

THE PIRCHEI SHOSHANIM TEFILLA PROJECT

The Roadmap to Prayer

Lesson 20

© Pirchei Shoshanim 2005

This shiur may not be reproduced in any form without permission of the copyright holder

The Roadmap to Prayer

Lesson

20

Chazoras Hashatz, Kedusha, Birchos Kohanim,
Amen, Talking in Shul

חזרת הש"ץ Chazoras Hashatz

The Chazzan's Repetition of Shemoneh Esrei

After the *minyan* finishes reciting the quiet *Shemoneh Esrei*, the *chazzan* begins the repetition of the entire *Shemoneh Esrei* by *Tefillas Shacharis* as well as by *Tefillas Mincha*. By *Ma'ariv* there is no repetition.

Why Shemoneh Esrei is Repeated

There are a number of reasons why the *Shemoneh Esrei* is repeated. The primary reason is because there may be some people who would like to daven *Shemoneh Esrei* but are unable to do so because they cannot read. This was quite common in the time of the *Talmud* when many people were not very literate and they were even unfamiliar with the regular daily prayers. At that time, the *Anshei Knesses Hagedolah* (the Men of the Great Assembly) instituted that the *chazzan* repeat the *Shemoneh Esrei* out loud so that anyone who didn't know how to daven would be able to listen to *Chazoras Hashatz* and discharge their obligation (be *yotzei*) by listening. It is necessary to have a *minyan* present in order for anyone to be *yotzei* by listening. Additionally, anyone who is capable of davening on their own cannot discharge their obligation in prayer just by listening to *Chazoras Hashatz*.

The Tur mentions another reason for *Chazoras Hashatz*. He says that it was necessary to repeat the *Shemoneh Esrei* so that the *chazzan* could recite *Kedusha* and also the verses (*Pesukim*) of *Birchos Kohanim*.

The *Aruch Hashulchan* explains that we recite *Chazoras Hashatz* nowadays mainly because of the reason of the Tur. Once we are repeating it for the reason of *Kedusha*

and *Birchos Kohanim* we recite the entire middle part as well even if we know that everyone present knows how to daven.

According to *kabbalah* Rabbi Moshe Kordevaro *zt"l* writes that the full effects of our daily prayers are not realized until the *chazzan* repeats the *Shemoneh Esrei*.

Someone that Listens to *Chazoras Hashatz* for the purpose of fulfilling his obligation

Since one purpose for *Chazoras Hashatz* is to help others that don't know how to pray fulfill their obligation (be *motzee*). Such a person should do the following in order to fulfill his obligation of Prayer.

- § He should take three steps backward and forward at the start of *Shemoneh Esrei* and place his feet together while standing
- § He should bow at the usual points one bows during *Shemoneh Esrei*
- § He should listen to every word and answer *Amen* to each *bracha*
- § He should not answer *Baruch Hu u'varuch she'mo*, since one only uses this response when one is not fulfilling one's obligation through listening to the *bracha*
- § He should recite *Kedusha* along with the congregation
- § He should listen to the *Modim* of the *chazzan* and not recite *Modim de'rabbanan* that the congregation says
- § If the *chazzan* does not recite *Modim* out loud, he should recite *Modim* himself
- § At the end of *Chazoras Hashatz* he should recite *Yihyu leratzon* and *Elokaye Netzor* himself as usual and take three steps backwards etc.

The Chazzan and Chazoras Hashatz

The *chazzan* recites *Hashem sefasaye tiftach etc.* quietly before starting the recitation of *Shemoneh Esrei*. He should take three steps backwards and forwards before starting *Chazoras Hashatz* as usual, unless someone standing *Shemoneh Esrei* behind him is blocking him. Some opinions allow the *chazzan* to take three steps backwards even then. The *chazzan* proceeds to recite *Chazoras Hashatz* out loud, having in mind to be

motzee (fulfill the obligation) whoever desires to be *yotzei* (fulfill) his obligation by listening to *Chazoras Hashatz*.

Nine People Listening

Unlike by *Kaddish*, it is necessary for at least nine people to listen to *Chazoras Hashatz* in order to fulfill the *mitzvah* properly. If less than nine people respond to the *shali'ach tzibbur's* repetition, it is very likely to be wasteful *brachos*. Therefore, it is advisable for someone who is concerned that the *tzibbur* will not follow along, he should recite the *Shemoneh Esrei* as a *Tefillas nedava* (voluntary prayer) if necessary.

The Congregation's Responsibility

It is incumbent upon the congregation to be sure to follow along with the *shali'ach tzibbur* during *Chazoras Hashatz*. It is recommended to follow along in a *Siddur* (Prayer Book) so that one will not be distracted. It is important not to be seduced by one's religiosity to study *Torah* or recite *Tehillim* or other prayers during that time. If necessary, one may leave the *shul* (synagogue) briefly to study something or to recite a prayer if there are another nine individuals listening intently.

Kedusha – Different Versions and their Origins

The first insertion to *Shemoneh Esrei* unique to *Chazoras Hashatz* is *Kedusha*. It is recited daily at *Shacharis* and also at *Mincha*. It consists of the following verses.

קדושה: נוסח אשכנז
 נְקַדֵּשׁ אֶת שְׁמֵן בְּעוֹלָם, כְּשֵׁם שְׁמֵקֵדִישִׁים אוֹתוֹ
 בְּשֵׁמי מְרוֹם, כְּכַתוּב עַל יַד נְבִיאָךְ, וְקָרָא זֶה אֶל זֶה
 וְאָמַר:

קְדוֹשׁ, קְדוֹשׁ, קְדוֹשׁ, יְיָ צְבָאוֹת, מְלֵא כָל הָאָרֶץ
 כְּבוֹדוֹ.

לְעַמְתֶּם בְּרוּךְ יְאֹמְרִים:

בְּרוּךְ כְּבוֹד יְיָ מִמְקוֹמוֹ.

וּבְדַבְרֵי קִדְשֶׁךָ כְּתוּב לֵאמֹר:

יְמִלְךָ יְיָ לְעוֹלָם, אֱלֹהֶיךָ צִיּוֹן, לְדֶרֶךְ נְדָר, הַלְלוּהָ.

