



Praying WITH Passion

GIVING MORE MEANING TO OUR TEFILLAH - ONE WEEK AT A TIME ISSUE NO. 31

Tefillah Focus Of The Week: **PESUKEI D’ZIMRAH: HODU** *Be Amazed*

דרשו ה' ועזו. בקשו פניו תמיד:
זכרו נפלאותיו אשר
עשה, מפתיו ומשפטי פיהו...

Meaning:

The simple translation of the prayer

Search out Hashem and His might, seek His Presence always. **Remember His wonders that He wrought, His marvels and the judgments of His mouth...**

Theme:

An essential concept of the prayer

The Tool Of Gratitude

Remembering Hashem’s wonders and marvels allows us to deal with His judgments.

Insight:

Deeper meanings of the theme

Building Our Trust In Hashem

A hint at the Force behind nature is found in the word for nature itself – *hateva*. The *gematria* (numerical equivalent) of the word is the same as that of the word for G-d, “*Elokim*” (*Sefer Pri Tzadik*, on Chanukah, *Ose* 14, page 82). What this reveals is that nature is in reality just an earthly manifestation of Hashem, and that miracles are embedded in every aspect of creation. For instance, it seems “natural” to a person that he can take

a breath, wag his tongue in a certain way and produce sounds capable of expressing profound ideas. It’s natural, but miraculous indeed.

The amazing precision and creativity that goes into every aspect of this world is a source of tremendous spiritual inspiration when one sets his mind to thinking about it. **Attaining this inspiration, however, requires active thought.** If someone turns on a computer and presses some buttons, he might be impressed by what a powerful new computer can do. But if he makes the effort to understand the intricate circuitry and programming that went into the design, his awe is much greater. “The designer must have been a genius!” he might declare (see “My Father My King” (ArtScroll) by Rabbi Zelig Pliskin).

Not only does Hashem’s design of the world testify to His wisdom, but it

testifies to His kindness as well. He is like the perfect host who sees to his guest’s every need, providing not just the necessities, but continual sources of pleasure and delight.

Human nature is such, however, that whatever one becomes accustomed to seems “natural.” For example, the generation of Jews born in the desert saw Manna – bread from heaven – as a natural phenomenon, just as we perceive our “water from heaven” as natural. Therefore, the *Meshech Chachmah* explains (*Vayikra* 26:4), Hashem performs open miracles from time to time, reminding us that nature bends to His will.

Appreciating G-d’s perfection is a necessary step toward being able to accept His judgments as well. This (cont. P. 2)

Word to the Wise: Meaning within the meaning

“נפלאותיו”: “His Wonders” are G-d’s “hidden miracles” (*Malbim, Tehillim*, 9:2); the remarkable forces of nature that enable life and the world to exist. “מפתיו” refers to things that occur in the world, which are out of the natural order. (*Vilna Gaon on Divrei Hayamim*).



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(INSIGHT cont.)

explains the connection between the beginning of the verse, “Remember His wonders that he wrought,” and the second part of it, “His marvels and the judgments of His mouth.” Only by understanding Hashem’s perfection can a person comprehend that goodness is the final outcome of all the “judgments”—the troubles and injustices one sees in the world.

Trusting in their parents’ love, children can accept the pain their parents sometimes must put them through. Likewise, **by absorbing into our hearts the evidence of G-d’s love that is all around us, we can trust that His judgment, too, comes from love.**

Visualize:

Images that bring the prayer to life

Enjoy Your Stay!

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You have recently gotten married, and you are going to spend your first Shabbos at your new in-laws’ home. When you arrive, you are led into a guest room adorned with a beautiful bouquet of flowers. Every detail has clearly been prepared with you in mind. There is a small refrigerator filled with your favorite snacks and beverages, and your favorite book has been left on your night table. They’ve even supplied you with a fresh tube of your hard-to-find organic toothpaste. Every meal features your favorite foods, followed by one of your favorite desserts.

You might pass through the entire Shabbos not noticing the special attention paid to your needs. Accustomed to all the amenities your in-laws have provided, you might take it all for granted. But if you did that, you would miss the message of bountiful love they are trying to send.

Try This!

▶ This week, when you say זכרו נפלאותי think of something visible– whether natural or man-made – that arouses in you a sense of amazement. Picture it, and feel the full sense of amazement it arouses.

Did You Know

▶ Hands-Free Davening

Pri Megadim (cited in *Mishneh Berurah* 96:1) rules that when a person recites *Pesukei D’zimrah*, he should not hold anything in his hand that might distract him, for instance, something that might drop and break or spill. Preoccupied with the object, the *kavannah* of his prayer would be undermined. However, if after the fact he realizes he had been holding something, he need not repeat *Pesukei D’zimrah*.