

Vechol Maaminim

A Weekly Leaflet From "Bnei Emunim"



220

PARASHAS VAYIKRA

תשע"ח

IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

The Significance of a Mistake in Birchas Haminim

“ויקרא אל משה” (א א)

“The aleph of “vayikra” is small, because Moshe, who was both great and humble, wanted to actually write “vayakar” – from the word “mikreh” as though Hashem only spoke to him in a dream, as it was said of Bilam...And Hashem told him to write the aleph as well...and he wrote it small.” (*Baal Haturim*)

Based on the words of the *Baal Haturim*, **Harav Avraham Weinfeld**, Rav of Kehillas Derech Emes in Monsey, explained the reason that the *Midrash (Tanchuma 2)* writes a *halachah* from the *halachos* of *shaliach tzibbur* right next to this *passuk*: “*Ta’ah*, if one errs in the *Birchas Haminim* [in *Shemoneh Esrei*], then he has to go back and repeat it, because otherwise he may be suspected of being a *min*, a heretic.”

From the *Baal Haturim* we learn that even though Moshe certainly did not intend to contradict Hashem’s Word, deep down he still wanted to minimize his own importance, and thus the aleph was written virtually automatically. Similarly, *l’havdil*, a *shaliach tzibbur* who makes a mistake in *Birchas Haminim* can be assumed to have done so because deep in his conscience he has entertained heretic thoughts, and that is what caused him to err without realizing it in this *brachah* [because he ostensibly does not want to speak badly of heretics]. Therefore, he is obligated to go back and recite it properly.

Lev Avraham

One Hundred Brachos Corresponding to Korbanos

“אדם כי יקריב מכם” (א ב)

The word “*mikem*” seems to be superfluous, because would it not have been enough to write: “*Adam ki yakriv korban l’Hashem*”?

The *Yalkut Me’ein Ganim* says that this comes to teach us that anyone who makes *meah brachos*, which is numerically equivalent to *mikem* (100), each day,

it is as though he brought a *korban* on the *mizbeach*.

Torah Sheleimah Vayikra 1:52

Razei Emunim

Hints of Amen in the Parashah

A Small Word – With Tremendous Power

“ויקרא אל משה” (א א)

“*Vayikra*” is an acronym for “*vayaanu kol ram amen*”, alluding to the words of the *Gemara (Shabbos 119b)* that one has to answer amen “with all his might” which is “in a loud voice”. (See *Tosafos* there, beginning with “*kol ha’oneh*.”)

Why is the aleph written small? In order to teach us that although answering amen seems to be a small, easy act, it is really a fundamental of *emuuah*, as the *Megaleh Amukos* writes (*Parashas Ha’azinu*) “the main point of *emunah* is dependent on answering amen.”

Pardes Ephraim, entry Aleph

The *Sefer Hagan* (Second Day) by the early sage Rabi Yitzchak ben Rabi Eliezer similarly says: “Anyone who raises his voice and says the *brachos* aloud, the *passuk* considers it as though he sacrificed all the *korbanos* listed in *Parashas Vayikra*. We say one hundred *brachos* that each mention Hashem’s name, and 11 additional *brachos* that do not have Hashem’s name, in *Baruch She’amar*, which totals 111 *brachos*, corresponding to the 111 *pesukim* in *Parashas Vayikra*.

The *tzaddik Harav Hillel Lichtenstein of Kolomaya* added to this:

From the fact that the mitzvah of *meah brachos* is alluded to in the word “*mikem*” we learn an allusion to the words of the *Gemara (Bava Kama 94a)* that one who makes a *brachah* on something stolen “is not called making a *brachah* but rather cursing,” and of him it is said (*Tehillim 10:3*): “*Ubotzea [a thief] beirech*

nietz Hashem,” a thief who makes a *brachah* is actually cursing Hashem. Therefore the Torah says “*Adam ki yakriv mikem*” – you should make the 100 *brachos* “*mikem*,” from you, and not for something that belongs to someone else.

Mikrei Dardaki 13

“Lema’an Nechdal Mei’oshek Yadeinu”

“אדם כי יקריב מכם קרבן לה” (א ב)

“Your *korban* should be similar to the *korban* of Adam Harishon; like Adam Harishon who had everything did not sacrifice something that was stolen, then you as well...don’t sacrifice from something that is stolen.” (*Vayikra Rabbah 2 7*)

The question is asked: Why do we need to learn through an allusion about the prohibition of bringing a *korban* from something stolen? Doesn’t it state clearly in *Yeshayah (61:8)*: “Because I am Hashem Who loves justice and despises theft in the *olah*”?

