

# Vechol Maaminim



A Weekly Leaflet From "Bnei Emunim"

## IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

## Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

### Thanking Hashem for the King's Kindness

“וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל עַל רֹאשׁ הַמֶּטֶה” (מז לא)  
“And Yisrael bowed” – by way of a parable, when it is the time of the fox, bow to him. “At the head of the bed” – He turned towards the Shechinah. (Rashi)

First, Rashi explains that Yaakov bowed to Yosef, while later it appears that he means that he bowed to the Shechinah. To whom then, did Yaakov prostrate himself?

Harav Shlomo Kluger explained:

One who receives a favor from another has to express gratitude for it, because the one doing the favor had a choice whether to do the favor or not. But one who receives a favor from a king does not have to express gratitude because it clearly states (Mishlei 21:1) “*Lev Melech beyad Hashem al kol asher yachpotz yatenu*, the heart of a king...is in the Hand of Hashem, wherever He wishes He turns it.”

Thus we can explain the words of Rashi: When Yaakov received the agreement of Yosef to bury him in Eretz Canaan, he thanked Hashem and not Yosef. That is because he considered Yosef a king, then based on the above explanation, Hashem swayed his heart to benefit Yaakov, therefore, Yaakov turned his face towards the Shechinah and expressed his gratitude.

*Imrei Shefer*

### A Blessing of the Sons Is a Brachah for the Father

“וַיְבָרֵךְ אֶת יוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר...הַמְּלֶאֶךְ הַגָּאֵל אֶתִּי מִכָּל רָע” (מז טו-טז)  
“ברך את הנערים” (מז טו-טז)

The holy Zohar (Vayechi 227 2) explains from this that the *passuk* began with “And he blessed Yosef” and concluded with “He will bless the youths”, that a blessing of the sons is a *brachah* for the father.

The *Bnei Yissaschar* explained the words in *Maseches Taanis* (6a) that when Rav Nachman asked for a *brachah* from Rabi Yitzchak, he blessed him “May it be Hashem’s will that your children should

be like you.” Here, too, we find that Rabi Yitzchak blessed the children of Rav Nachman because the *brachah* of the sons is a blessing for the father.

Based on this the Rebbe **Harav Kalonymous Kalman of Piaseczne, Hy”d**, explained the *Gemara* (*Brachos7a*) that after HaKadosh Baruch Hu told Rabi Yishmael Kohen Gadol “Bless me” he responded and said: “Maybe it be Your Will that Your mercy overcome Your anger and Your Compassion should overcome Your *middos* and You should act with Your children with the *middah* of compassion and You should act towards them *lifnim mishuras hadin*.” Here, too, we find that HaKadosh Baruch Hu asked for a *brachah* and Rabi Yishmael blessed Yisrael. That is because Yisrael are the children of Hashem, and a *brachah* for the children is a *brachah* for the father.

*Likutei Mahartz”a; Eish Kodesh*

### Razei Emunim

Hints of Amen in the Parashah

### Geulah in the Merit of Amen

“וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף אֶל אֲחָיו אֲנִי מֵת וְאַלְקִים פִּקְדוּ יִפְקְדוּ אֶתְכֶם וְהִעֲלָה אֶתְכֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת אֶל הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע לְאַבְרָהָם לֵיחָזֵק וְלֵיעֹקֵב” (נ כד)

The acronym of “פִּקְדוּ יִפְקְדוּ אֶתְכֶם” is numerically equivalent to amen. The *sefer Derech Moshe* (day 11) says that “There was a story of a *chassid* who afflicted himself so that from Above it should be revealed to him the secret of why the exile is so long. And it was revealed to him in a dream: How can the *Geulah* come if the world is not careful to answer amen on *Birchos HaGeulah*?” Therefore, this *passuk* alludes “*pakod yifkod eschem*” on condition that you answer amen on the *brachos* of *Geulah*.

*Ma’ayan Shmuel p. 55*

### For Your Miracles That Are With Us Each Day

“הַמְּלֶאֶךְ הַגָּאֵל אֶתִּי מִכָּל רָע” (מז טז)

**Harav Avraham Dovid of Buchatch**, author of *Daas Kedoshim* explained why Yaakov used the word “*Hagoel*” in the present tense, according to what is brought down in *Tanna Devei Elyahu* (*Rabba* 2 12):

“Dovid Hamelech said: I will tell of the righteousness and *chesed* of HaKadosh Baruch Hu that He does with Am Yisrael at every moment; each and every day, a person is sold and each and every day a person is redeemed...Each and every day miracles are performed for him like *Yetzias Mitzrayim*...” A person is redeemed from his troubles each and every minute, as we thank Hashem in *Shemoneh Esrei*: “For the miracles that You perform each day with us.” Therefore, Yaakov used “*Hagoel*,” the Redeemer, in present tense.

