

Laws of Blessings, Chapter 2 (Auto Translated)

English

Auto Translated

Shiur Overview

Summary of the Lecture – Laws of Blessings, Chapter 2 (Rambam, Sefer Ahava)

Halacha 1: The Order of Birkat HaMazon – The Four Blessings and Who Established Them

The Rambam's Words:

"The order of Birkat HaMazon is as follows" – There are four blessings: (1) Birkat HaZan, (2) Birkat HaAretz, (3) Boneh Yerushalayim, (4) HaTov VeHaMeitiv. The first blessing – Moshe Rabbeinu established it when the manna descended. The second – Yehoshua established it when he brought the Jews into Eretz Yisrael. The third – David and his son Shlomo established it – Boneh Yerushalayim. The fourth – HaTov VeHaMeitiv – the Sages of the Mishna established it corresponding to the slain of Beitar who were given burial.

Explanation:

The Rambam lays out the order of Birkat HaMazon: four blessings, each established in a different period by a different figure. The first three are connected to historical gifts (manna, Eretz Yisrael, Yerushalayim/Beit HaMikdash), and the fourth with a later miracle.

Insights and Explanations:

a) What does "Moshe Rabbeinu established it" mean – a broad inquiry:

A difficult question: What does "Moshe Rabbeinu established it" mean? It cannot mean that Moshe established the **essence of the mitzvah** of Birkat HaMazon, because that is a **mitzvah from the Torah** – "You shall eat and be satisfied and bless Hashem your God" – which the Almighty commanded, and Moshe was only the transmitter. If "established" only means that he transmitted the mitzvah, that would be a strange usage of the term "established."

Several approaches:

(1) Moshe established the manner/format, not the text: Just as with **prayer** (Hilchot Tefillah) the Rambam said that the essence of the mitzvah is to pray in the manner of praise, thanksgiving, and request, but the **text** was only formulated later by the Anshei Knesset HaGedolah – so too here: Moshe established that one should bench in the manner of thanksgiving for food, but the specific words were formulated later by the Anshei Knesset HaGedolah. This fits with what the Rambam said earlier that **the Anshei Knesset HaGedolah established the text of all blessings and prayers.**

(2) Moshe actually made a text, but not our text: He gave a text when the manna fell, but later the Anshei Knesset HaGedolah "reconstructed" or renewed the text – as Chazal say **"they forgot it and re-established it"**. The meaning of "Moshe Rabbeinu established it" is that he taught the Jews to bench with some text, but that text is not our current text.

(3) Perhaps Moshe's establishment was the manner of thanksgiving + request: Birkat HaMazon is primarily **thanksgiving** (thanking the Almighty), but there is also **request** – such as "may He restore His service to its place" (in Boneh Yerushalayim). This recalls the Rambam's principle in Hilchot Tefillah that prayer must be in the manner of **praise, thanksgiving, and request**. Perhaps this was Moshe Rabbeinu's establishment – that Birkat HaMazon should always contain both thanksgiving and request, just like prayer.

b) The Ramban's position and his dispute with the Rambam:

The **Ramban** in his Hasagot says that **the text of Birkat HaMazon is not from the Torah, and the prophets established an organized text.** The Ramban's position is analyzed in the context of his dispute with the Rambam regarding **Hallel**: The Rambam said that Hallel cannot be from the Torah because Hallel is in Tehillim (which is later than Moshe). The Ramban responded: What do you mean it cannot be? – Just as Moshe Rabbeinu established Birkat HaMazon, Kriat Shema, prayer, so too Hallel can be from the Torah even if David HaMelech later made the specific text.

The innovation: From the Ramban's proof we see that **the Ramban understands "established" as literally making a text** – because he brings proof from Moshe's establishment of Birkat HaMazon to demonstrate that one can have a mitzvah from the Torah even when the text was made later.

c) Proof from "as it is said, You open Your hand" that the text is not original from Moshe:

The **Beit Yosef** asks: In our text of Birkat HaZan it says **"as it is said, You open Your hand"** – but this is a verse from **Tehillim**, which was written by David HaMelech, hundreds of years after Moshe Rabbeinu! How can this be in a blessing that Moshe Rabbeinu established? The simple answer: **This piece "as it is said, You open Your hand" Moshe indeed did not say** – it is a later addition. (There is also an answer that "You open Your hand" was a saying before Tehillim, but that is not the simple explanation.)

d) "David and his son Shlomo" – not literally two establishers:

How do **David and Shlomo together** come in as establishers of Boneh Yerushalayim? The explanation: **"David and Shlomo" does not literally mean that both sat down and established a text.** It is like saying "Anshei Knesset HaGedolah" or "the court of Shaul" – it means **that period, the spirit of that time.** David elevated Yerushalayim as the capital and brought the Ark there, Shlomo built the Beit HaMikdash – **together they brought to Klal Yisrael the importance of Yerushalayim**, which caused the blessing of "Boneh Yerushalayim." It is more of a **midrash** – the spirit of that period, not a specific enactment by both individuals.

e) HaTov VeHaMeitiv – the slain of Beitar:

The **fourth blessing "HaTov VeHaMeitiv"** was established by the **Sages of the Mishna**. The occasion: After the destruction of the Second Temple, in the city of **Beitar** (where Bar Kochba led his rebellion), the Roman emperor **Hadrian** killed many Jews. The slain were not buried for a long time. When they were finally permitted to bury them ("**when the slain of Beitar were given burial**"), the Sages of the Mishna established "**HaTov VeHaMeitiv**" – "**HaTov**" that the bodies did not decompose, "**VeHaMeitiv**" that they were able to bury them.

f) The exilic character of HaTov VeHaMeitiv:

The fourth blessing is a "pitiful blessing" – very exilic in its essence. The previous blessings at least have a piece of redemption in them. But HaTov VeHaMeitiv was established for a minimal salvation: we were already killed, but at least there was some mercy on the bodies. This is a blessing on "the lesser of the evils" – we rejoice in the portion of salvation, but in a minimalist way. It fits with the principle that one makes a blessing on the bad just as one blesses on the good.

g) The individualistic character of HaTov VeHaMeitiv versus Boneh Yerushalayim:

In Boneh Yerushalayim we request a "major milestone" – a collective redemption, the building of Yerushalayim. But HaTov VeHaMeitiv speaks of comfort and encouragement for the individual person – "He nourishes and sustains every broken person." The words in HaTov VeHaMeitiv – "mercy, grace and kindness and mercy, success, blessing, salvation, comfort, sustenance and support" – are all individualistic things. If you had a slightly better day, a bit of joy at home – this is the place where you put it.

h) Historical layers in Birkat HaMazon – parallel to prayer:

Just as with the three prayers we bring that Avraham, Yitzchak, Yaakov established them (although the Rambam brings against the korbanot), so too with Birkat HaMazon there is a historical layering: First the Almighty gave food (manna), then Eretz Yisrael (inheritance), then Yerushalayim (David HaMelech). When a person bentshes, he lives through the entire history.

[**Digression:** It is mentioned a source from **R' Yitzchak Eizik Tirna** (or other Rishonim of Ashkenaz) that "**Al HaNissim**" was established by **the yeshiva in Nehardea**. The explanation: The Jews of Eretz Yisrael saw that their joys did not have permanence, so they said praise for the Almighty's miracles. It does not necessarily mean that specifically those people who saw the miracles made the text – rather **the yeshiva in Nehardea formulated the text "Al HaNissim"**. This is a parallel to how "established" does not always mean literally those specific people, but rather the spirit of that period.]

Halacha 1 (continued): The Law of Workers – Workers Who Eat at the Employer's Home

The Rambam's Words:

Workers who eat from the employer's bread – they do not make a blessing before (do not make a first blessing), **and after the meal they make only two blessings** – Birkat HaZan and Birkat HaAretz – **so as not to cause the**

employer to be idle from his work. But if they eat from their own (from their own food), **or if the employer reclines with them – they bless four blessings like all other people.**

Explanation:

Workers who are paid with food from the employer should not make a first blessing, and after eating they say only two blessings (HaZan and HaAretz), so as not to waste the employer's time. But if they eat from their own, or the employer sits with them, they bentsh fully with four blessings.

Insights and Clarifications:

a) Question on the exemption from the first blessing:

Birkat HaMotzi is half a moment! How can the stingiest employer have a complaint about such a short blessing? The answer: It's not just about the blessing itself. The worker needs to enter into a serious frame of mind, perhaps think whether his hands are clean – the whole procedure takes time. Additionally, the first blessing is only **rabbinic**, and the rabbis did not establish it for someone who is in the middle of working. The final blessing (Birkat HaMazon) is **from the Torah**, therefore it cannot be completely removed – only shortened to two blessings.

b) How does Boneh Yerushalayim fit into Birkat HaAretz (for workers):

When the worker says only two blessings, Boneh Yerushalayim is incorporated into Birkat HaAretz – "he includes Boneh Yerushalayim in Birkat HaAretz." The foundation: Boneh Yerushalayim is essentially connected to Birkat HaAretz – it is like a clarification or a condition in Birkat HaAretz. This is compared to "**Havineinu**" in prayer – where all requests are put together in one blessing when there is no time, but the content remains.

c) The root of Boneh Yerushalayim as a separate blessing:

Boneh Yerushalayim is originally not a separate blessing – it is part of Birkat HaAretz. When David and Shlomo established it, they took it out as a separate blessing, because it is nicer to make extra blessings. But for workers, where one must shorten, it is put back into Birkat HaAretz – because that is the original place.

d) "The employer reclines with them" – two explanations:

(1) When the employer sits with them, he is not particular about their time; (2) When the employer is there, he himself must also make Birkat HaMazon, so there is no waste anyway. It can be both.

e) "And they were eating from their own" – a moral lesson:

When workers eat from their own, the Sages say: Such a wicked person (the employer who does not give food) – you should bentsh a long bentshing! That is, when the employer does not pay with food, you are not under his time pressure, and you bentsh fully.

f) Are these laws relevant today:

Today we do not conduct ourselves this way, because: (1) Employers are not particular about such things; (2) We do not work as intensively as in the past – a physical laborer truly had no moment, but today people talk on the phone at work; (3) We do not take blessings seriously enough – we rush through

the entire Birkat HaMazon, so the difference between two blessings and four blessings is not so great. But the moral lesson is that we should learn from these laws to take blessings more seriously.

[**Note aside:** There is a short version of Birkat HaMazon (based on what Chazal made abbreviations for workers), which has been reviewed by gedolei Yisrael.]

Halacha 2: Birkat HaAretz – Text, Content, and Meaning

The Rambam's Words:

In Birkat HaAretz one must say thanksgiving at its beginning and at its end, and the conclusion is "for the land and for the food". Anyone who does not say "a desirable, good and spacious land" in Birkat HaAretz – has not fulfilled his obligation. And one must mention in it brit and Torah, and brit comes before Torah.

Explanation:

Birkat HaAretz must contain thanksgiving at the beginning and at the end. One must mention "a desirable, good and spacious land," and also brit (circumcision) and Torah – brit before Torah.

Insights and Clarifications:

a) "For the land and for the food" – why is food mentioned again:

Although we already said Birkat HaZan for the food, food is mentioned again in the conclusion of Birkat HaAretz. The explanation: "For the land and for the food" means "for the land and for the food **of it**" – the food that comes from the land. The land is praised because it is "good and spacious" – it produces food.

b) The great question: What does Birkat HaAretz mean in chutz la'aretz?

When a Jew sits in chutz la'aretz and has no land, what is the content of Birkat HaAretz? The land does not produce his food, he is not there – what does one think when saying "a desirable, good and spacious land" in America?

The Zohar's answer: The Zohar asks the same question and answers that one means "**the upper land**" – **the Shechina**. But on the simple level the question remains unanswered.

c) A possible answer – Birkat HaAretz is a blessing on Jewishness:

Birkat HaAretz is not just a blessing on a piece of land – **it is a blessing on Jewishness in general**. The proof: One must mention in the same blessing: **(1) A desirable, good and spacious land** – the land, **(2) Brit milah** – the physical sign, **(3) Torah** – the spiritual content. These are all "**national symbols**" – things with which Jews are distinguished from all peoples: they have their own land, their own body (brit milah), and their own Torah. If so, Birkat HaAretz is **almost like a Birkat HaTorah** – a blessing on "I am a Jew, I belong to Eretz Yisrael," even when one is physically in chutz la'aretz. **This is somewhat of an answer to the question** – in chutz la'aretz one says Birkat HaAretz because one mentions the entire Jewish identity.

d) "A desirable, good and spacious land" – specifically in exile:

Specifically in exile one must say "a desirable, good and spacious land" – **one must not forget Eretz Yisrael that we had**. The land that is mentioned is **the land that one longs for**, from which one has been exiled. This is not "the upper land" – it is **the actual Eretz Yisrael**.

e) "Has not fulfilled his obligation" – what does it mean?

The **Radbaz** and **other Rishonim** say explicitly that "has not fulfilled" does not mean **that one must bentsh again** – it only means that one has not done as Chazal said, but after the fact one has fulfilled the obligation.

f) Brit before Torah – the Raavad's explanation:

The Rambam says that **brit comes before Torah**. The **Raavad** explains: Brit comes first **in time** – the Almighty already gave brit milah to Avraham Avinu (Parshat Lech Lecha), before Matan Torah.

g) Thirteen covenants by brit milah – "keyword" (leitmotif):

In **Parshat Lech Lecha** (by brit milah) the word "brit" appears **thirteen times**. Also at the **end of Sefer Devarim** (by the covenant for the Torah) "brit" appears thirteen times. In contrast, "**the entire Torah was made with three covenants**" – the Torah in general is only three times "brit."

[**Digression:** The concept of "**keyword**" (leitmotif) – a term from modern biblical scholarship. This means that in certain portions of the Torah a particular word is repeated many times as a stylistic device, to hint at a special meaning. Examples: (1) "Good" in Bereishit 1 – "and He saw that it was good" is repeated, (2) "Priest" in Parshat Chukat – seven times, (3) "Lights" by the menorah, (4) The Zohar also counts such calculations. The explanation: When the Torah writes "brit" thirteen times in one portion, it wants to hint that brit is "**important times thirteen**" – something especially important.]

h) Is brit milah more important than Torah?

Brit milah has thirteen covenants, and the entire Torah has only three. Obviously one does not say that brit is more important than Torah – we are only obligated in brit milah because it is written in the Torah. **But in a certain sense brit milah has importance before the Torah** – it is a midrash that has a deeper meaning.

i) The Yerushalmi – Torah must be adjacent to the land:

The Rambam brings a Yerushalmi: **R' Yose beRabbi Bun** said, why must one make Torah adjacent to Birkat HaAretz? So that no one should say that land without Torah is worth anything. The Torah is a condition in Eretz Yisrael. If one has land without Torah, it becomes transformed into ruins (destruction). Birkat HaAretz does not mean just a land, but a Jewish land that goes with Torah and with brit.

Halacha 2 (continued): The Third Blessing – Boneh Yerushalayim

The Rambam's Words:

The third blessing begins with "Have mercy, Hashem our God, on Israel Your people and on Yerushalayim Your city," or "Console us, Hashem our God, in Yerushalayim Your city." And concludes "Builder of Yerushalayim" or "Who consoles His people in the

building of Yerushalayim." And anyone who does not mention the kingdom of the house of David in this blessing – has not fulfilled his obligation.

Explanation:

The third blessing begins with a request for mercy/consolation for Klal Yisrael and Yerushalayim, and ends with "Builder of Yerushalayim" or "Who consoles His people in the building of Yerushalayim." One must mention the kingdom of the house of David.

Insights and Clarifications:

a) Rachem vs. Nachem – two versions, two meanings:

In the Gemara there are two options for the beginning:

- **"Have mercy, Hashem our God, on Israel Your people and on Yerushalayim Your city"** – means: Jews have many problems (fate, life, matches, healing, salvations), they need mercy; Yerushalayim is in ruins, needs mercy. This is a broad request – mercy **for** a trouble.

