

Vechol Maaminim

"A Weekly Leaflet From "Bnei Emunim



IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

The Seder Haggadah – A Lofty Tefillah

"ורחץ" - "נטול את ידיו לאכילת הכרפס הטבול במי מלח ואינו מברך על נטילת ידים" (שו"ע או"ח תעג ו)
 There is a well-known question: Why are we particular on Seder night to wash our hands before eating the *karpas*, even though the rest of the year we do not wash our hands before eating 'something that is dipped in liquid' whose *shiur* is less than a *kezayis*? (See *Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim* 158 4, and *Mishnah Berurah* ibid 20)

The **Rema** offers a beautiful explanation (*Darchoi Moshe* 473 12): "One can say that the relation of the *Haggadah* is like *tefillah*, as we relate the honor of Hashem and His praises, therefore [just like one washes hands before *tefillah*] one should wash here as well."

The *mekubal* **Harav Yosef of Dubno**, the rav of **Harav Tzvi Kaidenover**, author of *Kav Hayashar*, writes in his *sefer Yesod Yosef* (Ch. 85) about the loftiness of the *tefillah* that is incorporated in the *Seder Haggadah*:

"In each and every generation on the eve of Pesach, anyone who says praise of *Yetzias Mitzrayim* and the story of the *Haggadah* with joy and happiness, without any anger in his heart, without laziness or the sense that it is a burden, but rather with concentration and joy, that person will be sheltered by the *Shechinah* and be saved wherever and whenever he is, and merits to have miracles performed for him. But anyone who feels the *Haggadah* to be a burden, and says it lazily and without joy in his heart, does not merit to have miracles performed for him when he is in a place of danger."

This Night – 32 Brachos

"שהחיינו וקיימנו והגיענו לזמן הזה"

Harav Shmuel Huminer writes:

"Come my brothers and see how many *brachos* we merit to make on this holy and pure night: Four *brachos* of *Krias Shema*, seven *brachos* of *Shemoneh Esrei*, two *brachos* of *Hallel*, three *brachos* of *Kiddush*, *Borei Pri Ha'adamah* on *karpas*, *Asher Ga'alenu*; three times *Hagafen* on the three cups of wine besides *Kiddush*, *Al Netilas Yadayim*, *Hamotzi*,

Yetzias Mitzrayim Imbues Emunah

"מעשה ברבי אליעזר ורבי יהושע ורבי אלעזר בן עזריה ורבי עקיבא ורבי טרפון שהיו מסבין בבני ברק והיו מספרים ביציאת מצרים כל אותו הלילה"

The *Sefer Hachinuch* (Mitzvah 21) explains that the Torah instructed us to speak about *Yetzias Mitzrayim* because the story of *Yetzias Mitzrayim* has the power to imbue *emunah* in the heart of the person, as the wondrous miracles that were done then for Klal Yisrael showed everyone that Hashem is the *Elokim*. Indeed, the words of *Rabbeinu Bechayei* (*Shemos* 20: 14) are known, that answering amen was establish in order to imbue Am Yisrael with *emunah* in their hearts. The *Chida* cites the connection between *Yetzias Mitzrayim* and amen – that the acronym of the names of the Tannaim who discussed *Yetzias Mitzrayim* at length: אליעזר, יהושע, אלעזר, טרפון עקיבא, are numerically equivalent to 91, which is amen.

Peh Echad [Commentary on the *Chida Haggadah*]

Al Achilas Matzah, *Al Achilas Maror*, four *brachos* of *Birchas Hamazon*, *Melech Mehulal Batishbachos* and the *Brachah Me'ein Shalosh*, for a total of 32 *brachos*. And when Hashem will rebuild the *Bais Hamikdash*, may it be speedily in our day, we will add two more *brachos*: "*Al Achilas Hazevach*" for eating the *chagigah* of the 14th day of Nissan, and *Al Achilas Pesach* – on eating the *Korban Pesach*."

The *mashpia*, **Harav Aharon Naftali Follman** of New York, explains why there are so many *brachos* on this night:

Rabbeinu Bechayei (*Eikev* 8:10) writes that when a person takes care to make his *brachos* properly, an abundance of *shefa* is bestowed upon him from Above, and "the grain and the fruit are blessed and multiply." The *Mateh Moshe* (351) cites an allusion to this from the *passuk* (*Mishlei* 10:22): "*Birchas Hashem he ta'ashir*" meaning: *brachos* said properly are a *segulah* for wealth [and *sefer Seder Hayom* adds that in order for the *shefa* to come in its

entirety one must take care to make one hundred *brachos* a day like the *takanah* of *Chazal*.] Hence, because *Chazal* said (*Rosh Hashanah* 17a) that on Pesach we are judged regarding the grain, we say a lot of *brachos* on Pesach night so that through them, the grain should be blessed and we should receive an abundant blessing of *parnassah*.

