

# VeChol Maaminim

A Weekly Pamphlet From "Bney Emunim"

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## Peninei Emunim

Pearls of Tefillah in the Parashah

## Pischu Shearim

Open the Gates

### The Reason Women Recite 'She'asani Kirtzono'

“ויאמר אלקים נעשה אדם בצלמנו כדמותנו ויירדו בדגת הים ובעוף השמים ובבהמה ובכל הארץ ובכל הרמש הרמש על הארץ” (א כו)

Rashi writes (based on Sanhedrin 38b) that the Torah writes “na’aseh adam,” to say that when HaKadosh Baruch Hu wanted to create man, He consulted the Angels, and the Torah teaches us *derech erez*, that “the greater one consults and asks permission of the smaller one.”

Based on this, Harav Yaakov Meshulem Orenstein of Lvov explained the reason that the woman recites “she’asani kirtzono” every morning. While in the creation of a man, Hashem consulted with the Angels, when He created the woman He made her “kirtzono,” as He wished, and did not consult with the Angels. This is because she was a continuation, and part of, the creation of the man, and was not considered a new creation.

Yeshuos Yaakov,  
Orach Chaim 46 5

### Middas Harachamim Is Awakened Before the Middas Hadin

“אלה תולדות השמים והארץ בהבראם ביום עשות ה' אלקים ארץ ושמים” (ב ד)

Rashi explained (ibid 1:1) that HaKadosh Baruch Hu is called ‘Elokim’ for the *Middas Hadin* with which the world is run, which means that Hashem treats each person according to the way he is deserving of being treated. One who fulfills the Torah receives a reward, while the

sinner is punished. At first, Hashem wanted to create the world with *Middas Hadin*, as it says (ibid) “*Bereishis bara Elokim es Hashamayim v’es ha’aretz.*” But when He saw that the world cannot exist with the attribute of *Middas Hadin*, He gave priority to the *Middas Harachamim*, expressed by the Shem Hava-yah, and joined it with the *Middas Hadin.*”

Therefore, this *passuk* states: “*Beyom asos Hashem Elokim erez v’shamayim*” – first the Shem Hava-yah is mentioned, indicating the leadership with *Middas Harachamim*, and only afterwards, is the Name of Elokim mentioned, as it corresponds to the attribute of *Middas Hadin.*

The *Pri Megadim* added that when Hashem placed *Middas Harachamim* before *Middas Hadin*, and did not just combine them together, He further weakened the *Middas Hadin.* Because when the *Middas Hadin* is awakened after the *Middas Harachamim* has already been applied, its intensity is far less than if it would have been aroused before the *Middas Harachamim.* Indeed, this is what we praise HaKadosh Baruch Hu for in the *piyut of VeChol Ma’aminim*, said during the Yamim Noraim: “*Harachum umakdim rachamim lerogez,*” the compassionate One Who precedes the anger with mercy.” In His compassion, Hashem did not only attach the *Middas Harachamim* to the *Middas Hadin*, He even placed it first.

Sefer Hamaggid 5536

A word from the founder and Nasi of Bney Emunim

### בראשי"ת Starting from

Shabbos Bereishes has a special aura of renewal. Each year on this Shabbos, we start the Torah anew, and thus express our commitment to once again study Hashem’s Torah without stopping.

Shabbos Bereishis also serves as an important reminder of our obligation to recite each and every *brachah* aloud, and to give those around us the merit of answering amen. As the Chida wrote in his *sefer Nachal Kedumim*, the word בראשית is an acronym for אברך שם יי תמיד.

The fact that this virtue is alluded to in the first word of the Torah teaches us about the tremendous importance, and that it is of top priority in *avodas Hashem.*

One who habituates himself to recite every *brachah* aloud reaps a double reward. The first is by becoming a partner in the tens of thousands of amens that were saved from loss in his merit, because he made his *brachos* out loud and gave others the merit of answering them. The second is that due to his scrupulousness to recite the *brachos* out loud so others could hear him, he is acquiring a wonderful habit. This accords the fitting respect to the *brachos* that are said from his mouth to Hashem, King of the world, instead of *chalilah*, murmuring them out of habit.

