

Vechol Maaminim

A Weekly Leaflet From "Bnei Emunim"



PESACH

IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

Pearls About Tefillah and Amen in the Haggadah

Thirty Two Brachos In One Night

שהחיינו וקיימנו והגיענו לזמן הזה

Harav Shmuel Huminer writes:

"Come my brothers and see how many *brachos* we merit to make on this pure and holy night: the four *brachos* of *Krias Shema*, the seven *brachos* of *Shemoneh Esrei*, two *brachos* of *Hallel*, three in *Kiddush*, the *Borei Pri Ha'adamah* of *Karpas*, *Asher Ga'alenu*, three times *Hagafen* for the three cups in addition to *Kiddush*, *Al Netilas Yadayim*, *Hamotzi*, *Al Achilas Matzah*, *Al Achilas Maror*, four *brachos* of *bentsching*, *Melech Mehulal Batishbachos*, the *brachah* of *Al Hagefen* and *Hamapil*, for a total of 32 *brachos*.

When Hashem will rebuild the Bais HaMikdash, may it be in our day, we will make two more *brachos*: *Al Achilas Hazevach* on the *Korban Chagigah* of the 14th of Nissan, and *Al Achilas Pesach*, for the *Korban Pesach*."

Mitzvos Beileil HaSeder, 73

It should be noted here that several of these *brachos* are extremely rare and can be recited only once a year, and therefore it is worthy to recite them in their complete form, when there is someone to reply amen to them. (See *Zohar*, *Eikev* 271a)

A Brachah on the Mitzvah of Haggadah

מצוה עלינו לספר ביציאת מצרים

Many have asked: Isn't the story of *Yetzias Mitzrayim* on Seder night a *mitzvas aseh*, a positive commandment? If so, why don't we make a *brachah* on it, as we do with all the *mitzvos*: "*Asher Kidshanu bemitzvosav vetzivanu al sippur yetzias Mitzrayim*"?

There are several answers to this question:

Some write that one of the *brachos* that we make on this night relates to the *mitzvah* of the story of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*, and there are three opinions on this subject:

1. The *Avudraham* (*Seder Hahaggadah*) writes that the *brachah* of *Kiddush* in which we mention "*zecher l'yetzias Mitzrayim*" applies also to the *mitzvah* of *sippur yetzias Mitzrayim*.

2. The *Shibolei Haleket* (218) writes that the *brachah* of *Asher Ga'alenu* that we recite at the end of the Haggadah recital serves as a *brachah* on the *mitzvah* of relating the story of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*.

3. It is brought down in the name of the *Imrei Emes* that with the *brachah* of *Hallel*, we fulfill the obligation of the *brachah* on the *mitzvah* of *Sippur Yetzias Mitzrayim*, because there is an entire passage in *Hallel* [*Beitzeis Yisrael*] that speaks of the miracle of the exodus from Egypt. (*Haggadah Shel Pesach*, *Likutei Yehudah*, 31)

However, others write that indeed, there is no *brachah* recited for this *mitzvah* for the following reasons:

1. The *Rosh* (*Shu"t Besamim Rosh*, 196) explains that there is no *brachah* on a *mitzvah* that is in and of itself a *brachah*. For example, we do not make a *brachah* on the *mitzvah* of *Birchas Hamazon*, because it is itself a *brachah*, and because reciting the Haggadah is in essence one long *brachah* that concludes with *Asher Ga'alenu*, therefore, we do not recite a *brachah*.

2. Harav *Tzvi Yechezkel Michelson* (*Shu"t Tirosh Veyitzhar* 91, 14) explains according to the *Ohr Zarua* (Vol. 1, 140), that we do not say a *brachah* on a *mitzvah* that is constant and regular. Therefore, too, we do not make a *brachah* when praising Hashem for taking us out of Egypt, with all the miracles involved,

Yetzias Mitzrayim and Amen

מעשה רבי אליעזר ורבי יהושע ורבי אלעזר בן עזריה ורבי

עקיבא ורבי טרפון

The first letters of the names of these Tannaim – *Eliezer*, *Yehoshua*, *Elazar*, *Akiva* and *Tarfon* are numerically equivalent to 91, which is *amen*.

