

# Vechol Maaminim



A Weekly Leaflet From "Bnei Emunim"

## PARASHAS KORACH

### IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

#### Those Called to the Torah on the Moed

נשיאי עדה קראי מועד אנשי שם" (טז, ב)

**Harav Yitzchak Konstadt**, Av Bais Din of Radovitz, explained:

The *Magen Avraham* (*Orach Chaim* 136 1) cited the ruling of the Mahari"l, that on Moadim, on festivals, one should call to the Torah first the leaders and patrons of the community. Hence we can understand why the Torah referred to the *Nesiei ha'edah* "keriei mo'ed", because they are the ones who are called up to the Torah on the festivals.

Luach Erez Hachadash

#### "All" of them and Not "Most"

כי כל העדה כלם קדשים" (טז ג)

"Everyone heard the words at Sinai from the Pi HaGevurah" (*Rashi*)

Why didn't *Rashi* explain these words according to the simple explanation of the *passuk*, that the whole nation was behaving in holiness as they were instructed in *Parashas Kedoshim* (*Vayikra* 19:2): "*Kedoshim tihyu ki kadosh Ani*"?

**Harav Shaul of Amsterdam** explained: In the *tefillah* of Rosh Hashanah we ask: "*Meloch al kol ha'olam kulo bichevodecha*, Rule over the whole world in Your Honor." The *Taz* asks (*Orach Chaim* 582 3) about the meaning of the additional word "*kulo*" which seems somewhat redundant after we said "*Meloch al kol ha'olam*"? He explained: Because the *halachah* is that "*rubo kekulo*", most is like all, we have to emphasize, "*al kol ha'olam kulo*" that there shouldn't be a single one in the world that doesn't recognize His Kingship.

According to this we can explain the *passuk* here: If the intention of the *passuk* was the simple meaning that the whole nation is holy, then we could have derived this from the double language of "*kol ha'edah kulam kedoshim*," that there isn't a single one who is not holy. How was Korach supposed to know such a thing?! Therefore, *Rashi* explained: "*Kulam*, everyone heard at Sinai words from the Pi HaGevurah."

Binyan Ariel

\*\*\*

Another explanation for the double language in this *passuk* was explained by **Harav A.Y. Shain**, *shlita*, Ra"m Yeshivas Tiferes Yerushalayim:

In *Birchas HaTorah* we ask: "*Venihyeh*

*anachnu vetze'tzaeinu...kulanu yodei Shemecha.*"

We should say that the word "*kulanu*" here is not explained in the simple form, that we are asking that all of Am Yisrael should know Your Name and learn Your Torah. Rather, the request is about the quality – that the Torah and knowledge of Hashem should fill our whole essence and become an integral part of us.

According to this we can also explain the *passuk* here, that Korach came to expound in the description of the holiness of "*kol ha'edah*" that is so lofty in their holiness that "*kulam kedoshim*", their entire essence is enveloped in *kedushah*.

Birchas Ish

#### Mentioning the Shem Havayah in Our Times

"ישמרו משמרתך ומשמרת כל האהל" (יח ג)

"*Kol ha'ohel*" is numerically equivalent to "amen". In the Bais HaMikdash, they would utter the Shem Havayah as it is written (*Sotah* 38a). Today, that we have no Bais HaMikdash due to our multitudes of sins, we can reach this virtue only through being scrupulous about answering amen (which is numerically equivalent to the Shem Havayah and the Name of Adnus), and those who are careful about it merit to fulfill the commandment: "*Veshamru mishmartecha umishmeres kol ha'ohel.*"

Sefer Hagematrios 38

#### Moshe Emes Vesoraso Emes

בזאת תדעון כי ה' שלחני לעשות את כל המעשים האלה כי לא מלבי" (טז, כז)

After Moshe said: "*Ki Hashem shelachani*" why did he have to repeat himself and say "*ki lo milibi*"?

