



הַמִּזְרָחִי

HAMIZRACHI

PARSHA WEEKLY



PARSHAT EIKEV
5782 • 2022

ISRAEL
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וְנָתַתִּי מִטֶּר אֲרָצְכֶם בְּעֵתוֹ יוֹרֵה וּמִלְקוֹשׁ
וְאִסְפֹּת דְגָנְךָ וְתִירְשֶׁךָ וַיִּצְהָרְךָ:
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Based in Jerusalem and with branches across the globe, Mizrachi – an acronym for *merkaz ruchani* (spiritual center) – was founded in 1902 by Rabbi Yitzchak Yaakov Reines, and is led today by Rabbi Doron Perez. Mizrachi's role was then and remains with vigor today, to be a proactive partner and to take personal responsibility in contributing to the collective destiny of *Klal Yisrael* through a commitment to Torah, the Land of Israel and the People of Israel.



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Mini Israel

The Unique Role of Shuls in the Diaspora Today



Rabbi Doron Perez

Executive Chairman, World Mizrachi

There is a genuinely transformative commentary of the *Kli Yakar* on this week's Parasha that sheds a totally new light on the pivotal role of the Beit Knesset – synagogue – in Diaspora life today.

This commentary relates to a fascinating Talmudic interpretation of the last verse of the second paragraph of the Shema which appears in this week's Parasha. But first, a word of introduction about the *Kli Yakar*.

This unique commentary was written by Rabbi Ephraim of Luntschitz who was the Chief Rabbi of Prague after the *Maharal* and one of the towering Rabbinic leaders of the time. He was known as an exceptional *darshan* with a rare ability to connect the depth and breadth of Torah to the contemporary and relevant issues of the day, weaving together Biblical, Talmudic and Midrashic insights intertwined with an uplifting and relevant message. His commentary on this week's Parasha is no exception.

Can people live long in the Diaspora?

The last verse of the second paragraph of the Shema implies that the promise of longevity of life is **only** in the Land of Israel. Having discussed the important commandments of learning Torah, wearing Tefillin and placing a Mezuzah on the doorposts of our homes, the verse then states :

”למען ירבו ימיכם וימי בניכם על האדמה אשר נשבע ה' לאבותיכם לתת להם כימי השמים על-הארץ.”

“In order that you and your children may live a long life, **in the land** that Hashem swore to your fathers to assign to them, as long as there is a heaven over the earth.” (Devarim 11:21)

This interpretation of long life applying only in the Land of Israel is the view of Rabbi Yochanan in the Talmud (Massechet Brachot, 8a) where he asks:

”איכא סבי בבבל?”

Can there be elderly people in Babylon?

After all, the verse seems to imply that only in Eretz Yisrael is there the blessing of long life. The Talmud then answers that since people go to shul early and return from shul late at night, spending significant time in the synagogue, they therefore merit long life.

The *Kli Yakar* on the pasuk raises the following question. He posits that the answer of the Talmud does **not** address the question. The question of Rabbi Yochanan was how can there be long life outside of Israel when the verse specifically implies only in Israel. The answer of the Talmud is that people spend a lot of time in shul in Babylon addressing the promise of long life in the Land?

The *Kli Yakar* answers this with a brilliant insight and unique concept as follows:

”ואם כן האדמה שבכל בתי כנסיות של חוץ היא האדמה של ארץ ישראל”

“..therefore the land (the very ground) of all shuls in *chutz l'Aretz* is considered the Land of Eretz Yisrael”.

This is a remarkable insight. The *Kli Yakar* maintains, based on this Talmudic interpretation of the verse that indeed a shul in *chutz l'Aretz* is a 'Mini Israel' - a small part of Eretz Yisrael.

The *Kli Yakar* bases this idea on another unusual Talmudic teaching.

Synagogues flying through the air to Israel?

The Talmud states (Megillah 29a):

”רבי אלעזר הקפרא אומר, עתידין בתי כנסיות ובתי מדרשות שבבבל שיקבעו בארץ ישראל...”

“Rabbi Elazar Hakapar says - In the future, synagogues and Torah learning centers in Babylon will be uprooted and entrenched in Eretz Yisrael”.

What does this mean - shuls flying to Israel? Why is it that specifically the shuls and learning centers from overseas will be transported to the Land of Israel and nothing else of life in *chutz l'Aretz*?

He maintains that from here you see that indeed the precincts and land of a shul and beit midrash in *chutz l'Aretz* is considered a part of the Land of Israel. In the messianic era, these parcels of the Land of Israel will therefore return to their source.¹

How are we to understand this? How can a synagogue situated outside the Land of Israel possibly be considered a part of Eretz Yisrael? What is the logical basis for such an unusual concept?

A Spiritual Embassy

The truth is that it is not unusual at all and is easily understood in the modern era. The diplomatic reality of a political embassy in international law serves as a great example. Where there is a country with diplomatic relations with another, the embassy is considered extraterritorial land of the motherland. Geographically, Israel may have an embassy physically located in New York, Pretoria, London or Paris. The land itself, though, is considered literally part of the homeland. One who enters any embassy enters into the precincts of the mother country with the



How can a synagogue situated outside the Land of Israel possibly be considered a part of Eretz Yisrael?

laws of that country applying, offering diplomatic immunity, etc. This remarkable legal reality beautifully explains the role of a synagogue and Torah learning center in *chutz l'Aretz*. They are indeed supposed to be designated as spiritual embassies.

The validity and veracity of an embassy can only be a reality if there is a mother country - a homeland. So, too, with a shul, since the Jewish People have been given the gift of the Land of Israel as their spiritual and national homeland, it follows that when Jewish communities were exiled and had to relocate to *chutz l'Aretz*, the shuls and learning centers they built to serve as spiritual embassies of their homeland - Eretz Yisrael.

Not only a 'Mini Mikdash'

This adds a totally new and innovative dimension to the role and purpose of a synagogue. Generally speaking, our sages have called every synagogue a *מקדש מעט*, mini *Mikdash* - a small Temple. This teaching also appears in close proximity to the above mentioned Talmudic teaching. Based on the following verse in the book of Ezekiel where Hashem promises the Jewish people about to be exiled to Babylon - 'ואהי להם למקדש מעט' - 'I will be for them like a small Temple' (Ezekiel 11:16). From this the Talmud learns:

’אמר רבי יצחק - אלו בתי כנסיות ובתי מדרשות שבבבל’-

‘Rabbi Yitzchak says, these refer to shuls and Torah learning centers in Babylon.’ (Megilla 29a)

Clearly, these places are seen as places of G-d's Presence, the *Shechina* - of Divine connection. It is for this reason that a shul structure mimics that of the Temple in Jerusalem. All shuls face Jerusalem, have

an Aron HaKodesh, a Holy Ark (like in the Holy of Holies) a continuous candle (like the Ner Tamid), a Bimah and Amud (like the internal and external altars).

The novel idea presented in this article is that a shul is not only a mini *Mikdash*, but also a mini Israel. It is not only a place of religious and spiritual connection to Hashem but also one of national connection to *Klal Yisrael* - part and parcel of the Land of Israel and collective Jewish destiny.

Delegitimizing Israel and the role of a shul today

The importance of a shul being a part of Israel is so relevant today. In the new incarnation of antisemitism as anti-Zionism today, the aim of the enemies of Israel is to sever any connection between the Jewish People's connection to Torah and its connection to the Land of Israel. To sever the umbilical cord between Jewish and Zionist identity - between the core values of *Torah* and *Eretz Yisrael*.

In this climate, the role of the shul and learning center specifically in the Diaspora is more important than ever. It has the dual role of being both a place for all Jews and those wishing to come close to Judaism, to build a connection to G-d and also the same people building their connection to *Klal Yisrael*, the inextricable link between the Jewish People, the Torah and the Land of Israel.

One who steps into any shul or Yeshiva today in any community around the world, ought to feel a deep connection to G-dliness and the centrality of Israel in Jewish communal life.

1. The *Maharsha*, Rabbi Shmuel Eidels offers the exact same insight in his commentary on the above Talmudic teaching (Berachot 8a) and evokes this same Talmudic statement of shuls returning to Eretz Yisrael (Megilla 29a as above). Interestingly the *Kli Yakar* and the *Maharsha* (contemporaries living in the later 16th and early 17th centuries) clearly state in almost identical language that shuls and learning centers in *chutz l'Aretz*, are a mini Israel, literally a part of the Land of Israel.

More Action



Rabbi Reuven Taragin
Educational Director, World MizRachi
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רבי חנינא בן דוסא אומר... כל שיראת חטאו קודמת לחכמתו, חכמתו מתקיימת. וכל שחכמתו קודמת ליראת חטאו, אין חכמתו מתקיימת כל שמעשיו מרבין מחכמתו, חכמתו מתקיימת. וכל שחכמתו מרבה ממעשיו, אין חכמתו מתקיימת (אבות ג:ט):

רבי אלעזר בן עזריה אומר... כל שחכמתו מרבה ממעשיו, למה הוא דומה? לאילו שענפיו מרבין ושרשי מעטיו, והרוח באה ועוקרתו והופכתו על פניו... אבל כל שמעשיו מרבין מחכמתו, למה הוא דומה? לאילו שענפיו מעטין ושרשי מרבין, שאפלו כל הרוחות שבעולם באות ונושבות בו אין מזיזין אותו ממקומו... (אבות ג:ז):

More Action

Last week we saw how Rebbi Chanina ben Dosa and Rebbi Elazar ben Azarya highlight the importance of action in general and specifically as a complement to wisdom. The two emphasize not only the problem with having **less** action than wisdom, but also the need for **more** action than wisdom.

A situation where one performs less action than what their wisdom dictates is understandably problematic; we need to translate theoretical wisdom into practical action. But why should one have more action than wisdom?

The commentators offered two explanations. The Meiri understood the Tannaim to be teaching the importance of doing more than just what pure reason requires. The category of *lifnim mishurat hadin* (supererogatory) conduct is a great example of this idea. *Halachah* may require only a certain minimal level of action. Caring and passionate people, though, go beyond this letter of the law.

Avot D'Rebbe Natan (32:1) seems to have understood the need for additional action differently because it links the requirement to the *pasuk* of “*na'aseh v'nishma*.” Proper commitment to *avodat Hashem* means fulfilling *mitzvot* even before we understand the rationale behind them; in this way, actions exceed wisdom.¹

This explains why Rebbi Elazar ben Azarya quoted a *pasuk* that deals with

bitachon (trust in Hashem) as the basis for this idea. Acting before understanding hinges on trusting that Hashem gives us Torah and *mitzvot* that are meaningful and worthwhile.

Sustaining Wisdom

The Tannaim see action exceeding wisdom as more than just an important ideal. They see it as a condition for sustaining wisdom. Rebbi Elazar ben Azarya emphasizes this point through his comparison of the relationship of wisdom to action to that of branches to roots. One would have thought that wisdom is the root from which action sprouts. Rebbe Elazar teaches us that ideally, wisdom should stem from action. Active performance of *mitzvot* and good deeds helps us develop a proper understanding of life and of the world. We should therefore ground our lives and perspectives in action.

Rabbeinu Yonah took this idea a step further in order to explain why wisdom's sustainability hinges on **greater** action. Since wisdom stems from action, one who values wisdom will act beyond what their wisdom dictates with the aim of fostering additional wisdom. Not acting this way indicates a lack of appreciation for wisdom and wisdom that is not properly appreciated is unsustainable.

A Healthy Balance

Rebbi Elazar ben Azarya's illustrative comparison between man and tree helps us appreciate the major impact

that balancing wisdom and action has on our spiritual fortitude. The identity and belief system of one whose actions exceed his wisdom are impenetrable — he is well-grounded, stable, and protected from passing winds. One whose identity depends on his own wisdom, however, can be swayed by the “winds” of passing ideas and ideologies; he may find himself, to use Rebbi Elazar ben Azarya's term, “flipped on his head.”

A person focused upon action has two feet on the ground. He has a strong foundation and is not susceptible to the blustery winds of changing times.

Wisdom's Context

Over the past few weeks, we have studied Rebbi Chanina ben Dosa's two statements about wisdom's sustainability. Wisdom is of great value and worth pursuing, but its stability hinges on it being preceded by *yirah* (fear of G-d) and exceeded by *ma'aseh*. A *yirah* foundation gives the wisdom acquired afterwards true meaning, while excessive action provides wisdom with strong footing and fertile ground to grow from.

May we appreciate the importance of *yirah* and *ma'aseh* and use both to develop and sustain healthy and meaningful wisdom.

