

# ספר תהילים קב | Tehillim / Psalms 102

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## The poor and living stones

In this week's study from *Tehillim / Psalms 102:1-28*, the Psalm opens saying, *102:1 Hear my prayer, O Lord! And let my cry for help come to You. 102:2 Do not hide Your face from me in the day of my distress; Incline Your ear to me; In the day when I call answer me quickly.* (NASB) The psalmist calls for help in the context of a poor man, what is the significance of that? The psalmist continues saying, *102:3 For my days have been consumed in smoke, And my bones have been scorched like a hearth. 102:4 My heart has been smitten like grass and has withered away, Indeed, I forget to eat my bread. 102:5 Because of the loudness of my groaning My bones cling to my flesh. 102:6 I resemble a pelican of the wilderness; I have become like an owl of the waste places. 102:7 I lie awake, I have become like a lonely bird on a housetop. 102:8 My enemies have reproached me all day long; Those who deride me have used my name as a curse.* (NASB) The psalmist speaks of his situation relating this to his sustenance, which is directly related to the provision of the Lord for our daily bread (*Tehillim / Psalms 102:9-11*). Even though all of these things have happened, the psalmist continues in his faith saying, *102:12 But You, O Lord, abide forever, And Your name to all generations. 102:13 You will arise and have compassion on Zion; For it is time to be gracious to her, For the appointed time has come. 102:14 Surely Your servants find pleasure in her stones And feel pity for her dust. 102:15 So the nations will fear the name of the Lord And all the kings of the earth Your glory. 102:16 For the Lord has built up Zion; He has appeared in His glory. 102:17 He has regarded the prayer of the destitute And has not despised their prayer. 102:18 This will be written for the generation to come, That a people yet to be created may praise the Lord.* (NASB) What an amazing hope that we have in the Lord God of Israel. The psalmist continues saying, *102:19 For He looked down from His holy height; From heaven the Lord gazed upon the earth, 102:20 To hear the groaning of the prisoner, To set free those who were doomed to death, 102:21 That men may tell of the name of the Lord in Zion And His praise in Jerusalem, 102:22 When the peoples are gathered together, And the kingdoms, to serve the Lord. 102:23 He has weakened my strength in the way; He has shortened my days.* (NASB) The psalmist concludes saying *102:24 I say, ‘O my God, do not take me away in the midst of my days, Your years are throughout all generations. 102:25 ‘Of old You founded the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. 102:26 ‘Even they will perish, but You endure; And all of them will wear out like a garment; Like clothing You will change them and they will be changed. 102:27 ‘But You are the same, And Your years will not come to an end. 102:28 ‘The children of Your servants will continue, And their descendants will be established before You.’* (NASB)

עברית	Hebrew	ארמי	Aramaic	ελληνικός	Greek
<b>ספר תהילים פרק קב</b>	<b>ספר טוביה פרק קב</b>	<b>ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 102</b>			
<b>א</b> תְּפִלָּה לְעַנִּי כִּי-יָעַטֵּפּ וְלֹפְנִי <b>בָּ</b> יְהֹוָה יָשַׁפֵּךְ שִׁיחּוֹ: בָּ יְהֹוָה שְׁמַעְתָּה <b>גָּ</b> יְהֹוָה קָבֵל צְלוֹתִי וְפָגִינִיתִי לְקָדְמָךְ <b>דָּ</b> תִּיעּוֹל: גָּ לֹא תִּסְלִיק שְׁכִינַתִּיךְ מִינִּי <b>הָ</b> בַּיּוֹם עֲקָתִי אֶצְלִי לֹותִי אָוֹדֵנִי בַּיּוֹם אֶקְרָא <b>וְ</b> דָּאָקְרִי סְרָהִיב עֲנֵנִי: דָּ אֶרְוֹם <b>זָ</b> מְהֻרָּעֲנֵנִי: זָ כִּי-כָּלֹו בְּעַשְׂן יְמִי <b>חָ</b> אִישְׁתִּיצְיָאו הֵיכָה תְּנַנָּא יוֹמִי וְאִבְרִי <b>וְ</b> וְעַצְמוֹתִי כְּמַזְקָד נְחָרוֹ:	<b>א</b> צְלוֹתָא עַל מִסְכִּינָא אֶרְוֹם מִישָׁ <b>בָּ</b> תְּלִיהִי וְקָדֵם יְהֹוָה יִמְרֶץ צְלוֹתִיהִי: בָּ <b>גָּ</b> תְּפִלָּתִי וְשְׁעוּתִי אֶלְיךָ תְּבֹא: גָּ <b>דָּ</b> תִּיעּוֹל: גָּ לֹא תִּסְלִיק שְׁכִינַתִּיךְ מִינִּי <b>הָ</b> בַּיּוֹם עֲקָתִי אֶצְלִי לֹותִי אָוֹדֵנִי בַּיּוֹם אֶקְרָא <b>וְ</b> דָּאָקְרִי סְרָהִיב עֲנֵנִי: דָּ אֶרְוֹם <b>זָ</b> מְהֻרָּעֲנֵנִי: זָ כִּי-כָּלֹו בְּעַשְׂן יְמִי <b>חָ</b> אִישְׁתִּיצְיָאו הֵיכָה תְּנַנָּא יוֹמִי וְאִבְרִי <b>וְ</b> וְעַצְמוֹתִי כְּמַזְקָד נְחָרוֹ:	<b>102:1</b> προσευχὴ τῷ πτωχῷ ὅταν ἀκηδιάσῃ καὶ ἐναντίον κυρίου ἐκχέῃ τὴν δέησιν αὐτοῦ εἰσάκουσον κύριε τῆς προσευχῆς μου καὶ ἡ κραυγὴ μου πρὸς σὲ ἐλθάτω <b>102:2</b> μὴ ἀποστρέψῃς τὸ πρόσωπόν σου ἀπ' ἐμοῦ ἐν ᾧ ἂν ἡμέρᾳ θλίβωμαι κλῖνον τὸ οὖς σου πρός με ἐν ᾧ ἂν ἡμέρᾳ ἐπικαλέσωμαι σε ταχὺ εἰσάκουσόν μου <b>102:3</b> ὅτι ἔξελιπον ὥσει καπνὸς αἱ ἡμέραι μου καὶ τὰ ὄστα μου ὥσει φρύγιον συνεφρύγησαν			

ה הַוְּפָה-כְּעֵשֶׂב וַיַּבְשֵׁ לְבִי כִּי  
שְׁחַקְתִּי מְאֹכֶל לְחַמִּי: וּמְקוֹל אֲנָדָן  
חַתִּי דְּבָקָה עַצְמִי לְבָשָׂרִי: זָהָם  
לְקַאַת מְזֻבָּר קַיִתִי כְּכָסָה תְּרַבּוֹתָה: חַ  
שְׁקַדְתִּי וְאַהֲנָה בְּצַפּוֹר בּוֹזָד עַל-גָּגָן:  
ט כָּל-הַיּוֹם חַרְפּוֹנִי אָזְבִּי מְהֹלָלִי  
בַּיּוֹם שְׁבָעָוָן: יְכִי אַפְרֵךְלָחֶם אַכְלָתִי  
וְשְׁקָנוּ בְּבָכִי מְסֻכְתִּי: יְאָמָנִי-זָעַד  
מַה וְהַצְפָּה כִּי נְשָׁאָתָנוּ וְתְשִׁילִיכְנִי: יְבָ  
קְמִי בְּצַל נְטוּיוֹ וְאַנְיִ בְּעַשְׁבָּא אַיְשָׁן: גַּ  
וְאַתָּה יְהֹוָה לְעוֹלָם תִּשְׁבֹּז וְזַרְכָה לְדוֹר  
וְדוֹר: יְד אַפְתָּה תָּקוּם פָּרָתָם צִוְּן כִּי  
עַת לְחִנְנָה כִּי בָא מָוֹעֵד: טו כִּי-  
רָצַו עַבְדָךְ אַת-אֲבָנִית וְאַת-עַפְרָה  
יְחִינָנוּ: טז וַיַּרְאָו גּוֹיִם אַת-שִׁם  
יְהֹוָה וְכָל-מְלָכִי הָאָרֶץ אַת-כּוֹךְ: יז  
יְהֹוָה כְּבָנָה יְהֹוָה צִוְּן גְּרָאָה בְּכֻבּוֹדָה:  
יח פִּי-כְּבָנָה יְהֹוָה צִוְּן גְּרָאָה בְּכֻבּוֹדָה  
אַת-תְּפִלָּתָם: יט תְּכַתֵּב זֹאת לְדוֹר  
אַחֲרוֹן וְעַם נְבָרָא יְהֹלְלִיהָ: כ כִּי-  
הַשְׁקִיףְ מְאֹרָום קְרָשׁוּ יְהֹוָה מְשֻׁמִּים  
אַל-אָרֶץ הַבֵּיט: כא לְשָׁמָעַ אֲנָקָת  
אָסִיר לְפָתָח בְּנֵי חַמוֹתָה: כב לְסֶפֶר  
בְּצִוְּן שֵׁם יְהֹוָה וְתְהַלְתּוּ בִּירוֹשָׁלָם:  
כג בְּהַקְבִּץ עַמִּים נְחֹזָוּ וּמְמֻלָּכוֹת  
לְעַבְדָ אַת-יְהֹוָה: כד עַבְדָה בְּקָרְבָּה כְּתוּ  
[כְּחִי] קָצַר יְמִי: כה אָמַר אֱלִי-  
תְּפֻלְלֵי בְּחָצֵי יְמִי בְּדוֹר דָוִרִים שְׁנוֹן-  
תְּפֻלְלֵי כְּחָצֵי יְמִי בְּדוֹר דָוִרִים שְׁנוֹן-  
תְּפִיק: כו לְפָגִים הָאָרֶץ יִסְׁדַּקְתִּי וּמְעַשָּׂה  
יְקִיק שְׁמִים: כז הַמָּה | יְאַבְדוּ וְאַתָּה  
תְּמַעַד וְכָלָם כְּבָגָד יְבָלוּ פְּלַבּוֹשׁ תְּחַ  
לִיְפָם וְנִיחַלְפָם: כח וְאַתָּה-הָוָא וְשָׁ  
נוֹתָךְ לֹא יִתְמֹוֵה: כט בְּנִי-עַבְדִּיךְ  
יְשִׁכּוּנוּ וְזַרְעָם לְפָנֵיךְ יְכֹונֵן:

ה לְקָא הַיְךְ עַסְבָּא וַיִּתְבִּישׁ לִבִּי אֲרוֹם  
אִיתְנְשִׁיתִי אָוָרִיתִי אָוָלְפִנִּי: וּמַן קָל תְּנַחְתִּי  
אִידְבָּק גְּרָמִי לְבָסְרִי: זָ אִידְמִיתִי לְקַחְתָּא  
דְּמַדְבָּרָא הוּא הַיְךְ קִיפּוֹפָא דִי בָּאָרְעָא  
גְּגֻבְתָּא: חַשְׁקָדִיתִי כְּלִילָא וְהַוִּיתִי הַיְךְ  
צִיפְרָדְרָה וְנוֹיִד בְּלְחוֹדִיה עַל אִיגָּרָא: ט  
כָּל יוֹמָא יְחִסּוּן לִי בְּעֵלָי דְּבָרִי מְתַלְעָבִי  
בְּמִימְרִי קִימְוָמִי מְגָנָן: יְאָרָומָא אַפְרָא הַיְךְ  
מְזוֹנוֹן סְעִדִּית וְשְׁקוּוֹתִי בְּבָכּוֹתָא מְזִגְתִּי:  
יא מַן קְדָם רְוגַזְקָדְקָפָר אֲרוֹם נְטָלָתִי  
וְתְלִקְתָּנִי: יְבָ יוֹמִי הַיְךְ טְוָלָא דִּיצְלָי וְאָנוֹ  
הַיְךְ עַסְבָּא אִיבָּשָׁן: יְגָ וְאַתָּה הָוָה מְדוֹרָד  
לְעַלְמָם בְּשָׁמְיָא תִּחְיֵבְ מְתִתְמִיבְ וְדָרְנֵךְ לְדוֹר  
וְדוֹר: יְד אַתָּה תְּרַחְמָם צִוְּן עִזּוֹן  
לְמִיחּוֹס עַלְהָא אֲרוֹם אַתָּה זִמְנָא: טו אֲרוֹם  
רְעוֹעַ עַבְדָךְ יְתָא אַבְנִיתִי וְיַתְעַפְּרָה  
רְעוֹעַ עַבְדָךְ יְתָא אַבְנִיתִי וְיַתְעַפְּרָה  
רְהָא יְחִיּוֹן: טז וַיַּדְחַלְוּ עַמִּיא עַמִּיא  
יְתָשָׁא דִּיהָה וְכָל מְלָכִיא דָאָרְעָא יְתָ  
יְקָרָד: יז אֲרוֹם אַיְתָבְנִי בְּמִימְרָא דִּיהָה  
קְרָתָא דְּצִוְּן אַתְגָּלִי בִּיקְרָא: יְחַ אַתְפָּ  
נִי לְוֹתָ צְלָוְתִּיהָ דְּמַצְדִּיאָיָן וְלֹא בְּסָרִית  
צְלָוְתִּיהָוָן: יְטָ תְּחַכְּחִיבְ צְלָוְתָא דָא לְדוֹר  
בְּתָרְאִי וְעַמָּא דְּעַתִּיד לְאִיתְבָּרָהָא יְשַׁבָּח  
יְהָא אַלְהָא: כ אֲרוֹם אַודְקִין מְשִׁמְיָא מְרוֹמָא  
דְּקָוְדְשָׁהָיָה מְנָה מְשִׁמְיָא לְאָרְעָא אַסְתָּכָל  
כָּא לְמִשְׁמָעָ אַנְיּוֹתָא דָאָסִירָא לְמִשְׁרָא  
בְּנִיאָ דְּמִסְרִין לְמִיתּוֹתָא: כב לְמִשְׁעָתִי  
בְּצִוְּן שָׁאָה דִּיהָה וְתוֹשְׁבָה בִּירוֹשָׁלָם:  
כג בְּהַתְּכִנָּשׁוֹת עַמִּין עַמִּין כְּחָדָא וּמְלָכָ  
וְתָא לְמִיְפָלָח קְדָם יְהֹוָה: כד אִיסְתָּגְרִמִּן  
טוֹרָה דָאָרְחָה גְּלֹתָה הַלִּי אִיתְקָצָרָן יְמִיּוֹ  
כָּה אִימְרָקְדָם אַלְהָיָ לְאַתְלְקִינְנִי מִן  
עַלְמָא הַדָּן בְּפָלְגָוָת יוֹמִי אַתִּי יְתִי לְעַלְמָא  
דָאָתִי מְטוֹל דִּי בְּדָרִיא שְׁנָתָךְ: כו מַן  
שִׁירְיוֹא דָאִתְבָּרִי כָּל בִּירְיִתָּא אָרְעָא יְסָ  
דָתָא וְעַובְדִי יְדָר אִידְיִיךְ שְׁמִיא: כז הַנִּינוֹן  
יְהַבְדּוֹן וְאַתָּה תָּקוּם וְכָלְהָוָן הַיְךְ לְבוֹשָׁא  
יְתְבִּלְיָהָן הַיְךְ אִיצְטָלִי תְּחַלְפִּינְנוּ וְתְהַלְלָ  
פָּנִים: כח וְאַתָּה דִּי בְּרִיתִינְנוּ וְשַׁנְתָךְ לְאַ  
מִישְׁתָּלָמָן: כט בְּנִי עַבְדָךְ יְשָׁרוֹן אָרְעָא  
וּזְרַעְתָּהָוָן קְדָמָךְ יְתָקָנוּ:

Tehillim / Psalms 102	Toviyah / Psalms 102	Psalmoi / Psalms 102
<p>102:1 Hear my prayer, O Lord! And let my cry for help come to You. 102:2 Do not hide Your face from me in the day of my distress; Incline Your ear to me; In the day when I call answer me quickly. 102:3 For my days have been consumed in smoke, And my bones have been scorched like a hearth. 102:4 My heart has been smitten like grass and has withered away, Indeed, I forget to eat my bread. 102:5 Because of the loudness of my groaning My bones cling to my flesh. 102:6 I resemble a pelican of the wilderness; I have become like an owl of the waste places. 102:7 I lie awake, I have become like a lonely bird on a housetop. 102:8 My enemies have reproached me all day long; Those who deride me have used my name as a curse. 102:9 For I have eaten ashes like bread And mingled my drink with weeping 102:10 Because of Your indignation and Your wrath, For You have lifted me up and cast me away. 102:11 My days are like a lengthened shadow, And I wither away like grass. 102:12 But You, O Lord, abide forever, And Your name to all generations. 102:13 You will arise and have compassion on Zion; For it is time to be gracious to her, For the appointed time has come. (NASB)</p>	<p>102:1 The prayer for the poor man, for he is weary, and will speak his prayer in the presence of the Lord. 102:2 O Lord, accept my prayer, and let my entreaty come before you. 102:3 Do not remove your presence from me in the day of my distress; incline your ear unto me; in the day that I call, hasten, answer me. 102:4 For my days are consumed like smoke; and my limbs burn like an oven. 102:5 My heart is smitten like grass and will dry up; for I have forgotten the Torah of my instruction. 102:6. Because of the sound of my groaning, my bones have clung to my flesh. 102:7 I have become like a marshbird in the wilderness; I have become like an owl in the parched land. 102:8 I stay awake all night, and I have become like a bird that flutters and wanders by itself on the roof. 102:9 All the day my enemies will jeer at me; those who mock me have sworn by my word in vain. 102:10 For I have supped on ashes like food, and prepared my drink in weeping. 102:11 Because of your anger and rage, for you have lifted me up and cast me down. 102:12 My days are like a shadow that lengthens; and I will wither like grass. 102:13 But you, O Lord, your dwelling place is eternal, in heaven you will dwell, and your memorial is to every generation.(EMC)</p>	<p>A Prayer for the Poor; when he is deeply afflicted, and pours out his supplication before the Lord. 102:1 Hear my prayer, O Lord, and let my cry come to thee. 102:2 Turn not away thy face from me: in the day when I am afflicted, incline thine ear to me: in the day when I shall call upon thee, speedily hear me. 102:3 For my days have vanished like smoke, and my bones have been parched like a stick. 102:4 I am blighted like grass, and my heart is dried up; for I have forgotten to eat my bread. 102:5 By reason of the voice of my groaning, my bone has cleaved to my flesh. 102:6 I have become like a pelican of the wilderness; 102:7 I have become like an owl in a ruined house. I have watched, and am become as a sparrow dwelling alone on a roof. 102:8 All the day long mine enemies have reproached me; and they that praised me have sworn against me. 102:9 For I have eaten ashes as it were bread, and mingled my drink with weeping; 102:10 because of thine anger and thy wrath: for thou hast lifted me up, and dashed me down. 102:11 My days have declined like a shadow; and I am withered like grass. 102:12 But thou, Lord, endurest for ever, and thy memorial to generation and generation. 102:13 Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Sion: for it is time to have mercy upon her, for the set time is come.(LXX)</p>

**Tehillim / Psalms 102**

102:14 Surely Your servants find pleasure in her stones And feel pity for her dust. 102:15 So the nations will fear the name of the Lord And all the kings of the earth Your glory. 102:16 For the Lord has built up Zion; He has appeared in His glory. 102:17 He has regarded the prayer of the destitute And has not despised their prayer. 102:18 This will be written for the generation to come, That a people yet to be created may praise the Lord. 102:19 For He looked down from His holy height; From heaven the Lord gazed upon the earth, 102:20 To hear the groaning of the prisoner, To set free those who were doomed to death, 102:21 That men may tell of the name of the Lord in Zion And His praise in Jerusalem, 102:22 When the peoples are gathered together, And the kingdoms, to serve the Lord. 102:23 He has weakened my strength in the way; He has shortened my days. 102:24 I say, ‘O my God, do not take me away in the midst of my days, Your years are throughout all generations. 102:25 ‘Of old You founded the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. 102:26 ‘Even they will perish, but You endure; And all of them will wear out like a garment; Like clothing You will change them and they will be changed. 102:27 ‘But You are the same, And Your years will not come to an end. 102:28 ‘The children of Your servants will continue, And their descendants will be established before You.’ (NASB)

**Toviyah / Psalms 102**

102:14 You will arise, you will pity Zion, for it is time to have compassion on her, for the season has come. 102:15 For your servants have desired her stones, and they will have mercy on her dust. 102:16 And the peoples will fear the name of the Lord, and all the kings of the earth your glory. 102:17 For the city of Zion was built by the command of the Lord, he was revealed in glory. 102:18 He turned to the prayer of those who were made desolate, and did not despise their prayer. 102:19 Let this prayer be written for a later generation, and the people yet to be created will praise Yah. 102:20 For he watched from the high heavens of his holiness; the Lord looked from heaven to earth. 102:21 To hear the cry of the prisoners; to set loose the children of those handed over to death. 102:22 To tell in Zion the name of the Lord, and his praise in Jerusalem. 102:23 When peoples are gathered together, and kingdoms to worship in the presence of the Lord. 102:24 My strength is harmed by the weariness of the path of exile; my days are shortened. 102:25. I will say in the presence of my God, “Do not remove me from the world at the halfway point of my days; bring me to the world to come, because your years are throughout generations of generations.” 102:26 In the beginning when all creatures were created, you founded the earth, and the heavens are the works of your hand. 102:27 They will perish but you will endure; and all of them like a garment will wear out; like a mantle you will change them and they will pass away. 102:28 And you are he who created them; and your years do not come to an end. 102:29 The sons of your servants will abide in the land; and their offspring will be established in your presence. (EMC)

