

Veche Maaminim

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Peninei Emunim

Pearls of Tefillah in the Parashah

The Power of Shabbos Tefillos

“שור או כשב או עז כי יולד והיה שבעת ימים תחת אמו ומיום השמיני והלאה ירצה לקרבן אשה לה” (כב כז)

Chazal (*Vayikra Rabbah* 27 10) explain that the reason the Torah commanded us not to bring a *korban* before it is “seven days under its mother,” is to ensure that it goes through at least one Shabbos before being sacrificed as a *korban*.

Based on this, the *Shibbolei Haleket* explains what we say in *Mussaf* of Shabbos: “*Tikanta Shabbos ratzisa korbanoseha*” – does Hashem only want the *korbanos* of Shabbos? However, according to the words of Chazal that one cannot bring a *korban* before it lives through one Shabbos, we explain that indeed, we refer to all the *korbanos*, because it is Shabbos that causes them to be willingly accepted.

Harav Moshe Yechiel of Ozherov explained:

If the power of Shabbos is so great to help the *korbanos* that are not sacrificed on that day be willingly accepted, how much more so does it help the *korbanos* that are sacrificed on the day. And from that we can learn that the *tefillas* of Shabbos, which are in place of the *korbanos* of Shabbos, have a *segulah* to be willingly accepted more than the *tefillas* of weekday. “And therefore, one must be very cautious on Shabbos about Torah and *tefillah* more than during the week.”

Shibbolei Haleket 82; *Eish Dos*, Vol. VIII, p. 330

Thank for the Trouble and the Salvation as One

“וכי תזבחון זבח תודה לה' לרצונכם תזבחו” (כב כט)
The *Ksav Sofer* explained:

The way of the world is that when a person offers thanks for being saved from a trouble, he feels deep down in his heart that he would have preferred not to have been struck with this trouble in the first place, and then he would not have needed a *yeshuah*. Therefore, the Torah instructs us with regard to the *Korban Todah*, which is brought as gratitude for a miracle (see *Rashi*

ibid 7 12): “*Lirtzonchem tizebachu!*” – bring your *Todah* willingly and with desire to do so, and don't think that it would have been better that you should never have needed a *yeshuah*. This is because the pain that you felt because of this trouble is to your benefit, as Chazal instruct (*Brachos* 33b): “A person must bless for the bad just like he blesses for the good.”

Based on this concept, the *Ksav Sofer* explained the reason why in *Birchas Hagomel*, we do not suffice with the *brachah* of “*Shegemalani tov*” and emphasize, “*Shegemalani kol tov*.” This teaches us that when a person thanks Hashem and blesses for his *yeshuah*, he must recognize the fact that both the trouble and the salvation were for his benefit, and he should thank for “*hakol*” – all of it together.

Ksav Sofer Hachadash [Yerushalayim 5760]
p. 145

‘Hayom Yom Echad’ – To Counteract the Heretics

“וספרתם לכם ממחרת השבת מיום הביאתכם את עמך התנופה שבע שבתות תמימות תהיינה” (כג טו)

On the first day of *Sefiras Ha'omer* we count: “*Hayom yom echad la'omer*.” There is a well-known question: Why do we not say “*Hayom yom rishon la'omer*”? From the words of *Rashi* (*Bereishis* 1:5) doesn't it seem that this term is more fitting, and indeed in this *parashah* we see that the Torah uses the term “*bayom harishon*” a number of times?

Harav Yosef Shaul Nathanson explained:

The *Gemara* (*Menachos* 65a) says that the heretics who dispute the *mesorah* of Torah claimed that *Sefiras Ha'omer* should begin always on a Sunday – the day after Shabbos. That contradicts the *mesorah* handed down by our sages that “*mimacharas haShabbos*” means the day after the first Yom Tov of Pesach. Hence, in order to repel their words, Chazal instituted that we count “*yom echad*” and not “*yom rishon*”, thus clarifying that the counting is not from the first day of the week, but rather from the morrow of the first day of Pesach, whichever day of the week it is.

Divrei Shaul, Chiddushei Aggados Menachos 66a

Pischu Shearim

Open the Gates

A word from the founder and Nasi of Bney Emunim

‘Vekara Zeh el Zeh’

Each day, we begin *Kedushah* by declaring: “*Nakdishach vena'aritzach kenoam siach sarfei kodesh*” or “*nekadesh es Shimcha k'shem shemakdishim Oso bishmei marom*” each one according to his *nusach*.

