

# Vechol Maaminim



A Weekly Leaflet From "Bnei Emunim"

## IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

### One Who Accepts Bribery Prolongs "Echad"

“ולא תקח שחד” (טז יט)

A rumor once spread that one of the *dayanim* in Lvov accepted bribes. When this *dayan* once davened at the *minyán* of the rav of the city, **Harav Yaakov Orenstein**, author of *Yeshuos Yaakov*, the Rav noticed that the man was prolonging his recitation of the word “Echad” in *Kriyas Shema* more than *halachah* stipulates. (See *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim* 61 6)

When the *Yeshuos Yaakov* asked the *dayan* why he did this, the *dayan* did not have a satisfactory answer, and as such, the Rav told him, with veiled rebuke: “I will explain to you why you prolong the word ‘Echad’: *Chazal* say (*Shabbos* 10a) that ‘any *dayan* who judges an absolutely truthful judgment... it is as though he has become a partner with HaKadosh Baruch Hu in the act of creation.’ You, who have accepted bribes, are certainly not judging truthfully, and because you have not merited to be a partner to HaKadosh Baruch Hu in Creation, therefore it is truly fitting that you should declare aloud, and with emphasis, that “Hashem Echad” and that you are not a partner with Him...”

*Sichas Chulin Shel Talmidei Chachamim – Hachadash, Chapter 5, 2*

### “Elokim Ten Bamidbar Har”- Hashem, Make the Desert Into a Mountain

“וקמת ועלית אל המקום אשר יבחר ה' אלקיך בו” (ז ח)

“*Vekamta v'alisa*, this teaches us that the Bais Hamikdash was loftier than all other places.” (*Rashi*)

**Harav Ytzhak Zev of Brisk** said:

It is not coincidental that the Bais Hamikdash was built in such a high place; it was rightfully needed to be built on a mountain, as it says (*Shemos* 15:17): “*Teviemo vesita'eimo behar nachalascha*.” We also learn in the *Tosefta* (*Brachos* 1 15): “The Shechinah does not return to it [=Yerushalayim] until you

make a mountain.”

For this reason, we sing in the *zemer* of *Dror Yikra*: “*Elokim ten bamidbar har*” – return the site of the Mikdash that is desolate like a desert to be a mountain, so that the Bais Hamikdash can be once again built upon it.

*Haggadah Shel Pesach “Mibeis Halevi” p. 248*

### Razei Emunim

Hints of Amen in the Parashah

#### The “Tamim” Merits to be With “Hashem Elokecha”

“תמים תהיה עם ה' אלקיך” (יח ג)

In this *passuk* we find an allusion to the virtue of those who rise early to go to shul to be one of the ten first ones to daven and answer amen. “*Tami”m*” is an acronym for “*tihyeh miyud mashkimim*”, be among the ten early risers. “*Tamim tihyeh*” is numerically equivalent to ten times amen, and this teaches us that ten people who rise early to daven and answer amen on *Birchos Hashachar* merit to be “with Hashem Elokecha.” As the *Gemara* explains (*Brachos* 6b), HaKadosh Baruch Hu is together with the ten first people in the shul.

*Kol Yehudah*

#### Hashem Testifies of You that ‘You Will Not Return to Do It’

“וה' אמר לכם לא תספון לשוב בדרכך הזה עוד” (ז טז)

**Harav Ephraim Zalman Margulies** in his *sefer Mateh Ephraim* wrote a beautiful allusion from the words of this *passuk*:

“*V'Hashem amar lachem lo*” – is an acronym for Elul, to teach us that in the month of Elul a person has to repent and regret his sins from the depths of his heart, until the words: “*V'Hashem amar lachem lo tosifun lashuv baderech hazeh od*” should be fulfilled

with him. As the *Rambam* states (*Teshuvah* 2 2), the desirable level of *teshuvah* is that a person should abandon his sins and be consoled over his past: “And the One Who knows all secrets should testify of him that he will never return to do this sin.”

