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Digest
Mishna Berura
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סימן קמ"ח סעיף א'-סימן קמ"ט סעיף א'

Halacha Highlight

Accompanying the Torah to the *aron kodesh*

Shulchan Aruch Siman 149 Seif 1
וילוהו למקום שמצניעין אותו שם
Accompany it to the place where it will be stored

Shulchan Aruch (סי' קמ"ט סע' א') rules that the *tzibbur* is not permitted to leave the *Bais HaKnesses* until after the Torah is put away. Mishnah Berurah (סק"א) explains that it is not respectful for the Torah for the *tzibbur* to leave while the Torah is out. In the event that the Torah will be taken to another location for it to be stored, one must accompany the Torah to that place. Rema explains that when the Torah will be taken to the *aron kodesh* to be stored there it is a *mitzvah* for all those people in front of whom the Torah passes to accompany the Torah to the *aron kodesh*. Similarly, the *golel* and the one who does *hagbah* should accompany the Torah back to the *aron kodesh* (ע' מ"ב סק"ח בשם הלבוש). Mishnah Berurah (סק"ז) adds that when the Torah is taken from the *aron kodesh* to the *bimah* there is also a *mitzvah* to accompany it to the *bimah*.

Kaf HaChaim (אות ז') reports that in addition to accompanying the Torah, Arizal's practice was to also kiss the Torah. He then references Toras Chaim who explains that the custom isn't only for children to come to the *Bais HaKnesses* to kiss the Torah but adults should also kiss the Torah when it passes by. Sha'arei Ephraim (פ"י סע' ד') adds that someone who is close enough to the Torah should also hug the Torah with his right arm. One who is not able to kiss the Torah directly should at least kiss the Torah with his hand. Pischei Shearim (שם) explains that although Kitzur Shelah mocked the practice of those who kiss the Torah with their hand, nevertheless, it is a proper practice to observe since it demonstrates that one has been affected by the sanctity of the Torah.

Stories to Share

How to Empathize

ש"ע סי' קמ"ט, א': "עד שיחזירו הספר תורה למקומה..."

On today's amud we find the halachos regarding replacing the sefer Torah to the aron hakodesh.

During his last years, the Tchebiner Rav lived in Shaarei Chessed. There was a certain very broken, lonely man who would collect tzedakah in the neighborhood shuls. This person was well known—if not well-liked—by all on account of his bizarre dress and strange behavior. He had his own unusual way to sing יהללו when the Torah was being replaced into the aron kodesh. Since his voice was cracked and he could not hold a tune, this was very annoying to the other people in shul. Nevertheless, if there was a chosson, he would always belt out his tune, often accompanied by bored children who immediately flocked to him and did their utmost to "help him along."

Once, when this man was collecting in the Tchebiner Rav's minyan, the Tchebiner Rav gave him a princely donation before they had replaced the Torah into the ark. "I am not giving you this merely as a gift," he proclaimed. "I give this to you on condition that you make the minyan happy with your unique tune for יהללו."

The man was thrilled to his core and began to sing his special tune. But this time, since the Rav had asked for it, everyone joined him and it was actually a fitting way to replace the Torah. The broken man was overjoyed at his triumph and would tell everyone he knew about the admiration for him that the Tchebiner Rav had for him. Not only had he given him a big sum of money, he had even asked for his special nigun!

ונכתב בספר, ח"ב, ע' רמ"ה

Overview

Siman 148 Seif 1:

The *shaliach tzibbur* is not authorized to fold up the covering on the *shulchan* as long as the *tzibbur* is still in the *Bais HaKnesses*. (Rashi explains that they used to bring the *sefer Torah* from another house where it was safe etc. and it was burdensome for the *tzibbur* to remain, see the Tur's explanation.)

- Generally, the term תבה refers to the *aron kodesh* but here it refers to the *shulchan* upon which the Torah rests when it is read. (M.B. 1)
- The *shaliach tzibbur* may not fold up the covering on the תבה in the presence of the *tzibbur* since it would be burdensome for the *tzibbur* to have to wait until the cloth on the *shulchan* is folded. Instead, they should follow the *sefer Torah* to the house where it will be stored and the *shaliach tzibbur* will go back to fold up the covering on the *shulchan*. (M.B. 2)

Siman 149 Seif 1:

The *tzibbur* may not exit the *Bais HaKnesses* until the *sefer Torah* is put away. If only an individual exits it is acceptable. **If the *sefer Torah* is put into storage elsewhere and the *Bais HaKnesses* has only one doorway the people must remain until the *sefer Torah* is removed and the people should follow the *sefer Torah* to the place where it is stored. If the *Bais HaKnesses* has two exits the people may exit the other exit ahead of the Torah but they must still follow the *sefer Torah* to the place where it is stored.** When the Torah is stored in the *aron kodesh* in the *Bais HaKnesses* there is a *mitzvah* for the people to accompany it to the *aron* if the Torah passes before them. Similarly, the *golel* must accompany the Torah to the *aron* and stand there until the Torah is returned to its place. This is also the custom for the one who lifts the Torah since he is the primary *golel* as was explained. There are those who write that children should be brought to the *Bais HaKnesses* to kiss the Torah to teach them and train them to perform *mitzvos* and this is our custom.

- Shulchan Aruch refers to a place that has the custom to put away the Torah after ובא לציון because otherwise one may not leave since it is prohibited to leave the *Bais HaKnesses* before *kedusha* in ובא לציון. (M.B. 1)
- Even two or three people may leave. Pri Megadim asserts that Rema's ruling applies when the *sefer Torah* is stored in the *Bais HaKnesses* but when it is stored in a nearby house even an individual must wait for the *sefer Torah* to be carried out of the *Bais HaKnesses*. (M.B. 2)
- Even though it is permitted to exit the other door it is still necessary to accompany the Torah to its place. (M.B. 6)
- It is also a *mitzvah* to accompany the Torah from the *aron* to the *bimah* if it passes one on the way. (M.B. 7)
- Later authorities maintain that both the one who received *hagbah* and the one who received *gelilah* must accompany the Torah back to the *aron*. (M.B. 8)
- We say מזמור לדוד when the Torah is returned to the *aron* on Shabbos and on Yom Tov and during the week we say מזמור לה'. (M.B. 8)