

# Laws of Blessings, Chapter 10 (Auto Translated)

English

Auto Translated

## Shiur Overview

### Summary of Hilchot Berachot Chapter 10 – Rambam

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#### Introduction to the Chapter: What Type of Berachot Are Discussed Here

**The Rambam's Words:** The chapter discusses **berachot that are "derech shevach v'hoda'ah l'Hakadosh Baruch Hu, kemo birchot ha'tefillah"**, which "**Chachamim**" instituted.

**Explanation:** After discussing Birkat HaMazon, Birchot HaNehenin, and Birchot HaMitzvot, the Rambam comes to a new category: berachot on events, situations, and sights — not on pleasure or mitzvot, but on life situations.

#### Chiddushim:

1. **"Kemo birchot ha'tefillah" — Two interpretations:** (a) Simply that Anshei Knesset HaGedolah instituted tefillot, and this is also such a takanah. (b) A deeper interpretation: these berachot are more similar to **tefillah** than to Birchot HaNehenin. With Birchot HaNehenin, the mechanism is: one may not derive pleasure without a berachah. With Birchot HaMitzvot: one makes a berachah on a mitzvah. But **here** there is no cheftza of pleasure or mitzvah — it is an **event**, a **state of mind**. This is more similar to tefillah where one praises the Almighty "derech shevach v'hoda'ah", not as a condition for pleasure.

2. **Why doesn't the Rambam say "Anshei Knesset HaGedolah"?** The Rambam says here only "**Chachamim**", not "Anshei Knesset HaGedolah" as he says regarding Shemoneh Esrei, Birkat HaMazon, Birchot HaNehenin, Kiddush, Havdalah. Perhaps this means that **later Chachamim** instituted this.

3. **Shitat HaRa'avad — Birchot HaReshut:** The Ra'avad argues that **all the berachot of this chapter are birchot reshut, not obligatory**. His proof: the Mishnah doesn't say "chayav". It's not like Birchot HaNehenin where one may not eat without a berachah — there is no halachah that one may not put on a new coat without Shehecheyanu. Many Rishonim learn this way. **The Rambam disagrees** — according to the Rambam it is **an obligation by rabbinic enactment**.

4. **Why don't people catch themselves to make these berachot?** The real reason is not halachic but **psychological** — **"one doesn't catch it"**. With Havdalah one takes besamim in hand and says a berachah. But with an event in the middle of the day (one hears news, meets a friend) one simply doesn't catch that the obligation of berachah has fallen upon you. This is because our halachic mindset is set up for **actions** (eating, mitzvot), not for **events**. One must have **da'at** — an active thing, one must actively think "now the obligation has fallen."

5. **Berachah on a fact, not on a feeling:** Against many Acharonim who say that one makes the berachah only if one feels (for example, only if one feels joy when seeing a friend),

the chiddush is: a simchah is a **fact**, not a feeling. A Jew died — there is a sad thing. One tells the Almighty "Your truth" — we believe that You know what You're doing. **No one asked you if you feel** — the berachah is on the objective reality.

6. **Comparison to Birchot HaShachar:** With Birchot HaShachar one thanks for actions that a person does in the morning (malbish arumim, zokef kefufim). **During the day** a person also does things — he meets a friend, he sees a fire, he hears good/bad news — and on **every event** one makes a berachah. The difference: Birchot HaShachar are **regular every day**, but the berachot of this chapter are on **occasional events**.

7. **Two fundamental approaches to berachot:** (a) **Approach A:** Berachot are for things that **truly affect a person** — when one feels something, one makes a berachah. (b) **Approach B:** The essence of berachot is **constantly remembering the Almighty** — "bechol derachecha de'eihu". Everything a person does, he brings in the Almighty into his life. According to this approach, it doesn't have so much to do with the "feeling" — it's a **constant acknowledgment**.

8. **The Almighty in a "sanctuary" vs. in life:** When a person only thanks the Almighty in the beit midrash — he has **removed the Almighty from "bechol derachecha de'eihu"**. The Almighty becomes locked in a sanctuary. The **Bnei Yissachar** (Derech Pikudecha) also speaks about making berachot on other things: mitzvot onah, good weather, beautiful sights. The main point: **one should not lock the Almighty in a sanctuary**.

**[Digression: Tefillat HaDerech and caution when driving]** — In Tefillat HaDerech one asks "mikaf kol oyev v'orev baderech" (or "oyev v'orev v'listim v'chayot ra'ot"). When one drives faster than the law, one is oneself the "chayot ra'ot" from whom one is praying. A person is the greatest danger to himself.

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**Halachah 1: HaBoneh Bayit Chadash or HaKoneh Kelim Chadashim — Shehecheyanu**

**The Rambam's Words:** "**HaBoneh bayit chadash o hakoneh kelim chadashim**" — makes Shehecheyanu.

**Explanation:** When one buys new things — new clothes, a new car, a new phone — one is obligated in Shehecheyanu.

#### Chiddushim:

1. **Practical application — new phones:** When people upgrade their phone every few years, they are obligated in Shehecheyanu. This is not publicized enough.

2. **Shi'ur of simchah:** There is no stated shi'ur — it's enough that there is a simchah. What people don't do is a **bitul of minhag ha'olam** — one looks for excuses why not to make it.

3. **Minhag on Yom Tov:** One uses Shehecheyanu on new clothes when there is a doubt about the berachah of

Shehecheyanu of Yom Tov — this shows how "easy" it is, but one uses it only as a cover.

**4. Rav Chaim Kamievsky's shittah:** New socks don't count as "new keli" — but a new shirt or coat, certainly one makes a berachah.

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**Halachah: Seeing a Friend — Shehecheyanu and Mechayeh HaMeitim**

**The Rambam's Words:** One who sees his friend after **thirty days** — is mevarech Shehecheyanu. **After twelve months** — is mevarech "**Mechayeh HaMeitim**".

**Explanation:** After 30 days — he is happy that he lived to see his friend again. After 12 months — it's a time when the person doesn't even know if the friend is still alive, therefore one makes "Mechayeh HaMeitim".

**Chiddushim:**

- Practically one can catch the berachah of Shehecheyanu in the beit midrash when one sees a friend after 30+ days.

- **Rav Ari Holtzman** makes Shehecheyanu b'shem u'malchut when he meets a friend (he comes from Eretz Yisrael, so it's immediately after thirty days).

- **The Belzer Rebbe's minhag:** When he saw a Jew whom he hadn't seen for a while, he always said "Baruch Hashem s'zet zich." He didn't conduct himself according to the Rambam's halachah, but at least he said it in Yiddish.

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**Halachah: HaRo'eh Peri HaMitchadesh MiShanah LeShanah — Shehecheyanu**

**The Rambam's Words:** "**HaRo'eh peri hamitchadesh mishanah leshanah**" — is mevarech Shehecheyanu.

**Explanation:** When one sees new fruits that are renewed yearly, one is mevarech Shehecheyanu.

**Chiddushim:**

1. **Critique of Tu B'Shvat minhag:** What people do today on Tu B'Shvat to find a fruit and make Shehecheyanu — **this is not the main essence**. In the store everything is available all year — like **Antoninus and Rebbi** who saw fruits all year. Exception: fruits that one can't find in the store except for a few weeks a year — **then** there is a simchah and a Shehecheyanu.

2. **The Satmar Rebbe's vort:** "In America everything is available except a parah adumah" — because everything is available, there is no opportunity for a parah adumah. On the other hand: the **disconnection** — a person has a huge table with fruit, and he only makes a "chayav ani" (formal, without feeling).

**[Digression: Shabbat and meah berachot]** — If one is missing Shabbat meah berachot, one can open a newspaper — good news = HaTov VeHaMeitiv, bad news = Dayan HaEmet. **But:** On Shabbat one doesn't read newspapers, on Shabbat one may not hear bad news, Shabbat is "yom hanezek" — so the advice doesn't work.

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**Halachah 3: Heard Good News — HaTov VeHaMeitiv; Bad News — Dayan HaEmet**

**The Rambam's Words:** "**Heard good news one is mevarech HaTov VeHaMeitiv... on bad news one is**

**mevarech Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam Dayan HaEmet.**"

**Explanation:** When one hears good news one says HaTov VeHaMeitiv, and when one hears bad news one says Dayan HaEmet.

**Chiddushim:**

1. **What is the definition of "good news"?** Your son's teacher calls that the son is learning well, the doctor calls with good results, a relative's shidduch — these are clear examples. But what about distant news — who won an election, a war in a distant land? "Good news" must be something that is relevant to the person — something he cares about. But in the Rambam it doesn't explicitly say that it must concern you.

2. **Reading newspapers — does one make berachot?** If "good news" means just any good news, a person who browses a newspaper can make HaTov VeHaMeitiv and Dayan HaEmet in order 24 hours a day! This shows that the definition must be narrower — browsing news is not a "shemu'ah". A shemu'ah must be something that has a substantial relevance.

3. **Stock market example:** A person with money in the stock market — this is not a tovah and not a ra'ah when it goes up and down — the person does nothing, he just sits and watches.

4. **Rambam's lashon "shemu'ah tovah" vs. Mishnah's lashon "beserot tovot":** The **Mishnah** (Berachot 9:5) says "**al beserot tovot omer HaTov VeHaMeitiv**", but the **Rambam** changed it to "**shemu'ah tovah**". The change in lashon is noted.

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**Halachah: V'Chayav Adam Levarech Al HaRa'ah KeShem SheMevarech Al HaTovah**

**The Rambam's Words:** "**V'chayav adam levarech al hara'ah b'tuvat nefesh, kederech shemevarech al hatov b'simchah. Shene'emar v'ahavta et Hashem Elokecha bechol levavcha uvechol nafshecha uvechol me'odecha. Bichlal ahavah zo hayeteirah she'afilu be'et sheyatzer lo, yodeh viyeshabach b'simchah.**"

**Explanation:** A person is obligated to make the berachah on bad news (Dayan HaEmet) with a good nefesh — "b'tuvat nefesh" — just as he makes the berachah on good news with simchah. The source is the pasuk "v'ahavta et Hashem Elokecha bechol levavcha uvechol nafshecha uvechol me'odecha."

**Chiddushim:**

1. **"B'tuvat nefesh" — a unique lashon:** The Rambam uses "**b'tuvat nefesh**" — a special expression. He doesn't say simply "b'simchah" like the Gemara, but "b'tuvat nefesh" — with a good taste in the nefesh. Only afterwards does he also bring the lashon "b'simchah" when he says "yodeh viyeshabach b'simchah."

2. **The Rambam's translation of "bechol me'odecha":** The **Mishnah** (Berachot 9:5) expounds "**bechol me'odecha**" — "**bechol midah umidah shehu moded lach, hevei modeh lo**" — a play on words with three similar words (me'od/midah/modeh). The **Rambam** did **not** bring it this way. Instead he translated "me'odecha" literally — "**ahavah yeteirah**", very much love. "Me'od" means literally "very" (very much). The Rambam put aside the play on words from the Mishnah and brought the simple translation.

### 3. What does "ahavah yeteirah" mean practically?

Normal love for the Almighty is when He gives you good. "Me'od" — the extra love — means **even when He gives you bad**, you thank Him and praise Him with simchah. This is the "yeteirah" — what goes beyond the normal.

4. **The essence of the simchah:** The simchah comes from the fact that **the Almighty is praised** — one justifies the judgment, one recognizes that the Almighty is Dayan HaEmet, and this itself is a source of simchah. Not that the person is happy about the trouble, but he is happy that he can praise the Almighty.

5. **"Me'od" — not money according to Rambam:** According to the Gemara (Berachot 61:) "bechol me'odecha" is also a hint to **mamon** (money). But the Rambam brings the pasuk and means the **simple meaning** — "me'od" = very much, not money. This is a known choice of the Rambam to go according to the simple meaning of Scripture.

6. **What does "Dayan HaEmet" mean — a psychological-theological analysis:** "Dayan HaEmet" doesn't mean that the Almighty did me a favor (because then one would say HaTov VeHaMeitiv). "Dayan HaEmet" means: the Almighty is just, He is truth — even though it's not good for me, it is truth. The person encounters the Almighty not as "HaTov VeHaMeitiv" but yes as "dino emet" — the Almighty is present in your life also with ra'ah.

7. **Against a certain approach in bitachon:** Those who speak about bitachon in a way that everything the Almighty does is the best for you, and one must actually feel that way — the Rambam's halachah is not like that. One says Dayan HaEmet, not HaTov VeHaMeitiv, on a ra'ah. One doesn't have to feel that a ra'ah is actually a tovah; one must acknowledge that it's a ra'ah, but the Almighty is just.

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### Halachah 2: She'Ein Mevarchin Al He'Atid Lihiyot Ela Al Mah She'Eira Atah

**The Rambam's Words:** "If good came to him or he heard good news, even though things indicate that this good will cause him harm — he is mevarech HaTov VeHaMeitiv. If harm came to him or he heard bad news, even though things indicate that this harm will cause him good — he is mevarech Dayan HaEmet. For one does not make berachot on what will be in the future but on what has happened now."

**Explanation:** One makes a berachah on what has happened now, not on what might come out in the future.

### Chiddushim:

1. **The Rambam's "psychological genius" — focus on the present:** The Rambam clarifies a great confusion that people have with "mixed bag" situations. When news comes that is a mixture of good and bad, the Rambam says: focus on what the main thing is, what the majority is. Is it mainly a tovah? Put aside other thoughts and say HaTov VeHaMeitiv. This helps the person contain mixed thoughts. Example: a shidduch — one has a thousand thoughts, but the berachah HaTov VeHaMeitiv helps focus.

2. **"Temimut" — living with the present:** The main principle is "temimut" — people make too many calculations about the future. The Rambam says: live with what you have now. When the good news that came out of a ra'ah arrives, you will then make HaTov VeHaMeitiv. But now — react to now.

On one event one can make several berachot — today HaTov VeHaMeitiv, tomorrow Dayan HaEmet, if it turns around.

3. **Perush HaMishnah in Berachot — a comparison:** In Perush HaMishnah the Rambam gives a different nuance: that a wise person knows that often a good thing becomes bad in the end, and vice versa. But this doesn't completely match what it says here in Mishneh Torah.

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### Halachah: Berachot on Rain / Field

**The Rambam's Words:** When it starts to rain — whoever has a field alone makes Shehecheyanu; whoever has a partnership makes HaTov VeHaMeitiv.

**Explanation:** HaTov VeHaMeitiv is said when it's good for several people (partnership).

### Chiddushim:

1. **HaTov VeHaMeitiv = lashon rabim:** HaTov VeHaMeitiv is said when it's good for several people.

2. **[Digression: Living with nature — Nishmat]:** When does a Jew from the past say Nishmat with true enthusiasm? When it starts to rain! A field worker who lives with nature feels "yoducha Hashem Elokeinu al kol rov ma'asecha" with true vitality. In Eretz Yisrael one sees people who live with Birkat HaShanim literally.

3. **"Modim anachnu lach... al kol tipah v'tipah shehoradeta lanu":** One thanks for every drop of rain — millions of times. And this leads into "ilu finu malei shirah kayam" — even if one would say as many berachot as there are drops, one would still not have fulfilled.

4. **Nishmat kol chai — "al ken evarim shepilagta banu":** The one who thanks is himself also a gift from the Almighty. One said above that a mouth like the sea would not be enough — so therefore, the mouth that the Almighty did give us, we use to the extent we have. One thanks with the "tools" that the Almighty gave us, even though they are not enough.

5. **Shi'ur of rain for berachah:** One doesn't make the berachah immediately when it starts to rain, but **misheirbu hamayim al ha'aretz** — when there is already a lot of water, so that **v'ya'alu av'avu'ot min hamatar al penei ha'adamah** (bubbles spring up from the earth). The Rambam calls this **"zeh ikar hashir"** — the talmid chacham from the Gemara described the rain: **"chatan likrat kallah"** — the drops of water spring up toward the rain falling down, like a groom goes toward a bride. The great poet is the one who makes the good tefillah — he has a nefesh piyuti that sees beauty in creation.

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### Halachah: Father Died and He Inherited — Berachah on Tovah and Ra'ah at Once

**The Rambam's Words:** When one receives news that the father died and he inherits him — **if he has brothers, he is mevarech first Dayan HaEmet and afterwards HaTov VeHaMeitiv. If he has no brothers with him, he is mevarech Shehecheyanu.**

**Explanation:** On the same event one makes both berachot — Dayan HaEmet on the death, and HaTov VeHaMeitiv/Shehecheyanu on the inheritance.

### Chiddushim:

1. **Mixed feelings:** Jews can live with "mixed feelings" — one can be sad and happy at the same time. This is "**tovah v'ra'ah ba'in k'echad**".

2. **Order of berachot:** One makes first Dayan HaEmet and afterwards HaTov VeHaMeitiv — because first happened the father's death, and then resulted from it the inheritance.

3. **Practical question:** Has one ever seen someone make Shehecheyanu when his father dies? Almost everyone inherits something. According to the Rema's shittah that one makes on every good news, it wouldn't be so questioned.

4. **Onen and berachot:** An onen is not exempt from all mitzvot — he must make berachot, he is exempt from tefillah and certain things.

5. **A humorous note:** The only person one can imagine making Shehecheyanu when his father dies is a rebbe — he becomes a rebbe (inheriting the crown).

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**General Rule: HaTov VeHaMeitiv vs. Shehecheyanu**

**The Rambam's General Rule: "Tovah shehi lo v'la'acherim — mevarech HaTov VeHaMeitiv. Tovah shehi lo levado — mevarech Shehecheyanu."**

**Explanation:** Shehecheyanu means "one lived to see it" — a joy that one is here. HaTov VeHaMeitiv means "the Almighty is good" — a recognition of the Almighty's goodness.

**Chiddushim:**

1. **Question on the translation of HaTov VeHaMeitiv:** "HaTov lo v'hameitiv la'acherim" sounds a bit selfish — as if the Almighty is good for me and also for others. It must be a different interpretation — not that "I am the center and also for others."

2. **Open question:** Why specifically when it's good for others also does one say HaTov VeHaMeitiv, and when it's only for oneself does one say Shehecheyanu? This remains an open question.

3. **Shehecheyanu and HaTov VeHaMeitiv are older berachot** that were adapted to different occasions, not berachot that were specially made for these situations.

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**Halachah: Birkat HaGomel — Arba'ah Tzerichin Lehodot**

**The Rambam's Words: "Four need to give thanks — a sick person who was healed, a prisoner who left prison, seafarers when they ascended, and travelers when they reach settlement. They need to give thanks before ten and two of them chachamim, as it says 'virommuhu bikehal am uvmoshav zekeinim yehalleluhu'. He stands among them and is mevarech 'Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam hagomel lechayavim tovot shegemalani kol tov', and all who hear say 'mi shegemalcha hu yigmalcha kol tov selah'."**

**Explanation:** Four types of people who were saved from danger/trouble must make a special berachah of thanksgiving before ten (two of them chachamim).

**Chiddushim:**

1. **Difference between birchot hoda'ah and berachot on good things:** This is a new type of berachot — earlier we spoke about berachot on good things that happen generally

(Shehecheyanu, HaTov VeHaMeitiv), now we speak about berachot on being saved from trouble.

2. **Source of Birkat HaGomel:** The source is a Baraita in Berachot, and it stems from korban todah. The pesukim are from Tehillim 107 ("hodu l'Hashem"), which is our tefillah today instead of the korban.

3. **Dikduk in "shenitrapeh":** The Rambam writes "choleh shenitrapeh" with a hei at the end (not "shenitrapah"), which is interesting — in the pasuk one already finds "rafa" with a hei.

4. **"Bifnei asarah ushnayim mehem chachamim" — practical application:** According to **Sha'arei Efraim** this is only if one has, but if one doesn't have two chachamim one is not prevented. A practical advice: one should go to a large beit midrash where presumably there are chachamim among them.

5. **Explanation of "hagomel lechayavim tovot":** A broad discussion of what "chayavim" means:

- "Chayavim" means people who had trouble — presumably they were "dan al ha'emet", they deserved the punishment, and the Almighty had mercy.

- **Difference between chayav/zakai and rasha/tzaddik:** "Chayav" doesn't necessarily mean a rasha — it means someone who is in a situation where he can receive a judgment. He is in a danger situation.

- **Lashon anavah:** The mevarech says with humility that the Almighty does miracles not only for tzaddikim — "even I am who I am, even if I am a chayav, the Almighty did good for me." This is different from David HaMelech's lashon "vayashev Hashem li ketzidki."

6. **[Digression: The Baal Shem Tov's takanah — Hodu erev Shabbat]:** The Baal Shem Tov introduced that one should say Tehillim 107 (Hodu) Friday nights, because a person goes through every week all four types of troubles. When one looks into that chapter, it speaks a lot about troubles that come from sins, which fits with the Baal Shem Tov's vort that a person goes through in his head ups and downs every week — also emotional turmoil. On such spiritual matters one doesn't make HaGomel — one says Hodu.

7. **Minhag to give an aliyah:** The minhag is that one gives the mevarech an aliyah to the Torah — this is a simple matter of derech erez, not me'akev.

8. **Airplane — whether one makes HaGomel:**

- Flying on an airplane is not clear if it's like "yordei hayam" or "holchei derachim."

- **The Belzer Rebbe** (the last one) said one should not make a berachah on flying. The **Klausenberger Rebbe** understood that the Belzer Rebbe wanted to emphasize that flying should not be a danger.

- **Counter-argument:** Even if the airplane itself is not dangerous, a trip in general brings more dangers — one can be late, one runs around, one can get hurt.

- **Rav Soloveitchik (the Boston Rav)** used to make a berachah on flying. He also used to make HaGomel when he drove from Boston to New York, but when he got used to it and no longer felt a danger, he stopped. His shittah: it has to do with the **judgment** of danger — when a person no longer feels that it's dangerous, he is exempt.

- **A further chiddush:** The Almighty created nature so that a person should feel like everything is okay — on **that** part of nature one doesn't need to make a berachah. But on the part where there remains a "loophole" and one still feels danger — one does need to say.

- **Rav Nachman Biderman** said that every day one makes a gomel, because in the morning one says "hagomel chasadim tovim le'amo Yisrael" in Birchot HaShachar.

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**Halachah 10: Birkat She'asah Nissim — Place Where Miracles Were Done for Israel**

**The Rambam's Words:** "One who sees a place where miracles were done for Israel, such as Yam Suf and the crossings of the Jordan... is mevarech Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam she'asah nissim la'avoteinu bayamim hahem bazman hazeh."

**Explanation:** Whoever sees a place where a miracle happened for Klal Yisrael, makes a berachah.

**Chiddushim:**

1. **The Rambam says "kegon"** — Yam Suf and the Jordan crossings are only examples. **From then until today thousands of miracles have happened in Eretz Yisrael** — in every war, in every valley. Every place where a missile almost fell, or other miracles, can possibly also be a place where miracles were done for the many.

2. **Question about the exact place:** At Yam Suf — the Rambam doesn't give any shi'ur how close one must be. At the Jordan crossings it's easier — one knows it was opposite Jericho.

3. **The nusach** is exactly the same as Chanukah — "she'asah nissim la'avoteinu bayamim hahem bazman hazeh". The difference: with Chanukah the berachah is on the **time**, and here it is on the **place**.

4. **"Kol makom shena'asu bo nissim larabim"** — it must be an event that happened for Klal Yisrael, not just that people weren't killed.

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**Halachah: Miracle for an Individual**

**The Rambam's Words:** "A place where a miracle was done for an individual, that individual and his son and his son's son are mevarech when they see that place: Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam she'asah li nes bamakom hazeh, or she'asah le'avi nes bamakom hazeh."

**Explanation:** With a miracle for an individual, only that person and his children/grandchildren make the berachah.

**Chiddush:** Does "beno uven beno" mean all generations, or only until grandchildren? The Rambam doesn't say explicitly.

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**Halachah: Miracle for Tzaddikim**

**The Rambam's Words:** **\*\***"One who sees Gai Aroch Zeh Kivshan HaEsh... is mevarech Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam

**Halachah: Miracle for Tzaddikim (continued)**

**The Rambam's Words:** "One who sees Gai Aroch Zeh Kivshan HaEsh... is mevarech Baruch Atah Hashem

**Elokeinu Melech HaOlam she'asah nes latzaddikim bamakom hazeh."**

**Explanation:** Whoever sees the place where Chananyah, Mishael and Azaryah were thrown into the fiery furnace, makes a berachah.

**Chiddushim:**

1. **Three categories of miracles:** (a) Miracle for the many (Klal Yisrael), (b) Miracle for an individual (private), (c) Miracle for tzaddikim — not for Klal Yisrael, but also not just private, rather something that is relevant for Klal Yisrael through what is written in the pesukim.

2. **What does "latzaddikim" mean?** The Rosh is brought that "latzaddikim" has to do with **kiddush Hashem** — the tzaddikim were moser nefesh not to bow to the idol, and therefore the Almighty created the miracle.

3. **"Bamakom hazeh"** — specifically at the specific place, not anywhere one sees a deep valley.

4. **[Digression: Why did we stop making holy places?]** In Tanach after a miracle one still made a monument, a korban, a place. This is only when Jews are in control of a place — in Eretz Yisrael. But **in exile** we never made any places. The only thing that Jews are in control of in exile is their **daily order/calendar** — therefore we began making special days (like Megillat Ta'anit). **But** the lion's den in Bavel is an exception — "a place where miracles were done" is not a cheftza of kedushah, but a din in berachot.

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**Halachah: Berachah on a Place of Avodah Zarah — "Shenatan Erech Apayim Le'Ovrei Retzono"**

**The Rambam's Words:** "One who sees a place where avodah zarah was worshipped, is mevarech Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam shenatan erech apayim le'ovrei retzono."

**Explanation:** Whoever sees a place where avodah zarah was worshipped, makes a berachah that the Almighty is erech apayim (long-suffering) to those who transgress His will.

**Chiddushim:**

1. **Erech apayim — lashon explanation:** "Erech apayim" literally means **long breath** — the opposite of "charon af" where the breath becomes shorter. When a person is angry, if he breathes in long, it calms him.

2. **The place of avodah zarah as a challenge to emunah:** When a person comes to a place of avodah zarah, it occurs to him "lamah zeh harasha v'tov lo?" — why doesn't the Almighty punish on the spot? The berachah is an answer — the Almighty is erech apayim. This is a chizuk emunah.

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**Halachah: Berachah on a Place Where Avodah Zarah Was Uprooted**

**The Rambam's Words:**

When one sees a place where avodah zarah was uprooted — in Eretz Yisrael one says "**Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam she'akar avodah zarah me'artzeinu**", and in chutz la'aretz "**she'akar avodah zarah min hamakom hazeh**". With both one says: "**keshem she'akarta min hamakom hazeh kach ta'akor mikol hamkomot v'tashiv lev ovdeihem le'ovdecha**."

**Explanation:** When one sees a place where avodah zarah once was and was removed, one makes a berachah with a tefillah that avodah zarah should be uprooted everywhere.

**Chiddushim:**

1. **What does "ne'ekar" mean:** There is a discussion whether Jews came to uproot it (which would perhaps also be a Birkat HaMitzvot), whether it naturally broke down, or whether the worshippers themselves nullified it. The lashon "ne'ekar" (passive) indicates that it's not necessarily through Jews' active action.

2. **"V'tashiv lev ovdeihem le'ovdecha" — a remarkable tefillah:** One doesn't ask that the worshippers of avodah zarah should die ("meherah yikaretu" one says only about minim, Jewish heretics), but one asks that their hearts should turn to serve the Almighty. A tefillah for teshuvah of worshippers of avodah zarah, not for their destruction.

3. **[Digression: Reaction to seeing a beautiful church]:** When seeing a beautiful church (like in the Vatican) — the minhag is to say "sheketz teshaktzenu". But a higher level is to see in it the Almighty's middat erech apayim — "if for those who transgress His will it's like this, for those who do His will kal vachomer." The place shows orech apo shel HaKadosh Baruch Hu — that the Almighty lets even those who transgress His will have such beautiful buildings. This is "much nicer" than just spitting.

4. **Transformation of a place of avodah zarah:** When one takes a church and makes it into a beit midrash, this is also a form of "ne'ekar avodah zarah." This fits with "v'tashiv lev ovdeihem" — that the actual will of people to serve should be used correctly.

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**Halachah: Berachah on Seeing Jewish Homes in Settlement — "Matziv Gevul Almanah"**

**The Rambam's Words: "One who sees Jewish homes in their settlement — is mevarech Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam matziv gevul almanah."**

**Explanation:** When one sees Jewish settlements where Jews live and flourish, one makes a berachah that the Almighty establishes the borders of the "widow" (Klal Yisrael).

**Chiddushim:**

1. **Not only Eretz Yisrael:** The Rambam doesn't say that this is only in Eretz Yisrael — even in chutz la'aretz, like Monroe or Lakewood, one makes the berachah when one sees a flourishing Jewish community.

2. **"Almanah" — Klal Yisrael's state:** The source is from Mishlei "yatziv gevulot almanah." Klal Yisrael is compared to a widow — exiled from Yerushalayim, like in "Nachem" where Tzion cries "ke'almanah bli baneha." The Almighty restores her borders.

3. **The meaning of "almanah" — she is still a widow:** Klal Yisrael is still a widow — she hasn't gotten back her husband (the complete redemption). The Almighty helps her "in the meantime." But it is also said that "matziv gevul almanah" can also mean that a widow remarries.

