



## THE UNIQUENESS OF EVERY PRAYER

Can we break through nature and change reality?  
An exploration of the unique power of each  
of the three daily prayers.

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TEACHER'S MANUAL



# JEWISH INSIGHTS

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## A. The Breakthrough.....1

This week's Torah reading recounts how, when Jacob left Be'er Sheva for Charan, he dreamed of a ladder set on the ground with its top reaching the heavens, and angels ascending and descending it (Source 1). The Talmud teaches that the three daily prayers were established by the forefathers: Abraham instituted Shacharit, Isaac established Minchah, and Jacob introduced Arvit on the night he dreamed of the ladder. (Source 2)

In this class, we will explore the uniqueness of each prayer:

### Arvit (Evening Prayer)

The essence of prayer is breaking through the boundaries of the natural world, expressed in our requests of G-d to heal and bless us, transcending the laws of nature. In Judaism, the day begins at night (Source 3), making Arvit the first prayer of the day and the one that blazes the trail in this endeavor.

## B. The Entire World Prays.....6

### Shacharit (Morning Prayer):

While Arvit primarily focuses on the Jewish individual's service to G-d, Shacharit shifts the focus outward, detailing how the nations of the world and all of creation sing praises to G-d, as described vividly in Pesukei Dezimra. Thus, through Shacharit, a person fulfills the mission of their soul's descent into the world: inspiring the world itself to sing and give thanks to G-d, transforming it into a sanctuary for Him.

(Source 4 includes a moving account by the Rebbe Rayatz of a young Jew's inspired prayers as he sat marveling at the wonders of nature)

## C. The Entire World Prays.....14

### Minchah (Afternoon Prayer):

During the famous confrontation between Elijah the Prophet and the prophets of Baal, Elijah prayed to G-d in the afternoon, saying, "Answer me," and his prayer was answered. This is why the Sages teach us to take special care with Mincha. (Source 5)

The unique aspect of Minchah is that it requires a Jew to pause amid the busy rush of the day to pray and connect with G-d. This contrasts with Arvit, which is recited when the day's tasks are done, and Shacharit, which precedes the day's demands.

# Introduction

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In this lesson, we will uncover the secret of the three daily prayers. Each has a distinctive quality and special virtue that enables a Jew to rise and connect with G-d throughout the day.

## השיעור לכרשת ויצא

משיחת אור ליום ועש"ק פ' וישב, י"ט כסלו, ה'תשכ"ז, הנחה בלתי מוגה  
תורת מנחם כרך מ"ח עמ' 309

[לשמיעת השיחה](#)



5:47 והלאה

# A. The Breakthrough

## Jacob's Ladder

After receiving his father's blessing (in last week's Torah reading), Jacob begins his journey from Be'er Sheva to Charan. As the sun sets, Jacob settles in for the night on Mount Moriah. He takes some stones and uses them as a makeshift pillow, and during his sleep he has a dramatic dream:

### Source 1 Genesis 28:10-17

Student's  
pg. 1

Jacob left Be'er Sheva and went to Charan. He encountered the place and camped there because the sun had set. He took some of the stones of the place, placed them at his head, and lay down in that place.

He dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the ground with its top reaching to heaven, and angels of G-d were ascending and descending upon it. Behold, G-d was standing over him, saying, "I am the G-d of Abraham, your father, and the G-d of Isaac. The land upon which you are lying—I will give to you and your descendants.

"Your descendants shall be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread westward, eastward, northward, and southward. Through you and your descendants, all the families of the earth will be blessed. Behold, I am with you, and I will guard you wherever you go and will return you to this land. I will not forsake you until I have done what I promised."

Jacob awakened from his sleep and said, "Indeed, G-d is in this place, and I did not know it." He was frightened and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of G-d, and this is the gate of heaven."

וַיֵּצֵא יַעֲקֹב מִבְּעַר שֶׁבַע וַיֵּלֶךְ  
חֲרָנָה. וַיַּפְגֵּעַ בְּמָקוֹם וַיֵּלֶן שָׁם  
כִּי בָּא הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ וַיִּקַּח מֵאֲבָנֵי  
הַמָּקוֹם וַיִּשֶׂם מִרְאשׁוֹתָיו  
וַיִּשְׁכַּב בְּמָקוֹם הַהוּא.

וַיַּחְלֶם וְהִנֵּה סֻלָּם מַצֵּב אֶרֶץ  
וְרֹאשׁוֹ מֵגִיעַ הַשָּׁמַיְמָה וְהִנֵּה  
מַלְאָכֵי אֱלֹהִים עֹלִים וְיֹרְדִים  
בּוֹ. וְהִנֵּה ה' נֹצֵב עָלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר  
אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵי אֲבֹרָהם אָבִיךָ  
וְאֵלֹהֵי יִצְחָק הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר  
אַתָּה שֹׁכֵב עָלֶיהָ לְךָ אֶתְנַנָּה  
וְלִזְרַעךָ.

וְהִנֵּה זֶרַעךָ כַּעֲפַר הָאָרֶץ  
וּפְרִצְתָּ יָמָה וּקְדָמָה וְצָפֹנָה  
וְנִגְבָּה וְנִבְרָכוּ בְּךָ כָּל מִשְׁפָּחוֹת  
הָאֲדָמָה וְכִזְרַעךָ. וְהִנֵּה אָנֹכִי  
עֹמֵד וְשֹׁמְרִיךָ בְּכָל אֲשֶׁר תֵּלֵךְ  
וְהִשְׁבַּתִּיךָ אֶל הָאֲדָמָה הַזֹּאת  
כִּי לֹא אֶעְזֹבְךָ עַד אֲשֶׁר אִם  
עָשִׂיתִי אֵת אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתִּי לְךָ.

וַיִּיקָץ יַעֲקֹב מִשְׁנָתוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר  
אָכֵן יֵשׁ ה' בְּמָקוֹם הַזֶּה וְאָנֹכִי  
לֹא יָדַעְתִּי. וַיִּירָא וַיֹּאמֶר מַה  
גֹּדֵל הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה אֵין זֶה כִּי  
אִם בֵּית אֱלֹהִים וְזֶה שַׁעַר  
הַשָּׁמַיִם.

