

Vechol Maaminim

A Weekly Leaflet From "Bnei Emunim"



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PARASHAS EIKEV

תשע"ט

IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

Hashem Directed Moshe to Daven

"ויאמר ה' אלי לאמר ראיני את העם הזה והנה עם קשה ערף הוא. הרף ממני ואשמידם" (ט יג-יד)
Usually, "leimor" indicates a commandment to say to others. To whom did Moshe have to convey Hashem's words?

Harav Tzvi Yitzchak Abramowitz, the Rav of Chatzor Haglilit, explains:

The *Gemara* (*Brachos* 32a) says that from the fact that Hashem told Moshe "heref Mimeni" – leave Me alone, Moshe understood that the salvation of Am Yisrael was dependent on him, and as a result, he strengthened his davening for them. According to the *Gemara*, we can explain the *passuk* as follows: "And Hashem said to me, *leimor*", that His statement to me "heref Mimeni" was intended to cause me "leimor", to say my *tefillah* before Him.

Ta'am Hatzvi

HaKadosh Baruch Hu "Davens" That We Should Choose Good

"ועתה ישראל מה ה' אליך שאל מעמך כי אם ליראה" (י יב)
Chazal say in *Maseches Brachos* (97a): "How do we know that HaKadosh Baruch Hu davens? Because it says (*Yeshayah* 56:7): 'Vehaviosim el Har Kodshi, vesimachtim beveis tefillasi.' It does not say "tefillasam", their *tefillah*, but rather "tefillasi" – My *tefillah*; from here [we learn] that Hashem davens."

The commentaries ask: Isn't the essence of *tefillah* that the request of the one davening should be fulfilled? This request applies only to a person who is dependent on the benevolence of the Creator, and not HaKadosh Baruch Hu Himself, to Whom everything belongs. So how is this explained?

The *Rashba* explains (according to the explanation of the *Tzelach*):

Man is unique among all the other creations in the fact that he is given the power to choose between good and bad. Out of His desire to benefit His creations, HaKadosh Baruch Hu *kaviyachol* asks and pleads with the

person to choose good, so that things will be good for him. That is what this *passuk* alludes to: "V'atah Yisrael, mah Hashem Elokecha shoel me'imach" – what does Hashem ask of you? It is as though Hashem is davening, and

Mibe'er Emunim

Sources in the Parashah About the Greatness of Amen

Hakadosh Baruch Hu Wants Amen

"ואכלת ושבעת וברכת את ה' אלקיך על הארץ הטבה אשר נתן לך" (ח י)

"A person should be careful in davening and in *brachos* to answer amen, which is a word derived from the word 'emunah.' Anyone whose fathers stood at Har Sinai and received the Torah, which is called *emunah*, and who is descended from Avraham Avinu, who was the *rosh ha'emunah*, as it says of him (*Bereishis* 15:6): "vehe'emin b'Hashem", must concentrate his heart and mind on answering amen...Because when a servant hears that his *rebbe* is being blessed he is obligated, logically to answer amen. How much more so when someone blesses Hashem, in Whose Hands is the soul of every living thing, does it behoove the listener to answer amen. How much more so is this when Hashem establishes a mitzvah on this matter, and commands the person to bless Him, which is a *mitzvas ase'i* in the Torah, as it says (*Devarim* 8:10): 'Ubeirachta es Hashem Elokecha...' And just like Hashem wants the *brachah*, the same is true with answering amen, which is the completion of the *brachah*. And *Chazal* says in *Brachos*, at the end of *Eilu Devarim* (23b), Rabi Yosi says: 'the one who answers amen is greater than the one making the *brachah*.'"

Kad Hakemach, Emunah

asking of us, "ki im leyirah" – to choose good. *Rashba Brachos* 7a; *Tzelach ibid*

Tefillah Betzibbur Helps Parnassah

"ולעבדו בכל לבבכם ובכל נפשכם. ונתתי מטר ארצכם" (יא יג-יד)

"Ul'ovdo bechol levavchem" – *avodah*, service of the heart is *tefillah*...And did the Torah not already command (*ibid* 6:5) 'bechol levavcha uvechol nafshecha'? Evidently: one command is addressed to the individual, and the other command is addressed to the community." (*Rashi*)

Why indeed, did the Torah need to command the *tzibbur* after it had already commanded the individual?

