

Vechele Maaminim

A Weekly Pamphlet From "Bney Emunim"

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Peninei Emunim

Pearls of Tefillah in the Parashah

A Name Written by Four

"ויעשו את ציין נזר הקדש זהב טהור ויכתבו עליו מכתב פתוחי חותם קדש לה'" (לט ה) Why does it say "vayichtevu" – in the plural? How many people wrote it together?

The **Imrei Emes** explained:

In *Maseches Yoma* (38a) it says that *Chazal* condemned the "Ben Kamtzar" for not revealing to others the secret through which he would write four letters at one time, which is why he could write the Shem Hava-yah all at one time. The virtue of writing the Name in one time is that the Name is not lacking for even one moment (*Tosafos Yom Tov Yoma* 3 11, in the name of the *Yefe Mareh*). Furthermore, this way he refrained from marring the Shem ה-י because when writing the שם ה-י letter after letter, we find that first he writes ה-י and then that is marred by adding the *vav* the follows. (*Minchas Chinuch* 437 6).

Based on this we can say that in order to write the Name on the *tzitz* with utmost *hiddur*, without any pauses or marring, four people needed to write it together, and that is why it says "vayichtevu, and they wrote."

Imrei Emes Tetzaveh 5692; *Vayelaket Yosef* p. 41

Shleimus Hamitzovs Even After the Mishkan Was Built

"ותכל כל עבדת המשכן אהל מועד ויעשו בני ישראל ככל אשר צוה ה'" (לט לב)

Harav Shlomo Kluger explained: The *passuk* praises Bnei Yisrael that even after the construction of the Mishkan, which atoned for their sins, as we say in the *Haggadah* "And He built for us

the Bais Habechirah *lechaper al kol avonoseinu* to atone for all our sins," they did not become lax in observing *mitzvos*. Rather, "And Bnei Yisrael did all that Hashem commanded them."

Imrei Shefer

To Daven "Ka'asher Tzivah Hashem"

"ויבא את הארון אל המשכן וישם את פרכת המסך ויסך על ארון העדות כאשר צוה ה' את משה" (מ כא)

The *Baal Haturim* wrote that the nineteen commandments of "tzivuy" – such as at the end of this *passuk* "Ka'asher tzivah Hashem es Moshe" – are said in this *parashah* regarding the work of the Mishkan. Corresponding to them, *Chazal* instituted the 19 *brachos* in the *Amidah*. He added: In the nineteen commandments, there are together 113 words, the number of words in the closing line of all the *brachos* in the *tefillah* of the *Amidah*, and equivalent to the number of times the word לב appears in the Torah [in various forms]. This teaches us that we should have special *kavanah* in the heart when completing these *brachos*.

Regarding the importance of *kavanah* when concluding the *brachos* of *Shemoneh Esreh*, **Harav Yitzchak of Korbil**, author of the *Sma"k* (11) wrote: "Rav Eliezer of Worms wrote in his *sefer* that it is very good to have *kavanah* in the closing line of each *brachah*, because they have 113 words, equivalent to the number of words in *Tefillas Chana*. Thus, anyone who has *kavanah* in his request [the body of the *brachah*] and doesn't have *kavanah* in praise of Hashem [in the closing line] is obligating himself."

Chazon Yechezke

Pischu Shearim

Open the Gates

A word from the founder and Nasi of Bney Emunim

A Shemoneh Esreh of Sorts in Birchos Hashachar

In this space, we usually address something relating to answering amen and especially regarding *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa*. At the same time, I constantly peruse the *brachos* and requests that we do not explicitly answer amen to, as they are found within the *nusach* of a long *brachah*, but they contain entire worlds of *tefillos* and wishes that we all need.

I mean, of course, the extensive list found at the end of *Birchos Hashachar*, in the *brachah* of *Hama'avir Sheinah*, which concludes with "Hagomel Chassadim Tovim L'Amo Yisrael."

