

# VeChol Maaminim

A Weekly Pamphlet From "Bney Emunim"

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## Peninei Emunim

Pearls of Tefillah in the Parashah

## Pischu Shearim

Open the Gates

### 'Nosein' – Each Day Anew

”דבר אל בני ישראל ואמרת אליהם כי תבאו אל הארץ אשר אני נתן לכם ושבתה הארץ שבת לה” (כה ב)

Why does the Torah say “El ha’aretz asher Ani nosein” in the present tense?

**Harav Yaakov Katina**, Av Beis Din of Chusht, explained:

In order to merit to feel the lofty kedushah of Eretz Ysrael, a person must be on a suitable level of kedushah. The higher a person rises on the levels of his kedushah, the higher is his understanding of the kedushah of the land. Therefore, the Torah writes here: “El ha’aretz asher Ani nosein,” in the present, because the gift of the Land is giving to a person each day anew, depending in the value of his level of kedushah that he rose to that day.

Similarly, we can explain the reason that Birchas HaTorah concludes in the present “Nosein HaTorah.” Because the more a person adds toil to his Torah, the more deeply he understands it, and thus it is like he receives it again each day anew.

*Korban Ha’ani*

### 'Your Field' and 'Your Vineyard' – From the Power of Keeping Shemittah

”שש שנים תזרע שדך ושש שנים תזמר כרמך ואספת את תבואתה; ובשנה השביעית שבת שבתון יהיה לארץ” (כה ג-ד)

**Harav Moshe Leib Litsch-Rosenbaum**, a talmid of the Chasam Sofer, explained:

Chazal say (Brachos 35a) that until a person fulfills his obligation to bless his Creator for the food, the land and its fruits are considered hekdesch and forbidden in pleasure, as it says “L’Hashem ha’aretz uemeloah” (Tehillim 24:1). Only after the brachah does the land get transferred to his ownership, and he is allowed to benefit from it, as it says (ibid 115:16): “Veha’aretz nasan livnei adam.”

There is a similar idea alluded to in these pesukim: When are the field and the vineyard considered ‘your field’ and ‘your vineyard’? Only after you fulfill your obligation to your Creator, with the fulfillment of the commandment “And in the seventh year, it should be a Shabbos Shabason for the Land.”

*Imros Hashem Hashalem*

A word from the founder and Nasi of Bney Emunim

### 'Kedai Hu Rabi Shimon Lismoch Alav'

We are approaching the holy day of Lag BaOmer, the hilula of the Tanna Rabi Shimon Bar Yochai, zy”a.

Just the mention of Lag BaOmer sends a shiver of emotion through us, and raises memories of going up to the tziyun in Meron, the site of the holy hilula, where joy and prayer combine and rise like a fiery flame On High – effecting yeshuos and bringing down compassion and abundance to all of Am Yisrael.

The power of Rashbi, as Chazal tell us (Brachos 9a): “Kedai hu Rabi Shimon lismoch alav b’shas hadchak,” it is worth relying on Rabi Shimon in a time of trouble, is very lofty, and who does not want to merit any type of connection to Rabi Shimon and Lag BaOmer?

However, not everyone merits to actually ascend to the Upper Galilee, whether because of the distance, or because of various restrictions, similar to what we have experienced in recent years. First it was the corona pandemic that prevented us from going, and last year, the tragic incident on lag BaOmer night, when 45 precious souls were taken from us, zichronam livrachah.

We do not know how the traditional pilgrimage to Meron will look this year, and we hope and pray that all will be in the best way possible, with joy, and peace. However, connecting to the teachings of Rashbi, and thus to merit salvation and to have our tefillos answered, can be done in every place, and at

every time.

In numerous places through the holy Zohar, Rashbi expounds in the virtue of answering amen; this is not the place to delve into them. But it is worthwhile to emphasize his words in Parashas Vayeilech (285 2), where he writes that a person who is strict to answer amen properly merits to have a Bas Kol declare: “Pischu she’arim vetiskabel tefillaso,” open the gates and his tefillah will be accepted. We have a clear promise from the holy Tanna, that if we strengthen our observance of answering amen, then the gates of tefillah will be opened to us.

Of course, adhering to this custom of early sages, and the Arizal, to strengthen the recital of Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa before davening, is the worthy preparation that helps our tefillos be accepted. As the passuk (Tehillim 69:14) that we say as we enter shul alludes: “Aneini b’emes yishecha.” And amen means emes, truth. So in the merit of amen, Hashem will answer us and send us salvation.

If we have the proper kavanah in our tefillos by answering amen after Birchos Hashachar, surely we will merit to see to what extent “Kedai hu Rabi Shimon lismoch alav,” as the gates of tefillah will be opened to us, and our tefillos will be willingly accepted.

