

Torah Wellsprings

Collected thoughts
from
Rabbi Elimelech
Biderman
Shlita

Pekudei



בס"ד

Torah WELLSPRINGS

CONTACT INFORMATION

Mail@TorahWellsprings.com
718.484.8136

Weekly bulk orders in USA:
Wholesale@BeerEmunah.com

Weekly in your email free!

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

Lashon Kodesh

באר הפרשה

subscribe+subscribe@beerhaparsha.com

English

Torah Wellsprings

Torah+subscribe@torahwellsprings.com

Yiddish

דער פרשה קוואל

yiddish+subscribe@derparshakval.com

Spanish

Manantiales de la Torá

info+subscribe@manantialesdelatorah.com

French

Au Puits de La Paracha

info+subscribe@aupuitsdelaparacha.com

Italian

Le Sorgenti della Torah

info+subscribe@lesorgentidellatorah.com

Russian

Колодец Торы

info+subscribe@kolodetztory.com



USA OFFICE Mechon Beer Emunah
1660 45th St, Brooklyn NY 11204
718.484.8136

ERETZ YISROEL OFFICE

מכון באר האמונה
רח' דובב מישרים 4/2
עיה"ק ירושלים תובב"א
025 688 040

יו"ל ע"י מכון באר אמונה

COPYRIGHT 2022 הזכויות שמורות כל

Duplication of this gilyon in any format, for any sales or marketing purpose, without written permission by Machon Be'er Emunah, is against the law and Halacha.

Table of Contents

Torah Wellsprings - Pekudei

One Hundred <i>Brachos</i>	4
How to Say the <i>Brachos</i>	7
Indications to the Hundred <i>Brachos</i>	9
On a Practical Note	10
Benefits of Answering Amen.....	10
<i>Korbanos</i> and <i>Ketores</i>	17
Minchah	18
The Meaning of the Word Minchah.....	21
The Outpouring of the Soul.....	23
Don't Hold a Grudge	25
One Person Can Influence the Entire World	31

Torah Wellsprings

Pekudei

One Hundred Brachos

The halachah of reciting one hundred brachos every day has its source in this week's parashah. The posuk teaches us that the Mishkan was built with one hundred silver אֲדָנִים foundations (see 38:27) and the Baal HaTurim writes that the Chachamim established that we recite one hundred *brachos* each day, to correspond to the one hundred *adonim* of the Mishkan.¹

In the previous weeks, we discussed that every Yid should work to turn himself into a Mishkan, a place where Hashem resides. The Chidushei HaRim *zt'l* says that just as the *adanim* were the

foundation of the Mishkan, so too are the one hundred brachos the foundation of the holiness of a Yid.

The Chidushei HaRim adds, "אֲדֹנָיִם comes from the word אֲדוֹן, master because through the *brachos* we testify that Hashem is the Ruler over the entire universe."

Indeed, one of the primary reasons for the brachos is so we should remember the אֲדוֹן, Hashem. The Rambam (*Hilchos Brachos* 1:3) writes, "The *rabbanim* instituted many *brachos* so that we should remember the Creator always."

The *Or Zarua* (42) writes, "I knew an old yid from Vamsh called Reb Bunim,

1. *Shulchan Aruch* (*Orach Chaim* 46:3) states, חייב אדם לברך בכל יום מואה ברכות, לפחות, "Man is obligated to recite at least one hundred *brachos* each day."

who worked for the *chevra Kadisha*. Once, Reb Bunim rose early, went to the *beis knesset*, and saw someone sitting outside the *beis knesses* wearing a crown of herbs on his head. Reb Bunim feared that this person might be a *sheid* (demon). However, as Reb Bunim got closer, he recognized him and asked, "Aren't you Ploni, who died, and whom I buried?"

"That's correct."

"How are things in the other world?"

"Extremely good!"

"How did you merit this? You weren't a great tzaddik in this world..."

"It is because I would say the *brachos* in the *beis kneses* in a sweet voice. I was rewarded for this. They brought me to Gan Eden, and they honor me. Do you see my torn sleeve? This is a sign that it is I. You tore it while dressing me in the *tachrichim* (shrouds)."

"What are you wearing on your head?"

"Leaves from Gan Eden. I put them on my head so that I wouldn't smell the pungent odor of this world."

The Or Zarua concludes, "I, the author, write this story so that those who fear Heaven will learn to say Hakadosh Baruch Hu's praises with a sweet voice and concentration. Those who comply will merit Gan Eden."

These brachos also offer protection.

The *Poskim* tell us that there was a time during Dovid HaMelech's rule when one hundred people died every day. Dovid HaMelech sought the reason behind this epidemic. Hashem revealed to him that if Klal Yisrael recited one hundred *brachos* each day, the epidemic would end.

The *Tur* writes, "Therefore, the Chachamim established *birchas hashachar*."

[the morning *brachos*] which praises Hashem for the way He leads the world, to fill the quota of one hundred daily *brachos*."

We might find it surprising that a hundred *brachos* stopped the hundred daily deaths. A more logical solution would have been to fast a hundred days or to say one hundred chapters of *Tehillim*. What is the connection between the deaths and *brachos*?

The Levush writes, "Dovid investigated the matter and understood through his *ruach hakadosh* that the cause of the deaths was because they weren't praising and blessing Hashem properly for all the good He bestows. Dovid established that Klal Yisrael should say one hundred *brachos* each day, and since then, the plague ceased."

Reb Shimshon Pinkus *zt'l* explained it with a *mashal*:

When people aren't getting along and are hardly speaking to one another, if one of them would greet the other fellow with a happy countenance and with blessings - and would do so several times daily - the other person will automatically begin feeling positive towards him. This is what Dovid HaMelech understood with his *ruach hakodesh*. He realized that if we praise Hashem, all barriers that separate us from Hashem will fall.

In addition to offering protection, the one hundred *brachos* are also a source of blessings.

The *Zohar* (vol.1 76:) writes, "When a soul is ready to descend to this world, Hashem makes it swear that it will keep the mitzvos and do Hashem's will, and Hashem gives him one hundred keys..."

The keys are the one hundred daily *brachos*. These keys open the doors for all kinds of blessings.

