

מצוות צריכות כוונה

עת מלחמה

The (ס' ד סימן ס), paskens שולחן ערוך that one is obligated to have כוונה before doing a מצוה.

Having the kavana כאשר ציוה ה' can also turn most routine actions into full-fledged מצוות!

It is preferable to speak out the words of חוונת, as the חובות הלבבות writes: 'המחשבה נמשכת אחר הדיבור'

The horrifying events which occurred this week are weighing heavily upon Klal Yisroel. But even in times of difficulty there are opportunities - to draw closer to ה'. As Rav Avigdor Miller זצ"ל said: "We must utilize the צרות in our lives to improve ourselves!"

Let's identify the particular מצוות that apply at this time and grab the opportunity while we can - may ה' end our צער today!

מצוות והלכת בדרכיו

We who are not currently in Eretz Yisroel are not directly threatened by terrorists or missiles. However, it is still incumbent upon us to feel the tremendous צער of our brothers and sisters who are there. Many of them are suffering in unimaginable ways.

As we are taught, a person must be נושא בעול עם חבירו.

This is not just a nice middah; it is a mitzvah min haTorah, as the פסוק in דברים (כח, ט) says 'והלכת בדרכיו', "and you shall follow in Hashem ways".

Hashem suffers alongside Klal Yisroel, as the pasuk in Tehillim says, 'עמו אנכי בצרה (צא:טו).'

Anything we do which demonstrates our pain for those suffering in Eretz Yisroel, including thinking about them, davening, learning, helping financially, or doing anything else to bring them merit, is a fulfillment of this mitzvah, and one should first have kavana:

**הריני מכוין לקיים
מצות והלכתה בדרכי
כאשר ציוה השם**

מצוות לא תירא מהם

On the דברים (כ, א) פסוק in which says: 'כי תצא למלחמה על איבך...לא תירא מהם' Rabbeinu Yonah writes: 'הזהרנו בזה, שאם יראה האדם כי צרה קרובה, תהיה ישועת השם בלבבו ויבטח עליה...!' (Sha'arei Teshuva).

Therefore, when one refuses to submit to panic, and instead has בטחון in ה', he should have this mitzvah in mind:

**הריני מכוין לקיים
מצות לא תירא מהם
כאשר ציוה השם**

מצוות לזעוק לפני ה'

The פסוק in Bamidbar (10:9), says, 'וכי תבאו למלחמה...על הצר הצר, אתכם והרעתם בחצצרת'

The ספר החרדים (יג, ט) writes that this is the מצוה דאורייתא to cry out to ה' in an צרה ה'.

על הצר הצר אתכם, He writes, 'והרעתם' - היינו תרועה בפה דהיינו תפלה "זעקה".

Now is a time when all our thoughts feelings and emotions are directed to ה' as we daven for an end to the terrible suffering of Klal Yisroel. But before we daven or say Tehillim, let's take a moment to think:

**הריני מכוין לקיים
מצות לזעוק לפני ה'
כאשר ציוה השם**

מצוות ונשמרתם מאד לנפשתיכם

When a person takes proper precautions to stay safe, he fulfills the מצוה to protect his health.

The Steipler זצ"ל writes (Karna D'igrisa רמב) that when one stays calm, it is also a קיום of 'ונשמרתם מאד'. When doing these, a person should first be מכוין:

**הריני מכוין לקיים
מצות ונשמרתם מאד
לנפשתיכם
כאשר ציוה השם**

מצוות לא יהיה אלקים אחרים

The second of the עשרת הדברות is 'אין עוד מלבדו' of מצוה remembering that ה' is in total control of the universe, and that no one can

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do anything against His רצון.

This is a מצוה which is always applicable, but it resonates now more than ever.

People may think they are being kept safe by an army, but actually ה' is the One in control!

When we think about אין עוד 'מלבדו we should remember to have in mind:

הריני מכוין לקיים

מצות לא יהיה אלקים אחרים

כאשר ציוה השם

מצות תשובה

The פסוק in (ל, ב), דברים, says, 'ושבת עד ה' אלקיך'

The ספר החרדים writes (ט, לד) that this is the מצוה דאורייתא of תשובה. He writes:

'שיתחרט חרטה גדולה ויסכים הסכמה חזקה שלא יחטא עוד עד יום מותו'

This is a very suitable time for this מצוה, as everyone engages in self-introspection and finds an area that he can improve, whether it be in תורה, davening or something else. Before doing תשובה and having חרטה, one

should have in mind:

הריני מכוין לקיים מצות תשובה
כאשר ציוה השם

מצות ביטחון בה'

The מצוה of בטחון is learned from the פסוק which says, 'תמים תהיה עם ה' אלקיך', and is one of the מצוות תרי"ג according to many of the מוני המצוות.

Before having בטחון that ה' will protect us (or grant success in any endeavor), one should be מכוין:

הריני מכוין לקיים

מצות ביטחון בה'

כאשר ציוה השם

מצות חשבון הנפש

Chazal teach us that a person should regularly make a *cheshbon hanefesh* of his behavior and character traits. In this way, he will be able to notice his good points and improve on them, while also being aware of any negative aspects that need fixing.

When making a *cheshbon hanefesh*,

one should remember to have in mind:

הריני מכוין לקיים
מצות חשבון הנפש
כאשר ציוה השם

צפיה לישועה

Whenever a person anticipates and hopes for the coming of Mashiach (which one should do regularly), they fulfill the mitzvah of לישועה, anticipating the Redemption.

At any time of suffering, our nation has always strengthened their hopes and prayers that mashiach will arrive and redeem us from our long *galus*.

When we think these thoughts and daven for *mashiach*, (a good time for this is when saying 'את צמח דוד' in shemoneh esrei) we should say or think:

הריני מכוין לקיים
מצות צפיה לישועה
כאשר ציוה השם

May Klal Yisroel be zoche to see a total ישועה very soon.

The Chofetz Chaim's Chinuch

The following story about the Chofetz Chaim illustrates the immense importance of being mechanech our children in Kavana b'Mitzvos. It also reminds of the terrible loss which occurs when one is not careful with this halacha:

Harav Aaron Dovid Mendelowitz once did a favor for the granddaughter of Rebbetzin Zaks, (who is the daughter of Chofetz Chaim). Rebbetzin Zaks was very grateful to R' Mendelowitz, and to express her gratitude, she shared with him two precious insights about the *chinuch* she received from her holy father.

She said, "Father would constantly tell us, "My daughters, *mitzvos tzrichos kavana!* Therefore, if your mother asks you for a cup of water, you must have in mind to fulfill the *mitzvah* of *Kibud Eim*, otherwise you've lost the mitzvah!"

Rebbetzin Zaks continued: "My father would also constantly say, "A Yid must always be *freilich!*" - from Joy of Emunah, (pg. 9).