

# Vechol Maaminim



A Weekly Leaflet From "Bnei Emunim"

## PARASHAS KISISA

### IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

#### Among the Sick of Israel

“ולא יהיה בככם נגף בפקד אתם” (ל, יב)

**Rabbeinu Bechayei** explains the reason for why it is dangerous to count Klal Yisrael:

The *segulah* for Am Yisrael to be saved from their enemies is very great at the time when they are united as one man with one heart. The merit of the *rabbim*, the many, advocates for them. But when they are counted, then they are divided into individuals, and hence, each one of them stands trial for his sins, and they could be struck by a plague, *chalilah*.

When the **Ohr Sameach** fell ill with his final illness, **Harav Elchanan Wasserman**, ז"ל, suggested that he should publicize his name in the *yeshivos* so they could daven for him. Rav Meir Simchah replied: For myself, I prefer that they do not daven especially for me, because through this I will be separated from Klal Yisrael and judged according to my actions. As it says in the holy *Zohar* (*Vayeitzei* 160 2), it is better for a person to count himself among a *klal*, and not be judged as an individual.

*Rabbeinu Meir Simchah (Rabiner Edition) p. 234*

#### Tefillah Is Accepted in the Merit of Sinners of Yisrael

“ויאמר ה' אל משה קח לך סמים נטף ושחלת והלבנה” (לד)

“And *chelbenah* – a perfume whose smell is bad... And the *passuk* listed it among the ingredients of the *Ketoress* to teach us that it should not be minor in our eyes to include the sinners of Yisrael when we fast and pray, so that they should be counted with us.” (*Rashi*)

The *Rashi* concludes: “That they should be counted with us” seems to be repetitive. **Harav Yissachar Dov of Belz** explains this with a story that happened in the court of the Baal Shem Tov:

One Yom Kippur, the Baal Shem Tov was very atea arriving to the shul for *Ne'ilah*. When he began davening, he davened with more intense fervor than was usual even for him.

After Yom Kippur, the Baal Shem Tov explained his actions to his disciples: In one of the distant towns lived a Jew who was very wicked in his deeds. Towards the end of Yom Kippur, before *Ne'ilah*, he was suddenly aroused to repent, and resolved to do complete

*teshuvah*, including regretting his past actions. When he began *Ne'ilah*, he reached a state of such *dveikus*, cleavage to Hashem, that many *tefillos* that had been delayed from being accepted for years suddenly went up together with the prayer of this *baal teshuvah*. That is why I was late to davening; I wanted to daven with him so my *tefillah* would also be accepted willingly.

Based on this we can understand that the words “so that they should be counted with us” teach us that we need the sinners of Am Yisrael for our *tefillos*. It is not only for their benefit to include them; we also stand to benefit greatly from doing so.

*Alim Literufah, 5758*

#### Amen as an Olah and a Ketoress

“לשרת להקטיר אשה לה” (ל, כ)

The acronym of “*Ishares lehaktir ishe l'Hashem*” is numerically equivalent to amen. From here we learn that the *yichud* that is performed by replying amen rises and is accepted in Heaven like an *Olah* and a *Ketoress*.

*Niflaos MiTorasecha, entry Amen*

#### Amen Tears Up Decrees

“ועתה אם תשא הטאתם ואם אין מחני נא מספרך אשר כתבת” (לב, לב)

“*Tisa chatasam ve'im ayin*”: the acronym of the last letter of each word is equivalent numerically to amen, and “*ayin mecheini na*” is an acronym for amen. This teaches us that in the merit of being careful about replying amen with *kavanah*, a person's decree is torn up and his name is erased from the book of the guilty, as it says in *Tikkunei Zohar* (*Tikkun* 19 p. 41) “One who answers amen with all his might, his decrees for seventy years are torn up.”

*Shevet MiYehudah; Chiddushei Avra” ch*

#### Fortunate Are We for Believing

“וירא העם כי בשש משה לרדת מן ההר” (לב, א)

The Chafetz Chaim would often be *melamed zechus* on Am Yisrael and said:

During the days when the Erev Rav incited

Am Yisrael, they were unable to withstand the challenge for even a few hours, while we, believers the sons of believers, have been waiting expectantly for thousands of years for the arrival of *Mashiach*. We daven constantly and do not desist for a moment from our faith. How fortunate and praiseworthy we are.

