

WORSHIP OF THE HEART

FINDING MEANING IN PRAYER

Source Materials
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① TALMUD

(TA'AMIS 2b)

The Gemara gives the source for the inclusion of the mention of rain in the Shemoneh Esrei:

וּמֵנָּה לֵן דְּבִתְפִלָּה – And from where do we know that rain must be mentioned in the Shemoneh Esrei prayer? דְּתַנִּינָא – For it was taught in a Baraisa: „לְאַהֲבָה אֶת־ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וּלְעַבְדּוֹ בְּכָל־לְבַבְכֶם” – Scripture states: *TO LOVE HASHEM YOUR GOD AND TO SERVE HIM WITH ALL YOUR HEART.*^[22] אִיזוּ הִיא עֲבוּדָה שֶׁהִיא בְּלֵב – Now WHICH SERVICE of God IS performed IN THE HEART? הוּי – YOU MUST SAY that THIS IS a reference to PRAYER.^[23] וּבְתֵיב בְּתַרְיָה – AND immediately AFTER [THAT VERSE] IT IS WRITTEN: „וְנָתַתִּי מִטְר־אֶרְצְכֶם בְּעֵתוֹ יוֹרֵה וּמִלְקוֹשׁ” – AND I WILL PROVIDE RAIN FOR YOUR LAND IN ITS PROPER TIME – THE EARLY AND THE LATE RAINS. By the juxtaposition of one to the other, rain is associated with prayer.^[24]

② RAMBAM
(MAIMONIDES)

HILCHOS TEFILLA 1:1

א מצות עשה להתפלל בכל יום, שנאמר: וְעַבַדְתֶּם אֶת יְיָ אֱלֹהֵיכֶם. מפי השמועה למדו, שעבודה זו היא תפלה, שנאמר: וּלְעַבְדּוֹ בְּכָל־לְבַבְכֶם – אמרו חכמים: אי-זו היא עבודה שבלב? זו תפלה. ואין מנין התפלות מן התורה; ואין משנה התפלה הזאת מן התורה; ואין לתפלה זמן קבוע מן התורה.

ב וּלְפִיכָּךְ נָשִׂים וְעַבְדִּים חִיְבִין בְּתַפִּלָּה, לְפִי שֶׁהִיא מִצְוֹת עֲשֵׂה שֶׁלֹּא הַזְמַן גִּרְמָא. אֵלָּא חַיִּיב מִצְוָה זו כָּף הוּא – שֶׁיְהִי אָדָם מִתְחַנֵּן וּמִתְפַּלֵּל בְּכָל יוֹם, וּמַגִּיד שְׁבָחוֹ שֶׁל הַקְדוּשׁ-בְּרוּךְ-הוּא, וְאַחֲרֵיכֵן שׂוֹאֵל צְרִכָיו, שֶׁהוּא צָרִיךְ לָהֶם, בְּבִקְשָׁה וּבִתְחִינָה, וְאַחֲרֵיכֵן נוֹתֵן שְׁבַח וְהוֹדָיָה לָהּ, עַל הַטּוֹבָה שֶׁהִשְׁפִיעַ לוֹ, כֹּל אֶחָד לְפִי כָחוֹ.

1. It is a positive Torah commandment to pray every day, as [Exodus 23:25] states: “You shall serve God, your Lord.” Tradition teaches us that this service is prayer, as [Deuteronomy 11:13] states: “And serve Him with all your heart” and our Sages said: Which is the service of the heart? This is prayer.

The number of prayers is not prescribed in the Torah, nor does it prescribe a specific formula for prayer. Also, according to Torah law, there are no fixed times for prayers.

2. Therefore, women and slaves are obligated to pray, since it is not a time-oriented commandment.

Rather, this commandment obligates each person to offer supplication and prayer every day and utter praises of the Holy One, blessed be He; then petition for all his needs with requests and supplications; and finally, give praise and thanks to God for the goodness that He has bestowed upon him; each one according to his own ability.

