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5782/2021 Parashath Wayhi

Accepting Shabbath When Not Praying with a Minyan

If there is only one Synagogue in the town, when the congregation accepts Shabbath, all those in the town who were unable for some reason to be in Synagogue, must accept Shabbath by that time also. That moment is when the congregation reaches "Boee Kallah" and "Mizmor Shir Leyom HaShabbath".

If there are multiple Synagogues in the town, one who was unable to go to Synagogue, be it because he was unwell or for some other important reason, should accept Shabbath when the Minyan in the Synagogue that he prays in, accepts Shabbath.

A wife, however, must light by the time her husband accepts Shabbath. This is all the more relevant in the summer months when many Synagogues accept Shabbath early. As such, even if other Minyanim in the town start Shabbath later, she must still light by the time her husband accepts Shabbath.

(See Tanna Debei Eliyahu, Response of 14 Kislew 5774)



מדרש בן איש חי
Midrash BEN ISH HAI

5782 פְּרַשַׁת וַיְחִי

Wayhi: The Kingdom of Judah Does Not Rely on Weapons

Rabbenu Bahya says that if we look closely at the blessing that Ya'aqob Abinu, 'a"h, (Jacob), gave Yehudah (Judah), we find that all the letters of the Hebrew alphabet appear there except for the letter Zahn (Zayin - ז). The reason why this is so is because the Kingdom of Israel, which was from the tribe of Yehudah, never won its victories with weapons of war, which are called Kelei Zayin (כְּלֵי זִין), unlike the nations of the world who rely on weapons to fight their battles.

The Kingdom of Israel does not rely on winning wars through physical might, but depends on the Al-mighty, and the success, or lack thereof, is dependent on their spiritual level. When they follow the right path, G-d fights for them and they win their wars. That is why Yehuda's name includes in it the full ineffable Name of G-d. This comes to hint at the fact that when the Jewish people do the will of G-d they are successful and G-d is with them. As a result, they do not need to rely on weaponry.

In addition to G-d's Name, the name Yehudah also contains the letter Dahl (ד), whose numerical value is 4. Possible reasons are that he was the fourth child born to Ya'aqob Abinu, 'a"h, or because the sun was created on the fourth day, and the kingdom of Judah is likened to the sun.

(See Rabbenu Bahya on the Torah, Parashath Wayhi)

For the 'Iluy Neshamah of
Liel Dina bath Efraim

Nishmath Kol Hai: A Deeper Comprehension

In the Nishmath Kol Hai which we recite on Shabbath morning, we say, "Yodu, Wiybarkhu, Wishabbehu, Wifa-arū, Wishoreru", which are five praises that are addressed to G-d. These five praises represent the four letters of G-d's ineffable Name, plus the crown on the letter Yod of the Name.

Shortly thereafter we say, "Shaw'ath 'Aniyyim Attah Thishma'" (You hear the cries of the poor). This refers to the Jewish people who are dwelling in exile. The following words, "Sa'aqath HaDal" (the crying out of the unfortunate), refers to Mashiyah Ben Yosef (the Messiah, son of Yosef), who is afflicted with suffering. We can understand this from Yeshayahu (53:5), where it says, "He is wounded by our transgressions".

(See Ben Ish Hai, 2nd year, Parashath Toldoth, Oth 5)

Trusting in G-d in Difficult Times

It says in Tehillim (22:5), "בְּךָ בָּטְחוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ בָּטְחוּ וַתִּפְּלֵטמוּ" (In You did my fathers trust, they trusted and You saved them). Even among people who believe in G-d, there are many different levels. Some people's belief doesn't extend to trust in Him on a day to day basis, inasmuch as it applies to their everyday dealings.

When they undergo difficulties or suffering, Heaven forbid, and they feel they have no one to turn to, they turn to G-d with increased passion. At that point their faith in Him rises significantly. The trust of our forefathers, that is referred to here, was very different.

When everything was going well for them, on all levels, they had complete and utter trust in G-d. On account of that, when they found themselves in times of difficulty, G-d saved them. This is the level that each of us must strive for. When life is going well for us and our Mazzal is smiling at us, that is the time we must ensure that we have full trust in Him. It is this level of trust that saves us in times of trouble.

(See Hayyim WeHashalom, 22:5)

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

When Times are Difficult

The Jewish people are going through difficult times now. It is precisely during such times that our nation manifests its strength, morality and courage. Perhaps at times like this we can comprehend why the Jewish people are likened to an olive tree. Our Rabbis of blessed memory tell us that just as olives produce their oil as a result of pressing, so too the Jewish people repent when they are knocked and go through periods of suffering. We may perhaps expound on this to say that all the good, the strength, the unity and more, hidden within us, comes out at times like this.

Any human being, who is honest to himself, will admit that we are different. There is something unique and special about us. Like the olive oil, which keeps itself separate from all the other liquids, and does not mix with them, so too we are unlike any of the other nations, keeping to ourselves (while, of course, always treating them with respect). If we are not particular about it, the nations of the world will inevitably, remind us of this.

At times like this, I often think that the well known phrase: "In the merit of Jewish women we will be redeemed", becomes clearer and more obvious. Who, if not us, merciful and compassionate women, will bang on the gates of Heaven, pleading to our Father in Heaven to save us? Who, if not us, will cry out to Him, as we have learnt from our Matriarch Rahel, 'a"n, and beg Him to have mercy on our children? He will collect every single tear of ours and gather them in a most precious place for Him. I think, right next to His Throne of Glory.