

Cincinnati Torah מסיני

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Eikev

A LESSON FROM THE PARASHA

RABBI YITZCHOK PREIS

OUR PARASHA INCLUDES THE BIBLICAL MITZVAH to thank Hashem after eating a satisfying meal—the blessings we typically refer to as *bentching* or *Birkat Hamazon*.

The Talmud suggests that, logically, if we are obligated to bless Hashem *after* eating, *kal vachomer* (all the more so), we should be expected to recite a *bracha* *before* eating. After all, someone who is famished is more acutely aware of the need for food and more appreciative that Hashem has made it available to satisfy his hunger. The Talmud concludes, however, that this is not the case. There is, in fact, no Biblical obligation to recite any *bracha* prior to eating. (Yes, Jewish practice is certainly filled with a broad array of blessings that we do recite before eating, but these are of Rabbinic origin and not included in this commandment.)

Interestingly, there is only one other Biblical blessing—the blessing over Torah study. That blessing must, in fact, be recited *prior* to the learning. Following Torah study, there is no parallel obligation to express thanks.

Why do these two *mitzvos*—the only Biblical recitation of *brachos*—operate in opposite manner? Food only warrants blessings *post facto*, and Torah study, demands its blessing in advance!

The Meshech Chochmah addresses this “imbalance,” shedding profound insight into

human nature and how each of these *mitzvahs* is designed to protect us from a potential human failing.

A spiritual hazard looms immediately following a satisfying meal. Prior to eating, while hungry, it is easy to sense our dependency on our Provider. But once satisfying that hunger, our attitude can shift. We run the risk of becoming self-assured, confident in our own sustenance, and potentially dismissive of the True Source of satiation. *Bentching* protects us from slipping into this spiritual danger zone and brings us back to the recognition that our dinner, and ultimately, our survival is dependent on Hashem. Hence the Biblical requirement for *bentching* following the meal but not in advance.

The opposite holds true for Torah study. In theory, one can approach Torah study from a shallow, even selfish perspective. Wanting to be “in the know” or to earn honor and recognition can be ulterior motivations. To protect against such ultimately disrespectful and damaging attitudes toward Torah, we are commanded to pause and recite a *bracha*. In so doing we acknowledge the Divine gift, and we take note of the goal—bonding with the Divine Source—through the transcendental learning of His Torah. But post Torah study there is no need for a *bracha*. A successful endeavor of Torah learning, initiated with a

A TIMELY HALACHA

RABBI CHAIM HEINEMANN

A common question that comes up during *bein hazmanim* and summer break is whether it is appropriate to remove one's *tallis katan* (or *tzitzis*) while playing sports or engaging in strenuous activities that make one hot and sweaty.

While it is true that neither Biblical nor Rabbinic law obligates one to wear a *tallis katan* at all times, it has become the accepted custom that every male wears a *tallis katan* all day long.

The *Poskim* mention two basic reasons as to why men choose to be meticulous about donning a *tallis katan* even when not required to do so.

1) Wearing *tzitzis* gives us the opportunity to be constantly reminded of our obligations as a Jew, as it is written in *Bamidbar* (15:39), “That you will see them and it remember all the commandments of Hashem and perform them.”

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Heavenly-orienting *bracha*, refines and uplifts, yielding a greater appreciation of Torah and its Provider. Hence the Biblical requirement for *bracha* preceding Torah study but not following.

May all of our physical and spiritual sustenance be blessed and true sources of blessing!



TIDBITS OF CINCINNATI JEWISH HISTORY

RABBI MOSHE TZVI CRYSTAL

The 18th of Av, 5700 (1940), saw the opening of the second annual Agudath Israel of America convention here in Cincinnati. The American branch of Agudath Israel had been started by Rabbi Eliezer Silver in 1939. Approximately 200 Rabbis and lay leaders visited Cincinnati for the convention. Lectures covered topics such as the strengthening of Shabbos observance, helping the establishment of *yeshivos*, and how best to help refugees fleeing the war in Europe. Sessions were held in the Knesseth Israel, Forest Avenue (later Golf Manor Synagogue), and Ohev Shalom Synagogues. On Shabbos, Talmudic discourses were given by Rabbi Shlomo Heiman (Torah Vodaas), Rabbi Moshe Feinstein (Mesivta Tifereth Jerusalem), and Rabbi Chaim Korb (Hebrew Theological College). Rabbi Joseph Dov Soloveitchik gave a moving eulogy of the recently passed Torah leader, Rabbi Chaim Ozer Grodzinski. On Friday afternoon, all attendees were given a guided tour of Cincinnati.

SOURCE: Rakeffet-Rothkoff, Aaron. *The Silver Era*. Feldheim, 1981, pp. 166-169.

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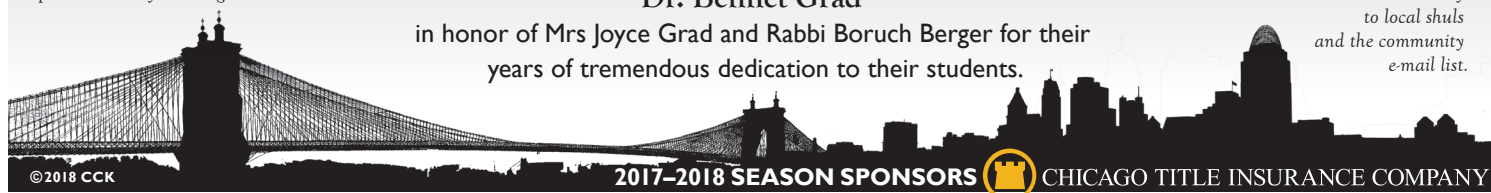
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Cincinnati Torah

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and the community
e-mail list.



