

Vechol Maaminim

"A Weekly Leaflet From 'Bnei Emunim"



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PARASHAS EMOR

תשפ"א

IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

Lack of Kavanah Sullies the Tefillah

"אמר אל הכהנים בני אהרן ואמרת להם לנפש לא יטמא בעמיו" (כא א)

Harav Dovid Moshe Ashkenazi, the Rav of Tolchova, explained:

This warning was said to all of Klal Yisrael as well, because they are also called Kohanim, as the *passuk* says (*Shemos* 19:6): "V'atem tihiyu Li mamleches Kohanim" (see *Baal Haturim* *ibid*). Because in present times, *tefillos* were instituted in place of the *korbanos*, we find that every Jew who stands in *tefillah* is like a Kohein bringing as sacrifice, and the Torah warns him: "Lenefesh lo yitma" – he should not pray without *kavanah* in his heart, because by doing so he is sulling his *tefillah*, which is called 'nefesh' (see *Shmuel* I, 1:15). As we know, *tefillah* without *kavanah* is like a body without a soul (*Chovos Halevavos*, *Shaar Cheshbon Hanefesh* 3), and just like a body without a *neshamah* causes others to become impure with *tumas meis*, likewise, the lack of *kavanah* sullies the *tefillah*.

Be'er Sheva

The 'Korban' of Meah Brachos Brings Abundance Into the World

"והקרבתם על הלחם" (כג יח)

Harav Yaakov Tzvi Yalish, author of *Melo Haro'im*, explained:

Reciting 100 *brachos* each day brings down an abundance of food and sustenance to the world. This is alluded to in the name of Dovid Hamelech, who instituted this practice (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 18:21): "Dovid ben Yishai...Bais Halachmi" (*Shmuel* I, 17:58), to teach us that in his merit there is *lechem*, bread and food for the creations. This *passuk* also alludes to this, "*Vehikravtem al halechem*" – if you are "*makriv*" על [which is numerically equivalent to 100] *brachos*, each day, Hashem will send you an abundance of *parnassah* from Above and you will never lack for bread.

Kol Yaakov

Bivrachah Sheleimah Venomar Amen

"תמים יהיה לרצון כל מום לא יהיה בו" (כב כא)

There is a clearly stated *halachah* regarding *korbanos* (*Megillah* 28a; *Menachos* 64b) that even though all the animals in the herd are complete and unblemished, one should choose specifically the 'meyuchad,' the special one in the herd, as a *korban*. Moreover, even after someone has already slaughtered his *korban*, if he finds a nicer and healthier animal, it is permitted for him to sacrifice the latter in the first one's place. This is even considered a *hiddur mitzvah*.

From this *halachah* we can also learn about *tefillah*, which was instituted in the place of the *korbanos* (*Brachos* 26b); just like with a *korban*, the one who brings it must try to bring the 'select of the herd' as a *korban*, likewise in *tefillah* – the one who davens should try that his *tefillah* should be said in the most perfect way possible. Therefore, because answering amen is part of the *brachah* (*Rema Orach Chaim* 167 2), and a *brachah* that is not answered with amen is not a complete *brachah* (*Zohar Parashas Eikev* p. 271 1), it is worthy that a person should be strict to make a *brachah* in front of others so that they answer amen after him. They should also answer amen after the *brachah* of others, and thus, he will be presenting a perfect *korban* before Hashem.

Rav Yaakov Dov Marmorštein, shlita,
the Nasi of Bnei Emunim

Tefillah on Yom Tov – An Obligation from the Torah

"מועדי ה' אשר תקראו אתם מקראי קדש" (כג ב)

There is a well-known dispute between the Rambam and the Ramban as to whether the mitzvah of *tefillah* each day is an obligation from the Torah or if it is a rabbinical commandment: The Rambam is of the opinion (*Sefer Hamitzvos Aseh* 5) that

tefillah is a *mitzvah aseh* from the Torah, while the Ramban holds (in his comments *ibid*) that the obligation of *tefillah* each day is a *takanah* of Chazal, and from the Torah, the obligation is only to pray in a time of trouble.

In this *parashah*, the Ramban explained the words of the *passuk*: "Mikra'ei kodesh" – "that on this day they should all be called and gathered to sanctify it. Because it is a mitzvah for Am Yisrael to gather in the House of Hashem on the Mo'ed – to sanctify the day in public with *tefillah* and praise to Hashem..." The Bais Yosef writes that this is why they were strict to include these words in the *nusach* of the *tefillos* of the Moadim: "Vatiten lanu ... moadim lesimchah...mikra kodesh."

