

Kehillah

Chiddushim and Insights for Shabbos | 14 Tevet, 5783 | 3



Walking the Straight Path of the Avos

Rabbi Yehoshua Pfeffer

According to Chazal, the term *sefer ha'yashar*, “the book of the just” (Yehoshua 10:13), refers to the book of Bereishis that records the just deeds of the Avos (*Avodah Zarah* 25a). But whose deeds does this contrast with? Who was not *yashar*, while the Avos were?

According to Rashi, the contrast is with the generations that preceded the Avos, beginning with Adam Harishon. On the Pasuk, “This only have I found: G-d created mankind upright, but they have sought out many reckonings” (Kohelet 7:29), Rashi explains that Hashem created Adam upright, yet he (and Chava) sought out schemes of sinfulness. This deterioration continued until the Avos, beginning with Avraham, who restored the human condition to its original rectitude.

Yet, there remains a tremendous difference between Adam prior to his sin and the Avos. Rather than the messy amalgam of good and evil that earthly reality presents us, Adam’s pre-sin world was one of simple goodness. He could live an existence of shameless innocence and enjoy relationships – with Hashem and with others – that knew no suspicion.

This was not the case for the Avos. Avraham had to depart from the truth in order to protect Sarah. Rivka orchestrated an act of deception to ensure Yaakov received his father’s blessings, and Yaakov’s life was replete with the trials and tribulations of harsh circumstances and relationships filled with suspicion and intrigue. These were also the lot of Yosef, the final member of Avraham’s family to beget tribes, whose death and burial close the book of Bereishis.

Remarkably, the Rambam mentions that even today, a person can choose to withdraw from the ways of the world and “proceed justly as G-d made him, removing from his neck the yoke of the many reckonings that people seek” (*Mishnah Torah, Shemittah & Yovel* 13:13). This, however, was not the way of the Avos; nor does it characterize our lives. In a post-sin world, our task is to seek out the just, the

good, and the moral in a world where these commodities are anything but obvious.

In the book of Shemos we receive the Torah, and with it Divine instruction on navigating our complex environment. But the message of Bereishis is not forgotten. Bereishis lays out the journey: returning to Eden by means of a convoluted path traversed through harsh terrain. Shemos provides us with the means to make it.

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Where lies the terrain via which we return to Eden? The answer, of course, is Eretz Yisrael. Unlike Adam, who could irrigate and drink all he wanted from the rivers of Eden, life upon the Land is always precarious. We depend on rain from the Heavens, both physically and metaphorically. It isn’t always easy, but here, on the Land, we are able to live with Hashem, treading the path of destiny.

As Olim who arrived here by conscious choice, we certainly know the privilege of living on the Land. We heard Hashem’s calling His people back, and though we had good excuses, we chose to heed it. Many of us also embody the Chasam Sofer’s principle (*Sukkah* 36a) whereby working in the Land represents an elevated ideal.

Things can be tough, but we didn’t arrive in the Land to withdraw from its challenges. We came here to rise to them and find the good, the just, and the moral in a reality whose navigation in many areas – schools, Torah study, work, housing, bureaucracy, and much besides – requires dedication, perseverance, and much Emunah.

Thus we continue to chart the upright course of the Avos toward an ever-nearing destiny. To follow in their footsteps, here on the very Land they were promised, is an unfathomable *zechus*. We thank Hashem for it daily.

We Are Yosef Rabbi Refael Tawil

Sefer Bereishis concludes with the deaths of Yaakov and Yosef – the last among the Avos. At the time of their death, both make similar requests, asking that their bones should not remain in Egypt. Moreover, both adjure their family members and descendants to ensure their request is fulfilled.

Yaakov and Yosef thus emphasized, on their deathbeds, the depth of their connection with the Promised Land and the transient nature of their sojourn in Egypt. Both meant to ensure that the family of Yaakov should not become assimilated in Egypt – yet they did so in different ways.

Yaakov thus instructed his son, Yosef: “Please – if I have found favor in your eyes, please place your hand under my thigh and do kindness and truth with me – please do not bury me in Egypt. For I will lie with my fathers and you shall transport me out of Egypt and bury me in their tomb” (Bereishis 47:29-30).

Later, addressing all his sons, he added a more specific instruction to be buried in Me’aras Ha’Machpelah: “In the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which faces Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Avraham bought with the field from Ephron the Hittite as a burial estate” (Bereishis 49:30).

We have not assimilated. It has been tough, it took many years, but we are returning to our Land.

