

Kinder Torah

בס"ד

Parashas Tetzaveh

Worldwide Symphony

"Abba, we are really making progress in our learning of the *Pisukei DiZimra*. We are up to psalm 148!"

"Boruch Hashem, Avi."

"I have a question, Abba. I know that every word of *tefillah* is of supreme importance. However, are there some *tefillos* which are considered more important than others?"

"Yes, Rashi's commentary on the Gemora (Shabbos 118b) states that psalm 148 is the main part of *Pisukei DiZimra*. The Mechaber in Shulchan Aruch - Orach Chaim 52 discusses what to do if you come late to *Shacharis*. The minimum *Pisukei DiZimra* that can be said are 'Boruch She'amar', 'Ashrei', and 'Yistabach'. If you have more time, say 'Hallelu es Hashem min hashomayim' (psalm 148)."

"It must be a very important *zemer*, if is the first one said if time is pressing (after the minimum three.)"

"It is, Avi. However, I should point out to you the words of the Ba'air Heytev. He cites the Siddur Ha'Ari who tells how the Maggid warned the Beis Yosef (Rav Yosef Karo, author of the Shulchan Aruch) to come to the Beis HaKinesses early in order to pray all of the *tefillos* in the proper order without skipping anything. Then they can proceed straight up the 'tefillah pipeline' to the Almighty. Subsequently, blessings may come down to earth through their pipeline. One who prays out of order reverses the pipelines and the system cannot work properly."

"Oy vey. I surely would not want to do that. I am coming to *Shacharis* on time."

"I am very proud of you, Avi. Let us begin to explain this *tefillah*. The Yesod ViShoreh HoAvodah relates that the importance of this psalm makes it fitting to say with special enthusiasm. It can be described as a worldwide symphony of glory to the Creator of the universe. The Malbim explains that the praises begin in the heavens, work their way down to the earth, and then rise up to the pinnacle of creation. 'Praise Hashem from the heavens; praise Him in the heights. Praise Him all His angels; praise Him all His legions. Praise Him sun and moon; praise Him all bright stars.'"

"Is man commanding the heavens and angels to praise the Almighty?"

"The *meforshim* differ on this point, Avi. Even if it is not a command, we are saying that it is pleasing to extol the Creator."

"Which aspect of His greatness are we glorifying?"

"He commanded and they were created. He established them for all time. He issued a decree which will not change. What awesome power! Hashem created an entire universe from nothing. He set it in motion with laws that have not changed one iota for thousands of years." "That is truly mind boggling."

"Yes, Avi. Now we speak to the earth and its creations. 'Praise Hashem from the earth, sea giants and all watery depths. Fire and hail, snow and vapor, stormy wind fulfilling His word.' When we suffer from hurricanes, tornados and other strong winds, we must realize that it is not by chance, rather they are obeying the command of the Almighty. We are being punished for our misdeeds.¹ 'Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars. Wild beasts and all animals, crawling things and winged fowl. Earthly kings and all governments, ministers and all judges on earth. Young men and also maidens. Elders together with youths. Let them praise the Name of Hashem, for His Name alone is exalted; His majesty is over the earth and the skies.'"

"Abba, this *tefillah* truly is a worldwide symphony of tribute to the Almighty."

"Yes, Avi. At the time of final redemption, He will raise the might of His people, causing praise for His pious ones, the children of Israel, His intimate people, Halleluka!"



Kinderlach . . .

Hashem's majesty fills the universe. Each and every one of His creations shows His wisdom and power. In this tefillah, we tell the world to extol its Creator. The stars, the heavens, the angels, the creatures, the storms, the kings, the people, and more will all glorify the Almighty! What a magnum opus of adoration! He will raise us up for all to see that we are His cherished nation. May that day come speedily in our days, amen!

Prepare Your Heart

"Yes, young man, what would you like? Your wish is my command."

The young man could hardly believe it. The King was ready to grant him anything that he requested. What should he ask for? His mind flooded with thoughts of all the good things in the world. It was all his for the asking . . .

"Avi! Avi!"

"Yes, Abba."

"I have been calling you for five minutes. Were you sleeping?"

"I guess so, Abba; in a manner of speaking. I was daydreaming."

"About what, Avi?"

"I dreamed that the King was ready to give me anything that I asked for."

"Wow, Avi. That is quite a dream. What did you ask for?"

"I was thinking about that when I heard you calling, Abba. What should I have asked for?"

"Well, Avi, Hashem was ready to give Shlomo HaMelech anything that he asked for. He said, 'Request what I should give you' (Melachim 1, 3:5)."

"Didn't Shlomo ask for wisdom Abba?"

"Yes, Avi. He was only twelve years old when he assumed the kingship, and he needed a wise heart to judge the people. He could have asked for wealth, long life, revenge from his enemies. Yet he valued wisdom more than any of these things. Therefore Hashem granted him 'a wise and understanding heart, unlike any before or since' (Melachim 1, 3:12)."

"Just a minute, Abba. You mentioned wisdom, and a wise heart. Is there a difference between the two?"

"You are really on the ball today, Avi. Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz zt"l discusses this very point in this week's parasha. Those who worked on the clothing of the Kohanim had to have a *chochom leiv* - a wise heart (Shemos 28:3). A later verse states, 'I have endowed the heart of every *chochom leiv* with wisdom' (Shemos 31:6). Who merits receiving wisdom? One with a wise heart. What is a wise heart? One that values and desires wisdom more than anything else in the world. Shlomo HaMelech became the wisest man in the world because he valued wisdom more than anything."

"How strong does this desire have to be, Abba?"

"Rav Shmuelevitz brings an example from the Megilla, Avi. All of the inhabitants of the civilized world, thousands of thousands of citizens of 127 nations bowed down to Haman HaRasha, except for one person - Mordechai HaYehudi. What was Haman's reaction? 'Yet all this is worth nothing to me as long as I see Mordechai HaYehudi sitting at the king's gate' (Esther 5:13). That is the enormity of his desire for *kovod* (honor). Our desire for wisdom has to be at least as great as his desire for *kovod*."

"Abba, you have inspired me to be a *chochom leiv*. I am going to begin learning right now."

"May you become a very wise man, Avi."

Kinderlach . . .

If you want to hold something, you need the proper container. We are all learning, trying very hard to understand and remember the chochma (wisdom) of the Torah. What is the best container to hold that chochma? A chochom leiv. A heart that desires wisdom is a container ready to be filled with the deepest secrets of the universe. Show Hashem how much you value his Holy Wisdom, by seeking it with all of your heart. B'ezras Hashem you will all be blessed with much chochma.

¹ Radak