

# Vechol Maaminim

A Weekly  
Pamphlet  
From  
"Bney  
Emunim"



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## Peninei Emunim

Pearls of Tefillah  
in the Parashah

### Shiras Miriam Was Said With a Tzibbur

"ותען להם מרים שירו לה' כי גאה גאה סוס ורכבו רמה  
בים" (טו כא)

Why is the song of Miriam called an "answer" – "and she answered"? Furthermore, why does it say "and she answered to them" – in the masculine tense, and not "vata'an lahen"?

Harav Chaim Halevi of Brisk explained: Chazal say (Chulin 91b): "The Ministering Angels do not say shirah On High until Am Yisrael says shirah below." And why is that? Because like with every "davar shebikedushah", the shirah also needs to be said betzibbur, meaning with at least ten people. Because the angels do not have this din of tzibbur, then they cannot say shirah alone, and only when Am Yisrael begins reciting shirah can they join along.

This concept is also evident in the nusach of the Kedushah of Mussaf: "Kevodo malei olam mesharsav sho'alim zeh lazeh ayei mekom Kevodo [leha'aritzo] le'umasam baruch yomeru." Because the Kavod of Hashem fills the entire world, His servants yearn to say Kedushah in front of Him, but they "ask one another, where is the Mekom Kevodo" – where is the time and place that we can say Kedushah? They are answered that because to say Kedushah they need ten members of Am Yisrael, then only when Am Yisrael begins to say Kedushah then "le'umasam baruch yomeru."

Based on this, we can also explain this passuk: Because the women do not have the din of tzibbur, therefore, Miriam did not begin her song until Am Yisrael were singing, and at that time, she answered them and said her own shirah as well.

Nachalas Binyamin

## Pischu Shearim

A word from the founder and Nasi of Bney Emunim

### Beautify Yourself for Him With a Beautiful Brachah

In the Shiras Hayam that we say each morning, whose source is in this parashah, we recite (15:2): "Zeh Keili v'anveihu, Elokei avi v'aromemenu." From this passuk Chazal learn (Shabbos 133b) the obligation to beautify ourselves to Hashem by doing His mitzvos with hiddur and beauty. And indeed, out of a love of Torah and mitzvos, the halachos of "hiddur mitzvah" are ingrained in all aspects of our lives.

The Zohar explains (Naso 134 1) that everything is contingent on mazel, even a Sefer Torah in the Heichal. Similarly, in this regard, we can also discern between mitzvos that we are accustomed to doing with exceptional hiddur, such as the arba'ah minim, writing a Sefer Torah, lighting the Chanukah lights, and others, and mitzvos that for some reason we are not strict to perform with hiddur.

The latter category includes the recital of brachos and answering amen, which, unfortunately, we still need to work very hard to raise awareness about, so that it can be done according to halachah. With regard to hiddur, everyone will agree that there is much room for improvement.

The hiddur with amen begins by making a brachah with hiddur. This means not only saying it aloud and with kavanah, in a clear and pleasant way, in accordance with halachah. It also includes the obligation to ascertain before reciting it that there is someone to answer amen according to halachah.

As part of hiddur mitzvah, it behooves the mevarech to make sure that his brachah will be answered with amen. The Zohar tells us very clearly about this (Eikev 271 1): "Only a brachah that is answered by amen is a complete and worthy brachah!"

Furthermore, in the way Chazal explain the din of hiddur mitzvos from the passuk "Zeh Keili v'anveihu," we can also find a special connection to the mitzvos of answering amen. They explain (Shabbos ibid): "Hisna'eh lefanav, beautify yourself to Him with mitzvos, make for Him a beautiful sukkah" and so forth. Aside for the fact that סוכה is numerically equivalent to אמן – the word התנאה לפניו teaches that it is not enough to just beautify it, it must be done "in front of Him," and which mitzvah fits this definition more than the mitzvah of amen, of which Chazal say (Devarim Rabbah 7 1): "There is nothing greater lifnei HaKadosh Baruch Hu than an amen answered by Am Yisrael."