Jacob's ladder becomes an important symbol in Judaism, and from this story much is learned about the essence of prayer.

Firstly, it teaches us who composed the three daily prayers:

## Source 2 Talmud, Berachot 26b

**Student's** Rabbi Yosei the son of Rabbi Chanina said:  
pg. 2 The daily prayers were instituted by the Patriarchs.

A Beraita says the same:

"Abraham instituted the morning prayer, as the verse says, 'Abraham rose early in the morning to the place where he stood.' 'Standing' means to stand in prayer, as the verse says 'Pinchas stood and prayed.'"

רבי יוסי ברבי חנינא אמר: תפלות  
אבות תקנום...

שנויה ברייתא פשיטתו של רבי  
יוסי ברבי חנינא:

אברהם תקן תפלת שחרית,  
שנאמר: "וישכם אברהם בבקר  
אל המקום אשר עמד שם", ואין  
עמידה אלא תפלה, שנאמר:  
"ויעמד פינחס ויפלל".

After G-d informs Abraham about what will happen in Sodom, and after Abraham pleads for G-d to save Sodom for the sake of the righteous who might live there, G-d tells him that there are not even ten righteous people in the city. The next morning, Abraham rises early and prays again. "Abraham arose early in the morning to the place where he had stood." The Talmud explains that the word "stood" implies prayer, as it is written elsewhere, "Pinchas stood up and prayed."

**Student's** Isaac instituted the afternoon prayer, as it says,  
pg. 2 "Isaac went out to converse [losu'ach] in the field towards evening." The term "converse" refers to prayer, as it is written, "A prayer of the afflicted when he is overwhelmed, and he pours out his speech [sicho] before G-d."

יצחק תקן תפלת מנחה, שנאמר  
"ויצא יצחק לשוח בשדה לפני  
ערב", ואין שיוחה אלא תפלה,  
שנאמר "תפלה לעני כי יעטף  
ולפני ה' ישפך שיחו".

When Eliezer, Abraham's servant, returns from Haran with Rivkah, Isaac's match, they approach Abraham and Isaac's home and see Isaac coming out "to converse in the field." The Talmud teaches that the word "converse" implies prayer, as it says in Psalms that the afflicted pour out their "speech" before G-d, with both verses using a derivative of the word "sicha."

**Student's** Jacob instituted the evening prayer, as it says, pg. 2  
 "He encountered the place and camped there."  
 The term "encountered" refers to prayer, as it says, "As for you, do not pray for this people, and do not raise up a cry or prayer for them, and do not plead (encounter) with Me."

יעקב תקן תפלת ערבית, שנאמר:  
 "ויפגוע במקום וילון שם", ואין  
 "פגיעה" אלא תפלה, שנאמר:  
 "ואתה אל תתפלל בעד העם הזה  
 ואל תשא בעדם רנה ותפלה ואל  
 תפגע בי".

*When Jacob flees from his brother Esau, on his way to Haran, he stops to sleep in Beit El, where "he encountered the place." The Talmud explains that the term "encountered" also means prayer, as G-d tells Jeremiah not to pray for the people or "encounter" with Him.*

## >> The Rebbe

### The First Prayer

**Student's** Arvit has a special quality, which renders it pg. 2  
 more effective than the Morning or Afternoon prayers. This, despite the fact in Jewish law it is considered optional, as opposed to the other two.

This quality is that it is the first prayer of the day, considering the premise that in Judaism the day follows the night, so the beginning of the 24 hour day is the evening.

בתפלת מעריב יש מעלה מיוחדת, שפועלת עוד יותר מאשר תפלת הבוקר ותפלת מנחה - אף על פי שעל פי הלכה "תפלת ערבית רשות"<sup>1</sup>, ואילו תפלת הבוקר ותפלת מנחה הן חובה - להיותה התפלה הראשונה במשך היום.

ובהקדים - שאצל בני ישראל הסדר הוא ש"היום הולך אחר הלילה"<sup>2</sup>, והיינו, שהתחלת היום היא מהלילה.

## Source 3 Talmud, Chulin 83a

**Student's** Rabbi Shimon ben Zoma taught: In the story of Genesis, it says "One day." pg. 3  
 ...This day is preceded by night, as the verse says: "And it was evening and it was morning, one day."

דרש רבי שמעון בן זומא: נאמר  
 במעשה בראשית "יום אחד..."  
 יום אחד האמור במעשה בראשית  
 — היום הולך אחר הלילה שלפניו,  
 שהרי נאמר: "ויהי ערב ויהי בקר  
 יום אחד".

1. ברכות ד, ב, כז, ב. רמב"ם הל' תפלה פ"א ה"ו. טור אורח ר"ס  
 רלה. שו"ע אדה"ו אורח סק"ו ס"ב.  
 2. חולין פג, סע"א. וש"נ.

In Judaism, the day begins at night. We see this every week in our observance of Shabbat, the day starts on Friday evening at sunset and continues until nightfall on Saturday, marked by the appearance of three stars. After that, Sunday begins.

## >> The Rebbe

### Breaking Through Nature

Student's  
pg. 3

The unique idea of Arvit, the evening prayer, is that it is the first time each day that we break through the materiality of the world. Within the material world we pray to G-d, and through our prayer we effect all the blessings we pray for—financial blessings, healing for the sick, etc.

This is a significant step. Our physical world has laws of nature that G-d established, as the verse states, “seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease.” Nevertheless, when we pray to G-d and ask Him for our needs we have the power to overrule nature, beginning with the first request of the prayer, “bestow knowledge,” through all of the other requests. Naturally speaking—without prayer—there would be one outcome, and through our prayer we change the reality.

As mentioned, the initial breakthrough is made with the evening prayer.

וזהו החידוש של תפלת ערבית - שזוהי הפעם הראשונה (התחלה ראשונה) ביום, שיהודי בוקע את גשמיות העולם, שבעולם הזה הגשמי יוכלו להתפלל להקב"ה ולפעול על ידי התפלה את כל הבקשות שמבקשים בתפלה: מברך השנים ורופא חולים וכיוצא בזה.

