

# Vechele Maaminim

A Weekly Pamphlet From "Bney Emunim"

Parashas VAYIGASH | 5782 | Issue No. 411



## Peninei Emunim

Pearls of Tefillah in the Parashah

### Begin By Mentioning Zechus Avos

"ויגש אליו יהודה ויאמר כי אדני ידבר נא  
עבדך דבר בעיני אדני" (מד יח)

**Harav Yosef Yisrael Deutsch**,  
Av Bais Din of Balassagyarmat,  
explained:

The *Midrash* states (*Yalkut Reuveni Lech Lecha*) that the word 'שה' is comprised of three letters added to names of the three Avos: the *hei* of Avraham, who was first called Avram, the *shin* of Yitzchak, who was also called 'שחק' (*Tehillim* 105:9), and the *vav* of Yaakov, who is also sometimes called יעקוב (*Vayikra* 26:42).

Based on this we can explain that the word 'שה' is alluded to in the acronym of the final letters of the words "ויגש אליו יהודה" (see *Baal Haturim*) to teach us that Yehudah would not have approached Yosef to speak so harshly if he had not relied on *zechus avos*.

For the same reason, the word 'שה' is alluded to at the beginning of *Baruch She'amar*, with the acronym of the words "שאמר והיה העולם"; just like we begin *Shemoneh Esrei* with mentioning *zechus avos*, likewise we start the *brachah* that begins *tefillah* by mentioning *zechus avos*.

Ben Garni

### 'He Should Be Strong Like a Lion...To Serve His Creator'

"וישלח את אחיו וילכו ויאמר אלהם אל  
תרגזו בדרך" (מה כד)

**Harav Shlomo of Bobov** said:

Since very early times, *tzaddikim* would part from their followers with the *brachah* of "zei gezunt un shtark [be healthy and strong.]" This *brachah* has a very deep meaning, because *Chazal* say (*Brachos* 31a) that "a person should not part from his friend without a statement of *halachah*, because that is how he will remember him." In order to fulfill this, they blessed the *tzaddikim* with the *brachah* of "be healthy and strong" so that you can fulfill the

*halachah* that begins the *Shulchan Aruch* – "he should be strong like a lion to rise in the morning to serve his Creator."

*Siach Tzaddikim*, p. 385

### Yaakov Recited Shema Specifically at His Meeting with Yosef

"וַיֹּאסֶר יוֹסֵף מִרְכַּבְתּוֹ וַיַּעַל לִקְרַאת יִשְׂרָאֵל  
אֲבִיו גִּשְׁנָה וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו וַיִּפֹּל עַל צוּרָאֵיו וַיִּבְךְ עַל  
צוּרָאֵיו עוֹד" (מו כט)

"But Yaakov did not fall on Yosef's neck nor did he kiss him. *Chazal* say (*Maseches Derech Eretz Zuta* 1) that he was reciting *Krias Shema*." (*Rashi*)

There is a well-known question: If Yaakov and Yosef met at a time when they became obligated to recite *Krias Shema*, why didn't Yosef recite *Shema* together with his father? And if it was not yet time for *Krias Shema*, then why did Yaakov recite it?

**Harav Pinchas Cimetbaum**, the Raavad of Grosswardein, and father-in-law of the *Minchas Yitzchak*, explained:

The *gedolim* of the generations (see *Maharsha Sotah* Vol. I, 22 1) explained that when someone who is not strict to inculcate his son with the path of Torah and *mitzvos*, then when he recites *Krias Shema*, it is as though he is falsely testifying of himself (see *Brachos* 14b). How can he recite the commandment of "veshinantam levanecha" and not fulfill it?!

Likewise, whenever Yaakov recited *Krias Shema* and mentioned the commandment of "veshinantam levanecha," he felt bad about his beloved son Yosef. He worried that perhaps he had not fulfilled this commandment properly and when Yosef fell into the hands of bad people he may not have maintained his piety. But when he met Yosef and saw that he had remained pious as ever, he immediately stood up and recited *Krias Shema* with full *kavanah*, with the clear feeling that this time he was "testifying truthfully of himself."

*Minchas Yitzchak al HaTorah*

## Pischu Shearim

Open the Gates

A word from the founder  
and Nasi of Bney Emunim

### Recalculating the Route...

For many years now, Bney Emunim's activity calendar has revolved around the ancient custom of reciting *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa*. The extensive efforts and resources that have been invested in imbuing the public with this matter have, *bechasdei Shamayim*, reaped bountiful results.

