כב. מי ששכח לברך ברכות התורה, ונזכר באמצע פסוקי דזמרה, יברך ברכה אחת שהיא ברכת "אשר בחר בנו מכל העמים" (שבגמרא ברכות (יא ע"ב) נקראת "המעולה שבברכות"), וימשיך בפסוקי דזמרה, עד סוף ישתבח. ובין ישתבח ליוצר יברך שתי הברכות הנותרות: "על דברי תורה". וברכת "והערב נא..., המלמד תורה לעמו ישראל". [יבי"א ח"ד סי' ז אות ה, ובילקו"י מהדו"ק עמ' נח]. ויאמר פסוקי ברכת כהנים. [הלכה ברורה עמ' שעט]. ואחר כך ימשיך בברכת יוצר והלאה.

כג. מי שנזכר שלא בירך ברכות התורה, אחר שהתחיל ברכת יוצר, יש לו לברך ברכות התורה בבין הפרקים שבין ברכת "יוצר המאורות", לבין ברכת "אהבת עולם", שהואיל ולאחר ברכת אהבת עולם לא יכול יותר לברך ברכות התורה, נחשב הדבר למצוה עוברת, ורשאי להפסיק בבין הפרקים של ברכות קריאת שמע לברכה שעובר זמנה. [ראה יבי"א ח"ד סי' ז סוף אות ה, ובילקו"י מהדו"ק עמ' נט]

Between *yotzer hame'orot* and *Ahavat olam*

22) If someone began *shaḥarit* and realized, only after he was in the middle of *Pesuke dezimra*, that he had forgotten to recite the blessings over the mitzvah of Torah study, he should interrupt his prayers and recite the blessing of *Asher baḥar banu*, and then continue reciting the rest of *Pesuke dezimra*. This blessing has preference because the Talmud (*Berakhot* 11b) describes it as "the best of all blessings." After reciting the blessing of *Yishtabaḥ*, he should recite the blessings of *al divre Torah* and *Veha'arev na* and the verses of *Birkat kohanim*[84] before continuing with *Yotzer or*.

Day 31

Between *Yotzer or* and *Ahavat olam*

23) If someone began *shaḥarit* and realized, only after he was in the middle of the blessing of *yotzer or*, that he had forgotten to recite the blessings for the mitzvah of Torah study, he should recite those blessings immediately after completing that blessing (after the words בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' יוֹצֵר הַמְּאוֹרוֹת) and before he begins the blessing of *Ahavat olam*. This is because if he waits until after reciting the blessing of *Ahavat olam*, he will no longer be able to recite the blessing over Torah study. This is therefore an example of *mitzvah overet* – a mitzvah that, if it will not be performed right now, it will not be available later on. It is permissible to interrupt between the blessings of the *Shema* to perform a *mitzvah overet*. After reciting the blessings over Torah study, it will not be necessary to recite any verses before continuing with the blessing of *Ahavat olam*. Instead, this person can rely on the *Shema* that he is about to recite to validate the blessings, or he can recite verses after completing his prayers.[85]

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84. This is the ruling of the *Halakha Berura* (page 379). See the discussion in the *Otzerot Yosef* (#16). According to the *Mishna Berura* (51:10), one may recite all the blessings for Torah study and the customary verses in the middle of *Pesuke dezimra*.

85. This is the ruling of Maran the Rishon Letziyon (responsa *Yabia Omer* Vol. V, #7:5, based on a similar ruling by the *Magen Avraham* (66:5) regarding someone who heard thunder while reciting the *Shema* and its blessings. In that case, he may interrupt to recite the appropriate blessing for thunder, and a number of *Aḥaronim* concurred with the *Magen Avraham*. Although some *Poskim* disagreed with that ruling, they would probably agree that it is permitted between the blessings or between passages of the *Shema*, since this is a *mitzvah overet*. The same should apply to reciting the blessings over the mitzvah of Torah study.

