

VeChol Maaminim

"A Weekly Leaflet From 'Bnei Emunim"



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PARASHAS BO

תשפ"א

IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

"Bo El Pharaoh" With No Fear of a Kitrug

"ויאמר ה' אל משה בא אל פרעה כי אני הכבדתי את לבו ואת לב עבדיו למען שתי אתתי אלה בקרבו" (י א)

We need to understand why "because I have hardened his heart" was a reason to go to Pharaoh. On the contrary, the hardness of Pharaoh's heart was a reason to refrain from coming to him, because in such a situation there was no chance that he would listen to Moshe's words.

The **Maharam Schick** explained:

Moshe was afraid to go to Pharaoh specifically because he was afraid that he might hear Hashem's Words and repent. That would arouse a *kitrug* on Klal Yisrael for not listening to the Word of Hashem (see *ibid* 6:12). As *Chazal* explain (*Yerushalmi Sanhedrin* 11 5) the reason that Yona Hanavi refused to rebuke the people of Ninveh as Hashem had instructed was because he was afraid that their repentance that would result from his rebuke would bring a *kitrug* upon them. In order to dispel this fear, HaKadosh Baruch Hu said to Moshe: "*Bo el Pharaoh*" and don't be afraid that this might arouse a *kitrug* "because I have hardened his heart" and he will not listen to your words.

Maharam Schick Hashalem al haTorah

"See Children and Grandchildren Engaging in Torah"

"ולמען תספר באזני בנך ובן בנך את אשר התעללתי במצרים ואת אתתי אשר שמת בם וידעתם כי אני ה'" (י ב)

Harav Shlomo Zalman Friedman, Av Bais Din of Tenka, explained:

The words of *Chazal* (*Bava Metzia* 85a) "as long as he is a *talmid*

When Entering Nissan, We Increase *Emunah*

"החדש הזה לכם ראש חדשים ראשון הוא לכם לחדשי השנה" (יב ב)

Harav Chaim Kinst, one of the *maggidim* of Yerushalayim, explained:

When leaving Mitzrayim, Am Yisrael was purified from every vestige of *avodah zarah*, and their hearts strengthened with pure *emunah* in Hashem. Each year, when the month of Nissan is renewed, the impression of this *emunah* is awakened in the heart of every Jew, and he can strengthen his *emunah* in Hashem and His absolute control over everything. We can find an allusion to this in the words of the *passuk* "ראשון הוא לכם" – as the last letter of each word forms the acronym "amen."

Toras Moadim p. 36

chacham and his son is a *talmid chacham* and his grandson is a *talmid chacham*, then Torah does not stop from his progeny for eternity." However, *Tosafos* explains, (*Bava Basra* 59a beginning with *vehachut*) that this promise is only applicable when the father, the son and the grandson see one another.

An allusion to this can be found in these words: if "*tesaper*", you will relate yourself the words of the Torah "in the ears of your son and grandson" then it is guaranteed to you that Torah will not stop from your offspring "and you will know" – all of you – "that I am Hashem."

Therefore, we ask in the *zemiros* of Shabbos: "*HaRachaman Hu yevarech es amo...veyizku liros banim ubnei*

banim..." – that we should merit to see this with your eyes, and thus, we are guaranteed that Torah will not be removed from our progeny for eternity.

Chemed Shlomo

Pidyon Haben - Only During the Day or Also at Night?

"ויהי בחצי הלילה וה' הכה כל בכור בארץ מצרים" (יב כט)

The *Yaavetz* cites this *passuk* as proof of his opinion that one may conduct a *Pidyon Haben* at night. He explains: In the mitzvah of *Pidyon Haben* we were commanded to commemorate the great miracle Hashem performed for Am Yisrael in Egypt when He killed the firstborns and saved us from them (as explained hence 13:15). As such, because *Makkas Bechoros* took place at "*chatzi halaylah*" – midnight, then a *Pidyon Haben* can also take place at night.

