TEFILA: Opening the eyes of the blind

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As we explained last week, the Birkot haShaḥar are the blessings which we say following the different daily events that we experience as we wake up in the morning. These berakhot help us identifying these occurrences and seeing them as miracles that we witness every day.

Previously (see **this**), we talked about awakening from sleep, which the rabbis described as a sort of resuscitation or revival (consciousness), and listening to the rooster (hearing), appreciating its God-given ability to differentiate between nocturnal and diurnal cycles (see **here**).

Today we will examine the third blessing, *poqeaḥ ivrim*, which was originally established to be said when we open our eyes for the first time in the morning (sight). The berakha says: "Blessed are You, HaShem, our God, King of the Universe, Who opens (the eyes of) the blinds".

When we are asleep our sense of sight does not function. We don't see not because our eyes are closed. Actually, many people might sleep with their eyes open and they still won't see. The rabbis understood then that during sleep we are "virtually" blind, and in the morning, we recover our sense of sight. Upon realizing this "miracle" we say the blessing, *poqeaḥ ivrim*, acknowledging that God has equipped our bodies with these amazing abilities.

This berakha also helps us to value the preciousness of our sense of sight. Normally, we take for granted that we see. Unless we have a problem with our eyes, we don't stop every day to think (and thank!) for the privilege of seeing. This berakha, when said with the proper *kavana* or understanding, inspires us to value what we have while we have it. Moreover, by acknowledging God (and not just *nature*) as the One responsible for our sight, this berakha enables us to discover and acknowledge HaShem's Presence behind this daily routinely events, keeping our minds more focused on Him.

If Good and evil exists, God exists.

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