

Vechol Maaminim



A Weekly Leaflet From "Bnei Emunim"

PARASHAS SHELACH

IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

Even a Great Person Needs Tefillah

“ויקרא משה להושע בן נון יהושע” (ג, טז)

“Daven for him: *Kah yoshiacha mei'atzas hameraglim*. Hashem should save you from the plan of the spies.” (Rashi)

Rashi explains that even though Yehoshua was the select *talmid* of Moshe Rabbeinu, with whom he learned the entire Torah, and who was destined to be Moshe's successor, Moshe still needed to daven for him that he should not be drawn to the sin of the *meraglim*.

From here, the **Alter of Kelm** learned a great lesson: When it comes to fear of sin, a person should not rely on his current spiritual state, and be sure that he will never stumble and sin again, because as the Gemara (*Brachos* 29a) relates, Yochanan Kohein Gadol, who served in that position for eighty years, became a Tzedoki at the end of his life. Therefore, a person must always be on guard, and even when he feels spiritually “secure”, he should not desist from continuing to daven to Hashem to help guard himself from sin.

Chochmah Umussar (Vol. 1, 267)

Yehoshua Was Embarrassed to Ask the Avos

Targum Yonasan explains on this *passuk*: “When Moshe saw the humility of Hoshea Bin Nun, he changed his name to Yehoshua.” This needs to be explained.

Harav **Meshulem Zusha of Chernobyl** explained that Moshe knew that the best thing would have been for Yehoshua to prostrate himself at the gravesites of the Avos and ask for mercy that he not fall prey to the sin of the *meraglim*, as Kalev ben Yefuneh had done. But because he was aware of Yehoshua's modest demeanor, he feared that his humility would make him feel unworthy of showing his face before the Avos, and therefore, Moshe Rabbeinu opted to daven for Yehoshua himself.

(Masa'eihem Lemotzaeihem, p. 67)

Aharon Fell On His Face Because of Moshe

“ויפל משה ואהרן על פניהם” (ד, ה)

Why does it not say “*vayiplu*, and they fell” in the plural?

The **Mahara"l Tzintz** explained: The Gemara (*Megillah* 22b, *Rashi*) says that an important person has no right to fall on his face unless he is sure that his prayers will be answered, like Yehoshua Bin Nun. Here, Moshe Rabbeinu was sure that his *tefillah* would be answered,

as we see in Rashi's explanation (*ibid* 9:7) on the words of the *passuk* “*imdu v'eshmea'h*”—“like a *talmid* who is assured to hear from his *rebbe*.” But Aharon, who was not assured of this, fell on his face only because of Moshe, and therefore it says in the singular “*vayipol* Moshe V'aharon.”

Melo Ha'Omer

Salachti Kidvarecha - A Promise for the Future

“יאמר ה' סלחתי כדברך” (ד, כ)

“Because of what you said, perhaps they will say because Hashem is unable to.” (*Rashi*)

Harav **Shaul Brach** the Rav of Kashau explained: With the word “*kidvarecha*” Hashem informed Moshe that He had accepted the claim that Hashem's Name should not be desecrated when the gentiles will say: “Because Hashem is unable to...” (*ibid* 14:16), and therefore He should not

Forgiveness of Sins in the Merit of Amen

“סלח נא לעוון העם הזה כגדל חסדך” (ד, ט)

The last letters of each word of “*na l'avon ha'am*” combine to make “amen” to teach us that in the merit of answering amen, the sins of each person are forgiven.

Birchas Avraham, p. 75

Replying Amen—The Foundation of Emunah

“להיות לכם לאלקים אני ה' אלקיכם” (טו, טא)

The acronym of “*lihiyos lachem l'Elokim Ani*” is numerically equivalent to 91, or amen. From here we can learn of the importance of replying amen in order to establish the foundation of *emunah* in HaKadosh Baruch Hu.

Edus B'Yehosef, Tehillim 91

decree total destruction for Klal Yisrael, not only now, but even if they sin in the future generations. For that reason, we say before *Maariv* of Yom Kippur the *passuk*: “*Vayomer Hashem salachti kidvarecha*,” in order to remind Hashem of His eternal promise to Moshe, that Am Yisrael will never be destroyed completely, in order not to cause a *chillul Hashem*.

