

Chizzuk Tefillah

Posted by ur-a-jew - 18 May 2011 17:05

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I've been meaning to start this thread for a long time and my good friend Zemiros Shabbos made a similar suggestion to me recently. The koach of tefillah is awesome, yet as the gemara in Brochos says: ????? ?? ?? ????? ??? ????? ?? ????? ??? (?????? ??) ????? ????? ????? ??? ??? ??? ??? ????? ??????? ????? ?? ????? ????? ??? ??????? ???, which Rashi explains is referring to things like Tefillah. Ask anyone who has had real success in these struggles and they will tell you that a staple in their arsenal is Tefillah. One of the things that I learned from Dov early on was to talk to Hashem, during the course of the day. It works, I have seen it in my own struggles. Yet, precisely because of its power, the Yetzer Hora tries to get us to be from the ??? ??? ??????? ???. Perhaps if we can give each other ideas to be ????? in this area we can tap into the full power of it.

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Re: Chizzuk Tefillah

Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 21 Jun 2011 16:16

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I condemn the quoting in an honorable context of such a maskil, a *chote umachte*.

[quote="Wikipedia]

he gave his allegiance at age fifteen to the Haskalah, the Jewish enlightenment. He began a deliberate plan of secular learning, reading books in Polish, Russian, German, and French. He planned to go to the theologically liberal Rabbinical school at Zhytomyr,

[/quote]

We try not to get out inspiration from teenage dropouts....

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Re: Chizzuk Tefillah

Posted by Yosef Hatzadik - 21 Jun 2011 16:28

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Someone wrote: *Kabeil ess ha'emes m'mi she'amro.*

My reply was:

Will we meet you next Sunday in church?

The sermon about loving god sounds very nice....

Isn't this guy much worse?

Besides, what was the writer's intention? Was it not to belittle the image of the devote *Golus Yid*?

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Re: Chizzuk Tefillah

Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 21 Jun 2011 21:23

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in the four words "King, Helper, Rescuer, and Shield," we become more and more aware of God's closeness. First we see Him as a benevolent but distant king, then as a willing helper, then as an nearby rescuer, and finally, as an immanent shield. In these four words, we make the transition from viewing God as a remote transcendental force to seeing Him as a protector who is closer than the air around us.

*Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, Jewish Meditation, page 118*

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Re: Chizzuk Tefillah

Posted by ur-a-jew - 21 Jun 2011 22:07

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[Yosef Hatzadik wrote on 21 Jun 2011 16:16:](#)

I condemn the quoting in an honorable context of such a maskil, a *chote umachte*.

You can take it up with Aish.com. Frankly until you posted I never heard of the guy, although the moshul does sound vaguely familiar. My tefillah is that we be zoche to exercise the same courage and kaneius in refusing to let improper sights into our eyes.

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Re: Chizzuk Tefillah

Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 27 Jun 2011 14:22

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There are great and true tzadikim in the world who cannot accomplish with their prayers because of their lowly self-image. They do not believe that Hashem listens to their prayer and therefore they are not answered. A person should believe that Hashem listens to the prayer of every person.

*Sefer Orach Le'Chaim in the name of the Mezeritcher Maggid zy'a*

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Re: Chizzuk Tefillah

Posted by ur-a-jew - 30 Jun 2011 16:19

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The Yated this week has an editorial on Reb Michel Lefkowitz Z'tl. Among other things he quotes advice given by Reb Michel to a bar mitzvah bochur, which is worth keeping in mind:

When you daven, don't show the Ribbono Shel Olam that you are in a rush to take off your tefillin. Keep them on just a bit longer, until after the last Kaddish, and then the Ribbono Shel Olam won't be in a hurry to leave you.

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Re: Chizzuk Tefillah

Posted by ur-a-jew - 13 Jul 2011 19:45

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From the Yated Article on Rabbi Chaim Stein Zt"l:

"Every day, tefillah was an avodah. Rav Chaim, even deep into his nineties, would stand during tefillah with his finger on the place. **He never took his finger off the place during davening. That was one of the ways he would advise people in maintaining their focus and kavanah during davening.** He would often say that the word teivah in the passuk in Parshas Noach where Hashem tells Noach, "Bo el Hareivah -- Go into the teivah," is not referring to the ark, but can also be translated to mean "word." The Rosh Hayeshiva said that **all must enter into the teivah, the words of tefillah. When one throws himself into tefillah, he will be saved from the mabul, the flood of extraneous thoughts that seek to pull a person's concentration from davening.**"

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Posted by ur-a-jew - 14 Jul 2011 03:17

