**Ten Minute Halacha - May a Kohein Go To Medical School? Transcribed by Rabbi Joey Mizrahi**

Someone asked rav schachter in a q &a session in Toras Shraga: What does a kohen need to know when he goes to medical school and rav schachter said he cant go at all !

What are the issues ? Halacha- a kohen can’t be tame to a corpse. Shulchan Aruch says( YD-171-1) Assur for kohen to go in ohel of a corpse. What about a gentile? Shulchan Aruch(372-2 )graves of a non jew ,kohen should be careful from going over and Rama says correct to be strict.

Bet Yosef –this is a machloket many rishonim say no problem to gentile , but nachon lizaher( proper to be careful)

. So what are the heterim? In Med schoolits mandatory to take an anatomy course and they work on cadavers. So Rav Moshe says assumption is that they are gentile bodies ( at least outside of Israel)but even so ,it would be forbidden according to the Shulcha Aruch.

.so there are 4 heterim, some weaker than otgherss

* **Weakest** Rav Moshe (YD 155), a talmid hacham said its ok bec of pikuach nefesh , bec he can eventually save lives. But Rav Moshe rips it to smithereens, says its most ridiculous thing that he ever heard, explaining that its only pikuach nefesh if you are already a doctor to save a life , not to study medicine to eventually ,perhaps do pikuach nefesh, and even if there is no doctor in the world ,its not pikuach nefesh, bec pikuach nefesh means to do all within your ability to save lives..

e.g. mitzvah of tzedaka is to give what you have , not to make as much $ as you can to give tzedaka ( obviously its mutar to retire)

* #2- Raavad (nezirus 5-15), The Rambam holds if one touched a dead body he cannot touch another even though its not adding tumah.. But Raavad argues and says its ok that one is not liable for becoming tameh.

So here you have a double doubt to rely on ( safek sefeka)- # 1-are non jewish bodies tameh, and also Raavad to rely on that we’re all tameh mes already so you can be lenient .

Pitchei Teshuva (372-10 )says this from the Nodah Beyehuda, but NB knocks this out by saying if you look at the Raavad he never says that its ok to be with a non jewish corpse, rather just that one is not liable for punishment but not that its ok

* # 3- heter of Rav Goren- There is a concept-**cherev harei hu kechalal**- a metal implement that touches a dead body becomes like the dead body itself, so Rambam holds while youre touching a dead body you can touch another, so a kohen can touch a cherev( a metal item) even though it becomes an avi avos( highest level of tumah, i.e. like that of the corpse itself) so he says take a ring touch a dead body and have him wear it ( thereby rendering the kohen an avi avos, albeit in a permissible manner)and then touch dead bodies because he is not increasing any tumah on himself.
* Most Rabbis disagreed. Rav Schachter in his sefer ( Beikvei Hatzon) explains why he disagrees with Rav Goren.
* People had said that Rav Tendler gives heterim so I looked into it they said he says not really mutar just don’t touch dead bodies. Bec he holds that Shulchan Aruch forbade walking over graves of gentiles but to be in same room then is ok, so he says if you can take anatomy without touching a dead body then its ok and some have done that ( delegate that job to others while doing the non touching jobs)

However Rav Schechter said even to be in same room is not ok, e.g. a kohen going to a wake of a gentile co worker is not ok, arguing on Rav Tebdler.

Rav Dovid Cohen says you can go to a wake, agreeing with Rav Tendler

Rav Schechter quotes Rav Moshe who says he feels it’s a chilul Hashem for a kohen to be in med school