

Parashas
Devorim

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ד' אב תשפ"ו

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י"ל ע"י

קהילת שבתי בבית ד'

בנשיאות מורנו ורבנו הרה"צ

רבי גמליאל הכהן

רבינובין שליט"א

טיב הקהילה

English edition

באנגלית

טיב הפרשה

טיב המערכת

המחכים בבין אריאל

Those who await the building of Ariel

On one of the Shabbasim during the Three Weeks, a certain wayfaring man once found himself at the holy table of the sacred Rebbe, Rebbe Aharon of Karlin זצוק"ל. The Rebbe and his chassidim were singing with great fervor and spiritual arousal, in accordance with their custom. This individual, who was not among the chassidim, was exceedingly astonished. "We are, after all, in the midst of the days of the Three Weeks; what place is there for such joy?"

While he was still absorbed in his reflections, the assembled began to sing the hymn "Kol Mekadesh." Upon reaching the words, "אויב' ה' המחכים בבין אריאל," the Rebbe began to repeat the phrase time and again. The entire holy congregation joined him, reiterating the words repeatedly with profound emotion and exalted enthusiasm. At that moment, the man perceived that the chassidim indeed retain a vivid awareness of the destruction; even now, as they sat at the holy table, they were praying and yearning for the rebuilding of Ariel.

After many repetitions of the words "who await the building of Ariel," the holy Rebbe suddenly roused himself and cried out from the depths of his heart: "However! On the day of Shabbos—rejoice and be glad!" That is to say, although we are in mourning and await the rebuilding of the Beis HaMikdash, nevertheless, on Shabbos one is obligated to conduct oneself in a state of joy.

Every individual who has merited to marry and establish a home in Israel well remembers that he is married; yet when the date arrives upon which he stood beneath the chuppah, he marks that day in a distinctive manner. The same applies to birthdays and other occasions of rejoicing. At present, we find ourselves in the midst of the Three Weeks, at the threshold of the period of mourning instituted by Chazal, for it was during these days that the two destructions of the Temples occurred. Although throughout the entire year we are enjoined to remember the destruction and the absence of the Beis HaMikdash—indeed, every groom recalls the destruction at his chuppah, and in every home an amah by an amah is left unfinished as a remembrance of the destruction—nevertheless, this period is wholly designated for remembrance of the destruction.

Regrettably, we neither comprehend nor truly feel the absence of the Beis HaMikdash. However, if each person would contemplate at least one aspect in which his condition would be improved upon the rebuilding of the Beis HaMikdash, this could assist him in sensing the mourning more deeply. Would that we might feel, even to a slight degree, the authentic pain of the destruction and the exile of the Shechinah. We have already been assured that "whoever mourns for Jerusalem will merit to behold its rebuilding."

— Tiv HaSichos – The Three Weeks

מויעת החטא מתוך הכרה בחסדי ה'

Holding back from sin by recognizing the kindness of Hashem

אלה הדברים אשר דבר משה אל כל ישראל בעבר הירדן במדבר בערבה מול סוף בין פארן ובין תפל ולבן וחרצת ודי זהב: (א, א)

These are the words that Moshe spoke to all Israel, across the Yardein, in the Wilderness, in the Plain, opposite the Sea of Reeds, between Paran and Tophel and Laban, and Chatzeiros and DiZahav. (1:1)

Rashi explains: And DiZahav – He rebuked them over the calf they had made because of the abundance of gold which they had, as it says (Hoshea 2:10): 'ובסף הרביתי להם וזהב עשו לבעל' – I provided much silver for her, and gold. They fashioned it for the Baal.

Behold, from the wording of Rashi—"He reproached them concerning the calf that they made because of the abundance of gold that they possessed"—it appears that the claim regarding the "sin of the Golden Calf" was: why were they not careful with their wealth, and instead squandered it for the sake of sin? As if to say, even if you had surplus funds, you ought not to have expended them for transgression. Yet these words are difficult to comprehend, for why should an abundance of gold be a cause for abandoning oneself to sin? Moreover, we do not find in the section of the Golden Calf that their desire to make the calf stemmed from the abundance of gold. True, the gold served as a means for their sin, but the desire itself arose from the claim, 'כי זה משה האיש אשר העלנו מארץ מצרים לא ידענו מה, -היה לו' "For this man Moshe, who brought us up from the land of Egypt—we do not know what has become of him" (Shemos 32:1). And even if we were to say that the gold was the primary cause, and that there was also a claim against them for not safeguarding their wealth, certainly this was not the principal claim. The primary claim was why they exchanged His glory Yisbarach, for a non-deity. We must therefore understand why the Torah alludes only to the secondary claim and not to the essential one.

