

Vechol Maaminim

A Weekly Leaflet From "Bnei Emunim"



IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

Fulfill What It Says in the *Mi Shebeirach*

“איש כי ידר נדר לה...לא יחל דברו” (ל א)

In a *hesped* held at the end of the *shivah* for one of his *talmidim*, Harav **Yehoshua Leib Diskin** called on the *shamash* of the *shul* and gave him a sum of money, noting that the money was given to him in the name of all those present as an *aliyah* for the soul of the deceased person.

When met with surprise, Rav Yehoshua Leib explained:

“During the *hesped*, the *chazzan* said the *tefillah* of *Kel Malei Rachamim*, and recited: “so that the whole congregation pledges *tzeddakah* for mentioning his soul” and in order that this pledge be fulfilled, I am donating *tzeddakah* for them.”

Amudei Eish, p. 155

Not to Cause the Holy Shechinah to ‘Wait’

“לא יחל דברו ככל היוצא מפיו יעשה” (ל א)

Harav **Shmuel Shmaryahu Heine**, the Rav of Ostrovtze and a *talmid* of the Kozhnutzer Maggid, wrote:

This *passuk* alludes to the reward of one who is careful about the words of the *Gemara* (*Brachos* 6b): “When HaKadosh Baruch Hu comes to the *shul* and doesn’t find ten people there – He immediately gets angry, as it says (*Yeshayah* 50:2): ‘Why did I come and no one is here, I called and there is no one to answer.’”

“*Yachel*” is a language that denotes waiting, as it says (*Bereishis* 8:10): “*Vayachel od shivas yamim.*” “*Davar*” is a term for the holy Shechinah (*Zohar Mikeitz* 194 2). That is what it says here: “*lo yachel devaro*”, one who does not cause the holy Shechinah to ‘wait’ for his arrival to *shul*, but rather hastens to be from the first ten people there, is guaranteed that his *tefillah* will be answered – “*kechol hayotzei mipiv ya’aseh*”, all that emerges from his mouth will be done.

Zichron Shmuel

Baseless Hatred is Worst of All

“נקם נקמת בני ישראל מאת המדינים אחר תאסף אל עמך” (ל ב)

“And not from the Moavites, because the Moavites entered the matter out of fear. They were afraid of them, that they would plunder them...but the Midianites, however were enraged over a dispute that was not theirs.”(*Rashi*)

Harav **Dov Meir Rubman**, Rosh Yeshivas Tiferes Yisrael in Haifa, pointed out something important:

This *parashah* teaches us about the severity of the sin of baseless hatred, because it clearly states in *Rashi* that the reason that we were commanded to take revenge specifically from the Midianites and not the Moavites was because of the baseless hatred that they had, getting involved in a fight that was not theirs.

We can also learn about the severity of this sin from the *nusach* of the *tefillos* of the Yamim Noraim, when we add in *Chazaras Hashatz* in the *brachah* of *Modim*: “Avinu Malkeinu, remember Your mercy and suppress Your anger, and end all plague, sword, hunger, captivity and destruction and sin and illness...and all types of punishments and bad decrees and baseless hatred from us and from all members of Your covenant.” We

have here a series of wondrous requests, and, like most *tefillos*, they go from the lighter to the more serious (See *Bava Basra* 8b). And what is the last of them? *Sinas chinam*, baseless hatred!

Zichron Meir

Lavan Is Bilam, And He Sought to Uproot Everything

“ואת בלעם בן בעור הרגו כחרב” (ל א)

The *Targum Yonasan* on this *passuk* states that before Pinchas killed Bilam he said to him: “Are you not Lavan the Aramite who wanted to destroy Yaakov Avinu and you went down to Egypt in order to destroy his children...”

From the *Targum Yonasan* it seems that he had a *kabbalah* that Bilam is Lavan the Aramite, and according to this, Harav **Eliezer Yehudah Waldenberg**, author of *Tzitz Eliezer*, offered a beautiful explanation on the words of the *Haggadah Shel Pesach*: “Go and see what Lavan the Aramite wanted to do to Yaakov Avinu, that Pharaoh only decreed upon the males and Lavan wanted to destroy it all, as it says (*Devarim* 26:6): “*Arami oved avi vayered Mitzraymah.*” Many have asked: How did Lavan the Aramite end up in the *Haggadah*, whose story is about Yetzias Mitzrayim?!

