



Seder Zeraim | Masechet Berachot 58-64 | Shabbat Tetzaveh | 5-11 Adar (March 1-7)

Daf 58: בְּרָכוֹת מִיַּחְדוֹת – SPECIAL BLESSINGS



The Gemara says that a Jew who sees a multitude of Israel (i.e., 600,000 Jews gathered together), should bless God. Each one of these hundreds of thousands of individuals looks and thinks differently, and yet, God knows the inner thoughts of each of them. On such an occasion, the required *beracha* is: “*Baruch Atah HaShem, Elokeinu Melech HaOlam, Chacham HaRazim*” (Blessed are You HaShem... Who Knows all secrets).

One who sees a great Torah scholar recites: “*Baruch Atah ... She’Cha’lak m’Chochmato l’yirai’av*” (Blessed are You ... Who has shared His wisdom with those who revere Him). One who sees a gentile scholar recites: “*Baruch Atah ... she’Natan me’Chochmato l’va’sahr va’dahm*” (Blessed is the One Who gave of His wisdom to flesh and blood).

Upon seeing a Jewish king, one blesses: “*Baruch Atah ... she’Chalak mi’kevodo l’yirai’av*” (Blessed are You ... Who has shared of His glory with those who revere Him.) One who sees a gentile king recites: “*Baruch Atah ... she’Natan mi’kevodo le’vasahr va’dahm*” (Blessed are You ... Who has given of His glory to flesh and blood).

Daf 59: בְּרַכַּת הַחֶמֶה וּבְרַכַּת שְׁהַחֲיֵנוּ – BLESSING OF THE SUN & THE SHEHECHEYANU BLESSING



The sun rises every morning and sets every evening. It revolves in the sky and each year returns to the point at which it began to glow at the time of the creation of the world. However, once every 28 years, the sun returns to its exact original location at the precise moment of the week (Wednesday morning) it was created. One who sees the sun on that special anniversary recites the blessing: “*Baruch Atah, HaShem, Elokeynu Melech HaOlam, Oseh Ma’aseh Breisheet*” (Blessed are you, HaShem... Author of creation.)

The Shehecheyanu Blessing: The Gemara states that one who hears good news, which fills his or her heart with joy blesses God: “*Baruch Atah ... Shehecheyanu v’ki’ye’manu v’hi’gi’anu la’z’man ha’zeh*”. If those joyous tidings are good for the individual as well as for others, he or she must bless “*Baruch Atah HaShem, Elokeynu Melech HaOlam, HaTov v’ha’Meitiv*” (Blessed are You, HaShem, our God, King of the universe, Who is good and does good). If a man is informed that his wife gave birth to a baby boy, he blesses: “*HaTov v’ha’Meitiv*”.

Daf 60: כָּל מַה שֶׁה' עוֹשֶׂה - לְטוֹבָה הוּא עוֹשֶׂה – EVERYTHING GOD DOES — HE DOES FOR THE BEST

Rabbi Akiva said: A person should become accustomed to say: “*Kol mah she’HaShem oseh, l’tova Hu oseh*” (Everything God does — He does for the best). [Cont’d on p. 2]



מִן הַתְּלֻמוֹד:
סדר זרעים, מסכת ברכות דף ג"ח:
“והנצח - זו מפלתה של רומי, וכן הוא אומר: ויז נצחם על בגדי” וגו’.”

Translation

מפלתה... Mah’pah’lata... *The downfall of*
בגדי... Be’ga’dai... *My garments*

Explanation

The Talmud interprets the words of the verse “Yours (*Lecha*), O God (*HaShem*), is the greatness (*Ha’Gedulah*), and the power (*v’ha’G’vura*), and the glory (*v’ha’Tiferet*), and the triumph (*v’ha’Netzach*), and the majesty (*v’ha’Hod*).” The word “*Netzach*” alludes to the downfall of the wicked Roman empire.

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[Cont'd from p. 1] Once, Rabbi Akiva went out on a journey, bringing with him a donkey, a rooster, and a candle. When Rabbi Akiva reached an inhabited location, he sought out a place to sleep but none would agree to let him enter their home. Rabbi Akiva was left with no choice; he found a place to sleep in a field outside the city. He did not become angry or annoyed, rather, he just said: “*Kol mah she’HaShem oseh, l’tova Hu oseh.*”



Suddenly, in the middle of the night, some strange things occurred. A wind began to blow and extinguished the candle. A cat passed by and consumed the rooster. Worst of all — a lion came and devoured the donkey. Rabbi Akiva was left alone, without anything at all, in the dark. Yet, he still said: “*Kol mah she’HaShem oseh, l’tova Hu oseh.*”

Some time later, Rabbi Akiva heard a series of extremely loud noises. A large band of soldiers attacked the city and took all of its citizens hostage. Rabbi Akiva viewed these events as proof that everything God does is for the best. Had he been in the city, or had his candle been visible, or his animals noisy Akiva would have been caught and taken into captivity. Seemingly detrimental experiences turned out, in hindsight, to have saved him.