**Psalmoi / Psalms 102**

102:14 For thy servants have taken pleasure in her stones, and they shall pity her dust. 102:15 So the nations shall fear thy name, O Lord, and all kings thy glory. 102:16 For the Lord shall build up Sion, and shall appear in his glory. 102:17 He has had regard to the prayer of the lowly, and has not despised their petition. 102:18 Let this be written for another generation; and the people that shall be created shall praise the Lord. 102:19 For he has looked out from the height of his sanctuary; the Lord looked upon the earth from heaven; 102:20 to hear the groaning of the fettered ones, to loosen the sons of the slain; 102:21 to proclaim the name of the Lord in Sion, and his praise in Jerusalem; 102:22 when the people are gathered together, and the kings, to serve the Lord. 102:23 He answered him in the way of his strength: tell me the fewness of my days. 102:24 Take me not away in the midst of my days: thy years are through all generations. 102:25 In the beginning thou, O Lord, didst lay the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands. 102:26 They shall perish, but thou remainest: and they all shall wax old as a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them, and they shall be changed. 102:27 But thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail. 102:28 The children of thy servants shall dwell securely, and their seed shall prosper for ever.(LXX)

א תְּפִלָה לְעַנִי כִּי-יַעֲטֵף  
 ב. יְהֹה שֶׁמֶעָה תְּפִלָתִי וְשׁוֹעָתִי אֶלְיךָ תִבּוֹא:  
 102:1 Hear my prayer, O Lord! And let my cry for help come to You. 102:2 Do not hide Your face from me in the day of my distress; Incline Your ear to me; In the day when I call answer me quickly. (NASB) The Aramaic Targum states,  
 א צְלוֹתָא עַל מִסְכִּינָא  
 ב. אֲרוֹם מִישְׁתָלָהִי וְקָדֵם יְהֹה יַיְמֵר צְלוֹתְיהָ: 102:1 The prayer for the poor man, for he is weary, and will speak his prayer in the presence of the Lord. 102:2 O Lord, accept my prayer, and let my entreaty come before you. (EMC) The rabbis say the psalmist calls for help in the context

of a poor (מַסְכִּינָא) man, what is the significance of that? The emphasis that appears to be applied to prayer is to the poor who seek the help of the God of Israel. What is the sense of this word? Is it in the context of one seeking wealth? The term poor in this context is in relation to being afflicted, crushed, forsaken, and desolate as the psalmist continues saying the following:

**Tehillim / Psalms 102:3-8**

102:3 For my days have been consumed in smoke, And my bones have been scorched like a hearth. 102:4 My heart has been smitten like grass and has withered away, Indeed, I forget to eat my bread. 102:5 Because of the loudness of my groaning My bones cling to my flesh. 102:6 I resemble a pelican of the wilderness; I have become like an owl of the waste places. 102:7 I lie awake, I have become like a lonely bird on a housetop. 102:8 My enemies have reproached me all day long; Those who deride me have used my name as a curse. (NASB,  
ג אל-תִּסְתַּר פָּנֵיכָ | מַפְנִי בַּיּוֹם צָר לִי הַטָּה-אֲלִי אָזְנָךְ בַּיּוֹם אֶקְרָא מַהְר עֲגַנְנִי: ד כִּי-כַלְוּ בְּעַשְׁן יְמִי וְעַצְמוֹתִי כְּמֻוקֵד גַּנְחָרוֹ: ה הַוְּכָה-כְּעַשְׁבָ וַיַּבְשֵׂ לְבִי כִּי-שְׁכַחְתִּי מְאַכֵּל לְחַמִּי: ו מְקוֹל אֶנְחָתִי כְּבָקָה (עַצְמִי לְבָשָׂרִי: ז ذְמִיתִי לְקַאת מַקְבֵּר הַיִתִי כְּכָוס חֲרֹבוֹת: ח שְׁקָתִי וְאַחֲרָה כְּפָזָר בּוֹזֵד עַל-גַּג:)

The language of the psalm provides for us the state of the psalmist, of his affliction and miserable condition as being poor in the sense that better expresses the idea that the poor are afflicted in this way. Midrash Rabbah Vayikra Parashat 34, Part 6 states the following:

**Midrash Rabbah Vayikra Parashat 34 Part 6**

There are eight names for a poor person: ani, evyon, misken, rash, dal, each, mach, helech. Ani [afflicted] means literally “poor”. Evyon [one who longs] because he longs (mita’ev) for everything. Misken [despised] because he is despised by all as it says “The poor man’s (misken) wisdom is despised.” (Eccl 9:16). Rash [impoverished] because he is dispossessed (mitroshesh) of property. Dal [detached] because he is detached (meduldal) from property. Dach [oppressed] because he is crushed (meduchdach); he sees a thing but cannot eat it, he sees a thing and cannot taste it, and cannot drink it. Mach [trampled upon] because he is lowly before everyone, like a kind of lowest threshold. Helech [vagrant] or Chelech [weak].  
רבי תנחים ברבי חייא פתח: ”*if your brother becomes poor...*” (שם ז): ביום טוביה היה בטוב וביום רעה ראה כי גם את זה לעומת זה עשה האלים. אם באת רעה לחבירך ראה הייך לזכות בו ולפרנסתו כדי שתתקבל מתן שכרו. כך היה רבי תנחים ברבי חייא עושה, בשעה שאמרו לו קחת לו ליטרא אחת של בשר מן השוק היה לוקחת לו שניים, אחת לו ואחת לעניים. על שום: גם את זה לעומת זה עשה הקב”ה העניים ועשירים, כדי שיהו זכין אלו לאלו. לפיכך משה מוזהיר לישראל: וכי ימוך אחיך:

The midrash states that the poor longs for everything because he is despised by all, even his wisdom is despised. Why is the wisdom of the poor man despised? Luke 6:20 simply has “blessed are the poor” whereas Matthew adds “in spirit” adding a different context to the meaning. Matthew 5:3 writes “Blessed are the poor in spirit” where the word μακαριοι, here rendered blessed, may also mean “happy,” and so Yeshua seems to imply the future disposition of the poor of being hopeful and expectant of greater things by faith in the Lord God of Israel. The key point is to continue to live by faith in the midst of having the desire for all things which is the context of the midrash. The Midrash has the poor man as being dispossessed from a place to dwell (land), his being crushed as like one who sees but cannot eat or drink, being trampled upon as a person considered of lower stature due to his position. This is why Moshe wrote in the Torah, Vayikra / Leviticus 25:23 “*If any of your fellow Israelites become poor and are unable to support themselves among you, help them as you would a foreigner and stranger, so they can continue to live among you.*” (NIV) This is also why the Midrash continues saying the following:

## **Midrash Rabbah Vayikra Parashat 34 Part 7**

7. R. Ze'ira said: Even the ordinary conversation of the people of the Land of Israel is Torah. How is this? A man would say to his neighbor: "Give me charity" [z'kaai bi or izdakai bi {the Hebrew רכבי is a corruption}, as if to say]: benefit yourself through me. R. Haggai says: [A man would say] "Look [sakai] at me; look [istikai] at me" [intimating] look at me - what I was, and look at me - what I am [now]. For R. Haggai said in the name of R. Yohanan: It is written, "And those riches perish by evil ways [inyan]" (Ecclesiastes 5:13) - that he [the one being asked] answered the poor man in an evil way [inyan], saying to him: "You do not go to work and [therefore have no food to] eat? See what forelegs! See what legs! See that stomach! See that flesh!" The Holy One, blessed be He [then] says to him: "Not only have you not given him anything that belongs to you, but what you did give him you gave with an evil eye. Consequently, "If he gives birth to a son, there is nothing in his hand" (*ibid.*) of everything he [once] possessed [to bequeath].

The point is that if the poor are found to live amongst us, we are to help, to give charity. This is why the rabbis say "Even the ordinary conversation of the people of the Land of Israel is Torah," indicating that God's people are to be known by their charity towards others. The Midrash speaks of the poor man saying to his brother to look at him, what he was as compared to what he is now. His brother considers the reason for his being poor is his not going to work, and thinks evil thoughts, but does not necessarily know the circumstances of his position. The one who seeks the Lord with pure intentions and an innocent heart, it is to him the Lord will hear and answer his prayer for help. This reminds us of a situation in the Apostolic Writings, of a poor man who was lame from birth, not having the ability to work, the Apostles Peter and John meet on the way to the Temple in Jerusalem.

### **Acts 3:1-9**

3:1 Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the ninth hour, the hour of prayer.  
3:2 And a man who had been lame from his mother's womb was being carried along, whom they used to set down every day at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, in order to beg alms of those who were entering the temple. 3:3 When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he began asking to receive alms. 3:4 But Peter, along with John, fixed his gaze on him and said, 'Look at us!' 3:5 And he began to give them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. 3:6 But Peter said, 'I do not possess silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene walk!' 3:7 And seizing him by the right hand, he raised him up; and immediately his feet and his ankles were strengthened. 3:8 With a leap he stood upright and began to walk; and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God. 3:9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God; (*NASB*)

Note the commentary of the Midrash from Vayikra, on the people of the land always speaking of the Torah in the context of the poor. What is the purpose of the continual speaking of the Torah? This is meant for the purpose of not only being reminded of our duty before God as His children, but also to speak of the mercy, grace, and love of God to His people. It is within this context the Apostles Peter and John meet with and speak to the lame man at the gate to the Temple in Jerusalem. This man never had a chance, because from birth he was lame. However, the mercy of the God of Israel was demonstrated in the Name of Yeshua the Messiah. The Lord heard his prayer, he met with Peter and John and by their faith stated because of Yeshua the Messiah, in his Name, raise up and walk, and the lame man walked for the glory of God.