Sometimes, I ask myself, where do have the nerve to compare ourselves to the Heavenly Angels? The answer is alluded to further in *Kedushah*, by the words of the *passuk* (*Yeshayahu* 6) “*Vekara zeh el zeh v'amar*” – the angels call to one another, and we can do that as well: We can call to one another by saying a *brachah* in its complete form, which means our friends will then answer amen to our *brachah*!

When the *mevarech* sanctifies his Creator, and testifies that He is the *Melech Ha'olam*, the *oneh*, who answers, then offers praise by declaring ב'אמן

This is what *halachah* stipulates: Throughout the day, with every *brachah*, from *Birchos Hashachar* in the morning until *Birchas Hamapil*, we should make sure before reciting the *brachah* that someone will listen and answer amen. By doing so, we can praise like the Heavenly Angels – by calling and answering.

It is known that אמן is numerically equivalent to מלאך. Aside for the accepted explanation, that every amen creates an angel, we can also explain that this alludes to the fact that the combination of the *brachah* and the amen creates the praise of “*vekara zeh el zeh*”, like the praise of the angel.

And who does not want to be like the *Malachei Hashareis*?

May it be that we merit to praise our Creator properly, and thus, our *brachos* will rise On High and bring down upon us an abundance of *brachos* and *yeshuos*, *ad bli dai*.

Good Shabbos,
Yaakov Dov Marmurstein

'After Amen Comes a Miracle'

This story was shared some time ago by a dear friend, a *baal chessed*, who has been working for decades, very unassumingly, to help sick people and their families within the renowned *chedsed* organization, Ezer MiTzion.

This friend is a major partner to all of the activities coordinated by Ezer MiTzion to help the physically and emotionally ill and their families, in so many ways.

It happened when this friend was in America to raise funds for Ezer MiTzion. One of his stops was the home of the chairman of Bney Emunim, Rav Yaakov Dov Marmurstein, *shlita*, a longtime friend and supporter of Ezer MiTzion.

Rabbi Marmurstein welcomed his guest with great respect. The two spoke warmly, and during the

spiritual assistance to ill patients, and remarkably, it does not require any resources. I am referring to the *tefillah* of *Mi Shebeirach* for the sick, recited each Shabbos during *Krias HaTorah*. During this *tefillah* we mention sick people who need a *refuah*, and ask Hashem to send them a complete recovery.

This lofty *tefillah* is said alongside the holy *Sefer Torah*, and it is purposely recited when all the *mispallelim* are listening, as at the end the call of "Venomar amen!" is issued, as if from the mouths of the ill people just mentioned.

Regretfully, and surprisingly, despite the importance of this *tefillah* for *yeshuos* for the ailing people, many *mispallelim* do not pay attention to the call that is issued to them. They are busy with other things, either perusing a *sefer*, or worse, chatting, and thus, even if they do utter 'amen' they do it out of rote. The amen that is so needed to complete the *brachah* is said, if at all in a hollow way, without *kavanah*.

If you just make the effort to arouse the public awareness of the importance of this amen, I have no doubt that you will save lots of resources in your work, because most

of the people who need your help will recover, *bechasdei Shamayim*, through the power of the '*tefillas rabbim*' of the one saying the *Mi Shebeirach* and the *mispallelim* who join him by answering amen."

As we know, words that come from the heart penetrate the heart, and Rabbi Marmurstein's words were very effective. His visitor, an energetic and resourceful person, immediately called his friend who serves as a *gabbai* of the Tze'irim shul in Shikkun Gimmel in Bnei Brak, and conveyed the message he had received from Rabbi Marmurstein.

In fact, this phone call was not random. The son of one of the well-known *mispallelim* in shul, a young boy, had just been struck with a deadly bacterial infection. He was

hospitalized and doctors were fighting for his life. The situation was serious, and the doctors were nearing the point of helplessness. The family members watched desperately as the situation grew worse with every passing moment.

Despite the tremendous distance between them, the *gabbai* sensed the warmth with which the message was conveyed, and he took the words to heart. He resolved that the very next Shabbos, during the *Mi Shebeirach l'cholim* after *Krias HaTorah*, he would gather all the children in the shul to the *bimah* and would ask them to answer amen to the *Mi Shebeirach*.

