

VeChol Maaminim

A Weekly Pamphlet From "Bney Emunim"

Parashas VAYKIRA | 5783 | Issue No. 476



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Peninei Emunim

Pearls of Tefillah in the Parashah

Pischu Shearim

Open the Gates

Beginning Tefillah With a 'Call of Love'

"ויקרא אל משה וידבר ה' אליו מאהל מועד לאמר" (א א)

Rashi explains that the word "*vayikra*" symbolizes an "expression of love," to teach us that whenever HaKadosh Baruch Hu wanted to speak to Moshe, He would precede by calling him with an endearing term. However, if this is what Hashem did before every time He spoke to Moshe, why is it explained specifically here, in the *parashah* of the *korbanos*?

Harav Shlomo Kluger explained: The reason that the Torah explained HaKadosh Baruch Hu's practice to precede and call to Moshe with a term of endearment, is to teach us that we should also cleave to His ways, and whenever we stand to daven to Hashem, and to ask from Him, we should precede with words of praise, as *Chazal* say (*Brachos* 32a): "A person should always first present his praise of Hashem, and then he should pray." Therefore, the Torah chose to teach this to us specifically at the beginning of the *parashah* of *korbanos*, because *tefillah* was instituted to correspond to these *parshiyos* (*Brachos* 26b).

Chochmas HaTorah

Despite Mistakes, We Need to Do Viduy

"דבר אל בני ישראל לאמר נפש כי תחטא בשגגה מכל מצות ה'
אשר לא תעשינה ועשה מאחת מהנה" (ד ב)

After the Torah writes "if a person unwittingly transgresses any commandment of Hashem, which should not be done" why is it necessary to add "and commits one of these sins?"

The *Alshich* explained that the Torah seeks to clarify that a sin done by mistake is caused to a sinner as a result from a sin he did on purpose. Because if he would not have sinned purposely in his past, he would have had protection from Above that he should not sin. The *passuk* says: "If a person unwittingly transgresses" – this happens only because in the past he stumbled "and committed one of these sins" intentionally.

Based on this, *sefer Aish Tamid* explained the words of the *Viduy* on Yom Kippur: "*Al cheit shechatanu bezadon ubishgagah.*" Why are witting and unwitting sins stated together? Is there not a big different between them? But based on this explanation, that the unwitting sin is the result of an intentional sin, it is clear that indeed, it is fitting to mention them together.

Toras Moshe [Rav Moshe Alshich]; *Aish Tamid* [Rav Y.M. Druk]

A word from the founder
and Nasi of Bney Emunim

Mishenichnas Nissan Marbim B'emunah

Nissan is the first month of the year, as it says (*Shemos* 12:2): "*Hachodesh hazeh lachem rosh chodashim rishon hu lachem lechodshei hashanah.*" The *Ramban* (*ibid*) explains that the secret of the importance of Nissan is in the miracles of Yetzias Mitzrayim that happened during this month.

During the tremendous miracles that occurred when Bnei Yisrael left Egypt, the *Malchus* of Hashem in His World was revealed to all; everyone was able to witness the *Hashgachah pratit* that supersedes all forms of nature.

It is brought down in *seforim* that the month of Nissan is a month of renewal. In this month, *emunah* was renewed in the hearts of our forefathers, and for generations, this month contains the power for every Jew to strengthen and renew his *emunah* in Hashem.

When answering amen, we ingrain the *emunah* in our heart, as the *Megaleh Emukos* revealed (*Parashas V'eschanan*) that "the *ikkar* of *emunah* depends on answering amen." And if that is the case the whole year, how much more so is it in this auspicious month. This concept is also alluded to in the *passuk* (*Shemos* 2:12): "ראשון יהיה לך" – as the last letter of these words come together to make 'amen.'

Answering amen builds the Mishkan of *emunah* in the heart of a person, and if we want to enjoy its fruits, it behooves us to answer *k'halachah*, not like a mitzvah we do by rote, murmuring, and offhanded. Rather, we should do it with enthusiasm and daily rejuvenation.

We can further say that with the words "*Rishon hu lachem,*" the Torah alludes that the amen needs to be a top priority for us – *rishonah*, first, of all things.

Amen is the fundamental of *emunah*, and *emunah* is the foundation of the entire Torah. As the *Ramban* wrote (*Shemos* 13:8): "A person does not have a share in the Torah of Moshe Rabbeinu until we believe with all our words and all that happens to us, that everything is miracle, and there is no nature or way of the world."

And it is interesting to see that this concept is also alluded to in the word amen, which is an acronym for "אין מקרה [אלא] נס", there is no coincidence [only] miracles.

