

<p>ו וַיִּרְקִידֵם כְּמוֹ-עֵגֶל לְכַנּוֹן וְשָׂרִיף כְּמוֹ בֶן-רְאֵמִים: ז קוֹל-יְהוָה חֲצֹב לְהַבּוֹת אֵשׁ: ח קוֹל יְהוָה יַחֲיֵל מִדְּבַר יַחֲיֵל יְהוָה מִדְּבַר קֹדֶשׁ: ט קוֹל יְהוָה חוֹלֵל אֵילֹת וַיַּחֲשֶׁף יַעְרוֹת וּבְהִיכְלוֹ פָּלוּ אֲמֵר כְּבוֹד: י יְהוָה לְמַבּוּל יִשָּׁב וַיִּשָּׁב יְהוָה מִלְּאֵי לְעוֹלָם: יא יְהוָה עָז לְעַמּוֹ יְהוָה יְבָרֵךְ אֶת-עַמּוֹ בְּשָׁלוֹם:</p>	<p>ו ושוורינון היך עגלא לבנן וטור מסרי פריי היך בר ביר רמיא רימנין: ז קלא דיהוה מנסר שלהובין דינור: ח קלא דיהוה מרטט מדברא מרטט מימרא דיהוה מדברא חיווי די במדברא דרקם: ט קלא דיהוה מבטיין איילתא ומזליח חיוות חור- שא ובמוקדשיה ובהיכל בית מוקדשיה די עיל כולהון שמשוי אמרין איקר קדמוי: י יהוה בדר טופנא טובענא יתיב על כורסי דינא למיתפרע לאתפרעא מנהון ויתיב יהוה על כורסי רחמותא רחמין ושזיב ית נח ומלך על בנוי לעלמי עלמין: יא יהוה אוריתא לעמיה יהב יהוה יברך ית עמיה בשלם:</p>	<p>29:6 καὶ λεπτυνεῖ αὐτὰς ὡς τὸν μόσχον τὸν λίβανον καὶ ὁ ἡγαπημένος ὡς υἱὸς μονοκερώτων 29:7 φωνὴ κυρίου διακόπτοντος φλόγα πυρός 29:8 φωνὴ κυρίου συσσειόντος ἔρημον καὶ συσσειεῖ κύριος τὴν ἔρημον καθὼς 29:9 φωνὴ κυρίου καταρτιζομένου ἐλάφους καὶ ἀποκαλύψει δρυμούς καὶ ἐν τῷ ναῶ αὐτοῦ πᾶς τις λέγει δόξαν 29:10 κύριος τὸν κατακλυσμὸν κατοικεῖ καὶ καθίεται κύριος βασιλεὺς εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα 29:11 κύριος ἰσχύει τῷ λαῷ αὐτοῦ δώσει κύριος εὐλογίησιν τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν εἰρήνῃ</p>
<p>Tehillim / Psalms 29 A Psalm of David. 29:1 Ascribe to the Lord, O sons of the mighty, Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. 29:2 Ascribe to the Lord the glory due to His name; Worship the Lord in holy array. 29:3 The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; The God of glory thunders, The Lord is over many waters. 29:4 The voice of the Lord is powerful, The voice of the Lord is majestic. 29:5 The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars; Yes, the Lord breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon. 29:6 He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, And Sirion like a young wild ox. 29:7 The voice of the Lord hews out flames of fire. 29:8 The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; The Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh. 29:9 The voice of the Lord makes the deer to calve And strips the forests bare; And in His temple everything says, ‘Glory!’ 29:10 The Lord sat as King at the flood; Yes, the Lord sits as King forever. 29:11 The Lord will give strength to His people; The Lord will bless His people with peace. (NASB)</p>	<p>Toviyah / Psalms Chapter 29 29:1 A psalm of David. Give praise in the presence of the Lord, O bands of angels; give glory and might in the Lord’s presence. 29:2 Give the glory of his name in the presence of the Lord; bow down before the Lord in the splendor of holiness. 29:3 The voice of the Lord is heard above the waters; in his glorious might the Lord called out over many waters. 29:4 The voice of the Lord is heard in strength; the voice of the Lord is heard in splendor. 29:5 The voice of the Lord shatters cedars; the word of the Lord has shattered the cedars of Lebanon. 29:6 And he made them jump like a calf – Lebanon, and the Mount of Noisome Fruit, like the young of oxen. 29:7 The voice of the Lord splits flames of fire. 29:8 The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; the word of the Lord shakes the wilderness of Rekem. 29:9 The voice of the Lord impregnates the hinds, and makes the beasts of the forest give birth; and in his sanctuary above, all his servants say, “Glory,” in his presence. 29:10 In the generation of the Flood, the Lord sat on his throne of judgment to take vengeance on them; and the Lord sat on the throne of mercy and saved Noah; and he reigns over his children forever and ever. 29: 11 The Lord gave the Torah to his people; the Lord will bless his people in peace. (EMC)</p>	<p>Psalmoi / Psalms 29 A Psalm of David on the occasion of the solemn assembly of the Tabernacle. 29:1 Bring to the Lord, ye sons of God, bring to the Lord young rams; bring to the Lord glory and honour. 29:2 Bring to the Lord glory, due to his name; worship the lord in his holy court. 29:3 The voice of the Lord is upon the waters: the God of glory has thundered: the Lord is upon many waters. 29:4 The voice of the Lord is mighty; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty. 29:5 There is the voice of the Lord who breaks the cedars; the Lord will break the cedars of Libanus. 29:6 And he will beat them small, even Libanus itself, like a calf; and the beloved one is as a young unicorn. 29:7 There is a voice of the Lord who divides a flame of fire. 29:8 A voice of the Lord who shakes the wilderness; the Lord will shake the wilderness of Cades. 29:9 The voice of the Lord strengthens the hinds, and will uncover the thickets: and in his temple every one speaks of his glory. 29:10 The Lord will dwell on the waterflood: and the Lord will sit a king for ever. 29:11 The Lord will give strength to his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace. (LXX)</p>

א מְזִמּוֹר לְיְהוָה הָבוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד וְעֹז: *Tehillim / Psalms 29:1-11* opens with David saying *הָבוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד וְעֹז*: *A Psalm of David. 29:1 Ascribe to the Lord, O sons of the mighty, Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. (NASB)* It is interesting that verses 1 and 2 both begin saying “Ascribe to the Lord” (הָבוּ לַיהוָה) and that *Brown Driver and Briggs Lexicon* does not list the definition for the work הָבוּ. *Sefer Milim, a Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Bavli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature by Marcus Jastrow* on the other hand does list the word הָבוּ and states the meaning of this word is “to give.” David is saying

“give to the Lord” both glory and strength. Marcus Jastro references *Mishley / Proverbs 30:15* which says: *הַיֵּשׁוּבִים לַאֲמֹרֵי הוֹן: 30:15 The leech has two daughters, ‘Give,’ ‘Give.’ There are three things that will not be satisfied, Four that will not say, ‘Enough’:(NASB)* In *Mishley / Proverbs 30:15* this word is translated as “give” supporting Marcus Jastro’s definition. Searching the Tanach for the word הָבוּ (Hovu), this word as it is spelled occurs three times in the torah.

הָבוּ in the Torah

Bereshit / Genesis 47:16 וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף הָבוּ מִקְנֵיכֶם וְאֶתְנֶנָּה לָכֶם בְּמִקְנֵיכֶם אִם-אָפֶס כֶּסֶף: 47:16 *Then Joseph said, ‘Give up your livestock, and I will give you food for your livestock, since your money is gone.’ (NASB)*

Devarim / Deuteronomy 1:13 יֵג הָבוּ לָכֶם אֲנָשִׁים חֲכָמִים וְנִבְנִים וַיִּדְעִים לְשִׁבְטֵיכֶם וְאֲשִׁימָם 1:13 *‘Choose wise and discerning and experienced men from your tribes, and I will appoint them as your heads.’ (NASB)*

Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:3 כִּי יֵשׁ יְהוָה אֶקְרָא הָבוּ גִדְל לְאֱלֹהֵינוּ: 32:3 *‘For I proclaim the name of the Lord; Ascribe greatness to our God! (NASB)*

It is interesting in the opening verses to Parashat Haazinu (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:1-32:52*) we find Moshe declaring the Glory of God saying: *כִּי יֵשׁ יְהוָה אֶקְרָא הָבוּ גִדְל לְאֱלֹהֵינוּ: 32:3 ‘For I proclaim the name of the Lord; Ascribe greatness to our God! (NASB)* Studying these verses from Parashat Haazinu, it is interesting to compare these verses from the Aramaic Targums (Onkelos and Pseudo Jonathan). Let’s compare the text from three translations of the first four verse from Parashat Haazinu.

<p>ספר דברים פרק לב</p> <p>א הָאֲזִינוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֲדַבְרָה וְתִשְׁמַע הָאָרֶץ אֶמְרֵי-פִי: ב יַעֲרֹף כַּמָּטָר לְקֹחֵי תִזְל כַּטֵּל אֶמְרֵי תִתִּי כַּשְּׁעִירִים עָלַי-דְּשָׁא וְכַרְבִּיבִים עָלַי-עֹשֵׁב: ג כִּי יֵשׁ יְהוָה אֶקְרָא הָבוּ גִדְל לְאֱלֹהֵינוּ: ד הַצּוֹר תְּמִים פְּעֻלוֹ כִּי כָל-דַּרְכָּיו מִשְׁפָּט אֵל אָמוֹ-נָה וְאֵין עוֹל צְדִיק וְיִשָּׁר הוּא:</p>	<p>Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:1-4</p> <p>32:1 ‘Give ear, O heavens, and let me speak; And let the earth hear the words of my mouth. 32:2 ‘Let my teaching drop as the rain, My speech distill as the dew, As the drop-lets on the fresh grass And as the showers on the herb. 32:3 ‘For I proclaim the name of the Lord; Ascribe greatness to our God! 32:4 ‘The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He.</p>
<p>תרגום אונקלוס ספר דברים פרק לב</p> <p>א אֲצִיִּתּוּ שָׁמַיָא וְאֶמְלִל וְתִשְׁמַע אֶרְעָא אֶמְרֵי פִמִּי: ב בִּבְסָם כַּמָּטָרָא אֶלְפָנֵי תִקְבֵּל כַּטֵּלָא מִי מְרֵי כְרוּחֵי מְטָרָא דְנִשְׁבִּין עַל-דְּתָאָה וְכַרְסִיסֵי מְלֻקוּשָׁא דִי-עַל-עֹשֵׁבָא: ג אֲרֵי בְשָׁמָא דִּי אֲנָא מְצַלִּי הָבוּ רְבוּתָא קְדָם אֶלְהֵנָא: ד תְּקִיפָא דְשֵׁ-לְמִין עוֹבְדוּהֵי אֲרֵי כָל-אַרְחֻתֵיהּ דִּינָא אֶלְהָא מְהִימְנָא דְמוֹ-קְדָמוּהֵי עוֹלָה לָא נָפְקֵי דְמוֹ-קְדָם-זְכִּי וְקִשִּׁיט הוּא:</p>	<p>Targum Onkelos, Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:1-4</p> <p>LISTEN, ye heavens, and I will speak ; give ear, O earth, to the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall be soft as rain; let it be received as the dew, and my word be as the breath of the rain that breathes upon the grass, and as the showers of the latter rain upon the herbage. For in the Name of the Lord do I invoke: Ascribe ye greatness unto our God; the Mighty One whose works are perfect; for all His ways are justice; a faithful God from whom no iniquity proceedeth, just and true is He.</p>

Targum Onkelos is very similar to the Masoretic text saying that we are to Ascribe greatness to the Lord our God and the reason is that His works are perfect, His ways are justice and truth. The Targum Pseudo Jona-

than on the other hand contains a significantly expanded text on the first four verses from Parashat Haazinu.

