

אלא שהניחו ספר תורה על מטתו –

Rather, they placed a ספר תורה on his bed

Overview

ר' נחמיה maintains that the חזקיה that was given to him consisted of placing a ס"ת on his מטה (and stating בזה שכתוב בזה). Our Tosfos discusses the permissibility of being on the same bed on which a ס"ת is lying.

Tosfos anticipates a question:

ואף על גב דבפרק בתרא דמועד קטן (כה,א) גבי רב הונא משמע דאסור לעשות כן¹ –

And even though that in the last פרק of מסכת מו"ק, concerning רב הונא, it seems that it is prohibited to do so; to place a ס"ת on the bed of a מת –

משום דאסור לישב על גבי מטה שספר תורה מונחת עליה –

Because it is forbidden to sit on a bed when a ס"ת is lying on it. How is it that they placed a ס"ת on the bed of חזקיה?!

Tosfos anticipates an additional question (and resolves them both):

ובהקומץ רבה (מנחות דף לב,ב) איכא פלוגתא דאמוראי² –

And in the פרק הקומץ רבה there is a dispute between אמוראים whether one may sit on a bed where there is a ס"ת, nevertheless one –

ליכא למיפרך מדרבי נחמיה³ דהכא –

Cannot challenge the view that it is prohibited from the statement of ר"נ here that they placed a ס"ת on the bed of חזקיה, which would seemingly prove that one is permitted to be on the same bed with a ס"ת –

Tosfos rejects this:

דשאני חזקיה דהוה גדול בתורה ובמעשים טובים ביותר:

For חזקיה was unusual, for he was extremely great in תורה study and in doing good deeds therefore it was permitted to have him on the same bed with a ס"ת.⁴

Summary

Even if one maintains that it is prohibited from sitting on the same bed where a ס"ת is lying, nevertheless it was permitted to place a ס"ת on the מטה of חזקיה since he was a גדול בתורה ובמע"ט ביותר.

Thinking it over

How can we explain the חזקיה נמי איבע"א even for one lesser than חזקיה?⁵

¹ The גמרא there relates that when רב הונא passed away they wished to place a ס"ת on his bed. רב חסדא restrained them, saying that something which רב הונא did not permit to do (when he was alive), should we do it to him now! The גמרא there relates a story that רב הונא would not sit on a bed with a ס"ת on it.

² The גמרא there cites the story with ר"ה (footnote # 1) and that ר' יוחנן disagrees.

³ ר' יהודה בר פלוגתא as a תנא (quoted in this ברייתא as a רבי נחמיה).

⁴ There is no בזיון for the תורה to be on the same bed as חזקיה since he was completely imbued with תומע"ט.

⁵ See נח"מ.