

CHAPTER VII.

REGULATIONS CONCERNING THE PASSAGES READ BY THE HIGH-PRIEST AND WHAT GARMENTS HE MINISTERED IN AFTER, AND WHAT GARMENTS OTHER PRIESTS WORE.

MISHNA: The high-priest came to read. If he desired to read dressed in linen [white, byssus] garments, he did so; otherwise, he was reading in a white stole of his own. The Hazzan [servant, attendant] of the congregation takes the scrolls of the Torah, and presents them to the president of the congregation, the president presents them to the Segan, and the latter gives them to the high-priest. The high-priest rises, receives them, and reads standing. He reads the section, "After the death," etc. [*i.e.*, Lev. xvi.], and the section, "Also on the tenth," etc. [*i. e.*, Lev. xxiii. 26-32]. Then he rolls the scrolls together, and keeps them on his knees, and says: "More than what I have read to you, is written here." The section, "On the tenth," etc. [in the book of Numbers, xxix. 17], he reads by heart, and pronounces over it eight benedictions; namely, over the Torah, over the service, over the thanksgiving, the atonement of iniquity, the Temple by itself, and Israel by itself (and Jerusalem by itself, *in some versions*), the priests by themselves, and the rest of the prayer. He who sees the high-priest reading, does not witness the burning of the bull and the he-goat; he who witnesses the burning of the bull and the he-goat, does not see the high-priest reading: not because he is not allowed, but because there was a great distance, and both were done at the same time.

GEMARA: (Let us see:) If he might read in a white stole of his own, then we must assume that this is not a service for which the sacred garments are required; but at the same time, we see that he could read in the white garments. Hence we see they could be used even at other times than that of service. Infer from this, that the priestly garments he could use for his own benefit. Perhaps reading is different: though not itself a service, it is a preparation for service. Then the schoolmen propounded

a question: May the priestly garments be used for personal purposes or not? Come and hear: The priest's garments, in the country, may not be used; but in the Temple, whether during service or not, they may be used, because it is allowed to derive a benefit from the priestly garments. Infer from this, that he may. You say, in the country it may not be used? Have we not learned in the following Boraitha: On the twenty-fifth of Tebeth is called the day of Mount Gerizzim, and no mourning is allowed on it. Why? Because on that day the Samaritans petitioned Alexander of Macedon to have our Temple destroyed, and he permitted them. When Simeon the Upright (the high-priest) was notified of it, he put on the priestly garments, and accompanied by the respectable men of Jerusalem, they all went with torches the whole night till dawn, both parties approaching each other. When it dawned, Alexander of Macedon perceived from a distance the Jews. He asked, Who are these men? And the Samaritans told him: They are the Jews, who have rebelled against thee. As they reached the town Antipatris, the sun had risen, and they faced

each other. As Alexander saw R. Simeon the Upright, he descended from his chariot, and bowed to him. They said to him: Will such a great king as you bow to that Jew? He replied: His image I saw shining before me, whenever I gained a victory. He asked the Jews: Wherefore are you come? They said: The Temple wherein we pray for thee, and for thy empire, that it should not be destroyed, is it possible that thou shouldst be misled by the idolaters to bid its destruction? He asked: Who are those idolaters? They replied: These Samaritans who stand near thee. He said to them: I deliver them into your hands. Treat them as you please. They were soon fastened to the tails of their horses, and thus dragged as far as Mount Gerizzim, which was ploughed, and sowed, as they had intended to do with our Temple. This day was made a festival. (We see that Simeon the Upright went out even into the country in his priestly clothes.) If you wish, I will say, not the priestly clothes were meant, but clothes similar; and if you wish, I will say, this was in a case of urgency, and it is written [Ps. cxix. 126]: "It is time to act for the Lord: they have broken Thy law."

