Why does the Torah associate the trait of mercy with the eyes and not with the heart?

Normally, the Torah attributes emotional traits, metaphorically, to the heart as their source.

Meged Yosef points out that the fact of the matter is that the heart is ultimately the source for all traits. However, in the heat of the moment one must often battle his eyes.

In the heat of the moment one must often battle his eyes. This is the case here. The Torah commands Bnei Yisrael to defeat the inhabitants of Eretz Yisrael. In the heart one can accept the need to kill the enemy because that is Hashem’s command. However, when one sees the enemy, and sees a healthy and vibrant human being, it is very hard to go ahead and actually kill this person. Because of this, the Torah tells us: “Your eye shall not have pity on them.”

FOLLOWING ONE’S EYES

A father is concerned about his child to train and discipline his son to do that which is correct.

But even if one’s child does not respond to the father’s guidance, the father will not give up. The father’s love and natural concern for his son do not allow him to leave any stone unturned in his quest to assure that the son is headed on the correct path of life. His heart yearns for the welfare of his child, and the father therefore will continue to discipline the son until the boy is set on the proper course.

The best indication that the father acts out of love is that once the formal discipline is no longer needed, the father immediately is ready and willing to provide the son with anything he needs, and he will coach and support the son both emotionally and physically.

A father is concerned about his child to train and discipline his son to do that which is correct.
TO THANK AND TO BLESS

We learn that a brachah is to be said after partaking of food, but how do we know that it is to be said before eating? We learn this from a לְכָּל עֻזַּרְיָת קָרָא - an a fortiori. If one is required to recite a brachah after eating, when he is full, then certainly one must say a brachah before eating, when he is hungry. - Gemara Berachos 35a

A simple reading of this Gemara may seem perplexing. Our logic would lead us to think that offering thanks and praise is more deserving and appropriate after one eats and is satisfied. Why does the Gemara believe that a satisfied person is less likely to have to bless?

Rav Dov Ber Yaffe notes that there are two distinct concepts which should be differentiated. קדושה is acknowledging and expressing thanks. This is fitting in reference to a gift or favor already bestowed. Giving thanks after having received one’s needs is a very basic gesture, and it is a level which even the gentile world recognizes. "Blessing" is telling of praise and lauding Hashem’s ability to continually provide. It is only the Jews, ingrained through and through with appreciation and trust in Hashem’s continuing benevolence, who boldly and lovingly bless, and even thank and praise Hashem, not only for what they have already received, but also for that which He will grant to us in the future. As the verse states (Tehillim 145:10): “All that You have made will praise You” - for all mankind understands the concept of thanks. “But your pious ones - they will bless you.” It is the chosen few who are prepared to bless and comprehend Hashem’s great gifts even before they are distributed. This is the level of the Jewish people.

In introducing the mitzvah of Birkas HaMazon, it would seem to be more fitting for the verse to have said, “And you shall eat and be satisfied, and bless God, your Lord, for the good land which He has given you.” Devarim 8:10

It is only the Jews who boldly and lovingly bless and even thank and praise God for that which He will grant to us in the future.

THE LIVES OF THE RIGHTEOUS

Oros HaGr"a cites the verse in Mishlei (13:25) which states: “The righteous only eat that which they require to subsist, and only enough to satisfy their hunger. The wicked, however, indulge in consumption to fill their desires, which are unbounded. It is almost as if their stomachs are too small to contain the excess in which they partake. “Their bellies are lacking”, because they wallow in an overabundance of delicacies and luxuries, and their bodies cannot contain it all.

The righteous are characterized by restraint. They eat sparingly, and they stop when their hunger is satisfied. This indicates a level of trust and confidence in that there is no need to hoard or stockpile, for Hashem continues to provide for each and every day. The righteous person does not worry that the next day will be one of want. Each day, then, is one of contentment. The wicked one lives with a sense of concern and anxiety, always reluctant to use that which he has so that it may be preserved for the next day as well, for he has no trust in Hashem to sustain him beyond that which he can plan for himself.

