

# Ve chol Maaminim

A Weekly  
Pamphlet  
From  
"Bney  
Emunim"



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

Parashas VAYECHI | 5784 | Issue No. 514

## Peninei Emunim

Pearls of Tefillah  
in the Parashah

### 'When It Is the Time of the Fox' - in *Avodas Hashem*

"ויאמר השבעה לי וישבע לו וישתחו ישראל על ראש  
המטה" (מז לא)

*Rashi* explains (based on *Megillah* 16b) that after Yosef promised his father to fulfill his request, Yaakov wanted to express his gratitude to him, by bowing in deference to his royal status. As the phrase says: 'When it is the time of the fox – bow to him.'

The author of *Teshuvos Vehanhagos* wrote that this phrase contains a wonderful *remez*: Sometimes, a person has a Divine illumination and he feels a strong drive for *avodas Hashem*. He needs to know that at such a time, he is considered a "fox in its time" – from Above, an *eis ratzon* was ordained for him. Therefore, he should not miss this opportunity that is given to him, and he should take advantage of it to pour his heart out to Hashem and to grow closer. Through this, he will merit to bring upon himself much compassion from Above.

*Ta'am Veda'as*

### To Do the Will of the *Tzaddik*

"ואני נתתי לך שכם אחד על אחיך אשר לקחתי מיד האמרי  
בחרבי ובקשתי" (מח כב)

The words "*becharbi ubekashti*" are explained by *Onkelos*: "*bitzelosi ubeva'usi*." These two words seem to have a meaning of *tefillah*, so why is not enough to mention just one of them?

**Harav Moshe Chaim Ephraim of Sedlikov** explained:

The words "*tzelosi*" is indeed a term of *tefillah*, but the word "*ba'usi*" is a term denoting *ratzon*, a desire, as is found in Shas: "איבעית אימא" which means "if you want to say." Yaakov meant to say that sometimes, Hashem carried out his will even without him davening for it, as it says (*Tehillim* 145:19): "*Retzon yerei'av ya'aseh*."

*Degel Machaneh Ephraim*

## Pischu Shearim

A word from the founder and Nasi of Bney Emunim

### Answering Amen Is Part of the *Brachah*

Answering amen after the *brachah* has a special status, as we know, in the fact that it is not a freestanding praise; it is an integral part of the *brachah*. Even though the *brachah* and the amen are said by two people, in actuality they are two parts of the same praise. The first part is said by the *mevarech*, and the second part is completed by the one who answers amen. This concept arises from a number of halachic *sugyos*, and it is the primary reason for the obligation of the *mevarech* to make the effort to ensure that his *brachah* is answered by amen.

Although as a rule, in this segment, I do not address the halachic aspects of this subject, I would like to cite the clear words of *Rashi* in *Maseches Brachos* (47a ad loc. *Ad*): "**Answering amen is part of the brachah,**" and likewise, the clear *halachah* is ruled in the *Shulchan Aruch* (*Orach Chaim* 167 16 based on *Mishnah Berurah* *ibid* 85).

The *sevara* also obligates that answering amen should be considered part of the *brachah*, because the word amen in its simple meaning is *emes*, it is true, has no other meaning aside for when it connected to the words said before it. In other words: the amen affirms and validates the words of the *brachah*, and with the two parts together, the *brachah* is complete.

Likewise, from this unique *halachah*, that amen should be said adjacent to the *brachah* without a *hefsek* between them, we can learn that they are together one, unified praise, and therefore, they need to be connected one to the other.

And if we still need another proof, then we can find it in the *passuk* (*Tehillim* 34:4): "*Gadlu l'Hashem iti uneromemah Shemo yachdav*," which means that the *mevarech* is calling to those around him: "*Gadlu l'Hashem iti*" by answering amen after the *brachah* and by doing that, we will together elevate it to a complete *brachah* (see *Brachos* 45a). It is explained here that a complete *brachah* is only said in a way of "*neromemah Shemo yachdav*" – with amen. In other words, without the amen the *brachah* is not complete – it is lacking something!

