

INTERNET PARSHA SHEET
ON PARSHAS EIKEV - 5757

B'S'D'

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Peninim on the Torah Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum

You shall teach them to your children to discuss them. (11:19) Rashi comments that Chazal have inferred from this pasuk that when a child begins to talk, his father should converse with him in lashon hakodesh, Hebrew, and should begin to teach him Torah. If he does not teach him Torah, it is viewed as if he had _____ buried him. This is implied by the juxtaposition to the next pasuk, in which the Torah states, "In order to prolong your days and the days of your children." The mitzvah of limud haTorah takes on a new perspective when it applies to a father's obligation to educate his children. A father who is lax in fulfilling his responsibility of chinuch ha'banim incurs grave consequences. Not only does he rob his child of his heritage, he impairs his development as a Jew.

Horav Yisrael Salanter, zl, says that when a person passes on from this world he comes before the Heavenly Throne and must give an accounting of his life. He is asked to justify his behavior and the level of his observance of Torah and mitzvos. He then receives his reward and is able to repose in his eternal rest. He may still, however, be called upon to answer for the shortcomings of his children. If their sins can be traced back to a lack of proper education, then the parent is held liable. The onus of guilt is placed where it belongs - on the parent. The Alter M'Kelm, interprets the prayer "and remove spiritual impediment from before us and behind us." We implore Hashem not to prosecute us for the sins that are "lifaneinu," before us. This refers to our sins. We also beg Him not to profer charges against us for those sins that are "m'achareinu" behind us. This is a reference to the sins perpetrated by our children, after us.

The baalei mussar cite a compelling analogy which will hopefully impart a strong impression regarding a parent's responsibility towards his children's education. There was once a man who was very wealthy. He was blessed with one son who lost his ability to speak due to the effects of a serious illness. The grief-stricken father took his child to a multitude of doctors and specialists, alas, to no avail. The boy grew up healthy and bright, but he could not speak. The father would go into his room at night and weep bitter tears for the agony suffered by his only child. What could he do? He was willing to undergo any ordeal just so that his child could speak. If only he could put words in his son's mouth. This tragic story is regrettably one that is relevant to us. When a person leaves this world, he enters the eternal world where everything is spiritual. What does the neshamah do ba'Shomayim? We are taught that Torah is studied at all times; each person shares in the Torah according to his specific level of erudition. If he was a great scholar in this world, he will have much to speak about in Olam Habah. If, unfortunately, his mastery of Torah was limited, he will be relegated to sitting alone "speechless" because he will not have a word to say! In the World To Come, there will be no interest in secular or mundane matters. Everything will be Torah - nothing else! Are we that different than the father whose son could not speak? Are we availing our children the opportunity to "speak" in Olam Habah, or are we preparing them to sit there mute, impaired eternally, because of our lack of vision and selfish concerns?

The mitzvah of teaching Torah to one's children, writes the Shelah Ha'Kadosh, is the underlying purpose of the mitzvah of "Pru U'rvu," "Be Fruitful and Multiply." We are enjoined to have children that will study Torah and transmit this commitment to learning through the generations. The commentators emphasize the great significance for parents to pray to Hashem that they be blessed with children who are devoted and committed to Torah study. The mother of the Chofetz Chaim was a tzadeikes - a modest, virtuous

woman who spent the major portion of her day in prayer to the Almighty. She prayed that her beloved son grow to be a G-d-fearing Jew. A number of years after her death they found an old, worn Tehillim in her house. This precious book was brought to the Chofetz Chaim who took hold of it with both hands, kissing it fervently as tears welled up in his eyes. During this tearful "reunion" with his mother's Tehillim the Chofetz Chaim turned to the people and said, "Do you have any idea how many prayers my mother said every morning? She would tearfully embrace her Tehillim and pray to Hashem, 'Please Ribono Shel Olam, grant me that my son grow into a good and true Jew.'" Is it any wonder that her son became the righteous and learned Chofetz Chaim? We have no idea of the effect that prayers emanating from the heart have upon the spiritual development of a child. A bright child, the finest schools, the most exciting and experienced teachers are all wonderful - but Tehillim and tears are essential pre-requisites for raising a ben Torah. Parents must realize that Torah, unlike any other form of knowledge, is a gift from Hashem. We must pray that we, together with our child, be worthy of that gift.

Horav Yaakov Galinsky, Shlita, tells of the time the Chazon Ish asked him to study with the first baal teshuvah who had come to the Ponovez Yeshivah. Horav Galinsky asked the Chazon Ish, "What merit did this young man's father have that he who desecrated Shabbos and ate treifah food should have a son that would study Torah?" The Chazon Ish responded, "When this young man's father went 'off the derech' and alienated himself from Torah Judaism, his father cried bitter tears. His tears regrettably did not help his son, but they served as a merit that his grandson would return to Torah." Horav Efraim Cohen, zl, writes that once a man came to him crying bitterly that on Shabbos night when he recites Kiddush, his son stands nearby smoking a cigarette to provoke his anger. What should he do? The rav asked the man, "To which school did you send him as a child?" He responded by telling him the name of a secular school which was totally devoid of Torah study. "Now you come to me crying," the rav said angrily. "You are responsible for destroying your son's neshamah! You sent him to a school that would "progressively" lead him away from the Torah." Horav Cohen continued with a story. In Russia the government seized any cash or jewelry that belonged to people, claiming it was for tax purposes. The people who were clever hid their money in a coffin, claiming they were taking a body outside of the city to be buried in the cemetery. One time the guards suspected the ruse and demanded that the coffin be opened so that they could view the corpse. The "mourners" suddenly began to cry that this was not proper honor for the dead. It was a desecration and sacrilege to open the coffin. They cried and wailed to no avail. The guard, who was not fooled, said, "You are crying too late. You should have cried earlier when you were carrying the coffin. Then I would have believed your display of grief. Now, your mourning is out of place." "My dear friend," Horav Cohen said to the man, "You are also too late. You should have cried years ago when your vested interests motivated you to send your son to a secular school. Your indifference to the future of your child is haunting you now. You woke up too late."