ש"ץ: לְדוֹר וָדוֹר נִגִּיד גְּדֻלָּתְךָ, וְלִנְצַח נְצַחִים קִדְשֶׁךָ
 נְקַדֵּשׁ, וְשִׁבְחֶךָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מִפִּינּוּ לֹא יִמוּשׁ לְעוֹלָם
 וָעֶד, כִּי אֵל מֶלֶךְ גָּדוֹל וְקָדוֹשׁ אַתָּה. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ,
 הָאֵל הַקְּדוֹשׁ (בְּעֵשִׂית: הַמֶּלֶךְ הַקְּדוֹשׁ).

קדושה: ספרדים ונוסח ספרד
 נְקַדֵּשׁךָ וְנִעְרִיצֶךָ, כְּנֶעַם שִׁיחַ סוּד שְׂרָפִי קִדְשׁ,
 הַמְשַׁלְשִׁים לְךָ קְדוּשָׁה, כְּכַתוּב עַל יַד נְבִיאָךְ, וְקָרָא
 זֶה אֶל זֶה וְאָמַר:

קְדוֹשׁ, קְדוֹשׁ, קְדוֹשׁ, יְיָ צְבָאוֹת, מְלֵא כָל הָאָרֶץ
 כְּבוֹדוֹ.

לְעַמְתֶּם מְשֻׁבְּחִים וְאוֹמְרִים:

בְּרוּךְ כְּבוֹד יְיָ מִמְקוֹמוֹ.

וּבְדַבְרֵי קִדְשֶׁךָ כְּתוּב לֵאמֹר:

יְמִלְךָ יְיָ לְעוֹלָם, אֱלֹהֶיךָ צִיּוֹן, לְדֶרֶךְ נְדָר, הַלְלוּהָ.

ש"ץ: אַתָּה קְדוֹשׁ וְשִׁמְךָ קְדוֹשׁ, וְקְדוּשִׁים בְּכָל יוֹם
 יְהַלְלוּךָ סֵלָה. כִּי אֵל מֶלֶךְ גָּדוֹל וְקָדוֹשׁ אַתָּה. בְּרוּךְ
 אַתָּה יְיָ, הָאֵל הַקְּדוֹשׁ (בְּעֵשִׂית: הַמֶּלֶךְ הַקְּדוֹשׁ).

Nekadeish es shimcha¹ ...or Nakdishach ve'na'aritzach² ... Kadosh, Kadosh, Kadosh... Baruch Kevode... Yimloch Hashem le'olam...

The prevalent custom is for the *chazzan* to start and the congregation responds ahead before the *chazzan* finishes each verse. According to *Halacha* only the *chazzan* would recite the first stanza of *Nakdishach/Nekadeish* as it serves only as an invitation to the congregants to come together for the purpose of saying the verses of *Kedusha*. The main verses of *Kedusha* are *Kadosh etc. Baruch kevode* and *Yimloch*. In practice, it is customary for the entire congregation to join together in saying the first stanza of *Nakdishach/Nekadeish* anyway³.

There are differing customs whether the congregation adds the words "*le'umassam meshabchim ve'omrim*" after *Kadosh, Kadosh, Kadosh...* and "*uv'divrei kodshecha kasuv leimor*" after *Baruch Kevode...* The *chazzan* definitely recites those words. Also, according to some the *chazzan* continues with *Atta kadosh* after *Kedusha*, while according to others *Le'dor le'dor naggid etc* is recited.

The prayer of *Kedusha* is recited while standing with both feet placed together as one as we do for *Shemoneh Esrei*. When we say *Kadosh, Kadosh, Kadosh...* we lift ourselves by the heels of our feet three times.

Kadosh (Holy) three times

The *Shela'h* writes that the three references to G-d's holiness refer to 1) *Hashem's* omnipotence in the Heavenly spheres, 2) in our present physical world, and 3) that He will continue His existence forever and ever. This is how the *Targum*⁴ explains this verse (*pasuk*) and we say this expressly in the *U'vah le'tziyone* prayer towards the end of *Shacharis* (The Morning Prayer).

These three references correspond to *Hashem Melech, Hashem Malach, Hashem Yimloch le'olam va'ed*. *Hashem Melech* (is presently king) refers to His dominion over events in the present world we live in. *Hashem Malach* (was king) at the beginning before we existed referring to His dominion over spiritual spheres. *Hashem Yimloch le'olam va'ed* (will be king forever) corresponds to the last reference mentioned above. The Highest form of

¹ *Nusach Ashkenaz*

² *Nusach Sefard*

³ *Aruch Hashulchan* 125:2

⁴ *Yeshaya* 6: 3

decree. Since by *Shacharis* we anyway recite the *She'ma* and not by *Mussaf*, they chose *Mussaf* to retain the recital of *She'ma* in *Kedusha*.

Full Devotion

The *Sefer Yesode Ve'shoresh Ha'avodah* points out that the holy *Ari zt"l* was very meticulous by *She'ma Yisrael* of *Kedusha* to accept performing *Hashem's Torah and Mitzvos* even if it means giving up our lives *al Kiddush Hashem* (to sanctify G-d's Holy Name) just as we do by *Krias She'ma*. Therefore when saying *Hashem Echad* (G-d is the One and Only) one should think in one's mind that he is giving up his life for *Hashem's* honor. As one continues the stanza of *Hu Elokeinu Hu Avinu* (He is our G-d He is our father) one should rejoice in having the opportunity of doing *Hashem's service (Avodas Hashem)* and for having the resolve to even give up one's own life if necessary for such an exalted G-d.

