

More Koshair Demonstrations

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rabbi Shimon Isaacson

The source of the *melacha of koshair* can be traced to the era of the *mishkan*. The Gemara relates that when snails were captured for the dyes used in the *mishkan*, they used nets. When they needed a larger net, they would tie a few small nets together. When they needed smaller nets they would untie it. The Gemara concludes that this is the source for the prohibition of tying and untying knots on *Shabbat*. Making a loose knot tighter would be included in the prohibition of *koshair*. Typically people are accustomed to check the knots on their *tallit* every morning so as not to make a blessing on invalid *tzizit*. What tends to happen is that the knots loosen and needs tightening and that could create a problem on *Shabbat*. Therefore we are instructed not to check the knots on *Shabbat*. A non-perma-

nent knot is ok. So if one makes this knot with the intent to untie it after *Shabbat*, there are *poskim* who are lenient. However we generally assume it should not be done on *Shabbat*. Although one may have a subjective intention to untie the knot within 24 hours, as most people tie this kind of knot permanently, there's a principle of *Batla data etzel kol adam*. One's individual intent is nullified vis -a -vis the rest of the world.

The Gemara says that an *aniva*, a slip knot, is not considered a knot and one can make it on *Shabbat*. However, a bowknot on a shoe that will not be opened within 24 hours can pose a problem. The bow on top is an *aniva* which is permitted. But the knot underneath that holds it together can be problematic. A double bow

consists of a knot, a bow, and a knot. There are *poskim* who are lenient and permit this and those who are stringent and prohibit it.

There are two ways to knot a tie. A Half Windsor is a slip knot which is permitted on *Shabbat*. The fuller, thick, ties are usually tied with a double Windsor knot which is a double knot. On the one hand, it's a thick kind of material which is usually knotted in a temporary way. However there are people who are lazy and won't go through the process of undoing the tie. They'll simply loosen it, slip it on and off, and then retighten. This would pose a problem of *koisher* as the knot then becomes permanent.

Tehillim: Perek 121

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rebbetzin Tziporah Heller

In the *beit hamikdash*, there were fifteen steps separating the *Ezrat Nashim* from the *Ezrat Yisrael*. The *Leviim* would stand on these steps and sing verses of *Tehillim*. Fifteen is the numerical value of Hashem's name, *Kah* (*yud* and *heh*). It says in Yeshaya, "*Ki b'kah Hashem tzur olamim*." Hashem formed worlds with these letters. The *yud* represents the higher world while the *heh* symbolizes the lower world. Our world is about uplifting while the world above is about drawing down.

"I lift my eyes to the mountains, from where will come my help." Our forefathers were called mountains. We know we are a part of

them but sometimes we feel so far away from their lofty level. "My help will come from Hashem who creates the heavens and earth." The One Above, in His great Humility calls himself *ayin* -nothingness. *Oseh* (He creates) is in the present tense. He didn't make the world and abandon it like an artist would abandon his work in a museum. He continuously renews creation and watches over it. "He will not allow your foot to falter, your guardian does not sleep" A person's foot signifies where they want to go in life. *Malchut* is called *regel*. Where your kingdom is, that is where your will is. If you want to serve Hashem and know Him, He'll guide you. "Hashem is the shadow of your right hand." The shadow follows where

the hand goes. So too Hashem conducts himself above, the way we conduct ourselves below. "You will not be stricken by the sun by day nor the moon by night" The *mazalot*, the celestial bodies Hashem set in motion at the time of creation, will not affect you." The Jews are above *mazal*. "Hashem will guard you from all evil, will guard your soul. Hashem will guard your entrance and leaving this world from now and forever." The Targum says this is a reference to the Torah a person learns which stays with him forever. When the soul departs this world, it leaves nothing of value behind. It is only his *Torah* and *mitzvot* that accompany him to the next world.

Honorable Mentchen: Civility Rabbi Hanoch Teller

A key component to achieving happiness is gratitude. Religious Jews have the obvious edge, because we're taught from a young age to make a *bracha* (blessing). A blessing connotes appreciation. We don't just stuff our mouths with food. We take a moment beforehand to feel grateful for what we have. Preferably before making the *bracha*, a person should hold the bread with ten fingers and think about the ten acts of labor that went into producing the loaf. There was plowing, sowing, harvesting, winnowing, threshing... People think bread comes out of a bag on a shelf from a supermarket when in fact so much effort is invested. The more one thinks about this the more thankful and joyous one becomes.

Many years ago, I was on a flight to America with Rav Aryeh Finkel and Rav Aharon Chodosh. They asked me to sit next to them. But my policy is that whenever I travel, I prefer to sit next to someone who is not religious. It's my chance to try and impact others. I introduced myself to my neighbor and he told me, "I am *chareidi chiloni*." That means zealously irreligious. His wife was *chozeret b'sheila*. She grew up strictly observant and then kicked the fold. I go into my shpiel. Nothing doing. Dawn creeps in through the windows. Rav Aryeh Finkel jumps up. Here's his opportunity to say *birchat*

hashachar (the morning blessings). He puts on his hat and jacket and begins. The couple next to me freaks out. A few minutes later he goes to the bathroom, comes back, puts on his hat and jacket, and goes back into the windup. The man next to me can't contain himself, "Now, what is he doing!" I say to him, "Sir, I don't know how to explain this to you, but there's a special blessing we make when we come out of the bathroom. All you have to do is go to the hospital and see all the sick people. If there's a rupture or a blockage in a person's body he's in horrific pain. Suddenly he turns to me and says, "You know, you've got a point." For the next six hours we're talking religion all the way to America. Rav Finkel's bathroom blessing turned him around.

In seminary, I teach a class on prayer. The first class is about *Modeh Ani*, the prayer we say upon arising in the morning. I ask my students, "What do you think when you say *Modeh Ani*?" If you get up in the morning and think, I'm grateful I'm alive, it's a wonderful way to start the day. When the Jewish people were in the desert, Hashem gave them the *mohn*. It came right to their door, it nourished them. It turned into any flavor they wanted. Still they complained. Nothing is good enough for an ingrate whose typical hymn is, "What have you done for me lately?" Past favors mean nothing to him.

An acquaintance of mine is in jail in Israel and I try to visit him as often as possible. On *Chol hamoed* Pesach, I saw a religious family engaged in Torah learning as they waited to visit their son in jail. He was accused of damaging police property at the demonstration in Atzmona. His wedding was postponed and during the year and a half that he was imprisoned, he finished the entire Talmud. I visited him and he was so grateful. He's such a happy person. Gratitude breeds joy.

The Steipler would go to Petach Tikva on a monthly basis to thank a person who once did him a favor when he was a little boy. Rav Soloveitchik would travel from Washington Heights to the Bronx to thank a woman whose father did her father a good turn. Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach went to a wedding in the snow because the person was helpful in a *shidduch* for his grandson.

Show appreciation to family members, Rabbis, and teachers who've benefited you in any way. Write them thank you notes or give them a small gift expressing your gratitude. It's so important to cultivate gratefulness by thanking others and showing you appreciate and value what they've done.