

Vechol Maaminim

A Weekly Pamphlet From "Bney Emunim"



ת.ד. 102 בני ברק | פקס: 03-5055919
9139191@gmail.com

PESACH | 5785 | Issue No. 577

Pischu Shearim

A word from the founder and Nasi of Bney Emunim

-- At P'sach Lo --

One of my acquaintances recently visited Eretz Yisrael, and when he returned, he shared a special experience that he had. When he came to the shul where he regularly davened during his visits to Eretz Yisrael, he was surprised to see that the *mispallelim* arrived ten minutes before davening in order to recite *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa*. On previous visits, when davening began, there had barely been a *minyan* present, while now, he saw a total turnabout.

He looked left and right, seeking out someone to whom he could say his *brachos*, and suddenly...from the corner of the *beis medrash*, someone approached him with rapid steps, his face alight with a big smile, and offered, "I'll be happy to answer amen to your *brachos*!"

After davening, he asked one of the *mispallelim* about the drastic change, and he explained, to this man's shock, that the whole revolution was to the credit of one person who undertook to raise awareness on the subject of answering amen and saying *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa*. That Yid came over to people and asked them to say *Birchos Hashachar*, and slowly, one after another, the *mispallelim* began coming early to say *Birchos Hashachar*. One person effected a revolution in his *beis medrash*!

But for me, this was no *chiddush*, because *baruch Hashem*, I often hear such wonderful stories, but it did galvanize me to once again write about this subject.

My friend's description illustrates the virtue and tremendous influence of those precious Yidden who dedicate from their time to answer amen after the *mispallelim*. No one will cast doubt on the fact that it's a wonderful *zechus*, and everyone agrees that answering amen is "one of the things *berumo shel olam*," and yet, there are still "people who are lax about it."

When a person claims to me that as it is, their mornings are so hectic and busy, and he cannot take upon himself another task, I respond, "he *hanosenes*,"

perhaps the reason for the time crunch is because you do not invest time in answering amen? The holy *Zohar* says (*Vayeilech* 285 2) that the *shefa tova* and *brachah* come to this world in the merit of answering amen, and if so, one who invests of his time to answer amen undoubtedly is sparing himself many hours he normally spends doing other things.

I thought of a *remez* to this in the words of Chazal (*Brachos* 47a): "Anyone who prolongs his amen – has his days and years prolonged." Why did Chazal double the language and say both "days" and "years"? Aren't days included in years? They are alluding that anyone who invests time in answering amen – "*hama'arich b'amen*" prolongs not only his years, but also his days. The time that he invests in answering amen saves him precious time that he otherwise has to invest in other issues that take his time.

As an aside, I will note that *bechasdei Hashem*, for many years now, I have merited to take time each morning to answer amen to *mispallelim*. I have the tremendous *zechus* of spending several hours each day doing this, and I have no words to thank Hashem for giving it to me.

We can also find a beautiful *remez* in the *Haggadah Shel Pesach* regarding the virtue of one who dedicates time to answering amen. We read about the four sons, and how we should tell them the story of Yetzias Mitzrayim. Each one of the first three sons is given an answer according to his question, but regarding the last one "*she'eino yode'a lishol*," the *baal Haggadah* tells us "*at p'sach lo*" – don't wait for him to ask, rather, stand up on your own initiative and tell him the story of the faith of the Jewish people through the generations – the story of Yetzias Mitzrayim. With *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa* as well, there is a "*she'eino yode'a lishol*" – he won't ask, either because he does not understand the importance

of it, or because he feels uncomfortable doing so, and you, the one who does understand the importance of amen, are obligated: "*At p'sach lo*!" Dedicate from your time and offer him, "Reb Yid! I'll be happy to answer amen to your *brachos*!"

On Seder night, we add a unique *HaRachaman* request: "*HaRachaman...yom shekulo tov yom shekulo aroch yom shetzaddikim yoshvim...v'yehi chelkeinu imahem*." When we ask that our share should be with the *tzaddikim l'asid lavo*, we have to remember that the way to merit this is by answering amen, and as Chazal say (*Shabbos* 119b): "Anyone who answers amen with all his strength – has the gates of Gan Eden opened for him." We can say that the words "*at p'sach lo*" allude to this as well: One who is *mezakeh* someone who does not know how to ask regarding amen, opens the gates of Gan Eden for him.

This is the call of our time. In every shul, in every *minyan*, one person who loves *mitzvos* and is ready to answer amen after his friends' *brachos* should rise up. He is a person who will effect a daily and ongoing revolution in the shul where he davens, and he becomes a one-man superpower.

Dear Reader! You can do this, too! Start today with this task and join the select group of *anshei emunim*, a link in the long chain of *tzaddikim* and *shomrei emunim* through the generations, who have dedicated time each morning to answer amen, and have illuminated their surroundings with the light of *emunah*.

