

Chapter 4: The Lishkos of the Azarah

There were many different rooms in the Azarah, which were made for various different purposes; each one is called a *Lishkah* (chamber)¹.

On top of the Sha'ar Hamayim² (the easternmost gate in the south of the Azarah, which was right by the foot of the ramp of the Mizbeach) there was a mikveh. On Yom Kippur, the Kohen Gadol would use this mikveh for his first immersion (the later immersions were done on top of Lishkas Haparveh). When he used it, they would spread a linen curtain between it and the Azarah³.

This mikveh was exactly the minimum size, with the water⁴ taking up one amah by one amah by three amos. The lintel of the gate (like all of the lintels of the gates in the Beis Hamikdash) was made out of marble, and therefore did not have to be very thick, and together with the floor of the mikveh was less than one amah. The

mikveh was fed from Ein Eitam, a spring to the west of Yerushalayim⁵.

This spring was a little more than twenty three amos higher than the Azarah, and so the water was able to naturally rise back up to that height, and feed the



the mikveh on top of Sha'ar Hamayim

mikveh; the top of which, as mentioned, was a little more than twenty-three⁶ amos above the floor of the Azarah⁷. This is because water will always flow back up to its

1 Rambam, Hilchos Beis Habechirah 1:7

2 Yoma 31a

3 Yoma 30a

4 The structure of the mikveh was taller, and when the Kohen Gadol would go in, he would displace some of the water and cause it to rise, and cover his head. (Tosafos Yoma 31a)

5 This is the spring called in Yehoshua (15:9) Mei Naftoach, and it was the highest point in Eretz Yisrael. (Rashi Zevachim 54b, see appendix 3 for more discussion about this)

6 Twenty amos of the gate, three amos of the mikveh, and less than an amah of the lintel and mikveh floor.

7 Yoma 31a-b

original level, if it has no way to go lower.



Beis Avtinah

Next to the Sha'ar Hamayim,⁸ on the east side⁹, was the Beis Avtinah, where the Avtinah family¹⁰ made the ketores¹¹. This building had two floors¹², with the upper one (the “attic”) being where the ketores was made. This part of the upper floor had the same sanctity as the Azarah, since the only way to access it was through the Azarah¹³. There was also a part of it that was outside the Azarah. This part did not have the same sanctity as the Azarah, as it was accessible from the Cheil¹⁴. This part did not have a roof, but was open to the air¹⁵, and there would be a Kohen guarding there at night¹⁶ (Probably, the lower part of the building was also divided into the two parts, one in the Azarah and one outside, with both of them having staircases leading to the upper floor.)

8 Yerushalmi Yoma 1:5, Rambam in his drawing of the Azarah in Peirush Hamishnayos (Middos 4:8), Maharam Kazis Middos 1:5

9 Rambam in his plan of the Beis Hamikdash in Peirush Hamishnayos (Middos 5:3), Tosafos Yom Tov's drawing of the Beis Hamikdash, (in the first editions)

10 Shekalim 5:1. The name Avtinah sounds like it is a Greek name, in which case this was the family's name only in the Second Beis Hamikdash period, while in the First Beis Hamikdash they would have had a different name, and their Lishkah would also have had a different name.

11 Rabbeinu Shemaya Middos 1:1

12 Tamid 26b

13 Even though it is an upper floor, and as a general rule upper floors do not have the sanctity of the Azarah (Pesachim 85b), if the upper floor opens up to the Azarah, it has the sanctity of the Azarah. (Sefas Emes Yoma 31a, Tiferes Yisrael Middos 5:3 Boaz #3)

14 Ezras Kohanim Middos 1:1 ד"ה בבית אבטינס ב, quoting Zichron Menachem Tamid 25b

15 Tamid 1:1, Middos 1:1

16 Tiferes Yisrael Tamid 1:1 Yachin #4

In the thickness of the doorway of the Eastern gate of the Azarah (called Sha'ar Hachadash, the new gate) there was a chamber, which at the end of the First Beis Hamikdash period was used by Gemaryahu son of Shafan the scribe. From this Lishkah Baruch Ben Neriah read a scroll,¹⁷ composed by Yirmiyahu, to the Jewish people, to try to get them to do Teshuvah¹⁸.



