

Vechele Maaminim

A Weekly Pamphlet From "Bney Emunim"

SUCCOS | 5782 | Issue No. 453



ת.ד. 102 בני ברק
פקס: 03-5055919
9139191@gmail.com

Peninei Emunim

Pearls for Succos

Pischu Shearim

Open the Gates

The Four Minim – A Tefillah for Rain

On Succos, the world is judged regarding water, and the rainwater for the year is determined (*Rosh Hashanah* 16a). The four *minim* that we take on this Yom Tov are an appeasement for the request for water, and when we take them, it is like we are davening to Hashem. Just like they cannot grow without water, likewise the world cannot survive without water (*Taanis* 2b).

It is told that one Succos, the **Bais Yosef** encircled the *tziyun* of Rabi Elazar ben Rabi Shimon while holding the four minim in his hand. Suddenly, the skies went dark with thick clouds, and rain began to fall. When he saw this, he felt guilty, because *Chazal* (*Sukkah* 28b) compare the rains that fall on Succos to a "servant who comes to serve his master a drink and the master spills a pitcher on his face." But the "Maggid" who regularly revealed himself to him from Above reassured him when he revealed that these rains were a result of his *hakafah* at the holy *tziyun* of Rabi Elazar, because he was holding the *arba'ah minim* that come to appease on the water, and that if he would have circled the grave one more time, then the rains would have fallen, as in the days of Choni Hame'agel (see *Taanis* 23a).

Maggid Meisharim, *Emor*

Four Minim Help Kavanah in Tefillah

We learn in the *Breisa* (*Sukkah* 41b): "This was the custom of the people of Yerushalayim. A person went out of his home [on Succos] with his *lulav* in hand, and he went to shul with the *lulav* in hand, recited *Krias Shema* and davened, with the *lulav* in his hand." **Harav Shimon Deutsch**, a *talmid* of the Chasam Sofer, testified of his *rebbe*, that he would practice the custom of the *anshei Yerushalayim*, and he would hold the *arba'ah minim* in his hand until the end of the *tefillah*. "And he would testify that the love of the mitzvah caused so much *kavanah* in the *tefillah*, that he would daven on the Yom Tov of Succos gripping the *lulav* with more *kavanah* than on Yom Kippur."

Imrei Shefer, *Brachos* 17b

Don't Make Light of the Mitzvah of Amen

Sitting in the sukkah is called by the holy *Zohar* (*Emor* 103 1) "*Betzila d'meheimnusa*" – in the shadow of *emunah*; this is for good reason. When a person leaves his permanent home for a temporary home, this is a declaration that a person should not put his faith in his possessions and assets. Rather, he should place his trust only on the Hashgachah of Hashem.

As such, the deep connection between the mitzvah of sukkah and the mitzvah of answering amen is easily understood. Answering amen is the foundation of *emunah*, and this is manifested by the fact that סוכה is numerically equivalent to אמן.

Harav Yaakov Yokev Ettlinger, the *Aruch Laner*, began his *sefer Bikkurei Yaakov* (on the *halachos* of sukkah and *lulav*) with these words: "The righteous should rejoice...and even the weaker ones in Yisrael, with this holy holiday that is called Yom Simchaseinu, and his joy is doubled. **And they should be very careful to fulfill the mitzvah of sukkah as its number [equivalent] is 91, which is equal to the two Holy Names that together combine to make 'amen,' and its holiness is doubled and one who fulfills it according to halachah will have his reward doubled from Above.**"

Because the fact that sukkah is numerically equivalent to amen is brought down in many *seforim*, we will try in this segment to delve into the connection and the relation between the mitzvah of answering amen and the mitzvah of sitting in the sukkah. We will also derive what we need to learn from it about the mitzvah of amen.

Firstly, just like sitting in the sukkah "*betzeila d'meheimnusa*" strengthens the *emnuah* in our hearts, so, too, answering amen is intended to strengthen *eth emunah* in our hearts. As Rabbeinu Bechaye expounded in his commentary

on the Torah (*Shemos* 14:31). Aside for this: The sukkah is comprised of walls and *sechach*. The סכך – whose numerical value is one hundred – alludes to the one hundred *brachos* that we are obligated to recite each day. The סוכה – which is numerically equivalent to אמן – alludes to amen. Just like the *sechach* leans on the sukkah, so too, the amen strengthens the *brachah* and gives it what to rest on; without it, the *brachah* is not complete.