ומובן גודל החידוש שבדבר - שהרי העולם קשור עם חוקי הטבע שהטביע הקב"ה בעולם, כמו שכתוב<sup>3</sup> "זרע וקציר וקור וחום וקיץ וחורף גו' לא ישבותו", ואף על פי כן, יש בכחו של יהודי, שכאשר הוא מתפלל את תפלתו ומבקש את צרכיו לפני הקב"ה, הרי הוא פועל היפך הטבע - החל מ"חונן הדעת", ועד לכל הבקשות שבתפלה - שלולי התפלה, מצד הטבע בעצמו, היו באופן אחר, ועל ידי תפלתו משתנה הטבע.

וכאמור - ההתחלה ופריצת הדרך בענין זה היא בתפלת מעריב.

*We are all familiar with the idea that we pray to G-d for all our needs—whether for health, livelihood, or anything else. But when we think about it, this concept isn't entirely rational. If someone wants a livelihood, they should find a good job. If they need healing, they should seek out a skilled doctor. Why would anyone imagine that a spiritual act like prayer in a synagogue*

could affect the physical, material world? After all, G-d created nature and its laws, and the world operates according to them. How does prayer fit into this framework?

This is the first remarkable insight about the concept of prayer: after G-d created the world and established the laws of nature, He also introduced the idea of prayer. G-d promised that when a person lifts their hands toward Heaven and requests their needs, He will intervene in the natural order and grant them what they require.

What might seem obvious to us today is, in fact, a profound innovation.

This concept can be compared to an idea the Rebbe introduced into Jewish consciousness—checking mezuzot. Countless times, when people wrote to the Rebbe about a problem, whether related to health or livelihood, the Rebbe would instruct them to check their mezuzot. At first, this seemed strange—what is the connection between a mezuzah and health or livelihood? But the Rebbe emphasized the understanding that the physical and spiritual worlds are one. The spiritual integrity of a mezuzah directly impacts physical matters like livelihood and health.

This concept begins with prayer. The belief that spiritual prayer can bring about change in physical life already "breaks through" the idea that spirituality and physicality are separate. It demonstrates their intrinsic connection.

## B. The Entire World Prays

### >> The Rebbe

Student's  
pg. 4

We then proceed to the morning prayer, which also has a unique characteristic. In the morning prayer we pray at greater length and also bring the concept of prayer into the world at large.

The evening prayer is primarily our personal divine service, and all other elements are marginal. By contrast, the morning prayer contains the lengthy "verses of song" which express the prayer and song that the entire world offers to G-d. The morning prayers begin with "Give thanks to G-d, call in His name, make His exploits known among the nations." The personal element of the morning prayer, the amidah, is only a minority of this prayer.

The structure of the morning prayer is called the "ladder of prayer" in Kabbalistic works. This ladder consists of four stages, "rungs," as is evident also from a literal reading of the prayer, beginning with hodu, and concluding with the amidah sections. Each rung of the ladder of prayer corresponds to a different spiritual realm, and the morning prayer thus encompasses and permeates all four realms.

ולאחרי כן באה המעלה שבתפלת הבוקר - שלא זו בלבד שהיהודי עצמו מתפלל באריכות, אלא הוא פועל את ענין התפלה בעולם כולו:

תפלת מעריב - עיקרה עבודת ישראל, ואילו שאר הענינים הם בקיצור נמרץ, ואילו בתפלת הבוקר - ישנה את כל האריכות שב"פסוקי דזמרה", שתוכנם, שכל העולם מתפלל ומזמר ומשורר להקב"ה, ועד שכבר בהתחלת התפלה, "הודו לה' קראו בשמו", אומרים מיד: "הודיעו בעמים עלילותיו"; ואילו כאשר יהודי מגיע כבר לתפלה שלו - הנה תפלת שמונה עשרה היא החלק הקטן בכמות לגבי אריכות התפלה לפני זה.

וכללות החידוש שבתפלת הבוקר - שפועלת וחודרת בכל ארבע השליבות של ה"סולם", שכן, בתפלת הבוקר ישנם את כל ארבע השליבות בשלימות, כפי שנימנו בספרי הקבלה<sup>5</sup>, וכמובן גם מפשטות פירוש המילות פרטי החילוקים של ד' חלקי התפלה, מהודו עד לאחרי שמונה עשרה.

המקבילים. לקו"ת בשלח ב, ב. סה"מ תרס"ח ע' ה ואילך. סה"מ קונטרסים ח"ב שיט, ב ואילך. סה"מ תש"ח ע' 80 ואילך. ועוד.  
6. עירובין ב, א. וש"נ.  
7. תרומה כה, ח.

1. ברכות ד, ב, כז, ב. רמב"ם הל' תפלה פ"א ה"ו. טור אור"ח ר"ס רלה. שו"ע אדה"ז אור"ח סק"ו ס"ב.  
2. חולין פג, סע"א. וש"נ.  
3. נח ח, כב.  
4. דברי הימים-א טז, ח.  
5. ראה סידור האריז"ל בתחלתו. כתהאריז"ל במקומות

## The Ladder of Prayer — Optional Section

Let us devote a few moments to learning about the four stages of the Shacharit prayer:

The structure of the morning prayers, as established by the Men of the Great Assembly, allows one to undergo a spiritual, step-by-step process. This progression is described in the writings of the Arizal:

“Know that the four worlds of Atzilut, Beriah, Yetzirah, and Asiyah, correspond to the four parts of prayer: the sacrificial offerings, from the beginning of the blessings until Baruch She’amar; then the hymns, from Baruch She’amar to the conclusion of Yishtabach; then Yotzer and the blessings of the Shema until the Amidah; and finally the Amidah itself. These are the four levels of prayer.”

### **Stage One: The Offerings**

From the korbanot (offerings), followed by Hodu and Mizmor Shir Chanukat HaBayit, until Baruch She’amar, corresponds to the world of Asiyah (Action). The section of prayer highlights the acts of sacrifices and emphasizes the purpose of prayer—not as a means for personal emotional release or self-centered desires, but as a way to “offer” the nefesh habehamit (animal soul) to the divine fire. This sets the tone for the entire prayer.

