

מַאימְתִי קוֹרִין אֶת שְׁמַע בְּעֶרְבִין

When may one recite the Shema in the evening?

From: The earliest time -

1. When the stars appear
2. When the Kohanim who were tamei, return from the mikvah and were again able to eat terumah

Until: The latest time -

1. R Eliezar - First 1/3 of the night
2. Sages - Until midnight
3. Rabban Gamliel - Until morning

מֵאַיְמָתִי קוֹרִין אֶת שְׁמַע בְּעֶרְבִין

Rashi says these different opinions are based on how to interpret the phrase “and in your laying down to sleep” (Devarim 6:7)

R Eliezar says people usually lie down in the first 1/3 of the night

The Sages and R Gamliel say the phrase does not refer to when they go to sleep but while people are actually sleeping. Therefore, the entire night until daybreak is appropriate for recitation of the evening Shema.

The sages only mandate by midnight, so a person won't fail to do it.

All agree that while one is allowed to say the Shema until the times mentioned, the fastidious person will fulfill a mitzvah at the earliest opportunity, i.e., at the time the stars come out.

Unless: You are busy teaching
You are busy learning
You will soon join a minyon

1- Berachos 2a1 line 1 A8
Daf Digest

מֵאִמְתִּי קוֹרִין אֶת שְׁמַע בְּעֶרְבִין

Why does the Mishnah choose the reading of the Shema at night to be the very first halachah to be discussed?

Because when a person becomes Bar Mitzvah, his obligation to fulfill the mitzvot begins on that very day. In our tradition that day begins at night. So his first mitzvah is the reading of the Shema that evening.

From what time...?

מַאיִמְתִי קוֹרִין אֶת שְׁמַע בְּעֶרְבִין

The Talmud starts with a question!

What is the time we may begin to recite the Shema in the evening?

Note: The Talmud does not start with an explanation as to what the Shema is or what obligation we have to say it.

The Talmud does not explain why it first asks about the evening Shema and not the morning Shema.

This is the oral law explaining the written law – it is assumed that we all are fully familiar with the written law and are living it, seeing it practiced by our parents, our teachers, siblings, friends etc. so preambles are not needed. Even the posuk, (sentence) upon which this question is based, “when you lie down and when you rise up,” is not mentioned.

The question also assumes an agreement with the story of Creation, “and there was evening and then there was morning”, telling us that evening came first and therefore, should be addressed first.

1- Berachos 2a1 line 1 A8

Daf Digest

מַאימְתִי קוֹרִין אֶת שְׁמַע בְּעֶרְבִין

When may we recite the Shema in the evening?

This first answer has a connection to the last mesechta in Shas , which is Niddah, to the first mesechta in Shas, which is Berachos. In Niddah, the Talmud talks about the process of becoming purified after niddah, or being a zav or other situations which cause a person to be tamei. Only after a Kohen has been cleansed of his state of tumah by immersing in a mikvah and waiting until nightfall, can he eat terumah. It is in that time slot that the Shema of the evening can be first said.

מַאימְתִי קוֹרִין אֶת שְׁמַע בְּעֶרְבִין

Siyum Hashas Mar 1, 2005

Everyone has the obligation to join in the simcha of his brother – even if you have not learned. You are obligated to celebrate with others who celebrate, and you should consider yourself as not having studied – yet!

The people gathered to hear the king read the Torah. We are a nation who say the Shema in the dead of night and in the light of early day. What can we learn from people who learned shas?

1. That it is done by 120,000 shows us that if “he can do it, so can I”.

2. It also shows us that the soul needs more substance than what is available in our world of pleasures and distractions. The body cannot be sustained with junk food. The soul cannot be sustained by pleasures and distractions but by substantial materials that elevate and engage us intellectually. Daf Yomi is a quick tour of the world, like a tourist, but each page deserves a longer, deeper visit.

Remember this watchword in learning and in life.

It is never too late, it is never too little and it is never enough.

1- Berachos 2b1 line 13 B1
Daf Digest

מִשְׁהָעֶנִי נִכְנָס לֶאֱכֹל פֶּתוֹ בְּמִלַּח

When a poor person enters to eat his bread with salt.

This time frame is suggested as the proper time from which one may say the Shema in the evening.

It would be an early time, because a poor person cannot afford candles to light his table when it is dark. Candles are expensive. He eats early while there is still a little light.

דְּרַבִּי מֵאִיר קָשְׁיָא דְרַבִּי אֶלְיעֶזֶר אֲדַרְבֵּי אֶלְיעֶזֶר
תַּנָּאי אֵלִיבָא דְרַבִּי אֶלְיעֶזֶר

One statement of R Eliezar contradicts another statement by R Eliezar

The answer agreed upon is when the stars come out. “Tzet Hakochovim”, i.e., when the Kohanim who were tamei may eat terumah.

What time is that? Until the end of the first heavenly watch. What’s the heavenly watch? A period of time when different angels sing before Hashem!

What kind of an answer is that? How is a person to know in a practical way the time when he may still say the Shema at night? Why mix in the angels?

R Eliezar says “and so here on earth the night is divided into three watches”. It says in Jeremiah 25:30 that “God will roar like a lion at each watch”. It says this three times. There are three watches and we can tell the three watches by what occurs at those times:

- A donkey brays
- A dog howls
- An infant nurses

וְנִכְנַסְתִּי לְחֹרֶבָה אַחַת מֵחֹרְבוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַיִם לְהִתְפַּלֵּל

Once R Yose entered one of the ruins of Jerusalem to pray.

One should not enter a broken down building, i.e., a dangerous place. Eliyahu advised that he should not have entered the building but should have prayed on the road.

We learn from this story:

1. Not to engage in risky activities, even if we initially think we are doing so for proper reasons.

Think beforehand, there might be a safer and more proper way to accomplish the same objective with less risk.

2. It is proper to pray on the road.
3. If you pray on the road, you may pray the abridged prayer.

1- Berachos 3b3 line 30 A5
Daf Digest King David

עַד הַצֹּת לַיְלָה הָיָה מִתְנַמֵּם כְּסוּס

Until midnight David would doze like a horse.

A horse never falls into a deep sleep, rather it dozes for a short period and then awakens.

King David also slept this way, i.e., short periods and therefore, was always awake at about midnight to say the Shema.

- He was able to use the REM portion of sleep efficiently.
- His harp woke him when the wind blew on the strings.

מִיַּד יוֹעֲצִים בְּאַחִיתוֹפֵל וְנִמְלָכִין בְּסִנְהֶדְרִין
וְשׂוֹאֲלִין בְּאוּרִים וְתוּמִים

Immediately he took counsel with Achithophel.....

This section tells us that when King David had to make an important decision, he first consulted his generals, and then the Sanhedrin. Only after that level of consideration did he approach the Urim and Tumim for final advice.

Similarly, when consulting your Rabbi –first give all due consideration to the project, seek advice from experts and only when its feasibility and reasonability have been thoroughly discussed; come to your Rabbi for his input and his blessings.

1- Berachos 3b4 line 46 A16
Bleich 3:256 278

מִיַּד יוֹעֲצִים בְּאַחִיתוֹפֵל וְנִמְלָכִין בְּסִנְהֶדְרִין
וְשׂוֹאֲלִין בְּאוּרִים וְתוּמִים

A king may not undertake military action without the approval of the
‘Urim and Tumim’

He must have a Divine mandate.

Even a defensive war requires God’s mandate. Certainly a discretionary war taken to enlarge the territory of the land of Israel or for economic consideration requires approval of the ‘Urim and Tumim’.

-Defensive war - Milchemet Magan

-Discretionary war - Milchemet Reshut

However, war by commandment- Milchemet Mitzvah – requires no consultation with the Urim and Tumim.

It has been already ordered by God.

עַד-יַעֲבֹר עִמָּךְ ה' עַד-יַעֲבֹר עִם-זוֹ קְנִיֹתָ׃

“Until your people passes, HaShem; until this people you have acquired

(by conquest of Joshua and again) passes”, via acquisition by Ezra.

Sanctification of Eretz Yisroel-

Possession by Joshua was by conquest. The land and its sanctification was only for its time and can be lost by conquest.

The sanctification achieved by Ezra and those who returned from Babylon was different. The land was acquired by chazakah and when land is acquired by chazakah, title to the land lasts forever.

In Ezra’s time chazakah was achieved by the consent of the rulers of Persia and the title confers eternal ownership.

Those who conquered Israel in the second commonwealth were given no permission to dispossess Israel from the land . Israel’s sanctification is permanent in nature and is not usurped by conquest.

1- Berachos 4a1 line 14 B19
Daf Digest

לִמְד לְשׁוֹנֶה לֹמֵר אֵינִי יוֹדֵעַ

Know when to say “I don’t know”.

If you know - you can’t say, “I don’t know”.

If you don’t know - you must say, “I don’t know”.

Do not be the type of person who answers a question with his own general feeling or impression. Others may believe you speak factually, when you really do not know.

Better to be clear and truthful and simply say, “I do not know”.

כָּל מֵה שֶׁאֲנִי עוֹשֶׂה אֲנִי נִמְלֵךְ בְּמִפְיֵבֶשֶׁת רַבִּי

King David here addresses his Rebbe Miphiboshes by his first name - it is prohibited to do so:

It may be permissible if you

- Attach a title before the name i.e., - “my Rebbe so and so”.
- Are not in the presence of the teacher.
- Don’t use the teacher’s actual name but his honorific title.
(Miphiboshes was not his real name, see note 25.)
- Refer to a teacher who is not your main teacher, as your Rebbi Muvhak.

You must not use his first name.

כָּל הַאֹמֵר „תְּהִלָּה לְדָוִד” בְּכָל יוֹם שְׁלֹשׁ פְּעָמִים
 מוֹבְטָח לוֹ שֶׁהוּא בֶּן הָעוֹלָם הַבָּא

Whoever recites psalm 145 “Tehillah L’David”
(i.e., Ashrei) three times each day is assured of a place in the world to come.

It could tip the scale in his favor. Ashrei is said at:

1. Pesuki de zimrah
2. Concluding prayer before Aleinu
3. Minchah

Ashrei is special – because it follows the order of the aleph beis and it refers to the sustenance of every living thing.

Other tehillim have phrases that are similar.

God guides those who fear him. However, only in Ashrei does it state clearly that God protects and provides for all living creatures.

Weiss #732

כָּל הָאוֹמֵר „תְּהִלָּה לְדָוִד” בְּכֹל יוֹם שְׁלֹשׁ פְּעָמִים
 מוֹבְטָח לוֹ שֶׁהוּא בֶּן הָעוֹלָם הַבָּא

Whoever recites the psalm 145” Tehillah L’David”
 (i.e., Ashrei) three times/day is sure to inherit the world to come.

A person lived in a cold damp cellar and complained that he frequently had colds despite taking medication . All the medication in the world can’t cure colds that result from continuous exposure to a harmful environment.

A person lived a life devoid of mitzvot and good deeds and relied on the fact that he said Ashrei 3 times a day to gain him a place in the world to come.

All the Ashrei prayers in the world cannot overcome the continuous exposure to a non-meritorious environment.

Medicine and Ashrei can make a great difference but not against perpetual exposure to a harmful life style.

1- Berachos 4b4 line 38 B14
Daf Digest

„נְפִלָה לֹא-תוֹסִיף קוּם בְּתוֹלַת יִשְׂרָאֵל“

Absence of the letter nun in Ashrei is because it refers to the downfall of Israel's enemies.

מִפְּנֵי שֵׁשׁ בָּהּ מִפְּלֹתָן שֶׁל שׁוֹנְאֵי

B12

This mentions Israel's downfall but does not note any subsequent ascent, suggesting a terminal catastrophe. That is why David left off the letter nun when he composed this psalm.

לְעוֹלָם יִרְגִּיז אָדָם יִצְרַר טוֹב עַל יִצְרַר הָרָע

A person should always incite the good impulse to fight against the evil impulse.

It is wiser to counteract against a bad influence than merely to resist it by patience or tolerance. If tempted to do, counteract by doing right.

If tempted to waste time, counteract by a conscious attempt to use your time profitably on a noble project.

Merely tolerating a bad influence will not overcome it.

You must actively counteract against it.

אִם רוּאָה אָדָם שִׁסּוּרֵינָן בְּאֵין עָלָיו

If a person sees that afflictions are befalling him

How should a person interpret suffering which afflicts him?

1. Analyze your actions to learn if you are failing in any area
2. Assess whether you are deficient in Torah study
3. Attribute the suffering to “afflictions of love”, i.e., Hashem subjecting you to this pain without it being due to sin, to increase your reward in the world to come.

1- Berachos 5a3 line 31 B7
Responsa 1980-1990 p569

שִׂסוּרֵיִן שֶׁל אֱהָבָה

Punishments out of love

A phrase only to justify God when a person's suffering seems to be undeserved.

Some religions saw suffering as a penalty for sin.

Active suffering was a means to salvation.

The Inquisition was justified as a way of inflicting pain in this world to attain salvation in the next.

Judaism does not consider pain beneficial. That concept cannot be used as a justification for withholding pain medication from a suffering person.

1- Berachos 5a5 line 43 A6
Weiss #236

יְסוּרֵיִן מְמַרְקֵין כָּל עֲוֹנוֹתָיוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם

Suffering washes away all the sins of man.

Rabbi J B Soloveitchik – Suffering is intended to elevate man, to purify and sanctify him, to refine his character and broaden his horizons in life. It is a crime to allow his anguish to go to waste and remain without meaning or goal.

Physicians, of course, do not see suffering in this light. They are committed to vanquishing suffering and see no redeeming value to the pain of a fellow creature.

Daf Digest

וְהָא אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן
דִּין אֶרְמָא דְעֵשִׂירָאָה בִּיר

Rav Yochanan kept a bone from his tenth son who had passed away and showed it to others.

He wanted people to know that he, too, had experienced tragedy.

The nature of people is to derive comfort and encouragement when they realize that they are not the only ones who are suffering.

1- Berachos 5b2 line 25 A37

Weiss #532

אֵין חָבוּשׁ מִתִּיר עֲצָמוֹ מִבֵּית הָאֲסוּרִים

A prisoner cannot release himself from the house of detention.

A physician may know how to prescribe for others but not for himself.

A person's prayer to benefit others may be answered, while prayers for himself are not as effective.

A community under siege should send away its Rabbi. Then the Rabbi could pray for them, since his prayers, then, would have no selfish tinge.

אֶחָד הַמְּרַבֵּה וְאֶחָד הַמְּמַעֵיט

One who toils in Torah may do a lot and another may do little.

A person should know that as long as he has done his best he has earned the same reward as another who did their best as well, but may have accomplished more.

The reward is commensurate with the effort (Avos 5:23) not with the results.

A person who toils in Torah for 100 years and another lives only 20 years but toils in Torah for those 20 years, Hashem rewards them equally.

This is the rule for learning Torah, for giving tzedakah, and for all meritorious acts.

רַב הוֹנָא תְּקִיפוּ לִיה אַרְבַּע מָאָה

Don't take the law into your own hands

Rav Huna suffered the loss of 400 barrels of expensive wine.

Upon reflection, Rav Huna realized that he had withheld the proper share of crops from a person who he claimed had taken more than his rightful share of crops at a previous division, i.e., Rav Huna took the law into his own hands.

You are permitted to reclaim the exact stolen article from a thief . However, you may not take something else in exchange – i.e., you may not steal from a thief.

This process of examining one's actions should be done on a regular basis.

Each of us should react to another person's suffering with compassion and not ascribe his misfortune to his sins. We should ascribe his sufferings to “afflictions of love”.

1- Berachos 5b3 line 43 A19
Weiss #118

דְּאָמְרֵי הַדֵּר חֶלְא וְהָוָה חִמְרָא וְאִיפָא

If you steal from a thief, you also have a taste of it.

Stealing even if you steal from a thief and even if you believe you have the right to steal from a thief; that act stains your soul, just as stealing stains the soul of the thief. An unauthorized taking will accustom one to take that which is not his.

Do not even steal back your own property from a thief for fear you will also appear to be a thief (even though that you are allowed to do).

מִיָּנִין לְמִתְפַּלֵּל שְׁלֵא יְהֵא דְבָר חוּצָץ בֵּינוּ לְבֵין הַקִּיר

From where do we learn that one who prays should have nothing interposed between him and the wall?

Yeshayahu 38:2 “and Chizkiayu turned his face to the wall and prayed.”

This is suggested in order not to be distracted during prayer.

Prayers are likened to a korban. For sacrifices, there cannot be an intervening substance between the sacrifice and the holy vessels.

How about our current practice? Where should we stand?

Items that are large are considered like walls.

Items that are fixed are considered walls i.e., benches.

If you can find a space near a wall it is preferred, but not if it delays your prayer.

Otherwise, hold a siddur before your eyes or close your eyes when you pray.

1- Berachos 6a1 line 12 B3
Daf Digest

הָאֵי מֵאֵן דְּבָעֵי לְמִידַע לְהוּ

How can you catch a demon (shade) if you want to know of their presence?

Spread ashes around your bed at night. In the morning you may see tracks that look like chicken foot prints, i.e., of a rooster.

אָגַרָא דְּתַעֲנִיתָא צְדָקָתָא

The reward that comes from a fast day is for giving charity

This is in view of the fact, that all fasts were instituted to inspire repentance and good deeds.

It was customary to give food on the night following a fast day to the poor people who fasted that day.

One who fasts should give the money he saves to charity.

The merit of fasting for the wealthy is that they develop empathy with the poor who fast continuously. It awakens in them the desire to dispense charity and to help the poor.

1- Berachos 6a2
Daf Digest

line 34 A33

חֶשֶׁב אָדָם

If a person contemplates fulfilling a mitzvah

and was unavoidably prevented from performing it, scripture credits him, as if he had fulfilled it.

God assumes good and sincere intentions on the part of that person.

1- Berachos 6a2 line 34 A33
Daf Digest

חֵשֶׁב אָדָם לַעֲשׂוֹת מִצְוָה

If a person contemplates fulfilling a mitzvah

Is a husband who donates sperm for the purpose of impregnating his wife, to be credited with fulfilling the mitzvah of procreation? Is an infertile couple to be given credit for the mitzvah of “be fruitful and multiply” if they are infertile?

God attributes the merit of fulfilling a commandment if one tries to do it, but cannot.

A person cannot be legally obligated to do that which he cannot do. The obligation to procreate ceases with that diagnosis.

וּמִיֵּן שֶׁאֶפִּילוּ אֶחָד שִׁיּוֹשֵׁב וְעוֹסֵק בִּתְּוָרָה שֶׁשְׁכִּינָה עִמּוֹ

Even when one person sits and is involved with Torah, the Shechinah is with him.

All of one's deeds are recorded (Avos 2:1). As an individual, one's deeds are simply recorded. When two people study, their deeds are amplified and each gets credit for a communal mitzvah.

As an individual, he does not actually enunciate his words, his ideas are merely thoughts. In a group of two or more, actual words are exchanged and words foster accuracy. There is give and take, therefore, truth is more likely to come out. An insight identified by a group is more likely to be correct than an insight by an individual alone.

1- Berachos 6a3 line 49 B12
Daf Digest

אלו תפילין שבראש

That is the tefillin on the head.

Devarim 28:1 ,“the nations of the land will see that Hashem’s name is called upon you and they will be frightened”. Chazal explains that which the nations will see, are the ‘Tefillin Shel Rosh’, the phylactery of the head.

Note, however, Chazal do not say tefillin on one’s head but “tefillin b’rosho”, tefillin in his head. The person has incorporated the idea of tefillin, which is a connection between himself and God, within his very being and that will frighten other nations.

1- Berachos 6a3 line 48 B22
Bleich 3:82

וְיִמִּי בְּעַמֶּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל גּוֹי אֶחָד בְּאֶרֶץ

The sentence written in our tefillin is, “Hear O’ Israel The Lord our God the Lord is One” The sentence written in God’s tefillin is, “and who is like your people Israel, a singular nation on earth”.

The two sentences are a corollary of each other. God affirms that the children of Israel constitute a unity in the world much like God constitutes a unity.

This unity is preserved by limiting membership and only admitting those who will not dilute the communal faith and commitments, nor compromise its principles. Israel is a unity only in its communal behavior as an aggregate of individuals. It must not dilute that adherence to its principles.

1-Berachos 6a4 line 52 A29
Schottenstein

בְּשֵׁאֵר בְּתֵי מְאִי

The rabbis discuss what passages are written in the other three compartments in God's tefillin.

Tefillin show the special relationship between God and the Jewish people. They demonstrate the closeness and devotion of the people to God. In this sense, God also puts on tefillin, since He is similarly devoted to us.

1- Berachos 6b1 line 2

A8

Daf Digest

כָּל הַרְגִיל לָבֵא לְבֵית הַפְּנִסָּת

If a man who regularly goes to synagogue

is absent one day for a mitzvah matter, his absence is justified. A person engaged in a mitzvah is free from engaging in another mitzvah.

כָּל הַקּוֹבֵעַ מְקוֹם לְתַפִּלָּתוֹ אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם בְּעִזְרוֹ

Whoever fixes for himself a place to pray, the God of Abraham will help him.

This is interpreted to mean that a person should choose according to:

- Rabbi Yonah - a fixed place in his house for prayer.
- Other Rishonim - a fixed synagogue in which to pray. Once he decides which synagogue, then any place he chooses within that synagogues is satisfactory.
- The Rosh – no, he must also choose a spot in that specific synagogue.
- Shulchan Aruch-agrees with the Rosh.
- Tur-agrees with the Rosh, but adds he may change his spot, in case of need.
- Meiri – he should fix a spot at home and another spot in the synagogue as his set location for prayer.

1- Berachos 6b2 line 19 A19
Daf Digest

הַיּוֹצֵא מִבֵּית הַכְּנֶסֶת
אֵל יַפְסִיעַ פְּסִיעָה גְּסָה

One should not take long strides upon leaving the synagogue (but it is a mitzvah to run to the synagogue)

Because to rush from the synagogue, suggests he considered it a burden to be there.

1- Berachos 6b2 line 25 B21
Daf Digest

אִגְרָא דְּשִׁמְעוֹתָא סְבָרָא

The merit of studying Torah lies in the reasoning.

The essence of Talmud study is not fluency, volume of pages or reading the entire shas.
The essence is in understanding the reasoning.

One who has studied a single tractate with all its arguments and intricacies and has acquired its reasoning, (its sevarah), he is called a Torah Scholar.

כָּל שִׂוְדַע בְּחֵבְרוֹ שֶׁהוּא רָגִיל לִיתֵן לוֹ שְׁלוֹם
שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר לוֹ שְׁלוֹם

Whoever knows that his friend will greet him; he should greet him first.

If one person greets another and the second does not return the greeting, he is called a “robber”. He took his greeting and gave him nothing in return. Isaiah 3:14

כָּל הָעוֹלָם כְּלוּ לֹא נִבְרָא אֱלֹא בְּשִׁבִיל זֶה

The Holy One blessed be He declared the whole world in its entirety was only created on behalf of the human species.

Also see Kiddushin 82b – “the animals were not created other than to serve me,” said Rabbi Shimon bar Eleazar.

