

Vechol Maaminim

A Weekly Leaflet From "Bnei Emunim"



IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

Special Thanks for a Miracle Performed at Night

“עֶרֶךְ אֶתוֹ אַהֲרֹן וּבְנָיו מֵעֶרֶב עַד בֹּקֶר” (כז כא)

“From evening to morning: This means, put into it the amount necessary for it to burn from evening to morning.” (Rashi)

The Gemara (Shabbos 22b) explains that by contrast to all the lights that burned from night to morning, based on the amount of oil they had in them, the Ner Maaravi, the western light, continued to burn miraculously through the entire day.

Harav Yehonasan Eibeshitz asks: If every day such a miracle happened with the menorah, why do we marvel and especially thank Hashem for the miracle of Chanukah, when the menorah was lit for eight straight days even though there was only enough oil for one day?

He answered: “The miracle of the Western candle” occurred during the day, which is a time that is auspicious for miracles, as it says (Tehillim 52:3): “Chessed Kel kol hayom.” But the miracle of Chanukah also occurred through the night, when Middas Hadin reigns (See Zohar Chayei Sarah 132 2). That is the wonder for which a special form of thanks was established.

Based on this we can also understand the reason that the poet said at the beginning of the piyut describing the miracles of Yetzias Mitzrayim: “Az rov nissim hifleisa balaylah”, then, most miracles You wondrously performed at night, indicating that there is a special wonder in miracles that occur at night.

Tiferes Yehonasan

“Bikdushaso Shel Aharon”

“ואתה הקרב אליך את הארון אחיך ואת בניו... אהרן נדב ואביהוא אלעזר ואיתמר בני אהרן” (כח א)

After the Torah said “Es Aharon achicha v’es banav”- why did it then need to repeat that these “are the sons of Aharon”?

Harav Avraham Yitzchak Shain, shlita, Ra”m in Tiferes Yerushalayim of Staten Island, explained:

The four sons of Aharon were born before their father was sanctified for the Kehunah, therefore, it needed to be mentioned specifically that they were also sanctified (further on in perek 29). As such, there was

The Chofetz Chaim explained:

The Torah alludes here that one who presses his lips together at a time of discord “safah yihyeh lepiv”, then the words “and his voice will be heard when he comes into the Kodesh before Hashem” will be fulfilled with him. This means that when he stands in tefillah before Hashem, his tefillah will be accepted. As the Gemara says (Chulin 89a): “The world only exists because of those who restrain themselves at a time of discord.”

A man who had no children came to Harav Chaim Kanievsky, shlita and asked that he daven for him. Rav Chaim advised him to find a person who remains silent in the face of insults, and at the time that such a thing happened, to ask that person for a brachah. The man complied, and indeed, was blessed with a child.

Chofetz Chaim al HaTorah; Aleinu Leshabeach Bamidbar, p. 260

Tefillos As Korbanos

“את הכבש האחד תעשה בבקר ואת הכבש השני תעשה בין הערבים” (כט לט)

Maseches Sukkah (53a) brings the testimony of Rabi Yehoshua ben Chananyah: “When we rejoiced at the Simchas Beis Hashoevah we did not sleep. How? First hour: Tamid of the morning, from there to davening, from there to the Korban Mussaf. From there to Tefillas Hamusafin, from there to the Bais Medrash, from there to eat and drink, from there to Minchah, from there to the Tamid of the evening, and from that point on to the Simchas Beis Hashoevah.

The question is asked: Why did they daven Minchah before bringing the Tamid of the evening – unlike by Shacharis and Mussaf, when they davened after bringing the Tamid Shel Shachar and the Mussaf?

The Maharsha explained (Vol. I ibid):

The tefillos were an integral part of the service in the Mikdash, and because the Tamid of the evening needs to be sacrificed after all the Korbanos (Pesachim 58a) therefore the tefillah of Minchah preceded it.

