

Priest Entering *Bet Hamikdash*

Ref: *Sefer Avodah, Hilchot Biat Hamikdash, Chapters 1, 2 4 and 5*

📖 | A Priest should not enter the *Mikdash* drunk.¹

If a Priest entered area of *Mizbeach* or beyond, was drunk from wine and performed Service, his service is invalid and his punishment is Death at the Hand of Heaven.

🔔 Reminder:

Pack on Punishment for *Sefer Avodah*



MEASURE

- Must be wine
- Must be **1 revit** or more
- Wine must be at least **40** days old

Similarly, it is forbidden for any person to enter *mikdash* (from the courtyard of Israelites), drunk, even from other beverages.

This *halachah* extends to other prohibitions while drunk (and even to Israelites) – such as not to decide halachic rulings while drunk.

📖 | A Priest should not enter the *Mikdash* (Altar and inwards) with long hair.²

Similarly, if a Priest with long hair entered the Temple and did the service, the punishment is Death at the Hand of Heaven.

MEASURE

- Hair left uncut for **30** days or more.

An ordinary Priest only has periods of Service, and therefore outside these periods his hair can be long. The *Kohen Gadol* is always in the Temple and his hair must be always cut.

It is similarly forbidden for any person to enter *Mikdash* (from the Courtyard of Israelites) with unkempt long hair.

📖 | Not to enter (i.e. a Priest) with torn garments.³

Similarly, for Priests with torn garments doing Service, the punishment is Death at the Hand of Heaven.

Similarly, it is forbidden for any person to enter *Mikdash* (from Courtyard of Israelites) with torn garments.

📖 | Priests should not come at all times to the *Hechal*.⁴

Hechal includes

- *Ulam*
- *Kodesh*
- *Kodesh Hakodashim*

Ordinary Priests are allowed into the *Kodesh* only to do Service. *Kohen Gadol* can do Service in the *Kodesh*, and only on *Yom Kippur* may he enter the *Kodesh Hakodashim*, at particular

times.

He enters 4 times on *Yom Kippur*.

Punishment for entering *Kodesh Hakodashim* at any other times is Death at the Hand of Heaven. (for Priest and High Priest)

Punishment for entering the *Kodesh*, where no Service is involved, is *malkot*.

📖 | A Priest shall not go out from the *Mikdash* during the time of Service.⁵

Punishment for Priests leaving their Service before completion is also death at Hand of Heaven.

Laws of mourning are relevant to Priests leaving their Service.

- If an ordinary Priest receives news of the death of a close relative while performing his Service, he is not allowed to leave the Temple, but nor is he allowed to do the Sacrificial Services.
- If same happens to the *Kohen Gadol*, he can continue with the Sacrificial Services. He is however forbidden to partake of the sacrificial food.

On the day of death of a close relative a person is in a state of acute mourning (*onen*) – Scripture Law.

📖 | On that night, he is an *onen Derabanan*

Throughout the 7 days of mourning after burial, a person should not send sacrifices to be offered in the Temple.

🕒 **Reminder:**

Mourning of a *Kohen*. Ref: *Sefer Shoftim, Hilchot Evel*, Chapter 2.
Pack on Mourning



📖 | An impure Priest shall not serve⁹, A *Tevul Yom* should not serve.¹⁰ (Someone who has immersed in a *mikveh* but has not yet waited till sunset.)

🕒 **Reminder:**

Mechusrei Kaparah ((period after *mikveh* and sunset, before achieving atonement with Sacrifices).
Ref: *Sefer Korbanot, Hilchot Mechusrei Kaparah*, Chapter 1.



Tarrying in *Bet Hamikdash* while *tamei* gives punishment of *karet*.

Serving in *Bet Hamikdash* while *tamei* gives punishment of Death at the hand of Heaven (and not *karet*).

Examples

- Was rushing away from *Mikdash* in correct manner but at same time turned over a limb from a sacrifice on the fire.
- A *tevul yom* who had been to *mikveh* (entered the Temple accidentally) and then started his service before nightfall (knowingly, as he rushed away from *Mikdash* in correct manner).

- *Mechusar kippurim* (He is exempt from punishment even though service is invalid.)
- Priests service when he had a known impurity but it only became known after his service – all his sacrifices become invalid.
- Priests service with unknown impurity (*tumat tehom*).

The *tzitz* (forehead plate), when on the forehead of the *Kohen Gadol*, brings about appeasement for this impurity.

- Offerings of a set time override the laws of *tumah* only in the case of *tumat met* (contact with a human corpse) i.e. other forms of *tumah* would still be liable to *karet* or Death at Hand of Heaven.



Korban Pesach can be eaten in state of impurity if most of the Jews were impure. *Mipi Hashmuah*.

This too only refers to impurity due to contact with dead.

Washing hands and feet.



Ministering Priest had to wash his hands and feet before serving.¹¹

Punishment for not washing is Death at the Hand of Heaven and the service is invalid.

This must be done once a day (day includes night and starts from daybreak) unless there has been an interruption of leaving Temple, urination, defaecation or sleeping.

There was a general principle that no person would enter Temple Courtyard for service without immersing in a *mikveh*, even although he was pure.

The sanctification had to take place with

- sanctified vessel
- water

VESSEL

Kiyor was made for this purpose.

Any sanctified vessel could be used however.

WATER

- Any water, provided its appearance has not changed, can be used for the *Kiyor*.
- *Kiyor* should contain enough water for 4 Priests.
- Water disqualified if it stayed overnight.

HOW PERFORMED

Done standing by oneself or by a fellow Priest.

Right hand placed on right foot and left hand on left foot and water poured over them.

There should be no intervening substance between flesh, vessel and water.

Generally, Temple service must be performed with right hand, standing, and with no interventions between feet and Temple and hands and the Service.

Reminder:

Hand-washing *Mikvaot*. Ref: *Sefer Taharah, Hilchot Mikvaot*, Chapter 11.
Pack on Purification

