

VeChol Maaminim

A Weekly Pamphlet From "Bney Emunim"

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Peninei Emunim

Pearls of Tefillah in the Parashah

A Tefillah of 'A Day or Two'

"אך אם יום או יומים יעמד לא יקם כי כספו הוא" (כא כא)

Harav Yosef, Av Beis Din of Posna, explained: A person who prays without any *kavanah* every day of the year, and "אך" only "if a day or two" on Yom Kippur or on the two days of Rosh Hashanah, "*yaamod*" he will stand in prayer as is fitting, "*lo yukam*" – he should not think that this will bring him revival and reprieve "*ki kaspohu*" – because his behavior proves that his strengthening in *tefillah* on these days is only so that he should merit to be written in the book of *parnassah*.

In contrast, the **Imrei Yosef** of Spinka would explain this *passuk*: "*Ach im yom oh yomayim yaamod*" – even if someone who does not pray properly all year, and only on Yom Kippur or the two days of Rosh Hashanah does he daven properly, "*lo yukam*" – Above, his *tefillah* will not be prevented from being heard in revenge for not davening properly all year round, "*ki kaspohu*" – because his preoccupation with *parnassah* of his family is what causes the fact that he does not daven properly the rest of the year

Nachal Kedumim [Chida]; Likutei Imrei Yosef

The Sin of One Who Believes Lashon Hara Is Worse, Because of 'Gadol Ha'oneh'

"לא תשא שמע שוא אל תשת ירך עם רשע להיות עד המס" (כג א)

From this *passuk*, Chazal learn (*Pesachim* 118a) that a person must not believe and accept *lashon hara* said about someone else. The **Rambam** (*De'os* 7 3) wrote that with *lashon hara*, the punishment of the *mekabel* is more severe than the punishment of the one who says the news, and the **Maharshal** explained (*Amudei Shlomo Lo Sa'aseh* 9) that this is because through him, the *issur* was brought to completion.

Harav Dovid Kviat, one of the *roshei yeshivah* of Mir in America, cited the explanation of **Rabbeinu Bechaye** (*Shemos* 14:31) on the words of Chazal (*Brachos* 53b): "The one who answers amen is greater than the *mevarech*." The reason that the virtue of the one who answers is greater is because the *mevarech* who testifies in his *brachah* about the Malchus of Hashem is only like one *eid* – one witness. When the person answers amen, the testimony becomes complete, like two *eidim*.

With regard to *lashon hara* as well, the one who relates the *lashon hara* is like 'one witness' and the one who hears the words and accepts them is like the second witness, testifying in defamation of the subject of the story, and thus the testimony becomes valid. And because the reward of the one who answers is greater than the *mevarech*, likewise, the punishment of the one who hears *lashon hara* is greater than the punishment of the one who relates the story.

Sukkas Dovid, Metzora 38

Pischu Shearim

Open the Gates

A word from the founder and Nasi of Bney Emunim

'Yehalelucha Zar Velo Picha...'

From time to time, I meet people who uphold the practice of reciting *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa* in the regular place where they daven. But when they come to a strange place, their feelings of embarrassment overpower them, and they are ashamed to ask a stranger to help them continue this practice. I wonder about this: It is true that naturally, asking a favor from a stranger involves some unpleasantness, but is this 'asking a favor' or 'doing a favor'?! By the very fact that you reach out to a person, you are giving him the merit of a number of amens, which he would not have merited to answer without you. Even though at the same time you are benefitting from the fact that your *brachah* is perfected by answering amen, it is still a case of 'this one benefits and the other one benefits.'

Moreover, experience proves that it is very possible that the person who you are so embarrassed from also wants to ask you to answer amen to his *brachos*, and didn't do so because he is embarrassed...

