

# Vechol Maaminim

A Weekly  
Pamphlet  
From  
"Bney  
Emunim"



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## Pischu Shearim

A word from the founder and Nasi of Bney Emunim

Strengthening amen is fairly common in many homes. Often, this effort is dedicated to the healing of a family member. One of the practical manifestations of strengthening the observance of amen is conducting a "seudas amenim." The family gathers around a table laid with foods of all kinds that require various brachos. Each one of the people present makes brachos aloud and everyone answers amen.

Over the years, I have heard many stories of yeshuos that resulted from stronger attention to amen, each with their own story. Some of the stories have been published here and have been a source of inspiration for all who heard them.

But it's important to clarify! In order to increase merits and to accrue valuable amens, it's not necessary to have a seudas amenim with all the effort that such a thing involves.

Each morning, every Yid makes a series of brachos of gratitude to Hashem, the Birchos Hashachar. Reciting these brachos together allows one to accrue a treasure trove of amens, more than every other opportunity, and this ancient practice is intended specifically for this purpose (see Mishnah Berurah 6 23).

Apparently, answering amen to these brachos in which we thank HaKadosh Baruch Hu for all the goodness and chessed that He showers us with, and primarily for the health and function of our body, is a tried and true segulah for a refuah sheleimah.

I would like to share with you a wonderful story that I took part in and heard firsthand.

A number of years ago, I was in Yerushalayim for one of the Bney Emunim assemblies. In the morning, I woke up and headed to the Kosel, I davened vasikin. I arrived about an hour

before neitz, as I usually did, and hoping to have someone to answer amen to my brachos, I approached a distinguished looking Yid sitting nearby and asked him if I could say Birchos Hashachar in front of him. Of course, he gladly agreed.

When I finished my brachos, I saw that I was not the only one. Many of those who davened neitz went over to this Yid and made their brachos in front of him. Obviously, I was very pleased at this opportunity, because in the shul where I daven, I have the custom of dedicating a lot of time to answering amen after mispallelim. Imagine how thrilled I was to be able to do this in this holiest of places, at the Kosel. So I stood next to that Yid for a long time and joined him in answering amen after many people making brachos.

Later, I was told that this Yid's name is Reb Avraham Mendelson, shlita, one of the regular members of the neitz minyan at the Kosel for many years, and that there is a wonderful miracle behind this practice.

After davening, I went over to him to find out what was behind his practice, and I was amazed to hear a very moving story. He emphasized that he is happy to relate and publicize the miracle he witnessed, as it says (Tehillim 105:2) "Sichu bechol nifle'osav, speak about all His miracles."

Rav Avraham related: "My son-in-law, a father of eight children, was critically ill. He was literally on his deathbed, and the doctors gave him no chance. I turned the world over, I mentioned him to gedolei Yisrael in Yerushalayim and asked them to daven for his recovery. One of the mekubalim of Yerushalayim, who lives in my neighborhood, saw my distress and suggested: Take upon yourself to hear Birchos Hashachar

from 17] people and answer amen to them. If you do this, b'ezras Hashem you will merit to see the "tov," the goodness.

I was very excited to hear this. The practice is very close to my heart. My father, Rav Pinchas, ztz"l, used to hear brachos each morning from many people, and I also have tried to always be strict to do this... But I never thought about doing it for 17 people.

The next morning, I came to daven at the Kosel, as I usually did, and asked my friends, who were very distraught along with me, to help me save my son-in-law's life by saying Birchos Hashachar for me. Of course, they were happy to help out, and that very first day, I merited to have twenty people say Birchos Hashachar in front of me. After davening, I hurried to the hospital. Until that morning, every visit to my son-in-law was very tense, but this time, I walked with more of a spring in my step. I was sure the yeshuah was at hand. I went over to his bed, where he lay silent, unconscious, and in a loud voice I said to him, "Reuven, I did something very big for your recovery today! I had the zchus to hear Birchos Hashachar from more than to"v people. I am sure that in this zchus, already today things will be better. Open your eyes, please."