4. **Why doesn't the world know about this berachah:** The world knows about berachot at the cemetery because one puts up a sign there. But "matziv gevul almanah" no one has put up any sign.

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**Halachah: Berachah on Seeing Jewish Homes in Ruin — "Dayan HaEmet"**

**The Rambam's Words: "One who sees Jewish homes in ruin — is mevarech Baruch Dayan HaEmet."**

**Explanation:** When one sees ruined Jewish towns (like in Europe after the destruction), one makes "Baruch Dayan HaEmet."

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**Halachah: Berachah on Seeing Jewish Graves**

**The Rambam's Words: "One who sees Jewish graves — is mevarech Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam asher yatzar etchem badin."**

**Explanation:** When seeing Jewish graves one says a berachah that acknowledges the Almighty's judgment — He created them with judgment, He caused them to die with judgment, and He will resurrect them with judgment (techiyat hameitim). "Baruch Atah Hashem Mechayeh HaMeitim."

**Chiddushim:**

1. **"Yatzar etchem" — lashon nochach to the dead:** Why does one say "etchem" (to you) — one is speaking to the Almighty ("Baruch Atah Hashem"), not to the dead? The answer: Every berachah begins with nochach ("Atah") and ends with nistar, and one has no problem with that.

2. **[Digression: Speaking to the dead]:** The fact that Chazal instituted a berachah with lashon nochach to the dead ("etchem") is a proof that one can indeed speak to the dead — against those who say one may not. The halachah of "lo'eg larash" (one doesn't go with tzitzit by graves, one doesn't daven there) also shows that the dead hear and feel — one must have respect for them.

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**Halachah: HaRo'eh Shishim Ribo Bnei Adam K'Echad**

**The Rambam's Words: "One who sees six hundred thousand people at once — if they are non-Jews he says 'boshu imchem me'od chafrah yoladetchem'; if they are Jews — 'Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam chacham harazim'."**

**Explanation:** Whoever sees six hundred thousand people at once, one makes a berachah — for Jews "Chacham HaRazim", for non-Jews one says the pasuk "boshu imchem".

**Chiddushim:**

1. **Does one actually need to count 600,000?** Rav Moshe Feinstein has a question whether it must be exactly shishim ribo. "Shishim ribo" simply means "very many people" and not a precise number.

2. **Pasuk "boshu imchem":** The Rabbeinu Menuch explains the leshonot. The pasuk is from Yirmiyahu: "boshu imchem me'od chafrah yoladetchem hineh acharit goyim midbar tziyah va'aravah." An interesting contradiction: earlier with worshippers of avodah zarah (individuals) one said "lo tevoshu v'lo tikalmeu" (a berachah), but when non-Jews gather together in a large mass, one says something negative.

3. **Chacham HaRazim — only in Eretz Yisrael?** A chiddush: in chutz la'aretz all Jews think the same thing, but in Eretz Yisrael every Jew thinks something different — therefore specifically there is relevant "Chacham HaRazim." The Tzelach is mentioned. The Gemara in Berachot explains:

"keshem she'ein partzufei hem shavot kach ein machshevot eihem shavot."

4. **What does "Chacham HaRazim" mean?** The Almighty encompasses all the wisdom of all people — He is the chacham, not that He gave wisdom. This is the difference from "shenatan mechochmato" — there He gave, here He Himself is the chacham. The Gemara also says that on one chacham one can make "Chacham HaRazim" because he is as wise as six hundred thousand people.

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**Halachah: HaRo'eh Chachmei Yisrael / Chachmei Umot HaOlam**

**The Rambam's Words: Chachmei Yisrael — "shenatan mechochmato lirei'av"; chachmei umot ha'olam — "shenatan mechochmato levasar vadam".**

**Chiddushim:**

1. **"Lirei'av" vs. "levasar vadam":** A Jew is not just "basar vadam", he is from the Almighty's yerei'av. Even a Jewish doctor who is not religious, one makes "lirei'av" because he is a part of Klal Yisrael who are yerei'av — it doesn't go on the specific person but on the klal.

2. **Nusach difference — "shechalak" vs. "shenatan":** In the Gemara it says for yerei'av "shechalak mechochmato" and for umot ha'olam "shenatan mechochmato", but the Rambam brings both with "shenatan" — he doesn't make the distinction.

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**Halachah: Malchei Yisrael / Malchei Umot HaOlam**

**The Rambam's Words: Malchei umot ha'olam — "shenatan mikevodo levasar vadam"; malchei Yisrael — "shenatan mikevodo lirei'av".**

**Chiddushim:**

- **What does "kavod" mean for a king?** In pesukim it always says "melech hakavod" — a king is expressed with kavod, not with koach. "Kavod" is a broader thing — it's the acknowledgment of his might, not just an honor or honors. In the Rema it says "kavod ugevurah".

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**Halachah: HaRo'eh Et HaKushi / Beriyot Meshunot — "Meshaneh HaBeriyot"**

**The Rambam's Words: "One who sees a Kushi, a Lavkan, or one unusual in the form of his face or limbs — is mevarech 'Meshaneh HaBeriyot'." Also: blind person, amputee, one with boils, and vitiligo. Also: elephant, large monkey, small monkey.**

**Explanation:** When one sees people or animals that look different from what one is accustomed to, one makes "Meshaneh HaBeriyot."

**Chiddushim:**

1. **It's bidirectional:** The Rambam brings Kushi (black) and Lavkan (white) together — a person from a white region who sees a black person, or a person from a black region (for example Yemenite Jews) who sees for the first time a white European — both make the same berachah. It's relative to what the person is accustomed to.

2. **What does "meshaneh" mean?** Not that the Almighty took a "normal" one and changed him, but He created a broad

world with different types of people — "borei minei beriyot meshunot", similar to "borei nefashot rabot vechesoranan."

3. **"Behakanim" — what does this mean?** Not just freckles, but something more serious — possibly people with white pigment (vitiligo), or a type of tzara'at. It must be something that is a severe, sad thing.

4. **"Mimei iman" — what berachah?** When the defect is from birth, one only makes "Meshaneh HaBeriyot" (not "Dayan HaEmet"). The reasoning: when someone is born with the defect, he doesn't feel as sad as someone who got it later.

5. **Animals:** The monkey is interesting because he looks almost like a person — "the only animal that looks normal." The others (elephant, giraffe) look very different from regular animals.

6. **General principle of birchot hare'iyah:** "Anything that catches your attention" — everything that catches a person's attention, he must bring to the Almighty through a berachah. Chazal use every opportunity. "A Jew's attention is a very precious thing."

7. **[Digression: Brisker story]** A Brisker picked up a small child and said "Meshaneh HaBeriyot" — and the child became an enemy. "Meshaneh HaBeriyot" doesn't mean that the person is "meshuneh" in a negative sense, but that one goes to a foreign place and sees something new.

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**Halachah: Birkat "Shekachah Lo Be'Olamot" on Beautiful Creatures**

**The Rambam's Words: "One who sees very good and beautiful creatures" — beautiful, healthy people, or "ilanot tovo" — beautiful trees — makes "Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam shekachah lo be'olamo."**

**Explanation:** "Tovot umtukanot" means people who are very healthy, fit, attractive — the opposite of sick/afflicted with boils. It doesn't say "yafot" but "tovot umtukanot."

**Chiddushim:**

1. **Nusach "shekachah lo be'olamo" — a dikduk:** The nusach doesn't give full credit that the Almighty actively made it — one only says "such beautiful things exist in His world." One can be medayek from this nusach (perhaps implying that someone didn't directly make it), though the world didn't agree with the shittah that one can be medayek from nuscha'ot of berachot.

2. **"Beriyot" — not only people:** "Beriyot tovo" can also mean every beautiful creation — a peacock with magnificent feathers, beautiful flowers, and the like.

**[Digression: Critique of the minhag of dragging a truck with a tree]:** One drags around a truck with a tree so that one can make Birkat Hallanot. **Mori v'Rabbi Rav Yechezkel** said that this is "not such a good thing" — because "beriyot tovo v'ilanot tovo" means that a person should not be ashamed when he sees a beautiful person or a beautiful thing, he should make a berachah. It's a **natural reaction**, not a formal ceremony.

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**Halachah: Birkat Ilanot — "Shelo Chiser Be'Olamot Klum"**

**The Rambam's Words: "One who goes out to fields or gardens in the days of Nisan, and sees trees flowering and buds rising — is mevarech Baruch Atah Hashem... shelo chiser be'olamo klum, uvara vo beriyot tovot v'ilanot tovot kedei lehanot bahen bnei adam."**

#### Chiddushim:

1. **The Rambam doesn't say it must be a fruit tree** — also just flowering trees. And he doesn't say it must be specifically the month of Nisan — "bimei Nisan" is an example, but one can also make it in Adar or Iyar.

2. **"Kedei lehanot bahen bnei adam"** — the Almighty made beautiful things specifically for people's pleasure. With a fruit tree the chiddush is that besides the fruit, the Almighty also made that for a few weeks a year the tree should bring forth beautiful flowers.

**[Digression: Berachah on flowers]:** When one buys flowers for Shabbat, or for Shavuot when one puts flowers in the beit midrash — flowers are the only thing one buys specifically for beauty! One should make "shekachah lo be'olamo" on seeing, and "borei minei vesamim" on smelling.

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#### Halachah: Berachah on the Smell of Bread

**The Rambam's Words: "Yesh omrim"** that when one smells bread, one makes "**shenatan rei'ach tov bapat**", and "**yesh omrim**" that one doesn't make it because the smell is not the main thing.

**Chiddush:** What about the smell of chocolate cake — the smell is a pleasure! Apparently according to the Rambam one should make a berachah on bread. Also asked about the smell of meat on the grill.

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#### Halachah: Berachot on Natural Phenomena — Winds, Lightning, Thunder, Earthquakes

**The Rambam's Words: "On strong winds", "on lightning", "on thunder", "on any air in which one hears great thunder"** — one makes "**shekocho ugevurato malei olam**". Also: "**earthquakes**", "**meteors**", "**comets**".

**Explanation:** On all these phenomena one makes "shekocho ugevurato malei olam."

#### Chiddushim:

1. **What are the "strong noises"?** Not only thunder, but also "noise of large animals" (one hears the wheels working hard), or a type of strong wind that makes noise.

2. **"Ed shebishchakim" — meteors:** The Rambam says that a "shooting star" is not really a star — it's only "ed" (a type of air/vapor) shebishchakim, a balloon of air or gas that flies from the stars. Also comets ("kochav sheyesh lo zanav") the Rambam held that it's such an "ed", not a real star.

3. **Practical note — wind:** One teaches children that on thunder one makes a berachah, but one doesn't know that on a great wind one makes the **same berachah** — "shekocho ugevurato malei olam."

4. **Personal story:** A few weeks ago there was an earthquake in the middle of the night, "it felt like the whole world was ending" — and one made "shekocho ugevurato malei olam" without any doubt.

**Two Berachot: "Shekocho Ugevurato Malei Olam" vs. "Oseh Ma'aseh Bereishit"**

**The Rambam says that one can make either "shekocho ugevurato malei olam" or "oseh ma'aseh bereishit", or both.**

#### Chiddushim:

1. **Difference between the two berachot:** "Shekocho ugevurato malei olam" goes on the **fear** — one is impressed by the might. "Oseh ma'aseh bereishit" goes on what one is a **chacham** and understands how nature works — he recognizes the creation mechanism.

2. **A deeper difference:** "Shekocho ugevurato malei olam" declares that the Almighty **is acting now** — He is active in the present. "Oseh ma'aseh bereishit" means that the Almighty **built into creation** that this should happen. But he says "**oseh** ma'aseh bereishit" (present tense, not past) — also this means that the Almighty does it in the present.

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#### Halachah: Berachah on Mountains, Hills, Deserts, Seas, Rivers

**The Rambam's Words: "On mountains and hills and deserts and seas and rivers"** — if one sees them **after thirty days**, one is mevarech "**oseh bereishit**".

#### Chiddushim:

1. **Lashon "al" instead of "haro'eh":** The Rambam says "al heharim" — not "haro'eh harim."

2. **Thirty days:** If one lives among mountains, he is not impressed every day, therefore he only makes a berachah after 30 days.

#### Berachah on the Great Sea

**"HaRo'eh et HaYam HaGadol"** — is mevarech "**oseh et hayam hagadol**", also from thirty days to thirty days.

**Chiddush:** "Yam hagadol" can mean any great sea — an ocean (Atlantic, Pacific, Mediterranean), not a lake.

#### Question: 30 Days for Other Berachot

The Rambam doesn't say clearly which berachot require 30 days and which don't. **Reasoning:** All these berachot are based on a certain **being impressed**. Thunder — even twice in a day one is still impressed. But a sea in one's "backyard" — it's no longer interesting. It's **according to the matter**.

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#### Halachah: Berachah on a Rainbow

**The Rambam's Words: "One who sees a rainbow is mevarech: Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam zocher habit v'ne'eman bivrito v'kayam bema'amaro."**

**Explanation:** The Almighty remembers the covenant with Noah after the flood — "et kashti natati be'anan."

#### Chiddushim:

- **Three leshonot:** "Zocher habit" — He remembers; "ne'eman bivrito" — He is faithful; "v'kayam bema'amaro" — He fulfills what He said. The Gemara Berachot 59 says that one was accustomed to say all three.

- **"Zocher habit" in Zichronot:** This is also said in Zichronot on Yom Kippur/Yovel.

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#### Halachah: Birkat Kiddush Levanah

**The Rambam's Words: "One who sees the moon in its renewal is mevarech: Baruch Atah Hashem... asher bema'amaro bara shechakimim, v'ruach piv kol tzeva'am, v'chok uzman natan lahem shelo yeshanu et tafkidam, sesim usemechim la'asot retzon konam, po'alei emet shepe'ulatam emet, v'lalevanah amar shetitchadesh ateret tiferet la'amusei vaten, she'atidin lehitchadesh kamotah ul'fa'er leyotzram al kol kevod malchuto."**

**Explanation:** When one sees the new moon one makes a berachah. The word "chodesh" is from the lashon "chiddush" — a new moon.

#### **Chiddushim:**

1. **"Bema'amaro bara shechakimim":** "Be'asarah ma'amarot nivra ha'olam" — He created the heavens with His word. "V'ruach piv kol tzeva'am" — another way to say with His word.

2. **"V'chok uzman natan lahem shelo yeshanu et tafkidam":** The Almighty clearly told the sun it should rise and set every 12 hours, and the moon once every thirty days — and they always follow.

3. **"Sesim usemechim la'asot retzon konam":** Every time the moon comes out, it rejoices again to follow. **How do we know it does it with simchah?** Because it has **not been late** — if it were like a person, it would arrive an hour late.

4. **"Po'alei emet" — beings with nefesh: We say "po'el emet"** (singular) which goes on the Almighty. But **the Rambam's nusach is "po'alei emet"** (plural) — which goes on **the heavenly hosts themselves**, "shepe'ulatam emet". This shows that **the Rambam took them as beings with nefesh** — the heavenly bodies have a nefesh, they are sesim usemechim, they are po'alei emet.

5. **"Ateret tiferet la'amusei vaten":** The Almighty told the moon that it should renew itself every month — to be a beauty for the Jews. "Amusei vaten" literally means people whose mother carried them, but here it seems like a metaphor — the Almighty took/carried them.

6. **"She'atidin lehitchadesh kamotah":** The Jews will also renew themselves just like the moon — from darkness to light. **The entire purpose** of the moon renewing itself every month is for an "ateret tiferet" — a sign for the Jews.

7. **"Ul'fa'er leyotzram al kol kevod malchuto":** The one davening at Kiddush Levanah thinks in — just like the moon is sas v'same'ach la'asot retzon kono, so are Jews also sesim usemechim la'asot retzon konam.

8. **Practical chiddush:** One who conducts himself to wait with Kiddush Levanah until it's said with the community, must be careful not to look at the moon until then — because if he looks and is impressed, he already becomes obligated in the berachah. **The entire berachah is on the being impressed.** The reason why one does it with the community: we are no longer impressed on our own — the only way is through a takanah that a minyan goes out together.

9. **Rema: Standing:** "Kol hamevarech al hachodesh bizmanah ke'ilu mekabel penei haShechinah." According to the simple meaning "mekabel penei haShechinah" means that one recognizes the renewal of creation every month. A pleasant note: most people don't know why one stands at

Kiddush Levanah — when asked, they answer "good shidduchim for the children."

10. **Rema: Time:** "If he didn't make a berachah on it the first night, he has until sixteen days in the month" — until the moon becomes completely full. After that one can no longer say "mechadesh" because it's no longer a chiddush.

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#### **Halachah: Birkat HaChamah — 28 Year Cycle**

**Rema's Words: "One who sees the sun on the day of tekufat Nisan of the beginning of the cycle of twenty-eight"** — makes Oseh Ma'aseh Bereishit.

**Explanation:** The sun has a 28-year cycle when tekufat Nisan falls on the same point in the week as at the creation of the world.

#### **Chiddushim — detailed explanation of the calculation:**

- The sun travels around a whole year (approximately 365 days with some hours). One divides this into 4 tekufot, each approximately 90 days. Every year tekufat Nisan moves by a quarter day. At the creation of the world the sun was created **on the fourth day in the morning** (Wednesday — "nitlu hame'orot"). A week has 7 days × 4 quarters = 28 parts. Therefore it takes 28 years until tekufat Nisan falls again on the fourth day in the morning.

- **It's not a real cycle of the sun** — it's only a cycle that the tekufah begins at the same time in the week.

**Other stars:** The Rambam brings that **the same berachah** is made when **other stars** (the other 5 of the 7 planets) return to **the beginning of mazal taleh** — the starting point of the sky. **Today we don't know what all these things are** — only Birkat HaChamah has remained with us.

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#### **Halachah: Seeing Non-Jewish Homes in Settlement / in Ruin / Non-Jewish Graves**

**The Rambam's Words:** In settlement — **"beit ge'im yisach Hashem"**; in ruin — (not mentioned); non-Jewish graves — **"boshu imchem me'od"** (Yirmiyahu).

#### **Chiddushim:**

1. **It's not a berachah with shem umalchut** — just a pasuk. This fits with what the Gemara says that not everything is berachot — it's tefillot, pesukim, matters.

2. **A question:** What does "batei ovdei kochavim" mean? Does it mean just non-Jews, or specifically wicked ones? Because the pasuk says **"beit ge'im"** — bad people. Perhaps it means batei ovdei kochavim in Er

#### **Halachah: Seeing Non-Jewish Homes in Settlement / in Ruin / Non-Jewish Graves (continued)**

#### **Chiddushim (continued):**

2. **A question:** What does "batei ovdei kochavim" mean? Does it mean just non-Jews, or specifically wicked ones? Because the pasuk says **"beit ge'im"** — bad people. Perhaps it means batei ovdei kochavim in Eretz Yisrael. It remains an open question.

3. **At graves:** When they live one says "boshu imchem chafrah yoladetchem", and after their death one says "boshu imchem me'od" — a similar but different pasuk.

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**Halachah: HaNichnas LeMerchatz / Hakaza Dam**

**The Rambam's Words:** "One who enters a bathhouse says yehi ratzon shetatzileini mizeh v'kayotze bazeh, shelo yera'eh li davar kikkalah v'avon, v'im yera'eh li tehei mitati kaparah lechol avonotai. When he exits he says modeh ani lefanecha shelo shaltani min ha'or. One who enters to let blood says yehi ratzon sheyehei esek zeh li lirefu'ah ki rofei chinam atah. When he exits he says baruch rofei cholim."

**Explanation:** The Rambam moves to a new category — requests/tefillot for specific situations.

**Chiddushim:**

- A bathhouse was then a place of danger — so hot that there was literally a danger of fire. "The FDA wouldn't have allowed it."

- With bloodletting it says "ki rofei chinam atah" — the Almighty heals for free. When exiting it says "baruch rofei cholim." There is a machloket hagirsat — "rofei cholim" or "rofei chayim."

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**Halachah: HaHolech Limdod Et Gorno — Tefillat Shav**

**The Rambam's Words:** "One who goes to measure his grain pile says yehi ratzon shetishlach berachah bema'aseh yadai. He began to measure and says baruch hashole'ach berachah bakeri hazeh. But if he measured and afterwards asked for mercy that there should be a se'ah in it — this is tefillat shav."

**Explanation:** Before measuring one may ask for berachah. After measuring to ask that there should be more — this is tefillat shav.

**Chiddushim:**

1. **Why is "limdod" not yet tefillat shav?** While measuring something can still happen — it can be lost, it might not turn out well. "Limdod is a stage when it can still happen." But after measuring it's already finished.

2. **The main principle of tefillat shav:** Tefillah goes on the reality of the world, not on miracles. "Tefillah doesn't go on miracles, tefillah goes on the reality of the world." One may not rely on miracles.

3. **Difference between berachah and bakasha:** A berachah (baruch hashole'ach berachah, or Dayan HaEmet) one can say on what is. But a **request** that it should become more after counting — that is tefillat shav.

**4. Great discussion: May a critically ill person pray for his life?**

- **Question:** If tefillat shav means that one doesn't ask for things that have already happened — what about a person who has an illness where 99% die?

- **Answer/distinction:** A person who is fighting for his life — this is not tefillat shav, because "even if a sharp sword is placed on a person's neck, he should not despair of mercy."

- **The main distinction:** The fundamental distinction is between **changing the order of the world** (= tefillat shav) and **something that can still happen in the natural way** (= legitimate tefillah). With a sick person — even with very small chances — being healed is still within the order of the world. But with a grain pile that one has already measured — that it should grow afterwards is literally against nature.

- **Practical point:** One may not tell a sick person he should not pray — this is also a matter of bein adam lachaveiro.

5. **The example of male/female:** When his wife is already pregnant and he asks that it should be a male child — this is also tefillat shav. The Almighty can very easily change a male to a female — with Dinah it already happened. But — He doesn't do such things almost ever. Tefillat shav is not because the Almighty \*cannot\*, but because He \*does not\* do such things generally.

6. **Nature as a boundary for tefillah:** Nature determines which tefillah one should pray. When something is already determined in the natural way, one doesn't ask for it.

7. **Difference between asking for the future vs. changing the past:** When one hears ambulances, one cannot ask "it shouldn't be mine" (already happened), but one can indeed ask "yehi ratzon that the sick person should have a complete recovery" (future). The example of a headache: asking that it should go away — legitimate. Asking that also the last half hour of the headache should go away — tefillat shav.

8. **Goseis vs. not goseis:** If it's not a goseis, it means there is still a possibility in the natural way. "Still a chance" means: he shouldn't die now, he should live until a doctor comes with perhaps a breakthrough. The world is full of "miracles" — doctors themselves say "this is a miracle", which means against statistics. But something that already happened in the past one cannot change.

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**Halachah: HaNichnas LeBeit HaMidrash**

**The Rambam's Words:** "Hareini nichnas lebeit hamidrash — yehi ratzon milfanecha Hashem Eloka' shelo echashel bidvar halachah, shelo omar al tamei tahor v'al tahor tamei, v'al mutar asur v'al asur mutar" — and also "v'yismechu bi chaverai" and "al yikashlu chaverai bidvar halachah v'esmach bahem."

**Explanation:** When one enters the beit midrash, one asks that one should not stumble in halachah, and that the friends should rejoice with him.

**Chiddushim:**

1. **"Shelo echashel bidvar halachah" — psak or learning?** "Tamei tahor, mutar asur" sounds like he's going to pasken. But the conclusion is that it means in the beit midrash — he shouldn't accept false traditions, he shouldn't repeat false things in the sugya.

2. **"V'yismechu bi chaverai":** He asks that he shouldn't make a mistake that the world laughs at him. On the contrary, his learning should be accepted by his friends.

3. **"Al yikashlu chaverai bidvar halachah v'esmach bahem" — double tefillah:** In the beit midrash it boils, people argue, people compete. The tefillah asks for two things: (a) that the friends shouldn't stumble, and (b) even if they do stumble, he shouldn't rejoice from it. Both are included.

4. **Parallel to bathhouse:** Just as in the bathhouse it happens that one gets burned (physical danger), in the beit midrash it happens that one gets embarrassed (spiritual danger). This is the "danger" of the beit midrash that one must pray about.

5. **[Digression: Competition in learning vs. business]:** One who a whole day in the beit midrash his "fun" was not

simchat haTorah but simchah that the friend stumbled — he goes exactly like "yoshvei keranot." The merchant rejoices that he has more money than the friend; the learner who rejoices that he "won" an argument — it's the same. Therefore one needs the tefillah "v'esmach bahem" — that my simchah should be a simchah of Torah, not of competition.

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### Halachah: Birkat Hoda'ah When Leaving Beit HaMidrash

**The Rambam's Words:** "Modim anachnu lecha Hashem Elokeinu shessamta chelki miyoshvei beit hamidrash v'lo samta chelki miyoshvei keranot."

**Explanation:** One thanks the Almighty that my portion in life is among those who sit in the beit midrash, not among those who sit at the corners of the street.

#### Chiddushim:

1. **"Chelki" — what does this mean?** "Chelki" means literally: my job, my portion in life, my status, my place where I spend my time.
2. **"Yoshvei keranot" — two meanings:** (a) Idlers — people who sit at the corners of the street and waste time. (b) Merchants — people who are engaged in business, like the pasuk "sichi bi yoshvei sha'ar unginot shotei shechar." Both meanings are also mentioned in Hilchot Kriat HaTorah. **"Yoshvei keranot" doesn't mean workers who go to work** — the Jew who leaves the beit midrash does go to work. "Yoshvei keranot" means people who **don't work** — they waste time instead of learning.
3. **"She'ani mashkim v'hem mashkimim":** Both get up early, both work hard — "ani ameil v'hem ameilim." The difference: "ani ameil umekabel sachar, v'hem ameilim v'ainam mekablum sachar." One who comes to kollel at eleven o'clock cannot say "ani mashkim" — one must actually get up early to say this.
4. **"Ani ratz lechayei ha'olam haba, v'hem ratzim leve'er shachat":** "Be'er shachat" means Gehinnom? The Rambam at the end of Hilchot Teshuvah explained that "be'er shachat" means loss of the soul. The explanation: it could be that people who have no da'at, cannot have a portion in the World to Come — their soul is lost.

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### Halachah: HaNichnas LeKerach

**The Rambam's Words:** "One who enters a city — yehi ratzon milfanecha Hashem Elokeinu shetachnisei'ni लेकरach zeh leshalom", and when he enters beshalom he says "modeh ani lefanecha Hashem Elokeinu shehichnastani", when he seeks to leave he asks "shetotzi'eini mikerach zeh leshalom", and when he exits beshalom he says a longer thanksgiving: "modeh ani lefanecha... shehotzeitani mikerach zeh leshalom, ucheshem shehotzeitani leshalom ken toligheni leshalom v'tismecheni leshalom v'tatz'ideni leshalom v'tatzileni mikaf oyev v'orev baderech."

**Explanation:** At every stage of traveling to a new city — entering, being there, leaving — there is both a request beforehand and a thanksgiving afterwards.

#### Chiddushim:

1. **"Kerach" doesn't mean one's own city**, but a new city where he travels to — for business, for market, or to make

friends. This is not the same as Tefillat HaDerech which goes on the road itself — here we speak specifically about the **entry into the city** itself.

2. **Entering a city was a "difficult thing"** — one had to go through bathhouses, various difficulties — therefore the entry itself is already something that requires tefillah.

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### Klalo Shel Davar — The General Rule of Tefillah and Hoda'ah

**The Rambam's Words:** "Klalo shel davar, le'olam yitz'ak adam al he'atid lavo, vivakesh rachamim, v'yitein hoda'ah al she'avar, v'yodeh vishabach kefi kocho."

**Explanation:** The general rule is: a person should always cry out/ask for what is coming, and thank for what has already been.

#### Chiddushim:

1. **"Kefi kocho" — one's own language:** "Kefi kocho" means that one can use **one's own language** for the thanksgiving, not only the prescribed nusach. This fits with what the Aruch HaShulchan also said. Many of the berachot are such "suggestions" and one can use one's own words.
2. **Two sides of every event:** With **the same event** one should both cry out (bakasha) and thank (hoda'ah) — as one sees clearly with kerach, where at every stage there is both bakasha and hoda'ah. One can also say: "Creator, You have helped me until now — I ask You, help me further."
3. **The rule as an expansion:** The "klalo shel davar" doesn't mean only the specific cases that the Gemara enumerated (beit midrash, bathhouse, kerach), but **thousands of other things** in life. With every event one should seek to thank the Almighty, even if it's not a formal berachah.
4. **Hoda'ah vs. tze'akah — distinction:** The Rambam speaks here specifically about **hoda'ah al she'avar** (thanking for the past), not about tze'akah al lehaba (asking for the future). Mixing the two — being modeh for the future or crying out for the past — is a confusion.

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### Kol HaMarbeh Lehodot Et Hashem

**The Rambam's Words:** "Kol hamarbeh lehodot et Hashem uleshabe'ach tamid — harei zeh meshubach."

**Explanation:** Whoever thanks the Almighty more is praiseworthy.

#### Chiddushim:

1. **No contradiction to tefillat shav:** One learned earlier about tefillat shav and one can be a bit scared of saying too much. But the Rambam says that tefillat shav is a **small detail**, and the **bigger picture** is that the more one thanks the Almighty the better.
2. **Why "hodot" and not "litz'ok"?** The lashon "meshubach" fits only to hoda'ah — because he praises (meshabbe'ach) he himself is praiseworthy (meshubach). With tze'akah one couldn't say such a lashon. The simple meaning is that "meshubach" means **ra'ui la'asot ken** — it is proper according to halachah.

