

Sketches of Jewish Social Life - Part 4

by Alfred Edersheim

This sermon explores the practices and literature of ancient Jewish synagogues, highlighting the importance of teaching, the role of the meturgeman and darshan, and the significance of the Book of Jubilees.

Scripture: Isaiah 9:2, Isaiah 21:11, Jeremiah 25:30, John 7:46, Romans 11:2, Hebrews 3:1

Topics: "Jewish Customs", "Temple Worship"

Description

Alfred Edersheim delves into the intricate details of Jewish practices and rituals, shedding light on the significance of various customs observed in the Temple, such as the timing of prayers, the layout of the Temple, and the roles of priests and Levites. He explores the meticulous regulations governing prayer times, the structure of the Temple, the duties of the priests, and the symbolic meanings behind certain practices. Edersheim also discusses the divisions of the night watches, the functions of different chambers within the Temple, and the importance of specific rituals in Jewish worship.

Transcript

According to the present practice, the fingers of the two hands are so joined together and separated as to form five interstices; and a mystic meaning attaches to this. It was a later superstition to forbid looking at the priests' hands, as involving physical danger. But the Mishnah already directs that priests having blemishes on their hands, or their fingers dyed, were not to pronounce the benediction, lest the attention of the people should be attracted. Of the attitude to be observed in prayer, this is perhaps scarcely the place to speak in detail. Suffice it, that the body was to be fully bent, yet so, that care was taken never to make it appear as if the service had been burdensome. One of the Rabbis tells us, that, with this object in view, he bent down as does a branch; while, in lifting himself up again, he did it like a serpent--beginning with the head! Any one deputed by the rulers of a congregation might say prayers, except a minor. This, however, applies only to the "Shema." The eulogies or "tephillah" proper, as well as the priestly benediction, could not be pronounced by those who were not properly clothed, nor by those who were so blind as not to be able to discern daylight. If any one introduced into the prayers heretical views, or what were regarded as such, he was immediately stopped; and, if any impropriety had been committed, was put under the ban for a week. One of the most interesting and difficult questions relates to certain modes of dress and appearance, and certain expressions used in prayer, which the Mishnah (Megillah, iv. 8,9) declares either to mark heresy or to indicate that a man was not to be allowed to lead prayers in the synagogue. It may be, that some of these statements refer not only to certain Jewish "heretics," but also to the early Jewish Christians. If so, they may indicate certain peculiarities with which they were popularly credited.

Of the services hitherto noticed, the most important were the repetition of the eulogies and the priestly benediction. What now followed was regarded as quite as solemn, if, indeed, not more so. It has already been pointed out, that the main object of the synagogue was the teaching of the people. This was specially accomplished by the reading of the law. At present the Pentateuch is for this purpose arranged into fifty-four sections, of which one is read on each successive Sabbath of the year, beginning immediately after the feast of Tabernacles.

But anciently the lectionary, at least in Palestine, seems to have been differently arranged, and the Pentateuch so divided that its reading occupied three, or, according to some, three and a-half years (half a Jubilee-period). The section for the day was subdivided, so that every Sabbath at least seven persons were called up to read, each a portion, which was to consist of not less than three verses. The first reader began, and the last closed, with a benediction. As the Hebrew had given place to the Aramaic, a "meturgeman," or interpreter, stood by the side of the reader, and translated verse by verse into the vernacular.

It was customary to have service in the synagogues, not only on Sabbaths and feast-days, but also on the second and fifth days of the week (Monday and Thursday), when the country-people came to market, and when the local Sanhedrim also sat for the adjudication of minor causes. At such week-day services only three persons were called up to read in the law; on new moon's day and on the intermediate days of a festive week, four; on festive days--when a section from the prophets was also read--five; and on the day of atonement, six.

Even a minor was allowed to read, and, if qualified, to act as "meturgeman." The section describing the sin of Reuben, and that giving a second account of the sin of the golden calf, were read, but not interpreted; those recounting the priestly blessing, and, again, the sin of David and of Amnon, were neither read nor interpreted. The reading of the law was followed by a lesson from the prophets. At present there is a regular lectionary, in which these lessons are so selected as to suit the sections from the law appointed for the day.

This arrangement has been traced to the time of the Syrian persecutions, when all copies of the law were sought for and destroyed; and the Jewish authorities are supposed to have selected portions from the prophets to replace those from the law which might not be produced in public. But it is evident that, if these persecuting measures had been rigidly enforced, the sacred rolls of the prophets would not have escaped destruction any more than those of the law. Besides, it is quite certain that such a lectionary of the prophets as that presently in use did not exist at the time of our Lord, nor even when the Mishnah was collated.

Considerable liberty seems to have been left to individuals; and the expression used by St. Luke in reference to our Lord in the synagogue at Capernaum (Luke 4:17), "And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written," most accurately describes the state of matters. For, from Megillah iv. 4, we gather that, in reading from the prophets, it was lawful to pass over one or more verses, provided there were no pause between the reading and the translation of the "meturgeman."

For here also the services of a "meturgeman" were employed; only that he did not, as in reading the law, translate verse by verse, but after every three verses. It is a remarkable fact that the Rabbis exclude from public reading the section in the prophecies of Ezekiel which describes "the chariot and wheels." Rabbi Elieser would also have excluded that in Ezekiel 16:2.

The reading of the prophets was often followed by a sermon or address, with which the service concluded. The preacher was called "darshan," and his address a "derashah" (homily, sermon, from "darash," to ask, inquire, or discuss). When the address was a learned theological discussion--especially in academies--it was not delivered to the people directly, but whispered into the ear of an "amora," or speaker, who explained to the multitude in popular language the weighty sayings which the Rabbi had briefly communicated to him. A more popular sermon, on the other hand, was called a "meamar," literally, a "speech, or talk." These addresses would be either Rabbinical expositions of Scripture, or else doctrinal discussions, in which appeal would be made to tradition and to the authority of certain great teachers. For it was laid down as a principle (Eduj. i. 3), that "every one is bound to teach in the very language of his teacher." In view of this two-fold fact, we can in some measure understand the deep impression which the words of our Lord produced, even on those who remained permanently uninfluenced by them. The substance of His addresses was far other than they had ever heard of, or conceived possible. It seemed as if they opened quite a new world of thought, hope, duty, and comfort. No wonder that even in contemptuous Capernaum "all bare Him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth"; and that the very Temple-guard sent to make Him prisoner were overawed, and before the council could only give this account of their strange negligence: "Never man spake like this man" (John 7:46). Similarly, the form also of His teaching was so different from the constant appeal of the Rabbis to mere tradition; it seemed all to come so quite fresh and direct from heaven, like the living waters of the Holy Spirit, that "the people were astonished at His doctrine: for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (Matt 7:28,29).