Personally, I am more embarrassed by the heart-piercing words of the *tzaddik*, Rav Yaakov Katina, the Av Beis Din of Chust, in his *sefer Rachamei Av* (56), in which he warns his sons: "Be very careful about answering amen, because what will he answer on the appointed day when he is asked: 'Why did you not answer amen – how much work is it it?!' This is alluded to in the *passuk* (*Tehillim* 83:17): '*Malei peneihem kalon*,' their faces will be filled with shame. The acronym of the final letters of each word is amen. In other words: **One who refrains from answering amen ends up being embarrassed on that Yom Pekudah, the appointed day...**"

Furthermore, the *passuk* in *Shir Hashirim* (4:8) states: "תשורי מראש אמנה מראש שניר והרמון ממענות" אריות מהררי נמרים..". The acronym of מהררי נמרים is amen, to teach us that one who seeks to be *mehader* in answering amen properly must be 'strong as a lion' to do so – to rise early to go to shul, and 'daring as a leopard' – not to be embarrassed to ask another person to answer amen to his *brachos*.

Good Shabbos,
Yaakov Dov Marmurstein

Chinuch to Tefillah for Fifty Dollars

This story was related by one of the eminent *tzaddikim* of Yerushalayim, Harav Gamliel Hakohen Rabinowitz, *shlita*, a *rosh yeshivah* of Shaar Hashamayim. This story can teach us the value of being *mechanech* children to come early to davening, where the concept of a 'personal example' can certainly enhance the lesson and imbue it in the soul of the child.

The concept of a Shabbos Hisachdus has become very common in recent years among families, *yeshivos* and communities. Anyone who has enjoyed such a Shabbos knows that it is a surefire way to bring people close to one another, and at the same time to convey important messages and concepts that will accompany the participants for many days, if not years, to come.

This story happened at a Shabbos Hisachdus that took place on a winter Shabbos in the town of Kiryat Ye'arim – Telzstone, which was attended by Rav Gamliel Rabinowitz. A large, elegant venue was rented to accommodate the many participants.

The pinnacle of the Shabbos was the Sheves Achim that took place on Friday night in the main banquet hall of the venue. It was designated



Harav Gamliel Rabinowitz, *shlita*

primarily for the *bochurim* of the community, but many *avreichim* and children also attended.

At the height of the Sheves Achim, as they sat around tables laden with refreshments, and hearts and ears were opened to listening, the Rav began to speak to the *bochurim*. He dedicated his words to a subject that is close to his heart, and one that needs to be improved almost everywhere.

Rav Gamliel spoke on the topic of coming early to davening. He expounded at length, and brought stories and insights from *tzaddikim* about the importance of coming early

to davening. His point was very clear: One who comes to davening on time proves that he does not treat *tefillah* like a burden, and like a habitual thing that must be done. He wants to be close to Hashem, and be treating *tefillah* seriously, he gets up early to come on time, and thus causes *nachas ruach* to his Creator.

"When one comes to *tefillah* late, that is terrible derision of *tefillah*," the Rav cried passionately. Then he added a pained, yet common quote, that "when the father comes to davening at *Baruch She'amar*, then his son will come for *Vayevarech Dovid*, and the grandson will come for *Nishmas*..."

Rav Gamliel added: "There are many people in our time who turn over the world to find *segulos* for a *yeshuah*. Among them are *segulos* that have no sources, and others that have become widely accepted nevertheless. Some examples are reciting *Perek Shirah* for forty days in a row, or davening at the Makom Hamikdash for forty days, reciting *Shir Hashirim*, *Nishmas*, *Parashas Hamann*, the *tefillah* of Harav Meir of Apta, and many, many more. These *segulos* are important and precious, and they are all beloved, but they are not mentioned in *Shulchan Aruch*.

"However, there is one *segulah* which is very great and lofty. This *segulah* is mentioned clearly, and is also ruled as *halachah* in *Shulchan Aruch* in *Hilchos Tefillah* (*Orach Chaim* 90 14): 'A person should rise early to go to shul so that he should be among the ten first ones there.' The *Tur* (*ibid*) adds the words of the *Gemara* in *Brachos* (47b): 'Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: A person should always rise early to shul so that he should merit to be among the first ten people there, because even if one hundred come after him – he receives the reward for all of them.' The *Tur* also cites the words of the *Gemara* (*ibid* 8b) that Rabi Yehoshua ben Levi instructed his sons to come early to shul and to linger there for a long time, because this would guarantee that they would live long lives.

