



Parshas Chayei Sarah - Shabbos Mevorchim
Kislev 5784 | Year 1 Issue 7

Message from the Founder

Shabbos Mevorchim Kislev, Chanukah is around the corner...a time to thank, and a time to praise. That being said, my message this month is a bit different. It is my personal message of thanks. Thanks to the Master of the world who is the ultimate Healer!

It's been four long years of doctor visits and hospital stays. Moreover, surgeries, chemo and radiation have become part of life. A few weeks ago, my amazing *shliach* from Hashem, the oncologist, recommended that I try a relatively new method of treatment called targeted therapy. B"H, I recently took an MRI and the tumor was barely noticeable! So much so that my doctor asked the radiologist (who reads the scans) if the images were good quality since it was basically unnoticeable.

This is obviously *Yad Hashem* and I want to publicly share my thoughts of appreciation to the Almighty. On a personal note, I would like to thank Rabbi Niehaus and our generous sponsors for this wonderful publication. I also want to thank everyone who reads this leaflet for being *meschazek* in Asher Yatzar. Who knows? Maybe this was the merit that

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Personal request:

My daughter Esther bas Sara Miriam needs lots of tefillos. Can you please accept upon yourself bl"n to say Asher Yatzar for one week from a card or poster as a *zechus* for a *refuah sheleimah* for her? Thank you so much!

The Best Way To Help

Over a month has passed since the brutal massacre and we are still in the midst of this difficult situation. Here in Eretz Yisroel, and around the globe, our enemies are showing their true colors. It is now clear to everyone that we have no one to rely on besides our Father in heaven! As we enter the month of Kislev, let us hope that once again Hashem will perform miracles for us, just as in the days of Chanuka. This is the time to strengthen our *bitachon* in Hashem, and thus merit His special protection.

There are so many Yidden suffering now, whether as a result of the present situation, or due to personal difficulties such as sickness. How can we help them? I heard from Rav Reuven Hexter shlit"a in the name of Rav Nosson Wachtfogel zt"l that many times it is hard for people going through something difficult to strengthen themselves in *bitachon*. It is our job to be "*nosei b'al*" and help them carry their burden by feeling their pain. For example, take a moment to imagine what it feels like to have a close family member in captivity in Gaza. Or not being able to sleep at night because of air raid sirens and explosions. In order to really put ourselves in their shoes, we must picture their situation in great detail. Once we have done so, when we strengthen ourselves in *bitachon*, it will help them also, since we are in this together. In this month's "Dose of *Chizuk*" we explain how saying Asher Yatzar properly is an excellent way to strengthen our *bitachon*.

As you may recall, I started this monthly leaflet as a *zechus* for a *refuah sheleimah* for my daughter (**Esther bas Sara Miriam**), a young mother undergoing treatment for the *machalah*; we have not yet been *zoche* to see the *yeshua*. May the *chizuk* from this leaflet bring her a complete recovery. We were happy to hear that Baruch Hashem there was a major improvement in the health situation of R' Yossi Hecht (**Yosef Chaim ben Devorah Leah**), founder of ashertotheyatzar.com. Please continue to *daven* for him.

May we be *zoche* to Nissim and *besuros tovos*,

Eliezer M. Niehaus | Editor

brought about this positive news! We just have to do our job and Hashem will take care of the rest. This is especially true in these tumultuous times where Jews are in danger and some wonder where to turn. Nobody knows, but we do – we just have to do our part and turn to Hashem to do the rest.

Let us be *meschazek* in Torah, *tefilla* and *chesed*! In that *zechus*, it is our hope and prayer that Esther bas Sara Miriam have a complete *refuah sheleimah*, together with all the other *cholim* in Klal Yisroel. May we reunite with all our brethren with Moshiach speedily in our days!

Yossi Hecht



What Do The Words Mean?

