

“SEFER YEHOSHUA SIYUM”

Contemplating Connections to Our Tefilla

Prepared with love by Fonda-Fayga Weiss, Yerushalayim for MyNachYomi4Women
For the Merit of Refuah Shleima B'mheira of Avraham Yitzchak Ben Chana

Sefer Yehoshua Perek 1

ח לא-ימוש ספר התורה הזה מפיה, והגית בו יומם ולילה, למען תשמר לעשות, ככל-הכתוב בו: כי-אז תצליח
את-דרךך, ואז תשכיל.

8 This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but **thou shalt meditate therein day and night**, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein; for then thou shalt make thy ways prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

What do the words **וְהִגִּיתָ בּוֹ יוֹמָם וְלַיְלָה** “thou shalt meditate [words of Torah] therein day and night” mean to you? Why and how do you think Hashem wants us to fulfill **וְהִגִּיתָ בּוֹ יוֹמָם וְלַיְלָה** as conveyed in Sefer Yehoshua?

What does it mean to be in a meditative state day and night? Is it possible to contemplate Torah while multi-tasking during our waking hours?

Do we typically (or ever) enter into a meditative state during our davening? During our Torah learning? To meditate... is that with consciousness and focused intent? Or is this being in auto-pilot mode? Is this an emotional, mental, intellectual, spiritual or physical (e.g. via speech) experience?

BTW most hold that these very words refer to our Mitzvah of Talmud Torah... learning Torah.

Just some ideas to ponder...

Sefer Yehoshua Perek 2

Here we have a huge takeaway message on behalf of doing g'milut chasadim. Rachav did a chessed to help and save the 2 spies, and in turn, her own life was saved together with her family. And we learn (through midrash) of many future zechuyot of Rachav... in her doing teshuva, becoming Jewish, marrying Yehoshua, bearing descendants who will be Kohanim, etc. All of these are her zechuyot we know about in this world. Certainly, there are many more in the next world.

With g'milut chasadim, you are often helping other people. Yet in the process BH, you yourself (and your family) benefit so much from the chessed you do for others.

In morning davening, we say everyday:

אלו דברים שאין להם שעור. הפאה והבפורים והראיון וגמילות חסדים ותלמוד תורה. אלו דברים שאדם אוכל פרותיהם בעולם הזה והקרן קיימת לו לעולם הבא. ואלו הן. כבוד אב ואם. וגמילות חסדים. והשקמת בית המדרש. שחרית וערבית. והכנסת אורחים. ובקור חולים. והכנסת כלה. ולוית המת. ועיון תפלה. והבאת שלום בין אדם לחברו ובין איש לאשתו. ותלמוד תורה כנגד כלם. (משנה פאה א:א)

May we all be zochot to jump on every act of chessed that we can do for each other in this world. With many benefits in this world and in the next.

Sefer Yehoshua Perek 3

Before crossing the Yarden River to enter into E"Y, Yehoshua tells B"Y to **הַתְּקַדְּשׁוּ** "to sanctify themselves" in preparation for what is about to happen. Yehoshua's instructions are practical and enlightening so as to give proper perspective to the people B"Y being granted Divine entry into a Holy Land.

ה וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶל־הָעָם הַתְּקַדְּשׁוּ כִּי מָחָר יַעֲשֶׂה יְהוָה בְּקִרְבְּכֶם נִפְלְאוֹת:

5 And Yehoshua said to the people, "**Sanctify yourselves**, for tomorrow Hashem will do wonders among you."

This is equivalent to taking a preparation step for any Avodat Hashem that we ourselves are about to do. For example, instead of fast forwarding into our davening or mouthing a bracha, it makes a big difference if we first pause and contemplate our kavanah. In anticipation of Shabbatot and chagim, we are typically focused on heart-felt preparations. So too, preparation enhances many mitzvot in our everyday lives, to help us not "just do it."

With a bit of advanced preparation, may our subsequent actions get to a new level beH.

Sefer Yehoshua Perek 4

כא נִיאֶמֶר אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁאַלְוּ בְּנֵיכֶם מִחַר אֶת-אֲבוֹתֵם לֵאמֹר מָה הָאֲבָנִים הָאֵלֶּה:
כב וְהוֹדַעְתֶּם אֶת-בְּנֵיכֶם לֵאמֹר בִּבְשָׁה עָבַר יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת-הַיַּרְדֵּן הַזֶּה:

21 And he spoke to the Children of Israel, saying, "When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, 'What do these stones mean?'

