

Ve chol Maaminim

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Peninei Emunim

Pearls of Tefillah in the Parashah

Tefillas Haderech En Route to Eretz Yisrael

"ויהי בנסעך ארץ ויאמר משה קומה ה' ויצאו איביך וינסו משנאיך מפניך" (י לה)

The **Baalei Hatosafos** wrote that Moshe's request for salvation from enemies and haters – "*Kumah Hashem veyafutzu... mipanecha*," which is said at the beginning of each *masa*, segment of traveling - as it says "*Vayehi binsoa ha'aron vayomer Moshe*" - was their *tefillas haderech*.

It is known that this *passuk*, and the subsequent one that details Moshe's *tefillah* at the end of each segment of travel: "*Uvenucho yomar shuvah Hashem rivevos alfei Yisrael*," are bracketed in the *Sefer Torah* with an upside down letter *nun*. *Chazal* explain (*Shabbos* 116a) that the reason for the separation of these *pesukim* from those before and after them, teaches us that they have special importance as a *sefer* in their own right.

In his *Chumash Rashi shiur* (*Vayeitzei* 5744), the **Shefa Chaim** explained that the Torah dedicated an entire *sefer* that is comprised only of the *tefillas* of Am Yisrael when they set out on their travels and when they arrived at their destination. This negates the thought that it is enough for a person to learn Torah and keep *mitzvos*, and that he does not have to invest in the *avodah* of *tefillah*. The Torah thus instructs that "there is no *koach kiyum*, there is no power to exist, without the *avodah* of *tefillah*." *Chazal* allude to this (*Yevamos* 109b) by saying: "Anyone who says he has nothing but Torah – does not even have Torah."

At another opportunity, the **Shefa Chaim** said on this subject: "If the *tefillah* is not the way it should be, and if one misses answering even one amen, then that is already a *meniah*, a preventive factor, to merit learning Torah."

Baalei Hatosafos al HaTorah; Shefa Chaim Drashos Chumash Rashi 5744 Parashas Vayetzei; Shefa Chaim Rava Deravin Vol. 1, Parashas Toldos Ma'amar 2:5

Pischu Shearim

Open the Gates

A word from the founder and Nasi of Bney Emunim

Completing Ninety Amens in *Birchos Hashachar*

Many ask me why we place such an emphasis on answering amen after *Birchos Hashachar*. Is there really such special importance specifically to answer amen after these *brachos*?

Bney Emunim was established in memory of and *l'iluy nishmas* my father, Rav Chaim Bentzion ben Rav Aharon Tzvi, *zt"l*, who until his final day was strict to answer amen after *Birchos Hashachar* after as many people as he could. Yet, there are many people who want to know what the source for this practice is.

In this segment, and in the ones that follow, we will address the source of this custom:

As is known, this custom was established by the **Bais Yosef** in *Shulchan Aruch* (*Orach Chaim* 6 4), and the **Magen Avraham** (*ibid* 9, cited in *Mishnah Berurah*, *ibid* 13) explains it in a few words: "It appears to me that they do this in order to answer ninety amens, as it says in *Zohar Chadash* (132 1) and in the *Teshuvos Menachem Azariah* (119), see there."

These words need explanation: Why is a special effort – answering amen after *Birchos Hashachar* – required in order to reach the quota of ninety amens a day? A simple calculation shows us that answering amen after the *brachos* of *tefillah* and in *Kaddish* will bring us to that number.

But upon further perusal of these sources, the *Teshuvos Menachem Azariah* that mentions the **Magen Avraham**, known today as the *Shu"t HaRema MiPano*, explains this clearly.

The early Sages explained the words of the *Zohar* (*ibid*) that the quota of holy words that a person must answer each day is alluded to in the word 90 – צ"ד"ק amens, 4 *kedushos*, 10 *Kaddish* and 100 *brachos*. Furthermore, if the amens that we answer to *Kaddish* are a separate quota – the 10 *Kaddish* – and are not included in the 90 amens, then we need

to generate those 90 amens specifically from answering amen to *brachos*. So in order to accumulate ninety amens to *brachos*, even if we add up all the amens that we say to *brachos*, most of them in *Chazaras Hashatz* of *Shacharis* and *Minchah*, we still only reach about half this quota. And that is exactly why – say the **Magen Avraham** and *Mishnah Berurah* – this practice of answering amen after *Birchos Hashachar* was instituted.