A RIDDLE FOR YOU

When is it the optimum for a person to eat and yet not utter the words of the bracha?

Look for the answer in two weeks!

PREVIOUS RIDDLE:

Q What mitzvah is fulfilled over an entire year?

A A newly married man may not go to war for the first year of marriage in fulfillment of the verse "He shall be free for his house one year." (Chinuch Mitzvah 582) 📖

A TIMELY HALACHA

CONTINUED

2) The Talmud tells us that wearing a *tallis katan* serves as protection from "Hashem's wrath." When He sees His children performing *mitzvos*—such as *tzitzis*—that they are not obligated to perform, His anger is contained and He views us more favorably.

Based on the above, some *Poskim* rule that regardless of the heat or discomfort, one should still not remove his *tallis katan*. One constantly needs a reminder of his status as a servant of Hashem and should always take advantage of the protection that the *tallis katan* offers him.

There are other contemporary *Poskim* who disagree. They argue that the *mitzvah* is only properly fulfilled when the garment benefits the person in some way (protection or warmth). If, however, the garment does nothing for him in any way and, on the contrary, it makes him uncomfortable or bothers him, then it is possible that it no longer falls under the category of *begeid* (a useful garment) and one does not fulfill the *mitzvah* by wearing it.

It appears that almost everyone would agree that if it would be degrading for the *tzitzis* or if it really disgusts the person (e.g., sweating profusely), the *tallis katan* can be removed. However, often one can wear his *tzitzis* over his shirt and still take advantage of all that this beautiful *mitzvah* offers. 📖



SUMMER BREAK

The Kollel is on recess starting Sunday August 5th until Wednesday August 22nd.

At the Kollel

DAILY

WEEKLY

MORE

🖐️ "Dirshu" Gemara Shiur (Maseches Chulin)

Rabbi Yitzchok Preis.....
Sunday 7:15–8:15 AM
Monday–Friday 5:50–6:45 AM

🖐️🖐️ Kollel Yisgaber K'ari (amud-a-day of Mishnah B'rurah)

Rabbi Chaim Heinemann.....
Monday–Friday 6:55–7:20 AM

🖐️🖐️ Mishnah Kavuah online

two mishnayos and some mussar
Rabbi Ezra Stettin.....any time you like

🖐️ Daf Yomi

Rabbi Meir Minster
Sunday–Thursday 8–8:45 PM
Shabbos (at CZE) 1:00 pre-mincha

🖐️🖐️ Night Seder Chabura

in the Annex Library
(Maseches Avodah Zara)
led by Rabbi Tzvi Fishman
Sunday–Thursday 9–9:50 PM
followed by Ma'ariv at 9:50

KEY: 🖐️ Beginners 🖐️ Intermediate 🖐️ Advanced 🕒 for men and women

Chavrusos are available for private and group learning—

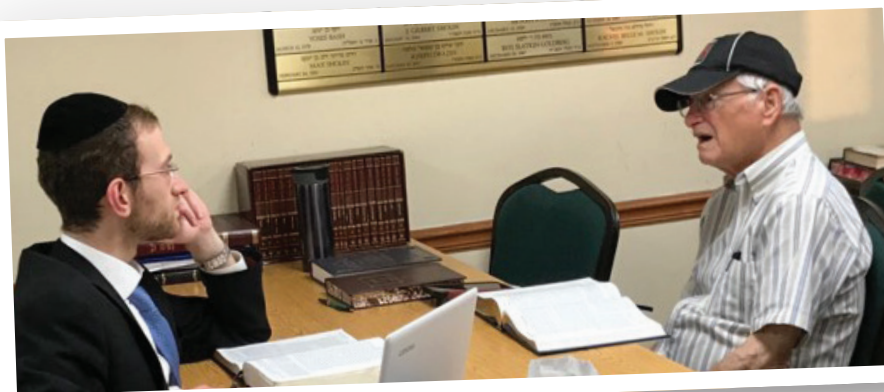
speak to Rabbi Chaim Heinemann! weekdays noon–1 PM • Sun.–Thurs. 8–9:45 PM

DAVENING TIMES CAN BE FOUND AT CINCYKOLLEL.ORG/MINYAN-SCHEDULE

GREAT ACTS OF ORDINARY PEOPLE

ALEX WAS A YOUNG BRITISH MUSICIAN WHO SEEMED to hold much promise of stardom in the world of music. As his name got bigger he also reconnected to his Jewish heritage. When he signed a contract with his first label company, he stipulated that he not play any concerts on Shabbos or Jewish holidays. The label company thought he held so much promise they were willing to accede to his conditions. Unfortunately though, when he released his debut album, it did not sell like anyone had hoped. The label company was put into the position of trying to get Alex all the exposure they could muster to try to get the album sales up. Now the condition to which they had agreed proved to be a thorn in the side of the label company, as most concerts they would have scheduled or signed him up for were on Friday night. After several attempts,

the label company thought they had it, the break they were finally waiting for! There was a cancellation on a live music section on BBC radio and the BBC had agreed to let Alex have the spot. Excitedly calling Alex, they informed him of the opportunity. "It's not even on a Friday night, Alex, we checked." Alex checked the calendar. It wasn't Friday night, just like they had said. It was the first night of Sukkos. "Sorry, I can't do it, it's a holiday." "What! If you don't play were finished with you!" Alex stayed strong and did not relent, but he was still down about being dumped. Then, out of the blue, Alex received a call from Microsoft. They wanted to use his lead song for a commercial they would be doing. Alex said yes. Then because of the commercial, his song became very popular. His album sales skyrocketed. Alex Clare had finally made it in the music business. 📖



Cincinnati Community Kollel

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