

Vechol Maaminim



A Weekly Leaflet From "Bnei Emunim"

IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

An Allusion to the Seven People Called Up to the Torah

"ואתנה את הלויים נתנים לאהרן ולבניו מתוך בני ישראל לעבד את עבדת בני ישראל באהל מועד ולכפר על בני ישראל ולא יהיה בבני ישראל נגף בגשת בני ישראל אל הקדש" (ח ט)

Harav David Idan of Djerba explained:

In this *passuk*, the "Leviim" and "Aharon and his sons" are mentioned once each, while "Bnei Yisrael" are mentioned five times. With this the Torah alludes to the seven people who are called up to the Torah on Shabbos as Chazal established: Kohein, Levi and five Yisraelim. Likewise, the *passuk* alludes to a *halachah* that is explained in the *Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 135 8)* that when there is no Levi in shul, the Kohein who had the first *aliyah* gets the second *aliyah* instead of the Levi, as it says "*Haleviim nesunim l'Aharon ulebanav*" – that the Kohein also has a part in the Levi's *aliyah* – which refers to when there is no Levi in shul.

Maskil LeDovid, Vol. II p. 16

Covering the Knife During Birchas Hamazon At Night

"וביום הקים את המשכן כסה הענן את המשכן לאהל העדת" (ט טו)

"How do we know that the Bais Hamikdash cannot be rebuilt at night? As it says "*Ubeyom hakim es hamishkan*" – by day he can erect it, and at night he does not erect it." (*Shavuos 15b*) In the *halachos of seudah*, the *Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 180 5)* rules: "It is customary to cover the knife during *Birchas Hamazon*, and there was a custom not to cover it on Shabbos and Yom Tov." The *Magen Avraham* explained (*ibid 4*): The reason it was established to remove the knife from the table during *Birchas Hamazon* is because the table is compared to a *mizbeach (Brachos 55a)*, of which it says (*Devarim 27:5*): "*Velo sanif aleihem barzel*, do not lift iron upon them" (*Rokeach 332*). On Shabbos and Yom Tov, the *mizbeach* is not built (*Yevamos 6a*) and so this reason does not apply, and therefore it was not customary to cover the knife.

Bearing this in mind, however, why then do we cover the knife during *Birchas Hamazon* recited at night? Doesn't this *passuk* teach us that the *Mishkan* is not built at night either? Therefore it would seem that the *mizbeach* is also included in this prohibition of erecting it at night?

The Rav of Yerushalayim, **Harav Tzvi Pesach Frank** brought proof for the opinion of the *Aruch Laner (Yevamos ibid)* that while it is prohibited to build the *Mishkan* at night, the vessels of the *Mishkan* – among them the *mizbeach* – may be built at night. Therefore we can understand why it is important to cover the knife during *Birchas Hamazon* recited at night.

Har Tzvi Ki Savo

Mibe'er Emunim

Words of Chazal on the Great Virtues of Answering Amen

"Ki Eved Ne'eman Karasa Lo"

"לא כן עבדי משה בכל ביתי נאמן הוא" (יב ז)

The *Midrash (Shemos Rabbah 51 1)* says: "*Ish emunos rav brachos*" (*Mishlei 28:20*)... That is Moshe who was Hashem's trusted one, as it says "*Lo kein avdi Moshe bechol Beisi ne'eman hu*."

The Rebbe **Harav Yechezkel of Kuzmir** said:

"Chazal said (*Brachos 53b*): 'One who answers is greater than one who makes the *brachah*'; on the matter of amen, he wants that the *brachah* that his friend makes should be fulfilled, and therefore, the main point is that every person wants his friend's *brachah* to be fulfilled, and not that he should be the one making the *brachah*, rather, his friend should make the *brachah* and he should answer amen. Therefore the *Midrash* said: '*Ish emunos – zeh Moshe*' who was more humble than anyone else. Therefore, he wanted that all of Am Yisrael should make the *brachos* and he should answer amen."

Nechmad Mizahav Pekudei

The Body Enjoys the Food, the Soul Benefits from the Brachah

"ועתה נפשנו יבשה אין כל בלתי אל המן עינינו" (יא ו)

If Bnei Yisrael's complaint is based on the lack of variation that they had in their food, why did they say "our soul is dry" and not "our body is dry?"

