

Vechol Maaminim

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A Weekly
Pamphlet
From
"Bney
Emunim"



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

Peninei Emunim

Pearls of Tefillah
in the Parashah

Tefillah Corresponds to the Burning Fire

”צו את אהרן ואת בניו לאמר את תורת העלה הוא העלה על
מוקדה על המזבח כל הלילה עד הבקר ואש המזבח תוקד
בו” (ו ב)

The three *pesukim* at the beginning of the *parashah* mention the burning fire on the *mizbe'ach*. **Harav Yitzchak Abarbanel** explains that Rabi Yehoshua ben Levi learned from this that *Chazal* instituted three *tefillos* a day, corresponding to the *Korban Tamid* (*Brachos* 26b), as these three *pesukim* allude to the three *tefillos*: This *passuk* “*Al mokdah shel hamizbe'ach kol halaylah ad haboker*,” alludes to the *tefillah* of *Arvis*, which is said at night. A few *pesukim* later (6:5): “*Veha'eish al hamizbe'ach tukad bo lo tichbeh ubi'er aleha haKohein eitzim baboker baboker*,” alludes to the *tefillah* of *Shacharis*, said in the morning, and the *passuk* after that “*Eish tamid tukad al hamizbe'ach lo sichbeh*,” and next to it, it says “*vezos Toras haminchah*”, alluding to the *tefillah* of *Minchah*.

Thus the Torah alludes to the concept written by the *Kuzari* (3:5) that just like the foods are sustenance for the body, *tefillah* is sustenance for the soul. The same way a meal provides a person with strength until the meal after it, likewise, the love of Hashem that is compared to fire [as it says (*Shir Hashirim* 8:6): “*Ki azaha kamaves ahavah... for love is as strong as death... its coals are coals of fire of a great flame!*] that is renewed in the heart of a person during *tefillah*, needs to burn in his heart until the next *tefillah*. *Arvis* needs to ignite the fire of love in the person's heart “all night until the morning” – until *Shacharis*, and so forth, from *Shacharis* to *Minchah* and from *Minchah* to *Arvis*, and then from the beginning. Thus, there will be an *aish tamid* burning on the *mizbe'ach* of a person's heart, and it will never be extinguished.

Peirush HaTorah LeRabi Yitzchak Abarbanel

Pischu Shearim

A word from the founder and Nasi of Bney Emunim

Amen – A Song of Gratitude

In this *parashah*, the Torah details the *halachos* of bringing the *Korban Todah*, which was brought by a person who was saved from danger, in order to express his gratitude to his Creator. At this time, when we do not have a *Bais Hamikdash*, the *Anshei Knesses Hagedolah* established that instead, we make the *brachah* of *Hagomel* (*Rosh, Brachos* 9 3).

One who studies this will find that in fact, every *brachah* that we make during the course of the day is gratitude to Hashem. But without a doubt, the *Birchos Hashachar* supersede them all, as in those *brachos*, we thank Him each morning for the tremendous goodness that He grants us every single minute, both spiritually and materially. This includes the health of our bodies, the power to walk, the sight in our eyes, and all the tools that He has granted us so that we can live lives of goodness and *brachah*, and to sanctify ourselves with *avodas Hashem*. It is not for naught that these *brachos* conclude with the *brachah* of “*Hagomel*” – “*Hagomel chassadim tovim l'amo Yisrael*.”

And when we delve even further into it, if every *brachah* in its essence is a song of gratitude, then how much more so the amen, because that affirms and fulfills the *brachah*!

The *Tiferes Shlomo* (*Sha'ar Hatefillah*) adds another illuminating point: While the *mevarech* thanks in the *brachah* for the good things that the Creator gave him, the one who answers amen offers thanks for the good given to another person. Hence we find that the level of the gratitude of the *oneh amen* is greater than that of the *mevarech*, and that is why *Chazal* say (*Brachos* 53a): “The one who answers amen is greater than the *mevarech*.”

A few years ago I thought of a beautiful *remez* that teaches that answering amen is the essence of gratitude: One of the most remarkable *pesukim* of gratitude is the one sung by Dovid Hamelech (*Tehillim* 146:12): “*Mah ashiv l'Hashem kol tagmulohi alay*.” The acronym of the words: “מה אשיב לה” is numerically equivalent to ninety one, exactly like the word amen!

