

Ve chol Maaminim

A Weekly
Pamphlet
From
"Bney
Emunim"



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Peninei Emunim

Pearls of Tefillah
in the Parashah

Tefillas Arvis Is Optional

“ויפגע במקום וילך שם כי בא השמש ויקח מאבני המקום וישם מראשתיו וישכב במקום ההוא” (כה יא)

Chazal explain the word “*vayifga*” (*Brachos* 26b) to be a term of *tefillah*, and they learn from this that “Yaakov instituted *Tefillas Arvis*.” The *Gemara* (*ibid* 27b) adds that in contrast to *Shacharis* and *Minchah*, which are mandatory, the *tefillah* of *Arvis* is optional. And why is it specifically *Arvis*, instituted by Yaakov Avinu, the chosen of the Avos (*Bereishis Rabbah* 76 1) that was not made mandatory?

Harav Yosef Shaul Nathanson explained:

Yaakov Avinu did not seek to institute a new *tefillah*, but rather to daven *Minchah*, as instituted by his father. But because the sun set before its time on that day (*Bereishis Rabbah* 68 10), his *tefillah* was said after the time for davening *Minchah* passed. Therefore, it was instituted for generations that one should add to the *tefillos* of the day – *Shacharis* and *Minchah* – the *tefillah* that Yaakov davened at night – which is *Arvis*. But because Yaakov did not mean initially to institute it, it was established as optional and not mandatory.

Harav Moshe Halberstam further explained:

The *Toras Chaim* (*Sanhedrin* 95b) asked regarding the words of Chazal that at the time Yaakov instituted *Tefillas Arvis*: Why did Yaakov see it fitting to institute this *tefillah* specifically at a time when he was travelling and had a lot on his mind? He replied: Because the sun set suddenly, before he had a chance to pray *Minchah*, therefore he instituted *Arvis*, in order to make up the *Minchah* that he missed. And as Chazal say (*Brachos* 26a): “One who mistakenly does not daven *Minchah* should daven *Arvis* twice.” The first is for the *Arvis* and the second is to make up the *Minchah* that he missed. Based on his words, we can explain that because the whole point of instituting the *Arvis* prayer was intended from the start only to make up the missed *Minchah*, therefore it was instituted as optional and not mandatory.

Divrei Shaul; Shu"t Divrei Moshe 15

Pis chu Shearim

A word from the founder
and Nasi of Bney Emunim

Amen Is the Divine Protective Wall

We merit Divine protection by answering amen, as revealed by Eliyahu Hanavi, as it says in *Tanna Devei Eliyahu* (*Rabba* 11): “In whose merit does HaKadosh Baruch Hu take revenge for Am Yisrael from the nations of the world? Through those who go to the *beis knesses* and *beis medrash* morning and evening, and answer amen...”

Am Yisrael in general, and in Eretz Yisrael in particular, are compared to a lamb among seventy wolves that threaten to tear it apart. In every single generation our enemies rise up to destroy us, and we are currently witnessing to what extent this is the case in our generation. Eliyahu Hanavi gives us a wonderful *segulah* that protects and defends us on the one hand, and takes revenge on our enemies on the other, and that is the mitzvah of answering amen.

I had a thought that this concept is alluded to in the *passuk* that describes the lofty virtue of answering amen (*Yeshayah* 26:2): “*Pis chu she'arim veyavo goy tzaddik shomer emunim*.” The *passuk* writes “*shomer*” – with two meanings. The one who is “*shomer*” – who makes sure to answer amen serves as the “*shomer*” – the one who protects Klal Yisrael. The real battle is not taking place here, it is taking place On High, and the merit of answering amen is what advocates for us to prevail over our enemies.

This is also alluded to in the dream of Yaakov Avinu in this *parashah*: “And he dreamed that there was a ladder standing on the ground and its head reached the skies, and the angels of Hashem were ascending and descending on it.” In his dream, Yaakov saw all the angels of amen [as we know that אמן is numerically equivalent to מלאך] ascend in order to be *melamed zechus* on Am Yisrael, and they then descend once again to defend Am Yisrael in times of trouble. As the *passuk* states (*Tehillim* 91:11) “*Ki malachav yetzaveh lach lishmorcha bechol derachecha*.” It is remarkable to see that when we calculate the value of the last letter of each word in this *passuk* [with the exception of the last word, *derachecha*], the result is 91, numerically equivalent to amen.

