

Vechol Maaminim



A Weekly Leaflet From "Bnei Emunim"

IN THE PATHWAYS OF FAITH

Divrei Torah About Amen and Tefillah in the Parashah

"Chuppah" Before "Good Deeds" – How?

“וביום השמיני ימול בשר ערלתו” (יב ג)

“Chazal say, one who performs a milah says ‘Asher Kidshanu bemitzvosav vetzivanu al hamilah.’ The father of the child says, ‘Asher kidshanu bemitzvosav vetzivanu lehachniso bevrivo shel Avraham Avinu.’ All those standing around say, ‘Keshem shenichnas labris ken yikaness leTorah lechuppah ulemaasim tovim...’” (Shabbos 137b)

There is a well known question: Why is “chuppah” mentioned before “good deeds”? Does the child not pledge to do “mitzvos and good deeds” at the age of thirteen while the time of chuppah is from eighteen (Avos 5:21)?

There are several answers for this:

1. The Avudraham explained: It is true that the son pledges mitzvos and good deeds at the age of thirteen, but with regard to Heavenly judgment, he is not punished until he is twenty (see Shabbos 89b) – which is after the time of chuppah.

2. The Ksav Sofer explains this according to the words of Chazal (Kesubos 72a): “Eizo hein maaseh yadav shel adam? What are the deeds of a person? This means his sons and daughters.” And that is what we bless the new baby: after he enters the chuppah he should quickly merit “maasim tovim” – sons and daughters following the right path.

3. The Cheshek Shlomo answered this with a chiddush, that chuppah comes before mitzvos to teach us that it is better for a person to bring his son to the chuppah as quickly as possible, even before he reaches the age of mitzvos.

The Cheshek Shlomo related that his brother, Harav Betzalel Hakohen of Vilna, was famed as a brilliant illuy already as a child. A wealthy gvir who wanted him as a son-in-law, took him as a chassan when he was just eleven years old. At the time, his father Harav Yisrael Moshe said that that is what we bless the baby: that he should ‘enter Torah’ and be so successful that he should be brought

to ‘chuppah’ before he reaches the age of ‘maasim tovim.’

Avudraham Birchas Hamilah; Ksav Sofer al HaTorah in the introduction to Ohel Leah; Binyan Shlomo, introduction; ibid siman 10

“Double Remuneration” For a Bris Milah

“וביום השמיני ימול בשר ערלתו” (יב ג)

“Ubayom hashmini yimol” – it does not say that he should expend any money on the bris. Come and see how much Am Yisrael love the mitzvos that they spend money on them to preserve the mitzvos and to be happy

with them. HaKadosh Baruch Hu said: You preserve My mitzvos and are happy with them, and I will compound your happiness.” (Tanchuma 5)

Harav Yosef Leib Sofer, the Rav of Paksh, clarified:

Although Chazal have already said (Kiddushin 39b) that “sechar mitzvah behai alma leka, the reward of a mitzvah is not given in this world,” a person is reward for the joy that he feels when does a mitzvah in this world as well. Therefore, HaKadosh Baruch Hu said to Yisrael: If you rejoice in the mitzvos “I will add to you simchah” – in this world. For this reason, it is customary to hold a festive and happy meal after the mitzvah of bris milah, to show that doing the mitzvah with joy earns him reward even in this world.

Thus we can understand the wording of the “HaRachaman” said in Birchas Hamazon after the seudah of the bris milah: “HaRachaman Hu yevarech es baal bris hamilah asher sos (who was happy) la’asos tzeddek begilah (to do justice with joy) veyshalem po’alo umaskurto kefulah (and he will pay his action and his remuneration twice)... Because the baal bris “rejoices” to do the mitzvah, therefore he will receive a “double remuneration” both in this world and in the next world.

In the same vein, there is another explanation brought for the brachah of umaskurto kefulah:

When the milah is being conducted, the baby is not worthy of receiving the full reward, because he is not yet a bar daas, he lacks the ability to desire to do a mitzvah and to rejoice with the mitzvah. But when he grows up and he has his own son and he willingly performs a bris milah on him, then it becomes clear to all that he wants and is happy with the bris that he had as a child. Thus, he completes the mitzvah that he began as a child, and then he is worthy of double reward – for circumcising his son and for the circumcising that was done on him.