"*The Hazzan takes the scrolls,*" etc. Infer from this that honor is given to the disciple even in presence of the Master. Said Abayi: All this was only to honor the high-priest (that he might get it through many subordinate great officers).

p. 100

"*The high-priest rises.*" It seems then implied that hitherto he was sitting. Have we not learned in a Mishna (in Sotah) that nobody might sit in the Temple, except kings who are descendants of David? Said R. Hisda: He was then in the women's court, and there all could sit. It is written: [Nehem. viii. 6]: "And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God." Why is the epithet "great" employed here? Said R. Joseph in the name of Rabh: He then magnified him by calling him expressly "Jehovah." R. Gidel said: By saying as it is written [1 Chron. xvi. 36]: "Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel from everlasting even unto everlasting." Said Abayi to R. Dimi: Why not as R. Jose said in Rabh's name? R. Dimi answered: Because "Jehovah" must not be pronounced outside of the Temple.

Is that so? Is it not written [Nehem. viii. 4]: "Ezra the expounder stood upon an elevated stand of wood," and R. Gidel has said, he then pronounced the name "Jehovah"? This was only because on that occasion Ezra allowed himself to use it, as he deemed it necessary. It is written [ibid. ix. 4]: "They cried with a loud voice unto the Lord." What did they say? They cried: "Woe! Woe! The tempter to idolatry has destroyed the Temple, has killed all the just men, and exiled Israel from their land, and we see him yet among us. Why hast thou created the tempter? To reward us more for overcoming him. We wish neither him nor the greater rewards." Then fell down a billet from Heaven, whereon was written: "Emeth" (Truth). [Says R. Hanina: Infer from this that the seal of the Holy One, blessed be He, is "Truth."] They fasted three days and three nights. Then he (the evil spirit) was delivered into their hands. So they saw how a lion-cub of fire went out from the Holy of Holies. Then the prophet said to them: "Here is the evil spirit of idolatry." As it is written [Zechariah v. 8]: "This is the wickedness." They caught him. When a hair was torn out from his mane, he issued a cry which was heard at the distance of four hundred *parsas*. They said: If he cries so loud, what can we do to him? Lest he be pitied in Heaven, what shall we do that his voice be not heard? They were then advised to throw him into a leaden pot, as lead muffles the voice. They put him into a leaden pot, and covered it with a leaden lid, as it is written [ibid.]: "And he said, this is the wickedness. And he cast it into the midst of the ephah, and he cast the weighty lead cover upon the mouth thereof." (And since then idolatry ceased

among Israel.) They said: Since it is a time of favor(from Heaven), they would pray that the tempter to fornication be delivered to them too. They prayed, and he was delivered to them. It was said to them: "Take heed. If ye kill this spirit, the world will perish." They kept him imprisoned three days. They sought in all Palestine an egg laid on that day. They could not find. They said among themselves: What shall we do? If we will kill him, the world will perish. Shall we pray for the half (that desire should exist only in legal cases)? We have a tradition that a half is not given from Heaven; so they put out his eyes, and left him. The good result was, that since then he does not excite desire toward relatives.

In Palestine they learned it thus: R. Gidel says: "Great," because he pronounced the express name of God. R. Mathna says: What is written "the great," means that he said [Nehem. ix. 32]: "Our God the great, the mighty, and the terrible." But what R. Mathna had said, will be according to R. Joshua b. Levi, who said: Why was it called the Great Assembly? Because they restored the old crown. What is it? Moses had said [Deut. x. 17]: "The God, the great, the mighty, and the terrible." Then rose Jeremiah and said: The idolaters are destroying His Temple. Where is His terribleness? So he said only "the great, the mighty," omitting "terrible." Then came Daniel, and said: The idolaters keep as slaves His children. Where is His might? So he omitted "mighty." Then came the men of the Great Assembly, and said: On the contrary, this is His might, that He is patient toward the wicked. And this is His terribleness, that if men had not felt His terror, how could such a small people (as Israel) keep itself among so many peoples of idolaters? Therefore they introduced again the phrase, "the God, the great, the terrible, the mighty." And the rabbis (Jeremiah and Daniel), how did they dare to modify what Moses had established? Says R. Elazar: Because they knew the Holy One, blessed be He, loves truth. So they did not wish to lie to Him, to tell Him what they did not think.

"More than what I have read to you," etc. To what purpose did he say so? That the scrolls he used should not be said maliciously to contain only that which he read (and be invalid).