Daf 61: מִשַּׁל הַדָּגִים – PARABLE OF THE FISH



The Roman government issued a decree prohibiting Jews from studying Torah. Rabbi Akiva did not obey the decree. Pappos ben Yehudah found Rabbi Akiva convening a large public study session. Pappos questioned him: Do you not fear the empire?

Rabbi Akiva replied: “Allow me to share a parable with you. To what can this situation be compared? It is like a fox walking along the riverbank who saw fish quickly fleeing. The fox asked them: ‘From whom are you fleeing?’ The fish responded: ‘We are fleeing from the nets of the fisherman who are trying to hunt us.’ The fox replied: ‘Come, dear fish. Come up on the dry land and we will reside together!’ The fish told the fox, ‘your proposal is not clever, and is even foolish. If we were afraid in the water — which is our natural habitat — all the more so would we be in fear outside the water, as fish out of water — die!’”

Rabbi Akiva concluded by telling Pappos Ben Yehudah, “For a Jew, the Torah is like water; it is his life. How is it possible to consider refraining from Torah study?”

Daf 62: קַיְצוּר דְּרֹדָּה - קַפְּנִדְרְיָא — KAPPANDARYA – A SHORTCUT

It is forbidden to enter *Har HaBayit* (the Temple Mount) in a disrespectful manner. As such, it was prohibited to enter *Har HaBayit* while carrying a walking stick. Shoes were required to be removed as a sign of respect for the holiest place in the world.

Due to the sanctity of the *Beit HaMikdash*, it was also prohibited to take a shortcut (“Kappandarya” in Aramaic) through *Har Habayit*. Rather, one was required to circle around *Har HaBayit*. The *Gemara* applies this *Kappandarya* rule to synagogues too. If a synagogue has two entrances, it is prohibited to enter through one set of doors and exit through the other. However, an individual who enters the synagogue through one door to pray is permitted to exit through a second door, since he clearly did not enter the synagogue as a shortcut, but rather for the legitimate purpose of prayer.



Dvar Torah TETZAVEH

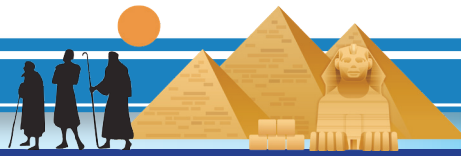
“ וַיִּקְחוּ אֶלְיָךְ שֶׁמֶן זַיִת זָךְ ”

In *Parashat Tetzaveh*, the Torah commands the lighting of the *menorah*: “[And you shall further instruct *B’nai Yisrael*] to bring you clear oil of beaten olives [for lighting, to kindle lamps regularly].” Our sages enumerated a variety of characteristics of the olive tree. Notably, there are two central qualities *Chazal* highlight which seem to contradict each other: On one hand, the *Chachamim* state that eating olives could cause forgetfulness; while on the other hand, *Chazal* asserts that olive oil is beneficial to memory preservation. (*Horayot* 13b).

How is it possible for one food item to have two polar opposite effects? It appears there is a profound difference between olives and the oil derived from them.

Eating an olive requires no prior preparation. Olives are ready to eat, as is, without effort or exertion. In contrast, preparation of olive oil requires quite a bit of labor and tremendous strain throughout the production process. Based on this distinction, it is possible to explain the seeming contradiction by saying that anything a person comes by easily, without investing effort, can just as easily disappear and get lost. In that regard, the olive symbolizes forgetfulness. However, something a person took the great pains to acquire will remain with that person over time. Therefore, olive oil, which was produced with great exertion and toil symbolizes the memory that remains for a long time.





Daf 63: כִּיבוּד תַּלְמוּדֵי חֻכְמַיִם – HONOR OF TORAH SCHOLARS

When the academy for Torah Scholars was established in Yavneh, the holy *Tannaim* Rabbi Yehudah, Rabbi Yossi, Rabbi Nechemiah, and Rabbi Elazar Ben Rabbi Yossi HaGlili assembled and offered *drashot* (sermons) in honor of those who hosted yeshiva students in their homes.

