

Tuesday 5th of Menachem Av

ענייני בין המצרים

Moshiach Tidbit:

The Arizal stated: It was only in the past – in previous generations, that the secrets of Kabala were hidden, and one had to exercise great caution before revealing them. However, in these later generations, directly prior to the time of Moshiach, it is not only permissible, but it is actually a Mitzva to reveal the wisdom of Kabala.

Hilula of the Arizal

The 5th of Menachem Av is the Yohrtzeit of the Arizal (known as the Arizal HaChai). The Rebbe says that there are 3 important lessons that we must learn from the Arizal.

1. Toil in the study of Torah – when the Arizal would learn a Halacha, he would toil and exert himself to the fullest extent. We too must exert ourselves in the study & understanding of Torah.
2. Dedication to Mitzvos – when the Arizal performed a Mitzva, he did it with the greatest possible Hidur. In fact, he wouldn't haggle with the price, but pay the full amount of the asking price, when it came to buying a Mitzva. We too, must dedicate ourselves to beautifying Mitzvos in every possible manner.
3. Joy – Reb Chaim Vital said that everything that the Arizal merited was in the Z'chus of his Simcha Shel Mitzva – the great joy that he constantly had in the performance of Mitzvos. We, too, must constantly be in a state of joy especially when doing Mitzvos.

Siyum on Masechta Baba Basra

One of the Masechtos that is especially connected to the 9 days is Bava Basra. According to Kabala, the 3 Bavos correspond to the three Batei Mikdash, and Bava Basra corresponds to the completion of the 3rd Galus and the building of the 3rd Beis HaMikdash.

This is why the Gemara in Bava Basra speaks about the Beis HaMikdash a few times. In fact, there is specific discussions regarding the Ta'im / Tzl'os and the building of the walls of the Beis HaMikdash.

The Masechta begins with partners that wish to refrain from causing each other damage and do everything peacefully. It is this increase in Ahavas Chinam that brings about the Siyum of the final Galus and building of the 3rd Beis HaMikdash. The end of the Masechta speaks about an Arev, guarantor for a debt, and specifically one who Beis Din accepts his obligation to them, and this pleasure that he derives from the fact that Beis Din accepts him is enough to constitute his guarantee, so that he doesn't need a Kinyan. May we merit the fulfillment of the guarantee of Beis Din Shel Ma'ala for the coming of Moshiach and building of the 3rd Beis HaMikdash Now!

Lesson Thirteen

The Ezras Nashim

- *Midos Chapter 2 and 1*
- *Rambam Laws of Beis Habechira Chapter 5*
- *Yechezk'el Chapter 46 and 40*

Mishna - Tractate Midos

משנה (מידות)

פרק ב' Chapter 2

Mishna 5

משנה ה'

The women's court ¹ was one hundred and thirty-five Amos long by one hundred and thirty-five Amos wide.	עזרת הנשים הייתה ארך מאה ושלשים וחמש, על רחב מאה ושלשים וחמש.
There were four chambers on its four corners, forty Ama by forty Ama each ² .	וארבע לשכות היו בארבע מקצועות, של ארבעים ארבעים אמה.
They did not have roofs, and they will be the same in the future, as {Yechezk'el} says:	לא היו מקורות. וכן הן עתידות להיות, שנאמר:
"{The angel} took me out to the outer courtyard, and brought me to its four corners and behold there was a courtyard in the corner of the courtyard,	"ויוציאני אל החצר החיצונה, ויעברני אל ארבעת מקצועי החצר, והנה חצר במקצע החצר, חצר במקצע החצר,
{and} a courtyard in the {other} corner, on all four corners of the courtyard ³ ;	בארבעת מקצעות החצר

¹ The area that women were allowed to be in as well, as they were forbidden to be in the actual Azara. This courtyard was the place that people who weren't bringing a Korban at the time, would stand. It was a place to Daven, it was where the small Sanhedrin sat, and where the Simchas Beis HaSho'eiva took place (and Hakhel according to some opinions)

² In the 3rd Beis HaMikdash they will each be 40 Ama by 30 Ama

³ This too is different in the 2nd, that the Ezras Nashim is below the Azara. In the 3rd Beis HaMikdash the corners of the Ezras Nashim surround the Azara on all sides.