AN ATTITUDE OF ARROGANCE

Sefer Toras HaMiddos tells the story that when Rabbi Chaim from Volozhin first established his yeshiva, he arranged for the students to be housed in relatively large and well-furnished rooms. Some people from the community noticed this degree of comfort which the young men had been afforded, and they pointed out to the Rosh HaYeshivah their concern that as a result of such fine treatment,
And now, Israel, what does God, your Lord, ask of you but to fear God, your Lord, to go in all His ways and to love Him, and to serve God, your Lord, with all your heart and with all your soul.

Devarim 10:12

Arrogance is not the exclusive property of men who live in respectable housing.

God expects a person to avoid sin because of the distance it places between the person and God.

God, your Lord, you shall fear, Him shall you serve, and to Him shall you cleave, and with His Name shall you swear.” Devarim 10:20

Arrogance is possible even with one whose job is to remove shoes in the bathhouse and to shovel coals? It is not the exclusive property of men who live in respectable housing. Anything can lead to haughtiness, and it is incumbent upon each and every person to work on his personality continually to refine and perfect himself to rid himself of this trait.

Reb Chaim responded by relating a story. “Once, I arrived at a small town and went to the local bathhouse before Shabbos. I was about to remove my boots, when, in order to earn a few extra cents for himself, the person who attended to the building approached to offer to help me. He grabbed my shoe and began to tug and yank at it with all of his strength. I tried to tell him calmly that in Volozhin we remove our shoes gently. He became angry and grabbed his shovel, about to hit me, as he raised his voice and screamed at me. ‘How dare you tell me how to take off shoes! I have been doing this for years, and there is no one who is better at this than I am!’”

Reb Chaim then concluded, “My dear friends, don't you see that arrogance is possible even with one whose job is to remove shoes in the bathhouse and to shovel coals? It is not the exclusive property of men who live in respectable housing. Anything can lead to haughtiness, and it is incumbent upon each and every person to work on his personality continually to refine and perfect himself to rid himself of this trait.”

THE DESTRUCTIVE ASPECT OF SIN

A man warned his son many times not to walk around barefoot. The father told his son that the reason for this instruction was that the son might step on a thorn, and extracting a thorn was an especially painful procedure. The father wanted the son to avoid such an ordeal by taking the simple precaution of walking around with his feet protected. The son heard the father’s advice, and he heeded his words. Yet, the son’s main concern was not that he might step on a thorn in the first place, which would cause an injury to his foot. That he followed his father’s directive was based upon the desire to avoid the pain of having to remove the thorn if it were to become imbedded into his foot. The father, on the other hand, was primarily concerned with having his son avoid injury in the first place. The removal of a foreign body from his foot, if it were to happen, would actually be beneficial, for it would be part of the healing process, if necessary.

HaMagid MiMezeritch notes that some people avoid sin because they are afraid of the punishment in store for each and every sin they commit. Yet, Hashem expects a person to avoid sin because of the distance it places between the person and Hashem. The sin is evil and damaging to a person in and of itself, aside from the extended consequences which result. In fact, once the sin is perpetrated, the retribution which results is actually helpful in that it serves as a purifying and atonement process that assists the person in overcoming and repairing the damage that has been done. As our verse declares, Hashem seeks from a person “only that he fear God”.

We should focus our concern on avoiding sin due to its being a destructive force, and not merely due to the punishment which is in store for those who indulge in these unacceptable activities.

THE TERRIBLE SIN OF CHILUL HASHEM

The word מפג"א comes to include talmidei chachamim – that one should have reverence for Torah scholars. -- Pesachim 22b

Rabbi Yitzchak said: If one makes [derogatory] remarks about the dead, it is like making remarks about a stone. Some say [the reason is that] they do not know, while others say that they do not care. Can that be so? Has not Rav Papa said: “A certain man made derogatory remarks about Mar Shmuel and a log fell from the roof and broke his skull.” A rabbinical student is different, because the Holy One, blessed be He, avenges his insult. - Berachos 19a

Mahar”l Diskin cites Rambam’s Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah (the end of the fifth chapter), who writes that there are two categories of desecrating the Name of God. One is when a person violates a Torah precept or conducts himself in an unlawfully lenient manner in public. The second category is when a Torah
And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and upon your gates. Devarim 11:20

While he was away, he was exempt from the mitzvah, and the new situation warrants a new brachah.