Lishkas Gemaryahu Ben Shafan

Next to this gate there were two Lishkos, one on each side. The one on the north side was Lishkas Pinchas Hamalbish (The chamber of Pinchas the clothier), and the one on the south was Lishkas Osei Chavitin (The chamber of the makers of the Chavitin).¹⁹

Lishkas Pinchas Halmalbish was where they made the clothes for the Kohanim, and stored them until they would be given over to a Kohen²⁰. The person in charge of this (during the beginning of the Second Beis Hamikdash, or the most righteous one²¹) was named Pinchas²², and the room was therefore called



Lishkas Pinchas Hamalbish

¹⁷ This scroll was the first part of Megillas Eichah, discussing the tragedies of the Churban (see Moed Katan 26a)

¹⁸ Yirmiyahu 36:10

¹⁹ Middos 1:4

²⁰ Ezras Kohanim Middos 1:4 ד"ה לשכת פנחס המלביש א, from Shiltey Hagibborim chapter 36

²¹ Bartenura Shekalim 5:1

²² Shekalim 5:1

“the chamber of Pinchas the clothier”. When a new Kohen would come to work in the Beis Hamikdash for the first time, he would come here and get a pair of Bigdei Kehunah that fit him. He would then keep it, together with the clothes of the rest of his Mishmar, in an alcove in the Lishkas Hagazis²³, and whenever it was his Mishmar's turn he would take it from there²⁴.

Lishkas Osei Chavitin was where the Chavitin would be made. Every day, the Kohen Gadol had to pay for and offer a Korban Minchah called the Minchas Chavitin. Every morning, some Kohanim would be designated to prepare it²⁵, and it would then be offered on the Mizbeach.



Lishkas Osei Chavitin

The Chavitin were made in the following way: the Kohen would take a full *isaron* of fine flour and sanctify it, and then divide it with the half *isaron* vessel of the Mikdash. Three *lugs* of oil were then added and mixed with the flour, and then he scalded it by pouring boiling water on the dough. He kneads twelve loaves, six from each half *isaron*. Each loaf was made separately, with the oil getting divide into twelve parts, each one a *revi'is*. After scalding, the Minchah was lightly baked and then fried in a pan. Each loaf was then divided into two, with twelve halves being offered in the morning and twelve in the afternoon²⁶.

There were six more Lishkos in the eastern corners of the Azarah, three in the north and three in the south. The three southern ones are (going from east to west) *Lishkas Hamelach*- The Salt Chamber, *Lishkas Haparvah*- The Parvah Chamber, and *Lishkas Hamadichin*- The Rinsing Chamber. On top of Lishkas Haparvah was a mikveh, used by the Kohen Gadol on Yom Kippur, with the stairs to go up there located in Lishkas Hamadichin²⁷.

²³ Tamid 5:3 with Rosh, see page 11

²⁴ Ezras Kohanim Middos 1:4 ד"ה לשכת פנחס המלביש א

²⁵ Tamid 1:3

²⁶ Rambam Hilchos Ma'asei Hakorbanos 13 2-4

²⁷ Middos 5:3



The three southern Lishkos, (with Beis Avtinah next to them on the west)

Lishkas Hamelach was where the salt used for the Korbanos was stored²⁸, as all Korbanos had to have salt put on them before being offered on the Mizbeach²⁹, and salt was used for other purposes as well, such as being spread on the ramp of the Mizbeach so the Kohanim bringing wood up to the fire don't slip³⁰.

Lishkas Haparvah was where they would salt the hides of the Korbanos. The hides of the Kodshei Kodoshim would go to the Kohanim³¹, and to make sure the hides did not go bad before they would be divided up, they would salt them³². To salt them, they used the salt that had previously been



Lishkas Haparvah

²⁸ See Tosafos Menachos 21b

²⁹ Vayikra 2:13

³⁰ Mishnah Eiruvim 10:14, the Gemara there (104a) explains that this was only done for the Kohanim bringing the wood up, which is not considered an Avodah, by anything else the salt would have been considered a separation between the Kohen's feet and the ramp, which is not allowed.

³¹ Vayikra 7:8

³² Middos 5:3 with Ezras Kohanim ד"ה ששם מולחין עורות קדשים

put on the ramp, which it was not able to be left there permanently, as that would be adding to the structure of the Mizbeach, which is forbidden³³.

This chamber was named after the person who made it, a magician named Parvah³⁴. He was Jewish, so there was no problem with him building part of the Beis Hamikdash and calling it after him³⁵.

Lishkas Hamadichin was where they would wash out the stomachs of the Korbanos. The other parts of the Korbanos, which do not have as much filth and do not to be washed so much, were washed on the eight silver tables in the Azarah proper, by the Beis Hamitbachayim³⁶.



