

ספר תהילים ה | 8 Tehillim / Psalms

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David declaring the Power of God

This week's study is from *Tehillim / Psalms 8:1-10*. The Psalm begins by stating א לְמַנְצֵחַ עַל-הַגִּתִּית מְזֻמֹּר לְדָוִד: *“For the choir director; on the Gittith. A Psalm of David.”* David declares the glory of God saying ב יְהוָה אֲדֹנָינוּ מִה-אֲדִיר שְׁמֶךָ בְּכָל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר-תָּנָה הוֹדֶךָ עַל-הַשָּׁמַיִם: *8:1 O Lord, our Lord, How majestic is Your name in all the earth, Who have displayed Your splendor above the heavens! (NASB)* There is “power” in God’s Name (יְהוָה) throughout all the earth; the Lord has displayed His majesty (הוֹדֶךָ) upon the heavens. It is interesting in declaring the majesty and power throughout the earth, David declares ג מְפִי עוֹלָלִים | וַיִּנְקִים יְסֻדְתָּ יְסֻדְתָּ יְסֻדְתָּ יְסֻדְתָּ: *8:2 From the mouth of infants and nursing babes You have established strength Because of Your adversaries, To make the enemy and the revengeful cease. (NASB)* David then states ד כִּי-אֲרָאָה שְׁמִיךָ מַעֲשֵׂי אֲצַבְעֹתֶיךָ יָרַח וְכֹכְבֵימָה אֲשֶׁר כֹּונְנָתָה: ה מָה-אֲנוֹשׁ כִּי-תִזְכְּרֵנוּ וּבֶן-אָדָם כִּי תִפְקְדֵנוּ: *8:3 When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained; 8:4 What is man that You take thought of him, And the son of man that You care for him? (NASB)* The work of God’s creation, in the infant (babe), the Lord displays his awesome wisdom and power to create new life. Who else can do this other than the Lord God Himself? The heavens, who can establish the heavens except God Himself? Seeing the greatness of God in His creation, David wonders how the Lord God Almighty can take thought of man, and of the son of man to take care of him? He then quantifies the reason the Lord takes thought of man saying ו 8:5 *Yet You have made him a little lower than God, And You crown him with glory and majesty! (NASB)* and ז תִּמְשִׁלֵהוּ: *8:6 You make him to rule over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet, 8:7 All sheep and oxen, And also the beasts of the field, 8:8 The birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea, Whatever passes through the paths of the seas. (NASB)* The Lord by His wisdom established the heavens and the earth and then placed all of his creation in our hands. What an awesome God we serve!

עברית Hebrew

ארמי Aramaic

ελληνικός Greek

| ספר תהילים פרק ה | ספר טוביה פרק ה | ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 8 |
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| <p>א לְמַנְצֵחַ עַל-הַגִּתִּית מְזֻמֹּר לְדָוִד: ב יְהוָה אֲדֹנָינוּ מִה-אֲדִיר שְׁמֶךָ בְּכָל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר-תָּנָה הוֹדֶךָ עַל- הַשָּׁמַיִם: ג מְפִי עוֹלָלִים וַיִּנְקִים יְסֻדְתָּ עַז לְמַעַן צוֹרְרֶיךָ לְהַשְׁבִּית אוֹיֵב וּמְתַנְקֶם: ד כִּי-אֲרָאָה שְׁמִיךָ מַעֲשֵׂי אֲצַבְעֹתֶיךָ יָרַח וְכֹכְבֵימָה אֲשֶׁר כֹּונְנָתָה: ה מָה-אֲנוֹשׁ כִּי-תִזְכְּרֵנוּ וּבֶן-אָדָם כִּי תִפְקְדֵנוּ:</p> | <p>א לשבחה על כינורא דאייתי מגת תושבחתא לדוד: ב אלהא ייי רבוננא כמה תליל ומשבח שמך ומשבח בכולא ארעא דיהבתא זיוך עיל מן שמיא: ג מפום עולימא ויונקיא אשתיתא עושנא מן בגלל מעיקך ייי לבטלא בעיל דבא וגזומא: ד מטול דאחמי שמך עובדי אצבעותך סיהרא וככביא די אתקינתא:</p> | <p>8:1 εις το τέλος υπερ των ληνων ψαλμος τω δαυιδ 8:2 κυριε ο κυριος ημων ως θαυμαστον το ονομα σου εν παση τη γη οτι επηρθη η μεγαλοπρεπεια σου υπερανω των ουρανων 8:3 εκ στοματος νηπιων και θηλαζοντων κατηρτισω αινον ενεκα των εχθρων σου του καταλυσαι εχθρον και εκδικητην 8:4 οτι οψομαι τους ουρανους εργα των δακτυλων σου σεληνην και αστερας α συ εθεμελιωσας 8:5 τι εστιν ανθρωπος οτι μιμηνησκη αυτου η υιος ανθρωπου οτι επισκεπητη αυτον</p> |

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| <p>ו וַתַּחֲסֹרְהוּ מְעַט מֵאַלְהֵיִם וְכָבוֹד וְהִדָּר תַּעֲטָרְהוּ: ז תִּמְשִׁילֶהוּ בְּמַעֲשֵׂי יָדָיְךָ כֹּל שִׁתָּה תַחַת-רַגְלָיו: ח צְנָה וְאַלְפִים כָּלָם וְגַם בְּהֵמוֹת שָׂדֵי: ט צַפּוֹר שָׁמַיִם וּדְגֵי הַיָּם עִבְר אֲרָחוֹת יַמִּים: י יְהוָה אֲדַנִּינוּ מֶה- אֲדִיר שְׁמֶךָ בְּכָל-הָאָרֶץ:</p> | <p>ה מה בר נשא בר נש מטול ארום תדכר עובדוי ובר נשא מטול ארום תסער עלוי: ו וחסרתא וחסרתיה יתיה קליל ממלאכיא ואיקרא ויקרא ושבהורא תכלליניה: ז אשלטתיה בעובדי ידך כולא שויתא תחות רגלוי: ח עאן ותורי כולהום ולחוד בעירי חקלא: ט צפורי ציפרי שמיא וכוורי ונוני ימא ולויתן דחליף דגווה אסרטי ימא: י אלהא ייי רבוננא כמה תליל ומשבח שמך בכולא ארעא:</p> | <p>8:6 ηλαττωσας αυτον βραχυ τι παρ' αγγελουσ δοξη και τιμη εστεφανωσας αυτον 8:7 και κατεστησας αυτον επι τα εργα των χειρων σου παντα υπεταξας υποκατω των ποδων αυτου 8:8 προβατα και βοασ πασας ετι δε και τα κτηνη του πεδιου 8:9 τα πετεινα του ουρανου και τους ιχθυασ της θαλασσης τα διαπορευομενα τριβουσ θαλασσων 8:10 κυριε ο κυριος ημων ως θαυμαστον το ονομα σου εν παση τη γη (LXX)</p> |
| <p>Tehillim / Psalms 8 For the choir director; on the Gittith. A Psalm of David. 8:1 O Lord, our Lord, How majestic is Your name in all the earth, Who have displayed Your splen- dor above the heavens! 8:2 From the mouth of infants and nursing babes You have established strength Because of Your adversaries, To make the enemy and the revengeful cease. 8:3 When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained; 8:4 What is man that You take thought of him, And the son of man that You care for him? 8:5 Yet You have made him a little lower than God, And You crown him with glory and maj- esty! 8:6 You make him to rule over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet, 8:7 All sheep and oxen, And also the beasts of the field, 8:8 The birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea, Whatever passes through the paths of the seas. 8:9 O Lord, our Lord, How majestic is Your name in all the earth! (NASB)</p> | <p>Toviyah / Psalms Chapter 8 8:1 For praise, on the lyre that he brought from Gath. A hymn of David. 8:2 O God our master, how lofty is your name and praiseworthy in all the earth, you who have placed your splendor above the heavens. 8:3 From the mouth of chil- dren and infants you have established strength because of your oppressors, to bring to naught the enemy and the vio- lent man. 8:4 Because I see your heav- ens, the works of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have fixed in place, 8:5 What is a son of man, because you will remember his deeds, and a son of man, because you will punish him? 8:6 And you have made him a little less than the angels, and you will crown him with glory and brightness. 8:7 You made him ruler over the works of your hands; all things you have placed under his feet. 8:8 Sheep and oxen, all of them, and also the beasts of the field. 8:9 The birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, and Levi- athan, who passes along the paths of the sea. 8:10 O God our master, how lofty and praiseworthy is your name in all the earth! (EMC)</p> | <p>Tehillim / Psalms Chapter 8 For the end, concerning the wine-presses, a Psalm of David. 8:1 O Lord, our Lord, how wonderful is thy name in all the earth! for thy magnificence is exalted above the heavens. 8:2 Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou perfected praise, because of thine enemies; that thou might- est put down the enemy and avenger. 8:3 For I will regard the heavens, the work of thy fingers; the moon and stars, which thou hast established. 8:4 What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? 8:5 Thou madest him a little less than angels, thou hast crowned him with glory and honour; 8:6 and thou hast set him over the works of thy hands: thou hast put all things under his feet: 8:7 sheep and all oxen, yea and the cattle of the field; 8:8 the birds of the sky, and the fish of the sea, the creatures passing through the paths of the sea. 8:9 O Lord our Lord, how wonderful is thy name in all the earth! (LXX)</p> |

In this week’s study, *Tehillim / Psalms 8*, the opening verse states: א לְמִנְצַחַ עַל-הַגִּתִּית מְזִמֹּר לְדָוִד: And the “*For the choir director; on the Gittith. A Psalm of David.*” Here, in *Tehillim / Psalms 8*, again we find the transliteration of a Hebrew word into English, the word הַגִּתִּית (Gittith). The root word for Gittith (הַגִּתִּית << גת) is derived from the word “Gat” (גת). Note that transliterating the Hebrew letter “Tav” (ת) the English translations use the letters “th” and so obtaining the translation “Gittith.” There are two “t” in the middle of the English word because of the dagesh (dot) in the center of the letter Tav which causes “virtual doubling,” this is similar to the word “Rabbi” spelled with two letter “b” (רַבִּי). The meaning of the root word “Gat” (גת) is “*cistern or wine-press.*” The rabbinic literature on *Tehillim / Psalms 8*, questions the meaning of this word HaGittith (הַגִּתִּית) and considers the translation of this word to be “*wine-press.*” The

Aramaic translation (Targum Pseudo Jonathan) states: *לשבחא על כינורא דאייתי מגת תושבחתא לדוד: 8:1 For praise, on the lyre that he brought from Gath. A hymn of David. (EMC)*. Here, the Aramaic translation states explicitly using word “Gat” (גת) as the translation of the word הַגְּתִית (Gittith). Note that regardless of the Aramaic translation, the meaning of this word is not so straight forward and we may conclude this may be the reason for its transliteration into the English language. The difficulty arises by reason of the Aramaic translation. The Aramaic translation literally states *כינורא דאייתי מגת “lyre (stringed instrument) to be (which was) brought from Gat.”* Why would David be bringing a stringed instrument from a wine-press? Would this word be better translated being related to a place (location or city) rather than the wine-press? Could this be a reference to the people of גת by spelling it as הַגְּתִית? One way of referencing a people group may be to place the name of the originator into the plural form. In the Scriptures, Gath is one of the five royal cities of the Philistines according to *Joshua 13:3*, upon which the ark of the covenant brought great calamity according to *1 Samuel 5:8-9 and 6:17*. The city was also famous being the birthplace or residence of Goliath (*1 Samuel 17:4*). The Scriptures also tell us that David fled from Saul to Achish, the king of Gath (*1 Samuel 21:10, 27:2-4, and Psalms 56*), and his connection to Gath accounts for the words in *2 Samuel 1:20*. Gath was later conquered by David in *2 Samuel 8:1*. Gath held a strong position on the borders of Judah and Philistia (*1 Samuel 21:10 and 1 Chronicles 18:1*). Its site has been identified with the hill called Tell esSafieh, the Alba Specula of the Middle Ages, which rises 695 feet above the plain on its east edge. The name Gath is found written upon monuments dating to 1500 BC. In *2 Kings 14:25*, Gath-hepher (מְגַת הַהֶפֶר) is a “wine-press of the well” the name of a town of Lower Galilee, about 5 miles from Nazareth and the birthplace of Jonah. This is the same city as translated as Gittah-hepher in *Joshua 19:13*. It has been identified with the modern village of el-Meshed. The Scriptures also list the name of Gath-rimmon meaning “press of the pomegranate,” a city of the Levites in the tribe of Dan (*Joshua 19:45, 21:24, and 1 Chronicles 6:69*). Another city of the same name in Manasseh, west of the Jordan (*Joshua 21:25*), and is also called Bileam in *1 Chronicles 6:70*. (*Easton’s Dictionary*).

