וטוב שישמע אחר כך מאחר הברכה, ויכוין לצאת, ויוצא ממאי נפשך. [משנ"ב ס"ק כ]. או שיברך בעצמו ויהרהר שם ומלכות בלבבו. [באו"ח וישב ה"ו]

לב. מי שהתחיל לברך "ברוך אתה ה'" על דעת לסיים ברכת "זוקף כפופים", ונזכר שלא בירך ברכת "מתיר אסורים", לא יסיים לומר "מתיר אסורים", אלא יסיים "זוקף כפופים", אף על פי שכעת בזה שוב לא יוכל לברך ברכת "מתיר אסורים". [אול"צ ח"ב עמ' מ בהערה]

ברכת "מלביש ערומים"

לג. בברכת "מלביש ערומים" נותן הודאה לה' יתברך על שלובש בגדיו.

about to recite his morning blessings and ask him to recite the blessing of *matir asurim* on his behalf. If this is not feasible, he should recite the blessing for himself while thinking of God's Name without pronouncing it.[21]

As above

32) If someone began to recite the blessing of *zokef kefufim*, but while in the middle of reciting it (after saying *Barukh Atta Hashem*) he realized that he had not yet recited the blessing of *matir asurim*, he must not switch over to the blessing that he skipped. Instead, he must continue to complete the blessing of *zokef kefufim* even though this means that he will not be able to recite the blessing of *matir asurim* at all.[22]

Day 10

Malbish Arumim

The gift of clothing

33) This blessing (Who clothes the naked) was instituted to thank God for the gift of clothing to protect our dignity and to protect our bodies from exposure to the elements. According to some authorities, the correct text is *hamalbish*,[23]

21. The *Ben Ish Hai* recommended pausing to think of God's Name while reciting the blessing in this case, without pronouncing the Name, so that one would fulfill the obligation of the blessing at least according to the *Poskim* who ruled that one can fulfill the requirement of any prayer by thinking it.

A better solution would be for this person to find someone else who needs to recite the blessing and ask him to recite it on his behalf as well. In that way, he would fulfill his obligation according to all *Poskim*. Regarding other such situations, this is exactly what the *Ben Ish Hai* recommended (e.g., *parashat Re'e* halakha 15; *parashat Hukat* halakha 13). Perhaps he did not offer this suggestion in this case since it is not a practical solution regarding the morning blessings because the custom is to recite the morning blessings at home, as explained above in halakha 11. Therefore, it is unlikely to find someone else to recite the blessings on his behalf.

22. This is the ruling of the *Or Letziyon* (Vol. II, footnote on page 40), concurring with the ruling of the *Haye Adam* (cited in the *Ben Ish Hai parashat Vayeshev* halakha 7 and *Kaf Hahayim* Sofer 46:45). The *Ben Ish Hai* disagreed, arguing that it is better to change this blessing to *matir asurim* and recite that of *zokef kefufim* afterward.

23. The *Tefilla leDavid* (page 73 in the HaKeter edition) claims that according to the *Sha'ar Hakavanot* the correct text is *hamalbish*, and this is the text appearing in the prayer books *Sha'are Rahamim* and *Hesed le'Avraham*. The *Kaf Hahayim* Palachi (9:10) concurred with this, and the *Yafe Lalev* (46:26 in HaKeter's edition) cited proof that this is the correct text from a verse (*Shemu'el II*,

ויש שכתבו שיש לומר "המלביש" בה"א [ראה תפלה לדוד אות ק]. **אולם המנהג לומר "מלביש".** [שמח נפש עמ' קמו בנד"מ, וע"ע בחוקר לב על היפה ללב סי' מו הערה לא]

ויאמר "עֲרוּמִים" במ"ם דגושה, דאי לאו הכי משמעו פיקחים. [הרב נאמ"ן בהערות איש מצליח על המשנ"ב]

ברכת "הנותן ליעף כח"

