

Daat - [Knowledge](knowledge.html)

By Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David (Greg Killian)



In this [study](study.html) I would like to take a closer look at *daat*, often translated [knowledge](knowledge.html), and what this has to do with [praying](prayer.html). These [two](two.html) are closely interwoven and will require much thought to understand. This is a very difficult subject.

Most of this [study](study.html) is based on shiurim given by Rabbi Akiva Tatz.

To begin this [study](study.html) we will need to understand exactly what the Sages understood about *daat* and how they used the model of the human [body](body.html) to help us understand the daat and its connections. We will be only hinting at the sexual understanding of daat by examining the [mouth](body.html) and the [tongue](spirit.html). But, it is enough for the wise to have a hint.

The [mouth](body.html) is a place of [connection](connection.html), both [physically](physical.html) between people, and [spiritually](physical.html). The [mouth](body.html) is used for [three](three.html) things: [Speaking](mashal.html), [eating](eating.html), and [kissing](mashal.html). If [one](one.html) organ is used for [three](three.html) things, then the [three](three.html) things must be the same. As we shall see, each of these [three](three.html) is used for [connection](connection.html).

**Speech**

Speech is the vehicle that an infinite neshama shares its [heart](body.html) with a finite [world](worlds.html). The most explicit intimate [connection](connection.html) that can exist between [two](two.html) people is speech. Speech, which comes from the [mouth](body.html), is capable of allowing another person, at some level, to understand what is in our soul. So it is also with the infinite G-d and His finite [world](worlds.html). [HaShem](hashem.html) [**spoke**](mashal.html) to man through the *K’ruvim* in the [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html), which was where [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [connection](connection.html) to the [world](worlds.html) is most manifest.

[**Eating**](eating.html)

[Eating](eating.html) [connects](connection.html) the [body](body.html) and the neshama, the soul. Without [food](food.html), the neshama would leave the [body](body.html)

The most intimate [connection](connection.html) in this [world](worlds.html) is the [connection](connection.html) between a neshama and the [body](body.html). This most potent [connection](connection.html) is maintained through [eating](eating.html). The Sages see the neshama and the [body](body.html) as the ultimate opposites, the ultimate [male](male%2Bfemale.html) and [female](male%2Bfemale.html) [connection](connection.html). The neshama is a spark of the infinite subsumed in a finite [body](body.html). Finite and infinite truly are the opposites, which are cemented by [eating](eating.html). The combination of [body](body.html) and soul is something that we cannot understand. We must assume that it is a mystery known only to [HaShem](hashem.html).

[Food](food.html) is the energy, which bonds [two](two.html) opposites together. [Food](food.html) was the last thing created. It was created as the energy, which binds these opposites.

[One](one.html) can understand [food](food.html) and [eating](eating.html) by looking at what happens when [one](one.html) stops [eating](eating.html). If we stop [eating](eating.html) for a short [time](time.html), the neshama begins separating from the [body](body.html) and we manifest this separation by feeling weak. If we stop [eating](eating.html) for a longer period, the [body](body.html) actually feels faint in response to the continued separation of the neshama from the [body](body.html). If we continue this pattern, the neshama will completely separate from the [body](body.html) and we manifest this complete separation with death.

[HaShem](hashem.html) is [spiritual](physical.html) as the neshama is [spiritual](physical.html); we as a people are [physical](physical.html) like the [body](body.html). Nevertheless, the Divine Presence can rest among us just as the neshama rests in the [body](body.html). However, this was only true when the [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html) stood and we brought korbanot, sacrifices. Through the “[food](food.html)” of the korbanot, the Divine Presence rested among us. However, now that the korbanot have been taken away, the Divine Presence has also been taken away from us just as the neshama leaves the [body](body.html) when there is no [food](food.html).