Bihiyos Boker

Forgiveness is Proportional to the Number of Pleas

Harav **Baruch of Mezhibuzh** said: “*Salachti kidvarecha*,” the more a person pleads and feels a *hisorerus*, an awakening, the more forgiveness he will bring about.

Similarly, we can say on the words of the *passuk* (*Tehillim* 33:22): “*Yehi chasdecha aleinu kaasher yichalnu lach*,” in the same measure that we long for HaKadosh Baruch Hu, so too, will His *chesed* toward us increase.

Lehisaneq

Tefillah from the Heart is Accepted

“יפגריכם אתם יפלו במדבר הזה” (יד, לב)

In his commentary on *Maseches Bava Basra* (181a, beginning with “*sichlo*”) the **Rashbam** cites the *Midrash*: Each Erev Tisha B'Av of the forty years that Am Yisrael was in the desert, an announcement was heard: ‘Everyone should come out and dig graves!’ Immediately, they would all dig graves in the ground and sleep inside them that night. In the morning, the announcement came again, ‘The live ones should separate from the dead!’ and the ones who had remained alive would rise.

Klal Yisrael lost 15,000 people this way each year, until in the fortieth year, when just fifteen thousand people remained alive. After the announcement, they lay in their graves and expected to die, but in the morning, they were still alive. Because they feared they had made a mistake in the calendar, they slept in their graves for the next few nights, until the evening of 15 Av, when the moon was full in the sky. That's when they realized that the decree had been lifted, and they celebrated the day in great joy.

Why did these final 15,000 thousand people merit to have a miracle performed for them, and why didn't Hashem forgive the rest of the sinners as well?

The *sefer Ateres Paz* (*Seder Haselichos* p. 54) explains: Each year, before entering the graves, Am Yisrael knew that 15,000 of them would not be waking up. Therefore, they each offered a *tefillah* that they not be among the dead. But because there was a reasonable chance that they would be, their *tefillah* did not come from deep in their hearts, as it should have.

Only the last year, when the last few left felt the sword resting on their necks, did the *tefillah* emerge from the deepest part of their hearts. Being that it was such a heartfelt prayer, it was accepted by Hashem.

Amen—D'Oraisa

Shabbos Parashas Shelach, 19 Sivan (5737), is the *yahrtzeit* of the *tzaddik*, Harav Shmuel Huminer, ז"ל, one of the eminent residents of Yerushalayim, who authored the *sefarim Eved Hamelech*, among others.

In his *sefarim*, Rav Shmuel frequently mentions the greatness and importance of replying amen, and he also is *mechadesh* according to the Ramban and the *Tzeidah Laderech* that:

“For every *brachah* that we answer amen, we fulfill a *mitzvas aseh* from the Torah, even though the *brachah* is *d'Rabbanan*. In any case, after we merited that Chazal established *brachos*, and one fulfills “*Ki Shem Hashem ekra*,” by making the *brachah*, the listeners now have a Torah obligation of “*havu godel l'Elokeinu*” (*Devarim* 32:3), which Chazal teach means to answer amen. (*Eved Hamelech*, *Haazinu*, and in the *sefer V'Imru Amen*, 70)

Bnei Emunim. We don't forego even one *brachah*!



Introduction to the Parshiyos of the Korbanos

The source of the custom to read the *Seder HaKorbanos* each day that is brought down as a *halachah* in *Shulchan Aruch* (*Orach Chaim* 1:5), is from the words of Chazal in *Maseches Menachos* (110a): "Rabi Yitzchak said, why does it say (*Vayikra* 6:18, 7:1) "Zos *Toras hachatas...vezos Toras ha'asham*"? Because when someone learns *Toras hachatas* it is as though he sacrificed a *chatas*, and anyone who learns *Toras ha'asham* it is as though he sacrificed an *asham*."