*Machazeh Avraham*

### Zechus Avos That Gets Stronger and Greater

“הַמְּלֶאֶךְ הַגָּאֵל אֶתִּי מִכָּל רָע יְבָרֵךְ אֶת הַנְּעָרִים וַיִּקְרָא בָהֶם שְׁמִי וְשֵׁם אֲבֹתַי אֲבָרְהָם וַיִּצְחָק וַיִּדְגּוּ לְרֹב בְּקִרְבֵּי הָאָרֶץ” (מז טז)

Why did Yaakov Avinu specifically use a comparison to fish in his *brachah*?

**Harav Shlomo Zalman Ehrenreich, the Rav of Shamloi**, explained:

In contrast to most other creations whose strength wanes as they age, the older fish get, the stronger they get (*Shabbos* 77b). That is what Yaakov said in his blessing: “*Veyikarei bahem shemi veshem avosai...veyidgu larov*” – the merit of their forbears should stand in their stead for generations and its effect should intensify and expand, like fish, who, the more they age the stronger they get.

Thus we can understand the reason that on Rosh Hashanah, when we ask that the *zechus avos* should advocate for us in judgment, Am Yisrael has a custom of reciting *Tashlich* next to a body of water with fish. They mean to say: just like the fish add strength as they age, thus, the merit of our forbears should advocate for us even though many years have passed.

From the approbation to the *sefer Pnei Hamayim*

## “הַמְּלֶאֶךְ הַגָּאֵל אֶתִּי מִכָּל רָע יְבָרֵךְ אֶת הַנְּעָרִים” (בְּרֵאשִׁית מ"ח)

Harav **Yaakov Abuchatzaira**, author of *Abir Yaakov* (passed away on 20 Teves 5640) explained: “*Malach*” is numerically equivalent to :”amen”, to teach us that answering amen according to *halachah* is auspicious as a protection, and to save us from any bad – in this world and in the Next World, as it says: “*Choneh malach Hashem saviv lireiav vayechealtzem*, the angel of Hashem camps around those who fear Him and rescues them.” (*Tehillim* 34:8).

*Alaph Binah, Tehillim 34*



**Birchas Hamazon – Birchas Hazan (3)****Do It For Your Name**

At the end of the last installment, we explained the meaning of the request of “and we should not lack sustenance for eternity.” Now we will further delve into this and ask why we are sure that we will not lack sustenance. “*Ba'avur Shemo Hagadol!*” for His great Name!

The *Midrash (Rus Rabbah 2 11)* asks about a seeming contradiction in the *pesukim*: One *passuk* says (*Tehillim 94:14*): “*Ki lo yitosh Hashem amo venachaloso lo yaazov*, for Hashem will not forsake His people, nor will He desert His land,” while the other *passuk* says (*Shmuel I 12:22*): “*Ki lo yitosh Hashem amo ba'avur Shemo Hagadol, for the sake of His Great Name!*”

The *Midrash* explains: “Sometimes He does it for His nation and His land, and sometimes He does it for His Great Name. Rabi Ivi said: When Yisrael are meritorious it is for His Nation and His land, and when they are not meritorious, it is for His Great Name.”

Thus we find that Yehoshua Bin Nun asked after Yisrael sinned and Hashem was about to punish them: (*Yehoshua 7:9*): “And what will you do for Your Great Name” – which will be desecrated among the nations when they see the lowly level of Am Yisrael who bear the Name of Hashem (see *Rashi* there.) Here too, when we ask that we should never lack for sustenance for eternity, we explain why we are sure we will merit this: “*Ba'avur Shemo Hagadol!*” Because Am Yisrael is promised that they will always exist because of the Name of Hashem that they share [Yisrael contains the Name of Hashem, K-l], therefore, in order for them to exist they need sustenance. (*Nesivos Olam of the Maharal, Nesiv Ha'avodah 18*)

**Zan, Mefarnes Umeitiv**

The simple explanation of these three praises is: “*Ki Hu K-l-zan*” – with food and drink, “*umeifarnes lakol*” – with the other things a person needs to exist, but are not food and drink [such as air to breathe and the like], “*umeitiv lakol*” – even luxuries that we do not need to exist, but which we acquire in order to enjoy our lives in this world. (*Maharal ibid*)