The parallel of [food](food.html) in the [spiritual](physical.html) [world](worlds.html) is the [Korban](korbanot.html)(which means something that brings closeness from the root *kirbah*), a [sacrifice](korbanot.html). Sacrifices maintain contact, as it were, between [HaShem](hashem.html)’s infinite presence and the finite [world](worlds.html). The place of [sacrifice](korbanot.html) is the [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html)*.* That is why the Holy place contained [food](food.html), the bread of The Presence. The korbanot, the sacrifices were called [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [food](food.html):

***Bamidbar (***[***Numbers***](nchart.html)***) 28:2***[*Command*](cmds613.html) *the children of Israel, and say unto them, My* [*offering*](korbanot)*, [and] my bread for my sacrifices made by* [*fire*](fire.html)*, [for] a sweet savour unto me, shall ye observe to offer unto me in their due season.*

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 3:11*** *And the* [*priest*](priests.html) *shall burn it upon the altar: [it is] the* [*food*](food.html) *of the* [*offering*](korbanot) *made by* [*fire*](fire.html) *unto* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*.*

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 3:16*** *And the* [*priest*](priests.html) *shall burn them upon the altar: [it is] the* [*food*](food.html) *of the* [*offering*](korbanot) *made by* [*fire*](fire.html) *for a sweet savour: all the fat [is]* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *‘s.*

As the [body](body.html) and the neshama are connected by [food](food.html), so also is [HaShem](hashem.html) (pictured by the neshama) connected to the earth (pictured by the [body](body.html)) by the korbanot (pictured by the [food](food.html)). This also gives us considerable [insight](insights.html) into the mystery of the [body](body.html) of [Mashiach](mashiach.html), the bride, making love, as it were, with [HaShem](hashem.html), the groom.

As long as we brought sacrifices the Divine Presence rested among us. When the [Beit HaMikdash](mikdash.html) was destroyed, the divine presence no longer dwelt among us. The Soul of the [world](worlds.html) departed with the cessation of the [food](food.html), the korbanot.

[**Kissing**](mashal.html)

[Kissing](mashal.html) is a most unusual, universal, human custom. It is a natural act of affection between [two](two.html) human beings. Between parent and child, between husband and wife, and even between friends. It is the way that [two](two.html) infinite souls connect in the [physical](physical.html), finite, [world](worlds.html).

A [kiss](mashal.html) is to the upper [world](worlds.html) what marital intimacy is to the lower [world](worlds.html). In both acts there is a flow of energy.

The [Gemara](orallaw.html) says that [heaven](heaven.html) and Earth [kiss](mashal.html). The [Gemara](orallaw.html) is hinting at the nature of the [connection](connection.html), and the [mouth](body.html) in this metaphor, which is the [BeitHaMikdash](mikdash.html). This is also the place where the infinite, [first](one.html) connected to the finite. The foundation [rock](rock.html) in the Kodesh HaKodashim, the Holy of Holies, is the place where [creation](bara.html) began.

**The** [**two**](two.html) **Brits**

With the organ of the Brit (brit is the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word for [*covenant*](covenant.html)) milah ([circumcision](circumcz.html)) we can bring a soul into the [physical](physical.html) [world](worlds.html). With the Brit HaLashon (the [tongue](spirit.html)) we can bring a soul into the [Olam HaBa](futures.html), the [world](futures.html) to come. This is the complete understanding of what [Abraham](avraham.html) and Sarah did in Haran. At the Peshat level it means they brought children into the [world](worlds.html). At the [sod](sod.html) level they brought their talmidim into the [Olam HaBa](futures.html). This is what the Torah is saying:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 12:5*** *And* [*Abram*](avraham.html) *took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother’s son, and all their substance that they had* [*gathered*](gather.html)*, and the souls that they had made in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.*

Bearing children and bearing talmidim are both the same thing. [One](one.html) is in this [world](worlds.html) and the other is in the [spiritual](physical.html) [world](worlds.html). The lower form of [connection](connection.html) brings a [body](body.html) into the [world](worlds.html), the higher form of [connection](connection.html) brings a mind into the [world](worlds.html).

**Marital Intimacy**

The [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word for the intimate [connection](connection.html) between husband and wife is Daat, [knowledge](knowledge.html):

***Bereshit (Genesis) 4:1*** *And* [*Adam*](adam.html) *knew (daat) Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*.*

Daat, [knowledge](knowledge.html), is achieved when we connect with a person or a piece of information. Daat is not merely collecting facts; it is an intimate [connection](connection.html) with them. Daat always means an intimate [connection](connection.html).

