

# Vechol Maaminim



A Weekly Leaflet From "Bnei Emunim"

## IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

## Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

### Complete Teshuvah Before the "Knower of All Secrets"

"והתודו את חטאתם אשר עשו" (ה ז)

The Rambam (*Teshuvah* 2 2) says that the *viduy* of the sinner has to stem from the depths of his heart, from a regret that is so sincere that "the Yodea Ta'alumos, the Knower of all Secrets, should testify of him that he will never return to this sin."

Based on this concept, the Kozhnutzer Maggid explained our request in the *tefillah* of *Shemoneh Esrei*: "*Vehachazireinu b'teshuvah sheleimah lefanecha*", that we should return with such utter completion, that it should be clear before Hashem that we will never return to this sin.

The Be'er Moshe of Ozherov added an explanation of the words of the *viduy* of Yom Kippur: "You know the secrets of the world and the mysteries and secrets of every living being...and therefore, may it be Your will... that You should atone for all our sins..." It would seem that, on the contrary, the fact that HaKadosh Baruch Hu "knows all secrets" should make it harder for us, and is not a reason to atone for us. Based on the above concept, we can explain that because He "knows all secrets", He can testify of us that our regret is sincere.

*Avodas Yisrael, Parashas Parah, Eish Dos, Vol. IX, p. 613*

### Viduy for the Sake of Making the Heart Humble

"והתודו את חטאתם אשר עשו" (ה ז)

Harav Aharon Kotler asked:

From the words of the Rambam (*Teshuvah* 1 36) it seems that the mitzvah of *viduy* is the culmination of the *teshuvah* process, which begins with *azivas hachet* - leaving the sin, *charatah* - regret, and accepting upon oneself for the future. Based on this we need to understand why in the *Tachanun*, we first say *viduy* in the form of "*Ashamnu Bagadnu*" before the pleas, the regret and the *teshuvah* that follows?

He answered: The *viduy* that begins the order of *Tachanun*, listed in *aleph - beis* order, is not in order to fulfill the mitzvah of *viduy*, but rather to remind us to introspect into how entrenched we are in the sin, from '*aleph to tav*', so that this will cause our souls to feel humble and be aroused to complete *teshuvah* from our bad ways.

*Mishnas Rabi Aharon, Bechukosai*

### Razei Emunim

Hints of Amen in the Parashah

#### Ninety Amenim in Shul

"כל הבא לצבא צבא לעבד עבדה באהל מועד" (ד כג)

We can derive from this *passuk* an allusion to the opinion in the *poskim* (*Shu"t HaRema MiPano* 109) that with the quota of 90 amens that Chazal established (*Tikkunei Zohar Hachadash* 132 1), you can include only amens that were answered to *brachos* and not to *Kaddish*: "צבא" - is an acronym for "צאמן ברכות" and because one can reach 90 amens for *brachos* only through staying in shul and answering amen for *Birchas Hashchar* and *Chazaras Hashatz*, therefore the Torah wrote: "*Kol haba letzyvo tzava la'avod avodah b'ohel moed*" - in shul.

*Marom Harim, Introduction*

#### Brachah Out of Love

"כה תברכו את בני ישראל אמור הם" (ו כג)

It would seem sufficient for the Torah to write: "*ko sevarchu es Bnei Yisrael*". Why did it add: '*amor lahem*'?

The *Ksav Sofer* explained:

Because the Kohanim benefit from their blessing of Klal Yisrael, through the *matnos kehunah* that they get, therefore, the Torah warned them: "*Amor lahem*" - that they should not have in mind with their *brachah* their own benefit, but rather the good of Am Yisrael, as

*Rashi* emphasized in his commentary: "*Amor lahem...with kavanah and with a complete heart.*"

His disciple, Harav Shlomo Klein, the Av Bais Din of Zenta, added that this explains the words of the *brachah* the Kohanim make: "*Vetzivanu levaraeh es amo Yisrael b'avahav*": Where were the Kohanim instructed to bless us 'with love'? Based on the explanation that the Torah instructed the Kohanim should have in mind only the good of Am Yisrael, there is no greater love of Yisrael than this.

