

ברכות השחר

מוֹדָה אֲנִי



PUTTING THINGS IN PERSPECTIVE



What is the first thing you do every morning after you wake up?

Three horizontal lines for writing an answer.

Did you write "Press the snooze button and go back to sleep"? Did you write "Say 'Good Morning'" or "What time/day is it?"

The תורה teaches us that the first thing we should say each day is "מודה אני".

How would you translate those words?

A horizontal line for writing a translation.

Notice the order of the words.

What would seem to be the more correct order to say those words?

Two horizontal lines for writing an answer.

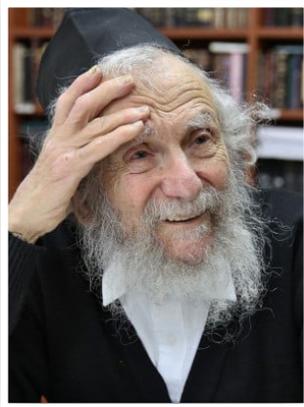
This תפילה teaches us that we start every day by saying the word "Thank" as opposed to the word "I". In a world where so many people are focused on the "I", themselves, the תורה teaches us that the best way to start your day is by being thankful.

How can starting your day by being thankful affect the rest of your day?

What is one thing you are thankful for this morning?



FROM THE HEART; TO THE HEART



I recently heard a story of Rav Yaakov Edelstein, who was one of the first students of the Ponovezh yeshiva, a close student of the Chazon Ish, and Rav of Ramat Hasharon for 70 years. When he was around 90 years old he needed to undergo a throat surgery that left him unable to speak. The speech therapists wanted to help him regain his ability to speak and asked him to write down his two most important words. This way, they could start by practicing saying those two words.

Which two words would you pick? _____

Rav Edelstein wrote down the words “תודה” and “אמן”. Rav Yaakov Edelstein knew that if he could only say two words, they should be words of appreciation: one word to thank everyone who helped him each day and one word to recognize the ברכות that ה' constantly showers upon us.



MAKING IT MEANINGFUL



DID YOU KNOW?

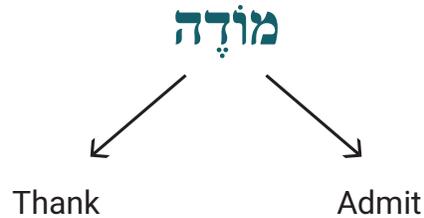
Look at the תפילה above. Which very important word found in most תפילות is missing? _____

The משנה ברורה (א: ח) writes that one can say מודה אני נטילת ידיים, even before washing, since it does not have ה's name. However, the פסוק of "ראשית" found in many siddurim with other important פסוקים should not be said until after washing since it does have ה's name.

מודה אני לפניך

What does the word מודה mean? _____

In לשון הקודש the word מודה has two meanings:



What do you think is the connection between thanking and admitting?

Rav Hutner explained that only someone who can admit that they are incomplete is able to thank someone.

Have you ever had a hard time saying thank you? Why?

When a person admits that they need help from others and 'ה, they can then properly give thanks.

THINK ABOUT IT

Have you ever wondered why we are called יהודים?

The word יהודים indicates that we are always מודה - we thank 'ה and admit/recognize that 'ה controls the world.

Now you can understand why מודה is the perfect word with which to start our day!

שְׁהִיְחֹזֶרֶת בִּי נִשְׁמָתִי בְּחִמְלָה

What do we thank 'ה for in this תפילה?



ברכות נז:

שַׁבַּת - אֶחָד מִשְׁשִׁים לְעוֹלָם הַבָּא. שֵׁנָה - אֶחָד מִשְׁשִׁים לְמִיתָה. חֵלוֹם - אֶחָד מִשְׁשִׁים לְנְבוּאָה

Sabbath is one sixtieth of the World to Come; sleep is one sixtieth of death; and a dream is one sixtieth of prophecy.

What does the גמרא compare each of the following things to?

שבת _____

Dreams _____

Sleep _____

What does it mean that sleep is one sixtieth of death?

חז"ל teach us that when we go to sleep our נשמה goes to שמים to spiritually recharge from all of the "hard work" it is doing in this world. Every morning, the first thing we do is thank ה' for giving us back our נשמה so that we can keep doing מצוות every day.



Why are you thankful today for your נשמה? What is one מצוה that you can make sure to do today?



DID YOU KNOW?

The משנה ברורה (א:ח) writes that one should pause between the word **בְּחִמְלָה** and **רַבָּה**.

רַבָּה אֱמוּנָתְךָ

In what way do you think 'ה's faithfulness is great? Why do we trust 'ה?

These words are based on a פסוק in איכה:



איכה ג:כג

חַדָּשִׁים לְבִקְרִים רַבָּה אֱמוּנָתְךָ

They are renewed each morning; Your faithfulness is great!

The משנה ברורה explains that 'ה demonstrates His faithfulness to us each morning by keeping His promise to return our souls to us every day. The מדרש (איכה רבה ג:ח) adds that because He does so we also have faith that during the days of תחיית המתים, 'ה will return the souls of all those who have passed away.



THINK ABOUT IT

The פסוק says that 'ה makes our souls new again each day. This helps us get a fresh start to each day. What is something new that you can do today that you did not do yesterday?

"כל הלומד תורה ואינו חוזר עליה, דומה לאדם שזורע ואינו קוצר" (סנהדרין צט).



REVIEWING AND REAPING

Understand the Words:

_____ מוֹדָה אֲנִי לְפָנֶיךָ.

_____ מְלַךְ חַי וְקַיִם.

_____ שְׁהַחֲזַרְתָּ בִּי.

_____ נִשְׁמַתִּי בְּחַמְלָה.

_____ רַבָּה אֲמוּנָתְךָ.



UNDERSTAND THE IDEAS

1) Why is it important to start our day with the word "מודה" and not "אני"?

2) What does the word מודה mean?

מודה אני

3) Why are we allowed to say מודה אני before washing ידיים?

4) What do we thank ה' for in this תפילה?

5) Where should we pause when saying the words נְשַׁמְתִּי בְּחֶמְלָה רַבָּה אֶמוּנָתְךָ?

6) What do we mean when we say "רַבָּה אֶמוּנָתְךָ"?
How does ה' show us that we should trust Him?



MAKING IT PERSONAL

Let us try to personalize what we learned!
What is one idea from this תפילה that you
can focus on in the coming week?

I want to try to focus on the words:

When I do so I will think about:

I think that doing this will help my תפילה because:
