TEFILA: Blessing vs Magic

Rabbi Isaac Abarbanel (1437-1508. Tomorrow BH we will have a special column about him) explained that the concept of berakha (=blessing) must be understood from three different viewpoints.

1. First and most importantly is the berakha that HaShem bestows upon us. His free blessings to us. Everything we have (most of it we take for granted!) is part of the berakha coming from HaShem. The first example of this berakha is the blessing of procreation. When HaShem, after creating the first forms of life, established the mechanism of procreation so life perpetuates itself. "God blessed them saying: Be fertile and multiply…." (Bereshit 1:22). The creation of life and life's ability to reproduce itself is part of HaShem's blessings. The first type of berakha is ALL what HaShem gives or does for us.

2. The second type of berakha is from us to HaShem. When a person recognizes, acknowledges and expresses that all what he or she has, comes directly or indirectly from Him. One of the best and most beautiful examples of this type of berakha is the Tefila of King David, which in due of its magnificence we recite everyday while standing (I Chronic. 29:10-13: "Vaybarekh David" . In this superb blessing David blesses HaShem, not by giving something to Him but by acknowledging that He is the Supreme Giver and the Master of the whole universe.

3. Then there is a third form of blessing, a blessing from man to man. One of the best example of this type of berakha is birkat kohanim, the priestly blessing we read in last weeks' parasha. The Kohanim bless the people of Israel. But they don't bestow anything unto us directly, as if they would have some type of superpowers or magic abilities. The Kohanim invoke the berakha of HaShem: may *HaShem* bless you and protect you. This type of berakha, when we wish someone to be blessed, never goes directly from man-to-man, but thru HaShem. By invoking His blessings. Not mine.

(*To be continued….)*

WATCH

This is WATER

by Aish