

The Weekly *Farbrengens*



למען ישמעו • שופטים תשע"ח • 475
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

SINGING PRAISE (II)

THE WAY TO PRAISE

When one makes a *bracha*, he should contemplate what he is doing: he is thanking *HaShem* for the food or the *mitzvos* that He has given us. A *bracha* should not be recited out of habit. In fact *HaShem* sent *Yeshayahu HaNavi* to reprimand the *Yidden* who were making *brachos* for washing their hands or before eating, without thinking of *HaShem*. *HaShem* even withheld wisdom from them.

There was once a man who appeared in a dream to one of his relatives, several years after his passing. The relative asked him, "How are you doing in the other world?" The deceased replied, "Every day I am judged for not having been careful to think about *HaShem* when making *brachos*," and he added that though many years had passed, he was still being cleansed of this fault.

(ס' חסידים אות מ"ו)

When a person says *brachos* properly, with *kavana* and *simcha*, he draws upon himself *HaShem's* kindness. Also, *brachos* should be recited audibly and carefully, because *hakol meorer es hakavana* – voicing words arouses one's devout concentration.

(ראשית חכמה, שלי"ה, ס' החינוך מצוה תל)

Reb Chaim Vital writes: "My Rebbe, the *AriZal*, warned me to be very careful about having *kavana* when reciting *brachos*, for doing so refines a person, enabling him to become a vessel for *kedusha*, and it is a major step towards *Ruach HaKodesh*."

(כף החיים סי' קצ"א סק"ו)

HEARTFELT PRAISE

Throughout his entire lifetime, whenever the esteemed *chossid* Reb Dovid Tzvi Chein (better known as the *Radatz*) would make a *bracha* over food or drink, he would first place his right hand over his forehead, as people do when they are deep in thought, and only then recite the *bracha*.

The *Friediker Rebbe* related, "When I was a little boy, I asked him the reason for this, and he told me that when he was twelve years old, his father Reb *Peretz* brought him to *Lubavitch* to see the *Zemach Tzedek*. When he went into the *Rebbe's* room, the *Rebbe* showed him closeness and affection, and

amongst other things told him, "Listen to me. It's time to stop behaving like a child. When you're about to make a *bracha* over food or drink, and have to say 'Boruch Ata', remember to Whom you are going to say 'Boruch Ata'."

(סה"ש תש"ג ע' 143)

In days gone by, people regarded the very letters of the *Torah* with respect. This stemmed from their *yiras Shamayim*, which was clearly apparent even among ordinary, unlettered *Yidden*. When a *bracha* had to be said, they would first wash their hands, or at least clean them with grass or whatever.

Regarding this the *Friediker Rebbe* related: "One day, when I was playing outdoors as a little boy and making a toy ship, I overheard a gardener reciting a *bracha* - *Shehakol*, and from the way he said it, I began to tremble. Today, however, people don't hear the *brachos* they are saying, and the *brachos* don't hear them."

(סה"ש תש"ג ע' 119)

CONSIDER

What is the significance of the general *kavana* of all *brachos* and the unique *kavana* in each *bracha* type?

The *Rebbe* once explained that when one recites the one hundred daily *brachos*, the emphasis should be on their essence – bringing one to fear, love and remember *HaShem*. When the hundred *brachos* are recited properly, these feelings permeate the entire day.

(סה"ש תנש"א ע' 134)

UNDERSTANDING THE BRACHA

The *Alter Rebbe* writes:

One should be most meticulous about having the proper *kavana* when saying *brachos* and recognizing their basic idea – that he is *bensching HaShem*. One should also keep in mind the subject of his present

bracha, and not think about anything else.

When one says the Name of *HaShem*, he must concentrate on the meaning of the four letters ה-ו-ה-י – that He is the Master of everything and that He always existed, exists in the present, and will always exist. So, too, the Name אלקים reminds him that *HaShem* is all-powerful, above and below.

It is forbidden to do anything while saying a *bracha*, for it would then appear that one is careless and is not regarding it as important. It follows that even an activity which does not require concentration is also prohibited.

