### Tefillah Focus Of The Week:

### **PESUKEI D'ZIMRAH: HODU**

The Power of Holiness

**MEANING:** The simple translation of the prayer

Render might to G-d, Whose majesty hovers over Israel and Whose might is in the clouds. You are awesome, O G-d, from your sanctuaries, O G-d of Israel—it is He Who grants might and power to the people, blessed is G-d.

תנו עז לאלקים על ישראל גאותו ועזו בשחקים: נורא אלקים ממקדשיך הוא נותן עז ותעצמות לעם. ברוך אלקים:

### WORD TO THE WISE: Meaning within the word

hazal (see Yechezkiel 11:16) tell us that because we no longer merit having the Holy Temple, our *shuls* serve as a *Mikdash Meat*, a small Sanctuary, and our prayers substitute for the offerings. The Mishnah Berurah (Siman 151, Se'if Katan 1) explains that since a shul is called Mikdash Me'at, the exhortation "and My Sanctuary shall you revere," (Vayikra, 19:30) applies to every synagogue, each of which has the halachic status of kedushah. So holy are these way stations of exile scattered throughout the

world that they will be transported to Jerusalem when Mashiach arrives (Megillah 29a).

#### THEME:

An essential concept of the prayer

### A Powerful Presence

Hashem's holiness is powerful in our sanctuaries.

#### **INSIGHT:** Deeper meanings of the theme

# Always Near

fundamental question arises: If Hashem is Omnipresent, why do we single out the Shechinah's Presence in certain holy places -- such as a shul during tefillah? What is the significance of the Shechinah's Presence in these sacred places if Hashem is everywhere and anywhere?

The Aruch L'Ner (She'eilos U'Teshuvos Binyan Tzion, Siman 3) explains the concept as follows: the Shechinah, which we refer to as residing in various holy places, is not the actual entity of the Divine Presence, but an emanation of it. The Torah calls the Shechinah "the Glory of Hashem," and specifies locations in the earthly sphere where the Shechinah's Presence is apparent (Shemos 24:16; 40:34): "And the Glory

of Hashem dwelled on Mount Sinai" and "the Glory of Hashem filled the Mishkan."

Rav Chaim Friedlander, Mashgiach of the Ponevezh Yeshivah (Sifsei Chaim, Pirkei Emunah V'Hashgachah, Volume 1, page 170, citing the Ramchal) explains that "Shechinah" - which refers to "that which resides in your midst" — represents our relationship with Hashem. Thus, although His Presence is indeed constant, our awareness of the Shechinah is stronger when we are inspired by an occasion or a place of holiness. To the extent that we seek the Shechinah, we find It.

Therefore, Eitz Yosef explains that even though the actual entity of the Divine Presence rests above, נורא אלקים ממקדשיך, the emanation of it is awesome here in our own shuls.

### **VISUALIZE:**

Images that bring the prayer to life

## Where the Shechinah Shines Bright

The sun shines down upon the earth. One person, living near the equator, stands outside in broad daylight and feels intense heat beating down on his head. He travels a few hundred miles north, and the rays seem weaker. He steps into the shade of a tree and the sun's rays are obstructed. Dusk sets in and the sun disappears below the horizon. Yet out there in space, 93 million miles

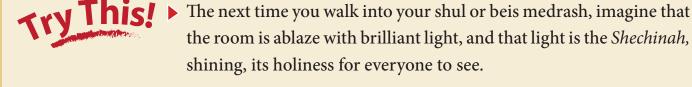


away, the sun is still emanating its constant blaze of light and heat, utterly unabated. To the person experiencing the sun's heat, it seems to change from time to time and place to place, but it is not really the sun that is changing.

The same idea applies to the Shechinah; the Glory of Hashem resides in the

Shechinah's Presence on earth refers to the force of holiness and sacredness that emanates from the Glory of Hashem so far away. This explains how different degrees of Shechinah rest in diverse holy places. The Ohr HaChaim Hakadosh (Bereishis 46:4) comments that the levels of kedushah emanating from the Shechinah vary according to the holiness of people present, the activities in which they are engaged, and the place they are occupying.

distant Heavens, while the



the room is ablaze with brilliant light, and that light is the *Shechinah*, shining, its holiness for everyone to see.



## Special Sanctity

Even after the Bais HaMikdash was destroyed, the Mount upon which the Bais HaMikdash stood still retains its special sanctity. Therefore, today, while we are all in a state of tumah, ritual defilement, it is strictly forbidden for a Jew to enter the Temple Mount (Mishneh Berurah Siman 561, Se'if Katan 5).

**To sponsor** an issue of *Praying With Passion*, please call: 201.837.0354 or email info@prayingwithfire.org

Praying With Passion is a free weekly e-mail newsletter by the author of Praying With Fire (Vols 1 & 2) and Yearning With Fire.