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By the Hakham
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5783/2023 Shabu'oth

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שבועות 5783

Studying Torah Aloud and Correctly

The Pele Yo'eş mentions that when the Torah tells us הקול קול יעקב, "The voice is the voice of Jacob" (Bereshith 27:22), which refers to the voice of the Torah, we must know that its virtues are very great. So much so, that it ascends and splits the firmaments.

G-d considers it very important when a person reads the Torah aloud and clearly. It brings Him much happiness. Those who do not read the words correctly, or who look at the words of the books without uttering the words, are making a very great error. They are missing out on much good.

One might think that however one reads it, it is still learning Torah. However, would one consider that if one had the opportunity to make a profit of 100 gold coins, but only made half the effort and earned 50, that one had done the right thing? Of course not. However, the loss to the individual alone is not what is at stake here. There is a loss to HaQadosh Barukh Hu (the Holy One blessed be He).

(To be continued)

(See Pele Yo'eş, Qol)



מדרש בן איש חי
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Immersing a Vessel on Shabbath

Even though the Shulhan 'Arukh permits a person to immerse himself (or herself) on Shabbath, the situation is different for vessels and utensils. Since one may not use vessels for the preparation of food, which have not been immersed in a Kasher Miqweh, if they have not been made by Jews, immersing them on Shabbath would appear to be fixing a vessel for use on Shabbath, which is forbidden.

The Shulhan 'Arukh states, therefore, that one who fears Heaven should not immerse a vessel on Shabbath but (in a case where one wishes to use a vessel which was not yet taken to the Miqweh) should, instead, give it to a non-Jew as a gift and then borrow it back from him. When one borrows utensils from a non-Jew, they do not require it to be immersed in a Miqweh. (It goes without saying that they have to be Kasher in all other respects).

One should be aware, however, that there is an opinion that even though one is borrowing it from the non-Jew, it is on a permanent basis and, therefore, after Shabbath one should immerse it again. However it should either be immersed without a blessing, or together with other vessels that require immersion.

(See Shulhan 'Arukh, 326:8, 323:7. Kaf HaChayim, 323, Oth 50. Mishna Berurah, 326:24)

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Donating a Sefer Torah On Shabu'oth (Shavuot)

The Torah tells us that we must count seven full weeks (49 days) from the second day of Pesah, and that on the fiftieth day (which is Shabu'oth), we are commanded to offer a "Minḥa Ḥadasha" (new meal offering) to G-d. One who donates a new Sefer Torah on Shabu'oth is considered as if he brought a new meal offering in its time.

What is most important when donating a Sefer Torah, however, is that the Torah should be purchased from a Sofer (scribe) who is experienced, competent and a G-d fearing individual. The Sefer Torah must also be checked several times.

Even nowadays, when computers are used to assist in the checking, I have seen errors that were either not detected or ignored. Therefore one must ensure that meticulous care was taken in the preparation of the Sefer Torah.

(See Kaf Haḥayyim 494, Oth 19)

Meat and Dairy Steam

On Shabu'oth and at all times, one has to be extremely careful about the laws of milk and meat. Steam that rises from the food is considered to be like the food itself. In practical terms what this means is that when one is cooking meat and steam is rising from the pot, one must be careful not to pass dairy food over it. If one does, the dairy becomes prohibited. There is even an opinion that the food in the pot becomes forbidden and a Rabbi should be consulted.

If one is cooking a meat dish on a stove top and also a dairy dish on another burner on the same stove top, one must ensure that the pots are covered. If they are not covered there is a fear that the steam rising from each of the pots will become mixed together. It should be noted that this is not permitted even if the steam is not so hot that the hand would recoil from it (Yad Soledeth Bo).

(See Maamar Mordekhai, Hilkhoth Ḥaggim, 23:43, 45)

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

Why Is Loving G-d Not One of the Ten Commandments?

On Shabu'oth, we read the 'Asereth Hadibberoth, The Ten Commandments. These Ten Commandments are the cornerstone of our religion. Reading over the commandments, it appears that one crucial part of our religion is missing. There is no mention of loving Hashem as part of the commandments. Indeed, loving G-d is a Miṣwah (commandment) discussed in the Torah, why then, is it not part of the Ten Commandments?

The reason for this is that the Ten Commandments are likened to the Kethubbah between a man and a wife. The Kethubbah stipulates a lot of things, but nowhere does it mention that a man must love his wife. The reason for this is that loving one another is a given. Without that love, there is nothing. It is the same with G-d and the Jewish people. Without that love of G-d, what is there? Loving G-d is a key prerequisite to the Aseret Hadibberoth.

Now that we are approaching the holiday of Shabu'oth, let us focus on our hearts. Let us focus on loving G-d, loving His Torah and Miṣwoth, and on accepting the holiday with joy, happiness, enthusiasm and love.