The psalmist speaks of his situation relating this to his sustenance, which is directly related to the provision of the Lord for our daily bread (*Tehillim / Psalms 102:9-11*). The psalms states the following:

## Masoretic Text

### Tehillim / Psalms 109:9-11

102:9 For I have eaten ashes like bread And mingled my drink with weeping 102:10 Because of Your indignation and Your wrath, For You have lifted me up and cast me away. 102:11 My days are like a lengthened shadow, And I wither away like grass. (NASB)  
ט כל-היום חַרְפּוֹנִי אָזֵבְנִי מִסְכָּתִי: יְאָמַנְנִי-זָעַמְנִי וְקַאֲפָחִי כִּי אָזֵבְנִי מִהְזָלְלִי בַּיּוֹם שְׁבֻעָנוּ: יְכִי אֶפְרָאִים כָּלָחֵם אָכַלְתִּי וְשָׁקְוִי בְּבָכִי מִסְכָּתִי: יְאָמַנְנִי וְקַאֲפָחִי כִּי נְשָׁאַתְנִי וְתַשְׁלִיכִנִּי:

## Targum Psalms

### Toviah / Psalms 102:9-11

102:9 All the day my enemies will jeer at me; those who mock me have sworn by my word in vain. 102:10 For I have supped on ashes like food, and prepared my drink in weeping. 102:11 Because of your anger and rage, for you have lifted me up and cast me down. (EMC)  
ט כל-יום יהסدون לי בעלי דברי מתלעבי במירמי קיימו מגן: י ארום אפרא היך מזונה סעדית ושקיותי  
יומא יהסدون לי בעלי דברי מתלעבי במירמי קיימו מגן: י ארום רוגז וקיצף ארום נטלתני וטלחתני:  
(בבכחותא מזגית: יא מן קדם רוגז וקיצף ארום נטלתני וטלחתני)

## Septuagint

### Psalmoi / Psalms 102:9-11

102:9 For I have eaten ashes as it were bread, and mingled my drink with weeping; 102:10 because of thine anger and thy wrath: for thou hast lifted me up, and dashed me down. 102:11 My days have declined like a shadow; and I am withered like grass. (LXX, 102:9 ὅτι σποδὸν ὥσει ἄρτον ἔφαγον καὶ τὸ πόμα μου μετὰ κλαυθμοῦ ἐκίρνων 102:10 ἀπὸ προσώπου τῆς ὄργης σου καὶ τοῦ θυμοῦ σου ὅτι ἐπάρας κατέρραξάς με 102:11 αἱ ἡμέραι μου ὥσει σκιὰ ἐκλίθησαν καὶ ἐγὼ ὥσει χόρτος ἔξηράνθην)

The psalm speaks of eating ashes as if it were bread and preparing drink in weeping. This reminds us of *Bereshit / Genesis 3:14* *The Lord God said to the serpent, ‘Because you have done this, Cursed are you more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you will go, And dust you will eat All the days of your life;* (NASB) and *Isaiah 65:25* ‘*The wolf and the lamb will graze together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox; and dust will be the serpent’s food. They will do no evil or harm in all My holy mountain,*’ says the Lord. (NASB) According to the Scriptures, the ashes or dust are connected to sin, and the psalmists writing of eating ashes and preparing drink in weeping may be the result of his past sins. Note how these are things the Lord God of Israel does for the purpose of drawing His people to repentance and to turn from their sins. This is similar to what is written in Lamentations regarding the work of the wrath of God due to sin.

### Lamentations 2:22-3:17

2:22 You called as in the day of an appointed feast My terrors on every side; And there was no one who escaped or survived In the day of the Lord’s anger. Those whom I bore and reared, My enemy annihilated them. 3:1 I am the man who has seen affliction Because of the rod of His wrath. 3:2 He has driven me and made me walk In darkness and not in light. 3:3 Surely against me He has turned His hand Repeatedly all the day. 3:4 He has caused my flesh and my skin to waste away, He has broken my bones. 3:5 He has besieged and encompassed me with bitterness and hardship. 3:6 In dark places He has made me dwell, Like those who have long been dead. 3:7 He has walled me in so that I cannot go out; He has made my chain heavy. 3:8 Even when I cry out and call for help, He shuts out my prayer. 3:9 He has blocked my ways with hewn stone; He has made my paths crooked. 3:10 He is to me like a bear lying in wait, Like a lion in secret places. 3:11 He has turned aside my ways and torn

*me to pieces; He has made me desolate. 3:12 He bent His bow And set me as a target for the arrow. 3:13 He made the arrows of His quiver To enter into my inward parts. 3:14 I have become a laughingstock to all my people, Their mocking song all the day. 3:15 He has filled me with bitterness, He has made me drunk with wormwood. 3:16 He has broken my teeth with gravel; He has made me cower in the dust. 3:17 My soul has been rejected from peace; I have forgotten happiness. (NASB)*

The author of Lamentations speaks of the day of the Lord's anger where the appointed feast times become times of terror on every side rather than the joy of the Lord. The one who sins and does not repent, will see affliction because of the Lord's wrath, and lamentations describes the type of life that will pursue those who pursue sin. The psalmist speaks figuratively in the sense that he has prepared his bread from the dust, similar to the account of the serpent that his meat will be the dust of the earth. This is paralleled to the Lord bringing one low, humbling a person for the purpose of drawing them back to Himself, and to repentance, and turning from his or her sins. The psalmist recognizes this and says that even though all of these things have happened, he continues in his faith saying, יב יְמִינֵּי כָּאַלְגָּתָיו וְאַנְּיִכְעַשְׂבָּאִיבָּשׁ: יג וְאַפָּה יְהֹוָה לְעוֹלָם תִּשְׁבֶּב, וְזִכְרָךְ לְזֹרֶד: יד אַפָּה תָּקוּם תְּרַחֲם צִיּוֹן כִּי עַת לְחַנְנָה כִּי בָּא מִזְעֵד:טו כִּי-רְצֹוּ עֲבָדֵיךְ אַת-אֲבֹנִיךְ וְאַת-עֲפָרָה יְחִינְנוּ: טז וַיַּרְאֻוּ גּוֹיִם אַת-שֵׁם יְהֹוָה וְכָל-מֶלֶכִי הָאָרֶץ אַת-כְּבוֹדָךְ: יז כִּי-בָנָה יְהֹוָה צִיּוֹן גְּרָאָה בְּכָבוֹדוֹ: יח פָנָה אֶל-102:12 But You, O Lord, abide forever; And Your name to all generations. 102:13 You will arise and have compassion on Zion; For it is time to be gracious to her; For the appointed time has come. 102:14 Surely Your servants find pleasure in her stones And feel pity for her dust. 102:15 So the nations will fear the name of the Lord And all the kings of the earth Your glory. 102:16 For the Lord has built up Zion; He has appeared in His glory. 102:17 He has regarded the prayer of the destitute And has not despised their prayer. 102:18 This will be written for the generation to come, That a people yet to be created may praise the Lord. (NASB) What an amazing hope that we have in the Lord God of Israel. He will one day return to give mercy to the holy place and to His people. The Targum translation states the following:

Toviah / Psalms 102:12-18

*102:12 My days are like a shadow that lengthens; and I will wither like grass. 102:13 But you, O Lord, your dwelling place is eternal, in heaven you will dwell, and your memorial is to every generation. 102:14 You will arise, you will pity Zion, for it is time to have compassion on her, for the season has come. 102:15 For your servants have desired her stones, and they will have mercy on her dust. 102:16 And the peoples will fear the name of the Lord, and all the kings of the earth your glory. 102:17 For the city of Zion was built by the command of the Lord, he was revealed in glory. 102:18 He turned to the prayer of those who were made desolate, and did not despise their prayer.* (EMC: יב יומי היך טולא דיצלי ואני היך עסבא איבשׁ:

*יג ואת יהוה מדורך לעלם בשמייא תיתב מתייתיב ודכרנוך לדר ודר: יד את תקום תרחם ציון ארום עידן למייחוס עלה ארום אתה זימנא:טו ארום רעו עבדך ית אבנהה אבנניה וית עפרהא יחיסון: טז וידחלוּן עמיה עממייא ית שמא דיהוה וכל מלכיא דארעה ית יקרך: יז ארום איתבנוי במירמא (דיהוה קורתא דציוון אטגלי ביקרא: יח אטפנוי לות צלותה דמצדייאן ולא בסר ית צלותיהן:*

Both the MT and the Targum state in *Tehillim / Psalms 102:15* that the servants of the Lord will desire her stones (referencing Jerusalem and the holy place). What is it about the stones that is so significant that it is to be desired? Notice how *Tehillim / Psalms 102:16* connects this love of the stones to the fear of the name of God and of His glory, and for the rebuilding of the city of Zion (*102:17*). Notice something here in the Targum and the MT regarding what the author is saying about these stones. In *Toviah / Psalms 102:12*, the author states that his days are like grass, quick to wither or perish, which illustrates the shortness of our days as men, corruptible, and incapable of keeping ourselves from harms way, illustrating that it is the Lord who is able to sustain each one of us. This is then brought into the context of the mercy of God for His people

and to the stones that are to be most desired, of the holy place, and Jerusalem and Zion. Reading through the Apostolic Writings, it seems as if Peter was writing based upon *Tehillim / Psalms 102* saying the following:

### **1 Peter 1:24-2:10**

*1:24 For, ‘All flesh is like grass, And all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, And the flower falls off, 1:25 But the word of the Lord endures forever.’ And this is the word which was preached to you. 2:1 Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, 2:2 like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, 2:3 if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord. 2:4 And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God, 2:5 you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 2:6 For this is contained in Scripture: ‘Behold, I lay in Zion a choice stone, a precious corner stone And he who believes in Him will not be disappointed.’ 2:7 This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve, ‘The stone which the builders rejected, This became the very corner stone, 2:8 and, ‘A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense’; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this doom they were also appointed. 2:9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 2:10 for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. (NASB)*

Notice how Peter opens in this part of his letter with a description of the grass and the flower, and how they will one day wither, illustrating the way of the body, as he describes as “*all flesh*” referencing all of God’s creation as well. He is taking a Torah perspective in order to lead into the context that the word of the Lord endures forever (see *Isaiah 40:6-9* which states *40:6 A voice says, ‘Call out.’ Then he answered, ‘What shall I call out?’ All flesh is grass, and all its loveliness is like the flower of the field. 40:7 The grass withers, the flower fades, When the breath of the Lord blows upon it; Surely the people are grass. 40:8 The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever. 40:9 Get yourself up on a high mountain, O Zion, bearer of good news, Lift up your voice mightily, O Jerusalem, bearer of good news; Lift it up, do not fear. Say to the cities of Judah, ‘Here is your God!’*) Peter speaks of the eternity of the Word of God, and then describes His people as “*living stones*” something that is desired of the Lord. Note the context of the psalm, the stones of the holy place are to be most desired of the servants of the Lord. This is the context of the holy temple, the house of the Lord as a place of prayer, the joy of his sacrifices (Shelamim Korban) and festivals (moedim), and peace, the place of worship in Jerusalem draws in all of these concepts, and in parallel fashion, Peter draws these things into the context of God’s children, being made into living stones, which were rejected of men but are precious in God’s sight (2:4), where the Lord has prepared a spiritual house, and a holy priesthood, and a place to offer spiritual sacrifices, etc. Are these things that Peter is speaking of referencing the cessation of the Torah commands and of the holy place in Jerusalem? Certainly NOT! The validity and eternity of the place in which God has made His Name known, Zion, is found in the continuation of God’s redemptive and creative work in our lives, conforming us unto the likeness of His son, Yeshua, who is the chief corner stone of Zion. We are representatives of the Lord God of Israel and of His Messiah Yeshua, and we are called to emulate the way of God in our lives, as was demonstrated by His Messiah Yeshua. (*John 13:15*)

