

במשנה נדונה השאלה כמה אנשים צריכים להיות בעיר כדי שתהיה ראויה שיעשו בה סנהדרין ושיטת חכמים היא שצריכים מאה ועשרים. שואלים: מאה ועשרים מאי עבדתייהו [מה חששיהו]? כלומר מה טעמו של מספר זה? ומסבירים: עשרים ושלושה צריך כנגד מספר סנהדרי קטנה, ושלוש שורות של עשרים ושלושה תלמידים היוכניג לפניהם ללמוד ופעמים גם ליעץ הרי בסך הכל תשעים ותרי (חשעיס ושנים) איש ועוד צריכים שיהיו בעיר עשרה בטלנין של בית הכנסת כלומר אנשים הפנויים מעבודות דחוקות ויושבים תמיד בבית הכנסת ודואגים לתקונו ולשאר צרכי הצבור הרי מאה ותרי (ושנים). ושני סופרים בסנהדרין, ושני חזנין (שמשים) ושני בעלי דינין שיבואו להתדיין ושני עדים לצד אחד. ושני זוממין שיאמרו שעים ראשונים אלה לא היו בשעת המעשה ושני זוממי זוממין שיוכלו להכחיש את העדים המזוימים, וכל זאת כדי שיוכל להתקיים דיון כפי שהוא מתאר בפרשת המשפט בספר דברים (יט, טרכא). הרי בסך הכל מאה וארבעים (וארבעה עשר) איש בעיר. ותניא (ושנויה ברייתא) כל עיר שאין בה עשרה דברים הללו אין תלמיד חכם רשאי לדור בתוכה ואלו הם: בית דין מכין ועונשין, וקופה של צדקה הנגבית כפי הדין בשנים (בשני אנשים המבזוים על כך) ומתחלקת על פי שלשה אם כן לגבאי צדקה יש צורך בעד שלשה אנשים הרי מאה ושבעה עשר. יש צורך שיהא בעיר בית הכנסת, ובית המרחץ, ובית הכסא, רופא ואומן (מקי דם) שהוא כעין חובש עור לרופא המומחה ולבלר (סופר) לכתוב ספרי קודש ושטרות נחוצים, וטבח (חוט) ומלמד תינוקות. הרי בסך הכל מאה ועשרים איש. משום ר' עקיבא אמרו: צריך שיהיו בעיר שתלמיד חכם דאי לדור בה אף מיני פירא [פירות] מפני שמיני פירא מאירין את העינים. במשנה שנינו שר' נחמיה אומר צריכים להיות בעיר מאתים ושלושים איש כדי שתהא ראויה לסנהדרין, כנגד שרי עשרות. בתוספתא מובאת גם שיטה אחרת: רבי אומר:

וְכַמָּה יֵהָא בְּעִיר וְיֵהָא רְאוּיָה לְסַנְהֶדְרִין מְאָה וְעֶשְׂרִים וְכוּ'. מְאָה וְעֶשְׂרִים מְאֵי עֲבִידְתֵּיהוּ? - עֶשְׂרִים וְשָׁלֹשָׁה כְּנֶגֶד סַנְהֶדְרֵי קַטְנָה, וְשָׁלֹשׁ שׁוּרוֹת שֶׁל עֶשְׂרִים וְשָׁלֹשָׁה - הֲרֵי תִשְׁעִים וְתַרְתֵּי. וְעֶשְׂרֵה בְּטַלְנֵין שֶׁל בֵּית הַכְּנֶסֶת - הֲרֵי מְאָה וְתַרְי. וְשְׁנֵי סוּפְרִים, וְשְׁנֵי חֲזַנִּין, וְשְׁנֵי בְעָלֵי דִינֵין וְשְׁנֵי עֲדִים, וְשְׁנֵי זוֹמְמִין, וְשְׁנֵי זוֹמְמֵי זוֹמְמִין - הֲרֵי מְאָה וְאַרְבֵּי־סוּר // וְתַנְיָא: כָּל עִיר שְׂאִין בָּהּ עֶשְׂרֵה דְבָרִים הִלְלוּ אֵין תְּלָמִיד חָכָם רִשְׁאֵי לְדוֹר בְּתוֹכָהּ: יֵבִית דִּין מִכֵּן וְעוֹנְשֵׁין, יוֹקוּפָה שֶׁל צְדָקָה נְגִבִית בְּשָׁנִים וּמִתְחַלְקָת בְּשָׁלֹשָׁה, וּבֵית הַכְּנֶסֶת, וּבֵית הַמְרַחֵץ, וּבֵית הַכְּסָא, רוּפָא, וְאוּמָן, וְלַבְלָר, וְטֹבַח, וּמְלָמֵד תֵּינוּקוֹת. מְשוּם רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא אָמְרוּ: אֵף מִינֵי פִירָא, מִפְּנֵי שְׁמִינֵי פִירָא מְאִירִין אֶת הָעֵינַיִם. // רַבִּי נַחֲמִיָּה אָמַר וְכוּ'. תַּנְיָא יוֹרְבִי אָמַר:

