

Parsha Encounters

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Parshas Lech Lecha - Rabbi Moshe M. Willner

Holy Sight

" And Hashem said to Avraham after Lot had separated from him: Raise your eyes and look from the place where you are, to the north, south, east and west."(13:14) "For all the land that you see I will give to you and to your descendants forever."(13:15) "Arise, travel across the land through its length and width, for to you I will give it".(13:17)

The Kli Yakar points out that after Hashem told Avraham to *look* across the land, he is promised that it will be given to his descendants as well. However, in the following pasuk, when he is told to *travel* across the land, only Avraham is mentioned. The Meshech Chachma explains that these psukim are dealing with the acquisition of the land. There were two aspects of the land that needed to come under Avraham's ownership: the spiritual and the physical. Hashem tells Avraham to first just look at the land. The Gemara in Bava Metzia tells us that by looking at an ownerless object, one can acquire it. The spirituality of the land was totally *hefker* (ownerless). The Canaanim were engrossed solely in the physical aspects of the land. All Avraham needed to do was just look at the land and the spiritual aspect was his. Since Canaanim were living and occupying the land, action was needed in order to acquire it and show ownership, therefore he needed to actively walk across the land. The spiritual aspect is promised to his descendants as well. The Jewish people will always be attached to the spirituality of the land. It's because of this, says the Kli Yakar, that even today we yearn to be by the site of the Beis Hamikdash. The physical aspect of the land, how-

ever, was not promised unequivocally. Only when the Yidden are adhering to the Torah properly do they merit staying in the land. Therefore, descendants are not mentioned when Avraham acquires the physical aspect of the land for a lack of observance would, and has, caused exile from the land.

We find this same idea in Parasha Ve'eschanan. Moshe Rabeinu pleaded with Hashem to allow him to enter Eretz Yisroel and to see it. One can ask, "If he will enter the land, won't he certainly see the land?" According to the above we can understand. He was beseeching Hashem to have the ability to acquire both the spirituality and the physical aspects of the land. Although he was not granted entry to the land, he did merit seeing the land, as he acquired the spirituality of it. The Gemara in Bava Basra (158b) states that the air of Eretz Yisroel makes one wise. A Rosh Yeshiva once said that the land received this power from the gaze of Moshe Rabeinu.

We can learn from this how powerful the gift of sight is. Through looking at the holy things and guarding one's eyes from the improper, we can achieve great heights. R' Nosson Wachtfogel zt"l said that it was because of his meticulous adherence to guarding his eyes that he merited to be the Mashgiach of Lakewood Yeshiva. May we all merit the fulfillment of our prayers, and may our eyes witness Hashem return us to Tzion.

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Halacha Encounters

Kiddush

Rabbi Dovid Meir Greenberg

The Mitzva of Kiddush is a Torah Commandment deduced from the verse, "You shall remember the Shabbos day to sanctify it" (Shemos 20:8). One should verbally mention the praise and holiness of the Shabbos (Rambam 29:1). Chazal ordained that this Kiddush should be recited over a cup of wine prior to the shabbos meal.

Who is included in the Mitzva?

Because of a special Talmudic exegesis, ladies are also included in this positive commandment, in exception to the rule that women are exempt from all time related mitzvos (Brachos 20b). As required by the mitzva of chinuch, children should be trained to hear or recite Kiddush once they are able to understand the concept of Shabbos. According to many contemporary poskim, for average children, six years old is the age to start (The Radiance of Shabbos pg. 31).

The prohibition of eating before Kiddush

From the onset of Shabbos, whether that be after sunset or through accepting Shabbos earlier, one is forbidden to eat or drink before the saying of Kiddush. Therefore, many poskim say that after candle lighting, which is customarily a women's acceptance of Shabbos, the prohibition goes into affect. However, rinsing out one's mouth or taking necessary medication with a small amount of water is permitted (M.B. 271:13). If a woman is in distress, there is room for leniency to permit water or other drinks until sunset (Daas Torah 271:4). If she knows beforehand that she would like to eat or drink before sunset, she should have in mind not to accept Shabbos with her candle lighting. On Shabbos morning the obligation of Kiddush begins after the morning prayers, since one is forbidden to partake of a meal before prayer. One is permitted to have a drink before praying without Kiddush (O.C. 289:1). However, a woman who is fulfilling her obligation with any personal request should make Kiddush afterwards before eating or drinking. If the woman is in extenuating circumstances there is room for leniency to forgo the Kiddush requirement in the morning (Minchas Yitzchak vol. 4 ch. 28).

