

TEFILLAH TIPS

TEFILLAT SHACHARIT—SHABBAT

E-I Adon Al Kol HaMaasim

The *Shulchan Aruch*, Code of Jewish Law, states in the laws of Shabbat (OH 281:1) that on Shabbat morning, when one is less burdened with worldly responsibilities, it is customary to express greater amounts of praise than one does during the week. This is evident in the next poem we recite – “*E-I Adon Al Kol Hamaasim*”, “G-d is the Master over all of creation...”.

E-I Adon is an acrostic whereby every phrase of the prayer begins with the next letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The *Anaf Yosef* explains that the poem is written in eleven clauses; each clause is made up of two phrases whose opening letters form the acrostic. The first clause contains **ten** words, the last clause contains **twelve** words and the middle **nine** clauses contain **eight** words, which equals **seventy two** words in the middle. The *Abudraham* (1340, Spain) explains the significance of the numbers. The seventy two letters correspond to the **seventy two** letter ineffable name of G-d, the opening **ten** words correspond to the Ten Commandments, and the **twelve** concluding words reflect the Twelve Tribes of Israel. The encrypted message is that G-d revealed the Ten Commandments (The Torah) to the Twelve Tribes of Israel.

The content of the poem presents A) the sheer majesty and exquisiteness of the earth’s solar system and the heavens above, and B) that by each of the pieces of Creation - the sun, the moon, the planet - playing their role by rising, setting, and orbiting, they are in essence singing G-d’s praises.

It has been previously explained in our section on *Kaballat Shabbat*, archived at www.oucommunity.org (The Tefillah Initiative), that Shabbat is like a weekly wedding between G-d and the Jewish people. There is a relevant and poignant imagery presented in the *Siddur Beit Yaakov* on the phrase “*Daat Utevunah Sovivim Ohto*”, “knowledge and wisdom surround Him”: It is like a bride that encircles a groom under the *Chuppah*, wedding canopy. Additionally, later in the prayer when describing the daily rising and setting of the heavenly luminaries, it states, “*Semaychim Betzaytam Vesosim Bivoam Osim Beaymah Ritzon Konam*”, “**Glad** as they go forth, and **joyous** as they return”. The commentaries here direct us to Psalms, which compares a radiant sunrise to a beaming bridegroom under the wedding canopy. Every movement in the heavens above provides light, energy, and warmth to us and serves G-d in the process.

Finally, The *Baruch Sheamar* (1860-1941 Lithuania) explains the difference between the words “*Sasson*”, “glad”, and “*Simcha*”, “joyous”, mentioned above. *Simcha* is the joy experienced when beginning a new adventure. *Sasson* is the joy experienced when recognizing you have accomplished and fulfilled your goal.

It is our task to gain inspiration from the great Solar System above. To not only see its complexity, beauty, and power, but also to recognize that it is the handiwork of G-d and performs its unique service unto Him every day. So too, every day we rise in the morning and settle down at night, and throughout our daily orbit, we try to unleash our own unique potential to bring light and energy to our world.

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