

Vechol Maaminim



A Weekly Leaflet From "Bnei Emunim"

PARASHAS BAMIDBAR-SHAVUOUS 5778

IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

Bitachon – The Key to Torah

“וידבר ה' אל משה במדבר סיני” (א א)

“Anyone who does not make himself ownerless like a desert cannot acquire the wisdom and the Torah and that is why it was said in the Sinai Desert.” (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 1 7)

The words of this *Midrash* are explained by **Harav Yaakov Neiman**, Rosh Yeshivas Ohr Yisrael of Petach Tikva:

The desert is desolate and far from any populated area, and has no help or support; it doesn't trust anything or anyone except Hashem himself. So, too, one who seeks to merit a share in Torah must put his faith in HaKadosh Baruch Hu.

This concept that *bitachon* is a condition for meriting Torah is also proven in the *brachah* of *Ahavah Rabbah*: “*Ba'avur avoseinu shebatchu Becha vatelamdem chukei chaim,*” meaning that our forebears only merited to learn “*chukei chaim*”, the laws of life, through the power of their faith in Hashem.

Darchei Mussar

Parashas Bamidbar – The Parashah of Lineage

“ויתלדו על משפחתם לבית אבתם” (א יח)

The *Tosafos* (*Megillah* 31b beginning with *klalos*) says that *Parashas Bamidbar* is always read before *Shavuos* in order to provide a separation between the curses said in *Parashas Bechukosai* and the festival of *Shavuos*.

The *sefer Drushim Velikchei Mussar* written by a *talmid* of Rav Mordechai Banet, cites another reason for this according to the *Midrash* (*Yalkut Shimoni Bamidbar remez* 684): “When Yisrael received the Torah, the nations of the world envied them... HaKadosh Baruch Hu closed their mouths and said to them: Bring me your genealogy books.”

The virtue of our lineage is the reason that the nations of the world were rejected from receiving the Torah, therefore *Chazal* established that prior to the Chag Matan Torah, we should read *Parashas Bamidbar*, which says, “*Vayisyaldu mishpechosam*

lebeis avosam, and they were registered by family ancestry according to the house of their fathers.”

Razei Emunim

Hints of Amen in the Parashah

Tefillos Are Answered in the Merit of Amen

“נשיא מטות אבותם ראשי אלפי ישראל הם” (א טז)

The acronym of “*nesi'ei matos avosam*” is “amen”, while the word “*roshei*” is an acronym for “*amen yehei Shemei Rabba,*” and the word “*alfei*” is an acronym for “*yihiyu leratzon imrei pi.*”

This is an allusion to the words of the holy *Zohar* (*Vayeilech* 285 2) that in the merit of answering amen with *kavanah*, *tefillos* are accepted willingly.

Mikrei Dardaki, Ben Yissachar

The Holiness of the Mishkan Helps the Tefillah Be Accepted

“ובנסוע המשכן יורידו אתו הלוים” (א נא)

It was told that whenever **Harav Menachem Mendel of Rimanov** felt difficulty davening, he would recite *Parashas Hamishkan* with great awe and *kavanah*, and the holiness of the Mishkan would give him the strength to continue davening.

His *talmid*, **Harav Yaakov Tzvi Yalish**, author of *Melo Haro'im*, added that this practice is alluded to in this *passuk*:

“*Ubinsoa Hamishkan*” – even after the Mishkan left us, due to our sins, “*yoridu oso haLeviim*” – the *tzaddikim* can bring down the holiness of the Mishkan into this physical world whenever they need help in the *avodas hatefillah*. How? By reciting *Parashas Hamishkan*.

Kol Yaakov

Everything That Emerges From His Mouth Should Be Done

“איש על מחנהו ואיש על דגלו” (א נב)

There was a village Jew who was a *chassid* of

Premishlan. The man's landlord, the *poritz*, decided suddenly to cancel the man's lease on his land and to evict him. Distraught, the *chassid* traveled to spend *Shabbos* in Premishlan. On Erev *Shabbos* he went to the Rebbe, Rav Meir'l and pleaded that he daven for him that he should not have to leave his home and lose his livelihood.

Shabbos arrived and the Yid was seated at the *tisch* when the Rebbe began to sing: “*Kol Mekadesh Shevi'i.*” When he reached the words “*secharo harbeh me'od al pi pe'ulo ish al machaneihu v'ish al diglo*” the Rebbe stopped and began to explain: “*secharo*” of one who keeps *Shabbos* in holiness is “*harbeh me'od*”, very great, and its essence is “*al pi pe'alo*” [*pi* meaning mouth], whatever comes out of his mouth, that is what will be acted upon in Heaven.