The Rebbe **Harav Moshe Yechiel Epstein of Ozherov** explains: The *passuk* is not talking specifically about items stolen from another person, but rather of what *Chazal* said (*Brachos 35b*): “Anyone who enjoys something in this world without a *brachah* it is as though he stole.” Just like a person is not permitted to enjoy this world until he recognizes that everything was given to him from Hashem, thus a *korban* is not considered “*shelachem*,” yours, before you recognize the fact that it is “*l’Hashem*” and you make a *brachah* on that. An allusion to this is that “*Yakriv korban*” is numerically equivalent to “*meah brachos*”.

Now we can understand the reason why we ask in *Ne’ilah* of Yom Kippur: “*Lema’an nechdal mei’oshek yadeinu*.” Is this the objective of the mitzvah of *teshuvah*? That we desist in stealing? Rather, our intention is not to ask that we should commit literal stealing, but rather that we merit to reach that absolute perfection in the recognition of Hashem’s leadership of the world, without which we are considered to have benefitted from something stolen.

Be’er Moshe



Amen.
A small word,
tremendous
power!

ובולם יענו קול רם אמן

Dear Fellow Yid!

As you stand before the King of the World, take heart of the words of the holy *Zohar (Tikkunei Zohar 40 1)* regarding the reward that is guaranteed to one who answers amen with all his might: “**One who answers amen with all his might, his decree of seventy years is torn up.**”

Is there a greater promise than this?!

Prayer of Faith

A Glance at the
Seder Hatefillah

Krias Shema – Vehayah Im Shamo (1)

Accepting the Yoke of Mitzvos Every Day Anew

Chazal say in *Maseches Brachos* (13b): “Why does the *parashah* of *Shema* precede “*Vehayah im shamo*”? So that a person should first accept the Yoke of Heaven and then the yoke of *mitzvos*.” The *Mishnah* explains that while the first *parashah* of *Krias Shema* relates to the important mitzvah of accepting the yoke of Heaven, in the second *parashah* we add and accept upon ourselves the yoke of the rest of the *mitzvos*.

Although we already all stood at Har Sinai and pledged to fulfill all the *mitzvos* (See *Nedarim* 8a, and the *Rashi* there), still, it was established that we should once again accept upon ourselves the yoke of *mitzvos* each day anew. This is so that we will feel that the *mitzvos* are like a “yoke” an “ol” that is placed upon us, in an effort to straighten us out and guide us on the right path. For that, it is not enough to have undertaken to do so at Har Sinai, because even the descendants of Noah pledged in the past to observe the seven *mitzvos*, and over the years, they threw off this burden until they permitted themselves to do everything. Even if they do fulfill them, they will only receive a reward of “one who is not commanded and does it.” (*Bava Kama* 38a)

Toward this end, it was established that we accept upon ourselves the yoke of *mitzvos* each day again, so that we should not weaken in our observance for even a moment, and thus the *mitzvos* will be like we received them that day at Har Sinai. As a result, we will also merit that our reward will be paid from Heaven in great abundance, as the reward for “someone who is commanded and does it.” (*Asaphra Kevodecha*, Eikev, according to Harav Y. Blazer, *zt”l*)

The Yismach Moshe, *zy”a*, wrote a beautiful concept (*Bamidbar* 30:3): “The yetzer of a person overpowers him every day,” – each day anew, “but the yetzer of tomorrow has not yet overpowered him. Therefore Chazal established that we should accept upon ourselves the yoke of *mitzvos* each day, and surely, if we think carefully about the words that come out of our mouths, we are guaranteed that we will succeed in overcoming the yetzer of today as well. The Yismach Moshe concludes with a promise: “And if each person in Yisrael would fulfill what he accepts upon himself in *Krias Shema*, then the Geulah will surely arrive soon.”

