

# HALACHOS HATZRICHOS

PACKET #2



# LEARNING FOR HASHEM'S SAKE

The *Chachomim* say that a person should always learn Torah (and do *mitzvos*) even if it may be *Shelo Lishma* (even if they aren't doing it for Hashem's sake) because "*Mitoch Shelo Lishma Ba Lishma*," doing it for the wrong reason will eventually make you do it for the right reason.

There are two kinds of "wrong reasons" a person could be learning Torah for.

A person could be learning Torah because he wants to be famous! He wants everyone to see that he is a big *Talmid Chochom* and very learned. He could be learning Torah because he wants to get lots of *kavod*! He wants people to see that he is a very special person, and maybe get a job as a Rabbi or *Rosh Yeshiva*.

A person who learns Torah for that kind of reason is not learning it because Hashem said so! Still, he does think about Hashem in general, and does do the *mitzvos* he is learning about. Eventually, he will start to realize that getting *kavod* is selfish, and will start to learn Torah in order to serve Hashem better — *Lishma*.

But there is a worse kind of "wrong reason" a person could be learning Torah. A person might be learning just because he thinks it is interesting, because he thinks the Torah has good psychology, or because he likes challenging his brain. But he doesn't realize that the Torah is the words of Hashem, and he doesn't actually plan on doing what the Torah says!

Some *Chachomim* say that we aren't talking about this kind of person when we say "*Mitoch Shelo Lishma, Ba Lishma*." They say that it would be better if this kind of person did not learn Torah at all! Not only is he not learning Torah for the right reasons, he is learning Torah for the WRONG reasons.

The *halacha* is that we do even tell this kind of person to still learn Torah, because of "*Mitoch Shelo Lishma Ba Lishma*." The Torah promises that every Yid will eventually do *teshuvah*, and Kabbalah teaches that any Torah we learned for the wrong reason will come out of *kelipah* and go into *kedusha* when we do *teshuvah*! It's worth it to learn Torah, even if it goes into *kelipah*, because in the end there will be that much more Torah in the world.

*Chassidus* tells us that really, NO Torah is learned "*Lo Lishma*!" Every Yid has a *neshama*, and deep inside every *neshama*, the REAL reason that a Yid learns Torah is because Hashem wants it. The "*toch*," the inside, of every time it looks like we're learning "*Lo Lishma*" is that we really are learning *Lishma*!

(See the Alter Rebbe's *Hilchos Talmud Torah*, chapter 4, *halacha* 3)



# HACHANA LETEFILLAH

Certain situations will make us feel a certain way. When someone gets called to speak to the principal, he will usually start to feel nervous. A person will often feel scared if he is very high up and looking down. Loud happy music will usually put us in a happy mood.

*Ruchnius* situations don't always work as easily to put us in the right mood! We spend our whole lives in a *Gashmius* world, and we don't feel the *Ruchnius* automatically.

If we really understood what was happening in *davening*, we would be nervous and excited! Going to speak privately to any important person would make us feel that way, but speaking privately to Hashem, the King of the entire world, is infinitely more special!

Even though we don't feel this way automatically, we do need to at least try to feel how important the thing we are about to do is. The *halacha* is that we need to prepare for *Tefillah* by realizing "*Da Lifnei Mi Ata Omeid*," we need to know Who we are standing before when we *daven*. We need to think about how unimportant a person is, and how great Hashem is!

Of course, learning some *Chassidus* before *davening* is a good way to do this. *Chassidus* shows us how low a person is, but how great Hashem is. Once in *Yechidus*, the Rebbe told someone that even if he doesn't have much time, he should spend at least 5 to 10 minutes learning *Chassidus* to prepare him for *davening* properly.

(See the Alter Rebbe's *Shulchan Aruch*, *Siman Tzadik-Ches*, *se'if alef*; *Sefer Hamafteichos LeSichos Kodesh*, *erech Tefillah*)



# DRESSED FOR DAVENING

The main *mitzvah* of *tefillah* is *Shemoneh Esrei*, where we ask Hashem for our needs. The *Chachomim* added other things to the *davening*, like *Pesukei Dezimra* and the *mitzvah* of *Kriyas Shema*. These prepare us to stand before Hashem in the proper way.