Throughout the years, I have had the privilege of meeting many Yidden who speak excitedly about the initiatives, and many of them describe the amazing changes that have taken hold ...in their children. Each time I hear such a description, I ask the person I am speaking to: "And what about you...?" Amen is what makes the *brachah* complete (*Zohar Hakadosh Eikev* 271 1) – are you exempt from thanking the Creator properly? Answering amen opens the gates to your *tefillah* (*ibid Vayeilech* 285 2) – do you want to forfeit this tremendous privilege?

And above all is the question: If you are so proud of your child who is strict about this wonderful practice, how can he keep to it if he sees that you are not strict about it?!

The wise sage has said that the power of habit is stronger than the power of logic. We know how important amen is, and we are proud of our children who merit to be scrupulous about it, but we have already gotten into the habit of acting differently...

But the truth is that we have the choice to change our habits. The *passuk* in *Shemos* (19:5) states: "V'atah im shamoa tisheme'u bekoli," and *Rashi* explains: "If you will now accept it, it will be pleasant for you from here on, for all beginnings are difficult." If we awaken and delve into the importance of reciting *brachos* and answering amen, then we will want to join the tremendous circle of those who thank their Creator each morning by reciting complete *brachos*, followed by amen, and after the difficult beginning, without a doubt, this practice will also become very dear to us.

Good Shabbos,  
**Yaakov Dov Marmurstein**

## The Shiur Purchased at the 'Bitachon Bank'

Harav Chaim of Volozhin, author of *Nefesh Hachaim*, was known for his greatness in the *middah* of *bitachon*. In his *seforim*, he delves into the nature of this *middah*, and in his *shmuessen* to his *talmidim* and those who sought his counsel, he would give them *chizuk* in the *middah* of *bitachon* and advise them to adhere to this *middah* with all their might.

A close *talmid* once approached him and asked: "Can the Rav teach me how one who trusts in Hashem should act in practical life, and what is the reasonable *hishtadlus* that he must make?"

In response, Rav Chaim took a piece of paper out of his drawer and wrote: "To my dear *talmid*...I will ask you to please teach the holder of this note, how one who trusts in Hashem must act on a practical level." Rav Chaim signed the letter, handed it to his *talmid* and said:

"If you want to acquire the *middah* of *bitachon* on a practical level, please travel to the home of my erstwhile *talmid* who lives in one of the towns in southern Russia, and he will teach you."

The *talmid* made the long trip until

with thoughts. Could it be possible that his *rebbe* had sent him here? Was it possible that this wealthy man, who clearly lacked for nothing, could teach him about *bitachon* and *hishtadlus*?!

However, the *talmid* was sure that Rav Chaim did not send him to an incorrect address, and with his faith intact, he walked into the grand room.

He approached the master, and handed him the letter from Rav Chaim. The man rapidly read the letter, and replied that because he was busy serving his clients right now, he was not available for a long conversation. It would be better, he explained, for the *talmid* to wait until he finished dealing with his clients, and then he'd have time to talk to him.

So the *talmid* sat down on one of the comfortable chairs in the corner of the hall and waited for the wealthy man to become available. Meanwhile, he observed the man's actions and the way he interacted with his many clients.

Towards lunchtime, a person entered holding a note for the huge sum of ten thousand rubles. He approached the master, showed him the note stating that today was the day it became mature, and demanded to get his money in full.

The *talmid* tensed; after dealing with dozens of clients, the master's till was empty of cash. He was very curious to see how he would deal with this demand.

He listened, and heard the master say to the client: "My friend, indeed, the date of maturity has arrived, but it has not yet

ended. Wait until the end of the day, and *b'eizras Hashem*, you will get your money in full."

The holder of the note had no choice but to wait, and the *talmid* also waited expectantly to see what would happen. Two hours passed. It was already two in the afternoon. The workday was nearing an end. The clients left one by one. It seemed that the bank owner was about to get into an unpleasant altercation with the creditor. But then, a distinguished looking figure entered the room, wearing a crisp army uniform adorned with many medals. It was a senior commander in the army,

and he came over to the master. He took out ten thousand rubles in cash – no more no less – and asked to deposit it for six months.