the {small} courtyards were made to let the smoke out ⁴ ;	הַצָּרוֹת קְטָרוֹת.
this implies that they had no roof.	וְאִין "קְטָרוֹת" אֵלֶּא שְׂאִינן מְקוּרוֹת.
What were they used for ⁵ ?	וּמָה הָיוּ מְשֻׁמְשׁוֹת?
The south eastern {chamber}	דְּרוֹמִית מְזֻרְחִית,
was the chamber of the Nazirites,	הִיא הָיְתָה לְשֵׁכֶת הַנְּזִירִים,
where they would cook their peace offering,	שְׁשֵׁם הַנְּזִירִים מִבְּשָׁלִים אֶת שְׁלַמֵּיהֶם,
and shave their hair	וּמְגַלְחִין אֶת שְׁעָרָם,
and burn it in the fire under the pot ⁶ .	וּמְשַׁלְחִים תַּחַת הַדּוּד.
The north eastern {chamber}	מְזֻרְחִית צְפוֹנִית,
was the chamber of the wood,	הִיא הָיְתָה לְשֵׁכֶת הָעֵצִים,
where the Kohanim who had a physical defect {and were therefore unfit for Avoda},	שְׁשֵׁם הַכֹּהֲנִים בְּעֲלֵי מוּמִין
would check the wood for worms.	מֵתֵלְעִים הָעֵצִים.
and any log that a worm was found in	וְכָל עֵץ שֶׁנִּמְצָא בּוֹ תוֹלַעַת,
was disqualified from being used upon the Mizbayach.	פָּסוּל מֵעַל גַּבֵּי הַמִּזְבֵּחַ.
The northwestern chamber	צְפוֹנִית מְעַרְבִית,
was the chamber of those who were recovering from Tzara'as ⁷ .	הִיא הָיְתָה לְשֵׁכֶת הַמְּצַרְעִין.
The southwestern chamber;	מְעַרְבִית דְּרוֹמִית,
Rabbi Eliezer Ben Ya'akov said:	אָמַר רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר בֶּן יְעֻקֵּב:
I forgot what it was used for.	שָׁכַחְתִּי מָה הָיְתָה מְשֻׁמְשֶׁת.
Aba Shaul says:	אָבָא שְׂאוּל אָמַר:
In it they would store wine & oil ⁸	שֵׁם הָיוּ נוֹתְנִין יַיִן וְשֶׁמֶן,
and it was referred to as the chamber of the oil.	וְהִיא הָיְתָה נִקְרָאת לְשֵׁכֶת בַּיִת שְׁמֹנֶה.

⁴ In the 3rd Beis HaMikdash, these rooms will be used to cook the meat of the Korbanos (that must be eaten in the Azara). For this reason, they will not be covered by roofs.

⁵ In the 2nd Beis HaMikdash there was no need for cooking rooms, they only made them to resemble the 3rd Beis HaMikdash.

⁶ As the Torah says, "The Nazir should take his hair and burn it in the fire that is under the peace offering"

⁷ There was a Mikve there for them to purify themselves.

⁸ For the Nesachim, the Mincha sacrifices, and lighting the Menora

{The walls of the Ezras Nashim} were plain walls {without a fence},	וְחִלְקָהּ הָיְתָה בְּרֵאשׁוֹנָה,
and they later surrounded them with a fence {so they should be like a balcony}	וְהִקִּיפוּהָ כְּצוֹצְטָרָה
and the women would watch from on top	שֶׁהַנָּשִׁים רוֹאוֹת מִלְּמַעְלָה,
and the men from below,	וְהָאֲנָשִׁים מִלְּמַטָּה,
so that they would not be mixed.	כְּדֵי שֶׁלֹּא יִהְיוּ מְעֻרְבִין.

The Rambam also mentions that there were stairs leading up to the balcony. There are different opinions as to whether this balcony remained thus all year as well. The main purpose was definitely for the Simchas Beis Hasho'eiva, as the sages wanted to prevent men & women from being together.

The Gemara also tells us that when doing so, they relied on the Pasuk in Yechezk'el that describes the balcony that will surround the entire Ezras Nashim in the 3rd Beis HaMikdash (although the purpose will be different, and on three of the sides – north, east & south, there will be chambers on the balcony).

There were fifteen steps ascending from the Ezras Nashim to the Ezras Yisrael	וְחֲמֵשׁ עֶשְׂרֵה מַעְלֹת עוֹלוֹת מִתּוֹכָהּ לְעֶזְרַת יִשְׂרָאֵל,
corresponding to the 15 chapters of Shir Hama'alos (song of ascent) in Tehilim upon which the Levites would sing.	כַּנִּגְדַּ חֲמֵשׁ עֶשְׂרֵה נְשִׁיר הַמַּעְלֹת שֶׁבְּתֵהִלִּים שֶׁעָלִיָּהֶם הַלְוִיִּם אוֹמְרִים בְּשִׁיר.
These steps were not straight rather they were rounded like a half circle.	לֹא הָיוּ טְרוּטוֹת, אֲלָא מְקֻפּוֹת כְּחֻצֵי גֶרֶן עֲגֻלָּה.

Mishna 6

משנה ו'

There were chambers below {the floor of} Ezras Yisrael	וְלִשְׁכוֹת הָיוּ תַּחַת עֶזְרַת יִשְׂרָאֵל,
open to the Ezras Nashim,	כְּתוֹחוֹת לְעֶזְרַת הַנָּשִׁים,
where the Levites would place their violins, harps,	נְשֻׁבִים הַלְוִיִּם נוֹתְנִין כְּנֹרוֹת וְנִבְלִים,
cymbals, and all types of musical instruments.	וּמִצְלָתִים, וְכֹל כְּלֵי נְשִׁיר
one hundred thirty five Amos long	אֶרְבָּע מֵאוֹת וּשְׁלֹשִׁים וְחֲמֵשׁ,
by eleven Amos wide,	עַל רֹחַב אֶחָת עֶשְׂרֵה.
and there was a border of tips of beams	וְרֵאשֹׁן פְּסָפְסִין מִבְּדִיל

to separate between the courtyard of the Israelites and the courtyard of Kohanim.

