

VeChol Maaminim

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Peninei Emunim

Pearls of Tefillah in the Parashah

Pischu Shearim

Open the Gates

The Prayer of the Poor Person Is Accepted First

“לרב תרבה נחלתו ולמעט תמעוט נחלתו איש לפי פקדיו יתן נחלתו” (כו נד)

The Rebbe **Harav Eliyahu Lerman of Pilov** explained:

The word נחלה in this *passuk* is explained to be a term of *tefillah*, just like the word ויהל serves as a term of *tefillah*, as it says (*Shemos* 32:11) “*Vayachel Moshe*.” And this is how we can explain this *passuk*: “לרב” – someone who makes himself bigger and considers himself greater “תרבה נחלתו” – needs to increase his *tefillah* and pleading so that his request should be accepted. In contrast, “ולמעט” – someone whose heart breaks inside him and he feels his value is minimal “תמעוט נחלתו” – his *tefillah* will be accepted without him having to prolong it, as it says in the *Zohar* (*Vayishlach* 168 2) that the *tefillah* of the poor man – whose heart is broken, is accepted before all the other *tefillas*.

Eizor Eliyahu

L'Asid Lavo, the Se'ir Izim Will Be Leratzen

“ושעיר עזים אחד לחטאת לה”
על עלת התמיד יעשה ונסכו”
(כח טו)

In *Mussaf* of Rosh Chodesh, at the beginning of the *Bracha Me'ein Hame'ora*, we say that the *se'ir izim*, the goat, is a *kapparah*, an atonement: “*behiyosam makrivim Lefanecha zivchei ratzen use'irei chatas lechaper b'adam*.” But right

after that, in the request for the future, we change the words and say “*Mizbe'ach chadash beTzion tachin... use'irei izim na'aseh beratzen*.” Why is that?

Harav Avraham Yisrael Ze'evi the Rav of Chevron, explained:

In this *passuk*, the Torah writes about the *se'ir* of Rosh Chodesh “*Use'ir izim echad lechatas l'Hashem*” in contrast to the rest of the *se'irim* of the *Mussafim* of which it is said only “*lechatas*.” *Chazal* explain (*Chulin* 60b, and in *Rashi* *ibid* ad loc. *veDovid*) that Hashem instructed that the *se'ir* of Rosh Chodesh HaKadosh be brought as a *kapparah* for diminishing the light of the moon. Because at first, the sun and the moon were created equal, but because the moon complained and said that “it is impossible for two kings to use the same crown,” Hashem diminished its light.

As such, one can explain that although during the time of the Bais Hamikdash, the *se'ir* Rosh Chodesh was intended for this *kapparah*, *L'Asid Lavo*, when the moon will be appeased, after it will resume illuminating as originally, as the *passuk* says (*Yeshaya* 30:26): “And the light of the moon will be like the light of the sun,” once again this *kapparah* will not be necessary. Therefore, in our request for the future – “*Mizbe'ach chadash beTzion tachin*” – we say that then, we will sacrifice the *se'ir izim* “*leratzen*” and not “*lechaper*.”

Pesach Einayim Shavuot 9 1

A word from the founder and Nasi of Bney Emunim

Zealotry in Honor of Hashem When Answering Amen

The previous *parashah* concludes with a description of the actions of Pinchas, who, in his zealotry for the honor of Hashem, fearlessly killed a Nasi of Am Yisrael. This *parashah* begins with a description of the praise that Hashem said to Moshe about Pinchas' actions, and the tremendous reward that Pinchas received because of this zealotry.

Pinchas serves as the eternal symbol of *kana'us*, zealotry for *Kavod Shamayim*. But it's important to know that in order to merit to be among those who perpetuate Pinchas' path in zealotry for *Kavod Shamayim*, we do not have to do specifically his heroic act.

From the words of Rabbeinu Bechayei, it is evident that any effort and action to strengthen the answering of amen is considered *kana'us lichvod Shamayim*, as he wrote (*Shemos* 14:31): One who is strict to answer amen with all his strength is a “*mechabed es Hashem Yisbarach be'emes*, and of him the *passuk* says (*Shmuel* I 2:30): “*Ki mechabdai achabed*.” He then continued to say that on the other hand, one who is not careful to answer amen properly is “*mevazeh*, humiliates Hashem Yisbarach, and of him the *passuk* says (*ibid*) “*Ubozai yekalu*.”

One will also notice that the words of the *passuk* (*Devarim* 32:3) “*Havu godel l'Elokeinu*,” from which we learn about the obligation to answer amen, indicate that the meaning of answering amen is *Kiddush Shem Shamayim*.

