

אביי said; there is a tradition

אמר אביי גמירי -

OVERVIEW

The גמרא is discussing the feasibility of building an אמה טרקסין in the בית שני, which was higher than thirty אמות. Originally it was suggested to build the wall up to thirty אמות (as it was in the בית ראשון), and for the rest of the height a curtain would be used. The גמרא said this is not feasible; an אמה width cannot support such a height. In the בית ראשון it was able to be thirty אמות high only because it was braced by the ceiling and plaster. To which the גמרא responded; let us make it whatever height an אמה width will support, and the rest will be made of curtains. אביי stated that there is a מסורה that the separation be made either completely with a wall (as it was in the בית ראשון) or completely with a curtain (as it was in the משכן).

השתא לא צריך לשנויא קמא¹:

The first answer is not required anymore. We need not say as we previously stated that a wall of thirty אמות high can be supported by a width of an אמה, only if in addition there is a bracing support from the weight of the roof/ceiling. That assumption is now irrelevant. In any case we could not build a partition consisting of both a wall and a curtain.

SUMMARY

The מסורה that אביי stated; either completely wall or completely curtain, is all that is necessary to explain why there was no wall/curtain combination in the בית שני

THINKING IT OVER

For what purpose is תוספות telling us that אגב תקרה ומעזיבה is now irrelevant?

¹ This would seem to contradict the previous שאני ד"ה (ג,א) which stated that when there is additional support from the roof/ceiling then an אמה width can hold more than the height allowed for in our משנה (i.e. four אמות high for (every) five טפחים width). In fact it can hold up to thirty אמות high (with a width of one אמה). Now תוספות seems to be saying that this statement (concerning תקרה ומעזיבה) is irrelevant. See מהרש"ל here who questions תוספות assumption that the גמרא is retracting its original statement, since the גמרא did not say 'אלא'. This may indeed be the answer to our question. תוספות is not saying that the גמרא retracts the previous assumption of "אגב תקרה ומעזיבה וכו'"; this assumption remains. תוספות is merely stating that this assumption is not necessary to answer the question why did they not build (at least) a partial wall in the בית שני. Once אביי stated that it is a tradition etc., the assumption of אגב תקרה is irrelevant to our discussion, but it remains valid. Therefore תוספות previously stated that the גמרא could have answered אגב תקרה וכו'.