These phrases are used in the modern discussion regarding the use of animals for medical experimentation to show that doing so has halachic authorization and precedent. We also have an important principle to avoid pain to animals, “tsar baalei chaim,” which mandates prevention of pain to animals, if we do decide to use them for experimentation.

חֵשֶׁב אָדָם לַעֲשׂוֹת מִצְוָה

If a person contemplates fulfilling a mitzvah.

Is a husband who donates sperm for the purpose of impregnating his wife to be credited with fulfilling the mitzvah of procreation? Is an infertile couple to be given credit for the mitzvah of “be fruitful and multiply” if they are infertile?

God attributes the merit of fulfilling a commandment if one tries to do it, but cannot.

A person cannot be legally obligated to do that which he cannot do and the obligation to procreate ceases with that diagnosis.

1-Berachos 6b2
Weiss #2

line 25

A13

אֲנִי רָא דְּפָרְקָא

The merit of attending a lecture lies in the running.

A person is rewarded for their enthusiasm to hear words of Torah even if that person does not fully understand what is being said.

Mere recitation of the written law, i.e., The Bible, Pentateuch – fulfills the mitzvah of Talmud Torah even if you don't understand what is being recited.

However, regarding the oral law, i.e., The Talmud, there is no fulfillment of the mitzvah without comprehension.

יְשַׁמְעֵאל בְּנִי בְּרַכְנִי

And God said to me “Yishmael my son – bless me”.

What kind of blessing can a human give to God? Yishmael Kohen Ha Gadol said to God, “may Your mercy triumph over Your anger.”

The word bracha means plenty or abundance. The idea is that we should pray for a steady flow of God’s mercy and kindness in our world.

שְׁלֵא תִּהְיֶה בְּרַבֵּת הַדְּרִיּוֹט קְלָה בְּעֵינֶיךָ

The blessing of a simpleton should not be treated lightly.

Blessings may be uttered by any person rich, famous, pious or simple, but the actual blessing is bestowed by God. They are not dependent on the person but are in the hands of Hashem.

A Kohen, who is a simpleton or even a rasha, has a mitzvah to participate in the blessing of the people. We do not discourage him. We encourage him so as not to add evil to his already tarnished reputation.

We should appreciate and respect any blessing bestowed upon us even if conveyed by a person considered less than the person being blessed. King David appreciated the blessings given to him by his subjects, the Kohanim, even though he was greater than they were in importance.

Daf Digest

לְבַלֵּק, מָה אֶקַּב לֹא קִבַּה אֵל

Bilam said to Balak, “How can I curse? God has not cursed.

We ask what is the latest time we are permitted to pray the evening prayer or any other prayer that has a true limit, i.e., the Shema?

A true limit for a particular prayer is quickly approaching. The person realizes that even if he starts the prayer immediately, he will not finish before the time for the prayer would have elapsed. Should he pray anyway or realize he is too late?

Tosofos – as long as one begins before the time for the prayer has passed, it is a prayer that will be accepted as if the person had prayed the entire prayer at its proper time. God’s attribute of kindness is greater than the attribute of severity.

God is kind rather than severe, as noted by his treatment of Bilam.

טוֹבָה מְרֵדוֹת אַחַת בְּלִבּוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר
יֹתֵר מִכַּמָּה מִלְּקִיּוֹת

Self reproach in the heart of a person is better than one hundred lashes.

Being told you are wrong has limited value. Realizing you are wrong, indicates you fully understand. You have internalized the lesson and are much less likely to repeat the offense.

1-Berachos 7a5 line45 B25
Weiss #667

וְחַנּוּתִי אֶת-אֲשֶׁר אֶחָד׃

“And I shall be gracious to whom I will be gracious.”

Although he may not deserve it. (Ex 33:19)

Sometimes we see an unworthy person bestowed with the blessings of this world. To those, God has decided to be merciful. If they are not worthy, perhaps their fathers were worthy. Hashem has a storehouse of grace from which He dispenses free gifts. Perhaps such kindness will improve them as much as is in their power to respond to the kindness.

Weiss #675

וְהִסְרֵתִי אֶת-פְּנֵי רְאִיתְךָ אֶת-אָחֳרַי
 אָמַר רַב חֲנָנִי בַּר בִּיזְנָא אָמַר רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן הֲסִידָא
 מִלְּמַד שֶׁהָרָאָה הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא
 לְמַשֶּׁה קָשָׁר שֶׁל תְּפִילִין

“And you shall see my back” (Ex 33:23) This teaches that the Holy One blessed be He, showed Moshe the knot of His tefillin.

“And you shall see my back”, is interpreted that only after the event has passed will you have the perspective to understand.

You will understand retrospectively, i.e., after I pass, you will see the knot on my tefillin. The connection that binds us to each other will influence the event to your benefit.

A boy asked his Rebbe to give him a blessing that he not be drafted into the Czar’s Army. He was disappointed to hear from the Rebbe, “it is good to learn how to shoot” and the Rebbe sent him away. Years later, his ability to shoot, allowed him to survive World War II.

לֹא הָיָה אָדָם שֶׁקָּרָאוּ לְהַקְדֹּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא אָדוֹן
עַד שֶׁבָּא אַבְרָהָם

There was no one who called God “Master “ until Abraham came and called him Adoni – Master.

All sin emanates from a denial of God’s ‘Adnuth’ i.e., mastery and ownership of the world. God has the right to deny and restrict. Modern man insists that he is free, but Adnuth recognizes that man should be humble before God and realize that it is He who bestows all gifts.

(Rav J B Soloveitchik)

גְּדוּלָּהּ שְׁמוּשָׁהּ שֶׁל תּוֹרָה יוֹתֵר מִלְמוּדָּהּ
שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר

Attending to the needs of a Torah Scholar is greater than absorbing his Torah teaching.

Seeing how a Torah Scholar lives, how he conducts himself and how he treats others is more valuable in shaping the character of a student than the mere conveying of academic details. How the knowledge of Torah translates into a way, a style, and a philosophy of life.

וּמִתְפִּיל עִם הַצִּבּוּר

and prays with a minyon with the community

Which is better

- to pray with a minyon?
- to pray by yourself when you can do so with greater kavannah?

R Moshe Feinstein says: – If you can concentrate, even minimally, while praying with a minyon, it is better to do so, even at the expense of greater kavannah. The prayers of a ‘group of individuals’ will more certainly be accepted, while those of an individual may not necessarily be accepted. Davening with a bit more kavannah is only a qualitative advantage, whereas davening with a minyon is a fundamental advantage.

1-Berachos 8a1 line 11 B8
Responsa 1990-2000 p394

וּמִתְפַּלֵּל עִם הַצְּבוּר

Communal Prayer

Praying with a community

This principle is part of “Bikur Cholim” the compassionate principle of visiting the sick. One can attend the sick in many ways, physically, cleaning house, shopping for groceries, doing laundry, taking over other duties, i.e., carpool duties etc. and spiritually: praying for and with the sick person and indicating that prayers are being said for them in the synagogue. Communal prayer convinces God to grant a request more effectively than private prayer.

כָּל מִי שֵׁיִשׁ לּוֹ בַּיִת הַפְּנוּסָה בְּעִירוֹ
לְהַתְּפִילַל נִקְרָא שָׂכֵן רָע

Whoever has a synagogue in his city and does not go in, is a bad neighbor (and his children will suffer exile).

Why such a severe sentence? To show him that by not supporting the important institutions of his city, he jeopardizes them. Soon he will not have a city or a house in that city to bequeath to his children.

His not going to synagogue may result in failure of a minyon and the Shechinah will not be present. Just as he caused the Shechinah to be absent so will he be absent. 'Midah Keneged Midah'.

Daf Digest

אָמְרוּ לִיהוּ לְרַבִּי יוֹחָנָן אֵיפָא סָבִי בְּבַבְלַי

There are elderly people in Babylon.

A traveler davened in a synagogue where almost everyone said Kaddish. It was explained that it was very difficult to gather a minyon but “fortunately” they had many who were in the first year of aveilos (mourning) and were obligated to attend, otherwise people were too busy to come to synagogue.

In the communities where people go to synagogue regularly, there is no need for God to take the lives of people just to have a minyon. In those communities, people live long. Come to synagogue and save a life.

כְּדָאֵמַר רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן לֵוִי לְבַנָּיָהּ
קְדִימוּ וְחֲשִׁיבוּ וְעֵיילוּ לְבֵי כְּנִישְׁתָּא

Rabbi Yehoshua Ben Levi instructed his son, “go to the synagogue early in the morning and evening and you will merit a long life”.

מִיּוֹם שֶׁחָרַב בַּיִת הַמִּקְדָּשׁ אֵין לוֹ לְהַקְדִּישׁ בְּרוּךְ
הוּא בְּעוֹלָמוֹ אֵלָא אַרְבַּע אַמּוֹת שֶׁל הַלְּכָה בְּלָבָד

Since the day the Temple was destroyed, the Holy one blessed be He has nothing in this world but the four cubits of halachah alone.

This tells us that the Temple had supreme sanctity and served in its day as the focal point of religious consciousness. So today, the Bais Midrash and the study of the four cubits of halachah, function as the guiding light of Judaism. They even have a greater sanctity than places of worship.

זֶה הַמַּנִּיחַ סֵפֶר תּוֹרָה וְיוֹצֵא

One who leaves a Sefer Torah open and exits the synagogue.....

Keeping a congregation conscious of the sacredness of the Sefer Torah.

Violations include:

1. Talking while the Torah reading is in process.
2. Leaving the synagogue in the middle of reading.
3. Failing to close the Sefer Torah when leaving it.
4. Casually moving the Sefer Torah from place to place.

It is permitted to move the Torah:

- a. If moved for services.
- b. An appropriate ark must be prepared.
- c. It must be read at least three times before it is returned.

If damaged and not repairable, the Sefer Torah must be buried in a Genizah.

What about a Sefer Torah damaged in the Holocaust? Can it be displayed and left open in a Shul or museum for educational purposes? Yes, and a defective Sefer Torah may be used for Hakaphot on Simchat Torah or to held at Kol Nidrei.

Tayko

תיקו

Elijah

Tishbi

will resolve (answer)

yitaretz

difficulties

kushios

and questions. v

Veboyos

Literally means – it stands over. Derived from ‘taykom’ let it stand. Indicating that the question still stands and the matter remains in doubt.

- Elijah will come and create peace in the world by resolving these uncertainties. The uncertainties will be resolved not by his powers of prophecy, because halachic decisions are no longer made in Heaven (Deut 30:12), but by his scholarship regarding the laws and the facts.

לְעוֹלָם וְשָׁלִים אָדָם פְּרָשִׁיּוֹתָיו עִם הַצְּבוּר
שְׁנַיִם מִקְרָא וְאַחַד תַּרְגוּם

How to study

Read twice and translate once.

Daf Digest

לְעוֹלָם יִשְׁלִים אָדָם פְּרָשִׁיּוֹתָיו עִם הַצְּבוּר
 שְׁנַיִם מִקְרָא וְאַחַד תַּרְגוּם

One should always complete the weekly Torah portion with the community by reading the Torah twice and the translation once.

What is the time frame in which this should occur:

1. From Minchah on Shabbos- that is when we first encounter the new parsha. (Mishnah Berura) (Tosophos).
2. From Sunday onward – since we read the prior parsha on the Sabbath, we don't obligate 2 parshiot on the same day. (Shulchan Aruch)
3. From Wednesday. (The Tashbatz)
4. From Friday am after Shacharis. (Ari)
5. From Friday afternoon.
6. It should be read on the Sabbath. (Shelah Hakodesh) (Maharam Mi Rottenberg)
7. Start on Sunday, (Shulchan Aruch.) This is the resolution of the debate.

לְעוֹלָם יִשְׁלִים אָדָם פְּרָשִׁיּוֹתָיו עִם הַצְּבוּר
שְׁנַיִם מִקְרָא וְאַחַד תַּרְגוּם

A person should complete the parsha of the week read by the congregation, twice in hebrew and once in translation.

This requirement is used to support the idea of modifying the public reading of the Torah. The public reading in orthodox synagogues does not satisfy this requirement, but relies on each individual to do so on his/her own.

There are three modifications to be considered. 1 & 2 are the triennial system.

- a. Read 1/3 of each parsha on Shabbos and next year, the second 1/3 etc.
- b. Read 1/3 of each parsha spread out over three weeks.
- c. Read one aliyah at Shabbat minchah, one Monday and one Thursday and the rest of the parsha (only 4 aliyot) on Shabbos.

Bleich 3:139

אֶלֶּא לֹוֹמֵר לָךְ כָּל הָאוֹכֵל וְשׁוֹתָהּ בַּתְּשִׁיעִי
 מַעֲלָה עָלָיו הַכָּתוּב כְּאִילוּ מִתְעַנֶּה תְּשִׁיעִי וְעֲשִׂירִי

A person who eats and drinks on the ninth, Scripture treats him as if he fasted on the 9th and the 10th.

May a person reduce the need to eat on Yom Kipper because of illness by using intravenous nutrition? If he consumes nutrients on erev Yom Kipper by IV, is it considered “eating and drinking” on the 9th of Tishrei earning him credit as though he fasted on the 9th and 10th?

R Moshe Feinstein teaches that use of IV feeding to avoid oral intake on Yom Kipper for an ill patient is not appropriate, unless he needs the IV feeding for health purposes. Then it is not being used to mitigate the infraction of eating but for pekuach nefesh. The obligation to mitigate infractions only relates to the same method by which the act is performed, i.e. eating very small amounts of food. We are not obligated to utilize an unusual or unnatural method.

Any intake of nutrition on erev Yom Kippur is laudatory and a person is rewarded, even if the intake is by IV means.

וּבְלִבְדֵּי שְׁלֵשׁ יְקָדִים וְשֵׁלֵשׁ יְאַחֵר

As long as he does not recite the Torah portion either before or after.

The benefits of having the entire Jewish people study the weekly parasha is to create unity and conformity among the Nation.

Also, there is an exponentially increased benefit when many learn, rather than if only one learns. A large number of people can share insights and new ideas with others.

Tosophos cites the Yerushalmi, where Rebbe commanded his children not to sit down to the Shabbos meal until they had completed this mitzvah so as to provide words and thoughts of Torah to be spoken at the Shabbos meal.

וְהִזְהָרוּ בְּזִקְן שְׂשֻׁכָּה תִּלְמוּדוֹ מִחֲמַת אוֹנְסוֹ

Be careful to respect a scholar who has forgotten his learning through a misfortune.

Such an illness or accident is no fault of his own. However, one who has forgotten his learning through negligence is not treated so well.

This concept is symbolized by the honor given to the fragments of the tablets which Moshe broke. They are also kept in the Holy Ark with the whole tablets in a place of honor and respect.

Meam Loez 16:83

The letters of the tablets flew away, only the stone tablets remained, yet the Israelites still treasured them.

1-Berachos 9a2
Weiss #700

line 13

A12

וְיִחַיד וְרַבִּים הֵלְכָה כְּרַבִּים

When there is a controversy between an individual and the many, the halachah is with the many (the majority).

This policy assures the survival of the people. We are obligated to follow the majority – even if they are later found to be wrong. By so doing, we have at least not destroyed the unity of the people.

מֵאִמְתִּי קוֹרִין אֶת שְׁמַע בְּשַׁחֲרִית

At what time may we begin to recite the morning Shema?

This sets out the times to recite the morning Shema.

When there is enough day light for one to distinguish blue wool from white wool i.e., techeles from undyed wool.

Being able to distinguish techeles is required (Num15:39) and is mentioned in the third paragraph of Shema. When we see it, we will recall all of the commandments of Hashem. Therefore, it must be light enough for us to recognize the blue color of techeles.

מֵאִמְתִּי קוֹרִין אֶת שְׁמֵעַ בְּשַׁחֲרִית

What time may one begin to recite the Shema in the morning?

From the time that one sees his friend at a distance of four amos and he recognizes him.

R Saul Weiss – when you have tolerance for your neighbor who is outside your daled amos of spiritual observance, then you are fit to address the Lord.

בְּעֵי רַבִּי מֵאִיר רַחֲמֵי עֲלֵוֵיהֶוּ כִּי הֵיכִי דְלִימוֹתוֹ

Once Rabbi Meir davened for mercy that these evil men die.

This does not seem to be a request for mercy. However, we must realize that Rabbi Meir was praying for mercy for the victims of these criminals.

Bruria suggested that, instead, her husband should pray that these men repent, not that these men be no more. He should pray that their inclination toward sinning be no more.

Another view is that Rabbi Meir prayed that these evil men be punished in this world and be spared a more severe punishment in the next world. Indeed, to die here would be merciful for them.

מִי פְתִיב חוֹטְאִים

“Is it written chotim (sinners)? It is written chattaim (sins)”.

Bruria helped her husband, R Meir, to change his prayer for the death of the sinners, to a prayer for the cessation of their sins.

Just as Abraham prayed for the life of the people of Sodom, his desire was that sin, not the sinners, be eliminated.

As it says in Tehillim 104:35, “let sins cease to be perpetuated on the earth, then the wicked will be no more” – for everyone will be righteous.

אֵלֹהִים בְּעֵי רַחֲמֵי עַלְוֵיהֶם דְּלִהְדָרוּ בְּתַשׁוּבָה

Pray for their mercy, that they should repent.

Let evil deeds be eradicated from the earth.

But not the evil doers.

This phrase is raised in the discussion as to whether we are allowed to combat terrorism with terrorism. If they bomb a bus, may we bomb a bus, etc?

The law of the pursuer permits as to execute any would-be murderers – even by a preemptive strike, unless the danger can be avoided by a less dramatic measure.

- If the perpetrators are known they may be targeted but not if innocent people will be harmed.
- If terrorist acts are committed by anyone, the acts must be condemned and the person punished, not as retribution, but as prevention.

All acts of terror must be met by public condemnation and censure until such acts are an anathema and until such acts, not necessarily the evil-doers, are gone from the earth.

1- Berachos 10a1 line 11 B23
Daf Digest

אָמַר לָהּ הֵהוּא מֵינָא לְבְרוּרָיָא

A Saduccee said to Bruria

and it was said about her that she was the righteous woman Bruria.

- She was the wife of R Meir.
- She was the daughter of R Chanina B Tradiyon (Avodah Zara 18a).
- She studied Torah (Pesachim 62b) and knew 300 Torah lessons learned from 300 different sages.

1- Berachos 10a5 line 47 B24
Kings II 20:1
Isaiah 38:1

בִּי מֵת אַתָּה וְלֹא תִחְיֶה׃

Isaiah told Chizkiyahu,
“You are dying and you will not live”.

This seems redundant.

The first refers to death in this world.

The second refers to death in the world to come.

These words are to inform Chizkiyahu that he was to lose his portion in the world to come.

אִפְּלוּ חֶרֶב חֲדָה מוֹנַחַת עַל צְנָאוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם
אֵל יִמְנַע עֵצְמוֹ מִן הַרְחָמִים

If we fear a severe decree should we yield?

If a sharp sword is at our throats, should we refrain from praying for mercy?

Chizkiyahu was told he would die – he prayed and God changed his “mind”.

Why? Because when told the news – Chizkiyahu’s prayer increased in intensity to the level needed to change the decree.

Never give up. Never refrain from praying for mercy.

גִּבּוֹר סֵפֶר רְפוּאוֹת

The Book of Remedies

Chizkiyahu hid the book of healing

This discusses how we must use great effort to find a refuah for patients.

Why did Chizkiyahu hide the book?

He felt if healing is so easy, people would not pray sincerely to God for healing.

Either the book led people astray and by hiding it, demonstrated Chizkiyahu's faith in God's healing powers. Or the book was about a type of healing forbidden by the Torah and, therefore correctly hidden by Chizkiyahu.

He used this act as an argument to change the decree against him and God relented.

גִּירָר עֵצְמוֹת אָבִיו עַל מִטָּה שֶׁל חֲבָלִים

He dragged his father's body on a bed of ropes.

Honor your father and your mother.

What if they are abusive parents, must you still honor them?

Ashkenazi sources: Rashi, Rabbenu Tam, R Moshe Isserless – No

Sephardic sources: We are commanded to respect our parents and it continues even in the face of abuse or other illegality.

Personal care or services may be given by others, nursing home, etc.

but we must visit our parents in person or at least by telephone.

Never does a child have a right to assault or beat a parent.

Chizkiyahu's father Achaz was steeped in wickedness. His son dishonored him publicly upon his death to provide a measure of atonement for his father and to warn others as to what lies ahead, if they follow Achaz' practices.

1-Berachos 10b5

line 40

A31

Weiss #168

אַל יַעֲמֹד אָדָם בְּמָקוֹם גְּבוּהָ וְיִתְפַּלֵּל

A person should not stand on a chair or on a stool or any high place to pray

but rather on a low place. There should be no haughtiness before God, as it says:

“from the depths I called upon you, Hashem”, means from a low position.

- from the depths of his troubles
- one must cultivate humility in prayer.

הַמְתַּפֵּלֵל צְרִיךְ שִׁכְוִיז אֶת רַגְלָיו

He who prays should align his legs as it says in Yechezkel 1: “and their legs are a straight leg”, referring to the angels.

From this Gemara, we learn that when praying the Amidah, our feet should be together like one leg.

There are other customs, e.g., keep heels together but spread the front part of the foot, since the sentence continues “and the sole of their foot was like the (split) foot of a calf”. This is the custom of the Yemenites.

לֹא תֹאכְלוּ קֹדֶם שֶׁתִּפְּלוּ

A person should not eat before praying in the morning.

It's a sign of arrogance.

A person should not attend to his own desires first and place his responsibility to Hashem after his own desires.

The operative word here is “desires” . If the person attends to his necessities, i.e., he has hunger which will detract from his concentration at prayer or thirst or needs medication, he certainly should do that first.

That is not arrogance.

בֵּית שַׁמַּי אֹמְרִים יֵשֶׁה וַיִּקְרָא

In the evening each person must first lie down and then recite the Shema.

This discusses the position one must assume while reciting the Shema.

Beis Shammai says, “in the evening each person must first lie down and then recite the Shema”.

Beis Hillel says, “each person may recite as he wishes standing, walking, lying or sitting.”

1- Berachos 11a1 line 7 A33
Weiss #168

פְּרֵט לְעוֹסֵק בְּמִצְוָה

Whoever is engaged in a mitzvah is exempt from performing another mitzvah.

You are exempt from saying the Shema if you are engaged in another mitzvah, i.e., a bridegroom who is preoccupied with performing a mitzvah, but only if he marries a virgin, not if he marries a widow.

אָבֵל חַיִּיב בְּכָל הַמִּצְוֹת הָאֲמֹרוֹת בְּתוֹרָה

A mourner is obligated in all the commandments stated in the Torah except for the mitzvah of tefillin.

The tefillin are referred to as ‘glory’ in Ezekiel 24:17.

“Affix upon yourself glory”, and it is not appropriate to crown oneself with glory when in the midst of your mourning.

1-Berachos 11a3 line 45 B47

Daf Digest

עֲשֵׂה כְּדַבְּרֵי בֵּית שְׁמַאי
לֹא עֲשֵׂה וְלֹא כְּלוּם

If he did as Beis Shammai suggests he has not fulfilled his obligation
(to recite the Shema).