The festive '*Reshus*' *nusach* that we read for the *Chassan Bereishis* to come up to the Torah on Simchas Torah is concluded with the words "*Amen ya'anu acharecha hakol meheirah*." We have here a call to the public at this ending of Succos: For the whole Yom Tov, you were *mehader* the mitzvah of sukkah, and by doing so, you infused *emunah* in Hashem into your hearts. If so, make sure to continue establishing your *emumah* by this daily mitzvah that is intended to do just that – the mitzvah of answering amen.

The poet calls on us and says "*Bal tehi mitzvas sukkah be'einecha kallah* – do not make light of the mitzvah of sukkah, because it is equivalent to all the *mitzvos*." I will conclude this segment with a call to you: "Do not make light of the mitzvah of amen!" Let us internalize and remember that the secrets of amen run endlessly deep, and through that, we will be strict to answer amen to each *brachah*.

If we will be like the '*tzaddik shomer emunim*,' then surely Hashem will open the gates to our *tefillah*, as we ask in the *nusach* of *Hoshanos*: "*Ta'aneh emunim shofchim Lecha lev kamayim*," may Hashem grant us good and happy lives, *amen v'amen*.

Wishing you a Good Yom Tov
Yaakov Dov Marmurstein

The Brothers Who Met in the Esrog Orchard

It was in the years after World War Two. Itche, a *bochur* of twenty, a survivor of the camps, was alone in the world. He arrived in Switzerland filled with fragments of sweet memories of the past, and a fiery *emunah* that he channeled into his efforts to rehabilitate his life.

Itche married, and even had many children. He worked in an *esrogim* orchard in Italy. His work required him to be away from home for a number of months each year, working very hard. But Itche was happy, because it enabled him to spend most of the rest of the year learning Torah, with peace and security.

Despite just about making a living, Itche never complained. He lacked for nothing, and if he did need more than he had, he turned to the Ribbono shel Olam, pleaded like a son to his Father, and was answered.

Itche's life seemed to be going smoothly. His children, who bore the names of his closest relatives who had been murdered in the Holocaust, were a comfort for his past that had been wiped out. But there was one wound in his heart that refused

for a ticket to Switzerland. He quickly stuck his hand into his suit pocket to take money out for the ticket, but to his horror, he discovered that the envelope wasn't there. He tried the other pocket, but that, too, was empty. The blood drained from his face. This was his family's livelihood for the coming year, and he had toiled for months to earn it. Now, it had disappeared. The clerk waited impatiently, and when he saw that the man was tarrying, he asked him to please step aside so he could serve the next person in line.

It was Erev Succos. Itche was alone, bereft of all his money, in a strange and foreign city; he didn't even have the bit of money he needed to return home. He was surrounded by non-Jews, all of them with blank, closed expressions. He thought about his family, who would have to celebrate the Yom Tov without him, and of himself, without a sukkah or kosher food. "Dear Father," a cry emerged from the depths of his heart. "How can I spend such a holy Yom Tov alone, among non-Jews? How can I manage without a sukkah, without kosher food, without *dalet minim*; what kind of Yom Tov will I have?!"

After Itche had poured all his pain and fear into his *tefillah*, he felt a bit of reprieve. He was very sure that just like until now, Hashem had not abandoned him, now, too. He would not leave him alone. He began to walk to the nearby post office to send a telegram to his family not to worry about him. He stood in line, and suddenly felt a hand tap his shoulder.

He looked behind him and discovered a Jew with a large smile on his face and a big black yarmulke on his head. As expected from two lonely Jews who had met on a foreign soil, they each shared their situation. Itche told the man, who introduced himself as Jacky, about his troubles, and Jacky shared with him the fact that for reasons not dependent on him, he was 'stuck' in this place, where he was doing business. He had no choice but to remain here for Yom Tov, far away from his family in America.

