

Pulse OF Emunah

ANI
MAAMIN
Foundation

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life

LESSONS

WORKING MAN'S MISSION

Reproduced from "Living Kiddush Hashem" by Rabbi Shraga Freedman, with permission of ArtScroll/Mesorah Publications

In his introduction to Rabbi Pinchas Bodner's *Halachos of Other People's Money*, Rav Mattisyahu Salomon says that Jews' business interactions with non-Jews are part of *Hashem's* plan for the world.

They give us an opportunity to promote *kiddush Hashem*—the purpose of the world's creation.

One Rav asked his *mispallelim* what areas of *avodas Hashem* have made a difference to those around them. Surprisingly, many responded with *mitzvos bein adam laMakom*, practices that show that Jews are unique, that we are servants of *Hashem*.

One man returned to work after a three-day *Yom Tov*. A coworker demanded, "How could you do that? We were in the middle of preparing for a very important presentation to an executive, which is due tomorrow, and you disappeared for three days. I understand that it was your holiday, but don't you even check your email?"

The *frum* employee explained the *halachos* of *Shabbos* and *Yom Tov*, and added that he reports to a higher Executive than any of his superiors at work.

The coworker's anger gave way to admiration. "I wish I could disconnect and recharge like that," he said. "You are truly blessed to have this in your life."

This is a message we can internalize. A person can transform himself from a 'simple' working man to a *mekadesh shem shamayim* through all the *mitzvos*, both *bein adam l'chaveiro* and *bein adam laMakom*.

When we recognize this tremendous power, it will imbue us with a profound sense of meaning, and we will recognize the difference that we can make in the world. 



gem

OF THE WEEK

BERACHOS ILLUMINATED

Based on the commentary of Rav Shamshon Raphael Hirsch zt"l on Chumash, with permission from the publisher.

In *Parshas Nasso*, *Hashem* commands the *Kohanim* to bless the Children of *Yisroel*, and prescribes the exact words to use: *yivarechecha v'yishmerecha*. This blessing does not come from their personal compassion. It is part of their *avodah*. The *Kohen* who recites the blessing is merely the appointed instrument through which these prescribed words come into being.

Why these words? What is their deeper meaning?

Since *yivarechecha* is paired with *v'yishmerecha*, we can understand that this part of the blessing refers mainly to possessions that require *shmirah* (guarding) even after they have been received. They need to be protected so that they remain ours and can be a true blessing. Therefore, the first *berachah* blesses *Yisroel* with the prosperity of all their bodily and material possessions, and protects them from anything that might harm them.

The second *berachah* begins with the word *ya'er*: to illuminate something so that it can be seen. *Hashem* is "illuminated" by His deeds and His creations. Everything that emanates from Him radiates back on The One who caused them, revealing Him in the almighty power of His rule. *Panav*—the face of *Hashem*—are the aims that He "directs His countenance" towards: achieved by His interventions and those who choose to do His will. *continued on reverse side*

powerful
PRAYER 

BAREICH ALEINU:
IN THE HANDS OF HASHEM

In Gan Eden, Adam didn't have to make an effort; everything was prepared for him. But after eating from the *eitz hadaas*, it was decreed that he would earn a livelihood by the sweat of his brow. Since then, everyone must work. However, our livelihood depends on what *Hashem* decides to give us on *Rosh Hashanah*. Since we must work in order to receive it, it is easy to think that we are the ones who make the *parnassah*. Many smart, talented people have been unsuccessful in earning a living, but it is human nature to make this mistake. *Bareich Aleinu* helps us remember that our success or failure is in the hands of *Hashem*. 

Adapted from *Biur Tefillah* (Ani Maamin Foundation)

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EMUNAH IN OUR TIME

By Rabbi Dovid Sapirman, Dean, Ani Maamin Foundation

In last week's column, I wrote about the prediction of previous-era *Gedolim* that, prior to the final redemption, *emunah* would be very weak for most people, being the great *nisayon* of our generation. For decades, as a *mechanech*, I have observed this, and written and spoken about it. In 2009 the Ani Maamin Foundation was created to bring greater conviction in *emunah* to the Torah community.

There has been much opposition to speaking about *emunah* in public, due to the fact that some who deny that there is a problem in *emunah*. But this assessment of our generation is not my own. The need to address the youths' doubts, and the approach of the Ani Maamin Foundation, its written and audio materials, have all been enthusiastically endorsed by: Rav Avraham Chaim Levin, z'tzal, in an opening talk at a Torah Umesorah convention; also by HaRabonim Shlita: Rav Shmuel Kamenetsky, Rav Aharon Feldman, Rav Reuven Feinstein, Rav Zev Leff, Rav Shlomo Miller, Rav Yaakov Michael Hirschman, Rav Moshe Mordechai Lowy, Rav Elya Brudney, and other many distinguished *Rabbonim*. Many *mechanchim* who have used our methodology in their classroom.

