

Vechol Maaminim

A Weekly
Pamphlet
From
"Bney
Emunim"



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Parashas TAZRIA | 5784 | Issue No. 529

Peninei Emunim

Pearls of Tefillah in the Parashah

Children Are Not Dependent on Merits

“דבר אל בני ישראל לאמר אשה כי תזריע וילדה זכר” (יב ב)

Harav Eliyahu Horoshovsky, the Rav of Drohobitz, explained:

The acronym for the words *לאמר אשה כי תזריע וילדה זכר* is *לא זכות* thus alluding to the words of the *Gemara* (*Moed Kattan* 28a) that the number of children that a person merits is not dependent on his merits, but rather on his *mazel* [*“chayei, banai, mezonei* – are not dependent on merits, but rather on *mazel*.”]

Even according to Rav Yochanan (*Shabbos* 156a) that with the power of *tefillah* and good deeds a person can change his *mazel* for the better, we can explain from this allusion that when a person comes to daven to be blessed with children, he should be humble, and recognize his minimal value, and know that he has no merits to depend on, and all that he can do is ask for a *matnas chinam*, a gift granted by Hashem in His great *chesed*. One who does this will merit to have his *tefillah* accepted for the good.

Eizor Eliyahu

Sins That Are Not Forgiven for a Chassan

“וביום הראות בו בשר חי יטמא” (יג יד)

From the fact that it doesn't say *ובהראות* and says *וביום הראות*, *Chazal* learn (*Moed Kattan* 7b, cited in *Rashi*) that there are days when they do not examine *nega'im*, “from here they said that if a *chassan* develops a *nega*, he is given seven days of feasting.”

When the **Imrei Emes** of Ger and **Harav Eliezer Dovid of Radoshitz** participated in a *sheva brachos* together, the Radoshitzer Rebbe asked the Imrei Emes: How is it possible that a *chassan* is struck with *tzara'as*? Doesn't *tzara'as* come from a sin (*Erchin* 16a) and *Chazal* say (*Yerushalmi Bikkurim* 33) that a *chassan* has all his sins forgiven?

The Imrei Emes replied: From the words of the *Gemara* (*Erchin* ibid) it emerges that among the sins that cause *tzara'as* are sins that are between man and his fellow man, and so it seems that just like Yom Kippur does not atone for sins between one man and another until he apologizes to the friend, likewise, the day of the wedding does not atone for the *chassan* if he has not appeased those who he has hurt.

Rosh Golas Ariel, Vol. I, p. 321

Pischu Shearim

A word from the founder and Nasi of Bney Emunim

A Mission That Is a Privilege

Some of us have surely witnessed the following scene: A person goes into a shul in the morning, with his *tallis* bag in hand and a burning aspiration in his heart to recite *Birchos Hashachar* with *shleimus*, in a way that they are crowned with amen.

He looks left and right; Ploni is very engrossed in his *siddur*, Almoni's expression is not inviting, the Yid sitting on the side is unfamiliar and that one...well, why should he go over to him?! The *chazzan* is about to begin, and the man turns to his place in disappointment. His *Birchos Hashachar* will remain orphaned, bereft of amen, lacking the royal crown that will adorn them and rise with them as a perfect gift to HaKadosh Baruch Hu. What a shame!

And suddenly, from the corner of the shul, someone hurries over with a big smile on his face, and courteously offers: “I'd be happy to answer amen to your *brachos*!”

The man's face lights up, his *brachos* are said properly and a great tumult occurs in Shamayim, as the Voice declares in all the worlds, “Open the gates for So-and-So's *brachos*, as he has sent a perfect gift to the King of the world.”

This is a typical description of the special figure of the

“*gabbai amen*,” a man who loves *mitzvos* and is ready to answer amen to the *brachos* of others. He is a regular person who generates a revolution day after day in the shul where he davens and alters the way things are done. As a result, he generates a protective spiritual mantle for himself and for those around him.