"Because of you, I won't be alone," Jacky said, and invited Itche to celebrate Yom Tov with him. "I put up a *mehudar* sukkah, and I have plenty of kosher food, and the *arba'ah minim* that I bought with me," he reassured Itche.

Itche quickly sent the telegram to his wife, and added to the original text that she shouldn't worry, *bechasdei Shamayim*, he would have a nice Yom Tov with another Yid.

The two stepped out of the post office into a luxurious car that waited for Jacky at the door. After a short drive, they reached an elegant home which, remarkably, was located just a short distance from the *esrog* orchard where Itche worked. Apparently, Jacky had recently bought the orchard, and he was now officially Itche's employer.

Itche spent that Yom Tov night in the home – or rather, the palatial estate – of his new friend. He lacked for nothing except his family, whom he missed. The night meal was filled with *divrei Torah* and singing, and after *Birchas Hamazon*, the two went to sleep in the sukkah. They rose early the next morning and prepared for the mitzvah of *dalet minim*.

The night before, when they had spoken about it, the host generously offered that they would be partners to the *arba'ah minim*. The *esrog* would be Itche's stunning *esrog*, which he had chosen out of thousands that he had handled this season. The other three *minim* would come from the host's set.

Now, as he observed his host taking out the *arba'ah minim* from their cases, Itche's eyes noticed something strange, and he began to tremble. The host looked at his guest, who was trembling and changing colors – and he had no idea what was wrong. Suddenly, Itche's lips began to sing – of their own accord – the words of the *Mishnah (Sukkah 3 8)*: "*Amar Rabi Meir ma'aseh b'anshei Yerushalayim shehayu ogdin es lulaveihen begimyonos shel zahav*, the people Yerushalayim used to bind their *lulav* with golden threads." To his surprise, Jacky found himself joining into the song. The two looked at one another with tears in their eyes, slowly digesting what this meant. Itche remembered his holy father who would bind the *lulav*, the *hadassim* and the *aravos* with a gold thread, as he hummed this song to himself. Jacky shared a similar memory...

Jacky's eyes closed, and then snapped open when he heard a thump. Itche's *esrog* had fallen out of his hands and onto the floor, and Itche collapsed right after it fell. Jacky bent over him, and suddenly he also realized...

"Itche'le! My brother! I don't believe it! It can't be!" he cried.

"Yes, Yankele, it is me!" Itche answered in a shaky voice.

The golden threads, a link in the chain of the generations, had united two longing souls that were filled with *tefillah*. The unbelievable Hashgachah had returned one brother to another. Itche and Yankel were reunited – and never separated again.

MiMishnasah Shel Torah, Succos 5776



An *esrog* orchard

to heal. Itche had a twin brother named Yankel. At the beginning of the war, they were separated, and Itche had never heard anything about his fate. In his heart, he had this unexplained certainty that Yankel was still alive, and he did not stop yearning for him. His longings found an outlet during davening. Despite the years that had passed, Itche did not give up. In every *tefillah*, he would mention his brother, and asked Hashem to reunite them.

One year, on Erev Succos, Itche was standing on line to buy a train ticket in the station in Italy. His heart was pounding with excitement as he got ready to return home after being away for a few months. One hand gripped his valise, and in the other, he held a box in which rested the beautiful *esrog* he had chosen for himself. The thick envelope with the fruits of his labors rested deep in the pocket of his suit. When it was his turn, he asked the clerk

The Tefillah on Hoshana Rabbah

On Hoshana Rabbah We Will Be Sealed

Hoshana Rabbah has been known throughout the generations as a very lofty day. The *Mateh Moshe* (957) brings the *Midrash Chachamim*: “And why is it called Hoshana Rabbah? HaKadosh Baruch Hu said to Avraham: “I am One and you are one, I will give your children a special day to atone for their sins, and that is Hoshana Rabbah.”” The *Midrash* also says, “HaKadosh Baruch Hu said to Avraham: If there is no *kapparah* for your children on Rosh Hashanah, then there will be on Yom Kippur, and if not, it will be on Hoshana Rabbah...The secret of the sealing is that it is on Hashanah Rabbah and not on Yom Kippur.”

