

The Weekly Daf



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Week of 13-19 Adar 5756 / 4-10 March 1996

Zevachim 58-64

Rav Weinbach's insights, explanations and comments for the 7 pages of Talmud studied in the course of the worldwide Daf Yomi cycle

Serving and Eating in the Master's Presence

The Rule:	Whereas the higher level of <i>korban</i> (<i>kodshei kodashim</i> - olah, chatas, asham) must be slaughtered in the northern part of the Sanctuary courtyard (<i>azarah</i>) the <i>shlamim</i> may be slaughtered in any part of this area, as the Torah states (Vayikra 3:2) "He shall slaughter it at the entrance to the <i>Ohel Moed</i> ." (The <i>Ohel Moed</i> or Tent of Assembly refers to the Sanctuary itself — the <i>heichal</i> in which the menorah, table and golden altar stood.)
Questions and Answers:	What if the <i>shlamim</i> was slaughtered in the <i>heichal</i> itself? Since the Torah declares that the "entrance to the <i>Ohel Moed</i> " qualifies as a site for the slaughter of the <i>shlamim</i> it implies that the <i>Ohel Moed</i> — or <i>heichal</i> — is the more qualified site. It is therefore logical to assume that if the secondary site qualifies then the primary one — the <i>heichal</i> — certainly does. May <i>kohanim</i> eat the flesh of the <i>kodshei kodashim</i> , which can not be eaten outside of the <i>azarah</i> , in the <i>heichal</i> ? Rabbi Yehuda ben Besaira ruled that if the Beis Hamikdash was under siege and the enemy was firing arrows and boulders into the <i>azarah</i> the <i>kohanim</i> could take shelter in the <i>heichal</i> and there eat the flesh of <i>kodshei kodashim</i> . He bases this on the passage (Bamidbar 18:10) which designates "the holy of holies" as the area in which the <i>kohanim</i> may eat this sacrificial flesh, a designation which certainly includes the <i>heichal</i> as well!
The Problem:	Why must this sage seek support from this passage when he could presumably have implemented the aforementioned logical extension that if the secondary site of the <i>azarah</i> qualifies for eating the sacred flesh then the primary site should certainly qualify?
The Resolution:	It is proper for a servant to perform service for his master in the master's presence. It is therefore logical to assume that if he can perform such a service — the slaughtering of <i>shlamim</i> — in a secondary site, farther removed from his Master, he can certainly do so in the primary site. It is not proper, however, for a servant to eat in his master's presence. Without the support of a specific passage we would therefore have assumed that such permission to eat was granted only in the secondary site and not in the primary site which is tantamount to eating in the Master's presence.

Zevachim 63a

Fig Leaves and Fires

For fueling the fire upon the altar from which coals would be taken for the offering of the incense (and for all the fires upon the altar) it was customary to take wood which came from a fig tree.

The fig tree referred to here must be one that grows wild and bears no edible fruit. Otherwise, it would be disqualified for use in the same way that the Mishna in the second perek of Mesechta Tamid disqualifies the wood of all fruit-bearing trees, by citing the examples of grape and olive trees. The reason given for this by Rabbi Acha bar Yaakov is to preserve the settlement of Eretz Yisrael for if there will be no wine or oil or figs to enjoy the land may become desolate.

But why did they insist on the fig tree?

Rashi explains that the leaves of the fig tree were the first items of plant life to be used in human effort for self improvement. When Adam became conscious of his nakedness following his sinful eating from the Tree of Knowledge he fashioned some garments for himself and his wife from fig leaves (Bereishis 3:7). It is therefore fitting that the wood from this tree be given priority in the effort of Adam's descendants to achieve self-improvement through the service of the Beis Hamikdash.

Zevachim 58a

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