

TEFILLAH TIPS

TEFILLAT SHACHARIT—SHABBAT

Yishtabach- He Shall be Praised

Yishtabach is the concluding blessing of the *Pesukei Dezimra* – the Chapters/Verses of Praise that we recite each morning before *Shema* and the *Amidah*. The reason the blessing of *Yishtabach* does not contain the prescribed Talmudic formula of **Baruch Ato HaShem Elokeinu Melech Haolam** is because it is a *Bracha Hasemucha Lechavertah* –A blessing that is connected to another one. The blessing of *Yishtabach* is halachically connected to *Baruch Sheamar*, the introductory blessing of *Pesukei Dezimra*, which does contain the full Talmudic formula. This same system is used after *Yishtabach* with a full formula for *Yotzair Ohr Uvoray Choshech*, and then abbreviated blessings for *Yotzair Hameorot*, *Habochair Beomo Yisrael Beahava* and *Ga-al Yisrael*. The system is also utilized during the recitation of *Hallel* and *Birkat Hatorah*, as well as in other places throughout our liturgy.

Rav Yaakov Emden, in his *Siddur Beit Yaakov*, demonstrates that the first letter of the second to fifth words of *Yishtabach* spells *Shlomo-Shimcha La-ad Malkeinu HaE-L* which may indicate that the author of *Yishtabach* is King Solomon-Shlomo Hamelech.

The *Maharal* explains the significance of the fifteen adulations of G-d starting from *Shir Ushevacha* ..until *Brachot Vehodaot*. He writes that it symbolizes the ascending of fifteen spiritual steps, which resembles the fifteen steps from the *Ezrat Nashim* - Women's Corridor to the *Ezrat Yisrael* - Israelite Corridor in the Holy Temple, which in turn, reflects the fifteen different chapters of *Shir Hamaalot* – A Song of Ascents in *Tehillim/Psalms* (120-134) and the fifteen days from the beginning of the lunar month when the image of the moon gets larger and brighter each night until the fifteenth of the month. Why fifteen? Because it is the number that corresponds to G-d's Name – *Yud Heh*=15, which the Talmud teaches are the letters G-d used to create our world and the World to Come (as it states in Isaiah 26:4 "*Ki Bekah Hashem Tzur Olamim*"). Since *Yishtabach* concludes "*Melech E-l Chay Haolamim*," "King and Life source of all worlds," it is ever so fitting that there are specifically fifteen praises recited.

Finally, Rav Shimon Schwab zt"l, in his book *On Prayer* (pp 247), relates that the entire order of the *Siddur* reflects a walkthrough of the *Beit Hamikdash* –The Holy Temple. It begins with the prayers of *Mah Tov* and *Adon Olam* outside the *Ezrat Nashim* – Women's Corridor, and climaxes in the *Kodesh Kadashim*-Holy of Holies when we recite the *Amidah*. He explains that when we recite the *Yishtabach*, we are passing from the *Ulam* - antichamber to the *Heichal* - sanctuary where we could see the three great vessels, the *Shulchan*/Table on the right, the *Menorah*/Candelabra on the left and the *Mizbayach Hazahav*/The Golden Altar in the middle. Rav Schwab writes that we can see an allusion to these three great vessels through the three-time usage of the phrase *E-l Melech*. It says, *HaE-l Hamelech Hagadol Vehakadosh, E-l Melech Gadol Batishbachot, Melech E-l Chay Haolamim*.

As we conclude *Yishtabach* and then hear *Kaddish* and recite *Barchu*, we are now ready to advance toward the blessings that precede *Shema* and recite the *Shema* itself.

Shabbat Shalom,
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