*Ksav Sofer; Likutei Shlomo p. 103*

#### Which Tefillah Does Hashem Favor?

"שא ה' פניו אליך וישם לך שלום" (ו כו)

The *Midrash* says, one *passuk* says "*Yisa Hashem panav eilecha*" and another *passuk* says (*Devarim* 10:17) "*asher lo yisa apanim*" - Rabi Yosi ben Doštai says how can these two *pesukim* be reconciled? '*Yisa Hashem Panav*' - *bidvar* [*aveirah*], with a sin that is between Hashem and the person; '*Asher lo yisa panim*' - regarding something that is between a person and his fellow man [that is not atoned for until you appease him].

The Baal Shem Tov would explain that the intention of the *Midrash* here is to explain the form of proper *tefillah*:

"If, when a person *davens* about his problems, he also remembers the thing that is 'between you and Him,' meaning the pain of the Shechinah that also feels his trouble, as it says (*Yeshayah* 63:9): '*bechol tzarasam Lo tzar*', in all their troubles He also feels troubled, then he is promised that Hashem will turn to him and accept his *tefillah*. But if when *davening* a person only has in mind the things between him and his fellow man, meaning his physical needs, without thinking of the pain of the Shechinah, then '*lo yisa panim*', Hashem will not turn to him to accept the person's *tefillah*."

*Divrei Yissachar [Rav Y.B. of Strozhnitz] p. 124*

## > Thus Did the Baal Shem Tov >

"Everyone in Yisrael should say *Birchos Hashachar*... specifically in the *bais medrash*, so that they could give Am Yisrael the merit of answering amen, and also because it is the beginning of *Kabbalas Ol Malchus Shamayim*, and thus the Baal Shem Tov would do."

[*Ohr Einayim, Rav A.Z. of Komarna*] Vol. II *Klal* 21



## Birchas Hamazon – Retzei (3)

Menuchas Ahavah  
Unedavah

What do the words “*lishbos bo velanuach bo b’ahavah kemitzyas retzonecha*” mean? Where were we commanded to rest on Shabbos “with love”? We can explain this according to the *Gemara* in *Maseches Shabbos* (10b): “One who gives a gift to his friend – needs to inform him of it. We also learn so in a *Breisa* that HaKadosh Baruch Hu said to Moshe: I have a good gift in My treasuries and its name is Shabbos, and I want to give it to Am Yisrael – go and inform them.” *Rashi* explained (*ibid*) that one who gives a gift needs to inform that the gift has come from him so that the love between them should intensify.

We find, if so, that HaKadosh Baruch Hu informed us about the gift of Shabbos so that through this gift, the love between us and Him should increase, and thus we declare “*Lishbos bo velanuach bo b’ahavah*” (*Masas Kapai* Vol. IV, p. 92)

Shabbos – The Root of the  
Six Days of Creation

Why do we ask “*shelo tehei tzarah veyagon v’anachah*” specifically “on our day of rest”, especially since on the other days of the week we ask the same thing in *Shemoneh Esrei*: “*vehaser mimenu yagon v’anachah*”?

It is well known that the holy Ohr Hachaim explains on the *pasuk* (*Shemos* 20:11) that “*Ki sheishes yamim asah Hashem*”, that at the beginning of Creation the six days were created in a way that they could never recur. After those six days, when Hashem created the Shabbos, He infused it with a specific *koach* of renewal that through its holiness, the Six Days of Creation could once again be taken from potential to reality. It was thus established for generations, that each Shabbos contains the potential for the renewal of the Six Days of Creation. From here we find that Shabbos is the root of all six days of the week. Just like if a tree, or any other creation that gives forth progeny, has a minor flaw in its root, that flaw is evident in all the branches that emerge from that tree with a tree, the same is true with the six days of the week whose root is Shabbos. It is only if we keep Shabbos in a flawless way that the six days of the week that are dependent on it will be as perfect as Shabbos is.