Harav Moshe Yaakov Hellin Ashkenazi, a *talmid* of the Rebbe Reb Heshel of Krakov, offered a beautiful explanation that he heard in the name of a Yerushalmi Yid:

The *Zohar Hakadosh (Tetzaveh 185 2)* asks about the wording of the *passuk* in which we are commanded to fast on Yom Kippur (*Vayikra 16:31*): "*V'inisem es nafshoseichem*". Why does it not say "and you should torture your body"? Isn't it the body that suffers from a fast? And it is explained: While the body benefits from the actual eating, the soul benefits from the *brachos* that are recited before and after the food. Thus, a fast, when we recite fewer *brachos*, is torture for the soul as well, which is why the *passuk* used these words.

Here, too, we can explain that Bnei Yisrael's complaint was about the fact that while their body benefited from the *mann* – because they could taste any flavor in the world – their soul remained "*yeveishah ein kol*", dry and bereft, because as a result of eating the *mann*, it lost out on many of the *Birchos Hanehenin*.

Rav Moshe Yaakov finds an allusion to this in the words of the *passuk (Devarim 8:3)*: "*Veya'anacha*, He oppressed you and made you hungry, and He fed you the *mann*...in order to inform you that not by bread alone does man live, rather by the entire expression of Hashem's word does man live." The fact that eating the *mann* was torture of Bnei Yisrael, even though they could taste anything they wanted was because it is "by the entire expression of Hashem's word" – with the *brachos* that we say on food "that man lives."

Yedei Moshe on the Midrash, Devarim Rabbah 7 4



Bivrachah "Sheleimah" Venomar Amen

The *tzaddik* Harav **Shlomo Zalman**, the son of Harav **Eliezer Bloch**, *zt"l*, (d. 11 Sivan 5736), a beloved *talmid* of the Chafetz Chaim, would answer amen each morning to the *Birchos Hashachar* of many of the *mispallelim* of the Zichron Moshe shul in Yerushalayim – from children to adults. In his later years, *yeshivah bochorim* would sleep in his home, and he would wait for them to arise, and then he would say *Birchos Hashachar* so that they could answer amen after him.

(Told by Rav M. Steinman, *shlita*, who was close to him)

Birchas Hamazon – Retzei (4)

One Who Enhances Shabbos is
Spared the Throes of Mashiach

In *Retzei* we ask “*shelo tehei tzarah veyagon v’anachah beyom menuchaseinu*” and then we immediately add a request “*vehareinu Hashem Elokeinu b’nechamas Tzion irecha*.” Why is this written in this order? What is the connection?

It can be explained according to the explanation the Rebbe Harav Yechezkel Shraga of Shineva offered on the words of the *zemer* “*Me’ein Olam Haba*”: “*Kol hamisangim bah yizku lerov simchah, mei’chevlei Mashiach yutzalu livrachah*” – all those who bask in its enjoyment will merit much joy, from the throes of Mashiach they will be saved with blessing.” It is known that before the arrival of Mashiach there will be many difficult decrees and troubles in Klal Yisrael, and they are known as “*chevlei Mashiach*”, the throes of the arrival of Mashiach. In fact, the Amoraim prayed “*ייתי ולא אחמיניה*” that Mashiach should come but that we should not see it with our eyes (*Sanhedrin* 98b), because it will be so bad. However in *Maseches Shabbos* (118a), it is explained that one who delights in the Shabbos with its three meals is spared these throes of Mashiach, and that is what the *zemer* is referring to: all who enjoy on Shabbos will be saved from these *chevlei Mashiach*.

