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מָה בַּפָּרָשָׁה • In This Week's Parashah

- Moshe asks Benei Yisrael to follow the mitzvot, and to remember all the ways God has cared for them in the wilderness. If they do this, they will be blessed and the land will produce plenty of food.
- But abundance can become a problem. When life feels comfortable, a person might imagine that they alone are responsible for their success. Be careful of this kind of thinking! In fact, we are always dependent on God.
- One way to keep this lesson in mind is by thanking God after eating.
- Moshe retells the story of how Benei Yisrael rebelled in the wilderness, when they worshiped a golden עֵגֶל (eigel, calf). Moshe stood up for the people. He prayed to God to remember the promise to Avraham, Yitzhak, and Yaakov.
- If Benei Yisrael fear, love, and stick to God, then rain will come at the right time in Eretz Yisrael. But if they fail, then there won't be enough rain. This is where we get the second paragraph of Shema!



פֵּרוּשִׁים • Commentary

Devarim 8:3

God let things become hard for you and let you become hungry—and then God fed you mann (miraculous food), which neither you nor your ancestors had ever known about.

This was in order to teach you that **a person cannot live on bread alone.** Rather, it is through God's words that a person can live.

דברים ח:ג

וַיְעַנְּךָ וַיַּרְעִבֶךָ וַיַּאֲכִלְךָ אֶת הַמָּן
אֲשֶׁר לֹא יָדַעְתָּ וְלֹא יָדְעוּן אֲבֹתֶיךָ

לְמַעַן הוֹדִעֲךָ **כִּי לֹא עַל הַלֶּחֶם**
לְבַדּוֹ יִחְיֶה הָאָדָם
כִּי עַל כָּל מוֹצָא פִי ה' יִחְיֶה
הָאָדָם:

Isn't bread exactly what we **do** need to live? What does it mean for that to not be enough, and that God's words give life? And how does mann teach this lesson?

Malbim (Eastern Europe, 200 years ago)

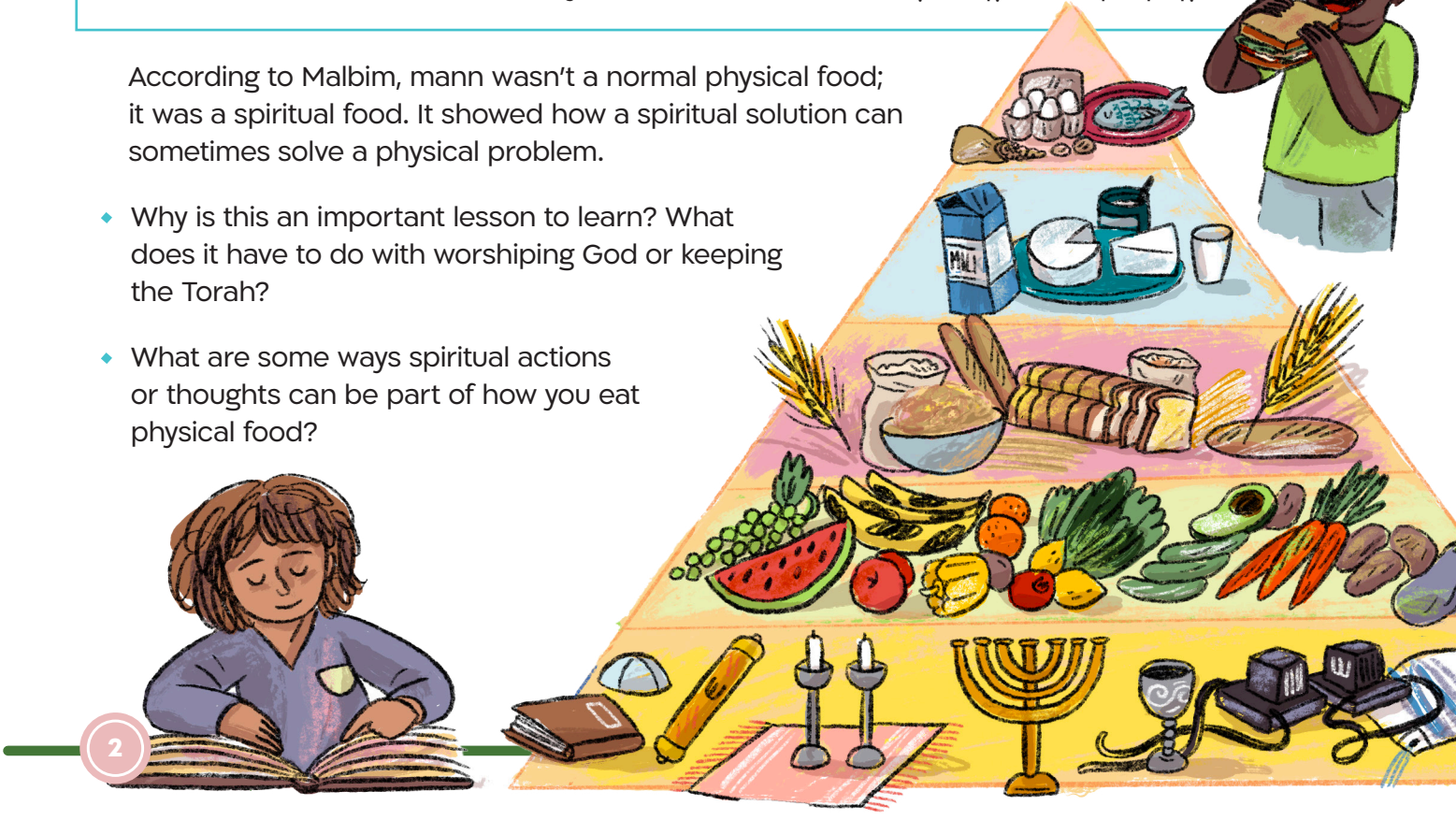
At first, God let things become hard for you and let you become hungry, because mann wasn't given to them right away. This was to make the physical less important. Then God fed them mann, a spiritual bread from Heaven. This means that the spiritual overcame the physical.