Intimate relations between husband and wife takes place in an inner chamber of the home, just as the Beit (House) HaMikdash (of The Holy [one](one.html)) has an inner chamber. As husband and wife embrace in the inner chamber, so too, do the [male](male%2Bfemale.html) and [female](male%2Bfemale.html) [Cherubim](angels.html), in the Holy of Holies, embrace in love. When [HaShem](hashem.html) talks about His Beloved, He uses the terms of [marriage](mashal.html) and of intimate relations (Ezekiel).

**Daat – The Hidden Part**

[Praying](prayer.html) will take us in to this area. This is a strange [experience](experience.html) because we repeat the same [prayers](prayer.html) over and over. [Prayer](prayer.html) is spitting out the same old tired words over and over. [Prayer](prayer.html) is the highest form of meditation. [Prayer](prayer.html) is hard work!

[Prayer](prayer.html) is not optional. The Sages [teach](teacher.html) us that our very existence depends on what we ask for. If we don’t ask then we do not receive. And if we do ask, we receive only what we ask for.

There are many problems with [praying](prayer.html):

What does [praying](prayer.html) have to do with the rain, since rain is a central idea in our [prayers](prayer.html)? *Geshem* means *rain* and it also means all of our material existence. (The [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word for rain is *geshem*, which means [*physical*](physical.html).) The root of *geshem* means the whole of [physicality](physical.html). *Gush* means a [body](body.html) or mass. Since [Hebrew](hebrew.html) is a very sensitive language, it must mean that *rain* is intimately connected with all of [physical](physical.html) existence.

Tefilah, [prayer](prayer.html), means [two](two.html) opposite things:

1. Requesting things that we do not deserve to have or have any expectation of ever receiving. We are asking for mercy, not what we deserve.

2. Negotiating in order to obtain exactly what we deserve. Negotiated JUSTICE! What profit do you have in my [blood](body.html) if I go down to the grave? Do the dead praise you?

When we have a single word, which means [two](two.html) opposite things, then we know that these [two](two.html) must be the same thing. Tefilah is [one](one.html) such word.

Additionally the [Gemara](orallaw.html) says that [HaShem](hashem.html) prays and wears [tefillin](tefillin.html) when He prays, just as we do. His Tefilah is very similar to ours:

***Berachoth 7a*** *R. Johanan says in the* [*name*](name.html) *of R. Jose: How do we know that the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, says* [*prayers*](prayer.html)*? Because it says: Even them will I bring to My holy mountain and make them joyful in My house of* [*prayer*](prayer.html)*. It is not said, ‘their* [*prayer*](prayer.html)*’, but ‘My* [*prayer*](prayer.html)*’; hence [you learn] that the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, says* [*prayers*](prayer.html)*. What does He* [*pray*](prayer.html)*? — R. Zutra b. Tobi said in the* [*name*](name.html) *of Rab: ‘May it be My will that My mercy may suppress My anger, and that My mercy may prevail over My [other] attributes, so that I may deal with My children in the attribute of mercy and, on their behalf, stop short of the limit of strict justice’. It was* [*taught*](teacher.html)*: R. Ishmael b. Elisha says: I once entered into the innermost part [of the* [*Sanctuary*](mikdash.html)*] to offer* [*incense*](ketoret.html) *and saw Akathriel Jah, the Lord of Hosts, seated upon a high and exalted throne. He said to me: Ishmael, My son, bless Me! I replied: May it be Thy will that Thy mercy may suppress Thy anger and Thy mercy may prevail over Thy other attributes, so that Thou mayest deal with Thy children according to the attribute of mercy and mayest, on their behalf, stop short of the limit of strict justice! And He nodded to me with His* [*head*](body.html)*. Here we learn [incidentally] that the blessing of an ordinary man must not be considered lightly in your* [*eyes*](body.html)*.*