בין עזרת ישראל לעזרת הכהנים.

Rabbi Eliezer Ben Ya'akov says:

רבי אליעזר בן יעקב אומר:

There was a step the height of one Ama upon which the Duchan was placed,

מעלה היתה גבוהה אמה, והדוכן נתון עליה,

and in {the Duchan} were three steps, half an Ama each;

ובו שלוש מעלות של חצי חצי אמה

thus the Ezras Kohanim was higher than Ezras Yisrael

נמצאת עזרת הכהנים גבוהה מעזרת ישראל

by two and a half Amos.

שתי אמות ומחצה.

The entire Azara was

כל העזרה היתה

one hundred eighty seven Amos long

ארך מאה ושמונים ושבע,

by one hundred thirty five Amos wide,

על רחב מאה ושלשים וחמש.

and there were thirteen places where one was obligated to bow.

ושלש עשרה השתחויות היו שם.

Aba Yosi Ben Chanan says:

אבא יוסי בן חנן אומר:

{the 13 places one would bow} were opposite the thirteen gates.

כנגד שלשה עשר שערים.

The Mishna will now go on to specify the names and locations of each of the thirteen gates. The Gemara says that there are various opinions regarding the number of gates: most notably; five, seven, and thirteen. Although there cannot be an argument regarding facts, the Rebbe explains that there were many entrances to the Azara, and the discussion is which of them are considered as gates.

The {four} gates on the south {of the Azara} near the west were:

שערים דרומיים סמוכים למערב:

The high gate {the highest gate on the south, closest to the west},

שער העליון,

Fuel Gate {through which wood was brought in for the Mizbayach},

שער הדלק,

Gate of the First Born {where first-born animals that could be Shechted in any part of the Azara were brought in},

שער הבכורות,

and the Water Gate.

שער המים.

Why was it called the Water Gate?

ולמה נקרא שמו שער המים?

Since through it they would bring the jug of water to be poured on the Mizbayach during Sukos.

שָׁבוּ מִכְּנִיסִין צְלוּחִית שֶׁל מַיִם שֶׁל גָּסוּף בְּחֶג.

Rabbi Eliezer Ben Ya'akov says:

רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר בֶּן יַעֲקֹב אָמַר:

Through it {will be} the trickling water that in the future will go out under the Beis HaMikdash⁹.

בּו הַמַּיִם מִפְּכִים, הַעֲתִידִין לְהִיּוֹת יּוֹצְאִין מִתַּחַת מִפְתַּן הַבַּיִת.

On the other side, on the north near the west:

וּלְעִמָּתוֹ בַּצָּפוֹן סְמוּכִין לַמַּעֲרָב:

The Yechanya Gate,

שַׁעַר יְכָנְיָה,

The Korban Gate {for the Korbanos that must be Shechted on the north},

שַׁעַר הַקֶּרְבָּן,

the Women's Gate {where women would stand and watch (or do S'micha on) their Korban},

שַׁעַר הַנְּשִׁים,

the gate of the song {through which Levites would bring in their musical instruments}.

שַׁעַר הַשִּׁיר.

Why was it called the Yechanya Gate?

וְלָמָּה נִקְרָא שְׁמוֹ שַׁעַר יְכָנְיָהּ?

Because through it {King} Yechanya went out to Galus¹⁰.

שָׁבוּ יָצָא יְכָנְיָהּ בְּגָלוֹתוֹ.

In the east {from the Ezras Nashim} is the Nikanor Gate, and it had two small doors,¹¹

שְׁבַמְזֻרָת, שַׁעַר נִיקָנוֹר, וּשְׁנַי פִּשְׁפֻּשִׁין הָיוּ לוֹ,

one on the right and one on the left.

אֶחָד מִיְמִינוֹ, וְאֶחָד מִשְׂמָאלוֹ.

There were two gates on the west

וּשְׁנַיִם בַּמַּעֲרָב

Olding the keys to the AzaThat didn't have {a specific} name¹²:

לֹא הָיָה לָהֶם שֵׁם:

Chapter 1

פֶּרֶק א'

Mishna 8

מִשְׁנָה ח'

The Beis HaMoked (chamber of the lit fire) was a large domed room, surrounded {on the inside} by stone slabs

בֵּית הַמוֹקֵד, כִּפָּה, וּבֵית גָּדוֹל הָיָה, מִקָּה רֹבְדִין שֶׁל אֲבָן,

⁹ We will learn BEH at a later time that Yechezk'el saw a vision of water that will come out from the Holy of Holies, beginning as a mere trickle, and gain momentum as they go down the mountain, out of the Azara, until eventually becoming a raging river, whose water will bring about healing & miracles.

