

Vechele Maaminim

A Weekly Pamphlet From "Bney Emunim"

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Peninei Emunim

Pearls of Tefillah in the Parashah

Pischu Shearim

Open the Gates

The Mitzvah of Parah Is Indicative of the Whole Torah

“זאת חקת התורה אשר צוה ה' לאמור דבר אל בני ישראל ויקחו אליך פרה אדמה תמימה” (יט ב)

This *parashah* address the mitzvah of *parah adumah*, which purifies those that are impure. Why then, does the Torah begin this *parashah* with the words “*Zos chukas haTorah*” and not “*Zos chukas hataharah*”, as it opened the *parashah* of Pesach with “*zos chukas haPesach*”? (*Shemos* 12:43).

The holy *Ohr Hachaim* explained:

Fulfilling the *mitzvos sichliyos*, the *mitzvos* that have a logical reason, does not prove that we are beholden to fulfill *mitzvos*, because the non-Jews fulfill such *mitzvos* as well. Only when we fulfill *mitzvos* that are classified as a ‘*chok*,’ which has no given reason, do we show that we are beholden to fulfill all the *mitzvos* of the Torah. Therefore, the Torah begins *Parashas Parah* with “*zos chukas haTorah*” to teach us that one who fulfills this mitzvah, which has no stated reason, is considered by the *passuk* to have fulfilled the whole Torah.

Based on this, the *Be'er Moshe* of Ozherov explained what we say on Chanukah in the *tefillah* of *Al Hanissim*: “When the kingdom of Yavan rose up against Am Yisrael to make them forget the Torah and transgress the laws of Hashem, the result of ‘*leha'aviram meichukei retzonecha*,’ is necessarily “*lehashkicham Torasecha*,” because by not doing the *mitzvos* of the Torah only because Hashem commanded to do them, then Torah will be forgotten.

Ohr Hachaim; Be'er Moshe Mishpatim p. 746

Have Kavanah About the ‘Da’as HaRishonim’

“זאת חקת התורה אשר צוה ה' לאמור דבר אל בני ישראל ויקחו אליך פרה אדמה תמימה” (יט ב)

Rashi (based on *Tanchuma* 8) explained that the words of the *passuk* “*Vayikchu Eilecha*” come to teach us that HaKadosh Baruch Hu promised Moshe that this mitzvah would always be called in his name, as the “*parah* that Moshe made in the Midbar.” After Elazar ben Aharon engaged in burning the cow and preparing its ashes, what significance is there to the fact that the cow is called on Moshe’s name?

Harav Aharon Shmuel Kaidenover, author of *Tiferes Shmuel*, explained in the name of ‘*chacham echad*’:

The sages of *Kabbalah* wrote that because today we do not have the ability to have the real *kavanos* in the *tefillah* of *Shemoneh Esreh*, it is fitting for a person to have in mind in his *tefillah* ‘*al da’as hakavanos vehasodos*’ – which the *Anshei Knesses Hagedolah* had when they instituted it.

The *Midrash (Bamidbar Rabbah* 19:6) states that HaKadosh Baruch Hu said to Moshe: “I reveal to you the reason for the *parah*, but for others it is a *chukah*.” From here we can understand that all the *Kohanim* who were engaged in working with the *parah adumah* through the generations could not have the full *kavanah* when doing it, because they did not understand the reason for it. That is why they had to have in mind when doing it ‘*al da’as hakavanos* that Moshe had in the Midbar,’ and that is why this mitzvah is called in Moshe’s name for eternity.

Birchas Shmuel, Ki Sisa

A word from the founder and Nasi of Bney Emunim

‘Ani Ma’amin B’emunah Sheleimah’

Emunah is the foundation of the life of a Jew; it is the source of strength that gives him the ability to stand strong in the face of turbulent waves that threaten his spiritual and physical well-being. When Chavakuk was asked to state one foundation on which the entire Torah is based, he replied that it is *emunah*, saying “*Vetzaddik b’emunaso yichyeh*.”

