

The Weekly Daf



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Berachos 16-22

Week of 12-18 Tishrei 5758 / 13 - 19 Oct. 1997
Rav Weinbach's insights, explanations and comments for the 7 pages of Talmud
studied in the course of the worldwide Daf Yomi cycle

Training for the Shema

Even though the Torah does not obligate one to fulfill mitzvos before he reaches the age of Bar Mitzvah, there is a requirement by rabbinical law for a parent to train his young child in the performance of those mitzvos even at an early age, once he reaches a level of intelligence where *chinuch* training is practical.

Does this rabbinical requirement of *chinuch* also apply to the mitzvah of reciting the Shema in the morning and evening?

It all depends on how we understand what the Mishnah means when it says that minors are exempt from the mitzvah of reciting the Shema. Rashi explains that this refers even to a minor who has reached the level where he is capable of being trained in other mitzvos. The mitzvah of Shema is different, he points out, because it is confined to a set period of time and it is too much to expect of the father to always be available at that time to train his son.

Tosefos cites the differing opinion of Rabbeinu Tam who contends that the Shema is no different from any other mitzvah in which a minor must be trained, and the Mishnah's exemption relates only to a minor who has not yet reached the age of *chinuch*.

Even according to Rashi's view, a father is required to teach his son the first passage of Shema as soon as he learns to speak, but not necessarily within the time framework to which the recital of Shema is limited. This is so because the father must train his child in the study of Torah. Similarly, he must train him in prayer, which is not as limited in its time framework as the Shema.

The *Shulchan Aruch* (*Orach Chaim* 70:2) cites both opinions and declares that it is proper to follow the ruling of Rabbeinu Tam and train children in the recital of the entire Shema.

Berachos 20a

Prayers and their Sayers

What are the sources for the texts of the prayers that we say?

The blessings we say upon rising, the ones we say in our *Shmoneh Esrei*, those before and after the Shema, and before and after our "Passages of Song" are all the creation of the prophets and sages who were the Members of the Great Assembly. Many of our prayers are also taken from the Psalms of King David and other parts of Tanach.

In this week's section of the Talmud we discover another source for some of our prayers — the personal prayers which some of our sages were accustomed to say at the conclusion of their *Shmoneh Esrei*.

The prayer which Rabbi Yehuda Hanassi (Rebbie) used to say for Divine protection against all sorts of arrogant and dangerous people became part of our morning prayers, immediately following the blessings upon rising.

At the other end of our morning service is the prayer we say at the conclusion of our *Shmoneh Esrei* for Divine assistance in guarding our tongue. This was initiated by the Sage Mar, the son of Ravina.

On the Shabbos before *Rosh Chodesh* when we pray before the *Mussaf* service for a good new month we repeat the words which the Sage Rav would say each day after his prayers.

Finally, the appeal to Hashem for acceptance of our confessions on Yom Kippur is the prayer which was said daily by the Sage Rava.

Berachos 16b-17a

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