**Harav Yitzchak Zev of Brisk** explained:

The *passuk* comes to teach us that besides that Korach rejected the seventh of the 13 Principles of Faith, that the prophecy of Moshe Rabbeinu was true and that he was the father of all Nevi'im, those before him and those after him, he also refuted the eighth Principle, that the Torah that we have was given to Moshe Rabbeinu (*Yerushalmi Sanhedrin* 11). Therefore, to counteract the first

heresy in the prophecy of Moshe, Moshe said to him: "*Ki Hashem shelachani.*" And to the second one, he added "*Ki lo milibi.*"

This helps explain the words of *Chazal* (*Bava Basra* 74a) that each day, the ones who were swallowed with Korach stand at the entrance to Gehinnom and declare: *Moshe emes vesoraso emes*. This declaration admits the truth of the two principles that their forbears rebelled against.

Yeshurun, Vol. 10, p. 298

#### One Who Repents Becomes a Different Person

אם כמות כל האדם ימותון אלה ופקדת כל האדם יפקד עליהם לא ה' שלחני" (טז כט)

The Rebbe **Harav Avraham of Chechanov** asked: How Moshe put the fulfillment of his words in danger? Is it not possible that Korach and his group would repent and would not be punished at all?

He answered: Indeed, it is not for naught that Moshe Rabbeinu specified and promised: "If like the deaths of all people **these** will die", that if these repent, they will not be "*eileh*, these" anymore, they will be new people, as the *Rambam* says (*Teshuvah* 2 4): "It is from the ways of *teshuvah* that the repentant one screams always before Hashem...and changes his name, saying **I am different** and I am not the same person who did those deeds."

Mikra Meforash [Rav Yitzchak Trunk of Kutna] p. 128

#### Flee to the Fortress of Tefillah

וכל ישראל אשר סביבתיהם נסו לקלם כי אמרו פן תבלענו הארץ" (טז לד)

According to the simple explanation of the *passuk*, Bnei Yisrael fled because they were frightened by the sound of the earth opening up. But **Harav Shlomo Kluger** asks that if so, it should have said "*Nasu mikolam*, they fled from the sounds".

He explained: *Tefillah* is called "*kol*" as it says (*Bereishis* 27:22): "*Hakol kol Yaakov.*" When Bnei Yisrael saw that the *Middas HaDin* had been aroused and the ground had opened up to swallow Korach and his people, they immediately fled "*lekolam*" – to stand and daven and plead for mercy that the *Middas Hadin* should not harm them.

Imrei Shefer



#### Harav Kalonymous Kalman Halevi Epstein,

author of *Maor Vashemesh* (passed away 1 Tammuz 5583) explained:

It says in *Tehillim* 41:14): "*Baruch Hashem Elokei Yisrael mei'haolam v'ad ha'olam amen v'amen.*" The double language comes to teach us that the power of the *Yichud* generated by replying amen sweetens the decrees and arouses the benevolence of Hashem to continue to perform *chassadim*, give us *parnassah*, life and all good things, "from the world to the world" – the source of the *brachah* in the Upper World, to Knesses Yisrael dwelling in the lower world.

Maor Vashemesh Parashas Vayigash



## Birchas Yotzer Ohr (8)

## The Seraphim Awaken the Ophanim

The Gemara (Chulin 91b) says: "Yisrael are beloved before HaKadosh Baruch Hu more than the ministering angels because Yisrael...mentions Hashem after two words, as it says *Shema Yisrael Hashem* etc, and the ministering angels only mention Hashem after three words, as it says *Kadosh Kadosh Hashem Tzevakos*." Later, the Gemara asks: Don't we find that the angels mention the Name of Hashem after two words when they say "*Baruch Kevod Hashem mimkomo*?" It replies: "*Baruch – Ophanim hu d'imrei lei*, the Ophanim are the ones saying it to Him."

From the words of the Gemara it appears that the Ophanim are on a higher level than the Seraphim, who say the praise of *Kadosh Kadosh Kadosh*, because the Seraphim mention Hashem's Name after three words, while the Ophanim do so after two words, like Klal Yisrael. This is puzzling, because don't we know that the Seraphim are holier than the Ophanim?

The Aruch Hashulchan, in his *drashos* (printed at the end of Vol. 9 of the *Aruch Hashulchan*, *Drush 21*) explains that indeed, the level of the Seraphim is certainly higher than that of the Ophanim, but as we see human nature is, that when a great person passes away, the ones escorting him are not brought to tears on their own. When they hear *hespedim* with words straight from the heart, then they cry even more than the one who is giving the eulogy. So, too, the Ophanim, after hearing the Seraphim praising Hashem with *Kadosh Kadosh Kadosh*, are aroused to praise on their own, and thus they are "*misnasim*" they are elevated in status "*le'umas haSeraphim*" compared to the Seraphim, and say "*Baruch Kevod Hashem Mimkomo*."

