

VeChol Maaminim

A Weekly
Pamphlet
From
"Bney
Emunim"



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Peninei Emunim

Pearls of Tefillah
in the Parashah

Every Day Has Its Task

”ואברהם זקן בא בימים וה' ברך את אברהם בכל” (כד א)

Chazal explain (*Bereishis Rabbah* 59 6) the *passuk* “*zaken ba bayamim*”: “You have a person who is old but not in days... but this is age corresponding to days and days corresponding to age.” The Ozherover Rebbe, the **Be'er Moshe** explained it as follows: Every person, every day, is given a special task that he has to fill, in accordance with his general mission in this world. If someone who does not fill his daily obligation, then even if he merits age in years, he cannot be considered a “*ba bayamim*.” The Torah says that Avraham Avinu was a “*zaken ba bayamim*” - that because he was strict to fulfill his daily obligations, then upon his passing, he came On High with all his days with him. There wasn't a single one one missing.

The **Sfas Emes** wrote on the *passuk* in *Tehillim* (19:3): “*Yom leyom yabia omer*”: “From the day the world was created until its end, the illumination of one day is not equal to that of another day.” Based on this, he explained the praise we say in *Maariv*: “*Asher bidvaro maariv aravim bechochmah pose'ach she'arim*.” The reason that each day ends in the evening, is in order to open the gates for the renewed illumination of the next day.

Sfas Emes Tehillim 19:3;
Be'er Moshe p. 509

Pischu Shearim

A word from the founder and Nasi of Bney Emunim

An Insurance Policy Signed With Amen

Just a few weeks have passed since the Yamim Noraim when we all pleaded, over and over: “*Zachreinu l'chaim!*” Very difficult days have ensued, and we put our faith in the Creator that our request was accepted with willingness and compassion. Shabbos *Parashas Chayei Sara* is a good time to remember that each day, we can merit, for free, a “life insurance” policy that will guarantee us long days in goodness and comfort.

Chazal (*Brachos* 47a) make an explicit promise: “Anyone who prolongs his amen will have his days and years prolonged.” In other words, in order to merit *arichus yamim* all we need to do is answer amen slowly, and as the *Shulchan Aruch* rules (*Orach Chaim* 124 8) “He should not answer a short amen, it should be a bit longer, and should take the amount of time it takes to say ‘*Kel Melech Ne'eman*.’”

The *Baalei Hatosafos* found an allusion to this promise in this *parashah* in the explanation of the *passuk* (24:1): “*V'Avraham zaken ba bayamim v'Hashem beirach es Avraham bakol*.” The acronym of the last letters of the words זקן בא בימים form the word אמן, to teach us that anyone who answers amen will live a long life.” I thought to add another beautiful and apt allusion on this subject: The acronym of the words of the *passuk* (*Mishlei* 3:2): “כי ארך ימים – ושנות חיים ושלום ויסיפו לך” – are numerically equivalent to 91, which is the value of amen.

I will note that the *Yerushalmi* (*Brachos* 8 8) cites these same words of Chazal with the addition of one word: “One who answers amen has his days and years prolonged *letovah*,” with goodness. We can say that this *Tosafos* is alluding to the continuation of the *passuk*: “*V'Hashem beirach es Avraham bakol*.”

There was a Yid named Rabbi Chaim Hirsch Goldberger, a Satmar *chassid* from Boro Park, who was especially *mehader* in in fulfilling the mitzvah of answering amen.

Rav Chaim Hirsch passed away in 1970, at the age of 91 – an age that at the time was considered an exceptionally old age. I heard from someone who was at the *levayah* that his Rebbe, the Divrei Yoel of Satmar, delivered a *hesped* and said: Rav Chaim Hirsch merited a long life because he was extremely careful to answer amen, for which Chazal promise *arichus yamim*. Because אמן is equivalent to 91, he merited to live 91 years.

