

Vechol Maaminim

"A Weekly Leaflet From 'Bnei Emunim"



330

PARASHAS
BEHAR BECHUKOSAI

תש"פ

IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

Shemiras Shabbos For the Sake of Hashem

(ושבתה הארץ שבת לה" (כה ב)

"For the sake of Hashem, as it says regarding the Shabbos creation." (Rashi)

Harav Yaakov Yosef Ginz, the Rav of Bessermin, explained:

The mitzvah of resting on Shabbos also has a natural reason, because it helps a person get much needed rest to reenergize. As we find, even the nations of the world chose a day on which they rest from their work.

At the same time, we as Jews are instructed to look away from the natural reasons, and to observe Shabbos only 'l'Shem Hashem,' as the Torah emphasizes (Shemos 20:10): "Veyom hashvi'i Shabbos l'Hashem Elokecha." For this reason, we have never seen a non-Jew be *moser nefesh* to rest on his day of rest, while in contrast, tens of thousands in Am Yisrael have been *moser nefesh* over the generations to observe Shabbos. That is because the non-Jews rest only for the sake of resting, while we do so in order to obey the commandment of Hashem.

Based on this we can understand wording of Tefillas Minchah on Shabbos: "Yakiru banecha ve'yedu ki **me'itcha** hi menuchasam" – because the Jews recognize the fact that their rest on Shabbos is because of the commandment of Hashem, therefore, "v'al menhuchasam yakdishu es Shemecha" – they sanctify the Name of Hashem and are *moser nefesh* for their rest.

That is what Rashi is saying: "Veshavsha ha'aretz Shabbos l'Hashem" – "as it says regarding the Shabbos of creation." Even though allowing the land to rest is practiced among many farmers all over the world, in order to benefit their land so that it should bring out better fruits in coming years, we are commanded to rest "Shabbos l'Hashem" – because that is what Hashem commanded us to do.

Harei Besamim

Vetzivisi es Birchasi – Amen!

(וצוית את ברכבתי להם" (כה, כ-כא)

Harav Yaakov Chaim, the only son and successor of the Ben Ish Chai, wrote:

The word "lachen" – with the kollel – is numerically equivalent to amen. So we can explain the *passuk* as follows: "Vetzivisi es birchasi lachen" – HaKadosh Baruch Hu commands you that every time you hear a *brachah*, answer amen after it. As the Rambam ruled (*Brachos* 1:73): "Anyone who hears another Jew making a *brachos*, any one of the *brachos*, even if he did not hear the *brachah* in its entirety from beginning to end, and even if he is not obligated to make that *brachah*, must answer amen."

Tzitzim Uperachim

Amen V'Amen to Bring the Geulah Closer

(וזכרתי את בריתי יעקוב" (כו ב)

"There are five places where it says יעקוב [with a vav] ..." (Rashi)

The **Rema MiPano** wrote: "How good it is if each person has two friends who listen and answer amen to his *brachos*." And he brings an allusion that "יעקוב" is numerically equivalent to "amen v'amen" (see *Machatzis Hashekel Orach Chaim* 6 9 who cited this practice in his name).

Harav Tzvi Hirsch Meizlish of Chicago explained this allusion as follows:

The **Chasam Sofer** in this *parashah* writes that throughout the exile, the name of Yaakov was written without the *vav*, and in the end of days, again his name will be written יעקוב. Being careful that two people answer amen after a person's *brachos* is an allusion to name יעקוב written in its full form, because it is equivalent to "amen v'amen". This indicates that they are *davening* that Hashem should hasten the final Redemption, and once again the name of Yaakov will be written in its full form.

Asarah Ma'amaros, Ma'amar Chikur Din 2:15; Agra D'Tzvi [on Agra D'Pirka] 59:1

Blessed Is the Man Who Trusts Hashem

"ואיש כי לא יהיה לו גאל והשיגה ידו ומצא כדי גאלתו" (כה כו)

And is someone who does have a redeemer not allowed to redeem his field himself? Why does it not say: "and if he has acquired sufficient means and finds it enough to redeem it [himself]?"

The **Netziv of Volozhin** explains:

The Torah taught us that fact that "lo yihiyeh lo go'el", causes "vehisigah yado." Because the way of the world is that when a person needs help, he casts his lot upon his relatives and friends to help him. In contrast, someone who does not have a relative or a redeemer, then immediately he trusts in Hashem and *davens* to Him, and therefore he merits that he will acquire sufficient means to redeem it.