¹⁰ Before Yechanya was exiled to Bavel, he went into the Beis HaMikdash to Daven, and left through this gate

¹¹ Which are also considered in the thirteen gates

¹² Since they were rarely used

the elders of the בית אב would sleep there¹³, וזקני בית אב ישנים שם, ומפתחות העזרה בידם, and the young כהנים slept on the ground, each with his garment {beneath his head}. ופרחי כהנה, איש כסתו בארץ:

Mishna 6

משנה ו

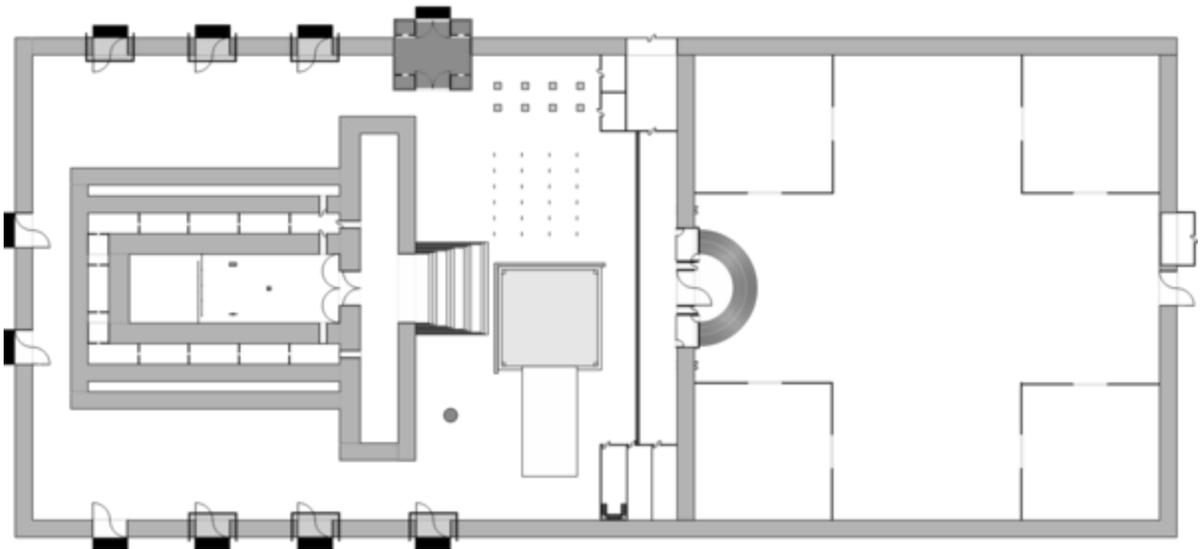
The בית המוקד ¹⁴ had four chambers	וארבע לשכות היו בבית המוקד
like small rooms that open into a big hall;	כקטונות פתוחות לטרקלין,
2 inside the עזרה and 2 on the outside	שתים בקדש ושתים בחל,
with a row of stones separating between the holy {area} and regular {area} ¹⁵ .	וראשי פספסין מבדילין בין קדש לחל.
What were these chambers used for?	ומה היו משמשות,
In the West Southern {chamber}	מערבית דרומית,
the [sheep] for קרבנות {were kept},	היא היתה לשכת [טלאי] קרבן.
in the South Eastern {chamber}	דרומית מזרחית,
the Show Breads ¹⁶ [were baked].	היא היתה לשכת [עושי] לחם הפנים.
In the East Northern {chamber},	מזרחית צפונית,
the Hasmonean family hid the stones of the Mizbayach that had been desecrated by the Greek kings {in the time prior to the Chanuka miracle}.	בה גנזו בני חשמונאי את אבני המזבח ששקצום מלכי יון.
In the North Western {chamber there were stairs} to descend to the מקוה.	צפונית מערבית, בה יורדים לבית הטבילה.

¹³ The בית אב was the group of כהנים whose turn it was to do the עבודה that week – the elders would sleep on the stone slabs, and the youngsters would sleep on the floor.

¹⁴ As we will learn, the בית המוקד is a large house in the North eastern gate of the Azara

¹⁵ The בית המוקד was built half inside the Azara and half outside. Because there were doors on both sides, the inside part had the holiness of the Azara and the outside part didn't.

¹⁶ The Southern chambers are the ones in the Kodosh (and were therefore used as such).



At the top right (highlighted) is the בית המוקד with its 4 chambers

Mishna 9

There was in the floor of that room
 a marble tile, the size of one cubit by one
 cubit, with a ring attached to it,
 and a chain with the keys {to the Azara}
 hanging {under this tile}.

When it would come time to lock up
 the Kohen lifted the tile by the ring,
 and take the keys from the chain;
 and lock {the gate} from the inside,

משנה ט

ומקום היה שם אמה על אמה
 וטבלא של שיש וטבעת היתה קבועה בה,

ושלשלת שהמפתחות היו תלויות בה.

הגיע זמן הנעילה,

הגביה את הטבלא בטבעת

ונטל את המפתחות מן השלשלת,

ונעל הכהן מבפנים,

and a Levite {guard} would sleep outside.