*Sichos HaChafetz, Chaim 56*

#### The Time of Minchah – An Auspicious Time

“אולי אכפרה בעד חטאתכם” (לב, ל)

The word “*achaprah*”, I will tone, appears in another *passuk* in the Torah: “*Ki amar achaprah panav baminchah.*” (*Bereishis*, 32:21).

The connection between these two *pesukim* is explained by the *Baal Haturim*, according to the *Gemara* (*Brachos* 6b): “A person should always be careful to daven *Minchah*, because *Eliyahu* was only answered by *Tefillas Minchah*.” That is what Moshe says here: “I will atone for your sins,” when? At the time of *Minchah*! As it says “*Achaprah panav baminchah.*”

#### Klil Tiferes Berosho Nasata

“ואתה אמרת ידעתיך בשם וגם מצאת חן בעיני” (לב, ב)

**Harav Pinchas Halevi Horowitz, the Hafla'ah**, explained the words of the *passuk* “*yedatich beShem*”:

Rabi Shimon says in *Maseches Avos* (4 13): “There are three crowns, *Keser Torah*, the crown of *Kehunah* and the crown of royalty, and the crown of a good name rises above them all.” That is what Hashem said to Moshe: “*Yedatich beshem*”, I know you that you merited the *keser shem tov*, in which all the others are included.

Indeed, if we peruse the *pesukim* of the Torah, we will find that Moshe Rabbeinu merited all the crowns: *Keser Torah* – at the time of *Matan Torah*; *Keser Kehunah* – when he served in the Mishkan during the *Shivas Yemei Hameluum*, and *Keser Malchus* – when he was chosen to lead Am Yisrael.

We also refer to this praise in the davening of Shabbos morning: “*Klil tiferes berosho nasata*” – Moshe merited to be crowned with the *Keser Shem Tov*, which is included through all the other crowns.

*Panim Yafos, beginning of Parashas Tetzaveh*

## כל יום תענה שחרית אמן כל יום תשעים אמנים

Dear Yid!!

The *Zohar HaKadosh* (*Tikkunei Zohar* 18 33) says that it is an obligation of every Jew to try and answer at least ninety amens per day.

According to the *Rem"i* *MiPano* (*Shu"t*, 109) the *Zohar's* intention is specifically amen to a *brachah*, and therefore, it is almost impossible to complete those ninety amens without fulfilling the custom of reciting *Birchos Hashachar Bechavrusa*.

Join the tens of thousands of people who make *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa* every day.

And through that, may you be numbered among the *tzaddikim* who serve Hashem with truth and integrity.



## Brachah of Yotzer Ohr (1)

The Virtue of the Brachah of  
Yotzer Ohr

The first brachah in the Brachos of Krias Shema is Yotzer Ohr, in which we praise Hashem for creating light.

It is a special praise for us that we merit to make this brachah, as cited by the Midrash Tanchuma (Vezos Habrachah 7): "An evil person in his lifetime is considered dead. Why is that? When he sees the sun rise and does not make the brachah of Baruch Yotzer Hameoros, and when it sets, he does not recite HaMaariv Aravim...but tzaddikim make a brachah for every single thing."

The Hagahos of the Ateres Zekeinim (on Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 59) cites the segulos of this brachah and says that in Yotzer Ohr, the tefillah of Shemoneh Esrei and in Birchas Hamazon, one can find all the letters of the aleph beis aside for the "pei sofis" (פ) which indicates anger and fury. This is to teach us that one who has kavanah when reciting these brachos, then "then no Satan or any bad thing or any mekatreg, anger or fury can control his tefillah or his meals."

Mention the Middah of Night  
During the Day

Even though the brachah of Yotzer Ohr is recited by day, when the sun rises and shines, we also mention the creation of darkness. So, too, in the brachah of Maariv Aravim, recited at night, we also mention the creation of day. This is to take it out of the hearts of the heretics, who say in their impunity that whoever created the light did not create the darkness, chaililah. Therefore, we take care to mention the light and the darkness together all the time. (Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 59 1)

Another reason for this is cited by the Bais Yosef (ibid) in the name of the Mahar"i Abohav: If we would not mention the middah of night during the day, it could be inferred from our brachah that there is an element of bad in the darkness. This is not true, because "es hakol asah yafeh be'ito, He made everything nice in its time." (Koheles 3:11).

