

Ve'chol Maaminim

"A Weekly Leaflet From 'Bnei Emunim"



347

PARASHAS KISAVO

תש"פ

IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

The Time of a Mitzvah Is an *Eis Ratzon*

"השקפה ממעון קדשך מן השמים וברך את עמך את ישראל" (כו טו)

Chazal (*Tosefta Bikkurim* 5 14) learn from this *passuk*: "When people are engaged in a mitzvah, their mouths are open in *tefillah* to Hashem."

Harav Shmuel Avigdor Rabinowitz – *Tosfa'ah* explained that based on this, Chazal explain that when a person fulfills the mitzvah of *Viduy Ma'asros*, he offers a *tefillah* that does not seem connected to the *Viduy* – *Hashkifah mim'on kodshecha*. They learn from this that the time of doing a mitzvah is an *eis ratzon* that is auspicious for prayer.

Thus, the *Chofetz Chaim* explains the reason why the requests of *Harachaman* are inserted in *Birchas Hamazon*. After we fulfill the mitzvas *aseh d'Oraisa* of *Birchas Hamazon*, it is a time to ask Hashem about many other matters that we need.

Minchas Bikkurim, Tosefta Bikkurim 5 14;
Chofetz Chaim Al HaTorah

Aseres Hadibros Every Day

"היום הזה ה' אלקיך מצוך לעשות את החקים האלה" (כו טז)

The emphasis of the *passuk*, "*hayom hazeh*," is explained by Chazal (*Tanchuma* 1, cited in *Rashi*): "Each day the Torah should be beloved to you as if you received it today from Har Sinai."

Based on this, Harav Alexander Sender Schorr, author of *Tevuos Shor*, explained the practice brought down in *Shulchan Aruch* (*Orach Chaim* 1 5) that each individual should recite the *Aseres Hadibros* each day. Because we were commanded to love the Torah as though we received it today, it is fitting that we should read the mitzvos of the Torah each day so that we can feel as though we received them that day. The *Aseres Hadibros* encompass all the 613 mitzvos (see *Rashi Shemos* 24:12 in the name of the *Rasag*), and by saying them, it is considered as

Merits to Answer Amen in Olam Haba

"וענו כל העם ואמרו אמן" (כו טו)

The *Midrash Rabbah* in this *parashah* (7 1) says: "Rabi Yudin said anyone who answers amen in this world merits to answer amen *l'Asid Lavo*."

Harav Eliyahu Hakohein Ha'itamari, author of *Shevet Mussar*, explains:

There is a *chiddush* in the words of Rabi Yudin: "*Kol ha'oneh amen*" – meaning, someone who answered amen in this world even one time, and even if he mistakenly did not answer in accordance with *halachah*, he merits as a reward to answer amen in the World to Come. How much more so is that the case for someone who is careful to answer amen according to *halachah* at every opportunity – and his reward is surely boundless.

Rav Eliyahu continues to explain by way of *drash*: The holy Ari revealed (*Eitz Hada'as Tov, Ki Seitzei*) that when a person feels a bond with a certain mitzvah, and favors it, then he should conclude that being strict about this mitzvah is his purpose in this world. Therefore, it behooves him to always pay attention to fulfill that mitzvah with utmost care. That is what this *Midrash* alludes to: "Anyone who answers amen in this world," meaning whoever cleaves to the mitzvah of answering amen in this world, that is a sign that it is his purpose here. As such, when his time comes he will merit "to answer amen *l'Asid Lavo*" and he will not need to be returned to this world, because he has carried out his mission.

Chut Shel Chessed

though we are reviewing all the mitzvos of the Torah.

Bechor Shor, Brachos 12a

The Greatness of Am Yisrael on Shabbos

"את ה' האמרת היום להיות לך לאלקים...וה' האמירך היום" (כו יז-יח)

The *Ohr Zarua* cites the *Midrash* that during the six days of the week, the Ministering Angels sing praise to HaKadosh Baruch Hu, while on Shabbos, He chooses specifically the song of Am Yisrael. Thus he explains the reason why in the *tefillos* of Shabbos we add passages of praise and many *piyutim*. It is because on this day, preference is given for the song of Yisrael over the song of the angels. He adds that this *passuk* alludes to that: "*Es Hashem he'emarta hayom*" – Yisrael expound in praise of their Creator on Shabbos because "*v'Hashem he'emircha hayom*" – on this day, HaKadosh Baruch Hu chooses their song over the song of the Ministering Angels.

The Rebbe Harav Moshe Yechiel of Ozherov added that the words היום האמרת are numerically equivalent to השבת – and from here, the *passuk* alludes to the greatness of Am Yisrael on Shabbos. As the *Ohr Zarua* says, this is expressed by the preference to their song over the song of the Angels.

