

Ve'chol Maaminim

"A Weekly Leaflet From 'Bnei Emunim"



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PARASHAS KI SISA

תשפ"א

IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

The Meaning of the "Sha'ah" in Our Tefillos

(רגע אחד אעלה בקרבך) (לג ה)

The word "rega" is explained by Onkelos as "sha'ah" (see also *Bamidbar* 16:21). Indeed, the concept of "sha'ah" is sourced in the Aramaic language, and its original meaning is a moment, meaning a very short amount of time.

With this fact, the *Tosfafos Yom Tov* explained the meaning of the words of the *brachah* of *Asher Yaztar*: "And if one of them will open or one of them will be closed, it is impossible to exist and to stand before You *afilu sha'ah echas*." If we would explain "sha'ah" to mean what we are used to using it in our day – an hour – there would be a question: When there is a breakdown of all the body's systems, *chalilah*, it is impossible to exist even one **minute**, let alone an hour! But based on this explanation, that the original term "sha'ah" means a moment, this can be understood.

Likewise, we can also understand the words of *Birchas Hamazon* [and similar wording in the *brachah* of *Sim Shalom*]: "*She'Atah zan...bechol yom ubechol eis ubechol sha'ah*." Based on the accepted meaning that "sha'ah" is a longer period of time than "eis" it should have been listed in declining order: "Each day and each *sha'ah* and each *eis*." But based on this, that the original meaning of "sha'ah" is a moment, then it makes perfect sense written as it is.

Maadanei Yom Tov [Al HaRosh] Brachos Ch. 9, 22 8

One Who Answers Amen Rises to Greatness

(כי תשא את ראש בני ישראל) (ל יב)

The *Gemara* (*Chulin* 87a, according to *Rashi* there, and *Shach Choshen Mishpat* 382 2) brings a story about a Tzedoki who ate at the home of Rabi Yehuda HaNasi. In those days, it was customary that one of the diners was *motzi* all the others with *Birchas Hamazon*, and they answer amen after him. Rabbi wanted to prevent the Tzedoki from saying amen after the *mevarech*, and because the value of each amen is ten gold coins, he offered the Tzedoki forty gold coins – the reward of four amens that are answered in *Birchas Hamazon*, so that he should leave before *Birchas Hamazon*. But the Tzedoki refused to give up this merit, and as such, a Bas Kol emerged from the Heaven and declared: Indeed, it is worth giving up forty gold coins to merit the reward of answering amen for *Birchas Hamazon*. Later, the *Gemara* brings the testimony of Rabi Yitzchak, who lived many years later: "That family [of the Tzedoki] is still among the great ones of Rome, and they are called the Bar Levianus family."

An allusion to the fact that one who is careful to answer amen rises to greatness is derived by the *Baalei Hatosafos* from this *passuk*: "תשמור שם א-דני תשא" is an acronym for *תשמור שם א-דני תשא*, meaning that if you have the right *kavanah* in mind according to *halachah* when you mention the Name of Hashem at davening and when you say *brachos*, and you are careful to answer amen after every *brachah* [which is numerically equivalent to the two Holy Names – Havayah and Adnus] then you will merit to be "*rosh Bnei Yisrael*."

Tosafos Hashalem

Middos Harachamim in the Merit of Humility

"ויאמר אני אעביר כל טובי על פניך וקראתי בשם ה' לפניך וחתני את אשר אחן ורחמתי את אשר ארחם" (לג יט)

"When you needed to ask for mercy for Am Yisrael, you reminded me of the merit of the Avos (*ibid* 32:13). You thought that were the merit of the Avos to be exhausted there would no longer be any hope...And I will proclaim the Name of Hashem in your presence – so as to teach you the order of asking for mercy [13 *Middos* of *Rachamim*], even if the merit of the Avos is exhausted... for My mercies are never exhausted." (*Rashi*)

Harav Avraham Yitzhak Shain, Ra"m in Yeshivah Tiferes Yerushalayim, said:

From the words of *Rashi* it appears that Moshe merited to have the 13 *Middos* of *Rachamim* revealed to him, because in his humility, he did not ask for compassion for Am Yisrael in his own merit, but rather in the merit of *zechus Avos* (see *Brachos* 10b). Based on this we can understand why in the *tefillah* of "*K-l Erech Apayim*" said as an introduction to 13 *Middos* we are careful to mention Moshe's humility: "*Besachanun ube'tefillah Panecha nekadem k'hodata l'anav mikedem*, we will approach You with pleading and prayer, as You informed the humble one in the distant past."

