

Vechol Maaminim



A Weekly Leaflet From "Bnei Emunim"

PARASHAS EMOR

IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

Load Upon Us the Brachos of Your Moadim

“והשיאו אותם עון אשמה באכלם את קדשיהם” (כב טז)
“*Vehisiu osam*” – they will load upon themselves a sin when they eat their *kodshim*.” (Rashi)

According to Rashi that “*Vehisiu*” is the language of *hatanah*, of carrying a load, Harav Yechiel Michel Feinstein explained the wording of our request in *Mussaf* of Shalosh Regalim “*Vehaseinu Hashem Elokeinu es bircas moadecha lechaim uleshalom...*” Riboono shel Olam: Gives us the merit that we should derive much *kedushah* from the *brachah* of the *moadim*, in such a great measure that the *brachah* should be upon us like a heavy burden.

Sar HaTorah, p. 356

Shabbos Blesses the Korbanos

“שור או כשב או עז...ומיום השמיני והלאה ירצה לקרבן אשה לה” (כבכ ז)

“HaKadosh Baruch Hu said: Don’t bring a *korban* before Me until it passes a Shabbos.” (Vayikra Rabba 27 10)

According to the *Midrash*, the *Shibbolei Haleket* (*Mussaf* of Shabbos) explains a question that arises when reading the words of *Mussaf* on Shabbos: “*Tikanta Shabbos ratzisa korbanoseha*”: Is it only the *korbanos* of Shabbos that Hashem wants? Actually, this is an allusion to the words of the *Midrash* that a *korban* is not willingly accepted by Hashem until it experiences a Shabbos.

To Thank for the Good and the Better

“וכי תזבחו זבח תודה לה’ לרצונכם תזבחו” (כבכ ט)

The *Ksav Sofer* explains:

The way of the world is that someone who experienced a miracle and expresses gratitude for his rescue, feels deep in his heart that he would have preferred that the trouble not befall him in the first place so he would not need a *yeshuah*. Therefore, the Torah instructs us about the *Korban Todah*, which is also in gratitude for a miracle (Rashi ibid 7:12): “*Lirtzonchem tizbachu*” – Know that even a trouble that happens to you is for your good. As Chazal said (*Brachos* 33b): “A person must bless for the bad the same way he blesses for the good.” Through this, bring your *korban* with willingness.

The *Ksav Sofer* further adds an explanation for the wording of the *brachah* of “*Hagomel*”

Lechayavim Tovos Shegemalani Kol Tov.” Why is it not enough to say “*shegemalani tov*”? This comes to teach us that when thanking Hashem for the *yeshuah*, the one making the *brachah* needs to recognize that the *tzar* was also for his benefit, and to thank for the good and for the better, at once.

Ksav Sofer Hachadash, p. 145

The Most Select Donation

“לפלא נדר או לנדבה” (כב כא)

“*Lenedavah*” is numerically equivalent to *amen*. From here we can learn that one should not suffice only with those *amens* that a person is obligated to recite, such as after hearing a *brachah*, or *Kaddish*, or during davening. Rather, he should seek to perform the mitzvah of answering *amen*, as it says (*Yeshayahu* 26:2) “*Shomer emunim.*”

Kovetz Vayizra Yitzchak, 15, p. 34

“Khal Am” At a Seudas Hoda’ah

“ביום ההוא יאכל לא תותירו ממנו עד בקר” (כב ל)

Why is the *Korban Todah* that is eaten for a day and a night different to the other *Kodshim Kalim* that are eaten for two days?

Rav Yitzchak of Volozhin offers a beautiful explanation:

The *Korban Todah* comes to thank for a miracle, hence the Torah instructed that it be eaten within a short time, this way the one who brings it will need to invite a lot of people to his meals so that no meat should remain after the time for eating it. Through this, his miracle will be publicized, as it says in *Tehillim* (107:31-32): “*Yodu l’Hashem chasdo venifleosav livnei adam. Veyeromemuhu bikehal am.*”

Peh Kadosh

To Refute the Tzedokim

“וספרתם לכם ממחרת השבת” (כג טו)

Many have wondered about the *nusach* of the *sefirah* on the first day of the Omer: “*Hayom yom echad la’omer.*” Why do we not say “*Hayom yom rishon la’omer*”? That makes more sense linguistically, as appears from the words of Rashi on the Torah (*Bereishis* 1:5), and in this *parashah*, where the Torah mentions several times, “*Bayom harishon*”?