Each person can have the *zechus* of *kana'us lichvod Hashem* by strengthening his answering of amen. But one should know that this *kana'us* should be done with pleasantness and respect, in keeping with “*Bekan'o es kinasi besocham*” (*Bamidbar* 20:11): *Kana'us* means to remove the barrier of shame and to approach someone who is about to make *brachos* and offer to answer amen after his *brachos*, or to ask another person to answer amen after our *brachos*. When one does so, aside from the merit of answering amen that he has, also merits to elevate the value of answering amen *berabbim* and to be *mekadesh Shem Shamayim* by doing so.

Just as Pinchas merited such a dignified status, and such tremendous reward for his zealotry *l'Shem Hashem*, the same is true for one who answers amen with all his strength. *Chazal* say (*Shabbos* 119b) that he merits the tremendous reward of having the gates of Gan Eden opened for him. It is possible that this is what is referred to in *seforim*, which say that the acronym of אהרן בן אלעזר בן אהרן is numerically equivalent to 91- which is the same as amen.

If we go to shul each morning and honor the Name of Hashem by answering amen after *Birchos Hashachar*, and we urge others to do the same, then surely we will see the fulfillment of the promise “*Ki mechabdai achabed*.”

Good Shabbos

Yaakov Dov Marmurstein

The Tefillah That Helped Establish the Neighborhood

Reb Yoshe Revilin, who was justifiably known as the Builder of Yerushalayim, did not know what to do; the trouble that had befallen him out of the blue, aside for endangering his life, also threatened to destroy the lifework he had invested so much toil into.

In the years leading up to this story, the situation of Yerushlaayim within the walls of the Old City was unbearable. The Jews of the Diaspora were moving to settle in Yerushalayim, and the overcrowding was getting worse by the day. Combined with the very poor sanitary standards at the time, the residents suffered terribly. There had to be a solution that would resolve the issues.

Reb Yoshe Rivlin was one of the pioneers who wanted to examine the option that until then, only few had dreamed of: to move out of the walls and to build homes in the many parcels of land that dotted the city.

Yerushalayim outside the walls of the Old City was a desolate place at the time, and teemed with vandals and other harmful elements. Only very few dared to leave and build homes in this literal desert. Reb Yoshe Rivlin decided to take action. He rallied more than 140 families of the Bnei



The Meah Shearim neighborhood in Yerushalayim.

Yerushalayim around him, and offered them a chance to purchase land together with him outside the walls, upon which they would build a new neighborhood. They would call the group Meah She'arim, and that is what the neighborhood that they ultimately built was also called.

Reb Yoshe set out to search for a good piece of land on which to realize his dream. He had a few options, and ultimately, the group chose a deserted, rocky piece of land that was rather close to the old City walls; it was being offered at a low price because it was known to be teeming with snakes and scorpions.

But when the members of the association wanted to wrap up the deal, a German missionary who lived in a hut near the designated neighborhood got very angry.

He was afraid of being the neighbor of the Jews, as they would surely try to thwart his work, and he decided to wage war against them.

As he was the owner of a flowering vineyard, which he tended to behind his hut, the man solicited the help of one of his Arab workers, who owned one of the pieces of land that the new neighborhood would be built upon. He promised the Arab monetary rewards, and at the same time, urged the worker not to sell the land he owned to the Jews. He got the man to accede, and even to agree to persuade other members of his family who owned land in the new neighborhood to follow his lead.

But due to the tremendous monetary temptation that was being presented to him, the Arab had no intention of fulfilling his promise, and he even encouraged his relatives to hurry to sign on the sale deal of the land.

When the missionary heard this, he was beyond furious, and at the first opportunity when he was alone with the worker in the vineyard, he murdered him and buried him in the earth of the vineyard.

When the missionary's anger subsided, he realized that he had done something very dangerous. The Arab's family would certainly start to search for him, and when it would be discovered that he was the murderer, they would kill him. So he came up with a satanic plan that would also achieve his original goal of preventing the Jews from becoming his neighbors.

He hurried to spread a rumor among the Arabs that the Jews had killed the Arab laborer because he refused to sell his land to them. The rumor spread like wildfire, and suspicions fell right away on Reb Yoshe Rivlin, who was very well-known for his work to build Yerushalayim.

When Reb Yoshe heard this, he quickly fled to a hiding place until the fury would blow over; he appointed one of his close friends, a wise man, to be the 'liaison' who would bring him important information relating to him.