<p>תרגום פסאודו יונתן ספר דברים פרק לב א והוה די מטה קיציה דמשה נביא למתכנשא מיגו עלמא אמר בליביה ליתנא מסהיד בעמא הדין סהדין דטעמין מיתותא בעלמא הדין האנא מסהיד בהון סה- דין דלא טעמין מיתותא בעלמא הדין ברם סופיהון לאתחדתא לעלמא דאתי ישעיה נביא כד הוה מתנ- בי בכנישתהון דישראל יהב שמיעא לשמיא וצייתא לארעא מן בגלל דהוה קריב לארעא ורחיק מן שמיא ברם משה נביא כד הוה מתנבי בכנישתהון דישראל יהב שמיעא לארעא וצייתא לשמיא מן בגלל דהוה קריב לשמיא ורחיק מן ארעא דהכין כתיב אציתו שמיא ואימליל ותישמע ארעא ממלל פמי ב ינקוף על מרודיא היך מיטרא סחפא אולפני ותתקבל ברעוא על מקבלי אולפנא היך טלא ממללי דילי כרביעות רוחי מיטרא דמנתבין על דיתאין בירח מרחשוון וכ- רסיסין לקושין דמרווין צימחוני ארעא בירחא דניסן ג ווי להון לרשיעייא דמדכרין שמא קדישא בגידו- פין ארום משה דהוה רבהון דישראל לא הוה איפשר ליה למידכר ית שמא קדישא עד דהוה מחניך פומיה בריש שירתא בתמניין וחמשין אתין דהינן עשרין וחד מילין ומן ברת כדין אמר ארום בשמא דיי אנא מצלי ואתון עמא בית ישראל הבו איקר ורבותא קדם אלקנא ד אמר משה נביא כד סליקית לטוורא דסיני חמית רבון כל עלמא ייי מרבע יומא לארבעא חולקין תלת שעין עסיק באורייתא ותלת עסיק בדינא ותלת מברזג בין גבר לאיתא וגזר למרום ומאיך ותלת מפ- רנס כל ברייתא דהכין כתיב תקיף דשלמין עובדוי ארום כל אורחתוי דינא אלקא מהימנא דמן קדמוי עוולא לא נפיק דזכיי וקשיט הוא</p>	<p><i>And when the last end of Moshe the prophet was at hand, that he should be gathered from among the world, he said in his heart: I will not attest against this people with witnesses that taste of death in this world, behold, I attest against them with witnesses which do not taste of death in this world, and whose destination is to be renewed in the world to come. Isaiah the prophet, when he prophesied in the congregation of Israel, attributed hearing to the heavens, and attentiveness to the earth; because (in his case) earth was nearest and heaven more remote: but Moshe the prophet, when he now prophesied in the congregation of Israel, attributed hearing to the earth, and attentiveness to the heavens; because (in his case) heaven was nearest and earth more remote; for so it is written, Attend, ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall smite the rebellious like heavy rain; but shall be enjoyed with pleasantness by those who receive instruction, as the dew: my words shall be like the down-falling rain of the wind that breathes upon the grass in the month of Marchesvan, and as the droppings of the latter rain which water the springing herbage of the earth in Nisan. Woe to the wicked who make memorial of the Holy Name with blasphemies. Wherefore Moshe, who was the Doctor of Israel, would not permit himself to pronounce the Holy Name until he had dedicated his mouth at the beginning of his hymn with eighty and five letters, making twenty and one words, and afterwards be spake: In the Name of the Lord I invoke you, O house of Israel, to ascribe glory and greatness before our God. Moshe the prophet said: When I ascended the mountain of Sinai, I beheld the Lord of all the worlds, the Lord, dividing the day into four portions; three hours employed in the law, three with judgment, three in making marriage bonds between man and woman, and appointing to elevate or to abase, arid three hours in the care of every created thing: for so it is written: The Mighty One whose works are perfect, for all His ways are judgment, a faithful God before whom no iniquity comes forth, pure and upright is He.</i></p>
---	--

Notice how the rabbis go on to provide a rich description (interpretation) in Targum Pseudo Jonathan on the first four verses from Parashat Haazinu, the rabbis describe the reason why Moshe called upon “Heaven and Earth” to listen. They say that Moshe searched for a witness against these people who did not taste death in this world and is destined to be renewed in the world to come. Heaven and earth would become an everlasting witness against the wicked. They also say that “hearing” is attributed to the earth and “attentiveness” is attributed to the heavens. Moshe says that his words will strike at the heart of the wicked whereas the righteous will delight in his words. The rabbis also say that Moshe dedicated (sanctified) his mouth before pronouncing the Holy Name of God. Following these things, Moshe calls upon the people to “ascribe glory and greatness before our God.” What does it mean to “ascribe” or “to give” to the Lord glory and strength? Are not greatness and glory already a part of who God is? How do we ascribe glory and strength to the Lord God Almighty who is glorious and strong? The Aramaic Translation of the Psalms (*Targum Pseudo Jonathan*) states יהוה לבדו קדם יהוה תושבחתא כתי מלאכיא בני אלים הבון קדם יהוה איקר

upon many waters. 29:4 *The voice of the Lord is mighty; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty. (LXX)* The example of strength is that the voice of the Lord is upon the waters and that the glory of God thunders over many waters. Is this a reference to the flood account in Parashat Noach (*Bereshit / Genesis 6:9-11:32*)? Or, is this a reference to the roar of the oceans or of a waterfall? We also know that in Parashat Bereshit, in the beginning in *Bereshit / Genesis 1:1-3*, in order to create the universe, “*the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light*” Was David thinking of the power and might (strength) of God in His creation of the Heaven’s and the Earth? This follows through with the idea that David was thinking upon Parashat Haazinu (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:3*). In Parashat Bereshit, the Spirit of God hovered over the waters and then the voice of God spoke the Word and said “*let there be light and there was light.*” David’s words of the “*voice of the Lord is upon the waters*” is very indicative that David was thinking of both Parashat Haazinu and Bereshit. The Ruach (Spirit) of God we know may also be translated as “*wind,*” it moves, we cannot see it but we can feel it. The Spirit of God is what represents God’s power. The mind and disposition of man demonstrates the power by which He (the Lord) puts His thoughts into operation in the hearts of men. “*23:7 For as he thinks within himself, so he is. He says to you, ‘Eat and drink!’ But his heart is not with you.*” (*Mishley / Proverbs 23:7*, הוּא כִּן-הוּא, אֲנִי כִּי כִּי-מִו-שָׁעַר בְּנַפְשׁוֹ כִּי-הוּא, 29:2 אֲשִׁירָה לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ וְשִׁתְּחַוּ לַיהוָה בְּהַדְרַת-קִדְשׁוֹ); and similarly the Lord God He is spirit (*John 4:24 ‘God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.’ NASB*). In the Tanach we find references to “*the Spirit of God*” or “*the Spirit of the Lord.*” Passages found in *Acts 2*, records the pouring out of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles on the day of Shavuot (Pentecost). Peter explained that this was a fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel, in which it is described as the pouring out of “*my (God’s) Spirit*” (*Acts 2:17*). The gospel of *Luke 4:1* records that Yeshua “*being full of the Holy spirit*” returned from Jordan; later in the same chapter Yeshua speaks of this also being a fulfillment of *Isaiah 61* (“*The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me...*”). Then in the Apostolic writings the Holy Spirit of God is paralleled with the power of God in *Luke 1:35* *The angel answered and said to her, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God. (NASB)*, Paul said in *Romans 15:13-19*, *15:13 Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. (NASB)*, and *15:19 in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit; so that from Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ. (NASB)* He also said to the Thessalonians in *1 Thessalonians 1:5* *for our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. (NASB)* The promise of the Holy Spirit to the disciples was spoken of as their being *Luke 24:49* “*... clothed with power from on high.*” Yeshua is described as being *Acts 10:38* “*... anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power; and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.*” (*NASB*) In addition to this, the Apostle Paul said that his preaching was with undeniable displays of God’s power (*1 Corinthians 2:4*) in the demonstration of the Spirit (Ruach) of God. *Tehillim / Psalms 29:2*, which states *הָבוּ לַיהוָה בְּהַדְרַת-קִדְשׁוֹ 29:2 אֲשִׁירָה לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ וְשִׁתְּחַוּ לַיהוָה בְּהַדְרַת-קִדְשׁוֹ*; all of these things are consistent with David’s words *קוֹל יְהוָה עַל-הַמַּיִם אֶל-הַכְּבוֹד 29:3 קוֹל יְהוָה עַל-הַמַּיִם אֶל-הַכְּבוֹד 29:3 קוֹל יְהוָה עַל-הַמַּיִם אֶל-הַכְּבוֹד 29:3 קוֹל יְהוָה עַל-הַמַּיִם אֶל-הַכְּבוֹד*; *29:3 The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; The God of glory thunders, The Lord is over many waters. 29:4 The voice of the Lord is powerful, The voice of the Lord is majestic. (NASB)* It is indeed by the power of the Holy Spirit that we are given the power to overcome sin.

