

Intermediate Talmud

Tractate Berachot: Chapter 7, folio 47a

Lesson Eleven

With Rabbi Mendel Kaplan

Once Rabin and Abaye were on the road and the ass of Rabin got in front of Abaye, and he [Rabin] did not say to him, Will your honor proceed. Said Abaye: Since this student has come up from the West, he has grown proud. When he arrived at the door of the synagogue, he said, Will your honor please enter. He said to him: Was I not 'Your honor', up to now? — He replied: Thus said R. Yochanan: One gives precedence only in a doorway in which there is a *mezuzah*. [You say] only where there is a *mezuzah*, but not where there is no *mezuzah*. If that is so, then in the case of a synagogue and *bet hamidrash* also where there is no *mezuzah* we do not give precedence? What you must say is, in a doorway which is suitable for a *mezuzah*.

R. Yudah the son of R. Shmuel b. Shilath said in the name of Rav: The guests may not eat anything until the one who breaks bread has tasted. R. Safra sat and stated: The statement was, 'May not taste'. What difference does it make [in practice]? — [It teaches that] one must repeat the exact words of his teacher.

Our Rabbis taught: Two wait for one another⁵ before commencing on the dish, but three need not wait. The one who has broken bread stretches out his hand first, but if he wishes to show respect to his teacher or to anyone senior to himself, he may do so. Rabbah b. Bar Chanah made a marriage feast for his son in the house of R. Shmuel son of R. Kattina, and he first sat down and taught his son: The one who acts as host may not break the bread until the guests have finished responding, Amen. R. Chisda said: The bulk of the guests. Rama b. Chama said to him: Why should this be the case only with the majority? Presumably it is because the benediction had not yet been completed. The same should apply also to a minority, for the benediction has not yet been completed? — He replied: What I say is that whoever [draws out] the response of Amen longer than necessary is in error.