The *Zohar* says that this is hinted at in the words... לך לך ,ואברכך , "go... and I will bless you."

לך לך is *gematriya* one hundred. When we say one hundred *brachos* we receive Hashem's *brachos*.²

How to Say the *Brachos*

The Yesod VeShoresh HaAvodah (*Shaar HaAshmoros* 2) writes, "My beloved friends and brothers, think

in your hearts, before Whom and to Whom are you saying your *brachos*...

"Take this rule with you: No matter what *brachah* you are saying, when you say ברוך אתה , recognize that you are talking to the Creator. That is what the words ברוך אתה mean. Obviously, if a person doesn't realize he is speaking to Hashem, it is as though he didn't say the *bracha*. Therefore, his

2. The *Zohar* also teaches, "When a Yid recites a *brachah*, there are no doors or angels that will stop the *brachah* [from going up to Hashem]. They proclaim, 'This is a gift for the King!' And the *brachah* brings down blessings [to the person who said the *brachah*]."

Consider the following *mashal*:

A king wanted to reward one of his loyal and beloved servants, so he gave him the keys to his treasury and said, "You can take whatever you want. The treasury is open for you."

The servant goes to the treasury, but finds the doors locked. He stands outside and cries.

But why doesn't he just open the door? He has the keys!

Someone who doesn't take advantage of the hundred daily *brachos* is like this loyal, but foolish, servant. He can receive Hashem's blessings, but he must use the keys - the one hundred *brachos* - to get it.

punishment is great because he didn't say the *brachah* that the Anshei Kneses Hagedolah established, and he is taking away Hashem's pleasure."

The *Yerushalmi* discusses whether אתה is part of the *brachah*. Rav says that we should say אתה in every *brachah*, and Shmuel says that one should only say ...ברוך ד' אלקינו מלך. The halachah is like Rav, and therefore we have a reminder in each *brachah* that we are speaking directly to Hashem.³

Here are some techniques that will help us say brachos with kavanah. First, one is to not rush through them. The Gemara (*Brachos* 47.) says, לא ירוק ברכה מפיו "One mustn't throw the *brachah* out of his mouth." Rashi explains that when one rushes through the *brachah*, it appears that he wants to get it over with.⁴ Furthermore, when he runs through a *brachah*, he probably won't say it with *kavanah*.

3. The word אלקינו is also an ideal point of focus because it implies Hashem's love to us, and His desire to listen to our praise.

By מלך one can contemplate how everything is being led by Hashem's *hashgachah pratis*.

4. One morning, a banker davened *shacharis* very quickly. The Chofetz Chaim told him that he shouldn't go to work that day.

"Why not?"

The Chofetz Chaim replied, "It is written in halachah that, 'one shouldn't skip over the words [of *Pesukei Dezimrah*] and one shouldn't swallow the words. He should say the words like someone who is counting money' (*Darkei Moshe* 51). I saw how quickly you davened *shacharis* this morning. If you are going to count money in this manner, you're better off remaining home."

Shulchan Aruch (*Orach Chaim* 191:3) also states, "It is forbidden to perform any activity while saying a *brachah*."

The Mishnah Berurah adds that "One shouldn't even do light work."⁵ Adhering to these guidelines makes it easier to say the *brachos* with *kavanah*.

Indications to the Hundred *Brachos*

The *Tur* (*Orach Chaim* 46) writes, "It states (*Shmuel* 2, 23:1), הוקם על, 'Dovid established על' and על is *gematriya* one hundred."

It also states (*Bereishis* 12:1), לך לך... ואברכך ואגדלה שמך, והיה ברכה, "Go for yourself...

and I will bless you and make your name great, and you shall be a blessing." The *Zohar* (vol.1, 76:) notes that לך לך is *gematriya* one hundred. By reciting one hundred *brachos*, והיה ברכה, one merits receiving Hashem's *brachos*.

It is written (*Tehillim* 128:4), הנה כי כן יברך גבר, "Behold, for so is blessed the man who fears Hashem." The *Sefer HaManhig* teaches that כי כן is *gematriya* one hundred because by saying one hundred *brachos* daily, a person is blessed with all types of blessings.

The Torah lists ninety-eight curses for those who transgress the Torah, and then the Torah adds another two. As it states

5. When one says *Viduy Maasros* in the Beis HaMikdash, one of the phrases he says is (*Devarim* 26:13), ולא שכחתי, "I didn't forget," and Rashi writes, לך לך... ואברכך ואגדלה שמך, "I didn't forget to bless You."

Bederech tzachus, we can explain that when one makes a *brachah* without *kavanah*, one forgets and doesn't know whether he said the *brachah* or not. By *Viduy Maasros* one says, "I say *brachos* properly, and therefore, I didn't forget. I remember that I said the *brachah*!"

(Devarim 28:61), ... גם כל חלי וכל מכה... יעלם ה' אליך עד השמדך "Even any illness and any blow... Hashem will bring upon you until you are destroyed."

Together, these are one hundred curses. The one hundred brachos nullify these one hundred curses.

In ancient *sifrei Torah* there were *tagin* (crowns) over the ק in (Devarim 6:7) ובקומך, "when you rise." The letter ק is *gematriya* one hundred and ובקומך means "when you rise in the morning." The Baal HaTurim writes, "The *tagin* on the *kuf* in ובקומך indicate that when one awakens in the morning, he should recite one hundred *brachos*."

The Levush concludes, "This is the meaning of the *pasuk* (Devarim 10:12) מִה ד' אֵלֶיךָ שׂוֹאֵל מֵעַמְּךָ כִּי אִם לִירֵאָה, "What does Hashem, your G-d, ask from you? Only to fear.' Chazal say don't read it מה, read it מאה, that Hashem is asking from us the one hundred *brachos*."

On a Practical Note

Rabbeinu Tam in *Sefer HaYasher* (*shaar* 13) writes, "It is better a little bit that is consistent than a lot that doesn't endure." Therefore, it is a good idea to choose three or four *brachos* that you wish to say with *kavanah* every day. It is a relatively small undertaking, but it can endure for a long time.

