

VeChol Maaminim

A Weekly Pamphlet From "Bney Emunim"

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ת.ד 102 בני ברק
פקס : 03-5055919
9139191@gmail.com

Peninei Emunim

Pearls of Tefillah in the Parashah

Only Yehoshua Needed Tefillah

"ויקרא משה להושע בן נון יהושע" (יג טז)

Rashi quotes Chazal (Sotah 34b) that when Moshe changed Hoshea's name to Yehoshua, he meant to daven for him: "K-h yoshiacha mei'atzas hameraglim," Hashem should spare you from the plans of the spies." Why, of all the *meraglim*, did Moshe daven only for Yehoshua?

Harav Ytizchak of Vorka explained:

Moshe davened only for Yehoshua because he saw that of all the *meraglim*, only he prayed before departing that he should not fail in his mission. And as is alluded in his original name, "Hoshea," he asked Hashem to spare him – to be *moshia* him that he should not stumble in his mission. In contrast, the other *meraglim* who did not offer a *tefillah* for themselves, could not be helped by Moshe's *tefillah*. The Vorka Rebbe concluded with a piercing lesson: From here we can learn that the *tzaddik* can help only someone who makes the effort and takes action to go in the right path, and not someone who sits idly and relies on his Rebbe to do the job for him...

The renowned *chassid*, Harav Aharon Walden, author of *Shem Hagedolim Hachadash*, added that it is possible that this is why the *Targum Yonasan* explains this *passuk* to mean: Because he [Moshe] saw his [Yehoshua's] humility, that he did not rely on his piety and prayed not to

stumble in his mission, that is why [Moshe] also prayed for him.

Ohel Yitzchak, Hashmatos [Deletions] 19

There Is No 'Eidah Ra'ah' in Am Yisrael

"עד מתי לעדה הרעה הזאת אשר המה מולינים עלי את לתנות בני ישראל אשר המה מולינים עלי שמעתי" (יד כז)

From this *passuk*, Chazal learn (*Megillah* 23b, cited in *Rashi*) that the 'Eidah' that is needed to recite holy words is no less than ten. Because twelve *meraglim* were sent to scout the Land, and of them, two did not sin, so we learn that the words of the *passuk* "la'eidah hara'ah hazos" refer to the ten remaining *meraglim*.

Harav Menachem Mendel of Riminov said that the fact that the Torah chose to teach us that ten people are considered an *eidah* specifically from the *passuk* "Ad masai la'eidah hara'ah," proved that the sin of the *meraglim* was "the most minute of the minutes, and only because of their greatness and lofty status was their mistake considered a great sin."

Harav Moshe Feinstein explained that the *passuk* wants to teach us that for saying words of *kedushah*, even an 'eidah ra'ah' is enough, meaning even a *minyán* of people who are not ideally kosher. That is because deep in the heart of each one in Klal Yisrael is a concealed a hidden point of *kedusah*, and from the power of this point, Hashem can bestow His Shechinah upon them.

Agra D'Pirka 33; Succas Dovid, 93

Pischu Shearim

Open the Gates

A word from the founder and Nasi of Bney Emunim

Ninety Amens Before Davening

In the last segment we began a discussion about the sources of the *minhag Yisrael* to recite *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa*, one to the other, each morning. We cited the explanation of the *Magen Avraham (Orach Chaim 6 9)* that this practice was established so that through it, each person can accumulate ninety amens each day to *brachos*, aside for the amens that are answered after *Kaddish*, which cannot be included in this quota.

Some teach another reason for this *minhag*, from the *Zohar (Tikkunei Zohar Hachadash 84 1)* that contains a beautiful *chiddush*: In contrast to the obligation of *Meah Brachos*, which is spread throughout the day, the quota of ninety amens has to be completed immediately at the start of the day, even before *Shemoneh Esreh*. This explains another facet in the fundamental importance of the *minhag* of hearing *Birchos Hashachar* from a few *mispallelim* before davening, because this is the only chance to accumulate ninety amens right in the morning (*Hagahos Bnei Abba* on the *sefer Pesora D'Abba, Inyan Birchos Hashachar 6*).

