## The God Who Prays—and Prays for Blessing

אָמֵר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן מִשׁוּם רַבִּי יוֹסִי: מִנַּיִן שָׁהַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא מִתְפַּלֵּל? שָׁנֶּאֲמֵר, ״וַהְבִיאוֹתִים אֶל הַר קָדְשִׁי וְשִׁמַּחְתִּים בְּבֵית תְּפִילָתִי.״ יְתְּפִילָתָם׳ לֹא נֶּאֱמֵר אֶלָא יְתְּפִילָתִי.׳ מִכַּאן שֶׁהַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא מִתְפַּלֵּל. מֵאי מְצַלֵּיי: אָמֵר רַב זוּטְרָא בַּר טוֹבְיָה אָמֵר רַב: יְהִי רְצוֹן מִלְּפָנֵי שָׁיִּכְבְּשׁוּ רַחֲמֵי אֶת כַּעֲסִי, וְיָגוֹלּוּ רַחֲמֵי עַל מִדּוֹתֵי, וְאֶתְנַהֵג עִם בָּנֵי בְּמִדַּת רַחֲמִים, וְאֶכָּנֵס לָהֶם לִפְנִים מְשׁוּרַת הַדְּין.

תַּנְיָא, אָמַר רַבִּי יִשְׁמָעֵאל בֶּן אֱלִשָּׁע: פַּעַם אַחַת נִכְנַסְתִּי לְהַקְטִיר קְטוֹרֶת לִפְנֵי וְלִפְנִים וְרָאִיתִי אַכַּתְרִיאֵל יָהּ ה׳ צְבָאוֹת שֶׁהוּא יוֹשֵב עַל כִּסֵּא רָם וְנִשָּׂא וְאָמר לִי: יִשְׁמָעֵאל, בְּנִי, בָּרְכֵנִי! אָמַרְתִּי לוֹ: יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךּ שֶׁיִּכְבְּשׁוּ רַחֲמֶיךּ אֶת כַּעֲסְךּ, וְיָגוֹלוּ רַחֲמֶיךּ עַל מִדּוֹתֶיךּ וְתִּתְנַהֵג עִם בָּנֶיךּ בְּמִדַּת הָרַחֲמִים, וְתִּכְּנֵס לָהֶם לִפְנִים מִשׁוּרַת הַדִּין. וְנִעְנַע לִי בְּרֹאשׁוֹ.

## וַקְמַשִּׁמַע לָן שֵׁלֹּא תִּהָא בִּרְכַּת הַדִּיוֹט קַלָּה בִּעִינֵידְ.

Rabbi Yohanan said in the name of Rabbi Yosi: Through what verse of Scripture do we know that the Holy One prays? It is the verse: *And I will bring them to my holy mountain and make them rejoice in the house of my prayer/beit tefilati* (Isaiah 56:7). The verse does not say *their prayer/tefilatam*, but *my prayer/tefilati*. From here we know that the Holy One, blessed be he, prays. And what does God pray? Rav Zutra bar Tovyah cited Rav: Here is God's prayer: "May it be my own will that my compassion subdue my anger and that my compassion prevail over my other dispositions; that I conduct myself with my children according the attribute of compassion and that I deal with them beyond the measure of justice."

It was taught: Rabbi Yishmael ben Elisha, the High Priest, said: Once, on Yom Kippur, I entered—before and within—to offer the incense in the Holy of Holies and I saw Akatriel Yah, the Lord of Hosts, sitting on his throne, high and exalted and he said to me: "Ishmael, my son, barecheyni/bless me." I said to him: "May it be your will that your compassion subdue your anger and that your compassion prevail over your other dispositions; that you conduct yourself with your children according to the attribute of compassion and deal with them beyond the measure of justice." He nodded his head to me.

We learn from this that one should not take lightly the *beracha*/blessing of an ordinary person.