

Vechol Maaminim



A Weekly Leaflet From "Bnei Emunim"

PARASHAS BEHAR-BECHUKOSAI

IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

Every Day Like New

"כי תבאו נתן לכם" (כה ב)

Why did the Torah say here: "to the land that I am giving" in the present tense, unlike other *pesukim*, which use the past tense? One example of the past tense is in *Parashas Matos* (*Bamidbar* 33:53) "Ki lachem nasati es ha'aretz", among other places.

Rav Yaakov Katina, *av bais din* of Chust, explains:

The Torah wants to teach us that it is in our ability to attain a new understanding in the holiness of Eretz Yisrael each day. As such, it is as though we are given the land each day anew. Similarly, we say in *Birchas HaTorah*, "Nosein haTorah." That is because one who toils in Torah finds new sweetness and pleasure in it each day, as *Chazal* said (*Sifri Re'eh*, 58) on the *passuk* (*Devarim* 4:8): "Asher anochi nosein lifneichem hayom" – "they should be beloved to you today as though you received them today from Har Sinai." *Korban Ha'ani*

The Brachah Depends on the Tefillah

"וכי תאמרו מה נאכל... וצויתני את ברכתי לכם" (כה כ-כא)

Why did the Torah condition the *brachah* on the question of "what will we eat?" instead of just writing: "And I will command My *brachah* on you?"

Harav Akiva Yosef Schlesinger explained: "*Vechi somru*" is not a language of a question; rather it is a *tefillah*. Because *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* awaits the *tefillas* of Am Yisrael, He does not fulfill "*vetzivisi es birchasi*" until they daven to him, "*vechi somru mah nochal*." *Toras Yecheil*

Before They Call and I Will Answer

"וכי ימוך אחיך ומטה ידו עמך והחזקת בו" (כה לה)

The **Dubno Maggid** explains:

There are two *middos* in the way one can support the poor: The first person waits until the poor man comes to his door and details his poverty, while the second is a "*maskil el dal*", his heart becomes aware by itself to the needs of the poor man, and before he calls, the benefactor answers.

HaKadosh Baruch Hu treats those who give *tzeddakah* the same way they give to others, *middah keneged middah*:

The first person, who waits until the poor man

comes to him, is referred to in *Tehillim* (91:15): "*Yikra'eini ve'enehu*" – He will call Me and I will answer. Only after he asks does he get a response. The second one, who gives to the poor before he is asked, will merit that the words "And it will be before they call and I will answer" be fulfilled with him. (*Yeshayahu* 65:24).

Ohel Yaakov

Amen Imbues Emunah

"כי תבאו אל הארץ אשר אני נתן לכם ושבתה הארץ" (כה ב)

The acronym of "*nosen lachem veshvashah ha'aretz*" is numerically equivalent to *amen*, to teach us that answering *amen* imbues a person's heart with *emunah*. The power of this *emunah* strengthens a person to fulfill the *mitzvah* of *shemittah* properly.

Korban Ha'ani

Amen V'Amen to Hasten the Geulah

"וזכרת את בריבי יעקוב" (כו מב)

The **Rema MiPano** (*Asarah Mamaros* Vol. IV, 2 15) writes: "Yaakov" is numerically equivalent to "*amen v'amen*." Because Yaakov was the source of blessing, "therefore, how good it is for a person to have two friends who listen and answer amen after his *brachos*" so that through the two *amens* that they reply, the *brachah* will be fully applied.

The **Chasam Sofer** (*Toras Moshe* according to *Rashi* here) explains that during the *galus*, the name of Yaakov is written without a *vav*, and in the end of Days, it will be written complete, Yaakov with a *vav*. Based on this, the **Igra DeTzvi** (on *Igra DePirka remez* 59) writes that when two people answer *amen* together, they complete the name of Yaakov, with a *vav*, and it is like they are davening that Hashem should hasten the *Geulah* so his name should be complete for eternity.

The Sanctity of the Shul Precedes the Honor of Your Friends

"את שבתתי תשמרו ומקדשי תיראו" (כו ב)

Harav Shlomo Zalman Friedman, the *Tenka*

Rav, explains the words of this *passuk*:

When you come to shul on Shabbos with your friends, remember the commandment "*Umikdashi tira'u*—and My sanctuary you should fear." Don't be tempted to desecrate it with idle chatter between friends.

