

# A Torah Minute com™

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

A PROJECT OF MIDRASH BEN ISH HAI (MIDRASH.ORG)

5783 פְּרַשַׁת שְׁלַח לךְ

5783/2023 Parashath Shelah Lekha

## Setting the Table for Shabbath

One should set the dining table on Friday, before Shabbath starts. This includes spreading an attractive tablecloth over it and putting out fine plates and cutlery. The prevalent Ashkenazi custom is to also place the candles on the dining table, whereas Sephardim do not.

One should not overeat before Shabbath, so that one can eat the Shabbath meal with a healthy appetite. If, however, one is not able to eat a full meal, because perhaps there was a Simḥa (religious celebration) earlier, or for some other reason, and will only be able to eat a Kezayith of bread, one must still set the table.

One cannot say that there is no point in setting the table since one will not be eating a full meal and that one can eat the Kezayith of bread without even spreading a tablecloth on the table. One must give honor to the meal by setting the table appropriately, irrespective of what one eats.

(See Derekh HaTorah, Shabbath, 7:31)

## Shelah Lekha: Obsessing about clothes

וַעֲשׂוּ לָהֶם צִיצִית עַל-כַּנְפֵי בְגָדֵיהֶם לְדֹרֹתָם "And they shall make fringes on the corners of their garments, for all generations" (Bamidbar 15:38).

A person must learn Mussar (an important lesson) from this. People tend to be overly concerned, even obsessed with their clothes. We wear all kinds of garments, one on top of the other. Sometimes they are made from expensive fabrics such as silk and embroidery. Very often people will pay exorbitant sums for designer names. And despite the sums we pay, these clothes cannot be worn two days in a row, but we have to change them every day.

At the end of the day, after a long life, when a person is laid in the grave, he wears only one single inexpensive garment. And that garment remains on him for generations and he does not change it.

From this a person must learn not to chase after that which is unimportant and to control his Yeşer (inclination). What must be of primary concern is to look after the well-being of the soul, and not make the needs of the body 'Iqqar (of primary importance) and the needs of the Nefesh (soul) Tafel (secondary).

The word "Şişith" comes from the word "Leḥaşış" (to look). The Kanfei Beghadim (corners) are the ends of the garment. This comes to tell us that we must look at what the value and importance of all these clothes really is - in the end.

(See Addereth Eliyahu, Parashat Shelah Lekha)



מדרש בן איש חי  
Midrash BEN ISH HAI

Sponsorships Available.  
Please contact Midrash BEN ISH HAI  
(516) 487 6676/www.midrash.org

## Saying Ashrei with the appropriate concentration

The more familiar one is with a prayer, the greater the danger that one will say it without the proper concentration. One such prayer is the "Ashrei".

One must be careful to say the Pasuq (verse) of פִּתַּח אֶת יָדְךָ (Potheyah Eth Yadekha - You open Your hand) with concentration. If one did not concentrate when saying it, it must be repeated. One must also have the appropriate intent when saying תְּהִלָּה לְדָוִד (Tehillah LeDawid). Ribbi El'azar states that one who says Tehillah LeDawid every day is assured a portion in the world to come.

And what is the essential aspect of the intent that one must have? One must understand the meaning of the words, that HaQadosh Baruch Hu (the Holy One Blessed Be He) watches over all His creatures and provides their livelihood.

(See Shulhan 'Aruch 51: 7. Kaf Hachayyim ibid, Oth 31 & 34)

## Juice of Sour Grapes

Wine which was never boiled, becomes forbidden if touched by a non-Jew. However, it is not only wine. The Shulhan 'Arukh states that juice made of unripe grapes (Boser), also becomes forbidden if touched by a non-Jew.

This is true, even if the grapes are exceptionally sour. The reason is that we are not knowledgeable enough to know when the grapes are considered to be Boser, and when not and, as such, their juice is considered to be like wine.

If, however, the juice of unripe grapes was added to food and the taste of the juice changed, it does not become forbidden if touched by a non-Jew. This is especially true if the juice of the sour grapes was actually cooked with other food.

(See Sh. 'A. Yoreh De'ah, 123:5 & 8. Be-er Heteb 123:8. Ben Ish Hai, 2nd year, Balaq, 14)



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

### Lighting the Shabbath Candles: A Special Moment

We are obligated to add "from the profane to the sacred" by accepting Shabbath before sunset (See Rashi Bereshith 2:2). Since women accept Shabbath upon themselves by lighting the Shabbath candles, obviously they have to light before sunset.

There are different customs as to when a woman should light her Shabbath candles. In Yerushalayim, for example, the horn (Shofar) is blown 40 minutes before sunset. According to the ruling of Hakham Yoseph Hayyim 'a"h, the Ben Ish Hai, it is best to light 30 minutes before sunset. In the US, most calendars state candle lighting time 18 minutes before sunset.

As discussed previously, candle lighting time is considered to be an עֵת רְצוֹן, a time when our prayers are accepted. It is a special time of connecting with our Father in Heaven, asking Him for what every Jewish woman should pray for: to merit to see her children become Torah scholars and illuminate the world with their Torah knowledge.

(to be continued)