

A disqualifying flaw

שמץ פסול –

OVERVIEW

The גמרא relates that a שמץ פסול was found by the כהן who did not speak נקיה. This שמץ פסול was a חלל according to רש"י. Our תוספות offers a different interpretation of שמץ פסול.



פירש רבינו חננאל דבר עבודת כוכבים כדכתיב (שמות לב, כה) לשמצה בקמיהם –

The ר"ה explained that this שמץ פסול is referring to an issue of idol worship, as it is written concerning the עגל הזהב that the Jews were לשמצה בקמיהם (disgraced, for those who oppose them). The term שמץ is used there to refer to ע"ז, similarly here they found in this student an issue of ע"ז -

ופסול לכהונה –

And therefore this student became ineligible for the כהונה; he was not able to serve in the בית המקדש -

כדתנן במסכת מנחות (דף קט, א) כהנים ששמשו בבית חוניו¹ לא ישמשו במקדש –

As it was taught in a משנה in מסכת מנחות that ‘the כהנים who served in the house of חוניו should not serve in the המקדש; the משנה continues -

ואין צריך לומר לדבר אחר פירוש לעבודה זרה –

And it is not necessary to say that he should not serve in the מקדש if he previously served for something else; the meaning of דבר אחר explains תוספות is עבודה זרה.

One who served for an ע"ז can certainly not serve in the ביהמ"ק as the משנה cites the reason -

שנאמר² אך לא יעלו כהני הבמות אל מזבח ה':

For it says in the פסוק; ‘however, the priests of the במות (which were used for sacrificing to ע"ז), should not go up to the altar of ה’. This פסוק teaches that one who served ע"ז is פסול to serve in the ביהמ"ק.

SUMMARY

The שמץ פסול was a matter pertaining to ע"ז, which prohibits the כהן from serving in the מקדש.

THINKING IT OVER

The גמרא subsequently asks how come they were בודק; there is a rule that אין בודקין

¹ בית חוניו (the son of שמעון הצדיק) built a sanctuary in Alexandria (Egypt) and it was called חוניו.

² מלכים ב כג, ט.

מזבח ולמעלה. However, this rule (seemingly) applies only to בדיקת יוחסין, what therefore is the question according to the ר"ח who maintains that it was a פסול ע"ז³ (and not a יוחסין) and they were בודק for ע"ז?³

³ See ספרי ברכת אברהם לר"א אבלי ולר"א ארלנגר. See also תוספות הרא"ש (הערה 63) and מהרש"א (הארוך).