מאתים שבעים ושבעה שהוא כפול את עיקר שיטתו של ר' נחמיה שצריכים להיות בעיר מאתים ושלושים אלא שיש להוסיף עוד אנשים כדי להשלים את מספר דיניי בית הדין לשבעים שאם יקרה שחכמי בית דין יגיעו למצב שאינם יכולים להכריע בדין ויוסיפו זוגות זוגות דינים הרי צריך שתהיה אפשרות להוסיף עד שבעים ושואלים:

והתניא (והרי שנויה ברייתא) אחרת שרבי אומר: מאתים שבעים ושמונה! ומשיבים: לא קשיא (אין זה קשה) הא [זו] שאמר מאתים שבעים ושבעה כשיטת ר' יהודה שיש רק שבעים דינים בסנהדרי גדולה. הא [זו] כשיטת חכמים שיש שבעים ואחד ולכן יש להוסיף עוד אחד. אגב שיטת ר' נחמיה במינוי שררות בישראל תנו רבנן [שנו חכמים] נאמר 'ושמת עליהם שרי אלפים שרי מאות שרי חמשים ושרי עשרות' (שמות ית, כא) ומסבירים שכך היו מספריהם: שרי אלפים היו שש מאות (לשש מאות אלף איש) שרי מאות היו שש מאות אלפים, שרי חמשים - שנים עשר אלף, שרי עשרות - ששת ריבוא, נמצאו דיניי ישראל כולם שבעת ריבוא ושמונת אלפים ושש מאות, ללמד שלכל התפקידים נמצאו אנשים המסוגלים למלא אותם.

מְאֵתִים וְשֶׁבַעִים וְשֶׁבַעַה. וְהַתְּנִיא, רַבִּי אֹמֵר: מְאֵתִים שְׁבַעִים וְשֶׁמֶנֶה! - לֹא קָשִׁיא, הָא - רַבִּי יְהוּדָה, הָא - רַבְּנָן. תְּנִין רַבְּנָן: 'וְשִׁמַּת עֲלֵיהֶן שְׁרֵי אֲלָפִים שְׁרֵי מְאוֹת שְׁרֵי חֲמִשִּׁים וְשְׁרֵי עֶשְׂרֹת' שְׁרֵי אֲלָפִים - שֵׁשׁ מְאוֹת, שְׁרֵי מְאוֹת - שֵׁשֶׁת אֲלָפִים, שְׁרֵי חֲמִשִּׁים - שְׁנַיִם עֶשְׂרֵי אֲלָף, שְׁרֵי עֶשְׂרוֹת - שֵׁשֶׁת רִיבּוּא, נִמְצְאוּ דִינֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁבַעַת רִיבּוּא וְשִׁמּוֹנַת אֲלָפִים וְשֵׁשׁ מְאוֹת.

הדרו עלך דיני ממונות

ששת אלפים, שרי חמשים - שנים עשר אלף, שרי עשרות - ששת ריבוא, נמצאו דיניי ישראל כולם שבעת ריבוא ושמונת אלפים ושש מאות, ללמד שלכל התפקידים נמצאו אנשים המסוגלים למלא אותם.

נבית בשנים ומתחלקת בשלושה / נבית הערכה דיה בשנים שלא יבואו להעיר באחד שמכיל לצורך עצמו, ועוד שכביעת השיעור שראוי לכל אחד לתת לצדקה נעשית על ידי טובי העיר, ואילו בחלוקת הצדקה יש צורך בשומא ובהערכה כי ראוי לכך ומה ראוי לתת לכל אחד, ובכל מקום הצריך הערכה עושים בית דין, ואינו סתות בשלושה (פאירי).

