

Vechol Maaminim

A Weekly Leaflet From "Bnei Emunim"



PARASHAS TERUMAH

IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

Giving Tzedakah L'Shem Shamayim

“ויקחו לי תרומה” (כה, ג)

“Li – liShmi, for Me—for My Name” (Rashi)

The Ozherover Rebbe writes in his *sefer Beer Moshe*:

In order for a donation to truly be for the sake of Hashem, without any feelings of conceit, the giver must recognize that everything that he has belongs only to HaKadosh Baruch Hu. Who deposited the money in his hands. Therefore, the Ari HaKadosh established the custom of giving *tzedakah* during the *tefillah* of *Vayevarech Dovid*, while reciting: “V’Atah moshel bako!” (Magen Avraham 51 7), because with this statement a person proves that he recognizes that he has nothing of his own, and through this, the *tzedakah* he gives is *l'Shem Shamayim*.

The Way We Say Hashem’s Name In Our Times

The *Yalkut Hagershuni* (*Agados HaShas*, Vol. II, p. 203) offers an insightful explanation on the words of *Rashi*: The Gemara (*Sotah* 38a) says that in the Bais HaMikdash the name of Hashem that was uttered was the *Shem Havayah*, in the way that it is written, not the way we say it today, in the language of Adnus. Bearing this in mind, we can say that this is what *Rashi* intended when he wrote: “Li – liShmi” in order to mention My Name properly, you will need to build the Mishkan, because only inside it can you utter it as it is written.

Furthermore, in our time, as well, since the Bais HaMikdash was destroyed as the result of our sins, we can rectify this flaw by replying amen with *kavanah*. As the *Baal Haturim* writes (*Devarim* 24:2), the reason that ‘one who answers amen is greater than the one making the *brachah*’ is because the numerical value of amen includes both the way Hashem’s Name is written (*Havayah*) and the way it is uttered (*Adnus*). By contrast, the person making the *brachah* only mentions the way it is uttered (*Adnus*).

Building LeShem Shamayim

“ככל אשר אני מראה אותך את תבנית המשכן ואת תבנית כליו וכן תעשו” (כה, ט)

Harav Dovid Hecksher, *zt”l*, a *rosh yeshivah* of Kol Torah said:

This *passuk* teaches us how important it is to

prepare a place of Torah and *tefillah* with purity and holiness from the construction stage. If not, why did the Torah write in detail about how the Mishkan and all its vessels were built?

This helps us understand the words of the *Gr”a* (*Maalos HaTorah*, *Maamarei R”A*: 13) that one who builds a shul of stones should hew them from the quarry with holiness *l'Shem Shamayim*, and thus all the *tefillos* that are davened there are guaranteed to be recited with *kavanah*. Even though the words of *tefillah* are holy and should block foreign thoughts and distractions, still, it is only in a place that is built with *kedushah* that the potential of this holiness can be realized.

Shiras Dovid, Maamarim, p. 108

Amen After Birchas Hamazon

“ועשית לו ארבע טבעות זהב” (כה, כו)

Rabbeinu Bechayei writes that the word “*zahav*” is an acronym for the three first *brachos* of *Birchas Hamazon*, which are an obligation from the Torah: *Hazan*, *Ha’aretz* and *Boneh Yerushalayim*.

By way of *remez* we can add that the word “*arba*” is numerically equivalent to three times the value of amen (273), alluding to the ruling of the *Pri Megadim* (*Orach Chaim* 215 *Eishel Avraham* 10) that just like reciting the first *brachos* in *Birchas Hamazon* is a *mitzvah* from the Torah, so is replying amen after them a *mitzvah* from the Torah.

Tzuzim Uperachim, Parashas Ha’azinu

Concentrate Towards the Kodesh HaKodashim

“ונתת אל הארץ את העדת אשר אתך אליך” (כה, טז)

Harav Moshe Sternbuch, *shlita* says:

It is a known fact that even after the Bais HaMikdash was destroyed, the Kodesh HaKodashim still exists in all its holiness, as the Rambam writes (*Bais Habechirah* 4 1): “And when Shlomo built the House and knew that it would ultimately be destroyed, he built a place to hide the aron deep beneath it, in hidden caverns, and King Yoshiyahu ordered that it be hidden in the place that Shlomo built.” This fact was the basis for the ruling of the *Shulchan Aruch* (*Orach Chaim* 94 1) that even in our time, one who davens should direct his heart

to Yerushalayim, towards the Mikdash and the Kodesh HaKodashim.