When you say three or four *brachos* properly and see how easy it is to do so and how enjoyable it is to praise Hashem, you will be motivated to say several other *brachos* with *kavanah*. Taking on a small *kabbalah* can lead to saying all *brachos* with *kavanah*.

Benefits of Answering Amen

אָמֵן (mentioned in this week's parashah, see 39:5) is *gematriya* אָמֵן, alluding to the mitzvah of answering amen. *Shulchan Aruch* (*Orach Chaim* 124:6) states, "Answer amen after every *brachah*..."

with *kavanah*. Think in your heart: The praise I heard is true, and I believe in it." The Mishnah Berurah adds that when the brachah is also a request, such as the brachos of Shemonah Esrei, one should think, 'It is true, and I also pray that it be so.' For example, with the brachah *אתה חונן*, we daven that that Hashem grants us wisdom. When you answer amen to *ברוך אתה ה' חונן הדעת*, think, 'It is true that You give wisdom, and may it be Your will that You grant us wisdom.' This is what one should do for all the *brachos*."

Therefore, the *efod*, which represents answering amen, had a belt called *חשב האפוד*.

חשב hints to *מהחשבה*, thought. *חשב האפוד* indicates that one should think and have *kavanah* when answering amen. This lesson was taught by Rebbe Shmelka of Nickelsberg *zt'l*.

Before his *petirah*, Rebbe Shmelka of Nickelsberg

said that throughout his life, he was cautious that someone should answer amen after his *brachos*. If there was no one around, he didn't make the *brachah*. He explained that a *brachah* creates a *malach*, and the formation of the *malach* isn't complete unless someone answers amen to his *brachah*. Once, Rebbe Shmelka traveled to a bris milah and had to say *asher yatzar*, but nobody was around to answer amen. What should he do? He didn't want to make a *brachah* without someone answering amen. Suddenly he saw two people who appeared awesome. Rebbe Shmelka recited *asher yatar*, they answered amen sweetly and with *kavanah*, and they suddenly disappeared. Rebbe Shmelka asked his attendant what he saw, and he said he didn't see anyone. Rebbe Shmelka understood that these two remarkable people were *malachim* - the *malach* Refael and *malach* Gavriel - sent

down from heaven to answer amen to his *brachah*.

Rebbe Shmelka realized that this is alluded to in the *piyut* of the *Yomim Nora'im*, והוא באחד, מי ישיבנו, who will answer amen to his *brachos*? The answer is, ויעש נורא מרום, וקדוש Hashem will send down holy *malachim* from heaven to answer amen to his *brachos*.

Rebbe Shmelka continued his trip to the *bris milah* and fell asleep on the wagon. In his dreams, he was told from heaven that he had correctly understood what occurred. The two "people" were *malach Refael* and *malach Gavriel*. They came to answer amen to his *brachah*, and the hint that he found in the *piyut* is a true explanation.

Reb Chaim Volozhiner *zt'l* was also cautious that someone should answer amen to his *brachos*. Once, he awoke in the middle of the night to study Torah. He needed a drink, but no

one was around to answer amen.

Suddenly, a *bachur* came and asked Reb Chaim to explain a *Tosfos* to him. Reb Chaim asked him to answer amen to his *brachos*, which he did.

The following day, Reb Chaim thanked that *bachur* for being there for him to answer amen, but the *bachur* didn't know what Reb Chaim was talking about. Reb Chaim understood that *Eliyahu HaNavi* came down from heaven in the image of that *bachur* to help him say a proper *brachah*.

(That *bachur* was accorded great honor in the *yeshiva*. They said that if *Eliyahu haNavi* appeared specifically in the image of this *bachur*, it shows that he is special.)

It is a sin to answer amen without *kavanah* (see *Zohar* vol.3 ip.285, *Maharal Nesiv HaAvodah* ch.11, and *Keser Rosh* 25). The *Or Zarua* (quoted in *Shevet Mussar* (ch.31)) offers a practical solution. Before

Shacharis say, "Ribono Shel Olam, you know I am flesh and blood, and I am unable to answer amen with the correct *kavanah*. Therefore, may my *kavanah* at amen go up to heaven together with those select few who know how to answer amen properly."

Chazal (*Shabbos* 119:) say, כל העונה אמן בכל כוחו פותחין לו שערי גן עדן, "Whoever answers amen with all his strength, the gates of Gan Eden open for him."⁶

Aishel Chaim (printed 5695) writes that this is alluded to in the *pasuk* (*Shemos* 28:35), ונשמע קולו בבואו אל, "It's

sound [of the bells on the hem of the *me'il*] shall be heard when he enters the Mishkan before Hashem and when he leaves, so that he will not die." This means ונשמע קולו, that we should hear your voice when you answer amen, בבואו לפני ה', when you are in the beis medresh, as the Gemara says, one should answer amen with all his strength. If he does so, ובצאתו, when he leaves this world, ולא ימות, he won't be dead in Olam HaBa. He will be alive in Gan Eden.

As Chazal (*Tanchuma*, *Tzav* 9) teach, "Whoever answers amen in this world

6. Once, on Purim, an intoxicated *bachur* told the Chofetz Chaim that he wants to be together with him in Gan Eden. The Chofetz Chaim thought for a moment and said, "If you will undertake never to transgress the halachos of *lashon hara*, you will be with me in Gan Eden."

The boy didn't respond. The Chofetz Chaim said to the other *bachurim*, "Take him away from me. He had Gan Eden in his hands, and he didn't take advantage of it."

Something similar happens each time we answer amen. This is our opportunity to open the gates of Gan Eden. Only a fool won't take advantage of this.

merits to say amen in Olam HaBa." And Chazal (*Devarim Rabba* 7:1) say, "There is nothing greater before HaKadosh Baruch Hu than amen that Yidden say."

Rabbeinu b'Chayei (*Shemos* 14:31) writes, "Emunah is the foundation of the entire Torah. Therefore, Chazal established that we should answer אמן to brachos. אמן comes from the word אמונה, and it expresses that we believe in the praises that the other person is expressing through his brachah.

"When one says a brachah, he testifies (saying eidus) that HaKadosh Baruch Hu is the source of blessings, but one eid is insufficient. When someone

answers amen to your brachah, effectively affirming your testimony, that makes two eidim, witnesses. The one who answers amen is the second eid, and together with the first eid the testimony is complete."

