יז. מנהגינו לומר: "בפינו ובפיפיות עמך בית ישראל". [ביבי"א ח"ח סי' יא אות ב]

Befifiyot

17) Our custom is to recite the text of "בְּפִינוּ וּבְפִיפִיּוֹת עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל" – in our mouths and the mouths of Your nation, the household of Yisrael."[78]

the prefix *vav* in deference to the *Rishonim* who ruled that the two passages are one blessing. The addition of the prefix *vav* does not necessarily contradict the *Rishonim* who ruled that the second passage is a separate blessing.

Responding Amen to *al divre Torah*

Apparently, the *Bet Yosef* did not come to a definite conclusion whether to consider these two passages parts of one blessing or two separate blessings. Logically, this should mean that if someone hears another person recite the blessing of *al divre Torah* he should not respond Amen since it might not be the end of a blessing. The general rule is to refrain from responding Amen wherever it might be unwarranted, just as we refrain from reciting a blessing wherever it might be unwarranted. Indeed, the *Mishna Berura* (47:12) ruled that people should make sure to recite this blessing silently so that others will not respond Amen to it, since most *Aḥaronim* ruled that one should not respond Amen.

The *Magen Avraham* (47:4), however, cited the Arizal ruling that people must respond Amen to the blessing of *al divre Torah*, because it is a separate blessing. It would seem, therefore, that according to the Arizal the second blessing should begin as *Ha'arev na* without the letter *vav* as a prefix. In fact, the *Peri Ḥadash* claims that this is the correct text according to the Arizal. The *Yad Aharon*, however, cited the Arizal teaching that the blessing begins with *Veha'arev na*. This seems to contradict his ruling that we must respond Amen, for that means that we definitely consider the words *al divre Torah* to be the end of the blessing, and if so there is no reason for the prefix *vav*.

The *Ma'amar Mordekhai* (47:5) resolved this, explaining that it is not forbidden to respond Amen to *al divre Torah* even if we would not consider it to be the end of a blessing. The *Shalme Tzibbur* (page 56b) rejected this, insisting that it is forbidden to respond Amen before the blessing's end, and offered a different resolution: The Arizal ruled that the first blessing definitely ends with *al divre Torah*, but regarding the text for the first word of the second blessing he chose to add the prefix *vav* in deference to the opinion that it is a continuation of the same blessing, since no harm is done by adding that letter. Harav Yosef Ḥayim (*Rav Pe'alim* Vol. III, #3; *Ben Ish Ḥai parashat Vayeshev* halakha 12) likewise explained that according to the Arizal these are two separate blessings and yet the second blessing begins with the prefix *vav*. This is likewise the opinion of the *Kaf Haḥayim* Sofer (47:13) and the *Or Letziyon* (Vol. II, 4:5).

In a gloss to the *Makhon Yerushalayim* Edition of the *Shulḥan Arukh*, it is noted that the Arizal had the practice of reciting the first blessing of *al divre Torah* and then interrupting to put on his *tallit katan* before continuing with the second blessing. Obviously, he considered them to be two separate blessings; he would have never considered interrupting in the middle of a blessing to put on any garment.

Despite all this, we have a rule not to respond Amen when its validity is in doubt. Even if the Arizal ruled that they are definitely two blessings, we apply the rule of *safek berakhot lehakel* even if it runs contrary to the opinion of the Arizal. Perhaps in this case, the custom of responding Amen to *al divre Torah* became widespread and overrides the principle of *safek Amen lekula*.

The *Yalkut Yosef* (47:22) suggested that there is no reason to refrain from responding Amen in this case, since even if *al divre Torah* is the middle of a blessing, it is permissible to respond Amen in the middle of a blessing. For example, many people respond Amen to key phrases in the blessing of *Barekh Alenu*, and in the passage of *Ya'ale Veyavo*. Here as well, it is permissible to respond Amen after the phrase of *al divre Torah*. This fits well with the resolution of the *Ma'amar Mordekhai* mentioned above.

According to this, if someone asks another person to recite the blessings over Torah study on his behalf, he must not respond Amen to *al divre Torah*. If he would, he might be guilty of interrupting in the middle of his own blessing. In fact, this is the ruling of Harav Yitzḥak Levi (journal *Yated Hame'ir* Iyar 5766).

It seems, however, that the earlier *Poskim* rejected the position of the *Yalkut Yosef*. If they concurred with it, they would never have brought up the issue of the Amen being a problem. Although it is true that the common custom is to respond Amen to individual phrases within blessings, that is true only for individual prayers and requests that are included within the blessing. In those cases, it is obvious that the congregation does not mean to end the blessing with the Amen, since the cantor has not yet recited any words that suggest that this ends the blessing. In the case of *al divre Torah*, however, it would appear as if the blessing ends with those words if others respond Amen at that point. The only reasonable resolution, therefore, is that we follow the established custom and override the principle of *safek Amen lehakel*, as stated above.

