

# The Aroma of Tefillah

פרשת אחרי מות-קדושים

The Chofetz Chaim writes in a letter that Hashem is full of compassion and He won't tolerate our silence. We must cry out to Him in times of trouble and He will for sure listen, and save us. The length and magnitude of suffering is due to the fact that we are not crying out enough. He goes on to say that we should not just rely on Shemoneh Esrei, because it is fluent in our mouths and therefore we don't focus as much. However, if a person stops loom in and focuses on the suffering, he will pour out his heart and such a Tefillah won't be turned away. It is clear from the Chofetz Chaim that even though Shemoneh Esrei is so powerful, since we are so as used to saying it, it results in us not focusing on it. Based on these words of the Chofetz Chaim, it is important to work on ideas and insights that can help us improve our focus in davening.

The Seforno tells us that Dovid HaMelech composed Chapter 141 in Tehillim when he was on the run from Shaul. In an effort to be saved from Shaul, Dovid ran to the land of Pelishtim. He composed this Mizmor (141) as a prayer that Hashem would save him from the hands of Shaul and others, and that he not be drawn towards the actions of the Pelishtim. Dovid says, "Hashem I have called You to save me from the hands of Shaul. Save me quickly because the danger is close, as Shaul is constantly chasing me. Listen to my voice as I ask that no distress comes upon me in the future. Let my Tefillah not be a request for forgiveness, but rather it should stand in front of you like the Ketores that was not brought for any sin."

At first glance Dovid's request that his Tefillah should not be a request for forgiveness seems puzzling. We know that pain and suffering are caused by sin. Why would Dovid not want his Tefillah to be a request for forgiveness, when this would seem to be the key to his salvation? In addition, why did Dovid feel that it was critical to ask that his Tefillah should be like the Ketores (which is brought solely to give a Nachas Ruach to Hashem) in the midst of begging for his life? We see from the Tefillah of Dovid that there is another dimension to Tefillah, and this aspect plays a critical role in our Tefillos being answered. Although Dovid was davening to be saved from Shaul, he wanted a portion of this same Tefillah to be solely to give Nachas Ruach to Hashem. Dovid understood how much Hashem desires us to turn to Him in times of trouble. Therefore, Dovid's intention in his Tefillah was not merely to be saved from Shaul, but it also was to fulfill Hashem's desire. He wanted his Tefillah to function like the Ketores which was just to bring a Nachas Ruach to Hashem.

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We can use the above idea to help us improve our focus in davening. Having in mind that our Tefillos should bring a Nachas Ruach to Hashem will create a greater awareness of how important our Tefillos are to Hashem, and the Nachas Ruach it gives Him, which will thereby help us focus with greater intensity. This idea is especially relevant to the difficult times that we find ourselves in. Unfortunately we have not been able to say קדוש קדוש קדוש, these past few weeks. We have been deprived of our greatest way to bring Nachas Ruach to Hashem. The Sefer Heicholos says the greatest pleasure Hashem has, is when the Jewish people lift up their eyes and say קדוש קדוש קדוש. We should therefore try to incorporate this intention within our Tefillos, and use every opportunity to bring Nachas Ruach to Hashem.

Another insight we can use to help improve our focus in davening is an idea from Rabbi Avrohom Ben Harambam, in his Sefer Hamaspik La'avodas Hashem. He writes that there are different levels of trusting in Hashem. The first level is a person who asks Hashem for his needs and is hopeful, but is unsure whether he will be answered due to his sins. The second level is a person who asks with greater intensity and fervor, called בקוש ודרושה and is hopeful. On this level, one is still unsure whether he will be answered due to his sins. The third level is where one is sure he will be answered. We can ask why is the person in the second level, who asks with greater passion and intensity in a different category of trust in Hashem? He is still unsure, and seems similar to the first level?

We can glean from here a powerful insight that can help daven with an enhanced focus; a person who musters up the strength to daven with more focus and intensity, doesn't just have a better Tefillah, but he elevates himself to a new category of Bitachon. The hope that he experiences from the strength of his Tefillah raises him to new heights of trust in Hashem. This new Bitachon will serve as a greater Zechus for him in having his Tefillah answered.

BASED ON THE WEEKLY SHMUSS GIVEN BY HARAV SHAYA COHEN, ROSH HAYESHIVA ZICHRON ARYEH

לעילוי נשמת גיטל בת הרב אליעזר מנוח  
לעילוי נשמת הרב יוסף חיים בן מאיר  
לעילוי נשמת רפאל חיים דוב בן ריסא שושנה  
לרפואה שלמה יהושע דוד בן אלטא יענטא