

Vechol Maaminim

A Weekly Pamphlet From "Bney Emunim"



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Peninei Emunim

Pearls of Tefillah in the Parashah

The Dwelling of the Shechinah in the Batei Knessios

"ועשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם" (כה ח)

Doesn't this *passuk* discuss the building of the Mishkan? Why then does it say "v'asu Li mikdash"?

Rav Mordechai Hakohein of Tzefas explained:

The *Zohar* (*Naso* 126a) explains that building a *beis knesses* is included in this commandment, as it says there, "every *beis knesses* is called a Mikdash. We also find in the *Gemara* that a *beis knesses* is called a "mikdash" and as Chazal explain (*Megillah* 29a) the *passuk* (*Yechezkel* 11:16): "ואהי להם למקדש" – "these are the *batei knessios* and *batei medrashos* in Bavel." In light of this we can say that it says "V'asu Li mikdash" in order to include a commandment for all the generations to build *batei knessios*, which are called "mikdash me'at."

Based on this, the Tzemach Tzedek explained the words of Chazal (*Vayikra Rabbah* 2 2) that everything for which HaKadosh Baruch Hu used the term "Li", for Me, like the *passuk* "v'asu Li mikdash," is never nullified. As such, when we are in *galus*, we fulfill this mitzvah by building *batei knessios* and *batei medrashos*, and we find that a *mikdash* can never be *batal*.

The *Zohar* (*ibid*) continues that the promise regarding the Mikdash – "veshachanti besocham" – is fulfilled in the *batei knessios*. Rav Dovid Abuchatzera from Tafilalt brought an allusion to that from the *passuk*: בתוכם is an acronym for בתי כנסיות ובתי מדרשות.

Sifsei Kohein; Ohr HaTorah Terumah p. 1442; Pesach Ha'Ohel

Pischu Shearim

A word from the founder and Nasi of Bney Emunim

A Yid Who Increases the Value of Answering Amen

This Shabbos, we read about the commandment to build a *mikdash* so that the Shechinah can dwell there, as it says (*Shemos* 25:8): "V'asu Li mikdash veshachanti besocham." In our time, while we are in *galus*, the Shechinah dwells in the *batei knesses* and *batei medrash*, as Chazal say (*Yerushalmi Brachos* 5 1) on the *passuk* (*Yeshayahu* 55:6): "Dirshu Hashem behimatzo" – "Where is He found? In the *batei knessios* and *batei medrashos*."

But Chazal explain that the dwelling of the Shechinah in the shuls obligates the *mispallelim* to be strict to come on time to davening, as it says (*Brachos* 6b) that when HaKadosh Baruch Hu comes to dwell His Shechinah in the shul at the time of the *tefillah* and He does not find ten *mispallelim* there "immediately He gets angry." We learn this from the *passuk* (*Yeshayahu* 50:2): "Madua basi, why did I come and there is no man there, I called and there is no one to answer."

However, the *passuk* says "madua basi v'ein ish," which implies a single person. How then, does the *Gemara* infer that HaKadosh Baruch Hu gets angry if there aren't ten people in the shul? The question is known and there are several answers.

I would like to offer the following explanation: איש is an acronym for יהודי שמייקר אמן. Such a Jew influences those around him about the importance of amen and reminds everyone that a complete *brachah* is only one that is answered by amen. By doing so, he causes other *mispallelim* to come earlier, before the start of the *tefillah*, in order to recite *Birchos Hashachar* for someone who will answer after them. Therefore, the *passuk* laments – "madua basi v'ein אי" – a Yid that raises the value of amen, because if there was such a person, then

surely the members of the *minyan* would come early to davening. We can add that the rest of the *passuk* "karasi v'ein oneh" – indicates that I [Hashem] came and called, and there is no "oneh" amen after the *brachos*, from who the *mispallelim* can learn to come early and recite *Birchos Hashachar bechavrusa*.