Kesser – The Crown Jewel:

Highest level of Kedusha

כתר יתנו לך המוני מעלה וקבוצי מטה. יחד כולם קדושה לך ישלשו כמה שנאמר על ידי
נביאך וקרא זה אל זה ואמר,

קדוש קדוש קדוש ה' צבאות מלא כל הארץ כבודו⁹

אז בקול רעש גדול אדיר וחזק משמיעים ומתנשאים לעומתם ברוך יאמרו

ברוך כבוד ה' ממקומו¹⁰

ממקומך מלכנו תופיע ותושיענו ותמלוך עלינו כי מחכים אנחנו לך מתי תמלוך בציון בקרוב

בימינו ובחיינו תשכן. תתגדל ותתקדש בתוך ירושלם עירך לדור ודור ולנצח נצחים. ועינינו

תראנה במלכותך כדבר האמור בשירי עזך מפי דוד משיח צדקך, ימלוך ה' לעולם אלוקיך

ציון לדור ודור הללוקה

The *Kedushas Kesser* of *Mussaf* on Shabbos and Yom Tov that is recited by Sephardim as well by *Nusach Sefard* dates back to before the time of the Ge'onim (the above version is from the Siddur of Rav Amram Gaon, and Rav Natrena'ee Gaon who brings this version from the 2 ancient yeshivos of *Bavel* -Babylon) who recited this special version that is a tremendous high level praise to *Hashem*.

From the version of the Ge'onim, it is evident that they said *Kedushas Kesser* by *Shacharis* on Shabbos and by *Mussaf* they said *Kesser* as well but they also recited *Pamayim be'ahavah*

⁸ *Shibalei Haleket Simon 45*

+ישעיהו ו', ג'⁹

+ יהזקאל ג' י"ב¹⁰

She'ma amrim (two times lovingly they recite Shema etc.) which is for the additional stanza of Shema Yisrael that is added to *Mussaf*.

מוסף

כְּתוּב יִתְנוּ לְךָ יְיָ-ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מְלֹאכִים הַמוֹתֵי מַעֲלָה. עִם עַמְךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל קְבוּצֵי מִטָּה:
 יְחַד כְּלֵם קְדוּשָׁה לְךָ יִשְׁלָשׁוּ כְּדַבֵּר הָאָמוּר עַל יַד נְבִיאָךְ וְקָרָא זֶה אֵל זֶה וְאָמַר:
 קו"ח - קְדוּשׁ קְדוּשׁ קְדוּשׁ יְיָ-ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֵל עֶבְרִית מְלֵא כָּל הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ:
 חזן - כְּבוֹדוֹ מְלֵא עוֹלָם. מִשְׁרָתֵינוּ שׁוֹאֲלִים זֶה לְזֶה אֵיךְ מְקוּם כְּבוֹדוֹ לְהַעֲרִיצוֹ. לְעַמְתָּם
 מְשַׁבְּחִים וְאוֹמְרִים:
 קו"ח - בְּרוּךְ כְּבוֹדֵי יְיָ-ה' מִמְּקוֹמוֹ:
 חזן - מִמְּקוֹמוֹ הוּא יִפֵּן בְּרַחֲמָיו לְעַמּוֹ. וְיַחֲוֹן עִם הַמִּיחַדֵּשׁ מִזֶּה עֲרֵב וְבוֹקֵר בְּכָל יוֹם תְּמִיד.
 פְּעָמִים בְּאַהֲבָה שִׁמְעוּ אוֹמְרִים:
 קו"ח - שִׁמְעוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ-ה' אֶחָד:
 חזן - הוּא אֱלֹהֵינוּ הוּא אֲבִינוּ. הוּא מְלַכְנוּ הוּא מוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ. וְהוּא יוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ וְיִגְאֲלֵנוּ עַתָּה
 וְיִשְׁמַעֵנוּ בְּרַחֲמָיו שְׁנֵית לְעֵינֵינוּ כָּל חַי לְאִמְרוֹ. הֵן גְּאֲלֵתִי אֶתְכֶם אַחֲרֵית כְּרֵאשִׁית לְהִיּוֹת לְכֶם
 לְאֵלֵינוּ:
 קו"ח - אֲנִי יְיָ-ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ-ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ-ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ-ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ-ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ:
 חזן - וּבְדַבְרֵי קְדוּשָׁתְךָ כְּתוּב לְאִמְרוֹ:
 קו"ח - יְמִלְכֵנוּ יְיָ-ה' לְעוֹלָם. אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ-ה' לְעוֹלָם. אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְיָ-ה' לְעוֹלָם. הַלְלוּהָ:

However, the *Machzor Vitriye* mentions that there is a difference between the Shabbos morning *Kedusha* and the *Mussaf Kedusha* that in the morning the ending for *Baruch Kevode* begins with *Mimkomecha* (from Your place) and at *Mussaf* it begins *Mimkomo* (from His place). He explains that the version of *Shacharis* implies that *Bnei Yisrael* are aware where the Divine Presence resides while at *Mussaf* it implies that even *Bnei Yisrael* are not aware where the Divine Presence can be found. The reason is that after exalting *Hashem* through the *Shacharis Kedusha*, *Hashem's* sanctity is raised to such a sublime level that even *Bnei Yisrael* can no longer discern where the Divine Presence dwells. For this reason on *Yom Kippur*, all the *Kedushas* are like by *Mussaf* since the entire day is so elevated we immediately are not able to grasp where the Divine Presence dwells.

The *Zohar* writes that the *Kedusha* of *Kesser* is very exalted and it is a prayer that encompasses all other prayers as well. In Chassidic writings, the *Zohar* is understood to mean that the *Kedusha* of *Kesser* has the unique power to uplift all other prayers to be favorably accepted by *Hashem*. The *Tefilla* of *Kesser* is considered a "key" to the acceptance of all prayers of the week. In accordance to what we learned previously that the praise of *Hashem* on Shabbos is empowered to *Bnei Yisrael* and not the *Malachim*, it is understandable how this prayer can elevate the weekday prayers to be accepted by *Hashem*. In *Kabbalah* it is written that the prayers of *Bnei Yisrael* are elevated to a level of *Kesser* to become "so to speak" a jewel in the crown of *Hashem*. In our prayer service to *Hashem*, we in a sense Coronate *Hashem* as our King through prayer and accepting His Dominion in our everyday affairs. This concept is mentioned in *Chagiga Daf* 13b as well. This concept is also found in *Halacha* with regard to reciting *Kedushas Kesser* on Rosh Chodesh (Festival of the New Moon). It states in Orach Chaim *Simon* 25:13 that

the custom is to remove one's *Tefillin* on Rosh Chodesh before *Tefillas Mussaf*. The Rama adds that this is only in those places that recite *Kedushas Kesser* by *Mussaf*. However, it is the custom to remove them even in those congregations that do not recite *Kedushas Kesser* by *Mussaf*.