22 then **you shall let your children know**, saying, 'Israel came over this Jordan on dry land...'

Across the span of all of our ages and experience levels, we are always B"Y, children of Hashem. We can strengthen our belief in Hashem's Wonders through relaying (i.e., making it known) the great miracles that Hashem has done for us, such as B"Y crossing the Yam Tsuf and crossing the Yarden River.

To enhance our davening, the Kuzari suggests that we conjure up images of a great miracle that Hashem has done. When we behold Hashem's Wonders before our very eyes, we will also view and relate to Hashem differently.

Sefer Yehoshua Perek 5

When B"Y entered the land of E"Y, they began to eat of the produce of the land.

יא וַיֹּאכְלוּ מֵעֵבֹר הָאָרֶץ מִמַּחֲרַת הַפֶּסַח מִצֹּת וְקֵלַי בְּעֵצִים הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה:
יב וַיִּשְׁבֹּת הַמָּן מִמַּחֲרַת בְּאֹכְלֵם מֵעֵבֹר הָאָרֶץ וְלֹא־הָיָה עוֹד לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִן וַיֹּאכְלוּ מִתְּבוּאוֹת אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן בַּשָּׁנָה
הַהִיא:

11 And they ate of the produce of the land on the morrow after the Passover, unleavened cakes and parched corn, in the selfsame day.

12 And the manna ceased on the morrow, **after they had eaten of the produce of the land.** The Children of Israel did not have manna any more; **but they ate of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.**

Birkat Hamazon (bentching) is made up of four brachot. The first bracha of Birkat Hamazon, composed by Moshe Rabbeinu, relates to the physical sustenance of each individual of B"Y, as each person was uniquely sustained by ma'an throughout B"Y's wandering in the desert.

This second bracha of Birkat Hamazon is Birkat Ha'aretz which relates to the physical welfare of the entire nation of B"Y. According to the Gemara (*Brachot 48b*), Yehoshua composed this bracha as a blessing of thanks for the Land, after leading B"Y into Eretz Yisrael. In this bracha, we express our thanks to Hashem for being given the Land of Israel which is desirable, good, and bountiful:

נוֹדָה לָךְ ה' אֱלוֹהֵינוּ, עַל שֶׁנַּחֲלַת לַאֲבוֹתֵינוּ אֶרֶץ חַמְדָּה טוֹבָה וְרוּחְבָּה

Sefer Yehoshua Perek 6

One of our earliest tefilot, Aleinu L'Shabei'ach, was composed by Yehoshua bin Nun. The Anshei K'neset HaG'dolah later instituted its inclusion in the Malchiyut section of Musaf davening on Rosh HaShanah.

According to one of the Rishonim (the Kol-Bo), Yehoshua composed the first paragraph of the Aleinu tefilla at the time of the conquest of Yericho. Yehoshua signed his original name (Hoshea, from BaMidbar 13:16) as an inverted acronym from the first letters of the prayer's first 4 verses:

עלינו לשבח לאדון הכל
לתת גדלה ליוצר בראשית. שלא עשנו כגוי הארצות. ולא שמנו כמשפחות האדמה .

שלא שם חלקנו כהם וגורלנו ככל המונם:
שהם משתחוים להבל וריק ומתפללים אל אל לא יושיע:

ואנחנו משתחוים ומודים לפני מלך מלכי המלכים הקדוש ברוך הוא: שהוא נוטה שמים ויוסד ארץ. ומושב
יקרו בשמים ממעל. ושכינת עזו בגבהי מרומים:

הוא אלהינו אין עוד. אמת מלכנו. אפס זולתו. כפיתוב בתורתו. וידעת היום והשבת אל לבבך. כי ה' הוא
האלהים בשמים ממעל ועל הארץ מתחת. אין עוד:

Upon entering E"Y and conquering Yericho, Yehoshua saw the ways of the idol worshipping inhabitants. Being a loyal servant of Hashem, Yehoshua wished to praise G-d and cause B"Y to remember that they are different from the nations of the world. Yehoshua lifted his hands towards the heavens, and with great fear and trepidation said in a loud voice, "עלינו לשבח!"

