

Vechele Maaminim

A Weekly Pamphlet From "Bney Emunim"

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Peninei Emunim

Pearls of Tefillah in the Parashah

Pischu Shearim

Open the Gates

A word from the founder
and Nasi of Bney Emunim

Moshe Davened Only for Yehoshua

"ויקרא משה להשע בן נון יהושע"
(יג טז)

Rashi brings the words of Chazal (Sotah 34b) that Moshe davened for Yehoshua: "K-ah yoshiacha me'iatzas hameraglim, Hashem should save you from the plan of the spies." Why did Moshe daven only for Yehoshua and not for Calev and the other meraglim?

The Chida explained: Rabi Shlomo Eštok explained that the tefillah of Moshe was not that Yehoshua should not be dragged into the plan of the meraglim, because knowing his greatness, he knew he had nothing to worry about. But Moshe Rabbeinu was worried that when the meraglim saw that he was not cooperating with them they would try to harm him. Therefore, he davened that Yehoshua be saved from their ideas. In light of this, we can understand why he did not have to daven for the rest of the meraglim, because the others did not object to the idea, so there was no need to be concerned for their welfare. Calev did object, but he made sure to conceal his view from the others. (See Rashi Bamidbar 14:24)

Nachal Kedumim

The Tefillah of Calev ben Yefuneh in Chevron

"ויעלו בנגב ויבא עד הברון ושם
אחימן ששי ותלמי ילידי הענק
והברון שבע שנים נבנתה לפני צען
מצרים" (יג כב)

The passuk begins in the plural tense "Vaya'alu banegev" and continues in the singular "Vayavo ad Chevron – and he came to Chevron." From here Chazal learn (Sotah 34b, cited in Rashi) that Calev deviated from the route of the meraglim and came alone to Chevron "and davened at the kevarim of the Avos and said to them: 'My forefathers, ask for mercy for me that I be saved from their ideas.'"

The poskim differ with regard to the concept of prayer at kivrei tzaddikim, as to whether one is allowed to address a tzaddik and ask him to advocate before Hashem on behalf of the person who is praying, or perhaps is one only allowed to turn directly to Hashem, to hear our pleas in the merit of the tzaddik buried in this place. (See Pri Migadim Orach Chaim, Eshel Avraham 581 16)

From the words of the Gemara that when Calev came to pray at the kivrei avos he asked them "Ask for mercy for me," it seems that one is allowed to ask the tzaddikim to advocate. But the Maharam Shick wrote that those who believe it is forbidden to do so will explain that Calev did not ask the Avos to advocate for him, and rather, he asked that the fact that he is praying at their kever should awaken their merits, and through that, they will advocate for him that his tefillah should be willingly accepted.

Shu"t Maharam Shick, Orach
Chaim 293

Honor Hashem by Answering Amen

Generally, we preferred to focus on the great reward earned by someone who fulfills the mitzvos of the Torah. We begin our Torah learning each morning with the words "Eilu devarim... ochel peiroseihem b'Olam Hazeih vehakeren kayemes lo l'Olam Haba..."

This is also true with regard to the mitzvah of amen. In this pamphlet we discuss at length the virtue of answering amen and the great reward it brings. But it's important to know that in the same measure, it is extremely serious to be lax about this mitzvah. The holy Zohar (Vayeilech 285 2) wrote that someone who is not careful to answer amen with kavanah derides Hashem, and of him the passuk says (Shmuel I, 2:30) "Ubozai yekalu, those who despise Me will be disgraced."

If you think about it, this is terrible! The Zohar calls someone who does not put his mind towards answering amen properly a "mevazeh Hashem." In other words, he is mechallel Shem Shamayim, plain and simple!

I thought that in this parashah we can find an allusion to this serious issue in the words of Moshe Rabbeinu after the sin of the meraglim. The passuk says (Bamidbar 14:11): "Ad anah yena'atzeini ha'am hazeh v'ad anah lo ya'aminu bi, until where will this people provoke Me, and how much longer will they have no faith in Me." The acronym of the words עד אנה עד אנה is numerically equivalent to 'amen' and in light of the above we can say that the passuk alludes to the violation of Kavod Shamayim that is caused from not being careful to answer amen with kavanah. For this reason, the passuk concludes "And until when will they have no faith in me."

It is not for naught that the Shulchan Aruch wrote (Orach Chaim 124 7) with regard to the halachah: "One should not speak about mundane matters while the shaliach tzibbur is repeating the tefillah." In another place, very sharp language is used, and it is language not found in any other halachah: "And if he speaks he is a sinner, and his sin is too great to bear," because speaking during Chazaras Hashatz leads to a laxity in answering amen, and through that, a chillul Shem Shamayim, and there is nothing more serious than that.