***Berachoth 6a*** *R. Abin son of R. Ada in the* [*name*](name.html) *of R.* [*Isaac*](isaac.html) *says [further]: How do you know that the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, puts on* [*tefillin*](tefillin.html)*? For it is said: The Lord hath sworn by His right* [*hand*](mashal.html)*, and by the arm of His strength. ‘By His right* [*hand*](mashal.html)*’: this is the Torah; for it is said: At His right* [*hand*](mashal.html) *was a fiery* [*law*](law.html) *unto them. ‘And by the arm of his strength’: this is the* [*tefillin*](tefillin.html)*; as it is said: The Lord will give strength unto His people. And how do you know that the* [*tefillin*](tefillin.html) *are a strength to Israel? For it is written: And all the peoples of the earth shall see that the* [*name*](name.html) *of the Lord is called upon thee, and they shall be afraid of thee, and it has been* [*taught*](teacher.html)*: R. Eliezer the Great says: This refers to the* [*tefillin*](tefillin.html) *of the* [*head*](body.html)*.*

*R. Nahman b.* [*Isaac*](isaac.html) *said to R. Hiyya b. Abin: What is written in the* [*tefillin*](tefillin.html) *of the Lord of the Universe? — He replied to him: And who is like Thy people Israel, a* [*nation*](nations.html)[*one*](one.html) *in the earth. Does, then, the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, sing the praises of Israel? — Yes, for it is written: Thou hast avouched the Lord this day . . . and the Lord hath avouched thee this day. The Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, said to Israel: You have made me a unique entity in the* [*world*](worlds.html)*, and I shall make you a unique entity in the* [*world*](worlds.html)*. ‘You have made me a unique entity in the* [*world*](worlds.html)*‘, as it is said: Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is* [*one*](one.html)*. ‘And I shall make you a unique entity in the* [*world*](worlds.html)*’, as it is said: And who is like Thy people Israel, a* [*nation*](nations.html)[*one*](one.html) *in the earth. R. Aha b. Raba said to R. Ashi: This accounts for* [*one*](one.html) *case, what about the other cases? — He replied to him: [They contain the following verses]: For what great* [*nation*](nations.html) *is there, etc.; And what great* [*nation*](nations.html) *is there, etc.; Happy art thou, O Israel, etc.; Or hath God assayed, etc.; and To make thee high above all* [*nations*](nations.html)*. If so, there would be too many cases? — Hence [you must say]: For what great* [*nation*](nations.html) *is there, and what great* [*nation*](nations.html) *is there, which are similar, are in* [*one*](one.html) *case; Happy art thou, O Israel, and Who is like Thy people, in* [*one*](one.html) *case; Or hath God assayed, in* [*one*](one.html) *case; and To make thee high, in* [*one*](one.html) *case.*

No [one](one.html), including women, is exempt from [praying](prayer.html), according to most authorities. They must spend at least a couple minutes a day in [prayer](prayer.html).

[Praying](prayer.html) means to request things. The middle sixteen blessings of the [Amida](amida.html) are requests for various things. What does this have to do with meditation?

Meditation is not switching our mind off and becoming a zombie! Meditation means getting to the essential root of who you are, and changing it. Meditation is changing our [ratzon](needs.html), our [desire](needs.html).

There is a major paradox to [prayer](prayer.html): [HaShem](hashem.html) is our Father and a father gives his child what he [needs](needs.html). Therefore, why do we have to ask since [HaShem](hashem.html) already knows what we need? A loving father will NOT give his child something that is bad for the child. So why do we [pray](prayer.html)? Consider what [His Majesty](yeshua.html) [Yeshua](yeshua.html) and His Talmidim said:

***Matityahu (Matthew) 6:7-8*** *But when ye* [*pray*](prayer.html)*, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen [do]: for they think that they shall be heard for their much* [*speaking*](mashal.html)*. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.*

[***Yaaqov***](israelja.html) ***(James) 4:1-3*** *From whence [come] wars and fightings among you? [come they] not hence, [even] of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and* [*desire*](needs.html) *to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume [it] upon your lusts.*

Most people understand that [prayer](prayer.html) as an attempt to change [HaShem](hashem.html)’s mind. We negotiate with the expectation that we can change [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [desire](needs.html). The bottom line is that we cannot change [HaShem](hashem.html) or His [ratzon](needs.html). It is not possible to change [HaShem](hashem.html)’s mind!