Regarding this we can add: In order to preclude a situation where there are not ten people in shul, Chazal instituted that in every city there should be "asarah batlanim," meaning ten people who are idle from all other work and are found in the *beis knesses* (see *Megillah* 5a). One can say that included in the role of those "asarah batlanim" is the job of imbuing the importance of amen in the *mispallelim*. And a sign for this is that בטלן is numerically equivalent to אמן. The commandment "V'asu Li mikdash veshachanti besocham" includes also the obligation to build *batei knessios*, where the Shechinah also dwells (*Zohar Naso* 126a). If so, one who tries to increase the virtue of amen, and as a result of that causes others to come early to davening, fulfills the mitzvah of "v'asu Li mikdash" and brings to the dwelling of the Shechinah in Am Yisrael. A wonderful *remez* for this is found at the beginning of this *parashah*: אל בני ישראל ויקחו לי תרומה – the value of the last letter of each word is equal to אמן!

And that is why we issue a call to each and every person: השתדל להיות אי"ש try to be a Yid that increases the value of amen, to come to shul early to answer amen after the *mispallelim* and be counted among those who are instrumental in bringing the Shechinah to dwell in Klal Yisrael.

Good Shabbos
Yaakov Dov Marmurstein

The sefer Derech Moshe was printed in Amsterdam more than 300 years ago, in 5455. The sefer was authored by Rav Moshe Kahana, the Av Bais Din of Gibitsch, regarding whom it was stated in the Hazkaras Neshamos registry of the community that "we knew with certainty that he had revelations from Eliyahu."

In the sefer, the author dedicates an entire chapter to the importance of answering amen, and includes an awesome story about it. It should be noted that already in the title page of the book, the author notes that it contains "a story about answering amen."

The author divided the sefer into the days of the month and the "story about answering amen," is in the section that belongs to Day 11 of the month. The author goes into great detail when relating the story below, which took place with Rav Mordechai Yaffeh, author of the Levush. The

5), and it is also brought in Sefer Henhora Hashaleim (Ch. 16).

This story is also brought in sefer Halichos Shlomo – Tefillah (p. 373) based on the letter of Rav Shlomo Zalman Aurbach, in which he wrote "so as to strengthen weak hands it is a mitzvah to publicize this story."

We bring the story in honor of the yahrtzeit of the Levush, which is marked this Monday, 3 Adar.

Rav Mordechai Yaffeh, author of the *Levush*, was the Rav of a small town in Poland, but in time, he became famed for his greatness and brilliance, and the distinguished community of Posen sought to appoint him as *Av Bais Din* and *Rosh Mesivta* in their city.

The residents of Posen sent a delegation to Rav Mordechai requesting that he come to serve in their city. They also had a *ksav rabbanus* with them, as is accepted, so that that they could give

it to the Rav if he acceded to their request.

When the Rav heard the request he told the delegation that he would want to accept the position, but he could not come to their city right away as he had not yet mastered the *halachos* of *ibur hachodesh*.

Because there was no one in Poland

from whom he could learn these *halachos*, Rav Mordechai wanted to first travel to Venice, Italy, where the Sephardic sages who were experts in these *halachos* resided. After he would learn the *halachos* from them, he would come to serve as Rav in Posen.

Rav Mordechai traveled to Venice where he studied for three months under Chacham Rav Yitzchak Abuhav, until he became an expert in the *halachos* of *ibur hachodesh*.

One day, as Chacham Yitzchak Abuhav and his *talmid* Rav Mordechai were sitting and speaking pleasantly, the son of the Chacham, who was about five, stood up and loudly recited *Borei Pri Ha'eitz* on a fruit. The rest

of the people in the house who heard the *brachah* answered amen, but Rav Mordechai did not, as he was engrossed in his thoughts and did not notice that the child had made a *brachah*. When Rav Yitzchak Abuhav saw this, he got very angry at Rav Mordechai, scolded him severely and even excommunicated him.