Yalkut Sofer; Bayom Hashemini p. 144

Be'er Emunim

From Rabbeinu Bechayei on the parashah

“Amen” and “Milah” Are Contingent One on the Other

“וביום השמיני ימול בשר ערלתו” (יב ג)

The Gemara in Sanhedrin (110b) says: “From when does a child (a katan) come to Olam Haba? Rabi Nychman bar Yitzchak said: From when he is circumcised... We learned in a Breisa in the name of Rabi Meir: from the time he says amen.” From the Gemara it is evident that the mitzvah of answering amen is equal to the mitzvah of milah. Indeed it is, because both were inherited from Avraham Avinu. Avraham was the first to be commanded to do the milah, and the nusach we say in the brachah is: “l’hachniso bevrivo shel Avraham Avinu.” On the other hand he was also the chief believer, the ma’amin – and amen and emunah are one (Rabbeinu Bechyaei Shemos 14:31). We then find that in order to be called “Zera Avraham”, the progeny of Avraham, we have to be strict about these two mitzvos, which complement one another. The sign for this is that “hamilah” (with the kollel) is “numerically equivalent to “amen

Harav Yaakov Dov Marmorstein, Chairman of Bney Emunim

The Month Surrounded by Yeshuos

In whose merit does Hakadosh Baruch Hu punish the nations of the world? Those people that go to shul in the morning and evening and answer amen, and bless “.HaKadosh Baruch Hu with amen

Tana Devei Eliyahu Rava 11



Birchas Hamazon – Birchas Boneh Yerushalayim (3)

V'Al Habayis Hagadol
V'hakadosh

In the introduction to the brachah, the words of the Yaavetz were cited, explaining the fact that we ask for mercy on the Bais Hamikdash even though it is unusual to ask for something that has been destroyed and is no longer, because the Bais Hamikdash is still alive even in this time. But its essence is concealed from our view.

This is what the holy Zohar says (Pekudei 240 2):

We must not say that the gentiles took control over the stones of Tzion and Yerushalayim and burned them. Rather, HaKadosh Baruch Hu concealed them all, and not a single one was lost. When HaKadosh Baruch Hu will rebuild Yerushalayim, those same stones will be restored to their place and their status.

The Zohar also says (Beshalach 55 2) on the passuk (Yeshayah 52:8): "Kol tzofayich nasu kol yachdav yeranenu ki ayin b'ayin yiru beshuv Hashem Tzion. The voice of Your watchmen - they raised a voice, together they shall sing, for eye to eye they shall see when Hashem returns to Tzion." - Who are "tzofayich, the watchmen?" They are those who wait expectantly for Hashem to have mercy and rebuild His home. The passuk does not say "yisru kol" - in the future but rather "nasu kol" in the past tense, to teach us that anyone who raised his voice in sobs over the destroyed House of Hashem during the galus merits to have the words "ki ayin b'ayin yiru beshuv Hashem Tzion" fulfilled.

We are given a worthy opportunity to evoke this pain in Birchas Hamazon, in the request of "v'al habayis hagadol vehakadosh shenikra Shimcha alav." As the Yesod Veshoresh Ha'avodah writes (Shaar 7, ch. 9): "And in the words 'v'al habayis hagadol vehakadosh shenikra Shimcha alav' he should insert great pain in his heart; how long will this Bais Hamikdash, our glory, remain destroyed and when will it be rebuilt so that we can bring the korbanos that we are obligated to do, so that we can generate nachas ruach for our Creator."

Greatness that Stems from
Holiness

Why do we call the Bais Hamikdash "hagadol"? Surely there are larger houses than it?

Harav Yosef Binyamin Shimonowitz, zt"l, one of the gedolim of Yerushalayim, explained: By contrast to other houses, whose size is measured by its dimensions, the Bais Hamikdash was unique in that it contained all those who came through its gates. As the Mishnah says (Avos 5:5) that even though Bnei Yisrael stood there very crowded, when they would bow down, there was space between them. This fact stemmed from the tremendous power of holiness that pervaded the Bais Hamikdash. Therefore, we include in this brachah on the Mikdash the descriptions of "Habayis hagadol vehakadosh" as one. (Yemin Yosef p. 260)

The words "shenikra Shimcha alav" can be explained according to the Gemrah that there are three things called in the Name of HaKadosh Baruch Hu, and one of them is Yerushalayim. The holy Zohar (Zohar Chadash Bereishis 17 1) says that HaKadosh Baruch Hu does not bestow His Name upon something that is destined to be lost and destroyed. We can therefore explain that that is why we note here: "V'al habayis hagadol vehakadosh shenikra Shimcha alav". Because Yerushalayim and the Mikdash are called in Your Name, surely they will not be lost to us, and we ask that You should restore them to us and they should be revealed to us with mercy. (Haggadah Shel Pesach Naftali Seva Ratzon)