This also helps us understand the words of the Mishnah Berurah (56 1) citing the Midrash that Rabi Chama met Eliyahu Hanavi, and with him were thousands of camels weighed down with 'af vecheimah, anger and fury' intended for those who speak during Kaddish. It's frightening!

'Middah tovah merubah,' the good middah of Hashem is greater, and if we take upon ourselves to honor Hashem by answering amen according to halachah, surely we will see the fulfillment of the passuk (Shmuel I, ibid) "Ki mechabdai achabed, I will honor those who honor Me."

Good Shabbos,
Yaakov Dov Marmurstein

Kaddish After Forty-Five Years

This story was related by the renowned *maggid shiur*, Harav Menashe Yisrael Reisman, *shlita*, of Yerushalayim, who heard it firsthand, and confirmed the details. The story was heard from one of the people who came to be *menachem avel* after the passing of Harav Yitzchak Landau, *zt"l*, who was the *meshamesh* of Harav Aharon of Belz, *zy"ta*, and later served as the director of Belzer Yeshivah in Yerushalayim.

In Teves 5750, Mrs. Tzivia Savitzky, *a"h*, passed away at an advanced age, without leaving children. This pious woman served in the years after World War Two as the house mother in Bais Sanhedria, which was located in the Ein Kerem neighborhood of Yerushalayim, and which is still active to this day. This home served dozens of children orphaned of their parents, who were saved from the



Beit Sanhedriya in Jerusalem

war but had no relatives. They slept there and ate their meals there, and left in the morning to schools, and returned in the afternoon to the only home they knew.

Mrs. Savitzky's *levayah* took place on a wintery Friday in Teves – a very short day – and naturally there was not a large crowd. The attendees were mostly the families of her nephews, the children of her sister, who took care of the burial arrangements. There were a few more acquaintances in attendance.

In the middle of the *levayah*, the family was taken aback when an unfamiliar Chassidic Jew approached them and asked if he could say *Kaddish*. Because they did not know him, they declined and said there was someone to say *Kaddish* for her.

The *chassid* looked very disappointed,

but he didn't say anything. He continued to accompany the *nifteres* for the course of the *levayah*, until the *keverah*, and right afterwards, he disappeared, without leaving his name or detailing how he knew the deceased woman.

Mrs. Savitzky's sister sat *shivah* that week, with her children at her side, and this Chassidic man turned up again. He sat down and began to relate his story:

"My name is Yitzchak Landau," he began, and his eyes filled with tears. "I came to Eretz Yisrael in Teves of 5705 as a ten year old boy without a single relative. My father, Reb Tzvi Yosef, *zt"l*, and my mother, *a"h*, survived the war, but only reunited with us in Eretz Yisrael five years later, in 5710.

For five years I was a living orphan without my father or mother; at one point, *Hashgachah* guided me to Yerushalayim. I studied at Talmud Torah Yavneh and Bais Sanhedria was my home.

My yearnings for my mother, which had been searing until that point, eased somewhat when I entered Bais Sanhedria as I was warmly welcomed by Mrs. Savitzky, the house mother. She was very devoted to the orphaned children, literally like a

mother. She cooked warm, nutritious meals, listened to their stories, calmed their fears and helped them in all kinds of ways.

One of the hard jobs that she took upon herself was making sure the children's heads were clean. The war orphans suffered bitterly from lice, after years of neglect, and Mrs. Savitzky, like a real mother, could not just watch them suffer. Despite the difficulty, she spent hours cleaning the children's heads, and didn't stop until the job was complete.

She took care of me with great devotion as well, and because I was a very sensitive child, this really touched me. Once, I could not control my tears and began to cry. Mrs. Savitzky asked me why I was crying, and I told her innocently that I was crying for her; it pained me to see her so distraught and working so

hard to help the orphaned children.

'How can I repay you for your dedication?' I asked her and her eyes filled with tears. It took her a few minutes to respond, and she weighed her words. 'My dear Yitzchak'l, you should know that I do not have any children, and after 120, there will be no one to say *Kaddish* for me. If you want to repay me, I ask that after I pass on, say *Kaddish* for me.'

As a child, during those moments, I did not sufficiently understand the significance of her words. In time, they receded to the back of my memory. I could have forgotten my promise if not for a few days ago, this past Thursday night, when I went to sleep I suddenly saw Mrs. Savitzky in a dream. She was sitting on a sofa in an unfamiliar room and she said to me, 'Yitzchak'l, the time has come to fulfill your promise!'