● Summarized by Yedidyah Rosenwasser.

1. See the Tiferet Yisrael commentary, which explains Avot D'Rebbe Natan this way.

HAFTARAH - PARSHANUT ON THE PARSHA

Tzion and the Return to Eden



Rabbanit Shani Taragin

Educational Director, World Mizrahi

The Tur (Orach Chaim 428) teaches: “From (parashat) Bereishit until the 17th of Tammuz the haftarah follows the theme of the parasha; from then onwards (the theme of the haftarah is) according to the date and the events (related to it): there are three (haftarot) of rebuke, then seven of comfort... the seven of comfort are ‘Nachamu’ for parashat Va’etchanan, ‘Va-tomer Tzion’ for parashat Ekev, ‘Aniya so’eret’ for Re’eh, ‘Anokhi’ for Shoftim, ‘Roni akara’ for Ki Tetze, ‘kumi uri’ for Ki Tavo, and ‘sos asis’ for Nitzavim...”. The haftaroth read from the 17th of Tammuz until the end of the year were chosen on the basis of their connection with the events of that period: there are three haftarot of rebuke for the period between the 17th of Tammuz and Tish’a B’Av, followed by seven of comfort for the seven Shabbatot after Tish’a B’Av – from parashat Va’etchanan until parashat Nitzavim.

In addition to this week’s haftarah selected as part of the post-trauma process of consolation, perhaps there is also commentary on this week’s parasha, Parshat Ekev, found in the words of this week’s haftarah – “Tzion says...” (Yeshayahu 49:14-51:3).

An initial reading of this week’s haftarah reveals various associations with Parashat Ekev:

1) In the parasha we find a warning: “Guard yourselves lest your hearts be tempted... and Hashem’s anger will burn against you, and He will stop up the heavens and there will be no rain... and you will quickly die off from upon the good land” (11:16-17). In the haftarah, the prophet announces in Hashem’s name: “At My rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a desert... I clothe the heavens in black

garments...”(50:2). Yeshayahu’s words broadcast the fulfillment of Hashem’s warnings of drought when we sin.

2) In the concluding pasuk of the haftarah, Yeshayahu pronounces “For Hashem will comfort Tzion, He shall comfort all her desolate places, and He shall make her desert like Eden, and her Arava like Hashem’s garden” (51:3). The primordial Gan Eden, the garden of Hashem, is a place where water flowed abundantly from four rivers and rain, irrigating the garden and all its vegetation. This week’s parasha introduces Eretz Yisrael similarly as “a good land, a land of streams of water, fountains and depths that flow from the valleys and the mountains” (Devarim 8:7).

Moshe Rabbenu shares with Am Yisrael that their entry into Eretz Yisrael closes the circle that was opened with Adam’s expulsion from the garden. Adam’s banishment meant the annulment of G-d’s plan to place in His garden the man that He created. Its uniqueness lay mainly in the fact that it was there that “G-d moved about in the garden” (Bereishit 3:8). If Adam had merited, he would have lived forever in the place where G-d “moves about.” And reveals His “Shekhina”. This intention was never entirely rescinded for Am Yisrael as a nation to fulfill the primordial plan of creation through settlement in Eretz Yisrael; Am Yisrael replaced Adam, and the land of Israel has replaced the Garden of Eden. Similarly, the revelation of the Shekhina, which in the past occurred in the Garden of Eden, is revealed in this week’s parasha as the exclusive quality of the Land of Israel – “It is a land which the Lord your G-d looks after, on which the Lord your G-d always keeps His eye, from the year’s beginning to the year’s end” (Devarim 11:12).

The Ramban, alludes to this comparison as well in the beginning of his commentary to the Torah. He refers to the Garden of Eden as “the choicest of all places created on earth,” and he employs the same phrase to describe the Land of Israel – “the choicest among inhabitable lands.” He explains that just like Adam was banished from the garden on account of his sins, it is therefore warranted that when a people continues to sin, it is driven from its land and another people comes to inhabit its land, for this has forever been G-d’s rule in the world, all the more so with regard to what the Scripture tells that Canaan is cursed and destined for eternal slavery (Bereishit 9:27) and is not worthy of inheriting the choicest among inhabitable lands. Instead, the servants of G-d, the offspring of His beloved, will inherit it, as it is written (Tehillim 105:44), “He gave them the lands of nations; they inherited the wealth of peoples, that they might keep His laws and observe His teachings,” meaning, He expelled from there those who rebelled against Him and had His servants settle there in order that they know that through His service they will inherit it. But if they sin against Him, the land will expel them, just as it expelled the nation that preceded them.”

This week’s haftarah consoles Am Yisrael based on the nation’s relationship with the Land of Israel as explained in this week’s parasha. Yeshayahu reminds us that just as we were banished from the Land (i.e. “Garden of Eden”) due to our sins, so too, we will merit return to the Land, and Hashem will restore the Land to its “Gan-Eden”-like state of rivers and rain, and constant Divine presence!

Halachic Q&A



Rabbi Yosef Zvi Rimon

Head, Mizrahi Rabbinic Council | Founder and Chairman, Sulamot

Question: Is one allowed to play soccer on Shabbat?

Answer: The Gemara in Eiruvin 104b says that it is forbidden to play with nuts on Shabbat on the floor because one may come to level out holes with them. The Shulchan Aruch (OC 338:5) paskins this way lehalacha, and seemingly is only concerned in a case when the floor is not paved. The Rema, on the other hand, is stringent even when the floor is paved. Nowadays, all of our homes have finished floors, and therefore even Ashkenazim could play with balls inside. Outside, however, it is assur for Ashkenazim even on a floor that is paved (Shmirat Shabbat Kehilchata). Purely based on this, we would say that Sephardim can play on any paved area, and Ashkenazim cannot play even on paved areas (unless it is inside).

However, there is a different reason why this is problematic. The Yerushalmi (Ta'anit 4:5) writes that the town Tur Shimon was destroyed because they played ball on Shabbat. Therefore, according to both Ashkenazim and Sephardim, it is not appropriate to play sports on Shabbat as it does not give proper honor to Shabbat. Children can play in the house or in the courtyard which is paved. It is appropriate to play with your child in a family game or to learn with them while playing in order to elevate the nature of the playing to something more appropriate for Shabbat.

Question: If I washed my hands for netilat yadayim and then touched somebody else, do I need to wash again?

Answer: The Gemara in Chulin (106a) explains that the Chachamim enacted that people's hands are considered impure before eating bread and that we need to wash hands to remove the impurity. The Shulchan Aruch (OC 162:4) writes that if somebody washes his hands and – while still wet – touches somebody else's unwashed hands, the one who washed must wash again. There are a few important exceptions. There is only a need to rewash if you touch somebody's unwashed hands, but if you touch an object or even a person but not their hands, you do not need to rewash.

Additionally, once a person has dried his hands, even if he touches somebody else's hands that are not washed, he does not need to wash his hands again (Mishna Berurah 162:66).

Another important note: Many people are careful not to speak between drying hands and the blessing of "hamotzi," but are not careful about staying quiet between the washing and the drying. In fact, interruptions between the washing and the drying are prohibited, as many poskim believe the mitzvah of netilat yadayim is only completed with the drying. On the other hand, remaining quiet between drying hands and hamotzi is a minhag we follow to be extra careful but it is not strictly prohibited. A 3-year-old girl once asked me whether she could suck her thumb after netilat yadayim. Based on what we have said, this is permissible after drying her hands.

Question: What is the proper procedure for leftovers from shvi'it produce?

Answer: Leftovers from shvi'it produce should not be thrown directly into the garbage. There are two options:

- 1) The first option is to have a garbage or some other vessel designated specifically for shvi'it leftovers. The leftovers stay in this bag until they rot, and then they can be taken out with the regular trash. Before each meal, a piece of paper or newspaper should be placed in between the leftovers in the trash from the previous meal and the current meal.
- 2) Alternatively, one can collect all of the leftover shvi'it items in a plastic bag, tie it, and throw it in the regular trash.

Question: When I eat fruit which is kedushat shvi'it, many times there remains a tad of leftover fruit around the pit. Does that need to be thrown out separately?

Answer: It is best to eat as much as you can get up until the pit. If after doing so there still remains a bit of fruit around the pit, Rav Elyashiv holds you can throw all of it in the trash. Others are stringent and hold that this needs to be thrown out separately, as we discussed above. In practice, if you have garbage for shvi'it nearby it is best to put it there, but if you do not have anything close you can rely on Rav Elyashiv and throw it out normally.

● Translated from Hebrew and abbreviated by Yaakov Panitch.

תקציר פרשת עקב

הרבנית שרון רימון



ולבקש יותר (כשם שהתלוננו שהמון לא מספיק מגוון)? האם הם מכבדים את הכללים שה' קבע להם לגבי השימוש בשפע (כשם שהיו צריכים ללקוט את המון בזמן הנכון ובכמות הנכונה)? ובכלל – האם הם מרגישים שהשפע מגיע להם מאת ה' או שמא הם מקבלים אותו כמובן מאליו?

כך, המון חינוך את ישראל להבין שבשעת קושי ומצוקה ה' תמיד ידאג להם, ומצד שני – להבין שיד ה' עומדת גם מאחורי השפע שהם מקבלים, והם תמיד תלויים בה'.

כאשר ישראל ייכנסו אל הארץ, ויתחילו להשיג דברים בעצמם (לגדל, לרכוש, לכבוש, להצליח), וייהפכו לאנשי חיל (אנשי ממון), עליהם להמשיך לחוש את החוויה שרכשו בשנות הנדודים במדבר: "וְזָכַרְתָּ אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ כִּי הוּא הִנְתָּן לָךְ כַּח לַעֲשׂוֹת חַיִל" (פס' ח).

תקופת המדבר היוותה תקופת נסיון ולמידה כהכנה לקראת החיים בארץ, ובה למדו ישראל לבטוח בה' ולדעת שהכול מתנהל על פיו: גם הטובה וגם הרעה מנוהלות על ידי ה', המשגיח על הכול ומסובב את הכול.

בתקופת המדבר למדו ישראל להתמודד עם ייסורים וקושי. מתוך כך הם למדו מהי תלות בה'; למדו לפנות לה' בעת צרה ולבקש ממנו מענה; וידעו, שה' בסופו של דבר הוא היחיד שיכול לתת להם מענה ולדאוג לקיומם בשעות הקשות ביותר. **המון היה המענה שה' נתן להם לייסורי הרעב** שבמדבר. ממנו למדו ישראל שבתוך העינוי יש גם טובה שה' משפיע על האדם; בזמן הייסורים והקושי האדם מבחין שה' גם נותן לו אפשרות להתמודדות, מחזיק בידו ועוזר לו לעבור את הקשיים. מתוך כך הוא מגיע להבנה שה' מייסרו, כשם שאב מייסר את בנו, כדי לחנכו: "...כִּי עַל כָּל מוֹצֵא פִי ה' יִחְיֶה הָאָדָם..." (פס' ג); "וְיִדְעָתָּ עִם לְבָבְךָ כִּי פָאָשָׁר יִיָּסֵר אִישׁ אֶת בְּנוֹ ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ מִסֶּרְךָ" (פס' ה).

מצד שני, בתקופת המדבר למדו ישראל גם מהו שפע אלקי נסי מוחלט, וכיצד אמורים להתייחס אליו.

המון היה שפע אלקי קבוע שישראל קיבלו במדבר, ובכך היווה נסיון בפני עצמו: האם ישראל מצליחים לחוש את יד ה' גם כשהם מקבלים שפע? האם הם בוטחים בה' שיתן להם שפע טוב ככל שיצטרכו (כשם שהוריד להם את המון בכל יום מחדש)? האם הם מצליחים להודות על הטוב שיש להם, ולא להתלונן

ל סף הכניסה אל הארץ, משה מתאר לבני ישראל את טוב הארץ, אל מול הקשיים והנסיונות בהם עמדו ישראל במדבר (פרק ח' פס' ב-טז). ההשוואה בין המצב בארץ ישראל למצב במדבר מדגיש את הטוב של הארץ, ויחד עם זאת מדגיש את הלקחים החשובים שרכשו בני ישראל במסע במדבר, וצריכים ללוות אותם בהתמודדות בארץ ישראל.

משה מתאר את המציאות במדבר משתי זוויות: האחת – הקשיים והנסיונות הרבים (ח', ב-ה). והשנייה – שפע הטוב שה' נתן לישראל במדבר (ח', טו-טז).