Birchas Ish



The Principal Emunah Depends on Amen

On Shabbos *Parshas Ki Sisa* is the *yahrtzeit* of the *Aruch Hashulchan*. In his *sefer* (*Orach Chaim* 124 11) he rules regarding the virtue of answering amen:

"The principal *emunah* is dependent on amen, and therefore, he should teach his young children to be careful to answer amen, and as soon as the child answers amen, he has a share in Olam Haba."

Bnei Emunim – Careful to preserve it, fathers and sons.



Taaneh Emunim

Insights into the Virtues of
Hashkamas Bais Hamedrash

Yehi Ratzon After Birchos Hashachar (1)

Why Do We Say It at the Beginning of the Day?

After concluding the brachah of *Hama'avir Sheinah* the ones who arranged the *tefillah* (*Seder Rav Amram; Machzor Vitri, Avudraham*) added another *tefillah*, which is Rebbe's *tefillah* brought in *Maseches Brachos* (16b) with slight changes in the *nusach*:

"Rebbi, after his davening [when he finished *Tefillas Shemoneh Esrei*] said: 'Yehi ratzon milfanecha Hashem Elokeinu v'Elokei Avoseinu, shetatzileinu mei'azei panim umei'azus panim, me'adam ra umipega ra, miyetzer hara, michaver ra, save us from those who are insolent, and from insolence, from a bad person and from being harmed, from the yetzer hara, from a bad friend, a bad neighbor, and from the destroying Satan, and from difficult judgement and from a difficult prosecutor, whether he is a member of the covenant or not a member of the covenant.'"

Likutei Maharich (Seder Birchos Hashachar) explained the reason this *tefillah* was recited, according to the *Shelah Hakadosh (Emek Brachah [Mahada] ch. p. 73)* that the *Yehi Ratzon* said in the brachah of *Hama'avir Sheinah* is the essence of *Shemoneh Esrei*. So we find that when we say this *tefillah* after that *Yehi Ratzon*, it is as though we said it after *Shemoneh Esrei*, as Rebbe did. Similarly, the *Siddur Tzelosa D'Avraham* (p. 64) explains that *Birchos Hashachar* corresponds to the *tefillah* of *Shemoneh Esrei*, and therefore it was arranged to recite after them the *tefillah* that Rebbe instituted to be recited after *Shemoneh Esrei*.

However, there are those who have a custom to say it in its original place, after the conclusion of *Shemoneh Esrei* (*Shu"t Maharsh"l*, 64).

This *Yehi Ratzon* completes the request of the *Yehi Ratzon* following *Hama'avir Sheinah*, because in the first one, we ask *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* to spare us from spiritual damages – that we should not be drawn after sins and sinners, and the like. In this *Yehi Ratzon*, we ask that He should also save us from material damages. (*Siddur Tzelosa D'Avraham* ibid)

The Difference Between "Azei Panim" and "Azus Panim"

At the beginning of the *Yehi Ratzon*, we ask *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* to save us "me'azei panim umei'azus panim." *Rashi* explains the difference between the two (*Brachos* ibid) because at first we ask to be saved from "azei panim" – that they should not irritate us, and then we ask to be saved from "azus panim" that they should not spread rumors that we are *mamzerim*. The *mamzer* is called an "az panim" because "azus panim," insolence, is one of the signs of a *mamzer* (see *Kiddushin* 70b). On the other hand, we find that the *middah* of silence and pursuance of peace, indicates that one who has it is of fitting lineage. (ibid 71b; *Rashi* ibid beginning with "zil")

The Maharal writes (*Nesivos Olam, Nesiv Habushah* Ch. 2) that according to *Rashi*, the *nusach* is very precise, as at first, we ask that "azei panim" should not irritate us – in the plural, because usually, even an impudent person is afraid to instigate unless others join him. Then we ask in the singular form, to be saved from "azus panim" – because such *lashon hara* can be disseminated even by a single individual.

Yehi ratzon milfanecha Hashem Elokei v'Elokei Avosa, shetatzileinu hayom uvehchol yom from people who are azei panim – that they should not instigate against me, or should not issue lashon hara against me, or should not issue umei'azus panim – and that I should not be insolent towards others.