I woke up in alarm. For decades, I hadn't heard anything about this woman, and I didn't even know if she was still alive. My dream was very strange. I shared it with my wife, and then returned to sleep.

The next morning, I went out to daven *Shacharis*, and on the street, I saw a fresh mourning sign. The words stunned me: it stated that Mrs. Savitzky had passed away, and that the *levayah* would be held today at eleven in the morning.

I came to the *levayah* and asked if I could say *Kaddish*. When you refused, I did not insist. But from now on, for the rest of the year, I will say *Kaddish* for her."

Reb Yitzchak finished the story and left those present in stunned silence. Their righteous aunt merited the great *zechus* that few do – to descend from the world Above and convey a message to this world. Although there were relatives who could say *Kaddish* for her, it was important that specifically the children, to whom she had dedicated herself should say *Kaddish*, as Chazal say (*Sanhedrin* 19b) "Anyone who raises an orphan in his home, is considered by the *passuk* as if he gave birth to him."

The Mitzvah of Meah Brachos (4)

The Value of One Hundred Brachos

In *Maseches Chulin* (87a) Chazal say that the reward for each *brachah* is ten gold pieces, and therefore, one who snatches a *brachah* from another person has to pay him ten gold pieces. Ten gold pieces is a very large sum of money, equivalent to two hundred and fifty *zuz*, and in the time of the Talmud, two hundred *zuz* was enough to cover the expenses of food and clothing for a person for an entire year (*Ra"sh Peah* 8 8).

The *Rema MiPano* calculated it and found that when reciting one hundred *brachos* a day we give "a *kofer nefesh* for all the souls in Am Yisrael," as follows: The value of a gold piece is twenty five *zuz* (*Bava Metzia* 44b), and the value of a *zuz* is twenty four *isserim* (*Kiddushin* 12a). So we find that each gold piece is worth 600 *isserim* [25x24]. Hence, when we say one hundred *brachos*, whose value is one thousand *zuz*, we are rewarded with 600,000 *isserim*, one *isser* for each soul of the *shishim ribo* [600,000] souls in Am Yisrael. This remarkable calculation is alluded to in the words of the *passuk* (*Bamidbar* 30:3): "L'esor issar al nafsho" – one *isser* corresponding to each Jewish soul. (*Ma'amarei HaRema MiPano, Ma'amar Tzivos Hashem* 5, Vol. III 4)

Based on what we said that the value of one hundred *brachos* is one thousand gold pieces, the *Toras Chaim* explained (*Bava Kama* 91b) the words of Dovid Hamelech in *Tehillim* (44:11): "Ki tov yom bechatzeirecha me'elef bacharti hi'stofef beveis Elokai." Every "yom", each day that I merit to be in "Your courtyard" – in the shul, "tov" is better for me than "elef" gold pieces that I could have merited in this world, because by going to shul in the morning and evening to daven in the *Chatzros Hashem*, I could complete reciting *Meah Brachos*, for which I would get one thousand gold pieces in *Olam Haba*. Therefore "Bacharti hi'stofef, I chose to bask in the House of My G-d" and to receive this tremendous reward in the World to Come.

The Weight of the Bracelets that Eliezer Gave Rivka

Rabbeinu Yehuda Hachassid said that the source for the words of Chazal that the value of each *brachah* is ten gold pieces is in the *passuk* that describes the jewelry that Eliezer gave Rivka when he learned that she was worthy of marrying Yitzchak, (*Bereishis* 24:22): "And the man took a gold nose ring weighing a *beka* and two bracelets on her hand, weighing ten gold pieces." The *passuk* detailed the weight of the bracelets to teach us that these bracelets were not given to Rivka as a gift, but rather as a payment for the fact that in her merit, he would bless Hashem for giving him success, as he said (ibid 27): "Baruch Hashem Elokei Adoni Avraham." And because Avraham, his *rebbe*, taught him that the value of a *brachah* is ten gold pieces, he paid her in two bracelets whose combined weight was ten gold pieces (*Ohr Zarua Halachos Kisui Hadam* 399)

Another source for the value of the *brachah* is learned by Rabbeinu Yehuda Hachassid from the *passuk* (*Bamidbar* 7:14): "Kaf achas asarah zahav meleiah ketores." The *Ketores* is considered like a *brachah* (see *Yeshayahu* 66:3), and from the fact that the Torah instructed that the *Ketores* be taken in a spoon whose value was ten gold pieces, we learn that the value of each *brachah* is ten gold pieces (ibid). The *Kol Bo* (108) learned the value of the *brachah* from this *passuk* but he explained it differently: "Kaf achas" – each one of the כף [numerically equivalent to 100] *brachos* is valued at "asarah zahav."