בית הכסא / היו מקומות שהיה להם רק בית כסא אחד לכל העיר וצריך שיהא מתוקן שלא יחזיקוהו הרבה מן הישוב מפני הסכנה, או גם במקום שיש לכל בית כסא משלו ראוי להתקין בית כסא עבורו עבדו אנשי העיר המצויים ברשות הרבים (יעב"ק).

אורה ההלכה

עיר הראויה לסנהדרין / אין מושיבים סנהדרין בעיר שיש בה פחות ממאה ועשרים איש, וכפי המבואר במדרא, ופסג כחכמים.

עיר שראוי לישב בה / אין ראוי לתלמידי חכמים לישב אלא בעיר שיש בה דברים הללו: בית דין, קופה של צדקה, בית הכנסת, בית המרחץ, ובית הכסא, רופא, אומן, לבלר, מלמד תינוקות וזים. במדרא, (שם, כפר סדק, הלכות דעות, פ"ד הכ"ג)

דיניי ישראל כולם שבעת ריבוא ושמונת אלפים ושש מאות, ללמד שלכל התפקידים נמצאו אנשים המסוגלים למלא אותם.

ששת אלפים, שרי חמשים - שנים עשר אלף, שרי עשרות - ששת ריבוא, נמצאו דיניי ישראל כולם שבעת ריבוא ושמונת אלפים ושש מאות, ללמד שלכל התפקידים נמצאו אנשים המסוגלים למלא אותם.

עיר הראויה לסנהדרין / אין מושיבים סנהדרין בעיר שיש בה פחות ממאה ועשרים איש, וכפי המבואר במדרא, ופסג כחכמים. עיר שראוי לישב בה / אין ראוי לתלמידי חכמים לישב אלא בעיר שיש בה דברים הללו: בית דין, קופה של צדקה, בית הכנסת, בית המרחץ, ובית הכסא, רופא, אומן, לבלר, מלמד תינוקות וזים. במדרא, (שם, כפר סדק, הלכות דעות, פ"ד הכ"ג)

WHAT MUST THE POPULATION OF A CITY BE IN ORDER THAT IT MAY QUALIFY FOR A SANHEDRIN? A HUNDRED AND TWENTY, etc. What is the reason for that number?⁶—Twenty-three, corresponding to the number of the minor Sanhedrin, and three rows of twenty-three,⁷ make ninety-two. Adding the ten 'batlanim'⁸ of the Synagogue, we have a hundred and two. Then, a further two clerks,⁹ two sheriffs,¹⁰ two litigants, two witnesses, two *zomemim*,¹¹ and two to refute the *zomemim*,¹² gives a hundred and fourteen in all.

Moreover, it has been taught: A scholar should not reside in a city where the following ten things are not found: A court of justice that imposes flagellation and decrees penalties; a charity fund¹ collected by two and distributed by three;² a Synagogue; public baths; a convenience; a circumciser; a surgeon, a notary;³ a slaughterer⁴ and a school-master.⁵ R. Akiba is quoted [as including] also several kinds of fruit [in the list], because these are beneficial⁶ to the eyesight.

R. NEHEMIA SAYS, [TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTY etc.]. It has been taught: Rabbi said: [18a] [The population must be] two hundred and seventy-seven.⁷ But has it not been taught: Rabbi said, [The population must be] two hundred and seventy-eight?—There is no difficulty: The one statement is according to R. Judah;⁸ the other according to the Rabbis.⁹

Our Rabbis taught: *And place such over them to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties and rulers of tens.*¹⁰ The rulers of thousands amounted to six hundred;¹¹ those of hundreds, six thousand; those of fifties, twelve thousand; and those of tens, sixty thousand. Hence the total number of judges in Israel was seventy-eight thousand and six hundred.

Parochial:

1. court of Jewish justice
2. Jew. charity fund
3. shul
4. circumciser
5. ritual slaughterer
6. teacher of Jew. children

Cosmopolitan

1. public baths
2. outhouse
3. surgeon
4. notary for writing scrolls
- [5. several kinds of fruits]

Hanina? (6) Lit., 'what has (the number) to do (with that)?' (7) Usually seated behind the Sanhedrin for the purpose of completing courts. For full explanation, v. Mishnah, *infra* 37a. (8) *בטלני* fr. *בטל* 'to rest from labour', 'to be at ease or idle', hence men with leisure. Ten such men were appointed in every Community to attend religious services, in order to ensure the requisite quorum for public worship—the *minyan*. v. Meg. 3b. (9) To take down notes for the prosecution and defence, v. *infra* 37a. (10) The court beadle, who summoned the litigants and carried out the court sentences, such as flagellation. (11) V. Glos. No testimony is valid if there is no possibility of its being refuted. Hence two are necessary for that. (12) As a further precaution, lest false witnesses be hired to refute the first two.