As such, the *middah* of *azus* is a terrible one, as it destroys even the good *middos* that a person has and transforms them into bad ones. Therefore, we do not only ask to be saved from the harm by "azei panim" but also, that we should not need them for any good thing, because even their favors – are bad. (*Siach Yitzchak – Siddur HaGra*)

We Should Not Become Azei Panim

In contrast, the *Avudraham* explains that the two abovementioned explanations are included in the request of "mei'azei panim" – that we should be saved from insolent people who may harm us, and even spread slander about us that we are *passul*. But the request of "azus panim" is directed at ourselves – that we should not stumble and be impudent to others, because we know that an "az panim l'Gehinnom," one who acts with insolence goes to Gehinnom. (*Avos* 5:20)

The *sefer Toras Bar Nash (Parashas Kedoshim)* adds that the request of being saved from "azus panim" is necessary after the request of "mei'azei panim" because even a person who is not an *az panim* by nature may struggle to remain silent when others are offensive to him, and may respond with impudence. Therefore, after we ask to be saved from "azei panim" it is important that we ask that even if those people are instigating against us, we should not be dragged down to answer them with the same kind of talk.

The *Siddur Derech Hachaim* [Rav Y. Mecklenburg] explains that in our request to be spared from "azus panim" we ask also that we should not use this *middah* towards ourselves. Every Jew has his internal point of truth where he knows his obligation in this world, and he is a *yarei Shamayim*, but when the *yetzer hara* overpowers him, he becomes an *az panim* against this internal truth, and that is what we are asking to be spared from.

Azus Panim – Wealthy People, Azei Panim – Poor People

In the city of Rava, the leaders and *parnasim* of the city, led by the Av Bais Din, Rav Levi Yitzchak Schorr, *zt"l*, author of *Ateres Tiftach*, gathered for an important meeting to discuss matters relating to the *klal*. Suddenly, a group of riffraff burst into the meeting and insolently hurled insults against the eminent assemblage.

In the face of their chutzpah, the Rav said incisively:

We daven every day to Hashem to save us from "azei panim umei'azus panim." We find that the term "azus" is directed towards the wealthy, as it says (*Mishlei* 18:23): "V'ashir ya'aneh azus." The term "azei" is directed towards the poor as it says (*Yeshayahu* 56:11): "Vehaklavim azei nefesh." And there is nothing poorer than a dog (*Shabbos* 155b).

This is what we ask Hashem to save us from: the "azei panim" – poor people who are insolent like dogs that bark when they do not have the power to harm, and more so, from "azus panim" – from wealthy people who are insolent when they do have the power to harm.

Now I see that this *tefillah* is applicable specifically for this gathering, because the wealthy that have the power, were silent, and it is the poor and those who have no good deeds who were insolent and rude, while they do not have real power to do anything. (*Daas Zekeinim* [Rav A. Ittinga] p. 47)

Maaseh Emunim

Pearls and Insights
on Birchas Hamazon

A Glorious Tree Planted with Tears

To mark the *sheloshim* of one of the eminent elder *roshei yeshiva* in our generation, Harav Yitzchak Scheiner, *zt"l*, Rosh Yeshivas Kamenitz, we present the remarkable story of his rise to greatness, as he related it. He attributed everything he achieved in life to the power of his mother's tears.

Rav Yitzchak, *zt"l*, was born on 14 Cheshvan 5683/1923 to his parents, Reb Dov and Mrs. Pearl Scheiner. About three years before his birth, they had emigrated from Galicia, due to the difficult economic situation in Europe at the time, and settled in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

His father, Reb Dov, was a *yarei Shamayim*, and a very sincere Yid, who was *moser nefesh* to keep Shabbos – no simple feat in America at that time. Jews like him had to face many difficult challenges; in the Goldeneye Medinah, the value of time was measured only by money. The money-making industry worked full time, seven days a week, and anyone who sought 'vacation' for himself was automatically fired from his job.

And so, each week Reb Dov was compelled to find new work to support his family. When he finally found a position where he was not forced to work on Shabbos, it was very difficult work with a paltry salary.

Late in his life, Rav Yitzchak related:

"About sixty thousand Jews lived in Pittsburgh at the time. Most of them were *yarei Shamayim*, who, like my parents, had immigrated from Europe in an effort to improve their financial situation. However, in America they found new challenges – in the spiritual realm. In the area where my parents lived, there were no *talmudei Torah*, and certainly no *yeshivos*.

In far off New York, another reality began to slowly emerge, as a few Jews who everyone viewed as "strange" began establishing *talmudei Torah* and *yeshivos*. One of the well-known among them was my *rebbe*, Harav Shraga Feivel Mendlowitz, *zt"l*, who, together with his partner, Harav Binyamin Wilhelm, did the unbelievable. Against all odds, they established Yeshiva Torah Vodaas, which saved the Jews of America from spiritual annihilation.

This revolution took hold only in New York at that time. I, who lived in Pittsburgh, had to learn in a public school as a child, like the other Jewish children who lived in my city. I had many Jewish friends at the time, but today, I can count on the fingers of one hand those who remained loyal to their Yiddishkeit.

