

Kehillah #32



THE PERTINENT PARASHA

Taking Responsibility

Rabbi Yehoshua Pfeffer | Rav of Kehillat Ohr Chadash, Ramot, Jerusalem

Like the first paragraph, the second paragraph of the Shema ends with the words, "You shall place these words upon your hearts and upon your souls, tie them as a sign upon your arms and place them as totafos upon your foreheads" (*Devarim* 11:18). Furthermore, we are instructed to teach them to our children and to

When we realize the connection through doing the good, we sense His closeness in the goodness of His blessings.

... speak them always, to retire to sleep with them at night and awaken with them in the morning.

Concerning the first paragraph of the Shema, the centrality is understood: Emunas Ha-Yichud, the belief that all existence derives from Hashem and that He is the source of all goodness, stands at the core of being Jewish.

The Pasuk tells us to "trust Hashem, and do good" (*Tehillim* 37:3). Our capacity to do good in the world draws from our trust in Hashem, His goodness and His oneness. We must return to it always.

But why is the second paragraph of the Shema, which dwells on the consequences of our actions, so important, such that it also warrants being remembered always? What is the centrality of these consequences?

The answer is that the second paragraph teaches us responsibility. We learn that our fate does not depend on some inevitable script we follow irrespective of our actions, but is contingent on how we act: if we follow the ways of Hashem as prescribed by the Torah, we will be blessed with Hashem's goodness and bounty. If we do not, we will suffer the consequences.

Internalizing the depth of our responsibility provides an essential complement to the first paragraph.





THE PERTINENT PARASHA



Knowing Hashem's oneness inspires us to do the good. By doing so we attach ourselves to His infinite goodness. Yet, this inspiration only makes a true impact when we know that our actions matter. If a given action makes no difference, we are unlikely to perform it even if we know it's essentially right.

This is the core significance of the second paragraph of the Shema. It teaches us that connection with

The way we act, speak, and interact with others has a tremendous impact, and there is much we can do to realize the Torah beyond our private spheres.

Hashem is not an abstract idea devoid of material consequences. When we realize the connection through doing the good, we sense His closeness in the goodness of His blessings. When we do not, Heaven forbid, we suffer His distance.

The message of the second paragraph of the Shema is true everywhere, but it applies most directly to life in the Land of Israel. Here, in the place where Hashem's supervision is

forever present, the idea of human responsibility is most prominent. If we cling to the good, the Land will reciprocate with its bounty; if not, we stand to lose our ability to live here.

For many centuries, the second paragraph of the Shema was read with an individual focus. Each one of us will be blessed or otherwise based on his or her individual merits. Today, however, after millions of Jews are gathered once more to the Land, we have begun to read it more literally, as a reference to our national life upon the Holy Land.

Love of Hashem, declared in the first paragraph of the Shema in the singular, is a matter of each person's heart. Following the Torah's instruction, however, which is the subject of the second paragraph, is written in the plural. We do it together.

As the tensions in Israel continue to flare, we must remember our responsibility – not just in a personal sense, but even on a national level. As representatives of observant Judaism, the way we act, speak, and interact with others has a tremendous impact, and there is much we can do to realize the Torah beyond our private spheres.

The second paragraph of the Shema urges us to take responsibility.



Take Off Your Shoes

Rabbi Yaacov Haber | Rav of Kehillas Shivtei Yeshurun, Ramat Beit Shemesh

We speak of sensitivity as if it is some sort of disease. We tell our spouses, our children, and our employees to stop being so sensitive. We work on ourselves and exercise our emotions so that we should become less sensitive. We speak of sensitivity as the cause of pain and anguish.

Yet sensitivity is a very positive trait. Sensitive people are able to feel what others cannot. The ability to feel is essential for wholesome living. The alternative to being sensitive is being insensitive. Being sensitive can be an obstacle in a relationship, but a meaningful relationship is impossible without sensitivity.