"Look Hashem, how special Your nation is. They worship only You. It is incumbent upon us to praise the Master of all! How fortunate are we! We are not like the idol worshippers, who bow down to vanity and emptiness and pray to a god who cannot help them. Hashem created us with the merit to serve Him! He spreads the heavens and establishes the earth; the seat of His Glory is in the heavens! He is our G-d; there is nothing else. He is truth, all else is insignificant."

Yehoshua davens Aleinu L'Shabei'ach with the hope of instilling separation between B"Y and the nations of the land. As a plea that B"Y not be influenced by the idol worshippers of the land of Israel which they are about to conquer and inhabit.

We say Aleinu L'Shabei'ach at the conclusion of each daily prayer service-- Shacharit, Mincha, and Maariv. The Aleinu tefilla helps implant faith that that our prayers preceding it do not return empty-handed. Because our lot is not like those who worship powerless gods. Rather we prostrate ourselves before the King of kings, the Holy One, Blessed be He! The Bach adds another reason – to fix in our hearts as we go on our way (after davening) the Oneness of the Kingdom of Heaven, and to strengthen in our hearts this emunah to help carry us through temptations of the day.

For more insights on the Aleinu prayer, listen to Rivka Alter's podcast on Aleinu (as part of the OU Women's Initiative Counting Toward Sinai - Tefillah series): <https://outorah.org/p/69224>

To learn even more about the Aleinu prayer, go to: <http://www.aleinu.org/index.html>

Sefer Yehoshua Perek 7

From Achan, we learn that someone being killed by the Beit Din needs to confess one's sin, which will grant them a חלק לעולם הבא a portion in the next world.

כה ויאמר יהושע מה עכרתנו יעקרבך יהוה ביום הזה...

25 And Yehoshua said, "Why have you troubled us? **Hashem shall trouble you this day**"...

As elucidated in משנה סנהדרין ו:ב, this pasuk means that Hashem will punish you [Achan] this very day, for only the sin you have transgressed. However, because you have confessed (see psukim 19-20) prior to being killed [stoned], you have attained complete repentance and will thereby die clean of all sins and have a place in עולם הבא.

Upon repenting, Achan realized that his sin (in taking booty from Yericho) represented a lack of unity among B"Y which he sought to correct. Some attribute the second paragraph of our Aleinu L'Shabei'ach tefilla to Achan, as hinted by the initials of the first three words (על כן נקוה). While now, we are the only nation that recognizes Hashem's Kingship, we hope that some day all nations will recognize Hashem's Glory. And that will occur only when the Jewish people become "a unified nation in the land."

על כן נקוה לך ה' אלהינו לראות מהרה בתפארת עזך. להעביר גלולים מן הארץ. והאילים פרות ופרתיון. לתקן עולם במלכות שדי. וכל בני בשר יקראו בשמך להפנות אליך כל רשעי ארץ. יפירו וידעו כל יושבי תבל. כי לך תכרע כל ברך. תשבע כל לשון. לפניך ה' אלהינו יכרעו ויפלו. ולכבוד שמך יקר יתנו. ויקבלו כלם את על מלכותך. ותמלך עליהם מהרה לעולם ועד. כי המלכות שלך היא ולעולמי עד תמלך בכבוד. פפתוב בתורתך. ה' ימלך לעולם ועד: ונאמר. והיה ה' למלך על כל הארץ. ביום ההוא יהיה ה' אחד ושמו אחד:

This second paragraph in our Aleinu L'Shabei'ach tefilla describes the glory of a world that will come to perfection under the Heavenly Kingdom. And all of mankind, including the wicked, will call upon Your Name and give honor to You. This includes a plea to help those very people who torment us. May they come to see the truth and return from their evil ways. They will all accept the yoke of Your kingdom, and You will rule over them forever. On that day, Hashem will be One and His Name will be One.

In this prayer, we express our fervent hope for that great day when idolatry and wickedness will be abolished and all mankind will acknowledge the sovereignty of the Almighty. Note that we do not pray for the wicked people to be destroyed, rather that their evil be obliterated, and they do teshuva.