- **"Console us, Hashem our God, in Yerushalayim Your city"** – means: Our trouble is specifically that we do not have Yerushalayim; console us by giving us Yerushalayim. This is consolation **after** a trouble – more specific.

b) Shabbat – Nachem: The simple meaning in the Gemara suggests that on Shabbat one should say "Nachem" instead of "Rachem," because Shabbat is more a time of consolation.

c) "Console us" shows that Israel and Yerushalayim must come together: The version "Console us" shows that Israel Your people and Yerushalayim Your city should come together – this is the essence of the consolation.

d) The kingdom of the house of David – has not fulfilled his obligation:

The Rambam rules that whoever does not mention the kingdom of the house of David in the third blessing has not fulfilled the obligation. **Rashi in Berachot** says: **"For there is no complete consolation except with the return of the kingdom of the house of David."** Yerushalayim without the kingdom of the house of David is not complete. If one does not have the kingdom of the house of David, one still needs mercy, still needs consolation. Just a state in Yerushalayim without the kingdom of David is not the end.

e) Inquiry: Yerushalayim and the kingdom of the house of David – one thing or two?

Are Yerushalayim and the kingdom of the house of David two synonyms or two separate things? What would be if, God forbid, one builds the kingdom of the house of David in Tiberias instead of Yerushalayim? David HaMelech himself was king in Hebron for seven years before he came to Yerushalayim.

The conclusion: They are two separate but connected things. "Builder of Yerushalayim" simply means the building of the city and the Beit HaMikdash. "The kingdom of the house of David" means the monarchy that leads from there. One can request Yerushalayim without the kingdom of David (like the kingdom of Israel in Shomron), therefore one must specifically mention the kingdom of the house of David.

Proof: In Shemoneh Esrei there are indeed **two separate blessings** – "Build Yerushalayim" and "The offspring of David Your servant" – which shows that they are two matters. But in Boneh Yerushalayim we also say "and the throne of David Your servant speedily establish within it" – we put it in

together. There were even versions that had only one blessing for both.

f) David and Shlomo did not establish the text, but the matter:

David and Shlomo, who established the third blessing, did not pray for the glory of the kingdom of the house of David – they prayed for success or eternity. From here we see that they did not establish the text, but the matter (the Ramban's answer). Until David's time one said simply "the Almighty should help and succeed," and later one added the kingdom of the house of David.

g) The original text of Boneh Yerushalayim in the time of the Beit HaMikdash:

In the name of the Ramban: In the time of David and Shlomo, when the Beit HaMikdash still stood, the text was not "Builder of Yerushalayim" (a request), but praise – a thanks that there is a Beit HaMikdash. Only after the destruction was it changed to a request.

Halacha 2 (continued): Text for Shabbat in the Third Blessing

The Rambam's Words:

On Shabbat one begins "Have mercy, Hashem our God" or "Console us," and concludes "Who consoles His people in the building of Yerushalayim" or "Builder of Yerushalayim." In the middle one says: "Our God and God of our fathers, be pleased and strengthen us, Hashem our God, in Your commandments and in the commandment of the seventh day, this great and holy day, for this day is great and holy before You to rest on it and be at ease on it in love according to the commandment of Your will."

Explanation:

On Shabbat one inserts in the middle of the third blessing a special request – "Be pleased and strengthen us" – regarding Shabbat rest.

Insights and Clarifications:

a) "VeHachalitzeinu" – a rare word:

"VeHachalitzeinu" means to calm, strengthen, feel good. It comes from the expression **"a life that strengthens the bones"** (= a life where the body works well, one is at one's best). Perhaps it means that one should have a neshamah yeteirah – **"Shabbat vayinafash"** – the body should work together with the soul, not just have good ideas but without energy.

[Digression: Shabbat at the end of the meal, when one bentsches after cholent, is specifically not a "life of strengthening bones" – we pray that we should have a neshamah yeteirah, "which has no eating, no drinking, no sighing" – we should not eat so much cholent.]

b) The Rambam's text vs. our text:

The Rambam's text begins "Our God and God of our fathers, be pleased and strengthen us" – we do not say "Our God and God of our fathers," we say directly "Be pleased and strengthen us." Also, the Rambam's text is shorter – our text is four times as long but says the same thing.

c) "And let there be no trouble or sorrow on our day of rest": Our text has a request "And let there be no trouble

or sorrow on our day of rest" – this is added in our text.

d) The Gemara's principle – "begins with consolation and ends with consolation":

One begins with consolation (or mercy) in "Be pleased and strengthen us," and ends with consolation. Our text fits with the Yerushalmi – we end "Blessed are You, Hashem, Who consoles Zion" instead of saying again "and console Yerushalayim."

Halacha 2 (continued): Additions – Ya'aleh VeYavo, Al HaNissim, Order of Mentions

The Rambam's Words:

One adds in the middle of the third blessing (Boneh Yerushalayim) Ya'aleh VeYavo on Yom Tov and Rosh Chodesh. On Chanukah and Purim one adds about the event – Al HaNissim – in Birkat HaAretz, as one adds in prayer. And Yom Tov and Rosh Chodesh that fall on Shabbat – one mentions Shabbat first and then Yom Tov. And if Rosh Chodesh Tevet falls on Shabbat (during Chanukah) – one mentions Al HaNissim in Birkat HaAretz, and then Retzeh, Ya'aleh VeYavo and Nachamenu.

Explanation:

On Yom Tov and Rosh Chodesh one inserts Ya'aleh VeYavo in the blessing of Boneh Yerushalayim. On Chanukah and Purim one inserts Al HaNissim in Birkat HaAretz. When there are multiple mentions, there is an order: Shabbat first, then Yom Tov/Rosh Chodesh, and Al HaNissim comes in Birkat HaAretz separately.

Insights and Clarifications:

a) Why does Ya'aleh VeYavo come specifically in the blessing of Boneh Yerushalayim?

Several answers:

1. **The blessing of Boneh Yerushalayim is the place of requests** – just as in Shemoneh Esrei, where requests come in the middle blessings. The blessing of Boneh Yerushalayim ends with "do not make us need and do not shame us" – it is a blessing with a request character. Ya'aleh VeYavo is also a request ("may our remembrance rise and come and arrive..."), therefore it belongs with requests.

2. **The content connection to Yerushalayim** – Ya'aleh VeYavo speaks of "remembrance of Mashiach son of David Your servant, and remembrance of Yerushalayim Your holy city, and remembrance of all Your people the house of Israel" – this has a direct connection with the kingdom of the house of David and Yerushalayim.

3. **It is similar to Retzeh in Shemoneh Esrei** – in prayer Ya'aleh VeYavo comes in Retzeh, which is also a "matter of service" – we request that the service return to Yerushalayim.

4. **Why not in the fourth blessing?** – Because the fourth blessing is only rabbinic – it is not the right place for such a mention.

b) Why does Al HaNissim come in Birkat HaAretz and not in Boneh Yerushalayim?

The fundamental difference: **Al HaNissim is thanksgiving** – we thank for miracles, therefore it must be attached to a text of thanksgiving. **Birkat HaAretz begins with "We thank You"** – it is literally a blessing of thanksgiving. Therefore Al HaNissim belongs there. This is parallel to prayer, where Al

HaNissim comes in Modim (thanksgiving), not in a request-blessing. **In contrast, Ya'aleh VeYavo is a request**, therefore it belongs with Boneh Yerushalayim which is the place of requests.

c) The connection between Shabbat and Yerushalayim:

Shabbat is a "sanctuary in time" – a holiness in time, parallel to Yerushalayim which is a holiness in place. This gives a deeper connection why Shabbat-mentions come in Boneh Yerushalayim.

d) Text of the blessing of Boneh Yerushalayim – mixture of versions:

Our siddur is "just mixed together" – the Gemara makes a distinction between versions: one can begin "Have mercy" or "Be pleased and strengthen us," and then continue. But in our siddurim it is put together. For Ya'aleh VeYavo we did take the text "Our God and God of our fathers," but for Retzeh it was said not to say "Our God and God of our fathers."

Halacha 2 (continued): Forgot and Did Not Mention – Laws of Forgetting Mentions

The Rambam's Words:

"If one forgot and did not mention the sanctity of the day on Shabbat or Yom Tov – if he remembered before saying the fourth blessing" – on Shabbat he says: **"Blessed is He who gave Sabbaths of rest to His people Israel as a sign and holy covenant."** On Yamim Tovim: **"Blessed is He who gave festivals to His people Israel for joy and gladness."** On Rosh Chodesh – **"Blessed is He who gave new months to His people Israel for remembrance"** – without a conclusion, and begins the fourth blessing. **"And if he did not remember until he began the fourth blessing – he completes it"** on Rosh Chodesh, **"and so on Chol HaMoed and on Chanukah and Purim"** – one does not need to repeat.

Explanation:

When one forgets to mention Shabbat/Yom Tov in Birkat HaMazon: If one remembers before the fourth blessing, one makes a special blessing. On Shabb

Explanation:

When one forgets to mention Shabbat/Yom Tov in Birkat HaMazon: If one remembers before the fourth blessing, one makes a special blessing. On Shabbat/Yom Tov – with a conclusion; on Rosh Chodesh – without a conclusion. If one has already begun the fourth blessing: On Shabbat/Yom Tov one must repeat; on Rosh Chodesh, Chol HaMoed, Chanukah, Purim – not.

Insights and Clarifications:

a) "As a sign and holy covenant" – Shabbat as a covenant:

The text "as a sign and holy covenant" on Shabbat is a strong source that **Shabbat itself is a holy covenant**. The expression "holy covenant" here refers to Shabbat, not to brit milah. This fits with "it is a sign" (Shemot 31:13). The expression "holy covenant" as we use it in everyday language (holy covenant = brit milah) is actually not the main meaning – the main source of "holy covenant" is Shabbat.

b) Why can one add a blessing on Shabbat/Yom Tov?

Usually one may not add blessings, but here one makes a special blessing when one has forgotten. The answer: It may be that **originally Shabbat came with an extra blessing** (like Kiddush), but the Sages combined it into Boneh Yerushalayim. If one forgot, one makes the original extra blessing.

c) Why Rosh Chodesh without a conclusion – the distinction between Shabbat/Yom Tov and Rosh Chodesh:

Why does Rosh Chodesh not have a conclusion like Shabbat/Yom Tov? **Shabbat and Yom Tov have an obligation of a meal** – one must eat. Therefore the Birkat HaMazon of Shabbat/Yom Tov has its own formulation with additions, and when one forgets, one makes a full blessing with a conclusion. **Rosh Chodesh does not have an obligation of a meal** – it is forbidden to fast (one may not fast), but not fasting and eating a meal are different things. One can eat a small amount, fruits – it is not a fixed meal. Therefore Rosh Chodesh does not have its own formulation of Birkat HaMazon, and the blessing is only without a conclusion.

d) The foundation: Shabbat has a "Shabbat Birkat HaMazon":

The main distinction: **Shabbat and Yom Tov have their own Birkat HaMazon** – the formulation that the Sages established says that every prayer/blessing of Shabbat must be with additions. Therefore, when one forgets, one must repeat (or make a special blessing). **Rosh Chodesh, Chol HaMoed, Chanukah, Purim** – it is not the case that today there is a different formulation of Birkat HaMazon, because there is no obligation of a meal. Therefore, if one forgot, one completes – one finishes and does not need to repeat.

e) Purim – a question on this foundation:

Purim has a **obligation of feasting and joy** – why is it in the same category as Rosh Chodesh? **The obligation of feasting and joy is perhaps not clearly an obligation of a meal with bread**, and therefore it is not enough to create its own formulation of Birkat HaMazon.

f) Dispute between Rambam and Raavad – until when can one go back:

The **Rambam** holds: Once one has begun the fourth blessing (HaTov VeHaMeitiv) – "Blessed are You" – he stops, he does not need to repeat from the beginning. The **Raavad** disagrees. The **Ramban** says that the Raavad made a mistake. The Ramban brings a proof: Someone who is accustomed to say Tachanun after prayer and forgot something in prayer – he cannot go back to Avodah (Retzeh), because Tachanun is already a new stage. So too: Although HaTov VeHaMeitiv is not from the Torah, it is part of bentching (habit), and once one has begun it, one cannot go back.

The **Raavad** would agree that when one has **completely** finished (after Yehi Ratzon or after all requests), one can no longer go back. But as long as one is still in the middle – even in the fourth blessing – one can still go back to **the beginning of Boneh Yerushalayim** (not to the beginning, but to the third blessing).

Halacha 3: The Fourth Blessing – HaTov VeHaMeitiv, Three Mentions of Kingship

The Rambam's Words:

The fourth blessing – HaTov VeHaMeitiv. One must say in it three mentions of kingship. The text includes "the King Who is good and does good to all," "King of the universe," and "He shall reign over us forever and ever."

Explanation:

In the fourth blessing one must mention kingship three times. This is a special enactment for the blessing.

Insights and Clarifications:

a) Why three mentions of kingship?

Several explanations:

1. **"Hashem was King, Hashem is King, Hashem will reign forever and ever"** – "was, is, and will be" – past, present, future. But this is not necessarily the meaning here.

2. **The simple answer (from Rishonim):** The first three blessings do not say kingship (except for the first blessing which says "our God, King of the universe"). The last two blessings (Birkat HaAretz and Boneh Yerushalayim) do not have kingship. Therefore in the fourth blessing one completes with three mentions of kingship – one for itself (for the fourth blessing itself) and two for those that are missing.

3. **"Not to equate earthly kingship with heavenly kingship"** – an important innovation (brought in Sefer Mishnah): In the blessing of Boneh Yerushalayim we speak of the kingdom of the house of David. One did not want to insert the kingdom of Heaven there, so as not to compare earthly kingship with heavenly kingship. Therefore all kingship-mentions were placed in the fourth blessing, where it is clear that we speak only of the kingdom of Heaven.

b) The moral lesson of three mentions of kingship:

In Birkat HaMazon one goes through a progression – first the Almighty is like a "good father who gives bread" (first blessing), then a "general who gives lands" (Birkat HaAretz), then a "builder of Yerushalayim" (third blessing), and in the fourth blessing **we give Him back kingship** – we recognize that He is the King of the universe. Kingship is a higher level. A Jew who has a true closeness to the Almighty must think: Now we do not have the kingdom of the house of David, but the Almighty is our King. He remains King even in exile.

Halacha 3 (continued): Additions in the Fourth Blessing – Blessing for the Host, House of Mourning, House of Grooms

The Rambam's Words:

"Praise of the guest for the host" – one adds in the fourth blessing a blessing for the host. The Rambam gives a suggested text, but **according to the Rambam one can make up one's own texts**, because **for this there is no concept of a formulation that the Sages established.**

In a house of mourning – one adds in the fourth blessing a special text: **"The living King Who is good and does good, God of truth, true Judge, Who judges with righteousness, Who says to His world 'enough,' Who rules in His world to do as He wills, for we are His servants and His people, and for everything we are obligated to thank Him and bless Him,"** and one adds **"May the Merciful One console these mourners."**

In a house of grooms – one blesses the blessings of grooms after Birkat HaMazon.

Explanation:

The fourth blessing is the place where one adds special additions according to the situation – at a host's home, at a mourner's home, at a groom's home.

Insights and Clarifications:

a) Blessing for the host – no fixed text:

The Rambam gives a suggested text, but he understands from the Gemara that **one is not obligated in a fixed text**. The proof: In the Gemara R' Yochanan says one text, and R' Yehudah (or R' Yosef) "adds words" – one may add. The Rambam understands this to mean that **it does not mean one must say the text, but one can add one's own text**. Therefore there is no formulation that the Sages established for this. One does not need a fixed blessing, but one can and should say compliments and blessings for the host.

b) Text in a house of mourning – justification of the judgment in bentching:

The text of a house of mourning is explained with a deep meaning:

- **"The living King"** – the Almighty still lives, even when that person has passed away.

