

# Vechol Maaminim



A Weekly Leaflet From "Bnei Emunim"

## PARASHAS MASEI

### IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

#### Unceasing Awakening

“ויכתב משה את מוצאיהם למסעייהם” (לג, ב)

The question is obvious: Hashem knows all of man’s thoughts; why do we need to utter the words of *tefillah*? Is it not enough for us to think the thoughts and ask with our hearts?

Harav Yeshaya of Drohovitch explained:

The power of *tefillah* in the heart is only strong enough to awaken a person for that hour that he is davening, but when he utters the *tefillah* with his lips, that awakening continues in his heart even after he has finishes davening. It is similar to what Chazal said (*Megillah* 27b, and see *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim* 92:8) that even some time after the *tefillah* is over, the lips of the one davening still murmur the words.

This is hinted to by the words of this *passuk*: “*motza’eihem l’maseihem*,”—when a person utters words of *tefillah* from his lips, the impression remains in his heart for a long time, and thus, he merits to continue to “travel” from one achievement to another powered by the *tefillah* that awakens him again and again.

Chazon Yeshayahu, *Tefillah L’Ani*

#### Avoid Davening Alone

“ויסעו מחרדה ויחזו במקוהלת” (לג, כה)

Harav Moshe Elyakim Beriyah of Kozhnitz pointed out *b’derech remez*:

“Charadah” has the same letters as “*hacheder*”; “And they traveled from Charadah,” – a person should distance himself from and avoid davening by himself in a “*cheder*,” a room, “and they camped in Makheilos,” and instead, he should always make sure to daven with a *kahal*, a *tzibbur*, in a group.

Binas Moshe

#### In Makheilos They Blessed Hashem

Rav Yosef Yisrael Deutsch, Av Bais Din of Bolosho Yarmot, explained:

When a person is in trouble, he concentrates when davening to Hashem that he should be saved from this trouble, but after it passes, and he returns to blessed routine, he may forget Hashem, his Creator. For that reason the *passuk* warns:

“And they traveled from Charadah,” when a fear and trouble passes from you, you must remember “*Vayachanu beMakheilos*,” to thank Hashem and bless Him in public with *Birchas Hagomel*.

Ben Gorni

#### The Greatness of One Who Answers Amen

“לרב תרבו את נחלתי” (לג, נד)

The word “*rav*” indicates greatness, as the

*passuk* says (*Bereishis* 25:23): “*Verav yaavod tza’ir*.” One can explain here by way of *remez* that the greater a person is than his friend in *mitzvos* and good deeds, the greater his share in the World to Come will be.

Similarly, the *passuk* in *Mishlei* can be explained (28:20): “*Ish emunos rav brachos*,” one who is careful about replying amen is greater and more honored than the one who makes the *brachah*, as Chazal say (*Brachos* 53b): “One who replies amen is greater than the one making the *brachah*.”

Bnei Shlomo

#### How To Listen to the Torah Reading

“ונסב לכם הגבול מנגב למעלה עקרבים ועבר צנה” (לד, ד)

It was the last summer of the life of Harav Yitzchak Zev of Brisk, some two and a half months before his passing. On Shabbos *Parashas Vayakhel-Pekudei*, the Rav lay weakly on his bed in the inner room of his home as the *baal korei* leined loudly so that the Rav could hear, and, with his last vestiges

#### Influence of the Shechinah Through Answering Amen

“כי אני ה' שכן בתוך בני ישראל” (לה, לד)

By taking care to reply amen to *brachos*, Am Yisrael causes the Shechinah to dwell within the nation. This is hinted to in the words of the *passuk*: Because of “*ki ani*,” which is numerically equivalent to “amen” we merit “*Hashem shochen besoch Bnei Yisrael*.”