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TORAH WEEKLY Highlights of the Weekly Torah Portion Ohr Somayach
The Ink Of Eternity

"Carve for yourself two stone Tablets like the first ones." (10:1)
Michaelangelo may have known a thing or two about painting, but when it came to Jewish anatomy he was a bit off. When he painted Moses he gave him little horns. Michaelangelo's problem came from a mis-translation of the Hebrew word keren. It's true, keren does mean a 'horn,' but it also means a ray of light. The English word corona, meaning a glowing halo, is probably a derivation of keren. How did Moshe get his 'horns'? After the Jewish People heard the Ten Commandments at Sinai, Moshe ascended the mountain on the 7th of Sivan to receive the rest of the Torah. He came down on the 17th of Tammuz and was greeted by the sight of the golden calf.

Moshe smashed the two tablets of the Torah to the ground. These first tablets were made by Hashem and were engraved by Hashem. They contained all the Torah -- the gemaras and the agaditas etc. -- everything that was necessary to carry out The Maker's instructions. For example, the first tablets included all the details of how to make tefillin: that they had to be perfectly square black boxes made from the hide of a kosher animal. Similarly, it was on these two tablets that Hashem inscribed all the minutiae of the laws of Shabbos. However, when God gave Moshe the second tablets, they only contained the written Torah. The detailed instructions, the Oral Torah, was given to him verbally. After Hashem forgave the Jewish People their infidelity with the Golden Calf, Moshe ascended the mountain again on the first of Elul to receive the second tablets. He came down 40 days later -- on Yom Kippur. When the Children of Israel saw Moshe, his face was shining with a radiant corona. Why didn't Moshe's face shine before? The Midrash says that when Moshe had finished writing the Torah, some of the ink that was left over in his pen touched his face -- and that's where the radiance came from. However, the Torah itself says the rays of light came from speaking to Hashem. But Moshe spoke to Hashem many times before, why only now did his face become luminescent? And which was the real cause of the aura? The ink in the pen or speaking to Hashem? One would think that the second giving of the Torah was a second-class affair. After all, the first tablets were written by Hashem on rock hewn by Hashem, whereas the second tablets were the work of man, and only the writing was Divine. It sounds like the first giving was on a higher level, doesn't it? Really the reverse is true. When Hashem first gave the Torah, the Jewish People were to be the vessel that would contain the Torah. Like the Holy Ark, we would hold the Torah but we would not be part of the Torah, just as a box only contains what is inside it. It's not the thing itself. But with the second tablets, the Jewish People became part of the Torah itself: The beams that came from the ink that was left in the pen of Moshe was the Oral Torah. Hashem put into the mind of Moshe Rabbeinu -- the rabbi, the teacher of Israel -- the Oral Torah. All the verbal instructions that were originally written on the first Tablets were now engraved in the mind of Moshe. Everything that is possible for a mortal understanding to attain to was written in the mind of Moshe. The ink of eternity in the pen of Moshe was one and the same as G-d talking to him. Thus the Jewish People became partners in the Torah. We become the parchment on which Hashem wrote with the ink of eternity.

Immortal Fear "You shall not be broken before them, for Hashem, your God is among you, a great and awesome God." (7:21) If a person loves his fellow man and gives him respect, in no way does this detract from his love and respect for Hashem. However, if a person fears mere flesh and blood, this is a sure sign that his feeling of awe for Hashem is less than perfect. If a person is genuinely "God-fearing", then he fears no man.

Soul Food "For Man does not live on bread alone, rather on all that comes from the mouth of Hashem man lives." (8:3) How is it possible for the soul whose very essence is spiritual to be sustained by something as physical as food? The answer is that, in reality, the whole of Creation exists only as a result of the power of Hashem's original utterance at the time of Creation (as it says in Bereishis "By the word of Hashem, the heavens were created"). It is this same power of Hashem's word wrapped inside the food which nourishes the soul. When a Jew takes an apple and makes a blessing over it, he awakens the latent spiritual power implanted in the fruit at the time of the Creation -- that's real "soul-food"!

Stealing the World "And you will eat and be satisfied and you will bless Hashem your God" (8:10) Rabbi Levi pointed out a contradiction between two verses in Tehillim (Psalms): One verse states "The world and it's fullness are Hashem's," and a different verse states "The world He has given to Man." Really there is no contradiction -- the first verse refers to the situation before a person makes a bracha, while the second verse refers to after the bracha. Said Rabbi Chanina "Anyone who takes pleasure from the physical world without making a bracha first is as if he stole from Hashem."

V'HaKabbalah in the name of Maharil Margolios z"l o Soul Food - the Arizal o Stealing The World - Talmud, Tractate Berachos 35a

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Prayer is essential to the Jewish experience and is, moreover, a fundamental human need. Every culture has some type of prayer, but Jewish tefillah differs substantially from what the world perceives as prayer. The Biblical basis for the mitzvah of tefillah is found in Parshas Eikev, in the verse read twice daily in the second paragraph of the Shema: "If you pay careful heed to My commandments...to serve Him with all your heart." What is avodah shebelev, service of the heart?" ask our Sages. "Prayer." What is the purpose of prayer? In what sense is it "service of the heart?"