המון מופיע בשני התאורים הללו, משתי זוויות שונות: בקטע המתאר את הקשיים והנסיונות של ההליכה במדבר, המון הוא המענה לנסיונות: "הַלִּיכָה ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ זֶה אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה בְּמִדְבָּר לְמַעַן עֲנֶתְךָ לְנִסְתָּךְ... וְיָרַעְבָּךָ וְיִאֲכַלְךָ אֶת הָמֶן" (ב-ג)

בקטע המתאר את השפע האלקי שניתן לישראל במדבר – המון הוא השפע והוא מהווה נסיון בפני עצמו: "הִמְאֲכַלְךָ מֶן בְּמִדְבָּר... לְמַעַן עֲנֶתְךָ וְלְמַעַן נִסְתָּךְ" (טז)



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Orange Juice and Summer Vacation



Sivan Rahav Meir and Yedidya Meir
World Mizrahi Scholars-in-Residence

Every year when reading Parashat Eikev I am reminded of this story: Once at a kiosk on a Manhattan street I asked for a small squeezed orange juice. I was given a giant glass full of juice. “I asked for a small,” I told the kiosk owner in order to correct his mistake, but he pointed to two larger glasses: “What you got was a small. Here, this is a medium, and this is a large!” A glass in Israel that is called “large” is “small” in the United States, but I am sure that in another few years in Israel, what is “large” today will also be considered “small.”

One of the great dangers that the book of Deuteronomy warns about is a society of abundance where we have everything – and it's all large-sized. It's a challenge to live in poverty, but it is also a challenge to live with wealth. It's difficult being hungry, but it's also not simple to be satisfied. And these days, the challenge of finding satisfaction amidst affluence is very real.

Moshe Rabbeinu's warning in this Parashat Eikev concerns how the good life of the present can cause us to forget the past and neglect the future:

“Lest you eat and be sated, and build good houses and dwell therein, and your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and gold increase, and all that you have increases; and your heart grows haughty, and you forget the Lord, your G-d, Who has brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage... and you will say to yourself, My strength and the might of my hand that has accumulated this wealth for me.” (Deuteronomy 8:12-14, 17)

Previous generations demonstrated self-sacrifice in pogroms and in the Holocaust. Our self-sacrifice is in continuing



During vacation, there are numerous opportunities for channeling kindness, being charitable, and volunteering, even within the home.

to cleave to their values despite comfortable circumstances – with a large glass of orange juice in our hand.



We read the farewell speech of Moshe Rabbeinu at the height of summer's heat. When millions of children are at home, the Torah portion of Eikev offers a few golden rules for life that are especially appropriate for summer vacation.

- “You shall not bring an abomination into your home.” Everything is available today; good and evil. But not every kind of garbage needs to gain entry into our living rooms, into our digital devices, and into our hearts. How difficult but essential it is to filter, to supervise, to say “no.”
- “Because HaShem your G-d is bringing you to a good land . . . a land of wheat and barley and grapevines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey.” For thousands of years, Jews read these words while looking out of windows in Yemen or Russia. They could only imagine.
- “He does justice for the orphan and the widow, and loves the stranger, giving him food and clothing.” This is how the Torah describes G-d, Who is concerned for the weak and the needy, while we are enjoined to walk in His ways. During vacation, there are numerous

opportunities for channeling kindness, being charitable, and volunteering, even within the home.

- “Carve for yourself two tablets like the first.” Our Torah portion describes moments of reconciliation: After the sin of the golden calf and the breaking of the first Tablets of the Covenant, G-d tells Moshe to carve a second set of tablets. Our commentators learn from this story the importance of forgiveness and atonement, that we have the capacity to pardon and to make peace. During vacation, we are often packed together in cramped quarters and are under stress. But it does not matter how much we may fight or get angry at each other, we can always forgive and begin anew.



אהבה. זו אחת המילים שמופיעות בפרשה הכי הרבה, שוב ושוב. 8 פעמים אנחנו מתבקשים לאהוב, או מתבשרים שאנחנו עצמנו אהובים: “לִלְכֹת בְּכֹל דְרָכָיו וּלְאַהֲבָהוּ אֹתוֹ”, “רַק בְּאַבְתְּיָד חֶשֶׁק ה' לְאַהֲבָהוּ אוֹתָם”, “וְהָיָה אִם שָׁמַע תִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶל מְצוֹתַי אֲשֶׁר אֶנְכִי מְצַוֶּה אֹתְכֶם הַיּוֹם – לְאַהֲבָהוּ אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם.”

רש"י מסביר כאן כלל יסודי, שקשור ליחסים שלנו עם אלוקים וגם ליחסים שלנו עם בני אדם: “אל תאמר 'אעשה כדי לקבל שכר', אלא כל מה שתעשו – עשו מאהבה, וסוף הכבוד לבוא.”

הרבנית ימימה מזרחי מסבירה שזוהי ה-פרשה לחופש הגדול, לתקופה של משפחתיות צפופה, של “משעמם לי”, של אתגרי יולי-אוגוסט. אחד האויבים הכי גדולים של האהבה הוא הכבוד. הציפייה לקבל מחיאות כפיים. הרצון התמידי שיגידו לך תודה וייתנו לך קרדיט. והנה, הפרשה מכריזה על המתכון המנצח לתקופה הזו: אהבה, אהבה, אהבה. זה הזמן להרעף, לא להתחשב, פשוט לתת. רגע לפני שכל אחד חוזר לבית הספר, לעבודה, למסלול השגרתי, מול כל הניגוסים והתורים, מול כל השמש והצפיפות והבלגן בבית ובחוף: “כל מה שתעשו – עשו מאהבה.”



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For the Shabbat Table



Rabbi Danny Mirvis

Deputy CEO, World Mizrahi

Rabbi at Ohel Moshe Synagogue, Herzliya Pituach

“**A**nd now Israel, what does Hashem your G-d ask of you, but to fear Hashem your G-d, to go in all His ways and to love Him and to serve Hashem your G-d with all your heart and with all your soul. To observe the commandments of Hashem and His statutes, which I command you today, for your good?” (Devarim, 10:12-13).

In this week's Parsha, Moshe Rabbeinu continues his last will and testament. During the course of this speech, he teaches us what Hashem expects of us – to fear Him, go in His ways, love Him, serve Him with all our heart and soul, and observe His commandments and statutes.

Whilst this may seem like a long and demanding list, the way it is presented in the Torah seems to trivialise the difficulty involved. The wording, "What does Hashem your G-d ask of you, but..." seems to imply that Hashem does not require very much. Is it really so easy and simple to do everything Hashem expects of us?

This question appears in the Gemara (Berachot 33b), which answers that



Is it really so easy and simple to do everything Hashem expects of us?

whereas we may find these things difficult, for Moshe Rabbeinu they really were very simple.

Without rejecting or contradicting this answer, I would like to suggest that the Torah also provides an answer for those who are not on the level of Moshe Rabbeinu. How can it be easy or at least easier for us to fulfill this list of requirements? The very next verses in the Torah provide the answer:

"Behold, to Hashem your G-d (belong) the Heaven and the Heaven of Heavens, the world and everything that is inside it. Only in your fathers did Hashem desire to love them and He chose their descendants after them above all Nations, as it is today. And you shall circumcise the foreskin of your hearts and no longer be stiff-necked. For Hashem your G-d is the G-d of gods and the Master of masters,

the great, strong and awesome G-d who will not regard faces (in judgement) and will not take a bribe. He who executes the judgement of the orphan and the widow and loves the stranger, to give him bread and dress" (Devarim 10:14-18).

Once we fully internalise that everything in the universe belongs to Hashem and that we are privileged to be part of Am Yisrael; If we can be less stiff-necked and "circumcise the foreskin" i.e. remove the cynical, negative, impure and artificial coverings from our hearts; If we truly understand that Hashem is the G-d of gods and Master of masters, who is above human bias and cares for the orphan and the widow, then to fear, love and serve Hashem is not very much to ask. On the contrary, it should be our natural response.

In addition to considering what we expect from Hashem, we must consider what Hashem expects from us.

Shabbat Shalom!

Continued from previous page

יש פרשנים שמדגישים איך בפרט בימים אלה של קיץ, טיולים וחופשות, הפרשה מראה איך לקחת דיבורים חשובים ותפיסות פילוסופיות, ולבטא אותם גם בברכת המזון במנגל על שפת הכנרת, או בשלוק של מים שלוקחים ממימייה בדרך.

בתיאבון.

”ואכלת ושבעת וברכת את ה' אלוקיך על הארץ הטובה אשר נתן לך” - נאמר בפרשת השבוע. מכאן לומדים שברכת המזון היא הוראה מפורשת מהתורה. יש לברך לפני שאוכלים משהו, אבל גם אחרי שכבר אכלת ושבעת - גם אז - ”וברכת”.

רבי נחמן מברסלב כותב: “אכילת האיש הישראלי יקרה מאוד”, וקורא לנו לשים לב לתרבות האכילה שלנו.

החיים לא מתחלקים לשיעורים ולהרצאות, ואז לחיים עצמם. ברכת המזון לוקחת את כל העקרונות הגדולים והפילוסופיים שעליהם אפשר לדבר הרבה – ומכניסה אותם ישר אל תוך המטבח והשולחן, אל הסנדביץ' בהפסקה. רק רצינו לאכול, ופתאום אנחנו מברכים על העבר והווה והעתיד, מיציאת מצרים ועד ירושלים.

The Power of Gratitude



Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks zt"l

In the early 1990s, one of the great medical research exercises of modern times took place. It became known as the Nun Study. Some seven hundred American nuns, all members of the School Sisters of Notre Dame in the United States, agreed to allow their records to be accessed by a research team investigating the process of ageing and Alzheimer's Disease. At the start of the study the participants were aged between 75 and 102.¹

What gave this study its unusual longitudinal scope is that sixty years early the very same nuns had been asked by their Mother Superior to write a brief autobiographical account of their life and their reasons for entering the convent. These documents were now analysed by the researchers using a specially devised coding system to register, among other things, positive and negative emotions. By annually assessing the nuns' current state of health, the researchers were able to test whether their emotional state in 1930 had affected their health some sixty years later. Because they had all lived a very similar lifestyle during these six decades, they formed an ideal group for testing hypotheses about the relationship between emotional attitudes and health.

The results, published in 2001, were startling.² The more positive emotions – such as contentment, gratitude, happiness, love and hope – the nuns expressed in their autobiographical notes, the more likely they were to be alive and well sixty years later. The difference was as much as seven years in life expectancy. So remarkable was this finding that it has led, since then, to a new field of gratitude research, as well as a deepening understanding of the impact of emotions on physical health.



What medicine now knows about individuals, Moses knew hundreds of years ago about nations.

What medicine now knows about individuals, Moses knew hundreds of years ago about nations. Gratitude – *hakarat ha-tov* – is at the heart of what he has to say about the Israelites and their future in the Promised Land. Gratitude had not been their strong point in the desert. They complained about lack of food and water, about the manna and the lack of meat and vegetables, about the dangers they faced from the Egyptians as they were leaving and about the inhabitants of the land they were about to enter. They lacked thankfulness during the difficult times. A greater danger still, said Moses, would be a lack of gratitude during the good times. This is what he warned:

When you have eaten and been satisfied, and have built fine houses and lived in them, when your herds and flocks have grown abundant, and your silver and gold is multiplied, and all that you have has multiplied, your heart may become proud, forgetting the Lord your G-d who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery... You might be tempted to say to yourself, 'My power, the strength of my own hand, have brought me this great wealth.' But remember the Lord your G-d, for it is He who gives you the power to do great things, upholding the covenant that He swore to your ancestors... (Deut. 8:12-18)

The worst thing that could happen to them, warned Moses, would be that they forgot how they came to the land, how G-d had promised it to their ancestors, and had taken them from slavery to freedom, sustaining them during the forty years in the wilderness. This was a revolutionary idea: that the nation's history be engraved on people's souls, that it was to be re-enacted in the annual cycle of festivals, and that the nation, as a nation, should never attribute its achievements to itself – “my power and the might of my own hand” – but should always ascribe its victories, indeed its very existence, to something higher than itself: to G-d. This is a dominant theme of Deuteronomy, and it echoes throughout the book time and again.

