

Vechol Maaminim

A Weekly Pamphlet From "Bney Emunim"



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Peninei Emunim

Pearls of Tefillah in the Parashah

The Ikkar of Tefillah is "Lifnei Hashem"

"איש על דגלו באתת לבית אבתם
יהנו בני ישראל מנגד סביב לאהל
מועד יהנו" (ב ב)

The *passuk* that says יהנו is explained by the Midrash (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 2 9, cited there in Rashi) that the camp of Am Yisrael was not more than 2,000 *amah* from the Mishkan, so that Bnei Yisrael could come to it on Shabbos and daven in front of the *aron*. Likewise, when Yehoshua went to capture Yericho, he said to Bnei Yisrael (*Yehoshua* 3 4): "*ach rachok yihiyeh beineichem ubeino k'alpayim amah*" – that they should not be more distant from the Mishkan than 2000 *amah*, so that they could come and daven in front of the *aron* on Shabbos.

Why were Moshe and Yehoshua strict that Bnei Yisrael should come specifically on Shabbos to daven in front of the *aron*?

The **Minchas Elazar** explained:

Because Shabbos is a time that is designated for *tefillah*, and it is a day when *tefillah* is better accepted, as alluded in the acronym of its name שגורה תפילתי בפי, therefore, both Moshe before the capture of the Land and Yehoshua before the capture of Yericho, urged Am Yisrael to take care to gather especially on Shabbos in this holy place to daven for their success.

The Minchas Elazar adds that the concept of the virtue of *tefillah* on Shabbos was written specifically in this *parashah*, because most years it is read on the

Kol Emunim

A word from the founder and Nasi of Bney Emunim

Give Respect to *Birchos HaTorah*

Each morning, we merit to recite *Birchos HaTorah*, setting up our infrastructure for the new day, a day of being engaged in Torah and *mitzvos*. Aside from the expression of gratitude for the gift of Torah, in these *brachos* we ask for ourselves, our children and grandchildren – those that are already with us and those who are destined to be born – that we should all merit to learn Torah *lishmah*, and to have a connection to the Nosein HaTorah.

These *brachos* conclude in the present tense – "*Hamelamed Torah l'amo Yisrael*," "*Nosein haTorah*." From the day of *Kabbalas HaTorah* to this very day, HaKadosh Baruch Hu gives us the Torah each day anew, and we just have to be willing to accept it.

We should make these *brachos* aloud, in front of someone who will complete them by answering amen. Would it enter our mind that specifically *Birchos HaTorah*, which symbolize the *ma'amad* Har Sinai and the giving of the Torah from generation to generation, should be said in a manner that is not complete? Is it possible that someone who toils in Torah should be lax about this *brachah* and not say it with *shleimus*?

Moreover: The obligation to answer amen is learned by Chazal from the *passuk* that commands us about *Birchos HaTorah* (*Devarim* 32:3): "*Ki Shem Hashem ekra havu godel l'Elokeinu*," and it is explained that Moshe Rabbeinu said to Am Yisrael: "*Ki Shem Hashem ekra*" – in *Birchos HaTorah*, then you should "*havu godel*" – by answering amen. (See *Brachos* 21a, and Rashi there ad loc. Ki)

So if we have an obligation to complete every *brachah* with amen, how much more so is that the case with *Birchos HaTorah*!

We all aspire, teach and pray for the merit to see good generations. If we are strict to give respect to the *Birchos HaTorah*, to say them with *shleimus* – meaning aloud, with *kavanah*, *bechavrusa* – then our request of "*Venihyeh anachnu vetze'etzaeinu vetze'etza'ei tze'etzaeinu... kulanu yodei Shemecha velomdei Torasecha lishmah*," will not be rejected.

Remember – אז מסיני נצטוו – the acronym of these words is amen!

Good Shabbos

Yaakov Dov Marmurstein

Shabbos prior to Shavuos (see *Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim* 428 4 and *Biur Halachah* *ibid*), and thus the *passuk* mentions to a person to come early and pray there so that he should receive his share in the Torah on the upcoming Yom Tov. As we ask in the *tefillos* of Shabbos "*vesein chelkeinu beTorasecha*." This is because aside for the especial virtue of *tefillah* said on Shabbos, which is more accepted, all the *hashpa'os* that will be coming during the week depend on the Shabbos prior to it, and in order to merit them we have to precede by praying on Shabbos.

