



SILENCE SPEAKS HONOR

כבוד



Issue #3

פ' ראה תשפ"ו

Glimpses of Greatness

Stories of Salvation in the Merit of Sanctifying Tefillah

Blessed Children Who Came into the World in the Zechus of the Holy Kabbalah

The following incident was related by the legendary storyteller Reb Pinye Rubenstein, who heard it directly from the subject of the story, Reb Hershel Danziger, Monsey.

On 6 Elul of year 5783 (2023), a massive event took place at the *tziyun* of the Tosfos Yom Tov in Krakow, where thousands of *Yidden* from throughout the world came together to awaken themselves in the *inyan* of *kedushas hatefillah* and the importance of refraining from talking during davening.

A few days prior to the trip, Reb Hershel received a call from a friend who asked him whether he wished to join.

For a number of years, this friend had been after him to join this pilgrimage, and in general he would argue with Reb Hershel about the matter of talking during davening. However, Hershel felt that the entire topic wasn't relevant to him. *"This is a matter for previous generations... today, it's okay to talk during davening,"* he would say. In fact, he kept saying, if not for the socializing, he wouldn't be coming to shul at all. »

Pearls on the Parashah

Insights on Tefillah from the weekly Parashah

Proud in Prayer

There's a famous *vort* by Rav Mechele of Zlochev on the *pasuk* אנכי עומד בין השם ובניכם, stating that the אנכי, the "I", stands between Hashem and the Jewish People. Selfishness and hubris are barriers that block our closeness to Hashem.

Said the Ma'or VaShamesh: there are times when a bit of אנכי, some pride, is important to have—and that is when a person approaches the *Melech Malchei HaMelachim* to daven before Him. *"Who am I to daven before the Master of the World?"* he may think as he hesitates to daven with the proper fire and fervor.

This is what the *pasuk* is telling us: ראה אנכי נותן לפניכם היום ברכה וקללה, the אנכי can be a blessing or it can be a curse. When it comes to *avodas Hashem*, it is a blessing to feel confidence and pride.

(Ma'or VaShamesh)

Secrets of the Sages

Kedushah Beis Hamedrash as Espoused by the Tzaddikim

The Tosher Rebbe, zy" a (27 Av 5775)

"One who speaks during davening brings ill upon himself. Even if during the Yamim Nora'im it was bashert for this person to have much good, it is impossible for anything good to come his way, for he prevents the shefa from coming to him"

(Avodas Avodah Pekudei)



WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH A MILLION?



Firsthand Accounts

Whenever we hear of a person who experienced a miraculous *yeshuah*, we tend to believe the story... However, when we hear the incident firsthand from the person who experienced it—hearing the emotion and the excitement of the subject of the story—it takes on a whole new meaning.

We currently find ourselves one week away from the *yahrzeit* of the holy Tosfos Yom Tov, *zy"ta*, and to this end, we will relate a number of firsthand accounts that we ourselves have heard—and even accompanied from beginning to end.

By way of introduction, we will relate that in our *beis medrash*, we have instituted that prior to the *yahrzeit* of the holy Tosfos Yom Tov, we hold a *leil hashlichus*, an “evening for emissaries,” during which *Yidden* from all over come and take on *kabbalos in the matter of tefillah*, and write *kvitlach* to be sent through a designated emissary to the holy *tziyun* on the day of the *hillula*, which takes place on 6 Elul.

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A *Yid* we knew held the position that he doesn't take on *kabbalos* upon himself. *I won't be able to carry them out anyway*, he would say to himself. *There's no point in taking them upon myself*. This *Yid* would come late to shul on a regular basis... often arriving after *Barchu* on Shabbos morning.

However, at last year's "*leil hashlichus*", this *Yid* was present, and he read in the name of the holy Chofetz Chaim that one who accepts upon himself a *kabbalah* is given special *siyata diShmaya* to carry it out. And so, he made the decision to accept upon himself to come on time to davening from then until Yom Kippur. He added several requests to his *kabbalah*, one of them being that his Section-8 application should be approved.

