

In the Service of *Kedushah*
Dayan Yehoshua Grunwald
February 17, 2022

Q May mundane items be placed on a bimah?

A Items that directly service sifrei *kodesh* are called *tashmishei kedushah* and are subject to three halachos:



- They may not be used for mundane purposes.
- When they will no longer be used, they must be placed in genizah.
- If they are sold, the money must be used to purchase something with a higher level of *kedushah*.

The velvet cover of a bimah directly services a sefer Torah, so it is *tashmishei kedushah*. The plastic cover over the velvet isn't *tashmishei kedushah*, because its function is only to protect the velvet. The Mishnah Brurah writes that the wooden table is also *tashmishei kedushah*, though it doesn't usually touch the sefer Torah, because sometimes the velvet cover slips off the table and the Torah makes contact. But *poskim* write that because today's better-fitted covers rarely slip, the table isn't *tashmishei kedushah*.

Based on this, it would seem that it should be forbidden to put things other than sifrei *kodesh* on a bimah or even to lean on it. But a condition was instituted by Chazal to limit the original *kedushah* of *tashmishei kedushah* to allow certain uses ("*leiv bais din masneh aleihem*"), including storing invalid sifrei Torah in an *Aron Kodesh* and placing things like a *pushkeh*, *zmanei tefilah* chart, or tallis on a bimah. (Those who are lenient with regard to leaning on the bimah and placing hats on it assume this principle extends to those items as well.) But something like one's lunch bag may not be put on a bimah.