

Tefillah Focus Of The Week:

אשרי

Living in Hashem's Kingdom

MEANING: The simple translation of the prayer

...Of the glory of **Your kingdom** they will speak, and of **Your power** they will tell. To inform human beings of **His mighty deeds**, and the glorious splendor of **His kingdom**.

...כבוד מלכותך יאמרו,
וגבורתך ידברו. להודיע
לבני האדם גבורתו,
וכבוד הדר מלכותו.

WORD TO THE WISE: Meaning within the word



Siach Yitzchok explains that מלכותך, Your kingdom, refers to ordinary events, while גבורתך, Your power, refers to the extraordinary events and wonders that Hashem performs. First, one must acknowledge that Hashem is the cause behind the ordinary events of the world, but these normal happenings are not the subject of people's conversation. In fact, our acknowledgement of Hashem's kingdom must be aroused; this is an essential element of any *beracha*, which we begin by calling Hashem "*Melech Ha'Olam*" (Siman 218, Se'if 1).

After one acknowledges that Hashem is the cause of the ordinary, he can reach a new level of awe by attempting to fathom the grandeur of His miracles. These astounding events arouse wonder and cause people to relate the tales of their occurrence. Thus, the word ידברו is used, indicating that people will have much to say about these extraordinary events.

THEME:

An essential concept of the prayer

Running the Kingdom

Hashem's flawless running of every aspect of creation expresses His unique power.

INSIGHT:

Deeper meanings of the theme

The Majesty of the Whole

This first verse in this section of Ashrei begins with מלכותך, **Your kingdom** and ends with גבורתך, **Your power**. The next verse, however, begins with גבורתי, **His mighty deeds** and ends with מלכותו, **His kingdom**. The meaning of this reversal can be derived from the following allegory:

A commoner was invited into the home of a very wealthy individual. When he entered the wealthy man's home, he was impressed by the expensive paintings, artifacts and exquisite ornaments arranged in the foyer of the mansion. Then, when he was ushered into the next room, he was overwhelmed by the vision of vast heaps of gold, silver and diamonds. However, only when he contemplated the totality of the wealth which he witnessed in the mansion did he become awe-struck by the sum total of the man's immense wealth.

The concept of "*melucha*" is the sum total of all the activities of a country under its king and

the coordination between them. The words כבוד מלכותך, the glory of **Hashem's kingdom**, express admiration and appreciation for the sheer breadth of the activities under Hashem's control. Then, when a person comes to realize the flawless with which Hashem administers His control, he comes to grasp and appreciate that His kingdom is aptly described as **גבורתי, His mighty deeds**.

Furthermore, when human beings inform others regarding **His [Hashem's] mighty deeds**, להודיע לבני האדם גבורתי, they realize that these are not individual, imperfect acts of power like the acts of a human king. Rather, Hashem's mighty deeds are awe-inspiring and comprehensive—His kingdom encompasses literally everything in creation. Once we come to that stage of our realization, we are able to reflect back and fully comprehend וכבוד הדר מלכותו, the glorious splendor of **His kingdom** (*The Alter from Kelm, cited in Tallelei Oros on Tefillah, Page 163*).

VISUALIZE:

Images that bring the prayer to life

"I'll Take Care of Everything"

The Rosen family was moving to Eretz Yisrael. Their "to-do" list seemed endless. However, the "to-do" items in America were at least manageable. Packing, selling their house and unwanted furniture, gathering necessary documents and medical records all took time, but with organization and persistence, it could all be done.

On the other side of the ocean, however, there was as much or more to do: Schools for the children; a new house; job interviews and much more. It seemed impossible to deal with



all that from a distance, and get it done in time for the move.

The couple began to feel a surge of panic and doubt as their moving date got closer and so much remained to be settled.

"I don't know what to do," Mrs. Rosen told her sister, who had been living in Eretz Yisrael for many years. "There are dozens of things to take care of, and I can only deal with one at a time from here. My Hebrew isn't so good, the time difference kills half the day...it's impossible!"

"Give me the list and I'll take

care of it all," her sister offered. "I'm right here. I know what you need and I speak the language. I can put it all together for you. You just pack."

One can well imagine the gratitude that welled up in the beleaguered Mrs. Rosen upon hearing her sister's offer. It was like a miracle! The entire puzzle, from top to bottom, would be put into place, leaving nothing for Mrs. Rosen to worry about except for the things that were in her direct control. Likewise, Hashem's grandeur should evoke our awe and gratitude, for He "puts it all together" for us. We do our *hishtadlus*, and He runs the entire world.

Try This! ▶

Think of a complicated, difficult situation in your life and imagine your reaction if some trustworthy individual were to come along and take it all off your shoulders. (Pay off all your debts, marry off all your children, organize your entire home, etc.) Relate to that feeling when saying the verses in Ashrei that declare Hashem's kingdom and might.

Did You Know

▶ Omitting Sections of Pesukei D'Zimrah on Shabbos

In Newsletter 61, we stated that if a person arrives so late to shul that, were he to recite the entire *Pesukei d'Zimrah*, he would miss Shemoneh Esrei with the minyan, some authorities permit him to skip certain sections of *Pesukei d'Zimrah* (Mishneh Berurah 52:1). The *Chayei Adam* writes that if it is necessary to omit parts of *Pesukei d'Zimrah* on Shabbos, one should omit the parts that are added on Shabbos. The minimum on Shabbos consists of *Boruch She'amar*, *Ashrei*, and *Yishtabach*, plus *Nishmas* (Mishneh Berurah ibid:5).