This *brachah*, which begins, like those that precede it, with gratitude, then segues into a list of lofty and special requests, as we plead for that which is most important – our *ruchniyus*, our spiritual wellbeing!

After we have concluded thanking the Creator in *Birchos Hashachar* for all the good that He does for us, spiritually and materially, it is only natural that we should then ask Him to help us in the battle of the *yetzer hara*, which is renewed each and every morning.

Even when we recite *Birchos Hashachar* properly, with someone to answer amen, or we listen at our turn, it is not worthwhile to speed through this *brachah*. We should peruse it calmly, and we will merit an abundance of good *hashpa'os* throughout the day.

Whenever I listen to this request being recited by another *mispallel*, I answer 'amen' to myself after each of the requests. Of course, after the closing statement, which contains the significant words "Hagomel Chassadim Tovim L'Amo Yisrael" the cry 'amen' bursts forth, with the *kavanah* that this is true, and correct, and *halevai*, may it be His will that it come true!

With a *tefillah* that we merit to see the *chassadim* of Hashem,

Good Shabbos

Yaakov Dov Marmurstein

A Yeshuah During Davening...

This story took place a long time ago, but was only recently related by the person it happened to, who today is the father of a large family *baruch Hashem*.

The day Betzalel celebrated his thirtieth birthday was a very significant one for him. The truth is that “celebrated” is not a suitable word in this context, because beginning at sundown on the eve of his birthday until sundown the next day, he did not emerge from his room. Even when members of his family and his friends knocked at the door, he chose to ignore them. Betzalel was an older *bochur*, and despite being talented and intelligent, and having many virtues, and despite spending most of his time in yeshivah learning, he still had not found his *zivug*. Now, on this thirtieth birthday, tired of failures, he felt like he was at rock bottom. For some reason, he felt guilty about his situation, and this caused him to feel deep despair.



A plate that was broken at the *tena'im*.

Hence, instead of receiving *brachos* from his friends and family, and returning those blessings, he lay in bed, alone in his room, and let the waves of despair and failure wash over him.

Betzalel had been through a tough and painful year. His family and friends tried to help him at first, but he chose to keep a distance from them. He was becoming addicted to his sense of despair and failure. His avoidance of leaving his room only increased his fear of doing so, and it became even more difficult. At one point, he already began to tell himself that it wasn't worthwhile for him to go out, especially now... Everyone would probably point at him, and have pity, and then they'd run away to avoid him...

Things were reaching a breaking point; he almost felt that he would be better off dead than alive, until Ephraim came along.

Ephraim was an old friend, one of the few who had maintained real ties with him. Ephraim had moved with his family abroad, but he did not stop his contact with Betzalel. He made sure to call every Friday, to speak for a few minutes, share what was going on in his life and to wish him a good Shabbos.

In the last year, he had not been able to contact Betzalel, as his family told Ephraim about Betzalel's dismal situation. It pained him to hear what his friend was going through, and he waited for the next opportunity when he would be in Eretz Yisrael. That chance came almost a year later.

On the first day of his visit, late in the afternoon, he went to visit Betzalel. He knocked at the door, but Betzalel did not open. “Betzalel, it's me, Ephraim,” he called. Betzalel was so stunned that he hurriedly got out of bed and washed his hands.

Ephraim was stunned at Betzalel's appearance, but didn't speak much. “Betzalel, there's someone you've got to meet. Get dressed quickly and we'll go...”

In shock, Betzalel was surprisingly obedient.

He asked his friend to wait a few minutes; he washed his face, and got ready to go. He silently followed Ephraim.

Ephraim walked through the alleys of Yerushalayim and stopped next to a small, old house. He knocked at the door, and it was opened by an elderly, venerable looking Rav.

The Rav listened to Betzalel's story, and for the first time, Betzalel felt like someone understood his pain. When he finished, the Rav buried his face in his hands and became immersed in his thoughts. Finally, he raised his eyes and asked: “Are you strict to daven each morning before *zman tefillah*...?”