"He reads by heart." Why? Let him have found the place in the scrolls? In honor of a congregation, it is not made to wait till the scrolls should have been unrolled for that purpose. Let him have used other scrolls? This they did not, because if they

brought other scrolls, it might be said, the first scrolls were invalid. So says R. Huna b. Jehudah. But Resh Lakish says: In that case, a second benediction would have had to be pronounced (over the new scrolls). Do we fear lest it be said that the scrolls are invalid? Did not R. Itz'hak of Naph'ha, say: That when the first day of the month Tebeth falls on Sabbath, three scrolls have to be taken out: one for the section of that week, one for Hannkah, the third for the first day of the month? When three persons read in these scrolls, it is not feared; but when one man reads in two, it may be said he does not read in the first because the first is invalid.

"Pronounces over it eight benedictions." The rabbis taught: Over the scrolls as in the synagogue, over the service, over the thanksgiving, the atonement of iniquity as it has been ordered in the prayer of the Day of Atonement, over the Temple by itself, over the priests by themselves, over Israel by itself, and over the rest of the prayer. The rabbis taught: What is meant by the rest of the prayer? Songs, prayers: "We supplicate before (to) Thee for Thy people Israel, who need

help," and concluding, "Blessed be he who heareth prayer." After this, every one brought a scroll of the Torah from home and read it for himself. Why did they bring them? To show to the whole world that they had scrolls (and loved religion).

"He who sees the high-priest reading," etc. Is this not self-evident? We might think, lest one assume one may not pass from place to place in search of religious duties, he comes to teach us that it is not so. And what merit is there? Because it is written [Prov. xiv. 28]: "In the multitude of people is the king's glory."

MISHNA: If he read in linen garments, he washed his hands and feet, stripped himself, and went down to bathe, came out and dried himself with a sponge. Garments of cloth of gold were brought to him, he put them on, washed his hands and his feet, he went out and performed the rites on his ram, and the ram of the people, and the seven unblemished sheep, of one year--according to R. Eliezer. R. Aqiba says: They were offered with the daily sacrifice of the morning; and the bull for the burnt-offering and the he-goat used outside, were offered with the daily sacrifice of the evening. He washed his hands and feet, undressed, went down to bathe, came up and dried himself. White clothes were brought to him, he put them on, washed his hands and feet, he went in to fetch the spoon and the censer.

p. 103

[paragraph continues] He washed his hands and his feet again, stripped himself, went down, bathed, came out and dried himself. Garments of cloth of gold were brought to him, he put them on, washed his hands and feet, and went in to offer the incense of the evening, and to trim the lamps. He then washed his hands and feet, stripped himself, put on his own clothes--which had been brought to him--and was accompanied to his own house. He then used to keep the day as a holiday with his friends, when he had come away from the Holy of Holies unhurt.

GEMARA: The disciples of Samuel taught: R. Eliezer said: He went out, and performed the rites on his ram, and the ram of the people, and the members of the sin-offering. But the bullock of the burnt-offering, and the seven sheep, and the he-goat that was used outside, were offered together with the daily evening offering. In a Tosephtha it was taught: R. Aqiba said: The bullock of the burnt-offering and the seven sheep were offered with the daily morning offering, as it is written [Num. xxviii. 23]: "Besides the burnt-offering of the morning, which is for a continual burnt-offering." And then he made the offerings of this day, and then the he-goat used outside, as it is written [Num. xxviii. 11]: "One he-goat for a sin-offering, besides the sin-offering of the atonement "; and then he offered his ram, and the people's ram, the members of the sin-offering, and then the daily evening offering.

We see that all agree, that there was but one ram for the people; and this would be according to Rabbi of the following Boraitha: Rabbi said, the one ram mentioned here [Lev. xvi. 5] is the same as is mentioned in Num. xxix. 8. And R. Elazar b. R. Simeon says: Two were needed: one mentioned in Leviticus, the other in Numbers. What is the reason of Rabbi's saying? Because it is written "one." What will R. Elazar b. R. Simeon say to this? That signifies, the only one (best) in his flock. Rabbi, however, says: There is no need to state it, as it has already been mentioned [Deut. xii. 11]: "Your choice vows." According to R. Elazar b. R. Simeon, both statements are needed, because there it is only spoken of voluntary offerings.

