

# Vechol Maaminim

"A Weekly Leaflet From 'Bnei Emunim



## IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

## Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

### Those on the 'Mizrach' Were Pushed to the Back

"ויקרא משה להושע בן נון יהושע" (ג טז)

An interesting *din Torah* was presented to **Harav Yaakov Shimshon of Shpivovka**:

The *gabbaim* of one of the shuls wanted to expand the shul towards the *mizrach* side, by destroying the original *mizrach* wall and rebuilding it a distance away. At the end of the expansion work, a number of rows were added on the eastern side of the shul, while the original *mizrach* benches were pushed back.

The veteran occupants of the *mizrach* who suddenly found themselves seated in the middle of the shul demanded that the *gabbaim* assign them places at the front, as they used to be. They claimed that they had a *chazakah* to sit on the eastern wall. The *gabbaim* countered that their regular places had remained where they were, and if they wanted to move to the new benches in the front of the shul, they had to pay the new rate that the *gabbaim* had set for these preferred seats.

Rav Yaakov Shimshon listened attentively to their claims, and finally ruled in favor of the *gabbaim*, based on this *passuk*:

The *Yerushalmi* (*Sanhedrin* 2:6) says that the letter "yud" was added to the name of Yehoshua as a compensation for it being taken away from the name of Sarah Imeinu, when it was changed from 'Sarai' to 'Sarah.' The question is, does one wrong get fixed by another wrong? Because of this addition, the letter 'hei', which until then had been first in the name of Hoshea, now became the second letter, after the 'yud.'

However, we can learn from this that even though a *yud* was added in front of it, as long as the letter *hei* remains in its place, it cannot claim anything. "So, too," the

### 'Amen' That Hashem Wants Us

"אם חפץ בנו ה' והביא אתנו אל הארץ הזאת ונתנה לנו ארץ אשר הוא זבת חלב ודבש" (ד ח)  
How could Yehoshua and Kalev use the wording of "*im chofetz banu Hashem*" – if He wants to grant us the land that we were promised? Moreover, we know that the objective of the *meraglim* was to cast doubt on the inheritance of the land, as it says (*Devarim* 1:27): "In Hashem's hatred of us He took us out from Mitzrayim to give us to the hands of the Emori to destroy us."

**Harav Yaakov Tzvi Meklenburg** explained:

The word "*im*" written in this *passuk* is not meant as a condition – if - but rather, it is from the same root as 'amen', meaning, '*emes*,' it is truth: "*Im chafetz Hashem banu*" – it is true that Hashem wants us, and certainly He will grant us the promised land.

*Haksav Vehakabbalah, Bereishis 28:20; Bamidbar 14:8*

Rav said to the plaintiffs, "you remained in your original place. What do you care if a few 'yuds' (Yidden – i.e. Jewish people) were added in front of you?"

*Shemuos Tovos – Razin D'Oraisa, p. 3*

### A Tefillah 'Beshem Omrah' Brings the Geulah

"ויאמר ה' סלחתי כדבריך" (ד כ)

It was Yom Kippur night. With the conclusion of *Kol Nidrei*, before the *passuk* "*Vayomer Hashem salachti kidvarecha*," which is customarily recited, **Harav Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev** stopped and called out to the *mispallelim*: "*Chazal say (Avos 6:6): 'Anyone who says something in the name of the person who said it brings Geulah to the world,' let us therefore say a 'davar beshem*

*omro*' and hasten the *Geulah*.' Immediately he cried, "*Vayomer Hashem*, and Hashem said, *salachti kidvarecha*, I have forgiven, as you have said."

*Zechusa D'Avraham Va'eira*

### 'A Day for a Year' Corresponding to 'A Day for a Year'

"יום לשנה יום לשנה תשא את עונותיכם" (ד לד)

Why was Hashem so strict about the judgement of Bnei Yisrael by punishing them for an entire year for each day that they sinned?

