|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|

|  |
| --- |
|  |
|  |
| **By:** **Eliya Baruch** - – Yeshivat Chedvat HaTora |
| **The Right Way to Pray** |
| I have a problem to share with you. Maybe it also happens to you when you start to pray and you find yourself – all over the place - but just not there with the prayer?! On one hand, this problem happens to everyone. On the other hand we still need to do something about it because we can't really say that we are actually speaking to Hashem. We have to admit it that we don’t really pray with *kavana* (*Hebrew for intent*). But if we think about it a second, how can anyone pray with *kavana* in a minute and a half?! Being 16 makes it hard to say all the words and even get to the level that we actually have kavana in the standing prayer. Last week my friend and I sat in a Halacha (Jewish Law) lesson given by Rabbi Kassel at our Yeshiva Chedvat HaTorah and he spoke about what the different intentions are within our daily prayers. After the class, my peers and I were in shock because we realized that in order to pray with intention we will need at least ten minutes to pray. My Rabbi's class touched our hearts and we thought about what we could do to pray with more focus. So to do that you need to say a word, breathe and then say another word. After a week of doing this I saw that more or less I am standing to my goal. Nevertheless I thought to myself, maybe I am saying it word by word slowly but I am still not thinking of the words, my head is all ways focused on how to extend my length of the standing prayer. At the same time, I didn’t know what to do about other distracting thoughts, so I went to my Rabbi for advice on what can I do to pray with more concentration. Rabbi Sassoon gave me good advice on how to start to pray with intent by starting to choose the smallest paragraph from the standing prayer and no matter what, stop and concentrate on every word. You can think about whatever you want in the standing prayer but you need to have in mind that when you reach that paragraph your only focus is about the words rather than something else and if you feel you lost it, just start again and again until you're sure you have it. After a while of doing it three times a day you will see that automatically you will start to be focusing not just on that paragraph but you will have more of a connection on the other paragraphs. Little by little one day you will see yourself praying the whole standing prayer with full intention. It’s amazing! Think about it, if you were going to ask or request something very important from your wife, husband or your boss you'd be totally focused until you got it. You would be respectful, kind and patient. The same rule goes when praying for your own needs like health or finding a job with a good salary, we need to be in full focus when we speak with Him. If you really want to be connected in the standing prayer you should put yourself in a place where most of the people around you also try to focus. On the other hand when everyone around you is praying thoughtfully it gives you strength to continue but when everyone around you is finished praying after a minute it's hard to continue praying with power. There is a story about one of the big Hasidic Rabbi's that prayed every day more than a half an hour every standing prayer.  One Shabbat all the people that prayed with him decided they could go outside make the blessing on wine, eat something and go back in before he finished. They went out, but after three minutes, the Rabbi came outside and sat with them! Everyone was shocked to see their Rabbi sitting there! They thought he was in the middle of praying. One of the people asked him: "Rabbi how is it that you pray every day so long and now you finished in five minutes?!" The Rabbi answered: "the only reason I can pray so long is because of you people, you give me the strength to pray, but today when there was no one there I didn't have the strength to pray so that’s why I finished fast." If you feel my point, try doing what I did, if it’s taking a stopwatch, choosing one paragraph to focus on or whatever. Try it, it really works! |

|  |
| --- |
|  |

 |

 |

 |