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By the Hakham

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May Baby Formula Be Strained on Shabbath?

Is one permitted to strain baby milk or formula on Shabbath, in order to remove the lumps so that a child can drink it from a bottle? It says in Ohr LeShon that this depends on the child.

If the child was fed the milk or formula by spoon, but would not be able to drink it if it was somewhat lumpy, then it would be forbidden to strain it on Shabbath to make it smooth so that the child could drink it. If, on the other hand, the child would be able to drink it, with the lumps, if it were fed to him/her by spoon, then it is permitted to strain it on Shabbath so that it could be fed to the child with a bottle.

The basic rule is this. Anything that can be eaten, even if it was not strained, one is permitted to strain with a strainer on Shabbath. Therefore, if the child is able to drink the formula without straining, and the only purpose in straining it is to permit it to be fed to the child using a bottle, it is permitted on Shabbath.

(See Shulhan 'Arukh with Rama, 319:10. Taz, ibid, 9 Ben Ish Hai, 2nd year, Parashath Beshallah, Oth 17.

Shemirath Shabbath Kehilkhatha, 3:49,56,125.

Ohr LeShon, 2, 31, 9)



מדרש בן איש חי
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Wayyiggash: How Was Joseph's Weeping Heard by All?

וַיִּתֵּן אֶת-קֻלּוֹ בִּבְכֵי וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ מִצְרַיִם וַיִּשְׁמַע בֵּית פַּרְעֹה

"And [Joseph] wept and all of Egypt heard and the house of Pharaoh heard" (Bereshith 45:2). From this, it is apparent that Joseph's (Yosef HaSadid, 'a"h) crying was very loud indeed.

It mentions in 'Od Yosef Hai Derashoth that his crying was not only his voice. Joseph saw through Ruwah HaQodesh (Divine inspiration), the terrible suffering that his brothers would have to endure when they would return as Gilgulim in the 10 martyrs. While he was crying, he was picturing the cries of his brothers and his cries were mixed in with theirs. That is why it was so loud that all of Egypt heard.

All the tears that Joseph wept, from the beginning till now, were in order to redeem his brothers from the Dinim (judgments) against them which came about as a result of their sale of him. It is well known that crying has the effect of sweetening judgments (למתק את הדינים) and freeing a person from them.

(See 'Od Yosef Hai Derashoth, Parashath Wayyiggash)



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Using a Hamsa Against 'Ayin Hara'

In 'Od Yosef Hai, it speaks about a Seghullah in Sefer Yerushalayim, that in order that 'Ayin Hara' will have no dominion over someone, they would draw a picture of a hand over the entrance to their homes, in red, and they would put a silver hand over the heads of their children. The idea being that since the hand has five fingers, it will harm anyone who wishes to place 'Ayin Hara' on the child or on those who live in the house.

Rabbenu the Hida, 'a"h, writes about a Seghullah against 'Ayin Hara', through the letter Heh (ה), whose numerical value is 5, and comments that this is the reason why people say "Hamsa" (which means '5'), to be saved from 'Ayin Hara'.

The Ben Ish Hai (Hakham Yosef Hayyim, 'a"h) sees a connection with the letter Heh and the five fingers of the hand, and comments that the placing of the five fingers in front of the one who wishes to give 'Ayin Hara', has the effect of nullifying it. This is the source of the custom of those who place a Hamsa (five fingered hand, commonly found on sale in Israel), in their homes

(See 'Od Yosef Hai Derashoth, Parashath Wayyishlah)

Learning to Cope with Life, From the Plants

It says in the Ashrei "*WeAttah Nothen Lahem Eth Okhlam Be'Itto*" (You give them their food at the right time). It is well known that G-d doesn't make all fruits appear at all times. Rather, some are summer fruits, others appear in the winter or the fall. Some appear when the weather is warm, others thrive when the weather is cool. The reason for this is that G-d knows what is most beneficial for people at that particular time.

Even plants that do not appear to have any useful purpose, are needed in the world, perhaps to grind as medication or for some other purpose. That is why it says when the Creation of the world was completed (on the sixth day) that "G-d saw ALL that He created, and it was exceedingly good". This means that even a thorn has a purpose when the time is right.

Just as plants and the like can, at times, harm a person, and yet at other times the same plants are used to heal people, so too when a person sees that times do not appear to be so good, we must realize that they have their uses. People go through good and bad times. It would help us to understand that bad times can be compared to plants that appear to be harmful. Therefore, much as we hope never to have bad times, we must know that if they come, they might be required to help a person, even though the reason may not be apparent till later.

(See Tehillah LeDawid, 'Einei Khol Elekha)

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

Shabbath Candles and "Shelom Bayith"

Our Rabbis of blessed memory ruled that when one cannot afford to purchase both wine for Qiddush and candles for Shabbath, Shabbath candles take precedence. These days, I hope this is merely a theoretical question for us, but what is the significance of this question?

The reason the Shabbath candles take priority over wine, is because it affects our "Shelom Bayith", the peace in our homes. Especially in those days when the candles provided the main or only source of light, darkness caused people to be distressed, not able to find things, tripping on objects etc. The husband would blame his wife for leaving her shoes in the middle of the room, and she would shout back at him for falsely accusing her. She turns angrily to her daughter, who "borrowed" her shoes and left them in the middle of the room, and so forth, contributing to a lack of harmony and peace in the home.

(To be continued)