

# Vechol Maaminim

A Weekly Pamphlet From "Bney Emunim"



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## Peninei Emunim

Pearls of Tefillah in the Parashah

### From Heights to Depths

"קדשים יהיו לאלקיהם ולא יחללו שם אלקיהם כי את אשי ה' לחם אלקיהם הם מקריבם והיו קדש" (כא)

**Rav Yaakov Neiman**, Rosh Yeshivas Ohr Yisrael, asked:

After the Torah commanded the Kohanim to be careful about their purity more than the rest of Am Yisrael, why did it add a commandment that they should not decline to the lowly level of *chillul Hashem* – isn't the commandment self-understood?

Rav Yaakov explained that we learn a meaningful rule here. In *avodas Hashem*, there is no middle way. A person can only be one of two things: "*Kadosh l'Elokav*" or "*mechallel Shem Elokav*"! As we can see from the words of the *parashah* of *Vehayah Im Shamoa*, right after the directive of "*ul'ovdo bechol levavchem*," it says "*hishomru lachem pen yifteh levavchem vesartem v'avadetem Elohim acheirim*." (Devarim 10:16-17).

For this reason, Chazal also instituted that we recite *Parashas Arayos* during *Minchah* on Yom Kippur. This *takanah* is intended to remind each person that although right now, towards the end of the holy day, he is on a very high level, if he does not guard himself on this level throughout the year, he can easily reach a lower level and

## Kol Emunim

A word from the founder and Nasi of Bney Emunim

### Brachos That Are a Perfect Gift

This Erev Shabbos is Lag B'omer and at the asra kadisha in Meron, and in locations all over the world, the tefillah and hisorerus will rise to the Heavens in a fiery storm.

On this day, we should turn our attention to the words of the holy Zohar on the lofty virtue of answering amen. "Amen, kallah dekula! Kiyuma d'kulho!" the Zohar declares (Vayeilech 285b). Amen includes all the sodos and fulfills all the worlds. It is the secret of creation and the foundation of all the worlds. Could we possibly be lax about answering amen, *chalilah*?!

Rabi Shimon also reveals in Sefer Hazohar (ibid) that the passuk (Shmuel I 2:30): "Ki mehabdai achabed ubozai yekalu" is said about answering amen. He writes: "One who answers amen k'halachah honors Hashem, and Hashem says of him: "Ki mehabdai achabed"! In contrast, when one is lax about amen, Hashem calls, "Ubozai yekalu!" This is chilling!

When we are strict to answer amen k'halachah, we honor and sanctify the Shem Shamayim, and fulfill the halachah lema'asah of the commandment in this parashah (Vayikra 22:32): "Venikdash besoch Bnei Yisrael."

The power to choose honor or shame, *chalilah*, is in the hand of each one of us. Let us rise each morning to honor Hashem by answering amen after the brachos of mispallelim, and we will merit to have the words "ki mehabdai achabed" said about us.

Good Shabbos

**Yaakov Dov Marmurstein**

stumble in the terrible sin of *arayos*, R"l.

*Darchei Mussar*

### The Influence of Krias Shema on the Whole Day

"ובא השמש וטהר ואחר יאכל מן הקדשים כי לחמו הוא" (כב ז)

*Maseches Brachos* begins with the words: "*Me'eimasai korin es Shema b'arvis – misha'ah sheKohanim nichnasim le'echol bitrumasan*." The Gemara explains that this is the time of *tzeis hakochavim* when the stars emerge, and if so, we need to understand why Chazal used this example, specifically, to note the time of *Krias Shema*. What is the connection between the two?

The *Avnei Nezer* brings a beautiful explanation, in the name of his father, **Rav Nochum Zev, the Rav of Biala**:

The reason why the Kohanim who became impure and then immersed were not allowed to eat the *terumah* until the stars emerge is the basis for the obligation of reciting *Krias Shema shel Arvis*. Just like the impression of the *tumah* does not dissipate entirely from a person after immersion until the sun sets, likewise, *l'havdil*, the impression of *kedushah* that comes over a person when he recites *Krias Shema shel Shacharis*, does not dissipate from him until evening, and only in the evening does he have to renew it. Therefore, the Torah commanded us to once again recite *Krias Shema* in the evening.

*Eglei Tal, Introduction*

**Birchos Hashachar k'halachah**

Aloud

With kavanah

Bechavrusa

*This Wednesday, 23 Iyar 5785, marks three years since the passing of Rav Simcha Hakohein Kook, ztz"l, the renowned Rav of Rechovot and the founder of its Torah institutions.*

*In a chizuk speech at a Bney Emunim gathering about ten years ago in Bnei Brak, the Rav related a story that teaches us about the power of answering amen, which he heard from Rabbi Dr. Abraham Sofer Abraham, author of Nishmas Avraham, who served at the time as a department director at the Shaare Zedek Hospital.*

One day, an elderly Jew was brought to the department in the hospital after contracting severe pneumonia accompanied by very high fever. His medical condition evoked worry, because such an infection – especially at his advanced age – could be a risk to his life, and could rapidly deteriorate to a situation of *pikuach nefesh*.



Harav Simcha Hakohein Kook, ztz"l, speaking at a Bney Emunim gathering

The doctors, headed by Professor Abraham, immediately began administering treatment for his complex condition. *Baruch Hashem*, within a few days, the improvement was evident: The fever began to decline, his breathing stabilized and his overall condition was much better. The doctors were preparing to release the man so that he could continue convalescing at home, with his family.

Two days passed, and to everyone's dismay, his condition began to

deteriorate again. The fever spiked again, and the doctors began giving him intensive medications. A few more days passed, and once again, the condition stabilized: The fever went down, and the man appeared to be recovering. But then again, the fever went up – even higher than it had been previously.

The situation began to get worrying. It seemed like the standard treatment was not effective enough, and it was necessary to administer even stronger medication. But that medication had serious side effects, and also posed a risk, and therefore the doctors decided to hold off for a bit.

Suddenly things took a sharp turn for the worse. The patient lost consciousness and his life was in danger. The doctors quickly began to administer care, as the family stood around his bed anxiously.

*Baruch Hashem*, the new medication was effective and a short time later,

the man was stabilized yet again. A few days passed and he opened his eyes and looked around him. From the expressions on his family's faces he realized how severe his condition had been. As soon as he had the energy to speak, he began to relate the following extraordinary story:

"A short time after I lost consciousness, and was at death's door, I found myself standing in front of the Beis Din Shel Ma'alalah. The *beis din* was discussing a question about something. I listened and realized that the discussion was about me: The *beis din* was discussing whether to give me an opportunity to come back down to this *olam hama'aseh* or not. There were supporters of both sides. The prosecuting angels stood on one side and the defenders on the other, and ultimately, it appeared as if the

former were going to prevail and I was being judged to end my life in this world.

But then, a voice could be heard – and it was remarkably familiar. At first, I couldn't place where it was familiar from, but then I remembered. It was the voice of the Rav of the shul where I've been davening for the past thirty years. I listened again and I heard how the voice was trying to offer a defense and a *limud zechus* for me:

'Rabbosai, please listen! For the past thirty years, I have served as the Rav of the shul where the person being judged has davened. I can testify that for all of these thirty years, he never missed the *shiur* before *Shacharis*.' When he saw that this claim was not effective, the Rav added, 'And I testify that in the past thirty years, I never heard him speak *lashon hara* about anyone.'

That, too, seemed ineffective, so the Rav added:

'For thirty years that I have served as Rav of the shul, he was never late to davening – even once. If that is not enough, he rises early and comes to shul, listens to the *Birchos Hashachar* of other *mispallelim*, and has also influenced the other *mispallelim* to start this practice. And therefore, the shul has become known as a *beis knesses* for *onei amen*.'

Upon hearing this, the *beis din* agreed to nullify the decree. A voice emerged announcing that the Beis Din Shel Ma'alalah was ruling that the man could live, and that he could return to this world to continue his *avodas Hashem*.

At that moment, I opened my eyes, and here I am, in front of you, *bechasdei Shamayim*, on the road to full health," the old man concluded his moving story.

When he was about to be discharged from the hospital, his children came to Professor Abraham's room to thank him for his role in healing their father. In response he said:

'You want to thank me?! My colleagues and I had already given up on his life. You have experienced an absolute miracle, and the thanks



### Every Tefillah Is a Meeting With the King

**Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach** would say that a person should come to shul ten minutes before davening, and he would stress: No person would dare come at the last minute to a meeting he has with the king, and he certainly would not come late, how much more so in the meeting with the King of kings. Indeed, a person who comes early to davening instills in his heart the feeling that every *tefillah* that he davens is literally like a meeting with the King of kings. (*Shalmei Simchah* Vol. I p. 221)

#### Coming Early to Davening Connects One to It

**Rav Binyamin Rabinowitz**, a *dayan* in Yerushalayim, often said:

When one gets to davening ‘exactly on time,’ it is impossible to have the proper *kavanah*. Only someone who comes a few minutes before davening starts, and prepares himself for it properly, will feel a connection and belonging to it, and can then daven with the requisite *kavanah*. (*Tiv HaTorah Kedoshim*)

#### The Virtue of Coming Early to Davening Is More than Davening Itself

The *rosh yeshivah* Rav Yehuda Tzadkah explained:

One who is strict to come early to shul before the time of davening indicates that he wants to serve his Creator, and he doesn’t come to *tefillah* only to be *yotzei* his obligation. Because coming early to *tefillah* is what indicates the nature of the *mispallel*, Chazal say (*Shabbos* 127a) that one who rises early to come to shul reaps the fruits of his deeds in this world, and his reward is also in the Next World, even though we do not find that for *tefillah* itself one is promised such a reward.