I thought to add that when saying (*Tehillim* 130:6) “*shomrim laboker*”, Dovid Hamelech had in mind those who rise to go to the *beis knesses* and answer amen. These people give themselves and Am Yisrael the merit of the most effective and secure protection.

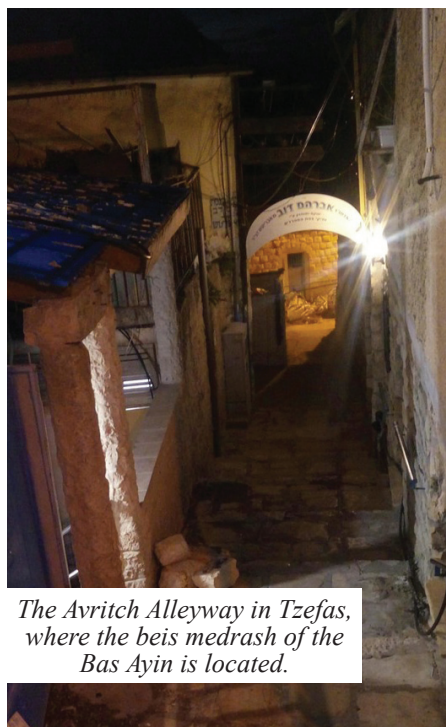
Good Shabbos

Yaakov Dov Marmurstein

In honor of the yahrtzeit of the Bas Ayin, zy"ta, on 12 Kislev, we bring you this awe-inspiring story that sheds a bit of light on his greatness, and on his tremendous aspiration for holiness, which he used to ascend to wondrous heights.

The Jews of Europe were used to the sight of the *shadarim* – the *shluchim d'Rabbanan*, emissaries of the Rabbanim who we know as *meshulachim* from Eretz Yisrael. They would travel the great distance from Eretz Yisrael to Europe, and made their rounds of the communities on the continent, to give more and more Jews the opportunity to partner in the support of poor people and Torah scholars who lived in the holy cities of Eretz Yisrael.

At the time when Harav Avraham Dov of Avritch, the Bas Ayin, served as the Av Bais Din in Zhitomir, Ukraine, the *meshulachim* visited there often. They knew that they would be treated with great respect, as the *mara d'asra* was



The Avritch Alleyway in Tzefas, where the *beis medrash* of the Bas Ayin is located.

very fond of them. This made the rest of the city – who deeply admired their Rav – give generously to the causes the *meshulachim* were coming for.

Rav Avraham Dov had a deep love for Eretz Yisrael, and he yearned all his life to make *aliyah* and settle there. He would treat any resident of the Land with the deepest respect. As such, he hosted any *meshulach* who came from

Eretz Yisrael; he served him and spent a lot of time speaking to his guest in praise of the Land.

One day, a *meshulach* arrived in Zhitomir. He had a regal countenance, and like his predecessors, he was hosted graciously in the home of the Bas Ayin, where, also like his predecessors, he was asked to speak in praise of the Holy Land.

It soon emerged that the *meshulach* was as regal on the inside as he appeared to be on the outside. As soon as he opened his mouth, everyone in attendance was riveted. He spoke expansively of the Land, and his descriptions were vibrant and flowing, to the extent that his listeners felt like they were in the land, breathing its pure air. In his fascinating descriptions, he took them north to south, and in every place that he ‘passed’ he described the holy atmosphere that pervaded there.

As he spoke, the audience could not take their eyes off the Bas Ayin, as from moment to moment, he grew more enthusiastic, and his face burned with the fire of the holiness of the land. The *meshulach* was about to conclude, but the Bas Ayin urged him to relate more...

The *meshulach* continued his descriptions about the cities of the Land and the virtues of those who dwelled there. Finally, he felt that he had shared all that he could. He asked to conclude, but when he saw that the Bas Ayin wanted to hear more, he added one more sentence, which later emerged to be exceptionally significant for the Bas Ayin.

“I’m not sure you will merit to understand this,” the *meshulach* said, as he leveled his gaze at his listeners, “but I cannot help but tell you, that the Holy Land is so wondrous, that even the stones that are in its streets are not regular stones...they are pearls!”