It is possible that this is what *Rabi Eliezer* intended in his will to his students (*Brachos* 28b): "*Hizaharu bikevod chaveireichem*...and when you daven, know before Whom you are standing." Even though you have to treat your friends kindly and in a friendly manner, still, during davening, you must remember before Whom you are standing and don't fall into idle conversation with them.

Kerem Shlomo P. 35

"Be'itam" – At a Time When No Travelers Are Davening

"אם בחקתי תלכו ואת מצותי תשמרו... ונתתי גשמיכם בעתם" (כו ג)

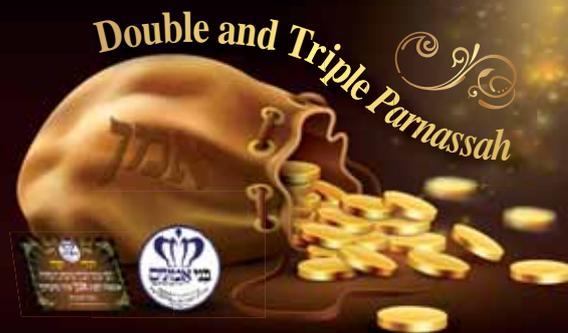
"*Be'itam*" – at a time that is not customary for people to go out, such as on Friday night and on Yom Tov evenings." (*Rashi*)

Rav Yaakov Hamburger, the *av bais din* of Prague, explained:

In *Maseches Yoma* (53b), it says that one of the requests of the *Kohein Gadol* on Yom Kippur in the *Kodesh HaKodashim* was "the prayers of travelers should not be accepted." Nevertheless, when *Rabi Chanina ben Dosa* was once walking on the way and it suddenly began to rain, he asked, "*Ribbono shel Olam*, the whole world is in comfort and *Chanina* is in distress?" His *tefillah* was accepted and the rain stopped immediately.

This story proves that the *tzaddik* has the power to annul the *tefillah* of the *Kohein Gadol*. According to this *passuk*, it emerges that if *Bnei Yisrael* will follow the laws of Hashem, and will obey His *mitzvos*, the rains will never be able to fall, because of the *tefillas* of the travelers among them. Therefore, *Rashi* explained that the promise of "and I will give your rains in their time" will only apply to a time when it is not customary for people to go out – a time when there won't be a *tzaddik* out to daven that the rain should stop.

Kol Kol Yaakov p. 58



The Avudraham (Tikkun Hatefillas) writes in the name of Rabi Avraham Ben Shushan:

How great is the reward of one who davens with the *tzibbur*, because in one *tefillah*, he has the reward of davening three *tefillas*. How? In the quiet *Shemoneh Esrei* he says 19 *brachos*, and when he listens closely to the *brachos* of the *Shatz*, then through the law of "*shomea k'oneh*, one who hears it is like he answers" he earns another 19 *brachos*. When he makes sure to answer *amen*, he has another 19 *brachos*, as it says (*Brachos* 53b): "One who answers *amen* is greater than the one making the *brachah*." Thus, in one *tefillah* he has 57 *brachos*. In the merit of these 57 – "*zan*" *brachos*, *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* sustains him and his family with abundant *parnassah*.

Hazan es hakol. Amen.

Birchas Yotzer Ohr (5)

Hallel and Praise for the
Creation of the Heavenly Armies

Further on in the *brachah* of *Yotzer Ohr*, after we finish praising and lauding for the creation of the Heavenly lights, we continue to expound on the praises of our Creator for creating angels that were created in order to speak about His greatness in the world, so that we can see and then act like them. (*Iyun Tefillah*, and from the *nusach* of *Kedushah*: 'Nakdishach venaaritach kenoam siach sod sarfei kedosh.')

At the beginning of this praise, we bless HaKadosh Baruch Hu with three names: "Tisbarach lanetzach Tzureinu, Malkeini VeGoaleinu." These three descriptions correspond to three periods in life: past, present and future. *Tzureinu* corresponds to the past, in which the Creator created us; *Malkeinu* is for the present, when He watches over us like a king over His subjects, with a watchful eye; *Goaleinu* is in the future, when the Geulah will arrive. Because the concepts of 'past present and future' began from the period when the Heavenly bodies were suspended in the sky, therefore, we make sure to mention them in the *brachah* of *Yotzer Ohr*. (Commentary of Rav Avraham, son of the Gra.)

