

# Vechol Maaminim

A Weekly  
Pamphlet  
From  
"Bney  
Emunim"



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## Peninei Emunim

Pearls of Tefillah  
in the Parashah

### Resting – But Not Because of Work

"ששת ימים תעשה מלאכה וביום השביעי יהיה לכם קדש שבת שבתון  
לה' כל העשה בו מלאכה יומת" (לה ב)

Harav Yosef Shaul Nathanson explained:

The Torah cautions us that in our homes there should be "*Shabbos Shabbason l'Hashem*," meaning a *shevisah*, a suspension of work, because it is the commandment of Hashem, to teach us that in contrast to rest whose objective is to shore up strength for future work, the rest of Shabbos needs to be with a sense of "as if all your work is done" (*Mechilta Masechta D'Bechodesh Ch. 7*). One should be like a person who has nothing to do, and his rest is solely because Hashem commanded it.

For this reason, in *Minchah* of Shabbos, we describe the rest of Shabbos as "*menuchah sheleimah she'Atah rotzeh bah*," a complete rest that You want. This is not rest to build up strength for future work, rather it is "*menuchah sheleimah*" an absolute and complete rest "as if all your work is done," and this is the rest "that You want."

*Divrei Shaul, Fifth Edition*

### Shabbos Is an Auspicious Time for Tefillah

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Rashi explains (based on *Mechilta Masechta d'Shabbata Ch. 1*) that the reason the Torah once again writes another warning about keeping Shabbos before the commandment about the *melech haMishkan* is to teach us that work on the Mishkan does not supersede Shabbos.

From the fact that building the Mishkan was forbidden on Shabbos, the *Shem MiShmuel* learned that the Mishkan was not needed on Shabbos, because the power of Shabbos is like the power of the Mikdash, as the *hashra'as haShechinah* that comes from the power of the Mikdash is present on Shabbos. That is how he explains our request in the *piyut* of *Azamer Bishvachin*, said on Friday night: "יהא רעוא קמיה," – in other words, may it be Hashem's Will that His Shechinah should dwell on Shabbos as it dwelled in the Bais Hamikdash.

*Shem MiShmuel Vayeira 5671*

## Pischu Shearim

A word from the founder and Nasi of Bney Emunim

### Mitzvas Aseh D'Oraisa

In *Maseches Brachos*, the *Gemara* (21a) cites a source in the Torah for the obligation of *Birchas HaTorah*, from the *passuk* (*Devarim 32:3*): "*Ki Shem Hashem ekra havu godel l'Elokeinu*." Rashi explains (*ibid ad loc. Ki*) that in this *passuk*, Moshe Rabbeinu said to Am Yisrael: "*Ki Shem Hashem ekra*," when You say Hashem's Name in *Birchas HaTorah*, you should "*havu godel*," give greatness to Hashem by answering amen.

In light of Rashi's words, the *Pri Migadim* (*Eshel Avraham 215 6; Teivas Gomeh Ha'azinu*) rules that just like *Birchas HaTorah* derived from the beginning of the *passuk* "*Ki Shem Hashem ekra*," is a *mitzvas aseh d'Oraisa*, so, too, answering amen after it, which is derived from the end of the *passuk* "*Havu godel l'Elokeinu*" is a *mitzvas aseh d'Oraisa*.

In this segment, we will not expound on the general halachic aspects that are derived from this significant halachic ruling, but rather in the wondrous knowledge that can be derived from it: Each morning, even before saying *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa*, we can merit a *mitzvas aseh d'Oraisa* by answering amen after *Birchos HaTorah*. An allusion to this concept can be brought from the *nusach* of the request that we say in *Birchas HaTorah*: "*Venihyeh...vetze'etzaeinu...Amcha Bais Yisrael...*" It is for good reason that the word used is "*tze'etzaeinu*" and not "*zareinu*," or any other word that denotes offspring. It is to remind us over and over the letters צא, which are numerically equivalent to amen, and thus to remind us of the virtue of answering amen to this *brachah*, which is a *mitzvas aseh d'Oraisa*. In this vein, we can also explain the words that follow: "*Kulanu Yodei Shemecha*," as an allusion to answering amen, because amen is the numerical equivalent of the two Holy Names, Hav-yah and Adnus.