The reason that we stress

“*Ki Hu...*” is because it is a special praise in the matter of *parnassah* that HaKadosh Baruch Hu Himself supports and sustains us, not through an emissary, as the *Gemara* explains (*Taanis 2a*) that the key to *parnassah* was not given to an emissary, and it is in the Hands of HaKadosh Baruch Hu Himself. (*Vezos L'Yehudah*)

**Umeichin Mazon Lechol Beriyosav Asher Bara**

It would seem that this request has redundant language: after we have already praised Hashem that He is a “*Zan uMefarnes uMeitiv lakol*” why do we then have to add that he “prepares food for all His creations that He created?”

The Maharal explained: The praise of “*umeichin mazon*” relates to the rest of the creations, and this teaches us that Hashem takes care of the needs not only of humans, but of all His creations. However, in contrast with humans of which it is said “*nosein lechem lechol basar*”, with relation to the other creatures it says: “*umeichin mazon lechol beriyosav.*” That is because humans merit to get their food and it becomes like their own possessions [as Hashem gives it to them], but the rest of the creations do not merit that with their food. Each day they eat what Hashem prepares them with His Hand. (*Maharal ibid*)

There are also those who explained that we are thanking here for the fact that Hashem also takes care of providing us food for the next day. *Chazal* say (*Yoma 74b*): “One cannot compare a person who has *pas besalo* [literally, his bread in his basket, meaning he knows that he has enough food] to one who does not have *pas besalo.*” That is because whoever has food for today but is not sure that he will have tomorrow does not enjoy his food today either; the worries of tomorrow prevent him from doing so. Therefore we especially thank Hashem for making sure that we should also have food for tomorrow, so that our enjoyment today from the food should be complete. (*Iyun Tefillah; Haggadah Shel Pesach Bnei Yehudah*)

**Who Trains My Hands to Battle, My Fingers for War**

The years of 5532 to 5556 (1772 to 1796) were known as the years when the Polish Empire was captured by its neighbors, Prussia, Russia and Austria. During these years, the conquering powers divided up control of Poland. Thus, the Galicia region was given over entirely to Austrian control, while Silesia was divided between Russia and Prussia.

Throughout Poland still lived many noblemen who belonged to families who had controlled Poland for hundreds of years. These noblemen, who controlled extensive properties, including fields and estates, continued their practice of enslaving their subjects, the farmers. They took advantage of them and earned a tremendous amount of money and power by doing so.

In the year 5606 (1846), several of the nobles of Galicia gathered and decided to launch a rebellion against the ruling Austrian Empire. Under the agreement between the powers, only a few Austrian soldiers were stationed in Galicia. The nobles hoped that the farmers, already accustomed to obeying their every word, would join the rebellion, and would help them easily banish the foreign rulers from their homeland so that they could regain power.

Like in every war that occurred in the lands where they were exiled, the Jews were an easy target for both sides. In every situation, and under any rule, the Jews suffered from looting, persecutions and various decrees that were imposed on them. This time as well, the rumors of the impending war evoked fear among the Jews of Galicia, who feared what it would mean for them.

As noted, the noblemen's rebellion seemed headed for inevitable success, but for some reason, it was an utter failure even before it began. Over the years, historians had many theories about this failure, but none of them was able to anchor itself in reality. The mystery remained unsolved.

However, record keepers and historians in the Chassidic world throughout this period do have a wondrous explanation. It was documented based on many testimonies from survivors of that generation, and it is the most sound of all the explanations that have been offered for this mysterious incident. This is what they say:

At the beginning of 5606, the nobles of Galicia met to organize an uprising against the Austrian occupation. Graf Mitzislav Rey was appointed to lead the rebellion. Towards the end of the winter, the secret preparations reached the final stretch. Carriages loaded with weapons had already been dispatched to the noblemen, and the trumpets of war were set to be blown at any moment.

It was Erev Shabbos *Parashas Mishpatim* 5606. Harav Tzvi Hirsh of Rimanov had just finished *Minchah*. The rumors about the impending troubles had not passed him by, but

nothing impeded his holy *avodah*. As was the longtime practice in the community of Rimanov, Harav Tzvi Hirsch stood up and began to recite the *mizmor*: “*LeDovid baruch Hashem tzuri, hamelamed yadai lakrav etzbaosai lamilchamah...* Blessed is Hashem my Rock Who teaches my hand for battle, my fingers for war.”