A student of Rabi Yehudah Assad once complained to his *rebbe* in despair that each day he accepts upon himself to better his ways, and at the end of the day he finds that he did not meet his pledge. He didn’t know anymore what to do. The Rav said to him: My advice to you is, take a *Chumash Devarim* and delve each day into the *parshiyos* of *Krias Shema*, not during davening. After you peruse them well, once in a few days, accept upon yourself something good as the result of this perusal, and you are guaranteed that you will be able to meet this commitment, because it is a worthy thing to peruse the *pesukim* of *Krias Shema*, and it is able to help a person become a servant of Hashem who fulfills His *mitzvos* with *mesirus nefesh*. (*Peninei Ha’otzar*, Matos)

The Parashah of Vehayah in the Plural Form

Another difference between the *parashah* of *V’ahavta* and the *parashah* of *V’ayahay* is that the former is said in the singular form (*Asher Anochi metzavecha hayom*) and the latter is said in plural (*Asher Anochi metzaveh eschem hayom*). The *Sifri* (*Eikev* 41) addresses this and says: “Here it is for the individual and here it is for the *tzibbur*.”

Harav Tzadok Hakohen of Lublin explained (*Tzidkas Hatzaddik* 224): The first *parashah* was said to the individual because the highest level that a person needs to aspire is that he should agree to give up his money and his soul and be involved only in loving Hashem, learning His Torah and fulfilling His *mitzvos*. However, this level is a matter for individuals, as the *Gemara* says (*Brachos* 35b) that “*Rabim*, many did so and they were not able to.” But for the many they said (*ibid*): “*Hanheg bahem middas derech erez*,” because even though everyone is obligated to accept upon themselves the yoke of *mitzvos* and set aside time to learn Torah, still they have to ensure that they have a *parnassah* to sustain themselves, and therefore, it does not say in this *parashah* “*uvechol me’odchem*” (your money) as it does in the first *parashah*.

In any case, every person needs to begin with the first *parashah*, because at the beginning of the service of the day he has to accept upon himself to give up all he has in order to do the Will of Hashem, if that is what is decreed upon him from On High. However, HaKadosh Baruch Hu wants the world to be settled, as it says (*Yeshayah* 45:18) “*Lo sohu bera’ah*—He did not create it nothingness—*lasheves yotzrah*—He created it to be settled.” Therefore, everyone needs to also recite the second *parashah*, where we are commanded to establish the love of Hashem in our hearts, even if we are busy with matters of the world.

Why Does it Not Say Bechol Me’odchem

Expounding on the above, many have asked why the second *parashah* does not say “*Uvechol me’odchem*” as the first *parashah* does? There are several answers:

1. The *Midrash Tanchumah* (beginning of *Parashas Noach*) answers: The first *parashah* was said on *Torah shebaal peh*, and learning it involves pain, effort and lack of sleep, because someone who loves wealth and pleasures cannot learn it. Therefore it says “*uvechol me’odecha*” regarding the Oral Torah, and there is no reward stipulated, because the reward for the Oral Torah is not granted in this world. By contrast, the second *parashah* refers to the written Torah, and learning it does not entail any pain, and even a wealthy man can learn it. Therefore, it does not say “*uvechol me’odchem*” in the second *parashah*, and it does detail the reward the person will receive in this world.
2. The *Kli Yakar* (*Devarim* 11:13) explains, as does the *Ohr Hachaim* (*ibid*) that because the first *parashah* was said to individuals, then it is possible to say of it “*Uvechol me’odecha*” because this commandment was said to those “whose money is more dear to them than their bodies” (*Brachos* 61b), and these are a few individuals. But the second *parashah* that was said to the many did not need this language, because there is no “*rabbim*” whose money is more dear to them than their bodies.

A Story of Faith

A Weekly Story About
Amen and Tefillah

Which Tefillah Impressed the Chofetz Chaim?

This remarkable story was heard by the *maggid*, Rav Eliezer Turk, *shlita*, from Harav Hillel Zaks, *zt”l*, Rosh Yeshivas Knesses Hagedolah, who heard it from his father, Rav Mendel, *zt”l*, the son-in-law of the Chofetz Chaim, *zt”l*:

The Chofetz Chaim was known for the holy fire that burned in his heart for the holiness and purity of Am Yisrael, which was manifested in his *mesirus nefesh* to be *mezakeh harabbim*, to help the public improve themselves, on these matters. Thus, aside for the many years that he devoted to writing his renowned *sefarim*, he also dedicated a significant part of his time to writing *sifrei halachah* and *musar* for Yidden living in remote locations far from Jewish population centers, and for Jewish soldiers serving at the front lines, far from home, among thousands of non-Jews.

Motivated by this inner fire, the Chofetz Chaim traveled often from his home to distant towns to address various issues that needed improvement. He did this from when he was a young man until very late in his life. He did not think of the great effort involved, and would stop at nothing to rectify a spiritual fault that needed to be rectified in a particular city or town.