What happened next was incredible. This person, who struggled so much to come to shul on time, was suddenly—after accepting upon himself the *kabbalah*—able to do so for the first time in his life. He kept his resolution past Yom Kippur, and then after Simchas Torah, one hundred percent. During the weekdays, he was in shul for *berachos*, and on Shabbos, he made it in time for *Hodu*. For this person to be able to accomplish this was akin to *Kriyas Yam Suf*!

This itself was the greatest miracle and *yeshua* for this person, and he felt completely transformed by this change in his life. But, as an addition to the story, he related, “On the very day of the *yahrzeit*, I received a call from the Section-8 office stating that I was approved for their benefits!”

Incredibly, they further related, there was a mistake on their part. They had forgotten all about his case, and they had skipped him and worked on two people beneath him on the list. But for some reason, on this very day, they “remembered” the case and called him about it.

This year, his *kabbalah* will be for much longer than two months.

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Another *Yid* related the following:

“I never used to attend the *leil hashlichus*, because it's not my type of thing. However, last year I was about to take a very rigorous and intense exam. This wasn't just any test; it was an exam that 60 percent of people fail. I was very nervous about this test, which requires the examinee to sit in a room for ten hours... the pressure is truly intense.

“It was then that I said to myself: *Let me take on a kabbalah to improve my tefillah as a zechus*, and I made my way over to the hall to accept the *kabbalah* upon myself. I know that this may sound incredible, but the moment I left the hall, a great

calm overtook me... a serenity of the soul that I could not explain. Shortly before taking the test, I encountered one of the *gabbaim* of Morah Mikdash, and he encouraged me to take on an additional *kabbalah*, which I did.

“*B'chasdei Hashem*, I passed the test. and I attribute my success to the fact that I strengthened my *tefillah*!”

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A newly married young man related the following:

It was shortly after my marriage, and I was searching for a job, but not just any job... A unique, niche job in a specific industry, a position that isn't very easy to find. As a *zechus*, I decided to take on a *kabbalah* in *tefillah* at last year's *leil hashlichus*.

Previously, my davening wasn't as it should be. I would routinely arrive late or leave early, and it was very difficult for me to take on this *kabbalah*. But I knew that I needed lots of *zechusim* and *siyata diShmaya*.

Now, listen to this miracle: I wrote my *kabbalah* on Sunday evening. On Wednesday, I received an offer for just the job I was looking for, and by Monday, I was ensconced in my new job. Simply incredible!

I saw just how quickly the *yeshuos* arrive!

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An older gentleman came over to share the following story:

I must tell you a story that I experienced a number of years ago, before the “Keren Tosfos Yom Tov revolution.”

I have been careful not to speak during davening for many years now, and on Shabbos, I daven in a shul where the *rav* recites the *Mi Shebeirach* of the Tosfos Yom Tov for those who refrain from talking during davening.

Cont. on P7

Glimpses of Greatness (cont.)

« This time, however, Hershel's friend had an offer for him. "I have a free ticket for you," he said. "Perhaps you'll come?" And Hershel agreed.

This was three days before departure, and Hershel's friend tried everything he could to get him on the charter flight to Krakow, to no avail. Eventually, he purchased tickets on a commercial flight leaving from JFK in New York. As he was settling into his seat and making himself comfortable, a fellow passenger, a *Yid* from the Five Towns, arrived to take the adjoining seat.

"What's your name?" Hershel asked.

"My name is Yoni Nierenberg," came the reply. "It may seem peculiar to you that I, a *Yid* from Long Island, am joining a group comprised largely of *chassidishe Yidden*. But three years ago, I was sitting in a meeting with one of my clients, a *chassidishe Yid* who related that he'd be leaving on a trip to Krakow the next day along with his colleagues—all of whom I knew—and he invited me to join them."