On a personal note I will add: A few years ago, I visited the gravesite of my grandfather, Rav Yaakov Dov Marmurstein, a *talmid* of Rav Yehuda Assad, whose name I bear. When I arrived at his burial site in Sighet, Romania, I was amazed to see these words etched on his *matzeivah*: “He lived 91 years.” At that moment, the realization struck me that my grandfather merited this because he emphasized to his offspring the importance of answering amen, and he merited to see the fulfillment of the words of Chazal “Whoever prolongs his amen has his days and years prolonged.”

Dear brothers! At this time when we are all praying for *yeshuos*, let us get up early and be *mehader* the mitzvah of answering amen after *Birchos Hashachar* of the *misपालेलים*. There is no doubt that if we do this, we will merit to be able to do so into our old age, for many years to come, amen.

Good Shabbos

Yaakov Dov Marmurstein

Reb Hershel, a resident of Tel Aviv for nearly fifty years, decided in his old age to move near his children in Bnei Brak. He was a Holocaust survivor who suffered tremendously, but whose spirit did break. With great *emunah*, he made *aliyah* to Eretz Yisrael and established a beautiful family. During the *shivah* after his passing, a wonderful story about him was shared:

A day after he moved to Bnei Brak, he met in the lobby of the building one of the older neighbors in the building. After greeting each other warmly, and each one introducing himself to the other, the longtime resident of the building told Reb Hershel that one of the neighbors had been asking for a long time to extend his apartment, but that the neighbors objected. “We have a lot of experience with building extensions in this neighborhood, and we know what a huge nuisance and headache it is. Therefore, we decided to refuse to grant permission,” the neighbor concluded.

Reb Hershel looked at the man with his wise eyes, as if he did not know what he was talking about, and what he wanted from him. The neighbor began to explain: “The way it seems now, our objections will be overridden by the municipality,



The *maggid*, Rav Reuven Elitzur Karelinshtein, *zt"l*

and I don't know how much longer we'll be able to prevent the permit from being issued. But now that you came to live here, it will be an opportunity to get the request for a permit rejected permanently. You can claim, rightfully so, that at your age, construction in the building will be very difficult for you to tolerate. You didn't come here to suffer through the noise and the dirt.”

“Who is the neighbor? What is his name?” Reb Hershel cut off the neighbor's excited monologue.

“He's the one who lives right on top of you,” the neighbor whispered

significantly.

“Alright, I'll deal with it. Thank you!” Reb Hershel said, and continued on his way.

Reb Hershel immediately took action. Like a man many years younger, he quickly climbed the stairs to the floor of the neighbor who wanted to build. He knocked at the door and introduced himself as the new resident downstairs. “Ohhh...*shalom aleichem!* Yes, we heard that you moved here from Tel Aviv. Welcome, I wish you a good *yishuv!*”

“Can I come in?” Reb Hershel asked pleasantly.

“Sure. I'm sorry about the mess. Let me make you a cup of tea.” He cleared away some of the mess on the dining room table and offered the neighbor a seat.

“As a new neighbor in your building, I came here to become acquainted with you,” Reb Hershel began, and then asked a whole bunch of questions. “How many years do you live here? How many children do you have? Have you married off any children? How many rooms are there in your home?”

“I understand, if so, that you live with twelve people in two and a half rooms,” Reb Hershel concluded. “How do you manage?”

At this point, the neighbor began to stammer: “When we have no choice, we manage...At night the children sleep on the dining room and kitchen floors...” Then he added in a pained tone: “We want to extend our apartment but the neighbors are objecting. We don't want to get into fights and disputes, so we have no choice but to manage for now, somehow...”

“And what about money?” Reb Hershel asked. “If you want to build, will you be able to afford it?”

“When it is relevant, we'll get the money we need,” the man replied. “There are lots of *gemachim* in Bnei Brak.”

“Listen, my friend,” Reb Hershel said. “When I lived in Tel Aviv, I managed a *gemach*. I have a large sum of money available. Come downstairs to me now and get a form, sign the guarantors, and I'll be happy to lend you the money.”

“But I just said that we can't extend right now,” the neighbor said in surprise.

“Let me take care of that,” Reb Hershel said, and turned to go.