(4) It is a positive mitzvah, etc. All this accords with the view of the Rambam that only the times for /praying/ the /eighteen-blessing/ prayer were ordained by the Sages, but the basic mitzvah of prayer is a Torah obligation. For it is stated,² "and to serve Him with all your heart" /, and the Sages explained³/, "What service is /performed/ with the heart? One must conclude that prayer /is meant/."

obligation to pray the prayer/ is /thus/ a positive commandment that /derives/ from a Rabbinical requirement which relates to a specific time. Women are exempt from /fulfilling/ any positive commandment which relates to a specific time, even where a Rabbinical requirement is involved, such as the sanctification of the /new/ moon. Despite this, /the Sages/ nevertheless obligated /women/ to /pray/ the Shacharis and Minchah /eighteen-blessing/ prayers, just like men, in view of /the fact/ that prayer constitutes a request for /Divine/ mercy.

However, there is no acknowledged wording for /prayer given/ by the Torah. /According to Torah law,/ one can pray with any /suitable/ wording one wishes /to employ/ and at any time one wishes. /In addition,/ after having prayed once, by day or by night, one will have fulfilled his obligation according to Torah law. The M.A. writes that the practice of most women not to pray the eighteen/-blessing prayer/ continually, morning and evening, is based on this view. For they say some request immediately /they get up/ in the morning, close to the washing /of the hands/, and according to Torah law they fulfil /their

The latter/ is the prevailing view, for it is the view of the majority of Poskim. This is likewise decided in the work Sha'agas Aryeih. Consequently, one must admonish women to pray the eighteen/-blessing prayer/. It is also correct /practice/ for them to accept upon themselves the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven, which involves saying at least /the verse/ וְשָׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל וְכוּ', as stated /above/ in Sec. 70 /, Par. 1/. They should also say the blessing Emes Ve-Yatziv, so that they will /mention/ the redemption immediately before /the praying of/ the /eighteen-blessing/ prayer, as the M.A. writes in Sec. 70.⁴

obligation/ by means of it. It may be that even the Sages did not obligate /them to say/ more.

/It should be noted that/ all these /remarks only apply/ as regards Shacharis and Minchah, but /not to/ the Ma'ariv prayer, which was /ordained as/ discretionary. Even though now all Israel have already accepted it upon themselves as an obligation, women have nevertheless not accepted /this obligation/ upon themselves and the majority of /women/ do not pray Ma'ariv. As to the Musaf prayers, the Tzelach writes that /women/ are exempt /from praying them/, but in the work Magen Giborim /the author/ rules that they are obliged /to pray them/; see there.

However, the Ramban is of the opinion that the mitzvah of prayer is fundamentally a requirement of the Sages. /The Sages involved/ are the men of the Great Assembly, who ordained a series of eighteen blessings to be prayed obligatorily in a Shacharis (morning) /prayer/ and in a Minchah (afternoon) /prayer/ and at one's discretion in a Ma'ariv (night-time) /prayer/.

ב (ד) שהיא מ"ע וכו'. כ"ז

לדעת הרמב"ם שרק זמני התפלה הם מדברי סופרים אבל עיקר מצות תפלה היא מן התורה שנאמר ולעבדו ככל לנכנס איו עבודה שהיא בלב היא אומר זו תפלה אלא שאין לה נוסח ידוע מן התורה ויכול להתפלל בכל נוסח שירצה ובכל עת שירצה ומשהתפלל פ"א ביום או בלילה יא י"ח מן התורה וכנס המ"א ש"פ סגורא זו נהגו רוב הנשים שאין מתפללין י"ח בתמידות שחר וערב לפי שאומרות מד בטוקר סמוך לנעילה איזה נקשה (ה) ומן התורה יולאות בה ואפשר שאף חכמים לא חייבו יותר אבל דעת הרמב"ן שיעקר מצות תפלה היא מד"ס שהם אנשי כה"ג שתיקו י"ח ברכות על הסדר להתפלל אותן שחרית ומנחה חובה וערבית ראש וז"ל שהיא מ"ע מד"ס שהזמן גרמא והנשים פטורות מכל מ"ע שהזמן גרמא אפילו מד"ס כגון קידוש הלבנה אע"פ חייבו אותן בתפילת שחרית ומנחה כמו אנשים הואיל ותפלה היא בקשר רחמים. וכן עיקר

