

CHAPTER IV.

REGULATIONS CONCERNING SELLING OF SACRED PROPERTY AND ABOUT THE READING OF THE HOLY SCROLLS ON SABBATH AND HOLIDAYS.

MISHNA: Inhabitants of a town who have sold the open (or market-) place of the town may buy for that money a prayer-house; the money obtained by the sale of a prayer-house they may apply to the purchase of an ark (to keep the Holy Scrolls in); for that obtained by the sale of such an ark, cloaks or wrappers for the Holy Scrolls may be purchased; for the proceeds of such wrappers, books of the Prophets and Hagiographa may be purchased; for the proceeds of the same books, the scrolls of the Pentateuch may be purchased; but if they had sold scrolls of the Pentateuch, it would not be lawful to apply that money for the purchase of books of the Prophets and Hagiographa, nor wrappers for the proceeds of such books, nor an ark for the proceeds of wrappers, nor a prayer-house with the proceeds of an ark, nor a market-place with the money obtained by the sale of a prayer-house; and so in respect to any surplus fund.

GEMARA: "*Inhabitants of a town.*" Said Rabba bar bar Hana in the name of R. Johanan: All this was said by R. Menahem bar Jose, in accordance with whom are many anonymous Mishnas; but the sages said that there is no sanctity in a market-place. But what is the reason of R. Menahem b. Jose? Because on the congregational fast-days the people assembled in the market-places to pray (as is explained in Tract Taanith). The rabbis, however, do not care for what happens only occasionally.

"*The money obtained by the sale of a prayer-house.*" Said R. Samuel bar Na'hmani in the name of R. Jonathan: The case is only about prayer-houses of villages, where they are the inhabitants' property; but in large towns, where money for them is collected from other places also, and to which other men come to pray, the congregation cannot sell it at all, because the prayer-house belongs to a majority who are absent, and it is not theirs.

Said R. Ashi: The prayer-house in my town, Masa-Me'hasia

[paragraph continues] (Sura), although the money was collected from abroad, yet because they all came for my sake, I am the owner of it, and if I wish, I may sell it. Rabha said: What is said, that the money obtained for sacred property must be spent only on other sacred things, applies only to a case where it was not sold by the seven elders of the town, in presence of the townsmen, but if they did so, it may be spent even on drinking beer (if all so wish). There was a hill, on which had stood a prayer-house, which Rabbina wanted to sow. He came to R. Ashi, and asked whether he might do so. He answered him: Go and buy it from the seven elders of the city, in the presence of the townsmen, and then you may sow it. Rami bar Abha was engaged in building a new prayer-house; but he also had an old prayer-house, which he wanted to pull down

in order to use the bricks and beams for the new structure. He asked himself this question: R. Hisda once said, one may not destroy an old prayer-house before the new one has been finished; but this is only because one is not sure whether the new one will be completed; I, who am certain that it will, may I pull it down or not? He went and asked R. Papa, who prohibited. He went then and asked R. Huna: he forbade him also.

Rabha said: A prayer-house may be exchanged for another, or sold, but it may not be rented or pledged. Why? Because when it has been sold, its sanctity departs from it; but when rented or pledged, it remains holy, and may not be used for profane purposes. The same is it with the bricks of a prayer-house: they may be exchanged or sold, but not pledged. This applies to old bricks, but not to new ones which have not yet been used. About giving away, however, as a present, R. Aha and Rabbina differ: one says one may do so, and the other not.

The rabbis taught: Articles used for a religious duty may be cast away; but such as are used in holy service must be hidden. What articles are used for religious duties? Such as a Sukkah, Lulab, cornet, Tzitzith. What are holy things? Scrolls of Scripture, Tephilin, Mezuzoth, also cases of scrolls, of Tephilin, and their straps.

Said Rabha: I had thought before, that the pulpit on which the Holy Scrolls are laid to be read is not itself a sacred article, but only one used for the preparation of a holy article; but where I saw once the Holy Scrolls put down on it (without a cloth between), I thought it was itself used for a holy purpose, and therefore must not be sold. Rabha says again: At first I

p. 72

had thought the curtain of the ark was only an article used for a sacred article; but after I had seen that they folded it together, and put the Holy Scrolls on it, I knew it was a sacred article itself, and must not be sold. The same said again: Of an ark which fell to pieces one may construct a smaller ark, but not a pulpit. He said again: When the curtain of the ark is rotten, one may cut it smaller for the use of the Holy Scrolls, but for scrolls of parts of the Pentateuch he must not. The cases of the Holy Scrolls and of the Five Books, as they were used for sacred purposes, must be hidden. Is this not self-evident? Lest one say that they are not made for the honor of the sacred things, but to preserve them, he comes to teach us it is not so.

Mar Zutra said: The Holy Scrolls, when rotten, may be used as shrouds for a dead man that has no friends to bury him, and left no property to be used for that purpose, and this is hiding them.

Said Rabha: Holy Scrolls that were whole, and were torn, may be interred in the grave of a scholar, and even if he had learned only Halakhoth (and did not know Gemara). Said R. A'ha bar Jacob: But they must be put into a clay vessel, as it is written [Jer. xxxii. 14]: "And place them in an earthen vessel."

R. Papi said in the name of Rabh: A prayer-house may be converted into a learning-house, but not *vice versa*; and R. Papa in the name of Rabha taught the contrary. Said R. A'ha: It seems to be according to R. Papi, because so said R. Joshua b. Levi: A prayer-house may be turned into a learning-house. Infer from it that it is so.