That is because just like the objective of being busy with the story of *Yetzias Mitzrayim* is increases *emunah* in the heart of a person, so, too, replying *amen* was established to instill *emunah* in the heart of a person, as Rashi says (*Shabbos* 119b) that one who answers *amen* "*me'id al Boro shehu Kel Melech Neeman*," he testifies of his Creator that He is a Trustworthy King.

Haggadah Shel Pesach Olas Moed

The Study of the Intention of Amen

צא ולמד

By way of a hint, the *Chozeh of Lublin* said: The word "*tzei*" is numerically equivalent to "*amen*," which includes the *Shem Ha-vayah* and *Ado-ai* as one, and here is says "*tzei uleamad*," that each person is obligated to learn and to regulate himself to have in mind the special *Yichud* of *Hava'yah* and *Adnus* included in the word "*amen*."

Imrei Yosef, *Drushim L'Hakafos* 3:6

It is also well know that the *Chozeh of Lublin* would call a child over each day to recite the *Birchos Hashachar* so that he could reply *amen*.

Shemen Hatov, 2, 25

because a person must remember the miracles of the exodus each and every day, as it says (*Devarim* 16:3) "*L'maan tizkor es yom tzeischa me'erezt Mitzrayim kol yemei chayecha*, so that you will remember the day you left Egypt every day of your life." Being that the *mitzvah* of the story on Seder night is an integral part of the *mitzvos* of constant remembering, we do not make a *brachah*.

3. Rav *Yishmael Hakohen*, the Rav of Modina, Italy, (*Zevach Pesach*, *Kadesh*, 2) cited on this matter the well known guideline (see *Shu"t Harashba*, Vol. 1, 18) that one does not make a *brachah* on a *mitzvah* that is not entirely dependent on the one who performs it, because it is possible that his friend will not be appeased and the *mitzvah* will be nullified. So, too, with this *mitzvah*, because the primary way of fulfilling it is in response to the question of another person (*Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim* 173, 7) as the *passuk* says (*Shemos* 13:14) "*Vehayah ki yisholcha bincha*, and it will be when your son will ask you." If so, the *mitzvah* is dependent on others and thus no *brachah* is recited on it.

Gratitude Even for a Son Who Is Not Wise

ברוך המקום ברוך הוא. ברוך שנתן תורה לעמו ישראל, ברוך

הוא. כנגד ארבעה בנים דברה תורה...

The word "*baruch*" appears here four times, correlating to each one of the four sons. The *Chida* says: Just like one who merits a wise son blesses and thanks Hashem for his joy, as it says (*Mishlei* 10:1): "*Ben chacham yesamach av*, a wise son brings joy to the father", so too, one who has a son that is of another kind: a *tam*, *rasha* or *she'eino yodea lishol*, must also thank Hashem for him. As *Chazal* say (*Brachos* 33b): "A person is obligated to bless for the bad just like he blesses for the good."

Haggadah Shel Pesach, Simchas Haregel

The Identity of the Author of the Haggadah

Harav *Bunim of Peshischa* noted: The *nusach* of the Haggadah, especially "*Baruch HaMakom, Baruch Hu*" proves that *Eliyahu Hanavi* compiled the order of the Haggadah, because we have often found the words "*Baruch HaMakom Baruch Hu*" in the *Tanna Devei Eliyahu*.

Haggadah Shel Pesach Tzemach Menachem, Introduction According to the *Rokeach* (introduction) that each author should mention his name at the beginning of the *sefer*, one can say that *Eliyahu* hinted to his name in the opening words of the Seder Haggadah: "*Ha Lachma Anya*," the word "*ha*" is an acronym for *Hanavi* (hey) *Eliyahu* (aleph).

Haggadah Shel Pesach Birchas Avraham



When Pesach-the festival of faith-approaches, this is a wonderful piece of advice from Rabbeinu Bechaye (*Shemos* 14:1) through which you can instill *emunah* in the hearts of your children:

"Because *emunah* is the fundamental of the entire Torah, Chazal establish that we recite *amen* in *tefillah* and to *brachos*, because that is derived from the word '*emunah*.'"

