



Praying WITH Passion

GIVING MORE MEANING TO OUR TEFILLAH - ONE WEEK AT A TIME ISSUE NO. 42

Tefillah Focus Of The Week: **PESUKEI D'ZIMRAH: HODU** *In Hashem We Trust*

עזרנו ומגננו הוא, כי בו
ישמח לבנו כי בשם
קדשו בטחנו...

Meaning:

The simple translation of the prayer

...Our help and our shield is He [Hashem]... **for in Him will our hearts be glad, for in His name we trusted...**

Theme:

An essential concept of the prayer

The Key to Happiness

Trusting in Hashem gives a person inner peace.

Insight:

Deeper meanings of the theme

It's All Hashem

For in Him will our hearts be glad, for in His name we trusted. The person who has *bitachon* – trust in Hashem -- keeps his innermost world calm, no matter how violently the storms rage outside. As the *Chovos Halevovos* (Sha'ar HaBitachon, Pesicha) writes, "The essence of *bitachon* is to have serenity regarding worldly worries and tranquility from the things that cause the mind to ache."

As World War II raged throughout Europe, the bitachon of the Jewish people was all that stood between them and crippling

despair. In a lecture given in Lithuania on Shabbos Shuvah in 1940, Rabbi Chatzkel Levenstein stressed the key to maintaining inner peace, even in the midst of external chaos: "The main thing we need to know is that all that transpires is from Hashem, and only Hashem. Thus, the more one throws oneself upon Hashem, the more Hashem will help him, for there is no reality except Hashem."

Rabbi Avigdor Miller ("Rabbi Avigdor Miller Speaks" by Rabbi Simcha Bunim Cohen, ArtScroll/Mesorah, p. 66) explains that *bitachon* means ... "in your mind, there should be no turmoil ... When a man knows that *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* is managing his life, he does his work with calmness ..." Rabbi Yisroel Reisman once commented that it is not surprising that in *Orchos Tzaddikim*,

the topic of *bitachon* can be found in the section called *Sha'ar Hasimchah*, the gate of happiness.

The **key to trust** is the ability to suspend human judgment and to patiently wait — even for a lifetime — for the revelation of the good that is inherent in all that happens.

Our problem lies in our assumption that Hashem conducts His affairs in this world as we do. When a person wishes to benefit another, he does so immediately. The ways of Heaven, however, are different, for it is **only at the end of a test** that Hashem reveals the full extent of His beneficence for those who patiently await His salvation (*Ohr Yechezkel, Emunah*, p. 218).

Word to the Wise: Meaning within the word

One whose faith is in G-d, and who possesses an *emunah* so deep that it becomes instinctive knowledge, has the foundation of the trait known as *bitachon* — trust in Hashem. The *Ramban* (*Kisvei Ramban, Sefer HaEmunah U'Bitachon*, Ch. 1) and *Orchos Tzaddikim* (*Ha'Sha'ar Ha'Teshiyi, Sha'ar HaSimchah*, s.v. 'Ach haderech') explain that there cannot be *bitachon* without *emunah*. A person will not trust Hashem to sustain his life — and therefore turn to Him for the fulfillment of his needs — unless he has complete faith in His presence and power.



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 PESUKEI D'ZIMRAH: HODU *In Hashem We Trust*

Visualize:

Images that bring the prayer to life

Letting Go

“We’re going to play a game called “Trust,”” the leader told his group of teenage boys. They were signed up for a 3-week adventure program designed to build self-confidence and self-discipline. “Trust” was the first activity.

“Each person has to stand with his back to me, keep himself perfectly straight and fall backward like a tree that’s just been cut down,” the leader explained. “But don’t worry...I’ll catch you before you hit the ground!”

As they later discussed their reaction to the “game,” some boys described a moment of panic. “I knew you were going to catch me,” said one. “But it was just a second past the point where I had enough control to stop myself. Why did you let me fall so far?”

“I never said you wouldn’t be scared,” said the leader. “I only said I would catch you.”

In life, people often feel they are in a free-fall. They know Hashem is there, but what if he doesn’t “catch” them before they get hurt? The “what ifs” are so plentiful and foreboding that it is possible to become paralyzed with fear. Those who learn to trust that Hashem is there to catch them, even past the point at which they no longer feel safe and comfortable, possess true *bitochon*. As the Chazon Ish (*Emunah U’Bitachon*, Ch. 2) states, *bitachon* does not mean that one trusts that everything will turn out as he hopes. It means that whatever the outcome, the *boteiach* trusts that nothing is by chance — Hashem knows all his troubles, worries and thoughts, and He listens to his *tefillos*. Knowing this, he trusts that things happen because Hashem wants them to happen, and therefore, they spring from Hashem’s essence of goodness.

Try This!

- ▶ What greater gift could there be than someone coming to you in a time of trouble and saying, “Don’t worry about a thing. I’ll take care of it!” Feel the sense of relief and joy you would have at such a moment, and inject it into the words *כי בו ישמח לבנו* when you recite Hodu.

Did You Know

▶ Doing Our Part

Mesilas Yeshorim, (Chapter 21) states that one must always keep in mind that *bitachon* does not mean there is no need to make a reasonable effort. It means that all efforts are seen only as channels through which Hashem can send His salvation. Furthermore, even though one trusts that Hashem will do good, one must pray for this to occur. As the *Netziv* (*Vayikra 25:26*) concludes, “even a person with *bitachon* needs to make an effort through prayer.”