



## The Power of a Prayer

By Rebbetzin Shira Smiles (Shiur E7)

*Do you know the power of your Tefilos? If you knew that no word goes unanswered and no tear goes uncounted, would your Tefilos be the same or would you Daven differently?*

### *The זכות of one who performs a מצוה*

Whenever we perform a Mitzvah, we create a שעת הכושר – an opportunity. The קדושה which one brings into the world when one does a מצוה opens channels of שפע which a wise person uses to draw down additional שפע. A life well-lived is a life where one takes advantage of those opportunities. An example of grabbing the opportunity created by the זכות of a מצוה is when we make a variety of requests right after fulfilling the מצוה of ברכת המזון. Those are usually prefaced with the word הרחמן. But their timing and placement are designed to take advantage of the זכות created by fulfilling the מצוה.

### *The שעת הכושר associated with הדלקת נרות*

Another such moment of זכות is when a woman fulfils the Mitzvah of lighting Shabbos candles. To take advantage of this שעת הכושר it has become a nearly universal custom to recite the יהי רצון which is found in every Siddur and often on the wall near the candles. While that תפילה has been widely accepted in כלל ישראל it is not the only בקשה which can be said at that time. A woman can give expression to the deepest yearning of her soul through a variety of channels.

### *The תפילת השלייה*

Many who yearn for the spiritual welfare of their children have found that the תפילת השלייה gives expression to their hopes and prayers. While it has become customary to recite the תפילת השלייה on Erev Rosh Chodesh Sivan, that is by no means the only time it can or should be employed. Candle lighting time is an auspicious time for including this בקשה.

### *A story about the תפילת השלייה*

R' Meilech Biderman Shlita tells a story about an anti-religious woman who had the 'tragic misfortune' that three of her daughters became בעלות תשובה, married בני תורה and were raising Torah-true families. At the wedding of the third daughter, she

stepped away from the dancing to sob in the kitchen over her misfortune. How could such a thing have happened to her, after all she did to keep away from 'those' religious people.

A woman who found her in the kitchen asked her how, indeed, did she have the merit for this to happen. It then turned out that this woman had been handed a card with the תפילת השלייה and was told that reciting these words daily is an 'amulet' for having successful children. Without a clue as to what she was saying she did as the

*The prayer associated with naming the child helped and those children became*

*נביאים!*



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speaker suggested (she was given the card at an Arachim weekend which she could not wait to end; the card was the 'only' thing she took from the experience). After, all who does not want successful children?! Indeed, the well-worn card was in her purse even as she was sobbing over her fate.

R' Meilech added that if the תפילת השל"ה can have such a heavenly impact when said without any intent for its holy content, how much more so is it potent when one intends those precious words.

### *The תפילת חנה mentions של"ה*

The של"ה refers to a custom to say תפילת חנה, the heartfelt prayer that חנה uttered in beseeching Hashem for a son (contained in 'פרק א' פרק א', שמואל א'), and her exultation in thanks to Hashem for His salvation (the first 11 פסוקים of 'פרק ב'). Chazal instituted this תפילה as the הפטרה for ראש השנה and it can be found there as well. It is considered a סגולה for raising children in these challenging times. חנה gives voice to all of us who plead to Hashem for children who will serve Him.

### *An insight into תפילת חנה*

When חנה named her son שמואל she announced her motive in choosing that name, כי מה שאילתיו –

***Takeaway: I will try to seize the opportunity to put forth my heartfelt requests of Hashem at auspicious times such as lighting Shabbos candles.***

for I have requested him of Hashem.<sup>1</sup> Based on the word שאילתיו she should have called him שמואל, not שאל. The חיד"א cites חז"ל who teach that for quite some time there was a בת קול announcing that a צדיק was going to be born by the name of שמואל. Throughout the period of the בת קול any woman who yearned that her son be a צדיק called her newborn שמואל. And like those other women, חנה called her son שמואל, attaching the name to the fact that she had requested him of Hashem, since the letters of the word שאל appear in the name. On the day that she called him שמואל the בת קול stopped. The צדיק that the בת קול referred to, שמואל בן חנה had been born.<sup>2</sup>

### *What became of the others?*

The חיד"א cites the ספר פרי הארץ who says that the group of נביאים –<sup>3</sup> the group of נביאים who gathered around שמואל were those boys whose mothers called them שמואל with a prayer that he be a צדיק per the בת קול. The prayer associated with naming the child helped and those children became נביאים!

No תפילה goes unanswered and every tear is counted. The child may not become the צדיק that the בת קול referred to, but the תפילות have an impact and those many Shmuel's became נביאים.

<sup>1</sup> שמואל א א: כ

<sup>2</sup> חיד"א ספר מדבר קדמות מערכת ש

<sup>3</sup> שמואל א י: ה