In his introduction to *Perek Chelek*, the Rambam listed thirteen principles of faith, and urges the reader: “Repeat these words many times, and peruse them very well.” Indeed, that is why many people have a custom of reciting the *ikrei emunah* every day. The constant repeating imbues the *emunah* in the heart of a person.

That this is exactly what the mitzvah of amen was instituted for! It is not my *chiddush*; these words are clearly stated by Rabbeinu Bechaye in his commentary on the *passuk (Shemos 14:31)*: “*Vaya’aminu b’Hashem uve-Moshe avdo*” – and because *emunah* is the foundation of the entire Torah, *Chazal* instituted for us to respond amen in *tefillah* and to *brachos*, as it is derived from the same root as *emunah*...

Yes! Every time we hear a Jew praising his Creator with a *brachah*, and agree to his *brachah* by answering amen, we deepen and more firmly establish the roots of *emunah* in our hearts. An excellent example of this is answering amen after *Birchos Hashachar*.

When answering amen to *Birchos Hashachar*, we declare our *emunah* that there is a King of the world, Who leads it with *Hashghachah pratis* all the time, at every moment, and He is the One who renews our power of vision, and gives us the ability to move our limbs, and He prepares the footsteps of man. In all, He is “*Gomel chassadim tovim l’Amo Yisrael*.”

Likewise in *Shemoneh Esreh*; when answering amen to *Chazaras Hashatz*, we declare our *emunah* in *techiyas hameisim* and in the arrival of *Mashiach* by the fact that HaKadosh Baruch Hu created the world, is the Almighty, and we are dependent on Him all the time for every single thing.

The same is true when we answer amen to the *brachah* of “*shehakol nihiyeh bidvaro*” and all the *Birchos Hanehenin* that we will not detail here, because the concept is clear. A wise person will hear this and derive the right lesson.

Thanks to the tens of thousands of amens that we answer, our *emunah*, with all its facets, becomes part and parcel of who we are, and as a direct result of this, we have more strength to withstand the challenges of the time and to remain close to Hashem at all times and in every situation.

Good Shabbos
Yaakov Dov Marmurstein

The Thieves Were Sent from Above

Harav Shalom Meir Youngerman, *zt"l*, founder of Kehillas Bnei HaTorah in Zichron Yaakov, with its many institutions, divided his time between long stays in the Diaspora and living and teaching Torah in Eretz Yisrael. He lived in Eretz Yisrael, where he directed his institutions and disseminated Torah to many *talmidim*, and when abroad, he expended herculean efforts to raise funds to sustain those many *mosdos* and thousands of students who learned Torah within their framework, from a young to old. For the long periods that he spent in the United States, Rav Youngerman stayed in a modest basement that he rented in Boro Park. The small basement had one room in which he lived, and other rooms that served as an office, from where the financial affairs were managed for his *mosdos* in Eretz Yisrael.

In his little basement room, Rav



The Ohel Yaakov Shul in Zichron Yaakov

Youngerman utilized every free moment he had to learn Torah and *mussar*, and to write his many *chiddushim* and *seforim*. He elucidated the words of the Rishonim and made them more accessible to a wider audience of *lomdim*.

Late one evening, Rabbi Youngerman was scheduled to depart on a domestic flight to a different state, and he used the time until his departure to sit in his room and learn. Suddenly, he heard a loud thump from the direction of the small yard that separated the basement from the street. Rabbi Youngerman stopped learning and went out to the yard; he was met with a totally unexpected sight: the carcass of a large dog had been thrown onto the floor of the yard.

The health department of New York City has strict laws about the disposal

of animal carcasses, and apparently, the owner of this dead dog was trying to evade those laws. He decided to take the easiest way out, and that was to toss the dog carcass into the first yard that he came across.