We can say that the author of the *Haggadah* concurred with *Targum Yonasan* that Lavan is Bilam, who, when seeing that he could not destroy Yaakov Avinu, tried to brutally destroy his offspring. Therefore, when we were enslaved in Egypt, he followed them and advised Pharaoh (see *Sotah* 11a) to decree that all children – boys and girls- born to Bnei Yisrael should be destroyed. But Pharaoh only accepted part of his suggestion and decreed solely upon the males. That is what the Baal Haggadah says: “*Arami oved avi*”, and when this did not happen, “*vayered Mitzraymah,*” he went down to Egypt in pursuit of Yaakov’s offspring in order “to uproot everything” – girls and boys, but to his disappointment “Pharaoh only decreed upon the males...”

Shu”t Tzitz Eliezer, Part 17, 24

Razei Emunim

Hints of Amen in the Parashah

Answering Amen Is Part of the Brachah

“כי לא מלאו אחר” (לב יא)

The acronym of “*ki lo mil’u acharai*” is numerically equivalent to 91, which is amen, to teach you that the word “amen” is what fills and completes the *brachah*. As the *Mishnah Berurah* writes (*Orach Chaim* 167 20): “answering amen is also part of the *brachah*.”

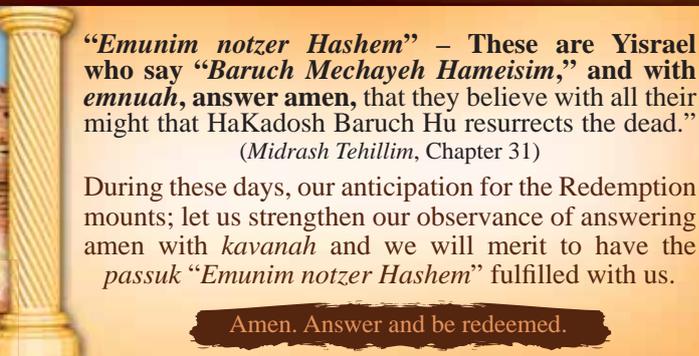
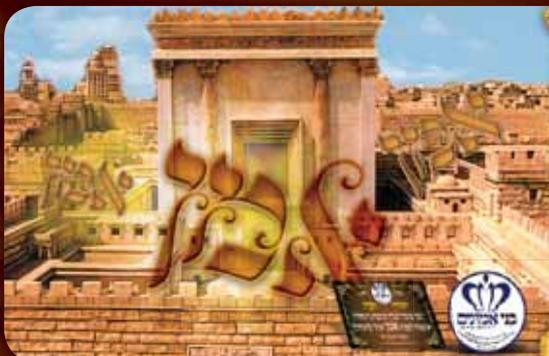
Chairman of Bnei Emunim, Harav Yaakov Dov Marmorstein

“*Emunim notzer Hashem*” – These are Yisrael who say “*Baruch Mechayeh Hameisim,*” and with *emnuah*, answer amen, that they believe with all their might that HaKadosh Baruch Hu resurrects the dead.”

(*Midrash Tehillim*, Chapter 31)

During these days, our anticipation for the Redemption mounts; let us strengthen our observance of answering amen with *kavanah* and we will merit to have the *passuk* “*Emunim notzer Hashem*” fulfilled with us.

Amen. Answer and be redeemed.



Krias Shema – Parashas Tzitzis (2)

A Tzaddik Will Always
Separate His Tzitzis

In explaining the meaning of the word *tzitzis*, *Rashi* writes (*Menachos* 41b) that “*tzitzis*” is something that hangs out from something larger, as the *Gemara* cites a similar language in (*ibid* 42a) the words of the *passuk* (*Yechezkel* 8:3): “*Vayikacheinu betzitzis roshi*, and it took me by a lock of my hair.” Similarly, the *Rambam* writes (*Tzitzis* 1): “a branch that is made on the corner of the garment from a type of garment called ‘*tzitzis*’ because it resembles the *tzitzis*, the forelock, of the head.”

The practical halachah is derived from this explanation of the *Gemara* there, that one has to be careful to separate the strands of the *tzitzis* so they should be like “a forelock of the non-Jews” and the *Mishnah Berurah* (8 18) brings a sign for this in the name of the *Arizal*: “*Tzitzis*” is an acronym for “*tzaddik yafriid tzitziyosav tamid*, a *tzaddik* will always separate his *tzitzis*.”

The *sefer Noam Megadim* (*Shelach*) explains that this is why this matter was attributed specifically to a “*tzaddik*”, even though it applies to every person in Am Yisrael. The *Magen Avraham* (*Orach Chaim* 8 10) explains that the reason that one does not rely on a *chazakah* [relying on the last known status] when checking the *tzitzis* is because we have a rule that wherever it is possible to clarify something we do not rely on *chazakah*. However, he writes that for this reason, if the person knows that by being involved in checking the *tzitzis* he will be late and miss davening with a *minyan*, then he should not check them, and can rely on *chazakah*.

