

# Vechol Maaminim

"A Weekly Leaflet From 'Bnei Emunim"



353

PARASHAS NOACH

תשפ"א

## IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

## Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

### He Hears the Tefillos of Tzaddikim With Compassion

"אלה תולדות נח נח איש צדיק תמים היה בדרתיו את האלקים התהלך נח" (ו ט)

Harav Yosef Nechemiah Kornitzer, the Rav of Krakow, explained:

There are two types of *tzaddikim*: those who serve Hashem with *Middas Hadin* and those who serve Him with *Middas Harachamim*. When, *chalilah*, a decree is cast upon Am Yisrael, the *tzaddik* whose *middah* is *chesed* and compassion can work to annul the decree with his *tefillos*. He has a say before his Creator, as if to say, "If I, a human being, can conduct myself with compassion, how much more so can You, Hashem, the Source of Compassion, act with *Middas Harachamim* to them." Therefore, Avraham Avinu, the pillar of *chesed*, could daven for the sinners of Sodom. In contrast, Noach, who acted according to *Middas Hadin*, could not daven for the sinning people of his generation.

This is alluded to in the *passuk*: "*Eileh toldos Noach*" – the decree of the Mabul was part of the *toldos* of Noach, who refrained from davening for his generation. Why did he not daven? Because "*es Ha'Elokim*" – the *Middas Hadin* (*Bereishis Rabbah* 33 3) "*his'halech Noach*" in his *avodas Hashem*.

Thus Rav Yosef Nechemiah explained the *musach* of our request in *Selichos* of Yamim Noraim: "*Malachei rachamim meshorsei Elyon chalu na Pnei K-l...*" Many ask: How do we turn to the angels in our *tefillos*? Didn't Chazal establish (*Yerushalmi Brachos* 9a) that one must not do so? Based on this we can understand it: When we say "*Malachei Rachamim*" we do not mean to turn to the Heavenly angels, but rather to ask those *tzaddikim* who conducted their lives with *Middas Harachamim* to advocate good for us On High and to daven for us to be spared from our troubles.

Chiddusehi Rabbeinu Yosef Nechemiah

### Tzaddik Shomer Emunim

"אלה תולדות נח נח איש צדיק תמים היה בדרתיו את האלקים התהלך נח" (ו ט)

The *Rema MiPano* (*Shu"t* 109) cites the holy *Zohar* (see *Tikkunei Zohar* 18, p. 132 1) that the reason that Am Yisrael is called "*Goy Tzaddik*" (*Yeshayah* 26:2) is because they are careful each day to say the quota of things that are alluded to in the word "*tzaddik*" – 90 צ' amens; 4 four *Kedushos*, 10 י times *Kaddish*, and 100 ק *brachos*.

Based on this Rav Yaakov Dov Marmorstein, *shlita*, Nasi of Bnei Emunim, explains that Noach was called an "*Ish Tzaddik*" so he surely kept to this quota of holy things that are required to be thus called. Indeed, two of them are alluded to in this *passuk*: "נח נח" – the acronym is numerically equivalent to 100, an allusion that he recited one hundred *brachos*. He is then called "איש צדיק" – whose acronym is 91 צא, equal to amen, and also an acronym for אמנים, an allusion to the fact that he answered 90 amens.

Of all these quotas, accumulating 90 amens a day is the hardest to keep, because the person is dependent on *brachos* he hears from others (See *Remez* commentary on the *Zohar Vayeilech* 285 2). Therefore the *passuk* says: "*Es Ha'Elokim his'halech Noach*"; "*Ha'Elokim*" – is numerically equivalent to "amen" to teach us that Noach would walk around hoping to hear *brachos* so he could answer amen after them. The fact that Noach was careful about answering amen explains the fact that even today, we see gentiles who are "Nnei Noach", who are careful to answer amen, and utter it in *Lashon HaKodesh*. As Rav Moshe Dovid Vali writes (*Yirmiyahu* 48:18), when non-Jews answer amen, that is what keeps them extant, "because if they would not do so, they would not survive even one day."

### He Refused to Sit on a Stolen Seat ...

"ותמלא הארץ חמס" (ו יא)

Once, on Tisha B'av day, the *Chofetz Chaim* was in the city of Kenigsburg. When he came to the shul, he saw that there was no empty seat for him. In his humility, he remained standing. One of the *mispallelim* who recognized him and knew how great he was, hurried out of the shul to bring a few bricks. He arranged them on the ground, spread a napkin over them, and offered the *Chofetz Chaim* to sit. To the man's surprise, the sage refused to sit, remarking, "These bricks were surely taken from wherever you could find them, so there is a chance that they are stolen..."

