

"ובדברי קדשך ... הכבוד סלה"

This is a series of פסוקים that proclaim our belief that Hashem is THE Ruler over the entire world, and over all the nations of the world.

"ועל ידי ... ה' אחד"

This is a series of פסוקים that proclaim our belief in the special relationship we the Jewish People have with Hashem, Who, being our King, will redeem us and judge our enemies. And in the end the entire world will recognize Hashem as King. It ends with our proclamation:

שמע ישראל - we are not embarrassed of our belief, rather we proclaim out loud so that all of Israel should hear our belief that Hashem is the ONLY G-d and power in the world.

"אלקינו ... ויום הזכרון"

Hashem - Who controls everything and has taken care of the Jewish people throughout our history - rule over the entire universe with Your great glory, and reveal Your strength to all the inhabitants of the world; let everything that was created (including us!) realize that You are its Creator; and let everything that breathes proclaim that: "Hashem, the G-d of the Jewish People is King, and that He rules over everything." [Hashem - Who controls everything and has taken care of the Jewish people throughout our history - we hope You are pleased with our observance of this day of שבת and] please (even though we may not show this always in our daily lives, but in truth we do want You to) make us holy and special though Your מצוות; help us find our unique connection to Your תורה; help us feel satisfied with the good You give to us; and make us happy with Your salvation; [and please Hashem, give us and all Jews the day of שבת as our unique inheritance, and us, the Jewish People who sanctify Your Name - may we always be able to rest on the שבת] and purify our hearts and desires (since we live in such impure times and societies) so that we will be able to serve You sincerely and not superficially or hypocritically. For You, Hashem, are the True G-d and Power, and Your word is true and lasts forever.

מלך על כל הארץ - You, Hashem are the source for everything; ברוך אתה ה' - You are King over the whole world; ומקדש [השבת ו] ישראל ויום הזכרון - and has specifically made the [שבת and] the Jewish people and the Day of ראש השנה holy and unique.

Introduction זכרונות

But our mission did not start today. The great mission to the world called "עם ישראל" is based on a long history - dating back to creation. In זכרונות, we focus on the fact that Hashem does see all our past deeds, and thus we accept responsibility to slowly correct them. And we focus on the history of our relationship with Hashem and accept that as the foundation for our future.

זכרונות

"אתה זוכר ... משפט לאלקי יעקב"

(We realize that our actions of this past year, and what You Hashem will decree for us in the coming year, must be understood in the context of Your master plan for the universe, which we are proud to be part of. We realize that) You, Hashem remember and take into account all deeds done by all Your creations since the very start of creation. You, Hashem take into account all the hidden things and mysteries of the Universe since creation, for nothing is hidden before You. You, Hashem, take into account every deed done by every person in the universe - for all is open and revealed before You Hashem, Who controls everything. And You also see to the very end of all generations. And all this is taken into account as You take notice and judge every individual - and every single deed. You have made this known from the very beginning - that today is the anniversary of the beginnings of Your creation - and thus it is a day of judgement specifically for us, the Jewish People (since we have a special mission in this world and in history - which we are proud to be a part of - and are thus judged accordingly).

"ישמחו ... בראשית" [On add: שבת]

Those who observe שבת and realize what a delight it is to have the gift of שבת - they will be happy to have You, Hashem, as their Ruler. The nation that sanctifies the Seventh Day (this is the Jewish People who make שבת a day of stepping back from the day to day material pursuits) , because of this (stepping back from the day to day material pursuits), they will have the ability to be satisfied with whatever good You, Hashem, gives them. You, Hashem, made the Seventh Day unique - it is the most special of all days - for it reminds us that Hashem is the Creator of all.]

Introduction מלכות

There is a difference between a king and a judge. A judge is obligated to follow the rules of the land - no matter what he might feel about the person being judged. The law is the law. But a king, who makes up the laws of the land, has the right to override the laws if he feels it is for the good of the country. If you are in court, and you realize that based on letter of the law you are going to lose, the best thing to do is to try to get an audience with the king. Hopefully you can convince him that, notwithstanding what you did, you are still a loyal citizen and deserving of another chance. The king does have the ability to issue a royal pardon - or at least a stay of execution!