Yaakov was making a very clear statement. I am not Egyptian. I cannot be buried in Egypt, for my place is in the family heirloom that was purchased by Avraham, where my parents and grandparents are buried. My place is with them.

Yosef’s instructions were different:

“Yosef said to his brothers: ‘I am about to die, but G-d will surely remember you and bring you up out of this land to the land that He swore to Avraham, to Yitzchak, and to Yaakov.’ Then Yosef adjured the children of Israel, saying: ‘When G-d will indeed remember you, then you must bring my bones up out of here.’”

First, Yosef’s instructions were prefaced by a prophecy: Hashem will remember you and take you out of Egypt. Second, his request was not immediate; indeed, it was only fulfilled hundreds of years later. Third, his request included the Divine promise to give the Land to the Avos.

Yosef represents the transition from Avos to Banim, from the level of the Forefathers to the nation of their offspring. On the one hand, he is one of the Bnei Yisrael, sons of Yaakov; but on the other, he himself begets tribes. He serves as an intermediary between the two categories.

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Yaakov insisted on an immediate burial in Egypt. By doing so, he ensured that our ancestral landmark of Me’aras Ha’Machpelah was complete. For all generations, even in the harshest exile, we would be able to look towards the Promised Land in the knowledge that our Avos are there, waiting for our return.

Yosef, in contrast, ensured that the elevation of the Avos and their unbreakable connection with the Land remained *within* the Jewish People. His Aron would remain with the people, in Egypt, a constant and present remainder of two Divine promises: the promise of a future redemption, and the promise of the Land made to the Avos.

The book of Bereishis, the book of the Avos, finished with the death of Yosef. But Yosef does not leave us. His presence continues into the book of Shemos, the book of our national birth, and he emerges from Mitzrayim together with us, providing the eternal link between the Children of Israel and the fathers, Israel himself – Yaakov Avinu – who lies eternally in Chevron. As the link between Avos and Banim, he ensures that we will all be united.

Even today, the connection lives on. The entire Jewish people is named after Yosef, after Ephraim, and after Rachel. Indeed, the blessing we give our children, as Yaakov prescribes, is that of Yosef and his sons. We are Yosef. We have not assimilated. It has been tough, it took many years, but we are returning to our Land.

As we return, en masse, we continue to raise our eyes to Chevron, the burial place of Yaakov and the Avos, which calls us to our final destiny.

When Can We Bend the Truth? Rabbi Asher Meir

At the end of our parsha, Yosef’s brothers send him a touching message from their late father:

When Yosef’s brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, “What if Yosef still bears a grudge against us and pays us back for all the wrong that we did him!” So they sent this message to Yosef, “Before his death your father left this instruction: So shall you say to Yosef, ‘Forgive, I urge you, the offense and guilt of your brothers who treated you so harshly.’” (Bereshis 50:15-17)

Chazal (Yevamot 65b, Yerushalmi, Pe’ah 1:1) tell us that the brothers bent the truth of this story for the sake of peace. The Gemara in Yevamos continues to explain that sometimes a fib is actually a mitzvah, giving the example of Shmuel: Hasehm instructed him to make up a cover story in order to fulfill the commandment to anoint Yishai’s son in Beit Lechem without incurring Shaul’s wrath.

In general, we permit such untruths when they are defensive

Moreover, sometimes even Hashem amends the truth, which Chazal note from the tale of Avraham and Sarah as they were told they would have a child. Sarah was surprised to hear she will give birth, exclaiming “My lord is aged!” When Hashem relays the story to Avraham, he quotes her as saying: “I have aged.”

Halachically, the cases of Shmuel and Avraham exemplify two quite distinct leniencies to alter the truth. In the case of Avraham, the sole intention is to prevent unnecessary wounded feelings. This leniency is halachically quite broad (though practically speaking, it is always worth considering if perhaps hurt feelings can be avoided some other way).

Shmuel, however, obtained direct benefit from misleading Shaul. Such an untruth is quite problematic. Normally, the prohibition of *geneivas da’at* (deception, or literally “theft of the mind”) forbids not only lying or misleading but even passive benefit from a misunderstanding. For example, if a non-Jew has a reasonable basis to assume that meat is kosher, the Jewish seller must pro-actively inform him if it is not kosher (*treif*). Even though non-Jews don’t insist on kosher meat but only prefer it, and even if the price is that of non-kosher meat, one must still clarify that the meat is not kosher (*Chullin* 94a-b).

