



Bet Horaah

בית הוראה

Shaare Ezra

שערי עזרא

Parshat Va'era
Zmanim for New York:
Candle Lighting: 4:40pm
Shabbat ends: 5:44pm
R"Y: 6:11pm

Shaare Ezra is a one of a kind, multi-faceted organization that's there for the community. Under the leadership of HaRav Shay Tahan שליט"א, Shaare Ezra feels that proper Halachic guidance should be accessible to everyone, therefore we offer the community the opportunity to call, text, WhatsApp, or e-mail any halachic questions they may have, through the Bet Horaah, where qualified, trained and ordained Rabbis are available to answer your questions in English, Hebrew and Russian. Shaare Ezra is from the community—for the community.

Call/Text:
347-918-4088
WhatsApp:
347-666-3467
Email: askhala-cha1@gmail.com
Website:
www.askhalacha.com
Rabbishaytahan.com

Blessings to our generous donor for allowing the continuation of our newsletter to be available around the NY tristate area, Monsey, Miami, and more. May he and his wife merit to see much Nachat from their children and see them grow to be big Talmidei Chachamim!

WOMEN IN THE WORKFORCE.
RABBI SHAY TAHAN
 SUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEW EMAIL NOW PARASHADELIGHT@SHIURENJOYMENT.COM
 SUBJECT RABBISHAYTAHAN

In previous generations the workforce was primarily dominated by men, while women were at home taking care of their house and family. In today's world, women are much more involved in business and professional fields, almost as much as men. They hold high positions such as managing large offices, being doctors, lawyers, financial managers etc.

This relatively new phenomena brought with it many Halachic questions which necessitate a better look and understanding. We already got used to the fact that women take a job in the workforce and are in charge of many important departments; but our discussion here is more relevant to whether they can join the religious field that was known for generations to be the 'man's role, like being a Mashgiach, a Rabbi, or even a Posek. Can women who learned one of these professions take such a position?



Position of Power

Let us start with the basics. The Rambam (פ"א מהלכ') writes regarding a woman taking a position over other men, like being a principal of a school with men working under her control, ordering men workers of what to do: just like we don't appoint a woman to be a king, so it is regarding all other positions of power and control:

”אין מעמידין אשה במלכות שנגמרה”

עליך מלך" ולא מלכה. וכן כל משימות שבישראל אין ממנים בהם אלא איש:

Translation: We may not appoint a woman as king. When describing the monarchy, the Torah employs the masculine form of the word "king" and not the feminine.

This principle also applies to all other positions of authority within Israel. Only men should be appoint-

ed to fill them.

Accordingly, it seems that women may not take charge of any of the above mentioned positions. However, it seems that this ruling of the Rambam was not accepted as Halacha, as Rav Moshe Feinstein (אגרות יו"ד ח"ב סי' מד) points out that most of the Rishonim argue on this ruling. Although the Rambam holds that you can extend the Torah law that forbade a woman to be a king to other positions as well, other Rishonim feel it's limited to the position of king.

Rav Feinstein asks further that he doesn't know a Talmudic source from where the Rambam learned that other positions would not be permitted for women (ראה עוד במשנה הלכות ח"ז סי' רנד). Thus, Rabbi Feinstein permits a woman to take such a position.

Now we will examine the ruling with some Torah-related positions.

Can a woman be a Mashgiach?

In the above responsa from Rabbi Feinstein, he says that a woman can be a Mashgiach based on two reasons. First, the Torah trusted women by saying וספרה לה. Furthermore, there is a concept that one person is enough to supervise over the Kosher food industry—באיסורים—עד אחד נאמן

Rav Shtarenbuch similarly (תשובות והנהגות ח"א סי' תכו) permitted women to work as a Mashgiach, unless the owner is a very tricky person who tries to manipulate the Halacha, in which case he feels that it's not correct that a women should stand up to him. It's important to explain the role of a Mashgiach, man or a woman, since although the above poskim permitted this job for a woman, but it's only if she is qualified:

1. A Mashgiach must be very knowledgeable

WOMEN IN THE WORKFORCE.

with the Halachot relevant to his field, for although they might be very good at what they're doing, since they don't know what the Halacha is—they wouldn't know what to pay attention to.