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### KeShem SheMevarech Al HaRa'ah Kach Mevarech Al HaTovah — Brief Reminder

**Chiddush:** The Rambam warned that "keshem shemevarech al hara'ah kach mevarech al hatovah" means that **regarding one matter** there must be "kach" — that is **with a full heart**

— but the **nusach** (the words of the berachah) must be **different**. That is, the equality is in the intention and heartfelt feeling, not in the text.

## Full Transcript

### Laws of Blessings Chapter 10 – Other Blessings: Tefilat HaDerech, Shehecheyanu, and HaTov VeHaMeitiv

#### Introduction: Tefilat HaDerech and Responsibility When Driving

We are learning Hilchot Berachot Chapter 10. Hilchot Berachot Chapter 10.

Before we go to the shiur, I wanted to say something important. First of all, we are in the middle of a campaign for the beit midrash where we learn these shiurim, Beit Midrash Ein LaMachshava. I will return to this.

But I wanted to say this: Today, Friday, erev Shabbat Kodesh Parashat Beha'alotcha, there were three accidents in Boro Park, and in one of them a bachur was very seriously injured. The Ribbono Shel Olam should send him a refuah sheleimah, and we should be mitpalel for him.

In this chapter we learn the tefillah of Tefilat HaDerech. The Rambam says, the Rambam rules – we will soon learn when we learn the shiur inside, it's a beautiful sugya that he discusses there about Tefilat HaDerech, what the definition is – but we say there, we ask the Ribbono Shel Olam to save us "mikaf kol oyeve ve'orev baderech," or in our nusach we say "oyev ve'orev velistim vechayot ra'ot."

I once was driving, and many times I also stumble with this, driving faster than the law and so on, and I caught myself that I am the chayot ra'ot from whom I am praying the Ribbono Shel Olam should save me. A terrible thing when I realized it. Because a person is the greatest danger to himself, because when a person, if chas veshalom someone hits someone, he is unfortunate for his life. And who are the chayot ra'ot here? From whom must one be warned here? The Ribbono Shel Olam should save you from yourself. It's a terrible thing.

So, if we take in more Tefilat HaDerech in our lives, besides that we will simply make more berachot and have the protection of asking the Ribbono Shel Olam and thanking the Ribbono Shel Olam, it will also constantly remind us of the simple thing of what responsibility we have when we sit at the wheel, and that we absolutely don't want to be the chayot ra'ot against whom we are praying. The Ribbono Shel Olam should protect all Jews.

Back to our campaign. Baruch Hashem, we learn the shiurim every day. Very beautiful shiurim, a very unique shiur. We learn a whole perek of Rambam every day. The limud HaRambam is very geshmak, we can always jump into the sugya. It's not simple like we're in the middle of a long pilpul, it's very hard to attach oneself to a Daf Yomi shiur just like that. But Rambam, every perek that one learns is a holy Torah in itself, and we learn it berov chaverim, a very geshmak shiur. Share it with others.

Besides this, my friend and my partner R' Yitzchak puts out many other shiurei Torah in all areas of Torah. These days he is making a campaign for his beit midrash, that he should be able to continue and expand its borders, yagdil Torah ve'yadir.

I want to mention and praise the distinguished nedvanim, the great lovers and supporters of Torah, who are the shemen hatov that absorbs into itself all the good spices from all the chachamim and Torah scholars with whom he learns together, as we learned in the previous perek of the Rambam. R' Yoel, and I invite everyone to be nichnas lachem venosei besamim, to enter into the good fragrance of all the rivers bursting forth with Torah that R' Yitzchak does, and one should become part of the campaign, become partners and co-learners, ve'ashrei chelkechem.

#### Halacha 1: The Category of "Berachot Acherot"

The Rambam says, now. Besides what we have learned about berachot, the Rambam has already taught us Birkat HaMazon, Birkat HaPeirot, other berachot, and things that don't have an opening and closing the Chachamim also established. More, there are still other berachot, meaning more berachot literally, as we say "Baruch Atah Hashem." There are also, he says with another three, there are formulations of tefillah or formulations of berachah that don't exactly begin with "Baruch" and end with "Baruch," as we will see in this chapter. For example, actually Tefilat HaDerech, which we begin, at least our nusach we begin "Yehi ratzon milfanecha," it ends however with "Baruch." We end, and the Rambam doesn't end. And other things, like when entering the beit midrash one says, it's not a... It's a berachah, but it doesn't have the formula of Shem uMalchut. Some don't have Shem uMalchut, some however are not in the form of a berachah.

So the Chachamim established **derech shevach vehodaah laKadosh Baruch Hu**.

#### What Does "Derech Shevach VeHodaah" Mean?

What do the words "derech shevach vehodaah laKadosh Baruch Hu" mean? **"Like the berachot of tefillah that we have already written, and they are these."** Apparently what does one need to have in the formula of Birkat HaTefillah? That the berachot... Let's say this, the Rambam has already several times, he wants to say this, let's try to say, one needs to write precisely the formula, but at least what he says is: We have already learned two, three, maybe four times, that the Anshei Knesset HaGedolah established for Israel berachot and tefilot, right? They made tefilot, we call them tefilot, we call them Tefilot Shemoneh Esrei, that is also berachot. We must remember, most things that the Anshei Knesset HaGedolah made go with the formula of berachah, "Baruch Atah Hashem," Shemoneh Esrei, nineteen eighteen, is seven, Birchot Kriat Shema, and other berachot, Kiddush, Havdalah, Birchot HaNehenin, Birkat HaMazon, these are all things that the Rambam says that the Anshei Knesset HaGedolah established these sorts of things.

Now, besides this, now the Rambam adds, he goes besides this, the Chachamim, he doesn't say here Anshei Knesset HaGedolah, I don't know why, it's interesting, it could be that it was later Chachamim, I don't know, established more things.

Now, there is Birkat HaMazon which is a mitzvah in itself, a mitzvah d'Oraita Birkat HaMazon, and he says Birchot HaNehenin is an obligation in itself, one may not have benefit from the world without a berachah. Now there are more berachot that are not Birkat HaNehenin, not Birkat HaMitzvot, it's not an issur hana'ah, it's not an obligation, one may not buy a new thing without saying Shehecheyanu. It's more similar to tefillah.

I think "like the berachot of tefillah" he simply means, as I already said, that the Anshei Knesset HaGedolah made tefilot, but perhaps he also means that these berachot are more similar to tefillah than they are similar to Birkat HaNehenin, that "derech shevach vehodaah" is not like Birkat HaNehenin which is in order to thank the Creator of the world, blessed is He, which we learned.

According to the first interpretation that it's a thing that on everything one must make the berachah on the fruit, on the food, to sanctify everything as reshut, to sanctify the Ribbono Shel Olam's name on the thing, on these things it's not so strongly relevant, yes? Because it's the whole house, or it's a friend, or it's news, these aren't things that one doesn't now grasp as "derech shevach vehodaah," one thanks the Ribbono Shel Olam, and one doesn't always thank the Ribbono Shel Olam for something. You see when davening we say, the first and last three berachot of Shemoneh Esrei are also berachot. And the berachot need... It's interesting, because I think that all those that he will bring do, all have petichah vechatimah. Those that don't have, the "Yehi ratzon"s, are already more in the form of tefillah.

There is, there is, there is. There is also a leaving the beit midrash which is a hodaah, but there is a tefillah. True, the Rambam doesn't speak about the thing that one should take requests. Berachot of requests, yes, at the end of the perek we will also see berachot of requests. But the point is, what the important thing is, and one must remember this, perhaps we will speak about this more soon, he brings here on the side the Ra'avad, not here on the spot, in other places he argues that all these berachot that we are going to learn are birchot hareshut, not an obligation.

#### **The Shita of the Ra'avad: Birchot HaReshut**

Apparently, the meaning is, people are also today very melazel in all these berachot. Almost no one makes, except for certain ones who make really, Shehecheyanu. Also really there is no reason one shouldn't make with Shem uMalchut on each one. One only conducts oneself that only the close relatives make really with a berachah, but no one else makes. There is really no reason for this.

The reason, the halachic answer that one can conduct oneself this way, is the shita of the Ra'avad and the other Rishonim who argue that it doesn't say in the Mishnah "chayav." It's not simple like with eating without a berachah one transgresses, one is a goy, a Jew may not eat without a berachah. There is no such halachah that a Jew may not put on a new bekesh without a Shehecheyanu. So learn many Rishonim.

#### **Why Don't People Catch the Berachot? – Berachah on an Event, Not on an Object**

When I learned it I thought a bit differently. We spoke earlier about hana'ah that must, about by Birkat HaReach we had this discussion. The things that we are going to see here is mainly a berachah not on a tangible thing, but on a feeling one can say, or a certain state of mind, which is an event. Ah, an event. So

an event is very hard to obligate people, because one makes the berachah on the simchah. For example, seeing one's friend is tremendous for one who becomes besimchah when he sees his friend and it's really a friend. The Ra'avad's interpretation is that it's more good, it's really joy, or the Gemara says there, he is moved every time he sees someone die. Perhaps only when he is moved. Everyone dies people. Let's understand, let's understand. That's one thing. But there is a certain feeling on which one makes the berachah.

So, let me explain. What I wanted to finish exactly at this is, this is what the Rama says that it's "like Birkat HaTefillah." When he says "like Birkat HaTefillah," he switched. That is, there are berachot that are... The reason, I think that the true reason, we don't see that the reason... This is a thing that you say, one doesn't want to come to a doubt. But we see that the reason why people don't catch to make the berachah, it's much less that one conducts oneself or doesn't conduct oneself, it's more that one doesn't catch.

Why doesn't one catch? As we spoke recently by the reach. For some reason, when Havdalah comes and one takes the besamim in hand, one says, ah, borei minei besamim. But you go to your business, or you come home and you buy freshly baked coffee, not baked, a roasted coffee that is roasted, it's properly mugmar, it's properly... You simply don't catch. We are accustomed... We are really set up this way in halachah. There is an eating, then there is also a Birkat HaReach, except if it's exempt from berachah.

Here is the thing, a Jew comes in, you were told that so-and-so died, and you don't catch that chal alecha chovat berachah. And it's true, even according to the Rambam who says that it's an obligation, the Rambam doesn't say that it's reshut, even according to the Rambam who learns that it's really an obligation from the enactment of the Chachamim, it's not simple that now you must be mevarech on the news. No, there is like berachot, there is generally a person goes through a smell, like by Shemoneh Esrei one says tefilot for everything throughout, and the Ribbono Shel Olam made an enactment that in these situations one makes these specific berachot. It's a berachah for the Ribbono Shel Olam.

#### **Against the Emphasis on Feelings: Berachah on a Fact, Not on a Feeling**

About this, I don't agree with what you say and many Acharonim say, that this is a berachah only if one feels, if one doesn't feel besimchah. It's nonsense with noodles. The berachah is... Not chas veshalom nonsense, because great Jews also say this, but we see, and you already know me, I am anti the current emphasis, everything is about the feeling, one feels yes, one feels no. No one asked you if you feel. A simchah is a fact, not a feeling. A Jew died, there is a davar atzuv. One says to the Ribbono Shel Olam, "Dayan HaEmet," we believe that You know what You are doing, that You killed a Jew, and we are not in dispute with You chas veshalom. The same thing by a simchah, we say "Shehecheyanu." It doesn't mean I feel, I don't feel.

#### **Comparison to Birchot HaShachar**

Let me tell you what I think. The berachot are there, very easy to compare to the Birchot HaShachar. When one gets up one says, Malbish Arumim one says. These are all actions that a person does and he thanks for this. And in the middle of the day, what does a person do? He has already finished tying his shoes, but he goes, he meets a friend, he sees a fire, he hears

good things, bad things. All the time he makes berachot. But it doesn't say in the Gemara because these are things, events, sometimes it happens more often, sometimes less.

### **Other Berachot: Bringing the Ribbono Shel Olam Into All Aspects of Life**

#### **Two Approaches in Berachot: Feeling Versus Da'at**

I can say that on things that a person does with his hands, he makes a berachah on the thing that he does. But all day, you know, there are certain, a person comes home, he was twelve hours, he went around, many good events and bad events happened. On what is bad, he will make vows, he will choose the berachah. On what is practical, actions, you can say. But on feelings...

I say, the approach, the one who says only when one feels, is simple on things that really affect you. But R' Yitzchak has a strong point to the contrary. The matter is after all, that one should constantly remember the Ribbono Shel Olam, it should be constantly shevach vehodaah, derech shevach vehodaah. So it's more simple like the interpretation, like every thing that you do, you remember the Ribbono Shel Olam.

You put on shoes, where does the Ribbono Shel Olam come in here? No, you bring in the Ribbono Shel Olam into your life. The Ribbono Shel Olam gave you the strength, the intelligence for shoes, and so that one should be able to make bread from wheat, motzi lechem min ha'aretz. The same thing, when anything happens, you see a friend, it's a simchah, and it can even be according to R' Avraham, these are the things of the Gemara.

Every day, R' Yitzchak is now going to start with his campaign. Every time he will come to someone, he will tell him, "I give you twenty thousand dollars for the campaign." But they should make him a berachah. A HaTov VeHaMeitiv, a Shehecheyanu, a Birkat HaRe'iyah. They should make on a good friend. Even one that one already saw yesterday, one saw him the day before, but now you see that he is your friend. It has now become a recognition. Exactly it became a seeing, it became now a seeing.

But he goes back to the basics, that one should constantly bring in the Ribbono Shel Olam into life. Therefore it doesn't have so much to do with the feeling.

#### **Why People Don't Make Berachot Spontaneously – The Central Question of Da'at**

Also I don't agree that one doesn't feel. As you say, when I eat a piece of kugel, I also don't feel anything. What are you chasing him that he should make a berachah? And what is the question? A person hears the news, he should make a berachah every minute. Okay, and what's wrong? What could be wrong that one should make twenty times a day the berachah? The Rambam ends with this, that one should really make berachot. That's the whole idea. **"A person is obligated to make a berachah on every good and bad news."**

We have a friend, R' Ari Holtzman, he feels very strongly to make Birkat Shehecheyanu, HaTov VeHaMeitiv. When he meets me, he makes a Shehecheyanu with Shem uMalchut. I mean, he comes from Eretz Yisrael, so he makes a lot right after thirty days. "And from where does he have that he should do so?"

I mean, but it can also be a certain matter that many good news and bad news come in, and there isn't the exact moment.

A seeing of a friend really is yes. Baruch Dayan HaEmet yes, when one hears about a close one. But even Baruch Dayan HaEmet one usually says at the funeral, one tears kriah. It's also a question, why does one conduct oneself this way?

I mean, it's very not spontaneous. Because we were taught that kugel obligates a berachah, or eating obligates a berachah. True. It's one of the things why we don't do this spontaneously. Because one must have da'at. It's not spontaneous.

A person receives a bad diagnosis, it should be in his head a Dayan HaEmet. True. But we, one tears kriah, the shamash, it became such a... It's very similar to the Birkat Asher Yatzar that one says in the beit midrash. One doesn't say it because one doesn't want to go out. It's something very strange, and I think it's because one doesn't have any sense.

One must after all have da'at. What does da'at mean? Da'at is an active thing, right? He remembered, "Ah, now the obligation of Dayan HaEmet has fallen, now one must say Dayan HaEmet." It's hard for people. I think that's why this became. It makes a very deep difference.

#### **The Ribbono Shel Olam in a Palace Versus "Bechol Derachecha De'ehu"**

Also, when a person lives with how he constantly brings in the Ribbono Shel Olam in nature, he puts on his shoes and he remembers that he with the Ribbono Shel Olam puts on shoes. He received, he made a good deal, the shidduch is good, yes, the deal went through, he thanks the Ribbono Shel Olam.

#### **Blessing of Shehecheyanu, HaTov VeHaMeitiv, and Dayan HaEmet**

But now, the Ribbono Shel Olam (Master of the Universe) is in the beis hamedrash (study hall). We've finished putting on our shoes, we've finished going to the mikveh (ritual bath), we've finished doing everything, we go into the beis hamedrash, we thank the Ribbono Shel Olam. We've finished working the whole day, busy, we go thank the Ribbono Shel Olam in the beis hamedrash. So, we've taken the Ribbono Shel Olam out of His "bechol derachecha da'eihu vehu yeyasher orchosecha" (in all your ways know Him and He will direct your paths).

#### **Derech Pikudecha (Bnei Yissaschar) – Blessings on More Things**

When one enters a place, one goes, ah, one says a blessing on the good smells. The question is actually, for example, the Derech Pikudecha, the holy grandfather the Bnei Yissaschar, he also speaks about making blessings on other things, such as mitzvas onah (marital relations), or on good weather, on beautiful sights it actually says, one sees the sea etc. A whole thing, that one shouldn't confine the Ribbono Shel Olam to a sanctuary. The Baal Avodah (Master of Service) has the Ribbono Shel Olam in a sanctuary.

This is actually Reb Uri's, Reb Uri of Strelisk's approach, that's why he conducts himself to bring back all these blessings, because one must remember that the Ribbono Shel Olam, when a person goes on a... We spoke about him going likras bo'o melech (to greet the coming king) trip, that there once was a custom, one goes to the zoo or whatever, one makes a blessing on every beautiful thing, oseh ma'aseh bereishis (Who makes the work of Creation), shekocho ugvuraso malei olam (Whose power and might fill the world), meshaneh habrios (Who varies the creatures) etc. Here are the special blessings,

baruch tovos ve'ilanos tovos (blessed are good creatures and good trees).

#### **Critique of the Custom of Dragging a Truck with a Tree**

The same thing, and it's also a spectacle, one remembers, they drag around a truck with a tree so that one can make the blessing. That's not what it means. Because someone made honor of the truck. And I wrote at the time, mori verabbi (my teacher and rabbi) Reb Yechezkel was still alive then, mori verabbi Reb Yechezkel, I asked him, he said it's something not, you know, it's not such a good thing.

But it has to do with the matter, because brios tovos ve'ilanos tovos means that a person shouldn't be embarrassed, he sees a very beautiful person, he shouldn't be embarrassed to make a blessing. He has pleasure, it's so beautiful, he sees a beautiful young man. By us it's become into when one makes, whether one may make a minute after Chodesh Nissan (the month of Nissan), so-and-so makes the blessing.

We've become removed from nature, one must bring the Ribbono Shel Olam into our life. "Bechol derachecha da'eihu vehu yeyasher orchosecha," with this the Rambam (Maimonides) concludes. The Rambam begins and ends with this that one should... In general, if someone is missing for example on Shabbos (Sabbath) one hundred blessings, he should make for himself a solution, and he opens the newspaper and he sees there good news, he makes "HaTov VeHaMeitiv" (Who is good and does good). He sees bad news, he makes "Dayan HaEmes" (the true Judge).

On Shabbos one doesn't read the newspaper, ah? No, because on Shabbos one doesn't make "Baruch Dayan HaEmes," and on Shabbos one may not hear any bad news. There is no joy on Shabbos. Shabbos is yom hanezek (a day of damage). Shabbos is yom hanezek, so one may not read the newspaper. Okay, true, just so, what about pain? Okay, ve'al mah anu omdim (and upon what do we stand)? Already, ve'al mah anu omdim? Let's start three times like this.

#### **Halacha: One Who Builds a New House or Buys New Items — Shehecheyanu**

"Haboneh bayis chadash" (one who builds a new house), someone builds a new house, "**o hakoneh kelim chadashim**" (or buys new items), someone buys new items, a new watch, or just a new car, a new computer, a new iPhone. They've allowed themselves a new phone. Very good.

They've allowed themselves a new phone, but they forgot to tell the world a halacha (Jewish law), that the world conducts itself to upgrade their phone every few years, and when one buys a new phone one is obligated by the rabbis to make a "**Shehecheyanu vekiyemanu vehigi'anu lazman hazeh**" (Who has kept us alive, sustained us, and brought us to this time). The new iPhone has come out. It can even be when someone is waiting for the new one to come out, and when he sees it he can already make the blessing, just like on fruits.

#### **Discussion: The Measure of Joy and the Custom of the World**

Yes, but on everything. There's a lot of dispute about this. He brings down that there's a custom about this. Why in practice?

No, no, the custom is yes to make Shehecheyanu. No, the custom is, for example, we see on Yom Tov (holiday) it's said that at night when it's not certain that he makes

Shehecheyanu, he can make a blessing of Shehecheyanu on the new clothes. One goes in new clothes.

No, no, there's no doubt that the custom is on fruits. But also on new things that one buys, in my opinion, because it's hard to know the measure. Because people go shopping and one keeps bringing new things. Should one make Shehecheyanu every day?

Where does it say there's a measure? It doesn't say. It's enough that there's joy that one makes the blessing. It doesn't say that one doesn't make it. You, have a little patience, you'll look for answers why people avoid. More, more, one is nullifying the custom of the world.

But you see how you say, one uses it even when one has a doubt. You see how easy it is? One has a doubt, what's the cover? One knows that one buys a new shawl. Recently I heard that the Rav should buy a new shawl. A new kappel (skullcap), one can make a certain blessing.

Reb Chaim Kanievsky says that new socks don't count, he says it doesn't apply to him, it's not called a new vessel there. But a new shirt or a new frock coat, certainly one makes a blessing on that.

#### **Halacha: Seeing a Friend — Shehecheyanu and Mechayeh HaMeisim**

One who sees his friend after thirty days that he hasn't seen him, mevarech Shehecheyanu (blesses Shehecheyanu), he's happy that he's lived again to see his friend. Also one can turn around in the beis hamedrash, and people travel a lot today, he can catch the blessing of Shehecheyanu.

**Ve'im ra'ahu le'achar shneim asar chodesh** (and if he saw him after twelve months), if he saw him after twelve months, one makes an even stronger interesting blessing: **Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam Mechayeh HaMeisim** (Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the Universe, Who revives the dead). Because after twelve months is a time when the person already doesn't even know if the friend whom he hasn't seen for so long, perhaps he's already died altogether.

#### **Halacha: One Who Sees Fruit That Renews from Year to Year — Shehecheyanu**

**Haro'eh pri hamishadesh mishanah leshanah** (one who sees fruit that renews from year to year), when one sees a fruit that renews, that is the fruits grow and renew from year to year, when he sees the new fruits, mevarech Shehecheyanu.

#### **Critique of the Tu B'Shevat Custom**

Also this, I think that what people conduct themselves today on Tu B'Shevat (the New Year for Trees), that one finds some fruit, it's not about this, that's not what it means. Today the halacha is, I agree with those who don't do it today, I almost don't do it, because it's in the store, we're like Antoninus and Rabbi who saw it the whole year.

There are those who want to say that a person, for example, I'll think, perhaps today is already more, but still, there are fruits that you can't find in the store except for a few weeks a year that they sell it. Then, since it comes, there's joy, there's a Shehecheyanu. But here you go, it perhaps costs a little cheaper, more, it has no taste.

#### **The Satmar Rebbe's Vort and the Disconnection from Nature**

But I want to add to this like this, my grandmother, the Rebbetzin of my mother's mother, the Landsberger Rebbetzin, was a sweet Yiddishe woman, she very much wanted to instill "sense of humor." So she always at a new wedding said a joke, and she wanted to see how quickly the other person catches on.

That the Satmar Rebbe said, the Rebbe zichrono livracha (of blessed memory) said, that in America everything is here except a parah adumah (red heifer). Why? Because everything is here, so there's not even an opportunity to make a parah adumah. It's a good vort (Torah insight), but I think from the other side, that the disconnection is something else. That the person has here on the table a huge table with fruit, and he only makes a "chayav ani" (I am obligated).

### **Blessing of Shehechyanu, HaTov VeHaMeitiv, and Dayan HaEmes**

#### **Digression: Shehechyanu in America — The Satmar Rebbe's Thought**

**Speaker 1:** She very much wanted to instill sense of humor. So, she always at a new wedding said a joke, and she wanted to see how quickly the other person catches on.

The Satmar Rebbe said, the Rebbe zichrono livracha said, that in America everything is here except a horse of Shehechyanu. What's the meaning? Because everything is here, one doesn't even have the opportunity to make a horse of Shehechyanu.

It goes further. But I think from the other side, that the disconnection is something else. That the person has here on the table a huge table with fruit, and he only makes one blessing, borei pri ha'eitz (Who creates the fruit of the tree). He doesn't know that one can make a borei minei besamim (Who creates various spices), borei rei'ach tov bapeiros (Who creates good fragrance in fruits), a Shehechyanu also one should catch, HaTov VeHaMeitiv on very good... No, HaTov VeHaMeitiv only if one brings wine, and another better wine.

But, rabbosai (gentlemen), one can during the meal make several blessings that one doesn't remember that one must make. Shehechyanu! One can perhaps be the opposite, that one can make a whole Shehechyanu. Yes, once a year we make a Shehechyanu on the fruit, it's not a settled thing. Okay.

#### **Halacha 3: Heard Good News — Blesses HaTov VeHaMeitiv; Bad News — Blesses Dayan HaEmes**

##### **The Rambam's Language**

**Speaker 1:** Heard good news. Upon seeing, yes? Yes, further.

**Shama shemu'ah tovah mevarech HaTov VeHaMeitiv... al shemu'os ra'os mevarech Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam Dayan HaEmes.** (Heard good news blesses HaTov VeHaMeitiv... on bad news blesses Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the Universe, the true Judge.)

##### **Discussion: What is the Definition of "Good News"?**

**Speaker 1:** Good news doesn't mean something about you, as it were. Good news is someone who makes a deal with you. No, something you care about, but good news. Good news? What's the involvement? It's nothing at all about you? He had a baby, he should win the election, he won, he makes HaTov VeHaMeitiv.

What's the question? Good news. One must think precisely what the definition is of good news. It could be that it means

when your relative made a shidduch (match), and you're happy. You're happiest to be, because your guy won, it's not a real... I don't know. One must think.

**Speaker 2:** You wanted it to happen, so it's a good thing. What's the question not? I wouldn't... I don't understand the problem. Every time he flips through news, should he say the whole time HaTov VeHaMeitiv?

**Speaker 1:** I didn't say that. I asked you well. A person eats potato chips, and he makes on every dairy dumpling he makes every new potato chip. It's a different kind of thing. He makes himself a blessing on the food he eats. The same thing, he makes a blessing. But the blessing isn't a...

But this isn't a blessing of having pleasure from reading news. It's a blessing that the Ribbono Shel Olam made that you should have pleasure from doing good things.

**Speaker 2:** Very good. So is it a good thing that the mayor of that city that you don't know, and happens to be that you read his tweet about himself? Do me a favor, further, further.

**Speaker 1:** That's a question on the person, why is he reading this story? But if someone reads good news that makes him happy...

**Speaker 2:** I don't understand. Tell me, in the holy Rambam it doesn't say this thing. From where do you feel, it doesn't say. The heart doesn't need to feel.

**Speaker 1:** This is good news. I say that if someone makes a newspaper, and half the newspaper will have good news and one side will have bad news, one can flip through and keep saying "Baruch HaTov VeHaMeitiv," and the whole time say "Dayan HaEmes."

**Speaker 2:** Why not?

**Speaker 1:** Because he hears nothing, he doesn't read. He flips, he flips through a newspaper.

**Speaker 2:** What does bad news mean? It means that it's something relevant to him. His aunt died, his neighbor lost. He's affected.

**Speaker 1:** It was a real terrible halacha. I added a halacha that doesn't say in the Rambam. I know, perhaps in the later poskim (halachic authorities) it says.

**Speaker 2:** They weren't the definition for him. But you're going to tell me...

**Speaker 1:** There's no definition. Good news for him. A person can 24 hours a day make "HaTov VeHaMeitiv" and "Dayan HaEmes." Not only that, he can make 24 hours a day shalom aleichem (peace be upon you), shalom aleichem. True, true, true.

The New York Times has every day a list of who died yesterday on the website. Every day he has enough there to fill a whole day. Why not? Ah, no, you understand that it's a waste of time. But why do you look at that? I don't look at that website, I only look when it's relevant to me.

**Speaker 2:** But, Reb Yitzchak, I think you're exaggerating. I don't mean when someone reads a newspaper. I mean when someone hears news that...

##### **The Meaning of "Shemu'ah" and "Tovah Lo"**

**Speaker 1:** I want to understand the word. The translation of shemu'ah is news, Hebrew translation. And shemu'ah tovah means good news, and shemu'ah ra'ah means bad news. I

don't see why he shouldn't make it on something that is good or bad for the person.

A person has no money in the stock market, every minute he can make a blessing according to whether it went up or down. Do me a favor, further.

**Speaker 2:** Why not?

**Speaker 1:** Because it's not good and it's not bad. The person does nothing now at all. He does nothing. He reads just "leishev badad veyidom" (to sit alone and be silent) until he finds something good.

**Speaker 2:** Tovah means tovah lo (good for him). We'll soon see the halacha. Tovah doesn't mean...

**Speaker 1:** Tovah lo, we'll now know the definition. And I don't yet know the definition. I don't know further. I don't know.

Good news means... On bad news one makes a blessing "Dayan HaEmes." On good news, good tidings, shemu'ah tovah, the Mishnah says "**al besuros tovos omer HaTov VeHaMeitiv**" (on good tidings one says HaTov VeHaMeitiv).

