

# The Weekly Farbrengen



למען ישמעו • לך-לך תש"פ • 539  
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

## REMEMBERING HIM (IV)

### IN HIS PRESENCE

Rebbi taught, "Reflect upon three things and you will not come to sin: An Eye that sees, an Ear that hears, and all your actions are recorded in a Book."

(אבות פ"ב מ"א)

In *Tanya*, the Alter Rebbe writes that before fulfilling a *mitzva* we should refresh our awareness of the Presence of *HaShem* and His concern for our performance.

Whenever we do a *mitzva*, *HaShem* (so to speak) sets aside everything else in the physical world and the spiritual realms, and focuses his Sovereignty upon this one Yid who performs the *mitzva*, just as he was concerned with the service of *Adam HaRishon* who was the only human being on the planet. Realizing this will cause a person to serve *HaShem* with awe and fear, as if he were standing before a mortal king.

Although every Yid is born with this latent fear of *HaShem*, it can be a challenging task to uncover it so that it will be felt in one's day-to-day life. To this end a person must meditate upon *HaShem's* all-seeing Presence until he feels it.

(תניא ריש פמ"א ופמ"ב)

### A MOMENT OF SILENCE

In the summer of 5743 (1983) the Rebbe urged that in all schools a moment of silence should be instituted, at the beginning of every day. These sixty seconds should be designated to thinking about the Creator and Director of the world, and about performing the universal *Sheva Mitzvos Bnei Noach*. Heeding the Rebbe's call, the President of that time signed a call for the moment of silence. The Rebbe acclaimed this act of the President and wished that all Senators and Congressmen would follow suit. In the coming years the President's call was accepted in many states of America.

Many questions were raised concerning this idea

and the Rebbe addressed and dealt with each of them during the *farbrengens* in the following years, explaining at length the reasoning and the purpose behind this campaign.

At one *farbrengen* the Rebbe explained:

The only way to guarantee that people should follow the straight and just path is to instill in them a faith in the Creator of the world.

In this country many parents do not have the time or patience to educate their children. They discharge their obligation by sending them off to school with tasty sandwiches, giving them spending money for treats, and nice clothing, of course. Education they leave for the school.

### CONSIDER

Why is remembering the  
Creator the only way to  
influence people to be honest?  
Does it always work?

And for absurd reasons, mentioning the Creator and Conductor of the world is not allowed in school! As a result, hundreds of thousands of Jewish children and millions of non-Jewish children who are enrolled in public schools do not hear or know anything about the Creator! The only solution to this is to institute a moment of silence at the beginning of the school day, which is designated to thinking about the Creator. This, the Rebbe assured the critics, would influence the rest of the day.

Furthermore, even if children receive the best education at school, it is important that they hear these messages at home as well. As a result of the Moment of Silence children will ask their parents what they are meant to think about at that time, and this question will remind the

parents of their role in educating their children.

(תו"מ תשד"מ ח"ד ע' 2172 ובכ"מ)

The Rebbe made it clear that the Moment of Silence is not a lifeless silence, but rather a purposeful meditation – that the Creator of the world also directs it in every detail. And His involvement includes the child himself, his parents and his friends.

(תו"מ תשמ"ו ח"ד ע' 265)

### HOW MUCH TIME?

A non-chossid once asked the Alter Rebbe: *Chazal* say that one should divide his time in thirds between the study of *Mikra*, *Mishna*, and *Gemara*. Now, you say that the study of *Chassidus* fits into the category of *Mikra*. Why, then, do chassidim spend more than a third of their time studying *Chassidus*?

The Alter Rebbe did not respond, and instead steered the conversation to a discussion of this man's business endeavors.

"How much money do you have invested in business?" the Alter Rebbe asked. The man replied that practically all of his assets were invested in the business.

"But don't *Chazal* say that one should invest a third of his assets in business, a third in real estate, and a third he should keep in hard cash?!" the Alter Rebbe challenged.

"Rebbe, you obviously don't know very much about business. That may have worked fine in the old business model, but nowadays, even if you invest everything you own, you're lucky if you break even."

"Aha!" said the Alter Rebbe, "The same is true for the study of *Chassidus*. In earlier times, people didn't have to study so much to acquire a Fear of Heaven. Today, even if one were to study *Chassidus* all day long, *halevai* one should break even!"

(למען ידעו ע' 245)

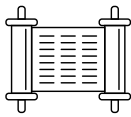


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## DAVENING FOR WOMEN

**I am a mother, but I have some time each day to daven. What should my order of priority be?**

It is a given that women are obligated to *daven*, yet the question arises as to what the parameters of their obligation are. Women are generally exempted from positive *mitzvos* that have fixed times (*zman grama*) and *davening* has fixed times.<sup>1</sup>

One view is that the essential obligation of prayer—for both men and women—is biblical in nature and lacks any fixed times; any form of prayer once during the 24 hours of each day fulfills this obligation.<sup>2</sup> Chazal instituted times and a specific *nusach* of *shmoneh esrei* and it is this aspect that women are exempt from. In this approach, a woman can utter a request to Hashem every morning and thereby fulfill her obligation of prayer.<sup>3</sup> Many Jewish women throughout history relied on this opinion.

