

Tefillah Focus Of The Week:

ובא לעיון
Making Israel Great

MEANING: The simple translation of the prayer

May it be Your Will Hashem, our G-d and the G-d of our forefathers, that we observe Your decrees in This World, and merit that we live...Hashem desired for the sake of its [Israel's] righteousness that the Torah be made great and glorious.

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלהינו
ואלהי אבותינו, שנשמך
חקיך בעולם הזה, ונזכה
ונחיה... ה' חפץ למען
צדקו, יגדיל תורה
ויאדיר.

WORD TO THE WISE: Meaning within the word



The *Mishnah* (*Makkos* 23b) says that Hashem desired to confer merit upon Israel. Therefore, He gave them the Torah and an abundance of *mitzvos* to observe, as we proclaim, ה' חפץ למען צדקו יגדיל תורה ויאדיר, "Hashem desired for the sake of its [Israel's] righteousness that the Torah be made great and glorious" (Isaiah 42:21). *Rambam* (on *Mishnah*,

Makkos 23b) explains that in order to merit eternal life in the World to Come, a person must fulfill at least one mitzvah "lishmah" properly with complete devotion to G-d. The mitzvah must be performed without any ulterior motive, with the sole intention fulfilling G-d's Will with love. G-d gave us an abundance of *mitzvos* so that every person could, in his lifetime, observe at least one mitzvah perfectly, thereby meriting eternal life.

THEME:

An essential concept of the prayer

Opportunities

By giving us many mitzvos, Hashem provides us with abundant opportunity to earn reward.

INSIGHT:

Deeper meanings of the theme

While We're At It

The story is told of a teenager who approached Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach and asked about the *Mishnah*: "Hashem desired to confer merit upon Israel, i.e. to increase their reward by providing them with many opportunities for mitzvah observance." What merit do all of the mitzvos confer? To the contrary, the young man asserted, the mitzvos are a source of obligation and subjugation!

Rav Auerbach answered with the following: "There are many activities that any person, Jew or gentile, performs daily as a matter of course. These include: washing upon awakening, getting dressed, putting on shoes, etc. Look at Hashem's kindness! Because Hashem wants to confer merit upon His children, the Jewish people, He has given us detailed instructions on how to perform activities we would have performed anyway--how to wash our hands

[three times on each hand], how to dress, how to put on our shoes [right shoe first], how to tie our shoes [left shoe first], etc."

Rav Auerbach continued "We put on our shoes and they put on their shoes. We put on our shoes and receive reward [for performing a mitzvah], while they put on their shoes but receive no reward [for they have no such mitzvah]. We tie our shoes and they tie their shoes. We tie our shoes and receive reward, while they tie their shoes but receive no reward."

This, concluded Rav Auerbach, is the meaning of the verse (Tehilim 62:13), "Yours, Master, is kindness, for You pay each man according to his deeds." How is it a kindness to pay a person what he deserves? Rather, the kindness is that Hashem pays us for the mundane deeds that we would do in any case. (Minchas Avos p.41; Hamaayan, by Shlomo Katz, Parshas Kedoshim, Volume 25, No. 30)

VISUALIZE:

Images that bring the prayer to life

The Benefits of Being Busy

On one side of town was Benny's Bagels. The store was always mobbed. Benny and his staff were busy from the moment they walked in the door until they finally locked up at 7 o'clock each night. At breakfast and lunch time, the lines snaked out the door onto the sidewalk, and the staff worked at a frantic



pace to keep up with demand. On the other side of town was David's Bagels. It was a nice, peaceful spot for a quiet breakfast or lunch. David felt fortunate that he didn't have to work as hard as his counterpart in the competing bagel shop. However, while Benny was a

wealthy man, David had to deal with a constant financial struggle.

Hashem has "set the Jewish people up in business" by giving us His Torah, which provides us with much to do each day to serve Him. Life might be easier for those whose business is less demanding, but the easy life will never bring the spiritual riches that accrue to the Jewish people who keep the Torah.

Try This!

Take some time to mentally list all the mitzvos you do in an average day. For most people, there will be many, starting with reciting Modeh Ani in the morning and continuing on throughout the day. Washing for bread, reciting blessings after eating the bread (*bentching*), *davening*, making a blessing before eating food, learning Torah and much more fill a Jew's day with acts of service to Hashem. Think of this list when you say the words ה' חפץ למען צדקו יגדיל תורה ויאדיר.

Did You Know

Standing for Alenu

The prayer עלינו should be said while standing (Siman 132:2). The Magen Avraham writes in the name of the Ariz"l, that the prayer עלינו should be said with awe. This is because Hashem "stands" with His celestial entourage and they all respond by saying, "Happy is the people for whom it is thus, happy is the people, etc." (*Mishneh Berurah* 132:8)