

Vechol Maaminim

A Weekly Pamphlet From "Bney Emunim"



ת.ד. 102 בני ברק | פקס : 03-5055919
9139191@gmail.com

Parashas RE'EH | 5784 | Issue No. 548

Derech Emunim

Pearls of Halachah in the Parashah

Birchas Hamitzvos for Eradicating Avodah Zarah

"אבד תאבדון את כל המקומות אשר עבדו שם הגוים אשר אתם ירשים אתם את אלהיהם על ההרים הרמים ועל הגבעות ותחת כל עץ רענן" (יב כ)

In this *passuk*, we are commanded to abolish and rid the world of *avodah zarah* (*Sanhedrin* 90a), and those who count the *mitzvos* listed this as a *mitzvas aseh* in the order of the 613 *mitzvos* (*Sefer Hamitzvos LaRambam Aseh* 185; *Sefer Hachinuch* 436).

We need to clarify whether Chazal instituted to make a *brachah* on fulfilling this mitzvah like the other *mitzvos aseh*. The Mishnah in *Brachos* (54a) says: "One who sees a place where the *avodas kochavim* was uprooted says: 'Baruch [Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech Ha'olam] shene'ekrah *avodas kochavim me'artzeinu*.'" It is a *brachah* of *shevach*, praise, but it is not explained whether the one who does the uprooting also has to recite a *brachah* on the mitzvah.

The *Maharsha* (ibid Vol. I 57b) writes that indeed, we recite the *brachah* for fulfilling this mitzvah as we make a *brachah* on the other *mitzvos*, and therefore, one who uproots *avodah zarah* makes

Continue on page 3

Pischu Shearim

A word from the founder and Nasi of Bney Emunim

The Select of That Kind

In this *parashah*, the Torah teaches us that when a person pledges a *korban* to Hashem, and comes to fulfill that promise, it is a mitzvah for him to bring the most select of his animals. This *halachah* is derived from the *passuk* (*Devarim* 12:11): "*Vechol mivchar nidreichem asher tidru l'Hashem*," and as Rashi explains there: "This teaches us that he should bring from the best."

It says in *Parashas Bereishis* that Kayin and Hevel also brought *korbanos*, but while Hevel's *korban* was accepted "*El Kayin v'el minchaso lo sha'ah*" (*Bereishis* 4:5). Why? Because Hevel brought a *korban* from the best of his sheep, as it says "*mibchoros tzono umeichelbeihen*, from the firstborn of his flock and from the best thereof," (ibid 5), while Kayin brought from the worst of his fruit (Rashi ibid 3).

Obviously, HaKadosh Baruch Hu does not need our offerings, but a person needs to honor Hashem and to offer the best of what he has. The Rambam says at the end of *Hilchos Issurei Mizbe'ach*: "He should bring his *korban* from the best and most select of that kind. As it says in the Torah (ibid) "And Hevel also brought from the firstborn of his flock and from the best and Hashem turned to Hevel and to his offering." That is the *halachah* in everything that is done *l'Shem Hashem* – it should be from the best and most beautiful. If a person builds a shul, it should be nicer than his home, if he feeds the hungry, he should serve the tastiest and sweetest foods that he has on his table, if he provides clothing for one who doesn't have, he should give him the nicest of his garments, if he sanctifies something as *hekdesh*, it should be the most beautiful of his assets."

Likewise, with the *brachos* that we recite. There are two kinds of *brachos*: One that is answered by amen, which is a *brachah sheleimah*, and from the

positive we learn about the negative, that a *brachah* that is not answered by amen is a *brachah* that is lacking. When a person wants to bless the Name of Hashem, he is commanded to bring from the "most beautiful and select in that kind," and therefore, he is commanded to make the *brachah* in the ears of someone who will hear it and answer amen after it, to make it a complete *brachah*.

By way of *remez* we can say that this is alluded to in the *passuk* itself: *מבחר נדרכים אשר*... the acronym of these words is amen to teach us that a *brachah* that is answered by amen is the most select of all the *brachos*, and one who wishes to give Hashem from the most select should be strict that his *brachos* should be completed by amen.

