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

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5782/2022 Parashath Saw

All Sins Are Magnified on Shabbath

The Pele Yo'eş writes that according to the Mequbbalim (Kabbalists), it's not just the desecration of Shabbath that one needs to be concerned about on Shabbath. Rather, anything that is a sin or transgression, even one that if an ordinary person does it during the week, he causes a blemish in the lower spiritual world of 'Asiyah (action), on Shabbath the same sin causes a blemish even in the highest world, that of the Aşiluth. That is because on Shabbath, all the spiritual worlds combine together.

Included in these sins, is the sin of speech of forbidden matters, which is very serious. This sin is found more on Shabbath than on weekdays. The reason is that people have more free time and thus gather together in groups and speak about all manner of forbidden things. It is very important to keep away from such groups. On the contrary, one must join together with those who fear G-d and are involved in the study of Torah.

(See Pele Yo'eş, Shabbath)



מדרש בן איש חי
Midrash BEN ISH HAI

5782 פֶּרַשַׁת צו

Saw: Connection Between the Three Prayers and Fire

צו אֶת־אַהֲרֹן וְאֶת־בָּנָיו לֵאמֹר זֹאת תֹּרַת הָעֹלָה הָאֵשׁ הָעֹלָה עַל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ בְּלֵילֵהָ עַד־הַבֹּקֶר וְאֵשׁ הַמִּזְבֵּחַ תִּהְיֶה בֹקֶר בּוֹ "Command Aaron and his sons, saying, This is the law of the burnt offering; This is the burnt offering, because of the flame upon the altar all night to the morning, and the fire of the altar shall be burning in it." (Wayiqra 6:2).

This Parasha hints at the three prayers that we are commanded to pray each day, Shaḥrith, Minḥa and 'Arbith. The Abrabanel quotes three different verses that prove it. In Barukh Ta'am it says that the three words "תוקד" (shall be burning) from verse 5, "מוקדה" (flame) from verse 2, and the mention of "תוקד" (shall be burning) in verse 6, are all hints to the three prayers.

"מוקדה" (flame) comes to teach us about 'Arbith because it was placed on the altar throughout the night, and 'Arbith can be prayed throughout the night. "תוקד" (shall be burning) from verse 5, says that the fire must be kindled every morning, and this is a hint to Shaḥrith which is prayed every morning. Finally, Minḥa is hinted at in "תוקד" (shall be burning) in verse 6, which is mentioned in connection with a permanent fire which had to be on the altar.

The fact that the prayers are connected with the word "fire" comes to teach us that when a person prays, he should feel as if the fire is burning inside him. In particular, one should be particular about the Minḥa prayer because Eliyahu HaNabi was answered at Minḥa time.

(See Abrabanel, Parashath Saw,
6. Barukh Ta'am, Parashath Saw, Berakhoth 6b)

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

Borrowing Can Be Considered Stealing

One is not permitted to steal, even an item of the smallest value. This applies to stealing from a Jew or a non Jew. Both are forbidden.

In fact, if one steals from another, even something that is worth a Peruṭa (a coin of minimal value), it is considered as if he took the other person's life. If one finds oneself in a life or death situation, and the only way to save oneself is by taking something belonging to someone else, without the other person's permission, one must take it with the intention of returning it to the owner later.

"Borrowing" an item, with the intention of returning it later, but without the permission of the owner, is considered to be stealing and is not permitted. This does not include a case where it is known that the owner would be happy if his item were used by someone else.

(See Shulḥan 'Arukh, Ḥoshen Mishpat, 359:1,3,4,5)

Repeating a Blessing

When a person recites a blessing, he must recite it loudly enough for at least his own ears to hear. If, after the fact, he did not hear his own blessing, but did actually mouth it, he will have fulfilled his obligation, even though this is not the ideal way of doing it. Saying it in one's mind without even mouthing it has no validity. It should also be recited in a composed and unhurried manner.

If one skipped the portion of the blessing which mentions G-d's Name and/or Kingdom, the blessing has to be repeated. This is because a blessing without both G-d's Name and Kingdom is not considered to be a blessing.

In fact, if one said the entire blessing but only omitted the word Ha'olam (the world), from the phrase Melekh Ha'olam (King of the world), the blessing is invalid since it is not a true indication of the fact that G-d is [the supreme] King. As a result, even in this case the blessing has to be repeated.

(See Shulḥan 'Arukh, 206:3. 214:1. Ben Ish Ḥai, 1st year, Parashath Balaq, Oth 2)

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

"Blessed Are You For Not Making Me a Woman", Part 1

Why is it that when men recite the Birkhoth Hashaḥar (morning blessings), they say, "Blessed are You, G-d of the Universe, for not making me a woman"? Are they implying that they are fortunate not to have been created as women? Wouldn't it have been more thoughtful and complimentary to have said, "Blessed are You for making me a man"?

In order for us to get answers to these questions, we must examine this blessing in connection with the two preceding ones: "Blessed are You for not making me a gentile" and "Blessed are you for not making me a slave". The common thread to all three - gentiles, slaves, and women - is the exemption from certain obligations and precepts that men, specifically, are commanded to perform.

The blessing which men recite "...for not making me a woman", reflects the desire for a deeper connection with the Al-mighty. Building a closer connection can be achieved through the performance of additional Miṣwoth (commandments). Thus, men through their blessing, are expressing their aspiration for spiritual growth, which they strive to achieve through the performance of these extra Miṣwoth.

(To be continued)