People observe and take lessons from Torah scholars, as they assume that everything they do is justified and condoned by the Torah itself.

If someone tells false reports about a Torah scholar, that he acted improperly, this would cause a chilul Hashem, because people would believe his story and they might conduct themselves in the same way that they had heard was done by this important person.

The Gemara tells us that telling stories about those who have already died is technically not a violation of the law of leshon hara. Yet, if the story is being told about a talmid chacham, a great Torah scholar, those words have the ability to cause a great desecration of the Name of God. This is why Hashem directly intervened and protected the dignity and the reputation of the Torah scholar, in order that His name not be desecrated. When the people saw that a beam from the ceiling fell down and killed the person who was spreading the rumors, they understood that this man had lied, and that he was promulgating vicious and false aspersions on a Torah scholar.

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MEZUZAH INQUIRIES

There is a fascinating opinion found in the responsa of Rabbi Akiva Eiger (I:9) regarding the mitzvah of mezuzah. He writes: “It seems to me that if someone leaves his house for business and he stays away many hours, or perhaps he may even leave his city and travel for many days, when he returns to his house he should recite a new brachah upon the mitzvah of mezuzah each time. This can be compared to the case of a person who leaves his sukkah to conduct his business. There, too, the person recites a new brachah upon the new opportunity to do the mitzvah. In both cases – the mitzvah of sukkah and the mitzvah of mezuzah – while he was away he was exempt from the mitzvah, and the new situation warrants a new brachah. Even if he leaves the members of his family in the house while he is away, they are technically not the owners, and their obligation is no more than one who borrows or rents. This is also comparable to one who removes his tallis, not having in mind to put it on again immediately, where the halachah is that he should repeat the brachah when he does wear it again.” Rabbi Akiva Eiger concludes and writes that he later came across the sefer Birkei Yosef, in which the author writes that a new brachah need not be recited upon the mezuzah when returning from an extended absence, because the brachah was only established at the moment of fastening the mezuzah on the doorpost, and not just having one upon the door. Nevertheless, Rabbi Akiva Eiger concludes that the matter must be studied further in order to arrive at a proper conclusion.

When Rabbi Yitzchok Elchanan Spektor, the Rav of Kovno, was asked about this insight of Rabbi Akiva Eiger, he cited several sources which clearly indicate that no brachah should be said when one returns to his home after being away for a while. The Shita Mikubetzes (Bava Metzia 101b) writes that even if one owns ten houses, he must affix mezuzahs to each of them, although he may not even enter each house more than once a year. The Nimukei Yosef (ibid.) also writes that if a person owns a house which remains empty, he is nevertheless obligated to have a mezuzah fastened upon its doors. This is true even though he neither lives in the house nor rents it out. These two sources seem to clearly indicate that the obligation of the mitzvah of mezuzah continues uninterrupted even when a person is not in his house, and consequently no new brachah would be needed if a person was away from his house for business.

Rabbi Dovid Rappaport, a grandson of Rabbi Akiva Eiger, in his work Tzemach David (comments and insights on the writings of Rabbi Akiva Eiger),
analyses this halachah, and he concludes that, in fact, no brachah should be recited for the mitzvah of mezuzah if one is away from his house even for an extended period.

Halachic Corner

When removing tefillin, a man should first unwind the coils of the leather strap from the hand and from the fingers, but not from the arm. This portion of the strap which was removed is then wrapped around his palm. The Shel Rosh is then removed, wrapped up and put into the tefillin bag. Finally, he removes and puts away the Shel Yad. It is proper to kiss the tefillin before putting them on and when removing them. The bayis must be held stationary while the leather strap is wrapped around the sides, the titurah, rather than holding the strap steady and rolling the bayis into the strap. It is customary to place the Shel Yad on the left side of the bag and the Shel Rosh on the right side, so that when one opens it he will reach first to the left side for the Shel Yad and put it on, then to the right side for the Shel Rosh. One should not remove his tefillin in front of a Sefer Torah. The tallis should be removed after the removal of the tefillin.