Rabbi Youngerman stood across from this unwelcome guest, at a loss. Leaving the dog carcass in the yard until he turned from his trip was clearly not an option. The option of tossing it into a garbage can as is was not feasible either, because such an act in New York City is a crime, and could incur a steep fine.

He quickly had to find a desolate place where he could toss the body, but the area was densely populated, and Rabbi Youngerman was pressured for time. Having no other choice, he decided to take the dead dog along with him, hoping that on the way, he'd find a solution to his problem. In the corner of the office, he found a large valise, and suppressing his revulsion, he stuck the carcass into the valise. Then he took his hand luggage and quickly headed for the train station, dragging the heavy valise behind him.

Rabbi Youngerman was in a big hurry, and during the short walk, he looked every which way to try and find a suitable place to get rid of his load. But there were passersby the whole route, and he had to board the train still dragging the valise.

"If I don't find any other solution," Rabbi Youngerman thought morosely, "I'll have to continue with the train to the stop closest to the beach. I'll walk to the beach and surely there I'll be able to get rid of this disgusting cargo..." It was the only solution that came to mind, but it meant wasting a lot of time, and expending a lot of physical effort.

"Ribbono shel Olam," he davened quietly, "please, help me get rid of this troublesome load in the easiest and fastest way, that won't take too much energy and time, so that I can use that energy and time for Torah and *mitzvos*, instead of wasting it on this..."

As his lips were still murmuring the *tefillah*, he did not notice two

suspicious figures stealthily making their way toward him. They were two husky black men and the Rav's venerable appearance led them to conclude that surely he was carrying lots of valuable possessions. The heavy suitcase at the Rav's feet whetted their appetite and made them dizzy with anticipation at what was inside...

In those years, the subway in New York City was a magnet for such characters, and every day, there were hundreds of muggings and robberies on the subway. The muggers used to wait until a moment before the doors of the train closed, and then they would swoop down on their prey and the race away from the train with their loot in hand.

This pair of thugs drew closer to Rabbi Youngerman, planning to employ this tactic once again. The train stopped at the nearest station and the doors opened. People boarded and got off, and the minute the bell chimed warning that the doors were about to close, the two black men grabbed the heavy valise and fled through the closing doors to the bustling platform. Rabbi Youngerman stared in shock at the two '*shlemazels*' hastily moving off from the scene, their broad smiles giving away their confidence at the great wealth that surely awaited them in this case. A moment later, he burst out laughing. The passengers around him who had witnessed the theft shook their heads in surprise. They had never seen a person laughing after he'd been robbed of his possessions...

A short time later, Rabbi Youngerman arrived at his destination, and he went on his way, his lips murmuring gratitude to HaKadosh Baruch Hu for the unbelievable solution He had sent to the problem.

Until his final day, whenever Rav Youngerman told his children about what had happened and the clear miracle he had seen, he could not contain his laughter. The thought of the look on the faces of the two thieves when they discovered the 'treasure' they had found could elicit no other response than a hearty chuckle...

Heard from members of the family

The Brachah of 'Es Tzemach Dovid'

Source of the Brachah

According to the *Yerushalmi* (*Brachos* 2 5, based on *Tosafos RY"D, Taanis* 13a) the Anshei Knesses Hagedolah did not institute a separate *brachah* for the renewal of the Malchus Bais Dovid, but rather included a request for this in the *brachah* of rebuilding Yerushalayim. The closing words of this *brachah* were “*Baruch Atah Hashem Elokei Dovid Uboneh Yerushalayim.*” But from the words of the *Bavli* (*Megillah* 17b) it seems that a special *brachah* was instituted for the renewal of the kingship of the House of Dovid, and the reason it is placed next to the *brachah* on building Yerushalayim is because after Yerushalayim and the Bais Hamikdash are rebuilt, then Malchus Bais Dovid can be restored.

