

Tefillah Focus Of The Week:

ויברך דויד

Singing Hashem's Praises

MEANING: The simple translation of the prayer

And David blessed Hashem in the presence of the entire congregation; ... Yours, Hashem, is the greatness, the strength ...Yours, Hashem, is the kingdom, and the sovereignty over every leader.... and You rule everything ...

ויברך דויד את ה' לעיני כל
הקהל... לך ה' הגדלה
והגבורה... לך ה'
הממלכה והמתנשא
לכל לראש.... ואתה מושל
בכל....

WORD TO THE WISE: Meaning within the word



Yours, Hashem, is the greatness, the strength...This verse of ויברך דויד was said by King David at the public coronation of his son Shlomo (*Divrei Hayamim* I, Chapter 29). King David hoped that his son Shlomo would bring the Jewish Nation to the ultimate redemption and that King Shlomo would become the *Mashiach*. King David's words reflect his concern that,

overwhelmed by all the glory surrounding the building of the Holy Temple, people would lose sight of the purpose of it all—the revelation of G-d's existence in the world. Therefore, King David acknowledges לך ה' הגדלה והגבורה והתפארת והנצח וההוד כי כל בשמים ובארץ, all attributes come from Hashem. Likewise, any prosperity or success of the individual or of the nation is attributed solely to G-d and His kindness. He attributes all of man's success to G-d's greatness.

THEME:

An essential concept of the prayer

Every Kind of Praise

Hashem's praises extend to every form of power and greatness.

INSIGHT:

Deeper meanings of the theme

History Reveals Hashem's Praises

The Gemara (*Berachos* 58a) explains that the praises in ויברך דויד allude to G-d's might. *Levush* (end of Orach Chaim, Siman 51) states that a person should stand when reciting Boruch She'amar, Yishtabach and ויברך דויד because they consist of Hashem's foremost praises.

Each specific praise in ויברך דויד is connected to a particular event:

1. לך ה' הגדלה. – [*To You G-d is Greatness*]. This refers to Creation and the splitting of the Reed Sea. Maharsha (*ibid*) explains that G-d's greatness is His kindness. It was through Hashem's kindness that the world was created and the Reed Sea was split.
2. -והגבורה. *And Strength*. This refers to the Exodus from Egypt and the killing of the Egyptian first-born.
3. -והתפארת. *And Splendor*. This refers to the sun and moon, which stopped for Yehoshua. Maharsha (*ibid*) explains that this miracle brought Yehoshua fame and splendor throughout the world. התפארת also applies to the giving of the Torah, which grants fame and splendor to the Jewish people.
4. -והנצח. *And the triumph*. This refers to the fall of the Roman Empire, representing G-d's vengeance for Edom's persecution of the Jewish people. It also connotes the mountains surrounding Jerusalem, which help the Jews to triumph in war.
5. -וההוד. *And glory*. This refers to the Battle at Nachal Arnon, the “Canyons of Arnon,”

during the Exodus. The “Canyons of Arnon” is a narrow valley between two steep, tall mountains that run along the border between Moab and the land of the Amorites. The Jews had to pass through this valley on their way into Eretz Yisrael. The Amorites hid in caves in the mountain on the Moabite side of the valley, with the intent to ambush the Jews by casting arrows and boulders upon them as they passed through. (See Rashi, *Bamidbar* 21:15; *ibid*, *Berachos* 54b, s.v. *avdai*.) וההוד also refers to the Holy Temple, which is Israel's glory.

6. – *All that is contained in heaven and earth*. This refers to Heaven doing battle against the Army of Sisera, the general of a Canaanite army that opposed Israel for twenty years. The Army of Sisera was miraculously defeated in battle by the Jews led by Deborah and Barak.
7. - לך ה' הממלכה. *To You G-d is Kingship*. This refers to G-d's war against Amalek, the first nation to attack the Jews after the Exodus from Egypt.
8. - המתנשא. *And You are exceeding elevated over everything*. This refers to the Messianic era, when Gog, king of the land of Magog, will launch an attack on Israel. Hashem will annihilate the invaders, which will elevate G-d's Name throughout the world.

VISUALIZE:

Images that bring the prayer to life

All Good Things

Each of us has a cast of characters in our lives, and each of those characters plays a certain role. When we want sympathy, we go to one person. When we want someone to “tell it like



it is,” we seek out someone else. If we need someone to intercede in a conflict, there's yet another person on call. If we are seeking

inspiration and motivation to grow, we turn to someone else. Different people have different strengths, and no one has it all. Yet Hashem possesses every kind of power, and there is no praise in its utmost form that does not pertain to Him.

Try This!

► Re-read the correlation between Hashem's praises and events in Jewish history. Choose one, and think of it in vivid detail – for instance, imagine the greatness of a universe coming into being, or the Reed Sea opening up, or the masses of Jews leaving Egypt. Think of that image when you say לך ה' הגדלה והגבורה.

Did You Know

► Why These Praises?

Abudraham writes that the reason ויברך דויד and אז ישיר, the Song at the Reed Sea, are added to the Pesukei D'Zimrah is because the *Midrash* expounds on the 15 expressions of praise of Hashem listed in *Yishtabach* (שיר ושבחה הלל וזמרה עז וממשלה נצח גדלה וגבורה תהלה) from verses contained in ויברך דויד (תפארת קדשה ומלכות ברכות והודאות). The source of ויברך דויד until לשם תפארתך is from *Divrei Hayamim* I (Chapter 29, 10-13). From ויברכו שם כבודך until במים עזים [in ויברכו] it is from *Nechemia* (5:11).