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Not Being Able to Fall Asleep after the Shema'

The Rama states in his gloss on the Shulḥan 'Arukh, that from when one recites the Shema' before going to sleep at night, one should not eat, drink or speak, but should go to sleep immediately. But what happens if a person is unable to fall asleep immediately? The Rama comments that in such a case a person should keep repeating the Shema' till he falls asleep.

The Mishnah Berurah expounds, that one who has difficulty falling asleep can also say other verses of Raḥamim (mercy) or think of words of Torah. It says in Ben Ish Hai that, generally speaking, when one reads the Shema' before going to sleep, one has to be careful not to allow sleep to overtake him in the middle of his reading, but must force himself to read all the verses correctly.

In a case where one is unable to fall asleep right away, however, he also mentions that one should think of words of Torah in order to fall asleep while saying them. He states that one should say the verse, *Beyadkha Afqid Ruḥi...*, as well as concentrate on its acronyms (see Ben Ish Hai, 1st year, Parashath Pequdei, Oth 11 for details), repeatedly till one falls asleep. One who does not have sufficient knowledge to do this, should recite the Hebrew alphabet, or say the verse, *Barukh H' Le'olam, Amen We-amen* repeatedly till one falls asleep in the midst of words of Torah.

(See Rama 239:1. Ben Ish Hai,
1st year, Parashath Pequdei,
Oth 11 & 15.
Mishnah Berurah 239:7)



מדרש בן איש חי
Midrash BEN ISH HAI

Hayyei Sarah: A Hint to Us, Directly From G-d

וַיֹּאמֶר בּוֹא בְרוּךְ ה' לָמָּה תַעֲמֹד בַּחוּץ וְאֵנֹכִי פְנִיתִי הַבַּיִת וּמִקּוֹם לְגַמְלִים

"He said, 'Come O blessed ones of G-d, why should you stand outside, while I have cleaned out the house and place for the camels'" (Bereishith 24:31). It says in Addereth Eliyahu, that there is a hint here of a message from G-d, for every single one of us.

G-d is saying, "You who used to be righteous (a blessed one of G-d), and subsequently sinned and distanced yourself from Me, come close to Me. Why do you wish to stand outside (the Land of Israel, to where you were exiled, because of your sins)?"

G-d is saying further, that we will see how dear we are to Him, because even though we sinned to G-d and angered Him, He only poured His anger on wood and stone, which is the Beth HaMiqdash (Temple) which He destroyed -- and not on us. G-d continues, "And I have cleaned out the house (Temple), of all the vessels that were inside it and the place became for the nations of the world who turned it into their house of worship". All this was done by G-d on account of His love for us, that even though we sinned, he poured out His anger on wood and stone.

G-d is calling out to us to return to Him with complete Teshubah (repentance), so that He can build the third Beth Hamiqdash, which will last forever. May we witness it speedily in our days, Amen.

(See Addereth Eliyahu, Parashath Hayyei Sarah)

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In an Automobile Accident, What is One's Responsibility?

If a person gets into an automobile accident and causes damage to another car, the damage to the other person's car is covered by the insurance company. But the one whose car was damaged has also lost several hours or a day of work, on account of the accident and having to repair the car. Is the one who caused the accident obligated to pay him for it, according to Halakha?

It says in Dibrei Mordekhai that it would appear that the one who caused the damage is obligated to pay the entire loss of the other person, especially to fulfill his obligation in the eyes of Heaven. Since, however, according to the law, each car must carry insurance, and there is always a chance, Heaven forbid, when driving, that one's car will get damaged or that one will damage someone else's car, it is considered as if everybody came to an agreement, that one's obligation is limited to what the insurance company pays and not for additional costs of the nature of the time spent fixing the car.

(See Dibrei Mordekhai, Parashath Mishpatim, Halakha BaParasha)

The Importance of Not Being Too Strict with One's Household

Our Rabbis of blessed memory speak about the dangers of being too strict with one's household.

The disciples of Rab Zera asked him what he did to merit such a long life. He responded that he was never harsh in dealing with his household.

Rab Hsida said that a man should never cause great fear of himself among members of his household. The story of the concubine of Gib'a, who was terrorized by her husband, resulted in the death of tens of thousands in Israel. Ribbi Yehudah said in the name of Rab, that if a man causes excessive fear in his household, he will eventually transgress in three areas:

1. forbidden relations (because his wife will be afraid to tell him that she is not permitted to him at that time),
2. shedding blood, (because members of his household will run away from him and may suffer fatal accidents) and
3. desecration of Shabbath (because his wife might kindle the lights after Shabbath starts because of her fear of him).

(See Meghillah 28a. Gitin 6b)

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

Why Care for Others? Part 2

We saw in the parable that we quoted how the various parts of the body didn't want to assist any of the parts. The legs didn't want to carry any other limb's weight, the feet didn't want to walk for the other parts of the body, the tongue only wished to speak for itself, and so on.

This parable should serve as a reminder to us that our very existence is dependent on helping and assisting each other. The world cannot exist without this fundamental element of caring, giving and doing for one another. For us women especially, this message is even more profound. Our very essence is to give to others, whether as mothers, wives, or simply being involved in professions that naturally necessitate giving (for instance: teachers, nurses, therapists etc., where we see a lot more women in these professions than men).

We too cannot survive without doing for others and giving of ourselves. This is, in fact, the way G-d, in His infinite wisdom, created the world. Every individual is dependant on the other. So the question is not, "Why care for others?" but rather, "What can I do to help them?"