The Rema ruled (*Orach Chaim* 124:7)

"He should teach his young children to recite *amen*, because as soon as a baby replies *amen*, he has a share in the World to Come."

On Pesach, we all make sure to recite *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa*!

Kamah Maalos Tovos LaMakom Aleinu

The Essence and Source of the Song

As part of the Seder Haggadah we recite the ancient song “*Kamah Maalos Tovos LaMakom Aleinu*”, in which we list the attributes of Hashem and the great *chassadim* that He performed for us in such special ways. Each one of these attributes concludes with the word “*dayeinu*.”

The source of the song is very ancient. Although it is not mentioned in the Seder Haggadah mentioned in *Mechilta Shelifaneinu*, it is mentioned in the order of the Haggadah of Rav Saadya Gaon. Rabi Avraham, the son of the Rambam, testified that his father would recite it. (*Maaseh Rokeach on the Rambam in the Seder Hahaggadah*)

The placement of the song in the order of the Haggadah was explained by the Rashbatz (*Haggadah Shel Pesach Ur'eh*, in the *Maharal*) that it is the continuation of the earlier words of the Baal Haggadah: “At first the idol worshippers were our fathers,” in which we mention the entire passage that one who brings *Bikkurim* recites before the Kohein when he brings his small fruit as a *Minchah* of gratitude to Hashem for the countless good things Hashem has done for him. Before Hashem accepts it, the person details all the tremendously good things he has merited to receive from Hashem, beginning with “*Arami oved avi*,” the Aramite served my father, until the exodus from Egypt.

This song is a continuation to the *Parashas Bikkurim* that preceded it, because after we detail the miracles that occurred to Klal Yisrael until they departed from Mitzrayim, we now continue to describe the miracles that were performed from the time they left Egypt and onwards, until they arrived in Eretz Yisrael, and the Bais HaMikdash—where the *Bikkurim* were brought—was built.

In the *Midrash Haggadah*, the Malbim writes that the song is a prelude to the recital of *Hallel*; after we finished detailing all the miracles of *Yetzias Mitzrayim*, before we begin reciting *Hallel* with enthusiasm, it is incumbent upon us to first recite this song, in which we declare that we recognize that each and every miracle that happened to us is worthy of *Hallel* in and of itself.

Kamah Maalos Tovos Lamakom Aleinu

Harav Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev (*Kedushas Levi Drush l'Pesach*, and similarly, the *Shelah, Pesachim* 205) wonders at the meaning of the words “*laMakom aleinu*”. Wouldn't it have made more sense to say “*MeiHamakom aleinu*?” From Hashem upon us? He explained that for the most part, Hashem's mercy on His creations gives Him pleasure because they are enjoying the many good things He bestows His creations with. Therefore, there are two aspects of these favors: “*laMakom*” and “*aleinu*.” For Hashem and for us.

Dayeinu? Or Dayeinu!

Simply put, the word “*dayeinu*” is recited calmly, and it means that even if Hashem would have done just this miracle for us, we could have sufficed with that.

But many of the commentators on the Haggadah, each in his own way, wonder how it is possible to say that we could have sufficed with each miracle individually. For example, “Had He brought us before Har Sinai, and not given us the Torah.” Could we have sufficed with that? Each one of the miracles listed here is a detail in the process of building Am Yisrael, and if even one is missing, there would be a great void.

The Malbim in *Midrash Haggadah* explains that indeed, we don't come to say that it would have been enough for us with only one of the miracles. What we are saying is that each one of these miracles would make us obligated to praise Hashem for it separately.