Another explanation: *Maseches Avodah Zarah* (9a) cites the *Tanna Devei Eliyahu*: Six thousand years is the world, two thousand was nothingness, two thousand Torah and two thousand the days of Mashiach.

We use the three languages to describe Hashem to correspond to these three periods:

Tzureinu, for the two thousand years of nothingness, when those in the world only recognized the fact that HaKadosh Baruch Hu was "tzuram", the One Who created them, but did not believe in His constant leadership of the world.

Malkeinu corresponds to the two thousand years of Torah that began from when Avraham Avinu was 52 years old and began disseminating *emunah* among those in his generation. From his days and on, people of the world began to believe in the Kingship of the Creator, and in His constant Hashgachah that does not cease for a second. This faith became especially honed after *Mattan Torah*, when Hashem revealed Himself in all His Glory to all of Bnei Yisrael.

Goaleinu corresponds to the two thousand years of *Yemos Hamashiach*, which began from the destruction of the Second Bais HaMikdash until our time, when we don't stop for a moment to daven and yearn for the final Redemption. At that time, Hashem will reveal His Glory to the whole world, and all evil will dissipate like smoke as Hashem will uproot all evil rule from the world. (*Iyun Tefillah*)

New Angels Every Day

Among the Heavenly armies there are angels that are created every day and every hour, glorifying their Creator and then immediately going out of existence (see *Chaggigah* 14a). We refer to them in our praise by saying, "Tisbarach Tzureinu...Borei kedoshim,

yishtabach Shimcha...Yotzer mesharsim" (*Avudraham*, and see *Tosafos* there 13a beginning "meziasan").

Because these angels are created with the power of our *tefillah*, the more *kavanah* a *tefillah* has, the holier they are. Therefore, the praise is divided between the way the *tefillah* rises up to the *Olam HaBriah*, which is very high, at which point HaKadosh Baruch Hu is "Borei kedoshim", and the way that it reaches only until the *Olam Hayetzirah*, which is lower, then Hahsem is "Yotzer mesharsim" (*Siach Yitzchak*, Gandman, *Shaar* 8, and see *Iyun Tefillah*).

Aside for the angels created each day, there are ministering angels that were created with *Brias HaOlam*, and since then, they are there and do not cease to exist. Among them are Michael, Raphael, Gavriel and others. We refer to them by praising in the past tense: "V'asher mesharsav kulam omdim berum olam." Therefore, we pause for a second between "yotzer mesharsim" and "v'asher mesharsav" to announce that they are two separate praises. (*Avudraham*, *Siddur Rav S.* of Premishla)

This is the place to note the words of the *Yesod Yosef* (Chapter 80) that from every single mitzvah that a person does, angels are created that belong to that mitzvah, and they reply amen after the *brachah* a person makes for doing the mitzvah. Chazal have already alluded that amen is numerically equivalent to "malach", angel.

To Do the Will of Our Creator
With Awe and Fear

With a flesh and blood king, the closer the servant is to the king, or the rav is to his *meshamesh*, the less awe there is between them. However, with HaKadosh Baruch Hu, it is different. Those who are closer to Hashem --because they recognize His kingship and grasp the tremendous levels of greatness--fear Him far more than other creations. Therefore, we are careful that those servants who are in the higher parts of the world are the ones who "mashmi'im beyirah divrei Elokim chaim uMelech Olam." (Eitz Yosef)

Kulam Ahuvim Kulam Berurim

It is possible that envy and hatred might break out among humans, because the *yetzer hara* constantly plants the idea in a person's heart that his friend is taking something that he deserves. One is sure that if his friend has a good thing, or a virtue above him, it is certainly on account of what he is supposed to have. But the angels are "kulam berurim" -- each one of them clearly knows what his special role is and is aware of the reason for which he was created: to praise and glorify their Creator. Therefore "kulam ahuvim" -- there is no hatred or competition between them and they are always friendly and love one another, "vekulam osim be'eimah ubeyirah retzon Konam...venosnim reshus zeh lazeh lehakdash leyotzram, they all carry out with fear and awe the Will of their Creator ...and give permission one to another to sanctify their Creator." (*Sifsei Chaim, Ohr Yahel*, Vol. III, p. 356)

Intercontinental Tefillah

Thursday evening. The ringing phone in the M. home in Bnei Brak cut off the typical hustle and bustle of this hour of this day. One of the children picked up the phone, listened for a minute and then gave it to his father: "Telephone call from England," he said, a bit alarmed. "It sounds urgent!" he added. Rabbi M. picked up, and heard that the caller was Moshe, his longtime friend from yeshivah:

"I'm speaking to you from the hospital in London," Moshe said tensely. "We had a boy half an hour ago..."