להבדיל - we all know that if we will be judged on the letter of the law for each and every thing we did - the odds of having a happy ending is poor! By saying מלכות - and proclaiming that we accept that Hashem is King; He controls all; and that we do accept our mission as His people and role model to the world (even though we do not always act like that), we can become deserving of a "royal pardon." Hashem can then at least write us (not seal it yet) in the ספר החיים. This is an opportunity to clarify to Hashem (and ourselves!), that even though we may not always act like proud members of His People - but we really are, and it is "worth His while" writing us in the ספר החיים.

Of course during עשרת ימי תשובה we must show Hashem we are serious by creating a credible and doable plan of improvement. By doing that, then on יום כפור we will be sealed in the ספר החיים.

מלכות

"עלינו לשבח ... אין עוד"

(The first step in accepting Hashem as our King is proclaiming that we are not doing this begrudgingly, but rather we feel that) it is our duty to praise and thank Hashem - the Creator of the entire universe - because He made us, His People, so unique and different than all the people on the earth. We have a special place in history and a role different than all others. They all bow and pray to gods who cannot help them. Whereas we, the Jewish People, bow and give thanks to the King of all kings who created heaven and earth. His "throne" is above in the heavens (meaning - we, as mere humans, cannot always understand His plan for us here on Earth. Nevertheless, we believe that) Hashem controls the circumstances of our lives - and there is no other power that can affect us; Hashem is our true and just King, and there is nothing else that can affect us. It is written so in His תורה: "You should understand and put into your heart that Hashem is the only G-d and Controlling Power - here on earth and in the heavens above - there is no other."

"על כן ... שבתי ישראל"

And therefore, (even though from some of our actions this past year it doesn't look like it, but in truth) we put our trust in You, Hashem, and we hope that soon we will see the beauty of Your power: to remove all the false gods from society, and to perfect the entire universe under Your Kingship. Then all people, included the wicked, will recognize Truth, submit to Hashem's Will, and accept the yoke of Hashem's Kingship. Because ultimate Rulership and Kingship is Yours, Hashem - as it says in the תורה: "Hashem will rule for all eternity."

"ובכן צדיקים ... ממשלת זדון מן הארץ"

And also, let the world become a place of Truth & Goodness, such that the צדיקים will look out at the world and be happy, and the honest and straightforward people will sing praise, & the righteous will be happy and sing, because all evil will close its mouth (there will no more lies or hypocrisy); and all wickedness will evaporate like smoke - when You Hashem will get rid of the power & leadership of evildoers from the world.

"ותמלוק אתה ... לדור ודור הללו-ה"

Then (with all the evil gone), You Hashem will rule alone over everything and everyone, from ציון ה' - the place where Your כבוד can be most felt, in ירושלים; Your holy city. For as the פסוק tells us: ציון - Hashem your G-d will rule forever - for all generations!

"קדוש אתה ... המלך הקדוש"

You, Hashem, are holy (separate from mere humans and therefore we cannot understand who or what Hashem is) and Your Name is awe-inspiring (we cannot fully understand how Hashem deals with the world); but we do know that there is no other power in the world besides Hashem; as the פסוק tells us: Hashem's judgments are on high (above our understanding) and Hashem is sanctified in righteousness (all His judgments on us are fair and just, even if we, as mere people, cannot see it).

ברוך אתה ה' - You, Hashem are the source of everything; המלך הקדוש - You are the holy King.

קדושת היום

"אתה בחרתנו ... עלינו קראת"

You Hashem have chosen us out of all the nations of the world to be Your special people; and You have shown Your love for us by giving us the great mission of being the ones who are privileged (yes - privileged!) to keep Your מצוות - which sanctify our lives and give it meaning; and thus we are known to the world as Your unique People.

"ותתן לנו ... ליציאת מצרים"

And because of Your love for us, You, Hashem, who controls everything, have given us this [Day of שבת to rest and to step back from the day to day material world, and also this] Day of Remembrance (we remember our connection to our history and our mission, and Hashem "remembers" our unique relationship with Him and judges us); a day of sounding and remembering the שופר. This entire day and the opportunities that it gives us are based on the fact that Hashem chose us and took us out of מצרים to give us מצוות and תורה.