Chazal (*Yerushalmi Brachos* 8:8) write, "Whoever says a long amen, his days and years are lengthened בטובה, with goodness."⁷

Rabeinu Yitzchak Chaver explains that בטובה, "with goodness" means "He will have more pleasure in one day than others have in several days."

We learn this from the pasuk (*Bereishis* 24:1), ואברהם זקן, בא בימים ויהי ברך את אברהם בכל "Avraham was old, well on

7. Year 5730, a Yid, a Satmer chasid, was niftar at the ripe age of 91 (which was somewhat unusual in those days). At the hesped, the Satmer Rebbe said that he merited to live so long because every morning, he would go from person to person to hear their brachos to answer amen. And Chazal say, "Whoever says a long amen, Heaven lengthens his days and years." This is hinted in the person's age, because 91 is gematriya אמן.

in years, and Hashem had blessed Avraham with everything." How did Avraham receive these *brachos*? The *sofei teivos*, final letters, of **זקן בא בימים** spell **אמן**. This implies that when you answer amen, you will be blessed in every way (*Baalei HaTosfos*).

The *sefarim* (see *Tzlach Pesachim* 56) write that **אמן** is *gematriya* מלאך. This suggests that for each amen you say, a *malach* is created. That *malach* will entreat Heaven that you should receive Hashem's kindness and blessings.

Chazal (*Shabbos* 119:) say, "Whoever answers amen with all his strength, all bad decrees on him get ripped up."

By answering amen, you will be protected from the *yetzer hara*, too. The

Divrei Shmuel (*Vayishlach* ד"ה הציילני) writes:

It states (*Bereishis* 32:12), הציילני נא מיד אחי מיד עשו, "Rescue me, please, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Eisav." The *roshei teivos* **נא מיד אחי** spell **אמן**. Eisav signifies the *yetzer hara*. We are rescued from the *yetzer hara* when we answer amen.

The *Minchas Eliyahu* (written by the author of *Shevet Mussar*) writes on the *pasuk* (*Esther* 2:7), ויהי **אמן** את הדסה היא, אסתר, "And he had raised Hadassah, she is Esther," that **אמן** is written without a **ו** (וא"ו). This means that Mordechai taught Esther to answer amen to *brachos*. Mordechai was Esther's adopted father, and every father is obligated to teach his children to answer amen (see *Rema, Orach Chaim* 124:7).⁸ This protected her from the *tumah* and bad

8. Shulchan Aruch (*Rema* 124:7) states, "Teach your young children to answer amen, because as soon as a child answers amen he has a portion in Olam HaBa."

influences of Achashveirosh's palace.

A doctor told what caused him to do *teshuvah* (the story is printed in *Notrei Amen* p.281). "Once, a very ill person came to me. I told the family that they had two options. Either they can leave the patient without any medical treatment, and he will die within a few days. The other option, I said, was to operate. The operation would grant the patient another half a year of life, but the operation is costly, and throughout that final half-year of his life, he will be in intense pain.

"The patient heard his two options, and being a student of Reb Moshe Feinstein *zt'l*, he wanted Reb Moshe to rule on this case.

"I wasn't religious, but I was interested to know what it was like when people ask such questions before a great rabbi. So I told the family that I wanted to go with them to

Reb Moshe, and I explained that it is for their benefit because I could describe the situation to the rav better than they could.

"I told Reb Moshe the details, and Reb Moshe cried for nearly twenty minutes. He hadn't heard from this student for many years, and now he listened to the sad story of his illness.

"Reb Moshe said he needs a day to think it over.

"The next day, Reb Moshe ruled that we should operate. He explained, "The doctor said he would live for another half a year. During that half a year, he will answer amen, and each amen will create a *malach* that will daven for him and plead on his behalf.

"When I heard how much one can gain from answering amen, I also wanted this merit. That prompted me to do *teshuvah*."

Korbanos and Ketores

On the topic of tefillah, *brachos*, and amen, we take this opportunity to discuss the importance of saying the *korbanos* and the *ketores* before Shacharis and Minchah.

The *Zohar* (vol.2 218:) states that whoever says the *ketores* with *kavanah* will be saved from all types of bad things, and he will be protected from bad thoughts. "No harm will befall him the entire day because the Sitra Achara has no power over him."

The *Zohar* (*Vayeira*, *Midrash HaNe'alam* 100:) states, "Whoever says the *ketores* with *kavanah* in *beis medresh*, there is a covenant that the *malachim* who report the sins of man won't be able to harm him. They can only do good to him. Once, I was traveling, and I met Eliyahu HaNavi *zachur l'tov*. I asked him, 'Tell me what is good for people. [What can they do that will bring them

goodness?].'¹ Eliyahu replied, 'There are *malachim* in heaven appointed to tell the sins of people before Hashem's Throne. When Bnei Yisrael say *korbanos* with *kavanah*, these *malachim* are forced to say good things about Bnei Yisrael, and they must judge them favorably. When there is a plague, *r'l*, an announcement comes forth from Hashem to all *malachim* in heaven that if Hashem's nation gathers in *beis medresh* and says *ketores* with *kavanah*, the *mageifah* must stop.'

The Gemara (*Megillah* 16.) tells us that on the sixteenth of Nisan, Mordechai HaTzaddik taught his students the mitzvah of *Korban HaOmer*. Haman arrived and asked them what they were learning. When he heard, he said, "Your handful of flour pushed away my ten thousand *kikar* of silver coins."

The Chofetz Chaim asks, how did Mordechai

have the peace of mind to study Torah with students at the time when the entire nation was in danger? And why did he teach the children specifically about the *Korban HaOmer*?

The answer is, the Chofetz Chaim says, Mordechai wanted to teach them about the *korbanos* because saying *korbanos* silences all prosecuting *malachim* and brings salvation to Klal Yisrael.

Reb Shlomo Zalman Aurbach *zt'l* said that reciting *korbanos* before Minchah is *mesugal* not to have to go to doctors.⁹

Minchah

We continue the theme of tefillah to discuss Minchah.