Rav Mordechai waited thirty days, as is the *halachah* for a *talmid* whose Rav has banished him, and then came to appease his *rebbe*. But Rav Yitzchak Abuhav refused to forgive him. Rav Mordechai pleaded for his life and said, "Please, Rabbeinu, tell me why is my sin so great that he does not want to forgive me?"

Rav Yitzchak Abuhav replied: "Know that I love you more than the love of a father to his son, but the moment you did not answer amen to the *brachah* of the child, you were sentenced to death by Shamayim."

Afterwards he added: "I forgive you on condition that you promise me that wherever you go and whichever community you will be with, you will announce in public the sin of one who hears a *brachah* and does not answer amen, and you will command your children and all your offspring to relate this story that I will tell you now."

And this is what Rav Yitzchak told Rav Mordechai:

Many years earlier, there was a large city in Spain that was populated by many Jews, including multitudes of *talmidei chachamim*. In this city lived a *chassid* and *tzaddik* who was also very wealthy and found great favor in the eyes of the king.

A number of times, the king wanted to expel the Jews from his land, but each time that he plotted to do this, the sage traveled to him and was able to nullify the decrees and prevent the banishment of the Jews.

One day, the king again got angry at the Jews and ordered them expelled from the country. The community members came to the his *chassid's* house to ask him to go to the king and nullify the decree, as he had done in the past.

The *chassid* immediately set out, and soon reached the royal palace. The king welcomed him fondly, and therefore the *chassid* was sure that this time, once again, he'd be able to



A canal in Venice

author, who printed his sefer some 90 years after the passing of the Baal Halevush, notes that he heard the story from his wife's grandfather Rav Avraham Varter of Lissa, who was a great-grandson of the Levush.

The Derech Moshe also adds about this story that "one who fears and is chareid l'dvar Hashem will learn this story once a month, to inform all the members of his household the great punishment for one who does not answer amen even to the brachah of his baby."

In later generations, gedolei Yisrael also included this story in their seforim. The Chida brings it in Shem Hagedolim (Ma'arechas Seforim 30 12), the Pele Yoetz cites it in his sefer Chessed L'Alafim (214-215, se'if

An Abundance of *Brachah* from the *Lechem Hapanim*

ונתת על השלחן לחם פנים לפני תמיד" (כה ז)

Chazal say (*Yoma* 39a) that the *brachah* was transmitted through the *Lechem Hapanim* and the *Kohanim* would eat it and be satiated with just a bit. The *Ramban* (*Shemos* 25:24) adds that it was not only through the *Lechem Hapanim* that the *brachah* was transmitted; from the *Shulchan* and the *Lechem Hapanim*, *brachah* and plenty were bestowed on all of Am Yisrael.

Based on this, **Rav Pinchas Steiner, the Rav of Ilok**, explained what we ask at the end of *Birchas Hamazon*: "*HaRachaman Hu yishlach lanu brachah merubah babayis hazeh v'al shulchan zeh she'achalnu alav*." The words שלחן זה שאכלנו עליו refer to the *Shulchan* of the *Lechem Hapanim*, of which it says (*Yechezkel* 41:22): "*Zeh hashulchan asher lifnei Hashem*," upon which 12 *challos*, equivalent to ז were laid, and the *Kohanim* ate them in the *Mikdash*.

And we ask that the *Bais Hamikdash* should be built and the *avodah* should be restored to Yerushalayim, and the *brachah* should return to the *Shulchan* ז"ה – the *Lechem HaPanim*, and from there, the "*brachah merubah babayis hazeh*" will be drawn to all of the homes in Am Yisrael.

Brisi Shalom, Toldos

A Request for the *Mizbe'ach* in the *Brachah Me'ein Shalosh*

ועשית את המזבח עצי שטים חמוש אמות ארך וחמש אמות רחב רבוע יהיה המזבח ושלוש אמות קמטו" (כו א)

In the *brachah* "*Me'ein Shalosh*," in the part that corresponds to the *Birchas Ha'aretz* in *Birchas Hamazon*,

we make a special request for the *mizbe'ach*: "*V'al mizbechecha v'al heichalecha*." If in *Birchas Hamazon* we don't have a special request for the *mizbe'ach*, why do we have one in the *Brachah Me'ein Shalosh*, which is a much shorter *brachah*?