Emunas Lev

of strength, concentrate fully as was his habit. When the *baal korei* came to the *passuk*: “*Venasav lachem hagvul miNegev lemaaleh akrabim v’avar Tzina*,” he read the word “*Tzi-na*” with the accent as *milra*, on the ultimate part of the word. Suddenly, the Rav’s voice could be heard from the inner room correcting the *baal korei* to read it “*Tzinah*,” with the accent on the penultimate (*mil’el*) “*tzī*”. Those in the room marveled how it was possible that those closer to the *baal korei* did not detect the mistake, while the Rav, in his sickbed, noticed it and corrected it on the spot.

After davening, the Rav explained: there’s a big difference in the meaning of the word “*Tzinah*” depending on where the accent is. When it is read correctly, it means “to the place called Tzin.” But

when it is read incorrectly, it means “shield,” as it says in the *passuk* (*Tehillim* 91:4) “*Tzinah vesochera amito*,” whose meaning does not fit in this context.

Peninei Rabbeinu HaGri”ז, p. 111

#### The Main Thing is the Heart

“ונס שמה רצח מכה נפש בשגגה” (לה, יא)

In the reality that appears to us, there is no difference between one who kills someone intentionally and one who does so by accident. In both cases, the victim is dead, and a person killed him. But there is a significant difference between them: the intention. The first did it unintentionally while the second did so with malicious intent.

Rabbeinu Bechayei in his commentary on the Torah, drew a great lesson from this: “The heart is the primary part of a person, and the main part of all *mitzvos* and *aveiros*... Everything depends on the heart. If one did a *mitzvah* but did not have *kavanah* in his heart to do so for the Sake of Heaven, he gets no reward.”

Expounding on Rabbeinu Bechayei, the *Maggid Harav Reuven Karelinstein*, would say:

Two people recite *Birchas Hamazon* in front of us. One does so with great *kavanah* while the second one does so with little thought. They are both doing the same act, but the difference between them is gargantuan.

Just like with the killer—the action is the same, but the result is drastically different, because the main thing is the intention of the heart.

Yechi Reuven

#### Power of Tefillah from the Heart

“וישב בה עד מות הכהן הגדול” (לה, כה)

In *Maseches Makkos* (11a) it is explained that the mother of the Kohein Gadol would provide the exiles to the city of refuge with food and clothing in order to appease them so that they should not pray that her son should die. The question that is asked: can one think that the prayer of these murderers could be effective in harming Hashem’s beloved Kohein Gadol?

The Mashgiach Harav Yechezkel Levenstein, learned a great lesson here: Because the murderers knew that their only hope of leaving the city of refuge was if their *tefillos* were accepted and the Kohein Gadol died, they put all their heart and soul, and pinned all their hopes, on this *tefillah*, and such a *tefillah* can be accepted even if it is directed against the *tzaddik* of the generation, the Kohein Gadol.

Mofess Hador, p. 137

### There Are No Friends More Beloved Than These

This coming Monday, 4 Av is the *yahrtzeit* of Harav Menachem Azarya, son of Rav Yitzchak Berachya, zy”a, the Rema MiPano.

In his well known response (*Shu”t* 109) the Rema PiPano expounds on the advantages of the custom of reciting *Birchas Hashachar bechavrusa*. In conclusion, he writes:

“And how good it is to institute the custom that the *shaliach tzibbur* should recite *Birchos Hashachar* aloud... and not only that, but friends sleeping in one room, such as *yeshivah bachurim*, should rise and each recite the *brachos* for themselves and their friends should reply amen, and then they should go to shul *beragesh*, with deep emotion. One who makes the *brachos* and then his wife and children, big and small, make the *brachos* for him likewise there are no friends more beloved than this, and that is the *din* for those making the *brachos* in shul, one after another, for a *zechus* for them all.”

Let us all strengthen our recital of *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa*, as his holy soul aspired, and may he be an advocate for us that we be blessed with all good. Amen.



## Mizmor Shir Chanukas Habayis

## Why Does It Precede Baruch She'Amar

Before reciting *Baruch She'amar*, we say *Mizmor Shir Chanukas Habayis L'David*, which was composed by David Hamelech towards the end of his life, to be sung at the inauguration of the Bais HaMikdash that was destined to be built by his son Shlomo. (See *Ibn Ezra* and *Radak, Tehillim* 30:1)

The Rishonim do not mention this passage as being included in *Pesukei Dezimra*, and therefore, it was established that it be recited prior to *Baruch She'amar*, the *brachah* that actually begins *Pesukei Dezimra*.

