The Chicago Center
Digest
Mishna Berura
THE DAILY RESOURCE FOR MISHNA BERURA YOMI
Tues, Aug 11, 2026 ■ כ"ח אב, תשפ"ו
סימן קי"ט סעיף א'-ב'

Overview

Siman 119 Seif 1:

If one wants to add to any one the middle *berachos* something that relates to that *beracha* he may do so. For example, if someone is ill one may ask for mercy on his behalf in the *beracha* of רפאנו. If one needs *parnasa* he may ask for it in ברכת השנים. When adding something one should first start the *beracha* before adding the additional prayer and one should not start with the additional prayer before starting the *beracha*. **In שומע תפלה one may ask for anything since that *beracha* encompasses all requests. According to Rabbeinu Yonah when one is adding something to a *beracha* if the request is for the *tzibbur* one should use plural language rather than singular and the addition should be added to the end of the *beracha* rather than the middle. If one is asking for personal matters, e.g. someone is ill in one's house or for *parnasa*, one may ask even in the middle of the *beracha* and the request should be in singular rather than in plural. In the *beracha* of שומע תפלה or at the end of *davening*, whether it is before יהיו לרצון or afterwards one may add requests using singular or plural language and the request may be for the *tzibbur* or for one's private needs.**

- Pri Megadim writes that in the middle *berachos* one may not *daven* that something bad should not happen in the future, e.g. that one should not become ill, but in שומע תפלה it is acceptable. (M.B. 1)
- When *davening* for someone ill in their presence it is unnecessary to mention their name but when not in their presence it is necessary to mention their name. (M.B. 2)
- Pri Megadim rules that one must complete an idea before adding a request into a *beracha*. (M.B. 3)
- It is appropriate for one to confess his sins and ask for *parnasa* in *davening*. One who committed a new sin should confess by specifying the sin in the next *tefila* and it should be said in a submissive manner with a crying voice. One should also commit not to transgress that prohibition again. (M.B. 4)
- Prayers for a large group are comparable to a prayer for Klal Yisroel. (M.B. 5)
- When an individual asks for a communal need in the middle of a *beracha* it seems as though one is adding to the wording composed by Chazal. (M.B. 8)
- In *siman* 566 *seif* 4 it is evident that *l'chatchila* one should make an effort to comply with Rabbeinu Yonah. (M.B. 9)
- Bach asserts that according to Rabbeinu Yonah the *beracha* of שומע תפלה is similar to the other *berachos* in that one should not make their requests in plural. (M.B. 10)

Siman 119 Seif 2:

There is an opinion who maintains that when adding a private request to a *beracha* one should not elaborate.

- After *shemone esrei* but before יהיו לרצון one may elaborate as he sees fit. (M.B. 12)

Stories to Share

The Pitchfork of Prayer

ש"ע ס' קי"ט, א': "יכול לשאול בין בלשון יחיד בין בלשון רבים"

Today's amud discusses when one may petition Hashem in personal prayer during shemoneh esrei. The Divrei Torah asks, "Why should prayer effect any change at all? One would think that since Hashem orchestrates events, shouldn't we just learn to accept His will instead of trying to overturn it?" He answers that since we have been commanded to pray, Hashem's true will is that we use prayer to change our fate. We can see this in the image of the pitchfork.

A pitchfork is not used to move hay from one place to another, but rather to turn the hay and expose it to the air. Similarly, Hashem sends challenges our way not to make our lives difficult, but so that we will be goaded to turn to Him in prayer and remove the challenges. The heavenly decree is meant to last only as long as it takes us to "turn it over" to mercy through prayer. This sometimes needs to be done many times, just as the hay needs to be turned a number of times before it is dry.

דברי תורה, סע' ד'

The Chofetz Chaim writes, "The sole reason for all the hardships that have come upon us is that we have not prayed enough. If we had prayed more, we would have been answered. The three daily prayers are simply not enough. One should pour out his heart to Hashem with intensity several times a day. The reason why the three regular prayers are not enough is because we are so used to them that it is difficult to say them with intensity. But a prayer from the depths of the heart will surely be answered."

קונטרס ליקוטי אמרים, פ"י

Rav Nachman of Breslov explained, "This is like someone traveling on the highway; since bandits also know the 'high road,' he must take precautions. But one who forges a new path through the wilderness need not fear highwaymen. The regular prayers are the 'high road'—easy to travel, but unsafe. Personal prayer is a newly-trod path—no heavenly accusers lie in wait to prevent one from pouring out his heart to Hashem!"

לקו"מ, ח"ב, צ"ז'

Halacha Highlight

Adding Requests into Shemone Esrei

Shulchan Aruch Siman 119 Seif 1

אם רצה להוסיף בכל ברכה מהאמצעיות

If one wishes to add to any of the middle *berachos*

Shulchan Aruch (סע' א') teaches that one who wishes to add to one of the middle *berachos* of *shemone esrei* is permitted to do so. As an example, he mentions that one who wishes to *daven* for someone who is ill may add that request in the *beracha* of רפאנו and one who wants to *daven* for *parnasa* may add that request into the *beracha* of ברך עלינו. There is a special importance associated with these individual requests. *Tefila* is a Biblical command and requires the concentration of one's heart. Unfortunately, many of our *tefilos* are recited without focus and attention since they are recited so frequently. However, individual requests are often heartfelt and for that reason they are particularly dear (פסקי תשובות אות א' בשם יערות דבש).

Poskim write that one who understands and knows how to express himself in *lashon hakodesh* should recite these individual requests in *lashon kodesh*. The reason is that *davening* in *lashon kodesh* is a *segulah* that one's *tefila* will be accepted since there are opinions who maintain that the Angels do not understand any language other than *lashon kodesh*. However, if one would have a difficult time expressing himself in *lashon kodesh* and that difficulty would prove distracting, it is preferable for him to express these individual requests in a language that he understands as long as it will be heartfelt (פסקי תשובות שם). When adding individual requests the request should not be too long; rather one should be concise but clear (שו"ע סע' ב' בשם י"א). If one wants to elaborate on individual requests they should be added after reading the *pasuk* יהיו לרצון even though there is a preference to make requests that relate to the middle *berachos* when reciting the appropriate related *beracha*. Sefer Chassidim (סי' קנ"ח) cautions that one who will add individual requests should be careful to concentrate on the rest of the *berachos* as well so that the prosecuting Angels should not be able to criticize one who only focuses on his individual request (פסקי תשובות שם).