

**I can say, what does מחיצה mean; a division.** – ואימא מאי מחיצה פלוגתא

### Overview

The גמרא originally interpreted מחיצה to mean a wall. After the גמרא showed that this is based on a ברייתא (and inferring from this translation that היזק ראייה (לא שמיה היזק), the גמרא challenges this assumption and declares that מחיצה should mean a (property) division. There is seemingly no basis for this challenge; on the contrary the accepted translation of 'מחיצה' universally, is a wall. תוספות deals with this issue.

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**The ר"י explains;** why does the גמרא want to reinterpret the word מחיצה to mean a division as opposed to the original interpretation that מחיצה is a dividing wall. The word מחיצה generally refers to a wall, not to a division.

explains תוספות

**because on the translation** that מחיצה refers to a **wall**

**– משום דעל לשון גודא** – **there are many difficulties** with that translation

**– כדפריך בסמוך** – **as the גמרא will shortly<sup>1</sup> ask.** The גמרא asks many questions on the interpretation that מחיצה means a wall. This interpretation of גודא requires us to assume that היזק ראייה לא שמיה היזק.<sup>2</sup> The גמרא cites many sources which indicate that שמיה היזק

**– לפיכך דוחק לפרש** – **therefore<sup>3</sup>,** on account of these questions, the גמרא **forces** itself **to awkwardly interpret** the word –

**מחיצה' – מחיצה' to mean a division.** When מחיצה is interpreted to mean גודא, then we assume that היזק ראייה שמיה היזק, and there are none of the above referred-to difficulties. The גמרא prefers this interpretation –

**– אף על גב דבכל מקום** – **even though that everywhere**

**– הוי מחיצה גודא** – **the meaning of 'מחיצה' is a wall.** It is preferable to compromise the literal meaning, and conform to all the cited sources, than having a proper translation but (seemingly) contradicting all the cited sources.

### Summary

The גמרא challenges the assumption that מחיצה means גודא. According to that assumption, we will maintain that היזק ראייה לא שמיה היזק. There are many sources which indicate that היזק ראייה שמיה היזק. Therefore it is preferable to

<sup>1</sup> The גמרא on this עמוד asks many questions on the opinion that ה"ר לש"ה from many משניות and a מימרא. (עמוד א' ד"ה סבריה) has previously stated תוספות, that the answers to these challenges are unconvincing.

<sup>2</sup> See the גמרא immediately preceding this 'ואימא'.

<sup>3</sup> The גמרא presents its opposition to מחיצה גודא and offers the alternate that מחיצה פלוגתא immediately after the גמרא inferred that if מחיצה גודא then ה"ר לש"ה. This may indicate that the opposition was not to the translation itself, but rather what is inferred from the translation, namely that ה"ר לש"ה.

ה"ר שמייה היזק interpret מחיצה to mean a division, thereby maintaining that  
Even though this interpretation runs contrary to the usual interpretation of  
the word מחיצה.

Thinking it over

1. Why can we not say that the reason the גמרא wants to say מחיצה פלוגתא is because if מחיצה גודא then it should have said 'בונין אותו' instead of 'בונין את', as the גמרא asks? Or is this also included in the 'כמה קושיות', that תוספות refers to?

2. What does this תוספות teach us as to the relative strengths of כלל versus פרט?