Even though the *davening* itself is a preparation for *Shemoneh Esrei*, there are other *hachanos* (preparations) we need to do as well. We make sure the place we are *davening* in is appropriate, that our body is clean, that our clothing is proper, that our mind is clear and ready to have *kavana*, and that we give *tzedakah* before.

Today we'll learn some of the *halachos* about clothing for *davening*:

When we *daven*, we should wear clothing that shows that we understand that we are speaking before Hashem. We should be dressed at least as nicely as we would if we were meeting an important person.

In most places, that means wearing clean clothes, shoes and socks, and not wearing outdoor clothing like a coat or gloves.

The Alter Rebbe says that if someone can, it is appropriate to have special clothes for *davening*, like the *Bigdei Kehunah* that the *kohanim* wore when they did their *avodah* in the *Beis Hamikdash*!

(See the Alter Rebbe's *Shulchan Aruch*, *Siman Tzadik-Alef se'if hey*, *Siman Tzadik-Ches se'if daled*)



# GUF NAKI

The main part of *davening* is *Shemoneh Esrei*, where we ask Hashem for the things we need.

In the past, Yidden used to just stand up and speak to Hashem when they wanted to, but nowadays, after the *Churban*, we need more preparation to speak to Hashem properly. The *Chachomim* gave us detailed ways to get ready for *davening*, so that our *tefillah* will be with the proper *kavod* and will be accepted by Hashem.

They taught us to spend some time before and after *Shemoneh Esrei* in *davening*, that we should *daven* with a feeling of *simcha*, and a feeling of humility. The *Seder HaTefillah*, the whole setup of *davening*, is based on this.

We also make sure that our body is ready for *davening* — that we are dressed properly, that the place we *daven* in is appropriate for *tefillah*, that our mind is clear and ready to speak to Hashem, and that our body is clean as it should be. The details of how to do these preparations are in *Shulchan Aruch*.

Here are some of the *halachos* about preparing our *guf* for *davening*:

- 1) Try to use the bathroom before starting to *daven*, so we won't need to use it during *davening*.
- 2) Before *Shemoneh Esrei*, we should make sure we don't have something yucky in our mouths that we will need to spit out during the most important part of *tefillah*.
- 3) If you know you scratched your head or touched a part of your body that is usually covered, you need to wash your hands. If you just weren't paying attention, so you're not sure that your hands are *tahor*, it is best to at least wipe them on something as a preparation for *davening*.

(For more details, see the Alter Rebbe's *Shulchan Aruch*, *siman Tzadik-Beis*)



# SHEMONEH ESREI

When we *daven Shemoneh Esrei*, our feet should be together, touching, so they look like one foot. The *posuk* tells us that this is how *malochim* stand, who only have one foot. We also stand this way during *Kedusha*, when we make Hashem holy like the *malochim* do.

*(See the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch, siman Kuf-Chof-Gimmel and siman Tzadik-Hey, se'if beis)*



# SHEMONEH ESREI

The *Chachomim* tell us to take three steps forward, to show that we are going towards something important. In order to take these steps forward, we first need to take three steps back.

At the end of *Shemoneh Esrei*, we show that we don't want this special time to end. We bow like a person leaving from before a king, and take three steps back while bowing. We go back with our left foot first, to show that really we don't want to leave. We step backwards, like someone would not turn his back to a king.

While still bowing, we give *shalom* to Hashem. When we say the *posuk* "*Oseh Shalom*," we turn a bit to the left, then we turn to the right. We bow again, like a person does before a king.

To continue showing *kavod*, we don't step back to our place right away. There are many *halachos* about how to return to our place, which we will *IY"H* learn more about next week.

(See the Alter Rebbe's *Shulchan Aruch*, *siman Kuf-Chof-Gimmel* and *siman Tzadik-Hey*, *se'if beis*)



# SHEMONEH ESREI

At the end of *Shemoneh Esrei*, we say *Sheyiboneh*, asking Hashem to build the *Beis Hamikdash* again! Our *tefillah* is instead of bringing *korbanos*, and we tell Hashem that we want to bring *korbanos*, and do the *avodah* the way it is really supposed to be!

*(See the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch, siman Kuf-Chof-Gimmel and siman Tzadik-Hey, se'if beis)*