The Gemara (*Brachos* 26:) teaches that Yitzchak established *tefillas Minchah*, as it states (*Bereishis* 24:63), ויצא יצחק לשוב בשדה לפנות ערב, "Yitzchak went to pray in the field towards evening."

Tur (232) writes, "One must be very cautious with Minchah because Eliyahu's *tefillos* were answered during Minchah time. As it states (*Melachim* 1, 18:36), ויהי בעלות המנחה ויגש אליהו 'Minchah time, Eliyahu approached [Hashem with *tefillah*]."¹⁰

9. For all those who claim that they don't have time to say *korbanos*, let them remember that the few moments it takes to say *korbanos* is a lot shorter than the time people spend waiting for a doctor, *r'l*.

10. "Eliyahu said (*Melachim* 1, 18:37) עניי ה' עניי, 'Answer me, Hashem, answer me!' The Gemara explains: "He prayed, 'Answer me that fire should come down from heaven and answer me that they shouldn't claim that I'm engaging in witchcraft and sorcery.' The Ben Yehoyada (*Brachos* 26:) asks, the main point of the Gemara is that one should be cautious with Minchah, because Eliyahu's *tefillos* were answered specifically at this time. Why does the

What is so unique about Minchah that the *tefillos* are answered at that time?

Tur explains that it is the hardest *tefillah* to keep track of, as it is right in the middle of the day when people are in the midst of their work. Also, it is hard to leave work to daven. These two factors make this *tefillah* very precious, and therefore, the *tefillos* said during this time are answered.¹¹

The Trisker Magid (*Magen Avraham, Balak*) *zt'l* writes, "I heard from my father (Rebbe Mordechai of Chernobyl *zt'l*) in the name of the Baal Shem Tov *zt'l* that when a person is busy with his work all day long - in the market and on the streets - and he almost forgets that there's a Creator, and then he remembers that it is time to daven Minchah, and he moans in his heart, thinking

Gemara need to add exactly what Eliyahu said in his prayers at that time?

The Ben Yehoyada explains, "Chazal (*Taanis* 8:) say, 'A person mustn't pray two prayers at one time. Therefore, it is difficult: How did Eliyahu pray for two things (that the fire should come down from heaven and that the people shouldn't say it was witchcraft)? Rather, it is because Minchah is a very auspicious time for *tefillah*, more than other times, and at Minchah one can ask for two things at once. Therefore, the Gemara brings this *drashah*, that Eliyahu asked for two things, to prove that Minchah is a very special time for *tefillah*, and one can daven for multiple things at that time."

11. The Tur writes, "The time for Shacharis is known. When one wakes up in the morning he davens right away before he becomes busy with other things. The time for Maariv is also known: When he comes home after work, he davens Maariv. But Minchah is in the middle of the day when he is still busy at work. One must pay attention (so that he doesn't miss the time) and has to leave his work to daven. If he does so, his reward is very great."

how the day passed with foolishness, and he runs to a side street and davens Minchah, although he doesn't know what he is saying, חשוב ויקר מאד לפני הבורא, ברוך הוא, his *tefillah* is very precious before the Creator, והאנחה שלו בוקע רקיעים, and his moan pierces the heavens."

Another reason the Minchah *tefillah* is so special is that Yitzchak Avinu established it. The Gemara (Brachos 26:) teaches that Yitzchak established Minchah, as it states (Bereishis 24:63) ויצא יצחק לשוח בשדה לפנות ערב, "Yitzchak went to pray in the field towards evening.

The Kli Yakar (*Bereishis* 24:63) explains:

"Avraham and Yaakov established Shacharis and Maariv, but we don't see that their *tefillos* were answered immediately. But when Yitzchak davened Minchah, his prayers were answered right away. Yitzchak was likely praying for a spouse since Eliezer was now on the road for

this purpose. And it states (*Tehillim* 32:6), על זאת יתפלל כל, 'For this, let every chasid pray to You...' and Chazal (Brachos 8.) say that this refers to praying for a spouse. Yitzchak's prayers were answered immediately, as it states (Bereishis 24:63), וישא עיניו וירא, 'He raised his eyes and saw, and behold! camels were coming' [bringing Rivkah]. He davened with his eyes turned downwards, and immediately upon finishing the *tefillah* he raised his eyes and saw that his *tefillos* were already answered. Camels were coming carrying his spouse. This is Chazal's proof that a person's prayers are answered by Minchah more than by Shacharis and Maariv."

Reb Yonoson Eibshitz *zt'l* (*Tiferes Yonoson, Korach* ד"ה ויהר) also explains that the greatness of Minchah is because Yitzchak established it, and he explains that Yitzchak

represents the belief that Hashem answers everyone's tefillah, even those who are at low levels.

His explanation is based on the following Gemara (*Shabbos* 89:):

In the future, Hakadosh Baruch Hu will tell the *avos*, בניך חטאו לי, "Your children sinned to me." Avraham and Yaakov will reply, ימחו על קדושת שמך, that Hashem should wipe out and destroy Klal Yisrael, *chalilah*.

Only Yitzchak will speak up in our defense. He will say, "Ribono Shel Olam! Are they my children and not Your children? You call them (*Shemos* 4:22)

בני בכורי ישראל, 'My firstborn, Yisrael.'" Yitzchak will pray and save the Jewish nation.

From this Gemara, Reb Yohonoson Eibshitz understands why the Minchah *tefillos* are most answered. Minchah corresponds to Yitzchak Avinu, and Yitzchak davens for the *resha'im*, for people who aren't worthy. So when we daven Minchah, even if we aren't worthy, our *tefillos* are answered.¹²

The Meaning of the Word Minchah

Shacharis and Maariv are named for the time of day they are said. (Maariv

12. By the *machlokes* of Korach, Moshe davened (*Bamidbar* 16:15), אל תפן אל מנחתם, "Hashem shouldn't accept their Minchah sacrifice." It seems strange that Moshe had to say this prayer. Why would Hashem listen to the prayers and accept the sacrifice of *resha'im*? The answer is it was a *minchah* sacrifice, and by Minchah even the *resha'im*'s prayers are answered (Reb Yonoson Eibshitz).