This can be emphasized according to what is explained in the holy *Zohar* in *Parashas Vayeilech* (285 2), that when Am Yisrael are careful to answer amen in a fitting way, then when they daven to Hashem about their troubles, the Voice announces in all the *Olamos*: "Pischu she'arim veyavo goy tzaddik shomer emunim" (*Yeshaya 26:2*) and they explain: "Do not read it 'emunim' but rather 'amenim.' " "Pischu she'arim" – just like Am Yisrael have opened the gates of *brachos*, so, too, the gates of *tefillah* are opened for them and their *tefillos* are accepted.

So we can say that if the Navi Yeshaya announces that the gates of *tefillah* are opened to the one who answers amen, then there is no more appropriate preparation for *tefillah* than to engage in answering amen. And we have another reason to make the effort to come to shul ten minutes before davening starts, so that we can answer amen to several *mispallelim*. There is no doubt that the merit of answering so many amens in general, and upholding the *takanah* of reciting ninety amens with all the *halachos* in particular, will open the Gates of Heaven to have our *tefillos* accepted with compassion.

Good Shabbos

Yaakov Dov Marmurstein

Baruch Hameichin Mitzadei Gaver

This story was recently sent in by one of our loyal readers, a Yid who, like many others, has begun to adhere to the mitzvah of answering amen and reciting *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa*, which was a catalyst for tremendous *siyata diShmaya*. This is his story:

I live in Bnei Brak and I have a business in the food industry that operates in Yerushalayim. Due to a certain problem in the management of the business, I was summoned for questioning to the tax authority offices in Yerushalayim. The summons was for nine thirty in the morning, so I planned to leave for Yerushalayim right after davening in my regular *minyan* that I attend each morning, which begins at seven. This is the place to note that *bechasdei Hashem*, I was able to strengthen in recent years my observance of answering amen properly, and due to that, I took upon myself to come to shul each morning about fifteen minutes before davening, so that I could



Traffic on the highway up to Yerushalayim

begin the *tefillah* by answering amen to the *Birchos Hashachar* of a few people, and to merit that my *brachos* should be said with *hiddur* in front of someone who would answer amen.

I planned to leave right after davening, and I knew that at those hours there is heavy traffic and it takes a longer time to get to Yerushalayim. I could not allow myself to be late to such a crucial meeting. So the night before, I prepared all the paperwork I would need, so that I wouldn't be delayed, and even went to bed earlier than usual, with a prayer on my lips that the meeting should work out well and that I should have no trouble from it.

In the morning, I awoke early, as I usually do, but regretfully, that morning, for reasons out of my control, I was delayed at home for a short time, and only got to shul a few minutes before davening began. When I entered, I was not surprised, but was definitely disappointed to find that my regular *chavrusos* were already after *Birchos Hashachar*.

Now I faced a test: Should I forfeit my habit and start davening without hearing *Birchos Hashachar* and answering amen to them, so that I shouldn't be late to my meeting? Or should I wait for the next *minyan*, scheduled to start at seven thirty, and this way I'd be able to uphold my *kabbalah* on this day as well?

I deliberated for a few moments, and then recovered as I was suddenly struck by the realization: My whole deliberation was the fear that I would be late to my meeting at the Tax Authority. Was it conceivable that because of my respect for a human, I would refrain from fulfilling my obligation to answer amen – and *Kavod Shamayim* would not be as important as the respect for humans?!

I decided to wait for the next *minyan* so that I could fulfill my practice of saying *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa*, as I usually did.

The first of the *mispallelim* at the second *minyan* recognized me, and knew of my practice, and they were happy to recite their *brachos* for me. So I merited on this day, as well, to arm myself with dozens of amens before I stood *Shemoneh Esreh* in front of the King of kings.

At eight thirty, after davening, I got into my car to set out. I wasn't afraid of being late, because I was sure that I did Hashem's Will, and I would not lose out from doing the right thing.

But as I started the car, in a hurry to be on my way, the phone in my pocket began to vibrate and ring. I was surprised to hear the voice of the tax official who I was supposed to meet that morning. He apologized profusely and told me that unfortunately, he would not be able to meet me that

day. "You are probably on your way to Yerushalayim already," he said sympathetically, "but just this minute I found out that I won't be able to be at work this morning. I'm sorry for putting you out for no reason..."