Searching the Scriptures on the word הַגְּתִית (Gittith) found in *Tehillim / Psalms 8*, the word occurs only twice in the Scripture spelled as הַגְּתִית occurring in *Tehillim / Psalms 81:1 and 84:1*

ספר תהילים פרק פא

א לְמַנְצֵחַ | עַל-הַגְּתִית לְאָסָף:

“For the choir director; on the Gittith. A Psalm of Asaph.”

ספר תהילים פרק פד

א לְמַנְצֵחַ עַל-הַגְּתִית לְבְנֵי-קַרְח מְזִמֹּר:

“For the choir director; on the Gittith. A Psalm of the sons of Korah.”

In *Tehillim / Psalms 81:1 and 84:1*, we also find the Hebrew word transliterated in the English translation as Gittith (הַגְּתִית) like in *8:1*.

Examining the LXX (Septuagint) translation, it is interesting that the LXX takes the rabbinic interpretation from the Midrash stating *8:1 εις το τελος υπερ των ληνων ψαλμος τω δαυιδ For the end, concerning the wine-presses (ληνων), a Psalm of David. (LXX)* The LXX is the oldest known Greek translation of the Tanach dating to the 3rd century BC, translated by 72 rabbis. It is a translation into Koine Greek of the Tanach. It incorporates the oldest of several ancient translations of the Tanach, the apocrypha (Deuterocanonical books). In *Midrash Tehillim 8*, the rabbis speak extensively upon the “wine-press” and the meaning of the word הַגְּתִית (Gittith). In verse *8:1*, the Greek translation utilize the rabbinic tradition and translates הַגְּתִית (Gittith) as “wine-press” (ληνων). The differences in the translation to Aramaic, Greek, and English

demonstrate the difficulty on the translation and the meaning, or purpose of this Psalm and the use of the word in the introduction verse. Reading the context of *Tehillim / Psalm 8*, the Psalm does not appear to be related to a wine-press, which in many instances is a reference to either wrath or blessing. The context of the Psalm appears to be related to the Praise of the works of God's hands and the Lord's ultimate control overall of the world including our enemies. The reason for David composing the Psalm for the choir director on the Gittith (לְמַנְצֵחַ עַל-הַגִּתִּית) is indeed not so straight forward and we may conclude this is most likely the reason for its transliteration into the English language.

The next verse is a well known verse that states בְּיְהוָה אֲדַגִּינוּ מִה-אֲדִיר שְׁמֹךְ בְּכָל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר-תָּנָה 8:1 *O Lord, our Lord, How majestic is Your name in all the earth, Who have displayed Your splendor above the heavens!* (NASB) David is declaring the awesomeness of God's Name which is established in the glory of His works that He has done for the nation of Israel. Here this verse focuses upon the Name of God (יְהוָה). Studying this verse in the English translation, interestingly the NASB uses a circumlocution for the Name of God in *Tehillim / Psalms 8:1* substituting the word "LORD" for the "YHVH." Other translations also do the same thing here in 8:1, shown below from the NIV and the KJV.

8:1 For the director of music. According to A psalm of David. O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. (NIV)

8:1 O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. (KJV)

Throughout the Scriptures, when we read the words "Lord God" juxtaposed together, it is most likely because of the Hebrew words יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים (YHVH Elohim), where the Name of God (יְהוָה) is juxtaposed to the word for God (אֱלֹהִים). The English translations for the most part translate the Hebrew text according to rabbinic tradition, that the Name of God is not to be pronounced and that a circumlocution should be used to prevent making the name common which would then lead itself to profaning the name of God. The first occurrence of the Name of God is found in *Bereshit / Genesis 2:4* אֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ בְּהַבְרָאָם 2:4 *This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made earth and heaven. (NASB)* A lot can be said concerning the use of the circumlocution in the Hebrew Scriptures. For example, Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew English Lexicon (BDB) has an interesting comment on the word Adonai. Throughout the Scriptures there are variations of the word Adon (אֲדוֹן) meaning "Lord" such as Adonei, Adoni, and two variations of Adonai using the nikkud vowel marks, the qametz and the patach. According to the BDB lexicon, these variations in the nikkud vowel marks are used to distinguish the divine references from human references. In the Hebrew mind and for understanding the Scriptures this is very important. For example, in *Bereshit / Genesis 18:3*, the Masoretic text points the word "Adonai" with the qametz and not the patach in the meeting and conversation the angles have with Abraham. The use of two vowel pointing marks by the masorets suggest that Abraham was addressing the Lord God Almighty. Interestingly, comparing a printed copy of the LXX with the Hebrew text, the word Kurie (κύριε) from the word "κύριος" (kurios) is used meaning "Lord." The word "Lord" is capitalized in the Greek text indicating the translators of the LXX were under the opinion that this name Adonai was a reference to the Lord God Almighty. The capital letter suggests the 72 rabbis believed Adonai in Hebrew was a reference to the Name of God that is written in *Bereshit / Genesis 18:1* אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה (אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה בְּאֵלֹהֵי מִמְרָא וְהוּא יֵשֵׁב בְּתַת-הָאֵל כְּחֵם הַיּוֹם).

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| <p>ΓΕΝΕΣΙΣ 18:1-3 ὤφθη δὲ αὐτῷ ὁ θεὸς πρὸς τῆ δρυὶ τῆ Μαμβρη καθήμενου αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τῆς θύρας τῆς σκηνῆς αὐτοῦ μεσημβρίας, ἀναβλέψας δὲ τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς αὐτοῦ εἶδεν καὶ ἰδοὺ τρεῖς ἄνδρες εἰστήκεισαν ἐπάνω αὐτοῦ καὶ ἰδὼν προσέδραμεν εἰς συνάντησιν αὐτοῖς ἀπὸ τῆς θύρας τῆς σκηνῆς αὐτοῦ καὶ προσεκύνησεν ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν, καὶ εἶπεν κύριε εἰ ἄρα εὖρον χάριν ἐναντίον σου μὴ παρέλθῃς τὸν παῖδά σου</p> | <p>Bereshit / Genesis 18:1-3 18:1 Appeared and to him God before the oak in Mamre, at his sitting near the door of his tent at the midday. 18:2 And lifting up his eyes he saw; and behold three men had set upon him. And seeing, he ran up to meet with them from the door of his tent. And he did obeisance upon the ground. 18:3 And he said, O Lord, if surely I found favor before you, you should not go by your servant. (Literal Translation)</p> |
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Studying the variant spelling on the word Adonai with the qametz, this variant spelling occurs 134 times in the Tanakh without the divine name YHVH or Elohim. A complete list of verses can be found in the “*Hebrew Bible: BFBS Major Edition (volumes 3 and 4a)*” by Dr Christian D. Ginsburg. Examine the following verses from Ginsburg’s Masoretic text from the Torah, *Bereshit / Genesis 18:27, 18:31, 19:18, 20:4, Shemot / Exodus 4:10, 4:13, 15:17, 34:9, Bamidbar / Numbers 14:17*. These select verses contain the occurrences of Adonai without the accompanying divine names. While examining these verses it is interesting to observe in the Marginal Masorah, Ginsburg notes in some copies of the Torah, the word “Adonai” is found to be written as the YHVH (*Bereshit 20:4, Shemot 15:17, and Bamidbar 14:17*).

פרשת וירא ספר בראשית פלק כ פסוק ד

v. 28. ס"א ועל־פני כָּל־ארץ וכן ח"ש, ות"א כ"י, ועל פני הַנֶּכֶר בח"ע. v. 30. כן בהללי, ירושלמי מַצְעֵר חסר. v. 31. בהללי לְבָא חסר. v. 33. סביר הֵהוּא וכן ח"י. v. 33. נקוד על ו'. v. 4. ס"א יְהוָה.

פרשת בשלח ספר שמות פלק טו פסוק יז

v. 13. ב"ג גְּאֵלֶת רַסִי. v. 16. ס"א עליהם | פסק. v. 16. כן בהללי, ירושלמי זְרָעָה חסר. v. 16. בהללי קָנִיתָ. v. 17. נ"א ב"ג וְחִטְעֵמוּ בַגְּעִיָּא. v. 17. ס"א יְהוָה וכן ר"ב, חד"ה ד"ו וח"ש. v. 19. כן יריחו אֶת־ בריש שורה שניה. v. 20. ס"א וְחִצְאָן, וגמסר עליה במוגה וְחִצְאָן. v. 25. ו רבתי.

פרשת שלח-לך ספר במדבר יד פסוק יז

v. 17. י' רבתי. v. 17. ברוב ספרים כ"י יְהוָה וכן ד"ב. v. 18. ס"א חסר וַאֲמַת וכן ח"ש, ת"י ות"ע: עיין שמות ל"ד ו'. v. 18. ס"א וּפִשַׁע וְחַפְּאָה וכן ח"ש, ת"י ות"ע: עיין שמות ל"ד ז'. v. 18. בונבוקי וְנָקָה בַסְּגוּל. v. 20. ס"א פְּדֻבְרִיקָה מלא וכן ח"ש, חד"ד וד"ו. v. 21. כן ירושלמי, בהללי כָּבֵד חסר. v. 22. כן בהללי, ירושלמי פְּקָלִי חסר. v. 23. כן ב"א, ב"ג וְכָל־ בַּגְּעִיָּא, נ"א ב"א וְכָל־ בַּגְּעִיָּא, וב"ג וְכָל־ בלא געיא. v. 24. כן ירושלמי, בהללי יוֹרִישָׁנָה מלא יו"ד. v. 25. סביר הַמְדַבְּרָה, בס"א הַמְדַבְּרָה כתיב וקרי וכן בח"ש. v. 27. כן ב"א, ב"ג אֶת־ בַּגְּעִיָּא.

