

# Vechol Maaminim



A Weekly Leaflet From "Bnei Emunim"

## IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

## Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

### Moshe Recognized His Greatness from Korach's Words

“וישמע משה ויפל על פניו” (טז ד)

Harav Elimelech of Lizhensk would explain this *passuk* as follows:

Chazal said (*Taanis* 14b): ‘An important person is not allowed to fall on his face [in prayer] unless he [is so righteous that he will be] answered like Yehoshua bin Nun.’ Therefore Moshe, who was the most humble of all men, refrained until then from falling on his face. But when “*Vayishma Moshe*, Moshe heard” that Korach and his group were jealous of him for being the *nasi* and *gadol b'Yisrael*, immediately “and he fell on his face,” because if he was so great in their eyes – surely his *tefillah* would be answered.

Noam Elimelech

### The Tefillah of the Wicked Is Also Heard

“אל תפן אל מנחתם” (טז טו)

“Do not turn to a *korban* that they will bring before You and to a *tefillah* that they will *daven* to You, because all *korbanos* and *tefillah* are called “*Minchah*” in the *passuk*.” (*Ramban*)

The question is asked: Is it possible that Moshe was afraid that the *tefillah* of Korach and his cohorts would be accepted?

Harav Avraham Menachem Rappaport explained: Indeed, the *tefillah* of the wicked is also accepted, as Chazal derive (*Krisos* 6b) from the fact that one of the components of the *Ketores* is the *chelbenah*, which has a foul odor, because “any fast that does not include sinners of Yisrael – is not a fast.”

Minchah Belulah

### Tefillas Minchah Atones for the Wicked

“אל תפן אל מנחתם” (טז טו)

Why did Moshe specifically mention their “*minchah*” and not their “*korban*”?

Harav Yonasan Eibeshitz explained:

In contrast to the *korban* of an animal that only atones for one who is worthy of it, a *Korban Minchah* atones also for the evil. Likewise, it is not only the *Korban Minchah*, but also the *tefillah* that is called for it, “*Minchah*”, that is the only one that can be accepted even when

it is recited by a *rasha*. As Chazal said (*Shabbos* 89b) that in the End of Days, when HaKadosh Baruch Hu will tell the three Patriarchs that their children sinned, Avraham and Yaakov will say: “They should be destroyed for the sake of the Holiness of Your Name,” while Yitzchak will *daven* for them. Therefore, only *Tefillas Minchah*, which was composed by Yitzchak (*Brachos* 26b) can be accepted from the sinners as well. As Chazal say (*Brachos* 6b): “A person should always be careful with *Tefillas Minchah* because Eliyahu [who *davened* for the evil people of his generation] was only answered by *Tefillas Minchah*.”

Tiferes Yehonasan

### Special Tefillah of Moshe and Shmuel

“לא חמור אחד מהם נשאתי” (טז טו)

When Yirmiyahu *davened* for the drought in his

times, Hashem did not accept his *tefillah* and said (*Yirmiyahu* 15:1) that even “If Moshe and Shmuel would stand before Me I have no desire for this nation.” The question is asked: What was so unique about Moshe and Shmuel’s *tefillah*?

Harav Dovid Tevele of Posna explained in the name of “Chacham Ehad”:

From Chazal (*Koheles Rabbah* 3 15) it appears that only someone who refrains from enjoying the gifts of a human being merits to have the Shem Hameforash revealed to him, and those who mention the Shem Hameforash in their *tefillah* are guaranteed that their *tefillah* is not turned back unanswered. Moshe and Shmuel were unique in that they did not benefit from other people: Moshe said “Not a single donkey from them did I carry” while Shmuel said (*Shmuel* I, 12:3): “Whose ox did I take and whose donkey did I take.” We find that only they merited to mention the Shem Hameforash in their *tefillah*, and therefore, their *tefillah* were not rejected.

Masores Habris [Harav Dovid Tevele of Posna – Hamburg 5475] *Vayishlach*

### Ketores As Per the Navi

“וקחו איש מחמתו ונתתם עליהם קטרת והקרבתם לפני” (ט זי)

“*Ketores*” is the only *korban* that is never brought as a *nedavah*, either by the public or by an individual (*Menachos* 50a), unless the commandment to do so comes from a *navi*, as happened here.