Since the publication of the Nun Study and the flurry of further research it inspired, we now know of the multiple effects of developing an attitude of gratitude. It improves physical health and immunity against disease. Grateful people are more likely to take regular exercise and go for regular medical check-ups. Thankfulness reduces toxic emotions such as resentment, frustration and regret and makes depression less likely. It helps people avoid over-reacting to negative experiences by seeking revenge. It even tends to make people sleep better. It enhances self-respect, making it less likely that you will envy others for their achievements or success. Grateful people tend to have better relationships. Saying “thank you” enhances friendships and elicits better performance from employees. It is also a major factor in strengthening resilience. One study of Vietnam War Veterans found that those with higher levels of gratitude suffered lower incidence of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Remembering the many things we have to be thankful for

helps us survive painful experiences, from losing a job to bereavement.³

Jewish prayer is an ongoing seminar in gratitude. *Birkat ha-Shachar*, ‘the Dawn Blessings’ said at the start of morning prayers each day, form a litany of thanksgiving for life itself: for the human body, the physical world, land to stand on and eyes to see with. The first words we say each morning – *Modeh Ani*, “I thank you” – mean that we begin each day by giving thanks.

Gratitude also lies behind a fascinating feature of the Amidah. When the leader of prayer repeats the Amidah aloud, we are silent other than for the responses of *Kedushah*, and saying Amen after each blessing, with one exception. When the leader says the words *Modim anachnu lach*, “We give thanks to You,” the congregation says a parallel passage known as *Modim de-Rabbanan*. For every other blessing of the Amidah, it is sufficient to assent to the words of the leader by saying Amen. The one exception is *Modim*, “We give thanks.” Rabbi Elijah Spira (1660–1712) in his work *Eliyahu Rabbah*⁴, explains that when it comes to saying thank you, we cannot delegate this away to someone else to do it on our behalf. Thanks must come directly from us.

Part of the essence of gratitude is that it recognises that we are not the sole authors of what is good in our lives. The egoist, says Andre Comte-Sponville, “is ungrateful because he doesn’t like to acknowledge his debt to others and gratitude is this acknowledgement.”⁵ La Rochefoucauld put it more bluntly: “Pride refuses to owe, self-love to pay.”⁶ Thankfulness has an inner connection with humility. It recognises that what we are and what we have is due to others, and above all to G-d. Comte-Sponville adds: “Those who are incapable of gratitude live in vain; they can never be satisfied, fulfilled or happy: they do not live, they get ready to live, as Seneca puts it.”⁷

Though you don’t have to be religious to be grateful, there is something about belief in G-d as creator of the universe, shaper of history and author of the laws of life



Though you don’t have to be religious to be grateful, there is something about belief in G-d as creator of the universe, shaper of history and author of the laws of life that directs and facilitates our gratitude.

that directs and facilitates our gratitude. It is hard to feel grateful to a universe that came into existence for no reason and is blind to us and our fate. It is precisely our faith in a personal G-d that gives force and focus to our thanks.

It is no coincidence that the United States, founded by Puritans – Calvinists steeped in the Hebrew Bible – should have a day known as Thanksgiving, recognising the presence of G-d in American history. On 3rd October 1863, at the height of the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln issued a Thanksgiving proclamation, thanking G-d that though the nation was at war with itself, there were still blessings for which both sides could express gratitude: a fruitful harvest, no foreign invasion, and so on. He continued:

No human counsel hath devised nor hath any mortal hand worked out these great things. They are the gracious gifts of the Most High G-d, who, while dealing with us in anger for our sins, hath nevertheless remembered mercy... I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States... to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next, as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens. And I recommend to them that while offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings, they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to His tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners or

sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty Hand to heal the wounds of the nation and to restore it as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquillity and Union.

What might such a declaration made today – in Israel, or the United States, or indeed anywhere – do to heal the wounds that so divide nations today? Thanksgiving is as important to societies as it is to individuals. It protects us from resentments and the arrogance of power. It reminds us of how dependent we are on others and on a Force greater than ourselves. As with individuals so with nations: thanksgiving is essential to happiness and health.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What does Rabbi Sacks note is a dominant theme in Devarim. Can you think of examples?
- How often should we give thanks, and to whom?
- How do you think a proclamation like Abraham Lincoln’s would be received today?

1. See Robert Emmons, *Thanks!: How the New Science of Gratitude Can Make You Happier*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2007.
2. Deborah D. Danner, David A. Snowdon, and Wallace V. Friesen, “Positive Emotions in Early Life and Longevity: Findings from the Nun Study”, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 80.5 (2001), pp. 804-13.
3. Much of the material in this paragraph is to be found in articles published in *Greater Good: The Science of a Meaningful Life* @ <http://greatergood.berkeley.edu>.
4. *Eliyahu Rabbah*, Orach Chayyim 127:1.
5. André Comte-Sponville, *A Small Treatise on the Great Virtues: The Uses of Philosophy in Everyday Life*, New York: Holt, 2001, p. 133.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 135.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 137.

The Immutability of Torah



Rabbi Hershel Schachter

Rosh Yeshiva, Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary of Yeshiva University

The Torah, in prohibiting bal tosf and bal tigma (Devarim 13:1), stresses that we are not permitted to add to or detract from any of the mitzvos of the Torah. Nonetheless, occasionally, we come across a mitzvah that did change over the generations.

One such case is the mitzvah of Birchas HaMazon described in our parsha:

ואכלת ושבעת וברכת את ד' אלקיך על הארץ הטובה אשר נתן לך -

“You will eat and you will be satisfied, and bless Hashem, your G-d, for the good Land that He gave you” (Devarim 8:10), a d'oraisa obligation after one ate bread to satiety.

The Gemara in Berachos (48b) discusses the origin of the text of Birchas HaMazon. When the mann fell from heaven to sustain the Jewish People in the midbar, Moshe composed the first berachah of Birchas HaMazon. Although there is presently a Biblical obligation to offer thanks to Hashem for giving us Eretz Yisrael as well, this obligation did not begin until Yehoshua conquered the land. The land already belonged to Avraham from the time he fulfilled the directive, “Arise, walk about the land along its length and breadth, for, to you, I will give it” (Bereishis 13:17), as this passuk is understood not just as a promise to be fulfilled in the distant future, but as an actual legal acquisition through which Avraham acquired the land (Bava Basra 100a). Nevertheless, the obligation to thank Hashem for giving us Eretz Yisrael did not begin until the land was actually delivered to Bnei Yisrael at the time of Yehoshua. Therefore, it was Yehoshua who composed the second berachah of Birchas HaMazon, birchas ha'Aretz, and it then became a d'oraisa obligation to recite this berachah as well.

Similarly, in the days of Dovid and Shlomo, the Biblical obligation expanded to include

a third berachah. When Dovid HaMelech conquered Yerushalayim and established it as his capital, he composed the first section of the third berachah, and after Shlomo HaMelech built the Beis HaMikdash, he added the second half of the third berachah.

Thus, the nature of the mitzvah of Birchas HaMazon has changed over the course of generations, with the addition of the latter two berachos in the days of Yehoshua, Dovid, and Shlomo (see Ramban, cited in Beis Yosef, Orach Chayim 187:1).

[Now that the Beis HaMikdash has been destroyed and, absent the Malchus Beis Dovid, Yerushalayim has lost its status as the capital of Eretz Yisrael, the text of the third berachah has been modified to contain a tefillah. We ask of Hashem to have mercy on these two institutions and to return them to us,

רחם ד' אלקינו ... ועל ירושלים עירך ... ועל הבית הגדול והקדוש -

“Have mercy Hashem, our G-d ... and on Yerushalayim, Your city ... and on the great and holy House” (Tur, Orach Chayim 188:1). It would seem, therefore, that the third berachah as we have it is only a rabbinic obligation; only when we have the Beis HaMikdash in Yerushalayim are we obligated, on a d'oraisa level, to thank Hashem for these institutions.]

The two halves of this third berachah correspond to two aspects of the uniqueness of Yerushalayim. First, Yerushalayim is the מקדש מלך, the Sanctuary of the King, which is what allows for the consumption of korbanos (of kodshim kallim) in its environs. In addition, Yerushalayim is עיר מלוכה, the Royal City, the official capital of Eretz Yisrael. All of Eretz Yisrael is considered the פלטין של מלך (royal palace). Yerushalayim, referred to as קרית מלך רב - “the city of the great King” (Tehillim 48:3) - and

ד כסא ד - “the throne of Hashem” (Yirmiyah 3:17) - is the Capital City of the kingdom of Hashem in Eretz Yisrael.

The distinctiveness of Yerushalayim as the עיר מלוכה enables us to understand why the Mishnah in Kesubos (13:11) teaches that if one spouse wishes to relocate to Yerushalayim from another location in Eretz Yisrael and the other spouse refuses, the latter is considered to be at fault regarding the dissolution of the marriage. This has relevance to the requirement to pay the kesubah upon the couple's divorce.

Apparently, there is a greater mitzvah of yishuv Eretz Yisrael to live in Yerushalayim than in the rest of Eretz Yisrael (Chasam Sofer, Yoreh De'ah, simanim 233-234). Since Yerushalayim is the capital of Eretz Yisrael, it is considered a greater mitzvah to live there and develop this city than to live in the rest of the country.

The twofold nature of Yerushalayim's uniqueness is why the city was divided between shevet Binyamin, in whose section korbanos were offered on the mizbe'ach, and shevet Yehudah, whose section contained the government's official buildings (Zevachim 53b). The Rambam (Hilchos Melachim 1:10) rules that only a king of the Malchus Beis Dovid has the right to use Yerushalayim as his capital, because Hashem authorizes only such a king, of the malchus hanivcheres (chosen kingdom), to serve as the human representative of the kingdom of Hashem in His capital. This is in line with the Gemara's requirement that mentioning of Malchus Beis Dovid is indispensable to the berachah of Boneh Yerushalayim, for the re-establishment of this kingdom is necessary for the rebuilding of Yerushalayim to be considered complete.

● Adapted from Rav Schachter on the Parsha.

Yerushalayim: Tapping into the Kedusha



Rabbi Yisroel Reisman
Rosh Yeshiva, Yeshiva Torah Vodaas

We will speak this week about a thought about ירושלים עיר הקודש. Many people don't realize it, but in the *שיר של יום* for Monday, we talk mainly about ירושלים. We say the Pasuk of "יפה נוף משוש כל הארץ", referring to the beautiful city of ירושלים which brings joy to the entire world, and "הר ציון ירנתי צפון", referring to Mount Tzion where the Beit Hamikdash is built. The Gemara in Rosh Hashana says that the term "יפה נוף" can also mean a bride, meaning that ירושלים is the bride of the Jewish people. How is that so? What does it mean for ירושלים to be considered a bride of the Jewish people?

Yet, ירושלים is not the only thing that we find Chazal compared to a bride for the Jewish people. We find that Shabbas is also considered a bride for ישראל, and perhaps if we better understand that comparison, we can understand why ירושלים is considered a bride for the Jewish people as well. Chazal tell us that Shabbas complained that every day of the week has a pair, and that Shabbas alone was the odd man out. Therefore, Hashem responded that the Jewish people will be the match for Shabbas, and from there we get the concept that Shabbas is the bride for the Jewish people. What does it mean that each day of the week had a partner, and what exactly are those partners? Rav Shimshon Pincus explains, quoting from the Gra, that the pairs for the days of the week are not as we might have thought, pairing Sunday with Monday, and Tuesday with Wednesday, and so on. Rather, the pairs for the days of the week



Shabbas is full of tremendous potential, and was looking for a match that would be able to tap into that potential.

work differently, pairing Sunday with Wednesday, Monday with Thursday, and Tuesday with Friday.

On the first day, Hashem separated the heaven from the earth. On the second day, Hashem separated the waters, and created the oceans, seas, and rivers. On the third day, Hashem created the trees, plants, and everything that grows. Those three days have a certain amount of potential, but that potential was only brought to fruition on a later day. On the fourth day, Hashem created the heavenly bodies, including the sun, moon, and stars. While on the first day Hashem created the heavens, which had a certain amount of potential, that potential was only brought to fruition when Hashem added the heavenly bodies on the fourth day, which now had the ability to be used for mankind. Similarly, the oceans and seas created on the second day had tremendous potential, but that was only utilized properly when Hashem added the fish and all the creatures that live in the water on the fifth day. And the pair between the third day and the sixth day has that same relationship as well. The potential created by the vegetation

was only brought to fruition on the sixth day when Hashem created animals and human beings. Thus, we see that the pairs for each day of the week relates to each day's potential, and the matching day that will utilize the potential properly.

Now we can understand why Shabbas complained that it had no match, and why the Jewish people were chosen to be its match. Shabbas is full of tremendous potential, and was looking for a match that would be able to tap into that potential. For this, the Jewish people were chosen, as they were going to be able to make the most of Shabbas, and be able to maximize the potential that is inherent within the day.

