

# Vechele Maaminim

A Weekly Pamphlet From "Bney Emunim"

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## Peninei Emunim

Pearls of Tefillah in the Parashah

## Pischu Shearim

Open the Gates

### Techiyas Hameisim – Like Sons, Not Servants

“בנים אתם לה’ אלקיכם לא תתגדדו ולא תשימו קרחה בין עיניכם למות” (ד א)

Harav Pinchas Halevi, the Rav of Wengrov, explained:

Chazal say (*Taanis* 2a) that the key to *Techiyas Hameisim* is not given to a proxy, and remains in the Hands of HaKadosh Baruch Hu Himself. Chazal ask, how can HaKadosh Baruch Hu resurrect the dead? Is He not considered a Kohein (*Sanhedrin* 39a) who must not become a *tamei l’meis*? They explain that because Am Yisrael are considered sons to Hashem, therefore, He can resurrect them, because a Kohein may become impure for his closet relatives. (*Prashas Derachim*, 25, according to *Tosafos* ibid ad loc. *Bamai*.)

This is what the *passuk* is saying: “Because “you are sons to Hashem” and HaKadosh Baruch Hu is destined to resurrect you, therefore, do not be distraught over your dead to the point that you bruise your body and shave the hair on your heads, the way the non-Jews do when they part form their dead for eternity. Rather, mourn in the measure set by the Torah, because sooner or later, you will be reunited with them.

Thus, Rav Pinchas explained the stanza that concludes the *piyut* of *Yigdal Elokim*: “*Meisim yechayeh K-l berov chasdo baruch adei ad Shem Tehillaso*.” The fact that Hashem will bring the dead back to life Himself, despite being a Kohein, proves

that we are considered His Children and not servants. Hence, in contrast to a servant, whose master can sell him to another person, the bond between father and son never breaks, and likewise, we are eternally bound to Hashem, and although we are in exile, and have been given to our enemies, we must serve Him and praise Him “*adei ad*.” (See *Sanhedrin* 105a)

*Nachalas Ezriel – Parpara’os*  
[*L’chochmah* [Horodna 5577

### Eating Fruits in Purity and Holiness

“ואכלת לפני ה’ אלקיך במקום אשר יבחר לשכון שמו שם מעשר דגנך תירשך ויצהרך ובכרת בקרך וצאנך למען תלמד ליראה את ה’ אלקיך כל הימים” (ד כג)

In the *Brachah Me’ein Shalosh*, we ask “*Unevarechecha aleha bikedushah ubetaharah*.” Why do we need to mention holiness and purity specifically in this *brachah*?

Harav Yitzchak Zev Soloveichik of Brisk explained that the words “*bikedushah ubetaharah*” are a continuation of the previous *brachah*: “*Uvene Yerushalayim Ir Hakodesh... venochal mipiryah*.” When we say “her fruits” with regard to Yerushalayim, we certainly do not have in mind fruits that grew in the city, because “gardens and orchards are not planted in Yerushalayim” (*Bava Kama* 82b). Rather this refers to the fruits of *Ma’aser Sheini* that grew in other cities, and which have to be eaten in Yerushalayim with purity and holiness of the body, and that is why we add “*bikedushah ubetaharah*.”

*Toras Ze’ev, Zevachim* 32

A word from the founder and Nasi of Bney Emunim

### A Brachah Out Loud Is Everything!

At the beginning of this *parashah* we read a sentence that alludes to an important fundamental to anyone seeking to fulfill the obligation of *brachos* with *hiddur*, and that is “*Es habrachah – asher tishme’u!*” – a *brachah* of a Yid needs to be heard!

The essence of the *brachah* is, as is known, the declaration of the Kingship of Hashem. As Chazal say (*Brachos* 40b) “Any *brachah* that does not have *Malchus* is not a *brachah*.” Hence, just like the declaration of kingship needs to be heard aloud, so that the listeners should accept it and agree with it, likewise, the *brachah* needs to be said aloud, because if not, the *mevarech* misses the point of the *brachah*.