Based on this, Harav Chaim Kanievsky *shlita*, explained the reason that we precede *Parashas Haketores* in the *Korbanos* of *Shacharis* by saying: “*Atah Hu Hashem Elokeinu shehikirtu avoseinu lefanecha es ketores hasamim...k'asher tzivisa osam al yedei Moshe neviacha*.” Why does it say here “*Moshe Your Navi*” and not “*Moshe Your Servant, avdecha*” like it says in other places? In order to emphasize to us that in contrast to other *korbanos*, the *Ketores* is only brought upon a clear directive in the Torah, or by command of a *navi*.

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### Razei Emunim

Allusions to Amen in the Haftarah

### “Ki Lo Yitosh” In the Merit of Amen

“כי לא ישׁשׁ ה' את עמו בעבור שמו הגדול כי הואיל ה' לעשות אתכם לו לעם” (שמואל א' יב כב)

On the *passuk* (*Shoftim* 5:2): “בישראל בהתנדב עם ברכו ה” (*Tanna Devei Eliyahu Rabbah* 11): “What did Devorah prophesize to Am Yisrael? She said to them: In whose merit does HaKadosh Baruch Hu take revenge against the nations of the world on behalf of Klal Yisrael? In the merit of people who rise early and go to shul for *Shacharis* and later for *Maariv*, and answer amen and bless HaKadosh Baruch Hu with amen...”

That is what this *passuk* is alluding to: In which merit will “Hashem not abandon His nation”? “*Ba'avur Shemo Hagadol*”, referring to answering amen, which is numerically equivalent to the Names of Havayah and Adnus together. It is remarkable that the acronym of the words at the end of the *passuk*: “*La'asos eschem Lo l'am*” are numerically equivalent to amen.

Gvul Binyamin Shmuel I 12:22

“It states that the reward for a *brachah* is ten gold coins (*Chulin* 87a), specifically when the person says it out loud, when he gives the public a merit as they answer amen. That is the honor of Hashem Yisbarach, to bless Him before a crowd, as it says (*Mishlei* 14:28): ‘*Berov am hadras Melech*’. From here a person can learn to say the *brachos* before the public in a loud voice, both *Birchos Hanehenin* and *Birchos Hashachar*, so that everyone can answer amen...”

Yalkut Me'am Loez, Mishpatim p. 731

תנו לה פדיון



**In the King's Palace 1**

**The Secret of the Success of the Life of a Jew**

We have a great merit to have been chosen from the billions of gentile denizens of the world to be the elite of the human race, the progeny of Avraham Yitzchak and Yaakov, who merit to cleave to HaKadosh Baruch Hu, to stand before him each day during the three *tefillos* and share with Him all our concerns and to plead for our needs.

The words of Harav Dovid Shlomo of Tolchin, a *talmid* of Harav Baruch of Mezibuzh, instill enthusiasm in our hearts about the loftiness of the service of *tefillah*. He writes at the beginning of his *sefer Hisorerus Hatefillah*:

"The fundamental basis and the pillar of service is *tefillah*, which was established by our forbears *zichronam livrachah*, and which were organized for us by the Anshei Knesses Hagedolah. And who can possibly describe and relate even a tiny drop of its greatness, because these are the things at the highest levels of the world, a ladder on the ground whose top reaches the skies and all the decisions of children, health and *parnassah* of a person are contingent on these...And know, that the entire day is dependent on the time of *tefillah*. And if his bond to Hashem Yisbarach at a time of *tefillah* is strong then even after he finishes *davening* [it will continue]. Because it is impossible for a person only to *daven* all day...thus he will remain with the impression of love for the Creator and he should succeed in all that he does, and he should never disconnect and separate from his closeness and fear of the Creator."

**"Being Close to Hashem Is Good for Me"**

*Tefillah* is the path that our forbears paved for us through which we can draw closer to Hashem, as explained in the *passuk* (*Devarim* 4:7): "For who is a great nation that has a G-d close to it, as Hashem, our G-d, whenever we call to Him?"

