

HALOCHOSCOPE

This week's question:

As of the first day of *Pesach*, *mashiv haruach umorid hageshem* is omitted from *shemone esrai*, and in the weekday *shemone esrai*, *vesain bracha* is said in place of *vesain tal umatar*. If one is in doubt about having said the right words, for thirty days it is assumed that he followed his old habit. If he recited the phrases including the new words 90 times, or according to some 100 times, he may assume that he has changed his habit. An *avail* has been acting as *shliach tzibbur* since *Pesach*. May he assume that he changes his habit sooner, since he repeated *shemone esrai* twice at both *shacharis* and at *mincha*?

The issues:

- A) *Mashiv haruach umorid hageshem*, *vesain bracha*
- B) Repetition of *shemone esrai* if they were not said correctly; Doubts
- C) 90 times

A) *Mashiv haruach*, *vsain bracha*

Mashiv haruach umorid hageshem is a praise to Hashem referring to His power to dispense rain in its correct season. It is inserted in the second *brocha* of *shemone esrai*, *gevuros*, which lists those powers in which Hashem maintains a more direct involvement than others. These demonstrate the futility of human attempts at intervention more than anything else. Rains are indispensable for life, and Hashem keeps the 'keys' to Himself. Thus, it is included in the *brocha* describing Hashem's control over life and death.

In the ideal agricultural system, specifically in *Eretz Yisroel*, rain should come at times when it can provide the most help with the least damage. Therefore, during winter, when the ground can absorb water and store it without damaging crops, rain is requested. During summer, this supply is used up, but comes from below the ground surface rather than coming down to wet the crops. (Moisture is maintained by the dew, or humidity.) Accordingly, during winter *she'ayla*, the request for rain, is inserted in the *brocha* about produce. This is in the form of *vesain tal umatar livracha*. During summer, we omit this request, since it is the wrong season. In the *brocha* of *gevuros* we do not wish to mention rain either. This is not because we do not wish to praise Hashem for it. The Talmud actually debates this, with one position being that it should really be appropriate to praise Hashem for it throughout the year. However, since it is not always considered a positive thing, we are praising Hashem by its omission. He governs the dispensation of rain within His natural world at the seasons He has set up.

For this reason, the insertions do not actually apply at exactly the same times. *Mashiv haruach* is inserted from *musaf* on *Shemini Atzeress*, which is incidentally the end of the rain judgment period of *Sukos*, until *musaf* on the first day of *Pesach*. This covers the entire winter season. [There is an opinion in the Talmud that one should mention it at the beginning of *Sukos*. We do not follow this view. Though *mashiv haruach*

umorid hageshem does not involve asking for rain, it still seems inappropriate to mention it during the first days of *Sukos*, when people sit in a *Sukah*. We do not wish it to rain then.] It could be said at *maariv*. However, more people go to *shul* by day. In the past, people followed what they saw at *shul*. Rather than have a divided nation, we wait until such time that all can be 'on the same page'. Those who miss *maariv* might omit it, and those who then come to *shacharis* might think that it was said at *maariv*. Therefore, *musaf*, when it can be properly announced, is the optimum time to begin together.

Vesayn tal umatar is not mentioned at the end of *Sukos*. Asking is different from praising. Requesting for rain implies that there is an immediate need. In the days when the Jews traveled to *Yerushalayim* for *Sukos*, they did not want to travel home in the rain. Therefore, it is delayed until the last of the pilgrims arrive home, two weeks. The diaspora was originally in *Bavel*. That country has many wetlands. It does not require as much rain, and its harvest season continues past *Sukos*. Therefore, *Bavel* only began requesting rain sixty days after the equinox. Though the poskim debate the matter, the prevailing minhag is that anywhere outside *Eretz Yisroel* follows the original institution for *Bavel*. Thus we begin inserting *vesain tal umatar* in early December.