In Hodu, the focus is on G-d's providence throughout Jewish history. Despite the adversities—being moved “from nation to nation”—G-d ensured their survival: “He permitted no man to oppress them.” The following psalm expresses gratitude for personal salvation: “I will exalt You, G-d, for You have drawn me up and have not let my enemies rejoice over me.” Here we reflect on G-d's guidance and support in the physical world of Asiyah, both collectively and individually.

The term Hodu (thanksgiving) reflects a sense of acknowledgment, even without fully grasping or feeling the emotions behind it. We humbly accept the historical and practical miracles that enabled Jewish survival in an often hostile world.

### **Stage Two: Psalms of Praise**

The section from Baruch She’amar to Yishtabach corresponds to the world of Yetzirah (Formation). Here, the wonders of nature, G-d's creation, are explored in detail. Beginning with the statement “Blessed is He who spoke, and the world came into being,” the prayer highlights G-d's continuous renewal of creation: “Who in His goodness renews each day, constantly, the work of creation.”

This stage evokes an emotional response to the grandeur of creation, from the heavens and clouds to the beasts of the earth and the mysteries of the deep. By contemplating G-d's creation, one experiences awe and love for the Creator. This emotional awakening aligns with Yetzirah, which corresponds to the realm of feelings in the soul.

Even the simplest individual, like a child, can be inspired by the beauty of nature. This emotional connection to creation demonstrates how the natural world reflects its divine origin.

### Stage Three: Blessings of the Shema

The Shema and its blessings, From Yotzer Or (He who forms light) until the Amidah, corresponds to the world of Beriah (Creation). This stage describes the enthusiasm of the angels—the ofanim and chayot hakodesh—in the celestial chariot (Merkavah).

Reflecting on the higher realms of creation and the unity of G-d (yichuda ila'ah and Yichuda tata'ah) requires deep intellectual engagement. This is the domain of Binah (understanding) in the soul, corresponding to the realm of Beriah.

### Stage Four: The Amidah

The Amidah corresponds to the world of Atzilut (Emanation). At this stage, the praying individual reaches a state of complete bitul bemetziut (self-nullification) before G-d, like a servant standing humbly before their master. This is expressed through the whisper of the Amidah, symbolizing the diminishment of one's ego.

The individual's focus shifts entirely to being part of G-d's essence, to the point where they feel incapable of expressing praise independently. Thus, they begin with the plea: "G-d, open my lips, so my mouth may declare Your praise." Even requests for physical needs are framed as a desire to fulfill G-d's will, making the physical necessities tools for serving G-d in the material world.

This deeper meaning of "one who prays must first mention the praises of the Creator and then ask for their needs" is not about flattering the King to gain favor. Instead, it's about aligning one's requests with the purpose of creation, "for Your sake, not ours."

### End of optional section

## The Wonders of Nature

Of the four stages of prayer, the second stage is the longest, in which the wonders of nature, G-d's creation, are described in great detail. This stage begins with the general contemplation of "Blessed is He Who spoke and the world came into being" and continues to detail the grandeur and beauty of creation. It stirs our emotions, awakening a visual appreciation for the marvels of G-d's universe and inspiring a love for the Creator.

Here are some lines from the prayers that express this theme:

First, from the preliminary morning declarations:

Student's  
pg. 5

"The Master of the Universe, Who reigned before any form was created, at the time when His will brought everything into being, then His name was proclaimed King."

"אֲדוֹן עוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר מָלַךְ, בְּתָרָם  
כָּל יִצּוֹר נִבְרָא. לְעֵת נִצְשָׁה  
בְּחִפְצוֹ כָּל, אֲזִי מָלַךְ שְׁמוֹ  
נִקְרָא."

Now, moving into the heart of the prayers. The section known as Pesukei Dezimra (Verses of Praise) already signals its content by name. These are passages of poetry, entire chapters taken from the scriptures, particularly Psalms, containing exalted descriptions of G-d's power, the harmony of the universe, the forces of nature, the wonders of creation, and the songs of the seas, rivers, mountains, and trees. These praises include the murmurs of crawling creatures and the chorus of winged beings, all culminating in the song of humanity. The collective name Pesukei Dezimra perfectly encapsulates the content of this section of prayer.

For example, some verses and statements from the Psalms include:

**Student's**  
pg. 5

- "For all the gods of the nations are idols, but G-d made the heavens."
- "The heavens declare the glory of G-d, and the sky proclaims His handiwork."
- "He spreads out the earth upon the waters."
- "He made the great lights."
- "He counts the number of the stars and calls each by name."
- "He covers the heavens with clouds, prepares rain for the earth, and makes grass grow on the mountains."
- "You made the heavens, the heavens of heavens, and all their hosts, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them, and You give life to them all."

"כִּי כָל אֱלֹהֵי הָעַמִּים  
אֱלִילִים וְד' שָׁמַיִם עָשָׂה."  
הַשָּׁמַיִם מְסַפְּרִים כְּבוֹד אֱל  
וּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדָיו מִגִּיד הֶרְקִיעַ."  
לְרַקַּע הָאָרֶץ עַל הַמַּיִם."  
לְעֵשֶׂה אוֹרִים גְּדִלִים."  
מוֹנֶה מִסְפָּר לְנוֹכָכִים לְכֹל  
שְׁמוֹת יִקְרָא."  
הַמְכֹסֶה שָׁמַיִם בַּעֲבִים  
הַמְכִּין לָאָרֶץ מָטָר הַמַּצְמִיחַ  
הָרִים חֲצִיר."  
אֶתָּה עָשִׂיתָ אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם,  
שָׁמַי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְכָל אֲצִבָּאָם,  
הָאָרֶץ וְכָל אֲשֶׁר עָלֶיהָ,  
הַיָּמִים וְכָל אֲשֶׁר בָּהֶם וְאֶתָּה  
מַחְיֶה אֶת כָּלָם."

Up to this point, the description offers a broad portrayal of the universe, a sketch with general outlines: the heavens, the earth, and the sea, occasionally accompanied by their "offspring"—the luminaries, creatures, vegetation, mountains, and hills.