We see from this *Halacha* that the elevated state of *Kedushas Kesser* is so great that it replaces the *Kedusha* of *Tefillin* that the sign of *Tefillin* which signifies our subservience to *Hashem* can be removed when we recite *Kedushas Kesser* which is in itself a declaration of *Hashem's* sovereignty and dominion.

The Underlying Difference between *Kesser* and the rest of the *Kedushos*
The *Aruch Hashulchan* writes that usually, the *Kedusha* begins with an invitation of *Nekadeish* or *Nakdishach* which both essentially mean that the *chazzan* is calling upon the congregation to recite *Kadosh Kadosh Kadosh etc. Baruch Kevode etc.* According to the original institution of *Kedusha*, only the *chazzan* would recite the opening phrase of *Nekadeish/Nakdishach*. The congregation would respond with *Kadosh Kadosh Kadosh etc. Baruch Kevode etc.*

One might ask, if the main parts of *Kedusha* are the two above-mentioned phrases, how does *Kedushas Kesser* exceed the regular *Kedusha* in its level of praise? The only difference of *Kesser* is its introduction which mentions the great level of praise attained by *Bnei Yisrael* that their service to *Hashem* is in effect crowning *Hashem* (so to speak).

The *Kolbo* notes that in the *Nusach* (version) of *Nakdishach* of *Sephardim* and *Nusach Sefard*, as well as the *Nusach* of *Nekadeish* of *Nusach Ashkenaz* emphasize that our praise concurs with the praise of the *Malachim* and is secondary to theirs. However, on Shabbos by *Mussaf* by the *Kedusha* of *Kesser*, we speak of the multitude of Heavenly angels that can only recite the praise of *Kedusha* after it is recited by *Bnei Yisrael*, implying that the *Malachim* are secondary to us in this praise.

The *Kolbo* answers this question with the *Medrash* that explains the verse in *Yechezkel* that refers to *Malachim* as having 6 wings, i.e. they are only permitted to praise *Hashem* during the 6 days of the week. However, on Shabbos, only *Bnei Yisrael* are permitted to take the lead in praising and exalting *Hashem*. This is denoted in the verse in *Tehillim Miknaf ha'aretz zemiros shamanu tzvi latzaddik* – From the wings of the firmament we heard songs of splendor of the righteous...¹¹ Hence on Shabbos we recite *Kedushas Kesser* which signifies the primacy of *Bnei Yisrael* in praising *Hashem*.

¹¹ Yeshaya 24:16

According to the *Kolbo*, perhaps the underlying difference is - who is taking the initiative to praise *Hashem* with these select praises of *Kedusha*. As the *Kolbo* tells us, the essential difference of *Kedusha* on Shabbos and *Kedusha* during the week is who the primary initiator of this praise is. During the week it is the *Malachim*. On Shabbos it is *Bnei Yisrael*. That is why *Kedushas Kesser* is essentially greater, since the feat of Mankind to reach higher levels than *Malachim* is the greatest accomplishment.

Rav Amram Gaon brings a beautiful *Medrash* about the greatness of the praises of *Kedusha*. The *Medrash* begins with a vision of destruction and devastation. The Beis Hamikdash is destroyed, Jews are murdered, the Holy places are in the hands of our enemies etc. It seems as if all hope is lost for *Bnei Yisrael*. Then there is another vision from the Heavenly Gates of Salvation and the Heavenly Gates of Consolation. There we see a chamber with beautifully woven attire being prepared by the Heavenly angels, with gorgeous crowns and then a most strikingly magnificent crown that is far more beautiful than any of the other crowns. The regular crowns (*Kesser*) are for the Tzaddikim of each generation and for the kings of the Davidic dynasty as well as the other kings of Israel. The other crown is reserved for *Dovid Hamelech* who will wear this to ascend a magnificent throne opposite the Divine Presence and will recite unusually beautiful praises to G-d. Apparently, hope is not lost and the future promises great spiritual achievement. The *Medrash* continues how fiery sparks go forth to meet *Dovid Hamelech* followed by the Davidic kings followed by the Israelite kings etc. *Dovid Hamelech* ascends his tall throne and begins saying such beautiful praises that were never heard by mankind. Afterwards Dovid says the pasuk of Yimloch *Hashem* le'olam (*Hashem* should reign forever etc.) and as soon as Dovid says that, the highest Malach recites Kadosh Kadosh Kadosh and then the other *Malachim* join in with thunderous excitement, Baruch kevode *Hashem Mimkomo*.

From this we catch a glimpse of the beauty of the elevated praise of *Kedusha*.

On a Public Fast

On a day of fasting, an additional prayer is added to the *Shacharis* and *Mincha Shemoneh Esrei*. This prayer is the *Aneinu* ענינו prayer. It is inserted into the quiet *Shemoneh Esrei* of the individuals as an addition to the prayer of *She'ma koleinu* שמע קולינו. However, during *Chazoras Hashatz*, the *chazzan* inserts it after the *bracha* of *Re'ei (nah) be'anyeinu* ראה בעינינו (נא). It is said as an additional separate *bracha* which brings the total count of *brochos* in this *Shemoneh Esrei* to 20. If the *chazzan* forgot to recite this *bracha* at this point, it is no longer recited as a separate *bracha* but as an addition to *She'ma koleinu* שמע קולינו as by the congregation's quiet recitation of the *Shemoneh Esrei*. If the *chazzan* forgot to add it there, he just continues *Shemoneh Esrei* without reciting it. An individual that

forgets to say it by *She'ma koleinu* שְׁמַע קוֹלֵינוּ should recite just before *Elokaye Netzor* אֱלֹהֵי נֶצֶר. Even if it was omitted completely, the *Shemoneh Esrei* is still valid.

Otherwise, the *chazzan* should not insert any additional prayers to *Shemoneh Esrei* even those that an individual would add.