**The correct understanding of Tefilah is that we stand and try to change US. We do not try to change** [**HaShem**](hashem.html)**. We try to change ourselves! We try to change US into the person who does deserve the things that we are asking for. We attempt to change us to the point that we could handle the thing that we are requesting. We attempt to change our** [**ratzon**](needs.html)**, our** [**desire**](needs.html)**, to** [**desire**](needs.html) **something different. When we** [**desire**](needs.html) **the right things, then** [**HaShem**](hashem.html) **will give us what we** [**desire**](needs.html)**.**

How do we change ourselves through [praying](prayer.html)? It is easy to understand how we change ourselves though [mitzvot](cmds613.html) and other similar actions, but how are we changed through [prayer](prayer.html)? And how de we change by ***requesting*** things?

This is where we connect with the *daat*. The act of [praying](prayer.html) a request is the act that can change our [ratzon](needs.html), our [desire](needs.html), by switching on the *daat*.

Daat is the central line that [connects](connection.html) the right and left [hand](mashal.html) sides if the [body](body.html). It runs through the central [organs](body.html) in the [body](body.html). It runs through the Brit HaLashon (the [tongue](spirit.html)), and the [Brit Mila](circumcz.html) (the organ of [circumcision](circumcz.html)), the [two](two.html) [male](male%2Bfemale.html) [organs](body.html). These are the [two](two.html) [organs](body.html) that make fruit in the [world](worlds.html). The Brit HaLashon we use to make talmidim, [spiritual](physical.html) children, who will enter the [Olam HaBa](futures.html) and the [Brit Mila](circumcz.html) we use to make [physical](physical.html) children. Thus we can understand when the Torah speaks of Daat:

***Bereshit (Genesis) 4:1*** *And* [*Adam*](adam.html) *knew (daat) Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*.*

***Bereshit (Genesis) 4:25*** *And* [*Adam*](adam.html) *knew (daat) his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his* [*name*](name.html) *Seth: For God, [said she], hath* [*appointed*](settimes.html) *me another* [*seed*](flower.html) *instead of Abel, whom Cain slew.*

Daat is inner wisdom that we know because *we know*. It is not amenable to examination using the various tools of the scientific method. It is like a camera. A camera can take a picture of everything but itself. In the same way we can use external [knowledge](knowledge.html) to examine everything except the Daat.

Daat is the place where we know that we exist. We do not know we exist because of external measurements. We know we exist only because *we know*. Proving we exist has been a major problem of philosophy for a long [time](time.html). In philosophy, we have come to grips with the [knowledge](knowledge.html) that we can NOT prove that we exist. We only know we exist because *we know*.

[One](one.html) of the ways that we can [experience](experience.html) the daat is through a near death [experience](experience.html). For example: If [one](one.html) is drowning and at the last moment is raised above the water, that [first](one.html) breath is an [experience](experience.html) of daat. At that moment there is no debate about whether you do, or don’t exist. At that moment ***you know*** that you exist.

The root, or the highest point, of daat is called [ratzon](needs.html). [Ratzon](needs.html) comes from a [Hebrew](hebrew.html) root, which means *to run*, because the [ratzon](needs.html) is the source of all movement. All motion begins because we want something.

On the human [body](body.html) this is the point where the baby’s [head](body.html) is open. It is the place where the [tefillin](tefillin.html) are worn. This is the highest place of the daat and this place is called [ratzon](needs.html), [desire](needs.html).

When we [pray](prayer.html), we can [travel](mashal.html) up to the highest point of daat and actually reach our [ratzon](needs.html)! This is the goal of our Tefilah. We can reach the place of what we *want* and reform that [desire](needs.html) to become something [new](new.html). *With our Tefilah we can become something* [*new*](new.html). Consider that what we want, our [ratzon](needs.html), is what we are. That is, the root of our [desire](needs.html) is what makes us human; it is what makes us different from all other creatures.

If all we want is to [eat](eating.html), for example, we are no different from a [monkey](mashal.html) in the forest. This is a very poor [ratzon](needs.html). What we try to do in our Tefilah is to change our [ratzon](needs.html) to want what [HaShem](hashem.html) [wants](needs.html) and then use the [needs](needs.html) of the [body](body.html) to serve [HaShem](hashem.html).

(It is an important exercise to get at the “root” [desire](needs.html). For example: If we [desire](needs.html) money it is usually because we want to buy something. The thing that we buy may also be something like a car that we are using to impress a young lady. Ultimately, when we finally get to the root, what we really want is to marry the young lady, but it started with the [desire](needs.html) for money. The root, the [ratzon](needs.html), was NOT the money or the car; the root was the [desire](needs.html) to be married.)