In *Bereshit / Genesis 20:4, Shemot / Exodus 15:17, and Bamidbar / Numbers 14:17* the marginal Masorah contains a very significant note on the name Adonai. The note in the Masorah on “Adonai” concerning the manuscript evidence is consistent with the rabbinic tradition on the use of the circumlocution for the Name of God. The Masorah note indicates that in other manuscripts, such as the “*First edition of the entire Bible, Soncino 1488,*” the “*Third edition of the Bible,*” “*Brescia 1494,*” and the “*Pentateuch, Brescia 1492*” the Word Adonai is replaced with the YHVH. Now the question arises whether the variant

manuscripts were intentionally modified by the scribe who copied it or accidentally wrote the word YHVH because it was believed this reference is to the Lord God Almighty? Regardless on the reason behind the origin of the textual variant, the alternate texts (manuscripts), the Tetragramaton (YHVH) is used rather than the word Adonai. The manuscript evidence found in Ginsburg's critical apparatus of the Hebrew Bible supports the translation that one of the Angels (men) Abraham was speaking to was the Lord God Almighty. It is clear the Masorets believed the text in *Bereshit / Genesis 18:1-3* to be a reference for God Himself appearing to Abraham when the word Adonai is written with the qametz. In addition to this, rabbinic commentary in the *Talmud Bavli Shabbat 127a and Shavuot 35b* contain a dialog on the text that Abraham is speaking to God. It also is interesting to note that the angels went down to Sodom to see what was said was happening and God Himself did not go to that wicked place. Back to the Psalm of David, he declares the glory of God saying : על-השמים: יהוה אֲדִינֵנוּ מִה-אֲדִיר שְׁמֶךָ בְּכָל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר-תְּנָה הוֹדָךְ עַל-הַשָּׁמַיִם: ב 8:1 *O Lord, our Lord, How majestic is Your name in all the earth, Who have displayed Your splendor above the heavens!* (NASB) declaring for us the “power” of God’s Name (יהוה) throughout all the earth, the Lord has displayed His majesty (הוֹדָךְ) upon the heavens. The NASB among other English translations use the circumlocution LORD for the Name of God in *Tehillim / Psalms 8:1* and elsewhere throughout the Bible.

David then states : מִפִּי עוֹלָלִים | וַיִּנְקִים יְסֻדָּתָ עַז לְמַעַן צוֹרְרֶיךָ לְהַשְׁבִּית אוֹיֵב וּמַתְנַקֵּם: ג 8:2 *From the mouth of infants and nursing babes You have established strength Because of Your adversaries, To make the enemy and the revengeful cease.* (NASB) How does God establish his strength in the mouth of “infants” and “nursing babes?” While thinking upon this Scripture, the Lord God Almighty is the one who makes infants and babies, the one who is weak who must depend upon his or her parents to be taken care of. These Scriptures are telling us that “the one who is weak and depends upon the Lord,” this person will praise the Lord because it is God who stops and defeats his enemies.

Looking in the Apostolic Commentary, it is interesting that Yeshua references this verse from *Tehillim / Psalms 8:2* following his triumphal entry into Jerusalem (*Matthew 21:9*) we read in *Matthew 21:16* ¹⁵ἰδόντες δὲ οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς τὰ θαυμάσια ἃ ἐποίησεν καὶ τοὺς παῖδας τοὺς κράζοντας ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ καὶ λέγοντας, Ὡσαννὰ τῷ υἱῷ Δαυὶδ, ἠγανάκτησαν ¹⁶καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ, Ἀκούεις τί οὗτοι λέγουσιν; ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς λέγει αὐτοῖς, Ναί: οὐδέποτε ἀνέγνωτε ὅτι Ἐκ στόματος νηπίων καὶ θηλαζόντων κατηρτίσω αἶνον; 21:15 *But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that He had done, and the children who were shouting in the temple, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David,’ they became indignant 21:16 and said to Him, ‘Do You hear what these children are saying?’ And Jesus said to them, ‘Yes; have you never read, ‘Out of the mouth of infants and nursing babes You have prepared praise for Yourself?’* (NASB) According to the context of *Matthew 21*, Yeshua had entered into the city and the children were proclaiming in the Temple saying ‘*Hosanna to the Son of David,*’ and the chief priests and scribes become indignant. The way that God dealt with the leadership in the Temple was to declare his praises by these young ones and even infants, the smallest and weakest of people, proclaim the strength of the Lord God Almighty. Yeshua said earlier in *Matthew 18:3*, ³καὶ εἶπεν, Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, ἐὰν μὴ στραφητε καὶ γένησθε ὡς τὰ παιδία, οὐ μὴ εἰσέλθητε εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν. 18:3 *and said, ‘Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.* (NASB) Yeshua also said in *Matthew 19:14*, ¹⁴ὁ δὲ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν, Ἄφετε τὰ παιδία καὶ μὴ κωλύετε αὐτὰ ἔλθειν πρὸς με, τῶν γὰρ τοιούτων ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν. 19:14 *But Jesus said, ‘Let the children alone, and do not hinder them from coming to Me; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.’* (NASB) According to these Scriptures from the Apostolic Gospels, in order for us to be strong and mighty in the Lord, we are to become as infants and like suckling babies. This illustrates our total dependence upon the Lord God for all of our needs. As we become more mature in the Lord (*in Christ, in the Messiah, in the Anointed One*) we are to depend more and more upon the Lord God Almighty for all of our needs. Without this kind of dependence, without become weak, we cannot give praise. If we are arguing, gossiping (Lashon Harah), joking, fighting, envious, proud, etc, we cannot give praise. The Lord desires to strengthen us from within, and so we must first become like babes

and sucklings and praise the Lord so that He may defeat the enemy, the adversary, the Devil (HaSatan). When we give praise unto the Lord, we kill the spirit of the adversary within, and thereby destroying our enemies surrounding us. It is then that we are able to feed our enemies and to pray for those who persecute us and despitefully use and abuse us. We are to “love” our enemies as it says in *Matthew 5:44*. Yeshua said in *Matthew 11:25-26*, ²⁵Ἐν ἐκείνῳ τῷ καιρῷ ἀποκριθεὶς ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν, Ἐξομολογοῦμαι σοι, πάτερ, κύριε τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ τῆς γῆς, ὅτι ἔκρυψας ταῦτα ἀπὸ σοφῶν καὶ συνετῶν καὶ ἀπεκάλυψας αὐτὰ νηπίοις; ²⁶ναί, ὁ πατήρ, ὅτι οὕτως εὐδοκία ἐγένετο ἔμπροσθέν σου. *11:25 At that time Jesus said, ‘I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants. 11:26 ‘Yes, Father, for this way was well-pleasing in Your sight. (NASB)* We are to seek the things that the Lord has hidden, those things that He has hidden from the wise and intelligent and has revealed to infants and babes. When we become like infants and babes, we are able to call upon the name of the Lord out of a “pure” (clean) heart (*take note of Tehillim / Psalms 66:18 and the necessity of having a pure/clean heart*), not like those who call out to the Lord believing themselves to be “wise and intelligent.”

David goes on to say: כִּי-אַרְאָה שָׁמַיִךְ מַעֲשֵׂי אֶצְבְּעֹתֶיךָ יָרַח וְכֹכְבֵּים אֲשֶׁר כּוֹנְנֹתָ: 8:3 *When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have ordained; (NASB)* Here in *Tehillim / Psalms 8:4(3)* David literally says “because (כִּי) I see (אַרְאָה) Your Name (שָׁמַיִךְ) the works (מַעֲשֵׂי) of your finger (אֶצְבְּעֹתֶיךָ).” According to this verse, the Name of God is synonymous with the working of the “finger of God.” How do we understand the meaning of the “finger of God?” In Parashat Va’era, *Shemot / Exodus 8:15(19)*, when Moshe performed the miracle of gnats before Pharaoh, the magicians said: וַיֹּאמְרוּ הַחֹרְטָמִים אֶל-פְּרַעֲהוֹ אֶצְבַּע אֱלֹהִים הוּא וַיִּחַזַק לִב-פְּרַעֲהוֹ וְלֹא-שָׁמַע אֶלְהֶם כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה: 8:19 *Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, ‘This is the finger of God.’ But Pharaoh’s heart was hardened, and he did not listen to them, as the Lord had said. (NASB)* The magicians tried to do the same thing by their “secret arts” and were unable to do so, they proclaimed to Pharaoh that “This is the finger of God” (אֶצְבַּע אֱלֹהִים הוּא). In the Ketuvei Shelachim (Apostolic Writings) Yeshua was casting out demons and some of the people said that Yeshua casts out demons by Beelzebul. (*Additional notes: Beelzebul was believed to be a chief demon in Judaism, The term Beelzebul is based upon the Hebrew phrase ba’al-zevuv, the pagan god of Ekron (see 2 Kings 1:3). This was not actually the name given to the idol god, but the mocking name applied by the Hebrews which literally means “Lord of the flies” and is a play on the Hebrew phrase baal zevul meaning “Lord or husbandman of dung.” Note also that there is a rabbinic term, zevul meaning “temple,” that is sometimes applied to the temple in Jerusalem, and at other times to pagan temples in a mocking manner according to “A Dictionary of the Targumim, Talmud Bavli, Talmud Yerushalmi and Midrashic Literature” by Marcus Jastrow on the Hebrew word zevul.*) The response Yeshua gave is found in *Luke 11:14-20*, ¹⁴Καὶ ἦν ἐκβάλλων δαιμόνιον [καὶ αὐτὸ ἦν] κωφόν: ἐγένετο δὲ τοῦ δαιμονίου ἐξεληθόντος ἐλάλησεν ὁ κωφός. καὶ ἐθαύμασαν οἱ ὄχλοι: ¹⁵τινὲς δὲ ἐξ αὐτῶν εἶπον, Ἐν Βεελζεβούλ τῷ ἄρχοντι τῶν δαιμονίων ἐκβάλλει τὰ δαιμόνια: ¹⁶ἄλλοι δὲ πειράζοντες σημεῖον ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἐζήτουν παρ’ αὐτοῦ. ¹⁷αὐτὸς δὲ εἰδὼς αὐτῶν τὰ διανοήματα εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Πᾶσα βασιλεία ἐφ’ ἑαυτὴν διαμερισθεῖσα ἐρημοῦται, καὶ οἶκος ἐπὶ οἶκον πίπτει. ¹⁸εἰ δὲ καὶ ὁ Σατανᾶς ἐφ’ ἑαυτὸν διεμερίσθη, πῶς σταθήσεται ἡ βασιλεία αὐτοῦ; ὅτι λέγετε ἐν Βεελζεβούλ ἐκβάλλειν με τὰ δαιμόνια. ¹⁹εἰ δὲ ἐγὼ ἐν Βεελζεβούλ ἐκβάλλω τὰ δαιμόνια, οἱ υἱοὶ ὑμῶν ἐν τίνι ἐκβάλλουσιν; διὰ τοῦτο αὐτοὶ ὑμῶν κριταὶ ἔσονται. ²⁰εἰ δὲ ἐν δακτύλῳ θεοῦ [ἐγὼ] ἐκβάλλω τὰ δαιμόνια, ἄρα ἔφθασεν ἐφ’ ὑμᾶς ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ. *11:14 And He was casting out a demon, and it was mute; when the demon had gone out, the mute man spoke; and the crowds were amazed. 11:15 But some of them said, ‘He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons.’ 11:16 Others, to test Him, were demanding of Him a sign from heaven. 11:17 But He knew their thoughts and said to them, ‘Any kingdom divided against itself is laid waste; and a house divided against itself falls. 11:18 ‘If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebul. 11:19 ‘And if I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? So they will be your judges. 11:20 ‘But if I cast out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. (NASB)* Here Yeshua uses the phrase “by

the finger of God” (ἐν δακτύλῳ θεοῦ) “*I cast out by divine power*” ([ἐγὼ] ἐκβάλλω τὰ δαιμόνια). The finger of God references the thing that only God is able to do. In the casting out of the demon who was deaf and mute, a person could not obtain the name of the demon to cast out. Not knowing the name of the demon it is impossible to bind the demon and cast him out. A demon that inflicted physically both deaf and mute presented an impossible case. Here Yeshua by the power of God casts out the demon with ease. The remainder of the verse in *Tehillim / Psalms 8:3*, the moon and the stars (יְרֵחַ וְכּוֹכְבִּים) God has ordained (פְּוֹנְנָהּ), to establish, make ready, fix, or provide. The glory of the heavens declare the power of God and require that God’s name be praised. The stars, the moon, and the earth did not come into being all by itself and man does not have the ability to change these things, therefore the only response we have when seeing the sun, the moon, and the stars is to give glory and praise to the Lord God Almighty who is above the heavens.