יט תְּפִתְחַבْ זֹאת לְדוֹר אָחָרוֹן וְעַם נָבְרָא יְהָלֵל-יְהָה: כ בִּ-הַשְׁקִירִ מִמְּרוֹרָם קְדֻשָׁו, יְהָה מִשְׁמִים | אֶל-אָרֶץ הַבֵּית: כא לְשָׁמַע אֲנַחַת אָסִיר לְפִתְחַ בְּנֵי תְּמוּמָה: כב לְסִפְרַ בְּצִיוֹן שֵׁם יְהָה וְתְּהָלָתוֹ בְּיַיִן: כג בְּהַקְבִּץ עַמִּים יְחִזּוּ וּמְמָלָכוֹת לְעַבְדַּ אֶת-יְהָה: 102:19 For He looked down from His holy height; From heaven the Lord gazed upon the earth, 102:20 To hear the groaning of the prisoner, To set free those

*who were doomed to death, 102:21 That men may tell of the name of the Lord in Zion And His praise in Jerusalem, 102:22 When the peoples are gathered together, And the kingdoms, to serve the Lord. 102:23 He has weakened my strength in the way; He has shortened my days. (NASB)* Notice how the Lord God of Israel who is full of mercy and grace, looks down from heaven and sets free those who are in prison and doomed to death for the purpose of making known the glory of God in His ability to deliver His people. The Aramaic Targum states these things in the following way:

## Targum Translation

### *Toviah / Psalms 102:12-18*

*102:20 For he watched from the high heavens of his holiness; the Lord looked from heaven to earth. 102:21 To hear the cry of the prisoners; to set loose the children of those handed over to death. 102:22 To tell in Zion the name of the Lord, and his praise in Jerusalem. 102:23 When peoples are gathered together, and kingdoms to worship in the presence of the Lord. 102:24 My strength is harmed by the weariness of the path of exile; my days are shortened. (EMC)*

כ אֲרוֹם אָוְדֵיק מִשְׁמֵי מֶרְומָא דַקּוֹדְשָׁה יְהוָה מִן שְׁמֵיא לְאָרְעָא אַסְתָּכְלָל: כָּא לְמִשְׁמֵעַ אַנְיקָוְתָּא דְאָסְרִיא לְמִשְׁרֵי בְּנֵיא דְמִסְרֵין לְמִתְוֹתָא: כְּבָ לְמִשְׁתָּעֵי בְּצִיוֹן שְׁמָא דִיְהוָה וְתוֹשְׁבָהָה בִּירוּשָׁלָם: כְּגָ בְּאִתְכְּנָשׁוֹת עַמִּין עַמִּין כְּחַדָּא וּמְלֻכּוֹתָא לְמִיפְלָח קָדָם יְהוָה: כְּדָ אִיסְתָּגִיף מִן טָוָרָה דָאוֹרָה גְּלוֹתָא חִילִי אִיתְקָצְרוֹן יוֹמָיִם:

The Targum describes the Lord God of Israel who watches from heaven and hears the cry of the prisoners and sets loose the children of those who were handed over to death, suggesting a possible late interpretation based upon the Babylonian captivity or as a psalm of David in reference to the surrounding peoples who are continually attacking Israel. This provides a sense of future redemption and salvation, but lacks the present day expectation of deliverance, whereas the MT states, “*לְשָׁמַע אֲנַחַת אָסֵיר לְפָתָח בְּנֵי תְּמוּתָה*” “To hear the groaning of the prisoner, To set free those who were doomed to death,” expressing the present day expectation of God’s deliverance. The thing about the Babylonian captivity, the people had been warned by the prophets for years and years, but failed to listen and obey God’s Word. They chose to walk in the way of their own opinions and sins rather than grasping and taking hold of the covenant of God and walking in His ways, and to seek the forgiveness and mercy of God. The MT expresses the mercy of God that is available both today and tomorrow. The psalm provides for us a future expectation of the Lord looking down from heaven and being concerned to help His people. This is similar to what the Jewish commentary Malbim states on *Tehillim / Psalms 102:22*.

### *Malbim on Tehillim / Psalms 102:22*

*That men may declare – That is to say, to develop all mortal men that they declare afterwards the name of the Lord and His praise in Jerusalem in the future, when all nations and kingdoms gather together to serve the Lord. The phrase ‘the name of the Lord’ indicates the spread of His name as creator of the world, renewer and controller. This will be declared in Zion because the wise men and the priests reside there, who know the name of the Lord. ‘His praise’ refers to His ways and guidance which are merciful and filled with grace. This will be known even to the masses who reside in Jerusalem, through the whole city.*

Note how the rabbinic commentary recognizes the mercy and grace of God in relation to the praises of His people who have been set free, unburdened by the enslavement due to sin, which is coupled with the future expectation of peoples from all nations worshiping and serving the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in Jerusalem. Note how this is a reference to a powerful move of God in the lives of both His people and in the

hearts of peoples from other nations. The purpose is so the glory of His name will be declared throughout all of the world. The most awesome thing about these Scriptures is that the mercy of God is for all peoples, for the purpose of drawing them unto the Lord, and to set free all men from the bondage of sin who are willing to join themselves with the Lord God of Israel and His Messiah Yeshua.

The psalmist concludes saying *102:24 I say, ‘O my God, do not take me away in the midst of my days, Your years are throughout all generations. 102:25 Of old You founded the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. 102:26 Even they will perish, but You endure; And all of them will wear out like a garment; Like clothing You will change them and they will be changed. 102:27 But You are the same, And Your years will not come to an end. 102:28 The children of Your servants will continue, And their descendants will be established before You.’* (NASB) The psalmist concludes seeking the Lord to not take his life, but to have mercy and to extend his life. He recognizes and acknowledges the power of God in His ability as Creator and sustainer of all life, and how the earth itself is perishable and wearing out, whereas the Lord God of Israel is eternal, and how the Lord sustains His people from generation to generation. The Aramaic Targum states, כה אמר קדם אלהי לא תסלקני מן עלמא הדין בפלגות יומיอาทית לעלמא דאתי מטול די בדרי דרייא שנתק: כו מון שירויא דאיתברاي כל בירייתא ארעה יסדה ועובדיך ייך אידיך שמיא: כז הינון יהובדונ ואת תקום וכולהון היך לבושא יתבלין היך איצטלי תחליפינון ויתחלפן: כח ואת הוא די בריתינו ושותך לא: כט בני עבדך ישرون ארעה זורעתהון קדם יתקנו: 102:25. *I will say in the presence of my God, “Do not remove me from the world at the halfway point of my days; bring me to the world to come, because your years are throughout generations of generations.” 102:26 In the beginning when all creatures were created, you founded the earth, and the heavens are the works of your hand. 102:27 They will perish but you will endure; and all of them like a garment will wear out; like a mantle you will change them and they will pass away. 102:28 And you are he who created them; and your years do not come to an end. 102:29 The sons of your servants will abide in the land; and their offspring will be established in your presence.* (EMC) Note the Targum translates “*the sons of your servants will abide in the land*” The key word being Yeshron (ישרון) meaning “to be loosened, untied Com. --(a) to be liberated Syr. (a.1) to be dismissed Syr. (a.2) to be judged innocent, forgiven of a crime Syr. (a.3) to be released from a spell Gal. --(b) to be dismantled Syr.” The Aramaic translation suggests that the ability of the sons of the servants of God to remain in the land is due to the parent being forgiven and judged innocent for a crime against God. An important point is that the verse refers to בני עבדך the children of your servants, suggesting that we are to be servants of the Most High God, and to seek Him daily, to live according to His will, and it will go well with us. Note Solomon’s words in *Mishley / Proverbs 16:2 All the ways of a man are clean in his own sight, But the LORD weighs the motives.* (NASB) This suggests that the Lord is looking at each of our motivation for what we do, and teaches us (among other Scripture) that we are not sufficient of ourselves to think or speak any thing wise and good. We need the help of the Lord God of Israel. There is a significant aspect of having the correct motivation of heart, something all of Scriptures directs us towards, which is to have a desire to draw near to the Lord each day. We must seek the Lord God in heaven for this kind of motivation, because it is pleasing in His sight. This is what it means to be poor in spirit, and living stones! Let’s Pray!

## Rabbinic Commentary

The Rabbinic Commentary (Midrash) on *Tehillim / Psalms 102* has 3 parts. Reading through the Midrash we will be looking at Part 1, 2, and 3. Let’s begin by outlining *Midrash Tehillim Chapter 102, Parts 1, 2, and 3.*

## Outline of Midrash Tehillim / Psalms, Chapter 102, Part 1, 2, and 3

### Part 1

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתהיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying, “*A prayer of the afflicted, when he faints and pours out his complaint before the Lord (Tehillim / Psalms 102:1).*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*Elsewhere, this is what Scripture says, The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord; but the prayer of the upright is His delight (Mishley / Proverbs 15:8).*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis say that the Lord does not seek a sacrifice from the wicked. What is it the rabbis say the Lord does seek from the wicked?.
- The **نمשל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **مثال** (mashal), the rabbis say what the Lord looks for is the prayer of the righteous. If a wicked man is wicked, is it possible for there to be a prayer of the righteous?
- The Concluding phrase says, “*That is, The prayer of a man who is poor because he delays (Tehillim / Psalms 102:1) refers to Jacob’s delay in prayer, as a result of which Laban got those of the flocks which might have been Jacob’s. The delaying in the verse form Genesis thus means delaying in prayer, as also in the verse of the Psalm A man who delays the Tefillah is poor.*”

### Part 2

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתהיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying, “*In a different exposition, the verse is read A prayer for the afflicted, when he faints.*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*Rabbi Meir and Rabbi Jose differed. One said, At what point in his prayers may a man pray for his own needs?*”
- The **مثال** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis state that a man may first pray for his needs, then follow with the Amidah. What is the purpose of the amidah?
- The **نمשל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **مثال** (mashal), the rabbis expand upon the mashal declaring there are two parts to prayer.
- The Concluding phrase says, “*Hear, Lord, the voice of Judah (Devarim / Deuteronomy 33:7). For my days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burned as a hearth (Tehillim / Psalms 102:4); that is, my bones are like a spark thrown out by the fire.*”

### Part 3

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתהיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying, “*He will regard the prayer of the destitute man, and not despite their prayer (Tehillim / Psalms 102:18).*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*Rabbi Samuel son of Hahmane said in the name of Rabbi Judah, Should not Scripture have said, He will regard the prayer of the destitute man, and not despise his prayer; or He will regard the prayer of the destitute men, and not despise their prayer?*”
- The **مثال** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis discuss whose prayer does the Lord despise?
- The **نمשל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **مثال** (mashal), the rabbis speak in terms of the Lord hearing the prayer of the destitute. Why would the Lord hear the prayer of the destitute? Because the prayer from such a person is motivated by innocence?
- The Concluding phrase says, “*And what are they to do then? They are required to take into their hands their citrons and their palm branches, the willows of the brook and the myrtles, and praise You. Hence, And a people that will be created will praise the Lord.*”

Midrash Tehillim 102, Part 1 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתהייל) saying, “*A prayer of the afflicted, when he faints and pours out his complaint before the Lord (Tehillim / Psalms 102:1).*” The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*Elsewhere, this is what Scripture says, The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord; but the prayer of the upright is His delight (Mishley / Proverbs 15:8).*” The rabbis are contrasting the differences between the prayer of a righteous man and the sacrifice of the wicked.

