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By the Hakham

Rabbi Ya'aqob Menashe, 'a"h

5782/2022 Parashath Terumah

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5782 פֶּרַשַׁת תְּרוּמָה

Terumah: How Not to Lose Torah Knowledge

It says in Parashath Terumah, וַעֲשֵׂה אֲרֹן עֲצֵי שִׁטִּים "And you shall make an Ark of acacia wood" (Shemoth 25:10). It says in 'Od Yosef Hai, just as the Aron was the place where the Luḥoth HaBerith (the Tablets of Stone, [which were the Ten Commandments and effectively included the entire Torah]), were kept and protected, so too, a person's heart is the place where the Torah is kept and protected in a person.

When the Torah is in our heart, it is protected, meaning no one can come and steal it from us. However, we have the ability to lose it ourselves. How is that? This is done by not reviewing the Torah and relying on the fact that there are Sefarim (books), or perhaps computers, where we can look up what we need to know. The problem with this being that, if we are unable to find it in the books, then that Torah is lost to us.

So the only protection that we have to ensure that the Torah is, in fact, kept and protected in our heart, is to constantly learn and review the Torah.

(See 'Od Yosef Hai Derashoth, Parashath Terumah)



מדרש בן איש חי
Midrash BEN ISH HAI

How to Use a Towel on Shabbath

The Shulḥan 'Arukh states that when drying one's hands on Shabbath, it is preferable to first dry them vigorously against each other, in order to remove as much water from them, before drying them on a towel.

There is an opinion that this is only referring to towels from a previous generation. Those towels used to be very thin and, as a result, after using them only once or twice, would become full of water. The problem is that this would then result in Seḥiṭa (the forbidden Shabbath labor of squeezing). Today's towels are much thicker and Seḥiṭa does not apply.

It should be noted that there is an opinion that permits it in all cases, and the Rama adds in his gloss that we need not be concerned that it may fall into the category of laundering on Shabbath.

The Kaf Haḥayim comments that even when using thick towels, one should use different ends of the towel, in order not to let the towel become too full of water which would result in Seḥiṭa. Also, one should ensure that one uses the dry side of the towel and not the portion that is wet.

(See Shulḥan 'Arukh with Rama 302:10. Derekh HaTorah, Hilkhoth Shabbath, 17:18. Kaf Haḥayim, 302:75)

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

Pay Workers or Pray Minḥa?

The importance of paying employees who are paid by the day can be best illustrated by the following story about Rabbenu the Ari, z"l. He had the custom of never praying Minḥa till he paid the wages of all his workers who were employed on the basis of being paid daily.

When, on occasion, he did not have the money in hand to pay them, he would actually delay praying Minḥa till he would borrow the money he needed and would pay all of them their dues. He used to say: "How can I stand before G-d and pray Minḥa, when the opportunity to perform a very important commandment was in my hands and I did not fulfill it?" The holy Zohar was very strict about this also.

The Ḥesed LaAlafim adds that a woman who does your laundry is in the same category, and must be paid right away whenever she brings the clothes.

(See Kaf Haḥayyim 232:12)

Requiring Panim Ḥadashoth (New Faces) at the Sheba' Berakhoth

Each of the meals during the seven days of celebration after a wedding, require Panim Ḥadashoth. Panim Ḥadashoth (lit. new faces) are people who were not part of any of the previous meals in honor of the Ḥathan and Kallah (bride and groom). If there are no new faces at the meal, only the last of the Sheba' Berakhoth (seven blessings, that of "Asher Bara"), may be recited.

The Sheba' Berakhoth which are recited under the Ḥuppah are not relevant in deciding who are considered to be Panim Ḥadashoth and who are not. Therefore, if someone was only at the Ḥuppah but did not stay for the meal after the wedding, he may be included in a subsequent meal as one of the Panim Ḥadashoth.

Similarly, we do not require Panim Ḥadashoth at the meal after the wedding ceremony. Even if all the guests at the meal were at the ceremony, we do not require Panim Ḥadashoth.

(See Mas. Kethubboth, 7b. Mekor Ḥayyim, 1. Ḥokhmah Adam, 129:5)

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

Making Fridays Blessed

If you had to choose two of the most important aspects connected with the preparation of Shabbath, what would they be?

The Ben Ish Hai (Ben Ish Hai, 2nd year, Parashath Lekh Lekha) guides us and explains that Zerizuth (quickness) and Simḥa (joy) are two essential prerequisites in the process of preparing for Shabbath. In fact, he writes that the source of Zerizuth is the feeling of joy, because whatever makes a person happy, he is most likely to do quickly. The two Middoth (traits), happiness and quickness are interconnected and both are praiseworthy.

The word in Hebrew for quick is זריז (Zariz), which has the equal numerical value (Gematria) of the words Zer Tob (זר טוב), literally meaning "good crown". This indicates that serving Hashem in such a manner, quickly, is considered to be a crown to the person's head.

(To be continued)