## Zorea Tzedakos Matzmiach Yeshuos

The Midrash Tehillim (114:2) says that in the firmament named *Aravos*, HaKadosh Baruch Hu plants the actions of the *tzeddikim* and cultivates the fruits of their rewards as it says in *Yeshayah* (3:10): "*Imru tzeddik ki tov ki pri m'alaleihem yochehu*."

The term "*zeriah*" is used specifically for the *mitzvah* of *tzeddakah*, as Chazal said (*Bava Kama 17a*) that *zeriah* refers to *tzeddakah*, as it says (*Hoshea 10:12*): "*Ziru lachem tzeddakah*." The Mashgiach Harav Yeruchem Halevi of Mir said (*Mamaeri Hamashiach – Elul Tishrei, Maamar 153* and see *Ruach Chaim Avos 1:4*):

Just like with planting, the observer watches the farmer taking the best of his fruits and burying them in the ground, and he is shocked: is he throwing out all his toil?! But one who understands realizes that when the time comes, this seed will grow a tree that will give tens of thousands of juicy, delicious fruits. So, too, with *tzeddakah*: an observer does not understand why a person gives his money to others. Isn't the money meant for the person to enjoy?! But one who is wise realizes that HaKadosh Baruch Hu plants that *tzeddakah* that he does, and in the future, He reaps from it tremendous *yeshuos*, as Chazal said (*Yalkut Bereishis 82*): "Our early forefathers, why did they merit this world, and the Days of *Mashiach* and *Olam Haba*? Because they acted with *tzeddakah*."

Harav Chaim of Volozhin (*Ruach Chaim Avos 4 1*), added advice from the *passuk* (*Hoshea 10:12*): "*Ziru lachem tzeddakah kitzru lefi chessed*." A person can "plant" in this world a small *tzeddakah* that he does with a poor person. But in the World to Come, he will reap his reward manifold for the deed, and the results can be manifested a long time afterwards, as the reward that the giver receives continues to grow.

Similarly, one can recommend the *mitzvah* of answering amen: One who answers amen to a *brachah* of his friend causes him to say the *brachah* aloud and with more *kavanah*. Thus, he will strengthen the recital of *brachos* and *tefillah* in general, and will also strengthen others in this *mitzvah*. Thus, like a seed planted in the ground, the action that seemed small and minor actually grows to have immeasurable results, with commensurate rewards.

## Vesitneinu Lechen Ulechessed...In the Eyes of All Who See Us

It was just a few months before World War One broke out. Rav Tzvi Yehudah Meltzer, the son of Harav Isser Zalman Meltzer, z"l, author of *Even Ha'ezel*, was a fifteen year old youth at the time. His parents lived in Slutzk, which was under Russian rule, and the *yeshivah* that he learned was in a town that was under Polish rule.

At the time, the *bnei yeshivah* fulfilled the dictum of "*hevei goleh lemakom Torah*, exile yourself to a place of Torah," in the full sense of the world. With the beginning of the winter *zman*, right after *Succos*, they made grueling long journeys from their homes to *yeshivos*, where they spent the entire winter learning diligently. Before *Pesach*, they returned home to spend the holiday with their families.

As *Chodesh Nissan* approached, young Tzi Yehudah, who deeply missed his family, began looking forward to going home for *Pesach*. But because the winds of war had already begun to blow through Europe, the return trip was far more difficult now, if not impossible, to make.

A few days before *Pesach*, after a harrowing journey, he finally found himself standing on the border town near Slutzk. He was overcome with emotion, as just a short distance separated him from his hometown. He was already envisioning the warm welcome he would receive at home after being away for so long.

The youth went to the market square, where carriage drivers would gather to wait for passengers. He quietly inquired how he could reach his destination as quickly as possible without arousing the suspicion of the authorities. He was told that a group of the drivers lived beyond the border and they planned to set out at midnight, when, under the cover of darkness, they hoped to be able to make the short trip and evade the piercing eyes of the border police.