Here the Rebbe turned to those around the *tisch* and asked: “What do you say, is Meir'l a *Shomer Shabbos kadas*, the way it should be?” And everyone replied: “Yes!” The Rebbe then continued: “If, so I rule and say, *Ish al machaneihu, v'ish al diglo*...each man on his camp and each man to his banner...!”

The Rebbe then continued to sing and the villager's eyes lit up. When he returned home after *Shabbos* he was not surprised to find that the *poritz* had changed his mind and allowed him to remain “on his camp and under his banner.”

Sippurei Tzaddikim

Acceptance of Tefillos In the Time of Nissan

“איש על דגלו באתת לבית אבתם יחנו בני ישראל” (ב ב)

Harav Dovid of Tolna said:

The virtue of the *degalim* is so great, that each year, when the time comes that Yisrael was commanded about them – on 1 Iyar, we once again arouse compassion upon Yisrael and their *tefillos* are willingly accepted. David Hamelech alluded to this when he said (*Tehillim* 20:6): “*Ubeshem Elokeinu nidgol yemalei Hashem kol mishalosecha*” meaning in the “*Tekufas Nissan*” [which includes the months of Nissan, Iyar and Sivan] when Yisrael merited the *degalim*, they are guaranteed that all their requests will be answered by Hashem.

Magen David, Rosh Chodesh Iyar

Dear Yid, Did you know?

The *Pri Megadim* (*Eishel Avraham* 215 6; *Teivas Gomeh Ha'azinu*) says that according to the Ramban, the *Birchos Hatorah* that we recite each morning are *d'Oraisa* – and answering amen after them is also *d'Oraisa*.

Remember! When you answer amen after Birchos HaTorah recited in the morning you fulfill (according to the Ramban) a mitzvas aseh d'Oraisa!

Birchos Hashchar: Aloud... With kavanah... Bechavrusa...



Shavu'os – Chag Matan Toraseinu

There is a famous question posed by the *Magen Avraham* (*Orach Chaim* beginning of *siman* 294, and the same question is also asked by the *Rivash*, 96) in the name of the Rema MiPano (*Asarah Maamaros, Maamar Chikur Din*, Vol. II, 15): Why do we refer to Shavu'os as Zman Matan Toraseinu in Kiddush and davening? Don't we *psaken* like Rabi Yosi (*Shabbos* 86b) that the Torah was given on Shabbos, 7 Sivan, and if so, when we celebrate Shavu'os on 6 Sivan it is actually Erev Zman Matan Toraseinu?

There are many answers to this question, some of them according to *pshtat* and others along the lines of *drush*. We will cite a few of them.

1. The *Baal Ha'akeidah* asked further: Why then does the Torah not explicitly mention the reason for Chag Hashavu'os—Zman Matan Toraseinu—the way it does with the rest of the festivals? He writes: "Matan Toraseinu is not limited to a specific day or time; rather a person must feel that all day every day HaKadosh Baruch Hu gives him the Torah anew, as *Chazal* said (*Yalkut Shimoni Mishlei* 937): 'Each day they should be new in your eyes.' Therefore, this can be marked on 6 Sivan even if the Torah was not given on that day. (*Akeidas Yitzchak, Emor, Shaar* 76, end of chapter 4; similarly in the *Kli Yakar* and many other commentaries.)

Harav Yissachar Dov Teichtel, *Hy"d*, added: Certainly the Torah did not seek to conceal the true time when the Torah was given, but because it wanted to teach us this concept, that Matan Torah is not limited to a specific day, therefore the Torah did not state that this is the day of Matan Torah, and specifically preceded the date to 6 Sivan so that everyone should know and understand that a person can "receive the Torah anew" each day. (*Mishneh Sachir*, Vol. II, 90)

2. The Maharal of Prague explained that one should differentiate between the time of "nesinas haTorah", when the Torah was given, from HaKadosh Baruch Hu, to the time of "kabbalah," when we actually accepted it:

From the day they emerged from Egypt, Bnei Yisrael were instructed count fifty days, during which they rose from level to level until on the fiftieth day, they were ready, as far as their level, to receive the Torah from HaKadosh Baruch Hu. HaKadosh Baruch Hu was also ready, but He agreed to the words of Moshe, who added one more day of his own accord (*Shabbos* 86a) because he wanted to set aside one full day during which we would be worthy of accepting the Torah. Therefore it was given on the fiftieth day. Hence, it is worthy of being called Zman Matan Toraseinu from 6 Sivan, because of HaKadosh Baruch Hu's willingness to give it, and that is why it is called Zman Matan Toraseinu. (*Tiferes Yisrael* 27)

3. Harav Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev also addressed this question, and in order to explain it, he first explained a fundamental concept relating to all the festivals: Even though thousands of years have passed since the day for which the festivals are established, still, each year we celebrate the same event that occurred, and that arouses again the light that glowed during that time, and it is as though it is happening again now.