The "Keren Tosfos Yom Tov" awakening hadn't reached the Five Towns at that time, and Yoni wasn't aware of this *inyan*. But he nevertheless agreed to join the group.

Just before getting onto the flight, Yoni had received a call from his daughter, who had been married for two years. "Totty, I didn't tell you this till now. But I heard that you're traveling to the *tziyun* of a *tzaddik*... Please daven for me. We need a miracle."

"What happened?"

Clearly agitated, she related that she had just been to the doctor, who informed her that she would never have children, *R"l*! "Totty! I need the *tzaddik's* blessings. As you visit the *tziyun*, please plead for us. Daven for me and my husband to see a *yeshuah*."

Yoni was shocked and distraught by the call. The news was heartbreaking for a parent to hear. He promised his daughter that he would surely daven for her and her husband and storm the heavens on their behalf in the merit of the holy *tzaddik*.

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During the journey to Krakow, Yoni had the opportunity to share with his fellow

travelers the difficult conversation he had had with his daughter. In response, someone in the group related a story of salvation that he had personally experienced at the *kever* of the Tosfos Yom Tov a number of years earlier. "The power of the *kabbalah* not to speak during davening is incredibly powerful," he said. "But this means truly not to talk during davening!"

Yoni listened earnestly to the words of his fellow traveler, and, being in desperate need of salvation, he resolved to accept upon himself this *kabbalah* at the *kever* of the Tosfos Yom Tov.

Standing at the *tziyun* in Krakow, the tears flowed forth as Yoni cried his heart out and firmly accepted upon himself never to utter a mundane word during davening, no matter what!

"Nine months later, my daughter and her husband welcomed a beautiful baby boy into the world!" Yoni exclaimed.

As Yoni concluded the incredible story, a flight attendant came over to him and notified him that he had been upgraded to first class, and with that their encounter concluded.

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Hershel sat there, flabbergasted by what he had just heard. He felt as if he were hearing his own life story. You see? Hershel had an only son, who was already an older child. He and his wife were yearning for another child, and they had visited many doctors in pursuit of a *yeshuah*, to no avail; they were still waiting for an additional child to join their family.

"I'm sitting here on the plane... and it's as if I am listening to my own life story," Hershel said to himself. "Whatever he told me... that's what my wife and I are living through."

Hershel arrived in Krakow, and as he prepared to join the great *yahrzeit seudah* along with his group of friends, he found that—of the thousand or so people in attendance—who took the seat opposite him but Yoni Nierenberg!

Hershel was shaken up by this "coincidence." *I was meant to take the charter flight, but instead I left through Kennedy Airport... only to be seated next to Yoni Nierenberg... for a*

total of five minutes...and now, in Krakow, of the hundreds of people in attendance, I find myself seated right next to him?! What are the odds?!

Something's going on here, he thought.

Overwhelmed by the sequence of events, Hershel resolved on the spot: "I'm not waiting for tomorrow! I firmly accept upon myself not to talk during davening for the next forty days—no matter how difficult it will be!"

Right there, at the *seudas hillula*, he wrote a note with his *kabbalah* not to speak during davening for the next forty days—something he felt he could do. On the following morning, he took his note with him to the *tziyun* of the Tosfos Yom Tov and poured his heart out with heartrending sobs... expressing all the anguish and yearning that he and his wife had experienced over so many years.

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Despite the difficulty, Hershel fulfilled his *kabbalah* completely. For forty days, he did not utter a word during davening. He was transformed by this, and he came to enjoy it, feeling elevated by his *kabbalah*. The initial *kabbalah* of forty days turned into another month, and then another...

Not ten months went by, and on Shabbos Lag BaOmer 5784 (2024), Hershel celebrated the birth of his baby daughter with a gala *kiddush*!