Based on this, the *Pri Migadim* writes that with regard to Yamim Tovim, the Ramban agrees with the Rambam that the obligation of *tefillah* is *d'Oraisa*, and not more. But from the fact that he writes that one should "sanctify the day in public with *tefillah*" it seems that his opinion is also that the obligation to daven with a *minyan* on Yom Tov is also from the Torah. As Chazal say (*Sanhedrin* 74b): "פרהסיא", the public, is a minimum of ten people."

However, the Aderes explained that the reason that the Ramban wrote that we must sanctify Yom Tov with davening is not because of the obligation of the special *tefillah* for the Moadim, but rather because they are *yemei din*, days of judgement. As Chazal say (*Rosh Hashanah* 16a): "At four times the world is judged: on Pesach for the grain, on Atzeres [Shavuot] for the fruit of the tree, on Rosh Hashanah – all the denizens of the world pass by Him...and on Chag [Succos], they are judged about water." The time of *din* is like a time of trouble, when the Ramban holds that it is obligatory from the Torah to daven even during the rest of the year.

Bais Yosef, *Orach Chaim*, 487 beginning with *Seder Hayom*; *Pri Migadim*, *ibid* 490 in *Mishbetzos Zahav* 2; *Ataros Adar Vayikra* 22:32

We have been promised by Rabi Shimon that in the merit of answering amen –

The Gates of Heaven open, and Am Yisrael's *tefillos* are accepted.
(*Vayeilech* 285 2)

Tremendous joy pervades all the worlds.
(*ibid*)

One merits *arichus yamim*.
(*Shelach* 162 1)

One's decrees of seventy years are torn up.
(*Tikkunei Zohar* 40 1)

One merits special protection, as it says (*Tehillim* 31:24): "Emunim notzer Hashem."
(*Vayeilech* 286 1)

Birchos Hashachar Aloud With kavanah Bechavrusa

In honor of the *hilula* of Rabi Shimon Bar Yochai, let us take upon ourselves to be careful to elevate and glorify Shem Shamayim by answering amen with *kavanah* after *Birchos Hashachar* and after every *tefillah* and *brachah*. Thus we will surely merit all the *yeshuos* and *brachos*.

Yigdal (3): The Second Principle: Yichud Hashem

The Source of Emunah of the Yichud

The second stanza of the *piyut* is "Echad v'ein yachid k'Yichudo, ne'elam, vegam ein sof l'achduso," which describes the second of the Thirteen Principles of Faith, the *Yichud Hashem*. We were commanded this in the *passuk* (Devarim 6:4): "Shema Yisrael Hashem Elokeinu Hashem Echad." After being commanded to believe in the *metzius Hashem*, and that He created the world and sustains it all times, the Torah commands us to believe that Hashem is One. As we declare in *Ani Ma'amin*: "ShehaBorei Yisbarach Shemo Hu yachid v'ein yechidus kamohu beshum panim veHu Jevado Elokeinu Hayah, hoveh veyihyeh." Rabi David Hakochavi (*Sefer Habatim Sefer Mitzvah, Mitzvas Aseh 2*) writes that in order to strengthen among us thus *ikkar* of *emunah*, we were commanded to recite *Krias Shema* each day in the morning and in the evening.

The Rambam (*Krias Shema 1 4*, according to *Pesachim 56a*) writes that before his passing, Yaakov Avinu urged his sons to strengthen themselves in this principle of faith. He said: "We have a tradition that when Yaakov Avinu gathered his sons in Egypt at the time of his passing, he commanded them and urged them about the *Yichud Hashem*, and the path of Hashem that Avraham and Yitzchak, his father, had followed...and he said to them: my sons, is there is one among you who is not with me on the *Yichud Hashem*?... And they all responded, 'Shema Yisrael Hashem Elokeinu Hashem Echad,' meaning, *shema*, hear from our father, Yisrael, that Hashem Elokeinu Hashem Echad."

The Essence of the Faith
in Yichud Hashem

There are many details in the world that can be described as 'singular' but in actuality, they are comprised of forces and various details, and therefore their uniqueness can be compartmentalized. Indeed, at the time of creation, when Adam Harishon was created, he was not considered singular, even though there were no other people, because his essence was comprised of various limbs and organs, many varied emotions and different desires. In contrast, when we say of Hashem that He is Echad, we refer to eternal *Yechidus* that is not comprised of other elements. HaKadosh Baruch Hu is the absolute "One", and there is no other being that can be compared to Him in the universe. (Rambam *Yesodei HaTorah*, 1 7, 2 10)