- **"God of truth, true Judge, Who judges with righteousness"** – it is a justification of the judgment, the Almighty is righteous.

- **"Who rules in His world to do as He wills"** – not that the Almighty had to do it, He did it because He wanted to, He is righteous, He has the ability.

- **"For we are His servants and His people"** – He remains God in our lives, we are His servants.

- **"And for everything we are obligated to thank Him and bless Him"** – in every situation there is a place to give thanks. This is the foundation of **"a person is obligated to bless on the bad just as he blesses on the good"** – one must give thanks even when it is difficult.

c) The reason for the fourth blessing is illuminated through the house of mourning:

The text of the house of mourning fits very well with the reason for the fourth blessing in general: **to bring out gratitude even when it is difficult**. This is the essence of "HaTov VeHaMeitiv" – to recognize God's goodness in all situations. The text is brought in Tosafot Rid, in Ashkenazic customs, and also in the Tur.

Halacha 3 (continued): Blessings of Grooms After Birkat HaMazon

The Rambam's Words:

"And in a house of grooms one blesses the blessings of grooms after these four blessings at every meal that they eat there." The Rambam says **one** blessing of grooms (not seven). **"And when does one bless these blessings? And who blesses them? Not slaves and not minors."** **"If it was a widower who married a widow – one blesses it on the first day only. And if it was a bachelor who married a widow, or a widower who married a virgin – this blessing is done all seven days of the feast."** **"This blessing that is added in a house of**

grooms is the last blessing of the seven blessings of marriage." **"When does this apply? When the diners were those who stood at the marriage blessing and heard the blessings. But if there were other diners who did not hear the marriage blessing at the time of marriage – one blesses for them after Birkat HaMazon seven blessings as one blesses at the time of marriage."** **"And there must be ten for the blessings of grooms, and the grooms are part of the count."**

Explanation:

The blessings of grooms are an addition to Birkat HaMazon in a house of grooms. For a widower with a widow – only one day; for a bachelor with a widow or a widower with a virgin – all seven days. When the ten have already heard the seven blessings at the chuppah, one says only one blessing (the last of the seven). When there are new people (new faces) who have not heard, one says all seven blessings. One needs ten people, and the groom counts with them.

Insights and Clarifications:

a) The blessings of grooms are an addition to Birkat HaMazon, not a separate law:

The Rambam places the laws of the blessings of grooms here in Hilchot Berachot (not only in Hilchot Ishut) because it is connected to Birkat HaMazon – it is an addition to the four blessings. The actual laws of the seven blessings of marriage are in Hilchot Ishut, but the Rambam mentions it here because it is part of the order of Birkat HaMazon.

b) "Not slaves and not minors" – a qualification specific to the blessings of grooms:

Until now the Rambam has not said that slaves and minors cannot bless in Birkat HaMazon. Here perhaps there is a matter of **honor of the community** – for the blessings of grooms, which is a public blessing with ten people, there is a special qualification.

c) The source of "new faces":

When the ten have already heard the blessings at the chuppah, one says only one blessing (the last one). Only when **new people** come who have not yet heard, one says all seven. All seven days one must have new faces – those who already heard at the chuppah cannot do it again.

d) "House of grooms" – the groom's tent:

"House of grooms" usually means the tent that the groom set up in his father-in-law's house to make the meal there.

e) The groom is part of the count:

The groom counts as one of the ten. One does not need to have ten besides him.

f) Birkat HaMazon has become an "occasion for prayer":

Birkat HaMazon has developed to be more than just thanks for food – it has become **another occasion for prayer**. Normally one would think that all additions (Ya'aleh VeYavo, Al HaNissim, seven blessings) belong in prayer (Shemoneh Esrei). But once Boneh Yerushalayim and other matters were added, Birkat HaMazon became a platform for all kinds of additions. Additionally: **Birkat HaMazon is more than prayer from the Torah** – it has a source from the Torah, and in certain respects it is even stronger than prayer. Therefore it is a suitable place for such additions.

Versions of Birkat HaMazon – Shorter Versions

Insights:

a) The long versions in siddurim were added later:

The versions found in the siddurim were added much later – "the printer wrote this," meaning that later generations added. The Rishonim had much shorter versions. Gedolei Yisrael have already instructed to make shorter versions.

[Digression: The Chazon Ish's practice – eating without a blessing:

The Chazon Ish would often eat without a blessing, because he held that he did not have the strength to have proper intention (holiness) in the blessing, and he did not want to say a blessing without intention. This shows tremendous seriousness. One must eat – there is no question. A first blessing is rabbinic, and when one cannot, one cannot. But Birkat HaMazon from the Torah he apparently tried to make – perhaps he said something like "Blessed is the Merciful One for this bread" (a short blessing without God's name and kingship), perhaps he was afraid of God's name and kingship without intention. The prohibition of eating without a blessing (as if stealing from the Holy One Blessed be He) is when one can say a blessing – when one cannot, it is a different reality.]

Blessings in Thought – The Rema's Position

Insights:

a) The Rema: One fulfills after the fact with blessings in thought:

The Rema says that one fulfills after the fact with blessings in thought (without saying them out loud). The Shulchan Aruch (Siman 110) says it explicitly. Perhaps the Chazon Ish indeed said it in thought.

b) "Intended in his heart" – thinking in words vs. concepts:

When the Rema says "intended in his heart," he speaks specifically to people who think in letters/words – such a person thinks "Hashem, Who nourishes, the King" – he formulates the blessing in his head. But other people think in concepts or feelings – when one tells them "thank the Almighty," they think of the feeling of "thankfulness," not of the words "Blessed are You, Hashem." This is also a kind of "intending in his heart" – a feeling of gratitude.

c) Is a "feeling" enough?

If a person has a feeling of "wow, thank you" or "thankfulness" – apparently not, because one must have God's name and kingship (mention the name of the Holy One Blessed be He). But the very feeling of gratitude is not to be dismissed – it is a kind of intention in his heart.

A Drunk Person and Birkat HaMazon – Purim

Insights:

a) A drunk person may bentsh Birkat HaMazon:

This is a clear law without doubt. For prayer the Rambam said that a drunk person may not pray, but for Birkat HaMazon he is permitted.

b) Purim and a drunk person:

Purim has an obligation of feasting and joy, but "feasting and joy" does not necessarily go with bread – one can fulfill feasting without bread. Apparently it comes out that a drunk person does not need to repeat Birkat HaMazon (because Purim does not have an obligation of a meal with bread). The Rema says that one can add a calculation for Purim, but he did not speak specifically about a drunk person.

c) The Zohar has a long beautiful discussion of why a drunk person may bentsh – specifically why he may bentsh on wine.

[Digression: Birkat HaMazon is like an entire Shemoneh Esrei – it has request, praise, almost everything. If one is drunk one can make a long sermon at Birkat HaMazon.]

Forgot to Bentsh – One Repeats as Long as the Food Has Not Been Digested

The Rambam's Words:

If he remembered before the food is digested in his intestines – he repeats and blesses. "Did I bless or did I not bless" – he repeats and blesses, because it is still not yet digested in his intestines, because at that time he did not feel hunger.

Explanation:

Whoever forgot to bentsh – if he remembers before the food is digested in the stomach – he must repeat and bentsh. Even when he is in doubt whether he bentshed or not – he repeats and blesses, because Birkat HaMazon is from the Torah.

Insights and Clarifications:

a) "Eaten twice":

The food is eaten twice: Once in the mouth (with teeth), and again in the stomach (the digestive system, "also there are teeth inside"). The measure of the time for digestion is until the stomach finishes "eating."

b) R' Mani – in doubt:

The Rambam brings the law of R' Mani – not only whoever forgot, but even whoever does not know and is in doubt ("did I bless or did I not bless") – he repeats and blesses. The sign that it is not yet digested is that he has not felt hunger – as long as one is still satisfied, one is obligated to bentsh.

c) Principle: One is obligated to bentsh as long as one is satisfied. But when the food is already digested – it is finished, one can no longer bentsh.

[Digression: "Thank the Creator" – Simple Jewish Gratitude]

When a person eats something good and he says "Oh, thank the Creator" – it is clear that it is a good thing. He burns with love for the Almighty. He is a simple Jew who mentions the Almighty all the time. "Thank" speaks in Yiddish – he says thank you.

"Well done" to the Almighty is a problem because the Almighty does not need strength – but it has become a borrowed term (a metaphorical expression) for "thank you."

Why Chazal made the text of blessings: When one speaks to the Almighty, one must remember that He is not your friend – not informal language. Therefore Chazal

established a text of blessings – because without it people would say "thank you, Hashem" or "thank the Creator." The text gives a proper, dignified form for gratitude.

Thus far the laws of Birkat HaMazon, Chapter 2.

Full Transcript

Laws of Blessings Chapter 2 – The Order of Birkat HaMazon

Law 1: The Four Blessings of Birkat HaMazon

Speaker 1:

Rabbosai, we are learning Hilchos Berachos in Sefer Ahava of the Rambam, and we're holding at Birkat HaMazon, chapter 2, the second chapter. We're going to learn here the nusach (text) of Birkat HaMazon, the order in which we bentsh (recite Grace After Meals).

Alright, this is the main point. The Rambam says... I had intended to say it briefly, because it's a continuation of the first chapter, where we learned that from the Torah there is only one thing, this is from the Torah, yes? The mitzvah of "v'achalta v'savata u'verachta" (and you shall eat and be satisfied and bless), regarding this he seemingly begins with this. This is the point. Yes.

So, the Rambam says, law 1, the Rambam says: **"The order of Birkat HaMazon is as follows"**. What is the order of Birkat HaMazon? What does one bentsh? The Rambam tells us here, there are four blessings. Didn't he say there are four blessings? No, he mentioned it, because he spoke about saying Amen at the third one, because it's only original, but it's a bit backwards.

He says like this, there are four blessings. **"The first is Birkat HaZan"** (the blessing of nourishment), the obvious one, the blessing for the fact that the Almighty has fed us, nourished us. Here come additional interesting blessings, which we'll see later why they were added to Birkat HaMazon. **"Birkat HaAretz"** (the blessing of the Land), a blessing to thank the Almighty for Eretz Yisrael. **"Boneh Yerushalayim"** (Builder of Jerusalem), a blessing, or a prayer, for Jerusalem. Specifically, he says that the first gift is Eretz Yisrael, the more important one than that is Jerusalem. And the fourth blessing is **"HaTov v'HaMeitiv"** (Who is good and does good), thanking the Almighty for miracles, which the Rambam is now going to say who instituted what.

Who Instituted the Blessings

The Rambam says, **"The first blessing, Moshe Rabbeinu instituted it"**. When Moshe Rabbeinu said "v'achalta v'savata u'verachta es Hashem Elokecha," he said one should bentsh. I don't know if he means to say that Moshe made the nusach. I don't believe the Rambam would say that Moshe Rabbeinu made the nusach. But the takanas haberachah (institution of the blessing), that "v'achalta v'savata u'verachta," or perhaps the manner... He doesn't say that the Almighty commanded us "v'achalta v'savata" is a mitzvah. "Moshe Rabbeinu tikein" (instituted) perhaps means yes, perhaps the order that one should...

Speaker 2:

No, but you're right that you said he doesn't mean the nusach. He means this, as the Rambam says, I mean the Rambam doesn't say, but Chazal don't mean the nusach, because the nusach he said that the Anshei Knesses HaGedolah (Men of

the Great Assembly) made. Right, right, so it could be that "takanah" (institution) means... the manner how we bentsh, because the essence of bentshing he said the mitzvah "v'achalta," so, something a minute more. Just as with prayer he said it must be in a manner of thanksgiving and request for example, Moshe Rabbeinu already... The takanah is only how to say the nusach. Let's see.

Speaker 1:

No, ah, but it doesn't make sense, because if Moshe Rabbeinu means takanah doesn't make any sense, because the Almighty, I mean, it's a mitzvah from the Torah.

Speaker 2:

No, that's what I'm saying, if it's a takanah when he said "u'verachta es Hashem Elokecha," that the Almighty commanded, it became a mitzvah, Moshe Rabbeinu was the transmitter. We assume that takanah is that he instituted the manner how one should say it. Later the Anshei Knesses HaGedolah made the nusach.

Speaker 1:

No, I'm saying, by prayer we had an approach. By prayer we said that the essence of the mitzvah is to say it in a manner of thanksgiving and request, or to say praise, thanksgiving and request. That stood before the takanas Anshei Knesses HaGedolah. But how to do it, turned to Anshei Knesses HaGedolah. So we need to think in which part Moshe Rabbeinu instituted. Let's see, it will become clear later.

Speaker 2:

I don't see that it becomes clearer, not in this chapter at least. So it certainly doesn't mean the essence of the mitzvah of "v'achalta," right? Seemingly not. I mean, one could perhaps interpret it that way, but then it would be a chiddush (novelty), that here there is a language "Moshe Rabbeinu tikein," and it means essentially that here there is a blessing, a mitzvah.

Speaker 1:

Seemingly it makes more sense to say that he only said it just as he said that one should say Krias Shema. I would probably think that he did make the nusach, he did make the nusach, but it doesn't mean that the nusach is indispensable. It could be as you say, he made a nusach, and the Anshei Knesses HaGedolah changed the nusach according to the matter.

Speaker 2:

So what the Rambam said earlier that the nusach of all blessings and prayers the Anshei Knesses HaGedolah instituted, doesn't he mean Birkas HaMazon?

Speaker 1:

Perhaps the final nusach that we have. So Moshe Rabbeinu did something. He said that one should say Birkas HaMazon, and he said it with some nusach, but it's not necessarily that it doesn't stand in the Torah that nusach.

The Ramban's Position

Speaker 2:

Ah, that's very good. The Ramban says so. The Ramban in the Hasagah (critique) says that the language of Birkas HaMazon is not from the Torah, and the prophets instituted an organized nusach. Ah, he also doesn't say what Moshe Rabbeinu instituted. The Ramban is seemingly in disagreement with the Rambam, which the Rambam said, therefore I think it doesn't fit so well, because the Ramban said that this is the root of disagreeing with the Rambam. If I remember correctly, the Ramban also spoke about prayer.

Speaker 1:

No, I'm talking about Hallel. The dispute is about Hallel. The Rambam said that it can't be that Hallel is from the Torah, because Hallel doesn't appear in Tehillim. The Ramban says, what do you mean it can't be? It can be just as Moshe Rabbeinu said Birkas HaMazon, and just as he said other things that he mentions. What did he say? Krias Shema, prayer. It doesn't mean that Moshe Rabbeinu made the nusach, it means he said the idea. Later, and I mean one fulfills Hallel with a different nusach from the Torah. Dovid HaMelech made the nusach that we say.

But it appears from there that the Ramban doesn't hold that way. The Ramban understands that when one says "tikein" one means made the nusach. Because the Rambam's approach about Hallel doesn't suit him, where he said that it can't be that it's a mitzvah to say Hallel from the Torah. So, I don't know how one can understand. Do you understand? So here the Ramban's position is a bit difficult to understand what was the language of "tikein." Rather what, one must say that Moshe actually made the nusach. How can it be that we don't have the nusach?

When Did Moshe Rabbeinu Institute Birkas HaZan

Speaker 1:

Moshe instituted for them, for Israel, Birkas HaZan when the manna descended for them. But there's also what it says "v'achalta v'savata u'verachta." When the manna fell he said to the Jews, "Let us thank the Almighty." We don't have the language that he said. It was the Anshei Knesses HaGedolah who kind of reconstructed, just as Chazal did the thing "shachchu v'chazru v'yisudim" (they forgot and returned and established them). But in any case, "limdan Birkas HaZan" (he taught them Birkas HaZan) is more than just saying "v'achalta v'savata u'verachta." The simple meaning is, the Jews, the manna fell, and he taught the Jews to bench. Presumably he gave them some certain piece of nusach, or something he told them.