Seder Hayom, Seder Meah Brachos; Mitzvos Leil HaSeder [Rav S. Huminer] 73; *Ma'amarei Yom Tov Vechag HaPesach*, p. 24.

Needless to add to the readers of this pamphlet, according to the *Zohar* (*Eikev* 271 1), answering amen completes the *brachah* and one who wishes to merit a complete *brachah* should take care to complete his *brachos* with amen.

Two Praises in One Brachah

"אלו קרבנו לפני הר סיני ולא נתן לנו את התורה - דינינו"
 What could possibly be the benefit of standing in front of Har Sinai yet not receiving the Torah?!

Harav Shmuel Di Oziza, a disciple of the *Arizal*, explained:

It did not say here: "*Ilu kervanu lifnei Har Sinai velo kibalnu bo es haTorah...*" but rather: "*velo nasan lanu es haTorah*." Because with the words '*nasan lanu*' we allude to the two tremendous virtues that if the Torah would have been given to us without them – it would have been enough. The first is "*nasan lanu*" – he gave the Torah to us and not to the nations of the world, as *Chazal* say (*Sanhedrin* 59a): 'A gentile who engages in Torah is deserving of death as it says (*Devarim* 33:4): '*Torah tzivah lanu Moshe morashah*' – it is a '*morashah*' for us and not for them." The second is "*nasan lanu*" – that He gave the Torah to the sages of Am Yisrael to explain it, as we find (*Bava Metziah* 59b) that when *Chazal* disputed *Rabi Eliezer* and a *Bas Kol* emerged from the Heavens that *halachah* is like *Rabi Eliezer*, the sages did not heed the call.

We thank Hashem for these two gifts each morning in *Birchas HaTorah*: "*Asher bachar banu mikol ha'amim*" – that it was given to us and not to them, "*venasan lanu es Toraso*" – to explain it and to commentate on it.

Midrash Shmuel Avos 3:20



Double Blessing: Health and Parnassah

Seder night. *Leil Shimurim*. "*Velo yiten hamashchis lavo el bateichem lingof*." Likewise, *Chazal* said (*Rosh Hashanah* 16a) that 'On Pesach we are judged regarding the grain.' We all ask now for health and *parnassah*, that we not be harmed by the destroyer and that our livelihood should not be affected. Now is the time to take upon ourselves to be strict to make 100 *brachos* each day.

In the merit of 100 *brachos* we will receive both health and *paranassah*.



Health:

"*Dovid Hamelech* established for Am Yisrael 100 *brachos*, and because of this the plague was halted." (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 18:21)



Parnassah:

"*Birchas Hashem he ta'ashir*" (*Mishlei* 10:22) – *Brachos* that are recited properly are a merit for wealth. When a person takes care to make the *brachos* properly, then from Above, he is bestowed with an abundance of blessing and the "grain and the fruit are blessed and multiply." (*Rabbeinu Bechayei Devarim* 8:10, *Mateh Moshe* 351)

The Requests of HaRachaman (9)

HaRachaman for Seder Night

In *Birchas HaMazon* there is a request of *HaRachaman* that is recited just one time a year, on this holy night, Seder night. This request is very ancient and its source is in the words of the Maharil (*Kitzur Shel"ah, Inyanei HaSeder*): "On the nights of the Pesach Seder one should say in *Birchas Hamazon: Harachaman Hu yanchileinu leyom shekulo tov yom shekulo aruch yom she tzaddikim yoshvim v'atroseihem berosheihem venehenim miziv haShechinah veyihi chelkeinu imahem.*" It is told that Harav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach would say this *HaRachaman* with great emphasis and emotion. (*Halichos Shlomo, Moadei Hashanah* p. 311)

Yom Shekulo Tov

The *Gemara* says in *Maseches Pesachim* (50a): "Rabi Acha Bar Chanina said: *Olam Haba* is not like *Olam Haze*; in This World – one says *Baruch Hatov VeHameitiv* for good news, and for bad news one says *Baruch Dayan Ha'Emes*. In the World to Come – it is all *Hatov VeHameitiv*." The *Tzelach* explains these words (*Pesachim* 50a) in the name of Rabi Ephraim Reisher, the Maggid of Brod that *Chazal* purposely did not say: "In *Olam Haba* – everything is good news." Rather "Everything is *Hatov VeHameitiv*." Because in This World, even though we believe that everything is for the good, there are still things seem to us to be bad because the good in them is not evident. But in the World to Come, everyone will understand that good that was concealed in it, and then it will emerge that even what looked like bad in this world really was only good.