In general, we permit such untruths when they are defensive – when they protect against undeserved harm. Shaul had no right to keep Shmuel from his prophetic mission, hence it was proper for him to make up a story that would enable him to fulfill it. Another example in the Gemara concerns a dishonest innkeeper who stole the purses of the Tannaim Rabbi Yehuda and Rabbi Yosi. Due to the circumstances, they were within their rights to trick the innkeeper’s wife into thinking he instructed her to return them (*Yoma* 83b).

The brothers’ fib to Yosef fits both leniencies. It is true that Yosef agreed to continue to provide for them, saying “fear not, I will sustain you and your dependents.” But the brothers did not request any benefit from Yosef or imply that Yaakov requested one. The request was merely for Shalom, for forbearance for their mistreatment of him twenty years prior.

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The brothers could also rely on the second leniency of protection. Rashi tells us that Yaakov would never have suspected the righteous Yosef of avenging himself on his brothers, but the Torah tells us that the brothers themselves were apprehensive. Yosef could have used his authority to punish them arbitrarily; the Netziv suggests that the situation could even have been considered *pikuach nefesh* (danger to life).

The Netziv, differing from Rashi, explains that the brothers did not fabricate Yaakov’s request, but only interpreted it. Yaakov’s blessing to Yosef states: “Archers bitterly assailed him; they shot at him and harried him. Yet his bow stayed taut, and his arms were made firm” (Bereshis 49 23:24). The brothers interpreted this to mean that even though Yosef was assailed by his brothers, his arms were to remain firm, without reprisal.

The Netziv’s interpretation teaches that even when social harmony and legitimate self interest can justify bending the truth, interpretation is always better than fabrication.

How Can I Get My Son to Stop Lying to Me? ?

Rebbetzin Tamar Pfeffer

question

My oldest son is 16.5 years old and his teenage years have been very challenging. He conceals things from us and lies. He doesn't keep promises to come home on time and doesn't bother calling to update us about

where he is and when he'll return. How do you get to a situation where he takes responsibility on the one hand and on the other hand doesn't hide and lie? Thank you so much.

Answer

Dear Cherished Mother,

Thanks for the question, which I studied several times. It took me a while to feel it out as a single unit.

Several issues arise. There's the concealment issue. There's responsibility. In addition, you also mention lying. Ultimately, they are all related, of course.

delegate, allowing kids to take responsibilities.

For example, a parent might transfer responsibility to a child for preparing breakfast. To do so, he needs to let go and stop giving reminders that time's running out. Only when the child is allowed to fail, forget, and go hungry will he experience the responsibility and learn from the process.

How responsible will the child be? As with sharing, the outcome is not up to parents. We're responsible for the learning process and not the results.

The same principle applies for lying. When a parent has a clear picture of desired results he unintentionally invites the child to lie. Parents tend to have this clear image, but the child is independent and sometimes has a different picture in mind. This is intensified during adolescence, when he begins to develop his own opinions, examine, criticize and build himself.

When a child doesn't meet parents' expectations, he often has no choice but to embellish reality. In other words, to lie. Parents expect the child to share events and experiences: a test at school, a relationship with a rebbi, feelings about a Shidduch, and so on. On the other hand, the child does not speak the "language of sharing" and is just not interested. To get out of the quagmire, he simply lies: the test was canceled.

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So how do you get to a situation where a child takes responsibility and does not hide and lie?

The answer involves a change in approach. You don't "get to a situation" but rather start a process. The

principle of taking responsibility is thus conveyed slowly, gradually, and with much trust and letting go. We give him love and connection and accept him with his failures and falls. He is in a learning process. Since the focus is on the process and not on the result, and the process by definition includes falls and mistakes, the need to lie fades on its own.

I want to emphasize, in conclusion, that as parents we have a duty to clarify boundaries (even in adolescence) and enforce them. At the same time, it's always best to make joint decisions with older children on when to come home. They have an opinion, too, and it's right to respect them.

I'll start from hiding. The opposite of hiding is sharing. Sharing is like a language, acquired through an environment

Even the boundaries, however, are the foundation for a process, a learning curve that takes place within the boundaries set by the parents. The trust you give your child, including the possibility of failures, gives him a sense of responsibility and reduces the urge to lie.

Wishing you much joy in the process!

Tamar Pfeffer

The answer involves a change in approach. You don't "get to a situation" but rather start a process. The principle of taking responsibility is thus conveyed slowly, gradually, and with much trust and letting go

I'll start from hiding. The opposite of hiding is *sharing*. Sharing is like a language, acquired through an environment. Sharing parents have sharing children: the home, as it were, speaks "sharing." English-speaking parents have English-speaking children and parents who share have sharing children.