With our conversation, we also understand why Yitzchak loved Eisav. It was Yitzchak's way to pray and care for the *resha'im*, to bestow kindness on them and to draw them back to Hashem. (Reb Yonoson Eibshitz).

means when the sun sets in the west. Shacharis means morning.) But why is the afternoon *tefillah* called Minchah? A *korban minchah* is a flour offering. A minchah was indeed brought in the afternoon, together with the afternoon *tamid*, but a *minchah* was brought every morning, too, together with the morning *tamid*. So why is the afternoon *tefillah* named for the *Minchah*?

The Sefer HaChaim (written by the brother of the Maharal) explains that Yitzchak was offered on the *mizbeiach*. He was like a *korban olah*. But a *korban olah* needs a *minchah*. Avraham didn't sacrifice a *minchah*. When Yitzchak davened, he completed the minchah part of his *korban*. Therefore, his *tefillah* is called Minchah.

The Baal HaTanya offers another explanation on why this *tefillah* is called Minchah.

The Gemara (*Menachos* 104:) teaches that a *korban minchah* is a *korban* with

mesirus nefesh, self-sacrifice. Because who brings a *korban minchah*, a *korban* made of flour and oil? Only the most destitute. The wealthy bring calves, goats, and sheep to the Beis HaMikdash, the middle-class Yidden sacrifice birds, but the poor can't afford those *korbanos*, so they bring flour and oil and make a *korban* out of it. It seems inexpensive, but for a poor person, it is expensive, and offering such a *korban* requires self-sacrifice.

This is why the word נפש, soul, is written solely by the *korban minchah*. As it states (*Vayikra* 2:1), ונפש כי תקריב מנחה לה, "If a soul brings a *korban minchah* for Hashem." Hashem says, "I consider it like you sacrificed your soul before Me," because it is a *korban* brought with self-sacrifice.

As we explained, the hardest *tefillah* of the day is Minchah because it is in the middle of the day, in the middle of our business

dealings. It is a tefillah with *mesirus nefesh*. Therefore, it is named Minchah, the name of the korban that is brought with *mesirus nefesh*.

The Outpouring of the Soul

Chazal (Yoma 75.) say, דאגה בלב איש ישיחנו לאחרים, when a person has worries, he should discuss it with others.

There are several benefits to sharing your problems with others. One is that your fellow man can advise and direct you.

A second benefit is that sometimes one feels better simply by unburdening himself and sharing his struggles with others.

Ideally, one should discuss his struggles with Hashem. As the Alshich writes, "Just as one pours out a cup of water, so shall he pour out all his *tzaros* [before Hashem], and he will feel better."

It states (*Tehillim* 102:1), תפילה לעני כי יעטוף ולפני ה' ישפך שיחו,

"The prayer of the poor man who wraps himself and pours his speech out before Hashem." The Alshich HaKadosh explains that the *pasuk* teaches us that when a person is wrapped in *tzaros*, he should pour his heart out before Hashem.

Minchah is called שיחה, as it states, ויצא יצחק לשוח בשדה, "Yitzchak went out to speak [with Hashem] in the field." Minchah is an ideal time for ישפוך שיחו, to pour out your heart before Hashem, and to tell Hashem everything you are going through.

It is easiest to do so when you do so in your own words. The Chofetz Chaim (*Likutei Amarim* 10) recommends davening in one's own words. He explains that people tend to daven by rote. But when they say their personal *tefillos*, expressing in their own words the issues that lie in the depths of their hearts, it is always a *tefillah* with *kavanah*.

Therefore, Chazal (*Brachos* 29:) say, "When one davens, he should be *mechadesh* (add some *tefillos* in his own words)." That makes the *tefillah* personal, and it won't be a *tefillah* by rote.

The Gemara (*Brachos* 34:) states, אמר רב כהנא חציף עלי מאן דמצלי בבקתא, Rav Kahana said, "I consider it a *chutzpah* when one davens in an open field." Rashi explains, "In an enclosed place, he is afraid of the King, and he has a broken heart." In a wide-open field, he prays with arrogance (see *Shulchan Aruch* 90:5).

Tosfos questions why Yitzchak davened in a field, as it states, לשה בשדה. One of Tosfos answers is that שדה means Har HaMoriah, the place of the Beis

HaMikdash. Tosfos's second answer is that the prohibition is to daven in a field where people pass by and will disturb his *tefillos*.

Perhaps, to answer Tosfos's question, we can explain that "the field" has an allegoric meaning. Avraham prayed in a מקום, a place, as it states (*Bereishis* 19:27), וישכם אברהם בבקר אל המקום, "Avraham awoke in the morning to the *place* where he had stood before Hashem." Yaakov also davened at a place, as it states (*Bereishis* 28:11), ויפגע במקום, "he encountered the *place*." *Place* implies an orderly *tefillah*. There is a place, and there is preparation; everything is orderly.¹³ Yitzchak prayed in a field, which represents a

13. Among the preparations are *pesukei d'zimra* and *kriyas Shema*, which are found in Shacharis, and there's the Shema in Maariv, but they aren't there by Minchah. This is because Minchah represents a spontaneous *tefillah*.

Someone once told Reb Yechezkel Levenstein *zt'l* that he can daven Shacharis with the *neitz hachamah* but won't be able to come in

spontaneous prayer without preparation. Something heavy was on his mind, so he instantaneously poured his heart out before Hashem. He might be in the middle of work, but he turns to Hashem, and tells Hashem everything he is going through.

That is the beauty of Minchah, it is a *לשוח בשדה*, a spontaneous outpouring of the soul before Hashem.

Don't Hold a Grudge

A poor chassid of Reb Michel of Zlotchev *zt'l* had to collect money to support his family and to cover the costs of his son's *chasunah*. So he asked the Rebbe to write a *hamlatzah*, a letter appealing to the wealthy people to give generously to the cause.

"I don't write *hamlatzos*", the rebbe informed him"

The chassid pleaded, but the Rebbe stood firm.

Finally, the chassid said, "I accept the Rebbe's wishes, but please tell me the reason. Why doesn't the Rebbe write *hamlatzos*?"

The Zlotchever Magid replied, "What will you do if you go to a wealthy person with my letter and he only gives you a few pennies or nothing at all?"

"I would slap him twice," the chassid replied. "He is disgracing the holy Rebbe!"