We can add that the *passuk* does not allude only to a *brachah* that is answered by amen, which is a most select *brachah*, but also to the actual answering. In other words, answering amen is the most select gift that we can present to HaKadosh Baruch Hu, as Chazal say (*Brachos* 53b): "There is nothing greater in front of Hashem than the amen that Am Yisrael answer." And we can note that *Maseches Nedarim* ends with *daf* 91, which is numerically equivalent to amen, to allude that being strict about answering amen as *halachah* is the "*mivchar nidreichem*," the most select of your *nedarim*.

Let us present to Hashem "the best and most beautiful" and be careful to adorn our *brachos* and the *brachos* of other *misparallelim* with the crown of amen, and this merit should advocate for us all that we should soon be able to sacrifice the *temidim kesidram*, with the arrival of Mashiach speedily in our day amen!

Good Shabbos
Yaakov Dov Marmurstein

It was the winter of 5689. The Arab wagon driver glared with obvious impatience at the group of *bochurim* that struggled to part from their friend. It was getting late, and the route from Chevron to Yersushalayim was steep and taxing. The skies were filled with clouds, and he wanted to set out before the rain began. “Why are they delaying? The trip is challenging enough without getting stuck in the mud that the rain will bring” – the wagon driver thought impatiently.

There was no way he could possibly comprehend the deep and loving ties between those who learn together in a the *beis medrash*. They didn’t know, but their hearts felt that this would be their final meeting. Who believed that the same year, the placed skies would grow stormy, and the community in Chevron would be cut down and then shut down, including the holy yeshivah that they learned in?



Rav Moshe Mordechai Epstein,
Rosh Yeshivas Chevron

A few weeks earlier, Davey, the *bochur* Nochum Dovid Herman, had received an urgent telegram from his father, the renowned *tzaddik* Rav Yaakov Yosef Herman, demanding that he return home.

The telegram took Davey by complete surprise. He remembered his emotional parting from his parents four years prior. The Rosh Yeshivah, Harav Moshe Mordechai Epstein, had visited their home and advised them to send their beloved son to a place of Torah, in the new yeshivah that had been established just a year earlier in Chevron. His parents, with the fiery *ahavas Torah* that burned in their

hearts, sent him to the yeshivah, and now, as he was thriving and learning so well, his father was requiring him to return home to America. What would be with his learning?

With the telegram in hand, Davey went over to the Rosh Yeshivah. Although he was completely surprised as well, he knew Rav Yaakov Yosef and assumed that he if he had sent such an urgent telegram, it was a sign that there was a good reason for it. In retrospect, this assumption turned out to be true. “You have to listen to your father,” the Rosh Yeshivah ruled, and Davey accepted the *psak* unquestioningly.

Now it was time to leave. During those poignant, sorrowful moments, Davey parted from his beloved friends, and boarded the creaky wagon, that began to wend its way in the winding paths of the Judean Hills to Yerushalayim. When they arrived, Davey first went to take leave of his grandparents, who lived in the Givat Shaul neighborhood, and after an emotional parting, he went to the train station.

Late at night, he heard the whistle and the train pulled into the platform. Davey hurried to find a comfortable seat for the long ride from Yerushalayim to Port Said in Egypt, where the ship that would take him home to America was docked.

The trip passed slowly. The train crossed the Sinai Desert, and finally, finally arrived in Port Said the next afternoon. Davey got off the train and hurried towards the port. But there, he was astonished to face the grim reality. The clerk sitting at the port informed him laconically that the ship he wanted to board had already departed.

Alone and helpless, Davey stood in the foreign port for an emotional *Minchah*. He had no idea how he would get out of this difficult situation, and what he should do now. But first, he davened from the depths of his heart that Hashem should extricate him from the trouble.

When he finished davening, he noticed a group of Chinese porters quickly loading cargo onto a large ship. On the spur of the moment, he went over the captain and asked where his ship was sailing to.

