

# Vechol Maaminim

"A Weekly Leaflet From 'Bnei Emunim"



329

PARASHAS EMOR

תש"פ

## IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

## Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

### The "Heavy Load" of Birkas Moadecha

"והשיאו אותם עון אשמה באכלם את קדשיהם" (כב טז)

"Ve'hisu osam" – They burden themselves – they themselves will bear the sin when they eat their holy things. (Rashi)

Based on Rashi's words that the word "ve'hisu" means burdening and carrying, Harav Yechiel Michel Feinstein explained the words of our request in Mussaf of Shalosh Regalim: "*Vehasienu Hashem Elokeinu es birkas moadecha lechaim uleshalom...*" – Ribbono shel Olam: Give us the merit of having an abundance of brachos from the Moadim bestowed upon us, until we will be burdened with the load of the "birkas moadecha".

Sar HaTorah, p. 356

### The Segulos of the Shabbos Tefillos

"שור או כשב או עז...ומיום השמיני והלאה ירצה לקרבן אשה לה" (כב כז)

"HaKadosh Baruch Hu said: Do not bring before Me a korban until it goes through a Shabbos." (Vayikra Rabbah 27:10)

Based on this Midrash, the Shibbolei Haleket reconciled a question that arises in the words of Mussaf of Shabbos: "Tikanta Shabbos ratzisa korbanoseha" – Does Hashem want only the korbanos of Shabbos? In fact, however, it means all the korbanos, as the korban does not rise On High willingly until it goes through a Shabbos, therefore we say "ratzisa korbanoseha", as explained in this passuk, that after Shabbos,

### Ninety Amens Corresponding to Ninety Blemishes

"כל איש אשר בו מום מזרע אהרן הכהן לא יגש להקריב את אשי ה' מום בו את לחם אלקיו לא יגש להקריב" (כא כא)

The Rambam (Bi'as Mikdash 8 1) lists ninety different blemishes that disqualify the Kohein who has them from serving in the Bais Hamikdash.

The Rav of Ramat Elchanan, Harav Yitzchak Silberstein, shlita, adds: The Rokeach (Hilchos Brachos 320) wrote that the establishment of 100 brachos was made to save Am Yisrael from the one hundred curses mentioned in the Torah. According to this, one can say that the reason for the takanah to answer 90 amens a day is to save us from the ninety blemishes that disqualify a Kohein.

The record keepers added a remez for this: המום is numerically equivalent to amen – 91.

Kovetz Shu"t printed at the end of Sefer Aleinu Leshabeach, Vol. III, Teshuvah 78; Me'oros Hadaf Hayomi Bechoros 43a

The takanah to answer ninety amens a day is cited in the Zohar HaKadosh (Tikkunei Zohar Chadash 133 1). The Rema MiPano was asked if upholding this takanah is specifically for amens answered to brachos or if the number can include amens for Kaddish. He replied: The Zohar (see there) says that the daily quota for holy things is alluded to in the word "צדיק" 90 – amens, 4 times Kedushah, 10 Kaddish and 100 brachos. So we see here that Kaddish is counted separately, which indicates that the ninety amens should be specifically for brachos.

When someone asked how it is possible to accrue 90 amens to brachos each day, the Rema MiPano suggested that each person should recite Birchos Hashachar in front of another person, and when someone hears Birchos Hashachar from a number of people he can reach the requisite number of 90 amens established by Chazal.

Shu"t HaRema MiPano 109; Nefesh Shimshon on the Siddur Hatefillah, p. 138

"yeiratzeh" it will be wanted as a korban.

The Rebbe Harav Moshe Yechiel of Ozherov added:

In light of this we can explain that "ratzisa korbanoseha" applies to the korbanos of Shabbos. Because if Shabbos helps the korban that is not brought on that day be accepted willingly, how much more so does it help a korban that is brought on Shabbos, "because the Shabbos adds a special element of kedushas Shabbos to the korban." We can learn from this that the tefillos of Shabbos that were established in place of the korbanos have a segulah to be accepted more than the tefillos of weekday.