"Don't worry," I reassured him with relief. "It's true that I should have been on my way already, but with *Hashgachah pratis* I was delayed. You got me the minute I was planning to leave." He was happy I hadn't made the trip for nothing, and we set up a new time for the meeting. This time, I felt at ease to set up the meeting for a day and a time that I had to be in Yerushalayim anyway, and we hung up on friendly terms...

On the way home I thought to myself that if I would have heeded the advice of my *yetzer hara*, and canceled my practice 'just today,' then I would have gotten the message about the cancellation after I was long on my way, and I would have lost precious hours of time sitting in traffic. It was clear that the delay because of answering amen is what spared me that aggravation.

If that was not enough, the next day, I merited to see another positive outcome of this story:

The next morning, when I arrived early to shul, as I usually did, I saw that one of the regular *mispallelim* who I daven with every day, who evades answering amen to me each morning with the claim that he is used to making the *brachos* at home, was standing in the line with the rest of my 'chavrusos.' As he waited, this man answered amen to all those making the *brachos*, and when his turn came, he said the *brachos* for me with special fervor.

After davening, when I gently expressed my surprise at the change, he answered: "When I saw your dedication yesterday to this mitzvah, and that even though you came on time to davening, you waited for the next *minyan* so as not to miss out on your holy practice, I couldn't help but be ashamed that I allow myself to miss out on this, not one day, but every day...I realized suddenly how important this *minhag* is to you and I decided to join you..."

— If the Mevarech Begins Another Brachah —

Brachos that the Tzibbur Is Obligated to Hear

From the time the *sha"tz* begins saying a different brachah, such as he begins “Atah Gibor” after “Magen Avraham,” one should no longer answer amen to the previous brachah, even if the time of “kedei dibur” has not yet passed since it ended. But some hold that if the *sha"tz* was wrong by quickly starting another brachah without giving the tzibbur time to answer amen to his first brachah, that does not absolve the tzibbur from the obligation to answer amen.

• Sources and Explanations •

The *Birchei Yosef* (*Orach Chaim* 124 9) cited Harav Yaakov Molcho that after the *sha"tz* begins a new brachah, one should not answer amen to the previous

brachah, because its time has passed, and it is like answering amen without a brachah. The *Mishnah Berurah* (124 37) concurs, and in *Biur Halachah* (ibid 11) he brought that this was also the view of the *Magen Gibbor*. In *Sefer Kesher Godel* (9:29) the Chida added that the *sha"tz* is liable for the nullification of this amen.

But the *Birchei Yosef* himself noted that according to *Halachos Ketanos* (Vol. I, 55) who differs and holds that as long as the tzibbur does not answer amen, the brachah has not ended, and the *sha"tz* who is in a hurry does not have the power to start another brachah, and to lose out on the amen from the tzibbur. See *Toras Chaim* (ibid 12) who justified this. The *Halachos Ketanos* also added another *sevara* that one must answer amen after the brachah of “Magen Avraham” even if “Atah Gibor” has begun, because the first three brachos in the *Amidah* are considered like one brachah (*Rosh Brachos* 7:23), and therefore, even after the *sha"tz* begins “Atah Gibor” the *Birchas Ha'avos* has still not ended.

Ro'ei Emunim

From the Words of Our Gedolim on Answering Amen

Chazal's words (*Brachos* 53b) that “*gadol ha'onehyoser me'hamevarech*” are well known. But the question is obvious: What greatness of the *oneh* is *Chazal* referring to?

The *Gemara* in *Shabbos* (119b) says that the meaning of amen is “*K-l Melech Ne'eman*” and in the simple meaning of the words is that the one who answers amen affirms and fulfills the words that the *mevarech* said. But it seems that we can further explain that while saying the brachah is a momentary expression of *emunah*, because the one who says the brachah lives it only in that moment that he is praising Hashem, the one who answers amen connects to the *metzius* of *emunah*, which is everlasting, and by doing so, he is also considered to be fulfilling the brachah, meaning he gives it eternal fulfillment of “*K-l Melech Ne'eman*.” That is the greatness of one who answers amen over the *mevarech*.