Ohr Zarua, Shabbos 42 4; *Be'er Moshe* p. 773

Complete Words Will Build the Mizbeach

"אבנים שלמות תבנה את מזבח ה' אלקיך" (כו ו)

From this *passuk* we can derive an allusion to the obligation of a person, especially a *shaliach tzibbur*, to enunciate the words of davening so that they are complete.

The word מזבח is numerically equivalent to 57, which is the number of *brachos* recited each day in the three *tefillos* of *Shemoneh Esrei* [each one of which is 19 *brachos*]. The Torah instructs us: "complete stones you should build" – you must fully express "the Mizbeach of Hashem" – the words of the *tefillos* that are alluded to in "Mizbeach" – and were established to correspond to the *Tamid* that was brought on the Mizbeach (*Brachos* 26b).

Yalkut Me'am Loez

This coming Wednesday, 20 Elul, marks the *yahrtzeit* of the Gaavad of Yerushalayim, Harav Moshe Aryeh Freund, *zt"l*, who often expounded about the virtue of answering amen. He wrote in his *sefer Ateres Yehoshua* (*Parashas Ha'azinu*):

Chazal say (*Shir Hashirim Rabbah* 5 3): "HaKadosh Baruch Hu said to Yisrael: My son, open for me one small opening of *teshuvah* the size of the opening of a needle and I will open for you an opening that carriages will be able to enter through." HaKadosh Baruch Hu asks us for something easy and small like the opening of a needle – being careful about answering amen according to *halachah*. As a reward for doing so, from Above, the gates of *brachos* and *yeshuos* will be opened.

Amen. One word, three letters, an abundance of yeshuos.



The Breisa of Eilu Devarim (2)

Hashkamas Bais Hamedrash
Shacharis V'Arvis

Rising in the morning is such an important part of a Jew's life, to the extent that the first *halachah* in *Shulchan Aruch* addresses this matter: "One should strengthen himself like a lion to stand up in the morning to serve his Creator – and he should rise before daybreak." The *hashkamah* referenced in this *Breisa* means to come to the *bais medrash* early both in the morning and in the evening (*Siddur Tzelosa d'Avraham* p. 16). As Rabi Yehoshua ben Levi told his sons (*Brachos* 8a): "Come early to the *bais knesses* and leave late, so that you should live long lives."

Some point out regarding this explanation that we do not find anywhere that the term "*hashkamah*" is used regarding *Arvis*, and it should have said "*Hashkamas v'ha'aravais bais hamedrash Shacharis v'Arvis*." As we say in the *tefillah* of *L'Olam Yehei Adam*: "Fortunate are we for being *maskimim* and *ma'arivim* in the shuls and *batei medrash*." The *Sfas Emes* explains that indeed, the word "*hashkamah*" applies only to *Shacharis*, and the *Tanna* means to teach us that the mitzvah of rising early and going to the *bais medrash* for *Shacharis* already begins at *Arvis* – from the fact that a person does not go to sleep late, so that he can rise early to serve his Creator. (*Rosh Golas Ariel*, Vol. I p. 274)

The *Reishis Chochmah* (*Totzaos Chaim* 40) writes beautiful things about the need to go as early as possible to shul: "A person should always try to come early to shul, even if he is not from the first ten people, because anyone who comes early is closer to the root of the *kedushah*..."

Iyun Tefillah

Chazal call *tefillah* "*avodah shebalev*," service of the heart (*Taanis* 2a), because *kavanah* in the heart is a necessary condition of *tefillah*. Regarding this, the *Ramban* says in his renowned letter to his son: "And remove all the matters of the world from your heart during the time of *tefillah* and prepare your heart before HaKadosh Baruch Hu, purify your thoughts, and think of the words before you emit them from your mouth... Your *tefillah* will be pure and clean and with concentration and accepted before Hashem, as it says (*Tehillim* 10:17) '*tachin libam takshiv oznecha*, may You prepare their heart, may Your ear listen.'"

Some explain that *tefillah* is called service of the heart because through it, a person remembers to fulfill the *mitzvos* that are dependent on the heart. As the six constant *mitzvos* that the *Sefer Hachinuch* lists (in the introduction), among which are *emunas Hashem*, *Yichud Hashem*, and love and fear of Hashem. Because the mitzvah is dependent on the heart, if it is not accompanied by something practical it may be forgotten. As the *Rambam* says (*Moreh Nevuchim* 2 31): "[Regarding] the opinions, if there will not be action to establish them – they will not remain." That is why *tefillah* is called *avodah shebalev*, meaning an action through which we remember to fulfill the *mitzvos* that are dependent on the heart (*Divrei Shaul*, *Eikev*, *Mahadura Kama*). Of course, fulfilling these *mitzvos* during the *tefillah* can only be merited by someone who davens with pure *kavanah*.