The man who had conveyed the message almost forgot the whole thing, but the issue refused to be forgotten...That is because already that Sunday, he received a phone call from the *gabbai* he had spoken to the week before. And his news was nothing less than stunning:

"Listen," he said, his emotion coming through the phone lines. "As I had planned, at the end of *Krias HaTorah*, I gathered all the children in the shul to answer amen after the *Mi Shebeirach*, I said the *tefillah* aloud, and the children all loudly answered amen, with *kavanah*, along with the rest of the *mispallelim*."

"The merit of the *tefillas rabbim* apparently advocated for that child, because wondrously, right after Shabbos I was updated that after weeks of deterioration, on Shabbos, there was a surprising turnabout in the child's condition. His body seemed to overcome the bacteria, and he began to slowly improve. Today, on Sunday morning, I was again informed that he is recovering rapidly."

"Later, I heard from the boy's father that the doctors are calling it an open miracle, a wonder that does not have a natural explanation, aside for the power of answering amen. Once again, it has proven itself as a wondrous key for *brachah* and *yeshuah*, and as the sages tell us, the letters after the letters אמן are בנס, to teach us that after amen comes the miracle."



conversation, Rabbi Marmurstein shared with his guest something that was on his mind.

"My friend, you, and the rest of the Ezer MiTzion staff, invest your time and resources in helping the sick of Am Yisrael. Like tens of thousands around the world, I have also heard about the tremendous projects that you have established to help the sick and their families. These wonderful projects are widely publicized throughout Israel; would it not be worth for you to invest some resources in the spiritual aspect as well?"

When he saw the surprise on the face of his guest, Rabbi Marmurstein explained:

"I'm talking about something very easy and simple to implement, a small spiritual act that can bring balm and

The Brachah of Hashivah Shofteinu

Source of the Brachah

The *Gemara* (*Megillah* 17b, based on *Rashi* ad loc. *Vekiven*) explains that the *brachah* of *Hashivah Shofteinu* comes after the *brachah* of *Kibbutz Galuyos* because when the *Geulah* comes, first all the exiles will be ingathered.. They will settle in Yerushalayim, and HaKadosh Baruch Hu will then conduct judgement on the evil, and thus, justice will be established in the land.

It is brought down that the *Anshei Knesses Hagedolah*, in whose times there were fixed *batei dinim* that they appointed, instituted to begin this *brachah* with the request “*Meloch Atah Hashem aleinu levadecha bechessed uberachamim vetzadkeinu bamishpat.*” This is because in their times, it was not necessary to ask that the *shoftim* be returned. Only in later years, after the Sanhedrin was exiled from its place in the Lishkas Hagazis (see *Rosh Hashanah* 31a) was it instituted to add the request: “*Hashivah shofteinu kevarishonah veyo'atzeinu kevatchilah.*” They also asked “*Vehaser mimenu yagon v'anachah,*” because the reason for the exile of the Sanhedrin was that they did not have the power to judge the murderers (*Avodah Zarah* 8b) and because the fear of *beis din* was no longer, there was much anguish and sighing in Am Yisrael. (*Tikkun Tefillah*, in *Siddur Otzar Hatefillos*, in the comment before *Shemoneh Esreh*)

Structure of the Brachah

Further in the *brachah* we ask: “*Umeloch aleinu Atah Hashem levadecha,*” because after the evil people who rule over us are destroyed, and the *shoftim* of Yisrael return to their status, this is the place to ask that the *Malchus Hashem* should reign over us. As we say in the *tefillos* of *Rosh Hashanah*: “*Vechol harishah kulah k'ashan tichleh, ki sa'avir memsheles zadon min ha'aretz,*” and then right away, “*Vesimloch Atah Hashem levadecha al kol ma'asecha.*” (*He'aras Hatefillah*)

We ask that this *Malchus Hashem* should be “*bechessed uverachamim*” and that we should not be punished by *din Shamayim*, rather “*vetzadkeinu betzeddek ubemishpat.*” Because through the fact that the Sanhedrin are restored to their status, and will punish the sinners, then we will be exempt from the *din* of Shamayim. As *Chazal* say (*Tanchuma Mishpatim* 5): “If there is *din* below, then there is no *din* On High. If there is no *din* below, then there is *din* On High. How? If the lower elements will do the *din* from below, then the *din* is not carried out from Above. Therefore, HaKadosh Baruch Hu said: *Shimru es hamishpat*, preserve the justice so that you don't cause Me to mete out judgement from On High.” (*Peirush Hatefillos Vehabrachos*, Rav Y. Ben Yakar)