"It will not be lawful to buy books of the Prophets," etc. The schoolmen propounded a question:

May old Holy Scrolls be sold, to purchase with the money new ones? Shall we assume that as the new ones have no preference over the old ones, they may not be sold; or that if the old ones are not sold, the new ones cannot be had, therefore it may be done? Come and hear: Rabba bar bar Hana said in the name of R. Johanan, quoting R. Simeon b. Gamaliel: One must not sell old scrolls for the purpose of buying new ones. There it is different: It is a precautionary measure lest he sell the old ones without buying new ones; but here the question is about such as are already written, and he ready for us to be obtained when the money is had. How is the law? Come and hear: R. Johanan said in the name of R. Meir: In any case the Holy Scrolls must not be sold, except for the purpose of using the money for study, or for marriage.

p. 73

[paragraph continues] From this we see that to exchange the Law for study, one may; so to exchange old scrolls for new ones, one may also. But perhaps it is different, because from studying he will know how to act; and marrying, because it is written [Is. xlv. 18]: "Not for naught did he create it; to be inhabited did he form it." But to exchange old Holy Scrolls for new ones, perhaps one may not? (This question is not decided.)

The rabbis taught: A man shall not sell Holy Scrolls, even when he does not need them; furthermore, says R. Simeon b. Gamaliel, even when he has nothing to eat, and has sold the Holy Scrolls, or his daughter for a slave, he will not see a sign of blessing all his life. Even when he has sold them, and bought new ones instead at a lower price, he will not see a sign of blessing in the remainder of the money. Said Rabha: The case is only when old Holy Scrolls have been sold, and new ones bought, so that some money was left; but when money was collected for this purpose and Holy Scrolls were bought, but some money was left, it may be used for all purposes. And even in the first instance it is so only when the old Holy Scrolls had been bought by the seven elders of the town, in the presence of townsmen, without any condition; but if it was bought conditionally, it may be used even for Duksusia.

Said Abayi to one of the rabbis, who arranged Boraithoth before R. Shesheth (who was blind): Hast thou not heard from R. Shesheth what is meant by Duksusia? He answered: So said R. Shesheth: A rider, whom the people of the town hire for their needs. Said Abayi again: Therefore if a young scholar heard something and does not know it, he should ask a man who usually goes before the great rabbis, because it is impossible that he should not have heard an explanation from the great men.

R. Johanan said in the name of R. Meir: When inhabitants of one town went away to another town, and the elders of that town ordered them to give charity for the poor of that town, they should give (that it should not be suspected they give no charity); but when they return, they may take it back, to support therewith the poor of their own town. The same we have learned in a Boraitha. But if an individual went to another town, and was ordered to give charity there, it should be given away to the poor of that town.

R. Huna ordered a congregational fast. Came to him R. Hana bar Hanilai, with many inhabitants of his town: he ordered

p. 74

them to give charity, and they did so. When they had to return, they said: Let the Master give us back the money, that we may support therewith the poor of our own town. He said to them: We have learned in a Boraitha: When must it be given back? Where there is no scholar in their town who occupies himself with the public needs; but if there is such a man, it must be given to him, that he should dispose thereof. According to this judgment, so much the more the poor of my town and yours, all are supported through me.

MISHNA: Sacred public property must not be sold to private individuals, because the sanctity thereby becomes lowered. This is according to R. Meir. The sages, however, said: If so, it would also be prohibited for a large town to sell sacred things to a smaller one.

A prayer-house may be sold, according to R. Meir, only conditionally (that if they want it, it shall be returned to them). But the sages permit it to be sold permanently, except for the four following uses: to be made a bathing-house, a tanning-place, a legal diving-bath, or laundry. R. Jehudah says: It may be sold on the condition that it be made an open court, and then the purchaser is at liberty to turn it to what purpose he pleases.

GEMARA: "*But the sages permit to be sold permanently.*" Said R. Jehudah in the name of Samuel: A man may let water within four ells of a prayer-house. Said R. Joseph, what does he come to teach us? We have learned this in a Mishna, R. Jehudah said, he may sell it for a courtyard, and the buyer can do what he pleases. And even according to the rabbis, who forbid it, it is only in case of a prayer-house whose sacredness is permanent; but in regard to the four ells before the prayer-house, which have no sacredness, even the rabbis admit. One Tana taught in the presence of R. Na'hman: One who prays, and wants to let water, shall step away four ells and do so; and he who has done so must walk away four ells before he may pray. Said R. Na'hman to him: "The last teaching is right, because we have learned in a Mishna that he must withdraw from such things to a distance of four ells; but that he who prays should go away four ells, why is this? By this teaching you make all streets of Nahardea sacred, for there is no place there where men have not prayed; hence letting water would be unlawful in them? Therefore teach, he must tarry for the length of time required for walking four ells, but need not walk."

p. 75

[paragraph continues] It is right that he who has let water should wait as long as walking four ells requires, because the feet can be besprinkled and he must wait till they dry; but why shall he who has prayed wait for that time? Said R. Ashi: Because for that length of time the prayer is still in his mind and his lips still keep moving, if he had been praying. The disciples of R. Zakkai asked him: In reward of what have you been living so many years? He replied: I never let water within four ells from a prayer-house, and I never called my neighbor nicknames. It never happened I should pronounce the morning benediction of the Sabbath without a goblet of wine: it happened once I had no money to buy with, and my old mother sold the cap from her head and brought me wine for Kiddush.

[It is taught in a Boraitha:] when she died she left three hundred cans of wine, and when he died he left to his heirs three thousand cans of wine. R. Huna stood in the presence of Rabh, girdled with a piece of rubber gum. And Rabh asked him: Where is thy girdle? He said: I had not wine for Kiddush, and pawned my girdle to get it. Rabh answered him: May it be God's will that you should be wrapped in silk. When he married his son Rabha, he slept on a bed; as he was not tall, his daughters and daughters-in-law threw their silken clothes upon him, and he was wholly hid.