A second view is that the essential *mitzva* of prayer is an institution of the Anshei Knesses Hagedola, along with its fixed times and *nusach*. Although women are generally exempt from time-bound *mitzvos*, Chazal established this obligation also for women since they too must ask for mercy from Hashem.<sup>4</sup> In this approach, a woman is obligated to *daven shmoneh esrei* of *shacharis* and *mincha* every day (*maariv*, however, is not included).<sup>5</sup>

The Alter Rebbe prefers the second opinion, and it is recommended if practical.<sup>6</sup> It follows that they should also recite the passage concerning the daily sacrifice (*tamid*) for the *tefilos* were ordained in place of the daily burnt-offerings.<sup>7</sup>

Shema is time bound and women are therefore exempt. However, since the first *pasuk* speaks of acceptance of Hashem's Kingship, they should say it. Women are obligated to remember *yetzias mitzrayim*, as the *mitzva* always applies and it is not time bound. They should therefore recite *emes veyatziv*—the *bracha* commemorating *yetzias Mitzrayim*—preferably adjacent to *shmoneh esrei*, in order to join *geula* with *tefila*.<sup>8</sup> The remainder of *birchos krias shema* and *pesukei d'zimra* is optional for them but recommended based on their ability.<sup>9</sup>

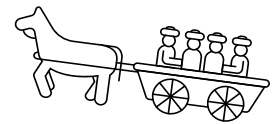
Women recite *birchas haTorah* since they are obligated in many *mitzvos* and they must learn how to fulfill them (and also because they are obligated to recite *parshas hatamid*). *Poskim* also obligate women in the remaining *birchos hashachar*, as they are daily *brachos* not connected to any fixed time, and furthermore, they should express thanks to Hashem for their benefit from the world.<sup>10</sup>

Some *poskim* point out that a woman who is busy taking care of little children may rely on the first opinion. In addition, she has the status of one who is taking care of a sick person, which exempts one from *tefila*.<sup>11</sup>

In conclusion, their obligation includes: *birchos haTorah*, *parshas hatamid*, the first *pasuk* of *shema*, *emes veyatziv*, *shmoneh esrei* of *shacharis* and *mincha*. Optional but recommended (in this order) are: the rest of *shema*, *birchos krias shema*, and *pesukei d'zimra* (at least *baruch she'amar*, *ashrei* and *yishtabach*).

1. ראה ברכות דף כ' ע"ב, שו"ע סי' ע"א בנוגע ק"ש.
2. שו"ע סי' ק"ו א.
3. רמב"ם הל' תפילה פ"א ה"ב.
4. רמב"ן השגות לספר"מ מצוה ה'.
5. שלא קיבלו ע"ע כחובה - ראה שו"ע שם ובסי' רצ"ט סי"ח.
6. שו"ע סי' ק"ו א.
7. שו"ע אורח סי' מ"ו סי' בחצו"ג (עפ"י י"ש לומר התמיד גם לפני מנחה).
8. שו"ע סי' ע"א.
9. שו"ע שם.
10. שו"ע סי' מ"ו סי' - הליכות בנות ישראל פ"ב סי' ה'.
11. ראה הליכות בת ישראל פ"ב סי' ב' והע' ב'.

לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה



## REB AVREMKE ZHEMBINER

Reb Avrohom Halevi Landau, known as Reb Avremke Zhembiner, was a chossid of the Tzemach Tzedek and the Rebbe Maharash. He was a grandson of Reb Zalmen Kurnitzer, who was the head of the city of Kurenitz and one of the great chassidim of the Alter Rebbe. At first, Reb Avremke was in business in Kurenitz and was quite a *gvir*. When things turned and he lost his fortune, the Rebbe Maharash appointed him to be the *rov* of the city Zhembin.

As *rov*, Reb Avremke sat at the *mizrach* wall in *shul*, far from the *bima*. When he was called up for an *aliya*, everyone would stand up for him out of respect. Out of his humility, this bothered him very much and he would cover his face with his *tallis*. When he reached the age of seventy he stopped covering his face, saying that at that point he didn't mind because they are simply fulfilling the Torah's instruction to rise for an elderly person.

(לקוטי סיפורים ע' תנח)

A city near Zhembin was in need of a *rov*. Many people came to try out for the position and the townspeople were considering hiring one specific person based on an excellent *drasha*

he gave. However, there were some who felt that he was lacking in *yiras shomayim*. The townsmen were truly G-d fearing and turned to Reb Avremke of the nearby town. Reb Avremke instructed them to check and see if this man has a *Zohar* in his *seforim* collection, as this would be evidence as to whether or not he is truly G-d fearing and worthy enough to be their *rov*. After looking into the matter they discovered that he did not own a *Zohar* and he was not hired.

(לקוטי סיפורים ע' תנח)

Before Reb Avremke passed away, he said to his *talmid* Reb Groinem, "Pass me the Tanya, I would like to part with it." When he took the Tanya, he sat up in his bed, opened the *sefer* with both hands and cried so hard that the pages became soaked with tears. After a while Reb Avremke said, "The Alter Rebbe said, that with the Tanya one can be a *chossid* like Avrohom Avinu!" Reb Avrohom continued to weep, and then he handed the Tanya back to Reb Groinem. He lay back down in bed and after a few moments passed away. When Reb Groinem would repeat this episode, he too would cry uncontrollably.

(כפ"ח גליץ 1021)

## A Moment with The Rebbe



## A CHOSSID DOESN'T AGE

Reb Yosef Tzvi Segal relates:

In 5724 (1964), Reb Osher Sassonkin was one of the first chassidim to escape the Iron Curtain and make his way to the Rebbe in New York.

At his first *yechidus*, the Rebbe began talking to him with a respectful plural, as is accepted in *Yiddish*. Reb Osher wouldn't hear of it. "Rebbe, why do you talk like that to me?"

"Why, you look older than your father!" the Rebbe replied,

referring to the elder chossid Reb Shmerel Sassonkin.

"Rebbe! I heard from [the *mashpia*] Reb Chatche with my own ears: a chossid ages in years, but not is spirit!"

The Rebbe smiled affectionately. From then on, the Rebbe spoke with him in direct terms, dropping the plural.

(Otzar Hachasidim EY page 448; Reb Chatche Feigin served as *mashpia* and *mazkir* of the Friediker Rebbe)