

Halacha Highlight

Overview

Exercising greater caution during the aseres yimei teshuvah

Shulchan Aruch Siman 603 Seif 1
בעשרת ימי תשובה צריך לזהר

During the aseres yimei teshuvah one must be more cautious

Siman 603 Seif 1:

Even one who normally is not careful with regards to bread made by a gentile, during the aseres yimei teshuva he should be careful. Every person should search and examine his actions and repent during the aseres yimei teshuva and an uncertain transgression requires more teshuva than a certain transgression because a person regrets known transgressions more than transgressions about which he is uncertain. For that reason an Asham Talu'i is more expensive than a Chatas.

- ❖ One should not even eat bread that was baked by a professional baker. If a person cannot bake his own bread he should at least throw in a piece of wood or blow on the fire to raise it. Someone who is travelling and bread baked by a Jew is more than four mil away may eat bread baked by a gentile professional baker during the aseres yimei teshuva. (M.B. 1)
- ❖ Rosh wrote that each person should read from the אגרת התשובה written by Rabbeinu Yonah. At the very least a person should follow the Zohar and repent before he goes to sleep, bemoan his misdeeds examine his actions. (M.B. 2)
- ❖ יערות הדבש writes that on each day between Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur one can repent for the sins committed on that day of the week for the entire year. (M.B. 2)

Bais Yosef notes that one who exercises greater caution during these days is not obligated to continue to observe these practices as though he had taken a vow since it is understood that one's intent was to exercise greater caution only during these

Shulchan Aruch based on the Yerushalmi (Shabbos 1:3) rules that even one who is not careful with regards to bread that was baked by a gentile the entire year should be cautious during the ten days from Rosh HaShanah through Yom Kippur. Mishnah Berurah (סק"א) emphasizes that one should even avoid bread that was baked by a gentile professional baker (פת פלטר). Although there are Poskim who allow the consumption of bread baked by a gentile professional baker, when possible one should avoid it. However, one who is travelling and knows that even if he were to travel another seventy-two minutes he would not be able to obtain bread baked by a Jew he is permitted to eat bread baked by a gentile professional baker.

Be'er Heitev (סק"א) cites Shelah who wrote that during aseres yimei teshuvah pious individuals would eat their unconsecrated food in a state of purity (לאכל חולין בטהרה). Although everyone is assumed to be tamei from a corpse, nevertheless, they would eat bread that was kneaded in fruit juice so that it would not be susceptible to tumah and they would drink directly from a well or river so as not to make the water tamei by touching it. Kaf HaChaim (סק"ו) observes that this behavior is no longer practiced but nonetheless it establishes a principle of behavior for these ten days. That principle is that a person should make a greater effort to be sanctified during these days so that his heart and mind could be pure. Some even have the practice to immerse in a mikvah every day since a pure body will generate a pure neshama.