78. The responsa *Ta'alumot Lev* (Vol. IV #42:9) stated that it is more grammatically correct to say וּבְפִי כָּל עַמְּךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל,

יח. יש לומר: ונהיה אנחנו וצאצאינו וצאצאי צאצאינו "וצאצאי עמך בית ישראל". [יבי"א שם] **ונוסח** זה ניתקן על פי דברי רבותינו ז"ל (בבא מציעא פה ע"א) שכל הרואה בנו ובן בנו עוסק בתורה מובטח לו שאין התורה פוסקת מזרעו שנאמר (ישעיה נט, כא), "וְדִבָרַי אֲשֶׁר שַׂמְתִּי בְּפִיךָ לֹא יָמוּשׁוּ מִפִּיךָ וּמִפִּי זַרְעֲךָ וּמִפִּי זֶרַע זַרְעֲךָ אָמַר ה' מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם". מאי "אָמַר ה'", אמר הקדוש ברוך הוא, אני

Descendants of Your Nation Yisrael

18) The preferred text is "...וְנִהְיֶה אֲנַחְנוּ וְצֶאֱצָאֵינוּ וְצֶאֱצָאֵי צֶאֱצָאֵינוּ וְצֶאֱצָאֵי עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל – so that we, our offspring, our offspring's offspring, and the offspring of Your nation, the household of Yisrael...."[79] This text follows the teaching of the Talmud (*Bava Metzi'a* 85a): "Whoever merits to see his son and his son's son toiling in Torah study can rest assured that the Torah will never cease to be carried by his descendants through all generations. This is based on the verse (*Yeshayahu* 59:21): 'וּדְבָרַי אֲשֶׁר שַׂמְתִּי בְּפִיךָ לֹא יָמוּשׁוּ מִפִּיךָ וּמִפִּי זַרְעֲךָ וּמִפִּי זֶרַע זַרְעֲךָ אָמַר ה' מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם – My words, which I placed in your mouth, will not stray from your mouth, from the mouth of your offspring or from the mouth of your offspring's offspring, says God, from now and forever hereafter.'

"What is the significance of the words 'says God'? It means that the Blessed Holy One states, 'I guarantee this.' What is the signifance of the words 'from now and forever

but that one must not protest against anyone who continues to use the text of וּבְפִיפִיּוֹת since he has grown accustomed to it. Maran the Rishon Letziyon (responsa *Yabia Omer* Vol. VIII, #11:2) refuted this leniency, demonstrating that Rabbenu Aharon Halevi (comment to *Berakhot* 11b) and Rabbenu David Abudarham (page 15b) state that the text of the blessing is בְּפִינוּ וּבְפִיּוֹת עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, and the text in the prayer book of Rav Amram Ga'on is בְּפִינוּ וּבְפֶה עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל. In other words, these *Rishonim* used a term containing a single letter *fe*. On the other hand, the *Mahzor Vitri*, Rabbenu Yitzhak Alfasi, and Rambam all have the text of וּבְפִיפִיּוֹת, and this is the text appearing in our prayer books. Likewise, the Yom Kippur prayer preceding the account of the *Kohen Gadol's* activities in the *Bet Hamikdash* begins with the phrase הָיָה עִם פִּיפִיּוֹת שִׁלּוּחֵי עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל. The *Ta'alumot Lev* chose to ignore these *Poskim*.

79. This is the ruling of Maran the Rishon Letziyon (responsa *Yabia Omer* Vol. VIII, #11:2), based on the Talmud (*Berakhot* 11b), and the text found in the works of Rabbenu Yitzhak Alfasi, Rabbenu Asher, Rambam (*Hilkhot Tefilla* 7:10), *Sefer Hamanhig*, and Rabbenu David Abudarham (page 15b). He declared based on this that the prayer books that were printed in the Land of Yisrael in the early years of the 5700's mistakenly omitted the phrase וְצֶאֱצָאֵי עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, and we must restore the correct text to its status as the universal text. After all, he argued, it is meritorious to bless the entire nation of Yisrael. When someone sincerely prays for someone else's needs, his own needs will more likely be granted. The *Kaf Hahayim* Sofer (47:11) likewise listed a number of *Aharonim* who included this phrase in the blessing.

The *Yafe Lalev* (Vol. V, 47:3) also praised the text that includes this phrase. Nevertheless, in the introduction to *Ben Ish Hai*, the author offers a prayer that וְנִהְיֶה אֲנַחְנוּ וְצֶאֱצָאֵינוּ וְצֶאֱצָאֵי צֶאֱצָאֵינוּ כּוּלָּנוּ יוֹדְעֵי שְׁמֶךָ. Based on this, those who printed prayer books based on the *Ben Ish Hai's* ruling used this text for this blessing as well. This, however, contradicts the ruling of the *Rishonim*, as Maran the Rishon Letziyon pointed out. Maran the Rishon Letziyon constantly stressed this point while teaching that every Jew is responsible to pray for the welfare of the entire nation of Yisrael.

"כָּל" עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל

Rambam's text of the blessing includes the phrase וּבְפִיפִיּוֹת עַמְּךָ "כָּל" בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל, or, according to a variant version appearing in the Frankel edition: וּבְפִיפִיּוֹת "כָּל" עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל. It would seem that if we wish to be consistent, the blessing should continue with וְצֶאֱצָאֵי "כָּל" עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל or וְצֶאֱצָאֵי עַמְּךָ "כָּל" בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל. Nevertheless, no Sefardic community has the custom of adding the word כָּל to either of these phrases in the blessing.