Chapter 18

Brief Outline of Ancient Jewish Theological Literature

The arrangements of the synagogue, as hitherto described, combined in a remarkable manner fixedness of order with liberty of the individual. Alike the seasons and the time of public services, their order, the prayers to be offered, and the portions of the law to be read were fixed. On the other hand, between the eighteen "benedictions" said on ordinary days, and the seven repeated on the Sabbaths, free prayer might be inserted; the selection from the prophets, with which the public reading concluded--the "Haphtarah" (from "patar," to "conclude")--seems to have been originally left to individual choice; while the determination who was to read, or to conduct the prayers, or to address the people, was in the hands of the "rulers of the synagogue" (Acts 13:15). The latter, who were probably also the members of the local Sanhedrim, had naturally charge of the conduct of public worship, as well as of the government and discipline of the synagogues. They were men learned in the law and of good repute, whom the popular voice designated, but who were regularly set apart by "the laying on of hands," or the "Semichah," which was done by at least three, who had themselves received ordination, upon which the candidate had the formal title of Rabbi bestowed on him, and was declared qualified to administer the law (Sanh. 13 b). The Divine Majesty was supposed to be in the midst of each Sanhedrim, on account of which even that consisting of only three members might be designated as "Elohim." Perhaps this may have been said in explanation and application of Psalm 82:6: "I have said, Ye are Elohim; and all of you children of the Most High."

The special qualifications for the office of Sanhedrist, mentioned in Rabbinical writings, are such as to remind us of the directions of St. Paul to Timothy (1 Tim 3:1-10). A member of the Sanhedrim must be wise, modest, God-fearing, truthful, not greedy of filthy lucre, given to hospitality, kindly, not a gambler, nor a usurer, nor one who traded in the produce of Sabbatical years, nor yet one who indulged in unlawful

games (Sanh. iii. 3). They were called "Sekenim," "elders" (Luke 7:3), "Memunim," "rulers" (Mark 5:22), "Parnasin," "feeders, overseers, shepherds of the flock" (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2), and "Manhigei," "guides" (Heb 13:7). They were under the presidency and supreme rule of an "Archisynagogos," or "Rosh-ha-Cheneseth," "head of the synagogue" (Yom. vii. 1; Sot. vii. 7), who sometimes seems to have even exercised sole authority. The designation occurs frequently in the New Testament (Matt 9:18; Mark 5:35,36,38; Luke 8:41,49, 13:14; Acts 18:8,17). The inferior functions in the synagogue devolved on the "chassan," or "minister" (Luke 4:20). In course of time, however, the "chassanim" combined with their original duties the office of schoolmaster; and at present they lead both the singing and the devotions of the synagogue. This duty originally devolved not on any fixed person, but whoever was chosen might for the time being act as "Sheliach Zibbur," or "legate of the congregation." Most modern writers have imagined, that the expression "angel of the Church," in the epistles to the seven churches in the book of Revelation, was used in allusion to this ancient arrangement of the synagogue. But the fact that the "Sheliach Zibbur" represented not an office but a function, renders this view untenable. Besides, in that case, the corresponding Greek expression would rather have been "apostle" than "angel of the Church." Possibly, however, the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews may refer to it, when he designates the Lord Jesus "the Apostle and High-Priest of our profession" (Heb 3:1). Besides these functionaries, we also read of "Gabaei Zedakah," or collectors of charity, to whom the Talmud (B. Bathra, 8 b) by a jeu de mots * applies the promise that they "shall be as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan 12:3), since they lead many to "righteousness."

* Zedakah means righteousness, but is also used for "charity."

Alms were collected at regular times every week, either in money or in victuals. At least two were employed in collecting, and three in distributing charity, so as to avoid the suspicion of dishonesty or partiality. These collectors of charity, who required to be "men of good repute, and faithful," are thought by many to have been the model for the institution of the Diaconate in the early Church. But the analogy scarcely holds good; nor, indeed, were such collectors employed in every synagogue.

In describing the conduct of public worship in the synagogues, reference was made to the "meturgeman," who translated into the vernacular dialect what was read out of the Hebrew Scriptures, and also to the "darshan," who expounded the Scriptures or else the traditional law in an address, delivered after the reading of the "Haphtarah," or section from the prophets. These two terms will have suggested names which often occur in writings on Jewish subjects, and may fitly lead to some remarks on Jewish theology at the time of our Lord. Now the work of the "meturgeman" * was perpetuated in the Targum, and that of the "darshan" in the Midrash.

* Hence also the term "dragoman."

Primarily the Targum, then, was intended as a translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into the vernacular Aramaean. Of course, such translations might be either literal, or else more or less paraphrastic. Every Targum would also naturally represent the special views of the translator, and be interesting as affording an insight into the ideas prevalent at the time, and the manner in which Scripture was understood. But some Targumim are much more paraphrastic than others, and indeed become a kind of commentary, showing us the popular theology of the time. Strictly speaking, we have really no Targum dating from the time of our Lord, nor even from the first century of our era. There can be no doubt, however, that such a Targum did exist, although it has been lost. Still, the Targumim preserved to us, although collated, and having received their present form at later periods, contain very much that dates from the Temple-period,

and even before that. Mentioning them in the order of their comparative antiquity, we have the Targum of Onkelos, on the five books of Moses; the Targum of Jonathan, on the prophets (inclusive of Joshua, Judges, and the books of Samuel and of the Kings); the so-called (or pseudo) Jonathan on the Pentateuch; and the Jerusalem Targum, which is but a fragment. Probably the latter two were intended to be supplemental to the Targum Onkelos. Late criticism has thrown doubt even on the existence of such a person as Onkelos. Whoever may have been the author, this Targum, in its present form, dates probably from the third, that of Jonathan on the prophets from the fourth century.

In some respects more interesting than the Targumim are the Midrashim, of which we possess three, dating probably, in their present form, from the first or second century of our era, but embodying many parts much older. These are--mentioning them again in the order of their antiquity--"Siphra" (the book), a commentary on Leviticus; "Siphri," a commentary on Numbers and Deuteronomy; and "Mechilta," a commentary on certain portions of Exodus. But we have even a monument more interesting than these, of the views of the ancient Pharisees, and of their Scriptural interpretations. Some of the fathers referred to a work called "Lesser Genesis," or the "Book of Jubilees." This had been lost to theological literature, till again discovered within the present century, although not in the original Hebrew, nor even in its first or Greek translation, but in an Ethiopic rendering from the latter. The work, which no doubt dates from the era of our Lord, covers the same ground as the first book of Moses, whence the name of "Lesser Genesis." It gives the Biblical narrative from the creation of the world to the institution of the Passover, in the spirit in which the Judaism of that period would view it. The legendary additions, the Rabbinical ideas expressed, the interpretations furnished, are just such as one would expect to find in such a work. One of the main objects of the writer seems to have been the chronology of the book of Genesis, which it is attempted to settle. All events are recorded according to Jubilee-periods of forty-nine years, whence the name "Book of Jubilees," given to the work. These "Jubilees" are again arranged into "weeks," each of seven years (a day for a year); and events are classified as having taken place in a certain month of a certain year, of a certain "week" of years, of a certain "Jubilee"-period. Another tendency of the book, which, however, it has in common with all similar productions, is to trace up all later institutions to the patriarchal period. *

* Although the "Book of Jubilees" seems most likely of Pharisaic authorship, the views expressed in it are not always those of the Pharisees. Thus the resurrection is denied, although the immortality of the soul is maintained.