One opinion is that initially, the Anshei Knesses Hagedolah did not institute a special *brachah* for Malchus Bais Dovid, and included it in the *brachah* of building Yerushalayim. But after the *churban* of Bayis Sheini, when the sages saw that many *meshichei sheker* were rising up, who tried to draw the hearts of the nation after them, they instituted the *brachah* of *Es Tzemach Dovid*. The meaning of this *brachah* is that we need to anticipate the Geulah that will come with the arrival of Mashiach ben Dovid, and we should not follow those who are not descended from Dovid and yet declare themselves Mashiach. (*Tikkun Tefillah, Siddur Otzar Hatefillos, he'arah l'Shemoneh Esreh* p. 152, explaining the *Midrash* in *Bamidbar Rabbah* 18 21)

Structure of the Brachah

The *brachah* begins with the words “*Es tzemach Dovid avdecha meheirah satzmiach*” as Rabi Yehoshua ben Levi says (*Yerushalmi Brachos* 2 4) that the name of Mashiach ben Dovid is Tzemach, as the *passuk* states (*Zechariah* 6:2): “*Vehinei ish Tzemach shemo umitachtav yitzmach ubanah es Heichal Hashem.*” (*Eitz Yosef, Siddur Otzar Hatefillos*)

Later in the *brachah* we explain that we ask for the Geulah to come closer as a reward for our expectation: “*Es tzemach Dovid avdecha meheirah satzmiach...ki l'yeshuascha kivinu kol hayom.*” As Chazal say (*Yalkut Shimoni Tehillim* 736), even though “Am Yisrael only has the hope, they are worthy to receive the Geulah in the merit of this hope.” And because the anticipation for which we merit the Geulah is only an anticipation that stems from an aspiration for the Geulas Hashechinah, which is distraught with us in *galus*, we say “*Ki l'yeshuascha kivinu kol hayom,*” – “Your salvation,” Hashem, and not ours. (*Tzemach Dovid* [Rav Yosef Dovid of Salonika] *Vayechi.*)

Chazal also disclosed to us (*Shabbos* 31b) that every Jew will be asked when he comes before the Heavenly court at the end of his days if he anticipated the *yeshuah*. In light of this, he wrote in *sefer Shaar Hakavanos* (*Drushei Ha'amidah Drush* 6): “When you say ‘*ki l'yeshuascha kivinu kol hayom,*’ have in mind to anticipate and wait each day for His *yeshuah*, so that you will not be embarrassed after your passing, when you come to judgement and are asked, ‘did you anticipate the *yeshuah*?’”

Essence of the Brachah

The twelfth principle of faith of the Rambam (*Peirsuh Hamishnah Sanhedrin* Introduction to Ch. 10) obligates us to believe that the Melech Hamashiach will be descended from Dovid and Shlomo, and that he will reveal himself and come and redeem us as the Torah and the Nevi'im promised.

The Maharal explains that for this reason, we do not begin this *brachah* with the request “*Tatzmiach lanu es tzemach Dovid.*” Because this could be understood as if we *chalilah* are not sure about the arrival of Mashiach and we need to ask for it. But Chazal instituted to begin with the words “*Es tzemach Dovid avdecha meheirah satzmiach,*” meaning that we believe in the resurrection of Malchus Bais Dovid, and we only ask that it happen speedily in our day. (*Nesivos Olam, Nesiv HaTorah* Ch. 14)

The Rambam (*Melachim* 11:1) wrote: “*Melech hamashiach* is destined to stand and restore Malchus Bais Dovid to its glory...and anyone who does not believe in it, or someone who does not wait for his arrival, does not only deny the rest of the Nevi'im, but also the Torah and Moshe Rabbeinu...” Harav Yitzchak Zev of Brisk further explained these words of the *Rambam*, that it is not enough to believe in the coming of Mashiach, but rather we have to live in constant expectation for his arrival, because someone who believes with full *emunah* that Mashiach can be revealed to us at any moment, will always wait for his arrival. This concept also rises from the fact that we declare in this *brachah*: “*Ki l'yeshuascha kivinu kol hayom,*” and not “*bechol yom.*” We say “the whole day” because we are constantly anticipating the Geulah. (*Peninei Rabbeinu HaGri"z* p. 85)