What we ask for is not always what we need. In fact there is often a fine line between what we need and what we actually ask for. [HaShem](hashem.html) will ONLY give us what we need, of those things we have requested.

Chazal, our Sages, [teach](teacher.html) that when the Torah says that man was created in the image of [HaShem](hashem.html), that that means that we have free will, like [HaShem](hashem.html). This means that what we want is who we are. Nothing stands in the way of [desire](needs.html). Nothing stands in the way of [ratzon](needs.html).

Therefore, when we [pray](prayer.html) we are changing, at the highest level, who we are, *by asking* for things. Our mediations, our Tefilah, are to change the very essence of who we are. We change ourselves to want the things that we are asking for. In so doing we make [HaShem](hashem.html)’s [ratzon](needs.html), our [ratzon](needs.html). Because we are a different person, because we have a different [ratzon](needs.html), we could deserve those things that we did not deserve before we changed who we are by changing our [ratzon](needs.html).

This explains why the [first](one.html) of the [thirteen](thirteen.html) middle blessings of the [Amida](amida.html) is a request for daat. The daat is the beginning point, which leads us to our [ratzon](needs.html).

[Praying](prayer.html) is usually something we do at the extremes of our life: When something is going very well, or when something is going very badly. There is a [mitzva](cmds613.html) to [pray](prayer.html) when we are in crisis:

***Shemot (***[***Exodus***](exodus.html)***) 22:22-24*** *Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise, and they* [*cry*](mashal.html) *at all unto me, I will surely hear their* [*cry*](mashal.html)*; And my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.*

***Bamidbar (***[***Numbers***](nchart.html)***) 12:9*** *And if ye go to war in your land against the enemy that oppresseth you, then ye shall blow an alarm with the trumpets; and ye shall be remembered before* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *your God, and ye shall be saved from your enemies.*

This is not the only way it should be. Whilst it is a [mitzva](cmds613.html) of the Torah to [pray](prayer.html) when we are in crisis, there is another higher aspect of [praying](prayer.html). There is actually a [halacha](walking.html) which demands that we [pray](prayer.html) to continue our existence! Just to stay alive we need to continually make that [connection](connection.html) with [HaShem](hashem.html) and continually change our [ratzon](needs.html). In [praying](prayer.html) for our existence we reveal Malchut, the Kingship of [HaShem](hashem.html).

We can begin to understand this concept of Malchut by understanding that when we stand before [HaShem](hashem.html) to do our Tefilah; we are [standing](mashal.html) in front of The King. When we [pray](prayer.html) we are like a slave in front of his master. This we do just to continue to exist. We are making a request of the King that He should allow us to continue to exist. What gives us the right to ask [HaShem](hashem.html) to allow us to live? The Sages [teach](teacher.html) that the [merit](merit.html) of simply [coming](coming.html) before The King in [prayer](prayer.html) is all we need to deserve the right to petition The King. When we stand before The King as *His subjects*, we make Him King. A king is only a king if he has subjects who proclaim Him to be king.

[**Midrash**](orallaw.html) **Rabbah - Lamentations V:19.** THOU, O LORD, ART ENTHRONED FOR EVER, THY THRONE IS FROM [GENERATION](toldot.html) TO [GENERATION](toldot.html) (v, 19). Is there enthronement without a throne or a king without a consort? (The [Temple](temple.html) is [HaShem](hashem.html)’s throne and Israel His consort; so there must be a restoration since the enthronement is for ever.)

Now we can understand that [praying](prayer.html) is greater than just us reforming who we are. [Praying](prayer.html) is actually a revelation of the presence and Kingship of [HaShem](hashem.html). Therefore when we stand to do Tefilah we must be dressed like we were [standing](mashal.html) before a king. We are not allowed to be sloppy or incompletely dressed. We must be scrupulously [clean](purity.html). Our [bodies](body.html) must be completely [clean](purity.html) because we are [standing](mashal.html) before The King! The Sages [teach](teacher.html) us that our [mouth](body.html) should be empty and our [head](body.html) should be covered. These are the requirements of Tefilah.