There is an entire *passuk* on this subject: "Cursed is the man who trusts in man... blessed is the man that trusts Hashem and Hashem is his trust." (*Yirmiyahu* 17:5, 7)

Ha'amek Davar

Caution About Discord in the Bais Medrash

"לא תעשו לכם אלילים...ומקדשי תיראו" (כו: א-ב)

The **Sma"K** writes (*Mitzvah* 11): Each person needs to derive a *kal vachomer* for himself: If the nations of the world stand silently in their places of worship, how much more so we, who stand before the King of all kings HaKadosh Baruch Hu, surely need to conduct ourselves with respect in our places of worship. He adds: "And we find in the *Midrash* and the *Talmud* (see *Yevamos* 96b), and our ancestors told us, and we saw with our own eyes how many shuls have become houses of idol worship because they were treated with laxity."

Harav Avraham Saba added that this is alluded to by the fact that the two *pesukim* "Lo sa'asu lachen elilim" and "umidrashi tira'u" are positioned one near the other. If you don't want your *batei medrash* to become places of idol worship, be careful about respecting them.

Tzeror Hamor

ותתן לנו חיים ארוכים... חיים של טובה

Dear Brothers!

These times, when we all need special protection for our health, and for *brachah* and success in all our endeavors, is a time to be more scrupulous about answering amen. *Chazal* promised (*Yerushalmi Brachos* 2a) anyone who is careful about answering amen clearly and slowly [not too slowly, but in the amount of time it takes to say the words 'K-l Melech ne'eman' (*Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim* 124 8)] a wondrous promise:

"His days and his years are extended in good."

Bney Emunim – Choosing a life of good



Taaneh Emunim

Insights into the Virtues of
Hashkamas Bais Hamedrash

Birchas Hamazon – Requests of Harachaman (13)

Hodu L'Hashem Ki Tov Ki L'Olam Chasdo

The Shalah writes (*Shaar Ha'osios Kedushas Ha'achilah* 181), "And it is good to say after 'Yiru es Hashem kedoshav' the words 'Hodu l'Hashem ki tov...' The source for this is the Avudraham (*Birchas Halechem, Hamotzi* 42), and from his words there it seems that of the four times that this *passuk* is mentioned in *Sefer Tehillim*, the intention here is the one that begins *Perek* 136 in *Tehillim*. This chapter is known as *Hallel HaGadol*, in which we recite 26 statements that conclude with: "Ki l'olam chasdo." The last of them is "nosen lechem lechol basar ki l'olam chasdo, hodu l'Kel Hashamayim ki l'olam chasdo."

The reason why the sages included this *passuk* at the end of *Birchas Hamazon* can be explained according to the *Gemara* (*Pesachim* 118a): "And why is it called 'Hallel Hagadol'?" Rabi Yochanan said: Because HaKadosh Baruch Hu sits On High, and distributes sustenance to every creation." This means that all the great miracles cited in this chapter of *Tehillim*, which has 26 *pesukim* – equivalent to the Name of Havayah – are like an introduction to the final praise listed: "Nosen lechem lechol basar." Because this is the *tachlis* of *emunah* - to recognize His Name in the miracles that are enveloped in nature, that the One On High watches over every creation with *Hashgacha pratis*, and provides sustenance to them Himself, from the tiniest to the largest. (*Maharsha* Vol. I, ibid; *Toras Ha'avodah Vehateshuvah, Pesach* p. 55)

Poseach Es Yadecha Umasbia

After the *passuk* "Hodu L'Hashem," we continue with "Poseach es yadecha umasbia lechol chai ratzon." That is also compared by the sages to *Hallel Hagadol* (*Brachos* 4b), because it mentions this subject that HaKadosh Baruch Hu sustains each and every creation with *Hashgacha pratis*, with the food that suits it and its nature.

As explained in the segments discussing *Birchas Hazan*, this *passuk* is said with great *kavanah*, and it is a great *segulah* for *parnassah*, as the *Pele Yoetz* wrote: "And he should have a lot of *kavanah* in *Birchas Hanehenin*, and especially in *Birchas Hamazon*, to say it with *kavanah*, letter by letter, word by word. And He should have *kavanah* when saying the *passuk* 'Poseach es yadecha' because the principle of *parnassah* is contingent upon these words. (*Pele Yoetz, Parnassah*) If so, these two *segulos* are both found in *Birchas Hamazon*.

