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By the Hakham
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5783 פָּרַשַׁת כִּי תָבוֹא

Special Shoes for Shabbath

We are supposed to wear special clothes for Shabbath. Indeed, even though it is not the widespread custom, according to the Ari, z"l, one should even have special clothes set aside just for Shabbath. The question is whether the necessity to wear special clothes for Shabbath applies also to one's shoes and that one should change one's shoes to special ones before Shabbath.

It says in Rab Pe'alim, that shoes are not considered to be under the overall umbrella of clothes in Halakha. Proof of that is that clothing has the Berakha (blessing) that we recite every morning, of "Malbish 'Arumim" (who clothes the naked). Shoes have their own separate Berakha, that of "She'asah Li Kol Şorki" (who made for me all my necessities). This shows us that shoes are not considered to be clothing.

Additionally, our Rabbis of blessed memory state that it is not commonplace for a person to have a special pair of Shabbath shoes. As such, there is no requirement to change one's shoes for Shabbath.

(See Rab Pe'alim, vol. 4, Oraḥ Ḥayyim, 13)

Parashath Ki Thabo: Blessings Will Happen Against All Logic

It says in the Parasha of Ki Thabo, "And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you listen to the voice of the L-rd your G-d".

Sometimes a person is so blessed by G-d that whatever he does he succeeds in, even if logically his business venture should fail. A story that illustrates this well is the story of Timothy Dexter who, in the 18th century, exported two shiploads of coal from Virginia to Newcastle in England, which was a famous coal producing town. Everyone was expecting to hear of his ruin because of this foolish act. When his ships arrived in England, a miners' strike was in progress. Dexter sold all his coal for a handsome profit.

Even if a person runs away from success, if G-d wishes him to have it, success will run after him as it says, "all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you". But, as far as the Jewish people are concerned, we must know that there is a condition. Our blessings are dependant on the keeping of the Torah, as the Pasuq (verse) says, "if you listen to the voice of the L-rd your G-d".

(See Addereth Eliyahu, Parashath Ki Thabo)



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Reading Tehillim During Elul

There are those who have the custom of reading, from Rosh Hodesh Elul till Yom Kippur, 10 Mizmorim of Tehillim (Psalms) daily, together with the congregation or a Minyan of 10 or more males. One should aim to complete the entire book of Tehillim, twice, before Rosh Hashanah.

There are a total of 150 Psalms in the book of Tehillim. Reading them twice means that one will have read 300 psalms. 300 in Gematria (Jewish numerology), is the same as the word כפר "atone".

In the Yehi Raṣon that is said when reciting Tehillim, one should not say, "till we complete 70 years". We should not limit G-d, who we pray in His infinite mercy, will give us many more years than that.

After reading the Tehillim, the Qaddish Yehe Shelemah should be recited. If there isn't a Minyan present, they should hold off reading one Psalm till there is a Minyan, at which time they should say it and recite Qaddish.

(See Kaf Hachayyim 581:22)

Can the Body Live if the Soul Has Died?

In the last request in the Yehi Raṣon in the morning, we beseech G-d to save us from the judgment in Gehinnam (Hell). We might think that this is referring to after one dies. In fact, it is speaking about being judged in Gehinnam while one is still alive.

It says in Sha'ar Maamarei Rashbi (Noah), that even when one is still in this world, one can be judged in Gehinnam. When a person sins, a portion of his soul is pulled down to Gehinnam, while he is still alive. Each time he sins, the same thing happens. As a person becomes steeped in sins and transgressions, bit by bit, all of his soul gets pulled down to Gehinnam.

This explains the saying of our Sages, z"l, that the wicked are considered to be dead. This is so, even though they are still alive, in the sense that we see them moving about and talking. Nevertheless, even though their physical body is still functioning, their soul has already been judged in Gehinnam. This hopefully moves us all to look closely at our deeds, every day.

(See 'Od Yosef Hai, Wayyesheb, Oth 15)

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

When is the Right Time to Get Married? (Part 2)

(continued from last week)

I find it ironic that in some sections of our society, there are single women who insist on only marrying men who are already established, so that they can be financially comfortable. By the same token, there are single men who feel the necessity to postpone developing a serious relationship until they have a house and can financially support a wife. This automatically raises the average age of when people are ready to commit themselves to marriage.

I have been involved with singles for quite some years and I can share with you that it pains me to see many eligible, capable and successful singles, who remain single. It seems that we have gone in the other direction to what the Ben Ish Hai warned about in his days, some 150 years ago.

It is our responsibility, as mothers, to inculcate in our sons and daughters the importance of starting the dating process, as soon as they are emotionally ready, without delay. As a young lady once told me: "Let them get married while they're still young enough, that their requirements are still flexible".

I pray that our Father in Heaven will guide us to guide them - our dear sons and daughters - and may each one of them find their true soul mate with joy and clarity.