The Zlotchever Magid replied, "That is exactly the reason I don't want to write this letter. In heaven there is a list of people who will help you and exactly how much money each person

time to say *pesukei d'zimra*. Should he anyway daven with the *neitz*?

Reb Yechezkel Levenstein replied, "If you skip *pesukei d'zimra*, you didn't daven. Davening is more important than the *neitz*."

will give. If someone doesn't give you, that doesn't mean he is a cruel, uncaring person. It is just that he isn't on that list."

The Rebbe added, "If you believed this, you wouldn't be angry when someone doesn't give you money."

The chassid said, "I accept what the Rebbe is teaching me. If someone doesn't give me money, I know that it wasn't *bashert*."

Reb Michel said, "If so, I can write you a *hamlatzah*. Just remember: Don't be angry with those who don't give you money."

The chassid was thrilled with the letter because he understood that raising the money would now be so much easier. His first stop was a wealthy chassid of Reb Michel of Zlotchev. "After he sees the Rebbe's letter, he will probably give me all the money I need."

The wealthy person read the Rebbe's letter,

gave a few coins, and wished him a good day.

The poor chassid was very disappointed and on the verge of anger. But he remembered the Rebbe's lesson. Under his breath, he repeated to himself over and over, "He isn't on the Rebbe's list. He isn't on the Rebbe's list."

The wealthy person asked him what he was mumbling.

"It's nothing. It's just something private between me and the Rebbe."

"No. You said something about me not being on the list! What was that about? What type of list is it? Is it the list of life? Perhaps it is the list of wealth! And what will be with me if I'm not on the list?"

"It is nothing. It is just between the Rebbe and me."

But the wealthy person was worried, so he said, "I will give you all the money

you need, just tell me what you meant."

"First give me the money, and then I will tell you," the poor man replied.

The wealthy man gave him all the money he needed, and then the poor man explained that Hashem has a list of who will give and how much they will give. The Rebbe taught me that whoever doesn't give is obviously not on that list. But now, we see that your name is on Hashem's list in large, bright letters!"

This lesson applies to us all. People tend to complain about others, "Why doesn't he help me, or why does he harm me?"

Understand that there are lists in heaven, everything is *bashert*, and there is no reason to be angry at anybody who is not on that list.

Reb Elchonon Wasserman *zt'l hy'd, rosh yeshivas* Ohel Torah, in Beranowitz, came to America to raise funds for

his yeshiva. In one *beis medresh* he spoke about the importance of supporting Torah, and he described to the community the poverty and lack of food the yeshiva *bachurim* were subjected to. Then he made his pitch: "For \$11.43 you can sponsor one day in the yeshiva. For \$80.00 you can support one week in the yeshiva. Please, become our partners, and sponsor a week, or at least a day in the yeshiva."

Then the *rav* of the *beis medresh* spoke. He wanted to help Reb Elchanan, but he made a terrible error. This *rav* spoke about the great privilege of giving even one dollar to the yeshiva. Reb Elchonon set the tariff at \$11.43, or hopefully \$80.00, and he lowered it to a dollar.

Reb Elchonon didn't raise much in that *beis medresh*, and the *rav* asked *mechilah* on his behalf and on behalf of his congregation.

Reb Elchonon told him, "Hashem told Moshe to appoint Betzalel ben Uri ben Chur of *shevet* Yehudah to build the Mishkan. Imagine the following scene: Moshe comes down from the mountain and asks someone, 'I need to find Betzalel ben Uri. Are you Betzalel ben Uri?'

"The man replies, 'No, I am Shimon.'

"Moshe asks another person, 'Perhaps you are Betzalel ben Uri?'

"Sorry, I'm Aminadov.'

"Will Moshe be upset with them for not being Betzalel? Of course not! They weren't the person he was searching for. Similarly, it was determined in heaven that the members of this beis medresh won't merit being part of supporting my yeshiva. I have no reason to be angry with you. I just have to go elsewhere to find my Betzalel ben Uri."

One day, Reb Yaakov Kaminetzky *zt'l* met with

Reb Moshe Feinstein *zt'l*, and Reb Yaakov saw that Reb Moshe was extremely happy. He asked him about this, and Reb Moshe replied, "Three months ago, I had a *din torah* in my home, and I *paskened* according to Torah. Later that day, someone called me up and said, 'I'm the person you obligated to pay money in the court case. I want you to know that you ruled erroneously...' and he let loose some disrespectful words.

"Today, this man came to me again and asked me to give him a *haskamah* for *shechitah* (approbation to be a *shochet*). I was tempted to tell him to leave. He spoke disrespectfully to me, and now he wants me to do him a favor? But I remembered that Yom Kippur has passed since then, and I had forgiven him, so I agreed to test him on the laws of *shechitah*. He knew the laws well, so I wrote a letter saying that

he is fitting to be a *shochet*. As he was leaving, I told him, 'But I want you to know that you didn't speak to me properly three months ago, after the *din Torah*. That is not the way to speak.'

"The man didn't know what I was talking about. He told me that he had never called me before. We then understood that another person (who was somehow involved in the *din Torah*) called up and impersonated him.

"That is why I am happy," Reb Moshe told Reb Yaakov. "I may have held a grudge against this person forever, and it would be for naught. He didn't deserve it."

This is a lesson never to hold a grudge. Forgive your fellow man. It is likely that you have wrong information about what that person did to you. And even when he did harm you, remember that it was on Hashem's list,

and what occurred is *bashert*.

The Ben Ish Chai *zt'l* told the following story:

Once, there was a poor but generous woman who baked four loaves of bread each day. She gave three loaves to the poor and kept one for her family.

One morning, after distributing the three loaves, a destitute man came to her door begging for food. He said he hadn't eaten for a few days. She had mercy on him and gave him the fourth bread.

"I'll bake another one for my family," she thought.

She took a bag of wheat kernels and went to the shore, where the communal mill stood. After grinding her wheat into flour, she filled her bag with flour, flung it over her shoulder, and headed back home to bake bread for her family. Just then, a powerful gust of wind snatched the bag out of her hands and tossed it into the sea. She cried,

"Why do I deserve this punishment? Is this my reward for giving *tzedakah*?"

