

# Vechol Maaminim



A Weekly Leaflet From "Bnei Emunim"

## PARASHAS VESCHANANI II

### IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

#### Mi Shebeirach for the Sick

“זאתחנן אל ה'” (ג כג)

**Harav Avigdor Tzarfati**, one of the Baalei Hatosafos, writes: It does not say here “*vehischananti*,” but rather “*v'eschanan*” to teach us that Moshe Rabbeinu did not suffice with a prayer for himself. Rather, he asked from many to pray for mercy for him. This teaches us the great power of the *tefillas rabbim*, the *tefillah* offered by many. Therefore, if there is a sick person in someone's home, *chalilah*, he should publicly recite a *Mi Shebeirach* for his recovery. When the assembled *tzibbur* replies amen to this *tefillah*, it becomes a *tefillas rabbim*.

Peirushim Upesakim LeRabbeinu Avigdor Tzarfati, Psak 319

#### The Last Tefillah in Life

“זאתחנן אל ה' בעת ההוא לאמר” (ג כג)

**Harav Mordechai Ellreich**, one of the Rabbanim of Krashnov, would explain on this *passuk*: “*V'eschanan el Hashem*” – when a person comes to daven before Hashem, he should imagine that this is the last *tefillah* of his life, and that he won't have another opportunity to say it aside from “*ba'eis hahi*” – at that time.

It is told that before each *tefillah*, **Harav Tzvi Hirsch Kinstlicher**, the Rav of Hermanstadt, would whisper to himself in awe: “Tzvi Hirsch, put your heart into properly utilizing this last *tefillah* that you have to daven before departing from this world...” This would arouse him to daven with great *kavanah* and fervency.

Kovetz Sifsei Tzaddikim, Kovetz 4, p. 16; Mipi Sefarim Vesofrim Re'eh, He'arah 36

#### Moshe Asked to Hasten the Geulah

“זאתחנן אל ה' בעת ההוא לאמר” (ג כג)

By way of *drush*, **Harav Menachem Mendel Shapiro**, the Rav of Dragomiresti, said that in this *passuk* Moshe Rabbeinu asked for the future Redemption to be hastened: “And I davened to Hashem” that when Your sons go out to exile, please hasten for them the prophecy of “*ba'eis hahi*” at that time, that You promised them through Your Neviim, “*leimor*, saying” (*Tzefaniah* 3:20): “*Ba'eis hahi* at that time I will gather you and at the time that I will gather you...*beshuvi es shevuschem le'einechem*, when I restore your captivities before your eyes, *amar Hashem*.”

Maoznei Tzedek

#### “Doing” This Order

“אשר מי א-ל בשמים ובארץ אשר יעשה כמעשיך וכגבורתך” (ג כד)

**Harav Mordechai Banet**, Av Bais Din of Nikolsburg, said: We should assume that at the time when Moshe davened to merit to enter the Holy Land, he mentioned the Thirteen Middos of Rachamim, which we have been promised (*Rosh Hashanah* 17b) that “When Yisrael sin, they should do this order and I will forgive them.”

This is the place to focus on the language of “*yaasu*”, they should do, because the *segulah* of the 13 Middos depends on actually doing them. However, the fact is that the first *middah*, “K-I”, cannot possibly be performed by mortals, thus we have no choice but to explain “*yaasu*” as “*yazkiru*”, they should mention. Therefore, Moshe Rabbeinu alluded in his *tefillah*: *Ribbono shel Olam*, “*Atah hachilosa*”, some time ago, You began to show Your servant Your greatness, the 13 Middos of Rachamim, which are the symbol of Your Greatness, “*asher*”, the fact that “*Mi K-l Bashamayim uva'aretz asher yaaseh kemaasecha...*” proves that it is enough to mention them in order to merit salvation. Therefore, I am mentioning them in my *tefillah* and asking that in their merit, You should hear my *tefillah* and allow me to enter the land.

Yalkut Hagershuni

#### Amen – Strengthens Emunah

“אתה הראת לדעת כי ה' הוא האלקים אין עוד מלבדו” (ד לה)

The acronym of the last letters of the words “*Hu Ha'elokim Ein*” is amen, and from the fact that they are said right near the worlds “*ein od milvado*” we can learn that when answering amen, a person undertakes the Yoke of Heaven and testifies with his soul that there is none other than Hashem Yisbarach, as the Gemara says (*Shabbos* 119b): “*Mai amen? Kel Melech Ne'eman*.” *Rashi* explains that by saying amen a person testifies about His Creator that He is a *Kel Melech Ne'eman*.

