

As we begin the post-Yomim Noraim and Sukkos part of the year, having put away our Sukkahs, began the process of making Esrog jelly, and encounter the difficulty or struggle in holding on to our Kabbalos, may we suggest one practical *eitzah* for maintaining one's greater Kavannah in Tefillah throughout the year.

It is the concept of '**landmarks**'.

In every bracha of Shemone Esrei, one can find a phrase upon which to focus--and upon which he awaits to focus--so that he remains constantly attuned to his Tefillah on a bracha-by-bracha basis, as he intends to reach the landmark in each bracha.

The first bracha in Shemone Esrei requires Kavannah of the simple meaning in its entirety, and accordingly, is a wonderful inspirational starting point for a Kavannah-filled Shemone Esrei.

We then proceed...

In the bracha of '*Mechayeh Hamaysim*'-- when reciting the words '*Mechalkel Chaim B'chesed*', one can reflect for a moment on the Chesed he receives. Alternatively, one can think about someone who is down, physically, mentally or financially at '*Somaych Noflim*'. Of course, as we had suggested the other day, one will know whether he has recited the words '*Mashiv HaRuach U'Morid HaGeshem*' if at that time he thinks about how Hashem makes each drop of rain land at a particular place at a particular time.

In *Ata Kodosh*, when reciting the words '*Ukdoshim B'Chol Yom*', one can think about how he has the privilege of praising Hashem as the Malochim do!

In the bracha of "*Atta Chonein*"--when reciting the words "*Chaneinu Mei'itecha*"--recognize that all of one's wisdom, intuition, understanding and expertise is not attributable to his personal prowess--but is attributable to only One Source--which each of us have the opportunity to nurture from--for free!

In the bracha of "*Hashiveinu*"--when reciting the words "*Vehachazireinu Bishuva Sheleima Lefanecha*"--ask Hashem to give you the ability to recognize your faults and sins and to correct them immediately--rather than let them wallow for weeks and months.

In the bracha of "*Selach Lanu*"--when reciting the words "*Mochel V'Solei'ach*"--ask Hashem not merely to pardon an aveirah that you realize that you have recently committed (Mochel), but to completely expunge it (*Solei'ach*).

In the bracha of "*Re'eih V'Anyeinu*"--when reciting the words "*Ki Go'el Chazak Ahta*"--believe with a complete belief that there is no burden, task, job or request that is too big for Hashem to fulfill.

In the bracha of "*Refaeinu*"--when reciting the words "*Rofeh Ne'eman V'Rachaman Ahta*"--think about how one can be healed immediately and painlessly--if Hashem so wills. Statistics and procedures are overridden by Hashgacha Pratis.

In the bracha of "*Bareich Aleinu*"--when reciting the words "*U'Vareich Shenaseinu Kashanim Hatovos*"--think about a good year or a good time--and ask Hashem to bring back times like that again--or even better!

Tekah B'Shofar--the first in a series of brachos pleading for the Geulah:

In the bracha of "*Tekah B'Shofar Gadol*"--when reciting the words "*Tekah B'Shofar Gadol L'Cheiruseinu*", one can have the Kavannah that HaRav Mattisyahu Salomon, Shlita, urges him to have here. That is, to think that we want to hear the Shofar heralding the Geulah **so that the Yetzer Hara will once and for all be quashed and we will finally be able to serve Hashem and bring Kavod Shomayim with each and every one of our faculties. We will then finally realize our full potential in life!**

In the bracha of "*Hashiva Shofteinu*"--when reciting the words "*Vehaser Mimenu Yagon V'Anacha*"--reflect for a moment upon all of the pain and suffering--that of each individual and of all of K'lal Yisrael--that will cease when the Geulah in all of its glory comes upon us!

In the bracha of "*Velamalshinim*"--when reciting the words "*VeHazeidim Meheirah Se'aker U'seshaber*"--think about our dastardly and ruthless enemies in Lebanon, Gaza, Syria, and all of those that seek to harm us worldwide--and realize that it is Hashem and only Hashem Who can humble them, uproot them, and smash them.

In the bracha of "*Ahl HaTzadikim*"--when reciting the words "*V'Ahl Ziknei Amecha Bais Yisrael*"--think about our zekeinim--such as HaRav Chaim Kanievsky, Shlita, HaRav Shmuel Wosner, Shlita, HaRav Moshe Shternbuch, Shlita, HaRav Dovid Feinstein, Shlita, and your own Rosh Yeshivos, and daven for their good health and continued leadership of K'lal Yisrael.

In the bracha of "*V'lirushalayim Irecha*"--when reciting the words "*U'vnei Osah BeKarov Beyameinu Binyan Olam*"--think about **how much you want it Beyameinu**--in our days!

In the bracha of "*Es Tzemach*"--when reciting the words "*Ki Lishuasecha Kivinu Kol Hayom*"--remember the Kavannah that HaRav Avraham Chaim Feuer, Shlita, urges us to have when reciting it--*Ani Ma'amin B'Emunah Sheleimah B'vivas HaMoshiach...Achakeh Lo Bechol Yom Sheyavoh!*

In the bracha of "*Shema Koleinu*"--one should stop for a moment each time the word "*Racheim*" or "*Rachamim*" is mentioned--mentally pleading with Hashem to grant the requests we have made in our Tefillos with Rachamim. In Nusach Ashkenaz, the Lashon of Rachamim occurs three times, in Nusach Sefard--Rachamim is requested four times within the bracha. This gives us an important indication of how essential it is to ask Hashem for His mercy in listening to our prayers and granting our requests!

In the bracha of "*Retzei*"--when reciting the words "*Vehashev Es Ha'avodah LiDvir Veisecha*"--remember that the *Devir* is the *Kodesh HaKedoshim* itself--how can we live in a world that is devoid of its holiest place?! Hashem--please, please, bring it back to us!

In the bracha of "*Modim*"--when reciting the words "*Ve'al Nisecha Shebichol Yom Imanu*", recall that this refers to the daily miracles that each person experiences individually. Think about at least one (there are so many!) that occurred to you since the last Shemone Esrei (yes, it can be something physical or monetary)--and thank Hashem for it!

In the bracha of "*Shalom*" (*Sim Shalom/Shalom Rav*)--when reciting the word "*Shalom*"--one of the numerous times it is requested in the bracha, think about a separate area of Shalom that you really need (Shalom Bayis, Shalom at work, Shalom with a neighbor or acquaintance...Shalom in Eretz Yisrael) and ask Hashem to bless you with it!

We hope that our suggestions have been useful to you. Once again, please feel free to provide us with any additional insights and suggestions in landmarks in Shemone Esrei and Tefillah!