Sefer Yehoshua Prakim 10 and 11

In both Yehoshua Prakim 10 and 11, Hashem is the One that assists B"Y to war. In Yehoshua Perek 10, Hashem helps B"Y with overt (open) miracles in which hail stones come down from the heavens, and Hashem fulfills Yehoshua's request for the sun and the moon to stay put. Whereas in Yehoshua Perek 11, the warfare seems to be in a "natural" way, not through open miracles.

In our daily Shmonei Esrei davening, we thank Hashem for many things, including for "Your Miracles that are with us every single day":

מִזְדִּים אֲנַחְנוּ לְךָ שְׂאֵתָהּ הוּא ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד ...

וְעַל נִסֵּיךְ שֶׁבְּכָל יוֹם עִמָּנוּ ,

וְעַל נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ וְטוֹבוֹתֶיךָ שֶׁבְּכָל עֵת, עֶרֶב וּבֹקֶר וְצָהָרִים.

Every day we witness "natural" life. We don't witness the Yarden River split in front of us, nor hail stones coming down from the heavens to target our enemies. However, one might wish to see such great miracles, which are so overt and can't be misconstrued as such.

Yet, the aim is for our eyes to witness "natural" incidents in life, and to acknowledge (thank) Hashem for the life He is giving us, all of which is a miracle. To be zochot to view one's life albeit seemingly "natural" as a Miracle that Hashem has Given us.

Sefer Yehoshua Perek 23

יא וְנִשְׁמַרְתֶּם מְאֹד לְנַפְשֵׁיכֶם לְאַהֲבָה אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם:

11 Take good heed therefore to yourselves, that you love Hashem your G-d.

A few times in our daily davening, we say וְאַהֲבָתָּה as commanded by Hashem (in דברים ו:ה). These words obligate us to love Hashem. One can fervently recite the words for this Mitzva. Yet how do we know and truly experience what it means to love Hashem? Actualizing this Mitzva, as an emotion we feel with our hearts, is something to continuously strive for.

Sefer Yehoshua Perek 24

At the end of Sefer Yehoshua, Yehoshua gathers all of B"Y to Shechem and proceeds to go through the history of our nation:

ב וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוֹשֻׁעַ אֶל־כָּל־הָעָם כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעֵבֶר הַנָּהָר יָשְׁבוּ אֲבוֹתֵיכֶם מֵעוֹלָם תְּרַח אָבִי אַבְרָהָם וְאָבִי נְחוֹר וַיַּעֲבְדוּ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים:
ג וְאֶקַּח אֶת־אֲבִיכֶם אֶת־אַבְרָהָם מֵעֵבֶר הַנָּהָר וְאוֹלָךְ אֹתוֹ בְּכַל־אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן [וְאַרְבֵּה] [וְאָרַב (אֶת־זְרַעוֹ וְאֶתְּנֶלְוֹ אֶת־יִצְחָק:
ד וְאֶתְּנֶן לְיִצְחָק אֶת־יַעֲקֹב וְאֶת־עֵשָׂו וְאֶתְּנֶן לְעֵשָׂו אֶת־הַר שֵׁעִיר לְרֵשֶׁת אוֹתוֹ וַיַּעֲקֹב וּבְנָיו יָרְדוּ מִצְרָיִם:

2 And Yehoshua said to all the people, "Thus says Hashem, the God of Israel, 'Your fathers dwelled of old time beyond the River, even Terach, the father of Avraham, and the father of Nahor; and they served other gods.

3 And I took your father Avraham from beyond the River and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed, and gave him Yitzchak.

4 And I gave to Yitzchak—Ya'akov and Esau; and I gave to Esau-- Mount Seir to possess it, and Ya'akov and his children went down into Egypt.

These psukim, familiar to us in the Hagaddah shel Pesach, start from the time of Terach, the father of Avraham Avinu. At the time of our Avot, Avraham's own father Terach served idols. Then Hashem chosers Avraham...

Sefer Yehoshua... the only sefer in Tanach in which B"Y, as a nation, are righteous throughout. Yehoshua manages to keep B"Y righteous and successful throughout all of his days BEH.

חזק חזק ונתחזק!