

הלכה of the Week

~ ספרים קדושים ~

~ Holy Books and Religious Objects ~

We have been discussing laws regarding the holiness of the בית-כנסת. ספרים קדושים (holy books) and other religious articles must also be given proper respect. Here are some laws relating to this:

- ~ One should not sit on a chair or bench on which ספרים קדושים are lying.
- ~ All ספרים קדושים, including those that are worn out or torn, and sheets of paper on which Torah thoughts were written, may not be thrown out. They must be put in a גניזה (a special burial place). Many synagogues have a special box or place where these books and papers are set aside until they are taken for burial.
- ~ Holy books must not be placed face down. If one sees a ספר קדוש that is face down he should turn it over on to its right side.
- ~ A חומש, or one of the five parts of the חומש, may be placed on top of a volume of נביאים or כתובים; volumes of נביאים and כתובים may be placed on top of each other; נביאים and כתובים may not be placed on top of חומשים. Other holy books must not be placed on top of any of these ספרים.
- ~ Papers which do not have any holiness or religious meaning at all must not be inserted in ספרים קדושים unless they help in the study of the books.
- ~ A person who was studying from a holy book should not leave the book open when he leaves, even if he expects to return in a short time.

פרקי אבות of the Week

פרק ג
ב רבי חנינא סגן הכהנים אומר, יהי מתפלל בשלומה של מלכות, שאלמלא מורא, איש את רעהו חיים בלעו.

Rabbi Chanina, the assistant Kohen Gadol, taught:

“Pray for the welfare of the government, because if people did not fear it (the government) a person would swallow his fellow alive.”

* * *