In this allusion we can also find a special emphasis: “בכל את” - in every time and every place; in every time – from *Birchos Hashachar* until *Birchas Hamapil*, and in every place – even when he is among strangers, he should not be ashamed in his practice. He should not worry about anyone else, and rather should adhere to this practice and be strict about making each *brachah* aloud.

In the same vein, we can add that the second word in the Torah, ברא, completes the previous word, *bereishis*, by alluding to the obligation to answer amen after the *brachah*, as it is an acronym for אמן רם אמן. This allusion is a direct continuation to the previous one. Because as we know, the main point of the virtue and reward of amen is by answering it aloud (see *Tosafos Shabbos* 119b), but, because Chazal instruct (*Brachos* 45a) that one who answers amen should not raise his voice louder than the *mevarech*, therefore: only when the *mevarech* is strict about ברא – בקול רם בראשית – בקול רם אברך שם ה' תמיד רם אמן.

Shabbos Bereishis comes very closely after the Yamim Noraim, during which we gradually ascended. We repented with *teshuvah* and took upon ourselves good practices for the future. This is a wonderful opportunity for us to start from *bereishis*. Let us be strict about reciting each *brachah* out loud, and we will be blessed from the Source of all *brachos*, *amen v’amen.*

Good Shabbos

Yaakov Dov Marmurstein

### The 'Amen' Sealed the Din for Good

This remarkable story was recently sent by the person it happened to, a dear Yid who, after strengthening his observance of answering amen due to the activities of Bney Emunim, merited to see amazing *yeshuos* that one who is strict about answering amen receives. This is his story:

In recent years, I forged business ties with a certain person. At first, things went smoothly; I tried to be fair to him, and it seemed that he was doing the same to me. Naturally, as in every business partnership, every significant step in the business had to be implemented only after both sides agreed to it. Usually, neither one of us acted without an explicit agreement by both of us, but on one specific detail he decided to act unilaterally.

Although in my view, it was a mistake, and the risks were greater than the chances of success, he insisted that

As expected, at this point, our partnership unraveled, and I had no choice but to enter long, complex legal proceedings against the former partner. He demanded that we reach a compromise, but aside from the significant financial loss, I viewed it as an unfair effort at extortion. It was clear to me that I was right, and after consulting with *dayanim* and *morei hora'ah*, I hired a lawyer to help me get through the legal proceedings ahead.

The lawsuit dragged on for a few months. The primary claim of my former partner was based on the fact that although there had been no contract, I had signed on to that specific action, because he viewed various actions that I had taken as an expression of acquiescence. Ultimately, we reached a mediation process. The lawyer that I had hired thought I was right, but as someone who had seen many business cases in his life, he told me that it was never possible to know if indeed this position would be viewed the same way by others. The decision about seeing certain actions that I had done as an expression of agreement was up to the arbitrating judge, and it was likely that he would not let me off completely.

Because a significant sum of money was involved, I told myself that at this point, my *hishtadlus* was to take upon myself to be

stronger in a certain matter, and surely I would see success from Above in whatever I would do.

It was around then that you launched the Derech Emunah initiative to strengthen the recital of amen after *Birchos Hashachar* in shul. As a veteran reader of your brochure, and as someone who has merited through you to understand how great is the power of amen, as soon as I heard about this initiative, I decide that this would be the area that I would work on. From that day on, I decided to come to shul fifteen minutes before davening to answer amen to *Birchos Hashachar*.

I did this with the hope that it would help me merit the *yeshuah* that I so needed, but in fact, I enjoyed every moment. I enjoyed both being among the first ten people, and the fact

that I merited to answer amen after the *brachos* of many Yidden each morning, as they thanked Hashem time after time for their physical health and for being provided with everything needed in this world.