The Sages say further in *Maseches Megillah* (31b), that Avraham Avinu asked Hashem: "Ribbono shel Olam! Perhaps Am Yisrael will sin before You and You will do to them what You did to the generation of the *Mabul* and the *Dor Haflagah*?" Hashem replied, "The *korbanos* will come and atone for them." When Avraham Avinu further wondered: "What will be when there is no *Bais HaMikdash*?" Hashem said, "I already established for them the order of the *korbanos*. When they read that before Me, I consider it as though they sacrificed the *korbanos* before me, and I forgive them for all their sins."

Why Does it Precede Davening

The reason the *parashah* of the *korbanos* is recited prior to the davening can be understood according to the explanation of the Netziv of Volozhin on the *pasuk* (*Shir Hashirim* 1:8): "If you do not know, fairest of women, go your way in the footsteps of the flocks and pasture your kids beside the shepherds' dwellings." If you do not know, and ask which merit you will have in the *galus* instead of the *korbanos*, go in the footsteps of the flocks, pay attention to the main objective of the *korbanos*, which is that the person's *tefillah* offered at that time should be accepted, as it says with the *korban* of Hevel (*Bereishis* 4:4): "*Vayisha Hashem el Hevel v'el minchaso*," that Hashem heard the *tefillah* in the merit of his *Minchah*. It is brought down in other places that *tefillah* is heard in the merit of the *korbanos*.

Sins create a partition that separates a person from his Creator, and the atonement of the *korban* removes this partition and brings about that his *tefillah* should be accepted. Besides that, the *korban* brings a person to cleave to Hashem, because when he is bringing it, he must feel as though he is sacrificing himself before Hashem and that the entire *avodah* of the *korban* is being carried out on his body, literally. (See *Ramban Vayikra* 1:9). This cleaving to Hashem is vital for the service of the heart—which is *tefillah*.

Therefore, Chazal established that we should recite the *parshiyos* of the *korbanos* before davening, because by reciting it, it is considered as though all the *korbanos* have been sacrificed, and that will banish the partitions that have been caused by our sins and will help us cleave to Hashem. Thus our *tefillos* will be accepted on High. (*Telalei Oros*)

Reading the Korbanos Atones Even for Intentional Sins

If we look closely at the words of the Gemara, we will find that in the first question, Avraham Avinu asked how Hashem would atone for Bnei Yisrael's sins when they are "*chotim*" [unintentionally] sinning before Him, and was told that the *korbanos* would atone. Indeed *korbanos* only atone for sins done unintentionally. But his second question is what will be after the *Churban* of the *Bais HaMikdash*, and to that Hashem replied that by reading before Him the *Seder Hakorbanos* He forgives all their "*avonoseihem*" [intentional sins.]

The Bnei Yissaschar offered a beautiful *chiddush* on this: The influence of reciting the *parashah* of *korbanos* is greater than even the *korbanos* themselves, because *korbanos* do not atone for intentional sins, but reciting the *parashah* of *korbanos* atones also for the intentional sins. (*Derech Pikudecha*, Introduction 5, 8)

This is similar to the *chiddush* of the Chafetz Chaim (*Al HaTorah* p. 146) according to the *Midrash*, that even during the time of the *Bais HaMikdash*, the one bringing the *korban* had to recite the *parashah* of the *korban* he was sacrificing, and that was an integral part of the atonement process.

According to the Bnei Yissaschar it can be explained that even when the *Bais HaMikdash* was standing, the *korban* itself was effective for the unintentional part of the sin, but in order to atone for the intentional part, one needed to read the *parashah* of the *korban*.

Importance of Reciting It With Kavanah

From the words of Chazal "*kol ha'osek*", the Shelah learns (*Maseches Taanis, Ner Mitzvah* 33) that the *segulah* of the *parashah* of *korbanos* does not work when it is merely recited but rather only when a person is involved in it and has *kavanah* for every detail.

Rabbeinu Bechayei writes openly (*Vayikra* 7:37): "And the *inyan* is that he should delve into the explanation of the *parashah*, about which subject it hints to, because through this, his mind will be illuminated and he will understand wondrous things from the *Toras Hakorbanos*, and with that, he should try harder to keep the Torah and *mitzvos*, and his sins will be forgiven as though he sacrificed a *korban*. One should not say that it means that he should just recite and study the words of the *parashah* with its bare *pesukim*, without delving into the meaning."