When Moshe Rabeinu approached the burning bush, he heard G-d speak to him: "Take off your shoes. You are standing on Holy ground." Why did G-d command Moshe to take off his shoes rather than cover his head or prepare his heart? The Sfas Emes explains that there is a great difference between walking with shoes and walking without them. With shoes, one can walk over stones, glass, water, even fire and not feel a thing. Without shoes, one can feel everything. Step on

even a little Lego, and the pain climbs right up the spine.

Hashem told Moshe that if you want to hear the word of G-d, if you're going to be a leader of the people, you must take off your shoes. You must remove the insulation that protects you from the environment. It will hurt, but you must be able to feel every bump. You must be able to feel the pain.

A person who is responsive to external conditions, quick to take offense, or touchy, is a person who is sensitive to the feelings

Think of what it feels like when someone says something mean to you before you let loose on your spouse or other loved one.

and circumstances of others. It is this individual who can develop a meaningful relationship. It is this person who can truly help another Jew. It is this individual who can be endowed with prophecy and holiness.





TORAH INSIGHT FOR THE WEEK

Parasha Eikev describes the most wonderful blessings possible in this world. Rashi teaches that Eikev – which means heel – talks of the ‘small’ mitzvos, mitzvos that are easy to ignore, mitzvos that we step on with our heel. The major blessings of life, it seems, depend on the small, insignificant mitzvos. Yet when we leaf through the parasha, we don’t find small mitzvos:

1. Remember that G-d was the one who took you out of Egypt;
2. Don’t forget G-d.
3. Thank G-d for your food.
4. Fear G-d.
5. Pray to G-d.
6. Love the stranger because you were a stranger.

Although these mitzvos are not small, they are easy to ignore. They are mitzvos that require deep thought and high sensitivity. It is easy for us to do the big mitzvos, while we insulate ourselves from showing gratitude or love or feeling the stranger’s pain. To this the Torah says, take off your shoes. Take off your shoes and feel where you came from, your surroundings, and where you are going.

The mitzvah of Eikev is to exercise

our sensitivity and keep our feelings healthy. Try to imagine what it feels like to be hungry, and then feed the poor. Imagine what it feels like to be alone, and then make a shidduch. Think about what it would feel like to be disabled, and then go visit the sick. Think of what it’s like to be a kid getting yelled at by a grown-up before you lose it with your kids. Think of what it feels like when someone says something mean to you before you let loose on your spouse or other loved one. Think of what it feels like to be ignored before you close someone important out of your life. If you can listen and feel, then G-d, too, will feel our pain.

Before Moshe approached the holy ground, he took off his shoes. Before the Kohen walks into the Holy of Holies, he takes off his shoes. On Yom Kippur and Tisha B’Av, we take off our shoes. Before we walk into marriage, parenting, or a life of mitzvos, we, too, must take off our shoes and then be blessed with the blessings of the Torah – “I will love you, multiply your offspring, and sustain you forever.”



Hashkafically Speaking

The Land of Israel: A Matter of Body and Soul

Rabbi Dovid Miller | Rosh Kollel RIETS Israel Kollel, Gruss Institute, Jerusalem

A central theme repeats itself again and again in parashas Eikev: the Land of Israel. Within the one hundred and eleven verses of our portion, the word “land” – the Land of Israel – appears no less than thirty times! If we were to give titles to Parshios, Eikev would certainly be “The parasha of the Land.”

Throughout the parasha, the Torah establishes a strong connection between the Land of Israel and Mitzvah observance. For instance, the following statement is made at the outset: “The entire Mitzvah that I instruct you today you shall be careful to observe, so that you may live and multiply, and enter and possess the land” (*Devarim* 8:1). Similar statements are made later in the parasha (for instances, *Devarim* 11:8). The Torah emphasizes that the Land of Israel is unique in that life within its boundaries depends on Mitzvah observance: “For the land that you enter therein to possess is not like the land of Egypt... a land that Hashem, your God, seeks out” (*Devarim* 11:10-11).

It is incumbent upon us to contemplate the essence of this connection between Mitzvah observance and the Land of Israel.