Essence of the Brachah

In this *brachah* we ask Hashem to redeem us and return the *Beis Din Hagadol* [Sanhedrin Gedolah] to its place in the Lishkas Hagazis in the Bais Hamikdash. The sages of the *beis din* would rule in *halachah* for all of Am Yisrael on all the disputes that arose in *dinei Torah*. Everyone had to act as per their instructions, as it states (*Devarim* 17:11): “*Al pi haTorah asher yorucha v'al hamishpat asher yomru lecha ta'aseh lo sasur min hadavar asher yagidu lecha yamin usmol,* according to the law they instruct you and according to the judgment they say to you, you shall do; you shall not divert from the word they tell you, either right or left.” The reinstatement of this *beis din* will be before the arrival of Mashiach, and when Eliyahu will come to inform us of the *Geulah*, he will authorize the elders of the generation to serve as members of the Sanhedrin. (*Ye'aros Dvash*, *ibid*, Vol. I, *Drush* 1. And see *Rambam Mamrim* 12)

We also ask in this *brachah* about the *dayanim* of Am Yisrael, in the present, that they should judge according to the *din emes*, and through that, they should remove from us anguish and sighing. Because when the *dayanim* distort the *din*, then HaKadosh Baruch Hu extracts punishment through them and from Am Yisrael that appointed them (*ibid*, according to *Avos* 5:2).

The wording of this *brachah* is based on the *passuk* (*Yeshayah* 1:26) “*V'ashiva shoftecha kevarishonah veyo'atzecha kevatchilah.*” *Chazal* say on this *passuk* (*Yalkut Shimoni Yeshayah* 247 391): “*V'ashivah shoftecha*” – this is Moshe and Aharon, “*Veyo'atzecha*” – this is Dovid and Shlomo. But the *Gra*, in his commentary on *Yeshayah* (*ibid*) says the opposite: “*V'ashivah shoftecha*” refers to Dovid and Shlomo, “*Veyo'atzecha*” – refers to Moshe and Aharon. (See commentary *Avnei Eliyahu* in *Siddur Ishei Yisrael*)

Conclusion of the Brachah

Throughout the whole year, we conclude the *brachah* with “*Melech Ohev Tzedakah Umishpat,*” while during the *Aseres Yemei Teshuvah* we say “*Hamelech Hamishpat*” (*Brachos* 12b). The difference between these two signoffs is explained by the *Levush* (*ibid*) in two ways: 1. Throughout the year we note only that HaKadosh Baruch Hu “loves *tzedakah* and *mishpat*.” During the *Aseres Yemei Teshuvah*, when He reveals His Kingship by judging every creature in the world, we note specifically “*HaMelech Hamishpat.*” 2. The rest of the year, we say that HaKadosh Baruch Hu is a *Melech Ohev*, he is a King that likes His creations to do “*tzedek umishpat.*” But during the *Aseres Yemei Teshuvah*, we say that HaKadosh Baruch Hu Himself reveals His Kingship by sitting on the *Kisei Hamishpat*.

Kavanah of Amen

The whole year: It is true that HaKadosh Baruch Hu loves *tzedakah* and *mishpat*, and *halevai*, He should find us innocent in judgement.

During *Aseres Yemei Teshuvah*: It is true that HaKadosh Baruch Hu reveals His Kingship in these days by sitting on the *Kisei Hamishpat*, and *halevai*, He should find us innocent in judgement.

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

Otzros Emunim

Reciting Birchos Hashachar Bechavrusa

Amen After Birchos Hashachar - 'Shomer Emunim'

In *Maseches Shabbos* (119b), Chazal explain from the *passuk* (Yeshayahu 26:2): “*Pischu she'arim vayavo goy tzaddik shomer emunim*” that the gates of Gan Eden are opened to one who answers amen. The word “shomer” is explained as waiting (*Rashi*, Yeshayah *ibid*). Why specifically must one wait and anticipate to answer amen?