Hershel concluded his story: "Perhaps the biggest *yeshuah* in this story is that I, Hershel Danziger, stopped talking during davening! Some people think that this *kabbalah* isn't made for them... it's for the olden days, and it's difficult. But when I see others talking during davening, I say to myself, *if they only knew what they can accomplish with this hour or two of refraining from talking, and the yeshuos they could effect thereby, there's no doubt that they would stop!*"

"What's the big deal?" Hershel concludes. "Is it that difficult to refrain from talking when you're standing before the *Melech Malchei HaMelachim*?! Try it, and you will see that this *kabbalah* will change your life!"

The Shemoneh Esrei of Leil Shabbos Kodesh⁽³⁾

~ אתה קדשת ~

Introduction to Proclamation

The stanza אתה קדשת serves as an introduction to the proclamation we make with ויכולו, stating that Hashem created the entire universe. We say the words, אתה קדשת את יום השביעי לשמך תכלית, מעשה שמים וארץ וברכתו מכל הימים וקדשתו מכל הזמנים, וכן כתוב בתורתך, *You sanctified the seventh day for Your Name, the culmination and purpose of the creation of heaven and earth. You blessed it above all the other days, and You made it holy above all other times. And so it is written in Your Torah.*

The Avudraham, who is known for his great work in elucidating our *nusach hatefillah*, points out that all these words indeed correspond to the *nusach* of ויכולו. We begin with the words אתה קדשת את יום השביעי לשמך, which correspond to the words אלוקים ויברך אותו—stating that Hashem sanctified Shabbos. We then go on to the words תכלית מעשה שמים וארץ, which echo the words ויכולו השמים והארץ—with which we say that with Shabbos, the world arrived at its purpose. The words מכל הימים are aligned with the words ויברך אלוקים את, while the words מכל הזמנים וקדשתו מכל הזמנים correspond to וקדש אותו.

And we conclude with the words וכן כתוב בתורתך—which lead us into the words of the Torah of *Vayechulu*.

Pausing at “His Name”

The Avudraham further notes that it is important to pause between the words ויכולו. תכלית שמים and לשמך. For if we say the words together, it will sound as if we’re saying that there’s, *chas v’shalom*, an end (tachlis) to His Name.

This was already pointed out by the Machzor Vitri, who says clearly: “One should not read the words ‘לשמך תכלית’ as a single uninterrupted phrase, for there is no end or limit (tachlis or sof) to His great Name. Doing so would imply, Heaven forbid, that His Name has an end, which would be blasphemous. Therefore, one must pause between לשמך (“for Your Name”) and תכלית (“the culmination”).

The Meaning of “Tachlis”

The *Aruch HaShulchan* brings two meanings for the word *tachlis*. The first is an expression of “conclusion”—that is, Shabbos was **the conclusion of the work of creating the world**, as we say in *Vayechulu*. The second is that Shabbos is the *tachlis*, the ultimate purpose of the entire creation of the world.

How Shabbos Is Holy and Blessed

In אתה קדשת we say that Shabbos was more blessed than all the days and more sanctified than all the times. The Avudraham cites three *peshatim* in how Shabbos is “blessed” and “holy.”

Rabbeinu Saadya Gaon writes that Shabbos brings blessing and holiness to those who keep Shabbos. That is, Hashem sanctified and blessed Shabbos so it should have the ability to make Klal Yisrael holy and blessed.

Ibn Ezra explains that the blessing is for the *guf* as well as for the *neshamah*, which is strengthened by the blessing of the mind, while “holiness” refers to the day of Shabbos in which we refrain from doing work.

The Ramban explains that this refers to Klal Yisrael, who bless and sanctify

Shabbos. We bless Shabbos by making *kiddush* and take pleasure in it, and we sanctify it by refraining from work.

