



NECHAMA CAPLAN

ENERGY PRACTITIONER AND MENTOR HELPING PEOPLE REFLECT THEIR OWN DIVINE REALITY

Nechama Caplan loves teaching women how to reframe life to reflect the Divine Reality. She has been learning the teachings of mystical Torah for the past 12 years, and is constantly challenging herself and others to integrate the Divine Truth in a practical way. She is a featured lecturer on Chabad.org. Nechama has an eclectic past - academic all American athlete from Vassar College, Harvard School of Public Health grad, internet advertising strategist and Montessori pre-school founder and director. She is now an energy practitioner living in the holy city of Tzfat, Israel with her husband and children.

God Is In The Words

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Prayer is a funny thing. Day after day we say the same thing over and over - words rolling off of our tongues. How easy to lose their profundity, the meaning of what we are saying - to stop paying attention, even to stop believing them. Sometimes we may just stop saying the words altogether.

The 10th blessing in the *Amida* prayer, the seminal prayer of the Jewish people, reads, "*Sound the great shofar for our freedom, raise a banner to gather our exiles, and bring us together from the four corners of the earth into our land. Blessed are You, Lord, who gathers the dispersed of His people Israel.*" For thirteen years, I have been standing in the same place in my home, in front of my book shelf, repeating those words; words that the Jewish people have been saying for 2500 years. For some reason this morning, I actually paid attention.

In a moment, I suddenly realized the power of these words because I *am* one of those people whom God brought from one of the four corners of the earth to our land. It actually made me cry. First of all, how did I ever say all of those words, 21 words, 2 times a day for 13 years – 199,290 words – and never once did I focus on their meaning? And secondly, in a moment of pure clarity, I realized that I'm living proof of prophecy.

Great sages wrote the *Amida* prayer around 500 BCE. Upon returning from the first exile in Babylonia – these giants of God; Ezra, Daniel, Mordechai, Malachi, Nechemia, realized the collective consciousness of the Jewish people was eroding. Our Temple had been destroyed and for the first time, we would lose direct Divine communication. What could be done to preserve our Divine connection, when we entered into exile – not just physical exile, but exile of consciousness?

So, as we entered a wave of collective sleep, exiled among the nations, the great sages compiled the prayer book with chapters written by Moses, King David, King Solomon and others. They knew by Divine inspiration that the Nation of Israel would need words to say when their minds and hearts went to sleep - even if they didn't know the background or meaning of the words. But these words that we have been repeating, day in and day out for thousands of years, they are not just any words. The great sages gave us codes – like DNA – strings of holy letters propelling Divine energy into the Universe, slowly, slowly, changing the world.¹ It takes a lot of letters to recreate the fabric of reality. For thousands of years, we have spoken these words, "*...and bring us together from the four corners of the earth into our land. Blessed are You, Lord, who gathers the dispersed of His people Israel.*" Maybe we're not paying attention the whole time, maybe we said the words in our sleep, but those words have power and I am living proof.

Footnotes:

1. The traditional *Jewish* prayer book *is called a "Siddur,"* containing the three daily prayers as well as the prayers for Shabbat, *Rosh-Chodesh* (New Moon) and the festivals. *Siddur* means "order," because the prayer book has the important prayers in their proper and fixed order. The individual Hebrew letters, which make up the words in the prayer book, have an intrinsic Divine power – they help to transform the world. They are like radical ions eating away at the mask of reality. Our words are most powerful when we connect emotionally to what we say, but they have power even when we don't.