

Tehillim / Psalms 66 | ספר תהילים טו

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Trials, Sickness, and Suffering

In this week's study from *Tehillim / Psalms 66:1-20*, the psalm opens saying **א לְמַנְצֵחַ שִׁיר מְזִמּוֹר הָרִיעוּ** *For the choir director. A Song. A Psalm. 66:1 Shout joyfully to God, all the earth (NASB)* David calls for all of the earth to praise the name of the Lord for His mighty works. He calls upon the Scriptural account of God's mighty works, turning the sea into dry land (66:6), He watches the nations (66:7), He is the One who keeps our feet from slipping (6:8), and for all of these things, He is to be praised, **ב וַיִּמְרוּ כְבוֹד-שְׁמוֹ שִׁימוּ כְבוֹד תְּהִלָּתוֹ: ג אָמְרוּ לְאֱלֹהִים מֵה-נִוְרָא מַעֲשֵׂיהָ בְּרַב עֲזָה יִכְחָשׁוּ-לָהּ אִיִּבְיָה: ד כָּל-הָאָרֶץ | יִשָּׂ-יִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לָהּ וַיִּזְמְרוּ-לָהּ וַיִּזְמְרוּ-לָהּ וַיִּזְמְרוּ שְׁמָהּ סֵלָה: 66:2 Sing the glory of His name; Make His praise glorious. 66:3 Say to God, 'How awesome are Your works! Because of the greatness of Your power Your enemies will give feigned obedience to You. 66:4 'All the earth will worship You, And will sing praises to You; They will sing praises to Your name.' Selah.** David compares us to being refined by fire as silver is refined, where silversmiths look to see their reflection in order to determine the purity of the metal, **י כִּי-בִּחְנֻתָנוּ אֱלֹהִים צָרַפְתָּנוּ כַּצָּרָף-כֶּסֶף: 66:10 For You have tried us, O God; You have refined us as silver is refined. (NASB)** Does the Lord look at our purity by this comparison in the way in which we follow His Torah? The Lord refines us by bringing calamity upon us. Some people interpret Scripture to say that God wont do this any more because of Yeshua the Messiah. Is this type of interpretation true? David says the Lord causes men to come against us and laid a heavy burden upon us, and these are compared to fire and water, which the Lord brings us through to God's place of abundance. (66:12) David says that it is our duty to tell others about the work the Lord has done in our lives saying, **טז 66:16 Come and hear, all who fear God, And I will tell of what He has done for my soul.(NASB)** David continues saying, **יח אֲנִי אֵם- 66:18 If I regard wickedness in my heart, The Lord will not hear; (NASB)** Do you think this Scripture has application for our lives today? Under what conditions would the Lord, our Father in heaven, hear our prayers? If one is living in sin, would one still be presentable to go to the Lord in prayer? David concludes saying, **כ בָּרוּךְ אֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא-הִסִּיר 66:19 But certainly God has heard; He has given heed to the voice of my prayer. 66:20 Blessed be God, Who has not turned away my prayer Nor His lovingkindness from me. (NASB)** He believed the Lord heard his prayer because he was not living in sin, his desire is to serve the Lord and to walk in His ways!

עברית	Hebrew	ארמי	Aramaic	ελληνικός	Greek
ספר תהלים פרק טו	ספר תהלים פרק טו	ספר טוביה פרק טו	ספר טוביה פרק טו	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 66	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 66
א לְמַנְצֵחַ שִׁיר מְזִמּוֹר הָרִיעוּ לְאֱלֹהִים כָּל-הָאָרֶץ: ב וַיִּמְרוּ כְבוֹד-שְׁמוֹ שִׁימוּ כְבוֹד תְּהִלָּתוֹ: ג אָמְרוּ לְאֱלֹהִים מֵה-נִוְרָא מַעֲשֵׂיהָ בְּרַב עֲזָה יִכְחָשׁוּ-לָהּ אִיִּבְיָה: ד כָּל-הָאָרֶץ יִשָּׂ-יִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לָהּ וַיִּזְמְרוּ-לָהּ וַיִּזְמְרוּ שְׁמָהּ סֵלָה:	א לשבחה שירא תושבחתא יביבו קדם יהוה כל יתבי ארעא: ב שבחו איקר יקירו שמיה שוו איקר תושבחתיה: ג אמרו קדם אלהא מה דחילין הינון אינון עובדך בסגיעי בסוגעי עושנד יכדבון לך מן קדמך בעלי דבבך: ד כל יתבי ארעא יסגדון קדמך קומך וישבחון לך לותך ישבחון שמך לעלמין:	א לשבחה שירא תושבחתא יביבו קדם יהוה כל יתבי ארעא: ב שבחו איקר יקירו שמיה שוו איקר תושבחתיה: ג אמרו קדם אלהא מה דחילין הינון אינון עובדך בסגיעי בסוגעי עושנד יכדבון לך מן קדמך בעלי דבבך: ד כל יתבי ארעא יסגדון קדמך קומך וישבחון לך לותך ישבחון שמך לעלמין:	א לשבחה שירא תושבחתא יביבו קדם יהוה כל יתבי ארעא: ב שבחו איקר יקירו שמיה שוו איקר תושבחתיה: ג אמרו קדם אלהא מה דחילין הינון אינון עובדך בסגיעי בסוגעי עושנד יכדבון לך מן קדמך בעלי דבבך: ד כל יתבי ארעא יסגדון קדמך קומך וישבחון לך לותך ישבחון שמך לעלמין:	66:1 εις τὸ τέλος ᾠδὴ ψαλμοῦ ἀναστάσεως ἀλαλάξατε τῷ θεῷ πᾶσα ἡ γῆ 66:2 ψάλατε δὴ τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ δότε δόξαν αἰνεῖσει αὐτοῦ 66:3 εἶπατε τῷ θεῷ ὡς φοβερὰ τὰ ἔργα σου ἐν τῷ πλήθει τῆς δυνάμεώς σου ψεύσονταί σε οἱ ἐχθροί σου 66:4 πᾶσα ἡ γῆ προσκυνησάτωσάν σοι καὶ ψαλάτωσάν σοι ψαλάτωσαν τῷ ὀνόματί σου διάψαλμα	66:1 εις τὸ τέλος ᾠδὴ ψαλμοῦ ἀναστάσεως ἀλαλάξατε τῷ θεῷ πᾶσα ἡ γῆ 66:2 ψάλατε δὴ τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ δότε δόξαν αἰνεῖσει αὐτοῦ 66:3 εἶπατε τῷ θεῷ ὡς φοβερὰ τὰ ἔργα σου ἐν τῷ πλήθει τῆς δυνάμεώς σου ψεύσονταί σε οἱ ἐχθροί σου 66:4 πᾶσα ἡ γῆ προσκυνησάτωσάν σοι καὶ ψαλάτωσάν σοι ψαλάτωσαν τῷ ὀνόματί σου διάψαλμα

