

Veche Maaminim

A Weekly Pamphlet From "Bney Emunim"

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Peninei Emunim

Pearls of Tefillah in the Parashah

Giving Tzedakah L'Shem Shamayim

"ויקחו לי תרומה מאת כל איש אשר ידבנו לבו תקחו את תרומתי" (כה ב)

Rashi explains: "Veyikchu Li – l'Shemi, for the sake of My Name." This means that the *terumah* should be *l'Shem Hashem* only, and not in order to attain any other goal, such as pursuing honor and suchlike. The Rebbe Harav Moshe Yechiel of Ozhrov explained that in order for the *terumah* to be sanctified only for Hashem, without any hubris or personal objectives, the one who gives it must recognize the fact that everything that he has belongs to HaKadosh Baruch Hu, Who gave him the money as a deposit, and that nothing is his. Therefore, the Ari HaKadosh instituted to give *tzedakah* while saying *Vayevarech Dovid*, with the words "V'Atah moshel bakol" (*Divrei Hayamim* I, 29:12), because giving *tzedakah* with the recognition that HaKadosh Baruch Hu rules everything, and all the possession that a person has belong to his Creator, is considered doing so with the right *kavanah* and is wanted Above.

Be'er Moshe

Dwelling of the Shechinah Depends on the 'Lev' and Not on the 'Binyan'

"ועשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם" (כה ה)
Why does it say "*besocham*" in the plural, and not "*besocho*"?

Harav Yosef Pachonovsky of Lodz, explained:

The commandment 'V'asu Li mikdash' also includes the commandment for all the generations to build *batei knessios* in Jewish communities (*Zohar Naso* 126 1), and as

Chazal say (*Megillah* 29a), the *beis knesses* is called a *mikdash me'at*. That is why the *passuk* stresses "*Veshachanti besocham*" – in those who do it, and not in the Mikdash. This means to say: "Even if it will be a big, elegant building, I will not rest My Shechinah there unless those who build it come to shul in the morning and evening to daven and serve Hashem."

He added another explanation: "*V'asu Li mikdash*" is a *siman* for "*veshachanti besocham*." The fact that Bnei Yisrael give generously of their money to build the Mishkan indicates that I have dwelling in their hearts for a long time already, and that My Honor is precious to them.

Pardes Yosef

The Keruvim Spread Their Wings at the Times of the Tefillos

"והיו הכרובים פרשי כנפים למעלה סככים בכנפיהם על הכפרת ופניהם איש אל אחיו" (כה ז)

The holy *Zohar* (*Acharei Mos* 59 1) explains that initially, the *Keruvim* were formed with their wings at the sides of their bodies, however three times a day, a miracle was done "and the *Keruvim* would spread their wings" on their own. And the *Tiferes Shlomo* wrote that such a wondrous miracle, that an inanimate block of gold should spread its wings three times a day, was the greatest of the miracles done in the Mikdash. Through this remarkable miracle, HaKadosh Baruch Hu showed His love for Klal Yisrael, and to what extent He desires their *tefillos*, that at the time of each of the three *tefillos* the *Keruvim* would spread their wings, as if davening for Klal Yisrael.

Tiferes Shlomo

Pischu Shearim

Open the Gates

A word from the founder and Nasi of Bney Emunim

'Aromimcha Elokai HaMelech'

There is an interesting pattern in *Birchos Hashachar*, that each of the *brachos* begins with "*Baruch Atah Hashem Elokeinu Melech Ha'olam*." The halachic reason that with other groups of *brachos*, only the first *brachah* begins with "*Baruch*," is because all the *brachos* that follow are considered a "*brachah semuchah lechavertah*," which does not begin with "*Baruch*." *Birchos Hashachar* are different from other groups of *brachos* because they were not originally instituted to be recited together. Rather, each one was instituted as a *brachah* in its own right. (*Tosafos Brachos* 46a, ad loc. *Kol*)

Yet, it is impossible to ignore the fact that can serve as a daily reminder for us, that as soon as we get up, we should remind ourselves over and over that there is a King in the world, and we have a purpose, which is to serve Him and make *brachos* with His Name.