The **Margalios Hayam** explained that Moshe and Yehoshua were strict that Am Yisrael should come and daven in front of the *aron* on Shabbos, like the other days of the week, because standing in prayer before Hashem is the fundamental basis of the mitzvah of *tefillah*. We learn this from the Rambam on the mitzvah of *tefillah* (*Sefer Hamitzvos Aseh* 5) citing the *drashah* of Chazal (*Midrash Hagadol Re'eh*) from the words of the *passuk* (*Devarim* 6:13): "*V'oso ta'avod*" – "serve Him in His Mikdash," and he explained: "In other words, to go there and pray in it and in front of it." His words prove that this *halachah* is an integral part of the mitzvah of *tefillah*. And because *me'ikar hadin* it is fitting that Am Yisrael should daven specifically in front of the *aron Hashem*, therefore Moshe and Yehoshua instructed that they remain close to it on Shabbos.

Chamishah Ma'amaros; Nefesh Chayah [Rav R. Margulios] Orach Chaim 490 3

Birchos Hashachar k'halachah

Aloud

With kavanah

Bechavrusa

Hints for Salvation

Financial crisis is a very difficult challenge. It can hit with great intensity and disrupt the routine of life as an entire family is thrown into the abyss of confusion and uncertainty. What was until then firm ground suddenly becomes a stormy sea of challenges and frustration. But sometimes, it is specifically during those difficult moments that the power of emunah is revealed, and the crisis itself becomes a huge springboard for spiritual growth. That is what happened in this story – a true story that was submitted and adapted to preserve the privacy of those involved.

Reb Chaim worked hard for a living and did well for himself. He didn't live a luxurious life, but he earned enough to support his family with comfort. But then, all at once, things turned upside down. A small mistake snowballed into a severe financial

a heavy burden. The bit that Reb Chaim earned was barely enough for survival, and there was no choice but to cut back on food, electricity use and even water. And when you have to fight for the basics, not only the body and soul pay the price – the spirit is also affected. The joyous atmosphere that used to pervade the house began to disappear.

At night, Reb Chaim could hardly sleep. The worries were relentless, the nightmares gave him no peace, and the fear of what was to come weighed on his heart. Every moment he was awake, or even when he was sleeping fitfully, he felt trapped. During those torturous nights he recognized the truth of the words of Chazal “a poor man is considered like dead.”

One day, after reaching a nadir, he was overcome with pain at his inability to provide for even the basic needs, Reb Chaim decided to go to the Kosel and pour his heart out to his Creator. He stood there,

bent and broken, leaning on the ancient stones, and whispered a silent prayer, as hot tears rolled down his cheeks. Ribbono shel Olam, how much more can I carry? he whispered with hot tears rolling down his face.

He cast about for a *zechus* that would lift the harsh decree, seeking to take

upon himself to become stronger in a certain mitzvah, something he could invest his heart and soul in, and which he could keep at persistently. But what could he be stronger in? The thoughts raced through his mind, and he could not decide. Finally, he decided to open a *Tehillim* and to pour out his heart *passuk* after *passuk*, word after word, with the hope that during his recital Hashem would illuminate the path for him.

As he progressed through the

chapters, he felt like he could truly identify with the *pesukim* describing the suffering of the *evyon*, the indigent person. Then his eyes fell on the *passuk* (9:19): “*Ki lo lanetzach yishakach evyon.*” He repeated the words over and over, and when he studied the words in depth, he discovered something remarkable. He noticed that the acronym of the words “כי לא לנצח ישכל אביון” are numerically equivalent to amen. As a regular reader of *Vechol Ma'aminim*, the subject of answering amen was close to his heart, and when he discovered this, his eyes lit up.

“Here's the answer!” he exclaimed to himself. “I have to strengthen myself in answering amen.”