It is known that the description “*tzaddik*” is applied to one who is careful to be among the first ten people to arrive in *shul*, and therefore, the acronym can be understood: “*tzaddik yafriid tzitziyosav tamid*” because only a *tzaddik* can fulfill this custom always, without missing a single day, because he is always careful about being one of the first in the *shul*.

Tzitzis Are a Reminder for a
Person to Do Mitzvos

The Maharal explained that this language was used regarding the mitzvah of *tzitzis* because the garment of *tzitzis* in which a person wraps his body symbolizes the body of the person that is made of earth from the ground, and the *tzitzis* that emerge from it are like “*tzitz hasadeh*” [grass] that emerges from the ground, symbolizing his good deeds.

Wearing the *tzitzis* and seeing

the *tzitzis* that emerge from it, remind a person that his body is only earth from the ground, and thus the objective of his creation is for the sake of doing *mitzvos* and good deeds, and only through that can a person realize the potential of his creation to actual deeds. (*Nesivos Olam, Nesiv Ha'avodah* 15)

To “Peek” Through the
Tzitzis

Many of the commentators explained that the language of *tzitzis* symbolizes “*lehatzitz*”, peeking and seeing, which is the objective of the *tzitzis* – to see them and through that to remember the *mitzvos* of Hashem. *Rashi* thus explains in *Parashas Shelach* (*Bamidbar* 15:38) and the *Rashba* writes (*Shu”t*, Vol. VII, 538) that the matter of *tzitzis* is “*habatah*” gazing, as the *passuk* says (*Shir Hashirim* 2:9) “*Meitzitz min hacharakim*.”

Harav Menachem Mendel of Riminov writes that this language symbolizes the *segulah* of this mitzvah: “To remove the cloud of darkness from our physical eyes and to focus our eyes on the holiness of Yisrael,” and he concludes: “And therefore one must be very careful about this mitzvah.” (*Menachem Tzion, Bereishis*)

The Be'er Moshe of Kohnitz cites in the name of his Rebbe, Harav Zusha of Anipoli, who said: “My son, right before dawn, when you awaken from your sleep, take the holy *tzitzis* in your hand, and concentrate to look at the great loftiness and greatness of the Creator, Blessed be His Name, and you should fear Him...Fear of loftiness, and not just like a mitzvah done out of habit.”

The *Ba'al Akeidah* (*Bamidbar* 78) writes that through looking at the *techeiles* strand, which is an average shade between black and white, the person should always introspect into his deeds, and to straighten them to the average path. As the *Rambam* writes: (*Deios*) 1 3): “The two extremes that are distant from one another in each trait is not the good way, and a person should not follow them. And if he finds his nature swaying towards one of them... or he has already learned one of them and acts upon it, he should restore himself to the right path...That is the average *middah* in each and every trait, of all the traits a person has, and that is the one that equidistant from both extremes, and not close to either one. Therefore, the sages commanded that a person should always place his traits and guide them on the average path so that he should be perfect...”

The Chapters of Tehillim Were Not Said in Vain

Rabbi L. was used to occasionally taking up his wandering stick and traveling abroad on behalf of the *tzeddakah* enterprises he was involved in. He sometimes remained abroad for weeks at a time, while his family remained back home, missing him deeply.

They were aware of the fact that their father was a man of *chesed* with every fiber of his being, and that the purposes of his trips were holy and lofty. But the difficulty and yearning took their toll and clearly came through during the many transatlantic phone conversations.

For a long time, Rabbi L. tried to think of a way to make it easier for his young children, until he came up with an idea:

He suggested that his older daughter gather the family together each day to recite *Tehillim*, and then a *tefillah* that would be dedicated to their father's success. The children would channel their longing for their father into the recital of the *Tehillim*, and this would assuage their yearning a bit because they would know that they were full partners on the trip.

Rabbi L. knew very well how necessary every *tefillah* for his success was; he never took it for granted. Anyone who has ever taken such a trip will agree with the fact that the results are always unexpected and unpredictable, and that tremendous *siyata diShmaya* is necessary in order to meet the goals and to succeed in raising a sufficient sum of money.

This way, Rabbi L. killed two birds with one stone: his family would feel that they were partners, involved in his trip, and their many *tefillas* would be a merit for him.