Rabi Yochanan says (*Brachos* 40b): "Every *brachah* that does not have *Malchus* is not a *brachah*." From his words it is clear that saying "*Melech Ha'Olam*" is not only an addition to the *brachah*, it is the *ikkar*, the main part of the *brachah*, because that is the purpose of the *brachah*, to cause us to understand that Hashem is the King of the world, and we must accept upon ourselves the Yoke of His Kingship.

We must therefore rejoice with this wonderful opportunity that is given to us each morning to be *mamlich Hashem* again and again. When we say time after time, with *kavanah*, the words *Melech Ha'olam*, surely we will merit to take upon ourselves *Ol Malchus Shamayim* with love.

Moreover, answering amen after *Birchos Hashachar* is what completes the *Kabbalas Ol Malchus Shamayim*, as Chazal say (*Shabbos* 119b), "amen" is an acronym for "*K-l Melech Ne'eman*." Each time the *mevarech* declares that Hashem is the King of the World, the one who answers amen agrees with his words that he is indeed the "*K-l Melech Ne'eman*."

Good Shabbos,
Yaakov Dov Marmurstein

I Will Sing to You Hashem – No Matter What You Do to Me

It was Rosh Chodesh Iyar 5780, during the peak of the "first wave" of coronavirus in Eretz Yisrael. Rav Herschel Cohen, an eminent *askan* and Breslover *chassid* in Yerushalayim, was one of the names added to the list of ill people. He began to feel symptoms of corona, his fever rose, and he was assailed by a severe cough.

At first he hoped, that like most people, it was a relatively mild illness that would pass within a few days. But when a week later, he began to feel serious breathing difficulties, he realized that it was considerably more serious. One of his family members hastened to bring him an oximeter, which indicated that his oxygen levels were dangerously low. Under advice of senior medical *askanim*, Reb Herschel was taken to the hospital, from where the situation rapidly escalated.

As part of corona protocols, his family had to stay outside the hospital, and he was left alone. The doctors, who had been updated about his dangerous condition, quickly connected him to various devices. The tests indicated that his condition was even more perilous than they had thought, and the doctors informed him that there

was scheduled to get married a few weeks hence, coming to Har Hazeisim to invite him to the *chuppah*, and his children weeping as they said *Kaddish* at his *mittah*. The thought that at such a young age he would leave this world and his family broke his heart.

He almost fell into a state of despair, but then, in the depths of the darkness, a piercing question flashed through his mind: "Herschel, what is with you? Did you already say 'thank You' to the Ribbono shel Olam...?" As a close *talmid* of Harav Yaakov Meir Shechter, *shlita*, who speaks extensively on the subject, Reb Herschel was aware of the importance of thanking Hashem for everything that happened to him – good or not so good – and he had instilled this practice in his family as well.

He concentrated on Rashi's explanation on the *passuk* in *Tehillim* (101:1) "*Chessed umishpat ashirah Lecha Hashem azamerah*," – when You do *chesed* with me, I will praise you, '*Baruch Hatov Vehameitiv*,' and when You deal justice to me, I will sing '*Baruch Dayan Ha'emes*.' Either way, '*Lecha Hashem azamerah*,' I will sing to You Hashem."

These words of Rashi had always accompanied Reb Herschel every step of the way. Now, as he lay helplessly on his bed, a few moments after hearing the harsh news that there was a significant chance that these were his last conscious moments on this world, he made the effort with his meager strength to move his lips to say a few words:

"Ribbono shel Olam, I thank You for all the *chesed* that you do for me, I know that everything You do is for the best, and whether I awaken from the sedation or not, I thank You..."

At the same time, not surprisingly, Reb Herschel's lips began to move, as if of their own accord, singing the moving tune composed by the Pittsburger Rebbe, *zt"l*, on the Shabbos his young daughter passed away, as he tried to distract himself from his grief until Shabbos ended. The song was to the words of *tefillah*: "*Veyeida kol pa'ul ki Atah pe'alto, veyavin kol yetzur ki Atah yetzarto...*"

The Pittsburger Rebbe prepared with this song for his daughter's *levayah*, and Reb Herschel felt that he was preparing with it for his own funeral... When the anesthesiologist, a religious Jew, entered the room and found the patient laying with his eyes closed and singing the poignant tune, he could not help but join him, as his own tears flowed. With the *niggun* on his lips, he sedated Reb Herschel.

Over the next few days, it appeared that the gloomy predictions of the doctors were coming true. Reb Herschel's organs failed one by one, his lungs were 'finished.' At one point, the doctors advised the family to prepare for the funeral...

