

Vecheh Maaminim

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Peninei Emunim

Pearls of Tefillah in the Parashah

Pischu Shearim

Open the Gates

Assistance from Above for the Mis'chazek

"ואתה תדבר אל כל חכמי לב אשר מולאתיו רוח חכמה ועשו את בגדי אהרן לקדשו לכהנו לי" (כח ג)
Harav Meir of Kaluszyn explained: A "chacham lev" who wants to strengthen and progress in his *avodas Hashem* is guaranteed to receive assistance from Above. He will see the fulfillment of the words of the *passuk* "asher mileisiv ruach chochmah, that I have filled him with a wise spirit," and as *Chazal* say (*Yoma* 39b): "A person sanctifies himself a bit – and then he is sanctified a lot [from Above.]"

Nahar Shalom

An Inside-Out Garment Prevents the Tefillah from Being Accepted

"והיה פי ראשו בתוכו שפה יהיה לפני...ונשמע קולו בבאו אל הקדש לפני ה'" (כח לב; לה)
The *Shulchan Aruch* (*Orach Chaim* 2 3) ruled that a person must be strict not to wear his garments reversed or inside out, so that the seams meant to be on the inside should not be on the outside – which will cause him to be derided by people who see him.

Harav Pinchas Bar Plita, *av beis din* of Wlodawa, added that one who wears an inside out garment does not have his *tefillah* heard. He brought an allusion to this from the way the *pesukim* in this *parashah* are placed: "Vehayah pi

rosho besochu" – when a person wears his garment according to *halachah*, with the edge of the outer garment folded into it, then "and his voice will be heard when he comes to the *Kodesh*." That is not the case if he wears the garment inside out, and its folded edge is on the outside, as this will prevent the *tefillah* from being accepted.

[Bris Shalom [Frankfurt 5478

The Korban Tamid Atones

"וזה אשר תעשה על המזבח כבשים בני שנה שנים ליום תמיד" (כט לה)

Although the Torah does not write that the *Korban Tamid* atones for sin, the *Gemara* (*Yoma* 33b) defines the *Korban Tamid* as a "mechaper," one that atones. *Rashi* explains (*ibid ad loc. af al gav*) that the atonement of the *Olas Hatamid* is like the atonement of every *Korban Olah* – for not doing a *mitzvas aseh* and for a 'lav hanitek l'aseh.'

Thus we can understand the *Yehi Ratzon* said before *Parashas Hatamid*: "May You have mercy on us and forgive us for all our sins and atone for us for all our transgressions...and we should bring before You the *Korban Tamid* that will atone for us," because, as noted, the *Korban Tamid* atones like a *Korban Olah*.

Megadim Chadashim

A word from the founder and Nasi of Bney Emunim

'Venahafoch Hu' On Answering Amen

We are coming closer to Purim, and are in the "month that was reversed for them from grief to joy and from mourning to a festive day" (*Esther* 9:22). In this month, it is fitting that we should remember that each and every one of us have that 'magic wand' that has the power to transform grief to joy, mourning to festivities, and a decree to a *yeshuah*.

Amen is that 'magic wand' that can effect *yeshuos*. HaKadosh Baruch Hu has given it to us, and all that we need to do is to "activate" it. Yes! Amen has the power to alter reality, to bring salvation and to transform bad to good. With every amen that is added – the *yeshuah* becomes bigger.

It states in *Maseches Shabbos* (119b) that "Rabi Yehoshua ben Levi said: Anyone who answers 'amen yehei Shemei rabbah mevorach' with all his strength – has his decree torn up." The holy *Zohar* (*Tikkunei Zohar* 40 1) gives a similar promise to everyone who answers amen, as it states: "One who answers amen with all his might has the decree of seventy years torn up." (See also *Shomer Emunim Ma'amar Pischu She'arim* 1)

In its simple meaning, when the *Zohar* writes "the decree of seventy years is turn up" it refers to a person's lifetime in this world, as it says in *Tehillim* (90:10) "Yemei shenoseinu bahem shivim shanah." In other words: Even if someone who is decreed to suffer all his life, if he answers "amen with all his strength" he can nullify this decree and merit a good life.

I had a thought that there is another promise contained here: One who answers amen nullifies the decree of "yemei shenoseinu bahem shivim shanah" and merits to live a long life of good years, as *Chazal* promise (*Brachos* 47a) that anyone who lengthens his amen "has his days and years lengthened."