Let us recite *Birchos Hashachar* together each morning, in front of those who will answer amen, and we should also answer amen to the *brachos* of our friends, and by doing so, aside for having complete *brachos*, we will also fulfill our obligation of gratitude by answering amen after the *brachos* of our friends.

Good Shabbos

Yaakov Dov Marmurstein

This story was told by the *tzaddik* Harav Zev [Velvel] Eidelman, *zt"l*, who asked to convey through it a simple but important message, to understand and internalize the right way to daven.

The story is about a wondrous *tzaddik* who lived about 200 years ago; his name was Rav Chaim. He was known for his power of *tefillah*, and people flocked to him from the surrounding areas to ask that he daven for them.

Rav Chaim lived in a remote village, in a small house that he rented from a local *poritz*.

That *poritz*, who was an extremely arrogant person, came one day to the *tzaddik's* house just at the time when the man was davening. The *poritz* got off his carriage, knocked at the door, but was not answered. He looked through the window, and was surprised to see the *tzaddik* standing next to one of the walls, engrossed in his *tefillos* and oblivious to everything around him.

The *poritz* had to wait outside the door, but time dragged on and the *tzaddik* was still davening. The *poritz* began

The *poritz* screamed as he shook with fury, but to his astonishment, the *tzaddik* was neither moved nor frightened. He just answered simply and innocently: "I didn't open the door because I didn't hear the knock."

"How didn't you hear?" the *poritz* roared. "I saw you standing pretty close to the door. If you were deaf, you wouldn't be hearing me now either!"

In response, the *tzaddik* smiled calmly. He invited the *poritz* into his home, put a kettle onto the fire, and began to steep tea leaves. He sat the *poritz* down at the table, and as the tea was cooking, he asked the *poritz* permission to relate a story:

"A few hundred years ago, in a faraway land, the king sought to find the best carpenter in the land, to build furniture for his palace. Toward that end, he gathered all the carpenters in his kingdom and posed them with a challenge:

He pointed to a sack that had two hundred sparkling new gold coins in it, and promised to give these coins to whoever would, in two weeks, build a wooden box that could contain the coins exactly – not more and not less – and without any space for air.

A few of the carpenters undertook the challenge, and two weeks later, they came to the king's palace with the ready boxes in hand. The boxes were all examined preliminarily, and each one was found to have one fault or another. Only one was able to meet the challenge:

After calculating the dimensions hundreds of times, and after working with precision, he was able to build a small box that met the criteria.

After a more thorough examination, the carpenter was invited to put the box on the king's table. The minister in charge began to put the coins from the sack into the box, one after another, until it was time for the last coin. Everyone held their breaths when the minister placed the coin in the box, and like all the others before it, it nestled in there perfectly. The minister was about to close the cover.

But then a problem arose: the cover of the box did not close all the way.

The carpenter paled; he could not believe what he was seeing. Based on

all his examinations, the box should have closed. What had happened?

All around, snickering could be heard. Hushed voices filled the hall and some even went so far as to demand punishment for the carpenter for embarrassing the king. But the carpenter faced them, sure in his heart that this box could close properly.

He closed his eyes for a moment, and then asked permission to try again. Permission was granted, and in front of the eyes of all present, he emptied the box of all the coins. When he finished, he raised the box, and then blew into it with all his strength. Then he replaced the coins. The coins were put in one after another, and wonder of wonders, this time, the cover of the box closed perfectly, to the cheering of the people.

Everyone looked at the carpenter, wondering how this had happened. Instead of an answer, he pressed his finger to the table, and showed the people a small grain of sand that stuck to his finger. 'This little grain is what prevented the box from closing,' – he explained. And then he received the full box in his hand; it was given to him. He had met the challenge."

The *tzaddik* finished the story and then explained the message to the *poritz*:

"In the Torah we are told about prayer (*Devarim* 11:13) "*ule'ovdo bechol levavchem*" – prayer is service of the heart, and in order for it to be said properly, and accepted, it needs to fill the entire heart. During davening, the heart needs to be empty of everything else. And that is what I do – during my prayers, I leave no room for my ears to hear, my eyes to see and my hands to be busy. My heart is completely dedicated to *tefillah*, and therefore, with all due respect to the *poritz*, I simply did not hear the knocking."