(סדר ברכת הנהנין פ"ט ה"ג, שוע"ר סי' ה, סי' קפ"ג סי"ד)

Many *brachos* begin with the words, *Baruch Ata HaShem Elokeinu Melech haolam*. As is explained in *Chassidus*, the very word *beracha* signifies that something is being drawn down from above. The next word, *Ata*, means that that spiritual energy is being drawn down from the essence of *HaShem*, through the successive levels of *Seder Hishtalshelus*. The term *Elokeinu* refers to the sustenance that comes down to the *Yidden*, and *Melech haolam* refers to the sustenance that then comes down to the rest of the world.

(תו"א בראשית ו, א, ד"ה בלילה ההוא ת"ש)

The *Alter Rebbe* held a number of debates with the *geonim* of Lithuania over the validity of *Chassidus*. On these occasions he would discuss concepts in *halacha* (generally the *halachos* of *Birkas HaNehenin*), and would conclude with a *ruchniyusdike* lesson.

At the second debate, which took place in *Minsk*, everyone recognized his outstanding *geonus*, and it deeply impacted the Lithuanian *talmidei chachomim*. At the conclusion of that debate, he taught a lesson from the *Mishna*: "Whoever drinks water out of thirst should say *shehakol niyah bidevaro*." He explained that water symbolizes *Torah*, and the test of whether one is truly learning *Torah* properly is whether he recognizes that everything (*shehakol*) is being created by the word of *HaShem* (*niyah bidivaro*). Among those present were many diligent students, *masmidim* who would learn for eighteen to twenty-one hours every day. When they heard this explanation, scores of them were attracted to becoming disciples of the *Alter Rebbe*.

(סה"ש תש"ד ע' 139)

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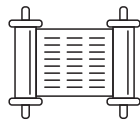


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TZITZIS FOR KIDS

What size and material tzitzis should I get for my child?

A garment is only obligated in *tzitzis* if it is large enough for a nine-year-old to cover his head and the greater part of his body with it, and a thirteen-year-old would not be embarrassed to wear it at times in the marketplace.¹

Practically, a *tallis katan* for an adult must have a width and length of an *amah* (19 in or 48 cm) on both the front and back individually, excluding the area of the hole for the head. The Alter Rebbe points out that any folded portion detracts from the *shiur*, thus one ought to ensure that the garment is fully spread out. For this reason, it is recommended to purchase *tzitzis* that are slightly larger than the *shiur*.²

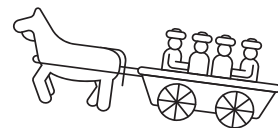
The *halachic* obligation of *chinuch* for the *mitzva* of *tzitzis* begins at the age of six, when the child is capable of putting on a garment, draping two of the corners in front and two in back, and holding the *tzitzis* by *shema*. At this point, his father is obligated to buy him a four-cornered garment and attach *tzitzis* to it.³ For a child between six and thirteen, the Alter Rebbe rules that it is sufficient for the total area of his *tallis katan* to be a square *amah*, excluding the hole for the head.⁴ (Yet some explain this to mean that the width of each side can be a half an *amah*, i.e. the width of both sides together equal an *amah*.⁵) This notwithstanding, it is widely accepted to rely that the *shiur* is whatever size garment covers the individual child's body.⁶

Our custom is that boys begin wearing *tzitzis* from the age of three.⁷ Since this is not part of the obligation of *chinuch*, we need not be particular about the size of the garment until age six (and it usually covers his body regardless).⁸

There is a dispute amongst *Rishonim* whether garments made of materials other than wool or linen are exempted with woolen *tzitzis* strings, or whether their strings must be the same material as the garment (e.g. kosher cotton strings). The custom doesn't follow this opinion, though the Alter Rebbe says that a G-d-fearing person should be stringent. Moreover, since some *Rishonim* hold that garments of these other material aren't obligated in *tzitzis min haTorah*, only from Rabbinic decree, one who wishes to observe the *mitzva* in the optimum manner should make a point of having a *tallis katan* made of wool, and so is the Chabad custom.⁹

For the obligation of *chinuch*, cotton *tzitzis* suffice, though many are *mehader* to get wool, especially after age nine.¹⁰

