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If Ink or Colored Liquid Spills on a Book Shabbath

The Shulḥan 'Arukh writes that if one erases ink from parchment, and the place that it occupied is sufficient to write two letters, one is guilty of transgressing the Shabbath labor of Moḥeq (erasing).

The Mishnah Berurah comments that this does not mean that if it takes up less space than that, it is permitted. On the contrary, it is still a Torah prohibition to erase even less than that. The only difference is that there is no requirement to bring a sin offering (Ḥattath). Therefore if ink, or other liquid, spills onto a book, one must not wash it off with water, on account of "Moḥeq".

The Ben Ish Hai writes that if one has a little ink on one's hand from when one was writing before Shabbath, one may not wash it off on Shabbath. When washing one's hands, one should wrap a cloth around it to prevent water from reaching it. The same applies to any other type of color or paint, that one is forbidden to wash it.

(See Shulḥan 'Arukh 340:3. Mishnah Berurah, ibid., 12-13.
Ben Ish Hai, 2nd year, Parashath Pequdei, Oth 1)

5784 פְּרַשַׁת וַיַּעַי

Wayyesei: Hinting at the Three Temples

וַיִּפְגַּע בַּמָּקוֹם וַיֵּלֶן שָׁם בִּיָּבֵא הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ וַיִּקַּח מֵאֲבְנֵי הַמָּקוֹם
"And he came to the place - and he took some of the stones of the place - and lay down in that place" (Bereshith 28:11). Three times in one Pasuq (verse), the Torah speaks about the place. It appears, at first glance, to be unnecessary repetition because if it had mentioned it only once, we would have understood it perfectly.

It says in Barukh Ta'am that each time it says the word "Maqom" (place), the Torah is referring to a different Beth Miqdash (Temple). The first one says that he came to the place; this refers to the first Beth HaMiqdash which was destroyed, for our sins. The continuation of the verse says, "because the sun set", which refers to the darkness over our loss. The second says that he took "some of the stones" of the place. This was the second Beth HaMiqdash which was built by Ezra, but which was lacking many of the items of the first. That is why it says "some" of the stones.

The third time it says that he "lay down" in that place and it refers to the third and final Beth HaMiqdash. And at that time there will be complete rest for us, without any more oppression. May we witness the rebuilding of the Beth HaMiqdash speedily in our days, Amen.

(See Barukh Ta'am, Parashath Wayyesei)



מדרש בן איש חי
Midrash BEN ISH HAI

לעלוי נשמת ההרוגים, להחזרת השבויים בשלום
להצלחת החיילים, ולשמירת כל עם ישראל

What Blessing on Rose Water?

The Shulḥan 'Arukh writes that the blessing that one recites when smelling rose water is בּוֹרֵא עֵצִי בְּשָׁמִים "Borei 'Aṣei Besamim". Since roses can be made into jam, there is an opinion, brought down by the Tur, that we should say הַנּוֹתֵן רִיחַ טוֹב בַּפֶּרוֹת, "HaNothen Reyaḥ Tob BaPeroth".

In truth, however, the primary use for roses is not for eating but smelling. This explains the ruling of the Shulḥan 'Arukh, to recite "Borei 'Asei Besamim" over rose water and not "HaNothen Reyaḥ Tob BaPeroth".

There are those, however, who recite בּוֹרֵא מֵינִי בְּשָׁמִים "Borei Minei Besamim" on rose water. This is based on the fact that there is a difference of opinion, as we mentioned above. Each one should follow his own family's custom. In the absence of a specific custom, however, it would seem to me to be appropriate to recite בּוֹרֵא עֵצִי בְּשָׁמִים "Borei 'Aṣei Besamim", as brought down in the Shulḥan 'Arukh.

(See Shulḥan 'Arukh, 215:3. Mishnah Berurah, ibid, 19. Kaf Haḥayyim, ibid, Oth 39)

What to Say and What to Leave Out

The Pele Yo'eṣ tells us that one who is giving a Derasha or lecture must be very careful not to let people suspect that the reason he is speaking about a certain topic is for his own benefit. Therefore, he should not expound too much on the importance of giving charity to those who study Torah or speak at length about the honor due to Talmidei Ḥakhamim (Torah scholars), and the like.

He speaks further about the importance of going over the entire speech in advance so that when one comes to deliver it one will be fluent in one's delivery. Every orator will tell you that when saying a speech over in advance he realizes that it is inappropriate to say something that he originally thought of mentioning.

The Pele Yo'eṣ comments on this and says that when going over a speech beforehand one realizes that there are portions that are either inappropriate to say or that don't make that much sense and one will be able to omit them when delivering the speech in public. If he didn't prepare it appropriately, he would have to stop his speech to try and figure out what changes need to be made on the spot and this would be viewed negatively by the audience.

(See Pele Yo'eṣ, Darshan)

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

Why and What We Should We Pray for (Part 2)

(continued from last week)

Yis-ḥaq Abinu, 'a"ḥ, was the one who instituted Tefillath Minḥa. Prayer, is the tool that our ancestors used anytime they were in need of something. They truly understood the power of prayer, Tefillah.

The Ba'al Hatureem states that Ribqa Immenu, 'a"ḥ, actually appeared to Yisḥaq Abinu after he prayed Tefillath Minḥa (Bereshith, 24:63). Rab Mordechai Eliyahu, 'a"ḥ, writes in Dibre Mordekhai, in connection with the topic of finding one's mate, that there are singles who search for all kinds of "Seghulloth" in their quest to get married. He requests all singles, male and female, not to turn to those "Seghulloth", which were unknown to our forefathers. "Instead", he proclaims, "turn to Tefillah! This is an amazing 'Seghulla', which the Torah itself advocates -- in particular Tefillath Minḥa."

If someone wonders, what to pray for, a better question would be, "Is there anything one should not pray for?". We should pray for everything, and everyone, and follow in the paths of our forefathers, by turning to G-d with passion and emotion, all the time.