Shibbolei Haleket, 82; Eish Dos Vol. VII p. 330

### One Who Departs from the Tzibbur - Desecrates the Name of Hashem

"ולא תחללו את שם קדשי ונקדשתי בתוך בני ישראל אני ה' מקדשכם" (שם)

The Chasam Sofer explained:

Even when there are ten in the shul, and the mitzvah of "venikdashiti besoch Bnei Yisrael" is fulfilled without you, you should not exempt yourself from davening with a minyan with the claim that Hashem's Name is sanctified even if you daven alone. This is because the mitzvah of "venikdashiti" is not a Divine need; rather it is for our benefit, so that the words "Ani Hashem Mekadishchem" can be fulfilled through us. One who refrains from davening with a tzibbur shows that he does not want this sanctity and thus he transgresses "velo sechallelu es Shem Kodshi."

Drashos Chasam Sofer Vol. II, 268 2

### הוא ימליץ טוב בעדינו, אדונינו בר יוחאי

All of Am Yisrael's eyes are turned to the Asra Kaddisha in Meron, which is currently closed and desolate because of the situation. The heart of every Jew is fervently yearning and wondering: Will we be able to visit the tziyun of Rashbi on Lag BaOmer?!

Based on the current status, going to Meron is not going to be possible... So who will advocate for us?!

If we undertake to be careful about answering amen – that mitzvah that Rashbi mentions numerous times in the Zohar HaKadosh, we will surely merit that he should advocate for us and for all of Klal Yisrael, and the zealous battle to uphold religion should exempt us from the punishment of the mageifah that we are all yearning for Hashem to bring to an end.

Following are a few selected concepts that Rashbi writes in the Zohar about the power of answering mane:

- In the merit of answering amen with kavanah, the Gates of Blessing are opened and good is bestowed in abundance upon all the worlds. (Vayeilech 285 2)
- One who answers amen with kavanah merits to have his tefillos answered and will be spared from his troubles. (ibid)
- The brachah that is answered by amen is a complete brachah; one who makes such a brachah is considered to have sent a perfect gift to the King of the World. (Eikev 271 1)
- One who answers amen with kavanah, is described by the passuk (Shmuel I, 2:30): "Ki mechabdai achabed" (Vayeilech 285 1)
- Anyone who answers amen with all his might has his decrees of seventy years torn up. (Tikkunei Zohar 40 1)
- One who answers amen merits a special shemirah, as it says (Tehillim 31:24): "Emunim notzer Hashem." (Vayeilech 286 1)

Bnei Emunim – answering amen according to halachah, aloud and with kavanah





**Birchas Hamazon – Requests of HaRachaman (12)**

**Ending Birchas Hamazon With  
Pesukim of Bitachon**

We conclude Birchas Hamazon with the brachah of peace – "oseh shalom bimromav Hu ya'aseh shalom aleinu v'al kol Yisrael v'imru amen." As Chazal says (Maseches Derech Eretz, Perek Shalom, 4 and see Avudraham p. 326): "Shalom is so great that all the brachos and tefillos sign off with shalom," and therefore, it has been an early practice (see *Machzor Vitri* 83; *Shelah Sha'ar Ha'osiyos* 100 – *Kedushas Ha'achilah*) to add a series of seven *pesukim* that include words of *mussar* that are apt for this time.

The first two *pesukim*, "Yiru es Hashem kedoshav ki ein machsor li'yereiv, kefirim rashu ve'raevu vedorshei Hashem lo yachseru kol tov" are from *Tehillim* (34 10-11). They describe the praise of the *middah* of *bitachon*, and how good it is for a person who trusts in Hashem, and on the contrary, what is the fate of one who trusts only himself and his strength.

From these *pesukim* we can learn a lot of concepts about acquiring the *middah* of *bitachon*, which we also expressed at the end of the brachah of *Hatov Vehameitiv*, by saying, "Hu heitiv, Hu meitiv, Hu yeitiv lanu...Hu yigmelenu la'ad." There are many commentaries brought by Chazal, and we will cite some of them.

**A Special Call to "Kedoshim"**

The simple meaning of the *passuk* is: Fear Hashem, *kedoshav* [those who leave the desires of this world], and do not fear that you will lack for bread, because HaKadosh Baruch Hu Himself will provide you as much as you need. Take a lesson from the fact that even the *kefirim* [the lions and the people who resemble them by being wealthy and very confident in their wealth (*Metzudas Dovid*)], who are sure that they will find their sustenance with their strength and power. Often they are poor and hungry and do not find food, while in contrast those who seek Hashem and trust only Him will never lack from the good of the world. (Based on *Radak, Tehillim* 34:10-11).

