



Asher to the Yatzar

PARSHAS BAMIDBAR
SHABBOS MEVORCHIM
SIVAN 5783

YEAR I ISSUE 1

לזכר נשמת מינדל ע"ה בת דוד חנה עמו"ש
Dedicated by her mishpacha.

You can sponsor the next issue!
Email us at ashertotheyatzar@gmail.com

WELCOME

Since Chazal felt it was crucial to thank Hashem for our health throughout the day, it is obvious that Asher Yatzar should be said with feelings of true gratefulness. Unfortunately, because we say it so often, and usually while in the middle of our daily routines, that special effect can get lost. We hope that this monthly leaflet will help raise awareness, so we can focus on this *berachah* and say it properly.

Over a year ago, my daughter Esther bas Sara Miriam *shetichyeh* (a young mother), was diagnosed with the *machalah*, and she needs a lot of *tefillos*. (Could I trouble you to stop for a moment and say a *perek* tehillim for her?) Rav Shimon Galay *shlit"א* told me that as a *zechus* for her *refuah sheleimah*, we should ask people to say the *berachah* of Asher Yatzar with *kavanah*. I got down to work and the obvious contact was R' Yossi Hecht. Indeed, I was swept away by his pleasant nature, his personal charm, and his stalwart *emunah* in Hashem! He suggested that we put out a leaflet in shuls across the globe, and after much *Siyata D'shmaya*, we now present you with the result.

May the *chizuk* from this leaflet bring a *refuah sheleimah* to our dear founder Yosef Chaim ben Devorah Leah, to my daughter, and to all the *cholim* in *Klal Yisroel*.

Have a wonderful Shabbos,

Eliezer M. Niehaus
Editor-in-chief

Rabbi Niehaus is the author of "Oasis: Experience the Paradise of Shabbos" and "HEAVENWORDS: Elevate your Tefillah and Yourself". He is the Rosh Kollel of Kollel Zichron Aharon Yaakov in Kiryat Sefer. He is also a *rebbe* in Yeshivas Beis Dovid and Yeshivas Imrei Binah in Yerushalayim.



STORIES THAT INSPIRE

Message from the Founder

Humans can tend to take things for granted. We wrongfully fall prey to thinking that the basic seemingly simple acts that we are so accustomed to are a given. I too used to share this mindset. That all changed rather quickly when a tumor was found in my spinal column. My life was transformed forever. I had to undergo multiple surgeries, chemotherapy, and radiation resulting in my dependence on a wheelchair for mobility.

I have since tried to impart to the world the message of how grateful one must be to Hashem for all He does for us. Whether orchestrating seemingly basic bodily functions or whether orchestrating an auspicious event in one's life - it is all by the grace of Hashem.

May this leaflet serve as a reminder to always thank Hashem and focus on the positive. This project would not have materialized if not for Rabbi Eliezer Niehaus' input and ambition. We are extremely thankful to him for this wonderful idea.

May Hashem send his daughter a complete *refuah sheleima* among all the other *cholim* in *Klal Yisroel*!

- Yossi Hecht



THE HALACHA CORNER

Q: Are you allowed to dry your hands while saying Asher Yatzar?

A: In Shulchan Aruch (O.C. 191:3) it says that it is forbidden to do any "work" while saying a *berachah*. This is for two reasons. First, it is hard to have *kavanah* while involved in other actions. Second, it is disrespectful to the *berachah* to do other actions while saying it, as it shows that the *berachah* is not so important. Regarding the first reason, Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld (*Salmas Chaim siman 15*) said that indeed, if a person will have less *kavanah* because he is drying his hands, he should not do so while saying Asher Yatzar. Regarding the second reason, Rav Chaim Kanievsky said (brought in *Rivevos Ephraim* vol 1 *siman 17*) that since drying your hands is part of the mitzvah of washing your hands (as drying removes the *tumah*), it is not considered disrespectful. And he added that he saw the Chazon Ish dry his hands while saying this *berachah*.

Therefore, if you wish to recite Asher Yatzar while drying your hands you should make sure that it doesn't take away your *kavanah*.



A rabbi was hired by a shul, and since he was a bit more scrupulous about mitzvah observance than his predecessor, many of the senior shul members grew skeptical of some of his practices. It's not hard to imagine their utter surprise upon observing their new rabbi closing his eyes and quietly reciting a prayer after using the restroom. A prayer for that too? Hilarious! Until one day.