"I've been called to serve in the tsar's army in Saint Petersburg," he explained. "I'm afraid to make such a long trip with such a large sum of money so I'd like to deposit it with you."

The bank owner raised his hands in gratitude to Hashem for sending him the amount he needed to repay the promissory note, and he handed the money over to the holder of the note, who was still waiting. Only then did he go over to his guest, who was waiting patiently in a corner.

"Now I am available for you," the host addressed his guest, who was still shocked at what he had just seen. "Come with me and I will show you the source of my wealth," he said.

The host walked to his office, followed by the *talmid*, curious to see the great treasure his host was surely about to show him. The host took a small metal box out of a drawer, opened it wide, and pulled out the *sefer Chovos Halevavos* from inside it. The wealthy man leafed through the old *sefer*, opened to *Shaar Habitachon*, and told his guest:

"You should know my friend, that each and every day, I sit and learn this *sha'ar*, and right after the learning, I turn to the *Ribbono shel Olam* and offer a special *tefillah*, in which I say: 'Ribbono shel Olam, You know that from the day I began to engage in business, I have done nothing without including You, and I never worried about tomorrow and how I would repay a certain debt. I trust You with my whole heart that You can help me and provide for all that I lack. Please be with me always so that I can meet all my obligations!'"

"That is the secret of my success and the source of my strength. Even when my till is empty, I am calm and trust my Creator, as the *passuk* says (*Tehillim* 32:10): "Vehaboteach b'Hashem chessed yesovevenu."

After such a remarkable lesson from a Yid who had transformed the *middah* of *bitachon* into an integral part of his life, the guest bid farewell to his host and returned to his home and his *rebbe*.

Imrei Yaakov, Mikeitz



The Volozhin Yeshiva building today.

he reached the said town. When he arrived, he asked some local people where the *talmid* of Rav Chaim lived, and they showed him the way to a compound with a few impressive stone houses indicating the wealth of their owner. In an opulent hall in one of the homes, he found the master of the houses seated at a beautiful desk. There was a long line of people waiting for him, seeking to purchase or redeem various notes and securities from him.

It was a bank in every sense.

Quite shocked, the *talmid* stood at the doorway to the hall, his mind abuzz



## The Brachah of Ma'ariv Aravim

### The Source of the Brachah

Chazal instituted that one who recites *Krias Shema shel Arvis* needs to make two *brachos* before it and two *brachos* after it (*Brachos* 11a). Despite the fact that we rule that *Tefillas Arvis* is *reshus*, and is not a mandatory *tefillah* like *Shacharis* and *Minchah* (*Rambam Tefillah* 1:6), still, the *Birchos Krias Shema* of *Arvis* are absolutely mandatory. (*Shibbolei Haleket*, 52, in the name of *Rashi*)

According to the *poskim* that the calculation of the quota of one hundred *brachos* that a person must make every day begins at night – from *tzeis hakochavim* of the previous night until *tzeis hakochavim* the next night (see *Shu"t Betzel Hachochmah*, Vol. IV, 155), we find that this *brachah* is the first in the order of the *Meah Brachos* that Chazal instituted for us to make each day.

### The Essence of the Brachah

The *brachah* of *Ma'ariv Aravim* begins with 'Baruch' and ends with 'Baruch.' Before the conclusion of the *brachah*, some add "*K-l chai vekayam tamid yimloch aleinu l'olam va'ed*" (as *nusach Ashkenaz* has it, cited in *Tur Orach Chaim* 236). Chazal established that one must say '*me'ein hachasimah samuch lachasimah*,' a sample of the conclusion should be said before the conclusion. The relation of this addition to the conclusion of the *brachah* is explained by the *Rosh*: When the Malchus of Hashem will be revealed in the world, there will be light for the *tzaddikim* and darkness for the wicked ones (*Zechariah* 14:6). We find that this addition includes the subject of light and darkness, which are the subject of the conclusion of the *brachah*. (*Tur* *ibid*; *Mishnah Berurah* *ibid* 2)

