



Talmud Tales – Session 18 – God’s Prayer

BT Brachot 7a

Said R. Yohanan in the name of R. Yosé, “How do we know that the Holy One, blessed be He, says prayers? Since it is said, ‘Even them will I bring to my holy mountain and make them joyful in my house of prayer’ (Isa. 56:7). ‘*Their house of prayer*’ is not stated, but rather, ‘*my house of prayer.*’ On the basis of that usage we see that the Holy One, blessed be He, says prayers.”

What prayers does He say?

Said R. Zutra bar Tobiah said Rab, “‘May it be my will that my mercy overcome my anger, and that my mercy prevail over my attributes, so that I may treat my children in accord with the trait of mercy and in their regard go beyond the strict measure of the law.’”

It has been taught on Tannaite authority: Said R. Ishmael b. Elisha, “One time I went into the Holy of Holies to offer up incense on the innermost altar, and I saw *Achatriel Yah Adonai Tzvaot*, enthroned on the highest throne. He said to me, ‘Ishmael, my son, bless me.’

I said to him, ‘May it be your will that your mercy overcome your anger, and that your mercy prevail over your attributes, so that you treat your children in accord with the trait of mercy and in their regard go beyond the strict measure of the law.’ And he nodded his head to me.”

And from that story we learn never to underestimate the blessing offered by an ordinary person.