Sharing begins with the simplest things: I missed a bus and was late to work; I forgot an ingredient and the cake flopped; today's shopping was great. It also includes more complex matters: someone insulted me at school; I misbehaved towards the teacher; I don't like to Daven. A parent cannot decide how his child will share, when and how much. A parent can take responsibility for the learning process, while the results are not in his hands.

Responsibility, too, involves a similar process. Like sharing, it's acquired rather than taught. As soon as a parent expresses trust in a child, the child experiences a sense of responsibility and can rise to the challenge. Parents, however, must be ready to release and

No Excuses Rebbetzin Ilana Cowland

Excuses sit on that fine line between truth and honesty.

We have a saying in our house. One excuse is a reason; two reasons are an excuse.

So:

"I'm sorry that I couldn't make it, my car broke down" means you could not make it because your car broke down.

But "I'm sorry that I couldn't make it because my car broke down and I also had a stomach ache and besides that I had a meeting" means you just didn't want to come.

It's not foolproof, but it's often true.

Excuses sit on that fine line between truth and honesty.

We generally manufacture them so that we don't offend people, or to avoid dealing with consequences. And, of course, nice honest people like you and I do not lie when we make excuses.

I have a particularly vivid recollection of answering the phone for someone (back in the day when homes shared phones, remember?) who didn't want to deal with the caller. They ran to the front door and stepped over the threshold. Right on cue I said, "I'm sorry, they're out."

Which was true. Technically. And it really taught me

to be sensitive to not saying things that are actually untrue. To this day, I'm a terrible liar, mainly because I didn't have much practice.

But there is a gap between not speaking non-truths and being honest.

The more our society requires us to present ourselves as being in order, in control or perfect, the less honest we become. After all, perfection doesn't really exist, so to look the part you have to hide the parity between where you're really at and where you look good.

Are we really all as fine, baruch Hashem, as we say we are? Are the excuses we present, which generally confer the message that whatever went wrong had nothing to do with us, the whole story?

How much more do we find ourselves saying, "I was stuck behind a bus," rather than "I was late because I didn't leave when I should have"? Or "my alarm didn't work," rather than, "I overslept"?

Not everyone has to know everything. Personal privacy is a great reason to not be completely transparent all the time.

But perhaps, in our important relationships and in the way we teach our kids to communicate, we should consider risking a little more honesty and a little less perfection. When we do that, we give the people around us permission to be human too.

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The Visa Rabbi Shmuel Kimche

I want to share an incredible story that I heard third hand. It was told by the great R' Efrayim Wachsmann, about his wife's grandfather. The story had such a powerful message for me, and I am excited to share it.

The Germans had invaded Poland, and then Belgium, Luxemburg, and Holland. France was next. Many thousands of Jews were trying to escape as far as possible from the German Army, and only Great Britain seemed safe. The journey there could be made easily from Bayeux, a town in the Normandy region of northwestern France, just ten kilometers from the Channel coast, and this became the first destination for many Jews.

R' Yosef was frantic. It was May, 1940, and the pressure was unbearable. Running from place to place, unsure where he was running to, he knew he simple had to find a way for his wife and three children over the English channel to (relative) safety.

As he was walking near the road to the French beachfront, he noticed a man drinking a beer. He wore all the right clothes – a blue sailor shirt and even an old black cap, tipped to the side. “Are you a sailor? Do you sail to England?” tumbled out the frank and unintroducted statement. “I sure am, Laddie! I’m the captain of a vessel set to sail tomorrow!” R' Yosef suddenly broke down in front of this complete stranger. “I’m desperate! My wife and kids – we need to get out of here! We’re in grave danger that I can’t begin to describe.”

The captain was taken by this strange but noble man. “Listen. I have an almost empty ship. We set sail in 24 hours. You can bring as many people as you want on board. The only problem is that to get into England you need a Visa stamped into your passport – and EVERYBODY is trying to do that. Go to the main street in Bayeux, you can’t miss the building. Crowds surround it every moment of the day!”

A man with a mission, R' Yosef started to run the five miles back to town. Without effort he found the main street, and as predicted there was no way he was getting in past the thick crowd. Hundreds surrounded the consulate trying in vain to find a way in. “So close, but so far,” he thought to himself. “I have a way to get there but no way to get a Visa!!”

