



Uvah Letzion III: Conclusion

After we recite the *Kedushah Desidrah*, and declare our loving commitment to G-d, the conclusion of *Uvah Letzion* describes the unbelievable opportunity and privilege we have been afforded by G-d to receive, learn, and fulfill the precepts of the *Torah*.

The Gap Between Inspired Expression and Defined Commitment:

Many years ago HaRav Shimon Schwab zt"l once stated in front of a group of rabbinical students who were running a summer program for returnees to Jewish tradition that, *All Jews Should Be Baalei Teshuvah*. My explanation is that all Jews of all backgrounds need to continuously strive to grow closer to *Hashem* and fulfill the *Torah* better.

There is a fascinating phenomenon that can take place when a Jew finds his/her way back to the traditions of *Torah*. The journey begins with enthrallment and inspiration. Each new *Mitzvah* that is *taken on* is exhilarating both in its performance as well as because he/she is adding another slice of holiness into his/her life. Then one day through study and/or experience a realization sets in that if one does **not** keep the *Torah* and *Mitzvoth*, he may face the Biblical warnings and punishments therein. The returnee then does a double take and thinks: Wait a minute – I took on (for example) *Shabbat* because it is enjoyable, holy, a great idea for family... now you are telling me I HAVE to do it?!!! This is a reality check faced by thousands of Jews each year. When that threshold is crossed positively, the person arrives at observance and commitment to *Halachik* Judaism.

This experience is mirrored in the final verses of *Uvah Letzion*. *Baruch Elokenu Shebiraanu Lechvodo – Blessed is our G-d that has created us for His glory, separated us from the sinners and presented us with the eternal truths of the Torah and implanted eternity within us*. The prayer continues with a verse from Isaiah 65:23 – *Hu Yiftach Leebeynu Betorato....Uleavdo Beleyvav Shaleyem Lemaan lo neegah Larik velo Naylaid Labehalah – May G-d open our hearts to Torah...so that we may serve Him with full hearts and not struggle towards **emptiness** and pursue **futility***.

The first sentence demonstrates the unparalleled greatness G-d created us for. The second verse from Isaiah states clearly that the lack of pursuit towards a life of truth and *Mitzvoth* will determine a life G-d forbid, that leads towards **emptiness** and **futility**. What a contrast!

Uvah Letzion concludes with a request that G-d protect us in this world and the next one, where we will praise G-d with our souls, meet Messiah, and experience the World to Come. The final verses from Psalms and Isaiah punctuate this theme of our eternal relationship with G-d.

Take Home Tip: Remember that learning *Torah* and fulfilling *Mitzvoth* are divine gifts and privileges. If we value our opportunities we will be forever rewarded; and if we squander the opportunities G-d forbid, we will have lost them forever.

Shabbat Shalom,

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