The *Siddur Mekor Hatefillos* explains the reason this passage is recited prior to *Baruch She'amar*. Because we have just concluded the *Korbanos* and the *Yehi Razon* requesting that the *Bais HaMikdash* be rebuilt, it is only fitting that we should continue with *Mizmor Shir Chanukas Habayis*, recited at the inauguration of the *Bais HaMikdash*, because that's how we express our faith that Hashem will fulfill our request and rebuild the *Bais HaMikdash* speedily.

## Did David Hamelech Inaugurate the Bais HaMikdash?

The *Mechilta* says in *Parashas Beshalach (Masechta Deshira 1)*: "There were ten *shiros*, songs...the eight that Shlomo said, as it says "*Mizmor Shir Chanukas Habayis L'David*." Did David build it? No, Shlomo built it, as it says (*Melachim I, 6:14*): "And Shlomo built the House." So why then, does it say *Mizmor Shir... L'David*?

Owing to the fact that David gave his heart and soul to build the *Bais HaMikdash*, it was called in his name, as it says in *Tehillim (132:1-5)*: "*Zechor Hashem L'David es kol unoso...ad emtza makom l'Hashem mishkenos l'Abir Yaakov*."

The *Midrash Shocheh Tov* writes (*Tehillim 30:1*): Hashem said, one who thought in his heart to do the *mitzvah* and did not do it, I consider it as though he did it, because David thought about building it," and it is called on his name, as it says "*Mizmor Shir Chanukas Habayis L'David*."

## David Was Saved in the Merit of the Chanukas Habayis

Many wonder about the connection between the beginning of the passage, "*Mizmor Shir Chanukas Habayis*," and its continuation, the description of David Hamelech's salvation from his enemies. What is the connection between the building of the *Bais HaMikdash* and David's travails?

Simply, the *Toras Chaim (Sanhedrin 107b)* explains according to the Gemara (*Sanhedrin, ibid; Shabbos 30a*) that when Shlomo wanted to inaugurate the *Bais HaMikdash*, the gates stuck to one another and did not open until he asked in the merit of his father: "*Hashem Elokim, al tashve pnei meshichecha, zachrah lechasdei David avdecha*, do not turn away Your anointed one, remember the kindness of David Your servant." (*Divrei Hayamim II, 6:42*), and then the gates opened.

The Gemara there explains that until that moment, David Hamelech's enemies rejoiced, saying that Hashem had not forgiven him for the sin of Batsheva. But from that moment on, their faces were transformed, and became clouded, because the fact that the gates were opened in his merit proved to all that he had been forgiven for his sin.

This explains the link between the beginning of the passage and its continuation. In the merit of "*Chanukas Habayis l'David*" David was saved from his enemies who set obstacles for him all his life, and even after his passing.

The passage continues to describe the recovery of David from his ailments, and that too, is indirectly related to the *Chanukas Habayis*, as explained by Harav Yitzchak Zev of Brisk (*Al HaTorah, Tehillim*), according to the *Midrash (Yalkut Shimoni Divrei Hayamim remez 1081)*: The "*Megilas Bais HaMikdash*" was given to Moshe while he was standing, and Moshe gave it to Yehoshua while he was standing and Yehoshua to the Zekeinim and the Zekeinim to the Neviim, all while standing, and David also gave it to his

son Shlomo while standing.

As long as David was ill, he could not give over the *Megillah*, because it had to be done while standing (when he was healthy), and that's why he davened to Hashem to heal him, as it says (*Tehillim 41:11*): "*V'Atah Hashem chaneini vehakimeini v'ashalmah lahem*, Hashem please be benevolent to me and raise me up so that I can pay them." Thus, the *Chanukas Habayis* was contingent on his recovery.