Going back to the Gemara in Rosh Hashana, we can now better understand why Chazal understood that "יפה נוף" means that ירושלים is the match for the Jewish people. ירושלים is instilled with tremendous Kedusha, with so much inherent potential. There is a sense of closeness to Hashem that is different from all other places, where one's davening and learning and fulfillment of Mitzvot are on a higher level, and where one can get closer to Hashem by simply appreciating the place in which he is living. ירושלים is in space what Shabbas is in time. The same way that Shabbas was looking for a match to bring out all of its potential, so too ירושלים was looking for a match to do the same thing. And that is our job now, to be able to tap into the קדושת ירושלים and bring out all the potential that ירושלים has to offer.

● Edited by Jay Eisenstadt and Ari Levine.

A Change in the Order



Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis

Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth

A change in the order presents us with a crucially important lesson for life.

Last Shabbat, Parshat Va'etchanan, we read the first paragraph of the Shema which is so very well known to us. In it we have the important mitzvah of *וּשְׁנַתָּם לְבִנְךָ וְדַבַּרְתָּ בָּם* – we must teach Torah to our children. A bit later in the same paragraph, we're given the Mitzvah of Tefillin – *וְקִשְׂרָתָם לְאוֹת עַל יָדְךָ*. Now in the second paragraph of Shema which we will be reading in Parshat Eikev this coming Shabbat, we have, yet again, the mitzvah of tefillin – *וְקִשְׂרָתָם לְאוֹת עַל יְדֵיכֶם* and that is followed by *וּלְמַדְתֶּם אוֹתָם אֶת בְּנֵיכֶם לְדַבֵּר בָּם*. First Tefillin and then Talmud Torah.

So my question is this: Why is it that in the first paragraph, the teaching of Torah precedes the mitzvah of Tefillin, whereas in the second paragraph, first, we have the mitzvah of Tefillin followed by the mitzvah to teach Torah.

Now we know of course that the first paragraph of the Shema is in the singular. It therefore, addresses each and every one of us in our own individual capacities. The second paragraph is in the plural, indicating that we fulfil the mitzvot of Hashem as an integral part of Am Yisrael as a collective, with a responsibility to all of Am Yisrael.

Allow me therefore to suggest the following: When a child is born, the parents immediately have the mitzvah of *וּשְׁנַתָּם לְבִנְךָ* – to teach Torah to their child. To instil within the heart and the mind of that child an appreciation of Torah values and eventually as suggested by the first paragraph, the child will grow up.

As girls reach the age of 12 and boys reach the age of 13 when they put on Tefillin, they become members of the adult community of Am Yisrael and they embrace fresh responsibilities. But that's not the end of the story.

The second paragraph of the Shema picks it up from there. First of all, Tefillin and after that, yet again, Talmud Torah. Indicating that as an adult, the study of Torah must always continue.

In this spirit, we say in our davening every evening,

– *כִּי הֵם חַיֵּינוּ וְאֵרֶךְ יַמֵּנוּ וְבָהֶם נִהְיֶה יוֹמָם וּלְיַלָּה* – that the words of Torah are our lives and they are the length of our days' – they are there to inspire and to guide us throughout our lives.

Let no one therefore think, God forbid, that there comes a time in one's life when one 'graduates' from Torah study, or from a commitment to keep the law of Hashem. Quite the contrary: Talmud Torah needs to be a part of our lives both as children and thereafter, throughout our entire existence.

And thanks to Torah, we have the keys to a meaningful life filled with joy and happiness always.

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Enhancing our Avoda Shebalev



Rabbi Shalom Rosner
Yeshivat Kerem B'Yavneh

In this week's parsha we encounter the second paragraph of Kriyat Shema "ve'haya im shamoah". Within this section appears the followings phrase:

לְאַהֲבָה אֶת־ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וּלְעַבְדוֹ בְּכָל־לִבְבְּכֶם וּבְכָל־גִּפְתֹּתְכֶם:

"to love Hashem, your G-d, and to **serve Him** with all your heart and with all your soul." (Devarim 11:13). We are commanded to "love" Hashem with all our heart and soul. Yet, if we look at the pasuk closely, we notice that love is not the only thing alluded to – we are also required "ul'avdo" to serve Him. Chazal interpret "ul'avdo" as *avoda shebalev* – essentially Tefillah (Ta'anit 2a).

In other words, we are obligated to pray with all our heart and soul! This is not a simple task. How are we able to improve our *kavanah* (concentration) during davening? We have all had those moments during *shemona esre* where we lose track of where we are at, or when we started to pound our heart Friday night during Maariv while reciting "selach lanu" to suddenly realize we are reciting the weekday *amida* in error.

Tefillah is a personal conversation with our creator. Unfortunately, all too often



Tefillah is a personal conversation with our creator. Unfortunately, all too often we recite words by routine without the proper understanding or intention.

we recite words by routine without the proper understanding or intention. Rabbi Shimshon Pincus (Tifferet Shimshon) offers advice to help us improve our *Tefillah* experience. The word *kavana* – stemming from the work *לכוון* – means to aim. When one shoots an arrow, he is unlikely to hit his target unless he initially focuses, aims and directs the arrow towards the target. This is true with respect to *Tefillah* as well. The Gemara in Berachot (30b) tells us that the early *Chassidim* used to sit and prepare themselves for *Tefillah* an hour prior to the services. This was necessary in order for them to get into the proper frame of mind prior to engaging in conversation with the Almighty. The least we can do is to arrive at minyan a few moments early so we are able to contemplate that we are

about to converse with G-d. It will set the tone for a more meaningful davening. We need to focus so we can "aim" our "*kavana*" in the proper direction. This also means that we need to detach ourselves from distractions, such as conversations with neighbors or glancing at our cell phones.

In addition, if we understood our prayers, we would recite them with more meaning. Imagine, if we tried to better understand one word, or paragraph a day – after a year, we would have mastered over 300 words or paragraphs. That would surely enhance our *kavana* while reciting those *Tefillot*.

We read *Kriyat Shema* twice daily asserting that we are to worship G-d with all our heart and soul. We are slightly more than a month away from Rosh Hashanah. Now is the time to invest in ways of enhancing our *Tefillah*. We offered concrete suggestions above. Prepare for *Tefillah* in advance, detach from distractions and try to better comprehend the meaning of the words we recite. May our prayers be heard and as we request during *birchat Hachodesh*: שְׁיִמְלֵא ה' מִשְׁאָלוֹת לִבְנוֹי לְטוֹבָה – May Hashem grant our hearts requests for our benefit!

Parshas Eikev: Of Manna and Emunah



Michal Horowitz
Judaic Studies Teacher

In this week's parsha, Parshas Eikev, Moshe reminds the Bnei Yisrael of the Divine food, the Heavenly manna, that sustained them for their forty-year desert wanderings.

(Do not forget Hashem) Who feeds you manna in the wilderness, which your forefathers knew not, in order to afflict you and in order to test you, to do good for you in the end (Devarim 8:16).

In regard to the miracle of manna, Chazal (Taanis 9a) teach: Three good sustainers rose up for the Jewish people (in the desert), and they are: Moshe, Aharon and Miriam. And three good gifts were given through them, and these are: The well of water, the cloud, and the manna. The well in the merit of Miriam; the cloud in the merit of Aharon; and the manna in the merit of Moshe.

Just as Moshe sustained the people spiritually, teaching them Torah and mitzvos, so too, in his merit they were sustained physically, with the foodstuff of the manna.

Rav Soloveitchik zt'l writes, "The Israelites (in the desert) were free from daily care and worries. They ate their bread, not by the sweat of their brow, but in the knowledge that G-d was with them. There was no need to till, plant, watch and reap. The curse imposed upon Adam was suspended.

"At times, the glorious event of what we call the transcendental (spiritual) order expresses itself not through a genuine revelation experience or through a confrontation with a transcendental reality – seeing G-d in the midst of the community – but in an illuminated existence. At times, both for the individual and for the community, to live is a great joy: there is no perplexity, dreams come true, aspirations are fulfilled, one feels that life makes sense and is replete with purposefulness.

"But the transcendental experience eventually comes to a stop; it does not continue forever. G-d wills man to live, exist and work in the dimension of the natural and the orderly. The beautiful visions of the Song at the Sea vanish; the light of a transcendental reality is extinguished. What does the Torah tell us right after the manna is introduced (Shemos 16)? וַיָּבֵא, עִמְלֵק; וַיִּלְחֶם עִם-יִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּרִפְדִּים – and Amalek came and fought with Israel at Refidim (Shemos 17:8). Man finds himself facing a cynical environment; he is lost, ignorant of both purpose and direction. Events are sometimes unfriendly. Life is full of absurdities and contradictions. He experiences no revelation, no prophecy, no direct contact with G-d" (Chumash Masores HaRav Shemos, p.135).

The manna represents the height of Divine revelation – daily food directly from Heaven. And yet, this realm of existence does not last forever. Every person experiences, in their own lives, moments of revelation and exultation, and moments of darkness and difficulty. Greatness lies in our ability to find the RS"O (Almighty) in our lives when it is dark, just as we can find Him when it is light.

R' Abraham J. Twerski M.D., writes, "According to tradition, the manna had a magical quality: one could taste in it whatever one desired. There is a magical quality within our means that can affect how we taste our food: that quality is love.

"One of my favorite stories is that of the disciples of the Baal Shem Tov (d.1760, Ukraine) who one Friday night saw a rather simple person whose face radiated with light. "What is this man's secret?" they asked. "Is he so spiritual a person that his face should shine in this manner?" The Baal Shem Tov replied, "Let's follow him home and see."

"The man entered a small hut and greeted his wife with a hearty 'Good Shabbos!' Peering through the window, the Baal Shem Tov and his students saw a sparsely furnished room that testified to the austere conditions of the household. A wooden table was covered with a plain white cloth, and the two candles shed a warm glow. The man sang Shalom Aleichem, welcoming the angels with a lively refrain, then sang Eishes Chayil. Then he said to his wife, 'Please bring the special wine.'

"The wife brought two loaves of coarse, dark bread. He washed his hands and recited the proper blessing, then chanted the kiddush. After he ate of the bread, he said, 'We have never yet had such fine wine! Can you please bring in the fish?' Moments later the wife served him a small portion of beans. 'Hmmm!' he exclaimed, smacking his lips. 'This fish is unusually delicious.' He sang a Shabbos song and said, 'I'm ready for the soup.' The wife appeared with yet another dish of beans. The man complimented his wife, 'This soup is simply superb.' He sang another Shabbos song and asked, 'Can we have the roast meat and tzimmes?' Again the wife served him beans. 'How wonderful the roast and tzimmes are!' he exclaimed.

"The Baal Shem Tov said to his disciples, 'Our ancestors in the desert had the manna, a food from heaven, in which they could taste anything they wished. This man's love for G-d, for Shabbos, and for his wife have enabled him to reach a level of spirituality so lofty that he can taste the finest delicacies in a dish of beans.'

"Is such a level of spirituality attainable? Even if it is not, it is certainly a far cry from complaining that the food was too cold or lacked salt. At the very least, we can certainly send our compliments to the chef and our gratitude to HaKadosh Baruch Hu for that which He has provided" (A Taste

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The Biblical Significance of ‘Matar’



Rabbi Menachem Leibtag

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In the beginning of Parshat Ekev, the land of Israel receives a very positive assessment: “For the Lord your G-d is bringing you into a **good** land... a land of wheat and barley ...a land which lacks nothing...”

Yet, later in the Parsha, it appears that the land of Egypt may still be better: “For the land which you are about to conquer is **not like the land of Egypt**, from which you have come, where when you planted your field you watered it with your foot... the Land which you are about to conquer, a land of hills and valleys, receives its water from the rains (**matar**) of the heavens.”

So which land is better?

We begin our study with the Torah's ‘strange’ description of how one waters his field (in its definition of the land of Egypt): “For [your] land is **not** like the land of Egypt... where you planted your field and **watered it with your foot**.”

Why is Egypt described as a land which ‘you water with your feet’? Furthermore, how is specifically this definition significant in relation to this comparison between Egypt and the land of Israel?

The ancient civilization of Egypt developed around the Nile Delta. The Egyptians used the Nile River to water their fields by digging irrigation ditches. Therefore, to water one's field in Egypt, one would simply open the irrigation ditch by kicking away the dirt **‘with his foot**’.