2. They must have much Yirat-Shamayim, fear from Hashem.

Being a Mashgiach is a tremendous responsibility that carries with it a hard and tedious job requiring one to have real Yirat-Shamayim in order to be on top of all they need to supervise.

3. They must have the ability to 'put their foot down' when needed and make sure everyone at the facility obeys the Kashrut guidelines. This means that they must have the workers and the owner somewhat fear them, otherwise they'll be able to cut corners' and get away with important Kashrut issues.

4. They must be professionals in the field since it requires knowing how to deal with various food items and various equipment, etc.

Can a woman be a Posek?

Contrary to popular belief that being a Posek is only a "man's" job, surprisingly the Poskim say that a woman who studies certain laws and is familiar with them, is permitted to instruct others on what is the Halacha.

This is actually what the prophetess Devorah was doing as the pasuk says (שופטים ד,ה):

”ודבורה אישה נביאה אשת לפידות, היא שופטה את ישראל בעת ההיא. והיא יושבת תחת תומר דבורה...ויעלו אליה בני ישראל למשפט”

Tosfot (תוס' יבמות מה,ב ד"ה מי) say that she wasn't judging the people since a woman is not allowed to be appointed as a judge, but rather she was instructing and teaching the male judges what the law is.

Other Rishonim write in a similar vein. See the Ramban (ב"ק טו,א), the Rashba (שבועות לא), Sefer Hachinuch (סימן קנח), The Chida (ברכי יוסף הובא בפתחי תשובה חו"מ ס"ז ס"ה) learns that a woman that is wise and knowledgeable in the Torah laws may be a Posek:

”אף שאשה פסולה לדון, מכל מקום אשה חכמה יכולה להורות הוראה, וכן מתבאר מהתוספות...שדבורה היתה מלמדת להם הדינים, וכן תראה בספר החינוך”

Interesting to note, a dispute between two of the biggest Poskim of earlier generations, Rabbi Avraham Gombiner, better known as the Magen Avraham, and Rabbi Yehoshua Falk, better known as the Prisha.

The Prisha's mother was known to be very knowledgeable in Torah subjects. The Prisha (introduction to Tur Yore' Deah) instructed women in a few new laws. One of them is that although [Ashkenazi] women light Shabbat candles before they say the Bracha since there are opinions which hold that once a Bracha was said, Shabbat was accepted and they aren't permitted to light anymore, but on Yom Tov the Halacha would be reversed since on Yom Tov it's permitted to light a fire, and therefore they can say a Bracha first and then light.

The Magen Avraham (סימן רסג ס"ק יב) disputes her ruling saying that Chazal compared Yom Tov to Shabbat, and responds to this saying that women should not get involved in Halacha, which is a man's area:

כך כתוב בסוף ספר הדרישה באבן העזר [בהקדמה של בנו של בעל הדרישה] בשם אמו, אבל אין חכמה לאשה [אלא בפלך] דלא חילקו חכמים

We see that the approach of the Magen Avraham is to restrict women from being Posek Halachot.

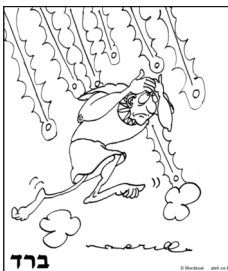
L'emaase what's done today is that although women don't serve as Poskim, but they do serve as Kallah teachers and then keep in touch with them for further Halachot related to them. But they need to know that every question that comes to them which they aren't sure of the Halacha, they must call a Posek to find out the ruling, because every Halacha is very intricate and a person who isn't a Posek must not decide on his own what to do.

It's also common for married ladies to attend classes from a woman who teaches Halachot related to them.

MIRACLES WITHIN MIRACLES- A MIRACLE THAT TRANSFORMS ITSELF.

Do we ever think of the term "miracle within a miracle"? What does it mean?

We all know that a miracle means something unnatural—that goes beyond nature. But what is a miracle within a miracle? Let's analyze a fascinating concept that happened in this week's Parasha. We learn about the various plagues that Hashem brought down on the Egyptians, amongst them, Barad—hail. When describing Barad, Rashi explains this plague to be a "miracle within a miracle, because the hail came down with fire within it. We all know that fire and ice never mix with each other, but here however, these two contradictory elements made peace in order to carry out Hashem's Will. This was clearly a miracle. But where was the miracle within a miracle?



be a problem, as the pasuk says that the ice and fire came down together, not that the ice turned to fire. To understand this phenomenon, we need to first take a closer look at the definition of the Hebrew word for heaven—Shamayim.

