



הרב הראשי עיה"ק אלעד מרדכי מלכא שליט"א נשיא וראש מוסדות "אור המלך"

מחבר ספרי שו"ת דרך המלך, אמרי מרדכי, ודרכי המלך על המועדים ועוד
רשת מעונות, ורשת גנים, ת"ת פרי תואר, ובית יעקב פרי תואר, תיכון בית יעקב החדש, ת"ת מאור ישראל,
ישיבה קטנה ארחות יהודה, ביהמ"ד גבוה לרבנים ודיינים "לקח טוב" קופת "מפעל החסד" אלעד
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עיר התורה שקרובה אליך

Parashat Ekev

One Hundred *Berachot* Every Day

Our *parasha* states (10:12), "And now Yisrael, what does Hashem your G-d ask of you but to fear Hashem, your G-d, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, and to serve Hashem, your G-d, with all your heart and soul. (13) To observe the mitzvot of Hashem and His statutes that I command you today, for your benefit."

For Moshe, Heavenly Fear was a Small Thing

Our Sages expounded on the aforementioned *pasuk* that everything is in the Hand of Heaven except for Heavenly fear. However, from the *pasuk* it sounds like Heavenly fear is an easy thing, as if to say that Hashem asks nothing more from the Jewish Nation than just that! But how could that be, ask the Sages, for do the Sages not say elsewhere that the only thing Hashem has in His storage room is Heavenly fear! This implies that it is a very great thing! The Sages answer that indeed for Moshe Rabbeinu, Heavenly fear was a small thing. They draw a parable to someone from whom is being requested a small vessel. If he has the vessel to give, he views it like a small thing, but if he does not have it, he views it like a very great thing.

How Can Moshe be Compared to the Rest of the Jewish Nation?

The *Derashot HaRan* (*drush* 10) asks that this still requires clarification. For it sounds like that Sages are saying that because Heavenly fear was a relatively minor matter for Moshe, he therefore referred to it as a small thing, even though for the rest of the Jewish Nation it was a very great thing. This is truly perplexing, for it is not fitting for someone on Moshe's level of wisdom to think that just because something is easy for him that it would be easy for others too. This is like someone with 100 gold coins saying to someone who does not even have one gold coin, that he is only asking one from him one gold coin! So asks the *Sefer Halkrim* (*maamar* 3, 31); see there what he answers.

The Commandment is for Man's Benefit

The *Daat Zekeinim* from the *Baalei Tosafot* (10:12) answers the Sages question that it sound like Heavenly Fear is a small thing by writing that Moshe was referring to the end of the *pasuk*, which states that Hashem asks us to fear Him and observe His mitzvot "for your benefit." The Sages in a different place specify that this is referring to the mitzvah of reciting 100 blessings every day. This is as the *pasuk* stated, "Now Yisrael that (מה) what Hashem asks from you..." On the word *mah*, which implies an easy thing, our Sages expound that we should not read the word as *mah*, but rather as *me'ah*, "one hundred." in other words, all that Hashem asks from us is to recite 100 blessings every day. This is to our benefit and could be viewed as an easy thing. However, we can ask on their answer that all of the mitzvot of the Torah are for man's benefit, yet despite the fact that it is for our benefit, nevertheless it still remains difficult for us since we have a *yetzer hara* that tries to make us stumble and sin. Therefore, why should reciting 100 *berachot*, even though they are to our benefit, be considered a small matter?



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A Lack of Value for *Berachot*

When we look at what is going on in the world we will see that Jews do not value *berachot*. This is because they do not understand what they mean and how a *berachah* is able draw down bounty from Heaven. Therefore an individual is not careful with the *berachot* that he recites, and he barely gives any consideration about how he recites them and on what he is reciting them, and to Whom he recites the *berachah*. So therefore the *berachah* is made by rote and it loses its special benefits. Therefore we learn from our parasha just how valuable each *berachah* truly is.

A contradiction between the Sages statements'

We must also add that we found that our Sages expounded on this *pasuk* differently in *Masechet Menachot* (43b). There they state that one should not read the word "*mah*," which implies that *yirah* is a small thing, but rather, one should first read "*me-ah*" "one hundred," referring to the 100 *berachot* one must recite each day. How can we reconcile these two statements of our Sages?

Attaining Heavenly fear by concentrating when reciting a *berachah*

I believe that we can explain that there is truly no contradiction between the statements of our Sages. On the contrary, their intentions are to teach us and to explain how Heavenly fear was a small thing for Moshe Rabbeinu. They therefore state that because he was careful to recite 100 *berachot* every day with the proper intentions, that it brought him to a lofty state of Heavenly fear. This is what the Arizal explains that the main way of attaining *ruach hakodesh* is when concentrating when reciting his *Berachot*. For by doing so he sanctifies the food that he eats and he climbs higher and higher in holiness until he attains *ruach hakodesh*. So is explained in the sefer *Kaf Hachaim* (*siman* 158), who cites the Arizal and explains that through reciting blessings carefully, he removes the impure forces from the item over which he is reciting the blessing and purifies his physicality. He is then ready to receive an influx of holiness. He adds that the Arizal warned people very much about this. All the more so, for by reciting 100 *berachot* every day, a person reaches the level of Heavenly fear. This is as the Rambam wrote in *Hilchot Berachot* (1:4). We therefore see that all of the *berachot* are to remember Hashem constantly and to fear Him. After a number of years, I saw that I had written similarly to the Ben Ish Chai in his sefer *Benayahu ben Yehoyada* (*Menachot* 43b). There the Gemara quotes Rabbi Meir, who says that a person is required to recite 100 *berachot* every day, which he derives from the *pasuk* we opened with. He additionally writes that someone who is careful with 100 *berachot* every day, will become someone who has Heavenly fear with ease. This is because he will become sanctified by the 100 *berachot* that he recites and will be filled with Heavenly fear. Therefore, for such a person, Heavenly *berachot* is a small thing. This is why our Sages state that one should not read the word "*mah*" which implies that Heavenly Fear is a small thing; rather, one should first read "*me-ah*," which teaches us that first one must recite 100 *berachot* every day and then Heavenly fear will be a small thing, implied by the word "*mah*".

Story About Rav Yerucham

The great Rav Yerucham of Mir was once travelling with his students and they reached an inn. They sat there to rest from the travelling and ordered coffee to drink. The waiter brought them their coffee and



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said that it cost was 10 rubels. The students were aghast - coffee usually costs, at most, a half a rubel. How then could they be charged 10? Rav Yerucham explained that certainly coffee costs only a half rubel. However, to obtain coffee when traveling on the road, an inn must first be built and furniture must be purchased. The inn must be decorated and flowers and lawns must be planted. A waiter must be employed who will serve the coffee on a tray. So when one takes into account all of these things, then he can understand why the coffee costs 10 rubel. This is what a person must think about every time he recites a blessing. A myriad of actions and details were involved for him to receive the food on which he is reciting his blessing. When he thinks about this and contemplates how many hundreds and thousands of individuals were involved in the production of this food, and how much kindness from Hashem was involved in making this food, his blessing will be entirely different.

Shabbat Shalom

Rav Mordechai Malka