The *Midrash* (*Devarim Rabbah* 2 10) says on this *passuk*: "Rabi Yehudah bar Simon said: From here until the firmament is a distance of 500 years – that is '*rachok*', so what does it mean that Hashem is '*karov*' close, as it states numerous times? It means that a person stands and *davens* and thinks in his heart, and HaKadosh Baruch Hu is close to hear his *tefillah*...Dovid said to HaKadosh Baruch Hu: Ribbono shel Olam...When Yisrael read before You – immediately hear our prayers as it says (*Tehillim* 4:2): "When I call answer me Elokei Tzidki." HaKadosh Baruch Hu said to him: What did you say? "When I call answer me"; I swear to you that even before you will call Me I will answer you as it says (*Yeshayah* 65:24): "Before they call and I will answer", as I do not have another nation besides you..." (*Devarim Rabbah* 2 10)

The *Gemara* further says (*Yevamos* 64a): "HaKadosh Baruch Hu desires the *tefillos* of *tzaddikim*." The Ramchal explained (*Derech Hashem* Vol. IV, ch. 5), that because the way of good is to

benefit others, and HaKadosh Baruch Hu seeks to benefit His creations, therefore He desires their *tefillos*, because throughout our *hisorerus* to accepting His good through *tefillah*, the abundance descends from Him to us.

**An Obligation That Is a Pleasure**

Due to His great love for us, Hashem established specific times, three times each day, during which He waits to hear our *tefillos*, as the *Midrash* says: "Moshe foresaw that the Bais Hamikdash was destined to be destroyed, and that the *bikkurim* would stop, and he then established for Yisrael that they should pray three times each day, because HaKadosh Baruch Hu loves *tefillah* more than one hundred good deeds." (*Midrash Tanchuma Ki Savo* 1)

Although *tefillah* is established for us as an obligation (as the *Rambam* says at the beginning of *Hilchos Tefillah*), however, one who internalizes the knowledge that *tefillah* is a way to be close to Hashem surely will not approach *tefillah* as a way to fulfill his obligation, but rather as a privilege given to him from the Creator Who seeks to come closer to him, to hear his voice and to fulfill his request. As the Chazon Ish writes in his letter (Vol. I, Letter 2): "*Tefillah* is a powerful staff in the hand of each person, and the more a person puts his faith in Hashem, the more he will rise higher and succeed."

*Chazal* say (*Brachos* 6b according to *Rashi* *ibid*) regarding *tefillah*: "These are things that are at the height of the world and people are disdainful of them." They also said (*Brachos* 32b) that *tefillah* is one of the four things that requires *chizuk*, strengthening.

The *Toras* Chaim of Kossov said: "*Veha'osher vehakavod milfanecha*" (*Divrei Hayamin* 1 29:12) – the greatest wealth and honor that a person can have are through his privilege to stand before Hashem in *tefillah*. (*Sarfei Kodosh* p. 647)

Clear things on this subject are written by the *Sefer Ha'ikrim* (4:20):

"Even though *tefillah* is a mitzvah in the Torah...and therefore I say because *tefillah* is one of the *mitzvos* in the Torah, it is worthy that one should receive a reward for it like he gets for each of the other *mitzvos*. However, in and of itself it has a great advantage over all the others. While every mitzvah in its own right gives a special reward, as you find in *shiluach haken*, '*I'maan yitav lach veha'arachta yamim*' [a long life], and in *tzedakah* '*lema' an yevarechecha Hashem Elokecha bechol tevuasecha ubechol ma'aseh yadecha*' [success in the crops and in all areas], the mitzvah of *tefillah* has a special *segulah* in its own right, because it is a beneficial thing for everything. We find that it is effective in healing the sick...in saving from death...in being blessed with children...for hunger...for war...and if so, the *tefillah* is like a general balm that is effective for everything...and it will therefore even be effective for absolute *resha'im*."

**Ki Malachav Yetzaveh Lach – He Instructs His Angels for You**

This story was related by one of the *rabbanim* in a well know yeshivah for *baalei teshuvah*, in its branch in South Africa. He heard the story with all the details from the person it happened to, who he met as part of his outreach activities.

The dim light of the handful of streetlights could hardly banish the darkness that pervaded on that moonless night somewhere on the outskirts of Cape Town, South Africa. Moshe, a Jew who was taking his first steps in the world of *teshuvah*, stood frustrated and frightened next to his car, waiting for a miracle to happen.

He tried to figure out how he had landed up in such a dark and frightening spot so late at night. He had come to this part of Cape Town to attend to a certain matter, and on his way home, decided to take a shortcut through the deserted industrial zone. And that was where his car's motor decided to die.