Besides these works, another class of theological literature has been preserved to us, around which of late much and most serious controversy has gathered. Most readers, of course, know about the Apocrypha; but these works are called the "pseudo-epigraphic writings." Their subject-matter may be described as mainly dealing with unfulfilled prophecy; and they are couched in language and figures borrowed, among others, from the book of Daniel. In fact, they read like attempts at imitating certain portions of that prophecy--only that their scope is sometimes wider. This class of literature is larger than those not acquainted with the period might have expected. Yet when remembering the troubles of the time, the feverish expectations of a coming deliverance, and the peculiar cast of mind and training of those who wrote them, they scarcely seem more numerous, nor perhaps even more extravagant, than a certain kind of prophetic literature, abundant among us not long ago, which the fear of Napoleon or other political events from time to time called forth. To that kind of production, they seem, at least to us, to bear an essential likeness--only that, unlike the Western, the Oriental expounder of unfulfilled prophecy assumes rather the language of the prophet than that of the commentator, and clothes his views in mystic

emblematic language. In general, this kind of literature may be arranged into Greek and Hebrew--according as the writers were either Egyptian (Hellenistic) or Palestinian Jews. Considerable difficulty exists as to the precise date of some of these writings--whether previous or subsequent to the time of Christ. These difficulties are, of course, increased when it is sought to fix the precise period when each of them was composed. Still, late historical investigations have led to much accord on general points. Without referring to the use which opponents of Christianity have of late attempted to make of these books, it may be safely asserted that their proper study and interpretation will yet be made very helpful, not only in casting light upon the period, but in showing the essential difference between the teaching of the men of that age and that of the New Testament. For each branch and department of sacred study, the more carefully, diligently, and impartially it is pursued, affords only fresh testimony to that truth which is most certainly, and on the best and surest grounds, believed among us.

It were, however, a mistake to suppose that the Rabbinical views, extravagant as they so often are, were propounded quite independently of Scripture. On the contrary, every traditional ordinance, every Rabbinical institution, nay, every legend and saying, is somehow foisted upon the text of the Old Testament. To explain this, even in the briefest manner, it is necessary to state that, in general, Jewish traditionalism is distinguished into the "Halachah" and the "Haggadah." The "Halachah" (from "halach," to "walk") indicates the settled legal determinations, which constituted the "oral law," or "Thorah shebeal peh." Nothing could here be altered, nor was any freedom left to the individual teacher, save that of explanation and illustration. The object of the "Halachah" was to state in detail, and to apply to all possible cases, the principles laid down in the law of Moses; as also to surround it, as it were, with "a hedge," in order to render every unwitting transgression impossible. The "Halachah" enjoyed not only the same authority with the law of Moses, but, as being explanatory, in some respects was even more highly esteemed. Indeed, strictly speaking, it was regarded as equally with the Pentateuch the revelation of God to Moses; only the form or manner of revelation was regarded as different--the one being committed to writing, the other handed down by word of mouth. According to tradition, Moses explained the traditional law successively to Aaron, to his sons, to the seventy elders, and to the people--care being taken that each class heard it four times (Maimonides' Preface to Seraim, 1 a). The Talmud itself attempts to prove that the whole traditional law, as well as the writings of the prophets and the Hagiographa, had been communicated to Moses, by quoting Exodus 24:12: "I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them." "The 'tables of stone,'" argues Rabbi Levi (Ber. 5 1), "are the ten commandments; the 'law' is the written law (in the Pentateuch); the 'commandments' are the Mishnah; 'which I have written,' refers to the prophets and the Hagiographa; while the words, 'that thou mayest teach them,' point to the Gemara. From this we learn, that all this was given to Moses on Sinai."

If such was the "Halachah," it is not so easy to define the limits of the "Haggadah." The term, which is derived from the verb "higgid," to "discuss," or "tell about," covers all that possessed not the authority of strict legal determinations. It was legend, or story, or moral, or exposition, or discussion, or application--in short, whatever the fancy or predilections of a teacher might choose to make it, so that he could somehow connect it either with Scripture or with a "Halachah." For this purpose some definite rules were necessary to preserve, if not from extravagance, at least from utter absurdity. Originally there were four such canons for connecting the "Haggadah" with Scripture. Contracting, after the favourite manner of the Jews, the initial letters, these four canons were designated by the word "Pardes" (Paradise). They were--1. To ascertain the plain meaning of a passage (the "Peshat"); 2. To take the single letters of a word as an indication or hint ("Remes") of other words, or even of whole sentences; 3. The "Derush," or practical

exposition of a passage; and 4. To find out the "Sod" (mystery), or mystical meaning of a verse or word. These four canons were gradually enlarged into thirty-two rules, which gave free vent to every kind of fancifulness. Thus one of these rules--the "Gematria" (geometry, calculation)--allowed the interpreter to find out the numerical value of the letters in a word--the Hebrew letters, like the Roman, being also numerals--and to substitute for a word one or more which had the same numerical value. Thus, if in Numbers 12:1 we read that Moses was married to an "Ethiopian woman" (in the original, "Cushith"), Onkelos substitutes instead of this, by "gematria," the words, "of fair appearance"--the numerical value both of Cushith and of the words "of fair appearance" being equally 736. By this substitution the objectionable idea of Moses' marrying an Ethiopian was at the same time removed. Similarly, the Mishnah maintains that those who loved God were to inherit each 310 worlds, the numerical value of the word "substance" ("Yesh") in Proverbs 8:21 being 310. On the other hand, the canons for the deduction of a "Halachah" from the text of Scripture were much more strict and logical. Seven such rules are ascribed to Hillel, which were afterwards enlarged to thirteen. *

* It would be beyond the scope of this volume to explain these "middoth," or "measurements," and to illustrate them by examples. Those who are interested in the matter are referred to the very full discussion on Rabbinical exegesis in my History of the Jewish Nation, pp. 570-580.