(1) קופה, *kupah*, the communal fund from which distributions in money were made to the poor every Friday. B.B. 8b. (2) V. B.B. 8b. (3) For writing scrolls, etc. (4) Rashi deletes this; in that case, the charity fund ranks as two institutions, viz., the collection and distribution. (5) Rashi suggests the following persons as the six necessary to complete the hundred and twenty: viz., the two collectors and three distributors of charity, and one man capable of practising all the other professions. (6) Lit., 'enlighten'. (7) Tosef. III. Two hundred and thirty in accordance with R. Nehemia, and forty-seven held in reserve for increasing the number of the court of twenty-three, where one is uncertain and the rest equally divided, adding two at a time, up to a maximum of seventy or seventy-one, v. *infra* 40a. (8) Requiring only seventy to constitute the Sanhedrin. (9) Requiring seventy-one. (10) Ex. XVIII, 21. (11) Since the population consisted of 600,000. Likewise for the other officials. (Ex. XII, 35.) [This is to teach that the judges were included in the number of each respective group (*Tanh. Mishpatim*).

Being his letter to the Jews of Spain according to the text printed in Italy about 1480

5

And a Jew, a Merchant of the tribe of Issachar, found me and bought me for 32 gold pieces and brought me back with him to his country. They live in the mountains of the sea-coast² and belong to the land of the Medes and Persians. They fulfil the command "the book of this law shall not depart from thy mouth". The yoke of sovereignty is not upon them but only the yoke of the law. Among them are leaders of hosts but they fight with no man. They only dispute as to the law, and they live in peace and comfort and there is no disturber and no evil chance. They dwell in a country ten days' journey by ten days, and they have great flocks and camels and asses and slaves, but they do not rear horses. They carry no weapons, except the slaughterer's knife, and there is not among them any oppression or robbery and, even if they should find on the road garments or money, they would not stretch forth their hand to take it. But near them are wicked men, fire-worshippers, who take their own mothers and sisters to wife, but them they do not hurt. They have a Judge, and I asked about him and they said his name was Nachshon, and they practice the four

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death penalties³ according to the law, and they speak Hebrew and Persian.

6

And the sons of Zebulun are encamped in the hills of Paron and reach to their (i.e. Issachar's) neighbourhood and pitch tents made of hairy skins which come to them from the land of Armenia, and they reach up to the Euphrates, and they practice business and they observe the four death penalties inflicted by the court.

7

And the tribe of Reuben is over against them behind Mount Paron, and there is peace and brotherhood and companionship between them, and they go together to war and make roads and divide the spoils amongst themselves, and they go on the highroads of the Kings of Media and Persia and they speak Hebrew and Persian, and they possess scripture and Mishna, Talmud, and Haggadah, and every Sabbath they read the law with accents, the text in Hebrew and the interpretation (Targum) thereof in Persian.

8

And the tribe of Ephraim and half tribe of Manasseh are there in the mountains over against the city of Mecca, the stumbling block of the Ishmaelites. They are strong of body and of iron heart. They are horse-men and take the road and have no pity on their enemies, and their only livelihood comes of spoil. They are mighty men of war. One is match for a thousand.

9

And the tribe of Simeon and the half tribe of Manasseh live in the country of the Babylonians⁴ six months' journey away, and they are the most

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numerous of all of them, and they take tribute from five and twenty kingdoms and some Ishmaelites pay them tribute.

10

And in our country we say that it is a tradition among us that ye are the sons of the captivity, the tribe of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin under the dominion of the heathen in an unclean land, who were scattered under the Romans who destroyed the Temple of our God, and under the Greeks and the Ishmaelites, may their sword pierce their heart and may their bones be broken!

