
The Brochos of Shema

ברכות דף י"א : - דף י"ב. ושלחן ערוך סימן נ"ט סעיף א' וסימן ס' סעיפים א' וג' וסימן ס"ו סעיף י' וסימן רל"ו סעיף א' [עפ"י פסקי מ"ב]

What is the first ברכה of שמע?

In the morning, one says **אור**. One should pay special attention to make a slight break between the above said words. When saying them, one kisses the **יד של יד**, תפלה, and upon reciting **יבורא חשד'**, one kisses the **ראש של ראש**. There are various other דקדוקים in the terminology of the ברכה, many which depend on one's family or shul מנהג. [See the **באר היטב** and **שערי תשובה** at the beginning of **סימן נ"ט**.]

In the evening, the ברכה is **אשר בדברו מעריב ערבים**. One should pause slightly between **ברקיע כרצונו'** and the following, **יבורא יום ולילה**. Once again, the **משנה ברורה** mentions other differences, dependent on the **נוסח** to which one is accustomed.

What is the second ברכה?

The **גמרא** has some discussion as to whether the second ברכה opens with **אהבת עולם** or **אהבה רבה**. The **רי"ף**, based on his **גירסא** in the **גמרא**, sides with the first option. This is quoted by the **בית יוסף** and subsequently is the **מנהג** of many sects. However, the **גאונים** make a compromise, saying that in the morning, one says **אהבה רבה** and in the evening, **אהבת עולם**; this is the **מנהג** amongst the **בני אשכנז**. The disagreement is only with regard to the opening words of the ברכה, but all agree that the main body is different to the evening blessing. Nonetheless, if one recited the evening **אהבת עולם** in the morning, the **משנה ברורה** rules that one need not repeat anything.

What is the third ברכה?

In the morning, it is **אמת ויציב**, a ברכה in which we recall the miracles and **חסדים** that **הקב"ה** did for us at **יציאת מצרים**. As warned by **תוספות**, the fifteen **לשונות** of praise refer to **יהדבר הזה** that follows; not the **שכינה**, about which we have no permission to sing too much praise. In this ברכה, the **ירושלמי** writes that, it must include a mention of **מלכות**, **קריעת ים סוף**, and **מכת בכורות**. [See the **משנה ברורה** in **סימן ס"ו** as to whether this is **לעיקובא**.]

In the evening, we recite **אמת ואמונה**, an expression of our **אמונה** of what is yet to come. Alternatively, we are stating the amazing **אמונה** with which **הקב"ה** looks after our **נשמות** at night; we receive them back in a renewed and reinvigorated state.

If one said the one for the morning in the evening, or vice-versa, if he has not yet concluded the ברכה, the **ח"י אדם** writes that he should simply continue on from the beginning of the correct ברכה.

If, however, he has already said Hashem's Name in the concluding ברכה, it is too late for corrections and he should not worry for the ברכה counts.

If one was lacking on time and realised that he would be unable to read קריאת שמע, the רמ"א writes that he should stop at the end of קריאת שמע and leave the ensuing ברכה until he is ready to daven the שמונה עשרה; in this way, he will at least be גאולה לתפלה. In response to the אברהם's surprise, the נהר שלוי explains that the רמ"א is talking of one who did not realise that he would run out of time and found himself stuck, as he neared the end of שמע. Of course, one who realises from the outset that his time was limited, should only recite שמע and then later, repeat the שמע with the ברכות, along with the שמונה עשרה.

What happens if a person gets the order of the ברכות mixed up?

The order of the ברכות does not matter. In fact, even if one recited אמת ויציב before קריאת שמע, or he said all the ברכות after קריאת שמע, or better still, he said them all after the תפלה, he has still fulfilled the מצוה. If he recited only one ברכה, the משנה ברורה states that he has, at least, been יוצא that ברכה.

בעזה"ש, we are yet to see, that להלכה, even if one omitted the ברכות completely, he has still been יוצא his מצוה of קריאת שמע; albeit, that it is not in the most fitting fashion. Hence, according to the הלכה, when the גמרא writes that one who does not recite אמת ויציב in the morning, and אמת ואמונה in the evening, has not fulfilled his obligation, this does not refer to the חיוב of קריאת שמע.

Still, if one did not recite the ברכה of אמת ויציב after קריאת שמע, the ברכי יוסף advises that when he decides to make it up, he should ideally precede it with the recitation of קריאת שמע.