The sudden disappearance of Reb Yoshe led a few of the people who had registered with the purchase group to think that he had tricked them and run away with their money, and they began to search for him. Now, Reb Yoshe had to urgently emerge from hiding to prove his innocence, but that would put him in immediate danger from those seeking to avenge the blood of their relative.

When he realized the perilous situation he

was in, he sent his confidant to the famous *gaon*, Harav Meir Auerbach, author of *Imrei Binah*, who served as the rav of Yerushalayim, to instruct him what to do. The Imrei Binah understood the gravity of the situation and addressed it accordingly: He took upon himself a *taanis* and closeted himself in his room for a long while, where he pleaded with Hashem to save Reb Yoshe and his vision, which was so vital for the residents of Yerushalayim. When he finished davening, he emerged from the room and told Reb Yoshe's emissary to tell him that he could stop worrying, and within a few days, the real murderer would be found. When that happened, Reb Yoshe would be able to emerge from hiding and continue his work.

The *gaon* was known as a holy man, whose *tefillos* were answered, and his promise soothed Reb Yoshe, who stopped worrying. He waited patiently in hiding for things to happen.

A few days later, the Pasha – the governor of Yerushalayim on behalf of the Turkish Sultan – visited the vineyard of the German missionary, and wanted to buy some of his excellent grapes. The missionary, in an attempt to flatter the official, invited the Pasha to his vineyard, and offered him to choose the best grapes that he saw.

The Pasha and his entourage entered the vineyard, and the missionary hovered around them. Suddenly, the Pasha commented to his escorts that there was a very strong odor in the area. The missionary got very nervous and tried to reassure the Pasha with various excuses, but the Pasha was not calmed. He looked around, and his eyes fell on a small mound of fresh dirt. He instructed one of his escorts to dig, and the latter, who was incidentally a good friend of the murdered laborer, almost fainted when he unearthed the body of his friend. Next to the body was a document that mistakenly fell into the grave while the missionary was digging – and the contents of the document were the final clue that was needed to prove that the missionary was the murderer.

The missionary realized that the game was up. He paled and tried to flee, but the Sultan's emissaries caught him and prevented him from getting away. He was taken to the police station, and after a short interrogation, he broke down and confessed; he was taken straight to be hanged.

Now, Reb Yoshe emerged from his hiding place and continued working towards the building of Meah She'arim, which in time, became the home to the *gedolim* and *tzaddikim* of Yerushalayim.

Amen with Kavanah

The Three Kavanos
in Answering Amen

The word amen affirms the words that were heard. But it is not enough to affirm them in a general sense; one should have *kavanah* when answering amen based on the content of the *brachah* or the *tefillah* that is said. Therefore, when answering amen to *brachos* whose subject is praise and gratitude, one should have *kavanah*: “This *brachah* that the *mevarech* made is true and I believe it.” When answering amen to *tefillas* and requests, one should have in mind: “May it be Hashem’s Will that this request is fulfilled.” And when answering amen after *brachos* that have both praise and a request, one should have both these *kavanos* in mind.

Sources and Explanations

The *Tur* (*Orach Chaim* 124) wrote that when answering amen, the *oneh* should think in his heart: “This *brachah* that the *mevarech* made is true, and I believe it because amen is a term of affirming something.” The *Bais Yosef* (*ibid*) cites the words of the *Midrash* (*Devarim Rabbah* 7 1) as a source, and this is also brought in *Maseches Shavuos* (36a): “Amen contains *ha’amanas devarim*, affirmation of the words.” In *Peirush Hatefillas Vehabrachos*, Rav Y. Ben Yakar (Vol. II, p. 112) wrote that we find that the root of amen is mentioned in the *passuk* in the context of truth, as it says (*Melachim* I 8:26): “*Ye’eman na devarecha*,” which means “your words should please come true.”

But the *Bach* (*ibid*) wrote that this *kavanah* is only sufficient for *brachos* of praise, while for *brachos* that have also a request one should also have in mind: “Maybe it be Your Will that this should come true in front of our eyes, and all our requests that we asked You should be fulfilled.” The *Magen Avraham* (*ibid* 10) and the *Taz* (*ibid* 3) cited his words, and the *Magen Avraham* added that for requests that do not include praise one should have *kavanah* only that the request should be fulfilled. See *Rashi Shavuos* (*ibid ad loc. Bo*) where it says “And it is fitting to answer amen on a matter of *tefillah* and pleading, as it is a word of affirming the words that it should be Hashem’s Will that they should indeed be as such.” Indeed, the *Shelah* (*Maseches Tamid* 59-61) cited the words of his older brother, Rav Yaakov, in his annotations to the *sefer Yesh Nochalin*, that there are three *kavanos* in answering amen, based on the content of the *brachos* and *tefillas* that are said. The *Yesod Veshoresh Ha’avodah* wrote (*Sha’ar Hakorban* Chapter 6): “One should have this rule in hand when he has *kavanah* when answering amen, that he needs to have the *kavanah* exactly like the one who is making the *brachah*, whichever *brachah* it may be.” The *Pri Megadim* (*Mishbetzos Zahav* 51 3), the *Shulchan Aruch Harav* (124 9); the Ben Ish Chai (*Od Yosef Chai Parashas Vayechi* 16, and see also that it seems from his words that the meaning of the amen that