And from there, Reb Hershel hurried to the biggest opponent to the building – the one he'd met in the lobby and who had told him about it in the first place. He asked to come inside, and then began to ask: “How many children do you have?”

“Five, and they are all married, *baruch Hashem*,” the man replied.

“And how many rooms do you have in your house?”

“Three large rooms,” the man replied, not understanding what his guest was getting at.

“So you have two empty rooms,” Reb Hershel concluded, “while your neighbor is crowding with twelve people into two and a half rooms. They sleep there on the kitchen floor, and not only do you dare object to his plans to expand, you also try to persuade me to do so?!”

“You should know,” Reb Hershel added, with tears in his eyes, “that I am not young, and I've been through a lot in life. Despite the age difference between us, you aren't so young either anymore. From my life experience, I can tell you: if a person has compassion for another, especially his close neighbors – then Hashem has compassion on him, and his *tefillos* are answered willingly. But someone who, *chalilah*, closes his heart to someone else's suffering, will not be answered from Above in his time of trouble, and no one has any guarantees, you know...”

The words that came from the heart of the kind elderly gentleman entered the heart of his neighbor, and he said tersely, “I'm backing down from my objection.”

“One minute, it's not enough,” Reb Hershel persisted. “We also have to help him obtain the money to extend. I already did what I could, now I will ask you to help however you can.” The astonished neighbor agreed to this as well.

Reb Hershel was still not finished: “Let's take advantage of this *she'as rachamim*, and let's go together now to tell the neighbor about these developments. The other man could not refuse. On their way upstairs, the older man went into his own house and got a bottle of whiskey. He put it into the objecting neighbor's hand, and they walked up to the other neighbor's apartment.

“We're going to drink *l'chaim* now. You can start building this minute,” the older man informed the new neighbor. “The neighbors don't object anymore,” he added as he smiled broadly at the neighbor who had accompanied him.

“Such stories of objections happen every day,” concluded the *maggid*, Rav Reuven Karelinshtein, who heard the story firsthand. “We have wonderful opportunities to bring *rachamim* upon ourselves – to think about the other person. To have compassion for him, to gladden and encourage him, and we've been promised [*'kol hamerachem, anyone who has compassion for the creations has compassion granted to him from Above, Shabbos 151b*), won't we be wise to take advantage of it?!”

Yechi Reuven Vayeira

One Is Not Yotzei by Hearing Birchos Hashachar

One should not question the custom of reciting *Birchos Hashachar* with the claim that by hearing the *brachos* of the first person, the listeners are *yotzei* their obligation and do not need to make the *brachah*. Because the *mevarech* has no *kavanah* to be *motzi* them, and the listeners have no *kavanah* to be *yotzei* by hearing the *brachah*, and intend to make the *brachos* themselves afterwards.

Explanations and Sources:

The *Shulchan Aruch* (6 4) says: “And they should not be doubted [those who gather to recite *Birchos Hashachar* together] and to say that they already were *yotzei* because they answered amen, because the *mevarech* does not have in mind to be *motzi* them. Even if the *mevarech* would have in mind to be *motzi* others, they have in mind not to be *yotzei* with his *brachah*.” From his words, it seems that it is not enough that the listeners don’t have *kavanah*

to be *yotzei*, but they have to clearly have in mind not to be *yotzei*. *Sefer Minchas Pesim* by Rav Meir Arik (*Orach Chaim* 6 4) explained that this is why the *Shulchan Aruch* wrote this specifically: There was concern about those who might think that the *mitzvos d’Rabbanan* do not need *kavanah* (as the *Magen Avraham* ruled 60 3. And see *Shulchan Aruch Harav* 489 12), and because reciting *Birchos Hashachar* is a *mitzvah d’Rabbanan*, the listener is *yotzei* his obligation even if he did not have in mind to do so, unless he specifically had in mind not to be *yotzei*. But *Mekor Chaim*, authored by the Chavas Yair (ibid) explained that the *Shulchan Aruch* does not mean that the listeners have to explicitly express a condition that they do not want to be *yotzei* from their friend’s *brachah*. Rather, the fact that they have a custom to recite the *brachos* one after the other, in order to increase the number of amens, proves that they do not have in mind to be *yotzei* one from the other. The *Halichos Shlomo* (Nissan-Av p. 351-352) concurs, and see *Minchas Pesim*, ibid, that this seems to be the case from the words of the *Maharil* (*Shu”t Chadashos*, 1) and from the *Shulchan Aruch Harav* (6 9).