When Rabbah heard of this, he was sorry, and said: When I blessed you, why did you not answer me: and the same to the Master.

The disciples of R. Elazar b. Shamua asked him: In reward of what have you lived so long? He replied: I never used the house of learning as a passage (*compendiarius*, thoroughfare); I never trod on the heads of the holy people (he used to come earlier than his disciples, and did not make them rise from their seats on the ground, as it is in the East); and I never raised my hands (for he was a priest) to bless Israel without pronouncing first a benediction. R. Preda was asked the same question by his disciples. He told them it never happened a man should come to the house of learning earlier than I; I never pronounced a benediction at a meal in the presence of a priest; and I never ate of an animal of which the gifts had not been separated, as R. Itzhak said in the name of R. Johanan: It is not allowed to eat of an animal of which gifts have not been made to the priest even in these days. The Master says: "I have pronounced no benediction in the presence of a priest." Is that a merit? Did not R. Johanan say a scholar for whom a priest, even a high

p. 76

priest, who is an ignorant man pronounces a benediction (which properly the scholar had to pronounce, and the latter had not protested, he) deserves death, because it is written [Prov. vii. 36]: "All those that hate me love death"? Do not read "Mesanai," etc. (see Sabbath, p. 236). R. Preda means when the priest was equal to him in scholarship.

The disciples of R. Nehunia b. Haqana put to him the same question, and he answered: I never honored myself by the disgrace of my neighbor, and I never went to bed with the curse of my neighbor (but reconciled myself to him before), and was liberal with my money.

["I never honored," etc. As it happened, R. Huna bore a *pickaxe*. R. Hana bar Hanilai took it away from him, and he wanted to carry it. He said to him: If it is your custom to carry such a thing in your town, do it; but otherwise, if I will be honored by your disgrace, I do not want it." I never went to bed." As Mar Zutra, when he went to bed, used to say: I pardon all the men who have vexed me. "I was liberal." As the Master said elsewhere that Job was liberal with his money; that is, he allowed the storekeepers larger profits than was necessary.]

R. Aqiba asked R. Nehunia the Great the reason for his longevity. His servants came and beat him (for the question). R. Aqiba fled from them, and went to the top of a tree, and said: Rabbi, when it is written [Num. xxviii. 4]: "one sheep," if it is not in the plural why should "one" be written in addition? And he said to his servants: He is a young scholar; do not hit him. And he answered to him: "One" is added to signify that it shall be the best in its flock. (Then he answered to him to the first question thus:) I never accepted in my life presents, I never was obstinate, and I was liberal with my money.

["I accepted no presents." As happened to R. Elazar, when gifts were sent to him from the house of the Nasi, he did not take them; and when he was invited, he used not to go. He used to say: When they send to me gifts, they do not wish that I shall live, for it is written [Prov. xv. 27]: "He that hateth gifts will live." And R. Zera, when gifts were sent to him, he did not accept; but went when he was invited, saying: "They only want to honor me." "And I was not obstinate." As Rabha said: Who yields from his obstinacy has his sins cancelled. As it is written [Micah, vii.

and forgiving transgression"; and that is interpreted in Tract Rosh Hashana: To whom does God pardon iniquity? Him who pardons the wrongs of his neighbor toward him. Rabbi asked R. Joshua b. Korha: In reward of what have you lived so long? He answered to him: Does it grieve you that I live so long? He rejoined him: Rabbi, it is a study, and I want to learn it from you. He replied: I never in my life looked into the face of a wicked man [as R. Johanan said: One shall not look at the appearance of a wicked man, as it is written (II Kings, iii. 14)]: "Surely, were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the King of Judah, I would not look toward thee nor see thee." Rabha says: From the following passage [Prov. xviii. 5]: "It is not good to favor the countenance of the wicked." When R. Joshua b. Korha was dying, Rabbi asked him: Bless me! And he said to him: It shall be the will of God you should reach the half of my age. Said he to him: Rabbi, and not your whole age? Do you not wish I should live as long as you? He replied to him: And what will your sons do? will they tend sheep? If you will live so long, you will survive them (Rabbi was a Nasi). The disciples of R. Adda bar Ahba 1 asked him: Why have you lived so long? He answered: I never was angry in my house, I never preceded a superior, I never thought of Divine subjects in unclean alleys, and I never walked four ells without thinking about the Law and without phylacteries, and I never took a nap in the house of learning; I never rejoiced when my neighbor was in misfortune, and I never called my fellowmen nicknames.]

MISHNA: Furthermore, R. Jehudah says: No funeral orations may be delivered in a house of prayer which had become ruinous, nor may it be used as a rope-walk, nor to spread nets therein, nor to spread fruit on its roof, nor to use it as a passage--*compendiarium*--(by a shorter route), as it is said [Lev. xxvi. 31]: "I will bring your sanctuaries into desolation." That means, they remain sanctuaries even in their desolation. If grass spring up therein, it may not be pulled up, that the view may contribute to the affliction (of the beholder).

