

רבי שמעון בן יוחאי אומר: ארון גִּלְהָ לְבָבֶל, שְׁנָאֵמַר: "לֹא יוֹתֵר דְּבַר אָמַר ה'" – אֵלּוּ עֶשְׂרֵת הַדְּבָרוֹת שָׁבוּ.

Likewise, Rabbi Shimon ben Yoḥai says: The Ark was exiled to Babylonia, as it is stated: "Behold, the days come that all that is in your house, and that which your fathers have stored until this day, shall be carried to Babylonia; nothing [*davar*] shall be left, says the Lord" (Isaiah 39:6). These are the Ten Commandments [*dibrot*] that are inside it; they too shall not be left behind.

רבי יהודה (בן לקיש) אומר: ארון במקומו נגנו, שנאמר: "ויראו ראשי הַבַּדִּים מִן הַקֶּדֶשׁ עַל פְּנֵי הַדְּבִיר וְלֹא יֵרָאוּ הַחֻצָּה וַיְהִי שֵׁם עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה".

Rabbi Yehuda ben Lakish says: The Ark was buried in its place, as it is stated: "And the ends of the staves were seen from the sacred place before the partition, but they could not be seen without; and they are there to this day" (1 Kings 8:8). The expression "to this day" means forever, as the text might be read at any time. This teaches that the Ark is hidden in its place.

וּפְלִיגָא דְעוּלָא, דְאָמַר עוּלָא: שְׂאֵל רַבִּי מַתְיָא בֶן חֲרָשׁ אֶת רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן בֶּן יוֹחָאִי בְּרוֹמֵי: וְכִי מֵאַחַר שָׂרְבִי אֶלְיעֶזֶר מִלְמַדְנֵנוּ פַּעַם רִאשׁוֹנָה וְשֵׁנִיָּה אֶרֶון גִּלְהָ לְבָבֶל, רִאשׁוֹנָה – הָא דְאָמְרֵן "וַיְבִיֵאֵהוּ בְּבֶלְהָ עִם כְּלֵי חַמְדַּת בֵּית ה'", שְׁנִיָּה מַאי הִיא? דְכָתִיב: "וַיֵּצֵא מִבֵּית צִיּוֹן

The Gemara comments: And this opinion that the Ark was exiled to Babylonia disagrees with that of Ulla, as Ulla said: Rabbi Matya ben Ḥarash asked Rabbi Shimon ben Yoḥai in Rome: And since Rabbi Eliezer taught us once and twice, i.e., from two separate verses, that the Ark was exiled to Babylonia. The Gemara interrupts its citation of Rabbi Matya ben Ḥarash's question to identify these two verses. The first verse is that which we said: "And brought him to Babylonia, along with the precious vessels of the House of the Lord." What is the second verse? Rabbi Eliezer said: As it is written: "And gone from the daughter of Zion is

כָּל הַדְּרָה". מַאי "כָּל הַדְּרָה" – חֲדָרָה. אֵתָהּ מַאי אֵתָהּ אֹמֵר? אָמַר לוֹ: שְׂאֵנִי אֹמֵר אֶרֶון בְּמַקְוֵמוֹ נִגְנָנוּ, שְׁנָאֵמַר: "וַיֵּאָרְכוּ הַבַּדִּים" וְגו'.

all her splendor" (Lamentations 1:6). What is the meaning of: "All her splendor [*hadara*]"? It means: Her chamber [*hadra*],^N i.e., something that was hidden within the innermost chambers, namely the Ark. You, Rabbi Shimon ben Yoḥai, what do you say in response to this? He said to him: As I say, the Ark was buried in its place and not exiled, as it is stated: "And the staves were so long that the ends of the staves were seen from the sacred place before the partition, but they could not be seen without; and they are there to this day" (1 Kings 8:8).

אָמַר לֵיהּ רַבָּה לְעוּלָא: מַאי מְשַׁמַּע? דְכָתִיב: "וַיְהִי שֵׁם עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה". וְכָל הַיְכָא דְכָתִיב "עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה" לְעוֹלָם הוּא? וְהַכְּתִיב: "וְאֵת הַיְבוּסִי יוֹשֵׁב יְרוּשָׁלַם לֹא הוֹרִישׁוּ בְּנֵי בְנֵימִן וַיֵּשֶׁב הַיְבוּסִי אֶת בְּנֵי בְנֵימִן בִּירוּשָׁלַם עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה", הֲכִי נִמְי דְלֹא גָלוּ?

