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ברוקלין, נ. י.

By the Grace of G-d
10th of Sivan, 5725
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mr. H. Gleich
631 Tremont Ave.
Bronx, N. Y.

Greeting and Blessing:

I am in receipt of your letter, in which you ask why the second benediction of the Shemone-esrei begins with the Divine Name connoting adnus ("Lordship"), while it concludes with the Tetragramaton.

In general, this question belongs primarily in the realm of the Kabbala, where the various Divine Names and their significance are explained. However, all matters of Torah are reflected in all four levels of Torah interpretation (Pshat, Remez, Drush, Sod - Pardes), and the same is true of the subject matter in question.

The benediction of Gevuros, which begins with Atto Gibbor ("Thou art mighty"), and subsequently - "Who is like unto Thee, Bael Gevuros," etc., emphasizes G-d's attribute of might rather than that of mercy. For the same reason the resurrection of the dead is included in this benediction, because the resurrection has to be preceded by death, which is an act of G-d's might rather than of mercy (though one attribute contains the other in a latent form).

Even the section of the benediction which begins with the words "Thou sustaineth the living in mercy" also belongs in the realm of adnus, since G-d in His attribute of Lordship is "responsible" for His subjects, while the word "mercy" is mentioned here because G-d sustains also the undeserving. But the act of sustaining the world is, generally, an act of Gevuros.

So much for the contents of the benediction. However, when it comes to the conclusion of it, as indeed is the case with every other of the eighteen benedictions, the Tetragramaton is invariably used, because regardless of the content of the benediction, where it is characterized by the attribute of "might", or "mercy", or it is a prayer for knowledge, etc., we pray that G-d in His mercy grant us our request that the content of the benediction be materialized in us, in a practical way, in our daily life. For the world as a whole was created primarily in the attribute of mercy.

Seeing your interest in the inner meaning of prayer, which is one of the three pillars on which the world at large (macrocosm) and the small world of the individual

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(microcosm) rest, I am confident that the devotional aspect of your Divine service is on the proper level. And in order that it be on the proper level, it is necessary to bear in mind "Know before Whom thou art standing," which in turn requires preparatory study of the Torah and of the inner aspects of the Torah, which discuss G-d's greatness and majesty and wonders, etc. Such study must, of course, be in the proper spirit, namely with a view to translating it into actions and deeds in the daily life. May G-d accept your prayers for the fulfillment of your heart's desires for good.

With blessing *M. Schmerson*