Questions for Thought and Study

1. Which words indicate that a person can only have רצון (joy) when performing mitzvos?
   See Ohr HaChaim 7:12
2. Other than feeding Bnei Yisrael, what else did the ש' provide for them?
   See Ba’al HaTurim 8:3
3. How is the irrigation of Eretz Yisrael blessed in contrast to Egypt?
   See Ramban 8:7
4. What is the first tactic the yetzer hara uses to draw a person away from Hashem? Which words indicate this?
   See Ohr HaChaim 8:18
5. What is the best time for rain? Which words allude to this?
   See Ba’al HaTurim 11:14
6. What is the reward for being scrupulous in the mitzvah of mezuzah?
   See Ohr HaChaim 11:21

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By Hebrew Theological College wishing mazal tov to HTC Board of Governors member, Robert Matanky, and his wife Lee on the birth of a grandson, born to Joe & Katie Schwartz; to HTC Board of Governors member, Mr. Michael Nussbaum, on the marriage of his grandson, Ari Daniels, to Rebecca Baratz; and to HTC Board of Regents member, Dr. Oscar Novick, and his wife Bernice, on the marriage of their grandson, Shlomo Rush, to Daniella Last.

Gourmet Torah at Shallots Bistro is not meeting in the restaurant, so we are bringing Torah to you. Please join Rabbi Ben-Zion Rand over Zoom on Thursday, August 13, at 12:30 PM. Topic: “The Three Festivals - A Practical Approach”. Zoom info: https://zoom.us/j/99921240863 or call in +1 312-626-6799. Zoom ID 999 2124 0863.

Mazel tov to the Fasman Yeshiva High School Class of 2020 upon your graduation this week. We are so proud of you and all you have accomplished this year. We wish you much hatzlacha in yeshiva, college and beyond!

By Hebrew Theological College inviting prospective students to apply for our upcoming Fall 2020 semester. This year we will have three tracks for men: Yeshiva learning only, Yeshiva and College. Chavrusa and shiurim will meet in person, and college classes will be held over Zoom and Canvas. To learn more, contact Rabbi Josh Zisook at zisook@htc.edu or call 847-982-2500 ext. 1113.

JDBY-YTT is seeking an Assistant to our incoming CEO. The ideal candidate will possess excellent verbal and written communication skills, organizational and computer skills and the ability to multitask. If you would like to join the staff of a fast-growing school and assist in the chinuch habonim v’habanos of nearly 1300 children, please submit a résumé by email only to hr@jdbyytt.org with “Assistant to CEO” in the subject line. Please include several references.

JDBY-YTT is seeking an additional full-time School Nurse to oversee the health of our student body, overseeing and implementing the health and wellness education, and maintaining compliance with governmental medical requirements. The School Nurse will work closely with the administration of the girls’, boys’ and/or Nursery divisions. Interested candidates should email their résumé with “School Nurse” in the subject line to hr@jdbyytt.org.

Joan Dachs Bais Yaakov Elementary School is seeking candidates for the following positions in the General Studies Department for the 2020-2021 school year: permanent subs and primary grades teacher assistants. Scheduled hours will be Monday-Thursday afternoons 12:15-4:00 PM and Friday afternoons 11:45 - 1:00 PM. Call 773-583-5329 x402 or email résumés to rwechsler@jdbyytt.org.
Yeshivas Tiferes Tzvi is seeking qualified candidates for the following General Studies positions: 1st grade teacher; 3rd or 4th grade teacher, Assistants for Prek1 - 3rd grade. Applicants should contact Mrs. Jodi Sohl at jsohl@jdbytt.org or 773-973-6150 ext 209.

Arie Crown Hebrew Day School seeks outstanding 3rd and 4th Grade General Studies teachers for the upcoming school year. Ideal candidates are passionate about teaching, willing to collaborate, and eager to be part of a great team. We offer ongoing mentoring, coaching, and professional development. All positions are afternoons only. Please send résumé and cover letter to Mrs. Miriam Swann, Director of General Studies, at mswann@ariecrown.org.

Arie Crown Hebrew Day School Early Childhood is seeking creative, dedicated teachers and assistants to work with Kindergarten children. Enthusiastic educators who will inspire our young children to learn through exploration and investigation. Lead teacher candidates must have early childhood degree/teaching experience. General Studies positions available. Shoshana Safrinstein ssafirstein@ariecrown.org 847-908-7977.