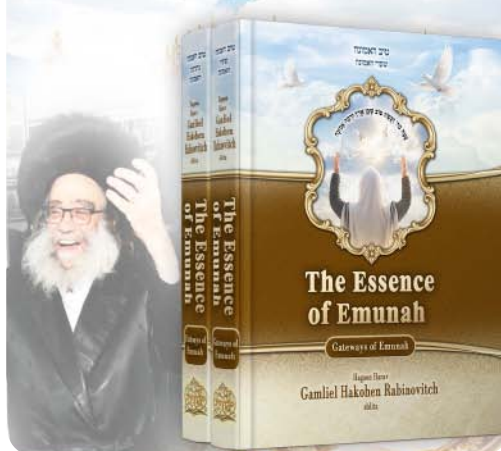
However, it may be said that regarding the very stumbling in this sin, there is no claim against Israel, since from Heaven they were incited to it and their free choice was taken from them. Reason itself testifies to this, for we are dealing with an entire nation that heard from HaKadosh Baruch Hu Himself "Anochi" and "Lo Yihyeh Lecha," and these words made a profound impression upon their souls. How then could they stumble in such a strange sin merely forty days later? It must be that this was a decree from Heaven and did not depend upon their choice at all. Indeed, it is an explicit Gemara (Avodah Zarah 4b): "Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: Israel did not make the calf except to provide an opening for penitents." And Rashi there explains: "Israel did not make the calf—meaning, they were strong and in control of their inclination, and it was not fitting that their inclination should overcome them; rather, it was a royal decree that it should rule over them, in order to provide an opening for penitents, so that if a sinner says, 'I will not repent, for I will not be accepted,' one may say to him: go and learn from the episode of the calf, that they denied and were nevertheless accepted in repentance." End of his words.

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However, if this is indeed the case, we must understand why HaKadosh Baruch Hu wished to punish them for this, and moreover, with the most severe punishment—annihilation, *Rachmana litzlan*. And even when HaKadosh Baruch Hu was appeased toward them, the attribute of judgment did not entirely cease, for killing and plague followed in its wake, and to this day we still suffer on its account, as HaKadosh Baruch Hu said (Shemos 32:34): **‘וביום פקדי ופקדתי עליהם חטאתם’** - “And on the day that I reckon, I shall reckon upon them their sin.” Rashi explains: “Whenever I reckon their iniquities, I will reckon upon them a small portion of this sin.” If they did not choose this sin, why should they bear its punishment?

Furthermore, the very fact that this sin serves as an “opening” for the wicked proves that they had the capacity to strengthen themselves and withstand the test, for only in such a case is there an “opening” for the wicked, who themselves stumble in sins that depend upon free choice. But if free choice had been entirely removed from them, this would not constitute an opening for one who sins by his own volition.

Indeed, it may be said that the “spirit of folly” that incited them to make the calf was not something they were capable of extinguishing, despite their awareness that it entailed rebellion against the Kingdom of Heaven. Their desire to make the calf was so powerful that no logic could subdue it. However, even if with respect to the sin of idolatry their free choice was removed, their free choice was not removed regarding other commandments and traits. HaKadosh Baruch Hu therefore arranged that the making of the calf would also involve the negative trait of ingratitude, so that this would serve as a factor to restrain them

from sin. For in order to carry out their intent, they required gold, and at that point they ought to have reflected: who gave them this gold? Only three months earlier they had been poor and destitute. Rather, it was HaKadosh Baruch Hu who orchestrated, in an unnatural manner, that the Egyptians should disperse their wealth and grant it to Israel. How, then, could they anger Him by means of the very goodness that He had bestowed upon them?