The *Ksav Sofer* explained:

One who davens alone can do so at a time that is suited for him, without disrupting his daily routine. By contrast, *tefillah betzibbur* often disrupts the person's daily schedule and his business affairs. Therefore, the Torah had to repeat and promise that ensuring to daven *tefillah betzibbur* will not affect one's *parnassah*. On the contrary: in the merit of "ul'ovdo bechol levavchem" – the *tefillah* of the *tzibbur* [in plural] will lead to "and I will give the rains of your land."

Ksav Sofer

"Hishamru Lachem Pen Yifteh..." In a Whisper

"השמרו לכם פן יפתה לבבכם וסרתם ועבדתם אלהים אחרים" (יא טז)

Harav Ephraim Manela, one of the *Roshei Yeshivah* of Chiddushei Hari"m, related:

As a youth I merited to daven together with the Kozhiglover Gaon, **Harav Aryeh Tzvi Frommer**, ז"ל. The Gaon had a custom of reciting *Shema* aloud with great enthusiasm. But when he came to the *passuk* "Hishamru lachem..." he would lower his voice and recite it and the *passuk* after it quietly, as we customarily do during *Krias HaTorah* when we reach the *pesukim* of the *tochachah*, the rebuke."

Pardes Yosef Hachadash

"The beginning of *teshuvah* can be *davka* with the good deeds that we do – by making sure to fulfill them properly. This is possible by paying a bit of attention, especially in things that people tend to be lax about, even though they are very serious. For example, answering amen; how many *halachos* do we learn from this. It is well known how strict the sages were – in a frightening way – about an amen *chatufah* (a "snatched" amen) and an amen *yesomah* (an "orphaned" amen) and one can figure from this the severity of refraining from answering amen."

Mishnas Rabi Aharon, Ma'amarim, Vol. II p. 80

Birchos Hashachar

Aloud

With kavanah

Bechavrusa

Ani
Ledodi
Vedodi
Li



Hashkamas Bais Hamedrash (3)

Preparing the Heart for Tefillah

Part of the virtue of rising for the *bais medrash* is the fact that it facilitates the proper preparation for *tefillah*. As explained in earlier segments, *tefillah* is one of the most lofty matters in the world, and no single *tefillah* is similar to another. The Ari HaKadosh said that from the day of Creation until now "the *tefillah* of one day is not the same as the *tefillah* of the day before it...and even the *tefillah* that are said every single day are very different one to another...There is no *tefillah* from the day that the world was created until the End of Days that is at all similar to another *tefillah*." (Pri Eitz Chaim, Shaar Hatefillah, Chapter 7)

The central reason for why *tefillah* becomes a matter of rote for us is because we do not prepare for it in accordance with its status. As Chazal say (*Shemos Rabbah* 24 4): "A person must purify his heart before he *davens*."

In order for *tefillah* to be said with proper preparation, Chazal in the *Mishnah* (*Brachos* 32b) establish: "One must only stand up to *daven* with solemnity of mind." They added, "Early *chassidim* would wait one hour and then *daven*, so that they should prepare their hearts for Hashem."

How to Prepare for Tefillah

The *Rishonim* (*Brachos* ibid) were divided on the reason for the need to wait before *davening* (their words are cited in *Rabbeinu Yona Brachos* 21a *Midapei HaRif*):

The *Ritva* and other *Rishonim* explain that the reason for waiting before *davening* is that through doing so, a person can clear his mind from the thoughts that disturb him, and then he can have proper *kavanah* in *davening*. However, *Rabbeinu Yona* (*Brachos* 21*Midapei HaRif*) and other *Rishonim* explain that the preparation is so that they can prepare the heart for *davening*, which means to negate the pleasures of this world. He explains that when they purify their soul from the trivialities of this world, it will then be filled with the loftiness of Hashem, and through that their *tefillah* will be willingly accepted by Hashem.

The *Shulchan Aruch* (*Orach Chaim* 98 1) rules: "One who *davens* needs to have *kavanah* in his heart...and he should think that if he was standing before a human king, he would organize his words and concentrate to say them nicely, without stammering. How much more so before the King of Kings, HaKadosh Baruch Hu, Who knows all man's thoughts. Thus, the *chassidim* would do: they would introspect and have *kavanah* in their *tefillah* until they reached a state of total physical negation and an empowerment of their mental powers, until they reached nearly the state of *nevuah*, prophecy...And he must think of things that submit the heart and guide him to his Father in heaven, and he should not think of frivolous matters."