We always daven that our *tefillos* and requests should be fulfilled completely, as we say in the *nusach* of the *brachos*: "*Brachah sheleimah*," "*geulah sheleimah*," "*refuah sheleimah*" and so forth. If so we need to make sure that our *brachos* should be complete, by making sure before every *brachah* that there is someone to answer amen for it. May it be Hashem's Will that in this merit, He should send a "*refuah sheleimah*" to all the sick and wounded, "*geulah sheleimah*" to all the hostages and "*brachah sheleimah*" in everything that we do, *amen v'amen*.

Good Shabbos  
Yaakov Dov Marmurstein

Much has been written about the special *segulos* of the *brachah* of *Asher Yatzar* for *refuos* and *yeshuos*. This wondrous story can serve as an example of the tremendous *yeshuos* brought about by this *segulah*:

Colitis is a word that most of us are not familiar with, but for many people it is synonymous with horrible suffering. This is a disease for which there is no cure, and doctors and researchers have not even found a cause that could explain its appearance.

If every intestinal ailment causes a lot of discomfort and pain, those who are familiar with the symptoms of colitis, and the pain and suffering that it brings, just the mention of the word sends a shiver down their spines.

Colitis is an infection caused by the immune system that is supposed to protect our bodies. This infection affects the tissue of the large intestine and causes attacks of acute pain, along with other symptoms that significantly

of your life. There will be flare-ups, when the disease is active, and times when it will be calmer – when it is less active. The medications that I will give you ease the symptoms of the disease, but do not heal it.”

But this individual was infused with a generous dose of *emunah*, and this diagnosis did not shake his *emunah* one bit. He didn't intend to accept the dismal predictions of the doctors, and to capitulate to the dictations of nature.

“Hashem is the greatest Doctor,” he thought to himself. “The cure to every disease is in His Hands. All I have to do is fix what I need to rectify, and to strengthen myself in those matters that need *chizuk*, and surely, if I do this, Hashem will send me help and heal me completely.”

Of course, the young man did not refrain from accepting the doctors' recommendations to adapt to a new lifestyle that included a very natural diet and significant nutritional changes. He also made sure to take the medications that suppressed the symptoms, but at the same time, he constantly thought about something spiritual that he could be *mechazek* himself with.

After consulting with his *rabbanim*, he decided to focus on thanking Hashem in the *brachah* of *Asher Yatzar*, by saying it with extra *kavanah* and from the written text.

Even when he slipped up once or twice, he didn't give in, and continued to adhere to his *kabbalah* firmly. From day to day, he felt how he was discovering new layers and facets of this wonderful *brachah*, and that his feelings of gratitude to HaKadosh Baruch Hu constantly grew stronger.

Some time passed, and he went to the doctor to take some routine tests. When the results arrived, the doctor was rather surprised. Finally, after a long time of deterioration, there were some encouraging signs that the disease was slowing.

Indeed, from that day on, this person began to feel some relief; slowly, the pain and the other symptoms began to ease, and after a few months, they

disappeared completely.

However, the tests he took some time after indicated that the disease was still festering in his body, but because the symptoms had disappeared, this did not bother him too much. He resumed his full function, and slowly, the memory of the disease faded.

Thirteen years passed, and over that time, his *kabbalah* that he took on during his illness began to weaken. He sometimes found himself muttering *Asher Yatzar* hastily, like many others. But the reminder was not long in coming.

The disease returned striking him hard, and with it came the suffering and horrible pain. This time, he decided to go to one of the biggest professors in the field, who is the gastro director in one of the big hospitals in Israel. But the doctor didn't have much to tell him, and like the first doctor, he told this person that there was no medical cure for his disease. They could maybe ease the pain somewhat, but could not prevent it from flaring up.

The *avreich* did not need a stronger reminder, and again, he decided not to capitulate to his condition, and while complying with the doctors' instructions he also resolved to concentrate once again on reciting *Asher Yatzar* properly. He also began to focus on the *brachah* of *Refa'einu*.

This time as well, the symptoms gradually disappeared. But if that was not enough, during one round of tests, the professor was shocked to discover that in contrast to the past, this time, his intestines had completely healed.

The doctor refused to believe the results on his desk. He was sure that there was some glitch that had led to these results. The patient took more tests – which were more comprehensive as well - to understand the situation. And to everyone's absolute astonishment, the tests all indicated that the disease had disappeared, in a most unexplained fashion. Everyone agreed it was nothing short of a miracle.

