

Tefillah Focus Of The Week:

הללי נפשי

Love the Tzaddik

MEANING: The simple translation of the prayer

He is the maker of heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them, **Who safeguards truth forever.** He does justice for the exploited... **Hashem loves the righteous.**

עשה שמים וארץ, את הים ואת
כל אשר בם, השמר אמת
לעולם. עשה משפט לעשוקים...
ה' אהב צדיקים.

WORD TO THE WISE: Meaning within the word



Often times we find that *tzaddikim*, righteous people, suffer. Yet, this verse states that G-d loves the *tzaddikim*. Michtav M'Eliyahu (Volume 3, page 247) explains that through sins and negative actions, one creates a barrier between oneself and the Creator. This barrier prevents the light of Hashem's benevolence from reaching into a person's life. Therefore, punishment comes to cleanse and purify him from the sludge of his sins. It is the means by which the barriers are removed and a closer relationship with Hashem is established. It is not, as some may think, evidence that the sufferer is rejected and unloved by G-d. To the contrary, leaving the barriers of sin in place would be the real sign of rejection. The *Maharal* (*Nesivos Olam, Nesiv HaYesurin*, Chapter 1) explains:

When a person is righteous and worthy of ultimate virtue, however, because of his sins ...he may not be worthy, Hashem brings suffering upon him in order to cleanse his soul and to remove sin from him, enabling him to attach himself to the ultimate virtue... Therefore it is called "afflictions of love," because Hashem loves him and wants the individual to become closer to Him. When the person has sin which hinders him, Hashem cleanses him until he is worthy of attaching himself to Hashem.

THEME:

An essential concept of the prayer

Hashem's True View

Hashem acts with us through the lens of His true, perfect view of which gifts and which challenges will help us to attain our greatest joy – a close connection to Him.

INSIGHT:

Deeper meanings of the theme

The Love Within Suffering

What is the connection between the concept of עשה שמים וארץ, את הים ואת כל -- that Hashem is the Maker of heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them, Who safeguards truth forever-- and the fact that ה' אהב צדיקים Hashem loves the righteous?

For *tzaddikim*, the righteous people in this world, the focus is always Heavenward. The goal is always to discern Hashem's will and perform it. For them, any suffering, especially severe suffering, is Hashem's means of saying "This is your error; correct it" (Michtav M'Eliyahu Volume 1, page 21). Such a person is constantly reviewing his words and deeds, searching for flaws and laboring to correct them. The Gemara (*Berachos 5a*) cites an opinion that affliction not only awakens one to the fact that he has sinned, but also purges the sin from him. It derives this

from the verse in Tehillim (94:12): "Fortunate is the man whom G-d afflicts, and whom You [still] teach from your Torah." The Gemara interprets this verse to mean that that affliction purges one from sin.

For the *tzaddik*, who possesses the highest level of spiritual sensitivity, a small sin is like a grain of sand that prevents an adhesive from adhering to a smooth surface. The *tzaddik* does not wish for Hashem to overlook it, forever marring his quest to cleave completely to Hashem. Even though, as "the Maker of heaven and earth," Hashem could give the *tzaddik* anything he needs or wants, His love for the *tzaddik* causes Him to withhold. The resulting suffering, which erases the *tzaddik's* sins, is Hashem's loving gift to him, for it clears the way for an eternal, perfect bond.

VISUALIZE:

Images that bring the prayer to life

Raising the Bar

When Yosef started nursery school, every day was filled with prizes, stickers and nachas notes telling his parents of his wonderful achievements in playing nicely and sitting quietly at story time. In kindergarten, his stellar academic career continued, as he mastered the Alef-Beis and "davened" with enough volume to frighten the classroom's pet parakeet. In first grade, however, Yosef's enthusiasm began to flag. "We never get to play," he complained. The Rebbe complained too,



because Yosef couldn't seem to stop playing, even as he sat in his seat and the rest of the class was engaged in learning. His pencil was a rocket ship, his desk was a distant planet and his eraser, it seemed, was a daring astronaut. Yosef often found himself in trouble for failing to attend to the Rebbe's lesson.

"He's just six!" his mother told the Rebbe. "You can't expect so much of him! He has an active imagination." But the

Rebbe continued to judiciously apply pressure to Yosef to pay attention and engage himself in the learning. He knew that if the situation were not repaired, this bright boy would fall behind, and by third or fourth grade, he would be telling himself "I can't learn."

Likewise, Hashem sees the potential in each individual. Were He to simply "applaud" the achievements we attain at our lower levels, we would remain mired in self-imposed limitations. We would soon be telling ourselves, "This is who I am," and strive no higher, never attaining the goals Hashem put us into the world to accomplish.

Try This!

► Think of a challenge in your life, and some way in which it has spurred you to a new level of spiritual strength or faith. Think of this as a message from Hashem, a Father trying to draw His child closer to Him. The love inherent in this experience is the emotion to inject into the words השמר אמת לעולם. עשה משפט לעשוקים... ה' אהב צדיקים.

Did You Know

► **Priorities When Catching Up**

In Newsletter 68, we discussed the procedure to follow if one arrives 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. While 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*), there are some *perakim* of *Pesukei D'Zimrah* that take precedence over others. The order of priority is (see *Siman 52:1*):

- The five *perakim* (each beginning הללוי-ה) that follow אשרי;
- If there is not enough time to recite all five, then the third *perek*, beginning with הללוי-ה, is recited, followed by the fifth *perek* הללוי-ה הללו קל בקדשו, and then the other three in order of appearance.
- If more time is available, recite לשם תפארתך until ויברך דוד (*Mishneh Berurah 52:4*).

Next week we will continue list the order of priority.