Speaker 2:

Seemingly, why can't it be that actually our nusach is from Moshe Rabbeinu?

Speaker 1:

I remember there's an interesting Beis Yosef that says... Ah, now you're going with the nusach that appears in our siddur. It could be quite a broad topic, and we'll see if the Rambam has the same nusach. I remember there's a dispute, I do remember this though, in the Beis Yosef, that in our nusach it says in the books after the first blessing "kakasuv 'poseiach es yadecha'" (as it is written "You open Your hand") or "ka'amur 'poseiach es yadecha'" (as it is said "You open Your hand"). The Beis Yosef asks a question, "ka'amur"? This is in Tehillim, which was after Moshe Rabbeinu. One can say "poseiach es yadecha," it's in Tehillim. So, there are those who answer that it could be

that it wasn't such a saying "poseiach es yadecha" before, and it wasn't a Tehillim with that first. But the simple meaning is nothing at all, because that piece Moshe didn't actually say. But how the Rambam learned I don't know.

Is There a Request in Birkas HaMazon?

Speaker 1:

It's an interesting thing, I'm thinking now, that in Birkas HaMazon one only thanks the Almighty the whole time, but there's also a small request for the future, because "yachzir avodaso limkomo" (may He restore the service to its place). One needs to look at the nusach. It could be, if I think about this, perhaps that was the takanah. Moshe had the takanah that it should always be both praise and request. Is there a request, as it says in Rambam Hilchos Tefillah. It could be that one needed in Birkas HaMazon that it should be in a manner of thanking and asking. One needs to know if that is...

Speaker 2:

I have a long nusach, I think the Rambam has a shorter nusach. One needs to look at the coming nusach. The Rambam does say "yachzir avodaso limkomo." It's when you go to a wealthy person and you say, "I hope you'll give me" – there's soon a campaign in yerachem Hashem – "I hope you'll give me fifty thousand dollars." What is that, is that a request or such? Do you really mean to say to the wealthy person, "I trust that you'll give me."

The Story from the Gur Aryeh

Speaker 1:

Okay, so it's very interesting. But it makes sense, because it's very beautiful the story that the Gur Aryeh tells here. First of all, Moshe Rabbeinu gave the Jews to eat manna, he made Birkas HaMazon. Very good. When Yehoshua gave the Jews Eretz Yisrael, he said, "We continue with the same way, b'shuv Hashem es shivas Tzion hayinu k'cholmim" (when Hashem returned the captivity of Zion we were like dreamers). Very good. This means that the forefathers made blessings with the Jews, one thanked the Almighty together with the Jews. Very good.

And third, the third blessing, **Dovid and Shlomo his son instituted**, is Boneh Yerushalayim. Boneh Yerushalayim is entering into Eretz Yisrael, and because... in Eretz Yisrael. It says that Dovid HaMelech took the Aron twenty attempts, and Yehoshua designated the place of the Mikdash in Jerusalem, right? Yehoshua designated the place of the Mikdash in Jerusalem. It says in the Midrash, the main place of the Mikdash was on the threshing floor the first time. It shows that already in the times of Dovid and Shlomo they built the Beis HaMikdash. There's a whole story there it says, and presumably Shlomo himself prayed for the Beis HaMikdash. And third they instituted Dovid and Shlomo his son. You have further that it's not simple that Dovid literally instituted it, because how does Shlomo come in? If Dovid is still king, Dovid is king. If Shlomo is king, Shlomo is king. What it means, I don't know, it could be such a Midrash. I think it's like it says "Anshei Knesses HaGedolah," "beis dino shel Shaul," or "beis dino shel Shem." It means that it's that period, it's from the spirit of those times. It's not so specific. It's more a Midrash.

The Comparison to "Al HaNissim"

Speaker 1:

Just as it's mentioned in the Rishonim, Ashkenaz, that "Al HaNissim" (for the miracles) was actually the yeshiva in

Neradea. Why? Because the Eretz Yisrael Jews saw that we don't have all these three festivals any existence, they said a praise to the Almighty that we have our own holidays. It doesn't necessarily mean that they remembered the miracles, rather the yeshiva in Neradea made the nusach "Al HaNissim" for praise. So it says in R' Yitzchak Eizik Tirna.

I'm saying a bit more. I'm saying just as for example one says that the thing is one of the foundations of Chassidus of the holy Baal Shem Tov HaKadosh. It could be that it's something that comes from a hundred years later, but it's all comes from Rebbe Elimelech. We bite from his teachings.

The Spirit of Dovid and Shlomo

Speaker 1:

So Dovid and Shlomo made Jerusalem the great thing, the building of the Beis HaMikdash, the kingdom of Beis Dovid, which is always together with Jerusalem. And the spirit of the matter, I want to say, if it's not exactly that Dovid and Shlomo made the nusach, the spirit that Dovid and Shlomo brought to the Jews, that they elevated the importance of Jerusalem, caused the blessing of "Boneh Yerushalayim." And the blessing of "HaTov v'HaMeitiv" the Sages of the Mishnah instituted.

HaTov v'HaMeitiv – The Slain of Beitar

Speaker 1:

When did the Sages of the Mishnah institute this? It says in the Gemara, there's also a holiday, **"that the slain of Beitar were not given for burial"**. After the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash, when they killed the Sages, many Sages of the Gemara lived in the city of Beitar. And Titus was... how was he? Later after Titus, Hadrian. What was his name? The murderer from Rome? Yes, yes, yes. Hadrian. And Beitar is Bar Kochba. Bar Kochba was the king in Beitar in the days of the counting. And when the slain of Beitar were killed, when they were troubled to bury them, it means it was already a bit easier, Hadrian they call him the king, but they say to me a favor and good, it's interesting.

Law 1 (Continued): The Blessing of HaTov v'HaMeitiv – Character and Meaning

The Rambam's Words

The fourth blessing, the blessing of "HaTov v'HaMeitiv," **the Sages of the Mishnah instituted it.**

When was this actually? It says in the Gemara, also in the years when Jerusalem wasn't built, but the slain of Beitar were given for burial. After the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash, when they killed the Sages, many Sages of the Gemara were in the city of Beitar. And who was there? Later after that, what was his name? The murderer of the Romans... Hadrian... By the way, the slain of Beitar were killed, and when they permitted them to be buried, it says it was already a bit easier. Hadrian they call him, the king. But one says "HaTov v'HaMeitiv."

The Exilic Character of HaTov v'HaMeitiv

It's very interesting, it's very exilic. The previous one, I mean Dovid, at least reads a piece of redemption. The fourth blessing is very such a pitiful blessing. It means, we were already killed unfortunately, but at least, they had a bit of mercy on the bodies. Then one also needs such a blessing, just as one makes a blessing on the bad just as one blesses on the good. Then one makes very truthfully. No, one rejoices on the part of salvation, but it's very in such a manner... very minimalist. One rejoices at least that the bodies didn't rot.

Boneh Yerushalayim Versus HaTov v'HaMeitiv

Boneh Yerushalayim one asks that one should have a major milestone. Let's think a bit broader. But I think, it's another story. Just as we say, it's a very beautiful story, because you remember for example, the three prayers the Rambam didn't bring. The Rambam brought that it's corresponding to sacrifices. It's also brought that Avraham, Yitzchak, Yaakov instituted this. I don't remember. Yaakov slept there at night, he struggled, he prayed Maariv.

The same thing, when a person bentches, Birkas HaMazon is even more history. He says, ah, first of all they had to eat, the Almighty gave to eat to the Jews, for the manna, they also had Eretz Yisrael from inheritance, and they also had Jerusalem from Dovid HaMelech. And because there's destruction, one asks Boneh Yerushalayim. There was presumably a different nusach that means Dovid, he didn't say Boneh Yerushalayim, he said a praise that there is a Beis HaMikdash. So says the Rambam in that place. After that HaTov v'HaMeitiv, I think I would have to think that today there actually isn't Jerusalem, but there are many good things.

The Individualistic Character of HaTov v'HaMeitiv

Very good. In HaTov v'HaMeitiv one asks for comfort and encouragement. In HaTov v'HaMeitiv one doesn't speak of a person who is in a kingdom, and there's a king, and it's really tremendous. One speaks of the Almighty nourishing and sustaining every broken person. It's also individualistic, one doesn't speak of Klal Yisrael, such a building of Jerusalem, such... The prayers are actually there. But the words in Jerusalem aren't on... are very strongly on us, just as... a general you mean to say. Yes.

The first two. "Who brought us out Hashem our God from the land of Egypt, and redeemed us from the house of bondage, for Your covenant that You sealed in our flesh, and for Your Torah that You taught us, and for Your statutes that You made known to us, and for life, grace and kindness that You granted us, and for the eating of food that You nourish and sustain us constantly every day and at every time and at every hour."

Ah, that's still in Racheim, excuse me. I got mixed up with... what's the nusach there. But also one asks for comfort, one asks for encouragement, and about one's own difficulties. But it's further general.

In this it fits with the slain of Beitar, that it's more like the "less of the evils." One asks for very few things, one asks for a bit of wisdom and encouragement. More thanksgiving, in other words, says that there are many good things. There are many good things. It's the whole day. Actually, we're not unlucky. As he says, the slain of Beitar is perhaps the greatest example. In practice, there are many things that go well for us, so also goes every... "He has bestowed upon us, He bestows upon us, He will bestow upon us forever." Yes, He will always give us. There are all kinds of good things. "Mercy, grace and kindness and compassion, success, blessing, salvation, comfort, sustenance and support." Yes, it's all such individualistic things. If you had a bit of a better day at home, you had a bit of joy in the house, you had a happy festive day, you're right, one doesn't go later, one adds it to prayers, one adds it to such a squeeze, and then it's certainly the place.

Supplications After Birkas HaMazon

Translation

Very interesting, the Rambam is going to say, there are supplications (tachanun) after Birkat HaMazon (Grace After Meals), yes? Okay, we'll still come to that. So, this is the Sages of the Mishnah (Chachmei HaMishnah), the Rambam calls it. **The Sages of the Mishnah enacted.** Because this was in the time of the Sages of the Mishnah indeed, the Tannaim. Rabbi Akiva, yes, yes.

Law 1 (Continued): The Law of Workers – Workers Who Eat at the Employer's Home

The Torah Was Given for All Jews

Just as we spoke in the Laws of Prayer, that the Torah was not given for refined Jews or for kollel students. The Torah was given for all Jews. And therefore there are solutions. Just as a person finds himself at the top of a tree, they made for him a special prayer. Also by Birkat HaMazon the same thing.

The Rambam's Words

Workers who eat from the employer's bread, workers who work for the employer, we must say not a contractor who works on his own terms, but literally a hired worker, an employed person, **and they ate his bread**, they make a meal to eat, **they do not bless beforehand**, they may not make a blessing beforehand.

This is very puzzling to me, because the blessing of HaMotzi Lechem (the blessing over bread) is just half a moment. Do you know how much half a moment of a Jew is worth?

Question: How Can One Not Make the Blessing of HaMotzi?

No, it's truly wondrous. The stingiest employer I cannot see that the moment when you take out the piece of bread from the plate and you make a blessing, that he should have a complaint with you. I heard an answer that today's employers are not particular about this. If it doesn't say so, let it be.

But I think it's a very serious matter. I take very seriously this thing that you just said, that this is a Jew, this is rabbinic law, yes, the final blessing is from the Torah, but this is rabbinic. The Rabbis did not enact for someone who is in the middle of working that he should make blessings. One can say that even though the blessing doesn't take long, but he needs to enter into a certain state of seriousness, perhaps think whether his hands are clean. You can eat, because the worker doesn't need to think about anything, he only remembers that afterward somewhere he will need to say two blessings only. Because the final blessing is from the Torah, they said that the blessing beforehand is only rabbinic.

Is This Law Relevant Today?

There are two things: we certainly don't conduct ourselves this way, I told you, we assume that employers are not particular. But there are two things: either we don't work seriously enough, or we are very... also the times have changed. A person, when he works twelve hours, it's not simple that he works sixty minutes an hour. He talks on the phone. A physical worker, a laborer that we're talking about here, no, he... and I think that times are different, we don't take blessings seriously enough. He makes a blessing, he takes in. No, but the truth is, that if you think into the... let's see further.

Two Blessings Only

Beforehand one doesn't make a blessing, **and after the meal one makes two blessings only.** One doesn't say all four, one only says HaZan and HaAretz, **so that the employer should not nullify him from his work.** So that

the employer should not nullify him from his work. But I think that our version is also a long version. It could be that the two blessings is also a bit longer than HaMotzi Lechem Min HaAretz. But... true.

What is the first? He says, **they enacted the first blessing**, they enacted **the blessing of HaZan.** **Second**, one does such a thing, basically the blessing of HaAretz begins with thanking for the Land of Israel, and it ends with "we thank You," but what is, and includes, and one ends, instead of ending, instead of making the blessing of HaAretz and afterward one still needs to make Boneh Yerushalayim (Builder of Jerusalem), they made it this way, essentially this is already Boneh Yerushalayim, but it's a good thing to mention Boneh Yerushalayim, so in the blessing of HaAretz you should mention Boneh Yerushalayim.

Discussion: How Does Boneh Yerushalayim Fit Into the Blessing of HaAretz?

Speaker 1: Includes, I said, one only needs to make the Jerusalem blessing, and that's it. I think that's not how Rashi explained it. I would explain that the simple meaning is, essentially the blessing of HaAretz and Boneh Yerushalayim are very similar. I think like we spoke earlier, for example you need to remember all the laws in blessings they go remember, they learned... Havineinu. What is Havineinu? Havineinu it says there, instead of making an extra "Blessed are You, Hashem" on each one of the twelve thirteen requests that one makes, one can put them all together in one blessing. But we see that it was always shortened, and often goes with the logic. But it must fit. One can, the content remains, but one puts it in extra blessings. It's nicer to make extra blessings, but if one doesn't have time, one puts it in one blessing.

One doesn't need to understand what Boneh Yerushalayim is. Boneh Yerushalayim is apparently something that is connected to the blessing of HaAretz. What did they say? That it goes along with it. It must be so, let's say once David and Solomon... let's say, when there was the kingdom of Judah and the kingdom of Israel, and a Jew makes a blessing on the land, the one who was a great devotee of David and Solomon, like all honest Jews. But should add, but when I say HaAretz I mean Jerusalem. No, this also looks something like, even if one is exempt, what would they say, who lacks, should you give a mention you mean to Jerusalem? No, no, I tell you, I would be a good devotee of the city when one is not exempt from Boneh Yerushalayim. No, but it could be that the reason why one mentions Boneh Yerushalayim at all is because here you say the blessing of HaAretz. Okay. You can say that Boneh Yerushalayim is somewhat a kind of condition in the blessing of HaAretz, like a clarification perhaps for the blessing of HaAretz.

Speaker 2: Two things, there are two things. One can do it in an inclusive way, how does one do kapparot (atonement ritual)? One can make each one separate kapparot, and one can make one big kapparot for everyone. If one doesn't have time, one makes one big one. If one has time, one makes separate ones.

When Workers Make Four Blessings

The "**and they were eating from their own only**", if the workers are not... it's not that the employer gives them a bit of permission... on the contrary, not they... that they make their own meal. No, no, no, I think you didn't learn the same law well. They work, they don't receive proper payment. They are

worker laborers, they only receive poor payment, a bit of food. **Or if the employer reclines with them**, the simple meaning is that he doesn't have permission... this means that the employer also needs to make Birkat HaMazon. Does this mean? Or perhaps it's because the employer is there with them, simple meaning that if the employer is not particular. Could be both. **Then they make properly...**

But I like the "**and they were eating from their own only**", the Sages say that such a wicked person should bench a long bentching. Ah, I knew that we learned the same law in the Laws of Prayer, that there is a distinction. I thought that there is such a thing for a poor worker. Ah, nothing happened, you don't need to work, you're already working. One can say something like this. We are no longer under this topic, we already work too much just like that.

