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Not Overstaying One's Welcome

Just as there is an obligation to receive guests and treat them honorably, so too there is an obligation on the guests not to be an imposition or a burden on their hosts. As King Solomon, 'a"h, said: *הָקֵר וְגִלְדְּךָ מִבֵּית רֵעֶךָ פֶּן יִשְׂכַּעַךְ וְשָׂנֵאֲךָ* Don't let your foot be often in your neighbor's house; lest he become fed up with you, and hate you (Mishlei 25:17).

When the guest goes to visit his friend, he does not know what is in his friend's heart. The guest might feel that he is honoring his friend by spending several hours with him, but his host might be wondering when he will leave, so that he can take care of the many pressing matters that he needs to deal with. One has to use one's common sense when visiting a friend and try to understand what his friend wants and not do something that goes against his will or desires. One should even try to understand the nature of his host.

The Pele Yo'eş says that if he knows his friend to be miserly, even though he offers him food and drink, he should run away from him, because since he knows that the host really does not mean it, it could be a form of stealing. The holy Zohar says that a person must not eat the bread of one who is miserly.

In addition to minimizing the time that one stays with one's host, one should also contribute to the costs involved periodically. If one is unable to do so, one should show one's gratitude by blessing the host.

(See Pele Yo'eş,
Derekh Eres, H'esed)



מדרש בן איש חי
Midrash BEN ISH HAI

5779 פרשת קרח

Qorah: Controversy Diminishes Livelihood

וַיִּקַּח קָרַח בֶּן יִצְהָר בֶּן לֵוִי "And Qorah (the son of Yiş-har, the son of Qehath, the son of Levi), took" (Bamidbar 16:1). Qorah, as is well known, was extremely rich, because he found one of the three treasures that Joseph had hidden away.

These treasures were from the treasures of Pharaoh, and caused Qorah to become very arrogant. They were also the cause of his desire for honor and his resulting conflict with Moshe Rabbenu, 'a"h. He commented that since he was the son of Yiş-har (which means oil, in Hebrew), and oil floats above all other liquids, so too he, Qorah, deserves greatness and honor, to be above everybody.

It says in Tokhaḥath Ḥayim, that Maḥloqeth (controversy) causes one's food and livelihood to be diminished. In fact, even in business, when one person tries to take away from the business of another, it affects their prosperity. He tells a story that he witnessed himself, about a non Jewish supplier of merchandise, who saw that a father and son who were running a business together, started quarreling. The supplier was not happy at what he saw and took his business elsewhere. In such a case, we must also be concerned about H'illul Hashem (desecration of G-d's Name).

Our Rabbis of blessed memory tell us that Maḥloqeth is worse than idol worship. Proof of this is that when the Children of Israel sinned with idolatry, the manna still came down. However, during the time of the conflict with Qorah, it ceased falling.

(See 'Od Yosef Hai Derashoth, Parashath Qorah. Naḥal Qedumin, Qorah. Tokhaḥath Ḥayim, Seder Ben Lewi)

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Does Qaddish or Qedusha Take Precedence?

What should one do if one hears both the Qaddish and Qedusha at the same time? It says in H̄esed La'alaphim that if one has the opportunity to answer both the Qaddish and the Qedusha at the same time, answering the Qaddish takes precedence.

This assumes that one heard both of them at the same time. If, however, the Qaddish comes a little later and one has already started answering the Qedusha, one should not answer the Qaddish but should continue answering the Qedusha.

This assumes further, that one has not yet answered the Qaddish that day. If one did hear a Qaddish previously and answered it, but has not heard a Qedusha till now, then the Qedusha takes precedence. In this way one will have fulfilled one's obligation of both Qaddish and Qedusha.

(See Ben Ish H̄ai, 1st year, Parashath Wayhi, Oth 11)

Early to Bed and Early to Rise

Nowadays, most people have difficulty getting to bed early. In Ben Ish H̄ai it states, that even though the entire night is appropriate for sleeping, nevertheless sleeping during the first half of the night is preferable to sleeping during the second half. This refers to the health of both the body and the soul.

The Ruwah̄ H̄ayyim quotes a famous H̄akham who stated that going early to bed and rising early, makes a man healthy, wise and strong.

Women should also get into the habit of going to bed early and doing whatever it is that they would have done late at night, early in the morning. As King Solomon said in Esheth H̄ayil (Mishlei): *She rises while it is yet dark and gives food to her household.*

(See Ben Ish H̄ai, 1st year, Parashath Wayyishlah, Oth 1)



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

Eating to Live, Part 1

Many of us live in a society where food is found in abundance. The supermarkets are overflowing with a wide variety of products. I still have memories, from when I was a child, growing up in Israel, of many families whose most common food item for all three meals was bread. Today, new Kasher items pop up so often, that it is hard to keep track.

As a result, many of us simply overeat, living to eat instead of eating to live. We consume large amounts, not because we are hungry, but because of the abundance of tasty food around us.

Our religion guides us how to act in all aspects of our lives. One might think that it would only instruct us concerning how to behave towards or interact with our Creator, but it actually covers every possible nuance of our daily activities. It may be worthwhile, therefore, to examine what our H̄akhamim have said concerning the topic of eating.

Our body is similar to a burning fire. Just as fire needs wood to burn, so too food is an essential component, without which our body cannot exist.

(To be continued)