If we carefully examine the wording of the pesukim, there is a special emphasis that recurs three times in this context. In the above-mentioned verses, the Torah links the inheritance of the Land to the observance of “the entire Mitzvah.” The same idea is found at the end of the parasha, where we learn that if we keep “the entire Mitzvah” then Hashem will drive out the nations of the Land before us (*Devarim* 11:22-23).

What does the term “the entire Mitzvah” mean? The Midrash, quoted by Rashi, explains that “One

The Torah links the inheritance of the Land to the observance of “the entire Mitzvah.”

who begins a Mitzvah is told: Finish it!” Only a Mitzvah that is complete, finished, is termed “Mitzvah.” That is, “the entire Mitzvah” would mean “from beginning to end.” Certainly, this is a significant concept, but the interpretation does not explain





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why the Torah stipulates the inheritance of the Land specifically upon the observance of “the entire Mitzvah,” from beginning to end. Which Mitzvah? In which sense?

It is possible for us to interpret the expression in a slightly different manner, in a way that will clarify the close connection between observing “the entire Mitzvah” and inheriting the Land.

There is a fundamental dispute between the Rambam and the Ramban concerning whether the daily davening is a biblical commandment or a rabbinic enactment. Their disagreement is rooted in different understandings of the verse in our parasha: “And to serve Him with all your heart” (*Devarim* 11:13).

The Rambam, in his *Sefer HaMitzvot* (*Positive Commandment* 5), explains this verse based on the words of Chazal as cited by Rashi: “Service that is in the heart, which is prayer.” Davening is called “service,” and the Pasuk thus implies a positive Mitzvah of prayer.

However, the Ramban (in his elaborations on *Sefer HaMitzvot*) objects to the Rambam’s interpretation and proves from the teachings of Chazal elsewhere that the concept of daily prayer is

rabbinic alone. The Ramban thus interprets the verse “to serve Him with all your heart” differently: “Our service to Hashem should be with all our hearts, meaning with a complete intention for His name and without any iniquitous thoughts.” In other words, the “service in the heart” implies performing the

Our possession of the Land is a spiritual connection that includes eternity, holiness, and the enshrinement of the Divine Presence.

Mitzvos with a “whole heart,” with a complete intention for the sake of Heaven.

According to the Ramban, we learn that just as there is a concept of “the entire Mitzvah” in the quantitative sense – to perform the Mitzvah from beginning to end (as explained by Rashi), so also the idea applies qualitatively: to perform the Mitzvah “with all your heart,” with a complete intention for the sake of Heaven.

Rabbi Chaim Vital (in his *Likutei Torah*) explains the idea in a similar vein: just as each limb in the human body is composed of “body” and



Hashkafically Speaking



“soul,” and the physical limb cannot live without the soul that animates it, so each commandment has a “body” and a “soul.” The “body” of the Mitzvah is the action, while the “soul” is the heart’s intention in performing it. A complete Mitzvah is only achieved when both parts are present, the “body” and the “soul,” the action and the intention. Without intention, the Mitzvah becomes like a body without a soul, devoid of life. The Pasuk thus continues to explain that we must fulfill “the entire Mitzvah [...] that you may live.” This is how “life” is achieved.

This is how we merit to “go in and possess the land.” For this purpose, it is not sufficient to fulfill the Mitzvos without intention, like a body without a soul. The Land of Israel is different from all other lands; all lands have only a “body,” but the Land of Israel consists of both a “body” and a “soul,” as Rabbi Yehuda HaLevi describes in his Lamentation: “the life of souls, the air of your land.” Mitzvah fulfillment depends on the unique atmosphere of the Land of Israel, its special sanctity, its closeness to Hashem.

The inheritance of the land is not just a physical possession. It is a spiritual connection of the people of Israel to their land. It involves

both body and soul.