- (א) כי כן דעת רוב הפוסקים וכן הכריע בספר שאגת ארי' ע"כ יש להוסיף לנשים שיתפללו י"ח וכוון ג"כ שיקבלו עליהן עול מלכות שמים דהיינו שיאמרו ע"פ שמע ישראל כדאיתא בסו"ט ע' ויאמרו ג"כ ברכת אמת ויציב כדי לסמוך גאולה לתפלה כמו שכתב המ"א בסו"ט ע' וכו' לענין שחרית ומנחה" (א) אבל תפלת ערבית שהוא ראשון אע"פ שעכשיו נכנס קלוהו עליהם כל ישראל לחובה מ"מ הנשים לא קבלו עליהם ורובן אין מתפללין ערבית. ותפלת מוספין נל"ח כתב דפטורות אבל בספר מגן נצרים פסק דחייבות ע"פ: (ה) לחונכב. להתפלל י"ח ערב וטוקר ומ"מ (ח) ראשי ליתן להם לאכול קודם תפלת שחרית ואסור לענותם כמ"כ בסו"ט רס"ט ושם ג' לענין להאכילם קודם קידוש: ג' (א) בגון רשב"י. דהם (ט) לא היו עוסקים כלל במלאכתם (י) ואין מצטלין מלימודם אפילו רגע אבל אנו שמתפסקין מד"ל למלאכתנו כ"ש שנתפסק לתפלה: (ז) לק"ש. מפני (יא) שהיא דאורייתא משא"כ לתפלה דהיא דרבנן ואף אם נספור דהיא ד"ח (יב) מ"מ מה"ח אין לה זמן קבוע ודי בפ"א ביום וכנ"ל וכשקורא ק"ש (יג) יקראנה עם ברכותי ואח"כ יחזור ללימודו ולא יתפלל. (יד) ואף שצריך לנטל ולהפסיק לימודו לעשיית כל המצות אפילו של ד"ס דהלמוד ואינו מקיים נוח לו שלא נברא מ"מ תפלה הואיל ואינה אלא בקשר רחמים קילא משאר מצות לגבי אנשים כאלו שאינם מצטלים

③
ISHAG
BERURA
LCHOS
TEFILLA
106:1

between day and night — HASHEM, Master of Legions,* is His Name. Chazzan— May the living and enduring God continuously reign over us, for all eternity. Blessed are You, HASHEM, Who brings on evenings. (Cong.—Amen.)

אֱהָבָתָּ With an eternal love* have You loved the House of Israel, Your nation. Torah and commandments, decrees and ordinances have You taught us. Therefore HASHEM, our God, upon our retiring and arising, we will discuss Your decrees and we will rejoice* with the words of Your Torah and with Your commandments for all eternity. Chazzan— For they are our life and the length of our days* and about them we will meditate day and night. May You not remove Your love from us forever. Blessed are You, HASHEM, Who loves His nation Israel. (Cong.—Amen.)

שְׁמַע THE SHEMA

Immediately before reciting the Shema concentrate on fulfilling the positive commandment of reciting the Shema twice daily. It is important to enunciate each word clearly and not to run words together. See laws of Shema on p. 982.

When praying without a minyan, begin with the following three-word formula: God, trustworthy King.

Recite the first verse aloud, with the right hand covering the eyes, and concentrate intensely upon accepting God's absolute sovereignty.

Hear, O Israel: HASHEM is our God, HASHEM, the One and Only.¹

In an undertone— Blessed is the Name of His glorious kingdom for all eternity. While reciting the first paragraph (Deuteronomy 6:5-9), concentrate on accepting the commandment to love God.

וְאֵהָבָתָּ You shall love HASHEM, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your resources. Let these matters that I command you today be upon your heart. Teach them thoroughly to your children and speak of them while you sit in your home, while you walk on the way, when you retire and when you arise. Bind them as a sign upon your arm and let them be tefillin between your eyes. And write them on the doorposts of your house and upon your gates.

(1) Deuteronomy 6:4. different things to different people. The Torah teaches us that the only true life is one in the service of God, one that is dedicated to the study of Torah and the performance of mitzvot. When a person lives such a life on earth, he is assured that a natural consequence of his efforts is that lengthy days, of blessing and joy in the eternal World to Come (Or HaChaim).

שְׁמַע וְאֵהָבָתָּ / The Shema The recitation of the three paragraphs of Shema is required by the Torah, and one must have in mind that he is about to fulfill this commandment. Although one should try to concentrate on the meaning of all three

בין יום ובין לילה, יהיה צבאותי שמו. אל חי ונקים, תמיד ימלוך עלינו, לעולם ועד. ברוך אלהי יהוה, המעריב ערבבים. (Cong.—אמן.)

