

Ve'chol Maaminim

"A Weekly Leaflet From 'Bnei Emunim



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PARASHAS MIKEITZ

תשפ"א

IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

"Do This" and Be Spared from Decrees

"ויאמר אלהם יוסף ביום השלישי זאת עשו וחיו" (מב) (יח)

The Chida explains:

In this *passuk* we find an allusion to the words of Chazal (*Koheles Rabbah* 5 6): "Three things annul bad decrees and they are: *tefillah*, *tzedakah*, *teshuvah*." The word *זאת* is numerically equivalent to *קול* [*tefillah*], *צום* [*teshuvah*], and *צום* [*tzedakah*]. If "*zos ta'asu*", you do this, then every bad decree that is cast upon you will be nullified, and "you will live."

Yosef Tehillos, 33 11

A Yarei Shamayim In Private and in Public

"ויאמר אלהם יוסף ביום השלישי זאת עשו וחיו את האלקים אני ירא" (מב יח)

Harav Pinchas Horowitz of Frankfurt, explained:

From this *passuk*, it appears that a person may boast about being a *yarei Shamayim*, despite the commandment that we were given (*Michah* 6:8): "*vehatznea leches im Elokecha*, walk discreetly with Hashem." The reason is because *yiras Hashem* is the result of firm *emunah* in the fact that Hashem pays each person in accordance with his deeds, as we see from the words said at Krias Yam Suf (*Shemos* 14:31): "*Vayir'u ha'am* – the nation feared Hashem, and they believed in Hashem and in Moshe His servant."

Because it is certainly permitted for a person to publicize the fact that he is a *ma'amin*, a believer with *emunah shleimah*, therefore, with regard to *yiras Shamayim* as well, which is an outcome of *emunah*, one may publicize himself.

In light of this, we can explain the words said each morning before davening: "*L'olam yehei adam yarei Shamayim baseser*." A person should always be a *yarei Shamayim* covertly.

This does not mean to say that the person should conceal the fact that he is a *yarei Shamayim*. Rather, his obligation is to be

Amen – An Abundance in All Worlds

"ויוסף הוא השליט על הארץ הוא המשביר לכל עם הארץ" (מב ו)

The *Shelah* writes regarding the virtue of answering amen as a means to opening the gates of blessing (*Maseches Tamid*, 80):

"And one who concentrates on each and every *brachah* that emerges from the one making a *brachah*, and answers amen with *kavanah* as is the *din*, causes much holiness Above, and brings down an influence of abundance and good to all the worlds, because he opens the Upper Source, the *mekor mayim chaim*, just like one opens a well to water all that needs watering. And a Voice descends from Above and announces that all this good and happiness is caused by so and so, the servant of the Holy King."

An allusion to this can be derived from the *passuk*: "ויוסף הוא השליט על הארץ" – the acronym of this *passuk* is numerically equivalent to 'amen' to teach you that the merit of answering amen is "the *mashbir lechol am ha'aretz*."

Nasi of Bney Emunim, Rav Yaakov Dov Marmorstein, *shlita*

G-d fearing even when he is concealed from the eyes of all creations and no one sees him.

Panim Yafos

Repent in Detail and With Anguish

"ויאמרו איש אל אחיו אבל אשמים אנחנו על אחינו אשר ראינו צרת נפשו בהתחננו אלינו ולא שמענו" (מב כא)

The *Shelah HaKadosh* explains:

The brothers of Yosef did not suffice with admitting to the sin of selling him; they added details about every step of their misdeed: "that we saw the distress of his heart" – we ignored his suffering, "and he pleaded with us and we did not hear" – we ignored his pleas. Likewise, it is appropriate for any person who repents to detail each and every step of the sin and not suffice with mentioning it in general.

Another thing we can learn from this is the obligation of the sinner to be deeply anguished by his sins, as the brothers of Yosef said: "*aval asheimin anachnu*" – אבל is from the same root word as *aveilus*, mourning, meaning – we must mourn and be anguished by our sin.

Shnei Luchos Habris, Mikeitz Derech Chaim 73

Bedikas Chometz Is Like the Search for the Goblet

"ויהפך בגדול החל ובקטן כלה וימצא הנביע באמתחת בנימן" (מד יב)

From the fact that the words "and he searched...and he found" are written next to each other, Chazal learn (*Pesachim* 7b) that only something that is searched for can be defined as a "*metzieh*," a find. Based on this, we learn the obligation of *bedikas chometz* before Pesach from the words of the *passuk* (*Shemos* 12:19): "*Shivas yamim se'or lo yimatzei beveischem*" – which indicates that we need to search for the *chometz* before Pesach in order to find it and burn it.