**The Rambam's Change of Language: "Shemu'ah Tovah" Instead of "Besuros Tovos"**

Why did the Rambam change the words from the Mishnah? The Mishnah says "besuros tovos," the Rambam says "shemu'ah tovah." I say in Yiddish it's called news, in lashon hakodesh (the holy tongue) it's called shemu'ah tovah.

What is shemu'ah tovah? Good news. Your son's teacher called you that your son is good, make a blessing. The doctor called you that the test came back positive, make a blessing. You heard that your rabbi fulfilled his obligations, and someone once said that you call yourself papa Bnei Brak Tel Aviv, you'll perhaps yes make a blessing "HaTov VeHaMeitiv" because it's good news.

But it's not good news and not bad news. People have a tendency, whoever won the war in some distant land, he'll now make a blessing "HaTov VeHaMeitiv" because his team won.

I'll tell you why not: You also need to know that the main thing here isn't you, the main thing here is the Ribbono Shel Olam. The Ribbono Shel Olam also had pleasure, okay, but it's not an event that happened to you. It doesn't say in the Rambam that it must relate to you. It doesn't say. We'll soon see explicitly in the halacha that there are many things that don't relate to you and you say a blessing.

But the Rambam says "shemu'ah tovah," good news, and "shemu'ah ra'ah," bad news. Let's go further.

**And a Person is Obligated to Bless on the Bad Just as He Blesses on the Good**

**Speaker 1:** **Vechayav adam levarech al hara'ah keshem shemvarech al hatovah.** (And a person is obligated to bless on the bad just as he blesses on the good.) On bad news one says, yes, they're still in the middle of section 3, yes, **al shemu'os ra'os mevarech Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam Dayan HaEmes.**

Wait, but first let's go back to "HaTov VeHaMeitiv," because the Ribbono Shel Olam is good and He does good things. It's interesting, that the blessing to make is there's a second wine. It's interesting what's the connection to the second thing. Also is a good thing.

The Rambam says further. Now, when one makes the blessing on the bad, you need to know that specifically here there's a

law of feeling, okay?

**The Rambam's Language: Betuvas Nefesh**

Says the Rambam, he's now said that when one hears bad news, for example that a person had a great loss or real bad news, he'll actually give a murmur the blessing, but he won't say it with any heart.

Says the Rambam, **vechayav adam levarech al hara'ah.** A person must make the blessing also on the bad, also when one makes the blessing Dayan HaEmes, that I trust the Ribbono Shel Olam that He is the true Judge, as it were one justifies the judgment on the bad thing that happened, one must do it **betuvas nefesh** (with goodness of soul), with a good soul. A unique language that the Rambam says, let's finish first the piece then we'll go into the details of the words.

You should make the blessing betuvas nefesh, with good taste, **kederech shemvarech al hatov besimchah.** (just as one blesses on the good with joy.) Just as on good news, that a good thing happened, you make the blessing with joy, so too the blessing on the bad should be done betuvas nefesh.

**The Source: And You Shall Love the Lord Your God with All Your Heart and with All Your Soul and with All Your Might**

**Shene'emar, ve'ahavta es Hashem Elokecha bechol levavecha uvechol nafshecha uvechol me'odecha.** (As it is said, and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.) You should love the Ribbono Shel Olam with your whole heart, and your whole soul, and your whole me'od (might).

The Rambam translates, **bichlal ahava zo hayeseira**, this means, "and you shall love Hashem your God" says that one should love the Almighty with a great love, which is with all your heart, with all your soul, a very great love. And in this great love that the Almighty commanded us is included **shaafilu be'eis sheyatzar lo**, even when it hurts him, the Almighty has caused him pain, yatzar lo or sheyatzar lo, yes, when the Almighty has caused him pain, yes, kivyachol actions that the Almighty has caused him pain, **yodeh veyishabach besimcha**, he should continue to give thanks and praise with joy.

**Discussion: Betuvat Nefesh and Besimcha — The Gemara's Language**

**Speaker 2:** Yes, literally with joy. First he says betuvat nefesh, but the language besimcha is the language of the Gemara. The Gemara says that the nafka mina of blessing on the bad just as one blesses on the good, the Gemara says, the nafka mina is that you should do it with joy. There is an explicit Gemara in the Mishna, lekablem besimcha, yes? Yes? And the Mishna...

**Speaker 1:** He doesn't bring the language of the Gemara? The Mishna already says the thing that it's... that it's... about the verse "and you shall love Hashem your God with all your might." The Gemara says on "with all your might" - with every measure. The Mishna says so, so the Rambam translated it a bit... in the Mishna it says - he doesn't bring the language - in the Mishna it says... in the Mishna it says... well...

**Speaker 2:** Yes, as you say, the Mishna brings an entire derasha: "**a person is obligated to bless on the bad just as he blesses on the good**", as it says "**and you shall love Hashem your God with all your heart**", and the Mishna says "**with all your might**" - with every measure that **He measures out to you.**

### The Rambam's Translation of "With All Your Might"

**Speaker 1:** And the Rambam translated it a bit. The Rambam didn't bring the derasha as it stands in the Mishna, that "me'odecha" is a hint, "me'odecha" means money. No, no, no, "me'odecha" doesn't mean money.

The Rambam translates it this way: The Rambam translates the derasha of the Mishna. Instead of making the beautiful metaphor that the Mishna made, **"with every measure that He measures out to you, be thankful"**, the Mishna makes a metaphor, "with every measure that He measures," be thankful. There are three words that are similar to "me'od," so the Mishna made a little derasha.

The Rambam translated it a bit more without that kind of metaphor, and he wrote "me'odecha" means **ahava yeseira**, very much, according to the simple meaning of Scripture, "me'odecha" - very much. Yes, me'od me'od me'od. He translates that one must love the Almighty very much.

What is very much? Normally loving the Almighty is when He gives me good. "Me'od" - even when He gives me bad, I thank, I say "Your praise with joy."

#### The Essence of the Joy

The simple meaning that stands here is that the joy is that the Almighty is praised, the Almighty becomes great, so naturally he does everything with joy. This is the simple translation that the Rambam says here.

**Speaker 2:** I thought that the ahava yeseira is the very thing that one should love with all your heart and with all your soul. Not specifically the word "me'od" that it means me'od me'od, but it can also mean money. But the Torah, since the Almighty says "and you shall love Hashem your God," He says that one should love Him.

#### "Me'od" – Money or Literally?

**Speaker 1:** "Me'od" money is also a derasha. The Rambam brings a verse and he means the simple peshat, not that it should mean money. "Me'od" isn't a simple translation, no? It's not the Hebrew word for "me'od." "Me'od" doesn't mean money. No, I don't know. I think it's a jewel.

### Other Blessings – Law 2: Blessing on Good and Bad

#### Law 2 (Continued) – "For One Does Not Bless on What Will Be in the Future but on What Has Occurred Now"

This is the simple translation of what the Rambam says here.

#### Discussion: What Does "With All Your Might" Mean – Peshat or Derasha?

It's interesting, I thought that the ahava yeseira is the very thing, that he should love with all his heart and with all his soul. Not specifically the word me'od, that it means me'od me'od, but it can mean money. It's a derasha from "me'odecha and Your name is one," he says that it's a great measure. "Me'od" is money is also a derasha, not necessarily. The Rambam when he says a verse means simple peshat. He doesn't say that it should mean money. "Me'od" isn't a simple translation. No, it's not. In Hebrew you don't see "me'od" should mean money. I don't know, I think it's a derasha.

#### What Does "Ahava Yeseira" Mean – Your Truth Even in Bad

In general, ahava yeseira, yes, very good. What is the Rambam's translation? I tell you, the simple translation here is that he praises the Almighty. He says, "Yes, I have troubles, but the Almighty is still great, and the Almighty is just." And he rejoices with the fact that the Almighty is just. Not that he

praises, "thank you for doing this." Praising doesn't mean thank you. No, but he gives thanks. He gives thanks with the same vitality, with the same enthusiasm that he says when the Almighty has given him good. He doesn't say that it's good. This is the remaining translation that stands here.

#### Perush HaMishna in Berachos – A Comparison

In Perush HaMishna in Berachos the Rambam says a slightly different translation. I don't know if it fits entirely with what stands here. There he translates that whoever is wise – I'm not bringing here the language, the simple meaning – that whoever is wise knows, but it doesn't fit so well with what stands here next, perhaps that's why he doesn't bring here the same thing. That whoever is wise knows that many times a good thing in the end is a bad thing, and many times a bad thing is a good thing. A person shouldn't get lost from one good thing. So the next piece goes a bit to explain what is being discussed here. No, but the next piece doesn't fit with this. That's why I'm not saying this.

#### The Rambam's Words: Blessing on the Present, Not on the Future

In general, it's a bit difficult, because for example, when a person gives thanks with joy that the Almighty is the true Judge, and the thing that the Almighty has done is with righteousness and justice, what does he say? He says that I acknowledge that it was a punishment, or that perhaps from this will come out good, or one of the two. So it is yes connected with what he says.

The Rambam says, **higia elav tova**, good has come to him, **o shama shemu'a tova**, or he heard good news, **af al pi shehadvarim meramzim shehatova hazo tigrum lo ra'ah**, even though the good news brings with it such fear that this brings after it more bad. It seems that one pays a price for it. Right, it succeeded, but... let's say, someone made money in such a way that it could be that the government will catch him for this, let's say an example. Perhaps the good can bring bad. Perhaps the person has now both, he is happy for the good but he is a bit worried, he is worried, he says HaTov VeHaMeitiv, because the main thing that happened was good.

**Naga elav ra'ah**, bad has come to him, **or he heard bad news, af al pi shehadvarim meramzim shehara'ah zo gorem et tova**, that from this will come out good, **baruch Dayan HaEmes**. The Rambam says, **she'ein mevarchin al he'atid lihiyot ela al mah she'eira ata**. One doesn't say a blessing on something that can come out from this or something that will come out from this, but on what has happened.

#### The Psychological Genius of the Rambam – Focus on the Present

One must look at a thing, a person can't... The Rambam says a beautiful thing, a person can't be so in his head and be in calculations. Look at the present, if the thing that happened is called good, absolutely it's good, because it's called good news, it's categorized as good, whatever thoughts you have in your head, you put away and you say HaTov VeHaMeitiv.

And the same thing in reverse. Dayan HaEmes is simply not that the Almighty has done me good, because then one doesn't say a blessing on good. Rather Dayan HaEmes says, the Almighty is the true Judge even though He hasn't done me good, even though it's a bad thing, but still He is truth. Yes, HaTov VeHaMeitiv is simply He has done good to me. Here He has done something, He has done bad to me, He has done

evil, but from His perspective this is truth, not good but it's truth. He is just. The main thing is that the Almighty is just. He is just, it's not good but it's truth. Yes, the Almighty is just, Dayan HaEmes, He doesn't kill people, He doesn't do to someone what isn't appropriate. This is the meaning.

#### Clarifying Confusion – Living with the Present

Also for the same reason a person shouldn't say HaTov VeHaMeitiv when a bad thing has happened, because I know that from this will come out good. This is the Rambam. Even if you know, even not only that, even the Gemara speaks of such a thing, the Gemara will mention this. He knows, he is still facing reality, he knows but the reality is going to come away. I don't know, one makes a blessing, that now, even here one also learns according to my approach that people are worried, it's not complete. You think that one has said, someone was sick, he became a bit healthy, can you already make HaGomel? Perhaps he became sick again. The law is, a blessing first of all on what I haven't today become healthy again, already comes a blessing. If tomorrow he will die, he will make then Dayan HaEmes. One can make on the same event back and forth a bunch of blessings. Just Dayan HaEmes, HaTov VeHaMeitiv, let's go. I still don't hold here perhaps Dayan HaEmes. HaGomel doesn't stand here. But soon we will see that HaGomel is perhaps a bit different. But the point of HaTov VeHaMeitiv and Dayan HaEmes, that it can be someone in the same deal he has fifty times good news and bad news, and on each time he makes exactly a blessing. The blessing comes on what I am now satisfied, I praise the Almighty. It doesn't mean that I have now ruled that the... Yes, someone says, he heard that Israel killed the king of Iran. It's good news, one makes a blessing HaTov VeHaMeitiv. Eh, tomorrow this will cause that there will come worse. Okay, tomorrow one makes Dayan HaEmes.

#### The Genius of This – Clarifying "Mixed Bag" Situations

What does this do? It's very good. You don't like to talk about feelings, but here lies a tremendous genius, psychological genius. That people very often have a mixed bag. There has come to them some certain news, and it's a mixed bag. It can be good, it can be bad, and one can look at it different ways. The Rambam says, focus on what the majority is, what the essence of it is. The essence is good? Put away, put away other things. He clarifies here very strongly confusion. There is sometimes when one makes both. It's in the category where you place it, it's in good, don't think more about the bad. No, he's speaking of the future. If it's at the time of the event both, we will see soon, sometimes one makes both blessings at once.

Right, but the Rambam here goes against people who are mixed up. A person shouldn't be mixed up. It's in the category of good, you made a match, you have a thousand thoughts in your head, is this the right match? This... one should keep the thoughts, and the HaTov VeHaMeitiv helps the person keep the thoughts. But also by Dayan HaEmes, don't be now... that. If one wants to go with the Rambam, one must acknowledge, it's a thing that is very hard for me, it's not good for me, but the Almighty is still a proper Creator. I haven't now encountered the Almighty as HaTov VeHaMeitiv, but I have still encountered Him as His judgment is true. Yes, the Almighty is very present in your life. Yes, yes, yes. And this is like temimus, this is temimus, this means temimus. People make too many calculations. Tomorrow came out from this bad. Always we find...

#### Discussion: The Rambam Against the Approach of "Everything Is for the Best"

I say, the second law, the second law one must understand according to the extremes, not extremes, I wouldn't say the word extremes, but according to those who speak about bitachon in such a way that what the Almighty has done is the best for you, and you must literally feel so. And the Rambam, the law is not so. But someone who is not so, is simply that he is on a higher level or he is off? Because the Rambam says that a person must focus on what has happened. That one makes everything Dayan HaEmes. Yes, it's... Dayan HaEmes. The Rambam says that according to law one must make Dayan HaEmes, but... but the thing that he... okay, the truth is that... subjectively. Also the thing brings also a bit that a person should live with nature. When will come the good news that came out from the news, you will then make HaTov VeHaMeitiv, but here the opposite. Live with what you have now, live with the present. Yes, the temimus, that we make too many calculations.

#### Digression: Living with Nature – Nishmas

Now we're saying the shiur, we're recording Friday, my heart jumps to me I'm going to say Nishmas. Yes, there is... but people who live more with nature, a wonderful thing. When does a Jew from the old days say Nishmas? When does a field worker say Nishmas? He says it when it starts to rain. He lives with nature completely, then is his Nishmas. Yoducha Hashem Elokeinu al kol rov ma'asecha. We aren't farmers, but I've seen in Eretz Yisrael every year, people who are holding their heads with what is literally... ah, one says Birchas HaShanim. Yoducha Hashem Elokeinu...

#### Law 5 – Blessings on Rain and Field

**And he has a field**, if a person has a field, I undertook to rain. If a person has a field, **he blesses Shehecheyanu**. Interesting, he also says the same Shehecheyanu when the fruits grow out the first time. There are many Shehecheyanus on one field.

**If it's a partnership with others**, if it's shared, it's not only his, also the others, **he blesses HaTov VeHaMeitiv**. You see that this is plural language, that it's good for other people too. Yes, one will see, in the end the plural will say, I don't know why. HaTov VeHaMeitiv means that the Almighty is good and does good. It can also be a reason that it's a rule, I don't know why. Now I catch that I don't know if by wine it wasn't so, also by good news it also wasn't so, that the many should also say. Here the many will say.

#### The Prayer "Modim Anachnu Lach"

Here the many will say, ah, here is mentioned the poor person, the poor person inserts a nice longer prayer. The others may also say. Another word is that the owner of the field is truly bursting with joy, he doesn't need much, he warms himself up with the words, it's a prayer that should make him thank the Almighty. Often there are prayers that are a mussar sefer, he warms himself up to thank the Almighty. But I think there's no contradiction, he may say. He says, he's not obligated, he doesn't say the blessing, but...

**Modim anachnu lach Hashem Elokeinu**, we thank You **al kol tipa vetipa shehoradeta lanu**, on every drop that You have brought down to us. It's meant we thank here millions of times. Yes, every time a person makes such a blessing, he thanks on every drop.

**"Ilu Finu Malei Shira KaYam"**

But the simple meaning is, **ilu finu malei shira kayam**, ilu finu, our mouth, malei shira kayam, our mouth is full of song like the sea. This comes a whole sea of water, comes in the sea. You would think that then I would yes be yotzei, if I would actually say as many blessings as there are drops. But it's not so, because even if our mouth would be malei shira kayam, **ulshoneinu rina kahamon galav**, and our tongue would be tongues of praise, of thanks, songs and praises, as many as the waves **karchav harakia**, as wide as the sky is higher than us. **Ve'eineinu me'iros kashamesh vekayare'ach**, and our eyes are luminaries, are such illuminators, or we say me'iros kashamesh vekayare'ach. **Veyadeinu perushos kinshrei shamayim**, and our hands are spread out. What comes in the hands?

**Nishmas Kol Chai, Blessing on Rain, and His Father Died and He Inherited****Nishmas Kol Chai – Continuation of the Text**

And our lips would have enough praise, enough words of praise and thanksgiving, kimarchavei rakia, as wide as the sky is higher than us. Ve'eineinu, and our eyes, are luminaries, are such illuminators, or one says me'iros kashamesh vekayare'ach. Veyadeinu perushos kinshrei shamayim, our hands are spread out.

**Speaker 1:** What comes in the eyes? One must thank with the eyes? One doesn't know what the answer is?

**Speaker 2:** Okay. To see every good thing.

**Speaker 1:** Ah, that's what it means?

**Speaker 2:** Yes, so he says.

**Speaker 1:** Okay.

**Veyadeinu Perushos Kinshrei Shamayim**

Veyadeinu perushos kinshrei shamayim is very interesting. But an eagle isn't so big. I mean, he spoke about the whole world, the whole sky. An eagle flies around, he says he can go, he can see everything.

**English Translation**

**Speaker 2:** Ah, he can fly around and see everything, see all the drops and see all the good things.

"V'ragleinu kalos ka'ayalos" (and our feet light as deer), if our feet were as swift as deer that run quickly, we still would not be enough. "V'ei anu maspikim" (and we are not sufficient), we would not have enough "Thodos lecha Hashem Elokeinu ul'vareich es shimcha malkeinu" (to thank You, Hashem our God, and to bless Your name, our King), even for just one, for one of the thousands upon thousands upon thousands.

**Speaker 1:** Is "elef alfei alfei alafim" (thousand thousands of thousands) a million?

**Speaker 2:** No, a thousand times a thousand is a million. "Elef alfei alafim" is a billion. A thousand times a thousand times a thousand.

**Speaker 1:** And ten thousand times ten thousand times ten thousand, that's how much?

**Speaker 2:** That's called an "ofen" (manner/way). The "rov rivei revavos" (multitude of myriads of myriads). It becomes trillions. "Rov rivei revavos."

**Speaker 1:** Okay. It's almost "ein shiur" (without measure). "Ein shiur" plus one.

"Ein shiur pe'amim hatovos she'asisa imanu v'im avoseinu" (without measure times the good things You have done for us and for our ancestors).

**Mimitzrayim Ge'altanu – Detailing the Good Things**

He recounted, he says, "Mimitzrayim ge'altanu Hashem Elokeinu" (from Egypt You redeemed us, Hashem our God), our story began "mimitzrayim ge'altanu Hashem Elokeinu, umibeis avadim pedisanu" (and from the house of bondage You freed us). And besides that, all those years in between, or perhaps in the desert, "b'ra'av zantanu" (in famine You nourished us), when there was nothing to eat, and hunger, "uv'sova kilkaltanu" (and in plenty You sustained us), and when there was, the Almighty gave us abundance, or gave preparation, so we could properly benefit from it, make bread and the like. "Umicherev hitzaltanu" (and from the sword You saved us), He saved us from the sword. "Umidever milatanu" (and from pestilence You delivered us), He saved us from plagues, from new viruses. "Mechalayim ra'im v'rabim" (from evil and numerous diseases), the afflictions of great illnesses, difficult and many, the Almighty pulled us out. "Ad heinah azarunu rachamecha" (until now Your mercies have helped us), until now the Almighty's mercy has helped, "vachasadecha lo azavtanu" (and Your kindnesses have not forsaken us), and the Almighty's kindnesses have not abandoned us.

And here one adds something that looks like a prayer language, an old chain, and the Rambam doesn't include it.

**Al Kein Eivarim Shepilagta Banu – The Gift of Gratitude**

"Al kein eivarim shepilagta banu" (therefore the limbs that You distributed within us), the limbs that the Almighty planted in us, the Almighty planted in us. "Pilagta" means divided, "kol yomar" (each one says), a person has different limbs, and the Almighty made, imagine if a person were just one thing, he couldn't do anything. He would be like plastered out, spread out, that's what I always think when I say this, I don't know if that's the translation.

"V'ruach u'neshama shenafachta b'apeinu" (and the spirit and soul that You breathed into our nostrils), the Almighty blew in, that's how everyone understands, "nafachta b'apeinu," the Almighty blew in His soul, the breath or the vitality, one can think. "V'lashon asher samta b'finu" (and the tongue that You placed in our mouth), and the tongue that You placed in our mouth. "Hein heim yodu vivarchu vishabchu" (behold, they will thank and bless and praise), they say an amazing thing, that the one who thanks is also everything from You.

**Innovation: We Thank with the Tools the Almighty Gave Us**

Yes, he says, if I had a mouth like the sea, I still couldn't [thank You enough]. So automatically, the mouth that I do have, I use that. What You gave me. You didn't give me a mouth like the sea, I thank You at least with the tools that You gave me. I think that's what he wants to bring out. I can't do it as properly as it should be, You only gave me such a mouth, I use that. However much I have, however much I have.

And we conclude "baruch atah Hashem rov hahoda'os, Eil hahoda'os" (blessed are You, Hashem, abundant in thanksgivings, God of thanksgivings), this is the Almighty to whom all these thanksgivings are due, and He is the God of thanksgivings.

**Halacha 6: Blessing on Rain**

There's another halacha about this, about the blessing on rain. From when does one make the blessing on rain? The blessing

on rain we don't make immediately when it starts to rain, but "misheyirbu hamayim al ha'aretz" (when the water increases on the earth), there should be a lot of water on the earth, so much that "v'ya'alu avavu'os min hamatar al p'nei ha'adama" (and bubbles rise from the rain on the surface of the ground), when it rains hard, it also jumps from below upward, and there's a display of water, an abundance of water, bubbles.

#### **Zehu Ikar Hashir — The Poetic Language of the Gemara**

"V'ya'alu avavu'os," he says, "zehu ikar hashir" (this is the essence of the song), this is a beautiful expression in the Gemara. The Gemara calls this, I can't now [remember] the exact reference. But the Rambam wants to explain what he means. That the bubbles, I think bubbles means like in a display, yes? There will be a dance upward, there will be a display.

The talmid chacham from the Gemara, it says in whose name this thing is stated, was a tremendous poet, because even how it rains he said in such a poetic way, "chasan likras kalah" (a groom toward a bride). You look, it was a beautiful... not because it's very beautiful, but the... it's a connector to the display. "Yichyu avivei zekarah" is truly a poetic, genuinely poetic thing. "Chasan likras kalah," yes. Beautiful.

#### **Innovation: The Great Poet is the One Who Makes Good Prayer**

**Speaker 1:** No, here you see that the great poet is the one who makes good prayer, as you discussed at your father's shiur. Because you see that it's not only that that Jew was inflamed for the Almighty, that Jew also became completely absorbed when he saw the "avivei zekarah," he saw in it "chasan v'kalah" (groom and bride), yes? It was a tremendous poetic soul, he wrote the prayers.

#### **Halacha 7: Meis Aviv V'Yirsho — Good and Bad Coming Together**

"Amru lo meis avicha" (they told him his father died), a person receives news, they should come tell him your father has died, "v'yirsho" or "v'yirashto" (and he inherits him), and with this he inherits him. Two things have now happened: a sad thing has happened, he loses his father, and he receives his father's property. So, "im yesh lo achim, mevarech b'techila Dayan Ha'emes" (if he has brothers, he first blesses Dayan Ha'emes). One first makes Dayan Ha'emes, which is the blessing on bad things, justifying the judgment on the bad thing, on the father's death. "V'achar kach mevarech HaTov V'HaMeitiv" (and afterward he blesses HaTov V'HaMeitiv), because a new good thing has happened, he and his brothers have now received property.

And he has become wealthy. We're talking about... it doesn't say here a wealthy inheritance, but they received money, so one makes HaTov V'HaMeitiv. "V'im ein imo achim" (and if he has no brothers with him), one makes the blessing that one makes when one alone receives a great benefit, a great blessing without other people, one makes Shehecheyanu.

#### **Innovation: Jews Can Live with "Mixed Feelings"**

So here it's very interesting, because here both things happened at once. This halacha here teaches us that Jews can live with "mixed feelings." Jews can be sad and happy at the same time.

#### **Discussion: Practical Questions on This Law**

**Speaker 1:** It's very interesting, have you ever seen anyone say Shehecheyanu when his father died? Almost everyone inherits something from his father, right? It's not practiced,

but one can't make Shehecheyanu when the father dies. If one doesn't make it every time one receives a sum of money. The one who followed the earlier Rema, that every time one receives good news one makes HaTov V'HaMeitiv, when one receives good news, one can make it here too. Because then it's not so questioned, it's not so weird. Because every time one receives a check one makes a Shehecheyanu or a HaTov V'HaMeitiv.

So here the innovation is, the innovation here is the mixed feelings, because one can make on the same event, it's "tova v'chatzi ra'ah ba'in k'echad" (good and half bad come together), the death with the inheritance happen at once, and on the same event one makes both blessings. It's interesting, a person must be able to... but it also becomes that this is intentional, one first makes Dayan Ha'emes, then HaTov V'HaMeitiv.

**Speaker 2:** Why should he be obligated to first make HaTov V'HaMeitiv when the father died? First was the death of his father, and then the inheritance happens.

**Speaker 1:** But it must be a confirmed death to... okay, afterward it becomes a HaTov V'HaMeitiv. Okay, this was caused by that, so it caused a HaTov V'HaMeitiv.

#### **Question: Onen and Blessings**

But it's an interesting thing, because an onen is exempt from mitzvos, right? He has now become an onen, and he now becomes exempt from mitzvos, but before that he must still make another blessing.

**Speaker 2:** All mitzvos?

**Speaker 1:** Not simple, he must make a blessing when he eats. He's exempt from prayer, from tefillin, from certain things, I don't think he's exempt from all mitzvos. Onen, I don't remember the laws of onen, I'm sure an onen must make all blessings.

**Speaker 2:** Did they learn it in the laws of Birkas HaMazon?

**Speaker 1:** Not Birkas HaMazon. How did I see that an onen doesn't pray, he's exempt. I think an onen is exempt from prayer and so on.

#### **Humorous Note: Who Makes Shehecheyanu When the Father Dies?**

**Speaker 2:** Okay, okay, the only person I can imagine making a blessing of Shehecheyanu when his father dies is a Rebbe.

**Speaker 1:** Yes. He becomes a Rebbe. Mazal tov.

**Speaker 2:** One is inclined to say mazal tov at the... when? At the coronation, at the funeral, I don't know when.

So that's the only one I can think of, there can be mixed feelings there. Inheritance, but here we're not talking about a Rebbe.

**Speaker 1:** He says "yesh im v'yesh im acheres" (if there is and if there is another), it's not the answer in two houses.

**Speaker 2:** Okay.

#### **General Rule: HaTov V'HaMeitiv vs. Shehecheyanu**

"Kitzur fun di zach, kitzur fun di meinung iz, milashon katzuv" (in short, the summary of the opinion is, in precise language), the specific thing from it is, "shekol tova shehi lo ul'acheirim" (that every good thing that is for him and for others), which is good for him and for other people, "mevarech HaTov V'HaMeitiv. V'tova shehi lo levado, mevarech Shehecheyanu"

(one blesses HaTov V'HaMeitiv. And a good thing that is for him alone, one blesses Shehecheyanu).

#### **Discussion: Why Two Different Blessings?**

It's interesting, because... yes, we haven't seen what the concept is. Why are there two different types of blessings? HaTov V'HaMeitiv one says thank you to the Almighty for the good, and this is something Shehecheyanu, one thanks that I have lived to see the good thing. It's actually a different "matbei'a shetav'u chachamim" (coin that the Sages minted), it's a different kind of way of thanking for this. The text is different though. But it seems that HaTov V'HaMeitiv and Shehecheyanu are older blessings that were adapted to the occasion, it's not like a blessing that was made for this.

**Speaker 2:** I agree, because Shehecheyanu means one has lived to see it, thank God one has lived to see it, but HaTov V'HaMeitiv means the Almighty is good. Both mean that... both show that one is in a state of joy, one is happy that one is here and that one has the thing.