Thus we can understand why we make this request “That there not be pain and anguish and sighing” on Shabbos that will prevent us from resting “on our day of rest” the way we should, because we are guaranteed that if we keep the day of rest properly, then no pain and sighing will befall us on the six other days of the week. (*Bnei Yissachar Mei'imrei Hashabbasos* 7 13)

Lo Tehei Tzarah for Those  
Who keep Shabbos

The introduction to the *sefer Shu”t Min Hashamayim* (Rav Reuven Margulies Edition p. 5), cites in the name of Rabi Eliyahu of Londrish of the Baalei Hatsofos, that he was asked in a dream about the fact that we ask on Shabbos: “*shelo tehei tzarah veyagon beyom menuchseinu*,” that there should not be pain and anguish on this day. Why do we not ask it for ourselves, “*shelo nehei betzarah veyagon*” that we should not be in pain and anguish. Wouldn’t it be better to *daven* for ourselves than to *daven* for the day?

Rav Eliyahu said that he responded in the dream that that if we would say that, it would mean that we should not be in pain and anguish on the day of rest, but on the other days, *chalilah*, we should be. Therefore we ask: “*shelo tehei tzarah veyagon*” that this should mean that there should be no pain and anguish for the world, for anyone who rests on this day. Pain and anguish should therefore only be the lot of those for whom this is not a day of rest... He concludes concludes: “And I woke up from my dream and this was a dream that was a prophecy and not one out of sixty [parts of prophecy, as most dreams are]”

The Sar Shalom of Belz similarly explained: The letter ‘*beis*’ of “*Beyom menuchseinu*” means “*ba’avur*”, meaning that we are not asking that “on *yom menuchseinu*” there should be no pain. Rather, “*shelo tehei tzarah veyagon v’anachah*” *ba’avur*, in the merit of our rest “*beyom menuchseinu*.” As Avraham asked (*Bereishis* 18:28): “התשחית בהמשה את כל העיר” and the Ibn Ezra explain “for [the sake of] the five.”

The Tefillah  
of Rabi Chaim Palagi

In his *sefer Ateres Hachaim* (53) Rabi Chaim Palagi brings in the name of the *Sefer Chassidim* that there was a chassid who *davened* each Erev Shabbos that no fire should occur on Shabbos so that they should not come to Shabbos desecration. He writes: “And from a young age, I have had a practice of learning *Tehillim* in a *chaburah* each Erev Shabbos close to *Minchah* in order to *daven* to Hashem just like that chassid would do, and in the *Yehi Ratzon* after the *Tehillim* I established to say this *nusach*:

“And save us and protect us and all of Bnei Yisrael our brethren wherever they are from fire and blazes and all bad things, and Your Nation *bais* Yisrael should not come to desecrate Your holy Shabbos and we should merit to keep all the Shabbosos Kodeshecha all our lives in thought and in speech and in action, with fear and love and much joy.”

## A Brachah That Changed a Life

Chaim, the subject of this story, is a young *bochur* from a distinguished family. In *cheder* and in *yeshiva ketanah*, Chaim did not especially excel or display outstanding abilities, but he was a diligent learner. As such, after extensive efforts, he was accepted to one of the top yeshivos in the yeshiva world.

Chaim’s parents were sure that in such a select yeshiva, their son would surely excel. But sadly, it was specifically there, in a place known for its excellence in learning, that his learning began to decline. While his friends in the *bais medrash* were seeing great success, Chaim fell behind and began to deteriorate.

It is hard to describe Chaim’s anguish at not being able to “live” the *sugya* together with his friends. There was no satisfactory explanation for why this was happening, but the fact was that Chaim simply could not learn. Each time he opened the *Gemara*, he felt the letters staring at him accusingly, as if to say “You don’t know, you won’t succeed!”

The power of *hasmadah* that had accompanied him throughout *yeshiva ketanah* faded; during *shiurim* and *sedarim*, he spent most of the time gazing into space, and even when the *bais medrash* around him was thrumming with passionate learning, he felt like an observer instead of a participant.

His test grades wordlessly expressed his failure, and they did little to lift his flagging self confidence and willpower.

Throughout the winter *zman*, Chaim continuing to deteriorate, and his reputation took a beating, both among his friends in yeshiva and with his family. Wherever he went, he felt like a walking failure. He completely ignored the efforts he did invest and the bit of success he did achieve. Worst of all, he could not muster up the courage to turn to anyone for help.

At the beginning of the summer *zman*, Chaim returned to yeshiva but his spiritual state was very poor. He had no *chvarusos*, his friends had turned their back on him, and despair gnawed at him inside.