Iyun tefillah here means *tefillah* with *kavanah* (*Rashi Shabbos* 127a beginning with '*v'iyun*'). The *Tanna* writes that one who fulfills the mitzvah of *tefillah b'iyun* and *kavanah* of the heart reaps the rewards of this mitzvah in this world and in the World to Come. The *Riva* (*Rosh Hashanah* 16b) explains: *Tefillah* is comprised of praise and gratitude to Hashem and of requests. A person receives the reward for the former in the World to Come, while the reward for his requests are answered in this world, when those requests are accepted and granted.

Bringing Peace Between
Man and His Friend

Chazal say (*Maseches Derech Eretz Perek*

Shalom Halachah 4): "Peace is very great, because in every mitzvah where the Torah writes '*ki*' – '*ki sireh*...' (*Shemos* 23:5); '*ki sifga*...' (ibid 4); '*Kiyikarei*...' (*Devarim* 22:6) '*ki sivneh*...' – means that when the mitzvah comes to you, you need to do it [but you are not commanded to pursue it.] But regarding peace it says (*Tehillim* 34:15): '*Bakesh shalom veradfeihu*' – ask for it in your place and pursue it in another place."

The *passuk* "*bakesh shalom veradfeihu*" is the source of the mitzvah of 'bringing peace between a person and his friend' (*Yerushalmi Peah* 1 1). The meaning of '*veradfeihu*' is that a person must try and bring peace in every argument, even when the warring sides are not interested in it (*Tiferes Yisrael* ibid). Moreover, if someone brings peace between two sides, and they begin fighting with one another again, he cannot pull back and he must pursue peace and try other ways to bring peace to them. (*Peirush Hakoseiv*, ibid)

Vesalmud Torah Kenegged Kulam

It says in *Maseches Kiddushin* (40b) that *Chazal* were asked if Torah learning [*talmud*] is preferable, or if performing its *mitzvos* [*ma'aseh*] is a higher priority. "Rabi Tarfon answered: '*ma'aseh*' is greater. Rabi Akiva said *talmud* is greater. They all answered and said *talmud* is greater, because learning brings about action."

Based on this, the *Amoraim* differ (*Yerushalmi Peah* ibid) on the explanation of this *mishnah* of *Vesalmud Torah kenegged kulam*. One who thinks like Rabi Tarfon, that fulfilling the *mitzvos* is more important than learning Torah explains that Torah learning is equal to all the enjoyments of this world, as it says (*Mishlei* 3:15): "*Yekarah hie mipnimim vechol chafatzecha lo yishvu bah*, it is more precious than pearls, and all your desirable things cannot be compared to it." One who thinks like Rabi Akiva, that *talmud* is greater, explains simply that *talmud Torah* is equivalent to all the *mitzvos*, because it is in itself a mitzvah. In addition, it brings one to fulfill other *mitzvos* (*Ra"sh* [Rav Shlomo] *Sirilio* ibid). Therefore, if a person is presented with the mitzvah of learning Torah or with another mitzvah that can be done through others, he should not stop learning. But if there is no one else to do the other mitzvah, he should do it, and then go back to learning (*Rambam Talmud Torah* 3, 3-4)

Eilu devarim – *mitzvos she'ein lahem shiur* that is specified in the Torah: *hapeah* – part of the crop that the Torah commanded to leave for the poor during the harvest, *vehabikkurim* – the first of the fruits that ripen from the *Shivas Haminim* that the Torah commanded should be taken to Yerushalayim and given to the *Kohanim*, *vehare'ayon* during the time that the *Bais Hamikdash* stood each Jew was obligated to be seen in the *Bais Hamikdash* during the Three Regalim, and to bring with him a *Korban Olas Re'iyah*, *u'gemilus chassadim* – to be good to others and to help them, *vesalmud Torah*.

Eilu devarim she'adam ochel peiroseihen – he receives a reward for fulfilling them *b'Olam Haze*, *vehakeren kayemes* – the main reward is preserved *lo'Olam Haba*, *v'eilu hein: kibbud av v'eim, ugemilus chassadim, vehashkamas* – arriving early to *Bais Hamedrash Shacharis V'Arvis* *vehachnassas orchim* into his home and providing for their needs, *ubikur cholim* – visiting the sick, and caring for their needs and praying on his behalf, *vehachnassas kallah* – to escort her to the *chuppah* and to provide for the needs of her marriage, *ulevayas hameis* who is being brought to burial, *v'iyun tefillah* – to concentrate during davening *vehava'as shalom bein adam lachaveiro* [ubein ish l'isho] *vesalmud Torah* is equal *kenegged kulam* – to all the *mitzvos*, because through learning Torah all merits to all the *mitzvos*.

