

תנא דבי אליהו, כל השונה הלכות בכל יום מובטח לו שהוא בן העולם הבא

IT WAS TAUGHT IN THE ACADEMY OF ELIYAHU, WHOEVER STUDIES TORAH LAWS  
EVERY DAY IS ASSURED THAT HE WILL BE PRESENT IN THE 'WORLD TO COME'

### Chapter 1, Question 8

*Should one recite Parashat HaMan & The Ten Commandments every day?*

Following on from Essay 1.7, the Shulchan Aruch<sup>1</sup> continues to list other portions of the Torah which are beneficial to recite every morning before Shaharit:

טוב לומר... ופרשת המן ועשרת הדברות ...

*It is good to recite... Parashat HaMan and Aseret Hadiberot (The Ten Commandments)*

**Parashat HaMan** is the portion of the Torah which describes the wondrous miracle of how Bnei Yisrael received the spiritual food called 'manna' that fell from Heaven daily whilst they were sojourning in the barren Desert. The source of the custom to recite Parashat HaMan seems to stem from the תשב"ץ *Tashbetz* - Rabbi Yisrael of Krems (an Austrian Rabbi from the 14th Century) who quotes a Gemara Yerushalmi in tractate Berachot<sup>2</sup> that reveals a special segula regarding its recitation:

כל האומר פרשת המן בכל יום מובטח לו שלא יתמעטו מזונותיו

*Whoever says Parashat HaMan every day*

*is assured that he will not fall short of his sustenance!*

The תשב"ץ puts his stamp on this Yerushalmi and holds that the recital of this portion is a segula for one's *parnasa* (income). The custom was then strengthened by the Tur<sup>3</sup> (HaRav Ya'akov ben Asher 1270-1340) who writes that it is good to recite this Torah portion as well as the Ten Commandments every day, and the custom was subsequently recorded by HaRav Yosef Cairo in our Shulchan Aruch above.

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1. סימן א, סע' ה'  
2. בירושלמי שלנו איננו  
3. שם

There are several questions which would be interesting to explore regarding this halacha. Firstly, why does the Shulchan Aruch say it is good to read these specific portions of the Torah? i.e. can one really pick and choose parts of the Torah which are 'better' to read than others? Furthermore, it is quite evident that most communities today do not have the custom to recite these Torah portions at all. So what went wrong exactly? Why was the Shulchan Aruch's advice not followed?

Firstly, looking at Parashat HaMan, the Beit Yosef gives an interesting reason why this particular section of the Torah is so beneficial to recite. He says it is good to read Parashat HaMan **כדי שיאמין שכל מזונותיו באין לו בהשגחה** *in order to instill the belief that all of a person's sustenance comes to him by hashgacha!* What is this 'hashgacha' that the Beit Yosef is referring to? We have already discussed in Essay 1.4 that hashgacha means **divine providence** or governance, i.e. the way Hashem governs and controls the world and all the details therein. The Beit Yosef holds that this particular section of the Torah was chosen to recite before the start of our prayers to instill in us the belief that Hashem is the true provider in this world. Starting the day with this outlook would instill merit in our prayers and enable us to have the correct attitude towards the upcoming events that the day will unfold.

It is interesting that the Mishnah Berura<sup>4</sup> quotes the Beit Yosef above but adds an important word... **כדי שיאמין שכל מזונותיו באין לו בהשגחה פרטית** *in order to instill the belief that all of a person's sustenance comes to him by hashgacha pratit.* What is the difference between general 'hashgacha' and 'hashgacha pratit'?

Rav Chaim Freedlander zt'l<sup>5</sup> writes on this topic at length and explains that even though Hashem is in full control of everything that has transpired, is transpiring and will transpire in the world, nevertheless he governs His various creations through different levels or qualities of hashgacha. The level of hashgacha for a person or creature depends on the importance of the individual and the extent of his or its role in the ultimate Divine Plan of things.

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4. שם, ס"ק יג'

5. בספרו שפתי חיים, פרקי אמונה והשגחה

**Hashgacha pratit** is the highest level one can be on... it is a more personal type of divine governance where Hashem gives more detailed attention to every aspect of that particular element of one's life. The Mishnah Berura is therefore pointing out to us a fundamental principle! That a Jew's financial income is under detailed personal hashgacha from Hashem. There is nothing random about it. Hashem decides exactly what amount and what form of income every Jew is to earn or acquire that year - down to the very last penny! The Mishnah Berura then states that the reading of this portion of the Torah every morning teaches us that:

**אין רבוי ההשתדלות מועיל מאומה**

*no increase in physical effort will help at all!*

(in the level of financial success a person is destined to achieve)

We can see now why it is so beneficial to start the day by acknowledging such an important reality. In today's world it is more important than ever to make a special effort to avoid the danger of believing that our financial success is the direct result of our own physical effort, intelligence and/or skill. This is the false reality that has been created in today's money-driven society where a great emphasis is placed on working more and more hours and investing more energy in one's field of work. Hashem purposely allows many wayward people in this world to succeed financially through the means of investing more time and labour at work, and this is done in order to give the righteous the ability to exercise their 'freedom of choice', i.e. to withstand and overcome the same temptation, focus more on spiritual goals and thus be rewarded accordingly.

