

ISSUE

76



פרשת ראה
ר"ח אלול תשע"ז
שנת הקהלה

COMMUNAL AVOS UBONIM

Achdus Through torah 5776

All boys with their fathers or male guardian are invited to join in Australia's largest Torah learning event.

Join hundreds of other fathers and sons from across the community in a night of Achdus. Each boy will receive a special souvenir prize.

Motzai Shabbos Parshas Shoftim, 8:15pm in the Werdiger Hall.

MEZUZAH SERIES

Get back into textual learning with an in depth series for men with Rabbi Michoel Stern.

Learn the Halachos of Mezuzah inside the Shulchan Aruch. Topics include Mezuzah placement, where is a Mezuzah required and more.

Over 4 Tuesdays, 8:45pm in the Lunchroom.

SEE TISHREI LIKE THE ALTER REBBE

All men are invited to join a daily Chassidus shiur during the month of Elul, learning Likkutei Torah on the Yomim Noraim.

Monday-Friday from 7:00-7:30am in the Kollel. The shiur is led by Rabbi Johnson with a focus on covering ground.

MIVTZA HALOCHA

Our annual Mivtza Halocha program begins on Sunday Elul 8. Learn the Halachos of Tishrei from the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch in a systematic way in only 15 minutes a day.

A collection of Torah thoughts produced by Kollel Menachem

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Chiddush



Communal Avos Ubanim

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Entry to the inner circle

Every year on Rosh Hashona, we arrive in droves to our shuls. We take our pre-assigned seats, open our Machzors and wait for the intense G-dly experience to unfold. Like villagers flocking to the gates of the palace, we have come, hoping to get a glimpse of the King.

When the king is in his palace, the radiance and majesty is overwhelming. The scene is one of pure royalty, drawing and inspiring the heart and minds of all of those who experience it.

But not everyone merits to gain entrance and behold this awe-inspiring scene. Only those unique individuals, people with connections, ministerial positions or other connections, are able to enter the inner sanctum and see the king in all his glory.

But there is a time when even the commoner can access the king. When the king is traveling in the field, anybody can connect to him. All it takes is to put down our work tools, approach the king and pledge our loyalty.

Somehow, this setting is less alluring. When the king is in the field, there is no majestic hall with marble floors and mirrored walls. The golden throne and plush velvet drapes are missing. The absence of the crown and trappings of opulence is noticeable. The experience does not seem all that it should be; certainly not strong enough to draw most away from their busy lives and personal affairs to make the approach.

But for those who see reality more clearly, who are willing to forgo on the props and backdrop, the king is still the king, be he in crown and robes or simple clothing. All the fanfare and regalia are missing, but the essence of the king is there to approach. Those who make the effort to put their affairs aside to greet his majesty are richly rewarded. They are greeted in friendship with a kind face and a waiting ear, ready to fulfill their heart's desires.

When the king returns back to the palace, the throngs arrive at the gates, pushing to gain entry, only to realize that it is too late for them. "You, you and you", the ministers call forward select individuals who may enter.

Those who made the effort when the reward was not apparent are now granted entry into the elite circle. They have the once in a lifetime opportunity 'to behold the full revelation of the king's glory. The rest remain outside the palace walls, satisfying themselves with the lesser revelation, but knowing that they have missed out on the full experience.

During the High Holy days, Hashem sits upon the throne of Glory, the King is in the palace. The angels tremble in awe. The Divine energies of Creation are re-aroused and the G-dly revelations draw the soul and inspires us deeply. The revelation of the High Holydays is so powerful that we cannot help but feel something.

But to truly experience the glory and the holiness, to allow the sublime revelation of Hashem's kingship to shine into our souls, we cannot just show up like commoners at the King's gate. Our seating cards may let us into the Shul, but they do not gain us entry into the palace.

There is a way in and that is the month of Elul, the final month of the year. The month of Elul may not possess the heightened revelations of the High Holy Days and Yomim Tovim, but it is the key to them.

During the month of Elul, the month of *Rachamim* (Divine mercy), Hashem is present and accessible in our day-to-day lives.

Elul is about self-motivation; to put aside our personal ambitions and affairs and to turn to Hashem and surrender ourselves and accept His Kingship. The mundane experience may not feel as spiritually inspiring, but the reward is worth it for those who make the effort.

Because when we do, the King in the Field receives us with a pleasant face and shows us His joyous countenance. And we gain VIP access to see the King in the palace, with a meaningful, inspired Tishrei and all of the King's blessings for a *Kesiva Vechasima Tova*.

Please join us at one of Kollel's many Elul shiurim and learning programs, we would love to share the Elul preparations with you.

Washing Floors on Shabbos

Q. In last week's Chiddush you wrote about sweeping the floor on Shabbos and that the Minhag nowadays is to permit sweeping since all of our floors are covered surfaces.

Is it permissible to wash floors on Shabbos as well?

A. The Gemora¹ records the following Maaseh. A Talmid of Rabbi Meir went after his Rebbe into a bathhouse on Shabbos (this took place before the Gezeira prohibiting bathing on Shabbos). He wanted to wash the floor, but Rabbi Meir stopped him, saying "we do not wash (the floor on Shabbos)".

The reason washing the floor is forbidden is the same as for sweeping²; that through washing the floor one will cause holes to be filled in which is a violation of *Boneh*.

Washing covered floor surfaces

Again the concern of filling in holes only seems to apply on dirt floors. What is the status of washing floors which are paved, tiled or otherwise covered?

