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By the Hakham
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5783/2023 Parashath Mishpaṭim

Using Repulsive Oil for Shabbath Lights

The Shulḥan 'Arukh states that if a mouse is found in the oil that is used for lighting in the Synagogue, one may not use that oil for lighting in the Synagogue, if it has become repugnant. This holds true, even if there is sixty times more oil than the volume of the mouse. This is based on a verse in Malakhi, that one will not offer something repulsive to the ruler.

The Ben Ish Hai applies this equally to the Shabbath candles. If something repulsive falls into the oil, even if there is sixty times the amount of oil, as long as one would not offer it to an important person, one may not use them for the Shabbath lights that one recites the blessing over.

If one wished to light other candles with them, that would be permitted.

(See Shulḥan 'Arukh, 154:12. Keneseth HaGedolah, ibid. Ben Ish Hai, 2nd year, Parashath Nowah, Oth 17. Mishnah Berurah, 154:49)



מדרש בן איש חי
Midrash BEN ISH HAI

5783 פֶּרֶשֶׁת מִשְׁפָּטִים

Mishpaṭim/Sheqalim: Why Proclaim the Sheqel in Adar

וְהָיָה כִּי־יִצְעַק אֵלַי וְשָׁמַעְתִּי בִּי־חֲנוּן אֲנִי "It shall come to pass when you cry out unto me, I shall hear, because I am compassionate" (Shemoth 22:26).

Prayer must be said in happiness. If a person prays with joy, his prayer is accepted willingly (BeRaṣon). Whenever the term "Wehaya" is used, it denotes happiness. That is why when it says "And it shall come to pass (וְהָיָה) when you cry out to me", we learn that when a person cries out to G-d in prayer, his prayers will be accepted.

This is why Raza said that on the first of Adar a proclamation is made concerning the giving of the half Sheqel (Maḥaṣith Hasheqel) for the Beth Hammiqdash (Temple). Maran z"l brought down as Halakha in the Shulḥan 'Arukh "Mishenikhnas Adar, Marbim Besimḥa" (from when Adar starts, we increase our happiness). Since every Miṣwah (commandment) performed with happiness is accepted more readily, it is most important to perform the commandment of the Maḥaṣith Hasheqel (half Sheqel) in the month of Adar when the Jewish people increase their happiness. That is why the proclamation of the Sheqalim is made on the first of Adar.

(See Addereth Eliyahu, Parashath Mishpaṭim)

For the 'Ilui Neshamah of
Rabbanith Ruth Menashe, 'a"h.
רות בת אהובה, ע"ה

When Flour Develops Worms

If one finds that flour has developed worms or other insects, and they cannot be separated from the flour, the flour may not be sold to a non-Jew, for fear that it may be resold to a Jew. This is true even if one can clearly see the worms, because the flour may be used to bake bread which is then sold to a Jew.

In fact, this applies to any food which has developed worms or other insects. Once it becomes forbidden to a Jew, it may not be sold to a non-Jew. In the case of a great financial loss, a competent Rabbi should be consulted.

The flour may, however, be fed to non-Jewish help or live-ins. Infested flour may not be kept in one's home for an extended period of time for fear that a Jew may come to consume it. There is a difference of opinion as to whether infested flour may be kept in one's house for a short time and, where not absolutely necessary, it would appear prudent not to do so.

(See Shulchan 'Arukh Yoreh De'ah, with Rama, 84:5-6. Zibhei Sedeq, ibid., Oth 37. Issur WeHeter, 41:5-6.
Ben Ish Hai, 2nd year, Naso, Oth 13-14)

From When Do We Start Counting Six Hours?

From when can we start calculating six hours before we can eat dairy after eating meat? In fact, there are three requirements. First of all the table cloth or cover where one ate, must be removed or replaced. In the old days, they used to remove the table itself. One must then say Birkath Hammazon and only after that can one count six hours.

In other words, there are three requirements:

1. Removal of the table cloth,
2. Birkath Hammazon, and
3. Waiting six hours.

Reciting Birkath Hammazon assumes, of course, that one ate bread. If one ate meat without bread, one should remove the table cloth, recite the appropriate Berakha Achronah (after blessing), and then count six hours.

(See Shakh Y.D. 89:5. Keneseth HaGedolah on the Tur, 3. Shiyurei Berakha 9. Ben Ish Hai, 2nd year, Shela Lekha, Oth 10)

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Rabbanith Ruth Menashe ע"ה
For her Yahrzeit
דברי חיזוק

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