

Vechol Maaminim



A Weekly Leaflet From "Bnei Emunim"

IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

How Can One Lean on an Animal During the Viduy?

וסמך ידו על ראש העלה ונרצה לו לכפר עליו" (ד א) *Maseches Yoma* (36a) explains that when placing one's hands on the *korban*, the owner would confess to the sin for which he had brought the *korban* [See *Ksav Vehakabbalah* here which explains that the word "lechaper" means "lehisvados", to confess.]

In the *halachos* of Yom Kippur, the *Magen Avraham* rules (607 4) that because *Viduy* must be said while standing, therefore, while saying *Viduy* the one reciting it must not lean on anything that, if it would be taken away – the person would fall down. Such leaning is considered sitting. Based on this, the *Imrei Emes* asked: How can the owner of the *korban* say *Viduy* while placing his hands on the *korban*? Isn't the *semichah* done "bechol kocho, with all his strength" (*Chagigah* 16b), and in that case, if the animal would be removed the person saying *Viduy* would fall?

Harav Yitzchak Yehudah Trunk, Av Bais Din of Kutna, answered this question in two ways:

1. Even though the *semichah* is done "with all his strength" it is not done with the strength of his body, but with the strength of his hands. [See *Midrash (Bereishis Rabbah* 65 17) that the lambs in Eretz Yisrael were exceptionally tall. According to this, even someone bringing a lamb would not have to bend down to place his hands on it, and the *semichah* could be done only with the strength of his hands.] As such, even if the animal was taken away, the person would remain standing, and that is not the type of *semichah* that the *Magen Avraham* ruled was forbidden.
2. The prohibition against *semichah* during *Viduy* only applies to someone who is leaning because standing is hard for him. In that case, the *semichah* indicates pride, or focus on oneself, and the *Viduy* needs to be said with submission. But *semichah* on the *korban*

is not meant to make it easier for the person to stand, but rather so that he should submit his heart and realize that as long as the sin is upon him – he is like an animal (see *Panim Yafos* on this *passuk*). Therefore, it does not affect the submission that is necessary during *Viduy*.

Yavin Daas, Kuntres Chasdei Avos 13 1-2

Be'er Emunim

From Rabbeinu Bechayei on the parashah

Answering Amen Is Like Bringing a Korban

אדם כי יקריב מכם קרבן לה" (ב א)

In the *parashah* of *korbanos*, three types of sacrifices are detailed: *Isheh*, *Minchah* and *Nesech*. The acronym of מנחה is *amen*, to teach us that the *yichud* and *tikkun* done in the Bais Hamikdash when these *korbanos* are brought is like the *yichud* done when answering amen, whose essence is combining the names of Havayah and Adnus, which are numerically equivalent to amen.

Shivtei K-h [Rav M.D. Vali] Bamidbar 28 11

A Brachah without Amen – Like a Dish Without Salt

וּכְלֵי קָרְבָן מִנְחַתְךָ בְּמַלַּח תִּמְלַח...עַל כָּל קָרְבָנְךָ תִּקְרִיב מִלַּח" (ב ג)

Why was the commandment about salting the *korban* repeated in this *passuk*?

The *sefer Shaar Bas Rabbim* explains:

Tefillah without *kavanah* is like a cooked dish that is bland and lacking salt. Therefore, the *passuk* repeated this warning about the salt in order to remind us that even when *tefillah* is in place of the *korbanos* (*Brachos* 26b) we have to make sure to "salt" our prayers by having the proper *kavanah*. Similarly, the early *mochiach*, **Harav Moshe ben Rav Yakar Ashkenazi**, compared

answering amen after a *brachah* to salt put into a cooked dish: The same way as long as a dish is not salted it will taste bland, yet a dash of salt can fix it completely, so too, a *brachah* is like a delicious cooked dish without salt. The amen answered after it is like the bit of salt that fixes the entire dish.