Okay. Say here... **then they bless four blessings like all other people**, they make four blessings like every person. Very good. This is the point.

Moral of the Story: We Must Take Blessings More Seriously

This is very correct, and all these laws are not practiced by us, because we, we rush through the entire Birkat HaMazon, there's no great difference. God forbid. But we must learn from all these laws to take all these things much more seriously.

I think you need to associate with more honest, better Jews. I don't know any Jews who rush after bentching. One thanks the Almighty for the bread. People are accustomed to the version. I wanted to say that one must rush, because much has been added to the version, and it's repeated three times everything. Why should one say so long? In short, for one person it's just in a good mood, he wants to say everything three times. In any case... if you want to replace the version, they made a short version. If you want the short version, you can call me, I'll send you the version. I had great Torah scholars review it, but I don't take any responsibility for it.

Law 2: The Blessing of HaAretz – Text, Content, and Meaning

The Rambam's Laws of the Blessing of HaAretz

Speaker 1: In any case... one must add Rachamim (mercy). No, this is not with the paragraph of Rachamim. One sees immediately, the paragraph of Rachamim is much shorter. What there are versions in the siddurim, the printer wrote that, I don't mean the printer, I mean to say, much later. The Rishonim had much shorter versions.

Speaker 2: Yes, but... as long as you don't have a replacement, one cannot throw this out.

Speaker 1: I have a replacement, do you know what a replacement? If you made a shorter version, one can see. If you want a shorter version, one can call a sick, crazy person. I had great, great Torah scholars approve it. I don't take any responsibility. On this I don't take any responsibility. Keep saying what's written in the bentcher, nothing will happen.

Speaker 2: No, it will happen yes, because one becomes accustomed that bentching on Pesach, and one needs to say five hundred words.

Speaker 1: Your solution will remove all problems.

Speaker 2: A hope, a hope will remove all problems.

Speaker 1: Wow! We're lucky we have you. Thank you. I'll go make a new blessing in your name. Tell the truth.

Workers Who Need to Shorten Birkat HaMazon

Speaker 1: Anyway, you see when a person works, or when one works for another at least, one needs to shorten in Birkat HaMazon.

The Chazon Ish's Practice – Eating Without a Blessing

The holy Chazon Ish would often eat without a blessing, whoever knows the secret, he held that he didn't have the strength to have holiness, so he ate without a blessing. Only, but he knew a tremendous seriousness, he didn't think of such an option as saying a blessing when he is not concentrating.

Speaker 2: Yes.

Speaker 1: This is a thing. Eating has an imaginative power, eating gives strength. One must eat, there's no question, he must eat, when one is not... a blessing is rabbinic. When one cannot, one cannot.

Speaker 2: Okay, now give us the laws of blessing.

Speaker 1: But it's certain that he apparently tried to make the Torah blessing, like "Blessed is the Merciful One who gave this bread," he probably said something, perhaps not the blessing, the Name and Kingship, perhaps was afraid.

Speaker 2: Perhaps this is not only knowledge.

Speaker 1: No, the thing of as if robbing the Holy One Blessed Be He, is apparently a prohibition that it changes. Like he says, I may not go take, I'm not here. That this is when one can, when one cannot is a different chapter.

Speaker 2: Don't know.

Speaker 1: It could be a difficulty was the Name and Kingship. But to say thank you, thank you, thank you for the bread.

Speaker 2: This is not the story.

Speaker 1: I have by the way, who knows that saying thank you is easier? Sometimes, because when one says yasher koach (well done) it's a symbolic thing. It doesn't mean to say that you literally just now saved me from some slavery or whatever, no one would have been without you. This is indeed a level. It's saying the words, that's how it's ingrained. Yasher koach to the Creator for the bread that You gave me.

Blessings in Thought – The Rama's Position

Speaker 2: Perhaps in the name is enough?

Speaker 1: Very good. Perhaps in thought is enough. I learned earlier, true, I said that the Rama says that one fulfills one's obligation after the fact with blessings in thought. The Shulchan Aruch says explicitly in chapter 110, but perhaps he did say in thought in general.

Speaker 2: We say he didn't say.

Speaker 1: I don't know.

Speaker 2: Okay, this is not relevant to me why he didn't say.

Speaker 1: It's not relevant to me why, but one must indeed say the words of the blessings. It's a question. According to the Rama, when he estimated whether he has the strength to say or not, and he thought the word "blessing," he already fulfilled his obligation. He thought about blessing. I wanted to thank the Almighty, and I sought how I have the strength to do this.

Discussion: Thinking in Words Versus Thinking in Concepts

Speaker 2: Okay, we will learn certain laws of how to think.

Speaker 1: The simple meaning of this is that the Rama says that one can fulfill one's obligation in the mind, he's speaking specifically to people who think in letters. Because a person

who thinks in concepts or in pictures, and one tells him "thank the Almighty," he would think, "wow, I'm so thankful." He would think of the word "thankful," he wouldn't think of "Hashem, HaZan, the King." When the Rama says "he concentrated in his heart," he's speaking of one who thinks in words. He needs to think, not the one who... other people have another way of thinking. When one tells them "think of a blessing," they will think more of the concept, of thanking, yasher koach to the Creator.

Speaker 2: One must be precise. I'm not sure. You say, what you say, you think of a concept, but I heard how you described it, you think in other words. You say you think without words.

Speaker 1: No, but I don't think in the words, I think like, ah, wow, I now have a feeling of thankfulness.

Speaker 2: You just said a whole sentence, true?

Speaker 1: Yes, no, I didn't say. A feeling of being thankful. Feeling the feeling.

Speaker 2: That's basically concentrating in his heart. If a person has this kind of feeling of concentrating in his heart of "wow, yasher koach" or "thankfulness," it's not to ask the Rama. He fulfilled his obligation according to the Rama.

Speaker 1: Apparently not, because one needs to have Name and Kingship.

Speaker 2: But when the Rama says "he concentrated in his heart," he means yes that a person thinks.

Speaker 1: Another thing is the last chapter, the next chapter.

Speaker 2: Yes, this is the blessing of HaAretz.

Speaker 1: There the Rama doesn't say much about... the blessing of HaZan, which this is confirmed that this is a law. This is written, this is all in the Gemara. On the blessing there are laws. On the previous blessing there are no laws written in the Gemara, so we don't know.

Law 3: The Blessing of HaAretz – Text and Content

Speaker 2: Okay. Yes.

Speaker 1: The Rambam says, **the blessing of HaAretz one needs to say thanksgiving at its beginning and at its end.** The blessing of HaAretz one needs to thank for the land at its beginning and at its end, and the conclusion of the blessing is **"for the land and for the food"**. It's indeed called the blessing of HaAretz, but it mentions food again. Indeed interesting, we already said "for the food." The reason we gathered, why we gathered here, is for the food. It's Birkat HaMazon (Grace After Meals). Apparently.

The blessing of HaAretz is... the land itself is good and spacious that has food. "For the land and for the food" one can say like "for the land and for its food." This is the translation, yes.

The Great Question: What Does the Blessing of HaAretz Mean Outside the Land?

It's very difficult when someone sits outside the Land and he doesn't have a land, what comes in the blessing of HaAretz? Let's say he says the blessing of HaAretz that he hopes that it will be one day, but the land doesn't produce any food. I don't understand what one thinks when one says the blessing of HaAretz in America. I have no idea what the people saw.

I saw that the Zohar asks my question, and the Zohar says that we mean to say the supernal land, the Shechinah (Divine Presence). Okay, no problem. But the simple meaning was not answered. One must think well.

I once saw a Jew holding a sign with an Israeli flag like this with an axe, and he's at a protest, and he needs to sit on the side somewhere to eat and make Birkat HaMazon, and he says "a desirable, good and spacious land"... it's a bit confusing what's going on here. That Jew has more problems than the question itself.

"A Desirable, Good and Spacious Land" – An Obligation

Speaker 2: Okay, in any case one should not say... another Rambam.

Speaker 1: In any case if one does not say "a desirable, good and spacious land" in the blessing of HaAretz, one has not fulfilled one's obligation. One must mention that this is a desirable, good and spacious land. A wondrous thing, it should be a different version. And probably, so the Raavad doesn't say explicitly, but the Radbaz on the side and other Rishonim it's written explicitly, but this doesn't mean "one has not fulfilled," this means to say that we have seen a few such things. All the "one has not fulfilled" things that say the blessing of the Torah, "one has not fulfilled" to say "a desirable, good and spacious land," it's not an obligation to say.

Speaker 2: No, it's not an obligation to say "a desirable, good and spacious land," that's what it means.

Speaker 1: But this can mean, "one has not fulfilled" specifically is when we say in the manner that the Sages told us.

Speaker 2: Okay, can you...

Speaker 1: But it's indeed puzzling, why shouldn't one say? That a number when it's in exile one should at least not say "good and spacious"?

Translation

I mean to say the opposite, the opposite, the opposite. In exile (galus), one must first say all these things, one must not forget the Eretz Yisrael that we had. One should not say "Eretz Ha'elyonah" (the superior land), no, certainly not "Eretz Ha'elyonah". That "Eretz tovah u'rechavah" (good and spacious land) from which one was exiled, one will rectify the blessing. But the land that is mentioned here, which one longs for, is "Eretz chemdah tovah u'rechavah" (desirable, good and spacious land).

Speaker 2: Okay.

Speaker 1: But I mean to say that when I want to say "lo yatza" (did not fulfill the obligation), I mean to say that if one did not do so, it doesn't mean one must bentch (recite Birkas Hamazon) again. One can thank Him for the "Eretz chemdah tovah u'rechavah".

Bris and Torah in Birkas Ha'aretz

Another thing that must be added: **"One must mention in it bris and Torah."** And one must mention that the Almighty has a bris (covenant) with the Jews, and it means bris milah (circumcision), as it appears in other places, seemingly. One must thank the Almighty for bris milah, an amazing thing. One must mention basically all the things that make Jews, which are Jewish national symbols, yes, things with which Jews are distinguished from all nations. They have their land, they even have their own body, they have bris milah. He adds this, and bris must be mentioned before Torah.

First the Almighty gave bris, because bris He already gave at the time, says the Ra'avad, ah, and it's not earlier in the time of

Avraham.

Thirteen Brisos by Bris Milah

In Parshas Lech Lecha the word bris appears thirteen times. **"Torah, as if thirteen brisos were made upon it,"** says the Ra'avad, thirteen times that the Almighty with the Jews wrote the tablets of bris. Not thirteen times, by the way, the language appears thirteen times, and at the time when the Almighty made the bris for the Torah at the end of Sefer Devarim, the word bris appears thirteen times. Because after Matan Torah there was a bris, yes, it appears at the end of Mishpatim, but the phrase "thirteen brisos" is a... I mean that it's a... that the Torah meant thirteen brisos.

It's very interesting, and the thing is... today it's called... what was it called? Today's biblical scholarship has a...

Digression: "Millas Manchah" – Leitwort in Torah

Let me finish, the Ramban brings three times the reason spoke bris, besides the bris that was made with Yitzchak and sold, to Avraham a bris was made. Interesting, "nichresu lo" (were cut for him), a very interesting language, not "she'nichtav lo" (that was written for him).

Speaker 2: Yes, right.

Speaker 1: So, in other words, I would want to say this, every time it appears in the Torah that the Torah makes a bris... say, this is what I would want to explain, this is a method today in today's biblical scholarship it's called, I don't remember what it's called, millas manchah I think, a leitwort, a word that leads. You can see in certain portions in the Torah that the Torah keeps repeating a certain word, for example in the portion of bris milah, and it also appears in another midrash, I remember, by Parshas Chukas it says "seven kohanim" and seven times the word "kohen" appears, and laws are derived from this. But there is such a thing that when a certain word appears thirteen times in a certain portion, there must be an intention. It's a stylistic, it's a... when you write something, like someone who writes a beautiful poem, and he writes the person's name a hundred times.

Like for example the word "tov" (good) accompanies very much the first portion in the Torah. Just like it says "vayar ki tov vayar ki tov" (and He saw that it was good and He saw that it was good).

Speaker 2: It appears in the Zohar, right, the Zohar counts, yes, there are those who say that by the menorah a certain... seven times "neiros" (lamps) appears, there's a calculation.

Speaker 1: Yes, this didn't come out of this now.

But it says thirty-six brisos, the simple meaning is that the Torah wants to hint to us something there. It wants to hint that bris is important times thirteen, something like that. Shmuel said that "filled for him thirteen," he had to stand seven times for the eighth day.

Speaker 2: Yes, look here, you'll see thirteen times, it appears perhaps even more times, one must know how...

Speaker 1: No, sorry, he begins before the flood.

"The entire Torah was made upon three brisos," it's very interesting, because one certainly doesn't say that bris is more important than Torah.

Speaker 2: Yes, in a way, because bris milah we are also only obligated because it appears in the Torah.

Speaker 1: Logically, but in a certain sense bris milah has importance before the Torah, it's thirteen times important,

and the entire Torah is only three times important. It's a midrash, it has some meaning about something.

Birkas Ha'aretz is a Blessing on Jewishness

But about this I thought that one puts it into land, the simple meaning is that we're talking here about things with which Jews are distinguished. What does it mean that I'm a Jew? I have a land? I have a different body? Yes, I have a seal, a strong symbol.

Speaker 2: Very good.

Speaker 1: And the Torah. Perhaps this is truly... and from this perspective bris is even earlier.

Perhaps this is truly a bit of an answer to what I asked, what does one do in chutz la'aretz (outside the Land). The simple meaning is that Birkas Ha'aretz is not just a blessing, it's more a blessing on Jewishness. I thank You for Eretz Yisrael. It's almost like Birkas HaTorah. It's very interesting.

Birkas Ha'aretz – Bris and Torah in Chutz La'aretz

Speaker 1:

It's a midrash, it has some meaning.

No, about this I thought that one puts it into land, the simple meaning is that we're talking here about things with which Jews are distinguished. What does it mean that I'm a Jew? I have a land, I have a different body, yes, a seal, a strong symbol. Very good. And the Torah. From this perspective bris is even earlier. Perhaps this is indeed a bit of an answer to what I asked, what does one do in chutz la'aretz? The simple meaning is, Birkas Ha'aretz is not just a blessing, but a blessing on Jewishness. I belong to Eretz Yisrael. Almost like Birkas HaTorah, very interesting. Almost like Birkas HaTorah, modeh ani lefanecha Hashem Elokaï shessamta chelki (I thank You before You, Hashem my God, that You placed my portion)...

Torah, and not just Torah, but more the broader context, the bris, the Eretz Yisrael. Very good. It can indeed also be that they established it to mention in it, that when one doesn't have land, one at least has bris and Torah. This makes you a Jew, what keeps you a Jew. This is a law from chutz la'aretz, it indeed appears in the Talmud Bavli. Did they put it in in chutz la'aretz? I don't know. It doesn't appear in the Yerushalmi? No, it also appears in the Yerushalmi, I'm not saying. Very good.

Says the Rambam, the third blessing, the third blessing... but he brings, look, but it's very important, and the Yerushalmi indeed brings, look, he brings here a Yerushalmi, it appears in the Yerushalmi, Rabbi Yosi bar Rabbi Bun said, why must one juxtapose Torah to Birkas Ha'aretz? So that no one should say, God forbid, any Zionism, meaning that land without Torah is worth something. Like the Zohar, "yordei yam ba'aniyos" (those who go down to the sea in ships), why? Not Zionism, why? "Ba'u yoshvei nechalim" (come dwellers of streams). The Torah is a condition in the land. If one has land without Torah, it transforms into caves. It's very important that Birkas Ha'aretz doesn't mean just that we should have a land, it means that we should have a land that is a Jewish land, that goes with the Torah, that goes with the bris. That's the meaning. Very good, simple meaning. It appears in the Yerushalmi explicitly. Yes, very good.

