

Tefillah Focus Of The Week:

ובא לציון  
Holy Places

**MEANING:** The simple translation of the prayer

... Blessed is Hashem from His place... Blessed is the honor of Hashem from the **place of the abode of His Presence.**

ברוך כבוד ה'  
ממקומו... בריך  
יקרא דה' מאתר  
בית שכינתה.

**WORD TO THE WISE:** Meaning within the word



**W**hy do we say ברוך ה' ממקומו, "Blessed is Hashem from His place" when the *Gemara (Ta'anis 21b)* teaches that,

*Shechinah* accorded honor to the mountain and no man or beast was allowed to trespass. Once the *Shechinah* departed from the mountain, the prohibition was lifted, showing that the mountain possessed no sanctity in the absence of the *Shechinah*.

"It is not a person's place that accords him honor, but rather it is the person who accords honor to his place"? By the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai, Hashem commanded, "Even the sheep and the cattle shall not graze next to 'that mountain'" (*Shemos 34:3*). As long as the *Shechinah* rested upon 'that mountain,' the

That is why we follow ברוך כבוד ה' ממקומו, "Blessed is Hashem from His place" with the words מאתר בית שכינתה, "from the place of the abode of His Presence." The place does not give honor, rather the *Shechinah* provides honor to the place. (*Margalios HaTorah*).

**THEME:**

An essential concept of the prayer

**Feeling Holiness**

The *Shechinah*, Hashem's Divine Presence, originates in the Heavens and imparts holiness everywhere it is perceived.

**INSIGHT:**

Deeper meanings of the theme

**Standing in the Glow**

The Torah calls the *Shechinah* "the Glory of Hashem," and specifies locations in the earthly sphere where the *Shechinah's* Presence is apparent: 'And the Glory of Hashem dwelled on Mount Sinai and the Glory of Hashem filled the Mishkan' (*Shemos 24:16; 40:34*). The *Glory of Hashem* refers both to the origin of sanctity and holiness — a place which is concealed in Heaven — and to the aura of holiness that emanates from it and inspires a sense of sanctity here on earth.

The *Aruch L'Ner (She'eilos U'Teshuvos Binyan Tzion, Siman 3)* explains the difference between these two facets of the *Shechinah* with an analogy to the sun, and the light and heat that emanate from it. When we remark, "the sun is out," we do not mean that it is actually before us — after all, the sun is situated 93 million miles away from

earth. Yet, despite this great distance, we can see the sun's light and feel its heat.

This analogy explains how different degrees of *Shechinah* rest in diverse holy places as the *Ohr HaChaim Hakadosh (Bereishis 46:4)* comments that the levels of *kedushah* emanating from the *Shechinah* are many, i.e. where ten men study Torah together, and to a lesser degree, where two, or even one, learn. Just as the strength of the sun's rays varies from place to place, the force of the sacred "rays" of the *Shechinah* also varies according to the particular holy place or occurrence.

Our task as we pray is to expose our souls to the "rays" of the *Shechinah* — to shed the layers of distraction and habituation — and feel Its radiant Presence all around us.

**VISUALIZE:**

Images that bring the prayer to life

**The Holy Gym**

At 3 p.m., the gym at Bais Yaakov of Centerville was packed with high school girls. The main athletic event of color was taking place – a fierce game of basketball between the green team and the blue team. The room was filled with cheering that reached fever pitch when a team scored. When the green team made its final, winning shot, the green-team spectators mobbed the players and turned the gym into a scene of happy pandemonium.



At 8 p.m., all signs of the basketball game were gone. The gym stood pristine, with rows and chairs lined up neatly on the polished wooden floor. The seats were all occupied by members of the Centerville Jewish community, who had come out on this evening to hear inspiring words from a visiting Rabbi of great renown. The conversational buzz in the room came to a sudden

stop as the Rabbi's arrival was noticed. The crowd rose to their feet reverently, and then, as the speaker arrived at the podium, they sat down in silence. The greatness of the speaker radiated out across the room, making it seem more like a shul in the heart of Yerushalayim than a gym in middle America.

The Rabbi transformed the room from a raucous gymnasium to a holy place. Likewise, the *Shechinah* imparts its holiness to every place in which it is recognized, welcomed and revered.

**Try This!**

▶ The next time you are in shul, look at the *aron kodesh* and imagine that a pure, bright light is emanating from within, streaming out from the cracks and crevices in the *aron*. Think about this light of holiness, and the holiness it imbues upon the shul, when you say בריך יקרא דה' מאתר בית שכינתה.

**Did You Know**

▶ **A Sign of Importance**

So important is *Kedushah De'Sidra* of ובא לציון, that we translate the *Kedushah* into Aramaic (for example, we say ... ומקבלין דין מן דין ... ויאמרין, קדיש בשמי מרומא עלאה from one another and say: Holy is the most exalted heaven...) after saying it in Hebrew (*Siman 132:1*). *Mishneh Berurah (ibid:1)* explains that this is done so that everyone will understand what is being said. Therefore, one must take great care to say *Kedushah De'Sidra* with kavannah (*Siman 132:2*).