My older brother, *Harav Aharon Tzvi*, added a *remez* and proof of these words from the words of *Chazal* (*Beitzah* 15b) that many have connected to the month of Adar: "One who wants his assets to survive should plant them in Adar," and *Rashi* explains (*ibid ad loc. yita*) that "adar" means "an important tree." It is known that אילן is numerically equivalent to אמן and it is possible that *Chazal* alluded to the concept that answering amen contains the power of the month of Adar "where their grief was transformed to joy, and their mourning to festivities."

If we are strict about amen, and answer it often, we will merit to see only good and blessings, and all the problems of the past will become *yeshuos* and consolation.

Good Shabbos and a Freilichen Purim
Yaakov Dov Marmurstein

A Brachah that 'Created' Souls

After the horrific Holocaust in which he lost almost his entire family, Harav Shlomo of Bobov returned to his hometown, hoping to find some remnants of the magnificent *chassidim* that his father, Harav Bentzion, *Hy"d*, had led up until the war, and which had been almost wiped out.

All the Rebbe found in his town were thirteen young orphans, who somehow had managed to survive. The Rebbe, who had lost his parents, brothers, wife and two children, and remained alone with one young son, who eventually became his successor, Rav Naftali Tzvi, decided to take those orphans under his wing, and to serve as their father and mother.

Later, when the Rebbe acceded to the call of a group of *chassidim* that had managed to escape before the war to America, to come and lead them



Harav Shlomo of Bobov

and reestablish the Bobov empire in America, he took these thirteen orphans that he had adopted with him.

The Rebbe aspired to establish a yeshivah in the tradition of Bobov, and it was only natural that the first students would be his thirteen orphans. The first American born student that joined the yeshivah was a sixteen-year-old *bochur* named Zusha. Zusha was the son of one of those Bobover families who had settled in America before the war broke out. Until then, he had learned in Torah Vodaas, then in Williamsburg, and when the Rebbe established his yeshivah, his parents transferred him there.

Zusha was the first to join, and was followed by many *talmidim*; the

Chassidic yeshivah, which at first seemed a strange thing in America, grew and thrived.

In its early years, the Rebbe used to eat with the yeshivah students, and was a partner to their problems and struggles. That is how the bond was formed between him and his early students – especially the very first ones, Zusha among them.

Many years passed.

The Bobover Rebbe had a special *minhag* to celebrate Shushan Purim among his *chassidim* with great joy, as if it was Purim itself. On the morning of Shushan Purim, after davening, the Rebbe visited close relatives, and later in the day, visited a few of his *chassidim*; he was joined on this visits by a number of select *chassidim*. The Rebbe was intimately familiar with the needs and struggles of his *chassidim*, and on these rare visits, he would shower them with *brachos* and give encouragement to the ones who needed it. Many of the *chassidim* saw significant *yeshuos* after those visits.

Upon entering the house, the Rebbe would cry enthusiastically, 'Gut Yom Tov! Gut Yom Tov!' as he glowed with an inner joy and love. As he continued to murmur 'a gut yom tov, a guten Purim,' the Rebbe would sit down at the table. The host served cake and drinks, and when he finished, the *chassidim* who had joined the Rebbe would take seats at the table. The Rebbe would slice the cake, pour the drinks into cups, and each one of the *chassidim* was called to take his portion.

After the Rebbe finished distributing to all those present, he would make a *brachah* and take a drink, just a sip, so as not to generate a question of *brachah acharonah*. After the *l'chaim*, everyone burst into song and dance for a few minutes. Then they moved onto the next address...

The year this story took place, after concluding his visits, the Rebbe quietly turned to the *gabbai* and told him he wanted to make 'one more visit.' To who? the *gabbai* asked. "To Reb Zusha," the Rebbe replied.

By that point, Reb Zusha was already serving as the Rosh Yeshivah of Bobov, and when the *chassidim* heard that the Rebbe was about to visit him, their curiosity was piqued. They knew very well that Reb Zusha was suffering, as nine years had passed since his marriage and he had not yet been blessed with children. When the Rebbe announced

his intention to visit Reb Zusha, the *chassidim* realized that he wanted to draw down a *yeshuah* to his home.

Again, the *chassidim* sat down around the table. This time, as well, the Rebbe sliced the cake he had been served, and his face was especially luminous. When Reb Shmiel, the Rebbe's loyal *gabbai*, approached to receive his portion, the Rebbe asked him to prepare a cup of tea.