ויש שכתבו שמרן הראש"ל זצ"ל חזר בו מהפסק הנ"ל, וסבר שיכוין בפירוש בברכת אהבת עולם, שרוצה לצאת בה ידי חובת ברכות התורה, ומיד אחר התפלה יאמר כמה פסוקים או ילמד מעט, ובזה יוצא ידי חובת ברכות התורה לכל הדעות. [הלכה ברורה עמ' שצב-שצד]

כד. ברכת אהבת עולם פוטרת ברכת התורה (וכאמור לעיל בהלכה כ"א). אולם הוא בתנאי שילמד מיד בלי הפסק. [ש"ע סי' מז ס"ז]. ואף אם התפלל עמידה, וסיים התפלה, אינו נקרא בזה הפסק, כיון שלמד אחר כך מיד. [משנ"ב ס"ק טו. כה"ח ס"ק טז]. ואף אם הפסיק בכל הסדר שאחר התפלה, כגון וידוי ונפילת אפים ושאר

Although this is the printed ruling of Maran the Rishon Letziyon, there are authorities who claim that he later changed his mind. His newer ruling is for this person to continue with the blessing of *Ahavat olam* and to have in mind for this blessing to serve as his blessing over Torah study. Immediately after the prayers, he should recite a few verses or study some passage of the Oral Torah. In that way, he definitely fulfills his obligation according to all *Poskim*.[86]

***Amida* and *vidui* are not an interruption**

24) As mentioned above in halakha 21, the blessing of *Ahavat olam* can count as the blessing over the mitzvah of Torah study, but only if the person learns Torah immediately afterward without interruption. The *Amida* of *shaḥarit*, however, does not constitute an interruption. In fact, the *vidui* confession and the supplications asking God to forgive our sins do not constitute an interruption either. The term "immediately afterward" means immediately after completing all those sections of

What about reciting the verses of *Birkat Kohanim*?

In Maran the Rishon Letziyon's ruling, he added that this person should also recite the verses of *Birkat Kohanim* immediately after the blessings, before he begins the blessing of *Ahavat olam*. This is in deference to those *Poskim* who ruled that one must fulfill the mitzvah of Torah study immediately after reciting the blessings, without any interruption. Maran the Rishon Letziyon pointed out that Rashi (comment to *Berakhot* 24b) wrote that once someone has been forced to interrupt his prayers, it is permissible for him to continue interrupting it with other pertinent speech. Our case is a perfect example for applying this rule.

In the *Yalkut Yosef* (first edition, page 58), however, Maran the Rishon Letziyon omitted the instructions to recite the verses of *Birkat kohanim*. In the newest edition (authored by Harav Yitzḥak Yosef), the author suggested that although he omitted those words, we may assume that wherever it is permissible to recite the blessings over Torah study it is likewise permissible – and necessary – to recite the verses of *Birkat kohanim*.

Harav Meir Mazuz (*Hagahot Ish Matzli'aḥ* on the *Mishna Berura*, page 15) disagreed with this interpretation, and asserted that it is apparent that Maran the Rishon Letziyon changed his ruling when he composed the *Yalkut Yosef*. He pointed out that there is a *safek sefeka* enabling us to assume that it is unnecessary to recite these verses in this case. First, according to some *Poskim* it is sufficient to recite the *Shema* following the blessings. [The blessing of *Ahavat olam* is not an interruption between the blessings and the *Shema*. On the contrary, it is considered a continuation of the blessings over Torah study.] Second, there are *Poskim* who ruled that it is never necessary to study Torah immediately after reciting the blessings; they permit interrupting with other conversation. Therefore, it is best not to interruption between *yotzer hame'orot* and *Ahavat olam* any more than is absolutely necessary.

In fact, Harav Yitzḥak admitted that he asked his father whether he purposely omitted the instructions to recite the verses when he wrote the *Yalkut Yosef*, and he answered that he indeed omitted those words on purpose, since it is best not to recite the verses. As soon as the prayers are over, however, it is recommended to recite some verses or a passage of the Oral Torah before interrupting with any other conversation.

