

“BEWARE OF TIRCHA D'TZIBBURA”

“But if the eved [Jewish bondsman] will say, ‘I love my master, my wife, and my children-I do not want to go free. Then his master shall bring him to court and shall bring him to the door or the doorpost, and his master shall bore through his ear with the awl, and he shall serve him forever” (21:5,6).

The Gemara Sotah [8a] comments, אין עושין מצות חבילות חבילות “we do not perform Mitzvot as bundles”. Because of this, if there are two avadim [slaves] that Bet Din has to perform the Mitzvah of ear boring for each one separately. By the same token, the Gemara continues, we do not give to drink two Sotah and we do not purify two Metzora'im [afflicted with Leprosy] at once- but rather, each one separately. Of course it's no Mitzvah for an eved to remain in servitude, but once he chooses to do so then it is a Mitzvah to follow the Torah procedures. Just as by a divorce, which is one of the 613 Mitzvot, it's no Mitzvah to divorce a wife, but once it is being done it must follow the Torah procedures.

As a follow up of the rule “Ein Osin Mitzvot Chavilot Chavilot”, when you have two Mitzvot together and each requires a cup of wine, such as under the Chupah of a wedding, or by Birkat HaMazon of a wedding, Rav Gumbinger, [d.1682] the Magen Avraham argues that we do not fill both cups simultaneously but rather, we finish one Mitzvah and then fill the second, for otherwise, it would be a violation of “Ein Osin Mitzvot Chavilot Chavilot”. However, the Perisha argues and states that we do fill both cups together and indeed, many follow the Perisha.

According to Mesechet Sofrim, when we have to take out two or more Sifrei Torah from the Aron HaKodesh we should NOT take out both [or all] together, but each taken out in full honor separately. We read from the first, place it back in Aron Hakodesh then take out the second. That is what we should do! But the reason we don't is because of טרחה וצבורא, it would be a hardship of time consumption for the congregation. Taking out each Torah with its full honor and glory, by the singing of “VaYehi Bin'so'ah Ha'aron” and reciting Brich Shemei, for each one individually, would indeed take up much time. We see how important the honor of the congregation is valued, for it trumps even the honor of the Torah, and how seriously the violation of “Tircha D'Tzibbura” is deemed in Halacha

For that reason it is important for the Gabbaim to make sure the Sifrei Torah are turned to the right place before taken out so the congregation should not have to wait while it to be turned, as that is Tircha D'Tzibbura! Likewise, how serious it is when the Torah reading [which means Gd is talking to us] has to be stopped because some congregants are talking –a serious violation of Tircha D'tzibbura!!

Shabbat Shalom from sunny Florida, Rabbi Aharon Ziegler