Based on this unique duality, Rabbi Avraham Yitzchak Kook (*Shmuot HaRaiya, Chayei Sarah*) explained the textual comparison made by Chazal (*Kiddushin* 2b) between the betrothal of a woman and Avraham’s purchase of the field of Ephron – Chazal employ the comparison, to derive the halacha that a betrothal can be affected by means of money. Rav Kook explained that the Sages mean to liken the acquisition of marriage not to the purchase of real estate in general, but rather specifically to the acquisition of the Land of Israel: marriage is a spiritual connection that is composed of body and soul, just like our possession of the Land is a spiritual connection that includes eternity, holiness, and the enshrinement of the Divine Presence.

Therefore, the Torah promises in our Parashah that if we, in our body and soul, fulfill “the entire Mitzvah” with both body and soul, we will merit to connect and attach ourselves to the body and soul of the Land of Israel: “a land that Hashem, your God, seeks; the eyes of Hashem, your God, are always upon it, from the beginning of the year to year’s end.”



MEKOM AVODA

Workplace Ethics & Halacha

Work in Eretz Yisrael

Rabbi Asher Meir | Torah and Policy Researcher

Our parasha compares the miraculous *mann* we ate in the desert with the agricultural produce waiting for us in the Land of Israel. According to many commentaries, the comparison favors the latter. For example, the Chizkuni writes that the phrases “He caused you hunger” (8:3) and “He disciplined you” (8:5) refer to the fact that a person who doesn’t have stores of food feels hungry (as pointed out in Yoma 18b). The Seforno understands the phrase “to humble you” (8:16) in the same way.

The trial of life in the desert with the *mann* is contrasted with the comfort of life in Israel: “a land with wheat and barley, vines and fig trees, pomegranates, olive oil and honey; a land where bread will not be scarce and you will lack nothing; a land where the rocks are iron and you can dig copper out of the hills.” (8:8-9). These verses describe a life where man’s sustenance appears to be the product of his own effort, not Hashem’s blessing. Hence, there’s the ever-present temptation to say, “My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.” Someone who has the feeling of self-

reliance is content.

This is, of course, a general insight into human nature, one expressed by the aggada that states that Adam was terrified when Hashem told him that the earth would sprout thistles; he thought that was being condemned to forage like an animal. When Hashem told him “By the sweat of your brow shall you eat bread,” meaning that his food would be the fruit of his unique human effort, he was reassured. (*Pesachim* 118a.)

This message doesn’t seem to be about sustenance in general, but rather specifically about sustenance in the Land of Israel, where a person’s earnings are a *direct* expression of Divine providence. This is superior to the *indirect* sustenance of public support.

Later in our parasha, the Torah promises that in the merit of fulfilling the mitzvos “you may gather in your grain, new wine, and olive oil.” (11:14.) Rabbi Yishmael (*Berachos* 35b) understands this to mean that an inherent part of a lifestyle of mitzvos is to “conduct them in an earthly way” (*derech eretz*). Rabbi





MEKOM AVODA Workplace Ethics & Halacha

Shimon bar Yochai considers that if we truly do Hashem's will, then we will not have to toil at all.

The Chasam Sofer (*Sukkah* 36a) suggests that Rabbi Yishmael's

Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai considers that if we truly do Hashem's will, then we will not have to toil at all.

statement applies uniquely to the when the Jewish people are settled in the Land of Israel. "...working the land is itself a mitzvah of the settlement of the Land of Israel . . . Just as a person wouldn't say, 'I won't put on tefillin because I am busy with Torah,' likewise, he shouldn't say, 'I won't gather in my grain due to occupation with Torah.' And possibly even other productive occupations are all a mitzvah."

The Avnei Nezer (CM 95) writes in the name of his father (Agudas Ezov) that "the principal mitzvah of settlement in the Land of Israel is if he supports himself from his own

income from Eretz Yisrael. But if he receives charity from abroad, he does not completely fulfill the mitzvah." A proof of this principle: the owner of an eved kenaani who flees from abroad to Israel is required to free him (*Gittin* 45a, *Avadim* 8:10). A slave's sustenance is from his master, yet the mitzvah of settling the land is not fulfilled if the ultimate source of income is from abroad. So the slave must be set free.