The end of the season is universal. *Pesach* heralds the spring season. Though this matter is also debated by the Talmud, we all begin the omission of *mashiv haruach umorid hageshem* on the first day of *Pesach*, and *vesain bracha*, omitting the words for rain, on our first opportunity after that. The first weekday *shemone esrai* is *maariv* at the end of *Yomtov*, first night of *Chol Hamoed*. Interestingly, this insertion or omission does begin at *maariv*. Since there is no *musaf* with its mention, the announcement and maximum public notice is not possible anyhow. Therefore, it reverts to its rightful place. [See Taanis 2a-6a 10a, Poskim. Tur Sh Ar OC 114 117, commentaries.]

B) One who omitted them, or added them in the wrong season; a doubt

If one omitted or wrongly added either of these insertions, he must repeat *shemone esrai*. [Although other Talmudic views exist, we follow this one.] The formal version of *shemone esrai* was instituted by the *Anshei Kenesess Hagedolah*, Men of the Great Assembly. This was a gathering of the elders of the generation returning to *Yerushalayim* with Ezra, including a number of prophets. Until that time, *tefilah* was a personal matter, including eighteen general subjects, but formulated by the individual. By formalizing an authorized text, the *Kenesess Hagedolah* infused these words with the powers to invoke all the necessary forces of prayer. Anyone who tampers with the formalized version has not fulfilled his obligation. This involves mentioning the Name of Hashem many times. This is not to be taken lightly, in light of its involving Scriptural violations when done for the wrong reasons. However, the Rabbis have the authority to require a *brocha* in a specific format, and to insist on repetition if the format was not followed.

If one catches himself before finishing *shemone esrai*, he may repeat only the part that he said after his mistake. That is, he goes back to the point at which he erred, and repeats it, with the correction. If he has not ended the *brocha*, he may correct it and continue. If he ended it, he cannot go back to the middle of a *brocha*, but must begin the *brocha* containing the correction. For *mashiv haruach*, this is complicated by the nature of the first three *brochos*. They are separate but connected. Therefore, a mistake in any of them requires going back to the beginning of the first *brocha*. However, if he did not be-

gin the next *brocha*, he may still return to the beginning of that *brocha*.

To summarize: If one makes a mistake in regard to one of these insertions, if he catches himself before the end of the *brocha*, he corrects himself and continues. If he has finished the *brocha* he returns to the beginning of that *brocha*. In the case of *mashiv haruach umorid hageshem*, if he has begun the next *brocha*, he returns to the beginning of the first *brocha*. If one has finished *shemone esrai*, he must repeat it. In addition, if one realized this later in the day, he must repeat the *shemone esrai* that he 'missed'. For this, he must follow the guidelines for *tefilas tashlumin*, making up for a missed *tefilah*.

If one is in doubt about having said the right thing, he is in a quandary. Repeating *shemone esrai* involves uttering Hashem's names. If he is exempt, his mention of them is in vain, a serious transgression. If he is obligated, he must repeat it, and the mention is for a positive purpose. Usually, the rule applied is, in doubt about a *brocha*, one should practice leniency. Most *brochos* are a Rabbinical obligation, and does not apply in cases of doubt. *Tefilah* is a Scriptural obligation according to some. However, one fulfills the Scriptural part of the obligation by praying once a day, and not necessarily with the authorized formula. The remaining *tefilos* are Rabbinical, like *brochos*.

Due to its routine nature, one develops habits for *tefilah*, saying things without realizing it. One must assume that if he did not make a conscious effort to do things a certain way, he defaulted to his habit. When the season changes, the habit must be changed. The *Yerushalmi* determines that this takes people about thirty days. Though it is a gradual process, the point at which one changes from probably following the old habit, to probably following the new habit is thirty days. This probability is enough to resolve a doubt, and is considered a certainty for *halachic* purposes. It is also possible that until thirty days he assumes that the doubt is not reasonable, so he repeats. After thirty days there is reasonable doubt, so he does not repeat. [See Taanis 3b Yerushalmi, Poskim. Tur Sh Ar OC 114:4-9, PMG, commentaries.]