**Speaker 1:** Why is HaTov V'HaMeitiv for others? He says, earlier we saw that HaTov V'HaMeitiv is when the wine has company, or when the person has company, or when it's the second wine that's brought. One can think that there we're still talking about a meal where one brings several bottles of wine, but it's not clear. But the Rema said that it must be other people. It's obvious, because one who drinks alone is an alcoholic, one drinks with other Chassidim, one is an honest Jew, one is a distinguished Chassid.

#### **Question: What is the Meaning of HaTov V'HaMeitiv?**

But it could be, he translates as you translate, "HaTov lo v'HaMeitiv la'acheirim" (good for him and beneficial to others). I don't know why. HaTov V'HaMeitiv means that the Almighty is good and He is beneficial. It's also a bit of a selfish look, as if the Almighty is good for me and also for others. It's the same wine that he brought for both of you, it's not... no, it must be some other explanation. Not that I'm the center and also for others.

Okay, we must search for an explanation. There's surely a simple explanation that we're missing here, why the rule is. If someone knows... we must have seen, the good YouTubers know, every video ends with "let us know what you think." Let us know if someone knows why HaTov V'HaMeitiv is so, and Shehecheyanu is so. One should learn from him. As if we say, Rebbe, "alufim yadu'a, lomed min hachavra" (distinguished ones know, one learns from the group), many things.

Next.

#### **Beginning New Halacha: Birkas HaRe'iya**

Okay, now we're learning a new halacha, blessings, what's the chapter? Birkas HaRe'iya (blessing of seeing), and we call it Birkas HaGe'ula (blessing of redemption), that's the language. That means, it's different from before. What's the difference? Let's see.

Now, as we discussed, someone had something happen, he had a good thing, just a good thing.

#### **Birkas HaGomel — Arba'ah Tzerichin L'Hodos**

##### **Halacha 10: Birkas Hoda'ah — Birkas HaGomel**

**Speaker 1:** Let's say, "rabanan alufim yedu'im, lamir zein machmir al hatzad hayoser" (distinguished rabbis know, let's be stringent on the stricter side).

Okay, now we're learning a new type of blessings. The chapter is Birkas Hoda'ah (blessings of thanksgiving), Birkas HaGomel. That's the language. That means, it's different from before. What's the difference? Let's see.

Yes, now, before we discussed that someone had something good happen, just something. Now we're going to learn, he was saved from some problem, from a trouble. From four types of troubles, says the Rambam.

#### **The Four Types of People Who Must Give Thanks**

The Rambam says according to a Mishna or a Gemara in Berachos, a Braisa I think, "arba'ah tzerichin l'hodos" (four are required to give thanks). Four types of situations that people have gone through, they must thank the Almighty. Besides that one must regularly always thank the Almighty in prayer, or through saying "Modim anachnu lach" (we thank You), there's simply a concept. He's going to say how the thanking must be.

Apparently it comes from korban todah (thanksgiving offering), when one remembers, one brings a korban todah on such types of things. I think it's derived from... I think it's all from the verses in "Hodu" (Give thanks), there the "Hodu" is our prayer today for this reason.

So, the four must thank the Almighty: "choleh shenisrapei" (a sick person who was healed), a sick person who became healed. It's interesting that it says "nisrapei" with a hei at the end. It's almost as if the Rambam says that when the intestines are healed everything is healthy. No, what's relevant that the Rambam held that the grammar is so? I don't know. It's interesting. "Choleh shenisrapei." He says that in the verse one already finds "rafa" with a hei.

Okay, "choleh shenisrapei," "v'chavush sheyatza mibeis ha'asurim" (and a prisoner who left the prison), one who was imprisoned and left the prison. "V'yordei hayam" (and those who go down to the sea), people who travel down to the sea, "k'she'alu" (when they come up), when they come back up to dry land. Interesting, the sea is somewhat lower. Yes, "v'holchei derachim k'sheyagi'u l'yishuv" (and travelers when they reach settlement). We already had before that travelers need a special... can't pray properly, and so on. It's a place of danger, a desert or whatever, where one goes outside the settlement.

#### **How One Makes Birkas HaGomel**

These four must give thanks, and this is what we say in the chapter of "Hodu laHashem" (Give thanks to Hashem), there one counts out the four. Says the Rambam, "tzerichin l'hodos bifnei asara" (they are required to give thanks before ten). How must he give thanks? There are different ways to give thanks. A Jew thanks every day, but there's such a special blessing of thanksgiving that has laws. That one is required to give thanks before ten, one must say the blessing of thanksgiving must be said before ten Jews, "u'shneyim meihem chachamim" (and two of them scholars), and two of them must be scholars. "Shene'emar" (as it is said), at the end of that verse in Tehillim 107 that counts out the four who are required to give thanks, it says "virommuhu bikehal am" (and let them exalt Him in the congregation of the people), and we know that "kahal" (congregation) means ten, and it says further in the verse "uvmoshav zekeinim" (and in the assembly of elders), which means scholars, there must be at least two Torah scholars, "yehalleluhu" (let them praise Him). An interesting halacha.

**Discussion: Is This Actually Done in Practice?**

**Speaker 2:** Yes, is this done? Have you ever seen someone looking for two Torah scholars for HaGomel?

**Speaker 1:** No, presumably the calculation is that among every ten Jews, let's not be obligated to judge Jews, let's say at least twenty percent of Jews are Torah scholars, no? Ah, he brings that the Sha'arei Efraim brings that it doesn't say that it's only an obligation if one has, if one doesn't have one is not obligated. No, but perhaps it means that when a Jew can say Birkas HaGomel, he should go find a large beis midrash where there is at least among them presumably some two scholars. Yes, or he should go to the rav, to the Rebbe. Haven't you heard of someone going to the Rebbe to make HaGomel?

**Speaker 2:** No, it's not practiced.

**Speaker 1:** We'll institute it.

**Text of Birkas HaGomel**

In short, how does the blessing of thanksgiving go? "Omeid beineihem" (he stands among them), he stands among the congregation, "umevarech, 'Baruch atah Hashem Elokeinu melech ha'olam hagomel l'chayavim tovos'" (and blesses, "Blessed are You, Hashem our God, King of the universe, who bestows good things upon the undeserving"). That the Almighty gives even to the undeserving, even to the wicked, or even to people who are not in perfection, the Almighty gives good things. And one concludes, "Baruch... shegemalani kol tov" (Blessed... who has bestowed upon me all good). Goes back up to the "Baruch." "Baruch shegemalani tovos," that He gave me, "gomel" means good things.

**Speaker 2:** Ah, he doesn't say "kol tov"?

**Speaker 1:** No, he says "shegemalani kol tov." "HaGomel l'chayavim tovos shegemalani kol tov," yes. Good hint.

"V'chol hashom'im omrim" (and all who hear say), we say, "Mi shegemalcha" (He who has bestowed upon you), the Creator who gave you good, "hu yigmalcha" (He shall continue to bestow upon you), He should continue to give you good, He should continue to be good to you.

**Explanation of "HaGomel L'Chayavim Tovos"**

I think the "chayavim" is simple, because thanksgiving means one had a trouble. It's simply thanksgiving that he had a trouble. Presumably he was judged truthfully, he admitted that he was guilty of something, and the Almighty had mercy on him, he was healed or taken out of captivity, makes sense. Although the traveler didn't commit any sin, but it was that he was alone in a place of danger. In a place of danger it's like everyone, anyone can be harmed, because it's like... "chayav" doesn't mean a sinner. "Chayav" means one who could have received the verdict "yatza gavra l'hareiga" (the man went out to be killed), something like that.

**Speaker 2:** No, it's interesting, because it's the only time that we call ourselves wicked, just in the world.

**Speaker 1:** No, it's "chayavim."

**Speaker 2:** "Chayavim" doesn't have in it exactly the word. "Chayav" and "zakai" is not the same as "rasha" and "tzaddik."

**Speaker 1:** Okay, it's similar. It's close.

**Speaker 2:** The simple meaning is, this was a danger, so he placed himself in the category of those liable, in the category of a person who is potentially liable. If he had been liable, the Almighty would indeed have punished him.

**Speaker 1:** Ah, on the contrary, the Almighty, sometimes the Almighty helps even the one who...

**Speaker 2:** It can be like a language of humility, that you shouldn't think that the Almighty performs miracles only for the righteous. Even I am who I am, even if I am wicked, the Almighty did good for me. It's humility. The blessed one says with humility, it wasn't my merit, but even if I am liable.

**Speaker 1:** Right, that's very interesting, because for example I think in Tehillim, many times you see that David HaMelech, as it's written in the chapters, he says "vayashev Hashem li k'tzidki," the Almighty helped me because I was righteous. We don't say that, we say the Almighty helped me even though I wasn't righteous.

**Digression: The Baal Shem Tov's Enactment — Hodu on Erev Shabbos**

It's interesting, the Baal Shem Tov instituted that one should say it Friday night, and he says that a person goes through every week all sorts of arba. This makes me think perhaps that the arba is also the four types, but it can also be very many things that are similar to cholayim ra'im v'ne'emanim, for example a person goes through emotional turmoil. And I say the Baal Shem Tov's teaching is very interesting, because when you look into those chapters you see very much where he speaks about the person's trouble being a part of their soul, because they committed sins, and there stands a curse and the like from the liable ones. Yes, there they speak out a lot, even "mitah shalem sni." And many times they were afraid of a danger, it wasn't a real danger. He says this teaching from the Baal Shem Tov, that a person goes through every week — the Baal Shem Tov spoke about how a person goes through in his head every week, he has ups and downs and trials. But he says, even in the verses it's not far. If one studies Hodu well, one will see that the verses will also speak of spiritual ups and downs that a person goes through, connected with the — here come in the liable ones, because he suffered because of a sin through transgression.

**Speaker 2:** But then one doesn't make a gomel. Rather then comes indeed Hodu. One says Hodu to the Almighty.

**Speaker 1:** One who came out of prison through transgression, yes, he committed a sin, he went to prison, or maybe it was a gentile, he made an informing, I don't know. In those chapters it looks like that, Israel speaks there about this.

**Speaker 2:** Sometimes one includes from me, but... yes, yes. I feel like...

**Speaker 1:** No, the Baal Shem Tov made a good enactment. It's certainly a good enactment. Hodu on erev Shabbos makes a lot of sense.

**Custom to Give an Aliyah**

But here he brings, they had these things, but it doesn't speak of counting. We added it, and the custom is also that one tries to give him an aliyah or perhaps a hagbaha, as if because he stands there. This is just a simple matter of derech eretz.

**Speaker 2:** No, I think perhaps the Torah is in place of the danger, because one is already reading, so he's certainly the baal korei.

**Speaker 1:** But the baal korei stands like this, the baal korei and the baal tefillah should be, this was never simple in the kehilla, whoever was good enough to be a shaliach tzibbur. But this isn't indispensable. It's certain that if one doesn't have a

sefer Torah, then he's obligated. Okay, one needs to know when exactly one is obligated, that's already busy with poskim.

#### **Discussion: Flying — Does One Make Hagomel?**

And there are those who have doubts like this, for example, one flies over a sea, whether it's called like yored hayam. And in honor of this, for example, they say without Hashem u'malchus. It's very well known in all contemporary poskim. I heard that the Belzer Rebbe, the last Belzer Rebbe, when a Jew came whom he hadn't seen for a while, he would always say "Baruch Hashem s'zet zich." And he said that they don't conduct themselves according to halacha to do the Rambam which says "mi she'lo ra'ah es chaveiro" says "Baruch shehecheyanu," but at least one says it in Yiddish "Baruch Hashem s'zet zich" and one fulfills it. So there is such a thing, one says "Shalom aleichem, Baruch Hashem s'zet zich."

It's very interesting. I am stringent in this, because one has further the obligation of "I'hazkir es Hashem tamid." It's already a matter, one is concerned about every thing, beracha levatala. Yes, I don't know, I'm usually stringent here, I try to say one should make more berachos. But hagomel, I had to think according to this, because I don't make a beracha when I travel on a plane. I don't see that it's a danger. It's still about as much a danger as going in a car from here. That's not a danger.

**Speaker 2:** But if it's not a danger, one needs to thank even more that the Almighty gave so much wisdom and He made such a thing. One needs to make a different beracha.

**Speaker 1:** No, but that's the beracha. When your grandfather from a hundred years ago would have been told that you traveled in an iron box to Eretz Yisrael in ten hours, he would have told you, "Did you say all the berachos that stand in the Rambam? I would have been concerned about a punishment." One really needs to make a new beracha. Yes, or perhaps the language. One needs to make a she'eilas chacham. Right.

There is a question, but the Belzer Rebbe wouldn't have instructed to make it. The Klausenberger Rebbe said that he asked the Belzer Rebbe whether he should make a beracha on traveling on a plane, he said no. He said that the Rebbe wanted to effect with this that there shouldn't be any danger. Like "mayim she'ein lahem sof" regarding the nahrei melech.

Interesting. I saw that R' Avraham... I say, makom sakana, one mustn't think dramatically. But this one needs to think, perhaps it is a makom sakana. But it's still a gemul tovah from the Almighty that the plane travels and that everything travels, and it's nothing. And also tefillas haderech, the simple meaning is that when a person travels he is found in dangers. So you can set up, not only can the plane crash, but it can also delay the plane, and he runs around much more, one can get hit, one can become animals, there can be millions of ways. A trip is more an opportunity for a person.

**Speaker 2:** True, true, one needs to think about this. One needs to think about this, because as if according to what we say that a beracha is indeed a smaller thing, people think that absolutely if it's said one needs to make a beracha, but he makes a beracha on every little thing, it can be one really needs to also make it on this.

**Speaker 1:** I saw that Rav Soloveitchik, the Boston Rav, said he used to make a beracha.

## **Birkas Hagomel, Tefillas Haderech, Birkas She'asa Nissim, and Birkas Makom Avodah Zarah**

### **Birkas Hagomel and Tefillas Haderech – Continuation of the Discussion**

**Speaker 1:** Be robbed he can in millions of ways. So, a trip is more an opportunity for a person to have troubles, than when he is at home. It's true, it's true, but one needs to think about this, because according to what we say that a beracha is a smaller thing, people think that even on such a thing one needs to make a beracha, one makes a beracha on every little thing, it can be that you really need to also make it on this.

I saw that R' Soloveitchik, the Boston Rav, said that he used to make hagomel, I don't remember even tefillas haderech, when he traveled from Boston to New York or whatever, and there he became accustomed, he no longer felt that it's a danger, he stopped making it.

**Speaker 2:** Ah, only when one feels danger?

**Speaker 1:** Ah, not the Boston Rebbe Horowitz, the Boston Rav, R' Soloveitchik.

**Speaker 2:** Ah, Soloveitchik.

**Speaker 1:** And I saw that the Boston... I don't know, he did say that it has to do with the feeling, that when he doesn't feel that one is traveling... What here people have the question about tefillas haderech in the neighborhood, I try to say when one goes out of the city.

**Speaker 2:** Yes, where is the city?

**Speaker 1:** People say that when one travels on a bridge, and that means when you travel over from New York to New Jersey, ah, you know now that you've traveled out. But it can also be that every time you travel on a highway, which is already a bit more a makom sakana, one drives fast, one needs to think.

**Speaker 2:** Okay. Ah, no, the thing that you say from R' Soloveitchik is interesting, that it does have to do with the feeling.

**Speaker 1:** I insist on feeling.

**Speaker 2:** That you've become accustomed you don't make the danger.

#### **Discussion: Feeling versus Judgment**

**Speaker 1:** No, no, no, on the contrary, so there is even more a place for "v'lizkor es Hashem tamid," because when you feel a heartbeat and you pray to the Almighty quietly, you've already done half a mitzvah.

**Speaker 2:** No, one mustn't say the feeling, one can say the judgment. That a person is a new thing, he is more careful.

**Speaker 1:** It's already not in a category of fear.

**Speaker 2:** Yes, he is more careful, he has every minute...

**Speaker 1:** It's not in a category of fear.

**Speaker 2:** It really became more dangerous sometimes, and it really became less dangerous. Perhaps a week when one hears of an accident one makes the beracha, because there is more a feeling.

#### **Innovation: Nature and Beracha**

**Speaker 1:** The truth is, you said indeed an interesting thing, because the Almighty created nature. The part of nature that the Almighty made that a person should feel like everything is in order, on that one doesn't need to make a beracha. On the part of nature where there remained some loophole that one

still feels danger, one really needs to say. Yes, "rogei hayam v'yemo galav," one makes us think that the world is stable. But when he goes out of the stable world, the beracha indeed has a wonder, it's true, true.

One makes the beracha always. But the usual beracha isn't, one doesn't speak about this, one speaks about bitachon. He says that a person makes therein a mishneh habriyos, truly on every creature. Why is a monkey more strange than a person? The Almighty made both. Rather it goes according to the koach hadimyon of the person, not the reality. That it has already become nifal, he says. So the question is whether the beracha must generate the hispa'alus, or the hispa'alus comes from the beracha? The question of feeling. Whether the hispa'alus brings a beracha.

I heard a talk from R' Nachman, what's his name, Biderman, he said that every day one makes a gomel, because one says in the morning "hagomel chasadim tovim l'amo Yisrael" by birchos hashachar, so one isn't obligated there the whole distinction. Okay. Done.

### Halacha 9: Birkas She'asa Nissim

**Speaker 1:** Now one can learn about the beracha of she'asa nissim. Right? Very good. There is the Rambam, "**Haro'eh makom she'na'asu vo nissim l'Yisrael**". That one who sees a place where there were done miracles for Jews, **k'gon Yam Suf**, one sees the Yam Suf, wherever it is. It's a difficult thing, because the Rambam could have given a throw in a measure, that sea. But the Rambam doesn't say it. Here there are indeed disputes. Yes, here one needs R' Uri Holtzman to say what is the Yam Suf and what is the ma'abaros haYarden. Very good.

One needs to think about this, whether it means that one needs to stand exactly in the place where the Jews stood. And when did one know? In the times of the Mishnah did one know exactly? It can be that one goes in the sea, here was the place the Yam Suf. Well, one doesn't know.

### Ma'abaros HaYarden

What does ma'abaros haYarden mean? The language is interesting. The place where the Jews crossed the Jordan. Ma'abaros is interesting. I mean that it was some place. I mean that Uri says that he knows where it is. Ah, where is the ma'abaros haYarden? And he goes there, he makes the beracha. I can ask him. He does whatever he wants.

But the Yam Suf, if one establishes which sea it is, it doesn't have to be by the place in the sea. It's a big sea. One knows where the Yam Suf is. The Yam Suf is the Red Sea. Somewhere between Egypt and Eretz Yisrael it must be. But I spoke with R' Uri recently. One knows, we have a friend, R' Uri Holtzman, he knows where everything is, and one can call him, he gives tours, one needs to pay a bit for it, and he knows where the ma'abaros haYarden makes a beracha. Like you know where the even merivah that Moshe Rabbeinu had to split and the like.

### Innovation: "K'gon" – From Then Until Now

**Speaker 2:** No, but the interesting thing is that it says here k'gon. From then until now there have happened thousands more miracles in Eretz Yisrael. Every place where all enemies tried to destroy, by every war, in every valley. So then it is that one doesn't need to have... Certainly everyone should take R' Uri Holtzman, but one needs to become aware of any place where there was, a missile was almost, or all the places...

**Speaker 1:** If there was a nes l'rabbim, one needs to make the beracha there.

**Speaker 2:** A nes l'rabbim is a nes l'yachid.

**Speaker 1:** No, Yisrael means all Jews.

**Speaker 2:** A part of makom she'na'asu vo nissim l'rabbim, okay.

### The Baraisa and the Text of the Beracha

**Speaker 1:** But in the baraisa stand many more examples: Yam Suf, nachal Arnon, and the like. The rabbim, have the stone upon which Moshe Rabbeinu sat during the war with Amalek. It's interesting, is there someone who knows where the stone is? Perhaps about this the baraisa indeed didn't write, that we don't know where it is. But it's okay, let's continue.

The Yam Suf and the Jordan is yours, the words are known. I mean, it only makes mistakes, it was a mile up. We know how it went, we know more or less like, let me say the Jordan, that's easier to know, right? It was opposite Jericho, as it says in the verse. We know where Jericho is, the same city as then. We know where the Jordan is. So what is it? I make a mistake, it's a kilometer, I don't know if it's exact.

It needs to be, because the beracha is exactly the same beracha, "**she'asa nissim la'avoseinu bayamim hahem bazman hazeh**". Meaning, that beracha is on the time, it's Chanukah. And this is "**bamakom she'na'asu vo nissim**", on the place. So one makes the same text, "**she'asa nissim la'avoseinu bayamim hahem bazman hazeh**", and this is "**bamakom hazeh**".

**Speaker 2:** What stands in the she'eilos u'teshuvos on Chanukah?

**Speaker 1:** Ah, yes. And the difference is only that the beracha one didn't add any "al hanissim." Meaning, one didn't add any day when one was saved from the war. One has here a place. A place is indeed there, if someone comes there.

### Nes L'rabbim

**Speaker 1:** Okay, let's see the next one. "**Kol makom she'na'asu vo nissim l'rabbim**", every place where there was a nes l'rabbim one should make the beracha. Let me make the beracha. I don't know what this means.

**Speaker 2:** Why for example, every time a Jew was in Meron, one year was indeed unfortunately killed, but every other year was a nes l'rabbim that people weren't killed.

**Speaker 1:** No, it's not a nes l'rabbim. I didn't hear at all what you're saying. Either krias Yam Suf, or like a war is emunah.

**Speaker 2:** Like a war is emunah. Is that a shinuy hateva? Ah, yes. I don't know about shinuy hateva. "Avnei elgavish" is "avanim shehushvu l'Moshe." Okay. I don't know about shinuy hateva. It needs to be at least some event that happened for Klal Yisrael.

### Nes L'yachid

**Speaker 1:** But "**makom she'na'aseh vo nes l'yachid, oso yachid u'vno u'ven bno**", does he mean all generations? Or? He doesn't say. He says "**bno u'ven bno**", **u'mevarech k'shero'eh oso makom**. And he says here without Hashem u'malchus, he says he blesses "**Baruch atah Hashem Elokeinu melech ha'olam she'asa li nes bamakom hazeh**", or "**she'asa l'avi nes bamakom hazeh**". That means, if it was for him himself he says "li," if it

was his father he says "l'avi," if it's his grandfather he says "l'avi avi."

**Speaker 2:** Yes.

**Nes L'tzaddikim**

**Speaker 1:** And here there is a third thing, where there happened a miracle not for the many, but also not just for a person who is only his grandfather's, but it's relevant for Klal Yisrael, which stands in the verses, or such a thing. "**Haro'eh gei aroch zeh kivshan ha'esh**", **mevarech "Baruch atah Hashem Elokeinu melech ha'olam she'asa nes latzaddikim bamakom hazeh"**.

It's interesting, one needs to know whether one can also come here to...

**Speaker 2:** Do you mean what the sefarim also say k'gon?

**Speaker 1:** No, whether... For example, if a person can make, I don't know, the place where the holy, I don't know, the Satmar Rebbe was saved from the Nazis.

**Speaker 2:** No, if it can be that the tzaddikim...

**Speaker 1:** What happened to tzaddikim, as he says, it's specifically in the verses.

**Speaker 2:** No, if it made a kiddush Hashem.

**Chiddush: "L'tzaddikim" – Kiddush Hashem**

**Speaker 1:** What do you think, this is how he brings it from the Rosh, as I said, that it has to do with the kiddush Hashem that he made. "L'tzaddikim" is not simply "ba'asher hem tzaddikim", not that the Almighty loves tzaddikim, but that the tzaddikim were moser nefesh not to bow to the idol, and therefore the Almighty created the miracle.

**"Bamakom Hazeh" – The Specific Place**

It's interesting, because the Rambam doesn't say the Gei Aruch is in Bavel. One might have thought that wherever one goes and sees a Gei Aruch, one should remember the miracle. He says "**bamakom hazeh**".

**Speaker 2:** And your version is...

**Speaker 1:** No, not as it is, but I'm asking you what is your version.

**Speaker 2:** I'm asking you, the Gei Aruch, what is a Gei Aruch? Gei Aruch is there where they threw in Chananya, Mishael and Azarya. And Chazal when they speak of the lion's den, they say the lion's den that is in Bavel.

**Speaker 1:** Yes, it's a city in Bavel, it's in Iraq. It's a city, the capital city, I don't remember what it's called. Not Baghdad, but another city.

**Digression: Why Did We Stop Making Holy Places?**

We once had a beautiful approach about why we stopped making places so strongly. In Tanach we see many times that a miracle happened in a place, they made a monument there, they brought a sacrifice there, or they made a permanent place there, Migdal Noam, what does that mean, Yad Avshalom ad hayom hazeh. That is only when Jews are in control of a place, they can make places, they can bring forth revelations. But in exile we never saw, after Eretz Yisrael we never saw that they should make any places. The only thing that Jews are in control of is their daily schedule, is their calendar. So they did indeed begin to make, like Megillat Taanit, all kinds of days, marking days. But here you see indeed, that there is a lion's den that is in Bavel. It's not a holy place, but one makes a blessing there.

A place where miracles were done, we didn't hesitate about the place for a... not a cheftza of that Torah. Okay.

**Blessing on a Place of Idolatry**

**Speaker 1:** One who sees a place where idolatry was worshipped, he sees a place where idolatry was served, **recites "Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam..."** Indeed, he comes to such a place, he says, one thanks the Almighty "**shenatan erech apayim l'ovrei retzono**", that the Almighty holds back His anger, so to speak.

**Explanation: Erech Apayim**

That means that erech apayim means the opposite of quickly exploding. And charon af means He gets hotter and hotter, and His breath gets shorter and shorter, His body becomes... It's all metaphors. When a person is angry, if he doesn't have a long breath... One always says breathe in, one speaks about calming down, when one breathes in it calms the anger. So erech apayim literally means long breath. It's a metaphor that the Almighty holds back.

**Chiddush: Place of Idolatry as Challenge to Faith**

That means that he comes to a place of idolatry and a question occurs to him, why does the wicked prosper? Why doesn't the Almighty punish on the spot? The Almighty is indeed erech apayim l'ovrei retzono. One can look at it as if the place that says to idolatry is like a bit of a challenge to his faith, and he answers this, so he strengthens his faith that the Almighty is erech apayim.

**Blessings on Seeing Special Places**

**Halacha 10: Blessing on a Place Where Idolatry is Worshipped and a Place from Which Idolatry Was Uprooted**

**Speaker 1:** You know, I was once for example in the Vatican, I saw such a huge, beautiful, they have very beautiful buildings, we don't have such beautiful buildings in the whole world. Like the custom that you say to say "sheketz teshaktzenu", for example. The answer is the opposite, very good. We don't have such a custom, we have a custom to say "sheketz", but the Torah says, you see a beautiful church...

But it says here "**makom she'ovdim bo**", it's not you see the worshippers. No, he certainly means that it's perhaps not simple to become, a simple for everyone, the whole world is a place where idolatry is worshipped, I don't mean it that way. No, he sees a group of gentiles bowing, not necessarily the church, whatever they are in the middle of... No, the place certainly means some building, something like that, and he sees the church.

I'm just saying this way, I'm trying to say my interpretation. I claim that you see a beautiful thing, what do you say, "sheketz"? "Hodu l'Hashem ki tov", I can't say specifically about idolatry, it's indeed nicer what you say. One says, where, the Almighty is very good, He lets them have such a beautiful building for thousands of years. It's very nice. It's much nicer than to say, it's spitting and "sheketz teshaktzenu", you think about it. It's a whole different level of such a thing.

You are praising the Almighty that the Almighty has some pleasure from the place. No, but the place proves His patience. I mean that here you have a certain silver lining, here a virtue in the place, that the place also shows the greatness of Hashem, it shows His attribute of erech apayim. You think

that the place shows the opposite, so to speak? I say no, the place shows the patience of the Holy One, Blessed be He. As it says "im l'ovrei retzono kach", on what does it stand? "Im l'ovrei retzono kach"? On osei retzono al achat kama v'kama. I saw that there is what says that when one remembered that when one saw how well it goes for the gentiles, one said, well, kal vachomer how much it comes for the...

#### Place from Which Idolatry Was Uprooted

**Speaker 1:** How much it comes for the... **A place from which idolatry was uprooted**, when one sees a place where idolatry was uprooted, one was already obligated in the mitzvah of the laws of idolatry. And one tore out idolatry, there in Eretz Yisrael one recites **Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam she'akar avodah zarah me'artzenu**. It's interesting, because for example if a Jew, a person uproots, there is also perhaps a birkat hamitzvot, and even in chutz la'aretz there is, one recites **she'akar avodah zarah min hamakom hazeh**.

But as it was uprooted, means like naturally, he says something not when Jews came to uproot. It's simply broken. Right, not Jews came to break, but he speaks simply also of such a case. It became old and it was broken. Uprooted means that they nullified it, they decided that they will no longer worship idolatry, they will do something like that. It's interesting, because either a person uproots because the Almighty merited with what he wrote in the Torah as if it's a mitzvah to uproot. Or a person was a miracle and was uprooted. The people stopped and decided that there is no more, something like that.

And in chutz la'aretz, one recites **she'akar avodah zarah min hamakom hazeh. V'omer bishteihen**, one says in both, **keshem she'akarta**, it's interesting the precision, the hei at the end, keshem she'akarta is interesting. Just as You have uprooted from this place, **kach ta'akor**, so shall You uproot idolatry **mikol hamkomot, v'tashiv lev ovdeihem l'ovdecha**. Ah, that is very powerful.