ובן לוי ישן לו מבחוץ.

When {the Kohen} finished locking up

גמר מלנעול,

he would replace the keys on the chain

החזיר את המפתחות לשלשלת.

and return the tile to its place,

ואת הטבלא למקומה,

cover {the tile} with his garment, and go to sleep.

נתן כסותו עליה, ישן לו.

If a {Kohen} became impure {during the night},

ארע קרי באחד מהם,

he would leave through the tunnel¹⁷ that is beneath the Beis HaMikdash¹⁸,

יוצא והולך לו במסבה ההולכת תחת הבירה,

where candles were lit on either side,

והנרות דולקים מכאן ומכאן,

until he came to the Mikve.

עד שהוא מגיע לבית הטבילה.

Rabbi Eliezer Ben Ya'akov says:

רבי אליעזר בן יעקב אומר:

He would leave through the tunnel that goes under the "Cheil"¹⁹,

במסבה ההולכת תחת החיל יוצא

and exit {the Temple Mount} using the Tedi Gate²⁰.

והולך לו בטדי.

Rambam Laws of the Beis

רמב"ם הל' בית הבחירה

Hab'chira

Chapter 5 פרק ה'

Halacha 4

הלכה ד'

Within the Cheil was the Azara, ; לפניו מן החיל, העזרה;

¹⁷ Some commentaries translate Mesiba - an elevator-like pulley used to descend to the tunnel.

¹⁸ A Tamei person can go in the tunnel since it doesn't have the sanctification of the Beis HaMikdash

¹⁹ Area outside the Beis HaMikdash. After a Ba'al Keri immerses in the Mikve, he is still a T'vul Yom until sunset, whom the Rabbinic law forbids from entering the Ezras Nashim (& Beis HaMoked), and Torah law forbids him from entering the Azara until after bringing a Korban the next day. The Tana Kama says, that he would nevertheless return to his place until the morning, as the Rabbinic addition doesn't apply since he became Tamei while inside. According to Rabbi Eliezer Ben Ya'akov, he would leave immediately, since as a T'vul Yom prohibited from returning to the Beis HaMoked.

²⁰ The Northern gate was used by people who wanted to stay away from crowds.

and the entire Azara was one hundred and eighty-seven Amos long by one hundred and thirty-five Amos wide, and it had seven gates, three on the north close to the west and three on the south close to the west, and one on the east parallel to the Holy of Holies in the center.

Halacha 5

Each of these gates was ten Amos wide and 20 Amos high, and had gold-plated gates, besides for the eastern gate which was made of copper that shone like gold;

this gate was called the Upper Gate and it is {also known as} the Nikanor Gate.

Halacha 6

The Azara wasn't exactly in the center of Har HaBayis, rather it was more distant from the south of Har HaBayis

than any of the other sides, and closer to the west than any other side, and between {the Azara} and the north was more {space} than between it and the west;

and between {the Azara} and the east was more than between it and the north.

Halacha 7

Before the Azara on the east side was the Ezras Nashim, which was one hundred thirty-five Amos long

וְכָל הָעֲזָרָה הָיְתָה אַרְבֵּי מֵאָה וּשְׁמוֹנִים וְשִׁבְעִי,

עַל רֹחַב מֵאָה וּשְׁלוֹשִׁים וְחָמֵשׁ.

וְשִׁבְעָה שַׁעֲרִים הָיוּ לָהּ

שְׁלוֹשָׁה מִן הַצָּפוֹן סְמוּכִין לַמְּעֲרָב,

וּשְׁלוֹשָׁה מִן הַדָּרוֹם סְמוּכִין לַמְּעֲרָב,

וְאֶחָד בַּמִּזְרָח

מִכְּנֹס פִּנְגֵד בֵּית קֹדֶשׁ הַקְּדוּשִׁים בְּאַמְצָע.

הַלְכָה ה'

כָּל שַׁעַר מֵהֵן,

הָיָה רֹחַבוֹ עֶשְׂרֵי אַמּוֹת וְגִבְהוֹ עֶשְׂרִים אַמָּה

וְהָיוּ לוֹ דְלֹתוֹת מְחֻפּוֹת זָהָב

חוּץ מִשַׁעַר מִזְרָחִי

שֶׁהָיָה נְחֹשֶׁת דּוֹמָה לְזָהָב,

וְשַׁעַר זֶה הוּא הַנִּקְנָא שַׁעַר הָעֶלְיוֹן,

וְהוּא שַׁעַר נִיקְנֹר.

הַלְכָה ו'

הָעֲזָרָה לֹא הָיְתָה מְכֻנָּת בְּאַמְצָע הַר הַבַּיִת,

אַלֵּא רְחוּקָה מִדָּרוֹם הַר הַבַּיִת

יְתֵר מִכָּל הָרְחוּחוֹת,

וְקָרוּבָה לַמְּעֲרָבוֹ יְתֵר מִכָּל הָרְחוּחוֹת;

וּבֵינָהּ וּבֵין הַצָּפוֹן

יְתֵר מִמָּה שְׁבִינָהּ וּבֵין הַמְּעֲרָב,

וּבֵינָהּ וּבֵין הַמִּזְרָח

יְתֵר מִמָּה שְׁבִינָהּ וּבֵין הַצָּפוֹן.

