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By the Hakham

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5783 פֶּרֶשַׁת וַאֲתַחֲנֵן – שַׁבַּת נַחֲמוּ

5783/2023 Parashath WaEth-ḥannan

Waeth-ḥannan: Making Our Prayers Felt

"And I pleaded with G-d at that time saying" (Debarim 3:23). In says in Barukh Ta'am that we learn from the prayer of Moshe Rabbenu, 'a"h, that one should never give up on G-d's mercy. In the Gemara of Berakhoth (32b) it says that if a person sees that he prayed but his prayer was not answered, he should not despair, but should pray again. We see this clearly from the fact that Moshe Rabbenu, 'a"h, prayed 515 prayers.

The fact that the word 'Waeth-ḥannan' (pleaded) was used instead of Hithpallel (prayed), alludes to the fact that one should not pray by rote, some thoughtless prayer, as it were, but rather one should have sincere intent in one's prayer, pleading with G-d to have mercy on him and accept his prayer.

Rabbenu the Hida, 'a"h, quoting Rabbenu Efraim, mentions that the Gematria of Waeth-ḥannan, together with the number of letters, is the same as the phrase, "Ten Hinnam" (give for free). This teaches us that whoever prays to G-d and pleads with concentration, will find that G-d will grant his request, even if he is undeserving (G-d gives it to him, as it were, for free).

(See Barukh Ta'am, Parashath Waeth-ḥannan. Naḥal Qedumim, Parashath Debarim)



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Soaking Dishes on Shabbath

Any permitted Shabbath labor (Melakha) may be forbidden if it is done as a preparation for after Shabbath. Preparing on Shabbath for Ḥol (lit. profane - a week day) is not appropriate for the honor of Shabbath, apart from the fact that Shabbath is a day of rest and we should minimize our chores.

We mentioned previously that dishes may only be washed on Shabbath if they are to be used on that Shabbath (see A Torah Minute™, *Washing Dishes on Shabbath*). The same rule applies to soaking dishes and utensils on Shabbath, by performing a specific additional effort or action, such as running water over them, so that the food and grime will not stick to them. If they are not going to be used again that Shabbath at all, then this is also forbidden because of preparing on Shabbath for Ḥol.

There is an opinion that if the utensils are left unsoaked and the food will harden on them, making it difficult to wash them after Shabbath, then they may be soaked on Shabbath. Only if it has already hardened, according to this opinion, is it forbidden to soak them on Shabbath. However, not all Posqim are in agreement with this. The Ohr LeShion states that even in such a case one is preparing on Shabbath for after Shabbath and it is forbidden. He adds that one may not wash one's hands over them if one's intention in doing so is to soak them.

(See Ohr LeShion, 2, 34:1)

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Remembering the Destruction of the Temple Whenever We feast

After Tish'ah Be-Ab and the difficult period of 22 days are over, one soon forgets the fasting and the Abeluth (mourning) associated with it. As we eat our food with enjoyment and anticipation, it behooves us to remember the words of the holy Zohar.

It says:

"One who is enjoying a meal at his table and delighting in the delicacies that he is eating, should remember and worry about the desecration of the Holy Land and the destruction of the Beth Hammiqdash (Palace of the King - the Temple). In view of the fact that he feels sadness while he is rejoicing and eating and drinking, the Holy One Blessed Be He considers it as if he has rebuilt G-d's house and all that was destroyed with the Beth Hammiqdash. He merits his portion".

(See Kaf Haḥayyim 560, Oth 19)

Repeating Birkath Hamazon If One Only Said it in One's Mind

In a case where one read Birkath HaMazon in one's mind only, without the words leaving one's lips, if it was on account of an illness or for some other reason out of one's control, one has fulfilled one's obligation. The question is if the reason why one had to recite it silently goes away before the food has been digested, whether one needs to repeat the Birkath HaMazon again correctly.

While there is an opinion that one would need to recite Birkath HaMazon again, the Kaf Haḥayyim points out that in a similar situation concerning the reading of Shema' Yisrael, the Aḥronim, z"l, do not require us to repeat it again and this is the case here also, that once one has read Birkath HaMazon in one's mind, because one had no other option, one has fulfilled one's obligation and does not need to repeat it.

In addition, if one wasn't fully satisfied even though one ate the required amount of bread for Birkath HaMazon, there are many who are of the opinion that the obligation to recite it is not from the Torah but from the Rabbis. This would be an additional reason not to repeat it.

(See Shulḥan 'Arukh, 185:2. Kaf Haḥayyim ibid, Oth 7)

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

Let Us Still Remember

A day after, and it seems as if it has all been forgotten. This is how the human mind works. Two days ago we sat on the floor, wearing cloth shoes, crying for the destruction of the two temples and today, the music is blasting, we're going on shopping sprees and dancing at weddings.

This Shabbath, we will be reading the first Haftarah of the seven prophecies of consolation, which are read between the Shabbath following the Ninth of Ab and the Shabbath preceding Rosh Hashana. The message is clear, it is time for spreading hope and light. We should be consoled and comforted.

Yet, as many of us know, we must always display a firm belief in the future redemption and anxiously await it. It is, in fact, one of the thirteen principals of our faith. The Gemara in tractate Shabbath states that one of the questions that every single one of us will be asked on our day of judgment is: "Did you anxiously await the Geullah, the salvation?"

The Pele Yo'es, (Ḥakham Eliezer Papo from Turkey), writes that it is not sufficient to just utter the words, rather, we must feel it with our hearts and await for the redemption wholeheartedly.

(to be continued)