It is specifically this agricultural aspect of the land of Egypt which the Torah contrasts with the land of Israel: “...a land of **hills & valleys**, which drinks from the **rains of heaven**.”

In contrast to Egypt, Israel lacks a mighty river such as the Nile. Instead its fields are dependent on **rainfall**. Therefore, when it **does** rain, the fields are watered ‘automatically’; however, when it does **not** rain, nothing will grow for the crops will dry out.

Hence, even though the land of Israel may have a slight advantage over Egypt when it does rain from an agricultural perspective the land of Egypt has a clear advantage.

So what's going on? Why is Moshe Rabeinu telling Bnei Yisrael that the land of Egypt is **better** than the land of Israel?

To answer this question, we must re-examine these psukim in their wider context.

“And now, O Israel, what is it that G-d demands of you? It is to **fear** (“yirah”) the Lord your G-d, to walk in his ways and to love Him... Keep, therefore, this entire ‘Mitzvah’... that you should conquer the Land...”

Not only does this parshia open with the mitzvah to **fear** G-d, but as it continues it emphasizes this same point over and over again.

Thus, the theme of our short ‘parshia’, where the Torah's compares the land of Israel to Egypt, must somehow be related to the theme of **yirat Hashem** (fearing G-d). But what does the water source of a country have to do with the fear of G-d?

To answer this question, we must read the Torah's conclusion of this comparison: “It is a land which the Lord your G-d **looks after** (“doresh otah”), on which Hashem always keeps His eye, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year.”

This pasuk informs us that G-d Himself takes direct control over the rain which falls in the Land of Israel! Hence, in contrast to Egypt where the water supply from the Nile is basically **constant**, the **sporadic** water supply in Israel becomes a direct function of G-d's will. Hence, because one's survival in the Land of Israel is dependent on rain, and the rain itself is dependent on G-d's will, then to survive in the land of Israel one must depend on G-d – a dependence which should increase one's level of **yirat Hashem**!

In other words, the Land of Israel is not better than Egypt, rather it is **different** for its agriculture is dependent on the abundance of rain. A good rainy season will bring plenty, while a lack of rain will yield drought and famine. Hence, living in a land with this type of ‘touchy’ rainy season, dependent on G-d's will, should reinforce one's fear of G-d.

“If you obey the commandments... I will grant the rain (“matar”) for your land in season... then you shall eat and be satisfied...”

Be careful, lest you be lured after other G-ds... for Hashem will be angry ... and He will shut up the skies and there will be no rain (“matar”)...”

Thus, according to Sefer Devarim, the “matar” (rain) acts not only as a ‘barometer’ of Am Yisrael's faithfulness to G-d, but also as a vehicle of divine retribution. Through the “matar”, G-d ‘communicates’ with His nation in their special land; rainfall, at the proper time, should be considered a divine reward for national ‘good behavior’, while a drought (the holding back of “matar”) should be understood as a sign of divine anger.

So which land is better? The answer simply depends on what one is looking for. An individual striving for a closer relationship with G-d would obviously prefer the Land of Israel, while an individual wary of such direct dependence on G-d would obviously opt for the more secure life in Egypt (i.e. “chutz la'aretz”).

Recall how the Gan Eden narrative (2:4-3:24) opens with a statement concerning “matar” (rain):

“...When Hashem made heaven and earth... And no shrub of the field had yet grown in the land and no grains had yet sprouted, because Hashem had not yet sent rain (“matar”) on the land, nor was there **man** to work the field...”

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Faith and Charity



Rabbi Eli Mansour

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In Parashat Ekev, Moshe instructs Beneh Yisrael that after they cross into Eretz Yisrael, work the land and accumulate wealth, they must ensure to remember that their wealth is given to them by G-d. He warns that a person might say, "Kohi Ve'osem Yadi Asa Li Et Ha'hayil Ha'zeh" - "My strength and the might of my hand made for me this wealth" (8:17). Rather than think in these terms, Moshe commands, we must instead "remember Hashem your G-d, for it is He who gives you the strength to make wealth" (8:18).

Interestingly, Moshe warns against attributing our success to "Kohi Ve'osem Yadi" - "my strength and the might of my hand" - and reminds us that G-d gives us the "strength" ("Ko'ah") to succeed. In the first phrase, Moshe mentions both "Kohi" and "Osem Yadi," whereas in the second clause, he mentions only "Ko'ah." How might we explain this terminology?

It has been suggested that Moshe refers here to the unfortunate phenomenon of people who achieve financial success

but refuse to share their material benefits with others. Sometimes, people feel that since they worked very hard to earn their money, employing their skills and ingenuity, they do not need to share it with those in need. This is the meaning of the phrase, "Kohi Ve'osem Yadi." The word "Osem" can mean "might," but can also mean "close." Moshe speaks here of one who thinks that because of "Kohi," since he invested great efforts to earn money, his "Osem Yadi" - the shutting of his hands, and refusal to assist others - is justified. In response to this attitude, Moshe says, "You must remember Hashem your G-d, for it is He who gives you the strength to make wealth." Although we indeed work to earn a living, we must believe that ultimately, our material blessings come to us from Above. G-d alone determines how much we have; our success or failure depends solely on Him. Therefore, we cannot "close our hands" because of the claim of "Kohi," that we worked hard to earn our money. The source of our material blessings is not our "hands," our hard work and effort,

but rather G-d, who expects us to share our blessings with those who are less fortunate.

The Talmud lists several questions that we will all be asked when we leave this world and move on to the next world, including, "Nasata Ve'natata Be'emuna," which is commonly translated to mean, "Do you conduct your business affairs honestly?" Additionally, however, this may be understood as, "Did you conduct your business affairs with faith?" If we approach our professional and commercial pursuits with Emuna, with the firm belief that G-d alone determines how much we earn and how much we lose, it changes our entire outlook and the way we handle our money. We will be more flexible and less inclined to fight and argue, as well as less inclined to stingily keep all our earnings for ourselves. One we realize that everything we have has been given to us as a gift from G-d, we immediately realize our obligation to share what we have with G-d's other children who need our assistance.

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of Nostalgia, by R' A. J. Twerski MD and Judi Dick, Artsroll, p.32-33).

As the adage goes: A Jew takes a cup of scalding water, bitter coffee, sweet sugar, and cold milk. He mixes them all together

and says: She'hakol ni'hi'yeh bi'dvaro - RS"O, everything in my life: hot, cold, bitter, sweet - it's all from You!

Let us strive to taste the quality of manna in all that Hashem sends our way; let us

appreciate the manna that tested us and sustained us; and let us bless Hashem Who is Good and does good, for all that we experience in our lives.

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At first glance, this statement appears to contradict earlier psukim which tell us that water was everywhere (even though rain itself was never mentioned). Furthermore, we all know that shrubs and grains grow very nicely even without man's help. Yet, according to this second account of Creation it appears as though nothing

could grow without "matar" (rain) and without man.

Thus, according to the Torah's second account of Creation, i.e. from the perspective of man's relationship with G-d, "matar" (rain) and "adam" (man) emerge as the two essential ingredients for all growth and development. The concept

of "matar" emerges as more than just a source of water, but more so as a symbol of any connection between the heavens and earth, i.e. between G-d and man.

In the ideal spiritual environment, as reflected in the Land of Israel, "matar" serves as a vehicle by which Am Yisrael can perfect their relationship with G-d.

Growing Up



Rabbi Moshe Weinberger
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What is the nature of the transition of a young man or woman from a child, who is exempt from the mitzvos and punishments of *beis din*, to *bar* or *bas mitzvah*, when he or she is obligated to observe the mitzvos and is subject to the punishments of *beis din* (*Chulin* 12a, *Sanhedrin* 68b; *Chagigah* 2a; etc.)? *Teshuvos HaRashba* (*Yi'ud Rishonim*) explains that a child under *bar* or *bas mitzvah* is *halachically* not considered a *bar daas*, possessing mature intellect. No one should be offended by this. Even a genius like the Vilna Gaon was exempt from mitzvos as a child. The Rashba explains that the fact that a child is not a *bar daas* is a *halachah l'Moshe miSinai*, a direct transmission from Sinai.

Let us look at this more closely. What is the precise nature of this change in intellectual maturity between childhood and adulthood? The *Navi Yeshayahu*, who offers us so much consolation regarding the upcoming redemption in the *haftarahs* we read in the seven weeks after *Tisha B'Av*, also describes eighteen serious challenges the Jewish people will face at different times in history.

The *Gemara* (*Chagigah* 14a) explains, based on *psukim* in *Yeshayahu*, the nature of the malady of our generation, the last one before Moshiach at the end of time. Our generation is also hinted at in the name of our parshah, *Eikev*, which means “heel,” the last and least part of the body. But it also a hint at the fact that our generation is the generation of *ikvisa d'meshicha*, the footsteps of Moshiach. What is the main issue plaguing us? “The youth will elevate himself over the elder and the lightweight over the honored one” (*Yeshayahu* 3:5). The *Gemara* explains that this means that for the youth and the lightweight,



What is the precise nature of this change in intellectual maturity between childhood and adulthood?

“serious things appear to him as insignificant.” Regardless of a child’s intellectual acumen, the key sign of intellectual maturity is the ability to recognize the true importance of important things and not ascribe undue significance to trivial matters. As the *Yerushalmi* (*Brachos* 5:2) says, “Without intellectual maturity, how can one make distinctions?”

Rav Yerucham Levovitz, the *Mirer Mashgiach*, *zt'l*, writes that one of the most fundamental principles of *Yiddishkeit* is to properly understand the importance of things. The *passuk* at the beginning of our *parshah* (*Devarim* 7:12) says, “And it will be, because you will heed these laws...” *Rashi* explains that this refers to the mitzvos one tends to take lightly. The Torah is telling us we must listen to these mitzvos just like we listen to the other laws. We must recognize their importance despite the fact that people usually take them lightly. And the *mishnah* in *Avos* (2:1) says, “Be as careful with a ‘light’ mitzvah as with a ‘heavy’ one, for you do not know the reward of mitzvos.” The evil inclination’s main goal in this generation is to cause people, both adults and children, to shrug off profound matters as insignificant and give great deference and respect to trivial things.

Many adults today fail to recognize what is and is not important. A frum Jew will scoff at a man studying in *kollel* for twenty years, calling him a bench-warmer. But a moment later he will discuss A-Rod’s

retirement with the greatest admiration and respect. While there is nothing wrong with appreciating a human being’s ability to hit a ball, the inability to understand what is important in life and what is insignificant is profoundly disappointing.

The *Gemara* (*Sotah* 49b) says that “At the time of the footsteps of Moshiach, *chutzpah* will increase... and [people will perceive that] the wisdom of the scholars becomes putrid.” The *chutzpah* we see in both children (and adults who think like children) today is a function of the lack of *daas*, intellectual and spiritual maturity.

Being an adult means knowing that major spiritual potential exists in every encounter one has with others. Every single conversion with another person is an opportunity to give a kind word, offer encouragement, or spread positivity and light.

It is a sign of childish immaturity to only appreciate things that seem “big” and important. But truly “big” people recognize the importance of the things that seem small to others. For example, the unfortunate individuals who currently or have previously served as president of our shul over the years are important people in their respective professions. Yet they involve themselves in the countless myriad of details that are an inherent part of maintaining the daily operation of the shul. That is true greatness.

Every Jew, every detail, has such potential packed within it. May we merit being big people and may we merit spiritual, intellectual, and emotional maturity, thereby finally earning the complete fulfillment of that which we say in *kedushah* in *Mussaf* on Shabbos: “Indeed I will redeem you, the last ones like the first ones, to be to you G-d, I am Hashem your G-d.”

Broken



Rabbi YY Jacobson
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“The world breaks everyone, and afterwards some are stronger in the broken places.” -- Ernest Hemingway.

The simple reading of the story goes like this: After the Jews created a Golden Calf, Moses smashed the stone tablets created by G-d, engraved with the Ten Commandments. Moses and G-d then "debated" the appropriate response to this transgression and it was decided that if the people would truly repent, G-d would give them a second chance. Moses hewed the second set of stone tablets; G-d engraved them also with the Ten Commandments, and Moses gave them to the Jewish people.

Yet a few major questions come to mind.

1. Moses, outraged by the sight of a golden calf erected by the Hebrews as a deity, smashed the stone tablets. He apparently felt that the Jews were undeserving of them and that it would be inappropriate to give them this Divine gift. But why did Moses have to break and shatter the heavenly tablets? Could Moses have hidden them or returned them to their heavenly maker?