As a result of God’s power and glory, David says *ה 8:4 מַה-אֲנוֹשׁ כִּי-תִזְכְּרֵנוּ וּבֶן-אָדָם כִּי תִפְקְדֵנוּ: What is man that You take thought of him, And the son of man that You care for him? (NASB)* The Scriptures literally says “*What is man that You remember us and the son of man that You count/number us.*” According to the Scriptures, Shepherds would perform a frequent head count of their flocks in order to prevent the animals from straying away. The Torah describes the counting or numbering of sheep is performed by passing them one by one under the rod of the shepherd whereby every tenth is considered Kedosh (holy) unto the Lord in *Vayikra / Leviticus 27:32*, וְכָל-מִעֵשֶׂר בְּקָר וְצֹאן כָּל אֲשֶׁר-יַעֲבֹר תַּחַת הַשֶּׁבֶט הַעֲשִׂירִי יִהְיֶה-קֹדֶשׁ, לַיהוָה *27:32 For every tenth part of herd or flock, whatever passes under the rod, the tenth one shall be holy to the LORD. (NASB)* According to the Scriptures, the shepherd was used to designate not only persons who herded sheep but also as a reference to kings (*2 Samuel 5:2*) and God Himself (*Tehillim / Psalms 23:1; Isaiah 40:11*) and later the prophets are also referred to Israel’s leadership as shepherds (*Jeremiah 23:1; Ezekiel 34:1*). The sheep were used to provide food (*Shemot / Exodus 12:3*), wool for clothing (*Job 31:20*), and in parables to show a contrast between the truth and a lie (*Matthew 7:15, I.e. wolves in sheep’s clothing*). Furthermore, sheep were used as offerings in the sacrificial system (*Shemot / Exodus 20:24*). They were offered as burnt offerings (*Vayikra / Leviticus 1:10*), as sin offerings (*Vayikra / Leviticus 4:32*), and as peace offerings (*Vayikra / Leviticus 22:21*). Shepherds were among the first to visit Yeshua at His birth (*Luke 2:8-20*). The Apostles reference Yeshua as the shepherd and use the sheep to illustrate His relationship to His followers who refer to Him as “*our Lord Yeshua, that great shepherd of the sheep*” (*Hebrews 13:20*). Yeshua even spoke of Himself as “*the good shepherd*” who knew His sheep and would lay down His life for them (*John 10:7-18*). Yeshua also commissioned Peter to feed His sheep in *John 21:1*. The numbering or counting of the son of man therefore is a reference to the Shepherd who takes care of His sheep. Note that this verse from *Tehillim / Psalms 8:5(4)* is used in the Ketuvei Shelachim (Apostolic Writings) in *Hebrews 2:6-8* which states, ⁶διεμαρτύρατο δέ πού τις λέγων, Τί ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος ὅτι μιμνήσκη αὐτοῦ, ἢ υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ὅτι ἐπισκέπη αὐτόν; ⁷ἠλάττωσας αὐτόν βραχύ τι παρ’ ἀγγέλους, δόξη καὶ τιμῇ ἐστεφάνωσας αὐτόν, ⁸πάντα ὑπέταξας ὑποκάτω τῶν ποδῶν αὐτοῦ. ἐν τῷ γὰρ ὑποτάξει [αὐτῷ] τὰ πάντα οὐδὲν ἀφήκεν αὐτῷ ἀνυπότακτον. νῦν δὲ οὐπω ὁρῶμεν αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα ὑποτεταγμένα: *2:6 But one has testified somewhere, saying, ‘What is man, that You remember him? Or the son of man, that You are concerned about him? 2:7 ‘You have made him for a little while lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, And have appointed him over the works of Your hands; 2:8 You have put all things in subjection under his feet.’ For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him. (NASB)* Here in the Apostolic commentary in the book of Hebrews, the author writes ‘*What is man, that You remember him? Or the son of man, that You are concerned about him?*’ equating the numbering or counting with having concern for man. It is interesting the Aramaic translation states *8:5 What is a son of man, because you will remember his deeds, and a son of man, because you will punish him? (EMC)* and the LXX translates *8:4 ὅτι ὁμοίαι τοὺς οὐρανοὺς ἐργὰ τῶν δακτυλῶν σου σεληνὴν καὶ ἀστὲρας αὐτῶν ἐθεμελίωσας 8:4 What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? (LXX)* Here in the

Aramaic translation, it appears that the rabbinic understanding on *Tehillim / Psalms 8:5(4)* is when the Lord remembers man, will He be mindful to punish him? No, the Lord's remembering of man is done so as to save man. In a similar manner, the LXX translates the numbering or counting as God having visited him. The remembering and visiting is consistent with the Lord doing good and not harm.

David then quantifies how the Lord remembers man and cares for the son of man in *Tehillim / Psalms 8:6-9(5-8)*, ה ונתחַסְרְהוּ מְעַט מֵאַלְהִים וְכָבוֹד וְהָדָר תִּעֲטֹרְהוּ: ז תַּמְשִׁילֵהוּ בְּמַעֲשֵׂי יָדָיךָ כֹּל שְׂפָתָה תַחַת-רַגְלָיו: ה 8:6-9(5-8) *Yet You have made him a little lower than God, And You crown him with glory and majesty! 8:6 You make him to rule over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet, 8:7 All sheep and oxen, And also the beasts of the field, 8:8 The birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea, Whatever passes through the paths of the seas.* (NASB) It is interesting here the Scripture says literally: ה ונתחַסְרְהוּ מְעַט מֵאַלְהִים וְכָבוֹד וְהָדָר תִּעֲטֹרְהוּ: ז “a little lower than God (מֵאַלְהִים) and adorn him with a crown of glory.” This is interesting because in the Apostolic commentary we read in *Hebrews 2:7* ‘You have made him for a little while lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, (NASB) that He (God) made Yeshua a little lower than angels. The Aramaic translation on this verse states ו וחסרתא וחסרתיה יתיה קליל ממלאכיא ואיקרא ויקרא ושבבורא 8:6 And you have made him a little less than the angels, and you will crown him with glory and brightness. (EMC), could the author of Hebrews have been quoting from the Aramaic translation on *Tehillim / Psalms 8:6(5)*? The crown of glory that the Lord bestows upon man and the son of man is to cause him to rule over His creation: ז 8:6 You make him to rule over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet, the Lord makes man to rule over all of the works of His hands and put all things under the authority of his feet. Here these Scriptures are used to show us what God has done in His Messiah Yeshua, that Yeshua has all authority and dominion. In the Scriptures, the Lord gave dominion of the world into the hands of mankind according to *Bereshit / Genesis 1:26*, כו וַיֹּאמֶר, אֱלֹהִים נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כְּדֹמוֹתֵנוּ וַיְרִדוּ בְדִגְתַּי הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבַבְּהֵמָה וּבְכָל-הָאָרֶץ וּבְכָל-הָרֶמֶשׂ הָרֹמֵשׂ עַל-הָאָרֶץ: 1:26 Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” (NASB) In the context of Hebrews chapter 2, the Scriptures are speaking of Yeshua the Messiah, *Hebrews 2:8* “... For in subjecting all things to him, He left nothing that is not subject to him. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him.” 2:9 But we do see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone. 2:10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings. 11 For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, (NASB) In the placing under the authority of the “son of man,” the Lord made Yeshua His Son, to taste death for all peoples, bringing even death itself under His authority, and then crowning Him in glory and honor. The purpose was so many would come to glory by salvation through Yeshua’s suffering. According to the Scriptures, God gave the authority and rule over the world, of the living creatures (beasts of the field), the birds of heaven and the fish under the sea, even of the earth itself and placed it into man’s hands where *Tehillim / Psalms 8:6* is a commentary on *Bereshit / Genesis 1:26*. (*Tehillim / Psalms 8:6 You make him to rule over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet, 8:7 All sheep and oxen, And also the beasts of the field, 8:8 The birds of the heavens and the fish of the sea, Whatever passes through the paths of the seas.* (NASB)), The reason God did this, placing rule of His creation into our hands was wholly for the purpose of directing us to know what the Lord had planned from the foundation of the world, to establish His Son (the Living Word of God) to have all authority dominion and power over all things! The Apostle Paul concurs with this assessment according to *1 Corinthians 15:27* ²⁷ πάντα γὰρ ὑπέταξεν ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ. ὅταν δὲ εἴπῃ ὅτι

πάντα ὑποτέτακται, δῆλον ὅτι ἐκτὸς τοῦ ὑποτάξαντος αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα. 15:27 *For He has put all things in subjection under His feet. But when He says, "All things are put in subjection," it is evident that He is excepted who put all things in subjection to Him. (NASB) and Ephesians 1:22, ²²καὶ πάντα ὑπέταξεν ὑπὸ τοῦς πόδας αὐτοῦ, καὶ αὐτὸν ἔδωκεν κεφαλὴν ὑπὲρ πάντα τῆ ἐκκλησίᾳ, 1:22 And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, (NASB) The author of Hebrews continues saying in Hebrews 2:14 Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, 2:15 and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. 2:16 For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendant of Abraham. 2:17 Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. 2:18 For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted. (NASB) The ultimate purpose of the Lord giving dominion or rule over all of creation into man's hands was designed to be a messianic expectation of God's deliverance from sin and death and wonderful salvation in mercy and grace. Think about that for a second, the reason God gave mankind dominion and rule over all of creation was for the purpose of bringing His Messiah, His Savior, His Word into this world to deliver (give) all dominion, authority, and power to Yeshua the Messiah! The plan, from the very beginning (*Bereshit / Genesis 1:26*) was to make man after the image of God being made a little lower than God, but bestowing the authority of God upon this earth to conquer death in His Messiah Yeshua. We are therefore set free from the fear of death and the slavery to sin all of our lives. Yeshua had to be made like His brethren in all things so that He could become our high priest in the things that pertain to the Lord God Almighty (*Hebrews 2:17*) both in this world and in the world to come! Praise God, what a wonderful and awesome God we serve.*