86. The *Halakha Berura* (page 392) disagreed with the entire ruling of the *Yabia Omer* and the supposed retraction, and instead ruled that this person should not

דברים, לא הוי הפסק, שכל שלא יצא מבית הכנסת ועוסק בדברי תפלות ותחנונים, "מיד" קרינן ביה. [כה"ח שם. ועי' ביאור הלכה שם ד"ה אם למד]. וגם במה שאומרים אשרי יושבי ביתך, ומזמור של יום, ופטום הקטורת, ותנא דבי אליהו, נחשב כשונה לאלתר. [יחו"ד ח"ד סי' ה]

כה. יש להסתפק אם מה שקורא קריאת שמע אחר ברכת "אהבת עולם" נחשבת כמי שלמד אחר הברכה. ומכיון שיש אומרים שאין קריאת שמע מועילה לענין זה, כיון שקריאת שמע הוי כדברי תפלה שאינו אומרה לשם לימוד, לכן יש ליזהר לברך ברכות התורה קודם "אהבת עולם", ולא יסמוך על ברכת "אהבת עולם". [ראה ש"ע סי' מז ס"ח]

the prayer. The sections that follow the supplications, including *Ashre-Uva leTziyon*, the daily psalm, the passages of *ketoret*, and the passage of *Tanna deve Eliyahu*, are themselves the fulfillment of his obligation of learning Torah "immediately" after reciting *Ahavat olam*.[87]

Validating the blessing after the *Amida*

25) Although some authorities ruled that by reciting the *Shema* one automatically validates the status of *Ahavat olam* as the blessing for the mitzvah of Torah study, others claimed that it does not accomplish that. They argue that the act of reciting the *Shema* is not one of Torah study; it is more of a prayer or declaration of allegiance to Hashem.

One must always try to recite the blessings over the mitzvah of Torah study before reciting the blessing of *Ahavat olam* and not rely on that blessing to cover one's obligation.

recite the blessings at all. He should intend to fulfill his obligation with the blessing of *Ahavat olam* and then recite some verses immediately following his prayers.

87. The *Kaf Hahayim* Sofer (47:16), citing the *Ma'amar Mordekhai* and *Petah Hadevir*, ruled that the *vidui* and supplications are not considered an interruption. The *Mishna Berura* (*Bi'ur Halakha*) likewise cited the *Or Zaruwa* stating that none of the additions to the prayers constitute an interruption. Maran the Rishon Letziyon (responsa *Yehave Da'at* Vol. IV, #5) added that *Ashre*, the daily Psalm, the passages of *ketoret* and of *Tanna deve Eliyahu* count as the necessary Torah learning following the *Amida*. The verses included in the supplications cannot count as the necessary Torah learning since we do not recite them as Torah study but rather as prayers. As explained above in halakha 13, it technically is permissible to recite verses as the text of prayers without first reciting the blessings over Torah study.

The *Halakha Berura* (page 389) states: "Even if the person recited his words of Torah after completing the entire *shaharit* service, including *Alenu leshabe'ah*, it still validates his *Ahavat olam* as a blessing for Torah study. Sources for this ruling: *Or Zaruwa*, *Ma'amar Mordekhai*, *Petah Hadevir*." It seems, however, that the phrase "including *Alenu leshabe'ah*" was added by mistake. If the person has reached *Alenu leshabe'ah*, that means he has already recited the passages of *Ashre-Uva leTziyon*, the daily Psalm, and *pitum haketoret*. All those passages are considered Torah study as well, as explained in responsa *Yehave Da'at*, and there is no obligation to recite additional verses after *Alenu leshabe'ah*.

What is meant by "after the prayer"?

The *Shulhan Arukh* rules that when someone relies on the blessing of *Ahavat olam* to cover his obligation of reciting the blessings for the mitzvah of Torah study, he must recite some words of Torah immediately "after the prayer." This likely means immediately after completing the *Amida*, but on the other hand the *Shulhan Arukh* (131:1) ruled that it is forbidden to speak between the *Amida* and the *tahanun* prayers. The *Mishna Berura* (131:1) added that if someone speaks at that time, Heaven will not accept his *tahanun* prayers.

It could be that if someone speaks words of Torah for the purpose of validating the blessing of *Ahavat olam* as his blessing over the mitzvah of Torah study, it is not considered an interruption. The *Mishna Berura* admitted that it is permissible to interrupt for the sake of a mitzvah.