Betzalel lowered his eyes and didn't answer. *Zman tefillah*? Who even

talked about that... Was the Rav not aware of his difficult emotional state...?

The Rav understood it all... He looked at Betzalel with his sagacious eyes and said, “My dear boy, you are still a young *bochur*; your hope is not lost. Make sure each day from now on to daven *Shacharis* before *zman tefillah* and *b'ezras Hashem*, your *yeshuah* is guaranteed!”

Betzalel – so battered from disappointments – was not quick to be convinced. “How will the *yeshuah* come? Hasn't every possible *shidduch* already been suggested to me?” But the Rav was insistent. “If you are strict about *zman tefillah*, you will merit to build a *bayis ne'eman b'Yisrael* very soon.”

The *bochur* was impatient – an outcome of his suffering – and dared to ask: “In how long?” The Rav did not get angry; he just gazed at Betzalel with compassion eyes and said, “Within one month.”

The clear answer shook Betzalel to the core. He decided to take his life in hand, and mustered up the bit of energy he still had. The Rav hadn't asked much of him – just to get up and daven before *zman tefillah*.

A month later, Betzalel called the Rav and asked to visit with him. The Rav was busy that day and asked him to come the next day. The next day he came to the Rav and said just two words – words he had waited to say for more than a decade:

“I'm engaged!”

Betzalel thought that all the suggestions had been exhausted, but apparently, abroad, there was still a *shidduch* waiting. Just for him.

The Rav rejoiced with his simcha and Betzalel made a point of adding: “I know with certainty that I became engaged only because I listened to the Rav's idea and made sure to daven before the *zman*,” Betzalel said. “Only after the *shidduch* was closed did I hear from someone in the family that they were aware of my situation in the last year, but the question that they were focused on was: Does the *bochur* get up each morning to daven. As soon as they learned that I am strict to come to davening before the *zman*, the *shidduch* progressed rapidly until completion.”

The Brachah of Refuah

Source of the Brachah

In *Maseches Megillah* (17b) Chazal say that the *brachah* of *Refuah* was placed eighth in the order of the *brachos* of *Shemoneh Esreh* to correspond with the *bris milah*, that takes place on the eighth day, because *milah* needs a *refuah*. But then the question arises: Is it only *milah* that needs a *refuah*?

The Imrei Emes explained: Because there were times that the only time a *refuah* was necessary was for a newly circumcised person, as described in the *Gemara* (*Bava Metziah* 87a) that until the time of Yaakov Avinu there was no weakness in the world, and the *Midrash* says (*Bamidbar Rabbah* 7a) that at Matan Torah all the sick were healed, therefore, the *brachah* of *Refuah* is attributed to *milah*. (*Birchas Eliyahu* [Harav Elya Fisher, Rosh Kollel Gur in America] p. 317)

Similarly, Harav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach related: Because the sins are what cause all disease, we find that *l'asid lavo*, at the time of the *Geulah*, when HaKadosh Baruch Hu will excise the *yetzer hara* from this world, there will be no more disease, and healing will only be needed for one who has performed the mitzvah of *milah*. Therefore, Chazal instituted the *brachah* of *Refa'einu* as eighth, corresponding to *milah*. (*Mizmor Lesodah* p. 184)

Structure of the Brachah

In the Rambam's *nsuach* of the *brachos* of *tefillah*, this *brachah* begins with the words "*Refa'einu Hashem Elokeinu veneirafei*." But the *Rokeach* (*Peirush Siddur Hatefillah* 52) wrote that because the beginning of this *brachah* is based on the words of the *passuk* in *Yirmiyahu* (17:14): "*Refa'eini Hashem veneirafei hoshieni ve'ivasheah ki tehillasi Atah*", we do not mention "*Elokeinu*" at the beginning of the *brachah* and say "*Refa'einu Hashem veneirafei*."

