

Tefillah Focus Of The Week:

ברנת קריאת שמע

Holiness Above and Below

MEANING: The simple translation of the prayer

Holy, Holy, Holy is Hashem, Master of Legions, the whole world is filled with His glory.

קדוש קדוש
קדוש ה' צבקות,
מלא כל הארץ כבודו.

WORD TO THE WISE: Meaning within the word

צבקות

Although it is commonly translated simply as “hosts” or “legions,” the word צבקות is a name of G-d which means that He is the Master of all the heavenly hosts. The word צב is used to refer to an organized, disciplined group. Thus, an army is called צבא. In the context of this Divine Name, the word צבקות expresses the idea that the infinite heavenly bodies are organized according to G-d’s will, so that they can properly serve Him. (Siddur Eitz Chaim, The Complete ArtScroll Siddur)

THEME:

An essential concept of the prayer

Relating to Holiness

By confirming Hashem’s holiness, we connect to the holiness within us.

INSIGHT:

Deeper meanings of the theme

You’re an Angel

Hashem is undoubtedly holy, as we affirm when we call out to Hashem, קדוש קדוש קדוש. However, it is not a trait reserved for Hashem alone; the Torah (Vayikra 19:1-2) implores us, “You shall be holy, for I (Hashem your G-d) am holy.” The Rizhener Rebbe explains that the key to attaining any degree of holiness is to be conscious of the fact that man is innately holy. As long as one perceives himself as an earthly creature - flesh and blood - it is inevitable that he will be drawn towards his earthly, immoral, and materialistic nature, and will fail to achieve any level of holiness. If, instead, he sees himself as holy, then, his actions and deeds will be governed by his sense of holiness.

Each day, we are presented with all sorts of tests to our morality, character, and dedication to the Torah. If one approaches these tests with a sense of his “this-worldliness,” he is bound to stumble. He will forever find excuses for

himself to, so to speak, fail the test. “After all,” he assures himself, “I’m not an angel. I’m flesh and blood! Can it be expected of me to live the life of an ethereal being? I’m doing the best that I can.”

If, however, one approaches these daily tests, trials, and tribulations with an awareness of his innate holiness, then with each moment, with each passing trial, he will be fortified by his sense of higher purpose. “How could I do such a thing!” he will say to himself. “After all, deep down I’m really a holy person. I’ve been endowed with a holy neshamah, -- a ‘piece of G-dliness’ implanted within man. A holy person doesn’t do such things; speak such words; take interest in such matters.” When one approaches the daily onslaught to his character with this perspective, he has the foundation upon which to succeed. (Rabbi Eliyahu Hoffmann, Achrei Mos-Kedoshim, Torah.org, 1998).

VISUALIZE:

Images that bring the prayer to life

Who, Me?

Andy hadn’t gone to A minyan in 12 years. Back then, when his name was Aryeh, he knew that if he didn’t make it to minyan three times a day, everyone from his father to his rebbe to his 6-year-old brother would be disappointed in him. But time wore away that fear and he eventually just stopped.

Then one day, as he passed by a local shul on his way to his



morning work-out at the gym, a man snagged him. “We need a tenth. Come on, help us out. One guy’s saying Kaddish and everyone’s late for work.” Andy went into the shul and in a borrowed pair of tefillin and a yellowed tallis from a forgotten shelf, he began to daven with the minyan. He couldn’t

identify the warm, elated, pure feeling rising in his heart as he recited the familiar words and looked upon the Hebrew letters of the siddur...until the word came to mind. “Holy,” he thought. “I feel holy.”

For some people, the connection to “holy” is buried deep. For others, it’s right on the surface, serving as an active motivation and guide to every life decision. But wherever the holiness is in a person, it’s always there.

Try This!

Imagine an invisible live wire connecting your heart to the highest realms of heaven. Imagine that holiness flows through this wire, feeding your neshama. Feel that energy flowing when you say the words קדוש קדוש קדוש.

Did You Know

Interruptions During Brochos of Krias Shema

Generally, at the same time as the shliach tzibur recites the bracha of modim, the congregation quietly recites its “own” modim, known as “Modim D’Rabanan.” In between the paragraphs of the berachos of Keriyas Shema, the Mishneh Berurah (66:23) concludes that one should only say the first words of Modim D’Rabanan.