<p>ה לכו וראו מפעלות אלהים נורא עליה על-בני אדם: ו הפך ים ליבשה בנהר יעברו ברגל שם נשמחה-בו: ז משל בגבורתו עולם עיניו בגוים תצפינה הסוחרים אל- ירימו [ירומו] למו סלה: ח ברכו עמים אלהינו והשמיעו קול תהלה- תו: ט השם נפשונו פחיים ולא-נתן למוט רגלנו: י פי-בחנונתנו אלהים צרכתנו כצרך-כסף: יא הבאתנו במצודה שמת מועקה במתנינו: יב הרכבת אנוש לראשו בָּאֵנו-בָּאֵשׁ ובמים ותוציאנו לְרוּחָהּ: יג אבוא ביתך בעולות אשלם לך נדרי: יד אשר-פצו שפתי ודבר-פי בצר-לי: טו עלות מחים אעלה-לך עם-קטרת אילים אעשה בקר עם-עתודים סלה: טז לכו שמעו ואספרה כל- יראי אלהים אשר עשה לנפשי: יז אליו פי-קראתי ורומם תחת לשוני: יח און אם-ראיתי בלבי לא ישמע אדני: יט אכן שמע אלהים הקשיב בקול תפילתי: כ ברוך אלהים אשר לא-הסיר תפילתי וחסדו מאתי:</p>	<p>ה אזילו וחמון עובדי אלהא דחיל מרי תסקופין על בני נשא: ו הפך ימא דסוף ליבשתא בנהר יורדנא עברו בני ישראל בריגליהון אוביל יתהון לטור קודשיה בית מוקדשא תמן נחדי במימריה: ז דשליט בכה גבורתיה על עלמא עינוי בעממא מסתכלין מסרהובין לא יתרמון יתרמון להון לעלמין: ח בריכו עממא אלהים יי ואשמיעו קל תושבחתיה: ט דמני נפשנא בחי דעלמא דאתי ולא מסר לאיזדעזעא ריגלנא: י ארום בחנתנא אלהא אתכתנא היך קינאה דמתוך סימא: ת"א ארום בה- נתא ארום נסיתא אבהתנא אלהא אגליתא יתהון ביני מלכוותא אשכחא יתהון זיקי הא כמא דסנין כספא: יא אעלתנא במצוד- תא שויתא שושלתא בחרצנא: ת"א אעיל- תנא במצרים כיד במצדתא שויתא מרוות בבלאי עלנא והוינא דמיין כאלו מיתשם אש ושלתא עקא חרצנא: יב אמאכתנא ארככתא מרי מזופיתא על רישנא דנתא יתנא כדי כיד בנורא בכור ובמוי ואפיקת- נא לרוחחא: ת"א רכב עלנא מדאי ויונאי סליקו על רישנא אעילתנא ביני רומאי דיינין יתנא כאכזראין כלדאי דרמו אבונן אברהם באתון נורא ומצראי דרמו ינקנא במאי ואסיקתנא לחירותא: יג איעול לבי- תך בית מוקדשך בעלוון אשלם לך נדרי: ת"א היכדין תרחמיננא ופרוק יתן וניתי לבית מוקדשך בעלוון ונשלם לוותך נדר- נא: יד די פתחו סיפוותי ומליל פומי בדעק לי: טו עלוון שמינין אסיק קדמך קומך עם קטורת בוסמין קרבן דיכרין אעביד תורין עם ברחיא לעלמין: טז איזילו שמעו ואש- תעי כל דחליא דאלהא מה דעבד לנפשי: יז לותיה בפומי קריתי ותושבחתיה תחות לי- שני: יח שקר אין חמיתי בלבי האפשר די לא ישמע יהוה: יט בקושטא שמע אלהא אצית בקל צלותי: כ בריך אלהא יי דלא אעדי צלותי וטוביה מיני:</p>	<p>66:5 δεῦτε καὶ ἴδετε τὰ ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ φοβερὸς ἐν βουλαῖς ὑπὲρ τοὺς υἱοὺς τῶν ἀνθρώπων 66:6 ὁ μεταστρέφων τὴν θάλασσαν εἰς ξηρὰν ἐν ποταμῷ διελεύσονται ποδί ἐκεῖ εὐφρανθήσόμεθα ἐπ’ αὐτῷ 66:7 τῷ δεσπότην ἐν τῇ δυναστείᾳ αὐτοῦ τοῦ αἰῶνος οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὰ ἔθνη ἐπιβλέπουσιν οἱ παραπικραίνοντες μὴ ὑψούσθωσαν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς διάψαλμα 66:8 εὐλογεῖτε ἔθνη τὸν θεὸν ἡμῶν καὶ ἀκουτίσασθε τὴν φωνὴν τῆς αἰνέσεως αὐτοῦ 66:9 τοῦ θεμένου τὴν ψυχὴν μου εἰς ζώην καὶ μὴ δόντος εἰς σάλον τοὺς πόδας μου 66:10 ὅτι ἐδοκίμασας ἡμᾶς ὁ θεὸς ἐπύρωσας ἡμᾶς ὡς πυροῦται τὸ ἀργύριον 66:11 εἰσήγαγες ἡμᾶς εἰς τὴν παγίδα ἔθου θλίψεις ἐπὶ τὸν νῶτον ἡμῶν 66:12 ἐπεβίβασας ἀνθρώπους ἐπὶ τὰς κεφαλὰς ἡμῶν διήλθομεν διὰ πυρὸς καὶ ὕδατος καὶ ἐξήγαγες ἡμᾶς εἰς ἀναψυχὴν 66:13 εἰσελεύσομαι εἰς τὸν οἶκόν σου ἐν ὀλοκαυτώμασιν ἀποδώσω σοι τὰς εὐχὰς μου 66:14 ἃς διέστειλεν τὰ χεῖλη μου καὶ ἐλάλησεν τὸ στόμα μου ἐν τῇ θλίψει μου 66:15 ὀλοκαυτώματα μεμυαλωμένα ἀνοίσω σοι μετὰ θυμιάματος καὶ κριῶν ποιήσω σοι βόας μετὰ χιμάρων διάψαλμα 66:16 δεῦτε ἀκούσατε καὶ διηγῆσομαι πάντες οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν ὅσα ἐποίησεν τῇ ψυχῇ μου 66:17 πρὸς αὐτὸν τῷ στόματί μου ἐκέκραξα καὶ ὕψωσα ὑπὸ τὴν γλῶσσάν μου 66:18 ἀδικίαν εἰ ἐθεώρουν ἐν καρδίᾳ μου μὴ εἰσακουσάτω κύριος 66:19 διὰ τοῦτο εἰσήκουσέν μου ὁ θεός προσέσχεν τῇ φωνῇ τῆς δεήσεώς μου 66:20 εὐλογητὸς ὁ θεός ὃς οὐκ ἀπέστησεν τὴν προσευχήν μου καὶ τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ ἀπ’ ἐμοῦ</p>
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<p>Tehillim / Psalms 66 For the choir director. A Song. A Psalm. 66:1 Shout joyfully to God, all the earth; 66:2 Sing the glory of His name; Make His praise glorious. 66:3 Say to God, ‘How awesome are Your works! Because of the greatness of Your power Your enemies will give feigned obedience to You. 66:4 ‘All the earth will worship You, And will sing praises to You; They will sing praises to Your name.’ Selah. 66:5 Come and see the works of God, Who is awesome in His deeds toward the sons of men. 66:6 He turned the sea into dry land; They passed through the river on foot; There let us rejoice in Him! 66:7 He rules by His might forever; His eyes keep watch on the nations; Let not the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah. 66:8 Bless our God, O peoples, And sound His praise abroad, 66:9 Who keeps us in life And does not allow our feet to slip. 66:10 For You have tried us, O God; You have refined us as silver is refined. 66:11 You brought us into the net; You laid an oppressive burden upon our loins. (NASB)</p>	<p>Toviyah / Psalms 66 66:1 For praise. A praise song. Shout for joy in the presence of the Lord, all inhabitants of the earth. 66:2 Praise the glory of his name; set forth the glory of his praise. 66:3 Say in the presence of God, “How fearful are your works! For all the abundance of your works, your enemies will deny you.” 66:4 All the inhabitants of the earth will bow down before you, and they will praise you, they will praise your name forever. 66:5 Come and see the works of God; fearful is the lord of destiny to the sons of men. 66:6 He turned the Red Sea to dry land; the sons of Israel crossed the river Jordan on their feet; he conveyed them to his holy mountain; there will we rejoice in his word. 66:7 He who rules over the world in the power of his strength, his eyes behold the Gentiles; let the disobedient not exalt themselves forever. 66:8 Bless God, O Gentiles, and make the sound of his praise heard. 66:9 Who has designated our souls for the life of the age to come, and has not allowed our feet to be shaken. 66:10 For you have tried us, O God, you have refined us like a smith who refines silver. Another Targum: For you have tried [us], for you have tested our fathers, O God; you exiled them among the kingdoms; you found them refined as one who purifies silver. 66:11 You brought us into the net, you placed chains on our loins. Another Targum: You brought us into Egypt as into a net; you placed the rule of the Babylonians upon us, and we became like one on whose loins chains of trouble are placed. (EMC)</p>	<p>Psalmoi / Psalms 66 For the end, a Song of Psalm of resurrection. 66:1 Shout unto God, all the earth. 66:2 O sing praises to his name; give glory to his praise. 66:3 Say unto God, How awful are thy works! through the greatness of thy power thine enemies shall lie to thee. 66:4 Let all the earth worship thee, and sing to thee; let them sing to thy name. Pause. 66:5 Come and behold the works of God; he is terrible in his counsels beyond the children of men. 66:6 Who turns the sea into dry land; they shall go through the river on foot; there shall we rejoice in him, 66:7 who by his power is Lord over the age, his eyes look upon the nations; let not them that provoke him be exalted in themselves. Pause. 66:8 Bless our God, ye Gentiles, and make the voice of his praise to be heard; 66:9 who quickens my soul in life, and does not suffer my feet to be moved. 66:10 For thou, O God, has proved us; thou hast tried us with fire as silver is tried. 66:11 Thou broughtest us into the snare; thou laidest afflictions on our back. (LXX)</p>
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<p>Tehillim / Psalms 66 66:12 You made men ride over our heads; We went through fire and through water, Yet You brought us out into a place of abundance. 66:13 I shall come into Your house with burnt offerings; I shall pay You my vows, 66:14 Which my lips uttered And my mouth spoke when I was in distress. 66:15 I shall offer to You burnt offerings of fat beasts, With the smoke of rams; I shall make an offering of bulls with male goats. Selah. 66:16 Come and hear, all who fear God, And I will tell of what He has done for my soul. 66:17 I cried to Him with my mouth, And He was extolled with my tongue. 66:18 If I regard wickedness in my heart, The Lord will not hear; 66:19 But certainly God has heard; He has given heed to the voice of my prayer. 66:20 Blessed be God, Who has not turned away my prayer Nor His lovingkindness from me. (NASB)</p>	<p>Toviyah / Psalms 66 66:12 You humbled us, you made our creditors ride over our heads; you judged us as if by fire and water, and you brought us out to a broad place. Another Targum: The Medes and Greeks rode over us, they passed over our heads; you brought us among the Romans, who judge us like the cruel Chaldeans, who cast our father Abraham into the fiery furnace, and the Egyptians, who cast our infants into the water; yet you brought us up to freedom. 66:13 I will enter your house with burnt-offerings, I will pay you my vows. Another Targum: Just as you have mercy on us and redeem us, then we will enter your sanctuary with burnt-offerings and we will pay you our vows. 66:14 Which opened my lips, and my mouth spoke, when I was in distress. 66:15 Fat burnt-offerings I will offer in your presence, with the sweet smell of the sacrifice of rams; I will make [sacrifice of] bulls with he-goats forever. 66:16 Come hear, and I will tell all who fear God what he has done for my soul. 66:17 I cried out to him with my mouth, and his praise was on my tongue. 66:18 If I saw falsehood in my heart, would the Lord not hear? 66:19 Truly God has heard, he listened to the sound of my prayer. 66:20 Blessed be God, who has not removed my prayer and his favor from me. (EMC)</p>	<p>Psalmoi / Psalms 66 66:12 Thou didst mount men upon our heads; we went through the fire and water; but thou broughtest us out into a place of refreshment. 66:13 I will go into thine house with whole-burnt-offerings; I will pay thee my vows, 66:14 which my lips framed, and my mouth uttered in my affliction. 66:15 I will offer to thee whole-burnt-sacrifices full of marrow, with incense and rams; I will sacrifice to thee oxen with goats. Pause. 66:16 Come, hear, and I will tell, all ye that fear God, how great things he has done for my soul. 66:17 I cried to him with my mouth, and exalted him with my tongue. 66:18 If I have regarded iniquity in my heart, let not the Lord hearken to me. 66:19 Therefore God has hearkened to me; he has attended to the voice of my prayer. 66:20 Blessed be God, who has not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me. (LXX)</p>
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In this week’s study from *Tehillim / Psalms 66:1-20*, the psalm opens saying אֲלֵמִנִיצֶה שִׁיר מְזִמֹּר הָרִיעוּ *א* : לְאֱלֹהִים כָּל-הָאָרֶץ: *For the choir director. A Song. A Psalm. 66:1 Shout joyfully to God, all the earth (NASB)* David calls on all of the earth to praise the name of the Lord for His mighty works. Throughout the Scriptures, the Name of God is very important, because this is how the Lord God distinguishes Israel from all the other nations, and Himself from the gods the nations serve. The Name of the Lord is associated with the presence of God in the midst of His people, as David said in *1 Samuel 17:45* Then David said to the Philistine, “You come to me with a sword, a spear, and a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have taunted. (NASB) Studying the Scriptures, the Name

is also related to the service of the Lord, praising and thanking the Lord by His Name for His deliverance and Salvation. We know and love the Lord because He loved us, and the Lord commands not to profane the Name. The Scriptures tell us we are called to wait upon the Name, because the Name of God is our Security and Salvation. We are told that the “Name” is the reason why God acts, and the Name is used in prophecy, similar to what Yeshua said in *Matthew 7:22* “Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ (NASB) The following is a short list of examples:

The Name of God and His Presence

Shemot / Exodus 20:24 ‘You shall make an altar of earth for Me, and you shall sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your oxen; in every place where I cause My name to be remembered, I will come to you and bless you. (בְּכָל-הַמְּקוֹם) (אֲשֶׁר אֶזְכֵּיר אֶת-שְׁמִי אָבוֹא אֵלָיךָ וּבֵרַכְתִּיךָ)

Shemot / Exodus 23:20-21, 23:21 “Behold, I am going to send an angel before you to guard you along the way, and to bring you into the place which I have prepared. 23:21 “Be on your guard before him and obey his voice; do not be rebellious toward him, for he will not pardon your transgression, since My name is in him. כ הִנֵּה אֲנִי שֹׁלֵחַ מַלְאָךְ לְפָנֶיךָ לְשָׁמְרָךָ בְּדֶרֶךְךָ וְלִהְבִּיאָךָ אֶל-הַמְּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר הִכְנַתִּי: כֹּא הַשָּׁמַר מִפְּנֵי וְשָׁמַע בְּקוֹלוֹ אֶל-תִּמְרָבוּ כִּי לֹא יִשָּׂא לְפָשַׁעְכֶם (כִּי שְׁמִי בְּקִרְבּוֹ:

Shemot / Exodus 33:19 And He said, “I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of the Lord before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion.” (ט וַיֹּאמֶר אֲנִי אֶעֱבִיר) (כָּל-טוֹבִי עַל-פְּנֵיךָ וְקִרְאתִי בְשֵׁם יְהוָה לְפָנֶיךָ וְחַנּוּתִי אֶת-אֲשֶׁר אַחֲזוּ וְרַחֲמֹתִי אֶת-אֲשֶׁר אֲרַחֵם:

Shemot / Exodus 34:5 And the Lord descended in the cloud and stood there with him as he called upon the name of the Lord. (ה וַיֵּרֵד יְהוָה בְּעַנָּן וַיִּתְיַצֵּב עִמּוֹ שָׁם וַיִּקְרָא בְשֵׁם יְהוָה:)

Bamidbar / Numbers 6:27 “So they shall invoke My name on the sons of Israel, and I then will bless them.” (כז וְשָׁמוּ אֶת-שְׁמִי עַל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֲנִי אֲבָרַכֶם:)

Devarim / Deuteronomy 12:5 “But you shall seek the Lord at the place which the Lord your God shall choose from all your tribes, to establish His name there for His dwelling, and there you shall come. ה כִּי אִם-אֶל-הַמְּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר-יִבְחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם מִכָּל-נְשִׁבְטֵיכֶם לְשׁוֹם אֶת-שְׁמוֹ) (שָׁם לְשִׁכְנוּ תִדְרָשׁוּ וּבֵאתָ שָׁמָּה:

Devarim / Deuteronomy 12:11 then it shall come about that the place in which the Lord your God shall choose for His name to dwell, there you shall bring all that I command you: your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and the contribution of your hand, and all your choice votive offerings which you will vow to the Lord. (יא וְהָיָה הַמְּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר-יִבְחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם בּוֹ לְשִׁכְנוּ שְׁמוֹ שָׁם שָׁמָּה תָבִיאוּ אֶת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצַוֶּה אֶתְכֶם עוֹלֹתֵיכֶם וְזִבְחֵיכֶם (מַעֲשֵׂוֹתֵיכֶם וְתִרְמַת יָדְכֶם וְכֹל מִבְּחַר נְדָרֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר תִּדְרֹו לַיהוָה:

Devarim / Deuteronomy 12:21 “If the place which the Lord your God chooses to put His name is too far from you, then you may slaughter of your herd and flock which the Lord has

given you, as I have commanded you; and you may eat within your gates whatever you desire. (כא כִּי-יִרְחַק מִמֶּךָ הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשׁוֹם שְׁמוֹ שָׁם וְזָבַחְתָּ מִבְּקָרְךָ וּמִצֹּאֲנָה: (אֲשֶׁר נָתַן יְהוָה לְךָ כְּאֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתָה וְאָכַלְתָּ בְּשַׁעְרֶיךָ בְּכָל אֹתוֹת נִפְשֶׁךָ:

Devarim / Deuteronomy 14:23-24, 14:23 “And you shall eat in the presence of the Lord your God, at the place where He chooses to establish His name, the tithe of your grain, your new wine, your oil, and the first-born of your herd and your flock, in order that you may learn to fear the Lord your God always. 14:24 “And if the distance is so great for you that you are not able to bring the tithe, since the place where the Lord your God chooses to set His name is too far away from you when the Lord your God blesses you, (כג וְאָכַלְתָּ לִפְנֵי | יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ) בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר-יִבְחַר לְשִׁפְן שְׁמוֹ שָׁם מֵעֵשֶׂר דְּגָנְךָ תִּירְשָׁה וְיִצְהָרְךָ וּבְכֹרֹת בְּקָרְךָ וְצֹאֲנָה לְמַעַן תִּלְמַד לִירְאָה אֶת-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ כָּל-הַיָּמִים: כד וְכִי-יִרְבֶּה מִמֶּךָ הַדֶּרֶךְ כִּי לֹא תוּכַל שְׂאתוֹ כִּי-יִרְחַק מִמֶּךָ (הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשׁוֹם שְׁמוֹ שָׁם כִּי יִבְרַכְךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ:

Devarim / Deuteronomy 16:2 “And you shall sacrifice the Passover to the Lord your God from the flock and the herd, in the place where the Lord chooses to establish His name. (ב וְזָבַחְתָּ פֶסַח לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ צֹאן וּבָקָר בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר יְהוָה לְשִׁפְן שְׁמוֹ שָׁם:

Devarim / Deuteronomy 16:6 but at the place where the Lord your God chooses to establish His name, you shall sacrifice the Passover in the evening at sunset, at the time that you came out of Egypt. (ו כִּי אִם-אֶל-הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר-יִבְחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשִׁפְן שְׁמוֹ שָׁם תִּזְבַּח אֶת-הַפֶּסַח בְּעֶרֶב) (כְּבוֹא הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ מוֹעֵד צֵאתְךָ מִמִּצְרָיִם:

Devarim / Deuteronomy 16:11 and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God, you and your son and your daughter and your male and female servants and the Levite who is in your town, and the stranger and the orphan and the widow who are in your midst, in the place where the Lord your God chooses to establish His name. (יא וְשִׂמַּחְתָּ לִפְנֵי | יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אַתָּה) וּבִנְךָ וּבִתְךָ וְעַבְדְּךָ וְאִמָּתְךָ וְהַלְוִי אֲשֶׁר בְּשַׁעְרֶיךָ וְהַגֵּר וְהַיְתוֹם וְהָאֵלֶמְנָה אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבְּךָ בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשִׁפְן שְׁמוֹ שָׁם:

Devarim / Deuteronomy 18:5 “For the Lord your God has chosen him and his sons from all your tribes, to stand and serve in the name of the Lord forever. (ה כִּי בּוֹ בָּחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ) (מִכָּל-שְׁבֻטֶיךָ לְעַמֵּד לְשֵׁרֵת בְּשֵׁם-יְהוָה הוּא וּבָנָיו כָּל-הַיָּמִים:

Devarim / Deuteronomy 18:7 then he shall serve in the name of the Lord his God, like all his fellow Levites who stand there before the Lord. (ז וְשֵׁרֵת בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ כְּכָל-אֶחָיו הַלְוִיִּים) (הַעֲמָדִים שָׁם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה:

Devarim / Deuteronomy 26:2 that you shall take some of the first of all the produce of the ground which you shall bring in from your land that the Lord your God gives you, and you shall put it in a basket and go to the place where the Lord your God chooses to establish His name. (ב וְלָקַחְתָּ מִרֵאשִׁית | כָּל-פְּרֵי הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר תָּבִיא מֵאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נָתַן לְךָ וְשָׂמְתָּ) (בְּטֶנָּא וְהִלַּכְתָּ אֶל-הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשִׁפְן שְׁמוֹ שָׁם:

The Torah speaks of the presence of God in the place that He will establish His Name. The author of Hebrews wrote that we are to pay particular attention to what we have heard, what we have read here in the Scriptures. Notice how in similar fashion to the Torah, the author of *Hebrews 2:12* writes, “I will proclaim

Thy name to My brethren, In the midst of the congregation I will sing Thy praise.” (NASB) The context for Hebrews 2 states the following:

Hebrews 2:1-12

2:1 For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it. 2:2 For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, 2:3 how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard, 2:4 God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will. 2:5 For He did not subject to angels the world to come, concerning which we are speaking. 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. 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. 2:11 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, 2:12 saying, ‘I will proclaim Your name to My brethren, In the midst of the congregation I will sing Your praise.’ (NASB)

In *Hebrews 2*, the author draws upon the Torah to establish his point, for example, from *Shemot / Exodus 23:20-21*, he says *2:2 For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, 2:3 how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard. (NASB)* In *Hebrews 2:12*, the author is not ashamed to proclaim the Name to his brethren (Israel). This text is believed to be a quote from David in *Tehillim / Psalms 22:22* which states, *כג 22:22 אֲסַפְּרָה שְׁמֶךָ לְאַחֵי בְּתוּךְ קְהֵל אֲהַלְלֶךָ: I will tell of Your name to my brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will praise You. (NASB)* (see *Hebrews 2:12*) He continues saying *כד 22:23 יִרְאַי יְהוָה | הִלְלוּהוּ כָּל-יִרְעֵי יְעֻקֵּב כַּבְּדוּהוּ וְגִוְרוּ מִמֶּנּוּ כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל: You who fear the Lord, praise Him; All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him, And stand in awe of Him, all you descendants of Israel. (NASB)* Those who fear the Lord will praise Him. Those who do not fear the Lord do not give Him praise. The fear of the Lord (יִרְאַי יְהוָה) is connected to Praise (הִלְלוּהוּ) and glorifying (כַּבְּדוּהוּ) Him, by believing the Scriptures and what they say concerning the Lord and His Messiah Yeshua. David says all of the descendants of Jacob glorify Him and stand in awe of Him. In *Tehillim / Psalms 22*, David is thinking of the Torah and the mighty way in which the Lord delivered Israel from Egypt, by the way he writes his psalm of all Israel standing in awe of the Lord and glorifying Him. In a similar fashion, the author of *Hebrews* draws upon the Torah for his proof of our needing to place our faith in Yeshua the Messiah.

In *Tehillim / Psalms 66*, David again looks to the Torah for his reasons for calling upon all the earth to praise the Name of the Lord. He calls upon the Scriptural account of God’s mighty works, turning the sea into dry land (66:6), He watches the nations (66:7), He is the One who keeps our feet from slipping (6:8), and for all of these things, He is to be praised, *ב זַמְּרוּ כְבוֹד-שְׁמוֹ שִׁימוּ כְבוֹד תְּהִלָּתוֹ: ג אִמְרוּ לְאֱלֹהִים מַה- 66:2 Sing the glory of His name; Make His praise glorious. 66:3 Say to God, ‘How awesome are Your works! Because of the greatness of Your power Your enemies will give feigned obedience to You. 66:4 ‘All the earth will worship You, And will sing praises to You; They will sing praises to Your name.’ Selah. (NASB)* David says

God's glory and his power will cause His enemies, and the enemies of Israel to give the lord obedience. The NASB states they will give him "Feigned" obedience. The Hebrew text does not say specifically that the nations will feigned obedience, however, the Aramaic Targum states יכדבון לך מן קדמך "your enemies will speak a lie about their relationship" with regard to the Lord, essentially saying they will "feign obedience" or even in the midst of the Lord's mighty works, his enemies will deny him. David continues saying the following in *Tehillim / Psalms 66:2-9*.

Masoretic Text

Tehillim / Psalms 66:2-8

66:2 Sing the glory of His name; Make His praise glorious. 66:3 Say to God, 'How awesome are Your works! Because of the greatness of Your power Your enemies will give feigned obedience to You. 66:4 'All the earth will worship You, And will sing praises to You; They will sing praises to Your name.' Selah. 66:5 Come and see the works of God, Who is awesome in His deeds toward the sons of men. 66:6 He turned the sea into dry land; They passed through the river on foot; There let us rejoice in Him! 66:7 He rules by His might forever; His eyes keep watch on the nations; Let not the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah. 66:8 Bless our God, O peoples, And sound His praise abroad, 66:9 Who keeps us in life And does not allow our feet to slip. (NASB)

ב זמרו כבוד-שמו שִׁימו כְבוֹד תְּהִלָּתוֹ: ג אָמְרוּ לְאֱלֹהִים מֵה-נִוְרָא מַעֲשֵׂיךָ כָּרֵב עֲזָךְ יִכְחָשׁוּ-לְךָ אִיבִיךָ: ד כָּל-הָאָרֶץ | יִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לְךָ וַיִּזְמְרוּ-לְךָ וַיִּזְמְרוּ שְׂמֵךְ סֵלָה: ה לְכוּ וַרְאוּ מַפְעָלוֹת אֱלֹהִים נִוְרָא עֲלֵיךָ עַל-בְּנֵי אָדָם: ו הִפִּיךָ יָם | לִיבְשָׁה בְּנֵהָר יַעֲבְרוּ בְּרֶגֶל שָׁם נִשְׁמְחָה-בוֹ: ז מִשָּׁל בְּגִבּוֹרָתוֹ | עוֹלָם עֵינָיו בְּגוֹיִם תִּצְפִּינָה הַסּוֹרְרִים | אֶל-יְרִימוֹ [יְרוּמוֹ] לְמוֹ סֵלָה: ח בְּרִיכוּ עַמִּים | אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְהַשְׁמִיעֵנוּ קוֹל תְּהִלָּתוֹ: ט הַשֵּׁם נִפְשָׁנוּ בַחַיִּים וְלֹא-נִתֵּן לְמוֹט רַגְלֵנוּ:

Targum Pseudo Jonathan

Toviyah / Psalms 66:2-9

66:2 Praise the glory of his name; set forth the glory of his praise. 66:3 Say in the presence of God, "How fearful are your works! For all the abundance of your works, your enemies will deny you." 66:4 All the inhabitants of the earth will bow down before you, and they will praise you, they will praise your name forever. 66:5 Come and see the works of God; fearful is the lord of destiny to the sons of men. 66:6 He turned the Red Sea to dry land; the sons of Israel crossed the river Jordan on their feet; he conveyed them to his holy mountain; there will we rejoice in his word. 66:7 He who rules over the world in the power of his strength, his eyes behold the Gentiles; let the disobedient not exalt themselves forever. 66:8 Bless God, O Gentiles, and make the sound of his praise heard. 66:9 Who has designated our souls for the life of the age to come, and has not allowed our feet to be shaken. (EMC)

ב שְׁבַח אִיקָר יִקִּירוּ שְׁמִיה שׁוּו אִיקָר תּוֹשְׁבַחְתִּיה: ג אָמְרוּ קִדָּם אֱלֹהָא מַה דְּחִילִין הֵינּוּן אֵינּוּן עוֹבְדֵךְ בְּסִגְיֵי בְּסוּגְעֵי עוֹשֵׁנֵךְ יִכְדָּבוּן לְךָ מִן קִדְמֵךְ בְּעֵלֵי דְבִכְךָ: ד כָּל יִתְבֵי אַרְעָא יִסְגְּדוּן קִדְמֵךְ קוֹמֵךְ וַיִּשְׁבַּחוּן לְךָ לוֹתֵךְ יִשְׁבַּחוּן שְׁמֵךְ לְעֵלְמִין: ה אֲזִילוּ וַחֲמוּן עוֹבְדֵי אֱלֹהָא דְחִיל מְרֵי תִסְקוּפִין עַל בְּנֵי נְשָׂא: ו הִפִּיךָ יִמָּא דְסוּף לִיבְשָׁתָא בְּנֵהָר יוֹרְדָנָא עֲבָרוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרִיגְלֵיהוֹן אֹבִיל יִתְהוֹן לְטוֹר קוֹדְשִׁיה בֵּית מוֹקְדָשָׁא תִמָּן נַחְדֵי בְּמִימְרֵיה: ז דְשִׁלִּיט בְּכַח גְּבוֹרְתֵיה עַל עֵלְמָא עֵינּוּי בְּעַמְמֵי מִסְתַּכְלִין מִסְרְהוּבִין לֹא יִתְרָמוּן יִתְרָמוּן לְהוֹן לְעֵלְמִין: ח בְּרִיכוּ עַמְמֵי אֱלֹהִים יֵי וְאַשְׁמִיעוּ קוֹל תּוֹשְׁבַחְתִּיה: ט דְּמִנֵי נִפְשָׁנָא בַחַיִּי דְעֵלְמָא דַּתִּי וְלֹא מִסָּר לְאִיזְדַּעְזַעָא רִיגְלָנָא:

Septuagint

Psalmoi / Psalms 66:2-9

66:2 *O sing praises to his name; give glory to his praise. 66:3 Say unto God, How awful are thy works! through the greatness of thy power thine enemies shall lie to thee. 66:4 Let all the earth worship thee, and sing to thee; let them sing to thy name. Pause. 66:5 Come and behold the works of God; he is terrible in his counsels beyond the children of men. 66:6 Who turns the sea into dry land; they shall go through the river on foot; there shall we rejoice in him, 66:7 who by his power is Lord over the age, his eyes look upon the nations; let not them that provoke him be exalted in themselves. Pause. 66:8 Bless our God, ye Gentiles, and make the voice of his praise to be heard; 66:9 who quickens my soul in life, and does not suffer my feet to be moved. (LXX)*