Shaar Bas Rabbim; Pesach Einayim [Constantinople 5311]

Learning Hilchos Brachos Protects from the Prohibition of Wrongful Deviation

נפש כי תמעל מעל וחסאה שבגגה מקדשי ה" (ה טו)

In all the types or *Korbanos Chatas*, the Torah first mentions the fact that there was a sin, and only after that, details the essence of the sin. Thus, *ibid* (4 22): First the fact, "Asher nasi *yechta*" and then the detail: "and he transgress one of the *mitzvos* of Hashem..." In contrast, here, at first the Torah details the essence of the sin: "a soul that will wrongfully deviate", and only after that does it mention the fact that there was a sin, "vechata".

Harav Yechezkel Abramsky explained:

Chazal say in *Maseches Brachos* (35a): "Anyone who benefits from this world without a *brachah* – has stolen." – That being the case, we find that many fall into this sin of "meilah, wrongful deviation" and that is why the Torah precedes the detail of the sin specifically in this case.

Chazon Yechezkel Tanach

This is a suitable place to cite the *Ritva* on this subject:

"Every person in Yisrael who comes to benefit from the world must make a *brachah* for what he is benefiting to the great Name of the King of the world, and if he does not make the *brachah*, it is as though he has stolen from something holy. Therefore, first of all it is worthy for a person to learn and to teach his children and students the order of *brachos* so that they should not come to *mei'lah*, this wrongful theft, because that is a very severe matter."

Hilchos Brachos LaRitva (Printed at the end of his *chiddushim* on *Maseches Brachos*) 11

Erev Shabbos 8 Adar II is the *yahrtzeit* of Harav **Eliyahu Hakohen of Izmir** [5489] author of *Shevet Mussar* and other *sefarim*.

Rav Eliyahu often mentioned the praise and virtue of answering amen. Following are some excerpts:

Chazal said (*Devarim Rabbah* 7 1): "Anyone who answers amen in this world merits to answer it in the End of Days." The reason for this is that answering amen purifies the person that he should rise up for *techiyas hameisim*, and therefore, he will then be able to answer amen in the End of Days. (*Einei Ha'eidah Ki Savo*)

On the *passuk* (Esther 2:7) "Vayehi omen es *Hadassah*" Rav Eliyahu wrote "omen" is written [chaser] to teach us that because Esther was orphaned of her father and mother, Mordechai Hatzaddik was the one who taught her from a young age to answer amen, as the *Rema* rules (*Orach Chaim* 124 7): "And he should teach his young sons to answer amen because as soon as a baby answers amen he merits Olam Haba." (*Minchas Eliyahu* chapter 32)

One who answers amen causes Hashem to bestow abundance on the world. This abundance is credited to the merit of someone who answers amen. (*Me'il Tzedakah* 1 487)



Birchas Hamazon – Birchas Boneh Yerushalayim (1)**Opening With “Rachamim”**

The *brachah* of *Boneh Yerushalayim* opens with a request for compassion – *Rachem Na*, which means: Although we are not deserving, please do a *chesed* with us and fulfill our requests. The reason the *brachah* begins with this request for compassion is because it is one of the *middos* of HaKadosh Baruch Hu to have compassion on a person even if he is not deserving, and at a time when he is in distress because he is being deceived or because he lacks clothes and food. That is why we use this language as well when pleading to Hashem to take us out of *galus*, rebuild Yerushalayim and grant us *parnassah*, even though we are not deserving. (*Yosef Daas on Birchas Hamazon*, according to the *Siddur HaGra* [Yerushalayim 5707] in the *Siach Yitzchak* commentary on the *brachah* of *Modim*, and in *Avnei Eliyahu* on *Avinu Malkeinu*)

The Rebbe Harav Shimon Nosson Nuta of Lelov, *zt”l*, said: We request for compassion in this *brachah* despite our state in the *galus*, and that is expressed in the words “*Rachem Na*.” We are so mired in the darkness of *galus* that we are not able to properly ask for the rebuilding of the Bais Hamikdash and *Malchus Bais Dovid* until we are faced with difficulties in *parnassah*, and for that fact alone it is worthy for us to ask for compassion. *Chazal* have said (*Tikkunei Zohar* 6, p. 22 1) that in the darkness of the *galus* our *tefillos* sound like barking dogs “*hav hav*” – “give us food” “give us life” and we do not pay attention to ask properly that the *Shechinah* should be restored to Its rightful place. (*Dibros Kodesh* [Lelov] *Va’eira* 5764 p. 3)