Qualifications of the cup and procedure:

The Gemara in Brachos (51a) lists ten qualifications for a cup of blessing (i.e. Kiddush, bentching). They are as follows.

- 1-2) The cup should be washed inside and out.
- 3) The cup should be whole.
- 4) The cup should be full.
- 5) The cup should be "crowned" (The minhag of the Vilna Gaon was to surround his Kiddush cup with six smaller cups - Maasei Rav 86).
- 6) The person reciting the Kiddush should be respectfully adorned (i.e. wearing a hat and jacket).
- 7) One should pick up the cup with both hands.
- 8) One should thereafter hold the cup in his right hand.
- 9) One should hold the cup at least a tefach (3 ½ inches) above the table.
- 10) One should gaze at the cup while saying the bracha to maintain one's concentration on the mitzvah at hand.

The Gemara continues to say that only the first four steps are really necessary. However, the Rishonim prove that it is still fitting to attempt to fulfill all of the requirements listed.

Halachically, the requirement of washing the cup is only to make sure that it is clean. Therefore, an unused, clean cup suffices without washing (M.B. 173:1). Kabbalistically, there is a stress to always wash out the cup before use (Kaf Hachaim 173:4).

A whole cup is defined as one which has no cracks, chips, or holes, even on the rim (O.C. 173:3). There is a controversy regarding the status of disposable cups. Some poskim claim that

due to its transient nature it lacks the status of a whole vessel. Others argue that the quick disposal of these cups is due only to their cheap cost and not to their basic structure. Therefore, one shouldn't use them unless there is no other option. Preferably, one should use a nice silver cup, both for hiddur mitzvah and kabbalistic reasons (K"HC 472:11).

One should hold the cup in his right palm with one's fingers enveloping the cup. One should gaze at the candles during the recitation of Vayechulu as this is helpful in repairing one's eyesight, yet return one's focus to the cup during the bracha as mentioned before.

In a post facto situation, none of these requirements will invalidate the Kiddush as long as the cup can hold a reviis of wine; otherwise it is not classified as a vessel. If there is no cup available, one may recite the Kiddush over the bottle of wine (Radiance of Shabbos in the name of R' Scheinberg).

The capacity of the cup:

The minimum capacity of the Kiddush cup is the volume of a reviis of wine. The definition of a reviis is a subject of dispute. The Talmud records two ways to calculate a reviis. One is based on the size of eggs. A reviis equals one and a half eggs. Another calculation is based on the size of a finger's width. The Noda BeYehuda, Rabbi Yechezkel Landau, measured the reviis according to both calculations and arrived at the conclusion that the calculation of the eggs was approximately half that of the measurement based on fingers. In order to solve the contradiction, he deduced that the size of the eggs has decreased over time, and the real measurement is according with the finger calculation. The Chazon Ish recommended that one be strict in accordance with the Noda BeYehuda and therefore wrote that the Kiddush cup should hold at least 5.3 ounces.

The Mishna Brura questions the Noda BeYehuda's conclusion, but concludes that for a Torah commandment one should be stringent in accordance with his opinion. Therefore, by Kiddush at night, which is based on a Torah Commandment, one should use the larger shiur and by Kiddush during the day, which is only a Rabbinic ordinance, one can be lenient and rely on the smaller shiur (Biur Halacha 271:13). Rabbi Moshe Feinstein determined that the shiur based on fingers comes out to 4.42 ounces while the shiur based on eggs comes out to about 3 ounces (Hagada Kol Dodi). Rabbi Moshe Feinstein agrees with the Mishna Berura that one should follow the stringent calculation by night and that one may rely on the smaller calculation for Kiddush by day.

How much must one drink?

One must drink a "milo lugmav" which means a cheek full in order to fulfill the mitzvah. This is the minimum amount that would provide the drinker with some satisfaction. The average person's cheek full is a little more than half a reviis. However, if one has a small mouth, it is preferable that one still drink a bit more than half a reviis. If one has a large mouth, the shiur is the size of one's cheek, but not exceeding a whole reviis. According to the Mishna Brura, even by Kiddush at night, one may rely on the smaller shiur to compute the milo lugmav (B.H. 271:13).

One should drink the "milo lugmav" immediately after Kiddush, however one must drink it within the time period of "kdei achilas pras" (the time it takes to eat half a loaf of bread) in order for Kiddush to be valid. The various opinions of this shiur range from two until nine minutes.

Who may drink?

Preferably the one who recites the Kiddush should be the one to drink the milo lugmov. In a case where he cannot drink, one of the listeners should drink the milo lugmav. In a post facto situation, even if the milo lugmav was consumed by a few people, as long as it was drunk within the correct time period, the Kiddush was valid.

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