Rabba said to Ulla: From where in this verse may it be inferred that the Ark was buried in its place? Ulla replied that the source is as it is written: "And they are there to this day," which is referring to any day when one might read this sentence, i.e., forever. Rabba objected to this explanation: And is it the case that anywhere that it is written "to this day" it means forever, as opposed to the time when the verse was written? But isn't it written: "And the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites who inhabited Jerusalem; but the Jebusites dwelt with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem, to this day" (Judges 1:21)? So too here, let us say that the Jebusites were not exiled from Jerusalem.

וְהַתְנִיָּא, רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אֹמֵר: חֲמִשִּׁים וּשְׁתַּיִם שָׁנָה לֹא עָבַר אִישׁ בִּיהוּדָה, שְׁנָאֵמַר: "עַל הַהָרִים אֲשֶׁר בְּכִי וְנָהִי וְעַל נְאוֹת מִדְבַּר קִינָה כִּי נִצְתּוּ מִבְּלֵי אִישׁ עוֹבֵר וְלֹא שָׁמְעוּ קוֹל מִקְנֵה מַעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וְעַד בְּהֵמָה נִדְרָו הַלְכוּ". בְּהֵמָה' בְּגִימְטְרִיא חֲמִשִּׁין וּשְׁתַּיִם הוּוּ.

But wasn't it taught in a *baraita* that Rabbi Yehuda says: No person passed through the land of Judea for fifty-two years after the destruction of the Temple by Nebuchadnezzar, as it is stated: "I will raise crying and wailing for the mountains, and a lamentation for the pastures of the wilderness, for they have been burned, with no person passing through. And they do not hear the sound of the cattle; from the bird of the heavens to the beast [*behema*], all have fled and gone" (Jeremiah 9:9). *Behema*, spelled *beit, heh, mem, heh*, has a numerical value of fifty-two, alluding to the fact that no one passed through the land for fifty-two years.

NOTES

Hadara, hadra – הַדְּרָה, חֲדָרָה: Since the letters *heh* and *het* look and sound similar, they are often interchangeable, and the Sages make use of this variance in their interpretations of verses. *Hadra* in this context serves to emphasize that the verse is referring

to the Ark of the Covenant, which is located in the innermost chambers [*hadrei hadarim*], as well as the Torah, referred to as *hadara*, the splendor of the Jewish people (see *Iyyei HaYam* and *Maharsha*).

Brimstone – גַּפְרִית: Brimstone is a synonym for sulfur. Although some sulfur is beneficial to plants, too much of it can be harmful. Sulfur can be found near volcanic regions in the form of crystals.



Sulfur crystal



Sulfur mine

NOTES

Blamished priests – כַּהֲנִים בְּעֵלֵי מוּמִין: Priests with physical blemishes are prohibited from performing the Temple service, but they may be employed in certain tasks. One such job is guaranteeing that the wood for the altar is acceptable. Any wood that contains worms is discarded as repugnant.

And the staves were so long – וַיֵּאָרְכוּ הַבָּדִים: Some commentaries say that the staves were twelve cubits long or even more, and would therefore protrude against the curtain so that their presence could be detected on the other side. Other authorities claim that the staves would elongate miraculously, beyond their original length (see Rabbi Yoshiya Pinto and *Ein Ya'akov*).

וַתִּנָּא רַבִּי יוֹסֵי אוֹמֵר: שְׁבַע שָׁנִים נִתְקַיְמָה גְּפִרִית וּמַלַּח בְּאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל. וְאָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: מֵאֵי טַעְמָא דְרַבִּי יוֹסֵי – אֲתֵינָא 'בְּרִית' 'בְּרִית'. בְּתֵיב הַכָּא: 'וְהִגְבִּיר בְּרִית לְרַבִּים שְׁבוּעָה אֶחָד' וְכֵתִיב הֵתָם: 'וְאָמְרוּ עַל אֲשֶׁר עָבְדוּ אֶת בְּרִית ה' אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתָם'.