The Sfas Emes (*Masaai* 5643) connects the mitzvah of *birkas hamazon* from our parasha with the idea of self-sufficiency in Israel. The Midrash (*Bamidbar Rabba* 23:7) states that *birkas hamazon* before the people entered Israel was only the first blessing – *hazan*, praising Hashem for nourishing us. After they entered, they added *al haaretz ve-al hamazon*, the blessing praising Hashem for giving us the land and the nourishment.

Why is added praise called for, given that our nourishment was already provided? The Sfas Emes writes: "Although in the desert the people were sustained by the *mann*, which was more elevated and supernatural, the special stature of the Land of Israel is to receive beneficence in a natural way, through adhering to their unique root."



BIOGRAPHY & LEGACY

Sarah Schenirer – The Founder of Bais Yaakov

Rabbi Dov Loketch | Rabbi of Agudas Yisrael Mogen Avraham, Detroit

Last week we read about Shenirer's decision to found a school for young Jewish girls. This week we follow the fate of that first school.

Sarah was convinced that the only solution for maintaining the spiritual well-being of the young women of the generation was formal Torah education for young girls, and she was determined to create such a program. She writes: "Since I couldn't get the plan of starting a girls' school out of my mind, I turned for advice to my brother, who was then living in Petschlau (Czechoslovakia). In his initial reply, he just laughed at me: "What's the point of getting mixed up in party politics?' When I told him I was determined to go ahead with what I decided to do and had no intention of giving up, he wrote back to me, 'So come to Marienbad, where the Belzer Rebbe (Reb Yissachar Dov) is currently staying... and we'll hear whether the leader of the generation approves of your plan!' My joy was boundless, and even though I was very short of money, I quickly prepared for the journey."

"As soon as I arrived in Marienbad, my brother and I went straight to see the Rebbe. My brother, who was a regular visitor in the rebbe's court,

wrote in his note, 'She wants to lead Jewish girls along the Jewish path.' With my own ears I heard the Rebbe speak the words 'Blessing and Success,' which were the most exquisite balm to my ears, and filled me with fresh courage. The blessing of this great and righteous man inspired the highest hopes in me that my efforts would find their fulfillment."

With unbridled passion, devotion and determination, Sarah's dream was realized. In a euphoric diary entry written in Cheshvan, 1917, she writes: "Finally, finally, the goal has been reached! I'm sitting now in my very own schoolroom, and who can possibly appreciate how I feel? Has anyone experienced anything like what I am going through now? Have they seen the radiant faces of my children? The way their eyes sparkle when I explain to them the meaning of a blessing. With joy they ask me, 'Are we going to meet again tomorrow so we can hear some more beautiful things?' There are twenty-five of them altogether, most of





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them children I sewed dresses for, and now I ask their mothers, 'Will you allow me to provide them with spiritual clothing for their souls?' Twenty-five children, twenty-five souls that have been placed in my hands to bring to life."

"My Dreams are Coming True"

A month after opening the school, she expressed her exhilaration over the school's rapid growth: "The school is growing from day to day. My dreams are coming true. Thank G-d, I now have forty students. Somehow every difficulty seems to have vanished ...The children are really good material. Innocent creatures who have never tasted sin. It's interesting to see how eagerly they arrive at school each day, how keen they are to hear fresh ideas . . . They know that a person can lead a happy life if they serve the Creator with true enthusiasm. I'm so busy with all the work that nothing else exists for me."

Sarah Schenirer married for a short time but never had children. She always regarded her students as her own children. One of the key figures who assisted Sarah was Rabbi Mottel Luksenberg, the father of one of her students. In her diary, she reflects on the fact that

Rabbi Luksenberg took significant time away from his Torah learning for this critically important undertaking. "He threw himself, heart and soul into the project. It makes me very uncomfortable that he takes a few hours away from the time he had set aside for learning Torah to spend on us, but I comfort myself with the thought that girls' education is so important and burning a problem that it certainly constitutes an instance of 'Et laasot laHashem, heferu Torathech'..."