I felt that this practice put all my problems into the right perspective. On days that there were hearings, I had a lot of *kavanah* in the *brachah* of *Hagomel Chassadim Tovim l'Amo Yisrael*, and in the *brachah* that precedes it: "*Vesitneinu lechen ulechessed ulerachamim b'einecha ube'einei kol ro'einu.*" And then I was calm about the outcome.

To sum up that period, I can say that with *siyata diShmaya*, indeed, everything went my way, in a most unusual fashion. Already at the first stage, the judge leaned in my favor, and as the hearings proceeded, this leaning grew more pronounced. Within a short time, he ruled in my favor, and even rebuked the plaintiff: "How did you dare sue this person when there is no signed document about this issue?! Without a signed document you had no right to go into such a thing!"

"You should know that it is very rare that a judge takes such an extreme step," my lawyer said before we parted. "Today, the widespread approach gives credence to consent even without a signature, at least with regards to a certain compensation that will be given to the plaintiff." But I knew that it was all in the merit of amen.

With remarkable *Hashgachah pratis*, just as the trial ended, I came across your ad comparing answering amen to signing on a document. As a veteran reader of your pamphlet, I remembered that you already wrote about this a number of times. And suddenly, the understanding dawned on me that the entire trial judged the question of whether my signature was necessary to take a certain step in a business that I was partner to.

By me holding amen – the signature – in such importance, I signed the *brachos* of the *mispallelim*. Then, *middah kenegged middah*, from Above it was put in the mind of the judge the importance of the signature, as if telling me from Above that you are right, the "signature is important."



it was a brilliant business move. Indeed, initially, it looked like it was succeeding. But because I was very hesitant about it, I did not hurry to express my agreement. It quickly emerged that my fears had been justified. The 'brilliant' tactical move taken by my partner shattered on the rocks of reality and dragged the joint business into huge losses.

The partner asked me to share the burden of those losses, but I claimed, rightfully so, that our contract clearly stated that every step in the business had to be done with mutual agreement of both sides, which is what had happened until that point. It should have been the case with this move as well. Because I refused to sign my agreement, it was a unilateral move of his own and he had to carry the losses.

## Answering Amen in the Bais Hamikdash

Amen was not recited after the *brachos* said in the Mikdash and on Har Hayabis; rather, they answered ‘*Baruch Shem Kevod Malchuso l’olam va’ed.*’ Some say that this was only the practice with the *brachos* of the *Amidah*, and that after the rest of the *brachos*, they answered amen even in the Mikdash.

### Sources and Explanations

It says in *Maseches Taanis* (16b): “And how do we know that they did not answer amen in the Mikdash? As it says (*Nechemiah* 9:5): ‘*Kumu barchu es Hashem Elokeichem min ha’olam v’ad ha’olam – viyevarchu Shem Kevodecha umeromam al kol brachah usehillah.*’ In other words, at the time when we make *brachos* to Hashem in the Mikdash, the listeners did not answer amen, rather, they continue to bless His Shem Kavod. *Rashi* explains (ibid 15b ad loc. *ela*, and as the *Rashash* there explains) that even after the *brachos* said on Har Habyis, they answered ‘*Baruch Shem...*’ And the Rambam ruled (*Taanios* 4 15) likewise. According to *Rashi* (*Yoma* 69b ad loc. *V’yevarach*, and see also his commentary on *Taanis* ibid ad loc. *minayin*), this custom was a *takanah* of Ezra, and it was only practiced in the days of Bayis Sheini. But see *Tosafos Yesheinim* and *Chiddushei Haritva* for *Yoma* ibid, which dispute this.

The Minchas Elazar wrote that only those who stood in the place of the Mikdash answered “*Baruch Shem...*” after the *brachos*, but those standing further away, who heard the *brachah* that was said in the Mikdash or on Har Habayis, had to answer amen (*Divrei Torah*, Vol. V, 58).