Rav Moshe Leib Shachor of Yerushalayim explained:

The *Mishnah* (*Sotah* 48a) says that "from the day the *Bais Hamikdash* was destroyed...the taste of the fruits was taken away." And we can explain that this refers to the destruction of the *mizbe'ach*, alongside which the *bikkurim* were laid. And because the *mizbe'ach* was destroyed and no more *bikkurim* were brought to it, the fruits lost their flavor (see *Rashi Rosh Hashanah* 16a, ad loc. *Shte*). In light of this, we can explain that because we recite the *Brachah Me'ein Shalosh* after eating the fruits of the *Shivas Haminim*, a special request was therefore instituted specifically in this *brachah* that the *mizbe'ach* should be rebuilt and through that, the flavor of the fruits should be restored.

Avnei Shoham Eikev

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach would say that the request of "*V'al mizbechecha*" in the *Birchas Me'ein Shalosh* is the reason why Am Yisrael have a custom of eating doughnuts on Chanukah:

On Chanukah, the *Chashmona'im* purified the *Mikdash* from the defilement of the *Yevanim*, but they were unable to restore the purity of the stones of the *mizbe'ach*, and therefore, they were hidden (*Avodah Zarah* 52b). For this reason, we have the custom of eating *sufganiyot* on Chanukah, to become obligated through them to recite the *brachah* of *Me'ein Shalosh* in which we ask for the *mizbe'ach* to be built.

Halichos Shlomo Moadim Vol. II p. 319

nullify the decree. As he was speaking with the king, a priest from a distant city entered the hall and began to bless the king. The priest's blessing went on and on, and the *chassid*, realizing that the sun was setting, stood in a corner and began to daven *Minchah*.

When the priest finished blessing the king, he asked those present to answer amen to his blessing so that it should be fulfilled. Everyone in the room, with the exception of the Jewish sage, who was engrossed in his *tefillah*, answered amen to the priest's blessing.

When the priest saw that the Jew had not answered amen to his blessing, he clasped his hands together and yelled, "Woe, because of the Jew who did not answer amen the blessing that I gave the king will not be fulfilled!"

The king heard this, got very angry, and immediately ordered the Jew

killed.

With terrible torture and threats, the servants of the king took the Jew to be killed, and already that same day, the king ordered all the Jews expelled from his country.

That holy Yid had a friend who knew his greatness and his virtues. When he heard what had happened to the *chassid* in the palace, he was beside himself with distress.

"Why was such a terrible decree cast on this holy man who never sinned?" the friend asked himself over and over again. In his desire to understand why this had happened, the friend fasted, wept and pleaded that the reason be revealed to him from Above.

One day, when the friend was sitting alone in his room, the dead *chassid* revealed himself to him and said: "Although I was a big *tzaddik* in *olam*

hazeh, once, my young son made a *brachah Hamotzi* on bread and I did not answer amen to his *brachah*, and because *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* is stricter with the *tzaddikim* like a hairsbreadth, it was decreed that I be punished in this harsh and bitter way." After the *chassid* revealed to his friend the reason for the punishment, he warned that he should relate it further, and disseminate it to the public, and caution them about answering amen. Then he disappeared."

Chacham Yitzchak Abuhav concluded his story and said to *Rav Mordechai*: "Don't be angry that I banished you. My intention was only for your good, that your sin should be atoned, and I forgive you, but on condition that you speak in public about the greatness of answering amen."