The boy glanced at his watch; it was three o'clock in the afternoon. He had nine free hours until it would be time to set out. As his father's son, he didn't have to think twice about how to use that time. He hastened to the quiet *bais medrash* in the town, took out a Gemara and began to delve into the *sugya*.

The boy could have sat for many hours like that, but after about an hour, he suddenly began to feel a mounting disquiet. He had a deep internal feeling that his plans were going to go awry, and that he needed to hurry before it would be too late.

He got up quickly, kissed the Gemara and returned it to its place on the shelf. He then began to run as fast as he could to the market square. When he arrived, he saw, to his chagrin, that the convoy of carriages that was supposed to take him to Slutzk had already begun to travel, many hours before the appointed time. He barely managed to stop one of the carriages and jump aboard.

"New information that we received gave us to understand that we should leave as quickly as possible," the wagon driver explained when the boy asked why they had left early. "You should try to hide in the back," he advised, pointing to the corner of the carriage. "At such a time, there is a big chance we will be caught by the border police," he added with no emotion.

"I am the son of the Rav of Slutzk," the boy explained to the wagon driver, hoping his father's reputation as a holy man, even among the non-Jews, had reached this person's ears as well. "Please, if a soldier or policeman stop us, try to explain to him that I'm just an innocent boy trying to go back to his parents' house."

The wagon driver heard and promised to fulfill the boy's request, but the lad was not calm at all. Having already experienced countless travails on

the roads, he had become used to reciting *Tefillas Haderech* with great *kavanah* and fervency. Now, the danger galvanized him to recite it with ever more fervor.

When he reached the words: "*Vesitneinu lechen ulechessed ulerachamim be'einecha uv'einei kol ro'einu*" tears began to flow from his eyes. Something inside him urged him to repeat this phrase two or three times, with copious tears and as much *kavanah* as he could muster. His voice choked and he could hardly complete the *tefillah*.

Just a few minutes later, it became clear that his fears had not been for naught. The convoy was ordered to stop at a Polish checkpoint. Armed soldiers came over to the carriages and examined their contents. Then they asked each driver where he was headed. When they responded that their homes and families were beyond the border, it was rather surprising that the officials let the wagons continue without any further questions.

Then they reached the last wagon in the convoy, in which the young boy was hunched into his seat. Like the rest of the wagon drivers, this one explained to the soldiers that he wanted to return home to Slutzk. But then one of them reached into the back of the carriage, and noticed the young Jewish boy.

"And what is this passenger going in the back of your carriage?" the soldier thundered. The driver didn't miss a beat and answered with feigned innocence, as though he had seen the boy for the first time "I don't know who the boy is and how he snuck into my carriage!"

"Spy!" the soldier declared, and immediately pointed his gun at the frightened boy. "Get off this wagon and come with me!"

His knees trembled as he began to follow the soldier. It was well known that during wartime, human life, especially the life of a Jew, were worthless in the eyes of soldiers. There was a well founded rumor that he had heard: if a soldier suspected someone in the slightest of spying, they would quickly render his fate and shoot him dead.

Before getting off the carriage, the boy tried to explain to the soldier that he was mistaken, and that he was not a spy, just an innocent boy trying to go back to his family that he hadn't seen in so long. But the soldier didn't react to his pleas and kept his gun trained on the boy as he urged him along to the police station.

Tzvi Yehudah, sensing that his life was in the balance, overcome his fear and repeated his explanation over and over that there was no reason that his fate should be different than those of the wagon drivers who had been sent home in peace. He was also just an innocent boy seeking to rejoin his family.

Forty times! That was how many times the boy repeated his explanation to the soldier who obstinately refused to listen. As they reached the police station, he was overcome by fear, but suddenly, the expression of the soldier softened, he turned to the boy and said, "Go in peace!"

This was the minute the boy had been waiting for, and before the soldier could change his mind, he ran away as fast as he could.

Only when he was finally standing at his parent's doorstep, safe and sound, did the boy understand the exceptional emotion that had gripped him when he said the words: "And let me find favor and *chesed* and compassion in Your Eyes and in the eyes of all who see us." The emotional *tefillah* had saved his life.

Anashim Mei'artzos Hachaim p. 96