Somehow we must stand in abject terror and at the same [time](time.html) we must stand in ecstasy. We must realize that we stand like a slave before a master who has the power to kill us and the power to bring us ecstasy. Both concepts are brought out by the word Tefilah. Thus we can understand the Psalmist:

***Tehillim (***[***Psalms***](psalms1.html)***) 2:11*** *Serve* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *with* [*fear*](fear.html)*, and rejoice with trembling.*

[Standing](mashal.html) in [prayer](prayer.html) is the ultimate [connection](connection.html) between the higher and the lower [worlds](worlds.html). On the [one](one.html) [hand](fourteen.html) our very existence depends on it, yet on the other [hand](fourteen.html) we can also [experience](experience.html) ecstasy because of it. Thus we understand the [connection](connection.html) to daat. If we stand in front of [HaShem](hashem.html), He stands in front of us.

If we do not [pray](prayer.html) for rain, it will not rain. Rain is [one](one.html) of the [three](three.html) things that [HaShem](hashem.html) Himself does without an [angel](angels.html):

1. He opens the [womb](thebirth.html).
2. He opens the grave and brings [resurrection](techiyat.html).
3. He makes the rain fall.

Rain comes unpredictably and is always a direct result of our [prayer](prayer.html). Our Sages [teach](teacher.html) us that when [Adam](adam.html) awoke on that [first](one.html) day, he saw a [world](worlds.html) without vegetation. He realized that it was his responsibility to [pray](prayer.html) for rain. When he did, [HaShem](hashem.html) brought the rain, which allowed the sprouts just under the surface to bring forth vegetation on the earth:

***Chullin 60b R.*** *Assi pointed out a contradiction [between verses].* [*One*](one.html) *verse says: And the earth brought forth grass, referring to the* [*third*](three.html) *day, whereas another verse when* [*speaking*](mashal.html) *of the* [*sixth*](six.html) *day says: No shrub of the field was yet in the earth. This* [*teaches*](teacher.html) *us that the plants commenced to grow but stopped just as they were about to break through the soil, until* [*Adam*](adam.html) *came and* [*prayed*](prayer.html) *for rain for them; and when rain fell they sprouted forth. This* [*teaches*](teacher.html) *you that the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, longs for the* [*prayers*](prayer.html) *of the righteous. R. Nahman b. Papa had a garden and he sowed in it* [*seeds*](flower.html) *but they did not grow. He* [*prayed*](prayer.html)*; immediately rain came and they began to grow. That, he exclaimed, is what R. Assi had* [*taught*](teacher.html)*.*

***Bereshit (Genesis) 2:5*** *And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and [there was] not a man to till (avodah) the ground.*

Avodah is the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word for the work of service to [HaShem](hashem.html) of which the primary service is Tefilah, [prayer](prayer.html)! Without Tefilah there would be no rain. Tefilah is the [connection](connection.html), which [connects](connection.html) the rain to the earth.

Thus we see that the [world](worlds.html) is set up in such a way that if we do not ask it will not be given. All of [creation](bara.html) is subject to human request. If we want it, we must ask, even though [HaShem](hashem.html) [wants](needs.html) to give it to us, He will not unless we ask. We have to bring down the mercy by asking, yet after we ask we see that that is the way [HaShem](hashem.html) wanted it from the beginning. Thus the paradox of the [two](two.html) meanings of Tefilah. We must ask for the mercy, yet it was [HaShem](hashem.html)’s justice that it should be. We are the key to unlock that which has to be, but will not be unless we ask. Rain is the symbol of this, yet the entire material [world](worlds.html) is just like this. **It is** [**HaShem**](hashem.html)**’s will that it should be, but only if we ask for it. This is the power and key to Tefilah.**

\* \* \*

This [study](study.html) was written by

Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David

(Greg Killian).

Comments may be submitted to:

Rabbi Dr. Greg Killian

12210 Luckey Summit

San Antonio, TX 78252

Internet address: gkilli@aol.com

Web page: <https://www.betemunah.org/>

(360) 918-2905

Return to [The WATCHMAN](https://www.betemunah.org/) home page

Send comments to Greg Killian at his email address: gkilli@aol.com