Let us take care to beautify ourselves in front of HaKadosh Baruch Hu each morning by saying Birchos Hashachar with hiddur, and then through the day, with all the brachos, and without a doubt we will merit Divine protection and an abundance of brachah and success in all that we do.

Good Shabbos  
Yaakov Dov Marmurstein

The frequent sirens that sounded in the city of Netivot on the morning of Simchas Torah indicated that something very serious was happening. But the residents of the city did not know of the terrible scope and severity, and when they had an opportunity, they hurried to get to shul for davening.

The large family of Rabbi Bar Yochai Dahbash, known in the city as a senior paramedic and a great *baal chessed*, did not have to go far. During corona, they had established a temporary shul in the yard of their home, and it has been operating continuously since then. So, on the morning of the Yom Tov, despite the sirens, more than thirty *mispallelim* gathered in the shul, most of them members of the family. The *tefillah* proceeded in order, aside for the occasional sirens that sent them into the reinforced room of the house.

Towards the end of *tefillah*, during *Birchas Kohanim* of *Mussaf*, while Rabbi Dahbash's children huddled under his *tallis*, they heard a siren once again, and right after it a terrible explosion. Heavy smoke, dust and glass particles filled the shul.



A blood-stained tallis in the shul in the yard of the Dahbash family's home in Netivot.

A rocket had struck the house.

A few seconds of utter shock passed, and then the wounded began to moan. First, they heard the cries of Rabbi Dahbash's nephew, the son of his brother Reb Eliyahu. His father hurried over to him. But after he took just one step, he crumpled. He felt terrible pain in his leg, and blood began to flow from it.

Rabbi Dahbash turned to his brother and studied his leg. The wound was severe and required an immediate tourniquet. Without thinking twice, he took off his tie, and improvised a tourniquet. Then he ran to the house to take his first aid bag. When he entered, he shuddered: the direct hit had destroyed his house completely.

He just about managed to find his bag in the wreckage, and when he returned he was horrified to hear that his wife and niece were among the wounded. A phone call to Magen David Adom made it clear that due to the overload, there would be no ambulance coming in the near future. Rabbi Dahbash had to load the wounded into his large car and began to drive to the nearest hospital.

They found out as they drove that the closest hospital was completely full and could not take in more casualties. Because his wife and brother were both in danger, he decided to drive to one of the hospitals in the center of the country. On the way, his brother's condition deteriorated. At the first possible opportunity, Rabbi Dahbash hooked up with an ambulance, who transferred him to a hospital. He then continued with his wife and the other victims towards the center of the country.

As he drove, Rabbi Dahbash pondered what was left behind. It seemed that most of the *mispallelim* who were outside the house were hardly injured, aside for a bit of shrapnel in their legs. In contrast, inside the house, where the rocket had struck directly, a real miracle had occurred.

When they heard the siren, his young children hid under the table, innocently explaining that the table was like a *mizbeach* so it would surely protect them. Indeed, miraculously, the whole ceiling of the house collapsed, except for the part over the table. The property tax assessors who came a few days later to assess

the damage did not believe that anyone had emerged alive from the house, let alone unscathed.

Rabbi Dahbash's wife and daughter recovered from their wounds slowly but steadily, and regained nearly normal function. But with his brother, Reb Eliyahu, the situation was different. Due to the masses of wounded that kept streaming to the hospital during those hours, no one was available to examine him, and he had to wait on the side, writhing in pain.

Only after he screamed in desperation did someone summon a doctor to examine him. The doctor was shocked at the sight of the leg, and sent Reb Eliyahu to emergency surgery, noting that it was the last thing that perhaps could save his leg from amputation.