Little objection can be taken to them; but unfortunately their practical application was generally almost as fanciful, and certainly as erroneous, as in the case of the "Haggadah."

Probably most readers would wish to know something more of those "traditions" to which our Lord so often referred in His teaching. We have here to distinguish, in the first place, between the Mishnah and the Gemara. The former was, so to speak, the text, the latter its extended commentary. At the same time, the Mishnah contains also a good deal of commentary, and much that is not either legal determination or the discussion thereof; while the Gemara, on the other hand, also contains what we would call "text." The word Mishna (from the verb "shanah") means "repetition"--the term referring to the supposed repetition of the traditional law, which has been above described. The Gemara, as the very word shows, means "discussion," and embodies the discussions, opinions, and saying of the Rabbis upon, or a propos of, the Mishnah. Accordingly, the text of the Mishnah is always given in the pages of the Talmud, which reproduce those discussions thereon of the Jewish Theological parliament or academy, which constitute the Gemara. The authorities introduced in the Mishnah and the Gemara range from about the year 180 BC to 430 AD (in the Babylon Talmud). The Mishnah is, of course, the oldest work, and dates, in its present form and as a written compilation, from the close of the second century of our era. Its contents are chiefly "Halachah," there being only one Tractate (Aboth) in which there is no "Halachah" at all, and another (on the measurements of the Temple) in which it but very rarely occurs. Yet these two Tractates are of the greatest historical value and interest. On the other hand, there are thirteen whole Tractates in the Mishnah which have no "Haggadah" at all, and other twenty-two in which it is but of rare occurrence. Very much of the Mishnah must be looked upon as dating before, and especially from the time of Christ, and its importance for the elucidation of the New Testament is very great, though it requires to be most judiciously used. The Gemara, or book of discussions on the Mishnah, forms the two Talmuds--the Jerusalem and the Babylon Talmud. The former is so called because it is the product of the Palestinian academies; the latter is that of the Babylonian school. The completion of the Jerusalem or Palestinian Talmud ("Talmud" = doctrine, lore) dates from the middle of the fourth, that of the Babylonian from the middle of the sixth century of our era. It need scarcely be said that the former is of much greater historical value than the latter. Neither of these two Gemaras, as we now possess them, is quite complete--that is, there are

Tractates in the Mishnah for which we have no Gemara, either in the Jerusalem or in the Babylon Talmud. Lastly, the Babylon Talmud is more than four times the size of that of Jerusalem. Obviously this is not the place for giving even the briefest outline of the contents of the Mishnah. *

* In Appendix 1 we give as a specimen a translation of one of the Mishnic Tractates; and in Appendix 2 translations of extracts from the Babylon Talmud.

Suffice it here to state that it consists of six books ("sedarim," "orders"), which are subdivided into Tractates ("Massichthoth"), and these again into chapters ("Perakim"), and single determinations or traditions ("Mishnaioth"). In quoting the Mishnah it is customary to mention not the Book (or "Seder") but the special Tractate, the Perek (or chapter), and the Mishnah. The names of these Tractates (not those of the books) give a sufficient idea of their contents, which cover every conceivable, and well-nigh every inconceivable case, with full discussions thereon. Altogether the Mishnah contains sixty-three Tractates, consisting of 525 chapters, and 4,187 "Mishnaioth."

There is yet another branch of Jewish theology, which in some respects is the most interesting to the Christian student. There can be no doubt, that so early as the time of our Lord a series of doctrines and speculations prevailed which were kept secret from the multitude, and even from ordinary students, probably from fear of leading them into heresy. This class of study bears the general name of the "Kabbalah," and, as even the term (from "kabal," to "receive," or "hand down") implies, represents the spiritual traditions handed down from earliest times, although mixed up, in course of time, with many foreign and spurious elements. The "Kabbalah" grouped itself chiefly around the history of the creation, and the mystery of God's Presence and Kingdom in the world, as symbolised in the vision of the chariot and of the wheels (Eze 1). Much that is found in Cabbalistic writings approximates so closely to the higher truths of Christianity, that, despite the errors, superstitions, and follies that mingle with it, we cannot fail to recognise the continuance and the remains of those deeper facts of Divine revelation, which must have formed the substance of prophetic teaching under the Old Testament, and have been understood, or at least hoped for, by those who were under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

If now, at the close of these sketches of Jewish life, we ask ourselves, what might have been expected as to the relation between Christ and the men and the religion of His period, the answer will not be difficult. Assuredly, in one respect Christ could not have been a stranger to His period, or else His teaching would have found no response, and, indeed, have been wholly unintelligible to His contemporaries. Nor did He address them as strangers to the covenant, like the heathen. His was in every respect the continuation, the development, and the fulfilment of the Old Testament. Only, He removed the superincumbent load of traditionalism; He discarded the externalism, the formalism, and the work-righteousness, which had well-nigh obliterated the spiritual truths of the Old Testament, and substituted in their place the worship of the letter. The grand spiritual facts, which it embodied, He brought forward in all their brightness and meaning; the typical teaching of that dispensation He came to show forth and to fulfil; and its prophecies He accomplished, alike for Israel and the world. And so in Him all that was in the Old Testament--of truth, way, and life--became "Yea and Amen." Thus we can understand how, on the one hand, the Lord could avail Himself of every spiritual element around, and adopt the sayings, parables, ideas, and customs of that period--indeed, must have done so, in order to be a true man of the period,--and yet be so wholly not of that time as to be despised, rejected, and delivered up unto death by the blind guides of His blinded fellow-countrymen. Had He entirely discarded the period in which He lived, had He not availed Himself of all in it that was true or might be useful, He would not have been of it--not the true man Christ Jesus. Had He followed it, identified Himself with its views and hopes, or headed its movements, He would not have

been the Christ, the Son of the living God, the promised Deliverer from sin and guilt.

And so we can also perceive the reason of the essential enmity to Christ on the part of the Pharisees and Scribes. It was not that He was a new and a strange Teacher; it was, that He came as the Christ. Theirs was not an opposition of teaching to His; it was a contrariety of fundamental life-principles. "Light came into the world, but men loved darkness rather than light." Closely related as the two were, the Pharisaical Judaism of that and of the present period is at the opposite pole from the religion of Christ--alike as regards the need of man, the purposes of God's love, and the privileges of His children. There was one truth which, we are reluctantly obliged to admit, found, alas! scarcely any parallel in the teaching of Rabbinism: it was that of a suffering Messiah. Hints indeed there were, as certain passages in the prophecies of Isaiah could not be wholly ignored or misrepresented, even by Rabbinical ingenuity, just as the doctrine of vicarious suffering and substitution could not be eliminated from the practical teaching of the confession of sins over the sacrifices, when the worshipper day by day laid his hands upon, and transferred to them his guilt. Yet Judaism, except in the case of the few, saw not in all this that to which alone it could point as its real meaning: "The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

And now, as century after century has passed, and the gladsome Gospel message has been carried from nation to nation, while Israel is still left in the darkness of its unbelief and the misery of its mistaken hope, we seem to realise with ever increasing force that "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." Yes: "unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isa 9:2,6). For assuredly, "God hath not cast away His people which He foreknew." But "all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob" (Rom 11:2,26). "Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night" (Isa 21:11,12).