This step will surely change your life for the better and will transform it to a life with a lofty mission filled with satisfaction. It has already changed the lives of many, and they have already merited a revolution and *yeshuos* in all areas, in *ruchniyus* and *gashmiyus*. You are also worthy of it!

Good Shabbos and
Pesach Kasher
Vesame'ach

Birchos Hashachar k'halachah

Aloud

With kavanah

Bechavrusa

The first rays of morning sun shone as the birds' chirping could be heard far and wide, with no disturbances. It was Shabbos today.

Ephraim opened his eyes in alarm; he was late to davening! Although he was only ten years old, he was very careful to be on time to davening with *minyan* on Shabbos. He quickly got dressed and hurried to leave, knowing that davening had already started.

The streets of Beitar were empty. A Shabbos breeze tickled his face and ruffled his *peyos*. One thought was on Ephraim's mind: He had not yet recited *Birchos Hashachar*, and he always tried to make the *brachos* in front of someone who would answer amen.

At the bend in the road, he met a *bochur* of about eighteen, who was dragging his feet towards the shul. Ephraim was too young to detect the

l'Amo Yisrael" – Ephraim finished in a clear voice, and the *bochur* answered amen. Ephraim then continued the other *brachos* and the *bochur* stood, seemingly rooted to his spot, and answered amen.

Brachah after *brachah*, the *bochur* listened and answered amen.

Ephraim finished, closed his siddur, gave it a kiss, and then suddenly offered:

"Now it's your turn! You make the *brachos* and I'll say amen."

For a moment, there was an awkward silence. The *bochur* looked at Ephraim, and then asked for the siddur and began to make the *brachos* word for word. At first, his voice was halting, and a bit broken, as if apologizing for its very existence. Slowly, his tone rose, and could be heard clearly on the empty street that was enveloped in the quiet and tranquility of Shabbos.

Every *brachah* ended with a clear "amen" from Ephraim, who stood next to the *bochur* as if they had known each other for the longest time.

Ephraim did not know, and neither did anyone else, that this *bochur* he had met was at a crossroads in his life. He was

grappling with a whirl of questions and confusion that threatened to do him in and drive him away from the yeshivah where he was not finding his place.

For a long while already, he felt disconnected, like he didn't belong. His friends in yeshivah were distant from him, and he found no enjoyment in his learning. His spirit, and his heart, slowly grew more distant from the *beis medrash* – but he kept this all inside and didn't dare share his feelings with anyone.

He was fighting a tremendous internal battle at the time, and it

was unclear which side would prevail. He chose to return home for Shabbos, and to him it was obvious that he was unlikely to return to yeshivah on Sunday. Perhaps he needed to stay home and figure out his next steps.

But what kind of steps were they if they were not in the direction of *derech Hashem*?

And it was then that he met Ephraim: A sweet boy who he did not know, who stopped him to ask him to be a *chavrusa* for *Birchos Hashachar*.

And then they came, the simple, but powerful and piercing words, that emerged from the younger boy's mouth. How he uttered each word with enthusiasm, and with such sweetness!

And the light struck him.

Until now, he was used to making the *brachah* of "*Hamelamed Torah l'Amo Yisrael*" just like any other *brachah* that he said, but he never paid any attention to the treasure contained in the words. How much he would want this *brachah* to apply to him as well – "*veha'arev na!*" If only he could also sense that sweetness of Torah, and bask in it and delve into its endless treasures. If only it could be for him an elixir of life to restore his spirit! If only he would be wise enough to make a bit more effort, he would merit to feel special *siyata diShmaya*, that HaKaodsh Baruch Hu himself would be the One to teach him Torah.

For the first time in a long time, he felt a sense of belonging. A sense of pride at being part of a nation, a faith, a child of HaKadosh Baruch Hu. He heard himself answer amen – not only from his mouth, but also from his heart. It was a recognition that he was a link in a glorious chain of generations, of Yidden, princes, who began their day with *Birchas HaTorah*. Yes! He also wanted to be a part! He also wanted this *brachah* to apply to him! He also wanted that he, his children and his grandchildren, should know Hashem's Name and learn His Torah. He would make the effort, he would try; it may not always be easy, but it would real, true and honest...! *Halevai!* He was filled with a new



indifferent look on the boy's face. He went over to him with confidence and asked:

"Excuse me, could you stop for a minute and listen to me say *Birchos Hashachar* and answer amen?"

The *bochur's* eyes opened wide. The request had clearly taken him by surprise. "Uh...yes, sure," he replied, somewhat confused. His body shifted uncomfortably, but the younger boy did not seem to notice.

Ephraim opened his siddur and began to recite *Birchos HaTorah*.

