

Tefillah Focus Of The Week:

עלינו

Only Good

MEANING: The simple translation of the prayer

They will accept upon themselves the yoke of Your Kingship that You may reign over them soon and eternally ... And it is said: Hashem will be King all over the world—on that day Hashem will be One and His Name will be One.

ויקבלו כלם את על
מלכותך, ותמלך עליהם
מהרה לעולם ועד ...
ונאמר: והיה ה' למלך
על כל הארץ, ביום
ההוא יהיה ה'
אחד ושמו אחד.

WORD TO THE WISE: Meaning within the word

We end *Aleinu* by proclaiming, ביום ההוא יהיה ה' אחד ושמו אחד, on that day Hashem will be One and His Name will be One. The Gemara (Pesachim 50a) asks, "Is He not One today?" It answers that the World to Come is unlike this world. In this world, upon hearing unusually good news, one says the blessing "*Hatov V'Hamaitiv*" (Hashem is good and does good). Upon hearing tragic news, one is obligated to recite the blessing "*Dayan Emes*" (Hashem is the true Judge), which expresses a

person's faith that G-d's every decree is just and fair. In the World to Come, however, all of the blessings will be *Hatov V'Hamaitiv*. Rashi (ibid) explains that there will be no bad news.

In this world, it is difficult to appreciate G-d's Oneness, since it is difficult to reconcile tragedy and suffering with G-d's attribute of mercy and kindness. In the next world, known as the world of truth, man will experience only good. Thus, he will fully acknowledge that G-d is One, as we declare אחד ושמו יהיה ה', אחד, on that day Hashem will be One and His Name will be One.

THEME:

An essential concept of the prayer

Recognizing Oneness

In the World to Come, one sees the "whole picture" and realizes that everything that happens springs from a singular Source of pure goodness that brings the world to the state of perfection.

INSIGHT:

Deeper meanings of the theme

No More Questions

Before one of the Ramban's students passed away, he asked the Ramban to please help marry off all his children. In return, the Ramban presented him with several questions pertaining to Hashem's management of the world; he requested that his student ask these questions in Heaven and come to him in a dream to convey the answers.

After the Ramban married off the last of his student's children, the student came to the Ramban in a dream and thanked him for fulfilling his task. "But why have you not come to me with answers to my questions?" the Ramban asked.

"When I was in the physical world, I thought

they were valid questions," replied the student. "But now, I am in the World of Truth, and I see that there are no questions or contradictions. Everything that happens is good, and there is nothing to ask" (Cited in *Sefer Gam Zoo L'Tovah*, page 15).

It is only in this world, in the limited vision and understanding of man, that the good within even the seemingly tragic occurrences cannot be discerned. When people arrive in the next world, they will see that *retrospectively*, there is no dichotomy; that there was no 'judgment' at all, rather it was all compassion and mercy

(Tzlach on Pesachim 50a, s.v., Bikaish Yaakov).

VISUALIZE:

Images that bring the prayer to life

How It Seems

Imagine a perfectly just nation governed by perfectly just, wise and honest people. A different country, plagued by corruption, invades a neighboring country and begins slaughtering its inhabitants. The perfect nation, called Utopia, cannot sit by and let the blood flow. It sends its mighty army into the fray. Raging battles are fought and at last, Utopia drives out the invaders and hands the



victimized country back to its people. From the viewpoint of the wives and children of the enemy army, Utopia is evil. Its soldiers have killed their loved ones and left their families' lives in shambles. Yet from the global perspective, good was accomplished. Aggressors were stopped, future aggression was discouraged, the invaded nation was saved and stability

was restored to the region.

We can only see the world from our own perspective. Our personal lives, trends in our cultural and religious worlds, political developments and so forth all weigh in on our personal scale of interests and beliefs. How much more, then, are we blind to the inner workings of the spiritual world? Our faith relies on knowing that the "perfectly just, wise and honest" Master of the Universe sees what we do not, and runs the world accordingly.

Try This!

► Hashem's Oneness encompasses everything in creation. It includes all that exists and all the "good" and "bad" that happens. Try to feel yourself as part of this whole, as part of the goodness of Hashem's world, as you say אחד ושמו אחד יהיה ה'.

Did You Know

► Women and Aleinu

Although women are exempt from *Tachanun*, *Ashrei*, *U'va L'Tziyon* and the *Shir-shel-yom* (*Halichos Beisa*, pg. 51-52 and *Halichos Bas Yisrael*, pg. 44), it has become customary for women to recite *Aleinu* after *Shemoneh Esrei* (*Machazeh Eliyahu* 20).