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

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5782/2022 Parashath Ki Thabo

Indirect Handling of an Item Which May not Be Handled on Shabbath

Tiltul Min HaSad -- indirect handling of an item which one may not directly handle on Shabbath because of Muqseh, is permitted if it is for an item which is permitted to be handled on Shabbath. Maran Mordekhai Eliyahu, zsh"l, mentions a couple of commonly found examples.

If a person wishes to take a bag of sugar from the closet on Shabbath, but there is a bag of flour on top of it, he may not directly remove the bag of flour. Instead, he must pull the bag of sugar which will, in turn, cause the bag of flour to fall by itself.

In the same vein, if a person wishes to take a vegetable to eat on Shabbath, but there is a raw potato above it, he should not handle the potato directly and move it. Instead, he should pull the vegetable he wishes to eat and let the raw potato fall by itself.

(See Shulhan 'Arukh, Orah Hayim, 311:8.
Derekh HaTorah, Shabbath, 33:88)

5782 פֶּרַשַׁת כִּי-תָבֹא

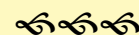
Ki Thabo: Feeling Empty Spiritually and Satisfied Physically

It says in the Parasha of Ki Thabo, וְהָיִיתָ רֶק לְמַעַל, וְלֹא תִהְיֶה לְמַטָּה, literally translated as, "You shall only be above and you shall not be below".

This is referring to our relationship vis-a-vis the nations of the world, when the Jewish people follow the right path. The word "רק - Raq" (only), however, can also be read as "Req", changing the meaning from only to empty. Instead of saying, "You shall only be above", we can read it as, "You shall be empty above." From this we learn, that in matters above, meaning spiritual matters, we must look at ourselves as being "רקים" (empty), and must diligently increase our study of Torah and Mitzwoth to attain what is lacking and not be empty.

However, the Pasuq also says, "ולא למטה" (but not below), meaning that in matters below (matters of this world) that must not be the case. When it comes to physical matters, we must consider that we have everything - that we are complete and not lacking. Through this we will achieve the Middah of הסתפקות (the attribute of being content with what we have), which will permit us to place our time and our efforts in the area which is really important - the spiritual area of the soul.

(See 'Od Yoseph Hai, Parashath Ki Thabo)



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Putting On Tefillin After Sunset

One must put one's Tefillin on during the day and may not do so at night. If one was unable to wear one's Tefillin during the day but is able to put them on Ben Hashemashoth (after sunset, but before actual night), what should one do?

In 'Od Yoseph Hai it mentions that there are three Sefeqoth (doubts) concerning the donning of Tefillin at this time. This is a time when we are uncertain if it is day or night. If it is night, perhaps the Halakha (law) is in accordance with the opinion that one is permitted to don one's Tefillin at night. If you opine that it is forbidden to don Tefillin at night, then perhaps the Halakha is in accordance with the Mordekhai who is of the opinion that Ben Hashemashoth, one is permitted, a priori, to put on one's Tefillin at that time.

In any case, in a situation where one was unable to wear one's Tefillin during the day, one should wear them Ben Hashemashoth, but without reciting the Berakha (blessing).

(See Shulhan 'Arukh 30:2. 'Od Yoseph Hai, Parashath Hayyei Sarah, Oth 7. Mishnah Berurah, 30:3,9)

Free Will or Not?

There are many misconceptions about free will and choice. The only area in which we have free will to make our own decisions, is in deciding which path to follow, the good or the bad. Most everything else that occurs, happens as a result of that decision. The Rambam comments that there is no other species in the world, other than man, which knows, intrinsically, what is right and what is wrong and what path ought to be followed.

Together with this knowledge comes the fact that man has the ability to choose whether to do that which is right or simply abandon the right ways for the wrong. That is why he had to be banished from the Garden of Eden, lest he eat from the tree of life as he did from the tree of knowledge. It is in our hands and is our decision whether we do what we are supposed to or whether we go against the will of the Creator.

One who follows the wrong path, therefore, knows that what he is doing is wrong, and does so willfully. The Middath HaDin (attribute of justice) requires that the person be immediately punished. However, HaQadosh Barukh Hu (the Holy One blessed be He), in His infinite mercy, has given us the opportunity to repent. To grab this opportunity with both hands is also something that we have free will to choose.

(See Rambam, Mishneh Torah, Teshubah, 5:1)

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

Acquiring Intent in Our Prayer, Part 2

(continued from last week)

In order to pray with the proper intent, it may help to visualize and really feel that we are standing before Haqqadosh Barukh Hu. We must truly ask ourselves whether we feed our own self importance, or realize that we are actually nothing, especially when we are standing in front of Him.

We see a clear example which illustrates this by comparing Pharaoh's dream to that of Ya'aqob Abinu's 'a"n. In describing Pharaoh's dream, the Torah says: "and behold! he was standing over the Nile". (Bereshith, 41:17). Although he considered the Nile to be his god, he still felt superior and is described as standing on the Nile.

In the dream of Ya'aqob Abinu on the other hand, it says: "And behold! G-d was standing over him" (Bereshith, 28:13). He understood that when standing in front of G-d, one must realize His greatness. The greater our ego is, the harder it is for us to focus and concentrate during our prayer. When we pray, we are too busy with ourselves, our plans and our priorities. We will discover deeper meaning and satisfaction in our prayer if we learn and internalize the greatness, the might and kindness of our G-d, to whom all our prayers are directed.