Prayer is most commonly perceived as an outpouring of feeling and emotion, a turn to G-d in times of personal distress and suffering and, certainly, tefillah incorporates this aspect of prayer. Most of the tefillot by individuals recorded in Tanach-Avraham on behalf of Avimelech; Moshe on behalf of Miriam-were supplications. But to construe tefillah as merely petitions and requests, as beseeching the Almighty for salvation from trials and tribulations is to render tefillah unrecognizable in a uniquely Jewish context. This is borne out by one observation and one halacha.

Our daily prayers consist mainly of praises of G-d, not petitions. The morning blessings and the paeans of Pesuke Dezimra contain no personal requests, but rather extol the qualities of the Creator. And the quintessential prayer, the Shemoneh Esrei, similarly values blessings of praise more than petitions, for while supplications predominate, the halacha is that if one fails to concentrate during the first blessings of praise, the entire tefillah must be repeated. This halacha applies to no other beracha, suggesting that the primary blessings are those of praise. Furthermore, the Rav, Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik, z"l, once explained in the name of his grandfather, Rav Chaim Soloveitchik, that the loss of concentration referred to above means a lack of focus on the meaning of the words. If one's concentration is so deficient, however, that one is not even mindful that he or she is standing before G-d in prayer, then there is no act of tefillah at all-and the prayer requirement has not been fulfilled.

It would seem then that the purpose of tefillah is, ultimately, to stand before G-d and recite His praises. Tefillah thus affords us the thrice-daily opportunity to reiterate truisms about G-d, the world He created, and our place in it. We ask for our needs only insofar as they will facilitate our service of G-d. Paradoxically, the existence of our personal needs forces us to acknowledge G-d and make us even more aware of His presence. It is therefore understandable that many rishonim define avodah shebelev as "service of the intellect" and not "of the heart," because tefillah removes us from the world of the mundane and petty and brings us into the world of objective ideas and values, and the recognition of G-d. Through the repetition of these ideas, we perfect our minds and soul, we learn "what G-d asks of us," and we become His beloved servants. It behooves us to appreciate the opportunity of prayer, to enhance our moments of prayer, and to beautify our places of prayer. Prayer is our link to the Divine Creator and His world of truth. Conducted properly, prayer ennobles our people and makes us worthy of His protective hand and ultimate redemption, speedily and in our days.

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* PARSHA Q&A * In-Depth Questions on the Parsha and Rashi's commentary. Parshas Eikev Ohr Somayach <http://www.ohr.org.il>

Parsha Questions 1. What must the Jewish People do to ensure that Hashem will fulfill His promise to do good for us? 2. What were the: a)

Sources: o The Ink of Eternity - Beis Halevi o Immortal Fear - HaKsav

`wonders'; b) `strong hand'; c) `outstretched arm' -- that the Jewish People witnessed in Egypt? 3. When a mitzvah is performed by a group of people whose name is attached to it? 4. How did the Jewish People do their laundry while in the Midbar? 5. How did the Jewish People obtain clothing for their growing children while they lived in the Midbar? 6. How many days did Moshe spend on Mt. Sinai altogether? 7. On what day did Moshe come down from Mt. Sinai having received complete forgiveness for the Jewish People? 8. Hashem was angry at Aaron because of his role in the sin of the golden calf. How was Aaron punished? 9. Who made the Aron in which Moshe placed the second set of Luchos when he came down from Mt. Sinai? What special function did it later serve? 10. Which sin committed by the Jewish People was prompted by the death of Aaron? 11. Why were the Levi'im selected by Hashem from among the Jewish People? 12. Why do the Levi'im have no portion in the land? 13. All aspects of man's life are in Hashem's `hands' except one. What is this? 14. What is the "added benefit" of observing the mitzvos? 15. What is meant by circumcising one's heart? 16. What are the sources of water for the fields of Egypt and Eretz Yisrael? 17. What path does the Torah prescribe for gaining new knowledge? 18. Which activity is `serving Hashem with the heart'? 19. When the Jewish People sin, why are they considered worse than the generation of the flood? 20. How does one `cleave to Hashem'?

Bonus Question: In verses 7:25-26, Hashem commands the Jewish People to destroy the idols of the Canaanites. The Torah commands immediately after this to observe all of the commandments (8:1). Why this juxtaposition?

I Did Not Know That! A certain man leading the prayers said, "The great G-d, the Mighty, the Awesome, the Powerful, the Valiant..." Rabbi Chanina said to him, "Have you exhausted the praises of Hashem? Even the three praises that we say, if they were not written by Moshe in the Torah and established in our prayer service by the Anshei Knesses Hagedola, then these too we would not be permitted to voice." Megilla 25a

Recommended Reading List Ramban 8:2 Lesson of the Midbar 8:9 Resources of the Land 8:10 Blessing After the Meal 8:18 Source of Power 9:8 Responsibility 9:28 In defense of the Jewish People 10:12 For Our Sake 11:10 Better Than Egypt 11:13 Individual and Community Sforno 7:12 Hashem's Direct Influence 7:24 Royal Adversaries 8:1 Advantage of Observance Sefer Hachinuch 430 Blessing After the Meal 431 Loving the Convert 432 Fear of Hashem 433 Prayer 434 Cleaving to the Wise

