

המתפלל בעד חבירו: הוא נענה תחילה

The Gemara teaches: "Ha'Mispaleil b'ad chaveiro hu neheneh techilah, "If one prays for his fellow man, then the one praying benefits first". Why? Because you performed the great mitzvah "love your fellow Jew as you love yourself" by praying for your fellow Jew. Therefore, your prayer for yourself stands a greater chance of being answered.

"Love Your Fellow Jew As You Love Yourself"

There is a minhag, custom of the Ariz"l, that before you begin to pray, you should accept upon yourself the mitzvah "love your fellow Jew as you love yourself". Why? Many of our prayers, including the most powerful Shemoneh Esrei, are written in a plural language and allow us to pray for other Jews. This is one of the many hidden and powerful 'secrets' that the 120 elders of the Anshei K'nesses Hagedolah, the men of the Great Assembly, among them prophets, imbued into the powerful text of Shemoneh Esrei—that it be recited in a plural language. For example, when we ask for health (i.e. "rifaeinu" - bring cure and healing for all our illnesses") we make our request using a plural language. Succinctly stated, if we want our prayers to be answered we must feel for our fellow Jew by praying for him\her.

Praying for others in Shemoneh Esrei

The berachas, blessings of Shemoneh Esrei relate to every area of human aspiration, both material and spiritual. Each beracha offers an opportunity to present one's own requests for others [and for yourself] to Hashem. If the person you are praying for is not before you then that person's name "son\daughter of the mother's name" must be cited.

OFTEN ASKED QUESTIONS WHEN PRAYING FOR OTHERS

Q PRAYING FOR ONE WHO DID NOT REQUEST A PRAYER

A Yesod V'Shoshet Ha'avodah writes that should pray first for a sick person in the city in which he lives before praying for a sick person in his house even if the sick person from his city did not even ask to pray for him. By doing so he fulfills the mitzvah "V'Ahavta l'reiacha komocha' love your fellow man like yourself.

Must One Mention the Sick Person's Name - The Mishneh Berurah rules that only if the sick person is not before the one praying then the person praying must mention the sick person's name.

Q CAN ONE THINK THE NAME RATHER THAN SAY IT?

A Saying the name is better than just thinking it. The source, explains Rav Chaim Kanievsky, is the Gemara which reconciles a contradiction in the verse: 'The desire of his Heart You have granted him, and the utterance of his lips You have not withheld, ever'.

Q HOW IS THE NAME OF THE SICK PERSON SAID?

A One recites the person's name ben|bas (son|daughter) of the mother's name. One may not be required to mention his own name if he is praying for himself. Kav Hayashar states that when one is praying for himself he should be careful not to mention his name lest the 'mazikim' demons look to scrutinize his actions and to cause him harm.

Q THE SICK PERSON'S PARENT'S NAME IN UNKNOWN

A Rav Chaim Kanievsky rules that if one does not know the name of the mother or father he can say the family name or other 'nickname' (that one is permitted to recite).

SEIZE *the* moment



The mission of the V'Ani Tefillah Foundation is to increase awareness of the importance and power of prayer and to provide education, inspiration, and tools for more sincere, powerful, and effective tefillah.

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before
HASHHEM



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Where To Insert Personal Requests In Shemone Esrei

There are several places in Shemoneh Esrei to insert personal requests to Hashem: In each of the middle berachos (requests pertaining to that blessing), in the beracha of Shema Koleinu or in Elokai Netzor. In these places, a person can pour his heart out regarding any matter that is of importance to him, personal or communal, spiritual or material. Several specific halachos, laws regarding how to add these personal requests, are as follows:

Middle Blessings (Includes 'Atah chonein' — the blessing for wisdom, through 'Es tzemach Dovid' — the blessing for Mashiach):

- Insert requests for others [and/or personal requests] by adding to each beracha that which is relevant to that beracha (see back of this brochure for examples).
- One may only add a personal request to a middle beracha if it is for a current need, rather than a possible future need; (i.e. you may pray for the recovery of a person who is currently ill, but you cannot pray that a healthy individual be spared illness in the future.)
- When praying for an individual's needs, (i.e. for a sick member of your household or friend) express it in the singular—in the middle, after reciting a complete phrase of the beracha (i.e. asking Hashem for health for others – First say "Rifa'einu Hashem v'neirafei" and not just the word "rifa'einu") or at the end of the beracha (before saying the words "Baruch Ata Hashem);

- When making a request on behalf of all the Jewish people, phrase it in the plural and add it only at the end of the berachah before saying the words at the end of the beracha "Baruch Ata Hashem;
- Requests should be concise;
- Requests can be made in the person's own language if you have difficulty with Hebrew.

Shomei'a Tefillah:

- The personal requests added to Shomei'a Tefillah may encompass any and all needs;
- You may seek Hashem's help for the future (i.e. asking that a healthy person remain healthy, that your children be guided on the right path in life);
- Requests should be concise.

Elokai Netzor (the conclusion of Shemoneh Esrei):

- At the conclusion of Shemoneh Esrei, before the (second) "Yihyu Leratzon", you may make any personal request and you need not be concise;
- Nothing is too petty to bring to Hashem's attention, neither is anything too large. No request, however seemingly unattainable, is ignored when accompanied by heartfelt tearful prayer. It is the place for fathers and mothers to pray that their children develop into Torah scholars with fine character traits. Yaaros Devash observes that this is an appropriate place for everyone, rich or poor, to beseech Hashem for sustenance.
- If you cannot phrase your thoughts in the Hebrew language of prayer, recite your thoughts in your own language, as long as it comes from the depths of your heart.

Conclusion:

Is there any preferred place to insert personal requests for others into Shemoneh Esrei?

- It is better to insert requests in Elokai Netzor –after you have finished reciting all of Shemoneh Esrei's blessings rather than including them into Shomei'a Tefillah to enable you to respond to Kaddish or to recite Kedushah;
- If you pray alone or where saying Kedushah or responding to Kaddish is not an issue then it is better to insert personal requests where they correspond to any of the middle blessings.

EXAMPLES:

Beracha # 4 — 'Atah chonein l'adam daas':

- Knowledge - Learning and remembering Torah, business meeting, exam, conversation on a date, doing homework with children, shopping for food and other essentials, remembering phone numbers and names
- Wisdom - Learning Torah, business meeting, exam, conversation on a date, doing homework with children, discussions with spouse, employer-boss, employees, children, mechutanim, neighbors, and elders.

Beracha # 5 — 'Hashiveinu Avinu L'Torahsecha'

- Torah - Help us want to study Torah, remove the evil inclination which makes it difficult to learn Torah, provide success in studying Torah, provide a livelihood to give us time and peace of mind to study Torah, help our children succeed to develop a love for Torah.
- Near to His Service - Remove the temptation we have for certain Avairos, enable us to arrive to davening on time, help us have kavanah when praying, assist us in performing mitzvos properly.
- Return To Complete Teshuva-, enable us to climb the ladder towards full Teshuva.

I would need a line to place over here to summarize the whole concept with a quick glance....