2. The rabbis teach us that “The whole tablets and the broken tablets nestled inside the Ark of the Covenant.” The Jews proceeded to gather the broken fragments of the first set of tablets and had them stored in the Ark, in the Tabernacle, together with the second whole tablets. Both sets of tablets were later taken into the Land of Israel and kept side by side in the Ark, situated in the Holy of Holies in the Temple in Jerusalem.

This seems strange. Why would they place the broken tablets in the Holy of Holies, when these fragments were a constant

reminder of the great moral failure of the Jewish people. Why not just disregard them, or deposit them in a safe isolated place?

3. In its eulogy for Moses, the Torah chooses this episode of smashing the tablets as the highlight and climax of Moses' achievements.

“Moses, the servant of G-d, died there in the land of Moab... And there arose not since a prophet in Israel like Moses, whom G-d knew face to face; all the signs and wonders which G-d sent to do in the land of Egypt... that mighty hand, those great fearsome deeds, which Moses did before the eyes of all Israel.”

What did Moses do “before the eyes of all Israel?” Rashi, in his commentary on Torah, explains “That his heart emboldened him to break the tablets before their eyes, as it is written, ‘and I broke them before your eyes.’ G-d’s opinion then concurred with his opinion, as it is written, ‘which you broke — I affirm your strength for having broken them.’”

This is shocking. Following all of the grand achievements of Moses, the Torah chooses to conclude its tribute to Moses by alluding to this episode of breaking the tablets! Granted that Moses was justified in breaking the tablets, but can this be said to embody his greatest achievement? Why does the Torah choose this tragic and devastating episode to capture the zenith of Moses' life and as the theme with which to conclude the entire Torah, all five books of Moses?!

Moses did not break the tablets because he was angry and lost control. Instead, the breaking of the tablets was the beginning of the healing process. Before the golden calf was created, the Jews could find G-d

within the wholesomeness of the tablets, within the spiritual wholesomeness of life. Now, after the people have created the golden calf, hope was not lost. Now they would find G-d in the shattered pieces of a once beautiful dream.

Moses was teaching the Jewish people the greatest message of Judaism: Truth could be crafted not only from the spiritually perfected life but also from the broken pieces of the human corrupt and demoralized psyche. The broken tablets, too, possess the light of G-d.

This is why the sages tell us that not only the whole tablets but also the broken ones, were situated in the holy of holies. This conveyed the message articulated at the very genesis of Judaism: From the broken pieces of life you can create a holy of holies.

G-d, the sages tell us, affirmed Moses' decision to break the tablets. G-d told him, “Thank you for breaking them.” Because the broken tablets, representing the shattered pieces of human existence, have their own story to tell; they contain a light all their own. Truth is found not only in wholesomeness but also – sometimes primarily – in the broken fragments of the human spirit. There are moments when G-d desires that we connect to Him as wholesome people, with clarity and a sense of fullness; there are yet deeper moments when He desires that we find Him in the shattering experiences of our lives.

We hope and pray to always enjoy the “whole tablets,” but when we encounter the broken ones, we ought not to run from them or become dejected by them; with tenderness, we ought to embrace them and bring them into our “holy of holies,” recalling the observation of one of the

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Emunah P'Shutah



Rabbi Judah Mischel

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Rebbe Avraham Dov of Avritch, the “Bas Ayin”, was one of the great Chasidic masters of Ukraine in the early 19th Century. A Rebbe for over forty years, the Bas Ayin moved to Eretz Yisrael in his mid 60s where he encountered a series of extraordinary challenges and tzaros. He survived a kidnapping and a pogrom at the hands of Arabs, in addition to the poverty and deprivation experienced by most *olim*. He also saw the miraculous salvation of his congregants during the devastating earthquake that decimated Tzfat in 1837, and led the Jewish community in the period of rebuilding.

The first year of their *aliyah* was particularly difficult and Reb Avraham Dov had strong doubts about their decision to leave their family, talmidim and a thriving Chasidic community behind. They had settled in the Galil, which was still underdeveloped. After a year under extremely difficult living conditions, the Bas Ayin came to the conclusion that he and his wife would be better off returning to the *shtetl*.

One balmy autumn afternoon, the Bas Ayin was walking back home from shul and was taken aback by all sorts of noises – banging, clanging and chatter coming from the surrounding rooftops. The Rebbe asked one of the local women who was climbing down a makeshift ladder from her roof what exactly was going on.

The *balabusteh* seemed surprised by the question. “Rebbe! We’re clearing our roofs!” The Bas Ayin was still uncertain as to what she was talking about. “Rebbe, all summer long we make use of our flat roofs for storing our winter cooking utensils and dry goods. Today, we’re bringing all of

our pots, pans and supplies inside so they don’t get soaked by the rain!”

The Bas Ayin looked upward; it was sunny, with nary a cloud in the sky. He was even more confused than before.

“Forgive me, but surely the Rebbe remembers that tonight is the 7th of Mar-Cheshvan, and that we will switch our *nusach* to include לברכה ותן טל ומטר, ‘And give dew and rain for blessing!’ If we don’t bring in all of our supplies before davening this evening, the rains will wash everything away!”

Reb Avraham Dov was awestruck by the depth of the woman’s *emunah p’shutah*, simple faith, and rushed home to share the encounter with his wife. That day, they committed themselves to staying in the Holy Land.



Our sedra features the continuation of Moshe Rabbeinu’s final address to *Klal Yisrael*, and includes the blessing and reassurance of our entering the Land of Israel, where we will enjoy the Divine providence and revealed good of the land flowing with milk and honey:

“The land that Hashem looks after; the eyes of Hashem your G-d are always upon it, *tamid*, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year (*Devarim*, 11:12).

Rashi notes that while Hashem obviously cares for all lands, “it is as if the Ribbono Shel Olam is only *doreish*, ‘actively looking after’, Eretz Yisrael.” Only through the care and special concern which Hashem bestows upon Eretz Yisrael, does He care for all the other lands along with it. Being in the Holy Land is an experience of being in the physical presence of the *Melech*, and

within the *armono shel Melech*, palace of the King.

Our sedra further accentuates the blessing and privilege of being in “G-d’s Land”, in His dwelling place:

“...in order that your days may increase and the days of your children, on the land which Hashem promised to your forefathers to give them, as the days of heaven above the earth.” (11:21)

The Sages of the Gemara calculate the length of a person’s life: “And how long is a person’s life? Seventy years. But subtract the first twenty years of his life – one is not punished for sins committed then, since in Heavenly matters, a person is only punished from age twenty. Fifty years remain for him. And subtract twenty-five years of nights (as he is usually asleep or taking care of his needs); twenty-five years remain for him. Subtract twelve and a half years during which one prays and eats and uses the restroom, and a mere twelve and a half years remain for him.” (*Shabbos*, 89b)

Reb Aharon, the holy Rebbe of Belz, reflected on the higher implication of our *pasuk* in light of living in Eretz Yisrael. Every moment we dwell in the Holy Land, we are surrounded by Kedusha and fulfilling a positive commandment. In the Upper Worlds, the “length” of a person’s life is measured specifically in terms of the time they spend in active, conscious service of Hashem. Therefore, even while passively fulfilling the commandment to live in Eretz Yisrael, our “days are increased.”

Furthermore, if we live with the intent of fulfilling the injunction “Know Him in all your ways” (*Mishlei*, 3:6), we are actively engaged in *avodas Hashem*

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Beautiful Blessings

Mrs. Shira Smiles

International lecturer and curriculum developer

We have two brachot deorayta, two explicit commands from the written Torah to make a blessing, after one finishes a meal and before learning Torah. The Torah commands us, “Veachalta vesavata uverachta et Hashem Elokecha (Devarim 8;10). This is the scriptural source for the blessing made after eating. However, the blessing before eating food is learned by extrapolation; if one makes a blessing and thanks Hashem after enjoying food, certainly one should acknowledge Hashem beforehand as well. In contrast, the blessing before learning Torah is derived from the scriptural verse “Ki shem Hashem ekra, havu godel leElokeinu,” (Devarim 32;3) and the blessing after learning is deduced by extrapolation. What is the significance of this difference? Why in one instance is the scriptural source for the blessing made after the mitzvah and the other before?

Rav Scheinerman in Ohel Moshe cites the following idea. It is self-understood that when a person is hungry, he will express appreciation and thank Hashem for the food He provides. It is much easier to forget the source of goodness once he is satisfied, hence the Torah’s directive “When you eat and are satisfied, you must therefore bless Hashem” (Devarim 8;10).



The obvious power of birkat hamazon helps us understand the suggestion of the rishonim that one can fulfill the obligation to have divrei Torah at a meal simply by reciting birkat hamazon.

One must be mindful not to adopt the attitude of Eisav who “ate, drank, got up and left” (Bereisheet 25;34).

In truth, the experience of thanking Hashem after eating can be truly transformative. The Chidushei Harim quotes the Kotzker Rebbe who was amazed that people do not grow in yirat shamayim each time they bentch. After all, according to the midrash Avraham Avinu brought people closer to Hashem by encouraging them to thank the One who provided them with food. Clearly, this realization of Hashem’s beneficence should impact us anew each time we bentch. The obvious power of birkat hamazon helps us understand the suggestion of the rishonim that one can fulfill the obligation to have divrei Torah at a meal simply by reciting birkat hamazon. The Chidushei Harim further

comments that if one is going to realize Hashem’s greatness and grow closer to Him through birkat hamazon, there is truly no greater expression of Torah. However, since most of us tend to say the words in a perfunctory manner, we need to elevate our meals with words of Torah and inspiration. He adds that not only should saying birkat hamazon elevate us but the experience of eating itself should have this effect. Yeshayahu Hanavi proclaims, “an ox knows its master, and a donkey its owner’s manger” (Yeshayahu 1;3). If an animal can recognize its owner through the provision of food, how much more so should a human being be inspired by this awareness.

Rav Scheinerman in Ohel Moshe discusses the apparent disparity between the above situations. After one learns Torah and has experienced its sweetness it is obvious that thanking Hashem would be natural. It is only before one begins learning that he needs prompting to say a brachah, since he is not yet familiar with the special quality of Torah wisdom.

It behooves us to savor both our Torah learning and physical food as opportunities to connect with special closeness to Hashem. Let us allow our blessings to reflect this profound reality.

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Rebbe’s, “there is nothing more whole than a broken heart.”

We often believe that G-d can be found in our moments of spiritual wholesomeness. But how about in the conflicts which torment our psyches? How about when we are struggling with depression, addiction or confusion? How about when we feel

despair and pain? How about in every conflict between a godless existence and a G-d-centered existence? We associate “religion” with “religious” moments. But how about our “non-religious” moments?

What Moses accomplished by breaking the tablets was the demonstration of the truth that the stuff we call holiness can

be carved out from the very alienation of a person from G-d. From the very turmoil of his or her psychological and spiritual brokenness, a new holiness can be discovered.

Frustrated Woman



Rabbanit Yemima Mizrachi
Popular Torah teacher and author

“**W**hat more does she want? How much I have invested in her, how hard I have tried, and she? She insists on radiating loneliness!” This is often how a partner feels, this is how parents of teenagers feel. We have done everything and she? Ungrateful! This is how G-d describes in Parashat Eikev the wonderful graces He pours out on His people, “The clothes upon you did not wear out, nor did your feet swell... I led you through the great and terrible wilderness...” And you? “Never forget how you provoked your G-d to anger in the wilderness... for you are a stiff-necked people...”

It is easy to say that this generation is a generation of plenty and therefore ungrateful and spoiled. But. You cannot argue with a sense of loneliness. Just when we were poorer, the family felt more connected. This generation is affected by loneliness precisely because it is no longer necessary to be refined: We no longer ask anyone to take our picture, and we no longer stick our heads out the car window and ask, “Can you give me directions?” Even the cashier we once complained to about the price of products has already turned into a camera. We became photographers and took pictures, but not really together.

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throughout our days and nights. Then, from the bedroom to the boardroom and everywhere in between, our every choice and physical movement reflects a higher purpose. Living with a consciousness of knowing Hashem *b'chol derachecha* shifts the existential accounting of our lives to include every moment as having been truly lived.



This generation is affected by loneliness precisely because it is no longer necessary to be refined.

“But Zion said: The Lord has forsaken me, and the Lord has forgotten me.” This courageous monolog of a woman describes a completely subjective feeling. Surely this cannot be true! The spouse will cry out, “See, I have engraved you on the palms of My hands! Your walls are ever before Me!” G-d will say. Show me an official document that I have banished you from My face! “Where is the bill of divorce of your mother whom I dismissed?!” That’s right. There is no official document, but that is exactly how she feels: abandoned.

