

Tefillah Focus Of The Week:

הללוי-ה כי טוב זמרה

Building Jerusalem

MEANING: The simple translation of the prayer

Hallelu-yah! For it is good to make music to our G-d, for praise is pleasant and befitting. **The Builder of Jerusalem is Hashem**, the dispersed of Israel He will gather in....

הללוי-ה. כי טוב
זמרה אלקינו. כי נעים
נאוה תהלה. בונה
ירושלים ה' נדחי
ישראל יכנס....

WORD TO THE WISE: Meaning within the word



In the Gemara's (Berachos 49a) discussion of the *Boneh Yerushalayim* blessing in *Bircas HaMazon*, it is stated that if one began the blessing with "*Rachem na Hashem Elokeinu al Yisroel amecha* --Have mercy, please, Hashem our G-d, on Israel Your people," he concludes with "*Boneh berachamav Yerushalayim* -- Blessed are You, Hashem, Builder of Jerusalem with mercy." This alludes to the verse we are focusing on this week "בונה ירושלים ה' נדחי ישראל יכנס", The Builder of Jerusalem is Hashem, the dispersed of Israel He will gather in."

This implies that G-d's role as the rebuildler of Jerusalem is connected with His gathering of the dispersed of Israel. Since the salvation of Israel and the rebuilding of Jerusalem are interdependent, the concluding clause of the *Boneh Yerushalayim* blessing in *Bircas HaMazon*, "Blessed are You, Hashem, Builder of Jerusalem with mercy" is considered the same as -- and thus a fitting conclusion to -- the opening clause, "Have mercy on Israel." *Midrash Tanchuma* (Noach 11) relates an Aggadic tradition that Jerusalem will not be rebuilt until the exiles have entered it. When the ingathering is complete, then the rebuilding of Jerusalem will be completed. (Rabbeinu Yona on Berachos 49a)

THEME:

An essential concept of the prayer

Hashem at Work

Day by day, Hashem is laying the groundwork for the rebuilding of Jerusalem to its full glory.

INSIGHT:

Deeper meanings of the theme

Redemption Now in Progress

This psalm states, בונה ירושלים ה', "The builder of Jerusalem is Hashem." The present tense of the verse suggests that, even in our exile, Hashem is building Jerusalem. Although this may at times be difficult to see, in the full light of redemption, we will recognize how every episode of the exile was the work of the Creator, aimed at bringing the world to perfection. Rav Dessler (Michtav MeEliyahu, Vol. 3, p. 245) draws this message from the words of Shir HaMaalos said on Shabbos and Yomim Tovim prior to reciting the Grace After Meals: "When Hashem will return the captivity of Zion, we will be like dreamers." (Tehillim 126:1). When the return to Zion (Jerusalem) comes, the suffering of past oppressions will seem like a dream — a vaporous non-entity leading us to open our eyes to the true reality.

In the midst of their exuberant singing and dancing, during his last Purim in Bais Medrash Elyon, Reb Shraga Feivel Mendlowitz rose to speak to his students about the teaching cited in Yalkut Shimoni (Mishlei, Remez 944) that with the coming of Mashiach, none of the holidays will be celebrated except for Purim. How, he asked the students, could anyone suggest that precepts of the eternal Torah would be suspended?

Reb Shraga Feivel explained that while G-d's presence is hidden within nature, the hand of G-d is visible only through miracles that override the laws of nature, such as those surrounding the Exodus from Egypt and the Revelation at Sinai. The Torah's festivals commemorate those miracles. But Purim involves no blatant miracles; its events can easily be interpreted as a series of royal intrigues. Only the teachings of the Sages make us aware that the Purim drama was as much a miracle as the splitting of the sea.

In the times of Mashiach, G-d's light will be clear for all to see. When we truly understand that G-d controls everything, His ability to override the laws of nature will come as no surprise. Indeed, the "natural events" we take for granted will show themselves equally to be G-d's work. Thus, while all the festivals will surely be observed as the Torah prescribes, the "miracles" that they commemorate will no longer be regarded as more extraordinary than "normal" events. The lesson of Purim — that everything is G-d-given and directed — will be the primary lesson of our lives.

VISUALIZE:

Images that bring the prayer to life

The House and the Inhabitants

A family's house burns down. Fortunately, a contractor offers to rebuild the house for a very reasonable price while the family takes temporary shelter in a rented house. After many delays and set-backs, the house is finally ready. However, it is the contractor's family, not



the original owners, who are given the keys and the right to inhabit the new house. Under these circumstances, the fact that the house is rebuilt gives no joy to the original family. It is not the house itself that is valuable to them – rather,

it is making it their home that matters to them.

Likewise, Hashem's rebuilding of Jerusalem and His gathering of the Jewish people within our borders are dependent upon each other. There would be no joy in returning to a city that remains in ruins, nor would there be any joy in seeing it rebuilt only to be inhabited by foreigners.

Try This!

► Use any mental images you have of Jerusalem to imagine the exultant home-coming of the Jewish people to a rebuilt city and a rebuilt Beis Hamikdash. Think of the jubilant scene, the hearts overflowing with gratitude, faith and joy, the unity and peace that would accompany such a moment, and connect to that image when you say the words **בונה ירושלים ה'**.

Did You Know

► *No Reason to Skip*

One should not skip parts of Pesukei D'Zimrah so that he can wake up someone else who is sleeping, even if his friend will sleep through the proper time to say Krias Shema, which extends up to the end of three [seasonal] hours, which is one quarter of the day (Ashrei Ha'Ish, Horav Elyashiv, Page 53).