HaChofetz Chaim – Chayav Upalo, Vol. III, p. 1080

### "Al Zos Yispallel Kol Chassid"

"את קשתי נתתי בענן והיתה לאות ברית ביני ובין הארץ" (ט יג)

It says in *Maseches Kesubos* (77b) that Rabi Yehoshua ben Levi merited to enter Gan Eden while alive, because he protected the members of his generation from the Mabul. Therefore, all his life, HaKadosh Baruch Hu never showed him the sign of the rainbow in the world.

Based on this, Harav Pinchas Halevi Horowitz, author of the *Hafta'ah*, explained the words of *Tehillim* (32:6): "*Al zos yispallel kol chassid Eilecha l'eis metzo rak leshetef mayim rabbim eilav lo yagi'u*." The *tefillah* of "*kol chassid*, every pious person" is to be spared "*l'eis metzo*" – this refers to death (*Brachos* 8a). However, "*rak leshetef mayim rabbim*" – someone in whose days the rainbow was never shown, because he protected his generation from the Mabul, will merit that the punishment of death "*eilav lo yagi'u*, he will not get to it" – like Rabi Yehoshua ben Levi, who entered Gan Eden alive.

Panim Yafos

"כי אתה ראיתי צדיק לפני בדרך ה'ה" (א)



"V'amech kulam tzaddikim"  
make the *brachos bechavrusa* and answer amen.

"For this *middah* of answering amen Am Yisrael are called *tzaddikim*, as it says (*Yeshayah* 26:2): '...Veyovo goy *tzaddik shomer emunim*.'"

Kad Hakemach, Emunah

Birchos Hashachar



Aloud



With kavanah



Bechavrusa





## Taaneh Emunim

Insights into the Virtues of  
Hashkamas Bais Hamedrash

### Adon Olam (2)

#### Hayah Hoveh Veyihyeh

With the words “*VeHu Hayah, veHu Hoveh, veHu Yihyeh besifarah*” we express our faith that HaKadosh Baruch Hu was – in the past, *Hoveh* – is in the present, *v Yihyeh* – *l'Asid Lavo*, and at all these times, He is the same “sifarah,” glory.

This can be compared to a king who built himself a beautiful palace. At the end of the construction, he wanted to hang a special drawing on the central wall to complete the special look. He invited all the best artists in the kingdom to show him their work, and he would choose the best among them to draw for him the most perfect drawing in the world. It is clear that the artist that would win the job would be the one who would bring the most masterful piece of art. The most talented artist would not be able to boast about his talents if he would not present a piece of work that would reflect that expertise.

That is not the case with HaKadosh Baruch Hu. The same *tiferes*, the glory, and power that was revealed to human eyes after the Creation of the world was in His Hands before that, and will continue even after the world is destroyed. He does not “need” proofs to express the greatness of His Glory (*Siddur Be'er Chaim*, p. 26).

In contrast, some explained the word “*besifarah*” to apply only to the future: “*VeHu Yihyeh*” – meaning, now the leadership of Hashem is with *heset panim*, but *l'Asid Lavo*, His Kingship will be revealed in all its glory (*He'aras Hatefillah*).

#### Who Is Like You

In the words “*veHu Ehad vein sheini lehamshil Lo lebachbirah*” – we testify that not only is HaKadosh Baruch Hu the Singular in His world, but “*ein sheini lehamshil Lo*” – there is no one who is even similar to Him, even in one detail – like a “*mashal*” a parable that is sometimes similar to a *nimshal* in only one detail. Likewise, there is no one that can be connected to Him [= “*lebachbirah*” from *lehaber*] as a partner, even for an iota of His great deeds. Because He alone leads everything that happens in the world, from the smallest details to the most powerful events. As we see “*veLo ha'oz*” – He possesses endless power and abilities, “*vehamisrah*” – the *serarah*, the authority is His alone, in this world and in the World to Come (*Siddur Be'er Chaim* *ibid*).

#### He Has No Beginning and No End

With the words “*bli reishis bli sachlis*” – we praise HaKadosh Baruch Hu for the fact that He has no beginning and end. The life of a human king has a beginning and an end, and his kingship is only over a defined area. Therefore, if he decrees a punishment on one of his subjects, that person can flee for his life to another land that is not under the king's jurisdiction. Even if he stays in his place, it is possible that the king will die before his sentence is carried out. That is not the case with HaKadosh Baruch Hu. There is no number to His years, and He controls all the worlds, and there is no way to run away from Him, only to repent and return to Him (*Eitz Yosef*).

