
Birchos HaTorah

ברכות דף י"א : ושלחן ערוך סימן מ"ז וסימן מ"ו סעיף ט' [עפ"י פסקי מ"ב]

רא"ש מסכת ברכות פרק א סימן יג

בירושלמי מסיק עלה א"ר אבא והוא ששנה על אתר ונראה דהיינו דוקא בברכה של אהבה רבה דלא מיתחזי לשם ברכת התורה אלא בשונה על אתר. ואם שנה לאלתר אז נראית ברכה לשם עסק התורה כמו לשם ק"ש. ואז לא יצטרך לברך כל אותו היום אפילו יפסוק ללמוד ויחזור וילמוד.

חידושי הריטב"א מסכת ברכות דף יא עמוד ב

וטעמא משום דאהבה רבה אינה ברכה מיוחדת לתלמוד תורה דלתלמוד תורה ברכה אחרת יש לה דהיינו אשר בחר. אלא דמכל מקום כיון דקריאת שמע בכלל תלמוד תורה הוא כיון שבירך עליה ושונה לאלתר הרי הוא פטור בכך.

רבינו יונה על הרי"ף מסכת ברכות דף ה עמוד ב

וטעם המנהג מפני שמנהגנו לומר בכל יום אלו הברכות קודם ק"ש ובאותה ברכה שבבקר פוטר כל היום וכי אמרינן בירושלמי והוא ששנה על אתר זהו בברכת אהבה רבה שחיובה אינה אלא על קריאת שמע בלבד וכשקורא מיד אין צריך לברך ואע"פ שלא ברך בבקר ברכת התורה מפני שמאחר ששונה מיד שקורא ק"ש ויתפלל גלה דעתו שלדעת כן קרא אותה לצאת בה ידי חובת ק"ש וידי חובת הקריאה וכשקורא אחר שעה אינו נפטר בה דכיון שאין תקנת חיובה אלא על ק"ש בלבד נראה שמתחלה לא קרא אותה אלא לדעת חיוב ק"ש בלבד ואינה פוטרת הקריאה שקורא אח"כ אלא כשקורא מיד אבל ברכת התורה שתקנוהו לחיוב קריאת התורה פוטרת כל היום ואין צריך לברך לכל פעם ופעם שקורא.

If one is unsure as to whether he has said ברכות התורה, what should he do?

There is a מחלוקת as to whether ברכות התורה is Torah ordained or is of Rabbinical order. [The ברכה on the leining, however, is definitely מדרבנן.] Based on this, we have a disagreement as to whether one should say ברכת התורה out of doubt; the מדאורייתא and others, who hold they are מדאורייתא, say one should say the ברכה of בנו אשר בחר, the 'choicest of the blessings'. On the other hand, the שערי תשובה cites those who say one should not make any blessing.

Although the ברורה is more inclined towards the former camp, he recommends that the one in doubt should either try to hear the ברכות from someone else, or should have כוונה to be יוצא with אהבה רבה. In fact, if one only realises his quandary after davening, the פרי מגדים suggests that he can rely on the אהבה רבה, even if he did not learn afterwards.

For what must one make ברכות התורה?

For any verbal learning, whether גמרא, משה, or פסוקים, one makes ברכות התורה. As for learning in one's mind, the שלחן ערוך rules that there is no need to make ברכות התורה; likewise, to issue a פסק, without verbalising the reason behind it, is like thinking in learning. [To read from a ספר, straight

laws without the reasons, however, the מטה יהודא writes that this can be equated with writing and thus requires a ברכה.] Therefore, writes the ט"ז, one should ensure to verbalise some words of תורה following his blessings, so that they should not be in vain.

However, the Vilna Gaon is doubtful of both of these rulings, for thinking in learning, is part of the מצוה of מילה וליילה בו יומם; therefore, he writes, one should be on the safe side and not be מהרהר without first making ברכות התורה. On the other hand, it is perfectly in order to perform a מצוה without ברכות התורה, although inevitably, he will be thinking about the laws of the מצוה.

When it comes to writing, the שלחן ערוך rules that this is more significant than just thinking [and according to the רבינו יונה, often writing leads one to verbalise words of תורה], and does require ברכת התורה. However, this הלכה is also challenged and the מגן אברהם, ט"ז, and גר"א all agree that one should first make ברכות התורה and say some words of תורה.