According to the *Ra’avad* (cited in *Rashba*, *Brachos* 63a) this custom was only practiced with the *brachos* of the *tefillah* of the *Amidah*, but they said amen to the rest of the *brachos* said in the Mikdash. The proof is from the words of the *passuk* (*Nechemiah* 8:6), as it says regarding the gathering of the nation at the gates of the Bais Hamikdash: “And Ezra blessed Hashem Elokim...and the whole nation answered amen amen.” The *sefer Asarah Ma’amaros* (*Ma’amar Chikur Hadin*, Vol. V, Ch. 5) brought this in the name of the *Rivash*. But from *Rashi* in *Yoma* (ibid) it is proven that in his view, they answered “*Baruch Shem...*” even to the other *brachos* said in the Mikdash. This is also explained by the reasons cited henceforth for this practice by the Bartenura and the Maharsha.

Harav Ovadia miBartenura explained the reason they answered “*Baruch Shem*” in the Mikdash instead of amen (*Taanis* 2 5): “Because they mentioned the Shem Hameforash with the end of the *brachah*, *velo sagi be’aniyas amen.*” But the *Maharsha* (Vol. I, *Sotah* 40a) explains that in the Mikdash they did not answer amen, because they did not need to complete the *brachah* with amen. This is because the whole reason that they answered amen to the *brachos* was to join and combine the Name of Hava-yah to the Name of Adnus, as amen is numerically equivalent to these two Names of Hashem. But all this is needed for a *brachah* said outside the Mikdash, where a person is not allowed to utter the Shem Hameforash. But in the Mikdash, when they mentioned the Shem Hameforash in the *brachah*, they did not need to answer amen. They used the words “*Baruch Shem*” to praise the Shem Hameforash that was mentioned in the *brachah*.

## Answering Amen after *Brachos* that Are Followed by a *Tefillah*

One should especially pay attention not to forget to answer amen to *brachos* that are followed by a *tefillah* right after their conclusion. One example of this is the *brachah* of *Hamachazir Shechinaso LeTzion*, because in the haste to say *Modim D’Rabbanan* people might forget to answer amen.

### Sources and Explanations

In *sefer Derech Moshe* (Day 11), he warns specifically about two amens that many are lax about answering – unintentionally: The amen after the *brachah* of *Hamachazir Shechinaso LeTzion* – because the *tzibbur* is in a hurry to say *Modim D’Rabbanan*, and the amen after the *brachah* of *Hapores Suktas Shalom...V’Al Yerushalayim*, said on Friday night. This is because the *tzibbur* is in a hurry to say *Veshomru* right after it. The *sefer* relates that there was a *chassid* who asked to understand why the exile was taking so long, and after he fasted, it was revealed to him from Above in a dream: “How can the Geulah come when the world is not careful to answer amen to the *brachos* in which we ask for the Geulah – *Hamachazir Shechinaso LeTzion* and *Hapores Suktas Shalom...*” As such, the *Derech Moshe* wrote: “Therefore, I institute in all the communities, wherever I travel, that before they begin *Modim*, and before they say *Veshomru*, they should pause for a moment, and should even give a bang on the *amud*, so that the *tzibbur* will have a chance to answer amen properly.” *Sefer Hapanim* (47) added a caution about answering amen after the *brachah* of *Mechayeh Hameisim*, as many begin *Kedushah* right after that, and forget to answer. The *sefer Tzitzis Hakanaf* also warns (page 21) about answering amen after the last *brachah* of the *haftarah*, as people are then in a hurry to recite the *tefillah* of *Yekum Purkan*.

## Stop Between Amen and the *Tefillah* That Follows It

When answering amen after *brachos* that are followed by a *tefillah*, one must pause between the amen and the first word of the *tefillah* that follows. This is because the amen is said on the *brachah* and it is unrelated to the *tefillah* that follows the *brachah*.

