



TOWARDS MEANINGFUL

TEFILLA

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Let's continue our discussion of ברוך Hashem. We will try and understand the two words of this paragraph that seem to form the main motif – “ברוך” and “אמן”. Obviously, these two terms have a major place in our daily religious experience, so understanding them better will help us not only for this Tefilla but for all of our brachot throughout the day.

ברוך

If you look in any standard translated siddur or ask any random person on the street, the word ברוך is always translated as “blessed” (as I translated it above). But when it comes to Hashem, it just doesn't make any sense. Why would we say that Hashem is blessed? Who blessed Him? What did they bless Him with? Money? Success? Children? It seems almost ridiculous for us to announce that Hashem is blessed. So it must mean something else.

Rabbeinu Bechaye explains that the root of the word ברכה is בריכה (pool or water source). When we say that Hashem is ברוך we are recognizing that He is the source of everything. It also comes from the word ברך (knee). Once we recognize that Hashem is the source of everything, we kneel (on our knees) in praise and submission.

The biggest praise we can possibly give to Hashem is the word ברוך, because in that one word we express our utter and complete appreciation for everything Hashem does for us. Hashem is ready to give us all the good in the world, but He needs us to first take that step in recognizing where that good is coming from.

As parents, we can understand this concept (on a human level). For children, parents are the source of all good. They give them food, clothing, shelter, warmth, love, entertainment etc. But when a child fails to recognize where all that good is coming from, parents feel frustrated and that they have raised children who are ungrateful. Look at the following story (found in *From the Source with Spirit Tefilla* textbook) –

Robyn loved her children very much, but found they had grown accustomed to receiving things from her and viewed those things as something they were entitled to. As the temper tantrums of her little children grew, she decided she needed to do something to teach her children that she would love to provide them with everything they wished, as long as they recognized what she was doing on their behalf. She deliberated back and forth, and she finally decided that she would provide her children with only the minimum for a week... Obviously things didn't start off so

the fact that Hashem is ברוך, making sure that everyone realizes that it is Hashem who is the source of everything in this world!! We need to be totally clear about this point before we can even begin to think about approaching Hashem with all of our בקשות (requests) in the Shemonah Esrei.

אמן

Throughout the day, whenever we hear someone make a bracha, we respond “אמן”. And here in this Tefilla, after the first and last sentence, we conclude not once but twice “אמן ואמן”. But what does the term אמן actually mean? The **Shulchan Aruch** 124:6 writes that it means “אמת היא הברכה...” – “ואני מאמין בזה and I believe it. The **Taz** and the **Magen Avraham** add on that we should also have in mind, יהי רצון מלפניו יתברך שיקיים דבר זה, a prayer that this should continue to be true in the future.

In our Tefilla as well, we recite אמן to

confirm that what we have said is true and hope it will remain that way. We announce that Hashem is the source of all bracha, וברוך שם כבודו לעולם וימלא כבודו את כל הארץ אמן ואמן

Hashem is the source of all good:

לעולם: forever, in all times

וארץ: and around the world, in all places.

We conclude with the word Amen, to verify that this basic tenet is completely true, we believe it with all of our being, and we also request that this tenet continue to be recognized in the future by all.

The **Gra** explains that the reason why we say it twice אמן ואמן is once על המקום, in the realm of space, and once על הזמן, in the realm of time.

May we see speedily in our days the fulfillment of the prophecy of Yishayahu “וימלאה הארץ דעה את ה' כמים לים מכסים” (ישעיהו יא:ט) *Knowledge of Hashem will fill the world the way that water fills the sea!* ■

— Cut and paste into your siddur — — — — —



Traditionally, this paragraph is said when one completes all of Sefer Tehillim. The five paragraphs of the Hallelukahs are in actuality the last 5 perakim of Tehillim. We conclude now with the traditional לעולם ה' ברוך as if to say, we unfortunately don't have time to say all of Tehillim every morning, but we did our best and please consider it as if we actually said *all* of the praises found in the entire 150 perakim of Tehillim! The biggest praise we can possibly give to Hashem is the word ברוך, because in that one word we express our utter and complete appreciation for everything Hashem does for us. Hashem is ready to give us all the good in the world, but He needs us to first take that step in recognizing where that good is coming from.