We all strive and invest our energies and resources to merit to see a *dor yesharim mevorach*. If we will be strict to give respect to *Birchas HaTorah*, and to say it completely, like the other *Birchos Hashachar*, aloud, with *kavanah* and *bechavrusa*, then our request: "*Venihyeh anachnu vetze'etzaeinu...yodei Shemecha velomdei Sorasecha...*" will surely not be turned away.

Good Shabbos

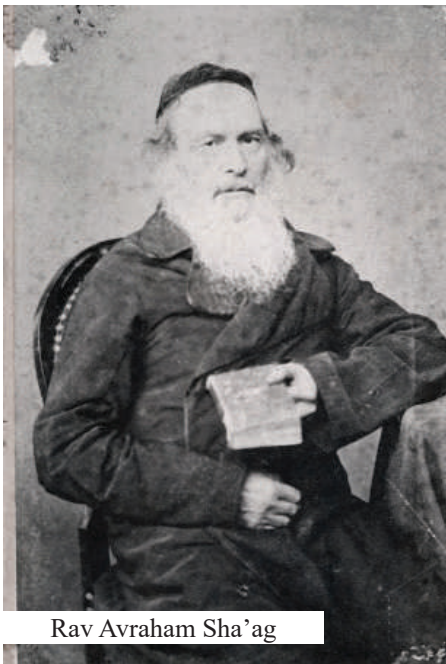
Yaakov Dov Marmurstein

This story was relayed by Rav Chaim Yitzchak Porush, the director and editor in chief of the famous Zichron Aharon publishing house, which in the last few decades has published dozens of volumes of works from the Rishonim and Acharonim. He related:

One day, I received a phone call from a distinguished Jew who lives in America. He was seeking to locate the writings left by Harav Avraham Sha'ag, *zt"l*, the Rav of Kobersdorf, who settled at the end of his life in Eretz Yisrael. He wanted to publish these works and promised to fund the project, whatever the cost.

I made a quick calculation that the cost of the project could reach astronomical sums, but he was determined, and therefore I could not help but wonder what had motivated him. He told me as follows:

"More than twenty years ago, my son had two daughters, very close in age, and it quickly emerged that they both suffered from a rare genetic condition that prevented them from growing and developing normally. *Baruch Hashem*, they were followed by a healthy son, and then another few healthy children.



Rav Avraham Sha'ag

From then, to this day, we have invested a huge amount of resources in trying to ease their suffering. The house runs on a relative routine, which was disrupted when the son reached the age of *shidduchim*.

This son is a very sweet boy, he learns well and is an *oved Hashem*. He comes

from a prominent and wealthy family, and naturally, he should have been flooded with *shidduch* suggestions. But his sisters' ailment led to many *shidduch* rejections. People were afraid, and rightfully so, that the disease is genetic.

My grandson's pain touched me deeply, and I decided to get involved. I reached out to a medical *askan* who specializes in genetic illnesses and asked him to find out if indeed, this is a genetic illness.

At the same time, I went to one of the *gedolei hador* and shared the painful story with him. The *tzaddik* listened and then said: "You need a good advocate to daven for you, and I think the best advocate for you is Rav Avraham Sha'ag, who was called by his Rebbi the Chasam Sofer the rare title of a 'living *Sefer Torah*.'"

Upon hearing this, I didn't ask any questions. As soon as I got the answer, I called you and I'm now asking you to take part in the effort..."

They began the process of publishing Rav Sha'ag's writings. The grandfather of the boy and other relatives were closely involved and the project was blessed with constant *siyata diShmaya*. We began with just a few manuscripts, while the rest were scattered in locations around the world, or were not yet found. It slowly continued, and as the existing writings that we had were published, with tremendous *Hashgachah pratis*, we kept finding more writings.