But his friends and family had no intentions of giving up. They began to storm the Heavens in *tefillah* for him. The name "Tzvi Herschel ben Yehudis" was dispatched all over the world, and tens of thousands of men, women and children, most of whom did not know him, davened fervently on his behalf and took on *kabbalos* in his merit. Advertisements pleaded with people to say *Mizmor Lesodah* with great *kavanah* as a merit for him, and at the conclusion of the campaign, no less than 50,000 *Mizmor Lesodahs* were said for Reb Herschel's merit.

The *tefillas* and *kabbalos* seemed to be effective because two weeks after the sedation, after doctors had already given up on his life, and on the day they wanted to begin ventilating him through a trach, a risky procedure, Reb Herschel suddenly awoke, as if from a long night's sleep. He motioned to the doctors that he wanted to get up from the bed. The doctors stood openmouthed around his bed. Reb Herschel had awakened from his coma weak and debilitated, but two weeks after that, he danced at his daughter's wedding, as if nothing had happened.

"We've never seen such a thing," the doctors agreed. "A ventilated, sedated patient, in such a poor state, awakening after two weeks and making such a rapid recovery, that is something that doesn't fit in with anything we've learned or seen in medicine..."

The doctors could not explain his miraculous recovery, but to Reb Herschel and those who know him it was clear. After all, they had always been saying over and over: "Say thank You and see *yeshuos*."

Heard firsthand



Hadassah Ein Kerem Hospital

was no choice but to sedate him and intubate him, and hope that this would save his life.

Upon hearing the news, Reb Herschel was utterly shocked, and could barely respond. "What are the chances of me awakening after the sedation?" he asked the doctor tremulously.

"I'm sorry to tell you, but the chances are slight," the doctor replied.

Reb Herschel lay on the bed helplessly, waiting for the anesthesiologist to arrive, and at the same time contemplating the significance of what he had just heard. In his mind's eye, he saw his daughter, a *kallah*, who

The Brachah of Chonen Hada'as

Source of the Brachah

After the first three *brachos*, which are the *brachos* of praise, the Anshei Knesses Hagedolah instituted that we recite the *birchos bakashah*, the *brachos* of requests, in which a person asks for his needs. The first three requests are dedicated to spiritual matters: "*Atah Chonen*," "*Hashiveinu*" and "*Selach Lanu*." (*Sefer Chassidim* 752)

Chazal (*Megillah* 17b) learned that we have to ask for "*binah*" after the *brachah* of *Kedushah*, from the fact that the *passuk* (*Yeshayahu* 29:23): "*Vehikdishu es Kedosh Yaakov*" indicating the *brachah* of *Kedushah*, is followed by the *passuk* (ibid 24) "*Veyad'u to'ei ruach binah*," which alludes to the request for *binah*, wisdom.

Structure of the Brachah

This *brachah* is different from the subsequent *birchos bakashah* in that it begins with praise (*Atah Chonen*) and concludes with a request (*Choneinu Me'Itcha*). This is in contrast to the *brachos* that follow, which begin with a request and conclude with praise. This is because the first three *brachos* are praise, therefore, the first *brachah* that is adjacent to them also begins with praise, and only afterwards, does it switch to terms of request. (*Iyun Tefillah*, in the name of Maharshada"1)

Furthermore, we know from Chazal (*Niddah* 30b) that the fetus in his mother's womb is taught the entire Torah, and during the birth, and then the angel comes and taps him on the mouth and he forgets all that he learned. The commentators explain that this learning with the angel is not for naught; in fact, when a person toils in his learning, that which he has learned returns to him (see *Eitz Yosef*, ibid). So we find that the request for wisdom is different than the other requests in that we ask that Hashem should return to us something that was taken from us before birth. Therefore, it is only with this *brachah* that we first say "*Atah Chonen L'Adam Da'as*" – meaning before the person was born, and therefore, we ask that You give us the merit again to understand that which we have already learned and known. (Harav T. Y. Michelson, Rav of Plonsk, *Kovetz Tel Talpiyos*, Vol. VII, 22)