"Mazel tov, mazel tov!" Rabbi M. instinctively responded, but immediately fell silent when he realized that something was not right with the child. Moshe didn't sound the way one expects a new father to sound.

"Thank you for the wishes," Moshe didn't forget his British manners even in his time of trouble, but then quickly continued: "The doctors are very worried about the baby. For a few minutes during the birth, he lacked oxygen, and they say his brain has been irreparably damaged. There's almost no chance he will grow and develop like a normal child."

Moshe finally broke down and his sobs came through the line, but Rabbi M. had no words with which to console him.

"I'm asking you, Rabbi M.," Moshe broke the silence, "you are a *talmid* of Harav Michel Yehudah Lefkowitz. Please, go to his house and ask him to daven for my baby!"

Rabbi M. glanced at his watch. It was too late to knock on the door of the elderly *rosh yeshivah*. He parted from his friend with words of encouragement for a *yeshuah* and promised that first thing in the morning he would go to the *rosh yeshivah's* house and ask on behalf of the sick child.

The next morning, Rabbi M. arose early to daven with the *rosh yeshivah*. Right after davening, he shared the story of the baby with the Rav and pleaded for a *brachah*. The *rosh yeshivah*, who was about to leave the house, listened patiently to the story and said:

"Right now, I'm on the way to serve as a *sandak* at a *bris*. Often, I feel that the *tefillah* that I daven at a time when I'm *sandak* are accepted more than other *tefillah*. This time, I will daven for this baby."

The Rav thought for a few moments, and then looked into Rabbi M.'s hopeful eyes. He raised his voice a bit and said with confidence: "Don't worry. The baby will be fine, physically and mentally, *b'ezras Hashem!*"

Rabbi M. emotionally thanked the Rav, and parted from him with words of gratitude. He raced home to call Moshe and tell him about the *brachah* and the rare promise of the *rosh yeshivah*.

As Rabbi M. was speaking to Moshe, the *bris* where the *rosh yeshivah* was *sandak* was completed. The baby was

still on the *rosh yeshivah's* lap, and he closed his eyes and davened fervently that the English baby that he did not know become healthy and nothing, and that no signs should remain of the traumatic birth. He then davened that the child grow in Torah and *Yiras Shamayim*.

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Meanwhile, in London, the worried parents were preparing to spend Shabbos at the hospital. A few kind Yidden had prepared a package for them, with all the food and other things they would need for Shabbos.

They watched the doctors in white coats dash back and forth around the baby's little bed, and their expressions did not bode well.

Moshe gazed into the cradle full of tubes and machines connected to his young baby, and he was overcome with worry. Thus, just a few minutes before candlelighting in Eretz Yisrael, he found himself placing a frantic call to another friend. He asked this friend to go to Rav Chaim Kanievsky, *shlita*, for a *brachah* for the baby.

The friend immediately ran over to Rav Chaim's home. To his surprise, as soon as Rav Chaim heard the story he said, "Go to Rav Michel Yehudah, my *rebbe*. His *brachos* are very important in Shamayim!"

That friend, who did not know that Rav Michel Yehudah had already blessed the baby, hastened to the *rosh yeshivah's* home. But before he could finish the details of the story, Rav Michel Yehudah said: "I already davened for him at a *bris* this morning. Hashem will help and he will be healthy and well!"

A week passed. The next day, the baby was taken for a battery of tests with special equipment. The doctors wanted to map his brain to see how much had been damaged and what could be healed.

Outside the exam room, the parents waited tensely, reciting *Tehillim* fervently. They were worried sick, but their confidence in the *tefillah* of the *rosh yeshivah* gave them strength.

Twenty long, drawn out minutes passed before the door opened and the doctor emerged—with a stunned look on his face. He could hardly speak.

"This is not the same baby. I am sure of it!" he sputtered. "You brought me a different baby, he's totally healthy... The test was perfectly normal. There is no other explanation for this other than it is a miracle!"

With tears of gratitude in their eyes, the parents had no doubt what had caused this miracle.

It was the *tefillah* of the *rosh yeshivah* that had breached the Heavens for them and torn up the decree.

Me'oram Shel Yisrael, p. 347