Appendix 1

Massecheth Middoth

(Being the Mishnic Tractate Descriptive

of the Measurements of the Temple)

Middoth is the tenth Tractate of Seder V. (Kodashim) of the Mishnah. It has no Gemara either in the Jerusalem or the Babylon Talmud. In the former the whole of Seder 5 is wanting; in the latter only two and a-half Tractates (half Tamid, Middoth, and Kinnim). Middoth contains Halachah only in the following passages: i. 2, 3, 9; ii. 2, 4, 5, 6; iii. 3, 5, 8; iv. 2, 5; v. 3, 4. Throughout the Mishnah the names of 128 sages are introduced. Of those mentioned in this Tractate almost all witnessed the destruction of the Temple.

Perek I.

1. The priests kept watch in the Temple in three places: in the house Avtinas, and in the house Nitsuts, and in the house of Moked; and the Levites in twenty-one places: 5 at the five gates leading into the Temple (the Mountain of the House), 4 in the four angles within, 5 at the five gates of the court, 4 in its four angles without, and 1 in the chamber of offering, and 1 in the chamber of the vail, and 1 behind the Most

Holy Place (the House of Atonement).

2. The Captain of the Temple (the man of the Temple Mount) visited each guard, and burning torches were carried before him. And every guard which did not stand up (which was not standing), the Captain of the Temple said to him: "Peace be to thee." If he observed that he slept, he smote him with his stick, and he had authority to burn his dress. And they said, "What is the noise (voice) in the court?" "It is the noise of a Levite who is beaten, and his clothes are set on fire, because he slept upon his watch." Rabbi Eliezer, the son of Jacob, said: "On one occasion they found the brother of my mother sleeping, and they burned his dress."

3. There were five gates to the Temple inclosure (Temple Mount): the two gates of Huldah from the south, which served for entrance and for exit; Kipponos from the west; Tadi from the north--it did not serve for anything; the eastern gate, upon which was a representation of the city of Shushan, and by it the high-priest who burned the Red Heifer, and all who assisted, went out upon the Mount of Olives.

4. There were seven gates in the court; three on the north, and three on the south, and one in the east. That in the south was the gate of burning; second to it, the gate of the firstborn; third to it, the water gate. That in the east was the gate of Nicanor, and two chambers belonged to it, one on the right hand, and one on the left--the one the chamber of Phineas, the wardrobe keeper, and the other the chamber of those who made the pancake offering. *

* For the daily offering of the high-priest.

5. And that on the north was the gate Nitsuts, and it was after the form of an Exhedra, and an Alijah was built on the top of it; and the priests kept guard above, and the Levites below, and it had a door to the Chel. Second to it was the gate of offering; third to it the Beth Moked.

6. And four rooms were in the Beth Moked, like small bed chambers opening on a dining apartment; two in the place that was holy, and two in that which was not holy, and the heads of the beams separated between that which was holy and that which was not holy. And for what did they serve? That on the south-west was the chamber of offering; that on the south-east the chamber of the shew-bread; on the north-east, there the Asmoneans deposited the stones of the altar which the King of Javan had defiled; on the north-west, there they went down to the bath-house.

7. There were two gates to the Beth Moked--one opened upon the Chel, the other upon the court. Rabbi Jehudah says: "That which opened upon the court had a small wicket by which they went in to explore the court."

8. The Beth Moked was arched, and was a great house surrounded by extensions (perhaps terraces) of stone, and the elders of the house of their fathers slept there, and the keys of the court in their hand; and the young priests, every one with his pillow on the ground (perhaps his dress).

9. And there was a place there, a cubit by a cubit, and a slab of marble, and a ring was fastened on it, and the chain with the keys were hung thereon. When the time came for closing, he lifted the slab by the ring, and took the keys from the chain, and the priest closed the gates from within, and the Levite had to sleep without. When he had finished closing, he returned the keys to the chain, and the slab to its place; he placed his pillow upon it and slept there. If an accident befell one of them, he went out and had to go by the winding stair which went under the house, and lights were burning on either side, till he came to the

bath-house. Rabbi Eliezer, the son of Jacob, said: "By the winding stairs he passed under the Chel, and went out and had to go through Tadi."

Perek II.

1. The Temple inclosure (the Temple Mount) was 500 cubits by 500 cubits; it was largest on the south; next largest on the east; then on the north; smallest on the west. The place where there was most measurement there was also most service.

2. All who entered the Temple inclosure entered by the right, and turned and went out by the left, except those whom something had befallen, who turned to the left. "What ails thee that thou turnest to the left?" "Because I am a mourner." "He that dwelleth in this house comfort thee!" "Because I am under the bann." "He that dwelleth in this house put it in their hearts, that they restore thee!" So Rabbi Meir. Rabbi Jose says to him, "This would make it, as if they had transgressed against him in judgment; but rather: 'He that dwelleth in this house put it in thy heart, that thou hearken to the words of thy brethren, and they restore thee.'"

3. Farther on was the Sorag, ten handbreadths high. And thirteen breaches were in it, which the Kings of Javan had made. They restored and strengthened it, and they decreed towards them thirteen obeisances [in remembrance]. Again farther on the Chel, ten cubits; and twelve steps were there; the step half a cubit high, and half a cubit in extension. All the steps which were there, each step was half a cubit high, and the extension half a cubit, except those which were at the porch. All the doorways and gates which were there, were twenty cubits high, and ten cubits wide, except that in the porch. All the doorways which were there, had doors, except that in the porch. All the gates which were there, had lintels, except that in the gate Tadi, which had two stones resting, this on the back of that. All the gates which were there, were renewed to be with gold, except the gate of Nicanor, because there was wrought upon them a miracle, and some say, because the brass sparkled.

4. All the walls which were there were high, except the wall in the east, so that the priest who burned the heifer, standing on the top of the Mount of Olives, and directing himself to look, saw through the gateway of the sanctuary, at the time when he sprinkled the blood.