Modim and Modim De'rabbanan

When the *chazzan* reaches *Modim* in *Chazoras Hashatz*, the congregation responds with what is called *Modim De'Rabbanan* that is taken from the various *Tefillos* recorded by the Gemara in *Mesechta Sotah*. The Gemara there mentions many *Tefillos* which were composed by different *Rabbanan* - thus its name - *Modim de'Rabbanan* (gratitude of the Sages).

The *chazzan* should recite the entire *Modim* out loud while the congregation recites the *Modim de'Rabbanan*. The reason why the congregation recites *Modim de'Rabbanan* even though they usually are supposed to be *yotzei* with the *chazzan's* recitation, the *Abudraham* explains that when one owes a Thank You, it ought to come personally from each individual and not through a messenger - by listening and accepting someone else's prayer. One who sends a messenger to thank someone on his behalf can later deny that he ever sent a messenger. Therefore, we have to personally give special thanks and praise to *Hashem* by the prayer of *Modim*. However the rest of prayer is mostly praises or requests, which can be done through a messenger.

Still, one who is fulfilling his obligation of *Shemoneh Esrei* through listening to the *Shali'ach Tzibbur* repeating *Shemoneh Esrei* does not recite *Modim De'Rabbanan* himself; rather he just listens to the *Shali'ach Tzibbur* recite the regular *Modim* as he does for the rest of *Shemoneh Esrei*.

Birchas Kohanim ברכת כהנים

הש"ץ אומר:
אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, בְּרַכְנוּ בְּבִרְכַּהּ הַמְּשַׁלֶּשֶׁת בְּתוֹרַהּ הַפְּתוּבָה עַל יְדֵי מֹשֶׁה
עֲבָדְךָ, הָאֲמוּרָה מִפִּי אֶהְרֶן וּבְנֵי כֹהֲנִים, עִם קְדוּשַׁתְךָ, כְּאֲמוּרָה.

יְבָרֶכְךָ יי וְיִשְׁמְחֶךָ. (קהל-בן יהי רצון)

יָאֵר יי פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וְיַחַדְךָ. (קהל-בן יהי רצון)

יִשְׂאֵל יי פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וְיִשֶׁם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם¹². (קהל-בן יהי רצון)

¹²Numbers/ *Bamidbar* 6:24-26

The next item that the *Shali'ach Tzibbur* adds to the *Shemoneh Esrei* is *Birchas Kohanim*, the blessings of *Yevorechecha*, *Ya'eir* and *Yissa* יְבָרְכֶךָ, יֵאָר, יֵשָׂא. The congregants respond by saying *Kein yehi ratzon* כֵּן יִהְיֶה רְצוֹן (so shall be His will) after each *pasuk* (Torah verse). The *sefer* (book) *Yesode Ve'shoresh Ha'avodah* writes that the *chazzan* should recite these *pesukim* (Torah verses) as a heartfelt blessing to the congregation and not just as a recitation of Torah verses. That's why the congregation responds *Kein yehi ratzon* כֵּן יִהְיֶה רְצוֹן (so shall be His will).

The *Shali'ach Tzibbur* recites this whenever the *Kohanim* do not *Duchen* with *Nesi'as Kappayim*. In the Diaspora, this is recited daily, including *Shabbos* except for festivals (*Yomim Tovim*). Then the *Kohanim* are called up to give their blessing to the congregation by standing in the front, turning towards the congregants with their hands raised over their shoulders enveloped in their *Talleisim* and reciting the *pesukim* (Torah verses) of *Yevorechecha*, *Ya'eir* and *Yissa* יְבָרְכֶךָ, יֵאָר, יֵשָׂא word by word, out loud. In this case the congregants must respond *Amen* at the end of each the three verses (*Pesukim*). The custom is for the *chazzan* to read each word aloud for the *Kohanim* to repeat.

Amen: It's Meaning & the Proper Way to Respond

While the *chazzan* is reciting *Chazoras Hashatz* and the congregation listens to his recitation intently, what is the *Kavanah* (intent) one should have when responding *Amen* to the *brochos*. The word *Amen* in Jewish life is very significant. It is associated with acquiring a portion in the World to Come for any youngster that recites *Amen*. The Chofetz Chaim *zt"l* once commented on a wicked person's unusually good fortune, "Who knows? Maybe he is getting repaid in this world for answering *Amen* when he was a youngster?"

The word *Amen* is an acronym for the words *Keil Melech Ne'eman* אֱלֹהֵי מֶלֶךְ נֹעֵמָן (*אמן) (*Hashem* the trustworthy king). It also is related to the word *Emunah* אֱמוּנָה (faith). Sometimes when we answer *Amen* we are expressing our belief and faith in that particular proclamation. Other times *Amen* is expressing a fervent hope that the blessing come to fruition. Sometimes both meanings are implied.

It is important to concentrate and realize what its meaning is each time it is said. This requires that one hear and understand the *bracha* one is responding to as well as training oneself to focus on listening to each and every *bracha* one responds to during the course of *Tefilla*. This requires much training and effort to break the natural habit of responding *Amen* by rote. On the other hand, it presents us with a daily challenge and opportunity to give *Tefilla* deeper meaning and help us continue to grow and reach greater heights in our closeness with *Hashem* through prayer. Perhaps this can be

another way of explaining what *Chazal* meant that *Gadol ha'oneh Amen yoseir min hamevorach* גדול העונה אמן יותר מן המברך (Greater is the one that answers *Amen*, even more than the one reciting the blessing). This is perhaps because the one responding requires greater effort to tune in and focus himself on the full meaning of the *bracha* and responding with the appropriate *Kavanah* (intent).

The following is a partial list of *brachos* with its appropriate meaning for *Amen*:

- Š For *Birchos Hanehenin* (i.e. Blessings for pleasures), *Birchos Hamitzvos* (i.e. Blessings for *Mitzvos*), *Birchos Hashachar*, *Baruch She'omar*, *Yishtabach*, *Hakeil Hakadosh* and all other blessings of praise - *Amen* means that it is true and confirms our belief in the praise expressed in the *bracha*.
- Š For *Kaddish*, *Bonei Yerushalayim* (Who will rebuild Jerusalem), *Es Tzemach David avdecha* (The sprouting of Your servant David), *Retzei* and other similar prayers that beseech *Hashem* to fulfill an appeal - *Amen* means a prayer that *Hashem* should fulfill our request
- Š For *Selach lanu* (Forgive us), *Refa'einu* (Heal us) and other similar blessings that praise *Hashem* and also beseech Him - *Amen* takes on both of the above meanings.

