

# TALMUD TORAH 6:8

*by Rabbi Yitzchak Etshalom*

**8.** A student who constantly sits in front of his teacher is not allowed to stand up in his presence except [once] in the morning and [once] at night, so that the honor given his teacher should not be greater than the honor given to God.

**Q1:** Doesn't this Halakha belong in the last chapter, where the student-teacher relationship is presented?

**YE:** There are two components to the student-teacher relationship:

- (a) the debt - based on an extension of honor for parents - which is owed to the teacher; and
- (b) the honor - based on an extension of honor for God (see answer to Q2 below) - due scholars.

Of course, if a scholar is not one's teacher, the laws in Chapter 6 apply; conversely, if one's teacher is not a scholar, the laws in Chapter 5 apply. In our case, we are analyzing the relationship towards scholars (the topic of this chapter) - where it should never exceed the honor due God. Within that context, it is most likely that that scholar's students will be the only ones to whom this conflict would be presented, such that the Gemara (and in its footsteps, R) phrases it as "a student who constantly sits..." - but it is still a Halakha in the field of "honor for scholars" as opposed to "honor for teachers".

**Q2:** Does this mean that even if his teacher enters, stands nearby etc. the student should not stand up for him? Doesn't this violate the general "honor for scholars" as presented up until now?

**YE:** Tosafot (BT Kiddushin 33b s.v. Ein Talmid Hakham - quoted in Kessef Mishneh on our Halakha) qualifies this statement as follows: "This law only applies to those [students] who live in the house of the teacher, since we assume that they stood up [in his honor] in the morning and evening; however, other students are obligated to stand up even one hundred times a day, lest someone else sees them and suspects them [of not standing] - and even regarding those who live in the teacher's house, if someone new came in they must stand." (btw, the next comment of Tosafot indicates that "not allowed" should be understood as "not obligated")

In addition, "honor for scholars" is, in one sense, an extension of God's honor - see Bava Kamma 41b, where R. Akiva expounds the extra word "*et* the Lord your God you shall fear" to include scholars - so it would violate the goal of this if we show more honor for the scholar than for God.

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