The Rav then pleaded with those assembled to take upon themselves to come early to shul. At the end of the speech, one of the listeners, a dignified

Yid who was very moved by the fiery words, stood up and announced to the *bochurim* that after they had all heard the passionate words about the virtue of rising early to shul, he would donate five hundred dollars that would be distributed after Shabbos to the ten first *bochurim* who would be at *Shacharis* the next morning – fifty dollars apiece.

Rav Gamliel then related: At the end of the *drashah*, out of the corner of my eye, I noticed a father and son who were also there. After the announcement about the prize for the first ten who would come, I heard the father say to his son in a disappointed tone, "Too bad we are not *bochurim*, because if we were, we could have earned a hundred dollars tomorrow, and you know that a hundred dollars is a lot of money..."

At the end of the evening, I could not help but chide the young man for his words, said innocently. I called him to the side, so that his son should not hear what I was saying, and pointed out that it is possible that his words could negatively affect his son's *chinuch*. I told him that in my opinion, the child had understood from his words that for one hundred dollars, it paid to be one of the ten first people in shul, while the actual fact that it is a *halachah* in *Shulchan Aruch* and in *Tur* that explicitly says the reward for it, is not enough to make him be among the ten first people. I told him that in my opinion, such an offhand remark could possible generate in the child a derision, *chalilah*, for the words of the *Shulchan Aruch*, and therefore, he really should fix what he said.

I was very happy when, a few minutes later, I saw the father speaking with his son about the tremendous greatness of the *Shulchan Aruch*, and the *emunah sheleimah* that we have that every single word written there is true. The father spoke at length with his son, and said that it was certainly fitting that they should together, fulfill the words of the *Shulchan Aruch* about the first ten people, even though they wouldn't get the fifty dollars...

Needless to say, the next morning, this father and son were among the first of the ten people to arrive in shul, and they came early even though they knew they would be receiving no reward for it.

The Brachah of Kedushas Hashem

Source of the Brachah

The third *brachah* in *Shemoneh Esreh* is called (*Megillah* 17b) *Kedushos*. *Chazal* (*ibid*) derived the obligation for this *brachah* from the *passuk* in *Tehillim* (29:2): "*Havu l'Hashem kavod Shemo hishtachavu l'Hashem behadras kodesh.*" This *passuk*, written after the first *passuk* in the *Mizmor*, which alludes to the *brachos* of *Avos* and *Gevuros*, indicates that *Kedushas Hashem* should be recited following *Avos* and *Gevuros*.

The *Kuzari* (3:18) explained the reason that the *brachah* of *Kedushas Hashem* should be said right after *Avos* and *Gevuros*: After we declare in *Birchas Ha'avos* the covenant that HaKadosh Baruch Hu forged with our forebears, and in *Birchas Gevuros*, of His being the Almighty Ruler of all His beings, a person might think that there is a connection between the Creator and the physical creations, *chalilah*. Therefore, we declare in this *brachah* that the Creator Himself is *mukdash* and *muvdal*, sanctified and separate, from all matters of physicality and materialism, and that we have no concept of His loftiness and holiness.

Structure of the Brachah

The subject of this *brachah* is that because HaKadosh Baruch Hu is holy and His Name is holy, therefore, Am Yisrael, which is holy, praises him each day, as it says (*Tehillim* 22:4): "*V'Atah Kadosh yoshev tehillos Yisrael.*" (*Siddur Da'as Kedoshim*)

Many of the Rishonim wrote (*Rambam Seder Tefillos, Nusach Birchos Hatefillah; Peirushei Siddur Hatefillah L'Rokeach* 47, in this *brachah* and others) that this *brachah* has only nine words before the conclusion: "*Atah Kadosh veShimcha Kadosh ukedoshim bechol yom yehallelucha selah.*" But the *Avudraham* (*ibid*) wrote that six words should be added: "*Ki K-l Melech gadol vekadosh Atah,*" and that is how it is in *Nusach Sephard*. The *Eshel Avraham* of Butchach (114) explained that those who do so are *mehader* in the fulfillment of the *mitzvos* of *Chazal* (*Pesachim* 104a) to mention in the *brachos* as a sort of closing before the actual closing *brachah* (*ibid*).