There is a question of whether this addition is said as a term of *bakashah*, request, or *shevach*, praise – in which we declare our faith that very soon we will be redeemed and Hashem will rule over us for eternity (*Notrei Amen*, Vol. II, p. 38. See *Magen Avraham* 236 4). With *brachos* that have *shevach* and *bakashah*, we need to concentrate when answering amen that '*emes*,' the praise said by the *mevarech* is true, and *halevai* this request should be fulfilled (*Mishnah Berurah* 124:25). However, when answering amen to this *brachah*, one should have in mind only '*emes*,' it is true, because even if we think that the *tefillah* of "*K-l chai vekayam...*" is said as a request, in any case, this *tefillah* is not included in the conclusion of the *brachah*. (*ibid*, citing the *Shevet Halevi*)

### The Meaning of Amen

It is true that one should praise Hashem for being *Ma'ariv Aravim*, and for making it possible for people to rest from the toil of the day. (See *ibid* 'Structure of the Brachah')

### The Structure of the Brachah

The *brachah* of *Ma'ariv Aravim* that comes first in the order of *Birchos Krias Shema* of *Arvis*, corresponds to the first *brachah* in the *Birchos Krias Shema* of *Shacharis* – the *brachah* of *Yotzer Ohr*. In both, we thank Hashem for the changes of the times. In *Yotzer Ohr* we thank for the Heavenly lights that enable a person to leave his home and take care of his needs, while in the *brachah* of *Ma'ariv Aravim*, we thank HaKadosh Baruch Hu for the darkness at night that enables people to rest from the toil of their day. (*Avudraham*, *Birchos Krias Shema*)

Chazal instituted that we mention in both the light and the darkness in both *brachos*. "*Golel ohr mipnei choshech vechoshech mipnei ohr*" in the *brachah* of *Ma'ariv Aravim*, and "*yotzer ohr uborei choshech*" in *Yotzer Ohr*. This is in order to refute the claim of the heretics who say that the One Who created day did not create night. (*Rabbeinu Yona*, *Brachos* 5b, *Midapei HaRif*)

The *Ramban* (*Brachos* 11b) explains that Chazal established to make these *brachos* before *Krias Shema* because the *zman* of *Krias Shema* of *Shacharis* and of *Arvis* depend on the light of the sun and when it sets.

### The Order of the Me'oros Changed Nine Times

The *Rokeach* writes that this *brachah* contains all the letters of the *aleph beis* – except the letter *tes*, alluding to the fact that Hashem changed the regular path of the *me'oros* nine times, as follows:

1. During the *Mabul*, Hashem altered the rising of the sun, as it rose in the west and set in the east (*Sanhedrin* 108a);
2. After Yaakov fought with the angel, the sun rose before its time in order to heal him (*ibid* 95b);
3. When Yaakov Avinu passed by Bais K-l en route to Charan, the sun set before its time (*ibid*);
4. During the plague of darkness there was "thick darkness in all of Eretz Mitzrayim for three days" (*Shemos* 10:23) and see *Rabbeinu Bechaye* *ibid* 21);
5. When Moshe Rabbeinu fought against Og Melech Habashan, the sun's setting was delayed (*Taanis* 20a; *Rashi Devarim* 2:25);
6. When Yehoshua fought the five kings of the Emori, the sun's setting was delayed (*Yehoshua* 10:12);
7. On the day that the evil Achaz died, the sun set ten hours before its time (*Sanhedrin* 96a);
8. On the day that Chizkiyahu was healed, the day was lengthened by 10 hours (*ibid*);
9. In the famous story of Nakdimen ben Gurion, the sun's setting was delayed so that the springs of water that he borrowed would fill before the time for this to happen passed (*Taanis* 20a).

"וכאשר תקום מן הספר, תחפש באשר למדת אם יש בו דבר אשר תוכל לקיימו."

## Amen Opens the Gates of Blessing

The holy *Zohar* (*Vayeilech* 285 2) states that in the merit of answering amen with *kavanah*, the gates of blessing and good Above are opened, and joy is evoked in all the worlds. He writes: "And when Yisrael down here make sure to answer amen, to concentrate in their hearts properly, how many gates of *brachah* are opened to them Above, how many good things are found in all the worlds, how much joy is there in every place."