מלבי"ם

שֶׁתְּחִלָּה עִנָּה וְהִרְעִיב אוֹתְךָ כִּי
לֹא נִתַּן לָהֶם הַמָּן תֵּכֶף וְסָבְלוּ רָעָב
לְהַכְנִיעַ הַחֹמֶר, וְאַחַר כֵּן וַיַּאֲכִלְךָ
אֶת הַמָּן שֶׁהָיָה לֶחֶם רוּחָנִי יוֹרֵד מִן
הַשָּׁמַיִם רְצוֹנוֹ לוֹמַר שֶׁגָּבַר בּוֹ
עִנְיָן הָרוּחָנִי עַל עִנְיָן הַגַּשְׁמִי.

According to Malbim, mann wasn't a normal physical food; it was a spiritual food. It showed how a spiritual solution can sometimes solve a physical problem.

- Why is this an important lesson to learn? What does it have to do with worshiping God or keeping the Torah?
- What are some ways spiritual actions or thoughts can be part of how you eat physical food?



Netziv (Eastern Europe, 150 years ago)

The purpose of this knowledge is that there will be times in the future when people might be without hope of getting enough to eat. They might lose all hope of surviving. So God gave us strength through the experience of living "through God's words." This is a wonderful idea to take with us in times of galut (exile).

העמק דבר

לְפִי הַפְּשָׁט תּוֹעֶלֶת יְדִיעָה זוֹ,
שֶׁיִּהְיוּ בַּמָּה עִתִּים שֶׁלֹּא תִּהְיֶה שׂוּם
תִּקְוָה לְהַשִּׂיג לֶחֶם, וְאִם כֵּן יֹאבְדוּ
כָּל תִּקְוָה לַחַיּוֹת עַל הָאָרֶץ, עַל כֵּן
הִקְדִּים הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא לְתֵת כֹּחַ
וְעָצְמָה לְהִתְפַּרְנֵס מ"כָּל מוֹצֵא פִּי ה'
", וְזוֹהִי תּוֹעֶלֶת נִפְלָאָה בִּימֵי הַגָּלוּת.

The Netziv suggests that mann teaches a lesson for hard times. When things look bleak, we can always remember how God saved our ancestors in the wilderness through the miracle of the mann. That can give us hope that God might save us again and help us through other hard times.



- Why is hope so important for survival?
- What words of God create miracles? What words of God give you hope?

דַּקָּה שֶׁל דִּיּוּן • One-Minute Debate

Debate: You can't take credit for your accomplishments.

How to play:

Here are some arguments to get you started, but try to come up with your own. Then debate someone!

For a true one-minute debate, give each side 30 seconds to make its best case.

Agree!