Aside for that, a *brachah* aloud also gives listeners a precious mitzvah – the mitzvah of answering amen. With this easy and simple action – saying the *brachah* out loud – we can be from the *matzdikei harabbaim*; would we possibly want to miss out on such a thing?! Rabi Yehudah Hachassid writes in *Sefer Chassidim* (257): “One who says *brachos* in a whisper is like stealing the *mitzvos*.” His words on this subject are clear: A *brachah* out loud is not only *hiddur* mitzvah, or *hishtadlus*. It is an absolute obligation, and one who does not fulfill it is considered a stealer.

It is possible that the reason for this is because the *brachos*, whose goal is to coronate Hashem as the King, are not solely the domain of the *mevarech*. They were instituted also to give merit to those around the *mevarech* by answering amen, as it says, “*Gadlu l’Hashem iti uneromemah Shemo yachdav*,” (*Tehillim* 34:4).

In truth, Rabi Yehudah Hachassid’s words contain another message. Chazal say (*Chulin* 86b) that the value of each *brachah* is ten gold coins. This reward is given both to the *mevarech*, and to the one who answers amen (*Tosafos Bava Kama* 91b, ad loc. *Vechiyvu*). So we find that one who makes *brachos* in a whisper, aside for withholding the benefit to himself [as the *Shach* says (*Choshen Mishpat* 382 4) that only a *brachah* that is answered by amen gives the one who says it the reward of the ten gold coins], he also steals from his friend, by preventing him from gaining ten gold coins. It is as if he is saying “neither you or I will have it” (*Melachim* I 3:26).

Let us be careful to make all our *brachos* – from *Birchos Hashachar* until the end of the day – out loud to someone who will answer amen after them. This way we will merit all the *brachos* written in the Torah.

Good Shabbos

Yaakov Dov Marmurstein

### The Gift of Five Thousand Mornings

An awed silence hung over those waiting for an audience with the Be'er Yaakov of Nadvorna. The Rebbe regularly received those who wished to see him late at night, after he finished his *avodah* of the day, which included many hours of Torah learning, *tefillah* and *avodas Hashem*. At the end of each day, the Rebbe dedicated the few hours he had remaining to sleep, to receiving people seeking his counsel and blessing. The Rebbe welcomed them all with warmth and compassion, listened to them attentively, and showered them with heartfelt consolation and *brachos* that were cloaked in fiery *ahavas Yisrael*.



The Rabbi of Mandvorna zt'l,  
owner of the 'Be'er Ya'akov'

Late on one of those nights, a young couple came into the Rebbe's room, accompanied by a renowned medical *askan* who had been working tirelessly to support their plight. They had asked him to come and share their story with the Rebbe, and he related:

This couple has been married for fifteen years. About two years after their marriage, the woman began to suffer from various problems that made it very hard to maintain her life's routine. When she felt her condition worsening, they sought out the advice of doctors. The doctors sent her to do all kinds of tests, and the results proved that she is sick with a rare and difficult disease; it affects her day-to-

day functioning and the chances of recovery are very low.

On advice of one of the medical *askanim*, the couple turned to a certain doctor, who specializes in treating this serious disease. On the day of the meeting, the *askan* left everything else to join them for the crucial consultation. He also took with them the binder filled with paperwork – the results of the tests and the medical opinions that the woman had received in recent years. The doctor perused the paperwork, asked a few questions, went back to reading, and then fell silent.

A few moments of tense silence passed before the doctor began to state his opinion:

"I'm sorry to tell you this...but this woman is sick with the worst type of disease, and regretfully, there is no cure. In my opinion, and in light of my experience, she has a mere two years left to live. It is possible, in this time, to ease her pain, but it is impossible to stop the disease from progressing."

The doctor finished his statement and lowered his gaze. Despite his extensive experience, it was not easy to face a person hearing such a dismal prognosis, that his days are numbered and there is no chance of a cure.

A moment passed before he dared to raise his eyes to see the woman's reaction. He was thus very surprised to find a woman who was patient and calm, as if she hadn't just heard a very difficult verdict. Thinking that perhaps she had not heard him properly, he tried to repeat himself, but the woman remained as calm as she had been.

"How are you so calm?" the doctor asked. "Perhaps you didn't understand me fully...?"