After Yishtabach, the prayer dedicates a detailed section to the celestial bodies, particularly the sun:

**Student's**  
pg. 5

- "G-d Who brings forth the sun from its place and the moon from its dwelling, and illuminates the entire world and its inhabitants. He Who in His mercy brings light to the earth and its dwellers

"הָאֵל-ל, הַפּוֹתֵחַ בְּכָל יוֹם  
וְלִתּוֹת שַׁעֲרֵי מִזְרָח, וּבּוֹקֵעַ  
חֲלוּגֵי רָקִיעַ, מוֹצִיא חֶמֶד  
מִמְקוֹמָהּ, וְלִבְנָה מִמְּכוּן

**Student's** and renews the work of  
pg. 5 creation every day in His  
goodness."

שְׁכֵתָּהּ, וּמֵאִיר לְעוֹלָם כָּלֹו וּלְיוֹשְׁכָיו, שֶׁכָּרָא  
בְּמִדַּת הַרְחָמִים. הַמֵּאִיר לְאָרֶץ וְלְדָרִים עָלֶיהָ,  
בְּרַחֲמִים. וּבְטוֹבוֹ מְחַדֵּשׁ בְּכָל יוֹם מַעֲשֵׂה  
בְּרָאשִׁית".

*This is a stirring poetic segment that describes the sensory wonder of the day. From this poetic depiction emerges the eastern horizon at dawn, with a golden sun rising to bring life to all inhabitants of the earth. The oppressive darkness retreats and dissipates as the sun's radiant glow awakens the sleeping and imbues them with vitality and readiness for action. The sunlight is sweet to the eyes and uplifting to the soul. It seems the ancients intuitively recognized through profound observation of the world that the sun not only heals the body but also serves as the source of plant growth and, indirectly, sustains all living beings. (Although we are already in the third stage of prayer, it still contains elements that speak of the natural world.)*

## >> The Rebbe

### Nature's Prayer

**Student's** In this way, the morning prayer helps  
pg. 5 us fulfill our duty in this world. Our soul  
descended into the world in order to  
transform it and make it pray to G-d,  
**Student's** thereby making the world into a dwelling  
pg. 6 place for G-d like the mishkan and Holy  
Temple, about which the verse states,  
"and I will dwell within them."

ונמצא, שבתפלת הבוקר נפעלת חובת  
האדם - שהרי הנשמה ירדה למטה בכדי  
לפעול על העולם שהעולם יתפלל להקב"ה,  
שעל ידי זה נעשה העולם משכן ומקדש  
לו יתברך, בדוגמת המשכן ובית המקדש  
- "משכן שנקרא מקדש ומקדש שנקרא  
משכן" - עליו נאמר<sup>7</sup> "ושכנתי בתוכם".

*To illustrate this concept, we bring a story shared by the Previous Rebbe, depicting the emotions of a young Jewish man who ventures into the forest, marvels at the greatness of G-d's wondrous creation, and is deeply affected in his prayer.*

## Source 4 Sefer Hazichronot, Ch. 70

**Student's** One time, Baruch was overtaken by an  
pg. 6 extraordinary enthusiasm for the greatness  
of G-d's works and the wonders of nature.

פעם נכנס ברוך להתלהבות  
גדולה ומיוחדת מגודל מעשי ה'  
ונפלאותיו בטבע, היה זה בשעת

6. עירובין ב, א. וש"נ.  
7. תרומה כה, ה.

It was during twilight, and as he strolled through the open spaces, his steps led him to the top of a hill. From there, he could gaze out over the expanses that stretched endlessly before him. Fields of green were spread as far as the eye could see. At the base of the hill, a river flowed, and the soft sound of its rushing waters blended with the symphony of other natural sounds, creating a melody that seemed as if it were sung by a choir of angels praising G-d.

Baruch was awestruck.

"Praise the G-d from the earth!" he proclaimed in amazement. Unable to tear his gaze from the majestic divine creation, he continued to marvel at the phenomena and wonders of existence, almost forgetting that he was meant to return to his teacher to serve him.

The sunset that followed was especially breathtaking. However, the awe gave way to a sense of dread as the twilight shadows deepened into a foreboding dusk. The earth shifted its appearance from bright to dim, altering the mood and atmosphere to one of somberness. Baruch remained rooted in his place, lost in thought.

Before long, a radiant sky unfolded above him, adorned with countless twinkling stars. The moon emerged among them as a queen, casting its silvery light over the world. The sadness brought by the sunset was now replaced with joy. The moonlight and starlight awakened in Baruch a happiness he had never felt before—a joy of creation, a perfect divine joy.

Baruch had no need to remind himself that the time for the evening prayer (Arvit) had arrived. The prayer seemed to emerge and

בין הערבים כאשר תוך כדי סיור במרחב הביאוהו רגליו לראש גבעה שממנה ניתן היה להשקיף על השטחים שהשתרעו לרגליו למרחקים. לכל מלוא העין היו פרושים שדות מוריקים, למרגלות הגבעה זרם נהר, ואיוושת מימיו השוטפים התמזגה עם שאר קולות הטבע, לזמרה עריבה שנשמעה כאילו מפי מחנה מלאכים האומרים שירה לה'.

ברוך היה נפעם.

'הללו את ה' מן הארץ' – הכריז בהתפעלות. הוא לא היה יכול לנתק את מבטו מהדר הבריאה האלוקית, והמשיך להסתכל מוקסם בתופעות היצירה ונפלאותיה, עד שכמעט שכח שעליו לשוב לרבו כדי לשמשו.

שקיעת החמה שהתרחשה לאחר מכן היתה נפלאה במיוחד, אלא שהתפעלות פינתה את מקומה לתחושת אימה, כשהחלה להשתלט אפלולית בין השמשות. כדור הארץ שינה את מראהו מבהיר לכהה, ועמו כאילו הפך את הלך הרוח ואת האווירה לקדורניים. ברוך נשאר רתוק למקומו תפוס הרהורים.

לא עבר זמן רב, ומעל ראשו החל להתפרס רקיע מאיר, זרוע מיליארדי כוכבים נוצצים, הלכנה הבקיעה לה דרך ביניהם כמלכה, ונוגהה שטף את פני תבל בקרני הכסף שלה.