Effect all Yeshuos

The *mekubal* Harav Yaakov Tzemach wrote in his *sefer Naggid ve'Mitzvah* (*Amidah*) about the special *kavanah* that one can have in mind when saying “*Ki l'yeshuascha kivinu kol hayom.*” He wrote: “And I also mean that one should anticipate the *yeshuah* of Hashem, that He does with us, and saves us from several blows each and every day and every minute. I found a great purpose in times of trouble with this” (his words cited in *Shaarei Teshuvah Orach Chaim* 118 1). This means that although the *kavanah* of *tefillah* is for the anticipation of the Geulah, the Mahar"i Tzemach added to it the anticipation for a personal *yeshuah* that a person needs at the time, which he said was very beneficial for him. The *Pele Yoetz* (*Teshuah*) brings in the name of the Arizal that one should do so in a practical sense, and concludes “and there is a wondrous benefit to this.”

The *Shomer Emunim* (*Ma'amar Hageulah* Ch. 3) explained that specifically because the *tefillah* “*Ki l'yeshuascha kivinu kol hayom*” is directed towards the Geulah, a person can effect through it any personal *yeshuah* that he needs, because all *yeshuos* are included in the Geulah Sheleimah.

Kavanah of Amen

It is true that You will grow the *yeshuah* and may we merit .that it happen speedily in our day

”וכאשר תקום מן הספר, תחפש באשר למדת אם יש בו דבר אשר תוכל לקיימו”

Otzros Emunim

Reciting Birchos Hashachar Bechavrusa

Reinstituting a Practice That Was Forgotten

At the end of 5770, a Bney Emunim rally was held in Bnei Brak to strengthen the answering of amen; it was graced by the presence of the Shevet Halevi. He addressed the gathering, and spoke about the practice of reciting *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa*. He said:

“There was an ancient practice in Am Yisrael that they would recite all the *Birchos Hashachar betzibbur*, including the *brachos* before “*Hanosein lasechvi binah*” and so forth. Everyone would make the *brachos* together – as one recited the *brachah* and his friends answered amen, and then they would switch, a different one made the *brachos* and another answered. This practice was forgotten in recent times, and our *chashuve* friend Rav Yaakov Dov Marmurstein merited to grasp onto the *eitz hachaim* of being *mezakeh* the *rabbim*, in his actions to strengthen the answering of amen. He aspires to revive and reinstitute this ancient *minhag*, fulfilling the words “they were forgotten and then reestablished once again” (*Shabbos* 104a).

He Makes Brachos Aloud, Slowly

The founder and Nasi of Bney Emunim, Rav Yaakov Dov Marmurstein, *shlita*, also merited to receive a holy letter from the Shevet Halevi, offering *chizuk* for his work to establish the custom of reciting *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa*:

B”H Chodesh Harachamim Vehaslichos 5769,

I have heard and rejoiced that my talmid, who is very active in work of tzedakah and chessed, Rav Yaakov Dov Marmurstein, ט” לאוי, has, with a spirit of mitzvah, come up with the idea of arousing the public and instilling in the young generation the early minhag of reciting Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa and other brachos out loud, and being mezakeh a person’s friend with answering amen. My talmid has invested a lot of his resources and energies to habituate people to this good practice, and he fulfills himself the words ‘האני מאן דבעי למהוי חסידא – לקיים מילי דברכות’.

It is brought down in Chazal about the greatness of answering amen, and these ancient words are well-known. Moreover, it causes us to inculcate the young people to recite brachos slowly, with kavanah, out loud. And see the story in the Ohr Zarua, Vol. II, Hilchos Shabbos, 42 on this subject.