**Harav Eliezer Ashkenazi** explained:

It is specifically because of the severity of the punishment that Am Yisrael received an abundance of good for generations to come. Because of the power of the concept of '*yom leshanah*', a day for a year, they merited Yom Kippur, where in one day, Am Yisrael can atone for the sins that they did for an entire year, as it says (*Vayikra* 16 34): "*Vehaysah zos lachem lechukas olam lechaper al Bnei Yisrael mikol chatosam achas beshanah*."

With this we can understand the reason that the *passuk* states twice "*yom leshanah yom leshanah*." Bnei Yisrael were punished with 'a day for a year,' but with that, they merited to receive good that continued for generations, 'a day for a year' on which "*tis'u es avonoseichem*" – your sins for an entire year are atoned.

That is what Moshe Rabbeinu prayed for in the *perek* of *Tefillah l'Moshe*: "*Samcheinu k'yemos inisanu shenos ra'inu ra'ah*." (*Tehillim* 90:15): "*Samcheinu*" bring us joy in that You give us a 'day for a year' in which our sins of an entire year are atoned, corresponding to '*shenos ra'inu ra'ah*' – the forty years that we remained in the desert as a punishment for the sin of the Meraglim – '*yom leshanah*.'

*Ma'asei Hashem*

## Sixty Amens in Shacharis

In his *sefer Nidchei Yisrael* (Ch. 5) the Chofetz Chaim calculates the number of *amenim* a person can accumulate each day in *Shacharis*. He writes:

"If a person davens *betzibbur*, he will get a few dozen more *mitzvos* each day from the 'amens' that he answers to every single *brachah* that he hears. And they are: 16 amens of *Birchos Hashachar*, another 4 amens until *Shemoneh Esrei*, 19 amens for *Chazaras Hashatz*, and another number of amens in *Kaddish* that is recited in every *tefillah betzibbur*, which brings us to nearly sixty amens in *Shacharis* alone. The merit of one who is careful to answer amen is greater than every *brachah* that he hears..."

*Nidchei Yisrael Ch. 5*



**Yigdal (7) : The Seventh Principle – The Superiority of Moshe Rabbeinu’s Prophecy**

**Moshe Rabbeinu – The Chosen Prophet**

With the words “*lo kam b’Yisrael*, there has not risen in Yisrael like Moshe another navi and seer into His Likeness,” the poet expresses the seventh principle, which determines that the level of *nevuah* that Moshe Rabbeinu had exceeded the level of *nevuah* of all the prophets. Moshe Rabbeinu achieved the highest level of *nevuah* – a level that none of the other *Nevi'im* merited to reach – and this includes both those before him and those that came after him. The Rambam explains this principle (*Peirush Hamishnyaos, Sanhedrin*, Introduction to Ch. 10): “And it is that we believe that he [Moshe Rabbeinu] is the father of all prophets who were before him, and who rose after him; they were all below him in stature. And he was the chosen of all of humankind, who acquired from the Knowledge of Hashem more than any other person who existed or who will exist understood or will ever understand.”

Even the Melech Hamashiach, whose arrival we anticipate every day, will not reach the level of Moshe Rabbeinu, as the Rambam writes (*Teshuvah* 9:2): “That king that will rise up from the progeny of Dovid will be wiser than Shlomo, and a great navi close to [the level of] Moshe Rabbeinu.”

This principle of faith is derived from the Torah. When Miriam and Aharon spoke about Moshe they said (*Bamidbar* 12:2): “*Harak ach beMoshe diber Hashem halo gam banu diber*, Is it only to Moshe that Hashem has spoken? Did He not also speak to us?” Thus they equated the *nevuah* of Moshe Rabbeinu to that of the rest of the prophets. Hence, HaKadosh Baruch Hu appeared to them and revealed that the level of Moshe Rabbeinu’s prophecy was above that of the other prophets. As the *passuk* says (ibid 6-8), “*Im yihyeh neviachem Hashem*, if there will be a prophet among you, I [Hashem] will make Myself known to him in a vision; in a dream I will speak to him. That is not the case with My servant, Moshe, in My entire house he is trusted. Mouth to mouth I speak to him, in a vision and not in riddles; he gazes at the likeness of Hashem.” At that time, this principle was revealed, and from that point on, anyone who equates the level of Moshe Rabbeinu’s *nevuah* to that of the rest of the prophets is denying one of the principles of the faith. (*Kovetz He aros, Bei’urei Aggados* 12:7)