We find, therefore, that only someone who is careful to hear *Birchos Hashachar* from at least three people, in keeping with the practice noted in *Shulchan Aruch*, can meet the obligatory quota of 90 amens on *brachos*.

Here we need to take note of an important point. While the quota of 100 *brachos*, four *Kedushos* and 10 *Kaddish* can be achieved by someone who davens three times a day with *minyan*, as part of his routine, and without great effort, in order to accumulate 90 amens to *brachos*, a special effort needs to be made – to answer amen after *Birchos Hashachar*. Anyone who does not do this will simply not reach the number.

Think about it! A person can live his entire life in this world, and be scrupulous about davening three times a day, but if he is not careful to answer amen after his friends' *Birchos Hashachar*, he will not have even one day where he will be able to meet the quota of answering 90 amens to *brachos*, as *Chazal* instituted.

This is also alluded to in the *passuk* (*Yeshaya* 26:2): "*Pischu she'arim veyavo goy tzaddik shomer emunim*." If you want to reach the quota that is alluded to in the word צ"ד"ק, you need to put special emphasis on the weak link of these quotas, which is the 90 amens, and to be a "*shomer amenim*."

Good Shabbos

Yaakov Dov Marmurstein

The Address to Salvation Was in the Siddur

This story took place recently, and it is about a father of a large family living in Yerushalayim. Before Pesach he found himself in dire financial straits. Things reached a point that even before he began purchasing necessities for Pesach, not only did he run out of cash, he didn't even have any available credit.

At first he was able to drag things along with some loans, and getting some money from 'here and there.' But the moment he dreaded soon arrived: A few days before Pesach the house was empty, plain and simple. There was nowhere for him to obtain another penny.

Struggling to see the pain and despair on the faces of his family, this man left the house, at a loss. He walked the streets of Yerushalayim, and suddenly found himself at the entrance to the famous Zichron Moshe shul. It was exactly the time for *Minchah Gedolah*, and he decided to go into the shul and to daven with one of the first *minyanim*.



The Zichron Moshe shul in Yerushalayim

Until he began davening, he didn't realize what a tremendous load he was carrying in his heart, which had built up over a long time. He began to daven, and when he thought, as per the *halachah*, about the fact that he was "standing before the King," the dam of his tears finally burst. "Why did I go look for help here and there," the man thought to himself, "before I shared my worries with the King of the world, the Almighty, Who can do anything and everything?" He davened with yearning in his heart, and when it came to the point of being able to make personal requests, the words burst forth from his heart:

"Ribbono shel Olam," he wept "I cannot do anything without You! Throughout the year, I have tried everything I could to obtain bread for my family, and I was barely able to. Now, Pesach is approaching, the expenses are so much higher; I am so humiliated and have no idea where I can turn. There is no bread to eat at home, who can think about *matzos* and wine and the many things that we need to fulfill Your *mitzvos*!?"

"Please, Ribbono shel Olam, You have the power, and there is nothing You cannot do, whether it is great or small. I know how little I am worth, and all I ask is for my family, my wife and my young children who are asking for what they need, but I have nothing."

For a long while, he poured his heart out; the *minyan* he had begun to daven with had long finished, and other *minyanim* that began after him had also finished already, but he paid no attention to everything going on around him. He was entirely focused on his pure *tefillah*.

As the *passuk* says "*Karov Hashem lenishberei lev, v'es dachei ruach yoshia, Hashem is near to the broken-hearted, and He saves those of crushed spirit*" (*Tehillim* 34:19), and his *tefillah* rose on high straight to the Kisei HaKavod and was accepted with compassion. The *yeshuah* was not long in coming.

As he was standing and davening, a wealthy American Yid entered the *shtiebel* where he was. He had come to Eretz Yisrael with his family for Pesach. The man had just landed, and he was in a very good mood, thrilled at the *zechus* of being able to make Pesach near the holiest place in the world. The sight of the Yerushalmi Yid weeping his heart out touched him deeply.

"This man must need help," the wealthy man concluded the obvious, and decided to wait for him to finish davening so he could ask what the problem was and try to offer his assistance.

A few moments later, the first man finished his long *tefillah* and took three steps back. He had not noticed

the American Jew waiting behind him and observing him with interest. The minute he turned to leave, the American stood up, shook his hand with a warm "*shalom aleichem*" and then asked quietly if there was something he could do to help.