As noted, according to *Nusach Sephard*, this *passuk* is added at the end of *Birchas Hazan*, and we say: "Ka'amur: Poseach es yadecha

umasbia lechol chai ratzon." It is important to note that the *Yesod Veshores Ha'avodah* writes according to the early sages that even those who say this *passuk* "at the end of *Birchas Hamazon*, it is incumbent upon the person to say it with great *kavanah*, because this *passuk* is the main principle of the *nusach* of *Birchas Hamazon*."

Baruch Hagever Asher Yivtach B'Hashem

The *passuk* "Baruch hagever asher yivtach b'Hashem vehayah Hashem mivtacho" (*Yirmiyah* 17:7) is unique because the concept of *bitachon* is mentioned there twice. This is because there is a special *brachah* for someone who merits to put his faith in Hashem, and the more he does so, the more Hashem will be a bulwark of faith for him, and will increase His *chesed* to this person. (*Radak* ibid; *Sfas Emes Terumah* 5631 in the name of the *Chiddushei Harim*, and see *Panim Yafos Beshalach*, Mishor Edition, p. 65)

Someone once came to the *tzaddik* Harav Chai Moshe Mandel and complained that he was mired in debt and he could not stand it anymore. The Rav quoted this *passuk* and said: Do you know why it says 'gever'? Because indeed, in order to trust Hashem one needs special *gevurah*, and the *passuk* is teaching us that even someone who trusts in Hashem and does not see a *yeshuah* must strengthen himself (be *misgaber*) and trust Hashem even more, and that is how his *yeshuah* will happen. (*Hera' L'Einav* p. 120)

Velo Ra'isi Tzaddik Ne'ezav

The next *passuk*, "Na'ar hayisi gam zakanti velo ra'isi tzaddik ne'ezav vezaro mevakesh lachem" (*Tehillim* 37:25), is a testimony from the *sar*, the Heavenly angel, that is appointed over the world (*Yevamos* 16b, and see there *Tosafos* beginning with 'passuk'). He says that since creation, he did not see a *tzaddik* who was abandoned without any assistance or support, and moreover, that Hashem will not leave his children either in the *tzaddik's* merit.

It seems that this *passuk* is a continuation of the *passuk* stated before; it also mentions that the *tzaddik* that trusts in Hashem is guaranteed to have *parnassah*. This is a fact that can be examined since the creation of the world until now, as it says (*Tehillim* 9:11): "Veyivtechu becha yodei Shemecha" – and where will they get the strength to do this? "Ki lo azavta dorshecha Hashem." (See *Midrash Tehillim* ibid; *Yosef Tehillos* [Chida] ibid)

Maaseh Emunim

Pearls and Insights on
Birchas Hamazon

A 'Bais Hamikdash' in Thailand

The border policeman at the airport in Bangkok, Thailand, rubbed his eyes in disbelief. The elderly man standing before him, with the black clothes and kind face, looked quite like an angel. He had never seen anything like this person among the millions of people that had passed by him over the years that he had been working there. The man himself seemed just as taken aback by his surroundings, amidst the colorful masses of backpackers from all over the world. The *tzaddik* Harav Shachne Zohn, a *talmid* of Harav Baruch Ber Leibowitz, *zt"l*, who merited to bask in the presence of the Chofetz Chaim, served for many years as the Rosh Yeshivah in Torah Vodaas in New York. Even after he moved to Eretz Yisrael, he would return to visit his *talmidim* a number of times a year.

A few days before Rosh Hashanah 5736/1976, Rav Shachne was on his way back from America to Eretz Yisrael, after spending a few weeks with his *talmidim*. At the time, there were no direct flights between Israel and the United States. He had to take a flight that made a stopover in London, and then board a connecting flight to Eretz Yisrael.

Heaven ordained it and Rav Shachne, who was hard of hearing, missed the captain's announcement at the stopover and remained on the plane. Thus, he found himself continuing with the rest of the passengers to its final destination – Thailand.

After a long journey, with a number of additional stops, including one in a hostile Arab country where the plane filled with Arabs, and the cabin crew who worried for Rav Shachne's welfare had to cover him with blankets, the plane landed in Thailand.

Rav Shachne landed in this truly foreign land a day before Rosh Hashanah without knowing where he would be going. But as he always had done, he bowed his head and calmly accepted the decree, and this time as well, despite his original alarm, he trusted that Hashem would not leave him.