At this point, the man concluded his story and engaged in the purpose for which he had come. As expected, the hearts of his listeners were warm and open, and the *meshulach* departed with full pockets, and set out for his next stop.

But the Bas Ayin could not calm down. His desire for the Land grew to the point that it was unbearable, and some time later, he set out to fulfill his longstanding wish. He packed his possessions and began the long and arduous journey to the Holy Land.

In 5591, when he was more than seventy years old, the Bas Ayin finally

merited to reach Eretz Yisrael. He settled in Tzefas, where he was asked to serve as the Rav of the Chassidic community in the city.

Some time later, the Bas Ayin met that *meshulach*, and after they exchanged greetings, the Bas Ayin said:

“I have a question to ask you: I recently moved here, and I see that everything that you said was true. From the day I arrived until now, I have not stopped seeing more and more goodness and holiness, and I feel on my very being the words of the *passuk* (*Devarim* 11:12): “*Eretz asher...Einei Hashem Elokecha bah mereishis shanah v’ad acharis shanah.*” I wander around the Land and I cannot be satiated by its beauty and its holiness. However, there is one thing that you said that I did not merit to see at all. You said at the end of your words that the stones in the land are not regular stones, they are pearls. And yet, I have been here and lived here for some time already, and I have not yet come across even one such stone – the stones of the land appear to me like any other stones...”

Upon hearing this, the *meshulach* stood and thought for a bit. Finally, he said: “I keep to what I said; the stones of the holy Land are not regular ones, they glow like pearls, but not every person merits to see this...” And he turned and went on his way.

From that moment on, the Bas Ayin had no peace. He could not bear the thought that there was a very high level that he could merit, but had not yet done so. From that moment on, he closeted himself in his room for a long time where he poured his heart out with tears and davened from the depths of his soul that Hashem should give him the merit to be among those who see the light of the stones of the land.

A while after that, the Bas Ayin invited the members of his *chaburah* to a large *seudah*. To their surprise and wonder at why the Rebbe was holding a *seudah* on a regular weekday, the Rebbe emotionally explained:

“Today, *bechasdei Hashem*, I merited to see that indeed, the stones of the Holy Land glow and shine like pearls. I was able to see that it is absolutely true, and anyone who does not merit to see it, should know that the flaw is not in the stones of the land, but rather in himself.”

Toldos Adam, printed at the end of sefer Bas Ayin, p. 328

Derech Emunim

The Halachos of Answering Amen

The Matnas Kohanim for Answering Amen

When the Kohanim bless Am Yisrael, they have to wait before beginning each one of the three *pesukim* of the *brachah* until the *tzibbur* finishes answering amen to the previous *brachah*, even for the minority that prolongs their amen. Similarly, one who makes a number of *brachos* in a row, and is *motzi* others of their obligation, such as before *Krias Hamegillah*, with “*Al Mikra Megillah*,” “*She’asah Nissim*” and “*Shehecheyanu*,” the *mevarech* should not begin the *brachah* before the whole *tzibbur* finishes answering amen to the previous *brachah*.

Explanations and Sources:

Although regarding slicing the bread, the *Shulchan Aruch*

Amen Is Part of the Brachah

rules (167 16) that one should not wait for the minority that prolong the amen too much, because their answer is not considered part of the *brachah*, regarding *Birchas Kohanim*, the *Shulchan Aruch* rules (128 18) that the Kohanim need to wait even for those who prolong their answering of amen. That is because the whole *tzibbur* is obligated to hear *Birchas Kohanim* in full, and if the Kohanim begin to make the *brachah* before those who prolong the amen finish saying the word, these people will not hear the *brachah* in full (*Mishnah Berurah* *ibid* 65, based on *Tosafos Sotah* 39b *ad loc. Ad*).

The *Magen Avraham* (124 15) learned from this that regarding other *brachos* that the *tzibbur* is *yotzei* their obligation, the *mevarech* must wait until the *tzibbur* finishes answering amen, so that even those who prolong their amen, improperly, should hear the *brachah* in full. The *Shulchan Aruch Harav* (124 12) and the *Mishnah Berurah* (*ibid* 38) concur.