## Yotzer Ohr U'Vorei Choshech

From the words of the brachah it seems that darkness is a creation in and of itself, and is not only a lack of the presence of light. This also seems to be the case from the words of the Gemara in Chagigah (12a): "Rav Yehudah said, Rav Said: Ten things were created on the First day, and they are: heaven and earth, tohu vavohu, light and darkness..."

The Likutei Hagr" a on the Sefer Yetzirah (cited in Orchos Hagr" a, entry Choshech) says that the opinion of the heretics is that darkness is a lack of light, and their proof of this is that when one lights a candle in a small closed house, it illuminates the whole house, and

when it is extinguished, darkness is created. How did the darkness get into the small, closed house? It must mean, therefore, that darkness is an absence of light.

But the Gaon rejects these words vehemently and explains that darkness is a creation just like light, but that the Creator limited the power of light with natural boundaries, and he did not limit the darkness, except to a place where there is light. For example, it exists in the air that fills every void in the world, therefore, wherever there is no light, immediately, darkness spreads. The Gaon cited proof from the words of Yotzer Ohr U'vorei Choshech, and from the fact that light and darkness are stated equally in the words of the brachah of Krias Shema of Arvis: "Golel ohr mipnei choshech uchoshech mipnei ohr."

Still, there are Rishonim (Ramban Shemos 4:11; Ibn Ezra, Yeshayah 45:7, Rav Saadya Gaon in Emunos Vedeios) who believe that the darkness is not a creation in and of itself. They explain the words "borei choshech" to mean the common concept that someone who extinguishes a candle has brought darkness. Or that HaKadosh Baruch Hu created in the air of the world a reality that could accept the darkness. This is not the place to expound upon this.

Oseh Shalom U'vorei Es  
Hakol

After mentioning the greatness of Hashem Who maintains two such opposite forces, such as darkness and light, we continue to praise for the fact that He "makes peace and creates everything." He has created in His world opposing forces, but at the same time, He prepared them the way that will make it possible for them to coexist. (Otzar Hatefillas)

By way of Mussar, Harav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, zt"l, explains:

The essence of peace is not to cause that one of the sides should submit to the other. Rather, that there should be no possibility for discord. As the passuk says in Mishlei (16:7): "Birtzos Hashem darkei Ish gam oyvov yashlim ito." This means that even the opposing side will agree with the opinion of his adversary.

In all the opposite forces of nature, we can see discord and victory, like fire and water fighting among them, and suchlike. Except for light and darkness. Although darkness is the opposing force to light, it is still banished with a bit of light, with no objection.

Hence we find that light is the symbol of peace, and that is why the bad forces are banished before it, without any discord, and agree with it. Therefore, the words "oseh shalom" are recited near the words "yotzer ohr." (Telalei Oros)

## The Informer Caught at "Velamalshinim"

As every week, on the same day, at the same hour, the familiar knocking came at the heavy wooden door. In the entrance as always, stood the same sad, hunched over figure, with her regular request: "The Rebbe should please find me a heter."

Like always, this time, too, the Rebbe sadly needed to turn her away, as he showered her with condolences and with warm brachos that very soon she should emerge from darkness to light. This time, as well, the woman lowered her face, and answered a fervent amen, before turning to leave.

The woman was the niece of the Rebbe, Harav Pinchas of Koritz, zy" a. For many years, she had been sitting alone at home, an agunah, after her husband disappeared without a trace a short time after her marriage. He just left in the morning and did not return in the evening; he hadn't been seen since.

There was no logical explanation for his sudden disappearance. The man had begun to dabble a bit in trade, but to the best of his family's knowledge he had no connection to any dangerous entities. He had just entered the business world and had not had time to forge ties with any veterans in the industry.

At first, all the residents of the village galvanized to help the young agunah. But as the years passed, she became more and more lonely. The many years that had passed had banished the memory of her husband from all those who had known him. No one paid any attention to her anymore, and she remained alone, abandoned.

There was only one home where she continued to be treated with respect: at the home of her revered uncle she always found a listening ear and an understanding heart.

