

The previous page listed reasons one should not enter a desolate building. Three objections were raised: 1) It would arouse suspicion, as people might think there was a woman of ill repute waiting inside; 2) The building might fall; 3) We are concerned about demons.

1. **What's wrong with doing things that might arouse suspicion?** Rather than going to meet a prostitute, a person might want to enter a ruin for a good reason. Should he really not do that, just because people might be suspicious? Indeed, we Jews are a very suspicious people, especially when it comes to each other. People are always watching and judging and making assumptions, and because of that we have to be careful to avoid even the appearance of wrongdoing. Suspicion of other Jews seems like a negative quality, but according to the Mei Hashiloach it can be a good thing. Because sometimes, knowing that G-d says not to do something is not enough to stop us from doing it. Sometimes it is only worrying about what our friends will think that keeps us from doing wrong. And that's ok, because doing right for the wrong reasons is still better than doing wrong. We are not aiming for perfection, but for movement in the right direction. Stopping yourself from wrongdoing just because of other people isn't perfect, but at least you're stopping yourself. That's why it's important to think about what other people think. If you get accustomed to doing things without caring about what other people think, you will lose the fear that might prevent you from doing things that actually are wrong.
2. **Entering into a ruin psychologically.** A ruin represents a desolate place where you don't have an establishment of the way things are. It might turn out ok. You might be able to meditate and create your own new reality. Some people prefer to go where there is no one else and build their own place. The problem is that when we try to remove ourselves from our community, we're not always sure if our heart is in the right place. Maimonides says it's important to be in a community, but not if it's a community of sinners. Rav Tzadok says it's all about knowing your intentions. When you take your own path, there's a danger of being misled by your own ego. You should not go completely alone; take one person with you so you know that your motivation isn't selfish.
3. **Debate about the night watches.** Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi, editor of the Mishna and descendent of King David, said there are four three-hour watches during the night. Rabbi Nosson argues that there are three four-hour watches. Mar'at HaAyin brings down in the name of Iyun Yaakov that this debate is really about who is a bigger influence on us: the three forefathers or the four foremothers. But what do our forefathers and foremothers have to do with how we divide the night? Kabbalistically, the fathers and mothers represent the people who preceded us and the archetypes that became embedded in what Israel is.
4. **Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi was descended from King David.** There is another way of understanding the debate about three vs. four watches: Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi is including King David as one of the pillars of our people, while Rabbi Nosson is not. A question is asked regarding Chanukah: why does it not have its own tractate in the Mishna? It is mentioned in another Mishna, so we know Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi knew about it. So why didn't he make a separate tractate for it? This question has led some to believe that there was a rivalry between Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi and the Chashmonaim, the priests who became kings after the Chanukah story, because they refused to return the crown to the Davidic dynasty. Of course, others do not accept this explanation. They say that the author of the Mishna would not have left out something important just because of a petty vendetta. It is more likely that Chanukah was not given its own tractate because it is

purely Rabbinic, not connected to any Biblical law. Then again, there's a tractate on Eruvin, which is almost purely Rabbinic. However, the laws of eruv are connected to the laws of Shabbos, which is Biblical, and Chanukah has no such Biblical connection. (The menorah that we light on Chanukah has little to do with the menorah in the Beis Hamikdash.)

5. **More about the three vs. four watches debate.** A question is raised: King David said that he would wake up at midnight and there were still two watches left. That's only possible if there are four watches. How does Rabbi Nosson explain that? When King David said he woke up two watches before everyone else, he was including the first daytime watch. In discussing when the morning shema can be said, Rabbi Yehoshua says you have three hours after you wake up to say Shema, like the time when a king wakes up. Other kings would wake up later than everyone else, three hours into the day. But King David would wake up two watches earlier than that; six hours of the night and two hours of the day.
6. **When you're standing by a dead body, you shouldn't talk about anything that's not related to that person.** That's only if you're talking about Torah, but you can talk about mundane matters that aren't about the person. Another opinion says you shouldn't even talk about mundane things. Why? Talking Torah in front of a dead person could make them "jealous," because they can no longer learn Torah. And why wouldn't you be allowed to talk about mundane things? There's an opinion that until a body is buried, the person can actually hear what people around them are saying, and it hurts them. Do we really believe that dead people can hear? The Zohar says you don't comfort the mourner before the burial, because the deceased is uncomfortable. The soul is still sort of attached, watching its body, confused and upset. It can't separate completely yet. And as long as the soul of the departed is so agitated, their loved ones are also agitated, and this is not the time to offer comfort. Even during shiva the soul isn't in Heaven yet; it still somewhere between the burial place and the shiva place.
7. **Tucking in tzitzit at a cemetery.** Not only should you not discuss Torah in front of the deceased, but some say you can't do any mitzvot either. You should not bring tallit, tzitzit, or Torah within six feet of a gravesite. Don't take off your tzitzit, but do tuck them in so the deceased doesn't "see" them. Even according to the Ritva, who says once the body is buried the soul stops hanging around, you must still have consideration for someone who can no longer do mitzvot.
8. **King David's harp at midnight.** He would wake up at midnight, maybe even earlier, and praise Hashem. He would leave his harp near the open window, and at midnight there would be a wind and he'd know it was time to start.
9. **King David knew when midnight was.** When Moses warned Pharaoh about the tenth plague, he said it would come "around midnight." That suggests that even G-d doesn't know when midnight actually is. So how did King David know? The answer is that of course G-d knows when midnight is. Even Moses knew. The only reason he said "around midnight" was that he didn't want to give the Egyptian sorcerers and astrologists the chance to point to their own inaccurate clocks and say that he had lied and the plague had not come exactly at midnight.
10. **The Bernie Sanders economic plan – Tosfot thinks it would fail.** Tosfot talks about King David and his advisors and the economy of Israel at that time. King David said, "Let everyone do business," and his advisors said, "You can't fill a hole with its dirt." The Rabbis try to figure out what that means. The Ri suggests: if you dig from one side and fill in from another side, it won't be full. What you dig up to put somewhere else is still missing where you took it from. If your plan is to tax the wealthy to sustain the poor, then the wealthy will be lacking.