It was an unusual request, because, as noted the Rebbe made sure to sip just a bit in these homes. The *gabbai* hastened to fulfill the Rebbe's request.

After the Rebbe finished slicing the cake to each one of the people, he called Reb Shmiel again. The *chassidim* thought that the Rebbe had forgotten that Reb Shmiel had already received his portion, and quickly pointed this out. But the Rebbe said: "He needs more..." Indeed, the *gabbai* did need more – had had one son, and he yearned for more children.

Then the Rebbe turned to his cup of tea, which had already cooled down somewhat...He took the cup, made a *brachah* and sipped half of it. Then he put his eyes on Reb Zusha and Reb Shmiel, and made a *brachah acharonah* in a loud voice, with much emotion and joy: "*Borei nefashos rabbos*" – the words echoed in the room, and touched the heartstrings of each one of them.

The Rebbe seemed to be ensconced in higher worlds; his face burned with holy fire, his eyes were closed. The *chassidim's* eyes were riveted on the Rebbe, as he uttered the words of the *brachah* with great emphasis, one by one, until he finished.

When the Rebbe finished the *brachah*, everyone responded with a resounding amen, with great *kavanah*.

Then the Rebbe resumed his daily schedule. But the *chassidim* did not forget the story.

A year after that Shushan Purim, Reb Shmiel and his wife had another boy, and a short time later, Reb Zusha and his wife were blessed with a daughter.

About twenty years later, Reb Shmiel and Reb Zusha became *mechutanim*, when that son and that daughter got engaged. The Rebbe was honored with *siddur kiddushin*...

The Rosh Yeshivah,
Harav Gerson Edelstein, *shlita*



— Answering Amen – Strengthening of Emunah —

Answering amen is known to be a very great thing. The *Gemara* (*Shabbos* 119b) brings the secret that it contains – that it is testimony that Hashem is the K-I Melech Ne'eman, and if it is answered with this *kavanah*, we cannot fathom what a *zechus* it is!

In order to have the right *kavanah* in answering amen, one must listen carefully to the *brachos* and to *Kaddish*, to hear each word and have in mind to understand what is being said. It is known that there are many explanations on the *kavanah* of the word amen.

There are famous words of the *gedolei hamussar* that it is worthwhile for a person to come to this world, and live in it for seventy years, even to merit one amen. The *gedolim* further said that if a person would know the virtue of answering amen, it is impossible to describe the great joy that he would feel. Indeed, it behooves us to delve into this great virtue of answering amen so that we can understand it better.

The source of the mitzvah of *meah brachos* is in the *Breisa* in *Maseches Manachos* (43b): “Tanya, Rabi Meir said: A person must recite one hundred *brachos* each day, as it says (*Devarim* 10:12): ‘*V’ata Yisrael mah Hashem Elokecha sho’el m’imach ki im leyirah.*” *Rashi* explains (ibid ad loc. *mah*) that the *passuk* is explained in a way of ‘*al tikrei*’ – do not read. Do not read *מה* rather *מאה* – “Hashem is asking of you one hundred [*brachos* a day].”

From the fact that the *passuk* that *Chazal* cite as the source of the obligation of answering one hundred *brachos* states “*כי אם ליראה*” – it seems that they recognized that there is a connection between saying one hundred *brachos* and *yiras Shamayim*. We need to understand this connection.

Harav Chaim Friedlander, *zt”l*, explained that by making the *brachah*, “*Baruch Atah Hashem,*” and studying the meaning of the words that he utters, a person reminds himself that HaKadosh Baruch Hu is the Master, and the person is like the servant that must fulfill His wishes. When the person reviews this to himself a hundred times a day, that brings

him to stronger *emunah* and *yiras Shamayim*.

That same virtue exists when answering amen, as *Rashi* explains (*Sanhedrin* 111a ad loc. *mai*) on the question of the *Gemara* there “*Mai amen, what is amen?*” – “when one answers amen to each and every *brachah*, it means *yiras Shamayim.*” Because the essence of every single amen is *tefillah* and a request that the words of the *mevarech* should be fulfilled, and even when a person blesses his friend and a friend answers amen, because his intention is to believe that this is what will be from Above, that strengthens his *emunah* and *yirah*. Through this, we attain higher levels of *emunah* and *yiras Shamayim*.