Assuming there was no way to get back to Eretz Yisrael in time for Rosh Hashanah, he left the airport. Passersby helped him find his way to the head of the Jewish community in Thailand, Mr. Jamal, who also served as the president of the Jewish shul there.

The man was stunned to see such a venerable looking Yid at his door. During the conversation, Rav Shachne learned that while the Jewish community in Bangkok was not Reform, its members were far from Yiddishkeit. Therefore, they did not sit separately in shul, as is the *halachah*.

That being the case, Rav Shachne informed his host that he would have to *daven* alone at his lodgings, and that is what he did. He emerged only to listen to *Tekias Shofar*, but he stood outside and listened through the window.

His host, who saw him through the window, came out and pleaded tearfully for him to come inside. Rav Shachne acceded to the request and entered. The congregants, who were surprised to see a Jew dressed in black in the shul, and were impressed by his reverent appearance, asked him to speak, a request he could not refuse.

With tears rolling down his

cheeks, Reb Shachne turned to the congregants and spoke to them from the depths of his heart:

"You are surely wondering why a Jew like me is only coming to shul now. In order to explain this, I have to explain to you first what a 'bais knesses' is from my point of view." Rav Shachne began to describe at length the Bais Hamikdash, and the tremendous benefit that Am Yisrael had in its merit. Then he said:

"After the Bais Hamikdash was destroyed, the *batei knesses* were established in its place, and they are like a 'Bais Mikdash me'at'. If so, surely you will agree with me that the sanctity in the *bais knesses* has to be equal to that of the Bais Hamikdash. In the Bais Hamikdash there was an *ezras nashim*, and therefore, a 'Bais Mikdash me'at' is not worthy of its name when men and women are seated together. Therefore, I could not *daven* with you."

His listeners were silent upon hearing these pericing words, and Rav Shachne continued tearfully: "If you want to do a favor for an elderly Jew who came here because of a Divine 'mistake', please, sit separately, as the *halachah* requires, and then it will become a 'Bais Mikdash me'at' and I will be able to *daven Mussaf* with you."

One of the congregants tried to object, but he was quickly silenced by his friends. Reb Shachne's host, Mr. Jamal, exercised his authority and turned to the others with a request to comply with the Rav's plea. Slowly, the congregation moved apart, and Reb Shachne was able to remain for *Mussaf*.

Throughout the Yom Tov and Shabbos that followed, Rav Shachne acceded to the requests of the shul members to speak a number of times. He included a number of concepts that are basic foundations for the purity of Am Yisrael. He spoke gently, but in a confident manner, and his words fell on an accepting ears. The community felt very uplifted, and in fact, on Motzaei Shabbos, dozens of them arrived at the home of Mr. Jamal. In front of the Rav they pledged to observe the fundamentals of Yiddishkeit. They even asked Rav Shachne to draw up a written pledge for them, and signed it.

A few days later, Reb Shachne returned home. With his great modesty, he did not tell his family about what had happened in the place where he had spent Rosh Hashanah. The story may have remained forever untold if not for a knock at the door of his home a few years later. Standing there were a number of *bachurim*, *baalei teshuvah* from Yeshivas Ohr Sameach. They asked the Rebbetzin to please host them for a Shabbos meal. When she asked where they knew the Rav from, they replied, "From Thailand." And that's how the story was told.

Apparently the Rav's surprise visit and his speeches in the shul there, planted the seeds of Torah among the distant community members, and a few of the youngsters were impressed enough that they took upon themselves the yoke of *mitzvos* as a result.

Heard from his son, Rav Elchanan Tzvi, *shlita*, *Ta'ut Goralit Supplement*, Pesach 5780

Michtavei Emunim

Letters from our Loyal Readers

Dear Bney Emunim,

I am happy to be among those who strengthen the answering of amen and are strengthened by it. I have the privilege of hearing *Birchos Hashachar* a few times each day from several people, and that is how I begin my day by accumulating ninety amens.

I wanted to share with you a beautiful *remez* that I recently heard from a *talmid chacham* who says *Birchas Hashachar* for me each day. It is also a tremendous *chizuk* for these times. At the end of the *tefillah* of *Yekum Purkan*, we say "מרן די בשמיא יהא בסעדון כלל" "מרן די בשמיא יהא בסעדון כלל" and the acronym of the first letter of each word is equivalent to amen. In order for it to be clear that we merit special support from Above at every moment in the merit of answering amen, we then add two words to this *passuk*, "Venomar amen."

S.G. - Yerushalayim