

Vechol Maaminim

A Weekly
Pamphlet
From
"Bney
Emunim"



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Peninei Emunim

Pearls of Tefillah
in the Parashah

The Torah Is Written On High

"ועתה אם תשא חטאתם ואם אין מחני נא מספרך
אשר כתבת" (לב לב)

It would seem enough for Moshe to say: "Erase me from Your *sefer*." Why did he then add "that You wrote"?

The **Lev Simcha** explained this according to the *Zohar* (*Zohar Hachadash Shir Hashirim* 74b) that there are six hundred thousand letters in the Torah. But it is well known that this determination does not fit in with reality because the actual number of letters in the Torah is only half of this amount. The explanation is that besides the Torah that was given to us, there is another Torah in front of HaKadosh Baruch Hu, and as *Rashi* says (according to *Sifri, Bamidbar* 134) on the *passuk* (*Bamidbar* 27:7): "*Kein Bnos Tzelafchad dovros*" – "this is how this *parashah* is written in front of Me On High," and the *passuk* says (*Tehillim* 119:89): "*L'olam Hashem devarecha nitzav baShamayim*." From here we can explain what the *Zohar* means, that both *Sifrei Torah* together have six hundred thousand letters.

In light of this, we can explain that Moshe says here: "*Mecheini na*" he asked that his name be erased from both *seforim*, "*misifrecha*," from Your *sefer* that You gave to Am Yisrael, and from the *sefer* "that You wrote," and is with You On High. And that is also the meaning of the request said at the end of *Shemoneh Esreh*, "*vesein chelkeinu beSorasecha*," that Hashem should give us a share also in the Torah written in front of Him On High.

Lev Simcha, Yisro 5738, Ki Sisa, Amarim

Pischu Shearim

A word from the founder and Nasi of Bney Emunim

A Brachah Without Amen as a 'Machatzis Hashekel'

This *parashah* begins with the mitzvah of *machatzis hashekel*, which each and every person in Am Yisrael was obligated to give each year, and which served to purchase *korbanos tzibbur* to be sacrificed in the Bais Hamikdash. Many have asked why the Torah stipulated that the donation amount be "half a shekel." Would it not be more fitting for the sum for the Bais Hamikdash to be a full shekel?

The *Alshich* in this *parashah* quotes Harav Shlomo Alkabetz, who composed *Lecha Dodi*, that by doing this the Torah seeks to teach us about the importance of unity in Am Yisrael. Just like the full shekel will only be attained if two Jews join together, so, too, a person cannot consider himself whole unless he joins with a friend.

This concept explains a basic *halachah* regarding answering amen: The *Rema* (*Orach Chaim* 167 2) rules that the *mevarech* must have in mind to be *yotzei* answering amen from the one who answers amen to his *brachah*. The *Mishnah Berurah* explains (ibid 20): "Answering amen is also part of the *brachah*...and by answering amen to it, the *brachah* becomes more important, therefore, it is fitting *lechatchilah* to have *kavanah* to be *yotzei* his obligation to answer amen through the amen that the *oneh* answers."

So we have a practical *halachah* of a mitzvah that is completed

specifically by two people. The *brachah* and amen are bound one to another, and the action of the *mevarech* is only complete after he fulfills the obligation of answering amen from the *oneh*.

When we think about this, we find that being strict about this *halachah* is rooted in the *middah* of *anavah*. While the humble person will make sure to recite a *brachah* aloud so his friend can complete the *brachah* with amen, one who is afflicted with the *middah* of *ga'avah*, in contrast, will struggle to recognize that he needs help from another person.

The Ramban wrote of the *middah* of *anavah* in his letter: "That it is a better *middah* than all the other good *middos*." Now, we find that it brings a person to be strict about answering amen, and we have learned that there is nothing greater to Hashem than this. An allusion to this special connection can be explained from the name of Moshe Rabbeinu, who was the humblest of all men (*Bamidbar* 13:3), and that alludes to answering amen. Because the final letters of the words that comprise the letters מ"ם, משה – ש"ן ה"א – are אמן.

Let us be strict to make complete *brachos* that are answered by amen and we will merit to see "*brachah sheleimah*" in all that we do, always.