Part 1

"אשר יצר את האדם בחכמה" – Who fashioned man with wisdom

The basic understanding of these words is that they are an introduction to the rest of the *brachah*. Meaning, we first say that Hashem created the human body with unbelievable wisdom, and then we go on to delineate those wonders (see Rashi Berachos 60b *d"h umaffi la'asos, Avudraham*, and others). The Chovos Halevavos (Sha'ar Habechina, beginning of Perek 5) writes that this is the meaning of the *pasuk* in *Iyov* (19:26)

"ומבשרי אחזה אלוה-א" – I see Hashem from my flesh." Just a quick glance at the human body reveals the infinite wisdom of the One Who created man. Indeed, a professor from the Hadassah Medical Center in *Yerushalayim* once commented that when he sees people walking down the street, he doesn't understand why they don't drop dead on the spot! The body has so many complex systems that need to interact in perfect harmony – it just doesn't add up. Unlike that doctor, we know Who is keeping us alive!

Some ask that Hakadosh Baruch Hu also



Question of the Month

Which two brachos deal with health and what is the difference between them?

Email your answers to ashertotheyatzar@gmail.com to enter a raffle to win our Asher Yatzar book, delivered to your home for free!

Answer to last month's question:

Question:

Which two letters are not found in the brachah of Asher Yatzar?

Answer:

The only letters which do not appear in Asher Yatzar are "ז" and "ט" because they represent two stomach disorders called *זיזיה* and *טחורים*. Perhaps we can explain that since this is the *brachah* that gives us health, we do not want to even allude to any type of disease, as doing so could weaken the potency of this special *refuah*. How great is the power of Asher Yatzar!

created the entire universe with such mind-boggling wisdom, especially the vast and spectacular animal kingdom. Why do we stress specifically that He created man with wisdom?

Perhaps we can explain as follows. The Kuzari writes (3:13) that one of the reasons we say *birchos hanehenin* is to give us more enjoyment. A drunkard does not enjoy the delicious foods he eats because he is not aware he is eating them. When he sobers up and hears about the delicacies he guzzled, his heart is full of remorse. So too, most people in the world are blind and simply not aware of what they are enjoying. Through making a *brachah* before we eat, we become aware of the pleasure, and we enjoy the food more. The result will be that we will thank Hashem with greater enthusiasm. According to this, one of the reasons we say the *brachah* of Asher Yatzar is to help us appreciate the smooth daily operation of our bodies. True, there is wisdom in the entire creation – not only in the human body – but the point is not just to praise Hashem for His wisdom. We want to make ourselves aware of the absolute pleasure of the great gift of being able to eat normally and use the facilities. When we say the words "with wisdom," let us have in mind what that wisdom gives us: The joy of a normal digestive system!



Stories that Inspire

Twenty Minutes

Someone once traveled to Sanz in order to speak to the Sanzer Rebbe, the Divrei Chaim zt"l. When he arrived, the gabbaim told him that he could not enter yet. While waiting he suddenly heard from behind the door the Rebbe reciting the brachah of Asher Yatzar. He said it with so much kavanah and feeling that it took twenty minutes to recite it! When he entered the room, the Rebbe said to him: "Young man, you should know that one must say Asher Yatzar with more kavanah than when saying 'Unesaneh Tokef', because that is a minhag and this brachah is a 'takanas Chazal'. One can bring about more tikunim and yeshuos with Asher Yatzar then through saying Unesaneh Tokef!"

An Everlasting Impression

I heard from my Rosh Yeshiva, HaRav Meshulam Dovid Soloveitchik zt"l, that when he was a young boy, he once saw an old man wash his hands in the hallway of

the shul in Brisk and begin to recite Asher Yatzar. The man said the *brachah* with such *kavanah* and fire that he could never forget that *brachah* – it had truly made an everlasting impression on him. Who was he? Harav Baruch Ber Leibowitz zt"l, Rosh Yeshivas Kamenitz!

See How He Says Asher Yatzar!