The Brachah That Led to Brachah

Corona has brought numerous and varied challenges to Jewish families all over the world. Many of these challenges have never been experienced before, and a substantial number of them center around *parnassah* matters. Earning a livelihood is as difficult as splitting the sea since we were decreed that 'by the sweat of your brow you shall eat bread.' But in times like this, this challenge has become ever more difficult. Following is a letter that was recently publicized in America, with the story of one of many that took place during this period. Fulfilling a simple and readily available piece of advice helped this person, with *siyata diShmaya*, get through this crisis.

The person to whom this story happened wrote:

Among the multitudes of our brethren whose livelihood has been affected during this time, my *parnassah* suffered as well. In normal times, I am a sought after violin player who appears each evening either as part of an orchestra or alone. This job enables me to provide for my family comfortably, *baruch Hashem*. But it all ended when corona arrived: weddings were held on a drastically scaled down level, dinners are done through the phone, and I remained without work. Worry about the present and the future whirled in my mind.

Initially, I used my savings, but as the days went by, my wallet shrunk and my anxieties grew. Then I remembered a holy *segulah* that I had heard so much about, and had always wanted to fulfill: strengthening oneself when saying *Birchas Hamazon*, by saying it with *kavanah* and from inside the text.

I decided to take this seriously upon myself. I felt like it was a very apt time. In my heart I was sure that, as the sages tell us, this *kabbalah* would be an opening for *siyata diShmaya* for my family's *parnassah*. I was sure it would take time, but the *segulah* was effective much faster than I expected...

During this difficult time, the local government in New York instructed that shuls be closed. In Boro Park, like in so many other places, hundreds of local *minyanim* organized. One joined from a porch, another from a yard and a third from the doorway of his house. We, the residents of a few houses near one another, organized to daven in a small *minyan*, in keeping with health regulations.

On normal Shabbosos, our community eats *Shalosh Seudah* together, and because we wanted to continue this practice, without detracting from health regulations, it was decided that each person would eat most of the *seudah* at home. Then, we would gather in one of the yards to eat a *kezayis* together, and to sing the *zmiros* of *Shalosh Seudos* together. Then we would recite *Birchas Hamazon* with a *minyan*, over a cup of wine.

It happened the first Shabbos after my new undertaking. The rest of the members of the *minyan* finished *bentsching*, but I was reciting *Birchas Hamazon* slowly and with *kavanah*, so I was still in the middle of *Retzei*. Because our *minyan* was small, the rest of the members needed to wait for me to

finish before we began davening *Maariv*.

At the end of *Maariv*, one of the *mispsalleim* came over and marveled at the way I had *bentsched*. He could not contain his surprise that until now, he did not know me as someone who *bentsches* so slowly and with such *kavanah*. In order to calm him down, I told him how it had happened – how corona had cut down my livelihood as a violinist at weddings and events, and how I was in dire financial straits and how I was doing this as a *segulah* for a *yeshuah*. I pointed out that the words of *Birchas Hamazon* contain great *segulos* for *parnassah*.

When I finished, I noticed a gleam in his eyes. "You'll be surprised to hear," he said to me, "but I might have an excellent idea. I will go home and make *Havdalah*, then I'll think it over and I'll get back to you with the details."

I sat at home, all kinds of hopeful thoughts running through my mind. In my heart, I davened. About an hour later, the call came. My neighbor announced gaily – "Your *segulah* worked... Listen, I work in a large senior citizens' home. Recently, I heard the owner – a frum Jew – expressing his concern and distress over the terrible solitude that the residents are in, because no one can come visit due to the circumstances. When I heard from you about what you do, I decided to suggest to the owner that you could use your talents to try and restore some joy to the residents through your music."

"After Shabbos, I called him, and *baruch Hashem*, he likes the idea. He would like to employ you for a nice salary at his three nursing homes. He wants you to go from room to room, based on a list that he will provide, to bring joy to the residents."

Baruch Hashem, for the past few weeks I have been working very successfully at my new job. Each day I feel renewed satisfaction when I see the light coming back to the eyes of these elderly residents. Some of them have told me openly that I have restored them to life, plain and simple. It is a fulfillment of the words that I will reap the rewards in the World to Come, and that there is reward in this world, in the form of abundance and reprieve from my dire straits.

I just heard from the nursing home owner that even when things go back to "normal", he does not want to give up on my services, and he plans to keep me employed. For all this, "*Odeh l'Hashem*, I thank Hashem with my mouth, and I praise Him among many." From here, I suggest to each and every Yid to fulfill this wonderful *segulah*, which has been tried and proven hundreds of thousands of times over the generations. As the *Ohr Zarua* writes that he learned from his *rebbeim*, one who is careful about *Birchas Hamazon* has his sustenance provided for him. With Hashem's help, each person should merit *siyata diShmaya* and abundant *parnassah*.

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