



## Parshat Behaaloscha

מתוך "ליקוטי שמואל"

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## The Greater the Gavra, the Greater the Gratitude

Parshas [Behaaloscha](#)  
Rabbi Yissocher Frand

The *pasuk* in Parshas BeHa'alosecha says, "And the people were *k'mis'onenim* (as murmurers), speaking evil in the ears of *Hashem*; and when *Hashem* heard it, His anger was kindled; and the fire of *Hashem* burnt among them and devoured in the uttermost part of the camp." (Bamidbar 11:1). The *Ribono shel Olam* became very angry. Moshe Rabbeinu had to pray to Him, and the fire was extinguished. What exactly is the meaning of the word "*mis'onenim*"? The *Ramban* quotes the *Ibn Ezra* that it comes from the word *aven* (sin), meaning that the people said "sinful things." The *Ramban* disagrees with the *Ibn Ezra* because the Torah did not mention any "sinful things" that the people spoke, and the Torah is usually not shy about mentioning what *aveira* is being punished when there is a Divine punishment.

The *Ramban* suggests that when the people distanced themselves from Har Sinai and moved deeper into the vast

and awesome desert, they panicked and did not know what to do. "How are we going to survive in this desert? What are we going to eat and drink? How will we manage through all the depravation and suffering that exists in this barren stretch of land? How are we ever going to get out of this place?"

According to the *Ramban*, the etymology of the word

"*mis'onenim*" is the same as the expression

"*Mah yis'onen adam cha'*" (Of what shall a living man complain) (Eicha 3:39), which connotes pain and complaint about a person's situation. A *mis'onen* is a person who is feeling sorry for himself. "Woe is me that I have such *tzores*."

The *Ramban* explains that the Torah is thus teaching us what they did wrong: They acted like the worst thing had just happened to them. The Torah uses a simile here

"like *mis'onenim*." They were not people in desperate straits, but they acted LIKE such people! This upset the *Ribono shel Olam*, who felt that they should be following Him in joy and rejoicing by virtue of all the positive things they had experienced: *Yetzias Mitzrayim* (The Exodus from Egypt), *Krias Yam Yuf* (the splitting of the Red Sea), *Kabbalas HaTorah* (receiving the Torah), as well as being provided with the *mann* and the *be'er* (well)! How dare they complain after all that?

*Hashem* said that someone who has it so good and nonetheless complains as if he has it so bad is guilty of a terrible *aveira*. That *aveira* is the inability to be '*makir tova*' (recognize favors), failing to appreciate the positive.

The *Ribono shel Olam* cannot tolerate ingratitude and therefore punishment immediately followed.

The Brisker Rav, zt"l, once said that if a person has a bad character trait (such as being haughty, or having a bad

temper), we judge him as an imperfect human being (not an '*adam shalem*'), a person who has a fault – perhaps even a bad fault. However, if a person is not *makir tova*, the Brisker Rav said that he is not merely not an '*adam shalem*,' but rather, he is not an *adam* at all. He lacks the most basic component of humanity! We all have our challenges with certain ideal character traits. We need to work on them. But someone who is an ingrate is not a *mensch* at all!

The truth of the matter is that the *Ramban* alludes to this in Parshas Ha'Azinu. The *pasuk* there says, "Is it to *Hashem* that you do this, O' vile and unwise people?" (Devorim 32:6) The *Ramban* writes that Moshe Rabbeinu is chastising the people: "This is how you treat the *Ribono shel Olam* after all that he did for you?" What does Moshe Rabbeinu call them? *Am naval*. The *Ramban* notes that when an animal dies, it is called a *neveilah*, indicating it is no longer an animal, but rather it is a dead carcass. So too, a person who is not *makir tova* is a *naval*, because he ceases to be a human being. He is no longer a *mensch*.

That is the meaning of "*Vayehi ha'am k'mis'onenim*".