For this reason, the *Kesser Rosh* (25) brings in the name of Harav Chaim of Volozhin: “And for an amen without *kavanah* that one says, he says there is no merit,” meaning that answering amen needs to be said with *kavanah* and emotion of the heart. Pay attention to the *brachah* that you are answering to. For example, in the *brachah* of *Borei Pri Ha’etz*, one should thank Hashem for creating the fruit of the tree. This includes two concepts of gratitude, one in the context of recognizing the truth, that we recognize that He created the fruit of the tree, and the second is in the context of gratitude, that we thank Hashem and are *makir tov* to Him creating and giving us the fruit of the tree. We need to have this *kavanah* also when answering amen.

We learn that every amen adds more *chizuk* to *emunah* and *yiras Shamayim*. The *Rambam* wrote in *Peirush Hamishnayos* on *Avos* what is said there (3 15): “*Hakol lefi rov hama’aseh.*” It is preferable to give one thousand times one coin to *tzedakah* than to give one donation of a thousand coins, because each donation strengthens in the heart of the person the nature of loving *chessed*. Likewise, with answering amen and one hundred *brachos* a day, because a person remembers his *emunah* so many times a day, through this his *yiras Shamayim* and *emunah* become stronger.

Otzros Emunim

Answering Amen to Birchos Hashachar

Birchos Hashachar in Shul

Harav Moshe ben Machir, author of *Seder Hayom*, mentions the custom of saying *Birchos Hashachar* aloud, in order to give others the merit of answering amen. He also explains that for this reason, it is worthy for a person to say them in shul and not at home. He wrote (*Seder Hayom Sefer Tefillas Hashachar*):

“The custom is to say *Birchos Hashachar* one after the other in shul and not at home, because the place in his home is not as clean and pure for a series of several *brachos* one after another. And also, he does not have such pure *kavanah* because he is still

sleepy or is busy with other thoughts, but in shul, one feels the awe of the Shechinah and the holiness of the nation upon him. And also, he gives others the merit to answer amen after him. For all these reasons, it is fitting for every *baal nefesh* to say the *brachos* in shul.”

Birchos Hashachar Is Part of *Tefillas Hatzibbur*

One who peruses the source of the *tefillah* of *Yehi Ratzon* said after the *brachah* of *Hama’avir Sheinah*, in *Maseches Brachos* (60b) will see that it was instituted in the singular form. “*Shetargileini beTorasecha vedabkeini bemitzvosecha...*” Today, we say this series of requests in the

plural form. Why is that?

From the words of the *Gemara* (ibid) it is explained that at the time, each person would recite *Birchos Hashachar* right when he arose, and each *brachah* was said at the time that the *mevarech* benefited from the thing the *brachah* thanked for. The *Yehi Ratzon*, which each person said in his home, was also instituted in the singular. But today, when we say *Birchos Hashachar* in shul, before davening, and we recite the *brachos* aloud so that they should be completed with amen, this *tefillah* is considered a “*tefillas rabbim*” and therefore we say it in the plural. (*Siddur Mekor Hatefillos* [Rav B. Friedman of Mishkoltz] *Birchos Hashachar*).

Answering Amen After *Chazaras Hashatz*

One should answer amen after the *brachos* of the *shaliach tzibbur* who repeats the *tefillah*, even if he does not hear them, on condition that he knows which *brachah* the *sha"tz* just repeated. But there is an opinion that because it is obligatory for the *tzibbur* to hear the repetition of the *tefillah*, the *halachah* of the *brachos* of the repetition are the same as a *brachah* that a person is obligated in. Hence, one must not answer amen after them if he did not hear from the *sha"tz* at least the conclusion of the *brachah*. If he does answer, it is an 'amen yesomah.' The *poskim* write that *lechatchilah*, one should heed this view, and be careful to hear the *brachah* from the *shaliach tzibbur* properly.

Sources and Explanations

The *Mishnah Berurah* (124 31; *Shaar Hatzion* ibid 33) wrote that according to the *Shulchan Aruch* and other *poskim* (in the view of the *Rema*) because today we are not *yotzei tefillah* from the *sha"tz* who repeats the *Amidah*, therefore, the *halachah* of the *brachos* of the *Amidah* are like a *brachah* that we are not obligated in, and anyone who knows which *brachah* he is answering, can answer, and it is not an *amen yesomah*. But the *Bach* (ibid, cited in *Magen Avraham* ibid 13) differs and thinks that one should not answer amen after the *brachos* of *Chazaras Hasha"tz* if he did not hear them from the *sha"tz*, because although he is not *yotzei* the