Lishkas Hamadichin

On top of Lishkas Haparvah was a mikveh which the Kohen Gadol would use on Yom Kippur³⁷ for most of his immersions (the first one was on top of Sha'ar Hamayim)³⁸. When he would use it, they would spread a linen curtain between it and the



Mikveh on top of Lishkas Haparvah

³³ Eiruvim 104a with Rashi

³⁴ Yoma 35a with Rashi

³⁵ Rosh on Middos 5:3

³⁶ Middos 5:3, Tamid 4:2

³⁷ Middos 5:3

Azarah³⁹. This mikveh was also fed from Ein Eitam, like the mikveh on top of Sha'ar Hamayim⁴⁰. This mikveh was also the same size as the one on top of Sha'ar Hamayim, with the water being one amah by one amah, and three amos high⁴¹. This roof had the same level of sanctity as the Azarah⁴², since the Torah⁴³ requires that the (later) immersions of the Kohen Gadol on Yom Kippur must be in a holy place. This roof had this level of sanctity since it was accessed from the Lishkas Hamadichin, which is in the Azarah⁴⁴.

In Lishkas Hamadichin there was a spiral staircase, leading up to the roof of the Lishkas Haparah⁴⁵. This staircase was closed off from the rest of the chamber, and had a separate door to it, so the Kohen Gadol would not have to walk through Lishkas Hamadichin, although the space under the stairs was open to the chamber.⁴⁶

Lishkas Hamelach was nine amos by nine amos, and its outer walls on its northern and western side were two amos thick. (The eastern and southern walls of this chamber were the walls of the Azarah, as this Lishkah is in the southeast corner of the Azarah.) It had a door in its northern side, to the Azarah, with a window on top of the door. The doors were covered in copper, so the salt does not eat up the wood.

The other two Lishkos were located an amah higher, in the Ezras Kohanim. Together, these two Lishkos were eleven by eleven amos, including the walls. The nine amah interior space was divided into the eastern room,



The three southern Lishkos

38 Yoma 31a

39 Yoma 34b

40 Ezras Kohanim Middos 5:3 ד"ה בית טבילה לכה"ג

41 The Gemara in Pesachim (109b) seems to imply that all the mikvaos in the Azarah were this size. Furthermore, it is logical to make these two mikvaos the same size, as they were used for the same purpose.

42 Yoma 31a

43 Vayikra 16:24

44 See above, note 13

45 Middos 5:3

46 Tosafos Yom Tov, Middos 5:3

Lishkas Haparvah, which was three-and-a-half amos, and the western room, Lishkas Hamadichin, which was also three-and-a-half amos, with the wall dividing them being two amos thick. Each room had doors on their northern side, to the Azarah, and windows on top of the doors. These two Lishkos were eleven amos tall, and Lishkas Hamelach, which was an amah lower, as it was located in the Ezras Yisrael, was twelve amos tall⁴⁷.

The three northern Lishkos in the eastern corner of the Azarah were Lishkas Ha'etz, Lishkas Hagolah, and Lishkas Hagazis⁴⁸. These rooms were built in a similar

way as the southern Lishkos, as two eleven amah chambers, with the western one being further subdivided into two Lishkos, but instead of it being divided into an eastern room and a western room, it was divided into a northern room (Lishkas Ha'etz) and a southern room (Lishkas Hagolah). The wall dividing them was one amah thick, and these two rooms were each four amos wide.



The three northern Lishkos

Each of these rooms had doors, and windows on top of the doors, but their doors were not all on the same side⁴⁹.

Lishkas Ha'etz- The Wooden Chamber, was the chamber of the Kohen Gadol⁵⁰. Seven days before Yom Kippur, he would be separated from his house and be brought to the Beis Hamikdash, and this is the chamber where he would then live⁵¹. Since he had to sleep here, and one cannot even sit in the Azarah⁵², for sure not sleep, this chamber's door opened to outside the Azarah⁵³, as the holiness of a Lishkah goes after its

⁴⁷ Shiltey Hagibborim chapter 23

⁴⁸ Mishnah Middos 5:4

⁴⁹ Shiltey Hagibborim chapter 23

⁵⁰ Middos 5:4

⁵¹ Yoma 1:1, Rambam Hilchos Beis Habechirah 6:17

⁵² Yoma 25a

⁵³ Tosafos Yoma 8b ד"ה דאי ר' חנינא סגן הכהנים הא איכא נמי הא

opening⁵⁴. Because the Kohen Gadol would live here, this chamber had a Mezuzah, as opposed to other chambers of the Beis Hamikdash which didn't⁵⁵. In this chamber the Kohen Gadol would also store his Bigdey Kehunah⁵⁶.

This chamber was called Lishkas Ha'etz because it was made out of wood⁵⁷ covered in plaster⁵⁸ (as exposed wood is not allowed to be built in the Azarah)⁵⁹. It was made out of wood because the Kohanim Gedolim in the first Beis



Lishkas Ha'etz

Hamikdash were righteous, and lived long lives, like trees which stand for a long time.⁶⁰ (If they were not righteous, they would not have survived a year, as it happened to most of the Kohanim Gedolim in Bayis Sheini, who were not righteous⁶¹).