#### "V'tashiv Lev Ovdeihem L'ovdecha" – A Prayer for Idol Worshipers

**Speaker 1:** One doesn't curse the idol worshippers here, but one prays for them a prayer that the worshippers of Hashem should change, should do teshuva, should serve the Almighty. It's a wonderful thing. If someone asks if there is anywhere a prayer where we pray for idol worshippers, not that they should speedily be cut off, but... speedily be cut off we say about the Jews, about the heretics. About heretics. Or as we say kol harish'ah kulah k'ashan techaleh. But here there is a thing where you pray **v'tashiv lev ovdeihem l'ovdecha**. Also about Eretz Yisrael this stands as if. Very interesting.

**Speaker 2:** Yes, wait. Those who serve here. Not only in exile.

**Speaker 1:** We're speaking in general, I tell you, we're speaking here of a beautiful building. It's a shame, the building could have been a beit midrash. The Arabs made it, maybe this is also the uprooting, if it stops being a church and becomes a beit midrash.

**Speaker 2:** No, it could be that v'tashiv lev ovdeihem l'ovdecha means that they should reverse the damage that the Rambam calculated in the laws of idolatry, they should suddenly remember back that all things were only, one served the sun because one wants to truly thank the Almighty, and one makes the place into a beit midrash.

**Speaker 1:** But no, that is the place one must uproot.

**Speaker 2:** No, the place, the place, you say a place, one makes the place of idolatry, one makes the place of idolatry, one takes the church and one makes from it a place of service of Hashem, is that also uprooting idolatry.

**Speaker 1:** No, v'tashiv lev ovdeihem is very interesting. It's such a tremendous thing, how many such Jews who are lost, he seeks to serve the Almighty, he simply came to the wrong place. Bring him back, you seek to serve, we weren't aware that this is such a great danger to be an idol worshipper.

When I asked him, I asked him, I told him, "If you want, I'll bring you a gentile, I'll bring you a Jew who is not from us, a tinok shenishba, who grew up in a very distant world."

#### Halacha 10: Blessing on Seeing Houses of Israel in Settlement and in Ruin

##### Blessing of "Matziv Gevul Almanah" – In Settlement

**Speaker 1:** Now we're going to learn what blessing we make when we come to Lakewood. **One who sees houses of Israel**, one sees Jewish homes **in their settlement**, if one sees it, a settlement means simply that it has rebuilt itself. No, it lives, there is a nice Jewish town. Monroe, one goes to Monroe, what blessing does one make? One makes a blessing, **"Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam matziv gevul almanah"**. That the Jews were expelled and they settled back. The Jews had a great destruction, a destruction of the world, they were expelled, there was the destruction of the Temple and wars and so on, but they settle back, the Almighty restores the boundary of the widow.

But the Rambam doesn't say in Eretz Yisrael, the Rambam says even in chutz la'aretz. Don't we say in Pesukei D'Zimra, how do we say about the widow in one of the blessings?

**Speaker 2:** Yes, k'almanah, that we were expelled from Jerusalem.

**Speaker 1:** Nachem, hashiveinu l'Eretz Yisrael.

**Speaker 2:** No, but there is in Pesukei D'Zimra, we say like a widow and barren.

**Speaker 1:** No, we say yes, "kibetz baneha l'tocha", there it says barren, not widow.

**Speaker 2:** No, but there is in Nachem we say that Zion cries like a widow without her children.

**Speaker 1:** And here is matziv gevul almanah, that the Jews are back together, the Jews continue to build. But it doesn't say that it must be in Eretz Yisrael, it doesn't say. Apparently on Monroe one also makes this blessing.

##### Blessing of "Dayan HaEmet" – In Ruin

**Speaker 1:** And **in their ruin**, if one travels to Kiryas Joel, then one makes **Dayan HaEmet**. Which blessing does one make if one travels to Europe and sees all the Jewish towns that are destroyed? Dayan HaEmet. Baruch Dayan HaEmet.

One goes to a cemetery, the two until now the world doesn't know. The current two the halacha one knows yes.

**Speaker 2:** Yes. One who sees graves of Israel, one who sees graves of Israel.

#### Discussion: Why Does the World Know One Blessing and Not the Other?

**Speaker 1:** The matziv gevul almanah is always very interesting to me, because it's a very unique blessing that is said in such a poetic way. Not to say that the other blessings

are... Almost all blessings are poetic. The matziv gevil almanah is very strong, because you perhaps have an image of such a yavam, an older brother-in-law who saved his sister-in-law from widowhood.

Now Chazal... Baruch matziv gevil almanah... There is a verse, "yatziv gevil almanah" in Mishlei, "v'nishlah tzaddik".

**Speaker 2:** Aha. There is a verse.

**Speaker 1:** One says that the Almighty is a matziv gevil almanah. It says that it's very interesting, because it seems that we don't want to rejoice too much with houses of Israel, because we are sad, we are not back in Eretz Yisrael.

**Speaker 2:** One rejoices very much. In glory.

**Speaker 1:** No, matziv gevil almanah, the simple meaning is, she remained a widow. She didn't find a new husband who took her.

**Speaker 2:** I don't agree. I don't agree. What refugee did she find?

**Speaker 1:** The Almighty has us as in the meantime.

**Speaker 2:** It could also be mi she'aflitah. It doesn't have to be. A widow has a wedding back, one also says matziv gevil almanah. It doesn't have to be. This is a reality. We are a joy together.

**Speaker 1:** Until then, but until then this is a matziv gevil almanah. One rejoices about this until one breaks a glass of brandy. We wait for the redemption.

**Speaker 2:** It doesn't have to be. It doesn't have to be. I'm not saying it has to be. I'm not saying I'm saying it has to be. If it has to be, this is not a chiddush. But I think.

**Speaker 1:** Say, say, say.

#### **Halacha 10: Blessing on Seeing Graves of Israel**

##### **The Text of the Blessing**

**Speaker 1:** Further, **one who sees graves of Israel.** One sees graves of Israel, one waits, one says the blessing. You don't know? It's written at all cemeteries. It says like this: "**Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam asher yatzar etchem badin**". The Almighty created you with justice.

Why... Now, you're going to discover the secret why certain blessings one knows yes and certain blessings one doesn't know. Because whoever makes the cemetery writes a sign with the blessing, therefore the world knows about it. By the gevil almanah they didn't write any sign, therefore the world doesn't know about it. I mean it's very simple. Do you agree?

**Speaker 2:** Yup.

**Speaker 1:** Okay, what does one do? One says like this, it's a sort of judgment, one says such a tzidduk hadin, and one speaks about resurrection of the dead. One says like this: "**Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam asher yatzar etchem badin**". The Almighty created you with justice. It already stands like the thousands... The Almighty decides on whom it should be born. The point is, the Almighty is just about the whole thing. The son is eating with judgment, and the son is usually that he is given sustenance. The difference is that he enters Gan Eden and he has what to eat. Resurrection of the dead is eating with judgment, and yet resurrection of the dead is that he is judged to death, the Almighty makes that people should die, but in the end there is the future to come, where he has a power of resurrection of the

dead for the future to come, and therefore he is destined to restore them in the future to come, and that is also his judgment, "**Baruch Atah Hashem mechayeh hametim**".

**Discussion: Why "Yotzer Etchem" – Present Tense to the Dead?**

**Speaker 2:** Why is there a question on "yotzer etchem badin"? One speaks to the dead, one doesn't speak to the dead, one speaks to the Almighty.

**Speaker 1:** One speaks to the dead, why shouldn't one be able to speak to the dead? Not like all these Litvaks say that one may not speak to the dead, one does indeed speak, one has a blessing that the Sages instituted that one speaks to them. Why shouldn't they hear? They are dead, can't they hear? You know that there is a halacha of lo'eg larash, that one doesn't go with tzitzit, and one doesn't pray, and one doesn't do any mitzvah there, because it's not appropriate.

**Speaker 2:** I hear, all questions that one hears.

**Speaker 1:** One speaks, they are people, the dead were once people, a bit more respect for a person. Why is it a wonder about why one says present tense to the dead? One doesn't need now an answer on the spot. I am very happy with it. When one is not happy, one must say that it remains difficult. It's a wonder, one doesn't speak to the dead. One does speak, one speaks the whole time to the dead. What don't you understand?

**Speaker 2:** It's a wonderful thing that the language is "yotzer etchem" and not "yotzer otam", the people. He doesn't speak to them, he speaks "Atah Hashem", he speaks to You. To whom does he send the email? To the Almighty.

**Speaker 1:** No, no, no, it's not a problem. You asked the greatest question on the language of the blessing, it's not a problem. Every single blessing in the world begins with present tense and ends with absent tense, and we have no problem with it. When we go to our work, home, always we see,

#### **Blessings on Large Gatherings of People, Sages, Kings, and Strange Creatures**

##### **One Who Sees Six Hundred Thousand People Together**

**Speaker 1:**

Does he send it to the Almighty? But not later than tomorrow. No, no, no, it's not a problem. Every single blessing in the world begins with "Baruch" and ends with "Baruch", and in the middle is... No, no, please, don't start...

##### **Gentlemen, Gentlemen, Gentlemen**

Gentlemen, gentlemen, gentlemen, sometimes we see that one reckons with the person. It's not human matters that are going on. A person has died, finished person, one doesn't reckon with him. I'm not going into the inquiry that the Gemara has in Berachos about whether people see or don't see. It's basic humanity. Why should one speak to them? And it's very sad, as it were, that he died. One says, "Come, he was born, the Almighty gave you birth, the Almighty gave you life. It's a quiet time, you should go on living."

Okay. "**One who sees six hundred thousand people at once.**" Gentlemen, one sees six hundred thousand people at once. Here one must ask Rav Moshe Feinstein whether it must be literally at once, or whether it must be six hundred thousand.

**Speaker 2:**

Ah, you mean with the questions about the stadiums?

**Speaker 1:**

I'm saying, six hundred thousand means one must count? Six hundred thousand means very many. Right? No? I don't know. Yes.

**The Blessing on Gentiles — "Boshu Imchem"**

**"If they are gentiles, one says 'Boshu imchem me'od chafra yoledetchem'."** What is the meaning? Ah, they're gentiles after all, it says "boshu." The Rabbeinu Manoach loves to translate the language of verses. "Boshu imchem" — I can't look in the book now, it will disturb my video. "Boshu imchem me'od" — if you want to look, look for me. "Boshu imchem me'od" — your mother should be ashamed. What does this have to do with it? That the mother should be ashamed? Yes, basically. **"Chafra yoledetchem hinei acharit goyim midbar tziya va'arava."** How does the verse work out? The gentiles don't go that way.

It's interesting, previously by idol worshippers one blessed them, "lo tevoshu velo tikalmu," and now they gather together. Why do gentiles gather together? Why? To watch sports? I don't know what.

One says negative about the six hundred thousand. Gentiles that they should not multiply. Not that they shouldn't, one says that acharit goyim. The Rambam doesn't say, he says that it exists, and here he doesn't bring the complete answer. I don't know.

The Rambam doesn't say, he says that it exists, and here he doesn't bring the complete answer. I don't know.

I think that the Jews need to be separate. It's special for the Jews. I don't know so many gentiles that when two or three Jews come. There the gentiles should be ashamed. Yes. There the gentiles should be ashamed. They're going to die.

**The Blessing on Jews — "Chacham HaRazim"**

But the Jews in Eretz Yisrael, we are Jews in Eretz Yisrael. Yes, what's bad about Jews in Eretz Yisrael? Because, ah, look, I'll tell you what the blessing is. At a gathering one says the blessing **"Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam Chacham HaRazim."** The Gemara there explains Chacham HaRazim, that there are so many different types of people there, and each one thinks differently. There it says **"Just as their faces are not alike, so their thoughts are not alike."** And the Almighty, **"knows the thoughts in the heart of every person."** The Rambam wouldn't say such language exactly, I don't know.

But the answer is like this, whoever is no Jews, he knows that in chutz la'aretz he knows, all Jews think the same thing. In Eretz Yisrael, he knows, every Jew thinks something different. So only in Eretz Yisrael is there Chacham HaRazim.

**Speaker 2:**

You know, there's a Rashba, "HaKadosh Baruch Hu knows thoughts." So that means Chacham HaRazim is the Almighty.

**Speaker 1:**

That's the general principle you're saying. Chacham HaRazim is certainly the Almighty. Yes, He knows different types of this, and others will know all of these from all these people as if their knowledge. The Almighty, chacham certainly refers to the Almighty. Yes, yes, yes.

That means the Almighty is the general wisdom of all people. Okay, whatever. But why only in Eretz Yisrael? Why only in Eretz Yisrael? I don't know. In chutz la'aretz they're fake. Jews in chutz la'aretz are fake.

Okay, he brings, what does the Tzelach say? Torahs. Well, he can also know this, just as he says he can also know this. Yes, but Eretz Yisrael is more wise. Okay, one really needs to know the difference. The gathering of Jews in chutz la'aretz is once a bit fake. That's the reality. Look around and you'll see.

**One Who Sees the Sages of Israel / Sages of the Nations**

Now, what blessing does one say when one sees a sage? How does one see a sage? Because one knows that he's a sage?

It's actually a wonder, what is the meaning of Eretz Yisrael? Okay, I need to look at it more. **"One who sees the sages of the nations of the world."** Baruch Chacham HaRazim. It should be blessed **Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam shenatan meichochmato livsar vadam.** I know, for example one goes to a doctor, he's a wise person who teaches people wisdom, I know, the Almighty gave His wisdom to flesh and blood. Well good, the Almighty gives His wisdom to people.

**Discussion: The Difference Between "Chacham HaRazim" and "Shenatan Meichochmato"**

So, it's interesting, because Chacham HaRazim also means that the Almighty gave wisdom to all people. Not that He gave, that He is. Right? Chacham that He is. The difference between the two things, here the Almighty gave wisdom livsar vadam. Chacham HaRazim can also be that all six hundred thousand people each one thinks in his way, and all of them received their wisdom from the Almighty.

Chacham HaRazim is a translation that it's something a language that the Almighty includes all wisdoms, all people's wisdom. Chacham HaRazim is a language that appears somewhere? No, he makes shenatan meichochmato. There is, yes, a place where the Gemara says that on one sage one makes Chacham HaRazim because he's as clever as six hundred thousand people, something like that language.

**"Lirei'av" vs. "Livsar Vadam"**

**Sages of Israel** one says, **Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam shenatan meichochmato lirei'av.** For Jews who are yirei Hashem. It's interesting, because a sage of Israel who isn't a yerei shamayim, one can also say apparently, because lirei'av means for the Jews who are yerei'av. One doesn't mean for the specific person. Yisrael in general doesn't mean a person who was born to a Jewish mother. Yisrael means one who conducts himself Jewishly. A sage of Israel means a Jewish doctor, can he not be perhaps, I don't know how he goes, he can learn Torah, but he's a Jewish doctor. Does one make shenatan meichochmato lirei'av? Because he's a part of the Jews. Or does sage of Israel mean wisdom of the wisdom of Israel.

No, no, I think that sage of Israel means a Jewish sage. The difference is that he's a yarei, it's simply a difference, it's a nice thing. For a Jew one doesn't say simply flesh and blood. A Jew isn't simply flesh and blood, a Jew is a Jew, he's from the Almighty's people, from the Almighty's chassidim, His fearers.

And nations of the world, we already know that also nations of the world can have wisdom, He didn't give it specifically to His fearers. He didn't give it to flesh and blood. It's a matter that you're a Jew. Very good, but the Jew... but every blessing goes

to me nachas... I think that there are like all blessings, the more important receives a special blessing, like HaBocher BePri Eitz.

**Speaker 2:**

No, but I'm saying about the shenatan, shenatan meichochmato lirei'av. There was only the blessing shenatan meichochmato lirei'av.

**Speaker 1:**

I said the possibility that wisdom isn't for everyone, the Almighty gives wisdom. No, there is wisdom livsar vadam, the Almighty gives to every flesh and blood. That's the fact, that everyone can become clever.

**Speaker 2:**

No, from what He gave you, from what He gave you. What He didn't buy, the Almighty didn't give.

**Speaker 1:**

You mean that one doesn't become cleverer through learning, but the Almighty gives everything. All blessings one makes, because the Almighty does everything.

**Textual Difference — "Shechalak" vs. "Shenatan"**

But I don't think it's different. Here in the Gemara there's a different text, "shechalak meichochmato" or "shenatan"? By the yerei'av it says "shechalak," and by the others it says "shenatan." Also by the kings, by the Rambam he doesn't bring the difference, by the Rambam there's both "shenatan". **"Kings of the nations of the world, Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam shenatan mikevodo livsar vadam."**

**One Who Sees Kings of Israel / Kings of the Nations**

**Discussion: What Does "Kavod" Mean by a King?**

That means that, yes, kavod here means more dominion than honor now. Kavod malchus. **Kings of Israel, Baruch shenatan mikevodo lirei'av.** Kavod here means power you think? I don't know. It seems what a king... And you don't say specifically when you see him with his honor and his crown. That he has the governance of the land. Perhaps that's what kavod means. I don't know, one needs to think. Kavod means that he goes in a nice bekitcha? That's not honor.

**Speaker 2:**

I don't know what you're saying, I don't know. What is the thing that you want to say that a king has more than other people?

**Speaker 1:**

It's kavod and gevurah. You see, there's kavod and gevurah in that Rema. I don't care what that Rema says. Kavod and gevurah, okay. We're going with the text, understand. I just want to know whether... What is the reality of the matter? I just want to know whether... How does one say about a king? I think that in the verse it always says "melech hakavod." A king is a thing that has kavod. It doesn't say that a king has power. I don't know what you're saying. It sounds that in Yiddish, in the language of the sages, the language of the Torah, the way to speak of a king, a king is a thing that has kavod. That's how it seems. I think you can call it prestige, honors. And not, kavod doesn't mean that one gives an aliyah, that's what I mean to bring out. Kavod is something a broader thing in halacha. Kavod is the acknowledgement of his gevurah or something like that.

**One Who Sees the Cushite / Strange Creatures — Meshaneh HaBriyot**

Okay. More interesting blessings, for when people see interesting things that draw their attention, they should remember that the Almighty made it so. The Almighty made an interesting world. He didn't only make things that are very important. A king is important to maintain order. Why should one have funny people who walk around in a circus? For fun.

**One who sees the Cushite**, one sees... This isn't for everyone, for what is? As the Rambam says, one must thank the Almighty for everything that's interesting. When one sees something that's very interesting to him, for example, a person from white places comes and he sees a black person, or in any case Jews from black places, Yemenite Jews come and they see for the first time a European person with white hair. The Rambam says **one who sees the Cushite, one who sees the albino** makes the same blessing. I agree. Or there comes here a Jew from a large community of blacks, and suddenly they see for the first time white people. Yes, maybe. **Or one who is strange in the form of his face or his limbs.** It probably doesn't mean in a way that they look sick, that they look bad. One must make the blessing truly, and they're actually extreme. But other types, in that region all people were like that. **Meshaneh habriyot**, that He made all types of changes in creatures.

**Discussion: What Does "Meshaneh HaBriyot" Mean?**

What is this? You know the story, there was a boy who was very small, some Brisker picked him up and made "ah, meshaneh habriyot," he got offended. No, it doesn't mean that. It means that you go to a foreign place. No, meshaneh habriyot seems that it's similar to Borei nefashot rabot vechesoronan. The Almighty made variety, the Almighty made a broad world. Just as we learned that an apple, the Tosafot says that an apple is something one could live without, one makes Borei nefashot. One thanks perhaps for the variety, no? For the selection.

**Speaker 2:**

What are you asking? Meshaneh means He made different ones, or He changed this one from him?

**Speaker 1:**

No, it's apparently "Borei minei briyot meshunaot," that's what it should mean. It's not that the Almighty took... that every black person is simply that the Almighty took a white person and painted him, smeared him with shoe polish.

**Speaker 2:**

But the whole world, all the fruits are also like that.

**Speaker 1:**

Yes, but that's not the details. We assume that generally there are normal people and there are strange ones. When they're normal, you go a whole time with the modern way of thinking, perhaps the young man is crazy.

**Blessings of Sight: Meshaneh HaBriyot, Shekacha Lo Be'olamo, and Shelo Chiser Be'olamo Klum**

**Halacha 12: The Blessing of "Meshaneh HaBriyot" on People with Defects**

**Speaker 1:**

He asks, does meshaneh mean He makes different ones, or He changed this one from a...

No, it's apparently **Borei minei briyot meshunaot**, that's what it should mean.

Not that the Almighty took a white person and painted him, smeared him with shoe polish. Rather as if all these types He creates different types.

**Speaker 2:**

Yes, but that's not the translation. We have that as if there are normal people and there are strange ones. When they're normal, you go a whole day with imagining and thinking perhaps that one is crazy.

But try, you want then, fine translate meshaneh habriyot. But the halacha doesn't say that the halacha is only normal. Then one says, make the blessing, I don't know, but not now.

**Speaker 1:**

Here there are funny ones, meshaneh habriyot means the Almighty makes funny creatures. That's the remaining translation.

You're saying a good progressive interpretation. They mean...

**Speaker 2:**

No, it has no complaints, you can be the progressive, you can join the bekanim, bekanim... But it's not then.

**Discussion: What Does "Behakanim" Mean?**

**Speaker 1:**

Okay, we'll see. Because so, one really speaks troubles.

What happens when a person sees people who are strange, but it's a sad thing? For example, he sees a blind person, or a cripple, a person who had his foot cut off, and mukeh shechin, people who have boils, and behakanim.

I mean, behakanim means people who have freckles? I don't think, because freckles isn't any... something very large... But something is more than freckles.

I thought it could mean lepers, you know what that means? The people who are very pale, have white pigment, are very white, vichvarot bahem.

That this is a sad thing, the people probably feel... and the others, simply, blind, cripple, or a deficiency, but the behakanim it seems he feels different, or... One needs to know what the behakanim matter is.

**Speaker 2:**

More a form he said. Something severe, yes, not just a small thing. It's a type of tzara'at. It's a type of tzara'at.

**Discussion: "Mimei Iman" — What Blessing?**

**Speaker 1:**

**And if they were from the mother's womb**, that means the mukeh shechin or behakan is so from the mother's womb, does one also say Dayan HaEmet, and also meshaneh habriyot? Or only meshaneh habriyot? Blessed, Baruch meshaneh habriyot?

**Speaker 2:**

No, apparently only meshaneh habriyot.

**Speaker 1:**

Ah, that's the point! It means, because perhaps here in punctuation... I think it also comes the Dayan HaEmet, the other came out. But he was born blind, that's what he is, he doesn't feel as sad as when he became blind. Do you understand so?

Not simply the Almighty made this person from he makes blind. Perhaps until then accepting his his his his his his identity.

**Speaker 2:**

No, no, it's sadder said. There was born a person who...

**Speaker 1:**

Yes, but you understand what I'm saying. No, perhaps only you can't on blind, perhaps it goes on a dwarf. Does it go on behakan, I take the thought like that. Don't know.

**The Blessing of "Meshaneh HaBriyot" on Animals**

**Speaker 1:**

I go a ro'eh pil vekof vekipof. That when one sees an elephant, a monkey... pil is a... ah, pil is an elephant. Vekof, vekipof are two types of monkeys, a large monkey and a small monkey.

Also one is blessed makes the blessing meshaneh habriyot, because these look very very different. So probably also a giraffe. Or anything. Not the regular cattle and chickens. Something looks very normal.

The novelty is, he looks similar to a person. It's a rocket. He's the only animal that looks normal. Almost a person. The others one makes very normal.

**General Principle of Blessings of Sight**

**Speaker 2:**

No, no, I mean to say that it's a rare thing, that a person sees and draws very attention dance, when it's a novelty. Perhaps one can make such a rule for all these laws.

Anything that catches your attention, comes for this a certain blessing. Every thing, according to the matter. Makes sense.

When a person is impressed, he must bring the policy to the Almighty, he must bring in the blessings. For so, one can perhaps say this.

It's also one can say it like Chazal use every opportunity. When a person has paid attention to something, one should... But the attention of a Jew is a very precious thing. Already let go.

Ah, it catches. That when he sees a movie which blessing must one make, but because one of the blessings. So it catches what it made to do the attention, no?

**Digression: Blessings on Scents**

**Speaker 1:**

I already spoke about smelling. We need to come to this. But ro'eh briyot tovot.

**Blessings on Beautiful Creations and Natural Phenomena**

No, we discussed, he asks there about a cigarette in agriculture in the Divrei Yissachar and the simple things to do. I smell a cigarette in the streets. And he brings various other things. The thing shouldn't become tamei (ritually impure). But it could be that it's actually one of the takanos (rabbinic enactments). We don't know.

**Law 13: The Blessing "Shekacha Lo B'olamo" on Beautiful Creations**

**Speaker 1:**

**HaRo'eh brios tovos um'sukonos b'yoser** (One who sees beautiful and well-formed creations), these are beautiful creations. Until now we've been talking, okay, now we've heard brios (creations), meaning people.

**Speaker 2:**

Yes, beautiful people.

**Speaker 1:**

It could be brios tovos um'sukonos b'yoser, he means for example a person who is very fit, a person who is very healthy, he looks very well-formed, he looks very healthy, attractive in English. It doesn't say yafos (beautiful), tovos um'sukonos can mean that people are very healthy, the opposite of the sick and ill person... and I think he also means beautiful.

Okay, **v'ilanos tovos** (and beautiful trees), these are beautiful trees. It says first goy (non-Jew) or behemah (animal), ilanos tovos, what does it say? Is it a mistake? I don't know.

Ilanos tovos, it's not just people or animals, but even a tree, something like that. Here I think, **mevarech Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam shekacha lo b'olamo** (blessed are You, Hashem our God, King of the universe, that He has such things in His world), that He has such beautiful things in His world.

Do we say shebara brios tovos (who created good creations)? No no no, that's another blessing.

**Discussion: Precision in the Text "Shekacha Lo B'olamo"****Speaker 1:**

Ah, Baruch shekacha lo b'olamo, it's interesting, because you're not giving full credit here that the Almighty made it. You're only saying that such beautiful things exist in His world.

I already know, one can be medayek (precise) about this specifically. This goes back to the chakira (analytical question), the world wasn't at all agreeing with my approach that one can't be medayek from the language. I still hold by it, but I saw that the congregation brought out well that no one agrees with it.

You can't be medayek. Shekacha lo b'olamo, it implies that someone didn't make it, rather the thing comes out as a blessing according to what you believe that He has such beautiful things in His world.

**Speaker 2:**

Yes, that's the meaning.

**The Blessing "Shelo Chiser B'olamo Klum" on Trees in the Month of Nissan****Speaker 1:**

Yes, **HaYotze l'sados o l'ganos b'yemei Nissan, v'ra'ah ilanos porchim v'nitzanim olim** (One who goes out to fields or gardens in the days of Nissan and sees trees blossoming and buds emerging), he sees the trees blooming and buds emerging, the beautiful little leaves coming out, he says the blessing **Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam shelo chiser b'olamo klum** (blessed are You, Hashem our God, King of the universe, who has made nothing lacking in His world), He made it so that nothing should be lacking in His world. It's similar to borei nefashos v'chesronan (who creates living things and their needs), everything is there. **Uvara vo brios tovos v'ilanos tovos, k'dei lehanos bahen bnei adam** (and created in it good creations and beautiful trees, in order that people should derive pleasure from them), so that people should have enjoyment from them.

By us it says lehanos, by us we say lehanos, but here it says **k'dei lehanos bahen bnei adam**. So the owner of this, he

hangs it in front of a house, he should have enjoyment from it.

**Innovations of the Rambam****Speaker 1:**

The Rambam doesn't say that it has to be a fruit tree for example. I don't understand why. The Rambam also doesn't say two things: fruit tree he doesn't say, and he doesn't say it has to be the month of Nissan. You can also make it in Iyar, you can also make it in Adar.

**Speaker 2:**

Yes, that's simple.

**Speaker 1:**

He means to say, you go outside, you see everything is beautiful, you should make a blessing. There's no doubt. I'm not going into the psak halacha (halachic ruling), but fruit trees is an even greater innovation that it has no reason. You go outside, you see that everything is beautiful.

By the way, I'm driving home from the road, everything is in bloom, gorgeous. Make the blessing, yes, one should make the blessing. Certainly.

**Discussion: Blessing on a Beautiful Person****Speaker 2:**

Also there where one sees what is a beautiful person, "shekacha lo b'olamo". It's very interesting. This is the Almighty makes fruit. It has to do with beauty.

**Speaker 1:**

No, here it fits precisely with a fruit tree. The Almighty made it so that besides a fruit tree you should have enjoyment for a few weeks in the year when the fruit tree produces beautiful flowers. It makes very beautiful.

**Practical Question: Blessing on Flowers****Speaker 1:**

By the way, perhaps one can make it every time one buys flowers for Shabbos. Which blessing does one make on bringing flowers for Shabbos? No blessing? "Shekacha lo b'olamo"? Something like that?

What does it say here? "Ilanos porchim v'notzrim b'olam" (trees blossoming and budding in the world). He's very insistent. It could be something, on everything there's a blessing. It could be something, a person buys fresh flowers. On seeing there's only this here.

When you smell the flowers, you can indeed make "borei minei besamim" (who creates various spices). But on seeing, on a beautiful sight, you have "brios tovos". Ah, the previous one. "Shekacha lo b'olamo".

