


מצוות
עשה
#26

 We learn this mitzvah from Parshas Naso: (במדבר ו:כג)

כֹּהֵן תְּבָרְכוּ אֶת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
אָמֹר לָהֶם

A *kohen* has a *mitzvah* to *bentch* the Yidden every day! (Outside of Eretz Yisroel, the *kohanim bentch* the Yidden only on *Yom Tov*.)

 The details of this mitzvah are explained in Mishnayos & Gemara:
Last perokim of Mesechta Megillah and Mesechta Taanis, and Mesechta Sotah perek Zayin

Birchas Habonim

Before the fathers go to *Shul* for *Kol Nidrei* on *Yom Kippur*, they give a *bracha* to their children. Our *Minhag* is for the father to *bentch* his children with the words of *Birchas Kohanim*. This is called *Birchas Habonim*.


Before *Kol Nidrei*, the Rebbe would give a special *bracha*, *Birchas Habonim*, to the *bochurim* in *Yeshiva*. The Rebbe said that since they are learning in the Rebbe's *yeshiva*, they are the Rebbe's children!

מצוות
עשה
#12

 We learn this mitzvah from Parshas Vaeschanan: (דברים ו:ז)

וְהָיוּ לְטֹטְפֹת
בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ

Men need to wear *Tefillin Shel Rosh*, *tefillin* on their head. This *mitzvah* is said four times in the Torah!

 The details of this mitzvah are explained in Mishnayos & Gemara:
Mesechta Menachos perek Daled

Rambam: Hilchos Tefillah, Tefillin U'Mezuzah V'Sefer Torah

PEREK YUD-DALED

In this *perek*, the Rambam teaches us about *Birchas Kohanim*, the special words that *kohanim* say to bring Hashem's *brachos* to the Yidden! In the *Beis Hamikdash*, the *kohanim* would *bentch* the Yidden using the special *Sheim Hameforash*, the name of Hashem that is written *Yud-Kay-Vov-Kay*, and pronouncing it properly. After Shimon Hatzadik passed away, they stopped using this name of Hashem, even in the *Beis Hamikdash*, in case someone who didn't act properly would learn it.

PEREK TES-VOV

We learn about times when a *kohen* shouldn't do *Birchas Kohanim*, like a *kohen* who is drunk. But being a *rasha* shouldn't stop a *kohen* from *bentching* the Yidden — because it's a *mitzvah*, and we don't make a *rasha* into a bigger *rasha* by stopping him from doing more *mitzvos*!

In the last *halacha*, the Rambam says that any *kohen* that *bentches* the Yidden is *bentched* himself, like the *posuk* says, that Hashem says to Avraham, “**Va'avarecha Mevarachecha**,” “I will *bentch* those who *bentch* you.” From here we see, “*Kol Hamevarech Misbarech*” — when someone gives a *bracha* to another person, he is *bentched* from Hashem!

PEREK ALEF

There are 10 things that *Tefillin* need to have in order to be kosher. (Many of these *halachos* are also for *mezuzos* and *Sifrei Torah*, which is why these *halachos* are all in the same set of *halachos*.) The first two are about how they are made:

1) *They need to be written with ink*: We make ink by mixing soot from burning candles with sap and honey, crushing it into powder, and drying it. We mix it with a liquid (like gallnut juice) and write with that. The ink has to be BLACK — if even one letter is written in another color, even gold, they are *posul*!

2) *They have to be written on parchment*: Parchment is made from the skin of an animal, which we soak to make it get smaller and harder. Once it is ready, it is called *g'vil*. *G'vil* can be separated into two parts — *klaf* (the outside part touching the hair of the animal) and *duchsstos* (the inside part touching the meat). It is best to write a *Sefer Torah* on *g'vil*, a *mezuzah* on *duchsstos*, and *Tefillin* on *klaf*. (Nowadays, we only use *g'vil*, with some of the top and most of the bottom rubbed off. This makes it a lighter color.)

The Rambam also teaches us about the *kavana* the *sofer* needs to have when he is writing. If he writes Hashem's name without thinking about the *kedusha* of Hashem, the whole thing is *posul*!