Throughout that time, we went often to the *kever* of Rav Avraham Sha'ag to daven for the success of the family and of the project. Aside for that, on Erev Rosh Chodesh Nissan, his *yahrtzeit*, we went with a *minyán* to Har Hazeisim, and put the pages ready for print on his grave-stone and asked, "Rabbeinu, this is yours, here are your *divrei Torah* that you toiled so hard on, please advocate for the philanthropist who took upon himself the burden of publishing them, and daven for a *yeshuah* for the family, especially for a *yeshuah* for his grandson to find a *zivug* quickly."

During that time, I got to know a descendent of Rav Sha'ag, an elderly man named Rav Avigdor Sha'ag, who lived in the Zichron Moshe neighborhood. I went to his house and told him about my work publishing his grandfather's writings. The man was very weak and frail, but when he heard about the project, he mustered up some energy and pointed to a high shelf in the bookcase where there was a very old

box. Inside there was no less than one hundred and fifty pages written in his grandfather's close writing.

"These writings have been passed down in our family for five generations," the old man said with a tremor in his voice. "My father instructed me to bring them to print, but I did not merit to do so. I am not calm about going to the World to Come without having fulfilled his instructions. Take these writings as a gift and publish them."

I carried out his instructions and remarkably, the older man passed away just three days later. This story is one of many stories that showed wondrous *Hashgachah pratis* that accompanied the publishing of Rav Sha'ag's work.

Concurrent to his investment in the writings, the dedicated grandfather continued to oversee the progress of the research about his granddaughter's illness. A few universities participated, together with a special research team from Hadassah Ein Kerem Hospital in Yerushalayim. With *siyata diShmaya*, after a very comprehensive study, the researchers were able to isolate the gene responsible for the illness. And that's how they reached the conclusion that someone who carries this gene in an inactive form is not in danger, nor are his offspring, and even when the gene is active it can be detected with a blood test that is administered by Dor Yesharim.

The minute the happy conclusion was reached, there was someone who made sure to publish it very prominently, and *bechasdei Hashem*, within a short time, the son found an excellent *shidduch*.

In the global medical community as well, the results of this study were a major breakthrough, and it had ramifications regarding many other studies that were taking place concurrently. A number of people were partners to the discovery, but for the grandfather, it was much more than symbolic that the most prominent of the doctors was from Hadassah Ein Kerem, and his name was none other than Avraham Sha'ag.

A short clarification revealed that this doctor was none other than the son of Reb Avigdor Sha'ag, who in his final days even joined the efforts to publish his grandfather's writings.

How great is the power of *tefillah*. And how remarkable is it to see the power of *tzaddikim* who even in death are called alive!

Simna Tava Chayei Sarah

## Taaneh Emunim

Pearls on the Mitzvah of Tefillah

### 1,000 Generations from the Creation of the Torah Until It Was Given

"זכרו לעולם בריתו דבר צוה לאלף דור"

Rashi explains the meaning of the *passuk* "*davar tzivah l'elef dor*":

Initially, Hashem created the Torah in order to give it over in the form of the commandments one thousand generations after the creation of the world. But because He saw that it is impossible for the world to exist for so long without Torah, instead of creating the world and the Torah at the same time, He first created the Torah, and delayed the creation of the world for 974 generations (as explained in *Chaggigah* 13b and in *Zevachim* 116a), and from the fact that Moshe received it twenty six generations after the creation of the world, we find that Hashem's Will was fulfilled and 1,000 generations passed from the creation of the Torah until it was commanded to Am Yisrael (*Rashi Chaggigah* 14a, ad loc. *Kodem*, and *Zevachim* ibid

ad loc. *Teisha*, based on *Turei Even*, *Chaggigah* 13b).

The *Rokeach* (*Peirushei Siddur Hatefillah*, Vol. I, p. 50) added that the words "לאלף דר" are numerically equivalent to משה, to teach us that a thousand generations after its creation, Moshe Rabbeinu received the Torah [see *Ma'amarei HaRema MiPano* (*Ma'amer Me'ayan Ganim* Vol. I) which explain that although the word דר is written in the whole Torah with the *vav*, still, it can be explained with a *gematria* as if it is written דר without the *vav*.]

