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5783/2022 Parashath Miqqes

Miqqes: Joseph Hints at the Three Decrees of the Greeks

"וַיֵּאסֹף אֹתָם אֶל־מִשְׁמֶר שְׁלֹשֶׁת יָמִים" And he gathered them into prison for three days" (Bereshith 42:17). Hakham Yosef Hayyim, 'a"h, writes that the Mefarshim explain that the Greek exile (Galuth Yawan), was as a result of the sin of the selling of Yosef HaShaddiq, 'a"h. As we know, the Greeks made three decrees concerning the Jewish people, that they may not keep Shabbath, Hodesh and Milah (Shabbath, new moon and circumcision).

The fact that he put his brothers in jail for three days, was a hint to them that, since the Greek exile was as a result of the sin of the selling of Yosef HaShaddiq, 'a"h, in the future they would have these three decrees made against them.

However, the Jewish people were willing to risk their lives by still keeping those three commandments, despite the decree. As a result, because of the merit of the keeping these very important commandments that the Greeks wished to abolish, they were able to overcome the Greeks and be saved from their hands.

(See Addereth Eliyahu,
Parashath Miqqes)



מדרש בן איש חי
Midrash BEN ISH HAI

5783 פְּרִשַׁת מִקֵּץ

If the Hanukkah Lights Go Out on Friday Evening

On Friday evening the Hanukkah candles must obviously be lit before sunset (and before one accepts Shabbath). On other days they are lit after the stars come out.

The question arises if the lights go out unexpectedly on Friday evening - both before sunset and before one has accepted Shabbath - what action must one take? We say that the lighting is what performs the commandment and, therefore, once they were lit we have fulfilled our obligation. However, there are those who are of the opinion that this only applies when the lights are kindled after the emergence of three stars. Since, on Friday evening we light before sunset, lighting the candles, according to this opinion, is not sufficient to fulfill one's obligation.

In view of this opinion, one should light again but without reciting the blessings again, to be in conformance with all opinions. It should be reiterated that this can only be done while it is not yet sunset and as long as one has not yet accepted Shabbath. If one has accepted Shabbath but there is still time to light, one should ask a friend who has not yet accepted Shabbath to relight for him.

(See Shulhan Arukh 673:2 with Rama. Maamar Mordekhai [Eliyahu] Hilkhoth Haggim 58:117,118. Kaf HaHayyim 673:57. Mishnah Berurah 673:27)

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If People Walk out During the Qaddish

The Qaddish cannot be recited unless there is a Minyan of ten Jewish males present. If they start reading the Qaddish with a Minyan, but some people walk out in the middle, the Qaddish is completed, provided at least six men remain. It should be noted that it is incorrect to walk out when the Qaddish is being recited, causing there to no longer be a Minyan.

If there are ten people present and one of them is still praying the 'Amidah and cannot answer the Qaddish, the Qaddish can still be recited and he is considered to be part of the Minyan. In fact, this rule applies even if up to four men are still praying the 'Amidah. As long as six people are able to participate in the Qaddish, it may be recited, since the other four who are praying the 'Amidah are counted towards the Minyan.

(See Ben Ish Hai, 1st year, Parashath Wayhi, Oth 4 & 5. Shulhan 'Arukh, 55:6)

Blowing the Shofar Before Shabbath to Stop People Working

The Shulhan 'Arukh mentions that when the Jewish people used to live in their settlements, they would blow six bursts of the Shofar every 'Ereb (eve of) Shabbath, in order to stop the people from working. The Rama mentions, in his gloss, the custom that a half hour or an hour before the onset of Shabbath, someone appointed by the congregation would announce that people should prepare for Shabbath, and this was instead of the Shofar. He adds that it is appropriate to do so everywhere.

The Maghen Abraham is of the opinion that someone should be sent, two and a half hours before nightfall, to those who are working to tell them to stop. Additionally, he states that store owners should close their stores one hour before Shabbath, because it happens that sometimes they stumble in this area when an important person enters their store and the negotiations continue till it gets dark. He adds that they carry the sin for this on their heads.

It would appear that the times mentioned above are a recommended minimum for those who work close to their homes, as they did in those days. Nowadays, since so many people travel a long distance from their homes, they must obviously add the travel time to the above figures to ensure that there will be no Hillul (desecration of) Shabbath (Heaven forbid), and that they will be fully ready to greet the Shabbath bride at the appropriate time.

(See Shulhan 'Arukh 256:1 with Rama. Kaf HaChayim ibid, Oth 2. Mishna Berura ibid:1)

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

The Hidden Power of the Shabbath Candles, Part 2

(Continued from last week)

The Gemara in Shabbath teaches us that just as Aharon HaKohen, 'a"n, spread the light of the Torah by lighting the Menorah in the Temple, so too, women should pray, at the time when they are lighting Shabbath candles, that their husbands and children will be learned in Torah. The Kaf HaChayim writes that our Tefilloth are more likely to be heard at the time of performing the Mitzvah of lighting the Shabbath candles.

It says in the holy Zohar that a woman should light the Shabbath candles with happiness and a gladdened heart. This will be considered for her as a merit, and she will have holy children who will light the world with Torah, fear of Hashem, and who will increase peace in the world. She will also cause her husband to receive the blessing of a long and good life.

We see from this how particular and careful we must be about this commandment of candle lighting (Hadlaqath Neroth), because of its immense power and influence on our families.

(See Kaf HaChayim 263, Oth 34. Derekh HaTorah, 3:10,11)