When it comes to sweeping, the Mechaber³ paskens like the Rambam⁴, who forbids sweeping dirt floors, but allows the sweeping of covered surfaces. (Unlike the Ram"o who rules like the Rishonim who extend a Gezeira to sweeping covered floor surfaces as well).

Yet, the Rambam⁵ forbids washing floors and does not distinguish between the type of floor concerned. The Maggid Mishna⁶ explains why the Rambam is more strict on washing than on sweeping, forbidding washing even covered floors;

Sweeping is a greater, more pressing need, and so Chaza"l did not apply a Gezeira on stone floors lest one come to sweep dirt floors as well. Washing floors is a lesser need and therefore Chaza"l did make a Gezeira lest one come to wash dirt floors too.

Again the Mechaber⁷ rules like the Rambam and expressly forbids washing all floor types. The Magen Avraham⁸ presents the explanation of the Maggid Mishna as does the Alter Rebbe⁹ and Mishna Berura¹⁰.

Another explanation as to why washing floors is treated more stringently is found in Tal Oros¹¹. In addition to the concern of filling in holes, washing the floor is also *uvdin d'chol*.

Therefore, even for Sefardim who allow sweeping tiled floors on Shabbos, washing the floor remains forbidden. This is certainly so for Ashkenazim.

What about nowadays when most floors are tiled or covered?

In this case, the Mishna Berura allows sweeping. His reason is that when the majority of houses in the city have covered floors, there is no need to apply a Gezeira on account of dirt floors.

Would this same logic allow one to wash the floor on Shabbos nowadays?

The Ketzos Hashulchan who rules like the Mishna Berura's leniency, allowing sweeping on Shabbos, nonetheless writes that it is forbidden to wash the floor, even if they are tiled¹².

He suggests that the same logic *should* allow washing the floor, but that it is not brought by any of the Poskim. He adds that there is a greater concern, since washing the floors will cause the cracks between the tiles/stones to be filled in. This concern is not as great with sweeping. Therefore one should be strict¹³.

Additionally, the leniency to allow sweeping floors nowadays relies on the fact that the Rif permits sweeping even dirt floors and that the Rambam allows sweeping stone floors. Since these lenient opinions are not found in regard to washing the floor, we cannot be as lenient even in cities where all floors are covered¹⁴.

Is there any room for leniency?

Despite the generally strict approach, in a case of great need, where muddy floors are causing great discomfort or anguish, or where the dirt is offensive and affects *Kovod Habrios* (human dignity), the Ketzos Hashulchan¹⁵ allows washing covered floors nowadays.

Shemiras Shabbos Kehilchasa¹⁶ also allows washing floors in situations of great need. The Rambam allowed sweeping because it is a greater need than washing the floor. Therefore when there is a great need, washing too should be allowed. He gives the example of hospitals where maintaining hygiene is so important.

Harav Ovadia Yosef¹⁷ permits applying a small amount of water on muddy floors during the winter out of need.

Shulchan Shlomo¹⁸ writes that the prohibition may only apply to washing a large area of the floor. Applying a small amount of water to spot-clean areas on the floor may not have been included.

However it is difficult to rely on this lenient ruling, because the Gemora and Rishonim do not distinguish between the size of area being washed. Az Nidberu¹⁹ expressly forbids washing even a small area. One may however pour a small amount of water onto the soiled area with-

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out rubbing or wiping it.

Other issues

Wiping up spills with a cloth without the use of water is acceptable.

Washing down benchtops and counters is permissible (where there is no Sechita).

One may not pour water or soda etc. onto stained carpet under any circumstances as this constitutes laundering.

The Mishna Berura raises the additional concern when washing surfaces, that it may violate laundering when the cloth is wet. However, this does not apply to Shmattes which are designated for cleaning.

Sechita - squeezing

In all cases where one is allowed to wash the floor or other surfaces as per above, it may only be done in a manner which does not involve any Sechita - squeezing out liquid from a cloth.

A rubber squeegee or sponger stick may be used. However a mop, sponge or a cloth that becomes saturated may not be used, since Sechita is inevitable. (Note that mops and sponges are thus Muktzah on Shabbos).

Washing or mopping by a non-Jew

Last week we mentioned that one may ask a non-Jew to sweep the floor for them on Shabbos according to all opinions. One may also ask a non-Jew to wash floors for them.

This only applies if the washing is done in a manner which will not involve Sechita (e.g. a rubber sponger stick). One may not ask or allow the non-Jew to mop as this does involve Sechita. In situations of great need, speak to a Rov for further information on what may be done.

¹ Shabbos 40b

² Shabbos 95a

³ OC 337:2

⁴ Hilchos Shabbos 21:3

⁵ ibid

⁶ See there. See also Rabbeinu Yerucham Nesiv 12, who writes that there is more of a concern that one may fill in holes intentionally when washing since there is a greater intention to neatened up the floor.

⁷ OC 337:3

⁸ 337:6

⁹ 337:4

¹⁰ 337:17 see Biur Halacha 12

¹¹ Choresh 28

¹² Siman 146

¹³ Badei Hashulchan 146:59

¹⁴ See Shabbos B'shabbos 337

¹⁵ Badei Hashulchan ibid

¹⁶ 23:6

¹⁷ See Yalkut Yosef 337:2

¹⁸ Siman 146

¹⁹ 1:79:97