- All the credit has to go to God. You couldn't do anything without God. See Devarim 8:17-18!
- If you achieve something really important, chances are you had some help. Be sure to acknowledge the people who supported you or gave you opportunities, like your teachers and parents and friends.

Disagree!

- If you work hard and you're successful, you have every right to be proud of what you did.
- When someone congratulates you, you should be gracious and say thank you for their good wishes.

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aliyot:
1) Devarim 7:12 to 8:10
2) 8:11 to 9:3
3) 9:4 to 9:29
4) 10:1 to 10:11
5) 10:12 to 11:9
6) 11:10 to 11:21
7) 11:22 to 11:25

haftarah: Yeshayahu 49:14 to 51:3

שְׁאֵלוֹת הַשָּׁבוּעַ • Parashah Scavenger Hunt

The answers to the first seven questions can be found in the matching numbered aliyah in the Torah reading. The answers to questions 8 and 9 are harder and can come from anywhere in the parashah. The answer to question 10 is in this week's haftarah.

Good luck!



1. What are the שִׁבְעַת הַמִּינִים (shivat ha-minim), the seven kinds of produce associated with Eretz Yisrael ?
2. Who is compared to fire?
3. What five places where Benei Yisrael rebelled or made God angry are mentioned in this aliyah?
4. Who was the second כֹּהֵן גָּדוֹל (kohen gadol, high priest)?
5. Which two groups of people does God love?
6. When and where are you supposed to teach your children about mitzvot?
7. What four major land features are guides to the boundaries of Eretz Yisrael?
8. How many times does Moshe mention spending 40 days and 40 nights on the mountain with God?
9. How many people from Benei Yisrael went down to Egypt?
10. **From the haftarah:** Which people from Sefer Bereishit are mentioned?



* Look for the answers on page 8!

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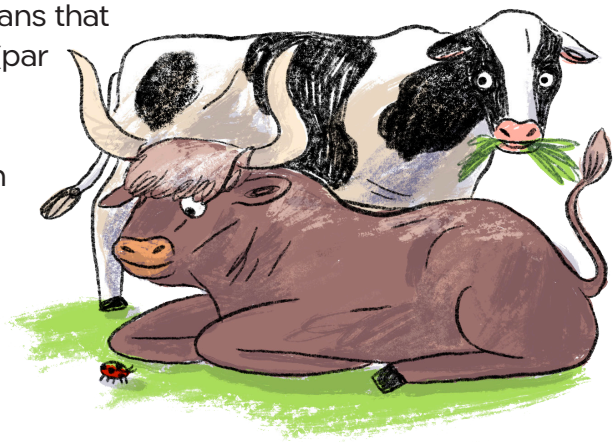


PEDAGOGY OF PARTNERSHIP
How we learn is what we learn.

For support teaching this and other texts in your school, check out PoP! hadar.org/pop

דִּקְדּוּק • Grammar

One of the hardest things for an English speaker to master about Hebrew is the gender of objects. In English, if you want to say that a bull or a cow is not small, you just use the word "big"—whether you're talking about a male bull or a female cow. In Hebrew, however, the word for bull—פָּר (par)—is male, and the word for cow—פָּרָה (parah)—is female. And that means that if you want to talk about a big bull, you say פַּר גָּדוֹל (par gadol). And if you want to talk about a big cow, you say פָּרָה גְּדוֹלָה (parah gedolah). This is because the gender of a word affects the adjectives (description words) and verbs (action words) that go with it.



We have a great example of these two forms in our parashah, right next to each other. The Torah tells us that there will be many blessings for following God's mitzvot. One of them is this:

לֹא יִהְיֶה בְךָ עָקָר וַעֲקָרָה וּבִבְהֶמְתֶּךָ

There shall not be among you an akar (male person unable to have children) or an akarah (female person unable to have children) nor among your animals (Devarim 7:14)

In Hebrew, almost all nouns (people, objects, things) have a clear gender. And it doesn't always have anything to do with male or female anatomy. For example, a window is male and a door is female.

Also, sometimes a noun can have both genders. Here are two examples:



1. שֶׁמֶשׁ (shemesh, sun)
   - verb in male form: וַיִּזְרַח לוֹ הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ (va-yizrah lo ha-shemesh, the sun shone for him) in Bereishit 32:32
   - verb in female form: אִם זָרְחָה הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ עָלָיו (im zarhah ha-shemesh alav, if the sun shone for him) in Shemot 22:2

2. רוּחַ (ruah, wind)
   - verb in female form / verb in male form: וְרוּחַ גְּדוֹלָה וְחָזָק (ve-ruah gedolah ve-hazak, a great and strong wind) in Melakhim Alef 19:11

   This is an interesting one because it appears as male and female in the same phrase.

