

## 100 Brachos

I think my children believe there's a *halacha* (Jewish law) to ask at least 100 questions a day and they're very diligent in following through. From morning to night. All day, every day.

But, it's good. It shows inquisitiveness. The questions range from, "was there sushi when you were a kid?" to "how does the internet work?" and "do we live on the top, bottom, or side of the world?" My daughter recently asked me, "Daddy, when you got married were you hoping for kids?" I answered, "Yes, of course." To which she replied, "Kids like us or different kids?"

After, "Daddy, can I give you a hug?" my favorite question they ask is, "where's my Amen?" When they remember to say a bracha and someone else is around, if that other person forgets to respond Amen to their bracha (usually me), they ask for one. I think it's beautiful.

Rabbi Manis Friedman says that the way to teach a child to say a bracha is to tell them and remind them and remind them and remind them again until they learn that they need to do it.

In this week's parsha, Pekudei, we learn from the following pasuk to make 100 brachos a day:  
וַיְהִי מִצַּת כֶּכֶר הַכֶּסֶף לְצִקְתֹּת אֶת אֲדָנֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ וְאֶת אֲדָנֵי הַפָּרֹכֶת מִצַּת אֲדָנִים לְמִצַּת הַכֶּכֶר כֶּכֶר לְאֶדָן: *The 100 talents (Kikar) of silver were to cast the sockets of the Sanctuary (Kodesh) and the sockets of the Partition (Paroches); 100 sockets for 100 talents (Kikar), a talent (Kikar) per socket. (Sh. 38:27)*

Rashi explains that אֲדָנֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ refers to the sockets of the beams of the Mishkan, which are 48 beams. They have 96 sockets (each beam stood in two sockets) plus the sockets of the *Paroches* are 4, totaling 100 sockets.

The Baal HaTurim states that corresponding to these 100 sockets, the *Chachamim* (Rabbi Meir in Gemara Menachos 43b) taught we are obligated to recite 100 brachos every day.

Rabbi Elimelech Biderman teaches that the Zohar calls the 100 brachos - "100 keys." They open Hashem's treasury of goodness. We have the keys in our hands – we just have to use them.

In his work *Shaarei Orah*, the kabbalist Rav Yosef Gikatilla (1248–1305) relates the Divine Name אֲדֹנִי (ADNY) to the אֲדָנֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ (*sockets of the Sanctuary*). He explains this Divine Name as "the secret of the concept of blessing," and compares it to a treasure house that receives the flow of all blessings. Thus, this Divine Name is a receptacle for holding בְּרָכָה (*bracha*) like a בֵּרֵיחַ (*bereicha* – pool) holding water. Similarly, the 100 אֲדָנִים (*sockets*), which are filled with the planks that form the Mishkan's walls, are like 100 pools which are filled from the great pool of blessing called by the Divine Name אֲדֹנִי (ADNY). And therefore a person is required to recite 100 blessings each day. Those blessings are then like the 100 silver sockets, the 100 pools into which the flow of blessing from אֲדֹנִי (ADNY) spreads.

The Chiddushei HaRim compares the 100 sockets to the 100 daily brachos. This implies that just as the sockets served as the Mishkan's foundation, so too the daily brachos represent the foundation for a Jew's sanctity. אֲדָן (*Aden*), the Hebrew word for *socket*, is related to אֲדוֹן (*adon*), the term for *master*. Both the sockets and the brachos attest to the fact the Hashem is



the Master of all. Hashem resided in the Mishkan, now He resides in Yidden. The Mishkan in our generation is every single Yid who merits Hashem residing in him. The original Mishkan had 100 sockets for its foundations. The foundations of today's Mishkan are the 100 daily brachos.

The simple gematria of אֲדֹנָי (ADNY) is 65, but through analyzing its *milui* (full spelling out of each letter), its numerical value increases to 100 teaches the Arizal. In order to reach the value of 100, the name אֲדֹנָי (ADNY) must be spelled out and each of those letters must also be spelled out as well – a double spelling out. When the letters are spelled out twice, then the second set of spelled out letters totals 35 letters. These 35 letters plus the 65 for the numerical value of אֲדֹנָי (ADNY) totals 100, the number of sockets in the Mishkan.