The Value of the Brachos That a Person Makes in His Life

According to Chazal (*Chulin* 87a) that the value of each *brachah* is ten gold pieces, the *Chasam Sofer* calculated that anyone who is strict to recite 100 *brachos* each day will merit, during the course of fifty-seven years – from when he becomes bar mitzvah until the age of seventy – the tremendous reward of 18,150,000 gold pieces. (*Toras Moshe Hashalem, Parashas Eikev*)

But some pointed out that there is apparently a printing or calculation error here, because according to the math, one who makes one hundred *brachos* a day for fifty-seven years will accrue two million more gold pieces than the sum noted by the *Chasam Sofer*, i.e. 20,105,000 (Comment 26 ibid).

The holy *Zohar* (*Metzora* 54 2) explained that all the words of *tefillah* that emerge from a person's mouth rise on High and breach the firmaments, and there they are evaluated. Those that are found to be kosher and worthy are granted entry to HaKadosh Baruch Hu so that the request of *mispallel* is accepted. Those that are not worthy do not get in. The Rosh Yeshivah of Porat Yosef, Harav Yehuda Tzadka, would say that the words of the *Zohar* can clarify for us the importance of being careful about *Meah Brachos* said each day. Because often a person utters a *brachah* without *kavanah*, and that is an obstacle that can occur even among *bnei Torah* who make a *brachah* when their minds of busy with the *sugya* they are learning. Therefore, when reciting a *brachah*, it behooves us to remember the words of the *Zohar* that the *brachos* that emerge from our mouths are closely evaluated, and as a result we should be careful that we should not ascend On High accompanied, *chalilah*, by a heavy burden of millions of *brachos* of which, in actuality, only a few will be attributed to our merit – those that are recited in a worthy way, with *kavanah*. (*Kol Yehudah Yamim Nora'im*)

The Amen Determines the Reward

With regard to the words of Chazal that the value of each *brachah* is ten, the *Shach* wrote (*Choshen Mishpat* 382 4) an important principle: "A person only gets a reward of ten gold pieces for a *brachah* that he makes in front of others and they answer amen to it. But he does not receive that reward for a *brachah* that he makes to himself."

The *Yalkut Me'am Loez* (*Mishpatim* p. 731) wrote: "The fact that we said that the reward of a *brachah* is ten gold pieces, is specifically when he says it out loud, because he is *mezakeh*, gives a merit, to those who answer amen. That is the *kavod* of Hashem to make a *brachah* to Him in front of others, as it says (*Mishlei* 14:28): "Berov am hadras melech." And from here a person will earn to say *brachos* before others, aloud – whether *Birchos Hanehenin* and *Birchos Hashachar* – so that the others will answer amen. This especially applies to *brachos* that are said when people have an *aliyah* to the Torah, that by the *halachah* must be said aloud so that people should hear. Because if one whispers these *brachos* to himself, they are *brachos levatalah*..."

From the words of Chazal (*Brachos* 55b): "The one who answers amen is greater than the *mevarech*," Rabbeinu Tam derived that if the reward of a *brachah* is ten gold pieces, then how much more so is the reward of every amen ten gold pieces. Therefore, he instructed that if someone was called to the Torah, and someone else went up instead of him, the *oleh* does not have to pay anything to the one who was originally called, because he can answer amen to the *brachos* and this way did not lose out on anything. (*Tosafos Bava Kama* 91b ad loc. *Vechiyvu*.)

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

Otzros Emunim

Reciting Birchos Hashachar Bechavrusa

No Shortfall of Amens

The Mashgiach, Harav Yechezkel Levenstein, would rise early to come to Yeshivas Ponevezh some time before davening, in order to prepare himself for *tefillah*. Each morning, a *bochur* would come to say *Birchos Hashachar* for him so that he would not be missing amens. (*Amud Hayirah Veba'avodah* p. 67)

A Brachah That Includes Everything

The *Mashgiach* of Lakewood, Harav Nosson Wachtfogel, was known for his scrupulousness in reciting *brachos*. For example, he made sure to wear his hat every time he made a *brachah*. He recited *Birchos Hashachar* aloud, and made sure that someone was there to answer amen. He especially raised his voice at their end: "*Hagomel Chassadim Tovim L'Amo Yisrael*," and when he was asked about this he explained: "This *brachah* includes everything!" (*Leket Reshimos, Inyanei Tefillah*, p. 205)

An Endeavor with Tremendous Profits

Each day, the *chassid* Rav Zalman Brizel would arrive at the *beis medrash* a few hours before davening. As the time for *Shacharis* neared, and the *heichal* would begin to fill with *mispallelim* and children who came to daven, Reb Zalman would get himself ready for a job that had tremendous profits: answering amen after *Birchos Hashachar*.