David continues saying *29:5 קוֹל יְהוָה שֹׁבֵר אֲרָזִים וַיִּשְׁבֵּר יְהוָה אֶת-אֲרָזֵי הַלְּבָנוֹן 29:5 קוֹל יְהוָה שֹׁבֵר אֲרָזִים וַיִּשְׁבֵּר יְהוָה אֶת-אֲרָזֵי הַלְּבָנוֹן*; *29:5 The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars; Yes, the Lord breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon. (NASB)* David drew a parallel to the glory and strength of the Lord in His creation, why does he then say that the voice of the Lord is able to break in pieces the cedars of Lebanon? What is so significant about the cedars of Lebanon? A survey of the bible regarding the cedars of Lebanon produces the following results.

Cedars of Lebanon mentioned in the Bible

- *“Open thy doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour thy cedars. Howl, fir tree; for the cedar is fallen; because the mighty are spoiled: howl, O ye oaks of Bashan; for the forest of the vintage is come down.” (Zechariah 11:1-2)*
- *“He moves his tail like a cedar; The sinews of his thighs are tightly knit.” (Job 40:17)*
- *“The priest shall take cedar wood and hyssop and scarlet material and cast it into the midst of the burning heifer.” (Bamidbar / Numbers 19:6)*
- *“The righteous man will flourish like the palm tree, He will grow like a cedar in Lebanon.” (Tehillim / Psalm 92:12)*
- *“I will put the cedar in the wilderness, The acacia and the myrtle and the olive tree; I will place the juniper in the desert Together with the box tree and the cypress.” (Isaiah 41: 19)*
- *“Behold, Assyria was a cedar in Lebanon With beautiful branches and forest shade, And very high, And its top was among the clouds.” (Ezekiel 31:3)*
- *“Yet it was I who destroyed the Amorite before them, Though his height was like the height of cedars And he was strong as the oaks; I even destroyed his fruit above and his root below.” (Amos 2:9)*
- *“For the Lord of hosts will have a day of reckoning Against everyone who is proud and lofty And against everyone who is lifted up, That he may be abased. And it will be against all the cedars of Lebanon that are lofty and lifted up, Against all the oaks of Bashan, Against all the lofty mountains, Against all the hills that are lifted up,” (Isaiah 2:12-14)*
- *“The king made silver as common as stones in Jerusalem, and he made cedars as plentiful as sycamore trees that are in the lowland.” (1 Kings 10:27)*

The cedars of Lebanon are commonly referred to in Scripture. Cedar wood is an aromatic, durable wood and was highly desirable for building in Israel. David used it in building his palace (2 Samuel 5:11 and 1 Chronicles 17:1), and Solomon used it in the construction of the temple and a palace for himself (2 Chronicles 2:3-8). Solomon was said to have made the cedar as plentiful in Jerusalem as the sycamore-fig trees in the Shephelah (2 Chronicles 1:15). In addition to this, the second temple was also constructed from cedars (Ezra 3:7). According to the Scriptures, the cedars of Lebanon were a prized wood, it was special enough for the construction of the holy Temple of God. The Palermo Stone, a large fragment of a pillar known as the Royal Annals of the Old Kingdom of Ancient Egypt, contains records of the kings of Egypt from the first dynasty through the fifth dynasty. The Palermo Stone indicates that cedar was imported to Egypt in the reign of the 4th dynasty during king Sneferu's reign, (2613-2589 BCE). One of the primary uses of cedar was for boat construction (*el-Awady, T. 2009. Sahure – the pyramid causeway: History and decoration program in the Old Kingdom. Czech Institute of Egyptology; Abusir 16. Prague.*). The Egyptian tale of Wen-Amun, from the 11th century BCE, recounts the travels of an Egyptian official to Byblos to negotiate for cedar wood. One of the earliest references to cedar in Mesopotamia comes from the reign of Sargon of Akkad (2334-2279 BCE). It is interesting to note the context of Solomon acquiring the cedars of Lebanon in 1 Kings 10.

1 Kings 10:26-28

10:26 Now Solomon gathered chariots and horsemen; and he had 1, 400 chariots and 12, 000 horsemen, and he stationed them in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem.

10:27 The king made silver as common as stones in Jerusalem, and he made cedars as plentiful as sycamore trees that are in the lowland. 10:28 Also Solomon's import of horses was from Egypt and Kue, and the king's merchants procured them from Kue for a price. (NASB)

Here Solomon was acquiring chariots, horsemen, cities, silver, cedars, and he was importing horses from Egypt, etc. What is the significance of these things? Chariots and boats may be used for war. These are the strength of nations. The short survey of the Scriptures on “cedars” suggest that cedars are a reference to the power and strength of Behemoth (*Job 40 :15-17*) and to the pride of Assyria and Lebanon. David words *הַקּוֹל יְהוָה שִׁבַּר אֲרָזִים וַיִּשְׁבַּר יְהוָה אֶת-אֲרָזֵי הַלְּבָנוֹן*: *29:5 The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars; Yes, the Lord breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon. (NASB)* suggests that it is the Lord who tears down strongholds and removes the pride and strength of the nations. “The cedars of Lebanon” appear to take on a symbolism of the nations and their strength and pride.

David continues saying *וַיִּרְקְדוּם כְּמוֹ-עֵגֶל לְבָנוֹן וּשְׂרִיִן כְּמוֹ בֶן-רְאֵמִים ז קוֹל-יְהוָה הִצִּיב לְהַבּוֹת אֵשׁ*: *29:6 He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, And Sirion like a young wild ox. 29:7 The voice of the Lord hews out flames of fire. 29:8 The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; The Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh. (NASB)* What is the importance of the Lord causing Lebanon to skip like a calf and Sirion like a wild ox?

Sirion is another name for Mount Hermon. Note also that Lebanon is north of Israel. “Mount Hermon” is a mountain cluster in the Eastern Lebanon mountain range. Its summit straddles the border between Syria and Lebanon (9,232 ft above sea level) and is the highest point in Syria. The southern slopes of Mount Hermon extend to the Israeli portion of the Golan Heights. David’s comment making Lebanon skip like calves and Sirion like a wild ox, he is obviously speaking of the mountains of Lebanon in the context of the Psalm. The power of the Word of God, the voice of the Lord is capable of causing the mountains to jump around. Could he be referring to earthquakes or volcanoes? These comments regarding the mountains of Lebanon speak of the strength of God and seem to parallel Parashat Haazinu and Bereshit as discussed earlier. The Lord has the power to deliver us and even to cast down mountains. David also says that “*The voice of the Lord hews out flames of fire*” (*ז קוֹל-יְהוָה הִצִּיב לְהַבּוֹת אֵשׁ*).



There are many references throughout the Scriptures that speak of the Lord and the use of fire and/or flame. Parashat Chukat (*Bamidbar / Numbers 19:1-22:1*) speaks of Israel’s destruction of Heshbon during their wilderness journey.

Bamidbar / Numbers 21:26-31

21:26 For Heshbon was the city of Sihon, king of the Amorites, who had fought against the former king of Moab and had taken all his land out of his hand, as far as the Arnon. 21:27 Therefore those who use proverbs say, ‘Come to Heshbon! Let it be built! So let the city of Sihon be established. 21:28 ‘For a fire went forth from Heshbon, A flame from the town of Sihon; It devoured Ar of Moab, The dominant heights of the Arnon. 21:29 ‘Woe to you, O Moab! You are ruined, O people of Chemosh! He has given his sons as fugitives, And his

daughters into captivity, To an Amorite king, Sihon. 21:30 'But we have cast them down, Heshbon is ruined as far as Dibon, Then we have laid waste even to Nophah, Which reaches to Medeba.' 21:31 Thus Israel lived in the land of the Amorites. (NASB)

כו כי חֲשַׁבּוֹן עִיר סִיחֹן מִלֶּדֶת הָאֱמֹרִי הוּא וְהוּא נִלְחַם בְּמִלְחָה מוֹאָב הִרְאִישׁוֹן וַיִּקַּח אֶת-כָּל-אֲרָצוֹ מִיַּד עַד-אֲרֹנָן: כז עַל-כֵּן יֹאמְרוּ הַמַּשְׁלִים בְּאוֹ חֲשַׁבּוֹן תִּבְּנֶה וְתִכּוֹנֵן עִיר סִיחֹן: כח כִּי-אֵשׁ יִצְאָה מִחַד-שָׁבוֹן לְהִבָּה מִקְרִית סִיחֹן אֶכְלָה עַר מוֹאָב בְּעֵלֵי בְמוֹת אֲרֹנָן: כט אוֹי-לָךְ מוֹאָב אֲבֹדָה עִם-כְּמוֹשׁ נָתַן בְּנֵיו פְּלִיטָם וּבְנֹתָיו בְּשֹׁבֵית לְמִלְחָה אֱמֹרִי סִיחֹן: ל וַיִּרְם אֶבֶד חֲשַׁבּוֹן עַד-דִּיבֹן וַנָּשִׂים עַד-נַפְחָה אֲשֶׁר עַד-מִיַּדְכָּא: לא וַיֵּשֶׁב יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאֶרֶץ הָאֱמֹרִי:

The Scriptures say that a fire went forth from Heshbon and a flame from the town of Sihon which devoured Ar of Moab the heights of the Arnon. The Arnon is the southern boundary of the territory of Israel beyond Jordan, that separates Israel from the land of Moab (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 3:8, 3:16*). This river (*referred to twenty-four times in the Bible*) rises in the mountains of Gilead, and falls into the Dead Sea. It is interesting how Parashat Chukat speaks of the destruction of these high places which are known as strongholds, the places of power of the nations and of their gods. There also may be a spiritual connection with regard to the high places being the places of worship to the gods of the nations. Parashat Shemot (*Shemot / Exodus 1:1-6:1*) speaks of the Lord appearing in a blazing flame in *Shemot / Exodus 3:2* וַיֵּרָא מִלְּאֲךָ יְהוָה אֵלָיו 3:2 *The angel of the Lord appeared to him in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, yet the bush was not consumed. (NASB)* The Lord can divide the flame, David said that the voice of the Lord hews out flames of fire literally saying הִצַּבּ the Lord “carves out” flames of fire. The Lord uses these things for his purposes to burn away the dross or the chaff to make us into the image that He chooses. Not only does the voice of the Lord carve out flames of fire, David says 29:8 *The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; The Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh. (NASB)* (ח קוֹל יְהוָה יַחֲלִיל מִדְּבַר יַחֲלִיל יְהוָה מִדְּבַר קִדְשׁ:) “Kadesh” (קִדְשׁ) that David is speaking of is not “Kadesh-barnea” (*Joshua 15:23*) the place the children of Israel went to while in the wilderness; it is “Kadesh-Naphtali” (*Judges 4:6*) which is located near Lebanon, indicated by the mountains of Lebanon that are spoken of in *Tehillim / Psalms 29:6*. The word קִדְשׁ “Kadesh” comes from the root word Kadosh meaning sanctified, holy, separate, to be devoted or dedicated. The wilderness and Kadesh are placed in parallel in this verse. From the name “holy” (קִדְשׁ “Kadesh”) this place may have been an ancient sanctuary. This is indicated by the decision for the city to be one of the cities of refuge, a place of peace and protection (*Joshua 20:1-9*). Kedesh in Galilee in Mount Naphtal was given to the children of Naphtali and assigned to the Gershonite Levites. (*Joshua 21:32*). It was the home of Barak, and here his host assembled. When the Assyrians invaded the land under Tiglath-pileser, it was among the first cities to be captured, and its inhabitants were deported (*2 Kings 15:29*). Near Kedesh was also fought the great battle between Jonathan the Maccabee and Demetrius (*1 Maccabees 11:63*).