GEMARA: The rabbis taught: The house of prayer must not be treated with levity: one must not eat therein, drink, decorate one's self there, promenade, nor resort there from the great heat or from rain; one must not deliver there a funeral

oration after an individual, but one may read there, study Mishna, and deliver a funeral oration after a scholar who was needed by many men. And it has to be swept always, also sprinkled with water, that there be no dust, and no grass grow (where there is no floor). R. Jehudah said: "This is when they are in good condition; but when in ruins, if grass spring up, it may not be pulled up, that the view may contribute to the affliction." R. Asi said: The prayer-houses which are in Babylon, although they are built conditionally, yet in the meantime no one allows himself any levities in them. What does he mean thereby? They do not make business calculations there. R. Asi said again: When business calculations are made in the prayer-house, finally it will become a place for a dead body for a night. How is this to be understood? He means to say that in punishment of this, some one will die in the town who will have no friends, and will be left overnight in the house of prayer. "Decorate one's self." Said Rabha: The scholars and disciples may do it in the learning-house. As R. Joshua b. Levi said: Why is a learning-house called the house of the rabbis? Because some things it is allowed to the rabbis to do which is not permitted

to others.

"From the great heat or rain." As Rabbina and R. Ada bar Mathna stood and asked a question of Rabha, meanwhile it began to rain. They entered the house of prayer, but remarked thereat: We go to the prayer-house not from the rain, but for the study of a Halakha for which the mind must be clear as the sunny day, when a north wind blows, purifying the air. R. A'ha b. Rabha asked R. Ashi: How is it when one wants to see a man who is in the prayer-house? May one go in to call him, or not? He answered: If he is a young scholar when he enters the prayer-house, he should speak about some Halakha. When he is a disciple studying Mishna, he should study, entering, a Mishna; if he can only read the Pentateuch, he should say a verse therefrom; if he is unable to do this, he should ask a child: What verse have you learned to-day? If not even this, he should enter, and stay there a while, and only then leave (that it should not seem he came only for this purpose). "After a scholar who was needed," etc. What is meant by this? R. Hisda pointed out, *e. g.*, if anyone of R. Shesheth's disciples should die. R. Shesheth pointed out R. Hisda: If, *e. g.*, one of R. Hisda's disciples would die.

Raphram lamented his daughter-in-law in the prayer-house.

p. 79

[paragraph continues] He said: For my honor, and in honor of the deceased, the whole world will come to hear my oration. R. Zera lamented after one of the rabbis in the prayer-house, and said: Either in my honor or in honor of the deceased all will come to hear. Resh Lakish delivered a funeral oration after a young scholar who had been in Palestine, and taught Halakhoth to twenty-four rows of disciples. He said: Woe! that the land of Israel has lost such a great man. One scholar died who had known Halakhoth, Siphra, Siphri, and Tosephta. They came and told R. Na'hman he should lament him. R. Na'hman said: What shall I say to such a great man--shall I say, Woe! that such a book-case full of books was lost? (He learned all by himself and not from masters, therefore he styles him merely thus, but not "scholar," because maybe he learned by heart but did not understand the reasons.) Come and see the difference between the mighty of the land of Israel and the pious ones of Babylon. (Rashi explains it thus: Resh Lakish was of the most honored men of Palestine, as it is said elsewhere that even to Rabbi bar bar Hana he did not talk in the street. Nevertheless, as above said, when a young scholar, learned only in Halakhas, died, he made the lamentation without any questions. R. Na'hman b. Itz'hak was of the pious men of Babylon, as it is said elsewhere that he said: Do not mention fear of sin, because I live yet.)

We have learned in a Mishna in Aboth: "Who uses the crown, is lost." Resh Lakish taught: That means, if one uses for his service a man who learns Halakhoth, which are the crown of the Law. Said Ula: A man can use the service of one who learns four Halakhoth, but not of one who *teaches* four Halakhoth; as happened with Resh Lakish, who walked on the road, and had to cross a stream. A man came, took Resli Lakish on his shoulders, and carried him across. Resh Lakish asked him: Can you read in the Torah? He said yes. Can you read in the Mishna? He said: I have studied four sections of the Mishna. Said Resh Lakish to him: You have cut out for yourself four rows of gold, and still you carried the son of Lakish on your shoulders? Throw him into the water! Said the man: It is agreeable to me to serve the Master. Said he: You may do it only when you will have learned from me something (and then he taught him a Halakha).

The rabbis taught: The burial of a corpse and the marriage of a bride supersede the study of the

Law. It was said of R. Jehudah b. R. Ilai: He used to interrupt his study for the above

p. 80

two things. This is in the case when the dead man has not enough men to accompany him, but if there are enough, one need not interrupt his study. What is meant by "enough"? Said R. Samuel bar Inia in the name of Rabh: It means thirteen thousand men, and six thousand with cornets. And according to others, the six thousand are included in the thirteen thousand. And Ula says: As many men as could form a wall from the place where the man died to the grave. R. Shesheth says: Six hundred thousand men. As the Law was given to six hundred thousand men, so a man who has learned the Law should be accompanied by six hundred thousand men. This applies only to a disciple who has learned, but for the Master who taught, no definite number is to be prescribed.

We have learned in a Boraitha: R. Simeon b. Yochi said: Come and see how the Israelites are beloved by the Holy One, blessed be He. Wherever they went in exile, the Shekhina accompanied them. They were exiled into Egypt, the Shekhina was with them, as is written [I Sam. ii. 27]: "Did I not appear unto the house of thy father, when they were in Egypt?" When they were exiled into Babylon, the Shekhina was with them, as is written [Is. xliii. 14]: "For your sake I was sent to Babylon." And in future, when they will be redeemed, the Shekhina will also come to them, as is written [Deut. xxx. 3]: "The Lord thy God will return"; it is not said, He will bring back you, but *He* will return with you.