I repeated this a few times, and my voice grew more choked up. And then the unbelievable happened – after a whole month of being in a coma, my son-in-law opened his eyes. "From that day on," Reb Avraham concluded, "I have adhered to this practice, and baruch Hashem, to this day, I have the zchus to see so many yeshuos and chassadim."

I heard this story firsthand and it touched me deeply. I was zocheh to get regards in the holiest place to

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In his article in the Torah section of the *Hamodia* [Hebrew] newspaper (*Parashas Kedoshim* 5784), Harav Moshe Yaakov Kanner, *shlita*, author of *Sifsei Melech* on the *Rambam*, describes a chilling story that he heard from Harav Yitzchak Elazar Meizlish, *shlita* of Yerushalayim:

Many years ago, Rav Meizlish related, I had the chance to visit a dear Yid in Yerushalayim, Reb Eliyahu Herman, *z"l*. He was a tailor, but his profession was just a veneer for his truly noble interior being.

Reb Eliyahu was a young man when he was expelled from his home in Hungary during the Holocaust. Along with many other Jews, he was exiled to a different planet, Auschwitz. Somehow, he was able to smuggle his *tefillin* there, and to don them with *mesirus nefesh*. Each day, he arose very early, before going out to their slave labor, and he put on the *tefillin* quickly and recited *Krias Shema*, before the human beasts, the Nazis, *ym"ס*, discovered him.

The danger was immense, and he was



risking his life to do this. It was clear that if he would be caught, he'd be killed on the spot. But he knew the secret of the *tefillin*, he knew that this was the way to connect to HaKadosh Baruch Hu with an unbreakable bond, and therefore, he was not ready under any circumstances to forego this daily spiritual oxygen that revived his soul.

He had just a few minutes each morning to put on the *tefillin*, and there was no time for anyone else to don the *tefillin*. It simply wasn't feasible under the circumstances.

One day, Reb Eliyahu had an idea: If his friends would hold onto him while he put on the *tefillin*, they would have a spark of that connection to HaKadosh Baruch Hu, and if those holding him

would hold onto others – they would also be influenced by the *kedushah*...

And that's how it happened that in the valley of death, there was a chain of people holding onto the sanctity of *tefillin*...

This went on for many months. Reb Eliyahu put on *tefillin* each day, and his friends connected to this mitzvah by holding onto him, with *mesirus nefesh*. The war was nearing an end. The Allies were closing in on the Nazis on all sides, but the beasts' desire for murder did not ebb. They sent the broken, weak Jews on death marches into Germany.

One dark night in Iyar 5705, as they passed through a thick forest, Reb Eliyahu and a few friends decided to escape and hide in the forest. They were able to leave the marching formation without the guards noticing, and with strength they didn't dream they had, they fled into the thick cover of the trees. When they rested a bit, they looked for something to eat.

As they were hunting for something to eat, one of them suddenly noticed a German army vehicle parked a distance away, and he drew his friends' attention to it. Their fear paralyzed them, and they hurried to hide behind the thick tree trunks. After hours of hiding, and seeing that the car was not moving, one of them crept up to the vehicle. When he got there, he breathed a sigh of relief, and motioned for his friends to come closer... There was one dead German soldier there, in the seat.

Inside the car, Reb Eliyahu and his friends found some fruits, and a few new sets of a German army uniform. Despite their repulsion at putting on these murderers' uniforms, they decided to change out of their rags and into the clean uniforms. Reb Eliyahu slipped his carefully guarded *tefillin* into the pocket of his new shirt.

Suddenly, they heard voices from the edge of the forest. The men froze, and the voices drew closer. They heard vehicles moving. Their eyes lit up when they saw that they were American army vehicles who were liberating the area. And suddenly, they were spotted – a group of men wearing German army

uniforms, by the American soldiers. Three soldiers stopped and aimed their weapons at them. "Who are you?" they asked for identities. "Where are your documents?" Of course, the prisoners had no documents, and the soldiers threatened to shoot them. Reb Eliyahu and his friends cried: "We are Jews! We found these uniforms and changed out of our prison garb into them!" But it was to no avail and they were a step away from being shot. Reb Eliyahu recovered and remembered the *tefillin* and took them out for the soldiers to see. One of them was a Jew and he asked in Yiddish: "*Du bist a Yid?*" And then he continued: "Do you know how to daven? Do you know how to recite *Shema Yisrael?*" Eliyahu burst out crying. With his last vestiges of strength, with the *tefillin* in his hands, he cried aloud: "*Shema Yisrael Hashem Elokeinu Hashem Echad!*" His cry moved the soldier to the depths of his soul, and he fell onto Reb Eliyahu's shoulder and began to cry with him.

