



FALL
5777/2016

G E S H E R

Washington Heights Congregation

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A Message From The Rabbi ...

Blessings After Eating: The Key to Much More?

by Rabbi Yaakov Hoffman

Drawing on the parallel between עקב meaning ‘consequently’ and עקב meaning ‘heel,’ Rashi comments at the beginning of Parshas Eikev that the rewards promised at the beginning of the Parsha will come when we obey *דש בעקביו* ש*אדם* הקלות, the “light” mitzvos that we trample underfoot.

One common example is actually found in Parshas Eikev: the mitzvah to bless God after meals *ואכלת ושבעת וברכת את ה' אלדיך*. While most people don't neglect to bentsh after eating bread, we often rush through it with little concentration. An even worse problem lies with the other after-brachos, *בורא נפשות מעין שלש*, which can easily slip our minds entirely.

While *prima facie* this does indeed seem like a minor infraction, *Psikta Zutarta*, an early medieval Midrashic collection, has a different idea. It notes that the verse ordaining grace after meals is immediately followed by: *השמר לך פן תשכח את ה' אלדיך* “Take care lest thou forget the Lord thy God.” Neglecting to say blessings after eating, or perhaps even saying them without paying attention, is not just a memory lapse but a form of casting off the yoke of heaven.

I think the reason that the Psikta judges this infraction so harshly is because right after the command to bentsh, the Torah warns us that living in peace and material comfort may lead us to take our lives for granted. This is similar to eating: It is easy to be careful to make the blessing before partaking because we feel a lack – we are hungry and feel the desire for the food in front of us. Once we are finished and our hunger assuaged, we are less likely to make a point of realizing that it was ultimately God who provided us with the food. Taking care to make the proper blessing after eating trains us to remember that our comfort in all areas of life is due to Divine grace.

Being more careful to make all the appropriate blessings after eating, slowly and with understanding, is an excellent way to lead up to

the High Holy Day season. If we demonstrate that we recognize God's role in our sustenance, God will hopefully have no reason to disturb the relative tranquility of our current existence in order to jolt us into not taking it for granted. We can thus merit a good judgment for the upcoming year. 🏛️

Upcoming Shul Events:

We look forward to the **Yomim Noraim**, with **Nafi Schwarzenberger** as ba'al shacharit and, as he has been for the past three years, **Shmuel Gilbert** as ba'al musaf. Tickets are \$100 each, although no one will be turned away for lack of money. Please contact the office (212-923-4407) to buy them or to make special arrangements. They also can be purchased on the website.

Plans for the fall include having a **scholar-in-residence** and a **film program**. Details will be announced after the yomim tovim.

Welcome New Member:

Rachel Reiss

מזל טוב / Congratulations

To **Esther Rodriguez** on her marriage to **Yeshaya Orlando Sanchez Soto**

To **Ilse Gruenspecht** on the birth of twin great-grandchildren, a boy and a girl, and on the bar mitzvah of a great-grandson **Yehoshua Gruenspecht** in Beit Shemesh, Israel

To **Rabbi and Giti Hoffman and family** on the first birthday of **Pesachya**

To **Ina Sondheim** on the birth of twin great-grandchildren, a boy and a girl

To **Bertha Gruenspecht** on the birth of a great-grandson

To **Gloria Spira** on the birth of a great-granddaughter

To **May & Gary Deutsch** on the birth of a grandson **Israel Yakir** to **Hillel & Ahavya Deutsch**, and to his parents and **Huda and Ami** on the birth of a son and brother, and to **Na'avah and Josh Brown and Gidon** on the birth of a nephew and cousin

To **Sam & Elaine Samson** on the birth of a granddaughter **Tehilla Sara**, named after **Sara Samson** o"h who was until her passing our oldest member

To **Sonya Jacobs** on the marriage of her grandson **Yitzchak Horowitz** to **Sara Brownstein**

To **David & Yafit Sclar** on the birth of their daughter **Ayala** and to **Noa** and to **Avraham** on the birth of a sister

To **Abe & Nancy Sclar** on the birth of their granddaughter **Ayala**

Kiddush Sponsors:

June 25, Parashat Beha'alotcha: **Sheva & Izya Shtaygrud**, on the yahrzeit of Sheva's parents

July 9, Parashat Korach: **Yosef Rabinowitz**, to celebrate his 25 years of living in Washington Heights

July 23, Parashat Balak: **Yafit & David Sclar**, in honor of **Ayala's** birth, **Noa's** 6th birthday, and **Avi** becoming a big brother

July 30, Parashat Pinchas: **Marjorie & Charlie Gregor**, to celebrate **Noach Gregor's** 3rd birthday

August 20, Parashat Va'etchanan: **May & Gary Deutsch**, to celebrate the birth of their new grandson **Israel Yakir Deutsch**

August 27, Parashat Eikev: **Peter Merker**, on the shloshim of his mother **Evelyn Merker**, o"h

September 3, Parashat Re'eh: **Yosef Ainbinder**, on the yahrzeit of his father

September 10, Parashat Shoftim: **Margot Fein**, on the yahrzeit of her grandmother **Anna Finestone** (Chana Sarah bat Yisrael) o"h

September 17, Parashat Ki Teitzei: **Laura & Morris Whitcup**, on the yahrzeit of his mother **Cecilia B. Whitcup** (Tziporah bat Moshe) o"h

If you are interested in sponsoring a Kiddush, please call the Shul office **(212) 923-4407**

רפואה שלמה / Best Wishes for a Speedy Recovery

Sheva Shtaygrud

Condolences to:

We regret to inform you of the passing of **Peter Merker's** mother, **Mrs. Evelyn Merker**, o"h

May they be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem

המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים

If you have any questions or needs,
please call the Shul office at **(212) 923-4407**
The answering machine is checked frequently.
You may also consult our website at **www.bridgeshul.com**

The Eruv

Information about the boundaries of the Washington Heights and YU Eruvin can be found at http://images.shulcloud.com/131/attachments/6279_DOC082112-003.pdf.