The meaning of answering amen “*bechol kocho*” on which *Chazal* conditioned the opening of the gates of Gan Eden, is also explained in this way. Because *Chazal's* words (*Shabbos* 119b) that “anyone who answers amen with all his might has the gates of Gan Eden opened for him” and *Rashi* explains (ibid ad loc. *Kol*) that “*bechol kocho*” means “with all his *kavanah*,” means that

the *oneh* has to answer amen “with all his *kavanah*”, meaning with the *kavanah* of everlasting *emunah* that is explained in the words “*K-l Melech ne'eman*.”

A person who merits to live with *emunah* lives in Gan Eden even in this world, plain and simple. Because when a person affirms a brachah with amen, he is establishing the foundation of the whole Torah, which is *emunah*. And as *Chazal* say (*Makkos* 24a), Chavakuk established all the *mitzvos* of Torah on the basis of *emunah*. One who merits a part of all the Torah “lives” in Gan Eden already in this world. That is the meaning of the promise of “the Gates of Gan Eden are opened to him.”

The holy *Zohar* (see *Tikkunei Zohar Chadash* 133 1) says that the words of the *passuk* “*tzaddik b'emunaso*” refers to the 90] צדיק” amens. This means that by being strict about reciting ninety amens, a person becomes the *metzius* of צדיק, and his life becomes one of *emunah* that is continuous and eternal.

So we find that amen is not only a moment of *emunah*, but rather an expression of an entire life of *emunah*. And when one's entire daily life becomes a life of *emunah*, that is the foundation of the entire Torah.

Opening the gates of Gan Eden to one who answers amen with all his strength is derived by *Chazal* from the *passuk*

Harav Dovid Cohen, shlita

Rosh Yeshivas Chevron



(*Yeshaya* 26 : 2) :
“*Pis chu she'arim veyavo goy tzaddik*

shomer emunim.” – “Do not read it *shomer emunim*, but rather *she'omrim amen*.” The *Maharsha* (Vol. I ibid) explains that the intention of *Chazal* is not to differ from the simple meaning of the words, but rather that the *passuk* should be read as it is written שמר אמנים and to explain the word שמר as waiting (see *Rashi Yeshaya* ibid), because whenever a person hears a brachah, he has to wait and see which brachah it is so that he can answer amen *k'halachah*. The *avodah* of a person is not only to say the amen that he happens to hear, but to look out for it, to listen to each brachah and to make sure that he doesn't lose out on a single amen. To seek out those who make brachos, to hear them and make sure to answer amen after them.

Our generation has merited to have Bney Emunim, which aside for urging Klal Yisrael to be *shomrei emunim*, has also imbued us with forgotten concepts of “*tzaddik be'emunaso yichyeh*.” If we take heart to follow this path, to answer amen with all one's strength, with all one's *kavanah*, then surely we will merit a life of *emunah*, which is the basis of the entire Torah.

Otzros Emunim

Making Hishtadlus to Answer Amen

Strictness for One Who Doesn't Answer Amen

On Shavuot night 5761, Rav Moshe Horowitz, a prominent *masmid* and distinguished member of Kollel Chazon Ish passed away. After his passing, he appeared in a dream to his longtime *chavrusa* in the *kollel*, and revealed that in Shamayim, there is great *hakpadah*, strictness, against those who are lax about answering amen.

This story was related by Rebbetzin Kanievsky, *a"h*, in the words of *chizuk* she recorded for a Bney Emunim gathering some two weeks before her passing. The Rebbetzin noted that this *avreich* who learned with Rav Horowitz told her the story, and she shared the remarkable outcome of it. She said:

"When I heard this story, I was very frightened and moved. I said to myself that it is impossible that we should hear such things, a message delivered from Shamayim, and we should just continue our day as usual. Because as long as we live in this world, we can and must do something to strengthen our answering of amen. I used to daven each morning in the *ezras nashim* of the Lederman shul, together with about fifty other women, and we decided from that point on to come earlier so that each one would recite *Birchos Hashachar* at her turn, and then we would merit to answer amen to several hundred *brachos* each day.

In addition, before I go to daven, I hear *Birchos Hashachar* from my husband, and I answer amen after him, and then I say *Birchos Hashachar* for him, and he answers amen.