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Event + Response = Outcome

Rebbetzin Ilana Cowland

Relationships Coach and author of *The Moderately Anxious Everybody*

(Excerpted from my recently published book)

Picture someone standing on a stage about to perform. Suddenly, a ball is thrown and bounces straight off him.

We have no control of things outside of our control...This idea can paralyze us.

He's taken by surprise and does not appreciate the discomfort of being hit by a ball. After a few seconds, the ball comes straight back at him. This keeps happening.

The person is thrown by this occurrence and is now on alert for more balls. He can no longer focus on what he came on stage to do. The stress of an unwanted ball hitting him at any moment is messing with his performance.

Interestingly enough, the next guy seems to have a worse experience. In his case, a ball is thrown at him, but it's thrown harder. And it's followed by another ball and then another. He counted eight balls altogether

thrown at him. Yet, the balls are not hindering his performance, and he is not experiencing anxiety. His performance is actually excellent.

Now let's add some context. Guy number one is a singer. Guy number two is a juggler.

It is hard to get through life without being impeded by stress, when, if you think about it, anything can happen. We have no control of things outside of our control, whether we're talking about the weather, other people's moods or the balls that get thrown at you occasionally, with no warning.

This idea can paralyze us. Life may be great now, but at any time, something might come out of left field that can interfere with my smooth life. So it's very lovely to be optimistic about things, but is it realistic to assume that I will never encounter curveballs? Honestly, no it's not. Life throws things at you at any point, without warning.

Sorry. I know that is not comforting.

So what is the difference between the singer and the juggler in our example? And here I share a secret I learned many years ago from my





mentor Jack Canfield, who credits this idea to psychotherapist Dr. Robert Resnick. (I haven't yet met Jack, but I still consider him a mentor.) It's remarkably simple and life changing.

E+R=O

Event plus Response equals Outcome.

The singers in life don't know this equation. The singer was standing on the stage about to perform for the audition they had prepared when a ball came and ruined everything. The singer is living the terrifying alternative equation $E=O$. The ball (the event) ruined the audition (the outcome).

There are countless examples of this. The mean comment hurt me. The boss ruined my day. My spouse made me miserable. The weather depressed me. The bank account stressed me out. Look how much power these events have. They are directly affecting the outcome. And you have no control over these events.

So the negative outcomes can come at you at any time, casting clouds on life even when it's going well. The juggler in life knows this equation. He was standing on the stage, and the balls came his way. What happened next was not about

the balls. It was about what he did with the balls.

The mean comment was a mean comment. What happened next in my mind determined whether I responded with pain or with understanding. The boss didn't ruin anyone's day. He was being his usually sulky self. How much attention I give him and whether I take his comments seriously will determine how my day goes. My spouse may be miserable but doesn't make me miserable. I make myself miserable. I may end the relationship because I don't want to be married to someone miserable, but my spouse doesn't make me anything.. What happens depends on my response to the misery.

The addition of the Response to the equation is not just semantics. It is the transference of power from the Event to me. The Event is just that. The Event. What happens ultimately in the Outcome depends on my Response. Every single time.

When we come to recognize and internalize this, we are in a completely different situation in life. We can now walk through life, recognizing that the power of what happens in the end is not tied up in the uninvited event that may happen upon us but rather in our response to it.



PARASHA HALACHA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE

Birkas Hamazon in the City of Balagan

Josh and Tammy Kruger

The Story

In the city of Balagan, on a street named Gevalt, lived a boy named Barney Mevulbal. He was nice and funny and very, very, very mixed up. One day Barney entered his favorite restaurant to order some dinner. He sat down at his favorite table and was pleased to see his favorite waiter walk over to take his order.

"I'd like to order a super cheese pizza with extra cheese, please," Barney said.

The waiter frowned. "Umm... this is still a meat restaurant, so there won't be any pizza today...again."

"Oh. In that case, I'll take two hamburgers with everything on them. But please hold the tomatoes, ketchup, mustard, onions, lettuce, and pickles. Please hold the burgers, too."

The waiter returned shortly after with two hamburger buns.