The obligation to make ברכות התורה only applies to learning for the sake of לימוד התורה. However, if one wishes to write a פסוק in a letter of greetings, all agree that no ברכה is required. Likewise, one who is editing or copying a ספר for another, in order to earn a פרנסה, does not demand a ברכת התורה. The ביאור הלכה is unsure if the same would apply to a סופר who actually verbalises the words as he writes and therefore rules that he should make the ברכות התורה and say the standard פסוקים before beginning his work.

The טור [in סימן מ"ו] questions the מנהג to delay the ברכות התורה until after the recital of various פסוקים such as פרשת התמיד. Rather, he writes, one should already say the ברכות התורה after אלקי נשמה. The strict הלכה follows the aforementioned מנהג, since one is not reciting the פסוקים for the sake of לימוד התורה. However, the רמ"א writes that the prevalent מנהג is in accordance with the טור. Even if one is in the middle of פסוקי דזמרה, when he realises that he has not recited ברכות התורה, the משנה ברורה writes [later in סימן נ"א סק"י] that he can say them there and then; even the customary ברכת כהנים of פסוקים can be said too.

One should take special note of this, when it comes to סליחות; ideally, one should say the ברכות התורה before סליחות. Likewise, one who needs to say קריאת שמע before davening, לכתחילה should recite ברכות התורה first. [However, if in doing so, he will miss the latest time for שמע, various פוסקים write that he should say the שמע without the ברכות התורה.]

What is the correct terminology for the ברכות?

Generally, one should follow his own custom, as transmitted through the generations. The פוסקים do give us some guidelines, however, for one who is not sure of his ancestors' מנהג:

1. The first ברכה is 'לעסוק בדברי תורה'.

2. Since there is much debate as to whether the part that follows is a separate blessing, or a continuation of the same one, we say it with a וי"ו; namely, יוהערב נא. In this way, one can't go wrong. However, one should not finish לעסוק בדברי תורה aloud, for this creates a ספק for others as to whether they should answer אמן. If one does hear someone enunciate those words, the majority opinion is to treat יוהערב נא as part of the same ברכה and, as of such, not to answer אמן until the end of that adjoining paragraph.
3. The word יצאצאי includes both immediate sons and future generations [or at least the grandchildren, as proven by the רבינו יונה], and as of such, writes the מגן אברהם, one need not say, יצאצאי יצאצאי as well. As an aside, the משנה ברורה writes that parents should have particular concentration on these words, davening for their offspring to be true to the תורה. Likewise, in ובה לציון in 'למען לא ניגע לריק ולא נלד לבהלה', and when saying the words, אהבה רבה.
4. The ט"ז notes the version of the רי"ף, asking the רבונו של עולם that we should merit to learn תורה for its sake; ולומדי תורתך לשמה. He writes that although these words are not mentioned in the גמרא or the טור, a person should still pray that the words should be sweet so that we can learn for its sake and not for any ulterior motives. Seemingly, we have adopted these words into our version.

Does ברכות התורה work in place of אהבת עולם or אהבה רבה?

Yes. There seems to be מחלוקת between the ראשונים as to whether it works even without having intent for it to act as ברכות התורה. The משנה ברורה understands that the שלחן ערוך rules leniently on this issue. If, however, one has specific intent for it *not* to be effective, understandably, the רבינו יונה rules, it does not work for ברכות התורה.

However, one must ensure to learn something after davening, so that the ברכה takes effect on some לימוד התורה. Since there is serious doubt as to whether the שמע that follows the ברכה counts for learning [and in fact the גר"א and many others, hold that it definitely does not work], unless the time of שמע has already passed and one is just reading it as one would learn תורה, one should not rely on it and should learn a little at the first opportunity after the שמונה עשרה. As long as one does not interrupt with talking of a different ענין or get involved in other affairs, one could do the learning even after terminating davening.

Does one have to learn something after ברכות התורה?