The entire midrash states the following:

<p><b>מדרש תהילים פרק קב סימן א</b></p> <p>א תפלה לעני כי יעטוף. זהו שאמר הכהן טוב [זוכה רשעים תועבת ה'] ותפלה ישרים רצונו (משל טוח), אין הקב"ה מבקש מן הרשעים לא זבח ולא עולה, ומהו מבקש תפלה ישרים, וכן הוא אומר כי לא תחפוץ זבח ואתנה [עלולה לא תרצה] (תהלים נא ייח). דבר אחר תפלה לעני כי יעטוף. אמר ר' פנחס בשם ר' ראובן אני עומד על דעתו של דוד, פעמים הוא קרא עצמו דוד, תפלה לדוד (תהלים יז א, פו א) פעמים הוא קורא עצמו עני, תפלה לעני, בשעה שהוא רואה הצדיקים שעתידין לצאת ממנו, כגון אסא [יהושפט] יחזקיהו וישעיה הוא קורא עצמו דוד, ובשעה שהוא רשעם עומדים ממנו, כגון אחוז מנשה ואמון, הוא קורא עצמו עני, תפלה לעני. אמר ר' שמואל בר נחמני בשם ר' יונתן כלפי מנשה אמר תפלה לעני, שהיה עני מעשים טובים, ר' אלכסנדרי אומר לפניו התפלה אמרו דוד דהוה ATI ומלקש ומלהך, כענין שנאמר והיה העתופים ללבן בראשית למב, לכך נאמר תפלה לעני כי יעטוף, אותן שקנה בעטיפה תפלה היו ליעקב, ואין עטיפה אלא תפלה, שנאמר תפלה לעני כי יעטוף.</p>	<p><b>Midrash Tehillim 102, Part 1</b></p> <p>1. <i>A prayer of the afflicted, when he faints and pours out his complaint before the Lord (Tehillim / Psalms 102:1). Elsewhere, this is what Scripture says, The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord; but the prayer of the upright is His delight (Mishley / Proverbs 15:8). Of the wicked, the Holy One blessed be He, seeks neither sacrifice nor burnt offering. What does God seek? The prayer of the upright. Thus, also Scripture says, For You do not delight in sacrifice, that I should give it; You do not delight in burnt offering (Tehillim / Psalms 51:18). In a different exposition of A prayer of the afflicted, when he faints, Rabbi Phinehas said in the name of Rabbi Reuben, I cannot understand David's intent; there are times when he calls himself David, as in A prayer of David (Tehillim / Psalms 17:1, 86:1); but there are also times when he calls himself the afflicted, as in A prayer of the afflicted. The explanation must be that when David saw the upright man who would issue from him, men such as Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Isaiah, he called himself David. But when he saw the wicked men who would descend from him, men such as Ahaz, Manasse, and Amon, he called himself the afflicted, as in A prayer of the afflicted. Rabbi Samuel son of Nahmani said in the name of Rabbi Jonathan, David composed the Psalm, A prayer of the afflicted with reference to Manasseh, whose affliction was his poverty in good deeds. But Rabbi Alexandri taught that David spoke these words with reference to prayer, having in mind the man who is poor because of the fact that he keeps delaying his prayer. To this sort of man, Scripture alludes in the verse On account of the delaying, they were Laban's (Bereshit / Genesis 30:42). That is, The prayer of a man who is poor because he delays (Tehillim / Psalms 102:1) refers to Jacob's delay in prayer, as a result of which Laban got those of the flocks which might have been Jacob's. The delaying in the verse from Genesis thus means delaying in prayer, as also in the verse of the Psalm A man who delays the Tefillah is poor.</i></p>
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Based upon the midrash, the rabbis say that the Lord does not seek a sacrifice from the wicked. What is it the rabbis say the Lord does seek from the wicked? The rabbis say what the Lord looks for is the prayer of the righteous. If a wicked man is wicked, is it possible for there to be a prayer of righteousness? King Solomon said in *Mishley / Proverbs 15:8 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but the prayer of the upright is acceptable to him. (NASB)* The sacrifice mentioned in *Mishley / Proverb 21:27 (The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination, How much more when he brings it with evil intent! NASB)* is related to one's intent, the Lord God hates the kind of sacrifice when the intent comes from a wicked and evil heart. *Ecclesiastes 5:1* states, “*Guard your steps as you go to the house of God and draw near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools; for they do not know they are doing evil.*” The issue is that the foolish man offers gifts for his sins, and does not turn from his evil works. The point is that he does not know, or is not able to distinguish between good and evil. This is like going to church and raising your hands during the worship service, then going home and putting your mind, hands, and actions to the service of evil. Sol-

omon said the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination. The Septuagint and Arabic versions (21:27) add “with a mind alien from the law (Torah)” or “unlawfully they bring them” meaning when it is not brought according to the Torah, it has become a corruption, for example, bringing those things which are torn, lame, sick, or taking from robbery for the burnt offering unto the Lord. These things are performed with an evil intention, to cheat at the way of God to cover sin, and to attempt to make atonement without repenting of it or forsaking it. The purpose is so one may go on to sin with impunity, and to find justification to continue in sin. This is the sin for which Balak and Bilam offered sacrifices, where their every religious action was not done in faith, love, sincerity, and with a view to the glory of God, but in hypocrisy and with selfish views, in an attempt to procure acceptance with God and justification in his sight; setting aside the righteousness of sacrifice for His glory (*purpose of obedience to the mitzvot*) and performing the sacrifice from a wicked mind which is for personal gain. This is an abomination to the Lord. Note how even though such persons bring their sacrifice diligently and with great skill, so as to deceive men, the Lord God of Israel in heaven is not deceived. This is synonymous to holiness being pretended when wickedness is intended, this is an abomination. This is why the Midrash leads saying “*For You do not delight in sacrifice, that I should give it; You do not delight in burnt offering (Tehillim / Psalms 51:18).*

The Midrash continues with a discussion on why David calls himself afflicted? The idea is the following:

*“when David saw the upright man who would issue from him, men such as Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Isaiah, he called himself David. But when he saw the wicked men who would descend from him, men such as Ahaz, Manasse, and Amon, he called himself the afflicted, as in A prayer of the afflicted. Rabbi Samuel son of Nahmani said in the name of Rabbi Jonathan, David composed the Psalm, A prayer of the afflicted with reference to Manasseh, whose affliction was his poverty in good deeds. But Rabbi Alexandri taught that David spoke these words with reference to prayer, having in mind the man who is poor because of the fact that he keeps delaying his prayer. To this sort of man, Scripture alludes in the verse On account of the delaying, they were Laban’s (Bereshit / Genesis 30:42).”*

The rabbis conclude that David realized there would be some righteous and some wicked men who would descend from his offspring, and it was by reason of his unrighteous offspring that he called himself afflicted. Another interpretation has a reference to Manasseh who was afflicted by reason of the poverty of good deeds, meaning that Manasseh did not perform any good deeds. By this interpretation, the rabbis are saying David has identified with all of the people (tribes) of Israel as being his children. The final interpretation is that David calls himself afflicted because he delays his prayer, which is paralleled to the weak animals that went to Laban, while Jacob took the strong animals. Is this delaying of the prayer being paralleled to deception? Could this be paralleled to the sin of Balak and Bilam where their every religious action were not done in faith, love, sincerity, and with a view to the glory of God in heaven, but in hypocrisy and with selfish views, in order to procure acceptance with God and justification in his sight? Would a delaying in prayer be synonymous to the setting aside of the righteousness of the sacrifice of our time (i.e. actually taking the time to pray) to delay prayer? Is this what the rabbis are trying to suggest in their Midrash with regard to being afflicted due to sin?

Midrash Tehillim 102 Part 1 concludes saying, “*That is, The prayer of a man who is poor because he delays (Tehillim / Psalms 102:1) refers to Jacob’s delay in prayer, as a result of which Laban got those of the flocks which might have been Jacob’s. The delaying in the verse from Genesis thus means delaying in prayer, as also in the verse of the Psalm A man who delays the Tefillah is poor.*” When the psalm states that the man who delays in prayer is poor, this appears to be a reference to those who are poor in spirit. The lack of spiritual insight (i.e. to pray immediately) is demonstrated in the rabbinic interpretations on David, saying that such a person is poor in good deeds, he is afflicted due to his many sins, and thus he delays his prayer due to the unrighteousness in his heart.

