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By the Hakham
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Setting the Table for Shabbath

One should set the dining table on Friday, before Shabbath starts. This includes spreading an attractive tablecloth over it and putting out fine plates and cutlery. The prevalent Ashkenazi custom is to also place the candles on the dining table, whereas Sephardim do not.

One should not overeat before Shabbath, so that one can eat the Shabbath meal with a healthy appetite. If, however, one is not able to eat a full meal, because perhaps there was a Simḥa (religious celebration) earlier, or for some other reason, and will only be able to eat a Kezayith of bread, one must still set the table.

One cannot say that there is no point in setting the table since one will not be eating a full meal and that one can eat the Kezayith of bread without even spreading a tablecloth on the table. One must give honor to the meal by setting the table appropriately, irrespective of what one eats.

(See Derekh HaTorah, Shabbath, 7:31)

Beshallah: Taking the Medication as Prescribed

אִם-שָׁמוֹעַ תִּשְׁמַע לְקוֹל ה' אֵל-לְהִיךָ ... כִּי אֲנִי ה' רֹפֵאֲךָ

"If you surely listen to the voice of the L-rd your G-d... for I am G-d your healer" (Shemoth 15:26). Rab Hida, 'a"h, mentions that Rabbenu the Rashba from Barcelona, 'a"h, said that when a person is ill he contacts the doctor who prescribes the appropriate medication and diet. The patient accepts the instructions of the doctor, even though he often does not understand the reasons, because he feels that he can rely on the doctor who is a specialist when it comes to healing his body.

We are also patients. Our illness is in our souls. The true Doctor prescribed the commandments and the laws to heal our souls. Even if we do not know the reasons, especially for the Hūqqim (laws for which we have no reasons), we must still listen to his instructions.

That is why it says, "for I am G-d your healer". Just like you listen to your doctor and follow his instructions carefully, even though you do not comprehend how the medication he prescribes heals your illness, so too we must diligently follow the advice, instructions and "prescription" of the Holy One Blessed Be He, in order to heal our souls.

(See Naḥal Qedumim, Parashath Beshallah)



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Separating Hallah from Dough That's Not for Baking

Hafrashath Hallah (the separating of a portion of the dough), only applies when it is for the purpose of baking. If one makes dough in order to fry or cook it, however, one should still separate the Hallah, but without reciting the blessing over it.

If one wishes to make an amount of dough, with the intention of using some of it for baking and the rest for frying or cooking, one separates the Hallah with a blessing (note: the blessing requires a minimum quantity. Please consult with your Orthodox Rabbi for the amount as there are differences of opinion. If the amount is less than the minimum amount, one should separate without a blessing).

(See Sh. 'A. Yoreh De'ah, 329:1,4,9. Ben Ish Hai, 2nd year, Parashath Shemini, Oth 4)

How Is Yishtabbah a Blessing Without the Word "Barukh"?

Even though one may not recite Yishtabbah until one has said Barukh She-amar and at least some of the Pesuqei DeZimra, for reasons we mentioned previously (See A Torah Minute™, *When Yishtabbah May Not Be Read*), nevertheless, after the fact if one did not recite Barukh She-amar, but recited the Pesuqei DeZimra, one still says the blessing of Yishtabbah.

When we speak about the blessing of Yishtabbah, one will note that it does not begin with the word "Barukh" (blessed), as one would ordinarily expect a blessing to do. This is because it relies on the blessing of Barukh She-amar, because both Barukh She-amar and Yishtabbah were established on account of the Mizmorim of the Pesuqei DeZimra. One is said before them, and the other after. (The Mizmorim are not considered to be an interruption, because these are all praises).

We see from this why one should not recite Yishtabbah unless one has read Barukh She-amar and some of the Pesuqei DeZimra.

(See Shulhan 'Arukh, 53:2. Beur Halakha, ibid. Sh. 'A. 54:1. Kaf HaChayyim, ibid., Oth 2, 3)

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

We have the Power to Bring the Shekhina

The idea that a man and his wife have the power of bringing the Shekhina, so that it rests between them is an incredible one. The question is how can we actually do it.

Ribbi 'Aqiba taught that when a husband and his wife are worthy, the Shekhina dwells between them. The word used in the Gemara by Ribbi 'Aqiba for the term "worthy", is: "Zakhu" (זָכָה), which is a verb that means to purify. How do we purify ourselves?

Our Rabbis of blessed memory tell us that all one's sins are forgiven on one's wedding. One reason for this is that after we get married, we are no longer separate individuals, independent, to do what we want. Once we unite with our spouse, we must learn to consider the other person's opinions, preferences and choices. As a result, we focus less on ourselves and our needs and more on our spouse's needs. This is a guaranteed recipe for acquiring humility. This is a powerful enough reason for a bride and a groom to be forgiven all their sins.

On a daily basis, we should try to put the above into practice. Both husband and wife should purify themselves by putting their spouse's desires and preferences ahead of their own. The phrase: "Me, Myself, and I" should not be part of the Jewish home values. This is the way the Shekhina will dwell in our homes.