66:2 ψάλατε δὴ τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ δότε δόξαν αἰνέσει αὐτοῦ 66:3 εἶπατε τῷ θεῷ ὡς φοβερὰ τὰ ἔργα σου ἐν τῷ πλήθει τῆς δυνάμεώς σου ψεύσονται σε οἱ ἐχθροί σου 66:4 πᾶσα ἡ γῆ προσκυνησάτωσάν σοι καὶ ψαλάτωσάν σοι ψαλάτωσαν τῷ ὀνόματί σου διάψαλμα 66:5 δεῦτε καὶ ἴδετε τὰ ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ φοβερὸς ἐν βουλαῖς ὑπὲρ τοὺς υἱοὺς τῶν ἀνθρώπων 66:6 ὁ μεταστρέφων τὴν θάλασσαν εἰς ξηρὰν ἐν ποταμῷ διελεύσονται ποδί ἐκεῖ εὐφρανθησόμεθα ἐπ' αὐτῷ 66:7 τῷ δεσπόζοντι ἐν τῇ δυναστείᾳ αὐτοῦ τοῦ αἰῶνος οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὰ ἔθνη ἐπιβλέπουσιν οἱ παραπικραίνοντες μὴ ὑψούσθωσαν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς διάψαλμα 66:8 εὐλογεῖτε ἔθνη τὸν θεὸν ἡμῶν καὶ ἀκουτίσασθε τὴν φωνὴν τῆς αἰνέσεως αὐτοῦ 66:9 τοῦ θεμένου τὴν ψυχὴν μου εἰς ζωὴν καὶ μὴ δόντος εἰς σάλον τοὺς πόδας μου

The Aramaic Targum states, 66:7 *He who rules over the world in the power of his strength, his eyes behold the Gentiles; let the disobedient not exalt themselves forever. 66:8 Bless God, O Gentiles, and make the sound of his praise heard. (EMC)* The rabbis essentially are saying based on David's words, that the gentiles are also to worship the Lord. According to the Shema from *Devarim / Deuteronomy 6:4-5*, we read: *6:4 שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה | אֶחָד: ה' וְאֶהְיֶה אִתּוֹ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ כֹּל-לְבָבָךָ וְכֹל-נַפְשְׁךָ וְכֹל-מְאֹדְךָ: 6:5 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. (NASB)* One aspect of the Lord's greatness is found within the Shema in the sense that in His Oneness we find His sovereignty over all peoples (all the world) and not just for Israel. The idea is that if His sovereignty would be limited only to Israel, this would imply and give credence to the Gentiles having valid gods. This however is not the case, and we know that there is only One God according to the Scriptures. The Targum translation goes on to say, 66:9 *Who has designated our souls for the life of the age to come, and has not allowed our feet to be shaken. (EMC)* (ט דמני) (נפשנא בחיי דעלמא דאתי ולא מסר לאיזדעזעא ריגלנא: דעלמא דאתי) Note that the Aramaic text states “*d’olama daaty*” דעלמא דאתי which is translated as “*in the age to come.*” The text is not written “*olam haba*” as the world to come. It is important to note the way the Aramaic Targum is written. The word “*daaty*” דאתי has been used idiomatically in the following ways “(a) to loosen the bowels Syr. (b) to accomplish Syr. (c) to bring to one’s mind Syr. (c.1) to pay attention Syr. (c.2) to understand Syr. (c.3) to recollect Syr. --(d) to put in writing Syr. --(e) to place after, attach to Syr.” This word and its idiomatic usage is important to study because of the way the verse is written in the verse, the Lord designates our souls for the life of the age to come and has not allowed our feet to be shaken. The Lord designates our lives to be lived in a particular way, specifically according to His Torah. The phrase “*world to come,*” and the use of the word “*daaty*” דאתי, draws in the concept of paying attention, understanding, to bring to one’s mind, and to place our minds upon serving the Lord both presently and in the future. The glory of God is found within His ability to set our feet securely by guiding us in His Word, and keeping us in His Messiah Yeshua. I believe these concepts are brought out by the way these Scriptures are translated into Aramaic.

David continues in his Psalm and compares us to being refined by fire as silver is refined, where silver-smiths look to see their reflection in order to determine the purity of the metal, כִּי-בְחִנֵּתְנוּ אֱלֹהִים צָרְפֵתְנוּ, 66:10 For You have tried us, O God; You have refined us as silver is refined. (NASB) The Lord establishes our feet according to His Word (the Scriptures). Does the Lord look at our purity based on this comparison in the way in which we follow His Torah? Note that “purity” in this sense is not related to our “salvation” that has been established according to the covenant. This is about being obedient to His Word, the purity of our hearts towards God that is evidenced by the desire we have to love, serve, and obey His Word. This is the purpose of the Lord refining us by bringing calamity upon us, so that we are continually seeking Him to move in our lives, to change our hearts, to work in the lives of others, etc. Do you believe that is the way the Lord works? Some people interpret Scripture to say that God will not bring bad things upon a person because of Yeshua the Messiah. For example, “by His stripes we are healed, therefore I declare sickness to leave in Jesus’ name!” Is this type of interpretation true? David says the Lord causes men to come against him and laid a heavy burden upon him, and these are compared to fire and water, which the Lord brings upon him for the purpose of bringing him to the place of abundance. (66:12) If there is sickness in your life, there may be a specific purpose that has been designed by God to draw you closer to Him, and to draw others closer to Him through prayer.

In the Torah, when the Children of Israel moved in the wilderness, the way was led by the pillar of cloud by day and pillar of fire by night accompanied by the Ark of the Covenant. These things were visible signs that “God Himself was Present.” When the people lived those 40 years in the wilderness, they were to make a distinction between clean and unclean, holiness and unrighteousness. Later, when they entered the Promised land, they were told to do the same. Today, we are still called to identify between what is holy and what is unholy. Holiness, according to the Torah and the Hebrew language, simply means to set apart as special, that which is holy is set apart from the ordinary of everyday. Unholy things are those things which are common, showing a lack of refinement and profane. The concept of unholiness represents the deliberate lack of respect and blasphemous. Note that the word “profane” is derived from the Latin word “profanus” which means literally “outside the temple.” Take the word “profanity,” it is most often deliberately and actively opposed to the holiness of the heart and the lips, which is the point of the second and third commandments (do not worship false gods, and make no graven images), setting the standard for separation of the sacred and the profane. This leads us back to the first and greatest commandment to fear and to love the Lord your God with all of your heart, and all of your soul and your entire mind taken from the Shema (Devarim / Deuteronomy 6:4-10). Holiness is the proper standard of respect for our body, our minds, and for the Lord, which includes love, honor, and obedience to the commands, all of which are expected from us by God. Do you believe these things cease today in Yeshua the Messiah?

David in his psalm suggests that trials are sent from God. The trials of God are meant to refine us, to make us and to mold us into His image. According to Tehillim / Psalms 11, David said, “The Lord tries the righteous, but the wicked and him that loves violence His soul hates (11:5), and the prophet Malachi said, “the wicked is Ishmael, and him who loves violence is Esau, of whom God said, but Esau I hated (Malachi 1:3).” Both Ishmael and Esau hated their inheritances and the covenant of God. Both chose wives from the people of the land of Canaan, taking their gods, their ways, their daughters, and adding them as part of their own family and lives. As children of the Most High God, when we live our lives according to God’s ways, and He is glorified. We set Him upon the throne of our lives. With the Lord’s help, in His Son Yeshua the Messiah, we are able to live our lives wholly devoted to Him. Ask the Lord right now to help you to live according to His will and purpose for your life!

David continues in his psalm saying the following:

Masoretic Text

Tehillim / Psalms 66:10-15

66:10 For You have tried us, O God; You have refined us as silver is refined. 66:11 You

brought us into the net; You laid an oppressive burden upon our loins. 66:12 You made men ride over our heads; We went through fire and through water; Yet You brought us out into a place of abundance. 66:13 I shall come into Your house with burnt offerings; I shall pay You my vows, 66:14 Which my lips uttered And my mouth spoke when I was in distress. 66:15 I shall offer to You burnt offerings of fat beasts, With the smoke of rams; I shall make an offering of bulls with male goats. Selah. (NASB)

י כִּי-בְחַנְתָּנוּ אֱלֹהִים צָרְפָתָנוּ כְּצָרֶךְ-כְּסֹף: יא הִבֵּאתָנוּ בַּמְצוּדָה שְׁמֵת מוֹעֵקָה בְּמַתְנֵינוּ: יב הֲרִי-
כַבֵּת אָנוּשׁ לְרֵאשֵׁנוּ פְּאֵנוּ-בְּאֵשׁ וּבַמַּיִם וַתּוֹצִיאֵנוּ לְרִנָּה: יג אָבוֹא בֵּיתְךָ בְּעוֹלוֹת אֲשֶׁלֶם לְךָ נְדָרֵי:
יד אֲשֶׁר-פָּצוּ שְׁפָתַי וַדְּבַר-פִּי בְּצֶר-לִי: טו עֲלוֹת מַחִים אֶעֱלֶה-לְךָ עִם-קַטְרֵת אֵילִים אֶעֱשֶׂה בְּקָר
עִם-עֲתוּדִים סֵלָה:

Targum Pseudo Jonathan

Toviyah / Psalms 66:10-15

66:10 For you have tried us, O God, you have refined us like a smith who refines silver. Another Targum: For you have tried [us], for you have tested our fathers, O God; you exiled them among the kingdoms; you found them refined as one who purifies silver. 66:11 You brought us into the net, you placed chains on our loins. Another Targum: You brought us into Egypt as into a net; you placed the rule of the Babylonians upon us, and we became like one on whose loins chains of trouble are placed. 66:12 You humbled us, you made our creditors ride over our heads; you judged us as if by fire and water, and you brought us out to a broad place. Another Targum: The Medes and Greeks rode over us, they passed over our heads; you brought us among the Romans, who judge us like the cruel Chaldeans, who cast our father Abraham into the fiery furnace, and the Egyptians, who cast our infants into the water; yet you brought us up to freedom. 66:13 I will enter your house with burnt-offerings, I will pay you my vows. Another Targum: Just as you have mercy on us and redeem us, then we will enter your sanctuary with burnt-offerings and we will pay you our vows. 66:14 Which opened my lips, and my mouth spoke, when I was in distress. 66:15 Fat burnt-offerings I will offer in your presence, with the sweet smell of the sacrifice of rams; I will make [sacrifice of] bulls with he-goats forever. (EMC)

