

HALOCHOSCOPE

This week's question:

Someone is traveling to a final destination with a day-long layover on the way. He planned the layover so that he could spend the time in that city visiting the grave of a *tzadik*. When he resumes his trip, must he repeat *tefilas haderech*?

The issues:

- A) *Tefilas haderech*, the wayfarer's prayer
- B) How often is it said on a single trip?
- C) What constitutes an interrupted trip or a divided trip?

A) *Tefilas haderech*

The Talmud relates, Elijah the prophet told a sage that when he sets out on a trip, he should consult with his Maker. The implication is that he should gain permission. However, not everyone merits a direct reply from his Maker. Consulting means that Hashem desires our confidence, so to speak. He wishes to hear from us at times that we put ourselves at His mercy. Alternatively, the permission terminology is used in the same way as it is used when discussing reciting a *brocha rishona* before eating. We plan to eat the food anyhow. Nonetheless, we recognize that it is Hashem's food, and we 'ask' before eating. Here, too, the World belongs to Hashem, and He gave us our own habitat. When we travel, going to new places and passing through other areas inhabited by other creations of Hashem, we 'ask' before setting out on a trip. Interestingly, the term used for Hashem in this context is *kono*, one's Maker or Owner.

This is a prayer for safety and protection. The Torah recognizes the danger of traveling in an uninhabited area. There are outlaws, wild animals and the dangers of exposure to the elements. If a wayfarer is found murdered, the nearby settlement is held liable. They should have provided him with provisions for his trip and escorted him on his way. Escorting him boosts his confidence. It also warns hidden potential attackers watching him that someone cares about him and will not allow his death to be unaccounted for. Furthermore, on a spiritual level, it arouses divine compassion. On the road, when one is in danger, the adversarial forces try to arouse divine judgment. At the very least, *levaya*, escorting, allows divine defending forces to counter adversarial forces. "See, he has friends. He is well-liked!" On the other hand, if he is left to fend for himself, it can arouse divine adversarial forces.

The Talmud indicates that this *tefilah* is recited when one has traveled a certain distance outside the city. There is an interpretation of the Talmudic passage that one only recites it when traveling this distance, though this opinion is difficult to reconcile. Some say that it means that when traveling a shorter distance one need not recite it. Some maintain that one may recite it before setting out, if one is absolutely certain that he will in-

deed be traveling that distance. It can be included in *shemone esrai* as well. This is often relied on in cases of doubt. Since the *tefillah* includes a *brocha* at the end, it should not be recited in full in cases of doubt. If one plans to leave immediately after *shacharis*, some append it to the end of *birchos hashachar*.

The source for the full version of the *tefillah* is first recorded in an extra-Talmudic text from the Talmudic period. In that form it is given in the singular, and does not seem to be limited to wayfarers. Indeed, the words could easily apply to anyone going out on a business errand. The Talmud says that one should recite it in plural form. Most *tefilos* can be recited with a quorum. This *tefillah* is actually an individual prayer, for wayfarers only. Nonetheless, there are always other wayfarers somewhere in the world. One should include others, and the entire Jewish people, in his prayers. By combining his own needs with those of others, one makes his own *tefila* more acceptable.

The Talmud discusses whether one should stand still when reciting it. The conclusion is to permit it while still walking, but that if possible, one should stop and remain stationary while saying it. When riding, it is also preferable to stop, but if one is riding in a large vehicle, this is not required. Even in a small vehicle, if it will disrupt the trip such that it will disturb concentration, one must carefully weigh the advantages of stopping. [On a large vehicle, some consider the passengers stationary relative to the vehicle.] Evidently, concentration on this *tefillah* is important. In fact, there are Scriptural references to travelers' devotion in prayer. They feel less secure and more dependent on Hashem.

Tefilas haderech is a type of prayer. It is also included in the class *brochos* of praise. These include *brochos* on sights, sounds and events. After the actual prayer, various verses are recited. These are based, in part, on Talmudic passages. [See Mikaitz 42:35. Brochos 4b-5a 29b-30a 35a 55a 60b Yerushalmi Shabbos 2:6 Sotah 48b, Derech Eretz Rabah (end), Poskim. Abudraham, shaar 8. Tur sh Ar OC 110:4-6, commentaries.]

B) How often is it said?

The poskim maintain that this *tefillah* is said once a day. That is, if one travels all day, and makes rest stops on the way, he need not repeat the *tefillah* when he sets out again. However, if one lodges overnight, he must recite the *tefillah* again in the morning. The presumption is that one does not travel at night. The Talmud actually does not recommend traveling at night. Rather, one should both set out and turn in for lodging by daylight. This is derived from a passuk, but most poskim do not consider it mandatory. It is considered a *mitzvah*-like suggestion. Nonetheless, the basis for it is the *mitzvah* to guard one's health and life, meaning that it is more than just a good idea.

Accordingly, one should not be traveling by night. Therefore, when he said the *tefillah* in the morning, he could only have in mind the travel of that day. Lodging by night is considered *hesech hadaas*, taking one's mind off the *tefillah*. This is similar to the concept of a *brocha rishona*, before eating food. One recites the *brocha* and eats a little. He may eat more at intervals without a new *brocha*, provided that one can still connect the original *brocha* to the eating activity. If one decided to stop eating, then changed his mind to eat more, he requires a new *brocha*. Even if one did not make a conscious decision to stop eating, but his actions demonstrate that he has finished that activity, he must recite a fresh *brocha* if he wishes to eat more. Sleeping overnight is clearly *hesech daas*. There is

a minority view that until one reaches his destination, one cannot be considered having 'ended' the activity. Therefore, if the trip is extended over a few days, one only recites it on the first day. Most poskim do not agree with this view.

