

מצוות צריכות כוונה

ראש השנה

ס' סימן ס, שולחן ערוך ערך ג' (ד) that one is obligated to have kavana before doing a mitzva. Furthermore, having kavana - כאשר מצוה - can turn a routine action into a full-fledged מצוה דאוריתא!

It is preferable to speak out the words of kavana, as the החותם המחברה נמשכת אחרwrites: הדיבור'

זכור חסדי ה'

It is a Mitzvah d'Oraysa to remember all the kindnesses that ה' does for us in our lives, as the pasuk says:

ז' זכרת את-כל-הדרה, אשר הוליך ה' אל-קjur זה ארבעים שנה במקבר... (דברים ח, ב)

Although Moshe Rabbeinu said this to the Yidden in the desert, Rabbeinu Yonah writes that the mitzvah applies to us as well.

Hashem answered our tefillos last year. He gave us life and provided us with health, shelter and good food. He protected us from harm. Remembering all this is a mitzvah. (A good time to have this kavana is by מזדים in Shemoneh Esrei.)

Beforehand, think:

הריני מכוען לקיים
מצוות זכרון חסדי ה'
כאשר צוה השם

התרת נדרים

It is customary to do התרת נדרים after Shachris on Erev Rosh Hashana. Many people are not aware that it is a מצוה דאוריתא for the three men who are acting as the judges to do התרת נדרים.

The ספר המצוות הקצר by the Chofetz Chaim says that it is a מצווה to judge cases of עשה, as the pasuk in Bamidbar says:

איש כי-ידר נדר לה', או-השבע
שבעה לא-סר אסר על-נפשו--
לא יחל, דברו: קכל-היצא מפיו,
יעשה (ל, ג)

This includes the halacha that if a man changes his mind and regrets his vow, he must go to a chacham or three שרווי' and they tell him הדיוות 'מותר לרי' or 'מחל לרי' or 'לך' (מצות עשה נ)

Therefore, before being נדר, each of the three judges should have kavana:

הריני מכוען לקיים
מצוות התרת נדרים
כאשר צוה השם
שביתת שבת ויום טוב

In a previous edition we brought down the mitzvah of שביתת שבת - abstaining from work on Shabbos.

However, it is important to know that each of the following

six: The first and סוכות last day of פסח, ראש השנה and שבתות - each have their own mitzvah שביתה.

Therefore, when stopping melacha on erev Rosh Hashana, be sure to say:

הריני מכוען לקיים
מצוות שביתת שבת ויום טוב
כאשר צוה השם
מקרא קודש

(כג, כד) ויקרא in says: דבר אל-בני ישראל, לאמר: בחדש השבעי באחד לחדש, יהיה לכם שבתון-- זכרון תרואה, מקרא-קדש'

Regarding Yom Tov, the ויקרא (כג, ב) explains רמב"ן that the mitzvah of מקרא קדש is for Klal Yisroel to gather to the בית אלוקים to publicly sanctify the day with תפילה and to in clean clothes and to make it a day of feasting.

When we make the brachah of ז' אתה בחרתנו we are being שמונה עשרה תפילה by חג מקדש and one should first think in his heart:

הריני מכוען לקיים
מצוות מקרא קודש
כאשר צוה השם

סליחות

At this time of year, we have the minhag to recite *selichos* before davening *shachris*. This is a special opportunity to beg Hashem for forgiveness.

Since *selichos* is an established minhag, it is a fulfillment of the mitzvah *m'divrei kabalah* of **שמע בני מוסר אביך**, 'Listen my son, to the discipline of your father'.

Rav Sholom Schwadron *zt"l* famously said, "We do not **say** *selichos*, we **ASK** *selichos*." In other words, we are not just mouthing words; we are actually davening, begging Hashem to forgive us. Therefore, before *selichos* one should have in mind to fulfill the mitzvah of davening to Hashem.

At the end of *selichos* we say *viduy*, which is the mitzvah *d'Oraysa* of confessing one's *aveiros* before Hashem.

Therefore, before starting *selichos* one should think:

הריני מכוען לקיים מצות

תפילה, מצות וידוי

ומצוות 'שמע בני מוסר אביך'

כאשר צוה השם

The **ימידות** we say during *selichos* are a *davar shebikidusha* which may only be said in the presence of ten men. It is therefore a fulfillment of the mitzvah of *'v'nikdashti b'soch bnei Yisroel'*. When saying the **ימידות** one should have in mind:

הריני מכוען לקיים

מצות קידוש השם ברבים

כאשר צוה השם

סימני מילתא

As we mentioned, fulfilling a minhag is the mitzvah *m'divrei kabala* of **שמע בני מוסר אביך**, 'Listen my son, to the discipline of your father'. Therefore, before one fulfills the minhag of the Simanei Milsah (eating the foods such as the apple dipped in honey, the pomegranate seeds, dates, fish head and the other symbolic foods on the first night of Rosh Hashana) he should say:

הריני מכוען לקיים מצות

'שמע בני מוסר אביך'

כאשר צוה השם

מצות תקיעת שופר

Every Rosh Hashana, the *Ba'al Tokea* is carefully mechaven to be **מוצא** the *tzibur*, and the *tzibur* is publicly reminded to be mechaven to be *yozei* the shofar blowing.

Before on *תקיעת שופר* Rosh Hashana, everyone should think:

הריני מכוען לקיים

מצות תקיעת שופר

כאשר צוה השם

קבלת עול מלכות שמיים

The essential *עבודה* of Rosh Hashana is **קבלת עול מלכות שמיים** – Accepting Hashem as our King. The Ramban writes (Parshas Yisro, 20:2) that accepting Hashem's Kingship falls under the mitzvah of **אנכי אלךיך**. One should certainly have *kavana* on Rosh Hashana to fulfill this mitzvah.

An appropriate time to have the *kavana* is before saying the *pesukim* of *Malchiyus* during the *Musaf Shemonah esrei*:

הריני מכוען לקיים

מצוות קבלת עול מלכות שמיים

כאשר צוה השם

A Kavana Story

Recording Hashem's Kindnesses

It was the practice of Hagaon R' Shmuel Huminer *zt"l*, to keep a record of the good things that **ה'** did for him, to fulfill the mitzvah of **זכרון מצוה**. For example, in one entry he wrote: **ה'** gave me (a certain amount of) money, **'הodo לה'** – **כי טוב כי לעולם חסדי**!

In another entry he wrote: 'Something collapsed in the courtyard adjacent to my house and fell at my doorway. It was a great and open miracle that we were saved with the help of **ה'** - **הodo לה** - **ה'** gave me (a certain amount of) money, **חסדי טוב כי לעולם**! And also: 'The chesed that **ה'** did, in healing my mother - may she live - of the infection in her hand, **הodo לה** – **כי טוב כי לעולם חסדי**! **חסדי טוב כי לעולם**!

And: 'A shard of glass was removed from my daughter's mouth... **הodo לה** – **כי טוב כי לעולם**! **חסדי**!

And: 'I was standing outside, and a flaming rocket flew over my head, and praise **ה'**, no harm befell me.'

In addition, every year he would make a *Seudas Hoda'a* and he would reflect on the various *Nissim* that **ה'** did for him in order to be the **מצוות מקיים** of **זכרון חסדי**!

א גוט ידר!