The *Chasam Sofer* (*Shabbos* 105a) gave an allusion to this concept from the fact that the first of the *Aseres Hadibros* – "*Anochi Hashem*" begins with the letter aleph: the letter א is written out אלף, like the number *elef*, 1000, an allusion to the 1000 generations that passed from the creation of the Torah until it has given. Likewise, the form of the letter aleph is comprised of two *yuden* and one slanted *vav*, which

together are numerically equivalent to 26, alluding to the twenty-six generations from the creation of the world until *Kabbalas HaTorah*.

### Zeh Le'umas Zeh

"זכרו לעולם בריתו דבר צוה לאלף דור"

This *passuk* is written twice in the Torah, with a minor change. In *Divrei Hayamim* (I, 16:15) the *passuk* makes the remembrance contingent on Am Yisrael, saying "*zichru l'olam briso*," and as we say in the *sefer hatefillah*, in *Tehillim* (105:8) the *passuk* pins the *zechirah* on Hashem: "*Zachar l'olam briso*."

The *Lechem Rav* (395) explains that the two *zechiros* are contingent on one another; "*zichru l'olam briso*" – remember the Torah that was given to you as a *bris*, a covenant, and through the *emunah* in its eternity, they fulfilled its dictates forever – "*l'elef dor*," and thus HaKadosh Baruch Hu will remember His *bris* with them for eternity – "*l'elef dor*."

## Shaarei Yeshuah

The Segulah of Answering Amen

This story was sent to Bney Emunim from someone who lives in Mevasseret Tzion, and owns a business in the transportation industry. The man related that due to the *Vechol Ma'aminim* pamphlet that he came across, he was inspired to strengthen his observance of the mitzvah of answering amen, and in time, he merited a wondrous miracle. This is his story:

"One day, a customer of mine sued me for a huge sum of money for damage caused to him that he claimed I was to blame for. His claims were totally groundless, but because the man had hired a top tier lawyer, you could say that this lawsuit definitely posed a risk to my financial future.

As a *segulah* ahead of the trial, I decided to strengthen myself even more about being strict to answer amen in general, and to recite *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa* each morning in particular. I did this throughout the months that I was waiting for the trial, until it became a habit. At the same time, I davened with all my heart for a good outcome.

On the day of the hearing, I rose early. The hearing was in Yerushalayim at 8:30 in the morning, and in order to be able to daven calmly, I left my house at first light, intending to daven *Shacharis* in one of the shuls in Shaarei Chessed, which was near to the courthouse.

I arrived in shul a few minutes before davening began. I didn't want to forego the *kabbalah* I had taken upon

### — A 'Chavrusa' Between the Judge and the Defendant —

myself, so I mustered up the nerve, and went over to one of the *mispallelim* and asked if I could say *Birchos Hashachar* so that he could answer amen.

The man looked surprised at the request, so I explained that it is a practice cited in the *Shulchan Aruch*, and that I had taken upon myself to be careful to do it, due to a big lawsuit where I was being falsely accused of something. After he agreed, I made the *brachos* and he answered amen. Then I listened to his *brachos* and answered amen.

After davening, I hurried to walk to the court. When it was my turn, I entered, and I was stunned when I realized that sitting on the judge's chair was none other than the Jew who just a short time earlier had answered amen to my *brachos*!

It is hard for me to describe the feeling I had in those moments. Without knowing the outcome of the trial, deep down I was already breathing easier, as if I had received a signal from On High that the *kabbalah* I had taken upon myself was accepted.

It is possible that the judge recognized me and it is possible that he did not. In any case, after a period of exhausting hearings, he acquitted me on all counts. I will never know with certainty, but it is possible that he was positively influenced by the fact that I came over to him that morning to ask if I could make *brachos*, and perhaps he also saw it as a sign from Above...



The kever of Harav Emanuel Chai Riki in Cento, Italy.

### The Mishnas Chassidim

1 Adar 5503

Harav Raphael Emmanuel Chai Riki was born in Italy in 5447. When he was six years old, his father, Reb Avraham, passed away, and his mother moved to live with her brother, Harav Yedidya Rabino, who was like a father figure to the child.