In truth, this is not the only example of ingratitude in Parshas BeHa'aloscha. There is a second incident as well: "And the mixed multitude that was among them felt a lusting; and the children of Israel also wept on their part, and said: 'Would that we were given flesh to eat! We remember the fish, which we used to eat in *Mitzrayim* for free; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic; but now our soul is dried away; there is nothing at all; we have only this *mann* to look to.'" (Bamidbar 11:4-6) The next *pasuk*, after those three *pesukim* is "Now the *mann* was like coriander seed and the appearance thereof was like the

(white and sparkling) appearance of bdellium” (Bamidbar 11:7). The Jews are complaining about their lack of onions and garlic and then suddenly, the Torah makes an editorial comment. What is that all about? Rashi clarifies: In the first three *pesukim*, *Bnei Yisrael* were talking. Pasuk 7 is *Hashem* talking! They are complaining that all they have is *mann* and then *Hashem* inserts into the Torah the divine character of the *mann*, as if to say, “Let the world come and see about what My Children are complaining. The *mann* is so so special!” If you can complain about *mann*, you can complain about anything!

I once heard a schmooze from Rav Pam, *zt”l* (subsequently printed in his *sefer*), in which he says that he often hears such *abas kol* (heavenly Voice) proclaiming “Look at what my children are complaining about!” When a young man comes and complains to him that he comes home from *yeshiva* or from work and finds the house strewn with toys all over the place, he complains to his wife, “Why can’t you keep a neat house?” Rav Pam says that when he hears such complaints, he hears the *bas kol*. “Look at what my children are complaining about?” How many infertile couples are there who would give their right arms to have a house full of strewn toys lying around! And these fellows are complaining that the house isn’t neat!

He goes through several examples in his *sefer*. A child comes home from school at 5:30. Supper is ready on the table. The mother prepares meatloaf and a plate of vegetables, the child comes home to a set table and a hot meal and he complains. “I hate meatloaf!” Look at what my children complain about! The following very instructive Medrash is not located in Parshas BeHa’aloscha, but I feel it is appropriate to share at

this time. The Medrash is in Sefer Shemos (Parsha 4):  
 When Hashem told Moshe that it was time to take the Jews out of Mitzraim, Moshe responded, "Master of the Universe, I am not able to take on this job. I need to ask permission from my father-in-law, Yisro. If he will not give me permission, I guess You will need to get another man."

The *baalei mussar* make two very interesting comments on this Medrash: It is our assumption that it is only necessary to show *hakaras hatov* to someone who is doing something positive for you out of the goodness of his heart. But if a person is doing something because it is his job or it is for his or her own personal reasons, then he or she does not deserve my *hakaras hatov*. They are just doing what they need to do or what they really want to do anyhow! The *baalei mussar* infer just the opposite from this Medrash:

Consider: Who owed whom? Moshe did not owe Yisro. Yisro owed Moshe. First of all, Moshe saved Yisro's daughters (Shemos 2:17). But moreover, Yisro could not get a *shidduch* for his daughters for all the money in the world because he was a pariah. He was ostracized by his community. He had been an idolatrous priest and suddenly, he adopted Judaism! Who wants to marry into his family? Moshe Rabbeinu did Yisro a great favor by marrying his daughter.

Nonetheless, Moshe Rabbeinu did not say, "He owes me. I do not owe him." The lesson is that it does not make a difference. If someone has benefited from someone else, he must show gratitude no matter why the other fellow did what he did.

I saw the following incredible story in a *sefer*:

A Jewish fellow in New York was going to work by subway. He was standing by the side of the tracks and suddenly, he fell onto the tracks and could not get up. Everyone was paralyzed

after having witnessed what just happened. An African-American man standing on the platform with everyone else jumped onto the tracks, pulled the fellow up, and saved him, shortly before the next train came riding right over the tracks where this fellow had fallen. The news crews of the New York papers tracked down this fellow and told him, "You are a hero!" He responded "I am not a hero. I did not do this to be a hero. I have a job. I am a dishwasher in a restaurant earning ten dollars an hour. I knew what would happen if this fellow had been run-over. The train would have been delayed for two hours. I would lose twenty dollars off my salary. I did not jump down onto the tracks to save him. I jumped down there to pull him off the tracks so that the train would not be delayed and I could get to my job on time."