Although usually in the Bavli these kinds of things appear. But the Yerushalmi already says it the exact way. That means, he

brings a verse, "yordei hayam ba'aniyos... ba'u yoshvei nechalim". Hebrew translation.

Okay, very good.

Law 4: The Third Blessing – Boneh Yerushalayim

The Rambam's Words

Speaker 1:

The third blessing, the third blessing one opens with "rachem Hashem Elokeinu" (have mercy, Hashem our God), we've already said food and land, now we say the blessing of Yerushalayim. We've already asked with rachem, the Almighty should have mercy al Yisrael amecha v'al Yerushalayim irecha (on Yisrael Your people and on Yerushalayim Your city) etc. Or it can be either rachamanus (mercy) or nachameinu (console us). One says that rachamanus is like for a trouble, and nachameinu is consolation, comforting after a trouble. I don't know why it couldn't be both. Also the ending will be the same. Either boneh Yerushalayim (Builder of Yerushalayim), or menachem amo b'vinyan Yerushalayim (Consoler of His people in the building of Yerushalayim).

Rachem vs. Nachem – Two Versions

Speaker 1:

It's very interesting. In the Gemara two options appear, it seems, both things are brought. The simple understanding is implied in the Gemara that it's Shabbos. On Shabbos one should say instead of rachamanus, nechamah (consolation), because Shabbos is perhaps more a time of nechamah. So it appears here a bit in the... It's very interesting. Perhaps this is what he means here to say, one can say this, automatically Shabbos is the simple meaning this way.

But rachem Hashem Elokeinu al Yisrael amecha v'al Yerushalayim irecha means this, that Yisrael amecha have many problems, one needs to have mercy on them. Yerushalayim irecha has many problems, one needs to have mercy on them. Nachameinu Hashem Elokeinu b'Yerushalayim irecha is very something different. He says, our trouble is that we don't have Yerushalayim, comfort us by giving us Yerushalayim. It's the same thing. U'rachem v'nachem amo b'vinyan Yerushalayim. It's much more specific. Rachem na Hashem Elokeinu al Yisrael amecha, Jews need many salvations, good livelihood, matches, healings, salvations, and Yerushalayim is in its destruction, and Jews should come together with Yerushalayim.

I'm saying, nachameinu shows that it must go together. Yisrael amecha and Yerushalayim irecha should come together.

Speaker 2:

Yes.

Speaker 1:

But what is indeed the difference? Rachem and nachem sounds the same to me.

The end result is the same.

The first time it was explained in that siddur.

No, no, there are two versions, rachem or nachem.

Malchus Beis David – Lo Yatza Yedei Chovaso

Speaker 1:

Another law: **Anyone who does not mention malchus Beis David (the kingdom of the House of David) in**

this blessing, has not fulfilled his obligation. Because the matter of Yerushalayim is malchus Beis David.

This is what the Rambam says here. Rashi in Berachos says, **there is no complete consolation except with the return of malchus Beis David.**

Fine, good. This is another such anti-Zionist thing. It's interesting, why doesn't he say that the word Yerushalayim, just Yerushalayim comes with a kingdom, and the true kingdom is perhaps not what... even with building. He says that it's a law in rachem or in nachem. The blessing on Jews means both things, means giving Yerushalayim and means giving malchus Beis David. Without malchus Beis David it's not complete. If one doesn't have malchus Beis David, then one shouldn't be so satisfied, one still needs mercy, one still needs consolation. That's the point.

Discussion: Why Specifically Malchus Beis David?

Speaker 2:

What is malchus Beis David? That's another question, but something a grandchild of David HaMelech. Something a tremendous Gemara is there, "asidah malchus Beis David lachzor" (the kingdom of the House of David is destined to return). What's the problem? What's the Rambam's point? That there must be a land, and one must have a good kingdom. Well, if David HaMelech was indeed a good kingdom, let it be a grandchild of David, let it be a grandchild of Shaul. Even through David his father. Why does it say in the Rambam "malchus Beis David"? It can be such an aseh me'avah aseh miyirah (positive commandment from love, positive commandment from fear).

Speaker 1:

Yes. So in any case it must be. This is interesting, because the third blessing David and Shlomo established, they didn't pray for the glory of malchus Beis David. They prayed for success, or for the eternity of malchus Beis David. So from here we see that the text they didn't establish, they only established the matter.

Very good. It must be, this is the Ramban's answer in those places. He says it must be, until my David one said "the Almighty should help and the Almighty should succeed," so he says. Very good. Very good.

Investigation: Yerushalayim and Malchus Beis David – One Thing or Two?

Speaker 1:

Okay. But it's the same idea, what was by building one built a building. One can still say "boneh Yerushalayim Hashem" (Hashem builds Yerushalayim). What I said, I think are Beis David and Yerushalayim two synonyms or two things? What happens, God forbid, Yerushalayim won't work out, he builds malchus Beis David in Tiberias. Are we good? Because the main thing is indeed... No, because for us it's es lishuascha malchus Beis David (Your salvation, the kingdom of the House of David), or does malchus Beis David mean the kingdom of David in Yerushalayim? David HaMelech himself was king in Chevron before he was in Yerushalayim. Seven years, then. It's not two different things, Yerushalayim is indeed further together. What's the problem?

I'm just saying, I'm asking a person's question. Okay, you know what, Creator, if You give me Yerushalayim, we'll have es lishuascha malchus Beis David, should we pray for it or not? It's a contradiction. Malchus Beis David is a kingdom of

Yerushalayim. I'll tell you another thought, that the kings of Yehudah subjugated Yerushalayim, and we had a kingdom on the other side of Eretz Yisrael, in Shomron. And when one says "malchus boneh Yerushalayim" (kingdom builds Yerushalayim), does one mean boneh malchus Beis David? No, no, no, one doesn't mean. This is boneh Yerushalayim means simply building, that the city, that the Beis HaMikdash. One can even say... Yes, malchus Beis David, everything is a part. And say clearly that Yerushalayim means Yerushalayim and the Beis HaMikdash, and the kingdom is the kingdom that leads from there, that lies there, that conducts the monarchy. It's two different things, it's both together, but it's interesting, you're right that the one who said "lo alsah al da'atcha" (it didn't occur to you) that it didn't occur to someone to pray for malchus David in Tiberias, but it did occur to him that someone will pray for Yerushalayim without malchus David, that occurred to him. As you say, perhaps malchus Yisrael from the other side.

And therefore we were also divided into two blessings, two things: "boneh Yerushalayim" and "es tzemach David avdecha" (the offspring of David Your servant). There are two things there. And we say yes "v'chisei David avdecha meheirah l'sochah tachin" (and the throne of David Your servant quickly establish within it) in "boneh Yerushalayim". One puts it in there. There were even versions that had only one blessing for both, indeed the same investigation.

Okay, this is the matter of... what's it called... of the third blessing.

Law 5: Text for Shabbos and Yom Tov in the Third Blessing **The Rambam's Words**

Speaker 1:

Now, in the third blessing, one changes the text a bit for Shabbos and Yom Tov. Says the Rambam, on Shabbos and Yom Tov one still begins with "nachem". Here he says, here one should certainly say "nachem". So I thought in the Gemara, but afterwards I looked in the Rambam, look inside, 29. Aha, one begins with "rachem" and ends with "merachem" (Who has mercy), as you said, "boneh Yerushalayim" or "menachem amo" (Consoler of His people). And in the middle one must make a special text for Shabbos. And he says this, 29, **"One begins 'rachem Hashem Elokeinu' in Your city, or,"** as you already said that there are two beginnings, **'rachem al Yisrael amecha v'al Yerushalayim irecha', right, and concludes 'menachem amo b'vinyan Yerushalayim' or 'boneh Yerushalayim'.** Also the two options. But in the middle he must say about Shabbos.

"Retzeh V'hachalitzeinu" – The Text for Shabbos

Speaker 1:

What does he say in the middle for Shabbos? He says this, **"Elokeinu v'Eilokei avoseinu retzeh v'hachalitzeinu"** (Our God and God of our fathers, be pleased and give us rest). We don't say "Elokeinu v'Eilokei avoseinu", we say directly "retzeh v'hachalitzeinu". "V'hachalitzeinu" is an interesting word. Few know the meaning of "v'hachalitzeinu". I can make a shiur on it. It means to calm, but it's a very weird word. It's a thing that is brought once there, "chayim shechiletz atzamos" (life that strengthens bones). It's from the same type, we ask for it, "chayim shechiletz atzamos". "V'hachalitzeinu" – we should feel good, we should be chalatz (strengthened).

Perhaps it means we should have a neshamah yeseirah (additional soul), "Shabbos vayinafash" (Shabbos and was refreshed), "nafshi katzrah" (my soul is short). His body doesn't work with him. He has good ideas, everything, but he doesn't have the energy. Chayim shel chiluf atzamos means he should be at his best, like an entrepreneur starts his day with exercise, the group that talks about this, his body should cooperate.

He brings much rest and energy. Yes, rest. About this I said that Shabbos, okay, to say yom hashvi'i (the seventh day), I said that Shabbos at the end of the meal when one bentches and says retzeh, then it's not usually a chayim shel chiluf atzamos. We ask, we should have neshamah yeseirah, she'einah lo achilah v'lo shtiyah v'lo anachah (that has no eating and no drinking and no sighing). We shouldn't eat so much cholent.

In retzeh we say, "v'tzivitanu Hashem Elokeinu al achilah matzah zu v'al shtiyat kos yeshuos zeh" (and You commanded us, Hashem our God, regarding eating this matzah and drinking this cup of salvations). Ah, no, that's Pesach. Okay, excuse me.

The Entire Text for Shabbos

Speaker 1:

"Retzeh v'hachalitzeinu Hashem Elokeinu b'mitzvosecha u'v'mitzvos yom hashvi'i hazeh hagadol v'hakadosh hazeh, ki yom zeh gadol v'kadosh hu lefanacha lishbos bo v'lanuach bo b'ahavah k'mitzvos retzonecha." (Be pleased and give us rest, Hashem our God, in Your commandments and in the commandment of this great and holy seventh day, for this day is great and holy before You to rest on it and be at ease on it with love according to the commandment of Your will.)

And I ask you a question, something in all these words that you put in the middle, do they add something? No. They say over the same thing. It's like the Rambam says, one says yom hashvi'i, so, "v'nishbos bo v'nanuach bo k'mitzvos retzonecha" (and we will rest on it and be at ease on it according to the commandment of Your will).

Yes, and here there is a request, "v'al yehi tzarah v'yagon b'yom menuchaseinu" (and let there be no trouble or sorrow on our day of rest). And what do we say? The same thing, just four times as long?

The Conclusion of the Blessing

Speaker 1:

And afterwards one concludes again with the matter of rachem. No, I mean that we do... I mean that the language of retzeh is just what was added into the retzeh.

Our Nusach and the Conclusion of Shabbat Mention

Our nusach, when finishing this section, after "retzei v'shabbat," we conclude and carry out our nusach, the German custom. We say the custom of the Yerushalmi: "V'harninu Hashem Elokeinu et kolecha, baruch atah Hashem menachem Tzion." We don't say "v'nachem Tzion v'nachem amcha v'nachem Yerushalayim." We don't say "v'nachem Yerushalayim" again. We simply say, "Baruch atah Hashem menachem Tzion." It fits us very well. No, perhaps one doesn't need to say the "rachem" beforehand, I mean to say. The formulation is that I already insert the "rachem" at the end. No, no, I begin. The Gemara says "matchil b'nechama

v'chotem b'nechama" - one begins and concludes with consolation. One begins, one can begin "nachameinu" with "retzei v'hachilitzenu," or "rachem" with "retzei v'hachilitzenu," and afterwards one can continue.

Our order is simply to say. But the question is, when does one say "ya'aleh v'yavo" when one says "Elokeinu v'Elokei avoteinu"? By "retzei" one doesn't say "Elokeinu v'Elokei avoteinu" again.

Halacha 2 (Continued): Additions in the Blessing of Boneh Yerushalayim - Ya'aleh V'yavo

Speaker 1:

One can simply say "baruch atah Hashem menachem Tzion," and it fits very well.

Speaker 2:

No, perhaps one doesn't need to say the "rachem" beforehand, I mean to say. The nusach is, I already place the "rachem b'rachamecha harabim," no, no, one should begin. This is what the Gemara says, one makes a distinction between nuscha'ot. One begins, one can begin "rachem na," "u'retzei v'hachilitzenu," or "rachem na," "u'retzei v'hachilitzenu," and afterwards one can continue. That is, our siddur is simply mixed together. But regarding this, when we say "ya'aleh v'yavo" we have indeed taken "Elokeinu v'Elokei avoteinu." By "retzei" someone said that one shouldn't say "Elokeinu v'Elokei avoteinu."

Speaker 1:

On Yom Tov one says "Elokeinu v'Elokei avoteinu ya'aleh v'yavo," which the Rema already brought this language earlier, or he brings it in the siddur. Or he brings it later, yes. "Rachem b'rachamecha harabim" etc., one adds in the middle of the third blessing "ya'aleh v'yavo." Here one inserts "ya'aleh v'yavo." Very good. Why does it come into this blessing, do you know or don't you know? What's the secret? Why does it come in here? Why specifically by "boneh Yerushalayim" does one say it? "Zichron Mashiach ben David avdecha, v'zichron Yerushalayim ir kodshecha, v'zichron kol amcha beit Yisrael." "Ya'aleh v'yavo" has a connection with Shabbat, Shabbat and Yom Tov, the festival of Matzot.

Discussion: Why Does Ya'aleh V'yavo Come Specifically in Boneh Yerushalayim?

Speaker 1:

Do you perhaps have a secret why it comes specifically here?

Speaker 2:

Is it because in "rachem" is where one makes requests, it ends with "al tatzricheinu v'al tachlimennu." It has a holy request. I don't know.

Speaker 1:

Usually Shabbat was established, for example, in the middle, yes, between the three and the three. Ah, here it was placed in the last blessing. It's literally here. Okay, can you say the fourth blessing once? You can't, because the fourth blessing is only from the Rabbanan. It's something at the end.

Speaker 2:

No, I think, why does it come... or does it have some connection with "boneh Yerushalayim"? Not clear. Or is it something of... something like the end.

Speaker 1:

It sounds like at the end. You see that for example, they said that... in Me'ein Shalosh one says either by "retzei" or by Birkat HaAretz, yes? Or in the middle blessing one mentions, yes? Yom Tov, when it's on a weekday, one says it by "retzei." Why by "retzei"? Because that's the last request almost. "Al HaNissim" is thanksgiving, it's a matter of thanksgiving. The same thing here is the last, and... it's not clear. Before thanksgiving, that "HaTov v'HaMeitiv" is similar to Birkat Modim, yes? It's not a better explanation.

Speaker 2:

I said that by "ya'aleh v'yavo" it fits all the kingship of the House of David with the matter of Yerushalayim, because the House of David, "ya'aleh v'yavo"...

Speaker 1:

Yes, perhaps that's exactly it, I don't know. Yes, one really needs to think. Ah, it comes into "retzei," and "retzei" is also a matter of the Temple service, you're saying the same thing. One should almost request for the service to return to Yerushalayim.

Speaker 2:

Okay. But on Chanukah and Purim...

Speaker 1:

Yes, one needs to think about Yerushalayim, about Yerushalayim. According to the explanation that Shabbat is a mikdash in time...

Speaker 2:

Okay. Further he says...