11

We have a tradition from father to son that we, the sons of Dan, were aforetime in the land of Israel dwellers in tents and among all the tribes of Israel there were none like us men of war and mighty of valour. And, when Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who caused Israel to sin and made two golden calves, arose over them, the kingdom of the house of David was divided and the tribes gathered together and said, "Come and fight against Rehoboam and against Jerusalem." They answered, "Why should we fight with our brothers and with the son of our lord David, King of Israel and Judah? God forbid!" Then said the elders of Israel, "You have not in all the tribes of Israel mighty ones like the tribe of Dan." At once they said to the children of Dan, "Arise and fight with the children of Judah." They answered, "By the life of Dan our father, we will not make war with our brothers and we will not shed blood." At once we children of Dan took swords and lances and bows, and devoted ourselves to death to go forth from the land of Israel, for we saw we could not stay, "Let us go hence and find a resting place, but if we wait until the end they will take us away." So

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we took heart and counsel to go to Egypt to destroy it and to kill all its inhabitants. Our prince said to us, "Is it not written, ye shall not continue to see it again for ever? How will you prosper?" They said, "Let us go against Amalek or against Edom or against Ammon and Moab to destroy them and let us dwell in their place." Our princes said, "It is written in the law that the Holy One, blessed be He, has prevented Israel from crossing their border. Finally we took counsel to go to Egypt, but not by the way that our fathers went and not to destroy it, but only to go there to cross the River Pishon (Lower Nile) to the land of Ethiopia and, behold, when we came near to Egypt, all Egypt was afraid and sent to us asking, "Is it war or peace?" and we said, "For peace; we will cross your country to the River Pishon, and there we will find a resting place," and, behold, they did not believe us, but all Egypt stood on guard until we crossed their country and arrived in the land of Ethiopia. We found it a good and fat land, and, in it, fields, enclosures, and gardens. They could not restrain the children of Dan from dwelling with them, for they took the land by might and, behold, though they wished to kill them all, they had to pay tribute to Israel, and we dwelt with them many years, and increased and multiplied greatly and held great riches.

12

Afterwards Sennacherib, King of Assyria, arose and took the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half tribe of Manasseh captive, and took them to Halah and Habor and the River Gozan, and the cities of Media. And Sennacherib arose a second time and took captive the tribe of Asher and the tribe of Naphtali and led them to the land of Assyria, and, after the death of Sennacherib, three tribes of Israel,

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being Naphtali, Gad, and Asher, journeyed on their own to the land of Ethiopia and encamped in the wilderness until they came to their border, a twenty days' journey, and they slew the men of Ethiopia, and unto this very day, they fight with the children of the kingdoms of Ethiopia.

13

And these tribes, being Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher, dwell in the ancient Havilah,⁵ where gold is (and in goodly places in the kingdom of the Paravim, under the rule of Oreinos), and they trusted in their Maker, and the Lord helped them. These tribes placed their hands on the neck of their enemies and every year they make war with the seven kingdoms and seven countries. The names of these kingdoms are Tussina, Kamti, Kuba, Tariogi, Takula, Karma, and Kalom,⁶ and they are on the other side of the rivers of Ethiopia. These four tribes have gold and silver and precious stones, and much sheep and cattle and camels and asses, and they sow and they reap, and they dwell in tents, and, when they will, they journey and encamp in tents, from border to border, two days by two days' journey, and in the place where they encamp there is no place where the foot of man enters, but they encamp in a place of fields and vineyards.

14

And their King's name is Uzziel and the name of their great prince Elizaphan, of the children of Aholiab, of the tribe of Dan, and their banner is white and written thereon in black is, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one God," and when they seek to go out to war the crier calls with the sound of the trumpet, and the lord of the hosts comes and the armies go forth one hundred and twenty thousand (?) with small white bannerettes. Every

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three months, a different tribe goes out to war, and the tribe remains three months away, and all that they bring from the spoil of their enemies they divide among their own tribe. But the descendants of Samson, of the tribe of Dan, are superior to all. They never run away, for that were a great shame to them. They are numerous as the sands of the sea, and have no employment but war and, whensoever they fight, they say it is not good for mighty men to flee, let them die young, but let them not flee, let them strengthen their heart unto God, and several times they say and cry all of them together, "Hear, O Israel, our God is one God," and then they all take heed.

15

And thus they do till their three months are over and then they return and they bring all their spoil to King Uzziel, and he divides it with all Israel, and this is their statute from King David until this day, and King Uzziel takes his share and the King gives a share to all the wise men, sages of the law, dwellers in tents, and afterwards all take their portion, and the lord of the host his share. Thus they do in the three months when Naphtali goes out, and in the three months when Gad goes out, and so (Asher); all of them until twelve months are completed, and then they repeat in succession.