It is now clear why the Tur and Shulchan Aruch recommended the recitation of Parashat HaMan before Shaharit. Now let us have a look at the source for reciting the Ten Commandments every day. Where did it come from?

Indeed the Tur<sup>6</sup> was responsible for introducing the custom of reciting this portion of the Torah and it was then subsequently recorded by HaRav Yosef Cairo in our Shulchan Aruch above.

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6. סש

However, the Beit Yosef<sup>7</sup> reveals that the actual source of this ancient minhag in fact dates back to the time of the Beit Hamikdash and is recorded in the Mishnah in tractate Tamid.<sup>8</sup> The Mishnah discusses the particulars of the morning service by the Cohanim in the Beit Hamikdash:

אמר להם הממונה ברכו ברכה אחת, והם ברכו, קראו עשרת הדברות

*The appointed one said to them (to the Cohanim)*

*'Recite a single beracha' (the beracha before Shema)*

*and they recited the beracha,*

*They then recited the Ten Commandments.*

However, despite the fact that the recital of the Ten Commandments was part of the morning prayer service in the Beit Hamikdash, the Gemara in tractate Berachot<sup>9</sup> reveals that its recital was surprisingly abolished by the Sages. The Sages forbade all the Jewish communities from reciting the Ten Commandments in their morning prayer service and it was only upheld in the Beit Hamikdash morning service. The reason for this was due to deep concerns of what idolatrous heretics might say regarding such a practice! Rashi explains that the Sages of that period were concerned that the heretics would try and convince *amei ha'aretz* (uneducated Jews) that the reason why the Cohanim recite the Ten Commandments before the Shema is because this is the only portion of the Torah that was heard by the nation **directly from Hashem** at Mount Sinai and the rest of the Torah is therefore false, has v'shalom!

It would thus seem logical that even today it would be wrong to specifically section out 'special' portions of the Torah to recite as it would again give the opportunity for heretics to attempt to enforce their false theories on the less educated. Indeed we find that the *Rashba*<sup>10</sup> (Rabbi Shlomo ben Aderet of Spain 1235-1310) was asked whether it is appropriate to uphold such a custom of reading these portions in public and he answered that it should not be allowed. The Rashba however added that in private one would be

7. שם

8. דף לב:

9. דף יב

10. חלק א, סימן קפ"ד.

allowed to recite Parashat HaMan and the Ten Commandments because there would obviously be no issues then of the arguments of heretics.

It is interesting that the Maharshal (Rabbi Shlomo Luria of Lublin 1510-1573) writes on this topic<sup>11</sup> and says that the main issue the Sages had with regards to reciting the Ten Commandments was reading it during the berachot of Kriyat Shema. But if one wanted to recite it before or after the berachot of Kriyat Shema then there would not be a concern of enticing the theories of the heretics. The reason is because just before Kriyat Shema there is a beracha we make beginning with the words... אהבת עולם 'Ahavat Olam', which focuses mainly on **thanking Hashem for giving us the precious Torah**. The Maharshal held that if we continued the custom of reciting the Ten Commandments at that very point of the service then the heretics would be able to strengthen their arguments and say that only the Ten Commandments are the 'true Torah' that we are thanking Hashem for. He therefore instituted that the Ten Commandments should be recited before ברוך שאמר 'Baruch She'amar' of Shaharit and that was the custom in his 'Synagogue of the Youth'. Nevertheless we know that the opinion of the Rashba, the Beit Yosef as well as the Rama<sup>12</sup> is to refrain from reciting Parashat HaMan and the Parasha of the Ten Commandments in public, i.e. anywhere in the prayer service. However, they all hold that it can be said in the **privacy** of one's own home before Shaharit.

What do the Sages of Kabbalistic wisdom have to say on this topic? Is there a special reason according to the סוד *Sod* to recite Parashat HaMan and the Ten Commandments every day? The Hida<sup>[1]</sup> writes that HaRav Chaim Vital in fact had the custom to recite these portions of the Torah and the Ari z'l stopped him from doing so due to the same reason of not encouraging the theories of the heretics. The Ari z'l's exact words are as follows:

**ומי זה יערב אל לבו לחזק המינים ולנהוג מה שביטלו חז"ל בגמרה!**

***And who is this [who] conjures up in his heart to strengthen the heretics and to re-enact that which was abolished by the Sages of the Gemara !?***

11. בתשובותיו ס"ל סד, הובא בדרישה אות ו'.

12. שם בהגהותיו.