Rabbi Yehudah presented the following sermon: It is written in the Torah that an Egyptian is permitted to convert and become a Jew. While we know the Egyptians tortured our ancestors in Egypt, they are not prohibited from joining the Jewish people because they were hospitable to our forefather Ya'akov and his family when they arrived in Egypt during the famine. Rabbi Yehudah asserted that the Egyptians did not receive Ya'akov Avinu and his sons because they aspired to observe the *mitzvah* of *Hachnassat Orchim* (hospitality, welcoming guests), but rather because they sought to derive material benefit from the Israelite presence in Egypt. Nevertheless, the merit of that good deed stood in their favor to allow them to convert. Likewise, those who host a *talmid chacham*, feed him, and provide him with drink, expressly in order to fulfill the *mitzvah* of *hachanassat orchim*, certainly merit a huge reward.

Daf 64: "לֵךְ לְשָׁלוֹם" – THE LOFTY STATUTES OF A TORAH SCHOLAR



Rabbi Avin HaLevi said that when bidding farewell to an individual who is about to depart, one should say, "*Lech l'shalom*" (Go to peace). When one bids farewell to a deceased person at their funeral should one say, "*Lech b'shalom*" (Go in peace).

Rabbi Levi Bar Hiyya taught that it is fitting to juxtapose the performance of *mitzvot*. For example, one should learn Torah and pray immediately afterward. By doing so, great rewards will be earned in the World-to-Come.

הדרן עלך
Masechet Berachot, we have learned from you, and we will return to learn from you again. At a good time, we begin *Masechet Shabbat*.

B'Sha'ah Tova –
 We complete learning *Masechet Berachot*

Please join us in learning *Masechet Shabbat*



QUESTIONS FOR THE WEEK

1. When does one say to another person "*Lech l'Shalom*" and when should one say "*Lech b'Shalom*?"
2. Once in how many years is the *beracha* "*Oseh ma'aseh Breisheet*" recited?
3. What *beracha* does one recite over hearing good news that causes ones' heart to rejoice?

***NOTE**
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HISTORY OF ISRAEL

[THE EARLY 1960s]

<p>FEBRUARY 1 1959 ... "Tzema" Over; Rationing Ends</p>	<p>APRIL 1958 ... Hebrew University, Givat Ram Campus Opens</p>
<p>MAY 1960 ... Eichmann Captured</p>	<p>MAY 1960 ... Ben Gurion Meets Adenaur</p>
<p>APRIL 1961 Eichmann Trial Opens</p>	<p>JULY 1960 1st Israeli Produced Plane</p>
<p>MAY 31 1962 Eichmann Executed</p>	<p>DECEMBER 1961 "Operation Yachin" Brings Moroccan Jews to Israel</p>
<p>SEPTEMBER 1962 US Sells Hawk Missiles to Israel</p>	<p>AUGUST 1962 Israel Downs Two Syrian Mig Planes</p>
<p>JUNE 1964 National Water Carrier Completed</p>	<p>JUNE 3 1963 Ben Gurion Resigns; Levi Eshkol New Prime Minister</p>
<p></p>	<p>JUNE 3 1964 Pope Paul Visits The Holy Land</p>

Consequently, President Eisenhower told French Premier Guy Mollet it was not worth selling arms to Israel, since 1.7 million Jews could never defend themselves against 40 million Arabs.

After its impressive 1956 victory, questions regarding Israel's chance of survival were eliminated. The nine years following the Sinai Campaign were years of sustained economic growth; while Jews from both Eastern Europe and North Africa continued to stream in.

During this period, two totally unrelated events took place which profoundly impacted Israel. The first was the completion of the National Water Carrier, which brought water from the Sea of Galilee all the way to the Negev. The National Water Carrier provided the water that allowed the development of the southern part of the country. The National Water Carrier, together with recycled sewage water, allowed Israeli agriculture to blossom.

The second transformational event was the capture and subsequent trial of Adolf Eichmann, one of the central architects of the Holocaust. Eichmann was captured in Argentina and flown to Israel, where his trial took place from April to December 1961.

The trial riveted the nation. Until then, survivors were reluctant to tell their stories — even to their closest relatives. As a result of the Eichmann trial, many survivors related their experiences to a national audience. This allowed others to tell their stories as well. For the first time, the Israeli public began to understand the horrific dimensions of the Holocaust.

The Sinai Campaign was, in effect, Israel's second war of Independence — much the same way the War of 1812 was for the USA. Before the 1956 war, many still questioned whether Israel would survive.

<p>1958 New Road to Eilat Opens</p>	<p>1958 1st Int'l TaNaKh Contest Held</p>	<p>1958 Cornerstone of New Knesset Building Laid</p>
<p>1959 Carmelit Completed in Haifa</p>	<p>1960 Nachal Soreq Nuclear Reactor Begins Operation</p>	<p>1960 Hadassah Ein Kerem Hospital Opens</p>
<p>1962 Arad Founded</p>	<p>1963 Masada Dig Begins</p>	