Here, too, it can be explained: Because we were commanded “*lishbos bo velanuach bo b’ahavah kemitzvas retzonecha*”, and this includes enjoying the pleasure of Shabbos with three meals, then surely we will merit “that there be no suffering and anguish and sighing” – that we should not suffer from the *chevlei Mashiach* in the merit of our rest “*beyom menuchaseinu*.” And therefore, there is nothing precluding us from then asking: “*vehareinu Hashem Elokeinu b’nechamas Tzion*” – that we should merit to see with our eyes the arrival of the *Geulah* and we should not have to ask “*yeisei velo ichimenah*.” (*Divrei Yechezkel, Ma’amarei Shabbos; Haggadah Shel Pesach She’eris Menachem; Haggadah Shel Pesach Kol Yehudah* [Rav Y. Segal Deutsch] in a footnote from the son of the author)

One Who Mourns Yerushalayim
Sees Its Rejoicing

The *Tiferes Shlomo* explained that the reason that on Shabbos we do not mourn for Yerushalayim is because the crux of our wishes for the rebuilding of the Mikdash is not our physical pleasure, but rather the fact that the Shechinah will return to dwell among Bnei Yisrael like in the past. Because on Shabbos, even after the Churban, the Shechinah dwells among Bnei Yisrael like in the time of the Mikdash, therefore we do not need to mourn the Churban on this day.

That is why we say “*ubirtzonecha haniach lanu Hashem Elokeinu shelo tehei tzarah vayagon v’anachah beyom menuchaseinu*”, to mean: the reason that we do not mourn on our day of rest is because of Your Wish, Hashem, as You rest Your Shechinah on Am Yisrael on Shabbos like in the times of the Mikdash. On the contrary, it is specifically because on Shabbos we feel the Presence of the

Shechinah that was also there all week before the Churban, we now ask “And show us ...the consolation of Tzion...the rebuilding of Yerushalayim,” and then You will rest Your Shechinah among us even during the week. (*Tiferes Shlomo Naso*, based on *Haggadah Shel Pesach Bnei Yehudah*)

“Hamakom Yenachem Eschem”

We seal the request of *Retzei* with a double praise: “*Ki Atah Hu Baal Hayeshuos uBaal Hanechamos*.” The reason we call Hashem the “*Baal Hanechamos*” is because in contrast to the consolation of a human being, who cannot transform the bad that his friend is mourning over into good that he can rejoice with, the consolation of HaKadosh Baruch Hu is for the World to Come. At that time, we will find out that even the pain that we endured is really good for us, even though now, as we are under the rule of nature, we cannot see this with your eyes. We have been promised many times that in the World to Come, Hashem will reveal to all how all the bad that we endured was really good, and that will be a true consolation. That is what we ask: “*Vehareinu Hashem*” – in the future “*b’nechamas Tzion*” – the real consolation when we will clearly see how all the troubles were actually good for us, “*Ki Atah Hu ...Baal Hanechamos*.” (*Sfas Emes Vayeitzei* 5658, and see *Haggadah Shel Pesach Beirach Moshe*)

It can also be explained that we, as human beings, have a major flaw: a person can shower his mourning friend with encouragement and words of comfort, but he can still not bring the mourner from a state of anguish to a state of joy. Hashem is not only the “*Baal Hanechamos*”, He is also the “*Baal Hayeshuos*”, and therefore we can ask of Him that in addition to showing us “*nechamas Tzion irecha*”, He should also show us the “*binyan Yerushalayim ir kodshecha*”, because with that we will return to rejoice like in the past and we will merit eternal salvation. (*Haggadah Shel Pesach Bnei Yehudah*)

The Mashgiach Harav Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler writes a wonderful thing:

By nature, a person can never be consoled, even if people offer words of consolation from morning to night. But HaKadosh Baruch Hu has given us a special gift, that He Himself goes to console the mourners, and He performs a miracle for every *aveil* that he is healed through the words of consolation that his friends offer. Therefore, we emphasize in the *passuk* of the consolation: “*Hamakom yenachem eschem*” And that is why Chazal said (*Pesachim* 54b) that it is decreed from Hashem that a dead person is forgotten from one’s heart, because without this, a person would never forget his loss. Therefore we praise: “*Ki Atah Hu...Baal Hanechamos*”, that all the consolations in the world can only comfort the mourner because of Hashem’s decree that they should. (*Michtav M’Eliyahu* Vol. IV p. 342)

Leads to the Perfect Shidduch

This remarkable story was heard from the person who was involved, at a convention in Bnei Brak for the coordinators of the Shachar Avakshecha program for elementary and high school girls, which took place this past Nissan.