During the first months of her status as an agunah, the Rebbe spent endless time discussing the issue with the rabbanim and scholars of the city in an effort to find a heter for her, but for naught. Even the most erudite scholars were unable to come up with a heter. The Rebbe tried to activate anyone who could possibly help find the missing husband, any testimony, even the most remote, was listened to carefully and discussed seriously. But it was futile. It seemed as though this woman would remain alone for the rest of her life. Yet, she refused to give up.

The Rebbetzin would often beseech the Rebbe on her behalf. "Isn't the Rebbe a miracle worker for so many others? Why can he not perform a miracle for his niece?" she asked once, and he replied patiently: "What can I do if Chazal determined that a woman cannot become mutar, permitted, through miracles, but only through a clear testimony according to halachah. In a case such as this, no such testimony has been found, and therefore, there is still no heter for this woman."

Over those long years, the Rebbe never stopped davening for his niece; her name and her mother's name were written on a note that was always on his desk. At every opportunity, he prayed for a yeshuah for her.

One day, the Rebbe was in the middle of Shemoneh Esrei of Shacharis, the note with the agunah's name stuck in his siddur, as always. The Rebbe was deeply immersed in his tefillos. Suddenly, the mispallelim gasped in horror. The note fell from the place where it was stuck, and got caught in one of the candles that were on the amud in front of the Rebbe. It began to burn, but the Rebbe was so deep in his tefillos that he did not notice what was happening.

One of the mispallelim quickly recovered and hurried to extinguish the fire,

preventing a tragedy that could have occurred. The Rebbe continued davening as though nothing had happened. Nothing could block his tremendous kavanah and dveikus in Avodas Hashem.

It appeared that the Rebbe did not notice what happened, but after davening, he quickly called his meshamesh. The Rebbe instructed him to call the local malshin, the informer. This wretched Jew was known in the town of Koritz as being dangerous. Many Jews had suffered from his wrath, and some of them had been sent to jail for many years because of information that he had handed over to authorities.

In his defense, he claimed he was not a malshin, but rather a "preserver of the law and public order."

"It is inconceivable," he always claimed "that people around us should break the law and we should put our entire community at risk."

The malshin could claim his innocence incessantly, but well established and stubborn rumors claimed that this man was no "lover of the law" but rather "one who loves money can never be satiated with money." Nothing else could explain the life of luxury this man lived, while he did not actually do any work aside for his dedicated informing, for which he received significant sums of money from the authorities.

Within a short time, the man appeared before the Rebbe. He expected, as usual, to receive a scolding, which would generate a series of apologies and senseless defenses, but he was surprised when the Rebbe commanded sharply: "Tell me where my nephew, the husband of the agunah, is right now!"

"How should I know?" the malshin replied, as expected. But the Rebbe was unmoved and repeated his words in an even firmer tone, threatening the informer that if he ignored him, he would have a bitter fate. The malshin, who realized where things were going, claimed impudently: "What does the Rebbe want? Am I a navi that I should know?" He turned to leave the house.

But then something terrible happened: As he began to descend the stairs, the malshin stumbled and fell, and went tumbling down the entire flight. His body was battered over and over by the sharp stone stairs. When he was finally able to sit up at the bottom of the stairs, both his arms were broken and his body was aching and bleeding. He blurted submissively: "The man is alive, and is in prison under an assumed name, after 'someone' informed on him that he was dealing in counterfeit coins."

"You must work to release him immediately!" the Rebbe commanded. The malshin, who had already tasted the results of his impudence, did not even entertain the idea of disobeying the Rebbe again. A few days later, the city of Koritz was in an uproar as the man who was considered dead returned home, to the joy of his wife and all those who knew him. It was nothing sort of a wonder.

In time, when the Rebbe was asked what happened that morning and why it took the Rebbe so many years to get to such a simple yeshuah, the Rebbe explained: "That morning, when the note fell into the fire, I was in the middle of the tefillah of Velamalshinim. I saw that as a sign from Above that the malshinim had it in their hands to solve the problem of this woman whose name was on the note. Therefore, I hurried to summon the malshin, and indeed, it emerged that he was the one who had brought about the young man's disappearance."

Likutei Imrei Pinchas, Shaar Hashipurim 142