In Parashat Bereshit it says that Hashem created the heaven and the earth, Shamayim Va'aretz. Rashi explains the meaning of the word Shamayim quoting the Gemara (תגיגה יב) that the word comes from 3 different roots: Sam Mayim—the heaven carries water, Sham mayim—there is water there (in heaven), Esh U'mayim—Hashem combines water and fire to create the heaven.

This last explanation describes how heaven was formed, through fire and water combined together. Seeing that heaven is naturally formed from fire and water, one may ask a question if heaven is already formed of water and fire what is then

The Siftei Chachamim explains that the water in the ice turned into fire, and it came down in a form of fire. This seems to

MIRACLES WITHIN MIRACLES- A MIRACLE THAT TRANSFORMS ITSELF.

so great about the miracle of Barad, if that's simply how Hashem created the Shamayim?

Isn't a miracle something that goes against nature?

It stands to conclude then, that Barad is considered an even higher level of miracle—a miracle within a miracle, a miracle which transforms itself!

The Gemara (תענית כדב) relays the story of Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa, who was extremely poor. When his wife asked where he would bring money for food, he went out to ask Hashem. A hand then miraculously came down from the sky and handed him a golden leg of a table. When he returned to his wife with the gold, she did not accept it, telling him instead of a dream she had recently. She described that she saw in the dream the rewards of the righteous in the next world. All of them were sitting and eating from a golden table with three legs each. However, their own table only had 2 legs and was unstable. She understood that this was because they were given their third table leg in this world instead of waiting for it in the next. She pleaded with her husband, Rabbi Chanina, to immediately return the gold. So it was, he prayed and it was taken back by the hand from heaven once more. This second miracle, that the gold leg was returned, is considered even greater than the first miracle which gave the gold in the first place. This is due to a general principle that when Shamayim gives something, it's not taken back. This story indicates a double miracle, the wealth that was given was taken back, but a miracle within a miracle is a totally different concept.

When Moshe Rabenu approached Pharaoh's magicians, he experienced a similar miracle. Following Hashem's instructions, he threw his staff to the ground and it turned to a snake. When the magicians performed the same trick with their own staffs, the pasuk says that Moshe's staff swallowed the other snakes. This is strange, because at the time, Moshe's staff should have been in snake form. Rashi says that this is another miracle within a miracle, because the snake actually reverted back to a staff, and then for the second miracle, the staff was able to swallow the other snakes while in staff form. We see again here that the mere fact that the snake reverted back to its natural state is considered a miracle.

With Barad, hail, it should have come down as fire and water combined because that's how Hashem created the sky according to nature. However, every time regular Barad comes down, Hashem performs a miracle and the fire disappears, leaving only ice. The "miracle within a miracle" for Makkat Barad therefore, was that Hashem reversed the miracle that we experience every time we receive hail and allowed the fire and ice to come down together, the way it naturally is in Shamayim. And according to the explanation of the Siftei Chachamim after it reverses itself it then combines to fire in a form of fire. Wow!!!

We don't realize how many miracles we experience every single day, as they appear to us in their disguised form of nature.

We live a miraculous life, and we need to live our lives with this knowledge every moment!

MULTI-RELIGION ROOM: PRAYING AT A PRAYER ROOM FOR ALL RELIGIONS

Upon arrival at an airport for travel, or visiting someone in a hospital etc. and the time to pray has come, many find it very hard to do so in front of people in a crowded place. As such, some establishments designated a room for praying. This room provides a quiet place without any symbols of any religion, and it welcomes people from all religions who want to pray or meditate in their break time at work or for those who travel and want to pray before their flight.

Is one permitted to enter such a place to pray? Is one allowed to enter such a place at all?

Entering a place of idol worship.

Let's start with the simple basics. Entering a place of idolatry is definitely prohibited.

The Gemara (ע"ז יז, א וראה תוס' ד"ה נזיל) doesn't allow us to even walk close to such a place, let alone enter it.