As you read our parashah, see if you can figure out the gender of the word אֶרֶץ (eretz, land)!

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מִדְרָשׁ • Midrash

Devarim 10:18

God does justice for orphans and widows, and loves the ger (stranger), providing food and clothing.

דברים י:יח

עֹשֶׂה מִשְׁפַּט יָתוֹם וְאַלְמָנָה וְאֹהֵב גֵּר לָתֶת לוֹ לֶחֶם וְשִׂמְלָה:

In the Torah, a ger is a person from another nation who chooses to live among Benei Yisrael. Hazal often understand ger as referring to a person who converts to Judaism.



Why does God love the ger and give them extra support?

This midrash uses a מָשָׁל (mashal, parable) to explain.

Bemidbar Rabbah 8:2 (900 years ago)

It's like a king who had a flock of sheep that went out into the field and came back in the evening every day.

Once, a deer entered with the flock and went along with the goats. When they went to graze, it grazed with them. When they entered the pen, it entered with them. When they went out, it went out with them.

They told the king, "This deer is attached to the flock. Every single day, it grazes with them and goes wherever they go."

The king loved the deer.

When it would go out to the field, he would tell the shepherd, "Give it whatever it wants to eat, and make sure no one hurts it."

And even when it came back with the flock, the king would say to them, "Leave it and let it drink."

The king loved the deer very much.

They said to the king, "Master, how many goats do you have? How many sheep do you have? How many young ones do you have? You don't warn us about them, but you command us about this deer every day!"

במדבר רבה ח:ב

לְמֶלֶךְ שֶׁהָיְתָה לוֹ צֹאן, וְהָיְתָה יוֹצֵאת בַּשָּׂדֶה וְנִכְנֶסֶת בָּעֶרֶב, בֵּין בְּכָל יוֹם,

פַּעַם אֶחָד נִכְנַס צְבִי אֶחָד עִם הַצֹּאן הָלַךְ לוֹ אֵצֶל הָעִזִּים הָיָה רוֹעֶה עִמָּהֶם, נִכְנְסָה הַצֹּאן לַדִּיר, נִכְנַס עִמָּהֶם, יָצְאת לִרְעוֹת יָצָא עִמָּהֶם,

אָמְרוּ לַמֶּלֶךְ הַצְּבִי הַזֶּה נִלְוֶה עִם הַצֹּאן, וְהוּא רוֹעֶה עִמָּהֶם, כָּל יוֹם וָיוֹם יוֹצֵא עִמָּהֶם וְנִכְנָס עִמָּהֶם,

הָיָה הַמֶּלֶךְ אוֹהֲבוֹ.

בִּזְמַן שֶׁהוּא יוֹצֵא לַשָּׂדֶה הָיָה מְפַקֵּד מִרְעֶה יָפֶה לְרָצוֹנוֹ, לֹא יַכֶּה אָדָם אוֹתוֹ הִזָּהֲרוּ בּוֹ,

וְאַף כְּשֶׁהוּא נִכְנָס עִם הַצֹּאן הָיָה אוֹמֵר לָהֶם תְּנוּ לוֹ וְיִשְׁתֶּה,

וְהָיָה אוֹהֲבוֹ הַרְבֵּה.

אָמְרוּ לוֹ מָרִי כַּמָּה תְיָשִׁים יֵשׁ לָךְ כַּמָּה כְּבָשִׂים יֵשׁ לָךְ כַּמָּה גְּדָיִים יֵשׁ לָךְ, וְאֵין אַתּ מַזְהִירֵנוּ, וְעַל הַצְּבִי

The king explained, "...Should I not show gratitude to this deer, who abandoned the great and free pastures of its previous home to choose to join my flock in a little fenced-in yard?"

הַזֶּה בְּכָל יוֹם וָיוֹם אַתְּ מְצַוֵּנוּ.

אָמַר לָהֶם הַמֶּלֶךְ... לֹא נַחֲזִיק טוֹבָה
לָזֶה שֶׁהִנִּיחַ כָּל הַמִּדְבָּר הָרָחָב הַגָּדוֹל
בִּמְקוֹם כָּל הַחַיּוֹת וּבָא וְעָמַד בֶּחָצֵר.