"I understood you completely," she replied, and added, "That is why I am so calm, and on the contrary, your words make me happy."

"Happy?" the doctor was completely taken aback.

"Indeed," the woman said, with tears in her eyes. "I am overcome with gratitude to Hashem for all the good that He has granted me to this day. According to your words, I will be meriting two years as a gift – which means another seven hundred times to wake up in the morning with happiness.

"This is not simple, because Hashem does not owe me anything. He has granted me life each day anew, as a gift, and you are saying that I will merit another two years of this, seven hundred more times. Is there something that can calm a person and make them happy more than being told that they will have that gift of life each day for another seven hundred days, that he will merit to say '*Modeh ani lefanecha...shehechezarta bi nishmasi*,' is this not what my heart rejoices with each day in gratitude? How can I not be happy?"

The doctor was stunned at the woman's words. His eyes opened wide; he'd never heard such an outlook on life. But the woman's subsequent remarks left him even more astounded:

"You say doctor, that I have only two years left to live. As someone who knows that each day of those two years are given to me as a gift, because the Ribbono Shel Olam is not obligated to give me life for even one hour, if not for His compassion and *chesed*, I can allow myself to doubt your words. Is there something preventing the Master of the World from granting me from His endless treasures another few decades of happiness, during which I will merit to have a family and raise them with *emunah*!?"

The doctor nodded understandingly. After being in this profession for so many years, when he'd had to tell quite a few people that their hope for life was snuffed out, this was the first time he had encountered such a situation. And his outlook on life was forever altered.

About fifteen years later, the couple came with the dedicated *askan*, to the Be'er Yaakov's room to be blessed with many more good years. On Motzaei Shabbos Kodesh *Parashas Shemos* 5761, the Rebbe told this story to a group of *bochurim* who had come to him for a *brachah*. When he finished, he added:

"Since that story, more than five thousand mornings have passed, during which this unbelievable woman rises each day, and says *Modeh Ani* with joy in her heart – "that You have returned my soul to me with compassion, *Rabbah Emunasecha*."



## Ninety Amens – On Brachos

**5. A person is obligated to answer ninety amens each day on brachos that he hears. This is aside for the amens he has to answer to Kaddish. Yet there are some opinions that include the amens answered to Kaddish in this sum.**

### Sources and Explanations

This dispute is based on the question of the right version in the *Zohar* regarding how to count the quota of holy things that must be recited each day: According to the *Rema MiPano* (*Shu"t*, 109) the correct version is that the quota of holy things is alluded to in the word צדק 90 - ק"צ amens, 4 (ט) *Kedushos*, 10 (י) *Kaddish* and 100 (ק) *brachos*, and thus, the amens answered to *Kaddish* are counted separately and in addition to the ninety amens. This proves that answering ninety amens applies only to amens on *brachos* and does not include the amens on *Kaddish*.

But the *Yalkut Me'am Loez* (*Bereishis* 19 30, 175) wrote according to the version of the *Zohar* that we have (*Tikkunei Zohar*, *Zohar Chadash* 83 2) that the quota of holy things is alluded to in the word צדק 90 - ק"צ amens, 4 *Kedushos*, 100 *brachos* and 5 *Chumshei Torah*. With this version, amens for *Kaddish* are not counted on their own, and they are included in the quota of 90 amens.

## Special Obligation for One Who Is Yotzei

**6. One who hears a brachah from a friend to be yotzei his obligation is especially obligated to answer amen after the brachah. This is an addition to the general obligation that each person who hears a brachah has. In any case, even someone who did not answer amen, bedieved, he is yotzei with hearing the brachah.**

### Sources and Explanations

We learn in the *Breisa* (*Brachos* 45b): "If he heard and did not answer amen – he is yotzei." In the *Biur HaGra* (*Orach Chaim* 52 2) he notes that because the *Breisa* said "yatza" – the one who heard and didn't answer amen is yotzei only bedieved. The *Mishnah Berurah* ruled like this (213 17), that one who wants to fulfill his obligation in the preferred way must hear the *brachah* well, from beginning to end, and then to answer amen after it. This is because there is a special obligation to answer amen after hearing a *brachah* that one has in mind to be yotzei his own obligation "in order actively instruct that he agrees to the *brachah* of the