The *Rema* (*Orach Chaim* 432 2) writes: "It is customary to place pieces of *chometz* in a place where the searcher will find them, so that the *brachah* [*al biur chometz*] should not be in vain." Many have asked about this custom: Can't the searcher easily find out where the pieces were placed? How does he carry out the mitzvah of *bedikas chometz* with this search?

The *Tchebener Rav* brings beautiful answer to this question:

As noted, the obligation of *bedikas chometz* is derived from the "search" described in this *passuk*. In this search, the one searching knew that the goblet was in Binyamin's satchel, because he put it there. Likewise, the "search" for *chometz* that we learn about from him can be fulfilled in a way that the searcher knows where the *chometz* is.

Pshat V'Iyun [Harav M. Sternbuch], *Pesachim* 7b

"והיה יחזקאל
לכם למופת
ככל אשר
עשה תעשו"
(יחזקאל כד כד)

Monday, 6 Teves, is the *yahrtzeit* of the Divrei Yechezkel of Shineva, about who his *talmidim* related: "Rabbeinu tried each day to hear *Birchos Hashachar* from a few people in order to answer amen on the *brachos*."

Divrei Yechezkel [Hachadash] p. 319

Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa - 90 amens before davening



The Brachah of She'asah Li Kol Tzorki

Gratitude for Shoes

From the words of Chazal (*Brachos* 60b) regarding the *brachah* of *She'asah Li Kol Tzorki* -- "when he dons his shoes he should say 'Baruch she'asah li kol tzorki'-- we learn that this *brachah* was instituted especially for wearing shoes. However, it was formulated in a language that expresses general gratitude for "kol tzorki, all my needs," because in the merit of shoes, a person can fulfill all his needs. This is because by wearing shoes, he is able to leave his house and tend to his affairs (*Avudraham, Seder Hashkamas Haboker*). Therefore, when we make the *brachah* on shoes, it is important to remember the tremendous benefit that we derive from them, as through the shoes we take care of our needs easily and comfortably, and we should thank Hashem for that wholeheartedly (*Sifsei Chaim, Biurei Tefillah*, p. 56).

Additionally, Rabbeinu Manoach explains (*Tefillah* 7 6) the reason that we make the *brachah* on shoes with the words "kol tzorki": Because shoes are the last item of clothing that a person puts on in the morning, we find that through the shoes a person's clothing needs are completed. Therefore, he should make the *brachah* "She'asah li kol tzorki."

Gratitude for the
Provision of Our Needs

On the other hand, some say that with this *brachah*, we thank Hashem for providing us all our needs, and not just shoes. The reason it was instituted to recite it when putting on shoes is because according to *Maseches Shabbos* (129a), Chazal say: "A person should [even] sell the walls of his house and should take shoes for his feet." Therefore, when a person merits to have shoes without needing to sell items in his home in order to purchase them, he should thank Hashem from the depths of his heart: "she'asah li kol tzorki." (*Mekor Chaim*, 46 1; *Chochmas Shlomo, Orach Chaim* 46 1)

Similarly, the *Yesod Veshoresh Ha'avodah* writes: "It behooves each person to make this *brachah* with great joy in his heart, and he should believe with great trust in Hashem Yisbarach that He will provide him with all his needs. Especially the person to whom Hashem granted bread and clothing and a home, and he has everything, should make this *brachah* with tremendous joy and give great praise and thanks for the past, and faith in the future. Even though this *brachah* was instituted for wearing shoes, certainly a person must have gratitude in his mind when saying this *brachah* for all the good that Hashem has granted him."

Harav Shimshon Pincus said: I felt a special feeling when I said this *brachah* when I was moving house. In normal days, as long as my possessions were organized in their place at home, I did not pay attention to the amount of objects that Hashem has given me. Only when I had to pack up the contents of my home ahead of the move did I suddenly realize how many things a person needs, and what tremendous abundance Hashem bestows upon him all the time... (*Nefesh Shimshon - Siddur Hatefillah*, p. 123)

Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech Ha'olam She'asah Li Kol Tzorki – for providing me with shoes, through which I am able to leave my home and tend to my needs.

Amen – It is true that we must thank Hashem for the shoes on our feet through which we can go and take care of all our needs.