Lishkas Hagolah- The Chamber of the Exiled: In the Second Beis Hamikdash, the Yidden who returned from the Babylonian exile dug here a well, to provide drinking water for the Azarah⁶², and it was therefore called the chamber of the exiled⁶³. In the First Beis Hamikdash, this well was not there, but it would seem that the chamber was there (as chambers cannot just be added to the Beis Hamikdash⁶⁴), but was used for some other purpose, and had a different name.

Lishkas Hagazis- The Chamber of the Hewn Stone, was where the great Sanhedrin sat. It was named this because it was built of special square hewn stone for the honor of the Sanhedrin⁶⁵, as well as because there the Sanhedrin would “cut” the

54 Ma'aser Sheini 3:8

55 Yoma 10a

56 Rambam Hilchos Klei Hamikdash 8:10

57 Ra'avad on Rambam Hilchos Beis Habechirah 1:9

58 Likkutey Sichos vol. 28 pp. 219-221

59 Rambam Hilchos Beis Habechirah 1:9

60 Tosafos Chadashim Middos 5:4, See Yeshaya 65:21

61 See Yoma 9a

62 Middos 5:4 with Rabeinu Shemaya

63 Rashi Yoma 19a

64 See above, in the introduction at the beginning of this book

65 Mishnah Middos 5:4 with Tosafos Yom Tov and Tiferes Yisrael (Yachin 32)

judgment (i.e., decide it)⁶⁶. The Sanhedrin was the highest court, and the major cases, as well as cases that could not be resolved by the lower courts, were decided by them. Their main occupation most of the time, however, was to check the new Kohanim (and Levi'im⁶⁷) who wanted to serve in the Beis Hamikdash, to make sure they were eligible to serve, and did not have any blemish or disqualification in their lineage. If the Kohen was disqualified because of his lineage, he would wrap himself in black clothing (to show his sorrow), and leave the Beis Hamikdash; if he was found eligible to serve, he would wrap himself in white (to show his happiness), and would be able to go and serve in the Beis Hamikdash with the rest of the Kohanim⁶⁸.



The Sanhedrin in Lishkas Hagazis

The Sanhedrin (like any Beis Din) sat in a semicircle, like half a round threshing floor, so they could all see each other.⁶⁹ The Nassi (head of the Sanhedrin) would sit in the middle, the Av Beis Din (the second to highest of the Beis Din) would sit on his right, and the other judges sat on either side based on their age and greatness, with the older and greater ones sitting closer to the middle.⁷⁰ Two scribes stood in front of them, and would write down what was happening and the arguments being made, like in every Beis Din⁷¹.

Lishkas Hagazis was half inside the Azarah and half outside, as in the Azarah itself

66 Rabeinu Bachya Devarim 1:17

67 Tosafos Yom Tov Middos 5:4

68 Mishnah Middos 5:4 with Rosh, Rambam Hilchos Bias Hamikdash 6:11

69 Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:3, Rambam Hilchos Sanhedrin 1:3. The comparison to “half a round threshing floor” implies that it was more like a half oval than a half circle. [Lechem Shamayim on Mishnayos Sanhedrin 4:3]

70 Rambam Hilchos Sanhedrin 1:3 with Radvaz

71 Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:3

one may not sit, unless he is king from David's family. It had doors both to the Azarah (in its southern wall) and to the Har Habayis (in its northern wall). It could not have had only a door to the Har Habayis, as any chamber with only one opening goes after the place where it is opened to, and it would not have had the sanctity of the Azarah, while the raffle amongst the Kohanim, which took place in Lishkas Hagazis, had to take place in the Azarah. It also could not be opened only to the Azarah, as then the Sanhedrin would not have been able to sit there. Therefore, it had to have doors both to the Har Habayis and the Azarah, as then it would be both part of the Azarah (the southern half, which was built there) and part of the Har Habayis (the northern half, which was built there)⁷².

The half of the chamber in the Azarah was nine amos by nine amos, and had a two amah thick wall on the southern and western sides, and on the eastern side the wall of the Azarah was its wall. On the northern side, the chamber continued outside of the Azarah, and its outer portion was the same size, nine by nine amos, with two amah thick walls⁷³. Since the floor of the Azarah was higher than the floor of the Har Habayis, this outer part was built on top of a supporting structure, making it look like a second floor, and it had stairs leading from the Har Habayis to its outer gate⁷⁴.