-Reciting the Shema lying down at night:

Beis Shammai – advocates this position

Beis Hillel – permits lying, sitting, standing or walking

Rabbis and Tosofos – penalize him if he says the Shema lying down and declare
that he has not read the Shema at all.

Rav Yosef – agrees with the Rabbis.

Rambam – permits any posture.

Shulchan Aruch – the mitzvah is fulfilled, but the person has transgressed the
words of the Rabbis.

בְּשַׁחַר מְבָרַךְ שְׁתֵּים לְפָנֶיהָ וְאַחַת לְאַחֲרֶיהָ
וּבְעֶרֶב מְבָרַךְ שְׁתֵּים לְפָנֶיהָ וְשְׁתֵּים לְאַחֲרֶיהָ

In the morning two blessings before the Shema

1. Yotzer Orr
2. Ahavah Rabbah

And one after it

1. Emes Vyatziv

In the evening two blessings before the Shema

1. Hamariv Aravim
2. Ahavas Olam

And two after it

1. Emes Veemunah
2. Hashkiveinu

Psalms 119:164 Sheva Bayom Helaitechah:

“Seven in the day, I praise you”

1-Berachos 11b2 line 28 B25
Siddur p16

לְעֶסֶק בְּדַבְרֵי תוֹרָה

Blessing before studying Torah – to be occupied in the words of the Torah.

The Levush answers the question, “why do you not have to make a new bracha each time during the day, that you learn Torah – as you must do each time you eat, for example?”

Because the entire day is considered a learning session with the Bracha Laasok Bedivreh Torah, as the Bracha Acharitah for yesterday’s learning, and Asher Bachar Banu starting a new day of Torah learning.

The first bracha ends yesterday’s learning session and the second bracha starts the new day’s learning.

אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר בָּנוּ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים

Who has chosen us from all peoples.

The three Birchos HaTorah correspond to the three ways we differ from other peoples.

1. We were chosen to be given the Torah to study.
2. We were chosen to understand the Torah's deeper meanings. - La asok B'divrei Torah.
3. We were chosen to have the authority to decide halachah from our human understanding of the text.

“Asher Batcher Banu”, it is with these ideas that we were chosen and given this responsibility.

1- Berachos 12a1 line 10 B15
Daf Digest

אֵף בַּגְּבוּלֵינָּא בְּקִשְׁוֵי לְקִרְוֵת

They wished to read the Ten Commandments as they do in the provinces.

Regarding the custom of standing as the Ten Commandments are being read in the synagogue.

Rambam – says it is prohibited since it appears that the Ten Commandments are more important than the rest of the Torah.

Rav David Feinstein points out that there are other sections of the Torah where we stand, such as the Shira. As such, people will not be misled by standing for the passages of the Ten Commandments.

1-Berachos 12a2 line 36 B29

Weiss #630

הַכֹּל הוֹלֵךְ אַחַר הַחֵתוּם

Everything is determined by the conclusion.

“all’s well that ends well”

This refers to a person who makes a mistake in his prayers, but realizes his error and ends with the correct benediction, “he has performed his obligation”.

This applies as well, to the progress we make during the year. If at the end of the year a person is conducting himself well, he gets credit for a full year of good conduct. You can rectify all preceding behavior of the year.

1-Berachos 12a4 line 50 A17
Psalms 146:8
Malachi 2:5

”ה' זקף כפופים”

How to bow, Hashem straightens the bent

When a person who is praying reaches a point where he is to, he must up at the name of God.

Proof: “HaShem Zokef Kefufim” Hashem straightens the bent. Psalms 146:8

Proof: “Mipnei Shemi Nichash Who” before my name, he was humbled.
Malachi 2:5

Indicates that humbling (bowing) is done before God’s name but at God’s name, the person should no longer be bowed down, but straightened up.

מִזְכִּירֵינוּ יְצִיאת מִצְרַיִם בַּלַּיְלֹת

We mention the Exodus from Egypt at night.

Must the night time Shema include all three passages that are recited in the morning?

The third passage relating to tzitzis is not pertinent at night, since the rule is to wear tzitzis only during the day, as we learn “ureisem oso”, and you shall see them.

Therefore, we should not have to say that third passage at night. However, it ends with the sentence, “asher hotzeti eschem maeretz mitzraim”

We learn from the story recited in the Haggadah from this Mishnah, that we must recite Yitzios Mitzraim, at night, ‘kol yemai chiyechah’. The word Kol, comes to include nights (or Olam Habbah). So we should say the third paragraph of the Shema, even at night.

1-Berachos 13a1 line 18 B31

תַּיִּי בֵּר קִפְרָא כָּל הַקּוֹרֵא לְאַבְרָהָם אַבְרָם עוֹבֵר בְּעֵשָׂה

Whoever calls Avraham, Avram, has transgressed a positive precept

since it says, “you shall no longer be called Avram”. Gen 17:5

כָּל תְּנִי בֵּר קְפָרָא הַקּוֹרָא לְאַבְרָהָם

Whoever uses the name Avram violates a positive commandment, for it says “your name shall be Avraham: Gen 17:5”

Avram - AV Aram-The father of Aram
 Avraham - AV Hamon-The father of many

“You shall call her Sarah” - means only Avraham was limited.
 He could not call her Sari any more.

Jacob - Israel

He can be called by either name.

Subsidiary name - Principle name
 Yud - Yaakov/Yitzchak
 Shin - Sarah
 Reish - Rachel-Rivka
 Aleph - Avraham
 Lamed - Leah

הִיָּה קוֹרֵא בַּתּוֹרָה

If one was reciting the sections of the Shema

This discusses when one is permitted to interrupt his recital of the Shema:

- A. between paragraphs
- B. middle of a paragraph

1. To inquire about another's welfare for the sake of his honor.

R Meir- A

R Yehudah-B

2. To inquire when you fear for a person's life.

R Meir- B

R Yehudah-B

3. To respond to a greeting.

R Meir- B

R Yehudah B

4. To return a greeting for the sake of another's honor.

R Meir A

R Yehudah A

עָלֵינוּ עוֹל מַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם תְּחִלָּה
וְאַחַר כֵּן מִקְבֵּל עָלֵינוּ עוֹל מִצְוֹת,, וְהָיָה אִם שָׁמַעַי

The first paragraph of the Shema declares our acceptance of the yoke of Heaven.

The second paragraph, our acceptance of the mitzvot.

At a bris, we first say the initial paragraph of the Shema, indicating we accept the yoke of Heaven. Only then do we perform the bris, which introduces the baby into the observance of mitzvot.

The same implication occurs when we use the preamble ‘L’ shem Yichud’ indicating our belief in Heaven and then, we proceed to perform the mitzvah.

תָּנוּ רַבָּנָן דְּבִרְי רַבִּי וַחֲכָמִים אֹמְרִים בְּכֹל לָשׁוֹן

“The Shema must be recited as it is written (in Hebrew)”, says Rebbe.

The sages say, “it may be recited in any language”.

Tosofos – rule is like the sages. Any language suffices.

Rif and Rosh agree with the sages.

Rambam – agrees, however the translation must be very accurate.

Ra’avad - no translation is ever good enough.

R’ Yosef Karo – choose the best translation and it is ok.

Shulchan Aruch – agrees with Rambam.

Mishnah Berura – agrees, but the translation must be in the language of the country where it is being recited.

Meiri – any language is OK but it is preferable to say it in Hebrew.

1-Berachos 13a4 line 49 B19

„שְׁמַע” בְּכֹל לְשׁוֹן שְׂאִתָּה שׁוֹמֵעַ

“Hear”

- means - any language in which you can understand what you are saying.
- means – you must say the words loud enough to hear them.

1-Berachos 13b2 line 31 B14

כָּל הַמְאָרִיף ,, בְּאֶחָד״ מֵאֲרִיכִין לוֹ יָמָיו וְשָׁנוֹתָיו

Whoever prolongs the word, ‘echad’, has his days and years prolonged.

Considered a reward – measure for measure.

1-Berachos 14a3 line 28 A12
Daf Digest

אָסוּר לוֹ לְאָדָם לַעֲשׂוֹת חֶפְצָיו קוֹדָם שְׂיִתְפַּלֵּל

It is forbidden for a person to do his activities before praying.

If a person engages in business before and after prayer, it is as though prayer interrupts his business, rather than prayer being the priority. It is much better to concentrate on prayer first and later attend to his business.

1-Berachos 14a3 line 31

A31

Weiss #735

כָּל הַלֵּן שֶׁבַע יָמִים בְּלֹא חֲלוֹם נִקְרָא רָע

A person who sleeps seven days without a dream is called evil.

Rashi - if he is wicked, Heaven will not send him messages.

Vilna Gaon - all life is but a fleeting dream.

We don't realize it during our busy lives, but we should reflect on that at least once every seven days, on Shabbos.

Not to do so, is evil.

הוא שתקדם,, שמע" ל,, וְהָיָה אִם-שָׁמַעַ

This sequence is logical that “Shema” should precede “Vehayah em Shamoah”

What determined the sequence of the three chapters of the Shema?

It is not in the order in which they appear in the Torah.

The third paragraph shows up in the Torah, first. - Vayomer-Bamidbar 15:37

The first paragraph shows up in the Torah, second. - Shema-Devarim 6:4

The second paragraph shows up in the Torah, third. - Vehayah -Devarim 11:13

R Yehoshua ben Korcha explains the logic of the sequence:

Shema – expresses allegiance to Heaven.

Vehayah – commits oneself to the commandments of Heaven including to study Torah day and night.

Vayomer – includes only the commandment of tzitzis which is required only in the daytime.

R Shiman bar Yochai explains the logic of the sequence:

Shema – commands us to study Torah, teach and do mitzvot i.e., tefillin and mezuzah.

Vehayah – also commands us to teach and perform mitzvot.

Vayomer - contains only the commandment to do the mitzvah of tzitzis.

וּמְקַדִּים

Rav rose up, washed his hands, and said the Shema.

Is it permitted to say the Shema without tefillin? No, it is testimony against yourself. The Shema tells of an obligation to wear tefillin and here he did not!

The reason may be the following scenario:

Rav shared his tefillin with another person who was not yet finished when the time to say the Shema arrived. So Rav said the Shema on time and later put on the tefillin and said Shema again.

Daf Digest

אָמַר עוֹלָא כָּל הַקּוֹרָא קְרִיאת שְׁמַע בְּלֹא תְּפִילִין
כְּאִילוּ מְעִיד עֵדוּת שְׁקֵר בְּעַצְמוֹ

Whoever reads Shema without tefillin is as though he is testifying against himself.

Can you read the Shema without tefillin on, without tzitzis on, or in a room without a mezuzah?

Mezuzah is not an obligation for the person, it is for the room.

Tzitzis is not an obligation for the person, it is for the article of clothing – if the item does not require tzitzis he does not need to wear them.

However, tefillin is incumbent on the individual and therefore, it is considered self incriminating if we say the prayer which orders us to use tefillin and in fact we don't have them on.

It would also be self incriminating, if a person did not concentrate when saying “Hashem is one”... or , who permitted his children activities that were not consistent with ‘V’Shinantom Bam’.

זכי מה ענין שאול אצל רחם

What is the connection between ‘the grave and the womb’?

Why are these words juxtaposed, “The grave and the barren womb” ? (Prov 30:15)

It is to tell us that the womb receives and yields up.

So the grave also receives and yields up.

Recall the story used to “prove” that there is life after death. Two brothers argue about whether there is life after this life. As they spoke, the space beneath them opened and one brother fell crying to the other , “we will now find out for sure”, and his voice trailed away. The remaining brother soon began to fall as well and when he felt a cold rush of air, he opened his eyes and saw his brother being held upside down by his ankles and people exclaiming, “mazal tov”. The twin brothers had been born into a world they could never have imagined while they were in their mother’s womb.

Just as that unimaginable transition could occur, so could our transition to the next world.

Daf Digest

קָרָא וְלֹא דִקְדַק בְּאוֹתֵיהֶּ רַבִּי יוֹסִי אֹמֵר יֵצֵא
 רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אֹמֵר לֹא יֵצֵא

A person read Shema but was not precise in his pronunciation of the letters.

Rav Yosi says he has fulfilled his obligation.

Rabbi Yehuda says that he has not.

We need to enunciate adjacent words that share the same letter.

We need to enunciate those letters that contain a dagesh.

We may not mumble, swallow or slur words.

How does this apply to a person who is a stutterer?

Meiri accepts, post facto , a Shema that was mumbled or said by a stutterer.

אָבֵל פֶּתַח בֵּינֵינוּ לְמַעַן יִרְבוּ יְמֵיכֶם סְרֵכִיָּה נֶקֶט וְאֵתִי

However, if he began to recite, “in order to prolong his days”, we assume he followed his habit.

If a person is not certain that he prayed correctly, i.e., in the Shema there are two places where the word “Uchesavtem” occurs. He must repeat the Shema from the first Uchesavtem and continue from there.

If he is not certain, after davening, whether he correctly changed from “Vtain Bracha” to “Vtain tal Umator,” he may assume that he did it correctly, if it has been 30 days since the switch.

Thirty days establishes a pattern.

This indicates an appreciation by Chazal that repetition during a 30 day period will establish a reliable pattern of behavior – the lips learn their routine. The plasticity of the brain has resulted in a new or relearned pathway.

תָּנוּ רַבָּנָן פֶּרֶט לְעוֹסֵק בְּמִצְוָה,, וּבְלִכְתָּךְ בַּדֶּרֶךְ” פֶּרֶט לְחֻתָּן

The Rabbis taught in a Baraisa:

“You must recite the Shema as you are sitting in your home (excludes one who is involved in performing a mitzvah) and during your discretionary walking on the way (excludes a groom)”.

Nowadays, a groom is not exempt from the recital of Shema on his wedding night, since the general level of concentration on the Shema is not great, He can recite the Shema even while occupied with his marital duties .

1-Berachos 16b1 line 18 A39

Weiss #804 See note #11

לֹא כָּל הָרוֹצֵה לִּיטּוֹל אֶת הַשֵּׁם יְטוֹל

Not everyone who wants to assume distinction may do so.

One should not emulate the excessive piety found amongst our great Torah authorities, unless his general behavior is such that it would warrant such stringencies.

We have an example of a groom who is generally exempt from saying the Shema on his wedding night, acting in a superior manner and presenting himself as a pious person who can maintain proper concentration on prayer, even at such a time. It appears haughty.

1-Berachos 16b-17a

line 19 B23

Weinbach p7

נְצוֹר לְשׁוֹנִי מִרָע

Guard my tongue from evil.

Resources for the texts of our prayers:

1. From Torah – Shema
2. From Talmud
3. From Tehillim
4. From Sages
5. From the personal prayers of the sages
 - a. After blessing upon arising, Yehudah Ha Nasi (Rebbe), prayed for divine protection against arrogant people.
 - b. Mar bar Ravina – added Yehi Ratzon following Shemonah Esrei.
 - c. Rav – added Bircas Hachodesh.
 - d. Rava – added an appeal to Hashem to accept our confessions on Yom Kippur.

Weiss "101"

עַד שֶׁלֹּא נִוצַרְתִּי אֵינִי כְדָאִי
וְעַכְשָׁיו שֶׁנִּוצַרְתִּי בְּאֵלוֹ לֹא נִוצַרְתִּי

Before I was formed I was not worthy.

(I would have been of no worth for I would not have accomplished anything at that particular time).

Now that I have been formed, I am as if I had not been formed.

Now that I have been born to fulfill my destined task and mission, I realize I have done nothing.

Every person created in this world has a unique purpose and goal that only he can achieve, and for this purpose was he created. No one else can achieve it for him. The schools of Hillel and Shammai concluded that it would be better for man never to have been born. Since there are more negative than positive commandments, the net result of living, is likely to be more negative than positive.

נְצוֹר לְשׁוֹנִי מִרַע וְשִׁפְתוֹתַי מִדְּבַר מְרָמָה

Guard my tongue from evil and my lips from speaking falsehood (deceit).

Two phrases:

The first relates to complete evil – where the utterance itself is evil and the intent is to do evil.

The second phrase relates to deceit - where the utterance appears good but the intent is evil.

וְנִפְשֵׁי כְּעָפָר לְכָל תְּהִיָּה

We find many places where the Jewish people are compared to dust of the earth –
what can this mean?

Tosophos - dust can be trampled on, but never destroyed.

Onkelos - such a comparison is a blessing that we will be as numerous as the particles of dust of the beloved land.

Sforno - Even if lowered to a status of dirt, they will rise to the heights of the stars of the heaven.

R Chaim Vitale - clouds of dirt are hard to work with until they are pulverized, then they can be used for building.

The Gra says - the comparison teaches us to be humble.

Chasam Sofer - although dirt is trod upon life comes from it. Although we suffer, the world depends upon us.

1-Berachos 17a2 line 27 A34

Weiss #428

סוף אדם למוות וסוף בהמה לשחיטה

The end of man is to die and the end of an animal is to be slaughtered.

Each is thereby elevated.

Man is elevated to be part of Divinity, i.e., the Shechinah in man returns to Hashem.

The animal is elevated to be part of man and thereby, elevated to be part of Divinity.

1-Berachos 17a3 line 37 A6
Daf Digest

וּמְרִבָּה שְׁלוֹם עִם אַחֵיו וְעִם קְרוֹבָיו וְעִם כָּל אָדָם

Try to always be on the best terms with your relatives and all men.

That you may be beloved above and well liked below.

For whenever the people are pleased, God is pleased.

1-Berachos 17a3 line 37 A8
Daf Digest

וְאֶפְּיָלוּ עִם נְכָרֵי בִּשּׁוּק כְּדֵי שְׂיֵהָא אָהוּב לְמַעְלָה

We must have a good name in Heaven as well as here on earth, even a person in the market place, in order to be beloved on high.

Treat everybody well.

Two neighbors, a Jew and a German, said good morning to each other each day for years. They exchanged this civil courteous greeting. They had no other contact. Later, the Jew found himself in a concentration camp line – people being told to go to the right to live and to the left to die. He looked into the eyes of the officer and the two men recognized each other. “Good morning”, said the officer, and pointed to the right, to life.

גְּדוּלַּת הַבְּטָחָה שֶׁהַבְּטִיחַן הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא לְנָשִׁים יוֹתֵר מִן הָאֲנָשִׁים

Greater is the promise that the Holy One, blessed be He, made to women than to men.

Women merit eternal life by bringing their children to cheder to learn and by permitting their husbands to learn.

The women have done their maximum and get credit for it.

The men, though in a place where they could learn, may not be doing their maximum. They may doze, talk about foolish topics and not learn all that they should. Therefore, women receive more credit than men.

1-Berachos 17b1 line 11 A25

Daf Digest

כָּל הָעוֹלָם כּוֹלֵוּ נְזוּנֵיין בְּצַדִּיקָה וְהֵם נְזוּנֵיין בְּזֵרוּעַ

The entire world is sustained by Divine Grace but (the righteous) are sustained by their own force,

i.e., the strength of their own merit and not through the merit of the people.

עוֹבֵר מִשּׁוּם ,, לַעֲג לְרֵשׁ חֵרֶף עֲשֵׂהוּ"

One who mocks a pauper insults his Maker.

He may mock him or ignore him since he believes any kindness he extends will never be repaid.

He may mock or ignore the dead for the same reason.

The Gemara cautions us to be very sensitive even to the point of not walking within 4 amos of a grave with our tzitzis exposed. It is considered mocking the dead who can no longer fulfill the mitzvah of tzitzis.

If this is how sensitive we must be with the dead, how much more sensitive must we be with our dealings with those who are still alive. We must avoid displaying anything which may contribute to the discomfort of others.

צְדִיקִים שְׁבִמִיתָן נִקְרְאוּ חַיִּים

The righteous in their deaths are called living.

Sfas Emes - man is a composite of matter which can be destroyed and die, whereas, “form” is eternal. The goal of the soul’s descent to this world is to change matter into form. The righteous achieve this and therefore even when they die, they are called living because their matter has changed to form and form does not die.

Or Hachaim Lev 18:2 Evil is the antithesis of life, so when a person sins his soul is attacked and loses its life and vitality. That’s why the wicked are called dead even while they are alive.

Rashi - The righteous live their lives with the understanding that they will eventually die. They prepare for that certainty. They accumulate good deeds in this world so as to live more satisfyingly in the world to come. The righteous are called “living” after they die, because their righteous deeds live on after them.

1-Berachos 18b1 line 10 B1

Weiss #973

רְשָׁעִים שְׂבַחֵיהֶן קְרוּיִין מֵתִים

The wicked in their lifetime are called dead.

Their soul is mortally wounded.

Their soul is dead even while their body lives. Because of their lack of spiritual sensitivity, they are considered dead.

1-Berachos 19a1 line 10 B11

אַחַר מִטָּתָן שֶׁל תְּלָמִידֵי חֲכָמִים נוֹפֵל בְּגֵיהֶנָּם

If someone speaks ill of a Talmid Chacham, he will surely go to Gehinnom.

How do we know?

Korach spoke ill of Moshe Rabbienu, and the earth opened up and he fell to Gehinnom. “And even when there is peace in Israel, i.e., the Torah scholar rests in peace: Hashem will drive those who disparage a Torah scholar, together with the workers of iniquity, to Gehinnom”.

If you see that a Torah Scholar sins (or you believe he has sinned) believe that he has already repented and/or your perception of his sin was wrong.

1-Berachos 19a5 line47
Daf Digest

A22

לְעוֹלָם אֵל יִפְתַּח אָדָם פִּיּוֹ לְשַׁטָּן

One should never give Satan an opening.

Words have power.

There are damaging effects to a curse and positive effects to a blessing. Our Gemara suggests that we should never verbalize portending disastrous situations, for fear that the Satan will use the opportunity to follow through and bring them to fruition.

וְקִטְנִים פְּטוּרִין מִקְרִיאַת שְׁמַע

And a child is exempt from reciting the Shema

A child is not obligated to fulfill mitzvot until he reaches the age of Bar Mitzvah but his parents are obligated to train him to do so at an early age. Does this requirement extend to not only learning how to say the “Shema” but also to reciting it regularly, morning and evening?

Rashi teaches that the mitzvah of the “Shema” is different – it must be recited at specific times and the father may not always be available at those times to train his son. Therefore, it is not part of the requirement upon the father to do so morning and evenings.

Rabbienu Tam disagrees, and writes that performing the Shema at the correct times is integral to the mitzvah itself and is also part of the requirement upon the father.

Rashi, teaches that the father only needs to teach his son the first passage of the Shema. Rabbienu Tam teaches that the entire Shema must be taught and performed at the correct times.

The Shulchan Aruch agrees with Rabbienu Tam.

וְחַיִּיבִין בְּתַפְלָה

Women, slaves and children are obligated in prayer

because prayer is a request for divine compassion and everyone requires that. One might have thought since one must pray evening, morning and afternoon, that prayer might have the status of a time-bound positive mitzvah from which women are exempt. This Mishnah tells us that women are obligated to pray and that it is not time bound.

