

Yom Kippur: Prayer Comment: L'David Hashem Ori

- Nisson Shulman.

There is a contradiction in Ledavid Ori. Are we visiting "levaker beheychalo" or are we dwelling permanently "Shivti bebeyt Hashem" in Hashem's house? An explanation of the contradiction teaches us how to pray with familiarity and novelty at the same time.

YOM KIPPUR – PRAYER COMMENT LEDAVID ORI

Rabbi Shlomo Riskin once pointed out that there is a contradiction in the passage “Ahas shaalti meet Hashem, ota avakesh. Shivti bebeit Hashem kol yemey haya. Lahazot benoam Hashem ulvaker beheychalo.”

“Shivti” implies permanence. I seek to be in the house of the Lord always.

“Levaker” implies an occasional visit. I seek to visit in His house.

Which is it?

The answer is, both.

Those who are always in shul have an advantage and a disadvantage. The advantage is that they know the prayers, the procedures, the ceremonies, and they are fluent in reciting the words. Many know a large part of the service by heart. The disadvantage is that the prayers can become routine, even habit.

Those who come occasionally also have an advantage and a disadvantage. The advantage is that they find the service fresh and new, and much of it can have deep meaning to them. There is novelty in the ceremonies and procedures. But there is a disadvantage. They stumble, are halting, often cannot keep up with their fellow daveners.

We pray in Ledavid Ori that we be granted the advantage of both; we would dwell in the house of the Lord, be at home in shul and familiar with every nuance of the prayers. But we would also find novelty and newness each time we pray, as if we are visiting for the first time.....

(Submitted by Nisson Shulman)