The Kavanah of Amen

It is true that HaKadosh Baruch Hu is holy and we have no concept of His Holiness. (*Siddur Nehora Hashalem, Shemoneh Esreh*)

Essence of the Brachah

This *brachah* is the last of the three *Birchos Hashevach* that begin *Shemoneh Esreh*. These three *brachos* are considered to be one *brachah*, because their objective is singular: to place the praise of Hashem before our requests. (*Rema* 114 6; *Mishnah Berurah*, *ibid* 33)

These *brachos* are also connected in the fact that they all use the description *Melech* with regard to HaKadosh Baruch Hu at their closing. In *Birchas Ha'avos* we say "*Melech ozer umoshia umagen.*" In *Gevuros* "*Melech meimis umechayeh umatzmiach yeshuah,*" and in this *brachah*, "*Ki K-l Melech gadol vekadosh Atah.*" The reason for this is explained by the *Avudraham* (*Shemoneh Esreh*) that these *brachos* have a special importance because the three *Avos* are alluded to in the closing words. *Magen Avraham* corresponds to Avraham, *Mechayeh Meisim* corresponds to Yitzchak, as Hashem revived him by stopping Avraham from slaughtering him after Avraham was already holding the knife and he was already considered dead; and *HaK-l HaKadosh*, corresponding to Yaakov, who merited to establish *zera kodesh* of Klal Yisrael, and there were no flaws in his progeny. (*Avudraham, Tefillas Shemoneh Esreh*)

Reciting Ledor Vador in Chazaras HaShatz

Some of the Rishonim wrote (*Rambam and Rokeach* *ibid*, and others) that the *shaliach tzibbur* does not say *Atah Kadosh* in *Chazaras HaShatz*, and rather recites "*Ledor vador nagid godlecha ulenezach netzachim kedushasecha nakdish veshivchacha Elokeinu mipinu lo yamush l'olam va'ed, Ki K-l Melech...*" Those who daven *Nusach Ashkenaz* do this. In their view, only the *shaliach tzibbur* says this *nusach* and not the individual, because an individual does not say *Kedushah* in his *tefillah*. Therefore, it was instituted for him to correspond to the *brachah* of *Atah Kadosh* in which we say the word '*Kadosh*' three times [*Atah Kadosh VeShimcha Kadosh...Ha K-l HaKadosh*], so that he should recite three times *kadosh* like the *sha"tz* (*Kolbo* 11).

However, according to the *Gra* (in his explanation of *Yeshayah* 12:6) it appears that the *brachah* of *Ledor Vador* is only said in *Chazaras Hashatz* because it is the continuation of *Kedushah*. But an individual who does not say *Kedushah* cannot say it, and that is why he says "*Atah Kadosh*" (*Likkutei Mahari"ch, Shemoneh Esreh*). Harav Zelig Reuven Bengis, the Raavad of Yerushalayim, further explained that the *brachah* of *Ledor Vador* was institute specifically for the members of the Ashkenaz community who say at the beginning of *Kedushah*: "*Nekadesh es Shimcha b'olam keshem shemakdishim Oso biShemei marom.*" Because in this *nusach* we compare ourselves to angels, we need to explain the nature of this comparison, and to say that just like the angels are eternal, we also have eternity through the fact that we establish generations that will sanctify the Name of Hashem. But for those who daven *Nusach Sephard*, which says "*Nakdishach...kenoam siach sod sarphei kodesh,*" and do not say "*keshem*" there is no need to say this. (*Liflagos Reuven* Vol. II, p. 236)

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

Otzros Emunim

The Segulah of Answering Amen

The Merit of Answering Amen Is Enough

We can learn about the tremendous reward that is granted to those who answer amen, from the words of Chazal (Aggadas Bereishis 79) on the *passuk*: "*Kechut hashani sifosayich umidbarech naveh*" (Shir Hashirim 4:3) – "the desert in you is pleasant to Me, how much more so the settled area! And what is the desert? Those are the *amei ha'aretz*, the ignorant ones who do not know how to read or to learn or to speak, like a desert that does not give forth fruits. And they go into the *batei knesses* and *batei medrash* and make the *brachah Baruch Yotzer Hame'oros* and *Mechayeh Meisim*, that He created and gives live to the dead, and they answer amen, and say that they believe that He revives the dead and that He created the world – even if they have only the reward for this amen, it is enough for them!"