Vaye'etar Yitzchak, Shabbos 119b

#### Reaching Eretz Yisrael With the Power of Moshe's Tefillos

“ויתעבר ה' בי למענכם ולא שמע אלי” (ג כו)

In 5709, the **Vayechi Yosef** of Pupa sailed from New York, where he lived, for a visit to Eretz Yisrael. Standing on the deck of the ship taking him to Eretz Yisrael, he said emotionally to his Chassidim: “Moshe Rabbeinu davened 515 *tefillos* to merit to enter Eretz Yisrael and did not receive his wish. Indeed, no *tefillah* is rejected, and although the *tefillos* were not accepted for him, you should know that whenever a Yid wants to get to Eretz Yisrael, and there are obstacles and delays that mount before him, he can overcome them and get there with the power of these *tefillos* [that Moshe offered].”

Toldos Baal Vayechi Yosef MiPupa, Vol. II, p. 57

#### Tefillah Accomplishes Half

“עלה ראש הפסגה...וראה בעיניך” (ג כז)

**Harav Zalman Sorotzkin** explained: It is known that *Chazal* say (*Vayikra Rabbah* 10 5): “*Tefillah* accomplishes half” and even here, the *tefillah* of Moshe was partially answered. He asked for two things (*passuk* 25): “*E'brah nah ve'ereh*, I will pass and I will see” and one of those was answered: “*ure'eh be'einecha*, and see with your eyes.”

Oznayim LaTorah

#### Two Paths to Ahavas Hashem

“ואהבת את ה' אלקיך” (ו ה)

**Harav Yaakov Chaim Sofer, shlita**, Rosh Yeshivas Kaf Hachaim, says: One who peruses the writings of *Chazal* will find that there are two way through which one can attain *Ahavas Hashem*: the first is through toiling and learning Torah, as *Rashi* says in the next *passuk*. The second is by delving into the wonders of creation, as the *Rambam* writes in the *halachos* of *Yesodei HaTorah* (2 1).

It appears that the *Anshei Knesses Hagedolah* had these two different paths in mind when they established that we recite the *brachos* of *Yotzer Ohr* and *Ahavah Rabbah* prior to reciting *Krias Shema* of *Shacharis*, and the *brachos* of *Hamaariv Aravim* and *Ahavas Olam* before *Krias Shema* of *Maariv*. That is because the *brachos* of *Yotzer Hameoros* and *Hamaariv Aravim* describe the wonders of creation, while *Ahavah Rabbah* and *Ahavas Olam* praise the holy Torah.

Hadar Yaakov Vol. III, 42

## Birchos Hashachar Aloud > With Kavanah > Bechavrusa

On Shabbos Parashas V'Eschanan, 13 Av, is the *yahrtzeit* of Harav **Mordechai Banet**, *zt"l*, about who his son said:

Each morning, he would make sure to hear from each member of the household *Birchos Hashachar* so that he could reply amen to them. Then he would stand and recite *Birchos Hashachar* himself, in a pleasant voice, with *kavanah*, in front of them.

Toldos Rav Mordechai Banet, p. 16



**Birchas Ahavah Rabbah (4)****One Needs Endless  
Compassion to Merit  
Torah**

In the *brachah* of *Ahavah Rabbah* we find words of pleading and requests that we do not see in any other *brachah*: “*Ahavah rabbah ahavtanu... chemlah gedolah veyeseirah chamalta aleinu, Avinu Malkeinu...*” And again, “*Avinu Av Harachaman, hamerachem rachem aleinu...*”

We don't ask for any of our physical needs with such pleading words; rather this language is reserved for the holy Torah. That is because, as explained last week, the Torah is the secret of the existence of life. “*Eitz chaim hi lamachazikim bah*” (Mishlei 3:18), and it is through its power that abundance descends onto the world, and in its merit that the world exists. As it says (Yirmiyah 33:25): “*Im lo brisi yomam valalyah chukos shamayim v'aretz lo samti.*” We find that there is no request that can be compared in its necessity to the request for meriting Torah, because that is the whole person. Hence, we can understand why we pour our hearts out to merit it. (Rav A.Y. Salamon of Kharkov, introduction to *Nesivos Hakodesh*)

This *tefillah* is so important that the Chazon Ish, *zt"l*, said of himself that more than he toiled in the difficult *suzyos* of *Shas*, he toiled in this *tefillah*, that Hashem should illuminate his eyes with the light of Torah. Many of those who davened with the Chazon Ish related that his entire body would tremble when he recited *Ahavah Rabbah*. (*Maaseh Ish*, Vol. I, p. 151; Vol. V, p. 116)

He also wrote a practical *halachah* in his letters (Vol. III, *siman* 151): “And they said – from the day that the Bais Hamikdash was destroyed, all the gates were locked, except the gate of tears. If a person merits to feel bad and repulsed by his lack of knowledge in Torah, until his heart melts in sobbing before Hashem, then that person should know that he merited a lot and that he is fortunate, and he is guaranteed that his *tefillah* is heard.”