Answers to this Week's Questions All references are to the verses and Rashi's commentary, unless otherwise stated. 1. 7:12 - Guard even the `light' commandments. 2. 7:19 - The: a) Plagues; b) Pestilence; c) Slaying of the firstborn. 3. 8:1 - The person who finishes it. 4. 8:4 - The Ananei Kavod (Clouds of Glory) would clean and bleach their clothing. 5. 8:4 - As their children grew, their clothing grew with them. 6. 9:18 - 120 days. 7. 9:18 - The tenth of Tishrei, Yom Kippur. 8. 9:20 - His two sons died. 9. 10:1 - Moshe made the Aron while he was on Mt. Sinai. This became the Aron that would accompany the Jewish People into battle. 10. 10:6-7 - When Aaron died the Ananei Kavod disappeared. The Jewish People fearing war with the King of Arad appointed a leader and retreated toward Egypt eight stations. The Levi'im fought with them and forced them to return. 11. 10:8 - Because they did not participate in the sin of the golden calf. 12. 10:9 - They were chosen to serve for the service of the Mizbeach (altar) and thus were not free to work the land. 13. 10:12 - Fear of Heaven is dependent upon the person. 14. 10:13 - There is reward. 15. 10:16 - To remove those things that block the words of Torah from entering. 16. 11:10 - Egypt is irrigated by manually carrying water up from the Nile. Eretz Yisrael is supplied by rainwater requiring no work on the part of its inhabitants. 17. 11:13 - By repeatedly reviewing what one knows, one more easily acquires new knowledge. 18. 11:13 - Prayer. 19. 11:17 - Because the generation of the flood had no one from whom to learn. 20. 11:22 - Attaching oneself to Torah scholars.

Bonus ANSWER: The purpose of idol worship was to obtain success in three areas; long life, children, and money. The Torah promises that one will receive everything via fulfillment of the mitzvos. "That you may live"

-- the Torah is promising long life in this world; "And multiply" -- i.e., many children; "And come to possess" -- attainment of riches through inheritance of the Land. Sforno

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The Chassidic Dimension Adaptation of Likutei Sichos by Rabbi Sholom Ber Wineberg Based on the teachings and talks of the Lubavitcher Rebbe Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson on the weekly Torah Portion Eikev Seeing and Hearing The First and Second Sections of the Shema

The Torah portion of Eikev contains the second section of the Shema, which has many striking similarities to the first section, found in the preceding portion of Vaes'chanaan. Nevertheless, differences exist between the two sections. The first commands us to love G-d with "all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might," while the second exhorts us only to love Him with "all your heart and with all your soul," omitting "all your might." Additionally, in Vaes'chanaan, the commandment to study Torah ("You shall teach it to your children...") precedes the commandment to wear tefillin -- to which all other commandments are likened -- while in Eikev, the mitzvah of tefillin precedes the commandment to study Torah. Yet another difference: The first section makes no mention of any reward for the performance of mitzvos, while the second one does. We must understand the reason for these differences.

Actually, all the above-mentioned differences stem from something alluded to in the names of the respective Torah portions: The general content of Vaes'chanaan refers to matnas chinam -- a free gift from above. The portion of Eikev -- which literally means "heel," the lowest (i.e. least alive) part of the human body -- speaks of a situation in which no G-dly illumination is drawn down from above. Nevertheless, even in this situation, Jews perform Torah and mitzvos. This also explains why Moshe's request in Vaes'chanaan was that he be allowed to enter and view Eretz Yisrael, while the expression at the beginning of Eikev refers to hearing ("because you have heard"). For spiritual sight results from an intense illumination from above, while spiritual hearing involves no such illumination. Hearing, however, possesses a quality that sight lacks: sound actually enters a person and becomes a part of him, while what a person sees remains external to himself; he views it "from afar," as it were. Just as this is so regarding physical sight and sound, so too with regard to "seeing" in the portion Vaes'chanaan and "hearing" in Eikev: Although spiritual "hearing" is lower than the "seeing" requested by Moshe, nevertheless, since it is accomplished through man's service (unlike "seeing," which since it is accomplished through man's service (unlike "seeing," which comes as a free gift from above), it can permeate an individual in a more profound manner. The differences between the two sections of the Shema can be understood accordingly: When there is illumination from above, as in the section related in Vaes'chanaan, a person is able to exceed the usual limitations and act "with all your might." However, when speaking of what man can achieve strictly on his own -- the level of the second section of Shema -- then spiritual service is limited to what can be accomplished by "all your heart and all your soul." And, since the Torah reflects G-dliness as it descends -- without change -- from above, this being the general content of the first section of Shema, there Torah precedes mitzvos. Mitzvos, on the other hand, emphasize man's service, the theme of the second section of Shema. The second section therefore has mitzvos preceding Torah. So too regarding the need to describe the reward for performing mitzvos: only on the lower level of Eikev is it necessary to emphasize the reward; at the level of Vaes'chanaan, a person performs mitzvos for his own sake. Nevertheless, the merit of the Shema as related in Eikev remains, for as mentioned above, there is great value in the seemingly lower service of "hearing." Based on Likkutei Sichos, Vol. IX, pp. 79-84

Mezuzah -- The Perfect Reminder The Torah portion of Eikev contains the commandment of mezuzah -- "and you shall inscribe them

