

פרשת ואתחנן

ה' אלוקים אתה החילות להראות את עבדך את גדלך ואת ידך החזקה [ג,כד] says, גמ' ברכות לב. The. Before someone דרש ר' שמלאי לעולם יסדר אדם שבחו של הקב"ה ואחר כך יתפלל מנלן ממשה davens, he should first state the praise of Hashem and then begin his תפילה. We learn this from משה. He first praised Hashem as is mentioned in this פסוק, פסוק אתה להראות את עבדך, אתה להראות את עבדך, אתה להראות את עבדך, אתה להראות את עבדך. Only then did he begin his תפילה to allow him to enter ארץ ישראל. This is also the basis for the three initial ברכות of עשרה, שמונה עשרה, where we mention Hashem's greatness, before we proceed with our requests in the subsequent ברכות. However, this needs to be explained. Are we trying to flatter Hashem by praising Him, so that he will listen to our תפילה?

Rav Moshe Feinstein זצ"ל (ס' קול רם ח"ב) explains, that if for example we were to ask a friend to do something for us, we understand that he may help us, but it's not guaranteed. However, when we daven and make requests of Hashem, our feeling must be that we are totally dependent on Hashem and only if He wishes, will it be fulfilled. This is why משה praised Hashem before his תפילה. We are not doing it for Hashem. Rather we are doing it for ourselves, to have the frame of mind that everything comes from Him. This is something that even משה needed to do, because without this recognition, his תפילה would not be effective. Following in משה's footsteps, חז"ל instituted this concept into our daily תפילות, so that we too can come to this הכרה, this recognition that everything comes from Him, before we request from Him our needs.

This idea pertains to all aspects of תפילה. Rav Moshe comments that when there is someone who is רח"ל not well, some people incorrectly start davening and saying תהלים in earnest, only when the חולה has taken a turn for the worst, and the doctors have all but given up hope. But they are mistaken. Rather they should daven right away bearing in mind that all health comes from Hashem. Only then should the necessary השתדלות, like going to the doctor, be done. With this frame of mind, may we merit and be זוכה to have all our תפילות answered and bring a ישועה to all those who need it.

Have a good Shabbos.

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