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By the Hakham
Rabbi Ya'aqob Menashe, 'a"h

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5781 פרשת וַאֲתַחֲנֶן – שבת נחמו

Coloring Food on Shabbath

Painting/coloring is forbidden on Shabbath. However, the Shulhan 'Aruch states that one may put saffron into food (which will have the effect of making it orange or yellow) without compunction, since coloring does not apply to food.

According to the Mishna Berura, one may do so even if one's intention was to color the food. He quotes an opinion, however, that it is preferable to refrain from doing so.

It says in Ben Ish Hai, however, that even though one may dip one's bread in colored liquid, despite the fact that the bread will become colored, and one may similarly put something into the food even though it will color it, this only applies if it was not added for the purpose of coloring it. However, if one's intention was to color it, it is forbidden to do so. As such, Sephardim must refrain from intentionally coloring food on Shabbath.

(See Shulhan 'Arukh 320: 19. M.B. ibid, 56.
Ben Ish Hai, 2nd year, Parashath Pequdei,
Oth . Kaf HaHayim 113, Oth 320, 115)

Naḥamu: We Can Feel Confident about the Impending Geullah

נַחֲמוּ נַחֲמוּ עַמִּי. Several times in the past, the Geullah (redemption) could have taken place. Because of our sins, however, the redemption was postponed and the Galuth (exile) became lengthened. As it is said: "Bishnath Zoth" (in this year), which refers to the year 5408, which was supposed to be the year of the redemption as is mentioned in the holy Zohar.

Instead of the Geullah, however, many people were killed that year in Poland, for our sins. When the real final redemption takes place, people may question whether our sins will again nullify the redemption so that it will not take place, Heaven forbid. The answer to this doubt comes from the words of the Prophet when he says: "Naḥamu Naḥamu" (comfort, comfort), doubling the word Naḥamu. One Naḥamu is for the Galuth itself and the other is for the fact that the Galuth was extended and the Geullah postponed.

The prophecy continues: "כִּי מְלֵאָה עֲבָאָה" (the time of the exile has been fulfilled). This comes to teach us that once the final time has come, it cannot be postponed further because this is the time of the true Geullah.

(Naḥal Soreq, Haftarah WaEth-ḥannan)



מדרש בן איש חי
Midrash BEN ISH HAI

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

Paying extra for paying late

Let us look at a case of a Jewish individual who sells an item to another Jew but does not require immediate payment and gives the buyer credit for a specific amount of time. If the time passes and the buyer does not pay as agreed within the allotted time, but some time later comes with the money and, in fact, gives the seller additional money because of the delay in paying, is this permitted or is it forbidden because of Ribbith (interest/usury)?

The answer is that it is forbidden, even if the additional money was given without specifying that it was given on account of the delay in paying, even though this money is for merchandise. And since credit was extended for a period of time this is considered as being a loan.

(See Ben Ish Hai, 2nd year, Parashath Wa-eth-hannan, Oth 11)

The Importance of Peace, Especially in the Home

בְּקֵשׁ שְׁלוֹם וְרִדְפֶּהוּ "Seek peace and chase after it" (Tehillim 34:15). This is the character of Aharon HaKohen, 'a"h, of whom it is said Oheb Shalom WeRodef Shalom (loves peace and chases after it). Peace is the medication of life.

If this is what is said about seeking peace with others, how much more so should one seek peace with one's own household, his relatives and those he is close to. One must know that in a place where there is argument and strife, the Shekhinah (G-d's holy presence) departs from there, Heaven forbid. A home in which there is argument is a dwelling place for the Sitra Achara (the other [evil] side), Heaven forbid.

In particular, a man must strive to ensure that there is peace between him and his wife and be careful to honor her. He must have in mind when doing so that it is in honor of the Shekhinah (which dwells among them when there is peace).

(Hid"ah, Morei Be'Esba', Ch. 1, Oth 7 & 8)

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

A Test of a Nation, Part 2

(Continued from last week)

This [the tent openings of the Children of Israel in the desert facing away from each other] is one aspect of Seni'ooth (modesty). We often forget that modesty is not only, (and I am not belittling the importance of), the length of our skirts and sleeves, or the height of our neckline. Keeping our family matters, our relationship with our husband and so on, private, and not meddling in other people's affairs, is an important, yet sometimes forgotten facet of modesty.

Bill'am was able to grasp it. We, a holy nation, especially us women who are the carriers of the holy flag of modesty, should take this to heart and work to improve in this area. As a result, blessing will rest on our homes and will have a major effect on the entire Jewish nation. The holiness our Seni'ooth generates, impacts every single Jewish person and serves as a means of protection and blessing.