It is written [Ezek. xi. 16]: "Yet will I be to them as a minor sanctuary." Said R. Itz'hak: This means the houses of prayer and the houses of learning that are in Babylon. R. Elazar said: That is the house of our Master who is in Babylon (*i.e.*, Rabh). Rabha lectured: It is written [Ps. xc. 1]: "Lord, a place of refuge hast thou been unto us." That means the prayer and learning-houses. Said Abayi: Formerly I learned at home, and prayed at the house of prayer; but when I heard later what David said [in Ps. xxvi. 6]: "Lord, I love the site of *thy* house," I went to study also in the prayer-house.

A Boraitha states: R. Elazar the Kapar said: The prayer and learning-houses which are at present in Babylon will in the future be established in the land of Israel, as it is written [Jer. xlvi. 18]: as Thabor is among the mountains, and as Carmel is by the sea, so shall he come." An *a fortiori* conclusion is to be drawn: If Thabor and Carmel, at which only occasionally the Law was studied, are counted among the land of Israel, the

p. 81

prayer and learning-houses, at which the Law is still studied, so much the more that they will become the land of Israel.

Bar Kapara lectured: It is written [Ps. lxviii. 17]: "Why watch ye enviously, ye many-peaked mountains?" A Heavenly voice was heard, which said to the mountains: "Why should ye be jealous of Mount Sinai? Ye, all great mountains, are blemished in comparison with Sinai." This is inferred from the expression "*Gabnunim*," and by analogy of expression in Lev. xxi. 20, the expression "crook-backed," which is one of the blemishes, is "*Giben*." Said R. Ashi: From this we may infer that a man who is haughty must be considered as blemished.

"Nor used as a passage" (*compendiarium*). What is meant? Said Rabha: The explanation is similar to the word; instead of going around, one goes through the house. Said R. Abahu: If the house was originally used as a shorter route, one may. R. Na'hman b. Itz'hak said: If one entered it without the intention to use it thus, but afterward wants to go through the other door, he may. And R. Helbi in the name of R. Huna said: If he entered to pray, he may go out by the shorter road. As is written [Ezek. xlvi. 9]: "But when the people of the land came before the Lord on the appointed feasts, he that entereth in by the way of the north gate to bow himself down shall go out by the way of the south gate."

"If grass spring up," etc. But did we not learn in a Boraitha, he must not pull it up to feed therewith cattle, but he may uproot it, and leave it lie? In the Mishna also is meant, he should not pull it up for animals.

MISHNA: When the first of Adar falls on a Sabbath, the portion Shekalim [Exod. xxx. ii] is to be read; if it falls on any other day, that portion must be read on the preceding Sabbath, and nothing additional is read on the following Sabbath. On the second, the portion "Remember" [Deut. xv. 15] is to be read; on the third, that of the red heifer [Numb. xix.]; on the fourth, that of the new moon [Ex. xvii.]; on the fifth, they return again to the regular order. The regular order of Aphtaroth is also to be interrupted on the days of new moon, on that of Hanuka, on Purim, and on public fast-days, also on the fast of the standing men (this is explained in Tract Shekalim), and the Day of Atonement.

GEMARA: We have learned in the Mishna in Shekalim (vol. iv., p. i): "On the first day of the month of Adar warnings are heralded from Jerusalem concerning Shekalim and

p. 82

[paragraph continues] Kelayim." About Kelayim it is the time of sowing, therefore it is right that it is heralded they should have no Kelayim; but whence do we deduce that about Shekalim it must be heralded on the first of Adar? Said R. Tebi in the name of R. Joshua: It is written [Num. xxviii. 14]: "This is the burnt-offering of the new moon for every month." The expression is: "*Hodesh behodsho*" (*i.e.*, new in its new), that means that the Torah said: Renew it. Ye shall bring the offerings from the new taxes of the year, and as with the first of Nisan begins the new year, it must be heralded in Adar that the new taxes shall be collected before or on the first of Nisan, for the purpose that they might be brought in time to the Temple.

Is the Mishna not in accordance with R. Simeon b. Gamaliel, who said: Only *two weeks* before Passover shall it be lectured about the Passover? Nay, we can say it is in accordance with R. Simeon b. Gamaliel also, but because in Shekalim, I, Mishna *c*, it is said: "On the fifteenth of Adar the money-changers outside of Jerusalem seated themselves at their tables," etc., we must be earlier in reading the portion of Shekalim. What is called the portion of Shekalim? Rabh says: The portion about the daily offerings [Num. xxviii. 2]. And Samuel says: Ex. xxx. 21. It is right according to Samuel that it is called Shekalim, because it speaks about it; but according to Rabh, where is mentioned in that portion about Shekalim? About Shekalim is not mentioned, but according to Rabh this shall be read because the daily offerings must be brought from the new Shekalim as R. Tebi said above. We have learned in the following Boraitha in accordance with Samuel: If the first of Adar falls on Sabbath, the portion from Ex. xxx. 21 shall be read; and the portion from the Prophets should be about Yehoyada the priest [II Kings, xii.]. R. Itz'hak of the

city of Naph'ha said: If the first of Adar falls on Sabbath, three Holy Scrolls must be taken out, and it should be read from one the portion due on that Sabbath, and from one the portion proper on the first of the month, and from one the portion of Shekalim [Ex. xxx. 21]. He says again: When the first of the month Tebeth falls on Sabbath, the same thing is to be done--three scrolls are to be taken out: one portion proper for the Sabbath should be read, the second that of the first day of the month, and the third about Hanuka [Num. vii..] It was taught: When the first of Tebeth falls on a week-day, said R. Itz'hak: Three must read the portion of the first day of the month, and one about the sanctification; and

p. 83

[paragraph continues] R. Dimi from the city of Hepha said, Three must read about the sanctification, and one about the first of the month. Said R. Mani: It seems to us that R. Itz'hak of Naph'ha is correct; because a frequent thing is given preference over an unfrequent thing, and we read Hanuka once a year, while the first of the month is twelve times. Said R. Abbin: On the contrary, it seems to be according to R. Dimi, for what is the cause of the fourth man being called to read the Torah? The first of the month. Therefore the fourth man must read the portion of the first of the month. How is it to be decided? R. Joseph said: We must give preference to Hanuka; and Rabba said, to the first of the month. And the Halakha prevails that the main attention must be given to the first of the month, not to Hanuka.