The *Minchas Elazar* wrote (*Shaar Yissachar, Ma'amar Yom Aravah* 9) that when he was in Berlin, he saw an ancient manuscript of a *Machzor* for Rosh Hashanah, in which appears the *nusach* of *Unesaneh Tokef* that says: “On Rosh Hashanah they will be judged and on Yom Kippur they will be inscribed and on Hoshana Rabbah it will be sealed.” This *nusach* is mentioned in the commentary of Rabi Menachem Rekanati on the Torah (*Parashas Shelach*).

A Day When the Kvittlach Are Submitted

The holy *Zohar* mentions this day as a day when the *din*, the judgement ends, and the *kvittlach* are handed out. He wrote (96 31:2): “On the seventh day of the Yom Tov it is the end of the *din* of the world and the notes, the *kvittlach* are dispatched from the King’s House.”

Rabi Chaim Vital explains this concept of sending the *kvittlach* on Hoshana Rabbah as follows (*Shaar Hakavanos, Inyan Succos Drush* 6): “The *ikkar hadin* that the world is judged on Hoshana Rabbah is to send the *kvittlach* that were sealed at the end of Yom Kippur for those who did not repent all the days in the interim – from Yom Kippur until Hoshana Rabbah – and they are given to the messengers to carry out the *din* and the justice for those who are found guilty. But even though the *kvittlach* are given to them, they are not granted permission to execute punishments written in those notes until Shemini Atzeres, in order to give the sinners more time to repent on Hoshana Rabbah. And if they repent, then the *kvittlach* are taken away from the messengers.” Rabi Chaim Vital concludes his words as follows: “A person needs to be careful to have a lot of *kavanah* in the *tefillah* of Hoshana Rabbah, and in all his actions on that day, because then, there is still a chance to rectify, and after that, there is no way to rectify.”

The Day of Those Compared to an Aravah

Chazal say (*Midrash Tehillim* 17:5) that the seventh day of Succos is called Hoshana Rabbah, and the *Sfas Emes* explained (*Succos* 5657) why this is: The *Gemara* (*Sukkah* 42b) calls this day “*Yom Shevi'i shel Aravah*” because it is on this day that the *aravah* is taken alone. It is known that the *aravah* has no taste and no smell and alludes to those people who have neither Torah nor good deeds (*Vayikra Rabbah* 30:12), and because they have no merit upon which to have their *tefillas* accepted, it is accepted

as a gift. Hence, because *Chazal* said (*Shemos Rabbah* 45 6), that the ‘*otzar matnas chinam*,’ the treasury of these gifts is the greatest treasury, and that is why the day of the *aravah* is called ‘Hoshana Rabbah,’ meaning ‘a big *yeshuah*.’

Based on this concept, the *Eretz Tzvi* explained (*Moadim* p. 140) that the words of the *Zohar* that the end of the judgement on Hoshana Rabbah do not contradict what is explained in the *Gemara* (*Rosh Hashanah* 16a) that the end of the judgment of a person is on Yom Kippur. On Yom Kippur, a person is judged by his deeds. But even someone who is not worthy through his deeds, because he is like an ‘*aravah*’ – empty of *mitzvos* and good deeds, is judged again on Hoshana Rabbah if he is worthy of being granted clemency from the ‘*otzar matnas chinam*,’ and thus we find that the end of the judgment is on Hoshana Rabbah.

Another reason why it is thus called was explained by the Rebbe, **Harav Dovid Moshe of Tchortkov** [who passed away on Hoshana Rabbah 5664]: Because this day is the day that the *din* is sealed, and we need tremendous Heavenly mercy to have a good decree issued, we employ the assistance of the compassionate angels with the tens of thousands of ‘*Amen Yehei Shemei Rabbah...*’ that we answered during the year. As we know, *Chazal* say (*Shabbos* 119b) “Anyone who answers *Amen Yehei Shemei Rabba mevarach* with all his might – has his decree torn up.” Therefore, it is called Hoshana Rabbah – meaning the day when we see salvation in the merit of “*amen yehei Shemei Rabbah...*” (*Orchos Aharon Hoshana Rabbah*).