There is another explanation: The nature of a person is to trust in wisdom, and therefore, he is not as aware to daven for it, the same way he davens for things that he feels are more dependent on Hashem. (See *Rabbeinu Yona*, *Mishlei* 3 5). Therefore, it was instituted to first say "*Atah Chonen L'adam da'as*" in order to make a person more aware that he should not rely on his wisdom, and rather, he should daven for Hashem to grant him wisdom (*Sifsei Chaim* – *Rinas Chaim*, *Biurei Tefillas Shemoneh Esreh*, p. 86)

The Kavanah of Amen

It is true that we must thank for the wisdom that Hashem granted a person, and *halevai* that He should grant us to always be able to conduct ourselves with wisdom and knowledge. (See *Siddur Nehora Hashalem*)

Essence of the Brachah

Chazal say (*Nedarim* 41a): "*Dida bei* [one who has wisdom] – *kula bei* [has everything]; *delo da bei, ma bei?*" This is because wisdom is the most necessary thing for a person, both to make acquisitions on a physical level, and for spiritual acquisitions (*Maharsha* ibid). The wisdom is so vital that Chazal instituted that we ask for it in the first *brachah* of our requests (*Brachos* 33a).

Aside for this, logic makes it necessary to precede all the other *brachos* with a *brachah* for wisdom because all the other *brachos* are dependent on it. A person who has no wisdom will not understand the necessity of the requests in *tefillah*, and will not be aware how much a person must cast his lot solely on His Creator. (*Rashba*, *Chiddushei Aggados*, *Brachos* ibid).

Saying Atah Chonantanu on Motzaei Shabbos

Chazal instituted to add each Motzaei shabbos and Yom Tov in this *brachah* the *tefillah* of "*Atah Chonantanu*." It is called "*Havdalah Shebatefillah*" (*Brachos* 33a). The connection between *Havdalah* and the *brachah* of *Chonen Hada'as* is explained in the *Gemara* in *Maseches Brachos* (33a) in two ways: Rav Yosef explains that the ability to differentiate between *kodesh* and *chol* depends on wisdom, and therefore, it was instituted to make the *Havdalah* in this *brachah*. Chazal explain that because *Havdalah* indicates the transition from Shabbos to weekday, it is therefore fitting to say it in the first *brachah* that is said only during the week, which is *Atah Chonen*.

Chazal further explain (*Yerushalmi Brachos* 5b, see *Magen Avraham* 294 1) that just like it is forbidden for a person to do *melachah* before making *Havdalah*, likewise, he must not demand his needs before making *Havdalah*, and therefore, he should make *Havdalah* in the first *brachah* of the *birchos bakashah*.

The *tefillah* of *Atah Chonantanu* is said in the middle of the *brachah*, after the words "*L'enosh binah*". The *Levush* (294 1) explained that in the words "*Atah chonen l'adam da'as*" we thank for the wisdom that HaKadosh Baruch Hu put in the heart of a person to understand and delve into the ways of the world and its practices. But in the *tefillah* of "*Atah Chonantanu Lemada Torasecha*" we especially thanks for the wisdom given to Am Yisrael to understand the words of Torah, and through that power they know how to differentiate between *Kodesh* and *chol*.

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

Otzros Emunim

Tefillah Is Accepted in the Merit of Answering Amen

Answering Amen Opens the Gates of Tefillah

The holy *Zohar* (*Vayeilech* 285 2) writes that when Am Yisrael are careful to answer amen properly, then when they daven to Hashem about their troubles, a Voice announces in the all the worlds: "*Pischu she'arim veyavo goy tzaddik shomer emunim*" (*Yeshayahu* 26:2) – do not read it "*emunim*" rather "*amenim*." Open the gates – just like Am Yisrael opened the gates of *brachos*, so too, the gates of *tefillah* will be opened before them and their *tefillos* will be accepted.

The *Tikkunei Zohar* further states (40 1): It is said of one who answers amen with all his might (ibid 58:9): "*Az tikra v'Hashem ya'aneh*." The word אָ is numerically equivalent to eight, and the word amen is numerically equivalent to the Names of Hava-yah and Adnus, which together have eight letters.

Answering Amen as Another Tefillah

The *passuk* in *Tehillim* says (27:14): "*Kaveh el hashem chazak v'ya'emetz libecha vekaveh el Hashem*." Chazal say (*Midrash Tehillim* ibid) "If you davened, and then davened again, you will be told that your *tefillah* is heard." Rabbeinu Yona (*Iggeres Hateshuvah* 9) explained that "*nispallalta vechazarta venispallalta*" is after the person davens the quiet *Shemoneh Esreh*, he listens to *Chazaras Hasha"tz* and answers amen with *kavanah*, and thus he is like someone who davened two *tefillos* and he is guaranteed that his *tefillah* is heard.