There was a *yeshiva* near the shore, and she went inside and asked the *rosh yeshiva* for an explanation. "I gave extra *tzedakah* today. I even gave away my family's bread. Is this my reward for the *tzedakah* I gave?"

The *rosh yeshiva* agreed that logically he didn't understand why this happened to her. Nevertheless, he encouraged her to believe that it was *bashert*, and for a good reason.

Just then, two merchants came in carrying two jugs filled with gold coins. "These are for the *yeshiva*," they said.

The *rosh yeshiva* was shocked, and he asked them why they were donating this large sum.

"We have just returned from a business venture overseas," they explained. "The water was stormy,

and the ship crashed into a large boulder. Water came pouring into the ship, and our lives were in danger. We vowed that if we survive, we will give *tzedakah* to the first *yeshiva* we find. As soon as we made this pledge, something miraculously plugged the hole in the ship. That's why we're bringing you these jars filled with gold."

"Do you know what sealed the hole of the ship?" the *rosh yeshiva* asked.

"Yes, we know. When we got off the boat, we looked to see what saved our lives. We were surprised to see that it was a sack of flour! The flour became dough in the sea and glued the bag onto the ship, exactly in the right place to save our lives. It was clearly a miracle!"

The poor woman was astonished when she heard this story. The *rosh yeshiva* told her, "Now you have the answer to your question. You wondered why your

bag flew out of your hands and why you were punished after giving tzedakah with *mesirus nefesh*. It wasn't a punishment at all. It was a reward. Because of your tzedakah, Hashem enabled you to earn an even greater merit. You saved the lives of all the people on the ship. This is your reward for giving tzedakah with *mesirus nefesh*."

One Person Can Influence the Entire World

Reb Shlomo Cohen was a student of the Chazon Ish, and he was renowned for his hasmadah in Torah. At one point in his life, he became involved in some communal activities to save Yidden from becoming secular. The Chazon Ish told him, "Your strength is in Torah," and he tried to convince him to wean away from other holy activities. Reb Shlomo Cohen explained to him the dire need for the activities he was involved in. The

Chazon Ish replied, "You must learn Torah. And with learning Torah, you are helping Klal Yisrael. Just being great in Torah shines spirituality to all your surroundings."

On another occasion, the Chazon Ish said, "One person learning Torah can create a greater spiritual revolution than a thousand activists can accomplish."

In a letter (*Igros* vol.3, 62), the Chazon Ish discusses the need for people to daven to save Yidden from becoming irreligious, and the need for people to take action, and the need for Torah scholars to be immersed in Torah. Each person does their part, and together, with Hashem's help, they can save Klal Yisrael. He writes, "Just as eyes are for seeing, ears are for hearing, and hands do things, etc., so is the nation like one body made of many people, and each person must do his part. If *bnei Torah* study Torah sincerely, it will save many

children and adults from sinful thoughts and heresy, etc. The holiness from their Torah learning will bring forth a spirit of purity into the world. In the neighborhoods where there are true *bnei Torah*, it is clearly noticeable the great influence they have on many people. If they tried to accomplish the same thing in any other way, they would fail. Even the people who are very distant from Yiddishkeit are affected positively by their influence, only it isn't so noticeable by them because it is subtle."

The Chareidim (פס"ו י"ג) writes, "Since all Bnei Yisrael are like one person, when one person becomes righteous it influences all of Klal Yisrael. Also, when one person sins, it affects all Yidden. So, rouse yourself sincerely in

teshuvah, and when you do *teshuvah*, intend that this should bring all of Bnei Yisrael to *teshuvah*."¹⁴

The Chareidim adds that this is the explanation of the *pasuk* (*Hoshei'a* 14:2-3), שׁוּבָה יִשְׂרָאֵל עַד ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם... קְחוּ עִמָּכֶם דְּבָרִים וּשׁוּבוּ אֶל ה' "Return, Yisrael, unto Hashem your G-d... Take words with you and return to Hashem." The beginning of the *pasuk* is talking to one person (שׁוּבָה is in singular tense). The end of the *pasuk* is speaking to many people (as it states, קְחוּ... וּשׁוּבוּ). The Chareidim explains that this is because one person did *teshuvah*, resulting in many people doing *teshuvah*.

The Chareidim continues, "It states (*Hoshei'a* 14:5), כִּי שָׂם אַפִּי מִמֶּנּוּ, 'For My anger has turned away from them.' The Gemara (*Yoma* 86:) teaches from this *pasuk*, 'Even if only one

14. When performing a mitzvah, many people say, בשם כל ישראל. One of the reasons is so that the mitzvah will affect and inspire all Yidden.

person does *teshuvah*, Hashem forgives the *aveiros* of all the Bnei Yisrael.¹ This is because his *teshuvah* rouses everyone else to *teshuvah*.

The Chozeh of Lublin *zt'l* (quoted in *חינוך בית יהודה*) said:

"It is impossible for every person to go around the streets, giving *mussar* to people to bring them back to Torah, because if one does so, when will he learn Torah? Rather, when a person studies Torah *lishmah* - wherever he is - and he studies *בשם כל ישראל*, that it should be a merit for all of Bnei Yisrael - this will inspire thoughts of *teshuvah* in people's hearts. It will be as if he gave *tochachah* (and taught them to go in Hashem's ways)."

This can be the translation of the *pasuk* (*Tehillim* 84:6), *אשרי אדם עוז לו בקך*, *מסילות בלבבם*, "Praiseworthy is the man whose strength is in You, paths in their

hearts." *עוז* refers to Torah. The *pasuk* is saying that when one studies Torah, even all by himself, *מסילות*, *בלבבם*, this opens roads in others hearts and rouses them to *teshuvah*.

We are discovering the amazing merits a Yid can attain. A person studying Torah might think he isn't accomplishing much. But, in truth, he is bringing thoughts of *teshuvah* and yearning for Torah into the hearts of hundreds, maybe thousands, or millions of people. We are all connected, our souls are one, and therefore each person's growth affects everyone else.

People have great aspirations; they want to accomplish a lot. They want to be *mekarev* multitudes of people to Torah and *emunah*.

As we see, it is indeed possible, each person in his own way.