My parents were among the only ones who continued to keep all the *mitzvos* even in the very secular landscape where they lived. They were very fearful about spiritual future of their only son, but there was little they could do besides daven.

My mother, *a"h*, saw the terrible decline of youth in the area where she lived, and how although their parents continued to go to shul, they never stepped foot in there. She poured her heart out tearfully to Hashem, especially at *hadlakas neiros* and pleaded with Him to give her only son a different future. She didn't ask for greatness; she just pleaded over and over in very simple terms: 'Ribbono shel Olam, do everything so that my son should remain a kosher Jew until the end of his life.'

There was no reason that I should not have followed the paths of my friends and peers, but the ways of Hashem are hidden. With remarkable *Hashgachah Pratis*, Hashem sent Rav Dovid Bender, *zt"l*, to my parents' home, and he was the one who persuaded them to send me to the unknown, to become a *talmid* in the yeshiva. Rav Dovid Bender was one of the administrators of Yeshivas Torah Vodaas, which had recently been established in New York. In fact, he was a 'meshulach' on behalf of the yeshiva. For many years, he travelled among the Jewish communities in America in order to raise funds for the yeshiva, and to disseminate information about it wherever he went. Reb Dovid visited Pittsburgh many times,

but usually, he stayed in a different part of the city, where he had relatives. He came to our area only once, and because he had heard that we were one of the few families who kept a kosher kitchen, he chose to stay with us.

As noted, in contrast to many *meshulachim* who were focused on their jobs – raising funds – Reb Dovid was made of something else. He had another goal – no less important in his eyes – to spread information about the yeshiva that had been established in materialistic America.

I was then a youth of sixteen, and Reb Dovid took an interest in me in his very pleasant manner. He asked me what I was learning, and when I told him I had just finished high school, he immediately asked my parents, 'Why don't you send him to yeshiva in New York?'

'Yeshiva? What is a yeshiva?' – my parents did not know what this concept was. They were from Jews who kept Shabbos and kashrus, and although they remembered the *yeshivos* in their homeland, there in America, the concept of yeshiva did not go hand in hand with the reality they lived in.

Reb Dovid did not hesitate. 'I'll take him to yeshiva,' he said. And my parents immediately agreed. But the Satan did not give up on me so fast...When I ran to the bus, I slipped on the ice and fell. I broke my leg and I needed to spend three months in a cast. Even after that, I needed to visit the doctor often, and so, my trip was delayed a full six months, during which I managed to study for a single semester at the University of Pittsburgh.

I could have continued my studies and become a scientist, but as I said, my mother spilled rivers of tears for me. The Chazon Ish had once responded once to someone who asked him how it was possible that there are *kibbutznikim* who do *teshuvah* after a few generations of being disconnected from Torah. His answer was that a mother's tears are never turned away. They are able to penetrate all the iron barriers and reach the *Kisei Hakavod*. It is possible for them to take a year to be accepted, or a generation or even three generations, but ultimately, they are always accepted. When a grandson repents after generations of being estranged, it is very possibly the result of a grandmother's tears.

In this case, my mother did not stop davening for me, and so, six months after Reb Dovid's visit, after all the various reasons had been resolved, I found myself at the entrance of a yeshiva in New York. But a short time after I arrived, I became sick again, this time with whooping cough. The doctor instructed me to vacation in Catskills Mountains where the fresh air would be good for my condition.

In the Catskills, I was sent to a Torah camp named Camp Mesivta, where I met two erudite *bnei yeshiva* who were about my age. I became friends with them, and one of them convinced me that I should switch to Torah Vodaas so that I should hear *shiurim* from his *Rebbi*, Harav Shlomo Heiman, *zt"l*. And that's what I did.

I merited to learn in Torah Vodaas for three years under Rav Shlomo Heiman, *zt"l*, and later under his successor, Harav Reuven Grozovsky, *zt"l*. Rav Reuven also arranged my *shidduch* with his niece, the granddaughter of Harav Baruch Ber Leibowitz, *zy"l*, Rosh Yeshivas Kamenitz, the daughter of his son-in-law, Harav Moshe Berenstein, *zt"l*.

That began the unstoppable rise of Rav Yitzchak. He became the *talmid muvhak* of *gedolei Torah* in America, and later moved to Eretz Yisrael. After his father-in-law's passing, he was appointed to lead Kamenitz Yeshiva in Yerushalayim, where he disseminated Torah for more than sixty years. He had thousands of *talmidim* throughout the Torah world. And he attributed all his success to his mother's tears.

From a speech he delivered at the Acheinu convention, Nissan 5771