Otzros Emunim

Amen With Kavanah

Answering Amen with Emunah Brings Yeshuah

One of the *chassidim* of Harav Moshe of Kobrin wanted to go into the Rebbe to share his woes and to receive a *brachah*. In response, the Rebbe replied that he should come in when he was eating. When he came, the *chassid* heard the Rebbe reciting the *brachos* of “*Borei Minei Mezonos*” and “*Shehakol*” and answered amen. Then the Rebbe said, “You heard my *brachos* and you answered amen, which means *emunah* in the Leadership of Hashem in His world, do you have anything more to add?!” Indeed, the *emunah* that was ingrained in the heart of that *chassid* from hearing his Rebbe’s *brachos* obviated all that he meant to ask for. He didn’t ask for anything, aside for the fact that the *emunah* should always rest in his heart.

At that time, the Rebbe added an explanation: The *passuk* (*Tehillim* 94 15): “*Ki ad tzedek yashuv mishpat*,” teaches us that the judgment and *yissurim* come upon a person “only until he works to ingrain the *emunah* in his heart, because Hashem is a *Tzaddik*, and *emes* is His judgement, and we must not question His *middos*.” After a person clarifies in his own heart the *tzidkus* of Hashem, and accepts his *yissurim* with love, then in any case “*yashuv mishpat*” – the *yissurim* will disappear and the *din* will be sweetened (*Imros Moshe* [Bnei Brak 5776] Vol. I, p. 104).

Iggeres Emunim

A Letter from a Loyal Reader

To the editors of *Vechol Ma’aminim*,

The name of your pamphlet on its own is so apt, and very moving. Inside, it is also very engaging, organized, well written and accurate. May you see much success.

The constantly new things in your pamphlet are very refreshing. Thank you for the new section, *Shaarei Yeshuah*, which artfully describes the miracles and *yeshuos* merited by people who are scrupulous about amen.

I have heard from a number of people that whenever they needed a *yeshuah*, in every area, they strengthened their answering of amen and they merited to see *chassadim*.

In the past, you wrote that in the order of *aleph-beis*, the letters following amen are *בנס* which indicates that right after becoming stronger about answering amen, one merits to see clearly the essence of “*v’al nisecha shebechol yom imanu*.” I thought to add an allusion to this. In the *tefillah* of *Maariv* we say: *Oseh gedolos ad ein cheker, nissim venifla’os ad ein mispar*.” The word *אמן* is an acronym for *אין מספר* and *נפלאות אין מספר*. This comes to teach us that answering amen brings with it all the *yeshuos*.

At this time, when we all need *yeshuos*, and we have no one to rely on besides our Father in heaven, let us all strengthen our answering of amen, and without a doubt we will see miracles and wonders.

Yeruchem Shmuel Hakohein, Tzefas

Letters can be sent to fax number 08-9746102
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Shaarei Yeshuah

The Segulah of Answering Amen

This story was sent to us recently after the horrific wave of terror that struck Am Yisrael in Eretz Yisrael, during which nearly 1500 people in southern towns were massacred, Hy"d, thousands were injured, and hundreds taken into captivity, may Hashem send them refuos and yeshuos speedily.

The Baruch family has lived in Ofakim for more than ten years. Like all the residents of the city, on Simchas Torah morning they came under a brutal terrorist attack, when armed terrorists from the Gaza Strip stormed into Israel, sowing death and destruction wherever they went.

The attack, as is known, began about the time of sunrise, when the murderers launched a massive missile attack at Israeli cities. Later, it became clear that this was meant to be a diversion, and under the hail of rockets, thousands of murderers entered the Holy Land unimpeded.