אֱהָבָתָּ עולמים בית ישראל עמו אהבת. תורה ומצוות, חקים ומשפטים, אותנו למדת. על פן יהוה אלהינו, בשקבנו ובקומונו נשים חוקיו, ונשמח בדברי תורתך, ובמצותיך לעולם ועד. כי הם חיינו, ואך למינו, ובהם נהגה יומם ולילה. ואהבתך, אל תסיר ממנו לעולמים. ברוך אלהי יהוה, אוהב עמו ושראל. (Cong.—אמן.)

שמע

Immediately before reciting the Shema concentrate on fulfilling the positive commandment of reciting the Shema twice daily. It is important to enunciate each word clearly and not to run words together. For this reason, vertical lines have been placed between two words that are prone to be slurred into one and are not separated by a comma or a hyphen. See laws of Shema on p. 982. When praying without a minyan, begin with the following three-word formula:

אל מלך נאמן.

Recite the first verse aloud, with the right hand covering the eyes, and concentrate intensely upon accepting God's absolute sovereignty.

שמע | ושראל, יהוה | אלהינו, יהוה | אחד: 1

—In an undertone

(דברים ו:ד) While reciting the first paragraph, concentrate on accepting the commandment to love God.

וְאֵהָבָתָּ את יהוה | אלהיך, בכל לבבך, ובכל נפשך, ובכל היום, על לבבך; ושונתם לבניך, ודברת בם, בשבתך בביתך, ובליכתך בדרך, ובשכבך ובקומך; וקשרתם לאות אע"יך; והיו לטעפת בין עיניך; ובתבתם על מנזות ביתך, ובשערך;

fact that He chose to give us His Torah proves that it is the vehicle for our national fulfillment. Therefore we dedicate ourselves to study it — constantly, joyously, and devotedly (Siach Yitzchak).

— [With] an eternal love. Like the blessing immediately before the morning Shema, this blessing is an ecstatic expression of gratitude to God for the gift of Torah. Only after acknowledging our dependence on, and love for, Torah, can we go on to express our undivided loyalty and dedication to ארך, ה' HASHEM, the One and Only God, Who gave us this most precious gift.

The blessing begins with an expression of an axiom of Jewish existence: God loves us. The length of our days. For they are our life and the word life means

While reciting the second paragraph (Deuteronomy 11:13-21), concentrate on accepting all the commandments and the concept of reward and punishment.

While reciting the second paragraph (דברים י"א:י"ג-כ"א), concentrate on accepting all the commandments and the concept of reward and punishment.

וְהִיא And it will come to pass that if you continually heed to My commandments that I command you today, to love HASHEM, your God, and to serve Him, with all your heart and with all your soul — then I will provide rain for your land in its proper time, the early and late rains, that you may gather in your grain, your wine, and your oil. I will provide grass in your field for your cattle and you will eat and be satisfied. Beware lest your heart be seduced and you turn astray and serve gods of others and bow to them. Then the wrath of HASHEM will blaze against you. He will restrain the heaven so there will be no rain and the ground will not yield its produce. And you will swiftly be banished from the goodly land which HASHEM gives you. Place these words of Mine upon your heart and upon your soul; bind them for a sign upon your arm and let them be tefillin between your eyes. Teach them to your children, to discuss them, while you sit in your home, while you walk on the way, when you retire and when you arise. And write them on the doorposts of your house and upon your gates. In order to prolong your days and the days of your children upon the ground that HASHEM has sworn to your ancestors to give them, like the days of the heaven on the earth.

Numbers 15:37-41

וַיֹּאמֶר And HASHEM said to Moses saying: Speak to the Children of Israel and say to them that they are to make themselves tzitzis on the corners of their garments, throughout their generations. And they are to place upon the tzitzis for each corner a thread of techeiles. And it shall constitute tzitzis for you, that you may see it and remember all the commandments of HASHEM and perform them; and not explore after your heart and after your eyes after which you stray. So that you may remember and perform all My commandments; and Concentrate on fulfilling the commandment of remembering the Exodus from Egypt. God to you; I am HASHEM your God — it is true —

Although the word תָּמַר, 'true,' belongs to the next paragraph, it is appended to the conclusion of the previous one, as explained in the commentary, p. 95.