And it was taught in another *baraita* that Rabbi Yosei says: For seven years a curse of brimstone⁸ and salt endured in Eretz Yisrael, rendering it unfit for human habitation. And Rabbi Yoḥanan said: What is the rationale of Rabbi Yosei; from where does he learn this? It is derived from a verbal analogy between “covenant” and “covenant.” It is written here: “And he shall make a firm covenant with many for one week” (Daniel 9:27), i.e., seven years. And it is written there: “And that its entire land is brimstone and salt ... They shall say: Because they forsook the covenant of the Lord, the God of their fathers” (Deuteronomy 29:22; 24). Evidently, the Jebusites must have been exiled from Jerusalem, which proves that the phrase “to this day” does not always mean forever.

אָמַר לֵיהּ: הַכָּא כְּתִיב 'שָׁם' הֵתָם לֹא כְּתִיב 'שָׁם'. וְכֹל הֵיכָא דְכְּתִיב 'שָׁם' לְעוֹלָם הוּא. מִיתִיבֵי: 'וַיִּמָּהֵם מִן בְּנֵי שִׁמְעוֹן הִלְכוּ לְהָר שֵׁעִיר אֲנָשִׁים חֲמִשׁ מֵאוֹת וּפְלִטְיָה וְנַעֲרָיָה וְרַפְּיָה וְעוֹזַיָּאל בְּנֵי יִשְׁעִי בְּרֵאשִׁית וַיַּכּוּ אֶת שְׂאֵרֵיטַהּ הַפְּלִיטָה לְעַמְלֶק וַיֵּשְׁבוּ שָׁם עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה'.

Ulla said to him: Here, with regard to the Ark, it is written: “And they are there”; whereas there, in the verse that deals with the Jebusites, it is not written. And anywhere that “there” is written with the phrase “to this day” it means forever. The Gemara raises an objection from the following verse: “And some of them, even of the sons of Simeon, five hundred men, went to Mount Seir having for their captains Pelatiah and Neariah and Rephaiah and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi. And they smote the remnant of the Amalekites who escaped, and dwelt there to this day” (1 Chronicles 4:42–43).

וְכִבְר עֲלֵה סַנְחֵרִיב מֶלֶךְ אַשּׁוּר וּבְלִבְל כָּל הָאֲרָצוֹת, שְׁנֵי אֲמָר: 'וְאֶסְרִי גְבוּלוֹת עַמִּים וְעַתּוּדוֹתֵיהֶם שׁוֹשְׁתִּי! תִּיּוֹבְתָא'.

The Gemara explains its objection: But Sennacherib, king of Assyria, had already come, and through his policy of forced population transfer he had scrambled all the nations of the lands, as it is stated in reference to Sennacherib: “And I have removed the bounds of the peoples, and have robbed their treasures” (Isaiah 10:13). This indicates that the children of Simeon were also exiled, despite the fact that the verse states: “There to this day.” The Gemara concludes: Indeed, this is a conclusive refutation of Ulla’s statement.

אָמַר רַב נַחֲמָן, תֵּנָא: וְחַכְמֵי אוּמְרִים אַרְוֹן בְּלִשְׁכַּת דִּיר הַעֲצִים הֵיךָ גָּנוּ. אָמַר רַב נַחֲמָן בַּר יִצְחָק, אִף אֲנִי נִמְי תִּינָנָא: מַעֲשֶׂה בְּכַהֵן אֶחָד שְׁהֵיךָ מִתְּעַסֵּק, וְרָאָה רְצָפָה מְשׁוּנָה מִחִבְרוֹתֶיהָ, וּבָא וְהוֹדִיעַ אֶת חֲבִירוֹ, וְלֹא הִסְפִּיק לְגַמְרוֹ אֶת הַדְּבָר עַד שִׁנְיָתָה נִשְׁמָתוֹ, וַיְדַע בִּיחּוּד שְׁשָׁם אַרְוֹן גָּנוּ.

Rav Nahman said that a Sage taught in the *Tosefta*: And the Rabbis say that the Ark of the Covenant was buried in the Chamber of the Woodshed. Rav Nahman bar Yitzḥak said: We, too, have learned in a mishna: There was an incident involving a certain priest who was occupied with various matters, and he saw a floor tile in the woodshed that was different from the others. One of the marble floor tiles was higher than the rest, suggesting it had been lifted out and replaced. He came and informed his friend of the uneven tile, but was unable to finish his report and provide the exact location of the tile before his soul departed from his body. And consequently they knew definitively that the Ark was buried there, but its location was meant to be kept secret.