This can be compared to someone who sends a letter or package. Even if he invested a lot of effort in writing the letter, or preparing the package, it will not be able to fulfill its purpose if he does not make sure that it is sent properly to its destination. The same is true here: The quiet *Shemoneh Esreh* is compared to a letter or package that are ready to be sent, and answering amen after the *sha"tz* is the way through which it is guaranteed that the *tefillah* reaches its destination. (*Yishma Me'heichalo Koli*, p. 151)

Answering Amen Should Apply to His Tefillah

Chazal (*Brachos* 55b) say that someone who had a dream but doesn't understand its meaning – if it is good or bad – should stand before the Kohanim during *Birchas Kohanim* and say a special *tefillah* [whose *nusach* is brought in the *Gemara* there] and should conclude it when the Kohanim conclude their *brachah*. This way, when the *tzibbur* answers amen to *Birchas Kohanim*, the amen should apply to his request as well. The *Aruch Hashulchan* added (*Orach Chaim* 130 1) that the reason that it is not enough for the dreamer to daven during the time of *Birchas Kohanim*, which is an *eis ratzon*, and it is necessary to conclude his request with the Kohanim so that the amen applies to his *brachah*, is "because answering amen is very effective to having his *tefillah* accepted."

Igros Emunim

Readers' Letters

Dear Vechol Ma'aminim,

You should be blessed for the work that you do. Instead of waging an explanation campaign about the severity of the prohibition of talking during davening, you chose to explain to the public the importance of a *brachah* and of each amen. Anyone who speaks during davening or *Krias HaTorah* is now aware of the tremendous loss caused each time he misses saying amen with *kavanah*.

I wanted to share with you a beautiful *remez* that teaches us about the importance of answering amen in shul. In *Tehillim* (84:1) the *passuk* says "כִּי טוֹב יוֹם בַּחֲצִירֶיךָ מֵאֶלֶף בַּחֲרֹתֶיךָ..." The numerical value of the first letter of each word of the *passuk* adds up to exactly ninety-one! This teaches us that the reason Dovid Hamelech chose to bask in the House of Hashem is because of the many amens that are heard there.

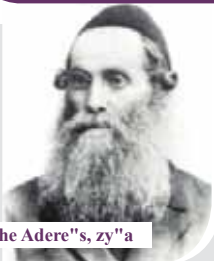
A good idea, which I practice, *baruch Hashem*, is that every time I get up to go to shul, I think about the many *mitzvos* that I am meriting at the time that I rose to go daven, and going to shul, and the hundreds of *mitzvos* I am going to merit through the amens I will answer in shul.

With best wishes,
Y.S.B. - London

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Tzaddik B'Emunaso

Amen and Brachos in the Teachings of One Who Has Yahrtzeit



The Adere's, zy"a

The Adere's

3 Adar 5665

Harav Eliyahu Dovid Rabinowitz-Te'umim, known by the acronym the "Adere's", was born in 5603 in the town of Piklin, Lithuania to his father, Rav Binyamin, who was the Rav of the

town. Even before he was thirty years old, he was appointed Rav of the city of Ponevezh, where he served for twenty years. In 5654, he was appointed Rav of Mir. In 5661, he came to Eretz Yisrael, after being invited by the elder Rav of Yerushalayim, Harav Shmuel Salant, to serve alongside him. But about four years later, during the lifetime of Rav Salant, he passed away on 3 Adar I, 5665, and was buried on Har Hazeisim.

A Deep Love for Answering Amen

"I would be very, very careful about answering amen, already from my childhood, and I hold this mitzvah very dear and run to do it, until it is has become almost a nature for me, as I have become accustomed to hearing *Birchos Hashachar* from a number of people. All who see me should learn from me to do this and to love answering amen. At first, they would be derisive, and did not hold this mitzvah to be important, and can it be small if Chazal were so excessive in its praise?! And in this easy way each person can acquire Olam Haba for himself, to fulfill this mitzvah in the hundreds, each day, easily, and without tiring."