

# Have Faith In Your Prayers

written by Yossi Katz

January 16, 2013



We all want and need different things. Sometimes those things are spiritual, like feeling closeness with God or working on our own character traits. Sometimes they are physical needs, like a working car, a reasonably-priced house, and the like. Whatever we need, Reb Noson teaches that prayer is the way to bring about a manifestation or “birth” of these blessings into our lives. But doesn’t this sound too easy? Not really. In order to be able to pray for what we need and actually receive these blessings, we must first have *emunah* (faith) in God’s ability to grant us these blessings – and also believe that in His great compassion, God listens attentively and answers all of our prayers.

According to the *Shulchan Arukh* (Code of Jewish Law) a firstborn child receives a double portion of his parents’ inheritance. Reb Noson explains that mystically, the concept of “firstborn” refers to bringing about a birth of something new. As we have seen, prayer is the source of all blessing/newness in this world. The double portion of the firstborn reflects the two components of prayer: praising God and asking for our needs. How much faith we have in our prayers being accepted by God determines the results of our prayers; therefore we must recognize God’s great compassion before we can ask. But in actuality, it’s not until we have actually prayed sincerely for something and been granted our

request that we can start to develop true faith in prayer. Our new confidence in our future prayers is forever rooted in that original “firstborn” prayer. For that reason the firstborn receives the double portion in order to bring about its success.

The firstborn of Egypt represent the opposite spiritual force, the blockage of prayer. Their mission is to convince us that even once we have succeeded with our prayers and are ready to live a life of *emunah*, we will forget and even deny God’s blessings. In Egypt, their force was so potent that it overwhelmed the Jewish prayers.

After all of the plagues, Pharaoh still refused to surrender until God killed the firstborn of Egypt. In that way, the Jewish prayers of those many bitter years of exile were set free and we were finally redeemed. We always remember the redemption from Egypt before we recite the *Amidah* prayer – reminding us that yes, we have all been answered before! May we all be answered once again! Amen.

*Based on Likutey Halakhot, Hilkhos Nachlos 4*