Therefore, I am offering my support and encouragement to him to continue with this, and we are only mezarrez those who are zerizim. In the merit of this great mitzvah and his efforts for Torah and chessed, may he and his family be blessed with yeshuah and rachamim, and they should succeed in all that they do.

*His Rebbi who seeks his welfare
[Signature]*

Igros Emunim

Readers’ Letters

Dear Vechol Ma’aminim, and Rav Yaakov Dov Marmurstein, *shlita*,

The pamphlet on *Parashas Naso* stated that when reciting each *brachah*, one fulfills two *mitzvos*. One is the actual recital of the *brachah*, and the other is fulfilling the mitzvah of *Meah Brachos*. This is a beautiful and inspiring insight.

I thought that in light of this, that even according to the view that davening *Maariv* is optional (see *Brachos* 26b), it is only ‘optional’ with relation to the actual obligation of the *tefillah*. But with regard to the obligation of *Meah Brachos* it is mandatory, especially in light of what appears from the words of the *poskim*, that the obligation of *Meah Brachos* is fulfilled primarily with the *brachos* that Chazal instituted in the regular routine of the day.

It is possible that this is why the Rambam ruled (*Tefillah* 1 6) “that *Tefillas Arvis* is not obligatory like *Shacharis* and *Minchah*, but nevertheless, all of Am Yisrael, wherever they dwell, have the practice of davening *Maariv*, and it was accepted by them as a mandatory *tefillah*.” In other words, it is not mandatory by the *din* of *tefillah*, but it was accepted as mandatory in order to fulfill the mitzvah of *Meah Brachos* through the *brachos* we make throughout the day.

With blessings for many *brachos*,

S. Friedman,

The Negev region, Israel

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Tzaddik B’Emunaso

Amen and Brachos in the Teachings of One Who Has Yahrtzeit



The Gerrer Rebbe, the Lev Simchah, zy”a

The Lev Simchah

7 Tammuz 5752

The Lev Simchah of Ger was born to his father, the Imrei Emes, on 23 Nissan 5658 in the town of Gur, Poland. With the passing of his father, the Imrei Emes, his brother, the Bais Yisrael took on the mantle of leadership. The Lev Simchah was exceedingly close to him, and conducted himself like a regular *chassid*, with complete *bittul*, submission, and modesty.

In 5737, when the Bais Yisrael passed away, the Lev Simcha was in his eightieth year, and he did not want to accept the leadership. But he acceded to the request of the community and undertook leadership. Although he led his life concealed from the public, when he began to lead, everyone was able to see the ‘*ohr olam*, the brilliant light, inside him. He spoke in a measured, succinct way, but his demands were piercing and comprehensive. He focused largely on one central tenet – *dveikus* in Hashem.

In his later years, he fell ill and on Wednesday 7 Tammuz, 5752 he passed away. He was laid to rest in the burial *ma’arah* of Ger on Har Hazeisim in Yerushalayim.

The Great Merit of Answering Amen

“The *Midrash* states (*Devarim Rabbah* 7 1): ‘There is nothing greater for HaKadosh Baruch Hu than an amen that Am Yisrael answer.’ Perhaps the world needs to become more aware, and to know of the great importance and virtue of answering amen. The world does not know what they have merited [*vos m’farmugt*] with this great thing of answering amen.” (*Lev Simchah, Ki Savo*)

Meah Brachos Corresponding to 100 Gates

Chazal cited the *passuk* in *Devarim* (10:12) as the source for the obligation of *Meah Brachos*: “ועתה ישראל מה ה’ – אלוקיך שאל מעמך” – do not read it מה but rather מאה. The expression שאל מעמך was written specifically regarding *Meah Brachos*, because each day, one hundred gates of *brachah* open in the merit of reciting *Meah Brachos* (*Rekanati Toldos*). And because HaKadosh Baruch Hu wishes to bestow all good on Am Yisrael, He therefore asks Am Yisrael to recite *Meah Brachos* each day, so that they should merit to receive this abundance. (*Lev Simchah, Toldos*)