עתה תפסה את מקום העצב שהביאה איתה השקיעה – שמחה. אור הירח והכוכבים עורר בנפשו של ברוך שמחה, שלא ידע ולא חש מעולם. היתה זו חדות הבריאה, שמחה אלוקית שלימה.

לברוך לא היה צורך לזכור כי הגיע זמן תפלת ערבית, התפלה כאילו בקעה והשתפכה מאלה, מונעת על ידי "כל

21. ראה גם תו"מ חמ"א ע' 254, וש"נ.  
22. לך לך יג, יז. וראה ב"ב ק, א.  
23. שם טו, טז.

18. וירא שם, יב.  
19. ראה ב"ר פנ"ז, ז. הובא בפרש"י עה"פ.  
20. ראה תנחומא לך לך ט. ב"ר פ"מ, ו. רמב"ן לך לך יב, ו. ועוד.

flow naturally, driven by the verse, "All my bones shall say, G-d, who is like You?" His lips began to express the profound feelings of his soul, blessing G-d, who, by His word, brings on evenings, opens the gates of wisdom, and alternates the times and seasons.

When Baruch reached the verse "Hear, O Israel, the L-rd is our G-d, the L-rd is One," he recited it with such deep intent and enthusiasm that he felt himself a part of the divine unity that sustains all creation. He stretched out the word "One" with a voice full of devotion, resonating in the air and filling the world around him. His declaration of unity reverberated across the hills and valleys, fields and forests, blending with the song of the river flowing at the foot of the mountain. This unified song ascended higher and higher until it became part of the radiant glow of the moon and stars, spreading like a fragrant offering through all of nature.

Baruch's voice fell silent, as though struck mute by the intensity of his awe. Then, from afar, he heard the echo of his own proclamation of unity. Again, the word "One" resounded, echoing back from within creation itself—encompassing the hills, valleys, fields, rivers, forests, rocks, trees, and grasses. It enveloped Baruch entirely. All became one cohesive, complete, and absolute expression of "The whole earth is filled with His glory."

A holy tremor overtook Baruch. It was as if he heard in the echo a divine response to his sacred call, perceiving it as a sign that his voice had indeed reached the heavens, ascended to the Throne of Glory, and returned as G-d's proclamation of "G-d is One!"—a full and absolute unity, "There is none besides Him."

עצמותי תאמרנה ה' מי כמוך", וכך החלו שפתותיו לבטא את כל חוויית נפשו המברכת את הקב"ה, אשר בדברו מעריב ערבים, בחכמה פותח שערים, ובתבונה משנה עתים ומחליף את הזמנים וכן הלאה.

את הפסוק "שמע ישראל ה' אלוהינו ה' אחד", השמיע ברוך בכוונה ובהתלהבות כה גדולה בהרגשת היותו חלק מן האחדות האלוקית המהווה את הבריאה כולה.

את ה"אחד" משך בקול גדוש בכוונת דביקות, שהסתלסל באוויר ומילא את חלל העולם. האחד של ברוך התגלגל על פני הר ובקעה, שדה ויער, התמזג עם שירת הנחל המפכה למרגלות ההר, והפך לשירת היקום כולו המתרוממת מעלה מעלה, עד שהיא הופכת לחלק בלתי נפרד מבוהק הירח והכוכבים, ומתפשטת כריח בשמים הניסך בטבע כולו.

קולו של ברוך נפסק, כאילו נאלם מעוצמת ההתפעלות, ואז התגלגל אליו מרחוק הד קול הכרזת ה"אחד" שלו. שוב חזר ה"אחד" ונקלט בהדהודו בתוככי הבריאה כולה, בהקיפו הר ובקעה, שדה ונחל, יער וסלע, עץ ודשא, ובעטפו גם את ברוך עצמו, הכל בכל כל, הותך והתמזג ב"אחד". הכל הפך להיות ביטוי אחיד מלא ומוחלט, של "מלוא כל הארץ כבודו".

רעד של קדושה תקף את ברוך. הוא שמע כאילו בהד שהגיע אליו את המענה האלוקי לקריאתו הקדושה, וראה בכך אות שאכן נקלט קולו בשמי שמים והגיע לכסא הכבוד, ומשם כביכול חוזרת אליו ההכרזה "ה' אחד!", המביעה אחדות מלאה ומוחלטת, "אין עוד מלבדו".

**Student's**  
pg. 8

When Baruch finally returned to the estate late that night, he felt as though he had been reborn—purified and uplifted. The impression of that evening stayed with him for the rest of his life.

כאשר חזר ברוך לאחוזה בשעה מאוחרת מאוד בלילה, חש עצמו כמי שנולד מחדש, מזוכך יותר ומרומם יותר. רושמו של אותו ערב לא סר ממנו כל ימי חייו.

## C. During the Workday

### >> The Rebbe

#### Elijah's Prayer

**Student's** Next comes the afternoon prayer, with its own  
pg. 9 unique quality.

The sages state, "One must always be vigilant with regard to the afternoon prayer, as Elijah's prayer was only answered in the afternoon prayer." Works of Jewish ethics and Chassidut explain that the unique feature of the afternoon prayer is that it occurs in the middle of the day, while people are still caught up in the commotion of their daily schedule.

ולאחרי כן ישנו את החידוש של  
תפלת המנחה:

מובא בספרי מוסר ובארוכה בספרי  
חסידות<sup>8</sup>, בביאור מאמר רז"ל<sup>9</sup>  
"לעולם יהא אדם זהיר בתפלת  
המנחה, שהרי אליהו לא נענה אלא  
בתפלת המנחה", שהחידוש של  
תפלת מנחה הוא להיותה באמצע  
היום, כאשר האדם נמצא עדיין  
בעיצומו של הלהט של עבודת  
היום.

#### Source 5 Talmud, Berachot 6b

**Student's** Rabbi Chelbo said in the name of Rabbi Huna:  
pg. 9 One must always be vigilant with regard to the  
afternoon prayer, as Elijah was only answered  
in the afternoon prayer, as the verse states: "And  
it was at the time of the afternoon offering that  
Elijah the Prophet came near, and he said ...  
Answer me, G-d, answer me

The first "answer me" was the request that fire  
descend from the heavens, while the second  
"answer me" was the request that the Jewish  
people should accept complete faith in G-d and  
not say that the fire descending from the heavens  
was an act of sorcery.