The *passuk* describes the big difference between the *tzaddikim* and the *reshaim*. The *tzaddikim* always fear Hashem, both when they lack for bread, and when they lack for nothing. No matter what, they always have the mention of Hashem and His good on their lips. In contrast, the wicked remember Hashem only when they get to a situation of poverty and hunger, and while they are satiated, they are described by the words "Vayishman yeshurun vayivat."

That is what the *passuk* is praising: "Yiru es Hashem kedoshav, ki [even when] there is no lack for those who fear Him." Unlike the "kefirim" – the evil ones, who only when

they "are in poverty and hunger" then they fear Hashem. (*Haggadah Shel Pesach Yalkut Shimoni*)

**Special Warning for "Kedoshav"**

We need to understand: If the *passuk* is talking to the "kedoshav", then why do they need to be warned to "yiru es Hashem"? Is it possible that the holy ones do not fear Hashem? Harav Shmuel Ehrenfeld, the Rav of Mattersdorf and the grandson of the Chasam Sofer, explained: There are people who sanctify themselves by eschewing luxuries and suffice with bread and water in order to afflict their bodies. They are called *kedoshav*. But despite the fact that they keep this up for a long time, they still constantly feel the lack, and their efforts to be holy are very difficult for them. This is what the *passuk* is warning: "Yiru es Hashem kedoshav," – do not sanctify yourselves before preceding it with *Yiras Shamayim*. Only if you first acquire the *middah* of *Yiras Shamayim* – which leads to *ahavas Hashem*, then you will really feel "that there is no lack for those who fear Him." (*Chasan Sofer, Mikneh Vekinyanim, Pesichah* p. 45)

It is further explained that this *passuk* is addressing Klal Yisrael as a whole, and calls them "kedoshav" so that through this praise their hearts will be softened to accept the rebuke. That is why he also adds a description of the benefit that will arise for them from this *yiras Hashem*: "Ki ein machsor li'yereiv." This teaches us the right way to rebuke in a way that the words will be accepted, in a soft, pleasant language, while focusing on the good. That is how one can be sure that the words will fall on attentive ears. (*Masores Habris Hagadol* [Rav M. Anzil, Mantova 5382] 928).

**The Reward of Yirah  
Is Given in its Entirety**

The *Kol Aryeh* explained the *passuk* according to a *drash* of Chazal (*Vayikra Rabbah* 27 2) from the *passuk* in *Iyov* (41:3): "Mi hikkidmani v'ashalem" – that in essence, a person should not be worthy of reward, because HaKadosh Baruch Hu is always "makdimo" – first He does the *chessed*, by building him a home, and then commands him to put a *mezuzah*. First He provides a person with clothes to wear, and only then commanded that the person put *tzitzis* on the clothes. Therefore, the reward given for it is not the maximum. But the entire mitzvah of *yirah* is given to the person, as Chazal said (*Brachos* 33b): "Hakol bi'Yedei Shamayim – except for *yiras Shamayim*." That is why there is no lack in the reward given for it. (*Haggadah Shel Pesach, Kol Aryeh*)

**Al Kiddush Hashem, Amidst Prayer**

The Holocaust era was an extraordinary challenge of *emunah* for our nation. We find many stories of that time about simple people, as well as eminent personalities, leaders who marched to their deaths with their *emunah* and adherence to Hashem and His *mitzvos* as strong and pure as ever. Until that final moment of their lives, they did not deviate one iota from the Torah and its dictates.

Such was the story of Harav Menachem Mendel Alter, Hy"d, the Rav of Kalish and the younger son of the Sfas Emes of Ger. The Rav was renowned among Polish Jewry as a man of wisdom, a brilliant Torah personality and a faithful leader of his flock.

Already as a young man, he established and directed the large yeshivah in Ger, where hundreds of *talmidim* learned under the aegis of his father, the Sfas Emes, zy"a. Subsequently, he established various other initiatives for the benefit of the Polish Torah community. At a relatively young age, he became Rav of the large city of Pabianice.

