

A Torah Minute com™

By the Hakham

Rabbi Ya'aqob Menashe, 'a"h

5783/2023 Parashath Mattoth/Mas'ei

A PROJECT OF MIDRASH BEN ISH HAI (MIDRASH.ORG)

5783 פְּרַשַׁת מַטּוֹת/מַסְעֵי

Rules for the Qiddush Cup

The cup for the Qiddush must be washed inside and out before use, even if it is clean. It should also be filled to the top, and no one should have drunk from it since the time it was washed. Both the mouth and the base of the cup must be complete, because if there is a crack, even if nothing is missing from the cup, it becomes disqualified for use for Qiddush.

According to the Hakhamim who follow the Kabbalah, another man should hold the cup with two hands and the one making the Qiddush should receive it from him with both hands and hold it with both hands in front of the left side of his chest, after which he holds it with his right hand alone and recites the Qiddush. He should keep his eyes on the cup so as not to take his mind off it.

When holding the Qiddush cup, one should make sure to hold it at least one Tefah (handbreadth) over the table. However, after the fact (Bedi'abad), if one did not hold it a Tefah above the table, one still fulfilled one's obligation of reciting Qiddush. Indeed, even if one did not hold the cup at all, one still fulfills one's obligation after the fact.

(See Shulhan 'Arukh, 271:10. Ben Ish Hai, 2nd year, Parashath Bereshith, Oth 21. Tana Debei Eliyahu, Halakha Yomith, 'ט' טבת תשע"ד, יום ה')



מדרש בן איש חי
Midrash BEN ISH HAI

Mattoth: Commanding the Leaders Concerning Vows

In Parashath Mattoth it says, concerning vows (Nedarim) and oaths (Shebu'oth), "Moses spoke to the heads of the tribes of Israel saying, this is the thing that G-d has commanded".

It says in Addereth Eliyahu that Moshe Rabbenu speaks to the heads of the tribes so that they, in turn, will speak to Benei Yisrael about the topic of vows and oaths. The question is why, specifically in this matter of vows and oaths, does it have to go through the heads of the tribes, whereas, in all other matters, Moshe Rabbenu is commanded to speak directly to the Children of Israel?

When a person swears in the name of something or someone, that person or object is usually very dear to him. When leaders of Israel, such as King David, 'a"h, swore in the name of G-d, it is because they were very close to Him. But just as a son learns from his father how to act and how to behave, by imitating him, so too, the people learn from their leaders and emulate them.

Therefore, when the people see their leaders swear in G-d's name, they may also come to do the same themselves, but there is a real danger that they will not be careful in their oath and it will be a false oath, Heaven forbid. That is why the leaders are the ones being warned that they must caution the people to ensure that vows and oaths are done correctly.

I would like to add that as we know, today, because of the many difficulties associated with making vows and oaths, we must take great care to refrain from doing so.

(See Addereth Eliyahu, Parashath Mattoth)

Sponsorships Available.
Please contact Midrash BEN ISH HAI
(516) 487 6676/www.midrash.org

Cutting Hair if Sheloshim Ends During the 22 Days

As is well known, Ashkenzim do not cut their hair or shave during the 22 days from the 17th of Tammuz till after Tish'ah BeAb (the ninth of Ab). Sephardim do not cut their hair or shave during the week that Tish'ah BeAb falls on (Shabuwa' Shehal Bo Tish'ah BeAb). In other words, they cut their hair till the Friday before Shabbath Hazon, and from then on, do not cut their hair till after Tish'ah BeAb. Some Sephardim also keep the entire period from the 17th of Tammuz till the 9th of Ab.

During the Sheloshim (the 30 day period following the passing of a relative or 31 days for a parent), a mourner is not permitted to cut his hair or shave. What happens in a case where a mourner, r"l, ends his Sheloshim during the 22 days between the 17th of Tammuz and the 9th of Ab?

If the Sheloshim ends on the 18th of Tammuz or later, a mourner may cut his hair and shave, since it is only a custom not to do so and one is not strict about it in such a case. On the fast day of the 17th of Tammuz, however, he should not cut his hair. Also, during the week that Tish'ah BeAb falls on, one may not cut one's hair or shave.

(See Kaf HaHayyim, 551:82)

Not Showering: Nine Days or Only the Week of the 9th of Ab?

The Shulhan 'Arukh mentions two customs regarding bathing during the 22 days. There are those who do not bathe from Rosh Hodesh Ab (for the full 9 days), whereas others do not bathe during the week of Tish'ah BeAb only (from the Shabbath preceding it till the fast is over). Ashkenazim do not bathe for the nine days, and there is an opinion that this applies even in cold water.

The opinion of the Rambam and Ramban is that the custom is not to bathe during the week of Tish'ah BeAb only, and that too only in warm water. Bathing in cold water, however, would be permitted, even during the week of Tish'ah BeAb. The Kaf HaHayyim quotes a custom in Salonika to go sailing on the water, even on the eve of Tish'ah BeAb.

Nevertheless, unless they have a specific custom to the contrary, it would be appropriate for Sephardim to also abstain from taking a hot bath or shower for the entire nine days, as mentioned in Ben Ish Hai. We mentioned previously that a less pleasant option, such a short cool shower is permitted by many and that it is permitted before Shabbath Hazon, even in warm water.

(See Shulhan 'Arukh, 551:16. Ben Ish Hai, 1st year, Parashath Debarim, Oth 6,16. Kaf HaHayyim, 551, Oth 186)

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

Love - A Powerful Emotion, Part 2

(continued from last week)

Love is a powerful and praiseworthy emotion, and for that reason, the evil inclination tries to plant seeds of jealousy and hatred amongst those who display affection to each other. Hakham Yoseph Hayyim 'a"n, guides us that rather than responding to hatred with the same, one should respond with affection and closeness, which, he assures, will bring much blessing and goodness upon us.

We can delve into the quality of love, by relating the following saying of a wise man: "Two people who love each other will find the hole of a needle spacious enough for them, whereas, for those who hate each other, the entire universe will not be big enough".

My dear friends, as we approach the period between the seventeenth of Tammuz and the ninth of Ab, let us remind ourselves of the immense power of love. It is, perhaps, a word which is overused but, nevertheless, has the potential of bringing our redemption closer and faster. May you merit to fill your homes with friendship, love and harmony, and as a result, abundance of blessings will follow.