Avinu Re'einu – Ro'einu

The words "Elokeinu, Avinu" are descriptions of our Creator, while "parneseinu vechalkeinu..." are requests. Regarding the

words "re'einu zuneinu" the Darkei Moshe (Orach Chaim 187 6) brought two opinions: The first is that these are requests that mean "re'eh osanu", lead us like a shepherd and "zon osanu", sustain us. The second is that these are descriptions of Hashem's Name - and according to this we have to say that it is like "Ro'enu" as the passuk says (Tehillim 23:1), "Hashem Ro'i lo echsar, Hashem is my Shepherd I shall not want."

The Taz (ibid se'if katan 7) is of the opinion that "re'einu zuneinu" are descriptions and he explained that these descriptions correspond to the requests that follow them: "parneseinu vechalkeinu, sustain and support us." Meaning "re'einu" - we believe in the ability You have to provide us with our basic and vital food items, like a father who is obligated to provide his son with food so he can live. And "zuneinu" - and also we believe that You have the ability to provide us with the luxuries that we need to live in comfort, such as fruit and the like. And thus we ask, "parneseinu" - with our necessary needs, "vechalkeinu" - with luxuries.

The Pri Migadim (Mishbetzos Zahav, ibid) noted that according to the Taz, the passuk "Hashem Ro'i lo echsar" can be explained as follows: If Hashem will provide me with my sustenance like a father and like a "ro'eh" - minimally and without luxuries, then I will be sure that I will not lack any of my share in the World to Come, as the Tanna said (Avos 6:4): "This is the way of Torah; bread with salt you should eat and water in moderation you should drink...if you do so, fortunate are you and it is good for you, fortunate you are in this world and it is good for you in the World to Come."

The Oreach Ne'eman (37) questions this explanation: How is it possible that it was established within the brachah to ask for luxuries? Did we not find in several places that Chazal condemned the request for luxuries? He answered that certainly our intention is not to ask for luxuries for our day to day needs, but rather for the needs of the Shabbos and Yom Tov seudos, when it is a mitzvah to take pleasure in them.

Special Nusach for Birchas
Hamazon of Shabbos

In light of the above, the Shulchan Aruch Harav (Piskei Hassidur, Birchas Hamazon, according to the Yerushalmi Shabbos 15 3) ruled that throughout the week we have to use "re'enu" as a form of request, and on Shabbos, when we do not ask for personal needs, we should say it "ro'einu" - as a description.

According to this, the Shefa Chaim of Sanz asked why we do not alter the request for Shabbos of "parneseinu vechalkeinu" to read "mefarneseinu umechalkeinu"? He cited the Chozeh of Lublin in his explanation of the passuk (Mishlei 1:22): "Birchas Hashem hi ta'ashir velo yosef etzev imah, the blessing of Hashem will bring wealth and will not add sadness with it." The spiritual abundance that descends from Above is also full of material good, and when the abundance is drawn from a high place, the material abundance comes with the spirituality. The Divrei Chaim of Sanzy, zy"ta, once received a person with a kvittel that had no mention of his material needs. The Divrei Chaim asked, why did you not ask for parnassah? Doesn't parnassah include everything, spirituality as well? His intent can be explained that parnassah that comes from a source of holiness includes all the spiritual needs that relate to the soul. Thus we can understand that it is indeed not worthy to ask for sustenance (mezonos) on Shabbos, because sustenance comes from the world of action, which is lower and provides only material needs—but we are permitted to ask on Shabbos for parnassah, which comes from a higher place, because it includes both kedushah and Yiras Shamayim. (Shefa Chaim Rava Deravin, Toldos 2)

Rofei Kol Basar" – The Remedy Before the Calamity"

The thick darkness that enveloped the gas station at the exit to the city of Kiryat Malachi that evening was broken from time to time by the headlights of a passing car on the highway. Reb Yosef, a learned avreich, stood on the road that led out of the gas station with a small Mishnayos in his hand. He read by the dim light of the electronic sign at the edge of the gas station. From time to time, he waved his hand in a plea to the handful of passing cars, but in the meantime, none had stopped for him.

He stood there for nearly an hour, but still, no reprieve was in sight. Reb Yosef was quite exhausted after a long day of being busy with a mitzvah in Kiryat Malachi. He wanted desperately to get home to his family in Bnei Brak.