"*He washed his hands and feet.*" The rabbis taught: It is written [xvi. 23]: "And Aaron shall then go into the tabernacle of the congregation." Wherefore? To take out the spoon and the censer. Why? Because the whole section follows the order of his rites, except this verse. What is the reason of saying

p. 104

that this verse applies to the taking out of the spoon and censer? Said R. Hisda: It is known to us traditionally, that five bathings and ten times of washing the high-priest performed that day. If thou wilt say, that this verse is not in a wrong place--namely, that no service done outside in the garments of cloth of gold would intervene between the day service (done in white) and the carrying out of the spoon and censer--then you would not find five and ten, but three and six. R. Zera opposed: Perhaps it was intervened by the he-goat used outside. Said Abayi: Because it is written [ibid. 24]: "And come then forth and offer his burnt-offering," we infer that after the first coming forth he offered the burnt-offering (that goat). Then we must say that the spoon and censer he had not yet carried out, else it would be his second coming forth.

When the conductor of the scapegoat returned, if he met the high-priest still in the street, he said to him: "My lord the high-priest, we have done thy commission"; but if he came to his house (on the morrow), he used to say to him: "We have done the commission of Him who giveth life to all living." Rabba said: In Pumbaditha, when the rabbis took leave, they said: "He who giveth life to all the living should give thee long good, and orderly life."

It is written [Ps. cxvi. 9]: "I will walk before the Lord in the lands of the living." (What is meant by the lands of the living?) Said R. Jehudah: The market-places (where food is purchased). Rashi explains this, as to a "long life." This is mentioned, and as for the markets, David persecuted by Saul prayed to be able to go to the markets to buy food.

It is written [Prov. iii. 2]: "For length of days, and years of life, and peace, will they increase unto thee." What means "years of life"? Are there any years not of life? Said R. Elazar: Those are the years of man when his circumstances change from evil to good. Said R. Brachia: It is written further [ibid. viii. 4]: "Unto you, O men, 1 I call." By this scholars are meant, who are weak like women, and perform feats as men. R. Brachia said again: He who wishes to bring a drink-offering on the altar should let scholars drink wine (which will be just as good). The same says again: When a man sees that learning has forsaken his sons, he should marry a scholar's daughter. As it is written [Job xiv. 8, 9]: "If even its root become old in the earth, and

p. 105

its stock die in the dust: yet through the scent of water will it flourish again, and produce boughs as though it were newly planted."

"*He then used to keep the day as a holiday.*" The rabbis taught: It happened to one high-priest going out from the Temple, and the whole world accompanying him, that they perceived Shemaia and Abtalian: the people then left the high-priest alone, and accompanied Shemaia and Abtalian. Later, Shemaia and Abtalian came to take leave of him. He answered them: May the children of the Gentiles (they were proselytes' descendants) go in peace. They replied to him: The children of the Gentiles may go in peace, because they do what Aaron the high-priest did;

but the children of Aaron may not have peace, who do not what Aaron did (love not peace).

MISHNA: The high-priest ministers in eight articles of dress; a common priest in four: in a robe and breeches, a mitre and a girdle. To the high-priest's are added: a breastplate and an ephod, and a coat and a *tsits* [plate on the forehead, [Ex. xxviii. 36]. The Urim and Tumim were inquired of only when he was thus attired; but inquiries were not made for a common man: only for the king, the chief of the Beth Din, and for a person of whom the public had need.

GEMARA: The rabbis taught: The stuff, which should be made according to the prescription of the Bible, of linen, should be six times *twisted*. Where twisted linen is prescribed, it should be eightfold twisted. The material of the robe of the high-priest was twelve times twisted; that of the vail, twenty-four; and that of the breastplate and ephod, twenty-eight. How do we know that an ordinary thread is six times twisted? Because it is written [Ex. xxxix. 27, 28]: "And they made the coats of linen . . . the mitre of linen, and the goodly bonnets of linen, and linen breeches of twisted linen thread." Five times "linen" is mentioned: once, to know that it is linen; the second time, that it be twisted six times; once, that it should be twisted; and once, that even the articles of dress of which it is not said "linen" should be of linen; the fifth time, to prohibit (those not of linen). [1](#)

