

Tefillah Focus Of The Week:

ברכת קריאת שמע: לא-ל ברוך...
Making Things Happen

MEANING: The simple translation of the prayer

To the blessed G-d they shall offer sweet melodies, to the King, the living and enduring G-d ... For He alone effects mighty deeds, makes new things, is Master of wars... makes salvations flourish... is L-rd of wonders...

לא-ל ברוך נעימות יתנו.
למלך א-ל חי וקים...
כי הוא לבדו פועל
גבורות, עושה חדשות,
בעל מלחמות... מצמיח
ישועות... אדון הנפלאות....

WORD TO THE WISE: Meaning within the word



Hashem makes salvations flourish.

hastening the Final Redemption (*Shabbos* 139a).

Ultimately, charity saves not only the individuals who embrace it, but the Jewish nation as well: "Zion shall be redeemed through justice and her returnees through charity" (*Yeshayah* 1:27). For by giving charity, a Jew is performing the utmost emulation of G-d, whose very essence is to provide for His world. The Maharsha (*Bava Basra* 10a) observes that a person's acts of charity help to bring the Final Redemption, which in turn brings worldwide recognition of God's constant charity in sustaining His creation. (*Yearning With Fire*, ArtScroll, p. 269-270).

How? One way is through our giving charity, as the prophet Yeshayah (56:1) states: "Observe justice and perform *charity*, for My salvation is soon to come." (*Eitz Yosef*). Giving *tzedakah* is a profuse source of merit and salvation. G-d, our Father, sends each beloved soul out into a dangerous world to fulfill its mission. When one Jew helps another, guiding him past life's pitfalls, our Father's gratitude knows no bounds. The Rambam (*Hilchos Matnas Aniyim* 10:2) explains that showing compassion for the needy and downtrodden evokes a reciprocal compassion from Heaven, thus

THEME:

An essential concept of the prayer

G-d Alone

Everything that happens, whether it seems mundane or miraculous, is the work of G-d.

INSIGHT:

Deeper meanings of the theme

Taking G-d Personally

כי הוא לבדו פועל גבורות, עושה חדשות, בעל מלחמות... מצמיח ישועות... אדון הנפלאות.... "Hashem alone effects mighty deeds, makes new things, is Master of wars... makes salvations flourish... is L-rd of wonders." A basic foundation of Judaism is the concept of *hashgacha pratis*. Everything that happens to a person is guided by the Hand of G-d. That is what is meant by "man does not stub his toe unless decreed from above" (*Chulin* 7b). Everything except a person's moral choices is decreed from above under the concept of *hashgacha pratis*.

The Rambam (*Morah Nevuchim*, Maamar 3, Perek 18) explains that in addition to *hashgacha pratis*, there is *hashgacha k'lalis*, which Hashem uses in nature. When does *hashgacha pratis* apply to a person? According to the Rambam, the degree to which a person is aware of G-d's hand, is the degree to which G-d treats him with *hashgacha*

pratis. To the extent that a person is blind to G-d's hand in his daily affairs, he is under the influence of *hashgacha k'lalis* (See also Rabbeinu Bachya, *Bereishis* 18:19, *Sipurno*, *Vayikra* 13:47). Therefore, if an individual recognizes G-d, then G-d will intervene in that person's daily affairs.

Rav Gedaliah Shorr (*Ohr Gedalya*, *Bereishis*, Page 28) teaches that each person has the opportunity to turn even those things that happen under *hashgacha k'lalis* into *hashgacha pratis*. Despite the fact that most people do not see G-d within nature, and the acts of nature do not have a special meaningful message to us, anyone who stops to ponder nature clearly sees it as the work of G-d. *Avraham Avinu* was able to recognize the ordinary things in the world as being the "Hand of G-d". We too have the ability to turn whatever comes our way into *hashgacha pratis*. (Based on a lecture from Rabbi Yisroel Reisman, *Yirmiyahu* 32:19, "The Sixth Name of Hashem.")

VISUALIZE:

Images that bring the prayer to life

Lost Wallet, Found Purpose

"In 1901, after two years in business, the wages of sixteen-year-old bachur Yechezkel Levenstein, (the future Mir Mashgiach) were stolen from his coat pocket while he was at the mikveh one erev Shabbos. This incident



convinced him of the transitory reality of the material world.... He left home for a small yeshiva in Makova, Poland. Two years later, in 1903, at the age of 18, he went to learn

in the famous Lomza Yeshiva and then went on to become the famous Mashgiach who would help shape the future of Klal Yisroel." (*Reb Chatzkel*, Rabbi Yitzchak Kasnett, ArtScroll, page 12).

The stealing of a wallet is not, on its surface, perceived as a miraculous event. Nonetheless, because the event was experienced as the Hand of Hashem, it paved a specific path in life.

Try This!

▶ Take one facet of your life situation – where you live, where you work, who your close friends are, and think of the trail of events that led to that situation. Recognize how Hashem laid out the path for you step by step to arrive where you are now. Think of this concept when you say
כי הוא לבדו פועל גבורות

Did You Know

▶ **Stopping for Thunder**

If a person hears thunder while he is between the paragraphs of the *berachos* of *Krias Shema*, the *Mishneh Berurah* (*Siman* 66:19) concludes, in accordance with the *Chayei Adam*, that the person may recite the *berachah* of "she'kocho...", as it is a "*mitzvah overes*," which is a *beracha* that may not be recited later. However, if one hears thunder when he is in the middle of a section, he should not make a blessing over it.