Also, the Reishis Chochmah (Shaar HaKedusha) writes that the letters of צַדִּיק (Tzaddik) are a hint to saying (צ) 90 Amens, (ד) 4 Kedushos, (י) 10 Kadishim, and (ק) 100 Brachos every day.

A Rabbi with whom I am very close shared that you could ask his grandfather at any point of the day, “What number are you up to?” And he would respond, 24, 51, 98, 116 or whatever number bracha he was up to at that point of the day. He kept track of his daily bracha count!

Esther Stern shares a *maschal* (parable) in her book, *Just One Word. Amen*, that Rabbi Ben-Zion Abba Shaul zt”l (1924–1998), a leading *posek* in Jerusalem and Rosh Yeshiva, would say over:

Aharon heard the hoot of an engine and watched a cargo train approach with mind-numbing speed. As it sped across the railroad tracks he began counting the crimson-colored carriages just to pass the time. 20, 30, 40...100, the train was never ending. His disinterested attitude soon turned to fascination as he watched this strange phenomenon. 900, 1,000... 10,000 was this for real? What freight could this train possibly be carrying?

Now Aharon was counting aloud with mounting excitement. He could barely keep up. Just when he thought that the train would never end, he finally saw the last carriage tailing the long, long train. Now he understood. This train was carrying all the brachos he had said in his lifetime.

Suddenly, as quickly as it had come, the long train stopped. A hand reached down and began plucking brachos out of the myriad carriages. Two brachos were taken from one carriage, three from another, one from yet another, and some carriages were completely passed over.

Aharon felt his heartbeat quickening as he saw a magnificently adorned, royal-looking carriage appear near the train. The doors slid open and a red carpet unrolled in front of the carriage. Then, amid the sounds of joyous trumpeting, those handpicked brachos were placed inside the royal carriage. Now the long, impressive train seemed to have lost a small amount of its importance in comparison to this exclusive carriage.

The long train of 25,000 cars began to grumble once again, but it did not move at all. Instead, Aharon watched the entire contents of all the cars relocate into thirty normal-sized carriages. What was happening? How did all those brachos fit inside thirty cars? And why was one regal car holding so few brachos? The train, considerably smaller now, seemed to have completed its mission. Swiftly, it raced off into the horizon. The royal carriage followed regally behind, exuding importance and honor.



Rabbi Ben-Zion Abba Shaul explained that in the course of an average lifetime, a person may have recited 2,500,000 brachos! After 120 years, these brachos will be transported to him on a long, impressive train with thousands of carriages. What an accomplishment! However, when the “sorting process” begins, a person’s joy may be dampened somewhat.

Of course, he will receive reward for every bracha recited – no mitzvah goes unnoticed in Heaven. Brachos a person mumbles quickly, in a hurry to move on to other matters, or brachos recited without the proper concentration, will certainly receive their due. Though the quantity of these brachos may fill up thousands of trains, their quality may very well be easily condensed into a few mere carriages.

On the other hand, those precious brachos that are recited with proper concentration are afforded royal treatment. The quality of these brachos makes their value immeasurable.

It is certainly a difficult task to recite every bracha with proper concentration. However, even if a person takes upon himself to say just two or three brachos a day with the proper *kavanah*, these will slowly add up. One day these “complete” brachos will earn their well-deserved respect, as they travel on a long, magnificent train – holding thousands of perfect brachos.

Rabbi David Ashear quotes a story from Rabbi Fischel Schachter in his Living Emunah email ([#192](#)) of a man named Avraham from Mea She’arim. Everything went well for him, and he was very close to Hashem, until his daughter fell ill. The illness brought him even closer to Hashem, but the situation looked bleak. The doctors told him that medically there was nothing else they could do. There was, however, a certain specialist in the United States who had developed a certain kind of treatment that proved to be successful. The problem was that it was impossible to get a hold of this doctor, and there was a very long waiting list to see him.