Be'er Emunim

From Rabbeinu Bechayei on the parashah

Amen – the Diamond in the Crown of Davening

“והטור השני נפך זפיר ויהלם” (כח ה)

“Yahalom” is numerically equivalent to amen. This alludes to the words of the Zohar (Eikev 271 1) about the virtues of a brachah that are answered with amen. When that brachah rises On High, all the gates of Heaven are opened before it, and it is announced: “This is the gift that So and So sent to the King!” Just like the “yahalom” was set into the choshen, so, too, the amen is the diamond that is set into the crown of tefillah taht Am Yisrael presents each day before the King of the World

Shaarei Nissim Vol. I p. 281

place to think that their holiness came to them in their own merit, and therefore the Torah reminds us that they are “the sons of Aharon” to teach us that their primary holiness stemmed from the fact that they are the progeny of Aharon, their father.

For this reason, the Kohanim stress in their brachah: “Asher kidshanu bikdushaso shel Aharon” meaning: All Kedushas Kohanim, to this day, is influenced from the power of Aharon.

Birchas Ish

“Those Who Are Offended but Do Not Offend in Return” – Their Tefillos Are Accepted

“והיה פי ראשו בתוכו שפה יהיה לפיו...ונשמע קולו בבאו אל הקדש לפני ה'” (כח לב;לה)

On Shabbos Kodesh Parashas Beshalach is the yahrtzeit of the Chida, zy”a.

Following are three of his statements, cited in his sefarim, regarding the virtue of answering amen:

Bereishis is an acronym for "בְּקוֹל רַם אֲבָרַךְ שֵׁם יי תָּמִיד". From here we learn that one should make a brachah aloud so that others can answer amen.

One who answers 90 amens is guaranteed not to be harmed that day.

Midbar Kedmos 1 33

In the merit of answering amen, the Shechinah will return to reside among Bnei Yisrael.

Nachal Eshkol Shir Hashirim 4 8



A Tzaddik in His Faith



Birchas Hamazon – Birchas Ha'aretz (6)

Thanking for the Bad Like
We Thank for the Good

Another explanation for the praise of "V'al Hakol" is explained in the *Haggadah Shel Pesach Livyas Chen*:

"V'al hakol Hashem Elokeinu" – both for the events that are from the *middah* of "Havayah", which symbolizes *chesed*, and the events that are the result of *Middas Hadin* – Elokeinu" – we thank You and bless You, because "a person is obligated to bless for the bad like he blesses for the good." (*Brachos* 54a)

The Shefa Chaim of Sanz, ז"ל, would explain the words of the *Gemara* (*Brachos* 20b) that after the Ministering Angels claimed to Hashem "Why are You partial to Am Yisrael?" He replied to them: "Why should I not favor them? I wrote in the Torah 'V'achalta vesavata ubeirachta es Hashem Elokecha' and they are strict to even do so after an olive and an egg." We need to explain that this is the essence of the difference between a Jew and a non Jew: Even when a Jew has nothing to eat but a bit of bread and water [= "ad kezayis v'ad kebeitzah"] he makes a *brachah* and thanks his Creator with *Birchas Hamazon*. By contrast, the non-Jew: when he has, he thanks his god, while when his sustenance is scarce, he kicks the gods and destroys them. That is what we are saying here: "V'al hakol" – even when it is bad for us and our *parnassah* is tight and barely enough "we thank You", and it is thus worthy that You favor us and bless us. (*Shefa Chaim* Vol. 18 p. 377)

The Difference Between
"Hoda'ah" and "Brachah"

The difference between "*hoda'ah*" and "*brachah*" is explained by the *Maharal* (*Nesivos Olam Nesiv Ha'avodah* 18):

Hoda'ah is said for the *chesed* that the life of man is contingent upon, such as a person who is saved from death to life. In this *brachah* we are saying *hoda'ah* for the actual food and sustenance. If not for it, we would not be able to subsist in the world. However *brachah* is said for the *chesed* whose essence is extra good, beyond the basic needs, and in this *brachah* as well we say it—thanking for the "*chen vechessed*" that Hashem has granted us, by providing us our needs with such generosity. Therefore, it was established to say in the *musach* of the *brachah*: "V'al hakol...anachnu modim Lach" – for the actual sustenance that is given to us for our lives "*umevarchim Osach*" – for the multitude of good He has granted us, more than we need just to live.