on the doorposts of your house and on your gates." Concerning the mitzvah of mezuzah, the Rambam writes: "It is obligatory to be scrupulous with regard to mezuzah... whenever he enters or leaves [his house], he will encounter the unity of His Name... He will be reminded of his love for Him and will be roused from his sleep and the errors of indulging in mundane delights. He will then know that only knowledge of G-d is eternal; he will immediately come to his senses and follow the paths of righteousness." We must understand why the Rambam states "It is obligatory to be scrupulous with regard to mezuzah" rather than using the seemingly more appropriate phrase "It is obligatory to be scrupulous with regard to the mitzvah of mezuzah," similar to his statement: "It is obligatory to be scrupulous with regard to the mitzvah of tzitzis." At first glance, it would seem that the Rambam's reason for writing "It is obligatory to be scrupulous with regard to mezuzah," rather than "the mitzvah of mezuzah," is that the mounting of mezuzah is not an obligatory mitzvah -- one need not select a dwelling that is obligated to have a mezuzah so as to be able to fulfill this commandment. However, if this were the reason, then the phrase "it is obligatory" would seem to be out of place; the Rambam should have used the expression "One should make an effort" or the like. It therefore seems that the Rambam is indeed referring to the mitzvah of mezuzah. This being so, why does he not state explicitly "It is obligatory to be scrupulous with regard to the mitzvah of mezuzah"? When the Rambam says it is obligatory to be scrupulous, he is not referring to the degree of observance, but rather is making it clear that one must be scrupulous in seeing to it that the mitzvah of mezuzah has an appropriate effect. This is why he goes on to say: "Whenever he enters or leaves [his house], he will encounter the unity of His Name ... He will be reminded of his love for Him and will be roused from his sleep and the errors of indulging in mundane delights. He will then know that only knowledge of G-d is eternal; he will immediately come to his senses and follow the paths of righteousness." This aspect of mezuzah is not a part of the performance of the mitzvah, for that is accomplished by merely affixing the mezuzah to the doorpost and keeping it there. Thus, the Rambam is describing the impact that the mezuzah is to have -- the dwelling's inhabitant should be scrupulous in seeing to it that whenever he encounters the mezuzah, "he will be reminded of his love for Him and will be roused from his sleep... and follow the paths of righteousness." This sheds light on another statement of the Rambam. The Rambam concludes the laws of mezuzah with the statement: "The early Sages have said: 'Whoever has tefillin on his head and hand, tzitzis on his garment and a mezuzah on his entrance is assured that he will not sin, for he has many reminders... that save him from sin.' " The Rambam quotes this statement only in the laws of mezuzah, and not earlier in the laws of tefillin, or later in the laws of tzitzis. According to the above explanation, however, this seeming omission is entirely understandable, for it is the mezuzah as an object -- as opposed to tefillin and tzitzis -- that serves as a reminder. As explained earlier by the Rambam, it is the overall sanctity of tefillin that keeps a person from sin. With regard to tzitzis as well, the Rambam explains that it is the commandment of tzitzis -- inasmuch as it acts as a reminder of all the commandments -- that keeps a person from sin. It is only with regard to mezuzah, possessing as it does "the unity of His Name," that the object itself keeps one from sinning by serving as a perfect reminder. Based on Likkutei Sichos, Vol. XXIX, pp. 61-66

within a time-span of no longer than 3-4 minutes(12). Since the basic halachah is that the 1.1 oz. must be composed entirely of flour - the other ingredients do not count towards the 1.1 oz. minimum - one should adhere to the basic halachah(13). Many people, however, are not precise in ascertaining the amount of flour they have eaten, and some poskim find a source for their practice(14) if at least the majority (.6 oz.) of the mixture is pure flour(15). Washing hands, reciting Al netilas yadayim and reciting Birkas ha-Mazon are required when eating an amount of cake(16) that constitutes kevius seudah, i.e., an amount of mezonos that has the halachic status of eating a regular meal (as opposed to a snack). When one eats such a substantial amount of cake, we treat the cake as a substitute for bread. There are several opinions as to the amount of cake which is necessary for kevius seudah. Some poskim rule that 8.8 oz. of cake is an amount which may be considered as a standard kevius seudah. Ideally, one should avoid eating this amount of cake so as not to enter into a halachically gray area(17). In practice, however, Al netilas yadayim and Birkas ha-Mazon are not recited(18) unless one eats an amount of cake equal to the amount of bread he would eat at a main meal, which is about two rolls or five pieces of bread, or about 18-20 oz. of cake. This is a very rough estimate(19) and the actual amount varies according to the differences in eating habits between men and women(20), different age groups(21) and different locales(22). Another disagreement among the poskim is how to calculate the amount of cake necessary for kevius seudah when cake is eaten together with other foods at the same sitting: Some hold that the entire amount must be composed of the cake(23) itself. Other foods eaten at the same sitting do not count(24); Some hold that other foods eaten at the same sitting do count - but only if a minimum of 8.8 oz. of cake is eaten. The other foods are counted towards the larger amount required for kevius seudah mentioned earlier(25). Some hold that other foods, like chopped liver or tuna fish, eaten along with mezonos items that are bread substitutes, like crackers, bread sticks or egg matzah, are also included in the amount for kevius seudah. But pastries etc., which are eaten before or after the other foods, do not combine with the other foods to form a kevius seudah(26). Some hold that all foods eaten at the same sitting, whether eaten with the cake or not, are counted towards the amount for kevius seudah(27). According to this opinion, even a small amount of cake eaten at a kiddush or buffet dinner will combine with the other foods to form a kevius seudah.

LIQUIDS: Shehakol [and Borei pri hagefen] is recited before drinking any amount. Borei Nefashos [and Al hagefen] is only recited after drinking at least 3.3 oz. L'chatchilah, one should not drink an amount between 1.1 oz. and 3.3 oz., since there are poskim who require a berachah achronah for that amount(28). Many poskim hold that the 3.3 oz. must be consumed within shiur shesias reviis(29), which is a very short time period(30). L'chatchilah, therefore, the amount required should be drunk in one or two sips. One who failed to do so, e.g., when drinking hot tea or coffee, should not recite Borei nefashos unless he leaves over 3.3 oz. to cool off and drink within a few seconds(31).