"Kol Shatah Tachas Raglav"

The Maharshal (*Siddur HaShelah - Birchos Hashachar*) also explains that in this *brachah*, we thank Hashem for providing all our needs. He explains the connection between this *brachah* and putting on shoes as follows:

When the world was created, Hashem first created the basic things that are vital for life in this world, such as light, air and water. Then He created the plants that are used for food, and then the birds and the fish, and after that the animals. Only in the end did He create the person to benefit from all this. This fact indicates that a person is the 'tachlis habriah,' the purpose of all creation (see *Sanhedrin* 38a).

The *passuk* (*Tehillim* 8:7-8) describes that man is the purpose of creation as follows: "Tamshleihu bema'asei yadecha kol shatah tachas raglav; tzoneh v'alaphim kulam vegam bahamos sadai, You give him dominion over the work of Your hands; You have placed everything beneath his feet. Flocks and cattle, all of them, and also the beasts of the field." This means that when a person puts on his shoes, which are made from the leather of an animal, he expresses his absolute control over the animal kingdom, and therefore, also his control over the inanimate and plant worlds, whose status is lower than the animal kingdom. Therefore, we can say: "Kol shatah tachas raglav," therefore it was established to offer praise in the *brachah* of "she'asah li kol tzorki" specifically when putting on shoes.

Shoes Separate from the Curse

Harav Moshe Chagiz (*Mishnas Chachamim* 221) explains that putting on shoes also has a spiritual benefit, because the shoes provide a buffer between the feet of a person and the ground, which was cursed at the sin of Adam Harishon. As the *passuk* says (*Bereishis* 6:17): "Cursed is the ground for you." For this reason, we do not wear shoes on holy ground, as HaKadosh Baruch Hu instructed Moshe at the *sneh*, the burning bush, (*Shemos* 3:5): "Remove your shoes from your feet because the place where you are standing is holy ground."

Based on these words, we can now understand the meaning of *she'asah li kol tzorki*. The primary needs of a person in this world are to distance himself from curses and to cleave to blessing. Because shoes are meant to aid one in doing this, we make the *brachah* of "she'asah li kol tzorki" on the shoes. (*Agra Depirka* 304)

Harav Moshe Leib of Sassov offers a beautiful insight on this *brachah*: The reason we do not say "she'asah kol tzorki" and we add the word "li" is to teach us that only with regard to ourselves must a person cleave to the *middah* of *bitachon* and suffice with just a bit. But with regard to another person, one must internalize all the time that if not for him standing next to his friend in his time of need, and providing his needs generously, then the person's lack will not be filled. (*Siddur Daas Kedoshim Birchos Hashachar*)

Salvation in the Middle of Minchah

The renowned Maggid, Harav Reuven Karelinstein, *zt"l*, related the following story:

As a *bochur*, I had the privilege of learning for a year at the Yeshiva L'Metzuyanin, headed by Harav Chaim Aharon Turchin, *zt"l*, a *talmid* and confidant of the Brisker Rav.

This yeshiva was attended by select *bochurim* from the yeshiva world, and it was known as a 'preparatory yeshiva' where *bochurim* would learn for a certain period of time before entering the yeshiva of Harav Yosef Dov Halevi Soloveichik, the son of the Brisker Rav, *zt"l*.

One of the *bochurim* who learned with me during that time was a son of the renowned Benedict family of Bnei Brak. When he was still young, he lost his father, Reb Yechiel, *zt"l*, who passed away at the prime of his life.

One day, the *bochur's* sister got married, and of course, he traveled to Bnei Brak to attend the wedding. A few days later, his mother was scheduled to make a *sheva brachos* in their home, and he again asked for permission to travel to Bnei Brak for the *simchah*.

At the time, it was customary that a *bochur* did not leave the yeshiva without asking permission from the Rosh Yeshiva. So that afternoon, before *Minchah*, the *bochur* went over to Harav Chaim Aharon and asked for permission to travel again to Bnei Brak for the *sheva brachos*, stressing "My mother is working very hard to prepare the *seudah* and I know that she wants very much for me to come."

He was thus very surprised when the Rosh Yeshiva refused to give him permission, and said, "you already went to the wedding. You don't need to go again." The *bochur* heard this and accepted it; it didn't enter his mind to argue. If the Rosh Yeshiva had instructed him not to go, he wouldn't go!

About half an hour before *Maariv*, during the *mussar seder*, the *bochur* sat down at his *stinder* and began learning the *mussar sefer* in front of him. Just a few moments passed before he noticed Rav Chaim Aharon walking in his direction. "Benedict! Go!" he said, and then returned to his place.