As part of his insurance plan, he was subscribed to a towing company. He called, and they promised to come shortly, but as the moments ticked by he realized that he should not trust the reliability of the company, and he should leave the place as quickly as he could, lest he fall victim to bloodthirsty hoodlums who swarmed in the area at night. They had already proven their brutality hundreds of times, and had taken the lives of innocent passersby as they vandalized anything and accosted everyone in sight.

He was a fifteen minute walk from the main road, where he hoped to catch a bus to take him home. It was a frightful walk, but the other option was worse. So he locked his car and began striding down the deserted road. From there, he turned right into a dark, long narrow alley, at the end of which he would have to walk through a large public park and then on a lighted road until he reached the main road.

He walked down the alley quickly glancing fearfully right and left. He was almost at the park when he froze in place; from the other side of the alley, a hulking figure approached. His swaying gait made it evident that he was drunk.

The alley was dark and deserted, and Moshe was already envisioning his fateful and imminent end. Turning around and fleeing back to the beginning of the alley was not an option; the gentile approaching him would have interpreted that move immediately as a sign of fear and would have caught up to him in a minute. Having no choice, and with a pounding heart, he decided to forge ahead despite being nearly frozen in fright.

He walked silently, his mouth murmuring the few chapters of *Tehillim* he had recently learned: "From whence will my salvation arrive...*al yiten lamot raglecha al yanum shomrecha...Hashem tzilcha al yad yeminecha...Hashem yishmor tzeischa uvo'echa...*"

The gentile came even closer, but had not yet detected Moshe, and Moshe lowered his eyes and kept murmuring the holy words: "*Ki Hu yatzilcha mipach yakush...lo sira mipachad laylah...eilecha lo yigash.*" At that moment, the gentile noticed him, and fixed him with a bloodthirsty stare as he began to cross the street towards Moshe.

"Ribbono shel Olam," Moshe murmured a fervent *tefillah* in the few moments he had

left. "Save me from this bloodthirsty man. Return me to my home and my children in peace. Please, Father..."

His *tefillah* was accepted. As if he was suddenly struck by an unexplained fear, the gentile turned on his heel and staggered away, as though nothing had caught his eye. Moshe barely made it to the end of the alley, and when he did, he crossed the street to the park and broke into a run towards the main road. He just wanted to flee this dangerous area as quickly as possible.

A few moments later, he was in a taxi headed home. His lips still murmured the *tefillos*, and this time, they were prayers of gratitude. He was fully aware that the man would have been able to do what he wanted to him and no one would have been the wiser.

He arrived home pale as plaster and emotionally shared his experience with his family. And then he began to sing, together with them, "*Atah seser li, mitzar tiztzeini...*"

The next morning, Moshe opened the newspaper and gasped: there was an official police announcement, with a photo of a dreadfully familiar face. The police were asking the public to give testimony about a criminal who had been apprehended the night before, after the murder of an innocent passerby, a local gentile, in the industrial zone on the outskirts of the city. A few suspects had been arrested after the murder, and the man in the picture was the prime suspect. The police were asking anyone who had seen him in the area to come and testify in order to help the prosecution.

Yes. It was no doubt that it was the beast that walked past him last night, right near the industrial zone. His fears had been well founded. The man was a murderer, and for some reason had chosen to ignore him...

A few hours later, Moshe arrived at the police station. He was happy to serve as a witness to help put that murderer behind bars for the rest of his life.

The police listened attentively to his report, and the fact that his car was still stuck where he had left it the night before served as more proof that he was saying the truth. The interrogators became even more confident about the identity of the murderer.

For a final identification, one of the interrogators took him towards the murderer's cell, and Moshe used the opportunity to realize how great the miracle he had experienced was.

"Look," the interrogator ordered the criminal. "Do you know this man?" It took him a few seconds to remember.

"Yes, I noticed him last night on the street near the murder scene," the criminal replied indifferently.

"Why didn't you harm him? The interrogator couldn't help but ask.

"What do you mean why?" the murderer didn't understand the question. "If he would have been himself, of course I would have harmed the Jew. But what can I do?! The minute I noticed the two armed guards walking at his side, I picked myself up and ran away."

Little did he realize the impact his words had on the Jew standing in front of him.

*Niftaasav Livnei Adam, Vol. IV, p. 53*