*mevarech*." (See more in *Mishnah Berurah* 215 7; *Biur Halachah* 167 2)

## A Brachah Said Especially for the Listener

**7. When one makes a brachah after having fulfilled his obligation, and is only doing so to be motzi others in their obligations, such as one who made Kiddush on Shabbos, and then again makes Kiddush to be motzi others who haven't heard Kiddush, then the one who hears and wants to be yotzei is obligated to answer amen to the brachah. If he does not answer amen, he did not fulfill his obligation. But there is a differing opinion that holds that even if the mevarech already was yotzei his obligation, those who hear him make the brachah are also yotzei even if they don't answer amen.**

### Sources and Explanations

The *Shulchan Aruch* (*Orach Chaim* 219 1) rules that when one recites *Birchas Hagomel* for himself, then a friend can be yotzei by hearing his *brachah* even without answering amen. The *Rema* (ibid) explains this *halachah* as follows: "Because the *mevarech* is also obligated, then the other is yotzei without answering amen." From the words of the *Rema*, Rabi Akiva Eiger clarified in the *hagahos* (ibid 9) that in all the *brachos*, even *Birchas Hamitzvos*, only someone who hears a *brachah* from another person who is making the *brachah* for himself is yotzei by hearing without answering amen. However, if the *mevarech* was already yotzei his obligation for this *brachah*, and he makes the *brachah* only to be motzi others, according to the *din* of "shomea k'oneh" then the listener is not yotzei if he does not answer amen. See *Minchas Shlomo* (Vol. I, 3) who wrote that it is correct to be aware of this and to caution the listeners about it.

But the *Avnei Nezer* (*Shu"t*, *Orach Chaim* 40) differs and holds that even when the *mevarech* has already fulfilled his obligation, the listeners are yotzei without answering amen. He brings proof from the *Tosafos* (*Rosh Hashanah* 28b, ad loc. *Umena*) that even someone who already heard *Tekias Shofar* can blow to be motzi others who did not hear. And if they are not yotzei only by listening from the *din* of "shomea k'oneh" by someone who already fulfilled his obligation, but rather by answering amen after him, how can they be yotzei with hearing *tekios* who was already yotzei – there is no way to answer amen in lieu of blowing the *shofar*.

"וכאשר תקום מן הספר, תחפש באשר למדת אם יש בו דבר אשר תוכל לקיימו."

## Otzros Emunim

Answering Ninety Amens a Day

### Like a Lion on Watch

Harav Eliyahu Meni, the Rav of Chevron, wrote in his *sefer Siach Yitzchak (Sha'ar Ha'ahavah)* about answering amen after every single *brachah* one hears. He wrote: "Therefore, my brothers and friends, this answering of amen should not be light in your eyes, because a person is not called *tzaddik* unless he fulfills each day 90 amens, 4 *Kedushos*, 10 *Kaddish* and 100 *brachos*. Therefore, who is the one who will see all these and his hair will not stand on end, and like a lion, he should be on watch that he should not miss out on even one amen."

### Ninety Amens to Instill Emunah

The reason for the *takanah* of Chazal that one has to answer specifically ninety amens a day is explained by Harav Uri Yehoshua Elchanan Asher of Porisov as follows: The *halachah* is (*Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim* 114 8) that for the first thirty days after we stop mentioning the rains and we begin to recite *Morid Hatal*, one who is not sure if he mentioned *tal* or *geshem* needs to repeat the davening. This is because it is likely that the power of habit overpowered him and mentioned the rains in his *tefillah*. But someone who, immediately on the first day that we say *tal*, says ninety times in a row, "*Mechayeh Meisim Atah Rav Lehoshia, Morid Hatal*," does not need to repeat the davening in a place of doubt. Because after reviewing this ninety times, it is more likely that he davened in the correct *nusach*.

