



מצוות צריכות כוונה

VOLUME 83

HAIRCUTS

The ס, סימן) *paskens* שולחן ערוך that one is obligated to have *kavanah* before doing a מצוה. Furthermore, having the *kavanah*: 'ה' can turn a routine action into a full-fledged מצוה!

It is preferable to speak out the words of kavanah, as the Chovos Halevavos writes: 'המחשבה נמשכת אחר הדיבור'

In the introduction to *Shaar HaMitzvos*, ד"ה גם העושה, the **Ariza"l** teaches us that *kavana b'mitzvos* isn't only required when doing a *Mitzvas Asei* – it's also required when refraining from a mitzvas lo sa'asei. In fact, when discussing the requirement of *kavana b'mitzvos*, the **Ariza"l** chose a *lo sa'asei* as his first example. He writes:

"When doing a mitzvah, it is not sufficient to simply do the physical action. More importantly, one must fulfill what Chazal have said: that one must have kavanah when doing a mitzvah that they are doing it for the sake of their Creator, Hashem Yisbarach. For

example, when a man takes a haircut, it is not enough that he is careful not to cut off his peiyos. He must also have kavanah that he is refraining from removing them in order to fulfill the mitzvah of his Creator, Who commanded it. The same is true about every mitzvah. One should be careful to have this kavanah."

מצות לא תקפו פאת ראשכם

When one gets a haircut, he should recognize that he has an opportunity to fulfill very many mitzvos. In fact, the **Kaf HaChaim** brings down no less than 16 mitzvos(!) that one can fulfill when getting a haircut and paying the barber. Some of them apply to both men and women, as well as the barber.

With just a bit of *kavana*, one can transform a mundane haircut into a spiritual goldmine!

When a person refrains from cutting off peyos, he fulfills **two** mitzvos *lo sa'asei* (one for each side). At that time, he should have in mind:

הריני מכיין לקיים
מצות לא תקפו פאת ראשכם
כאשר צוה השם

מצות לא תשחית פאת זקנך

When a person refrains from shaving his beard with a razor, he fulfills five distinct mitzvos *lo sa'asei* (one for each of the five 'corners' of the face). Any time one shaves or trims his beard, he should have in mind that he is fulfilling **five** mitzvos:

הריני מכיין לקיים
מצות לא תשחית פאת זקנך
כאשר צוה השם

מצות בחוקותיהם לא תלכו

When one refrains from styling his hair in the manner of a gentile, he fulfills the mitzvas *lo sa'aseh* not to follow in the gentile ways. Have this *kavana* in mind:

הריני מכיין לקיים
מצות בחוקותיהם לא תלכו
כאשר צוה השם

לא ילבש גבר שמלת אשה

When a man refrains from styling his hair in the manner of woman, he fulfills the mitzvas *lo sa'aseh* not to dress himself like a woman. He should have this *kavana* in mind:

הריני מכיין לקיים
לא ילבש גבר שמלת אשה
כאשר צוה השם

For questions and comments, please call 917-863-2685 or email 613kavana@gmail.com. To subscribe to a weekly email, just send us a blank email. **For a more complete understanding of the topic of מצוות צריכות כוונה, as well as additional practical applications, see 'ספר כאשר צוה'.** To obtain this sefer, or for sponsorships, please contact us at the above number/email

לא תגזול

In addition to the above, the person who hired the worker also violates the *pasuk* of 'לא תגזול', "You shall not rob."

When paying, one should have in mind:

הריני מכוין לקיים

מצות לא 'לא תגזול'
כאשר צוה השם

Haircuts with Kavanah

Before getting a haircut, Rav Yisrael Avraham Portugal, the Skulener Rebbe, would say a "I'shem Yichud. . ." in preparation to fulfill the mitzvah of "lo sakifu."

Once, not long before he passed away, R' Yisrael Avraham was seated and ready to have his hair cut. His son, whose job it was to cut his hair, asked the Rebbe if he was going to have kavanah for the mitzvah.

"Yes, of course!" the Rebbe responded, "I almost forgot!" R' Yisrael Avraham stood up, put on his "bekeshe" (caftan) and hat in honor of the mitzvah. Then, he declared מְצוֹת לְקַיֵּם וּמִזְמָן לְקַיֵּם, "לא תקיפו, לשם יחוד וכו'."

It is worth noting that this happened when the Rebbe was already an old, weak man; it must have involved a great deal of effort!

When HaGaon Rav Shmuel Huminer, author of Sefer Eved HaMelech would go to the barber for a haircut, he would first declare, "Hineni mekayem bazeh mitzvas 'lo sakifu pe'as rosheichem' k'dei la'asos nachas ruach l'Bor'!"

Good Shabbos!

לא תלין

If one doesn't pay a worker on the day he did the work, the person who hired him violates the *pasuk* of:

'לא תלין פעלת שכיר',

"The wage of a hired worker shall not stay overnight."

When paying, one should have in mind:

הריני מכוין לקיים

מצות לא תבא עליו השמש
כאשר צוה השם

לא תעשק את רעך

If he does not pay the worker on the day he did the work, he violates the *pasuk* of:

'לא תעשק את רעך'

"Do not withhold what is due to your friend."

When paying, one should have in mind:

הריני מכוין לקיים

מצות לא תעשק את רעך
כאשר צוה השם

לא תעשק שכר עני

In addition to the above, if the worker is poor, the person who hired him also violates the *pasuk* of:

'לא תעשק שכר עני',

'Do not to retain the wages of a poor employee.'

When paying, one should have in mind:

הריני מכוין לקיים

מצות לא תעשק שכר עני
כאשר צוה השם

כבוד שבת

When one gets a haircut before Shabbos, he should have in mind to

הריני מכוין לקיים

מצות כבוד שבת

כאשר צוה השם

Paying the barber

ביומו תתן שכרו

It is a mitzvah d'Oraysa to pay a fellow Jew before the end of the workday, as the *pasuk* says, 'ביומו תתן שכרו'. This mitzvas asei, as well as the soon to be mentioned lo sa'asei's, apply not just to a barber or sheitel macher but to any hired worker such as a taxi-driver, plumber, private tutor etc. Before paying a worker on time, one should have in mind:

הריני מכוין לקיים

מצות ביומו תתן שכרו

כאשר צוה השם

לא תבא עליו השמש

One who withholds a worker's wages violates several Torah prohibitions. If he does not pay the worker on the day he did the work, he violates the *pasuk* of 'לא תבא עליו השמש', 'the sun shall not set upon him.' When paying, one should have in mind:

הריני מכוין לקיים

מצות לא תבא עליו השמש

כאשר צוה השם