

24 Adar II 5774
March 26, 2014



Sukkah Daf 51

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Daf Notes is currently being dedicated to the neshamah of

Tzvi Gershon Ben Yoel (Harvey Felsen) o”h

May the studying of the Daf Notes be a zechus for his neshamah and may his soul find peace in Gan Eden and be bound up in the Bond of life

1. The Gemara cites a dispute regarding who held the musical instruments when the Leviim were singing the sacrificial songs. Rabbi Meir maintains that servants of the Kohanim held the musical instruments and Rabbi Yose maintains that Israelites with pure lineage held the musical instruments. Rabbi Chanina Ben Antignos maintains that the Leviim themselves held the musical instruments. The practical difference regarding who played the musical instruments is whether we elevate the status of one who sang on a platform in the Courtyard of the Bais HaMikdash to the level of one who was genealogically fit and that he could receive Maaser. (51a1)
2. Rabbi Yirmiyah bar Abbah maintains that the dispute between the Tanaaim regarding the musical instruments overriding Shabbos refers to the song at the Simchas Bais Hashoeva. Everyone would agree, however, that the instruments used to accompany the sacrificial song would certainly override Shabbos. (51a1-51a2)
3. The Mishna states one who did not see the joy of the Simchas Bais Hashoeva was never witness to true joy in his life. On the second night of Sukkos they would enter the courtyard of the Bais HaMikdash and light candelabra that were very high and the light from the candelabra would illuminate the entire Jerusalem. They would use the worn out trousers and belts of the Kohanim for the wicks. The pious and saintly people would dance and juggle torches in the center and sing songs of praise to HaShem. The Leviim would play with various musical instruments and the Kohanim would sound trumpets in various locations throughout the courtyard. The Mishnah states that the Kohanim would declare that they are not sun worshippers. Rather, they worshipped Kah, i.e. HaShem. (51a3-51b1)

4. The Gemara states that one who did not witness the glory of Jerusalem never saw a beautiful city in his lifetime. If one did not see the Bais HaMikdash when it stood, he never saw a glorious edifice in his life. This refers to the Bais HaMikdash that was built by King Herod. It was fashioned with stones of green, blue and white marble and it gave the appearance of the ocean waves. This edifice was so beautiful that had Herod plated it with gold it would have detracted from its beauty. (51b2)
5. The Gemara states that the synagogue in Alexandria was a sight to behold and there was once a time when the synagogue accommodated one million and two hundred thousand people. The Gemara relates that ultimately the entire Jewish community was killed by Alexander of Macedon, and the reason they were punished so harshly is because they violated the biblical prohibition not to return to Egypt. (51b2-51b3)
6. The Gemara states that in the magnificent synagogue of Alexandria, a bimah, a wooden platform, was located in the center of the synagogue and the sexton would stand there and wave a flag to notify the congregation that they should answer amen. (51b2)
7. The Mishnah stated that at the end of the first day of Sukkos they went down to the Women's Courtyard and they made a great adjustment. The Gemara explains that originally the Women's Courtyard was smooth and at a later date they surrounded it with a balcony. They decreed that the women should sit above in the balcony and the men below so they should not mingle with each other. A Baraisa states that originally the women watching the Simchas Bais Hashoeva would be inside the Women's Courtyard and the men observing would be on the outside but this led to frivolity. They then instituted that the women should be on the outside and the men should be on the inside but there was still frivolity, so they decreed that the women should be above and the men below. Although the dimensions of the Bais HaMikdash could not be altered, they found a verse that was said regarding the future when there will be eulogies delivered for the death of Moshiach ben Yosef. It is said that even at a time of sorrow the men and women will be separated. If this could be said

regarding the future when it will be a time of sorrow and the evil inclination no longer wields control over man, then certainly at the Simchas Bais Hashoeva, when they are engaged in rejoicing and they could become frivolous and the evil inclination still wields power, certainly men and women should be in separate areas. (51b3-52a1)

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

Worn out Trousers

Tosfos wonders why they used the worn out trousers and belts of the Kohanim for the wicks. Why did they not use the worn out *Kesones*, the shirt worn by the Kohen? Perhaps one could answer based upon the Gemara in Zevachim which states that the pants worn by the Kohen atoned for the sin of *arayos*, immorality, and the belt atoned for improper thoughts of the heart. When they performed the *nissuch hamayim*, the drawing of the water, there was a large gathering of men and women who would mingle together and the Chachamim were concerned about the men having improper thoughts and there was a general concern about the mingling. It was precisely for this reason that they erected a balcony to keep the men and women

separate. The *Kesones*, however, atoned for the sin of murder which was not relevant at the performance of the *nissuch hamayim*.

DAILY MASHAL

Lights of Love and Fear

The Mishnah states that pious men and men of good deeds would dance before them with flaming torches in their hands. The Meor Vashemesh on Sukkos writes that the hands symbolize the love and fear that one has for HaShem, so the Mishnah alludes to the idea that the pious people had a tremendous fire burning within them that reflected their love and fear for HaShem, and it was this fire that they danced with before HaShem.