It was taught: When the Sabbath of Shekalim falls when the portion proper to this Sabbath is Thetzaveh 1 [Ex. xxvii. 20], said R. Itz'hak of Naph'ha: Six persons should read from verse 20 of xxvii. to verse 11 of xxx., and one from verse 11 in xxx. to verse 17. Said Abayi: The people will think the portion is so long, and will not notice that they read the portion Shekalim, therefore he says six should read from 20 in xxvii. to 17 in xxx. (Thetzaveh), and then should come another and repeat from 11 in xxx. to 17 (Shekalim). It was taught: When the first of Adar falls on the eve of Sabbath, said Rabh, the portion Shekalim should be read the preceding Sabbath, because the tables of money-changers are set up two weeks after the reading, and if it will be read on the succeeding Sabbath, they will not be set up on the 15th, but two days later. Samuel, however, said: It should be read on the succeeding Sabbath. The tables will not be set up at all events until Sunday, because they will not begin on the eve of Sabbath, consequently the reading will not cause any delay. Their point of difference is the same as that of the Tanaim of the following Boraitha: There must be an interruption between the Sabbaths, on which must be read the four portions before Passover; so is the decree of R. Jehudah Hanasi. R. Simeon b. Elazar, however, said: No interruption must there be. And he said again: I say, there must be no interruption only then when the first of Adar falls on the eve of Sabbath, but if in the middle of the week, the portion

p. 84

Shekalim must be read on the preceding Sabbath, although the Sabbath is yet in the month Shebat.

"On the second the portion 'Remember' is to be read." It was taught: When Purim falls on the eve of Sabbath, said Rabh: The portion "Remember" should be read on the preceding Sabbath, because, if on the Sabbath after, "Remember" will be read after it has been done (with the reading of the Megilla). Samuel, however, said it should be read on the succeeding Sabbath; and concerning the fact, that the reading of the Megilla must not precede the reading of

"Remember," it will not precede in the walled towns, where it is read on the 15th, and then "Remember" will be read before the Megilla. When, however, Purim falls on Sabbath, said R. Huna, all agree it must not be read the preceding Sabbath, but on the same Sabbath. R. Na'hman, however, said: Rabh and Samuel differ also about this. The same was taught also by R. Hyya bar Abba in the name of R. Abba quoting Rabh: When Purim falls on Sabbath, the portion "Remember" should be read the preceding Sabbath.

"The third, that of the red heifer." The rabbis taught: What is meant by the third Sabbath? The one falling after Purim. In the name of R. Hama bar Hanina it was taught: By the third Sabbath is meant the one after which comes the first day of Nisan. They do not differ, however, when the first of Nisan occurs on Sabbath. On the preceding Sabbath the portion of the heifer must be read; and when it falls on a week-day, it has to be read on the Sabbath after Purim.

"The fourth, that of the new moon." The rabbis taught: When the first of Adar falls on Sabbath, the portion Shekalim must be read, and the portion of the Prophets should be about Yehoyada the priest. And what is called the first Sabbath? The one after which the first of Adar falls in the same week, and even on the eve of the succeeding Sabbath. On the second has to be read "Remember," and the portion of the Prophets must be from I Sam. xv.: "I remember what Amalek," etc. And what is called the second Sabbath? When Purim falls on the week after it, and even on the eve of Sabbath after it. On the third Sabbath it must be read about the heifer, and the portion of the Prophets in Ezek. xxxvi. 24: "I will sprinkle upon you." And what is called the third Sabbath? When it falls after Purim. The fourth Sabbath it has to be read about the new moon, and the portion of the Prophets shall be from Ezek. xlv. 19: "Thus has said the Lord Eternal, in the first

p. 95

month, on the first of the month." And what is called the fourth Sabbath? When the first of Nisan falls in the week after it, and even on the eve of the next Sabbath.

"On the fifth, they return again to the regular order." What order is meant? R. Ami says: To the order of the portions usually read on each Sabbath; and R. Jeremiah says, to the order of the portions from the Prophets (because on these four Sabbaths the portions from the Prophets were different). Said Abayi: It seems to us it should be as R. Ami said, as the Mishna stated above ([p. 81](#)) agrees with his opinion.

MISHNA: On the first day of Passover the portion in Leviticus relating to the festival must be read; on Pentecost that commencing "Seven weeks shall ye count," etc. [Deut. xvi.]; on the day of New Year, the portion commencing "In the seventh month, on the first day of the month" [Num. xxix. 7]; on the Day of Atonement that of "After the death" [Lev. xvi.]; on the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles, the portion of Leviticus relative to the festivals must be read; and on the other days of that festival the offerings for each day [Num. xxix. 17].