*VeHu Hayah* in the past *veHu Hoveh veHu Yihyeh l'Asid Lavo*, and He is always *besifarah*. *VeHu Ehad ve'ein sheini* that it is possible *lehamshil Lo* or *lebachbirah* – to connect to Him. *Bli reishis bli sachlis* – He has no beginning and no end *veLo ha'oz* – the strength *vehamisrah* – the authority. *VeHu Keli veChai Goali* – He is My Living Redeemer forever *veTzur* – the source of my strength, to save me from *chevli* the troubles that surround me *b'eis tzarah*. *VeHu Nisi* – He performs miracles for me *umanos li* – to Him I flee *menas kosi* – and He will be there on my side *beyom ekra* to Him in *tefillah*. *Beyado afkid ruchi b'eis Ishan* and He returns it to me *ve'a'irah* when I arise from my sleep. And even when I am awake *v'im ruchi geviyasi* – and my spirit is in my body, *Hashem Li* – He leads me and therefore *lo ira*.

#### A Pillar and Security at All Times

In the second part of *Adon Olam*, we praise Hashem for the fact that despite His tremendous greatness, which we cannot even fathom, He still accepts our *tefillas* with compassion and willingness, and he is our security at all times.

When we say “*VeHu Keli veChai Goali, veTzur chevli b'eis tzrah*” we express our recognition of the fact that we lean on our Creator in every situation, both when “*veChai Goali*” – when we are in a state of comfort and freedom, and “*b'eis tzarah*”, when HaKadosh Baruch Hu is at our side like a strong rock [*tzur*] (*Siddur Ohr Hachamah*).

The meaning of the word “*chevli*” is *chelki*, or my part, as the *passuk* says (*Devarim* 32:9): “*Ki chelek Hashem amo Yaakov chevel nachalaso*.” We also find that Dovid Hamelech says in *Tehillim* (16:5): “*Hashem menas chelki vekosi Atah tomich gorali*,” and the *Radak* explains (*ibid*): “I have no other *chelek* than He, like some people whose part and portion is money and gold and pleasures of this world, but I – Hashem is my portion...because in all my words and my affairs He is my Part and my intentions are all to Him.” However, some explain that the word “*chevli*” here comes from a term meaning *tza'ar*, pain and trouble, as the *passuk* says (*Tehillim* 116:3): “*Afafuni chevlei maves umetzarei she'ol metza'uni*.” If so, this connects to the words after it “*b'eis tzarah*” (*Siddur Avodas Yisrael*).

#### Ein Od Milvado – There Is No Other Besides Him

After the war with Amalek, the *passuk* says (*Shemos* 17:15): “*And Moshe built a mizbeach and he called it Hashem Nisi*.” *Rashi* explains: “Hashem Nisi – HaKadosh Baruch Hu made a great miracle for us here.” But the *Midrash Sechel Tov* (*ibid*) explains, “It seems to me that he called it this to mean ‘Hashem is my Degel, my banner.’ Similarly, the commentaries differ on the meaning of the words “*VeHu Nisi*.” Some explain it as: *Hu Digli* – He is my Banner, and I cleave to Him and I raise my eyes to Him (*Anaf Yosef*, cited in *Siddur Otzar Htefillas*). Some explain it: He always performs miracles for me (*Olas Tamid*, 3).

Because HaKadosh Baruch Hu is “*Nisi*” then in any case He is “*manos li*” – to Him I will run if I encounter troubles or tribulations. And He is My *Chelek* and my *Goral* on the day that I call to him and daven to him. Each night, when I go to sleep, “I entrust my soul to His Hand” and as soon as I awaken from my sleep, He returns it to me without delay. “*V'im ruchi geviyasi*” – even when my soul is in my body, I know that “*Hashem li*” – I cannot do a thing without Him decreeing that it should thus be done. Because Hashem leads me on all my ways, therefore “*lo ira*” I will not fear anyone else (*Olas Tamid* *ibid*).

## Maaseh Emunim

Pearls and Insights on  
Birchas Hamazon

### Meeting Tradeoff

“Trrrr trrrr” – The monotonous ringing of the ancient cell phone belonging to Reb Yekusiel, a well-known *rosh kollel* in a town in Israel, cut into his short afternoon nap. He glanced at the screen, and the long string of digits indicated that it was an international call – the type that always kindles hope in the hearts of *roshei kollel* and institution administrators. Reb Yekusiel quickly answered.

“Hello, Reb Yekusiel,” the American accent came through the line. “This is Yisrael, the *gabbai* of Reb Shlomo from Chicago. It's regarding a request you sent a few months ago. We made some inquiries about you and got good recommendations. So I'd like to set up a meeting for you with Reb Shlomo at his office next Wednesday at 6 p.m. Write down the address: Golden Towers, Chicago, 64<sup>th</sup> floor Room 436. *Kol tuv*, and lots of *hatzlachah*.”

