

Vechol Maaminim

"A Weekly Leaflet From 'Bnei Emunim"



305

PARASHAS CHAYEI SARAH

תש"פ

IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

Avraham's Eulogy for Sarah

"ויבא אברהם לספד לשרה ולבכתה" (כג ב)
"Where did he come from? Har Hamoriah." (*Bereishis Rabbah* 58 5)
Harav Yosef Pachonovsky writes that the words of the *Midrash* contain a reference to what Avraham said in his eulogy of Sarah:

The real *tzaddik* does not suffice with being an *oved Hashem* himself. He also makes sure to bring up his children to follow his path. This concept is alluded to in the words of *Chazal* (*Shabbos* 119b): "Anyone who answers amen *bechol kocho*, with all his might – the gates to Gan Eden are opened for him." "Kocho" is another way to say offspring [as Yaakov referred to Reuven his son (*Bereishis* 49:3): "kochi vereishis oni"]. Thus *Chazal* alluded that anyone who does not suffice with answering amen himself, but also does so "bechol kocho", he teaches his children to believe in Hashem and to cleave to Him, merits the level of *tzaddik* for whom "the gates of Gan Eden are opened."

This is what the *Midrash* here is referring to: "Where did he come from?" – Which point did Avraham stress in his *hesped*? "From Har Hamoriah" – that Sarah so excelled at raising her son with such pure *emunah* that he was ready to put his neck out in order to fulfill the mitzvah of Hashem.

Pardes Yosef

Eliezer Davened Outside the City

"ויברך הגמלים מחוץ לעיר אל באר המים ...
ויאמר ה' אלקי אדני אברהם הקרה נא לפני
היום..." (כד יא - יב)

Why did the Torah specify the location of the well?

Harav Zalman Sorotzkin

So That You May Live Long Days

"ואברהם זקן בא בימים וה' ברך את אברהם בכל" (כד א)
"אברהם זקן בא בימים" – The acronym of the last letter of each word is "amen", to teach us that answering amen lengthens a person's days, as *Chazal* say (*Brachos* 47a): "Anyone who extends his amen then his days and years are extended."

Tosafos Hashalem, Bereishis 24 1

The Rebbe **Harav Dovid Yitzchak Eizik Rabinowitz** of Skolya added:

The *Ohr Zarua* writes (*Hilchos Seudah* 192) that the amount of time one should linger over the amen is the amount of time it takes to say "K-l Melech ne'eman". As *Chazal* said (*Shabbos* 119b): "What is amen? K-l Melech Ne'eman." The *Baalei Tosafos* added (*ibid*) that one should think of these words when answering amen. Similarly, we can find an allusion in this *passuk*: "zaken ba bayamim" is numerically equivalent to "K-l Melech ne'eman" (272). Thus the Torah alludes that because Avraham took care to extend his amen and to answer with the right *kavanah* that Hashem is a K-l Melech Ne'eman, he merited to live many long years.

Tzemach Dovid

This is the place to note that *Chazal's* promise of a long life to someone who is careful about answering amen is also stated in the *Talmud Yerushalmi* (*Brachos* 8 8) in the *Tosafos* – *Teivah Achas*: "One who answers amen has his days and years lengthened *betovah*." This promise is also alluded to later in the *passuk*, as it says: "And Hashem blessed Avraham with everything."

Arichus Yamim Is Like the Shiur of Amen

A Satmar *chassid* named Reb Chaim Hersh Goldberger was especially scrupulous about answering amen. Toward this end, he would linger each morning in shul for many hours until the last *minyan* for *Shacharis* was over, so that he could answer as many amens after other people as he could. Likewise, he was always keeping an ear open, and when he overheard someone preparing to say a *brachah*, he ran over and stood near him to be able to answer amen... Reb Chaim Hersh passed away in 5730/1970 at the age of 91, an age considered then to be exceptionally old. His Rebbe, the **Divrei Yoel of Satmar**, addressed this in his *hesped*, and said: "You should know that Reb Chaim Hersh lived a long life because he was very careful about answering amen, about which *Chazal* said (*ibid*): 'Anyone who extends his amen will have his days and years extended.' And because amen is numerically equivalent to 91, he merited to live a long life until the age of 91."