We can assume from the Ari z'l's harsh words that he also forbade the recital of these portions **even in private**, and indeed this is the opinion of the Sha'arei Teshuva (Rabbi Chaim Mordechai Margoliot mid 1700s-1840)<sup>13</sup>. The Ari z'l's statement can also perhaps indicate that there is no Kabbalistic necessity for reciting these portions of the Torah, otherwise he would have for sure found a place for them somewhere in the order of our prayers.

The Ben Ish Hai<sup>14</sup> seems to have resolved all the issues discussed in this essay....

It is well known that there are ten specific Biblical events or axioms that are a **Torah obligation** to remember every day. The Ben Ish Hai beautifully compiled a special supplication called **עשר זכירות** *Esser Zechirot*, meaning the 'Ten Remembrances', which consists of ten short paragraphs from the Torah appertaining to each of these ten remembrances. Amongst these **עשר זכירות** is the miracle of the manna, as well as the event of receiving the Torah at Mount Sinai! The Ben Ish Hai's **עשר זכירות** can be found in many siddurim today and it enables one to recite these portions of the Torah in a manner by which one would not need to be concerned of enticing heresy. This is because the **עשר זכירות** can be said at any time of the day (in the siddur it is normally found straight after Shaharit) and there is no necessity to recite them in public. More importantly, their recital is simply a fulfillment of ten Torah obligations, i.e. of remembering these ten events, so there would therefore not be any concerns that heretics will use this practice to lead the uneducated astray with other theories.

The Ben Ish Hai stresses that one should be vigilant to recite all of the ten remembrances every day preferably **after** the Shaharit service and one should also **stand whilst reciting them** to show their importance. He recalls that this was the practice of **אנשי מעשה** *Anshei Ma'aseh* ('Men of Great Action').

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13. שם אות יא'

14. אוצרות חיים מועדים ב עמ' שצא מכתיבת יד שלו.

For the benefit of the reader we have brought below the sections of the Torah regarding the miracle of the Manna as well as the event of receiving the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai, which was taken from the Ben Ish Hai's עשר זכירות. It is important to note that even though the original custom was to recite much longer sections of the Torah, nevertheless we can for sure rely on the vast wisdom of the Ben Ish Hai who held that only these pasukim are necessary to recite.

וְזָכַרְתָּ אֶת כָּל הַדְרֹךְ אֲשֶׁר הִלַּכְתָּ ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ זֶה אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה בַּמִּדְבָּר לְמַעַן עֲנִתְךָ לְנִסְתֶּךָ לְדַעַת אֶת אֲשֶׁר בְּלִבְבְּךָ הִתְשֹׁמֵר מִצֻּוֹתָיו אִם לֹא: וַיַּעֲנֶךָ וַיִּרְעַבְךָ וַיֹּאכְלֶךָ אֶת הַמָּן אֲשֶׁר לֹא יָדַעְתָּ וְלֹא יָדְעוּן אֲבוֹתֶיךָ לְמַעַן הוֹדַעְךָ כִּי לֹא עַל הַלֶּחֶם לִבְדּוֹ יַחְיֶה הָאָדָם כִּי עַל כָּל מוֹצֵא פִי ה' יַחְיֶה הָאָדָם:<sup>15</sup>

*And you shall remember the entire way on which the Hashem, your G-d, led you these forty years in the desert, in order to afflict you to test you, to know what is in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. And He afflicted you and let you go hungry, and then fed you with **manna**, which you did not know, nor did your forefathers know, so that He would make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but rather by, whatever comes forth from the mouth of Hashem does man live.*

רַק הִשְׁמֹר לָךְ וּשְׁמֹר נִפְשְׁךָ מְאֹד כֹּן תִּשְׁכַּח אֶת הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר רָאוּ עֵינֶיךָ וּכְן יָסוּרוּ מִלְּבָבְךָ כֹּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ וְהוֹדַעְתָּם לְבָנֶיךָ וּלְבְנֵי בָנֶיךָ: **יוֹם אֲשֶׁר עָמַדְתָּ לִפְנֵי ה' אֱלֹקֶיךָ בְּחֹרֵב בְּאֶמֶר ה' אֵלַי הִקְהֵל לִי אֶת הָעָם וְאֲשַׁמְעֵם אֶת דְּבָרַי אֲשֶׁר יִלְמְדוּן לִירְאָה אֹתִי כָּל הַיָּמִים אֲשֶׁר הֵם חַיִּים עַל הָאָדָמָה וְאֶת בְּנֵיהֶם יִלְמְדוּן:**<sup>16</sup>

*But beware and watch yourself very well, lest you forget the things that your eyes saw, and lest these things depart from your heart, all the days of your life, and you shall make them known to your children and to your children's children the day **you stood before Hashem your G-d at Horeb**, when Hashem said to me, "Assemble the people for Me, and I will let them hear My words, that they may learn to fear Me all the days that they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children.*

## Rabbi Yosef Haim David

This document contains divrei Torah. Please treat it with necessary respect.

דברים ח:א. 15.

דברים ד:ט. 16.