But as such, one might wonder why so many people only concentrate towards Yerushalayim when they daven, and not in the direction of the Kodesh HaKodashim. It is undoubtedly a great *segulah* for anyone who wishes that his *tefillah* rise On High, to make sure to daven towards the Kodesh HaKodashim as well, as the *Shulchan Aruch* stipulated.

Chochmah Vodaas

Four Fundamentals in the Avodah of Tefillah

“והיו הכרבים פרשי כנפים למעלה סככים בכנפיהם על הכפרת ופניהם איש אל אחיו” (שם)

Harav Eliyahu of Wiskit, a disciple of the Kotzker Rebbe, learned four important fundamentals in the service of *tefillah* from this *passuk*:

1. “And the *keruvim* shall have their wings spread”: *keruvim* is a term indicating “*na’ar*” (*Onkelos*). A person must consider himself a ‘*na’ar*’, a youth, who has no wisdom of his own if Hashem will not grant it to him and illuminate his path. Only when he views himself as such, is he worthy of spreading his arms in *tefillah* before Hashem.
2. “Shielding the *kapores* with their wings” – ‘*kapores*’ is derived from the word “*kinuach*” and removing dirt (*Rashi Bereishis* 32:21), to teach us that the main thing a person’s *tefillah* must have is purity of heart, like the *tefillah* of Dovid Hamelech: ‘*Lev tahor bara li Elokim veruach nachon chadesh bekirbi.*” (*Tehillim* 51:12)
3. “With their faces towards one another” – whenever a person turns to his Creator to ask for something for himself, he must remember to also ask for something for his friend. Chazal have already guaranteed us: “Anyone who asks for mercy for his friend and he needs the same thing, he is answered first.”
4. The place of the *keruvim*, with their wings spread, was on the *Aron Habris*, to teach us that success in Torah depends on davening. The more a person asks of his Creator ‘*Veha’er eineinu beTorasecha*, illuminate our eyes with Your Torah’ the more his eyes will be opened to understand the words of Torah.

Eizor Eliyahu



ביום ראשון ז' באדר (תקפ"א) יחול יומא דהילולא של הצדיק הפלאי, בעל הייסורים, הרב הקדוש רבי יצחק אייזיק מקאליב זי"ע, שעל אודותיו סופר: בראשית ימי רבנותו בעיר קאליב, פתח הוא 'תלמוד תורה' לתנוקות של בית רבן. ולמן אותו היום ואילך, בכל בוקר היה מטריח עצמו וצוועד לבית ה'תלמוד תורה' כדי להקשיב לברכות השחר שהיו נאמרות מפי צעירי הצאן ולענות אחריהן אמן.

“מי זכרון ז' אדר”

ברכות השחר בחברותא - להאמין כל בוקר מחדש.

אמן אחר
תינוקות
של בית
רבן

Prayer of Faith

A Glance at the
Seder Hatfillah

Birchos Krias Shema – Seven Brachos Every Day

It is a *mitzvah* from the Torah to recite *Krias Shema* each day, morning and evening, as it says (*Devarim* 6:6-7): “*Vehayu hadevarim ha'eileh... vedibarta bam...ubeshachbecha uvekumecha*” – “at the time when people lay down and at the time when people get up.” (*Brachos* 10b)

As an addition to the *mitzvah* of *Krias Shema*, Chazal established the seven *brachos* of *Krias Shema*, which are the *brachos* we recite during davening before and after *Krias Shema*, as stated by the *Mishnah* (*Brachos* 11a): In the morning a person recites two before it and one after, and in the evening he makes two *brachos* before and two after.”

These seven *brachos* (three in the morning and four in the evening) are derived by Chazal (*Yerushalmi Brachos* 1 5) from the words of *Tehillim* (119:164): “*Sheva bayom hillalticha al mishpetei tzidkecha*.” Seven times a day I praise You for “*mishpetei tzidkecha*,” which is the *mitzvah* of *Krias Shema*, which is part of the *Sefer Torah* (*Rashi, Tehillim, ibid.*)

There are those who add that the three *parshiyos* of *Krias Shema* include seven *mitzvos* – “*mishpetei tzidkecha*” – *tefillin shel yad, tefillin shel rosh, mezuzah* and four *tzitziyos*. Therefore, they established that we recite seven *brachos* to thank Hashem for these seven *mitzvos*. (*Bach, Orach Chaim, 236 1*)

The *Sfas Emes* (*Matos* 5638) writes that “*sheva*” is derived from “*shevuah*”, a vow, because when we say these seven *brachos* a person accepts upon himself each day a vow to fulfill the *mitzvos* of Hashem, and renews the vow that he already made at Har Sinai. Knowing this helps sway a person's heart to his Creator.