"Do you hear this?" Rav Velvel Eidelman would conclude the story. "The *Mishnah* (*Brachos* 30b) writes that the early *chassidim* would spend one hour preparing for davening and then they would daven. They did this to clear their hearts completely, so that it would be entirely devoted to the service of Hashem, and there would be nothing else there besides *tefillah*. And we, what can we say about ourselves?"

Rav Velvel Der Eidelman, p. 360



to get angrier. From time to time, he knocked furiously at the door, but the *tzaddik* did not move. He continued davening fervently, and after a long while, finally finished. He took three steps back, waited a moment, like a servant taking leave of his master, and then turned to open the door.

The *poritz* was about to unleash his fury on the *tzaddik*, but a tiny drop of sanity that he still possessed to control himself, and before he did so, he hissed with anger, combined with insult:

"Why?? Why didn't you open the door the first time I knocked? Why didn't you open the second, third and fourth time? Don't you know that I can punish you most severely, and even throw you out of your house?"

— Amen in This World and in Olam Haba —

The sages of the *Midrash* say in this *parashah* (*Tanchuma* 7) praise the great virtue of one who brings a *Korban Todah*, and say: “HaKadosh Baruch Hu says: ‘It is the most beloved to me [the *Korban Todah*] of all the *korbanos*.’” The sages of the *Midrash* add from the fact that it says (*Tehillim* 50:21) “*Zevach todah yechabdaneni*” – with two letters *nun*, and not “*yechabdeini*” that one who brings a *Korban Todah* merits to do it doubly, as he brings the *korban* again in *Olam Haba*.

Chazal add that just like one who shows gratitude by bringing a *Korban Todah* also merits to bring it in *Olam Haba*, likewise “anyone who answers amen in this world merits to answer amen in *Olam Haba*. How do we know? As it says (*Tehillim* 41:14) ‘*Baruch Hashem Elokei Yisrael meiha’olam v’ad olam amen v’amen*’ – amen in this world and amen in *Olam Haba*.”

In this world, a person can praise his Creator and serve him as much as he wants, but in *Olam Haba* he will not be able to do this, as it says (*Tehillim* 115:17): “*Lo hameisim yehallelu Kah*.” But one who brings a *Korban Todah*, and one who is strict to answer amen, is guaranteed that they will have the right to continue to praise their Creator by answering amen in *Olam Haba* as well.

Following are some pearls and explanations from the treasures of the sages of the generations about this passage from *Chazal*.

Amen at the Seudas Tzaddikim in Gan Eden

Sefer Hanavon (printed in *Kovetz Al Yad*, 16 1, p. 220) cites a *Midrash* about this subject: “Anyone who answers amen in this world merits to say it at the *seudah* of the *livyasan*, as it says (*Tehillim* 89:53): “*Baruch Hashem l’olam amen v’amen*.” In the writings of the sages of Yemen, another *Midrash* is cited on this subject: “Someone who answers amen in this world merits to answer amen in *Olam Haba*, at the *seudah* of the *tzaddikim* in *Gan Eden*, and when Dovid Hamelech will make a *brachah*, he will answer amen.” (*Eitz Chaim* on the *Techalel*, *Shacharis* for weekday p. 23)

Source of the Takanah of Yehei Shemei Rabbah

In *Siddur Chassidei Ashkenaz* (p. 75), it is brought that based on this *Midrash* it was instituted to say in *Kaddish* “*Yehei Shemei Rabbah mevarach l’olam ul’olmei olmaya*,” meaning that even in *Olam Haba*, Hashem’s Name will be praised by those who praised Him by answering amen in this world.