Let us answer amen with renewed energy, and let us place its importance as a top priority. Each morning, we should come refreshed and enthusiastic to say "*Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa,*" and we will give another person the merit of answering amen to our *brachos*. Then we will merit to answer amen to his *brachos*, and we will merit that the words of the poet: "*Hachodesh asher yeshuos bo makifos,*" should be fulfilled. Amen!

Good Shabbos

Yaakov Dov Marmurstein

Amen for Birchas Ha'lanos Sprouts New Seeds

This beautiful story was sent by the person it happened to, a fine young man from Beit Shemesh, a 'tzaddik shomer emunim' who has merited to see tremendous *Hashgachah pratis* in the merit of being strict to answer amen.

In his letter, he writes:

On 4 Nissan, I was driving in my car to my home in Beit Shemesh. As I drove, I looked around at the flowering scenery and suddenly remembered: I hadn't yet recited *Birchas Ha'lanos*.

Being strict as I was to do a mitzvah as soon as the opportunity arises, I turned off from the road to the first *moshav* I passed, and after a short drive among the houses, I found what I was looking for. In front of me was an elegant private home, surrounded by a spacious garden with a number of fruit trees. I stopped the car, got out and approached the garden.

This is the place to note that in recent



Birchas Ha'lanos

years, in your merit, I have the *zechus* to be strict to recite *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa* each morning. In the last year, I also unofficially began to serve as a 'gabbai amen' in the shul where I daven. Many of the *mispallelim* who noticed the fondness I have for this matter, come to recite *Birchos Hashachar* for me.

The concept of amen has penetrated deep into my *neshamah*, to the extent that today, I cannot make a *brachah* without someone answering amen after it.

Now, as I stood there ready to recite *Birchas Ha'lanos*, I suddenly realized that I needed someone to answer amen. I began to look around, and davened in my heart for Hashem to send me a Jew who could answer amen to my *brachah*. Suddenly, I felt a strong slap on my back.

A tall, muscular man had suddenly appeared behind me, and grabbed my

arm roughly as he shouted: "Aha... Now I finally got you. Every dog has his day! What were you thinking? That you'd manage to get away from me?!" As he spoke, he pulled me into the garden, sat me down on the ground, and embarrassingly, even tied my hands behind my back with a plastic zip tie, so that I shouldn't run away, *chalilah...*

I was stunned, and in shock, I began to cry. "What do you want from me?" I asked the man. "What have I done to you?"

"You can tell everything you have to say to the police," the man said. "What exactly led you to spend fifteen minutes walking around my garden, if not to steal?!" I tried to explain to him that I had come here only because I wanted to recite *Birchas Ha'lanos*, and I was looking for someone to answer amen after me. But the man, who did not seem to have any basic knowledge of Jewish concepts, didn't 'buy' my story.

He had never heard of such a *brachah*, and knew amen only from the *Kaddish* that he recited once a year in shul.

Five minutes later, a police cruiser screeched to halt near us. Two policemen got out of the car and wanted to hear the story.

The man presented his version, and only then did things become a bit clearer. Apparently, in the past month, there had been two break-ins to his house, and based on the eyewitness accounts, it seemed to be someone with a religious appearance. Now, when he saw on the cameras someone religious walking around his house for fifteen minutes, he immediately came to the conclusion that the thief had come to try his luck a third time.

I was at a loss, and I davened in my heart for Hashem to help me. Then I noticed that one of the policemen was wearing a yarmulke. This encouraged me a bit, and I decided to try and explain the matter. I was happy when the man showed familiarity with the subject. He knew about *Birchas Ha'lanos* and was also aware of the obligation to answer amen after a *brachah*. He understood, as well, when I explained to him the *hiddur* I had taken upon myself not to recite a *brachah* without someone answering amen. Now that he understood what I

was looking for, the policeman asked me for my ID card. After asking for my details, he reached the clear conclusion that something here had gone awry...I was apparently no great criminal – or even a petty one...

"I think you caught the wrong person at the wrong place," the policeman said to the owner of the house. "You need to apologize to him..." The man lowered his head in shame, and didn't even try to argue. He immediately cut the zip tie and murmured shamefacedly, "I'm really sorry."

The policeman dissipated the tension when he said to me, "Okay, now you have three people to answer amen, so it's time to make the *brachah*!" I immediately began to recite the *brachah* with *kavanah*, and could barely contain my tears. The policemen answered amen and left.

I was left alone with the owner of the house. He felt very uncomfortable and apologized once again. Of course, I forgave him. I realized he'd made a mistake. But the man was not yet calm and asked me to come into the house.