That is what we ask: "*HaRachaman Hu yanchileinu leyom shekulo tov* – when everyone will recognize and understand the good that is concealed even in things that in This World look to be bad, and then in any case, the *tzaddikim* will bask in the glow of the Shechinah, because even in the depths of their heart they will not have any complaints towards Hashem, as they will realize that no bad comes from Him. (*Haggadah Shel Pesach Maasai LeMelech*)

V'Atroseihem BeRosheihem

We do not say: "*V'ataros b'rosheihem*" but rather "*v'atroseihem*" because in the real world, *Olam Haba*, the levels of

the *tzaddikim* are divided based on their actions in This World, as *Chazal* say (*Bava Basra* 75a) that HaKadosh Baruch Hu is destined to make each and every *tzaddik* a *chuppah* based on the level of his honor. That means based on what he built with his actions in the '*prozdor*,' the corridor, which is This World, for the sake of Heaven. That is how he will enter the '*traklin*,' the banquet hall that is *Olam Haba*. And that is the meaning of the word '*v'atroseihem*' – the *ataros* that they created for themselves in This World, based on the quality of their deeds. (*Chasan Sofer*)

The *Baal Haturim* says (*Devarim* 26:19): When a person *davens* properly he affixes a glorious crown to HaKadosh Baruch Hu, and in the World to Come, HaKadosh Baruch Hu will take this glory and place it as a crown for the person's head. However, we need to know that is something merited only by a person who *davens* properly. When someone speaks idle talk in shul during *davening*, not only will he not merit this, he will even be punished and instead will be crowned with a crown of thorns.

V'Yehi Chelkeinu Imahem

We need to understand the meaning of the added words "*V'Yehi chelkeinu imahem*", which appears like we are asking for a reward for our deeds in this world. The *Minchas Elazar* of Munkatch explained this with a parable to a king who made a big feast. Obviously, he invited his ministers and his servants. After all, they work all year long for him and this is part of their reward. But if he also invites to his banquet paupers and beggars, only because their fathers served the king, then he becomes even more glorified and honored.

Likewise, the fact that the *tzaddikim* merit Gan Eden is not a great praise to the Creator, because they are worthy of it in the merit of their deeds. But when '*yihiyeh chelkeinu imahem*', meaning we will merit the reward of *Olam Haba* in the merit of our righteous forbears, as the children of Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov, then the Name of Hashem will surely be glorified and sanctified and there will be great praise and *hiddur* for the Creator. This is what we pray and ask for. (*Shaar Yissachar*, *ibid*)

Thoughts Amidst the Corona Plague, Lo Aleinu

Dear Readers!

These past few weeks we have witnessed a global plague, *Rachmana litzlan*, which, as of this writing, has felled many victims throughout the world, including so many of our dear brethren.

We are all afraid of the plague, and seek ways to strengthen ourselves physically against it. We, too, can contribute on that front.

As the Yom Tov of Pesach approaches, when HaKadosh Baruch Hu passed over the homes of Am Yisrael and saved them from annihilation, we have asked the many *gabba'ei amen*, who are so dedicated to disseminating the mitzvah of answering amen around the world, and emerged with some encouraging thoughts. We are pleased to share them here.

Rabbi Moshe Levin, a *gabbai amen* in Beit Shemesh, relates:

If a big *rav* would have recommended a *safe segulah* to be spared from the plague, would any of us ignore him?! If we would have needed to stand in line for days, we would have been there. We would have been ready to make every effort to merit the *segulah*. Look at the herculean efforts all the world's leaders are making now to develop a vaccine against corona; senior scientists are hardly sleeping, and we are waiting impatiently for the results...

So that's it – there is just such a promise, not from a great person, but from the greatest of them all, from the one whose *sefer* we recite each day, at any given moment. Dovid Hamelech, *a"h*. Rav Yaakov Baal Haturim writes in his *sefer Arba'ah Turim (Orach Chaim* 46): "Dovid Hamelech, *a"h*, established *meah brachos*...Each day one hundred people in Am Yisrael would perish, and they didn't know why they were dying until he realized with *Ruach HaKodesh* and established for Am Yisrael the *takanah* of one hundred *brachos*." The source of this is in the *Midrash Rabbah Parashas Korach (Bamidbar Rabbah* 18:21)