With the prayer of “Shaarei Shamayim P’sach,”

**Good Shabbos,  
Yaakov Dov Marmurstein**

## One Story of a Yeshuah That Led to a Story of a Yeshuah

It was in 5772, and passersby on one of the streets in an Israeli chareidi city held their breaths in horror. A very heavy truck had lost its brakes and began to roll down the street to the unknown... The driver of the truck struggled mightily to brake, and when he was finally able to, it was too late for Rabbi S., who was crossing the street in front of his house at just that moment.

Rabbi S., a father of eight, lay on the street motionless, after he was hit by the truck. His life, and that of his family, had been overturned in a second. Critically injured, he was raced to the hospital, but the doctors gave no chance for survival. "It's a matter of hours, or days, possibly weeks," they reported tonelessly. "Internal organs have been irreparably damaged, and there's not much for us to do," they told the shocked family.

As the days passed and the patient's condition remained unchanged, they

throughout the world. It was hung on bulletin boards and spread in every way possible. A short time afterwards, on Lag BaOmer, when tens of thousands go to Meron, they were welcomed by huge signs with the call for tefillos. Anyone who saw them could not remain indifferent.

Three days after lag BaOmer something encouraging happened. The patient was transferred from the intensive care unit to the respiratory rehabilitation unit. But the doctors hastened to temper any excitement, stating they still thought there was not much of a chance for any recovery.

At the same time, the tefillos did not stop for a minute. On the contrary, they only intensified. The news from the hospital was a ray of hope that infused all the people davening for Rabbi S. with renewed energy. They pleaded with Hashem to grant the patient a full recovery so he could resume his life as it had been.

And that's exactly what happened: A few weeks later, he was released from the hospital, walking on his own two feet, and functioning almost normally. He became a full time father once again as he had been until the accident.

The story made waves around the world; it was clear that Hakadosh Baruch Hu had sent a powerful message to every Yid: When a person who was

almost in the Upper World returned to life, it only happened because of the power of tefillah.

But then the question arose: Where did the family draw this kind of strength from? How had they not given up, and instead persisted on investing their efforts in this massive tefillah rally, despite the pessimistic prognosis?

The father of Rabbi S., Reb Yitzchak S., shared a similar story that he had heard, from which he drew strength to give chizuk to his family to continue their tefillos unabated.

It was the story of Reb Moshe, a middle aged person, who, two weeks after taking some routine tests, was summoned urgently to the doctor's office. The doctor pointed to an image he had taken, and it was easy to see that the worst was happening.

"I'm sorry to tell you that we've discovered the dreaded disease in

your body. Unfortunately, it is in a very advanced state, and there is no real chance to save you," the doctor said.

Reb Moshe left the doctor's office, shattered. He came back seven months later, with a huge bouquet of flowers in his arms...

"Professor, I came to tell you thank you! I owe you my life!" he told the astonished doctor. It took the professor a few minutes to recover and to realize who was standing in front of him. Reb Moshe continued:

"When I was in your office seven months ago, you told me there is no chance. I accepted your words at face value, and decided from that day on to invest all my efforts in the only thing that has eternal chances, and that is prayer.

"At the same time, I decided to go to a clinic to treat my condition, despite the hopelessness of the situation. I decided that along with the tefillah, this was the hishtadlus required of me. But I invested most of my resources in tefillah, and each and every day for seven months, morning, noon and evening, I raised my eyes Heavenwards and said to the Creator: 'I know that by nature, I have no chance, and that is why I believe that only You, the Healer of all flesh, the Almighty, can restore me to the land of the living, and to my family.'

"And here I am, completely healthy. When I received the official letter yesterday stating that I have been cured, I thought to myself, in what merit did I get here, and realized that it is in your merit! And therefore, I'm here to thank you for it."

"My merit???" the professor was taken aback.

"Yes! Your merit!" Reb Moshe replied. "If you would not have told me there was no chance, I would have treated tefillah as an incidental matter – another hishtadlus that I had to make... But the minute you told me there was no chance, I treated the tefillah with the fitting seriousness, and bechasdei Shamayim it was accepted."

This story, Rabbi S. related, is what gave me and my family the strength to persist with the tefillos, and within a few months, we merited the wondrous yeshuah.



family began to come to terms with the difficult reality. But the father of Rabbi S. refused to give up. He realized that specifically when nature offered no reprieve, that was the time to invest all resources into tefillah, with strong emunah that only that could alter the decree.