The Rambam (בפירוש המשניות ע"ז פ"א דף יא) goes further to prohibit living in a city which has a place of worshipping Avodah Zara, and definitely one shouldn't look at such a building. The Rambam explains that the reason we live in such towns is because there is no place to live in which doesn't have such places.

After learning the above, we need to examine why entering such places is forbidden.

There are various opinions given in the early Rishonim, and

after we learn them we'll be able to see if they relate to this room of many religions.



1. Rashi (ע"ז יא, ב ד"ה בזמן) wrote that the reason not to enter is to prevent people's suspicion on him, who will say that he goes there to worship idols. The Rashba brings this reason as well (מובא בטור יו"ד סי' קמט).

2. The Rosh (בתשובותיו כלל יט סי' יז) wrote that one shouldn't enter in order to make sure that he won't be attracted and drawn to worship the idol.

3. The Ritva (ע"ז יא, ב) wrote that when one enters such a place, it honors the idol.

4. Sefer Chasidim (סימן תלה) brings a story of someone who entered a place of idolatry and heard a voice from heaven (ב"ת קול) saying to him that he threw Hashem behind his back, teaching that when one enters such a place he shows that he betrays Hashem.

5. Another reason in the Ritva is that entering is in and of itself a form of worship אביזריהו דע"ז.

If we analyze and compare/contrast these reasons to the multi-religion room, it seems clear that entering the room would be permitted.

According to Rashi's reason of suspicion, the Rosh's reason that one might be drawn after the idol, and the Ritva who held that entering honors the idol, here there is no suspicion and no reason to suspect he'll be pulled to the idol, nor

MULTI-RELIGION ROOM: PRAYING AT A PRAYER ROOM FOR ALL RELIGIONS

does it show any respect to the idol, since there are no idols present on premises.

The same can be said for the Sefer Chasidim who holds it betrays Hashem to enter the place of idols, if there is no idol, there is no problem. It is also permitted according to the reason that it's a form of worship.

Praying at place of idol worshipping

Still, one can argue that although entering the room may be permitted, one shouldn't pray in such a place since it's a despicable and disgusting place, just as one isn't permitted to pray in a bathroom.

Indeed, Rashi (רש"י שמות ט, כט) says that Moshe Rabenu wouldn't pray in the cities of Mitzrayim because they had many idols. On the other hand, one can argue that this wasn't done because of any Halacha, but rather because he wasn't comfortable to pray in such a place due to his high level.

There are several sources in Halacha which indicate that praying—even in a place that has actual idols—is permitted, if one has no other place to pray with the proper concentration.

The Rema (או"ח סוף סימן צד) quotes the Trumat Hadeshen (שאלה ו'),

"מי שבא בדרך והוא סמוך למלון יכול להסתלק מן הדרך במקום שלא יפסיקוהו עובדי דרכים שם, ולא יתפלל במלון של עכו"ם שלא יבלוהו בני הבית, אבל אם אי אפשר לו להסתלק מן הדרך במקום שלא יפסיקוהו, יתפלל במלון באיזה קרן זווית."

The Mishna Brura explains that in hotels there are certainly idols in every room, still it's permitted to pray there if one can't find a quiet place elsewhere to be able to pray with concentration (משנ"ב ס"ק כט-ל)

The same can be found in the Sefer (סימן יא) who brings a proof from the above that it's permitted to pray in such a place if a must.

Another source is from Rabbi Eliyahu Mizrahi (פא' סי' פא) who was asked about a shul that a big sin was done in it, whether the congregants can continue to use the place for praying. He proves that it's permitted, and in the middle of his responsa, says that one is permitted to pray even at an idol-worshiper's house while the idols are there.

From all the above, we see that one may use the multi-religion room (at least) if he won't be able to pray elsewhere.

The Posek who actually speaks about this question is Rav Shamai Gross in Shevet Hakehathi (ח"ו סי' פג) who concludes to forbid it, saying that the custom is to place an idol in this room. The reality is that, at least in our times, most of these rooms are deliberately left empty without showing any religious symbols in order to make everyone entering, feel comfortable to pray there.