he utters for *brachos* that have both praise and a request is “*emes*,” and in his heart he should think of another amen that means “*Yehi ratzon*”), the *Kaf Hachaim* (5:14) and the *Mishnah Berurah* (124 25) all rule the practical halachah this way.

Regarding the *kavanah* of amen after a *brachah* that contains both praise and request, the *Shulchan Aruch Harav* stated that “it is good to have in mind with amen two thoughts: that this thing is true, and that this person’s words should be affirmed, and that this thing should be fulfilled quickly.” He did not use the term of *chiyuv*, obligation like the *poskim* listed above. And we can say that he did this because the *Tur* and the *Shulchan Aruch* (*ibid* 6) mentioned regarding answering amen to the *brachos* of *Chazaras Hashatz* that one should have only one *kavanah* – “this *brachah* is truth” – even though most of them also include a request. Their opinion is that adding the *kavanah* of *Yehi Ratzon* is a virtue but not an obligation. *Sefer Birchas Avraham* (*Sanhedrin* 111a) explained that indeed, according to the *Tur* and the *Shulchan Aruch*, answering amen relates only to the conclusion of the *brachah*, and therefore, one should have in mind when answering amen that the words of the *mevarech* are truth, even with regards to *brachos* that also have a request. This is because the request is not included in the closure of the *brachah*. But according to the *Bach*, the *Shelah* and the other *poskim* listed above, answering amen relates also to the requests said in the entire *brachah*, and therefore, one should have *kavanah* of both meanings in these *brachos*: amen and *yehi ratzon*. See also what the *Shelah* says (*ibid* 61).

However, the *Eshel Avraham* (Butchatch *ibid* 6) wrote that *me’ikar hadin*, it is enough to have in mind when answering amen a general *kavanah* of “affirming the words [that were heard] as if he himself said them.” This *kavanah* is effective for all the *brachos* and *tefillas*, without differentiating between types of *brachos*, and without relating to the content of the words that are heard [as long as he hears or knows which *brachah* he is answering because otherwise it is an ‘*amen yesomah*’]. He added there that the *poskim* obligate one to have a special *kavanah* depending on the type and content of the *brachah*, but this is only regarding the fulfillment of the mitzvah of amen *lechatchilah*, and see there, where he leaves the words off with *tzarich iyun*. In the name of the *Ayeles Hashachar* it is brought that it is enough for the *oneh* to have in mind when saying amen that he wants his amen to be interpreted according to the *din* (*Notrei Amen* Vol. II, Introduction).

The *Yesod Veshoresh Ha’avodah* (*ibid*) further wrote: “The *ikar* of the *kavanah* of answering amen is the joy and elation in his mind about the greatness and G-dliness of Hashem Yisbarach, Who hears real praise and gratitude, which is not false in any way, emerging from the mouth of the *mevarach* to our Creator *Yisbarach Shemo*.”

The Kitrug That Was Accepted

Sefer Habris (Vol. II, *Ma'amar* 12, Chapter 1) brings this story with a different *nusach* and wrote: "And there was a story one time during this bitter exile, that there was an *eis ratzon* On High to bring the *Geulah*... and it came to a dream of a *tzaddik* who was in that generation that it was an *eis ratzon* and the Heavenly Entourage had already been apprised, but the Satan was *mekatreg* and said: Most of Bnei Yisrael do not daven with *kavanah* for the *Geulah*, and the proof is that they do not answer amen after the *brachah* of *Hamachazir Shecinaso LeTzion*. Due to this *kitrug*, the matter was settled and the exile was prolonged and we still have not returned to our land." But despite that according to the *Sefer Habris*, it was revealed in a dream that the *kitrug* came because of not answering amen to the *brachah* of *Hamachzir Shechinaso LeTzion*, the author warns the same thing about answering amen after the *brachah* of *Hapores Sukkas Shalom* and concludes: "And I wrote in ink the word 'amen' in my siddur at the end of these two *brachos* so that I should remember and to be able to respond to anyone who asks."