The conversation came to an end, and Reb Yekusiel could hardly contain his excitement. Reb Shlomo was known as one of the greatest supporters of Torah causes in our generation. A successful meeting with him could bring some financial reprieve to the *kollel* in the form of a generous and steady donation for the next few years. Those in the know said that it was worth making the trip from Israel especially for this. He had been waiting for months and now the moment had arrived.

Reb Yekusiel quickly called his travel agent. “I have to be in Chicago next Wednesday,” he said briefly. The agent suggested a few options, Reb Yekusiel considered them and decided to take an El Al flight from Tel Aviv on Tuesday night. It would land early in the morning in Paris, where he would have a four-hour stopover and then continue on an Air France flight to Chicago.

While waiting in Paris for the connecting flight, Reb Yekusiel planned to pop over to one of the shul near the airport to daven *Shacharis*, and then to rush back to make his flight to Chicago.

The flight from Israel was calm and uneventful. The plane landed and Reb Yekusiel hurried to leave the airport, as planned. But that's when things went a bit awry. It took him time to find the shul, and even after he got there, he discovered that davening was only supposed to start half an hour later. Reb Yekusiel's time was very tight, but he hoped that davening would end quickly, and he'd be able to make the flight. But even after the appointed time arrived, it took time for a *minyan* to convene, and when it finally did, the *baal tefillah* seemed to be the slowest one in all of France...

Reb Yekusiel then experienced a genuine battle of wills. On one side was the Air France plane, revving its motors for takeoff to a place where a fat check was waiting for him... On the other side was a modest shul, with a *minyan* of *mispallelim* that had just about begun to daven, among them Reb Yekusiel, who could not remember when, if ever, he had missed davening with a *minyan*.

The hands on the clock ticked brutally as the war raged in his heart. Finally, Reb Yekusiel settled the battle by resolving that he was not going to forego the merit of davening with *minyan*. As he made the decision, he tried to delude himself into thinking that perhaps the flight would be delayed. But it was a futile hope...

When davening finally ended, Reb Yekusiel grabbed his valise and hurried to stop a taxi to take him to the

airport. He ran to passport control and pleaded with the clerk behind the glass to let him cut the line because he must make the flight leaving momentarily for Chicago. But the indifferent clerk merely shrugged and pointed to the large window behind him. “Sir, your flight is taking off right now, so you have no reason to hurry...” he said flatly. Reb Yekusiel's heart sank. He hoped that the merit of *tefillah betzibbur* would advocate for him that he would not miss the meeting. But it was ordained otherwise from Above...

“I missed the flight – which means I missed the meeting,” he thought miserably. He had no choice but to book himself onto a flight heading back to Israel. Then he slumped onto a nearby bench. He had waited so long for this meeting, and now, he'd let it slip between his fingers.

Still, he was happy that he had withstood the test and not missed davening with a *minyan*. He hoped for the best.

He had a lot of time until his return flight to Israel, so he decided to go back to the shul that he had left a short time earlier. He wished to immerse in the *mikveh*, a custom he practiced every day. He would use the remaining time to learn.

Reb Yekusiel put his case down at the entrance to the shul and turned to the little kitchenette to prepare himself a hot drink. At the doorway he noticed a table with the *tefillin* bags of those davening in the *minyan* currently in progress. Reb Yekusiel glanced quickly at the names embroidered on the *tefillin* bags. He was surprised to discover a familiar name. One of them belonged to Reb Shammai, a tremendous supporter of Torah institutions.

In time, the *tefillah* ended and the *mispallelim* emerged. Reb Yekusiel waited for this moment, and when he noticed the elderly Yid reaching for the *tefillin* bag, he approached him and tried to begin a conversation. To his surprise, Reb Shammai was genial and conversational.

And so, without any mediation by *gabbaim* or secretaries, Reb Yekusiel had a meeting with Reb Shammai – the type of meeting many people worked very hard to arrange. Reb Shammai patiently inquired about each detail, and then took out a checkbook, wrote a check, tore it out and handed it to Reb Yekusiel. Then he related:

“Today I am supposed to serve as *sandak* at my grandson's bris. I looked for a special gift to give the baby, and from Above, I was sent a place of Torah after my own heart that I will be able to support as a merit for success for this new baby.”

The two parted on friendly terms, and only then did Reb Yekusiel glance at the check in his hand. He gasped: it was made out for a tremendous sum, far more than he could have dreamed of getting in Chicago. It was literally a sign from Above – in the same place where he was *moser nefesh* to daven with *minyan*, he merited the most exceptional *siyata diShmaya*.

If that was not enough, when he returned to Israel, he was stunned to find a message on his voicemail: It was Reb Shlomo's secretary, sounding very apologetic. “We're sorry, but Reb Shlomo won't be able to meet you this week after all. Don't bother to come. We'll send you the check in the mail...”

Heard from Rabbi Tzvi Nakar, Peninei Parashas Hashavua 172