And there, at the edge of the forest, at the height of battle between the liberating army and the army of murderers, their cries rose to the heavens, crowned with the holy *tefillin*, the witness to the eternity of Am Yisrael. And that's how the whole group was saved in the merit of the mitzvah of *tefillin*.

After Rav Meizlish heard the story from the tailor, he asked him to allow him to put on those *tefillin*. Reb Eliyahu was glad to give him the *tefillin* to put on. With his heart overflowing, the Rav went to one of the dressing rooms in Reb Eliyahu's shop, put on the *tefillin*, said *Krias Shema* and communed with his Creator with the *tefillin* through which *Shem Shamayim* was sanctified in the valley of death, in Auschwitz.

"Reb Eliyahu gave me those *tefillin* to put on," Rav Meizlish wrote. "I merited to put on *tefillin* that were a symbol of the *kedushah* of Am Yisrael in the death camps. The *tefillin*, which were an object of *Kiddush Hashem* in the world, the *tefillin* astonished the *malachim*, as they saw the *mesirus nefesh* of a young *bochur* endangering himself each day to put them on. The *tefillin* that a whole group of holy *bocurhim* in the valley of death used to tie themselves with a strong bond to their Father in Heaven, and which saved the Yid and his whole group from near certain death."



### Acquiring a *Chazakah* Through the *Brachah*

”והתחזקתם ולקחתם מפרי הארץ והימים ימי בכורי ענבים” (יג כ)

The *Chelkas Yehoshua* explained:

In *Maseches Brachos* (35a) *Chazal* ask about the two seemingly contradictory *pesukim* in *Tehillim*. One *passuk* says (24:1): “*L’Hashem ha’aretz umeloah*” and the other (115:16) says “*Veha’aretz nasan livnei adam*.” And they answer: Before the *brachah* – *L’Hashem ha’aretz umeloah*, and after the *brachah*, “*veha’aretz nasan livnei adam*.”

This is what this *passuk* alludes to: “*Vehischazaktem*,” first you need to make *brachos* on the fruits, and then they will be acquired by you and you will have a *chazakah* on them, and only then, “*velakachtem mipri ha’aretz*.”

*Otzar Michtavei Kodesh Chelkas Yehoshua Letter 42*

### Value of the Deed Depends on the Investment

”ועבדי בלב עקב היתה רוח אחרת עמו וימלא אחרי והביאתיו אל הארץ אשר בא שמה וזרעו יורשנה” (יד כד)

And is it only Kalev who “had a *ruach acheres* with him”? Didn’t *Yehoshua* also refrain from participating in the idea of the *Meraglim*?!

**Harav Yehuda Kahana**, author of *Terumas Hakri* explained:

As we know, the reward of a person is given based on the effort and the difficulty he invests in fulfilling the mitzvah. As *Chazal* say (*Avos* 5:26) “*Lefum tza’ara – agrā*.” *Yehoshua* was saved from the plan

of the *Meraglim* without effort, because *Moshe’s tefillah* for this was effective in that his *yetzer hara* didn’t tempt him to participate. But *Kalev*, who did not merit to have *Moshe* daven for him, had to go and pray at the *kevarim* of the *Avos* in *Chevron* for help from Above in overcoming his *yetzer* that was inciting him to participate with his friends. Therefore, only *Kalev*, who invested special effort in separating himself from the *Meraglim*, merited special reward for this.