His words were well received by the family, and from that day on, their home became a command center, coordinating a huge, global tefillah effort. From the little house, a call was issued worldwide, **"Please take a few minutes to say perakim of Tehillim for the patient, Ploni ben Ploni, the father of eight children who was critically injured, and the doctors say he has no chance of survival. Please daven for him because only the Almighty can return him from death to life."**

The request was disseminated in shuls and yeshivos and batei medrash

### Birchas Haminim

#### Source of the Brachah

The tefillah of Shemoneh Esreh is as it sounds: At first it was comprised of eighteen brachos that were formulated by the Anshei Knesses Hagedolah, who lived at the beginning of the Bayis Sheini era. Some five hundred years later, after the Churban, numerous groups of errant people formed in Am Yisrael and distorted the Torah; they drew many people after them. Therefore, Rabban Gamliel of Yavneh asked Shmuel Hakattan to compose Birchas Haminim. (Brachos 28b; Rambam Tefillah 2 1; Rabbeinu Manoach ibid)

Chazal placed this brachah after Birchas Hamishpat, because while Hashem will mete out judgment to the evil, he will certainly also punish those heretics, whose sin is worse (Megillah 17b; Maharsha Vol. I, ibid). Because of the close connection between these two brachos, this brachah begins with a connective “vav” – “Velamalshinim.” (Sifsei Chaim – Rinas Chaim, Biurei Tefillas Shemoneh Esreh, p. 160)

#### Structure of the Brachah

The Gemara (Brachos 10a) states that living near Rabi Meir were thugs who would harass him. Rabi Meir davened that they should die, but Bruriah, his wife, told him that it was not worthy to ask for this, because Dovid Hamelech specifically said (Tehillim 104:35): “Yitamu chata'im” – the sins should come to an end, but not the chotim, the sinners. Rather, she said, he should pray that they should repent. Rabi Meir accepted her words, and prayed that the thugs should repent; his tefillah was accepted. Based on this, we can ask how we are asking for the evil people to be annihilated in the brachah of Velamalshinim?

The Maharal explained that indeed, in this brachah as well, we are not asking that the sinners should die, but rather the yetzer hara from the heart of all creations should be annihilated. If the sinners repent and desist from rebelling against Hashem's Torah and hating Am Yisrael, there will be no more sinners in the world (Be'er Hagolah 7 6).

#### Essence of the Brachah

In the original wording, this brachah began with “Velameshumadim al tehi sikva.” But because it was instituted against those who distort the Torah, chief among them That Man, ym”s (Rashi, Dfus Yashan, Brachos 28b), the opening was changed to “Velamalshinim” because of the fear and awe of the harassment by the gentiles. (Luach Arash [Ya'avetz] 159)

In this brachah, one should have in mind to ask that the kefirah, the heresy, should be uprooted from the world, and that all of Am Yisrael should believe wholeheartedly in the Torah of Hashem – both the Written Torah and the Oral Torah. And that they should not dare defy the words of the Sages who teach Torah to Am Yisrael. Likewise, when we say “Umalchus zadon meheirah se'aker” [“vehazeidim meheirah se'aker use'shaber”] one should have in mind that the memory of Amalek, who rose maliciously to fight against Am Yisrael, should be lost, and with that, he will fulfill the mitzvah (Devarim 25:17) of remembering the act of Amalek (Ye'aros Devash Vol. I, Drush 1).

#### "N Brachos

Even after adding the Birchas Haminim, the name of the tefillah remained Tefillas Shemoneh Esreh. Why is this?

The Maharal explained: All the brachos instituted by the Anshei Knesses Hagedolah are for things that are needed for human life to exist, as their number alludes – “ן – eighteen brachos, using the same word as ‘living.’ The brachah of Minim, in contrast, is a brachah about removing the evil from the world, and although this brings good to the world, they did not want to include it on one level with the brachos in which we ask for life. Therefore, the general name was kept – Shemoneh Esreh (Nesivos Olam, Nesiv Ha'avodah, end of Chapter 17).

The Divrei Yoel further explained: Birchas Haminim was instituted at the beginning of the exile period, and its validity is limited to the end of this period. L'Asid Lavo, when all evil will be eradicated from the land, the need for it will be obviated again. In contrast, the original eighteen brachos instituted by the Anshei Knesses Hagedolah during the days of Bayis Sheini will be needed forever. Because even the brachos in which we ask for the Geulah, we will continue to say them after Mashiach's arrival, but instead of a request, they will become an expression of gratitude (Divrei Yoel, Parashas Vayeira).

#### Kavanah of Amen

I believe that HaKadosh Baruch Hu will break our enemies and submit the heretics, and may it be His Will that this should happen very quickly.