מֵאֵי הוּא עֵבִיד? אָמַר רַבִּי חֵלְבּוֹ: מִתְּעַסֵּק בְּקִרְדּוֹמוֹ הֵיךָ. תֵּנָא דְבִי רַבִּי יִשְׁמַעֵאל: שְׁנֵי כַּהֲנִים בְּעֵלֵי מוּמִין הָיוּ מִתְּלִיעִין בְּעֲצִים, וְנִשְׁמָטָה קִרְדּוֹמוֹ שֶׁל אֶחָד מֵהֶם וְנִפְלָה שָׁם, וַיִּצְתָה אֵשׁ וְאֶכְלָתוּ.

The Gemara asks: What was he doing, that priest who noticed the misplaced tile? Rabbi Helbo said: He was occupied with his axe, i.e., he was banging the floor with his axe. He thereby discovered an empty space under a tile, which he guessed was the opening of a tunnel. The school of Rabbi Yishmael taught: Two blemished priestsⁿ were sorting wormy wood when the axe of one of them dropped and fell there, into the hole in the floor. Blemished priests were appointed to inspect the wood for worms, as these logs were unfit for use on the altar. And fire burst out and consumed that priest, so the exact location remains unknown.

רַב יְהוּדָה רִמֵּי: כְּתִיב 'וַיִּרְאוּ רֵאשֵׁי הַבָּדִים' וְכֵתִיב 'וְלֹא יִרְאוּ הַחוּצָה' – הָא כִּי צִיָּד? נִרְאִין וְאִין נִרְאִין. תֵּנָא נִמְי הֵי: 'וַיִּרְאוּ רֵאשֵׁי הַבָּדִים' יָכוֹל לֹא יְהוּ זִוּין מִמְקוֹמָן – תִּלְמוּד לֹא מֵר: 'וַיֵּאָרְכוּ הַבָּדִים'. יָכוֹל יְהוּ מְקַרְעִין בְּפָרוֹכַת וַיִּצְאִין – תִּלְמוּד לֹא מֵר: 'וְלֹא יִרְאוּ הַחוּצָה'.

§ Rabbi Yehuda raised a contradiction. It is written: “The ends of the staves were seen,” and it is written in that same verse: “But they could not be seen without” (1 Kings 8:8). How can one reconcile this contradiction? They were seen and yet not seen, i.e., the staves were partially visible. This was also taught in a *baraita*: “The ends of the staves were seen”; one might have thought that they did not move from their position and did not protrude at all. Therefore, the verse states: “And the staves were so long.”ⁿ One might have thought that they ripped through the curtain and emerged on the other side; therefore, the verse states: “They could not be seen without.”

Clinging to one another – מעורים זה בזה – The *Me'iri* explains that the wings of the cherubs touched one another, and it was this contact that symbolized the connection between the Jewish people and the Holy One, Blessed be He, whose relationship is like that of a husband and wife. Indeed, this metaphor for the ties between the Jewish people and God appears frequently in the Prophets.

She is modest in the presence of her husband, etc. – צנועה מבעלה וכו' – The *Me'iri* states that in the days of the First Temple the nation was on a sufficiently high spiritual level to witness the symbol of the Jewish people clinging to God. However, in the Second Temple era the nation's spiritual level dropped, and therefore the image of the cherubs was hidden from them.

הא כיצד – דוחקין ובוֹלְטִין וְיוֹצְאִין בְּפְרוֹכֹת, וְנִרְאִין בְּשֵׁנֵי דְדֵי אִשָּׁה, שְׁנֵי אֲמֹר: "צָרוֹר הַמּוֹר דּוֹדֵי לִי בֵּין שְׂדֵי יְלִינִי".

אמר רב קטינא: בשעה שהיו ישראל עולין לרגל מגלילין להם את הפרוכת, ומראין להם את הכרובים שהיו מעורים זה בזה, ואומרים להן: ראו חבתכם לפני המקום כחבת זכר ונקבה.

מתיב רב חסדא: "ולא יבואו לראות כבלע את הקדש" ואמר רב יהודה אמר רב: בשעת הכנסת בלים לנרתק שלהם!

אמר רב נחמן: משל לכלה, כל זמן שהיא בבית אביה – צנועה מבעלה, כיון שבאתה לבית חמיה – אינה צנועה מבעלה.