FROZEN OR GELLED FOODS: We have seen that there are two basic differences between solid food and liquid regarding their blessings; 1) The minimum amount of solid food that requires a berachah achronah is 1.1 oz, while the minimum amount of liquid that requires a berachah achronah is 3.3 oz; 2) Food may be consumed within a time span of up to 4 minutes, while liquids must be drunk within a very short time period. There is a debate among the poskim(32) about how to classify foods which are solid but do not need to be chewed in order to be swallowed, such as ice cream, frozen yogurt and ices. Contemporary poskim, too, are hesitant(33) and divided on this issue. Some rule that these items are considered as foods, since at the time of consumption they are solid(34). Accordingly, as long as 1.1 oz. is consumed within a time -span of up to 3-4 minutes, the correct berachah achronah is recited. Other poskim, however, consider these items as liquids. Since they will melt in the mouth without chewing, they cannot be classified as foods(35). Accordingly, unless 3.3 oz. of the item is consumed within a very short time period, no berachah achronah is recited(36). Some authorities differentiate between ices, which is frozen water and therefore more of a drink than a food, and ice cream, which contains ingredients which are food(37). Several poskim(38) make a distinction between the amount of frozen and gelled food which necessitates a berachah achronah and the time in which it must be consumed. According to this opinion, we view these items as solid food in determining the amount necessary for a berachah achronah; thus, 1.1 oz. will suffice. Concerning the time -span within which they must be consumed, however, we view frozen and gelled foods as drinks. Accordingly, if 1.1 oz. was consumed within a short time period, a berachah achronah is recited. All poskim agree(39), however, that food which is not in solid form at the time of consumption, such as "liquidy" leben, is considered a drink and a berachah achronah should not be recited unless 3.3 oz. are consumed within a very short time period, which is not the rate at which such foods are commonly consumed.

FOOTNOTES: 1 Mishnah Berurah 158:10. 2 Mishnah Berurah 158:9. 3 Gr"a quoted in Sha'ar ha-Tziyon 9. 4 Igros Moshe O.C. 4:41; Harav S.Y. Elyashiv (quoted in Vezeos ha -Berachah, pg. 15 and pg. 255). 5 Shulchan Aruch Harav 168:7. 6 O.C. 184:6. This is a rabbinical obligation. Biblically, one does not recite Birkas Hamazon unless he has eaten a meal which satiates him. 7 The exact amount of time is in dispute, so l'chatchilah three minutes should be the limit. B'dieved, however, there are many poskim who consider four minutes the proper time -span. 8 Mishnah Berurah 184:15. It is proper, however, to wash and eat more bread so that Birkas Hamazon can be recited - ibid. 9 Sha'ar ha-Tziyon 486:7; Chazon Ish Uktzin 3:7. 10 Mishnah Berurah 210:1, as explained by Harav S.Z. Auerbach and Harav S.Y. Elyashiv (quoted in Vezeos ha -Berachah, pg. 46, 184 and 257). See Shoneh Halachos 486:4. 11 See Shiurei Torah (Harav A.C. Na'eh) 1:1. 12 O.C. 208:9. 13 Igros Moshe O.C. 1:71 and E.H. 1:114; Divrei Yoel 1:13; Harav S.Y. Elyashiv (quoted in Vezeos ha-Berachah, pg. 46). This is also the ruling of the Brisker Rav (quoted in Teshuvos v'Hanagos 1:132). 14 Mishnah Berurah 208:48; Chazon Ish O.C. 26:8. 15 Harav S.Z. Auerbach (quoted in Vesain Berachah, pg. 530); Yalkut Yosef 3:491. 16 Or other baked goods which have "bread-like" properties and appearance, such as thick crackers, pretzels, Cheerios, etc. Spaghetti, blintzes, farfel and other mezonos items which do not resemble bread at all are not included. 17 Mishnah Berurah 168:24. 18 But one who feels satiated from this amount, may recite Birkas ha-Mazon - Harav S.Z. Auerbach (quoted in Vesain Berachah, vol. 2, Hebrew section, pg. 10). 19 There are many factors and many views which must be taken into account when calculating this amount. See Vezeos ha-Berachah, pg. 28-36 and pg. 193-199 for a lengthy explanation of this very difficult subject. See also The Laws of Berachos, pg. 250-251. 20 Harav S.Y. Auerbach (quoted in Vesain Berachah, pg. 488) rules that women and girls who eat less than men have a smaller shiur of kevius seudah. 21 Beir Halachah 168:6, who rules that children and elderly people's kevius seudah

WEEKLY-HALACHA FOR 5757 SELECTED HALACHOS RELATING TO PARSHAS EIKEV
By Rabbi Doniel Neustadt A discussion of Halachic topics related to the Parsha of the week. For final rulings, consult your Rav.

You will eat and you will be satisfied and bless Hashem... (8:10)
AMOUNTS OF FOOD THAT REQUIRE BLESSINGS

BREAD: Washing hands is required before eating at least 1.1 oz. of bread, and is strongly recommended when any amount of bread is eaten(1). Al Netilas Yadayim is recited when washing for at least 2.2 oz. of bread(2). Some poskim(3) hold that a blessing may be recited even for 1.1 oz., and one may follow this view(4). Hamotzi is recited for any amount of bread(5). = Birkas ha -Mazon is recited after eating 1.1 oz.(6) of bread within a time -span of no longer than 3-4(7) minutes. One who is unsure whether or not he ate this amount of bread should not recite Birkas ha -Mazon(8).
NOTE: When measuring amounts of bread [and cake], small air bubbles are included in the measurements(9), while large ones are not(10). Note also that the amounts are measured by volume, not by weight(11).