So what do you do near a frustrated boy? Frustrated spouse?

You ask about the incantation that is in the Haftara: “G-d gave me a skilled tongue to know how to speak timely words to the weary.” This generation is not tired. Tiredness is dispelled by sleep. This is a generation that flies. Flying is jet lag, the gap between what I want so much to give and what the other person needs at that moment. When you love, it is not enough

to know how to fly. You have to learn it from time to time. Does it suit him now? Am I showering him with all this abundance now because my parents did not have the means to shower me with it in the past when I was a child? Is what I give my partner what she needs now, or is it a reflection of what I would like? Are you satisfied again with the selfie you took of yourself and sent to yourself in a group named after you?

This generation will fly a lot. The gap between the smile for the camera and the soul that will not be filled – is a huge jet lag. Therefore, when they are free, they sleep all day and are awake all night.

So, just before the school year, we need to pray that G-d will give us “the language of study so that we will know when to come.” To know how to learn the language and the speech of those before us. Tire them out a little with tasks related to the house and the family, need them, ask them to take an occasional picture of the house and not just of themselves. Pray that they may go to bed at night tired of grace and therefore rise in the morning full of strength to bless: “Blessed are you Lord... who gives strength to the weak”.

And this, explains the Belzer Rebbe, is another meaning of Hashem’s promise that we will experience life “for as long as the heavens exist above the earth/upon the land”. In other words, when we ‘know Him in all our ways’, when with faith we live with ‘upon the Land’, in the palace of the King, all our ‘days on the earth’ are qualitatively equal to ‘days in heaven’. Our

whole life comes alive with the revealed good, the Heavenly milk and honey of *emunah p’shutah*.

May our lives be increased – both in quantity and quality! And wherever we may be, in all our ways, may we live with the *Kedusha* and the simple faith that flows from Eretz Yisrael.

Hebrew Language in the Parsha



David Curwin
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Parashat Ekev is full of praise for Eretz Yisrael. Among the most well-known are the following:

כִּי ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ מְבִיאֲךָ אֶל-אֶרֶץ טוֹבָה אֶרֶץ נַחְלֵי מַיִם עֵינַת וּתְהַמֵּת לְצִאִים בְּבִקְעָה וּבְהָרִ: אֶרֶץ חֹטֶה וְשֹׁעֵרָה וְגִפְסוֹ וּתְאֵנָה וְרִמּוֹן אֶרֶץ-זֵית שָׁמֶן וּדְבַשׁ: אֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר לֹא בְמִסְכָּנֹת תֹּאכַל-בָּהּ לֶחֶם לֹא-תִחַסֵּר כֹּל בָּהּ אֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲבִדְיָהּ בְּרִזְל וּמַהֲרִיָּה תִחַצֵּב נְחֹשֶׁת:

“For the LORD your G-d is bringing you into a good land, a land with streams and springs and fountains issuing from plain and hill; a land of wheat and barley, of vines, figs, and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey; a land in which you will never eat bread in poverty, where you will lack nothing; a land whose rocks are iron and from whose hills you can mine copper.” (Devarim 8:7-9)

Let’s take a look at the phrase אֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר לֹא בְמִסְכָּנֹת תֹּאכַל-בָּהּ לֶחֶם

This translation rendered it as “a land in which you will never eat bread in poverty.” This is based on the understanding of the root סכן as referring to poverty and misery. The related word מִסְכֵן means “miserable.”

However, that meaning only appears much later in the Tanakh, in the book of Kohelet. This has led other scholars (such as Kli Yakar and Daat Mikra) to suggest a different interpretation of מִסְכָּנֹת in Devarim 8:9. They look to a verse earlier in the Torah, describing the Israelites servitude in Egypt:

וַיִּשְׁמְרוּ עָלָיו שָׂרֵי מִסִּים לְמַעַן עֲנֹתוֹ בְּסִבְלָתָם וַיָּבֹאוּ עָרֵי מִסְכָּנוֹת לְפָרְעֹה אֶת-רַעַמְסֵס:

“So they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labor; and they built storage cities for Pharaoh: Pithom and Raamses.” (Shemot 1:11)

These storage cities – עָרֵי מִסְכָּנוֹת – were used to store grain (as had been previously done in Yosef’s time). In this case, the root סכן has a different meaning – “to store.” According to this interpretation, the verse in Devarim promises that in Eretz Yisrael, the grain will never be rationed out via storehouses (as in times of famine), but will be available to all.

According to some scholars, this use of the root סכן is cognate with the root שכן, “to settle down, dwell.” They claim that the grain is “laid down, deposited” in the store house. We find a similar meaning with the root שכן in the word מִשְׁכֹּן – “pledge, deposit”, which also gives us the word מִשְׁכָּנָא – “mortgage.”

Parsha Riddle



Reb Leor Broh
Mizrachi Melbourne

My companions appear in the Parsha, but I don’t. Who am I ?

Answer to the Parsha Riddle

Many commentaries comment on this: • Ramban answers that Korach and the 250 men who offered the Ketoret were burnt rather than being swallowed up. Being that the earth opening up and swallowing them was of such rarity, Moshe focussed on that. • The Chida (in Chomat Anach) mentions that out of respect for Korach’s children who did Teshuvah and survived to build their own families, Moshe does not mention their father here. • See Rabbi Sorotzkin’s Ozneyim LaTorah in which he explains that Moshe mentions Datán and Aviram because they denigrated the land of Canaan, unlike Korach. He explains this beautifully in the context of the Parsha.

Korach. See 11:6 where Moshe recalls the earth opening up and swallowing Datán and Aviram, but no mention of Korach who instigated the rebellion.



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PERTH

Dianella Shule - Mizrachi Perth

AUSTRIA

VIENNA

Mizrachi Österreich

BULGARIA

SOFIA

Jewish Community

BELGIUM

ANTWERP

Menashe Michaeli

CANADA

MONTREAL

ADATH Congregation
Hebrew Academy

HAMPSTEAD

The ADATH

TORONTO

Beit Zion Congregation
Bnei Akiva Schools of Toronto
Shaarei Tefillah Congregation

CROATIA

ZAGREB

Bet Israel Jewish Community of Croatia

CZECH REPUBLIC

PRAGUE

Prague Jewish Community

ECUADOR

Equador Jewish Community

FINLAND

HELSINKI

Jewish Community of Helsinki

GERMANY

KOLN

Jewish Community

GUATEMALA

Guatemala City Jewish Community

HOLLAND

AMSTERDAM

AMOS Amsterdam Modern Orthodox Sjoel

HONG KONG

CHABAD HK

Jewish Women's Association (JWA)
Kehilat Zion - Hechal Ezra
Ohel Leah Synagogue
The Jewish Community Centre
United Jewish Congregation (UJC)

ISRAEL

JERUSALEM

Amudim Beit Midrash for Women
Baer Miriam
Hashiveinu
Jacques Sueke Foundation
Michelet Mevaseret Yerushalayim (MMY)
Midreshet Emunah v'Omanut
Midreshet Eshel
Midreshet HaRova
Midreshet Rachel vChaya
Neve Hagiva'a
Shapell's/Darche Noam
Torat Reva Yerushalayim
Yeshivat Eretz HaTzvi
Yeshivat Hakotel
Yeshivat Orayta

BEIT SHEMESH

Tiferet Midrasha
Kehillat Nofei Hashemesh

Yeshivat Ashreinu

Yeshivat Hesder Lev HaTorah

HERZLIYA

Mizrachi OU-JLIC Herzliya

MEVASERET ZION

Yeshivat Mevaseret

RAMAT GAN

Israel XP at Bar Ilan University

THE NEGEV

Mechinat Ruach HaNegev

MACEDONIA

SCOPIA

Jewish Community

MALTA

Jewish Community

PORTUGAL

PORTO

Rabbi Daniel Litvak

SERBIA

BELGRADE

Rav Isak Asiel

SOUTH AFRICA

JOHANNESBURG

Mizrachi Glenhazel Shul

SWITZERLAND

BERN

Jüdische Gemeinde Bern

ZURICH

Mizrachi

UNITED KINGDOM

Mizrachi UK

UNITED STATES

NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Kol Hatorah Kulah

National Council of Young Israel

RZA-Mizrachi USA

CALIFORNIA

Beth Jacob Congregation
Harkham Hillel Hebrew Academy
West Coast Torah Center
Young Israel of North Beverly Hills
YULA High School
Young Israel of Century City

COLORADO

DAT Minyan
East Denver Orthodox Synagogue
The Denver Kehillah

CONNECTICUT

Beth David Synagogue
Congregation Agudath Sholom
Young Israel of West Hartford

FLORIDA

Beth Israel Congregation
Hebrew Academy RASG
PlayHard PrayHard
Congregation Torah Ohr
Sha'arei Bina Torah Academy for Girls
Young Israel of Hollywood-Ft. Lauderdale

GEORGIA

Congregation Beth Jacob
Congregation Ohr HaTorah

HAWAII

Kehilat Olam Ejad Ganim

ILLINOIS

Mizrachi-Religious Zionists of Chicago

MARYLAND

Kemp Mill Synagogue
Pikesville Jewish Congregation
Bnai Jacob Shaarei Zion Congregation

MASSACHUSETTS

Congregation Beth El Atereth Israel
Congregation Shaarei Tefillah
Young Israel of Brookline

MICHIGAN

Young Israel of Oak Park
Young Israel of Southfield
Congregation Kadimah-Toras Moshe

MINNESOTA

Congregation Darchei Noam

MISSOURI

Yeshivat Kadimah High School Nusach
Hari B'nai Zion Congregation

Young Israel of St. Louis

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Hillel at Dartmouth

NEW JERSEY

Ahavas Achim
Volunteer Chaplain Middlesex County
Congregation AABJ&D
Congregation Adath Israel of the JEC
National Council of Young Israel
Congregation Ahavat Achim
Congregation Ahavath Torah
Congregation Brothers of Israel
Congregation Darchei Noam of Fair Lawn
Congregation Etz Chaim of Livingston
Congregation Israel of Springfield
Congregation Ohr Torah
Congregation Sons of Israel of Cherry Hill
Ma Tov Day Camp
Ohav Emeth
Pal Foundation
Shomrei Torah of Fair Lawn
Synagogue of the Suburban Torah Center
Yavneh Academy
National Council of Young Israel
Young Israel of Teaneck

NEW YORK

Congregation Anshei Shalom
Congregation B'nai Tzedek
Congregation Bais Tefilah of Woodmere
Congregation Beth Sholom
Ramaz
Ma'ayanot Yeshiva High School for Girls
MTA - Yeshiva University
High School for Boys
Young Israel of Merrick
Congregation Beth Torah
Congregation Etz Chaim of
Kew Gardens Hills
Congregation Kehilath Jeshurun
Congregation Ohab Zedek
Great Neck Synagogue
Iranian Jewish Center/Beth
Hadassah Synagogue
Irving Place Minyan
Jewish Center of Atlantic Beach
Kingsway Jewish Center
Lincoln Square Synagogue
Merkaz Yisrael of Marine Park
North Shore Hebrew Academy
Young Israel of Merrick

NYC Department of Correction
OU-JLIC at Binghamton University
OU-JLIC at Cornell University
Queens Jewish Center
Stars of Israel Academy
The Riverdale Minyan
Vaad of Chevra Kadisha
West Side Institutional Synagogue
Yeshiva University High School for Girls
Young Israel of Hillcrest
Young Israel of Jamaica Estates
Young Israel of Lawrence-Cedarhurst
Young Israel of New Rochelle
Young Israel of North Woodmere
Young Israel of Oceanside
Young Israel of Scarsdale

OHIO

Beachwood Kehilla
Congregation Sha'arei Torah
Congregation Torat Emet
Green Road Synagogue
Fuchs Mizrachi School
Heights Jewish Center

PENNSYLVANIA

Shaare Torah Congregation

SOUTH CAROLINA

Brith Sholom Beth Israel
Congregation Dor Tikvah

TENNESSEE

Baron Hirsch Congregation

TEXAS

Mayerland Minyan Synagogue
Robert M. Beren Academy
United Orthodox Synagogues of Houston

VIRGINIA

Keneseth Beth Israel

WASHINGTON

Bikur Cholim-Machzikay Hadath
Northwest Yeshiva High School
Sephardic Bikur Holim Congregation

VENEZUELA

CARACAS

Ashkenazi Kehilla
Mizrachi Venezuela



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