Iggeres Emunim

A Letter from a Loyal Reader

To the Nasi and patron of Bney Emunim, Rav Yaakov Dov Marmurstein, shlita

On the second *yahrtzeit* of your mother, *a"h*, which took place on 17 Teves 5785, you delivered a moving *shmuess* in our yeshivah in which you related, among other things, the marvelous *Hashgachah pratis* you merited to see on the day of her passing. You related that six days before she passed away, you came unexpectedly to Israel, and were with her. Before you left to return home to New York, you parted from her and received her *brachah*. You then went to the airport and prepared to board your flight, but then your friend who brought you to the airport called you and told you that he had just heard that your mother had suddenly collapsed. You returned at the last minute, and hurried to your mother's house. About ten minutes after your arrival, she passed away, at a ripe old age, with a *minyan* of descendants – you included – at her side, crying *Shema Yisrael*.

Indeed, marvelous *Hashgachah pratis*. Because what are the chances that a resident of New York would merit to be at the bedside of his mother in Israel when she passed away suddenly?

But there is no *chiddush* here, because reason says that one who is strict to answer amen – the basis of *emunah* – merits to see how the Eye of Hashem is upon him with special *Hashgachah pratis*, in the fulfillment of "*Ein Hashem el yerei'av*" (*Tehillim* 33:18) – and the acronym of those words is numerically equivalent to amen.

I thought to bring a beautiful *remez* about this concept that one who is strict to answer amen merits to see *Hashgachah pratis* in his travels.

In the travels and camping of Bnei Yisrael in the Midbar it says (*Bamidbar* 9:18): "*Al Pi Hashem yisu Bnei Yisrael v'al Pi Hashem yachanu*." In this *passuk* the word amen is alluded to, both at the beginning and the end! At the beginning it says *יִסְעוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל* - על פי ה' - and the acronym of the final letters of each word is numerically equivalent to amen. Likewise, at the end *יָחֲנוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל* ועל פי ה' - also has the final letters numerically equivalent to amen! This teaches us that one who is strict to answer amen merits to see *Hashgachah pratis* in his travels and his camping, like the members of the Dor Hamidbar.

In admiration, S.R.

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Shaare Gan Eden

Amen and Brachos in the Teachings of a Baal Hayahrtzeit



Rav Eliyahu Dovid Rabinowitz Teumim – the Aderes

3 Adar 5665

Rav Eliyahu Dovid Rabinowitz Teumim, known as the Aderes, was born in 5603 in the town of Piklin, Lithuania, to his father, Rav Binyamin, the Rav of the town. Even before he turned thirty, he was appointed to serve as the Rav of the city of Ponevezh. He served in this position for ten years, and in 5654, he was appointed Rav of the city of Mir.

In 5661, he came to Eretz Yisrael, following the invitation of the elder Rav of Yerushalayim, Rav Shmuel Salant, who asked him to come and serve alongside him. When he came to Rav Salant's home, the Rav rose from his chair and said: "I hereby hand over the seat of the Rabbanus to the honored *gaon*." But about four years after his arrival – still in the lifetime of Rav Salant – the Aderes passed away, on 3 Adar I 5665. He was 62 at the time of his passing, and he was laid to rest on Har Hazeisim, near the *kever* of the Maharil Diskin.

With his tremendous talents, the Aderes was *mechadesh* many *chiddushei Torah* in all subjects of Torah, but with his extraordinary humility and modesty, he worked to conceal this from everyone. In his *sefer Seder Eliyahu*, the Aderes listed the names of 71 seforim that he had authored, but only some of them were actually published, and others are still being printed in our time.

Birchos Hashachar from a Few People

The Aderes testified of himself that already from childhood, he had a special fondness for answering amen and that is why he was strict each day to hear *Birchos Hashachar* from a number of people. He wrote in his *sefer Nefesh Dovid* (23):

"I was very, very careful regarding answering amen, still from childhood, and I love this mitzvah and run fondly to do it, until it has become almost like nature to me, and I have become accustomed each day to hearing *Birchos Hashachar* from several people. And anyone who sees me should learn from me to do likewise to love answering amen, a mitzvah that at first people were lax about and did not deem it important. And how can it be minor when we see how Chazal have praised it?! And in this easy way, each person can acquire for himself Olam Haba, to fulfill the *mitzvos* in the hundreds, each day, easily and without tiring."