Good Shabbos
Yaakov Dov Marmurstein

The challenge he was facing was tremendous. He was just a regular person, and he'd never dreamed he'd ever be facing such a proposal, and a dilemma, and now, he was confused and at a loss about what to do.

Reb Shimon, the subject of this story, serves as the unofficial Rav in a small shul on a *moshav* in the Sharon region. He happened to be visiting there a number of years ago, and was honored with giving a *shiur* between *Minchah* and *Maariv*. The *mispallelim* enjoyed the *shiur* and urged him to return the next day. The rest is history. Each morning and evening, he travels to this small *moshav*, where the residents are happy every day anew to see him. They thirstily drink in his words, and garner *chizuk* from his *shiurim*. They even consult him about their questions in life.

In the last year, one of the regular *mispallelim*, a Torah observant elderly man, passed away. The Rav was sure that the son, who had grown distant from observance, would not be strict to say *Kaddish* for his father. But to his surprise, as soon as the *shivah* was over, the son

Despite the son's antagonistic behavior, the Rav made sure that during each *tefillah*, before *Kaddish*, he went out to call the son. He did this solely for the benefit of the father's soul, as he had truly loved Torah. This was his way of making sure the son did not miss *Kaddish*.

A few months later, the phone in the Rav's house rang, and he was surprised to hear that it was the daughter of the *niftar* on the phone. The story that she related shed some light on the mystery:

"As you know," the sister began, "my father, *z"l*, was a religious person. After his passing, he left me and my brother, who was distant from his path. During the *shivah*, we found our father's will, and what he wrote there stunned us.

My father had left assets worth twelve million shekel, of which he chose to give my brother ten million, and me only two million. But he conditioned it on the fact that my brother would say *Kaddish* at all the *tefillos* throughout the year of mourning, and if he did not fulfill this condition fully, he would have to split the sum with me evenly.

When my brother declared his intention to fulfill my father's instructions, I smiled to myself. The distance between him and the shul, physically and emotionally, was tremendous. I was sure he'd give up very fast... But as the days passed, and I saw that he was keeping to his word, I began to fear that he would indeed meet the condition that my father had set, to the fullest.

In order to prevent this tremendous loss, I hired a private investigator to follow my brother and to try and find a way to thwart his receipt of the inheritance. The investigator discovered quickly that although my brother is careful to come to the *tefillos*, he sits outside during the davening, and you are the one who makes sure to call him in for *Kaddish*.

Honored Rav, I am pleading with you, please, stop, at least a few times, calling my brother inside for *Kaddish*. We just need a few times for him to miss it once because he didn't notice, and then I'll have gained what I seek."

The woman paused for a moment before she continued, and dropped her 'bombshell':

"Honored Rav, if you are able to help me get that four million shekel, I promise to

give you the *ma'aser* from that amount, meaning four hundred thousand shekel, no less. You can do what you want with the money, take it for yourself, or share it with the poor and needy, just prevent him from saying one *Kaddish*..."

If at first, this Rabbi was inclined to reject the proposal out of hand, he later began to have second thoughts, and realized he had a real *sheilah* on his hands. There was so much to gain from doing something so minor; he began to find all kinds of justifications for his actions... With these thoughts in mind, he went to the home of the Ayeles Hashachar, Harav Aharon Leib Steinman, *ztz"l*, who gave him a quick and decisive response:

"*Chalilah, chalilah* do not answer this request; you don't know the value of every single *Kaddish* for the *niftar*. You must make sure that the *niftar* gets every *Kaddish* that he deserves, in a complete way, and there should be no other consideration involved!"

Armed with these clear instructions and a *brachah* for success, the Rav continued going outside during every *tefillah* to call the son to say *Kaddish*. What happened after that was surprising:

One day, after *Maariv*, the son suddenly turned to the Rav and asked: "Tell me, Rabbi, how do you do this?! Aren't you offended that I go outside for all the *tefillos* and don't attend your *shiur*?"

And like from Shamayim, the answer was on the tip of the Rav's tongue: "My friend, first of all, your *Kaddish* is very precious to the soul of your father, and that is what urges me to come out and call you over and over again. Secondly, regarding the *shiur*, Dovid Hamelech says (119:72): '*Tov li Toras picha mei'alfei zahav vakesef.*' The *divrei Torah* that I share are invaluable treasures, and if so, the loss is for the one who does not participate in the *shiur*; why should I be offended?!"