Laws דינים

- Š One should respond *Amen* accurately at the end of each *bracha*, not too soon and not too late.
- Š The *chazzan* should be sure to wait for most of the congregants to respond *Amen* before proceeding to the next *bracha*.
- Š The proper way to pronounce *Amen* is to put emphasis on the second half of the word, to say it long enough to have in mind *Keil Melech Ne'eman* but not to drag it out longer.
- Š One that didn't hear the *bracha* cannot answer *Amen* unless one is aware which *bracha* was just recited.

Intimations רמז

- Š It is beneficial to answer 91 times *Amen* daily equal to the numerical value of the Hebrew letters of אמן; א Alef = 1, מ Mem = 40, נ Nun = 50, (91).
- Š *Amen* has the same numerical value as *Hashem Elokeinu* -

$$65 = \text{א' - ד' - נ' - ל'} + 26 = \text{י' - ה' - ר' - ה'} \quad (65+26 = 91) = 91 = \text{אמן}$$

(*V'Avraham zakein*) ba bayamim (And Abraham) was old coming with days

אמן - The last letters spell Amen (ואברהם) זקן בא בימים

This hints to us that one who is careful to answer *Amen* will merit longevity.

Rav Eliyahu Lopian zt"l, the famous tzaddik who was known for his tremendous piety and pureness of character was once traveling by train in Eretz Yisrael. On this train there was also a group of secular Israeli policemen. When Rav Eliyahu came out of the restroom and was ready to recite the bracha of Asher Yatzar, he first summoned one of the officers to gather all the officers to listen to his bracha and answer Amen intently. The officers obliged and upon hearing Rav Eliyahu complete the bracha, they promptly returned to their seats. Soon afterwards, a strange thing occurred. The train all of a sudden came to a screeching halt and the officers all hurried out somewhere onto the tracks. There was a big commotion, but no one really new what was going on. After a short while, the officers re-boarded the train with a look of astonishment clearly evident on their faces. Apparently, a terrorist had planted explosives on the tracks with the intent of blowing the train up, as it passes over the explosives. Somehow, the train managed to stop just before riding over the explosives and the officers were able to secure the area and get rid of the explosives. They all seemed to understand quite well that their train escaped imminent danger unscathed through the merit of answering Amen to the bracha of the tzaddik. That bracha ends with the words Baruch Atta Hashem Rofei kol basar u'mafli la'assos (the Healer of all flesh and his works are amazing). Amen, affirmed their inner belief in Hashem and worked for them, wonders!

*Amen and Baruch Hu u'varuch
She'mo*

¹³אמן, וברוך הוא וברוך שמו

When one responds Amen it is considered as if one himself recited the blessing.

One should not respond Baruch Hu u'varuch She'mo to a bracha which his intention is to discharge his obligation.

If for example, one is listening to someone recite *Kiddush* on *Shabbos* and one's intention is to fulfill one's own obligation by listening to this person recite *Kiddush*, one must pay attention to every word of *Kiddush* and answer *Amen* at the appropriate endings of each *bracha*. Additionally, the one who is reciting *Kiddush* should specifically have in mind to be *motzee* (discharge that individual's obligation) and the one listening should have in mind to be *yotzei* (fulfill) his obligation of *Kiddush*. The intention of the

¹³ Blessed is He and blessed is His Name

one who is reciting to be *motzee* and the one who is listening to be *yotzei* is mandatory. Additionally, the listener should have in mind both by the *bracha* of *Borei Pri Hagefen* בורא פרי הגפן and by the *bracha Mekadesh Hashabbos* מקדש השבת, that *Amen* is affirming that what was said is true and that he believes it fully.

In this case one must be careful not to respond *Baruch Hu u'varuch She'mo* ברוך הוא וברוך שמו, since one needs to be *yotzei* with this person's *Kiddush*.

One who intends to be *yotzei* and listened to the *bracha* but didn't respond *Amen*, is still *yotzei*.

In the case of *Chazoras Hashatz*, answering *Amen* is necessary for the listeners even though they do not need to be *yotzei* the *brochos* of *Shemoneh Esrei* in order to validate the *Chazoras Hashatz* which requires a *minyán*. One should have in mind by each *bracha* where he answers *Amen* that he is affirming his belief in the particular thought expressed in that *bracha*. For example, by the *bracha* of *Refa'einu* רפאינו, he should affirm with his *Amen* that *Hashem* is the true Healer of all illnesses. By *Bareich aleinu* ברכ עלינו one should concentrate by *Amen* that *Hashem* is our only source of *Parnassah* (sustenance). If someone needed to be *yotzei* by listening to the *Chazoras Hashatz* then one is required to answer only *Amen* and not *Baruch Hu u'varuch She'mo*.

Increasing our Prayer Threefold

Rebbe *Yochanan*¹⁴ said "I wish one would pray all day long!" The following concept is one way of fulfilling this dictum.

The *Abudraham* writes that one who davens *Shemoneh Esrei* and listens intently to *Chazoras Hashatz* and answers *Amen* to all the *brochos* is considered as if he davened three *Tefillos* (prayers). Once when he himself davened. Another time when he responds *Amen* to each *bracha* it is as if he said each *bracha*. A third time is because the one who responds *Amen* is considered greater than the one reciting the blessing.

Answering Amen to Brochos of Shemoneh Esrei of an Individual

If an individual recites *Shemoneh Esrei*, one must be careful to recite it quietly. Although one must verbalize each word of *Shemoneh Esrei* and it is insufficient to just read *Shemoneh Esrei* in one's mind, still, the individual's *Shemoneh Esrei* is called *Tefilla be'lachash* תפלה בלחש (the quiet *Tefilla*) and it must be recited quietly. If an individual is davening *Shemoneh Esrei* in an audible tone, there is a question whether one may answer *Amen* to their *bracha*. The *Chochmas Shlomo*¹⁵ maintains that one should answer *Amen*. However,

¹⁴ See Gemara Berachos 21a and commentaries that this refers only to a voluntary *Shemoneh Esrei* - *Tefillas Nedava*

¹⁵ Notes to Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim Simon 124: 4

the *sefer* (book) *Halichos Shlomo* quotes that Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach zt"l came to the conclusion against answering *Amen* since the original institution of this *Shemoneh Esrei* was not for others to hear and therefore one is not meant to respond to these *brachos* even if he hears them from another individual. Only the *Chazoras Hashatz* was instituted to be recited out loud for the purpose to be *motzee* those who need it.

