

# A Torah Minute com™

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## 5783 פרשת שמות

### Shabbath Preparations Are Beneath My Dignity

Even if the person is of high standing, and would not ordinarily be seen doing his shopping in the marketplace or supermarkets, nevertheless, when it comes to preparing for Shabbath, he should make the effort do something to prepare for Shabbath. In this way we honor Shabbath. We can learn this from the greatest of our Hakhamim at the time of the Gemara (Shabbath 119a).

Rab Hisda would chop the vegetables very fine. Rabba and Rab Yosef would chop wood. Ribbi Zera would light the fire. Ribbi Abhu would fan the flames. Rab Papa would braid the wicks. Rab Safra would singe the head of the animal and Rabba would salt fish. Rab Nahman would prepare the house and bring in whatever was needed for Shabbath and remove anything that was for the rest of the week. And he would do this several times. This he would do to clearly demonstrate that he wished to honor Shabbath in the way that one would honor and fear one's master who was coming to visit.

From these great Hakhamim we learn that a man must make an effort himself and not say, "It will be a slight to my honor". On the contrary, honoring the holy Shabbath is a man's honor.

(See Sefer Meqabziel, 2nd year, Lekh Lekha, Oth 6)



מדרש בן איש חי  
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### Shemoth: One G-d in Charge of Everything

וְהָיָה אִם-לֹא יֵאֱמִינוּ לָךְ וְלֹא יִשְׁמְעוּ לְקֹל הָאֵת הָרִאשׁוֹן וְהָאֱמִינִי לְקֹל הָאֵת הָאַחֲרוֹן: וְהָיָה אִם-לֹא יֵאֱמִינוּ גַם לְשֵׁנֵי הָאֵתוֹת הָאֵלֶּה וְלֹא יִשְׁמְעוּן לְקֹלְךָ וּלְקִוְיָתָּה מִמִּיּוֹמֵי הַיּוֹם... וְהָיָה לָדֶם "And if they do not believe you and pay no attention to the voice of the first sign, they will believe the voice of the last sign. And it shall be that if they do not even believe these two signs..., then you shall take from the waters of the river...and it will become blood" (Shemoth 4:8-9).

G-d gave the signs to show that He was in full control of the good as well as the bad. For instance, Moshe Rabbenu's hand became white as snow with Şara'ath (צרעת) and was then healed. It says in Ben Ish Hai, that the whole purpose was to instill in them the correct belief that G-d is the cause of everything, the good as well as the bad. He is the source of all that occurs. This is in direct contrast to those who believe that there are two separate deities, one for the good and another for the bad.

That is also the reason why the Anshei Kenesseth HaGedolah (Men of the Great Assembly) instituted that we say in the blessings of the Shema', "Yoşer Or Uborei Hoshkeh" (יוצר אור ובורא חשך - Who forms light and creates darkness), to uproot the erroneous notion that there are two separate forces, and to emphasize that the One who creates light is also the One who creates darkness.

(See Ben Ish Hai Halakhoth, 1st year, Parashath Shemoth, Parashah section)

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## Say Ga-al Yisrael Loudly or Softly?

Maran Yosef Qaro, z"l, rules in the Shulḥan 'Arukh that one may not interrupt between the words "Ga-al Yisrael" and the beginning of the Shaḥrith 'Amidah, not even to say "Amen" in response to that blessing. Many Ashkenazim, therefore, say the words Ga-al Yisrael softly, so as not to elicit a response of "Amen" to the blessing of Ga-al Yisrael, because it would be deemed to be an interruption.

The Rama, z"l, however, is of the opinion that answering "Amen" does not constitute an interruption. As such, some Ashkenazim say "Ga-al Yisrael" loudly.

Sephardim follow the opinion of the Shulḥan 'Arukh that answering "Amen" does, indeed, constitute an interruption. However, since Sephardim are of the opinion that one does not answer "Amen" to the blessing of Ga-al Yisrael, the Hazan recites the words aloud.

(See Shulḥan 'Arukh, O.Ḥ. 66:8-9, 111:1)

## Must Coffee Be Bishul Yisrael?

Does coffee need to be prepared in accordance with the rules of Bishul Yisrael? After all, it is served on a king's table, and coffee beans are not eaten raw. These are the two conditions to require Bishul Yisrael. On the other hand, the majority of a cup of coffee is water, and water is exempt from the requirement of Bishul Yisrael. Therefore, a cup of coffee should be exempt from requiring Bishul Yisrael.

Rabbenu the Ari, z"l, however, forbade coffee which was fully prepared by a non-Jew. Nevertheless, the prevalent custom is to be lenient and permit it. The Ben Ish Ḥai mentions that the custom in his country was to be lenient, and adds that one cannot protest if people are lenient, since they have opinions to rely on.

He states, however, that one who is particular should keep away from coffee that was not prepared in accordance with the rules of Bishul Yisrael. He does not extend this to all instances, but adds that if an important person were to visit influential non-Jews and would be expected to drink coffee that they prepared (assuming it to be Kosher in other respects), he may.

(See Peri Ḥadash, 114:6. Zibhei Ṣedeq, 113, Oth 17. Ben Ish Ḥai, 2nd year, Parashath Ḥuqqath, Oth 16)

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

### Someone to Look Up To

How were the two midwives, Shifra and Pu'ah (Yochebed and Miriam) able to go against the decree of the king and save the Jewish male babies? Where did they get their strength and courage from?

It says in Parashath Shemoth (1:17), וַתִּירָאן הַמִּיָּלֶדֶת אֶת־הָאֱלֹהִים וְלֹא עָשׂוּ כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר מֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם - "And the midwives feared G-d and did not do that which the king of Egypt said to them." We see clearly from here that it was the extent of their fear of G-d that gave them this courage to go against Pharaoh's decree.

There are times when following G-d's path is easy for us, such as when what He wants coincides with our own ideas and desires. At such times it is not clear whether what we are doing is following G-d's will or simply what suits us. There are other times, however, when our desires or the pressure from those around us wish to pull us in the opposite direction, and then the extent and depth of our fear of G-d is challenged.

(To be continued)