Had they reflected upon this, they would have merited to escape the sin. However, the *yetzer* that incited them hastened them greatly toward sin and did not allow them to contemplate the goodness of the Creator toward them, for it knew that this was an avenue for their salvation, and also a cause to arouse their trust in Hashem when they would recall His deliverance. It was for this

that wrath went forth against them: why did they not reflect upon how they were repaying evil for good, and doing so by means of the very “good” itself? This is what Rashi intended in his statement, “He reproached them concerning the calf that they made”—and the primary claim was “because of the abundance of gold that they possessed”—for they could not have made it except through the gold; therefore, they should have reflected upon the disgrace of the trait of ingratitude, and thereby they could have overcome that difficult trial.

This concept applies as well to all generations, and to every sin that the *yetzer* inflames a person to commit. For every transgression is carried out by means of the gifts of HaKadosh Baruch Hu—at times through one’s “possessions,” and at times through one’s “limbs,” which are likewise a gift from Heaven. When one cannot extinguish his desire for the sin itself, his counsel is to contemplate the means through which he seeks to sin. If it is a sin dependent upon the eyes, he should say to himself: these are eyes that I received from Hashem in order to behold matters of holiness and to merit through them the World to Come—how can I cause Him pain through them? And when it is a sin of speech, he should say: how can I cause anguish to my Creator with the mouth through which He has granted me the merit of Torah, prayer, praise, and life in the World to Come? In this manner he should reflect regarding all sins performed with the hands or the feet or the other limbs of the body—how much HaKadosh Baruch Hu has benefited him through them, and how can he dare to cause Him pain through them. Through this, he will refrain from doing evil in the eyes of Hashem, for this individual goodness that his Creator has bestowed upon him is itself sufficient to restrain the sin through it.

‘Do not lower the temperature’ ‘אל יחסר המזג’

I daven Mincha Gedolah every day with a set minyan that convenes daily in the large shul in my city.

I arrived, as usual, to daven Minchah on the fast day of the Seventeenth of Tammuz, but there were not enough people to form a minyan. It appears that because it was a fast day, many people delayed their davening until later, closer to sunset. Nevertheless, several regular mispalelim did arrive, as they do every day, and we attempted to organize a minyan.

We nearly succeeded, when an individual who had been sitting and learning in the main Bais Midrash instructed us to move to the women’s section, claiming that on a fast day the Bais Midrash is designated for learning rather than for davening. We attempted to explain to him that if we were to move upstairs to the women’s section, we would not have a minyan, since those arriving to daven would not realize that the minyan had been relocated, and in any case we were already waiting for just two more individuals to complete the quorum.

Seeing that he was insistent, I attempted to explain gently that he was the only one studying at that moment, and perhaps he himself could move to the women’s section until after the Tefillah. However, he remained adamant. This individual went so far as to persuade a young

man who had been willing to join us and complete the minyan not to daven with us.

Eventually, a kind-hearted man arrived and explained to him that among those assembled was a bus driver who, if he did not daven with a minyan at that time, would not have another opportunity to do so later.

For the sake of peace, I said to the other members of the prospective minyan that it was not worthwhile to engage in dispute on a fast day, and I suggested that we instead enter a side room designated for davening and study, adjacent to the main Bais Midrash, separated only by a door. All agreed, and we entered without any contention, and Baruch Hashem began the daven.

After the Tefillah, I recognized the remarkable hashgacha pratis that had occurred. Five minutes after we began davening, the air conditioning and lights in the main Bais Midrash ceased functioning, and it became unbearably hot there, such that even the obstinate individual was compelled to leave. Meanwhile, in the smaller adjoining room, we benefited from proper air conditioning and lighting, allowing for a calm and composed Tefillah—even on a fast day.

ה.כ.ה

טיב ההשגחה

In the holy work Bnei Yissaschar (Maamarei Chodesh Tammuz–Av, Maamar 1, 2–7), it is established—based on Sefer Yetzirah (ch. 5) and the teachings of Rabbeinu the Arizal (Likkutei Torah, Parashas Bo)—that these two months, Tammuz and Av, are termed “dalim ve’rashim”—poor and impoverished.

How are they called “rash” (רש) ? The month of Tammuz corresponds to the faculty of sight within the soul, while the month of Av corresponds to the faculty of hearing. This forms the acronym “רש” —re’iyah (sight) and shemi’ah (hearing).