Speaker 1:

Yes, very good, there's a connection between... Shabbat and Yerushalayim. Yes.

Halacha 2 (Continued): Al HaNissim in Birkat HaAretz

Speaker 1:

He says, on Chanukah and Purim one also adds about the event of the holiday, like "ya'aleh v'yavo," but one doesn't do it in Birkat Retzei, rather one does it in the middle of Birkat HaAretz. One says "**Al HaNissim k'derech she'mosifin b'tefillah**" - just as one adds in prayer. Why indeed? Ah, because "Al HaNissim" is... one thanks for the miracles, one must always attach this to a formula of thanksgiving, a matter of thanksgiving.

This is what he said, "retzei" is a request, therefore it belongs with requests. Apparently, in the first three blessings, the place for requests is "boneh Yerushalayim." However, "Al HaNissim" is thanksgiving, it belongs with Birkat HaAretz where there is thanksgiving. "Modim anachnu lach," it literally begins like this, "modim anachnu lach," yes.

Speaker 2:

Okay, very good.

Halacha 2 (Continued): The Order of Mentions When Multiple Occur

Speaker 1:

"**V'Yom Tov v'Rosh Chodesh she'chal lihiyot b'Shabbat, mazkir shel Shabbat techilah v'achar kach shel Yom Tov**" - He says the order, what is frequent and what is not frequent. "**V'im Rosh Chodesh Tevet chal lihiyot b'Shabbat**" - which is during Chanukah - "**mazkir Al HaNissim b'Birkat HaAretz, v'achar kach retzei,**"

v'ya'aleh v'yavo v'nachameinu." This is the order. Very good.

Halacha 3: Laws of the Fourth Blessing - HaTov V'HaMeitiv

Three Mentions of Kingship in the Fourth Blessing

Speaker 1:

Laws of the fourth blessing. Now we're going to learn the fourth blessing, Birkat HaTov v'HaMeitiv, what it is. In the fourth blessing, there are three mentions of kingship. One must mention kingship three times. We say "HaMelech HaTov v'HaMeitiv lakol," and afterwards we say "Melech HaOlam," and afterwards we say "Hu yimloch aleinu l'olam va'ed." One mentions kingship three times. What is the matter of three kingships? One also says "Hashem malach, Hashem melech, Hashem yimloch l'olam va'ed." It's something of three kingships. Kingship is always explained with "hayah, hoveh, v'yihyeh" - was, is, and will be - I don't know exactly.

But here it's not exactly that. Yes, one can say according to Torah, one can say according to Kabbalah like this, yes. But it's not necessary here, because here it's more just three times, perhaps it's something nice... "shevach d'orchah etzel ba'al habayit" - praise of the guest to the host, one adds blessing to the host. He adds in the fourth blessing, he adds a blessing for the hosts. Right?

Discussion: Why Three Kingships?

Speaker 2:

I think that the fourth blessing must have three kingships. I think perhaps like, because with such things we bring down the Almighty like a good father who gives bread. And afterwards the Almighty is our general who gives us Yerushalayim, and He builds, He is "boneh Yerushalayim," He is one who gives lands. And here we give Him back kingship. Kingship is a higher level, He is King of the Universe, He is a...

Speaker 1:

Very good. There's a simple answer, it says in the Rishonim, the reason is because the first three blessings don't say kingship, or the last two blessings, now they were completing for the three that are missing. The first one does say, "Elokeinu Melech HaOlam." Why would they need two more?

Speaker 2:

Very good. "Chada l'gufah v'chada..." Perhaps the two that didn't say kingship, and actually it comes. What does the land have to do with kingship? And certainly Yerushalayim has to do with kingship. Fine, one didn't want to combine the kingship of Heaven with the kingship of the House of David.

Speaker 1:

Ah, it could be. Nu? I looked at this in Sefer Mishnah. One didn't want to add, in "boneh Yerushalayim" kingship also comes, but one didn't insert it there because "lo l'hashvot malchuta d'ara l'malchuta d'rakia" - not to equate earthly kingship with heavenly kingship.

Speaker 2:

Ah, that's what you're saying, the three kingships. Now we have indeed requested the kingship of the House of David, but even more we are excited for the kingship of Heaven. One can't mix it with earthly kingship. That's the point apparently. That's a simple explanation. Okay. It's an interesting thing, the simple meaning is that a Jew who has a true... a Jew who is close to the Almighty Creator, he must think that now we don't

have the kingship of the House of David, but the Almighty is our King.

Speaker 1:

Very good, it fits very well, it fits. Know that the Almighty sustains us.

Halacha 3 (Continued): Blessing for the Host

Speaker 1:

He says further, "**shevach d'orchah etzel ba'al habayit - mosif b'vracha revi'it bracha l'va'al habayit**" - praise of the guest to the host - one adds in the fourth blessing a blessing for the host. When a guest is at the host's home and he benches, he means him in the blessing. He means if the guest is the one who is the prayer leader, who says bentsching aloud and everyone answers Amen from him, as was discussed that at all the blessings one can say aloud. "**Mosif a bracha l'va'al habayit**" - one adds a blessing for the host, a short blessing. How does he bless? "**Yehi ratzon shelo yevosh ba'al habayit ba'olam hazeh v'lo yikkalem l'olam haba**" - May it be the will that the host not be ashamed in this world nor humiliated in the World to Come.

Very interesting. What do these words say? Does he give you a suggestion of a formula? And then the Rema says, "**v'yesh lo reshut l'hosif b'virkat ba'al habayit u'l'ha'arich bah**" - one has permission to add to the blessing for the host and to lengthen it - one can create one's own formulas. Since on this there is no matter of "matbei'a shetav'u chachamim" - the formula that the Sages established. When it's said, what does he begin with in the "yehi ratzon"? It's said that one shouldn't say Shem Malchut, or is this something from the Rambam?

Discussion: Is There a Fixed Formula for the Host's Blessing?

Speaker 2:

This is yes a piece that's in the Gemara. Yes there is a piece in the Gemara, but...

Speaker 1:

Very good. The Gemara requests more of a formula. But the Rema understood that this is... ah, it's stated first in the Gemara. Rabbi Yochanan said the formula that the Rema brings, and Rabbi Yehuda adds with words... and what's written in our text, Rabbi Yosef with words, one may add. The Rema understood that it doesn't mean one must say the formula. One can add one's own formula. Therefore, not on any, there are people who conduct themselves this way, especially Lithuanians are particular about the formula. A blessing, they should say that according to the Rema, it's not correct. The beginning is missing. I'm particular then to speak compliments for the host. But a blessing, one must go with a blessing. Yes. But part of the blessing is to give a blessing and a speech. We stand up for that. Just as one gives a speech for the ba'al habrit or whatever. One stands up to be complimentary. Here one can do it with people, one stands up still at "lo yechsarenu." I want to speak weakly here, I don't want to interfere in the Almighty's ways, how He runs the world. Okay, the Almighty says, you can be, but you're asking to give a blessing, a prayer, and a blessing.

Halacha 3 (Continued): Blessing in a House of Mourning

Speaker 1:

There is a blessing that one says "**she'orchin b'veit ha'avel**" - that guests say in a house of mourning. If one

benches Birkat HaMazon in a house of mourning, if one benches the fourth blessing, one adds in the fourth blessing, it already says "HaTov v'HaMeitiv," there is also a special formula. We don't say it today, but there is a house of mourning, yes, there are others who haven't abandoned this, and one may say it, it's not a mistake, it's a nice formula. And yes, as you say, in the Tosafot Rid it's printed in Ashkenaz, one perhaps doesn't say exactly the Rambam's formula, but there are such formulas for a house of mourning, yes, it's also brought in the Tur, which I remembered. But it also fits very well in the reason, that you'll see only the first, ah, that further it's a matter of, of finding the light, revealing finding the, bringing out gratitude even when it's difficult.

The Formula for a House of Mourning

Speaker 1:

If one benches the fourth blessing one says thus: "**HaMelech HaChai HaTov v'HaMeitiv**" - the Almighty who is living and good and does good, "**El emet, Dayan emet, shofet b'tzedek**" - there's such a piece here, "**ha'omer l'olamo dai**" - the Almighty still lives, because that one is, let's understand, the Almighty still lives, etc. But the Almighty is just, He is a righteous judge, He killed that one, it's a tzidduk hadin - justification of judgment, "**shalit b'olamo la'asot kirtzono**" - not that the Almighty had to do, the Almighty did because He wanted to, He is righteous, He has the ability, "**she'anachnu avadav v'amo**" - in practice, He remains God in our lives, we are His servants, "**v'al hakol anachnu chayavim l'hodot lo u'l'varcho**" - and for everything we are obligated to thank Him and bless Him - in every situation there is a place for "chayav adam l'varech al hara'ah k'shem she'mevarech al hatovah" - a person is obligated to bless on the bad just as he blesses on the good, "**v'al hakol anachnu chayavim l'hodot lo u'l'varcho**" - and for everything we are obligated to thank Him and bless Him, and therefore one can make "**HaRachaman hu yenachem avelim eilu**" - May the Merciful One comfort these mourners, and one says in this that the Almighty should help the family to be uplifted and the like, yes? One adds one's own, it's very important, one must add one's own formula, as you say make a speech, or you say add "HaRachaman," no, go back to the order.

Halacha 3 (Continued): Blessing for Grooms

Speaker 1:

Yes, he says further, "**u'v'veit chatanim**" - and in a house of grooms - there is also, "**b'veit chatanim, mevarchin b'veit chatanim**" - ah, here one speaks after finishing bentching, after the seven blessings, "**achar Birkat HaMazon**" - after Birkat HaMazon. Yes, but after Birkat HaMazon, not like a house of mourning in the home. Further, not one adds to finish the... Now today one, today after Birkat HaMazon. Ah, good. What will you make a new complaint. You can't from our after, the Rebbe one places it down here, that one must think. The one places it down, entirely, that it's still a story to Chassidut Yehuda she'ochel l'shem. He says, one blessing of the assumption, one blessing.

Halacha 2 (Continued): Blessing for Grooms After Birkat HaMazon

Speaker 1:

Right, not one adds differently in this. Now, one still holds with bentching, after bentching. Ah, good, you must make a new chapter. You can already say after.

The Rambam places it down here, one must think. The Rambam places it down, entirely, it's still an addition to Birkat HaMazon, only one placed it right after Birkat HaMazon. It's still an addition. Or, in other words, in a house of mourning one benched, one makes four blessings, in a house of grooms one makes ten blessings. One has more blessings, yes.

The Rambam's Language

The Rambam says, "**u'v'veit chatanim mevarchin Birkat Chatanim achar arba brachot eilu b'chol se'udah u'se'udah she'ochlin sham**" - and in a house of grooms one blesses Birkat Chatanim after these four blessings at every meal that they eat there. He says one blessing for grooms, one blessing.

The Rambam says, "**v'eimatai mevarchin brachot eilu?**" - and when does one bless these blessings? He's going to say that there are situations when one says seven blessings.

The Rambam says, "**v'eimatai mevarchin brachot eilu? U'mi mevarech otan? Lo avadim v'lo ketanim**" - and when does one bless these blessings? And who blesses them? Not slaves and not minors.

Discussion: Why Does the Rambam Mention Here Slaves and Minors?

Until now he hasn't told us that a slave and a minor can be the one bentching. It hasn't said by Birkat Chatanim, I don't know why it's a matter perhaps of a qualification.

Speaker 2:

Did we learn earlier that slaves and minors cannot bless for others?

Speaker 1:

No?

Speaker 2:

Did we learn in Chapter 1 something about this?

Speaker 1:

No? Chapter 1 didn't say about this? Motzi being?

Speaker 2:

Yes. In "motziin acheirim"?

Speaker 1:

Amen. No, it was stated here by... something wasn't stated? "Kol hashomei'a bracha k'oneh" - all who hear a blessing are like one who answers, it wasn't stated that it must be an adult. It was stated "motzi mi she'chayav bo min haTorah" - one who is obligated from the Torah can exempt, that was stated, yes. A slave is also obligated apparently. It wasn't stated, I don't know. I don't know clearly. Go further.

Speaker 2:

No, one must understand about this, what's the point.

Speaker 1:

Okay, let's look further. Say more.

Speaker 2:

No, it could be that here it's simply a matter of honor of the community.

Continuation of the Rambam: Until When Does One Bless Birkat Chatanim

Speaker 1:

"**Ad kamah mevarchin otah?**" - Until when? That is, how... A house of grooms usually means the wedding. A house

of grooms means the tent, there was often a tent that the groom set up at his father-in-law's house to make the meal there. But until when? That is, what happens if one makes there the next night after the wedding again a meal?

"Ad kamah mevarchin otah? Im hayah almon she'nasa almanah" - if it was a widower who married a widow, it's only once, **"mevarchin otah b'ynom rishon bilvad"** - only at the wedding. The first day they made the meal, that's the day.

"V'im hayah bachur she'nasa almanah, o almon she'nasa betulah" - which means that one of them is either a bachelor or a virgin, there is greater excitement. **"Bracha zo osin kol shivat yemei hamishteh"** - this blessing is done all seven days. All seven days.

Which Blessing Does One Say?

The Rambam says, about which blessing are we speaking here? **"Bracha zo she'mosifin b'veit chatanim hi bracha achronah misheva brachot shel nissu'in"** - this blessing that one adds in a house of grooms is the last blessing of the seven blessings of marriage. When you go to learn in Sefer Hilchot Ishut, the Rambam there speaks more about marriage, and there are seven blessings. The last of them is what one says after bentsching in a house of grooms.

The Law of Panim Chadashot - New Faces

The Rambam says, **"Bameh devarim amurim?"** - In what case is this said? One says only one blessing, only the last blessing? **"She'hayu ha'ochlin hen she'amdu b'virkat nissu'in v'sham'u habrachot"** - when those who are eating are those who already previously participated in the chuppah and heard the blessings that were made after the chuppah, the seven blessings.

"Aval im hayu ochlin acheirim shelo sham'u Birkat Nissu'in bi'she'at nissu'in" - but if there are new people who haven't yet heard the Birkat Nissu'in, **"mevarchin bishevilon achar Birkat HaMazon sheva brachot k'derech she'mevarchin bi'she'at nissu'in"** - one blesses for them now after Birkat HaMazon seven blessings just as one blesses at the time of marriage.

English Translation

This is the call for panim chadashot (new faces), it comes from here. Those who haven't yet heard birkat nissu'in (the wedding blessings), all seven blessings, we make them now. They're very beautiful blessings, in honor of the chatan and kallah (groom and bride), and here we have an explanation with all these things. Those who have already heard it, it's not interesting, but when there are new people, we say it again.

Speaker 2:

They explain, we're talking here about seven days, so... it's not just like that. All seven days more... ah, all seven days one actually needs to have panim chadashot. All those who already heard it at the chuppah (wedding canopy) can't repeat it again.

Speaker 1:

Every day new people come.

Speaker 2:

Every day new people come.

The Law of Ten

Speaker 1:

Says the Rambam, **"v'tzarich sheyiheyu asarah b'birkat chatanim"** (and there need to be ten for the groom's blessing), at a sheva brachot (seven blessings), at a bentsching (grace after meals) there need to be ten people, **"v'hachatanim min haminyan"** (and the grooms are counted in the quorum). The groom can be the tenth. One doesn't need to have eleven besides him, ten besides him.

Discussion: Can One Make Sheva Brachot with Several Grooms?

Speaker 2:

One can gather a bunch of grooms and they should come together and make a sheva brachot, and rejoice with each other. It's an affordable idea.

Speaker 1:

That's not what they meant here.

Speaker 2:

Maybe, one can.

Speaker 1:

I don't know.

Speaker 2:

No, the grooms themselves, ah, they can make one for the other.

Speaker 1:

A few grooms who just had weddings come together, they can gather for a meal.

Speaker 2:

Ten grooms.