I went in. The house was huge and beautiful, and so very quiet and empty... We sat down and the man told me a bit about his life. Apparently, he had lots of money, but he had not a drop of *nachas*... He asked about my family, and was surprised when I told him the large family I have the privilege of raising - ten children, *bli ayin hara*. The man was stunned, and there were tears in his eyes. Suddenly, he stood up, and pulled out a checkbook. He wrote a few words and handed me the check. I studied it for a second and was stunned when I saw the sum: the check was made out for fifty thousand shekels.

I was embarrassed to take it, but the man said to me cheerfully: "It's totally fine, I have plenty more even after I give you this... Take the money, buy your children some things for the *chag*, and tell them that someone sent it to them with lots of love... You have no idea how I admire the privilege that you have merited. I wish I would also have it..."

Now I could not contain my own tears. They were tears of joy, and of pain, for this Jew who had so much, but really, had nothing...

We parted with a warm handshake, and I felt my heart overflowing with so much emotion.

And if someone still needs to be convinced how great the benefit in this world is from someone who answers amen, send him to me...

The Halachos of Amen Yesomah

Answering Amen after
Borei Nefashos

Amen is answered after the *brachah* “*Baruch Chei Ha’olamim*” that concludes the *brachah* of *Borei Nefashos*. This is not an *amen yesomah*, even though this conclusion was added because of a *safek*, a doubt, and the original ending of the *brachah* is “*Lehachayos bahem nefesh kol chai*.” However, some wrote that it is fitting to be strict that the *mevarech* should hurry when saying the final few words of the *brachah*, and the listeners should answer amen right after he finishes.

Sources and Explanations

The *brachah* of *Borei Nefashos* was brought in the *Gemara* (*Brachos* 37a) without the conclusion that we add today, “*Baruch Chei Ha’olamim*,” who source is in the *Yerushalmi* (*Brachos* 6 1). And, even though the *Yerushalmi* wording of the *brachah* concludes with Hashem’s Name – “*Baruch Atah Hashem Chei Ha’olamim*,” the *poskim* ruled that it is sufficient to conclude without *Shem uMalchus* (*Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim* 207 1 and *Taz* *ibid* 1, based on *Rabbeinu Yona Brachos* 32a, *Midapei HaRif*).

Some have proven from the words of *Tosafos* (*Brachos* 37a ad loc. *Borei*) that this ruling is not because of a *safek*, a doubt, as per *Rabbeinu Yona*, but because it is indeed the view of the *Bavli* that the *brachah* should be concluded without *Shem* and *Malchus* (*Shu”t Igros Moshe Orach Chaim* Vol. VI 18:28, in the name of his son, *Rav Dovid*). The *Igros Moshe* (*ibid*) claimed that according to *Rabbeinu Yona* on the view of the *Bavli*, that the conclusion “*Baruch Chei Ha’olamim*” is said because of a *safek* and is not an integral part of the *brachah*, it should have been the *din* to answer amen after the words “*nefesh kol chai*.” Because when one answers after the words “*Baruch Chei Ha’olamim*,” the time of “*kedei dibbur*” [three words] has already passed since the end of the *brachah* [*nefesh kol chai*] and this results in an *amen yesomah* [and see *K’Ayal Ta’arog* –p. 278, and *Harav Simcha Zelig Riger, moreh tzedek* of *Brisk* also claimed this]. However, according to the *Tosafos*

that the *Bavli* also considers the conclusion of “*Baruch Chei Ha’olamim*,” part of the *brachah*, then indeed, one should answer amen after this conclusion. [In *Shu”t Rivevos Ephraim* it is brought (Vol. VII 26) that the *Igros Moshe* had the custom of answering amen after “*Nefesh Kol Chai*”]. But the *Shu”t Hisorerus Teshuvah* (91) wrote that even those who hold that the conclusion of “*Baruch Chei Ha’olamim*” was added out of a *safek*, one should answer amen after it “because [it is only] a general praise that was added to the *brachah*, and this is permitted, *bedieved*.”

They further explained that because everyone has the custom of concluding the *brachah* this way, the conclusion of the *brachah* has become part of the actual *brachah* (*Hagahos Zichron Menachem* on *Likutei Mahari”ch, Seder Birchos Hanehenin* 11). *Harav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach* also ruled that one should answer amen after “*Baruch Chei Ha’olamim*,” “because due to a doubt it was customary to end this way, so it is not a *hefsek*” (*Halichos Shlomo Tefillah* Chapter 23 comment 123), and this is what *Harav Chaim Kanievsky* practiced (*Meir Oz* Vol. IX p. 388).