The Yerushalmi was stunned by this "*malach*" that had been sent to him from Above, and he shared with the stranger everything that was on his heart and the dire straits he was in. The wealthy man heard, and was very moved. He took a piece of paper out of his pocket and wrote down his name the address where he was staying. He gave it to the Yerushalmi man and invited him to meet him that night at his home.

Early that evening, the Yerushalmi Yid knocked at the wealthy man's door. The American welcomed him warmly, asked about his life and his family and then asked: "How much money do you need to make Yom Tov comfortably?" His guest thought for a moment, and then said, "I think three thousand dollars will be enough."

Without another word, the man took out his wallet, counted out three thousand dollars, and gave it to the stunned guest, who could barely utter a coherent thank you before he left.

When he arrived home with the cash in his hand, he told his wife about the miracle that had happened, and her face lit up. Aside for the financial benefit, there was a sign from Above that proved to them that HaKadosh Baruch Hu had never left them, *chalilah*. When the right moment came, their situation turned around for the better in no time.

A few days later, someone who had heard this story asked the Yerushalmi man if he had kept the name and number of the wealthy man, so that perhaps he could ask for his help in the future as well. And the answer was very surprising: "The address of that Yid is written in the Siddur," he said with confidence. "I am not the one who looked for him. He was sent to me from Shamayim, and if *chalilah*, I'll be in need again, I'll daven to Hashem again, and He will make sure to direct me to the help I need."

The Halachos of Amen Ketufah

Missing One of the Letters

1. One must be careful to enunciate the word amen completely, without swallowing the nun at the end of the word, or any of the other letters. Amen that is said with one of its letters unintelligible is called an ‘amen ketufah,’ and Chazal forbade one from answering it.

Sources and Explanations

Rashi (Brachos 47a ad loc. Ketufah) explains that an amen ketufah means: “That he misses reading the nun, and does not utter it that it is recognized.” The Aruch Hashulchan (Orach Chaim 124 8) agreed. But Rabbeinu Yona (Brachos 34b Midapei HaRif) explained that an amen ketufah is: “That he does not pronounce all the letters,” and the Bach wrote (Orach Chaim ibid) that Rashi concurs with this. And Rashi did not write that “he misses reading the nun,” but it is common to miss the nun at the end of the word, and his words are cited in Biur Halachah (ibid ad loc. Krias). See also Ohr Zarua (Vol. I, 193) that maintains that it is as stated in the Yerushalmi (Brachos 8 8): “Amen ketufah – that he only said a mem and nun.”

Dividing the Word Into Two

2. The definition of amen ketufah also includes one who stops in the middle of answering amen in a way that the word appears to but cut in two.

Sources and Explanations

Sefer Ha’aruch (Amen) explained that an amen ketufah is when “he splits the amen into two,” which means that the

oneh paused in the middle and thus divided the word into two, like a – men, or am- en. This is cited l’halachah in the Rema ibid.

The Punishment of One Who says an Amen Ketufah or Chatufah

3. Chazal say (Brachos ibid) that “anyone who answers an amen chatufah will have his days snatched away; ketufah – his days will be plucked off [yiskatfu].”

Sources and Explanations

Sefer Birchas Rosh (Brachos ibid) explains that the difference between these punishments is as follows: “Yiskatfu yamav” means that he will die before his time, and it is what Chazal refer to (Chaggigah 28a) as “kareis deshani” [kareis of years.] While “yischatfu yamav” means that he will die at his time, but in a sudden death, and it is what Chazal refer to (ibid) as “kareis deyomi” [kareis of days]. And he notes that this seems the case from the words of the Rosh (Brachos 7 17) who said: “Chatufah – yischatfu yamav; ketufah – yiskatfu shenosav.” But the Yerushalmi (Brachos 8 8) maintains: “Chatufah – yischatfu shenosav; ketufah – tikatefnishmaso.” So it appears that for an amen ketufah one is punished in Olam Haba – the Olam Haneshamos. And see sefer Bikkurei Aryeh on the Agaddos of the Yerushalmi ibid.

Sefer Notrei Amen (Vol. II p. 320) cited the Derech Emunah who used to say that at a time when, R”l, there were many troubles, and young people were taken from this world, it is important to strengthen especially those things that the Gemara explicitly says cause these type of punishments, including answering amen l’halachah.