This concept is alluded to in the *passuk* itself: “And My servant *Kalev* because he had a *ruach acheres imo*,” at first, in *Kalev’s* heart there was a “*ruach acheres*” that leaned towards his *yetzer hara* to participate, and only after he battled his *yetzer*, and went to daven at *kivrei avos*, did he change his mind, “*Vayimalei Acharei*.” That is why he was promised: “And I will bring him to the Land to which he came” – and it will be given to him as a *nachalah*, referring to the city of *Chevron*, where he went to pray.

*Terumas Hakri, Introduction*

**Harav Yisrael of Stoln** was once walking to shul, accompanied by an entourage of *chassidim*. Suddenly, a merchant approached him, looking very self-important, and offered him to buy the painting that he was holding for a large sum of money. “This is a very artistic painting,” the merchant praised the painting, which had a goose in the center. “The goose looks real,” he continued enthusiastically.

The *Rebbe* listened attentively to the merchant, and looked at him in surprise, as if not understanding,

and asked: “Can’t I buy a real goose for a relatively small sum? Why are you offering me to pay a huge sum of money for a painting of a goose?” The merchant was taken aback at the question and quickly responded: “A tremendous amount of effort was invested in the painting, and that’s how its price was set.” Upon hearing this, the *Rebbe* nodded and continued on his way.

When they arrived at the shul, the *Stoliner Rebbe* said to his *chassidim*: “We are now going to prepare for *tefillah*, let’s remember the words of the merchant that the price is determined based on the investment of effort...”

*Yeinah Shel Torah, Avos p. 749*

### Eat in Order to *Bentch*

”והיה באכלכם מלחם הארץ תרימו תרומה לה” (טו יט)

From time to time, when there was a question of *brachos* at one of the guests in the home of the **Bais Yisrael of Ger**, and he needed to eat another item of food to be able to make a *brachah* and resolve the doubt, the *Rebbe* would say, “You are fortunate, that instead of making a *brachah* in order to eat, you merit to eat in order to bless your Creator. Now it is considered as if you are like the *ovdei Hashem* that *Am Yisrael* used to have, who ate only in order to make the *brachah*.”

He would then add this *passuk*: “*Vehayah b’achalchem milechem ha’aretz*” – even when you need to eat in order to sustain your physical body, “*tarimu terumah l’Hashem*” – have in mind to do it *l’Shem Hashem*, in order to merit to bless Him and thank Him.

*Pe’er Yisrael, p. 405*

#### Continued *Pischu Shearim*

the Jewish people about the power of answering amen after *Birchos Hashachar*.

When I returned from the *Kosel*, I thought a lot about the answering amen’s power to open the gates of *refuah*. I thought of an amazing *remez* for this: In *Maseches Shabbos* (119b) the *Gemara* says that the word amen is an acronym for the

famous words of praise א-ל מלך נאמן and the *brachah* of *Refa’einu* ends with these words, but with the addition of another word: “כ...א-ל מלך רופא נאמן” By integrating the description of “*Rofei*” about *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* in the א-מ-ן, the *Anshei Knesses Hagedolah* hinted to us that the power of amen to heal is very great.

Let us take upon ourselves to complete the *Birchos Hashachar* of our friends by answering amen, and in this merit, we should merit that the healthy should not get sick and the sick of *Am Yisrael* should receive a full *refuah* from Above.

**Good Shabbos**  
**Yaakov Dov Marmurstein**

## Otzros Emunim

The Segulah of Answering Amen

### Refuah Sheleimah in the Merit of Answering Amen

Harav Aharon Roth, the author of *Shomer Emunim*, explained:

When Am Yisrael answer amen, immediately, the Shechinah comes to that place, and through that, they merit a *refuah sheleimah* – *refuas hanefesh* and *refuas haguf*.