Midrash Tehillim 102, Part 2 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המת Hil) saying, “*In a different*

*exposition, the verse is read A prayer for the afflicted, when he faints.”* The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*Rabbi Meir and Rabbi Jose differed. One said, At what point in his prayers may a man pray for his own needs?”* 102:1 **א צלotta על מסכינא ארום מישתלהי וקדם יהוה יימר צלותיה:**” The prayer for the poor man, for he is weary, and will speak his prayer in the presence of the Lord. (EMC) and the Septuagint states, 102:1 προσευχὴ τῷ πτωχῷ ὅταν ἀκηδίασῃ καὶ ἐναντίον κυρίου ἐκχέῃ τὴν δέησιν αὐτοῦ εἰςάκουσον κύριε τῆς προσευχῆς μου καὶ ἡ κραυγή μου πρὸς σὲ ἐλθάτω A Prayer for the Poor; when he is deeply afflicted, and pours out his supplication before the Lord. (LXX) In both cases, the prayer of the poor is in relation to the one who feels he is being unfairly treated and will go before the Lord seeking the Lord to meet his needs. The rabbis ask at what point during prayer may one ask for his own needs? Before asking for the needs of others? The entire midrash states the following:

<b>מדרש תהילים פרק קב סימן ב</b>	<b>Midrash Tehillim 102, Part 2</b>
<p><b>ב</b> [דבר אחר תפלת לעני כי יעטוף]. ר' מאיר ור' יוסי חד מנהון אמר אימתי צרייך אדם לتبוע צרכיו, טובע צרכיו ואח"כ יהפלל, שנאמר תפלת לעני ואמתי כי יעטוף בזמן שלפני הי ישפוך שיחו [ואהרונה אמר תחלתו הוא מתפלל ולאחר כך הוא טובע צרכיו, שנאמר אשפוך לפניו שיחי (תחד לים קמג ג) ואח"כ צרתי לפניו אגיד (שם שם תהילים קמ"ב), ואין שיחה אלא תפלה, שנאמר וכייצא יצחק לשוח בשדה לפנות ערב תפלה. (שנאמר) ה' שמעה תפלה, אל תתן'accusomia של' בתוכה אלא تعالה ותעשה פירות. ושועתי אליך תבא אל תסתור פניך מפני ביום צר לי הטה אליו אזנק. אמר ר' יוחנן לכל השבט של יהודה ניתנה מתנה זו, שמע ה' קול יהודה (דברים לג ז), ר' חנני נא אמר לביתו של דוד ניתנה, ר' יהודה בר סימון אומר אין אדם אומר הטה אלא אם כן אחרים מקטרגין אותו, אמר ר' לווי אקסיטו רין זה נתן משה ליהודה בשעת פטירתו מן העולם, שנאמר וזאת ליהודה (שם שם דברים ל"ג). כי כלו בעשן ימי ועצמותי כМОקד נהרו. כהדין מציא דיקר.</p>	<p>2. <i>In a different exposition, the verse is read A prayer for the afflicted, when he faints. Rabbi Meir and Rabbi Jose differed. One said, At what point in his prayers may a man pray for his own needs? A man may pray for his own needs at the beginning of his prayers, then goes on to recite the Tefillah. Since it is said, A prayer for the afflicted, is it not meant that a man may pray first for himself when he faints? And afterwards he pours out his meditation before the Lord (Tehillim / Psalms 102:1). The other said, A man should recite the Tefillah at the beginning of his prayers, and after that he may pray for his own needs, for in another Psalm it is said first, I pour out my meditation before Him (Tehillim / Psalms 142:3), and then follow the words, I declare before Him my trouble. The term meditation clearly refers to Tefillah, for it is said, And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at eventide (Bereshit / Genesis 24:63). Rabb Zeiri said in the name of Rabbi Huna, All admit that a man should pray for his own needs only in benediction which ends with the words Blessed are You who hearkens unto prayer. O Lord, hear my prayer (Tehillim / Psalms 102:2). Do not put my petition away in a box, but let it go up and bear fruit. In the words, And let my cry come unto you. Do not hide your face from me in the day of my distress; incline Your ear unto me (Tehillim / Psalms 102:2-3), incline Your ear unto me, according to Rabbi Johanan, means that God's listening to prayer was a gift made to the entire tribe of Judah, for Moshe blessed Judah with Hear, Lord, the voice of Judah (Devarim / Deuteronomy 33:7). But according to Rabbi Johanan, this gift was made only to the house of David. Rabbi Judah son of Simon taught, A man says Incline Your ear unto me only when other men are making accusations against him. Rabbi Levi said, When Moshe had to leave the earth, he gave this farewell to Judah, saying, And this is the blessing of Judah, Hear, Lord, the voice of Judah (Devarim / Deuteronomy 33:7). For my days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burned as a hearth (Tehillim / Psalms 102:4); that is, my bones are like a spark thrown out by the fire.</i></p>

In the mashal (mashal), the rabbis state that a man may first pray for his own needs, and then follow with the Amidah. What is the purpose of the amidah? The Amidah is the core of every Jewish worship service, and is also referred to as HaTefillah, or “*The prayer.*” The Amidah (**העמידה**) literally means, “standing,” and refers to a series of blessings recited while standing. The Amidah follows the imagery of “*master and servant,*” where the Rabbis determined a worshiper should come before his or her master first with words of praise, which are then followed by one’s petitions. Concluding prayers should include words of thanks. As a result, the Amidah is divided into three central sections: praise, petitions, and thanks. The Midrash

however states that a man is to state his needs at the beginning of his prayers, and then go on to recite the Amidah. What we see here based upon the Midrash is that prayer was largely unstructured where the Rabbis eventually codified the format and themes of prayer into the three sections of the Amidah. The Amidah is not left to be a “strict” liturgical prayer; the prayer is left to the creativity of individual and leaders to generate the specific wording of the blessings and needs. What we see in the Sidur is that individual communities in different countries began to settle on a somewhat standard versions of the prayers over time. Today the variations between the traditional texts of the Amidah in different communities are fairly minor. The first three blessings of praise is always the same in every worship service, with only minor variations for weekdays, Shabbat, and holidays. The first blessing is called the Avot, referencing our “ancestors (fathers),” and serves as an introduction to the God of Israel connecting our faith to the faith of our fathers. Mentioning the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob brings praise to the God of Israel by remembering what He has done and promised to His people, demonstrating both our faith and submission to the Lord God in heaven.

The Midrash goes on to say the following:

*A man may pray for his own needs at the beginning of his prayers, then goes on to recite the Tefillah. Since it is said, A prayer for the afflicted, is it not meant that a man may pray first for himself when he faints? And afterwards he pours out his meditation before the Lord (Tehillim / Psalms 102:1). The other said, A man should recite the Tefillah at the beginning of his prayers, and after that he may pray for his own needs, for in another Psalm it is said first, I pour out my meditation before Him (Tehillim / Psalms 142:3), and then follow the words, I declare before Him my trouble. The term meditation clearly refers to Tefillah, for it is said, And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at eventide (Bereshit / Genesis 24:63). Rabb Zeiri said in the name of Rabbi Huna, All admit that a man should pray for his own needs only in benediction which ends with the words Blessed are You who hearkens unto prayer. O Lord, hear my prayer (Tehillim / Psalms 102:2). Do not put my petition away in a box, but let it go up and bear fruit. In the words, And let my cry come unto you. Do not hide your face from me in the day of my distress; incline Your ear unto me (Tehillim / Psalms 102:2-3), incline Your ear unto me, according to Rabbi Johanan, means that God's listening to prayer was a gift made to the entire tribe of Judah, for Moshe blessed Judah with Hear, Lord, the voice of Judah (Devarim / Deuteronomy 33:7). But according to Rabbi Hanina this gift was made only to the house of David. Rabbi Judah son of Simon taught, A man says Incline Your ear unto me only when other men are making accusations against him. (Midrash Tehillim 102, Part 2)*

The first interpretation is that a man pray for his own needs at the beginning of his prayers. The later interpretation has a man praying at the benediction of his prayers for his own needs. What is the significance of waiting until the end during benediction to seek our own needs in prayer? One possibility on the significance of waiting until afterwards to make petition for our own needs is by reason that sin stops prayer from being answered. The Lord God of Israel will not answer the prayer of a person if they are in a state of perpetual, unrepentant sin (1 Peter 3:12). *Tehillim / Psalm 66:18* states “*If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.*“ If we live our lives in obedience to the Torah, He will hear our prayers (*John 15:7*) and if we are unforgiving, He will refuse our petitions before His altar as Yeshua stated in *Matthew 18:35*. *Matthew 5:24* states when we fail to forgive others, this results in a failed request for God’s help, as Yeshua interpreted saying, “*leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.*” Our relationships effect our prayers and receiving an answer to prayer. This may be the reason why the rabbis conclude that “*all admit a man should pray for his needs only in the benediction...*” since a man is to make right his relationship with God first in prayer and in action, before he is to make petition for his own needs.

Midrash Tehillim 102, Part 2 concludes saying, “*Hear, Lord, the voice of Judah (Devarim / Deuteronomy 33:7). For my days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burned as a hearth (Tehillim / Psalms*

102:4); that is, my bones are like a spark thrown out by the fire." Jeremiah 20:9 states "But if I say, 'I will not mention his word or speak anymore in his name,' his word is in my heart like a fire, a fire shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in; indeed, I cannot." (NIV) The idea here may be that prayer and answered prayer are dependent upon us in the sense that we are to daily seek the Lord God with a repentant heart and lifestyle. Otherwise the word of God will burn inside of us and we will not have the kind of joy and peace in Yeshua the Messiah that we should.

Midrash Tehillim 102, Part 3 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתhill) saying, "He will regard the prayer of the destitute man, and not despise their prayer (Tehillim / Psalms 102:18)." The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, "Rabbi Samuel son of Hahmani said in the name of Rabbi Judah, Should not Scripture have said, He will regard the prayer of the destitute man, and not despise his prayer, or He will regard the prayer of the destitute men, and not despise their prayer?" The rabbis in the Midrash discuss whose prayer does the Lord despise? The entire Midrash states the following:

**מדרש תהילים פרק קב סימן ג**

ג פנה אל תפלה הערער [ולא בזה את תפלי] הם. ר' שמואל בר נחמני בשם ר' יונה אמר לא היה צריך לומר אלא או אל תפלה הערער ולא בזה את תפלו, או תפלה העררים ולא בזה את תפלם, מהו תפלה הערער, זה משנה שהיה עדר ממעשים טובים, [ולא בזה את תפלי] להם, זה דוד וחזקיה, שנאמר ויתפלל חזקיהו (מ"ב מלכים ב' יט טו), אמר ר' אחא בשם ר' אלכסנדרי אשרי אדם שיש לו יתד להתלוות בו. דבר אחר פנה אל תפלה הערער. אמר ר' יצחק כלפי הדורות אמרו, שאין להם לא נבייא ולא כהן מורה צדק, ולא בית המקדש שיכפר עליהם אלא תפלה אחת נשתיירה להן שהם מתפללים בראש השנה וביום הকפורים, אל תבזה אותה מהם, שנאמר (כ"י) ולא בזה את תפלם. כתוב זאת לדור אחרון ועם נברא יהליל יה. וכי עד עכשיו עתידה אומה אחרת להבראות, שהוא אומר עם נברא, אלא אמר ר' יהודה בר סימון וזה דורו של מרדכי שנבראו כבריה חדשה. ורבנן אמרו אלו הדור רות שחיבין במעשיהם הרעים, ובאיין ועוושים תשובה ומתחפלים לפניו בראש השנה וביום הকפורים, ולפייהם מחדשים את מעשיהם, הקב"יה בורא אותם בריה חדשה, ומה להם לעשות, יש להם ליטול אתרגינה בידיהם ולולביבהן וערבי נחל והדים להלן אותן, הוא אמר עם נברא יהליל יה.