How do we know that "Shesh" means "linen"? Because it is written "bad" (in some places, as equivalent to "Shesh") which signifies "only," and flax grows single from the reed in

p. 106

the middle, not in branches. Perhaps wool found between the tree and bark is meant? That can be separated into threads, but flax can not. But flax can also be separated? Flax can be separated when it is beaten, but that material can be so spontaneously. Rabhina says: Because it is written [Ezek. xlv. 18], "flaxen bonnets," and "flaxen breeches." Said R. Ashi to him: If thou adduce the proof from Ezekiel, how did they know it before Ezekiel? They had a tradition. Ezekiel wrote a verse. How do we know that "twisted linen" is eight times twisted? Because it is written [Ex. xxxix. 24]: "They made upon the lower hem of the robe pomegranates of blue, and purple, and scarlet yarn, twisted." Hence we deduce from an analogy of expression in another place (of the vail), by "twisted" twenty-four times is meant, so here, the thread of each kind being eight times twisted. How do we know that that of the robe should be of threads twelve times twisted? Because it is written [ibid. xxviii. 31]: "And thou shalt make the robe of the ephod altogether of blue woollen yarn." Here it is also inferred from an analogy of expression, as "blue" is mentioned speaking of the value also, as there every thread was six times twisted (since four kinds were twenty-four), so here, since it is written "altogether," it should be two times six. How do we know that the vail was of a material of threads twenty-four times twisted? Because it was of four kinds, and that each should not be less than six times twisted, it is unnecessary to deliberate upon. How do we know that that of the breastplate and ephod was of threads twenty-eight times twisted? Because it is written [Ex. xxviii. 15]: "And thou shalt make the breastplate of judgment of weavers' work; after the work of the ephod thou shalt make it: of gold, of blue, of purple, and scarlet yarn, and twisted linen, shalt thou make it." Four kinds, each six-fold, is twenty-four; and the gold four times, this makes twenty-eight. How is it known that the gold is four times? Perhaps also six times? Said R. Ashi: Because it is written [ibid. xxxix. 3]: "To work it in the blue and in the purple." Therefore it must be at least thinner than those threads.

Re'haba said in the name of R. Jehudah; He who tears the priestly garments, receives stripes, as

it is written [ibid. xxviii. 32]: "That it be not rent."

R. Eliezer said: He who takes off the breastplate from the ephod, or the staves from the ark, receives stripes, as it is written [ibid. xxviii. 28]: "That it be not loosed," and [ibid. xxv. 15]:

p. 107

[paragraph continues] "They shall not be removed therefrom." We have learned also in a Boraitha: It is written [ibid.]: "In the rings of the ark shall the staves be." We might think they must be always there, and may not be moved. Therefore it is written [ibid. 14]: "Thou shalt place the staves into the rings." From the expression, "place the staves into the rings," we might think that as they are placed there, they may be removed thence also. Therefore it is written, "In the rings of the ark shall the staves be." How is it then? They may be drawn out, but not wholly taken out (as their heads were too thick). R. Huma b. R. Hanina said: It is written [ibid. xxvi. 15]: "The boards for the tabernacle of Shittim wood, standing up." What means standing up? They shall be standing up as they grow. Re'haba said in the name of R. Jehudah: Bezaleel made three arks: the middle one was wooden, nine spans high, the one inside was of gold, and eight spans high; that outside was also of gold, and ten spans and odd high--nine, like the middle one, and a span and a trifle over, to screen it. We have learned in another Boraitha that it was eleven and a trifle? It presents no difficulty. This is according to one who says, the gold on the top was a span thick; and he who says it was ten, says it was not a span thick. Why was the fraction needed? That it should seem like a small crown on the top of the ark under the mercy-seat.

R. Johanan said: There were three crowns: one of the altar, one of the ark, and one of the table. Of the altar, called "the Crown of Priesthood," Aaron was privileged to receive; of the table, that of royalty, David received; that of the ark, called "the Crown of Learning," is yet to be bestowed. Shouldst thou say it is not valuable? therefore it is written [Prov. viii. 15]; Through me do kings reign."