Therefore 'The One Who Answers Amen Is Greater'

Based on this, **Harav Yechiel Heilperin**, author of *Seder Hadoros*, explained why *Chazal* instituted (*Brachos* 53b) that “the one who answers amen is greater than the *mevarech*.” When one answers amen in this world, he merits for that to answer it also in *Olam Haba*, but the *mevarech* does not merit this wondrous virtue. (*Sefer Halikutim* [Rav Y. Heilperin] Vol. II, *Teshuvah* 24)

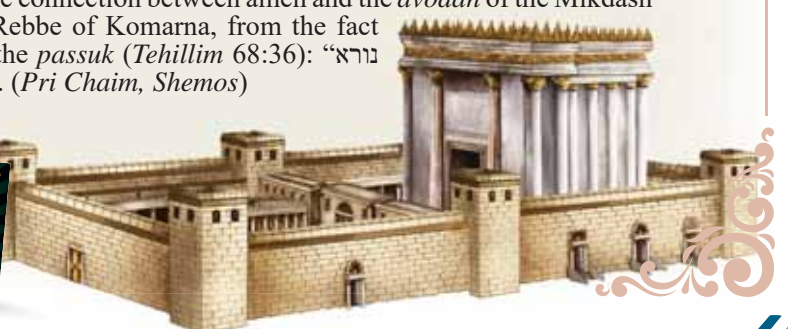
'Vesham Todah Nezabe'ach' – In the Merit of Answering Amen

The Mashgiach Harav Mattisyahu Salomon explained that the beginning of the *piyut* of *Ma’oz Tzur* is built on these words of *Chazal*. “*Ma’oz tzur yeshuasi Lecha na’eh leshabe’ach*” – when one praises and thanks his Creator with completeness and *emunah* for every good thing and blessing that he receives in this world, then when “*tikon Bais Tefillasi*” – the *Bais Hamikdash* will be built, “*vesham todah nezabe’ach*” - he will merit to continue to serve Hashem and praise Him completely by bringing the *Korban Todah* and answering amen. (*Kovetz Nehorai*, 5768 p. 69)

Ub'avodas Bais Hamikdash Nismach Kulanu

Seder Kodshim in the *Mishnah*, which includes the *halachos* of *korbanos* and the *avodah* in the *Mikdash*, has 91 *perakim*. This number alludes to the fact that the *avodah* of the *korbanos* has a *yichud* of the two holy Names, which are numerically equivalent to 91, like the *yichud* that is done when answering amen, which is also numerically equivalent to 91 (*Maaseh Rokeach*, *Pesichah* to *Shishah Sidrei Mishnah* 7).

Another allusion to the connection between amen and the *avodah* of the *Mikdash* is explained by the Rebbe of Komarna, from the fact that the acronym of the *passuk* (*Tehillim* 68:36): “נִרְאָה אֱלֹהִים מִמִּקְדָּשׁ” is אמן. (*Pri Chaim*, *Shemos*)



It was the afternoon of Yom Kippur in the well-known shul in Zichron Moshe, in Yerushalayim. The *mispallelim* had just returned from a short break, and they were somewhat refreshed and had garnered some strength to get through the rest of the holy day.

The *gabbai* of the shul began selling the *aliyah* of *Maftir Yona*, and Reb Kalman, who had a longstanding *chazakah* for this *aliyah* with hits many *segulos*, waited for the moment when he would ‘throw’ the highest sum into the air, and would acquire the *aliyah* for himself.

To his shock, things did not go quite as he’d planned. One of the other people, a relatively new *mispallel*, decided to negotiate with him, and with every moment that passed, the price went higher, until it reached numbers that Reb Kalman could not imagine being able to pay.

The competition was won by the opponent, and the *gabbai* was about to announce the happy winner. But Reb Kalman struggled to accept this. Thus, in one moment, the holy and somber atmosphere was replaced by the loud and bitter tones of an argument. Some of the *mispallelim* began to take sides, and their voices rose; accusations were hurled into the air, as were claims justifying the position of each side, which were then refuted; halachic concepts were also thrown into the mix. The tension in the shul was thick.

“What right do you have to make the price so high?” some of the elder *mispallelim*, representing Reb Kalman, asked.

“The benefit of the shul’s coffers is more important than anything,” the highest bidder replied. “There’s no justification for preventing me from enriching the shul’s coffers.”

“I have a *chazakah* for decades already,” the elder *mispallel* claimed. “If you want to give of your money, find a different time to do it.”