Chazzan repeats: **HASHEM, your God, is true.**

וַאֲמוּנָה And faithful* is all this, and it is firmly established for us that He is HASHEM our God, and there is none but Him, and we are Israel, His nation. He redeems us from the power of kings, our

Torah. Nevertheless, to enable those unfamiliar with this notation to group the words properly, commas have been inserted. Additionally, vertical lines have been placed between two words that are prone to be slurred into one and are not separated by a comma.

* אמון (אמונה) — True and faithful. This paragraph continues our fulfillment of the

obligation to recall the Exodus in the evening. The morning blessing of תָּמַר, True and certain, concentrates on God's kindness in having redeemed us from Egypt, while תָּמַר וְאֲמוּנָה, True and faithful, recited at night, symbolizes exile and stresses our faith that God will redeem us from this exile just as He did at the time of the Exodus (Berachos 12a; RashI and Tosafos).

וְהָיָה אם שמעו תשמעו אל מצותי אשר אנכי מצוה אתכם היום, לא תבזה את יהוה אלהיכם ולעבדו, ככל לבבכם, ובכל נפשכם: ונתתי מטרי ארצכם בעתו, יורה ומלקוש, ואספת רגלך וחיך שנה וצחרה: ונתתי לעשב בשדה לבתמתך, ואכלת ושבעת: השמרו לכם, פרופתה לבבכם, וסרתם ועבדתם אלהים אחרים, והשמחיתם להם: ותלהו אפיהוה בכם, ועצר את השמים, ולא יזיהו מטר, ותאדמה לא תתן את יבולך, ואבדתם מהרה מעל הארץ הטובה אשר יהוה נתן לכם: ושמחתם את דברי אלה, על לבבכם ועל נפשכם, וקשרתם אתם לאות על ידכם, והיו לטופת בן עיניכם: ולמדתם אתם את בניכם, לדבר עם בשבתך ב ביתך, ובכל בוקר בדרך, ולשכבה ובקומה: וכתבתם על מזוזות ביתך, ובשערך: למען יראו ימי בניכם, על האדמה אשר נשבע יהוה לאבותיכם לתת להם, בימי השמים על הארץ:

מסודר סוף ל' ט"ו

וַיֹּאמֶר יהוה אל משה לאמור: דבר אל בני ישראל, ואמרת אליהם, ועשו להם ציצת, על פני בגדיהם לזכרתם, ונתנו על ציצת הבגד, פתיל תכלת: והיה לכם לציצת, וראיתם אתו, וזכרתם את כל מצות יהוה ועשיתם אתם, ולא תחורו אחר ללבבכם ואחרי עיניכם, אשר אתם וזנים אחריהם: למען תופרו, ועשיתם את כל מצוותי, והייתם קדשים לאלהיכם: אני יהוה מוציא אתכם מארץ מצרים, אשר הוצאתי אתכם מארץ מצרים, לא להיזכר מצרים, ואני יהוה אלהיכם: אמרתי —

Concentrate on fulfilling the commandment of remembering the Exodus from Egypt.

Although the word תָּמַר belongs to the next paragraph, it is appended to the conclusion of the previous one, as explained in the commentary, p. 95.

Chazzan repeats **יהוה אלהיכם אמרתי.**

וַאֲמוּנָה * כל זאת, וקום עלינו, כי הוא יהוה אלהינו ואנו וולתו, ונתנו ישוראל עמו. הפודנו מיד מלכים,

5
GENESIS
4:1

והאדם ידע את חוה אשתו
ב ותהר ותלד את-קין ותאמר קניתי איש את-יהוה: ותסוף ללדת
ג את-אחיו את-הבל ויהי-הבל רעה צאן ולקין היה עבד אדמה: ויהי
ד מקץ ימים ויבא קין מפרי האדמה מנחה ליהוה: והבל הביא גם-הוא
ה מבכרות צאנו ומחלבהן וישע יהוה אל-הבל ואל-מנחתו: ואל-קין
ו ואל-מנחתו לא ישעו ויחר לקין מאד ויפלו פניו: ויאמר יהוה אל-קין
ז למה חרה לך ולמה נפלו פניך:

¹ Now the man had known his wife Eve, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, "I have acquired a man with HASHEM."² And additionally she bore his brother Abel. Abel became a shepherd, and Cain became a tiller of the ground.

³ After a period of time, Cain brought an offering to HASHEM of the fruit of the ground; ⁴ and as for Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and from their choicest. HASHEM turned to Abel and to his offering, ⁵ but to Cain and to his offering He did not turn. This annoyed Cain exceedingly, and his countenance fell.