הַלְכָה ז'

וּלְפָנֵי הָעֲזָרָה בַּמִּזְרָח הָיְתָה עֲזָרַת הַנָּשִׁים,

וְהִיא הָיְתָה אַרְבֵּי מֵאָה וּשְׁלוֹשִׁים וְחָמֵשׁ

by one hundred and thirty-five Amos wide.
 There were four chambers in its four corners,
 of forty Amos by forty Amos;
 and they did not have roofs,
 which is the way they will be in the future.

Halacha 8

What was the use {of these chambers}?
 The south eastern {chamber}
 was the chamber of the Nazarites
 in which they would cook their peace
 offerings

and shave their hair;
 the north eastern {chamber}

was the chamber for storing wood
 in which the Kohanim who had a physical
 defect
 would check the wood for worms,
 since a log in which a worm was found was
 disqualified.

The north western {chamber} was the
 chamber of the Metzora'im,
 and in the south west {chamber}
 they would keep wine & oil,
 and it was known as the chamber of the oil.

Halacha 9

The Ezras Nashim was surrounded by a
 balcony,
 so that the women could see from above
 and the men from below,
 so that they shouldn't be mixed²¹.

על רחב מאה ושלושים וחמש.
 וארבע לשכות היו בארבע מקצועותיה,
 של ארבעים ארבעים אמה;
 ולא היו מקרות,
 וכן הן עתידין להיות.

הלכה ח'

ומה הן משמשות
 דרומית מזרחית
 לשפת הנזירים,

ששם מבשלין את שלמיהם
 ומגלחין את שערם;
 מזרחית צפונית
 לשפת דיר העצים,

ששם כוהנים בעלי מומין
 מתלעים בעצים,
 שכל עץ שנמצא בו תולעת, פסול;
 צפונית מערבית לשפת המצרעים;

מערבית דרומית
 בה היו נוהגין יין ושמן,
 והיא הייתה נקראת לשפת בית שמניה.

הלכה ט'

עזרת הנשים הייתה מקפת כצוץ טרה,
 כדי שיהיו הנשים רואות מלמעלה
 והאנשים מלמטה -
 כדי שלא יהיו מערבבין.

²¹ From the fact that the Rambam doesn't mention Simchas Beis Hasho'eiva, we could perhaps understand that it remained this way all year.

There was a large structure at the side of the Azara

ובית גדול היתה בצד העזרה,

on the north towards the outside between the Azara and the Cheil

בצפונה מבחוץ בין העזרה והחיל,

which was built as a dome and surrounded {on the inside} with stone slabs

והיה בנוי כיפה, ומקף רבדין של אבן;

and it was called the house of the fireplace.

והוא היתה נקרא בית המוקד.

It had two doors, one opened to the Azara, and one opened to the Cheil.

ושני פתחים היו לו-

אחד פתוח לעזרה,

ואחד פתוח לחיל.

Halacha 10

הלכה י'

{The Beis HaMoked} had within it four chambers, two in the holy part & two in the part that was not holy

וארבע לשכות היו בו,

שתיים קדש ושתיים חל;

and there were beams that indicated the division between holy and unholy.

וראשי פסיפסין מבדילין בין הקדש והחל.

What was the function of these rooms?

ומה היו ממשמשות-

The south western {chamber} was the chamber of the sheep {where the sheep for the Tamid were stored},

מערבית דרומית

לשפת הטלאים,

The south eastern {chamber} was the chamber where the showbread was baked;

דרומית מזרחית

לשפת עושי לחם הפנים,

the north eastern {chamber} was where the Hasmonean kings stored the stones of the Mizbayach that had been defiled by the Greek kings.

מזרחית צפונית

בה גנזו בית חשמונאי

אבני המזבח ששקצום מלכי יון,

The north western {chamber} is where they would descend to the Mikve.

צפונית מערבית

בה יורדין לבית הטבילה.

Halacha 11

הלכה י"א

One who would go down to the Mikve from this chamber

היורד לבית הטבילה מלשפה זו,

would walk in the tunnel **הָיָה הוֹלֵךְ בַּמְסָבָה**
that goes under the entire Beis HaMikdash **הַהוֹלֵקֶת תַּחַת הַמִּקְדָּשׁ כְּלוֹ**
and candles were lit from either side **וְהַנְּרוֹת דוֹלְקוֹת מִכָּאן וּמִכָּאן,**
until he reached the Mikve. **עַד שֶׁמָּגִיעַ לְבֵית הַטְּבִילָה.**
There was a fire burning {in that room} **וּמְדוּרָה הָיְתָה שָׁם,**
and a dignified restroom. **וּבֵית הַפֶּסֶא שֶׁל כְּבוֹד;**
This is was its dignity; **זֶה הוּא כְּבוֹדוֹ**
if one found it closed, **מִצָּאוֹ נֶעֱלָ,**
he knew that someone was inside: **בִּידוּעַ שֶׁיֵּשׁ שָׁם אָדָם:**

