



## Thanksgiving Table Talk



42.2 million Americans struggle with hunger. This month, our students are learning about hunger and what we can do to help. Food collected from our classroom food drives will be donated to Tomchei Shabbos. Below are some organizations that you and your family can join in the fight against hunger. To learn more you can visit [mazon.org](http://mazon.org).

Stuff the Bus: (bus located on 68<sup>th</sup> Ave. and 108<sup>th</sup> St., Forest Hills) 718-268-5811

Tomchei Shabbos of Queens: <http://www.tsqinc.org/>

Mary Bennan INN: <https://the-inn.org/programs/soup-kitchens/mary-brennan-inn-hempstead/>

### Thoughts on the holiness of food:

Rabbi Sacks notes that the laws of Kashrut, in Parshat Shemini are followed by the construction of the Mishkan. He quotes Rabbi Munk, who teaches that the first command given to Adam Harishon is about what he can and cannot eat, directing him to avoid the Eitz Hadat. Similarly, the creation of the Mishkan is followed by the laws of Kashrut. Rabbi Sacks teaches that since humankind cannot survive without food, it is the focus of many cultures, some taking either withdrawal from or excess of food to an extreme. He writes, "Judaism, by contrast, sees the human situation in terms of integration and balance. We are body and soul. Hence the Judaic imperative, neither hedonistic nor ascetic, but transformative. We are commanded to sanctify the activities of eating..."

### Thoughts on our obligation to feed the hungry:

**משנה תורה, הלכות מתנות עניים י"א'**

(א) חִיבִין אָנוּ לְהִזְהָר בְּמִצְוֹת צְדָקָה יוֹתֵר מִכָּל מִצְוֹת עֲשֵׂה. שֶׁהַצְּדָקָה סִימָן לְצַדִּיק זָרַע אֲבָרָהֶם אָבִינוּ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (בראשית יח יט) "כִּי יִדְעָתוּ לְמַעַן אֲשֶׁר יִצְוֶה אֶת בְּנָיו" (בראשית יח יט) "לְעֲשׂוֹת צְדָקָה".

**Mishneh Torah, Gifts to the Poor 10:1**

(1) We must be especially careful to observe the *mitzvah* of *tzedakah*, more so than any other positive *mitzvah*, for *tzedakah* is a sign of the righteous [*tzadik*] lineage of Abraham, our father, as it is said, (Genesis 18:19) *For I have singled him out, that he may instruct his children and his posterity [to keep the way of the LORD] by doing what is just [tzedakah]*.

### Let's Talk!

Why is Tzedakah such an important mitzvah?

The Rambam says it is the most important Mitzvat Aseh, positive command, why do you think that is?

How can you and your family do the Mitzvah of Tzedakah?