וַיִּבֶן כַּיִן מִזְבֵּחַ לַיהוָה וַיִּקַּח מִכָּל אֲנִימַת הַטְּהוֹרָה וּמִכָּל
כא הָעוֹף הַטְּהוֹר וַיַּעַל עֹלֹת בְּמוֹזְבֵּחַ: וַיִּרַח יְהוָה אֶת-רֵיחַ הַנִּיחֹחַ וַיֹּאמֶר
יהוה אל-לבו לא אסוף לקלל עוד את האדמה בעבור האדם כי יצר לב
כב האדם רע מנעריו ולא אסף עוד להכות את-כל-חיי באשר עשיתי: עוד
כל-ימי הארץ זרע וקציר וקר וחם וקיץ וחרף ויום ולילה לא ישבתו:

6 GENESIS
8:20

Noah brings an offering ²⁰ Then Noah built an altar to HASHEM and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar. ²¹ HASHEM smelled the pleasing aroma, and HASHEM said in His heart: "I will not continue to curse again the ground because of man, since the imagery of man's heart is evil from his youth; nor will I again continue to smite every living being, as I have done. ²² Continuously, all the days of the earth, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease."

וַיִּקַּח אַבִּימֶלֶךְ צֹאן וּבָקָר וְעֶבְדִים וּשְׁפֹחֹת וַיִּתֵּן
לְאַבְרָהָם וַיָּשָׁב לוֹ אֶת שָׂרָה אִשְׁתּוֹ: וַיֹּאמֶר אַבִּימֶלֶךְ הִנֵּה אֲרָצִי לְפָנֶיךָ
בטוב בעיניך שׁב: ולשׂרה אמר הִנֵּה נָתַתִּי אֵלֶיךָ כְּסֶף לְאַחֶיךָ הִנֵּה
הוא-לך כסות עינים לכל אשר אתה ואת כל ונכחת: ויתפלל אברהם
אל-האלהים וירפא אלהים את-אבימלך ואת-אשתו ואמהותיו
וילדו: כִּי-עָצַר עָצַר יְהוָה בְּעַד כָּל-רַחֵם לְבַיִת אַבִּימֶלֶךְ עַל-דְּבַר
שָׂרָה אִשְׁתְּ אַבְרָהָם:

7 GENESIS
20:17

¹⁴ So Abimelech took flocks and cattle and servants and maidservants and gave to Abraham; and he returned his wife Sarah to him.

¹⁵ And Abimelech said, "Behold, my land is before you: settle wherever you see fit."¹⁶ And to Sarah he said, "Behold, I have given your brother a thousand pieces of silver. Behold! Let it be for you an eye-covering for all who are with you; and to all you will be vindicated."

¹⁷ Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech, his wife, and his maids, and they were relieved; ¹⁸ for HASHEM had completely restrained every orifice of the household of Abimelech, because of Sarah, the wife of Abraham.

וַיִּגַּשׁ אַבְרָהָם וַיֹּאמֶר הֲאֵף תִּסְפְּהַם צְדִיק עִם-
רָשָׁע: אוֹלֵי יֵשׁ חֲמִשִּׁים צְדִיקִים בְּתוֹךְ הָעִיר הֲאֵף תִּסְפְּהָ וְלֹא-תִשָּׂא
למקום למען חמשים הצדיקים אשר בקרבה: חללה לך מעשת ו
כדבר הזה להמית צדיק עם-רשע ויהיה כצדיק ברשע חללה לך
השפט כל-הארץ לא יעשה משפט:

8 GENESIS
18:23

²³ Abraham came forward and said, "Will You also stamp out the righteous along with the wicked?" ²⁴ What if there should be fifty righteous people in the midst of the city? Would You still stamp it out rather than spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous people within it? ²⁵ It would be sacrilege to You to do such a thing, to bring death upon the righteous along with the wicked; so the righteous will be like the wicked. It would be sacrilege to You! Shall the Judge of all the earth not do justice?"

⑨ KUZARI (III, IV)

...: "The hour of prayer is the climax, the flowering and the goal, of the day of the pious; all other hours are merely preliminary to it. Thus the three periods of daily prayers are the climax of the day; just as the Sabbath is the goal of the week. Prayer is for the soul, what food is for the body. The blessing of one prayer lasts until the next, just as the strength gained from one meal lasts till the one after. The longer the interval between one prayer and the next, the more man's soul occupies itself with worldly pursuits—the more it is dulled by them, especially when one is forced to listen to words that dim the purity of the soul. During the time of prayer, however, man purges his soul from all that has contaminated it. He prepares his soul for the future."