The individual concluded the story: I was able to see the tremendous power of healing that a person holds. If he only takes upon himself to strengthen that which needs rectifying, then his *yeshuah* is guaranteed, from the *Rofei kol basar umafti la'asos*.

*Barchi Nafshi, Vayishlach p. 455*



affect the daily function of the people who suffer from them. In many cases, the disease can lead to prolonged hospitalizations, and at times, even complex surgery to remove the colon.

When the person this story happened to – a *talmid chacham* and *marbitz Torah* – began to suffer severe intestinal problems, he thought it was a passing issue. But as the days passed and there was no improvement, he went to the doctor, and after a series of tests, was told: You have colitis.

“There is no complete cure for this disease, according to medical knowledge,” the doctor explained. “You have to learn to live with it and to prepare yourself for this challenge that will probably last for the rest



### The Practice of *Chassidim* and *Anshei Ma'aseh*

There are *chassidim* and *anshei ma'aseh* who try to wait before making a *brachah* until there is someone available to answer amen, and thus they merit to recite a complete *brachah*.

••• Explanations and Sources: •••

The *sefer Yeshod Veshores Ha'avodah (Sha'ar Ha'ashmores* Ch. 10) wrote that because of the great virtue of a *brachah* answered by amen “it is correct that a person should be careful, to the extent possible, to make his *brachos* in front of others, so that they can answer amen after the *brachah*.” The Rav of Plonsk, Harav Tzvi Yechezkel Michelson, wrote in a letter printed in *sefer Ohel Yitzchak* (in the comment to letter 176) that his grandfather, Harav Shmelke of Nikolsburg said of himself before his passing that he was always strict not to recite *birchos hamitzvos* or *birchos hanehenin* unless there was someone to answer amen after them. He explained: “When saying a *brachah*, an angel is created, and its creation is not complete unless there is an amen.” At the same time, Harav Shmelke added that once, when he was on the way, he needed to recite the *brachah* of *Asher Yatzar*, and when he could not find someone to answer amen after the *brachah* he was very distraught. Suddenly, two people emerged from the forest, and he made the *brachah* in front of them “and they answered amen sweetly and with enthusiasm, and then a cloud came and took them and lifted them up and they were not seen anymore.” He surmised that they were Heavenly angels sent to him to answer amen to his *brachah*. Harav Shmelke explained at the time the words of the *passuk* in *Iyov* (23:13): “*Vehu b'echad umi yeshivenu venafsho ivsah vaya'as*,” which in the *tefillah* of Rosh Hashanah we conclude with the words “*nora vekadosh*” to mean: As noted, amen completes the angel that is created from reciting the *brachah*. If so, what should a person do if he is alone in his home, or if he is walking alone and there is no one to answer amen after him? This is what the *passuk* is saying: “*Vehu echad*” – when a person makes a *brachah b'yechidus*, “*umi yeshivenu*” – and there is no one to answer amen to him, then if “*venafsho ivsah*” – his soul really wants his *brachah* to be answered by amen, then “*vaya'as – nora vekadosh*” – he has the power to effect wondrous things, and from Above an angel will be sent to answer amen to complete his *brachah*.

It is also related that Rav Chaim of Volozhin was strict not to recite a *brachah* if there wasn't someone to answer amen after it. In the *sefer Manchil Emunah* (14) the author, Harav Yehuda Leib Ragalin, a *talmid* of the Netziv, wrote that when he was learning in Yeshivas Volozhin, a grandson of Rav Chaim of Volozhin told him that his grandfather was strict to wait to make a *brachah* until there was