מתיב רב חנא בר רב קטינא: מעשה בכהן אחד שהיה מתעסק וכו'! אמר ליה: נתגרשה קא אמרת, נתגרשה – חזרו לחיבתה הראשונה.

במאי עסקינן? אי נימא במקדש ראשון – מי הואי פרוכת? אלא במקדש שני – מי הואי כרובים? לעולם במקדש ראשון, ומאי פרוכת – פרוכת דבבי.

דאמר רבי זירא אמר רב: שלשה עשר פרוכות היו במקדש, שבעה בנגד שבעה שערים, שתים אחת לפתחו של היכל ואחת לפתחו של אולם, שתים בדביר, ושתים בנגדן בעליה.

How is this so? The staves of the Ark pushed and protruded and stuck out against the curtain toward the outside, and appeared like the two breasts of a woman pushing against her clothes. As it is stated: "My beloved is to me like a bundle of myrrh, that lies between my breasts" (Song of Songs 1:13). For this reason the Ark of the Covenant, where the Divine Presence rests, is positioned so that its staves protrude through the curtain, like the breasts of a woman.

Continuing the previous discussion, Rav Ketina said: When the Jewish people would ascend for one of the pilgrimage Festivals, the priests would roll up the curtain for them and show them the cherubs, which were clinging to one another,^N and say to them: See how you are beloved before God, like the love of a male and female. The two cherubs symbolize the Holy One, Blessed be He, and the Jewish people.

Rav Hisda raised an objection: How could the priests allow the people to see this? After all, it is stated with regard to the Tabernacle: "But they shall not go in to see the sacred objects as they are being covered, lest they die" (Numbers 4:20), and Rav Yehuda said that Rav said: When the vessels were put into their containers for transport, it was prohibited even for the Levites to look at them. The prohibition against viewing the vessels should be even more severe when they are fixed in their sacred place within the Temple. How could they be publicly displayed?

Rav Nahman said in answer: This is analogous to a bride; as long as she is engaged but still in her father's house, she is modest in the presence of her husband.^N However, once she is married and comes to her father-in-law's house to live with her husband, she is no longer modest in the presence of her husband. Likewise, in the wilderness, when the Divine Presence did not dwell in a permanent place, it was prohibited to see the sacred objects. By contrast, all were allowed to see the sacred objects in their permanent place in the Temple.

Rav Hana bar Rav Ketina raised an objection from the aforementioned mishna: There was an incident involving a certain priest who was occupied and discovered the place where the Ark was hidden, and he subsequently died before he could reveal its location. Since he was prevented from seeing the Ark, it was evidently prohibited to see the sacred objects even after the Temple was built. Rav Nahman said to him: This is not difficult, as you are speaking of when she was divorced. Since the Jewish people were exiled after the destruction of the First Temple, they are compared to a woman divorced from her husband, and when a woman is divorced she returns to her original beloved but reserved state. She is once again modest and does not reveal herself. Likewise, the Divine Presence will remain hidden until the glory of the First Temple is restored.

The Gemara poses a question concerning Rav Ketina's statement: With what are we dealing here; in what circumstance did the priests roll up the curtain to show everyone the cherubs? If we say this is referring to the First Temple, was there a curtain between the Sanctuary and the Holy of Holies? In the First Temple, there was a wall there. Rather, we will say this is referring to the Second Temple; but were there cherubs there? Since there was no Ark, it follows that there were no cherubs on it. The Gemara answers: Actually, Rav Ketina is referring to the First Temple, and what is the curtain that he mentioned? It is the curtain of the gates. For all of the Jewish people to be able to see, they had to raise the curtains hanging on all the gates.

As Rabbi Zeira said that Rav said: There were thirteen curtains in the Second Temple: Seven opposite, i.e., on the inside of, seven gates; two additional ones within the Temple, one of which was at the entrance to the Sanctuary and the other one of which was at the entrance to the Entrance Hall. Two additional curtains were within the partition, in the Holy of Holies in place of the one-cubit partition, and two corresponding to them were above in the upper chamber. Above the Holy of Holies, there was another level in the same layout as the one below, and a curtain was affixed there, too, as no one climbed up to the higher chamber above the Holy of Holies without a pressing need. These curtains were most likely hanging in the First Temple as well.