The Ezras Nashim

In the 2nd Beis HaMikdash, there was a lower Azara and a higher Azara. The lower Azara was called the Ezras Nashim, and had only one entrance gate, called the gate of Ezras Nashim. This gate was preceded by 12 steps, either around the entire Beis HaMikdash, or only by the gate of Ezras Nashim. The Ezras Nashim was square; 135 Amos by 135 Amos. It had four chambers, one on each corner, 40 X 40 Amos each, and they had no roof, in the same manner as the 4 chambers in the 3rd Beis HaMikdash. However, they were used for a different purpose, and they will differ in various other ways as well, as we'll learn BEH.



There was also a chamber in the Ezras Nashim for the small Sanhedrin, and various other chambers. Along the wall of the Ezras Nashim there was a balcony upon which the women would stand to observe the Simchas Beis Hasho'eiva (and perhaps throughout the year as well). This balcony was not constructed together with the Beis HaMikdash, and was only put in later, when the need arose. However, the Chachomim permitted themselves to do so, due to the fact that there will be a similar balcony in the 3rd Beis HaMikdash as well. Here too, its purpose will be different and there will be various structural differences. The Rambam mentions that there were stairs outside the Ezras Nashim, so the women could ascend to the balcony.

Pasuk 21

And {the angel} took me to the outer courtyard and brought me to the four corners of the courtyard; and behold there was a {small} courtyard in the corners of the courtyard.

פסוק כ"א

וַיּוֹצִיאֵנִי אֵל הַחֲצַר הַחִיצוֹנָה וַיַּעֲבִירֵנִי אֵל אַרְבַּעַת מְקוֹצוּעֵי הַחֲצַר וַהֲגִהָה חֲצַר בְּמִקְצַע הַחֲצַר חֲצַר בְּמִקְצַע הַחֲצַר :

Pasuk 22

In all four corners of the courtyard there were courtyards without roofs, 40 Amos long and 30 Amos wide, all four had the same measurement.

פסוק כ"ב

בְּאַרְבַּעַת מְקוֹצְעוֹת הַחֲצַר חֲצֵרוֹת קְטוּרוֹת אַרְבַּעַיִם אַרְדּוֹ וּשְׁלֹשִׁים רְחֹב מִדָּה אַחַת לְאַרְבַּעֵתָם מִהֶקְצְעוֹת .

Pasuk 23

And there was a row of stones all around on the inside of each of these {chambers} with places to cook under the rows all around.

פסוק כ"ג

וְטוֹר סָבִיב בָּהֶם סָבִיב לְאַרְבַּעֵתָם וּמִבְּשָׁלוֹת עָשׂוּי מִתַּחַת הַטִּירוֹת סָבִיב

Pasuk 24

And he said to me: these are the cooking chambers, Where the {Kohanim} who serve in the Beis HaMikdash cook the Korbanos of the people:

פסוק כ"ד

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי אֱלֹהֵי בַיִת הַמְּבֹשְׁלִים אֲשֶׁר יִבְשְׁלוּ שָׁם מִשְׁרָתֵי הַבַּיִת אֵת זֶבַח הָעָם .

These 4 chambers in the 3rd Beis HaMikdash will be used for cooking, in fact they will have a set place around the inside wall, where pots can be placed, to cook the meat of the Korbanos. This is why they will not have a roof. The word קטורות comes from the word קיטור – smoke, the absence of a roof will allow for the smoke to go out.

In the 2nd Beis HaMikdash, these rooms were designated for other purposes. Only the Lishkas Metzora'im was actually used for cooking the Korban of the Metzora. Although in the 3rd Beis HaMikdash, the chambers will be 40 Amos by 30, in the 2nd they were made as a perfect square, 40 X40.

Why the difference in the dimensions? Perhaps it has to do with the fact that the Azara's were not one within the other as they will be in the 3rd Beis HaMikdash, but one below the other as they were in the first. If the Azaros were made one within the other, the entire dimension of the Azaros, including the placement of the Mizbayach would have to be changed. Perhaps that was something that they were unable to do, especially due to the fact that they were not sure how to do it exactly as the P'sukim of Yechezk'el since there are various opinions. The 4 chambers were made, because there was no major change in the dimensions. However, since

they were anyway not exactly like the P'sukim of Yechezk'el, it was more like a Zeicher, and it was better to make them completely square.

The Balcony

Chapter 40 סימן מ'

Pasuk 17

פסוק י"ז

And he brought me to the outer courtyard {ezras Nashim}

וַיְבִיאֵנִי אֶל־הַחֲצֵר הַקְּיֻצוּנָה

and behold there were chambers {upon} a floor (balcony) all around the courtyard;

וַהֲגַה לְשָׂכוֹת וְרֻצָּפָה עָשׂוּי לְחֲצֵר סָבִיב סָבִיב

There were {altogether} thirty chambers upon the balcony.

