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By the Hakham

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## How Hanukkah Rectifies the Blemish in the Thighs

The eight days of Hanukkah lend themselves very much to rectifying all sins that are done with one's legs. It is known to the Kabbalists that the eight days of Hanukkah rectify what is written in the Torah about Ya'aqob Abinu, 'a"h, when Esau's angel fought with him, וַתִּקַּע כַּף-יָרֵךְ יַעֲקֹב, "And the hollow of Jacob's thigh was dislocated" (Bereshith 32:26).

The Satan was able to rule over him because he married two sisters in their lifetime. This caused a spiritual blemish in the thighs. 'Thighs' refers to his descendants, because descendants are called 'those who emerged from the thigh', in Hebrew.

Therefore, one should make an effort to seek out those commandments which are performed through one's legs, such as visiting the sick, visiting mourners, accompanying the one who passed away, collecting money for those who study Torah and so on.

By being particular about the eight days of Hanukkah, the holy covenant between us and G-d (which is directly connected with our descendants), is rectified. The eight days represent the Milah (circumcision), which is done on the eighth day.

(See Dabar Be'Itto, 2 [H"R Sasson Mordekhai Moshe],

Rimzei Hanukkah)



## Wayyesheb: Speak Directly to the Person

וַיֹּסֶפוּ עוֹד שָׂנֵא אֹתוֹ עַל-חֲלֻמֹּתָיו וְעַל-דִּבְרָיו "And they hated him even more on account of his dreams and on account of his words" (Bereshith 37:8). There is a Torah commandment of הוֹכֵחַ תּוֹכִיחַ, "You shall surely rebuke your neighbor and not carry a sin over him" (Wayyiqra 19:17).

The Rishon LeShion, Maran Mordekhai Eliyahu, 'a"h, explains that if you see your friend doing something incorrect or inappropriate, you should not mention it to a third party. If your friend hears about it from someone other than yourself, he will hold the fact that you repeated it, against you.

This was the complaint of the brothers against Joseph. What they were effectively saying was, "If you have a criticism of us, tell it to us directly. Why did you have to go and repeat it to our father?" This explains Rashi's comment that this verse refers to the bad reports of them that he would bring to his father.

(See Dibrei Mordekhai, Wayyesheb, Parparaoth)



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## Nine Days of Hanukkah Outside Israel

Outside the Land of Israel, in the Diaspora, Jewish holidays are commemorated with one extra day. Why is that not the case with Hanukkah?

One reason given by Rabbeinu the Hida, 'a"h, is that before we had a fixed calendar, Rosh Hodesh (the new month) was established by the Sanhedrin, based on the testimony of witnesses. Since it could not always be predicted when the witnesses would appear, those who lived some distance from Jerusalem would get the news later, when the messengers finally arrived. As such, since they did not arrive in time for the Yom Tob (holiday), an extra day was added on account of the doubt.

Hanukkah starts on the 25th of the month, which gave the messengers ample time to get the word out to all locations. As such, there was never a doubt and never any need to add an extra day. An additional reason is that Hanukkah is a Holiday ordained by the Hakhamim and not by the Torah.

(See Birkei Yosef, O.H. 67)

## Letting the Fringes Drag on the Ground

Something that I have noticed over the years is that people are becoming increasingly careless about letting the Şişsioth ([Tzitziot] fringes) of the Talith Gadol drag on the ground. This is something that must be avoided.

It says in 'Od Yoseph Hai that one must be particular when wearing the Talith Gadol, that the fringes should not drag on the ground, and even more so when he is walking. He adds that if you see someone who is wearing a Talith Gadol who is stepping on the Şişsioth (fringes) without even realizing it, then whoever sees him doing this, must go over and tell him, so that he will pick up the Şişsioth from under his feet.

This does not only apply to when a person is stepping on the Şişsioth. He adds that even if a person is sitting and the four corners with the fringes are under him, it is also an insult to them and he must remove them from under him. This refers specifically to the fringes and not to the garment itself, which is not of concern in this matter.

I personally, would urge everybody to be particular about this matter, because it appears to be an area where everyone has made a Heter (permission to ignore it) for themselves. Whereas, on the contrary, they should be very particular to ensure that the fringes are neither dragging on the floor, nor under their feet, nor are they sitting on them.

(See 'Od Yoseph Hai, Parashath Lekh Lekha, Oth Geemal)

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

### The Hidden Power of the Shabbath Candles

Our Rabbis of blessed memory state in the Gemara of Shabbath, that the Shabbath candles are along the same lines as the candles in the Temple. Just as Aharon HaKohen, 'a"h, through his kindling of the Menorah, spread the light of the Torah to the Jewish people, so too, the women should pray that their husbands and children will be learned in the Torah. They should ask G-d to enlighten them with the wisdom of the Torah.

Hakham Ya'aqob Hayyim Sofer, the Kaf HaHayyim writes that at the actual time of performing the Mişwah (precept) of lighting the Shabbath candles, our Tefilloth (prayers) are more likely to be heard. Just like the candles are a source of illumination, so too the women will merit to have children who are learned in the Torah, as it says, "Ki Ner Mişwah WeThorah Ohr" (for the commandment is a candle, and the Torah is light).

(To be continued)

(See Kaf HaHayyim 263, Oth 34. Derekh HaTorah, 3:10,11)