Similarly, it can be understood from the words of the *Zohar* (Vol. I, p. 100, a), that one who reads and utters with his mouth the *parshiyos* of the *korbanos* in shul, and has *kavanah* in his heart, is guaranteed that the prosecuting angels that want to mention his sins constantly cannot do any bad, only good.

The custom of the Shefa Chaim, *zy"va*, was truly remarkable: He would recite the entire *Seder Hakorbanos* slowly, not just saying it, but as though he was learning it. He would make the effort to translate each word into the spoken language, and to explain it very well, until it appeared to those observing him that he was delivering an in depth *shiur* in the *halachos* of the *Mikdash* and the *kodshim*. He would read the *perek* of "*Eizehu Mekoman*" in the well known *niggun* that *Mishnayos* are studied in. At one point, he even went further, coming to davening with a *Mishnayos* in his hand, and he would read *Eizehu Mekoman* from inside. (*Halichos Chaim*, p. 169)

The Mashgiach's Miraculous Recovery

We can learn the greatness of reciting the *korbanos* from the following story, which happened to Harav Moshe Wolfson, *shlita*, rav of Khal Emunas Yisrael in Boro Park and a the renowned Mashgiach of Torah Vodaas.

At a *chizuk* gathering for his community, the Mashgiach established that from that day on, the *Seder Korbanos* would be recited in his *bais medrash betzibbur*, like the rest of the *tefillah*. Some time later, the Mashgiach had chest pains and needed to undergo an urgent operation that was very risky. The Mashgiach remained firm in his faith in Hashem that nothing would happen to him, and that he would emerge from the operation safely.

On the appointed day, the Mashgiach was wheeled into the operating room under anesthesia, and in a dream he saw an old man with a glowing countenance saying to him: "You can be calm, because *b'ezras Hashem* the operation will pass uneventfully and you will recover, and this is all because in Heaven there is great joy at the *minhag* you have established in your *bais medrash* to recite the *korbanos betzibbur*, which is a very great thing."

When the Mashgiach recovered, he hurried to gather his community and related the story to them and urged them that from then on they should be even stronger on this matter, because he had received an endorsement from Above that this was very important. (*Befikudecha Asicha* Vol. III, *Shaar Hatefillah, maamar* 5)

A Bird Sent from Heaven

This story was heard from Harav Yitzchak Schwadron from the tzaddik Rav Shmuel Huminer, zt"l, whose father, Rav Avraham, zt"l, testified that it was true and asked that it be disseminated to Klal Yisrael so that everyone should recognize the greatness of the power of tefillah.

The holy silence that usually pervaded the study of Harav Akiva Eiger, *zy"va*, was broken by the sudden squeak of the door opening. The Rav, who was in the midst of writing one of his brilliant responsa, raised his eyes from his *sefer*, to see who had entered.

It was one of the respected members of the community and his face was grey with tension and worry. The rav seated him and calmed him down and then listened to what the man had to say: "For some time, I have been feeling various pains," the man began. "I went to the best doctors, but they did not know what is causing them. Recently, my pains have grown more intense, and they are nearly unbearable, so I traveled to the capital to the clinic of a famous doctor.

"After being thoroughly examined by the doctor, he informed me that I am suffering from a terrible disease, and that regretfully, he does not know of a medication that can heal it.

"I don't know how longer you have left to live," the doctor added, "but in any case, it's not more than a few weeks."

"Brokenhearted, I came out of his clinic. It was hard for me to absorb this bombshell. While making my way home, I came to terms with the fact that within a few weeks or even days, my young children will be accompanying me on my final journey. But then, I remembered the words of Chazal: "Even if a sharp sword rests on a person's neck he should not despair of mercy." (*Brachos* 10a) I decided to come to the rav, perhaps he can effect a *yeshuah* for me."

"Please!" the man concluded with tears in his eyes: "Can Rabbeinu daven that I should merit a complete recovery, despite the natural course of this, because the doctors cannot save me anymore?"