לד. אף שכתב מרן בשלחן ערוך (סי' מו ס"ו) שאין לברך ברכת "הנותן ליעף כח", מכל מקום נתפשט המנהג לברך ברכה זו, ואין בזה חשש ספק ברכה לבטלה, כי במקום מנהג אין אומרים ספק ברכות להקל. ובפרט שיש אומרים שמרן עצמו חזר בו בסוף ימיו וציוה לאומרה. [ראה יבי"א ח"ב סי' כה אות יב-יג, ילקו"י מהדו"ק עמ' נ]

but the accepted custom is to say *malbish*. The correct pronunciation of the word *arumim* is עֲרֻמִּים with a *dagesh* in the letter *mem* [although most prayer books spell the word as עֲרוּמִים]. The word עֲרוּמִים, pronounced without a *dagesh*, means *crafty people*, an entirely different meaning.[24]

Hanoten Laya'ef Ko'ah

The custom to recite this blessing

34) The *Shulhan Arukh* ruled that it is forbidden to recite the blessing of *hanoten laya'ef ko'ah* since it is not mentioned in the Talmud. Nevertheless, the common custom nowadays is to recite it. We need not be concerned that it is a blessing recited in vain, since it has become an established custom to recite it and that overrides the principle of *safek berakhot lehakel*. Besides, some authorities claimed that the author of the *Shulhan Arukh* retracted this ruling in his later years and instructed people to recite this blessing.[25]

1:24). Another advantage of this text is that it separates the final letter *mem* in the word הָעוֹלָם from the opening letter *mem* in the word מַלְבִּישׁ, thus preventing people from melding both words together and omitting one of the two letters. The author of *Sede Hemed* testified (*Pe'at Hasade ma'arekhet Bet* #37) that he adopted this text for himself and he taught his disciples to use this text.

On the other hand, the *Same'ah Nefesh* Gagin (page 126) refuted these arguments, ruling that the correct text is *malbish*. This is the text appearing in the prayer book of Rasha"sh as well, and this is the text in the prayer book of Rav Amram Ga'on and that of Rambam. In contrast, Rav Natrunai Ga'on wrote in a responsum that the correct text is *hamalbish*. At any rate, the accepted text in all prayer books today is *malbish arumim*.

24. The verse (*Bereshit* 2:25), "וַיִּהְיוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם עֲרוּמִּים – The two (Adam and Eve) were naked," is proof to this spelling. In contrast, we have (*Iyov* 15:5), "וְתִבְחַר לְשׁוֹן עֲרוּמִים – choose the language of the crafty."

25. There is no source in the Talmud for this blessing. The *Shulhan Arukh* (46:6) states, "Some people have the practice of reciting the blessing of *hanoten laya'ef ko'ah*, but this is incorrect." The Rama commented in his gloss that the common custom of Ashkenazic Jews is to recite it. Since Sefardic Jews always follow the rulings of the *Shulhan Arukh*, one would think that we must not recite this blessing, especially since we follow the cardinal principle of *safek berakhot lehakel*.

Nevertheless, Harav HIDA (*Birke Yosef* 46:11) testified that the practice of reciting this blessing had become widespread in his time, following the instructions of the Arizal. He explained that although we accept all the rulings of Maran, we have a tradition that if Maran would have known the opinions of the Arizal he would have concurred

לה. ברכת "הנותן ליעף כח" יברך אחר ברכת "מלביש ערומים", וביאר האר"י הקדוש, ששתי ברכות אלו נתקנו על מלבושי הנפש, שיש אדם מאבד לבוש נפשו לגמרי, והקדוש ברוך הוא בחסדו נותן לה לבוש חדש, כי ערומה היא [ומלביש ערומים ניתקנה כנגד זה שנתפשט מעליו לגמרי מלבוש הקדושה]. ויש אינו חוטא כל כך, לאבד הלבוש לגמרי, אלא רק מחלישו, והקדוש ברוך הוא בחסדו נותן לו כח לחזקו בכל יום כאשר מחזיר לו נשמתו בבוקר, [וכנגד בחינה זו השנית תיקנו ברכת "הנותן ליעף כח"]. [באו"ח וישב ה"ח, מקבציאל הי"ג, כה"ח ס"ק מז]