**Midrash Tehillim 102, Part 3**

3. He will regard the prayer of the destitute man, and not despise their prayer (Tehillim / Psalms 102:18). Rabbi Samuel son of Hahmani said in the name of Rabbi Judah, Should not Scripture have said, He will regard the prayer of the destitute man, and not despise his prayer, or He will regard the prayer of the destitute men, and not despise their prayer? However, the words He will regard the prayer of the destitute man refer to Manasseh who was destitute in his lack of good deeds; and the words And not despise their prayer refer to David and to Hezekiah, for it is said, And Hezekiah prayed before the Lord (2 Kings 19:15). Rabbi Akha observed in the name of Rabbi Alexander, Happy is the man who has a noble family tree to cling to. In a different interpretation of He will regard the prayer of the destitute, Rabbi Isaac said, David had in mind the generations in exile that will have neither prophet, nor priest, nor teacher of righteousness, nor Holy Temple to atone for them; that will have left to them but one prayer which they will say on New Year's Day or on the Day of Atonement. Do not despise the one prayer that they say, as is said, And not despise their prayer. This will be written for the generation to come; and a people that will be created will praise the Lord (Tehillim / Psalms 102:19). And a people will be created will praise the Lord, Is another people still to be created? Rabbi Judah son of Simon explained, The words refer to the generation of Mordechai who, as it were, created anew. The Rabbis said, however, These words refer to those generations that are guilty because of their wicked deeds, but who come and repent and pray before You on New Year's Day, and on the Day of Atonement, and thereby scour off their deeds, so that the Holy One blessed be He, creates them anew, as it were. And what are they to do then? They are required to take into their hands their citrons and their palm branches, the willows of the brook and the myrtles, and praise You. Hence, And a people that will be created will praise the Lord.

The rabbis speak in terms of the Lord hearing the prayer of the destitute. Why would the Lord hear the prayer of the destitute? Because the prayer from such a person is motivated by innocence? The rabbis say that this prayer of the destitute man "refers to Manasseh who was destitute in good deeds." The psalm

states, פָּנָה אֶל-תְּפִלָּת הַעֲרֹעַר וְלֹא-בָּזָה אֶת-תְּפִלָּתֵם : יְה 102:17 *He has regarded the prayer of the destitute And has not despised their prayer. (NASB)* Why would the Lord regard the prayer of the man or tribe that was destitute of good deeds? This seems to be the opposite of what we find elsewhere in Scripture. This contrast of opposites may be designed to cause us to think about these things, that the Lord expects us to be patient to wait upon His timing, which is the way of a righteous man, as opposed to the unrighteous who wants answers now. *Hebrews 10:36 states, “For you have need of patience, that, after you have done the will of God, you might receive the promise.”* Notice how the author of Hebrews writes “*after doing the will of God*” follows the “*Receiving of the promises.*” Note how this is a very Torah centric teaching. The prophet Habakkuk and David write the following:

### **Habakkuk 1:2**

*1:2 How long, O Lord, will I call for help, And You will not hear? I cry out to You, ‘Violence!’ Yet You do not save. (NASB)*

### **Tehillim / Psalms 37**

*37:7 Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who carries out wicked schemes. 37:8 Cease from anger and forsake wrath; Do not fret; it leads only to evildoing. (NASB)*

*37:25 I have been young and now I am old, Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken Or his descendants begging bread. 37:26 All day long he is gracious and lends, And his descendants are a blessing. 37:27 Depart from evil and do good, So you will abide forever. (NASB)*

*37:34 Wait for the Lord and keep His way, And He will exalt you to inherit the land; When the wicked are cut off, you will see it. (NASB)*

The Scriptures speak of prayer and waiting upon the Lord when seeking the desires of the heart. The Scriptures also speak of doing what is right, departing from evil, and trusting in the Lord God of Israel for his graciousness and mercy. The reason the Lord God does not answer prayer immediately may be that we are asking for the wrong reason, asking for something that is not God’s will for our lives, or asking for selfish reason. This is why James wrote what he did in *James 4:1-5*.

### **James 4:1-5**

*4:1 What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? 4:2 You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. 4:3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures. 4:4 You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. 4:5 Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: ‘He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us’? (NASB)*

He speaks of quarrels and conflicts being sourced on the inside (*lusts, murders, envious, covetousness, wrong motives, etc*) which result in asking the Lord for things with the wrong motivations because one would spend the gift of God on sinful pleasures. Notice the connection to having friendship with the world which stands against the Lord God in heaven, and to what we do in our lives, how we live. James says, *4:4 ... Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. (NASB)* The Lord God is sovereign and He knows what is best, and holds our best interests in mind for our future (*Jeremiah 29:11 ‘For I know the plans that I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope. 29:12 ‘Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen*

to you. 29:13 ‘You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. 29:14 ‘I will be found by you,’ declares the Lord, ‘and I will restore your fortunes and will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you,’ declares the Lord, ‘and I will bring you back to the place from where I sent you into exile.’ NASB). The Lord does have a plan for us and so we should be actively seeking the work the Lord has planned for us. King Solomon wrote on what will happen to the one who does not listen to the Lord according to *Mishley / Proverbs 1:24-2:9*.

***Mishley / Proverbs 1:24-2:9***

1:24 ‘Because I called and you refused, I stretched out my hand and no one paid attention; 1:25 And you neglected all my counsel And did not want my reproof; 1:26 I will also laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your dread comes, 1:27 When your dread comes like a storm And your calamity comes like a whirlwind, When distress and anguish come upon you. 1:28 ‘Then they will call on me, but I will not answer; They will seek me diligently but they will not find me, 1:29 Because they hated knowledge And did not choose the fear of the Lord. 1:30 ‘They would not accept my counsel, They spurned all my reproof. 1:31 ‘So they shall eat of the fruit of their own way And be satiated with their own devices. 1:32 ‘For the waywardness of the naive will kill them, And the complacency of fools will destroy them. 1:33 ‘But he who listens to me shall live securely And will be at ease from the dread of evil.’ 2:1 My son, if you will receive my words And treasure my commandments within you, 2:2 Make your ear attentive to wisdom, Incline your heart to understanding; 2:3 For if you cry for discernment, Lift your voice for understanding; 2:4 If you seek her as silver And search for her as for hidden treasures; 2:5 Then you will discern the fear of the Lord And discover the knowledge of God. 2:6 For the Lord gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding. 2:7 He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk in integrity, 2:8 Guarding the paths of justice, And He preserves the way of His godly ones. 2:9 Then you will discern righteousness and justice And equity and every good course. (NASB)

King Solomon speaks to everyone who does not believe in Him and gives a warning to those who do not listen to the word of the Lord. Calamity and distress will come and the Lord will not hear the prayer of the person who disregards the word of the Lord because they hated knowledge and did not choose to fear the Lord. Solomon however speaks of such a person returning from their evil ways saying that the Lord God of Israel is the giver of wisdom, knowledge, and understanding and is a shield to those who walk in integrity, and to those who seek the Lord and His ways. This is why the Midrash continues in a different interpretation saying the following.

*In a different interpretation of He will regard the prayer of the destitute, Rabbi Isaac said, David had in mind the generations in exile that will have neither prophet, nor priest, nor teacher of righteousness, nor Holy Temple to atone for them; that will have left to them but one prayer which they will say on New Year’s Day or on the Day of Atonement. Do not despise the one prayer that they say, as is said, And not despise their prayer. This will be written for the generation to come; and a people that will be created will praise the Lord (Tehillim / Psalms 102:19). And a people will be created will praise the Lord, Is another people still to be created? Rabbi Judah son of Simon explained, The words refer to the generation of Mordecai who, as it were, created anew. The Rabbis said, however, These words refer to those generations that are guilty because of their wicked deeds, but who come and repent and pray before You on New Year’s Day, and on the Day of Atonement, and thereby scour off their deeds, so that the Holy One blessed be He, creates them anew, as it were. (Midrash Tehillim 102, Part 3)*

The midrash opened with the contrast of opposites and in the second half of the Midrash speaks of the prayer

of the destitute the Lord hears, is a reference to the wicked, who repent of their evil deeds and pray before the Lord seeking His forgiveness. This is consistent with what Peter wrote in *1 Peter 3:12* which plainly says that God will hear a believer's prayer but not those of the unsaved saying, "*For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.*" A life lived with a repentant attitude is what the Lord is looking for in His people and this is why the Midrash Tehillim 102 Part 1 speaks of the Lord looking for the prayer of righteousness from the wicked. The Lord God our Father in heaven and Yeshua His Messiah are looking for those who seek repentance and to turn from evil.

Midrash Tehillim 102, Part 3 concludes saying, "*And what are they to do then? They are required to take into their hands their citrons and their palm branches, the willows of the brook and the myrtles, and praise You. Hence, And a people that will be created will praise the Lord.*" The Midrash concludes with reference to the feast of tabernacles which draws to memory of the glory of God dwelling in our midst. Note the last words speak of "*a people that will be created will praise the Lord.*" This is the whole point and purpose of the Descriptions of the Lord God being involved in the cutting away of the dead parts of our hearts, that the Lord is working in our lives to change us from the inside out. It is the Lord God who causes us to have the desire to draw near, to walk in His ways, and to seek His holiness, righteousness, justice, and truth. These are the things that are found within the details of the Salvation of God for His people as it is written according to the Apostolic Writings (NT). The Lord is looking to produce an inward change, He is looking for a people that seeks Him and seeks His will in their lives. In Parashat Vayelech, the circumcision of the heart is brought into the context of the uncircumcised heart, and the salvation of God. The uncircumcised heart is closed off to the Lord's calling, has no desire to serve the Lord, and no interest in God's Word. On the other hand, the circumcised heart is found within the covenant relationship and the promises the Lord had given us, that He will work in our lives to change us. As a holy people, as the children of God by faith in the Messiah, these are the things we need to seek from our Father in heaven. Let's Pray!

Heavenly Father,

We thank You for revealing to us Your plan that You are seeking and saving us from ourselves. You have provided such a wonderful salvation and most importantly, we praise You for working in our lives to transform us into the likeness of Your Son Yeshua the Messiah. Please have mercy upon us for we are a sinful people. We truly seek to serve You all the days of our lives. Lord help us to have the strength to stand for truth and life, to have faith in Yeshua, a devotion to Your Word, and to love our neighbor each day. We thank You Lord for Your continued faithfulness to Your promises and to us. Help us to grow in our faith, to walk in the spirit, and apply these truths to our lives. We praise Your Holy Name and give You all of the honor, and the glory, and the praise forever and ever.

In Yeshua's (Jesus') Name we pray! Amen!

Be Blessed in Yeshua, Christ our Messiah!

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הֶלְלוּיָה לְאֲדֹנֵנוּ מַוְרָנוּ וּרְבִינוּ יְשׁוּעָה מֶלֶךְ הַמָּשִׁיחַ לְעוֹלָם וְעוֹד:

Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,  
"Yeshua" King Messiah forever and ever

## Notes