

הלכה of the Week

~ The Different Kinds of ברכות ~

The various ברכות can be divided into three categories:

1. ברכות הנהנין - "Blessings recited before enjoying an object."

These blessings are recited before eating food and drinking drink, and before smelling a fragrance.

2. ברכות המצוות - "Blessings recited before performing מצוות."

These blessings are recited before performing certain מצוות, such as taking the לולב on סוכות, putting on תפילין, lighting the נרות שבת (the Shabbat candles), sounding the שופר, reading מגילת אסתר, fixing a מזוזה to the doorpost, and so on.

3. ברכות השבח והודאה - "Blessings of praise and thanks."

When we recite these blessings we thank Hashem for His kindness towards us and we praise Him for His greatness. This category includes the following ברכות:

שֶׁהַחַיִּינוּ (recited before eating a new fruit, wearing new clothing and on lighting candles and making קידוש at the beginning of a festival), שְׁכַחוּ וּגְבוּרַתוֹ מֵלֵא עוֹלָם (on hearing thunder) and בְּרַכַּת הַגּוֹמֵל (recited after surviving a dangerous situation).

Every ברכה begins by mentioning Hashem's Name (בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ) - "Blessed are You, Hashem, our G-d") and His Kingship over the universe (מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם - "King of the Universe"). The rabbis teach us that, "A blessing that does not contain Hashem's Name and His Kingship is not considered a blessing."

פְּרָקֵי אָבוֹת of the Week

פְּרָקֵי ד

כ רבֵּי מַתְיָא בֶּן חָרַשׁ אָמְרַן, הָיוּ מְקַדִּים בְּשָׁלוֹם כָּל אָדָם. וְהָיוּ זָנְבִי לְאַרְיֹת,
וְאֵל תְּהִי רִאשׁ לְשׁוּעָלִים:

Rabbi Matya Ben Charash says:

- You should be the first to greet every person;
- It is better to be a tail to lions than a head to foxes.