However, the *Maharsham* rejects this view based on the words of *Chazal* (*pesichah* on *Maseches Semachos*): "Even though He struck them dead at midnight, their souls still hovered within them until morning." We do not thank for salvation before the *tzarah* has completely disappeared, and as the *poskim* rule, that we do not recite *Hagomel* before the trouble has passed completely. As the *brachah* states "*shegemalani kol tov*" and *tov* refers to a full and absolute good (*Ateres Zekeinim*, *Orach Chaim* 219 2). Therefore, the mitzvah of *Pidyon Haben*, in which we thank for *Makkas Bechoros*, takes place only during the day, as only then was the miracle completed and we merited an absolute good.

Migdal Oz, *Birchas Horai* 3:7; *Shu"t Maharsham* Vol. III, 43



This Wednesday 14 Shevat, is the *yahrtzeit* of the *mekubal*, Harav Daniel Frisch, author of *Masok Midvash* on the *Zohar Hakadosh*. The *Siddur Masok Midvash* says to say this *tefillah* each day in order to rectify the *amens* that are said without the right *kavanah*:



"*Ribbono shel Olam*, it is known before You that I am a flesh and blood human and I do not have the strength to have *kavanah* when reciting *amen*, *Yehei Shemei Rabba*, and *Baruch Hu Ubaruch Shemo* as I should. Therefore, may it be Your will that the *kavanah* of *amen*, *Yehei Shemei Rabba* and *Baruch Hu Ubaruch Shemo* that I say today should rise On High with the *seridim* that know how to have *kavanah* for them properly."

Birchos Hashachar



Aloud



With *kavanah*



Bechavrusa

Yehi Ratzon After the Brachah of Hama'avir Sheinah (1)

"Open a New Page" Each Day

Removing the sleep from our eyes brings an end to the previous day, with all its events, and enables us to start a new day with refreshed energy. When we begin the new day, we stand at a crossroads. It is in our hands to choose whether to utilize the day to fulfill our designated tasks, to serve our Creator and to engage in His Torah, or *challalah*, to heed the advice of the evil inclination and to stumble in sin and transgressions.

Because everything follows the beginning, it is worthy that after making a *brachah* for lifting sleep from our eyes, we should immediately ask Hashem to help us realize our deep aspirations to begin the new day on better footing than the day before, with true cleaving to Hashem and His *mitzvos* (*Siach Yitzchak* in *Siddur Ishei Yisrael*).

The Alter of Kelm explained that in the *brachah* of *Hama'avir Sheinah* we thank Hashem for lifting the spiritual slumber that disturbs our learning and mitzvah observance. Therefore, we recite right afterwards a *tefillah* of *Yehi Ratzon*, as an integral part of the *brachah*, to teach us about the nature of this *brachah* as gratitude for opening our spiritual eyes. This helps a person regulate himself in Torah learning (*Chochmah Umussar*, Vol. I, p. 255).

To Repent and Habituate Oneself in Torah

When we arise in the morning, before we start learning Torah, we have a special request about learning Torah: "*Yehi ratzon...shetargileinu beTorasecha.*" The simple meaning of this request is that we want the words of Torah to be fluent in our mouths, as *Chazal* say (*Kiddushin* 30a): "That if someone should ask you, you should not stutter until you tell him; rather tell him right away." (*Shim'ah Tefillasi* p. 46)

However, the commentaries write that this request is not only to remember one's learning. It is also about the regularity of Torah learning, which should be like nature for us. The nature of habit is that it draws a person to do a certain action, but the more he gets habituated, the easier it is for him to fulfill it. The soul of the Jew by its very nature yearns to delve into learning the holy Torah, but corresponding to that is the power of the physical body to pull him after the material desires that distance him from Torah.

The more a person habituates himself to idle matters and the affairs of this world, the stronger the desire in his heart to continue to do them more and more, until finally, he is not able to withstand the temptation and he totally strays from the path of Torah. As *Chazal* say (*Yalkut Shimoni Eikev* 873): "If you leave Me for one day – I will leave you for two days."