To the Rav's surprise, the next day, the man decided to come inside for the *tefillos* and the *shiur* that followed. He listened to the *shiur* and the *divrei Torah* spoke to his heart. The next day he participated again, and likewise, the coming days.

Two months later, he began to keep Shabbos, and then became closer and took on many more *mitzvos*.

It was not surprising that even after the year was over, the man continued to come to shul, this time, not for the money, but *l'Shem Shamayim*.

Heard from Rav Binyamin Cohen,
Chairman of Keren Hashvi'is,
who heard it firsthand



The yishuv of Chavatzelet Hasharon

appeared in shul to recite *Kaddish* at each of the three *tefillos*.

When the son returned the next day, and in the days that followed, for each *tefillah*, the surprise turned into a mystery. It was hard to attribute his behavior to his closeness to the path of his forebears, because he had made sure to maintain a distance. Throughout the *tefillah*, he remained outside, bored or busy with his things, and he came in only to say *Kaddish*. Even when the Rav tried to speak to him to come in at least for the *shiurim*, the son responded coolly; he made sure not to develop any personal connection and the Rav gave up. He realized that there must be something to it, and this man was not coming to shul for no reason. But he did not have answers.

A person must have *kavanah* when he answers amen after the *brachah*, but *me'ikar hadin*, it is not enough to just have general *kavanah* that the words of the *mevarech* are true. Rather, he has to have in mind when answering amen, based on the content of the *brachah*. Therefore, one who answers amen should not be distracted when the *brachah* is being said, until he is able to have the right *kavanah* when answering amen after it. In accordance with the various *brachos*, the *poskim* detailed three *kavanos* for answering amen: For *brachos* that are praise and gratitude one should have in mind: “The *brachah* that the *mevarech* made is true, and I believe it.” After the *brachos* of *tefillah* and *bakashah*, one should have in mind: “May it be that this request is fulfilled.” And after the *brachos* that have both praise and request, one should have in mind both these *kavanos* together (*Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim* 124 6, and *Mishnah Berurah* ibid 25).

In order for us to be able to fulfill our obligation and have the right *kavanah* when answering amen to *Birchos Hashachar*, we are presenting the *kavanos* that one should have when answering amen after each one of the *brachos*:

The Brachah of Al Netilas Yadayim

Amen – it is true that we must thank Hashem for sanctifying us with His *mitzvos* and commanding us to wash our hands in the morning.

The Brachah of Asher Yatzar

Amen – It is true that we must thank Hashem for creating in our body a wondrous digestive system, and by doing so, He sustains us and protects our health.

The Brachah of Elokai Neshamah

Amen – it is true that we must thank Hashem for restoring the *neshamah* to the people who are sleeping, each day, as those who are sleeping are considered dead bodies.

The Brachah of Hamelamed Torah L'Amo Yisrael

Amen – it is true that we must thank Hashem for sanctifying us with His *mitzvos* and commanding us to engage in Torah, and He helps us do this, and may it be that we and all our offspring should learn *Torah lishmah*.

The Brachah of Nosein HaTorah

Amen – it is true that we must thank Hashem for choosing us to give us His Torah.

The Brachah of Hanosein Lasechvi Binah

Amen – It is true that we must thank Hashem for giving us the knowledge to discern between day and night.

The Brachah of Shelo Asani Goy

Amen – it is true that we must thank

Hashem for not making us gentiles who are exempt from Torah and *mitzvos*.

The Brachah of Shelo Asani Aved

Amen – it is true that we must thank Hashem for not making us an *aved Cana'ani*, who has no *yichus* and is not obligated in all the *mitzvos*.

The Brachah of Shelo Asani Ishah

Amen – it is true that we must thank Hashem for not making me a woman, who is obligated only in part of the *mitzvos*.

The Brachah of Poke'ach Ivrim

Amen – it is true that we have to thank Hashem for opening our eyes each morning and restoring our power of sight.

The Brachah of Malbish Arumim

Amen – it is true that we must thank Hashem for providing us with clothes to cover our bodies.