He wrapped himself in his *tallis* and *tefillin*, and took his seat at the front of the *beis medrash*, like a cashier standing behind his cash register, reaping profits every single minute. A long line of people, young and old, snaked out in front of him, as they all came to recite *Birchos Hashachar*. He listened attentively to each one, and rejoiced with every amen he was able to answer.

On the days when his Rebbe, the Pinsk Karliner Rebbe, *zt"l*, was in Yerushalayim and davened in the *beis medrash*, he would join Reb Zalman and sit next to him on the bench. Together, they would slake their tremendous thirst with amens that emerged from the mouths of the *mispallelim*. (*Reb Zalman*, p. 175)

Igros Emunim

Readers' Letters

To the Editors of *Vechol Ma'aminim*

I really value your *Vechol Ma'aminim* pamphlet, filled each week with wonderful insights. You have also done wonderful work extensively clarifying the concept of *Meah Brachos*.

While perusing your enlightening words, I saw that one of the things you wrote from the *Midrash*, on the *passuk* "*Ne'um hagever hukam al*" – "*divrei Dovid ha'acharonim*," that because על is numerically equivalent to 100, we learn that the one hundred *brachos* that we are commanded to say were instituted by Dovid Hamelech, and his words of fully valid and extant to this day.

And I thought that based on this, that is why we wish a bar mitzvah that he should enter the "על תורה ומצוות" – the yoke of Torah and *mitzvos*, with a pleasant atmosphere, and על is an allusion to one hundred *brachos*, as from now on, he is obligated to say them in a joyous way.

With much appreciation,

Y.S.C.
Boro Park

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Tzaddik B'Emunaso

Amen and Brachos in the Teachings of One Who Has Yahrtzeit



Harav Shmuel Huminer, zt"l

Harav Shmuel Huminer

19 Sivan 5737

Among Yerushalayim's eminent *tzaddikim* of the last generation was Harav Shmuel Huminer, *zt"l*. Rav Shmuel was

known as an outstanding *oved Hashem*, who from his youth until his final day, cleaved to Hashem and His *mitzvos*. Due to his exceptional caution not to speak *lashon hara*, many called him the 'Chofetz Chaim of Yerushalayim'.

He was born in Yerushalayim on 25 Tishrei 5774 to his father Reb Mordechai Zev. He studied in Yeshivas Eitz Chaim, and was a *talmid* of the Even Ha'ezel. He was known for his *middah* of *emunah* and *bitachon*, and he would often say that it is a *mitzvah* to pray that every action, even the smallest one, should rise On High properly.

He authored numerous *seforim*, among them *Eved Hamelech on Tanach*; *Ikarei Dinim* – a *kitzur* of *Sefer Chofetz Chaim*; and *Olas Tamid*, on *brachos* and *tefillos*. He passed away in Yerushalayim on 19 Sivan 5737 and was laid to rest on Har Hazeisim.

Pause Between *Brachos*

"One must be careful when reciting *Birchos Hashachar* or *Birchas Hamazon*, and someone is on hand to answer amen to his *brachos*, he should not begin the following *brachah* right away, because by doing so, he prevents the person from answering amen. And if the person answers amen it could be an *amen yesomah, chalilah*. Rather, he should wait until the person answers amen." (*Mora Mikdash* [Rav S. Huminer] 55)

Answering Amen Is a Mitzvah from the Torah

One who answers amen to a *brachah* fulfills a *mitzvah* from the Torah, even when the obligation to make the *brachah* is only *d'Rabbanan*. Because the obligation to answer amen is derived by *Chazal* from the *passuk* (*Devarim* 32:3): "*Ki Shem Hashem ekra – havu godel l'Elokeinu*" – when I mention the Name of Hashem in a *brachah*, then you 'havu godel' by answering amen" (*Yalkut Shimoni Ha'azinu* 942; *Rashi Brachos* 21a ad loc. *Ki Shem*). We can learn from this that even when the *mevarech* is only obligated to recite the *brachah d'Rabbanan*, the Torah commands the listener to answer amen after him, because the *mevarech* mentions *Shem Shamayim* in his *brachah*, and thus the words "*Ki Shem Hashem Ekra*" was fulfilled through him (*Eved Hamelech Devarim* 32:3).