Barney devoured the first hamburger bun and then decided to eat the second hamburger bun at a slower pace. "These are great! I want to savor every bite," he thought.

Soon the waiter came to check on Barney. "Can I bring you something else?" he asked. "My work shift finishes at 6 o'clock, so I'll be leaving soon."

"Is it almost 6 o'clock!?" asked Barney. "Oh no! It's getting late. I need to get home quickly and start my homework."

"I'll bring you a *birkon*," said the waiter.

"Thanks, but I'm in a rush," said Barney. "I'll say *birkas hamazon* later when I'm back at home." He asked the waiter to place the remaining half of his hamburger bun in a take away bag so he could take it home, paid a very discounted price, and left the restaurant.

Along the way, Barney bumped into his friend Yehuda at the neighborhood park.

"Hi, Yehuda. Sorry, but I can't talk right now. I'm in a rush to get home and start my homework."

Yehuda smiled. "I think you can relax, Barney. The school year finished last week, and you won't have to worry about homework for another two months. Would you like to play some





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basketball with me in the park?"

"Absolutely," said Barney.

Forty minutes later, the boys decided to take a break.

"I win again" exclaimed Barney proudly. "I missed the net twenty-five more times than you did, Yehuda!"

"Congratulations," smiled Yehuda. "By the way, what's in that bag?"

"Oh my goodness!" said Barney. "It's the leftovers from my meal. I can't remember if I said *birkas hamazon*. I'm going to go home and call the restaurant to check. Maybe they'll remember. Would you like the rest of my hamburger bun, Yehuda? I guess it's too late to eat it now."

"Thanks for the offer," said Yehuda, "but we're about to start dinner soon at my home. See you tomorrow!"

Barney quickly made his way home, though he accidentally entered four other homes along the way. By the time he had arrived at his own home, he had completely forgotten about saying *birkas hamazon*.

"Better get started on my homework right away. Now where did I leave my pencil?" Barney wondered.

An hour later, after searching every drawer and shelf in the fridge, Barney

forgot about doing his homework and started thinking about food again.

"I sure could go for a hamburger. Wait a minute – I still haven't said *birkas hamazon*!" He closed the fridge and went to find a *birkon*...in the laundry machine.

Discussion

What are the four halachic mistakes Barney makes?

1) You should say *birkas hamazon* in the place where you eat your meal (*Shulchan Aruch* 184:1). If you forgot to say it where you ate, then you should try to go back. However, going back to where you ate is not absolutely necessary (*Mishna Berura* 184:5).

2) If you're not sure whether you said *birkas hamazon*, then you should say it, provided you ate your fill (*Shulchan Aruch* 184:4).

3) If you are unsure whether you said *birkas hamazon*, and you happen to have some bread leftover, then it's best to eat the bread and then say *birkas hamazon* (*Shulchan Aruch* 184:2). This ensures that you will not say a *beracha levatala*.

4) You can only say *birkas hamazon* while you are still full from the meal



PARASHA HALACHA FOR THE SHABBOS TABLE



that you ate. We learn this from the words in our parasha –

ואכלת ושבעת וברכת.

It is a requirement that we be full, **ושבעת**, in order to say *birkas hamazon*. For this reason, most poskim rule that *birkas hamazon* should be said within 72 minutes of finishing the meal (*Mishna Berura* 184:20). However, if you forgot and more than 72 minutes has passed, then you can still say *birkas hamazon bedieved*, as long as you did not become hungry since the

meal and as long as you did not eat anything else in the meantime (*Shulchan Aruch* 184:5). Once six hours has gone by, it has become too late to say *birkas hamazon* even if you still do not feel hungry (*Magen Avraham* 184:9).

Q: How is our story connected to the parasha?

A: Parshas Eikev discusses the mitzvah to say *birkas hamazon* (*Devarim* 8:10).



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Kehillah

Community. Education. Leadership

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Kehillah is an organization dedicated to serving the Anglo-Torah community living in Israel. It is active in areas of community, education, and leadership.

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