David concludes his Psalm stating יְהוָה אֱדִינֵנוּ מְה־אֲדִיר שְׁמֶךָ כָּכֹל-הָאֲרֶץ: 8:9 *O Lord, our Lord, How majestic is Your name in all the earth! (NASB) How "mighty, powerful, great, and monumental" (אֲדִיר) is the name of the Lord in all the earth. The rabbis translate Tehillim / Psalms 8:10(9) saying אֱלֹהִים יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים כִּמְהַרְבֵּי וּמִשְׁבַּח שִׁמְךָ בְּכֹל אֶרֶץ: 8:10 *O God our master, how lofty and praiseworthy is your name in all the earth! (EMC) that the majesty of God's Name (מְה־אֲדִיר שְׁמֶךָ) is to say that God's Name is "lofty" and "praiseworthy" (וּמִשְׁבַּח) because of all that He has done for His people. Note here in the Aramaic, the Greek, and the English translations, each uses a circumlocution for the Name of God (יְהוָה) translating the YHVH as Lord. This is illustrated in the LXX as κυριε ο κυριος (Kurie O Kurios, Lord O Lord) and in the Aramaic as יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים (Eloha יְהוָה). Precious and wonderful is the Name of the Lord God Almighty to the Hebrew people, and as God's children in Yeshua the Messiah, it is precious for us too (8:10 κυριε ο κυριος ημων ως θαυμαστον το ονομα σου εν παση τη γη (LXX), 8:9 *O Lord our Lord, how wonderful is thy name in all the earth! (LXX)***

David is perhaps the best known Shepherd of Biblical History and we know that throughout the history of the Bible numerous other prominent people held that occupation. The very first shepherd was Abel (*Bereshit / Genesis 4:2*), who tragically, was also humanity's first murder victim. Others were Abraham (*Bereshit / Genesis 12:16*), Rachel (*Bereshit / Genesis 29:9*), Jacob/Israel (*Bereshit / Genesis 30:31*), and Moshe (*Shemot / Exodus 3:1*). According to *Tehillim / Psalms 8*, the Lord God cares for His people and has given dominion, power, and authority to man as a expectation showing us the ultimate Shepherd who cares for us Yeshua the Messiah. Yeshua clearly portrayed Himself as the Shepherd of His flock according to *John 10:7-18*.

John 10:7-18

10:7 *So Jesus said to them again, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. 10:8 'All who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. 10:9 'I*

am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. 10:10 'The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. 10:11 'I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. 10:12 'He who is a hired hand, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. 10:13 'He flees because he is a hired hand and is not concerned about the sheep. 10:14 'I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, 10:15 even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. 10:16 'I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd. 10:17 'For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. 10:18 'No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father.' (NASB)

The love of the Shepherd was demonstrated by the authority that was given to Him (Yeshua) by God, He laid down His life on our behalf, he is victorious over death, and he is the source of all life. Do you see the awesome power of God and the Salvation that He has provided in His Son Yeshua the Messiah? What an Awesome God we serve!

Christian Commentary

According to the *International Critical Commentary on the Psalms (ICCP)*, Driver, Plummer, and Briggs, 2005, *Tehillim / Psalms 8* is an “evening hymn that consists of two trimeter octastichs (n. poem or stanza of eight lines) contrasting the glory of man as creature with the glory of the creator. The Psalm is analyzed based on structure and meter. The stanza are organized by identical trimeter couplets praising the name of YHVH throughout the earth (8:2, 8:10), an initial prayer that YHVH would set His glory above the heavens followed by the contemplation of His strength at the mouths of sucklings and babes overcoming His enemies. Man’s insignificance is compared to the moon and stars (8:2-5) where man is made lower than God and yet is given rule over all of the created creatures (8:6-9). It is interesting to note that the English translation used in the ICCP commentary states that “*man is made lower than the gods*” translating the Hebrew text as “WHEN Thou didst make him a little lower than the Elohim,” whereas Hebrew text states וַיַּעַטְרְהוּ: וְהָיָה כְּכֹדֶד that is translated in the NASB to read 8:5 *Yet You have made him a little lower than God, And You crown him with glory and majesty!* The commentary continues examining the English translation of the first verse “*YHVH, our Sovereign Lord, How magnificent is Thy name in all the earth*” stating that the Hebrew text וְהָיָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ and the English translation “Our Sovereign Lord” does not sufficiently sum up God’s manifestation of Himself by the word “Lord” as the object of commemoration and praise. The first stanza in the Psalm is a trimeter octastich (eight verses) composed of an introductory petition. It is believed that this is a synthesized tristich and tetrastich of two synthetic couplets, that the second is synthetic to the first. The conclusion is that “*a later scribe desired to connect the previous lines and overlooked their independence and inserted the relative without venturing to change the form and so gives difficulty to interpreters from the most ancient times.*” Essentially, the conclusion is this Psalm is not original and the Scribes were again not following the scribal tradition, they were allowed the freedom to modify, change, and insert their desire into the text.

In *Tehillim / Psalms 8:3*, the phrase “*Out of the mouth of little children*” those just able to speak, as sucklings, is superior to all other creatures, this concept is based upon the naming of animals by Adam

from *Bereshit / Genesis 2:19-20*. The enemies of God desire to silence and destroy them. The poet may have been thinking of God in His creative speech found in *Bereshit / Genesis 1*, He has established speech in little children as superior to our enemies. In *Tehillim / Psalms 8:4*, the poet looks up to heaven at night and contemplates the heavens. The commentary states here that a prosaic (*having the style or diction of prose*) copyist inserted “heavens” (הַשָּׁמַיִם) in the first line and destroyed the measure, the moon and stars were created and put in place by God (*Bereshit / Genesis 2:7-19*) is the underlying concept of the creation being created by the “finger” of God whereas the creatures, man and animals, were created by the hand of God like a sculptor carves out images or a potter molds clay. *Tehillim / Psalms 8:5*, “*What is man. The son of mankind*” is not a reference to a particular man but to that of human kind, as in “race.” Man is compared to the moon and stars, God manifests His glory, what does mankind amount to that God would take account of him or be mindful of him?

The commentary next moves to stanza 2 stating it is a trimeter octastich composed of an introduction line as a protasis (*grammar: the clause expressing the condition in a conditional sentence*) and consists of a synthetic distich and a synthetic pentastich all in one sentence “*When Thou Dist make him...*” He states the “Vav consecutive” does not admit of the rendering as an independent clause and refers back to the historic act of creation of moon and stars of verse 8:4, and carries to the new act of the creation of man. The commentary states that here in the Hebrew text 8:5: וַתַּחַסְרֵהוּ מֵעַט מֵאֱלֹהִים וְכָבוֹד וְהָדָר תַּעֲטֹרֵהוּ: 8:5 *Yet You have made him a little lower than God, And You crown him with glory and majesty!* (NASB) the poet is contrasting *Bereshit / Genesis 1:27* with other gods. The commentary states explicitly that the context of the Hebrew text is strictly monotheistic and that poly theism is not thought of in the mind of the poet. However, they say that “Elohim” is a reference to both God and angels that is of a later polytheistic understanding. As a result of the idea that this Psalm is much later than David, the bible translators chose to translate the text as “gods” rather than “God” regardless of whether the Hebrew text itself is strictly monotheistic in form. The commentary concludes on *Tehillim / Psalms 8:5*, being created a little lower than “the Elohim,” and how God crowned mankind with “glory and honor” being created in the image of Elohim (*Bereshit / Genesis 1:26-27*), the honor and glory is given as a result of the God given sovereignty over all the creatures.

Rabbinic Commentary

The rabbinic commentary (Midrash) on *Tehillim / Psalms 8* has 8 parts. Reading through this week’s Midrash we will be looking at Parts 2, and 4. Let’s begin by outlining Midrash Tehillim Chapter 7 Parts 2, and 4.

Outline of Midrash Tehillim / Psalms, Chapter 8, Parts 2 and 4

Part 2:

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דִּבּוּר הַמַּתְחִיל (Dibur Hamathil) “*O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth, yet surely above the heavens set Your glory.*” (*Tehillim / Psalms 8:2*).
- The פְּתִיחָה (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*The Rabbis say at three times is the glory of God set above the heavens, (i) at the making of man, (ii) at the giving of the Torah, and (iii) at the building of the Tabernacle.*”
- The מַשָּׁל (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the פְּתִיחָה (Petihta) on the three things that God had done to establish His glory above the heavens.
- The נִמְשָׁל (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the מַשָּׁל (mashal) to explain the

meaning of these three observations. (i) When Man was created (*Bereshit / Genesis 1:26*), the rabbinic interpretation states that the angels had a part in the creation of man. (ii) The giving of the Torah, the angels are shown why the Torah was given to man and not to them. (iii) The building of the Tabernacle, God desired to dwell in a Tabernacle among men, and spread His glory above the heavens for the angels.

- The Concluding statements says “Hence, it is said O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth where you have set Your glory which was in heaven.” (*Tehillim / Psalms 8:2*)

Part 4:

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) “Another comment. The words *My son, if you are become a surety for your neighbor* (*Mishley / Proverbs 6:1*).
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihata) “the homiletic introduction” to the Midrash says “The rabbis ask this question on ‘My son’ as it is related to the children of Israel, this phrase is addressed to them, the children of Israel who became sureties for one another at the time of the giving of the Torah.”
- The **משל** (mashal) “the parable,” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihata) the sureties are requested of God to Israel asking them what would guarantee that you will live by the Torah?
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) “expansion on the parable” expands upon the **משל** (mashal) goes on to explain the concept of the required “surety,” having the people and God answering back and forth over how the sureties will be given and accepted of God. It is interesting that in the midst of the Nimshal, the people propose using the patriarchs as their sureties but God says they are indebted to Him, that they must provide someone who is not indebted to Him? This gives us reason for Yeshua being our redeemer, He was not indebted to God, He lived without sin and then offered Himself on our behalf.
- The Concluding statements says “What did God mean in saying I also will forget your children (*Hosea 4:6*)? The Holy One blessed be He, meant I also in a manner of speaking will make Myself forget that your children blessed Me. Hence it is said I also.”

In *Midrash Tehillim 8*, we find quite a few interesting things on the idea of “doctrine” from a rabbinic perspective. In *Midrash Tehillim 8 Part 2* we are presented with the opening verse (**דיבור המתחיל**) “O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth, yet surely above the heavens set Your glory.” (*Tehillim / Psalms 8:2*). The rabbis make the statement that in the Tanach (Torah, Neviim, Ketuvim) there are three times that God has set (established, **מקומות**) his glory above the heavens. The first was in the creation of man. The text focuses upon *Bereshit / Genesis 1:26* and the meaning of “Let Us make man in Our Image.” The difficulty is apparent for the rabbis since the Torah presents a plurality written within the context of the verse (*1:26*). (See *Excursus I - Does the phrase Elohim mean many?*) The answer that is given in the commentary is that God was referring to the angels when he made man. The commentary states explicitly **באדם** (**בראשית א כו**) “They demonstrated at the making of man, when the Holy One blessed be He, desired to create man, he consulted the angels and said to them, Let us make man (*Bereshit / Genesis 1:26*),” the Lord consulted (**נמלך << להימלך**) the angels on the making of man. The Midrash goes on to say “They said to Him, What is man that You are mindful of him? (*Tehillim / Psalms 8:5*)” referencing verse 8:5. The difficulty from the rabbinic perspective and interpretation on God speaking to the angels is most likely that of the Christian influences (pressure) that has been given (interpreted) to mean the plurality of God (the trinity). One of the central tenets of Judaism is on the monotheism of God taken from *Devarim / Deuteronomy 6:4* **אֶחָד | יְהוָה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה** | “*Shema Yisrael Adonai Elohenu Adonai Echad,*” Here O Israel the Lord your God is One. Therefore the issue of plurality in the name Elohim and the phrase “Let Us” must have a different meaning as it is understood on the Scriptures (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 6:4*) and the resulting conclusion is that God was speaking to the angels.