Rambam – teaches that prayer is obligated by the Torah and the Rabbis merely defined the

times, language and frequency. Rambam would say that obligation could be discharged by one Shemoneh Esrei per day.

The Shulchan Aruch agrees with Rambam.

Rashi teaches that prayer is obligated by the Rabbis.

Rama agrees with Rashi.

Are women obligated to say the Bircas HaMazon?

נָשִׁים בְּבִרְכַּת הַמָּזוֹן

What difference does it make?

If she is only Rabbinically obligated, she can't say the Bircas HaMazon for a male who is Biblically obligated.

This may not be true, because a minor boy child can say the Bircas HaMazon for his father and he is only Rabbinically obligated. It should follow that an only Rabbinically obligated woman could do the same. It really should make no difference if she is Biblically or Rabbinically obligated! Wrong.

When can a minor say Bircas HaMazon for his father? Only when the father is also only Rabbinically obligated to bentsh (say Bircas HaMazon).

The father is Biblically obligated to bentsh, only if he ate a meal that is enough to satisfy but if it is only a small meal, i.e., the volume of an olive or an egg, the person is only Rabbinically obligated. A child or a woman who is Rabbinically obligated can bentsh for a man who is also only Rabbinically obligated.

וְכֹל שְׂאֵינוּ מְחוּיָיֵב בְּדָבָר אֵינוּ מוֹצִיא אֶת הַרְבֵּים יְדֵי חוֹבָתָן

An individual may perform a mitzvah as another's agent, only if the individual serving as the agent, has at least the same obligation as the individual for whom it is being performed.

This is stated in the discussion as to whether a woman is obligated to recite Bircas HaMazon Biblically or Rabbinically. If only Rabbinically, she cannot lead the Bircas for men who are Biblically obligated.

In our day this argument is used to make the decision, that a non-Jewish parent may not have an aliyah or any other religious honor, i.e., cannot serve as a Shaliach Tzibur or sing in a choir in the synagogue. Since the choir is considered an extension of the cantor. Other activities, such as reading the prayer for the government or a psalm or another selected reading would be acceptable.

נְשִׂים בְּבִרְכַּת הַמָּזוֹן

Is a woman required to say Bircas HaMazon

If so, are they Rabbinically or Biblically obligated?

“V’achalta V’savatah Uve’rachtah”... is from the Torah. She is obligated Biblically, if she ate and was satisfied.

No. The Torah says, “Al Haaretz Hatovah”, and women were not given the good land by Hashem. Only men were given land, except for the daughters of Zelophehad, and they were given land only on the basis of their father’s claim to it, not as women. The fact that they were not given land, is not a good reason to claim that their need to say Bircas HaMazon is not Biblically obligated. The Kohanim and Leviim were also not given land and certainly, they are required to perform Bircas HaMazon.

However, even though women were not given land, they were given the fruits of the land. Therefore, they have a reason to bless the good land. This suggests that they are obligated to say Bircas HaMazon, Mediorisah, (Biblically).

וְהֵלֵא אֶתְהָּ נוֹשֵׂא פָּנִים לְיִשְׂרָאֵל

The angels asked God, “Why do you show favor to the Jewish people”?

“How can I not show favor to them”, answered God.

“I wrote a law for them that requires them to recite Bircas HaMazon only if they have eaten enough to be satisfied. They chose to praise me even for a very small meal. Just as they favor me, so I must favor them”.

אָמַר רַב נַחֲמָן בַּר יִצְחָק נְהוּג עַל־מָא בְּהַי תְּלַת סְבִי

We learn the blessing on the Torah from the blessing after meals.

After the discussion as to whether contemplating a prayer is equivalent to saying it by moving ones lips (it is not), the Gemara tries to teach a kal V'chomer comparing food and Torah study.

Torah study - Biblically requires a bracha before you begin and you should need one as you finish. Deut 32:3, “When I call out in the name of God ascribe greatness”.

Eating - Biblically requires a bracha as you finish and you should need one as you start. Deut 8:10 , “You shall eat, be satisfied and praise Hashem”

Is this a valid comparison?

No, food and Torah study are fundamentally different.

Food gives you strength, so it is appropriate to give thanks as you have been physically satisfied and have received that strength.

Torah study makes one worthy of eternal life. Therefore, it is not appropriate to make a blessing when one stops studying or finishes. It is only appropriate to make a blessing before beginning to study Torah.

בְּרַכַּת הַתּוֹרָה לְאַחֲרֶיהָ מִן בְּרַכַּת הַמְּזוֹן מִקַּל וְחוֹמֶר

A blessing after the study of Torah would be derived from the precedent of Bircas HaMazon via a kal V'chomer.

Eating is merely sustenance for the body and requires a blessing before and after consumption. Torah study is sustenance for the soul, should it not require a blessing both before, as it does, but also afterwards?

A person could be yotzeh with the Hamotzei of one person and the Bircas HaMazon of another person. Is it possible to have two persons called up for an aliyah together with one saying the first bracha on the Torah and the other saying the second?

The Talmud concludes that the comparison between food and Torah study fails. It is not accepted by our Tanana. There is no Biblical source for blessings before food or after Torah study.

1-Berachos 21b1 line 7 A36
Daf Digest

עַד שְׁלֵא יִגִּיעַ שְׁלִיחַ צְבוּר לְמוֹדִים

Interruption during prayer

May we interrupt Shemonah Esrei to answer for:

Kedushah?	-	21b1	line 9	B2	- No
Modim?	-	21b1	line 7	A36	- No
Yehe Shemai Rabbo?	-	21b2	line 21	A15	- Yes

עַד שְׁלֵא יִגִּיעַ שְׁלִיחַ צְבוּר לְמוֹדִים

What is the rule concerning Modim, if the reader has not yet reached the Modim prayer?

Modim will be recited by him in his own Shemoneh Esrei, so perhaps, he does not need to be certain to say it with the congregation? - Not correct.

For him to stand during Shemoneh Esrei and not bow when everyone else is bowing for Modem, would look like he does not agree with bowing to God.

He must adjust his timing either to:

1. not start until after the congregation says Modim
2. finish before they say Modim
3. coordinate his coming to Modim in his private Shemoneh Esrei, at the exact time the congregation is saying Modim.

1-Berachos 21b1 line 13 B26

וְנִקְדַּשְׁתִּי בְּתוֹךְ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל,

And I will be sanctified among the children of Israel. Lev 22:32

If one is behind in his prayers and finds that the congregation is praying the Amidah, if he can begin and complete his own Shemoneh Esrei, before the congregation says Kedushah, he may begin. Otherwise, he should say his Shemoneh Esrei after he joins everyone saying Kedushah.

- Because in his private Shemoneh Esrei, he does not say Kedushah and it is important that he say it with the congregation.
- It requires 10 men, since it is a matter of sanctity.

אָמַר רַב נַחֲמָן בַּר יִצְחָק נְהוּג עַלְמָא בְּהַנִּי תְּלַת סְבִי

The Halachah is like the three elders.

There are times when the minhag of the people will prevail – the custom of our forefathers is as binding as the Torah itself.

A rabbi wrote that he must be buried in a talis with kosher tzitzis. The minhag is that we purposefully make the tzitzis posul. However, in this case, another great rabbi agreed to do as his colleague had requested. During the lowering of the body into the grave, one of the tzitzis got caught and ripped off making the talis posul. The rabbis realized that this was a sign from Heaven, that the deceased should be buried in accordance with the custom of the Jewish people. The minhag of the people prevail.

בַּטְלוּהָ לְטְבִילוֹתָא

Immersion was abolished.

It was a decree that a person had to immerse in a volume of 9 kabim before prayer or study. This obligation to immerse was changed to mere washing. That too, was abolished according to Rabbi Yehudah ben Bisara.

The Rif abolished immersion for prayer and study. Others abolished it for study but still required immersion for prayer.

Rav Hai Gaon – the customs of the patriarchs should be maintained.

Rambam – this decree did not gain wide acceptance. The people were not able to maintain it and immersion was consequently repealed.

Shulchan Aruch – we may pray without washing or immersion,

Showering is adequate and is regarded as immersing in 9 kabim.

„בִּי-קוֹלְךָ עָרֵב וּמִרְאִיךָ נְאוּהָ׃׃

For your voice is sweet and your countenance comely.

Rashi shows that a female voice is an object of desire to men – it is provocative. This phrase generates a discussion regarding women singing:

May you listen to a woman singing? No

May you read the Shema as you hear her? No

May you listen or sing with men and women together?

Singing together is accepted by some on the basis of the Talmudic principle, “Two voices cannot be heard”, neither is clearly audible. Deborah and Baruch sang together (Judges 5:1) but that was an isolated event and Divinely mandated.

You may listen to a woman singing hymns to God, crooning to a baby or lamenting the dead . A female voice on a radio is considered a disembodied voice, without visual stimulation and some say it is permitted.

הוֹאִיל וְחָטָא אֶף עַל פִּי שֶׁהִתְפַּלֵּל תְּפִלָּתוֹ תוֹעֵבָה

If a person davens but violates a halachic guideline, his prayer does not fulfill his obligation and the prayer is not valid.

R Moshe Feinstein learns from this, that a person who prays without a kippah must repeat his prayer even if the kippah fell off during the davening. He must stop and retrieve it.

Praying without a head covering is the custom of other religions and therefore, praying bareheaded is not proper.

הַתּוֹלֵה תְּפִילָּיו יִתְלוּ לוֹ חַיָּיו

One who dangles his tefillin – his life will be dangled. He has been disrespectful to the tefillin.

Dangled means:

1. On a hook.
2. The box dangled as you hold the straps.
3. The straps dangle as you hold the box.

1. Rashi – dangling the tefillin on a hook is forbidden.

2 + 3. Magen Avroham - forbidden

Or Zarua - forbidden

Taz - permitted but only while you are putting them on the head.

Mishnah Berura - agrees with the Taz.

Nimukei Yosef - a meticulous person would hold the box in one hand and the knot in his other, thus avoiding hanging the box at all.

1. Rebbi - It is permitted to dangle tefillin from a hook while they are still in their bag

הַמְשַׁמֵּיעַ קוֹלוֹ בְּתַפְלָתוֹ הָרִי זֶה מְקַטְנֵי אֱמֻנָה

Raising ones voice in prayer is considered a demonstration of diminished trust in God.

Rashi - it looks as if he believes God can't hear him if he speaks softly. Or, that he feels that his prayers are not being answered either because God decided not to grant him his wish at this time or that he is not beseeching God with sufficient intensity. Raising one's voice occurs when a person does not understand God's willingness to hear our prayers and to respond either now or in the future, in a manner that is always in our best interests.

A person who prays too loudly has not arrived at the highest realm: the realm of mystery.

The masses of people seem impressed with thunder and lightening, the externals. When the Torah was given at Sinai, they missed the great deep meaning of the Torah.

You can stand straight, erect, motionless, feet together, hands at your sides, completely silent and pray with great intensity and concentration. You may sway your body in prayer and still be removed from Torah.

וְאֵינוּ יְכוּל לְהוֹצִיא אֶת רֵאשׁוֹ מִפְּנֵי הַצָּנָה

Consult with your maker before you travel.

A Talmid Chacham needed money to marry off his daughter and was advised to go to a rich relative to ask for his help. As he was about to leave his house, he stopped at his door kissed the mezuzah and stood there for 10 minutes. He then went back to his room to study. His wife asked why he did not go. “I asked my maker, it is clear that whether the relative will give me money is in doubt, how can I leave my studies for a doubtful outcome. My father in Heaven is here before , and He will certainly provide for us”. Sure enough, funds came to him in time for the wedding. A rich person entrusted valuable jewels to the Talmid Chacham with instructions that if the rich person died, the jewels would then belong to the Talmid Chacham. Word came that on his travels, the rich man had died.

הִיְתָה טְלִיתוֹ שֶׁל בְּגָד וְשֶׁל עוֹר וְשֶׁל שֵׁק חֲגוּרָה עַל מְתָנָיו
מוֹתָר לְקָרוֹת קְרִיאַת שְׁמַע אֲבָל לְתַפְלָה עַד שִׁיכֶסֶה אֶת לְבוֹ

It is sufficient to wrap a garment around ones waist for the Shema but for Shemoneh Esrei one must cover one's chest (heart) as well.

The Shemoneh Esrei is considered a prayer said before the king, and a more complete covering of the body is appropriate. This can be learned from Adam and Eve, who, even though they clothed themselves, Genesis 3, they ran for cover and even more cover, when speaking directly with God.

תְּפִלַּת הַשַּׁחַר עַד הַצּוֹת

The morning prayer may be recited until noon.

Rav Yehudah - 4 hrs into the day.

The afternoon prayer may be recited until evening.

Rav Yehudah - until ½ of Minchah.

The evening prayer may be recited the entire night.

Rav Yehudah - only until 7 hours into the night.

- When the Gemara or Mishnah uses the term “tefillah” it means Shemoneh Esrei or Amidah.
 - Shacharis Amidah - has 19 paragraphs.
 - Shabbos Yom Tov & Rosh Chodesh Mussaf- have 7 paragraphs.
 - Rosh Hashanah- has 9 paragraphs.
- (An hour means 1/12th of the daylight period, not a standard 60 minute hour.)

1-Berachos 26a5 note 2

תְּפִלַּת הַשַּׁחַר עַד הַצֹּצוֹת

The prayer of: Shacharis - was initiated by Abraham
Minchah - was initiated by Yitzchak
Maariv - was initiated by Yaakov

Mussaf was designated to take the place of a sacrifice. Likewise, the other prayers were to correspond to the daily offerings in the Temple. Since the first offering of the day occurs at dawn, we see the Mishnah starts with Shacharis, not Maariv of the evening before.

1-Berachos 26a6

line 49

A23

Weinbach p9

טָעָה וְלֹא הִתְפַּלֵּל עֶרְבֵית

He erred and did not recite Maariv.

If one forgot to pray one of the regular prayer services, he has the opportunity to “make it up” by praying the next Shemoneh Esrei twice. This is true even if the make up text is different from the one he missed.

For example, he missed a Friday Minchah, he would say the Shabbos Shemoneh Esrei twice, during Maariv.

טָעָה וְלֹא הִתְפַּלֵּל עֶרְבִית

Con't-

What happens if one forgot to say Yaaleh Veyavo at Minchah on Rosh Chodesh?

Saying it at Maariv is not appropriate, since Rosh Chodesh is already over. What to do?

1. There is no point in saying a second Shemoneh Esrei at Maariv. He still would not recite the Yaaleh Veyavo that he missed.
2. Another opinion is that failing to say Yaaleh Veyavo at Minchah nullifies that entire prayer. Therefore, it must be said as a make up, even though Yaaleh Veyavo is not included in the make up prayer.
3. The Shulchan Aruch suggests that the person first declare that if his recitation is not required, it should be accepted as a voluntary prayer and do the makeup. He can't do this on Shabbos because voluntary prayers are not acceptable on Shabbos.

If he forgets to daven Shabbos Minchah, he can daven two times Saturday night with the weekday text. However, "Havdalah" should be said with the first recitation but not the second.

„מְעוֹת לֹא-יוּכָל לְתַקֵּן“

A twisted thing cannot be made straight.

A person failed to recite a prayer service, may he be permitted to double the next prayer?

1. If he failed intentionally - No
2. If he forgot by deliberate neglect, i.e., he did not follow the restrictions imposed regarding activities before praying and engaged in those activities (such as business) and, therefore, was distracted - No
3. If he failed by unintentional neglect – Yes

Some authorities, Rav Yosef Karo, Shulchan Aruch and Mishnah Berura, are lenient and permit the deliberately neglectful to say the next prayer twice.

תְּפִלוֹת אֲבוֹת תְּקִנוּם

The tefillahs (prayers) were instituted by the patriarchs.

R J.B. Soloveitchik

- a. Shacharis – is a prayer of beginning, with which he starts the day.
Until Shacharis, a person does not belong to himself, he belongs to God.
- b. Minchah - is a prayer of interruption in the middle of our mundane daily activities.
- c. The prayer of Maariv is the prayer of survival during the dread of night-the death of sleep.

מאי איפא בין רבי יהודה לרבנן

What difference is there between R Yehudah and the Rabbis

regarding the timing of weekday afternoon and evening services?

Rabbi Yehudah – daylight minutes are divided by 12 and each $1/12^{\text{th}} = 1$ hour

If one says minchah 1. after $6 \frac{1}{2}$ “hours” - he has fulfilled his obligation

If one says minchah 2. after $9 \frac{1}{2}$ “hours” - minchah gedolah until $10 \frac{3}{4}$

$\frac{1}{2}$ the remaining time of daylight.

Plag Minchah is best,

For example, if sunrise is 6 a.m. and sunset is 6 p.m. each “hour” is 60 minutes.

Minchah can be said after 12:30 p.m., i.e., after $6 \frac{1}{2}$ hours.

It is better to say Minchah between 3:30 p.m. and 5:15 p.m. and even though it is still $1 \frac{1}{2}$ hour before sunset, one may recite Maariv and repeat the Shema, after three stars are seen.

Shulchan Aruch and the Chachomim

Agree with 1. i.e., Minchah may be said after $6 \frac{1}{2}$ “hours”

Agree with 2. after $9 \frac{1}{2}$ “hours”, but permit Minchah until sunset, and Maariv immediately after that. Repeat the Shema after three stars are seen.

רַבִּי יְהוּדָה בֶּן בָּבָא הָעֵיִד חֲמִשָּׁה דְּבָרִים

R Yehudah Ben Bava testified to five matters

1. - That an orphaned minor girl when she reaches maturity, may be able to reject her husband.
2. - That a woman whose husband travels, and one witness reports that he died, she should be allowed to marry.
3. - That a rooster was once stoned in Jerusalem for killing a person; it pecked at the pulsating soft spot on a child's head. An ox that kills is stoned and by a gezeirah shavah, it was decided that the same shall be done to a rooster that kills.
4. - That wine 40 days old is considered "old wine", appropriate for libations.
5. - That the morning Tamid offering may be given during the first four hours of the day. The word "until" means "until and including" that fourth hour.

אֹתוֹ הַיּוֹם סָלְקוּהוּ לְשׁוֹמֵר הַפֶּתַח

That day they removed the doorkeeper.

R Gamliel posted a doorkeeper at the entrance of the academy to deny entrance to students whose moral or religious credentials were in question. When R Eleazar ben Azariah succeeded him and the doorkeeper was removed, 400-700 seats had to be added to the study hall because more students were included.

Both rabbis agreed to exclude students of ill repute but differed regarding students of unknown character. R' Gamliel demanded evidence of good character, R Eleazar ben Azariah accepted any student, as long as there was no negative information about him.

Rambam agrees that teaching simple students, i.e., those with no negative moral characters or even neutral moral character, is acceptable. Students of less than exemplary character, should be given remedial training.

1-Berachos 28a1 line 10 A24

Weiss #319

תּוֹכוֹ כְּבִירוֹ

His inside (i.e., his character) should correspond to his outside.

How would the guard outside the door of the house of study discern the inner sincerity of the approaching individual? Anyone lacking perfect purity of heart, after hearing the proclamation of R Gamliel uttered with such vehemence, would automatically stay away, so the guard would not need to make any judgments.

“Tocho Keburo” – this phrase has come to mean a truly moral person who has trained and cultivated his character, so that his inner thoughts and philosophy are in harmony with his outward conduct.

Just as the Holy Ark was overlaid with gold on the inside, as well as the outside, so must a scholar have the same golden character on the inside as on the outside.

רַבֵּינוּ לְמַדְּנוּ אֹרְחוֹת חַיִּים וְנִזְכָּה בָּהֶן לְחַיֵּי הָעוֹלָם הַבָּא

Teach us the ways of life in order to merit life in the World to Come.

1. Be mindful of the honor of your friends.
2. Restrain your children from (mere) recitation.
3. Put your children at the knees of scholars for a good influence.
4. When you pray, know before Whom you stand.

On account of these you will merit a life in the World to Come.

- It assumes:
1. You have friends.
 2. You live in a community that can teach your children.
 3. You live in a Torah environment, such that you can have contact with Torah Scholars.
 4. You pray regularly.

1-Berachos 28b4 line 54 B33
Weiss #786

כָּלוּם יֵשׁ אָדָם שִׂיּוּדַע לְתַקֵּן בְּרַכַּת הַצְּדוּקִים

Is there a man who can formulate a blessing for heretics?

Rambam - in Rabbi Gamliel's day the sages of Israel ignored evil, hoping it would cease of itself. The churban (destruction of the Temple) changed that. Evil could no longer be ignored.

Schmuel Hakatan - created a blessing for evil people – not by requesting their destruction, but by requesting the destruction of evil itself.

תפלת הדרך

Receive authorization for your trip from your maker - this means recite the prayer of the traveler.

Rules regarding the prayer of the traveler:

- It is obligatory, not elective, and is required of women, also.
- Intended for trips outside the city that are at least 1 parsah.
(One parsah equals 8,000 amos approx 12-16000 feet, i.e., 3 miles and/or time to travel of 72 minutes).
- The Prayer should be said while still within the first parsah i.e., 2-3 miles.
- Includes any type of travel walk, drive, fly, train or bus.
- It may be recited after 70 amos past the last house of the city that indicates he is travelling and is still proper to say the Prayer until 1 parsah of the destination.
- If possible one should stop traveling when one is saying the prayer and it should be said standing up. However, it should be said while still in the process of traveling.

1-Berachos29b3 to 30a1 line 1 A1

Weiss #832

לְעוֹלָם לְיִשְׁתַּף אִינָשׁ נִפְשֵׁיהַּ בְּהַדֵּי צְבוּרָא

A person should always associate himself with the community.

A person's prayer should be in the plural. By associating oneself with the public, each of us gains by the merits and strengths of each member of the group.

If we pray for them and they pray for us, we all receive many more prayers on our behalf.

מֵאֵי אֵיפָא בֵּין הַבִּינּוּ לְתַפְלָה קְצָרָה

Differences between Havineinu

The short prayer

- Does not pray the last three paragraphs.
- Needs to go back and pray Shemoneh Esrei.
- Recited standing or sitting.
- Does not fulfill his obligation to say Shemoneh Esrei.

The long prayer

- Prays first 3 and last 3 blessings of Shemoneh Esrei.
- Does not need to go back and pray Shemoneh Esrei.
- Must be recited standing
- Fulfills his obligation to say Shemoneh Esrei.

הָיָה רוֹכֵב עַל הַחֲמֹר

It's time for Shemoneh Esrei and you are traveling on your donkey what must you do?

You may continue traveling on your way and you do not have to:

- stand
- stop
- get off your donkey.

Why?

Because, the loss of travel time will disturb your concentration.

” וְהִתְפַּלְלוּ אֶל-ה' ”

And you should pray to Hashem.

Which way should you face when you pray?

If you are:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---|----------------------------|
| Outside Eretz Israel | - | toward Eretz Israel |
| In Eretz Israel | - | toward Jerusalem |
| In Jerusalem | - | toward the Temple |
| In the Temple | - | toward the Holy of Holies |
| In the Holy of Holies | - | toward the Ark cover |
| Behind the Ark cover | - | turn to face the Ark cover |

If you are standing:

- | | | | |
|-------|------------------|---|-------|
| East | - turn your face | - | West |
| West | - turn your face | - | East |
| South | - turn your face | - | North |
| North | - turn your face | - | South |

All of Israel directs their hearts to one place.

