The mission of **Torah Is Geshmack** is to bring out the richness and enjoyment of Torah for everyone, and in doing so bring them closer to Hashem.

תשפ״ו

Why a Bracha Here and Not There?

Dovid Kopel

If you start learning *birchos hamitzvos* seriously, one thing becomes clear very quickly: Chazal did **not** institute a bracha on "every mitzvah." They instituted brachos on certain **types** of mitzvos—where a bracha is the right כלי to frame the act.

So whenever we ask, **"Why do we make a bracha here, but not there?"** we're not asking a technical question. We're asking: *what category is this mitzvah in?* What is a bracha doing here—and what would be off about doing it there?

Let's build a map.

A well-known יסוד (*brought in the Rishonim*) is that we don't make a bracha on **tzedakah** because it is a mitzvah that is תלויה באחר. Even if I'm holding the money and fully ready to give, the recipient might refuse, be embarrassed, or not accept. If I would say "ברוך אתה… וצונו" first, I could end up with a ברכה לבטלה—a proclamation that assumes the mitzvah will happen when, in reality, it may not.

So far so good.

But then a sharper question pops up:

Isn't **kiddushin** also תלויה באחר? The woman must consent and accept the ring/shaveh kesef properly. If that's the issue, it should be the same problem.

A simple answer is that **kiddushin is staged in a way that removes the uncertainty**. By the time the bracha is said, the act has already been agreed upon: both sides are on board, the ring is ready, witnesses are ready, and the entire ma'amad is orchestrated to go through. It's not the fluctuating, awkward, real-time uncertainty of tzedakah.

And there is also a deeper layer many point out: **Birkat Eirusin doesn't read like a standard "brachas ha-mitzvah on an action."** Its nusach is about עריות, permitted and forbidden relationships, and the kedushah system of Yisrael. That sounds more like **brachas shevach/ kedushah** than "I am now doing X." Once you see it that way, it's less vulnerable to the standard "maybe it won't happen" concern.

So already we have one major category:

> ***Where the mitzvah depends on another person's acceptance, Chazal often avoided a bracha.***

But that's not the only axis.

There's another כלל that helps explain other conspicuous omissions:

We don't make a bracha on mitzvos that come through קלקול.

A bracha is not just a technical permission slip—it's a formal proclamation. In normal usage, it carries a tone of uplift: "אשר קדשנו...וצונו." When the act exists only because something went wrong, or because life arrived at a painful necessity, it may be halachically correct, but it is not something we "announce" as a banner moment.

This helps frame:

- **Bi'ur nosar**: the "mitzvah" exists because the korban wasn't eaten in its proper time. It's a תיקון after a breakdown.
- **Gerushin**: sometimes necessary, sometimes the right halachic step, but it is still a ma'amad of פירוד. It's not the עולם of בנין.

So now we have a second category:

> ***Where the mitzvah is essentially a tikkun of damage or bound up with sadness, Chazal did not institute a bracha.***

At this point, a thoughtful objection arises:

Of course we do. We live with *kabbalas hadin*. We believe everything is from Hashem. We don't deny difficult realities.

But there's a difference between **acceptance** and **happiness**.

A powerful parallel: we do **not** say **Hallel** on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Not because those days lack holiness—because they are days of דין, awe, and seriousness. "ספרי חיים וספרי מתים פתוחים." It isn't that praise is false; it's that the nature of Hallel isn't fitting for the moment.

So too here: we can accept hard halachic necessities fully, with אמונה, and still say that the formal "proclamation language" of bracha does not belong on certain acts.

Now we're ready for the twist that pulls it all together.

We often say that mitzvos that are **constant**, without a clear discrete moment, don't get brachos. That's why **kibbud av va'em** has no bracha: it's constant and situational. You can't imagine a bracha every time you stand up for a parent, bring a cup of water, speak respectfully, or refrain from contradicting. It's a life-mitzvah, lived across thousands of small acts.

But then you ask: **Talmud Torah is also constant!** And yet we say **Birchos HaTorah**.

So what's the חילוק?

Even though the חיוב of learning is constant, **the bracha isn't trying to follow every ma'aseh**. It's a once-a-day framing: we are entering today into the עולם of Torah, and our mouths are about to speak Torah.

And here's where it gets even sweeter:

In general, **Birchos HaNehenin** function as a מתיר—a halachic permission to benefit from this world in the right framework. Enjoyment isn't taken as a grab; it's taken with awareness that it's from Hashem.

Many view **Birchos HaTorah** in a similar light specifically Rav Chaim Brisker.

