
YIZKOR

הזכרת נשמות — יזכור

On the last day of Pesach, on Shavuos
(in Chutz La'aretz on the second day), and on Shemini Atzeres,
Yizkor is recited at this point; see page 287.

*Most congregations omit the following on days that Yizkor is said,
and some also omit when Yom Tov occurs on Shabbos. It is not said on Shabbos Chol Hamoed.
On Simchas Torah, Sisu V'Simchu is said instead; see page 480.*

KAH KEILI

קה קלי

Special Yom Tov Prelude to Ashrei

Why is this piyut specifically here?

Though we have translated the first pasuk of Ashrei as “Happy are those who (wherever they are) are living in the house of Hashem (living a meaningful and spiritually growing life),” the literal meaning is referring to the Beis Hamikdash. It is expressing the happiness and joy at being able to bring korbanos and be involved in the avodah in the “House of Hashem.”

The focus of the Mussaf Shemoneh Esrei will be the specific korbanos brought on each of the Shalosh Regalim and expressing our desire and hope to be able to once again go up to Yerushalayim and “see and be seen” by Hashem in the rebuilt Beis Hamikdash. And that is the theme of this piyut/poem!

The structure of the piyut:

The poem consists of three stanzas, each of which starts with one unique sentence, and then continues with two sentences of refrain.

First stanza seems to allude to Pesach by referring to Hashem as גואלי — my redeemer.

Second stanza seems to allude to Shavuos by referring to Hashem's וְלִתְבוֹנָתוֹ אֵין חֶקֶר — unfathomable wisdom, i.e., the Torah.

Third stanza seems to allude somewhat to Sukkos by referring to Hashem having חֵבֶר כָּל אֶהָלוּ — put together “His tent,” referring to the world as a temporary type dwelling.

Refrain: The first sentence of the refrain lists various types of korbanos that are brought in the Beis Hamikdash, and the second sentence (זְכוֹר וְלֵאמֹר) asks Hashem to remember us and bring us back to Eretz Yisrael.

יְהִי אֱלֹהִים וְגוֹאֲלִי—Hashem is my God Who takes care of me; וְגוֹאֲלִי—and He is my redeemer; אֶתִּיְצִבָּה—I (*hope soon that I*) will stand (*in the rebuilt Beis Hamikdash*) to greet You! Or: I stand in front of You now in prayer. הָיָה וְיִהְיֶה, Hashem always was, is, and always will be; כָּל גּוֹי אֲדַמְתִּךָ—I hope that the entire nation of Israel will be together on Your land (*of Israel, bringing the following korbanos in the Beis Hamikdash*). Or: All the nations of the world are on Your land (*since You created everything*).

וְהַתּוֹדָה...—The Todah, Olah, Minchah, Chatas, Asham, Shelamim, Miluim; כָּל קֶרְבָּנְךָ—these are the korbanos we bring to You. וְזָכוֹר נְלָאָה—Hashem, remember the exhausted nation (*Bnei Yisrael*); אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁאַחַח—*who once brought up (korbanos), or: who has borne so much suffering in our galus; וְהָשִׁיבָהּ—and return it to Your land, and then; סֶלָה אֶהְלֶלְךָ—I will praise You forever; בְּאַשְׁרֵי יוֹשְׁבֵי בֵיתְךָ—with “Ashrei,” happy are those who dwell in Your house, i.e., the Beis Hamikdash.*

דָּק עַל דָּק, עַד אֵין נִבְדָּק (*Hashem's judgments are*) exceedingly precise and beyond human analysis; וְלִתְבוּנָתוֹ—and His understanding is beyond our comprehension. הָאֵל נִוְרָא—Hashem, Who is awe-inspiring; בְּאַחַת סְקִירָה בֵּין טוֹב לְרַע יִבְקֶר—distinguishes between good and evil in one glance. (*And therefore, we accept our sufferings in galus and hope we are worthy of returning to bring korbanos in the rebuilt Beis Hamikdash.*)

בְּרֹב פְּלָאוֹת, חֶבֶר—Hashem, Who created and controls all elements of creation; כָּל אֶהְלוֹ—*with great wonders put together “His tent,” the world; בְּנִתִּיבוֹת לֵב, לְבָלֵב—using the “32 (לב) paths of wisdom” (a mystical concept based on the fact that name “Elokim” appears 32 [לב] times in the first chapter of Bereishis), He made the world blossom; הַצּוֹר תְּמִים פְּע*