“Paris!” he replied in broken English, and Davey asked, “Can I join, for pay of course?”

“Of course,” the captain replied. “But this is a cargo ship, and it’s nothing like a passenger ship.” Davey didn’t have too many other options. He boarded the ship with the assumption that it

would be easier to find a ship crossing the Atlantic from Paris.

As the only Jew among hundreds of Chinese people, Davey attracted a lot of attention. They stared at him when he took his black boxes with long straps out of his velvet sack, and put them on his arm and forehead, and stood in the corner of the ship to daven.

They couldn’t really communicate much, but they were able to understand that these were special tools through which he could connect with the Creator in Heaven and ask for whatever he wanted.

On Erev Shabbos in the afternoon, Davey was busy preparing for Shabbos when the ship got caught in a sudden storm. He was thrown to the wooden floor. Before he could even get up, the door to his room burst open. The captain stood there with a group of burly sailors. With alarm on his face, he cried to Davey: “Quick, take your black boxes and get on deck. We’re going to sink!”

Davey couldn’t find his balance, but the sailors didn’t wait. They gripped him by the arms and legs and ran with him to the deck, which was flooding with water and rolling in the waves like a walnut shell.

They stood him up at the edge of the deck and then moved off with awe. Everyone gazed at Davey who could barely wrap the *tefillin* around his arm and place it correctly on his forehead. He began to cry from the depths of his heart: “Ribbonon shel Olam, You commanded us to observe Shabbos, which is coming soon, as a day of rest, please with Your mercy, command the stormy sea to rest from its fury.”

He had no idea where he had mustered up the courage to utter such a *tefillah*, but suddenly, the sea began to calm, and the captain and sailors befell him with hugs and cheering, in gratitude.

In the days that remained of the voyage, Davey was accorded every honor. He was moved from his little room to be near the captain, and was called ‘the holy one’ by everyone on the ship.

Davey continued his long journey home, and a few months after he arrived in New York, back to his family, the terrible massacre was unleashed by Arabs on the Jews of Chevron and the yeshivah students. Now everyone understood the meaning of the urgent telegram that Rav Yaaov Yosef had sent his son, summoning him home quickly.

All for the Boss

the *brachah*: “*Baruch ...Asher Kidshanu...la’akor avodah zarah mei’artzeinu.*” But **Harav Binyamin Rabinowitz**, the Rav of Wilkomir, asks: One of the rules of the *birchos hamitzvos* instituted by **Rabbi Yosef Ibn Platt** (cited in *Avudraham Birchas Hamitzvos Sha’ar 3*), is that one does not recite a *brachah* for a mitzvah whose fulfillment is only made possible by an act of sin that precedes it. Therefore, for example, we do not make a *brachah* on the mitzvah of returning a stolen object, because this can only be fulfilled following the act of stealing that preceded it. If so, how can we make a *brachah* on eradicating *avodah zarah*? Even if it is done by non-Jews, for them it is also considered a sin, because the prohibition of *avodah zarah* is included in the Seven Noahide laws.

The son of the **Adere**’s answered that the words of Rabbi Yosef Ben Platt are said only for a mitzvah whose fulfillment comes following a sin that a Jew committed, of which it is not fitting to recite a *brachah*, but when a mitzvah is done by a Jew following the sin of a non-Jew, it is fitting that he make a *brachah* over it.

The **Margaliyos Hayam** notes a distinction between the mitzvah of returning a stolen object, that the thief himself performs, therefore it is not fitting that he should make a *brachah* for a deed that comes following his own sins. But the *avodah zarah* was done by someone else. Even if a Jew did it, the one who destroys it has no connection to the sin, so surely he can make the *brachah*.