"*Baruch Atah...Hamelamed Torah*

Kulanu Yodei Shemecha – In Everything We Do

“אמר רבי אלעזר בן עזריה: הרי אני כבן שבעים שנה, ולא זכיתי שתאמר יציאת מצרים בלילות עד שדרשה בן זומא, שנאמר (דברים טז:ג): למען תזכר את יום צאתך מארץ מצרים כל ימי חייך, ימי חייך - הימים, כל ימי חייך - הלילות. וחכמים אומרים: ימי חייך - העולם הזה, כל ימי חייך - להביא לימות המשיח”

The Gra explained the root of the dispute between Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya and the sages:

The word כל has two meanings: 1. Including a group of individuals, for example, *kol hayamim*, where *kol* means to include all the days; 2) including the details of a certain thing in its entirety, without any part of it being omitted, such as the expression *kol hayom*, where the word *kol* includes all the parts of the day. Ben Zoma explained the words of the *passuk* “*kol yemei chayecha*” with the second meaning – each day in its entirety, and if so, the meaning of the “*kol*” is to include the entire day – the daylight hours and the nighttime hours as one, and that is why he increased the obligation of mentioning Yetzias Mitzrayim at night. But Chazal explained this *passuk* with the first meaning, “*kol hayamim*” – and if so, the meaning of the *passuk* is to include all the days, including the days of Mashiach. Based on this, Rav Mordechai Rottenberg, the Rav of Antwerp, explained our request in a *siyum masechta*: “And we all and our children and children’s children and the children of Amcha Bais Yisrael *kulanu yodei Shemecha velomdei Torasecha lishmah*.” Why do we say “*kulanu*” twice? The word *kulanu* was written here with two meanings – and we have two different requests: the first “*kulanu*” is asking that all the ones who are detailed below “*anachnu vetze’etzae’inu...*” should be “*yodei Shemecha velomdei Torasecha*,” while the second “*kulanu*” is interpreted as another request: that our entire essence should cleave to Hashem and His Torah.

Biur HaGra LeHaggadah Shel Pesach; Mishneh Sachir; Parashas Nitzavim

In the World of Truth, We Will Discover That Everything Is Good

“הרחמן הוא ינחילנו ליום שכולו טוב יום שכולו ארוך יום שצדיקים יושבים ועטרתיהם בראשיהם ונהנים מזיו השכינה ויהי חלקנו עמהם”

Rav Yaakov Tzvi Abraham of Brooklyn, New York, explained:

In *Maseches Pesachim* (50a), Rabi Acha bar Chanina says: “*Olam Haba* is not like *Olam Haze*. *Olam Haze* – for good news one says *Baruch Hatov Vehameitiv*, and for bad news one says *Baruch Dayan Ha’emes*. In *Olam Haba* – it is all *Hatov Vehameitiv*.” It would seem that the root of the difference between this world and the next is not in the obligation of which *brachos* one has to say in them, but rather in the different reality in each one – that in *Olam Haba* there will be no bad at all and therefore, they will not be obligated in the *brachah* of *Dayan Ha’emes*. But if so, why did Rabi Acha bar Chanina emphasize the different *brachos* in the two worlds, and didn’t just say simply that in this world there are bad things and good things, while in *Olam Haba* it will be all good?

In his explanation on the words of the Gemara, the *Tzel”ach* (ibid) brought in the name of Rav Ephraim Reischer, the Maggid of Brod, that what Rabi Acha bar Chanina said “*L’Olam Haba – kulo hatov vehameitiv*,” means that in *Olam Haba* it will become clear in the eyes of a person that even the bad news that he recited “*Dayan Ha’emes*” for in *Olam Haze* was for his good, and based on the truth, he should have recited “*Hatov Vehameitiv*” on it.

This is what we are asking: “*HaRachaman Hu yanchileinu leyom shekulo tov*,” to *Olam Haba*, where everyone will recognize and understand the concealed good even in what in this world appears to be bad, and then the “*tzaddikim yoshvim v’atroseihem beroseihem venenim miziv HaShechinah*,” without their being any complaint in their hearts about the *tzaros* that struck them while they were in this world. (*Haggadah Shel Pesach Maasai Lemelech*, p. 79)

sense of longing that demanded of him to continue trying.

Years passed. Ephraim grew up and *baruch Hashem*, became engaged. At the end of the summer, he would marry and build his own new home. And one day, he randomly met that *bochur* from Shabbos morning – who was now a young *avreich* with five children. Ephraim did not remember him, but that young man had not forgotten Ephraim:

“You probably don’t remember it,

but I will never forget!” the young man exclaimed. “We met one Shabbos morning on the way to davening. You stopped me in the street and asked me to answer amen to your *brachos*. Then you insisted I should also make the *brachos* and that you’d answer amen.