In addition, the creations recognize the Creator through His actions, and thus He is sometimes revealed as compassionate and forgiving, and other times as a Judge who metes out punishment. As such, there were many philosophers who mistakenly said that there are many gods, and each one had a unique trait. That is why the Torah emphasizes, "Hashem Echad" – Hashem is One, and Only, and He Alone created the world, and He alone sustains it and leads it every single moment, without any assistance or partnership. There is no other creator and leader besides Him. (*Rosh Amanah*, Chapter 20 in the *Rambam* there; *Derech Hashem* Vol. IV, Ch. 4, 1)

This is what the poet intended when he stated "Echad" – HaKadosh Baruch Hu is singular in number, and there is no other creator or ruler aside for Him. Likewise, "v'ein yachid k'Yichudo" – and even in His Essence of "Yachid" He is in one complete entity that is unmatched in the world (*Siddur Haya'avetz; Siddur Ohr Hachamah*). Besides that, He is "ne'elam vegam ein sof l'achduso." In other words,

despite the fact that "ein keitz l'achduso" – that His *Yechidus* has no beginning and no end, and it fills the entire world, and we feel it every moment, still, it is beyond what we can fathom, because our limited minds do not have the ability to grasp the meaning of this. (*Eitz Yosef, Siddur Otzar Hatefillos*)

Echad, Yachid U'Meyuchad

The pure and complete faith that Hashem is the only Ruler in His world is "an *ikkar gadol* upon which everything is contingent" (Rambam *Yesodei HaTorah* 1 6). The Ramchal writes on this matter in his *sefer Da'as Tevunos* (36): "And one who believes in the *Yichud* and understands its essence needs to believe that HaKadosh Baruch Hu is an Echad Yachid Umevuchad, and that there is no deterrent or preventive at all for Him, on any front, rather He alone rules over everything...There is no one below Him who has control over the world, meaning there is no minister or any force, as the idol worshippers believed. Not only that, but He alone supervise all His creations with *Hashgachah pratis*, and there is nothing that is born into His world unless He wills it and makes it happen. It is not coincidence, or nature, or fate, rather He is the judge of the whole world, and everything that is in it, and He decrees everything that will be done in the Upper and Lower worlds until the end of all the *madreigos* in every single creation."

Indeed, the *Smag* writes (*Mitzvas Aseh 2*): "And all of Yisrael are grounded with the firm faith that the Creator of all is the Echad uMeyuchad." This faith is so imbedded in the hearts of Am Yisrael that throughout the generations, Jews gave up their lives for *Yichud Hashem* as stated in the *tefillah*: "Avinu Malkeinu asei lema'an tevuchim al Yichudecha."

To Remove the Heresy

Chazal instituted special *takanos* to eradicate the view of the heretics, who said that, *chalilah*, 'there are two entities.' In the *brachos* of *Krias Shema*, they established that we say during *Shacharis* "Yotzer Ohr Uborei Choshech," and at *Maariv* we say "Golei ohr mipnei choshech vechoshech mipnei ohr." They were particular to mention both the light and the darkness during the day and night *tefillos*, and did not suffice with mentioning light by day and darkness at night. This was in order to eradicate the thoughts from the hearts of the heretics who said that the One who created the light did not create the darkness, and this was meant to declare that there is One Creator who created everything. (*Rabbeinu Yonah Brachos 5b* in *Dapei HaRif*)

The *Mishnah* further states (*Brachos 33b*) that anyone who says "Modim modim" is silenced. The *Gemara* (*ibid*) explains that the reason for this is that when a person doubles the language of his praise, he seems to be thanking two entities, *chalilah*. Therefore, we must silence even one who says "Shema shema" because it appears as though he is accepting authority from two deities. The *Yerushalmi* (*Megillah 4 10*) says further that for the same reason we must also silence one who says "amen, amen."

The Creator, Blessed is He, is *Echad* and there is none other besides Him, and *ein* in all of creation a *Yachid k'Yechudo* in complete and absolute unity, that is not comprised of various parts at all. He is *Ne'elam* from what we can fathom, even though *v'ein sof l'achduso* that fills up all of Creation.

A Son – Decreed by Beis Din

The *gaon* Harav Pinchas Epstein, *zt"l*, the Raavad of the Eida Hachareidis in Yerushalayim, was known for being zealous on every holy matter. As part of his job as the head of the *batei din* of the Eida Hachareidis, he was responsible for issuing *kashrus* certificates of the Eida Hachareidis, which is renowned for its *hiddur*, to businesses and factories that passed the strict *kashrus* criteria of the Badatz.