The person telling the story is a coordinator at several high schools catering to girls who are taking their first steps in Torah observance. These frameworks are known to nurture their students’ spiritual growth so that they can go on to establish Torah homes.

This is her story:

It was towards the end of the 2018 school year. Several of the students who were finishing 12th grade in the high school, and were planning to continue on to seminary, asked me if they could have a special Shabbos getaway before the high school girls all went on their own paths towards their future.

It was a good idea that we had thought about for some time, and now that the request came from the girls, it was finally time to implement it. So the coordinators and teachers met to organize an uplifting and exciting Shabbos that would leave long lasting impressions on the girls.

The organization of the Shabbos included many details, from choosing a venue, arranging logistics and organizing a rich, captivating program.

As is customary on these Shabbosos, a prominent kiruv rav and speaker was invited. The rav was also a *maggid shiur* in one of the well known *kiruv yeshivos*. He would provide spiritual depth for the Shabbos, and, with his family, would conduct the *seudos*.

And this is where the story actually starts.

Sometime before that Shabbos, one of our veteran students, a wonderful girl who had made great strides on the path towards Torah, took upon herself to strengthen her observance of the mitzvah of answering amen – and to influence her friends to do the same. She did this as part of Bnei Emunim’s Shachar Avakshecha program.

That student carried out her job with outstanding dedication: from when she undertook the coordination of the program in her high school, she worked tirelessly to strengthen her friends in this mitzvah. During the Shabbos getaway as well, she was busy, during *davening* and the *seudos*, circulating among the girls to hear their *brachos*, and constantly reminding her friends to answer amen and to make *brachos* out loud.

Throughout the symposiums that were held during the *seudos* with the Rav – and which naturally, addressed many halachic questions – this girl’s questions all revolved around Amen and its *halachos*.

On Shabbos morning, we were surprised to discover that the girl had prepared a special ‘program’ on her own: Early in the morning she was already waiting, with bags

of sweets, snacks and chocolates, and a *Siddur* in hand. She invited all the girls to recite *Birchos Hashachar* for her, and every girl who either recited the *brachos* or said amen received a treat. The Shabbos came to a successful conclusion, and amen was an integral part of it, because of this special student.

The Rav who had joined the Shabbos was about to depart, when suddenly, he approached us – the coordinators and teachers – and asked some details about the girl. Apparently, over Shabbos, he had noticed her focus on this mitzvah, and he had an idea for a good *shidduch* for her – a *bochur* from his yeshivah.

The girl’s teacher was happy to provide whatever information she had, but she told the Rav that the girl came from a home where religious observance was very weak. Now that she had grown much stronger in her observance, and was going to seminary, she would need to move out of the house and into a dormitory. This was not ideal for her for several reasons, so if the *shidduch* would come to be, it would literally a salvation for her. The Rav took this to heart and after noting down the relevant information, he traveled home. When we finished packing up from the Shabbos we also went home, and I more or less forgot about the *shidduch*. Two weeks later, the teacher’s phone rang, and it was the Rav on the other end. He had made some extensive inquiries about the girl and her family, and had spoken with his *talmid*, and he felt that the *shidduch* could proceed...

Two weeks later, the *shidduch* was concluded between the Rav’s student and this special girl, who had so impressed the Rav with her dedication to the mitzvah of amen.

We were very excited after the engagement, when the girl told the *chassan* that in their home, there is no doubt that the mitzvah of answering amen would be a central focus, because amen was the foundation upon which their home was built...

But we couldn’t help but wipe away a tear when we heard the *chassan*’s emotional reply: “Of course that’s what will be! In the yeshivah where I learn, I’m the Bnei Emunim representative. I am also very active in strengthening the observance of amen and reciting *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa*.”

Apparently when the Rav noticed that his girl was very strong in her observance of amen, he immediately thought of his *talmid* with a similar dedication, and that’s how the idea arose to match them up. Indeed, they established a beautiful home on the foundations of answering amen. A Bnei Emunim home.