The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן קנ"א סעיף ב'-ו'

Overview

Siman 151 Seif 2:

Some maintain that what was taught regarding the sanctity of a *Bais HaMidrash* refers to a community *Bais HaMidrash* similar to a *Bais HaKnesses* but if an individual establishes a place for Torah study in his home it does not have that much sanctity.

- If one sanctifies his house to be used as a *Bais HaMidrash* it acquires the sanctity of a *Bais HaMidrash* even if it is not used for *davening*. (M.B. 14)

Siman 151 Seif 3:

One may not sleep in a *Bais HaKnesses* even just a nap but in a *Bais HaMidrash* it is permitted.

- Shulchan Aruch means that napping is permitted but Rav Akiva Eiger disagrees with this leniency and it is possible that since one spends long periods of time there it is difficult to avoid napping so they did not prohibit the activity. (M.B. 16)

Siman 151 Seif 4:

It is permitted to eat and sleep in a *Bais HaKnesses* if it is for the needs of the *Bais HaKnesses*. For this reason it is permitted to sleep in the *Bais HaKnesses* Yom Kippur night. It is even permitted to eat in a *Bais HaKnesses* for another *mitzvah*, e.g. when people gather together to establish a leap year.

- An example is someone who guards the *Bais HaKnesses*. (M.B. 17)
- Magen Avrohom only permits meals that are not accompanied by lightheaded behavior, meaning one that does not include drinking alcoholic beverages which is prohibited even in a *Bais HaMidrash*. However, it is permitted to host a *siyum* on *shas* when there is no other location to contain all the guests. (M.B. 20)

Siman 151 Seif 5:

If a *Bais HaKnesses* has two entrances one should not enter one entrance to exit the other entrance and thereby shorten one's path. If a path existed before the *Bais HaKnesses* was built it is permitted. Similarly, if one did not enter in the first place to shorten one's walk it is permitted to exit the second entrance. If one enters to *daven* it is permitted for one who entered one entrance to exit through the other.

- According to another *girsa* it should say it is a "mitzvah" rather than it is "permitted." (M.B. 21)

Siman 151 Seif 6:

It is permitted to enter with one's walking stick and different types of bags (תרמילו ובאפנדתו). Some prohibit entering with a long knife or exposed head.

Stories to Share

Reward for Every Step

מ"ב, ס' קנ"א, ס"ק כ"א: "כדי שיהיה נראה כמחבב..."

On today's amud we find that one should leave shul in a manner that demonstrates that he cherishes every inch of it that he can walk upon.

Once there was an extremely wealthy man who lived quite close to his synagogue. Although he could have easily walked the short distance, he would choose to ride on his very expensive mount to the Beit Knesset, since he felt it befitted his distinguished stature. Someone pointed out to this man that it may be preferable to walk the distance. The wealthy man consulted with the Ben Ish Chai, zt"l.

"It is better to go on foot," the Ben Ish Chai ruled. "We see this in Sotah 22. The gemara there recounts that a certain widow used to pray in Rav Yochanan's beis medrash even though she lived closer to a different beis medrash. When Rav Yochanan asked her why she went out of her way to come to his shul, she replied, 'I come here to receive reward for each step!' This implies that the reward for going out of one's way is only if one troubles himself to walk on his own two feet, not if one rides!

The Ben Ish Chai continued, "A small child is not obligated to be olah l'regel because he can't walk to the Beis Hamikdash himself. Beis Hillel rule that a child is not obligated until he is old enough to hold his father's hand and walk on his own two feet from Yerushalayim to Har Habayis. Although those who were very distant from Yerushalayim would surely ride, clearly one should walk as much as possible. For the above reasons, you should walk to synagogue on your own two feet, regardless of your honor and status!"

שו"ת תורה לשמה, ס' מ'

Halacha Highlight

Hosting *mitzvah* meals in a *Bais HaKnesses*

Shulchan Aruch Siman 151 Seif 4

לצרך בית הכנסת מתר לאכל ולישן בתוכו

For the need of the *Bais HaKnesses* it is permitted to eat and drink inside

Shulchan Aruch (סע' ד') writes that it is permitted to eat or sleep in a *Bais HaKnesses* if the eating involves a *shul* need. For example, it is permitted to sleep in the *Bais HaKnesses* the night of Yom Kippur since someone must be there to watch the candles (מ"ב ס"ק י"ט). Moreover, it is also permitted to use the *Bais HaKnesses* for other *mitzvos*. The example Shulchan Aruch gives for other *mitzvos* is gathering together to declare a leap year and it is permitted to eat at such a *mitzvah* gathering. Magen Avrohom in the name of Haghos HaSemak explains that the only *mitzvah* meal that is permitted is one which is similar to the meal that accompanied declaring a leap year that did not involve drinking alcoholic beverages. *Mitzvah* meals that include alcoholic beverages may not be held in the *Bais HaKnesses* or even a *Bais HaMidrash*. However, there are authoritative opinions to rely on who permit hosting a *siyum hashas* in a *Bais HaMidrash* when there is no place else to handle all the guests (מ"ב סק"כ).

In accordance with the lenient opinion that permits a *siyum hashas* when there is no other space to host the meal, the custom has developed to permit many different types of *mitzvah* meals in *Batei Knesiyos* and *Batei Midrashos*. For that reason many *Batei Knesiyos* host *seudas shlishis* or a *melave malka* in the sanctuary. Authorities also permit the distribution of cake and schnapps on the occasion of a yahrtzeit. The rationale for leniency in all these cases is that the meals involve a *mitzvah* and the Honor of Heaven is increased when people gather together and hear *divrei Torah* and sing songs of praise to Hashem. Additionally, it is generally assumed that people will not become drunk during one of these meals and it will not lead to lightheaded behavior (פסקי תשובות אות י"א).