The operation lasted several hours, and even afterwards, the doctors were not satisfied. They told Reb Eliyahu that regretfully, most of the veins in his leg had been torn and it was virtually impossible to connect them again. So if there would be no improvement in his leg within a few hours, they would be forced to amputate.

When Reb Eliyahu heard this he burst out crying. He knew that his future was in the balance now, and was aware that the most fitting thing for him to do at this time was to daven. So for the many hours that he waited to be examined again, Reb Eliyahu prayed fervently to Hashem to save his leg so that he could continue leading his life in a normal fashion.

Reb Eliyahu davened without letup, and indeed, the unbelievable happened.

At one point, he suddenly began to feel something warm flowing in his leg. He called the doctor, who asked him to move his toes, and wondrously, two of them began to move. This encouraging fact galvanized the doctor to return him to the operating room.

A few hours later, Reb Eliyahu awoke in the recovery room, and the first thing he asked was if his leg was still in its place...

"Do you believe in miracles?" the surgeon asked in response, and added excitedly: "I don't remember a medical miracle like yours! Now I can tell you that after the first operation, it was already clear to us that your leg was headed for amputation. We felt that without it, you might be in serious danger, and yet, we decided to wait a bit and to try to convey some hope to you..."

"Now that you were brought to the operating table again, we were completely taken aback. Against all odds, most of the veins and arteries have fused together, seemingly on their own, and the blood is flowing through them. The few veins that have not yet fused will not prevent you from walking again – of course, after extensive rehabilitation."

"Today," Rabbi Dahbash concludes this remarkable story, "towards the end of a hard, long rehabilitation process, my brother's leg is functioning again, except for two toes. They are a reminder for him that he is a walking miracle – literally – and of his need to thank Hashem in the *brachah* of *Hameichin Mitzadei Gaver*, for all the good that Hashem has granted him."

### Answering Amen Was Instituted to Strengthen Emunah

Because the *emunah* is the foundation of the entire Torah, Chazal instituted for us to make *brachos* in *tefillah* and to answer amen to the *brachos*, as the word amen is derived from *emunah*<sup>1</sup>, and from the word *hoda'ah*, that he takes upon himself the words of the *mevarech* and admits to them<sup>2</sup>. That is what Chazal say (*Shavuos* 36a): ‘Amen *kabbalah*<sup>3</sup>, amen *shevuah*<sup>4</sup>, amen *kiyum*<sup>5</sup>’.

### Answering Amen Is the Fulfillment of the Brachah

And on this they say (*Nazir* 66b): The one who answers amen is greater than the *mevarech*. And the explanation of this<sup>6</sup> is: Because the *mevarech* testifies with his *brachah* that HaKdosh Baruch Hu is the Source of *brachah*, the one who answers amen validates the document and that is the *ikar*, because the testimony of just one witness is not valid, only two witnesses, as the second one seals the testimony. The one who answers amen is the second witness, and he needs to join the first witness, which is the *mevarech*, and with him the testimony is validated<sup>7</sup>.

1. From the words of Rabbeinu Bechayei it seems that he holds that the word “amen” is based on the word “*emunah*,” and he wrote this in his *sefer Kad Hakemach (Emunah)*. And it is like the simple explanation of the *Gemara (Shabbos 119b)*: “What is amen? *Kel Melech Ne'eman*,” and *Rashi* explains: Thus he testifies of his Creator that He is a *Kel Melech Ne'eman*.” The *Mateh Moshe* likewise explains this (end of 88). But the *Peirush Hatefillos Vehabrachos*, by Rav Y. Ben Yakar (Vol. II, p. 112) brings that the root ךמנ is mentioned in the *passuk* with the meaning of *emes*, truth, as it says (*Melachim I 8:26*): “*Ye'amen na devarcha*” which means “please let Your word come true.” The *Rada”k (Yechezkel 21:20)* brings in the name of his brother, Reb Moshe, that the words “*emes*” is based on the word “amen” but that the “*nu*” was dropped.” This is also apparent from *Rashi* on the *passuk (Yeshayah 65:16)*: “*Asher hamisbarech ba'aretz yisbarech b'Elokei amen*,” which he explains as “he should praise himself that he is a servant of the Elokei amen – the Elokei *ha'emes*, the true G-d.” The *Re'em (Bereishis 42:20)* concurs. And see *Tur* and *Shulchan Aruch (124 6)* who wrote: “And they should answer amen after every single *brachah*, whether those that were *yotzei* through *tefillah* or those that were not, and the *kavanah* they should have in their heart is: *emes*, the *brachah* that the *mevarech* made is true, and I believe (*ma'amin*) in it.”