A Request for All of Klal Yisrael

The *Maggid* Harav Shimshon Pinkus, *zt”l*, said:

It is not for naught that it was established that the first in the order of requests in this *brachah* should be one for all of Am Yisrael: “*Rachem na Hashem Elokeinu al Yisrael amecha*.” The *middas harachamim* is a *middah* that is ingrained in the nature of each person. If we see a friend in financial distress and we have the ability to help him, then we will certainly do so as best we can. Even if we do not have the ability to help, if we know a friend or relative who is very wealthy and is generous to every needy person, we would probably approach that person and ask for something for our friend in need.

In truth, each one of us has a loving Friend, a compassionate Father, Who has all the treasures of the world in His Hand. He has the infinite ability to help, and He wants to help each person who calls out to Him in truth. Will we not have mercy on our friend and ask Hashem on his behalf? That is why *Chazal* said (*Brachos* 12b): “Anyone

who has the possibility to ask for mercy for his friend and does not do so is called a sinner.” Refraining from asking for a friend can stem from two things: either because he does not sufficiently believe in Hashem’s greatness and that He is the Almighty, or because of our *middah* of cruelty that is in his soul and is expressed in the fact that he does not have compassion for his friend. (*Haggadah Shel Pesach Tiferes Shimshon*)

Asking for Mercy for the Bais Hamikdash that Exists In Our Times

The *Yaavetz* asks why the *brachah* of *Boneh Yerushalayim* begins with a request for compassion. Is it not unusual to ask for compassion on something that was destroyed and no long exists in the present? He explains that this *tefillah* cannot be referring to the future Bais Hamikdash because we do not mention the future Bais Hamikdash until the end, when we say “*Uvnei Yerushalayim*”.

The *Yaavetz* explains: “But in the way of truth everything is answered and fully understood. Because in truth, these things are never really annulled, even if we cannot see them with our eyes. They exist in a different form to what we can see with our physical eye. But in the real meaning and essence, they still are the loftiest things in the world, and therefore they are still holy even when they appear desolate to our eyes. That is why we are sure they will return to us in the End of Days, and therefore we need to ask for *rachamim* so that what exists should become visible to all the nations.” (*Siddur Bais Yaakov*)

Yisrael Is Beloved By HaKadosh Baruch Hu

According to many *muschaos*, the word “*na*” is not said, and the request is “*Rachem Hashem Elokeinu*.” Harav Baruch Halevi Epstein of Pinsk, author of *Torah Temimah*, offers a nice explanation for the addition of the word “*na*”:

The *Gemara* (*Chulin* 91b) explains that the tremendous love that HaKadosh Baruch Hu has for Klal Yisrael is expressed in the fact that in contrast to the Ministering Angels who only mention Hashem after three words [*Kadosh Kadosh Kadosh Hashem*], Yisrael mentions Hashem after just two words [*Shema Yisrael Hashem*]. Therefore in each one of our requests in *Birchas Hamazon* – including the *brachah* of *Rachem Na* – the Name of Hashem is only mentioned after two words. [“*Baruch Atah Hashem...Nodeh Lecha Hashem...Retzei Vehachlitzeinu Hashem...Rachem Na Hashem...Baruch Atah Hashem...*”] (*Baruch She’amar* [by the *Torah Temimah*] *Birchas Hamazon*).

His Heart Gave Out at Uvnei Yerushalayim

Harav Shraga Feifel Mendlowitz, *zt”l*, was a remarkable personality, the “father of *bnei Torah* in America in this generation and in coming generations,” as Harav Moshe Feinstein, *zt”l* said of him, and the man “whom American Jewry until the end of all generations will be obligated to thank for his Torah work” – as the *Divrei Yatziv* of Sanz, *zt”l*, said.