The *Malbim* explains it differently (*Tehillim 30:1*): The "*bayis*" mentioned in this *Mizmor* is a parable to the body, which is the home of the soul that dwells within it. When David Hamelech was ill, his home—i.e., his body, was destabilized and when he recovered, *bechasdei Hashem*, his home was considered to have been rebuilt as it had been, and therefore, he begins his praise for his salvation with the words "*Mizmor shir chanukas habayis l'David*."

## Not to Forget the Bad Days

It is worthy to note the words of Harav Isser Zalman Meltzer in his introduction to his *sefer Even Ha'ezer (Vol. II, Avodah)* that it is clear that the words of the *Malbim* are a *drush* and far from the *psht*, and he explains:

In this *Mizmor*, David Hamelech teaches us the obligation of gratitude: When a sick, poor person who merits to recover, becomes wealthy and builds himself a big, beautiful home comes to thank Hashem for his wealth and his new home, he usually forgets about the days of poverty and suffering and thanks only for all the bounty he now has.

But David Hamelech teaches us that even in the good times that come, a person should not forget the days of his suffering, and even if he has already expressed gratitude at the time for being extracted from his troubles, still, when he receives good fortune, he must again remember and express gratitude for his salvation from the depths of his troubles, and only then to mention his good fortune and current happiness.

## I Will Exalt You Hashem, Because You Raised Me Up

This unique chapter describes various situations that David Hamelech was in, from the lowest of the low to the highest and most elevated. Indeed, the simple explanation of the thanks, "*Aromimcha Hashem ki dilisani*" is from the language of *romemus*, elevation. Just like a person draws water from the depths of a well, so, too, Hashem raised David Hamelech from the depths of his troubles to greatness.

In addition, Harav Baruch of Mezibuzh explains this gratitude in several different ways:

1. *Dilisani* is from the language of "*deles*," door, as David Hamelech thanks Hashem for giving him the merit to compile *Sefer Tehillim*, which is like an entryway for every Jew seeking to strengthen his *tefillah* and *teshuvah*.

2. Another meaning could be derived from "*dli*." Just like the *dli*, a bucket, is used to draw water up from the depths of the well, do too, David Hamelech, who was the *tzaddik* of the generation, served for Klal Yisrael as a "*dli*" to bring upon them an abundance of good from the Source of Life.

3. Another explanation can be "*dalus*," poverty or lowliness, and thus David Hamelech praises his Creator for having the merit to recognize His greatness and benevolence, and through that, to understand his own small stature and low level as compared to the magnitude of the Creator's greatness.

It is for these *chassadim* that David Hamelech thanks Hashem for in this *Mizmor*, and he concludes, "*L'maan yezamercha kavod velo yidom Hashem Elokai l'olam odeda*. So that my soul will sing praises to You and not be silent. Hashem, my G-d, I will thank You forever."

## Why Did the Plague Break Out?!

A terrible plague broke out in the city of Posna, and hundreds of people died. Things were just getting worse. The Mara D'Asra, Harav Naftali Katz, author of *Semichas Chachamim*, convened his *bais din*, and together, they declared a fast day of *tefillah* for all the residents of the city, men, women and children.

In addition, a firm message was issued by the *bais din* that anyone who knew of anything suspicious happening in the city was obligated to come and inform the *bais din* so that they could find out what was the reason Hashem had set this terrible plague on them, and through that, to understand what could be done to stop it.

A few hours after the message was issued, two residents of the city knocked at the rav's door, and nervously asked to speak with him privately.

The door closed behind them, and the rav took his seat at the head of the table while the two men sat on either side of him. They began to speak:

"We have come in light of the request of the *bais din* to report something suspicious happening in the city. We don't know if the testimony we have to share is "suspicious" but we decided to obey the rav and here we are. For some time, each night, close to *chatzos*, we notice one of the respected, wise members of the city, Harav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, emerging from his house carrying a small kerosene lantern, and heading for the forest outside the city.

"This appeared very suspicious in our eyes. What is a dignified Yid like him looking for in the forest, which at night is full of criminals and shady figures? One night, we decided to follow him, but he was able to evade us at one of the turns in the road and disappeared. We returned to the city no smarter than when we had left.