Dovid Hamelech found a vaccine to the plague with *Ruach HaKodesh* – a vaccine that only we, the Holy Nation have, and that is 100 *brachos*. It is not an unfounded rumor, the kind that abound in these days; it is a vaccine created by Dovid Hamelech himself. He certainly did not establish it only for his generation; he knew that there would be plagues in every generation, and when in each generation, a Yid will open his day with the 20 *Birchos Hashachar* established on the basis of this *takanah*, and throughout the day he completes the quota of 100 *brachos*, this will be the vaccine for him that will save him from every plague. (*Bach, Orach Chaim* 46)

Just like there are several levels in a vaccine, we also want "our" vaccine to be of the best quality and most effective, meaning that the disease should not touch us at all, and *chalilah*, should not harm any Jew in the world. In order to do that we need to execute the vaccine in the best way possible. How is that? By making sure that every *brachah* should be answered with amen. The holy *Zohar (Eikev* 271 1) says that a perfect *brachah* is one that is answered by amen, and for us, a perfect *brachah* means a perfect vaccine!!

With the eruption of this plague, Rabbi Levin continues, after I finish hearing *Birchos Hashachar* from so many Yidden in the morning, I take a *Sefer Tehillim* and say Chapter 91, the psalm of misfortune, which is numerically equivalent to 91, which is amen. Thus I seek to arouse the merit of Dovid Melech Meshicha, who established the recital of 100 *brachos* to stop the plague. I believe that Dovid Melech Yisrael *chai vekayam*, and his *takanah* to stop the plague is still valid and will protect us all to get through this period in good health.

As true believers, we have seen a clear strengthening across the spectrum to adhere

to this *segulah*. *Ashrei ha'am*, praiseworthy is this nation! Rabbi Dovid Alter Roth, *shlita*, of Bnei Brak, who is one of the greatest activists promoting the mitzvah of amen, was in home quarantine before Pesach because he was in contact with an infected person. He shares the unique way he handled the isolation he was forced into:

My chavrusa, who answers amen after my *brachos* each day, received a *heter* from a renowned *dayan* to answer my *brachos* on the phone. I was stunned that already on the first morning of my quarantine, I received a phone call from this *dayan*, who personally asked me to answer amen after his *brachos*.

The residents of the building where I live decided to make a *minyán* in the stairwell. I live on the first floor. I was surprised when, before *davening* began, they called me to come out to the porch. All of them, as one, wanted to say *brachos* one after the other so that I could answer amen. Even more amazing: There are two precious Yidden who I encounter, and I have always been 'nudging' them to join this initiative, this group of those who recite *Birchos Hashachar Bechavrusa*, yet I was not successful. Today, without me asking, they decided to come.

This reliable *segulah*, which has been passed down from Dovid Hamelech himself, is very attractive. And I thought to myself that aside for the one hundred *brachos*, the amen itself inspires one to joy. Although we cannot make a lot of *simchos* in these times, we know what the *Zohar* writes (*Vayelech* 245 2) that answering amen brings about joy in all the worlds and opens the gates of blessing for Am Yisrael. Although we are in very difficult times, we have the tools to be happy. When a person *davens* with amen and unites the Names of HaKadosh Baruch Hu, he then brings about joy in all the worlds, and certainly, *middah kenegged middah*, measure for measure, we will all merit very soon to see the ultimate joy with the arrival of Mashiach Tzidkeinu, may it be speedily in our day.

The *mechanech* Rabbi Meir Paneth, from Elad, who is active about disseminating the mitzvah of amen among children, conveys a message to the children of Am Yisrael who need to be home during this time:

Dear children! You can be the iron dome of Am Yisrael, the keepers of the city, the country and the world. Say *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa* wherever you *daven*, and be a role model how a Yid acts in a time of tribulation. The power of the *brachos* and of the amen – which is also a protection in and of itself as we all know – is tremendous!

The Ohr Hachaim explains the *passuk (Vayikra* 26:8): "*Umeach mikem revavah yirdofu*" – that the one hundred *brachos* will pursue the tens of thousands of harmful forces, and if together, we are all strict about reciting one hundred perfect *brachos*, we will create a tremendous powerful army to pursue all the harmful forces, with *siyata diShmaya*.

The chairman of Bnei Emunim, Rabbi Yaakov Dov Marmorstein, hones in on an interesting point: the professional name that the World Health Organization gave this terrible disease is "Covid 19" or in Hebrew, 19 קורבד. We can rearrange the letters to read 91 דיבוק – that by cleaving to answering amen (numerically equivalent to 91), we will take care to answer amen wherever and whenever we are, we will annul the decree of the Covid, and the words "*Yipol mitzidcha elef urevavah m'yeminecha eilecha lo yigash*" will be fulfilled.