5. The Court of the women was 135 cubits long by 135 cubits broad, and four chambers were in the four angles, each 40 cubits square, and they were not roofed in. And so they are intended to be, as it is said: "And he brought me forth into the outer court, and caused me to pass by the four corners of the court, and behold, in every corner of the court a court. In the four corners of the court courts smoking" ...It is said, they were "smoking," and that because they were not roofed. And for what did they serve? That on the south-east was the chamber of the Nazarites, where the Nazarites washed their peace-offerings, and polled their hair, and threw it under the pot. That on the north-east was the wood chamber, where the priests who were disqualified picked the wood, and every stick in which a worm was found, it was unfitted for the altar. That on the north-west was the chamber of the lepers. That on the south-west Rabbi Eliezer, the son of Jacob, said: "I have forgotten for what it served." Abba Shaul said: "There they put the wine and the oil; it was called the chamber of the house of Schamanyah." And it [the wall] was at first flush, and they surrounded it with a gallery, so that the women looked from above and the men from beneath, for the purpose that they might not be mixed together. And fifteen steps went up from there to the Court of Israel, like the fifteen degrees in the Psalms [Songs of Degrees in the Psalms]. Upon these the Levites stood singing the songs. They were not rectangular but rounded, like the arc of a rounded substance.

6. And there were chambers beneath the Court of Israel, and they opened upon the Court of the Women. There the Levites placed their harps, and their psalteries, and their cymbals, and all the musical instruments. The Court of Israel was 135 cubits long by 11 broad, and similarly, the Court of the Priests was 135 long by 11 broad, and the heads of the beams divided between the Court of Israel and the Court of the Priests. Rabbi Eliezer, the son of Jacob, said: There was a step, a cubit high, and upon it the Duchan was placed, and on it were three steps, each half a cubit. It results, that the Court of the Priests was 2 1/2 cubits higher than that of Israel. The entire court was 187 cubits long and 135 cubits broad. Thirteen obeisances took place there. Abba Jose, the son of Chanan, said: "Towards the thirteen gates." The southern were: nearest to the west, the upper gate, then the gate of burning, the gate of the first-born, and the water-gate. And why was its name called the water-gate? Because through it they brought the pitcher of water for pouring out for the "Feast of Tabernacles." Rabbi Eliezer, the son of Jacob, said: "And by it the waters were flowing down, with the direction of coming out below the threshold of the Temple." And opposite to them to the north were: (nearest to the west) the gate of Jeconiah, the gate of offering, the gate of the women, and the gate of the song. And why was it called the gate of Jeconiah? Because by it Jeconiah went out into captivity. That on the east was the gate of Nicanor, and it had two wickets, one on its right and the other on its left. And there were two [gates] to the west; they had no name.

Perek III.

1. The altar was 32 by 32 [cubits]. Upwards 1 cubit, and contract 1 cubit: that was the base. Remain 30 by 30. Upwards 5, and contract 1 cubit: that was the circuit. Remain 28 by 28. The place of the horns, a cubit on this side and a cubit on that side. Remain 26 by 26. The place for the tread of the priests, a cubit on this side and a cubit on that side. Remain 24 by 24: the place where the sacrifice was laid out. Rabbi Jose said: "At the first it was only 28 by 28; though it contracted and went up, according to this measurement, until there remained the place for laying the sacrifices: 20 by 20. But when the children of the Captivity came up, they added to it 4 cubits on the south and 4 on the west like a gamma, because it is said, 'And Ariel shall be 12 cubits long by 12 broad, square.' * That does not mean that it was only 12 by 12, since it is added: 'In the four corners thereof,' to teach that it measured from the middle 12 cubits in every direction."

* Ezekiel 43:16, "Ariel" = the lion of God = the altar.

And a scarlet line girdled it in the middle to separate between the upper and the lower blood-sprinklings. And the base ran round all the north and all the west side, but was shortened a cubit on the south and on the east.

2. In the south-western angle were two apertures, like small nostrils, and the blood, poured on the base to the west, and on the base to the south, descended through them, and co-mingled in the canal, and flowed out into the brook Kedron.

3. Below in the pavement, in that angle, there was a place, a cubit by a cubit, with a tablet of marble, and a ring was fastened in it, and here they went down into the sewer to cleanse it. And there was a sloping ascent to the south of the altar, 32 cubits long by 16 broad, and it had a pit at its west side, into which they put sin-offerings of birds that were defiled.

4. Both the stones of the sloping ascent and those of the altar were from the valley of Beth Cherem. And they dug beneath the virgin soil, and brought out from it undamaged (whole) stones, upon which iron had not been lifted, because iron defiles everything by contact, and by scratching. One of these stones was

scratched: it was defiled; but the rest were lawful for use. And they whitened them twice in the year, once at the Passover, and once at the Feast of Tabernacles; and the Sanctuary once at the Passover. Rabbi * says: "On the eve of every Sabbath they whitened it with a cloth, on account of the blood-sprinklings." They did not plaster it with an iron trowel, lest it might touch, and defile. For the iron is created to shorten the days of man, and the altar is created to lengthen the days of man, therefore it is not right that that which shortens should be lifted upon that which lengthens.

* The Rabbi, i.e. R. Jehudah the Holy.

5. And rings were to the north of the altar: six rows, each of four; but some say, four rows, each of six; and in these they slaughtered the holy sacrifices. The house (place) of slaughtering was to the north of the altar. And there were eight short pillars and squares of cedar upon the top of them, and hooks of iron were fastened in them, and three rows were upon each of them, upon which they hung up, and they skinned upon marble tables which were between the pillars.

6. And the laver was between the porch and the altar, and inclined nearer towards the south. Between the porch and the altar were 22 cubits, and 12 steps were there, each step half a cubit high, and its extension a cubit--a cubit, a cubit, and then an extension of three (cubits); and a cubit, a cubit, and an extension of three; and the topmost, a cubit, a cubit, and an extension of four (cubits). Rabbi Jehudah said: "The topmost a cubit, a cubit, and an extension of five (cubits)."

7. The doorway to the porch was 40 cubits high and 20 broad, and five beams of ash were upon the top of it; the lowest protruded over the doorway a cubit on this and a cubit on that side; that above it protruded over it a cubit on this and a cubit on that side; it results, that the topmost [was] 30 cubits, and a buttress of stones was between each one of them.

8. And supports of cedar were fixed from the wall of the Sanctuary to the wall of the porch, lest they should bulge; and chains of gold were fixed in the roof of the porch, and by them the young priests mounted, to look at the crowns, as it is written: "And crowns shall be to Helem, and to Tobijah, and to Jedaiah, and to Hen the son of Zephaniah, for a memorial in the temple of the Lord." A vine of gold was standing over the entrance to the Sanctuary, and was suspended on the top of beams. Every one who vowed a leaf, or a berry, or a bunch, brought it, and hung it up there. Rabbi Eliezer, the son of Rabbi Zadok, said: "It happened (that they had to remove it) and there were numbered for it 300 priests." *

* To remove or to cleanse it.