The *Michtav Sofer* (*Haggadah Shel Pesach*) explains that the ones receiving the good are divided: There is the simple person

who is not on any lofty level, and he suffices with thanking his benefactor for the good and *chesed* that he has granted him. Then there is someone on a higher level, because he understands how much his benefactor wants to give to others. He does not suffice with just gratitude, and adds that he should merit to bestow his good upon others. This is evident in the words of the *passuk* (*Tehillim* 145:10) "*Yoducha Hashem kol maasecha*" – are the masses of the nation who suffice with thanking Hashem, "*vachassidecha yevarchucha*" – these are the Chassidim who do not suffice with thanking, rather they are careful to bless Hashem to continue to be able to bestow His Goodness.

In this *brachah* as well, we do not suffice with just gratitude, and we add: "*Umevarchim Osach*," that the creations should always be worthy of getting Your good, and as such "*Yisbarach Shimcha befi kol chai tamid l'olam va'ed*", that even all those who receive the good should bless You that You continue to bestow Your good more and more.

Yisgadel Veyiskadesh
Shemei Rabba

Towards the end of the *brachah* emotionally plead with Hashem: "*Yisbarach Shimcha befi kol chai tamid l'olam va'ed*" – here we merit to be "*ma'aminim bnei ma'aminim*" and to recognize the fact that HaKadosh Baruch Hu leads the world and He Himself does and will do all the actions. But regrettably, most of the world's denizens do not merit to recognize this. May it be that Mashiach soon arrive and then all of life on this earth will recognize the Kingship of Hashem, the One and Only over all the creations, and their mouths will fill with praise and blessing of Hashem. (*Yesod Veshoresch Ha'avodah Shaar Habechoros* 9)

The *sefer Tikkun Olam* (Rav A.C. Levinson, p. 64) says that when he visited the home of the Chofetz Chaim, the sage invited him to eat at his holy table. Before *Birchas Hamazon* he said:

We say in *Birchas Hamazon*: "*Anachnu...mevarchim Osach*." We ask: Does He need our *brachos*? Where is the *brachah* that we give? The Chofetz Chaim explained that this is not a *brachah* in the simple meaning, but rather a request and a *tefillah* that just like we merited to bless our Creator, so, too, should all the denizens of the world recognize this holy obligation and thus: "*Yisbarach Shimcha befi kol chai tamid l'olam va'ed*, Your Name should be blessed in the mouths of all living beings for eternity."

Surprising Salvation in the Middle of the Night

It was morning in the room of Harav Avraham, the Yesod Ha'avodah of Slonim. The Rebbe was plumbing the depths of a complicated *sugya* when the door suddenly opened and the *meshamesh* entered with a question: "There's a *yeshivah bachur* asking to see the Rebbe. He says the question is urgent. Should I let him in?"

The Rebbe nodded his approval. The *meshamesh* left the room and immediately the door opened again, and a *bachur* entered, clearly in a frantic state. His breathing was labored and he could hardly utter a word. "Rebbe, help!" he cried.

The Rebbe seated the *bachur* on a chair, and waited a few moments for him to catch his breath and calm down. Then he asked the boy what the issue was.

In a tearful voice, the *bachur* described his dismal situation:

He had just received a draft call-up notice to the Russian Tsar's army. He knew very well that in the army it would be difficult, if not impossible, for him to continue living a life of Torah and *chassidus*, and he didn't know how he could possibly evade the draft.

The Yesod Ha'avodah listened to the *bachur* attentively and then emitted a deep sigh. "Oy, Ribbono shel Olam," the Rebbe moaned in distress. "How long will Your nation, Yisrael, suffer from the burden of this harsh decree...?"

After that the Rebbe thought for a few long moments, and then said to the *bachur*: "If you listen to my advice, then two days before the date you were told to report at the recruitment office, try to remain awake all night and to recite the entire *sefer Tehillim* in a pleading way. Hashem will surely come to your assistance and spare you from any suffering and tribulation."

This seemed very obscure to the *bachur*. The Rebbe hadn't told him to remain awake the night before the date; he had said two nights before. It seemed as though there was some type of hidden intention in his words, and the *bachur* decided to comply with the Rebbe's words.

