



# Praying WITH Passion

GIVING MORE MEANING TO OUR TEFILLAH - ONE WEEK AT A TIME ISSUE NO. 91

Tefillah Focus Of The Week: **ישתבח** *The Life of the World*

ישתבח שמך לעד מלכנו...  
ברכות והודאות... ברוך אתה  
ה', א-ל מלך גדול בתשבחות...  
הבוחר בשירי זמרה, מלך א-ל  
חי העולמים:

### Meaning:

The simple translation of the prayer

May your Name be praised forever --  
Our King ... blessings and thanksgivings  
... Blessed are You, Hashem, G-d, King  
exalted through praises ... Who chooses  
musical songs of praise — King, G-d,  
Life-giver of the world.

### Theme:

An essential concept of the prayer

#### Creator and Sustainer

Hashem brings everything in the universe  
into being, and sustains and supervises  
His creation moment by moment.

### Insight:

Deeper meanings of the theme

#### The Basics of Emunah

Hashem is the "life-giver of the world"-- חי  
העולמים -- since at every moment Hashem  
is creating and renewing a person by  
"breathing" life into him. In discussing  
this basic element of *emunah*, the  
Rambam (Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah 1:1) states,  
"The foundation of all foundations and

the pillar of wisdom is to *know* that there  
is a Primary Being Who brought into  
being all existence. All the beings of the  
heavens, the earth, and what is between  
them came into existence only from the  
truth of His being."

Beyond this belief in Hashem as the sole  
Creator, *emunah* requires recognition  
of Hashem's continuous role in every  
occurrence, from grand historical  
events to seemingly insignificant  
personal incidents. This is the concept  
of *Hashgachah Pratis*— that Hashem  
supervises His creation moment to  
moment, and that nothing happens by

chance, but only because He constantly  
wills it.

Despite the centrality of this belief in  
Hashem's constant supervision of His  
creation, it may appear, at times, to be a  
difficult concept for the human mind to  
fully grasp. The world seems to run on a  
system of cause and effect, conditioning  
people to interpret the events in their  
lives and in the world as results of human  
actions or nature. The true Power behind  
those human actions and nature becomes  
shrouded, unless one purposefully works  
at uncovering it. *Sefer Sifsei Chaim (Rinas*

(cont. P. 2)

### Word to the Wise: Meaning within the word

In this prayer, there are fifteen expressions of praise  
beginning with the words שיר ושבחה, and there are fifteen  
words in the concluding blessing (after ברוך אתה ה'). The  
number fifteen alludes to the numerical value of the Divine  
Name יה-וה and to the fifteen Songs of Ascents composed by  
King David (Tehillim 120-134).

Mishneh Berurah (Siman 53:1) states that one should be extremely careful not to  
make an interruption in-between any of the fifteen praises which are said in the  
blessing Yishtabach, starting with the words שיר ושבחה. However, the praises are  
not required to be said in one breath. Since some authorities consider answering  
Kaddish to be an interruption, one should try to time the praises of ישתבח so that  
he will not have to answer amen in the middle (Kaf Hachaim 53:2).



### Inside This Issue: Focus on ישתבח

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(INSIGHT cont.)

*Chaim*, p. 11, s.v. “L’Yeser diyuk”) explains that G-d controls the world from behind the scenes, utilizing the magnificent natural laws He has crafted in order to fulfill His will on earth.

This understanding that nothing in Creation can exist independent of Hashem is expressed, and is strengthened, every time we pray. By coming to Hashem for our needs, we continually weed out the subtly invasive belief in cause and effect, reinforcing in our hearts that there is no “cause” but Hashem’s constant will.

(See *Ohr Yechezkel, Emunah* p. 64)

*exercise, socialize and live life within a self-contained mini-world coursing through outer space. Over the years, crew members married and had children, and little by little, an entire society was established on the space ship.*

The generations born on board had no concept of any world outside their ship. The renewable fuel that kept it going, the water-distilling mechanism that created new supplies of water, the self-contained greenhouses that produced the food and cleaned the air – it was, to this society, just the “way it is.” They never thought about the engineering genius that went into creating their world, nor the impossibility of living for even a few moments outside of its protective shell.

Similarly, we live in a world created and tended to by Hashem, and yet we seldom notice His continuous input. Were He to suddenly stop His continuous giving, not only would our world collapse, it would cease to exist. (*Lev Eliyahu*, Vol. 2, p. 62, s.v. *Y’sod Ha’Briah*)

## Visualize:

Images that bring the prayer to life

### Sustaining Creation

*Preparing for a centuries-long journey through deep space, the spaceship was designed to support normal human life for its crew of 150. It had to provide food, air, water, places to stroll, and opportunities to*

## Try This!

► From the weeds that take root and push their way through the cracks in the pavement to the fruit flies that live, breed and die all within a day, to the fish that struggle against the currents to reach their spawning grounds to the mother bear that looms protectively around her cubs – all of life is invested with an indomitable drive to perpetuate life. Imagine this life-force as it surges through our world, and think of this power when you say the words: **חי העולמים**.

## Did You Know

### ► The Closing

The *ישתבח* prayer ends the *Pesukei D’Zimrah* section of *Shacharis*. Despite the fact that *ישתבח* is a blessing, it does not begin with the standard wording of a blessing *ברוך אתה*, because *ישתבח* is a continuation of the blessing at the end of *Baruch She’amar*, which is said at the beginning of *Pesukei D’Zimrah* (*Siman* 54:1). Therefore, *ישתבח* is not recited unless *Baruch She’amar* is recited (*Siman* 53:2; *Mishneh Berurah*, *Ibid* 53:3). *ישתבח* should be recited while standing (*Siman* 53:1, *Mishneh Berurah*, *Ibid*:1).