someone to answer amen after him. And he told him that once, when his grandfather was about to recite *Birchas Hamazon*, he realized that there was no one who could answer amen. And as he was wondering what to do, there was a knock at the door. There stood one of the *talmidim* of the yeshiva who wished to look something up in a *sefer* in the Rav's home. Rav Chaim was happy that someone had come who could answer his *brachah*, and indeed, he made the *brachah* and the *talmid* answered amen. When Rav Chaim subsequently met that same *bochur*, and asked about the *sugya* regarding which he had come to look something up in the *sefer*, the *bochur* was very taken aback at the question. He said he had not come at all to the Rav's house. At that moment, the Rav realized that an angel had been sent from Above in the form of this *bochur* to answer amen to his *bentching*. The *Manchil Emunah* added that although it is possible that Rav Chaim mistakenly approached a different *bochur*, and not the one who had come to his house, “and whoever thinks so, I will not decide about him that he has no *emunas chachamim*.” However, there are grounds to say that an angel descended from Above to answer amen to Rav Chaim's *brachah*. Because answering amen by angels is something that has been mentioned in *Kav Hayashar* (96), who wrote: “And it is simple that every single mitzvah that a person does creates holy angels, and that is why they are called the ‘*machaneh*’ the camp of this mitzvah. And when a *brachah* is made on a mitzvah, all those angels gather and stand around the *mevarech* and hear the *brachah* and answer amen. And a *remez* to this is that ‘מלאך’ is numerically equivalent to אמן. And see *sefer She'al Avicha Veyagedcha* (Vol. I. p. 87), that Harav Shalom Schwadron heard this story from the Gaavad of Yerushalayim Harav Zelig Reuven Bengis, who was a *talmid* of Volozhin in the times of the Netziv, and it says in the *sefer* that it was an angel from Shamayim.

*Sefer Birchas Avraham (Brachos 47a)* explained the custom of Harav Chaim of Volozhin not to make a *brachah* without there being someone to answer amen after his *brachah*. Rav Chaim was concerned about the opinion of the *poskim* that hold that answering amen is part of the *brachah*, and the *mevarech* needs to fulfill his obligation with the amen that he answers to the *brachah*, and this view is one that his *rebbe*, the Gra agreed with (*Biur HaGra, Orach Chaim 167; Darchei Noam Brachos 47a*). As such, Rav Chaim was strict that at the time of the *brachah* there should be someone to answer amen after his *brachah*, and by having in mind to be *yotzei* the obligation of answering amen, he had a full *brachah* in hand.

It should be noted that aside for the concept of completing the *brachah* by answering amen, there is an obligation to recite the *brachah* aloud, so as not to rob the listeners of the mitzvah of answering amen. As it says in *Sefer Chassidim* (820, and cited in *Biur Halachah 139 6*), a person who makes a *brachah* in a whisper is stealing from the *tzibbur* the mitzvah of answering amen that they could have done.

To the editors of *Vechol Ma'aminim*,

In the *Pischu She'arim* segment in the edition of *Parashas Toldos* this year, my dear brother Reb Yaakov Dov, *shlita*, the Nasi of Bnei Emunim wrote (based on the *Kli Yakar*) that Yaakov's grasp [on Eisav's heel] was like a sign and a declaration that he would be especially strict about *mitzvos* that a person tends to trample with their heel, and therefore, he was called Yaakov. And he added, that indeed we find in early sources that the name יעקב is numerically equivalent to twice amen, which is one of the *mitzvos* that a person tends to be lax about.

I thought to add another reason for the fact that amen is alluded to in the name Yaakov: On the *passuk (Bereishis 25:21)* “*Vaye'etar Yitzchak l'Hashem lenochach ishto ki akarrah he*,” the Divrei Yisrael of Modzhitz explained that Rivka did not daven herself. She just stood across from Yitzchak who davened in the corner of the room, and she answered amen after him. And we can say that because Yaakov was born from the power of Rivka's answering of amen, the amen is alluded to in his name.

Rav Aharon Tzvi Marmurstein  
Bnei Brak

Letters can be sent to fax number 08-9746102 or emailed to the *Vechol Ma'aminim* email address. 9139191@gmail.com

## Shaarei Yeshuah

The Segulah of Answering Amen

## 'Amen' Suspended in the Air...

It was dawn on a winter morning in the M. family home in Yerushalayim. The windows were closed tightly because of the cold weather, so the exuberant cries coming from the roof did not come through. None of the members of the family who slept deeply were aware the tremendous danger that Avrumy, the rambunctious little brother and son, was in.

The family had gotten used to Avrumy's surprising antics, but what happened that morning was beyond what they could have fathomed.

Some time earlier, the high school where their oldest daughter studied had a big project about the importance of saying *brachos* and answering amen. A few of the girls, including the daughter of this family, took upon themselves as a result a special *kabbalah*, not to make a *brachah* without having someone answer amen. They knew that it was not an easy *kabbalah* to implement, but they decided to take it upon themselves, at least for a certain amount of time.