Harav Moshe Zakut, the Rav of Mantua and one of the leading *mekubalim* of Italy, explained:

The early sages established a daily quota to recite holy things, and that is – צד”ק 90 amens, 4 *Kedushos*, 10 *Kaddish* and 100 *brachos*. In order to meet the quota of *Kedushah*, *Kaddish* and *brachos*, there is no need to make a special effort, and anyone who davens three *tefillos* a day with *minyan* usually accumulates the necessary quota. But in order to accrue ninety amens for *brachos*, a person has to wait, and look out for someone to say *Birchos Hashachar* for him. Therefore, after the word “*tzaddik*” in the *passuk*, which alludes to all the quotas, the *passuk* stresses “*shomer emunim*” – that in order for a person to complete the quota of ninety amens he has to stand guard and anticipate in a special way. The Rema”z (Rav Moshe Zakut) concludes that as a result, he also had the practice of answering amen after *Birchos Hashachar* each day, and added that this practice is “a *minhag vasikin* in Eretz Yisrael,” a longstanding custom. (*Peirush Harema*”z *LeZohar Hakadosh Vayeilech* 285 1)

Practice of the Mahara”m Banet When Reciting Birchos Hashachar

Rav Yaakov Banet, son of the Mahara”m Banet, described in a *sefer* that he wrote about his father’s life, his practices each morning. He wrote: “He always...was from the first ten, and heard from each one of the people in his house *Birchos Hashachar* so that he could answer amen after them. Then he said *Birchos Hashachar*, aloud, with *kavanah* in a pleasant voice, before the *shaliach tzibbur* stood up to daven.” (*Toldos Rabi Yaakov [Ofen 592]* p. 18)

Igros Emunim

Readers' Letters

To the Editors of Vechol Ma'aminim

Like many people, I have been positively influenced by your pamphlet, and as a result of reading it, I have been careful for a few years already to recite *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa*.

I decided to write this letter after I thought of a wonderful *remez* that teaches us about the great virtue of being strict to answer amen. It says in *Tehillim* (16:6): “*Chavalim naflu li bane'imim af nachalas shafrah alai*.” I found that the acronym of the words חבליים נפלו לי בנעימים אף are numerically equivalent to 91, which is equal to amen.

I learned from this that anyone who is strict to answer amen, and invests effort in order to merit doing so, feels a real emotional pleasure, in the essence of “*chavalim naflu li bane'imim*.” And this is in addition to the wondrous words that Chazal told us about the reward of one who is careful to answer amen, and who makes sure to complete his *brachah* with answering amen.

Thank you very much for your constant *chizuk* in general, and for the wonderful material you present in your weekly pamphlet in particular.

Wishing you much success,

T.A.G., Ashdod

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Tzaddik B'Emunaso

Amen and Brachos in the Teachings of One Who Has Yahrtzeit



The matzeivah of the Kli Yakar in the cemetery in Prague.

The Kli Yakar

7 Iyar 5379

Rav Shlomo Ephraim, the Kli Yakar, was born in Luntschitz, Poland, to his father, Reb Aharon. In addition to his tremendous brilliance

in Torah, he was also known as a gifted orator. In the year 5364, he was chosen to be a *darshan* in Prague, and later, he was chosen to serve as Rosh Yeshivah and Av Beis Din there. Many students streamed to Prague to learn from him, among them the Tosafos Yom Tov.

The Kli Yakar compiled many works on *drush* and *mussar*, but he became renowned primarily for his *sefer Kli Yakar al HaTorah*. In his introduction to the *sefer*, he wrote that in 5361, he fell very ill, and made a promise that if Hashem would heal him, he would write this compilation. He also wrote many other *seforim*, including the *sefer* of *drashos Ir Gibborim*, *Amudei Sheish* and *Sifsei Da'as*.

He passed away on 7 Iyar 5379, and is buried in the ancient cemetery in Prague.

Answering Amen Is Like Signing on a Document

He explained the words of Chazal (*Brachos* 53b) “*Gadol ha'oneh amen yoser min hamevarech*,” as follows: The *brachah* is compared to the writing in the body of a document, while the amen is like the signature. Just like a signature affirms and fulfills what is written in the document, likewise, answering amen affirms and upholds the words of the *mevarech*. (*Ollelos Ephraim* Vol. III, 460)

The Reward Is Commensurate with the Number of Brachos

The reward of Am Yisrael is given to them in accordance with the *brachos* they recite each day. Therefore, one who recites *Meah Brachos* each day receives a reward commensurate with the number of *brachos* that he made. This is alluded to in *Tehillim* (68:20): In the number of “*Baruch Hashem*” that a person makes “*yom yom*” that’s how he will merit to have the words “*Ya'amos lanu HaK-l yeshuaseinu selah*.” The *passuk* also alludes to this (*Tehillim* 31:20): “*Mah rav tuvcha asher tzafanta l'reiacha*” – don’t read it “*mah*” but rather “*meah rav tuvcha*...” that corresponding to the 100 *brachos* that we make each day, a person will receive one hundred gates of goodness and blessing. (*Sifsei Da'as Eikev* 306).