Note that the eruv does not extend into Fort Tryon Park or Gorman Park.

Find the CURRENT STATUS of both eruvim at <http://www.mtsinaishul.com/>, or call 646-450-ERUV, or send a text message (SMS) to 412-213-8991. If only the YU eruv is listed as unchecked, check www.yueruv.org closer to Shabbat, or listen to announcements in shul on Friday night.

Washington Heights Congregation Zmanim

Fall 5777

EREV ROSH HASHANA

SUN., OCTOBER 2

Candle Lighting	6:17
Mincha/Maariv	6:25

ROSH HASHANA DAY 1

MON., OCTOBER 3

Shacharit	7:40
Shofar (approx)	9:50
Conclusion of services (approx)	12:15
Tashlich	
Mincha	6:15
Maariv	7:14
Candle lighting NOT BEFORE	7:14

ROSH HASHANA DAY 2

TUES., OCTOBER 4

Shacharit	7:40
Shofar (approx)	9:50
Conclusion of services (approx)	12:15
Mincha	6:15
Maariv/Havdalah	7:12

FAST OF GEDALIAH

WED., OCTOBER 5

Fast begins	5:26
Fast ends	7:03

SHABBAT SHUVA

PARASHAT VAYEILECH

OCTOBER 7-8

Candle Lighting	6:09
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	6:15
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	6:05
Maariv/Shabbat ends	7:06

YOM KIPPUR

TUES.-WED., OCTOBER 11-12

Mincha with Mt. Sinai	
Candle Lighting	6:02
Kol Nidrei	6:10
Maariv	6:55
Shacharit with Yizkor	8:10

Mincha	3:55
Neilah	5:25
Maariv/Havdalah	7:00

SHABBAT PARASHAT

HA'AZINU

OCTOBER 14-15

Candle Lighting	5:58
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	6:05
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	5:55
Maariv/Shabbat ends	6:55

EREV SUKKOT

SUN., OCTOBER 16

Candle Lighting	5:55
Mincha/Maariv	6:00
Kiddush not before	6:46

SUKKOT DAY 1

MON., OCTOBER 17

Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	6:00
Maariv	6:52
Candle Lighting not before	6:52

SUKKOT DAY 2

TUES., OCTOBER 18

Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	5:55
Maariv/Havdalah	6:51

SHABBAT CHOL HAMOED

OCTOBER 21-22

Candle Lighting	5:47
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	5:55
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	5:25
Maariv/Shabbat ends	6:45

SHMINI ATZERET

SUN.-MON., OCTOBER 23-24

Candle Lighting	5:45
Mincha/Maariv	5:50

Kiddush not before	6:36
Shacharit with Yizkor	8:40
Mincha	5:50

SIMCHAT TORAH

MON.-TUES., OCTOBER 24-25

Maariv	6:43
Candle Lighting not before	6:43
Shacharit	8:20
Mincha	5:45
Maariv/Havdalah	6:41

SHABBAT MEVARCHIM

PARASHAT BERESHIT

OCTOBER 28-29

Candle Lighting	5:38
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	5:45
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	5:35
Maariv/Shabbat ends	6:36

SHABBAT PARASHAT

NOACH

NOVEMBER 4-5

Candle Lighting	5:29
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	5:35
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	5:25
Maariv/Shabbat ends	6:29

SHABBAT PARASHAT

LECH LECHA

NOVEMBER 11-12

Candle Lighting	4:22
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	4:30
Shacharit (note time)	8:30
Mincha	4:20
Maariv/Shabbat ends	5:22

SHABBAT PARASHAT

VAYERA

NOVEMBER 18-19

Candle Lighting	4:17
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	4:25
Shacharit (note time)	8:35
Mincha	4:15
Maariv/Shabbat ends	5:18

SHABBAT MEVARCHIM PARASHAT CHAYEI SARA

NOVEMBER 25-26

Candle Lighting	4:12
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	4:20
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	4:10
Maariv/Shabbat ends	5:15

SHABBAT PARASHAT

TOLDOT

DECEMBER 2-3

Candle Lighting	4:10
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	4:20
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	4:10
Maariv/Shabbat ends	5:13

SHABBAT PARASHAT

VAYETZEI

DECEMBER 9-10

Candle Lighting	4:10
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	4:15
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	4:10
Maariv/Shabbat ends	5:13

SHABBAT PARASHAT

VAYISHLACH

DECEMBER 16-17

Candle Lighting	4:11
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	4:20
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	4:10
Maariv/Shabbat ends	5:15

EREV CHANUKAH

SHABBAT MEVARCHIM

PARASHAT VAYESHEV

DECEMBER 23-24

Candle Lighting	4:15
Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat	4:20
Shacharit	8:40
Mincha	4:15
Maariv/Shabbat ends	5:19

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