obligation of *tefillah* with them, he is obligated to hear them and answer amen. Therefore, their *halachah* is like *brachos* that the *oneh* is obligated in, and if he answered amen after them without hearing them, it is considered an *amen yesomah* (see *Mishnah Berurah* ibid 33). But the *Mishneh Berurah* (ibid) wrote that even according to the *Bach*, one does not have to hear the entire *brachah* from the *sha"tz*, and it is enough to hear only the end. The *Kaf Hachaim* wrote likewise (ibid 47). The *Shulchan Aruch Harav* (ibid 11) the *Mishnah Berurah* (ibid) and the *Kaf Hachaim* (ibid) wrote that *lechatchilah*, one should be concerned about the *Bach's* view, and should listen to the *brachos* of the *sha"tz*, but *bedieved*, if he knows which *brachah* it is, he should answer amen.

The *hagahos* of Rabi Akiva Eiger (ibid 3) questions whether someone who davened and heard *Chazaras Hasha"tz* properly, and then came upon a different *minyan* during *Chazaras Hasha"tz*, has to take into consideration the *Bach's* concerns and not answer amen without hearing the *brachah*. He leaned towards saying that in such a case, even the *Bach* would concede that his *din* is like someone who is hearing a *brachah* that he is not obligated in, because a person is not obligated to hear the repetition of the *tefillah* an additional time. But *l'halachah*, he left this matter as one that needs more *iyun*. But *sefer Toras Chaim* (ibid 11) wrote that from the ambiguity of the words of the *Bach* it appears that this does not depend on the listener, but rather on the *brachah*, and after *Chazal* instituted that the *sha"tz* should repeat the *tefillah* so that the *tzibbur* should hear and answer amen, even someone who already davened and heard the repetition, should not answer amen if he did not hear the *brachah* from the *shaliach tzibbur*.

Tzaddik B'Emunaso

Amen and Brachos in the Teachings of One Who Has Yahtzeit



The matzeivah of the Yesod Veshoresh Ha'avodah in Horodna.

Yesod Veshoresh Ha'avodah 18 Adar II 5554

Harav Alexander Ziskind of Horodna was born in 5499 in Rózana to his father, Rav Moshe. He learned under the *mekubal* Rav Aryeh Leib Halevi Epstein, the Baal Hapardes. His name was uttered with awe, as someone whose entire life was enveloped in holiness and asceticism in a way that is hard to comprehend.

He left the encapsulation of his Torah in his *sefer Yesod Veshoresh Ha'avodah*, a *mussar sefer* that guides a person in day to day conduct. It is considered a fundamental *sefer* in *mussar* and *avodas Hashem*. Everything he wrote in his *sefer* – and more – he observed himself. In his will he wrote (part 5): “Heaven and earth can testify of me, my beloved children, that it was not lacking ...that I did not have *kavanah* myself in all the *tefillos* and all the gratitude with great intensity and strength, and many more suchlike that I could not present in my writings, I had them in mind, *b'ezras Hashem...*”

He passed away on 18 Adar II 5554, and was buried in the cemetery in Horodna. According to his will, his *matzeivah* was etched with the words “here lies Alexander Ziskind ben Reb Moshe, born to Rivka, an *oved Hashem yisbarach*.”

Birchos Hashachar in Shul

Regarding the way to say *Birchos Hashachar*, the *Yesod Veshoresh Ha'avodah* wrote (*Sha'ar Ha'ashmores* Chapter 10): “It is good to say them in shul with the rest of the *tefillah* so that people should answer amen after his *brachos*. Because how great is the virtue of a *brachah* when amen is answered after it...Therefore, it is fitting for a person to be careful to say his *brachos* as much as possible in front of others, so that they can answer amen to the *brachah*.”

Be Careful to Answer Amen with *Kavanah*

Regarding the obligation of being careful to answer amen with *kavanah*, the *Yesod Veshoresh Ha'avodah* wrote (*Sha'ar Hakorban* Chapter 6): “And a person should be very careful about answering amen, because *lefum gamla* – based on the size of his reward for answering amen – that is the greatness of the punishment *Rachmana litzlan* for one who is not careful to answer it, or who answers without having the right *kavanah* based on the *brachah*, and just utters the word amen by rote.” He said of himself in his will (15): “I was very careful about answering amen after the *mevarech*, with the *kavanah* that I wrote in my works, meaning that I had in mind in amen the praise of the *brachah*, and did not just utter the word amen without *kavanah*, and you should be very careful about this.”