The Rema added to the words of the *Shulchan Aruch*: "And he should think before *davening* of the loftiness of Hashem, and the humbleness of the person, and he should remove all the pleasures of man from his heart."

One Who Comes to Tefillah Receives Assistance

The *Siddur Bais Yaakov* of the *Yaavetz* (at the beginning of *Tefillas Shacharis*) details the order of preparing for *davening*:

"He should sit in his place and wait a bit until his mind settles and calms. He should

not *daven* in haste, but rather should first focus on before Whom he is standing, and he should concentrate in his heart about what his lips utter, and he should guard his language so that it should be organized and calm as is fitting and worthy, and it should be from the depths of the heart...And he should think of the loftiness of Hashem, the Master to Whom he is *davening* and requesting, and he should serve Him out of love and internal fear and with joy in his heart...and he should clear his thoughts of the affairs of the transient world as best he can."

Indeed, this work is very difficult, but the *Bach* (the *Tur Orach Chaim* 98) pointed to the *passuk* (*Tehillim* 10:17): "*Tachin libam takshiv aznecha*," that in order for *tefillah* to be heard it needs preparation. And he explains that it is not for naught that the *passuk* specifically uses the words "*Tachin libam*." It is to teach us that Hashem did a great *chesed* with us, that despite the fact that achieving *kavanah* in *tefillah* is very difficult, we are guaranteed that someone who comes to purify himself and tries to wait before *davening* to be able to prepare properly, then from Above "*mesayin lo*," HaKadosh Baruch Hu helps him and prepares his heart so that he can *daven* with *kavanah*.

Tefillah After Preparation Is More Powerful

One must know that *tefillah* said after proper preparation is many times more powerful, both with regard to the fact that it is recited slowly, and as Rav Shmuel Abuhav said in *Sefer Hazichronos* (*Hilchos Tefillah* Chapter 1) "that it is a known thing that one who comes at the wrong time to *davening* is hasty and rushes to *daven* with the *tzibbur*, and he is in such a hurry that he cannot possibly have the proper *kavanah* and [there is no way that he does] not cut letters."

In addition, the Maggid of Chernobyl explains the *passuk* (*Yeshayah* 65:24): "*Tereim yikra'u*, before they call and I will respond, while they are still speaking and I will hear" – if they will prepare "before they call" then "and I will answer," but if they come to *davening* "while they are still speaking" – without preparation, then "and I will [only] hear". (*Tzeror Hachaim* [Rav C. Liberson] 141).

We further find that Chazal compared *tefillah* to a sword and a bow (see *Onkelos Bereishis* 48:22). The Sar Shalom of Belz explained that when one uses a sword and a bow, the actual shot, the actual blow of the sword, take just a moment, and the primary effort is dedicating to aiming and to sharpening so that they should work properly, because without preparation they will not do what they have to. Similarly, in *tefillah*, the primary effort needs to be invested in preparing ahead of time, and only then can the *tefillah* be effective. (*Nitzotzei HaTorah Vayechi*)

The *Sefer Hakuzari* explains (3 5) that for a *chassid*, the three *tefillah*s are the central events of his day, and all the rest is only a preparation for them. He explained that a *chassid* knows that *tefillah* for the soul is like food for the body and that the soul is nourished from *tefillah* to *tefillah*. That means when he *davens Shacharis*, this nourishes the soul until *Minchah*, and from *Minchah* to *Maariv*, and so forth. Therefore, he will never *daven* in haste, by rote, and he will not just recite the words of *tefillah*. Instead, he will first prepare his body and soul to be able to utter every word with the necessary *kavanah*, and his heart and his mouth will be equal with one another. This is how *tefillah* can be done in a worthy fashion.

The Woolen Socks That No One Claimed

Monday night, 4 Nissan 5674. The difficult news spread like wildfire in the Sephardic community of Yerushalayim, leaving them stunned and reeling. Rabi Ezra ben Rabi Yitzchak Abadi Dehab, a tremendous *talmid chacham* and one of the sages of Aram Soba, who had settled in Yerushalayim, had passed away at the young age of 27 after years of suffering. He left behind his righteous widow, Masouda, the daughter of the *mekubal* Rabi Yehudah Pataya, *zy"l*, and a young orphan daughter. Sometime after his passing, another daughter was born; she was named Victoria.