The שלחן ערוך seems to side with תוספות, who write that, as opposed to אהבה רבה, one need not learn anything after the actual ברכות התורה. However, the majority of the אחרונים disagree with this and it has thus become accepted to recite the 3 פסוקים of ברכת כהנים, mimicking the minimum number of פסוקים for an עליי in leining. This is then followed with the 2 sentences of אלו דברים, the first a משנה

and the second גמרא. However, one who did not learn afterwards and only realises once it is too late [see previous question], should ideally be חושש for the ruling of the שלחן ערוך and use אהבה רבה or some other way out, such as finding someone else to be מוציא him.

When does the effect of the ברכה terminate?

Generally, the ברכה is effective throughout the day and the following night, even if he interrupts his learning with many hours of other matters, since one knows that the מצוה never ends and he intends to return to his learning at the first opportunity. For one who generally does not learn and changed his mind to learn, there is much debate if the דין is different; the הלכה sides with the ט"ז and he would not make the ברכות again.

Entering a toilet or a bathroom does not terminate the ברכה, especially since there are certain הלכות which apply at that time. Likewise, a nap, such as placing one's head down on his arms for a sleep, does not interrupt the ברכה. If one lay down during the day for a proper sleep, although strictly speaking this should demand a new ברכה when he awakes, the prevalent מנהג is to be חושש for the רבינו תם who rules that sleep does not act as an interruption and therefore not make a new ברכה. [However, one who wishes to do so, in line with the opinion of many פוסקים, 'does not lose', concludes the משנה ברורה.] It is advisable to cover oneself with the אהבת עולם in מעריב. However, at night, even at the very beginning, a proper sleep most definitely does warrant a new blessing.

If one was up the entire night, one cannot make a ברכה, since, as explained by רבי עקיבא איגר [in response to the wonderment of the מגן אברהם], the majority of ראשונים hold that sleep is the determining factor for a new blessing. One should, however, endeavour to be יוצא with someone else, or have in mind when he says אהבה רבה. If he slept properly during the day, then, says רבי איגר, unless he actually learnt something following אהבת עולם of the previous night's מעריב, one could most definitely make the ברכות the next morning, for either way he fulfils the requirement for a new ברכה; he has had both sleep and the arrival of a new day.

[As for אהבת עולם, there are various reasons why it may not have covered him: 1) He didn't have כוונה that it should be for ברכות התורה. 2) He didn't learn anything afterwards. 3) Some hold that אהבת עולם is only effective until he has היסת הדעת and not for the whole day or night. Although all these factors are subject to מחלוקת, and it may well be that generally we are lenient on each, in this case, putting them all together, one can make a new ברכות התורה.]

One who arises early, can he make ברכות התורה?

Yes. Even if he plans to go back to bed, he can make ברכות התורה and does not have to do so, upon reawakening, for we assume that his intention was to cover himself until the sleep of the next

night. [The משנה ברורה points out, however, that one who is accustomed to make a new ברכה after sleeping in the day, would most definitely make a new ברכה after his second sleep of the *night*.]

What about the other ברכות?

If one arises after חצות, he may make all the ברכות, except הנותן לשכוי בינה, which is subject to much discussion. In the final analysis, as long as it is after חצות, if he has made the ברכה, he is covered. However, ideally, he should wait for day-break, unless he actually heard the cockerel.

If he is planning on returning to bed, then he should not say אלקי נשמה and המעביר שינה with Hashem's Name. This, he should only do upon arising for the day. If he did recite them with Hashem's Name and then went back to sleep, the ביאור הלכה brings conflicting opinions and rules that out of doubt, he should not repeat the ברכות upon arising; especially if he do not intentionally go back to bed, but rather was overtaken by sleep, in which case, all agree that he need not be concerned.

One should not say before day-break, the פרשה of the תמיד or the accompanying משניות pertaining to the other קרבנות, since they could not be offered in the בית המקדש during the night.

Can a woman be מוציא a man for ברכות התורה?

This depends on the reason for a woman's obligation to make ברכות התורה. According to the סמ"ג who holds that they are obligated to learn the הלכות which are pertinent to them, or due to their חיוב to say the פרשיות of קרבנות, owing to their connection to תפלה, they would be able to be מוציא a man. However, the Vilna Gaon rules that their ברכה is not obligatory; rather, as with any positive time-bound מצוה, they are *allowed* to make the ברכה; thus, they would not be able, however, to cover a man's *obligation*. A child most definitely, cannot be מוציא a גדול, writes the פרי מגדים.