**A Father's Compassion  
for his Son**

The reason why we especially invoke the compassion of Hashem in this *brachah*, by saying “*Avinu Av Harachaman, hamerachem rachem aleinu,*” can be understood according to the words of the Baal Shem Tov:

There are a few kinds of mercy in this world, and the highest level is the compassion that a

father has for his son. Even if his son has all his needs, and he lacks for merely the minutest thing, the father worries to fill that lack. That is because the compassion of a father is constant and does not stop for a moment.

The compassion of “*Avinu Av Harachaman*” also does not cease for one moment from Am Yisrael, but it becomes especially intense when we toil in Torah. That is because just like between a father and son, when a son calls his father by his description, the father's compassion mounts, so, too, when we learn Hashem's Torah, which is replete with the Names of HaKadosh Baruch Hu (*Zohar, Acharei Mos*, p. 73 1) we thus arouse great compassion before Hashem. (*Baal Shem Tov, V'eschanan*, 22)

**Hamerachem – Even When  
We Are Not Worthy of  
Compassion**

The reason we use the double language to describe HaKadosh Baruch Hu with the words “*Harachaman...Hamerachem*” is explained by the mashgiach Harav Avigdor Miller, *zt"l* (*Ohr Olam* Vol. IV p. 226):

In the description “*Hamerachem*” we express our recognition of the fact that the Creator is the source of all the emotions of compassion and mercy that exist on this earth. When a mother has compassion for her child, or a Rav for his *talmid*, it is like a waiter pouring wine for a diner, yet the wine belongs to the owner of the restaurant. One who benefits from a good thing that his friend bestowed upon him in his compassion should thank his friend for it, but at the same time he should remember in his heart that the Source of the good is Hashem, and as *Chazal* said (*Bava Kama* 92b): that the wine belongs to the owner, but he should thank the pourer for giving him some.

This knowledge is very important, because often, a person develops a dependence on his benefactor, and when the person stops providing that good, the recipient falls into depression. He must know that although his friend was providing him with something good, he was just an emissary of the true Benefactor – Hashem. Therefore, he can always turn to this Benefactor and ask to be directly bestowed with the good, as David Hamelech says in *Tehillim* (27:10): “*Ki avi v'imi azavuni v'Hashem ya'asfeni,* because my father and mother have abandoned me, and Hashem gathered me up.”

**The Tefillah That Led to Mechilah**

*Chazal* have spoken frequently about the obligation to be careful about another person's honor and dignity, and even went so far as to say (*Yerushalmi Chagigah* 2 1) that one who reaps honor from his friend's shame has no share in the World to Come. This chilling story can help hone this issue and warn of the severity of this matter; and at the same time, underscore the power of *tefillah*, which can pave paths into the depths of the heart and bring solace to aching souls.

Shaul and Yisrael Meir had never gotten along well. Although they were in the same class in the famous Brisi Yomam Valaylah cheder, their personalities were very different. Shalom was an impressive child, healthy and hearty looking, with lots of talents, who was admired by all those around him—in short, a natural leader. Yisrael Meir, by contrast, was a weak, fragile child, quiet and withdrawn, and who walked with a pronounced limp—which didn't contribute much to his self confidence. Shalom's path to his friends' hearts was not always an admirable one. He sometimes employed various pranks to earn the reputation of being on the ball, a *chevraman*. Usually, these actions were tolerable, but there were times that even he felt that he had exaggerated and gone too far.

So it happened that one day, Shalom decided to try a new, cruel trick. It was during recess, and Shalom stood in the yard surrounded by his group of admirers when he suddenly noticed Yisrael Meir. Shalom realized that this was a chance to show his power, and immediately capitalized on it: he began to walk slowly behind Yisrael Meir, perfectly imitating the other boy's limp. All the other boys burst into raucous laughter.

This went on for a few days, with Shalom laughing at Yisrael Meir and his friends cheering him on from the sidelines. Each time Yisrael Meir looked behind him, Shalom would put on an innocent face, as though nothing had happened. But one morning, something unexpected happened. The rollicking laughter that echoed in the courtyard caused Yisrael Meir to spin around towards the source of the laughter, and thus he was able to catch Shalom red handed imitating his limping gait.

As expected, Yisrael Meir was deeply hurt. As the waves of insult washed over him he thought: I wish the ground would open up and swallow me forever. It didn't happen, of course, and Yisrael Meir hastened back to the classroom, where he put his head down on his desk and sobbed bitterly about his dismal plight.

For days after that, Yisrael Meir was in such anguish he could not leave his house, and even when he returned to class, he was even more sidelined than he had been, if that was possible. His social standing was in tatters and he could not even excel at his studies anymore.

About a month later, Yisrael Meir left the cheder and was forgotten by the rest of his classmates.

