

# A Torah Minute com™

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## Honoring Shabbath When Funds are Tight

Part of honoring Shabbath is increasing the amount one spends for Sabbath and the variety of good foods that one prepares. All this must be in accordance with what a person can afford. If a person doesn't have any cash available, but has items he can borrow against, he should do so and have faith that G-d will find him a way to pay it back. About this Raza tell us that G-d says, "Borrow on my account and I will pay back".

If, however, the person doesn't even have items he can borrow against, he should not borrow on the basis that G-d will repay. Since he doesn't have anything, he has absolutely no obligation to increase the amount he spends for Shabbath, beyond what he can afford.

What he should do, instead, is minimize his expenditure during the week, so that he can honor Shabbath to the best of his ability. Any person who is in difficult financial straits, who does this, will get ample reward.

(See Meqabsei, 2nd year, Lekh Lekha, Oth 11)



מדרש בן איש חי  
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## Noah: One Drink Too Many

וַיִּשְׁכַּר וַיִּבְרַח מִן־הַיַּיִן וַיִּשְׁכַּר "And [Noah] drank from the wine and became drunk" (Bereshith, 9:21). There was a young man who was an alcoholic. The situation was so bad that it was an embarrassment to the family, and he was depleting their funds with his habit. His family approached the holy Qabbalist, Hakham Salman Eliyahu, 'a"h, who sent the young man to a professional to help wean him off the alcohol, but to no avail.

Hakham Salman, 'a"h, then decided to take matters into his own hands and wean the young man off the alcohol himself. He started by explaining to him how harmful it was and, bit by bit, weaned him off it entirely. He was so successful, that the young man couldn't even bear looking at it or walking past a store that sold alcohol. When Hakham Salman, 'a"h, told the young man's father, he was so overjoyed that he decided to throw a festive meal for the occasion.

One of the items at the meal, was a bottle of hard liquor on each table. When the young man saw this, he immediately took all the bottles and returned them to the kitchen. Instead of being overjoyed that the son was completely "on the wagon", the father was upset and criticized Hakham Salman Eliyahu, 'a"h, questioning how he had trained the boy.

In our desire to have our children be just like us, we often see something positive as being negative. I have seen parents, whose children were going down the wrong path, beg Rabbis to help their children. When the Rabbis are successful and put the children on the right path, the parents complain that their children have become too religious.

Our children will almost certainly not be exactly like us in religion. If we, hopefully, see them surpass us, this should be a true reason to celebrate, with or without "a little alcohol".

(See Abihem Shel Yisrael 'Al HaTorah, Nowah, Page 43)

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## When We Must Be Strict about Doubts in Rabbinical Enactments

The requirement of washing one's hands for bread is Rabbinical in nature. The reason why we say that whenever there is a doubt about Netilath Yadayim, we consider the hands to be pure, is because of the concept of "Sefeqa DeRabbanan Lequlah" (a doubt about a Rabbinical enactment is treated leniently). Even though we follow the rule that doubts about Torah requirements are treated strictly, whereas those that are Rabbinical are treated leniently, the latter does not always hold true.

In a case, for instance, where there is no difficulty involved in being strict, one should be strict. If one can verify the matter about which there is a doubt, one must verify it.

The concept of "Sefeqa DeRabbanan Lequla" only applies when the doubt is in the item or matter itself. However, a doubt that exists on account of a lack of knowledge, is not considered to be a doubt for this purpose and we do not take the lenient path.

(See Shulhan 'Arukh, with Rama, 160:11. Kaf HaChayim, ibid., 52-54)

## What Happens to a Fellow Jew, Happens to Us

The Jewish people are considered to be spiritually one soul (Nefesh), and physically they are considered to be like one body. The Jewish people are likened to a gold scepter. If one end of it is placed in the fire, the other end also becomes very hot. That is why every Jewish person feels the pain of his fellow Jew, as if it were his own.

Since we are considered to be one person, however, we should also share the happiness of fellow Jews when something positive happens in their life. This is the reason why the Jewish people are considered to be sureties for each other (Shebu'oth 39a), because just like when one part of a person's body develops an illness, the entire body feels the pain, so too, if one person sins, everyone is affected. By the same token, any good deed that one person does, is considered as if the entire Jewish people performed it.

We see from this how important brotherhood and closeness are to the Jewish people. There is no place for jealousy and harboring negative feelings towards others. On the contrary, if someone is in pain or suffering, it is our responsibility to help them when we can, because we are all one body.

(See Shebet Mussar 30:3)

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

### Prayer: The Vessel for Our Blessings (Part 2)

Although G-d created the vegetation and trees on the third day of creation, they did not actually break through the surface of the ground. Why? Because Hashem was waiting for Adam's prayer! Only once he prayed for rain and acknowledged that the actual growth of the vegetation is dependent on the Al-Mighty, did it happen.

Moreover, even though the gift of the fruit trees, the grass, and the flowers was right there, it only broke through and became part of Adam's world, after he had asked for it.

The great sage, Hakham Yoseph Hayyim, 'a"n, expounds on this thought and poses the following question: Doesn't the Al-Mighty know what our needs are and even better than we do? Why, then, do we need to pray?

We need to create vessels, he explains, to "hold" the blessings and the abundance that He wants to bestow upon us. When a poor person asks for food, he must bring a vessel with him to place the food in it. The letters of the words of our Tefilloth have the power of creating such vessels and pipes through which an abundance of good will flow. This clarifies why the Holy One Blessed be He desires the prayers of the righteous!

Let us pray, pray, and pray.