Similarly, within the arrangement of the twelve tribes corresponding to the twelve months, the banner of Reuven—derived from רְעוּנִי - Hashem has seen my affliction (Bereishis 29:32)—corresponds to Tammuz (sight), while the banner of Shimon—derived from שְׁמִיעַתְּ כִּי (for Hashem has heard, ibid. 29:33)—corresponds to Av (hearing). Thus again forming the acronym “רש” —Reuven and Shimon.

How are they called “dal”? Based on the teaching of the Arizal (see Megaleh Amukos, Va’eschanan, ofan 105), the Divine Name Adnus when spelled in full—אלדא—contains twelve letters. Each month corresponds to one of these letters in sequence: Nisan to the letter א, Iyar to ל, Sivan to ו, and thus Tammuz corresponds to ז, while Av corresponds to ל—forming the acronym “לז”.

For this reason, the Bnei Yissaschar rules (os 5) that during these two months one should have specific intent when reciting “Ozer Dalim”—that Hashem should swiftly assist these two months, Tammuz and Av, which are called dalim, so that they be transformed and elevated for good.

For in the bitterness of exile they are “dalim”—from the root denoting impoverishment and depletion. One should therefore intend and pray that they be transformed into the expression (Tehillim 30:2) - דָּלִיתִי - You have raised me up, connoting elevation and exaltation.

Likewise, during this difficult exile and in these days of Bein Hametzarim, we are רָשִׁים —poor and destitute, as in the meaning of רָשָׁה —and we pray that this be transformed into רָאשָׁה —into prominence and elevation.

For this we supplicate in the Kaddish of these days: יְהִיא נְשִׁמְיָה רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ —an acronym of רש (shemei rabba).

As the Tosafos writes at the beginning of Berachos (3a, s.v. Ve’onin), citing the Machzor Vitri, we pray that His Name be made complete, as it states (Shemos 17:16) - כִּי יָד עַל כֶּסֶף יָהּ, (For a hand is on the

טיב המעשיות

The “Poor and Impoverished” Months

“יְהִיא נְשִׁמְיָה רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעֹלָם וּלְעֹלָמֵי עֲלָמֵינָא”
“May His Great Name be blessed
forever and for all eternity” (Kaddish).

throne of God) that in the future His Name will be whole and His throne complete.

Thus, “יְהִיא נְשִׁמְיָה - נְשִׁים יָהּ - רַבָּא” means: may His Name become great and complete.

This is what Yisrael beseeches: יִתְגַּדֵּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמִיָּהּ רַבָּא. What is now, as it were, in the state of רָשָׁה (incomplete, lacking)—as through our sins the Divine Name is incomplete and the Throne is incomplete—should be transformed into רָאשָׁה, as it is written (Michah 2:13) - וְהָיָה בְּרֹאשָׁם with Hashem at the head of them — where the Divine Name will be complete, and then (Tehillim 137:6) אֶעֱלֶה אֶת יְרוּשָׁלַיִם עַל רֹאשׁ, אֶעֱלֶה - I will set Yerushalayim above my uppermost joy.

This is along the lines of the words of the Midrash Osiyos d’Rabbi Akiva (beginning of the letter ר: רִי”ש —rosh—this refers to the Hakadosh Baruch Hu, Who is the “head” of the entire world, its beginning and its end.” And as it states (Mishlei 30:8) - רֹאשׁ וְעֹנֶשׁ - poverty or wealth, where the written form is רָשָׁה but the reading is רָאשָׁה, alluding to the transformation from רָשָׁה to רָאשָׁה.

This, then, is the heartfelt cry of Yisrael during these days: “יְהִיא נְשִׁמְיָה רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעֹלָם וּלְעֹלָמֵי עֲלָמֵינָא”.

According to both interpretations cited by Tosafos: — the simple meaning, that His great Name should be blessed; — and the deeper intent of the Machzor Vitri, that “יְהִיא נְשִׁמְיָה - נְשִׁים יָהּ - רַבָּא” —that His Name be great and complete.

This shall be fulfilled through the redemption of the Shechinah, the redemption of Klal Yisrael, and the rebuilding of our holy and glorious Beis Hamikdash, speedily in our days, Amen.