Speaker 1:

Perhaps at the Rebbe's tisch (table) one does such things.

Speaker 2:

There's a problem though, who will lift the groom on a bench? When they're all grooms.

Birkat Chatanim as Part of Birkat HaMazon

Speaker 1:

It's like an opening of a great matter. It's like the first as if kohanim (priests), what should one have a problem with birkat kohanim (priestly blessing), this is birkat hedyot (a layman's blessing). But now goes the Rebbe's tisch, because each one comes for another.

But it's interesting, the laws of birkat erusin (betrothal blessing) and birkat sheva brachot is a law in hilchot ishut (laws of marriage). The Rambam mentions it here because it's connected to birkat hamazon (grace after meals).

Speaker 2:

Right, it sounds from the Rambam here... it's true, you're right, that birkat erusin one also makes at the chuppah before the ketubah (marriage contract), simply. But it sounds from the Rambam that you add it to the meal according to the matter. You'll say the first blessing, and after that you have boneh Yerushalayim (who rebuilds Jerusalem), and all six blessings are part of birkat hamazon. That's how it looks.

Birkat HaMazon as an Opportunity for Prayer

Speaker 1:

It sounds like birkat hamazon has become another opportunity for prayer, if you look at how it goes. Because normally one would think, everything you need to say,

mention it at prayer. At prayer you mention ya'aleh v'yavo (may it rise and come), and at shome'a tefillah (who hears prayer) one can mention extra requests. Where do other side things come in? Birkat hamazon is thanking the Almighty for the bread. But once they added boneh Yerushalayim and that, it's already...

Speaker 2:

Yes, it looks, it looks.

Speaker 1:

Well, I can tell you, you need to think, birkat hamazon is more than prayer from the Torah, but not the order. It looks like birkat hamazon even has a source from the Torah, and certain things more than prayer, or at least equally. It looks like it's a whole order.

And I can tell you, beit chatanim (house of grooms) is an exciting thing, it's not something one can add during davening (prayer). It's a matter that has to do with a meal. Yes, I'm not just talking, not just beit chatanim, I mean in general, but...

Halacha 2 (Continued): Forgot and Didn't Mention on Shabbat or Yom Tov

The Rambam's Language

Speaker 1:

Says the Rambam further, "**shachach v'lo hizkir b'Shabbat o b'yom tov kedushat hayom**" (forgot and didn't mention on Shabbat or yom tov the sanctity of the day). He didn't mention Shabbat or yom tov kedushat hayom. Ah, now we're going to learn what happened, one didn't... the laws that one needs to do. What happened if one forgot something?

Says the Rambam, "**im nizkar kodem she'yomar beracha revi'it**" (if he remembered before saying the fourth blessing). So, on Shabbat he says there... that means he adds a fourth blessing, and he says, "**baruch asher natan Shabbatot menuchah l'amo Yisrael l'ot ul'vrit kodesh**" (blessed is He who gave Sabbaths of rest to His people Israel as a sign and holy covenant).

"L'ot ul'vrit kodesh" – Shabbat as a Covenant

It's interesting, here it says that Shabbat itself is a brit kodesh (holy covenant).

Speaker 2:

Certainly, it says "l'ot hi" (it is a sign).

Speaker 1:

It's a brit, yes. I haven't seen him say mekadesh haShabbat (who sanctifies the Shabbat).

Speaker 2:

No, good. I just want to say, everyone knows the words brit kodesh, this is a strong source that brit kodesh is Shabbat, more than brit milah (circumcision). Brit milah is like a crown. Why does one say a brit kodesh? Where does it say "v'chotam b'ot brit kodesh natan" (and sealed with the sign of the holy covenant)?

Speaker 1:

One says yes, "v'ot brit kodesh" (and the sign of the holy covenant).

Speaker 2:

No, but the words "brit kodesh," the expression "brit kodesh" isn't... in the blessings, birkat hamazon one says...

Speaker 1:

Yes yes, "v'al britcha shechatamta bivesarenu" (and for Your covenant which You sealed in our flesh). And "v'al Toratcha shelimadtanu" (and for Your Torah which You taught us). "V'al chukecha shehodatanu" (and for Your statutes which You made known to us). "V'al britcha shechatamta bivesarenu" (and for Your covenant which You sealed in our flesh).

Speaker 2:

Okay, very good. Here Shabbat is the ot brit kodesh (sign of the holy covenant).

Continuation of the Rambam: On Festivals and Rosh Chodesh

Speaker 1:

"**V'chadashim u'vkarim**" (and months and mornings), Shabbat. But festivals, "**baruch asher natan yamim tovim l'amo Yisrael l'sason ul'simchah**" (blessed is He who gave festivals to His people Israel for joy and gladness), "**v'chadashim u'vkarim**" Israel and the times.

And then he makes a fourth blessing, and then one makes another blessing. He has no problem with adding a blessing or what. Usually one doesn't do it, but in this case, yes, the matter of birkat hamazon is strong enough that one should add a blessing. Yes.

Why Can One Add a Blessing?

It could be as if originally on Shabbat there comes an extra blessing of mekadesh haShabbat, but the Sages combined it. If you want, as it is originally, if you forgot, you actually make the extra blessing. Very good.

If One Already Started the Fourth Blessing

And when it's the fourth blessing, when one is kore'a et shemo (calls His name), the fourth blessing, then what?

Speaker 2:

He already finished al hakol (for everything), he doesn't stop.

Speaker 1:

No, he says started, started. Once he already started the fourth blessing, he already started to say "baruch atah" (blessed are You), he stops that he doesn't need to return to the beginning, in any case with birkat hamazon he only needs to come until the beginning of hazan (who nourishes).

Dispute Between Rambam and Ra'avad

So says the holy Rambam. But the holy Ra'avad disagrees. The Rambam says that the Ra'avad doesn't speak to the matter, but the Rambam made a mistake.

Because the Rambam says, and the Rambam learned a law that one who is accustomed to say tachanun (supplication), the Rambam brings a law after prayer, one who says tachanun makes plus, and he forgot, he can't return. He can't return to pray, he can't return to the service. Not he must, he can't say that he needs to return to the service.

Seemingly the same thing, although tov u'meitiv (who is good and does good) is not from the Torah, but he holds that it's like a custom. That means, for him it means a part of bentching. It can only go back to nachem (console).

The Ra'avad would have agreed that when one has already completely finished. He says, as long as one is still in the middle of davening it's still called. That means the Ra'avad says so... seemingly, according to this calculation, the Ra'avad says that until one finishes, wherever finishing is, there's what

to say after yehi ratzon (may it be Your will), until after yehi ratzon. He interprets that he said that this is still the requests of needs.

According to the same logic that the Ra'avad says, that as long as he hasn't completely finished, he only needs to go back to **"techilat boneh Yerushalayim"** (the beginning of who rebuilds Jerusalem).

Halacha 2 (Continued): Laws of Rosh Chodesh, Chol HaMoed, Chanukah and Purim

The Rambam's Language

Speaker 1:

Says the Rambam further, on Rosh Chodesh (new month), what can't you say "retzeh v'hachalitzenu" (be pleased and strengthen us)?

Speaker 2:

So says indeed the Ra'avad, what is this about the mazal (constellation)?

Speaker 1:

We'll look in the later authorities and we'll see that it's not so simple.

Rosh Chodesh – No Seal

He says Rosh Chodesh. I tell you, Rosh Chodesh is different. Rosh Chodesh, if he remembered before the fourth blessing, he says **"baruch shenatan Rashei Chadashim l'amo Yisrael l'zikaron"** (blessed is He who gave new months to His people Israel as a remembrance), but he doesn't say "baruch atah Hashem" (blessed are You, God), he has no seal, as with Shabbat and yom tov, **"u'matchil beracha revi'it v'gomer"** (and begins the fourth blessing and finishes).

Discussion: Why Is Rosh Chodesh Different?

Why? What's different about Rosh Chodesh? Why doesn't Rosh Chodesh get a seal?

Speaker 2:

But at musaf (additional service) one says the extra blessing.

Speaker 1:

Well, what's wrong? Why doesn't one say on Rosh Chodesh "mekadesh Yisrael v'Rashei Chadashim" (who sanctifies Israel and the new months), as one does at musaf? Well, well, what's different about Rosh Chodesh than Shabbat?

Speaker 2:

One can perhaps also say it, because on yom tov one must eat, but on Rosh Chodesh one doesn't have to eat.

Speaker 1:

Ah, good. So there's a distinction. Simply, Rosh Chodesh is forbidden in fasting, but not fasting and eating is another thing. How is this exactly relevant?

Speaker 2:

Yes, but... ah, one can eat a little something, one can eat fruits, that means, it's not a fixed meal.

Speaker 1:

Okay, continue.

Rosh Chodesh, Chol HaMoed, Chanukah and Purim – One Doesn't Need to Return

These are the laws of Rosh Chodesh. Further, **"v'im lo nizkar ad shehitchil beracha revi'it, gomrah"** (and if he didn't

remember until he started the fourth blessing, he finishes it), and one doesn't need to start bentsching again from the beginning of Rosh Chodesh. **"V'chen b'cholo shel mo'ed uv'Chanukah u'Purim"** (and so on the intermediate days of the festival and on Chanukah and Purim).

It's very interesting, because that Shabbat and yom tov one must eat, it's simple that Shabbat has for itself a birkat hamazon, and the formula the Sages established says that every prayer of Shabbat needs to be with the additions of the Sages. Therefore, today's Shabbat bentsching has in it an addition.

Not so Rosh Chodesh, does one say an obligation for a person to wash? Even people wash, let's say, but it's not simple that today's formula the Sages established of bentsching comes with a birkat hamazon, which not necessarily today there is a birkat hamazon. It's interesting, this is the conclusion.

"V'chen b'cholo shel mo'ed uv'Chanukah u'Purim" (and so on the intermediate days of the festival and on Chanukah and Purim), days when there's no obligation to eat.

Discussion: Purim – A Question

It's interesting, because Purim I could have said that there is an obligation of mishteh v'simchah (feasting and joy). What can be an obligation of mishteh v'simchah perhaps clearly not bread.

Speaker 2:

Right, so seemingly one needs to work out the calculation here.

Speaker 1:

Intoxication is a returning matter.

Speaker 2:

What?

Speaker 1:

Yes, seemingly that's how the calculation comes out here.

Speaker 2:

Seemingly one must think so, yes.

Speaker 1:

One returning matter, so it says, yes.

Speaker 2:

The Rema says that one can be secluded, because...

Speaker 1:

Purim has other reasons.

Speaker 2:

Purim has other reasons. The Rema didn't say about a drunk. A drunk, a drunk with...

Halacha 2 (End): A Drunk and Bentsching

Speaker 1: There's a time, because Purim I could have said the obligation of mishteh v'simchah. Perhaps mishteh v'simchah doesn't require bread. Right, so seemingly one needs to come out that a drunk doesn't need to return. What? Seemingly that's how the calculation comes out here. I mean one thinks so, yes.

Speaker 2: One returns, so it says.

Speaker 1: Yes, the Rema says that one can add the calculation. Purim has another reason. The Rema didn't say about a drunk.

Speaker 2: A drunk may bentsch.

Speaker 1: Yes, so it says, the Zohar has a discussion about why a drunk may bentsch, why he may bentsch on wine. But at prayer he told us.

Speaker 2: So I say Purim, he's probably not relevant, because besides that there's no joy.

Speaker 1: I understand, a drunk is not prayer, but bentsching...

Speaker 2: Yes, I understand that. Because that's the order, the law is that one bentsches drunk. The Zohar has a long beautiful discussion about why a drunk may bentsch.

Speaker 1: Yes, but the fact is certainly that he may. No doubt about it.

Practical Point: Bentsching on Purim

Speaker 1: Okay, so he needs, if on Purim one needs to say that one needs to bentsch, davening is permitted for him drunk, but bentsching one needs anyway. Right. It's a good opportunity, because then one can add sermons.

Speaker 2: Ah, very good.

Speaker 1: No, the sermons one adds on al eleh (for these).

Speaker 2: I learned now that birkat hamazon is like a whole Shemoneh Esreh (eighteen blessings). There's request, praise, there's almost everything.

Speaker 1: Very good. If one is drunk one can make at birkat hamazon a long sermon.

Halacha 3: Forgot to Bentsch – Returns and Blesses As Long As It Hasn't Been Digested

Speaker 1: Okay, now, not he forgot, he made a mistake, right? He forgot to bentsch.

Speaker 2: Yes.

Speaker 1: He didn't forget to eat, as the teachers used to say. To eat he didn't forget.

Speaker 2: Ahh.

The Law: As Long As the Food Hasn't Been Digested in His Intestines

Speaker 1: So it is, **im nizkar kodem sheyit'achel hamazon b'me'av** (if he remembered before the food is digested in his intestines), that means, the food is eaten twice. It's eaten once in the mouth, and it's eaten again in the stomach.

Speaker 2: Yes, sheyit'achel hamazon b'me'av (that the food is digested in his intestines).

Speaker 1: Just as there are teeth here, there are also inner teeth.

Speaker 2: Yes, the system.

Speaker 1: But the point is that it's enough for digestion. **Chazer u'mevarech** (he returns and blesses).

Rabbi Mani – Uncertain If He Bentsched

Speaker 1: **V'cheiván d'amrinan Rabbi Mani v'lo yada** (and since we say Rabbi Mani and he doesn't know), not only he forgot, he doesn't know, he's uncertain, whether he

bentsched or not, he doesn't remember, **"birachti o lo birachti"** (did I bless or didn't I bless), **chozer u'mevarech** (he returns and blesses). Because it's not sheyit'achel hamazon b'me'av (that the food is digested in his intestines), because then he didn't feel satisfaction. Right, but as long as the satisfaction is there, one needs to make, it shows that one is obligated to bentsch as long as one is satisfied. But the grandchild can't anymore, it's finished.

Thus far the laws of blessings.

Digression: "Shkoyach BaShefer" – Simple Jewish Gratitude

Speaker 2: I heard that someone said that he doesn't want to say "shkoyach BaShefer" (thanks to the Creator) because he ate. He says, it's hard not to burst out, it's hard not to burst out.

Speaker 1: Ah, you're saying that... okay, but that's the point of...

Defense of "Shkoyach BaShefer"

Speaker 1: One needs very strongly in the style that Jews should say "shkoyach BaShefer." It's clear that when a person is in the middle of eating and he eats something good, he says "oy, shkoyach BaShefer," it's clear that it's a good thing. Because now he makes birkat hamazon, that's already a rabbinic service. So he holds himself in, he burns with love for the Almighty, wait until he'll say birkat hamazon.

Speaker 2: I shouldn't say shkoyach to Him? It doesn't make sense. Let, let him. Don't be so elitist. Not every person is made to think about Plotinus and about I don't know what.

Speaker 1: What, shkoyach means I give you strength? Shkoyach BaShefer! He's a simple Jew, he mentions the Almighty all the time, he eats the insides of the oats. Shkoyach speaks in Yiddish, he says thank you.

"Yasher Koach" and the Borrowed Name

Speaker 2: Ah, yasher koach (may your strength be firm) is a problem because the Almighty doesn't need strength.

Speaker 1: But it's become such a borrowed name for thanks. No, we may use a thanks.

Why Chazal Made the Formula of Blessings

Speaker 1: They say, when one speaks to the Almighty, we may remember that the Almighty is not your friend. No, not any vulgar language. For this Chazal (our Sages of blessed memory) made the formula of blessings, because people will say "thank you Hashem" or "shkoyach BaShefer."

Speaker 2: You're saying one should say "thank you Hashem"? Open your eyes and see, it's a more beautiful thing "thank you Hashem." Look inside.

Speaker 1: People come and turn back the wheel. No, but this...

Speaker 2: Well, yes, already.

Thus far the laws of birkat hamazon chapter 2.