"Ilanos tovos" it doesn't say when the tree is planted or something. "Brios tovos" can also mean... "brios" apparently means people, but it can mean any beautiful creation. A person sees a peacock with all the gorgeous feathers. A creation that is very beautiful. Beautiful flowers.

A building perhaps is "shenasan meichochmaso l'vasar v'dam" (who gave of His wisdom to flesh and blood) for the architect. I don't know.

**Discussion: Blessing on the Smell of Bread and Other Things****Speaker 1:**

These are indeed good questions, because we also spoke about blessings on smell. Why when a person bakes chocolate cake is

there nothing? Because he can't make "reiach tov b'peiros" (good smell in fruits). There's perhaps a question about smell on Pesach.

I remember that the Rambam didn't bring it. If there's perhaps a text, I understand because one doesn't make "shenasan reiach tov b'peiros" or something like that. Right? I remember, I remember something like that.

The Rambam says further, "al hareichos" (on smells), there's something not, I understand that only on this one doesn't make, because bread is made to eat, but here he says that yes one makes. There was a dispute about this. The Rambam says that on bread yes.

**Speaker 2:**

Very good. "Al hareichos shenoshavin min ha'asavim" (on smells that blow from the grasses), ah, this I can understand, the smell of the chocolate cake, I only have enjoyment from eating the chocolate cake, yes?

**Speaker 1:**

No, it's not so different from a good smell from a fruit. True.

**Speaker 2:**

So very good, it says in the Rambam, right? It says "yesh omrim hameriach pas, yesh omrim borei shenasan reiach tov b'pas, v'yesh omrim she'ein borei she'ein reiach bah" (some say one who smells bread, some say blessed is He who gave good smell in bread, and some say one doesn't bless because there's no smell in it). You don't need to learn the Rambam.

**Speaker 1:**

Hello? I've never smelled the bread, you're laughing at me. In short, apparently one should make a blessing. According to... it already says in the Gemara, the Rambam brings it.

**Speaker 2:**

And meat? One can go through every thing. Meat isn't... when one makes a grill and smells the fresh meat, I love it, don't you? I don't know, I love it, I want to make a blessing.

**Speaker 1:**

In short, on a flower apparently one can make "shekochos u'gevuraso malei olam" (whose power and might fill the world). It can't be, I'll ask you, you go to the botanical gardens, a flower is the only thing that one spends money to buy for its beauty.

Practically, one goes to a wedding hall, someone decorated very beautifully, Shavuot, yes, Shavuot is coming now, one puts in the beis medrash fifty thousand dollars of flowers, one doesn't make a blessing on this? It can't be. "Shekochos u'gevuraso malei olam". Okay, psak halacha, one makes "shekochos u'gevuraso malei olam".

Further, and if one sees the rabbi under the chuppah one also makes "shechalak meichochmaso lirei'av" (who shared His wisdom with those who fear Him), if it's an ehrliche Yid (upright Jew) lirei'av, but if it's just a Yid one should see... no no, one says it on every Yid, "chacham lirei'av" (wise to those who fear Him).

**Law 14: Blessings on Natural Phenomena**

**Speaker 1:**

Um, yes, the Rambam says further, "al hareichos", no, this should be, yes, "al hareichos shenoshavin", something doesn't fit. Let me see the Rambam's language.

**"Al hareichos shenoshavin b'za'af"** (on very strong winds), on very strong winds, tornadoes, yes, such sorts of things, **"v'al habrakim"** (and on lightning) on lightning, **"v'al hare'amim"** (and on thunder) on thunder, **"v'al kol ha'avir shetishma bo re'amim gedolim"** (and on all the air in which one hears great thunders), one hears strong noises.

What are the noises from this? Is this thunder? No, something else? It's something else than thunder, obviously. Kolos u're'amim (sounds and thunders). Ah, one hears such sounds. This sounds like great thunders, that one hears the wheels of the chariot.

**Speaker 2:**

The Gemara says that one can't hear it. There is what say that it makes noise, but we can't hear it.

**Speaker 1:**

What's the meaning? More the wind, some sort of wind that makes a great noise.

**Blessings on Natural Phenomena, Kiddush Levana, and the Inner Dimension of Creation**

**Blessing on Strong Noises: Thunder, Winds, Earthquakes**

When one hears strong noises. What noises is this? Is this thunder, no? Something else? Something else than thunder, certainly.

Ah, why does it sound like thunder? It sounds like the noise of great animals, that one hears the wheels working hard. The Gemara says that one can't stop it. Many people say that it makes noise, one can't stop it. What's the meaning? Or the wind, some sort of wind that makes a strong noise. I don't know, he doesn't explain.

Kol zo'os ha'aretz (all earthquakes of the earth), he says, Rashi brings, yes, an earthquake makes a noise. A hearing from a sort of earthquake.

**The Rambam's Understanding of Meteors and Comets**

**V'al ha'ed shebashchakim sheyera'u k'ilu hem kochavim noflim v'ratzim mimakom l'makom** (And on the vapor in the heavens that appear as if they are stars falling and running from place to place). Very interesting here. That is, the Rambam says that what we call a "shooting star", the Rambam says, but it's not truly a star. It's only the gas that flies from the stars or what.

The Rambam means a "meteor". You know what a "meteor" is? It's called a "shooting star" in English. The truth is that it's such bones, stones from "space" that when they come, there forms a bit of fire around them. This is the "ed shebashchakim" (vapor in the heavens). The Rambam called it "ed shebashchakim". "Ed" means like air, like a "vapor". A "vapor", yes. A "vapor" shebashchakim sheyera'eh (in the heavens that appears). Interesting.

Also **al kochav sheyesh lo zanav** (on a star that has a tail), this is a "comet" that runs. The Rambam further held that that one is some "vapor". Or truly what the Rambam, according to how he understood stars, it didn't fit that this should be a star. He said, "what you see there, it looks like it's some balloon of air or what that runs."

**The Blessing: "Shekochos U'gevuraso Malei Olam"**

**Al kol echad mei'elu mevarech, Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam shekochos u'gevuraso malei olam** (On each of these one blesses, blessed are You, Hashem our God, King of the universe, whose power and might fill the world). Very interesting, because the Almighty is the one who turns the greatest of the spheres. Everything makes the spheres turn the stars. But when one becomes impressed by something, one makes a blessing. Where, it's something enormous, such a noise, shekochos malei olam (whose power fills the world). By us it says "shekochos u'gevuraso malei olam". Okay, it's a double language.

#### **Practical Note: Blessing on Wind**

The same thing, it's very funny, one teaches all the children that when one hears thunder one should make a blessing, but they don't know that when one hears a great wind one should make the same blessing. There's no difference at all, psak halacha.

I think this is all only relevant during the day. When one is overcome by a wow, how it has a name, and yes, one becomes impressed, one agrees, one encounters the great... I don't know. But it happens.

#### **Personal Story: Earthquake in the Middle of the Night**

A few weeks ago I had here a bit of an earthquake, I don't know what it's called, but it was in the middle of the night, that it felt like the whole world is ending. But then one should be able, I made a blessing, "shekochos u'gevuraso malei olam", without any doubt.

It tells you, people are simply amei ha'aretz (ignorant people), one only knows what the rabbi says afterwards. What one should expect, the whole thing and perhaps.

#### **Two Blessings: "Shekochos U'gevuraso Malei Olam" and "Oseh Ma'aseh Bereishis"**

The Rambam says, if one wants one can make either "shekochos u'gevuraso malei olam" or "oseh ma'aseh bereishis" (who makes the work of creation). Two options, or one can make both. Or both?

#### **Distinction Between the Two Blessings**

I think that "shekochos u'gevuraso malei olam" is when one goes on the fear, and "oseh ma'aseh bereishis" is truly if someone is a scholar and he says, ah, an earthquake, I know how nature works, I know what it is." Okay, it's "oseh ma'aseh bereishis". I don't know, it's not at all Torah, I don't know. You can disagree with me.

But it's a bit interesting, "oseh ma'aseh bereishis" screams as if it's much less that the Almighty screams now. "Shekochos u'gevuraso malei olam" is the Almighty screams now, yes? "Oseh ma'aseh bereishis" is that the Almighty put into creation that such and such should happen. The Almighty does it in the present, yes, not He did it, but the Almighty does it.

He doesn't say "ma'aseh bereishis", he says "oseh bereishis" (makes creation). Okay, it's also a double language, "oseh ma'aseh bereishis", no? Okay.

#### **Blessings on Mountains, Seas, Rivers**

Everything is still laws, **al heharim** (on the mountains). He doesn't say "haro'eh harim" (one who sees mountains), **al heharim v'al hageva'os v'al hamidbaros** (on the mountains and on the hills and on the deserts). He doesn't say "haro'eh", he says "al". It could be even not "ro'eh", I don't know, just a note. But correctly one can say "al heharim". **Al**

**heharim v'al hageva'os v'al hamidbaros v'al hayamim v'al haneharos** (on the mountains and on the hills and on the deserts and on the seas and on the rivers). Ah, **im ro'eh osam mei'es l'es achar sheloshim yom** (if one sees them from time to time after thirty days), here it comes however. If someone lives among mountains, he can't every day, because he doesn't become impressed. But if someone sees a mountain now after thirty days, he becomes impressed, he says **Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam oseh bereishis** (blessed are You, Hashem our God, King of the universe, who makes creation).

**Haro'eh es hayam hagadol** (One who sees the great sea), the great sea also, if one sees it from thirty days to thirty days, **oseh... haro'eh es hayam hagadol**. What the meaning of great sea is we don't know, true? It can mean every great sea that you said. Great means to say an ocean, not a lake. Like the Atlantic, the Pacific, the Mediterranean, and so on. You said he also says rivers, no? He doesn't say rivers. Ah, rivers. He says great sea. What is the blessing? **Oseh es hayam hagadol** (who makes the great sea). Apparently it makes sense.

#### **Question: Thirty Days by Other Blessings**

What is the thing? Because the Rambam doesn't tell us which things are only thirty days and which things... because if someone sees an elephant every day, is it also only thirty days? Because on an elephant there is meshaneh habrios (who varies the creatures) and blessed... it seems that the reasoning is that an elephant is a thing that one doesn't see all the time. But what happens if a person lives in the village where they raise elephants? He will never make it.

And if someone lives, for example, I was fortunate to have friends that one can make on him every day shehecheyanu v'kiyemanu v'higi'anu lazman hazeh (who has kept us alive and sustained us and brought us to this time). Is it also only once in thirty days? Or like haro'eh es chaveiro (one who sees his friend)? Never. Like haro'eh es chaveiro makes shehecheyanu, if he sees him every day he doesn't make it. Right, perhaps only once in thirty days. But the Rambam is not so clear.

The same thing when one goes to the cemetery, is also only once in thirty days. The Rambam also doesn't say when one goes to the cemetery it's also the same thing. If someone lives... but think about it, if someone... just like haro'eh es chaveiro, yes? If you don't see me every thirty days you make a blessing. If you see me, you go thirty days that you haven't seen me.

Okay, and haro'eh brios tovos you can also say only once in thirty days. But if when he buys flowers, is to say that he went to buy, it's more like enjoyment, like similar to smelling. I truly don't know, one needs to understand all these laws. I don't know the answer.

#### **Reasoning: Impression According to the Matter**

It's true that the previous things that you said, haro'eh means he sees now the first time a blind person, when he sees him the first time. Not that if someone has some sign a mole he can make on him once in thirty days the blessing. It's simply not blessings in this matter. All these blessings are based on a certain impression, it seems apparently according to the matters.

So automatically one must say according to the matter. I don't know, thunder for example, there's thunder twice in a day,

you're still lost. It's not nature. But a sea, okay, I already know the sea, it's in my backyard, it's not interesting. I think one can understand it, it's not simply so.

I see the Rambam says indeed that one can make both blessings, both shekochos u'gevuraso malei olam and oseh ma'aseh bereishis. The Rambam seems that he understood that one should say one of them.

### Blessing on a Rainbow

**Haro'eh keshet be'anan** (One who sees a rainbow), when someone sees a beautiful rainbow, the blessing is Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai wasn't worthy to say. He says so, **mevarech** (blesses), what does he make the blessing? We say this, it's quite a long blessing. He says so, **Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam zocher habris** (blessed are You, Hashem our God, King of the universe, who remembers the covenant), that He remembers the covenant that He made, there's a covenant with Noach right after the flood that He won't bring again, rather "es kashti nasati be'anan" (My bow I have placed in the cloud), instead of a flood there will come a rainbow. He says it now, **zocher habris** (remembers the covenant), the Almighty remembers the covenant, **v'ne'eman bivrito** (and is faithful to His covenant), He is faithful to His covenant and He indeed does so that instead of a flood He brings a rainbow, **v'kayam b'ma'amaro** (and fulfills His word), kayam also means faithful, He is kayam, He is mekayem (fulfills), He stands b'ma'amaro (by His word), He follows.

### Various Texts in the Gemara and Blessings

It states in the Gemara various versions, and the Gemara in Berachos 59 says that they were accustomed to say all three, or two or three. Yes, "Zocher HaBris" (Rememberer of the Covenant) is said in the remembrances on Yom Kippur, yes, Zichronos, first, Yom Kippur of the Jubilee, first, yes.

### The Blessing of Kiddush Levana

**One who sees the moon at its renewal**, when one sees the moon when it is renewed, it's also once every thirty days, one should say it after the new month, yes. **One makes a blessing**, one makes what we call Birkas Kiddush Levana, and he says thus, **"Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech HaOlam"**, a very long blessing, **"Asher B'ma'amaro Bara Shechakim"**, He created the world with His utterance, it says "B'asara Ma'amaros Nivra HaOlam" (With ten utterances the world was created), He created the world, created the heavens, with His utterance, **"V'ruach Piv Kol Tzeva'am"**, "ruach piv" also means with His utterance, it's another way to say with His utterance, He created all their hosts, all the heavenly hosts, He created the sun and the moon and these things, **"V'chok U'zman Nasan Lahem Shelo Yeshanu Es Tafkidam"**, He placed them within their boundaries, the Almighty clearly told the sun it should set and rise every twelve hours, and the moon once every thirty days, **"Shelo Yeshanu Es Tafkidam"**, they always follow.

### The Joy of the Heavenly Hosts

And not only that, **"Sasim U'smechim La'asos Retzon Konam"**, it is that every time the moon comes out, it rejoices again to follow what the Almighty commanded it then that it should be renewed every thirty days. The moon doesn't do it with sadness or laziness, it does it with joy. Yes. What is the fulfillment, **"Po'el Emes"**... How do we know that it does it

with joy? Because it didn't delay, if it were like you, it would have come an hour late to the time, to the order.

**"Po'el Emes Shepe'ulaso Emes"**... There is an inner meaning in this, one must understand. Okay. It's similar to what we say "Kol Elu" and in other places during prayer that the... We say the same words, but what does it mean? One must understand. Yes, "Po'el Emes"... It's the chapter of "HaShamayim Mesaprim Kevod Kel"... Somehow it's the joy that one sees the... When it's beautiful, we say that the moon itself is joyful. Okay. But are they living beings?

### Innovation: "Po'alei Emes" — The Heavenly Hosts Are Living Beings

Ah, **"Po'alei Emes"**, we see from here that the Rambam took them to be living beings. I don't know what the Rebbe says there in the letters, but here we speak about them as if they were living beings. Because we say "Po'el Emes Shepe'ulaso Emes", meaning... When we say "Po'el", here it says "Po'alei". We say "Po'el Emes" refers to the Almighty. But here it appears that "Po'alei Emes" refers to the heavenly hosts, **"Shepe'ulatam Emes"**.

### The Moon as a Crown of Glory for the Jews

**"V'lalevana Amar Shetischadeish Ateres Tiferes L'amusei Vaten."** The Almighty said to the moon that the Almighty makes the moon renew itself every month, to be an "ateres tiferes l'amusei vaten", it should be a beauty for the Jews. It's a beautiful sign for the Jews. "Amusei vaten" — the Almighty took them, as if the Almighty said that they were created from nothing, such a thing. "Amusei vaten" is "literally" to carry people whom their mother carried in her womb, but here it appears as if we're speaking somewhat like a parable, that the Almighty took them. "K'cham asher ro'eh Yosef".

**"She'atidim Lehischadeish Kamosa Ul'fa'er L'yotzram Al Kol Kevod Malchuso"**. "Beautiful". The Almighty said to the moon that once a month it should shine again from what it was diminished, it was gone, it became again, so that it should be an "ateres tiferes", that the Jews should take from this a sign that they too will in the future be renewed, and can glorify their Creator for all the honor of His kingdom.

### The Purpose of Kiddush Levana

What does "La'oro Anu Nahor" mean? Just as the moon, so the Jews should always see themselves freshly renewed. And we thank the Almighty, and we thank His worker at the Kiddush Levana, he thinks about it. The worker is "sas v'same'ach la'asos retzon kono", just as the moon is "sas v'same'ach la'asos retzon kono", so Jews are also "sasim u'smechim la'asos retzon konam".

You should know, the main halacha is interesting, but it appears here that the entire purpose of the moon being renewed every month is for an "ateres tiferes", whatever that means, we said that it means the Torah scholars.

### Birkas Kiddush Levana, Birkas HaChama, and Blessings of Sight

#### Birkas Kiddush Levana — The Moon and the Jews

**Speaker 1:** Just as the moon, but Jews should always see themselves fresh and renewed and we thank the Almighty. Indeed, indeed, and we thank the Almighty now, at the Kiddush Levana, he thinks about it, **"Po'alim al yotzram al kol ma'aseihem, u'varuch Atah Hashem"**. Just as the moon is "atid lehischadeish kamosa", so we Jews are also

**"atidim lehischadeish kamosa"**. One should know the main halacha is...

**Speaker 2:** Interesting, but it appears that the entire purpose of the moon being restored every month is for **"ateres tiferes"**. Whatever that means, we said that the entire purpose is... I didn't say that this is the purpose, but he says that the moon should be renewed every month so that the Jews should also see from this. How is this built on a verse?

**Speaker 1:** This is a beautiful liturgical poem from the author of this, I don't know, the Men of the Great Assembly who made the blessing.

**Speaker 2:** No, but where do you see that the Jews are like the moon that is renewed every month? It says here, it says so.

**Speaker 1:** No, interesting. Does it say a verse? I remember that it says in a verse. It says in the Kiddush Levana, in the blessing of the moon, the blessing of the moon's renewal.

### The Law of Birkas HaLevana — Renewal and Obligation

**Speaker 1:** One must know the law, the law is that the Almighty renews. Interesting, you see that a new month is called a "chodesh", which has to do with the word "mechadeish". Chodesh is the same word as "chiddush", a new moon.

Says the Rambam, one must know the law, the law is that the blessing is made... We'll see in the Rambam also, when one sees the new moon one must, one is obligated to make the blessing, like all blessings of sight. The Rambam learns that it's an obligation.

There are simply interesting stringencies and innovations from the Rishonim that one should make it only after seven days, after three days, various claims that I don't understand, and they conduct themselves according to Kabbalah. And we also conduct ourselves to make it in the beis medrash, but it may be that one who conducts himself this way should be careful not to look at the moon until then, because otherwise one becomes obligated to make the blessing, and one cannot say that one has already seen.

The entire blessing is made on the wonder, right? You look outside, whoever goes outside a bit at night sees that the moon gets smaller, and then where, it's a new moon.

### Comparison to Morning Blessings

**Speaker 2:** Okay, it's interesting. Let's leave it open, that we're going to make it not like the morning blessings. It should have been consistent with the same morning blessings of the Rambam, but the answer will be here again the same thing: we no longer become amazed.

The only way to become amazed is if one says to oneself, "Let us now go become amazed and go out a minyan together and say together." Not that I become amazed and I actually do this. But other people, the only opportunity they should think that the moon has something to do with them, or that the moon's renewal says something for a Jew, is if there is an enactment of Kiddush Levana in public. And they don't transgress.

**Speaker 1:** Okay, I follow. I follow. I'll go to what I wanted to say. Let's see the correct version always. All the things... No, actually, this is the print. The print says just things many times. For details is all the prayer.

### Rema: Standing — As If Receiving the Divine Presence

**Speaker 1:** Says the Rema further, **"V'tzarich l'vareich bracha zo me'umad"**. This blessing should be made

standing. Why? **"Shekol hamvareich al hachodesh bizmanah k'ilu mekabel pnei haShechina"**. As if he received the Divine Presence.

Very interesting. Because the moon is the female, the sun is the male, and the Shechina is as if on... Yes, it's according to Kabbalah. But according to the plain meaning it simply means, one remembers, one recognizes the renewal of creation every month, this is receiving the Divine Presence. This is translated.

I often have pleasure from asking people after Kiddush Levana, "Why does one do Kiddush Levana standing? Why do we already bring out a little bench?" Most people can't remember that they ever read or learned about this. Until I tell them, "What did you have in mind when saying 'Amar Rabbi Yochanan tzarich lomar me'umad?'" "Ah, one should have good matches for the children." It's very good, because when one speaks to the Almighty one can ask anything, but it's good sometimes to know what one is asking.

### The Time of Birkas HaLevana — Until the Sixteenth Day

**Speaker 1:** **"Im lo beirach aleha balailah harishon"** — if one didn't make the blessing on the first night, says the Rema further, as you are correct, when it's at its renewal, **"Yesh lo l'vareich aleha ad shisha asar yom bachodesh"**. One has until the sixteenth day of the month, one can still bless on the moon's renewal. This is a bit of a leniency as you said. **"Ad shetismalei pgimasa"**.

No, "lo beirach" means that he didn't see, he didn't notice. He notices now, "Ah, I see a bit of new moon". Right, until the moon becomes completely full, then one can no longer say "mechadeish", because it's no longer renewing. It's already an old moon, it's already going back down, it's already the opposite.

### Birkas HaChama — The Twenty-Eight Year Cycle

**Speaker 1:** Says the Rema further, this is what's called Birkas HaChama. **"Haro'eh chama b'yom tekufas Nisan shel techilas hamachzor shel esrim u'shmoneh"**. The sun goes around every day, but it also has a cycle. Can you explain what this is? We don't remember from month to month, but the sun has a cycle of twenty-eight years which is called Birkas HaChama. It doesn't actually have a cycle, it only has what?

**Speaker 2:** No no, **"sha'as kevi'usa bitchilas leil revi'i"**. Okay, in other words, when is the tekufa at the beginning of the fourth night? When Tekufas Nisan begins, not we do it erev Rosh Chodesh, but Tekufas Nisan, I mean, sorry, erev Pesach we do. Ah, it has to do with when the tekufa can fall at other times. The cycle of twenty-eight, every time the time of the new cycle of the twenty-eight, says the Rema **"sha'as kevi'usa bitchilas leil revi'i"**. What then, again, the beginning of the twenty-eighth cycle is the beginning of the tekufa at the beginning of the fourth night.

### Discussion: The Calculation of Birkas HaChama

**Speaker 1:** In other words, yes, the point is this: There is a tekufa of the sun, meaning we divide the year into four, the sun cycle. The sun travels around the world, or the world around the sun, whichever you want to say it, a whole year. We divide this into four, that's four tekufos, okay? Each one is approximately ninety days.

Now, the tekufos, the sun travels around the world approximately three hundred sixty-five and some hours, right? I don't remember exactly anymore. And therefore it's not

equal, not every year does it come on the same day of the week.

And now, how many quarters, we divided each day into a quarter, it comes out each day is four, there are twenty-eight tekufos or parts of a week. Each week has twenty-eight parts. And each year, a year is approximately a quarter day, if I remember, longer than the three hundred sixty-five days.

So every year the Tekufas HaChama moves, when the new tekufa of Tekufas Nisan begins, which we calculate "b'Nisan nivra ha'olam" regarding this. That then it begins, every year it moves a quarter day. Understand? Every year it moves a quarter day. In other words, we say that the creation of the world was Tekufas Nisan on the fourth day in the morning, and the next year it was on the fourth day at noon, the next day Thursday night, and so on.

It comes out, since a week has twenty-eight such tekufos, it takes twenty-eight years for it to again be on the fourth day in the morning. That's the whole thing. It's not any real cycle of the sun, it's only a cycle that the tekufa of the sun begins at the same time in the week.

**Speaker 2:** But what does it mean that the world was created on the fourth day in the morning? So they say the first day, right?

**Speaker 1:** No, no, the sun, the sun, the sun, the sun, the sun, the sun, the sun, the sun, the sun, the fourth day in the morning, "**yom rev'i nisl'u hame'oros**". The sun was created on Wednesday, Wednesday of Nisan. That commemorates the original creation of the sun, we make "**oseh ma'aseh bereishis**".

**Speaker 2:** Exactly, that's all. If it interests you with life, there are such things that the moon, "**with the beginning of Mazal Taleh at the beginning of the month. And it should not be inclined neither north nor south**". We also make the same blessing, and life, also with the stars with the same order. The moon has the same kind of time that the moon... And all the hosts of heaven when they are in the same place as when they were created?

**Speaker 1:** Yes. Must one calculate? It's not the same place, it's the same calculation, not a choice. The month corresponds with the time it was created.

**Speaker 2:** Aha, "**v'chayim sheyachzeru kol kochav v'kochav meichameshet hakochavim hanish'arim**", here are seven stars, two of them we've already calculated the sun and the moon. The remaining five, when they return "**litchilas mazal taleh**"... Mazal Taleh is how we always calculate the beginning of the heavens. But "**lo tiheyeh noteh lo latzafon v'lo ladarom**" is the same thing. Tekufas Nisan also means that then the sun is.

So the point is, from all these things, that when Mazal Taleh is simply when the Rambam is lengthy in Hilchos Kiddush HaChodesh, that when astronomers divide the heavens into 12 parts, it was decided that Mazal Taleh would be where we begin. But it changes every day. The mazalos also have a cycle that they change.

So when all the stars begin from the beginning in that place, at the beginning of Mazal Taleh not up and not down, then it means that the matter is about Nisan being Rosh Chodesh or about Taleh. So therefore, the beginning of that, if that star that begins as if there we say. The world was created in Nisan, and then that was. The same thing, if Mars is at the eastern

edge, that means it's the first, then we make the same blessing. Already, until here the laws of comets, the laws of the world at the eastern edge.

**Speaker 1:** Yes. Today we don't know what all these things are at all, only Birkas HaChama has remained for us. We don't know this either, but we're told.

**Speaker 2:** So why aren't we told this?

**Speaker 1:** I don't know, perhaps there are those who know and they keep quiet. I don't know.

**One Who Sees Houses of Idol Worshipers — "The House of the Proud Hashem Will Uproot"**

**Speaker 1:** Already, another law. We learned earlier what the law is when one sees houses of Israel. We thank the Almighty for the houses of Israel. What happens with "**ro'eh batei ovdei kochavim**"? It's like this: "**Haro'eh batei ovdei kochavim b'yishuvam, omer 'Beis ge'im yisach Hashem**".

And here I don't understand, what's going on here? Are we seeking something that the Almighty should kill gentiles? Houses of idol worshipers means just idol worshipers, or perhaps it means specifically wicked ones? Because it says "beis ge'im yisach Hashem", that means bad gentiles.

Again, I don't understand it. But perhaps one can say that houses of idol worshipers that are in the Land of Israel, for example, one can understand, because they don't belong there. But a Jew turns around in Williamsburg, and we should kill all of America? Eh, the haters of Israel, wicked ones or what.

"**B'yishuvam omer**"... We had earlier what one says by Jews, that "**Baruch matziv ge'ul almaha**" etc. By idol worshipers it's the opposite, but there's no... He went from a blessing to verses. "Yomar", he doesn't say "Baruch Atah Hashem" nothing.

True, this is apparently a part of the things that are neither a blessing nor... Like the Gemara said at the beginning of the chapter, that not everything is blessings. There are prayers, there are verses, there are matters, things by way of mentioning the Almighty, remembering the Almighty, but there's really no blessing on this. We don't thank the Almighty. "Beis ge'im yisach Hashem" there's no blessing on this. We're only remembering the Almighty. It's a verse that the Rabbis said one should say.

Vengeance. That the destruction of houses of idol worshipers was a destruction for what they did before to others, to Jews.

**One Who Sees Graves of Idol Worshipers**

**Speaker 1:** "**Ra'ah kivrei ovdei kochavim, omer 'boshu imchem me'od**". The same verse... Ah, not the same, a similar verse. When they lived one says "**boshu imchem chafra yoladetchem**", and afterwards one says "**boshu imchem me'od**" etc., whatever it says further in that verse in Jeremiah.

**One Who Enters a Bathhouse — Beginning of Prayers and Requests**

**Tefillat Shav — The Boundaries of Prayer**

**Halacha: Hanichnas Lemerchotz / Hakazat Dam**

**Speaker 1:** Ah, not the same, a similar verse. When they were alive we say **boshu imchem chofru yoldetchem**, and when they're dead we say **boshu imchem me'od** etc., whatever it says further in that verse in Yirmiyahu.

**Hanichnas lemerchotz**, someone enters a bathhouse. Okay, up until here is basically, now begins a new thing, more like requests also, right? Until now it was like matters of prayers that you say before the Almighty about situations that you see, and this is perhaps a prayer. Right.