Thus the Divrei Yisrael of Modzhitz explained the reason why we conclude the requests of *Harachaman* said at the end of *Birchas Hamazon* with the words: "*Kein yevarech osanu kulanu yachad bivrachah sheleimah venomar amen.*" Who are we addressing with these words? According to the *Zohar*, who says that amen opens the gates of blessing, we can say that we are saying as follows: "*Kein yevarech osanu kulanu yachad bivrachah sheleimah*" in the merit of "*venomar amen*" – our strict adherence to answering amen to the *brachos*. (*Divrei Yisrael, Noach*)

## There Is Not Enough Reward in the World for One Amen

The Maggid Harav Mordechai Druk would imbue his listeners with the great reward that a person receives for every amen that he answers. Once, at the end of his *drashah*, a Yid to whom life had not been kind approached him and said: 'Rebbi, if the virtue of answering amen is so great, please, may the Heavens give me the reward of one amen in this world, and the reward of the rest of the amens should be preserved for me for Olam Haba...'

Rav Mordechai wisely responded, "Reb Yid, you are like a little child who goes to the corner shop to purchase candies with a check for a million dollars in hand. Know, that the reward for answering one amen is so great that there is no way to pay it in this world!" (Heard from someone who was there)

## Dear Vechol Ma'aminim,

I enjoy your special pamphlet very much, and even more so since it was revamped. In light of your request to share personal stories about the power of answering amen, as *Chazal* have promised that it has the power to tear up the person's decrees, I wanted to share a personal story. By doing so I can fulfill the *passuk* (*Tehillim* 109:30): "*Odeh Hashem me'od befi ubesoch rabbim aha'llenu*":

I waited for a number of years to be blessed with children. I davened and pleaded endlessly, but the *yeshuah* did not come. During one of the difficult hours that I experienced, I went to one of the *gedolim* of Yerushalayim to receive a *brachah* and to seek his advice.

The Rav blessed me, and at the same time, suggested that I be more scrupulous about answering amen with *kavanah*. He cited with words of Rabbeinu Bechaye in *Kad Hakemach* (*Emunah*) that a person is only called a *tzaddik* from the power of answering amen, as it says (*Yeshayahu* 26:2): "*Tzadik shomer emunim*," and the *tzaddikim* merit special *shemirah* and remembrance, as we say in the *tefillah* of *Brich Shemei*: "*Ulehavi ana pekida...*"

I followed his advice and since then, I have been strict to begin my day with answering amen after *Birchos Hashachar*. Throughout the day, I am on the alert to be a *shomer emunim* – to listen out for *brachos* and to answer amen, whether in *Chazaras Hashatz* or *brachos* said by those around me. *Baruch Hashem* I experienced a tremendous *yeshuah*, when a bit more than a year later, I was blessed with twins *bechasdei Shamayim*. Today they are three years old, and we are reaping much Yiddishe *nachas* from them.

Thank you for all your efforts,  
S.W., Yerushalayim

Letters can be sent to fax number 08-9746102 or emailed to the Vechol Ma'aminim email address. 9139191@gmail.com

## Tzaddik B'Emunaso

Amen and Brachos in the Teachings of One Who Has Yahrtzeit



The Jewish cemetery in Padua.

## Rav Moshe Dovid Vali

7 Teves 5537

The *mekubal* Harav Moshe Dovid Vali, one of the Rabbanim of Padua, Italy, was a close *talmid* of the Ramchal. He compiled a comprehensive commentary on all of

*Tanach*, from which we can learn of his greatness, wisdom and exceptional knowledge of all parts of Torah.

Rav Moshe Dovid's *kever* is located in Padua. His headstone is inscribed: "*Matzeivas kodesh, a wise and strong man, an ish emunos, ma'alas hachaver, the doctor and G-dly mekubal Harav Moshe Dovid Vali, zt"l...*" He rejected all honor and acclaim, and found in his tranquility glory...he was wise in every form of wisdom...he has now left this world with a trusting heart, to acquire with his toil the reward and happiness."

## Brachah Ad Bli Dai

The Rav explained the *passuk* (*Mishlei* 28:20): "*Ish emunos rav brachos*": Every time a person answers amen, he brings upon himself many *brachos* and good *hashpa'os*, from the power of the Holy Names alluded to in the *gematria* of the word amen. In his commentary on *Yeshayah* (24:18) he added a *remez* to this: the word amen is an acronym of the *passuk* (*ibid*): "*אֲרוּבוֹת מִמְרוֹם נִפְתָּחוּ*" to teach us that answering amen opens the gateways of Heaven to bestow upon us endless *brachah* for the person who is strict about it.