

A LESSON FROM THE PARASHA

Head Or Tail

BEFORE THE TORAH BEGINS THE *TOCHECHA*, THE rebuke for not keeping the Torah, the Torah lists all the beautiful amazing *brachos* we will receive if we follow and do the will of Hashem. One of those blessings is, "Hashem will place you as a head and not as a tail." (28:13)

We echo these words on Rosh Hashana eve when many have the custom to eat the head of a fish (or the more daring who eat or at least place on the table the head of a ram) and say, "May it be your will, Hashem our G-d and the G-d of our forefathers that we be as a head and not as the tail."

R' Shimshon Pincus ז"ל would ask—what is the significance to this, the tail gets to the destination as well, just a bit later than the head? Why are we davening to be at the head?



RABBI MICHAEL SOROKA

He explained that the head is the area where the thinking is done; there is a cognitive process. The tail is just dragged along (literally). Imagine a long train (we've all been stuck at a train crossing one time or another). All the cars of the train look the same as they move along, but if you detach them from another, only one will continue forging on—the one with the engine being powered with its own strength.

The Chofetz Chaim used to lament that "All the Jews in Radin keep Shabbos... because all the Jews in Radin keep Shabbos." We should ideally keep Shabbos since the Torah told us to and it enhances our life so much.

We might add, how perfect the *moshel* (analogy) of the tail is. First, the tail isn't just following the one in front of it as one person would follow another; it is being dragged along the floor with no life of its own. Moreover, a tail isn't just following the car in front of it, it is following itself. How often are we just following along and doing things the way we always have been doing it without much thought or focus.

During these days we add the words of King David to our daily prayers—"One thing I ask of Hashem, that I shall seek—that I dwell in the house of Hashem all the days of my life" (*Tehillim* 27:4). We ask to live in the house of Hashem, but not just to live there, rather, the verse goes on to say, "to behold the sweetness of Hashem and to contemplate in His sanctuary." As we get ready for Rosh Hashana, let us live life and not just live through it!

A TIMELY HALACHA

RABBI CHAIM HEINEMANN

Our sages composed a standard *Kiddush* text and ordained that it be recited over a cup of wine prior to the Shabbos meals. Although we are quite familiar with how to recite *Kiddush*, there is one Halacha which has many details that is less well known. *Kiddush* is valid only when it is followed by a meal—*Kiddush b'mekom seudah*. This involves the following two conditions:

- 1) The *Kiddush* must be recited where the meal is to be eaten. (O.C. 273:1)
- 2) The meal must be eaten immediately after *Kiddush*. (O.C. 273:3)

B'mekom seudah means eating in the room in which *Kiddush* was heard. It is acceptable to move to different locations in a room, but one may not leave the building to eat the meal. One is not *yotzai Kiddush* (did not fulfill the requirement) if he heard *Kiddush* in *shul* and went home to eat.

If one hears *Kiddush* in one room, with the intention to eat in a different room in the same building, he may eat in the

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A RIDDLE FOR YOU

The only way for a person to receive a certain gift mentioned in the Torah is by transgressing a specific prohibition? Which gift and which prohibition is it?

Look for the answer in two weeks!

PREVIOUS RIDDLE:

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

A Someone who is eating together with a crowd of people who are all eating the same thing, the optimum is for one person to make a bracha for the entire crowd because of the principle of *b'rov am hadras melech* (the glory of the king is the multitude of people). (M.B. 213:2)

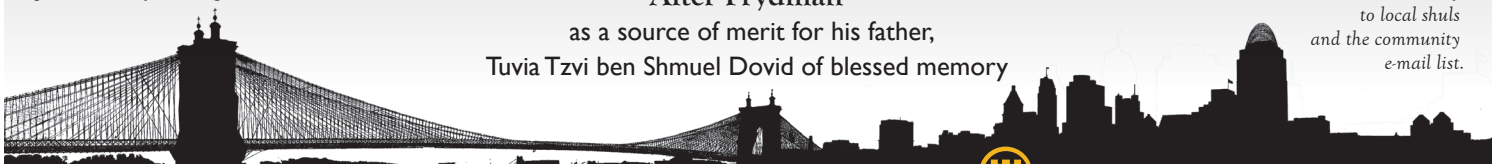


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A TIMELY HALACHA


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other room. (S.S.K. 54:9) This may be done *l'chatchilah* (in advance) only if he can see the other room while saying *Kiddush*. If he cannot see the other room, he is only *yotzai b'dieved* (after the fact).