Business owners in Yerushalayim and beyond knew that it was not easy to obtain such a *kashrus* certificate from the Raavad, because he was very strict about every detail of every stipulation the *beis din* made, and refused to compromise in the slightest. His practices and his stringencies were catalysts for the success of the Badatz *hechsher* all over Israel, as people rely on it completely.

Aside for the many stringencies that he implemented in the *kashrus* organization that he led, the Raavad also refrained from giving a *hechsher* on products that were considered "mosros," excessive luxuries. He claimed that there was no justification for taking upon himself the responsibility of giving *kashrus* for something that was an extra. He was so responsible that he occasionally conducted surprise inspections in factories and businesses. Together with his colleagues on the Badatz, he would arrive without advance notice to be able to see firsthand that the directives of the *beis din* were being adhered to. Indeed, these surprise inspections proved themselves, as it happened that a factory would be disqualified and lost its *kashrus* certificate as the result of *kashrus* violations that were discovered during these inspections.

One time, the Raavad and his *beis din* came for a surprise inspection at a candy factory that was owned by a G-d fearing Yid from the communities that immigrated from Romania.

When the members of the Badatz entered, the owner of the factory was surprised to see them, but he obligingly accompanied them on an extensive tour through the factory's various sections. He stood on the side anxiously, hoping that they would not, *chalilah*, find something that would lead them to remove the *hechsher* from the factory into which he had invested his whole life.

For a long while, the Raavad and the members of the *beis din* walked around the factory, inspecting each and every machine, visiting the store rooms and the production floor, as they listened to the explanations of the one in charge of *kashrus* at the facility.

Finally, the inspection came to an end, and the members of the delegation were satisfied. The factory met all the *kashrus* requirements, and the rabbanim even expressed their admiration for the exceptional *kashrus* rules that were implemented.

As the Raavad was about to bid farewell to the factory owner, the man surprised them by saying:

"Morai Verabbosai, in *Maseches Brachos* (31b), Chazal explain from the words of Eli HaKohen to Chana, the mother of Shmuel,

after he thought she was inebriated (*Shmuel* 1, 1:17): "Lechi leshalom v'Elokei Yisrael yiten es sh'elasech asher sha'alt me'Imo" – "from here we learn that one who suspects his friend of something that he did not do, should appease him, and moreover, should give him a *brachah*." From that *brachah*, as we know, Chana merited an exceptional *yeshuah*, and was blessed with a son."

Here, the man burst into tears, and continued in a choked up voice: "When you chose to come here for a surprise inspection, you did it only because you suspected me and doubted my faithfulness. Now that I have passed the inspection successfully *baruch Hashem*, I am therefore like Chana, as I was suspected of something that I did not do. My wife and I do not have children for many years already, and the doctors have given up. Therefore, I ask you that like Eli HaKohen at the time, you should also appease me, and decree, as a *beis din*, that we should be granted with offspring from Above!"

A deep silence hovered over the office, as the man spoke with deep emotion, in a broken voice; but his claim was clear!

After a short consultation, Rav Epstein declared in a confident voice: "After consulting with one another on this man's claim, we have found that he is right, and therefore, we must appease him and bless him. Therefore, we hereby guarantee that in due time, he and his wife will be blessed with offspring, *b'ezras Hashem*!"

Indeed, as the *beis din* ruled, and against the prediction of every doctor, a year later, a son was born to the couple, to the joy of all who knew them.

Right after the birth, the excited father hurried to the home of the Raavad to inform him that the *brachah* had been fulfilled, and to invite him to serve as a *sandak* for the new baby at the bris, which was to be held at the *simchah* hall in Bikur Cholim Hospital. The Rav rejoiced with him, and accepted the invitation and blessed him warmly. After the man left, the Raavad said to the *kashrus* director, Harav Avraham Aharon Scheinberger, who was seated beside him, "Very soon, everyone will likely be talking about the 'moifess' that happened here, but you should know that this was no *moifess* at all."

He then continued, revealing a bit of his great piety:

"When I returned home after our visit to the factory, I suddenly thought about the tremendous responsibility I had undertaken. This simple Yid thinks I am a great person, and he is sure that the Raavad of Yerushalayim has the power to decree in the *Beis Din Shel Ma'aloh*. What will be if *chalilah*, my words would not be fulfilled? This could cause a *chilul Hashem*..."

"As such, I did not delay, and I took a *Sefer Tehillim*, and for several hours, I poured my heart out to our Father in heaven, to send a *yeshuah* to this man, and *baruch Hashem*, my *tefillos* were accepted and the man saw a *yeshuah*..."

Vaya'amod Pinchas Vayepallel, Vol. I, p. 168; Tiv Hakehillah, Chag HaSukkos, p. 775