The man's words really pained the Rav's compassionate heart. "I will daven for you with all my heart," he said, "but at the same time I will try to work on the natural front, because who knows, maybe the cure for your illness is in another place, which you have not reached yet!"

Encouraged, the man left Rav Akiva Eiger's house, confident that with *siyatta diShmaya*, the Rav would effect a *yeshuah* for him with his *tefillos* and *brachos*, and that he would somehow be healed.

A few days later, during which time the rav did not stop davening and making efforts on behalf of the sick man, the surprising news spread through Posna that the king was planning to visit their city as part of his travels through the kingdom.

The news generated a thrill among the whole city. The authorities launched a rapid operation to clean all the city's streets. Trees were planted and gardens were spruced up. The local choir began rehearsing, and everyone was waiting in anticipation for the historic visit.

Several of the *mispalleim* of the shul were very surprised when Rabi Akiva Eiger began inquiring among his close confidantes regarding the schedule of the visit, who would be part of the entourage and other details concerning the event. "Since when does the *gadol hador* take an interest in such things?" they wondered aloud.

No one knew that the Rav was not at all interested in the festivities, but rather, his questions stemmed from a strong desire to help the hapless Jew. After intensive inquiries, Rabi Akiva discovered that the king's personal physician would be accompanying him on the visit.

This was no simple doctor; in addition to his wisdom and expertise in medicine, as the king's doctor he had unlimited access to medical tests, and all kinds of medical innovations were sent to his office by other doctors every day.

If there was a cure for this disease anywhere in the world, this doctor would surely know about it. He resolved to approach the doctor and ask him, and perhaps salvation would come from that avenue.

The big day arrived. Blaring trumpets heralded the arrival of the king to the city. Masses crowded on the sides of the streets to try and catch a glimpse of the elegant carriage, and perhaps even of the king himself.

Among the masses was the Rav of Posna, Rabbeinu Akiva Eiger, who was scanning the procession for the carriage in which the doctor was seated. When he noticed it, he hurriedly signaled to the driver that he had to speak to him. The carriage stopped and the Rav quickly boarded.

The doctor listened respectfully to the venerable sage, but had nothing to offer. He was also seeking a cure for this disease, but thus far, had been unsuccessful.

"And if the king himself would fall ill with this disease, G-d forbid?" the *gaon* surprised the doctor with the question. The doctor fell into deep thought, and then said, "I'll tell the Rabbi the truth. There is one tried and true cure for this disease but there's virtually no way to obtain it."

"In the middle of the desert, there is a rare bird whose meat is a cure for this disease. However, it is extremely difficult to catch it and the route to the place where it grows is extremely dangerous, and one must be escorted by a battalion of highly trained soldiers. If the king would need it, he would surely spare no expense or effort until he obtained it, but a regular person has no chance of doing so. That's why I didn't tell you about it at first."

From the viewpoint of a non-Jew, wise as he was, this was the right conclusion. But Rabi Akiva Eiger, with his fiery *emunah*, drew a *kal v'chomer* for himself: If a flesh and blood king has the possibility of obtaining the bird, then how much more so is the King of Kings able to do so.

The Rav parted from the doctor with a blessing, and hurried back to his study. Ensconced in the walls that were saturated with Torah and *chessed*, he davened fervently and tearfully that Hashem should send the man a full recovery.

A short time later, a thump was heard on the roof of the house. Someone quickly climbed onto the roof and discovered a large, strange bird that they had never seen before. The bird was wounded and could no longer fly, and a few people were called to help take it into the house.

When the Rav heard about it he was not surprised. Even though he did not know for certain that this was the bird the doctor was referring to, he was confident in the power of *tefillah*, and he instructed the members of his household to cook the bird in the soup and to take it to the sick man. Within a few days, the man's condition improved and a short time later he was miraculously healed.

As per the Rav's orders, they family hid the feathers of the bird, and when a few years later, the king's personal doctor passed through the city, the feathers were presented to him. He nearly fainted in disbelief: these were the feathers of that rare bird.

They returned to the Rav and related this, but the Rav was hardly surprised. "This is not why I instructed you to keep them. It was so that the future generations should learn to recognize the power of *tefillah* that stems from deep in the heart."

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