



פרשת חיי שרה  
שבת מברכים כסלו  
מרחשון תשפ"א

### MONDAY NIGHT CHASSIDUS

Join Rabbi Johnson on Monday nights for a taste of the Chassidische Parsha.

Learn Chumash Bereishis through the eyes of the Alter Rebbe as we delve into the mystical explanation of the Parsha from the Alter Rebbe's classic work, Torah Ohr.

**Mondays 8:30-9:30pm**

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Password: 613

### TUESDAY NIGHT PARSHA WITH RABBI BROH

Join master-teacher Rabbi Leor Broh for a shiur on the weekly Parsha.

Insights from the classic commentaries and Chassidische Seferim.

**Tuesdays 8:30-9:30pm**

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### WEDNESDAY NIGHT NACH WITH RABBI GORDON

Discover the richness of Navi with Rabbi Yossi Gordon.

Learn about the stories and personalities through the teaching of the Midrash and our sages.

**Wednesdays 8:30-9:30pm**

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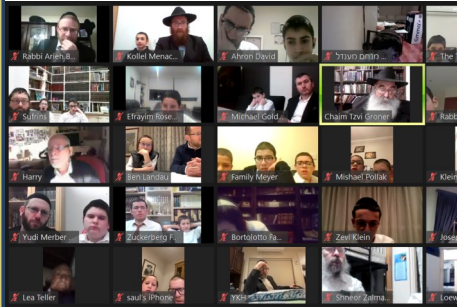
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### RETIREES SHIUR

The daily retirees shiurim will be resuming again in person this week. Join Rabbi Szmerling for a Gemara shiur. Followed by Rabbi Mendel Gurkov on Sefer Hachinuch. Monday-Thursday 10:00am.

A collection of Torah thoughts produced by Kollel Menachem

אין בית המדרש בלא **חידוש** Chiddush



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## The key to success in time management

Imagine you were given \$86,400 each day, deposited into your bank account. This money could be spent at your discretion, but with one proviso - there is no roll-over. Whatever is not spent, is lost.

Each day we are given 86,400 seconds, 24 hours to use as we choose. The time we don't use out to the fullest is lost and can never be returned.

On their death-bed, No one looks back and says "I wish I had made more money". Often our biggest regret is lost time and what more we could have accomplished in life. The irony is that we get so caught up in "things" and "stuff" that our most precious gift is under-utilised or wasted.

Rabbi Shlomo Ibn Gabirol encapsulates this in a powerful idiom;

אדם דואג על איבוד דמיו ואינו דואג על איבוד ימיו,  
דמיו אינם עוזרים, ימיו אינם חוזרים.

*Man worries about the waste of his money, but does not worry about the waste of his years, (ultimately) his money does not help and his years do not return.*

Life is filled with distractions, which in the technological era have only become more exacerbated. A recent study in the USA estimated that the cost of lost productivity due to employee use of social media totalled over \$650 billion per year!

It may take just one minute to look at an SMS, twitter or Facebook post, but the minutes add up. If you multiply this across the year and across the entire workforce, the collective impact is staggering. After the interruption, it takes up to 20 minutes to properly refocus on the task at hand.

This is the financial cost. But imagine the human cost. What could have been accomplished in this lost time? And the distractions don't just invade our workspace, they also impact our relationships and other important areas or our lives.

In this week's Parsha we read how Avraham was advancing in years. The phrase used, בא בימים, literally means coming with days. The commentaries note that Avraham came with his days and was able to account for the accomplishments of each day. Every moment was lived with meaning and purpose and utilised to the fullest in the service of his Creator.

On Yud Shvat 5730, the Rebbe related the following personal anecdote:

Late one night, the Rebbe entered the Friedike Rebbe's study in Leningrad. The Friedike Rebbe had just finished taking Yechidus and would be leaving in an hour and a half to catch a train for an important meeting in Moscow. The trip was fraught with danger, yet he calmly sat organising papers as if nothing else was happening.

Observing this, the Rebbe could not contain his surprise and asked his father-in-law, "I know that Chabad Chassidism is based on the principle that "the mind rules the heart", but to such an extent?"

The Friedike Rebbe replied, "we cannot make our days longer and nor can we add additional hours to our nights. But we can maximize how we use our time, by regarding each segment of time as a world of its own. When we devote a portion of time, whether it is an hour, a day or a minute, to a certain task, we should be totally invested in what we are doing as if nothing else exists in the world."

This is the key to Hatzlacha Bizman, success in how we use and maximise our time.

If it's the time allotted to Davening or a shiur, or when we set aside to time to spend with our spouse, child or friend, we need to block out all distractions and be completely present in what's most meaningful at the time, as though nothing else exists.

Amongst Chassidim, it was common practise to make a *Cheshbon Nefesh*, an accounting of the day, each night when reciting the bedtime Shema.

What did I achieve today? How did I grow today? What good deeds did I do today? How did I help others today? And most importantly how can tomorrow be better than today?

We may not be able to account for every second or every minute. We might not be able to avoid or shake free of distractions. But the lesson of Avraham Avinu and the story of the Friedike Rebbe is still relevant. If we want to be more productive, live with purpose and make our days count, be present and live in the moment.

# The weekly Halacha analysis

## Bishul Yisroel for Potato Chips and Vege Chips

### Rabbi Yonason Johnson

One of the Rabbinic Gezeiros in the laws of Kashrus is the prohibition on eating certain foods which have been cooked by a non-Jew. This is known as the prohibition of Bishul Akum.

