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Har Ha'Bayit

The first *Mishnah* of the second *perek* in *Masechet Midot* discusses the dimensions of *Har Ha'Bayit* (500 x 500 *amot*) which was much larger than the area required for the *Beit Ha'Mikdash*. The *Mishnah* then discusses how the additional space surrounding the Mikdash was distributed. The majority of the area was in the South, followed by the East, North and West. The *Mishnah* outlines that the South side received most of the area as this was the area most widely used.

The *Tosefot Yom Tov* cites a practical reason that the South side of *Har Ha'Bayit* was the largest. This is because most of the buildings in Jerusalem and the way in which most people traveled to *Har Ha'Bayit* was by way of the South. This is based upon a *pasuk* in *Yechezkel*, "...and set me upon a very high mountain, upon which was something like the structure of a city to the south"(40:3). Therefore, since most traffic was through this area, it was the largest and most inhabited area. The *Tosefot Yom Tov* follows his line of reasoning to explain why the East was the second largest area. This is because we learn in the next *Mishna* that all that enter into *Har Ha'Bayit* must go to the right. If one was walking from the South and turned right, the next direction he would come to is the East. Since the crowd would be flowing in this direction, there needed to be a larger space to accommodate them.

The *Tosefot Yom Tov* adds another reason as to why the South side was the largest which was stated by the *Shiltei Gibborim*. This is due to the fact that aside from the Temple chambers that are listed in this *Masechet*, there were a number of other chambers required for the Temple and those that served in it. These additional chambers (that are not listed in the *Mishnah*) were all located on the Southern side on *Har Ha'Bayit*. These additional structures and chambers included a *Beit Knesset*, *Beit Midrash*, two *Batei Din*, and additionally in Herod's time he built a number of halls on *Har Habayit*.¹

An interesting understanding is offered by the *Rosh*. The *Rosh* interprets the *Mishnah* as referring to the number of structures located on each side of *Har Ha'Bayit*. That is, the *Mishnah* is not referring to the *area* surrounding the *Beit Ha'Mikdash*, but rather the number of structures that were situated around this area. Following this explanation – the *Rosh* holds that most construction took place on the Southern side, followed by the East, North and West.

It can be seen that practically the *Rosh* does not necessarily disagree with the *Tosefot Yom Tov* and the *Shiltei Gibborim* on which side was larger. They differ in their interpretation of the *Mishnah*. Whereas the *Tosefot Yom Tov* and the *Shiltei Gibborim* interpret the *Mishnah* as referring to the physical area and space, the *Rosh* would hold that these words are in fact referring to the structures that are built in these areas..

Yehuda Gottlieb

¹ The *Mefarshim* all agree that there were additional structures built on *Har Ha'Bayit*. However, there is a disagreement over how many were built (see *Tosefet Yom Tov*).

Revision Questions

מדות א': ג' – ג': א'

- How many gates were in the wall surrounding *Har Ha'Bait*? (א': ג')
- Which of the gates was not used for access? (א': ג')
- What was different about the eastern gate and what was it used for? (א': ג')
- How many gates were in the wall surrounding the *Azarah* and where were they located? (א': ד')
- What were the names of the three gates on the northern wall? (א': ה')
- At which of those gates did both a *kohen* and *levi* stand watch? (א': ה')
- What were the three chambers inside the *Beit Ha'Moked*? (א': ו')
- Was the *Beit Ha'Moked* located in *kodesh* or *chol*? (א': ו')
- How many gates did the *Beit Ha'Moked* have? (א': ז')
- Describe the roof of the *Beit Ha'Moked*? (א': ח')
- Describe how the *kohanim* slept there? (א': ח')
- Where were the keys to the *Azarah* hidden? (א': ט')
- What would happen if a *kohen* needed to perform *tevilah* during the night? (א': ט')
- What are the dimensions of *Har Ha'Bait*? (א': י')
- What part had the largest area of empty space? (א': י')
- Describe how people must when enter *Har Ha'Bait*? (א': י')
- Who would enter in a different manner? (א': י')
- What was the name of the small fence that was just inside the fence of *Har Ha'Bait*? (א': י')
- How tall was that fence? (א': י')
- How many breaches did the *Yavanim* make in that fence and why is it important? (א': י')
- How many steps were there after this small fence and what was the space till those steps? (א': י')
- What were the dimensions of all the steps in the *Beit Ha'Mikdash* and which steps were the exception? (א': י')
- Which was the only entrance that did not have a door? (א': י')
- Which was the only gate that did not have a cross-beam? (א': י')
- Which was the only gate not made of gold? (א': י')
- Which wall was smaller than all the others and why? (א': י')
- What were the dimensions of the *Ezrat Nashim*? (א': י')
- What were the four chambers at each corner of the *Ezrat Nashim* and what were they used for? (א': י')
- What was different about these chambers? (א': י')
- How many steps were there from the *Ezrat Nashim* to the *Ezrat Yisrael*? (א': י')
- What were the chambers underneath the *Ezrat Yisrael* used for? (א': י')
- What divided the *Ezrat Yisrael* and the *Ezrat Kohanim*? (א': י')
- What were the dimensions of the *Azarah*? (א': י')
- List all the gates of the *Azarah*? (א': י')
- Describe the outer *mizbeach*? (א': י')
- What was the *chut ha'sikrah* and what was it used for? (א': י')

Local Shiurim

Sunday -Thursday

Between mincha & ma'ariv
Mizrachi Shul

Friday & Shabbat

10 minutes before mincha
Mizrachi Shul

Quick Thought

Mural of Shushan

The room above the Eastern gate had a picture of *Shushan HaBira* on it. *Amoraim* argue over the reason behind this

1. In order for the Jews to realise where they had come from (*Menachot* 95a)
2. To give praise to the Kingdom that allowed them to build the *Beit Ha'Mikdash* (*Rashi Menachot* 95a)
3. In order for the Jews to realise that they were exiled to Shushan because of their sins and in so doing they would remember their galut and the reasons for it (*Rabbeinu Chananel Pesachim* 86a)
4. In order to instill the fear of the Kingdom of Shushan into them to stop a possible rebellion.

Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קודש
1 st February א' שבט	2 nd February ב' שבט	3 rd February ג' שבט	4 th February ד' שבט	5 th February ה' שבט	6 th February ו' שבט	7 th February ז' שבט
Midot 3:2-3	Midot 3:4-5	Midot 3:6-7	Midot 3:8-4:1	Midot 4:2-3	Midot 4:4-5	Midot 4:6-7