Blessed *From* the Days

The Tiferes Shlomo writes that a *Yid* merits to absorb the *kedushah* of Shabbos according to the way he conducted his week. And this is what we say in the *nusach hatefillah*: וברכתו מכל הימים, *Shabbos is blessed from all the days of the week. As the week went, so will Shabbos go.* Thus, the Rebbe writes, “The blessing and sanctity of Shabbos for every *Yid* are ‘from all the days’—that is, from the six weekdays and the way one conducted himself during them. For everything depends on the quality of one’s conduct throughout the week. As a person lives during the weekdays, so is his Shabbos.”

Greater *Than* the Yamim Tovim

The Maharal tells us incredible words. Shabbos, he explains, includes in it all the Yamim Tovim. That is, Shabbos contains the holiness and the foundations of all the Yamim Tovim put together—for every Yom Tov contains a specific unique quality and message, but Shabbos contains everything.

With this *Maharal*, the Shem MiShmuel explains the words וקדשתו מכל הזמנים, which are commonly understood to mean that Shabbos is greater than the Yamim Tovim, this way: Shabbos is sanctified—מכל הזמנים—**from** all the times, because it contains within it the *kedushah* of these exalted days.

Rav Hershele of Spinka, zy”a

27th of Av 5757

A Holy Neshama Descends

The Rebbe, Rav Shmuel Tzvi Horowitz of Spinka, known affectionately as “Rav Heshale Spinker,” was born in the town of Munkacz, on the 9th of Tammuz of the year 1921. His father was Rav Avraham Abish, a direct descendant of the Zera Kodesh of Ropshitz. His mother was the daughter of the Chakal Yitzchak of Spinka, a son of the Imrei Yosef of Spinka.

Following the bitter Churban of the Holocaust, the Rebbe was left alone in the world—but determined to rebuild the beautiful world that he knew and to continue the golden chain of his exalted forbears. Countless *Yidden* coalesced around him, seeking to cleave to the Ribbono shel Olam and to derive guidance from the Rebbe in spiritual and material matters. The Rebbe returned his pure *neshamah* to its Creator on Friday night, 27 Av of the year 1997, in the midst of speaking *Divrei Torah* at his *tisch* in the presence of many chassidim and followers.

The Rebbe’s Elevated Avodah in Davening

The Rebbe always began his day at the precise time, and would say with yearning: “When will I go and see the Ribbono shel Olam in the Beis Medrash?” He would enter the Shul with a noticeable humility, deference, and modesty—as a servant before his master.

He once remarked: “I learn *Gemara* with *Tosafos* before davening, because this ignites my every limb to be able to daven properly.”

The Rebbe’s davening itself was legendary, and he would pour out his heart with incredible הנפש הנפש—even though he rarely moved around. He would daven in a loud voice and spill tears of yearning and pining and love to his Creator.

The sections of davening which speak of the pain of the *Shechinah* and its exile, as well as the suffering of *Yidden*, occupied a special place of emotion and yearning in the Rebbe’s *tefillah*. He supplicated the Ribbono shel Olam like a young child pleads from his father that we should merit salvation and *yeshuos*, and that Hashem should finally gather us in with the coming of Mashiach.

“I learn Gemara with Tosafos before davening, because this ignites my every limb to be able to daven properly.”

Although the Rebbe’s custom was not to shake much during davening, his clothes were regularly drenched from sweat and exertion following davening.

A Reluctant Parting

When the Rebbe davened, it was clear that he was encountering the Ribbono shel Olam, and it was difficult for him to tear himself away from this encounter. He would always remain at his place silently for a few minutes following davening. He once explained why we recite “Adon Olam” following davening with the following explanation: We wish to demonstrate to Hashem that we’re not running away from our meeting, rather we address the Adon Olam, the Master of

the World, saying, we want to remain with you for a bit longer...”

The Zeide’s Sigh

In his youth, the Rebbe was extremely close with his zeide, the Chakal Yitzchok of Spinka, and he was practically raised in his home. He would relate that his *zeide*, the Spinka Rebbe, would run to shul every morning with a freshness akin to a person who was doing so for the first time in his life.