⑩ TALMUD (BERAHOVS 26b)

The Gemara discusses the origin of the three daily Prayers:
אייתמר – It was said: רבי יוסי ברבי חנינא אמר – R' Yose the son of R' Chanina said: תפלות אבות תקנום – The prayers were instituted by the Patriarchs.^[12]
רבי יהושע בן לוי אמר – R' Yehoshua ben Levi said: תפלות בנגד תמידין תקנום – The prayers were instituted by the Men of the Great Assembly corresponding to the daily *tamid* offerings.^[13]

⑪ GENESIS (19: 27)

וַיִּשְׁכֶּם אַבְרָהָם בְּבֹקֶר אֶל-
הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר-עָמַד שָׁם אֶת-פְּנֵי יְהוָה: וַיִּשְׁקֹף עַל-פְּנֵי סוּדֹם וְעַמֹּרָה וְעַל
כָּל-פְּנֵי אֶרֶץ הַכְּפָר וַיֵּרָא וְהִנֵּה עֲלֵה קִיטָר הָאָרֶץ בְּקִיטָר הַכְּבָשָׁן: וַיְהִי
בְּשַׁחַת אֱלֹהִים אֶת-עַרְי הַכְּפָר וַיִּזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת-אַבְרָהָם וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת-
לוֹט מִתּוֹךְ הַהֶפְכָּה בְּהַפֵּךְ אֶת-הָעָרִים אֲשֶׁר-יָשַׁב בָּהֶן לוֹט: י

²⁷ Abraham arose early in the morning to the place where he had stood before HASHEM. ²⁸ And he gazed down upon Sodom and Gomorrah and the entire surface of the land of the plain; and saw — and behold! the smoke of the earth rose like the smoke of a kiln. ²⁹ And so it was when God destroyed the cities of the plain that God remembered Abraham; so He sent Lot from amidst the upheaval when He overturned the cities in which Lot had lived.

12
 GENESIS
 (24:63)

וַיִּבְרְכוּ אֶת־רִבְקָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ לָהּ אַחֲתֵנוּ
 אַתְּ הִי לְאִלְפֵי רִבְבָה וַיִּירֶשׁ זֶרַעְךָ אֶת שְׁעַר שְׁנָאוֹי: וַתִּקֶּם רִבְקָה
 וַנְעֲרֹתֶיהָ וַתִּרְפְּנֶנָה עַל־הַגְּמִלִים וַתִּלְכְּנָה אַחֲרֵי הָאִישׁ וַיִּקַּח הָעֶבֶד אֶת־
 רִבְקָה וַיִּלְךָ: וַיִּצְחָק בָּא מִבּוֹא בְּאֵר לַחֵי רְאִי וְהוּא יוֹשֵׁב בְּאֶרֶץ הַנָּגֶב:
 וַיֵּצֵא יִצְחָק לְשׁוֹן בְּשָׂדֵה לַפְּנוֹת עָרֹב וַיִּשָּׂא עֵינָיו וַיֵּרָא וַהֲנֵה גְמִלִים
 בָּאִים: וַתִּשָּׂא רִבְקָה אֶת־עֵינֶיהָ וַתִּרְאֵהוּ וַתִּצְחָק וַתִּפְּל מֵעַל הַגְּמִל:

וַתֹּאמֶר אֶל־הָעֶבֶד מִי־הָאִישׁ הַלְזֶה הַהֶלֶךְ בְּשָׂדֵה לַקְּרֹאֲתָנוּ וַיֹּאמֶר
 הָעֶבֶד הוּא אֲדֹנָי וַתִּקַּח הָצִעִיף וַתַּחַבֵּס: וַיִּסְפֹּר הָעֶבֶד לְיִצְחָק אֶת כָּל־
 הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה: וַיִּבְאֶה יִצְחָק הָאֵהָלָה שָׂרָה אִמּוֹ וַיִּקַּח אֶת־רִבְקָה
 וַתְּהִי־לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה וַיֵּאֱהָבֶהּ וַיִּנְחַם יִצְחָק אַחֲרֵי אִמּוֹ:

⁶¹ Then Rebecca arose with her maidens; they rode upon the camels and proceeded after the man; the servant took Rebecca and went.
⁶² Now Isaac came from having gone to Beer-lahai-roi, for he dwelt in the south country. ⁶³ Isaac went out to supplicate in the field towards evening* and he raised his eyes and saw, and behold! camels were coming. ⁶⁴ And Rebecca raised her eyes and saw Isaac; she inclined while upon the camel
⁶⁵ And she said to the servant, "Who is that man walking in the field toward us?" And the servant said, "He is my master." She then took the veil and covered herself. ⁶⁶ The servant told Isaac all the things he had done. ⁶⁷ And Isaac brought her into the tent of Sarah his mother; he married Rebecca, she became his wife, and he loved her; and thus was Isaac consoled after his mother.

וַיֵּצֵא יַעֲקֹב מִבְּאֵר שָׁבַע וַיֵּלֶךְ חָרָנָה: וַיִּפְגַּע בַּמָּקוֹם וַיִּלֵּן שָׁם כִּי־בָא
 הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ וַיִּקַּח מֵאֲבָנֵי הַמָּקוֹם וַיִּשֶׂם מִרְאֲשֹׁתָיו וַיִּשְׁכַּב בַּמָּקוֹם הַהוּא:
 וַיַּחְלֵם וַהֲנֵה סֶלֶם מֵצֵב אֶרְצָה וְרֵאשׁוֹ מֵגִיעַ הַשָּׁמַיְמָה וַהֲנֵה מַלְאֲכֵי
 אֱלֹהִים עֹלִים וְיֹרְדִים בּוֹ:

13
 GENESIS (28:11)

¹⁰ Jacob departed* from Beer-sheba and went toward Haran. ¹¹ He encountered the place and spent the night there because the sun had set; he took from the stones of the place which he arranged around his head, and lay down in that place. * ¹² And he dreamt, and behold! A ladder was set earthward and its top reached heavenward; and behold! angels of God were ascending and descending on it.

According to tradition, Abraham inaugurated the morning prayer, Isaac the Mincha, Jacob the evening prayer. The earthly fate of each one of them closely corresponded to each of these three times of the day. Abraham's life was like the rising sun, that waxes ever brighter. Blessed with abundant success in all his undertakings, he stood alone facing the entire world and summoning it to the altar of the one and only G-d. Yet he was neither envied nor hated, but highly revered as נְשִׂיא אֱלֹהִים.

14
 THE WORD OF PRAYER
 (R' ELI MUNK)

During Isaac's life the light began to grow dimmer. The sun which had shone for his father, had passed the zenith and had begun to descend. Isolated on account of his "walking before G-d" he was greeted only with envy by his contemporaries for the Divine blessings he received. He had to withdraw into himself and his household. With his birth the ominous presage גַּר יִהְיֶה זֶרַעְךָ becomes a reality. Finally, with Jacob the shadows of night close in. His entire life was a concatenation of trials and tribulations. Only in fleeting moments did he experience the joy of life. Yet all three Patriarchs, much as their lives differed, found the way back to G-d in prayer. They left as their heritage to us the means of elevating ourselves to G-d from the most divergent times of life: — when the rays of morning rouse all to life, when the waning of the sun turns us to earnest self-contemplation, and when the night summons us to rally our thoughts towards G-d.

However, the fact that the prayers are each tied to certain hours of the day, requires some further explanation. As Yabetz points out in his Siddur: — "No other hours are better fitted to turn the souls and minds of men towards G-d, than the hours of sunrise and sunset. At sunrise, Nature, as if touched by a magic word, springs to life in rejuvenated splendor. Man, refreshed by new strength and vigor, filled with the courage and will to live, takes up his appointed task once more. At sundown, on the other hand, when the veil of darkness is spread over nature and man, all that breathes entrusts its fate in the hand of the Omnipotent Creator." Thus the hours of morning and evening arouse differing moods in the heart of man. For the day

lays the terrestrial world at the foot of man. He is a free person; his energy and initiative master the world around him. But the night throws him, "the terrestrial lord of creation" into the chains of the earthly world. The day is the period of independence, of activity for him. The night is the time for him to yield, become passive, dependent. Night and darkness are not merely natural phenomena, they are also the metaphors most commonly used to describe states of spiritual and physical bondage, the most complete dependence that can beset nations and man.