On the half feast of Hanuka, the portion of the offerings of the princes [Num. vii.] must be read; on Purim, that of "And Amalek came" [Ex. xvii. 8]; on the first of the month, "And on the beginnings of your months" [Num. xxviii. 11]; on the fast-days for the standing men, about the creation [Gen. i.]; on fast-days, the portion containing the blessings and maledictions [Lev. xxvi. 3]; the denunciations therein contained must be read without interruption; namely, one man

must read the whole chapter. On Mondays and Thursdays, and on the Sabbath afternoon, they shall read the portion of the Torah in its regular order, but these readings are not available to reduce the regular number, for it is written [Lev. xxiii. 14]: "Moses declared unto the children of Israel the appointed festivals of the Lord." Whence it is inferred that each must be read on the appointed festival to which it refers.

GEMARA: The rabbis taught: On Passover should be read the portions referring to this festival, and the portions from the Prophets should be from Joshua, v. 9, about Gilgal, etc.; and at present in exile, when we keep two days as festivals, the first day should be about Gilgal; the second day from II Kings, xxiii., about Josiah; the last days of Passover should be selected small portions in which it is spoken about Passover. What are they? (This will be explained further on.) And the last days of

p. 86

[paragraph continues] Passover--on the first of them should be read [Ex. xiii. 17], "And it came to pass when Pharaoh," and the portion from the Prophets should be from II Samuel, xxii., "And David spoke"; and on the next day [Deut. xv. 19], "All the first-born males," and from the Prophets, in Isaiah, x. 32, "As yet to-day will he remain at Nob." Said Abayi: And now people have the custom to read as follows: "Draw out" [Ex. xii. 2], "When a bullock" [Lev. xxii. 27], "Sanctify" [Ex. xiii. 2], "If thou lend" [ibid. xxii. 24], and "Hew thyself" [ibid. xxxiv. i], "And the Lord spoke" [Num. ix. i], and "It came to pass" [Ex. xiii. 17], and then "All the first-born" [Deut. xv. 19]. On Pentecost, "Seven weeks shalt thou number" [Deut. xvi. 9], and from the Prophets, in Habakkuk, iii. An anonymous teacher says [Ex. xix.]: "In the third month," and the portion from the Prophets should be from Ezekiel, i., about the Divine Chariot. And now when in exile we keep two days Pentecost, we do as both have said, but reverse it on the first day of the New Year, as the anonymous teacher, and on the second as above. In the days of the New Year, "In the seventh month" [Num. xxix.], and from the Prophets, "Is not Ephraim a dear son" [Jerem. xxxi. 20]. According to others, "And the Lord visited Sarah" [Gen. xxi.], and from the Prophets, about Hannah [I Sam. i.]. And now when we keep two days, we read on the first about Sarah, and the second, "God did tempt Abraham" [Gen. xxii.], and the portion from the Prophets, "Is not Ephraim" [Jer. xxxi. 20]. On the Day of Atonement we read [Lev. xvi.], "After the death," and from the Prophets [Is. lvii. 15], "For thus hath said the High," etc. And in the Min'ha prayer, we read about the laws of legal marriage [Lev. xviii.], and from the Prophets, Jonah.

[R. Johanan said: In nearly every place where you find the might of the Holy One, blessed be He, you find also His modesty. This is written in the Pentateuch, and repeated in the Prophets, and mentioned a third time in the Hagiographa. In the Pentateuch [Deut. x. 17]: "For the Lord your God is the God of gods, and the Lord of lords"; and the next verse, "Who executeth justice for the fatherless and the widow." It is repeated in the Prophets [Is. lvii. 15]: "Thus hath said the High and Lofty One, who inhabiteth Eternity, whose name is Holy"; and the end of this verse is "yet also with the contrite and humble in spirit." The third time in Hagiographa [Ps. lxviii. 5]: "Extol him who rideth upon the heavens." "The

p. 87

[paragraph continues] Everlasting is his name," and the next verse is "A father of the fatherless, and the judge of the widows."]

The first festival day of the Feast of Tabernacles should be read the portion about this feast in Leviticus; and from the Prophets [Zechariah, xiv. 1]: "Behold, a day is coming unto the Lord." Now when we keep two days, we read on the second the same as on the first, but from the Prophets [I Kings, viii. 2]: "And all the men of Israel assembled." And on the remaining days of the festival we read about the sacrifices of the festival, and on the last day we read "All your first-born," to the end of the chapter, and from the Prophets [ibid. iv. 1]: "And it came to pass when Solomon had finished"; and on the morrow, "And this is the blessing" [Deut. xxxiii.], and from the Prophets [I Kings, viii. 22]: "And Solomon stood."

R. Huna said in the name of Rabh: On the Sabbath in the intermediate days of the festivals, whether Passover or that of Tabernacles, should be read Ex. xxxiii. 12; and from the Prophets [Ezek. xxxvii.], about the dry bones, and on Feast of Tabernacles [Ezek. xxxviii.], about Gog and Magog. During Hanuka the portion in Num. vii. about the offerings of the princes, and from Prophets [Zechariah, iii.], about the candlesticks, And when it happens there are two Sabbaths in the eight days of Hanuka, on the first Sabbath the candlesticks of Zechariah, on the last Sabbath from I Kings, vii. 49, about the candlesticks of Solomon. On Purim [Ex. xvii.], "And Amalek came," and "On the beginnings of your months" [Num. xxviii.]. And if the first of the month falls on Sabbath, it should be read from Isaiah, lxvi. 23: "And it shall come to pass that from one new moon to the other." And when the first of the month falls on Sunday, the preceding Sabbath it should be read from the Prophets [I Sam. xx. 5]: "And Jonathan said unto David, to-morrow is the new moon."