Correcting Mistakes in Brochos

ברכות י"ב. ושלחן ערוך סימן נ"ט סעיף ב' וסימן ר"ט [עפ"י פסקי מ"ב]

פירוש המשנה לרמב"ם מסכת מכות פרק א משנה ז

וזה שאמרנו עד שיוזמו כולם, בתנאי שיעיד כל אחד מהם בתוך כדי דבור חברו כדי שתהא כולה עדות אחת וכאלו הכל העידו בבת אחת.

רמב"ם הלכות ברכות פרק ח הלכה יא

לקח כוס של שכר בידו והתחיל הברכה על מנת לומר שהכל וטעה ואמר בורא פרי הגפן אין מחזירין אותו, וכן אם היו לפניו פירות הארץ והתחיל הברכה על מנת לומר בורא פרי האדמה וטעה ואמר בורא פרי העץ אין מחזירין אותו, וכן אם היה לפניו תבשיל של דגן ופתח על מנת לומר בורא מיני מזונות וטעה ואמר המוציא יצא, מפני שבשעה שהזכיר את השם והמלכות שהן עיקר הברכה לא נתכוון אלא לברכה הראויה לאותו המין, והואיל ולא היה בעיקר הברכה טעות אף על פי שטעה בסופה יצא ואין מחזירין אותו.

In the morning one began אשר בדברו מעריב ערבים and then caught his mistake; what should he do?

The *שלחן ערוך* and the majority of *פוסקים* hold that it all depends on two things:

- 1) A correct opening *or* body of the *ברכה*.
- 2) The correct ending.

Thus, in the above scenario, as long as he catches himself before the concluding blessing, he simply continues from *יוצר אור*. This ensures that the body and the conclusion were both fine. [The *משנה* *ברורה* and *הלכה ביאור* strongly disagree with the position of the *בי"ח* that he must catch his mistake *תוך כדי דיבור*.] Similarly, if he started correctly – *יוצר אור* = and then continued on with *אשר בדברו*, but concluded with *המאורות*, he is fine.

However, if in our first scenario, he did not correct anything, even if he ended with the correct words – *יוצר המאורות* – it does not help, since condition number one has not been met. Likewise, even if he said the correct wording for the body of the *ברכה*, if the ending was wrong – *המעריב ערבים* – he must repeat the *ברכה*; that is, unless he caught his slip within *תוך כדי דיבור*. [Once again, not like the *בי"ח*.]

However, the Vilna Gaon writes that the *הלכה* follows the *רשב"א*; namely, it all hinges on the ending of the *ברכה* and what he said in the opening and body of the *ברכה* is of no significance.

If he only realised his mistake once he has begun *אהבה רבה*, he should wait until the conclusion of that blessing and insert it there, before *קריאת שמע*. [Unlike the *מגן אברהם* who says that he should leave it until after the *עשרה עשרה*.]

The same *דינים* would apply for *מעריב*.

What is the general rule for doubts in *ברכות*?

חז"ל give us a rule of thumb: *ספק ברכות להקל*. This means that when ever, one is faced with a doubt in *ברכות*, one goes leniently. This is based on the fact that almost all blessings are of Rabbinic origin. However, in cases of doubt for *ברכת המזון*, which all agree is *דאורייתא*, one would have to act stringently.

There are differing views as to the status of *מעין שלש* [often referred to under the colloquial title of '*על המחיה*']. The *מגן אברהם* advises that if one is faced with a doubt, he should eat some more of the same food, so that he will be able to say the after-*ברכה* without *ספק*. The *פרי מגדים* adds that if he does not have anymore of the same species, he should consume enough of another species that will require a *מעין שלש* and he will then insert his 'doubtful' portion. For example, if he is unsure whether he has already said an *על המחיי* on the biscuits he ate, he would take some grapes and when he says the *על העץ*, he can insert the *על המחיי* too.

If someone took a cup of beer and began, planning to make *פרי הגפן*, can he correct himself?