Maharsh”a Brachos Vol. I 57b; Bnei Binyamin on the Rambam Avodah Zarah 7a; Mekor Habrachah p. 10

Peninei Emunim

Pearls of Tefillah in the Parashah

The Brachah That Includes All Brachos

”ראה אנכי נתן לפניכם היום ברכה וקללה: את הברכה אשר תשמעו אל מצות ה’ אלקיכם אשר אנכי מצוה אתכם” (יא כו-כז)

The *passuk* in *Tehillim* (128:4): “*Henei ki chein yevorach gever yirei Hashem,*” is explained by **Rav Tzvi Hirsh Charif, author of Tiv Gittin**, as follows: The chapter that this *passuk* is in begins with the words “*Shir Ha’amalos ashrei kol yerei Hashem haholech bidrachav,*” and in the *pesukim* that follow, Dovid Hamelech lists the great happiness experienced by one who merits to be a *yerei Hashem* and serves his Creator from deep in his heart, and not out of habit. Therefore, the *passuk* concludes “*heini ki chein,*” because we have seen that one who is a *yerei Hashem* merits so much good, “*yevorach gever yerei Hashem*” – one who seeks to bless another does need to expound in his *brachah*. It is enough for him to give a *brachah* that the other person should merit to be a *yerei Hashem*, because this *brachah* in any case includes boundless goodness and blessing.

In light of this, **Harav Gershon Stern, author of Yalkut Hagershuni** explained these words: “*Re’eh Anochi nosein lifneichem hayom brachah.*” What is *brachah*? That you should be *yerei Hashem*, “*asher tishme’u el mitzvas Hashem*

Elokeichem,” that this *brachah* includes all the *brachos*.

Yalkut Hagershuni, Parashas Emor

‘Emes V’Emunah’ – The Secret of our Existence

”שמר ושמעת את כל הדברים האלה אשר אנכי מצוה למען ייטב לך ולבניך אחרריך עד עולם כי תעשה הטוב והישר בעיני ה’ אלקיך” (יב כח)

Rashi explains (based on *Sifri* 12:45) that the double term “*hatov vehayashar*” teaches us that a person should conduct himself in a way that is good in the eyes of Hashem and at the same time, upstanding in the eyes of people.

The Rebbe **Harav Shaul Yedidya Elazar of Modzhitz** said:

The secret of the existence of the Jew is that he is good for Shamayim and upstanding and honest with other people, and both of these behaviors are based on the *middos* of *emes* and *emunah*. The *emunah* in Hashem is the fundamental of the connection between a person and his Creator, and the *middah* of *emes* is the fundamental of honest relationships between people. In fact, “הטוב והישר” is numerically equivalent to “אמת ואמונה.”

This is why we say in *Maariv* “*emes ve’emunah kol zos vekayam aleinu,*” – *emes v’emunah* are the *kol zos* – the basis of everything, through which a person becomes good for Shamayim and honest to others, and both these *middos* are “*vekayam aleinu*” – the secret of the existence

of Am Yisrael.

Imrei Shaul, Inyanei Succos 24

Shavuos in Memory of Yetzias Mitzrayim

”זכרת כי עבד היית במצרים ושמרת ועשית את החקים האלה” (טז יב)

This *passuk* that instructs the remembrance of *Yetzias Mitzrayim* is said after the commandment to celebrate Shavuos. We need to learn from this that not only Pesach and Succos were set to remember *Yetzias Mitzrayim*. Shavuos, which is considered a continuation of Pesach (see *Ramban Vayikra* 26:33) was also instated as such. Indeed, the *Likutei Maharich* wrote that this *passuk* is the source that we say in Kiddush and the *tefillah* on Shavuos “*Zman Mattan Toraseinu mikra kodesh zecher l’Yetzias Mitzrayim.*”

Harav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach explained that this is why we mention the name of each holy day at the end of the *brachah* said in its honor [*Mekadesh HaShabbos, Roshei Chodashim, Yom Hazikaron and Yom Hakippurim*], while on each of the Shalosh Regalim we conclude the *brachah* with the same *nusach*: “*Mekadesh Yisrael vehazmanim,*” without detailing the name of the Yom Tov. This is because all the *regalim* were instituted for the same reason – “*zecher l’Yetzias Mitzrayim,*” and that is why there is a single *nusach* for the three of them.