Reb Chaim continued to read the chapters with emotion, drawing much *chizuk* and strength from them. When he reached the end of the *sefer*, he stopped again. His eyes caught sight of another *passuk* (109:31): “*Ki ya'amod l'yemin evyon lehoshia...*” His heart beat rapidly. He looked at the *passuk* again and realized that here, as well, the acronym of the words formed the word “amen!” Now he had no doubt. The message was so clear. From Above he was being given a sign that he could not miss.

Reb Chaim resolved to strengthen his answering of amen. From now, he'd begin his day by hearing *Birchos Hashachar* from other *mispallelim*, and he'd make sure to complete their *brachos* and merit many amens early in the day. He had no doubt that the merit of amen would advocate for him, and that the day was not far off when his mazel would once again shine. But he did not fathom that this time, he would merit to see a *yeshuah* in the blink of an eye.

Already on his way back from the Kosel, his phone rang. On the line was a vaguely familiar voice – it was a childhood friend who he hadn't spoken to in years. After exchanging greetings, the friend surprised him with an unexpected offer: As the owner of a successful chain of stores, he was offering Reb Chaim to open a branch in his city. Reb Chaim chuckled sadly. “I don't have even a penny to invest,” he



crisis that decimated his assets and left him heavily in debt.

From that day, his world was transformed. He saw his family struggling to get used to their new reality and it broke his heart. It was so difficult to calculate every single penny of their daily shopping – which in the past was done with little thought – and now, they found themselves forgoing many things that they had become used to buying.

Things grew worse, and even the basic needs of the children became

The Importance of Kavanah When Saying This Request

We can learn about the tremendous importance of the request of “*Venihyeh anachnu vetze’etza’einu...*” from the words of Ravina (*Nedarim* 81a), who was asked why we do not find that the sons of *talmidei chachamim* are scholars like their fathers? And he replied that they were thus punished because “they do not recite the *brachah* on the Torah first.” And the *Mefaresh* there explains (ibid ad loc. *she’ein*) that this means that they are not careful to recite *Birchos HaTorah* before they engage in Torah learning – and therefore the request of “*venihyeh anachnu vetze’etza’einu*” is not fulfilled with them.

The Shelah Hakadosh wrote about this request (*Sha’ar Ha’osios* Letter 4, *Derech Eretz* 27): “And the *tefillah* of the father and mother should always be fluent on their lips, to pray for their sons to be *lomdei Torah* and *tzaddikim* and *baalei middos tovos*. And he should have a lot of concentration in *Birchos HaTorah* when he says the words “*Venihyeh anachnu vetze’etza’einu...*” and in the *brachah* of *Ahavah Rabbah* when he says “*Avinu Av HaRachaman...*” - he should think also about his children, and his grandchildren and for all the generations forward. Likewise, when he says *Uva Letzion*, “*Lema’an lo niga larik velo neled labehalah*” – in all these places he should daven with great fervency with all his heart and soul.”

The *sefer Shomer Emes* brings a beautiful comment on the subject of this request is (*Tefillah* p. 49) and he writes: “And I saw those who say that it is good for a person to have in mind each of his children individually when he says ‘*Venihyeh anachnu...yodei Shemecha velomdei Torasecha*.’”

“וְנִהְיֶה אֲנַחְנוּ וְצִאֲצֵאֵינוּ
וְצִאֲצֵאֵינוּ צִאֲצֵאֵינוּ כֻלָּנוּ
יֹדְעֵי שְׁמֶךָ וְלֹמְדֵי
תּוֹרָתְךָ לְשִׁמְחָה”

The Devar Chaim of Nadvorna once asked a Yid who visited his home which places in *tefillah* he has in mind the success of his children in Torah. That Yid, who was a *talmid chacham*, replied on the spot: Doesn’t the *Mishnah Berurah* (47 20) bring the words of the Shelah that one should daven in three places for children: in *Birchos HaTorah*, *Birchas Ahavah Rabbah* and in the *tefillah* of *Uva LeTzion*?