According to David 29:9 *The voice of the Lord makes the deer to calve And strips the forests bare; And in His temple everything says, 'Glory!' (NASB)* It is interesting that the voice of the Lord also causes the deer to calve and strips the forest bare. It seems that the voice of the Lord does everything, from the gentle care of helping a deer to calve to destroying the forests (*the pride of the nations*), like that of Lebanon which represented power, covetousness, and pride. In addition to that, the voice of the Lord says “Glory!” in His Temple. What is it about the voice of the Lord that goes forth into the world and helps the deer to calve and strips forest bare? In Parashat Vayetze (*Bereshit / Genesis 28:10-32:2*) Jacob made a vow in *Bereshit / Genesis 28:20-21* saying “If God will be with me and watch over me on this journey I am taking and will give me food to eat and cloths to wear so that I return safely to my father’s house, then the Lord will be my God;” (כ וַיִּדַּר יַעֲקֹב נֶדֶר לְאֹמֶר) אִם-יְהִי־יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים עִמָּדִי וְשָׁמְרָנִי בְּדַרְדָּרִי הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי הוֹלֵךְ וַנִּתֵּן-לִי לֶחֶם לֶאֱכֹל וּבִגְדִי לְלַבֵּשׁ: כא וּשְׁבֹתִי בְּשָׁלוֹם

אֶל-בֵּית אָבִי וְהָיָה יְהוָה לִי לֵאלֹהִים: whereas, the Targum Onkelos we read “*If the Word of the Lord will be with me ... then the Word of the Lord will be my God*” (כּ וְקַיִים יַעֲקֹב קָיָם לְמִמְרָא אִם יְהִי מִמְרָא דִּי בְּסַעְדִּי) וְיִטְרִינְנִי בְּאַרְחָא הָדָא דִּי אָנָּא אֶזְיִל וְיִתֵּן לִי לְחַמָּא לְמִיכַל וְכִסּוּ לְמַלְבָּשׁ: כּא וְאִיתּוּב בְּשָׁלֵם לְבֵית אָבָּא וְיְהִי מִמְרָא דִּי (לִי לֵאלֹהֵא:). According to the Aramaic translation, the Word of the Lord will be Jacob’s God. The rabbinic interpretation (translation) of the nature of the Word as equal to the Lord God Almighty is fascinating. Is this what David was thinking when he made His comments regarding the voice of the Lord? The voice of the Lord is powerful, majestic, breaks the cedars of Lebanon, makes the mountains skip like calves, carves out flames of fire, shakes the wilderness and Kadesh, helps to calve the deer, strips forests bare, and says “*Glory!*” in His Temple. Studying the Torah from the Targum Onkelos, Jacob believes the Lord’s Memra (מִמְרָה, Word) will be his God, the Lord God says I will save Israel through My Memra (מִמְרָה, Word), Abraham was justified through the Memra (מִמְרָה, Word) of God, the Memra (מִמְרָה, Word) gave Israel the Torah, Moshe prayed to the Memra (מִמְרָה, Word), the Memra (מִמְרָה, Word) spoke from the burning bush, and the Memra (מִמְרָה, Word) of the Lord created the World, it is no far stretch to understand how David sees the voice of God in light of the rabbinic understanding on the Word of the Lord according to the Aramaic translations. The Word of the Lord, the voice of God is not simply a element of speech or writing. According to early traditions (i.e. Targum Neofiti) man was created in the image of the Memra (מִמְרָה, Word) of the Lord (*Bereshit / Genesis 1:27*, וּבְרָא מִמְרָה דִּי יֵת בַּר נִשְׂא בְדַמּוּתֵיהּ בְּדַמּוּ מִן קִדְמָא יֵי בְרָה יֵתִיהּ). The Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, a Targum printed in the Rabbinic bibles on *Devarim / Deuteronomy 4:7* in the Masoretic Text reads “*What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the Lord our God is near us whenever we pray to him?*” Whereas, the Aramaic Targum states “*The Memra of Lord God sits upon His throne high and lifted up ...*” The concept of “*the Word*” obtained from the Aramaic translations of the Torah reveals profound truths that open up our understanding on David’s words in *Tehillim / Psalms 29*.

י יְהוָה לְמַבּוּל יִשָּׁב וְיִשָּׁב יְהוָה מְלֹךְ לְעוֹלָם: יֵא יְהוָה עֹז לְעַמּוֹ יִתֵּן יְהוָה | 29:10 *The Lord sat as King at the flood; Yes, the Lord sits as King forever.* 29:11 *The Lord will give strength to His people; The Lord will bless His people with peace.* (NASB) The Lord sits as King over all, He brought the flood to destroy the wicked and it is only by His mercy and grace that we do not see destruction today. According to David, the Lord gives strength to His people and blesses his people with peace. How does He give strength to His people? The Apostle John told us that it was the divine Word of God that had come down to dwell among us. It is through the Word that we can know God personally. In the Apostolic Writings, *Matthew 24:35, Mark 8:38, 13:31, Luke 6:47, 9:26, 21:33, 24:44, John 5:47, 14:24, and 15:7*, Yeshua says “*my words*” in these verses. Yeshua, He is the living Word of God, He is the creative work of God, the agent by which God created the world and even more importantly the agent through whom we are saved and redeemed from the curse of sin. David says that the Lord sits as King forever. The Apostolic Writings explain to us that Yeshua is the one through whom the world was created and in whom all things consist (*Colossians 1:12-29*). Examining the Aramaic Targums, the theology of the Memra (מִמְרָה, Word) of God who created all things and the voice of God that is powerful, majestic, breaks the cedars of Lebanon, makes the mountains skip like calves, carves out flames of fire, shakes the wilderness and Kadesh, helps to calve the deer, strips forests bare, and says “*Glory!*” in His Temple. Can you see the Power that is in the Name of Yeshua the living Word of God? Studying *Tehillim / Psalms 29* reveals the power in the Name. The Hebrew and Aramaic texts provide evidence that by God’s Word, He truly has spoken to us in these last days by His Son, Yeshua the Messiah. The Lord has provided atonement in Yeshua according to His Word. The significance of what we have studied today is that there is power in the name to receive the forgiveness of sins. In order to be forgiven of our sins, we must believe in the one God had sent to save us from our sins, at the name of Yeshua every knee will bow (powerful, majestic), nobody will be able to stand before Him in their pride or by their own power (He breaks the cedars of Lebanon, makes the mountains skip like calves, carves out flames of fire, shakes the wilderness and Kadesh, helps to calve the deer, strips

forests bare). So David says: *מְזִמּוֹר לְדָוִד הָבּוֹ לַיהוָה בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים הָבּוֹ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד וְעֹז: א A Psalm of David. 29:1 Ascribe to the Lord, O sons of the mighty, Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. (NASB), Let's give glory and honor and praise to the Lord God Almighty, the Lord has given strength to His people in His Son, the living Word! Halelluia!*

Rabbinic Commentary

The Rabbinic Commentary (Midrash) on *Tehillim / Psalms 29* has 2 parts. Reading through the Midrash we will be looking at Parts 1 and 2. Let's begin by outlining *Midrash Tehillim Chapter 29, Parts 1 and 2*.

Part 1

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the *דיבור המתחיל* (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*A Psalm of David. Lay it upon the Lord, O you bene elim (Tehillim / Psalms 29:1).*”
- The *פתיחתא* (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*This verse is to be considered in the light of what Scripture says elsewhere, Therefore will I save My flock, and they will no more be a prey (Ezekiel 34:22).*”
- The *משל* (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the *פתיחתא* (Petihta), the rabbis discuss David's words concerning the “sons of the Almighty” (benei elim) and the salvation of the people from their enemies.
- The *נמשל* (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the *משל* (mashal) goes on to expand upon the salvation of the people, the Lord does not hold back His salvation, the rabbis provide examples from Isaiah and Abraham regarding those who are blind and do not see and the only son of Abraham (Isaac) who the Lord is asking to be sacrificed. They draw a parallel to the covenant that the Lord promised to Isaac, the son that Abraham loved, the son of faith.
- The Concluding phrase says “*Another reading of bene elim is O you children of those who were ready to be sacrificed like rams (elim). Abraham said, I am ready to sacrifice, and Isaac replied, And I am ready to be sacrificed.*”

Part 2

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the *דיבור המתחיל* (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*Ascribe unto the Lord (YHVH) the glory due unto His name (Tehillim / Psalms 29:2) that is, whenever I breathe His ineffable Name (YHVH), you are to ascribe unto the Lord the glory due unto his name.*”
- The *פתיחתא* (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*As Moshe said, When I proclaim the name of the Lord, ascribe greatness unto our God (Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:3), that is, Offer prayers to God.*”
- The *משל* (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the *פתיחתא* (Petihta), the rabbis discuss David's words concerning giving glory to the Name of the Lord in prayer.
- The *נמשל* (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the *משל* (mashal) goes on to expand upon bringing glory to the Lord in prayer. They ascribe glory to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, He is the God who awakens the dead. The rabbis then draw a parallel to the eighteen occurrences of the name of God (יהוה) in the Psalm to the eighteen benedictions (*תפילת העמידה* *תפילת הטהרה*, *Tefilat HaAmidah* “*The Standing Prayer,*” also called the *Shmoneh Esreh* *שמנה עשרה*, *Shmoneh Esreh*) saying “*As the Lord commanded, All that the Lord commanded, eighteen occurrences in all, to correspond to these, Eighteen Benedictions which a man is to recite every day were instituted. But not all of them are in praise of the Holy One blessed be He, Only the first three and the last three are; the other twelve are concerned with the needs of man.*”

- The Concluding phrase says “*But the Shabbat is given for delight, for hallowing, and for rest, and not for sorrow. Hence, of the Shabbat it is written on the day seven times do I praise You (Tehillim / Psalms 119:164).*”

Midrash Tehillim 29, Part 1 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying “*A Psalm of David. Lay it upon the Lord, O you benei elim (Tehillim / Psalms 29:1).*” The homiletic introduction to the Midrash (פתיחתא, Petihta) says “*This verse is to be considered in the light of what Scripture says elsewhere, Therefore will I save My flock, and they will no more be a prey (Ezekiel 34:22).*” It is interesting the rabbis open on *Tehillim / Psalms 29:1* regarding David calling to the people to “*ascribe*” to the Lord glory and strength you sons of the mighty, and then reference *Ezekiel 34:22*. Let’s look at the context of *Ezekiel 34*.