Parenthetically, the custom of reciting *L'Dovid Baruch* on Erev Shabbos after *Minchah* was established decades earlier, in the days of Harav Mendele of Rimanov, following a story that happened in his time. The farmers of the nearby region had risen up against their masters, and as a first step they threatened to take revenge on the local Jews. Although it was the time of *Minchah* on Erev Shabbos, the Jews were too afraid to go to shul, and Reb Mendele found himself alone in shul, reciting *Tehillim* to annul the decree. When Rav Mendele reached *LeDovid Baruch...Hamelamed Yadai Lakrav*, his voice rose higher and higher, and at the same time, the sound of the farmers' trumpets of war faded out until they fell entirely silent.

The rumor about the disappearance of the farmers spread rapidly among the Jews and they hurriedly made their way to shul. There, they found their Rebbe still immersed in his recital of the chapter of *Tehillim*. The miracle was so obvious and apparent to everyone, that to commemorate it, a practice was established in the community of Rimanov to recite this chapter of *Tehillim* each Erev Shabbos after *Minchah*.

This time as well, the disciple and successor of Rav Mendele, Harav Tzvi Hirsch, began to recite the *mizmor*. But in contrast to his regular practice, he now said it with powerful screams, repeating the *pesukim* over and over. Those seated around him did not understand what was happening. But one elderly noble who lived nearby and was a partner to the planning of the uprising, heard the Rebbe's voice resounding and panicked. He remarked to his family: If the Jewish Rebbe has come out against us, I am sure that this uprising will fail, and thus, I am withdrawing my participation.

At exactly the same time, Graf Rey was planning to depart for the city of Dembitz, where a decisive meeting was set to take place between the rebel leaders ahead of the launch of the rebellion. He donned his finest garments and hung his gleaming sword on his belt; he saddled his powerful steed for the journey. Just before departing, he looked at himself in the mirror. He hoped to see a proud and impressive figure, but instead, he saw the image of a Jewish Rav with a reverent appearance gazing at him sternly and pointing a threatening finger.

He emitted a cry of alarm, and his wife, who hastened to his side, also saw the frightening visage. She became very frightened and pleaded with the Graf not to ignore the sign that had been sent to him from Above, and to

cancel his trip. But more than he was afraid for his life, the Graf was worried about his honor. He decided to leave at any cost.

His wife was so afraid that she decided to accompany him with her children. Thus, the convoy set out, the Graf riding ahead on his horse, with a carriage of weapons fright in front of him, followed by an elegant carriage in which his wife and children were seated.

The trip to Dembitz took them through a thick forest, and as the convoy passed among the trees, the Graf and his family were once again frightened to see the image of the old man looking at them from among the trees. This time, he did not suffice with a stern, warning look, but rather approached the Graf riding on his horse and delivered a ringing slap to his face.

The Graf, in pain and frightened, abandoned the horse and entered the carriage to sit with his family. This time as well, he decided to ignore the warning, which very soon came to reality at the entrance to the town of Tarnov.

When the carriage crossed the bridge separating the forest from the town, several drunken farmers who had just emerged from the nearby tavern stopped it. One of them peered into the carriage, and when he saw Graf Rey seated there with a loaded gun at his side, he was overcome with a burst of unexplained rage. Together with his friends, he dragged the Graf out of the carriage, and they began to mercilessly beat him until he died.

Upon hearing the tumult, more farmers arrived on the scene and joined the melee. Very quickly the ruckus spread to nearby towns. The fury that the farmers had accumulated towards the noble class that had enslaved and humiliated them for so many years suddenly erupted into a flood that could not be stanch.

Seven nobles were killed that day. Many estates were set aflame and their noblemen owners had to flee for their lives. The Austrian army entered Galicia to make order, and in the interim, the entire rebellion fizzled out in a colossal failure.

As stated, no historian of the time could indicate a specific reason that caused the farmers of Galicia to suddenly rise up, with no advance coordination, against their noblemen masters, whose estates were spread over a huge area.

Some of them were asked and related innocently that people identifying themselves as emissaries of the Kaiser had ordered them to do it. But we know the real reason. It was the cry of the general of Polish Jewry: “*Hamelamed yadai lakrav, etzba'osai lamilchamah,*” that decided this battle that had threatened a segment of Polish Jewry, even before it began.

*Hachassidus p. 193; Rav Tzvi Hirsch of Rimanov, p. 49*