Dear Reader! If this moving description aroused within you a deep-seated yearning to lead a spiritual initiative of *zikkui harabbim*, and to become a “one-man superpower”, don't wait! Jump into the mission today and join the ranks of the “*gabbai amen*,” who are part of a long chain of “*tzaddikim shomrei emunim*,” through the generations, who have put themselves at the disposal of others and illuminated those around them with the light of *emunah*.

This step will surely change your life for the better, and turn it into a life with a lofty mission and tremendous satisfaction. It's already changed the lives of so many, and they have merited wonderful *yeshuos* in every area, in *ruchniyus* and *gashmiyus*. You are also deserving of that!

Good Shabbos
Yaakov Dov Marmurstein

Reb Shalom, an elderly Yid who lives in a city in southern Israel, carried a burden in his heart for several years. His granddaughter, a lovely girl with sterling *middos*, was yearning for a *shidduch*, but she was already twenty-six and nothing suitable had borne out.

Her family did what they could. In addition to reaching out to well-known *shadchanim*, they divided *sefer Tehillim* amongst themselves for a *zchus*, visited the homes of *tzaddikim*, and also went to daven at the *kevarim* of *tzaddikim*. But while suggestions were made, none of them worked out.

In the shul where the grandfather, Reb Shalom, davens, one of the *mispallelim*, Reb Tuvia, served as the *gabbai amen*. Reb Tuvia brought about dramatic changes to the shul, and thanks to his efforts nearly one hundred percent of the *mispallelim* there recite *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa*. However, after last Succos, for personal reasons, Reb

to merit a *shidduch* quickly, and the grandfather answered amen to these *brachos* with great fervency and emotion.

Some time after he began this role, one of the regular *mispallelim* came to shul accompanied by an unfamiliar person. It turned out that the two had recently become *mechutanim*, as the older son of the guest had become engaged to the daughter of the *mispallel*. It seemed that the *mechutan* had come from the faraway place where he lived to find an apartment to rent for the young couple who would soon be getting married.

The guest was happy to hear that in this shul, as well, there was a *gabbai amen*, and that even though he was davening in an unfamiliar place, there would be someone to say amen to his *brachos*. Reb Shalom welcomed him warmly, listened to his *brachos* and answered amen to each one with *kavanah*.

Before the guest went to his place, his eye caught the paper that was posted in front of Reb Shalom, declaring that the *brachos* and the amens were dedicated as a *zchus* for his granddaughter. To his surprise, the guest turned to Reb Shalom and asked: "How old is your granddaughter?" Reb Shalom stated her age and the man turned to go daven, but not before he gave Reb Shalom a warm *brachah* that his granddaughter should merit to find her *zivug* very soon.

At the end of davening, the man once again surprised Reb Shalom when he approached and asked some more about his granddaughter. Apparently, this man had another son, a very good boy was also twenty-six, but who had not been in *shidduchim* as long as his older brother – who had recently gotten engaged – was still single.

Even though he was very busy with the wedding and preferred not to listen to suggestions for the next son, he saw his encounter with Reb Shalom as a sign from Above. He decided to make more inquiries about the granddaughter, and very soon the *shidduch* was completed.

About two weeks later, on Motzai Shabbos *Parashas Vayeitzei*, the emotional engagement was held. To Reb Shalom it was clear that the *shidduch* had happened in the merit of the many amens that had been answered as a *zchus* for his granddaughter. It was only natural that when he was invited to speak at the engagement, his *drashah* was centered around the subject of amen.

Reb Shalom began with an idea that he had, that the name of the *parashah* that they had *leined* that Shabbos, ויציא, was numerically equivalent to גבאי אמן, the וי is equivalent to גבאי and the צא is equivalent to אמן. "There is also a *remez* to the tremendous responsibility that rests on the shoulders of the *gabbai*," Reb Shalom added. To say וי [oy!] to every צא [amen] that is lost, and to do everything possible to make sure none of the *mispallelim* loses the *zchus*."

The grandfather finished his speech with warm wishes for the young couple to merit to establish a *bayis ne'eman* on the foundations of *emunah*, and he took his seat.