An individual who is reciting *Shemoneh Esrei* while the *chazzan* is reciting *Chazoras Hashatz*

A common occurrence that presents many difficulties is when someone is still in the middle of davening *Shemoneh Esrei* while the *chazzan* is reciting *Chazoras Hashatz*. We know that when someone is in the middle of *Shemoneh Esrei* one must not interrupt it by talking even for the sake of a *mitzvah* or for the sake of another *Tefilla*. Therefore, if one were to hear the *chazzan* reciting *Kaddish*¹⁶ *Kedusha* or *Borchu* it would be forbidden for him to respond. Rather, the individual should remain silent and listen intently to the *chazzan* recite these prayers, and fulfill his obligations (be *yotzei*) by listening based on the *Halacha* of *Shome'ah Ke'oneh* שומע כעונה (listening -with intention to fulfill an obligation - is as if reciting). One should do this in the middle of *Shemoneh Esrei* for *Kaddish*, *Kedusha*, *Borchu*, *Amen yehei shemei rabba*, *Amen to Hakeil Hakadosh* and to *Shome'ah Tefilla*.

If one is reciting *Shemoneh Esrei* together with the *Shali'ach Tzibbur*, one may recite *Kedusha* together with the congregation at the beginning of the third *bracha* - *Atta Kadosh* אתה קדוש, which is where the *chazzan* recites *Kedusha* during *Chazoras Hashatz*.

The Closing for the Shali'ach Tzibbur

The *Shali'ach Tzibbur* concludes the *Chazoras Hashatz* with the final *bracha* of *Shemoneh Esrei* – *Sim Shalom* שים שלום.

There is a question whether the *Shali'ach Tzibbur* recites *Yihyu leratzon* after he concludes his *Tefilla*¹⁷.

According to the *She'la* and also according to the *Gra*, the *chazzan* says the verse (*pasuk*) *Yihyu leratzon* at the end of *Chazoras Hashatz* quietly.

It seems logical that according to the opinion mentioned earlier that the verse (*pasuk*) *Yihyu leratzon* is still part of the *Shemoneh Esrei* instituted by the *Anshei Knesses Hagedolah* it

¹⁶ I.e. *Amen yehei shemey rabba* until the final *Amen* of *da'amiran be'olma*

¹⁷ Orach Chaim *Simon* 123: 6 and *Magen Avraham* s"v 14

should be recited by the *chazzan* at the end of *Chazoras Hashatz* just like the verse (pasuk) *Hashem sefasaye tiftach* that one recites at the beginning of *Chazoras Hashatz*.

It is not necessary for the *chazzan* to take three steps back after finishing the *Chazoras Hashatz*. This is because he can rely on the *Kaddish Tiskabel*¹⁸ after *U'vah le'tziyone* which is said after *Chazoras Hashatz* where he takes three steps back¹⁹.

It is possible for someone to be the *chazzan* for *Chazoras Hashatz* even though he has not yet davened the quiet *Shemoneh Esrei*. In this case, the *Rama* rules that he should take three steps back after completing (*Elokaye netzor*²⁰) *Chazoras Hashatz*. He will then take three steps back again after *Kaddish Tiskabel* which will count toward the prayer on behalf of the *tzibbur* (congregation)²¹.

A Word about Talking in Shul

We have seen that it is necessary to focus intently on *Chazoras Hashatz* to make sure that at least nine individuals follow along so that the repetition is not considered a *bracha le'vatalah* ברכה לבטלה. We also learned that answering *Amen* requires concentration as its meaning changes from *bracha* to *bracha*. It is therefore self understood that one should not engage in idle talk while praying in *shul* since it will definitely interfere with his ability to pray properly as well as to answer *Amen* with the proper *Kavanah*.

Aside from the obvious detriment to one's concentration on Prayer, there are *Halachic* issues involved with talking in *shul* as well.

The *Mechaber*²² writes:

In a Beis Knesses (synagogue) or in a Beis Medrash (Torah study-hall) one must avoid frivolous behavior such as laughter, mockery and idle-talk etc.

The *Mishna Berura*²³ elaborates:

¹⁸ This *Kaddish* inserts a prayer that *Hashem* should accept our prayers favorably

¹⁹ Magen Avraham 123:11

²⁰ Ibid. s"k 13 mentions that in this case he recites *Elokaye netzor* for his personal obligation in this prayer

²¹ Ibid. and see also Pri Megadim *Aishel Avraham* 14

²² Orach Chaim *Simon* 151: 1

One may not talk idle-talk i.e. talk relating to business matters or the like which one may speak outside of these places. Plain idle-talk which is a waste of time is forbidden any place, not only in a *Beis Knesses* or in a *Beis Medrash*.

It goes without saying that one must not degrade the sanctity of the *shul* by speaking ill and derogatory words about others. Nor should anyone defile a *shul* by causing conflict, strife and quarreling. Not only is this a disgrace to G-d Who dwells His Divine Presence in shuls that are considered to be a *Mikdash Me'at* - a miniature *Beis Hamikdash*. One cannot compare the gravity of someone acting this way in the street to someone doing so in a *shul* with total disregard to the sanctity of the location. Such behavior is not only inherently detestable but it leads to far worse ills. Many times the animosity engendered by such behavior leads to fighting, cursing and even malicious informing to government officials causing great harm and *Chillul Hashem* (desecration of *Hashem's* honor). All this is due to the initial breach of talking in *shul*. Therefore, one who strengthens himself in this respect will strengthen others along with him bringing much calm and tranquility to the *shul* environment and will promote concentration by prayer which will lead to much good. Concentrating on the meaning of prayer and its laws is a good first step in this direction.