In this request, we ask HaKadosh Baruch Hu to help us fix the bad habits that we have become accustomed to, so that we can once again become habituated in Torah and *mitzvos*. The more we regulate ourselves to learn Torah, the less interest we will have in the trivialities of the world, and through that, our aspirations

will be realized, and we will merit to grow in Torah. (*Siach Yitzchak* ibid)

Like the Habit of Eating and Drinking

The Imrei Emes of Ger was once asked: How can we ask "*shetargileinu beTorasecha*"? Don't *Chazal* tell us (*Tanchuma Ki Savo* 1): "Each and every day Torah should be beloved to you as if you received it today from Har Sinai"? The Rebbe replied: We are not asking for habituation that symbolizes routine, but rather a *hergel*, a habit like eating and drinking, that a person finds flavor in them each and every time he does it. (*Siddur Sfas Emes – Likutei Yehudah* p. 93)

Sefer Olas Tamid (Chapter 9) adds that with the words "*shetargileinu beTorasecha*" we ask that all our habits and our deed should be according to the Torah, as is fitting for a *ben Torah*. It is the essence of what *Chazal* instructed (*Maseches Derech Eretz* Ch. 8) "A *talmid chacham* needs to be modest in eating and drinking, in washing and anointing, and in wearing shoes, when he walks and when he envelops himself, in his voice... and in his good deeds."

Fulfilling Mitzvos with Dveikus

We further ask HaKadosh Baruch Hu: "*Vedabkeinu bemitzvosecha.*" We should not perform the *mitzvos* as a technical act without any understanding or emotion; rather we should do them with *dveikus* of the heart and holy emotions. As *Chazal* say (*Yalkut Shimoni Shelach* 750): "It is compared to someone who is tossed into the water, the captain sent him a rope and said, grab this rope and hold on tight – if you let go, you will lose your life. Here, too, HaKadosh Baruch Hu tells Am Yisrael: as long as you cleave to His *mitzvos* you are alive, as it says (*Devarim* 4:4): "*V'atem hadveikim b'Hashem Elokeichem chaim kulchem hayom.*" (*He'aras Hatefillah* p. 27). When a person fulfills the *mitzvos* with *dveikus*, then the light and holiness of the *mitzvos* is cast over him and it elevates and sanctifies him. (*Siach Yitzchak* ibid)

It would seem more appropriate to have requested the opposite: "*shetargileinu bemitzvosecha vedabkeinu beTorasecha.*" because it seems more apt to use the term *dveikus* with Torah – that a person should cleave to Torah. For *mitzvos* it would seem fitting to use the word '*hergel*' – that a person should become habituated to fulfilling them.

The reason that we ask in this language is that with Torah learning it behooves each person to engage in Torah learning actively throughout the day. Through that, he will reach *dveikus* and a desire for learning. Therefore, it is enough to request "*shetargileinu beTorasecha.*" In contrast, with *mitzvos*, a person can perform them habitually, but because he is doing it by rote, he does not cleave to them with all his heart. Therefore, we ask "*vedabkeinu bemitzvosecha.*" (*Sifsei Chaim, Biurei Tefillah* p. 66)

V'yehi ratzon milfanecha we ask before You that You should accede to us (*Siddur Tefillah LeMoshe*) *Hashem Elokeinu v'Elokei avoseinu shetargileinu beTorasecha* that we should be habituated to learning Torah *vedabkeinu bemitzvosecha* and we should fulfill the *mitzvos* with *dveikus*.

The Disease Disappeared Completely

Much has been written about the special *segulah* of reciting the *brachah* of *Asher Yatzar* with *kavanah* for healing and *yeshuos*. The *segulah* is brought down in the name of early sages, and many *gedolim* have recommended it. There are many stories that prove the effectiveness of this *segulah*, including this remarkable story told firsthand by the person who made it:

For many of us, the word '*colitis*' is not particularly familiar. But for those who are familiar with the term, it symbolizes endless suffering that upends their lives. Colitis is an inflammatory disease of the digestive tract. It has no cure, and the greatest doctors have despaired of finding an effective medication. The best researchers have not found a clear cause for the onset of the condition.

Anyone who has ever experienced digestive illness, R"l, certainly is familiar with the suffering. But for those who experience the symptoms of colitis, and the suffering that comes with it, will shudder at the mere mention of the name of the illness.

Colitis is an inflammatory disease caused by an overreaction of the immune system, which is generally supposed to protect the body. Colitis badly affects the large intestine, and causes flare ups of severe pain, as well as other symptoms that significantly affect day to day function of people who suffer from it. Often, it can lead to hospitalizations and in some cases, even to surgeries during which parts of the large intestine are removed.