One day, when the Chofetz Chaim was already quite elderly, a messenger arrived on behalf of Harav Chaim Ozer Grodzinski of Vilna, asking that he participate in a gathering to strengthen the purity of Am Yisrael that would be held in Vilna. The Chofetz Chaim agreed right away, but his family, fearing for his ailing health, tried to prevent him from going. They instructed the regular driver who took the Chofetz Chaim on his trips out of Radin, to leave the house, so that he would not be able to transport the Chofetz Chaim to Vilna.

But the Chofetz Chaim was undeterred. “If Rav Chaim Ozer asks, then it must be very important, and if the regular driver is not here, I’ll go find a different driver...” Indeed, he began to walk towards the door of the house, leaning on the walls and furniture for support...When his family saw how determined he was, they instructed the driver to come back, and the Chofetz Chaim set out for Vilna. There, he spoke for thousands of people, and his words left a deep impression for years to come.

At another time, late in his life, the Chofetz Chaim heard news of an incident that had occurred in a town near Radin, which needed to be corrected. As was his wont, the Chofetz Chaim felt responsibility for the members of his generation, as one who had to set boundaries and stand in the way of them being crossed. This time as well, he mustered up his energy and traveled to that town to correct the wrong.

That town had a distinguished Rav, and in his great modesty, the Chofetz Chaim did not want to do even the slightest thing without including the Rav of the town. So as soon as he arrived, he headed for the Rav’s home in order to come up with a plan on how to fix the problem and to make sure it would not happen again the future.

The Chofetz Chaim patiently knocked at the door until it was opened by a family member. When the Chofetz Chaim stated that he wanted to meet the Rav, he was told that the Rav had

gone for short rest, and if the guest wanted to speak with him, he could return in another hour, when the Rav would arise and receive the public.

Meanwhile, the Chofetz Chaim went to the nearby shul, took out a *sefer* and began to learn, waiting patiently until the Rav would be available to see people. As he was sitting in the empty shul, he suddenly heard the sound of quiet crying coming from the ladies’ section.

The Chofetz Chaim’s compassionate heart led him to listen to the crying, and he heard a woman offering up a *tefillah* to Hashem.

The Chofetz Chaim listened to what she was saying, and was astounded at the wisdom that her words radiated.

This is what the woman said:

“*Ribbono shel Olam!* Thousands of years ago, we made a deal with You; You took us as a nation and we accepted upon ourselves the Yoke of Your Kingship. We certainly don’t regret the deal; You shower us with endless good, and fortunate are we for our lot...But I think that You also don’t regret the deal You made with us. You commanded us in Your Torah: “*Lo yirah lecha she’ar bechol gevulecha*” and now look at Your nation Yisrael that You love – can you find even one house that is not overturned on Erev Pesach from top to bottom? Every cupboard, every item, every corner that they suspect might have *chametz* is checked, and they are not lazy to clean it carefully.

“You commanded in Your Torah “*In sukko* you shall sit for seven days.” Now raise Your compassionate Eyes – How much money and energy each Jew spends on Erev Succos for himself and his family, building a sukkah, purchasing the four *minim* and even buying food, drinks and clothes with which to honor the holiday...

“Look by contrast at the billions of non-Jews who fill the world. Can You find even a single nation that would agree to enhance the *mitzvos* this way, even one tenth of what Am Yisrael does?”

And the woman burst into tears and cried: “*Ribbono shel Olam!* If You are so satisfied from us, and we cleave to You with all our beings, why do we suffer more than all the other nations? Why is it decreed specifically upon us that we have to wander from nation to nation, and suffer under the decrees of evil regimes, and are so burdened by the need to earn a living, and other difficulties that rise day after day?”

The woman continued davening fervently, but the time had come for the Rav to see people, and the Chofetz Chaim had to leave the shul. He was deeply moved by the woman’s *tefillah*.

When he returned home, after completing his mission in the city, the Chofetz Chaim shared his amazement with his son-in-law, Harav Menachem Mendel Zaks, at the powerful and emotional *tefillah* the woman had offered. He praised the woman for knowing how to appease Hashem in her *tefillah*, because she began with an appealing tone, and only then mentioned her requests. “*Zi iz nisht kein narishe frau*—she is no foolish woman!” he declared.

Otroseihem Amalei, Va’eira