It is written [Ex. xxv. 11]: "Within and without shalt thou overlay it" (the ark). Says Rabba: It can be inferred from this, That a scholar whose inside is not like his outside is no scholar. Abayi, according to others Rabba b. Ulla, says: Not only is he no scholar, he is even called "corrupt," as it is written [Job xv. 16]: "How much more abominable and corrupt the man who drinketh like water wrong-doing." R. Samuel b. Na'hmain in the name of R. Jonathan said: It is written [Prov. xvii. 16]: "Wherefore is the purchase-money in the hand of a fool to acquire wisdom, seeing he hath no heart." Woe to the scholars who stud), the Law, and have no fear of Heaven! Said Rabba to his disciples: I pray you, that ye may not inherit

two hells (he who studies and is yet wicked, has a hell on earth, and yet will have hell after his death). R. Joshua b. Levi said: It is written [Deut. iv. 44]: "This is the law which Moses set." If he has merited, it becomes to him a medicine of life; if not, it becomes to him a poison. And this is the same which Rabba has said above (about the two hells). R. Samuel b. Na'hmain in the name of R. Jonathan finds a contradiction of the following two passages: It is written [Ps. xix. 9]: "The precepts of the Lord are upright, rejoicing the heart," and [ibid. xviii. 31]: "The word of the Lord is tried." There is, then, a contradiction. Here it is said, it rejoices, and there, it is trying? If he has merited, it rejoices him; otherwise, it is a trial to him. Said Resh Lakish: This we may infer from the same passages "He is a shield to all those that trust in him." If he merits, it tries him, to enable him the better to live; if he does not merit, his trials kill him. It is written further [ibid. xix. 10]: "The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever." Said R. Hanina: That

signifies, a man who studies the Law when he is pure. What is meant by pure? When he has first married a wife, and then studies. It is written [ibid. 8]: "The testimony of the Lord is sure." Said R. Hiya b. Abba: The Torah is itself a trusted witness against the students (about the manner in which they had studied it).

"*The Urim and Tumim were inquired of,*" etc. When R. Dimi came from Palestine, he said: The clothes which the high-priest wore, the priest anointed for war could also wear. Whence is it deduced? Because it is written [Ex. xxix. 29]: "And the holy garments belonging to Aaron shall be for his sons after him." What is meant by "after him"? Next to him in office, and that was the one anointed for war.

R. Adda b. A'ha, according to others K'di objected: We have learned in a Boraitha: Shall we assume that the son of the priest anointed for war shall succeed to the office of his father, as the high-priest's son does? Therefore it is written [Ex. xxix. 30]: Seven days shall that one of his sons put them on who is to be priest in his place, who is to go into the tabernacle of the congregation. That means, he who is fit to enter the tabernacle of the congregation on the Day of Atonement, which is the high-priest. (If it be according to R. Dimi, that the eight garments of the high-priest may be used by the priest anointed for war during the whole year, and that hence he is also fit to enter the tabernacle of the congregation, why should

p. 109

the Boraitha say it is only the high-priest?) Said R. Na'hman b. Itz'hak: This is meant. "Who is to go into the tabernacle of the congregation" means, him who has been anointed for this, whereas that one has been anointed for war.

An objection was raised: We have learned: The priest I anointed for war may neither put on the four garments, like a common priest, nor the eight, like the high-priest. Said Abayi to R. Na'hman: Do you want to make of him a layman? The Boraitha means this: Like a high-priest he is not attired, to prevent rivalry; and not like a common priest, because of the rule: In holiness one increases, but does not decrease. As while anointed for war he had eight garments on, he cannot be degraded to the level of a common priest. R. Abahu was sitting, and said the Halakha of R. Dimi in the name of R. Johanan: R. Ami and R. Ashi turned away their faces from him (to indicate that R. Johanan had not said it). When Rabbin came from Palestine, he said; It has not been said that the priest anointed for war may put on the garments, but only when he goes to consult the Urim and Tumim. We have also learned the same in the following Boraitha: The garments in which the high-priest performs the service may be used by the priest anointed for war when he consults the Urim and Tumim.