This is alluded to in the *passuk* (*Shemos* 15:26): “*Kol hamachalah*, any diseases that I put in Mitzrayim I will not put upon you **because I am Hashem your Healer.**” Through *כי אני* which is numerically equivalent to amen, *ה' רפאך* – the Shechinah will dwell upon you and you will merit *refuah* and *yeshuah*. (*Imrei Aharon Beshalach*)

Harav Menachem Mendel Lefkowitz, a *talmid* of the

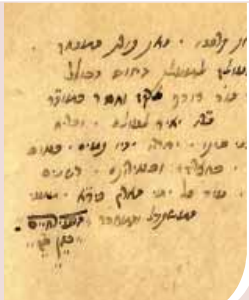
Shomer Emunim, related:

After a time of not feeling well, I was taken for comprehensive medical testing. To my horror, the tests showed that I was suffering from a severe and incurable disease. My world went dark and I went to my Rebbe, the Shomer Emunim, with tears in my eyes, and mentioned his name and pleaded to the Rebbe: “Because I have always been careful not to speak during davening, and was strict to answer amen properly, I ask that the Rebbe should be *po’el a yeshuah* for me.” When the Rebbe heard my words he raised his eyes to me and said firmly: “If so, so why are you worried? Without a doubt you will have a *yeshuah!*”

With faith in the Rebbe’s words I asked to be retested, and to the doctors’ astonishment, in the second test, no disease was evident. (*Chosamo Shel Kohein Gadol* p. 97)

## Shaarei Gan Eden

Amen and Brachos in the Teachings of a Baal Hayahrtzeit



A dedication in the handwriting of Rav Chaim Hakohein of Tripoli.

### Harav Chaim Hakohein of Tripoli 25 Sivan 5665

#### We Are Redeemed in the Merit of Answering Amen

Rav Chaim was born to his father, Rav Shlomo Hakohein, in Djerba, Tunis, around the year 5600. From an early age, his special characteristics were evident, and he acquired Torah and *yiras Shamayim* from the eminent *rabbanim* in his city. Rav Chaim always toiled in Torah and was known for his tremendous proficiency in *Nigleh* and *Nistar*. When he visited Tripoli, Libya, the community leaders recognized his greatness, and asked him to come and serve as a *dayan* in their city. In 5634, he was appointed to serve as *dayan* in Tripoli, and later, he became the *av beis din* there, and was recognized as the highest Torah authority in Libya.

Rav Chaim gave numerous *shiurim* and toiled to establish Torah institutions. His work bore fruit and in his days, the *kol Torah* resounded throughout Tripoli and the city returned to its former greatness. He authored dozens of *seforim* on all subjects of Torah including *Toras Chaim* on the commentary of Rabbeinu Bechayei on Torah; *Shu”t Dvar Hamishpat*, *Dumiyah Tehillah* on *Sefer Tehillim*, and *Mitzvas Hamelech* on the 613 *mitzvos*, of which Rav Chaim Berlin wrote in his letter to the author: “And as I continued to read, I found a *ta’am* in everything,” (*Malchei Tarshish* p. 289). Rav Chaim passed away on 25 Sivan 5665.

### Geulah in the Merit of Answering Amen

*Chazal* say that for the sin of not answering amen, Eretz Yisrael was destroyed and Am Yisrael was exiled from the land as they explain (*Sifri Ha’azinu Piska* 320) the *passuk* in *Shiras Ha’azinu* (*Devarim* 32:19-20): “*Vayomer astirah Panai meihem...ki dor tahpuchos heimah banim lo eimun bam.*” Do not read it *בם לא אמן* but rather “*lo amen bam*” – that they didn’t want to answer amen after the *Nevi’im* when they blessed them.”

In light of this, Rav Chaim Hakohein of Tripoli brings in his *sefer Dumiyah Tehillah* on *Tehillim*, an allusion from the *passuk* that in the merit of being strict about answering amen, we will merit to be redeemed:

When we connect the second letter of the *passuk* (*Tehillim* 29:9) “*ואנחנו קמנו ונתעודד*” we get the word amen, because when we are strict about amen, we will be redeemed from the *galus* and the words “*v’anachnu kamnu vanisodad*” will be fulfilled.

The *passuk* (66:36) Rav Chaim explains the words “*נורא אלוקים ממקדשיך*” whose acronym is amen, as follows: In the merit of answering amen, we will merit to have the *Bais Hamikdash* built, and the words of the *passuk* *נורא אלוקים ממקדשיך* will be fulfilled.