



Armaments of Assiduous Prayer

Based on a teaching of HaRav Avraham Tzvi Kluger *shlit"a*

וְהָיָה אִם שָׁמַע תְּשִׁמְעוּ אֶל מִצְוֹתַי אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מִצְוֶה אֶתְכֶם הַיּוֹם לְאַהֲבָה אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וּלְעֲבֹדוֹ בְּכָל לִבְבְּכֶם וּבְכָל נַפְשְׁכֶם:

דברים
יא:יג







On the concept of "toiling/וּלְעֲבֹדוֹ", Chazal in Taanis 2a remark that **tefilla** is the "**work of the heart**":
וּמָנָא לֵן דְּבִתְפִלָּה - דְּתַנְיָא: "לְאַהֲבָה אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וּלְעֲבֹדוֹ בְּכָל לִבְבְּכֶם", **איזו היא עבודה שהיא בלב - הוי אומר: זו תפלה.**

Bereishis 48:22 is a statement of Yaakov Avinu:

וְאָנֹכִי נָתַתִּי לָךְ שְׂכָם אֶחָד עַל-אַחֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר לְקַחְתִּי מִיַּד הָאֱמֹרִי בְּחַרְבִּי וּבְקִשְׁתִּי

Targum Onkelos comments that Yaakov battled "**בַּצְלוֹתִי וּבְכַעוֹתִי**" / with my sword [prayer] and with my bow [plea];
Through his clashes with the Emorites, Yaakov establishes two modes of tefilla...

Rav Kluger further explains these **two 'utilities and personalities' of tefilla**:

 <p>Sword צְלוֹתָא / חַרְבַּ</p>	 <p>Bow (and arrow) בְּעוֹתָא / קִשְׁתַּ</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Requires close contact. 2. Blade itself causes damage even <i>without</i> applied force. 3. Damage depends on blade size, wound location, etc. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shot from a distance. 2. Power depends mainly on the archer, not on bow itself. 3. Arrows penetrate any part of body; won't miss innards.
<p>Many Kabbalistic sources analogize Tefilla to warfare; Tefilla helps us cut through the many 'thorns' between us and Hashem...</p>	
 <p>Liturgical Tefilla / התפלות ג' [Established by Ezra, <i>Anshei Knesses</i>, etc.]</p> 	 <p>Meditation, Solitude / התבודדות [Unstructured speech between man & Creator]</p> 
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. State of constant ascension, trying to draw closer. 2. Words themselves, written by <i>gedolim</i>, are potent. 3. Power of typical tefilla depends on the timing of the day/calendar, whether recited alone or with a minyan. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Even</i> when feeling distant, a person can speak to Hashem. 2. Words are simple, but come from a personal place. 3. Deeper one reaches, deeper it 'penetrates' the heavens, but even the simplest words have great power/can't miss.
<p>יְחֻדָּא עֲלֵאָה שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ ה' אֶחָד תּוֹרָה שְׁבַעֲלָפָה Intrinsic kedusha / higher form of unity with Hashem</p>	<p>יְחֻדָּא תַתָּאָה כְּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מְלֻכוֹתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד תּוֹרָה שְׁבַעֲלָפָה Nurtured kedusha / lower form of unity with Hashem</p>
<p>A sword is a solid piece of metal; unchanging, unflinching. When using a sword, there is a target squarely in view.</p> <p>So too, liturgy is set and orderly; upon opening a siddur, we know what words appear on the pages. In shul, we possess a good sense of the challenging subjects davening addresses (and tough task of maintaining decorum in a social setting).</p>	<p>A bow's strings can be pulled, alter shape. Hidden potential. When using a bow, the target can be elusive and hazy.</p> <p>So too, this type of conversation is fluid and unpredictable. When we have a free-flowing, unscripted dialogue with our Creator, our emotions can take us and our words anywhere and catalyze untold outcomes, strengths, redemptions, etc.</p>

Both models of tefilla are needed for spiritual health. Each one has its time and place, and, when one type is lagging in vigor or inspiration, very often the other one can strengthen and reinvigorate its counterpart.

This spiritual "toiling" / עֲבֹדָה שְׁבַלֵב imbues our lives with strength, purpose and meaning, ever tightening the bond with our Creator.