Harav Yosef Shaul Nathanson explained: In order to refute the distorted opinion of the Tzedokim (Saducees) that *sefiras haOmer* needs to begin specifically on the first day of the week (see *Menachos* 65a), Chazal established that we recite it this way. If we would have said “*Yom rishon*” there would have been a possibility of erring, *chalilah*, and thinking like their view. Therefore we are careful to count: “*Yom echad*”, not specifically the first day of the week, but the first day of the counting.

Divrei Shaul

In Order to Purify Us from Our Klipos

Harav Chaim of Kossov says:

“*Lachem*” is an acronym for “*kedei letahareinu mikliposeinu.*” From here, there is an allusion to the *nusach* of the *tefillah* that we say after counting the Omer: “*Ribbono shel Olam You commanded us...to count the Omer...in order to purify ourselves mikliposeinu unitumoseinu.*”

Toras Chaim

If Like Sons, If Like Slaves

“וקראתם בעצם היום הזה מקרא קדש יהיה לכם כל מלאכת עבדה לא תעשו” (כג כא)

In the *tefillah* of *Hayom Haras Olam*, recited on the Day of Judgment, we ask: “If like sons, then have mercy on us like a father has mercy on his sons; if like slaves, our eyes are turned to You until you grant us a pardon and issue our judgment...” In other words, we prefer the status of a son, who is confident in the mercy of his father, than the level of the servant, whose eyes are always turned to his master in a plea. Sometimes that master accepts the request, and other times he does not.

The Gemara (*Rosh Hashanah* 16a) explains that the Moadim are all called *Yemei Din*, Days of Judgment. As such, Harav Yehonasan Eibeshitz explained the words of the *passuk* here by way of *drush*:

“*Ukarasem b’etzem hayom hazeh mikra kodesh*” – in the good days that are like days of judgment for you: “*kol meleches avodah lo saasu*” – make sure not to serve your Creator like a servant who serves his master, out of coercion and necessity, but rather out of love and joy like a son serving his father. This way, you will merit to be confident in the compassion of Hashem, the way a son is confident in his father, and not like a servant whose eyes are always turned to his master in a plea.

Tiferes Yehonasan

“Az tikra v’Hashem yaaneh” (Yeshayah 58:9). What does “az” here mean? These are the 8 letters (“az” is numerically equivalent to 8) of the Names “Havayah” and “Ado-nai” that together, are numerically equivalent to *amen*. One who answers *amen* with all his might arouses the power of these Names as one, and he is guaranteed that his *tefillas* will be accepted and seventy years worth of decrees will be torn up.
Tikkunei Zohar 40 1



On the *yahrtzeit* of the holy Rabi Shimon Bar Yochai, let us remember his holy words about the virtues of replying *amen*, and may it be Hashem’s will that we merit to have Rabi Shimons’ merit protect us and bring upon us *brachah* in all areas, *amen*!

Hat’s gepoilt ales gut. Amen!



Toraso Magen Lanu

Replying Amen According to the
Tanna Rabi Shimon Bar Yochai

The special attention that the holy Tanna Rabi Shimon Bar Yochai gives in the *Sefer HaZohar* to the mitzvah of answering amen is renowned. It would require a much broader platform to present everything he writes about the lofty virtues and holiness of this mitzvah throughout his holy works.

In honor of Lag BaOmer we present our readers with a sampling of his words, and even though the presentation is brief in a place where it should be lengthy, we know the words of the wisest of all men (*Mishlei* 9:9): "Ten lechacham veyechkam od, give to a wise man and he will become wiser." Any person who seeks to know more can peruse these concepts in the sources.

Tefillos Are Accepted in the Merit
of Amen

When Am Yisrael in this world make sure to answer amen with the right intentions in their hearts, how many gates of *brachah* are opened Above, and how much good is bestowed upon all the worlds! How much joy there is in every pace!

What is the reward of Yisrael for causing this? They have a reward in this world and in the World to Come:

In this world: At a time when their enemies torment them, and they daven to Hashem to save them, the Voice announces in all the worlds: "Open the gates and a righteous nation that is *shomer emunim* will enter." (*Yeshayah* 26:2). Don't read it "emunim" but rather "ameinim"; just like Yisrael opened the gates of *brachah* to bring down abundance onto the world, so too, now the gates are open to accept their *tefillas* and they will be spared from their tormentors.

In the World to Come: The same person who was "shomer", cautious" to answer amen, meaning he waited until the end of the *brachah* in order to answer amen properly, then when his soul departs from this world after his passing, there is a declaration: "Open the gates of Gan Eden to it" the same way this soul used to open the gates of blessing each day when he was "shomer emunim."