Ro’ei Emunim

From the Words of Our Gedolim on Answering Amen

Harav Yaakov Sofer
Son of the Imrei Sofer of Erloy, zt”l and Rav of the Erloyer Community in Beitar

I would like to share in writing a few practices from my father, the Rebbe, zt”l, regarding saying brachos and answering amen to them:

The Rebbe would caution about the obligation for each person to be in *bais medrash* at the beginning of the davening, so he should not miss out on answering amen. And there were two practices that he instituted in his *bais medrash* for answering amen: 1. They should say *Birchos Hashachar* after *Seder Korbanos* before davening began, so that even someone who was a bit late, and came only at the end of *korbanos*, would not miss out on answering amen to *Birchos Hashachar*. 2. Each day at *Shacharis*, at least two people said *Birchos Hashachar* aloud, so that the *tzibbur* should not lose out on the merit of answering amen after *Birchos Hashachar* from the one who said the

brachos.

Sometimes, the Rebbe would instruct more people to recite *Birchos Hashachar* aloud, because the *Zohar* (*Tikkunei Zohar Chadash* 83 1) speaks about the great virtue of answering 90 amens each day, and by making a lot of *brachos* aloud, it is easy to reach this number. He would point out that the reward for answering amen is very great, as Chazal say (*Shabbos* 139 2): “Anyone who answers amen with all his strength has the gates of Gan Eden opened for him,” as it says (*Yeshaya* 26:2): “*Pischu she’arim veyavo goy tzaddik shomer emunim*,” do not read it “*shomer emunim*,” but rather “*she’omrim amen*.” He also said that the word amen is an acronym for אמי מוסר נפשי.

Likewise, he was very strict that there should be someone to answer amen to his *brachos*. Even when he arose to learn

when it was still dark, and no

one was present, he would call his son in America to answer amen after his *brachos*. He said in the name of *tzaddikim* who explained the *passuk* (*Iyov* 23:13): “*Vehu b’echad umi yeshivenu venafsho ivsah vaya’as*,” as follows: “*vehu b’echad*” – when a person makes a *brachah* when he is alone, “*umi yeshivenu*” – and there is no one to answer amen after him, so if “*venafsho ivsah*” – if he wants very much that his *brachah* should be completed with amen, then “*vay’as*” HaKadosh Baruch Hu creates an angel to answer amen to his *brachah*. (See *Bigdei Yesha* 167:33 who brought this in the name of the Arizal.)



Otzros Emunim

Making Hishtadlus to Answer Amen

The *Zohar Hakadosh* (*Vayeilech* 285 1) asks about the *passuk* (*Yeshaya* 26:2) “*Pischu she’arim vayavo goy tzaddik shomer emunim*”: What is the meaning of the word “*shomer*”? And answers: “that the *brachah* that the *mevarech* recites watches over it and waits for him to answer after it amen properly.” In chapters about *tefillah* at the beginning of the *Nehora Hashalem* commentary on the Siddur (Chapter 15), after the author cites these words of the *Zohar*, he writes: “From this *ma’amar*, the heart of a person should be enthused to try and make the effort to hear the *brachah* from the *mevarech*, so that he can answer amen after it, and give *nachas ruach* to the Borei Yisbarach Shemo.”

In this chapter, we will bring insights from the *seforim* of the *gedolim* that urge a person to make every effort to merit the mitzvah of answering amen:

Run to Answer Amen

In his *sefer Chessed L’Alafim* (56 1) the author of the Pele Yoetz urges that it is fitting for a person to make every effort to merit the mitzvah of answering amen, and he wrote: “It is fitting for each person to try and run and wait for answering amen, and *halevai* that people should try to answer amen the way they try to earn a profit of a few pennies. This is referred to in the *passuk* (*Mishlei* 2:4-5): ‘If you seek it like money and search for it like a treasure, then you will understand *viras Hashem*.’”

The Great Shame on the Day of Reckoning

Rav Yaakov Katina, the *dayan* of Chusht, wrote in his *sefer Rachamei Av* (56) that because answering amen is an easy mitzvah that does not require from a person any particular effort, there is a special obligation for a person to fulfill it. *L’asid lavo*, a person will have some type of defense as to why he did not do the *mitzvos* that require effort or money to fulfill. However, regarding the mitzvah of amen: “What will a person answer on the day of reckoning when he is asked: ‘Why didn’t you answer amen – what work does it take?!’” And he concludes: The *passuk* (*Tehillim* 83:17) alludes to the great shame that this person will have in Olam Haba, “מלא פניהם קלון” – the final letters are an acronym for “amen.”