The Brachah of Matir Assurim

Amen – it is true that we must thank Hashem for releasing us from the confines of sleep and renewing our ability to move our limbs.

The Brachah of Zokef Kefufim

Amen – it is true that we must thank Hashem for straightening our posture after it was hunched during sleep.

The Brachah of Roka Ha'aretz Al Hamayim

Amen – it is true that we must thank Hashem for maintaining the dry land on the water so that creation can exist.

The Brachah of Hameichin Mitzadei Gaver

Amen – it is true that we must thank Hashem for accompanying us on all our ways and guarding our steps.

The Brachah of She'asah Li Kol Tzorki

Amen – it is true that we must thank Hashem for the shoes on our feet, through which we are able to walk and take care of all our needs.

The Brachah of Ozer Yisrael Bigevurah

Amen – it is true that we must thank Hashem for the belt that we wear around our waist that separates between the upper part of the body and the lower part.

The Brachah of Oter Yisrael Besifarah

Amen – it is true that we must thank Hashem for the covering that adorns our head.

The Brachah of Hanosein Laya'ef Koach

Amen – it is true that we must thank Hashem for returning in the morning our *neshamos* that are tired from the day before, in a fresh and calm state.

The Brachah of Hagomel Chassadim Tovim

Amen – it is true that we must thank Hashem for passing the sleep from our eyes and for the many good *chassadim* that He has granted us, and may it be that He grant us many more good *chassadim* today and every day.

The holy *Zohar* (*Vayeilech* 285 2) expounds on the severity of answering amen without *kavanah*, and writes that someone who does not have *kavanah* when answering amen to a *brachah*, the *passuk* says of him (*Shmuel* 1:30): “*Ubozai yekalu*.” In order not to stumble by saying amen without *kavanah*, the Mekubal Rabi Meir Papirash (*Ohr Tzaddikim Tikkun Hatefillah* 52) composed a special *tefillah* to say each morning before davening:

“*Ribbono shel Olam*, it is known and clear before You that I am a flesh and blood human and I do not have the strength to have the proper *kavanah* for amen, therefore, may it be Your Will that the *kavanah* of my amen should rise up with the *kavanah* of amen from those few people who know how to have the right *kavanos* of amen.”



Chukei Emunim

Halachos of Tefillah from the Parashah

— The Obligation of Women in Tefillas Mussaf —

“ונתנו איש כפר נפשו לה’ כפקד אתם ולא יהיה בהם נגף כפקד אתם; זה יתנו כל העבר על הפקדים מהצית השקל” (ל יב-יג)

When the Bais Hamikdash was standing, every person in Am Yisrael was instructed to give half a shekel. The money that was collected was used to purchase *korbanos tzibbur*, such as the *Korban Tamid*, *Mussafim* of Shabbos and *moadim*, and other things relating to the *avodah* of the *korbanos* (*Rambam Shekalim* 5 1).

The obligation of giving half a shekel was for men and not for women, as the *passuk* says “*venasnu ish kofer nafsho*” – *ish* and not an *ishah* (*Shekalim* 1 3; *Rav Ovadiah Bartenura* *ibid*). From this *din*, **Rav Akiva Eiger** proves that women did not have a part in the *korbanos tzibbur*, and therefore they are also exempt from davening *Mussaf*, which was instituted to correspond to the *Korbanos Mussaf*, which are a *korban tzibbur*.

However, **Harav Yechezkel Heller**, author of *Amudei Ohr*, differs from this view and claims that even though the Torah exempts women from giving *machatzis hashekel*, one should not

derive from that they have no part in *korbanos tzibbur*. On the contrary, it is more likely to say that although they were exempt from payment for these *korbanos*, still, they receive atonement through them, and therefore, they are obligated *min hadin* in *Tefillas Mussaf*. And as we find regarding the *par hachatas* sacrificed by the Kohein Gadol on Yom Kippur, that even though the Kohein Gadol purchased it himself, it would atone for all his brethren the Kohanim (see *Rambam Avodas Yom Hakippurim* 5 13).