Later, we ask "*veha'aleh refuah sheleimah lechol makoseinu*." The *Yaavetz* explained that this request relates even to a person who is physically healthy. That is because there are ailments and harmful elements in every person's body, and if not for the HaKadosh Baruch Hu planting in the nature of the body to overpower them before they erupt [through the immune system] we would not be able to withstand them. Therefore, even a healthy person needs a *tefillah* that Hashem should give his body the strength to continue to fight the battle against those concealed diseases. (*Siddur Yaavetz* [Altona 5506] Vol. II, in the comments of the author, p. 26)

Essence of the Brachah

The Ra"n wrote (*Drashos Hara'n*, Sixth *Drush*) that when a person is sick, he has to daven for the healing of his soul and not for the healing of his body. This is because a person takes ill because of his sins, and his primary sin is in his soul and not in his body, because the body will not heal without it first being preceded by healing of the soul. Dovid Hamelech also davened while he was ill for the healing of the soul, as it says (*Tehillim* 41:5): "*Ani amarti, Hashem...heal my soul because I have sinned to You*." The *Reishis Chochmah* writes (*Sha'ar Hateshuvah* Chapter 5): "And it is good to have in mind in the *brachah* of *Refa'einu* about the ailments of the soul."

The Chida cited Rabi Chaim Vital that when a person sins with one of the 248 *mitzvos lo sa'aseh*, then he harms one of the 248 organs that correspond to that sin, and when he transgresses one of the 365 *mitzvos aseh*, then he harms one of the 365 tendons that correspond to them. That is why Yirmiyahu Hanavi asked (*Yirmiyah* 17:4): "*Refa'eini Hashem*" – heal me from the sin that has harmed my soul and therefore, "*v'neirafei*" – my body should heal. "*Hoshi'eni*" – save me from the prosecuting forces created by my sin, "*v'ivasheah*" – from the *yissurim* that come upon us from their prosecutions. (*Tzavarei Shalal – Haftaras Bechukosai*)

'Rofei Cholei Amo Yisrael'

Harav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld explained the difference between the conclusion of the *brachah* of Asher Yatzar "*Rofei chol basar*" and the conclusion of this *brachah* "*Rofei cholei amo Yisrael*":

The *brachah* of Asher Yatzar was instituted as gratitude for the healing of the ailments of '*kol basar*, every being, and therefore we sign it off with the *brachah* of "*Rofei kol basar*." This *brachah*, in contrast, was instituted to correspond to the healing of the *milah*, done on the eighth day, which applies only to "*Amo Yisrael*." (See Source of the *Brachah*, above.) Therefore, it is fitting to sign off *Rofei Cholei Amo Yisrael* (*Chochmas Chaim*, p. 353).

The Kavanah of Amen

It is true that HaKadosh Baruch Hu alone is the *Rofei Cholei Amo Yisrael*, and may it be His Will that He heal us fully.

"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 Completes the Creation of an Angel

Rav Zushe of Anipoli said: Answering amen is the necessary completion of the *brachah*, because one who makes a *brachah* creates only the body of the angel only. It is only after the recital of amen that the soul of the angel created, which gives it life. (*Butzina Kadisha* 31)

Similarly, Rav Shmelke of Nikolsburg said of himself prior to his passing that he was strict all his life not to make a *brachah* without there being someone to answer amen, and he related a wondrous story that happened to him as the result of this practice:

Once, a wealthy person from a nearby town invited him to serve as the *sandak* at the bris for his son. Toward that end, he sent him a horse-drawn carriage driven by a Jewish wagon driver who was boorish and wild. In the middle of the way, when he wanted to make an *Asher Yatzar*, he realized, to his alarm, that there was no one to answer amen after him, because the wagon driver was so coarse and uncouth that there was no way to include him in any matter of *kedushah*.