Rav Reuven Feinstein, shlita, Rosh Yeshiva of Staten Island, wrote in his *haskama* to my third book *Tranquility and Travail*, "Sadly, in our time we have seen a frightening decline in matters of *emunah*, especially among the youth, who learn in *Yeshivos* and other *batei sefer*." Rav Shlomo Miller, shlita, Rosh Kollel, Toronto, wrote in a *haskama* on my first pamphlet that, "There are *talmidim* and *talmidos* who, in spite of being educated in *Yeshivos* and Bais Yaakov schools, have doubts about the truth of the fundamentals of *emunah*." That was written seventeen years ago, and the situation has only gotten worse since then.

Rav Aharon Feldman, shlita, Rosh Yeshiva Ner Israel, Baltimore, wrote the following in his *haskama* on my first book, *Emunah: A Refresher course*: "Faced with virtually an entire Western world which does not subscribe to the beliefs of Jews regarding Creation and *Matan Torah*, many of our youth need to be shown why they should accept these beliefs." When scheduled to speak in Chicago, two high school *mosdos* sent me their students' questions in advance. They sent about one hundred questions (with duplicates). The content of my presentation to them was to answer their questions, one by one. When I sent these questions for review to Rav Aharon Feldman, shlita, he replied that if my current books do not answer these questions, I need to write another one. Hence, the book I hope to publish soon is my response to the Rosh Yeshiva's advice. It will be my humble effort to help minimize the distress of unanswered questions, doubts, and the resultant weakening of our service to *Hashem Yisborach*.

The Rosh Yeshiva of Chicago Telshe, Rav Avraham Chaim Levin, zatzal, said publicly at the Torah Umesorah convention, 2010, that of all the curricula that are offered to *yeshivos*—which they simply have no time for — "there is one subject that I believe has to be integrated in all the *limudim*, which is the most important subject of anything in the world: the subject of *emunah* which is not always taught in the schools." He stated how great an effect Rav Avigdor Miller's first book, *Rejoice O' Youth*, had on him in spite of the fact that his father was a *talmid* of the Chofetz Chaim. He himself was a *talmid* of Rav Elya Mayer Bloch and Rav Mottel Katz. Even though the book addresses directly every *apikorsishe* issue: Christianity, Islam, Evolution, Bible criticism, etc, he felt that it should be required reading for every *Yeshiva bachur*. Tens of thousands have had their lives enriched with a stronger conviction in *emunah* as a result of our work. Many have told me that it has literally been life changing for them. My hope is to correct the fallacy that there is no *emunah* deficit. ♡ To be continued

continued from previous page

As it says in *Tehillim* (89:15): "*Hashem's* throne is founded upon righteousness and justice; His Countenance is directed to love and truth."

Vichuneka is to grant us the spiritual abilities we need to sense the face of *Hashem*, which has been illuminated before our eyes, and to recognize His hand in day-to-day occurrences and understand what we have seen.

Ya'er Hashem panav eilecha therefore means: may *Hashem* reveal to you the aims of His rule, to be achieved through you, which are found in the Torah and shown to us by the *nevi'im*.

Vichuneka becomes: may He equip you with the spiritual abilities, understanding His words in Torah and *nevuah*, seeing His hand in history, in your own tasks of life, enlightening mankind!

By the time we get to *Yisa*, we have been given comprehensive blessings for both the material and spiritual. Now *Hashem* adds the final crown: closeness to Him. If we properly utilize these blessings given to us, and use them in the spirit of "illuminating *Hashem's* countenance"—only to do the will of *Hashem*—then we become worthy of *Hashem's* closeness, which is the epitome of good.

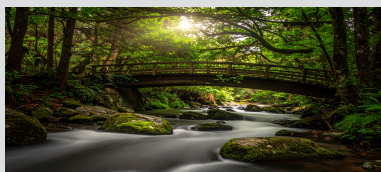
Therefore, the blessing means this: *Hashem* illuminated His countenance for you and revealed to you His aims and has given you the spiritual abilities and material means to recognize and achieve these aims. If you use all these gifts properly, you become part of a circle of people whose sole mission is to serve *Hashem*, and the purpose of His whole rule on earth will be focused on you. He will direct His countenance toward you, and you will be the object of His providence. This brings us to *v'yaseim l'cha shalom*.

When you are a true servant of *Hashem*, and His divine intervention is directed to you, while using your physical and spiritual gifts, then you will not be at odds with the rest of the world, instead be at peace and harmony. Sensitive and thoughtful people around you will see in you in perfect complement: the element that spurs *them* to do good and sustain them. Every breath by an individual truly serving *Hashem* will strike a chord with the universe around him bringing peace ♡



wonder WORLD

PEACE AND QUIET



Is peace and quiet a bonus or necessity?

In *Parshas Nasso*, *Hashem* commands the *Kohanim* to bless the nation with peace. While peace sounds like a nice bonus, it is actually a physiological necessity. When the body faces chronic stress, it floods with cortisol. While cortisol normally gives your body a boost to get it out of a dangerous situation, sustained high levels wreak havoc. It increases appetite and triggers fat storage - particularly in the face, chest, and stomach, raises blood pressure and blood sugar, leading to heart disease and diabetes. It breaks down muscle and blocks calcium absorption, increasing the risk of osteoporosis. Cortisol also thins the skin, triggers acne, suppresses immunity, and fuels anxiety, panic, depression, poor concentration, and brain fog. Ultimately, the blessing of peace is not just a comfort—it is vital for survival. ♡