This is not the end of the story. This Jew who had fallen onto the tracks made a *neder* (vow) while lying on the tracks: "If someone will save me, I will give him \$100,000." He now read the newspaper account where he learned that his savior did not do what he did to save him, but in order to not lose the \$20 from his job! He sent the *shaylah* to Rav Yitzchak

Zilberstein: Does he need to give the \$100,000 or not?

Rav Zilberstein *paskened* that he needed to give 1/3 of that amount. (I am not certain about the logic Rav Zilberstein used to come up with this specific figure.) Rav Zilberstein, however, then took the *shaylah* to his brother-in-

law, Rav Chaim Kanievsky to see if he agreed with

his *psak*. Rav Chaim told him: The fellow needs to give the entire \$100,000! Rav Chaim ruled that it does not matter why the fellow did what he did. He could have done it to become a hero or he could have done it to save \$20. The reason he did it is not relevant. He saved this Jew's life. The Jew said that if

someone will save his life, he will give him \$100,000. The Jew has to keep his *neder*.

*Hakaras hatov* does not depend on why the person does it. *Hakaras hatov* is an obligation regardless of the motive. A person must be a *mensch*. As the Brisker Rav said, a person who does not appreciate, *iz nit kin mensch* (is not a person). Over the years, I have read dozens, scores, and perhaps hundreds of stories about how great people were *makir tova* over things that we might take totally for granted, perhaps not even considering them favors at all. And yet, great people consider these things favors and remember them forever. The understanding of this is simple: Someone who is not a *makir tova* is not a mensch, and the bigger the *mensch*, the bigger *makir tova* a person is. The two go hand in hand. People who are literally *gedolim*, know what it is to be a *makir tova*.

I once mentioned the story of a *bochur* in Yeshiva Torah Voda'as who was not coming to *minyan*. No matter what they tried to do, they could not get him out of bed. The dormitory supervisor came to Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky, who was the Rosh Yeshiva at the time, and requested to throw this fellow out of the dormitory for not coming to *minyan*. Rav Yaakov said, "Yes. If his not coming to *minyan* affects other people, you can throw him out of the dormitory." But first, Rav Yaakov said, send him in to see me. I want to speak with him.

The head of the dorm told the fellow, "You are being kicked out of the dormitory and Rav Yaakov wants to see you." The fellow was literally shaking in his boots. Rav Yaakov said to him, "I understand that you need to leave the dormitory because you do not come to *minyan*, but tell me, where are



you going to sleep from now on?" The boy said, "I don't know. I have no back-up plan." Rav Yaakov said, "You will come to my house. You will sleep by me." (This is what we call an 'upgrade.')

The boy was astonished: "The Rosh Yeshiva said that I am being thrown out of the dormitory and now he is telling me that I am going from the dormitory to the Rosh Yeshiva's house?"

Rav Yaakov explained, "Yes. It is because I learned in the Kovno Kollel when I was a young man in Lithuania. Your grandfather used to give money to the Kovno Kollel. Therefore, I feel I owe you a debt of gratitude and so therefore, if you don't have a place to sleep, you can sleep by me." This grandfather was not the sole supporter of the Kovno Kollel, but he was on their contributor's list.

This is just an example of the maxim: The bigger the *mensch*, the bigger the *makir tova* and the lesser the *mensch*, the lesser the *makir tova*.