While the Rav was deliberating what to do, two distinguished people emerged from the thicket and stood next to him. After he recited the *brachah*, they answered amen with such enthusiasm and sweetness – and then disappeared. Rav Shmelke stood there, frightened and moved, until he realized that Heavenly Angels had been sent to him from Above in order to answer amen after his *brachos*. (*Ohel Yitzchak* p. 35)

One Who Wants His Brachos to Be Complete by Answering Amen

At the same time, Rav Shmelke explained the words of the *passuk* in Iyov (23:13): “*Vehu b’echad umi yeshivenu venafsho osah vaya’as.*” We say this in the *nusach* of Rosh Hashanah, and we conclude with the words “*Nora veKadosh.*” He explained:

As noted, answering amen completes the angel that is created by reciting the *brachah*. If so, what should a person do if he is compelled to be home alone or is walking alone on the way and there is no one to answer amen to him? Therefore, the *passuk* says “*Vehu b’echad*” – when a person makes a *brachah* alone, “*umi yeshivenu*” – and there is no one to answer amen after him, then if “*venafsho osah*” – if he wants his *brachah* to be completed by amen, because then “*vaya’as nora vekadosh*” he can effect awesome things – that an angel will be sent from Above to answer amen to complete his *brachah* (*ibid*).

Igros Emunim

Readers' Letters

Dear *Vechol Ma’aminim*,

I would like to express my appreciation for the tremendous *zikui harabbim* that you have merited with your work.

In the pamphlet of *Parashas Bo*, the Nasi of Bney Emunim cited *sefer Derech Moseh* that a *chassid* fasted so that it should be revealed to him the reason the *Geulah* is being delayed. He saw in a dream that the *Geulah* is being delayed because people are not strict to answer amen on *brachos* that they make asking for the *Geulah*.

I wanted to add that *Chazal* say (*Shabbos* 31a) that after the passing of a person, when he has to give a reckoning of his deeds, he will be asked specifically about matters that he is obligated to do in his life. One of them is “*Tzipisa l’yeshuah*” – did you await the *Geulah* and the arrival of *Mashiach* as *Hashem* promised to the *Nevi'im*.

According to *Derech Moshe* it would seem that the main part of awaiting the *yeshuah* is expressed in answering amen after the *brachos* of the *Geulah*. Anyone who is lax about this will not be able to answer positively to this question. It is possible that this is what being alluded to when it says that one of the additional questions will be “*nasasa venasata b’emunah.*” This alludes to the answering of amen, as a person is asked if he was suitably scrupulous about answering amen, and if he negotiated about it, like a person who is managing a business which is the focus of his mind.

With much blessing,
A.R., Lakewood, New Jersey

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 tziyun of the Shevet Mussar in the Jewish cemetery in Izmir, Turkey.

The Shevet Mussar

8 Adar 5489

Rav Eliyahu Hakohein Ha’itamari was born to his father, Avraham Shlomo Hakohen, in 5419 in Izmir, Turkey. He rose to great levels in *Nigleh* and *Nistar*, and was known for his *drashos*

and *seforim*. The Chida said of him (*Shem Hagedolim* 1:165): “He brought many back from sin with his *drashos* and rebuke and the sweetness of his speech.”

Rabbeinu Chaim authored more than thirty *seforim*, the most well-known among them *Shevet Mussar*, which was printed in dozens of editions. He passed away on 8 Adar II 5489, and was buried in Izmir.

Meah Brachos

In the order of the *aleph-beis*, the letters ז and ק are next to one another, to teach us that anyone who is strict to recite 100 *brachos* a day is called a צדיק. (*Midrash Talpiyos* 2 *Anaf Sod Birchas Besulim*)

Answering Amen

When a person answers amen, this word makes his body holy and through that his soul can return to his body at *techiyas hameisim*. For that reason, Rabi Meir said (*Sanhedrin* 110b) “From when does a child earn *Olam Haba*? ... From when he begins to say amen.” (*Aggadas Eliyahu, Shevi’is* Chapter 4)