But *halachah lema’aseh*, the *Amudei Ohr* agrees that women are exempt from *Tefillas Mussaf*, because of the *koach sevara* that is mentioned in *Tzelach* (*Brachos* 26a): The *Gemara* (*ibid* 20b, based on *Tosafos* *ibid* ad loc. *B’tefillah*) explains that even though the *mitzvah* of *tefillah* is time-bound, because the essence of *tefillah* is asking for compassion and women also need that *rachamim*, therefore they are obligated in *tefillah* like men are, and are not exempt from it like the other time-bound *mitzvos*.

Indeed, this reason is correct regarding the daily *tefillos* which during the week

include *brachos* with requests. But regarding *Mussaf*, which was instituted to correspond to the *Korbanos Mussaf*, and their essence is not *rachamim*, then even during the week they do not include requests, and this reason does not apply. If so, then the women should be exempt from it like the other *mitzvos* that are time-bound (see *Rabbeinu Yona Brachos* 13a in the *Dapei Harif*.)

But the *sefer Magen Gibborim* rejects this *sevarah* as well, because from the *Yerushalmi* (*Brachos* 4 6, and see *Rosh Brachos* 3 18) it seems that in earlier times, in *Tefillas Mussaf* that was said on weekdays, they would daven *Shemoneh Esreh* like in other *tefillos* and they would add a *brachah* to remember the *Korban Mussaf*. From this it emerges that when the *tefillah* of *Mussaf* was instituted, the women were also obligated in it, because it included the request for *rachamim* like in the other *tefillos*. Therefore, even though today we daven *Mussaf* with only seven *brachos*, their obligation has not expired.

Hagahos Rav Akiva Eiger Orach Chaim 106 2; *Shu”t Amudei Ohr* 7; *Magen Gibborim* *Elef Hamagan* 4

Shaarei Gan Eden

Amen and Brachos in the Teachings of a Baal Hayahrtzeit



The tziyun of the Ginzei Yosef in Stanov, Ukraine

The Ginzei Yosef

22 Adar 5560

Harav Yosef Bloch was born in 5484 to his father, Reb Avraham. Already from a young age, he was known for his greatness and piety, and as the Rav of Brod, Harav Meir Kristianpoler, author of *Yad Hameir*, wrote in his approbation to the *sefer Ginzei Yosef*: “As a youth, Rav Yosef learned Torah from my grandfather, Rav Yechezkel, and I remember that he always praised Rav Yosef’s *middos* and his greatness in Torah and *Yiras Shamayim*.”

Rav Yosef was one of the *talmidim* of the Maggid of Mezeritsch, and he was also close to the Maggid of Zlotchov. His *sefer Ginzei Yosef* is comprised of concepts of *chassidus* that he learned from his *rabbeim*. His brilliance and greatness in Torah is manifested in the second part of the *sefer* that contains his *chiddushim* on Shas.

Rav Yosef served as the Rav of Alesk, and at the end of his life he moved to Stanov, where he served as a *maggid*. The famous Rav of Stanov at the time, Harav Alexander Sender Margulies, wrote in his approbation about the greatness of Rav Yosef: “When he was a *maggid* a few years here in Stanov, I saw the greatness of his *chassidus*, his *prishus* and his humility and he did not move from the tent of Torah, and he did not stop learning, he engaged in Torah *l’Shem Shamayim*, and he would make his nights like his days.”

The Ginzei Yosef passed away in his 66th year on 22 Adar 5560, and he is buried in Stanov.

The Children Also Have to Come to Davening

The Maggid of Stanov explained the *passuk* (*Devarim* 29:9): “*Atem nitzavim hayom kulchem lifnei Hashem Elokeichem*,” on *tefillah*, that “*hisyatzvus*” means *tefillah* as it says (*Shmuel* I, 1:25): “*Ani ha’ishah hanitzeves imcha bazeih lehisparallel el Hashem*.” And the Torah instructs us: Your *tefillah* “*lifnei Hashem Elokeichem*” – in the shul, which is a place where the Shechinah dwells – needs to be with “*kol ish Yisrael*,” and even “your children.” The participation of the youth in *tefillah* is so important that it is fitting even to make *tefillah* later for this purposes. “And as they said in the name of Harav Yosef Hollis, z”l [the Rav of Tisminitz] who would daven later in shul so that the young children would come to answer *Yehei Shemei Rabbah* and *Kedushah* and amen” (*Ginzei Yosef Nitzavim*).