

MEANINGFUL BLESSINGS

Just as a person must understand the words of a prayer in order to pray with Kavannah (Fervently Pray), he also needs to consider the meaning of his personal greetings to transform them from a rote formula to a real blessing, with all the benefits this engenders.

As mentioned previously, the act of blessing someone brings Hashem's blessing in return. Likewise, the manner in which you bless the other person determines the potency of the return blessing. Given the frequency with which a person blesses someone else by saying a simple like "Good morning/evening/night," if one were to say them each time with sincerity, they could have a profound impact on the quality of one's life.

Each week is a packet of time that may be found to contain just about anything, good, bad or the normal ups and downs of life. As Shabbat departs and the new week begins, one has no way of knowing what it will bring. It is all in Hashem's control, and when we say *Shavua Tov*/Have a good week, at the end of Shabbat, this is what we are acknowledging. We are asking Hashem to bless our friend with a week that brings good.

The common response to another person's sneeze is *gezunt'heit*, "good health." The person receiving the blessing should respond, "*Baruch tihiyeh* – You should be blessed," and afterwards he should continue and say, "I hope for Your salvation, Hashem." The reason for this prayer is because if one prays for mercy for his fellow when he himself needs that very same thing, he is answered first.

We need to acknowledge that each day and every occurrence within the day is in Hashem's control – changes them from social niceties into the building blocks of blessings and faith.

POINTS TO PONDER

The greeting "good morning/evening" is actually a prayer that Hashem should bless the person's endeavors and keep him safe.

"*Shavuah Tov* or *Gut voch*" is a blessing for the week to come, acknowledging that only the will of Hashem can make the week happy, healthy, and productive.

***Gezunt'heit* is a blessing for health that is the proper response to another person's sneeze.**

Deuteronomy 28:2 "All these blessings will come upon you and overtake you if you obey the LORD your God. (NAU)