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By the Hakham
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Can a Doctor Treat His Parents?

Honoring one's parents includes not causing them any wound. A doctor or dentist may be involved in deciding the treatment for his parent, but may not do anything himself that causes bleeding of any sort, even giving an injection. This assumes that it is not an emergency.

In an emergency, if there is no one else competent available other than the child, he may perform the necessary treatment for the parent. This assumes that there is no one else available who is able to perform the procedure other than he, and that it cannot be postponed to a later time (because of the danger or because the parent is in great pain), when there will be another suitable doctor available.

If there is someone else or it could be postponed, he may not perform the procedure on a parent.

(See Shemoth 21:15. Sh. 'A. Yoreh De'ah with Rama, 241:1-2)



מדרש בן איש חי
Midrash BEN ISH HAI

Shemoth: What's in a Name?

"וַתִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ מֹשֶׁה וַתֹּאמֶר כִּי מִן־הַמַּיִם מְשִׁיתֶהוּ" And she called his name Moshe and said, [it is] because he was drawn from the water" (Shemoth 2:10).

We are told that Moshe Rabbenu, 'a"h, had ten names. The Yalqut Shim'oni says that when Moshe Rabbenu, 'a"h, was born, he was named by his father Haber (חבר), and his mother called him Yequthiel (יקותיאל). It seems hard to understand why the Torah would not use his Hebrew names that his own parents gave him and would use the name that Bathya, the daughter of Pharaoh gave him instead, which means, מִן־הַמַּיִם מְשִׁיתֶהוּ, "He was drawn from the water"

It seems to me that one possible reason is that, since the name implies, "he was drawn from the water", it is precisely for that reason that the Torah uses that name. The Torah wants to publicize the fact that even one as important as Pharaoh and with presumably intelligent advisors with whom he consulted constantly, was unable to see the facts under his very nose.

G-d is in charge of everything and even though it was spelled out to Pharaoh and his advisors and ministers of state, none could see the facts before their eyes, because G-d didn't want them to. We need to understand that no-one knows, sees, or understands anything, unless G-d wants them to.

(See Yalqut Shim'oni, 2:166)

For the 'Ilui Neshamah of
Rabbi Ya'aqob Menashe, 'a"h.
יעקב אליהו עבדאללה פרג' חיים בן רחל, ע"ה

Trying to Change Status of Forbidden Shabbath Food to Permitted

The Rama rules in his gloss on the Shulḥan 'Arukh, in accordance with a ruling by the Rashba, that if food was fully cooked before Shabbath, one may not ask a non-Jew to heat it up again on Shabbath. If one does, the food becomes forbidden to eat on Shabbath. Even if it is left to cool down again, it is still forbidden to be eaten again on Shabbath.

If food was separated in an impermissible manner on Shabbath, such as separating waste (Pesoleth) from food, or by intentionally separating food from waste, but with a utensil specifically designed for the purpose, the food becomes forbidden. The question is whether, if one mixes all the food back together again and then once again separates, but this time in a permissible manner, by separating the food from the waste with one's hands, whether the food now becomes permitted.

Based on the above Halakha, the ruling in Rab Pe'alim is that the food would remain forbidden, just like food which was reheated on Shabbath which, even after it cools down, remains forbidden.

(See Rama, 253:5. Rab Pe'alim, 1, O.H., 13. Ben Ish Hai, 2nd year, Parashath Beshallah, Oth 4)

Two Conditions to Benefit from Another's Good Deeds

Two conditions are required to be met for each one of the Jewish people to benefit from the good deeds (Miṣwoth) of another:

1. They must live in harmony with each other. For instance, we must respect each other's different ways and customs, even though we may passionately keep our own. This is in keeping with what we are told in the Mishna (Oqsin 3:12), "לא מִצָּא הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא בְּלִי מַחְזִיק בְּרַבָּה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל אֶלָּא הַשְּׁלוֹם" "The only vessel that G-d found that can hold the blessing due to Israel, is peace." And

2. They must have a desire to perform the commandments that they are unable to. For instance, if a person is not a Kohen, he should say I wish I were a Kohen so I could do such and such Miṣwah (מצוה). This brings memories of my father, 'a"ḥ, when I once asked him whether it was better to have a boy or girl first, he replied to me that having a boy first gave you the additional Miṣwah of Pidyon HaBen.

Obviously, if a person is relieved or rejoices at not being obligated to perform a commandment, it would hardly seem appropriate for him to be credited with it.

(See Shebet Mussar 30:3,4)

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

Character Traits - Is it Possible to Change Them?

Can we change our habits and improve our natural inclinations? While there may be a range of opinions, Hakham Yoseph Ḥayyim 'a"ḥ answers the debate with the following story:

There was a Torah scholar who had a profound knowledge in the art of reading palm and forehead lines. It happened, that a foreigner visited his city, who claimed to be an expert in the very same "art". The Torah scholar sent his students to the man to test his expertise. He asked them to show the visitor their palms, and sent an imprint of his own forehead and palms. To their amazement, the visitor unfolded past events and appeared to be an expert in the field. When they showed him their Rabbi's imprints he told them that this man has a bad temper, and that he is a liar and a cheat. This completely changed their opinion of the visitor! They all knew their Ḥakham to be an righteous, upright individual.

(To be continued)