Zohar Vayelech 285 2

The Obligation of 90 Amens a Day

One who is careful to answer 90 amens a day with all his strength, *bechol kocho*, links the *Yichud* of amen (numerically equivalent to Havayah and Adnus) to the *Yichud* of *bechol kocho* (numerically equivalent to "Elokim") and thus he gives strength to the Heavenly angels and they tear up his decrees for seventy years.

Tikkunei Zohar Chadash 132 1

A Perfect Brachah Opens Gates

When the *brachos* that are fulfilled by the reply of amen rise On High, all those in charge open the gates and declare in all the firmaments: this is the gift that So and So sent to the King, this is the gift that was done with noteworthy perfection. What is that gift? The *brachah* that was replied to with an amen.

That same *brachah* goes On High and gives strength to the Upper Worlds. How much more so is this the case if it was a *brachah* that was made by many—

then, it's holiness is greater, and it is adorned with the holy adornments in the *sod* of 'amen.' 'Amen' is the secret of all the connections and the *Yichudim*, and it adorns the *brachah* with holy adornments, as it should be.

Moreover, HaKadosh Baruch Hu is pleased, as He deeply desires *brachos* that have amen replied to them, as they give validity and strength in the Upper Worlds. On this it is said: "Ki mechabdai achabed, ubozai yekalu" (*Shmuel* I, 2:30). "Ki mechabdai achabed" – those who bless HaKadosh Baruch Hu as is worthy, "ubozai yekalu" – those who do not bless HaKadosh Baruch Hu as is worthy, and thus they withhold the *brachos*.

Zohar Eikev (Ra'aya Meheimna) 271 1

His Decree Is Torn Up

"Az tikra v'Hashem ya'aneh" (*Yeshayah* 58:9). What is this word "az"? These are the eight letters – Havayah and Ado-nai – that are numerically equivalent to amen. That is the significance of the words of the Mishnah: "One who answers amen with all his might" – with the strength of this holy *Yichud*, "his decree of seventy years is torn up."

Tikkunei Zohar 40 1

The Obligation of Kavanah When
Answering Amen

"Ubozai yekalu" (*Shmuel* I, 2:30) is someone who does not have *kavanah* when answering meant to be *meyached* the Holy Name and to tie the bond of *emunah*, and thus to propel the *brachos* to their fitting place while glorifying His Name. We have learned that "one who answers amen is greater than one who makes the *brachah*" (because the latter only mentions the Shem Havayah and the one who answers amen is *meyached* Havayah with Ado-nai).

Therefore, anyone who hears a *brachah* from someone and does not have *kavanah* when saying amen, it is said of him: "Ubozai yekalu" – that just like he didn't open the *brachos* Above, thus it is not opened for him. Moreover, when he leaves this world, all the *brachos* are locked before him; woe is to him and woe is to his soul.

How foolish are those people who are negligent and derisive about replying amen. They lose out on answering amen so many times because they did not value it properly. When their soul departs from the world, they are judged in Gehinnom, and they descend to the lowest level and never rise from there, unless they repent before their demise.

By contrast, those who sanctify the Name of Hashem and have *kavanah* when reciting amen, it is said of them (*ibid*): "Ki mechabdai achabed," and they rise one level after another and merit to bask in that world to which there is an unending abundance.

That is what is says in *Tehillim* (31:24): "Emunim notzer Hashem" – they are the ones who are careful about amen, and they merit to benefit in this world, "umeshalem al yeser oseh ga'avah" – these are the ones who are scornful about amen, and they descend to the bottom levels of Gehinnom.

Zohar Vayelech 285 1 – 286 1

Salvation Out of Desperation

It was a summer Friday night in 5749/1989, in the midst of the first *intifada*. Rabbi S. walked quickly, following his regular route from the Kosel to the Damascus Gate. At this late hour, the Arab market was already pretty deserted, save for a few bored youths whose eyes bored holes into the young man walking quickly in the market. No one else was around. Rabbi S. would often walk on Erev Shabbos from his home in Geulah to the Old City, where his elderly mother had been living for the past few years. After being with her for the onset of Shabbos, he would hurry to the Kosel to daven with one of the early *minyanim*, and then would quickly walk home, through the Muslim Quarter, which was bustling with Jewish *mispallelim* also returning home at that hour.

On this Shabbos, his mother hadn't been feeling well, and thus, he was running much later than usual. When he was finally able to leave, it was too late to find a *minyan* in one of the nearby shuls. For a moment, he entertained the thought of going home then, and davening alone when he got there. But then Rabbi S. decided to go down to the Kosel, where he hoped he would find a *minyan* even at this late hour.

