

1 ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם
אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לְשִׁכְוֵי בֵּינָה
לְהַבְחִין בֵּין יוֹם וּבֵין לַיְלָה.

WHO GAVE MY MIND THE INTELLIGENCE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN DAY AND NIGHT

Thank You, Hashem, for giving my mind the intelligence to distinguish between day and night.

HaRav Shmuel Rozovsky zt"l adds that just as the rooster (called "sechvi" in Hebrew) is excited when it begins to sense daybreak, so too, we should be excited with the opportunities of the coming day.



2 ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם
שֶׁלֹא עֲשִׂנִי גּוֹי.

WHO DID NOT MAKE ME A GENTILE

Thank You, Hashem, for making me a Jew, because Jews have many more mitzvos than gentiles have. Through my performance of mitzvos **today**, I can play a great role in kiddush Hashem and bringing the world to fulfill its ultimate purpose.

I also appreciate the special qualities, middos, and spiritual potential passed down to me from my ancestors - Avraham, Yitzchok, and Yaakov.



3 ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם
שֶׁלֹא עֲשִׂנִי עֶבֶד.

WHO DID NOT MADE ME A SLAVE

Thank You, Hashem, for not making me a slave. As a free person, I am able to serve You properly and openly, without restraints or being oppressed. I have the freedom to do mitzvos whenever I want to.

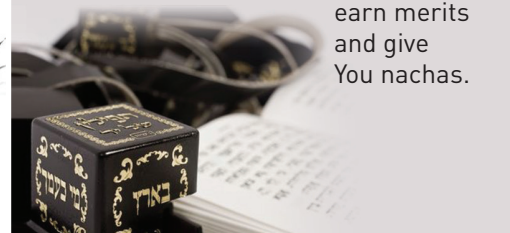


4 ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם
שֶׁלֹא עֲשִׂנִי אִשָּׁה.

WHO DID NOT MAKE ME A WOMAN

Thank you, Hashem, for not making me a woman, because women are not obligated in many mitzvos (such as tefillin, tzitzis, and learning Torah).

Being obligated in more mitzvos gives me more opportunities to serve You and earn merits and give You nachas.



5 ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם
פּוֹקֵחַ עֵוְרִים.

WHO GIVES SIGHT TO THE BLIND

Thank You, Hashem, for enabling me to open my eyes when I woke up this morning. Thank You for my eyelids and the muscles that enable me to open and close my eyes whenever I want!

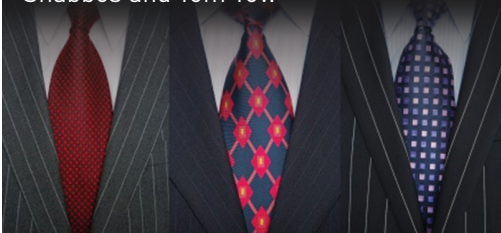
Thank You, Hashem for creating glasses and contact lenses, and for giving me an eye doctor and the money to purchase these with the proper prescription.



6 ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם
מַלְבִּישׁ עֲרֻמִּים.

WHO CLOTHES THE NAKED

Thank you, Hashem, for giving me clothing. I especially appreciate that I have different clothing for different times of the year - warm clothing for the winter, lighter clothing for the summer, and fancier clothing for Shabbos and Yom Tov.



7 ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם
מַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים.

WHO RELEASES THE BOUND

Thank You, Hashem, for enabling me to get out of bed this morning and move my muscles. Without being able to move, I would not be able to accomplish my goals for the day!

This brachah specifically refers to our ability to sit up in bed and stretch our muscles.



8 ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם
זוֹקֵף כְּפוּפִים.

WHO STRAIGHTENS THE BENT

Thank you, Hashem, for enabling me to stand up straight!

This brachah specifically refers to our ability to stand up when we get out of bed.



9 ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם
רוֹקֵעַ הָאָרֶץ עַל הַמַּיִם.

WHO SPREADS OUT THE EARTH UPON THE WATERS

Thank You, Hashem, for keeping all of the water in its place, and leaving dry land for us to walk on.

(Remember the Tsunami and Superstorm Sandy - appreciate that these do not happen more often!)



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ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם
שֶׁעָשָׂה לִי כָּל צְרָכָי.