Three By Day, Four By Night

The reason that the seven *brachos* are divided to three during the day and four at night was explained by Chazal (*Yerushalmi ibid*, according to the *Me'iri* in *Brachos*) according to what is says in *Yehoshua* (1:8): “*Vehagisa bo yomam valaylah*.” From here we learn that the “*hagayos*,” utterances, of the day and the night should be equal.” Therefore, during the day we say three *parshiyos* of *Krias Shema* (*Shema, Vehayah* and *Tzitzis*) and we add three *brachos*, which together make six. At night, in those times, when the *parashah* of *tzitzis* was not said, they added four *brachos* so that at night, too, six *parshiyos* should be said.

Another explanation is offered by the *Levush* (58): Because in the order of the Torah, night precedes day, as it says during Creation: “*Vayehi erev vayehi boker*” therefore, because of “*zerizin makdimim lemitzvos*,” those with alacrity do the *mitzvos* right away (*Pesachim* 4a), Chazal established that we recite most of the *brachos* (four) out of seven, during

the evening, and the rest remain for the morning.

It is apt to note here that although these *brachos* were established as part of the *mitzvah* of *Krias Shema*, they are not similar to the other *brachos* of the *mitzvos*, which are gratitude for the actual *mitzvah*. Rather, each one has a significance of its own: *Yotzer Ohr*, for the existence of light; *Ahavah Rabbah*, for learning Torah and the rest of the *brachos*, as we will explain in future installments. But as stated earlier, Chazal arranged them before and after the *mitzvah* of *Krias Shema*.

Brachos Krias Shema

Even though these *brachos* do not have the *halachos* of *birchos hamitzvos*, because the *brachos* are part of the “preparation” for the *mitzvah* of *Krias Shema*, and that is why they are called *Brachos Krias Shema*. The Baal Hatanya (*Likutei Amarim* 49) explained the following with regard to the *brachos* prior to *Krias Shema* of *Shacharis*:

Because the main principle of the *mitzvah* of *Krias Shema* is the *passuk* “*V'ahavta es Hashem Elokecha bechol levavecha*” therefore, the *brachah* of *Yotzer Ohr* precedes it. There, we express the greatness of the Creator, which is manifested by the order of the angels that stand On High and praise their Creator. Then we say the *brachah* of *Ahavah Rabbah Ahavtanu*, that despite the greatness of the angels and the fact that they do all of the Creator's wishes, with awe and fear, still, Hashem chose to dwell His *Shechinah* among us. Through this, we reach the true recognition of the *mitzvah* of *V'Ahavta es Hashem Elokecha*.”

Another reason is offered by the Alter of Slabodka: In order for us to be able to recite *Shema* properly “with *kavanah*, with fear, awe, trembling and perspiration” (*Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim* 61 1), we have to first introspect into the greatness of the Creator: the “*Yotzer Ohr uBorei Choshech...Po'el Gevuros, Oseh Chadashos, Baal Milchamos*” and this will arouse within us the love of Hashem. Then we can recite *Shema* as we should.

The Alter also derived from the *drush* of Chazal (*Yalkut Shimoni, Tehillim* 708) on the *passuk* in *Tehillim* (28:5): “*Ki lo yavinu el pe'ulos Hashem v'el maaseh yadav*” – “this is *Krias Shema*, that they recite *Yotzer Ohr*.” This means that in order to recite *Krias Shema* one needs to precede it with *Yotzer Ohr*, which describes the greatness of Hashem and the order of His world, and after we understand the actions of Hashem and His works, then we can accept *Ol Malchus Shamayim* by reciting *Krias Shema*. (*Telalei Oros*)

A Story of Faith

A Weekly Story About
Amen and Tefillah

A Miracle In the Place Where Amen Was Said

The following letter was received recently at the organization's offices from a Jew who was a longtime “*amen gabbai*” in his shul. Minor changes were made as necessary.