The Torah then reiterates the status of Moshe Rabbeinu’s *nevuah* towards the end (*Devarim* 34:10): “*Velo kam navi od b’Yisrael k’Moshe asher yeda’o Hashem panim el panim*, and there has not ever arisen a prophet in Yisrael like Moshe, whom Hashem knew face to face.”

**The Difference Between Moshe and Other Nevi'im**

The Rambam (ibid, and in *Yesodei HaTorah* 7:6), lists four differences between the status of the *nevuah* of Moshe Rabbeinu and the level of the prophecy of other *nevi'im*:

1. All the *nevi'im* received their prophecies through an angel, and therefore, they saw their *nevuah* as a vision of parables and riddles. Moshe Rabbeinu, in contrast, received his *nevuah* from HaKadosh Baruch Hu directly, without any medium. Therefore, his *nevuah* was completely clear, as the *passuk* says (*Bamidbar* 12:8): “*Peh el peh adaber bo*, mouth to mouth I will speak to him.” Chazal state in the *Breita* (*Yevamos* 49b): “All the *nevi'im* saw an *aspaklaria she'eino mei'rah*, an obscure looking glass, while Moshe Rabbeinu saw it through an *aspaklaria me'irah*, a clear looking glass.”
2. All the *nevi'im* received their prophecies in their sleep, and even when they received *nevuah* during the day, before it happened, they fell asleep. Moshe Rabbeinu would give forth his *nevuah* when he was awake and standing, as the *passuk* says (*Bamidbar* 7:89): “And when Moshe came to the Ohel Moed to

speak to Him he would hear the Voice being spoken from above the *kapress* that was atop the *Aron Ha'eidus*, from between the two *keruvim*; and He spoke to him.”

3. In contrast to all the other *nevi'im*, who became weaker and gripped by fear and trembling when they received their *nevuah*, the *passuk* says of Moshe Rabbeinu (*Shemos* 33:11): “And Hashem spoke to Moshe face to face, just as a man speaks to his friend.” The Rambam explains (*Yesodei HaTorah* ibid): “Just like a person is not frightened to hear his friend speak, likewise, Moshe had the power to understand the words of the *nevuah* while he was standing intact.”

4. All the *nevi'im* were unable to prophesize whenever they wanted to. Sometimes, a *navi* could go several years without meriting any *nevuah* at all. Moshe Rabbeinu was not that way: whenever he wanted, the *nevuah* would come upon him, as we find that he said to the impure people who wanted to keep Pesach Sheini (*Bamidbar* 9:8): “*Imdu ve'eshme'ah*, stand and I will hear what Hashem will command you.” (*Rambam* ibid). Harav Chaim of Brisk added an explanation from this *passuk* that Moshe Rabbeinu could have asked HaKadosh Baruch Hu about any doubt that arose, something that even the Mmistering Angels do not have the ability to do. (*Haggadah Shel Pesach 'MiBeis Levi'* p. 175)

**Moshe Rose On High**

The poet of *Yigdal* alluded to these differences between Moshe and the other *nevi'im* when he said: “*lo kam b’Yisrael k’Moshe od*” – there is no other *navi* who would prophesize like Moshe when he was “*kam*”, awake and standing, “as one speaks to his friend.” This is because all the others prophesized while asleep. Likewise, there was no one else who merited the level of “*navi*” [from the term of speaking, as in *niv sfasayim*] as HaKadosh Baruch Hu spoke to him “*peh el peh*.” Moreover, in contrast to the other *nevi'im*, whose *nevuos* were revealed to them in riddles and parables, Moshe Rabbeinu rose to the heights of “*umabit el Temunaso*,” as it says “*umareh velo bechidos uTemunas Hashem yabit*.” (*Eitz Yosef* commentary on *Siddur Otzar Hatefillos*)

