

L'sheim Yikhud

לְשֵׁם יִחְוּד קְדֻשָּׁא.*

L'sheim yi-khud ku-d'sha.

For the sake of the unification of the Holy One
[I am ready to fulfill the Torah's commandments].

D'rash

For the sake of the unification of the Holy One—יְחֻוּד (yikhud) refers to unification of Hakadosh (the Holy One) and the Shekhina (the Dwelling One), the male and female aspects of God, which are said to reflect the external male sexuality, apropos to God's presence when revealed outside of ourselves (as at the Sea of Reeds), and the internal female sexuality, apropos to the Shekhina's presence within us (as when we show kindness to another). We "exile the Shekhina" by alienating ourselves from the presence of God within us, and we hasten that alienation by blinding ourselves to the holiness of our physical world, no longer seeing its divine minding by God. When the Shekhina is alive within us, our physical world reflects the Divine Presence. We unify Hakadosh and Shekhina by our action, when the soul of every other person becomes the preoccupation of the spirit within each of us. Tzedek is one visible manifestation of the Shekhina's presence. When we act as a kahal poalei tzedek (a congregational community of doers of righteousness and justice) to alter our physical world, we unify God through the mitzvah to love your fellow like yourself because, as Hillel said, the rest is only commentary to guide us in the realization of that love in God's creation.

* Excerpted from the traditional weekday siddur (prayerbook), to focus intention before doing mitzvot, but often not included in contemporary siddurim.

Iyun Tefilla

THE MITZVAH DIMENSION

Did you think it was going to be easy
Living in the fourth dimension,
Mastering another reality
While others live only
With length and breadth
And height?
You have to be patient.
You have to watch
For the moment
To bloom
Right at your doorstep.
Now! There! See!
The window opens
Onto the secret garden.
You turn.
You catch a shimmer
In the tree.
Opportunity

Has landed like a bird
Of rare plumage
In your garden.
What are you waiting for?
Seize the moment!
Become the bird!
Rise on healing wings
And give
The broken world
One soul!

Go to <http://www.gatherthepeople.org> for more congregational development and organizing tools.

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