Bishul Akum applies even when all of the ingredients are kosher and even when the food has been cooked in kosher keilim in the home of a Jew. It is accepted Halacha and practise that even products manufactured industrially are subject to the laws of Bishul Akum.

According to most Rishonim, Chaza"l established this Gezeira to prevent developing overly close relationships with non-Jews which may lead to intermarriage. Rashi explains that the Gezeira is to prevent a situation of inadvertently being served non-kosher food.

#### Conditions

Not all foods were included in this Gezeira. To be subject to Bishul Akum the food type must meet the following two criteria<sup>1</sup>;

1. It is not eaten in its raw state.

This is defined by being eaten raw by most people. For example; meat, poultry, fish<sup>2</sup>, eggs, rice and pasta would be included. Fruits and most vegetables would be exempt.

2. It must be an 'important food', fit to be served on the king's table.

This would include being served to ministers and dignitaries. Interestingly, the Star-K agency is known to ask questions to the White House executive chef to determine whether specific foods fall into this category or not. Others define this as a food that one would serve at a wedding and the like.

There is a machlokes whether this includes foods served but not as part of the main meal, such as desserts and sweets. Accepted practise is to be machmir.

The application of what satisfies these two conditions will change over time and from place to place. For example, carrots and mushrooms did not used to be eaten raw, but today they are.

Further, the Gezeira only applies to specific cooking methods; cooking, baking, roasting, frying. Food prepared through salting, pickling and smoking do not require Bishul Yisroel.

Any food which meets the above criteria cannot be certified kosher without being Bishul Yisroel. Ashkenazi standard allows any involvement by a Jew in the cooking process such as turning on or

adding heat to the oven.

Each Kashrus agency will have their own policies in applying the above criteria to specific products and production methods. This gives rise to the diverse range of policies from one authority to the next.

#### Potatoes

Potatoes certainly meet the first criteria as they are not eaten raw. But what about the second criteria of being served at a king's table?

The Aruch Hashulchan<sup>3</sup> writes that potatoes are peasant food. Since they would not be served to royalty, they are not subject to Bishul Yisroel.

However, most Poskim note that nowadays potatoes are served at state banquets in various forms, including; mashed potatoes, roasted and fried. Therefore today, potatoes are considered to be subject to the laws of Bishul Yisroel.

#### Snack Foods

According to many authorities, general snack foods are not subject to Bishul Yisroel. This is because they are not considered to be 'important' foods that would be served on the king's table in the context of a meal. Accordingly, there is no requirement for lollies, chocolate bars etc. to be Bishul Yisroel.

#### The Potato Chip Debate

At the heart of the differing policies on potato chips is the following issue; What is the status of a food which would be served on the king's table in one form, but would not be served in the current form that it is made?

The differentiation may be in terms of the form of the food (e.g. potato chips as opposed to fried potato pieces) or the method of cooking employed (e.g. puffed rice as opposed to cooked rice).

The stringent opinion maintains that we follow the Min, the food-type itself. Since potatoes are a food-type that is served as part of a meal to royalty (even more so since they can be served in fried form), all potato products, even snacks, require Bishul Yisroel.

Additionally, there is a lesser held view held by some Poskim that potato chips themselves are considered as fit to serve on a king's table.

The stringent view is adopted by Rav Moshe Feinstein<sup>4</sup>, Shevet Halevi<sup>5</sup> and is policy of the OK hashgocho. It is also the opinion of Rabbi Moshe Shternbuch<sup>6</sup> and Rav Elyashiv<sup>7</sup>.

The lenient view says that we look at the form in which the food is eaten. When potatoes are made into chips, they take on the status of a snack food and become exempt from the requirement of Bishul Yisroel.

This view is held by Rabbi Osher Weiss. The OU Kashrus Agency follows the Psak of Rabbi Belsky and Rabbi Heinemann who do not require potato chips to be Bishul Yisroel.

#### Pringles and Vege Chips

Chips such as Pringles or Vege Chips present a different problem. Unlike regular Potato chips which are sliced into their form prior to cooking, these are made from potato flour. This flour is made by boiling potatoes in their whole form and then mashing them and dehydrating them.

Some Poskim write that even according to the lenient view, these should be forbidden. The whole potato is subject to Bishul Yisroel. Once it was boiled by non-Jews, it becomes Bishul Akum. The subsequent crushing and dehydrating does not remove this status. This is the position of the OK as published on their website.

Other agencies are lenient. Part of their basis for leniency is that the potatoes are cooked via steaming. It is questionable whether steaming was included in the Gezeira of Chaza"l. Whilst we are generally stringent, when there are other factors for leniency (such as snack foods), some Kashrus bodies will rely on this Heter. The OU certifies Pringles.

#### Conclusion

To find out the policy of your local Kashrus agency please contact them directly.

Chassidim traditionally are careful to keep the highest standard of kashrus, including cases of doubt in Bishul and Pas Yisroel<sup>8</sup>. Therefore, it is preferable to embrace the higher standard and eat only chips which are certified as Bishul Yisroel.

However, since those who are lenient have on whom to rely, one need not protest those who are lenient.

1. See Shulchan Aruch Y.D. 113
2. Whilst the sushi phenomenon is now widespread, fish is not yet considered to be a food which is eaten raw by most people.
3. 3 Y.D.
4. Igros Moshe Y.D. 4:48:5
5. Shevet Halevi 2:45, 6:108:4, 9:23 and 10:124.
6. Teshuvos VeHanhagos 1:438
7. Ashrei Halsh Y.D. 113
8. Based on the Ariza"l as quoted in Darkei Teshuvah Y.D. 112:13