[www.thelakewoodscoop.com/news/2011/07/a-small-kabbalah-for-a-big-neshama-a-10-week-kabbalah-for-the-pure-leiby-kletzky-ah.html](http://www.thelakewoodscoop.com/news/2011/07/a-small-kabbalah-for-a-big-neshama-a-10-week-kabbalah-for-the-pure-leiby-kletzky-ah.html)

Posted by ur-a-jew - 22 Jul 2011 16:44

Its the three weeks and Hashem obviously wants something more from us than simply not shaving and listening to music. I heard this week from Reb Rafael Paskesz (courtesy of a good GYE friend) that in Shemona Eisrai at least a third of the brochos are related to the Bais Hamiksdash and the geulah h'asidah:

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This is aside from the many other tefilos that we say on a daily basis related to this topic, i.e., the ??? ???? after shemona esrai, ??? ????? ?? ?? ???? ??. In these days, we should pay at least a little extra attention to these brochas. Perhaps, if we can't krechtz for the rebuilding of the bais hamikdash, then at least a krechtz for the fact that we don't even understand what we are missing.

We should be zoche to the rebuilding of the bais hamikdash b'koruv.

Posted by Stuart - 31 Jul 2011 04:29

I heard a vort this Shabbos about the accidental murderers would be in the arei miklat until the Kohen Kadol's death. The Mishna in Makos says that the Kohen Gadol's mother would send food and clothing to the murderers so that they shouldn't daven for her son's death. The question is will this really stop them from hoping and davening that the KG will die? Wouldn't they prefer their freedom then a few gifts from his mother?

One answer is that no, he will continue to hope the KG dies soon so he could be free. The KG's mother is aware of the koach of tefilah is and is therefore trying to diminish it by sending gifts to keep her son alive. Perhaps these gifts will be enough to prevent the tefila reaching the highest level and being answered.

We could learn from the KG's mother that if our tefilas are sincere and at its ultimate concentration level they will have a good opportunity of being answered.

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Re: Chizzuk Tefillah

Posted by ur-a-jew - 10 Aug 2011 15:00

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From the Rabbi Leff (To subscribe to the Sfas Emes Weekly Email, send an email message to: [sfas-emes-subscribe@torah.org](mailto:sfas-emes-subscribe@torah.org).)

Sfas Emes, Zechuso Tagein Aleinu, Parshas Va'eschanan, 5631 & 5639

This parsha begins with Moshe Rabbeinu davening to HaShem. So it comes as no surprise that the first paragraph of Medrash Rabba on the parsha focuses on the subject of tefila (prayer). So, too, the Sfas Emes also concentrates today on the topic of prayer.

The Medrash begins by quoting a statement of R. Yochanan. He tells us that "The Torah uses ten different words to refer to prayer." These ten synonyms include "hischanen" (pleading), "tze'aka" (crying out), and eight others. R. Yochanan's statement seems totally straightforward; and a person might be tempted to skip ahead to more innovative material. Fortunately, the Sfas Emes did not skip ahead, but instead, gave the matter some thought. His cogitation led the Sfas Emes to ask a basic (and startling) question. The Hebrew word most often used to refer to

prayer is 'tefila'. But, notes the Sfas Emes, the word tefila is not included in R. Yochanan's list of ten synonyms for prayer!

Not only does the Sfas Emes pose a fundamental question on R'Yochanan's statement, but thoughtfully, he also provides an answer. In true Sfas Emes fashion, his answer leads him -- and us -- to a paradox. That apparent inconsistency, in turn, leads him -- and us -- to a radical new insight. And not to just any insight, but to an insight that can help us in our avoda, our service to HaShem.

The Sfas Emes tells us that the key feature of prayer is not prayer itself, but rather preparing oneself for prayer. In that vein, the Sfas Emes reads the ten terms that the Medrash lists not as referring to prayer itself, but rather to "hachanos" (preparations) for prayer. Thus, the Sfas Emes explains, the ten terms listed refer to ten avenues and suggested aids ("derachim v'eitzos") conducive to reaching a state in which one is truly in contact with HaShem. In that perspective, the Sfas Emes reads our parsha's first pasuk as: "Va'eschanan" [I prepared myself for prayer] ... "laymor" [and then I prayed].

If the hachanos for prayer are more important than prayer itself, the implication for our avoda is clear. Prayer is not about presenting our wish list to HaShem. Prayer is about focusing our attention on our relationship with Him. As we concentrate our thoughts on that relationship, we can achieve a sense of awe (yir'ah) and perhaps of love (ahava) for HaShem.