A further explanation is as follows: The essence of *nevuah* is divided into two levels: one is a limited Divine understanding that rests upon *nevi'im* on the land – a level that all *nevi'im* merited. The second is the level that only Moshe Rabbeinu merited, is that the *nevuah* elevates the one saying it to the Heavens, and as the Torah indicates, Moshe rose On High. The previous principle, “*shefa nevuaso nesano el anshei segulaso vesifarto*,” relates to the level of all the *nevi'im*, that HaKadosh Baruch Hu bestows upon them from “*shefa nevuaso*” when they are in the land of the living. This principle relates to the level of Moshe Rabbeinu, who merited that the *nevuah* elevated him On High, and “*umabit el Temunaso*” – of Hashem. (*Siddur Dover Shalom*, p. 20)

**All of Moshe’s Words Were Divrei Torah**

Harav Chaim of Brisk said that aside for the actual superiority of the *nevuah* that Moshe merited above the other *nevi'im*, even the words that Moshe Rabbeinu said had a virtue that exceeded that of the other *nevi'im*. As we find, while the words of *nevuah* said by other *nevi'im* are called “*divrei kabbalah*,” the words of Moshe’s *nevuah* were called “*divrei Torah*,” and they endure forever. Moreover, we must not add to them or derogate from them. (*Haggadah Shel Pesach 'MiBeis Levi'* p. 176)

Based on this, some explain that this is what we have in mind with the order of the stanzas in this *piyut*: “*Shefa nevuaso nesano...*” – to all the *nevi'im*, but “*lo kam b’Yisrael k’Moshe od navi...*” a fact that is also manifested in that “*Toras emes nasan l’amo K-I al yad nevi’o ne’eman beiso*” – that all of his words were *divrei Torah*. (*Kovetz Moriah*, 32-33, p. 87)

**Lo kam b’Yisrael k’Moshe od navi** whom HaKadosh Baruch Hu spoke to ‘mouth to mouth’ nor a *navi* that merited to reach the level of *umabit el temunaso* with total clarity.

**Reb Eliyahu Was Answered at Minchah**

This story took place a few years ago in a frum community in southern Eretz Yisrael. It was shared by the protagonist, Reb Eliyahu, A., a fine young man who toils in his learning, and struggles to support his family.

One evening, when Reb Eliyahu returned to his modest home, he was welcomed by a puddle of dirty water. From the expressions on the faces of his family, he realized something had happened. He gently asked what was going on, and was crestfallen to hear the response: the washing machine, which they had bought just five years earlier at a ‘bargain price’ had broken down.

Reb Eliyahu, who had some basic technical knowledge, quickly bent down to examine the underside of the machine, to see if he could pinpoint the problem. Perhaps he would be able to fix it himself. He tried a few things, but it quickly became clear that it was a serious problem with the part upon which the drum was mounted, and which made the drum spin.

Just to provide some background information, this machine was a low quality one, purchased at a rock-bottom price, and throughout its short life, it had broken down many times. Over the five years, Reb Eliyahu had spent almost double the amount he had paid for machine on various repairs and parts. That was besides all the problems he’d managed to repair himself...

This breakdown was the final straw. Any beginner technician knows that changing this part is not usually worth the price, taking into account what a new machine costs. That was especially the case for this cheap, heavily used machine.

It took Reb Eliyahu just a few minutes to realize that he had to get ahold of a different machine, and quickly.

On second thought, his conscience did not allow him to repeat the same mistake of buying a cheap, low quality machine. His wife also gently made it clear that they had to invest in a higher quality machine, which would do the work as needed and wouldn’t keep breaking down.

Reb Eliyahu, who lived very frugally, and hardly had enough to cover daily expenses, had no idea where he would get the money for this. A high quality machine cost much more than he could afford, and where would he find a second-hand machine?