Once, a well-meaning *Yid* wished to gift Rav Hershele a *Gemara* that belonged to his grandfather. But the Rebbe refused. “I wish to be connected with the *zeide’s krechtz*, his sighs and his tears that he emitted in his heartfelt *avodas hatefillah*—not though a material object, even one as holy as a *Gemara*.

When the Cross Came Crashing Down

An incredible episode transpired when the Spinka kehillah purchased their Beis Medrash on Keap Street in Williamsburg in the year 1961. Prior to closing on the property, the Rebbe came down to the site to have a look at the building. As was his wont, he did not raise his eyes in the street, and did not even look at the surrounding buildings.

The first month after moving into the new building, the Rebbe went outside for *kiddush levanah*, and looked up. To his horror and dismay, he noticed a church with a large cross atop its roof right near his beis medash. It pained the Rebbe greatly to have this symbol of impurity overlooking the holy Beis Medrash.

A short while later, the cross came down, and no matter how many times they tried repairing it, it still came down again and again, and this is the way it has incredibly remained all the years.

Incredible teachings regarding *tefillah b'tzibbur* ⁽¹⁾

From a derashah of Rav Tzvi Elimelech Teitelbaum, shlit"a,

Rav Kehillas Tefillah l'Moshe Satmar-Boro Park

Preparing for Prayer

For *ehrliche Yidden, the hachanah, the preparation, for tefillah was a great avodah in itself. One may say that this avodah is one of the most important yesodos espoused by the Ba'al Shem Tov and his talmidim. It has traditionally been one of the most important times of the day.*

Tzaddikim were known to insist on learning prior to davening. It is said that the Ma'or VaShamesh would not allow an individual to daven in his *minyan* if he hadn't learned for at least two hours before davening.

This *avodah* is mentioned in the *Tiferes Shlomo*, who notes that it is alluded to in the words of the *Megillah*: ובבאה לפני המלך, *when one wishes to come before the King [in tefillah]*, אמר עם הספר, *if he comes having learned in a sefer*, then מחשבתו הרעה, *all impure thoughts will leave him and his davening will be pure.*

The Danger of Solitary Davening

Regarding davening itself, there's a halachah that it must be *b'tzibbur*. Aside from the halachic aspect, *ehrliche Yidden* were extremely *makpid* on *tefillah b'tzibbur*.

The *sefer Mishmeres Issamar* (a talmid of the Chozeh of Lublin) is an incredible treasure of Torah from the Chassidic masters. He mentions his Rebbe over 150 times, citing incredible teachings he learned from his exalted master and from the Koznitzer Maggid. For many of these teachings, this *sefer* is a primary source.

At the end of *Parashas Mishpatim*, he writes that he once spoke with his Rebbe, the Chozeh of Lublin, regarding a number

of topics. Regarding one of these, he writes, "The Rebbe of Lublin once advised me that I should be exceedingly careful never to daven alone, but always to daven with a minyan. Why? Because davening alone is spiritually dangerous, and it invites prosecution in Heaven."

Of course, this is in addition to the halachic requirement of *tefillah b'tzibbur*.

Greater than a *d'Oraisa*

The Chida, in his *sefer Chomas Anach* on *Nach*, writes similarly about the danger of davening solitarily. In *Yeshaya*, we learn the words בעת רצון ענייך, *In a time of favor, I answered you.* The Chida writes there extensively about *tefillah b'tzibbur*, writing, תפלה ביחידות מסוכנת, *davening alone is dangerous.*

The Toldos Yaakov Yosef writes similarly in *Parashas Shelach* regarding the *inyan* of *tefillah b'tzibbur*, stating, "An ordinary person should take this lesson to heart: If there is a shul in his town, yet he scorns the davening of the congregation and instead davens alone in his own home, he has committed two wrongs. Beyond what the Gemara (Berachos 8a) states—that such conduct causes exile for his children and other consequences—there is an additional fault: His davening is demeaned because it is not offered together with the *rabbim*. This warning alone should suffice."

