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# PARSHA ENCOUNTERS

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Parshas Lech –Lecha  Rabbi Yossi Lowinger

## Be Happy With Your Lot

“Vayivchar lo Lot es kol behar hayarden vayisah Lot m'kedem vayifritzu ish mayal achiv”. (13:11) “So Lot chose for himself the whole plain of the Yarden and Lot journeyed from the east; there they parted, one from his brother.”

Rashi cites the medrash that Lot ‘traveled’ away from Hashem, who is referred to here as “kedem”. He said “I want neither Avram nor his G-d”. This medrash seems very difficult to understand. Lot seems to have been on a high level of Ruchniyus. He had journeyed with Avram when Hashem had told him “Lech Lecha”, despite the fact that it was unclear where he was headed. Later on, when the angels came to Sodom, Lot was moser nefesh to host them. With this being said, how do we understand this medrash that Lot said, “I want neither Avram nor his G-d”? A deeper analysis of Lot reveals one major motivation in all his actions; his love of money. This love of money ultimately derailed Lot from a higher level of ruchniyus.

When Avram left Choron to fulfill Hashem’s command the Torah says, “Vayelech ito Lot” and Lot went with him. There are two words in Lashon Kodesh for “with”- ‘es’ and ‘im’. The word ‘im’ connotes with one intent. The word ‘es’ however connotes two different intentions. It’s true that Lot went with Avram, however “Lot halach **ito**” that is, Lot went for a different reason. Says the Kerem Tzvi, that Lot went with Avram with the knowledge that Avram had no children, and therefore when Avram dies Lot would inherit all he had. Thus, he was motivated by greed. This same

love of money was manifest again when the shepherds of Lot allowed their animals to graze on other peoples pastures. This also caused Lot to settle in Sodom because of its prosperity despite the tremendous evil that prevailed there.

With this in mind we can understand a difficult Rashi in Parshas Vayera. Rashi says that the reason Lot was saved from being destroyed along with Sodom was because when Avram went to Egypt and claimed that Sorah was his sister, Lot kept quiet and did not reveal the truth that she was really Avram’s wife. The question is however, what is so commendable about Lot not revealing the truth about Avram? Was Lot so evil that he would have handed over Avram to be killed?

According to the Kerem Tzvi, Lot’s desire to travel with Avram was based on his yearning to inherit his possessions. Seeing how Lot’s desire for money ultimately played a major role in every decision of his, we can now fathom how he would reveal the truth about Sorah, in order to receive major rewards and riches. And yet, this was the one time Lot did not let his greed get the better of him, and for that he deserved to be saved from Sdom.

The message to be learned from Lot is that too much pursuit of Gashmius can lead to a sharp decline in Ruchniyus. May we be zoche to internalize this message.

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# HALACHA ENCOUNTERS

## Mashiv Haruach Umorid Hagushem

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**B**eginning with mussaf of Shmini Atzeres and continuing until mussaf on the first day of Pesach, we include “mashiv haruach umorid hagushem” (henceforth- mhuh) in the second bracha of every shmonei esrei we recite. Omission of this phrase may invalidate the entire shmone esrei. The following is a review of the halachos governing one who omits mhuh.

[Note: There is actually a difference of custom regarding the pronunciation of the last word of this phrase. Some pronounce the “gimel” with a komotz beneath it (hagushem) while others pronounce it with a segol (hageshem). Much has been written on this point, particularly in recent years. (See, for example, *Ishei Yisroel Chapter 23 Note 87 and Kovetz Mvakshei Torah vol. 9 No. 43, Marcheshvan 5767*). Hagaon Rav Moshe Feinstein *zt”l* writes in *Igros Moshe O.C. 4:40-15* that the correct pronunciation is hagushem with a komotz.]

A clear distinction exists in halacha between one who omitted mhuh but recited “morid hatal” in its place (which is generally the case with one who davens nusach sfard and recites morid hatal throughout the summer months) and one who recited neither phrase. We will first discuss the halachos which apply to one who recited neither “morid hagushem” nor “morid hatal”.

1) Mhuh may be recited at any point within the second brocha of shmone esrei. Therefore, if one missed saying it at the precise point which the Chachamim designated (that is, immediately before the words “mchalkeil chaim b’chesed...”) he should insert it later in the bracha, between any two phrases. In this case, no repetition is necessary.

2) If one already recited “v’nemon atah l’hachayos meisim” just prior to the conclusion of the second brocha and then realizes he omitted mhuh, he should recite it at that point and then proceed by repeating “v’nemon atah...” and concluding the bracha.

3) If one realizes his omission after having begun the conclusion of the bracha (by saying “boruch” or “boruch atah”) before saying Hashem’s name, he should immediately recite mhuh and then continue by returning to “mchalkeil chaim b’chesed”. (*Ishei Yisroel Chapter 23 notes 117 and 126 citing Hagaon Rav Chaim Kanievsky Shlita.*)

4) If one realizes his omission just after reciting Hashem’s name in the conclusion of the brocha (“boruch atah Hashem”) he should immediately recite “lamdeini chukecha”, then recite mhuh and continue with “mchalkeil chaim b’chesed”. (*Mishna Brurah 114:32 and Beur Halacha; Ishei Yisroel chapter 23 note 126. Hagaon Rav Moshe Feinstein, however, in Igros Moshe O.C. 4:93 disagrees with the Mishna Brurah on this point.*)

5) If one already said “Boruch atah Hashem mchayei”, he must complete the brocha (by saying “hameisim”), then recite mhuh, and proceed with the next brocha “Atah kadosh”. This is true even if he paused significantly after saying “mchayei hameisim” as long as he remained silent. Preferably, one should not pause then but should recite mhuh immediately upon concluding the brocha of mchayei hameisim.

6) If one already began the third brocha of shmone esrei by reciting even one word (“Atah”), he can no longer salvage the tfilla which he began. From this point on there is no recourse other than to return to the beginning of shmone esrei and start over from “Boruch atah Hashem...” (The introductory pasuk, “Hashem sfasai tiftach...” need not be repeated.) Even if one completed the entire shmone esrei before realizing his omission of mhuh, he must repeat it in its entirety. If the latest time for that tfilla has already passed when he realizes his error, a tfillas tashlumin (supplementary shmone esrei) must be recited just as if the original shmone esrei was skipped entirely.

7) With regard to one who is uncertain if he mentioned mhuh in shmone esrei, the halacha is as follows. During the first ninety tfillos one davens in which mhuh needs to be included, uncertainty is treated as omission and all the above rules apply. After ninety tfillos in which one mentioned mhuh, the assumption is he will no longer omit it, and consequently in a case of uncertainty he would not repeat shmone esrei or any part of it.

### If one said Morid Hatal

As mentioned above, the halacha is different for one who omitted mhuh but did mention morid hatal instead. The *Beur Halacha 114:5* says that he too should correct his mistake if he realizes it before mentioning Hashem’s name in the bracha of mchayei hameisim. Rules 1, 2 and 3 above are, therefore, applicable to this individual as well. However, at any point after mentioning Hashem’s name, this person would proceed with his shmone esrei as usual. Rules 4-7 are not applicable to him.

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