Not, chas v'shalom, that Torah needs "permission" the way food does—Torah is חובה and קדושה. But the *act of engaging Torah*, of taking Hashem's Torah and learning it, is treated as an **entry into a domain** that requires הקדמה: a daily *matir*-like framing. That's why the nusach is full of:

- "ונתן לנו את תורתו ...אשר בחר בנו" (ברכות התורה)
- "והערב נא..." - Indicates the nature of enjoying the Torah
- "נותן התורה"

It's not "I hereby bench this specific five minutes of learning." It's: **I am about to live with your sweet Torah today and incorporate it into my life.**

Now the contrast becomes crisp:

- **Kibbud av va'em**: constant, episodic, and would require endless micro-brachos—so there is no bracha.
- **Talmud Torah**: constant too, but Chazal (and/or the Torah itself) set it up with a daily "entry" point—a bracha that functions as a once-per-day framing / *matir* for the day's Torah.

So the "why a bracha here and not there?" questions aren't random. They fit into clear categories:

- Uncertainty / תלויה באחר → no bracha (tzedakah and many interpersonal acts).
- **Kilkul / sadness / tikkun after breakdown** → no bracha (nosar, gerushin).
- **Constant, non-discrete life-mitzvos** → no bracha (kibbud av va'em).
- **But Torah—though constant—gets a bracha** because its bracha is not on each act; it's a daily framing, almost like a spiritual parallel to the *matir* of birchos hanehenin.

And that might be the best takeaway:

A bracha isn't merely a label that says "this is a mitzvah." It's a **way of speaking**—a formal declaration that frames how we enter an act. And Chazal taught us that not every holy thing is framed the same way.

When we have the opportunity to make brachos, let's pause for a moment and think about how special it is for us to proclaim and sanctify Hashem's name! Don't rush, take your time. Make it count!

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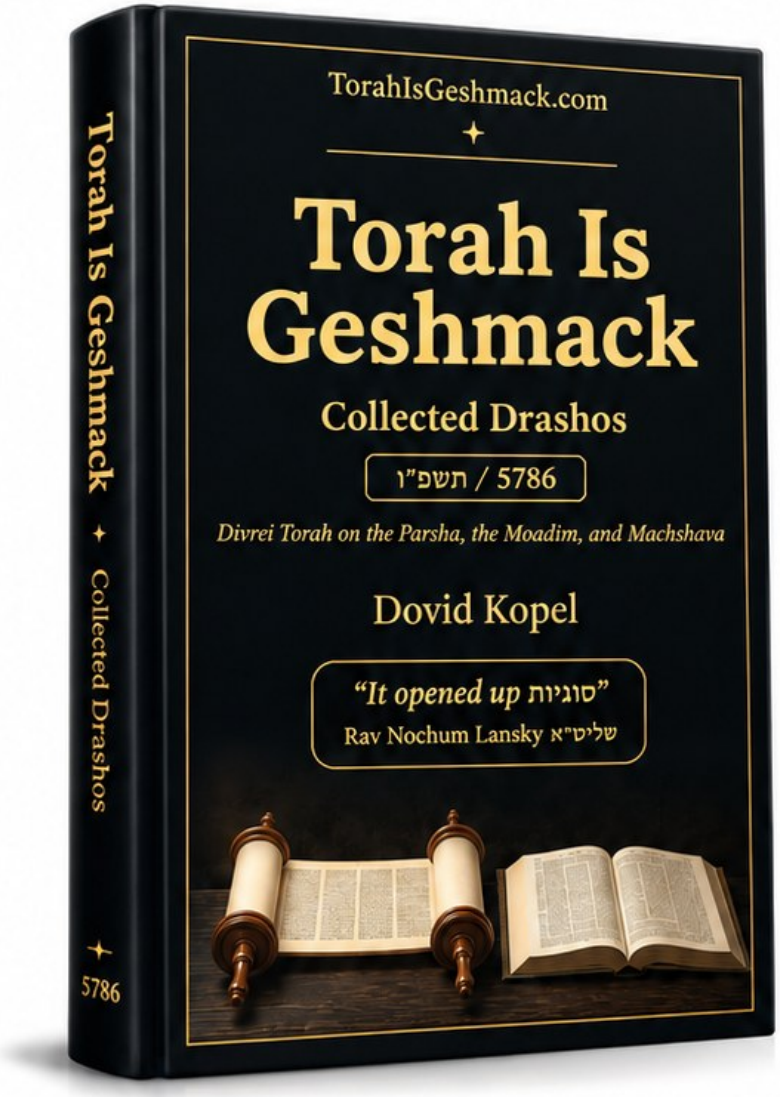
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