Based on this we can answer the question of the *Magen Avraham*: The primary time that the light glowed when it was time to receive the Torah, according to Hashem's Thoughts and Words, was on 6 Sivan, but Moshe Rabbeinu added one day, and therefore, in reference to that illumination, then it makes sense to call 6 Sivan Zman Mattan Toraseinu. (*Kedushas Levi Shavu'os*, beginning with *In the Shulchan Aruch*)

4. The Chiddushei Harim answered this question according to the words of his rebbe,

the Rebbe of Peshischa. He says that the word "matan" Toraseinu indicates that the Torah was given as a *matanah*, a gift to the sages of Am Yisrael, so they could learn it and derive its *halachos*. The *Gemara* says that the Torah was supposed to be given on 6 Sivan, but Moshe added another day and HaKadosh Baruch Hu agreed and delayed the giving until 7 Sivan. Thus we can understand why specifically 6 Sivan is called Zman "Matan Toraseinu" because on this day HaKadosh Baruch Hi revealed to the whole world that the Torah was given to the sages of Yisrael to decide *halachos* as per their understanding – how? Because He agreed to the opinion of Moshe to postpone Kabbalas HaTorah to 7 Sivan. (*Imrei Hari"m*, and similarly, the *Bais Halevi, Yisro*).

Harav Meshulem Dovid Soloveichik, *shlita*, explains according to this the words we say in the *Haggadah*: "If He would have brought us before Har Sinai and wouldn't have given (*nasan*) us the Torah – *dayeinu*, it would be enough." Many have asked: What purposes would there have been in just coming close to Har Sinai? Based on this we can explain that the intention is to say that even if HaKadosh Baruch Hu would have brought us near Har Sinai to get the Torah, but would not have given it to us – as a gift that we would be able to learn and derive *halachos*—that, too, would have been *dayeinu*. (*Haggadah Shel Pesach, Shiras Haleviim*, p. 79)

5. The *Chasam Sofer* explained: Before Matan Torah, Bnei Yisrael were considered like the sons of Noach, and it is known, that unlike in Am Yisrael, among the children of Noach, the night follows the day. Thus, the end of the night is at *neitz hachamah*, sunrise. According to this we can understand that until the Torah was given, the hour of its giving, which was at dawn on 7 Sivan, was considered to still be part of 6 Sivan, and only after the Torah was given did it emerge in retrospect that it was 7 Sivan [according to the way the Torah calculates dates.] Thus, both days have an essence of Zman "Matan Toraseinu." (*Drashos Chasam Sofer*, Vol. II, p. 234)

6. The *Torah Temimah* (*Shemos* 24, comment 36) explains: It is not for naught that we say Zman Matan Toraseinu as opposed to Yom Matan Toraseinu. It is because our intention is not the day the Torah was actually given, but rather the *zman*, the time when we were ready for it, and this time began already at the beginning of the *Sheloshes Yemei Hagbalah*, and 6 Sivan is included in that time.

7. The *Atzei Chaim* of Sighet (*Shu"t, Orach Chaim* 35) answers: The *Gemara* (*Shabbos* 87a) explains that even according to Rabi Yosi, as far as HaKadosh Baruch Hu was concerned, the Torah was ready to be given on 6 Sivan, and we also agreed to accept it by declaring *naaseh venishma*. But Moshe Rabbeinu added one more day of his own accord and established the time for Matan Torah as 7 Sivan.

One might wonder how Moshe Rabbeinu was able to move the receiving of the Torah after we already agreed to accept it by saying *naaseh venishma*. The *Gemara* in *Yevamos* (89b, 90a) explains the sages can only move something in the Torah in a form of "*shev v'al taaseh*", i.e. passively, and not "*kum v'aseh*", to actively do something. Moshe postponed the time of receiving the Torah with "*shev v'al ta'aseh*," hence it was possible.

According to this we can understand that all the *mitzvos* which, to move them, would involve a "*kum v'aseh*", and active step, which cannot be moved by *Chazal*, were commanded on 6 Sivan, and therefore, indeed, it is possible to call this day "Zman Matan Toraseinu."

A Brachah for Torah Attained With Great Effort

Harav Yeruchem Fishel Perle, *zt"l*, was an old man when he passed away. He was born and lived in Warsaw, and merited to have both Torah and *gedulah* (wealth). For decades, he would sit in a room far from the eyes of the world and toiled in Torah from morning to night.