This dismal argument could have continued for many long moments if Harav Yaakov Yisrael Fisher, ז”ל, the Ra’avad of Yerushalayim and the Rav of the Zichron Moshe, had not intervened. The Rav stood up in his place, and all at once, everyone fell silent and listened to what he had to say: “The highest bidder is right, and he has the right to *eh aliyah*,” the Rav ruled. After a short silence he added: “For the sake of peace, I will ask so and so, the one with the *chazakah*, to give up the *chazakah* for the one who bid the higher price.”

“How can I give up such a famous *segulah* for *arichus yamim*?” Rav Kalman was very disappointed at the ruling. “I don’t feel able to do this!” But the Rav, his face shining with the holiness of the day, gave a firm and fervent response:

“If you are worried about the *segulah*, I bless you with all my heart that you should merit a long and good life, even

without this *segulah*.” The Rav repeated his *brachah* over and over, until Rav Kalman was finally appeased, and he declared that he was giving up his *chazakah*. The *tefillah* continued.

A few months later, the community heard the terrible news of the sudden passing of Rav Kalman.

During the *shivah*, Harav Fisher came in to family to be *menachem avel*, and they could not conceal their pain and hard feelings. Who knows, perhaps had Rav Kalman not hastened to give up the *segulah*, he would have lived longer...

“Know that my *brachah* should have been fulfilled to the fullest extent,” the Rav said. “Rav Kalman was supposed to live a long life through the mitzvah that he performed. But to my distress, although I repeated the *brachah* over and over again, no one made the effort to answer amen after me, not even he himself, and therefore the *brachah* was not effective.”

“I felt this already in shul,” Rav Fisher added, “which is why I repeated the *brachah* a number of times, hoping that someone would answer amen after it. But regretfully, I did not hear even one amen. A *brachah* that is not answered by amen is certainly not a complete *brachah*, and if so, its power is limited,” Rav Fisher concluded his piercing words in a sad tone.

Notrei Amen Vol. II p. 313

Shaarei Gan Eden

Amen and Brachos in the Teachings of a Baal Hayahrtzeit



The *Birchos Shamayim* of Kashau.

The *Birchos Shamayim* of Kashau 20 Adar 5765

The Rebbe Harav Raphael Blum was born in 5669 to his father, Rav Shmuel, in the city of Kashau, Slovakia. As a *bochur* he learned under the Rav of the city, Harav Shaul Brach. During World War Two, he and his family were miraculously saved, and after the war he returned to Kashau and

served as the Av Beis Din there.

In 5708, he immigrated to Brooklyn, where he established the Kashau community, and Yeshivas Ohel Shmuel, where he delivered regular *shiurim*. He had many *talmidim*, who remained very close to him. He was famed for his diligence in learning, until his final day.

He printed his *chiddushim* in a series of *seforim* entitled *Birchos Shamayim*, on *Shas*, and *teshuvos*; *Tal Hashamayim* on Torah and *moadim* and other *seforim*. He passed away on 20 Adar I 5765 and is buried in the Kashau section of the Bedford Hills Cemetery in Brooklyn.

Amen Tears Up the Decree

In *Maseches Shabbos* (119b) it says: “Rabi Yehoshua ben Levi says: ‘Anyone who answers *amen yehei Shemei Rabba Mevarach* with all his strength has his decree torn up.’”

The holy *Zohar* promises the tearing up of a decree for anyone who answers amen, and not necessarily only one who answers “*amen yehei Shemei rabbah*,” as it says (*Tikkunei Zohar* 40 1): “One who answers amen with all his might has a decree of seventy years torn up” (see *Shomer Emunim*, *Ma’amar Pischu She’arim* 1).

The *Birchos Shamayim* wrote that Dovid Hamalech thanked Hashem for the gift of amen in *Tehillim* (106:48): “*Baruch Hashem Elokei Yisrael min ha’olam v’ad ha’olam v’amar kol ha’am amen halleluk-ah*.” And the *passuk* is explained: We have to bless and thank Hashem for this wonderful gift of “*v’amar kol ha’am amen*” in whose power the decree is lifted from Am Yisrael, and from the fact that Hashem gave us this gift, it is evident that He is the Elokei Yisrael, Who seeks the benefit of them to protect them and save them from all bad (*Tal Hashamayim Shabbos Shuvah*).