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In loving memory of our parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents, רב ון-רבי יחזקאל ז"ל, ג研讨会 פקע וה_phy. Pauline Litz, on the occasion of her 42nd yahrtzeit on 13 Av, and רבי רב לך מתתא עקרב, רבי דב בנ הפך התשכ"ל, Dr. Bernard Litz, on the occasion of his 21st yahrtzeit on 20 Av. They exuded love of Torah, family, chesed & ma’asim tovim. May they continue to be role models to their families. May their memories be for a blessing and may their neshamas have an aliyah. - The Litz, Bensinger, Sharfman, and Harris families. (Kehilath Jacob)

By the Samber, Millen, Engel and Lehrfield families in loving memory of our dear husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, Moshe Samber, ו"ת, on the occasion of his yahrtzeit on 23 Av. May his memory be for a blessing.

By Shaynee Jankelovitz, Stuart & Terri Jankelovitz and family, Lisa & Henry Goldberg and family, and Alan & Karen Jankelovitz and family in memory of our beloved mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother, Lillian Schaffer Grey, ו"ת, on the occasion of her 21st yahrtzeit on 23 Av. May her memory be for a blessing.

By the Volkut, Himmelfarb and Meisel families in loving memory of our dear father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, Chaskel Schlesinger, ו"ת, on his 21st yahrtzeit on 23 Menachem Av. His memory remains with us always and inspires all of us through the generations.

In loving memory of our mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother, Miriam Saltzman, ו"ת, on the occasion of her fifth yahrtzeit on 18 Av. Your memory lives on in our great-grandchildren, who follow in your footsteps of Yiddishkeit. - By the Buckman, Drapkin, Gerson, Weinstein, Gottlieb, Saltzman, Yoffe, Steiner, and Rosby families.

By the Silverstein family, the Mayesky family, the Isenberg family, and the Lerer family in memory of their beloved father and grandfather, Rabbi Isaac Mayesky, ו"ת, on the occasion of his 34th yahrtzeit on 21 Av. May his memory be for a blessing.

By Chana & Phil Kovalsky and family in memory of our beloved aunt, Eva Chudnof (née Meisel), ו"ת, on the occasion of her ninth yahrtzeit on the 22nd of Av. Eva was the sister of our late mother, Rebbetzin Leah Chaimovitz.

By Melanie and Moshe Neiditch, Yakov Neiditch, and Marsha and Jeff Schneiderman, in loving memory of our mother and savtah, Libby - Leeba bet Yehudah Leib Chaikil, ו"ת, on the occasion of her yahrtzeit on 20 Av. May her memory be for a blessing.

NILKUTI PESHATIM HAS TORAH CONTENT - PLEASE TREAT IT RESPECTFULLY

Prepared by Rabbi Ben-Zion Rand, Editor, and Mrs. Naomi Samber, Managing Editor

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Likutei Peshatim is endowed by Les & Ethel Sutker in loving memory of Max and Mary Sutker and Louis and Lillian Klein, ו"ת. May their memory be for a blessing.

Answers:

1. The word "ירחון" ("and it will be") always denotes a state of joy. Moshe was telling Bnei Yisrael that when they perform the mitzvos this will lead to a joyous state. The word "ירחון" can also imply "the end". It will be, in the end, that when one performs the mitzvos he will be in a state of joy.

2. The provided Bnei Yisrael with wisdom ("לפו בדוק את ישראל"). This is indicated by the words "ליאור ותרומתך" ("in order that you may know") written right after the blessing of the יסראלי.

3. Unlike Egypt, which needed to be irrigated manually, Eretz Yisrael will be blessed to be irrigated through springs and underground waters on its own.

4. The yetzer hara (evil inclination) tries to make a person forget all the good that Hashem has done for him. Once the person lacks gratitude, the yetzer can convince the person to deny Hashem’s existence. This is understood from the double expression "ירחון ורחב" (at night).

5. The word "ירחון" ("in its proper time") is numerically equal to יריעה (at night).

6. One who is scrupulous in the mitzvah of mezuzah is rewarded with long life. This is understood from the section that says "ל성이 רבי ומעולה" ("in order to prolong your days") written right after the mitzvah of mezuzah.