

Tefillah Focus Of The Week:

הללוי-ה שירו לה'

Rejoicing With Hashem

MEANING: The simple translation of the prayer

Hallelu-kah! Sing to Hashem a new song, let His praise be in the congregation of the devout. **Let Israel exult in its Maker**, let the children of Zion rejoice in their King. Let them praise His name with dancing...

הללוי-ה, שירו לה' שיר
חדש, תהלתו בקהל
חסידים. **ישמח ישראל**
בעשיו, בני ציון יגילו
במלכם. יהללו שמו במחול...

WORD TO THE WISE: Meaning within the word



Who is the verse describing when it says, תהלתו בקהל חסידים, “Let his praise be in the congregation of the devout ones?” Sforno (Tehillim 50:5)

explains that this refers to those who hold onto the Torah and mitzvos in exile. Upholding the Torah and mitzvos when we see Hashem’s open loving-kindness and compassion conforms to our sense of fairness and justice. However, in exile, Hashem’s loving “hand” is often times hidden. חסידים refers to those who preserve their bond with Hashem despite the hardship of exile, to those who have served Him and clung to Him for so long. To love Hashem in such a difficult situation is considered as going “above and beyond,” which is the definition of an act of piety.

One summer day in 1941, before the enemy took them all away to be killed, Rav Elchonon Wasserman addressed fellow townspeople in the courtyard of the home where he had been staying. Rav Elchonon spoke quietly and calmly as was his practice. Not even the sound of his voice was changed; on his face was his customary earnestness.

‘In Heaven it appears that they deem us to be righteous because our bodies have been chosen to atone for Jewry. Therefore, we must repent now, immediately. There is not much time. We must keep in mind that we will be better offerings if we repent. In this way, we will save the lives of our brothers and sisters in America. Let no thought enter our minds, G-d forbid, which is abominable and which renders a [sacrificial] offering unfit. We are now fulfilling the greatest mitzvah.’

THEME:

An essential concept of the prayer

Time for Rejoicing

The Jewish people, who have been loyal to Hashem throughout the exile, will rejoice with Him when the times of Moshiach arrive.

INSIGHT:

Deeper meanings of the theme

In Hashem’s Presence

This mizmor, שיר חדש, refers to the future, when the final redemption comes. This is hinted with the word ישמח which contain the same letters as the word משיח (Siddur HaYavetz). As the verse testifies, when the final redemption is upon us, ישמח ישראל בעשיו, the Jewish people will rejoice with our Maker, just as a child delights with his father’s presence after a prolonged absence. The rejoicing will not come simply in response to the abundance and delicacies of the redeemed world, but rather, our joy will be in the revelation of Hashem’s presence and the establishment of His rule over the world.

Shlomo HaMelech (Koheles 7:2) teaches: “It is better to go to a house of mourning than to go to a house of feasting (for that is the end of man) and the living should take it to heart.” The simple meaning of this statement is that

this brush with mortality motivates the visitor to examine his priorities. However, there is a deeper, core lesson in the prayer one says upon departing from the mourner, “May God comfort you among the rest of the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.”

In effect, one tells the mourner that his sadness is shared by the entire Jewish people. All Jews have lost the comfort and security of living in the presence of our Beloved One. From that loss, all other losses unfold. One who understands the deeper meaning of this prayer will indeed feel spurred to re-order his priorities, not only because life is so short, but more so because he will be motivated to do whatever is necessary to hasten the day when the Shechinah’s full presence is restored, the day when all sorrows will end, when we will rejoice with our Maker.

VISUALIZE:

Images that bring the prayer to life

Coming Home

A young father begins a new business that requires him to travel abroad for six weeks. Each day, the children ask their mother, “When is Daddy coming home?” She keeps assuring them that he will indeed return. They are too young to understand weeks and months, but she does her best to keep their hopes up.

Finally, the big day arrives. The children’s father walks through



the door and his children leap into his arms. Soon, he is pulling a wide variety of fascinating gifts out of his bags – dolls, toys, candies and jewelry of every description. The children are nearly drunk with delight as they examine their new treasures. But when their father heads into the kitchen to get some

refreshment, the children drop their toys and run after him. Now that they’ve got him back, there’s nothing they want more than to be near him.

In the same way, when the Jewish people are once again able to experience Hashem’s closeness, the physical bounty inherent in redemption will be only a side-benefit. Basking in Hashem’s presence will be our greatest joy. The peace and plenty we will enjoy will only exist to free us to expend all our energy in connecting to our Father in Heaven.

Try This!

► Imagine that everything you need for your physical well-being and happiness is right at your fingertips, and that you do not take it for granted. Each and every gift is a constant source of delight and gratitude to Hashem. Imagine that full, contented feeling – the feeling of living in a redeemed world – when you say the words: **ישמח ישראל בעשיו**.

Did You Know

► Enough Time to Finish

In last week’s issue, we stated that despite the fact that one should not interrupt in between reciting Baruch She’amar and Yishtabach, if he is the only Kohein or Levi present, he is permitted to be called up to the reading of the Torah and may read the portion quietly together with the reader.

If he is, at the time he is called up, close to the end of a section of Pesukei D’Zimrah and able to complete the section without delaying the reading of the Torah, he should do so. However, he should not do so if it will cause delay, to avoid burdening the congregation.

(Mishneh Berurah 51:10).

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