We learn from here that saying something ninety times establishes it well in the heart of the person saying it, until he says it out of habit. For that reason, Chazal also instituted that we answer each day again at least ninety amens. Because answering amen establishes the *emunah* in the heart of the person, and when he answers amen ninety times "The *emunah* in Hashem Yisbarach will be firmly established in his heart, and he will recognize the greatness of the Creator, Yisbarach Shemo, and feel it in his heart and mind." (*Ateres Yehoshua* Vol. II, p. 80)

## Iggeres Emunim

A Letter from a Loyal Reader

To the editorial board of *Vechol Ma'aminim*, the greatest *mezakeh harabbim* in the world,

The *Gemara (Brachos 47a)* explains that the life of a person depends on answering amen according to *halachah*, for better or for worse, as they said, "One who answers an amen *yesomah* [an orphaned amen] – his children will be orphans, a *chatufah* [snatched] – his days will be snatched, and a *ketufah* [cut off] – his days will be cut off." In contrast, one who is careful to answer amen according to *halachah* is guaranteed a long, good life – "and anyone who prolongs his amen then his days and years will be prolonged."

I thought of a beautiful *remez* for this: In the *tefillah* of *Nishmas* we say: "*Al kein eivarim shepilagta banu veruach uneshamah shenafacta b'apeinu, hein heim yodu...*" The acronym of על כן אברימ is numerically equivalent to amen, and the acronym of the final letter of those words equals 120. This alludes that in the merit of answering amen properly one will merit to use the limbs and organs that Hashem has granted him to thank Him until 120 years with good health. *Amen, kein yehi ratzon.*

With the *brachah* of Kohanim and great fondness,  
**Gamliel Hakohein Rabinowitz**  
Author of *Gam Ani Odecha* and *Pardes Yosef Hachadash* on the Moadim

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## Tzaddik B'Emunaso

Amen and Brachos in the Teachings of One Who Has Yahrtzeit



The ancient Jewish cemetery next to him in Venice

### Harav Shmuel Abuhav, zy"va

1 Elul 5454

Harav Shmuel Abuhav was born in Hamburg, Germany in 5370 to his father, Rav Avraham. When he was thirteen years old, his parents sent him to Venice, Italy, to learn Torah in the *beis medrash* of Rabi David Franco. When he came of age, he married his *rebbe's* daughter and settled in Venice.

In 5410, he was asked to serve as Rav of Venice and as Rosh Yeshivah. He had many *talmdim*; among the more well-known is Rabi Yisrael Yaakov Chagiz, *zt"l*, author of *Shu"t Halachos Ketanos*. The *Chacham Tzvi (Shu"t 135)* crowned him with the title "*gadol zemanenu*," the *gadol* of our times. His son, Rav Yaakov Emden wrote of him (*Toras Hakana'us* p. 24): "A special one in the flock of Hashem... who did not leave another one in his generation in wisdom and genuine *chassidus*... he was the father of Am Yisrael in Italy, and when someone sought the Word of Hashem, he was there for every petitioner." Many questions were directed to him from all the communities, and his responses were printed in his *sefer Shu"t Dvar Shmuel*, which is often cited in the *sifrei Acharonim*.

In his time, a compilation was anonymously printed in Prague entitled *Sefer Hazichronos*. The goal of it was to arouse the nation to perform the *mitzvos* that are normally overlooked. In time, it emerged that this compilation was authored by Rav Shmuel, and in his humility and piety, he kept it anonymous (*ibid*).

When he reached the age of *gevuros*, he decreed exile upon himself, and he would seclude himself and wander among the cities. Near his death, he returned to Venice. He returned his soul to its Maker on 1 Elul 5454, and was laid to rest in the Jewish cemetery in Venice.

### A Ben Olam Haba

In his introduction to his father's *sefer, Shu"t Dvar Shmuel*, his son Rav Yaakov describes how, before his passing from this world with a *misas neshikah*, he parted from all his students and family members. The last one to part from him was his only grandson, Rav Shmuel, who was named for him and who was very beloved. He declared that this grandson was a *ben Olam Haba* because of his strictness to answer amen: "And afterwards, he parted from his only grandson, his close friend, who shared his name, who cared for him in his old age, and he merited to hear that he is a *ben Olam Haba*, as he answers amen with all his might, and that is Shmuel, the son of Rav David."