BAKED GOODS: Mezonos is recited for any amount. Al Hamichyah is recited for 1.1 oz. eaten

varies according to their eating habits. = 22 Igros Moshe O.C. 3:32. 23 Indeed, the Chazon Ish is quoted (Archos Rabbeinu 1:80) as ruling that only the flour itself, and not the other ingredients, is counted towards the 8.8 oz. 24 Birkei Yosef 168:6; Aruch ha-Shulchan 167:17; Kaf ha-Chayim 167:43. 25 Shulchan Aruch Harav 167:8; Harav S.Z. Auerbach (quoted in Vesain Berachah, vol. 2, Hebrew section, pg. 10 and pg. 490); Shevet ha-Levi 7:25. 26 Derech Hachayim (Mezonos 3); Mishnah Berurah 168:24 (as explained by Harav S.Z. Auerbach, quoted in Shemiras Shabbos K'hilchasah 54 note 132); Harav Y. Kamenetsky (quoted in Vesain Berachah, pg. 261); Harav C.P. Scheinberg (quoted in VeZos ha-Berachah, pg. 32). 27 Igros Moshe O.C. 3:32 and 4:41; Harav S.Y. Elyashiv (quoted in VeZos ha-Berachah, pg. 32); Mekor ha-Berachah, pg. 113. 28 O.C. 190:3 and Mishnah Berurah 9 and 14. 29 See O.C. 612:10 and Sha'ar ha-Tziyon 210:12. 30 See Aruch ha-Shulchan 202:6-8; Sha'ar ha-Tziyon 210:11. 31 Mishnah Berurah 210:1. Many poskim, however, allow reciting Borei nefashos over hot tea or coffee, and one who follows that custom, may continue to do so - see VeZos ha-Berachah, pg. 42 and pg. 200 who quotes several contemporary authorities who follow this custom. 32 See Rambam Ma'achalos Asuros 14:9 and Radvaz 1518 (145). There is also widespread dispute concerning whether a raw egg is a food or a drink, see Sdei Chemed (Yom Kippur 3) and Har Tzvi O.C. 1:101. 33 See Nishmas Avrohom O.C. 612:6 who quotes Harav S.Z. Auerbach as questioning the halachic definition of sour cream and ice cream. 34 Harav Y.Y. Kanievsky (written responsim published in Mekor ha-Berachah, pg. 110). 35 Harav S.Y. Elyashiv (quoted in VeZos ha-Berachah, pg. 44); Be'er Moshe 1:11. 36 In practice, however, one may rely on a sfeik sfeika and recite the blessing: Maybe the item is considered a solid, and even if it is a liquid, maybe the halachah is like the view quoted earlier that liquid, too, may be drunk in 3-4 minutes, see Mishnah Berurah 210:1. 37 Teshuvos Betzail ha-Chachmah 3:114-4. 38 Kol Eliyohu 7 (partially quoted in Kaf ha-Chayim 202:63); Zera Avrohom O.C. 1:3; Ohr ITziyon 14:18-19; Yalkut Yosef 3:177-10; Nishmas Avrohom O.C. 612:6. 39 See VeZos ha-Berachah, pg. 44 and pg. 261. Weekly-Halacha, Copyright (c) 1997 by Rabbi Neustadt, Dr. Jeffrey Gross and Project Genesis

rmk@torah.org PARSHA PARABLES -- ON CUE -- PARSHAS EKEV

Not often does G-d Almighty tell anybody to leave him alone. But then again, Moshe isn't everybody. This week, Moshe recounts the sad tale of the Golden Calf. Moshe had promised to return from Mount Sinai after receiving the Torah in forty days, but the Jews miscalculated. According to their calculations, he was late. Fearing that Moshe would never return from his celestial mission, the Jews made themselves a golden calf and worshipped it while proclaiming, "this is our god that took us out of Egypt." Obviously, the calculations and miscalculations of the Jewish People are not as simple as they appear on the surface. That, however is an entirely different issue. I'd like to focus in on the aftermath of the calamity of the Golden Calf. Hashem actually wanted to destroy the Jewish Nation and rebuild a new folk with Moshe, as its patriarchal leader. "Release me," said G-d, "and I will destroy them and build a new nation from you" (Deuteronomy 9:14)). Immediately after the words, "release me" Moshe sprung into action. In the Book of Exodus, it details how Moshe pleaded, cajoled, and reasoned with Hashem with a multitude of persuasive arguments that calmed His wrath. The Jews were spared. What is troubling is Moshe's chutzpah. Didn't Hashem specifically tell him, "leave me alone"? What prompted him with the audacity to defy a direct command of Hashem?

Herbert Tenzer served as a distinguished congressman from New York in the 1960s. More importantly, he was an observant Jew who was a proud activist and was instrumental in providing relief for many Holocaust survivors. A few months before his passing, some years ago, he related to me the following story: The energetic and often outspoken Rabbi Eliezer Silver of Cincinnati, Ohio was a prominent force in the Vaad Hatzallah Rescue Committee. He worked tirelessly throughout the terrible war years and their aftermath to save and place the victims of Nazi depravity. In addition to his prominence in the Jewish world, Rabbi Silver enjoyed a personal relationship with the very powerful Senator Robert Taft of Ohio. Rabbi Silver had a very difficult request that needed much political pressure and persuasion to accomplish. He asked Mr. Tenzer to accompany him to the Senator. "Senator Taft!" he exclaimed, mixing his distinct accent in which the s would sound as sh, with a high pitched intoning of emotions. I have a very important and difficult request!" Rabbi Silver went on to plead his case of obtaining a certain number of visas for some refugees who may not have met all the criteria. Senator Taft looked nonchalant and non-committal. The Senator thought for a while then grimaced. He slowly and carefully stretched his response. "It would be arduous and burdensome," he began. "but technically," he continued, implying all the while that he was not the least bit anxious to get his hands dirty, "it can be done." But Rabbi Silver did not hear anything except the last three words. "IT CAN BE DONE?" He shouted with joy. "SHO DO IT!" Needless to say the stunned

Senator got to work immediately and obtained the visas for the beleaguered Jews.