Harav Shraga Feivel was twenty seven years old when he left his homeland of Hungary alone, and traveled to settle in America. For many European Jews, America was the land where they wanted to go to realize their aspirations of becoming rich.

But Reb Shraga Feivel was not going for that reason. He was deeply distraught over the deterioration of American Jewry, and despite having no resources or influence, decided that he was going to stanch the bleeding of American Jews leaving their heritage.

For the next thirty five years, until his passing, Rav Shraga Feivel dedicated himself to Torah. During that time he established *yeshivos* and Torah institutions which were the cornerstone for the establishment of dozens— or hundreds—of *yeshivos* and *chadarim* that exist to this day. That is how he preserved the tiny ember of Jewishness that existed in the massive, frozen, materialistic expanse of the United States, and in time, that ember burst into a vibrant flame that continues to burn brightly. Rav Shraga Feivel was known for his warmth and sensitivity to anything holy, especially when it came to the welfare of his Jewish brethren, whether in the Diaspora or in Eretz Yisrael. This sensitivity became very apparent during the year 5708, when the tumultuous events in Eretz Yisrael and the bloody results made Jews around the world hold their breaths. So many of those affected had just escaped from Europe and the Holocaust that had annihilated more than one third of the Jewish nation.

Rav Shraga Feivel’s close students knew how many tears their *rebbe* had spilled all his life over Jewish *tzaros*, and now they watched with alarm and concern as their *rebbe* became more and more overcome by the events unfolding in Eretz Yisrael and the terrible news that kept streaming in about the killed and wounded. From thousands of miles away, Rav Shraga Feivel felt the events as though he was experiencing them firsthand.

It was Erev Shabbos Parashas Bechukosai, 19 Iyar 5708/1948. There were terrible rumors coming from Eretz Yisrael, which Rav Shreiga Feivel also heard,

that the Old City of Yerushalayim, including the *Kosel*, had fallen into Arab hands.

Of the thousands of Jews who had lived for so many years within the walls of the Old City, numerous were killed by enemy bullets; the rest were either taken into captivity in Jordan or expelled from their homes and taken elsewhere. The news of the terrible calamity spread like wildfire through telegraph machines throughout the Jewish world. It was like an arrow in Rav Shraga Feivel’s sensitive heart. On Friday night, he finished the *seudah* and began to recite *Birchas Hamazon*, with great fervor, as he usually did.

When he reached the *brachah* of “*Rachem Na*” and the words “*Al Yisrael amecha v’al Yerushalayim irecha...*” he suddenly burst into tears, and could not calm down. His heart could not withstand the pain and anguish that he felt over the tragedy in Yerushalayim. Suddenly, he fell to the floor, unconscious.

Doctors that were summoned to his home quickly determined that he had suffered a serious heart attack. After extensive efforts, they were able to revive him. But his heart did not recover from the events. For the next three and a half months, he was bedridden and his condition deteriorated, until he passed away on 3 Elul that year.

One of the authors of that time depicted it very well in words that he published after the passing:

“His heart shattered with pain at the exile of Yisrael in general and the exile in Eretz Yisrael in particular...From his place in the United States, Rav Shraga Feivel seemed to live in Yerushalayim, and it was as though he lived together with the *bnei Yerushalayim*, and the exile that his brethren from the Holy City were sent into overpowered his heart.”

That stormy voice of “*Uvnei Yerushalayim*” that broke his heart will never stop—and will continue to shake the upper worlds, as it says in *Yeshayah* (62:6-7) “those who remind Hashem, be not silent, and give Him no rest, until He establishes and until He makes Yerushalayim Jerusalem a praise in the land.”

Due to the perilous situation at the time in Eretz Yisrael, he was buried temporarily in Monsey. Two years later, his remains were moved to Eretz Yisrael, as he wished, where he was buried in the Shomrei Shabbos Cemetery in Zichron Meir in Bnei Brak, in the presence of a huge crowd, headed by the *Chazon Ish*, *zy”a*.

Shlucha Derachmana p. 534