*Mateh Ephraim*, in corrections and omissions at the end of the *sefer*

### One Who Speaks Between Yishtabach and Yotzer Ohr – The Prosecuting Angels Return to Him

“מי האיש הירא ורך הלבב ילך וישב לביתו” (כ ח)

In his commentary on this *passuk*, *Rashi* cites the opinion of Rabi Yosi Hagligli (*Sotah* 44a) that this *passuk* refers to a person who is afraid that he will die at war due to his sins. The Tor (*Orach Chaim* 51) adds in the name of the *Yerushalmi*, that “One who speaks between *Yishtabach* and *Yotzer Ohr* – has a sin and that is enough to send him back from war.” [See *Tal Torah, Menachos* 36a, that he did not find this statement in the *Yerushalmi* that we have today.]

Another explanation for the words of the *Yerushalmi* is offered by **Rav Moshe Meth** of Premisla, a *talmid* of the *Maharshal*:

When a person stands up to daven, the prosecuting angels try to prevent his *tefillah* from being accepted, and in order to overcome them, it was established that we recite *Pesukei Dezimrah*, which, are like their name, they are “*zomrim*”, they prune and trim the power of these prosecuting angels.

This *segulah* is only effective for one who davenes *tefillah* in its consecutive order. However, when one stops and speaks between *Yishtabach* and *Yotzer Ohr*, he annuls the *segulah* of the *mizmorim*, and as such, the prosecuting angels once again hold up his *tefillah*. That is what the *Yerushalmi* is referring to: “*Chozrin aleha mei'orchei hamilchamah*” - The prosecuting angels who had disappeared return and fight to repel the *tefillah*.

*Mateh Moshe Vol. I, siman 53*

“For this *middah* of answering amen, Yisrael are called *tzaddikim*, as it says (*Yeshayah* 26:2) ‘*Vayovo goy tzaddik shomer emunim*.’”

(*Kad Hakemach* [Rabbeinu Bechaye] entry *Emunah*)

Dear Yid!

Start your day with reciting *Birchos Hashachar Bechavrusa*, so that you will merit to be called a *tzaddik* and to be written in the book of *tzaddikim* for a good and peaceful life.

*Birchos Hashachar* – aloud, with *kavanah*, *bechavrusa*.

"Tzaddikim Gemurim Are Written and Sealed for Life"



## Krias Shema – Parashas Vayomer (7)

## “Velo Sasuru” – For Your Own Needs

In his explanation on the *passuk* (Bamidbar 15:39) “Velo sasuru acharei levavchem v’acharei eineichem asher atem zonim achareihem.” Rashi cites the *passuk* said with regard to the *meraglim*, the spies, (*ibid* 13:25): “Vayashuvu mitur ha’aretz,” and they returned from scouting the land. He explains there: “The heart and eyes are spies for the body and broker the sins. The eye sees and the heart desires and the body performs the sins.”

Harav Chaim of Sanz explains: The Torah taught us that observing *mitzvos* has to be done for the sake of Hashem’s Name only and not for the sake of personal pleasure. And that is what the *passuk* says: “Velo sasuru acharei levavchem,” – like spies who pretend to be tourists in the land but their true intention is for themselves – to scout it out and to spy on it. Rather “V’asiseim es mitzvos Hashem” – only because Hashem commanded us to do so. (*Divrei Chaim, Shelach*)

The Maggid Harav Shalom Schwadron added that he heard from a great person that this comparison can also provide a “*kal vachomer*” for us:

If with the *meraglim*, who although asked in a way that was improper, Hashem allowed them to fulfill their wishes to scout the land (see Rashi at the beginning of *Parashas Shelach*), and the results were so severe and damaging, how much more so us, who were clearly commanded: “Velo sasuru,” certainly the result and the punishment will be severe. From here we can learn how careful we need to be about this severe prohibition. (*Lehagid Shelach*)

## A Bond that Is Never Undone

The Chozeh of Lublin offers another explanation for the words “*velo sasuru*”:

Even if, *chalilah*, you have sinned and you went “after your hearts and after your eyes,” nevertheless, “*velo sasuru*” – do not think that the bond between you and Hashem has become undone. Rather: “*Shuvu Eilai*, return to me...and I will return to you” (*Malachi* 1:3), because the connection between HaKadosh Baruch Hu and Klal Yisrael is extant for eternity and He will always be

waiting for your repentance. (*Likut Avnei Zikaron*, 584)

The Chofetz Chaim would say: After the Torah warned “*lo sasuru*” it immediately continues, “*lema’an tizkeru*, so that you remember...and you will be holy.” This is to teach you that even a person who, based on his current status needs the warning of “*velo sasuru*”, and as the *Gemara* states (*Brachos* 12b) that this prohibition alludes to apostasy and immodesty, R”l, a person can still reach the level of “And you will be holy to Hashem,” if he is just careful to preserve his holiness. (*Shemiras Halashon* Vol. II, Chapter 2)

## The Heart Draws the Eye

Many have asked: Why did the Torah write first “*acharei levavchem*”, after your hearts, and then “after your eyes”? Didn’t Chazal tell us (*Yerushalmi Brachos* 1 5; *Bamidbar Rabbah* 5 10) that what the eye sees follows the thought of the heart?

1. The holy Alshich explained that the reason that the *passuk* preceded the heart to the eye is so that a person should not be judged for the first sight that he stumbles upon through no fault of his own, but rather for the second time he sees it. After he becomes aware of the results of the first sight that brought him to have a desire in his heart, why did he then look again?!

2. It is told over in the name of the Vilna Gaon that by contrast to other sins, with the sin of *arayos*, it is the desire of the heart that incites the eye to see, and after that the heart desires. This is proven by a story cited in the *Gemara* (*Menachos* 44a) about a sinner who was very careful about the mitzvah of *tzitzis*, and when he heard that he had an opportunity to sin overseas, he was drawn by the desire of his heart and traveled abroad, even though he did not see anything with his eyes at first.

In this *parashah* the Torah hints that when one is careful about the mitzvah of *tzitzis*, then this mitzvah will protect him that his heart will not incite him to look, and that – “*Velo sasuru acharei levavchem v’acharei eineichem*” – in the merit of keeping the mitzvah of *tzitzis* the heart will not incite his eyes to see. (*Kerem Hatzvi* end of *Parashas Shelach*.)

## Tefillah Betzibbur That Saved a Soul

*This story was related by Harav Shmuel David Hakohein Friedman, shlitua, author of Sdeh Tzofim, who was instructed by a gadol b’Yisrael that it is a mitzvah for him to publicize it so that people should learn about the great virtue and value of davening betzibbur to the extent that it saved future generations. Rav Friedman relates:*

Several years ago, I flew to Toronto, Canada in order to participate in a family *simchah*. While in the airport, on the way back to America, I looked at my watch and realized that if I did not daven *Minchah* before the flight, I would have to daven on my own midflight.

Not wanting to forego *tefillah betzibbur*, I decided not to spare any effort and to walk through the various terminals to try and cobble together a *minyana*. Slowly, after quite some effort, I was able, with *siyata diShmaya*, to gather ten kosher Jews. We moved off to a corner and davened together with great emotion. After *Minchah*, one of the members of our *minyana* approached me. He was not someone I knew, but his visage and noble behavior made it clear that he was a respected Torah personality. He asked me my address. I gladly gave it to him and then we each went on our own way.

A few days after I returned from Toronto, a venerable looking Yid knocked at my door at home in Boro Park and asked to speak to me. I went to the door and realized right away that it was the person I had met in the airport.

I brought him inside and seated him at the table, and inquired about the purpose of his visit. In response, the man burst into heavy sobs; he could not compose himself for several long moments. Only after some time was I able to soothe him and he began to relate his sad story:

“I have a son, who is not yet eighteen. Until recently, he learned in one of the most prestigious *yeshivos* in Eretz Yisrael, with great diligence, and he brought me a lot of *nachas*. I do not know when and why it happened, but a short time I go I was surprised to hear that my son had been sent away from the *yeshiva* and that his spiritual situation was declining rapidly and was nearly at rock bottom.

