



WHEN
HOW
& WHY
DO WE SAY
THANK YOU

*YOUNG ISRAEL OF WEST HARTFORD
DOR L'DOR: PARENT-CHILD LEARNING*

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Packet created by Elisheva Cohen



YOUNG OF ISRAEL
WEST HARTFORD

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User Guide:

This packet is geared towards children from the ages of four until 6th grade to learn with their parents or other family member. On each page, there will be a source for all to learn and then questions in different colored boxes, based on age group, to discuss. For the youngest age group, feel free to just focus on the bolded line in the source and the questions. The **blue, top boxes** are for **children 4-6**, the **red, middle boxes** for **children 7-9**, and the **orange, bottom boxes** for **children 10-12**. These are merely suggestions but feel free to try out the other boxes as well.

In light of the advent of Thanksgiving, this packet is focused on gratitude and how it appears in Judaism- what are examples incorporated into Jewish practice that reflect the value of gratitude. Also included are practical tips for fostering gratitude in one's daily life.

See future dates and learn more about Dor L'Dor this year at youngisraelwh.org/DorLDor

Reciting Brachot/Blessings

גמרא ברכות לה-אמר רב יהודה אמר שמואל: כל הנִהנה מן העולם הזה בלא בְּרָכָה כְּאִילוּ נִהְנָה מִקְדָּשֵׁי שָׁמַיִם, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "לֵה' הָאָרֶץ וּמְלוֹאָהּ". רַבִּי לִוִּי רִמִּי: כְּתִיב "לֵה' הָאָרֶץ וּמְלוֹאָהּ", וְכִתִּיב "הַשָּׁמַיִם שָׁמַיִם לֵה' וְהָאָרֶץ נָתַן לִבְנֵי אָדָם"! לֹא קִשְׂיָא כְּאִן קוֹדֵם בְּרָכָה, כְּאִן לְאַחַר בְּרָכָה.

Rav Yehuda said that Shmuel said: **One who derives benefit from this world without a blessing, it is as if he enjoyed objects consecrated to the heavens**, as it is stated: "The earth and all it contains is the Lord's, the world and all those who live in it" ([Psalms 24:1](#)). Rabbi Levi expressed this concept differently. Rabbi Levi raised a contradiction: It is written: "The earth and all it contains is the Lord's," and it is written elsewhere: "The heavens are the Lord's and the earth He has given over to mankind" ([Psalms 115:16](#)). There is clearly a contradiction with regard to whom the earth belongs. He himself resolves the contradiction: This is not difficult. Here, the verse that says that the earth is the Lord's refers to the situation before a blessing is recited, and here, where it says He gave the earth to mankind, refers to after a blessing is recited (Gemara Brachot 35a)

Ages 4-6

1. How would you feel if someone took something of yours without asking?
2. How do you think God feels when we use what He gave us without thanking Him?
3. What do we do to thank God for the things He gave us?
4. Try to practice saying one bracha over food.

Ages 7-9

1. How would you feel if one of your friends always asked you for things but never said thank you, never did anything for you?
2. Why do we say brachot?
3. Do you think it's more important to make a bracha before you eat or after you eat, and why?
4. There's an idea that if someone says a bracha and no one says amen, it's like a text/letter being sent but not opened. Why do you think this is?

Ages 10-12

1. How would you define a positive relationship- with friends and family?
2. What are we acknowledging when we make a blessing?
3. What does it mean to have a relationship with Hashem?
4. Do you think it's more important to make a bracha before you eat or after you eat, and why?

Korban Todah- Offering of Thanksgiving

Vayikra 7:11-15

וזאת תורת זבח השלמים אשר יקריב לה: אם על-תודה יקריבנו והקריב | על-זבח התודה חלות מצות בלולת בשמן ורקיקי מצות משחים בשמן וסלת מרִבֶּכֶת חלת בלולת בשמן: על-חלת לחם חֲמִץ יקריב קרבנו על-זבח תודת שלמיו: והקריב ממנו אחד מכל-קרבן תרומה לה" לפהן הזרק את-דם השלמים לו יהיה: ובשר זבח תודת שלמיו ביום קרבנו יאכל לא-יגים ממנו עד-בקר:

This is the ritual of the sacrifice of well-being that one may offer to the Lord: If he offers it for thanksgiving, **he shall offer together with the sacrifice of thanksgiving unleavened cakes** with oil mixed in, unleavened wafers spread with oil, and cakes of choice flour with oil mixed in, well soaked. This offering, with cakes of leavened bread added, he shall offer along with his thanksgiving sacrifice of well-being. Out of this he shall offer one of each kind as a gift to the LORD; it shall go to the priest who dashes the blood of the offering of well-being. And the flesh of **his thanksgiving sacrifice of well-being shall be eaten on the day that it is offered**; none of it shall be set aside until morning.