י ארום בחנתא אלהא אתכתנא היך קינאה דמתוך סימא: ת"א ארום בחנתא ארום נסיתא אבהתנא
אלהא אגליתא יתהון ביני מלכוותא אשכחתא יתהון זקיקי הא כמא דסנין כספא: יא אעלתנא
במצודתא שויתא שושלתא בחרצנא: ת"א אעילתנא במצרים כיד במצדתא שויתא מרוות בבלאי
עלנא והוינא דמיין כאלו מיתשם אש ושלתא עקא חרצנא: יב אמאכתנא ארכבתא מרי מזופיתא
על רישנא דנתא יתנא כדי כיד בנורא בכור ובמוי ואפיקתנא לרוחתא: ת"א רכב עלנא מדאי ויונאי
סליקו על רישנא אעילתנא ביני רומאי דדיינין יתנא כאכזראין כלדאי דרמו אבונן אברהם באתון
נורא ומצראי דרמו ינקנא במיא ואסיקתנא לחירותא: יג איעול לביתך בית מוקדשך בעלוון אשלם
לך נדרי: ת"א היכדין תרחמיננא ופרוק יתן וניתי לבית מוקדשך בעלוון ונשלם לוותך נדרנא: יד
די פתחו סיפוותי ומליל פומי בדעק לי: טו עלוון שמינין אסיק קדמך קומך עם קטורת בוסמין
קרבו דיכרין אעביד תורין עם ברחיא לעלמין:

Septuagint

Psalmoi / Psalms 66:10-15

66:10 For thou, O God, has proved us; thou hast tried us with fire as silver is tried. 66:11

Thou broughtest us into the snare; thou laidest afflictions on our back. 66:12 Thou didst mount men upon our heads; we went through the fire and water; but thou broughtest us out into a place of refreshment. 66:13 I will go into thine house with whole-burnt-offerings; I will pay thee my vows, 66:14 which my lips framed, and my mouth uttered in my affliction. 66:15 I will offer to thee whole-burnt-sacrifices full of marrow, with incense and rams; I will sacrifice to thee oxen with goats. Pause. (LXX)

66:10 ὅτι ἔδοκίμασας ἡμᾶς ὁ θεός ἐπύρωσας ἡμᾶς ὡς πυροῦται τὸ ἀργύριον 66:11 εἰσήγαγες ἡμᾶς εἰς τὴν παγίδα ἔθου θλίψεις ἐπὶ τὸν νῶτον ἡμῶν 66:12 ἐπεβίβασας ἀνθρώπους ἐπὶ τὰς κεφαλὰς ἡμῶν διήλθομεν διὰ πυρὸς καὶ ὕδατος καὶ ἐξήγαγες ἡμᾶς εἰς ἀναψυχὴν 66:13 εἰσελεύσομαι εἰς τὸν οἶκόν σου ἐν ὀλοκαυτώμασιν ἀποδώσω σοι τὰς εὐχὰς μου 66:14 ἃς διέστειλεν τὰ χεῖλη μου καὶ ἐλάλησεν τὸ στόμα μου ἐν τῇ θλίψει μου 66:15 ὀλοκαυτώματα μεμυαλωμένα ἀνοίσω σοι μετὰ θυμιάματος καὶ κριῶν ποιήσω σοι βόας μετὰ χιμάρων διάψαλμα

David says, 66:10 *For You have tried us, O God; You have refined us as silver is refined. (NASB)* and the Aramaic Targum states, 66:10 *For you have tried us, O God, you have refined us like a smith who refines silver. Another Targum: For you have tried [us], for you have tested our fathers, O God; you exiled them among the kingdoms; you found them refined as one who purifies silver. (EMC)* How does the Lord sending one into exile among the kingdoms cause Israel to be refined? Note that David’s words in the MT do not say “*exile among the kingdoms,*” the Aramaic Targum does, which in a sense dates the writing of the Targum as compared to the writing of the Psalm, the Targum come much later following the Babylonian exile. But it is important to try to understand what the rabbis are trying to say; how does exile cause one to be refined as silver? It could be this is a reference to the people who are in exile seeking the Lord, repenting, and desiring to return to His ways. The rabbis are saying that exile refines by reason of our seeking the Lord to return us to the place He has prepared for us. Similar to illness and sickness, these things come due to the Lord working in our lives by drawing us back to Him. (Note that illness may also come as a result of our own abuses to our bodies, or environmental circumstances, but regardless of this, the Lord is still at work and is able to heal.)

David also told us in *Tehillim / Psalms 12* that the words of the Lord are Pure, אִמְרוֹת יְהוָה אֲמָרוֹת זָהֳרָוֹת 12:6 *The words of the Lord are pure words; As silver tried in a furnace on the earth, refined seven times. (NASB)* According to *Tehillim / Psalms 12:6*, the purity of God’s word is described as silver that has been purified (tried) in a furnace and refined seven times. Elsewhere, Scripture also tells us that the Lord works on His people to “*refine them like silver and test them like gold*” in *Zechariah 13:9*, like a smelter purifies silver, the Lord purifies and refines the people like gold according to *Malachi 3:1-4*. There are quite a few more verses that describe God as one who refines us using Fire. It is interesting how David says that the Lord has caused his people to pass through fire and water, making a reference to the Torah and God’s deliverance and mighty hand. *Malachi 3:3* (וַיֵּשֶׁב מְצַרְף וּמְטַהֵר כֶּסֶף וְטַהֵר) (אֶת־בְּנֵי־לְוִי וְזָקַק אֹתָם בְּזָהָב וּכְכֶסֶף וְהָיוּ לַיהוָה מְגִישֵׁי מִנְחָה בְּצַדִּיקָה: is interesting with regard to David’s words since the prophet uses of the word “*taher*” (וּמְטַהֵר) and “*tihar*” (וְטַהֵר) from the Hebrew root word meaning “*be clean, pure*” or “*ritually pure*” in the sense of making or declaring ceremonially clean. Verse 3:3 begins with “*Ve’yashav*” (וַיֵּשֶׁב) meaning “*He will sit*” indicating that God sits and works on us with fire. The construction of this sentence suggests this is to be understood that God is working as a sanctifying influence in our lives. This is especially interesting with regard to David’s words in *Tehillim / Psalms 66:10* which states, כִּי־בַחֲנֻתָנוּ אֱלֹהִים צָרַפְתָּנוּ בְּצַרְף־כֶּסֶף: 66:10 *For You have tried us, O God; You have refined us as silver is refined. (NASB)* where David uses the word צָרַף meaning “*to join, attach, combine, be purified.*” The Lord is joining us with Him through His commands, we learn by obedience and to have a regard for holiness in our lives for God’s glory. According to the silver smith, one must sit and watch with his eyes fixed on the furnace during the time for the refining of silver. Silver must be kept in the flame only long

enough to remove the dross and the silver smith scoops off the dross and throws it away. If the time required is exceeded the silver would become injured or damaged. This imagery is beautiful, because according to the Scriptures God is working to sanctify us in our lives and He literally sits and watches very carefully while he refines us. Based upon these Scriptures, the trials we go through do not come at random but are carefully crafted by God to work and to mold us into the likeness of His son Yeshua the Messiah so that as the Targum says, He finds us as one who has been refined as silver. Note that a refiner's job is complete when he can see his own image reflected back in the silver. The Lord God is sitting, working, refining, and purifying us so that we may reflect back to Him an image of Himself, which as you know, is in the image of the Messiah Yeshua. This is confirmed in His promise in *Zechariah 13:9* that says *13:9 'And I will bring the third part through the fire, Refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them; I will say, 'They are My people,' And they will say, 'The Lord is my God.'* NASB (וְהִבֵּאתִי אֶת־הַשְּׁלִישִׁית בְּאֵשׁ וְצִרְפֹּתִים כְּצִרְף אֶת־הַכֶּסֶף וּבְחַנְתִּים כְּבַחַן אֶת־הַזָּהָב הוּא | יִקְרָא בְשִׁמִּי) : וְהָאֲנִי אֶעְנֶה אֹתוֹ אֲמַרְתִּי עִמִּי הוּא וְהוּא יֹאמֵר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי: Notice how those who have been refined and tested, the Lord will hear and answer their prayer. Based upon this study, the Lord tests and refines us through trials for the purpose of drawing us back to Himself and to His ways. Those whom the Lord hears and answers are the ones who seek the Lord with all their heart and put their faith into action according to His Word (the Scriptures). Isn't this what Paul meant when he said "give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." (*1 Thessalonians 5:18*)? Our experiences, past, present, and future, intersect and weave together to reveal the true tapestry of God's handwork in our lives which is to draw us to Him to be His people. Praise the Lord for the work that He performs in us each day! The evidence of this is found in His transforming us in such a way that upholds the Word of God in our lives. Do you uphold the Word of God in your life? This means that as we trust in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and as we trust in Yeshua the Messiah, our lives will demonstrate our faith by our obedience to His commands. If your life is like this then you are truly a child of God.