Dear Bnei Emunim, the organization that strengthens awareness of amen, About two years ago, you launched a public call to join the ‘Bnei Emunim’ revolution and serve as ‘*gabbai amen*’ at shuls. Because the subject of amen is one that has always been close to my heart, the advertisement caught my attention. I called the office and a friendly Yid explained what my job would be: To stand in the shul where you daven and gently suggest to *mispallelim* to listen to their *brachos* and answer amen, thus completing them.

The conversation ended with me agreeing to think about it. At the time, my mornings were relatively free, and the idea of filling them with thousands of such lofty *mitzvos* was attractive to me.

The next day I called back to confirm that I would be joining. A courier soon brought me all kinds of explanatory materials, cards and more. The next more, I arose early to daven *vasikin*, and right after that I began my shift.

Like every new thing, at first, the idea was met with some puzzlement by the *mispallelim*. I tried to explain to pleasantly explain to everyone what it was about, and the fact that I was a quite a recognized figure in my community meant that within a few days, I was doing “brisk business.”

Thus, for a long time, I dedicated a few hours each morning to this *mitzvah*. I felt tremendous satisfaction from the *zechus* that I had. The *mispallelim* also expressed their gratitude and appreciation. Many told me that they always wanted to be careful about answering *Birchos Hashachar* in a complete fashion, but didn't ask others because they were embarrassed to do so. Now this obstacle was lifted and they felt a great sense of satisfaction.

I may have continued doing this for a long time, but due to certain circumstances, after a year, I needed to move away to another city, which was totally strange to me. Despite personally continuing to be careful to recite *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa* even in my new place of residence, deep down I felt bad about the great loss of *zikui harabbim*—generating a *zechus* for others.

In my new neighborhood, I opened a certain business which should have succeeded. It was a unique field that several relatives of mine are involved in and I had good reason to think I would also succeed. But as the *passuk* says “many are the thoughts of man, and the Idea of Hashem prevails.” As the days went by I began to realize that expectations do not always meet reality. The business encountered constant and unexpected difficulties from day one. There were few customers for some reason, and the profits I had hoped to earn remained little more than a dream.

I didn't know what to do; I hoped that these were temporary difficulties and that soon enough, I would see

success. But as the days went by with no salvation in sight, I began to break. One evening, when my brother was marrying off his son in Yerushalayim, I found myself at the door of my old shul, trying find a tenth person to join a *minyán* for *Minchah*.

I was happy to see that my old neighbors hadn't forgotten me. They all waved to me in greeting and asked how I was doing and how the new businesses was doing...I tried to smile at them all, even though inside, I was burning with pain that I could hardly suppress. Really... how was the business?!

I was about to leave and head for the hall where the wedding would be held, when I met a good friend. After exchanging pleasantries, he said to me: “You should know that I have a warm spot in my heart for you because you listened to my *brachos* and said amen each morning. Since you left, I decided to continue doing it with a *chavrusa*, but you still have the *zechus* of getting me to start.”

I was happy to hear the compliment and remembered the sense of satisfaction that I felt during that unforgettable period in my life from the fact that with minimal effort I accrued so many *mitzvos*. Suddenly, the thought came to my mind: I need a *yeshuah*; why should I not use this opportunity and ask for it?!

The *mispallelim* who arrived at the shul after that were met with an interesting and unusual sight: In a corner of the entrance hall, where I stood each morning for that time that I served as a *gabbai amen*, I now stood with a *sefer Tehillim* in hand, davening fervently to our compassionate Father in Heaven to open the gates of success for me. With tears pouring from my eyes I pleaded that in the merit of the many amens that I had merited to answer in this place, Hashem should give me a good, generous *parnassah*, with *siyata diShmaya*.

What can I tell you? What happened next was beyond all imagination: In the two weeks that have passed, the wheel of fortune has turned drastically. Suddenly people took an interest in my new businesses, and with Hashem's help, I was able to close a few god deals that netted me good profits and even covered most of the debts I had amassed over the previous few months.

I saw this as an open miracle, as though I was being told: You did something for *Kavod Shamayim*, and now you merited *siyata diShmaya*.

And if little me merited such a great *yeshuah* in the merit of being *mezakeh* others with answering amen, how much more so you, Bnei Emunim, who are responsible for such a tremendous revolution in recent years in this *mitzvah*, will also merit wondrous miracles. May you see only good and *chessed* always. Amen.

With appreciation,
D.M.B.

A former *gabbai amen*