The family saw it as a *zechus* to help their sister, and for most of the day, she found it pretty easy. The real challenge was early in the morning. Because it was far from their house to the school, she had to leave very early, at a time when the family was usually still sleeping.

And that was when Avrumy's mischievous nature helped her. He was an early riser, and he was happy – and proud – to help his sister and be her *chavrusa* to answer to her *brachos*.

So early each morning, Avrumy was ready and waiting in the kitchen for his sister to prepare herself a hot drink. He listened to her *brachah*, and answered amen happily, and then went on to play.

That morning, Avrumy had gotten up even earlier than usual. He had gotten bored and was looking for something new to try... Foolishly, he decided to climb out the window of his room, on the second floor of the house, to the area of the empty roof outside.

A few minutes later, the older daughter woke up, got ready quickly, and when she entered the kitchen, she was surprised to see that her brother was not waiting for her. She prepared her drink and went to find her *chavrusa*, but alarmingly, she discovered that he simply wasn't there.

He wasn't in his room, or in any other room. He wasn't in the park next door, where he looked to play. She began to fret; but before she went to wake her parents, she suddenly remembered the roof... She had recently noticed that the empty space on the roof right near their house had raised the interest and curiosity of her little brother.

She quickly went up to the second floor, looked out the window of the room to the empty roof, and when she didn't see anything, she called urgently: "Avrumy, where are you?" She was relieved to hear a faint voice from the corner of the roof: "I'm here!"

She slipped out of the window to the roof and ran to the direction of the voice. She was horrified to see a pair of small hands... A quick glance made it clear what danger he was in. Avrumy stood there, in terror, on the other side of the railing, grasping onto the railing with the big of energy he had left, and his feet barely fitting on a tiny protrusion under the railing.

The girl did not lose her wits, and *bechasdei Shamayim*, with unnatural strength, she was able to pull Avrumy back onto the roof, and collapsed next to him, helplessly. It took her a few long moments to recover... Avrumy stood next to her, and lowered his eyes with shame. Suddenly, he ran into the house. He quickly peeked back through the window with the hot drink – now warm – in his hand. "Take this, you made it..." he said, and was happy to see the smile on his sister's face. "Make a *brachah* and I will answer amen."

"*Baruch Atah Hashem... shehakol nihiyeh bidvaro*," the *brachah* took on even more meaning now, as Avrumy fervently answered 'amen.'

Heard firsthand

## Shaarei Gan Eden

Amen and Brachos in the Teachings of a Baal Hayahrtzeit



The resting place of the Mahara"m A"sh in Ungvar [Uzhhorod] Ukraine

### Mahara"m A"sh 24 Teves 5612

Harav Meir Eisenstadter was born in 5540 in the city of Eisenstadt to his father, Rav Yehuda Leib. As a child he studied under his father, and later under Harav Raphael of Glagov, who was a *dayan* in Eisenstadt. He was one of the first *talmidim* of the Chasam Sofer in the yeshivah he opened in Mattersdorf, and later, moved with him to Pressburg.

He served as Rav in various communities, and in 5595 he began to serve as Rav of Ungvar, where he

also established a large yeshivah for hundreds of students. Some of them later became prominent Rabbanim in Hungary.

After the passing of the Chasam Sofer, he was considered the leader of Hungarian Jewry, and many scholars began to direct their questions to him. He printed some of the responsa in his *sefer Shu"t Imrei Eish*.

He passed away on 24 Teves 5612 in Ungvar, where he was laid to rest. The Ksav Sofer said in a *hesped*: "Hagaon HaMahara"m was my father's greatest *talmid*... the select of his leading *talmidim*, in Torah, in piety and in *middos*, as is known." (*Drashos Ksav Sofer* [Yerushalayim 5748] p. 199).

### Five or Six People

In *sefer Zichron Yehudah*, compiled by Rav Menachem Eisenstadter, son of the Mahara"m A"sh, he writes the *hanhagos yesharos* that his father practiced each day, and this is how he described his strictness to hear *Birchos Hashachar* from the *mispallelim* in order to answer amen after them (Ungvar Edition, 5628, p. 18):

"He went to the *beis knesses* or *beis medrash*, wrapped in *tzitzis* [*tallis*] and crowned with *tefillin*, and five or six people said *Birchos Hashachar* for him and he answer amen after them to complete ninety amens."