2. Because by declaring in answering amen that he believes the words of the *mevarech*, he is admitting and agreeing to them.

3. When one buys something from another, the seller conditions with the customer a certain condition, and the customer answers amen, then he has accepted the seller's words and is committed to fulfilling the condition (*Rashi Shavuos 36a, ad loc. Bo kibalta*)

4. One who answers amen to an oath is like he uttered an oath (*Rashi bidi ad loc. Amen*).

5. In the *nusach* of this *Gemara* (and in the *Yerushalmi Sotah 2 5*, and in *Devarim Rabbah 7 1*) it is not mentioned that amen is also a term of “*kiyum*,” but rather a term of “*ha'amanah*.” And *Rashi* explains (*ad loc. Bo amanta*) that when one answers amen after a plea that he hears from a friend, he agrees and affirms the words that he heard, and it is as if he is saying, *Yehi ratzon* it should be this way (*Rashi ibid ad loc. Bo amanta*).

6. In his *sefer Kad Hakemach (ibid)* Rabbeinu brings this commentary in the name of “some who explained it this way.” And it is similarly explained in *Orchos Chaim (Din Aniyas Amen 4)*.

7. When answering amen, the *oneh* completes the testimony that the *mevarech* began with, and because one who concludes a mitzvah is more important than the one who started it, therefore Chazal say “the one who answers amen is greater than the *mevarech*” (*Succas Dovid, Parashas Metzora 38*, in the explanation of the words of Rabbeinu Bechayei). And see *Tosafos Harosh (Brachos 53b)* who explained that for this reason “the one who answers amen is greater than the *mevarech*, because he finishes the mitzvah.”

## Taaneh Emunim

Pearls on the Mitzvah of Tefillah

Hodu

### Sing in Praise and Honor of Hashem

“שירו לו זמרו לו שיהו בכל נפלאותיו”

The *Chofetz Chaim* explained: The song and music is an important part of the life of a Jew, but a person must make sure they are sanctified for Hashem and His Torah. This concept is taught to us by Dovid Hamelech in this *passuk*: “*Shiru*” but make sure that it is “*Lo*,” for Him! “*Zamru*” but remember to do it “*Lo*.” And the *passuk* continues: “*Sichu*” – friendly conversation is permitted, on condition that the subject of your conversation is “*bechol nifla'osav*” about His miracles.

*Chofetz Chaim Al HaTorah, Parashas Naso – Maasai Lamelech 2*

## Shaarei Yeshuah

The Segulah of Answering Amen

This story took place a number of years ago, and was sent to us at the time by the person it happened to, a student of a high school in Yerushalayim. We present it to you with minor changes to conceal identities:

“Like many of my friends, I am strict each day to recite *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa*. Despite the natural difficulty at first, I insisted on keeping to this practice day after day. Very quickly, I began to enjoy the idea, and connected to it.

In order to be able to stick to our *kabbalah*, my friends and I decided to take advantage of our long morning bus ride from home to school to day *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa*.

For a few months, this worked out very well. This encouraged me to make sure to be on time for the bus, so that I could say the *brachos* with my friends, and I wouldn't have to find someone to ask – which for me, involved some unpleasantness. Two months ago, it happened that I was late for the regular bus. But *baruch Hashem*, I withstood the test. I mustered up the courage, approached one of the women standing at the bus stop,

and asked her if I could say *Birchos Hashachar* for her.