My revered father, the gaon and tzaddik Rav Levi HaKohen Rabinowitz zt”l, accustomed himself from his youth to strive always to go to the beis haknesses to daven with a congregation, and to answer Amen and Amen Yehei Shemei Rabba aloud. Even in his advanced old age, when he was already the eldest person in the beis haknesses, he would respond Amen Yehei Shemei Rabba more loudly than all the young men...

He would also repeatedly caution about this in his remarkable ethical will, urging that one must be meticulous to educate the sons and young children in this practice—see there at length.

It was a constant expression on his lips to cite in the name of the holy gaon Rav Chaim of Volozhin zt”l, author of Nefesh Hachaim, that for prayer without proper concentration one may find grounds for justification; however, regarding answering Amen and Amen Yehei Shemei Rabba without concentration, it is far more difficult to justify, chas veshalom—for they consist of only a few short words!

In his later years, I accompanied him to prayer in the beis haknesses of the old Batei Neitin neighborhood, off Meah She’arim, as due to his age he required my assistance in various matters. As soon as his holy feet stepped into the House of Hashem, he was filled with great joy; he truly rejoiced at every opportunity to answer Amen and Amen Yehei Shemei Rabba, as one who finds abundant treasure!

Despite his advanced age, frailty, and weakness, he persisted in his custom of answering Amen and Amen Yehei Shemei Rabba aloud—louder than all the worshippers in the beis haknesses.

He would frequently repeat: “Amen is an acronym for Ani Mosser Nafshi—‘I surrender my soul,’” for one must exhibit self-sacrifice in answering Amen and Amen Yehei Shemei Rabba aloud and with proper intention.

On one occasion, he expressed to one of his physicians, who treated him devotedly during his illness, requesting that he make every effort to restore him to full health so that he could continue going to the shul—“so that I may answer Amen and Amen Yehei Shemei Rabba! For without this, what need have I for life?”

My dear brother, the tzaddik Rav Elchanan HaKohen shlit”a, who attended to our holy father with extraordinary devotion, told me that on one occasion, after our father suffered a heart attack, his weakness increased and he also had a high fever. At that time, the doctor strictly forbade him from leaving his home or going to the beis haknesses under any circumstances.

However, after weighing the matter carefully with his holy judgment, he decided not to heed the doctor’s warning. Strengthening himself like a lion, he asked my brother Rav Elchanan to accompany him to prayer in the beis haknesses.

When the doctor heard that his firm instructions had been disregarded, he became very upset and a n d

declared that he was removing all responsibility from himself. Turning to my father, he said sharply: "Listen to me—I warned you explicitly not to leave the house after such a heart attack. From now on, you alone will bear all the consequences, and everything will be your responsibility!"

Yet, remarkably, when our father returned from the beis haknesses, his fever had completely subsided, and his health improved significantly. When the distinguished doctor later came to examine him, he was astonished and asked: "How is it possible that the very exertion we feared—something that should naturally have weakened you—has instead improved your condition?"

My father replied with his characteristic grace and wisdom: "From here you can see that for me, going to the synagogue for prayer not only cannot harm me in any way—it actually benefits me!" (As we have said, he would literally revive his soul with every Amen and Amen Yehei Shemei Rabba, and with every Kaddish, Kedushah, and Barechu.)

After the doctor left, my father remarked wisely: "What does a doctor understand about Amen Yehei Shemei Rabba..." He then illuminated his reasoning with a fitting parable:

If, during those very days when the doctor forbade me to leave the house, I had needed to go to the hospital for an urgent visit to that very doctor—then certainly this would not be included in the prohibition! On the contrary, such a visit would be necessary for healing and health, and everyone—including the professor himself—would insist that I must exert myself to go!

All the more so now, when I went for devoted treatment with the Great Physician, Baruch Hu, and took the finest "medicine" of Amen and Amen Yehei Shemei Rabba, the elixir of life—surely He is the King, a faithful and compassionate Healer! Certainly I was obligated to strengthen myself and go to pray.

Of course, this is not to be taken as practical guidance; as has been stated many times regarding such narratives, each person must consult a competent halachic authority according to his circumstances. Rather, this teaches a profound lesson of the Torah of life: how fitting and proper it is to yearn to answer Amen Yehei Shemei Rabba with all one's heart, and how much self-sacrifice is required for every matter of holiness and for communal prayer.