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Many years passed. Shalom and Yisrael Meir, along with the rest of the boys in the class, grew up and established their own homes. But while all the boys were raising large families, Shalom was still waiting for a *yeshuah*. Although he had scored an excellent *shidduch*, he had not been blessed with children.

Shalom and his wife did everything to see a *yeshuah*. They invested money in doctors and remedies, did every *segulah* they heard of and stormed the Gates of Heaven with their *tefillos*, but it was all to no avail.

Ten years after his marriage, Shalom came to the home of his former *rebbe*, who, over the years, had become one of the *gedolei hador* to whom people turned for advice and blessings. His face lowered, Shalom shared with his *rebbe* his anguish of the last ten years, and asked what more he could do.

A heavy silence hung in the room. The Rav closed his eyes and settled deep in thought. Finally, he raised his compassionate eyes to his student and said, “My dear Reb Shalom, perhaps you remember something from your distant past, something you did to someone? Perhaps you can think of someone has a *kepeidah*, a strictness, on you that is preventing your *yeshuah*?”

Shalom covered his eyes in shame. He didn't need a lot of time to remember: the image of the “limper” rose in his mind's eye and suddenly, he was overcome with humiliation. How could he have behaved so cruelly towards another person?

He did not need to hear more. Shalom took leave of his *rebbe*, and that very day, began to search feverishly for Yisrael Meir. But what should have been a straightforward, uncomplicated task turned out to be much more difficult than he imagined.

It turned out that when Yisrael Meir had married he had gone to live abroad near his father-in-law. He had a very common last name, which made it difficult to track his whereabouts. When Shalom finally was able to track him down by phone, Yisrael Meir refused to exchange even one word with him, which intensified Shalom's dejection.

Concurrent to his efforts, Shalom davened tearfully to Hashem to put it in Yisrael Meir's heart to overcome his pain and allow him to rectify what he had done wrong.

Many months passed. On the morning of Lag BaOmer, Shalom found himself traipsing up Mount Meron together with masses of other people, to the *tziyun* of Rabi Shimon Bar Yochai. There, he wanted to storm the Gates of Heaven with his *tefillos* for a *yeshuah*, for forgiveness. He was surrounded by fathers and their children, which did little to improve his low mood.

When he finally reached the last curve before the *tziyun*, Shalom's eye caught sight of a Jew who looked American, standing on the side of the road with his children. Something about the man's face was familiar, but Shalom couldn't put his finger on exactly where he knew him from. Shalom stared at the man for a few long moments, which caused the man to shift uneasily, and immediately, to reveal his identity. The prominent limp reminded Shalom of forgotten incidents. He almost cried out in shock: I don't believe it! But he realized that enthusiasm, in this case, could be detrimental to his purpose.

He waited in a corner, and when an auspicious moment arrived he hesitantly approached the person. “Is your name by any chance Yisrael Meir?” Instead of a response, he received a cold shoulder. The man had immediately identified Shalom and refused to exchange a word with him.

And then the dam of his tears broke. Shalom found himself for the first time in his adult life sobbing bitterly, pouring out all his pain, anguish and sincere regret.

“Do you not have compassion on me? You have the key to change my life from one of suffering to one of happiness. Please, forgive me for what I did to you as a child. I would pay everything I have to turn back the clock. I regret with all my heart what I did. Please forgive me.”

Yisrael Meir lowered his gaze. He would not remain indifferent in the face of the man's tears, but on the other hand, the pain still stung at his heart and it was hard for him to forgive. Suddenly, he had an idea.

He turned to Shalom and said, “Truthfully, it's very hard for me to forgive you. I haven't forgotten for one day what you did to me, and I barely managed to rehabilitate my life after that. With *siyata diShmaya* and the help of my dear parents, who gave me every treatment possible, I was able to get my life back on track.

“Sill, you have also suffered enough. I feel like your apology is not just lip service. Let us go to the *tziyun*; I will daven for your *yeshuah* and you will daven for me, that I succeed in finding it in my heart to forgive you completely.”

Shalom liked the idea and they parted with a gleam of hope in their eyes. They joined the crush of people filling the holy *tziyun*, and made up to meet outside in an hour's time.

In the few minutes that they were able to spend inside the *tziyun* they each davened for one another, and when they returned to meet, they looked like close friends. The *tefillah* that he had davened from the depths of his heart for the man that he had felt such animosity towards for so many years, softened Yisrael Meir's heart and caused him to forgive wholeheartedly.

They parted as old friends, and Shalom promised to report to Yisrael Meir when he would have good tidings. Indeed, it did not take long to come: Less than a year after this happened, Shalom's wife gave birth to a son.

His name was—how not—Shimon, for the person in whose merit peace was made between two people...

*MeiHashem Yatza Hadavar*, p. 418