## Use Time Carefully / How You Ask Makes a Big Difference

Parshas [Behaaloscha](#)

Rabbi Yissocher Frand

### The Message of the Leveyims' Five-Year Training Program

The Torah says in this week's parsha that from the time a Levi is twenty-five years old, he enters into service in the *Bais Hamikdash* [Bamidbar 8:24]. However, as Rashi points out, there is a contradiction between this *pasuk* and another *pasuk* earlier in the sefer [Bamidbar 4:3], which states

that the age of service for the Leveyim [Levites] begins at thirty, not at twenty-five. Rashi reconciles the two *pesukim* by explaining that the Levy comes to the *Bais Hamikdash* at age twenty-five to begin a five-year training period. Then he in fact begins to serve at age thirty, as is says in Parshas Bamidbar.

The Shemen HaTov (volume 5) asks an interesting question: How long does a Kohen need to train? A Kohen's service in the *Bais Hamikdash* is seemingly much more intricate and involved than a Levi's service. However, we do not find anywhere in the Torah that the Kohanim had a five year training period. The Torah does not even mention them having a one-year period of learning before they could start participating in the *Avodah*. Why is that?

The Shemen HaTov suggests a very interesting idea.

A Kohen can perform the *Avodah* from the time he is Bar Mitzvah until the time he dies. He could be serving in the *Bais Hamikdash* for sixty or seventy years. A Levi's service is only for twenty years. As soon as he turns thirty, the clock starts ticking and once he becomes fifty, he is out of there. When someone has such a limited period of when he can do the *Avodah*, he wants to hit the ground running. He cannot waste any time. He needs to be ready on day one! He does not have the luxury of puttering around with on the job training. A Kohen, who potentially has sixty or seventy years of service ahead of himself, can take a couple of years "to get up to speed." However, a Levi, whose time is so limited, needs to know clearly, what he is doing from the first day on the job. Therefore, a Levi trains for five years before the clock starts ticking for him.

This thought conveys a message that I believe we should impress on our children while they are in their Yeshiva days. Boys enter Yeshiva when they are in high school at age 14. They look at their time as if they are going to be in Yeshiva for a very long time. It seems like forever. For most people, however, the time is limited. There is four years of high school then maybe three or four years of time in *Beis Medrash*. Then they get married and if they are lucky enough they can learn three, four, or five years in Kollel. Eventually, they have to face the reality of earning a livelihood. So how long is this very long time in Yeshiva for a Yeshiva *bochur*? For most people, it is 8 years, 10 years, or maybe 12 years and then it is over. When someone has such a limited amount of time and opportunity, one must make the best use of that time. The most important thing we can impress on our children is “Don’t waste your time while you are in Yeshiva.” I was looking through some old notes of mine and I found on the back of my notes what I told one of my sons on the day he started ninth grade in Yeshiva. I told him he should try to learn sixty minutes an hour. That is the definition of a *masmid* [a diligent student]. A *masmid* is not necessarily someone who learns 18 hours a day. A *masmid* is someone who learns sixty minutes an hour, for however many hours a day he is able to devote to learning. Do not waste your time. That is a lesson we need to impress on our children. When only a limited amount of time is available, we must make maximum use of it. Just as the Levi needed five years of preparation so that when he began his service at age 30, he would not need to “waste time” with on the job training, we need to be just as careful with the limited time that is available to us for our learning.

## The Way A Question Is Posed Determines Half The Answer

The Parsha relates the one and only time that *Klal Yisrael* brought a Korban Pessach [Paschal sacrifice] during their forty year sojourn in the Wilderness [Bamidbar 9:1-5]. Then the Torah says, "There were men who had been made impure by a human corpse and could not make the Pessach-offering on that day; so they approached Moshe and Aharon on that day." [Bamidbar 9:6] This group of *tameh* individuals were upset that they did not have the opportunity to participate in the *mitzvah* of *Korban Pessach*. They approached the leaders of the community and presented them with their problem: "...Why should we be left out by not offering Hashem's offering in its appointed time among the Children of Israel?" [Bamidbar 9:7]

Moshe consulted with the Almighty and was taught the laws of the "Second Passover". *Pessach Shenii* is a unique concept whereby one who was impure or remote from the location of the *Bais Hamikdash* on the fourteenth of Nisan, which is the proper time for bringing the Pessach offering, has a chance to offer a "make-up Pessach sacrifice" a month later.

