

מצוות צריכות כוונה

יום כיפור

סימן (שולחן ערוך ס' ד) that one is obligated to have kavana before doing a mitzvah.

This kavana, 'אשר ציווה השם', can also turn most routine actions into full-fledged mitzvot!

It is preferable to speak out the words of כוונה, as the מהשכבה writes: 'המחשבה משכת אחר הדבר'.

(Sha'ar Cheshbon Hanefesh, Perek ג)

TESHUVAH ON OUR MITZVOS

On Yom Kippur we strive to do a proper teshuva. Chazal teach us that teshuva does not just refer to repenting from our aveiros. In fact, a key component of teshuva is to work on improving the quality of our Mitzvos!

Kavana is a fundamental part of fulfilling mitzvos. It is therefore advisable to put effort into kavana b'mitzvos when doing teshuva on one's mitzvos.

One should select a few mitzvos to do with kavana each day. He will find that not only is it easy and simple to do so, but it will also elevate his day and draw him closer to Hashem.

אכילה בערב יום

הכיפורים

It is a Mitzvah to eat on Erev Yom Kippur. This Mitzvah is derived from the pasuk, 'וְעַבְתִּתֶם אֶת נְפָשֹׁתיכֶם'.

Therefore, before eating anything on Erev Yom Kippur, one should think:

הריני מכוען לקיים

מצוות ועניתם את נפשיכם'

כאשר ציווה השם

מחילה לאחרים

When we ask people for mechila and when we are mochel those who have wronged us, we fulfill the mitzvah of בדרכיו - the mitzvah to emulate the ways of Hashem. We see that Hashem makes peace as we say in davening each day, 'עֲשֵׂה שְׁלֹום בְּמַרְאֵינוּ'. We also see that Hashem forgives us when we ask mechila, as He said in the Torah, 'סְלַחْתִּי כִּי בְּרִרְךָ' I have forgiven you as you spoke.

Although these mitzvos are always applicable, they are commonly done on Erev Yom Kippur since it is the custom to ask forgiveness from others on this day.

Before asking forgiveness and before forgiving others one should have in mind:

הריני מכוען לקיים

מצוות ויהלכת בדרכיו'

כאשר ציווה השם

תשובה

If a person has sinned, it is a mitzvah for him or her to do teshuva (repentance).

Teshuva means to return to Hashem, as the pasuk says, 'וְשָׁבָת עַד ה' אֱלֹקֵיכֶם', You shall return to Hashem your G-d'.

Rabbeinu Yonah, in Sefer Sha'arei Teshuva (perek 2, Derech Hachamish) writes that it is a mitzvah min haTorah to do teshuva specifically on Yom Kippur, as the Torah says, 'מְכֹל חֲטֹאתֶיכֶם לִפְנֵי ה' תִּתְהַרֵּן'.

Proper teshuva consists of three elements: Confessing the sin, regretting the sin and accepting not to sin in the future.

When doing teshuva, one should have in mind:

הריני מכוען לקיים

מצוות תשובה

כאשר ציווה השם

וידוי

As mentioned above, teshuva consists of three elements: confessing the sin, regretting the sin, and accepting not to sin in the future. Confessing the sin (vidui) is a Mitzvah in its own right, based on the pasuk

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in Bamidbar which says, **וְהַתְנוּ אֶת חֶטְאֹתֶם** - And they shall confess their sin.

When saying vidui on erev Yom Kippur and Yom Kippur, one should think:

**הרני מכוען לקיים
מצוות יידוי
כasher ציווה השם**

עינוי ביום היכפורים

When one stops eating and drinking on erev Yom Kippur and removes their leather shoes, they fulfill the Mitzvah of **עינוי ביום היכפורים** - affliction on Yom Kippur. Included in this mitzvah is the prohibition to eat, drink, wash, anoint, wear leather shoes, and have marital relations.

At the start of Yom Kippur, when these become forbidden, one should have in mind:

**הרני מכוען לקיים
מצוות עינוי ביום היכפורים
כasher ציווה השם**

קידוש ביום היכפורים

When one says the Birchash Hamoados in **(אתה בחרתנו)** the Shemoneh Esrei of Yom Kippur, he sanctifies the day with words. It is important that one have **kavana at that time** to fulfill the mitzvah of Kiddush, because one cannot later fulfill the mitzvah of

Kiddush by saying it over wine, as we do on Shabbos and the other Yomim Tovim.

Therefore, when saying the bracha of **אתה בחרתנו**, one should be careful to have in mind:

**הרני מכוען לקיים
מצוות קידוש היום
כasher ציווה השם
לימוד המוסר**

When a person learns mussar, he fulfills the Mitzvah of **יראת השם**, since learning mussar brings one to fear Hashem.

He should be mechaven:

**הרני מכוען לקיים
מצוות יראת השם
כasher ציווה השם**

In the sefer Yir'ah V'daas, HaRav Yehuda Segal, zt"l, the Manchester Rosh Yeshiva, writes that mitzvos require kavana, and this includes the mitzvah of **Yir'as Shamayim**. Thus, before one begins to learn mussar, he should have kavana to fulfill the mitzvah of **Yir'as Hashem**. He should also have in mind to fulfill several additional mitzvos with the following kavana: **'הנני מוכן ונזמן לקיים מצוות את ה' אֶלְקֹר תִּירְאָ', תלמוד תורה, ה'וכח תזקיכם את עמיך', ומצוות 'מלקם את ערלתם'** - I hereby intend to fulfill the mitzvos of **Yiras Hashem**, **Talmud Torah**, rebuking your people [Vayikra 19:17 - rebuking oneself is included in this mitzvah from the additional word 'את'], and the mitzvah to circumcise the 'foreskin' of the heart' [Devarim, 10:16].

A Kavana Story

Hagaon Rav Shmuel Huminer, zt"l once hired a worker to unclog a stuffed drainpipe at his home in Batei Nathan. But instead of unclogging the pipe, the worker only caused more damage. To add insult to injury, the man then asked for payment for his labor!

One of Rav Shmuel's children came to their father and told him about the offensive demand - that the worker wanted to be paid for causing even more damage!

When Rav Shmuel heard this, he became excited. He could now fulfill the words of the Gemara (Bava Metzia, 83a.) which describes how Rabbah bar Bar Chonoh hired porters to transport a barrel of wine, which they accidentally broke. He then paid them anyway for their efforts, in a fulfillment of the pasuk which says 'V'orchos tzadikim tishmor' - 'Guard the Path of the Righteous'!

Rav Huminer therefore paid the worker, fulfilling two mitzvos: The Mitzvah of paying a worker on time, and the mitzvah of 'V'orchos tzadikim tishmor' - going beyond the letter of the law. (Adapted from the Sefer Mipinkoso shel Eved HaMelech.)

גמר חתימה טובה!