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By the Hakham

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## Aharei Moth/Qedoshim: Four Types of Life

וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם אֶת־חֻקֹּתַי וְאֶת־מִשְׁפָּטַי אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה אֹתָם הָאָדָם וְחַי בָּהֶם "You shall keep my laws and my statutes, which man shall do and by which he shall live" (Wayyiqra 18:5). Rashi and Onkelos explain that, "and by which he shall live" refers to the next world, because it cannot be referring to this world, since eventually everyone passes on from it.

Rabbenu Bahya explains that there are four different types of life that a person can merit through the observance of the Torah and Miṣwoth. The first type is the one where people live normal lives, in good health. The second type is life after a severe illness where a person almost died, but recovered and got his life back. The third is a life of forgiveness, when a person was a Rasha' (wicked individual) and then repented. He is considered as one who was dead and was brought back to life. The fourth type is life after death (Teḥiyyath Hammethim).

According to this explanation, all four types of life are included in the term, "by which he shall live", since they are all attained by keeping G-d's laws and statutes.

(Rabbenu Bahya, Aharei Moth)



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## 5783 פְּרַשַׁת אַחֲרֵי מוֹת/קְדוֹשִׁים

### Seventy Years Wearing Unfit Tefillin

There is a story about a man who wore Tefillin for seventy years without ever having them checked. After seventy years he decided to have them checked. When they did, they discovered that the Tefillin were Pasul (ritually unfit), because a letter was missing. This meant that the Tefillin were unfit for use from the very first time he wore them.

The man was distraught and cried, because he had worn Tefillin for seventy years that were Pasul and, as if that were not bad enough, he had effectively recited a Berakha Lebatalah (blessing in vain) for seventy years. The man went to Hakham Yosef Haysim, 'a"h, the Ben Ish Hai and told him what happened.

The Ben Ish Hai told him that once in their city of Baghdad, the Tefillin were not square but rounded and they issued a Taqqanah (ruling) to have the problem rectified. On another occasion there was a problem with the straps of the Tefillin and a Taqqanah was issued for that also. "Can we say that for years the people never performed the commandment of Tefillin?", asked the Ben Ish Hai. Rather, we apply the adage מחשבה טובה הקב"ה מצרפה למעשה (G-d accepts good intentions as if they were good deeds).

(See Abihem Shel Yisrael 'Al HaTorah, Wayyera)

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## Pirquei Aboth. Why We Must Receive Everyone with Happiness.

הָיִי מְקַבֵּל אֶת כָּל הָאָדָם בְּשִׂמְחָה "Receive (מקבל) all men with happiness" (Aboth 3:12). The Gematria (numerical value) of the word מְקַבֵּל is equal to the value of the word 'Eqeb (עקב).

The Rishonim explained the word 'Eqeb (in the Parasha of 'Eqeb) to mean humility. Therefore, one can understand from this that one should always be humble and, as a result, receive all men with happiness. Even if a person is complete and important, he should not feel superior to others who are not on the same level, but should receive each of them in happiness.

The last letters of the names of the Aboth (our Patriarchs) which are אברהם, יצחק, יעקב, and ישראל (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Israel), also spell the word מְקַבֵּל (to receive). We, who are their children must, therefore, also receive everyone with happiness.

(See Perush HaHida on Masecheth Aboth, Ch. 3, 12)

## Opening Pistachios on Shabbath

Borer (separating something that one does not want from items that one does want), which is one of the forbidden Shabbath labors, presents itself on a regular basis when eating food. In Ben Ish Hai, Hakham Yoseph Hayyim, 'a"h, discusses the permissibility of completing the crack in the shells of pistachios by hand, as one ordinarily does during the week, and removing and eating the nut inside.

He states that unlike the case of lupins, where he opines that the peel must be removed in one's mouth, pistachios may be opened on Shabbath in the manner described, and eaten.

It should be noted that this is only permitted where the pistachio nuts are to be eaten immediately (Lealtar) or, at least, within the hour. However, opening them now and keeping them aside for a meal that will be eaten more than hour later, is forbidden.

(See Ben Ish Hai, 2nd year, Parashath Beshallah, Oth 9)

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

### Raḥel, the Admirable Wife of Ribbi 'Aqibah and Her Hair, Part 2

[Recap: When Ribbi 'Aqibah and Raḥel were first married, they lived in extreme poverty and he would remove straw from her hair each morning, from their bed of straw. Later, when (Ribbi) 'Aqibah was away from home, studying at the Yeshiba, Raḥel, his wife, sold her hair, as an additional way to support herself during those challenging times.]

Hair is known to be one of the most attractive commodities of our feminine body. Women and girls invest a lot of time (and money) into their hair, caring for it, styling, coloring and designing etc. Hair has prominence, since it is on top of the head, which is, of course, one of the most noticeable parts of our body.

Hair means different things to different people. For women, in general, hair is such a focal point of their physical attraction that, to many, it is a source of immense struggle and spiritual challenge when it comes to covering it in an appropriate and modest manner. Even when covering their hair, they look for loopholes and shortcuts to cover it in something less than the most appropriate manner. Others, however, overcome their challenges to do the right thing and this is most admirable.

Others use their hair as a tool for an opportunity to do an act of kindness, by donating their hair to those who lose theirs, on account of sickness, G-d forbid. I have even known young beautiful high school girls who have done so.

In the rather unique case of Raḥel, her hair exemplifies the greatness of a woman. A woman whose hair would have straw stuck in it every morning, and would later on sell it, with some pain I would imagine, for the sake of fulfilling her dream: making her husband into the awesome Torah giant he became!