



THE THREE COMPONENTS OF PRAYER

I. Ascent, Standing, and Descent

1. TB Berachot 32b

<p>The early pious ones would wait an hour (before prayer). From where do we derive this? Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said, the verse states (Psalms 84:5), "Happy are they who dwell in Your House". And Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said, one who is praying must wait an hour after his prayers, as the verse states, (Psalms 140:14), "Surely, the righteous shall give thanks to Your Name, and the upright will sit before You". Another <i>beraita</i> teaches: one who prays must wait an hour before his prayers, and an hour after his prayers. From where do we derive that he must wait an hour before his prayers? As the verse states, "Happy are they who dwell, etc." And from where do we derive that he must wait an hour after? As it is written, "Surely, the righteous shall give thanks to Your Name, and the upright will sit before You".</p>	<p>תְּסִידִים הָרְאוּשׁוּנִים הָיוּ שׁוֹהֵיךְ שְׁעָה אַחַת: מִנָּא הֵיךְ מִלִּי? אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן לֵוִי, אָמַר קָרָא: "אֲשֶׁרִי יוֹשְׁבֵי בֵיתְךָ". וְאָמַר רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן לֵוִי: הַמְתַּפְלֵל צָרִיךְ לְשִׁהוֹת שְׁעָה אַחַת אַחֵר תְּפִלָּתוֹ, שְׁנַאֲמַר: "אֵךְ צְדִיקִים יוֹדוּ לְשִׁמְךָ יִשְׁבוּ יִשְׂרָיִם אֶת פְּנֶיךָ". תְּנַיֵּן נְמִי הָכִי: הַמְתַּפְלֵל צָרִיךְ שְׁיִשְׁקָא שְׁעָה אַחַת קוֹדֵם תְּפִלָּתוֹ, וְשְׁעָה אַחַת אַחֵר תְּפִלָּתוֹ. קוֹדֵם תְּפִלָּתוֹ, מִנֵּינֵךְ? שְׁנַאֲמַר: "אֲשֶׁרִי יוֹשְׁבֵי בֵיתְךָ". לְאַחֵר תְּפִלָּתוֹ מִנֵּינֵךְ? — דְּכַתִּיב: "אֵךְ צְדִיקִים יוֹדוּ לְשִׁמְךָ יִשְׁבוּ יִשְׂרָיִם אֶת פְּנֶיךָ".</p>
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2. Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks z"l

If we study the liturgy carefully we will find that it often has a symmetrical three-part structure, A-B-A, which has the following form: (a) ascent, (b) standing in the Presence, (c) descent

II. The Three-Part Order of Prayer

3. Rambam, Mishneh Torah, Laws of Prayer and the Priestly Blessings 1:2

<p>The nature of this mitzvah is as follows: a person should supplicate and pray every day, and utter the praises of the Holy One, Blessed be He. After this, he should ask for his needs as a request and supplication. Then, he must give praise and thanks to the L-rd for the good with which He has endowed him, each person according to his strength.</p>	<p>חַיִּיב מִצְוָה זֹכֵךְ הוּא שִׁיחָא אָדָם מִתְחַנֵּן וּמִתְפַּלֵּל בְּכָל יוֹם וּמְגִיד שְׁבַחַו שֶׁל הַקְּדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא וְאַחֵר כֵּךְ שׁוֹאֵל צְרִכֵו שֶׁהוּא צָרִיךְ לָהֶם בְּבִקְשָׁה וּבִתְחִנָּה וְאַחֵר כֵּךְ נוֹתֵן שְׁבַח וְהוֹדִיָּה לְה' עַל הַטּוֹבָה שֶׁהִשְׁפִּיעַ לוֹ כָּל אֶחָד לְפִי כְּחוֹ:</p>
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III. Praise

4. Sifrei, Devarim (Deuteronomy) 34:1

And he (Moses) said: The L-rd came from Sinai, and He shone forth from Seir to them": Scripture (hereby) relates that Moses did not open with the needs of Israel until he opened with the praise of the L-rd. To what may this be compared? To an advocate's standing upon the podium, having been hired by a man to speak in his behalf, and not opening with the needs of that man until opening with the king's praise first — "How exalted is our king! How exalted is our master! The sun has shone upon us! The moon has shone upon us!", all praising with him — after which he opens with the needs of that man, after which he concludes with the praise of the king. Moses, our teacher, likewise, did not open with the needs of Israel until he had opened with praise of the L-rd, viz.: "The L-rd came from Sinai and He shone forth from Seir," after which he opened with the needs of Israel, viz.: (*Ibid.* 5) "And He was a King in Yeshurun (Israel)," after which he concluded with praise of the L-rd, viz. (*Ibid.* 26) "There is none like the Almighty, Yeshurun."