There seems to be somewhat of a redundancy in the *pesukim* describing this incident. Scripture already told us in *pasuk* 6 that "there were men who had been made impure by a human corpse." Why then was it necessary for the people to also say in *pasuk* 7 "we are impure through a human course?"

The sefer Yismach Yehudah from a Rabbi Yehudah Jacobowitz in Lakewood, NJ addresses this question. In Parshas Emor there is the story of the Blasphemer, who cursed the Name of G-d. There are different interpretations as to what exactly

prompted this person to perform such a heinous crime. One of the interpretations is that this happened because of a "*Din Torah*" [civil dispute]. This man had an Egyptian father and a Jewish mother. He was thus "Jewish" but he did not belong to any Tribe (one's Jewish identity is based on matrilineal descent while one's Tribal identity is based on patrilineal descent). Consequently, he did not know with which camp to travel. Since his mother was from the Tribe of Dan, he went to that tribe and insisted that he was a Danite who had the right to travel in their camp.

He took the elders of the Tribe to a "*Din Torah*" over the matter and lost. He heard the verdict; he became upset and blasphemed the Name of G-d.

We must ask a question here: Chazal tell us that Dan was called the "*m'asef l'chol ha'machanos*". For lack of a better translation, Dan was the caboose. He brought up the rear. The Tribe of Dan took care of all the stragglers. First of all, when there are a couple of million people travelling together in the desert, they are bound to drop things — Dan picked up the articles that were dropped on the way. When sick children caused people to fall behind — Dan picked them up. When, for whatever reason, a person became lost or could not keep up with the pace of everyone else — Dan picked them up. Shevet Dan, the "*ma'asef l'chol ha'machanos*" was the barrel for everyone to come into.

In this case, this person came to them with an apparently valid complaint: "I do not have a place; my mother is from *Shevet Dan*." The elders should have said, "Sure. Join the crowd. We have a whole club back there at the end of the line with our tribe." Their reaction apparently was just the

opposite. "This is not our problem. You are not from *Shevet Dan*, go somewhere else!"

Why is this fellow different from everyone else? The answer is that everybody else who came to *Shevet Dan* said, "Listen, I fell behind. My child was sick. I did not feel well. Can we travel with you?" The answer in those cases was "Fine." However, when someone justifies joining the group by saying, "I am a Danite, I belong here, and you need to let me in because this is my right!" then they say, "Sorry my friend, do not tell me this is your right. You do not belong here; we are not going to take you in!"

That is what the *pasuk* is telling us here. We know that they were impure, but if their complaint was, "It is not fair! We missed bringing the Korban Pessach, you need to do something for us!" then we answer "Sorry. Life is not fair." However, if they come and say, "We know that the problem is ours, we know it is we who were impure, but give us a break because *nebach* we were impure" then it is a different story. When the approach is not a demand but a request, the response is completely different.

Just as *Shevet Dan* rejected him when he made a demand, but when asked for a favor, granted the favor, the same thing is true here by Pessach Sheni. The answer might have been different if they had come to Moshe and Aharon with demands. However, since they emphasized that the problem was their own "We were impure from contact with the dead" and therefore "why should we have to be excluded?" then Moshe Rabbeinu brought their case to the Almighty and the Almighty said, "Yes, in truth, we will do something to allow you to participate." That is why they received the right to bring a Pessach Sheni.

## Keeping the fire burning

Written by Daniel Shasha

After Aharon was commanded to light the *Menorah*, the verse says “and he did so” (8:3). Rashi explains that we are being told that he faithfully carried out this Mitzvah without any changes. Why would we think otherwise?