When he was nineteen, his uncle passed away, and he began to travel among Italy's cities and served as a *melamed*. He built for his students a model of the Mishkan and the *keilim*, and as a result, he wrote his *sefer Ma'aseh Choshev*, which is about the *melech haMishkan*.

When he was about thirty, he decided to dedicate himself to the study of *Kabbalah*, and he traveled to Tzefas, where he learned *Chochmas Hasod* from the writings of the Ari Hakadosh and his disciples. In Tzefas, he authored his well-known commentary *Hon Ashir*, on the *Mishnah*.

About two years later, following a plague in which his daughter perished, he had to leave Tzefas, and he traveled for Livorno, Italy, where he authored his famous compilation *Mishnas Chassidim*, which was printed three times in his lifetime. The author wrote in the introduction that he summarized all of *Toras Hasod* in this work, as he had learned it from the Arizal, in a clear way, in the style that the Rambam compiled *Mishnah Torah*.

The *Mishnas Chassidim* dedicated his life to Torah and *avodas Hashem*, and adopted many habits of *kedushah* and *taharah*. The Chida said of him (*Shem Hagedolim, Ma'areches Gedolim*, 70 18): "And I heard that there were twenty-two years during which he fasted every weekday, and conducted himself with *chassidus* and holiness."

Toward the end of his life, he resolved to return to Eretz Yisrael. He settled in Yerushalayim and established Yeshivas Chaveirim Makshivim. After a short time, he traveled to Italy to print his *seforim* and to raise money to support the yeshivah. On 1 Adar 5503, while in Italy, a tragedy occurred, when marauders accosted him and murdered him. A week later, he was brought to burial in the city of Cento, Italy.

### Answering Amen from the Mevarech

The *Mishnas Chassidim* wrote: When the *mevarech* hears amen being answered by the *oneh* (see *Rema Orach Chaim* 167 2), it is as if he also answered amen after his *brachah*, because a "*shomea k'oneh*", one who hears is like one who answers. So we find that with every answering of amen to a *brachah*, there are at least two who answer amen – the *mevarech* and the *oneh*. For this reason, *Chazal* say (*Shabbos* 119b) on the *passuk* (*Yeshayahu* 26:2): "*Pischu she'arim veyavo goy tzaddik shomer emunim*," – "do not read it *shomer emunim*, but rather *she'omrim amen*." They

used the plural of "*she'omrim*" and not "*she'omer amen*." This alludes to the fact that every answering of amen to a *brachah* has at least two "*she'omrim amen*," the *mevarech* and the *oneh*. (*Aderes Eliyahu Shabbos* ibid)

This is what Dovid Hamelech intended when he said (*Tehillim* 34:2): "*Avarchah es Hashem bechol eis tamid tehilaso befi*: answering amen is called '*tehillah*' as *Chazal* say (*Tosefta Brachos* 6:22) on the *passuk* (*Nechemiah* 9:5): "*Umeromam al kol brachah usehillah*" – that for every *brachah* that is heard, the listener needs to give a "*tehillah*" to Hashem, by answering amen. That is what Dovid said: "*Avarchah es Hashem bechol*

*eis*" – with a *brachah*, and when I hear the amen that is answered after my *brachah*, then as a *shomea k'oneh*, it is as if "*tehilasso befi*", his praise is in my mouth. (*Chazah Tzion Tehillim* ibid)

### Dovid Hamelech Answered Amen

The final words of the letters of the *passuk* (*Tehillim* 57:3): "*אקרא – לאלקים עליין*" – is amen. And the *Mishnas Chassidim* explained that this is what Dovid alluded to in this *passuk*: Each time I hear a person calling to Hashem with a *brachah*, and by doing so, crowns Him as the Highest above all, I am careful to answer amen after him (*Chazah Tzion, Tehillim* ibid).

### Mishenichnas Adar marbim Besimchah

The holy *Zohar* (*Vayeilech* 285 2) says that in the merit of answering amen with *kavanah*, the gates of *brachah* and goodness On High are opened, and *simchah* is aroused in the all the worlds, and he writes: "And when Am Yisrael in this world are careful to answer amen...how many openings of *brachah* are open to them On High, how many good things are found in all the worlds, how much *simchah* is in every place."