The Midrash continues stating that the second way God established his glory above the heavens is in the giving of the Torah. The angels ask the Lord again say “*They said to Him, What is man that You are mindful of him? (Tehillim / Psalms 8:5)*” and say it may be more fitting that You set forth the Torah in heaven (של עולם). The reason is the angels say that they are holy and pure as the Torah is holy and pure. The conversation between God and the angels continues, God says that the Torah cannot find fulfillment among heavenly beings. On the fulfillment of the Torah in heaven verses on earth, a parable is given on the father who sent his son to learn the skill of weaving.

ר' נחמיה בשם ר' יהודה אומר משל לאדם שהיה לו בן, והיה חסר אצבע אחת, והולך אביו ללמדו סריקה שירקיריס וכל עיסקה של אומנות, אותה אומנות צריכה לכלן אצבעות, אחר ימים בא אביו אצלו, אמר לו למה לא למדת לבני אומנות זו, אמר ליה אומנות זו צריכה כל האצבעות, ובגך חסר אצבע אחת, ואתה מבקש שילמוד בגך אומנות סריקוס שירקיריס, כך אמר הקב"ה אין התורה מתקיימת אצלכם, לפי שאין פריה ורביה ביניכם. ולא טומאה, ולא מיתה וחולי, אלא כלכם קדושים

In the name of rabbi Judah, rabbi Nehemiah told the parable of a man whose son had a finger missing. The father sent his son away to have him taught the weaving of silk garments and whatever appertains to this craft, a craft requiring the use of all the fingers. After a time, the father came to the master weaver and asked, Why have you not taught my son the craft? The master weaver replied, This is the craft that requires the use of all the fingers, but your son has a finger missing. Yet you desire that he should learn weaving? So too, the Holy One blessed be He, said to the angels, The Torah cannot be taught to you, for there is no procreating among you, not uncleanness, no death, and no disease. All of you are holy.

Like the son who is missing a finger, the angels, being holy, are not able to fulfill the Torah. The Torah was given because of uncleanness, sin, death, and disease. The Torah was given to unholy creatures, to man, for instruction on how to live holy lives before a holy God. Examples for this is given following the parable the midrash states “*Yet in the Torah, such things are said as When a man dies in a tent (Bamidbar / Numbers 19:14), Yhis will be the law of the leper (Vayikra / Leviticus 14:2), If a woman be delivered (Vayikra / Leviticus 12:2), If a woman has an issue (Vayikra / Leviticus 15:25), These may you eat (Vayikra / Leviticus 11:9), and these you may not eat (Vayikra / Leviticus 11:4). Hence, it is said of the Torah Neither is it found in the land of the living (Job 28:13). As soon as He finished saying all of these things to the angels, the Holy One blessed be He, performed His deed of love, and gave the Torah to Moshe.*” The reason the Torah was given to man was so God could fulfill his purpose to ultimately redeem mankind in His only Son, Yeshua the Messiah. The way this is accomplished is in the Lord coming down to tabernacle amongst His people.

The Midrash continues stating that עד שאין להם מענה ותשובה]. וכשבקש הקב"ה להשרות שכינתו במשכן, אמרו המלאכים לפני הקב"ה רבונו של עולם מה אנוש כי תזכרנו. *Again, when the Holy One blessed be He, desired His presence to dwell in the Tabernacle, the angels said to the Holy One blessed be He, Master of the universe! What is man that You are mindful of him?*” Reconciliation had to be made in the minds of the rabbis on God consulting them on His creation of man. The back and forth conversation is meant to show how this reasoning is conducted as an attempt to remain consistent with Scripture. Rabbi Judah, in the name of rabbi Aibu and rabbi Judah son of Simon concludes that God satisfies the angels by spreading His glory above the heavens (*Habakkuk 3:3*). The angels said then that “*only His praise and not His glory will be on the earth.*” However, *Tehillim / Psalms 148* states that “*David said, Nevertheless, His glory will be on earth, as you can see from the Psalm which begins with Praise you the Lord from the heaves (Tehillim / Psalms 148:1), and goes on, His glory will be upon earth and heaven (Tehillim / Psalms 148:13), thus the glory will be first upon earth, and then will be in heaven. Hence it is said O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth where You have set Your glory which was in heaven (Tehillim / Psalms 8:2)*” (הודו), (תהלים קמח א), אמר להן דוד אף על פי תדע לך שכן הוא, שנאמר הללו את ה' מן השמים (תהלים קמח א), (הודו) על ארץ ושמים (שם שם תהלים קמ"ח ג), תחלה על הארץ, ואחר כך על השמים, לכך נאמר ה' אדונינו מה אדיר

(שמך בכל הארץ אשר תנה הודך על השמים).

Excursus I - Does the phrase Elohim mean many?

The question occasionally comes up “Does Elohim refer to more than one in the Hebrew Bible?” This question is related to the doctrine of the trinity or the triune nature of God. The root of the question comes from sefer *Bereshit / Genesis 1:26* which states “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’” (NASB) The question relates to who it is that God is referring to when he says “Let Us” make man in “Our image.” The Hebrew Scripture says: וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כְּדְמוּתֵנוּ וְיִרְדּוּ בְדִגְתַּי הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבַבְּהֵמָה: וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הָאָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כְּדְמוּתֵנוּ וְיִרְדּוּ בְדִגְתַּי הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבַבְּהֵמָה: וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הָאָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כְּדְמוּתֵנוּ וְיִרְדּוּ בְדִגְתַּי הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּבַבְּהֵמָה: The Hebrew text uses the pronominal suffixes “נו” on the words בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כְּדְמוּתֵנוּ meaning “in our image like us.” Believers (*those who believe Yeshua is the Messiah of God as opposed to those who do not in Judaism*) have typically argued that Elohim is plural for El meaning God and thus proves that God is three the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Reasoning that “Elohim” being plural for “God” (El) is a proof text for the trinity is a poor method of exegesis (“a poor exegetical technique”). Can the entire doctrine on the trinity be summed up and based upon one word (Elohim)? Let’s have a little closer look at what is going on in the Hebrew Bible.

First, studying the rabbinic commentary from Rabbi Shlomo ben Yitzchak (Rashi) on *Bereshit / Genesis 1:26* we read the following.

רש"י בראשית פרק א

כו) נעשה אדם. עֲנִיָּתוֹתוֹ שֶׁל הַקַּב"ה לַמִּדְנָה מִכָּאן, לִפְנֵי שֶׁהָאָדָם הוּא בְּדְמוּת הַמַּלְאָכִים וַיִּתְקַנְאוּ בוֹ, לִפְיֶכֶךְ נִמְלֶךְ בְּהֵן, וְכִשְׁהוּא דָן אֶת הַמַּלְאָכִים הוּא נִמְלֶךְ בַּפְּמִלְיָא שְׁלוֹ, שְׁכֵן מְצִינּוֹ בַּאֲחָב, שֶׁאֵמֵר לוֹ מִיכָּה רֵאִיתִי אֶת ה' יוֹשֵׁב עַל כִּסְאוֹ וְכָל צְבֵא הַשָּׁמַיִם עוֹמְדִים עֲלָיו מִימֵינוּ וּמִשְׁמָאלוֹ, וְכִי יֵשׁ יָמִין וּשְׁמָאל לִפְנֵינוּ, אֵלָּא אֵלּוֹ מִימֵינִים לְזָכוֹת וְאֵלּוֹ מִשְׁמָאִילִים לְחֻבָּה, וְכֵן בְּגִזְרַת עִירִין פִּתְגָמָא ת וּבִמְאָמֵר קְדִישִׁין שְׁאַלְתָּא, אִף כָּאן בַּפְּמִלְיָא שְׁלוֹ נִטְל רִשׁוֹת, אֵמֵר לֵהֶם יֵשׁ בְּעֵלְיוֹנִים כְּדְמוּתֵי, אִם אֵינן כְּדְמוּתֵי בְּתַחְתּוֹנִים הֵרִי יֵשׁ קְנָאָה בְּמַעֲשֵׂה בְּרָאשִׁית: נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם. אִף עַל פִּי שֶׁלָּא סִיעֵוָהוּ בִּיצִירָתוֹ, וַיֵּשׁ מְקוֹם לְמֵינִים לְרִדּוֹת, לֹא נִמְנַע הַכְּתוּב מִלְּלַמֵּד דְּרַךְ אֶרֶץ וּמִדַּת עֲנוּהָ, שִׁיְהֵא הַגְּדוֹל נִמְלֶךְ וְנוֹטֵל רִשׁוֹת מִן הַקֶּטָן, א וְאִם כֹּתֵב אַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם, לֹא לַמִּדְנָה שֶׁהִיא מְדַבֵּר עִם בֵּית דִּינּוֹ, אֵלָּא עִם עֲצָמוֹ, וְתִשׁוּבָתוֹ בְּכַתּוּבָה בְּצִדּוֹ, וַיִּבְרָא אֶת הָאָדָם, וְלֹא כְּתִיב וַיִּבְרָאוּ: בְּצַלְמֵנוּ. בְּדַפּוֹס גְּשִׁלְנוּ: כְּדְמוּתֵנוּ. לְהַבִּינֵן ד וְלֵהֲשִׁכִּיל: וַיִּרְדּוּ בְּדִגְתַּי הַיָּם. יֵשׁ בְּלִשׁוֹן הַזֶּה לִשׁוֹן רִידוּי ה וְלִשׁוֹן רִידָה, זָכָה רִוּדָה בְּחֵיּוֹת וּבְהֵמוֹת, לֹא זָכָה, נַעֲשֶׂה יִרְוֹד לְפָנֵיהֶם וְהַחִיָּה מוֹשֵׁלָת בּוֹ

On *Bereshit / Genesis 1:26*, Rashi gives his commentary and stating *שהאדם הוא בדמות המלאכים* saying “that man he is in the form of angels.” Based on the Rabbinic commentary from Rashi, and interestingly from *Midrash Tehillim 8, Part 4*, God (Elohim) was speaking to the angels when He said “Let Us” and that man was therefore created in the form of the angels. Note, Rashi’s justification is based on statements from other sources taken from the Tanach, i.e. the prophet Micah saw the Lord sitting on his throne and all the host

of heaven standing on his left and right (שומר לו מיכה ראיתי את ה' יושב על כסאו וכל צבא) (השמים עומדים עליו מימינו ומשמאלו). Therefore, Judaism, from Rashi's perspective and the Midrash on Tehillim, teaches that the angels had a part in God's creative process. It is in their image God made man. So, who is right and how are we to understand why Elohim is written in the plural form?