This *שאלה* is very involved and pivots on many factors and opinions into how to learn the *סוגיא*. Let us begin with a summary of those *שיטות*:

- 1) *תוספות*, *רש"י* and many others learn that the *גמרא* discusses a case of one who was mistaken in the planning stage of the *ברכה* – up until *מלך העולם* – but got the correct terminology. Since the question remains unresolved, we apply the rule of *ספק ברכות להקל*; thus, if one ended with the correct words, he is fine.
- 2) The *רמב"ם*, as explained by the *כסף משנה*, learns that the discussion resolves around one who had the right intention, but got mixed up at the end. *ספק ברכות להקל* means that in this case, he would not need to make another *ברכה*. In our case, he is snookered, since the main part of the *ברכה* was said with the wrong intention. The *בית יוסף*, following his conviction, includes this ruling as the main one in the *שלחן ערוך*. However, *להלכה*, all *פוסקים* disagree with this assertion; first and foremost, by the *רמב"ם's* response to the *חכמי לונייל*, in which he writes that he was talking only of beer made from grapes. Secondly, the *ראב"ד* has already refuted the words of the *רמב"ם*. [See also the *ריבנו יונה* who explains the *רמב"ם* along the lines of the *רי"ף*.]
- 3) The *רי"ף*, as explained by the *רא"ש* explains that the *גמרא* is talking about one who actually thought that he was holding something else [as explained by the majority of *אחרונים*, as opposed to the *מגן אברהם*] and thus erred with the whole *ברכה*, but then, *תוך כדי דיבור*, caught his mistake. The rule of *ספק ברכות להקל* will mean that he is alright. In the above scenario, he is definitely fine.

In summary, the *הלכה* follows both *רש"י* and the *רי"ף* and therefore, as long as the ending was fine, even if he had to correct himself *תוך כדי דיבור*, nothing else matters.

If one made a *הגפן* on a cup of water, thinking it was wine, can he take a cup of wine and drink without a new *ברכה*?

The *רמ"א* cites the case of the *מהרי"ל* in which a man was being *מוציא* others on their wine at the time. He rules that just like he has covered them, he may also drink from another cup of wine, even if he sipped from the water in between, so long as he did not speak [even just to say *שם ברוך* ועד *שער הציון*], since he had intent to drink more wine himself.

The *משנה ברורה* explains that actually, there are two separate reasons given here. [See *שער הציון* that the *מהרי"ל* required the two reasons – firstly that he was covering others and secondly that he had intent for other wine for himself – for each reason on its own does have reservations.] Furthermore, he writes the *רמ"א* follows his opinion, that without specific intent, his *ברכה* would not cover any other cup of wine and thus, he would need to make another *ברכה*.

However, many disagree with the *רמ"א* on this and they hold that as long as he did not actually have specific intent that the *ברכה* should only take effect on this cup, his *ברכה* covers any other wine

on the table. If, though, his cup was the only cup present and he was planning to give to them to drink from that cup, obviously, writes the שער הציון, no one would be covered for other wine.

If one mixed up the ברכות of the candle and the spices for הבדלה, what should he do?

If he was actually planning to say בורא מיני בשמים in place of בורא מאורי האש, then correcting himself does nothing, for he has already been יוצא the ברכה on the fire and hence, should make the ברכה on the בשמים afterwards. If however, he was holding the בשמים at the time, clearly intent on making the ברכה on them, he can correct himself תוך כדי דיבור.

Likewise, if in place of פוקח עורים, one uttered מלביש ערומים, he cannot correct himself if he actually planned to say מלביש ערומים. Rather, he has been יוצא that ברכה and should then say פוקח עורים. The פרי מגדים adds that other than the two blessings of מתיר אסורים and זוקף כפופים, the same דין would apply to all of the ברכות. If, however, it was a slip of the tongue, then the פרי מגדים writes that one may correct himself. The מגן אברהם is not so sure. [See the דגול מרבבה who also says that here is different to the above case, when he was actually holding the correct and intended article.]

If his mistake was in ברכת המזון, is the דין the same?

As above said, the basis for the final הלכה was the rule of ספק ברכות להקל. However, when it comes to a ברכה דאורייתא, such as ברכת המזון, one has to be stringent. For example, having eaten bread, one got confused and, thinking that he was bentching on dates, began על העץ ועל פרי העץ, he cannot correct himself and must begin anew. If, however, he meant to say הזן את העולם and simply got mixed up with the wording, then, writes the ביאור הלכה, of course, the normal rule of תוך כדי דיבור would apply. Note, however, writes the משנה ברורה, that if he began על המחיי, even if he actually thought that he had eaten cake and biscuits, since they are also מזון, in this case, he may simply continue from הזן את העולם.

If he only began, up to מלך העולם, with the intent to say the wrong ברכה, it would then pend on the מחלוקת between רש"י and רי"ף. The ביאור הלכה leaves it as לדינא.