The *Igros Moshe* (*ibid*) concludes that “if the *mevarech* said it without a *hefsek*,” and the one who answers does so right at the end of his *brachah*, then even according to *Rabbeinu Yonah*, it is considered that he answered within the time of *kedei dibbur*. In essence, he concludes that one should be careful about this. His meaning, simply, is that the *mevarech* should not pause between the words “*nefesh kol chai*” and the conclusion “*Baruch Chei Ha’olamim*,” because if he pauses even a bit, and then says the three additional words, then according to *Rabbeinu Yona* he had a *hefsek* of more than *dedei dibbur* [three words] between the end of the *brachah* and amen. However, it needs to be understood, that because he himself ruled (*ibid*) that the amount of “*kedei dibbur*” is the amount of time it takes to say three words, then in any case, when saying the words “*Baruch Chei Ha’olamim*,” some time has passed, so what does the *takanah* of *Chazal* help? It can be explained that his intention that one should not pause when saying the *brachah* even while saying “*Baruch Chei Ha’olamim*” because due to the fact that the conclusion of the *brachah* is said because of a *safek*, he should say it quickly. Only this way will the answering of amen to his *brachah* be “*toch kedei dibbur*” from the words “*nefesh kol chai*” because the amount of *kedei dibbur* is measured according to the average time it takes to say these words (see *Divrei Yechezkel* 27:20). And see *Shu”t Rivevos Ephraim* (*ibid*) who brings this thought in the name of the *Igros Moshe*.

Ro’ei Emunim

From the Words of Our
Gedolim on Answering Amen

My father, the Rebbe, [the *Chelkas Yehoshua*], *zy”a*, explained that every single *dvar mitzvah* and good practice should be practiced as *halachah lema’aseh*. And what he did by establishing *takanos* was to benefit his generation. As it says in the holy *sefer Noam Elimelech* (*Noach*), in every generation there is a *mitzvah* and there is a special *inyan* to strengthen in particular. He wrote: “In every single generation there is a *shoresh*, a root, to be *mesaken* a special *mitzvah* more than other *mitzvos*. For example, in this generation there is a root to rectify the *mitzvah* of *tzitzis* more than the other *mitzvos*. Similarly, in every generation there is a root to grasp onto a special *mitzvah* more than the other *mitzvos*.”

This concept is not only applicable in the leadership of the generation, but also with every single individual. As is known, the *Yid Hakadosh* of *Peshischa, zy”a*, took upon himself to be specifically strict about the *mitzvah* of *tzedakah* and the *issur* of “*lo sinaf*.”

And among the things that my father and Rebbe, *zy”a*, cautioned about was to say *Birchos Hashachar* in front of someone who will answer amen. He wrote: “And to recite *Birchos Hashachar* in front of a number of people to answer amen, as is known from *kedoshei Elyon* that a *brachah* without an amen is literally like half a body.”

My grandfather the Rebbe of *Biala* [the *Divrei Binah*], *zy”a*, would answer amen to *brachos* each day in the amount

equivalent to amen. And even though he was extremely busy, he still had the custom that

children came into his room each day before he went to daven and they recited *Birchos Hashachar*, and he answered amen after them. He would even give them a few *kopecs* in reward for coming to his house to say the *brachos*. He did not seek out *tzaddikim* or elders, rather he answered amen to the *brachos* of little children, because in the merit of the *Tinokos* of *Bais Rabban*, the world stands. Therefore, the answering of amen after them is a very lofty matter. And with this practice of his, he certain sweetened some of the *dinim*.



The Biala Rebbe, shlita

Otzros Emunim

The Virtue of Answering Amen

A Brachah with Yirah and Amen with Ahavah

Some explain that the reason that the “one who answers [amen] is greater than the *mevarech*” (*Brachos* 53b) is because the *mevarech* does his action out of *yirah*, awe and fear, because the *brachos* were instituted “in order to remember the Creator always, and to fear Him” (*Rambam Brachos* 1 4). In the *passuk* that *Chazal* cite as the source of the mitzvah of saying one hundred *brachos* a day (*Menachos* 43b) the subject of *yiras Hashem* is mentioned, as it says (*Devarim* 10:12): “*V’atah Yisrael ה' אלהינו ה' אחד*] *Hashem Elokecha sho'el m'imach ki im leyirah...*” In contrast, the obligation of answering amen after *brachos* is based on *ahavas Hashem* and a desire to praise Him, because the obligation of answering amen is derived by *Chazal* (see *Rashi Brachos* 21a ad loc. *Ki Shem*) from the *passuk* (*Devarim* 32:3): “*havu godel l'Elokeinu.*” And because *Chazal* say (*Sotah* 31a) that “*gadol ha'oseh m'ahavah, one who does from love is greater than one who does from fear*” we find that one who answers amen is greater than the *mevarech* (*Kesser Meluchah* p. 100, in the name of *sefer Minchas Aharon* 8 2).