It is interesting in the Hebrew bible, according to *Williams Hebrew Syntax, 3rd Edition, University of Toronto Press, Scholarly Publishing Division, 264 pages*, the plural form of a Hebrew word is sometimes used to indicate what is called "simple plurality." Examples can be found on the following words, "king" (מלכים), composition such as "silver" (כספים), "firewood" (עצים), to indicate natural products in an unnatural or manufactured state like "barley" grain (שעורים), to indicate extension when an object consists of separate parts such as "youth" with respect to time (נעורים), and "shed blood" (דמים), to indicate abstract ideas like "faithfulness" (מאמינים), "virginity" (בתולים), "atonement" (כפרים), and finally to indicate respect "God" (אלוהים), and Lord "Adonim" (אדונים). Our understanding on the plural use of the Hebrew words come from the analysis of the Hebrew sentence (context and syntax). The various instances where the "simple plurality" is used, the plural forms produce a singular meaning because the attributive adjectives and verbs that go with the plural form are written in the singular form and not the plural. In the Hebrew Scriptures, Elohim when used to refer to the Lord God Almighty, in its plural form, is known as the "plural of respect, plural of majesty, plural of potentiality, or plural of eminence." In these instances throughout the Tanach when Elohim refers to the Lord God Almighty, Elohim refers to "one God" and is used to show the complete majesty and magnificence of God and His holiness. This is how we understand God to be "one God" being spelled in the plural form (Elohim). When understanding the trinity or the godhead (the Father, the Son, and the Holy spirit) we can not and should not justify our belief based upon one word. We absolutely must understand who God is based on all of scripture and not from one word (Elohim). The reason being, if we attempt to base a doctrine upon one word, we have a weak foundation that we are building upon. So, anyone who uses the one word "Elohim" to substantiate their case for the trinity are using a very poor exegetical technique. When we take all of Scripture into consideration, we know that God the Father sits upon the throne in Heaven. The Word of God proceeds from the Father (*John 1:1, 1:14, 8:42*), and the Spirit of God proceeds from the Father (*John 15:26*). Therefore, the Son (the Word of God), and the Holy Spirit (the Spirit of God) could not exist without the Father who sits upon the throne in Heaven. This is how we know God to be one according to *Devarim / Deuteronomy 6:4* and remain consistent with scripture on how God reveals Himself to mankind. Yeshua is the Word of God become flesh (*John 1:1-14*) the Word that proceeds from the Father (*John 8:42*) and the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, sent by Yeshua (*John 15:26*) who comes to make His dwelling place in our bodies. The point is when reading and studying the Scriptures, we absolutely must take all of scripture into account understanding who God is, how He has revealed Himself to us according to the Scriptures, what His will is for our lives, and how we are to live our lives for Him. We should not and cannot use one word to establish (base) our theological beliefs. This is a very dangerous thing and can lead to deception and the development of tradition and doctrine of men that stands against the truth of God found in the Word of God (the Scriptures).

In *Midrash Tehillim 8 Part 4*, we are introduced to the commentary with the opening statement (דיבור המתחיל) taken from Proverbs: "Another comment. The words My son, if you are become a surety

for your neighbor (*Mishley / Proverbs 6:1*). The “the homiletic introduction” to the Midrash (פתיחתא, Petihta) has the rabbis asking the question of the “son” (“My son”) and relates this to the children of Israel. The rabbis ask the question of assurance, that God seeks assurance that the children of Israel will keep the commandments, statutes, and precepts found in the Torah. Therefore at the giving of the Torah, they say that God asked how will you guarantee that you will keep the Torah? The parables (משל, mashal) given in Part 4 of the Midrash are related to the “sureties” (assurances) that God is requesting of Israel that they will live by His Torah. The Nimshal (נמשל) goes on to explain the parables that are given, and have the people of Israel and God answer back and forth over the sureties that will be accepted of God. Interestingly, in the central parable on sureties, the people propose using the patriarchs as their sureties but God says they are indebted to Him, that they must provide someone who is not indebted to Him? Let’s look at little closer at Midrash Tehillim, Chapter 8, Part 4.

Midrash Tehillim, Chapter 8, Part 4

4. Another comment. The words My son, if you are become surety for your neighbor (*Mishley / Proverbs 6:1*) are addressed to children in Israel who become sureties for one another at the time of the giving of Torah. How so? When the Holy One blessed be He, desired to give the Torah to the people of Israel, He said to them, Give Me sureties that you will live by the Torah. And when the people of Israel said Behold the Patriarchs will be sureties for us, God replied, As you live, the Patriarchs themselves are in debt to Me. Would that they were able to stand surety for their own persons. A parable is told of a man who needed to borrow money, and was told Bring surety, and you will receive as much money as you desire. The man went and brought another who himself was in debt, and he was told, You have brought one already in debt to me. Would that he were able to stand surety for his own person. Go now and bring someone not in debt to me, and then receive what money you desire. Likewise, the Holy One blessed be He, said to the people of Israel, You bring Me the Patriarchs, sureties who are not in debt to Me. Whence do we know that God spoke thus? Because it is written, The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, who are all of us here alive this day (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 5:3*). When the people of Israel asked, Who are those not in debt to You? God answered, Infants. Whereupon the people of Israel brought sucklings at their mother’s breasts, and pregnant women whose wombs become transparent as glass so that the embryos in the wombs could see god and speak with Him. And the Holy One blessed be He, asked the sucklings and the embryos, Will you be sureties for your fathers, so that if I give them the Torah they will live by it, but that if they do not, you will be forfeited because of them? The replied, Yes. When God said to them, I am the Lord Your God (*Shemot / Exodus 20:2*), they replied, Yes. When God said to them You will have no other gods before Me (*Shemot / Exodus 20:3*), they replied, Yes. And so, as sureties for their fathers, at every utterance they replied Yes, when God said You will, and replied, No, when God said You will not. Thereupon, God declared, Out of your mouths, then, I give the Torah, as is said Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings have You ordained strength (*Tehillim / Psalms 8:3*), strength here meaning Torah, of which it is said The Lord will give strength unto His people (*Tehillim / Psalms 29:11*). Accordingly, when fathers in Israel God forbid, reject the Torah, their children are forfeited on account of them, as it is said My people are cut off from lack of knowledge, because you have rejected knowledge, I will reject you, that you will be no priest to Me, seeing you have forgotten the Law of God, I also will forget your children (*Hosea 4:6*). What did God mean in saying I also will forget your children? The Holy One, blessed be He, meant I also in a manner of speaking will make Myself forget that your children blessed Me. Hence it is said I also.

מדרש תהלים פרק ח סימן ד

ד דבר אחר בני אם ערבת לרעך. בישראל הכתוב מדבר, בשעת מתן תורה, שהיו ערבים זה לזה, כיצד כשבקש הקב"ה ליתן תורה לישראל, אמר להם תנו לי ערבים שאתם מקיימין את התורה, אמרו לו הרי אבות העולם ערבים בנו, אמר להם חייכם הן חייבין לי, הלוואי שיעמדו הם בעצמם, משל למי שהיה צריך ללוות, אמרו לו הבא ערב וטול כמה שאתה מבקש, הלך והביא מי שחייב אצלו, אמר לו הבאת מי שחייב לי, הלוואי שיעמוד בעצמו, לך והבא שאינו חייב לי וטול, כך אמר הקב"ה לישראל, אבות העולם הבאתם לי, ערבים שיש לי עליהם כמה חובות, אלא תנו לי ערבים שאינן חייבים לי, מנין שכן כתוב לא את אבותינו כרת ה' את הברית הזאת [כי אתנו אנחנו אלה פה היום כלנו חיים] (דברים ה ג), אמרו לו ומי אלה שאינם חייבים לך, אמר להם התינוקות, [מיד הביאו התינוקות] שבמעזי אמן, ומשדי אמן, ועמדו כריסן כזוככית, וראו להקב"ה מתוך כריסן, ומדברים עמו, אמר להן הקב"ה ערבים אתם את אבותיכם, שאם אתן להם את התורה שהן מקיימין אותה, ואם לאו אתם נתפסין עליהם, אמרו לו הן, אמר להם אנכי ה' אלהיך (שמות כ ב), אמרו לו הן, אמר להן לא יהיה לך אלהים אחרים (שם שם שמות כ' ג), אמרו לו הן, ועל כל דבור ודבור היו משיבין עליהן על הן הן, ועל לאו לאו, אמר להן מפניכם אני נותן את התורה, שנאמר מפי עוללים ויונקים יסדת עז (תהלים ח ג), ואין עוז אלא תורה, שנאמר ה' עז לעמו יתן (תהלים כט יא), לפיכך כשיבטלו את התורה חס ושלוש בניהם נתפסים עליהם, שנאמר נדמו עמי מבלי הדעת [וגו' אשכח בניך גם אני] (הושע ד ו), ומהו גם אני, אמר הקב"ה כביכול אף אני משתכח שהיו התינוקות מברכין אותי, שנאמר גם אני.

John 8:31-43

³¹Ἐλεγεν οὖν ὁ Ἰησοῦς πρὸς τοὺς πεπιστευκότας αὐτῷ Ἰουδαίους, Ἐὰν ὑμεῖς μείνητε ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τῷ ἐμῷ, ἀληθῶς μαθηταὶ μου ἔστε, ³²καὶ γνώσεσθε τὴν ἀλήθειαν, καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια ἐλευθερώσει ὑμᾶς. ³³ἀπεκρίθησαν πρὸς αὐτόν, Σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ ἐσμεν καὶ οὐδενὶ δεδουλεύκαμεν πώποτε: πῶς σὺ λέγεις ὅτι Ἐλεύθεροι γενήσεσθε; ³⁴ἀπεκρίθη αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι πᾶς ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν δοῦλός ἐστιν τῆς ἁμαρτίας. ³⁵ὁ δὲ δοῦλος οὐ μένει ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα: ὁ υἱὸς μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα. ³⁶ἐὰν οὖν ὁ υἱὸς ὑμᾶς ἐλευθερώσῃ, ὄντως ἐλεύθεροι ἔσεσθε. ³⁷οἶδα ὅτι **σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ ἐστε**: ἀλλὰ ζητεῖτέ με ἀποκτεῖναι, ὅτι ὁ λόγος ὁ ἐμὸς οὐ χωρεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν. ³⁸ἃ ἐγὼ ἐώρακα παρὰ τῷ πατρὶ λαλῶ: καὶ ὑμεῖς οὖν ἃ ἠκούσατε παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς ποιεῖτε. ³⁹Ἀπεκρίθησαν καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ, Ὁ πατὴρ ἡμῶν Ἀβραάμ ἐστιν. λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Εἰ τέκνα τοῦ Ἀβραάμ ἐστε, τὰ ἔργα τοῦ Ἀβραάμ ἐποιεῖτε: ⁴⁰νῦν δὲ ζητεῖτέ με ἀποκτεῖναι, ἄνθρωπον ὃς τὴν ἀλήθειαν ὑμῖν λελάληκα ἣν ἤκουσα παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ: τοῦτο Ἀβραάμ οὐκ ἐποίησεν. ⁴¹ὕμεις ποιεῖτε τὰ ἔργα τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν. εἶπαν [οὖν] αὐτῷ, Ἡμεῖς ἐκ πορνείας οὐ γεγεννήμεθα: ἓνα πατέρα ἔχομεν τὸν θεόν. ⁴²εἶπεν αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Εἰ ὁ θεὸς πατὴρ ὑμῶν ἦν, ἠγαπᾶτε ἄν ἐμέ, ἐγὼ γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐξῆλθον καὶ ἤκω: οὐδὲ γὰρ ἀπ' ἐμαντοῦ ἐλήλυθα, ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνός με ἀπέστειλεν. ⁴³διὰ τί τὴν λαλιὰν τὴν ἐμὴν οὐ γινώσκετε; ὅτι οὐ δύνασθε ἀκούειν τὸν λόγον τὸν ἐμόν.