How does a person prepare for prayer? Getting into the right mindset requires both one's own efforts and -- perhaps surprisingly -- help from HaShem. On the latter point, the Sfas Emes quotes a pasuk in Tehillim (10:17): "Tach'in li'bam; tak'shiv ahz'necha" (ArtScroll: "Guide their hearts; let Your ear be attentive.") But a person's own efforts to open a channel are also crucial. Thus, the Sfas Emes tells us that a person may even use merrirus (bitterness) as his avenue to real tefila.

Real tefila is an outpouring of one's heart to be in contact with HaShem. A person who is davening in earnest recognizes his total dependence on HaShem. Rashi (following the Sifri on the parsha's first pasuk) makes an important observation in this context. He notes that even though tzadikim have many good deeds to their credit, when they daven, they do not rely on those credentials. On the contrary, they petition HaShem for "matnas chinam" (a pure gift -- one for which nothing is given in exchange).

Why so? Because of the basic fact of life just noted: that true tefila entails recognizing one's total dependence on HaShem. In such a one-way relationship, there is no place for a quid pro quo, (a "this for that") deal negotiated with HaShem.

The Sfas Emes takes us further in his examination of prayer. He reports a comment of the Kotzker Rebbe which essentially raises the question of "Why pray? The Kotzker prefaced his comment with a quote from Iyov (41: 3): "Mi hik'dimami va'ashaleim". In the present context, this pasuk translates roughly as HaShem saying to Iyov: "Don't I always pay my debts on time? And since my books are always up-to-date, what scope is open for tefila to change events?" Phrased more sharply, the Kotzker said: the fact that a person has to approach HaShem to ask for something implies that the person does not deserve that something. For, if the person truly deserved that something, he would not have to pray for it.

The Sfas Emes addresses the Kotzker's question by taking us back to to the word "Va'eschanan". Working "bederech remez" (allusion) he notes that the letters of the word "va'eschanan" can be rearranged to make two key words: "hachana" (preparation) and "chinam" (a free gift). The Sfas Emes uses both of these resonating words to bring home his earlier remarks about prayer. As we have seen, a person must approach prayer with hachana. In that hachana, a person recognizes how little HaShem owes him and; hence, how much would fulfilling his request be in the nature of matnas chinam.

The Sfas Emes sees the prayer situation as follows. Realistically speaking, a person starts his davening with a bakasha (a personal request). But as the person gets into his/ her davening, the person can be swept away into a deeper conversation with HaShem. . Tefila can initiate interaction with HaShem in which He takes over, and the person can let go, becoming a passive participant in the prayer dynamic. The Sfas Emes gives us a meta-pshat to help us absorb what he is saying. He views the word "Va'eschanan" as a nif'al (passive--probably an Aramaic Ispa'el) construction. This lets us read "Va'eschanan" as : " I was prayed." Surely, this is the ultimate in prayer as total dependence on HaShem

Indeed, a person can be so swept away that he forgets about his bakasha ! His tefila becomes so much leSheim Shamayim (focused only on the glory of HaShem) that HaShem has to remind the person what he came to request . Thus, we end with a unique perspective, in which we rely on HaShem to put the right words in our mouths. And lest you think that this perspective is "extreme " or too Chassidische, the Sfas Emes quotes a pasuk in Mishlei (16: 1): 'Le'ahdam me'archei lev; u'mei HaShem ma'aneh lashon". That is: "A person has his thoughts about what to say; but what he actually says comes from HaShem." Truly what the Sfas Emes has been telling us.

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Re: Chizzuk Tefillah

Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 19 Aug 2011 17:00

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Was learning in Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 16:3 about answering Amein in middle of the parshiyos in Krias Shema. The only two brachos of shemona esrei you can answer Amein to be'emtza ha'prakim (in middle of the parshiyos) are Hakel Hakadosh and **Shome'a Tefila**.

Underscores and reinforces the idea that the RBSO listens to our tefilos. Of course that idea should not be big news to anyone. But knowing it and living it are very different. ?? ??? ????

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Re: Chizzuk Tefillah

Posted by ur-a-jew - 19 Aug 2011 17:06

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[ZemirosShabbos wrote on 19 Aug 2011 17:00:](#)

Was learning in Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 16:3 about answering Amein in middle of the parshiyos in Krias Shema. The only two brachos of shemona esrei you can answer Amein to be'emtza ha'prakim (in middle of the parshiyos) are Hakel Hakadosh and **Shome'a Tefila**.

Underscores and reinforces the idea that the RBSO listens to our tefilos. Of course that idea should not be big news to anyone. But knowing it and living it are very different. ?? ??? ????

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I would just add that perhaps there is a message there that when we conduct our lives with Kedusha, Hashem answers our tefillos.

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Re: Chizzuk Tefillah

Posted by ZemirosShabbos - 19 Aug 2011 17:08

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beautiful and true!

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