The ideal method of fulfilling *Kiddush b'mekom seudah* is to recite *Hamotzi* on *lechem mishna* (two loaves) following *Kiddush*.

If one does not eat bread, one may eat a food containing one of the five grains upon which the *brocha* of *mezonos* is recited. Ideally, the food should be *pas haba'a b'kisinin* (e.g., cake, cookies, or crackers). However, the *seudah* may consist of other *mezonos* products. (M.B. 273:25) In these cases, a regular *seudahs Shabbos* with *lechem mishna* must be eaten later.

If one has wine or grape juice, but no *mezonos* food, he can drink an additional *revi'is* if he is reciting *Kiddush*, or one *revi'is* total if listening to someone else's *Kiddush*, to fulfil the requirement of *Kiddush b'mekom seudah*. (SSK 54:23)

A difficulty arises when a *Shabbos bris milah* is performed in the main sanctuary of the shul and the *Kiddush/seudah* is in the social hall. It is best for *Kiddush* should be made again in the hall for the congregation. The *mevarech* (the one making the blessing) at the *bris* should try to have *mezonos* or drink an extra *revi'is* of wine. 

GREAT ACTS OF ORDINARY PEOPLE

IN ONE OF THE OLDER SECTIONS OF JERUSALEM, where many families live in small spaces, there were two families in similar stages of life that lived one upstairs from the other. As time


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passed the family upstairs began celebrating engagements and weddings seemingly one after another, along with the celebrations that come along with grandchildren being born to them. At the same time, the family downstairs was not having success in marrying off their children. As time passed, the family upstairs needed to expand their apartment. By Israeli law they were required to ask their neighbors for permission, but there was an additional request for the downstairs neighbor. He was not only asked to allow the project, he was also asked to allow the workers access to his house and balcony in order to build the extension. Swallowing the feelings of jealousy he had towards his upstairs neighbor, he acquiesced. Sure enough, it became routine to let a troupe of burly workers into his home at seven o'clock

every morning. After several months, the work was finally finished and all the banging, drilling, hammering, and strangers in his home came to an end. Soon afterwards, he received an inquiry about his oldest daughter. A short period of time passed and his daughter was finally engaged to be wed. Upon meeting the prospective father-in-law at the engagement party, he remarked, "You look familiar, do I know you from somewhere?" "Yes you do. I am the contractor who built your neighbor's extension. When I saw how you and your family opened up your home for the needs of a neighbor in such a remarkable way, I told myself, this is a family I want for my son to be a part of and I inquired if you had any daughters of marriageable age. Thank G-d everything worked out. I could not be happier!" 

TIDBITS OF CINCINNATI JEWISH HISTORY

RABBI MOSHE TZVI CRYSTAL

On the 20th of Elul 5689 (1929), Sidney Weil gained majority ownership of the Cincinnati Reds, becoming their second Jewish owner, after Aaron S. Stern. Weil started out his career in his father's horse business and later switched to selling cars, at which he became enormously successful, eventually owning possibly the largest car dealership in America. He also owned the first multi-level car garage. After making it in the auto industry, he began to get heavily involved in the stock market. After the market crash that began the great depression, Weil was forced to declare bankruptcy and soon sold the team. Another early Jewish owner was Barney Dreyfuss, who bought the Pittsburgh Pirates in 1900 and was the man responsible for creating the World Series, first played in 1903. Currently, there are seven Major League Baseball teams owned by Jews, while Jews are even more heavily represented in basketball with almost half of the owners being Jewish, and in football with about a third. Since 2012 three Super Bowls have been played between teams with Jewish owners. 

SOURCE: Nathan-Kazis, J. "Why are so many pro basketball owners Jewish?" *Forward*, 6 May 2014. Retrieved online. Ryder, J. "Sidney Weil will bend his utmost efforts to strengthen team." *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, 26 Sep 1929. Proquest.

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