The *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* notes an interesting point. *Tefillah* itself is a matter of debate; is it a *d'Oraisa* or a *d'Rabbanan*. But the *tefillah b'tzibbur* aspect is surely a *d'Rabbanan*. However, he says, **even so, it is greater than a *d'Oraisa*—since it entails the mitzvah of וקדשתי בתוך בני ישראל, I will become sanctified among the Jewish People.**

What Irked the Chasam Sofer

In the times of the holy Chasam Sofer, the *Haskalah* heated up, and one *maskil* wrote a pamphlet tearing down everything that is holy to *Yidden*, the institution of *tefillah b'tzibbur* prominent among them. Writing to his illustrious father-in-law, Rav Akiva Eiger, regarding the words of this *maskil*, the Chasam Sofer expresses his deep pain about his attitude to *tefillah b'tzibbur*, indicating how much this bothered him.

Rebbe Isaac of Komarna, in his *sefer Shulchan HaTahor*, writes, "***Tefillah b'tzibbur is the most important thing, and is even more precious than serving as a sandak one hundred times!***" Sometimes, one may consider rushing his *tefillah*, often missing *tefillah b'tzibbur* so that he can fulfill another important mitzvah, such as serving as a *sandak*. But the Rebbe reveals to us that this mitzvah is more important than one hundred times of serving as *sandak*.

The Place of the Holy Water Carrier

The following incredible incident transpired in the days of the *Ba'al Shem Tov* and it illustrates the greatness of *tefillah b'tzibbur*.

Once, when the *Ba'al Shem Tov* came to a town, understandably, the people wanted to seat him at the front of the shul. However, the Rebbe declined, insisting on sitting at a certain spot in the shul. The people wondered about this, and the *Ba'al Shem Tov* explained:

In former times, a *Yid* in the *shetel* had worked as a water carrier—lugging heavy cans of water in the early morning hours to supply the homes of the »

The Maggid's Perspective (cont.)

« town. Although his work took place in the early morning, he was nevertheless extremely meticulous in davening *b'tzibbur*. He always made sure to be on time to davening.

One wintry day, our water carrier toiled mightily in the predawn hours to draw water from the icy river, and he was delayed in coming to shul. By the time he arrived at the shul, he saw that the *tzibbur* was about to begin davening. In his hurry to don *tefillin*, he hastily pulled up his icy shirt—taking some of the skin along with it, causing bleeding in the process.

Said the Ba'al Shem Tov: This caused tremendous *hisorrerus* in *Shamayim*—because this illustrated his great meticulousness in *tefillah b'tzibbur*—so much so that the very place where the *Yid* stood acquired a special *kedushah*, and the *tefillos* offered on this spot are more readily accepted On High.

“And now you know,” said the Ba'al Shem Tov, “why I chose this place to daven.”

Q&A:

Speaking before Maariv

Question:

From when are we prohibited to speak during Maariv?

Answer:

From the time the *tzibbur* begins saying *Shir HaMa'alos*, one must not talk, as the *Zohar HaKadosh* says that when the congregation recites praises to Hashem, one may not talk. Afterward, once *Kaddish* is being recited, it is forbidden to speak due to the *Kaddish*. Once *Barchu* has been answered, one has now begun the *berachos* of *Maariv* and he may not speak at all, even outside the Shul.

THESE QUESTIONS ARE ANSWERED HARAV NACHUM TZVI MEIR ROSENFELD, SHLIT"A, OF SHIKUN SKVERE, AUTHOR OF HALICHOS HACHAYIM

SUBMIT YOUR QUESTION ABOUT TEFILLAH AND KRIAS HATORAH. CALL THE KEREN TOSFOS YOM TOV HOTLINE AND PRESS 2

Points to Ponder (cont.)