Until her father came to Eretz Yisrael in 5694, and took the widow and her daughter into his home to attend to him and to imbibe from his holiness, the Masouda and her daughters lived in poverty and loneliness. Tragically, the older daughter Esther died of hunger as a child.

One day, three-and-a-half-year-old Victoria turned to her mother and innocently asked: "Ima, why do all my friends come to kindergarten with a sandwich and a fruit, while I usually come with nothing? Most days, I don't even have a fruit or vegetable in my bag."

Her daughter's innocent question filled the mother's eyes with tears. The overwhelming loneliness of her widowhood engulfed her, and she couldn't even answer her daughter for many long moments. Finally, with trembling lips and a choking voice, she replied:

"All your friends, Victoria, have a father. When they want something, they can turn to him and he tries to give them what they lack. But you, my child, are an orphan. Your pious father died before you were born. So who can you turn to...?"

"Yet, Victoria my dear," the mother stroked her child's head, "you know that HaKadosh Baruch Hu is the Father of orphans. You have a great Father in Heaven, and you can ask Him whatever you want, like a filling sandwich or even an apple..."

The young other buried her face in her hands and burst out crying again, but the little girl accepted her mother's idea with pure innocence. She left the house, raised her eyes Heavenward, and said with a broken heart: "My Father, Father in Heaven, all the girls in my class have a father, and only I don't. But Ima said that You are my Father. You are the greatest and strongest Father and I'm sure that You love me very much. Please, listen to your child, pleading with you, and send my mother *parnassah* so she can send me to school with a sandwich, and maybe even an apple. Please, Father!"

Victoria concluded her short *tefillah* and then skipped cheerfully back into the house. "Ima," she called to her mother, who was still weeping. "I asked our Father to send you *parnassah*. I'm sure that he heard me. Tomorrow, I'm sure you'll be able to

send me to school with a sandwich and an apple."

The child's innocence and pure faith encouraged the mother somewhat. She dried her eyes and added a short *tefillah* of her own that Hashem should fill her lack and send them *parnassah*.

Indeed, the Father of all orphans and the Judge of all widows listened to their *tefillah*s and fulfilled their wishes. About half an hour later, there was a loud knocking at the door. Masouda was quite frightened. She peeked through the peephole and saw several burly Turkish soldiers. She had no choice but to open the door.

"Madam!" one of the soldiers thundered, "we have heard that you are an expert seamstress. Winter is upon us and the war is in full swing. We have a large amount of torn woolen socks that are needed urgently for the soldiers of the Turkish army who are risking their lives in battle. Fix them for us and we will pay you up front."

The soldiers placed a large sack of socks on the floor, and handed the stunned young mother two heavy gold coins. Then they continued, without waiting for a response: "We'll be back in a few days and we want all the socks fixed by then!"

She didn't have much of a choice and sat down to do the job. Working quickly, she was soon done. The amount that she had received was tens of times more than the going rate for such work.

But the socks remained sitting in her house; to this day no one has come to get them. A few days later, General Allenby entered Yerushalayim and the Turkish soldiers were banished, never to return. The gold coins that the soldiers left behind sustained mother and daughter for a long time after that. The innocent prayer of the child breached the Heavens and was accepted, and she was able to take a sandwich and an apple to school from that point on.

From that day on, Victoria always knew Who she had to turn to in any time of trouble – to her Father in Heaven. Even when she grew up and married her husband, the *tzaddik* Rabi Yosef Batzri, *zt"l*, she would frequently visit the *mekomos hakedoshim*, where she would *daven* fervently:

"Ribbono shel Olam, I am asking You to give me children who are *tzaddikim* and Torah scholars." Then she added, "If they are not *tzaddikim* and Torah scholars, I prefer not to have any."

Indeed, her *tefillah* bore fruit. She gave birth to a generation of Torah scholars and *tzaddikim*, the *rabbanim*, *roshei yeshivah* and *dayanim*, Harav Menachem, *zt"l*, and *ybl"l*, Harav Sasson, Harav Ezra and Harav Dovid Batzri, *shlita*.

Binyamin Hatzaddik p. 58