Once at the Kosel, it took quite a few minutes for a *minyan* to gather. When davening was over, he quickly headed for home. For a minute he considered taking the longer, safer route, but it was late, and he decided to take his regular route. Little did he know how *Yad Hashem* was guiding this decision. The narrow streets were deserted, and the heavy darkness did not contribute to Rabbi S.'s peace of mind. His lips moved in constant prayer for protection as he tried to walk as fast as he could, pushing himself to the limits so that he could get past the danger.

A short time after he walked out of the Damascus Gate, and turned towards Shivei Yisrael Street, Rabbi S. was horrified to hear a scream, and then the sound of footsteps running. He turned to look to the source of the sound, and to his shock, he saw Reb Dovid, a young man who he regularly met each Friday night as they walked home from the Kosel. Reb Dovid was staggering towards him, a large red stain spreading over his Shabbos attire.

"I was just stabbed by an Arab terrorist," Reb Dovid whispered, before he crumpled to the ground, helpless. "Please, get help!" he begged as he slowly lost consciousness.

Arab cars passed from time to time on the nearby road, but Rabbi S. was afraid to stop them—that might only make things worse for both himself and Reb Dovid. He considered asking his friend to make the effort to walk just to the next intersection, which was friendlier territory, but quickly realized that it was a waste of time to think about it: Reb Dovid's condition was clearly serious and moving him could endanger him even more.

He was also afraid to leave Reb Dovid alone on the deserted, dangerous street so he could go get help, lest the murderer come back to complete the job. The passing seconds felt like eternity as Reb Dovid's situation deteriorated before his eyes.

Rabbi S. felt like he was facing a dead end, with nowhere to turn. Automatically, he closed his eyes tight, and a *tefillah* burst forth from his lips. It was short, yet fervent, and pleaded with the Almighty to save them in this difficult hour.

His eyes opened in alarm as he suddenly

heard the screeching of brakes. An armored police car passing at the scene stopped next to them. It took just a few seconds for the officers inside to deduce what had happened. Within a few minutes, it looked like a battle field. A large projector illuminated the whole area, and several rescue vehicles parked all around. A doctor in a white coat performed resuscitation on the victim, and when it appeared that his condition was somewhat stabilized, the paramedics put him on a stretcher and sped off to the hospital with wailing sirens. Only then did Rabbi S. leave the scene, his heart deeply worried for his friend, and his lips moving in constant prayer. First he passed by his own home to calm his worried family. Then he asked their permission to delay a bit longer, and dashed over to the home of Harav Yisrael Yaakov Fisher, zt"l. The Rav listened to the story and quickly called a medical *askan* who lived nearby, and told him to summon the best surgeons to the hospital to intervene in the victim's treatment. Only then did Rabbi S. go home to make Kiddush and eat the *seudah*.

Rabbi S. spent the rest of Shabbos in tense worry. As soon as Shabbos was over, he hurried to contact Reb Dovid's family to find out how he was doing. He was relieved to hear that the emergency surgery performed by the surgeon who had been summoned to the hospital by order of Rav Fisher had saved his friend's life, and that his condition was improving. Rabbi S. marveled at the *Hasghachah pratis* that he had experienced. However, he was manifold more shocked when he heard the rest of the story from the surgeon himself, a few days later, when he went to visit Reb Dovid at the same time as the surgeon was there for a checkup.

The surgeon described the course of the operation to Reb Dovid and did not conceal the fact that had aid been delayed even two more minutes, there would have been nothing left to save... Then he continued: "The knife that was stabbed into your stomach stopped right near the aorta, and that saved your life, but it did penetrate the abdominal cavity. We were horrified to see this during the surgery and were afraid that this caused irreversible damage that might affect you for the rest of your life. But then I noticed something amazing: The intestine, remarkably enough, was not in the right place. You must have had a hernia in the intestinal wall that you were not aware of, and that pushed part of the intestines out of their place and into the abdominal cavity. Thus, the knife passed near it, but didn't cause significant damage."

Reb Dovid heard this with great emotion and then said thoughtfully, "The truth is, I have known about the hernia for three years, since going to the doctor because I felt pain in my stomach. The doctor suggested an operation to fix the hernia, but when I went to consult with my Rebbe, Harav Moshe Mordechai of Lelov, zy"va, I was surprised when the Rebbe told me to wait to do the surgery. I obeyed, and now, it turns out that the Rebbe's advice saved me from a life of suffering and pain.

Moshe Ish Ha'Elokim, Ch. 26, p. 311