

The Weekly Daf



by Rav Mendel Weinbach - Dean, Ohr Somayach Institutions

Yoma 51-57

Week of 8-14 Adar 5759 / 24 February -2 March 1999
Rav Weinbach's insights, explanations and comments for the 7 pages of Talmud
studied in the course of the worldwide Daf Yomi cycle

A Direct Line

In order to make his once a year entry into the *kodesh kodashim* (Holy of Holies) on Yom Kippur, the *kohen gadol* had to pass through the *heichal* area. Both Rabbi Meir and Rabbi Yossi agree that in the second *Beis Hamikdash* a single *paroches* (curtain) separated the *heichal* from the *kodshei kodashim* and that it was folded back a bit at its northern end to enable the *kohen gadol* to enter. Their point of disagreement is the route he took to reach this entrance.

Rabbi Meir contends that he walked between the golden altar and the table, which meant that his route traversed almost the center of the *heichal*. He did not set eyes on the *heichal* until he actually reached the *paroches*, turned right until the northern end and entered. Rabbi Yossi's opinion is that he walked between the table and the northern wall, so that he was in a direct line with the entrance to the *kodshei kodashim*.

Rabbi Meir explains his position by pointing out that it would be disrespectful to the *kodshei kodashim* to walk along a route that affords a view of its sacred interior all along the way. Rabbi Yossi's rejoinder is that Jews are so beloved by Hashem that this was not considered a problem.

Rabbeinu Chananel's explanation of Rabbi Yossi's statement is based on the difference between how the *kohen gadol* entered the sacred precincts of the *Beis Hamikdash* all year long and on Yom Kippur. All year long he was required to wear a special garment called a *meil* which had bells attached to its bottom hem "and its sound would be heard when he entered the sanctuary" (*Shmos* 28:35). This was like an envoy of the people announcing his arrival to the king and requesting permission to enter. On Yom Kippur, the *kohen gadol* entered the holiest of all areas without the *meil*, signifying that on this day he had a greater degree of privilege because of Hashem's love for the people he represented. There was therefore no need for him to hesitate walking along a route that offered a view of that holy area.

Rashi's approach is that Jews are so beloved by Hashem that they require no agent to bring their prayers before Him. Every Jew can pray directly to Hashem, as King Solomon put it in his prayer to Hashem at the dedication of the first *Beis Hamikdash* (*Melachim I* 8:38). Their emissary on Yom Kippur may therefore enter in such bold fashion.

The prayer of a Jew has a direct route to the *kodshei kodashim* from which it rises upwards to Heaven. Physical access to this sacred area is limited, however, to the emissary of all Jews — the *kohen gadol* on Yom Kippur. It therefore follows that he should, on that day, have the same free access and not hesitate to follow the most direct route to the *kodshei kodashim*.

Yoma 52a

Prepared by Ohr Somayach in Jerusalem, Israel

©1998 Ohr Somayach International - All rights reserved.

The Weekly Daf is available from several sources:

- World Wide Web: Our address is <http://www.ohr.org.il>
- Fax and Mail in Israel and US-MAIL in America. Send us a note requesting a subscription in Israel, or call 800-431-2272 in the US for details.
- E-Mail via InterNet. To subscribe, send the message "sub dafyomi {your full name}" to listproc@virtual.co.il

☎ 22 Shimon Hatzadik Street, POB 18103, Jerusalem Israel ☎ 972-2-581-0315 fax: 972-2-581-2890 ✉ info@ohr.org.il
☎ 38 East 29th Street 8th floor, New York, NY 10016, USA ☎ 1-212-213-3100 fax: 1-212-213-8717 ✉ RZCorlin@aol.com or estern@aol.com
☎ 613 Clark Avenue West, Thornhill, Ontario L4J 5V3, Canada ☎ 1-905-886-5730 fax: 1-905-886-6065 ✉ Somayach@MSN.com

Dedication opportunities are available for The Weekly Daf — Please contact us for details.

This publication contains words of Torah. Please treat it with due respect. Do not let this land on a garbage heap.

Issue #260 - Yoma 51-57

Production Design: Eli Ballon

For the week of 8-14 Adar 5759 / 24 February -2 March 1999

The Missing Ark

The high point of the Yom Kippur service in the *Beis Hamidkash* was when the *kohen gadol* entered the *kodesh kodashim* and placed the incense in front of the holy ark. Since there was no holy ark in the second *Beis Hamikdash*, the incense was placed on a stone which marked its place, and was called *even shesiah* — the foundation stone, from which, say our Sages, the creation of the world began.

What happened to the holy ark? One opinion in the *gemara* is that it was taken into Babylonian captivity along with the other sacred vessels. Another is that when King Yoshiyahu anticipated the imminent exile prophesied in the Torah (*Devarim 28:36*), he ordered the holy ark concealed in some secret subterranean passage to prevent its being taken into captivity.

But why did those who built the second *Beis Hamikdash* at the end of the Babylonian Exile not make a new holy ark? If they lacked the original one, either because it was in foreign hands or because its hiding place was unknown, why didn't they make a new one?

This question is raised by Rabbi Shmuel Strashan (*Rashash*). His approach in answering it is based on the Torah command "You shall place in the ark the testimony (the *luchos* upon which the Ten Commandments were etched)" (*Shmos 25:16*). This would seem to indicate that the purpose of the ark is to contain those sacred Tablets, and once they were gone there was no longer any need for an ark.

He notes, though, that some commentaries write that even though the *urim ve'tumim* were missing in the second *Beis Hamikdash*, the *choshen* breastplate which contained them (*Shmos 28:30*) was nevertheless worn by the *kohen gadol* to complete his full array of eight garments. If so, perhaps the ark, too, should have been made in order to complete the array of sacred vessels, even if it could not fulfill its primary purpose of housing the Tablets?

The same instruction of placing the Tablets in the ark, he explains, is repeated five passages later, and Rashi grapples with the need for this reiteration. It may be, *Rashash* suggests, that the reiteration is to stress that with no Tablets there is no need for the ark.

Yoma 53b

Prepared by **Ohr Somayach in Jerusalem, Israel**

©1998 Ohr Somayach International - All rights reserved.

The Weekly Daf is available from several sources:	• World Wide Web: Our address is http://www.ohr.org.il
	• Fax and Mail in Israel and US-MAIL in America . Send us a note requesting a subscription in Israel, or call 800-431-2272 in the US for details.
	• E-Mail via InterNet. To subscribe, send the message "sub dafyomi (your full name)" to listproc@virtual.co.il

22 Shimon Hatzadik Street, POB 18103, Jerusalem Israel	☎ 972-2-581-0315	☎ 972-2-581-2890	✉ info@ohr.org.il
38 East 29th Street 8 th floor, New York, NY 10016, USA	☎ 1-212-213-3100	☎ 1-212-213-8717	✉ RZCorlin@aol.com or estern@Aol.com
613 Clark Avenue West, Thornhill, Ontario L4J 5V3, Canada	☎ 1-905-886-5730	☎ 1-905-886-6065	✉ Somayach@MSN.com

Dedication opportunities are available for **The Weekly Daf** — Please contact us for details.

Production Design: Eli Ballon

This publication contains words of Torah. Please treat it with due respect. Do not let this land on a garbage heap.

Issue #260 - Yoma 51-57

For the week of 8-14 Adar 5759 / 24 February -2 March 1999