“That was a pivotal Shabbos! It brought me back, and rekindled the spark inside me that was all but extinguished, and reminded me what I belong to and where the truth lies. It was amen that opened all the

gates for me!”

Stunned, Ephraim could hardly believe the story. He? A little boy? Had changed a *bochur*’s life? This young man standing in front of him now, as a father of five children, was in this place in his merit?!

It was all in the *zechus* of amen. A merit that only amen can create. The innocent request to a strange *bochur* also breached both locked doors and the gates of Heaven...All that remained was for Ephraim to send us this very special story.

A Night of Amen

“עבדים היינו לפרעה במצרים”
עבדים היינו לפרעה במצרים – the acronym of the last letter of each word is numerically equivalent to amen, to teach us that the power that amen has to open the gates of *yeshuah* for every person who is in trouble, just like Am Yisrael were saved from Mitzrayim. (Lechu Neranenah Ma’amar Dalet, Rav Gamliel Rabinowitz)

Amen Unites the Holy Names

“עמודיו עשה כסף רפידתו זהב מרכבו ארגמן תוכו רצוף אהבה מבנות ירושלים” (שיר השירים ג י)

Rav Hertz Avraham Naftali Scheier, the Rav of Mainz, said:

The beginning and end of the words אמן is ארגמן. Amen, as is known, combines and contains the Names of Hashem, because it is numerically equivalent to the Names of Hava-yah and Adnus, and the *passuk* מרכבו ארגמן alludes that amen comprises and unites the Names of Hava-yah and of Adnus. And this is what the *Tikkunei Zohar* means (142b) in the explanation on the *passuk* (Shir Hashirim 7:6): “*Vedeles roshecha k’argaman*” –this is the secret of amen.” (Turei Zahav, Shir Hashirim 3:10)

Learning the Kavanah of Amen

“צא ולמד”

The Chozeh of Lublin said that the word אמן is numerically equivalent to the two Names of Hashem Hava-yah and Adnus, which unite in the answering of amen, and it is alluded here that person should learn “to do the *yichud* of אמן”. (Imrei Yosef Drushim Lehakafos Hakafah Gimmel, Drush 6)

From the words of the Baal Teshuvos Vehanhagos shlita on the great virtue of the custom of reciting *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa*

As said during a visit by the Nasi of Bney Emunim to his home

During the visit of the Nasi of Bney Emunim, Rav Yaakov Dov Marmurstein *shlita*, to the home of the author of *Teshuvos Vehanhagos, shlita*, the Rav encouraged the work of Bney Emunim and called to strengthen the *minhag* of reciting *Birchos Hashachar* together with *onei amen*. He said:

“Every single person who has a connection to Torah, *mitzvos* and Yiddishkeit knows and recognizes the importance of every *brachah*. The *brachah* is the crown for the Ribbono shel Olam, and we crown Him, so to speak, by saying every single *brachah*. The *brachos* are for us a constant reminder that the world is not *hefker* – there is a King to the world and we must heed his Voice.

The *poskim* wrote (*Tur* and *Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim* 167 16) that answering amen is part of the *brachah*, and the *brachah* is not completed and concluded unless amen is answered after it. Therefore, the

obligation to answer amen is not only on the listeners, but also on the *mevarech* himself, who has to complete his *brachah* with amen, and the *oneh amen* needs to have in mind to be *motzi* the *mevarech* in his obligation to answer amen, as the Rema rules (*ibid* 2).

It seems that the custom of reciting *Birchos Hashachar* in shul, together, and not at home, while doing each one of the actions that we thank for, as is the

amen to his *brachos*, and thus he has entire *brachos* in hand, as is the *halachah*.

Fortunate are the Bney Emunim, who have adorned themselves with a *kesser shem tov* in this subject, and they have a tremendous *zechus*. And may Hashem give them continued success in their work to imbue the virtue of answering amen everywhere, and in places where one toils more, the reward is greater. A special *brachah* to the Nasi of Bney Emunim, Rav Yaakov Dov Marmurstein, who heads this wonderful work, and it is unbelievable how much the work of one person can have an effect in the entire world.

And all those who strengthen themselves and work to answer amen should merit *arichus yamim* and much goodness, as Chazal promise (*Yerushalmi Brachos* 8 8): “Anyone who prolongs his answering of amen has his days and years prolonged in goodness.”



The Nasi of Bney Emunim Rav Yaakov Dov Marmurstein in the home of the posek hador, the Baal Teshuvos Vehanhagos, *shlita*

halachah in the Gemara (*Brachos* 60b), is based on this concept: When the *mevarech* recites the *brachos* in shul in front of those who answer amen, the *mevarech* merits to hear the answering of