"ומפני השמינו ... מפי כבודך כאמור"

It is because of our sins that we do not have the בית המקדש and thus cannot bring קרבנות and do the עבודה. Hashem - Who controls everything and has taken care of the Jewish people throughout our history - You are a merciful King - please rebuild the בית המקדש and reveal to the whole world the glory and power of Your Kingship over us, the Jewish People. Please gather all Jews from all over the world out of our exile and bring us all to the rebuilt המקדש with songs, joy and happiness (not through pain, war and suffering). And once we are there, we will gladly bring all the appropriate קרבנות; and specifically the ones for today (שבת) and, as is written in the תורה.

"וביום השבת ... ונסכה" [On add: שבת]

This is a direct quote from the תורה listing all the קרבנות that were brought on שבת.]

"ובחדש השביעי ... לריח ניחח אשה לה"

This is a direct quote from the תורה about השנה - that it is a day of sounding the shofar, and then it lists the קרבנות of the day. We cannot bring the קרבנות as we do not have a בית המקדש, nonetheless we read about them to express our longing to Hashem that one day soon we will be able to bring these קרבנות again.

Machzor Companion for Teens

ראש השנה

שמונה עשרה של מוסף

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Introduction

To better understand how to properly use this pamphlet, and what you can do to help, please see the Introduction to the Companion. ראש השנה שחרית, מנחה ומעריב

(Starting after the ברכה of המתים ברכה השם)

"אתה קדוש ... יהלולך סלה"

You, Hashem, are קדוש, and thus separate and removed from this physical world; and all that we see You do (שפך) is beyond our understanding. But we, the Jewish People, we are "קדושים" and are also separate and somewhat removed from the values and the "normal" of the regular physical world (look at the miracle of our survival throughout Jewish History). And therefore, even though many times what happens to us seem to not make sense – we, Your People, praise and thank You every day.

"ובכן"

"And also" – also what? In the first two ברכות of עשרה we have been discussing and worrying about ourselves as a nation – the Jewish People. But on ראש השנה the whole world is being judged – and therefore we must focus on broader issues which we normally do not think about on a day to day basis because we are so busy with our personal issues. But today we show Hashem that those bigger issues ARE important to us. (And during עשרת ימי תשובה we will make a credible and workable plan to bring those issues more and more into our daily lives.)

"ובכן תן פחדך ... על כל מה שבראת"

All nations, all peoples, all cultures, wherever they are, were created by You, Hashem. Please get them to understand the Truth of Your power and Kingship. Please help them see through all the illusions of their military and economic might; and help them come to the realization that true success is ONLY thanks to You, Hashem. Help them drop their differences and wars, and unite together to serve You and follow Your Teachings and Will eagerly and with a full heart. Because we, בני ישראל, we know the truth - that Hashem, You are the only true Ruler of the universe, who created all and controls all. (Even if maybe during the year we did not always act that way.)

"ובכן תן כבוד ... במהרה בימינו"

And also Hashem, give honor to Your Nation בני ישראל (instead of the way it is now that so many people look down on us); and those who fear Hashem and have the courage to do what is right regardless of what others say – they should be praised (and not made fun of); and please give hope and courage to those who seek You and are at least trying to discover the right path; and to those of us trying to speak to You – open our mouths and help us find the right words to say. Bring happiness to Your land: ארץ ישראל, and bring joy to Your city ירושלים; bring back the Kings of the House of המלך דוד and bring משיח quickly – in our days.

שופרות Introduction

Our day to day lives are very busy with many details (and some of them important), and it is hard to focus on the big picture. We have papers to write, tests to take, clothes to buy, and friends to obsess about. It is hard to step back and focus on the big picture: on our overall value system; what is REALLY important; where do we fit in to the world; what is our life goal; and how important is it being a member of ישראל. כלל. The shofar is a call to battle, to wake us up and get us to step back and think about the core of who we are and what we care about. By reading the פסוקים of שופרות, it reminds us of the bigger key issues in life – and helps put ראש השנה in perspective.

שופרות

"אתה נגלית ... ויעמדו מרחוק"

You, Hashem, personally revealed Yourself to us, Your holy and unique People. The entire universe trembled when You spoke to us at the instant of Divine Revelation, the entire nation heard Your "voice" and You appeared to them with thunder, lightning and the sound of the שופר! As it is written in the תורה: "And it happened on the third day . . . there was thunder and lightning . . . and the sound of the שופר was very strong, and the entire camp trembled." And it also says: The entire Nation saw the sounds and the flames and the sound of the שופר and the smoking mountain . . ."