He also related that the father of the Beis Halevi once spent Shabbos with a certain *Chasideshe Rebbe*. Of course, the tefillos and singing were with tremendous fervor and excitement. The Rebbe was the chazan for the *tefillos* and indeed he davened with much passion and strength. The chasidim looked at their guest and they saw that he didn't seem to be impressed. When they asked him why, he answered, "I am waiting to see how he says Asher Yatzar. That is the true test!" (The Rosh Yeshiva added that nowadays, if someone lives as an "*Erlicheh Yid*", learning Torah and doing mitzvos because Hashem commanded him to do so, no one gets excited about him. They only get excited from extraordinary acts!)

even erode certain types of metals. Hakadosh Baruch Hu set up this powerful acid to work for each of us. Its job is twofold. First, it chemically takes apart the food, and second, it kills germs and bacteria that we may have swallowed. It is like a natural antibiotic which works for us after every meal, provided by Hashem free of charge.

You are probably wondering: If this strong acid can erode metals, why doesn't it eat through the walls of our stomach? The reason is that Hashem with His endless wisdom, set up the walls of our stomach to secrete a thick layer of mucus. This lines the interior surface of our stomach and keeps it safe from harm. The mucus gets replaced often so that it is always fresh and up to par, ready to do its important job of protecting the walls of our stomach. This ensures that the acid affects only the food, and not the human body. Wonders of wonders!



Wonders of Digestion

Part 7 – The Acid and the Lining

We learned last month that our stomach receives the food we chewed and swallowed and takes it apart in a two-prong process. One is physical, where it squeezes, churns, and mixes our food. The other process is the more important one, and that is the chemical process. Hashem arranged different enzymes that chemically break up our food into its components. One of these chemicals deserves special mention: it is called hydrochloric acid.

This is a very powerful chemical, the type that has a sign on its bottle: "DANGER! HANDLE WITH CARE!" Hydrochloric acid not only burns your skin if you touch it, it can

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A Dose of Chizuk

Kislev – Build Your Bitachon!

Rav Tzadok Hacoheh writes in *Pri Tzadik* (Rosh Chodesh Kislev *se'if beis*) that the word Kislev comes from the *pasuk* in Mishlei (3:26) "השם יהי בכסלך" which means "For Hashem will be your security." This means that in this month we should work on strengthening our *bitachon* in Hashem. A handful of weak Kohanim were able to miraculously defeat the mightiest army in the world because they put their trust in Hashem. This happened specifically in the month of Kislev, the month of *bitachon*. There is a special *siyata d'shamaya* in this month to strengthen our *bitachon* in Hashem, and thus merit the *nissim* we so desperately need.

How can we do so? The *Chovos Halevavos* writes (*Sha'ar Habitachon*, beginning of chapters 2 and 3) that the prerequisite to trusting Hashem is knowing that He only wants to bestow good upon us. Indeed, we say in the *brachah* of *modim* that He

is "*Hatov*" – "The epitome of good," "*Ki lo chalu rachamecha* – for His mercy never ends..." His goodness is infinite and involves every aspect of the universe. Still, merely saying these words is not enough. We must feel their truth. The more real it is to us, the more we will feel that we are placing our burden upon Him.

One of the best ways to really feel Hashem's good is to think about the wonders of our bodies. For example, anyone who has bought an appliance knows that if he is lucky, it won't break right after the warranty is over! Even if the manufacturer truly wants it to last and builds it well, how many years will it last? On the other hand, if we take care of our bodies, they usually work excellently for at least sixty to seventy years! Day in, day out, the heart pounds, the lungs inflate and deflate, the brain processes, the kidneys and liver filter, and the stomach digests. Hashem is doing all this for us and we don't even "bat an eye-lash." (Speaking of which, on average, most people blink 15 to 20 times per minute without even thinking about it! This protects our built-in color cameras by keeping them oxygenated and moist, and clearing out debris.)

Internalize It!

This month, before saying Asher Yatzar, take a moment to think about one of the processes that takes place inside your body without your participation. Then think about Who is making sure that there is no "breakdown." This will give us that calming feeling that we are in the Hands of our loving caring Father in heaven!



One day or day one? You decide...

Let today be day one of your enhanced journey through the Torah! The Daily Aliyah by Rabbi Shlomo Ressler presents a Torah insight for every aliyah, corresponding to the seven days of the week. Whether you're a seasoned learner or just starting on your journey, this unique book will empower you to reflect, introspect, and engage with the Torah by focusing on one aliyah a day.

We love feedback!

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