אֵין תְּפִלַּת הַמוֹסְפִין אֶלָּא בְּחֵבֶר עִיר

Mussaf is recited only with a minyon.

The sages say that each person is obligated to recite Mussaf alone, even if there is a minyon in town.

R Yehudah - If there is a town minyon, the individual is exempt. Why?

Because, the shaliach tzibur will be yotzeh for him.

However, if there is no congregation and no shaliach tzibur, he is obligated to pray Mussaf , alone.

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אֵין עוֹמְדִין לְהַתְפַּלֵּל אֶלָּא מִתּוֹךְ כּוֹבֵד רֵאשׁ

Discusses the frame of mind in which the recitation of Shemoneh Esrei should be approached

- attitude of reverence, heaviness of heart.

The pious ones of the past, would meditate for approximately 1 hour.

We recite pesuikhei dizimrah and Shema before Shemoneh Esrei.

- They and we, also, pray that we should be able to pray.

This Gemara is the source of the rule that at Minchah, we recite Ashrei in order to tarry (meditate) before Minchah. (32b5:A27)

- The pious ones also meditated an hour after Shemoneh Esrei. Why?
 - They needed an equal amount of time to come down from their lofty mental state.
 - To review the gains they achieved during prayer, i.e., new ideas and resolutions. (32b5:A240)

1-Berachos 30b3 line 39 A8

אֶפִּילוּ הַמֶּלֶךְ שׁוֹאֵל בְּשָׁלוֹמוֹ לֹא יִשְׁבְּנוּ

Even if a king inquires as to his welfare, he should not answer him

1-Berachos 32b5 line 50 A10

„רַק הַשָּׁמַר לְךָ וּשְׁמַר נַפְשְׁךָ”

A general extended a greeting to a Jew who was praying and the Jew did not answer him.

The general told him, “Your Torah tells you to not endanger your life. I could have you killed for this disrespect”.

The Jew answered him, “If you, general, were talking to the King of the country and a friend of yours came up and said, “Hello” , what do you think the King would do to you, if you turned from your conversation with him, to answer your friend?”

The Jew did put his life at risk and did not need to do so. Why did he take such a chance?

The fact that the general initiated the greeting, indicating some kindness in the man, suggested that he would not mete out any severe punishment.

1-Berachos 30b3 line 40 A9
Daf Digest

וְאִפְּלוּ נָחָשׁ כְּרוּךְ עַל עֵקְבוֹ לֹא יַפְסִיק

Even if a snake is around one's leg, he should not interrupt (his recitation of Shemoneh Esrei).

He should consider himself standing before the King. The snake is not a sufficient life threatening condition to force him to stop saying Shemoneh Esrei.

Interrupting the prayer by talking is not allowed, but he may walk away from the snake. Speaking in the middle of Shemoneh Esrei is not to be taken lightly.

Daf Digest

לֹא יַפְסִיק

He shall not interrupt.

One must never speak between the end of his recitation of the Amidah and Tachanun— to do so invalidates the power of Tachanun.

A story is told that after R Gamliel put his brother-in-law R Eliezer in charum. R Eliezer's wife, who was the sister of R Gamliel, made certain to interrupt her husband everyday, so that his Tachanun, which includes a request that God help us against our adversaries, would have no effect. By doing that, she protected her brother against her husband making such a request. One day she forgot to interrupt her husband and he said his Tachanun and her brother, R Gamliel died. The Tachanun had its full, powerful potency to punish adversaries.

לֹא יִפְסִיק

In the place where there is rejoicing, there should also be trembling.

Psalms 2:11 - serve the Lord in awe and rejoice with trembling.

To guard against excessive merriment, a sobering note to the festivities should be added.

Tosofos - This Gemara is the source of the custom to break a glass at a wedding.

1-Berachos 31a line 5 A14

Weiss 2:127

ווי לן דמיתנן ווי לן דמיתנן

“Woe to us for we are dying, woe to us for we are dying.”

Uttered by Rabbi Hamnuna Zuta during a wedding feast.

The Alter of Kelm (Rav Simcha Zissel Zev), pointed out that the awareness of death can be an exhilarating incentive to realize the spiritual potential in every moment. This was a challenge to the new couple to enhance their simchah, not a statement to diminish it.

אָסוּר לְאָדָם שִׂמְלָא שְׁחוּק פִּיּוּ בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה

It is forbidden for a person to fill his mouth with laughter in this world.

Excess gaiety is a spiritual liability - it opens the door to all types of lightheaded behavior, even for purposes of mitzvot.

R Yonah – especially because of the destruction of the Temple.

Meiri – when the Temple is rebuilt, the danger of over excitement will be diminished.

Shulchan Aruch – nowadays, excess merriment is forbidden, even for mitzvah activities.

Zohar – excess merriment is prohibited for worldly matters, but is permitted for mitzvah matters. Smiling or a buoyant mood is not included in this prohibition.

Excessive merriment leads to forgetfulness and laxity in the performance of mitzvot.

Total joy would be appropriate for a mitzvah, but even then, it should be tempered by the fact of the destruction of the Holy Temple.

See Sotah 48a - “when the Sanhedrin ceased to function, song ceased from the place of feasting”.

1-Berachos 31a3 line 35 A14

Weiss #545

אַל יִפָּטֵר אָדָם מִחֲבִירוֹ אֶלָּא מִתּוֹךְ דְּבַר הַלְכָּה

Don't take leave of your friend except with a word of Torah.

This is usually explained: so that your friend will remember you .

This could also mean, that since leave taking is a sensitive and sometime sentimental moment; those words of Torah will more easily enter your friend's heart, and the words of Torah will be remembered.

1-Berachos 31a5 line 59 B19

„וְקוֹלָהּ לֹא יִשְׁמָע־”

And her (Channah) voice was not heard.

- This teaches us that when we pray, our voices should not be audible, “only her lips moved.”
- In fact, it is forbidden to raise one’s voice during prayer.

1-Berachos 31a5 line 58 B12

Samuel I 1:12-17

וְחִנָּה הִיא מְדַבֶּרֶת עַל-לִבָּהּ׃

And Channah was speaking in her heart.

We learn that one who prays, must direct his heart to God.

Only her lips moved.

B15

We learn that when one prays, one must move his/her lips.

1-Berachos 31a5 line 59 B22

וַיַּחְשְׁבֶהָ עָלַי לְשׂוֹכְרָהּ׃

And Eli thought her a drunkard.

We learn from this, that a drunkard is not allowed to pray.

„וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיָהּ עָלַי עַד־מָתַי תִּשְׁתַּכְּרִין וְגוֹ' ”

How long will you be drunk?

We learn here, that one who observes his friend doing something improper, is obligated to inform, correct and chastise his friend.

וְתַעֲזֹב חֲנָה וְתֹאמַר לֹא אֲדֹנָי

And Channah answered him – “not so my master.”

“You are not a master in this matter, if you interpret my behavior mistakenly, to be drunk. The Holy Spirit is not now resting on you.”

1-Berachos 31b1 line 9 A22

וַיֵּין וְשָׂכָר לֹא שָׁתִיתִי

Neither wine nor strong spirits, have I drunk.

We learn that, if you are accused falsely, you must inform the accuser of your innocence - in order to clear yourself. In order to know that God knows you are innocent, you must quell any bad rumors about yourself. Then, you shall be vindicated by Hashem and the people of Israel.

אַל תִּתֵּן אֶת-אַמְתְּךָ לְפָנַי בַּת-בְּלִיעַל׃

Don't take your handmaiden to be a base servant.

“Bas beliyal” could mean, i.e., an idol worshipper.

Drink can confuse a person to a point that he conjures up concepts of God that are false. That is idol worship.

Also, this can be interpreted as a person who is “bli ol” - refuses to take on the yoke of the mitzvot.

וַיֵּעַן עֲלֵי וַיֹּאמֶר לְבִי לְשָׁלוֹם׃

And Eli said, “go in peace.”

We learn from this, that a false accusation requires a placating response and a blessing.

May the God of Israel grant your request.

אִם-רָאָה תִּרְאֶה,,

“If see, you shall see....”

- Stated for emphasis – or with a special meaning
- or it may mean- “if you see my suffering and grant me a child as a wonderful gift.”
- If not, you will see and you will take note. “You, God, will be forced to give me a child. Realize that I can act like a harlot and be alone in a room with a man my husband warned me about, with two witnesses outside. I would swear that I did nothing wrong. I would survive the ordeal of bitter waters, and then be granted God’s “reward of bearing seed”. Please give me a son and don’t force me to go to such lengths.”

1-Berachos 31b2 line 26 A30
Shottenstein

אִם-רָאָה תִּרְאֶה,,

If you take note, you will take note

How could Channah force God to grant her wish? She said, “If you don’t grant me a child, I will seclude myself with a man, whom my husband has forbidden me to be with. I will be accused of being a harlot. I will go through the procedure of the bitter waters, into which God’s name has been dissolved. I will be proven innocent of any licentious act. As a reward, I will warrant having the child, I so desperately desire.”

How could Channah have proposed that she would violate a Torah law (be alone with a man) and erase the name of God? Channah was pointing out that a modest woman, as she is, would not benefit but a harlot might succeed and receive the baby she wished for.

1-Berachos 31b2 line 27 B6
Weiss #133

וְנִקְתָּהּ וְנִזְרְעָה וְרַע

She will remain unharmed and shall conceive seed (Num 5:28).

The Sotah, a suspected adulteress, profits from this experience, if she is not found guilty.

Why? She secluded herself with a man, whom her husband had warned her not to be secluded with. Why should the Sotah (the harlot) be rewarded for that behavior? Because, although she defied her husband to be with this man, at the last moment she over-came her passion and remained “pure”. It is for this self control, that she is rewarded.

1-Berachos 31b3 line 32 A7
Weiss #134

דְּבַרְהָ תוֹרָה כְּלָשׁוֹן בְּנֵי אָדָם

The Torah employs human phraseology.

The repetition (if see, you shall see) means nothing special – it is merely an idiom people use.

R Yishmael - agrees

R Akiva - disagrees

Rambam – agrees, but only in relation to God, so that man can comprehend better. However, ascribing attributes of a corporeal nature to God, is blasphemous.

Ramban and Ibn Ezra have views different from Rambam, and do not find referring to God's attributes in anthropomorphic terms, as blasphemous.

וְאֵלֹהֵי הַיָּם נִבְחָה וְחַלָּה וְהִדְלָקַת הַנֵּר

Niddah, challah and lighting candles (hadlakat nairot).

Rearrange the first letters of each word and spell out the name of Channah, in Hebrew.

מִפֶּאֵן שְׂאֵסוּר לִישֵׁב בְּתוֹךְ אַרְבַּע אַמּוֹת שֶׁל תְּפִלָּה

One may not sit within 4 amos of a person praying.

We may distract him.

We don't want to have disrespect for the "Shechinah". The Shechinah is present where another person prays.

A person praying infuses the space around him (6 feet in all directions) with a level of holiness.

Another person should not introduce himself into that space , unless he is at least engaged in the same activity.

If a person starts to pray in a space already occupied, the first person does not need to move away.

1-Berachos 32a2 line 11 A4
Weiss #523

אֵין אַרִי נוֹהֵם מִתּוֹךְ קוֹפֵה שֶׁל תְּבֵן
אֶלָּא מִתּוֹךְ קוֹפֵה שֶׁל בֶּשֶׂר

A lion does not roam over a basket of straw, but over a basket of flesh.

Having a great deal; food or possessions, causes people to be self satisfied and to lose their humility. “He, whose stomach is full, increases deeds of evil.” The Bnei Yisroel were so full of gold and silver as they left Egypt, that they lapsed into the sin of the Golden Calf.

It is advantageous to fast periodically, to humble yourself from attaining a haughty spirit and to consider the real purpose of one’s life. Don’t “roar” because you have plenty and are self satisfied.

כָּל כַּהֵן שֶׁהָרַג אֶת הַנֶּפֶשׁ לֹא יִשָּׂא אֶת כַּפָּיו

A Kohen who kills a soul, may no longer raise his palms [in the priestly blessing],

- even in the company of other Kohanim,
- even if he is the only available Kohen.

Unless:

- he repents
- he killed accidentally
- the killing is in doubt, i.e., he hit a person who died later and it is not certain whether he died of some other cause.
- he killed in war
- he is a doctor and killed by means of a medical error
- he killed a fetus still in a pregnant woman
- he is a mohel and a baby died after a circumcision.

מִיּוֹם שֶׁחָרַב בַּיִת הַמִּקְדָּשׁ נִנְעְלוּ שַׁעְרֵי תְּפִלָּה

From the day on which the Temple was destroyed, the gates of prayer have been closed; the gates of weeping are not closed.

If the gates are not closed, what is the purpose of the gates?

Medzibozzer Rebbe - To keep out tearful requests made without intelligence.

Sanzer Rav - To keep out matters of no importance.

R.S.R. Hirsch - Calls a tear “the sweat of the soul.” If a person opens the gates of his heart, to God, certainly, He reciprocates, by opening the gates of Heaven, to his tears.

„רַק הַשָּׂמֶר לְךָ וּשְׂמֵר נַפְשְׁךָ”

Only beware for yourself and beware for your soul.

The story of a pious man praying and not returning the greeting of an armed general,

-is used to illustrate that we have an obligation to maintain our life and health.

-is used to create an obligation to:

1. use proper hygiene, diet, exercise and sleep
2. avoid overt endangering of oneself, i.e., not to go out alone at night (Pesachim -11b)
3. prohibit smoking, hallucinatory drugs and to live in communities where doctors are available
4. violate Shabbos to save a life

In American law, we are mandated to provide medical care for children, i.e., Jehovah's witnesses, etc. However, adults are not mandated by law to seek medical care. In Jewish law, adults are mandated to seek medical care, also, in order to prolong their lives, so they can do more good deeds.

”רַק הַשָּׂמֶר לָךְ וּשְׂמֵר בְּפִשְׁךָ”

Only beware for yourself and beware for your soul.

There are strictures against a person endangering him or herself.

Used in the discussion regarding egg donation on the part of a woman who wishes to have a child. There is a risk to the donor that makes other means more acceptable, i.e., artificial insemination or adoption. The risks relate to special medication that is needed to stimulate the ovaries to produce multiple eggs. The medication may increase the incidence of ovarian cancer.

In light of the strictures against endangering oneself, other means should be considered first. However, the risk is not so excessive, that we need to ban the procedure completely.

It came out, bit him and it died.

וַיֵּצֵא וַיִּנְשְׁכוּ וּמָת

A poisonous lizard threatened the community.

R Chanina ben Dosa put his foot over the hole dug by the poisonous lizard. The lizard bit him and the lizard died. This shows that a person is supposed to permit himself to be potentially damaged, to help another person, for whom the damage, is certain.

R Chanina ben Dosa was accustomed to miracles, so it was more likely that he would be saved. However, it was certain that another person would die from the bite of the lizard. The certainty of losing one's life must be accorded halachic precedence over the doubtful loss of life of another.

We must be very careful not to learn halachah from aggadic passages, however, since this story is alleged to be true, we may use it to deduce legal behavior.

This argument is used to encourage organ donation, i.e., a kidney from a living donor. The risk to the donor is small and uncertain, whereas, the life threatening danger to the patient is great and imminent.

וְכֹל מִי שֶׁאֵין בּוֹ דַעַה אָסוּר לְרַחֵם עָלָיו

If a person does not have knowledge, it is forbidden to have mercy on him.

R Yaakov Landau - There is a tendency to exonerate a transgressor simply because of his ignorance of the law.

Why is he not knowledgeable?

It is his obligation to study and learn and to know what is expected of him.

Ignorance of the law is no excuse.

R Isaiah Horowitz - Balaam should have known that there was a reason for his donkey's peculiar behavior. Num 22:34

1-Berachos 33a4 line 33 A5
Weiss #601

גְּדוֹלָה נִקְמָה שְׁנֵתָנָה בֵּין שְׁתֵּי אוֹתֵיּוֹת

Great is vengeance since it has been placed between two divine names.

Psalms 94:1 “A God of vengeance is Hashem.”

What is vengeance? It is the manifestation of justice in this world. It shows there is an ultimate judge and that justice is eventually carried out. However, it is only appropriate in Judaism, if it is done with no animosity, but solely for the sake of Heaven.

הַאֹמֵר עַל קֵן צִפּוֹר יִגִּיעוּ רַחֲמֶיךָ

He who says, “your mercies extend over a bird’s nest,” is silenced.

If it had been scripturally ordained because of compassion, the slaughtering of all animals would have been forbidden (Mishneh Torah Hil Tefillah 9:7).

We are permitted to assume it is the case, and we can learn from it. If God is so concerned about causing pain to a bird, how much more should we be concerned about our causing pain to fellow human beings.

That law is a chok – a law with no definite reason. We should not ascribe a reason to it.

הַכֹּל בְּיַד שָׁמַיִם חוּץ מִיִּרְאַת שָׁמַיִם

Everything is in the hands of Heaven, except the fear of Heaven.

This statement articulates a basic tenant of Judaism. God directs what occurs in your secular life, not your spiritual activities.

A teacher asked his student, who had moved to the big city, “What are you doing in Minsk?” The student answered, “I started a business and I am very successful.” His Rebbe asked him three more times and got the same answer each time. The Rebbe asked, “Why do you not answer my question? You told me what Heaven is doing for you, but not about the spiritual things you are doing – those things that only you can do for yourself.”

הַכֹּל בְּיַדֵּי שָׁמַיִם חוּץ מִירֵאת שָׁמַיִם

Everything is in the hands of Heaven except for the fear of Heaven.

In reality, even that is in the hands of Heaven and requires “Siato Dishmaya,” heavenly assistance.

According to this dictum, prayer is seemingly futile, since all decisions are made by Heaven. However, if the prayer is accompanied by fear of Heaven, then the decision might be influenced by the prayer.

הַעוֹבֵר לְפָנַי הַתִּיבָה – צָרִיךְ לְסָרֵב

Someone who is asked to lead the communal prayer service must initially demure.

For the second request, he should prepare as if to agree. At the third request, he should set forth to lead the services. At all times he must act with humility.

Unless he is asked to daven by a very important person or he is the appointed chazzan of the synagogue, i.e., a fixed chazzan, he must not hesitate.

מְקוֹם שֶׁבַעֲלֵי תְּשׁוּבָה עוֹמְדִין
צְדִיקִים גְּמוּרִים אֵינָם עוֹמְדִין

Where repentant sinners stand, the righteous cannot stand.

Can you imagine that a repentant is so important that where he stands a Tzaddik may not stand? The repentant has a quality that the righteous does not have.

He knows he did wrong and is, and always will be, ashamed of his behavior. Penitents are nearest the Lord. They are more devoted and strive more intently to do His bidding. They have an extra mitzvah, repentance.

Having experienced the forbidden behavior, it is harder for them to deny themselves their evil inclinations, therefore they get greater credit for doing so.

אֵלֹא כִּן מְקַבְּלֵנִי אִם שְׂגוּרָה תִּפְלְתִּי
בְּפִי יוֹדֵעַ אֲנִי שֶׁהוּא מְקוּבָּל

If my prayer is fluent in my mouth, I know that it is accepted.

R Chanina ben Dosa prayed for the sick to be healed. If he succeeds, does it mean that God changed his mind because R Chanina prayed to him? No, fluent in the mouth means he was familiar with those words. They were created at the time of creation and God already planned that, a person would get sick. R Chanina would use certain words and the person would be cured. God did not change his mind. This was always the plan and therefore, the words came fluently to R Chanina's mouth.

אֵלֶּא הוּא דוֹמָה כְּעֶבֶד לְפָנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ וְאֲנִי דוֹמָה כְּשֵׁר לְפָנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ

Why it is better to be a king's slave, rather than a king's minister?

A slave has a closer relationship with the king. He is always available and in his presence. An important minister is only called on special occasions.

There once was a Rabbi who promised his students to be a Meilitz Yosher, (a defense attorney in Heaven) after he died. But he did not pray for them. Later, he came to his students in a dream and explained that from the perspective he now has from Heaven, what has been ordained for the students is really in their best interest. Therefore, the Rabbi did not try to intervene.

בְּשֶׂהוּא שָׂבַע מְבָרַךְ

When he is satiated, he blesses God .

Deut 8:10

Why do we not say a bracha “Asher Kiddishanu B’ Mitzvosav” for Bircas HaMazon? Saying the Bircas is a mitzvah from the Torah. We have actually been commanded to recite it. The Hallel is a rabbinic obligation and yet we say “Asher Kiddishanu” for that prayer. It should be the other way around.

The use of that phrase “Asher Kiddishanu”, is limited to activities that actually make us holy. The saying of the Bircas is used to thank God for the good he has done for us. It is a universal requirement for all people and not limited to the Jewish people. Therefore, the recitation of the Bircas is not uniquely available to make us holy.

דורות הראשונים עשו תורתן קבוע
ומלאכתן עראי

The earlier generations made their Torah fixed and their work temporary.

They considered their Torah study primary, a fixed part of their life, a center pole around which other activities came and went. It does not only mean a fixed time of the day that is devoted to study.

As for fixing a time for study, Rav Chaim of Volozhin said his students do not establish set times for studying Torah, they study all the time. However, they do set times for “bitul Torah” to tend to other necessary tasks.

טוֹבָא גְרִיר – פּוֹרְתָא סְעִיד

A large quantity increases ones appetite, a small quantity sustains.

This relates to the use of wine. The large amount of the glucose in wine increases the need to eat. The rush of glucose causes the release of insulin which metabolizes the glucose. This usually overshoots and lowers the blood sugar, creating hunger. Thus, a lot of wine increases one's appetite.

A small quantity, taken gradually, decreases food intake. The steady intake of glucose satisfies one's hunger and food is not desired.

These Talmudic observation are found to be accurate and in accordance with modern medical science.

שֶׁמֶן זַיִת מְבָרְכִין עָלָיו בּוֹרָא פְּרִי הָעֵץ

Olive oil – the bracha for it is “borei pri haeitz.”

However, if it is a food that is damaging to one’s health, no blessing is recited.

Eating food that is harmful, is not considered eating and a blessing is not recited. However, if you mix it (i.e., vinegar) with other foods and that food (i.e., salad) is healthful, you can say the bracha on the healthful food.

Items that have a pleasing taste require a blessing even though they may be unhealthy. For example, a diabetic eating food such as chocolate cake that is not healthy, would still make a blessing on it. Because, while it is not healthy for him, the harm is not immediate.

Food eaten for medical purposes does not necessitate a blessing, even though the person benefits from ingesting it.

1-Berachos 37a1 line 19 B25
Daf Digest

עַל כֹּל מַה שֶּׁבָרָא

For all He created.

What is the difference between a pious person and others? One difference is the pious person wants to praise God. He looks for a way to do so. He finds an apple, for example, and eats the apple in order to make a blessing to God.

Ordinary people say a bracha in order to eat, the pious eat in order to make a bracha.