Moshe heard one line from Hashem, "leave me alone, and I will destroy them." That was his cue. The Talmud in Berachos explains that hearing those words, Moshe knew that now it all depended on him. The only way Hashem would destroy His people was if Moshe left him alone. And he didn't. Moshe badgered, cajoled, and pleaded with the Almighty and we were spared. My Rebbe once quoted legendary slugger Ted Williams, the last player to achieve a batting average of over .400. "Every player gets one pitch that he definitely can hit. To hit .400, don't miss that pitch." Instead of recoiling at the words "release me" or "leave me be," Moshe saw his pitch. And he hit it awfully hard. In life there are many cues. This week Moshe teaches his nation that when you get your cue, don't miss it. Even if it takes a little chutzpah. Good Shabbos!

Dedicated by B. David & Shani Schreiber in memory of Naomi BasSheva Bas Rav Boruch Yosef of blessed memory Rabbi Mordecai Kamenetzky will be a featured guest speaker at the Homowack Hotel for the Shabbos of Labor Day Weekend. For reservations Call the Homowack Hotel 1-800-243-4567 and mention Project Genesis. Mordechai Kamenetzky - Yeshiva of South Shore Drasha, Copyright (c) 1997 by Rabbi M. Kamenetzky and Project Genesis, Inc.

mikra@torah.org P'shuto Shel Mikra Parashat Ekev: The Composition of Birkat HaMazon by Yitzchak Etshalom

I THE TEXTUAL ASSOCIATION "When you have eaten your fill, you shall bless YHVH your God for the good land that He has given you." (Devarim 8:10) These words are the explicit source for the commandment of *Birkat haMazon* - blessing God after eating a meal. There are several blessings in the *Birkat haMazon*: (1) *HaZan* - praise for God, who sustains the world; (2) *Birkat Ha'Aretz* - thanks to God for everything, focusing on the Land of Israel; (3) *Boneh Yerushalayim* - petition to protect and rebuild Jerusalem; (4) *HaTov vехаMeitiv* - general praise and thanks for God. In addition, when three or more men eat together, the *Birkat haMazon* is prefaced by the invitation known as *Zimun*. The Gemara (Berakhot 48b) expounds: "When you have eaten your fill, you shall bless" - *Birkat "haZimun"*; "the LORD your God" - *Birkat haZan*; "for the...land" - *Birkat haAretz*; "...the good (land)..." - *Boneh Yerushalayim*; "that He has given you" - *HaTov vехаMeitiv*. From this piece, it seems clear that all five of these blessings are sourced in the Torah. Although differing opinions are presented regarding *HaTov vехаMeitiv* and *Zimun*, the basic formula of the first three blessings is, according to all opinions, mandated by the Torah - *D'Orayta*.

II THE HISTORIC ASSOCIATION Earlier on that same page in the Gemara, we are told that Moshe composed the *Birkat haZan* when the Manna fell, Joshua composed *Birkat haAretz* when the people entered the Land of Israel, David and Solomon composed *Boneh Yerushalayim* at different stages of the building of the city, and the Rabbis at Yavneh composed *HaTov vехаMeitiv* in response to the burial of the martyrs of Beitar. These two statements are apparently in conflict: From the first, it seems that at least three of the blessings are mandated by the Torah; from the second, it seems that these blessings were created at different point in history; such that at most, the first one was "in operation" at the time of the Torah, and the rest must be Rabbinic obligations. One possible approach depends upon an understanding of form and text within the context of prayer. According to many Rishonim (see Rambam, Ch. 1 of Hilkhot Tefilla, Ramban's comments on Sefer haMitzvot, Shores 1 etc.), there are several Mitzvot in the Torah which are presented in a most general way - and later generations (prophets, sages, custom) create form and, eventually, specific texts through which these Mitzvot are fulfilled. For instance, according to several Rishonim (Rabbenu Yonah, Tosafot, Raavan), the Mitzvah of reading the Shema is essentially a Mitzvah of reading words of Torah - and the rabbis decided upon this particular text. According to Rambam, daily prayer - as mandated by the Torah - has only the most general form - praise, request and thanks. It was later rabbis (Ezra and his court) who formulated the specific blessings. (Other examples include Kiddush, Hallel (according to Ramban), teaching the Exodus to our children on Pesach night, confession on Yom Kippur etc.) We can posit the same here. The Torah commands us to bless God after eating by praising, thanking and beseeching Him. The Torah itself not only provides no text for this blessing, it also provides no area of content. When the Manna fell, Moshe composed *HaZan*, praising God for His kindness in sustaining the world. He not only composed this blessing, he also ordained that it be recited after every meal. When the Torah was given, that blessing, along with the general blessings of (atypical and contentless) thanks and request, were the proper way to fulfill the command of *Birkat haMazon*. When Joshua led the people into the Land of Israel, he "fixed" the "thanking" component to revolve around the Land. Clearly, the content of his blessing was different than ours, insofar as his likely included mention of the unfought battles for the Land. The third blessing was still a generic request. When David build Jerusalem - and when Solomon constructed the Temple - they each "pinned down" a component of request (at that time it involved "protecting the city" - not "rebuilding it" as we request). In summary, there were three stages in the development of Birkat haMazon: (1) The Torah's command, to praise, thank and beseech God after eating; (2) The historical targeting of specific content areas for each blessing; (Moshe - _praise_ for God's sustenance; Joshua - _thanks_ for the Land; David/Solomon - _request_ for protection of Jerusalem and the Temple) (3) The evolution of a (more or less) fixed text, after the destruction of the Temple. As we praise, thank and beseech God after a meal, we also understand that by doing so we not only strengthen our connection with the Holy One, who is Blessed - but also with our history and our Land.

