

ATorahMinute.com™



By the Hakham
Rabbi Ya'aqob Menashe, 'a"h

5781/2021 Parashath Re-eh

A PROJECT OF MIDRASH BEN ISH HAI (MIDRASH.ORG)

5781 פרשת ראה

Parashath Re-eh: We must be happy

It says in Parashath Re-eh, וְהִיִּיתָ אֶדְוָה "and you shall be totally happy" (16:15). We see from this how dear happiness is to G-d and to what extent we must be careful to perform this Miswah (commandment).

When a person performs any commandment, he should not say "what difference does it make if the performance is accompanied by happiness or sadness". Rather, he must know that happiness is, first and foremost, a commandment in its own right. In addition, when joy is lacking, it also detracts from the Miswah that was performed, and actually hurts it.

That is why we have a specific commandment here of happiness, to teach us that it is a Miswah on its own, and that a person gets reward specifically for it. This is why the Anshei Keneseth Haggadolah (Rabbis of the Great Assembly) instituted individual Berakhoth (blessings) connected to Simha (happiness), such as Sheheyenu that we recite on new clothing and the like.

(See Ben Ish Hai, Shanah Aleph, Parashath Re-eh, Introduction)



מדרש בן איש חי
Midrash BEN ISH HAI

Speaking Between the Blessing and Eating the Bread

When one is eating a meal and recites the Berakha (blessing) of Hammosi on the bread, if one speaks before eating the bread (which one should not do), one must recite the Berakha again. However, if the speaking was connected with the meal, then this is not considered to be an interruption between blessing and eating and he does not repeat the Berakha.

An example of this would be if, after reciting the blessing of Hammosi he asked for salt to dip the bread in, which was not on the table, or asked for food to be given to the animals in their care (which we are obligated to do before eating ourselves). In all such cases, the Berakha does not need to be repeated. All this only applies, after the fact, if he already spoke. However, Lechatehilla, he should not speak, even about these matters, from when he has done Netilath Yadayim (the ritual washing of hands).

So what should a person do if the salt was not brought to the table before Netilath Yadayim or the animals were not fed, and he has now already done Netilath Yadayim or recited the blessing of Hammosi? The correct procedure in such a case is to taste a piece of the bread right after the blessing and then say what he needs to. And even though we mentioned that a person is obligated to feed his animals before himself, once he has recited the blessing he should first taste the bread and then take care of the food for the animals.

(See Shulhan 'Arukh with Rama 167: 6. Kaf HaHayim ibid, Oth 56)

For the 'Ilui Neshamah of
Rabbi Ya'aqob Menashe, 'a"h.
יעקב אליהו עבדאללה פרג' חיים בן רחל, ע"ה

Placing a Mezuzah Too High or Too Low

Since a Mezuzah must be placed at the bottom of the upper third of a door post, a Mezuzah which was placed below the upper third of the door post is Pasul (ritually unfit). Even though there are those who permit it, this opinion should not be accepted except in a case of extreme need.

If, however, the Mezuzah was affixed in the top third, but not at the beginning of the top third, as it should be, but higher up, perhaps even touching the lintel, then even though this is not the ideal position it is, nevertheless, Kasher, according to all opinions.

Even so, one should still remove it (if this is possible) and place it in the correct spot at the bottom of the upper third, and should not say that since it has been affixed there and, Bedi'abad (after the fact) it is still kosher where it is, it need not be moved. Rather, since one is in a position to put it in the correct location, one must do so.

(See Ben Ish Hai, 2nd year, Parashath Ki Thabo, Oth 7)

Praying in English

Nowadays, the level of Jewish knowledge is much higher than it was a generation or two ago. Nevertheless, there are people who are unable to pray in Leshon Haqqodesh (the Holy Tongue).

Someone who is unable to read Hebrew and pray from the Siddur (prayer book) should, nevertheless, pray in any language he is comfortable with, so that he will still have the opportunity of performing the Miswah (commandment) of praying. This situation is commonly found nowadays, when a person who was not observant and never prayed, starts getting closer to Judaism and wishes to pray on a regular basis, but is unable to read the prayers in the Hebrew Siddur.

It goes without saying, that a person should view this as a preliminary step, and make every effort to eventually pray all the prayers in Leshon Haqqodesh.

(See Sh. 'A. 101: 4. Kaf Hachaim ibid, Oth 19)

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

To Say it With Love, Part 2

(Continued from last week)

As parents, friends, spouses and other similar roles, we find ourselves in the position of having to rebuke. In fact, the Torah tells us that we have an obligation to rebuke our fellow man. (Wayyiqra 19,17)

Let us explore what rebuke is all about based on the actions of Moshe Rabbenu 'a"h. Hakham Yoseph Hayyim 'a"h explains that from the fact that Moshe Rabbenu spoke to all Israel, we learn the important lesson of how careful we must be not to embarrass the "sinner". Moshe Rabbenu made a point of gathering all of Israel, even though, different groups transgressed in different areas. Although they were not all to be blamed for every single transgression, they were all present. This is how nobody was put to shame.

