

## **And the hosts of the heavens bow to you      - וצבא השמים לך משתחווים -**

### **OVERVIEW**

ויש לומר דאין לנו ללמוד אלא ממה שאנו רואין<sup>3</sup> -  
**And if you will say; but at night they also bow to the east,** so what proof is there that  
שכינה במערב?  
שכינה is in the west, as is written<sup>1</sup> (regarding prayer) that the שכינה is in the west, and the need for this proof.  
Our תוספות discusses the proof from this פסוק, and the need for this proof.

asks: תוספות

ואם תאמר בלילה נמי במזרח משתחווים<sup>3</sup> -

**And if you will say; but at night they also bow to the east,** so what proof is there that  
שכינה במערב?

answers: תוספות

ויש לומר דאין לנו ללמוד אלא ממה שאנו רואין<sup>3</sup> -

**And one can say; that we can only learn from what we see;** we only see the sun  
traveling from east to west –

asks: תוספות

ואם תאמר ואמאי לא נדע מקום תפלה מבית המקדש שהיתה שם שכינה במערב<sup>5</sup> -

**And if you will say, but why cannot we know the place of prayer from the בית**  
**המקדש, where the שכינה was there in the west?!**

answers: תוספות

ויש לומר דמשם אין ללמוד דאף על גב דשכינה בכל מקום -

**And one can say; that we cannot learn anything from the ביהמ"ק,** for we can  
argue **that even though the שכינה is everywhere** (the same), nevertheless -

**אי אפשר להשים ארון וכפורת אלא בצד אחד<sup>6</sup> -**

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<sup>1</sup> . נחמיה ט,י

<sup>2</sup> The sun (and the moon) rises in the east and travels towards the west; indicating that it is facing and bowing to the שכינה which is in the west.

<sup>3</sup> At night after the sun sets in the west it travels towards the east from where it will arise the next morning. It seems that during the day the sun bows to the west, but at night it bows towards the east, so why is one more relevant than the other.

<sup>4</sup> Presumably since we do not see the sun traveling from west to east, even though it is apparent that it does so, nevertheless the fact that we do not see it, indicates that we should not learn anything from it.

<sup>5</sup> In the בית המקדש as one went towards the west the קדושה continually increased. The ארון הקודש was placed in the western part of the ביהמ"ק; indicating that the שכינה is in the west..

<sup>6</sup> It is therefore also understood why as one progressed to the west the קדושה increased, for the ארון was in the west, but not necessarily because the שכינה is there, more than anywhere else. See 'Thinking it over'.

**It is impossible to place the ארון and the כפורת, only on one side** (so they chose the west side), but that does not mean that the שכינה is (only) there.

תוספות offers an alternate explanation:

**ורבינו יצחק בן אברהם אומר דמשם אין ללמוד דשכינה במערב -**

**And the ריצב"א says that we cannot derive from the ביהמ"ק that the שכינה is in the west -**

**דנהי דבית קדשי הקדשים היה במערב המקדש -**

**For granted that the housing of the קדשי קדשים was in the western part of the ביהמ"ק -**

**מכל מקום הארון שהשכינה שם כדכתיב (שמות כה) ונועדתי לך שם -**

**Nevertheless, the place of the ארון, which is where the שכינה is found there, as it states, 'and I will meet with you there'; the ארון -**

**היה במזרח<sup>8</sup> בית קדשי הקדשים:**

**Was in the eastern part of the קדה"ק.**

## **SUMMARY**

Regarding the presence of the שכינה we can only derive from what we see, but not from what we assume. We cannot derive that שכינה במערב from the ביהמ"ק, since we can argue that it was an arbitrary decision where to place the ארון; alternately the ארון was not placed completely to the west of the קדה"ק.

## **THINKING IT OVER**

first answer is that there is no proof from the ביהמ"ק, for the ארון had to be placed somewhere; it happened to be placed in the west. If that is the answer, so what proof is there from the sun, we can say the same thing; it needs to travel in some direction so it happens to be towards the west; what proof is there that שכינה במערב?<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> פסוק כב.

<sup>8</sup> This seemingly means that it was eastward from the western back of the קדה"ק. The קדה"ק was twenty אמות by twenty אמות square. The ארון was placed in the center so that it was equidistant from all sides. The fact that the ארון was not placed completely in the west of the קדה"ק does not permit us to infer from the ביהמ"ק that שכינה במערב.

<sup>9</sup> See מהרש"א (and נחלת משה).