



SIMCHAT SHMUEL

BY RABBI SAM SHOR

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In our *sedra* this week we read the familiar verse- (*Devarim 8:10*): וְאָכַלְתָּ וְשָׂבַעְתָּ וּבִרְכַתָּ אֶת־יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ עַל־הָאָרֶץ הַטֹּבָה אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לָךְ

When you have eaten and been satiated, you shall bless the Lord your G-d upon the good land that he has given unto you.

This verse serves as the basis for the recitation of *birkat hamazon*, as well as the recitation of *brachot* in general before or after eating, as a sign of our appreciation and acknowledgment that *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* has provided that sustenance to us.

Our *Chazal* in the *Gemara* in *Brachot* (35b) explain this idea further:

אָמַר רַבִּי חֲנִינְיָא בַר פִּפְאָ: כָּל הַנִּהְנֶה מִן הָעוֹלָם הַזֶּה בְּלֹא בְרָכָה כְּאִילוּ גוֹזֵל לְהַקְדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא וּנְסַת יִשְׂרָאֵל

Rabbi Chanina bar Pappa said: Anyone who benefits in this world without reciting a blessing it is as if he has stolen from G-d and from Knesset Yisrael...

The concept of acknowledging that *Hashem* has provided us with sustenance and the importance of declaring our appreciation for that sustenance makes sense, but how are we to understand this statement that if we fail to recite a *bracha* upon deriving benefit, that somehow we have

also stolen from the Jewish People as well?

Rabbeinu B'Chaya, points to this *gemara* in his commentary on our verse. He explains that we need to understand that a *bracha* is not solely a vehicle for expressing our appreciation to G-d, but also the vehicle, the pipeline to bring further blessing, sustenance and goodness into the world. If we were to derive pleasure or benefit in this world without reciting a blessing, we would not only be coming up short in our show of gratitude to *Hashem* for that sustenance, but we would also be missing out on the opportunity to help others by the power inherent in that *bracha* to metaphysically channel and provide additional sustenance to descend into this world.

Similarly, the *Be'er Moshe, the Admor of Ozerov zy'a*, explains that each time we recite a *bracha*, the spiritual cognition of the gifts that *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* bestows upon us, is not only a manifestation of *Hakarat HaTov* for all we have received, but simultaneously becomes the catalyst to experience further *bracha*. When we acknowledge and are cognizant that *Hashem Yitbarach* is indeed the source of all blessing, then it opens us up spiritually and metaphysically to seeing and experiencing more and more *bracha* each and every day.

Yehi Ratzon, may each of us merit to recall the incredible dual capacity for goodness contained within every *bracha* we recite. ■



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