R. Huna said: If the first of the month Ab falls on Sabbath, it should be read from the Prophets in Is. i. 14: "Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth." On the ninth of Ab itself? What portion do we read from the Prophets? Said Rabh: Is. i. 2]: "How became a whore the faithful city?" Said Abayi: And now people have the usage to read from the Pentateuch [Deut. iv. 24]: "When thou begettest children ", and from the Prophets in Jerem. viii. 13: "I will make an end of them."

"*On the fast of the standing men.*" Whence do we deduce

p. 88

this? (Rashi explains it that the question is what connection there is between the creation and these fasts.) Said R. Ami: If not the standing men, the heaven and earth would not abide; as is written [Jerem. xxxiii. 25]: "If my covenant be not with day and night, I would not appoint the ordinances of heaven and earth," And it is also written [Gen. xvi. 8]: "And he said, Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" Said Abraham before the Holy One, blessed be He: Creator of the Universe, perhaps if Israel will sin before Thee, Thou wilt destroy them as the generation at the time of the Flood and of the Dispersion of Babel. And He answered: Nay. Said Abraham: Whereby will I know it? And the Lord said: Take Me a heifer three years old (*i.e.*, the sacrifices will forgive their sins). Then Abraham said again: Creator of the Universe, this will be as long as the Temple exists, but what will be when the Temple will be destroyed? And the Lord answered: I have therefore ordained to them the order of the sacrifices, and every time they will read it, it will be considered by Me as if they had offered them, and I will forgive them all their sins.

"*Without interruption.*" Whence do we deduce this? Said R. Hyya bar Gamda in the name of R.

Asi: Because it is written [Prov. iii. 11]: "The correction of the Lord, my son, do not despise." (And if there were interruption, it would seem as if the correction were disagreeable to them.) Resh Lakish, however, said: That is because we do not pronounce a benediction over chastisement. What else shall he do? We have learned in a Boraitha: He should begin a verse before the curses, and should end a verse after them. We have learned in a Boraitha: R. Simeon b. Elazar said: Ezra ordained that Israel should read the curses in Leviticus before Pentecost, and those in Deuteronomy before New Year. Why so? Said Abayi, and according to others Resh Lakish: That the curses should end with the year. It is right of Deuteronomy, because then begins a new year; but in Leviticus, before Pentecost, does Pentecost begin a new year? Yea, Pentecost is also a New Year's day, as we have learned in Tract Rosh Hashana, on Pentecost is decided in Heaven about the fruit of the year.

The rabbis taught: From the same place where they stop to read in the Pentateuch on Sabbath in the morning, they begin to read in the Min'ha prayer; and from the same place they should begin on Mondays and Thursdays and the next Sabbath. So is the decree of R. Meir. But R. Jehudah said: From the

p. 89

same place where they had stopped the last Sabbath, they should begin at the Min'ha prayer, and Mondays and Thursdays, and also the next Sabbath. Said R. Zera the Halakha prevails so. The rabbis taught: One shall open the Holy Scrolls and look on them, then pronounce the benediction, then read. R. Shephatia said in the name of R. Johanan: He who rolls together the Holy Scrolls, shall do it so that the sewn rolls should be in the middle, so that it be done easily. The same said again in the name of the same authority: They may be rolled together only from outside, but not from inside, so that the letters should not be seen outside. When one holds scrolls himself, and has to find in it something, he should not begin to roll away from his person, because one scroll might fall down, but he should roll them toward his person, so that they should remain on his knees. When he rolls them from both sides, he should begin with the side toward his person, because if from the other side, a man will be unable to see at a distance what is written in them, and it is a duty to let him see.

The same says again: If ten men have read in the scrolls, the greatest of them should roll them together, for R. Joshua b. Levi said: He who rolls them together, is rewarded as much as all of them together.

He says again: Whence do we know that we may avail ourselves of a Heavenly voice? Because it is written [Is. xxx.]: "Thine ears shall hear a thing from behind them." When is this the case? When one hears a male voice in town, and a female voice in the country, and when it says: "Yea, yea," or "Nay, nay." The same says again in the name of the same authority: Who reads without sweetness, and learns without a chant, of him says the verse in Ezekiel [xx. 25]: "And I also have given unto them laws that are not good." Abayi opposed. Shall I say, because he cannot make sweet his voice, the above verse should be applied to him? Therefore we must say as R. Mesharshia said elsewhere, that if two scholars are in one town, that contradict themselves in Halakha, to them is the above verse applied.

Said R. Pornach in the name of R. Johanan: Who handled the Holy Scrolls, while naked, 1 will be buried naked. Said R.

Janai the son of R. Janai the Elder: It is better that the mantle of the Holy Scrolls should be inserted between the scrolls than *vice versa*. It is written [Lev. xxiii. 44]: "And Moses spoke of the festivals of the Lord to the children of Israel"; *i.e.*, he told them the merit of reading the portions of the Torah each in its time. The rabbis taught: Moses ordered to Israel they shall discuss and lecture on the subject of the day: the Halakhas of Passover on Passover, the Halakhas of Pentecost on Pentecost, and the Halakhas of Tabernacles on the Feast of Tabernacles.

END OF TRACT MEGILLA.

Footnotes

[77:1](#) In text it is written R. Zera, but it is a misprint. See Taanith, p. 54.

[83:1](#) In Babylon they read through the Pentateuch once a year, as we do now; in Palestine, once in three years. This question applies to both; it can happen in both that the portion of Thetzaveh before that of Shekalim can come to have to be read when Shekalim should be.

[89:1](#) According to Rashi, it applies to the scrolls; Mordchai Plungian, however, in his "Alphai Menashe," interprets it in the name of Menashe of Ila that it applies to the man, which seems to be more correct, though he was persecuted for this interpretation.