

We derive the appellation for God's Name, used in the Rosh Chodesh Mussaf – Additional Prayer – from the combination of letters and vowels of the following verses:

This day, Hashem – *U'divash, Hayom Hazeh Hashem.*" (Deuteronomy 26:16)<sup>1</sup>

### A Conversation:

It is interesting to note that this Appellation is derived from the end of one verse, in which we are speaking, and the beginning of the next, in which God or Moses is speaking.

■ This Appellation describes God in conversation, and responding to us.

### I. We Did Our Part, Now Do Yours!

Rashi comments: We have done what You decreed on us, now You must do as is incumbent upon You, as You promised, "If you will follow My decrees...then I will provide your rains in their time." (Leviticus 26:3) just as You fulfilled Your oath to our ancestors and gave us a Land flowing with milk and honey.

■ "God responds: "The words of Torah must be as fresh to us as if they were just given today – Hayom."

We have just completed the Days of Awe: Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, Succot and Shemini Atzeret. We declare to God that we have fulfilled His numerous Mitzvot this past month. We have done Teshuva – returned to Him, we have recited the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy, heard the Shofar, fasted, lived in our Succot, shaken our Lulav and Etrog and rejoiced over the Torah.

◆ **Kavanah:** We face the year and say; "Do as You have promised. Forgive us. Bring us closer to You. Shower our year with blessing."

■ To which, God responds, "I will do as you ask. You must maintain your new heights and achievements. Do not allow the Torah to become old and stale.

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<sup>1</sup> This day, Hashem – U'divash, Hayom Hazeh Hashem." (Deuteronomy 26:16)

הַשְׁקִיפָה מִמַּעַן קִדְשֶׁךָ מִן-הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבְרַךְ אֶת-עַמְּךָ אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶת-הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר נָתַתָּה לָנוּ כְּאֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתָּ לְאֲבוֹתֵינוּ אֶרֶץ זָבַת חֵלֶב וּדְבַשׁ

Look down from Your holy abode, from heaven, and bless Your people Israel and the soil You have given us, a land flowing with milk and honey, as You swore to our fathers. (Deuteronomy 26:15)

הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ מְצַוְךָ לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת-הַחֻקִּים הָאֵלֶּה וְאֶת-הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים וְשִׁמְרָתָם וְעָשִׂיתָ אוֹתָם בְּכָל-לְבָבְךָ וּבְכָל-נַפְשֶׁךָ

Hashem your Empowerer commands you this day to observe these laws and rules; observe them faithfully with all your heart and soul. (Deuteronomy 26:16)

The Belzer Rebbe explains that the expression of “We have done what You decreed” refers specifically to “I have acted according to everything You commanded me.” (Verse 14) How can a human being possibly claim to have done all that God has commanded? We make this claim only because God decreed that we should recite those words!

God empowers us to make this demand.

This Appellation also includes God’s promise to help us always see the words of Torah as new and with a fresh perspective.

Kavanah: We ask Hashem to help us always see the words of Torah as new as He promised us.

## II. Eternally New

**The Ibn Ezra** explains that the person reciting the first verse is requesting that the gift of the Land be eternal.

☐ Moshe responds, “The eternality depends on your ability to always appreciate the Torah as new.”

◆ Kavanah: We want the heights we reached over the past month with its numerous festivals and Mitzvot to be eternal, to remain with us throughout the year and to shape our portion in the World to Come.

That desire elicits a response and promise from the Almighty: “Keep that sense of excitement and all you accomplished will become eternal!” The response is the demand for Hayom. The promise is that even eternal things will never grow old and will always feel fresh and new.

## III. A New Covenant

**The Ramban** points out that the promise of a Land flowing with milk and honey was not made to the patriarchs, but to our ancestors suffering in Egypt. This was a promise of hope made to people who had none. This statement is the conclusion of the review of the Mitzvot.

☐ Moshe now reflects on all of Torah by reminding us that today, when we have reviewed and understood all of God’s teachings, there is a new covenant of Torah.

The past month filled us with hope.

◆ Kavanah: Since we know our lives can change. We can grow. We can repair what needs fixing. We will restore our relationship with God. We want this hope and sense of accomplishment to be as a new covenant of Torah that will remain with us over the coming year.