Otzros Emunim

Amen With Kavanah

Amen With Kavanah Opens the Gates of Wisdom

In a special letter, the *mekubal* Harav Naftali Hertz Halevi, the Rav of Yaffo, explains the deep meaning of answering amen. He concludes the letter as follows:

“In light of the above, it becomes clear that the intention of *Chazal* with the words (*Shabbos* 119b) “one who answers amen with all his strength,” means with all the strength of amen, meaning all the *kavanos* that we explained until now, which goes to a level that is so deep that it is impossible for us to fathom. This is what *Rashi* explains (*ibid*) that “*bechol kocho*” means “*bechol kavano*.”

The advice for someone who cannot have all these *kavanos* is: he should have simple *kavanah* that includes all the *kavanos*, meaning that he should have in mind that he is uttering the word with his mouth and HaKadosh Baruch Hu, with His *chessed*, will make all the *tikkunim* that are needed to be made with the answering of amen. He should have in mind to ask Hashem for mercy to carry out, in His *chessed*, the *tikkunim* that are dependent on this.” (*Kesser Meluchah* p. 276)

Iggeres Emunim

A Letter from a Loyal Reader

Dear Rav Yaakov Dov Marmurstein and the staff of Bney Emunim, Over Yom Tov, I read with great interest a moving article that contained an interview with eight wonderful Yidden, a sampling of many others who dedicate a lot of time each day to answering amen after the *Birchos Hashachar* of other *mispallelim*. They should be praised – and so should you!

The *tzaddikim* say about the words of *Chazal* (*Shabbos* 119b) that “anyone who answers amen with all his strength has the gates of Gan Eden opened for him” – why is the word *poschim*, in the present tense? Because the gates of Gan Eden are opened to them in the present, in this world. And I say: The *simchah shel mitzvah* of these Jews was so evident from between the lines of the article, and it was clear that they are living in Gan Eden in this world.

אמת מה נהדר – whose acronym is amen – shows that they are *shluchei mitzvah* dedicated to their work, of which we can apply what we learn in the *holy seforim*: Amen is an acronym for אני מוסר נפשי – because they are *moser nefesh*, plain and simple, for this mitzvah. And without a doubt their work – the *melechtes Shamayim* – also brings about that many others learn from their ways.

These Yidden, and with them all the others who dedicate themselves to answering amen, build a wall of *emunah* and a wall of protection around every home in Klal Yisrael, because as we know the merit of answering amen is very great. I thought to bring a *remez* about the lofty power of answering amen from the fact that the acronym of the words א-ל פועל ישועות which we say each morning before *Krias Shema* is numerically equivalent to amen.

May you be strengthened to continue your work of imbuing the importance of amen in Klal Yisrael, *ki bachem bachar Hashem*.

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or emailed to the Vechol Ma'aminim email address. 9139191@gmail.com

Shaarei Yeshuah

The Segulah of Answering Amen

On Chanukah 5772, Harav Moshe Weiss, *zt"l*, passed away; he was a survivor who endured the horrors of the Holocaust.

In Auschwitz, he became very close to the Klausenberger Rebbe, *zt"l*, and in time, became his *mechutan*. At the end of the war, the Rebbe was involved in exhausting *avodas hakodesh* – burying the holy *meisei mitzvah*, the victims of the death marches who were strewn around the fields. Rav Moshe accompanied him and assisted him in this sacred task. One day, when Rav Moshe felt that his strength was waning, and his body was about to break from the exhausting physical work, the Rebbe sought to encourage him and said: “Ask for anything you wish right now – and I promise to grant it to you!”

Rav Moshe was very moved, and did not miss out on this rare opportunity: “I ask the Rebbe to promise me that my children will be proficient in every *Tosafos* in *Shas*,” he said spontaneously. The Rebbe was moved by the request, and did not hesitate to fulfill it – he warmly blessed Reb Moshe, and the *brachah* came true, as Rav Moshe’s seven sons are today leading *talmidei chachamim* in our generation.

One of the *mitzvos* that Reb Moshe loved most and which accompanied him through his life was answering amen in general, and in particular after *Birchos Hashachar*. Each day, he would listen and answer amen to hundreds (!) of *Birchos Hashachar* said by many *mispallelim*. Towards the end of his life, when it was hard for him to leave his house, his children and grandchildren would come to say the *brachos* for him and he would happily answer amen to them.