Out of nowhere the skies opened up! Not regular rain, but a genuine downpour, so hard that after ten minutes people started leaving. Quite unsure whether he’ll get anywhere in this rain, Yosef pushed his way forward through the thinning crowd and somehow managed to find himself INSIDE the consulate! Drenched to the

bone, dripping and all, he found himself outside the door that said “The Consulate!” A total *neis!*

Yosef Knocked and entered. Sitting there, by himself, behind a polished mahogany desk, was the Consul – *bi’kvodo uve’atzmo*. “Hi and welcome. How can I help you?” asked the official. Yosef was almost speechless. Again, the tension overwhelmed him and he began crying uncontrollably – how his wife and children were stuck and in mortal danger. “England is our only hope. We even have a way of getting there – but just need your approval!”

The Consul looked at Yosef’s, saw the sincerity in his eyes, and thought for some 20 excruciating seconds. “Okay, I can do it! Give me your passport and I’ll get you the stamps you need to get to England!”

As he was walking near the road to the French beachfront, he noticed a man drinking a beer. He wore all the right clothes – a blue sailor shirt and even an old black cap, tipped to the side

Yosef reached into his pocket and was instantly struck with deep horror. There was nothing there. He had left the passports at home!! He had forgotten to bring them! He wasn’t expecting to meet the captain, nor to go to the Consulate. He had no passports!!

This was all too much for R' Yosef. To find a ship willing to take them and the Consul ready to stamp a visa, but not having the passports and losing everything?! As he fainted, R' Yosef’s thoughts went along the lines of “This is the absolute worst thing that could have happened! Hashem, why are you bringing me so close just to say no?” He fell to the ground with a bang.

After a few minutes of revival, R' Yosef came to with a look of resignation in his eyes. “Don’t worry,” said the



consul – “I have another solution. You will not leave here empty handed! I am going to write my name on this blank piece of paper and under it I’ll ask for permission to stay in England to be given to anyone bearing this paper. This is an official document, and they will honor it at the border. All you have to do is add the names of your family as they appear on their passports.”

With that, a paper was typed and signed, including spaces to add names. Yosef left the building but started thinking. “Wait a moment! This page is blank. Anybody written on this page will be able to get into England. I have an empty ship leaving tomorrow morning...”

Yosef spent the entire night going from home to home, from street to street – filling EVERY SINGLE INCH of that paper with names, of over two hundred families! Two hundred families!!

The next morning, the captain almost dropped his tobacco onto his newspaper when he looked up to see an entire community of people making their way to his ship! Yosef showed him the paper, and the kind hearted captain smiled broadly as he realised he was going to be the vehicle of life

for hundreds of people!

To this very day, thousands of grandchildren of those who escaped Bayeux on that day in May, 1940 have kept in touch with each other. The Visa Paper Community.

What a story!! But what is the real message for us, my friends? So many messages!!

If our friend Yosef hadn’t forgotten his passport, what would have happened? The answer is simple: his family would have managed to leave, But the hundreds of others would not have escaped. What seemed like a moment of complete disaster was actually a tremendous *ge’ula*, a true redemption.

As Sefer Bereishis ends and the exile and slavery of Mitzrayim starts, these thought should be on our minds. Without Mechiras Yosef there would be no food for the family. Without the slavery of Mitzrayim there would be no *Yetziyas Mitzrayim* and *Matan Torah*.

Without *chashocha*, darkness, there is no recognition of the *nehora*, light. The trick is to know it in real-time.

Welcoming Event for Kehillas Chazon Elimelech – Afula

Last Monday evening, prominent Anglo Charedi Rabbonim and *askanim* came together to show their support and admiration for a group of families who arrived this past summer directly from the United States to establish a new Anglo kehillah in Afula. The community is the brainchild of Rabbi Nesanel Cadle, a musmach of Telz Yeshiva and alumnus of Ponevezh, and erstwhile Rav of the kehillah in Yardley, Pennsylvania.

The families made their way from Afula to Yeshivas Chofetz Chaim hall in Yerushalayim on a bus provided by the Afula municipality, with a stop for a Chanukah-related guided tour at Kever Shmuel HaNavi during the final minutes of Chanukah.

Rabbonim addressing the new Olim with divrei bracha and encouragement included Rav Yehoshua Eichenstein, the Bostoner Rebbe of Yerushalayim, Rav Yitzchak Breitowitz, and Rav Zev Leff, shlita. R' Yitzchok Pindrus from Degel

HaTorah also addressed the audience.