### Sources and Explanations

Based on the *Pri Migadim* (*Orach Chaim Mishbetzos Zahav* 51 3, cited by the *Mishnah Berurah* 124 25) that when we answer amen after the *brachah* of *Hamachazir Shechinaso LeTzion*, one should not say “*Amen Modim Anachnu Lach.*” Rather, he should pause, in order to emphasize that the amen is said for the *brachah*, and does not belong to the *tefillah* of *Modim*. The *Chavas Yair* pointed out to have *kavanah* in the amens that are followed immediately by a *tefillah*, because people are so focused on saying the *tefillah* that there are those who say amen without *kavanah*, out of rote. He concluded “One who is *medakdek* in this must be careful and warn others about this” (*Mekor Chaim* 124 6).

## Otzros Emunim

### Answering Amen – The Foundation of Emunah

#### Amen Is a Declaration of *Emunah*

The meaning of answering amen is a declaration of absolute *emunah* in the Creator. In *Maseches Shabbos* (119b) the Gemara queries: “What is amen?” And then explains: The word amen is an acronym for ל-ק-מ-א-נ and *Rashi* explains (ibid ad loc. *K-l*) that one who answers amen testifies of his Creator that He is a *Kel Melech Ne’eman*. Indeed, the *Tosafos* (ibid ad loc. *Amar Rabi Chanina*) extrapolates from these words of the *Gemara* that when answering amen, one should have in mind that HaKadosh Baruch Hu is a *Kel Melech Ne’eman*.

When the *Shulchan Aruch* explains the simple meaning of the word amen, it emphasizes the declaration of *emunah* that amen contains, as it says (*Orach Chaim* 124 6): “And they should answer amen after every *brachah*, whether those that he was *yotzei* through *tefillah*, and those that he was not *yotzei*, and he should have the *kavanah* in his heart is: this *brachah* that the *mevarech* made is true, and I believe this.”

In this section, we will present insights from the *gedolei hadoros* about the depth of this declaration of *emunah* contained in answering amen.

#### Two Levels in Declaring *Emunah*

Rabi Yehuda ben Rabi Yakar explains that when answering amen to *brachos*, there are two levels of declaring *emunah*: the first level is answering amen to *birchos hoda’ah*, or to *birchos hanehenin*. The level above that is answering amen to *brachos* in which there are future good things mentioned that will come upon Am Yisrael, like the *brachah* of the *Geulah* or *Techiyas Hameisim*. However, even when answering amen to the *birchos hoda’ah* and *birchos hanehenin*, there is a meaning of *emunah* – that he really and truly believes the words of the *mevarech* that HaKadosh Baruch Hu is the One Who granted him all this good that he is thanking for. But the main emphasis of *emunah* is when one answers amen to *brachos* in which the *mevarech* declares things that were promised to us by HaKadosh Baruch Hu to happen in the future. These are *brachos* that a person cannot affirm through logic or proof; he can only believe them “and that is great *emunah*.”

*Chazal* say regarding amen said on the *brachos* relating to the principles of *emunah*, (*Shabbos* 119b) “Anyone who answers amen with all his might has the aates of Gan Eden opened to him.” For this reason, even the words of the *Gemara* that amen is an acronym for K-l Melech Ne’eman, were said close to this statement, to teach us that only amen that is said with the meaning of “Kel Melech Ne’eman” opens the Gates of Gan Eden for the *oneh*, the one who answers.

*Chazal* especially praised one who answers amen to these *brachos*, and says (*Midrash Tehillim* 31:10) “*Emunim notzer Hashem*” (*Tehillim* 31:24). This refers to Am Yisrael who say ‘*Baruch Mechayah Hameisim*,’ and with *emunah* answer amen – that they believe with all their might in HaKadosh Baruch Hu, Who is the *mechayah meisim* – even though that *techiyas hameisim* has not yet come. We say *Go’el Yisrael*, and they have not yet been redeemed; they say ‘*Baruch Boneh Yerushalayim*’ and it has not yet been built.