The Korban Todah was an offering brought after someone survived a dangerous situation such as one who crossed the ocean, crossed the desert, recovered from a very serious sickness, and one who was released from jail. Along with the sacrifice itself, the person had to bring 40 loaves of bread to be eaten that day.

1. Would you rather have a birthday party with a lot of friends or just by yourself? Why?
2. Share a story of a time when you shared something of yours with someone else. How did that make you feel? How did it make your friend feel?
3. Tell two people something that happened to you this week that made you happy.

1. Why do you think the person has to bring so much food (40 loaves of bread) and why does it have to be eaten so quickly?
2. Why is it important to publicize what God has done for us and share our joy and gratitude of being saved with others?
3. Can you think of a time in your life when you would have wanted to bring a Korban Todah? Share this with your parent/child.
4. How can you compare the bringing of the Korban Todah to a thanksgiving meal you have with your family?

1. Why do you think the person has to bring so much food (40 loaves of bread) and why does it have to be eaten so quickly?
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Birchat HaGomel

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם הַגּוֹמֵל לְחַיִּים טוֹבוֹת שְׂגֻמָּלְנִי כֹל טוֹב

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who bestows kindness upon the accountable (not worthy), for He has bestowed goodness to me.

The Congregation responds:

אָמֵן מִי שְׂגֻמָּלְךָ\שְׂגֻמָּלְךָ כֹּל טוֹב הוּא יִגְמָלְךָ\יִגְמָלְךָ כֹּל טוֹב סְלֵה

Hashem who bestowed upon you this good, should continue to bestow upon you other good tidings.

Someone who has survived a very dangerous situation recites this bracha thanking God for saving him/her. It is said in front of a minyan (ten Jewish men over the age of 13), ideally within three days of the episode and with a Sefer Torah present. As with the Korban Todah, there are four times this is recited- if one crossed the ocean, crossed the desert, recovered from very serious sickness, or was released from jail. It is also the custom for women to say this blessing sometime after giving birth.

1. How do you feel when your nose is all stuffed up when you're sick?
2. What about when you get better and you can breathe easily again?
3. What is something you would want to tell God when you feel better?

1. Why do you think this bracha is said in these four cases specifically?
2. Why do you think the people around have to respond with this statement? Why not just say Amen like we do with other brachot?
3. When is a time in your life where you had a really close call or you experienced something scary?

1. Why do you think others respond in this way and don't just say Amen?
2. Why do you think we say birchat hagomel in those four cases?
3. Why do you think birchat hagomel needs to be said with a minyan present?
4. When is a time in your life where you had a really close call or you experienced something scary?

The Meaning Behind the Name Yehudim

Bereshit 29:35- Leah, Yaakov's wife, has a fourth son and names him Yehuda

וַתְּהַר עוֹד וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן וַתֹּאמֶר הַפְּעַם אוֹדָה אֶת־ה' "עַל־כֵּן קָרָאתִי שְׁמוֹ יְהוּדָה וַתַּעֲמִד מִלְּדוֹת:

She conceived again and bore a son, and declared, **"This time I will praise the Lord."**

Therefore she named him Judah. Then she stopped bearing.

Gemara Brachot 7b-

וְאָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן מִשּׁוּם רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן בֶּן יוֹחַי: מִיּוֹם שֶׁבְּרָא הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא אֶת עוֹלָמוֹ לֹא הָיָה אָדָם שֶׁהוֹדָה לְהַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, עַד שֶׁבָּאתָה לָאָה וְהוֹדַתָּ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "הַפְּעַם אוֹדָה אֶת ה'".

And Rabbi Yoḥanan said in the name of Rabbi Shimon ben Yoḥai: From the day the Holy One, Blessed be He, created the world, no one thanked the Holy One, Blessed be He, until Leah came and thanked Him, as it is stated: "And she became pregnant and gave birth to a son, and she said, 'This time I will give thanks to God,' and thus he was called Judah"

([Genesis 29:35](#)).