Perek IV.

1. The entrance to the Sanctuary was 20 cubits high, and 10 cubits broad; and it had four doors [two folding-doors]: two within and two without, as it is said: "And the Sanctuary and the Holy Place had two doors." The outer doors opened to the inside of the doorway, to cover the thickness of the wall, and the inner doors opened inwards into the house, to cover behind the doors. For, the whole house was covered with gold, except behind the doors. Rabbi Jehudah said: "They [both pairs of doors] stood within the entrance, and were like Azteramita, * and they folded backwards--these 2 1/2 cubits, and those 2 1/2 cubits. Half a cubit the door-post from this [corner], and half a cubit the doorpost from that, and so it is said: 'And the doors had two leaves alike, two turning-leaves; two for the one door, and two leaves for the other.'"

* The term, which seems not to have been quite understood even in Talmudical times, is rendered by Jost: twisted leaf, and derived from strepho.

2. And the great gate had two wickets, one to the north and one to the south. That to the south, no man ever passed through it; and to this clearly refers what is said in Ezekiel, as it is written: "Then the Lord said unto me, This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it; because the Lord, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it, therefore it shall be shut." He took the key, and opened the wicket, and entered the little chamber (atrium), and from the little chamber into the Sanctuary. Rabbi Jehudah said: "Along the thickness of the wall he walked, until he found himself standing between the two gates, and he opened the outer one from within and the inner one from without."

3. And thirty-eight little chambers were there--fifteen on the north, fifteen on the south, and eight on the west. On the north and on the south, five on the top of five, and five on their top; and on the west three on the top of three, and two on the top of them. And each one of them had three entrances, one to the little chamber on the right, and one to the little chamber on the left, and one to the little chamber on the top. And at the north-western corner were five entrances, one to the little chamber at the right, and the other to the little chamber on the top, and another to the winding-stair, and another to the wicket, and another to the Sanctuary.

4. And the lowermost (chamber) was 5 cubits, and the roofing (extension, platitude) 6; the middle (chamber) 6, and the roofing 7; and the uppermost 7, as it is said: "The nethermost chamber was 5 cubits broad, and the middle 6 cubits broad, and the third 7 cubits broad, for he made rebatements in the 'house' round about without, that [the beams] should not be fastened within the walls of the house."

5. And a winding-stair went up from the north-eastern angle to the north-western angle, by which they went up to the roofs of the chambers. One went up the winding-stair with his face to the west, and went all along the north side, until he came to the west. He came to the west, and turned his face to the south, and went all along the west side till he came to the south. He came to the south, and turned his face eastwards, and went along the south side, till he came to the entrance of the Alijah; for the entrance to the Alijah opened to the south, and in the entrance to the Alijah were two beams of cedar, by which they went up to the roof of the Alijah, and the heads of the beams divided in the Alijah between the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place. And trap-doors opened in the Alijah into the Most Holy Place, by which they let down the workmen in chests, that they might not feast their eyes in the Most Holy Place.

6. And the Sanctuary was 100 by 100, by 100 high; the solid foundation 6 cubits, and the height upon it 40 cubits; 1 cubit, decorated scroll; 2 cubits, the place for the water-droppings; 1 cubit covering, and 1 cubit pavement, and the height of the Alijah 40 cubits, and 1 cubit scroll-work, and 2 cubits the place for the dropping, and 1 cubit covering, and 1 cubit pavement, and 3 cubits balustrade, and 1 cubit scare-raven. Rabbi Jehudah said: "The scare-raven was not counted from the measurement, but the balustrade was 4 cubits."

7. From the east to the west 100 cubits--the wall of the porch 5, and the porch 11; the wall of the Sanctuary 6, and its interior space 40 cubits, 1 cubit intermediate wall, and 20 cubits the Most Holy Place, the wall of the Sanctuary 6, and the little chamber 6, and the wall of the little chamber 5. From the north to the south 70 cubits--the wall of the winding-stair 5, and the winding-stair 3, the wall of the little chamber 5, and the little chamber 6, the wall of the Sanctuary 6, and its interior space 20 cubits, the wall of the Sanctuary 6, and the little chamber 6, and the wall of the little chamber 5, and the place for the going down

of the water 3 cubits, and the wall 5 cubits. The porch protruded beyond it, 15 cubits from the north and 15 cubits from the south, and it was called the house of the sacrificial knives, because there they deposited the knives. And the Sanctuary was narrow behind and wide in front, and like to a lion, as it is said: "O Ariel, the lion of God, the city where David dwelt." As the lion is narrow behind and wide in front, so is the Sanctuary narrow behind and wide in its front.

Perek V.

1. The whole court was 187 cubits long by 135 cubits broad. From the east to the west 187: the place for the tread of Israel 11 cubits; the place for the tread of the priests 11 cubits; the altar 32; between the porch and the altar 22 cubits; the Sanctuary 100 cubits; and 11 cubits behind the house of Atonement.

2. From the north to the south 135 cubits: the altar and the circuit 62; from the altar to the rings 8 cubits; the place of the rings 24 cubits; from the rings to the tables 4; from the tables to the pillars 4; from the pillars to the wall of the court 8 cubits; and the rest between the circuit and the wall, and the place of the pillars.

3. There were six rooms in the court--three to the north, and three to the south. Those on the north: the salt-chamber, the chamber Parvah, the chamber of those who washed out. The salt-chamber: there they put salt to the offering. The chamber of Parvah: there they salted the skins of the holy sacrifices, and on the roof was the bath-house of the high-priest on the Day of Atonement. The chamber of those who washed out, where they washed the inwards of the holy things, and thence a winding-stair went up to the roof of the house of Parvah.

4. Those on the south: the wood-chamber, the chamber of the captivity, the chamber of "hewn stones." The wood-chamber--said Rabbi Eliezer, the son of Jacob: "I have forgotten for what it served." Abba Shall said: It was the chamber of the high-priest, and it lay behind the other two, and a roof was extended over the three (they had one common roof). The chamber of the captivity: a well was there which they of the captivity had digged, and a wheel was placed upon it, and thence they provided water for the whole court. The chamber of "hewn stones": there the great Sanhedrim of Israel sat, and judged the priesthood. And the priest in whom was found disqualification was clothed in black, and veiled in black, and went out, and had to go. And if there was not found in him disqualification, he was dressed in white, and veiled in white; he went in and served with his brethren the priests. And they made a feast-day, because there was not found disqualification in the seed of Aaron the priest, and thus spake they: "Blessed be God, blessed be He, that there has not been found disqualification in the seed of Aaron, and blessed be He Who has chosen Aaron and his sons, to stand to serve before the face of the Lord in the Most Holy House."

