



# Ask The Rabbi

Researched at Ohr Somayach, Jerusalem

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## SHABBAT ON THE COAST

Rabbikolbo@aol.com wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

If Hashem was resting in New York, He was still creating in California. If we would travel around the world wouldn't it make it that Hashem never did rest (stop creating) in totality? He only rested in individual places?

Dear Rabbikolbo@aol.com,

You are suggesting that Hashem was in a particular place and/or time. In fact, space/time were creations of G-d, but He is outside of those creations. When the Torah says that G-d "rested" on the seventh day, it means that He ceased the creation of new categories, but He continues to will the already existent world into existence. The term "He rested" is not a real description of what G-d did, it is anthropomorphic. It is using a human term inapplicable to G-d to describe something G-d wants to teach us, but not to describe G-d. The seventh day here is something that G-d knows and can see, even though He does not experience seven days, or time, and hence it is possible to talk of Hashem ceasing new creation on the seventh day.

## ABOUT FACE

Michael Brose from Lena, Illinois  
<mebrose@micro.honeywell.com> wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

Earlier this year we were in Jerusalem on a tour. We visited the Jewish Institute, and during our visit there we noticed that there were several depictions of the Ark of the Covenant. One had the figures on the Ark facing each other and the wings extended toward the center. The other had the figures facing away from each other, and the wings unfurled to their backs toward the center of the Ark. My question is, which is correct? This may be impossible to answer, but any enlightenment is most welcome.

Dear Michael Brose,

The Talmud says that when the Jews fulfilled the will of G-d, the winged images on the ark (keruvim) faced each other, but when the Jews did not fulfill the will of G-d they faced away from each other.

Sources:

- Bava Batra 99a

## BARE HEAD

Sidney Davis <Sldavis53@aol.com> wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

How is one to understand the wearing of the kippa (skullcap-yarmulke) in light of the following from the Targum? The Targum on Judges 5:2 suggests: "The wise men sit in the synagogues...with the head uncovered to teach the people the words of the law;" and Judges 5:9 has these words: "Deborah in prophecy said, I am sent to praise the Scribes of Israel, who when they were in tribulation did not cease from expounding the law; and so it was beautiful for them to sit in the synagogues with the head uncovered and teach the people the words of the law, and bless and thank before the L-rd."

Dear Sidney Davis,

The Targum says that Devorah praised the Sages for teaching Torah with "reish g'lai." Taken literally, this means "with a revealed head." This is wrong for two reasons: First of all, it makes no sense. Is there something praiseworthy about teaching Torah while bare-headed? Why would Devorah praise them for that? Second of all, we find the exact same expression regarding a verse in Exodus: "The Children of Israel went out of Egypt with a high hand." The Targum translates "high hand" as "reish g'lai" — "a revealed head." Obviously, this can't be literal. What does a revealed head have to do with a high hand? When they picked up their high hands, did they knock off their yarmulkes? Rather the Targum is taking the Hebrew idiom "high hand" and translating into the Aramaic idiom "revealed head." It means, as Rashi comments — a bold, public show of

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strength. It's like saying: "The Jews left Egypt with their head held high." So too, in the verses you quoted "reish g'lai" means "a bold, public display of strength" meaning that the Sages taught Torah unabashedly, with their head held high.

Sources:

- Exodus 14:8 and Rashi

**CURLY, MOE & LARRY**

Name@Withheld wrote:

*Dear Rabbi,*

*A few months ago I started growing payos (sidelocks). Unfortunately, instead of growing in tight curls, they tend to stick out at strange angles, making my head look something like a wrecked airplane. Is there something I should be doing differently to make them grow neatly? I thought of using curlers, but wasn't sure if that was allowed for a man. Please advise.*

Dear Name@Withheld,

A man shouldn't use curlers. Rather, if you want to curl your payos, use your finger. For the proper method to do this, we asked a Rabbi with long payos. He wrote us the following: "Wet the payos and comb them out horizontally across the forehead. Then, take the forefinger of the hand of whichever side you are doing, stick the forefinger from above in between the hair and the forehead, and push it towards the roots of the payos as far as you can comfortably get it. Then, with the other hand, curl the rest of the hair around your forefinger in the down direction, trying to keep it as in order as possible. Hold it that way just for a moment, and then gently try to remove the forefinger without messing up the curl. Once it's out, don't touch the curl; let it dry that way. Do this once each weekday morning, and maybe once again later in the day if you want (optional), and hopefully it will start curling naturally by itself. "If you ever cut your payos one time too short, then about five months later you will have a growth of hair coming from the top that will not go together with the rest of the payos, at least for a couple of years. Many have this problem. I don't have a clear solution for it."

