

Tefillah Focus Of The Week:

MIZMOR SHIR

King David's Temple

MEANING: The simple translation of the prayer

A psalm—a song for the inauguration of the Temple—by David. I will exalt You, Hashem, for you have drawn me up and not let my foes rejoice over me.

NOTE: Nusach Ashkenaz and Nusach Sephard differ in the placement of 'Mizmor Shir Chanukas Habayis L'Dovid' (Tehillim 30). In Nusach Ashkenaz, Mizmor Shir is recited before Boruch She'amar; in Nusach Sefard, Mizmor Shir is recited after Hodu.

מזמור שיר חנכת הבית
לדוד: ארוממך ה' כי
דליתני. ולא שמחת
איבי לי:

WORD TO THE WISE: Meaning within the word

The word בית refers to the third Bais HaMikdash which will be built at the time of Mashiach. (Tallelei Oros on Siddur, Page 12). The verse (Yeshayahu 2:3) says, "Many people will go and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of Hashem, to the House of the G-d of Yaakov...'" The Gemara (Pesachim 88a) asks why the verse specifies the third Bais HaMikdash as the 'House of the G-d of Yaakov?'

Maharsha (Pesachim 88a) explains that each of our Avos, our forefathers, was associated with a Bais HaMikdash. Avrohom called it הר -- 'mountain,' which represents the first Bais HaMikdash, as it states 'On the mountain Hashem is seen' (Bereishis 22:14). The Shechinah watched over the first Bais HaMikdash like a guard strategically stationed on top of a mountain. This protection was not permanent, for the first Bais HaMikdash was destroyed.

Yitzchak called the Bais Hamikdash שדה -- 'field,' as it says, "Yitzchak went out to pray in the field." (Ibid 24:63). שדה is linked to the second Bais HaMikdash, which merited an even lesser degree of the Divine Presence.

Yaakov called the Bais Hamikdash בית -- 'house,' as it states (Ibid 28:19) "He named that place 'the House of G-d.'" This בית symbolizes the third Bais HaMikdash, which will enjoy Divine protection like a house that is permanent and complete.

THEME:

An essential concept of the prayer

Justice Is Done

Hashem defends His servants against their enemies.

INSIGHT:

Deeper meanings of the theme

Restoring a Reputation

Many commentators ask why this Psalm states, "a song for the inauguration of the Temple by David" when it was really King Solomon, King David's son, who built and inaugurated it. An answer is provided by the Gemara (Shabbos 30a and Sanhedrin 107b), which relates that King Solomon was at first unable to bring the ark containing the tablets of the Ten Commandments into the Holy of Holies, where it was to be kept. When he tried to open the gates of the Holy of Holies, they miraculously clung to each other and could not be pulled apart.

In response, King Solomon recited 24 songs of prayer, but his efforts were to no avail. Then, as he recited the words "Hashem, G-d! Do not turn away the face of Your anointed one! Remember the pieties of David, Your servant," the gates opened. All the nations and all of Israel knew that Hashem had forgiven David for his sin with Bathsheva (Shemos Rabbah 8:1).

At that moment, the faces of King David's enemies (the family of Saul, Shimi ben Geira,

and others who opposed his ascension to the throne) turned dark with humiliation, appearing black as the bottom of a burned pot. Before this episode, David's enemies had claimed that G-d did not allow David to build the Holy Temple due to David's sin. To defeat that claim, Hashem chose the moment when the ark was brought into the Holy of Holies -- the climax of the inauguration of the Holy Temple -- to show that the Temple was built and the Divine Presence would reside in it only on King David's merit.

Therefore, in effect, the Temple was inaugurated by David. Furthermore, at the time of the inauguration of the Holy Temple, Dovid was vindicated before the eyes of all, including the eyes of his enemies. This vindication came from Hashem and is the inspiration of Dovid's special praise of Hashem: 'ארוממך ה' כי דליתני ולא שמחת איבי לי, 'I will exalt You, Hashem, for you have drawn me up and not let my foes rejoice over me.' (Toras Chaim, cited in the Schottenstein Edition of Tractates Shabbos and Sanhedrin)

VISUALIZE:

Images that bring the prayer to life

Fully Vindicated

The trial is almost over. The verdict is in, and the defendant, David, rises to face the judge. Without even turning his head toward the spectators, he can feel the eyes of his enemies boring into him. He can sense their keen anticipation of his downfall, and he knows that they are not interested in justice. Rather, they want to see the man who has stood against their corruption, and opposed them at every turn, finally suffer



defeat. They long to validate their position and stamp David as the evil one. Silently, David utters a prayer that Hashem will not give these evil men reason to rejoice.

The judge is anxious too, for he senses that the man before him is a good man who suffered a moment of bad judgment. He peers at a slip of paper containing the verdict. His stern expression changes to a

gentle smile as he announces "Not Guilty." David's enemies are dumbstruck. G-d was on his side after all.

When a pious person errs, his detractors rejoice, for they believe that this proves that he is no better than anyone else. This, to the pious, is the worst part of their disgrace. It is an unbearable chilul Hashem, for their error has invalidated their entire life's work. Thus, while a believing Jew might err, and might suffer for his error, he is grateful to Hashem when the circumstances do not strengthen the hearts of the cynical and corrupt.

Try This!

► Think of a time when you struggled to uphold an unpopular position, and were at last vindicated. You knew at that moment that Hashem had taken your part, coming to your aid like a good friend in a time of need. Recall that feeling of closeness and validation when you say the words: **ולא שמחת איבי לי**.

Did You Know

► *Introducing King David*

As noted above (Insight), when King Solomon built the Holy Temple, he sought to bring the aron, the ark, into the Holy of Holies but was unable. Only when King Solomon said, 'Hashem, G-d! Turn not away the face of Your anointed one! Remember the pieties of David, Your servant,' did the gates open. Therefore, before reciting Boruch She'amar, the opening blessing of Pesukei D'Zimrah (which includes King David's psalms), we recite this psalm (Tehillim 30), because it affirms King David's righteousness (Aruch HaShulchan, Siman 50).