וְאָמַר רַבִּי חֵלְבֹה, אָמַר רַב  
הוּנָא: לְעוֹלָם יִהְיֶה אָדָם  
זָהִיר בְּתַפִּלַּת הַמִּנְחָה,  
שֶׁהָרִי אֵלֵיהֶו לֹא נִעְנָה  
אֶלָּא בְּתַפִּלַּת הַמִּנְחָה,  
שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "וַיְהִי בַעֲלֹת  
הַמִּנְחָה וַיִּגַּשׁ אֵלָיו  
הַנָּבִיא וַיֹּאמֶר וְגו' עֲנֵנִי  
ה' עֲנֵנִי".

"עֲנֵנִי" – שֶׁתֵּרֵד אֵשׁ מִן  
הַשָּׁמַיִם, וְ"עֲנֵנִי" – שֶׁלֹּא  
יֵאמְרוּ מַעֲשֵׂה כַּשְׁפִּים  
הֵם.

8. ראה אוה"ת נ"ך מלכים א ס"ע עא ואילך. וש"נ. סה"מ תרצ"א  
ס"ע ריא. וש"נ (נעתק ב"היום יום" כב אדר א').

9. ברכות ו, ב.

## The Storyline:

The background of the conflict was King Ahab of Israel's policy of supporting idol worship, specifically the worship of Baal. To eradicate this from among the Jews, Elijah the Prophet initiated a confrontation with the prophets of Baal and Asherah. The residents of the Kingdom of Israel served as both the audience and judges, and the confrontation essentially became a way for them to choose a side in the dispute.

The chosen location was Mount Carmel. Elijah opened the confrontation with a proposal for a decisive method: the side whose deity would send down fire from the heavens would be declared victorious. This proposal was accepted, with each side using its own altar and bull to demonstrate that its deity was the true G-d.

The prophets of Baal were given the first chance to bring fire from the heavens. Initially, they tried to persuade Baal with relatively moderate efforts. By noon, Elijah began mocking them sarcastically, suggesting they call out louder to Baal to draw his attention away from other "occupations." Taking his words seriously, the prophets of Baal shouted even louder. To intensify their pleas, they also cut themselves, as was customary among Baal worshippers. Despite all their efforts, the result was: "They prophesied until the time of the evening offering, but there was no voice, no answer, and no attention."

At this point, it was Elijah's turn. He began by preparing an altar for the descent of fire. Additionally, he built a trench around the altar and, after arranging wood and placing the bull on the altar, poured water over the altar and into the trench. He then prayed:

"At the time of the evening offering, Elijah the Prophet approached and said, 'O L-rd, the G-d of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known today that You are G-d in Israel, and I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things by Your word. Answer me, L-rd, answer me, so that this people will know that You, L-rd, are G-d, and that You have turned their hearts back again.'"

G-d answered Elijah's prayer and sent fire from the heavens. The fire consumed the bull, the wood, the altar, and even the water in the trench. After Elijah's victory in the confrontation, the people bowed down and declared their faith in G-d.

## >> The Rebbe

### In the Middle of the Commotion

Student's  
pg. 10

The evening prayer comes after we have finished the day's work. We are at home, and no longer engaged in worldly affairs. The morning prayer is recited before we go out to engage in worldly

תפלת מעריב היא לאחר סיום  
עבודת היום, כאשר אינו עוסק עוד  
בעניני העולם ונמצא בד' אמותיו;  
ותפלת הבוקר היא קודם שיוצא

affairs, as Jewish law dictates that we are not allowed to engage in worldly matters before praying—our day must begin with prayer.

Praying the morning and evening prayers with the mindset of “a servant standing before his master” is no great achievement. The evening prayer is after the day’s work is over, and the morning prayer is before work has begun. There is no involvement in worldly affairs to interfere with the prayer.

The afternoon prayer, by contrast, comes in the middle of the day. Most of the days of the week are work days—only a minority are Shabbat and festivals. On these work days we must work in “whatever you do,” which the Mechilta teaches is actually a positive commandment. Everyone is engrossed in their worldly work, each person in their own specific way. In the middle, he looks at the clock and sees that there is now a minyan gathering in the synagogue and he must pray the afternoon prayer. He tears himself away from all of his work and goes to the synagogue to pray to G-d together with the community. Afterwards, he goes back to his worldly work.

This is the greatness of the afternoon prayer over the evening and morning prayers. A person can study Torah, observe mitzvot, and serve G-d in prayer in the most complete fashion. Even when he is in the middle of his day’s work he stops in the middle and prays, and does so as if he hadn’t just been busy with his work.

לעסוק בעניני העולם, שהרי הדין הוא שקודם התפלה אסור לעסוק בעניני העולם<sup>10</sup>, אלא יש להתחיל את היום בעבודת התפלה.

וכיון שכן, הרי מובן שעדיין לא פעל בעצמו חידוש גדול שיוכל לעמוד “כעבד לפני אדונו” ולהתפלל לפני הקב”ה - כי, תפלת ערבית היא לאחר שנסתיימה עבודת היום, ותפלת הבוקר היא לפני שהתחילה עבודת היום, כך, שעבודת היום בל”ט מלאכות של עובדין דחול, אינה מבלבלת לתפלות אלו.

ואילו תפלת מנחה, תפלת הצהריים, זמנה באמצע היום - סתם יום, שאינו יום השבת או ימים טובים, שהם מועטים בכמות, אלא ששת ימי המעשה, שבהם צריכה להיות ההתעסקות “בכל אשר תעשה”<sup>11</sup>, כדברי המכילתא<sup>12</sup> ש”ז מצות עשה”, שאז מתעסקים בעניני העולם, כל אחד לפי מצבו ומעמדו, ובאמצע, מביט בשעון ורואה שעכשיו יש מנין בבית הכנסת ועליו להתפלל מנחה בציבור, ואז מנתק את עצמו מכל עסקיו והולך לבית הכנסת כדי להתפלל להקב”ה בציבור, ולאחרי תפלת המנחה חוזר לעבודה של ששת ימי המעשה.