Iggeres Emunim

A Letter from a Loyal Reader

To the distinguished Nasi of Bney Emunim, Rabbi Yaakov Dov Marmurstein, *shlita*,

Thank you most sincerely for your holy work to infuse in the hearts of Am Yisrael the importance and loftiness of answering amen. Your beautiful pamphlets and the various activities you organize have made great inroads in the hearts of people to hold the mitzvah of answering amen in great importance. May you receive much *chizuk* to go forward with your work.

I just recently learned of your initiative entitled Chaim Shel Brachah that is taking place now in memory of your mother, Devorah bas Reb Dov, *a"h*. May you be blessed for the *brachah* that you have brought upon the homes of Am Yisrael.

On the Chaim Shel Brachah card, you brought the words of the *Tanna Devei Eliyahu* (*Rabbah* 11) about the *passuk* said in *Shiras Devorah* (*Shoftim* 5:2): “*Bifroa pera'os b'Yisrael behisnadev am barchu Hashem,*” and he writes: “**What did Devorah prophesize for Am Yisrael? She said to them: In the merit of whom does HaKadosh Baruch Hu take revenge for Am Yisrael from the nations of the world? In people who rise...and go to the *bais knesses* and bless HaKadosh Baruch Hu with amen.**”

I thought it was fitting to point out that these words stress the two fundamental concepts that you work so hard to imbue the whole *tzibbur* with: The first is that answering amen is part of the *brachah*, as the words of the *Tanna Devei Eliyahu* say “*umevarchim es HaKadosh Baruch Hu with amen.*” And two, that there is special importance to saying *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa*, and as the *Tanna Devei Eliyahu* stresses “*mashkimim lebaais haknesses...umevarchim es HaKadosh Baruch Hu b'amen.*” And *Birchos Hashachar* are the *brachos* that are said upon arising.

With deepest respects,
Y.S.C., Modiin Illit

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Shaarei Gan Eden

Amen and Brachos in the Teachings of a Baal Hayahrtzeit



The Shomer Emunim

The Shomer Emunim

6 Nissan 5707

The Rebbe, Harav Aharon Roth, was born in 5654 to his father, Rav Shmuel Yaakov, in the city of Ungvar, Ukraine. In his youth, he learned in the *yeshivos* in Munkacz and Weitzen, and was close to the *tzaddikim* of his generation.

After his Rebbe, Harav Tzvi Elimelech of Bluzhov, encouraged him to establish a Chassidic court, in 5681, he established a *chaburah* called Yirei Hashem in the city of Satmar, Romania. Because of the emphasis he placed on answering amen out loud, he changed the name of the *chaburah* to Chaburas Shomer Emunim, which developed into the Shomer Emunim *chassidus*. He discussed this subject at length in his *sefer Shomer Emunim*.

In 5699, he moved to Eretz Yisrael and settled in Yerushalayim, where he established Bais Medrash Shomer Emunim. For most of his life, he suffered with illnesses, and yet, he served his Creator with *mesirus nefesh*, and even practiced a lot of asceticism.

He passed away on 6 Nissan 5707, while he was manually grinding flour to bake matzos. He was 52 upon his passing, and his holy body was buried at the top of Har Hazeisim.

Birchos Hashachar in Shul

The Shomer Emunim wrote regarding reciting *Birchos Hashachar* one to another in shul:

“How good is it for those who recite *Birchos Hashachar* each day in shul, and are strict to have amen answered after their *brachos*, and not like those who think they are smart, and say *Birchos Hashachar* at home.” (*Shomer Emunim Ma'amar Pischu She'arim* Chapter 2).

Gates of Gan Eden in This World

The Shomer Emunim explained the promise of *Chazal* (*Shabbos* 119b) that “one who answers amen with all his might has the gates of Gan Eden opened to him,” as follows: It does not say “*yipaschu*” in the future tense, but rather “*poschim*”, in the current tense. That is because “one who answers amen with all his strength,” merits while he is still in this world to have the Gates of Gan Eden opened for him, and he will be bestowed with a Divine spiritual light whose source is in Gan Eden. Thus, he will feel in his mind a special sweetness in *avodas Hashem*. This is what the *passuk* alludes to (*Shir Hashirim* 1:4): “*משכני אחריך נרוצה.*” The acronym of these words is amen, to teach us that by answering amen, we feel wondrous sweetness in our closeness to Hashem, and therefore as a result “we will run after You.”