FROM THE NEW SEFER TEHHILIM

כתב בש"ע יש לזהר כמ"ש בב"י ולא חזר בו מזה, ועיין ב"י וב"ח ודו"ק, ועיין מ"ש הברכ"י אות"י, עכ"ל. וכן כתב להתיר לכתחילה בספר הלכה ברורה (סי' עה ס"ק יג) אם הוא רגיל לשמוע קול זמר אשתו.

ובספר הליכות שלמה לרש"י אורבך צ"ל (פ"כ הלכה יא) כתב להתיר לומר זמירות שבת כשמזמרות עמו קרובותיו אע"פ שאומר בהם פסוקים, אולם לשמוע שירתן סתם לא נכון הדבר. ובהערות שם כתב שמותר רק דרך זמרה ושבח אולם לומר דברי תורה אין להתיר. ויש לדון אם אסר בנידון דין שרגיל בקולה.

ובקובץ תשובות לגר"ש אלישיב (ח"ג סי' י') כתב שפשוט שאין לומר דברים שבקדושה בזמן שאשתו מזמרת, ואסור לומר איתה ביחד זמירות שבת וכדו'. ובספר הליכות בת ישראל (פ"ו ס"ח), והובא באשרי האיש פט"ז ה"ז) התיר לומר יחד עם אשתו אם לא יזכיר פסוקים או שמות כיון שהזמירות נאמרים דרך זמירה ושבח ולא בדרך לימוד תורה.

ולגבי אחיותיו כתב (בקובץ תשובות שם) שאף יש מקום להתיר לשמוע קול זמרתן לפני שהגיעו לגיל נערות, אולם אין לו לומר דברי קדושה, וכגון לקרוא תהלים בזמן שהן שרות, וזה אף למטה מגיל של נערות.

אדם הקורא תהלים או מתפלל בביתו ושומע את אשתו או בנותיו שרות רשאי להמשיך בקריאתו אם אינו חושש שיבוא לידי הרהור, אולם בנות הבית צריכות להקפיד לא לשיר בזמן שהוא קורא או מתפלל. ויש מחמירים שלא לקרוא כלל כשהן שרות.

הנה מצאנו בדיון זה מחלוקת ראשונים, דבקיציור פסקי הרא"ש (ברכות פ"ג אות לו) כתב לחלק בין הנידונים, שמה שאסרו בשעת קריאת שמע הוא רק טפח מגולה אולם דין קול באשה ערוה לא נאמר לגבי קריאת שמע אלא רק לגבי איסור הנאה משמיעת קולה, וכן הלך בעקבותיו הטור שהשמיט דין קול באשה בדיני ק"ש. וכך גם דייק מרן בכס"מ (פ"ג מהל' ק"ש הל' טז) מדברי הרמב"ם שדין קול באשה ערוה לא נאמר אלא לענין שאסור להנות מקולה ולא לענין ק"ש ולכן הרמב"ם לא הזכיר דינים בהל' ק"ש כשדן בדינים אלו.

בש"ע (סי' עה ס"ג) כתב שיש לזהר משמיעת קול זמר אשה בשעת קריאת שמע, והרמ"א הוסיף לאסור גם באשתו של אדם אולם סייג דבריו שאם הוא קול שרגיל בו אינו ערוה, והסביר המשנ"ב (ס"ק יח) שכיון שרגיל בו לא יבוא לידי הרהור, והוסיף להתיר אפילו באשת איש כהאי גוונא שרגיל בקולה.

ואמנם נראה שדעת הש"ע להתיר מעיקר הדין, ואפילו באשה זרה שאינו רגיל בקולה שהרי כתב רק לשון של זהירות ולא לשון איסור, וכדייק בן בכף החיים (ס"ק יד) וז"ל: "ואע"ג דבב"י כתב דטוב לזהר לכתחלה ממראית שער ומשמיעת קול זמר אישה בשעת ק"ש, והכא בש"ע כתב לאסור בשער ויש לזהר משמיעת קול, נראה דחזרו בו בש"ע ואסר בשער מפני שהרא"ש והטור אסרו בהדיא בשער, לא כן הרמב"ם רק השמיטוהו. אבל בשמיעת קול דגם הרא"ש כתב אינו אלא דאסור לשמוע, ולא לענין ק"ש, והטור לא כתב לאסור, ע"כ

