



TOWARDS MORE MEANINGFUL TEFILLA

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OU ISRAEL
Women's Division

Unlocking Tefilla Through Its Words

One of the greatest challenges in our Avodat Hashem today is developing a genuine connection to Hashem through Tefilla. We daven regularly, attend shul, and faithfully recite the words, but how often do we truly feel that we are standing before Hashem and speaking with Him? If we are honest with ourselves, many of us would admit that although we occasionally experience moments of inspiration, our Tefillot often feel routine, dry, and disconnected.

We do not want this to be our reality, yet many of us struggle to know how to change it.

So where do we begin?



The *Tziyunei Derech* suggests that perhaps we should start from a place that feels accessible: the words themselves. By exploring the meaning and depth embedded within the text of our Tefillot, we can begin to awaken the emotions, awareness, and yearning that lead

to a genuine relationship with Hashem. **Rav Shlomo Wolbe** writes that when a person finds himself unable to concentrate during davening, he should focus on the specific words he is recit-

ing and work to understand their meaning. Through that process, he can regain focus and reconnect to his Tefilla.

The *Saba of Kelm* teaches that when the Anshei Knesset HaGedola composed the sidur, they infused every word with profound ideas and spiritual depth. If we seek inspiration in our tefilla, we must invest time in uncovering those layers of meaning. He offers a beautiful analogy - Just as Hashem created food with taste so that we would enjoy eating and nourish our bodies, the Anshei Knesset HaGedola “seasoned” our Tefillot with rich and meaningful concepts so that we would



find pleasure in Tefilla and nourish our Neshamot. Our task is to delve beneath the surface and discover those treasures.

It is my hope that through this column, we can explore some of these ideas together and deepen our experience of Tefilla. Writing a column on Tefilla is a daunting task because it almost implies that the writer is an expert on the subject, which could not be farther from the truth. But as **Rav Yissachar Rubin**, the author of the sefer

טללי אורות: באורי תפילה writes, *“It would be appropriate for me to be too scared and intimidated to delve into the Kodshei HaKedoshim, the most holy words of the Anshei Knesset haGedola, words which are from another world, and to say to myself – who am I to take on this monumental task, this place where you are “standing” is holy ground - אדמת קודש הוא. Yet upon reflection, I realized that my role is merely to gather together and to organize the ideas of all of our sages throughout the generations regarding Tefilla, and to make those ideas more accessible to people who want to work on their Tefilla.”*

Inspired by these words, I will try b'Ezrat Hashem to focus each week on a different section of the davening, sharing insights from our meforshim. Some of the material will be familiar to those who participated in

our previous Tefilla series, drawing primarily from *Talalei Orot* and *Olam HaTefillot*, while much of it will be new, based largely on the teachings found in *Nefesh Shimshon*. I encourage you to clip sections that resonate with you and place them in your siddur, or jot meaningful insights in the margins. In this way, these ideas can become a lasting part of your daily Tefilla rather than something that is quickly forgotten.

It is my hope that the process of researching and writing this column will strengthen my own Tefilla, and that together we can grow steadily and learn to connect with HaKadosh Baruch Hu in a more real and meaningful way each day. ■



This year, the OU Israel Women's Division was privileged to welcome several new staff members: Aliza Back, our Yerushalayim Coordinator; Basya Teitelbaum, our Beit Shemesh Coordinator; and Chaya Kesselman, our ATID Young Olot Coordinator. Throughout the year, they will contribute on a rotating basis additional insights on Tefilla, enriching our collective journey toward more meaningful Tefilla.

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