

In the service for the שלש רגלים, in the paragraph of וּמִפְנֵי חֲטָאֵינוּ - one of the most inspiring and beautiful paragraphs in our davening - we say the following: יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאַלְהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ מִלֵּךְ רַחֲמָן - We express our yearning for the return of the המקדש and for us to be restored to our homeland. אָבִינוּ מִלְּפָנֶיךָ גְּלוּתָנוּ מִלְּכֻתְךָ עָלֵינוּ מְהֵרָה - Please reveal to us the כבוד of your מלכות, quickly; and it continues. The וְהוֹפֵעַ וְהוֹשֵׂא עָלֵינוּ לְעֵינֵי כָל חַי וְקָרֵב פְּזוּרֵינוּ מִבֵּין הַגּוֹיִם... and it continues. The מִלֵּךְ רַחֲמָן שֶׁתְּשׁוּב וְתִרְחַם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל מִקְדָּשְׁךָ בְּרַחֲמֶיךָ is this seems repetitive. We already said - הָרַבִּים וְתִבְנֶהוּ מְהֵרָה וְתִגְדֹּל כְּבוֹדוֹ - “Let the המקדש return.” What, then, is being added by the next phrase, אָבִינוּ מִלְּפָנֶיךָ גְּלוּתָנוּ מִלְּכֻתְךָ עָלֵינוּ מְהֵרָה?

The Vilna Gaon offers a fantastic vort on these פסוקים in our davening. He brings down a גמרא in י"ג חגיגה which says that all of the מלאכים in שמים have לְאָחָד שֵׁשׁ כַּנְפִּים - six wings, as the פסוק describes. This is brought down in יחזקאל and other places in תנ"ך. However, there is another פסוק which says וְאֶרְבַּעָה כַּנְפִּים לְאָחָת, implying that they have only four wings. The גמרא asks it's a סתירה, do the מלאכים have four wings or six wings? The גמרא answers: כָּאֵן בְּזֶמֶן שֶׁאֵין בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ קָיָים, כָּאֵן בְּזֶמֶן שֶׁבֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ קָיָים, - when the בית המקדש stood, the מלאכים had six wings, but when the בית המקדש was destroyed, they lost two of their wings. This is incredible. What happens in העולם הזה has enormous effects in האמת העולם.

The question is: Which two wings were lost? רבינו חננאל explains that the two lost wings were the middle wings, the ones used to say שירה. Since we are unable to say שירה properly in גלות, they, too, cannot say שירה. As it says in another פסוק: וּבִשְׁתֵּי יָדָיו יַעֲזֹב וְיִקְרָא זֶה אֶל זֶה וְיֹאמַר: Those are the two middle wings.

The גר"א asks: What was written on those wings? He brings another מדרש that states: On those six wings of theirs it said, בְּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מְלָכֻתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד. So therefore, which are the two middle wings? That's what we're saying in our תפילה, we are recognizing the power of our תפילה, the power of what we do here in העולם הזה. We say, אָבִינוּ מִלְּפָנֶיךָ גְּלוּתָנוּ מִלְּכֻתְךָ עָלֵינוּ מְהֵרָה, - Bring back those two wings which have the words מְלָכֻתוֹ, and then we will be able to serve you to our ultimate degree in the המקדש, במהרה בימינו. Have a wonderful Yom Tov!