David continues saying, that it is our duty to tell others about the work the Lord has done in our lives saying, *66:16 Come and hear, all who fear God, And I will tell of what He has done for my soul.* (NASB) Do you give testimony to others how the Lord has worked in your life? David concludes his Psalm saying the following:

Masoretic Text

Tehillim / Psalms 66:18-20

66:18 If I regard wickedness in my heart, The Lord will not hear; 66:19 But certainly God has heard; He has given heed to the voice of my prayer. 66:20 Blessed be God, Who has not turned away my prayer Nor His lovingkindness from me. (NASB)

יח אָנֹכִי אֵם־רָאִיתִי בְּלִבִּי לֹא יִשְׁמַע | אֲדַנִּי: יט אֲכֹן שָׁמַע אֱלֹהִים הַקְּשִׁיב בְּקוֹל תַּפְלְתִּי: כ בְּרוּךְ אֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא־הִסִּיר תַּפְלְתִּי וְחִסְדּוֹ מֵאֵתִי:

Targum Pseudo Jonathan

Toviyah / Psalms 66:18-20

66:18 If I saw falsehood in my heart, would the Lord not hear? 66:19 Truly God has heard, he listened to the sound of my prayer. 66:20 Blessed be God, who has not removed my prayer and his favor from me. (EMC)

יח שִׁקֵּר אֵין חֲמִיתִי בְּלִבִּי הַאֲפֹשֶׁר דִּי לֹא יִשְׁמַע יְהוָה: יט בְּקוּשְׁטָא שְׁמַע אֱלֹהָא אֲצִית בְּקַל צְלוּתִי: כ בְּרִיךְ אֱלֹהָא יִי דְלֹא אַעֲדִי צְלוּתִי וְטוֹבִיָּה מִיָּנִי:

Septuagint

Psalmoi / Psalms 66:18-20

66:18 *If I have regarded iniquity in my heart, let not the Lord hearken to me. 66:19 Therefore God has hearkened to me; he has attended to the voice of my prayer. 66:20 Blessed be God, who has not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me. (LXX)*

66:18 ἀδικίαν εἰ ἐθεώρουν ἐν καρδίᾳ μου μὴ εἰσακουσάτω κύριος 66:19 διὰ τοῦτο εἰσήκουσέν μου ὁ θεός προσέσχεν τῇ φωνῇ τῆς δεήσεώς μου 66:20 εὐλογητὸς ὁ θεός ὃς οὐκ ἀπέστησεν τὴν προσευχὴν μου καὶ τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ ἀπ' ἐμοῦ

David says, :מִתְחַנֵּן | אֵלַי לֹא יִשְׁמָע | ה' 66:18 *If I regard wickedness in my heart, The Lord will not hear; (NASB)* Do you think this Scripture has application for our lives today? Under what conditions would the Lord, our Father in heaven, hear our prayers and under what conditions would He not hear our prayers? If one is living in sin, would one still be presentable to go before the Lord in prayer? This idea of present-ability (*our being presentable before God*), how does Yeshua relate to our being heard by our Father in heaven? Does our having entered into a covenant with God in Yeshua cause the Father to automatically always hear our prayers? The point is that we should know the One before whom we go when we pray. He is holy, righteous, and true. The Scriptures say that He is a consuming fire. Should one go before the Lord asking for anything without first seeking the Lord for the forgiveness of sins? This seems to be the whole point of David words, :מִתְחַנֵּן | אֵלַי לֹא יִשְׁמָע | ה' 66:18 *If I regard wickedness in my heart, The Lord will not hear. (NASB)* Do you grieve over your sins? Have you bled in your resistance against sin in your life? (see *Hebrews 12:4*) These are all important points to consider as believers in Yeshua and being the people and children of God. This seems to be brought out in Paul's letter to the Corinthians in *1 Corinthians 12:22-25*.

1 Corinthians 12:22-25

12:22 *On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary; 12:23 and those members of the body which we deem less honorable, on these we bestow more abundant honor, and our less presentable members become much more presentable, 12:24 whereas our more presentable members have no need of it. But God has so composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that member which lacked, 12:25 so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. (NASB)*

²²ἀλλὰ πολλῶ μᾶλλον τὰ δοκοῦντα μέλη τοῦ σώματος ἀσθενέστερα ὑπάρχειν ἀναγκαῖά ἐστιν, ²³καὶ ἃ δοκοῦμεν ἀτιμότερα εἶναι τοῦ σώματος, τούτοις τιμὴν περισσοτέραν περιτίθεμεν, καὶ τὰ ἀσχήμονα ἡμῶν εὐσχημοσύνην περισσοτέραν ἔχει, ²⁴τὰ δὲ εὐσχήμονα ἡμῶν οὐ χρεῖαν ἔχει. ἀλλὰ ὁ θεὸς συνεκέρασεν τὸ σῶμα, τῷ ὑστερουμένῳ περισσοτέραν δοῦς τιμὴν, ²⁵ἵνα μὴ ᾖ σχίσμα ἐν τῷ σώματι, ἀλλὰ τὸ αὐτὸ ὑπὲρ ἀλλήλων μεριμνῶσιν τὰ μέλη.

When Paul talks about people who are part of the body of the Messiah, what exactly is Paul referring to? Some “*seem to be weaker*,” whom “*we think less honorable*,” and “*unpresentable parts*.” Here the use of the word *dokeo* seems to be an opinion, but Paul does not say whether this opinion is right or wrong. The use of the word “*unpresentable*” is based upon a judgment that is being made. The idea may be that we are not to regard a person from a human point of view, from the flesh (*sarx*), as we once had regarded Yeshua from a human point of view (*sarx*), we now no longer regard Yeshua in such a way. The point of Paul's words is that we are to regard everyone with equal value before God, Yeshua was also all about reaching out

to the outcasts of society; could that idea be at play, here? When we think about being presentable before God, realize that the Lord does not look at man in the way that we do. Paul talks about being presentable before God by man's standards, man tends to value a person by their position in life, their financial income, what they look like. On the contrary, the Lord looks at the heart, as David said, regarding iniquity in the heart leads to the Lord not regarding our prayer. This understanding is similar to what Yeshua taught in *Matthew 5:43-48, John 13:34-35 and 17:20-23*, that God's children are to show love in a significantly greater capacity, more than to those who they would naturally love, but also to love your enemies, pray for them, feed them, etc.

David concludes saying, יֵט אָכֵן שָׁמַע אֱלֹהִים הַקָּשִׁיב בְּקוֹל תְּפִלָּתִי: כ בָּרוּךְ אֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא-הִסִּיר תְּפִלָּתִי 66:19 *But certainly God has heard; He has given heed to the voice of my prayer. 66:20 Blessed be God, Who has not turned away my prayer Nor His lovingkindness from me. (NASB)* He believed the Lord heard his prayer because he was not living in sin, and that his desire is to serve the Lord and to walk in His ways! Something David continually brings out in his psalms thus far is the importance of our consistently looking to the Lord for His help, and for His sustaining power. We are to live repentant lives, humble before God, and gentle with one another, having a desire to study His Word, being quick to pray and slow to speak, and the list can go on. These things should be characteristic of our lives, and is consistent with what is taught in the Torah. Let's pray!

Rabbinic Commentary

The Rabbinic Commentary (Midrash) on *Tehillim / Psalms 66* has 1 part. Reading through the Midrash we will be looking at Part 1. Let's begin by outlining *Midrash Tehillim Chapter 66, Parts 1*.

Outline of Midrash Tehillim / Psalms, Chapter 66, Part 1

Part 1

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*For the leader. A song, a psalm. Shout unto God, all the earth; sing forth the honor of His name (Tehillim / Psalms 66:1-2).*”
- The פתיחתא (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*These words are to be considered in the light of what Scripture says elsewhere, For them will I turn to the peoples a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent (Zephaniah 3:9).*”
- The משל (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis comment upon David's words asking the question of the service of a man before God. The answer is that a man's service is prayer.
- The נמשל (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the משל (mashal), the rabbis expand upon the mashal by providing reasons to pray and to praise the name of the Lord.
- The Concluding phrase says, “*So, too, the sons of Korach said, O clap your hands, all you peoples; shout unto God with the voice of triumph (Tehillim / Psalms 47:2). Why? Because the Lord Most High, fearful, will be the great King over all the earth (Tehillim / Psalms 47:3). Then The Lord will be King over all the earth; in that day will the Lord be one, and His name one (Zephaniah 14:9).*”

Midrash Tehillim 66, Part 1 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying “*For the leader. A song, a psalm. Shout unto God, all the earth; sing forth the honor of His name (Tehillim / Psalms 66:1-2).*” The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*These words are to be considered in the light of what Scripture says elsewhere, For them will I turn to the peoples a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent (Zephaniah 3:9).*” Notice how the rabbis say, all will

call upon the name of the Lord with one consent. The midrash continues and the rabbis say the following:

Rabbi Johanan taught, What is the service of the Holy One blessed be He? It is prayer. Moshe implied this when he said, And it will come to pass, if you will hearken diligently unto My commandments which I commanded you this day, to love the Lord your God, to serve Him with all your heart (Devarim / Deuteronomy 11:13). What, then, is the service that a man may render to God? It is none other than prayer; as Scripture says, Serve the Lord with gladness; come before His presence with singing (Tehillim / Psalms 100:2), and further O come, let us sing unto the Lord; let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation (Tehillim / Psalms 95:1). (Midrash Tehillim 66, Part 1)

On a very basic level, prayer expresses both our faith and our belief in God. When one prays, he is exercising his faith in the Lord in heaven and recognizes that his life is dependent upon the Lord. When we pray, we are acknowledging the Lord as the one who is in control of all, and that it is within His ability to deliver us from our hardship. And because of His mercy and grace, in our time of need, we can go to Him for help, and it does not matter how trivial the need may be. Prayer alone is not what the rabbis are speaking of since obedience to the commands are coupled to the service of the Lord that is expected of us. The service that the Lord expects of us is act of providing help and love for others, act of offering our time, work or labor in the sense of serving others, our faith functions as a part of our reaching out to others because we are supposed to have love for one another. The important point is that we need to rely upon the Lord for all things. The following Scriptures illustrate this point:

Mishley / Proverbs 3:5

3:5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. (ESV)

Jeremiah 17:5-9

Thus says the Lord: “Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from the Lord. He is like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see any good come. He shall dwell in the parched places of the wilderness, in an uninhabited salt land. “Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit.” The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it? (ESV)

Isaiah 26:4

26:4 Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord God is an everlasting rock. (ESV)

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal. (ESV)

Philippians 4:19

4:19 And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. (ESV)

1 Peter 5:7

5:7 Casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. (ESV)

Midrash Tehillim 66, Part 1 states that the Torah refers to prayer as “*the service of the heart,*” making reference to *Devarim / Deuteronomy 11:13*.

