

How do we know to include, ineligible children - זרע פסול מניין

OVERVIEW

The תורה writes¹ if the husband of a כהן dies and leaves her childless, she may eat תרומה. However if she has any progeny from a ישראל, even זרע פסול², she is disqualified from eating תרומה, for it says אין לה meaning לה עיין. Our זרע פסול will explain what is meant by זרע פסול.

אומר רבינו יצחק זרע זרעה פסול³ קאמר –

The ר"י explains that this דרשה of זרע פסול which includes (to disqualify her from eating תרומה), actually means grandchildren who are פסול, but this דרשה is not needed for זרע פסול –

דהא כיון שנבעלה לפסול לה⁴ פסלה מן הכהונה ולא תאכל עוד בתרומה⁵ –

For if she had relations with anyone who is פסול to her, he disqualified her from כהונה (for ever) and she can no longer eat תרומה (even if she had no children from him) –

הילכך ליכא לפרש זרע פסול ממש אלא זרע זרעה:

Therefore זרע פסול cannot be interpreted to mean actually her children who are פסול, but rather her grandchildren who are פסול.

SUMMARY

A כהן who was נבעלה לפסול is forbidden to ever eat תרומה. The עיין of לימוד The זרע פסול concerning זרע פסול is for זרע פסול.

THINKING IT OVER

Perhaps the זרע פסול is referring to her son who is a פצוע דכא or a שפכה כרות who are פסול לקהל; however she was not נבעלה לפסול לה!⁶

¹ ויקרא (אמור) כב, יג.

² זרע פסול means children who are born from an illicit relationship; with a relative or a married woman. This כהן will have זרע פסול if she had relations with a relative or while she was married, and bore a child.

³ The כהן had זרע פסול. One of her children had an illicit relationship which resulted in זרע פסול. The children of the כהן died and there remained only this grandchild who is פסול. She cannot eat תרומה.

⁴ The only way she can have זרע פסול if she was נבעלה לפסול לה.

⁵ This is derived (see יבמות סח, א) from a previous פסוק (יב) which states ובה כהן כי תהיה לאיש זר היא בתרומת הקדשים לא תאכל.

⁶ See מהרש"ל. See בל"י אות עו for additional cases.