Therefore, Dovid Hamelech emphasized (*Tehillim* 119:32) “*Derech mitzvosecha arutz.*” Fulfilling the mitzvah

itself does not indicate that the *mekayem* cleaves to Hashem and wants to do His *mitzvos*, but the running and alacrity to fulfill *mitzvos* indicates the runner’s desire to fulfill the *mitzvos*. (*Kol Yehudah*, Vol. II p. 9)

### Five Minutes Effect Wonders

There was a group of *bnei aliyah* who gathered to discuss what they should strengthen regarding davening. Because each one of them suggested something else to help them daven better, they decided to seek the counsel of the Mashgiach, Rav Shlomo Wolbe. The Mashgiach summarized their discussion then and there and said: “The best idea for one who wishes to daven properly is that five minutes before davening starts, he should be ready to daven. Although it’s only five minutes, those are the moments that will cause his *tefillah* to be entirely

different.” (*Kovetz Mi Yerapei Lecha*, p. 102)

### Those Who Come Early Are Closer

Rav Bentzion Abba Shaul, Rosh Yeshivas Porat Yosef, would say:

It is known that the participation in the *simchah* of another person depends on the level of closeness the participant has to the *baal simchah*. Closer family members come earlier and leave later, while those who are further from the family come late and leave early. The same is with Torah learning – the more a person is connected to Torah, the longer his learning *sefer* and the more careful he is to be there from beginning to end.

He added in *sefer Yisgaber K’Ari* that the same applies with *tefillah*: The closeness of a person to his Creator is measured by his attitude towards the time of *tefillah*. The earlier a person comes to shul and the later he leaves, the more he shows how close and connected he is to his Creator. (*Yisgaber K’Ari*, Ch. 9:5)

for that goes only to the Ribbono Shel Olam!’

“This story moved me very much,” Rav Kook concluded his words, “especially since I remembered the words of the Chofetz Chaim in his introduction to *sefer Shemiras Halashon*, which answers the question that many ask as to why the Jewish people have prayed for

thousands of years, millions of *tefillos*, for the rebuilding of the Bais Hamikdash have yet to be answered, and the answer to that is simple: When a person speaks *lashon hara*, his mouth gets sullied, and *tefillos* that are said with a sullied mouth have only limited power.

“In this story that happened to this Yid,” Rav Kook ended, “I saw a

clear illustration of the words of the Chofetz Chaim:

Even after all the claims that the defendants offered were ineffective, the two minor *mitzvos* relating to the mouth – answering amen after *Birchos Hashachar* and refraining from *lashon hara* – together tipped the scales for good.



## Razei Emunim

Remazim of Amen and Meah Brachos in the Parashah

### Ninety Amens Protect from Ninety Blemishes

"כל איש אשר בו מום מורע אהרן הכהן לא יגש להקריב את אשי ה' מום בו את להם אלקיו לא יגש להקריב" (כא כא)

The Rambam (*Bias Mikdash* 8 1) lists ninety different blemishes that disqualify the Kohein that has them from serving in the Bais Hamidkash.

The *Chishukei Chemed* writes: The *Rokeach* (320) brought that the mitzvah of *meah brachos* is meant intended to save Am Yisrael from one hundred curses. Ninety-eight of them are written in *Parashas Ki Savo* and two more are alluded in the *passuk* (*Devarim* 28:61): "*Gam kol choli vechol makkah*." Based on this we can say that Chazal determined that we have to answer ninety amens a day to save us from the ninety blemishes that disqualify the Kohanim. (*Kovetz Shu"t* printed at the end of *sefer Aleinu Leshabe'ach* Vol. III, *Teshuvah* 78)

The *dorshei reshumos* added an allusion to this: המום is numerically

equivalent to ninety-one which is equal to "אמן". (*Meoros Hadaf Hayomi Bechoros* 43a)

### An Abundance of Parnassah in the Merit of Meah Brachos

"והקרבתם על הלחם שבעת כבשים תמימים בני שנה ופר בן בקר אחד ואילם שנים" (כ גח)  
Rav Yaakov Tzvi Yalish, author of *Melo Haro'im*, explained:

Reciting one hundred *brachos* each day brings down an abundance of food and *parnassah* to the world. This is alluded to by the fact that Dovid Hamelech, who instituted the mitzvah of *meah brachos*, was called "Bais Halachmi" (see *Shmuel I* 17:57), that in the merit of the *brachos* that he instituted that we recite there is bread and sustenance for the creations. This *passuk* also alludes to it: "*Vehikravtem al halechem*" – if you will bring על *brachos* each day, then Hashem will send you an abundance of *parnassah* from On High and you will never lack for bread. (*Kol Yaakov*)

## Iggeres Emunim

A Letter from a Loyal Reader

Dear Vechol Ma'aminim

I would like to share with you a *remez* that I thought of.

In *Parashas Emor* it says (*Vayikra* 22:20): "*V'ish ki yakriv zevach shelamim l'Hashem lefalei neder oh l'nedavah...*"

The word *לנדבה* is numerically equivalent to 91 – which is equal to אמן, and this is an allusion that a person should donate from his time to answer amen after those who recite *Birchos Hashachar* in shul.

Proof of this concept is found in the *Tanna Devei Eliyahu* (*Rabbah*, Ch. 11) that explains the words (*Shoftim* 5:2): "*Behisnadev am barchu Hashem*" – to mean those who rise early to go to shul to answer amen.

May you be blessed for your tremendous work to disseminate the virtues of answering amen, and may Hashem repay you for your efforts.

With respect,

Yisrael Dovid Freund, Beitar Illit

Letters can be sent to fax number 08-9746102 or emailed to the Vechol Ma'aminim email address. 9139191@gmail.com

## Shaarei Gan Eden

Amen and Brachos in the Teachings of a Baal Hayahrtzeit



At the right is the matzeivah of the Rem"a and on the left is the matzeivah of his sister, Miriam. In the center is the matzeivah of their father, Rav Yisrael Isser

### The Rem"a 18 Iyar 5332

Rav Moshe Isserles, known as the Rem"a, was born around the year 5290 in Krakow to his father, Rav Yisrael Isser, who was a philanthropist and *parnas* of his brethren.

his halachic decisions.

He authored numerous works, including: *Darchei Moshe* on *Arba'ah Turim*, and his comments on the *Shulchan Aruch*, in which he added halachic rulings and noted the customs of Ashkenazi Jewry. These comments are called the "*Mapah*" (tablecloth) as they are like a tablecloth spread on the "*Shulchan Aruch*," the set table.

The Rem"a passed away at a young age on 18 Iyar – Lag B'Omer of 5332, and he was buried in the ancient cemetery in Krakow, which is located behind the shul that his father established and which bears his name, the Rem"a Shul. The Jews of Poland would visit the *kever en masse* on the day of his *yahrtzeit* and many saw *yeshuos* as a result of their *tefillas* there. (See *Sefer Toras Simchah* 284)

His headstone is etched with the words: "*Ner hama'aravi, hagaon hagadol bedor, Moreinu Moshe Ro'eh Even Yisrael, on the 33<sup>rd</sup> day of the mispar Bnei Yisrael, galah kavod m'Yisrael, Moshe hayah ro'eh tzon Yisrael, tzidkas Hashem asah umishpatav Am Yisrael, hirbitz Torah b'Yisrael, he'emid talmidim l'rivevos alfei Yisrael, MiMoshe v'ad Moshe lo kam k'Moshe b'Yisrael.*"

His parents' home was a meeting place for *talmidei chachamim*, and the family was blessed with both Torah and wealth, and it was there that the Rem"a grew in Torah and *yiras Shamayim*. As a *bochur*, he traveled to Lublin to learn in the yeshivah of Rav Shalom Shachne, and he learned there until around 5309. After he married his *rebbe's* daughter, the Rem"a returned to Krakow, where he was appointed Rav at the young age of twenty.

For the next twenty-two years, he served as the Rav of Krakow. During these times, he illuminated all of the Diaspora with his Torah, and he disseminated Torah and taught many *talmidim*. To this day, Ashkenazi Jewry follows

### Olam Haba – From When He Answers Amen

The Gemara in *Maseches Sanhedrin* (110b) discusses the subject of a *kattan*, a child, who passes away- from which age does he merit Olam Haba, and the Gemara brings a few views. The Rem"a rules *l'halachah* like Rabi Meir, that a *kattan* merits Olam Haba from the time he answers amen, and wrote (*Orach Chaim* 124 7): "**And he should teach his little children to answer amen, because as soon as a baby answers amen he has a share in Olam Haba.**"