Before his next trip abroad, Rabbi L. purchased a set of *Tehillim Hamechulak*, and divided it among his large family. He also took several booklets for himself, so that each day they could complete the entire *sefer Tehillim* for the success of that day.

As expected, the change was remarkable. Rabbi L. began to feel amazing *siyata diShmaya* accompanying him and paving his path to success in a way that he had never seen. Doors that had previously been closed to him now opened, and his words began to find favor in the ears of the philanthropists who opened their hearts and pockets and donated to him generously.

And at home...the children, who were encouraged by the success stories that their father shared with them suddenly

felt like full partners to his trip. They understood its noble cause, and felt proud to be part of it – which also helped ease their feelings of acute longing during their father's absence.

From trip to trip, this became the habit. Each day of the week, the L. family convened to recite *Tehillim* together, and their father joined from afar. They finished the entire *sefer* each day.

One Shabbos morning during one of the subsequent trips, the family gathered, as usual, to recite their regular *Tehillim*. Suddenly, one of the younger children, a precocious and charming child, turned to his older sister and asked: “Doesn't Abba rest on Shabbos and not raise money? Why do we have to say *Tehillim* for him today?!”

The innocent question generated a vehement discussion among the children. Some took the younger child's side, and others said that even on Shabbos their father needed *siyata diShmaya*.

When the argument died down, they all looked at their older sister expectantly, waiting for her to render a decision one way or another.

The sister mulled it over and finally said: “Today, this Shabbos, we for sure have to say *Tehillim*, while for future weeks, we will ask Abba!”

Meanwhile, late on Friday night, in Monsey, Rabbi L. tossed and turned in his hosts' home, unable to fall asleep. He suddenly remembered something that had happened on Erev Shabbos, and his heart pounded with worry.

In order to understand what Rabbi L. was so concerned about, we have to go back to several hours earlier:

Throughout the week, Rabbi L. stayed at a family of *baalei chessed* that he knew on the outskirts of Monsey. For Shabbos, he was invited to stay with a different family, in an entirely different neighborhood.

On Friday afternoon, as Rabbi L. packed his small valise that he planned to take with him to the family he would be staying with for Shabbos, the valise suddenly tore and its contents spilled to the floor. His generous hosts, seeing his dismay, hastily found a new valise that they had and gave it to him as a gift.

Rabbi L. thanked them profusely. It was late and the driver was waiting outside rather impatiently. He quickly transferred his belongings into the new case, and left the house, dragging behind him the new valise.

On the way, his phone rang. It was the “weekday host”. “You left the torn valise here; can we throw it out?” Rabbi L. didn't think twice: “I'm sorry... no problem. It doesn't seem fixable, so you can throw it out. Thank you and good Shabbos!”

Now, on Friday night, Rabbi L. replayed the scene in his mind and recoiled. He suddenly remembered that in the inner pocket of that case, he had a thick envelope with a large bundle of cash, which he had worked to raise over the past three weeks. There was another important thing in the envelope: his passport and visa, allowing him to be in the United States.

The valise and its valuable contents were undoubtedly now in the street, with an endless number of non-Jews passing by, and it was highly likely that one of them would find and take the money. It was also possible that the very next morning, the valise would be picked up by the garbage trucks... Any of these possibilities was reasonable and certainly logical, and were preventing Rabbi L. from sleeping...

In any case, he could do nothing about it. Rabbi L. mustered up his deepest *emunah* in Hashem, the Al-mighty, Who would surely prevent him from losing so much. With these thoughts in mind, he finally fell asleep.

Throughout the Shabbos, the worrying thoughts popped into his mind, but Rabbi L. suppressed them, out of respect for Shabbos.

Late on Motzaei Shabbos, Rabbi L. bid his hosts farewell and set out to return to his weekday hosts. He felt extremely tense and anxious and as soon as the car arrived at his hosts' home, he darted out of the car with bated breath to see what had happened to his valise.

There it was: the valise stood on the sidewalk, torn and unusable. Rabbi L. hastened to slide his hand inside and froze...Inside, resting peacefully the coveted packet of money, bound together with a rubber band to his passport. Just like he'd left them thirty hours earlier.

Rabbi L. hurried to call home, as he did every Motzaei Shabbos. It was already early morning in Israel by then, and his family, who had just woken up, was stunned to hear the story.

“I told you,” Rabbi L. heard his older daughter's voice through the phone, “I told you that we have to say *Tehillim* on Shabbos as well. Look why—without the *Tehillim*, who knows what would have happened to the valise!”

Heard from the person it happened to