The Detriment of Talking in Shul

One shouldn't take the issue of speaking in *shul* lightly. The *Poskim*²⁴ (Experts in Jewish Law) cite the *Semak* that warns that idle-talk in *shuls* cause that they eventually will turn into houses of idol-worship (churches). The Tosefos Yom Tov who lived in the time of the Crusaders composed a special prayer (*Mi she'berach* מי שברך) praising anyone who is careful not speak any idle-talk at the time of prayer, blessing them with all the blessings of the *Torah*, wishing them great success in raising their children with health, and Torah values and finding their prospective mates etc.

The same Tosefos Yom Tov²⁵ is oftentimes quoted as lamenting the ills of talking in *shul* as the blame for the terrible pogroms and killings that were going on in his generation. Many people have said the same regarding the recent Holocaust of European Jewry. Unfortunately, it is quite common for people to take offence to such

²³ Ibid. ס"ק 2

²⁴ Ibid. ס"ק 1

²⁵ R' Yom Tov Lipman HaLevi Heller – Tosefot Yom Tov – Born: Wallerstein, Germany, 1579. **Died:** Cracow, Poland, 1654. **Notes:** Talmudist and Halachist. Rabbi of Vienna, Prague, and Cracow. Author of **Tosefot Yom Tov**, a commentary on the Mishneh and **Maadanei Melech/Royal Morsels**, a commentary on the Piskei HaRosh which he considered the binding legal code. Dedicated great efforts to alleviate the plight of agunot after the Chmielnicki massacres (1648-9). A student of the Maharal of Prague.

remarks as they consider them feeble attempts to explain the reason why G-d brought upon us such a Holocaust. We will not attempt to explain the reason for the Holocaust as it is beyond the purview of these lessons. However, we will offer an explanation given by Rav Mattisyahu Solomon *shlit"á* of Gateshead - Lakewood who put the words of the Tosefos Yom Tov into proper perspective. He explained it as follows:

We are well aware of the power of Tefilla. As the wicked Balak already acknowledged ישראל כחן בפה, Klal Yisrael's power is with their mouths. When we are faced with danger, we daven. When we are standing at death's doorstep, we daven. There's never a time that we cannot daven to Hashem and be saved. As a matter of fact, the Rambam writes that one who does not daven at a time of peril, is downright cruel.

When Klal Yisrael is faced with annihilation, there is still hope if one can still pray. If for some reason even the power of prayer has been taken from us, then Chas ve'shalom חס ושלום, G-d forbid, we are doomed.

What the Tosefos Yom Tov expressed with regard to the state of affairs in the shuls in his day may very well be that it was not the primary cause of their troubles, but if the people themselves destroyed the sanctity of their synagogues, then they have for all intent and purpose destroyed their own power of prayer. Without the power of prayer, what is there for us to hang on to for dear life if we can no longer communicate directly with our Creator. This effectively strangled us at a time we needed so much to be close to our Creator. Let us not repeat our mistake. Let us keep the sanctity of our shuls; let us keep the sanctity of prayer; let us keep an open-line of communication with our Creator!

Questions:

- 1) What is the reason the *chazzan* repeats the *Shemoneh Esrei*?
- 2) What other benefit is there from the *Chazoras Hashatz*?
- 3) What minimum requirement must be fulfilled for the *Chazoras Hashatz* to be valid?
- 4) What does saying 3 times *Kadosh* by *Kedusha* represent?
- 5) Why do we recite *She'ma Yisrael* by the *Kedusha* of *Mussaf*?
- 6) Where is the preferred place for the *chazzan* to insert the prayer of *Aneinu* and where is it recited if he missed it? How will it differ?
- 7) Why does the congregation say *Modim De'Rabbanan*?
- 8) What particular advice does the *sefer Yesode ve'Shores Ha'avodah* have for the *chazzan* reciting the verses (*Pesukim*) of *Birchos Kohanim*?
- 9) What are the 2 meanings of *Amen*?
- 10) In order for someone to be *motzee* another individual with a *Mitzvah* such as *Kiddush*, what must be intended?
- 11) If one is in the middle of davening *Shemoneh Esrei* when one hears *Kaddish*, *Kedusha* or *Borchu*, what is the appropriate way to fulfill his obligation (*yotzei*)?
- 12) How does the *chazzan* conclude *Chazoras Hashatz*?

Answers:

- 1) The reason it was instituted was because there were many individuals that were unlearned who did not know how to daven and needed to fulfill their obligation through the *Shali'ach Tzibbur's Shemoneh Esrei*.
- 2) During *Chazoras Hashatz* we add *Kedusha* and *pesukim of Birchos Kohanim*.
- 3) At least 9 individuals should follow along listening and responding *Amen* to the *brochos* of *Chazoras Hashatz*.
- 4) It represents that *Hashem* is omnipotent in Heaven and also on Earth. It also affirms *Hashem's* true eternal and infinite existence.
- 5) It started when it was decreed that *She'ma Yisrael* should not be recited publicly in *shul*. They installed guards to assure that the Jews keep the decree. Eventually, they realized that these guards were gone by *Mussaf* so the Sages instated reciting it there.
- 6) Between *Re'ei Nah B'anyeinu* and *Refa'einu* as a separate *bracha*. Otherwise it is recited by the *bracha* of *She'ma Koleinu* but without forming its own separate *bracha*.
- 7) Since it is incumbent on the individual to give personal thanks to *Hashem*; not through an agent.
- 8) He should say it as a blessing and not just a recital of *pesukim*.
- 9) We affirm our belief in something that it is true (related to the word *Emunah* –faith) or we pray for *Hashem* to do something for us in the future because *Hashem* is trustworthy to fulfill His promise (*Keil Melech ne'eman*).
- 10) The one who performs the *mitzvah* should have in mind that he is helping another individual fulfill his obligation in this *mitzvah*. The one who needs to fulfill the *mitzvah* should have in mind that he is now fulfilling his obligation in the *mitzvah*.
- 11) By quietly listening and fulfilling his obligation though *Shome'ah Ke'oneh* (listening is like reciting).
- 12) He says the verse *Yihyu leratzon etc.* but does not take 3 steps back at this point.