To the Nasi of Bney Emunim, Rav Yaakov Dov Marmurstein, *shlita*,

As a native Israeli who lives today in Johannesburg, South Africa, I peruse your pamphlet each week, and thoroughly enjoy the rich content, which both penetrates the heart and has an influence on the practical *halachah*.

In the Shavuot edition, you brought a beautiful compilation of insights about the connection between amen and Shavuot. Among other things, you noted the connection between answering amen, which is the fundamental of *emunah*, and the two first *dibros*, which command us about *emunah*.

I thought perhaps that in fact, we can find a close connection between the other *dibros* and answering amen:

The commandment "*Los sisa es Shem Hashem lashav*," which commands us to preserve the honor of the Name of Hashem, has a close connection to answering amen, because the essence of answering amen is preserving the honor of Shem Hashem said in the *brachah*. This is because the obligation to answer amen is derived by *Chazal* from the words of Moshe to Am Yisrael at the beginning of *Shiras Ha'azinu* (*Devarim* 32:3): "*Ki Shem Hashem ekra - havu godel l'Elokeinu*," and they explain, "When I mention the Name of HaKadosh Baruch Hu in a *brachah* - you should *havu godel* by answering amen" (*Rashi Brachos* 21a ad loc. *Ki*).

The connection to the commandment of "*Zachor es Yom Hashabbos lekadsho*", which we fulfill each Shabbos by saying the *brachah* of *Kiddush* - is clear. And we can add that according to

the *Pri Megadim* (*Eshel Avraham* 215 6) that the *din* of amen is like the *din* of the *brachah*, then answering amen to the *brachah* of *Kiddush* is a mitzvah from the Torah.

The fifth commandment is about honoring one's parents, which undoubtedly has a connection to answering amen, because after the passing of one's parents we fulfill this mitzvah by saying *Kaddish* and davening from the *amud*. Moreover, all your work is done in memory of your father, *zt"l*, in keeping with the concept of "*ben yechaved av*."

Because the essence of answering amen is *emunah*, one who has this *emunah* will not, *chalilah*, transgress the five *dibros* that relate to interactions between one person and another, which are etched into the second side of the *luchos*. Because one who believes in *Hashgachas Hashem* in His world, and in the fact that He gives each and every creation that which is vital for its sustenance, will not steal, covet, or lie in testimony, and certainly will not transgress the prohibitions of murder or illicit relationships.

I believe that there is no better way to conclude this letter than with the words of the beautiful *piyut* by Rabbi Yehuda Halevi, "*Hayom nechbad libney emunim zehirim leshomro avos ubanim chakuk bishnei luchos avanim*."

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Shaarei Gan Eden

Amen and Brachos in the Teachings of a Baal Hayahrtzeit



The kever of the Rama"k in the old cemetery of Tzefas.

The Rama"k

23 Tammuz 5330

Harav Moshe Cordovero was born in 5282 to his father, Rav Yaakov. The family originated in the city of Cordoba, Spain, as indicated by the family name. He grew up on Tzefas, and was one of the disciples of Rav Yosef Karo, author of the *Shulchan Aruch*.

He married the sister of Rav Shlomo Alkabetz, composer of the renowned *piyut* of *Lecha Dodi*, and began to learn *Kabbalah* from him. Later, he established a yeshiva in Tzefas, where he taught *chochmas haniSTAR*, and also served as a *dayan* in the city. His disciples include Rav Chaim Vital and the author of the *Reishis Chochmah*. When the Ari Hakadosh came to Tzefas a few months before the passing of the Rama"k, they learned *Kabbalah* together and when the Rama"k passed away, the Arizal succeeded him.

His main compilation on *Kabbalah*, *Pardes Rimonim*, was published when he was twenty-six. He also composed a commentary on the *Zohar* entitled *Ohr Yakar*, and a *mussar sefer* entitled *Tomer Devorah*, among other works.

The Rama"k passed away on 23 Tammuz 5330, at the age of forty eight; he was buried in the cemetery in Tzefas.

Tzaddik Without a Doubt

In the *Siddur Hama"k* (*Shaar* 4:3) he cited the *Zohar* (it is not printed in the *Zohar* we have today, see *Tikkunei Zohar Chadash* 132 1), that the quota of holy things are alluded to in the word 90 - צדיק amens, 4 *Kedushos*, 10 *Kaddish* and 100 *brachos*, and he writes: "The *Zohar* explained that a person must answer each day to 10 *Kaddish*, ninety amens, one hundred *brachos* and four *Kedushos*, which are indicated by צדיק, because one who does so is undoubtedly a *tzaddik*."