"We are sure that a *tzaddik* such as Rav Shlomo Zalman is surely not doing anything wrong, but because the rav asked us to inform him of anything suspicious we felt that it was right for us to report this so that it can be clarified. Perhaps in this merit the decree will be lifted."

Silence reigned in the room as the rav sat deep in thought. He was sure that all of Rav Shlomo Zalman's actions were *l'Shem Shamayim*, but what brought him to leave his house at such a late hour?

Then the rav spoke: "Thank you for drawing my attention to this matter, but because indeed, it is very difficult to express any doubt as to the pure intentions of the *tzaddik*, I have decided to join you tonight to check it out."

They made up to meet late that night. When they met, they tiptoed slowly towards the home of Rav Shlomo Zalman, and waited behind a wall on the side of the street. Sure enough, as *chatzos* neared, the door squeaked open and Rav Shlomo Zalman's venerable figure could be seen slipping out into the dark street.

For a man his age, he walked very briskly, and the rav and his companions had a hard time keeping up. But they soon found themselves following him towards the thick of the forest, with just the thin light of the lamp in his hand lighting the way.

At the edge of the quiet forest, Rav Shlomo Zalman stopped his rapid walk, and the three followers did the same, huffing and puffing from the exertion as they closely watched from behind the thicket.

They saw Rav Shlomo Zalman extinguish the lamp, and then he sat down on the ground and began to recite *Tikkun Chatzos* tearfully and in a broken voice, until even the hearts of the rav and the two men melted from the emotions that were clearly being expressed.

But one thing aroused their curiosity: Aside for Rav Shlomo Zalman's voice, they heard another voice in the darkness. There was no doubt about it; Rav Shlomo Zalman was not reciting the *Tikkun* on his own. Someone else, unseen, was saying it with him.

At the end of the *Tikkun*, Rav Shlomo Zalman collected his belongings and was about to set out for home, when he was shocked to find himself facing the distinguished rav of Posna.

"We have just seen that you are a holy man. However, I want to know who the other person saying the *Tikkun* with you is." At first, Rav Shlomo Zalman tried to evade answering, but the Rav ordered him, by power of his authority as *mara d'asra*, to reveal the truth.

"As the Rav noticed, my custom for a long time has been to mourn each night over the *Churban Bais HaMikdash*. In time, I was privileged to receive a gift from Above. Each night, Yirmiyahu HaNavi is sent down from the Heavens to this forest to say the *Tikkun* with me."

The rav countered with a complaint:

"If you had such a merit to meet with Yirmiyahu HaNavi each night, why did you not ask him why this terrible plague has been decreed on our city?"

"Tomorrow night I will ask him," Rav Shlomo Zalman replied.

Indeed, two days later, Rav Shlomo Zalman knocked at the rav's door and said: "I asked Yirmiyahu HaNavi, as per the Rav's request, and he replied that it is known that the *Bais HaMikdash* needed to be destroyed forty years prior to when it was actually destroyed. But because Am Yisrael in that generation were careful not to speak about mundane matters in shul, it remained standing for the next forty years, and was not destroyed despite the evil leanings of the people of that generation. But when they began transgressing this sin as well, and were no longer scrupulous about it, the decree was rendered and the *Bais HaMikdash* was destroyed.

Yirmiyahu then added: "You should know that it is not only that, but all the troubles that have happened to Jews over the years are because they speak of idle matters in shul, and that is also the reason of the trouble of your city, and you have permission to reveal this to them so that they can do *teshuvah* and see salvation."

As soon as Rav Shlomo Zalman concluded his words, the Rav hurriedly issued an announcement to gather all the city's residents, young and old, to the shul.

Standing in front of the crowd, the rav spoke and related this story, and detailed Yirmiyahu's explanation as to the reason for the plague. The entire assemblage burst into weeping and pledged from that day on not to speak anything mundane in shul. As soon as they did so, the plague was halted and the tides turned for the Jews of Posna.

Lehisaden B'ahavasecha, Vol. V, p. 345