Cont. from P2 I had been struggling with one of my sons for a number of years, and I constantly pleaded with the *Ribbono shel Olam* that in the merit of my silence during davening and *krias haTorah*, I should merit to see *nachas* from my son and merit to walk him to the *chuppah*.

Hodu l'Hashem ki tov! My son became engaged to a wonderful girl after getting his life in order in a wonderful way.

At the wedding, the *rav* of my shul served as *mesader kiddushin*, and

the question arose whether to write 5 Elul or 6 Elul as the date of the wedding. He determined that since things can drag for a bit into the evening, he would write 6 Elul as the wedding date!

Standing under the *chuppah*, I broke out into a sweat... *vov Elul!* The very *yahrzeit* of the holy *Tosfos Yom Tov* is the day I merited to marry my child to no less than a descendant of the great *tzaddik*—a clear sign from *Shamayim* that all those years of refraining from talking during davening were truly the *zechus* for what I had been hoping and yearning for.

*

Holy and precious *Yidden!*

We stand just one week from the *yahrzeit* of the *Tosfos Yom Tov*. Join thousands of your fellow *Yidden* in taking on *kabbalos* to improve their davening... and not just any *kabbalah*—but something that will elevate their *tefillah* more than before. Perhaps it's not to take out a cellphone during davening, coming on time to davening, not reading pamphlets during davening, or davening *b'tzibbur* from the beginning to the end of davening, and so forth.

Remember! The more we improve our *avodas hatefillah*, the more we become a conduit for the *shefa* that will result from our *tefillah*. *L'fum tzaara agra*, our reward will surely be commensurate with how difficult it is for us. Amen.



Readers Write

Selections from our vast readership

Exactly 43 days later!

I would like to share my personal experience.

My brother was an older *bochur*. He was in desperate need of a *shidduch*. It was very hard, and the situation became very painful. My heart went out to him. I asked my son, a young *bochur*, to take on a *kabbalah* during tefillah for the merit of my brother, that he should finally become a *chosson*.

My son is very careful does not talk during tefillah. However, because I asked him, he now took it upon himself as a formal *kabbalah* in my brother's merit. We decided that when we would see the *yeshuah*, we would publicize it.

My son's *kabbalah* began on the 2nd of *Sivan*. Exactly forty - three days later, my brother became a *chosson*! The joy we felt was beyond description.

I am sharing this to fulfill our promise. Please print it in your newsletter. *Yasher koach* for your holy work, it is invaluable!

Mrs. P., Monsey

★

Regarding the *nusach* of Rabbeinu Saadia Gaon

I would like to comment regarding the article "*The Siddur Unveiled*" in the section "Meshabchim V'Omrin," where you wrote about the *nusach* of the *berachos* of *Maariv*.

You cited a unique *nusach* from Rabbeinu Saadia Gaon for the *berachos* of *Maariv* on *Shabbos Kodesh*; I would like to say that there is still such a *nusach* today. You can

find in *Otzar HaChochmah* in the Italian siddurim, called *Nusach Bnei Roma* or *Nusach HaLo'azim*.

They have a different *nusach* on Friday night for the berachah of *HaMa'ariv Aravim*, and I believe they also have a different *nusach* for the blessing of *Hashkiveinu*. It is not specifically connected to Rabbeinu Saadia Gaon. These are differences related to the *nusach* of the *Bnei Bavel* and *Bnei Eretz Yisrael*. In the times of the *Gemara*, there was already a different *nusach* between the two, and the Italian *nusach* generally leans more toward the *nusach* of *Bnei Eretz Yisrael*. They had a different *berachah* for *HaMa'ariv Aravim*.

It appears that Rabbeinu Saadia Gaon did not compose this nusach. It was being said before. With respect and admiration,

Yaakov Asher Shaul Wassertheil

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