According to his lofty level, the tzaddik sensed and felt within himself that this would not harm him, but only benefit him—both in this world and the next.

Indeed, he merited a good old age and long life, and the beautiful allusion was fulfilled in him regarding the sanctity of the beis haknesses and his great care not to speak during tefillah. As expounded by the commentators: שְׁיָבָה (old age) (Vayikra 19:32) — is an acronym for שְׁתִּיקָה יָפָה - "Silence is wonderful at the time of prayer").

Certainly, through his great care in answering Amen and Amen Yehei Shemei Rabba, he merited that which is stated (Shabbos 119b): "All who answer Amen with all their strength—the gates of Gan Eden are opened for them, as it states (Yeshayahu 26:2): פֶּתְחוּ שְׁעָרִים וְיָבֹא גֹי צְדִיק, שֶׁמֶר אֲמִנִים - Open the gates, that the righteous nation that keeps faithfulness may enter. Do not translate שֶׁמֶר אֲמִנִים as keeps faithfulness, but rather as, those who guard [the response of] Amen."

A faithful Jewish man, who merited from Heaven—among the multitudes of baalei teshuvah in our generation—to return in complete repentance, and who established a home of exemplary Torah and yiras Shamayim, once recounted how his heart was awakened to repentance.

At the time, he was serving as a senior physician in one of the major hospitals. He was assigned to treat a patient suffering from an incurable illness, Rachmana litzlan, who had reached the final stages of life, with only a short time remaining due to the severity of his condition. There was, however, a possibility of slightly extending his life through a complicated and demanding surgical procedure. Yet the consensus among most of the doctors was that since this operation could not ultimately save him from his suffering, it would be preferable not to undertake such a difficult procedure—especially given its enormous cost, amounting to tens of thousands.

However, as a young and energetic physician, his conscience troubled him. Perhaps it would be worthwhile to attempt to prolong the patient's life by several months through the operation.

He presented all the doubts and considerations involved in this grave matter before the family. Due to the weight of such a life-and-death decision, they requested to seek daas Torah, and to consult with Rav Moshe Feinstein zt"l, author of Igros

Moshe, regarding how to proceed.

The young doctor accompanied the family to the consultation, in order to clarify the patient's medical condition. After hearing all the details of the complex case, the gaon carefully weighed all sides. Ultimately, he rendered a definitive halachic ruling: although the patient's condition was extremely severe, and even if his life were extended by a few months he would be unable to accomplish much in Torah and mitzvos—and would endure great suffering during that time—nevertheless, during those months he would still be able to answer, with his own mouth, many times: Amen and Amen Yehei Shemei Rabba. For that alone, everything is worthwhile. Therefore, one must proceed with the complex surgery, to preserve his life and not cut it short, chas veshalom—despite the suffering, the cost, and all the attendant difficulties.

When the doctor heard this ruling, he was astonished. Later, he asked the family: what are these words the Rav mentioned—Amen and Amen Yehei Shemei Rabba—for whose sake the scale was tipped "to incline him toward life"?

The family opened a siddur and showed him the passages where one responds Amen and Amen Yehei Shemei Rabba, and they made the effort to explain, according to his level of understanding, the meaning of these words.

Through this entire episode—clearly orchestrated by Heaven with precise hashgachah pratis—the holy spark, the "portion of God above," embedded in the root of every Jewish soul, was ignited within him. That inner point, which is never extinguished, suddenly came alive.

He felt a powerful yearning awaken within him—to learn and to delve deeper into the nature of those radiant and luminous words, Amen and Amen Yehei Shemei Rabba—for whose sake alone it is worthwhile for a terminally ill Jew to endure months of intense suffering and remain alive in this world.

From there, he quickly found his path into the world of repentance. Step by step, he ascended, until he became a complete baal teshuvah, and merited to establish upright and blessed generations, to the glory of the House of Yisrael.

The lesson speaks for itself: how greatly we must value and cherish every response of Amen and Amen Yehei Shemei Rabba.

How unfortunate are those who squander such precious jewels with their own hands—by engaging in conversation during davening, or by lingering outside the beis knesses and the like—thereby unknowingly forfeiting dozens of responses of Amen and Amen Yehei Shemei Rabba. Fortunate is the portion and the lot of one who is careful to always respond Amen etc., aloud and with devotion.