ערב לך בדבר זה. מאי "מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם", אמר רבי ירמיה, מכאן ואילך תורה מחזרת על אכסניא שלה.

[ב"ח ר"ס מז]

יט. "כולנו יודעי שמך, ולומדי תורתך לשמה". כי בתורה יש ב' חלקים: ידיעת התורה, ולימוד תורה.

[ראה ס' דרופתקי דאוריתא ח"ג עמ' יב]

hereafter'? Ribbi Yirmeya said that it means, 'From now on the Torah automatically returns to its regular host.'"[80]

Two aspects of Torah study

19) The correct text is "כֻּלָּנוּ יוֹדְעֵי שְׁמֶךָ וְלוֹמְדֵי תוֹרָתְךָ לִשְׁמָהּ" – we should all know Your Name and study Your Torah for its own sake." The mitzvah of Torah study has two goals – one is to know Torah wisdom, and the other is the act of being occupied in Torah study.[81]

80. The *Bayit Hadash* (*Siman* 47) cited this passage of the Talmud to explain why the blessing does not include simply "וְנִהְיֶה אֲנַחְנוּ וְכָל עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל" – we and Your entire nation, the household of Yisrael." The *Magen Avraham* (47:1), on the other hand, ruled that the words וְצֶאֱצָאֵי צֶאֱצָאֵינוּ are superfluous since the word צֶאֱצָאֵינוּ by itself already includes all our descendants of all generations. He demonstrated that this is so, citing the Aramaic Targum of *Iyov* (21:8 and 27:14). Harav Zalman and the *Mishna Berura* (47:9) concurred with this, deleting the words וְצֶאֱצָאֵי צֶאֱצָאֵינוּ from the blessing's text.

The *Eliya Rabba* (47:3) disagreed with the *Magen Avraham*, demonstrating that the *Sefer Hamanhig* and Rabbenu David Abudarham both used the text approved by the *Bayit Hadash*. The *Mor Uktzi"a* and the *Eshel Avraham* of Butchatch both approved of it as well, and the *Piske Teshuvot* (*Siman* 47, footnote 74) added several *Aharonim* to this list. At any rate, the custom of Sefardic Jews is to add the phrase וְצֶאֱצָאֵי צֶאֱצָאֵינוּ, while the custom of some Ashkenazic Jews is to omit it.

81. This is the explanation offered by Harav Yaakov Hayim Sofer in *Derufakti De'orayta* (Vol. III, page 12). One of the Torah's commandments is (*Devarim* 11:19): "וְלִמַּדְתֶּם אֹתָם – you must study them." This means to occupy yourself with Torah study, and even if you forget everything immediately after learning it, you still fulfill this mitzvah. Anyone can fulfill this mitzvah even if he simply repeats a single fact of the Torah multiple times, although he adds nothing to his knowledge. There is another commandment of (ibid. 6:7): "וְשִׁנַּנְתָּם – be fluent in them," which means to be familiar and fluent in the halakhot of the Torah. Our Sages taught (*Sifri* to *Va'et'hanan* #34; *Kiddushin* 30a) that Torah knowledge must be readily at the tip of one's tongue to answer any question that might arise. Therefore, the blessing refers to both these commandments: "know Your Name" refers to the mitzvah of וְשִׁנַּנְתָּם, while "study Your Torah for its own sake" refers to the mitzvah of וּלְמַדְתֶּם אֹתָם.

The blessing refers to all Torah knowledge as "knowing Your Name." The *Eliya Rabba* (47:3) explained, based on the *Zohar's* teaching (Vol. II, page 124a) that every word of Torah is an expression of God's Name. Harav Sofer added that this is the meaning of our prayer on Shabbat evening: "אַתָּה קִדַּשְׁתָּ אֶת יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי לִשְׁמֶךָ – You sanctified the seventh day for Your Name." The Midrash (cited in the *Arba'a Turim O.H.* 290) teaches that the Torah complained to the Blessed Holy One that once the people of Yisrael cross the border into the Land of Yisrael, everyone will be preoccupied with agricultural pursuits and they will no longer bother studying the Torah. The Blessed Holy One replied that the purpose of Shabbat is for the people to have time to devote to Torah study. This is what we mean in the prayer – God sanctified and dedicated Shabbat for His Name, meaning for Torah study.

Likewise, when we remove the Torah scroll from the ark, we chant the verse "גַּדְּלוּ לַה' אִתִּי וּנְרוֹמְמָה שְׁמוֹ יַחְדָּו" – Exalt God with me and we will laud His Name together." That is, we laud His Name when we read the day's Torah passage, which in itself is God's Name. After the Torah reading, when we escort the Torah scroll back to the ark, we chant, "יְהַלְלוּ אֶת שֵׁם ה' כִּי נִשְׂגָּב שְׁמוֹ לְבַדּוֹ" – They will praise God's Name since His Name alone is the essence of might." Once again, we refer to the Torah reading as God's Name. See the explanation to this verse in the preface to this *Siman*.