



TOWARDS MEANINGFUL

TEFILLA

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על הצדיקים

Israel, upon the remnant of their sages, upon the righteous converts and upon us. Grant ample reward to all who truly trust in Your Name, and place our lot among them; may we never be ashamed, for we have put our trust in You. Blessed are You Hashem, the support and security of the righteous.

After a few weeks of Chagim, we now return to our regular study of the Shemoneh Esrei. The last bracha we studied was ולמלשינים; we will now continue with על הצדיקים. As we mentioned previously, the first half of the brachot of Shemoneh Esrei are personal in nature, whereas the second half are communal requests for the development and success of the nation as a whole. The first three of these national brachot – ולמלשינים and על הצדיקים are all spiritual communal requests in which we ask Hashem to provide us with the ideal spiritual environment in which to flourish as a nation. We firstly need to have good leaders and a justice system based on Torah values (השיבה שופטינו), we secondly need to rid ourselves of all evil influences (ולמלשינים), and we thirdly want to have a society of positive role models in which we are surrounded by good influences (על הצדיקים).

על־הצדיקים ועל־החסידים ועל־זקני עמך בית־ישראל ועל־פליטת סופריהם ועל־גרי הצדק ועלינו, יהוה נא רחמיך ה' אלקינו, ותן שכר טוב לקלהובושים בשמך בצמח, ושים חלקנו עמָהֶם, ולעולם לא יבוש כִּי־בך בטחנו. בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה', מִשְׁעַן וּמִבְטָח לְצַדִּיקִים.

May Your mercies be aroused, Hashem our G-d, upon the righteous, upon the pious, upon the elders of Your people, the House of

At first glance, this bracha seems to simply be a request to reward the Tzadikim. This is all good and nice, but what does it have to do with us? Why is this request so important, and of what relevance is it to those of us who are not Tzadikim?

The answer is found in the words - ושים חלקינו עמָהֶם *and place our lot among them.*

In this bracha, we ask Hashem to reward those who have complete faith in Him and then we go on to say ושים חלקינו עמָהֶם – *and place our lot amongst them.* It seems like we are asking that we should be included in their reward. **Rav Eliyahu Lopian** asks – This seems like an inappropriate request. Why should we deserve the same reward as the Tzadikim? He answers that we are not asking to be part of their reward but rather that we should become part of the “club” of those who completely trust in Hashem, that their complete bitachon (faith) should rub off on us.

This bracha is so important because in order to grow as a nation, we need to create a society where the righteous are held in high esteem. We want to live in a world in

which those who are good are rewarded, in which it is clear to all which individuals we should try and emulate.

Rav Eliyahu Dessler in the *Michtav M'Eliyahu* writes that when a person does a Mitzvah, that Mitzvah generates another Mitzvah – מצווה גוררת מצווה. We generally understand this to mean that when a person does a Mitzvah, it will enable him to continue on that path and to do more Mitzvot. Rav Dessler writes that this is also true on a communal level. When a person does a Mitzvah, that has a domino effect on those around him, who see the Mitzvah that he has performed and are inspired to perform Mitzvot as well. So it is very important to be surrounded by good influences. But he goes on to write that this only works when we are in the company of a צדיק משפיע, a person whose good deeds are noticeable. So we ask Hashem not only to put us in an environment where we are surrounded by Tzadikim, but that their actions should be obvious and unconcealed so that we have the opportunity to learn from them and to emulate them.

We conclude with the message לעולם לא - נבוש כִּי־בך בְּטַחְנוּ – we will never be ashamed for we have put our trust in You. The true reward for trusting in Hashem is the state of calm that it affords us. We never have to feel ashamed for we know that Hashem will take care of us. The knowledge of השלך עליהם יהיה בְּךָ וְהוּא יִכְלֶכְלֶךְ (תהילים נה:כג) that we can throw our burdens onto Hashem and He will deal with them, is the most comforting and empowering message we can take with us, both as a nation and as individuals. May we all merit to attain such a level of complete bitachon in Hashem! ■



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