8:31 So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, ‘If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; 8:32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.’ 8:33 They answered Him, ‘We are Abraham’s descendants and have never yet been enslaved to anyone; how is it that You say, ‘You will become free?’’ 8:34 Jesus answered them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin. 8:35 ‘The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son does remain forever. 8:36 ‘So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed. 8:37 ‘I know that **you are Abraham’s descendants**; yet you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. 8:38 ‘I speak the things which I have seen with My Father; therefore you also do the things which you heard from your father.’ **8:39 They answered and said to Him, ‘Abraham is our father.’** Jesus said to them, ‘If you are Abraham’s children, do the deeds of Abraham. 8:40 ‘But as it is, you are seeking to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth, which I heard from God; this Abraham did not do. 8:41 ‘You are doing the deeds of your father.’ They said to Him, ‘We were not born of fornication; we have one Father: God.’ 8:42 Jesus said to them, ‘If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me. 8:43 ‘Why do you not understand what I am saying? It is because you cannot hear My word. (NASB)

In the Ketuvei Shelachim (Apostolic Writings) Yeshua acknowledges that those who he is speaking to are in fact the “*descendents of Abraham*” (σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ ἐστε) according to the Greek literally “*seed of Abraham you are.*” The interesting thing is that though the Pharisee’s were the seed of Abraham, they were not Abraham’s “children” because they do not do the things that Abraham did out of faith. According to the Midrash on *Tehillim* 8 Part 4, the people of Israel claimed before God Zechut Avot. In John 8, while speaking to Yeshua, the Pharisees do the same thing, they claim Zechut Avot on the merit of Abraham that their place is established in heaven. The discussion between God and the people in the Midrash states that the merits of the fathers are not a valid way to guarantee mercy and forgiveness of sins. Here in the Apostolic gospels in the discussion between Yeshua and the Pharisees, the entire discussion is centered on the idea of having a place in heaven that is guaranteed by reason of being a descendant of Abraham. However, Yeshua clarifies that it is not on the merit of their father Abraham but upon λόγῳ τῷ ἐμῷ “*My Words,*” the words that Yeshua is speaking, the works He is going to perform, the laying down of His life as a sacrifice accord-

ing to the Word of God in the Torah. Yeshua obeying God's Word and living God's Word, we are to obey God's Word and live God's Word. These things are what characterize a true child of Abraham. According to the Apostolic Scriptures, the Torah, and the Midrash, atonement is brought through an innocent life, and that one needs to have the Word of God written upon one's heart, on the inside in order for the Lord to sustain and support us like God said to Yehoshua וַיִּמְרֵי יְהוָה בְּסֵעָדָךְ ("My word will sustain you") in Parashat Vayishlach in the Aramaic translation (Targum Onkelos). In Parashat Vayishlach, Joshua (Yehoshua) whose name means "the Lord's salvation" will be sustained by God's Memra (His Word). The Torah principle that Yeshua is teaching in *John 8:31-34* is about himself, the living Word of God (*John 1:1-14*). He is the light of the world (*John 8:12*), He is God's Salvation, He is the light in and through whom we live. In the Midrash on Tehillim, we have learned that the Torah is understood as the light of God and the light of truth. The Lord's Salvation, Yeshua His Messiah, and the Word of God is the way we live in righteousness before God. At this time in history, the Pharisee's believed their place in heaven was guaranteed by their birthright according to Zechut Avot, the merits of their fathers. Today in Judaism it is believed Zechut Avot is the way for eternal salvation and justification before the Lord God Almighty. In the Apostolic Scriptures, Yeshua acknowledged one's birthright but corrected the belief that one is guaranteed a place in Heaven because of birthright of the merit of our fathers. According to Midrash Tehillim 8, Part 4, the merit of our fathers is invalidated because our fathers themselves are indebted to God and are unable to provide a "surety" for the people of Israel or even for you or I. According to Yeshua, the true children of Abraham are those who do the works of Abraham (τὰ ἔργα τοῦ Ἀβραάμ ἐποιεῖτε: vūv). The works of Abraham is to live out our salvation by faith in the salvation of God, Yeshua the Messiah, and to have faith this is what He did, offering His innocent life that was given so that we might live. Listen to the voice of the Lord God (שְׁמוֹעַ תְּשִׁמְעוּ בְּקוֹל) (יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיךְ) and then live and do by faith!

In addition to these verses and in the Parable from the Midrash providing as a proof text on "sureties" from *Devarim / Deuteronomy 5:3*, there is another Scripture from the Torah that may shed additional light on the topic. *Devarim / Deuteronomy 8:18* says that we are to remember the Lord our God, that He gives us the ability (power) to work so that He can establish (הִקִּים, confirm) the covenant that He swore to our fathers in this day (וַיִּזְכֹּר אֶת-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ כִּי הוּא הֵנִיחַ לְךָ כַּח לַעֲשׂוֹת חָיִל לְמַעַן הִקִּים אֶת-בְּרִיתוֹ אֲשֶׁר-נִשְׁבַּע (לְאַבְרָהָם בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא)). Note the wording of this verse. It is the Lord God who gives us the ability so that "HE" can establish His covenant with us. The way this is worded, it is not "so that we can establish or confirm the covenant" but so that "HE" can establish and confirm the covenant. Zechut Avot directs us to our fathers, saying that the merit of our fathers, their good deeds, their acts of righteousness (Maasei HaTorah, מַעֲשֵׂי הַתּוֹרָה). Zechut Avot points us in the reverse direction like the Pharisees and the people in Midrash Tehillim 8 misunderstanding how one is to be saved. The Torah points us to the Lord and to the Lord's Salvation, Yeshua the Messiah, as our light and our salvation. *Tehilim / Psalms 27* says אֲוִרִי וַיִּשְׁעִי | יְהוָה "the Lord God (YHVH) is my "light" and my "salvation." It does not say that the merit of our fathers is our light and our salvation. God is our light and our salvation. Our first love is the Lord God almighty because it is out of a love for God we draw near to Him and place our faith in Him and in Yeshua the Messiah. The Lord God Almighty is also our last love because we are the bride of Messiah (bride of Christ). In addition to this, the one who loves, believes, trusts, and holds onto Yeshua, is holding, trusting, believing, and loving the Lord God Almighty who has established His covenant in His Word, according to His Word, and by His Word in Yeshua the Messiah. There is nothing that we can do to add merit to our salvation and the righteous deeds of our fathers do not add merit to us before God. The Apostle Paul made this point clear in his letter to the Romans in chapters 6 and 7. Therefore, if we walk away from Yeshua, we walk away from the Salvation of God! We have no surety (assurances) that we will be forgiven of our sins, no surety (assurances) that we will stand righteous before God without Yeshua the Messiah!

The reason Yeshua is our redeemer is because He was not indebted to God, He lived without sin and

then offered Himself, laid down his life, on our behalf. The work of the Messiah is understood based upon the scriptures in the Torah to deliver the people from exile and to bring them into the Promised Land which involved having a correct relationship with the Lord, not only by faith but also in the way they live their lives. Having a correct relationship with the Lord was synonymous with being the children of Abraham, believing in God's Word and having God's Word written upon our hearts (*Jeremiah 31:31-35*). The Lord God is working to build a relationship with us first and foremost so that we could become His people and He would be Our God (וְהָיִיתִי לָהֶם לֵאלֹהִים וְהֵמָּה יְהוּ-לִי לְעָם). This is consistent with the Torah principle contained within the promise to our fathers where God said וְאָנֹכִי אֶהְיֶה עִמָּךְ *"I will be with you"* and וַיִּמְרָי יְהִי בְסַעֲדָךְ *"my Memra (Word) will sustain you."* Based upon these scriptures, and the Midrash we need to listen to His voice (שָׁמוּעַ תִּשְׁמַע בְּקוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ), and hear Yeshua's Words (ἀκούειν τὸν λόγον τὸν ἐμόν). Most importantly to realize that there is no merit available from our fathers. We need the One who is innocent, and blood needs to be spilled to expiate sins and receive forgiveness. According to the Abrahamic covenant *"all the nations of the Earth would be blessed in Abraham's seed"* as the Lord said in Parashat Lech Lecha (וְאָעֲשֶׂה לְךָ לְגוֹי גְדוֹל וְאֲבָרְכְךָ וְאֶגְדָּלְךָ וְשָׂמְךָ וְהָיָה בְרָכָה: ג וְאֲבָרְכָה מְבָרְכֶיךָ וּמְקַלְלֶיךָ אָאֵר וְנִבְרַכְו) ב וְאָעֲשֶׂה לְךָ לְגוֹי גְדוֹל וְאֲבָרְכְךָ וְאֶגְדָּלְךָ וְשָׂמְךָ וְהָיָה בְרָכָה: ג וְאֲבָרְכָה מְבָרְכֶיךָ וּמְקַלְלֶיךָ אָאֵר וְנִבְרַכְו) *"all the nations of the Earth would be blessed in Abraham's seed"* (בְּךָ כָּל מְשֻׁפָּחַת הָאָדָמָה:). Yeshua said in *John 8:31 So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, 'If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; (NASB)*. Here Yeshua contrasts obeying, continuing, or keeping His Words with being true disciples thereby invalidating the belief that Zechut Avot (merits of our fathers) guaranteed a place in Heaven. The only way to have a place in Heaven is to believe upon the life sustaining Word of God, Yeshua the Messiah! Do you feel God calling on your heart to become a part of His family? Yeshua's Words are life sustaining. If you want to be part of God's wonderful plan for salvation, believe on His Messiah Yeshua right now! Let's pray!

Heavenly Father,

We thank You for the great and awesome power of Your Word to sustain us each day. Lord we praise Your holy Name in all the earth for the mercies you have provide. Lord we ask that You break down the strongholds in the lives of the unsaved to reveal the truth of the light of Your word and Your Messiah Yeshua. We ask that You would establish Your Holy Word throughout all of the earth, establish your Word in our hearts and lives and help us to live the truth of your word each day. Keep us from sinning Lord, help us to live obediently to You, send Your Holy Spirit to help us to remember Your Word and to convict us of sin. Continue to raise us up Lord as a people of God in the covenant that You have made in Your Son Yeshua the Messiah. Thank You Lord for the words of this Psalm from David's life, thank You for the words of the Midrash that help us to know You better, to understand sin and the forgiveness of sins, and to root out sin in our lives. Help us to trust in Yeshua and the work that He did upon the cross to make atonement for our sins. As we continue to live our lives that are dedicated to you, help us to walk in righteousness, and help us to walk in freedom from sin. Fill us with Your presence Lord. 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