1. שו"ע"ר אור"ח סי' ט"ז ס"א.
2. סידור אדה"ז ציצית ד"ה ורוחב.
3. שו"ע"ר סי' י"ז ס"ד (ועיי"ש דמ"מ אין חובה כ"כ לקנות בגד כזה).
4. סידור אדה"ז שם.
5. פסק"ת ח"א סי' י"ז הערה 11.
6. ראה משנ"ב אור"ח סי' י"ז ס"ק ט בשם פמ"ג, וכן מובא בשער הכולל - דרך החיים ונתיב החיים סי' י"א, וכן המנהג הנפוץ בחב"ד מדורי דורות, ובשיעורי תורה (לגרא"ח גאה) סי' ג הע' עב.
7. "ולא ראיתו נוהגין באמה רוחב".
8. מכתב רבינו להטספות בשם כ"ק אדמו"ר מוהרי"צ.
9. שו"ת שבה"ל ח"ג סי' ג, הליכות שלמה פ"ג אות ד' ע"פ פרמ"ג סי' תרנ"ז משב"ז א'. תורת חיים סופר סי"ב אות ג'. ויכולים להקל גם בשיעור החוטין לפי שיטות המקילין.
10. שו"ע"ר אור"ח סי' ט"ד, ולדוגמא ראה תר"מ ח"מ עמ' 218.
11. חינוך בניים כהלכתו (רבינוביץ) הל' ציצית פ"ב סכ"א.



R. ZALMAN ZLATAPOLSKY

R. Shlomo Schneur Zalman Zlatapolsky lived in Kremenchug, and was a *chosid* of the Rebbe Maharash. The Rebbe Maharash held him in high esteem and would occasionally say *maamorim* especially for him upon his visits to Lubavitch. R. Zalman was very thorough in everything he did. He had a special *sefer* when coming to Lubavitch, how long to stay and when to leave. His trips to Lubavitch, hearing *Chassidus* and going into *yechidus* were particularly meaningful to him.

trees, my father pointed out a bench and said to me:

"In the year 5645 (1885), three years after the passing of my father [the Rebbe Maharash], R. Zalman sat on this bench, and while deep in thought, sang a *nigun* with great *dveikus* for many hours straight. I did not want to disturb him from his *dveikus*, I just looked at his face and saw R. Zalman's eyes were shut and tears were flowing on his cheeks. He was totally immersed in the *niggun*.

"At a later opportunity I asked R. Zalman which *maamar* he was contemplating at the time. R. Zalman was not soft hearted (he was from Kremenchug - known for their intellectual nature), yet when I asked him that, he burst out crying and could not neither speak or catch his breath. When he calmed down he said, "It was a *maamar* [he mentioned the opening of the *maamar*] that the Rebbe [Maharash] said on *Shabbos* [he recalled on which *Shabbos* it was said]."

My father concluded, "Looking at R. Zalman, was a mirror of the yearning life of a *chosid* who has physically lost his Rebbe some years earlier, but *b'ruchniyus* it was as if he was still standing before him."

(ת"ר"מ ח"ג ע' 67)

(משיחת י"ג תמוז תרצ"ב, סה"ש תש"ז ע' 70)

The Rebbe once related: After the Rebbe Maharash passed away, R. Zalman longed greatly to see him. He discussed his feelings with the Rebbe Rashab. After doing many preparations that the Rebbe Rashab had instructed him (including wearing a *gartel* while sleeping), the Rebbe Maharash appeared to him in a dream.

The Frieddiker Rebbe related:

In the year 5671 (1911) when we were in Menton, I once went with my father, the Rebbe Rashab, on a stroll along the shore. In a corner amongst beautiful

A Moment with The Rebbe



THIS ROOM CANNOT CONTAIN GLOOM

Reb Zalman Gopin, *mashpia* in Kfar Chabad *yeshivah*, relates:

The confused *bochur* remained rooted on his spot. He wasn't sure what to make of this directive. Only after the Rebbe repeated himself, did he understand that he was actually expected to do so.

A *bochur* I knew entered *yechidus* with a sullen expression on his face. As soon as he walked in, the Rebbe said to him, "*Der tzimmer ken nit ois-halten kein atzvus*" (this room cannot contain any gloom).

He walked over to the window, came back to the Rebbe's table, and the Rebbe then proceeded to begin his *yechidus*.

The Rebbe then instructed this *bochur* to "go over to the window, open it, throw out your *atzvus* - and then we could talk..."

(*Lilmod Eich Lehispalet* vol. 2, page 51)

לזכות יום ההולדת של מלמד תשב"ר
הרה"ת יוסף בן ציון שי' רייצעס
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