C) 90 Times

The Talmudic principle of thirty days to form the habit could mean one of four things. (i) It could depend on a time period needed to change. (ii) It could mean that habits are formed by repetitive action, and that the times it is repeated over thirty days are enough to force the change. (iii) Or it could be a combination of both. As a combination, it could mean one of two things. (a) One might require the full thirty days plus the repetitive action. (b) Or as long as there is a repetitive action drawn out over a time period, one could assume that the habit will form. Thirty days contain the required repetition, but it can be condensed in a shorter time, or lengthened over a longer period, if one happens not to repeat the *shemone esrai* exactly according to standard practice. (iv) It is also possible that either the time period or the repetition work equally well. The *Yerushalmi* mentions 30 days, rather than the number of repetitions needed, because this is the norm.

This leads to a debate by the poskim. If one repeated the insertion, or the phrase with the omission, as many times as would occur were he to say *shemone esrai* for the duration of thirty days, then said *shemone esrai* before the thirty days were up, and is now in doubt about the change, should he repeat *shemone esrai*? If his habit has changed, he may not repeat. If his habit has not yet changed, he must repeat. The amount of times is also debated. In one view, this is really 101 times, based on omitting *mashiv haruach*.

When adding the various *tefilos* of *Pesach*, including *musaf* throughout *Yomtov* and *Chol Hamoed*, and the *tefilos* of the weeks following, including the additional *musafim* of *Shabbos* and *Rosh Chodesh*, the number is 101. This fits beautifully with a Talmudic dictum that one should review his studies 101 times if he wishes to ingrain them in his mind. However, this does not work for *vesain brocha*, which is not recited in *musaf*, and not at all on *Shabbos* or *Yomtov*. Furthermore, including *mashiv haruach*, from *Shemini Atzeress*, one does not gain 101 times in the first thirty days.

The main explanation for the opinion that repetitive action helps in a shorter period is: if an ox gores three people it becomes a *muad*, forewarned. This changes its status with regard to responsibility for damages in the future. The Torah says this habit forms when it gores three consecutive days. The Talmud debates whether the habit can form in a shorter period, or whether an ox can have one bad day, then become tame again. We follow the latter view, but with regard to *davening* habits we apply the idea that if a longer period of repetitive action changes a habit, certainly a shorter period works. The thirty day period seems to cover an average of 90 mentions of the various insertions or omissions. In practice, most poskim follow this view. Some even recommend repeating the phrase 90 times, to remove the doubt. Even those who do not subscribe fully to this view maintain that one should not repeat *shemone esrai* if in doubt after 90 times. One reason to repeat before thirty days might be because of reasonable doubt. After saying it 90 times, it is a double doubt: he might have changed his habit by repetitive action, plus the reasonable doubt that he said it.

What about a combination, 45 times plus 15 days? What about 90 times over sixty days? A woman often does not say *shemone esrai* three times a day. May she assume that her habit changed after thirty days? In our case, a *shliach tzibur* might have said *shemone esrai* five times a day for eighteen days. May he assume that his habit has changed after that? Most poskim maintain that thirty days does not require that all *tefilos* were recited. Combinations are debated. The consensus seems to be that one who did this, then had a doubt, should not repeat. Either 30 days, or 90 times, or a combination, are enough to remove the doubt about the old habit. [See refs to section A and B. Baba Kama 24a, Poskim. Tur Sh Ar OC 114:9 MA TZ PMG Shaarei Teshuva, etc. Mamar Mordechai 15.]

In conclusion, the avail should not repeat when he is in doubt after about 20 days.

On the Parsha ... *Rebuke, you shall rebuke your friend and you will not bear a sin on his behalf. [19:17] continue rebuking him, even one hundred times. [Baba Metziah 31a]* Why one hundred times? What about after one hundred times? Why would the Torah say this for this particular *mitzvah*? Perhaps this refers to one who repeatedly violates a *mitzvah* out of habit. Rebuke him even before he sins, to stop him from lapsing into his habit. It might take one hundred times to change a habit. Perhaps after 100 rebukes [the 101st time] one may hope that he has changed the habit. He need not raise a doubt that the person might sin.

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