רב אחא בר יעקב אָמַר: לְעוֹלָם בְּמִקְדָּשׁ שְׁנֵי וְכוּרֹבִים דְּצוּרְתָא הָווּ קַיִימֵי דְכְּתִיב "וְאָת כָּל קִירוֹת הַבַּיִת מִסָּב קָלַע כְּרוּבִים וְתַמְרוֹת וּפְטוּרֵי צִיצִים וְצַפָּה וְזָב מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל עַל הַמְּחוּקָה"

Rav Aḥa bar Ya'akov said: Actually, Rav Ketina's statement is referring to the **Second Temple**: There was a curtain at the entrance of the Holy of Holies, and indeed there were images of cherubs there, i.e., drawn or engraved pictures of the cherubs on the walls. As it is written: "And he carved all the walls of the house round about with carved figures of cherubs and palm trees and open flowers, within and without" (1 Kings 6:29), and it is further stated: "And he overlaid them with gold fitted upon the graven work" (1 Kings 6:35), which teaches that in addition to the cherubs within the sacred place, other cherubs were drawn on the walls.

וְכַתִּיב: "כְּמַעַר אִישׁ וְלוֹיוֹת". מֵאֵי "כְּמַעַר אִישׁ וְלוֹיוֹת"? אָמַר רַבָּה בַּר רַב שֵׁילָא:

And it is written: "According to the space of each with *loyot*" (1 Kings 7:36). The Gemara asks: What is the meaning of: "According to the space of each with *loyot*"? Rabba bar Rav Sheila said:

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בְּאִישׁ הַמְּעוֹרָה בְּלוּיָהּ שְׁלוֹ. אָמַר רִישׁ לְקִישׁ: בְּשַׁעָה שְׁנַכְנְסוּ גוֹיִם לְהִיבֵל רָאוּ כְּרוּבִים הַמְּעוֹרִין זֶה בְּזֶה, הוֹצִיאוּן לְשׁוּק וְאָמְרוּ: יִשְׂרָאֵל הִלְלוּ, שְׁבָרְכֵתָן בְּרַכָּה וְקָלְלֵתָן קָלְלָהּ, יַעֲסִקוּ בְּדַבְרֵיהֶם הִלְלוּ! מִיָּד הַיְּהוּדִים, שְׁנֵאָמַר "כָּל מְכַבְּדֵיהָ הַיְּהוּדִים כִּי רָאוּ עֲרוֹתָהּ".

It means like a man joined and clinging to his *livaya*, his partner, i.e., his wife. In other words, the cherubs appeared to be embracing one another. Reish Lakish said: When gentiles destroyed the Second Temple and entered the Sanctuary, they saw these drawings of cherubs clinging to one another.^N They peeled them from the wall, took them out to the market, and said: These Jews, whose blessing is a blessing^N and whose curse is a curse, due to their great fear of God, should they be occupied with such matters, making images of this kind? They immediately debased and destroyed them, as it is stated: "All who honored her debase her because they have seen her nakedness" (Lamentations 1:8).

"וְיִשְׁתִּיָּהּ הַיְּתֵה נִקְרָאת". תָּנָא: שְׁמִמְנָה הַיְּשֻׁתֵת הָעוֹלָם. תַּנְּן בְּמֵאֵן דְּאָמַר מִצִּיּוֹן נִבְרָא הָעוֹלָם. דְּתַנְּיָא, רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר אוֹמַר: עוֹלָם מֵאֲמָצְעֵיתוֹ נִבְרָא. שְׁנֵאָמַר: "בְּצִקָּת עֶפְרוֹ לְמוֹצֵק וְרִגְבִים יְדוּבְקוֹ".

The mishna taught that a stone sat in the Holy of Holies and it was called the foundation [*shetiyya*] rock. A Sage taught in the *Tosefta*: Why was it called *shetiyya*? It is because the world was created [*hushtat*] from it. The Gemara comments: We learned the mishna in accordance with the opinion of the one who said that the world was created from Zion. As it was taught in a *baraita* that Rabbi Eliezer says: The world was created from its center, as it is stated: "When the dust runs into a mass, and the clods cleave fast together" (Job 38:38). The world was created by adding matter to the center, like the formation of clumps of earth.^N

רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אוֹמַר: עוֹלָם מִן הַצְּדָדִין נִבְרָא, שְׁנֵאָמַר: "כִּי לְשֹׁלֵג יֹאמַר הָיוּ אֶרֶץ וְגֶשֶׁם מִטֵּר וְגֶשֶׁם מִטְרוֹת עוֹזוֹ". רַבִּי יִצְחָק (נִפְתָּא) אָמַר: אֲבָן יָרָה הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא בִּיָּם, מִמֶּנּוּ נִשְׁתַּת הָעוֹלָם, שְׁנֵאָמַר: "עַל מָה אֲדִנְיָהּ הִטְבְּעוּ אוֹ מִי יָרָה אֲבָן פְּנֵתָהּ".