Ezekiel 34:11-24

34:11 For thus says the Lord God, ‘Behold, I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. 34:12 ‘As a shepherd cares for his herd in the day when he is among his scattered sheep, so I will care for My sheep and will deliver them from all the places to which they were scattered on a cloudy and gloomy day. 34:13 ‘I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them to their own land; and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the streams, and in all the inhabited places of the land. 34:14 ‘I will feed them in a good pasture, and their grazing ground will be on the mountain heights of Israel. There they will lie down on good grazing ground and feed in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. 34:15 ‘I will feed My flock and I will lead them to rest,’ declares the Lord God. 34:16 ‘I will seek the lost, bring back the scattered, bind up the broken and strengthen the sick; but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with judgment. 34:17 ‘As for you, My flock, thus says the Lord God, ‘Behold, I will judge between one sheep and another, between the rams and the male goats. 34:18 ‘Is it too slight a thing for you that you should feed in the good pasture, that you must tread down with your feet the rest of your pastures? Or that you should drink of the clear waters, that you must foul the rest with your feet? 34:19 ‘As for My flock, they must eat what you tread down with your feet and drink what you foul with your feet!’ 34:20 Therefore, thus says the Lord God to them, ‘Behold, I, even I, will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. 34:21 ‘Because you push with side and with shoulder; and thrust at all the weak with your horns until you have scattered them abroad, 34:22 therefore, I will deliver My flock, and they will no longer be a prey; and I will judge between one sheep and another. 34:23 ‘Then I will set over them one shepherd, My servant David, and he will feed them; he will feed them himself and be their shepherd. 34:24 ‘And I, the Lord, will be their God, and My servant David will be prince among them; I the Lord have spoken. (NASB)

יא פי כה אמר אדני יהוה הנני-אני ודרשתי את-צאני ובקרתיים: יב כבקרתי רעה עדרו ביום-היותו צאנו נפרשות פן אבקר את-צאני והצלתי אתהם מכל-המקומות אשר נפצו שם ביום ענן וערפל: יג והוצאתים מן-העמים וקבצתיים מן-הארצות והביאתים אל-אדמתם ורעייתים אל-הרי ישראל באפיקים ובכל מושבי הארץ: יד במרעה-טוב ארעה אתם ובקרי מרום-ישראל יהיה נוהם שם תרבענה בנה טוב ומרעה שמן תרעינה אל-הרי ישראל: טו אני ארעה צאני ואני ארביצם נאם אדני יהוה: טז את-האבדת אבקש ואת-הנדחת אשיב ולנשברת אחבש ואת-החולה אחזק ואת-השומנה ואת-החזקה אשמיד ארענה במשפט: יז ואתנה צאני כה אמר אדני יהוה הנני שפט בין-שה לשה לאילים ולעתודים: יח המעט מכם המרעה הטוב תרעו ויתר מרעיכם תרמסו ברגליכם ומשקע-מים תשתו ואת הנותרים ברגליכם תרפשו: יט וצאני מרמס רגליכם תרעינה ומרפש רגליכם תשתינה: כ לכן כה אמר אדני יהוה אליהם הנני-אני ושפטתי בין-שה ברעה ובין שה רזה: כא יען בצד ובכחף תהדפו ובקרניכם תנגחו כל-הנחלות עד אשר הפיצתם אותנה אל-החוצה: כב והושעתי לצאני ולא-תהינה עוד לבז ושפטתי בין שה לשה: כג והקמתי עליהם רעה אהד ורעה

אֶתְהַנֶּה אֶת עֲבָדֵי דָוִד הוּא יִרְעֶה אֹתָם וְהוּא יִהְיֶה לָהֶן לְרֹעֶה: כִּד וְאֲנִי יְהוָה אֶהְיֶה לָהֶם לְאֱלֹהִים וְעַבְדֵי דָוִד נְשִׂיא בְתוֹכָם אֲנִי יְהוָה דִּבַּרְתִּי:

Notice, in the verses preceding *Ezekiel 34:22*, we read that the Lord God Himself is searching for His sheep and seeking them out. Ezekiel prophecies that the Lord will deliver His people from where they are scattered and bring them to their own land. The Lord says that He will feed them and give them good pastures. The Lord will seek the lost, bring back the scattered, bind up the broken and strengthen the sick (34:16), however, the fat and the strong he will destroy and feed them judgment. Based upon the context of Ezekiel, the rabbis are beginning their discussion on the reason why the sons of the mighty (Israel) should give (ascribe) glory and strength to the Lord. In addition to God's mighty deliverance from Egypt, He also is seeking the lost sheep of Israel. Ezekiel continues saying in 34:17-21, some people take the best and give the poor, the innocent, the righteous, dirty food and water. Therefore the fat and strong are made fat and strong because they are treading down on their brothers and sisters. These people are categorized as the wicked, the unrighteous, the ungodly, those who disregard the commands of God. The midrash continues saying "What more am I to do for them? Asked the Lord. Let My servant David feed them, as is said and I will set up one shepherd over them, and he will feed them, even My servant David (Ezekiel 34:23). David answered, You are the deliverer; be You also the shepherd; Save Your people, and bless Your inheritance; feed them also, and carry them forever (Tehillim / Psalms 28:9)." ומה אני עושה להן, דוד עבדי ירעה אותם, שנאמר והקימותי, (שם שם יחזקאל ל"ד כג), אמר דוד אתה מושיע ואתה רועה, וכן עליהם רועה [אחד ורעה אתה את עבדי דוד וגו'] (שם שם יחזקאל ל"ד כג), אמר דוד אתה מושיע ואתה רועה, וכן Ezekiel says that the Lord will be their God and He will place His servant David as prince among them (34:24). The rabbis say that the Lord is our deliverer and He will feed His people including David His servant. The midrash continues saying "The Holy One blessed be He, asked, Do I hold them back from salvation that you say unto Me Save Your people? I do not hold them back. They hold themselves back." Is it possible to hold back salvation? What might be the ways one would be able to hold back salvation? In the midrash, is salvation physical or spiritual? The rabbis suggest that "talking back to God" (in a negative sense) is a way to hold salvation back. The example is given from the life of Abraham and Isaac based upon a parallel to *Isaiah 42:19 Who is blind but My servant, Or so deaf as My messenger whom I send? Who is so blind as he that is at peace with Me, Or so blind as the servant of the Lord?* (NASB) יט מי עור כּי אם-עבדי וחרש כּמלאכי אשלה מי עור) (NASB) What does Isaiah mean saying that the servant of the Lord is blind? The context provides a little more information regarding the blind. He says the Lord will lead the blind in a way they do not know and make darkness into light before them. Let's read the passages:

Isaiah 42:16-23

42:16 'I will lead the blind by a way they do not know, In paths they do not know I will guide them. I will make darkness into light before them And rugged places into plains. These are the things I will do, And I will not leave them undone.' 42:17 They will be turned back and be utterly put to shame, Who trust in idols, Who say to molten images, 'You are our gods.' 42:18 Hear, you deaf! And look, you blind, that you may see. 42:19 Who is blind but My servant, Or so deaf as My messenger whom I send? Who is so blind as he that is at peace with Me, Or so blind as the servant of the Lord? 42:20 You have seen many things, but you do not observe them; Your ears are open, but none hears. 42:21 The Lord was pleased for His righteousness' sake To make the law great and glorious. 42:22 But this is a people plundered and despoiled; All of them are trapped in caves, Or are hidden away in prisons; They have become a prey with none to deliver them, And a spoil, with none to say, 'Give them back!' 42:23 Who among you will give ear to this? Who will give heed and listen hereafter? (NASB)

טז והולכתי עורים בדרך לא ידעו בנתיבות לא ידעו אדריכם אשים מחשף לפניהם לאור ומעקב

שִׁים לְמִישׁוֹר אֵלֶּה הַדְּבָרִים עֲשִׂיתֶם וְלֹא עֲזֹבְתֶימָם: יז נִסְגּוּ אַחֲרָיו יִבְשׂוּ בְשֵׁת הַבְּטָחִים בְּפֶסֶל הָאֱמֻרַיִם לְמַסְכַּח אַתֶּם אֱלֹהֵינוּ: יח הַחֲרָשִׁים שָׁמְעוּ וְהַעֲוָרִים הִבִּיטוּ לְרֵאוֹת: יט מִי עוֹר פִּי אִם-עֶבְדֵי וְחֲרָשׁ כְּמִלְאָכֵי אֲשֶׁלַח מִי עוֹר כְּמִשְׁלָם וְעוֹר כְּעֶבֶד יְהוָה: כ רֵאִית [רֵאוֹת] רַבּוֹת וְלֹא תִשְׁמַר פְּקוּחַ אֲזַנִּים וְלֹא יִשְׁמַע: כא יְהוָה חִפֵּץ לְמַעַן צְדָקוֹ יִגְדִיל תּוֹרָה וַיֹּאדִיר: כב וְהוּא עִם-בְּזוּז וְשׂוּי הִפִּחַ בַּחֲוָרִים כָּלֶם וּבִבְתֵי כָלָאִים הִתְחַבְּאוּ הֵיוּ לְבוֹז וְאִין מִצִּיל מִשְׁפָּה וְאִין-אִמֵּר הִשָּׁב: כג מִי בְכֶם יֵאָזִין אֶת יִקְשָׁב וַיִּשְׁמַע לְאַחֲרָיו:

It appears that these people are those who have blinded themselves in idolatry and the Lord is calling them back (*Isaiah 42:17-20*) and to turn from their evil ways. Isaiah says *42:21 The Lord was pleased for His righteousness' sake To make the law great and glorious. (NASB)* The midrash may be suggesting that those who are blind and dumb (mute) and deaf do not talk back to the Lord. The purpose is for hallowing the name of God which is paralleled in the midrash to Abraham and Isaac, that Abraham and Isaac did not talk back to God when the Lord asked Abraham to sacrifice his son. The rabbis say that Abraham talked back to the Lord, that he questioned the word of the Lord in *Bereshit / Genesis 21:12* that through Isaac Abraham's seed would come and then in *Bereshit / Genesis 22:1-2* where the Lord tested Abraham's faith regarding his son *22:1 Now it came about after these things, that God tested Abraham, and said to him, 'Abraham!' And he said, 'Here I am.'* *22:2 He said, 'Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you.'* (*NASB*) It is interesting that in the Hebrew text it says א וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וְהָאֱלֹהִים נִסָּה אֶת-אַבְרָהָם וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אַבְרָהָם וַיֹּאמֶר הִנְנִי: ב וַיֹּאמֶר קַח-נָא אֶת-בְּנֶךָ אֶת-יְחִידְךָ אֲשֶׁר-אַהֲבָת אֶת-יִצְחָק וְלֶךְ-לְךָ אֶל-אֶרֶץ קַח-נָא הַלֹּדֶם וְהַעֲלֵהוּ שָׁם לְעֹלָה עַל אֶחָד הַהָרִים אֲשֶׁר אָמַר אֱלֹהֶיךָ: (אֶת-בְּנֶךָ אֶת-יְחִידְךָ) the one that he loved (אֲהֲבָת) and goto the land of Moriah and offering him as a burnt offering. What is interesting is that the Lord called Isaac Abraham's only son and the one in whom he loved. Was Isaac Abraham's only son? In Parashat Lech Lecha, Abraham's reaction to the covenant promise was to proclaim, "If only Ishmael would live before You!" Abraham seems to be saying that he would be perfectly happy to see Ishmael as his heir, the one who continues his life's work and carries on the special relationship that he has with the Lord.

Bereshit / Genesis 17:7-21

17:7 'I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you. 17:8 'I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.' *17:9 God said further to Abraham, 'Now as for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. 17:10 'This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: every male among you shall be circumcised. 17:11 'And you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be the sign of the covenant between Me and you. 17:12 'And every male among you who is eight days old shall be circumcised throughout your generations, a servant who is born in the house or who is bought with money from any foreigner, who is not of your descendants. 17:13 'A servant who is born in your house or who is bought with your money shall surely be circumcised; thus shall My covenant be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. 17:14 'But an uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant.'* *17:15 Then God said to Abraham, 'As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name. 17:16 'I will bless her, and indeed I will give you a son by her. Then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples will come from her.'* *17:17 Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, 'Will a child be born to a man*

one hundred years old? And will Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child? 17:18 And Abraham said to God, 'Oh that Ishmael might live before You!' 17:19 But God said, 'No, but Sarah your wife will bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; and I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him. 17:20 'As for Ishmael, I have heard you; behold, I will bless him, and will make him fruitful and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall become the father of twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. 17:21 'But My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you at this season next year.' (NASB)

The Lord rejects Abraham's suggestion and then reassures him that Ishmael will become a great people. The Lord says, *"but my covenant I shall establish with Isaac. Only Isaac, the son you will have with Sarah, can be your true heir; and only Isaac can father the people with whom I will enter into a covenant as my "kingdom of priests and holy nation."* According to the Scriptures, the Lord insists that Isaac carry on the special relationship as His chosen people. This tells us something very fundamental about the nature of our relationship with the Lord. Ishmael and Isaac differ in two significant respects, (i) Ishmael came into the world by natural means, while Isaac's birth was a supernatural event, and (ii) Ishmael was circumcised at the age of thirteen, the age of דעת daat (awareness) and against his will, whereas Isaac entered into the covenant of circumcision as an eight day old infant. Circumcision on the eighth day a person is not even aware of what is taking place, much less of its significance. Therefore, Ishmael represents a rational relationship with God, one that is based upon a person's nature and understanding. Isaac on the other hand represents a supernatural, containing both a spiritual and rational bond. According to the Scriptures, Abraham was desirous, to see Ishmael as his heir. However, the Lord insisted that his covenant with Abraham be perpetuated specifically through Isaac and Isaac's descendants. This is why we pray to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob whereas the first born son of Abraham (Ishmael) and of Jacob (Esav), they disregarded the covenant of God and were not chosen as a people because they were not committed to the word of the Lord. The conclusion of the Midrash states, *דבר אחר בני אלים. בניהם של אותן הנשחטים כאילים, אברהם אמר אני שוחט, "Another word on bene elim is O you children of those who were ready to be sacrificed like rams (elim). Abraham said, I am ready to sacrifice, and Isaac replied, And I am ready to be sacrificed."* Abraham was ready to make the sacrifice of his son and the rabbis say that Isaac was also ready to be sacrificed. This illustrates a great commitment of faith in the word of the Lord. How great is our commitment to the word of the Lord today?

From an eschatological perspective, according to the prophet Isaiah in *Isaiah 65:2-4, 66:15-17* and *Ezekiel 22:23-26*, the Lord issues a stern warning.

Isaiah 65:2-4

65:2 'I have spread out My hands all day long to a rebellious people, Who walk in the way which is not good, following their own thoughts, 65:3 A people who continually provoke Me to My face, Offering sacrifices in gardens and burning incense on bricks; 65:4 Who sit among graves and spend the night in secret places; Who eat swine's flesh, And the broth of unclean meat is in their pots. (NASB) ב פִּרְשֵׁתִי יְדֵי כָל-הַיּוֹם אֶל-עַם סוֹרֵר הַהֲלֹכִים הַדֶּרֶךְ לֹא-טוֹב אַחֵר מִחֻשְׁבֹּתֵיהֶם: ג הָעַם הַמְכַעֲסִים אוֹתִי עַל-פְּנֵי תַמִּיד זִבְחִים בַּגִּנּוֹת וּמִקְטָרִים עַל-הַלְבָּנִים: ד הַיִּשְׁבִּים בַּקְּבָרִים וּבִנְצוּרִים יְלִינוּ הָאֲכָלִים בְּשַׂר הַחֲזִיר וּפְרָק [וּמִרְק] פִּגְגָּלִים כְּלֵיהֶם:

Isaiah 66:15-17

66:15 For behold, the Lord will come in fire And His chariots like the whirlwind, To render His anger with fury, And His rebuke with flames of fire. 66:16 For the Lord will execute judgment by fire And by His sword on all flesh, And those slain by the Lord will be many. 66:17 'Those who sanctify and purify themselves to go to the gardens, Following one in the center; Who eat swine's flesh, detestable things and mice, will come to an end altogether,' declares

טו כִּי-הִנֵּה יְהוָה בָּאֵשׁ יָבוֹא וְכִסּוּפָה מִרְכַּבְתִּיו לְהַשִּׁיב בְּחֶמְהָ אֶפּוֹ וְגַעַרְתּוֹ בְּלִהְבֵי- (NASB) *the Lord.* אֵשׁ: טז כִּי בָאֵשׁ יְהוָה נִשְׁפָּט וּבְחָרְבוֹ אֶת-כָּל-בָּשָׂר וְרַבּוֹ חָלְלֵי יְהוָה: יז הַמְתַּקְדָּשִׁים וְהַמְטַהְרִים אֶל-הַגְּנוֹת אַחַר אַחַד [אַחַת] בַּתְּנֶה אֶכְלֵי בָשָׂר הַחֲזִיר וְהַשֶּׁקֶץ וְהַעֲכָבָר יַחְדָּו יִסְפוּ נְאֻם-יְהוָה:

Ezekiel 22:23-26

22:23 *And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 22:24 ‘Son of man, say to her, ‘You are a land that is not cleansed or rained on in the day of indignation.’ 22:25 ‘There is a conspiracy of her prophets in her midst like a roaring lion tearing the prey. They have devoured lives; they have taken treasure and precious things; they have made many widows in the midst of her. 22:26 ‘Her priests have done violence to My law and have profaned My holy things; they have made no distinction between the holy and the profane, and they have not taught the difference between the unclean and the clean; and they hide their eyes from My sabbaths, and I am profaned among them. (NASB)* כַּד כִּן-אָדָם אָמַר-לָהּ כַּד וַיְהִי דְבַר-יְהוָה אֵלַי לֵאמֹר: כַּד אֶת-אֶרֶץ לֹא מְטַהְרָה הִיא לֹא גִשְׁמָה בְיוֹם זַעַם: כַּה קָשָׁר נְבִיאֶיהָ בְּתוֹכָהּ פָּאֲרִי שׂוֹאֵג טָרֵף טָרֵף נֹפֵשׁ אֶכְלֵי חֶסֶן וַיִּקָּר וַיִּחַזְרוּ אֶל־מִנוּחֵיהָ הָרַבּוֹ בְּתוֹכָהּ: כֹּ כַּהֲנֵיהָ חָמְסוּ תוֹרָתִי וַיַּחְלְלוּ קַדְשֵׁי בֵּין-קֹדֶשׁ לְחַל לֹא הִבְדִּילוּ וּבֵין-הַטָּמֵא לְטָהוֹר לֹא הוֹדִיעוּ וּמִשְׁבְּתוֹתַי הֶעֱלִימוּ עֵינֵיהֶם וְאַחַל בְּתוֹכָם:

Ezekiel 22:23-26 describes those who are charged with the responsibility of using the word of God and justifying their own evil deeds and the evil deeds of the people under their charge. *Isaiah 65:2-4* speaks of a rebellious people and how they walk in following their own thoughts, who make sacrifices in ways that God has not prescribed and Isaiah states that they eat pork and cook all sorts of unclean meats in their pots. The people Isaiah is referring to believe the command of God regarding clean and unclean foods has passed away, or at the least they disregard the word of the Lord, which very similar to today’s teaching in the church regarding the Levitical food laws and the moedim (appointed times). *Isaiah 66:15-17* presents a unique example because this Scripture speaks of the eschatological event of the return of the Lord. Note the language used here, the Lord will come in fire and His chariots with the whirlwind to render His anger with fury and His rebuke with flames of fire. Note this is consistent with the Apostolic Writings in the books of *2 Thessalonians* and *Revelation*, etc. In addition to this the last verses in *Isaiah 66* use language which is similar to descriptions of hell that Yeshua gave saying that their worm will never die and the fire is not quenched (*Mark 9:48*). Those who eat swine’s flesh are singled out in Isaiah’s prophetic words of the last days. According to the Scriptures, there are two kinds of uncleanness described in the Scriptures, (i) a person may become unclean and not sin and (ii) a person may become unclean through sin. Can you think of any examples that would illustrate this from the Scriptures? One example would be those who touch a dead body (i.e. parents pass away, etc), unless one was the High Priest, it would not be a sin to touch the dead body and bury their family relative. One would simply become ritually unclean and one would simply need to do was follow the appropriate procedure to become ritually pure if one wanted to return to the Tabernacle to worship the Lord. On the other hand, the one may also become unclean because of their sin. The uncleanness that comes through sin is that which comes from the heart. This is specifically what Yeshua is speaking of in *Mark 7*. Note also that the differences between the internal verses external sources of uncleanness and sin, if one willingly disobeys God’s Word and become unclean, that uncleanness is because of one’s sin of disobedience. When choosing to eat unclean foods, one chooses to disobey God’s instruction (command) for our lives, this would be disobedience to God’s Word. In the Apostolic Writings in Yeshua and Paul’s day, many newly believers were suffering under the yoke of the rabbinic teachings. Some converted to become Jews believing their salvation was dependent upon the flesh based upon what we read in the book of Galatians. The Apostle Paul was explaining to the Gentile believers that God’s people do not depend upon the man made laws (rabbinic tradition). Tradition can help or hinder the work of God in our lives. This is exactly what Yeshua was saying to the Pharisees in *Mark 7:9* that by their tradition they negate the command of God. Christ abolished those Talmudic traditions that stand contrary to the Torah of God, that stand contrary to Yeshua, and places a yoke on the believers putting them back into

bondage to the ordinances (dogma) of the rabbis. Salvation is found in Yeshua and he did not do away with the Torah. In fact, Yeshua made it possible for both the Jew and Gentile to become brothers and sisters, the children of God (*Galatians 3:26-29, 6:16*), so that we could live together in freedom within God's perfect Torah (*James 1:25*). Yeshua the Messiah did away with the unnecessary and unprofitable requirements of men, but the Torah of God is binding on us and it is by the power of the Holy Spirit that enables us to live our lives according to God's Word. In addition to this, *Revelation 21:27* states *12:27 and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. (NASB)* According to the apocalyptic literature, the Torah requirement of clean and unclean will continue forever on into eternity. The Torah will remain relevant even into the Olam Habah (*World to Come*) as we spend the rest of eternity with God. This brings us back to the observation of Abraham, he was ready to make the sacrifice of his son and Isaac was also ready to be sacrificed. This illustrates how great a commitment of faith Abraham and Isaac had in the word of the Lord. How great is our commitment to the word of the Lord today? The benefits of observing the Torah are wonderful and many. The Torah schools us in keeping away from what is unclean and impure and stands as a reminder to not touch the unclean thing by allowing darkness, unrighteousness, wickedness, and sin to have a part in our lives. Because we are saved, sanctified by the Lord, set apart, and holy, we are called to practice righteousness, justice, and holiness. In *John 13:15-17*, Yeshua said *13:15 'For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you. 13:16 'Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him. 13:17 'If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them. (NASB)* Walking in the footsteps of the Messiah is to seek the Lord our God, Yeshua the Messiah, and walk by the instruction (Torah) of the Lord God Almighty.

Midrash Tehillim 29, Part 2 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying “*Ascribe unto the Lord (YHVH) the glory due unto His name (Tehillim / Psalms 29:2) that is, whenever I breathe His ineffable Name (YHVH), you are to ascribe unto the Lord the glory due unto his name.*” The homiletic introduction (פתיחתא, Petihta) to the Midrash states “*As Moshe said, When I proclaim the name of the Lord, ascribe greatness unto our God (Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:3), that is, Offer prayers to God.*” The rabbis speak of prayers to the Lord and say “*Moshe upon being asked, when do we know how many prayers we are to offer? Answered Mark how many times the ineffable Name occurs in this Psalm. Told Eighteen times, Moshe answered You must offer eighteen benedictions. Hence, it is said The glory due to His name, and hence also the preceding verse conjoins glory and strength. Asked When do we know where to begin? Moshe answered, Mark the beginning of the Psalm, Ascribe unto the Lord, O sons of the mighty, that is, sons of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.*” (אמרו לו מניין אנו יודעין מכמה, אמר להם ראו כמה אזכרות יש בפרשה, אמרו לו מניין אנו יודעין עשרה, לכך אתם תתפללו שמונה עשרה ברכות, לכך נאמר כבוד שמו, וכתוב כבוד ועוז, אמרו לו מניין אנו יודעין מהיכן נתחיל, אמר להם ראו מה בראש הפרשה, הבו לה' בני אלים, בני אברהם יצחק ויעקב) David did in fact write the Name of God (יהוה) eighteen times in *Tehillim / Psalms 29*. The rabbis parallel this to the eighteen benedictions. In a previous Psalms study (*Tehillim / Psalms 4*) we looked at the eighteen benedictions (also known as *Tefillah* “prayer,” the “*Shemoneh Ezreh*” or “*the Amidah*”). The Rabbis make 18 statements to parallel the 18 benedictions.

Eighteen Statements to Parallel the Amidah

1. *So you must say in the first benediction, The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.*
2. *And as in the second occurrence of the ineffable Name it is said Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength, so you must ascribe to Him glory and strength with Blessed are You who awakens the dead.*
3. *And as in the third occurrence of the ineffable Name, so you must bless Him with Blessed are*

You the holy God.

4. *Next, Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness, that is, worship the Lord who gives knowledge to the holy, for the knowledge of the holy is understanding (Mishley / Proverbs 9:10) calls for the benediction Blessed are You gracious giver of knowledge.*
5. *Next, The voice of the Lord is upon the waters, that is, upon repentance, which is likened to water in the verse In repentance they poured out their hearts before the Lord like water (1 Samuel 7:6) calls for the benediction Blessed are You who delights in repentance.*
6. *Next, The Lord is upon the many waters, that is, You are a God that pardons iniquity, You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea (Micah 7:18-19) calls for the benediction Blessed are You who are gracious and does abundantly pardon.*
7. *Next, The voice of the Lord is powerful, that is, I will redeem you with an outstretched arm (Shemot / Exodus 6:6), for God is described as Marching in the greatness of His strength (Isaiah 63:1) in the olam habah (the age to come) calls for the benediction, Blessed are You the redeemer of Israel.*
8. *Next, The voice of the Lord is a glorious voice, that is, in healing the sick, He restores to them the glory of the health, calls for the benediction Blessed are You who heals the sick of Your people Israel.*
9. *Next, The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars, calls for the benediction Blessed are You who blesses the years. The men who raise prices and give small measure, and the rich men who live in plenty and appear strong as cedars, such men the Lord breaks to bits when He blesses His world by bringing low prices to it, thereby breaking the staff of wickedness. Hence, the verse calls for the benediction, Blessed are You who blesses the years.*
10. *Next, The voice of the Lord breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon, that is, the Lord breaks in pieces the wicked nations of the earth that stand high as cedars, whose height is like the height of the cedars (Amos 2:9), and He will gather the banished from the midst of the nations, calls for the benediction, Blessed are You who gathers the banished of Your people Israel.*
11. *Next, The voice of the Lord hews out flames of fire, that is, the judgments hewn out of the Lord's word are like flames of fire, for God says, Is not My word like a fire? (Jeremiah 23:29), and also by Fire will the Lord execute judgment (Isaiah 66:16) calls for the benediction, Blessed are You who loves righteousness and judgment.*
12. *Next, The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness, that is, as the wilderness is barren, so the wicked men are barren, so barren in good deeds that the Holy One, blessed be He, shakes them to pieces, calls for the benediction, Blessed are You who breaks the enemies and humbles the proud.*
13. *Next, the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh, tha is, the righteous are in an exile which resembles the wilderness of Kadesh where there was no water for the people, as Scripture relates the people abode in Kadesh (Bamidbar / Numbers 20:1), and where water returned only because of the merit of Moshe and Aaron, calls for the benediction, Blessed are You the stay and trust of the righteous.*

14. *Next, The voice of the Lord brings froth hinds, Deliverers like kinds will be born to Israel, as is said, my Beloved is like a roe or a young hart (Song 2:9); He makes my feet like hind's feet (2 Samuel 22:34); and How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that brings good tidings (Isaiah 52:7). The voice of the Lord strips the forest bare, the Lord will strip the hostile nations of the earth who are like forests of their might, for it is said, The Lord of hosts will cut down the thickets of the forest with iron (Isaiah 10:34). And in His Temple does every one speak of His glory, Once the Messiah comes and punishes the wicked nations of the earth, the Temple will be rebuilt forthwith. Hence, the benediction, Blessed are You God of David who builds Jerusalem. In another comment, the verse is read, The voice of the Lord shakes terebinths (ayyalot), when the Holy One blessed be He, gives voice, terebinths in the forest are shaken. Ayyalot when bocalized elot means trees such as the terebinth or the oak. What follows in the verse is read, The voice of the Lord makes the white of the trees appear (yehesof), that is, The Lord makes the leaves of the trees fall, then the trees die, and makes them shed their bark. Here yehesof comes from the same stem as mahasof in the verse Jacob made the white appear (mahasof) which was in the rods (Bereshit / Genesis 30:37).*
15. *Next, The Lord sits above the water flood that is, when the Lord sat down during the deluge to judge the wicked, He listened to the prayers of those who came into Noah's ark, as is said God remembered Noah, and every living thing and the waters receded (Bereshit / Genesis 8:1). Hence the benediction Blessed are You who listens to the prayer.*
16. *Next, the Lord remains a king forever, that is, called by Noah's offering, the Lord had pity upon the earth, as is said, The Lord smelled the sweet savor; and said I will never again curse the ground (Bereshit / Genesis 8:21), calls for the benediction Blessed are You for You alone we worship in reverence.*
17. *And next, The Lord gives strength unto His people, that is, gives the goodly strength of Torah, of which God said, I give you good doctrine; forsake not My Torah (Mishley / Proverbs 4:2), calls for the benediction Blessed are You whose name is All good, and unto whom it is becoming to give thanks.*
18. *And finally, the Lord blesses His people with peace, calls for the benediction, Blessed are You who makes peace. Another comment, To correspond to the eighteen occurrences of the Ineffable Name in the account of the building of the Mishkhan as given in the section entitled These are the accounts of the Mishkhan (Shemot / Exodus 38:21) As the Lord commanded, All that the Lord commanded, eighteen occurrences in all, to correspond to these, Eighteen Benedictions which a man is to recite every day were instituted. But not all of them are in praise of the Holy One blessed be He, Only the first three and the last three are; the other twelve are concerned with the needs of man. And corresponding to the seven occurrences of the Ineffable Name in the Shabbat Psalm; only on week days does a man recite the Eighteen Benedictions. Otherwise, were there a sick man in his house, the householder would be reminded of him at the reading of Blessed are You who heals the sick and would be distressed.*