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

## Otzros Emunim

Reciting Birchos Hashachar Bechavrusa

### Birchos Hashachar Bechavrusa - Even If One Misses a Bris

The Rav of Ramat Elchanan, Harav Yitzchak Silberstein, shlita, was once asked:

Let's say one has a practice to regular recite Birchos Hashachar with his friends in a way that every mispallel says the brachah at his turn and the rest answer amen after him, and at the same time, there is a bris milah taking place in the same beis medrash. Is it preferable for him to continue answering amen with his friends, or perhaps he should go and participate in the bris, which, as we know, is a very lofty event, and even Eliyahu Malach Habris attends?

Rav Yitzchak replied: One should prefer to say with those answering amen after Birchos Hashachar than to participate in the bris. There are two reasons for this: 1. One who answers amen is fulfilling a mitzvah actively, while with the bris, only the baal bris fulfils the mitzvah and not all the participants. 2. Even though the virtue of participating in a bris is very great, as Eliyahu Hanavi comes to the place, new angels are constantly created from answering amen, as indicated by the fact that amen is numerically equivalent to מלאך. (Vavei Ha'amudim Vechishukeihem Kovetz 46, p. 90)

### Birchos Hashachar Aloud – a Holy Takanah

At the end of the sefer Hamevarech Yisbarech (p. 85), there are "Twelve Holy Takanos" regarding brachos detailed by the author, Harav Yaakov Meir Schechter, shlita, Rosh Yeshivas Shaar Hashamayim. The eighth one relates to answering amen after Birchos Hashachar, and it says: "It is fitting and worthy that each morning, one of the members of the household should recite all the Birchos Hashachar with kavanah, and they should all answer amen after him in a loud voice."

## Igros Emunim

Readers' Letters

### To the Editors of Vechol Ma'aminim

I have been reading your pamphlet regularly for more than five years, and I never cease to marvel how, although the idea that is the basis for the pamphlet, and the central message that is conveyed do not change – in the essence of "Ba Chavakuk vehe'emidam al achas: 'Vetzaddik b'emunaso yichyeh'" (Makkos 24a), the content is still so varied and new each week.

I have no doubt that the endless wellsprings that you present in your pamphlet, week after week, leave a deep impression in the hearts of many. I am also sure that they are a catalyst for the fact that each day, many more people return to the ancient practices of our ancestors and recite Birchos Hashachar for someone to answer amen after them.

From my personal experience, I can testify that there is a tremendous difference between beginning the day by reciting Birchos Hashachar calmly, with having amen answered to them, and not doing so. If we begin our day by calling "א-ל מלך" then the entire day looks different.

May you continue to see much success,

Y.S.B., Beit Shemesh

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 Rema 18 Iyar 5332

Harav Moshe Isserles is known by the acronym Rema; he was born around the year 5290 to his father, Rav Yisrael Isser in Kazimierz, a district near Krakow, Poland.

As a youth, he learned under Harav Shalom Shachne of Lublin, his future father-in-law. Later, he became known as the eminent posek of Ashkenazi Jewry. He wrote many compilations; some of the more well-known ones include Darchei Moshe on Arba'ah Turim, and his hagahos according to the order of the Shulchan Aruch, in which he added halachos and pointed out the customs of Ashkenazi Jews. This compilation was called the 'Mapah', because it is like a tablecloth spread out over the Shulchan Aruch, authored by Rabi Yosef Karo.

The Rema passed away at a young age, on 18 Iyar – Lag BaOmer – 5332, and was buried in the ancient cemetery in Krakow, located behind the shul that his father established and which bears his name, the Rema Shul. His matzeivah is inscribed with the message: "From Moshe to Moshe, there was no one like Moshe." The Jews of Poland would travel to his kever on the day of his yahrtzeit.

Caption: At the right is the matzeivah of the Rema, and on the left his the matzeivah of his sister, Miriam. In the middle is the headstone of their father, Rav Yisrael Isser.

### Halachah Like Rabi Meir

In Maseches Sanhedrin (110b) the Gemara cites various shittos as to when a katan, a Jewish child, who passes away merits Olam Haba. The Rema ruled that the halachah is like the shittah of Rabi Meir, that a katan merits Olam Haba from the time he answers amen. He wrote (Orach Chaim 124 7): "And he should teach his young children to answer amen, because as soon as a baby answers amen, he has a share in Olam Haba."

### Amen Completes the Brachah

The Rema rules that answering amen is not only a merit and a mitzvah for the one who answers, it also completes the brachah of the mevarech, because the amen is a part of the brachah. Therefore, in order for the brachah to be complete, "the mevarech should have in mind the amen that they say." (Rema Orach Chaim 167 2; Mishnah Berurah ibid 20. And see Teshuvos Vehanhagos Vol. II, 71)