At that point, the *mechutan* asked Reb Shalom when he had begun to serve as a *gabbai amen*, and when he said it was right after Succos, the *mechutan* exclaimed: "Amazing! Right after Succos, after a year and a half of 'total dryness', we received a serious *shidduch* proposal for my older son with the daughter of one of the *mispallelim* in your shul. And that is the suggestion that progressed until the *shidduch* was finalized, and through which my second son, tonight's *chassan*, became available. I have no doubt that the merit of your *chizuk* led to my older son getting engaged in order to pave the path for the *shidduch* of his younger brother with your granddaughter. The amens answered at your table led to a double *yeshuah* – *amen v'amen*."

Reb Shalom related this remarkable story. And with the perspective of his advanced years he said wittily: "One of your pamphlets said that someone who is strict about amen will merit to live 91 years, which is equal to amen, and I think we can recommend that someone who is a *gabbai amen* will live even longer, until 107, which is the value of אמן גבאי."



Tuvia had to be absent from this role. His lifework was in danger of unraveling if not for the fact that Reb Shalom volunteered to take over this meritorious job.

On the first morning, he rose early and on a moment's thought, decided to dedicate his new job as a *zchus* for a *yeshuah* for his granddaughter. The *mispallelim* who came to shul noticed a large paper on which he'd written: "The *zchus* of the *brachos* and *amens* are dedicated for a merit for Esther bas Devorah, that she should merit a *zivug hagun* speedily." The *mispallelim* were happy to share with Reb Shalom's wishes, and each one who finished the *brachos* then added a warm *brachah* for his granddaughter

Between 'Barchu' and the Brachos of Krias Shema

Saying *Barchu* primarily applies to the *brachah* that follows it. Therefore, after the recital of *Barchu*, even if a person has not yet begun the *brachah* of *Yotzer* in *Shacharis*, or *Ma'ariv Aravim* in *Ma'ariv*, the *mispallel* is considered to be in the middle of the *brachah*. He should not answer amen to *brachos*, and should only answer amen to the main part of *Kaddish*, the same as someone who is in the middle of the *brachos* of *Krias Shema*.¹

1 *Rema* (ibidi), and the *Shulchan Aruch Harav* (ibid 3), the *Kaf Hachaim* (ibid 9) and the *Mishnah Berurah* (ibid 13) concur. The *Rema* holds that this *din* applies to all the *mispallelim* who are considered to be in the middle of the *brachah*, after the *sha"tz* says *Barchu* (*Mishnah Berurah* ibid 14). But the *Sha'ar Hatziyun* (ibid 19) brings that Harav Chaim Sanzer in his *hagahos* rebukes that the *Ohr Zarua* (ibid) and the *Magen Avraham* (ibid 4) dispute the *Rema* and hold that this *din* only applies to the *sha"tz* himself, while the *mispallelim* who answer after the *sha"tz* but did not begin the *brachah* of *Yotzer* are not considered to be in the middle of the *brachah* (and see *Halachos Yom Beyom, Tefillah* Vol. II, Ch. 5:26). However, as noted, the Acharonim rule like the *Rema*, and the *Mishnah Berurah* (ibid 14) explained that even according to the *Rema*, the words only apply to someone who is about to begin the *brachah* of *Yotzer* with the *sha"tz*. But one who is in the middle of *Pesukei Dezimrah*, and plans to continue davening in order, is not considered to be in the middle of the *perek* when it comes to saying *Barchu* of the *sha"tz*. And see *Halichos Shlomo (Tefillah* Ch. 6, in *Dvar Halachah* 20) who wrote that one who is in the middle of *Pesukei Dezimrah* and answers *Barchu* after the *sha"tz*, needs to have in mind that he does not consider this the *Barchu* said before the *brachah* of *Yotzer Ohr* in the order of *tefillah*. Because if he has in mind to answer to the *Barchu* in the order of *tefillah*, his answering will be considered the beginning of the *brachah* of *Yotzer*, and he will miss out the *brachah* of *Yishtabach*.