While serving as the Rav, his energetic nature and many talents came to the fore. He established a number of *takanos* for the public and for individuals, including those that generated indignation among the wealthy and dignified members of the community. Until his arrival, they had allowed themselves to act as they pleased, even when it came on the account of the public. But despite just becoming Rav, Reb Mendel made no effort to curry favor with them.

Reb Mendel did not limit his influence to Pabianice; he later served as the chairman of Agudas Harabbanim of Poland, and in this capacity as well, he was the voice of Torah faithful Judaism. He worked fearlessly on behalf of Polish Jews, and even when his directives did not go hand in hand with the position of the anti-Semitic government that ruled at the time. This was especially evident regarding the laws banning *shechitah* and the tax imposed on kosher fish that were intended to directly harm the three and a half million Polish Jews, who were the biggest consumers of these products. Rav Mendel issued a call to Polish Jews that until further notice, they should not use any fish and meat for Shabbos. Instead, they should use other products, and donate the money they saved as a result to the needy. This was a clear declaration of war on the Polish government, which wanted to enrich its coffers from these taxes. But Rav Mendel did not pay this any heed.

In 5693/1934, Reb Mendel was appointed as the Rav of Kalish, a large, prestigious city. In this position as well, he continued

his unique manner of leadership, which manifested his concern for the public and for each individual.

His noble spirit and fortitude became even more salient in the Holocaust years, which he spent in the ghettos and camps, until he was led, with his community, to the slaughter in Treblinka.

There were many testimonies about his unique leadership in those stormy days. Record keepers of the time documented his final moments, during which he was enveloped in glory and strength:

When he was taken to his death, Reb Mendel turned to the hundreds of Jews around him and said: "Dear, Beloved Yidden! You are now going to merit to follow the age old path that holy, pure people have been treading for many eons, from *Akeidas Yitzchak* to this day. It is the path of *Kiddush Hashem* and *mesirus nefesh*. Do you know why we are being taken to the *akeidah*? Because we are Yidden, called in the Name of HaKadosh Baruch Hu – that is our only 'sin.'

"Dear Yidden! Let us not allow ourselves to miss this moment in haste and panic. Think about what lies ahead. Think about the mitzvah you are about to fulfill in the next few minutes, and fulfill it with solemnity and calm, as is worthy for such a lofty mitzvah. Let us declare together: '*Hineni muchan umezuman limsor atzmi ubesari...*' to the four types of deaths and all the tortures, for the Sake of His Name!"

Utter silence reigned. Hundreds of pairs of eyes were fixed on the figure in front of them, and his fiery expression. Suddenly, he said calmly: "If someone can bring me water, I will give him half of my share in *Olam Haba*!"

One of the Jewish *kapos*, a man who was distant from Torah and mitzvah, understood that the Rav needed water to drink. Something inside him moved, and he hurried to bring a cup of water. But to his surprise, instead of drinking the water, the Rav washed his hands and quickly recited the *Viduy*, with tears and sobs. The entire community joined him with mounting emotion, until their voice reached a heartrending crescendo.

At that moment, the Nazi commander seemed to awaken and began shrieking at them. "What is this here? A synagogue??" And he screamed at his underlings to open fire. A few seconds later, none of those Yidden remained alive.

In this wondrous way – later related by a survivor, the life of the Kalisher Rav came to an end. *Hashem Yikom damo*.

*Bikrovai Ekadesh* p. 70

Dear Readers - Dear Bnei Emunim,

I want to share with you an idea I had about answering amen, which is especially apt for these days:

Reciting the *Ketoress* is known as a *segulah* to halt a plague [the source of this is in the *Zohar Hakadosh Va'eira* 100 2]. I noticed something amazing: At the end of *Tefillas Shacharis* we say *Parashas Haketoress*, and we precede it with "Ein K'Elokeinu...Mi K'Elokeinu...Nodeh L'Elokeinu..." which are an acronym for amen. It is possible that this is to allude to us that if we want to halt the *mageifah*, we have to recognize that "ein k'Elokeinu" – which is a fundamental that is expressed by saying *brachos* and answering amen with *kavanah*.

Respectfully,  
T.Y.R. - Jerusalem