“I hastily traveled to Eretz Yisrael, and after a lot of effort, I was able to persuade him to come home with me to America. When we arrived, I began feverishly searching for a *yeshiva* that would agree to accept him. With great *siyata diShmaya*, and with great difficulty, I found a suitable

*yeshiva* that specialized in dealing with such boys. My heart filled with hope that very soon they would be able to extract him from this rut and put him back on the right path.

“So why have I come to you?” the father continued in a broken voice. “Because according to the way this institution operates, one of the conditions that it set down was that I would commit for the initial period to find for my son a workplace for the morning hours. Then they will accept him for the afternoon, where he will be under the supervision of the staff, who will do their best to save him.

“I ask therefore, that you please offer my son a job in your office, because I do not want him to work in unsuitable environment, which would make things worse, not better. “This is the last lifeline for him,” the father added, burying his head in his hands and starting to weep again. “If I am unable to get him into this place, the child will be lost, and I don’t know what I will do.”

Rabbi Friedman continued:

I listened with great sympathy to the broken father, and my heart was overcome with compassion. But I didn’t know what to tell him. At the time there were no open positions in my office, and even if there would have been, I would not have wanted to fill it with an irresponsible, inexperienced teen. But I thought to myself that it was not for naught that the Ribbono Shel Olam had brought this story to my doorstep and I decided to try and help.

“Send me your son tomorrow and I will speak to him,” I told the father, not sure myself yet how I could help him. The father thanked me effusively and left.

The next day, the *bachur* arrived. I greeted him respectfully and began to speak to him. I quickly realized that this was a very refined young man with a noble character and decided to hire him for a trial period. At first I sent him on small errands out of the office, and slowly, he acquired my trust and proved himself to be very responsible.

I received proof of his responsibility one day when I gave him a significant sum of money to deposit in the bank. It was late and the bank was nearly closing, but I emphasized that the money had to be deposited that day. The boy took the money and dashed out, racing to the bank. A short time later he returned, breathless, clutching a wrinkled receipt indicating that the deposit had been made. When I looked at the receipt I was surprised. The money

had been deposited a few minutes after closing time. Knowing that bank, I was aware that they did not allow anyone in after closing time. It was an unbreakable rule as far as they were concerned. I asked the boy how he was able to do it and he related that indeed, when he reached the door of the bank he found it closed, but because he knew how important it was to me, and wanted to be able to carry out my instructions, he used a very smart and daring tactic to force the guard to let him in... It worked and the money was deposited.

The boy remained employed in my office for mornings for a long time, and at the same time, in the afternoon, he was doing very well in the special *yeshiva* where he was learning. One day, his father visited my home, his face glowing, and told me that *baruch Hashem* his son was doing so well that he would soon be switching to a regular *yeshiva* to learn full time.

I was very happy to hear the good news, and that I was privileged to have been a good messenger to be part of saving one soul. Some time after that I was happy to learn that the *bachur* had gotten engaged to a girl from a prominent family. A year later, they had a baby boy.

A month after the birth, the young father appeared at my home, his face radiating such joy, as he honored me with serving as the Kohein at his son’s *pidyon haben*.

I happily accepted the invitation. On the appointed day I arrived at the hall, just as the *tzibbur* was davening *Minchah*. I stood to the side, my eyes riveted on the baby’s father who was deeply engrossed in an emotional *Shemoneh Esrei*. His entire being radiated nobility and seriousness.

At one point, my eyes met those of the overjoyed grandfather and suddenly I remembered a different *Tefillas Minchah*, held with *mesirus nefesh* in an effort not to miss out on davening with a *minyana*. Now the fruits of that effort were glowing before my eyes, as a branch that was almost severed from the tree once again began to grow and to give forth delicious fruits that would then produce future generations in Am Yisrael.

When I related this story to the Boyaner Rebbe, *shlitua*, he instructed me to publicize it, so that people could clearly see the tremendous advantage that can come out of one *Minchah* that I made the effort to daven with a *minyana*.

*Sdeh Achuzah* p. 545