The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
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סימן מ"ז סעיף ה'-ט'

Overview

Siman 47 Seif 5:

***Birkas HaTorah* is comprised of the berachos: אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו, והערב נא וכו' ,על דברי תורה, and אשר בחר בנו.**

- The custom in our countries is to say לעסק בדברי תורה. Converts may also say אשר בחר בנו. (M.B. 8)
- Some add the phrase וצאצאי צאצאנו but it is unnecessary. (M.B. 9)
- A parent should *daven* that their children should be *Torah* scholars, pious and men of good deeds. The time to think about this is while reciting אהבה רבה, the phrase ונהיה אנחנו וצאצאינו in *Birkas HaTorah* and when saying ובא לציון למען לא ניגע לריק ולא נלד לבהלה in. (M.B. 10)

Siman 47 Seif 6:

The phrase והערב נא should include the "ו." Some say that the phrase should not have a "ו" and this is the common custom but it is preferred to include the "ו."

- The custom, nowadays, is to say והערב נא with the "ו." There is a disagreement whether one should answer אמן to the *beracha* of לעסק בדברי תורה and a majority of authorities agree that it should not be said. Preferably the *beracha* should be said silently to avoid this question. (M.B. 12)

Siman 47 Seif 7:

***Birkas* אהבת עולם discharges one's obligation of *Birkas HaTorah* if he studied *Torah* immediately after *davening* without interrupting between *davening* and learning.**

- Shulchan Aruch's wording indicates that אהבת עולם discharges one's obligation for *Birkas HaTorah* even if he did not have in mind to discharge his obligation. (M.B. 14)
- Even studying a little bit is sufficient. (M.B. 16)

Siman 47 Seif 8:

It is uncertain whether reading שמע after אהבת עולם without interrupting in between is sufficient, therefore, one should be careful to recite *Birkas HaTorah* before the *beracha* of אהבת עולם.

- Vilna Gaon and others asserts that שמע is not considered learning. (M.B. 17)

Siman 47 Seif 9:

Some maintain that there is no issue to interrupt between *Birkas HaTorah* and learning. It is preferred not to interrupt and the custom is to read the *parsha* of ברכת כהנים after *Birkas HaTorah*.

- There is a disagreement whether it is necessary for one to study *Torah* immediately after reciting *Birkas HaTorah*. In the event that one did not learn immediately after the *beracha* one should have in mind while reciting אהבה רבה that he intends to discharge his obligation to recite *Birkas HaTorah* and then learn immediately after *davening*. (M.B. 19)
- The custom is to also learn the *Mishnah* and *Beraisa* that begin with the words אלו דברים in order to have studied *Tanach*, *Mishnah* and *Gemara*. (M.B. 20)

Stories to Share

A Novel Approach

ש"ע ס' מ"ז,ח': "ויש להסתפק אי סגי בקורא ק"ש סמוך לה מיד ..."

A certain person had almost completed Ahava Rabbah before he realized that he had forgotten to say birkas haTorah. He usually was very careful to say them with great feeling since it is a blessing with the status of a Torah obligation. He did not wish to execute his obligation with Ahavah Rabbah since he would then lose the ability to say birkas haTorah that day. In addition, he wasn't even certain that focusing on fulfilling his obligation for birkas haTorah would help, since he already passed the section of Ahavah Rabbah that discusses the Torah and he certainly couldn't repeat Ahavah Rabbah with the intention of fulfilling his obligation of birkas haTorah! He could just finish the blessing, but then he would be saying Shema without having recited birkas haTorah. He remembered that the Mishnah Berurah on today's amud rules that saying Shema during the zeman is not clearly considered learning and decided to say Shema without birkas haTorah.

Afterward, he brought the matter to Rav Chaim Kanievsky, zt"l, in order to clarify what would have been the best course of action in that situation. Rav Kanievsky responded, "Although you were not permitted to say Shema without birkas haTorah, you could have discharged your obligation even by focusing on doing so before saying the end of Ahavah Rabbah. It did not have to be part of your intention when you were speaking of the Torah in that blessing."

שאלת רב, ע' קנ"ט

When this question reached Rav Yosef Shalom Eliyashiv, zt"l, he offered a surprising solution. "It is permitted to focus on discharging one's obligation with Ahavah Rabbah for Shema alone. He could have done so and then said birkas haTorah after davening to discharge his obligation for the rest of the day."

בית אהרון וישראל, קובץ פ"ז, ע' קל"א, וקובץ פ"ב ע' קי"א

Halacha Highlight

Is *Birkas HaTorah* recited standing or sitting?

Mishnah Berurah Siman 47 Seif 5

ברכת התורה וכו'

The *berachos* recited for *Torah* study are:

Bais Yosef (ריש סי' ח') states that *Birchos HaMitzvos* should be recited while standing. Pri Megadim (סי' תל"ב משב"ז סק"ג אות ב') asserts that this rule applies to those *mitzvos* that are fulfilled while standing. However, the *beracha* associated with those *mitzvos* that are fulfilled even when a person is sitting may also be recited while sitting. Therefore, since one studies *Torah* while sitting, it would seem to be acceptable for one to recite *Birkas HaTorah* while sitting. Teshuvas Rama MiPano (סי' ק"ב) writes explicitly that *Birkas HaTorah* may be recited while sitting. Since the Torah writes בשבתך בביתך— as you sit in your house – it is obvious that one may study *Torah* while sitting and the *beracha* will have the same status as the *mitzvah* associated with it. Sefer Chaye Moshe notes that certainly according to those who maintain that *Birkas HaTorah* is not a *beracha* on the *mitzvah* but rather a *beracha* of praise to Hashem there would be no issue to recite the *beracha* while sitting.

Aruch HaShulchan (סע' ז') as well as Teshuvas Yechaveh Da'as (ח"ה סי' מ"ז) write that one could recite *Birkas HaTorah* sitting or standing. Teshuvas Shevet HaKehasi (ח"א סי' ס') relates that there were those who were particular to sit for the recitation of *Birkas HaTorah*. This practice was based on Shulchan Aruch's statement (ע' סי' קפ"ג סע' ט') that one maintains better concentration while sitting than while standing. Shevet HaKehasi also cites Bach who writes that anytime one benefits from the *mitzvah,* the *beracha* may be recited while sitting. Since one benefits from *Torah* study one may sit while reciting the *beracha*. Teshuvas Tzitz Eliezer (חט"ז סי' ב') references the statement of Erech Shai in the name of Zohar that any *mitzvah* that is fulfilled by men the *beracha* on that *mitzvah* should be recited while standing. Accordingly, writes Tzitz Eliezer, *Birkas HaTorah* should also be recited while standing.