Witnessed by Harav Yekusiel Yitzchak Brach, Av Bais Din Nanash

explained:

The Torah noted that the well was located outside the city to teach us that Eliezer was careful not to *daven* inside the city because it was full of idols. We find similarly that Moshe told Pharaoh (*Shemos* 9:29): "When I leave the city I will spread my hands to Hashem." *Chazal* explained (*Tanchuma Bo* 5): "Why? Because the land of Egypt was full of idols."

Oznayim LaTorah

Mentioning an Honorific for a Person in Prayer

"ויאמר ה' אלקי אברהם הקרה נא לפני היום ועשה חסד עם אדני אברהם" (כד יב)

There is an important concept here in the *halachos* of *tefillah*, derived by **Rabi Yehudah Hachassid**:

A person must not mention an honorific for his father or *rebbe* in *davening*. He has to mention the person only by his name, as we find that Elisha *davened* (*Melachim* II 2:14): "Ayeh Hashem Elokei Eliyahu" without putting a title before his *rebbe's* name.

Based on this, it is puzzling, why Eliezer called Avraham in his *tefillah* "Adoni Avraham." He explained that this *halachah* was only given to free people and not to servants. Proof of this is brought by **Rav Nesanel Fried**, the Rav of Uzvaras, from the *Yerushalmi* (*Brachos* 3 3) that the reason that a servant is exempt from reciting *Krias Shema* is because it says (*Devarim* 4:6): "Hashem Elokeinu Hashem *Echad*" and a servant has another master. So even when standing in *tefillah*, the servant is subject to this master, and therefore, he can precede the name with a title.

Sefer Chassidim, 800; *Pnei Meivin*

"ואברהם זקן בא בימים וה' ברך את אברהם בכל"

One who is careful about answering amen is promised a long, good life, as *Chazal* said (*Yerushalmi Brachos* 8 8):

"One who answers amen then his days and years are extended *letovah*, for the good."

Birchos Hashachar



Aloud



With *kavanah*



Bechavrusa



The bearer of this is deserving of a long good life due to his scrupulousness in answering amen.

הרב זלמן סורוצקין



Taaneh Emunim

Insights into the Virtues of
Hashkamas Bais Hamedrash

Birchas Hamazon – Hatov Vehameitiv (4)

Mah Adir Shimcha Bechol Ha'aretz

Another description used to refer to the Creator in the *brachah* of *Hatov Vehameitiv* is “*Adir*.” This description is based on the words of the *passuk* (*Tehillim* 8:2): “*Hashem adoneinu mah adir Shimcha bechol ha'aretz*,” which means that Hashem’s tremendous strength is revealed to the whole land – both in places where people are settled and in the sea and the desert. (*Avudraham* Chapter 30; *Radak Tehillim* ibid)

As explained in previous segments, the descriptions said in this *brachah* are arranged in ascending order from level to level. The description of “*adir*” is derived from and loftier than the description of “*Melech*” that precedes it. *Melech* is a name for someone who has the control and ability to work for the benefit of his subjects, because he is in a higher position of power and has authority over them. But *Adir* is a name for authority that does not only stem from the fact that the ruler is on a higher level than the one being ruled. Rather it is because he has a strength that the one being ruled does not have. (See *Rashi*, *Tehillim* 8:2). And with this power, he can do as he pleases to the one he is ruling over.

