

hold that one recites the blessing if one is bound in handcuffs and this is the case here (Piskei Teshuvot ibid. #1. Although Ha-Rav Chaim Kanievski said that Pollard should not recite Ha-Gomel based on the simple understanding of the words the Mishnah Berurah writes in the Biur Halachah brought above. Parashah Sheet "Divrei Shi'ach" – Parashat Re'eh 5775 - #131).

Q: Should we recite Ha-Tov Ve-Ha-Meitiv?

A: Yes, upon the good news of his release (Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 222:1. And this is also the opinion of Ha-Rav Chaim Kanievski. Parashah Sheet "Divrei Shi'ach" – Parashat Re'eh 5775 - #131).

Q: When should we recite this blessing?

A: Upon his release.

Q: Why don't we recite the blessing now over the good news that he will be released?

A: We only recite it when he leaves the prison and is free, since there can always be complications.

Q: Should everyone recite this blessing?

A: Anyone who is truly joyous. See Aruch Ha-Shulchan (ibid. #1).

Q: Should one recite Mechaye Ha-Meitim when meeting him after his release?

A: No, since we have known all along that he was alive. We only recite this blessing if we have not heard from someone in over a year and there is a possibility that he is dead.

A: Should one recite Shehechyanu when meeting him after his release as one does when not seeing his friend for 30 days?

A: Yes. Although there are those who do not, for various reasons, customarily recite Shehechyanu over seeing a friend (see Piskei Teshuvot 225:2. And Ha-Rav Chaim Kanievski said that one should not recite Shehechyanu when seeing Pollard based on the Mishnah Berurah 225:2. Parashah Sheet "Divrei Shi'ach" – Parashat Re'eh 5775 - #131). But Rabbenu Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah quotes all of these blessings in Sidur Olat Re'eiyah (Vol. 1 pp. 380-382) as the basic Halachah lays out (and see Shut She'eilat Shlomo 3:83-84, 86).

Q: But Shehechyanu is only recited when one is joyous to meet his friend, and not when one has never met the person (Shulchan Aruch ibid. #2)? And

is someone who visited Pollard in prison, as Ha-Rav did, in the category of a "friend"?!

A: This is a unique case (see Piskei Teshuvot ibid. #2). Pollard is all of our friend since he saved our entire Nation from the non-conventional weapons of the enemy. When the Netziv met the Aderet for the first time, he recited Shehechyanu (see Ha-Rav's commentary on Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 59:21).

Q: This was special since the Aderet was a Torah giant! And the Munkatcher Rebbe recited Shehechyanu upon seeing the Saba Kadisha for the first time (Shut Yayin Ha-Tov #48-49), as did Ha-Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld over the Munkatcher (Masaot Yerushalayim p. 21). And Ha-Rav Ephraim Greenblatt ruled that one should recite Shehechyanu the first time he meets Ha-Rav Moshe Feinstein (Shut Revivot Ephraim 6:104). It therefore seems that this is a special halachah for Torah giants!

A: One who saves his friend, and all the more so one who saves the entire community, has an aspect that is comparable to a Torah scholar. See Pele Yoetz Erech "Hatzalah", who explains the saying of our Rabbis: "Even those of Israel who are empty are as full of Mitzvot as a pomegranate [is full of seeds]." How so? It is those who save lives. And the Pele Yoetz emphasizes: One who saves lives is greater even than a Torah scholar.



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