Razei Emunim

Pearls of Amen in the Parashah

Answering Amen Voluntarily Protects from Enemies

וְכִי תִבְאוּ מִלְחָמָה בְּאֶרְצְכֶם עַל הַצָּר הַצָּרֵר אִתְּכֶם וְהִרְעַתֶּם בְּחִצְצֹרֶת וּנְזַרְתֶּם לְפָנָיו ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וּנְשַׁעְתֶּם מֵאֵיבֵיכֶם (י' ט)

Even today, when we do not blow the *chatzotzros* (see *Magen Avraham* beginning of 576; *Shu"t Igros Moshe Orach Chaim* Vol. I, 169) we have a wonderful mitzvah that is *mesugal* to bring about the fulfillment of “and you will be saved from your enemies.” That is the mitzvah of answering amen:

Chazal explain (*Tanna Devei Eliyahu Rabbah* 10) on the *passuk* (*Shoftim* 5:2): “*Bifroa pera'os b'Yisrael behisnadev am barchu Hashem*” – Through whom does Hashem take revenge on behalf of Klal Yisrael from the nations of the world? Through people who go to the shul and the *beis medrash* in the morning and evening and answer amen...”

Thus, **Harav Chaim Katz**, the grandson of the Sem"i, explained the *passuk* in *Tehillim* (12:2): “*Hoshiah Hashem ki gamar chassid ki pasu emunim mibnei adam*” – send us salvation Hashem, even though “*ki gamar chassid ki pasu emunim*” – we do not have among us people who are careful and value the matter of amen, in whose merit we were promised to be spared from our enemies.

Harav Moshe Yechiel of Ozherov added that when we delve further into the words of *Chazal*, we see that the primary protection of amen comes about when it is answered for a *brachah* that one was not obligated to hear, like those “people who go morning and evening to the *beis medrash*” in order to answer amen after people making *brachos*. As the *passuk* says – “*behisnadev am barchu Hashem*” – when a person volunteers to bless Hashem with amen, even when he is not obligated to do so.

;Eretz Hachaim [Rav C. Katz] *Tehillim* 12:1
Be'er Moshe, *Shoftim* p. 165

Shaarei Gan Eden

Amen and Brachos in the Teachings of a Baal Hayahrtzeit



The ohel on the kever of the Bais Aharon

The Bais Aharon

17 Sivan 5632

Harav Aharon Perlow of Karlin-Stolin was born in 5562 to his father, Harav Asher of Stolin, the son of Harav Aharon Hagadol of Karlin. In 5587, after the passing of his father, he succeeded him. At first, he conducted his court in the city

of Karlin, and in his later years, moved to the nearby town of Stolin.

He was very great in Torah and a leader who was revered by thousands of *chassidim*. His influence spread far and wide, and masses streamed to bask in his presence and to observe his fiery *tefillos*. After Shavuot of 5632, the Rebbe set out to participate in the wedding of his granddaughter, and on Motzaei Shabbos *Beha'alo secha*, on 17 Sivan of that year, he passed way, while still on his travels. He was laid to rest in the town of Malinov in Ukraine.

Bais Aharon Barchu Es Hashem

At the beginning of *Sefer Bais Aharon*, there are a few versions of the *Seder Hayom* that the Bais Aharon wrote, and he noted three times the obligation to try and answer amen:

1. A person must be careful to answer all amens, to hear the words of the *brachah* as it says (*Yeshaya* 26:2) “*shomer emunim*.” And in my opinion, it is appropriate for a person to try to seek out answering amen, by hearing the words of the *brachos* that are obligatory each day, because they are the “heroes that triumph.” [*Chazal* compare (*Brachos* 53b) the *brachos* to simple soldier sent to begin the war, and answering amen to the heroes that win the war.]

2. I agree that each person should hear from a friend every *brachah* that needs to be said in order to answer amen. Because the Arizal wrote that he would hear *Brichos Hashachar* even from one hundred people, even though he could have been *meyached* all the *olamos* in one moment, yet, he did not think of his own time, and was not lazy to hear even one hundred times “*Hanosein lasechvi binah*” and all the *brachos*.

3. One should make the effort to answer amen on all the *brachos*, *Birchos Hashachar*, the *brachos* of *Shemoneh Esreh* and all the *brachos*.