

Pekudei 2016

1.

Kavana when reciting berachos

Maaynah shel Torah page 176

"מאת אדנים למאת הככר ככר לאדן." (38, 27)

The Mishkan consisted of 100 sockets. These 100 sockets correspond to the 100 berachos which we are obligated to say daily. (As a side point, on a typical day we all most automatically recite minimally 100 berachos. Just in the three shemonah esrays alone and berchas hashachar consist of over 70 berachos.) Just like the sockets were the foundation of the Mishkan, so too **the 100 berachos which we recite are a major part of the foundation of our holiness.** The shrosh (root) of the word אדנים (sockets) is אדן/adan, master. The Chidushei Ha'Rim explains that through the recitation of berachos we testify that Hashem is the master of everything. These 100 brachos serve as the 'sockets' of every single individual.

**What's the source that we are required to recite 100 berachos daily? The Gemara in Menachos (43b) quotes Rabbi Meir who says a person is obligated to recite 100 berachos daily as the pasuk states "מה ה' אלהיך שואל מעמך??"** Rashi says don't read the word as מה, rather as מאה, 100. Tosefos explains that there are 100 letters in that pasuk. We find other pesukim that allude to this concept as well. The Bamidbar Raba (18, 21) quotes the pasuk in sefer Shmuel (2, 23) "הקם על". The gematria (numerical value) of על is 100 which corresponds to the 100 berachos. Every day 100 people would die. The reason for this tragedy was unknown. They finally understood once David Hamelech came and established the 100 Berachos and people stopped dying.

The Baal Haturim (devarim 4, 4) quotes the pasuk in Devarim that says "you who cling to Hashem, your God – you are all alive today." "ואתם הדבקים בה' אלהיכם חיים כלכם היום." On top of the letter ק in דבקים there is a special crown (קֶ). This alludes to the 100 berachos! The pasuk is essentially saying that only through the recitation of the 100 berachos will we merit a true life. The explanation of the Bal Haturim perhaps is; real life is living in a religious way and by following Godly pursuits. When we recite a bracha prior to the consumption of a certain food, additional קדושה/holiness is added to that food.

**Are there any segulas (good omens) for one who recites these 100 berachos? If there are, what are they?** The Meir Oz (Rabbi Meir Arava, chalek 46, 3 os ches page 32) quotes the Birchai Yosef who says that **anyone who says 100 berachos every day is guaranteed a place in the next world.** (This is assuming that everything else is equal, meaning that he doesn't have too many other sins.) **Furthermore, you'll have wealth and be saved from the 98 curses, including all types of sicknesses and wounds.** 98 curses + sicknesses + wounds = 100. We additionally see from the aforementioned Bal Haturim that **one will have longevity if he recites the 100 berachos.** The Bach says if we aren't careful to recite these 100 berachos, then we need to be careful about people dying again chas v'shalom

(heaven forbid). The Sader Hayom explains that **the aforementioned segulas will only come to fruition if we have the proper kavana (intent and focus) when we recited these berachos.**

The Rambam (Shailas U'Teshuvos Harambam siman 261) says מעניין קריאת מאה הברכות או הזמירות בחיפזון ובמהירות הרי היא טעות גמורה, /הכוונה לחטא גמור/ ומי שאינו מוכיח החזנים על זאת, חוטא. **It's a big mistake to rush when reciting berachos.** One who doesn't rebuke the chazanim if they daven too fast, is a sinner! (If this should actually be applied nowadays depends on many factors.) The Gemara in Berachos (50a) states, מברכותיו של אדם ניכר אם תלמיד חכם הוא, אם לאו. **From the way someone recites a beracha you can tell if he is a talmid chacham or not.** Additionally you can tell if they learned hilchos berachos or not. Similarly, the Gemara in Berachos (38) states a great person is great with his berachos. The Gemara in Bava Kama (30a) asks; how does a person become a chassid? The Gemara answers; learn hilchos berachos and say them properly! This is how we can build holiness in our Mishkan. The way we recite berachos is a crucial part of the foundation.