She looked at me in surprise, but of course, she agreed right away. I said the *brachos* with *kavanah*, as I had gotten used to doing, and she answered amen. After I finished, we began to chat. She asked me my name and where I went to school, and I innocently answered the questions.

Two weeks later, my parents told me about a *shidduch* suggestion that they had received – an excellent boy from a prestigious and wealthy family. At first, I was doubtful about how serious it was. After all, our family, like the families of our previous *mechutanim*, were all good families, but relatively simple. This suggestion, from such a prominent family – why should they choose to do a *shidduch* with us?!

As is customary, it was arranged for me to meet the boy's mother. For a while we conversed pleasantly, and towards the end of the conversation, she asked me: “Don't you recognize me?” I was surprised at the question, and she tried to jog my memory. “Remember...two weeks ago...at the bus stop...”

And then the penny dropped – I

remembered that morning right away.

In an unbelievable turn of events, I learned that during that chance encounter, I had found favor in the woman's eyes, and she saw me as an excellent *shidduch* for her son. Like I noted, he was a top boy, with all the *ma'alos*, and the family... really special, and wealthy as well. The *shidduch* advanced quickly and a few days later, it was completed.

At the festive engagement, my father, *shlita*, spoke, and he recounted the remarkable way the *shidduch* had come about, quoting the *passuk* (*Hoshea* 2:21): “*Ve'eraštich Li b'emunah.*”

Indeed, there are lots of ways for Hashem to do things, but such a wonderful way – the way of *emunah* – there is only one, and you, Bney Emunim, paved it for me!

In gratitude for doing so, and with the *brachah* that you should continue with your wonderful work, to increase the answering of amen among people, and the number of people who say *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa* in every place, until we merit to see the fulfillment of the *passuk* “*Veyimalei Kevodo es ko ha'aretz amen v'amen.*”

## Shaarei Gan Eden

Amen and Brachos in the Teachings of a Baal Hayahrtzeit



Rebbe Harav Yechiel Yehoshua Rabinowitz

### The Chelkas Yehoshua

21 Shevat 5742

The Rebbe Harav Yechiel Yehoshua Rabinowitz of Biala was born to his father, Harav Yerachmiel Tzvi of Shedlitz on 5 Teves 5661. His father passed away when he was five years old, and on Shabbos Nachamu 5684, he took upon himself to take his father's place in the city of Wodowa, Poland. In 5699, when the Nazis invaded Poland, he fled to Russian controlled territory and was exiled to Siberia, where he was *moser nefesh* to

keep *mitzvos*, and did not give up any of his holy practices.

In 5707, he made *aliyah* to Eretz Yisrael and settled in Tel Aviv. In 5715, he moved to Yerushalayim. He was revered by all who saw and knew him, and was known for his pure *tefillos*, said with great *dveikus*.

He passed away on 21 Shevat 5742. Etched onto his *tziyun* on Har Hazeisim are the words: “All his days, he davened for the *yeshuah* of Am Yisrael.” His *sefer*, *Chelkas Yehoshua*, published after his passing, has *divrei Torah* on Torah and *moadim* that he left behind in written manuscripts.

### *Birchos Hashachar* Should Be Completed With Amen

In *Seder Hayom*, which the Chelkas Yehoshua established, he wrote: “To say *Birchos Hashachar* in front of someone who should answer amen, as is known from the *kedoshei elyon*, that a *brachah* without amen is literally like half a body.” (*Chelkas Yehoshua – Takanos Vehanagos*, p. 61)

### Answer Amen after *Birchos Hashachar*

The Chelkas Yehoshua would hear *Birchos Hashachar* each day from all the regular *mispallelim* in his *minyán*, and would answer amen after them. (*Kuntress Ohr Olam*, p. 37)