After *malbish arumim*

35) The blessing of *hanoten laya'ef ko'ah* should be recited immediately following that of *malbish arumim*. The Arizal explained that these two blessings refer to the spiritual garments of a person's soul. Sometimes a person loses these garments due to his sins and his soul suffers a state of spiritual nakedness. In His abundant mercy, God provides this person a substitute garment, and for this we recite the blessing of *malbish arumim*.

Some people do not sin to such an extent, and they are able to preserve their souls' original garments. However, they also are guilty of some sins. Each sin loosens the stitches in the soul's garment and frays it, so that the garment becomes weaker and shabbier the more sins one accumulates. God has mercy on these people as well, and each morning they find the souls' garments newly repaired and reinforced. In recognition of this kindness we recite the blessing of *hanoten laya'ef ko'ah*.[26]

with them. Besides, the *Kenesset Hagedola* testified that some authorities claimed that Maran changed his mind about this blessing toward the end of his life. Therefore, it is best to recite this blessing.

In his *Tuv Ayin* (*Siman* 7), Harav HIDA wrote that Maran and the other rabbis of his time had no inkling of the Arizal's greatness. Unfortunately, the Arizal passed away before Maran had a chance to get to know his teachings. It could be that he later heard from the Arizal's disciples that we are supposed to recite this blessing, and on that basis he retracted his earlier ruling.

Harav Yosef Hayim (responsa *Rav Pe'alim* Vol. II, #12) considered Harav HIDA's testimony to be a cardinal factor in halakhic rulings. In fact, in his *Ben Ish Hai* (*parashat Bereshit* halakha 10) he asserted that we do not even apply the principle of *safek berakhot lehakel* wherever the Arizal has ruled to recite a blessing. This places the authority of the Arizal on a level far above that of Maran.

Maran the Rishon Letziyon (responsa *Yabia Omer* Vol. II, #25:12) rejected this as an unwarranted exaggeration of the Arizal's authority in ruling on halakhic matters. The idea that Maran would have invariably agreed with the Arizal on every point is pure conjecture and there is no basis to assume that it is true. Although there is no doubt that the Arizal was on the front line of Torah scholars in a generation of Torah giants, we must follow the principle of "It is not in Heaven." It makes no sense to reject the rulings of our accepted *Poskim* in favor of those of the Arizal. Only Moshe Rabbenu was able to rule halakha according to his perceptions of the Heavens.

All this notwithstanding, Maran the Rishon Letziyon concurred with the Arizal's instructions to recite the blessing of *hanoten laya'ef ko'ah* although Maran ruled that it must not be recited. This is not because the Arizal sided with that opinion, however. After all, Ashkenazic Jews also have adopted the custom of reciting this blessing even among communities that have no connection to the Arizal's teachings.

This custom is based on the fact that numerous *Rishonim* (*Sefer Mitzvot Gadol*, *Mahzor Vitri*, Rabbenu David Abudarham, *Arba'a Turim*) listed this as one of the morning blessings. It is likely, therefore, that this blessing appeared in the texts of the Talmud of those generations and it somehow was omitted afterward in later copies. Alternatively, it could be that although the Talmud does not mention this blessing, the post-Talmudic *Ge'onim* instituted it. Either way, now that the established custom is to recite this blessing, the custom overrides the principle of *safek berakhot lehakel*.