At that time, the father of the family, Reb Avraham, was about to leave to shul with two of his children for Yom Tov davening and *hakafos*. Like all the residents of the south, the family is very used to what they have to do when hearing sirens. This time as well, after waiting for a few minutes in their protected room, they went out and prepared to continue the day.

This is the place to note that the Baruch family lives on the border of the Mishor Hagefen neighborhood, which the terrorists overtook and where they murdered dozens of residents. Their path would have crossed through that neighborhood, passing Hatamar Street, where the terrorists based themselves.

When the sirens quieted, Reb Avraham and his children got ready to leave once again, but just then, his wife urged him to wait a little longer, in case there would be another siren. Reb Avraham, already used to the "routine" of rocket fire,

Answering Amen Saves Lives

soothed her that the attack was over and there was no reason to worry.

Reb Avraham was standing at the door, but then his wife raised a claim he could not counter: "In any case when you come to shul you make *Birchos Hashachar* with the children, so that you can all answer amen. So please, do it here at home, with the rest of the family. We're all up from the sirens anyway, so once we have the *zechus* of amen I can be calmer when you leave."

Reb Avraham could not refuse her request. So the whole family stood in the dining room and began to recite *Birchos Hashachar*, one after the other, from oldest to youngest – father, mother and then six children. They all recited *Birchos Hashachar*, and they answered amen to each person who recited the *brachos*. It took quite a few minutes, and when they were done, Reb Avraham asked his wife if he could leave.

With his two children holding his hands, Reb Avraham was about to walk out, but then they heard from outside horrible sounds of gunfire and panicked screaming. One of the neighbors raced into the building and apprised Reb Avraham of the situation, and warned him not to leave the building as armed terrorists were all over the city.

Reb Avraham concluded his letter as follows: "It's not hard to imagine where we, my children and I, were supposed to be during those crucial moments, if not for the fact that you have imbued our generation with the awareness of the importance of saying *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa*. I have always known about the *segulos* of this practice to save us from any bad things, but now, Hashem gave me the *zechus* to see it so clearly. *Hodu l'Hashem ki tov ki l'olam chasdo*.

Shaarei Gan Eden

Amen and Brachos in the Teachings of a Baal Hayahrtzeit



The tziyun of Rav Liber Hagadol in Berdichev

Harav Liber Hagadol of Berdichev 28 Cheshvan 5531

Harav Elizer Liber was born to his father, Rav Avraham Ashkenazi, who was the grandson of Rav Shimshon of Ostropolye. On his mother's side, he was a grandson of Rav Yechiel Mechel of Nemirov. Both these grandfathers were leading *mekubalim*, and they both perished in the pogroms of 1648-49.

Rav Liber lived in his younger years in the town of Bostrich, near the place where the city of Berdichev was eventually built. He was known as a *mekubal* and a holy person and spent a lot of time alone in the forests near the town. As a result of an incident that he had with the duke of the district, the duke promised to build a special city for Jews – Berdichev. Rav Liber learned with his *talmidim Nigleh* and *Nistar* in the *bais medrash* that the duke built him in Berdichev.

In his old age, when he was 104 years old, a deadly plague raged through Berdichev. He took upon himself to pass on from this world in the plague, and when he passed away the plague stopped. Rav Liber passed away on 28 Cheshvan 5531 and was buried in Berdichev.

A Segulah for Arichus Yamim

Rav Liber's grandson, Harav Chaim Liberson, wrote in his *sefer Tzeror Hachaim* (89) that his grandfather Rav Liber would caution about two amens, which, despite their great virtue, many are unintentionally lax about. The first is the amen after the *brachah* of *Hamachazir Shechinaso LeTzion*, because the *tzibbur* is hurrying to say *Modim D'Rabbanan*. The second is the amen after the *brachah* of *Haporess Sukkas Shalom...V'Al Yerushalyim*, said on Friday night, because the *tzibbur* is in a hurry to say *Veshomru* after it. Rav Liber would add that being strict to answer these amens "is a *segulah* for *arichus yamim veshanim*."