1. What is the Hebrew name for the Jewish People?
2. Why do you think it's important to say thank you?
3. Are there more ways to say thank you than just "thank you?" Come up with some examples!

1. Why, out of all the 12 tribes, do you think we, the Jewish People (Yehudim), are named after Yehuda?
2. Why does Leah only thank God now after the fourth son?
3. When do you feel grateful more- when someone gives something to you or you give something to someone else? How can you be grateful in both cases?

1. Why, out of all of the 12 tribes, do you think we, the Jewish People (Yehudim), are named after Yehuda?
2. Is this the really first time someone thank God in the Torah? Didn't Eliezer, for example, the servant of Avraham thank God when he said, "Blessed be the Lord, the God of my master Avraham, who has not withheld His steadfast faithfulness from my master" (Bereshit 24:27). Why does the gemara say that this time with Leah is the first time someone thanked God?
3. What do you think is unique about Leah's thanks and how does it differ from Eliezer's?

Thanksgiving Connection

Statement by George Washington- National Thanksgiving Proclamation:

“Now, therefore, I do recommend and assign Thursday, the 26th day of November next, **to be devoted by the people of these States to the service of that great and glorious Being who is the beneficent author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be**; that we may then all unite in rendering unto Him our sincere and humble thanks for His kind care and protection of the people of this country previous to their becoming a nation”

“It’s [Thanksgiving’s] motivation is to thank God for the freedoms we enjoy in America. This is a sentiment shared by citizens of all religions.”

-Rabbi Jack Abramowitz- <https://outorah.org/p/21932/>

1. Do you know the story of Thanksgiving? What were they thankful for?
2. Do you think it’s good to only have one day a year to be thankful?
3. What is something you could do to show that you are thankful?
4. Share two things that you are thankful for.

1. Do you know the story of Thanksgiving? What were they thankful for?
2. Do you think it’s good to have one day a year to focus on gratitude?
3. What is something you could do to show your gratitude?
4. Share three things you are thankful for- try to be specific.

1. Why was Thanksgiving instituted?
2. Do you think its important to have one day a year focused on gratitude? Aren’t we meant to be grateful everyday?
3. What is something you can do to express your gratitude?
4. Share three things you are thankful for- try to be specific.

Practical Tips for Cultivating Gratitude

1. Think about and share- what is something you love to do?
2. Draw a picture of someone who did something nice for you today and give it to them.
3. Create a paper flower- on each petal, write on it someone or something you love.
4. Say thank you to someone today.
5. At bedtime, share something from your day that made you happy.
6. Say a bracha before you eat.

1. Gratitude jar- every day, write something you are grateful for on a piece of paper and put it in the jar. See how the jar fills up and every so often, take some notes out and read them aloud.
2. Write a letter to someone you are thankful for and send it to them (can be a family member, teacher, friend, counselor, or other).
3. Gratitude scavenger hunt- find as many things around the house or outside that you are grateful for and as you find them, write a list and take a picture of it. At the end, compare what you found with someone else. You can even make it into a scrapbook.
4. Go on a gratitude walk- as you walk, try to really appreciate what's around you- take in the smell, the flowers, trees, what you hear, the air that you feel, etc.

1. Keep a gratitude journal for one week- every day write down one thing for which you are grateful and try not to repeat.
2. When you say the prayer *Modim* in Shemonah Esrai, pause and think of three things for which you are grateful for today.
3. Ask yourself three questions at the end of the day- 1) Who did something nice for me today? 2) What did I do for someone else today? 3) What is something I am grateful for today?
4. Write a letter to someone you are thankful for and send it to them (can be a family member, teacher, friend, counselor, or other).
5. Every day, take a picture of one thing that catches your eye, small or big, and for which you are grateful.

General Takeaways:

- Gratitude is an important value in Judaism
- There are many practices in Judaism which give us the tools to say thank you. Some examples are:
 - The blessings we say over food (before and after).
 - The Korban Todah- Thanksgiving Offering- that was brought in the time of the Temple.
 - Birchat HaGomel- A blessing said when one survived a very dangerous situation, modeled after the Korban Todah.
- Gratitude is such an important part of Judaism that it's even in our name- Yehudim.
 - Leah named her fourth son Yehuda as its root means "thanks."
- There are many ways we can incorporate gratitude into our daily life. Try putting some of the tips into practice and seeing the impact!



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