הַבּוֹסֵס אֶת הַחֹטָה מְבַרֵךְ עָלֶיהָ בּוֹרָא פֶּר הָאֲדָמָה

One who chews and swallows raw wheat recites the blessing

Let him teach us that we are to say “shehakol” on the flour of wheat.

Wheat

1. Raw ; the blessing is: “Borei Pri Haadamah.”
2. Ground into flour and pieces are intact (bread); - the blessing is: “HaMotzei” and Bircas is required.
3. Cooked in a pot and the pieces are not intact, but are dissolved in cooking – the blessing is: “Borei Minei Mezonos.”

Rice

1. Raw; the blessing is: “ Pri Haadamah”.
2. Rice bread; the blessing is “ mezonos”, and an abridged version of Bircas, Al Hamichyah.
3. Rice gruel; the blessing is “mezonos” .

Orez (rice) is not a grain like the seven species.

– הַמוֹצֵיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ

He who brings forth bread from the earth.

The word motzei, some say, is past tense and yet, we have the bread before us. The word Hamotzei is future tense and is not accurate in this circumstance, so we should say “motzei.”

Why do we say “hamotzei lechem min haaretz” instead of “motzei lechem min haaretz”? Because the two words “haolam motzei” have the same letter ending one word and starting the other. One “mem” may not be properly enunciated if we said “motzei.”

If that is the case, why are we not concerned about the proximity of the 2 “mems” in “lechem min haaretz”?

We are concerned and the Tur says we should briefly stop between the two words. However, we have that phrase in Tehillim 104:14 and therefore, we must use it as it is.

שְׁהַכּוֹל נִהְיָה בְּדַבָּרוֹ

That everything came into being through His word.

- What bracha do we make on barley? - “borei minei mezonos.”
- on beer made from barley? - “shehakol.”
 - on bread made from barley? - “hamotzei.”

The same material can be improved and elevated to higher potential.

The same is possible with a person, with a student, each can be elevated to higher and higher potential.

וְעוֹד רַבִּי חִיָּא בַר אֲבָא כָּל תְּלָתִין יוֹמִין
מֵהַדָּר תְּלִמוּדֵיהָ קָמִיהָ דְּרַבִּי יוֹחָנָן רַבִּיהָ

R Chiya Bar Abba would review his learning every 30 days in front of
R Yochanan, his teacher.

This passage teaches us the method by which the oral law could be reliably transferred from generation to generation without becoming corrupted by mistakes in the transmission. The student was expected not only to learn, but to recite back to his teacher, to verify that he had heard and understood correctly and accurately. Only then, would the student be granted “semicha” where he could teach the oral law to others.

וְהִלַּכְתָּ אֶת הַמּוֹצֵי לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ

And the law is that we recite on bread

That blessing on bread contains ten words, notes Tosophos, and provides the reason for the custom of placing the 10 fingers of both our hands on the bread when we make the “Hamotzei” blessing.

מֵר סֵבֵר תְּבִיב עֲדִיף

One holds that the favorite food takes precedence.

A rule of the laws of brachos is that the more we are able to specify, the better it is:

“Motzei lechem”- “pri hagefen”- bread or wine - very specific; limited-best.

“Mezonos” - limited to the five grains.

“Haeitz” - on all fruits of the trees.

“Shehakol” - the least specific, includes food of all types.

The more insight a person has as he notices the wonders of nature, the better is his bracha.

אָסוּר לְאָדָם שִׁיאַכֵּל קוֹדֵם

It is improper for people to eat first.

Why do the animals have benefits in the privilege of being fed first, before man? It is because, sometimes, man benefits in this world only because of the merits of the animals.

There was once a king who visited another king and listened in while he sat in judgment. Two people came. A buyer claimed that the land he bought contained a great hidden treasure that he did not expect and he wanted to return it to the former owner, the seller. The seller claimed he intended, when he sold the land, to sell everything in or on it, and did not believe it was proper for him to take back the treasure. The king turned to his guest and asked how would he judge this if this was in his country? The visiting king said, “I would kill them both and take the treasure for myself.” The visiting king asked, “and how would you judge? ”

“I would encourage the son of the buyer and the daughter of the seller to marry.”

Be aware that in a country with no fair set of laws, the sun rises and rain falls only on the merit of the animals; for they have not sinned – the people have lost their merit.

1-Berachos 40a3 line48 B12

Weiss #556

אִם שָׁמוּעַ בִּישָׁן תִּשְׁמַע בְּחֵדָשׁ

If you will hear the old, you will be able to hear the new.

Only if you know what was learned in the past – the foundation of knowledge - can you learn the new detail, that has been discovered to add to it. You have to have a good background understanding to comprehend new details. The new is established only from the roots of the old.

גֶּפֶן הַיָּיִן

It was a grapevine.

Whenever we introduce a major life cycle event in Judaism, we do so with a cup of wine.

Bris, Pidyon Haben, chupah, Shabbos, Pesach Seder, Succos, Shavuot – it is wine that sets the tone in every case. We could have used a learning period or some special prayer to usher in these events. Instead, we have relied upon wine. Perhaps it is because of our Gemara. The sins committed because of the use of the grape: i.e., Noach, Lot, etc., encouraged bad behavior. We should take every opportunity to use that same material in a constructive way. That is why we choose wine as we set out to increase the amount of holiness we experience in this world.

Daf Digest

הַמּוֹקְדִים בְּפֶסוּק זֶה קוֹדֵם לְבִרְכָּה

Whatever is mentioned first in this verse, is first in the blessing.

Is the order in which these fruits are listed meaningful regarding their status, or could they all be equal and merely listed in this sequence, because they had to be enumerated?

No, the order in which they are listed is meaningful. If the Torah wished to inform us that they are all equal, it would have found a way to do that. For example, Moshe and Aaron are also listed in order as Aaron and Moshe, to teach that they are equal. This could also have been done with this list of fruits. The order is significant.

מִיַּן שְׂמֵרָכִין עַל הָרִיחַ

From where do we learn that we recite a blessing over a fragrance?

The source in scripture for making a blessing on the enjoyment we derive from a pleasant smell is from Tehillim 150:6, “let every soul give praise to Hashem.” What pleasure is there that only the soul enjoys and not the body? It is the pleasure which comes from the sense of smell.

Please note, in the sin of Adam and Eve virtually all the senses were involved. They heard the enticement of the serpent, they saw the beauty of the fruit, they touched the fruit and tasted it. Only the sense of smell is not involved in this sin and therefore, it remained pristine enough to be enjoyed by the pure soul.

**מְלִמֵּד שְׂפָל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד יָפָה לוֹ
הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא אוֹמְנָתוֹ בְּפָנָיו**

We learn that each person finds his work made satisfying to him by God.

The water carrier in town was an old man. One day he was asked how he was and he answered, “I am tired, this work is difficult and I am too old to keep doing it.” The next day he was asked how he was and he answered, “Thank God , the work is hard but I must be thankful that at this age I still have the strength to do it.”

The same man, the same job, one day apart. The attitude of a person can lead him to satisfaction and contentment, such that, he can accept and tolerate his environment. This ability is a blessing given to us – “He satisfies every living creature according to their will.”

שְׁשֵׁה דְּבָרִים גָּנְאֵי לוֹ לְתַלְמִיד חָכָם

Six traits not becoming to a Torah scholar.

A person who can be recognized as a Talmid Chacham or as associated with Judaism should always recall that people see him or her as a representative of Judaism. How he acts reflects on the Jewish people and the principles of Judaism. If his clothes are tattered or not clean, if his speech is not respectful, if his business dealings are not completely above reproach, he may give a bad impression. A person should be meticulous in all he does and says and make sure there is no stain or spot on his clothes or his character.

הַמְהִילָךְ בְּקוּמָה זְקוּפָה אֶפִּילוּ אַרְבַּע אַמּוֹת
– כְּאִילוּ דוּחַק רַגְלֵי שְׂבִינָה

He who walks with an upright stature even a distance of 4 amos, it is as though he pushed against the feet of the Divine presence.

One is forbidden to walk four cubits with an upright stature (Kiddushin 31a).
It is one of the six things that are unbecoming for a scholar.

When all the blessings are fulfilled, then you will be able to walk upright. If a scholar walks upright, people may consider him arrogant and haughty, announcing that he has fulfilled all the blessings and Hashem now permits him to walk upright.

מְבָרַךְ אַחֲרֵיהֶם שְׁלֹשׁ בְּרָכוֹת

He recites after them, the three blessings of the Bircas HaMazon.

During “Bircas HaMazon,” people do not conduct themselves as respectfully as they do when reciting the “Shemoneh Esrei:” Yet the Bircas is required by the Torah and should command great respect. The Amidah is only directed by the Rabbis.

לְאִסּוּקֵי לְמֵאֵן דְּחִנְקֵיהּ אֹמְצָא

It comes to exclude a person being choked by a piece of meat.

When does one not need to make a bracha of “shehakol” on water? R Idi bar Avin says: when being choked by a piece of meat and the water is used for a purpose other than to quench his thirst.

For example:

when one drinks water in order to:

- clear his throat
- take his medication

פּוֹק חֲזִי מַאי עֲמַא דְּבַר

Go out and see how the people conduct themselves.

A man or a woman who has adopted a child may not be alone with that child of the opposite sex. This violates the rule of yichud. This rule does not pertain to one's own children. This phrase from our Gemara was used to grant leniency regarding this law, since people generally ignore it. People are wise and we generally accept what has become customary practice. Pesachim 66A, "leave it to Israel, if they are not prophets yet, they are the children of prophets."

שְׁלֹשָׁה שֶׁאָכְלוּ כְּאַחַת חֵיבִין לְזִמּוּן

Three who eat together are required to join a zimun.

In all other situations of communal prayer, we need a minimum of ten. Why is forming a group to say Bircas HaMazon different and requires a minimum of three?

The requirement to make the blessings after eating is after we have “eaten and been satisfied”. This likely goes along with drinking as well. It is likely that at least one of the three will be in sufficient control of his faculties, despite drinking, to lead the prayers so that all can fulfill their obligations.

1-Berachos 46a1 line11 B3
Daf Digest

בְּעַל הַבַּיִת בּוֹצֵעַ כְּדֵי שְׂיִבְצַע בְּעֵין יָפָה

The host breaks the bread and gives the guests large pieces.

The guest recites the Bircas HaMazon so that he can bless the host.

This obligation arises from the unnecessary “et” in the verse
Deut 8:10 - “Veachalta Vesavata Uverachta **et** HaShem Elokecha.”

The host should answer, “Amen” to the guest’s blessing, therefore the blessing should be said audibly.

קְדָמִיָּה חֲמַרְיָה דְרַבִּין לְדַאבִּי

Ravin's donkey passed Abaye's donkey on the road.

It is not proper for a student to pass his Rabbi and go first. When the two men reached the entrance to the synagogue, Ravin said to Abaye; “let the Rabbi go first,” and Abaye said, “and until now wasn't I the Rabbi?” Ravin answered, “Rav Yochanin holds that such deference is not required except at an entrance that has a mezuzah”.

In our day, if we are in a procession of cars and traffic is such that we see that we could pass our Rabbis' car - may we do so?. One opinion is that each car is a domain unto itself and only if people are traveling by foot or on an animal, are they considered traveling together and deference is expected. Others say, to pass your Rabbi is an inherent act of disrespect and should not be done.

מֵאִי שְׁנָא רוּפָא דְאַפְתֵּי לֹא כְּלִיָּא בְּרָכָה

One who breaks the bread must wait until the majority of the group finish saying Amen.

Why?

The Amen is part of the bracha and the bracha is not over until Amen is said.

This goes on to discuss different types of Amen

Amen Chatufah - Eh mein

Abbreviated Amen - Ame

Orphaned Amen - He did not hear the blessing only the Amen of others.
An Amen without a bracha is like a child without parents.

Lengthened Amen - Proper pronunciation of all the letters. A lengthy
Amen will result in lengthening his days and years.

הָכָא בְּמַאי עֵסְקִינָן בְּגֵר שְׂמֵל וְלֹא טָבֵל

Who is a convert?

What are we dealing with here? With a proselyte who was circumcised but did not yet immerse.

Can a person who has entered the conversion process and has been circumcised but has not yet been immersed in a mikvah, be counted for a zimun for the recitation of Bircas HaMazon?

No. Both circumcision and immersion are required.

- Such a person cannot observe the Sabbath.
- cannot father a legitimate Jewish child.
- cannot enter into a valid Jewish marriage, (if he did, a bill of divorce would be needed).

What about wine that he has touched? The rabbis restricted the use of wine touched by a gentile for fear it has been used in an idolatrous act. Here, the person is in the process of converting to Judaism, certainly he will not use wine to do an idolatrous act. Tosophos and Rosh permit use of the wine he touched. Rabbenu Nissim, Shulchan Aruch and Yoreh Deyah -124:2 ,do not permit the use of wine he has touched.

קָטָן הַמוֹטֵל בְּעֵרִיסָה מְזַמְּנִין עָלָיו

Making a zimun.

A baby can count towards making a zimun of ten.

A slave can count toward making a zimun of ten.

Shabbos can count towards making a zimun of ten.

Two Talmidei Torah who sharpen each other, count as three.

A child who is less than 13, but has the physical signs of maturity, counts toward a minyon.

Nine people plus the Aron HaKodesh combine to form a minyon. The Aron HaKodesh adds the Shechinah.

A golom formed by one who is versed in Kabbalistic techniques and could form a person, is not considered a genuine person and cannot be counted toward a minyon.

(see Sanhedrin 65b).

A child holding a Chumash or a Sefer Torah has been permitted to count toward a minyon in case of duress.

Tosophos, Rabbienu Tam, R Joseph Karo, do not permit. The Bais Halevi,

R Yosef Dov Soloveitchik permitted a child to be counted, but said that there is no need for a Chumash; it is better to hold a siddur and daven properly.

סדר ברכת המזון

The order of the Bircas HaMazon

Details the order for various blessings in the Bircas HaMazon

First blessing is - “who nourishes”.

Second blessing is - “for the land”.

Third blessing is - “for building Jerusalem”.

Fourth blessing is - “who is good and does good”.

עַל-הָאָרֶץ" זוּ בְרַפְתְּ הָאָרֶץ, הַטְּבָה" זוּ
בוֹנֵה יְרוּשָׁלַיִם וְכֵן הוּא אומֵר, הֵקֵר הַטּוֹב הַזֶּה וְהַלְבִּינֵנּוּ"

When it states “for the land,” this is a reference to the blessing for the land of Israel (in the Bircas HaMazon).

This phrase is used to support Rambam and Ramban’s position in deeming settlement in Eretz Yisroel to be a binding mitzvah. Gratitude for the gift of Israel acknowledges the Divine beneficence of that gift and failure to settle in Israel is a rejection of that beneficence. However, rejection of a beneficence is not a sin. Also, Rambam does not enumerate living in Israel as one the 613 Mitzvot.

לְפִי שְׂאִין עוֹשִׂין מִצְוֹת חֲבִילוֹת חֲבִילוֹת

Precepts may not be performed bundle wise.

Two mitzvot may not be performed simultaneously. This is so they won't appear to be a burden to be quickly disposed of. If we have two mitzvot to perform, they should be performed one after another. For example, if we have two circumcisions, we should have the same Mohel do both, to assure that only one is done at a time. We need to devote our attention to one mitzvah at a time.

You stated two pages were missing,
I am not missing any pages on my
computer. Maybe they never got
typed, please include pages to be
inserted. Thanks Lydia

וּמְבָרְכֵתוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם נִיפְרָר אִם תְּלַמִּיד חָכָם הוּא אִם לֹא

From the manner of a person's recitation of a blessing, it can be recognized whether he is a scholar or not.

The usual blessing states, "Blessed art thou, etc.". Is it appropriate for man to give God a blessing? To do so is entirely devoid of rational meaning. God cannot be affected by a blessing. A better meaning would be, not that God should be blessed, but that God is blessed - the source of all blessing: "Blessed are you," not "Blessed be you."

When this statement, before engaging in a mitzvah, is recited with concentration and proper intention, i.e., Kavannah, it prepares a person to receive the sanctity conveyed through the fulfillment of the mitzvah. How a person does this, can inform others as to his level of scholarship.

וְאֵין זוֹרְקִין אֶת הַפֶּת

One does not throw bread

nor any food that would be ruined by throwing.

Bread may not be thrown even if it will not be ruined, because bread has great importance and throwing it degrades it. It has an inherent dignity.

It is considered disrespectful of bread even to throw it, on Erev Pesach, into the fire. In fact the formula for “Biur Chometz” is recited in Aramaic, so that negative forces will not understand. Otherwise, they may object to the degrading of bread, man’s basic sustenance, by its being burned.

1-Berachos 50b3 line 28 A2
Weiss #531

אֵין זֹרֵקִין אֶת הָאוֹכְלִין

Edibles should not be thrown.

One should not despise any object – it was created in wisdom. Every blade of grass or leaf should be preserved. Nothing should be uprooted or destroyed.

בְּכוּס שֶׁל בְּרָכָה – חַי

The cup of bracha should be chai, i.e., complete.

Means that it must not be broken; even the base must be complete.

May we use a disposable cup for Kiddush?

No- Igros Moshe
It should not be used
unless another cup is
unavailable.

Yes- it is permitted.
R Shlomo Zalman Auerbach
R Yaakov Kamenetsky
Tzis Eliezar

וְתִבְרַח אַרְבַּע מֵאָה דְּפִי דְחַמְרָא

She destroyed 400 barrels of wine.

Yalta heard that it was not necessary for her to be given to drink from the cup of bracha. She became angry, went down to the wine cellar and destroyed 400 barrels of wine.

She destroyed the wine to demonstrate that it was not the wine she had desired, but the bracha, which was so important to her.

How can she violate the rule of avoiding wastefulness? The rule does not apply if a lesson can be learned. For example, we destroy a perfectly good glass object at a wedding to teach the lesson of remembering the destruction of Jerusalem.

The gematria of Yalta is 441. The same as emet, truth, suggesting she acted for altruistic reasons.

אלו דברים שביין בית שמאי ובין בית הלל בסעודה

These are the matters in dispute between Beis Shammai and Beis Hillel in regards to meals:

Beis Shammai

1. First bless the day, then wine
2. Wash hands for bread, then drink wine
3. Place napkins on table
4. Sweep room then, wash mayim acharonim
5. Flame, Bircas HaMazon , spices, Havdalah
6. Borei Meorei Ha'esh
7. Must return to where he ate to say Bircas, even if he left unintentionally
8. He may bless the wine and then do Bircas HaMazon

Beis Hillel

1. First wine, then bless the day
2. Drink wine, then wash hands
3. Place napkins on cushion, on chair
4. First wash hands, then sweep room
5. Flame, spices, Bircas, Havdalah
6. Borei Meorei Ha'esh
7. May say Bircas where he remembered and until the food is digested
8. Bircas first, then bless the wine and drink it

ועונין אמן אחר ישראל המברך

One answers Amen after an Israelite makes a blessing.

Is saying Amen obligatory or voluntary?

Those who say it is obligatory to say Amen

Those who say it is voluntary, may say Amen.

Rambam – even if he only heard a part
of the bracha

Rav Yosef Karo

Behag

Rishonim

Tur

Bach

R Moshe Feinstein

Shulchan Aruch

If you answer Amen to a bracha
you only partially heard, you cannot
use that bracha to fulfill your
obligation. You must make your own.

It is not necessary to say Amen if one hears:

- only a partial bracha
- a blessing from a gentile
- the blessing from students who are merely
practicing the blessing

הַנִּכְנָס לְבֵיתוֹ בְּמוֹצָאֵי שַׁבָּת

A person enters his house after Shabbos.

R Chaim Ozer was known to make a bracha during Havdalah using a light bulb instead of a flame, and tea instead of wine.

He wanted to demonstrate that a light bulb was actually fire and it was not permissible to turn it on or off on Shabbos.

Also, that if a person could not afford wine, any affordable beverage, such as tea, is acceptable for Havdalah.

וּבֵית הַלֵּל אוֹמְרִים בְּשָׂמִים וְאַחַר כֵּן מְאֹר

and Beis Hillel says spices and then, light.

Rashbatz notes the order in which we recite the brachos for Havdalah.

Wine – taste is a sense that occurs only for a short distance, i.e., when the food is in our mouth.

Spices – smell is a sense that works over a longer distance.

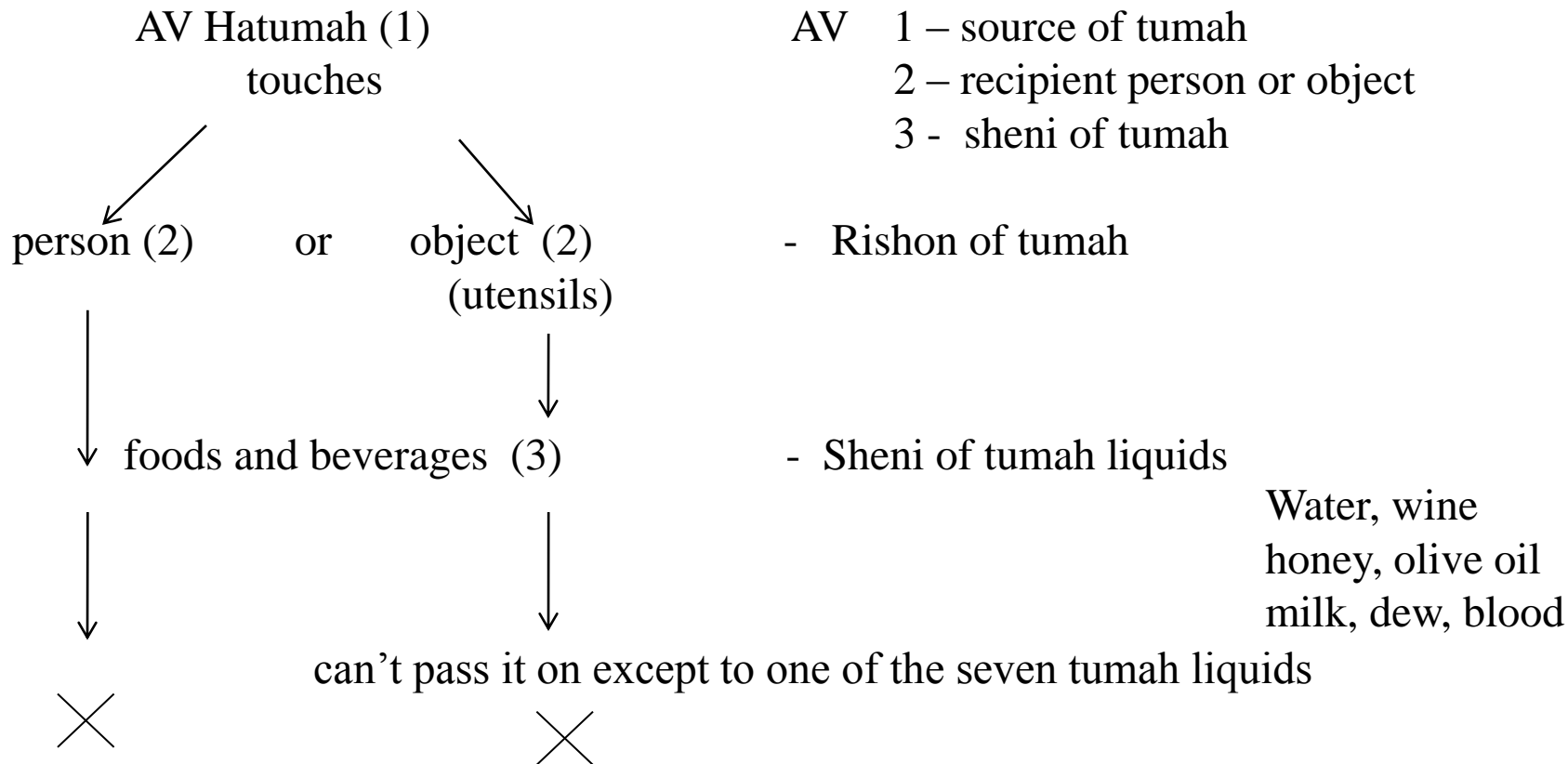
Fire – can be sensed at an even greater distance.