**WOMEN AND PRAYER**

Irina from Chicago, Illinois <itrlis@orion.it.luc.edu> wrote:

*Dear Rabbi,*

*Hello. I am kind of (or very) confused about the laws of Jewish women and prayers. What are the obligations for every day? Are women obligated to say the "shema" (all three paragraphs? Twice a day)? And how many times are they obligated to say shmoneh esreh? And what are the time limits? Thank you very much.*

Dear Irina,

Most halachic authorities maintain that a woman is obligated to recite the morning (shacharit) and afternoon (minchah) shmoneh esreh (silent amidah prayer) every day. If she has additional time she should recite the following, listed in order of priority: (Note that they are always said in the order printed in the siddur.)

- First verse of shema, together with baruch shem kevod malchuto l'olam va'ed.
- Emet veyatziv (the blessing after shema leading into shemoneh esreh)
- Baruch she'amar, ashrei, yishtabach • Birkot hashachar (morning blessings starting from "ha'no-tain la'sechvi..." and ending with "hagomel chasadim tovim l'amo Yisrael")
- Birkot haTorah (blessings on Torah study)
- The two blessings preceding shema
- The entire shema
- The entire p'sukei d'zimrah

A woman who has very minimal time because of child care or other obligations and can't spare even the short time for shmoneh esreh, must nonetheless fulfill the obligation to offer some form of prayer every day. This prayer must include the following three elements: Praise to G-d followed by a personal request, and then words of thanks to G-d. Since birkot hashachar and birkot haTorah contain these elements, a woman in the above situation should therefore recite birkot hashachar and birkot haTorah.

The time limits for a woman are the same as for a man. So for example, the morning shmoneh esreh should ideally be prayed within the first third of the daylight hours, or at the very latest before midday.

Sources:

- Halichos Bas Yisrael by Rabbi Yitzchok Yaakov Fuchs, ch. 2

# Yiddle Riddle

The following riddle is based on a question asked by the Ben Ish Chai, zatzal, who left hundreds of heiche timtzes (riddles) for the teachers in his kehillah (community).

Question: At the time when the Beit Hamikdash (Holy Temple) stood, there was a town near the Euphrates River in which the first day of Pesach was always observed for one day. The first day of Succos, on the other hand, was sometimes observed 1 day and sometimes 2 days. How come?

- Riddle idea: Eli Rothschild, Bayit Vegan, Jerusalem < eliro@internet-zahav.net >

Answer next week...

## THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

*Comments, quibbles, and reactions  
concerning previous "Ask-the-Rabbi" features*

Re: The Broken Glass after the Wedding (Ohrnet Parshas Balak):

*Aaron Friedman, Israel < aaron@sela.co.il >*

When I married, the shammash at our shul suggested rather strongly that we use a light bulb instead of a wineglass for my groom to crush "because it made a louder noise." I refused, and insisted on a wine-glass, on the grounds that the reason for using a wine-glass is that it is something used in celebration, and it is being shattered to remind us of the sorrow that comes with the joys in life. Thank you for a wonderfully informative weekly email!

*Jenny Stosser, Australia < jenerate@ozramp.net.au >*

I have a suggestion for those artistically inclined: Take the broken glass and glue it together on glass or other background, frame it and present it as a original wedding gift. You can "write" anything you like. My sister and I both received a gift like this with the words "Im Eshkachech Yerushalayim Tishkach Yemini" — "If I forget you, O Jerusalem..." written in glass from a cousin. It's beautiful and has a place of honor among other wedding and family pictures.

Nowadays many people have the broken glass mounted in a lucite box or even made into a mezuzah cover. Doesn't this defeat the purpose of breaking it? The custom to break a glass at a wedding derives from the Talmud: Guests were getting so carried away by their joy at the simcha that one of the Sages thought it unseemly, so he sobered everyone up by breaking a valuable vessel. If people now take the fragments and turn it into something of even greater value, aren't they undoing the significance of the destruction of the vessel?

*Michael Katz < M613K@aol.com >*

At least one company I know of will take the glass and embed it in lucite, after reassembling it into an approximation of its original shape. It's hard to describe but the effect is stunning.

*Moish Trencher, West Hartford, CT < MarkTr@aol.com >*

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