The *Mishnah Berurah* (236 1) wrote that there is no difference between the *Barchu* said in *Shacharis* and the *Barchu* said in *Maariv*, and therefore, one who davens *Maariv* with the *tzibbur*, after saying *Barchu*, is considered like one who is in the middle of the *perek*. But see *Shu"t Yabia Omer* (Vol. II, 5) who wrote that between *Barchu* and *Yotzer* is considered to be between *perakim* and one may answer amen to all the *brachos* at that time.

To the editorial board of *Vechol Ma'aminim*,

I very much enjoyed reading the segment by the Nasi of Bney Emunim in the pamphlet of *Parashas Terumah*, where he explained the great virtue and depth of answering amen, and how much we cannot even fathom it.

I once heard someone say in the context of this that the words in *Maseches Avos* (1:15): “*Emor me'at v'asei harbeh*,” mean, be strict to answer amen, which is a small word, but it effects a great deal, and that is like the title given to Rav Marmurstein's segment: “A Small Investment – A Big Result.” I thought that it could also be explained, based on this, that the words that conclude that *Mishnah* – “*vehevei mekabel es kol ha'adam besever panim yafos*,” are also alluding to this. Because in order to merit to answer amen, one needs to hear the *brachah* from the *mevarech*, therefore, the Tanna advises to greet each person in a friendly manner, and through that, he will be able to hear many *brachos* and answer amen.

We can add that in *Maseches Nedarim* (21b) it says “*Tzaddikim* say little and do a lot.” This certainly alludes to answering amen, and as the *sefer Kad Hakemach (Emunah)* writes, we can learn from the *passuk (Yeshayah 26:2)*: “*Pischu she'arim veyavo goy tzaddik shomer emunim*,” that “for this middah of answering amen, Am Yisrael are called *tzaddikim*.”

May you be blessed from Above on all that you do for such a small statement...and especially in publishing this wonderful pamphlet, which is a wellspring of information about the lofty virtue of answering amen.

In appreciation,
Asher Pearlman, London

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Iggeres Emunim

A Letter from a Loyal Reader



“העונה אמן בכל חותו קורעין לו גזר
דין של שבעים שנה” (תיקו"ז מ א)

Amen is an acronym for אנה מלטה נפשי – that through answering amen a person escapes many bad decrees (*She'eris Menachem Tehillim* 116:4).





The beis medrash of the Ohev Yisrael in Mezibuzh

The Ohev Yisrael of Apta 5 Nissan 5585

Harav Avraham Yehoshua Heschel was born in 5508 to his father, Rav Shmuel. Already in his youth, he reached very high spiritual levels. He was detached from all matters of this world, and his diligence in Torah was extraordinary (*Nesiv Mitzvosecha Shvil Emunah* 5 2).

After his marriage, his reputation spread, and in 5540, he was appointed Rav in Kolbasov. During his time in this city, he became closer to *chassidus*, and began to visit the court of Harav Elimelech of Lizhensk, and became one of his prime disciples.

In 5560, he was chosen to serve as the Rav of Apta. He loved this city, and when he left it in 5569 to serve as Rav of Jas, he promised the residents of the city that he would be called by the city's name for generations. It is said that he said that אמת is numerically equivalent to 91, which is like the two Holy names of Hashem (*Kovetz Sifsei Tzaddikim* 4, p. 55).

The Ohev Yisrael was one of the Torah giants in his generation, as Harav Yosef Shaul Nathanson wrote in his approbation to the *sefer Ohev Yisrael*: "And our fathers told us when he was here, everyone, all the *gedolei Yisrael* in our city, would come to him and they saw miracles and wonders from his Torah."

In Adar 5574, the Ohev Yisrael settled in Mezibuzh, and while there, he was considered the elder *tzaddik* in his generation, and was accorded great respect. On Thursday, 5 Nissan 5585, he passed away and was buried in Mezibuzh.

In Olam Haba We Learn to Appreciate Every Amen

The Ohev Yisrael said:

There are people who, while in this world, do not understand the great virtue of answering amen, and instead of answering amen to the *brachos*, they invest their time in material affairs. When they come to the Higher World, they will see how important every amen is to Hashem, and when they will feel the deepest regret about this, it will be too late.