One day, I told one of my grandchildren, who is also a grandson of Harav Steinman, the story of Rav Horowitz appearing in a dream, and the *kabbalah* we took upon ourselves as a result. He told it to his grandfather, and Harav Steinman was very moved, and decided that in the *minyán* in his home, the *mispallelim* would also come early from then on and recite *Birchos Hashachar* aloud, so that they could generate the merit of amen."

Iggeres Emunim

A Letter from a Loyal Reader

To Rav Yaakov Dov Marmurstein, *shlita*, carrier of the banner of amen in our generation!

Thank you very much for your diligent and dedicated efforts to constantly keep the flame of answering amen burning, and illuminating it for us all, while clarifying the great virtue of answering amen, in such a fine way and with *siyata diShmaya*, so much success.

I saw that you brought a beautiful *vort* in the name of the Divrei Chaim on the *passuk* (*Devarim* 11:27) that "*es habrachah asher tishme'u el mitzvas Hashem Elokeichem.*" He said, "the *brachah*" should be recited "so that it should be heard" – in a way that people should hear and answer amen. And one should not be lax about this because it is counted among the "*mitzvos Hashem Elokeichem.*"

I thought in light of this that we can say we also see an allusion to this in the *passuk* that begins the second *parashah* of *Krias Shema* (*ibid* 13): "*Vehayah im shamoa tishme'u el mitzvosai asher Anochi metzaveh eschem hayom...*" We wonder why the *passuk* refers to hearing and not doing, as it is fitting to write about the fulfillment of *mitzvos*, and as it says (*ibid* 15:40): "*Lema'an tizkeru v'asisem es kol mitzvosai...*"?

Based on this we can say that there is an allusion here to answering amen that is dependent on hearing the *brachos*, which is also alluded to by the acronym of the words "אָנְכִי מְצוּהָ" – which is amen.

Thank you once again for all your work,
Binyamin Scheinberg
Brooklyn, NY

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



The matzeivah on the kever of Rav Yehuda Assad in Szerdahely.

Harav Yehuda Assad

23 Sivan 5626

Harav Yehuda Assad was born in 5557 to his father, Reb Yisrael, in the town of Assad [Aszod] Hungary, for which he was later named. In his youth, he traveled to Suditch where he learned from the brothers Rav Yehuda Falk Bichler and Rav Aharon Suditch. Later, he began to learn in the

yeshivah gedolah of Harav Mordechai Banet in Nikolsburg.

At first, he served as Rav in Rete, from where he moved to be Rav in Szemnitz, where he served for twenty-one years, and also led the *yeshivah gedolah* there. He became known as one of the great sages of Hungary, and people sent him questions in *halachah* from all over Europe.

In 5613, he was appointed Rav in Szerdahely, to where he moved his *yeshivah*. In his final years, he became very weak and on 23 Sivan 5623, he passed away, and was buried in the Jewish cemetery in Szerdahely.

His works include *Shu"t Mahar"i* – *Yehuda Ya'aleh*; *Chiddushei Mahar"i al HaShas*; *Divrei Mahar"i al HaTorah*.

Amen Corresponds to 'Baruch Shem...'

Chazal say (*Taanis* 16b) that in the Bais Hamikdash, they did not answer amen to *brachos*, rather they would say: "*Baruch Shem Kevod Malchuso l'olam va'ed.*" Rabbeinu Bechaye wrote (*Kad Hakemach, Emunah*) that answering amen has the "virtue of *Baruch Shem Kevod Malchuso l'olam va'ed* that was said in the time of the Mikdash."

Harav Yehuda Assad explained that both with answering amen, which is an acronym for "א-ל מלך נאמן" (*Shabbos* 119b) and with *Baruch Shem*, we make the same declaration, that HaKadosh Baruch Hu is the Hayah, Hoveh and Yihiyeh, as is the *kavanah* of the *Shem Hava-yah* (as explained in *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim* 5 1). "K-I" indicates that Hashem precedes everything, as the *passuk* says (*Yeshaya* 43:10): "*Lefanai lo notzar K-I,*" and that is also the meaning of the words "*Baruch Shem.*" "Melech" indicates that Hashem supervises and leads this world, in the present, and likewise, this is indicated by the words "*Kevod Malchuso.*" "Ne'eman" indicates the eternal and continued existence, corresponding to "*L'olam va'ed.*" (*Divrei Mahar"i, V'Eschanan*)