



Praying WITH Passion

GIVING MORE MEANING TO OUR TEFILLAH - ONE WEEK AT A TIME ISSUE NO. 35

Tefillah Focus Of The Week: **PESUKEI D'ZIMRAH: HODU** *What It Takes to Run the World*

...הבו לה' כבוד ועז: הבו לה' כבוד שמו.... אף תכון תבל בל תמוט:

Meaning:

The simple translation of the prayer

...**Render to Hashem honor and might.** Render to Hashem honor worthy of His Name.... Indeed, the world is fixed so that it cannot falter.

Theme:

An essential concept of the prayer

The Cause of Everything

Nothing happens by chance, but only because Hashem wills it.

Insight:

Deeper meanings of the theme

The Foundation of Emunah

There are peoples in the world who believe that although G-d created the world, He does not supervise its daily events. Rather, G-d delegated the daily operation of the world to the sun, stars and forces of nature. According to this view, G-d is like a king who establishes his kingdom but entrusts the daily operations to lower level ministers. Such a king commands his subjects' honor for the kingdom he set up. However, since this king does

not exercise his power to tend to his subjects' needs, he does not deserve their praise for his "might."

Hashem's subjects, however, say 'הבו לה' כבוד ועז, praising both His honor and His might. He not only established Creation, but directs every occurrence within it. This concept, called *hashgacha pratis*, is a fundamental aspect of *emunah*; **one must recognize Hashem's role in everything from grand historical events to seemingly insignificant personal incidents.** (*Siach Yitzchak*). As Rabbi Yechezkiel Levenstein (Ohr Yechezkiel, *Emunah* page 105) explains, "Just as Hashem *alone* created the world, He *alone* runs the world. And whoever does not believe this does not believe

in *Hashgacha*—since *emunah* and *Hashgacha* are one...—and he is not considered to be a believer in G-d."

Visualize:

Images that bring the prayer to life

Understanding G-d's Hashgacha

Close your eyes for a moment and draw a painting of a tree in your mind. Every detail — the fruit growing on the tree, the trunk, the branches, the children playing under it—is an expression of you. Because you are the sole creator of that tree, it's all united by a single common thread—you.

Open your eyes and what happens to the tree? It's gone. The tree exists only as long (cont. P. 2)

Word to the Wise: Meaning within the meaning

The word 'לה in Hodu is actually *written* with the letters Yud-Heh-Vav-Heh. It is *pronounced* as if the letters are *Aleph-Daled-Nun* and *Yud*. *Rashi* on this verse (*I Divrei Hayamim 16:29*) explains that the pronunciation of Hashem's name refers to His role as Master of all. When one mentions the Divine Name, he should have in mind the meaning of the Name as it is read, referring to **His Mastery over all creation, Who 'Is, Was, and Will Be.'** (*Siman 5, Se'if 1*). Accordingly, when we say 'הבו לה' כבוד שמו, we "render to Hashem honor worthy of His Name," that he is Master of All.



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 PESUKEI D'ZIMRAH: HODU *What It Takes to Run the World*

(VISUALIZE cont.)

as you will it to be. Not only are you its creator, you're its sustainer as well. Without you, there is no tree.

*This helps us understand G-d's relationship to His creation. G-d is the sole Creator of the universe. By definition, G-d is continuously creating and sustaining the universe. Just as a shining light is in constant need of electricity, **nothing can exist without His constant will generating it.** Cut the current and the light immediately ceases.*

This understanding that nothing in Creation can exist independent of Hashem is expressed, and is strengthened, every time we pray. By coming to Hashem for our needs, we continually weed out the subtly invasive belief in cause and effect, reinforcing in our hearts that there is no "cause" but Hashem's will.

Try This!

- ▶ Sometimes, Hashem's hashgacha is more obvious to us. This is especially true when we see a prayer answered. Think of an instance in which your prayer was answered – whether it was for something small or great – and recall the feeling of having Hashem respond directly to your needs. Focus on that feeling when you recite the words "כבוד ועז" in Pesukei D'Zimrah.

Did You Know

▶ No Place for a Chat

In last week's "Did You Know" we stated that there is no specific halachah which prohibits talking between *Birchos ha-Shachar* and *Baruch She'amar*. It is important to note, however, that the *Mishnah Berurah* (Siman 151:2) equates mundane conversation in shul with the belittlement of Hashem's honor. Furthermore, it states that such conversations are likely to cause other people to talk and lead to *lashon hora* and arguments. He therefore concludes that a person should speak only words of Torah and Tefillah in a shul. (See also *Sefer Chofetz Chaim*, Introduction, *Mitzvos Asin 7*; and the *Chayei Adam* (Klal 17 Sif 6).