WHO PROVIDES FOR ALL MY NEEDS

Thank you, Hashem, for giving me everything that I need, including: shoes, food, a home, air, and so much more!

In this brachah, we express appreciation for the past gifts, as well as trust that Hashem will continue to provide for us in the future.

Hashem gives us all the tools and strength that we need in order to fulfill our mission in life.



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ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם
אוֹזֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּגִבּוֹרָה.

WHO GIRDS ISRAEL WITH STRENGTH

Thank you, Hashem, for empowering me with the strength to overcome my yetzer hara, and the self-control to turn away from temptations.

This self-control is symbolized by the belt (called "aizor" in Hebrew), which separates the upper and lower halves of the body (which represent spiritual and physical desires, respectively).



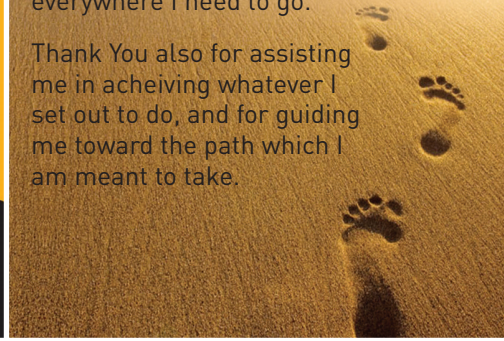
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ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם
הַמְכִיִן מִצְעָדֵי גִבּוֹר.

WHO PREPARES MAN'S FOOTSTEPS

Thank you, Hashem, for creating my feet with intricate bones, muscles, and nerves which enable me to walk to go everywhere I need to go.

Thank You also for assisting me in achieving whatever I set out to do, and for guiding me toward the path which I am meant to take.



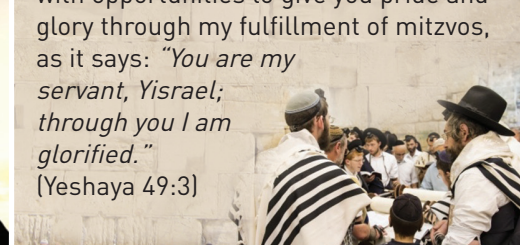
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ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם
עוֹזֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּתִפְאָרָה.

WHO CROWNS ISRAEL WITH SPLENDOR

Thank You, Hashem, for giving us head-coverings (i.e. yarmulkes) that identify Jews as members of G-d's holy nation.

Thank you Hashem for providing me with opportunities to give you pride and glory through my fulfillment of mitzvos, as it says: "You are my servant, Yisrael; through you I am glorified." [Yeshaya 49:3]



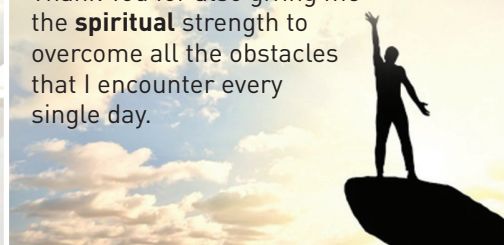
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ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם
הַנוֹתֵן לַיָּעִף כֹּחַ.

WHO GIVES STRENGTH TO THE WEARY

I was so tired when I went to sleep last night - Thank You, Hashem, for returning my soul to me this morning with renewed strength and energy!

Thank You for also giving me the **spiritual** strength to overcome all the obstacles that I encounter every single day.



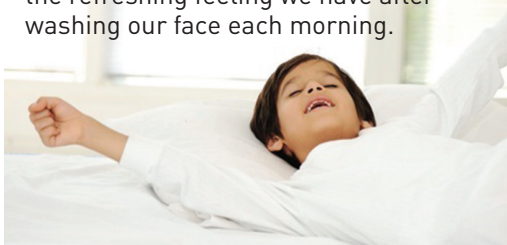
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ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם
הַמְעֵבִיר שְׁנָה מֵעֵינַי וְתַנּוּמָה מֵעַפְעָפִי.

WHO REMOVES SLEEP FROM MY EYES AND SLUMBER FROM MY EYELIDS

Thank You, Hashem, for removing all traces of sleepiness from me.

This brachah specifically refers to the refreshing feeling we have after washing our face each morning.



Please note:

These explanations are not meant to provide an official *peirush* (commentary) on the Birchos HaShachar. Rather, the purpose of these images and explanations is merely to give you something concrete to think about when you say these brachos in the morning.

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