It was on the last night of his life. The medical stats were declining, indicating that these were his final moments. His family – his children and grandchildren – stood around his bed, and when the signal was given, they began to recite *Viduy* and *Shema Yisrael*.

A Tzaddik Shomer Emunim

And then something wondrous happened: After they finished reciting *Shema*, the descendants saw the numbers stabilizing, and their grandfather returning to the land of the living. A seed of hope germinated in their hearts, and they began reciting *Tehillim* for his recovery. But then a few minutes later, the numbers began to decline again. Once again, they said *Viduy* and *Krias Shema*, but this time, as well, the numbers stabilized. Their grandfather’s pure soul seemed to be refusing to depart from his body. The indices went up and down through the night, and it seemed that his soul was yearning for something lofty and sublime to help it depart from the physical body to a world that is all good.

Meanwhile, a new day dawned. It was time for *Birchos Hashachar*, and suddenly, one of the grandsons had an idea: “We all know how our grandfather tried to hear *Birchos Hashachar* numerous times each day. Maybe we should take this opportunity to give him the *zechus* of hearing the *brachos* as long as his soul is still with us.”

As they had become used to doing, one by one, Rav Moshe’s descendants stood to recite the *brachos* and answer amen together. Their grandfather lay motionless on the bed, but his children were sure, without a doubt: he was listening, and even answering!

A few moments passed in this holy atmosphere, and when they all finished saying *brachos*, they recited *Krias Shema* with *kavanah*, and Rav Moshe’s soul departed in purity.

During the *shivah*, many people were very moved by this story, and one noted: “It seems unsurprising that Rav Moshe lived such a long life, until his ninetieth year, because he was always strict to answer ninety amens a day.”

Heard from his grandson, Rav Avraham Bekerman, *shlita*,
Rosh Yeshivos Chechanov

Shaarei Gan Eden

Amen and Brachos in the Teachings of a Baal Hayahrtzeit



The tziyun of the Maharshal in the old cemetery of Lublin.

The Maharshal 12 Kislev 5334

Harav Shlomo Luria was born in 5270 to his father, Rav Yechiel, Av Bais Din of Slutsk. As a child, he was orphaned of his father, and was raised by his mother’s father, Rav Yitzchak Klober, of Worms, from whom he learned most of his Torah. Already in his youth, the Maharshal gained renown as one of the *gedolei Torah* of his generation, and people began to direct halachic questions to him from distant countries. Later, he was asked to serve as Rav in various towns throughout Poland and Lithuania, among them Brisk,

Ostro’ah and Lublin. Wherever he was, he taught Torah in a yeshivah. In addition to his tremendous greatness in Torah, the Maharshal was famed as a *tzaddik* and *kadosh*. The *Chida* wrote (*Shem Hagedolim, Ma’areches Seforim Reishis Chochmah*) that he appointed a *mochiach*, someone to come and rebuke him for his sins, and he would sit in front of this person in awe and fear, as if he was a simpleton.

He invested tremendous effort in his series of *seforim* entitled *Yam Shel Shlomo*, in which he clarifies in each *sugya* how one should act in a practical sense. According to his students (in the introduction to *Maseches Bava Kama*) he wrote this compilation on seventeen *masechtos* of *Shas*, but all that remained through the years was his work on seven of the *masechtos*.

The *Maharshal* passed away on 12 Kislev 5334 at the age of 64; he was laid to rest in the old cemetery in Lublin.

Amen Is the Seal of the *Brachah*

In his *sefer Amudei Shlomo* on the *Smag* (*Aseh* 27), the Maharshal explained that only once amen is answered after it does the *brachah* gain validity and importance. That is why *Chazal* say (*Brachos* 53b): “The one who answers amen is greater than the *mevarech*.” He compares the *brachah* to the “body of the document” – the part that describes the details that the document is coming to affirm, and the amen to the signature of the witness, which affirms what is written in the document. “Just like the document is not considered anything until the witnesses sign it, likewise, the *brachah* is not [as] important until amen is answered to it, because that is the signature, as amen is the seal of the *brachah*.” The Maharshal concludes his explanation with the words “*kach kibalti*,” this is what I have received.