A few weeks passed, and only then did Chaim dare to turn to the rav of the community that his parents belonged to with a plea for help. He tremulously appeared before the Rav, and in a voice that shook, he briefly described his dismal state: “I’ve completely lost my drive for learning; I feel lost and confused...” he cried.

The Rav was stunned at the severity of the situation, and realized in his wisdom that words of *chizuk* and encouragement would not benefit this tortured soul. The *bochur* needed far more than that. He fell into deep thought, until suddenly, his eyes lit up.

“You’ve come at exactly the right time!” the Rav said to the *bochur*. “Shavuos is coming. You surely know that on this Yom Tov there is no special mitzvah like we have on the other Yamim Tovim. This teaches us that by contrast to the other festivals, which need special preparation in order to benefit from their light, Shavuos – Mattan Torah, belongs to each and every Jew wherever he is. Every single Yid can merit to receive the Torah anew, irrespective of the state he is in.”

The *bochur*’s curiosity was piqued. He asked for some explanation and the Rav continued: “In the holy *seforim* it is brought down that Shavuos is the *Yom Hadin*, the day of judgment, of the Torah. On this day, the Heavenly Court settles crucial questions regarding the future of your existence: Will

you have good *chaburos* in the coming year? Will the *Gemara* be sweet to you?

“I recently heard that Harav Naftali of Ropshchitz, ז”ל, would advise his Chassidim to linger over the *brachah* of *Ahavah Rabbah* on the morning of Shavuos, and to say it with exceptional concentration, pleading to Hashem to illuminate their eyes with understanding of the words of Torah. He also did this, and there were those who said that his *brachah* of *Ahavah Rabbah* would take him two hours on Shavuos, and through that he merited great heights in Torah and *Yiras Shamayim*.

“Try to take this advice for yourself as well. Accept upon yourself to concentrate on the *brachah* of *Ahavah Rabbah* on Shavuos, and say it with extra *kavanah*. *Daven* for your situation, and there is no doubt that Hashem will listen to your request and send you help.

“Remember, this is your opportunity, don’t miss it!”

Chaim parted from the Rav feeling somewhat encouraged. He waited with anticipation for the *tefillah* that might alter his fate.

A few days later, on the morning of Shavuos, Chaim hurried to a large, unfamiliar shul, sat down in the corner, and began to recite *pesukei dezimrah* with great fervor. As he neared the *brachah* of *Ahavah Rabbah*, Chaim stood up from his place and went into the *otzar sefarim*, the library, right near the *bais medrash*. In a quiet corner, he allowed himself to unload the heavy burden he had been carrying in his heart for so long.

“Merciful Father in Heaven, *hamerachem, rachem aleinu*” – he sobbed, as the memory of the difficult months that he had endured flashed through his mind. “*Vesein belibeinu*, give in our hearts the wisdom to understand, to hear, to learn and to teach...illuminate our eyes with Your Torah...and put in our hearts to love and fear Your Name.”

For many long moments, Chaim was immersed in his tearful pleas, and when he finished the *brachah* he felt infused with a new spirit.

Half a year later, the Rav that Chaim had gone to meet his friend, who was a mashgiach in the yeshiva where Chaim learned. As they spoke, he remembered that conversation with Chaim just before Shavuos. He had not heard anything since, and decided to use this opportunity to inquire about Chaim’s welfare.

The Mashgiach’s response stunned him – and exceeded his wildest expectations:

“Chaim is a gem, the pride of the yeshiva. At the beginning of his first year in yeshiva, he struggled to find his footing with the learning, but then one fine day, I think around Shavuos time, he underwent a dramatic turnaround. In all my years as mashgiach I do not recall such a thing. I have no explanation for it, but the fact is that within a short time, Chaim was transformed. Today there is no doubt he is one of the top boys in the yeshiva.”

The Rav parted from his friend with a feeling of satisfaction; only he knew the secret. The *bochur* had grabbed the opportunity that had been given to him. He invested his efforts in that *brachah* of Torah on the *Yom Hadin* of the Torah and the results were not long in coming.

One *brachah* said properly changed the picture dramatically.

*Ohr Haparashah, Bamidbar 5778*