Hamavdil – understanding, intellect, discernment, is a faculty that is on a higher level than all other senses.

This sequence aids us in returning to the work-a-day world.

גִּזְרָה שְׂמָא יִטְמָאוּ מִשְׁקִין שֶׁאֲחֹרֵי הַכּוֹס מִחֲמַת

This raises a concern regarding liquid on the outside of the cup. It may contract tumah from his hands.



A person or object can become a Rishon.

Only food or beverage can become a Sheni.

Exception: a beverage touched by a Sheni becomes a Rishon.

אָסוּר לְהִשְׁתַּמֵּשׁ בְּכֵלִי שֶׁנִּטְמָאוּ אַחוֹרָיו בְּמִשְׁקִין

It is forbidden to use a utensil whose outside contracted tumah through a liquid.

Beis Shammai

- forbidden to use a utensil whose outside contracted tumah through a liquid, as a precaution against droplets.

Beis Hillel

- can use the utensil because we are not concerned about the rare possibility of droplets contaminating the inside.
- do not wash hands first.
- drink the wine first and then wash hands

Therefore Bircas HaMazon:

- wash hands.
- wipe hands on napkins.
- place wet napkin on table, because if on a cushion, the cushion might transmit tumah to the water in the cushion.

הָיוּ יוֹשְׁבֵי בַּיִת הַמְּדַרְשׁ

People were sitting in the study hall.

Beis Shammai

In study hall on Saturday night,
each person makes Havdalah for himself,
so as not to cause a disruption in the Torah
learning of the hall.

Beis Hillel

One person recites for all.

מְרַפֵּא

It should be healed.

Rashi understands that this was said when someone sneezed, it was a custom to bless them with health. Originally, people died without first becoming sick. They simply sneezed once and their soul would leave via their nostrils, just as it had been inserted at creation of man (Bereshis 2:7).

If someone wishes you “Marpei - to be healed,” you should answer, “Beruch Tehiyeh-may you be blessed.”

There are those who do not say – “to be healed,” suggesting that is the custom of the Edomites – or at least in the study hall. It interrupts learning.

It should be healed.

מַרְפֵּי

Tzum Gezunt, Labriut, are the traditional blessings in Yiddish and Hebrew given to one who sneezes. In Talmudic times, the term was “Marpei”, to be healed.

If one sneezes in the study hall, it was the custom of Rabbi Gamliel not to interrupt one’s study to wish anyone good health. So as not to break one’s concentration.

In our day, do we concentrate so intently that we should not even break to give a civil response? We see from the ruling regarding a groom who is exempt from reciting the Shema on his wedding night, that we give him permission to say the Shema. The exemption no longer applies, because in our times, no one concentrates so intently. So in regards to interrupting our study to say Tzum Gezunt ;the Aruch HaShulchan 246:33 says, we should say it, even in the study hall.

וְכֹל רוּחָא דְלֵאוּ לְרִיחָא עֵבִיד לֵא מְבָרַךְ

Smelling of spices

that are being used for another purpose, i.e., perfuming clothes – does not warrant a blessing.

It was the custom in Tiberius to perfume clothes on Friday before Shabbos, to wear fragrant smelling clothes for Shabbos, and on Saturday night to assuage the pain of the departing of the “neshama yeseireh,” the additional Sabbath soul. This is the origin in some families, of the custom to smell the spices Friday night, as well as, after Shabbos. Smelling fragrances not meant for Havdalah, does not warrant a blessing.

כְּדֵי שִׁבְיִיר בֵּין אִיסָר לְפוּנְדִיוֹן

To be able to differentiate one coin from other.

A person does not actually have to differentiate. However, there should be a light close enough to make the distinction possible.

This is the origin of the custom to look at our fingernails at Havdalah. To prove that there is enough useful light from the Havdalah flame and we make use of the flame to justify the bracha.

אָבֵל בְּמִזִּיד דְּבָרֵי הַכֹּל יִחְזֹר לְמִקוֹמוֹ וַיְבָרֵךְ

He returns to his place and blesses

Beis Shammai

If one forgot to say Bircas HaMazon, he returns to the place he ate, to say it, even if he unintentionally left and forgot.

Beis Hillel

If he unintentionally forgot, he may say it when he remembers, anywhere he is. He must be seated.

Story: Someone ate a meal at the top of a mansion but forgot to say Bircas HaMazon, and to go back up would be great trouble. Beis Shammai says he must go up. Beis Hillel says he can say it when he remembers. Beis Shammai says, “Think, if he had forgotten his purse on top of the mansion, he would certainly have returned. So since he would have inconvenienced himself for his own benefit, he should certainly go back for the honor of Heaven.

רַבָּה בַּר חַנָּה הָיָה קָאֵל בְּשִׁירְתָּא

Rabba bar Hanna was traveling with a caravan

and he forgot to say Bircas HaMazon. He held like Beis Shammai, that a person needed to say Bircas at the spot where he ate. He feared the caravan would not consider it worth their while to wait for him for that purpose. So he told them he had forgotten a golden dove and had to return to get it. For that, they were willing to wait.

How could he tell a lie in order to bentsh (say Bircas)?

We could say that they would wait for him to accomplish something of great value, and to bentsh where he ate, was of great value to him. Therefore, he did not entirely mislead them. He did accomplish something of great value to him.

לְמִימְרָא דְמְבַרְךְ עָדִיף מִמָּאן דְּעָנִי אָמֵן

Is it better to make the bracha or to say Amen?

Those who say it is better to:

Say Amen

He who completes the mitzvah gets most credit. He who completes the victory over enemy soldiers are the best fighters and are usually credited with the victory.

Those who say it is better to:

Make the bracha

He who makes the bracha gets his reward from on high a little earlier than the one who says Amen.

Is this to say that one who recites the blessing is superior in merit to one who responds Amen?

הַרְוֹתָהּ מְקוֹם שֶׁנַּעֲשׂוּ בוֹ נִסִּים לְיִשְׂרָאֵל

A person who sees a place where miracles occurred.

Describes blessings

1. when seeing places that recall God's goodness to the Jewish people.
2. when seeing places from which idolatry has been uprooted.
3. when seeing the works of creation:
 - a. earthquakes
 - b. thunder
 - c. heavy winds
 - d. lightning
 - e. mountains
 - f. hills
 - g. seas
 - h. rivers
 - i. oceans
 - j. deserts
4. a. on hearing good news
 - b. on hearing bad news

בְּרוּךְ שֶׁהַחַיִּינוּ וְקִיָּמָנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזֶמֶן הַזֶּה

Shehecheyanu

- an expression of joy on acquiring an object that gives pleasure.

When should that bracha be said? What if you have mixed emotions?

For example:

1. When you find an abandoned article, even if you may have to give it back.
2. When someone dies and you inherit property.
3. When you buy a home but incur a mortgage.
4. When you close on a house or when you put the mezuzahs on.
5. When you buy a suit, even though it needs alterations, or when you put it on and wear it the first time.

It is to be recited at the time. The so benefit from the object can be derived immediately.

וְהִצּוּעַק לְשַׁעֲבֵר הָרִי זֶה תְּפִלַּת שָׁוְא

To cry out over that which has passed, is to utter a prayer in vain.

What would make a prayer, a “prayer in vain”?

i.e., his wife is pregnant and he prays - “please let my wife give birth to a male child”.
This is a prayer in vain; the gender has already been determined.

הַנִּכְנָס לְכַרְךָ מִתְפִּיל ל שְׁתַּיִם

He who enters a town prays twice,

once on entering and once on leaving.

On entering, he prays that his journey to the town be protected. On leaving, he prays that his journey from the town to his next destination, likewise, be in safety.

If it is a dangerous town, he prays 4 times:

1. that his past journey was, thankfully, safe.
2. that the current visit in town, be safe.
3. that his leaving the town was, thankfully, safe
4. and that the next leg of his journey would also, be safe.

וּבְכָל-מְאֹדְךָ בְּכָל מְמוֹנְךָ

With all your might means, with all your money. From Deut 6:4

The Chafetz Chaim suggests that since the sages determined that for most people, their money was their most precious thing, “your might,” meant your money. However, if something else is supremely important to you, then that would be considered, “your might.” You should be willing to express your love of God using those resources as well.

With all your heart, i.e., “with both inclinations” could have been written. The two “bais” letters suggest good news and bad news. Both need to be greeted with thanks to God.

אֵיךְ לְרַבִּים

How do we respond to a miracle performed for the masses

versus

a miracle performed for one person?

All the people must recite a blessing, if the miracle was done for the masses.
Only he, for whom the miracle was performed, is obligated to recite a blessing.

אַרְבַּעַה עֲרִיכִין לְהוֹדוֹת

There are four who must give thanks

for surviving dangerous experiences

1. sea travelers.
2. wilderness travelers, i.e., through the desert
3. sick person who recovered.
4. jailed person who came out of prison.

Rambam – safe completion of even an intercity journey, warrants recitation of this blessing.
 Orah Chayim - rules that in instances of deliverance from other dangers ,i.e., collapse of a wall, a wild animal attack, the blessing should be said, but without God's name.

How about any airplane flight? Some say:

1. any airplane flight is dangerous and therefore, the blessing must be said.
2. others say anytime you cross an ocean or desert by land, boat or airplane, you must say it.
 Anytime you escape any danger, you must say it.

The specific enumerated situations listed above mandate it.

An actual danger, in any circumstance, also mandates it. Any trip for which the prayer Tefillahs Haderech is appropriate.

כּוֹס שֶׁל בְּרָכָה לְבָרֵךְ וְאִינוּ מְבָרְךְ

We give him the cup to bless (i.e., bentsch) and he refuses.

Bentsching entails giving a bracha to the host. If a guest is given the opportunity but turns it down, his refusal suggests ingratitude.

However, he may turn the honor down:

- if he is not a guest
- if he has a good reason to turn it down
- if he defers to someone else in order to honor him
- if his refusal for a good reason will not be construed as arrogance, pomposity, or lack of appreciation.

כָּל הַחֲלוּמוֹת הוֹלְכִין אַחַר הַפֶּה

Dreams: follow the interpretation of them

Rava found that dreams follow the interpretation of the dream. He confronted Bar Hedyā and cursed him.

Bar Hedyā exiled himself to Rome.

He was asked to interpret the dream of the master of the King's wardrobe. Bar Hedyā asked for payment of a zuz. The wardrobe master refused to pay, so Bar Hedyā refused to tell him what the dream meant. Days later, the wardrobe master had a similar dream and again would not pay the zuz. A few days later, when he dreamed it a third time, he paid Bar Hedyā. He learned that the dream could be interpreted that worms were eating the King's silk clothes. All was ruined. As the wardrobe master went to his death, he said, "you should punish Bar Hedyā, for he knew all along, but for the lack of my giving him payment of one zuz, he refused to tell me."

They took Bar Hedyā, tied his legs to two cedar trees that were tied together and released them, splitting him into two parts.

מִיֵּן שֶׁפֶל הַחֲלוֹמוֹת הוֹלְכִין אַחַר הַפֶּה

How is the outcome of a dream determined? Dreams follow the mouth.

The way a dream is ultimately realized, depends on how it is interpreted.

“And it was just as he interpreted for us, so it did happen”, Gen 41:13.

שְׁלֹשׁ שְׁלוֹמוֹת הֵן נְהָר צֶפּוּר וְקַדְרָה

There are three dream visions that foretell peace: a river, a bird and a pot.

Dreams are not to be accepted as true, yet our tradition says if you dream of a:

Pot - portends peace.

River - portends peace.

Bird - portends peace

Though they all portend peace, they symbolize different aspects of peace.

A **pot** - symbolizes shalom bayis – a family that eats and lives together.

A **river** - provides blessings over a wide area. The entire community and a person's immediate associates and neighbors are benefited.

A **bird** - has no limits to its flight and peace can expand near and far over the entire world.

Also, when the Kohen blesses us with the three tiered blessing, the “Yeyaasem L Cho Shalom.” This phrase suggests peace on all three dimensions, home, community and the wider world.

הַרְוֹאֵה קָנָה בַּחֲלוּם יִצְפֶּה לְחִכְמָה

If you see reeds in a dream, anticipate wisdom.

Joseph was called in to interpret Pharaoh's dreams and he did so. Joseph also provided unsolicited advice to Pharaoh; to appoint a special officer to oversee the land during the seven years of plenty- Gen 41:33. Why did Joseph expand his mandate as interpreter and add the role of advisor and consultant to the king as well?

“When a person sees reeds in his dreams, he can expect wisdom to follow.” The wisdom Joseph conveyed was expected, based on the dream, and therefore, could be considered part of the dream for him to interpret.

הַרְוֵאָה הַסֵּפֶד בְּחֵלוֹם

One who sees the word “Hesped” in a dream.

Why do we cry when a great man is taken from this world? He has completed his mission in this world and has now entered the next world where his neshama is enjoying the elevated status for which it yearned so long. Our bemoaning his departure from among us, is misdirected grief. This great man has been treated with mercy from Heaven. He has been recalled and redeemed from this world.

The letters heh and chet are considered interchangeable from an exegetical standpoint. The word “hesped” can be rendered from a contraction of the words; “chasu” (they spared him) and “p”dauhu’ (they redeemed him) (see Rashi).

קוֹל וּמִרְאָה וְרִיחַ

Three things restore a person's spirit:

- beautiful sounds
- beautiful sights
- pleasant scents.

The sounds of musical instruments.

The sight of beautiful views in pictures.

The smell of aromatic fragrances.

שְׁלֵשָׁה מִרְחִיבֵין דַּעְתּוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם

Three things increase a man's self-esteem

- a beautiful home
- a beautiful wife
- beautiful furnishings.

These items lift a man's spirits.

חֲמִשָּׁה אֶחָד מִשְּׁשִׁים

5 things are a 1/60th of something else

The Sabbath is 1/60th of the world to come.

- Fire is 1/60th of Gehinnom.
- Honey is 1/60th of manna.
- Sleep is 1/60th part of death.
- A dream is 1/60th a part of prophecy.

תְּנֵנוּ רַבָּנָן הַרְוֵאָה אֶתְּכֻלּוֹסֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֹמְרִים

One sees a multitude of Jews what does he say?

“Blessed are you the Sage of the Secrets.” Their personalities differ just as their faces differ, and yet God knows the secret thoughts of each one.

וְבָרוּךְ שֶׁפָּרָא כָּל אֱלֹהֵי לְשִׁמְשָׁנִי

Blessed are you who created all these to serve me.

The prayer upon seeing a multitude of people.

An appreciation for the interactive dependency we all have on each other.

Rambam – the ultimate goal of creation is to have individuals emerge who would attain knowledge of and purify their physical nature. The purpose of the multitudes is to keep such sublime individuals company and to serve their needs, i.e., food, clothing. The purpose of this large crowd was to provide him with his needs. Therefore, he made this bracha.

הוּא הָיָה אוֹמֵר כִּמָּה יְגִיעוֹת יִגַע אָדָם הָרִאשׁוֹן

How much labor the first man Adam must have expended before he obtained bread to eat.

He had to plough, sow, reap, pile up sheaves, thresh, winnow, grind, sift, knead, bake, and only then, could he eat.

This type of thinking is especially important for someone who is easily annoyed with other people. Without other people to share the burdens, life would be unimaginably difficult. Learn to appreciate things that are usually taken for granted (Pliskin).

אֹרְחַ טוֹב מֵהוּ אֹמֵר

What is the attitude of a good guest?

A bad guest says, “I only ate and drank a little and caused only a little trouble. Everything my host did, he would have done anyway for his wife and children.”

A good guest says, “look how much trouble my host took for my sake. How much meat he brought me, how much wine he brought me and all the trouble he took for me!”

מְחַכְמְתוֹ לִירְאָיו

Blessed are you, who has shared your knowledge with those who fear you.

This is a blessing to be said when one sees a Jewish scholar. There is a question as to whether in our day, scholars are of a level high enough for us to recite this blessing. Rambam does not include it in his Yad Hachazaka. The reason is that Rambam does not include laws which do not apply now and won't apply in the future. Now, we have no men of sufficient stature, and later, in the days to come, there will be so many of them: the Patriarchs, the Tanaim and Amara'im etc., we would have to say the prayer so many times it would not be practical, therefore we omit it altogether.

דָּבָא עַל חֲמֵרָתָא

He copulated with his donkey.

Did R Shila lie in his accusation of the man before the government?

R Shila gave him lashes for copulating with a non-Jewess. The man denounced R Shila to the authorities for giving out punishment without permission. This could result in R Shila's execution. The man is a "rodef", (a pursuer), and if someone comes to kill you, you are permitted to kill him first.

By accusing a man of copulating with a donkey, that man would be guilty of a crime liable to the death penalty. The authorities gave R Shila the rod to mete out punishment and he killed this "rodef."

הַאִי רוֹדֵף הוּא

This man is a pursuer and the Torah says if someone comes to kill you, may kill him first.

We may defend ourselves and others from an attacker, even at the cost of killing the attacker.

Judaism considers life to have sanctity and it is to be preserved and prolonged .
Judaism cherishes life – but not under all circumstances and at all costs. We are allowed to:

- kill an attacker in self defense
- to execute for certain crimes
- permit ourselves to be killed when forced to commit incest murder or idolatry
- kill during warfare

הַאִי רוֹדֵף הוּא

If a person comes to slay you, arise and slay him.

Such a response is entirely legitimate on the part of any individual victim of putative aggression. It is also legitimate when undertaken by society as a whole, as an aggregate of individual victims.

The law against the “rodef”, the pursuer, is appropriate only if there is imminent danger that is virtually certain to result in loss of life. The response must be limited to the extent needed to neutralize the danger. Innocent lives may not be taken in the process of self defense.

1-Berachos 58b1 line 14 B4

Weiss #809

וְלֹא שָׁקַל יָדָא מִן פִּיֶּסָא

He (R Chana bar Chanilai), never took his hand from his purse

thinking that perhaps a poor man might come and would “have to wait in shame for me to give him help.”

A person eager to give chesed always thinks, “what if I was in need, how would I wish to be treated by others,” and acts accordingly.

לְאַחַר שְׁנַיִם עָשָׂר חֳדָשׁ אֹמֵר

What bracha do we say on seeing a friend after a lapse of twelve months?

Answer: Mechaye Hamesim.

Since a Rosh Hashanah and a Yom Kippur has passed since we last saw our friend, we thank God for sparing our friend from a sentence of death.

What bracha do we say on seeing a friend if there was only a lapse of 30 days?

58b2 line 29 B7

Answer: Shehecheyanu

הַבְּרָכָה אֲמַר

What bracha is recited when we see a person with a deformity? (spotted people)

Answer: “Mishaneh Habrios,” who diversifies the creatures (the created ones), if born that way.

Answer: “Dayan Haemes” - if it occurred late,r i.e. accident or amputee.

This is not an indictment of the person but an affirmation of faith by the viewer, who is disturbed by what he sees. God must have a reason, and we accept his will. Upon seeing a disabled person, our tradition demands that we bless God for making people different, thus reasserting the divine quality of such a life. Since that life has divine quality, it is not permissible to aid in shortening it. This blessing is used as proof in the argument against assisted suicide.

1-Berachos 59a3 line 25 A13

פְּרָקָא תְּקִיפָא דְּבָרִיק בְּעֵנָא וּמְתַבֵּר גְּזִיזֵי דְּבַרְזָא

What causes thunder? It is a powerful lightning bolt that strikes a cloud and shatters pieces of hail.

Rav Acha Bar Yaakov - says the above

Rav Ashi: - it is the noise wind makes as it blows over empty clouds. This is just like the noise made by wind blowing over the mouths of empty barrels.

לֵא נִבְרָאוּ רַעְמִים אֶלָּא לְפָשׁוּט עֲקֻמוּמִית שֶׁבֶלֶב

Thunder was created only to straighten out the crookedness of the heart.

As it says, Eccl. 3:14, “and God acted so that man should stand in awe of Him.”

Only a wise man has such fear naturally. Others, God frightens with something man considers terrifying, i.e., thunder. If a person realizes that thunder is only one of God’s minor powers, then the fear of thunder can be used as a stepping stone to the higher fear of God, without further fearful experiences.

הַנִּי עֲנַי דְּצִפְרָא לֵית בְּהוּ מְשָׁא דְכְתִיב

R Shmuel bar Rav Yitzchak said, “The morning clouds have no significance.”

This phrase can be interpreted for the reassurance of young people.

A person in his youth may not be sure of what he can accomplish and to what extent his abilities can potentially develop. He must realize that these elements of doubt about the future have no significance. A young person must persevere and apply him/herself totally without reluctance or hesitation.

The morning clouds will clear.

פְּרוּךְ זֹכֵר הַבְּרִית

Blessed is He who remembers the covenant.

When we see a rainbow in the sky, we feel assured that God remembers his covenant with mankind, never to decree the downfall of the entire human race. We recite a blessing to him for fulfilling his promise to Noah.

Question: What bracha do we make on a rainbow?

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. remember the covenant | - zocher habris |
| 2. trustworthy in his covenant | - neeman bivriso |
| 3. and fulfills his word | - vkayem bmaamaro |

Just as a rainbow has multiple colors, so too, the blessing contains several different forms of praise.

1-Berachos 59b1 line 3 B1
Bleich 2:37

בְּרוּךְ עוֹשֶׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית

Blessed are you who makes the work of Creation

A blessing must be made by a person who sees the sun at the beginning of its cycle; at the same location, time of day and day of the week at which time it was created; i.e., Tuesday evening 6 p.m., in the month of Nissan. This occurs once every 28 years. That is the day we say Bircas Hachamah – the Vernal Equinox prayer.

The solar year is reckoned as 365 days and 6 hours long,- Eruvin 56b. The Julian calendar was replaced by the Gregorian calendar in 1582 because the length of the year of 365 and 1/4 days was wrong. It is 11 minutes and 14 seconds shorter, i.e., 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes and 46 seconds.

This prayer is recited to reinforce the concept of continuous Creation as Rambam teaches in his first of the 13 principles of faith.