The rabbis taught: How was the ceremony of inquiring of the Urim and Tumim? The inquirer turned his face toward the priest (who inquires), but the priest's face is turned toward the Shekhina. The inquirer asks, as *e.g.* in 1 Samuel xxx. 8: "Shall I pursue after this troop?" And the priest answers him: "So has said the Lord. Go, and thou wilt succeed." R. Jehudah, however, said: He need not say: "So has said God." He has only to say: "Go, and thou wilt succeed."

One must not ask in a loud voice, as it is written [Num. xxvii. 21]: "And he shall ask of *him*"; no one else need hear. He should not have the question merely in his mind either, because it is written: "He shall ask of him before the Lord." (How shall he speak?) He shall ask as Hanna

prayed [1 Sam. i. 13].

Two inquiries should not be made at once; and if he has made two inquiries, only one is answered, and the first. As it is written [ibid. xxiii. 11, 12]: "Will the men of Ke'ilah surrender me into his hand? Will Saul come down?" etc. And the Lord said: "He will come down." But you have said, Only the first question is answered? David asked them in a wrong

p. 110

order, and he was answered in the right order. Then, when David perceived this, he asked the second question: "Will the men of Ke'ilah surrender me and my men?" And he was answered: "They will surrender." When, however, two questions must be asked at once, else it cannot be clearly understood, then the two questions are both answered. As it is written [ibid. xxx. 8]: "Shall I pursue after this troop? shall I overtake them?" And the reply is: "Pursue, for thou wilt surely overtake them, and certainly recover." And although the decision of a prophet can be revoked, the decision of the Urim and Tumim cannot be changed, as it is written [Num. xxvii. 21]: "The judgment of the Urim."

Why were they called Urim and Tumim? *Urim*, because they illuminate their words; *Tumim*, because they give a complete answer. It will be asked, Why were the Israelites beaten by the Benjamites of Gib'ah, though bidden to go to the battle by the Urim and Tumim? Because those people did not think to ask whether they would be victorious or defeated. They were answered, "Go," and they were beaten; but later, when they understood how to inquire, they received a right reply, as it is written [Judges xx. 28]: "And Phinehas the son of El'azar, the son of Aaron, stood before it in those days, saying: Shall I yet continue to go out to battle with the children of Benjamin my brother, or shall I forbear? And the Lord said: "Go up, for to-morrow will I deliver him into thy hand."

How did the priest receive the reply? R. Johanan says: The letters constituting the reply became more prominent. Resh Lakish says: Nay, the letters composing the words came near each other. In the Urim and Tumim were only the names of the tribes, hence there was not the letter Tsadhe. Said R. Samuel b. R. Itz'hak: The names of "Abraham," "Itz'hak," and "Jacob" were also written there. But there was not the letter Teth? There were likewise the words "Shibtei Jeshurun" ("The Tribes of Israel": hence there was a *t*). An objection was raised: We have learned that a priest on whom the Shekhina does not rest, and is not inspired by the Holy Spirit, need not be inquired through. (How, then, is it said, the letters projected, or arranged themselves together?) Why? We see that when Zadok inquired he was answered, and Ebiathar received no reply, as it is written [2 Sam. xv. 24]: "And Ebiathar went up, until all the people had finished passing out of the city." "Went up." He resigned. The Holy Spirit enabled him to

p. 111

perceive the letters that projected, which he could not do otherwise.

"*Inquiries are not made except for a king.*" Whence do we deduce this? Said R. Abahu: As it is written [Num. xxvii. 21]: "Before Elazar the priest shall he stand, and he shall ask of him, after the judgment of the Urim before the Lord . . . he and all the children of Israel with him." "He" means the king, and all Israel "with him" means, the priest anointed for war and all the

congregation means, the Sanhedrin.

Footnotes

[104:1](#) Men is in Hebrew here •••• (not •••••), as if the plural of ••• --woman.

[105:1](#) *Shesh* (linen) means also *six*.

[Next: Chapter VIII: Regulations Concerning Fasting on the Day of Atonement; What May Be Done Thereon, And What May Not Be Done.](#)