The Kaf hachaim (siman 191 os vav and siman 202 os alef) elaborates and explains that through berachos that are said with proper kavana, we remove the kelipos (spiritual negative forces) and we become pure and ready to receive holiness. When we say berachos properly we refine ourselves. This especially applies to berachos hanehnin (on pleasure); we must be incredibly scrupulous to recite them with proper kavana. The reason for this is because our body will receive pleasure and be sanctified via reciting these berachos.

**Why does Hashem want us to say so many berachos every day? Does Hashem really need us to bless Him? Does He need the food to be blessed?** The Rabbeinu B'chaya (kad hakemach arech berachos) explains that **the purpose of saying these berachos is only for us.** Someone who says a beracha is essentially testifying that Hashem provides everything we need. **The purpose of reciting berachos is for our sake and is the least we can do for Hashem. Reciting berachos demonstrates that we recognize the goodness that Hashem bestows upon us. Reciting berachos is hakaras hatov (gratitude).** In the merit of our reciting berachos our food will be blessed and the farms (business) will be blessed. Anyone who is careful regarding reciting berachos is showing that he has emunah (belief/faith) in Hashem, is pious, fears sin and has proper Jewish belief.

2.

### Tzedaka

(38, 21-27)

Chafetz Chaim (al Hatorah) asks, where is the machetzes hashekel going to? Hashem commanded us to make from these donations sockets, in order that the Mishkan will have what to stand upon. Why? This is in order that all of the Jews will receive a portion in the building of the Mishkan. The same applies to those who learn Torah and those who support Torah. They all are causing the world to continue to exist. Both are necessary in this partnership. The yeitzer hara attempts to convince people who are diligently learning full time to work. The yeitzer hara also attempts to convince people who are working and generously supporting Torah, to learn full time, and not support people who learning. We

must all know our status and where our true talents lie. The yeitzer hara has another tactic. Once he sees that people are learning, he tries to get the benefactors not to support them. That's what this pasuk is alluding to and symbolizes.

There are many transgressions placed upon those who can but don't support Torah according to their capabilities. Whatever we are blessed with we must give. One time there was a wealthy man who came to the Chafetz Chaim and asked about giving money to a certain Yeshiva. However, he didn't give a large donation. He said he was already giving to various Yeshivas. He said the total he was giving was 12 rubles. The Chafetz Chaim asked how much money does one curtain in your house cost. He said 25 rubles because they were made out of silk. The Chafetz Chaim then asked; how many curtains do you have? He said I have six. That totals 150 rubles. The Chafetz Chaim said your curtains alone cost so much and you can only give 12 rubles? I wonder how you can give so little!

Another time one of the Chafetz Chaim's talmidim (students) became very wealthy. He asked; why now do I have such a yeitzer (inclination) hara (bad) not to give any tzedaka when I used to love giving? The Chafetz Chaim answered based on the Gemara in Sukkah (52a) which states; the greater a person is the greater is his yeitzer hara! ( כל הגדול מהבירו יצרו ) ( גדול הימנו .) Now that you are wealthy, you should give even greater amounts than before, but the yeitzer hara is currently stronger than ever and convinces you to give less. The talmid asked 'what should I do now?' The Chafetz Chaim answered 'just give and don't think about it.'

Another time a wealthy individual came to the Chafetz Chaim saying he wanted to write a will and donate his sefarim (Torah books) to the Beis Medrash and leave all his money to his children. The Chafetz Chaim said do the opposite! Leave the sefarim for your children in order that they will learn from them (the Yeshiva already has sefarim) and give the money to the Yeshivas to support their Torah learning!

The Beis HaLevi (beginning of parshas Teruma) asks, why does the pasuk state "take for me teruma." It would be more logical for the pasuk to state 'to give Terumah'? **What we give isn't ours; it's really Hashem's. The money we give is only temporarily placed with us. This is comparable to a huge piece of sugar that is in a chest and a fly comes into the chest and starts eating from the sugar. Does the fly own the sugar? Does the fly have the ability to lift up and transport this sugar wherever he wants? No! The fly just got lucky and the sugar isn't his. So too a person's wealth isn't really his!**

Thank you Yair Moshe Ausabel for typing this up.