Rabbi Yehoshua says: The world was created from the sides, as it is stated: "For He said to the snow: Become the earth, likewise to the shower of rain, and to the showers of His mighty rain" (Job 37:6). This verse indicates that the rains fell from all sides, which led to the creation of the earth. Rabbi Yitzhak Nappaḥa said: The Holy One, Blessed be He, cast a stone into the sea, from which the world was created, as it is stated: "Upon what were its foundations fastened; or who laid its cornerstone?" (Job 38:6).

וְחַכְמִים אוֹמְרִים: מִצִּיּוֹן נִבְרָא, שְׁנֵאָמַר: "מִזְמוֹר לְאַסָּף אֵל אֱלֹהִים ה'" וְאוֹמַר: "מִצִּיּוֹן מִכְּלָל יוֹפִי" – מִמֶּנּוּ מוֹכְלָל יָפִי שֶׁל עוֹלָם.

And the Rabbis say: The world was created from Zion, as it is stated: "A Psalm of Asaph. God, the Lord God has spoken and called the earth, from the rising of the sun to its place of setting" (Psalms 50:1), and it states: "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God has shined forth" (Psalms 50:2). The mishna is taught in accordance with this last opinion.

NOTES

רָאוּ כְּרוּבִים – They saw cherubs clinging to one another – הַמְּעוֹרִין זֶה בְּזֶה: The early commentaries ask: Since the Talmud claims that the cherubs clung to one another only when the Jewish people obeyed God's will, why were they not they separated at the time of the Temple's destruction? One suggestion is that a special miracle was performed in order to shame the Jews. According to another opinion, this Gemara is referring to the drawn images of the cherubs, which always clung to one another. Yet others explain that the destruction of the Temple atoned for the sins of the Jewish people, and therefore the cherubs were embracing (see Ritva; Maharsha; Rabbi Yoshiya Pinto).

שְׁבָרְכֵתָן בְּרַכָּה – Whose blessing is a blessing – Some commentaries say that this statement alludes to the promise made to Abraham: "And I will bless them who bless you, and he who curses you I will curse" (Genesis 12:3). Others suggest that it is referring to the blessings and curses recited on Mount Gerizim, which include the prohibition against fashioning images and idols, as stated explicitly in Deuteronomy 27:15: "Cursed be the man who makes a graven or molten image, an abomination to the Lord..." (Maharsha; *Iyyun Ya'akov*).

מִיָּהֵן נִבְרָא הָעוֹלָם – From where was the world created – None of these claims are meant literally; rather, each alludes to a different perspective on the nature of the world and the order of its creation. Was the world created from a central point, or were all parts created equal? Those who say that earth was created from Zion maintain that the world was founded on a point of inner sanctity, the true center of its being (*Minḥat Hinnukh*).

NOTES

The generations of the heavens were created from the heavens – תולדות שמים משמים נבראו – This opinion indicates that the heavens comprise the upper worlds, which are of a different nature than the earth and all physical objects. Conversely, the Rabbis maintain that an element of sanctity unites the material and the spiritual, and therefore Zion is the center of the world from which both the spiritual heavens and physical earth were created (Rabbi Yoshiya Pinto; *Yefat To'ar*).

תנא רבי אליעזר הגדול אומר: "אלה תולדות השמים והארץ בהבראם ביום עשות ה' אלהים ארץ ושמים." תולדות שמים – משמים נבראו, תולדות הארץ – מארץ נבראו.

It was taught in a *baraita* that Rabbi Eliezer the Great says: "These are the generations of the heaven and the earth when they were created, on the day that the Lord God made earth and heaven" (Genesis 2:4) means that the generations of the heavens, i.e., all things found in the heavens, were created from the heavens,ⁿ while the generations of the earth were created from the earth.