**Hanichnas lemerchotz**, we learned that a bathhouse doesn't exist today, but it's consequential, meaning it has an effect on health, it can also perhaps not be healthy if one doesn't do it properly. It seems there was a prayer, it can be a place of danger and one can do it the wrong way. One says, **yehi ratzon etc. shetatzileini mizeh vechayotza bazeh, shelo ya'areh li davar kikkalah ve'avon, ve'im ya'areh li, tehei mitati kaparah lechol avonotai.**

**Vechesheyetze min hamerchotz omer modeh ani lefanecha Hashem Elokai shelo shaltuni min ha'or.** That means, You should save me from the fire. It seems the bathhouse used to be so hot that it wasn't terribly safe, the FDA wouldn't have allowed it. And in short, they had to be careful.

**Hanichnas lehakiz dam**, was also a similar thing, **omer yehi ratzon milfanecha Hashem Elokai sheyehei eisek zeh li lirfuah, ki rofei chinam atah.** That means, the Almighty heals for free, the doctors certainly take money. **Vechesheyetze omer baruch rofei cholim.** Rofei chaim it says here. Ah, rofei chaim. The Almighty saves even not the sick. The other version is actually cholim, but presumably the version is more correct. I would perhaps say more baruch rofei chinam, because it was ki rofei chinam atah. And it also fits, you see here a dispute whether chaim or cholim, so I'll say that the whole third thing is chinam. Baruch rofei chinam. Not because you have two versions can you invent a third version.

**Halacha: Haholech Limdod Et Gorno — Tefillat Shav**

**Speaker 1:** Okay, another halacha. Yes. **Haholech limdod et gorno**, he goes to measure his grain pile, yes. He says, **yehi ratzon milfanecha Hashem Elokai shetishlach berachah bema'aseh yadai.**

Interesting. It's an interesting thing, because it's simply a bit of blessing... No, no, read the whole halacha. **Im hitchil limdod**, if he already began to measure, **omer baruch hashole'ach berachah bakri hazeh.** He thanks the Almighty for the abundance, for the blessing that he found. **Aval madad ve'achar kach bikesh rachamim shetehei bo se'ah, harei zo tefillat shav.**

It seems that during the measuring it can still be. It seems that back then also, it can get lost, it can be that the scales aren't good, it can be that it's not going well now. It must be, it can't be that it's magic, a blessing by itself now. We're talking now about the law of tefillat shav. It seems that limdod is a stage when it can still happen.

**Discussion: The Essential Foundation of Tefillat Shav**

**Speaker 1:** It's interesting, the matter of tefillat shav, madad ve'achar kach bikesh rachamim, is an interesting thing, because the essential purpose is that a person should remember Hashem always. Yes, he now has anxiety about his grain pile, and he asks the Almighty. Why are you going into the whole thing? It's not relevant now.

Okay, okay, let's understand the sugya. It's a very simple sugya. Prayer doesn't mean, faith doesn't mean imagination.

**Speaker 2:** Yes, good, but earlier he said a blessing that one says when one sees a tree.

**Speaker 1:** No, no, that's not the blessing. It's tefillat shav. It's not the blessing. It's a request. He already knows he's asking. He's on a request.

When he actually hitchil limdod, he says baruch. Baruch you can say whenever you want. On however much there is, he makes a blessing. On a bad thing he makes dayyan ha'emet. But to go say, "Ribono shel Olam, help that I should have measured a lot," that he can't ask. The blessing he can't say.

There's a great principle we have, says the Ramban, harei zo tefillat shav. One can never ask for... It's interesting, it's the opposite. I want to tell you this, that not every time when you have nervousness, when you have anxiety, is it actually prayer. It must be actually in the right place. When a person is nervous about some salvation that he needs, it's a tremendous thing. But if he's just nervous, and he's nervous about something that already happened, meaning even he doesn't yet know what happened, as the Gemara says in the Mishna. The prayer isn't yet born, she's already pregnant, but it doesn't change. You're not saying that the Almighty can make miracles. It doesn't work that way. Prayer doesn't work on miracles, prayer works on the reality of the world.

**Speaker 2:** True. Not to rely on miracles ever.

**Speaker 1:** Yes. The Rambam says further, "Hanichnas lebeit hamidrash" - someone enters the beit midrash, "shelo yipol beit hamidrash". It's also a tefillat shav, like a berachah levatala, like "baruch atah Hashem". Yes yes, lashon shav, berachot shav is forbidden, it can be that it's a prohibition. "Shekorei shem shamayim lashav". Yes.

**Discussion: May a Very Sick Person Pray?**

**Speaker 2:** One must know, if someone is a patient with an illness where 99% of people who have the illness die, it's approximately also a tefillat shav. Why? Because perhaps, perhaps sometimes perhaps a miracle happens.

**Speaker 1:** But it must make sense, when there's a time of trouble one cries out to the Almighty. That's back then...

**Speaker 2:** But on things that can change, not on things that cannot change.

**Speaker 1:** Good, but a person may ask for his life, but to ask that there should be a bit more grain... already.

**Speaker 2:** Then everything is a tefillat shav. The same way.

**Speaker 1:** No, what is something? All things that the statistics say don't change, that's the reality.

**Speaker 2:** Statistics don't mean anything.

**Speaker 1:** Someone who is very sick can yes pray, but on the other hand someone who prays that the money he already counted should become more is a tefillat shav, and I think everyone can understand the difference.

The Rambam says, "Hanichnas lebeit hamidrash".

**Speaker 2:** You can't say that a person can't ask for his life when it's against what he read on Google, it doesn't make sense. Google doesn't know, but if Google knows yes... oh, you're not well.

**Speaker 1:** But a person asks for his life, there's no question why he asks for his life. Ah, on the contrary, on this it says "afilu cherev chadah munachat al tzavaro shel adam", which means even the statistics are... he shouldn't despair from mercy, because a person doesn't despair from something that's very important to him. But the measurer told him he wants a

thousand, but he wants eleven hundred here. He already counted to a thousand. You make a distinction because it's important. I don't see, because it's important one must now have imagination. If someone is... perhaps there isn't such a case, perhaps I'll say statistics, doesn't mean anything. Statistics means simply that there's still another chance. But a thing that already was, someone has some... some illness. He has a chronic illness. I don't know what. He says, it should have gone away, etc. It should have gone away. Why should anyone? Either way here, one must pray that it happened to him that there should be a salvation.

**Speaker 2:** Again, whether one may not ask for a miracle through a miracle, whether one may also ask for something that happens very rarely. Something wants it on the account...

**Speaker 1:** No, I admit, if I go which has already been in salvation, because it's a kind of with numbers. What it has already counted. Okay, I can tell you...

**Speaker 2:** But someone who is not taken because the chances are very high because not being exactly he wants very strongly to live asks the Almighty that the one in a thousand people who remain should be me...

**Speaker 1:** Wait wait you keep on putting in that very because he wants very strongly the salvation wants very strongly... yes... but see the basic what we're talking about a person's right to make stories to the Almighty.

**Speaker 2:** No no no no talking means talking about the reality not talking about imagination. That's what you want very strongly doesn't make it more. That makes it...

**Speaker 1:** Can you ask Rabbi Mailech Buddaman? I'll tell you 24 miracles of people who measured?

**Speaker 2:** Afterward the point happened... certainly it happened directly, it happened that exactly then that day there was a break that his neighbor it happened to. I can tell you, I can invent many stories how it can help, but very thing I which lines.

**Speaker 1:** But that's another good, one cannot ask for a change now in the order of the world, because he wants to have a bigger grain pile. But a person has the right to for your...

**Speaker 2:** Wait, wait, you're telling me new and another novelty, which isn't written. You have a big novelty. That if it's very important, then may I yes ask for one thing. Because it's very important, he makes that he should become rich or poor or so on, it says the Almighty wants so, you're smarter than the Almighty? You think one must jump from a roof and live on? You're making a tefillat shav.

**Speaker 1:** Okay, let's go learn this. You're saying an interesting thing, because one sees...

You're saying an interesting thing, because this is a simple thing. You can't say because people shouldn't pray for their life if you got cancer and there's a very high chance of dying. It doesn't make sense. Because it's permissible, it's a permissible thing to say such a thing. It's permissible against bein adam lachaveiro to say such a thing. Rabbi Yosef, these are things one may not say, because one may not say, because we also have bein adam lachaveiro, because one doesn't say it.

A person told him, he now wants to have more in his grain pile. It's against the Almighty's creation, we are against nature, that's it. But a person fights for his life, should he now check?

And if it's more than the majority, one must go also with the majority, ah... more than 50% die, should he already give up hope, and not make any arrangements.

**Speaker 2:** Okay, okay, knows he's not the majority, everyone.

**Speaker 1:** Okay, we must know. If it's at the stage where one can more be on his wife, is not an agunah. His wife is not an agunah, he's already dead, doesn't need a thing, and one recognizes this. He still lives, he still lives, but if someone sees only days, and later... if it's 0.99% he's already been from a corpse to a vegetable, he asks that there still is, that it will do nature still relevant that the person should be healed, and our understanding is it's always more complex, even if the chances are very high, he asks the Almighty to help him, even if one may ask the Almighty for a salvation, one must know the boundaries, seemingly the word here is, how much one may ask for a thing that's a change in the natural order of the world. When one becomes healed, even if the chances are very small, it's a change in the order of the world.

Again, that a grain pile on which it's already been measured, it should the Almighty grow afterward, more grain, it can't happen, it happens still so much until it happens that people measure, so on the 99% states, one has already counted the money and one has at night grown a tree, it was a mistake and the count, it's very rare, it happens to be the case, a collapse of the beit midrash, says the Rambam.

**Speaker 2:** No, you're right, but one must think, the Gemara is yes here perhaps an example. You're right that the Rambam's example that he brings is perhaps a weak thing.

Also the other thing, that it should be a ben zachar not a nekevah, is also a...

**Speaker 1:** No, that's also, it's a "shema kol tzeva'ah be'ah", "lo mishum delo lav re'uta hi ela mishum delo lav re'uta hi beveita", right? What does that mean? He hears that ambulances are driving, "Ribono shel Olam, help that it shouldn't be mine".

He can say, "Ribono shel Olam, help that that sick person should survive".

## Laws of Prayer – Tefillat Shav, Entering the Beit Midrash, and the Blessing of Thanks

### Continuation of Discussion About Tefillat Shav

**Speaker 1:** Entering the beit midrash, says the Rambam.

**Speaker 2:** No, you're right, but one must think, the Gemara is yes here perhaps an example. You're right that the Rambam's example that he brings is a weak thing. But the other thing, that it should be a ben zachar, not a nekevah, that's also an example. "Shema kol tzeva'o yavo'u", and he said to the messenger "I want this to be in my house", right? What does that mean? He hears that ambulances are driving, "Ribono shel Olam, help that it shouldn't be mine." He can say "Ribono shel Olam, help that that sick person should have a refuah sheleimah", but that doesn't make it... No, that's also something that already happened. Because it already happened.

He can ask "yehi ratzon that if someone in my house now has an ambulance, he should have a refuah." That he can ask. Yehi ratzon letovah within two hours doesn't make sense, because it already is. You hear the rescue people are already in a house, what are you asking now? And if it is yes now, isn't the

Almighty obligated to make privacy for his neighbor? But a salvation one can ask. I can think approximately as much as I can think about other things. Okay, let's go further.

#### **Discussion: The Question of the Ben Ish Chai About "Entering the Beit Midrash"**

**Speaker 1:** About the beit midrash, "Entering the beit midrash". The Ben Ish Chai, I don't know, the question is a good question. What would be the same question if one should say for a person who isn't yet complete? Should one tell him "go into the beit midrash"?

**Speaker 2:** No, yes, one can tell him, it's similar.

**Speaker 1:** No, it's actually a question, one can tell him this for our matter, no problem, one can tell him this.

#### **Return to the Foundation of Tefillat Shav – Statistics and Nature**

**Speaker 1:** Okay, essentially the dispute is about several things. The question is whether statistics, is that a hundred percent thing, or is it even ninety-nine percent? No, I say exactly the opposite. One puts in here that it can still happen in a natural way. That's one boundary.

About this he actually said a great novelty, it's not a decree. What does not a decree mean? Not a decree means there's still some chance. Still a chance means that he shouldn't die now and he should still live until he comes to the next medicine, until perhaps a doctor comes with perhaps a discovery. The world works that way, the world is full of miracles. Doctors say "that one is a miracle". A miracle means it's against the statistics. Against the statistics it happened. Something that already happened in the past you can't change. A decree is no longer.

So Rabbi Yitzchak, you also agree that one should pray very strongly, yes? I don't know, I'm not yet sure. One can't ask that the cancer should become... very good, when does one speak? It's not relevant, but it should be better than now, it should be the best. One can even ask always what one prays for. That's the truth, one doesn't ask the Almighty exactly how the salvation should be. One asks that it should be better than now.

Very good, always what one prays is good. But one can also ask for the salvation, because usually, almost always, I'm not talking about when someone has a grandfather who's a hundred and three years old, and he says one should pray he should live as long as one prays for a refuah, is a good plan, work on a refuah. But always, now you're saying a normal thing, you're not saying any novelty.

#### **The Boundary of Tefillat Shav – Absurd Prayers**

**Speaker 1:** I'm saying, one can give most prayers that people pray make sense. The things that the Mishna picks out as tefillat shav, are absurd prayers, it's not "shelo ya'areh beveiti". That means tefillat shav. But when it comes from a good place, one can't accuse him of tefillat shav, because in statistics, not certain.

The mussar speaker, I don't want to say he's a fool, he doesn't know at all what prayer means, his prayer isn't a good prayer, he thinks the Almighty can make a miracle also. No, I don't think so. It should be the opposite, it should be prayer. You're just calling out a foolish statement.

#### **Discussion: The Example of Coffee – Distinction Between Future and Past**

**Speaker 2:** What's so different? Let's understand, what's so different? It's not the matter of a male with... I don't know what, coffee should go away. Let's take a simple thing, right? Let's say the coffee should go away. When you pray that it should go away, you're praying for something for the future, not for the past.

But someone whose headache didn't start an hour ago, he asks the Almighty, "Creator, I want You to take away not only the coffee from now, but You should also take away the last half hour of headache." That is a tefilat shav (vain prayer).

**Speaker 1:** I don't have the strength to learn philosophy. He doesn't know, what's his name, the sonic wonder? He doesn't know anything. He knows that there can be a male in the womb, and we're talking about the time of the Gemara, I actually didn't know. And then there was a male about that.

I ask you, what's different? Let's say, there's such a type of coffee that the nature, as all doctors say, not ninety percent, one hundred percent, this is something that lasts for two weeks. I pray that it should last only one week for me. It's not different, then you agree that it's similar to the list that exists?

**Speaker 2:** No, then the Rambam would have said 'behold this is', he didn't say... The Rambam would have said it twice differently. It's something that the Creator can carry through or... A prayer needs to be explained, once to change what exists to make it a female, even when it already exists one can change, just as his daughter became a male. Everything exists.

#### **The Foundation of Tefilat Shav – One Doesn't Pray for Something the Almighty Doesn't Do**

**Speaker 1:** But the Mishnah there wants to say that one may not make a tefilat shav, because it's not relevant, because one doesn't ask the Almighty... You know what, let's say other words. One may not say 'Ribono Shel Olam, create a stone that You cannot lift'.

**Speaker 2:** No, no, no, not only that. The Almighty can very easily change a male in the womb to a female. For the Almighty it's not difficult at all. It's already been done many times in history with Dinah, I don't know when. It can be, it's spoken about, it's very easy for the Almighty. But He doesn't do such things, almost never. Therefore one doesn't pray, it's a tefilat shav, yes? A prayer, it's... one doesn't speak.

**Speaker 1:** And here is another thing, there's a certain dispute. Why? He can change it, it's not yet born. It's not any other nature.

**Speaker 2:** Ah, good morning, it's back to the nature that tells him which prayer one should pray. Very good.

#### **Law 23: Entering the Beit Midrash**

**Speaker 1:** Now, "Behold I am entering the beit midrash". Now we need to know if I should pray the prayer, because it doesn't agree with my laws. I'll already say how this is to be understood. Someone goes with a 'state of mind', he's not going to a place, he's going as you say but with a 'state of mind', he's going to a shiur, he's going to learn with a chavruta. "Yehi ratzon milfanecha Hashem Elokai shelo echshol bidvar halacha", he shouldn't stumble in a matter of halacha, "shelo omar al tamei tahor ve'al tahor tamei, ve'al mutar assur ve'al assur mutar".

#### **Discussion: "Tamei Tahor" – Ruling or Learning?**

**Speaker 2:** Interesting, because this thing sounds more like he's going to rule, he's going like to a beit horaah to be a moreh

horaah. Does he mean 'tamei tahor' in the sugya, or does he mean for a ruling, that no one should be able to ask?

**Speaker 1:** Ah, he doesn't mean halacha lemaaseh. It can be now he's going through learning the sugya, he shouldn't... ah, he shouldn't receive teachings incorrectly. 'State of mind' he's going to receive teachings and he's going to speak. In the beit midrash one doesn't rule, but 'shelo omar al tamei tahor' means he shouldn't repeat false things. Not ruling halacha lemaaseh, but he shouldn't receive a shevuah, a shmuah, he shouldn't have a question bidvar halacha. He already says the second time "al yichshol bidvar halacha".

#### **"Veyismchu bi chaveri" – The Prayer for Friends**

**Speaker 1:** Yes, but what does he say further? **"Veyismchu bi chaveri"**. It's apparently a fact, I mean like this, it shouldn't be that I make a mistake and the world laughs at me, and they are happy. On the contrary, the opposite, it should be accepted by my friends.

**Speaker 2:** Yes, but **"al yichshelu chaveri bidvar halacha ve'esmach bahem"**, that's exactly the opposite. Why should he pray? He's embarrassed by the friends when he asks in his prayer, he's embarrassed. Generally does one think such a possibility of rejoicing? Why should there be "ve'esmach bahem"? People are people, one prays, why does one need this at all? "Al yichshelu chaveri bidvar halacha ve'esmach bahem", that's the problem with the question.

**Speaker 1:** Yes, yes, yes, it's normal.

#### **The Danger of Beit Midrash – Competition and Embarrassment**

**Speaker 1:** Think into the beit midrash, what's the greatest danger in the beit midrash? That one can argue, one will say this way, the other will say that way, and it will... or... He asks for good middot, he asks he shouldn't make a mistake and his friends also shouldn't make a mistake and he shouldn't rejoice. It's both. Even if they make a mistake he shouldn't rejoice, or it shouldn't happen.

**Speaker 2:** Ah, it shouldn't happen that they make a mistake that they're embarrassed and he rejoices. It goes both ways.

**Speaker 1:** It's a problem in the beit midrash, that's the danger. One needs to make a different simcha, one needs to see that one should laugh for other reasons, not because the other made a mistake, or we should fight because we're both mistaken. No, we're happy, but one is... it's an example.

**Speaker 2:** No, that's the danger, it makes sense. Just as in the bathhouse it happens that one gets burned, in the beit midrash it happens that one gets embarrassed.

**Speaker 1:** No, that's the... okay, if one never fights one doesn't need to have any prayer. Did it nullify a prayer from the Torah? No. In the beit midrash it boils, it can be that, one prays, it doesn't happen. Okay. I once found a hint in the roshei teivot of the Torah.

**Speaker 2:** Well, one doesn't learn Diburei Halacha, but one learns other things, one learns Shulchan Aruch, one learns Gemara, one learns Zohar, what's the difference?

**Speaker 1:** Okay. But nothing can be that.

#### **Law 24: Upon Leaving the Beit Midrash – Blessing of Thanksgiving**

**Speaker 1:** In the beit midrash one also makes a blessing, one says **"Modim anachnu lach Hashem Elokeinu"**, one makes such a blessing of thanksgiving. One thanks the

Almighty **"sheshamta chelki miyoshvei beit hamidrash velo shamta chelki miyoshvei keranot"**. That I am among friends of those who sit in the beit midrash, not those who sit at the corners of the street and waste time.

#### **"Chelki" – My Place in Life**

**Speaker 1:** "Chelki" means literally, my job, my portion in life, my status, my place where I turn. It can be yoshvei keranot, we learned, it can be that it means generally people merchants. There are two interpretations, we also learned in Hilchot Kriat HaTorah. What you say, kibitzers, it can be that it means people who are engaged in... **"sichei bei yoshvei shaar, unginot shotei shechar"**, "yoshvei keranot". It can mean stores, merchants. My portion is Torah, not working.

#### **"She'ani mashkim vehem mashkimim"**

**Speaker 1:** **"She'ani mashkim vehem mashkimim"**. We are actually quite similar, we both get up, we both go work hard. One who comes to kollel eleven o'clock cannot say this. **"Ani mashkim ledivrei Torah vehem mashkimim ledvarim betelim"**. Ah, there are merchants who also go complain, "I don't feel so bad". I get up for words of Torah, but they have a way of life, I get up for words of Torah. **"Ani amel vehem amelim"**. Both toil, no one has an easy life. **"Ani amel umekabel sachar, vehem amelim ve'einam mekablum sachar"**. It says reward of the World to Come, yes? I receive reward, I receive reward, I receive work.

**"Ani ratz lechayei haolam haba, vehem ratzim libe'er shachat"**

**Speaker 1:** **"Ani ratz vehem ratzim. Ani ratz lechayei haolam haba, vehem ratzim libe'er shachat"**. They go to the grave. What is their end destination?

**Speaker 2:** Be'er shachat doesn't mean Gehinnom? We're talking about really bad Jews.

**Speaker 1:** When the Rambam calculated at the end of Hilchot Teshuva expressions for be'er shachat, he said it's ibud haneshama. It can be that's because they don't have knowledge, it can be that they can't have any... until he stood and calculated that he finally did teshuva.

#### **Mussar Haskel: Competition in Beit Midrash**

**Speaker 1:** I think that someone who didn't say this prayer beforehand, and the whole day what was his fun? What was his joy? It wasn't simchat haTorah, it was a joy that the friend became next door. He goes exactly like the yoshvei keranot. What is the yoshvei keranot all day? He rejoices that he made more money than his friend, he competes. Someone who by learning is also in competition, I don't know how much he can say.

#### **Blessings of the Way, The General Rule, and Whoever Increases Thanksgiving**

##### **Entering a City - Blessings of Entry and Exit**

**Speaker 1:** Okay. There's one section in Bava Batra, very good, what's the small section in Bava Batra?

Let's see the Rambam says here, "vechol mah she'eino etc.", yes, the Rambam says "derech mashal by Shacharit".

**Speaker 2:** You're right, you said a detail, but I didn't see. You're right.

**Speaker 1:** So about this I would say that yoshvei keranot doesn't mean one who goes to work, because the Jew also

goes, when he leaves the beit midrash he goes to work. How does he exist? He goes to work.

**Speaker 2:** Working what do you mean at night he goes home to sleep.

**Speaker 1:** Yes, one may also make a living.

**Speaker 2:** He's talking about the yoshvei keranot when they don't work.

**Speaker 1:** Very good, he wastes time, instead of learning he barely doesn't.

Now, "**Hanichnas lechirach**" when he enters the city, "**yehi ratzon milfanecha Hashem Elokeinu shetachnisei'ni lechirach zeh leshalom**". Apparently this means he's going to business, to a market.

**Speaker 2:** A city, chirach, Jews who enter a city, what's the point? It means he's traveling, he's entering a new city, it can't be his city.

**Speaker 1:** But no, we say this for tefilat haderech.

**Speaker 2:** And the Rambam says only the main tefilat haderech, the Rambam says by the tanks that when he went out.

**Speaker 1:** Not the chirach means he's traveling, like we do tefilat haderech.

**Speaker 2:** Okay, but here is more about the entry to the chirach, not on the way. The way is a danger, is one thing. The chirach is the city. He goes to make friends there, or he goes for business.

**Speaker 1:** But clearly, every new city, perhaps there's a non-Jew who will give you a ticket, I don't know, a parking ticket, I don't know. On the way is one should be free.

"**Hanichnas lechirach, yehi ratzon milfanecha Hashem Elokeinu shetachnisei'ni lechirach zeh leshalom**". Ah, no, even the entry, "**ve'im nichnas beshalom**". "**Im nichnas beshalom**", he thanks the Almighty, "**modeh ani lefanecha Hashem Elokeinu shehichnastani**".

So it looks like the entry was, one must go through the offices, one must... it's a struggling thing.

**Kevakesh latzeit**, he prays a prayer that he should be able to leave, "**yehi ratzon milfanecha Hashem Elokeinu shetotzi'eini michirach zeh leshalom**". And when one left in peace, one says this, there's a longer one, "**modeh ani lefanecha Hashem Elokeinu shehotzeitani michirach zeh leshalom, ucheshem shehotzeitani leshalom, ken tolicheni**" - so my next place where I go further should be in peace, "**vetismecheni leshalom, vetatz'ideni leshalom**" - You should accompany me, yes, You should step with me, yes, step. "**Vetatzileni mikaf oyev ve'orev baderech**" - and one who is... there are thieves, bandits on the way.

Very good.

**The General Rule - Always One Should Cry Out for the Future**

The Gemara concludes thus, "**Klalo shel davar, le'olam yitz'ak adam al he'atid lavo**". A person should always cry out, ask the Almighty, pray for the future to come. Like for example, if he enters the beit midrash, he should have good middot, he should learn well. Or the other thing we learned earlier, he enters the bathhouse, "**vevakesh rachamim**" - he

should ask for mercy from the Almighty, the language of prayer and request for mercy.

And afterwards, "**veyiten hoda'ah al she'avar**" - and he should thank the Almighty for what he has already gone through, "**veyodeh veyishabach kefi kocho**".

**Discussion: What Does "Kefi Kocho" Mean?**

**Speaker 2:** Ah, "kefi kocho" means one can use one's own language?

**Speaker 1:** Apparently that's what it means. Because he already said, when he says that the one who blesses he also said something "kefi kocho". So, in his own language like that.

Very interesting. So, many of the blessings are such suggestions, and one can use one's own language. That's how it sounds.

**Discussion: When Does One Say Request and When Thanksgiving?**

**Speaker 1:** But I want to understand, the "klalo shel davar", is he talking about the same event should be "yitz'ak al he'atid" and "yiten hoda'ah", or beforehand should be a "yitz'ak" and afterwards when he finishes "hoda'ah"?

**Speaker 2:** Because by the prayers we just saw, one does both every time.

**Speaker 1:** It can be every time like about the city he said both a request and a thanksgiving.

**Speaker 2:** Very clear. That's a midrash. Before and after.

**Speaker 1:** Very clear. You see very clearly.

It can be that this is also the pushback, that one should have such knowledge that by the before one should also say, "Creator, You have helped me until now, I ask You, help me." Like that, both things you can do. The point is always.

That the thing you say, I gave you a bunch of cases, perhaps he means that this is the general rule. The Gemara gave you a lot how, and such a case, but this does many more thousands of things. Is the thing before it to say after.

**The Rambam Doesn't Bring Everything**

The Rambam doesn't bring, for example, I remember in a Gemara that when someone was a sick person who was healed and he comes back, one should say "baruch rachmana deyahavach lan velo yahavach le'afra", and other such ways from the Gemara. The Rambam doesn't bring everything, but he says like this, take from here the thought that he said.

When you ask about any why one doesn't make a blessing, if a person goes to some fearful beautiful event, there aren't sixty thousand Jews, but something that takes him very strongly, he should see yes something to make a blessing. He sees there many people he hasn't seen, perhaps make Shehecheyanu. Even if it's not a blessing, it can be such language simply.

**Speaker 2:** Yes, or a danger shouldn't be such a kingdom and the like.

**Whoever Increases Thanksgiving to Hashem**

**Speaker 1:** The Rambam says further, "**kol hamarbeh lehodot et Hashem**", whoever increases to thank the Almighty, and he also says the word "et Hashem". I mean like, because we just learned about tefilat shav, one is somewhat frightened of tefilat shav. But indeed, the general thing, I mean that's what the Rambam says here, yes, one should indeed fear tefilat shav, but that's a small detail. The bigger picture is, the more one thanks the Almighty is better.

**"Lecho'orah kol hamarbeh lehodot et Hashem uleshabcho tamid"**, that he should have many opportunities, that he should have by different events in his life to thank the Almighty, **"harei zeh meshubach"**.

**Discussion: Why "Lehodot" and Not "Litz'ok"?**

It's interesting that the Rambam doesn't say "kol hamarbeh litz'ok". But the language is also relevant, because he is praised he himself is praised. For a person who always says praise.

Why doesn't it say "kol hamarbeh litz'ok"? "Harei zeh metzo'ak", what should it say? He should be screamed at?

**Speaker 2:** Okay, that's not... I mean that he says, simply he means that a person who according to the halacha is praised, he is worthy to do so.

**Speaker 1:** I also think that's what he says, one must cry out for the future and give thanks for the past. From that one must cry out for the past he mixes up the thing.

**Discussion: Modeh for the Future?**

**Speaker 2:** If one is not modeh for the future, that's how it sounds.

**Speaker 1:** Really? A whole line of nusach in the siddur says modeh for the future, for the good that will be.

**Speaker 2:** But what does it say besides that? Simply, for the future and for the past, one is modeh. If one does the opposite, one is mixed up.

**Speaker 1:** Right. Now, he has no objection.

**Speaker 2:** Right.

**Conclusion - Just as One Blesses on the Bad So One Blesses on the Good**

**Speaker 1:** The Rambam warned us, for example, he warned us by "keshem shemevarech al hara'ah kach mevarech al hatov", that it means to say that regarding one matter it must be "kach", that it must be with a full heart, but the text must be different.