However, there is a problem, as the Sanhedrin was comprised of seventy-one judges, and seventy-one judges sitting in a semicircle do not fit in nine by nine amos. [Each person takes up one amah⁷⁵, and even if they would be sitting against the walls, in a u shape, there is only twenty-seven amos of wall space.] The answer to this is that not all the judges were always there. Only twenty-three judges had to be there at a time, besides for certain special cases⁷⁶. Twenty-three people sitting in a semicircle (or more accurately, a semi-oval) can fit in nine by nine amos⁷⁷. As for the special cases when all seventy-one needed to be there, they could have not sat in a semicircle, or there might have been a miracle. This would not have been considered relying on miracles, which is not allowed, because it was a rare occurrence⁷⁸.

In this chamber⁷⁹ there were alcoves in the wall where the Bigdey Kehunah would be kept.⁸⁰ There were twenty-four sets of alcoves, for each of the twenty-four *Mishmaros* (divisions of Kohanim), and above each set, the name of the *Mishmar* to which it belonged would be written. Each set consisted of four alcoves, for each of the four Bigdey Kehunah, and the name of the garment stored in that alcove was

72 Yoma 25a, Maaser Sheni 3:8

73 Shiltey Hagibborim chapter 23

74 Yoma 25a with Rashi, Shiltey Hagibborim chapter 23

75 Sukkah 7b

76 Sanhedrin 37a, Rambam Hilchos Sanhedrin 3:2

77 Biurim Al Tziyurei Harambam Limaseches Middos, by Yosef Meiyers, page 130-131.

78 Ezras Kohanim Middos 5:4 ד"ה לשכת הגזית ב

79 Rosh and Ra'avad, Tamid 5:3 (32b)

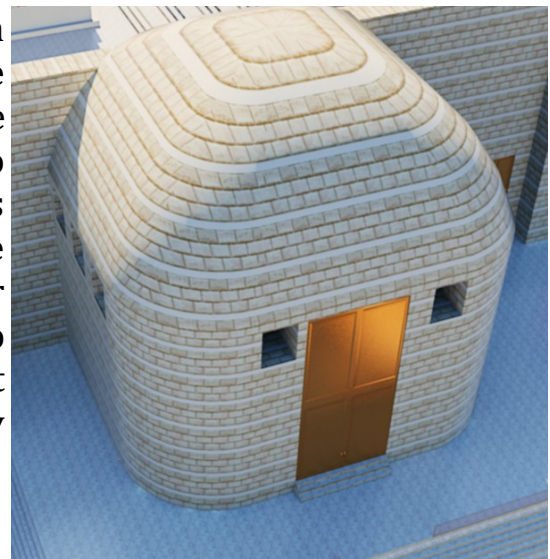
80 Tamid 5:3

written over it. Each alcove had doors, and would usually be closed. When each *Mishmar* would come by their week, they would open their alcoves, and use the Bigdey Kehunah from there, and when they left at the end of the week, they would them back and close the alcoves.⁸¹ If there was not enough clothing for that *Mishmar*, as more Kohanim from the *Mishmar* it came, they would go to Lishkas Pinchas Hamalbish and get new pairs of clothing.⁸²



The alcoves for the Bigdey Kehunah

The Beis Hamoked (hall of the pyre) was a large building in the northern side of the Azarah⁸³. The easternmost gate of the Azarah, the Sha'ar Beis Hamoked, did not lead straight into the Azarah, but was in the northern wall of this hall, and another gate in the southern wall of the hall led into the Azarah. This gate had a smaller gate next to⁸⁴ it, through which the Kohanim who slept in the Beis Hamoked during the night would enter the Azarah and inspect it every morning⁸⁵.



81 Rambam Hilchos Klei Hamikdash 8:8

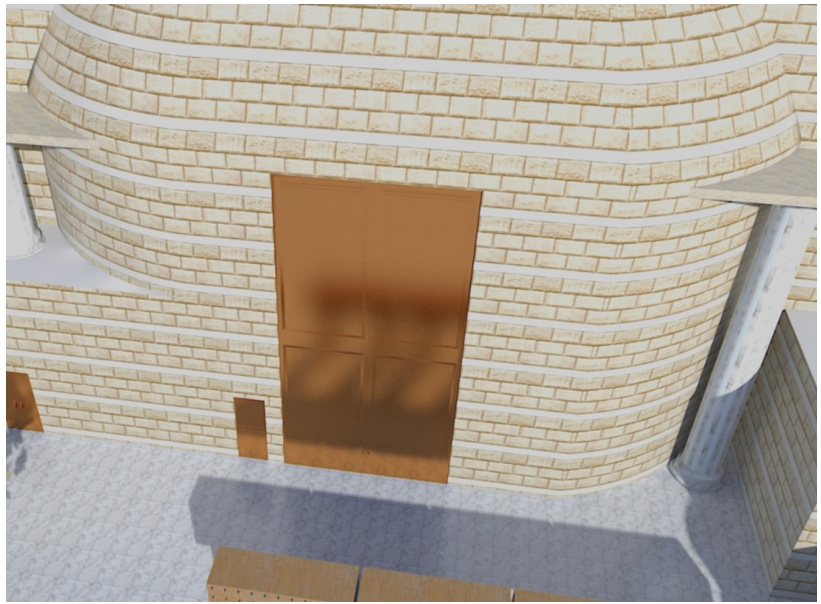
82 Ezras Kohanim Middos 1:4 ד"ה לשכת פנחס המלביש א