He had not planned to end the day this way. He was supposed to have set out for home on the bus that departed Kiryat Malachi each evening at a set time for Bnei Brak. But an unexpected delay caused him to miss the bus, and because that was the last bus for the day, he had no choice but to walk quite a distance to the hitchhiking post outside the gas station on the outskirts of Kiryat Malachi, with the hope of finding a hitch that would take him closer to Bnei Brak.

Some time earlier, Reb Yosef had attended a speech delivered by his rebbi, Harav Shimshon Pincus, zt"l. At the time, he had Rav Shimshon had dedicated his speeches to strengthen the recital of brachos according to halachah, with an emphasis on the brachah of Asher Yatzar, which has known segulos for refuos and success. Rav Pincus exhorted his listeners to say the lofty brachah in a proper way, word for word, from the Siddur, and with kavanah. Reb Yosef, who considered himself a disciple of Rav Pincus, had undertaken as a result to strengthen himself in this mitzvah at any cost.

When he had arrived at the hitchhiking post, about an hour earlier, he had been happy to find a group of three yeshivah bachurim also waiting for rides. He was even happier to discover that they were also heading for Bnei Brak, and hoped that quickly they would find a suitable ride together. But the ride they were hoping for did not materialize quite so fast. For more than half an hour, Reb Yosef and his friends stood at the post without a single driver taking notice of them. Only then did a car finally stop, heading for a city near Bnei Brak, and the driver agreed to take them.

But at that very moment, Reb Yosef was in the middle of reciting the brachah of Asher Yatzar with kavanah, as he had undertaken to do. He was completely oblivious to everything around him. When the car stopped, the bachurim tried to catch his attention and to allude to him that he should hurry to finish the brachah, but he motioned to them to wait...The driver was in a hurry and displayed signs of impatience. Having no choice, the bachurim climbed into the car, and the driver pulled away, leaving Reb Yosef behind.

When he finished the brachah, Reb Yosef found himself standing alone at the deserted post. For the first few minutes that passed, he encouraged himself with the knowledge that he had done the right thing. But as the

moments passed, he began to feel disappointment mounting inside him.

It took another half an hour for his yeshuah to arrive. A commercial vehicle stopped next to him, and a driver -clearly chareidi- invited him warmly into the vehicle. Reb Yosef climbed in without asking any questions, but he was overjoyed to hear that the driver's destination was Bnei Brak. He then realized that he hadn't lost anything out from doing the mitzvah. But there was an even greater surprise in store for him. The car sped towards Bnei Brak, but suddenly, in the middle of the Ashdod-Tel Aviv highway, they had to slow down; there was a long traffic jam snaking down the highway ahead of them. The driver of one of the cars next to them informed them that there had been a bad car accident ahead. "Several people have been injured," the driver added. He did not understand why the person he was talking to suddenly tensed. It turned out that the driver of Reb Yosef's vehicle was a paramedic. He wasn't on call at the time but when he heard about the accident, he quickly reached down under his seat and switched on the radio device that was there, and contacted the headquarters of the rescue organization he worked for.

He learned that rescue services had not yet evacuated all the casualties and his presence at the accident site was needed. As such, the driver quickly pulled out an emergency light, stuck it onto the roof of the vehicle, and pulled into the shoulder, where he pressed on the gas. A few moments later, they reached the site of the accident; he jumped out of the car and grabbed the large case on the back seat with his equipment and ran towards the scene. Reb Yosef followed him out of the vehicle, thinking perhaps he could help someone. When he reached the site he looked around. He noticed two yeshivah bachurim sitting on the shoulder of the road, looking panicked and frightened.

When Reb Yosef approached, he suddenly had to suppress a cry of surprise...It was none other than two of the three bachurim who had waited with him at the hitchhiking post an hour earlier. Distraught, they told him that the car that they had been riding in had flipped over, and the driver and their friend seated next to him were badly hurt. These two bachurim had sustained only minor injuries.

Reb Yosef could only share their distress, and at the same time thanked Hashem for His great compassion and chessed, and for helping him keep the pledge he had undertaken—which in retrospect turned out to have saved him.

"Your adherence to the mitzvah is what saved you," Rav Pincus said tearfully when he heard the story from his talmid. "The angel created by this mitzvah is what advocated for you On High to save you from all bad, and from Above you were also given the merit to clearly see this..."

Derech Eitz Chaim Vol. III, p. 115