Harav Elya Roth, *zt”l* said: It is not for naught that the Baal Haggadah expounded on this song *dayeinu*, in which we thank Hashem for the entire process, and each stage, of the redemption from Mitzrayim, in order to teach us that we should never suffice with a general thanks. Rather, we should always detail the nuances of each *chesed* that Hashem performs for us at every single moment. (*Ish Chassid Hayah*, 384)

The *Haggadah Maasei Hashem*, by Rav Eliezer Ashkenazi, explains differently. He writes that the word “*dayeinu*” is more of a question: “Is this miracle enough for us?” Would we be able to reach our complete state without it? He compared it to a king who anointed one of his great admirers to be a governor of a certain state. When one day, he came to visit, he saw that the man did not know how to act in a royal fashion, and the king hastily taught him how to conduct royal ceremonies. Then he saw that he had no royal clothes, and gave them to him. And so on and so forth, he continued to teach him and give him, elevating his position constantly. This man would praise the king and say: Now I see that every detail that I merited to receive from the king was necessary for me, to the extent that I could not do without it.

So, too, after we reached Eretz Yisrael and received the Bais HaMikdash, we marvel at each detail that we experienced and wonder: “Could we have possibly managed without it?”

What Do These 15 Praises Correspond To?

Some have written (*R' Yaakov Bar Yakar, Rokeach, Avudraham* and others) that the 15 praises that we thank Hashem for in *Dayeinu* correspond to the fifteen *Shir Hamaalos* composed by David Hamelech in *Tehillim*. [Those *Shir Hamaalos* were for the 15 steps in the Bais HaMikdash.] The *Mahara”l* adds that they counted specifically fifteen, because after fifteen *maalos* it was possible only to descend, like we see that the moon increases in size for 15 days each month and then declines for the remaining fifteen days.

The Gra wrote that it is corresponding to the 15 generations between Avraham Avinu—the father of our nation—to Shlomo Hamelech, who built the Bais HaMikdash [Avraham, Yitzchak, Yaakov, Yehudah, Peretz, Chetzron, Ram, Aminadav, Nachshon, Shalom, Boaz, Ovad, Yishai, Dovid, Shlomo].

The *Haggadah Vayaged Shmuel* by one of the early Gaonim of Spain wrote: These 15 *maalos* correspond to the 15 letters “*vav*” in *Emes V'Yatziv*, which, together with the aleph of *emes* amount to 91, the numerical equivalent of amen, whose meaning is *emes*, truth. By this we affirm the *parashah* of *Yetzias Mitzrayim* that we mentioned in *Krias Shema*.

Mesirus Nefesh That Led to Great Heights

Harav Shamshon Pincus, *zt”l*, was renowned for his fiery love of Hashem that pulsed in his body. This fire, which characterized his captivating speeches with which he enthused the hearts of Klal Yisrael with a passion for Torah and service of Hashem, grew into a veritable blaze whenever he was physically busy with a mitzvah, be it one between him and his fellow man, or between him and Hashem. He would literally “enter” the mitzvah with all his might and he did not withhold any effort to fulfill it to perfection.

Rav Pincus devoted a significant part of his life to the subject of *tefillah*, which Chazal defined as (*Brachos* 6b and *Rashi* there) as “things that stand at the pinnacle of the world and humans belittle them.” It is no wonder then, that many of the *drashos* that he delivered in his life were devoted to strengthening the service of *tefillah*. He also compiled a special booklet entitled *Shearim BeTefillah*, dedicated to elevating and glorifying it.

On Erev Pesach, his *avodah* was especially apparent, as he prepared with great awe for the holiday, with a solemnity that was hard to match, while not overlooking even the smallest detail that could have increased the value of the mitzvah.

How symbolic was the fact that his tragic passing occurred on the eve of *Bedikas Chametz*, as he returned from an evening of delivering *chizuk*, which he combined with stories of *chesed* and preparation for Pesach.

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For many years, people tried to extract the secret from him, how he merited to rise to such great heights, and where his rise began. However, in his humility, he refused to relate anything, until one time, he decided to share his secret with those close to him. This is what he said:

When I was a *talmid* in Yeshivas Brisk, I lived in an apartment with a few other friends. As I was an American and did not return home for Pesach, I found myself on the night of *Bedikas Chametz* alone in my apartment, and I had to carry out the *bedikah* myself for the entire apartment.

In addition to being large, the apartment was also old and very neglected, so *Bedikas Chametz* took me deep into the night. For several hours, I worked to check room after room, moving things around so I could access every corner. When I finally finished, near midnight, I slumped onto a chair, exhausted but feeling very satisfied.

