



Praying WITH Passion

GIVING MORE MEANING TO OUR TEFILLAH - ONE WEEK AT A TIME ISSUE NO. 68

Tefillah Focus Of The Week: הללי נפשי In G-d We Trust

אל תבטחו בנדיבים, בבן אדם שאין לו תשועה. תצא רוחו ישב לאדמתו, ביום ההוא אבדו עשתנתיו. אשרי שא-ל יעקב בעזרו, שברו על הי אלקיו.

Meaning:

The simple translation of the prayer

Do not rely on nobles, nor on a human being, for he holds no salvation. When his spirit departs he returns to his earth, on that day his plans all perish. Praiseworthy is one whose help is Yaakov's G-d, whose hope is in Hashem, his G-d.

Theme:

An essential concept of the prayer

One Salvation

The Jewish people cannot count on allies and rulers, but only on Hashem, for its protection.

Insight:

Deeper meanings of the theme

Who Is Fighting Our War?

There are two wars mentioned in Parshas B'Shalach - the war against the Egyptians at Yam Suf and the war against Amalek. The Ibn Ezra observes that the war with Amalek demonstrates that G-d was prepared to allow the Jewish people to fight a real military battle on their own

-- albeit with Divine Assistance. Why, then, in the war against Egypt, was the entire battle waged solely by the Hand of G-d? In fact, in all future wars, including the wars of Yehoshua and the wars of King David, the Jews were obliged to participate in battle. Why was the war with Egypt different?

Rav Yosef Neiman suggests that the first time that something happens in the Torah it is the prototype for all future occurrences. G-d wanted the Jewish people to know that just as in the very first battle, when G-d waged war for them, His mercy would always be the determining factor in our victories, even when we are physically involved in the battle. If it is G-d's will, we will be victorious, regardless of our military

performance. And if, Heaven forbid, as we find in numerous cases in Tanach, it is not G-d's will, we will lose regardless of our military prowess. The determinant of our fate is whether we possess the merit for G-d to make us successful.

We live in an ever-changing, frightening time in the Middle East. Although the Jewish nation currently has a top-notch army, the latest missiles and defense systems which will certainly be used to defend itself, we should never put our faith in the wizardry of military might— אל תבטחו בנדיבים, בבן אדם שאין לו תשועה. We must put our faith only in the Master of the World. Ultimately, it must be our prayers, our charity, our learning Torah--all our merits which determine our success. (Adapted from Rabbi Frand on Parshas Beshalach, 5761.)

Word to the Wise: Meaning within the word

In the midst of the recent upheaval of leaders in and around the Middle East, we must always remember that ultimately, the leaders of the world are pawns in the hands of Hashem—"Lev melachim be'yad Hashem - The hearts of kings are in the Hands of G-d." Even when rulers help Israel, it is because G-d has influenced them to do so. This will be clearly revealed to be the case when the Messianic redemption arrives (Adapted from Radak on Tehilim 146:3).



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Visualize:

Images that bring the prayer to life

The Bumper Lane

A group of five-year-olds went bowling as part of their friend's birthday celebration. To enable them to enjoy some success, the birthday boy's father requested that a set of automated bumpers be raised on the alley his group was to use. The bumpers were metal barriers which ran along the each side of the lane, preventing the bowling balls from falling into the gutters, and thus guaranteeing that each child would score.

The children were ecstatic at their incredible performance. Bowling pins were dropping left and right. The scores were mounting

higher and higher. "I really know how to bowl now!" one boy told his mother when she came to pick him up from the party.

Like these children, we are deluded with our own strength and savvy. In reality, if we merit Hashem's help, He erects the "bumpers" and lets us score. Without the "bumpers", we become the devastated witnesses to what we can accomplish on our own, without His help, which is in effect, nothing at all. Our diplomacy, military strategies, political moves and alliances are worth nothing unless Hashem puts up the "bumpers" for us and enables us to savor the sweet taste of victory.

Try This!

▶ With so many Middle Eastern rulers being deposed, it is not difficult to concretize the injunction against relying on nobles אל תבטחו בנדיבים. Think of the photos you have seen of masses of protesters in the streets, and imagine that the Jewish people's security depended on the very "nobles" these huge throngs are seeking to depose. How frightened we would be at our precarious situation! Now replace that image with one of total security, knowing that our Protector can never be deposed. Think of these images when you say אל תבטחו בנדיבים.

Did You Know

▶ Timely Modifications

In Newsletter 61, we discussed how if one happened to arrive so late to shul that if he were to recite the entire *Pesukei d'Zimrah* he would not finish in time to recite *Shemoneh Esrei* with the minyan, some authorities permit him to skip certain sections of *Pesukei d'Zimrah* in order to pray *Shemoneh Esrei* with a minyan (Mishneh Berurah 52:1). If one finds that he has more time available than he originally thought, he can add other *perakim* of *Pesukei D'Zimrah* later, even though he will be reciting them out of sequence.

Next week we will list the order of priority.