The *Sfat Emet* explains that it is natural to initially become excited about something yet after some time to lose the enthusiasm. The praise of Aharon was that every day he lit the *Menorah* with the same enthusiasm as before, even after many years. We can learn from Aharon to try and do mitzvot, even those that we do regularly, with a renewed amount of enthusiasm. (*Sfat Emet, Beha'alotcha 5635*)

## The purpose of speech

Written by Daniel Shasha

Towards the end of our parashah, Miriam relates to Aharon her concern that Moshe separated from his wife Tziporah. For this she was punished with *tzaraas* and was sent outside the camp for seven days. The Chafetz Chaim observes that Miriam didn't have any negative intent, she only desired to defend the honor of her sister-in-law Tziporah. She greatly admired Moshe and invested a lot of energy helping raise him when he was young. Furthermore, this comment was not said in public, only in private to her brother Aharon. Yet, she was still punished, showing us how severe *lashon hara* is. It is a mitzvah from the Torah to remember this incident, helping us be more on guard not to speak *lashon hara*.

The Magen Avraham (60:2) teaches that we should specifically remember what happened to Miriam, when we say the words *lehodos lecha*, to thank You, in *ahavah rabbah* each morning. What is the connection? Why specifically here do we remember this? The Magen Avraham explains that



the entire reason why we have a mouth, is to thank Hashem! The ability to speak is a tremendous gift and should be used in a positive way by thanking Hashem. Therefore, we see how specifically when we recite '*lehodos lecha*' we should remember the incident of Miriam, reminding ourselves of the correct use of the gift of speech.

So each time we thank Hashem we are fulfilling the reason why we have a mouth! When we say thank you Hashem for these scrumptious apples, this refreshing cup of water, this delicious ice cream, we are using our mouth for the reason why it was created. Phenomenal! This can bring us *yeshuos lemalah min hatevah*, as we see in the following story.

A concerned father was going through a very difficult time due to the fact that his 2 oldest sons were still single. They had such special qualities and he longed for the day when he would dance at their weddings. After attending a shiur on the importance of speaking positively and expressing gratitude, they resolved to change their perspective and became very positive and grateful people. They focused on all the blessings they have received going into great detail. They always said "Baruch Hashem", "chasdei Hashem" and constantly thanked Him. Not so long after they had adopted this attitude both of their sons were engaged! The man went to the Rabbi who gave the shiur that helped change their perspective, telling him about their yeshuah and thanking him for what he taught them. This in turn was mechazek the Rabbi and he resolved to strengthen his gratitude. He was recently diagnosed with a hearing condition and his hearing was severely deteriorated, he decided to focus on all the blessings in his life, despite this difficult predicament. He spent the next week devoting countless hours expressing his tremendous gratitude to Hashem. At the end of the week, he received a call from the hospital that one of the doctors thought that maybe there was one more thing they could try to help improve his hearing. The procedure was performed and sure enough his hearing greatly improved! (Chai batodah)



# Light up the world

Written by

אֶל מוֹל פְּנֵי הַמְנוּחָה יֵאִירוּ שִׁבְעַת הַנֵּרוֹת בְּהִעָלָתָם אֶת הַנֵּרֹת דִּבֶּר אֵל אֶהֱרֹן וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵלָיו  
 Speak to Aharon and say to him, “**When you light the lamps**, the seven lamps should cast their light toward the face of the menorah.” (8:2)

When the Torah discusses the various tasks and functions that took place in the Mishkan, it is easy to “switch off” from searching how to apply these duties to *our* daily lives. After all, we do not have a Mishkan, we do not even have a Beis HaMikdash, and we may not even be Kohanim! Yet, the Torah’s eternality does not simply mean that the Torah will always be *generally* relevant, it means that it will always be *specifically* relevant to every aspect of our lives, during every moment of every day.