ויאמר ה' מסיני בא וזרח משעיר, מגיד הכתוב שכשפתח משה לא פתח בצרכם של ישראל תחילה עד שפתח בשבחו של מקום משל ללוטיר שהיה עומד על הבמה ונשכר לאחד לדבר על ידיו ולא פתח בצרכי אותו האיש תחילה עד שפתח בשבחו של מלך אשרי עולם ממלכו אשרי עולם מדיינו עלינו זרחה חמה עלינו זרחה לבנה והיו אחרים מקלסים עמו ואחר כן פתח בצרכו של אותו האיש וחזר וחתם בשבחו של מלך אף משה רבינו לא פתח בצרכי ישראל עד שפתח בשבחו של מקום שנאמר ויאמר ה' מסיני בא ואחר כך פתח בצרכם של ישראל ויהי בישורון מלך חזר וחתם בשבחו של מקום אין כאל ישורון,

5. TB Sanhedrin 92b

The Sages taught in a baraita: At the moment that Nebuchadnezzar the wicked cast Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah into the fiery furnace, the Holy One, Blessed be He, said to Ezekiel: Go and revive the dead in the Dura Valley. Once Ezekiel revived them, the bones came and struck Nebuchadnezzar, that wicked man, in his face. Nebuchadnezzar said: What is the nature of these? His servants said to him: The friend of these three, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, is reviving the dead in the Dura Valley. Nebuchadnezzar began and said: "How great are His signs and how mighty are His wonders; His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and His dominion is from generation to generation" (Daniel 3:33). Rabbi Yitzhak says: Molten gold should be poured into the

תנו רבנן בשעה שהפיל נבוכדנצר הרשע את חנניה מישאל ועזריה לכבשן האש אמר לו הקב"ה ליחזקאל לך והחיייה מתים בבקעת דורא כיון שהחיייה אותן באו עצמות וטפחו לו לאותו רשע על פניו אמר מה טיבן של אלו אמרו לו חבריהן של אלו מחיה מתים בבקעת דורא פתח ואמר (דניאל ג, לג) אתוהי כמה רברבין ותמהוהי כמה תקיפין מלכותיה מלכות עלם ושלטניה עם דר ודר וגו' א"ר יצחק יוצק זהב רותח לתוך פיו של אותו רשע שאילמלא (לא) בא מלאך וסטרו על פיו ביקש לגנות כל שירות ותושבחות שאמר דוד בספר תהלים



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<p>mouth of that wicked person. His mouth should be sealed in the course of an extraordinary death; in deference to royalty, Rabbi Yitzhak suggested that gold would be used to accomplish that task. The reason is that if an angel had not come and struck him on his mouth to prevent him from continuing his praise, he would have sought to overshadow all the songs and praises that David recited in the book of Psalms. (Koren-Steinsaltz translation)</p>	
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6. Rashi, loc. cit.

<p>Because (Nebuchadnezzar) organized the praises of G-d in a nicer manner than David had, and if he had successfully uttered them, the Holy One, blessed be He would have been pleased more by them than those of David.</p>	<p>לגנות - שהיה מסדר שבחות נאות יותר מדוד ואילו אמרן הקב"ה היה נוטה אחריהן יותר מאחרי השירות שעשה דוד:</p>
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7. Psalms 150

<p>Hallelujah. Praise G-d in His sanctuary; praise Him in the sky, His stronghold. Praise Him for His mighty acts; praise Him for His exceeding greatness. Praise Him with blasts of the horn; praise Him with harp and lyre. Praise Him with timbrel and dance; praise Him with lute and pipe. Praise Him with resounding cymbals; praise Him with loud-clashing cymbals. Let all that breathes praise the L-RD. Hallelujah.</p>	<p>הַלְלוּ-יְהוָה הַלְלוּ-יְהוָה בְּקִדְשׁוֹ הַלְלוּהוּ בְּרִקיעַ עֲזוֹ: הַלְלוּהוּ בְּגִבּוֹרֹתָיו הַלְלוּהוּ כְּרֵב גְּדִלוֹ: הַלְלוּהוּ בְּתַקְעַת שׁוֹפָר הַלְלוּהוּ בְּנִבְלֵ וְכִנּוֹר: הַלְלוּהוּ בְּתִנְיָף וּמְחֹל הַלְלוּהוּ בְּמִנְיִם וְעִגְב: הַלְלוּהוּ בְּצִלְצְלֵי-שָׁמַע הַלְלוּהוּ בְּצִלְצְלֵי תְרוּעָה: כָּל הַנְּשָׁמָה תִּתְהַלֵּל קוֹה הַלְלוּ-יְהוָה:</p>
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8. Rabbi Menachem Mendel Morgenstern of Kotzk (1787–1859)

<p>Nebuchadnezzar wanted to sing praises of G-d, and an angel came and slapped him on his mouth (Sanhedrin 92b). This is what the angel said to him: you want to sing praises to G-d when the crown is on your head? You should hear how you should sing praises after you have been smacked across your cheek. Here's a slap, and now sing praises!</p>	<p>ביקש נבוכדנצר לומר שירה, בא מלאך וסטרו על פיו" (סנהדרין צב,ב). כך אמרו לו: אתה מבקש לומר שירה כשהכתר על ראשך? כדאי לשמוע איך תאמר שירה אחרי סטירת לחי. הרי לך סטירה ועכשיו אמור שירה</p>
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