Revelation of the Later Generations

After learning about the lofty importance of this day, as the day when the *din* is sealed, the question arises: Why is this very important information not mentioned in either of the Talmuds?

Harav Yaakov Kaminetzky explained: If this would have been well-known among the members of the early generations, then the joy of Succos would have been marred, because they would have been enveloped in the fear of the judgement. Therefore, in their times, the virtue of this day was only revealed to a select few – “*chassidim v'anshei ma'aseh*” who had the ability to rejoice on the Yom Tov without detracting from the fear of the *din*.” But after *Chazal* say that with the decline of the generations, the fear and awe of the *din* has diminished, and that the revelation will not suspend the joy of the Yom Tov, it was revealed to all (*Emes L'Yaakov, Emor*).

Harav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach explained: In earlier generations, it was enough to read the words of the *Mishnah* (*Rosh Hashanah* 16a) “*Ubechag nidonim al hamayim*” in order to arouse a person to daven and ask for water. Through that, the *tefillah* was also effective to end the general judgment on this day. But as the generations declined, this knowledge alone was not enough to arouse a person to daven properly, and therefore, it was ordained from Above that it should be revealed that on this day the person’s judgement is completed (*Halichos Shlomo Tishrei* – Adar, p. 430).

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

The Mitzvah of Sukkah as Easy as Amen

Chazal (*Avodah Zarah* 3a) call the mitzvah of sukkah an “easy mitzvah” because it does not cost money. However, even though it is possible to fulfill it without it costing money, building the sukkah takes great effort. Why then, is it called an ‘easy mitzvah?’

Harav Tzvi Hirsh Horowitz, the Rav of Frankfurt, explained: The *Gemara* (*Nazir* 66b) says that “the one who answers amen is greater than the *mevarech*,” and compares reciting the *brachah* to the simple soldiers that go fight the enemy at the beginning of the war, and answering amen to the heroic soldiers that come at the end and win the enemy. The *Maharsha* (Vol. I *ibid*) explains that this is not just a random parable. Rather, the *Gemara* uses this parable to illustrate what happens when the *brachah* and amen are recited: A person’s sustenance comes to him with difficulty, as Chazal say (*Pesachim* 118a): “The sustenance of a person is as difficult as *Krias Yam Suf*.” Reciting the *brachos* creates angels of compassion for the person, who fight for him against the hostile elements. But when amen is answered, the angels that are created are strong and they will “win the war against the hostile elements, which are destructive angels.” The reason that the victory of the hostile angels is carried out specifically via amen is because the numerical value of amen is 91, which is the same as the names of Havayah and Adnus combined (see *Baal Haturim Devarim* 27 6). The Shem Hava-yah alludes to the *Middas Harachamim*, which sweetens the *Middas Hadin* that the hostile angels arouse. Therefore, the power of answering amen is greater than the power of the *brachah*, in which only Adnus is mentioned.

Based on this we can understand why the sukkah is called an ‘easy mitzvah.’ Because סוכה is also numerically equivalent to 91, and therefore, in contrast to the rest of the *mitzvos* whose observance is disrupted by the *mekatregim*, the name

of the mitzvah of sukkah neutralizes those hostile angels. Therefore, one who has this *kavanah* when fulfilling the mitzvah of sukkah finds it easy to fulfill. This is even alluded to in the *Gemara* (*ibid*) ‘I have a mitzvah *kallah*, *usukkah shemah*.” The name of the mitzvah of sukkah is what causes it to be an easy mitzvah (*Lachmei Todah*, p. 210b).