On this verse, for instance, Rav Pincus would recall the Gemara which discusses that one who takes care of lighting<sup>[1]</sup> will merit children who will become great Torah scholars.<sup>[2]</sup> Rav Pincus would say that this does not merely refer to Aharon in the Mishkan, and it does not only refer to those who light Shabbos or Chanuka candles, but every “mitzvah lighting”. For instance, the Medrash relates that Shaul merited to become king of Israel *because* his grandfather would concern himself about the public’s safety and light dark alleyways and dangerous places. By bringing *physical* light to people surrounded in darkness, Shaul’s grandfather merited a grandson who brought *spiritual* light to the masses through his mitzvos and leadership.<sup>[3]</sup>

When we take a moment to consider the Torah’s timeless messages and commit to apply them to our lives, we too will undoubtedly light up the world with our own greatness.

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[1] The Rif includes lighting Shabbos and Chanukah lamps to the “blessing” about to be discussed from lighting the lamps (*Shabbos* 10b). See also Ben Yehoyada for an interesting interpretation why lighting these lamps will lead to children who are Torah scholars (*Shabbos* 23b).

[2] This is because the “lamp” is analogous to “mitzvah” whereas “light” corresponds to “Torah” (*Shabbos* 23a with *Mishlei* 6:23).

[3] *Tanchumah, Tetzaveh* 8. Interestingly, the Medrash relates that Shaul’s grandfather is referred to as “Ner — lamp” for his defining act of kindness to others (see *Divrei HaYamim* 1:8:33).

## **Humor**

### **A Friendly Bet**

Two lawyers, Jonathan and David, head out for their usual 9 holes of golf. Jonathan offers David a bet. "Let's say we bet \$50."

David agrees and they're off.

After the 8th hole, David is ahead by one stroke, but cuts his ball into the rough on the 9th. "Help me find my ball. Look over there," he said to Jonathan.

After a few minutes, neither have any luck and a lost ball carries a two stroke penalty, so David pulls a ball from his pocket and tosses it to the ground. "I've found my ball!" he announces.

Jonathan looks at him. "After all of the years we've been partners and playing together, you'd cheat me out of a lousy 50 dollars?"

"What do you mean, cheat? I found my ball sitting right there!"

"And you're a liar, too!" Jonathan said. "I'll have you know I've been **STANDING** on your ball for the last five minutes!"

## A Golf Good Bye

Shimon and Reuven are playing golf one day at their local golf course. Shimon is about to chip onto the green when he sees a long funeral procession on the road next to the course.

He stops in mid-swing, closes his eyes, and bows his head in prayer.

Reuven says, "Wow, that is the most thoughtful and touching thing I have ever seen. Shimon, you truly are a kind man."

To which Shimon replies, "Well we were married for 35 years."

## Shavuot Tips for Staying Up All Night

*Eating cheese blintzes, I can do. But staying up all night, past sunrise?*

The two main traditions of the holiday of Shavuot are learning Torah and eating blintzes. Preparation for the receiving of the Torah and eating dairy in rolled up crepe form, are holiday requirements. Known as *Tikun Leil Shavuot*, it is an atonement for us falling asleep before receiving the Torah in the desert.

The eating, I can do. But staying up all night, past sunrise?

It's no easy feat so allow me share some of the methods that I have used over the years to stay awake on Shavuot:

### **Eat a Long Meal**

Most people end their meals at around 10pm. They are stuck with a good six to seven hours before morning services. You could spend all of that time learning Torah, but I haven't studied anything for six hours since my last college exam; and that was because I never showed up to class.

Eating and enjoyment on the holiday is also a Mitzvah so I suggest a marathon meal that continues until as close to sunrise as possible. You can accomplish this by chewing. Many suggest 18 chews before swallowing, corresponding with the Hebrew word 'Chai,' meaning life. I just came up with that, but it sounds really good. To extend my meal, I was chewing well over 40 times. For leftover food that may be a bit stale, I was chewing up to 80 times.