When you choose to keep the Torah, you take on restrictions and obligations that you didn't have to keep before. For example, most people can eat almost anything they want, but the Torah expects Jewish people to keep kosher. So choosing to be Jewish is taking on a lot of responsibility and a new relationship to God and the Torah, and making that choice later in life is very different from being raised that way.

- In the midrash, what is special about the deer choosing to stay with the flock? Why does the king in the story love that so much? Why does the king feel he owes gratitude to the deer?
- What is the Torah trying to teach about people who choose to become a ger? What is the Torah teaching us about God?
- What can people who were born Jewish learn from people who choose to be Jewish? How can all Jews live up the ideal of choosing Judaism?
- How can the responsibilities of keeping the Torah be like a fence, and what are the reasons to choose to live within that fence?



Devash is a weekly parashah magazine that makes Torah learning sweet. By engaging directly with texts and taking kids seriously as Jews, Devash helps children (ages 7+) and grown-ups discover the weekly Torah portion. Write to us: devash@hadar.org

Parashah Scavenger Hunt Answers:

1. חִטָּה (hittah, wheat), שְׂעֹרָה (seorah, barley), גֶּפֶן (gefen, grapes), תְּאֵנָה (te'einah, figs), רִמּוֹן (rimmon, pomegranate), זֵית שֶׁמֶן (zeit shemen, olive oil), דְּבַשׁ (devash, honey) (8:8)
2. God (9:3)
3. Horeiv (9:8), Taveirah, Massah, Kivrot Hataavah (9:22), Kadeish Barnei'a (9:23)
4. Elazar, the son of Aharon (10:6)
5. The ancestors of Benei Yisrael (10:15) and the גֵּר (ger, stranger)—see Midrash on pages 6-7 (10:18)
6. When you stay at home and when you go out on your way, when you lie down to sleep and when you get up (11:19)
7. הַמִּדְבָּר (ha-midbar, the desert off to the south and the east), הַלְּבָנוֹן (ha-levanon, the Lebanon mountains in the north), נְהַר־פְּרָת (nehar perat, the Euphrates River in the northeast), יָם הָאַחֲרוֹן (yam ha-aharon, the Western Sea aka the Mediterranean) (11:24)
8. Five times! (9:9, 9:11, 9:18, 9:25, 10:10)
9. 70 (10:22)
10. Yaakov (Yeshayahu 49:26), Avraham and Sarah (51:2)

הַפְטָרָה • Haftarah

This week we read the second of the שֶׁבַע דְּנֶחָמְתָּא (sheva de-nehemta), the seven haftarot of comfort that help us feel better after the sadness of Tisha B'Av. All these haftarot come from the נָבִיא (navi, prophet) Yeshayahu, who spoke to the Jewish people during גָּלוּת בָּבֶל (galut Bavel, the exile in Bavel), right after the destruction of the first Beit HaMikdash.

On Tisha B'Av, we read about how the destruction of the Beit HaMikdash made the Jewish people feel abandoned. It seemed that God had left them and forgotten them (Eikhah 5:20). But in our haftarah, Yeshayahu says that this is impossible: A mother could never forget her baby, and God could never forget the Jewish people (Yeshayahu 49:15).

Yeshayahu wanted to help the Jewish people in galut feel hope for the future. So he pointed out some role models for them:

Yeshayahu 51:2

Look back to Avraham your father and
to Sarah who gave birth to you.
He was all alone when I called him,
but I blessed him and made him many.

ישעיהו נא:ב

הַבִּיטוּ אֶל אַבְרָהָם אֲבִיכֶם
וְאֶל שָׂרָה תְּחוֹלֵלְכֶם
כִּי אֶחָד קְרָאתִיו וַאֲבָרְכֵהוּ
וְאַרְבֵּהוּ׃

God told Avraham and Sarah to leave their home and follow God. And they were all alone—they didn't have a Jewish community to support them or Jewish parents or teachers to look up to. They had to start our whole people and history all by themselves. That must have taken faith and courage. In the end, it worked out really well for them!

- How could Avraham and Sarah's faith have inspired and helped the Jewish people at the time of galut Bavel?
- Do you ever feel like you don't know how hope is possible? What can we learn from Avraham and Sarah's faith today?