83 Middos 1:5,8

84 See Ezras Kohanim Middos 1:7 ד"ה פשפש ב, Rosh on Tamid 28a and Middos 2:6

85 Middos 1:7

The Beis Hamoked- hall of the pyre, was a large building, and was built in the shape of a dome⁸⁶. It was called the this because of the many⁸⁷ fires that were in this room, which the Kohanim would use to warm themselves; as they would walk barefoot on the marble floor of the Azarah⁸⁸. It was located partly inside the Azarah and partly in the *cheil*; (and since it also had two doors, one to the Azarah and one to the cheil,) the part of the building in the Azarah had the sanctity of the Azarah, and the half outside was the same as the *cheil*⁸⁹. Wooden blocks were placed on the floor⁹⁰, to mark the division between the sanctified and unsanctified areas⁹¹.



The Beis Hamoked



Inside the Beis Hamoked

86 Middos 1:8

87 Rashi Yoma 15b

88 Rashi Yoma 15b, Bartenura Middos 1:5

89 Middos 1:6, Rashi Yoma 15b

90 Rabeinu Shemaya Middos 2:6

91 Middos 1:6 with Rashi Yoma 15b

The Beis Hamoked was where the Kohanim who would serve the next day in the Beis Hamikdash would sleep. Therefore, running around its interior were stone ledges, each one shorter than the one underneath it, forming steps that the older Kohanim would sleep on, while the younger Kohanim would sleep on bedding placed on the floor.⁹² They would not sleep on regular beds, as it is not respectful to bring beds into the Beis Hamikdash⁹³. In the Beis Hamoked there was a tile, one amah square, which was removable, and it had a ring to help lift it. Under this tile there was a depression in the floor, in which there was a chain, from which the keys of the Azarah were hung. After locking up the Azarah by night, the keys would be placed here, and a kohen would put his bedding over the tile and sleep there, guarding the keys⁹⁴.

In the four corners of the Beis Hamoked there were four smaller chambers which opened up to it. Two of these chambers (the two southern ones) were in the sanctified half, and therefore had the same sanctity as the Azarah, and two were in the unsanctified half⁹⁵.

The southwest chamber was the Lishkas Hatela'im-The Chamber of the Lambs. In this chamber they would keep the lambs needed for the Korban Tamid⁹⁶. These lambs had to be inspected for any *mum* (disqualifying blemish) four days before it was offered, so there were always at least six lambs in this chamber, after that day's Korbanos



Lishkas Hatela'im

were brought⁹⁷. This chamber was actually not exactly in the southwest corner, but along the western wall of the Beis Hamoked, although it was closer to the south than to the north. Because of this, to someone entering the Beis Hamoked from the Azarah, it looked like it was in the northwest corner.⁹⁸

92 Middos 1:8, Tamid 26b with Rosh

93 Tamid 26b

94 Middos 1:9

95 Middos 1:6

96 Middos 1:6, Tamid 3:3

97 Erchin 2:5 with Bartenura (based on Gemara Erchin 13a)

98 Yoma 17a

The southeastern chamber was the Lishkas Osei Lechem Hapanim- The Chamber of the Makers of the Lechem Hapanim⁹⁹. In here they would make the twelve Lechem Hapanim which would be placed on the Shulchan (in the Heichal) every Shabbos¹⁰⁰. They were made in this chamber as they had to be baked in the Azarah, and this chamber was in the sanctified half of the Beis Hamoked¹⁰¹.



Lishkas Osei Lechem Hapanim

The northeastern chamber was the Lishkas Beis Hamoked, the Chamber of the house of the pyre.¹⁰² In here there was also a fire for the Kohanim to warm themselves, if they wanted to do this in a quiet place, and not in front of everyone¹⁰³.