וזהו החידוש שבתפלת מנחה לגבי תפלת מעריב וגם לגבי תפלת הבוקר - שיהודי יכול להיות לומד תורה ומקיים מצוות ועוסק בעבודת התפלה, ולעשות את כל הענינים הללו בשלימות, וגם כאשר נמצא באמצע העבודה בעניני העולם, הרי הוא מפסיק באמצע ומתפלל באופן

בלולה. וראה לקו”ש ח”ז ע’ 245 הערה 20. וש”נ.

10. שם יד, א.

11. פ’ ראה טו, יח.

12. הובאה בדרשות ר’ יהושע אבן שועב פ’ וישב, ובס’ מנחה

Moreover, his previous deep involvement in work actually advances his prayer. He sees G-d's Divine providence in his work, and this inspires him to pray more sincerely. His prayer then reaches higher levels, and brings down Divine blessings into the lowest realms.

At the same time, prayer doesn't remove him from the world. After praying he is able to re-engage with his worldly affairs, but he does so in a way that reflects that he is a Jew who just prayed the afternoon prayer and is now on a more exalted plane than he was before the prayer.

כמו שלא היתה אצלו עבודה קודם לזה ולאחרי זה

וואדרבה: העובדה שמקודם לכן התייגע בעבודה מוסיפה אצלו בתפלה, מכיון שראה בעבודתו השגחה פרטית כו', אזי תפלתו היא מעומק הלב יותר, ומגיעת למעלה מעלה, וממשכת ברכת ה' עד למטה מטה -

ולאידך, אין זה מנתק אותו לגמרי מהעולם, אלא לאחרי התפלה בכחו לחזור ולעסוק בעניני העולם, ובאופן שיהיה ניכר שעושה זאת יהודי שכבר התפלל מנחה, ונמצא במעמד ומצב נעלה יותר מכמו שהיה קודם שהתפלל תפלתו.

משיחת אור ליום ועש"ק פ' וישב, י"ט כסלו,  
ה'תשכ"ז, הנחה בלתי מוגה  
תורת מנחם כרך מ"ח עמ' 309

## Story - The Transformative Mincha prayer

By Velvel Greene

Back in the early 1960s, Rabbi Moshe Feller was the shaliach, the emissary, who the Rebbe sent to Minnesota. His job was to bring Jews closer to Yiddishkeit. Rabbi Feller had heard about me and wanted to meet with me face to face. At the time, I was doing research for NASA, as well as for the Army Biological Laboratory. I worked in a very, very secure laboratory. There was no access for anybody without high clearance.

He tried to call and make an appointment, but I told him it was impossible. When I first got a call from him, I knew, a guy with a black hat comes to Minneapolis—how many guys with black hats are there in Minneapolis? So I knew he's a meshulach, he's a representative; he's coming to get money.

So I told him on the phone, "You don't have to come. I'll send a check." And he said, "I don't need a check." That's the first time he said that, and the last time he said it, "I don't need a check, I want to see you." I said, "Rabbi, I'll give you twice as much." I thought, ah, I'm going

to give him \$36 instead of \$18. He said, “I must speak to you, it’s a matter of extreme importance.”

Believe it or not, I arranged for him to come.

He came into my office. This is a little Jew with a black hat, a beard, two big guards on both sides of him with guns. I saw that and my heart just, you know—I was sympathetic to him, even though I knew he was there for money or something else, whatever gig he had.

So I asked him to sit down and we talked. I said, “You’re a nice guy, I’m gonna tell you how to be successful. The first thing you got to do is trim the beard a little bit. Look like a mensch. Get out of that black suit, you look like an undertaker.” I was giving him good advice. He was listening.

And then he looked out the window—this is important—he looked out the window, and he looked at me. He said, “Excuse me, I’ve got to do something.” I said, “Well, the bathroom is over there.” No. He got up, he took a cord from his pocket, he tied it around his waist, and he started to shake like this.

What is he doing? It’s not Rosh Hashanah, and it’s not Yom Kippur. Is he praying? It’s the middle of the afternoon and there is no one telling him what page to be on. After all, this was my job as a Reform rabbi [although not ordained, Greene was appointed rabbi of a 60-family congregation] to tell you what page you’re on. There was no one telling him what page to be on. And most of all, I was no longer in control. He’s in my office, he asked for an appointment, and he’s ignoring me. He’s facing the window and he’s shaking.

When he was finished, he sat down again. I said, “Rabbi Feller, the interview is over; you’ve insulted me. You came for an appointment with me, and all of a sudden you’re doing some mumbo-jumbo.” And then he said the key words. He said, “What I came for was very, very important, but what I had to do now was even more important.”

If you want to know what changed, if you want to talk about the word epiphany, that happened there. Now I know he was davening Minchah, the afternoon prayer, and he had to do it before the sun went down—and that was more important than even what he came for.

Now that is dedication, and that impressed me.

## Key Points:

**Student's**  
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- The three Patriarchs established the three daily prayers: Shacharit in the morning, Minchah in the afternoon, and Arvit in the evening. Each prayer has its own unique characteristic:
- The essence of prayer is the disruption of the natural order, expressed through requests to G-d for healing and sustenance, bending the natural process. Arvit begins the process of breaking through nature (since in Judaism, the day begins at night).
- Shacharit focuses on praising G-d for the creation and His greatness. When a person reflects on the wonders of nature, as described in the prayer, it leads to an understanding and yearning for G-d's greatness. Through this, the person acts to bring about a prayer from the entire world in praise of G-d. Thus, in Shacharit, the person works toward having the world itself pray to G-d.
- Unlike Arvit and Shacharit, which take place at the beginning or end of the day, Minchah occurs at the peak of the day. A Jew must pause from their activities to pray, demonstrating that even in the midst of worldly pursuits, one can disconnect from the stressful and the mundane, and connect to G-d.

## Takeaway:

Through the study of Chassidus, which explains the special idea of each prayer throughout the day, we can approach prayer with a deeper, more internalized connection, fostering a more profound emotional and spiritual bond with G-d.