The president of the shul, who was also the leader of the amused congregants, had to have a catheter put in.

When the rabbi came to visit him in the hospital, the older man turned to him and said, "Forget *Kol Nidrei*, Rabbi! Asher Yatzar. That's where it's at!" (Reprinted with kind permission from "Asher Yatzar" by Rabbi Moishe Dovid Lebovits)

Wonders of Digestion



PART I – THE WONDEROUS SALIVA

We all know that in order to live we must eat food and liquid. However, until the food is broken down into the energy that gives us strength and life, it must pass through a long process called the digestive system, which is made up of many stages.

The first step of the process actually begins in our mouths, not our stomachs. There are two different important stages that take place in our mouths: Chewing the food, and the breakdown brought about by our saliva. Let us examine the stage of saliva. Saliva is not plain water – it is a special wonderful liquid loaded with many different types of enzymes. Some enzymes do the job of breaking down the starches, while others break down the fats. So, as soon as the food reaches our mouth and touches the saliva the digestion process has already begun.

The truth is that Hakadosh Baruch Hu designed our saliva glands in an amazing way. Even before we put the food in our mouths, and we are just getting ready to eat, our glands start producing extra saliva. They can be activated by seeing food, smelling it, or even through just thinking about it! We are all familiar with the scenario of seeing or smelling delicious food and suddenly our mouth begins to water. What is happening is that our body is getting ready to properly digest what we are about to eat, so our saliva glands start to work extra hard to increase production.

Our digestive system is ready to roll.

Thank you, Hashem,
“*Hazan es hakol!*”



To receive a daily 2-minute audio shiur by phone about the Wonders of the Human Body, please call/text 313-NIFLAOS (313) 643-5267 Also available on WhatsApp.

----- INTERNALIZE IT! -----

In order to help us say asher yatzar properly and with feeling, let us think briefly about the kindness of a healthy body-before saying the *Berachah*. Try choosing a different aspect of our health each time.

A DOSE OF CHIZUK



A man came huffing and puffing into the telegraph office of Western Union. “I need to send an urgent telegram to my family,” he managed to say. “No problem,” answered the clerk, “please write down your message.” The man picked up a pen and wrote: “ATE LUNCH. FOOD DIGESTED. USED FACILITIES. OK. THANK G-D.” The clerk looked up in surprise. “Excuse me sir for meddling, but what is so amazing about the fact that you were able to use the facilities?” “Young man,” he answered, “if you knew how many things could go wrong from the moment you put food into your mouth until the waste is expelled, you would be terrified each time you ate!”

The aforementioned parable was said by the Mashgiach of Mir, Rav Yerucham Levovitz. Anyone who has experienced any type of difficulty with digestion or expelling body wastes understands this quite well. If we would stop and contemplate this for a moment, we would realize that the only reason we can lead normal lives is because Hashem created our bodies with tremendous wisdom. Just think about how much human brainpower is invested by aircraft designers, aeronautical engineers, and avionics specialists when creating an airplane. Not only that, entire teams of technicians constantly check over its computer systems, engines, landing gear, wings and more. If even one detail is slightly off, they will not fly that plane until it has been fixed. So how do our bodies run so efficiently, even though the smallest disorder can throw us into disarray with various pains, symptoms and dysfunction? It must be that the Master Designer has crafted and fashioned us with infinite wisdom! It is not surprising, therefore, that Chazal instituted the special *berachah* of Asher Yatzar for us to recite after we use the facilities in order to thank Hashem for the constant kindness of a normal healthy functioning body, and specifically, our digestive system.

So why is it that many people mumble the words of Asher Yatzar while they are “off and running,” giving nary a thought to what they are saying? It is probably because they take their good health for granted. If we turn off our auto-pilot mode before we say Asher Yatzar, and put effort into learning what it means, we will see Bezras Hashem, great changes in the way we say this *berachah!*

TRIVIA QUESTION: WHAT IS THE BRACHA THAT WE MAKE ON WALKING?



Please email your answers to
ashertotheyatzar@gmail.com
To be entered into a raffle for a
\$36 Amazon gift card



WE LOVE FEEDBACK!

To receive this leaflet in your Shul or by email or if you have any comments or personal stories that we can share with the readers please visit: www.ashertotheyatzar.org

Graphics by graphicsbyperri@gmail.com