The Rebbe, who was pleased by the response, then added: “I’ll tell you another place where it is fitting to ask for this – in the *brachah* of *Emes Veyatziv*, in the words “*al baneinu v’al doroseinu*” (*Peninei Parashas Hashavua* Vol. I p. 547)

The Request for Three Generations

The *Bach* (*Orach Chaim* 47) holds that one should detail in this request צִאֲצֵאֵינוּ וְצִאֲצֵאֵינוּ צִאֲצֵאֵינוּ. This is according to the words of Chazal (*Bava Metzia* 85a): “Anyone who is a *talmid chacham* and his son is a *talmid chacham* and his grandson is a *talmid chacham* – Torah will leave his children, as it says (*Yeshayah* 59:21): ‘*V’ani zos brisi osam amar Hashem ruchi asher alecha...lo yamushu mipicha umipi zaracha umipi zera zaracha – amar Hashem mei’atah v’ad olam.*’” In light of this Gemara, it emerges that there is a special *inyan* that a person should ask for himself, his son and his grandson to be *bnei Torah*, because if his request is accepted, he is guaranteed that Torah will never leave his descendants “from now and forever.”

But the *Magen Avraham* (47) differs and holds that one should not say *tze’etzaei tze’etzaeinu*, because the word צִאֲצֵאֵינוּ means יֹרְצֵי וְצִאֲצֵאֵינוּ – sons and grandson, and if so, even if our intention is to include in our request our grandsons so that Torah should not stop from our offspring, it is enough to say וְנִהְיֶה אֲנַחְנוּ וְצִאֲצֵאֵינוּ.

admitted candidly. But his friend responded firmly: “Don’t worry. I’ll lend you the money you need to open the branch and I’ll provide all the merchandise. You’ll pay me back after you sell and start to turn a profit.”

Reb Chaim set out on his new endeavor with *bitachon* and *emunah*. He worked tirelessly, invested all his energy, and within a short time, the store became a success story. People streamed to shop there, and Hashem’s *brachah* was evident in his work. The revenues swelled and his debts shrank. But it was not only the story that thrived – Reb Chaim’s

other enterprise – his “amen business” was also growing.

Each morning, without exception, he rose to go to shul to answer amen after the *Birchos Hashachar* of the *mispallemim*. Nothing stood in his way. He adhered to his commitment with tenacity and dedication. And so, these two enterprises thrived side by side, in perfect harmony. And Reb Chaim knew without a doubt – one brought the other.

“I thank you with all my heart for raising the awareness of the subject of answering amen,” Reb Chaim wrote in his letter, and concludes, “I saw it firsthand – I merited to see

how the mitzvah of answering amen opens the gates of salvation.”

When this letter came to the Nasi of Bney Emunim, Rav Yaakov Dov Marmurstein, he noticed that there is another connection between the two *remazim*: Between Chapter 9 in *Tehillim*, where the first *remez* appears, and Chapter 109, where the second *remez* is, there are exactly 100 chapters, corresponding to the quota of 100 *brachos* established by Dovid Hamelech that we need to recite each day.

Protection and Defense in the Merit of Answering Amen

“אהבו את ה' כל חסידיו אמונים נצר ה' ומשלם על יתר עשה גאווה” (לא כד)

The holy *Zohar* (*Vayeilech* 286a) explains the *passuk* (*Tehillim* 31:24): “*Emunim notzer Hashem umeshalem al yeser osei ga'avah*” to refer to answering amen. The *Mikdash Melech* (*ibid*) explains that the *kavanah* of the *Zohar* is that the *passuk* “*emunim notzer Hashem*” indicates that Hashem protects the *oneh amen*, while the *passuk* “*umeshalem al yeser osei ga'avah*” teaches that in contrast, someone who, in his pride, is scornful about answering amen, *chalilah*, punishes and pays accordingly.

Sefer Shomer Emunim (*Ma'amar Pischu She'arim* Ch. 20) adds an explanation that the *passuk* “*notzer Hashem*” also applies to the amen itself, to mean that Hashem preserves and keeps every amen that is answered by a person in Am Yisrael. He hides it away for him so that it should protect the person in this world and the Next. In light of this, the *Shomrei Emunim* adds: “And if so, how can a [mere mortal] not learn a *kal vachomer* from HaKadosh Baruch Hu: If He keeps and preserves every amen, then how should a person not keep all the amens and make sure not to lose them *chalilah*?!”