He waited a day, then another, toying with the hope that perhaps something would land in his lap: a secondhand machine in good condition, or perhaps a new machine that would be offered to him for less than its true value. But after a week with no breakthrough, the mounting piles of laundry and the empty closets, his wife gently reminded him that they could not wait any longer. He had to get a different machine that very day.

Early that afternoon, Reb Eliyahu plodded heavily towards the kollel where he learned. His mind was racing, as his thoughts bounced between desperation and creative ideas. He was totally focused on the question of where he would get the money for this unexpected expense.

There were a few minutes remaining to *Minchah*, which began the second *sefer*. Reb Eliyahu sat in his place in the *kollel*, his head in his hands, as he pondered the dismal situation. Suddenly, he had an idea. *Tefillas Minchah* was an auspicious time, and the One Who answered Eliyahu HaNavi at *Minchah* would answer Eliyahu the *avreich* in his *tefillah*.

He davened a very lofty and spiritual *Minchah*. He invested all his energy into it, and poured out his heart in prayer to the Almighty to send him assistance and find him a way to bring happiness to his family with a new, working machine, that could reliably serve them for the long term.

When he finished davening, he walked over to his regular seat. His heart was heavy, but ‘*lulei Sorascha*’, if not for Your Torah Hashem...When he began to learn, his worries dissipated, and his engagement in the world of Abayei and Rava pushed his worries to the back of his mind.

After three solid hours of productive learning, the *sefer* came to an end, and Reb Eliyahu landed back in the world of mundane issues. His thoughts began to race again; perhaps he should take a loan? Maybe he should ask the *rosh kollel* what to do? Slowly, the *bais medrash* emptied out. The *rosh kollel* also headed home and Reb Eliyahu had no choice but to strengthen his *middah of bitachon*. He had done his *hishtadlus*, his effort! He had davened! Now, the salvation of Hashem can come in the blink of an eye! The young man arrived home, and climbed the three floors to his apartment. Like in a fairy tale, there was a surprise waiting for him at the door: a brand new washing machine, made by a reputable company, in the new packaging, stood outside the door.

Absolutely stunned, he knocked at the door before opening it. His wife hurried over to greet him, her face lit up with a smile. She then shared the explanation: “This afternoon, when I went down with the children to the park, a small truck stopped near me. A tall, strapping man got out of the cab, and he held a paper that seemed to be a delivery notice. He impatiently asked me for directions to the address on his paper.

‘I’ve been lost on these streets for an hour already and I can’t find the address,’ the man grumbled. ‘I own an appliance store, and I don’t usually deal with deliveries,’ he explained apologetically. ‘Today I got stuck without delivery men, and I had to do the work myself, and then I got lost...’

I explained to him how to go to the address, and as I did, I noticed that his truck was loaded with a number of washing machines.

Because the man had noted that he owned the store, I decided to try my luck and asked: ‘Maybe you have a high quality machine second hand that you could sell to us for cheap?’

‘No,’ the man replied. ‘I only deal in new machines.’

He was about to leave, when he suddenly thought for a moment and came back over to me:

“Madam, you call this *Hashgachah pratit*...I remembered suddenly that for a while already, I have a new washing machine in the back of my truck. The delivery men took it to the customer’s home, and as they were unloading, the machine got a bang that left it with an ugly scratch along the whole side. The client insisted on getting a new machine, and I was left ‘stuck’ with a perfectly good machine, but one that I cannot sell as new. I already said that I only deal in new machines. This machine is a real annoyance for me, and is taking up space in my small truck. I must get rid of it as soon as I can. Can you take it for a nominal fee, and enjoy it in good health?’

The man finished his words and waited for me to agree. I could hardly conceal my joy. I paid him a few hundred shekels for a machine worth a few thousand, and he carried the machine up to the house.”

Reb Eliyahu and his family clearly saw the power of *tefillah*, and all they could do was thank HaKadosh Baruch Hu, Who provides for all, and Who is close to all those who call to him with sincerity.

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