But something suddenly began to bother me. I remembered the attic of the building, which was jointly owned by all of the residents of the building, and thus they were all obligated to check it. I knew that if I would not do it, no one would do it for me.

In my heart, I felt a struggle: On the one hand, I was tired and weary, and I knew that I had fulfilled my obligation above and beyond what was required of me. On the other hand, I knew that these thoughts stemmed from my physical exhaustion, and halachically, I would not be exempt without a *bedikah*.

After a few minutes of deliberating, I decided: I would not capitulate! I decided to do the mitzvah in its entirety and with *mesirus nefesh*. I mustered up a bit more strength and climbed up to the attic. When I opened the rickety door and switched on the light, I stood in shock at the scene that met my eyes. It was clear that no one had been here for years and hadn't cleaned it. The floor was covered with a thick layer of dust, and the room was full of objects of all kinds.

“Every person must first honor the rooms before checking them,” I remembered the clear *halachah* in *Shulchan Aruch*. But my exhaustion almost made me give up.

Then I remembered that I had decided to fulfill the mitzvah with *mesirus nefesh* no matter what! So as though I hadn't just spent hours searching my own apartment, I found some strength, filled a bucket with water and got to work.

A stranger happening upon this attic would have been shocked at the strange scene: a typical American *yeshivah bachur* knee deep in mud and dirt on the night of Erev Pesach, cleaning a place that hardly anyone ever stepped into...

It was near dawn by the time I finally was able to be *bodek chametz*. My entire body was shaking with the effort, and when I finished, there was no point in going to sleep anymore. I went to daven *neitz*, hoping I'd be able to rest a bit afterwards. But the *mitzvos* of the day, such as burning the *chametz*, and other things, meant that despite my exhausted state, I could not get to sleep.

Before *Maariv* on the night of the Seder, I had some sorrowful thoughts. Who knew what kind of Seder awaited me after I hadn't slept for so long, not to mention the four cups of wine I had to drink...I began to daven with mixed feelings. But the minute I started, I forgot everything. A spirit of *kedushah* began to envelop me, and I felt this sweet feeling, like I had never felt before, fill every fiber of my being.

With that elevated feeling I began the Seder, and wonder of wonders, I did not feel any tiredness. On the contrary, I was alert not to waste even one moment of this holy night. I read the Haggadah with a great elevation of spirit, and in my heart I was convinced that I had never found such sweetness in the words of the Haggadah.

I performed the other *mitzvos* of the night, such as *matzah*, *maror* and drinking the four cups, with extremely high spirits. I didn't feel tired at all. I felt like I was ready to be *moser nefesh* to perform the *mitzvos*.

I became a different person! I felt true closeness to Hashem, and a special light enveloped me for the entire Seder, until after *Chatzos*. Surprisingly enough, even after the Seder, I could not go to sleep. I remained awake the entire night, studying the story of *Yetzias Mitzrayim* until dawn.

I was surprised that this special aura accompanied me the next day, and did not leave on Chol Hamoed either. I utilized it to delve into my Torah studies and my *tefillos*—I was busy doing nothing but being close to Hashem—*Kirvas Hashem*.

That year, Shevii Shel Pesach was on Friday, and during *Minchah* of Shevii Shel Pesach, tears welled up in my eyes. I was afraid that this holy spirit would dissipate now that Pesach was over and Shaabos was coming. Still, I strengthened myself with the thought that Shabbos was also influenced by the holiness of the preceding Yom Tov and decided to try and continue in the same way, and I hoped for assistance from Hashem.

Indeed, that Shabbos, I felt the true, sweet taste of Shabbos, and for the first time I understood the essence of its holiness.

And that's where my *aliyah* began...

“If there's something in me today,” Rav Shimshon concluded his secret, “then it's all because of the power of one mitzvah, a *derabbanan*, of *Bedikas Chametz*, which I grabbed onto and performed with *mesirus nefesh*!”

Haggadah Shel Pesach Tiferes Shimshon, Introduction