26. This explanation comes from the *Ben Ish Hai* (*parashat Vayeshev* halakha 8) and *Mikabtze'el* (*parashat*

ברכת "רוקע הארץ על המים"

לו. בברכת "רוקע הארץ על המים", אנו נותנים הודאה לה' יתברך, כי הפליא בחסדו ברקיעת הארץ על פני המים, הוא מי התהום, הפך הטבע, כי כפי הטבע העפר ישקע במים והמים יהיו למעלה ממנו, ככל דבר כבד שנשקע בתוך המים, ואם היה כן איך היה אפשר לבני אדם לדור וללכת על פני המים. והטיב ה' חסדו ברחמיו על ברואיו לשנות את הטבע, והרקיע הארץ על המים, לתת מקום לדור עליה ברואיו, ועל זה נאמר [תהלים קלו, ו] "לְרֹקַע הָאָרֶץ עַל הַמָּיִם כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ". [לבוש סי' מו ס"ב, מקבציאל פ' וישב הי"ד בשם השלמי צבור, ערוה"ש ס"ד]

Roka Ha'aretz al Hamayim

Day 11

The gift of dry land

36) The blessing of *roka ha'aretz al hamayim* expresses our gratitude to God for providing us dry land on which we can live. The existence of the continents cannot be taken for granted, since rock and soil are heavier than water, and the natural state of the planet should be a rocky core completely covered by one continuous ocean. (The planet Saturn's moon Titan is exactly that – a rocky core surrounded by several layers of liquids and ice.)

On the second day of Creation, God remolded the earth's shape, so that the continents and islands rise above the oceans' surface. This made it possible for man to survive. The text of this blessing is based on the verse (*Tehillim* 136:6), "לְרֹקַע הָאָרֶץ עַל הַמָּיִם כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ" – To He Who raised the earth above the waters, for His kindness endures forever.[27]

Vayeshev halakha 13), based on the *Sha'ar Hakavanot*. The *Tehilla leDavid* (#101) challenged this explanation, arguing that if it was true we would not be able to recite the blessing of *hanoten laya'ef ko'ah* after reciting that of *malbish arumim*. Once we have blessed God for providing us entirely new garments, it would be superfluous for us to bless Him again for simply repairing our existing garments.

The fact is that Harav Shalom Mizrahi Sharabi listed the blessing of *hanoten laya'ef ko'ah* before that of *malbish arumim*. Nevertheless, the *Tehilla leDavid* reconciled the order of the blessings that we are accustomed to following. He explained that we recite the blessing of *malbish arumim* to thank God for His kindness toward one group of people (those who have lost their spiritual garments altogether) and we recite the blessing of *hanoten laya'ef ko'ah* to thank God for His kindness toward those people whose spiritual garments have been weakened. Since each blessing refers to a different group of people, one blessing does not cover the intent of the other. The *Tehilla leDavid* concluded by testifying that the common custom in Yerushalayim was to recite the blessing of *malbish arumim* and afterward that of *hanoten laya'ef ko'ah*. The *Kaf Hahayim* Palachi (9:10) and the *Yafe Lalev* (46:100-102 in the HaKeter edition) concurred with this system.

27. This explanation appears in the *Levush*, the *Shalme Tzibbur*, and the *Arokh Hashulhan* Epstein. In *Sefer Mikabtze'el*, Harav Yosef Hayim posed a question: Why do we have to recite this blessing every day? We recite all the other morning blessings to thank God for things that are renewed each day, but the existence of the continents is continuous day and night. It should be sufficient to recite this blessing once in a lifetime.

The answer, he explained, is that on the contrary, we should have to recite this blessing every hour of the day and night. The continued existence of the continents is precarious, since the oceans threaten to flood the continents and erode the mountains until they are no longer visible above the water's surface. In fact, this almost occurred while King David laid the foundations for the *Bet Hamikdash*. King David resorted to using practical Kabbalah to stop this from happening, as our Sages taught in *Sukkah* (53a). If not for the power of God's Name that King David employed to stop it, such a catastrophe would be liable to occur at any moment.

Thus, by rights we should recite this blessing constantly all day long. Of course, this is not very practical, and so our Sages instituted to recite it once a day.