Likutei Maharich Seder Minhagei Chag Hashavuos; Minchas Shlomo Beitzah 17a

No one wishes upon himself financial crisis. It's a reality where, all at once, a family can be sucked out of their tranquil lives to a stormy sea of uncertainty, confusion and helplessness.

This letter describes the story of a person who was saved from financial crisis because of a *kabbalah* that he took upon himself regarding answering amen. The letter was sent to Bney Emunim by the person to whom the story happened, and we present it to you with slight adjustments to conceal identities.

I will begin by noting that for a number of years, I have been *zocheh* to read *Vechol Ma'aminim* each week, and it is wonderful and full of valuable messages. My children and I wait for it with anticipation.

I wanted to share with you a personal and very special *siyata diShmaya* that I merited following a *kabbalah* that I made to strengthen my answering of amen, which *baruch Hashem*, I have been able to adhere to.

I cannot describe to you the situation of a person with a large family who lived a relatively comfortable life, and then suddenly, in the middle of it all, finds himself poverty stricken and unable to support his family.

My family was used to a pretty comfortable standard of living. We didn't live a luxurious life, but I tried not to turn my children down when they asked for things. And when things changed, I couldn't even provide them with the minimal basics. It was a very bitter burden to bear. I was not used to it at all, and it caused me terrible tension. I hardly ate, I slept fitfully, if at all. I experienced the words of Chazal (*Nedarim* 64b): "A poor person is considered to

be dead."

One day, after a difficult exchange with my family, which was part and parcel of this financial situation, I went to the Kosel to daven. I was broken to the depths of my heart, and I wept copiously.

I felt like I had to take on something, but I wasn't sure what would be the right thing. All kinds of ideas ran through my mind, and I couldn't choose. I finally decided to say all of *Sefer Tehillim*, at the Kosel, and hoped that while I said it, a good idea would come to mind.

I began to read the *perakim*. Naturally, when the *pesukim* described situations of poverty and angst, I said them with more *kavanah*.

So when I reached the *passuk* (9:19): "*Ki lo lanetzach yishakach evyon...*" after lingering on the words, I noticed that the acronym of these words are numerically equivalent to 'amen.' As a loyal reader of your weekly pamphlet, the subject of answering amen has always been close to my heart. When I found this, I said to myself: I have an answer! I need to strengthen my answering of amen, and then my merits will be brought to HaKadosh Baruch Hu and I will not be forgotten.

I continued saying *Tehillim* emotionally. Towards the end, I received another clear answer. As I was saying the words (*Tehillim* 109:31): "*Ki ya'amod l'yemin evyon lehoshia...*" I noticed that in this *passuk* as well, the acronym of the words is 'amen!' Beforehand it had been "*ki lo lanetzach yishakach evyon*" and as soon as I took upon myself to strengthen my amen, I received the promise "*ki ya'amod l'yemin evyon lehoshia.*"

Now I understood without doubt! Form Above it was desired that

I strengthen myself in amen! I decided to take upon myself to be strict about saying *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa*, and to say amen at every opportunity.

What can I tell you? On my way home from the Kosel, a childhood friend who I hadn't spoken to in years called me. I answered and after a few polite words, he told me that he has a chain of stores and he is looking for a franchisee to open a branch in the city where I live.

When I told him I didn't have a penny to invest, he reassured me that he would give me merchandise and I'd pay him when I sold it... So I opened such a store. My family and I worked there on shifts from morning to evening, and *baruch Hashem*, we have seen much success in our work, and we have *brachah* in our *parnassah*.

At the same time, I opened an amen business: All the *brachos* from *Birchos Hashachar* to *Birchas Hamapil*, are said out loud in our home, no matter what! A *brachah* is said only out loud!! A *brachah* without amen doesn't exist in our realm! And I rise to go early to shul to answer amen after other *mispallelim*. *Baruch Hashem*, both my "businesses" are thriving together.

I thank you wholeheartedly for the tremendous awareness you have instilled on this subject. You have so many *zechusim*, and may Hashem give Rav Marmurstein and his family strength to continue with his lofty work.

With best wishes,
S.Y.