In *Perek Shira* it says that the song of the sea is the *passuk* (*Tehillim* 93:1): “*Mikolos mayim rabbim adirim mishberei yam – adir bamaron Hashem*.” Indeed, if we examine the character of water, we can understand what the word “*adir*” that we use for the Ribbono Shel Olam means. The water has tremendous destructive power that can destroy every object on earth. When the Creator gives the water permission to flood the world – as happened in the *Mabul* and as we hear happens from time to time in our day – there is nothing that can block it. Within a few minutes, it can flood and destroy huge swathes of land. Yet at the same time, on normal days, *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* stops the water from inundating the land, and that is a sign for us of His tremendous power because He can control the water, the *mayim adirim*. As the *Navi* rebuked *Am Yisrael* (*Yirmiyah* 5:22): “*Ha’Osi lo sira’u ne’um Hashem im mipanai lo tachilu asher samti chol ge’ul layam chok olam velo ya’avrenhu veyisga’ashu velo yuchalu vehamu galav velo ya’avrunhu*. Will you not fear Me? says the Hashem, or, do you not quake from before Me, for I made sand a boundary for the sea, an everlasting ordinance,

which it cannot pass, and [its waves] toss themselves, yet they cannot prevail; and its waves roar, but they do not pass it.” (See *Kanaf Renanim* on *Perek Shira*.)

Between “Boreinu” and “Yotzreinu”

It would seem that the meaning of the praises “*Boreinu*” and “*Yotzreinu*” are the same, but the *Mateh Moshe* (*Amud Ha’avodah* 331) explains that there is a difference between them. The term “*beriah*”, creation, refers to the spiritual part of a person, which is the *nefesh* and the *neshamah*. The word “*yetzirah*” relates to the physical part of him. As we find in *Brias Ha’olam*, first the spiritual part is attended to (*Bereishis* 1:27): “*Vayivra Elokim es ha’adam betzalmo*,” followed by the physical (ibid 2:7): “*Vayitzer Hashem Elokim es ha’adam afar min ha’adamah*.”

Boreinu Before Yotzreinu

We need to understand the order of the praises here: “*Ha-kel, Avinu, Malkeinu Adireinu, Boreinu...*” Isn’t it the case that when a person is born he does not understand anything about the existence of the Creator and His Greatness, and only after he grows up a bit he begins to recognize his Creator and knows that He is ‘*Avinu Malkeinu Adireinu*’? If so, would it not make more sense to put *Boreinu* ahead of all the other descriptions?

The *Chida* explained as follows: When *Bnei Yisrael* sin, they are punished for it, and they are given over to their enemies. But when *HaKaodsh Baruch Hu* has mercy on *Am Yisrael* and saves them from their enemies, this salvation is done with a Strong Hand, to the extent that *Am Yisrael* is considered to be recreated into a new creation. Therefore, one can explain that we are referring here to this “*beriah*”, the new creation, and therefore the order is to first say “*Ha-Kel Avinu Malkeinu Adireinu*” meaning that if we conduct ourselves properly and do not sin, then *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* – Who is *Avinu* and *Malkeinu* – will give us the power [*Adireinu*] so that we will not be given into the hands of our enemies. However, even if *chalilah* we have sinned, we ask Him that after we repent, He should be “*Boreinu, Goaleinu*”, meaning He should create us like new beings when we are being redeemed. (*Haggadah Shel Pesach, Simchas Haregel* p. 78)

Maaseh Emunim

Pearls and Insights on
Birchas Hamazon

Amen V’Amen and a Yeshuah

This story was sent to us by the person it happened to, an older, well-respected *talmid chacham* who has served as a *Ra”m* in a prominent yeshivah in Eretz Yisrael for many years.

To the people leading the Bney Emunim revolution, which spans across the globe and strengthens tens of thousands of people in Eretz Yisrael and around the world with this important mitzvah of answering amen.

As someone who has merited to serve in one of the prominent *yeshivos* in central Israel, I have been able for years to witness the important activities that you promote in bastions of Torah. I also try to encourage and strengthen my students to join the ranks of the “*shomrei emunim*,” who have been promised that the gates of Gan Eden will be opened for them.

At the same time, despite my relatively advanced age, I also merited to strengthen myself in this mitzvah as the result of your activities that make us aware of the importance of this mitzvah, namely brochures you publish each week. I would like to note that these compilations contribute a tremendous amount to raising the importance of *tefillah* in general and of *amen* in particular.

Activities that are rooted so deep in the heritage of our faith will ultimately become imbued in our hearts. It is therefore no wonder that your work has been so successful in the Torah world, and has penetrated the soul of every *Yid*, especially the young *bochurim*.