The *Pele Yoetz* writes (*Aniyas Amen*): "And if those who refrain from answering amen would know the great reward of answering amen, they would pursue the chance to listen and answer, like a *koreh* (a type of bird) runs in the mountains (*Shmuel I*, 26:20), and they would rejoice for answering one amen as if they had found a great treasure."

Igros Emunim

Readers' Letters

Dear *Vechol Ma'aminim*,

First, I'd like to thank you for your highly invested pamphlet each week, especially the one from *Parashas Bo*, in which you brought an explanation about the source and *segulah* of the custom of saying *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa*. The skillfully written words were a wake-up call for me, and many people who I know.

I was also very moved by the story that you brought about the father who was strict about *Meah Brachos* and merited to have his son return to the right path. I wanted to point something out on this subject. The *Kolbo* (1) wrote: "Because each day **one hundred bochurim** passed away, Dovid Hamelech instituted the one hundred *brachos* and the plague stopped, as it says (*Shmuel II*, 23:1): '*Ne'um hagever hukam al*' – and על is numerically equivalent to one hundred."

Based on his words that the plague primarily affected the *bochurim*, the *Ohr Pnei Moshe* (*Megillas Eichah*) wrote that there is a special obligation to educate the *bochurim* and youths to recite *Meah Brachos*. He even brought proof from the *passuk* (*Eichah* 3:27): "It is good for a person *ki yisa al bene'urav*" – and *al* is numerically equivalent to one hundred, meaning that it is good for a persona already in his youth to take upon himself the yoke of reciting one hundred *brachos*. [And we can add that 'שא' is an acronym for שיענה אמן.]

I thought to add that this is what we bless a bar mitzvah boy, to merit to accept "על תורה ומצוות" and על is numerically equivalent to 100. This *brachah* means that already at the beginning of his path, he should accept upon himself the obligation of one hundred *brachos*, because it is a special obligation for *bochurim*.

In appreciation,
Rav Chanoch Bergman, Yerushalayim

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Tzaddik B'Emunaso

Amen and Brachos in the Teachings of One Who Has Yahrtzeit



Har Hazeisim

Harav Meir Papirash

2 Adar 5422

The *mekubal* Rabi Meir Hakohen Papirash was born in Krakow, Poland in 5384. Already as a

child, his unique abilities became evident, and by the time he was thirteen, he already studied *Kabbalah*. His parents, aware of his success, sent him to Yerushalayim to study under leading *mekubalim* there. After his arrival, he became one of the pillars of Yeshivas Hamekubalim in Yerushalayim. Rav Meir went to great lengths to compile and organize the writings of the Arizal in his *sefer Eitz Chaim*, and he was very instrumental in many of the writings of the Arizal that we have to this day.

The Chida (*Shem Hagedolim, Maareches Gedolim* 40 27) testified that the Rav compiled 39 *seforim*, but only some of them were printed. He passed away in Yerushalayim on 2 Adar 5422, when he was just thirty eight years old, and was buried on Har Hazeisim.

Amen After *Birchos Hashachar* - Even One Hundred Times

In his *sefer Ohr Tzaddikim* (*Amud Hatefillah* 6 2), Rabbeinu cites the practice of the Arizal to answer amen each morning after those who recite *Birchos Hashachar* in shul, even if there are one hundred people. He even ruled this *halachah lema'aseh* in his *sefer Ohr Hayashar* (*Amud Ha'avodah* 7): "A person needs to answer amen after *Birchos Hashachar*, even if he hears them one hundred times."

Tefillah for *Kavanah* in Amen Each Morning

The Rav expounded greatly on the value of each and every amen, and the depths of *kavanah* that are concealed in this word. Knowing that because one answers amen a lot, it is hard to have the right *kavanah* for each and every amen, in his *sefer Ohr Tzaddikim* (*Tikkun Tefillah* 52), he composed a short *tefillah* to recite before davening, and he instructed each person to keep this *tefillah* in his *siddur*. It says:

"Ribbonon shel Olam, it is known before You that I am of flesh and blood and I have no strength to have the right *kavanah* for amen. Therefore, may it be Your Will, that my *kavanah* in amen should rise together with the *kavanah* of those few people who know how to have the right *kavanah*."