

A bride as she actually is

כלה כמות שהיא –

OVERVIEW

The ברייתא cites a מחלוקת between ב"ש and ב"ה concerning how we praise the כלה. ב"ה maintain that we praise her realistically according to her status and beauty. ב"ש maintain that we lavish praise on all the כלות, regardless if they merit it or not. תוספות discusses what ב"ש and ב"ה maintain concerning a כלה that is not only lacking in status etc., but is also somewhat blemished or disfigured.

וּאִם יֵשׁ בָּהּ מוֹם יִשְׁתַּקּוּ וְלֹא יִשְׁבַּחוּהָ¹ -

And if she has a blemish, it is the opinion of ב"ש that they should be silent and not praise her at all.

תוספות offers another interpretation of ב"ש' view:

אִי נִמְי יִשְׁבַּחוּהָ בְּדָבָר נָאֵה שִׁישׁ בָּהּ כְּגוֹן בְּעֵינֶיהָ אוֹ בְּיָדֶיהָ אִם הֵם יָפוֹת -

Or you may also say that they should praise her with any pleasant feature that she possesses; for instance with her eyes or with her hands if they are pretty.

תוספות anticipates the following question. If ב"ש also agree that even by a כלה with a מום, she is still praised for any positive attributes she may have, why do ב"ה disagree, and have them praise the כלה lavishly; beyond what she deserves. תוספות answers:

וּבֵית הַלֵּל אוֹמְרִים יִשְׁבַּחוּהָ לְגַמְרֵי דְכַשְׁמַזְכִּירִין מַה שִׁישׁ בָּהּ לְשֶׁבַח מְכַלֵּל דְּשֶׁאֵר לְגַנְאִי:

ב"ה maintains that they should praise her completely; without reservations or mentioning specific details for if we only mention the praiseworthy attributes she has the inference is that the rest of her attributes are shameful.

SUMMARY

If a כלה has a blemish ב"ש maintain that you either not praise her at all, or find something (specific) about her that is praiseworthy. ב"ה maintain that in all instances we lavish (equal) praise to all כלות; in order that there be no negative inferences.

THINKING IT OVER

Why do ב"ה challenge ב"ש by asking if one bought a flawed item, should the item be praised or degraded; when ב"ש maintain that even if she has a מום she is not degraded, we are merely silent (or she is praised for specific positive attributes).²

¹ ב"ש is of the opinion that one may not veer from the truth, even if the consequences are somewhat disconcerting.

² See מהר"ם שי"ף.