ומכל מקום בדיעבד, אם שכח לברך ברכות התורה קודם התפלה, וברך "אהבת עולם", וקרא קריאת שמע, אף שלא למד מיד אחר התפלה, יצא ידי חובה, דספק ברכות להקל. [כה"ח ס"ק יז, יחו"ד ח"ד סי' ה, ודלא כדהביא המשנ"ב ס"ק יז וסוף ס"ק כח]

ואם קרא קריאת שמע אחר זמנה, דהוי כקורא בתורה, לכל הדעות יצא ידי חובה. [משנ"ב סוף ס"ק יז, הלכה ברורה עמ' שפט]

כו. יש אומרים שאם הפסיק בין הברכה ללימודו אין בכך כלום. והנכון שלא להפסיק ביניהם. וכן נהגו לומר פרשת "ברכת כהנים" (במדבר ו, כב-כז) סמוך לברכת התורה. [ש"ע ס"ט]. ורשאי לומר פסוקים אלו אף קודם אור הבוקר. [משנ"ב ס"ק כ]

If it happens that someone recited the *shaharit* prayers without first reciting the blessings for Torah study, and then he failed to recite words of Torah immediately after completing the *Amida*, we still assume that he fulfilled his obligation through reciting the blessing of *Ahavat olam* and the *Shema*. This is based on the principle of *safek berakhot lehakel*.

If someone prays after the time allotted for the mitzvah of reciting *Shema* has passed, then we certainly consider the *Shema* recited during the prayers to be an act of Torah study, thus validating the blessing of *Ahavat olam* as a blessing for the mitzvah of Torah study.

Reciting Torah after the blessings

26) Some *Poskim* ruled that it is permissible to interrupt after reciting the blessings over Torah study and make conversation before beginning to study Torah. Even so, it is best to avoid such an interruption.[88] The common custom is to recite the verses of *Birkat kohanim* immediately after reciting the blessings.[89] It is permissible to recite these blessings even before dawn.[90]

88. The Talmud Yerushalmi states that one must recite words of Torah immediately after the blessing. According to Rabbenu Yitzhak, Rabbenu Yona, and the *Mordekhi*, this passage refers to someone who wishes to rely on the blessing of *Ahavat olam* to fulfill his obligation, but if he actually recites the blessings prescribed for the mitzvah of Torah study, it is permissible to interrupt between the blessings and his first words of Torah. According to Rambam, however, even when reciting the regular blessings over the mitzvah of Torah study, one must begin Torah study without any interruption. Rambam's reasoning is that the blessing for the mitzvah of Torah study is no different than the blessing reciting before fulfilling any mitzvah.

The *Bet Yosef* asked why, according to the first opinion, this blessing is different from all blessings recited over physical pleasures or the fulfillment of mitzvot. He offered two resolutions [which are beyond the scope of this volume]. The *Magen Avraham* (47:7, cited in the *Mishna Berura* 47:19) offered a third resolution: The mitzvah of Torah study is encumbent on us at all times of the day and night, and so it never leaves our consciousness.

89. Why is the custom to recite these verses in particular?

The *Bet Yosef* (*Siman* 48) explained that in the era of the *Bet Hamikdash*, the members of the *mishmar* in each community recited these verses daily, and therefore we recite them in memory of that practice. The *Lehem Hamudot* (to *Berakhot* 1:75, cited in the *Mishna Berura* 47:20) suggested that these verses are chosen since they are blessings for the Jewish people. The *Ru'ah Hayim* and the *Yafe Lalev* (47:5) cited a Midrash teaching that the *kohanim* gained the privilege of blessing the people in the merit of their eagerness to receive the Torah from Sinai, and so these verses are related to the mitzvah of Torah study. The *Yafe Lalev* added that the verses of *Birkat kohanim* consist of sixty letters, corresponding to the sixty tractates of the Mishna.

The responsa *Eretz Tzevi* Frommer (Vol. I, #27) offered a practical halakhic reason for the choice of these verses: Normally, it is forbidden to recite verses by heart; one must