The Mekatregim Have No Foothold

From the *passuk* (*Vayikra* 23:34) “*Chag Hasukkos Shivas yamim l’Hashem*,” Chazal explain: “Just like Shem Shamayim applies to the [*korban*] *Chagigah*, likewise, Shem Shamayim is *chal* on the sukkah.” The *Shem MiShmuel* explained that the fact that the Shem Shamayim is *chal* on the sukkah is alluded to in the name “sukkah” as it is numerically equivalent to 91, which is equal to the two Holy Names. “And it is comprised of the Holy names.” We thank for meriting this tremendous mitzvah in *Shacharis* each day, when we say “*Vekeiravtanu Malkeinu leShimcha haGadol*.” Therefore, the *Zohar* says (*Emor* 100 2): “Those who sit in the sukkah are spared from the *mekatreg*, because the sukkah is enveloped in Holy Names, and therefore the *mekatregim* do not have a foothold in it.”

The *Shem MiShmuel* there adds what he heard from his father, the Avnei Nezer, that those who sleep in the *sukkah* only say the *parashah* of *Shema*, and skip the *pesukim* that are said as a *segulah* to be saved from harmful forces, like on Pesach night, which is *Leil Shimurim*. (See *Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim* 481 2) (*Shem MiShmuel Succos* 5673; 5674)

The Acronym Is Elul

In *Tefillas Geshem* the *shaliach tzibbur* asks: “*Librachah velo liklalah*” – and the *tzibbur* answers amen. The Trisker Maggid said that “*לברכה ולא לקללה*” is an acronym for “*לשובע ולא לרזון*” *אמן*, *לחיים ולא למוות* *אמן* *אלול*.” And likewise *אמן* *לחיים ולא למוות* *אמן* *אלול*. (*Magen Avraham, Vezos Habrachah*)

Tzaddik B’Emunaso

Amen and Brachos in the Teachings of One Who Has Yahrtzeit



The burial site of the Pele Yoetz in Silištra, Bulgaria.

The Pele Yoetz

20 Tishrei 5588

Rabi Eliezer Papo was born to his father, Rabi Yitzchak, in Sarajevo, Bosnia, in 5546. Already in his youth, he was known for his diligence and his conduct with *prishus* and tremendous *taharah*.

In 5571, when he was 25 years old, he began to write his first compilation, *Chodesh Ha’aviv*, in which he wrote his *chiddushim* on a number of *masechtos* in Shas. In 5574, he was appointed Rav of the Jewish community in the city of Silištra, Bulgaria, a position that he held for fourteen years, until his passing.

The Rav was known primarily for the wonderful *sefer mussar* that he compiled, *Pele Yoetz*. But aside for that, he compiled other *seforim* such as *Dan Yadin, Elef Hamagen al HaTorah, Chessed L’Alafim* – halachic rulings on the *Orach Chaim* section of *Shulchan Aruch*, and others.

On 20 Tishrei 5588, on Chol Hamoed Succos, he passed away at the young age of 42. He was buried in the Jewish cemetery in Silištra. Before his passing, he said that from Above it was revealed to him that there was a danger of a plague hovering over the city, and he preferred to sacrifice himself to atone for the residents of the city.

The Obligation of Birchos Hashachar Increases

In his *sefer Chessed L’Alafim* (46 1), the Pele Yoetz wrote: A person has to say all the *brachos* word for word, and with extensive *kavanah*, but “*yigdal hachiyuv*,” the obligation increases especially regarding *Birchos Hashachar*. This is because they are said first, at the beginning of the day, and when one says them properly, then we know that “*mitzvah goreres mitzvah*” (*Avos* 4 2), one mitzvah leads to another. Hence, all the *brachos* said the rest of the day will also be said properly. In contrast, someone who, *chalilah*, is negligent about saying them may see the words of Chazal (*ibid*) fulfilled,

“*aveirah goreres aveirah*” – with the rest of his *brachos* that day...

One Who Makes a Brachah Aloud Gives Others a Merit

With regard to saying *brachos* out loud, he wrote: One who makes his *brachos* out loud in order to give the listeners the merit of answering amen is in the category of *mezakei harabbim*, of which Chazal said (*Avos* 5:18): “Anyone who is *mezakeh* the *rabbim* – a *cheit* does not come about through him.” And the reward of the *mezakeh* grows commensurate with the size of the mitzvah, and we know that Chazal say (*Brachos* 53b): “The one who answers amen is greater than the *mevarech*.” (*Pele Yoetz, Mezakeh*)