HaKadosh Baruch Hu said: Am Yisrael was only redeemed for an hour and they were once again enslaved, and they believe in Me that I am destined to redeem them, and that is “*Emunim notzer Hashem*” – they believe and answer amen, *notzer Hashem*. (*Peirush Hatefillos Vechabros*, Vol. II, p. 110).

## Iggeres Emunim

### A Letter from a Loyal Reader

Dear *Vechol Ma’aminim*,

Things that are renowned do not need proof; everyone knows about the *yeshuos* that people see in the merit of being strict about answering amen. But now, I experienced this myself and I wanted to share it with you.

I needed a certain *yeshuah* on a health matter. I decided to reinforce my answering of amen, especially with regard to amen for the *brachah* of *Asher Yatzar*. *Gedolim* have said that saying this *brachah* properly is a *segulah* for a *refuah*, and how much more so answering amen after it, because we know that “the one who answers is greater than the *mevarech*.”

*Bechasdei Hashem*, I saw a *yeshuah* after about two months, and this *yeshuah* was beyond the force of nature. I thought that it is not for naught that amen is numerically equivalent to 91 - טז, (to leave) to allude to us that when answering amen, the problem leaves the person and disappears.

With best wishes,  
**T.M.A., Beitar Illit**

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## Tzaddik B’Emunaso

### Amen and Brachos in the Teachings of One Who Has Yahrtzeit



The ohel on the kever of Harav Aharon of Zhitomir

#### Harav Aharon of Zhitomir, zy”a

26 Tishrei 5577

Rav Aharon was born in Lithuania to his father, Rav Mordechai. During the time when Harav Levi Yitzchak

of Berdichev lived in Zhelichov, Rav Aharon traveled to learn in his yeshivah. Later, he drew close to him and became one of his greatest *talmidim*.

In 5553, he was appointed *maggid* in the city of Lechovitz, and in 5557, after the passing of Rav Zev Wolf of Zhitomir, the Ohr Hameir, he was appointed to succeed him as Rav of Zhitomir.

Many flocked to him, among them the Bas Ayin. His Torah was written by his *talmid*, Rav Levi of Zhitomir, and printed in *sefer Toldos Aharon*.

He passed away on 26 Tishrei 5577, and he is buried in the Jewish cemetery in Zhitomir.

#### Ninety Amens Each Day

In his *sefer Toldos Aharon*, he often mentioned being strict to answer ninety amens each day. Following are some main points:

In *Parashas Shemini*, he pointed out the obligation to meet the quota of holy things that *Chazal* set for us to answer each day, and which are alluded to in the word ‘90] [ק”צ amens, 4 *Kedushos*, 10 *Kaddish* and 100 *brachos*]. He wrote: In our time, the main way through which a person can reach the level of *tzaddik*, is by being strict about this quota of holy things alluded to in the word ק”צ, which are 90 amens, 4 *Kedushos*, 10 *Kaddish* and 100 *brachos*. One who is careful about them opens the Gates of Heaven and his *tefillos* rise On High. The angels make a *Kesser*, a crown for HaKadosh Baruch Hu with them. “There are great *tzaddikim* who have

preparations before davening by special *yichudim* and combining Names of Hashem, but for people like us, who do not know this – the main thing is to be careful each day about ק”צ.” He was also *mechadesh* (*Parashas Shoftim*) that the quota of 90 amens determined by *Chazal* needs to be completed before davening: “Before davening one needs to answer amen ninety times, and with this **every person** can forge an opening for his *tefillah*.”

#### Birchas Hamazon D’Oraisa

He also expounded (ibid) on being very careful about *Birchas Hamazon*, to say it word for word, and to have the proper *kavanah*. He added that the *Maggid* of Mezeritsch cautioned “to have *kavanah* in *Birchas Hamazon* more than in *tefillah*, because *tefillah* is *d’Rabbanan* and *Birchas Hamazon* is *d’Oraisa*.”