

LEAD TIDBIT **Lowest on the totem pole, but WOW!**

B'rachot, b'rachot, and more b'rachot. 100 b'rachot a day. Food and drink b'rachot. B'rachot for sights and smells. And sounds. Mitzva b'rachot. Prayer b'rachot. Long b'rachot. Short b'rachot. Baruch at the beginning. Baruch towards the end. Baruch at the beginning and at the end. Everyday b'rachot. Familiar b'rachot. rare b'rachot. Once-a-year b'rachot.

Many a Jewish child can say a b'racha before they can form a sentence.

B'racha Bees - competition in classes, in schools, with other schools.

And after learning and using many, many b'rachot - there are the rules for b'rachot. Which come first. How much do you have to eat to require after-b'rachot. What if you forget. What if you say the wrong one. And on and on and on.

They all started - pretty much, from D'varim 8:10, in Parshat Eikev. The pasuk that commands us to 'bench' after a satisfying meal. The pasuk we all know by heart because we say or sing it in the Birkat HaMazon that the pasuk requires us to say - as formulated by our Sages.

And it is those very Sages that took the ball - so to speak - and ran with it.

From saying thank you to G-d after a full, satisfying meal, the Sages upped the ante by requiring a bracha for a crumb of a cookie, the last piece of a potato chip in the bottom of the bag. For a sip of water. For hearing thunder and seeing lightning. For blossoming

fruit trees in Nisan to a shooting star. Other cultures wish on it; we, l'havdil, acknowledge G-d for creating the world.

Let's focus in on the six before-b'rachot for food and drink. HaMotzi on bread is the most powerful one of the six. Many foods during a meal do not get their own b'rachot, because one washed for HaMotzi and made that b'racha to start his/her meal. Wine's bracha will trump HaMotzi in the Kiddush context, but without that, HaGafen follows both HaMotzi and Mezonot. Let's skip over HaEitz and HaAdama, because the real target of this Lead Tidbit is the low b'racha on the list - SHE'HAKOL. The other five food b'rachot are somewhat specific. The fruit of the grapevine. He who takes bread from the ground. Mitzva b'rachot are all specific. So are davening b'rachot.

Let's look at the 9 words of SHE'HAKOL.

The first six words are shared by many other b'rachot, but they are packed with powerful concepts. BARUCH - HaShem is blessed... maybe better, G-d is the source of all blessing. ATA - imagine that we have such a close relationship with HKB"H that we address Him in second person familiar. HASHEM ELOKEINU MELECH HA'OLAM (reluctantly, we're out of space). The last three words - on a sip of water - That everything in this world, exists because G-d called it into existence. SHE'HAKOL is a statement of our belief in G-d, His Kingship, and our debt of gratitude we owe Him. WOW!