I am using this letter as an opportunity to praise your work, but what galvanized me to write it is a personal story that happened recently in my family. If I would not have felt that publicizing it was of benefit to *Klal Yisrael*, I would never have made it public. Hashem has blessed me with a large family, and several years ago, I felt even more blessed to have married off my last son.

At the same time, my older children began to marry off their own children. So, with Hashem’s great *chesed* and compassion, I have already participated in the weddings of a number of my grandchildren. You cannot imagine the tremendous gratitude I feel to the Ribbono shel Olam each time I merited to escort one of my children to the *chuppah*.

This past Rosh Chodesh Nissan, I suddenly noticed that six of my grandchildren are of *shidduchim* age, and some even were a bit ‘older’ in these terms, and had not yet found their *zivugim*.

This state of affairs began to bother me. As it was nearing the *yahrtzeit* of the holy Shelah, who composed the renowned *tefillah* for the *chinuch* of children, I had an idea to travel to his *tziyun* in Teveriah on the day of the *yahrtzeit* to *daven* for my grandchildren.

I signed up for an organized bus that would be going there, and on the morning of 11 Nissan, which is known as the *yahrtzeit*, I found myself on the bus heading for Teveriah.

The long ride gave me time to think. I thought about what else I could do to bring about *yeshuos* for my grandchildren. Suddenly, I had an idea. I decided to reinforce something that I have been *makpid* on for many years, the mitzvah of answering amen. In addition to making sure to answer amen after the *Birchos Hashachar* of others, I would strengthen myself in answering amen the rest of the day as well, for all *brachos*. Already on that trip, I was able to hear several *brachos* and to answer amen, and even gave others the merit of answering amen to my *brachos*. When we reached the *tziyun*, I recited *Tefillas Hashelah* with the *tzibbur*. Then I sat down on a bench nearby, opened my *Tehillim* randomly, and began to read the *perek* I had opened to. Remarkably, the *perek* was none other than *perek* 41, which concludes with the *passuk*: “*Baruch Hashem Elokei Yisrael me’haolam v’ad ha’olam amen v’amen*.”

I was very moved; I saw this as a sign from Above that I had chosen to strengthen myself with the right thing. But the wonders did not end there. When I continued to the next *perakim*, - 42 and 43, I noticed that they contain the *passuk* “*hochili l’Elokim ki od odenu yeshuos panai*” no less than three times [the number of letters in amen.] I saw this as a promise of sorts: “*hochili l’Elokim*” – for a *yeshuah*, “*ki od odenu*” – when it will come.

But the most wondrous revelation of all takes a bit of calculating: The acronym of “*Ki od odenu*” is numerically equivalent to amen. Furthermore, the acronym of “*Odenu yeshuos panai*” – וֹדֵנִי יֵשׁוּעַ פָּנָאִי is numerically equivalent to amen. Hence we find that answering amen is alluded to in this *passuk* twice, and because this *passuk* is recited three times, then amen is alluded to here no less than six times. You tell me – isn’t that a clear sign that Hashem wants this particular matter to be strengthened as a merit for the six grandchildren I was praying for?!

I felt a shudder go through my body. I saw this as an illumination from Above, as if I had gotten a clear message: You decided to strengthen yourself with answering amen, so you are guaranteed “*Ki od odenu yeshuos...*” very soon.

I returned from Teveria feeling remarkably tranquil. My *emunah* was so strong that in my heart I was sure that very soon, all six of these grandchildren would see a *yeshuah*. I also gave *chizuk* to their parents and conveyed my feelings. And indeed...

Over the last summer, they got engaged one after another. The last of them got engaged on Erev Rosh Hashanah, *baruch Hashem*. My heart is overflowing with gratitude to *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* who guided me on the right path and ordained the *yeshuah* in such a special way, and to you, *Bney Emunim*, in whose merit I began to strengthen myself in this mitzvah.

May you be blessed with all that is good, and may we merit to see Hashem’s honor filling the whole world, amen v’amen.