So the Rabbis parallel these 18 statements to the Amidah. Midrash Tehillim 29, Part 2 is a discussion on *Tehillim / Psalms 29:2* “Ascribe unto the Lord (YHVH) the glory due unto His name” and they ask where to begin in ascribing glory to God's name? It is doubtful that David had the Amidah and wrote the Name of God (יהוה) eighteen times to parallel the Amidah. The rabbis however do make this parallel. The midrash states, “... you must say in the first benediction, The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” The first prayer in the Amidah is titled “*God of History*” where one declares praise and blesses the

Lord our God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob because of His lovingkindness and mercy. According to the Apostolic Writings, Pharasaic Judaism believed in the resurrection, and so the second way to praise the Lord is His ability to raise the dead that parallels the second prayer in the Amidah. Today, our hope and our praise is in the resurrection of the Messiah Yeshua. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is able to revive the dead because of His great mercy, to support the fallen, heal the sick, free the bound from the bondage of sin and the evil one. The third statement says to bless the Lord God because He is holy. The third prayer in the Amidah is the God who sanctifies, who sets us apart, makes us holy and righteous, and enables us by the power of His holy Spirit to live holy (sanctified) lives.

The midrash continues saying *“Next, Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness, that is, worship the Lord who gives knowledge to the holy, for the knowledge of the holy is understanding (Mishley / Proverbs 9:10)”* The fourth prayer in the Amidah is to ask the Lord for understanding to learn God’s morals and for discernment. The Rabbis then say *“Next, The voice of the Lord is upon the waters, that is, upon repentance, which is likened to water in the verse In repentance they poured out their hearts before the Lord like water (1 Samuel 7:6) calls for the benediction Blessed are You who delights in repentance.”* The reference to David in the Psalm that states the voice of the Lord is upon the waters, the Rabbis believe this is linked to repentance through the mikveh. The mikveh (מִקְוֵה or מִקְוֵה) is a bath used for the purpose of ritual immersion. The word “mikveh”, as used in the Torah and literally means a “collection,” generally, a collection of water (Shemot / Exodus 7:19, Vayikra / Leviticus 11:36). Several mitzvot (commandments or regulations) specify that full immersion in water is required to regain ritual purity after ritually impure incidents have occurred. A person was required to be ritually pure in order to enter the Temple. In addition, a convert to Judaism is required to immerse in a mikveh as part of the his/her conversion, and a women is required to immerse in a mikveh after her menstrual period or childbirth before she and her husband can resume marital relations. It should be noted that full ritual purity of the type needed to enter or serve in the Temple is not attainable by anyone today as we are all considered to be ritually impure by virtue of exposure to death (via exposure to corpses or to graves and cemeteries etc.) and that kind of ritual purity can only be obtained when the Jewish people have the ashes of the Red heifer. On the other hand, in Yeshua the Messiah we are made clean spiritually and have access to the throne of God in prayer because Yeshua, our high priest, stands before our Father in Heaven and intercedes for us. The next thing the Rabbis discuss is the connection to forgiveness saying *“Next, The Lord is upon the many waters, that is, You are a God that pardons iniquity, You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea (Micah 7:18-19) calls for the benediction Blessed are You who are gracious and does abundantly pardon.”* This is connected to the previous which is repentance.

Points seven and eight parallel the Prayers for deliverance from affliction, and for healing in the Amidah. The midrash continues saying *“Next, The voice of the Lord breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon, that is, the Lord breaks in pieces the wicked nations of the earth that stand high as cedars, whose height is like the height of the cedars (Amos 2:9), and He will gather the banished from the midst of the nations, calls for the benediction, Blessed are You who gathers the banished of Your people Israel.”* The Rabbis say that the Lord breaking down the cedars of Lebanon is His breaking to pieces the wicked nations of the earth that stand as high as cedars. This seems to be a similar conclusion that the cedars of Lebanon represent the strength of the nations. The wood is used for chariots and boats used for war which is the strength of nations. The “cedars” are a reference to the power and strength of Behemoth (Job 40 :15-17) and to the pride of Assyria and Lebanon. David’s words saying: הַ קוֹל הַהוֹד שֶׁבַר אֲרָזִים וַיִּשְׁבַּר הַהוֹד אֶת-אֲרָזֵי הַלְבָּנוֹן: 29:5 *The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars; Yes, the Lord breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon. (NASB)* along with the rabbinic interpretation of this verse suggests that it is the Lord who tears down strongholds and removes the pride and strength of the nations, we should not fear.

The midrash continues with the voice of the Lord shaking the wilderness and the wilderness of kadesh, this is paralleled to the prayer for the proud and arrogant and for the righteous and prostelytes. The rabbis say in Point 17 *“And next, The Lord gives strength unto His people, that is, gives the goodly strength of Torah, of which God said, I give you good doctrine; forsake not My Torah (Mishley / Proverbs 4:2), calls for the benediction Blessed are You whose name is All good, and unto whom it is becoming to give thanks.”* This is paralleled to the restoration of the Temple services. The strength of God’s people is good

doctrine, righteousness, justice, and not forsaking His Law. *“And finally, the Lord blesses His people with peace, calls for the benediction, Blessed are You who makes peace. Another comment, To correspond to the eighteen occurrences of the Ineffable Name in the account of the building of the Mishkhan as given in the section entitled These are the accounts of the Mishkhan (Shemot / Exodus 38:21) As the Lord commanded, All that the Lord commanded, eighteen occurrences in all, to correspond to these, Eighteen Benedictions which a man is to recite every day were instituted. But not all of them are in praise of the Holy One blessed be He, Only the first three and the last three are; the other twelve are concerned with the needs of man. And corresponding to the seven occurrences of the Ineffable Name in the Shabbat Psalm; only on week days does a man recite the Eighteen Benedictions. Otherwise, were there a sick man in his house, the householder would be reminded of him at the reading of Blessed are You who heals the sick and would be distressed. The Rabbis wrap up the midrash with comments on the Amidah, that the first three and the last three prayers are of praise to the Lord, the middle prayers are for the needs of man. It is interesting that the Psalm may be divided exactly in the way that the rabbis describe, the first three and last three are related to the glory of God (glory, strength, worship, holiness), and the middle five verses are related to the needs of men (breaking the cedars of Lebanon, pride, arrogance, shaking the wilderness and Kadesh).*

First three verses

A Psalm of David. 29:1 Ascribe to the Lord, O sons of the mighty, Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. 29:2 Ascribe to the Lord the glory due to His name; Worship the Lord in holy array. 29:3 The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; The God of glory thunders, The Lord is over many waters.

Middle Verses

29:4 The voice of the Lord is powerful, The voice of the Lord is majestic. 29:5 The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars; Yes, the Lord breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon. 29:6 He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, And Sirion like a young wild ox. 29:7 The voice of the Lord hews out flames of fire. 29:8 The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; The Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

Last three verses

29:9 The voice of the Lord makes the deer to calve And strips the forests bare; And in His temple everything says, ‘Glory!’ 29:10 The Lord sat as King at the flood; Yes, the Lord sits as King forever. 29:11 The Lord will give strength to His people; The Lord will bless His people with peace. (NASB)

It is interesting that with this observation regarding the Psalm, and the parallel to the Amidah, looking at Yeshua’s prayer (the Lord’s prayer, *Matthew 6:9-13*) while teaching the disciples to pray follows a similar pattern.

Leading verses

Matthew 6:9-13

6:9 ‘Pray, then, in this way: ‘Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. 6:10 ‘Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.

Middle verses

6:11 ‘Give us this day our daily bread. 6:12 ‘And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 6:13 ‘And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Final verse

[For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.]’ (NASB)

Notice how the first and final verses are giving glory to God (worship) and the middle are related to the needs of man. Is there an underlying truth on how we should approach the Lord in prayer? Open in prayer in worship and praise of the Lord God Almighty, then make a petition for our needs, and then close praising His Name because His is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever and ever Amen! Awesome!

Midrash Tehillim 29, Part 2 concludes saying “*But the Shabbat is given for delight, for hallowing, and for rest, and not for sorrow. Hence, of the Shabbat it is written on the day seven times do I praise You (Tehillim / Psalms 119:164).*” *Tehillim / Psalms 119:164 states “Seven times a day I praise You, Because of Your righteous ordinances.” (NASB)* How many times a day do you praise the Lord? How about in prayer, how many times do we go before the Lord in prayer and immediately begin petitioning and making requests to the Lord without first praising His Name for He is Holy, Righteous, Just, and a Loving, and Merciful God? Having studied these things, David’s words are a great reminder of how we are to approach a Holy God. David says **וְעֹז לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד וְעֹז: א 29:1** *Ascribe to the Lord, O sons of the mighty, Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. (NASB)*, Let’s give glory and honor and praise to the Lord God Almighty, the creator of all the universe, the Lord who has given strength to His people in His Son, the living Word, Yeshua the Messiah! Halleluia! Let’s Pray.

Heavenly Father,

We proclaim to You ... Glory ... and Strength! We pray in faith believing and thanking You for leading us into all truth. We thank you for Your mercy and Your grace Lord. According to the Scriptures You would make known Your ways, Your truth, and the path in which You want us to walk in as Sons of Righteousness and we thank you for calling us and drawing us near to You. We thank You for speaking to our hearts. We Thank You Lord for giving us Your Word, teaching us Your ways, and revealing these truths to us today. Truly all honor, and glory, and praise belong to You O Lord! Have mercy Lord and save us from our sins in Yeshua’s name. Thank You for sending Your son Yeshua the Messiah who laid His life down on our behalf so that we may enter into Your salvation. Thank You Lord for paying the covenant price for the forgiveness of our sins. We believe that Your Word directs us to Your Son Yeshua, and that in Him we have the hope of eternal life. Help us to trust in You Lord as we wait patiently for You and Your presence each day. Help us to dedicated our lives to You each day, fill us with Your presence Lord and thank You for revealing these truths to our hearts. 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 I pray! Amen!

Be Blessed in Yeshua, Christ our Messiah!

הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:
Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,
“Yeshua” King Messiah forever and ever

Notes