Based on this, the Rebbe would explain the *passuk* (*Tehillim* 126:6): "*Haloch yelech uvacho nosei meshech hazara bo yavo berinah nosei alumosav.*" If someone was lax about answering amen in this world, when he goes to the next world, then he will cry and regret that he was not wise enough to collect more and more amens. But someone who "*nosei meshech hazara,*" who was careful to answer amen, which is compared in this world like a grain of wheat that is planted in the ground, then "*bo yavo berinah*" – he will go into the Higher World with great joy as he carries his sheaves [of wheat]. Because then he will see that the amen that looks in this world like a little seed, in Olam Haba is a great and weighty mitzvah that is compared to a big sheaf.

In order to illustrate this, the Ohev Yisrael would explain this with an apt parable:

There was a wealthy man who lost all his money and became poverty stricken. He was very ashamed of his situation, so he could not bring himself to ask for help from the people in his city. He decided to leave his city and travel to a place where no one knew him, to try and resurrect his fortune. For a few years, the man wandered from place to place, until he arrived in a distant land, where there were hills and mountains filled with gold mines and precious gems.

In that land, the precious gems lined the

streets, and they were so common that most people did not even notice how valuable they were. When the man got used to the place, he also began to think that these stones had no value, and they became like regular stones in his eyes as well.

Years passed, and he kept failing at every business venture. Ultimately, he decided to return to his waiting family. He didn't want to come home empty-handed, and he thought about what to bring to them. He decided to take a handful of the stones from the floor, because although they were not worth much, they looked rather different from the stones on the ground in the place where he had come from. He took a handful of stones and put them in his satchel, donned his coat – which was buttoned with buttons made from these stones, and set out on his way.

The way back was difficult and filled with obstacles and dangers, and during the journey the man lost his way and could not find his way back. His food was depleted, and he was wandering in a desolate area, worried that he would soon die. But then he noticed a person carrying a sack full of loaves of bread on his shoulders.

This man was a swindler. The sack was full of moldy bread, and he had just placed a few fresh loaves on the top to deceive the one who saw him. But the lost man did not know that, and in his starving state, he pleaded with the other man to give him some bread; he apologized that he didn't have a way to pay him, besides for a few "simple stones" that he had.

The swindler looked at the stones and his breath caught, but he contained his excitement, and pretending to be compassionate, he "agreed" to the deal and the goods changed hands. The man received a sack full of bread and the swindler became instantaneously rich.

Eating gave the traveler strength. Finally, he was able to make his way home. His

family and friends hurried out to welcome him; they hadn't seen him for so many years. When he entered his house, his children began to rummage through his things, hopeful that his bags would be filled with good things that he had brought. They were very disappointed to find that the sacks contained moldy bread. They began to cry bitterly: "Father, did you leave us for so many years just to bring us bread that even animals cannot consume?"

After they calmed down a bit, they looked again in his packages, until they finally found one stone that had slipped out of his hand when he had given all his stones to the swindler. They also noticed the buttons on his coat, which were made of these stones. They quickly took the stones and ran to the gem dealer who lived on the next street, so he could appraise them. To their joy, he appraised them to be worth a fortune, which made them rich right away.

But their father could not share their joy. On the contrary, the news about this caused him to pull his hairs out of his head and cry in distress: "Woe is me, I could have taken from there wagonloads of stones and become the richest man in the world, while with my own two hands I lost it all when I traded the bit that I had for a sack filled with moldy bread!" Tears poured down his cheeks as he said this and no one could console him.

The *nimshal* is clear: When a person gets to the Next World, and sees the great value of amen, he will be so distraught, and will cry out bitterly about how foolish he was, and did not pay attention and threw out so many precious gems and diamonds of amen. Instead of amassing them in his treasury he traded them for moldy loaves of bread. (*Sefer Hapanim* [Harav Z.V. Leuchter] 31).