Only towards his old age did he become renowned in Am Yisrael due to the compilations that he published, most notably his brilliant and comprehensive work on the *Sefer Hamitzvos* by Rabbeinu Saadya Gaon. Late in life, after his wife passed away, he settled in Yerushalayim, where he lived in a modest apartment in the heart of the Batei Machseh neighborhood in the Old City. His home quickly became a locus for the *gedolim* and *gaonim* of Yerushalayim, and well as his many *talmidim*.

Some time before his passing, when several of his students were visiting his home, Rav Yeruchem told them a story about himself:

I was a young child when my mother took me in her arms and walked with me through the streets of the city, where she crowded along with the masses waiting expectantly.

The giant of that generation, Harav Shlomo the son of Rabbeinu Akiva Eiger, *zt"l*, had come for a short visit in my home city. The Rav, who was known as a *gadol* in Torah and a lofty *tzaddik*, had agreed to the request of the city's *parnasim* to receive the public seeking *brachos* and advice. It quickly became clear to the *gabbaim* that the Rav would not be able to withstand the mounting pressure; thousands of men, women and children from all over the city gathered at the Rav's home, many of them carrying their children, and all seeking a *brachah* from the *tzaddik*—or at the very least to lay their eyes on him.

The reception hours, which began in the early afternoon, dragged on to the late evening. During that time, the door to the Rav's room opened and closed constantly, as people entered one after the other, received a *brachah*, and left.

By late that night the *gabbaim* began to worry about the Rav well being. They looked at the large crowd still waiting outside and realized that there was no way that the Rav could possibly receive them all.

After consulting with the Rav one of the *gabbaim* came out onto the balcony in front of the house and announced: "Due to the Rav's weakness and the late hour, the reception hours are now over!"

A rumble of disappointment could be heard from the crowd as the *gabbai* continued apologetically: "In a few minutes, the Rav will come out onto the balcony and will bless the crowd, like one man with one heart..."

A few moments later, the venerable figure of the Rav emerged and he leaned on the railing of the balcony. His long beard and pure, glowing eyes lent him the appearance of an angel. He looked compassionately at the large crowd that had gathered, closed his eyes and began to warmly bless them:

"May Hashem bless you and your children with health, *nachas* and happiness. May you reap *brachah* in your studies and see success in

your endeavors. May you merit to raise your children to Torah and *mitzvos* and reap much *nachas* from them, and merit to see them growing to become *talmidei chachamim* who fear Hashem, and to marry them off to worthy spouses, and to see children and grandchildren engaged in Torah and *mitzvos* all your lives..."

The Rav concluded his *brachah* and a thunderous "amen" could be heard, and the crowd immediately dispersed and began to go home.

The Rav returned to his room, but then a scream was heard from the crowd. It was my mother, who could not bear the fact that this rare opportunity that she had so longed for, to have her son blessed by a *gadol hador* himself, would not come to fruition. She had spent so many hours waiting, some of them under the burning sun, and carrying me with significant effort, and now...it would all be for naught!?

Without looking right or left, she pushed until she reached one of the *gabbaim* and made a firm demand: "I must go into the Rav, I am not ready to suffice with a general *brachah*. I need a personal *brachah* for my son that he grow and have many long years in Torah..."

The *gabbai* tried to object, but my mother persisted. The Rav heard the altercation and asked what was going on.

One of the *gabbaim* offered an explanation:

"There is a woman who refuses to give up and is trying with all her might to get into the Rav. As much as we tried to explain that this is not possible, she refuses to back down and insists on coming in..."

The Rav, impressed at my mother's tenacity and devotion to the *chinuch* of her child, instructed the *gabbaim* to let her in. My mother entered the room with me in her arms.

"What would you like?" the Rav asked gently and my mother replied, "I want the Rav to bless my baby son that he grow to be a *talmid chacham* and that he should illuminate the eyes of Klal Yisrael with his Torah."

The Rav placed his holy hands on my head and blessed me with warm emotion:

"*Yehi ratzon* that you merit to grow up to be a *gadol b'Yisrael*, and a real *talmid chacham*, and may you merit a long life and live to a ripe old age."

Despite me being very young, Rav Yeruchem related, I remember to this day how we both answered—my mother and I—loudly and with great *emunah*: "Amen!" Tears of joy and emotion filled our eyes.

That *brachah*, which we answered with such a fervent amen, continued to accompany me throughout my life, and even now in my old age, I have merited to come and live in the holy city of Yerushalayim. Rav Yeruchem Fishel Perle passed away on 30 Shevat 5694 at the age of 90, after years of endless toil in Torah. To this day, his *chiddushim* continue to impress Torah scholars.

Zaharah Chamah, p. 342; Nishmas Yaakov [in memory of Rav Y. N. Rosenthal] p. 178