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Menachos Daf 98

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Amos

The *Gemora* notes: By the fact that the Rabbi Meir stated the term "medium *amos*," this implies that there must be an *amah* which is larger than the six-*tefach amah*. What is that?

The *Gemora* cites a *Mishna*: There were two *amah*-measures in the chamber called Shushan Habirah (*near the eastern entrance to the Temple Mount; outside of it was a decorative picture of the city Shushan*); one at its northeastern corner and the other at its southeastern corner. The one at the northeastern corner was longer than the *amah* of Moshe by half a fingerbreadth, and the one at the southeastern corner was longer than the other by half a fingerbreadth; it emerges that it was one fingerbreadth longer than the *amah* of Moshe. And what was the purpose of these two measures? It was so that the workmen might receive contracts of work (*for the Temple*) according to the measure of the smaller *amah* (*the standard six-*tefach amah**) and deliver the completed product according to the measure of the larger *amah*. In this manner, they would avoid any possibility of transgressing the sin of *me'ilah* (*benefitting illegally from the Temple*). And why two? One was for the measuring when the work was using gold and silver (*which due to its considerable value and difficult labor, they did not want them to lose too much*), and the other was for building. (98a)

Rav Chisda and Rav Yitzchak bar Avdimi argue as to what was the reason for this. One said that it was so in order that they be ever mindful from where they came (*from the exile in Persia; and thank the king for freeing them*), and the other said that it was so in order that the fear of the royalty should be upon them (*so they would not rebel*).

Rabbi Yannai said: The fear of the royalty should always be upon you, as it is written (*when Moshe told Pharaoh that after the killing of the firstborn all of his servants will come and beg that the Jews should leave Egypt*): *And all these servants of yours shall come down to me (and bow down to me)*, but he did not say so of the king himself (*out of respect to the royalty*). Rabbi Yochanan derives it from the following verse: *And the hand of Hashem was on Eliyahu, and he girded his loins, and ran before Achav (out of respect to the royalty)*.

And its leaf (from the tree that will grow from the river that will flow from the Holy of Holies in the Future Time) shall be for healing. Rav Chisda and Rav Yitzchak bar Avdimi argue as to what is the meaning of this verse. One said that it is to open the mouth above (*the curing of one who is mute and allowing him to speak*), and the other said that it is to open the mouth below (*and allow a barren woman to conceive*).

It was stated: Chizkiyah said: It is to open the mouth of the mute; Bar Kappara said: It is to open the mouth of barren women. (98a – 98b)

Shushan Habirah

We have learned in a *Mishna* elsewhere: The eastern gate (*of the Temple*) on which was portrayed the image of Shushan Habirah.

The Loaves on the Table

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: The three verses in the Torah teach us that the *Kohen* places two columns of six loaves each on the Table. If he does one column of four and one of eight, it is invalid. If he

places two stacks of seven, Rebbe says that we view the top loaves as if they are not present (*and they are still valid*).

The *Gemora* asks: Doesn't the verse state that the *levonah* shall be placed on the loaves (*and now the 'extra loaf' is an interposition?*)

Rav Chisda said to Rav Hamnuna: Rebbe is following his reasoning that 'al' means 'near,' as it was taught in a *braisa*: It is written: *And you shall place pure frankincense "al" each stack (the twelve loaves of bread that were placed on the Table in the Sanctuary)*. Rebbe understands the word "al" to mean that it should be placed (*on the Table*) "near" the stacks. This can be proven from the verse: *And you shall screen "al" the Ark with the partition*. Here, obviously, the word "al" means "near" (*for the partition was a vertical curtain, not a covering*). (98b)

Direction of the Vessels

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa* which teaches us that every vessel that stood in the Temple was placed with its length parallel with the length of the Sanctuary, except for the Ark, whose length was parallel with the width of the Sanctuary. It was so because its poles were placed along the width of the Ark.

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa* regarding the poles on the side of the Ark: They reached the curtain, but they did not tear through and emerge from the other side. Rather, they pushed against the curtain and protruded into it; they appeared (from the other side) like the breasts of a woman.

The *Gemora* proves that the poles ran alongside the width of the Ark and not its length, for there would not be enough room for two *Kohanim* (*carrying the Ark*) to stand in only one and a half *amos*.

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa* that King Shlomo made ten Tables and ten *Menoros* (*beyond for Moshe's*). The Tables were all on the north side of the Sanctuary: Moshe's was in the middle, and five were on its right and five were on its left. The *Menoros* were all on the south side of the Sanctuary: Moshe's was in the middle, and five were on its right and five were on its left.

They were situated in the first half of the Sanctuary, which is the first third if you reckon the Holy of Holies as well. [*The Sanctuary was forty amos long, and the Holy of Holies was twenty.*]

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: Rebbe holds that the Tables were placed from east to west. This, he derives, from the *Menorah*. Rabbi Elozar the son of Rabbi Shimon maintains that the Tables were placed from north to south. He derives it from the Ark. (98b)

DAILY MASHAL

On the Right: From the Direction of the Kodesh HaKodashim

The Table stood on the north side of the Temple and the Menorah was to the south. The Menorah was then to the left of those entering, contrary to what we would expect, that the Menorah, which symbolizes wisdom and Torah, should be put on the right, the more important side. The masters of *musar* pay attention to this fact and say that indeed this is true. He who enters from outside, the mundane street, sees the Menorah to his left. But he who comes from the direction of the *kodesh hakodoshim* encounters the Menorah to his right...