Appendix 2

Extracts from the Babylon Talmud

Massecheth Berachoth,

or Tractate on Benedictions

Berachoth is the first Tractate of the first Seder (Seraim, which consists of eleven Tractates). It contains nine Perakim, which successively explain the duty, the exceptions, the posture, the formulas, and the controversies in regard to prayer. The Tractate exists both in the Jerusalem and in the Babylon Talmud. The great Maimonides has prefaced the Seder Seraim by a General Introduction, which presents a

general view of Talmudism, and explains what is of greatest importance to the student. Notwithstanding his vast learning and authority, incompleteness and inaccuracies have, however, been pointed out in his Introduction.

Mishnah--From what time is the "Shema" said in the evening? From the hour that the priests entered to eat of their therumah * until the end of the first night watch. ** These are the words of Rabbi Eliezer. But the sages say: Till midnight. Rabban Gamaliel says: Until the column of the morning (the dawn) rises. It happened, that his sons came back from a banquet. They said to him: "We have not said the 'Shema.'" He said to them, "If the column of the morning has not come up, you are bound to say it." And not only this have they said, but, wherever the sages have said "till midnight," their command applies till the morning column rises. The burning of the fat and of the members (of sacrifices) is lawful till the morning column rise; *** and so everything which is to be eaten on the same day (on which it has been offered) is allowed to be eaten till the rise of the morning column. If so, why do the sages say, "till midnight?" In order to keep a man far from transgressing.

* The heave-offering given to the priests, which they ate within the Temple.

** The Jews divided the night into three watches.

*** That is, they may be left to consume on the altar from the time of evening sacrifice till then.

Gemara--Fol. 3 a. To the end of the night watch.--How does Rabbi Eliezer mean this? If he means that the night has three watches, he should say till four hours; and if he means that the night has four watches, he should say till three hours. Indeed, he means that the night has three watches, but he indicates by the expression that there are night watches in heaven, as there are night watches upon earth. For we have this doctrine: Rabbi Eliezer says, There are three night watches in the night, and in every one of these night watches the Holy One, blessed be His Name, sits and roars like a lion. For it is written (Jer 25:30), "Jehovah shall roar from on high, from the habitation of His holiness shall He give out His voice; roaring shall He roar on account of His habitation." The signs of this thing are as follows: In the first night watch the ass brays, in the second the dogs bark, in the third the suckling sucks his mother, and the wife speaks to her husband. How does Rabbi Eliezer indicate them? Does he thus indicate the commencement of the night watch? The commencement of the first night watch, what need is there for a sign of it, seeing it is night? Or does he refer to the end of the night watch? For the end of the last night watch, why does he give me a sign, seeing it is day? But he indicates the end of the first night watch and the commencement of the last night watch, and the middle of the middle night watch. And if thou wilt, I will say that he refers in all to the end of the night watches. And if thou sayest, the last does not require it, what is attained by it? The reading of the "Shema" for him who sleeps in a dark house, and does not know the time for saying the "Shema" when it is, so that, when the woman speaks with her husband and the babe sucks its mother, he may rise up and say the prayer.

Rabbi Isaac, the son of Samuel, says, in the name of Rab, "The night has three watches, and in each one of these watches does the Holy One, blessed be His Name, sit and roar like a lion, and say, 'Woe to the children, because on account of their sins I have laid desolate My house, and burned My temple, and have driven them forth among the nations of the world.'"

We have this doctrine: Rabbi Jose said, "On one occasion I was traveling, and I entered into one of the ruins of Jerusalem to pray. Then came Elijah--his memory be for good--and waited for me at the door till I had finished my prayer. After that I had finished my prayer, he said to me, 'Peace be to thee, Rabbi'; and I

said to him, 'Peace be to thee, Rabbi, and my teacher.' And he said to me, 'My son, why didst thou enter into this ruin?' I said to him, 'In order to pray.' And he said to me, 'Thou mightest have prayed on the road.' And I said to him, 'I was afraid that those who passed on the road might perhaps interrupt me.' He said to me, 'Thou shouldest have prayed a short prayer.' In that hour I learned from him three things. I learned that one may not enter into a ruin, and I learned that one may pray on the road, and I learned that he that prays on the road should pray a short prayer. He also said to me, 'My son, what voice hast thou heard in that ruin?' And I said to him, 'I have heard the "Bath Kol," * which cooed like a dove, and said, "Woe to the children, because on account of their sins I have laid waste My House, and I have burned My Sanctuary, and I have driven them forth among the nations."' And he said to me, 'By thy life, and by the life of thy head, not only at that time did the voice say so, but every day three times does it say so; and not only this, but also at the time when Israel enter the house of prayer and the house of study, and when they say, "Blessed be His great Name"; then the Holy One, blessed be His Name, moves His head, and says, "Happy is the king whom they thus praise in His house." What remains to the father who has driven his children into captivity? and woe to the children who have been driven forth from the table of their father.'"

* Literally "Daughter Voice"--the voice from heaven.

The Rabbis teach: On account of three things a ruin is not to be entered. On account of suspicion, * and on account of falling in (of the wall), and on account of evil spirits. On account of suspicion--does it not suffice on account of falling in? (Would that not have been alone a sufficient ground?) Fol. 3 b. Not if it is recent. ** But would it not suffice: On account of evil spirits? Not when there are two. *** If there are two, does not the ground of suspicion cease? Not if the two are impudent...

* Of secret sin.

** If it has only lately become a ruin, since then there would be no immediate danger.

*** Because where there are two, they need not fear evil spirits.

The Rabbis taught: The night has four watches. These are the words of Rabbi (Jehudah the Holy). Rabbi Nathan says: Three. What is the reason of Rabbi Nathan? Because it is written (Judg 7:19), "So Gideon came, and the hundred men that were with him, unto the outside of the camp, in the beginning of the middle watch. He taught: 'There is no middle, unless there is one before and one after it. And Rabbi, What is the meaning of the "middle?"' (He replied) 'One of the middle ones among the middle ones.' And Rabbi Nathan, 'Is it written: "The middle of the middle ones?" It is only written the middle one.'" But what ground has Rabbi? Rabbi Serika said, that Rabbi Ami said, that Rabbi Joshua, the son of Levi, said: In one place it is said (Psa 119:62), "At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto Thee, because of Thy righteous judgments." And in another place it is said (v 148), "Mine eyes prevent the night watches." How is this? Because the night has four watches. And Rabbi Nathan? He interprets it just as Rabbi Joshua. For we have this teaching: Rabbi Joshua says, "To three hours (into the day the 'Shema' may be said); for this is the way of kings, to rise at three hours (after daybreak). Six hours of the night (from midnight to dawn are six hours) and two by day make together two night watches" (each of four hours). Rabbi Ashi says: "A night watch and a half might also be called night watches." *

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