

The Weekly Daf



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Yevamot 6 - 12

Week of 27 Kislev 3 Tevet 5760 / 6 - 12 December 1999

Rav Weinbach's insights, explanations and comments for the 7 pages of Talmud studied in the course of the worldwide Daf Yomi cycle

Sanctuary Major and Minor

When the Torah commanded us to respect the Sanctuary, it did not explicitly define the nature of that respect; theoretically, such respect could include prostrating oneself before the Sanctuary as one would before Hashem. To dispel this notion, the Torah coupled in one passage (*Vayikra 19:30*) the command to observe Shabbat and to respect the Sanctuary. This is to teach us that just as in regard to Shabbat there is no obligation to show respect by bowing to the day (Rashi since the Torah

respect required regarding the Sanctuary is not respect for the building, but rather for the One who commanded us regarding the Sanctuary.

But how does one show respect for Hashem through his behavior in the Sanctuary?

Our Sages gave us a number of things we must refrain from doing even on the Temple Mount where the ultimate Sanctuary the *Beit Hamikdash* stood. This list includes some things, such as the prohibition against wearing shoes, which we

from one place to another. This sign of disrespect is prohibited even in regard to a synagogue, and is recorded in Shulchan Aruch (*Orach Chaim 151:5*).

Using the synagogue as a shortcut, or entering it for the purpose of calling someone there to come out, is considered disrespectful, as it is an exploitation of a holy place for a personal need. The *halacha* instructs us to eliminate the disrespect involved in such actions by reading some words of Torah or saying some mishna or halacha before indulging in the personal activity. If a person is not able to thus justify his presence, he should ask a child to recite the Torah passage he has just learned or at least sit down for a few moments, for even sitting in a synagogue is considered a mitzvah as indicated in the

Tehillim 84:5

Yevamot 6b

One who has water in his cistern should not dispose of it even if he has no need for it, so long as someone else does have a need.

This lesson of consideration, states Rabbi Yosef, was conveyed to us by Rabbi Yehuda Hanasi, the compiler of the Mishna, in a halacha dealing with the laws of *yibum* and *chalitza*, which form the main subject of our *mesechta*. Should a man die childless, his brother is supposed to perform *yibum* by marrying her. Should he be reluctant to do so, he must perform the act of *chalitza* that then releases the widow from her bond to the family and enables her to marry someone else.

But not just anyone else. Even though the Torah did not prohibit her marriage to a *kohen*, the Sages decreed that she may not do so. Her similarity to a divorced woman is so strong that if she would be permitted to a *kohen*, there is a danger that people may mistakenly extend such a right to a divorcee, who is forbidden to a *kohen* by Torah law.

A *mishna* later on (*44a*) discusses the case of a man who was married to two wives, one of whom was a divorcee from a previous marriage. In the event of his death without children, his brother must perform *yibum* or *chalitza* with one of the widows, automatically freeing the other one to marry at will. It is his choice as to which he prefers to make his wife through *yibum*. But if he chooses to perform *chalitza*, he is encouraged to do so with the divorcee. Even though this has no ramifications for him, he should take into consideration that by performing *chalitza* with the one who is eligible to marry a *kohen*, he thus renders her ineligible, a situation he could have avoided by performing *chalitza* with the previously ineligible widow.

Yevamot 11b

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