The reasoning might be the following. The poskim seem to debate whether the concept of one *brocha* each day has another connotation. We find that one must study Torah every day. At the beginning of each day, one recites a *brocha* on the Torah study of that day. Even if one did not have *hesech hadaas* before the next day, he really must recite a fresh *brocha* the next morning. This is because it is considered a fresh *mitzvah*. Though this matter is debated, (as is the case of one who slept by day), if it is applied to *tefilas haderech* one may say the same. The trip takes a few days. There is a separate *mitzvah* to recite it on each day. As long as one is on the trip, that is, he has not reached his destination, he has the *mitzvah* to recite this *tefilah* each day. It could also be considered a daily *tefilah*, like regular *davening*, for those on a trip.

One aspect of this would be how to view traveling by night. If one does not lodge on the way, but continues traveling, does he need a new *tefilas haderech* after nightfall? Is it like a daily *tefilah*, and if so, is the day defined from nightfall to nightfall, or from morning to morning. From the Talmudic dictum recommending travel by daylight only, it appears that the day is measured from morning to morning. Another application of this question would be one who lodged overnight, and then left before dawn. Should he recite a fresh *tefilas haderech* before daylight? Another difference could arise if one lodged at a rest stop, but never went to sleep. If the day determines the obligation, he should recite a fresh *tefilas haderech* the next day. If the issue is *hesech daas*, perhaps he has not interrupted his first *tefilah*. If one set out on the trip, then returned home for something, does he need to recite *tefilas haderech* again? Has he started his trip over, or can we say that there was no *hesech daas*?

These questions are addressed by the poskim. Some say that in cases where there is some question, one should recite it with the ending and Hashem's name on the first day. On subsequent days, it should be said without Hashem's name. One could fulfill it by listening to another person saying it, who is definitely obligated. This indicates that there is some debate on the reason to recite it every day of the trip. Some consider it a daily type of *tefilah*, while others consider the overnight interruption a *hesech daas*. This will actually affect our discussion in the next section. [See Tur Sh OC 110:5, commentaries.]

C) Interrupted or divided trips

Our case raises some of these issues. The traveler knows ahead of time that his trip will be interrupted. If all goes according to plan, he knows how long the interruption will last. He will not need to spend a night at the point of the overlay. However, he planned a specific activity for that time. He could be viewed as having planned a separate trip, or having planned two trips. Some people travel specially for this type of activity. Is this, therefore, true *hesech daas* from his *tefilah*? Does the fact that he is still on the way to his final destination connect the *tefilas haderech* before his first leg to his second leg?

There is an interesting question about the language of the *tefilah*. In one original source, the terminology includes a prayer for a safe return. This implies that until one returns, this *tefilah* should apply to the entire trip. Other sources exclude this term. Some

recent poskim say that if one plans to return on the same day, he should include this term. Then, he does not recite it again on the return trip. The presumption is that the round trip is not simply a ride. There is some activity planned at the destination. Nonetheless, the single prayer suffices for both 'legs' of the trip. Yet, if one lodges overnight, he must recite it afresh the next morning. Apparently, an activity is not enough to break the connection to the *tefilah*. This has become the prevailing practice, but some question its source.

The poskim define a break for lodging. When traveling in an uninhabited area, one is sometimes exempt from *shemone esrai*, due to the dangers of the road. If one lodges in an inhabited settlement, he is required to *daven* as usual. Thus, if one lodged by the roadside, he might be considered still on his original trip. It is like one who does not stop for the night, but continues traveling. Some say that one says it again, but with no ending.

If one stopped and then continued the same day, it depends on the intent at the time he stopped. If he originally planned to lodge overnight, then changed his mind to move on to the next town, his new trip requires a new *tefilas haderech*. If his original plan was to move to the next town, he need not recite a fresh *tefilah*. If his plan had been to go on to the next town, but he detoured here due to unforeseen events, when he 'changed his mind' to go on to the next town, in hindsight, he never really interrupted his trip. Therefore, the poskim say that he should not recite a fresh *tefilah*. The original *tefilas haderech* took all of this into account. Though the events causing the interruption were unforeseen, the original plan did work out, ultimately.

Our case seems to fit in with the last case mentioned. Though there was a definite plan to interrupt the trip, the original plan was always to continue immediately. Therefore, the original *tefilas haderech* should apply to the second leg of the trip. Only if there is an overnight layover could there be some doubt about this plan. In that eventuality, the person should recite a fresh *tefilas haderech* the next morning. Though he might not sleep overnight, his additional activity combined with his overnight stay means that there was a planned stop in this town. This makes it into its own destination. [See refs to section B, especially those cited in Kaf Hachayim 46-48, MB dirshu ed.]

In conclusion, unless he spends the night in the layover, he should not recite a fresh *tefilas haderech* on the second leg of his trip.

On the Parsha ... *Avraham went along with them to escort them. And Hashem ... [18:16-17] A righteous person is accompanied by the divine Presence [Baal Haturim]* Perhaps a second meaning can be gleaned from the juxtaposition of these words. Avraham was fulfilling the *mitzvah* of *levayah*, to escort the guests. Part of this *mitzvah* is to arouse divine protection. Therefore, the Torah hints that since Avraham did *levayah*, Hashem went along with his guests. Possibly, we may add, Hashem had already escorted the *malachim* on the outset of their trip. Here, they were setting out on the second leg, having interrupted it with the activity of visiting a *tzadik*! Hashem escorted them again, to show that it was like a new trip!

Sponsored by J. Sindler in memory of Rose (Stein) Sindler, ראשע מרים בת משה

ע"ה, whose fiftieth *yahrzeit* was on the 12th of Cheshvan. װ

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