"ובדברי קדשך ... הללוקה"

This is a series of פסוקים expanding on the theme that the שופר is sounded on special festive occasions and to announce the arrival of the King.

"ועל ידי ... בשלומך"

This is a series of פסוקים that discuss the use of the שופר to announce the end of days and the arrival of משיח.

"אלקיני ... ישראל ברחמים"

Hashem – Who controls everything and has taken care of the Jewish People throughout our history – (even though during the year we may get busy with our day to day small issues and personal requests, but in truth, we do long for the day that) You will sound the שופר for our freedom, and raise up the banner to gather in all our exiles. Please gather all the Jews who are scattered among the nations (those who have assimilated and lost their Jewish connection), and gather in those who are physically scattered over the ends of the earth. And bring us all to ירושלים and rebuild the בית המקדש with songs and joy (not through pain, war and suffering). And once there we will gladly bring all the קרבנות as are commanded in Your תורה: "And on the day of your gladness, and on your festivals, and on your חדש, you will sound the trumpets over the various קרבנות, and they will be a זכרון for you before Hashem your G-d; I am Hashem Your G-d." For You Hashem hear and take into account the sounds of the שופר – and there is no other power that controls us. ברוך אתה ה' – You Hashem are the source for everything, Who hears (and takes into account) the שופר sounds of His people Israel, with mercy.

רצה Continue with

"ועל המדינות ... כל החוסים בך"

But it is also a time of judgement for all the countries of the world: which ones will be at war, which will live in peace, which will suffer hunger, which will not. And it is a day of judgement for all humanity: who will live and who will die. You, Hashem, look into every person – analyzing their deeds and how well they have fulfilled their mission on earth. You take into account each person's accomplishments, his thoughts and plans (which may not have come into fruition), and each person's motives. (Even though we may not have lived up to our potential last year, but we DO proclaim and understand) that the only really happy person is one who does not forget You, Hashem (and thus bases his decisions on Hashem's guidelines and expectations). And happy is the person who draws their strength and convictions from You (and Your תורה). Because those who honestly seek You and are trying to discover the correct path will ultimately prevail and not fail. Those who trust You, in the end, will not be embarrassed – but rather will be proud to be a part of Your people. (And since we do believe this – we ask to be written in the ספר החיים for the coming year, in order to have the opportunity to correct our mistakes and live up to our true beliefs.)

"כי זכר ... והארץ אזכר"

All that has been done is remembered by You, Hashem, and You analyze everyone's actions. As an example – Hashem remembered נח and saved him and his family when He destroyed the world in the מבול. And Hashem heard the cries of the Jewish People in Egypt and remembered the covenant He made with the אבות. The פסוק says clearly that Hashem will always remember (and take into account) the unique covenant he made with our אבות – and with the Land of Israel. (And we are part of that covenant and take responsibility for our role.)

"ובדברי קדשך ... כרב חסדיו"

This is a series of פסוקים reiterating that Hashem will always take into account the unique covenant He made with us, the Jewish People.

"ועל ידי ... נאם ה'"

This is a series of פסוקים focusing on the special bond and covenant between Hashem and us, His nation.

"אלקיני ... זוכר הברית"

Hashem – Who controls everything and has taken care of the Jewish People throughout our history – please (even though our present actions may not be worthy of such a favorable judgement, nevertheless) remember us (and view us) with mercy, and take into account the special bond and covenant that You Hashem made with אברהם on the day when he suppressed his mercy on his son יצחק in order to do what You, Hashem had commanded him. In that merit, please suppress Your anger from upon us! And with Your great goodness, remove Your anger from Your nation, Your City and from Your Land. (And since we count ourselves as part of this covenant with the אבות) please fulfill what You wrote in Your תורה: I will (for all generations in the future) remember (and take into account) the original covenant I made, that I took the Jewish People out of Egypt publicly – in the eyes of the whole world, so that I will be their G-d forever. For You Hashem takes into account all "forgotten things," and may You take into account today the עקדה of יצחק for the merit of us, his offspring. ברוך אתה ה' – You Hashem are the source for everything, זוכר הברית – You remember and take into account the unique covenant (between You and us, Your People).