שְׁלֹשִׁים לְשָׂכוֹת אֶל־הַרֻצָּפָה:

Rashi explains that this balcony is like a second floor with thirty chambers all around.

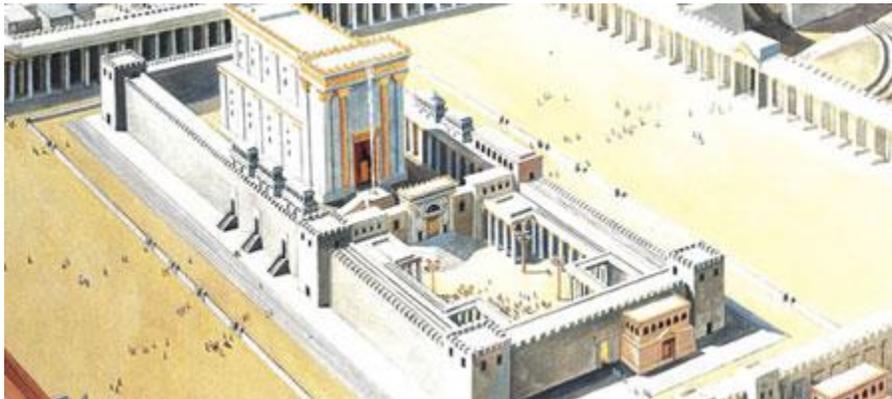
Pasuk 18

פסוק י"ח

The balcony went up until the gates
The bottom of the balcony was parallel to the top of the gates {50 Amos high}.

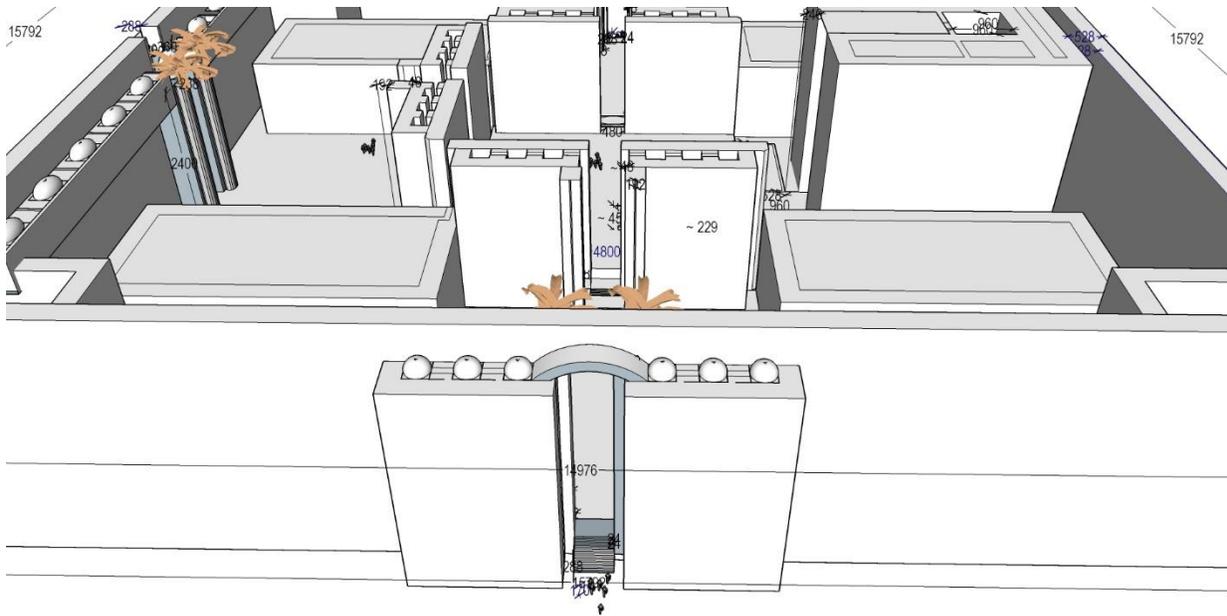
וְהַרֻצָּפָה אֶל־כַּתֵּף הַשְּׁעָרִים
לְעֵמֶת אֲרֹךְ הַשְּׁעָרִים הַרֻצָּפָה
הַמִּתְחַוָּגָה:

In the 2nd Beis HaMikdash, a balcony was made when there was a need for a place that the women could watch from above, so that men & women do not stand together. The balcony was a fence that was put on top of the walls, and it went all along the Ezras Naashim. It was able to be accessed by stairs from the outside that went up to the top of the wall.



In the 3rd Beis HaMikdash, the balcony will not go around the entire Ezras Nashim (which goes all around the entire Beis HaMikdash).

It will be at the height of 50 Amos (the same height as the gates), and it therefore only goes up until the gates, and it also will not go over the 4 chambers in the corner. Hence, we have 6 balconies, east north & south, two on each side. Each one will have 5 rooms, thirty rooms all together. Some say that the west side will also have a balcony, but without rooms.



In the top picture the left side is east and in the bottom is east – notice the balcony and rooms on the east, north & south