When Reb Shmaya, a distinguished *talmid chacham* who teaches Torah to many, began to suffer from digestive symptoms, he thought it was a virus or food poisoning from spoiled food. But as the days went by, and his condition did not improve, he went to the doctor. Reb Shmaya described his condition, and the doctor sent him to do comprehensive tests. The results pointed conclusively to a diagnosis of colitis.

When the final results arrived, Reb Shmaya was summoned to the doctor's office, where the doctor explained the condition and what he could expect. For Reb Shmaya, the worst part of the news was the fact that there was no known cure for the disease, and anyone who is diagnosed with it is expected to suffer through it for the rest of his life. Reb Shmaya left the doctor's office dazed and confused. Blessed with strong *emunah* and *Yiras Shamayim*, the doctor's firm diagnosis and prediction for what was ahead did not undermine Reb Shmaya's *emunah*. He didn't think for a moment to accept the bleak predictions and to capitulate to the rule of nature. Still, the news was hard for him to absorb.

He spent the time it took him to get home to strengthen his *emunah* that Hashem is the greatest Healer of all, and the cure for the disease is in His hands. Reb Shmaya knew that he had to rectify the things that he needed to fix and to strengthen himself in certain areas, and *b'eiras Hashem*, there was nothing that could prevent Hashem from sending him the help he needed from Above.

Of course, Reb Shmaya did not ignore the doctors' advice. He began to adopt some lifestyle changes that they suggested, which included a vegan diet

and a significant change in the types of food he consumed. But at the same time, he thought about what he could do to strengthen himself spiritually.

After consulting his rabbanim, he decided to adopt the well-known *segulah* brought down by early sages: He began to recite the *brachah* of *Asher Yatzar* with genuine *kavanah* and from the written text.

Even when he was sometimes lax, he did not give in, and continued to adhere to his resolution. Moreover, he tried to encourage all those around him to focus on the importance of saying this *brachah* with *kavanah*. From day to day, he sensed that he was finding deeper meanings in the *brachah*, and hence, his feelings of gratitude to HaKadosh Baruch Hu also intensified.

Some time passed, and he went to the doctor for routine tests. When the results arrived, the doctor could hardly contain his surprise: finally, after a long time of the disease getting worse, there were encouraging signs of improvement.

From that point on, Reb Shmaya began to feel some relief. The pain and the symptoms began to ease, and a few months later, ceased entirely.

The tests that he took the next time around indicated that indeed, while the illness was still present, its symptoms seemed to have stopped, and it was not bothering him. He resumed functioning fully and the memory of the disease all but faded. Thirteen years passed, and in time, his observance of his *kabbalah* faltered somewhat. Again, he found himself reciting *Asher Yatzar* hastily, like many other people. The reminder was not long in coming.

The diseased reared its head with full intensity, and he suffered terrible pain. This time, he decided to go to the biggest expert in the country, who is also the department head at one of the large hospitals in Israel. But the doctor didn't have much to tell him. Like his predecessor, he told Reb Shmaya that there was no cure for the disease. He could ease the pain somewhat, but there was no way to prevent the symptoms from recurring.

He didn't need a stronger reminder than this. Once again, Reb Shmaya decided not to resign himself to the doctor's predictions, and resolved once again to strengthen his recital of *Asher Yatzar* with *kavanah*. Additionally, he decided to have increased *kavanah* when saying the *brachah* of *Refa'einu*.

This time, he was not surprised when shortly afterwards, the symptoms disappeared once again. If that was not enough, the tests that he did as per the direction of the specialist surprised them both – Reb Shmaya's intestines had completely healed.

The disease disappeared completely, with no explanation. The doctors all concurred it was nothing short of a miracle.

"I was able to clearly see," Reb Shmaya concluded, "that the tremendous power of healing is in the hands of the person himself. If he would just undertake to strengthen himself and rectify that which needs fixing, then his *yeshuah* is guaranteed from Above, from the Hand of the Healer of all flesh and the *Mafli la'asos.*"

Ein Od Milvado p. 254