One day, a person who was involved in connecting patients with doctors called Avraham and told him that this doctor was visiting Israel and would be in his office in Tel Aviv. “Come right away,” he said. “If he sees you and hears about your daughter’s situation, maybe he’ll have mercy and give you an appointment. This is your only chance to get through the red tape and get to see him. Be here in a half hour.”

“A half hour?!” Avraham asked. “How do you expect me to get from Jerusalem to Tel Aviv in a half hour?”

“I don’t know, just do it. It’s your only chance.”

The man quickly told his wife what was happening, grabbed all the money they had in the house – 300 shekels – and ran outside. He flagged down a cab and told the driver he needed to be at the Tel Aviv address in a half hour, urgently. The driver turned around and said it was impossible. Avraham showed him the 300 shekels. The driver looked at the money, looked at the passenger, and said, “Ok, it’s possible.”

They took off, and the driver used every shortcut imaginable, and even drove through fields. The car came to a screeching halt in front of the office building, and Avraham looked at his watch. They had gotten there in 29 minutes flat – a miracle! He charged up the steps, knocked on the door, and he saw the man with whom he had spoken.



"I am sorry," the man said. "The doctor left exactly one minute ago. You just missed him."

Avraham's heart sank. There was nothing left to do. He suddenly began feeling very lightheaded, and he looked like he was about to faint. The people around him quickly brought him a cup of water, and he began reciting the bracha. After saying the first three words, *Baruch Atah Hashem*, he realized something. "My Father in heaven," he said to himself, "I don't have to make an appointment with You, I don't have to meet You only at a certain time and place. I don't have to rush by taxicab to see You. Whenever I want, at any time during the day or night, I am standing right in front of You and You listen to what I am saying. *Baruch Atah Hashem* – You are right here; I can speak to You at any time. Forget the doctors and cab drivers. This is between me and You."

As he completed the bracha and recited the words *shehakol nihiyeh bi'dvaro*, he said to himself, "You created everything – me, my daughter, everything. You help me, Hashem." After he drank the water, the people asked him if he was ok. He said, "I was never this ok in my entire life."

A couple of weeks later, he went with his daughter back to the doctor. After examining the girl, the doctor said, "It's one in a million. The medication appears to be working, and your daughter should have a complete recovery."

Later, Avraham's wife asked him what it was that helped their daughter. He told her that it was that bracha he recited over the cup of water in Tel Aviv.

"But why did you have to rush to Tel Aviv in a taxi and pay 300 shekels to say a bracha?" she asked. "You could have made the same *shehakol* right here in Mea She'arim!"

"Without that taxi ride," Avraham said, "I could never have made *that* bracha."

Sometimes we experience dark periods in our lives, but those are what give us the opportunity to rise to levels of emunah that would have otherwise been unattainable. Our instinctive reaction must be to turn directly to Hashem for all our needs since everything comes from Him.

One of the main functions of 100 brachos a day is to always recognize there is no coincidence or *mikreh* (happenstance). It's *shehakol* – my cup of water is from Hashem. *Ha'etz* – my apple is from Hashem. *Asher yatzar* – my bodily functions are from Hashem. *Refaeinu* – my health is from Hashem. *Hazan es hakol* – my sustenance is from Hashem. *Malbish arumin* – my clothing is from Hashem. There is not an act we do all day that we do not attribute to Hashem through a bracha.

Rabbi Daniel Glatstein asks, to what extent does Hashem think about us? The answer is it's reciprocal. To the extent we think about Him, He thinks about us. The more we think about Hashem, like making 100 brachos throughout the day, the more Hashem thinks about us.

Imagine what it would be like to have Hashem on your mind all the time. From morning to night. All day, every day. How would that feel?

Can you try to say at least one bracha a day with deep *kavanah* and contemplate its meaning?

Shabbat Shalom and wishing you a wonderful week ahead full of many, many brachos.