A few moments passed, and when Reb Chaim Aharon noticed that the *bochur* had not gotten up to leave, he against stood up from his place and asked, "Why aren't you leaving?"

"I prefer to daven *Maariv* before traveling," the boy replied. "Who knows if by the time I get to Bnei Brak, I'll find a *minyan*." At the time, the trip from Yerushalayim to Bnei Brak was long and tiresome. Bnei Brak itself was still just a town, with a small population. But the Rosh Yeshiva was insistent. "You must go now!" he said, and the *bochur* had no choice but to comply.

As noted, at the time the trip took a long time. There was no direct bus from Yerushalayim to Bnei Brak. Passengers first needed to go to Jaffa Road and catch a *sherut* taxi or a bus traveling to Tel Aviv, and from there, take a bus to Bnei Brak.

So it happened that the *bochur* Benedict set out from the yeshiva to Jaffa Road late in the evening. When he reached the taxi stand, he got onto the first van in line, and a few minutes later, the van filled up and set out on its way. After a while, he looked out the window and was surprised to discover the familiar Bnei Brak scenery. He imagined that for some reason, the driver had changed his route, and now they were passing not far from Bnei Brak. He asked the driver to stop for him, and the driver didn't ask too many questions. He signaled that he was pulling over, opened the door, and the *bochur* got off as the driver pulled back into the road. Only when the exhaust dissipated did the *bochur* realize his

mistake. He was far from Bnei Brak... The houses looked similar to those in Bnei Brak but this was definitely not his home town. Now he was stuck in the middle of a dark road, near the town of Be'er Yaakov. What was he to do now? Should he walk to the town, or try to flag down a hitch?

As he was pondering what to do, a van stopped, and a familiar face leaned out of the window. It was a family acquaintance, Rav Drabkin, from Bnei Brak, who was returning from Be'er Yaakov, where he served as a *maggid shiur*. It was remarkable *Hashgachah pratis* that he was driving by just then. "Benedict, what are you doing here?" he asked.

"I got off the *sherut* taxi because I thought we were in Bnei Brak, and only realized my mistake after I got off..."

"I guess it wasn't a mistake," Rabbi Drabkin smiled and invited him into the van. "We're traveling to Bnei Brak in any case, so we'll take you all the way home..."

He arrived home before the *sheva brachos* began, but instead of a joyous atmosphere everyone looked very anxious. "What happened?" he cried. One of the girls explained that as she was preparing, their mother had somehow ingested an olive pit, and now she was struggling to breathe...

There was no one who could help her, and she began to turn blue... But he did know what to do. Someone had once explained what needed to be done to expel a foreign object from the windpipe. He hurried over to his mother and within a few seconds, the pit was out.

After everyone calmed down, the *bochur* recounted the tremendous miracle that he had just experienced. It was a real *mofess*: Rav Chaim Aharon had ordered him to "go, now!" and from that second on, matters fell into place exactly as Hashem ordained them so that he should be there at precisely the right moment to save his mother.

The next morning after *sheva brachos*, he returned to Yerushalayim, and immediately went to the Rosh Yeshiva's office. After briefly describing what had happened, he asked excitedly: "I must know, how did the Rav know that I needed to travel exactly at that moment to save my mother? And furthermore, why did the Rav change his mind from his original decision that I should not go?"

Rav Chaim Aharon thought briefly and then replied slowly:

"*B'chasdei Hashem*, it has always been my privilege that when I daven *Shemoneh Esrei*, I never am disturbed by distracting thoughts. Yesterday, in the middle of *Minchah*, just after I told you to remain in yeshiva, I began the *brachah* for *Barech Aleinu*, and suddenly, your name, Benedict, flashed into my head. I tried to continue, but the name 'Benedict' did not stop bouncing around in my mind. I realized that I was being sent a message from Above, and I told myself that during the *mussar seder* I would rethink the matter and try to figure out why I had thought of your name in the middle of *Shemoneh Esrei*. During the *mussar seder*, I made a *chesbon hanefesh*, and reached the conclusion that there was no reason why I was punished with such a *Shemoneh Esrei*...except for the fact that from Above I was being sent a hint that the decision to have you stay here was not the correct one. So I hurried over to tell you to go right away.

"This story did not captivate me because of the unbelievable *mofess*..." Reb Reuven concluded the story. "It helped me realize what tremendous heights one can aspire to – and reach. Here you have a very distinguished Yid saying of himself that he manages to get through and entire *Shemoneh Esrei* without distracting thoughts, and not once – but his whole life! *Lo baShamayim hie!*"

Yechi Reuven Vayeira