16

As to the tribe of Moses our teacher, on whom be peace, the righteous servant of God whose name is called with us the tribe of *Janus*, for he fled from idolatry and clove to the fear of God, the sea surrounds them, three months' journey by three months. They dwell in glorious houses and fine buildings and castles, and train elephants for themselves in their times of joy. No unclean thing is to be found with them,

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no unclean fowl, no unclean beast, no unclean cattle, no flies, no fleas, no lice, no foxes, no scorpions, no serpents, and no dogs. All these were in the idolatrous land, where they had been in servitude. They have only sheep, oxen, and fowls, and their sheep bring forth twice a year. They sow seed twice a year; they sow and they reap and they have gardens and olives and pomegranates and figs and all kinds of beans and cucumbers and melons and onions and garlic and barley and wheat, and from one comes forth a hundred.

17

They are of perfect faith and their Talmud is all in Hebrew, and thus they learn, "Thus taught us our Rabbis, from the mouth of Joshua the son of Nun, from the mouth of our father Moses, from the mouth of the Almighty." But they know not the Rabbis, for these were of the Second Temple and they did not reach them.

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And they can speak only the Holy tongue and they all take ritual baths and never swear. They cry out against him that takes the name of God in vain, and say that by the sin of cursing your sons would die young. But they are long lived and live a hundred or 120 years and no son dies in his father's lifetime, and they reach three or four generations, and they sow and reap themselves, for they have no manservants or maidservants, and they are all equal, and do not shut their houses at night for that would be shame to them, and a young man goes with the flocks ten days' journey and fears neither robbers nor ghosts. They are all Levites and have not among them either Priest or Israelite, and they abide in the sanctity of Moses our teacher, the servant of the Lord.

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Moreover, they see no man and no men see them except these four tribes, who dwell on the other side of the rivers of Ethiopia. There is a place where these can see each other and speak if they cry out, but the River Sambation is between them, and they tell, "Thus it happened to us in war time," and they tell all Israel what happened to them. When they want anything important, they have a kind of pigeon known among them and they write their letters and fasten them to the wings or to the feet of the pigeon, and these cross the River Sambation and the pigeons come to their Kings and their Princes. They also have very many precious stones and silver and gold, and they sow flax and they rear cochineal and make pleasant garments without end and are five times as numerous as those that came out of Egypt, for they are innumerable. The breadth of that river is 200 cubits bowshot, and the river is full of large and small stones and the sound of them rumbles like a great storm, like a tempest at sea and, in the night, the sound of it is heard a day's journey and they have with them six wells and they all unite into one lake and therefrom they irrigate their land, and therein are clean edible fish. The river runs and the stones and sand rumble during the six working days, but on the seventh day it rests and is tranquil until the end of Sabbath. And on the other side of the river, on the side where the four tribes dwell, is a fire which flames on Sabbath and no man can approach within a mile. And this is my name, Eldad ben Mahali ben Ezekiel ben Hezekiah ben Aluk ben Abner ben Shemaiah ben Hater ben Hur ben Elkanah ben Hillel ben Tobias ben Pedath ben Ainon ben Naaman ben Taam ben Taami ben Onam ben Gaul ben Shalom ben Caleb ben Omram ben Dumain ben Obadiah ben Abraham ben Joseph ben Moses ben

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Jacob ben Kappur ben Ariel ben Asher ben Job ben Shallum ben Elihu ben Ahaliab ben Ahisamach ben Hushim ben Dan ben Jacob our father, on whom be peace and on all Israel.

These letters this Lord Eldad sent to Spain in the year 43 (883), and this Lord Eldad was full of law and commandments and, if a man sits with him from morning until evening, he does not cease to converse on the law in the Holy tongue and his words are sweeter than honey and the honeycomb. May the Lord give him a good reward in this world and in the world to come.

Here endeth the Book of Eldad the Danite.

CASE AS TO ELDAD THE DANITE

(according to the text printed at Constantinople in 1519)

This question the men of Kairouan asked of the Gaon Rabbenu Zemach with reference to Eldad the Danite of the tribes in ancient Havilah, in the land of Ethiopia, who had come unto them [after sundry greetings to the Gaon].

Be it known to your Lordship that a man has become our guest whose name is Eldad the Danite of the tribe of Dan, and he has told us that there are four tribes in one place, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher. Its name is the ancient Havilah where is the gold, and they have a Judge called Abdon, and they use the four methods of death penalty, and dwell in tents and journey and encamp from place to place. They fight with the five (? seven) Kings of Ethiopia and the extent of their land is seven months' journey. Five of those Kings surround them at the back and on two sides, and fight with them at all times, and whoever is faint-hearted is put into God's camp. They possess the whole of the Bible, but they do not read

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