Fulfill The Words of the Brachos - By Answering Amen

“אהבו את ה' כל חסידיו אמונים נצר ה' ומשלם על יתר עשה גאווה” (לא כד)

The Maggid of Brod, Rav Moshe Osterer, explained:

In *Maseches Brachos* (30a), the Gemara brings three opinions about what a person should be strict about if he wants to be a *chassid*: Rav Yehudah says he should be careful regarding matters of *nezikin*, damages. Rava says he should fulfill what it says in *Maseches Avos*, and some say he should be careful regarding *brachos*. We can easily understand why distancing oneself from causing damage to another, and being strict about the ethics

On Shavuot we mark the passing of Dovid Melech Yisrael, the founder of the eternal kingdom of Am Yisrael – Malchus Bais Dovid. Dovid Hamelech left us with many spiritual treasures that accompany us throughout our lives, chief among them *Sefer Tehillim*, which has always been an integral part of Am Yisrael, and its *pesukim* accompany every Jew throughout his lifetime.

In honor of the *yahrtzeit*, we have compiled, as we do every year, commentaries and allusions from the *pesukim* of *Tehillim* regarding the great virtues of answering amen:

stated in *Maseches Avos* are acts of *chassidus*. But what is especially pious about being careful when reciting *brachos*?

The meaning of the Gemara is that a *chassid* in *brachos* is someone who is strict to make his *brachos* specifically in the ears of someone who will answer amen after them. By doing so, he merits to complete and fulfill his *brachos*. This is the *kavanah* of this *passuk* as well: “*Ehevu es Hashem kol chassidav*” – according to all three opinions brought in the Gemara, among them he also warned about *brachos*, on condition that he is *shomer* “*emunim*,” meaning he is strict to recite the *brachos* in the ears of someone who will answer amen after them. He can then be called a *chassid* because “*notzer Hashem*” his merit for the answering of amen of the listeners as well, and that is what completes his *brachos*. (*Darash Moshe*)

Answering Amen Elevates and Expands the Brachah

“גדלו לה' אתי ונרוממה שמו יחדו” (לד ד)

The *Mefarsh* in *Maseches Nazir* (66b ad loc. *Echad*) explains that this *passuk* expresses the joint power of the *mevarech* and the *oneh amen*. The beginning of the *passuk* “*Gadlu l'Hashem iti*” are the words of the *mevarech*, who calls on others to glorify Hashem with

him by answering amen, while the later words “*uneromemah Shemo yachdav*” – applies to the *oneh amen*, who joins the *mevarech* and elevates the Name of Hashem with him.

As we know, answering amen is not only an agreement with the words of the *mevarech*, it is also part of the *brachah*, and by answering amen, the *brachah* is completed and through that the *brachah* itself becomes more important. (See *Mishnah Berurah* 167 20)

In light of this we can explain the deep meaning of this *passuk* as follows: The *mevarech* calls to others “*gadlu l'Hashem iti*” – it is in your hands to make my *brachah* greater and to complete it with one word that it lacks – amen. And when others answer amen they are saying that by doing so they also elevate and increase the importance of the *brachah* – “*uneromemah Shemo yachdav*.” (*Ohel Shlomo*)

Ninety Amens Leading to Life in Olam Haba

“ישב עולם לפני אלקים חסד ואמת מן יצרהו” (סא ה)

The words “*ve'emes mann*” allude to the obligation to answer ninety amens a day, because amen means *emes*, truth, and the word מן is numerically equivalent to 90. The *passuk* is saying that Hashem did *chessed* with a person that in the merit of him being strict to answer ninety amens a day, he will merit that “*yintzeruhu*” from Above from all bad things, both in this world and in the World to Come, and this way, he will merit to see the words “*Yeshev olam lifnei Elokim*” be fulfilled. (*Minchas Yosef*, Vol. II, Introduction)

Amen Brings Down Abundance

“מצמיח חציר לבהמה ועשב לעבדת האדם להוציא לחם מן הארץ” (קד יד)

Rav Yechiel Gross, *Hy”d*, a *talmid* of the Arugas Habosem, explained:

The final letters of the words of the *passuk* להוציא לחם מן הארץ are צ, אמן, to allude that one who is strict about the *takanah* of Chazal to answer at least ninety amens a day merits much abundance from On High. (*Toras Yechiel*)