וחכמים אומרים: אילו ואלו מציון נבראו, שנאמר: "מזמור לאסף אל אלהים ה' דבר ויקרא ארץ ממזרח שמש עד מבואו" ואומר: "מציון מכלל יופי אלהים הופיע" – ממנו מוכלל יופיו של עולם.

And the Rabbis say: Both these and those were created from Zion, as it is stated: "A Psalm of Asaph. God, the Lord God has spoken and called the earth, from the rising of the sun to its place of setting," and it says: "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God has shined forth," i.e., from Zion the beauty of the world was perfected, which includes both the generations of the heavens and the generations of the earth.

"נטל את הדם ממי שממרס בו" וכו'. מאי במצליף? מחו רב יהודה:

§ The mishna taught that the High Priest took the blood of the bull from the one who was stirring it so it would not coagulate, and he entered and sprinkled it like one who whips. The Gemara asks: What is the meaning of: Like one who whips? Rav Yehuda demonstrated the action with his hand,

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Like one who lashes with a whip – כמנגדנא – The commentaries debate the exact nature of this comparison to a whip. Some suggest that it is referring to the forty lashes struck on the back and the front of a criminal. The agent of the court administering the lashes had to change his hand position from above to below, so as to hit each side (*Sefer HaYashar*; see *Arukh*; *Me'iri*; Rabbeinu Hananel). Others explain that the sprinkling is like a whip in that the High Priest raises his hand only slightly, enough to strike a blow (*ge'onim*). Another interpretation is that the sprinkling is similar to whipping because the priest did not aim at an exact location, just as one who lashes does not strike a precise location (*Me'iri*).

כמנגדנא. תנא: כשהוא מזה – אינו מזה על הכפורת אלא כנגד עוביה של כפורת. כשהוא מזה למעלה – מצדד ידו למטה, וכשהוא מזה למטה – מצדד ידו למעלה.

like one who lashes with a whipⁿ on the back of another and who occasionally strikes lower down. A Sage taught in the *Tosefta*: When the High Priest sprinkles the blood, he does not sprinkle on the top of the Ark cover; rather, he does so against the thickness of the Ark cover. When he sprinkles once upward, he turns his hand so that the back of his hand faces downward, and he then sprinkles upward. And when he sprinkles seven times downward, he turns his hand so its back is upward. However, he does not sprinkle on the Ark cover or below it, so that the blood does not actually come into contact with it.

מנא הני מילי? אמר רב אחא בר יעקב אמר רבי זירא: אמר קרא 'והזה אותו על הכפורת ולפני הכפורת'. לא יאמר למטה בשעיר, דלא צריך, דגמר ממטה דפר.

The Gemara asks: From where are these matters, that the sprinklings do not actually touch the Ark cover, derived? Rav Aha bar Ya'akov said that Rabbi Zeira said: The verse states with regard to the goat sacrificed as a sin-offering: "And he shall do with its blood as he did with the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it upon the Ark cover and before the Ark cover" (Leviticus 16:15). The verse should not say downward, i.e., "before the Ark cover," with regard to the goat, as this is unnecessary; this requirement is derived from the term downward in connection with the bull.

למה נאמר – לאקושי על' לפני: מה לפני דלאו על – אף על' דלאו על.

Since the rite performed with the blood of the goat is compared to the rite of the blood of the bull, why is the requirement that the High Priest must sprinkle downward stated twice? It is to juxtapose the phrase "upon the Ark cover" to "before the Ark cover"; just as "before" means that it is not actually on the Ark cover but merely in front of it, so too, "upon" means that it is not actually on the Ark cover but in front of it, and the High Priest simply turns his hand upward.

אדרבה, לא יאמר למעלה בפר דלא צריך, דגמר ממעלה דשעיר, למה נאמר – לאקושי לפני לעל. מה על – על ממש, אף לפני – על ממש!

The Gemara raises a difficulty: On the contrary, the verse should not say upward, i.e., "before the Ark cover," with regard to the bull, as this is unnecessary; it is derived from the term upward stated in connection to the goat. Since the verse equates the two rituals, why does it state the upward sprinkling of the blood of the bull? It is to juxtapose the phrase "before the Ark cover," stated with regard to the bull, to "upon the Ark cover," stated with regard to the goat; just as "upon" stated by the goat means actually upon, as indicated by the literal meaning of the verse, so too, "before" means actually upon it, i.e., the blood of the goat should touch the thickness of the Ark cover.