Lishkas Beis Hamoked

The northwestern chamber was the Lishkas Hachosamos- The Chamber of the Receipts¹⁰⁴, as there the receipts for the Nesachim were stored¹⁰⁵, and as the officer in charge of them would sit here¹⁰⁶. Every Korban Olah or Shelamim had to be accompanied by a Korban Minchah (made from flour and oil) and Nesachim (wine that was poured on the Mizbeach)¹⁰⁷. The Beis Hamikdash kept a supply of these items, and anybody could

99 Middos 1:6

100 Vayikra 24:5-8

101 Tosafos Yom Tov Middos 1:6 from Menachos 11:2

102 Tamid 3:3, as explained by Rashi Yoma 17b, based on the Gemara there. Many other Mefarshim swap and say the northeast chamber was Lishkas Hachosamos, and the additional fire was in the northwest chamber, together with the stairs leading down to the Mikveh, see Tosafos Yom Tov on Middos 1:6

103 Ritva Yoma 15b

104 Tamid 3:3, see above, footnote 102

105 Rashi Yoma 15b

106 Bartenura Tamid 3:3

107 Bamidbar 15:1-16, Rambam Hilchos Ma'asey Hakorbanos 2:1-7

come buy when they needed it. They would first come to the officer in charge of the receipts and pay him, and he would then give them a receipt (a piece of parchment¹⁰⁸ or clay¹⁰⁹) which had written on it what kind of Nesech he bought (as different animals have different amounts brought with them). He would then go to



Lishkas Hachosamos

Lishkas Beis Shemanya, where the supplies were kept, and give the officer there the receipt and get what he needed¹¹⁰.

In this chamber there was also a flight of steps leading underground, going down to a *mikveh*¹¹¹. The steps led to a tunnel which went under the Beis Hamikdash¹¹², and had many candles on either side of it to light it up, until one reached the underground *mikveh*¹¹³. One or two candles would not have been enough, as this tunnel had many different twists and turns, and one or two candles would not have been able to light up the whole thing¹¹⁴.

Any Kohen who became Tamei during the night would immerse himself in this *mikveh*, and then return to the Beis Hamoked; in the morning he would leave the Beis Hamikdash through the northern gate of the Har Habayis¹¹⁵. (This *mikveh*



The underground Mikveh

108 Tiferes Yisrael to Shekalim 5:3 Yachin 23

109 A piece of clay with writing on it has been found by archaeologists, some interpret it as being one of these receipts, with the letters on it being the initials of the king of Korban that it was for, and for the date.

110 Shekalim 5:3-4

111 Middos 1:6

112 The mishnah says that it went under the “Birah” most Mefarshim to the Mishnah explain (based on the opinion of Reish Lakish in Yoma 2a) that this is referring to the whole Beis Hamikdash.

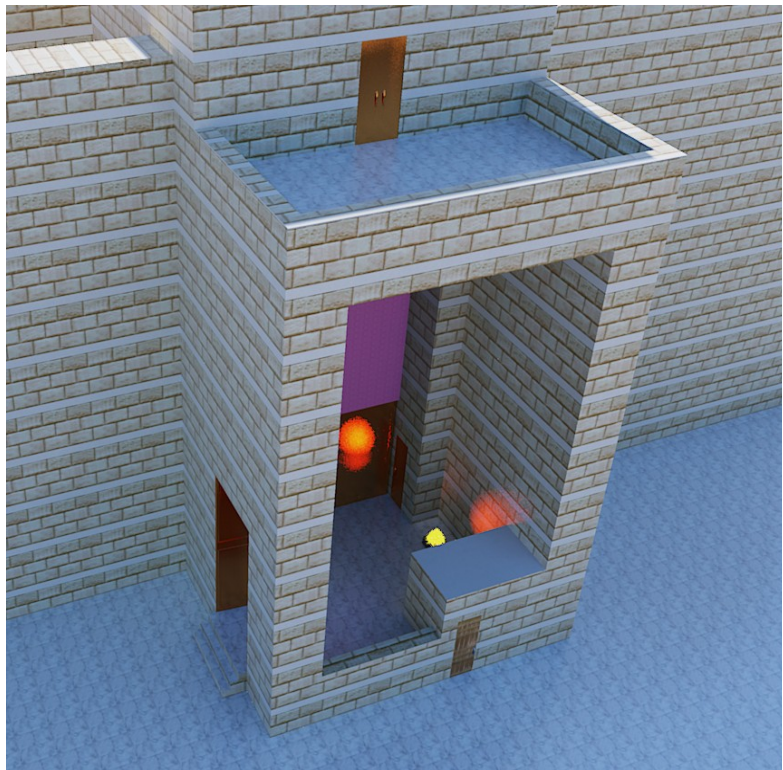
113 Middos 1:9

114 Ra'avad to Tamid 26a

115 Middos 1:9

was probably also the one used by the Kohanim every morning to immerse themselves in before serving in the Beis Hamikdash¹¹⁶.) Near the *mikveh*¹¹⁷ there was a fire, for the Kohanim to warm themselves after they immersed. There was also a bathroom here, for the tamei Kohanim to use before they go into the *mikveh*.¹¹⁸ This bathroom was called the “honorable bathroom” because it had a door, and if it was closed, that meant someone was inside, and if it was open, it meant it was empty.¹¹⁹ This insured that no one inadvertently entered when someone else was inside,¹²⁰ and that one did not have to talk in the bathroom.¹²¹ This bathroom was also used by regular Kohanim during the day, they would then immerse in the *mikveh* (as if one uses the bathroom in the Beis Hamikdash, they must immerse themselves¹²²) and warm themselves by the fire here.¹²³

