

## The Yachad Siddur Initiative

**Learn. Connect. Grow.**

*Welcome to the Yachad Siddur Initiative.*

*These Torah ideas & discussion topics will help guide us to develop our own Kavanos (thoughts) in davening (prayer) as we learn the Siddur (prayer book) together each week.*

The Yachad Siddur, like every siddur, is, in essence, a book of tefillos (prayers) to Hashem (G-d). Taking a step back and thinking about prayer generally, we must ponder, what do our tefillos do? Why do we Daven (pray)? Are we asking Hashem for things? Are we praising G-d? Many great answers have been given to these questions, and if you have one which you like, be sure to share it with your Chavrusa (study partner) once you are paired up and start learning! Until then, we will add our own approach as well:

Perhaps, the reason we Daven is NOT for G-d. I know that sounds crazy, but listen to this idea: It is possible that G-d doesn't really need our tefillos. He is not lacking without them. He is fine without hearing from us. The words of Davening (prayer) might not be for him, but rather for US!

When we Daven and say all these words, brachos (blessings), and songs, they are all about Hashem – but they are like a “pledge of allegiance” to G-d. Many Americans begin each day by looking up at the flag of the USA and singing aloud “We Pledge of Allegiance TO THE FLAG of the United States of America” - but they are NOT saying anything directly TO THE FLAG. The flag is just what they are talking about. It is declaration which they are saying for themselves; it is for them to hear, understand and affirm their belief in the wonderful country that the USA is, as represented by the flag.

Similarly, when we look at our Siddur, and the words which we Daven, it is for US! We are supposed to Daven and – and while we daven, we are not to be just day dreaming. We need to be thinking! We should wonder: Hmmm... I'm saying words, but what are these words? I'm Davening Brachos, but what are these brachos? I'm singing the songs, but what are these songs?

Hopefully, together, as we Learn, Connect, and Grow in The Yachad Siddur Initiative, we will begin to study more about Davening, and then we will understand – for ourselves – all about what Tefillah is. We can then say with confidence that yes – Yes! I believe in these words of the Siddur, I believe in these Brachos of the Siddur, I believe in these songs of the Siddur.

We look forward to Learning, Connecting, and Growing, b'Yachad!