After bidding the Rebbe farewell, the *bachur* returned to his learning. He reinforced his *emunas chachamim* and tried mightily to put his worries out of his mind. He clearly remembered the Rebbe's instructions and two days before the stipulated date, instead of going to sleep, he took a *Tehillim* in hand, sat down near the warm oven, and began to recite the chapters of *Tehillim* with emotion and *kavanah*.

With tears and pleas, he poured his heart out to

Hashem to spare him from the dreaded decree.

It was already very late, some time after midnight, when suddenly there was a loud knocking at the door. The *bachur* put down his *Tehillim* and hurried to open the door. Standing outside were three generals, dressed in Russian army uniforms adorned with many medals and epaulets. They looked pretty miserable as they stood shaking with cold. They asked to come inside. The *bachur* was quite aghast at the request, but didn't dare refuse. When they entered the house, one of them explained in a trembling voice that they had just returned from an army operation in the area when a snowstorm began.

They could not continue on their way and were looking for a place where they could rest until the storm would subside. When they saw a light on this house, they knocked at the door with the hope that they would be allowed in to rest and wait out the storm. The *bachur* graciously welcomed them inside. He cleared some place near the burning fireplace so they could warm their frozen bones. Then he put up a pot of tea and set the table so that they could eat the food they had brought with them. The *bachur* then went back to reciting *Tehillim* as he had been doing earlier, but kept an eye on the generals as they ate their food and drank the tea he had prepared. Then they stretched out on the floor near the hearth. Within a moment their loud snores could be heard.

The storm only subsided in the morning. The generals arose from their deep sleep and set out on their way, but not before thanking the *bachur* effusively for his kind hospitality.

Two days later, with his knees quaking, the *bachur* reported to the recruitment office with the draft notice in his hand. He was brought into the military doctor's room and the doctor examined him from head to toe, and asked in details about his medical state, after which he wrote his conclusion: "The boy is hale and hearty, and he is fully suited to serve in a combat role in the army of the his highness the Tsar." He signed the paper and sent the boy, with the letter, to the camp commanders, so that they could begin the enlistment process.

Despite his dismal, desperate situation, the *bachur's emunas chachamim* remained firm. The Rebbe had promised that if he followed his instructions he would be saved, and surely that is what would happen.

Tremulously, he entered the office of the commander, who, after reading the medical document,

immediately began the enlistment process. He explained to the frightened *bachur* about the division he would be placed in and then invited him to take a tour of the camp with him.

The *bachur* stumbled almost blindly after the commander as he tried to focus on believing the *tzaddik's* words. The commander began showing him the living barracks, the dining room and the study rooms.

As they approached the weapons warehouse, the *bachur* suddenly noticed a familiar face. At the same time, his escort stopped in his place and saluted in respect. The *bachur* didn't have to make any effort to remember who it was: he was one of the three generals who had stayed in his home two nights ago. The general looked at him for a long moment, and then went over to the commander, held a whispered conference for several moments and then turned to go on his way.

Surprisingly, the tour was cut off at that point and the commander briskly retraced his steps, with the *bachur* following him, somewhat encouraged. The picture was becoming clear now...The commander strode into the doctor's room and began to berate the physician with feigned fury:

"How did you send me this boy? Don't you see how thin he is? He must be so weak there is no way he can serve in our glorious army!"

The military doctor tried to protest and argue that his exams showed the boy to be healthy and hale, and on the contrary, he was perfectly suited for the glorious army. But his words fell on deaf ears. The final decision was in the hands of the commander: He tore the doctor's letter to shreds, and led the boy to his room where he wrote an official statement exempting him from the draft, and sent him home.

Apparently it was not for naught that the Rebbe had instructed the *bachur* to remain awake that particular night. One of those generals seeking shelter in his home was the Divine emissary to save him. When he saw the *bachur* walking through the camp clearly dejected, he realized right away that he did not want to be drafted, and instructed the commander, who was his underling, to do what he could to exempt him.

We learn from here how *tefillah* is never turned away. With his *Ruach HaKodesh* the *tzaddik* sensed that it was particularly this night that was auspicious for the *bachur* to *daven* to Hashem, and indeed, Hashem heard his *tefillos* and hastened his salvation, in a most miraculous way.

Kovetz Elyahu 429; Tiv Hakehillah Vayigash 5779