In front of the Sha'ar Hanitzotz (the westernmost gate in the northern Azarah wall) there was a structure, called the Beis Hanitzotz, which was constructed as follows: Two walls protruded from the wall of the Azarah outwards, into the Har Habayis; one on either side of the gate. On top of these walls there was an unroofed¹²⁴ balcony¹²⁵. This structure was called the Beis Hanitzotz, house of the spark, for the same reason the gate was called the Sha'ar Hanitzotz; after the small fire that burned there, to relight the fire on the Mizbeach if it went out.¹²⁶ In one of these walls there



The Beis Hanitzotz

was a doorway, leading to the cheil. On the balcony on top, a Kohen would stand guard every night; and a Levi would stand guard on bottom¹²⁷.

116 Tamid 1:2, Ezras Kohanim Middos 1:6 ד"ה צפונית מערבית וכו' ב

117 Mefarsh Tamid 26a

118 See Ra'avad to Tamid 26a

119 Tamid 1:1

120 Mefarsh to Tamid 26a

121 See Berachos 62b with Rashi

122 Yoma 28a

123 See Rashi Berachos 62b

124 Tiferes Yisrael Middos 1:5 Yachin 39

125 Middos 1:5 with Bartenura

126 Be'er Sheva on Tamid 25b

127 Middos 1:5

Lishkas Hakeilim-
The Chamber of the
Vessels: Near the Beis
Hamoked¹²⁸, there was
a Lishkah where they
would keep the
various vessels used
in the Beis
Hamikdash. Every
morning, the Kohanim
would come in here
and take the ninety-
three different vessels
they needed for the



Lishkas Hakeilim

daily *avodah*¹²⁹. (This chamber should not be confused with the other Lishkas Hakeilim, located in the Har Habayis¹³⁰, where people use to put vessels they donated to the Beis Hamikdash, and every thirty days the treasurers would come and take them out¹³¹.)

Lishkas Haparochoes-
The Chamber of the
Curtain: By the western
part of the Azarah¹³², there
was a Lishkah where they
would weave the
Paroches, and over there a
Levi would stand guard
every night¹³³.



Lishkas Haparochoes

The Paroches was woven
by 82 young girls¹³⁴;
young girls were chosen
so there will not be a
concern that they might

become a Niddah and make the Paroches *tamei*.¹³⁵ The question however arises, if this chamber is in the Azarah, how could there be girls working in it, as girls are not

128 Shiltey Hagibborim chapter 25

129 Tamid 3:4 with Rambam

130 Mentioned in Shekalim 5:6

131 Shiltey Hagibborim chapter 25

132 Ezras Kohanim Middos 1:1 א ד"ה בלשכת הפרוכת

133 Middos 1:1 with Rosh

134 Shekalim 8:5, as explained by Rashi, Chullin 90b

135 Tiferes Yisrael Shekalim 8:5 Yachin 33

allowed into the Azarah¹³⁶. The answer is that even though this chamber was in the Azarah, it opened to the Har Habayis, making the whole Lishkah not have the sanctity of the Azarah¹³⁷.

There were additional chambers in the Azarah where the Kohanim would eat their portions of the korbanos¹³⁸. In these rooms, as well as where the Kohanim would sleep, there were ten¹³⁹ silver menoros to give light during the night¹⁴⁰. [It can very well be that these



Chamber for Eating the Korbanos

Lishkos were in the western part of the Azarah, on either side of the Heichal, as that is where they will be in the third Beis Hamikdash¹⁴¹.]

136 Rashi Kiddushin 52b

137 Ezras Kohanim Middos 1:1 ד"ה בלשכת הפרוכת א; Lishkas Ha'etz was also built like this, so the Kohen Gadol could sleep there, see above, pp. 8.

138 Ezras Kohanim Middos 5:3 ד"ה שש לשכות היו בעזרה ב

139 Medrash Divrey Hayamim from R' Shmuel Masnos, Divrey Hayamim I 28:15

140 Divrey Hayamim I 28:15 with Radak

141 The Tavnis Heichal (II:134) also puts these Lishkos here, based on Yechezkel.