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Not Fulfilling One's Obligation of the First Blessing after Zimun

When three people eat bread together they become obligated to make Zimun (lit. invitation) before reciting Birkath Hamazon (grace after meals). If two of them have finished and wish to recite Birkath Hamazon, the third must also interrupt his meal to answer the Zimun even if he has not finished his meal. According to Maran Yosef Qaro, z"l, he may continue his meal as soon as the Zimun is over, i.e. once he has replied, *Barukh She-akhalnu Mishello...* The Rama (Rabbenu Moshe Isserles), 'a"h, states, however, that he should wait till the end of the first blessing (Hazan Eth Hakol).

Ashkenazim follow the opinion of the Rama. While some Sephardim follow Maran's opinion, many also follow the opinion of the Rama, especially since Hakham Yosef Hayyim, 'a"h, also rules in Ben Ish Hai that one should wait till the end of the first Berakha before returning to the meal.

To avoid any complication, however, those who are strict to wait till the end of the first Berakha should be careful to have in mind that they are not fulfilling their obligation of reciting the first Berakha by hearing it. This is because there is an opinion that if they hear the first Berakha, they fulfill their obligation of reciting it, so that when they make Birkath Hamazon themselves, they only start from the second Berakha. If one specifically has in mind that one is not fulfilling one's obligation by hearing it, all agree that when he finishes his meal he reads the Birkath Hamazon from the beginning.

(See Shulhan 'Arukh, 200:2.
Ben Ish Hai, 1st year,
Parashath Qorah, Oth 9.
Kaf Hayyim 200, Oth 10)



מדרש בן איש חי
Midrash BEN ISH HAI

5779 פרשת וירא

Wayyera: Why Is Abraham Considered So Highly?

וַיִּהְיֶה-לְהוֹתָם נִסָּה אֶת-אַבְרָהָם, And G-d tested Abraham (Bereishith 22:1).

Rabbenu the Hid"a, 'a"h, quoting Hakham Almoschnino, 'a"h, asks what was so special about Abraham Abinu, 'a"h? Why is he considered to be so great for fulfilling the will of G-d when he was commanded: *Take your son, your only son ... and offer him ...?* There are many who gave their lives in order to sanctify G-d's Name, such as the Ten Martyrs. And that is without G-d actually appearing to them. How much more so would it be, had G-d actually appeared to them and commanded them as he did Abraham Abinu, 'a"h.

He explains that the greatness of Abraham Abinu, 'a"h, was that he did everything with complete happiness. Hakhamenu z"l taught us that prophecy only rests on a person who is fully happy (Pesachim 117a). When Abraham Abinu took the knife to sacrifice his son, we would consider it totally natural that he would feel some degree of sadness. We know for certain, however, that there was not even a drop of sadness because, when he took the knife, prophecy came to him at that moment and the angel said to him, *"Do not stretch your hand out against the lad"*.

Had there been even the slightest amount of sadness, prophecy would not have come to him. Other righteous individuals who died for the sanctification of G-d's holy Name, most likely felt some degree of sadness. This demonstrates the greatness of Abraham Abinu, 'a"h, who attained a level that no other human being reached, when he agreed to sacrifice his only son who he, undoubtedly, loved even more than his own self.

(See Ruwah Hayyim, Derush 19)

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Qaddish for Someone Who Has No Sons

The Qaddish that is said just before 'Aleinu Leshabeyah (or right after 'Aleinu in the Ashkenazi Nusah), is considered to be the orphan's Qaddish since it was instituted by our Rabbis of blessed memory to be recited by the orphans on the passing of their parents. It is considered to be a great assistance to the parents if the son recites it during the 12 months of their passing as well as on the anniversary of their passing (Yahrzeit) every year.

It is effective in two areas.

1. to save one's parents from judgement in Gehinnam (hell), and
2. to help raise them into Gan 'Eden and to raise their souls from one level to the next.

Since it is known that a Qaddish read by one other than one's son does not have the same effect, is there any point in paying someone to read the Qaddish for someone who passed away without children? It says in Rab Pe'alim that this is the custom from long ago, that one hires someone to read the Qaddish for one who has no sons and it does, indeed, help.

(See Ben Ish Hai, 1st year, Parashath Wayhi, Oth 12. Torah Lishmah 412. Rab Pe'alim vol. 4:7)

Defining a Son's Obligations to His Parents

When we say that a son is obligated to honor his parents by feeding them and clothing them, this assumes that the expenses are covered by the parents, if they have sufficient funds. If they do not and he does, he must pay from his own pocket and the Beth Din (Jewish religious court) forces him to do so, provided he has enough money to feed himself for thirty days.

If the son has no money to feed them with, he is not obligated to beg in order to do so. If he did do so, however, it would be considered the right thing to do. If there are multiple sons, some rich and others poor, the rich ones are obligated to pay for the parents' needs.

Even if the son is unable to provide for the parents, he must still do the physical work related to honoring them, even if it would mean not being able to take care of his own work/business, provided he has enough money to feed himself (and his family) for that day.

(See Sh. 'A. Yoreh De'ah, 240:5, with Rama. Ben Ish Hai, 2nd year, Parashath Shoftim, Oth 8-9)

Women's Corner - by Rabbanith Ruth Menashe 'a"n

Her Merits are Greater than Mine!

אִמְרִינָא אֶחָתִי אֶתְּ לְמַעַן יִיטַב־לִי בְּעִבְדוֹךָ וְחַיִּיתָה נְפֹשִׁי בְּגִלְךָ Please say that you are my sister, so that on your account it will be good for me... (Bereshith 12,13).

How could have Abraham Abinu 'a"n, the prototype of loving kindness, put his beloved wife in danger, by leaving her up to the mercy of the immoral Egyptians? How could he have instructed Sara Immenu, 'a"n, to say that she was his sister, in order for him to be saved?

Rabbenu the Hida, 'a"n, writes that Abraham Abinu 'a"n, in his extreme humility, did not trust himself to have enough merits to be saved from the immoral Egyptians. However, he did have complete and utter confidence in his wife. Sara,

(To be continued)