הִיְתָה אִשְׁתּוֹ מְעוֹבְרֵת וְאָמַר יְהִי רְצוֹן שְׁתֵּלֵד בּוֹ
הֲרִי זוֹ תִפְלֵת שׁוֹא

After your wife is pregnant, to pray that the baby should be a boy, is a prayer in vain.

This is not entirely true. Leah found she was pregnant, and she rendered a judgment regarding herself. Twelve tribes are destined to emerge from Jacob. Six have already come from me, and two from each of the maidservants. If my baby is male, my sister Rachel will not even be like one of the maidservants. Therefore, Leah's baby was transformed into a daughter, Dinah.

1-Berachos 60a3 line 30

A26

Lev 12:2

אִשָּׁה בִּי תִזְרִיעַ וַיֵּלֶדָה

When a woman emits seed and bears a male.

This is interpreted as the gender of the child is determined at conception by who emits seed first.

יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ ה' אֱלֹהֵי שֵׁיחָא עֶסְק זֶה לִי לְרְפוּאָה וְתִרְפְּאֵנִי

What prayer should a person make upon receiving medical care?

May it be your will of God that this therapy should serve me as a therapy and you should heal me.

Daf Digest

דְּתַנִּי דְּבֵי רַבִּי יִשְׁמַעֵאל

We learn from the words of Rabbi Yishmael that, “Heal we shall be healed,” gives permission to doctors to heal.

R Yaakov Yisroel from Chortkov fell ill. He told his grandson Mordechai Dov of Hornsteipel that the source of all illnesses can be traced to the 248 (+) and 365 (-) commandments. These numbers correspond to the limbs and sinews of the body. When a person does a mitzvah or avoids an imminent sin, these areas become stronger. But when a person fails, that corresponding part of the body can become weak. Therefore, even before calling the doctor, examine your behavior, fix what needs to be fixed and you may have a remedy even before the doctor gets involved.

”וְרַפָּא יְרַפָּא”

And he shall surely heal.

Physicians are required to use their skill to heal. The patient, when ill, is required to seek medical attention without delay and must follow medical directives. Piety might claim that a person should seek to be healed by God, not man. The pious could be comforted by the faith that God sent the doctor as His messenger.

If a doctor permits a patient to eat on Yom Kippur but the patient claims he does not feel well enough to eat; even if 100 doctors agree, we listen to the patient. When there is any uncertainty, we “err on the side of life.”

Daf Digest

הַנִּכְנָס לְבֵית הַפֶּסַע אֹמֵר

Upon entering the washroom one should say

to the angels accompanying him “wait here till I return.”

Many halachic authorities (Rif, Rambam, Rosh, Tur) say this should only be recited by the very pious. Rav Karo rules in his Shulchan Aruch, that people no longer have the custom to make this request. Other Poskim disagree and suggest it should still be said, even in our time.

הַנִּכְנֵס לַיּוֹשֵׁן עַל מִטָּתוֹ אוֹמֵר

What part of the Shema is one to say upon going to bed?

The first paragraph.

If you are going to take a nap?

We don't say the Shema.

בְּרוּךְ שֶׁעָשָׂה לִּי כָּל צָרְכֵי

“Blessed is He who has provided me with all my needs.”

When he ties his shoes he should say, this blessing.

Why make this blessing only when he puts on his shoes and not when he puts on other articles of clothing? Because shoes are a symbol of contentment. When a woman refuses betrothal to a man of higher station she says, “I do not want a shoe too large for my foot.” Kiddushin 49a. It is a sign that she is content with her station in life. Here too, he blesses God because he is pleased with his life and has all his needs fulfilled.

מֵאִי חַיִּיב לְבָרֵךְ עַל הַרְעָה בְּשֵׁם שְׂמִבְרֵךְ עַל הַטּוֹבָה

What does it mean that we should bless God for the bad just as we do for the good?

We learned there is a different bracha for each

- for good we say - Hatov u'Metiev.
- for bad we say - Dayan Haemes.

This statement is needed to teach us to accept misfortune with a pleasant demeanor. A person may conclude that his misfortune is atonement for his sins and it is better to atone here, than in the world to come.

מֵאִי חַיִּיב לְבָרֵךְ עַל הַרְעָה בְּשֵׁם שְׂמֵרָךְ עַל הַטּוֹבָה

We believe no evil emanates from Hashem. Everything is a benefit in some way, even if we can't understand it now. Therefore, accept negative occurrences with joy. To emphasize this philosophy of taking the good with the bad, notice our custom on Pesach.

We take, according to Hillel's teaching
matzo – representing freedom

maror – representing bitterness and tears and
charoses – representing the sweet aspects
of life.

{ and eat all three of them together.

This custom symbolizes life's difficulties, challenges and blessings and to accept them with love, calm and composure.

כָּל דְּעָבִיד רַחֲמָנָא לְטַב עָבִיד

Whatever the All Merciful does, is for good.

If we look upon events, not as isolated units, but as parts of an all embracing whole, we can realize, perhaps only in retrospect, that, despite the initial appearances to the contrary, they are really for the good.

1-Berachos 61a1 line 2

לְעוֹלָם יִהְיוּ דְבָרָיו שֶׁל אָדָם מוֹעֲטִין לְפָנֵי הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא

A person's words should be few before HaShem.

He should not utter

- words of complaint
- words of praise.

He should not utter complaints, since everything God does is for the good, even if the person may not understand it yet.

He should not say praise, since any praise he fails to say, suggests that he limits God's wonderful qualities.

מֵאֵי דְּכִתִּיב,, וַיִּצְרַח ה' אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הָאָדָם" בְּשְׁנֵי יוּדֵי"ן

What is learned from the fact that the word Vayitzar is spelled with two yuds?

Two figures:

1. God created man with 2 inclinations: one good and one bad.
2. Man was created with two figures: one male and one female.

לֹא אֲבָרִי עַד מֵעֲלֵי שַׁבָּתָא

Man was not created until the last.

Man was the last to be created, just before Sabbath Eve. Why was he last?

God wanted man to be able to use all the world as soon as he was created.

Man was not just another aspect of creation, he was the purpose of creation.

1-Berachos 61a2 line 27 B17

וְזָכַר וּנְקָבָה בְּרֵאשִׁים

“He created them male and female with a singular creation.”

How do we reconcile the statement suggesting plural creations?

In the image of God he created Adam”.

1-Berachos 61a2 line 29 B26

וּלְבִסּוּף לֹא נִבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶחָד

Only one human being was created and the other was fashioned from the first.

1-Berachos 61a2 line 25 A41

Weiss #10

אֵוִי לִי מִיוֹצְרִי אֵוִי לִי מִיֹּצְרִי

Woe is me because of my creator and woe to me for my evil inclination.

Man suffers as a result of temptation. Therefore, when one overpowers his Yetzer Hora (evil inclination) how much greater is his reward.

Man's dual ordeal. The Yetzer Hora tempts him and God punishes him if he succumbs to the temptation.

הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא שׁוֹשֵׁב בֵּין לְאָדָם הָרִאשׁוֹן

The Holy One, Blessed is He, made the wedding arrangements for the first man.

Who made the marriage arrangements For Adam and Eve?

HaShem Himself.

וְלִמְאֵן דְּאָמַר פְּרָצוּף הֵי מִיַּנְיָהּ סָגִי בְּרִישָׁא

According to the one who says the male and female figures were joined, which one went in front?

Where should a man walk in relation to a woman?

- a. ladies first? (let the lady walk before him?)
- b. his wife?
- c. on a bridge?
- d. in a river?
- e. if he is a Talmud Chacham, like Moses?
- f. if he wishes to go to Heaven?

In all these circumstances, he should not walk behind a woman.

וַיֵּלֶךְ מֵאַחֲרֵי אִשְׁתּוֹ׃

And Manoach went behind his wife.

How does the Gemara learn that Samson's father was an unlearned man?

The verse says, "he followed his wife," and every learned person knows that a man should not walk behind a woman.

What is Samson's father's name?

Manoach

Why does this suggest he was not a learned man?

If he had learned scripture, he would have known that Rebecca and her maidens rode upon camels after the man (Eliezar) and not in front of him.

Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak objects and says:

"Follows," means his wife's words and advice, and not behind her, physically.

בְּשָׁעָה שֶׁהַצְּבוּר מִתְּפַלֵּין

At the hour they are praying.

Why must a person not pass the open door of a synagogue while the congregation is praying?

It suggests that he has disdain for prayer, a denial of the value of prayer, and the ability of God to influence events in response to prayer.

Unless:

- a. he is carrying something
- b. riding on a donkey
- c. there are other entrances
- d. he is wearing tefillin

יֵצֵר הָרַע דּוֹמָה לְזָבוּב

The Yetzer Hora is like a fly.

There are certain creatures that have a natural fear of man. When one passes a bird, it quickly flies away. There are other creatures that are insolent and stubborn. Even if they are chased and threatened by man, they return to irritate and harass. An example of this is the fly. It is the same with the evil influence. Just because you have chased it away once, does not mean it will stay away.

1-Berachos 61b2

line 27

A11

רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא אֹמֵר בְּכֹל נַפְשֶׁךָ'' אֶפִּילוּ נוֹטֵל אֶת נַפְשֶׁךָ

How does R Akiva interpret , “And all your soul?”

We should love God even if He takes your soul from you.

בְּשָׁעָה שֶׁהוֹצִיאוּ אֶת רַבֵּי עֲקִיבָא לְהַרְיָגָה

When they took Rabbi Akiva out to be executed...

Are those who are to be martyred to sanctify the name of HaShem, required to pronounce a blessing since they fulfill a mitzvah of scriptural origin?

Yes.

“Asher Kiddishanu bemitzvosav vtzivanu l’Kadesh Shimo B’ Rabim,” who has sanctified us with His mitzvot and commanded us to make His name holy before the multitude.

Others suggest that God does not wish to be praised when one of His creations is to be destroyed – just as He disapproved of the singing when the Egyptians were being drowned in the sea.

Though there is controversy, recitation of the bracha is ultimately upheld.

1-Berachos 61b3 line 45 B7
Shottenstein

זו תורה וזו שכרה

This is the Torah and this is its reward

R Akiva was reciting the Shema as his flesh was being combed with iron combs. The angel cried to God, “is this the reward for a person who followed the Torah so completely as R Akiva?” A voice came from heaven – “cease your complaints or I will return the world to null and void.” Some say the angels stopped complaining. Others say they could not holdback their complaints against the seeming injustice, and God fulfilled his threat and we are living in a world of chaos ever since.

Elie Wiesel

וְלִמְדָתִי שֶׁאֵין מְקַנְחִין בְּיָמִין אֶלָּא בְּשְׂמָאל

I learned that we do not wipe ourselves with the right hand.

1. The Torah was given with God's right hand.
2. We use the right hand for eating. B27
3. We tie tefillin with the right hand. Left is passive. B32
4. One points to the cantillation notes with his right hand. 62a2 - A3
5. One writes holy words with his right hand. A12

What about a left handed person?

A left handed person should use his right hand for reasons #2,3,4,5 but his left hand for reason #1. That is a more important reason.

A left handed person should use his left hand, since woman does not usually do #3,4,5, so she should also use her left hand.

קָרְנָא קָרְיָא בְּרוּמִי

“When the horn is sounded in the market of Rome ...

.. son of the fig seller, sell your father’s figs”.

If the father is not home the son should sell the figs while the buyers are still there.

Rashi - this is an admonition against procrastination.

It is also used by the Vilna Gaon to advise teachers to teach whenever and to whomever an opportunity to teach occurs.

Don’t wait for the perfect and ideal conditions. Teach when the market opens up, i.e., when the opportunity presents itself. Everyone, even the son of a teacher or a young person, should step up and share his knowledge with one who knows less and desires to learn.

1-Berachos 62b2

line 24

B4

וְאֶתְּן אָדָם תַּחְתִּיךָ”

“I will put a person in your place”

To what does R Elazar refer, when he quotes the phrase?

A Roman, who pushed him out of a bathhouse, was killed by a snake lurking there.

בָּא לְהַרְגֶךָ הַשָּׂפָם לְהַרְגוֹ

If someone comes to kill you, you may kill him first.

David had a right to kill King Saul because Saul wanted to kill him. Saul was a rodef, a pursuer.

Why did David not do so? Because of Saul's modesty in the latrine.

That act endangered David's life and a person has no right to endanger himself.
Was David wrong to spare Saul?

No, David understood that a person with Saul's qualities would not really kill him.
Therefore, Saul was not a rodef and David had no right to kill him.

Daf Digest

כָּל הַמְבִיזָה אֶת הַבְּגָדִים סוֹף אֵינוֹ נִהְנֶה מֵהֶם

Anyone who dishonors clothing, in the end will not get benefit from them.

This describes King David, “when he was old ... clothing did no longer warm him”.

Why does the Gemara use King David as an example of a person who damages clothing and use that act of his to explain why, in his old age, he was cold and needed to be warmed? David should be praised, he only cut a corner of Saul’s coat to prove to Saul that he had no desire to harm him. However, Chachomim fault David, saying he could have had the same effect, had he cut a much smaller piece of the garment. Such a demand for perfection could not be expected from everyone. However, for David King, author of Tehillim, and progenitor of the Moshiach, it was reasonable.

”כִּי תִשָּׂא אֶת-רֹאשׁ בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל לִפְקֻדֵיהֶם וְנָתַנוּ אִישׁ כַּפָּר נִפְשׁוֹ וּגְוִי’ ”

“And when you take a count of the heads of the children of Israel for their numbers”... Ex 30:12

Are we permitted to take a census in Israel ? Yes, - but not by counting heads only by counting tokens. Yet King David was incited by God to do so and 70,000 Israelites from Dan to Beer Sheva died of the plague. Why did David disobey this clear law?

David had called God an inciter – a disrespectful term.

- Rambam: the Torah does not specify whether the prohibition is only when in the desert or is binding on all generations. Did it lapse upon entry into the promised land?
- Even a census done by counting ½ shekels must be for a military or national need – not merely to gladden the heart of a King that he ruled over a large populace.
- Even when counting with a ½ shekel, only those 20 years and older can be counted. David ordered all those 13 and older be counted. This is forbidden under any circumstances.
- Perhaps a census in Israel is permissible, since it counts non-Jews as well. Non-Jews are counted indirectly, by counting the names on slips of paper. It is done for an important national purpose.

1-Berachos 62b5 line 44

B9

מֵאֵי קְפֹנְדְרִיָּא

What is a Kopandria

1. It is an acronym in Greek that means short cut.
2. Not to be used on the Temple Mount.
3. Or through a synagogue.
4. Wearing sackcloth before Achasveros is compared to spitting on the Temple Mount.
5. Just as a sackcloth cannot be worn before a worldly king and therefore, certainly not on the Temple Mount. Spitting which is repulsive and should not be done before an earthly king can certainly not be done on the Temple Mount- (a Kal V'chomer) 62b7 line 59

לְפִי שֶׁאֵין עוֹנִין אָמֵן בַּמִּקְדָּשׁ

Because we do not respond with “Amen” in the Temple.

What answer do we give?

- Baruch Shem Kavod Malchuso Leolam Vaed

Do we answer after all the blessings are finished?

No, after each and every bracha.

This extended response encourages an extended blessing.

דַּרְשׁ בַּר קַפְרָא זֵלַת קְבוּץ קָנָה מִיָּנָה

Bar Kappara said, “Merchandise that falls in value, gather and buy it,

for in the end, it will increase in worth”.

In a time when Torah learning is not valued highly, studying has even greater value, since it is a rare commodity.

אִיזוֹהִי פֶרֶשֶׁה קְטַנָּה שְׁכָל גּוֹפֵי תוֹרָה תְלוּיִן בָּהּ

What short text is there which holds all the essential principles of The Torah ?...

“in all your ways know him”. Prov 3:6

“let all your deeds be for Heaven.” Avos 2:17,

In everything you do, in every path you take, retain the awareness of God.

To believe is not enough, one must feel and sense the existence of God. The presence of the Almighty must be a personal intimate experience. A communion with the Holy One must be sought and achieved.

דַּרְשׁ בֵּר קַפְרָא לְעוֹלָם יִלְמַד אָדָם אֶת בְּנוֹ אוֹמְנוֹת נְקִיָּה וְקֵלָה

A person is obligated to teach his son a clean and easy trade

Clean - means not tending toward dishonesty.

Easy - means not risky or dangerous to one's health or net worth. The trade should not require excessive involvement, so that his son will have time to learn Torah.

כָּל הַמְּשַׁתֵּף שֵׁם שָׁמַיִם בְּצַעְרוֹ כּוֹפֵלִין לוֹ פְּרִנָּסָתוֹ

Whoever associates the name of Heaven with his suffering, will receive a double reward.

When a person sins, he causes God double pain

1. by injuring himself, he causes pain to the Almighty
2. His maker is also pained by needing to punish him.

When a person prays, it should be a prayer to remove the pain he has caused God. Since he has caused God two pains, he will receive a double reward when his prayer is answered.

מְעַבֵּר שָׁנִים וְקוֹבֵעַ חֳדָשִׁים בְּחוּצָה לְאֶרֶץ

He was intercalating years and establishing months outside the land of Israel.

An intercalating month is needed because there is a difference of eleven days between a lunar and a solar year.

The Sanhedrin placed an additional seven months every nineteen years to adjust to this difference. They decide each month when those months begin.

חֳדָשִׁים בְּחוּץ לְאֶרֶץ

Established months outside of Eretz Yisroel.

Question:

1. What did R Chanina do wrong regarding the calendar?
2. Why did he believe he had the authority to do so?
3. To whom did he compare himself?
4. How did he lose that authority?
5. What punishment was he threatened with?

Answer:

1. He decided calendar issues outside Eretz Yisroel.
2. He was a greater authority than those inside Israel.
3. Rabbi Akiva in Israel.
4. His students in Israel became greater than he, who, now, lived outside of Israel.
5. Excommunication.

בְּשִׁלְמָא הוּא מְטַהֵר וְהֵם מְטַמְּאִין לְחוּמְרָא

It is understandable he could rule it clean and they rule it tamei, a more stringent ruling.

A second authority to rule on a given issue is permitted to make a more stringent ruling, but not a more lenient one.

הַסִּפֵּת וְשָׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה נִהְיִיתָ לְעַם׃

“Pay heed Israel, for today you become a nation.” Deut 27:9

What day was that? Every day that Torah is studied.

What is the proper way to study Torah?

Form groups and engage in Torah study, because Torah does not enter, (is not acquired) except by studying with companions.

לְעוֹלָם יִלְמוּד אָדָם תּוֹרָה וְאַחַר כֵּן יִהְיֶה

A person should always first learn Torah and afterwards analyze it.

This means: learn even if you don't understand. After you are fluent in the lesson - you can try to fully understand it.

וְאִם זָמַם יָד לְפִה

If a person muzzles himself (puts his hand over his mouth)

i.e., does not open his mouth to ask questions when he is learning, he will be forced to muzzle himself again, (remain silent), later in life, when he is asked questions.

If he muzzles now, he will muzzle later, also.

סִינֵי וְעוֹקֵר הָרִים אֵיזָה מֵהֶם קוֹדֵם

Who takes precedence as a leader - a person with broad knowledge or an individual with piercing analysis?

In a disagreement between a deep thinker and one of broad knowledge, the opinion of the person who is a deep thinker, is followed.

- If two scholars are to be called to the Torah, the one with broad knowledge takes precedence. Broad knowledge was prized in Talmudic times since printed books were not available. Today, knowledge is more available so the analytical thinker offers what is otherwise not available and he should take precedence.
- Two doctors: whom do you choose to make the diagnosis, one with broad knowledge of medicine or one with knowledge in depth on that specific condition?

1-Berachos 64a1 line 6 B9

Weiss #631

סִינַי קוֹדֵם שְׁהַכֵּל צָרִיכִין לְמַרֵי חֲטָיָא

Everyone needs the owner of wheat.

Whom does the world need more; a person with a broad knowledge of Torah, (a Sinai - one who knows the revealed law given at Sinai), or one who has a sharp mind that allows him to deduce the law (the up-rooter of mountains)? The sages say the Sinai is like one who sells harvested wheat that is ready for use.

Everyone needs him and can benefit from him. As for the hidden Torah that needs to be extracted, i.e., by uprooting mountains - that, is need only by a few.

כָּל הַנֶּהֱנֶה מִסְעוּדָה שֶׁתְּלָמִיד חָכָם שָׂרוּי בְּתוֹכָהּ
בְּאֵילוּ נֶהֱנֶה מִזִּיו שְׂכִינָהּ

Whoever eats with a Torah scholar, it is as if he benefits from the presence of the Shechinah.

“Aaron and the elders ate bread....before the Lord!” Ex 18:12

Did they truly eat before the Lord?

If a Torah scholar is present, words of Torah will be spoken and it is as though the Divine presence is there.

תְּלַמְיְדֵי חֻכְמַיִם אֵין לָהֶם מְנוּחָה לֹא בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה וְלֹא בְּעוֹלָם הַבָּא

Torah scholars have no rest in this world or in the world to come.

The world to come is depicted as “the day which will be all Sabbath and rest” – to commemorate God resting on the 7th day. God rested from doing the physical work of creation. The intellectual activity of Torah study is not included in the category of activities forbidden on the Sabbath. To say that there is no rest from Torah study is merely to say, it is an activity that is so important, that it can never be finished. However, to say that Torah Scholars have no rest, does not mean that they must bring exertion to bear. Torah study, intellectual activity, is the menuchah, the rest of the righteous.

תְּלִמְיָדֵי חֻכְמַיִם אֵינן לָהֶם מְנוּחָה לֹא בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה וְלֹא בְּעוֹלָם הַבָּא

Torah scholars have no rest in this world or in the world to come.

The lack of rest does not produce fatigue or restlessness; just the opposite, because they have a yearning for knowledge - a wonderful and lively thirst for life. They have a quest for a new insight into Torah and a vibrant and energetic intellect that drives them forward. Their eagerness to seek and learn is an indication of vigor and strength due to their demanding mission .

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אֵל תִּקְרֵי בְּנֵיךָ אֶלָּא בּוֹנֵיךָ

Don't read it, “as your children,” “but as your builders”.

Talmidei Chachomim are builders because they are building the world. The underpinnings of the world are Torah, Tefillah, chesed and mitzvot. Talmidei Chachomim are constantly engaged in those activities.

We also pray that the holy city of Jerusalem will be rebuilt speedily and in our days. How will it be rebuilt? Biyameinu, in our days, days that we fill with service to God, Hashem. A lifestyle of mitzvahs and chesed, learning, teaching and prayer, builds the city of Jerusalem.

1-Berachos 64a3 line 23 A23

אָמַר רַבִּי אֱלֶעָזֶר אָמַר רַבִּי חַנִּינָא
תְּלַמִּידֵי חֲכָמִים מְרַבִּים שְׁלוֹם בְּעוֹלָם

R Elazar said in the name of R Chanina: Torah Scholars increase the peace in the world.

Four tractates end with this teaching of R Elazar.

It is striking that these four tractates form an acronym that spells out the word bonayich.

Berachos , Nazir, Yevomous, Kereisus :

The first letters of each word, spell the word bonayich, Builders.