R' Moshe Shimon Roth, Sanz delegate to Agudas Yisrael in the Knesset and a veteran Oleh himself, who is connected with the Kedushas Tzion network (and was accompanied by many network members), expressed how he felt humbled by the spirit and courage of these new settlers of Eretz Yisrael.

It was a moving experience to see this new community, which sets a precedent for other similar initiatives, coming together to receive such an outpour of encouragement and appreciation.

The event was organized by R' Yoel Berman, who works to promote Israel's out-of-town communities for Anglo Chareidim as a realistic way of permanently settling in Eretz Yisrael. R' Yoel can be reached at 053-319-1618 / yberman613@gmail.com.

Bedtime Blessings: Hamapil Josh and Tammy Kruger

The silly boy in the following story makes at least six mistakes. Can you find them? Can you think of how the story is connected with the Parasha?

The Story:

In the city of Balagan, on a street named Gevalt, lived the Mevulbal family. This family was nice and funny and very very mixed up.

“Reuven, it’s time for you to go to bed!” said Mr. Mevulbal to his son.

“Can’t I stay up for just 10 more years, Daddy?”

“Sorry son, we tried that last week and you were very tired the next morning,” his father replied.

Reuven proceeded up the stairs to his bedroom. He took off his pajamas, dressed in his tuxedo, and brushed his teeth.

He thought to himself, “I’d better sleep well tonight. Tomorrow I’m having a bubble gum blowing competition with my friends and I need all my strength.”

He lay down in his bed on his back and began to recite the words of *keriyas shema al hamita*. When he reached his favorite part, he began to sing: “*Hamelech ha-goel oti mikol rah...*”.

After finishing the *tefillah* he opened up his night table drawer and pulled out a chocolate donut, which he quickly devoured.

“Reuven,” his mother entered his room. “I’m making your lunch for tomorrow. Would you prefer fish or chicken?”

Reuven pointed to his closed lips and then his siddur.

“I see,” said his mother “You’ve already said *keriyas shema al hamita* and can’t talk. I’ll just go with chicken.”

As Reuven lay in his bed, he thought about his day and remembered how he had accidentally *davened* the *amidah* of Mincha for Shabbos instead of Shacharis for a weekday. “Oh well,” he told himself, “nobody’s perfect. Now’s not the time to think about the mistakes I’ve made. It’s time to think of all the presents that I want for my birthday.”

Answers

1. Reuven’s reasons for going to sleep (to win the bubble-blowing contest) are not what we should have in mind. A Jew should think about how sleeping gives us the energy needed to serve Hashem the next day (*Piskei Teshuvot* 239:3). The *Aruch Hashulchan* writes that this statement should even be said aloud (*Aruch HaShulchan* 236:1).
2. It is not proper for Reuven to recite *keriyas shema al hamita* lying down, particularly on his back. One should recite the *tefilla* sitting or standing (*Mishnah Berurah* 239:6).
3. The words are “*Hamalach Ha-go’el oti*” (the angel that redeemed me).
4. In general, after we recite a *beracha* we must immediately perform the action associated with the *beracha*. There should be no *hefsek*, no interruption. The *beracha* of *ha-mapil* is about sleeping. This means that immediately after saying the *beracha* we should go to sleep. So it isn’t proper for a person to eat, drink, or talk unless it’s absolutely necessary (*Mishnah Berurah* 239:4, Rema 239:1). A donut is certainly not necessary.

Note that if someone realizes they need to use the bathroom after saying *keriyas shema al hamita*, they certainly may do so and many *poskim* instruct that the *beracha* of *asher yatzar* should be said, though it creates a *hefsek* concerning *ha-mapil* (*Shut Pri Ha-Sadeh* Vol. 1, no. 93; *Shut Hisorerus Teshuvah* Vol. 1, no. 125; and others).

5. As stated above, there is a concern that someone who speaks after saying *keriyas shema al hamita* and before sleeping is performing a *hefsek*. However, the mitzvah of *Kibbud Av Ve’em* is more important (*Yalkut Yosef* Vol. 3, 665). Reuven should have answered his mother when she spoke to him.
6. Before a person goes to sleep they should think about the mistakes that they made during the day and make a goal to not repeat them) *Mishnah Berurah*.(239:9

Connections with the Parsha:

The famous words of *tefillas hamapil* “*hamalach hago’el oti*” ...come from Yaakov Avinu’s blessing for Menashe and Ephraim in *Parashas Vayechi*.

Written in collaboration with Rabbi Yehoshua Pfeffer ;le’ilui neshama of Frumit Bat Yosef ,Edith Nusbaum a”h