Devarim / Deuteronomy 11:8-16

11:8 ‘You shall therefore keep every commandment which I am commanding you today, so that you may be strong and go in and possess the land into which you are about to cross to possess it; 11:9 so that you may prolong your days on the land which the Lord swore to your fathers to give to them and to their descendants, a land flowing with milk and honey. 11:10 ‘For the land, into which you are entering to possess it, is not like the land of Egypt from which you came, where you used to sow your seed and water it with your foot like a vegetable garden. 11:11 ‘But the land into which you are about to cross to possess it, a land of hills and valleys, drinks water from the rain of heaven, 11:12 a land for which the Lord your God cares; the eyes of the Lord your God are always on it, from the beginning even to the end of the year. 11:13 ‘It shall come about, if you listen obediently to my commandments which I am commanding you today, to love the Lord your God and to serve Him with all your heart and all your soul, 11:14 that He will give the rain for your land in its season, the early and late rain, that you may gather in your grain and your new wine and your oil. 11:15 ‘He will give grass in your fields for your cattle, and you will eat and be satisfied. 11:16 ‘Beware that your hearts are not deceived, and that you do not turn away and serve other gods and worship them. (NASB)

The idea is that loving the Lord and serving Him is to be done with all the heart, including obedience to the commands. Rambam (Maimonides) writes that “*prayer without concentration is akin to a lifeless body.*” The Zohar goes so far as to refer to prayer as the “*spinal cord*” of Judaism. The concept of Kavanah is also an important aspect of prayer. Kavanah is the intense mental concentration on what one is praying for. For example, prayer requires our understanding of the words of the prayer, and not merely reciting the sounds. This can be a problem for some who use liturgical Hebrew, where one simply recites by rote. The Mishnah however in Pirkei Avot 2:13 states that one is not to pray by rote.

Pirkei Avot 2:13

Rabbi Shimon says: Be careful in the reciting of the Shema and the Shemoneh Esrei. When you pray, do not make your prayers routine, but rather a plea for mercy and supplications before God, as is written (Joel 2:13), “For [God] is gracious and merciful, He is slow to anger, and abundant with kindness, and relents from punishment.” Do not be wicked before yourself.

רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן אָמַר, הָיִי זֶהִיר בְּקִרְיַת שְׁמַע (וּבִתְפִלָּה). וּכְשֶׁאַתָּה מִתְפַּלֵּל, אַל תַּעַשׂ תְּפִלָּתְךָ קִבְעָה, אֶלֶּא רְחֻמִּים וְתַחֲנוּנִים לְפָנֵי הַמֶּקוֹם בְּרוּךְ הוּא, שְׂנֵאָמַר (יֹאֵל בּוּ, יֵב) כִּי חַנּוּן וְרַחוּם הוּא אֲרָךְ אַפִּים וְרַב חֶסֶד וְנִחָם עַל הָרָעָה. וְאַל תְּהִי רִשָּׁע בְּפָנֵי עַצְמְךָ:

The point is that if one uses liturgy, use the prayers as a guide for seeking the Lord’s mercy. Midrash Tehillim 66, Part 1 continues saying “*Your God whom you serve continually (Daniel 6:17). For how did Daniel serve God? By prayer, as it is said, And he kneeled upon the knees three times a day and prayed (Daniel 6:11).*” Originally, the mitzvah to pray did not include a specific time. We should always be ready to pray, or as the Apostle Paul said, in *Ephesians 6:18 With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints,* (NASB) and to the

Thessalonians in *1 Thessalonians 5:16 Rejoice always; 5:17 pray without ceasing; 5:18 in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. (NASB)*

Following the destruction of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem in 423 BCE, Israel was carried away into exile to Babylon for seventy years. A new generation of people were born in the Diaspora and as a result of this, they were not fluent in Hebrew. The people spoke a number of languages, Aramaic and Greek, with maybe a smattering of Hebrew (a few words here or there most likely). In order to address the issue of language, Ezra the Scribe together with the Men of the Great Assembly, translated the Scriptures into Aramaic (the Targumim) and established a standard text for prayer in Hebrew. In addition, they instituted three times for daily prayer: morning, afternoon and night. In addition to the three prayers, a fourth prayer was added after the morning prayers on Shabbat and Jewish holidays, which center around the Amidah, a series of nineteen blessings. The morning and evening prayers also incorporate the Shema, as per the mitzvah to recite it morning and night.

The rabbis say that the Torah refers to prayer as “*the service of the heart,*” and continue saying the following.

Say unto God, How fearful is Your work. Through the greatness of Your might will Your enemies dwindle away before You. All the earth will worship You. (Tehillim / Psalms 66:3-4). Even as it was said to God at the Red Sea, Who is like unto You, O Lord, among the mighty? (Shemot / Exodus 15:11), so now, I say to God, How fearful is Your work. Through the greatness of Your might will Your enemies dwindle away before You. All the earth will worship You. This, Isaiah also said, And it will come to pass that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, will all flesh come to worship before Me, says the Lord (Isaiah 66:23). This is also said in the verse, All nations whom You have made will come and worship before You, O Lord; and nations worship You, but All the earth will worship You (Tehillim / Psalms 66:4). Why so? Because flesh and blood will no longer have rule and dominion. (Midrash Tehillim 66, Part 1)

The interpretation, on the opening verses of the psalm is that all the earth will worship the Lord. This is stated explicitly in the Aramaic Targum, *Tehillim / Psalms 66:1-4*, saying *66:1 For praise. A praise song. Shout for joy in the presence of the Lord, all inhabitants of the earth. 66:2 Praise the glory of his name; set forth the glory of his praise. 66:3 Say in the presence of God, “How fearful are your works! For all the abundance of your works, your enemies will deny you.” 66:4 All the inhabitants of the earth will bow down before you, and they will praise you, they will praise your name forever. (EMC)* It is interesting how the midrash interprets that God’s enemies will dwindle away because of the power of His might, and yet all the earth will worship the Lord. There are those from the nations who will join themselves with Israel, and there are those who will not. The proof text for this is taken from *Isaiah 66*, Scripture that speaks of the last days and on the return of the Lord.

Isaiah 66:15-24

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 the Lord. 66:18 ‘For I know their works and their thoughts; the time is coming to gather all nations and tongues. And they shall come and see My glory. 66:19 ‘I will set a sign among them and will send survivors from them to the nations: Tarshish, Put, Lud, Meshech, Rosh, Tubal and Javan, to the distant coastlands that have neither heard My fame nor seen My glory. And they will declare My glory among the nations. 66:20 ‘Then they shall bring all your brethren from all the nations as a grain offering to the Lord, on horses, in chariots, in litters,

on mules and on camels, to My holy mountain Jerusalem,' says the Lord, 'just as the sons of Israel bring their grain offering in a clean vessel to the house of the Lord. 66:21 'I will also take some of them for priests and for Levites,' says the Lord. 66:22 'For just as the new heavens and the new earth Which I make will endure before Me,' declares the Lord, 'So your offspring and your name will endure. 66:23 'And it shall be from new moon to new moon And from sabbath to sabbath, All mankind will come to bow down before Me,' says the Lord. 66:24 'Then they will go forth and look On the corpses of the men Who have transgressed against Me. For their worm will not die And their fire will not be quenched; And they will be an abhorrence to all mankind.' (NASB)

What appears to be going on in *Isaiah 66* is the Lord returns, brings judgment upon the earth, establishes His kingdom, and re-establishes his covenant and the Temple sacrifices. The midrash takes this eschatological event to show how all of the earth will worship the Lord. The reason given for all the earth worshipping the Lord is “*Because flesh and blood will no longer have rule and dominion.*” The Lord has established His reign, and those who opposed the Lord are destroyed, as *Isaiah 66:24* states, *66:24 'Then they will go forth and look On the corpses of the men Who have transgressed against Me. For their worm will not die And their fire will not be quenched; And they will be an abhorrence to all mankind.'* (NASB) The description that is given of those who perish, is that their bodies will continue to be eaten, and the fire the Lord started (*Isaiah 66:15*) will not be quenched, sounds a lot like the descriptions we have run into previously on Gehenna. (see *Tehillim / Psalms 11*)

Gehenna is a place of separation, torment, and suffering. Based upon the rabbinic usage on Gehenna, Hell, and Sheol, one can draw the conclusion that Gehenna and Hell are synonymous words. In Midrash Tehillim 11, Part 6, over against the righteous, the wicked will have seven habitations in Gehenna (Hell). The book “*Jewish Views of the Afterlife*” by Simcha Paul Raphael, pg. 141, states in the apocryphal literature both Sheol and Gehenna appear interchangeable, in the rabbinic literature Gehenna is the term used most frequently to describe the realm of punitive retribution. In Midrash Tehillim 11, Part 6, similarly to the Talmud Bavli, Tractate Erubin, Rabbi Joshua son of Levi lists seven of the original names of Gehenna each of which is based upon a biblical passage. Sheol (שְׁאוֹל, nether-world, *Jonah 2:2*), Abaddon (אֲבַדּוֹן, Destruction, *Tehillim / Psalms 88:12*), Tselmavet (צֶלְמוֹת, shadow of death, *Tehillim / Psalms 107:10*), Erets Takhtit (אֶרֶץ תַּחְתִּית, Underworld, *Talmud Bavli, tractate Erubin 19a*), Erets Nesiya (אֶרֶץ נִשְׂיָה, realm of forgetfulness), Gehinnom (גֵּיהֵנוֹם), and Dumah (דּוּמָה, realm of silence, *Midrash Tehillim 11, Part 6*). Note that these seven names are not fixed. Other names that have been used are Beer Shakhat (Corruption, see *Tehillim / Psalms 16:10*), Bor Shaon (Horrible Pit) or Tit HaYaven (Miry Clay, see *Tehillim / Psalms 40:3*). The rabbinic tradition on Gehenna provides us with the understand that seven different names come to represent seven different regions within Gehenna, to which the wicked are judiciously dispatched, as is recorded in the midrash saying, “*Behold! There are seven habitations for the wicked ... according to their works ...*” (*Midrash Tehillim 11, Part 6*). The synoptic gospels use the word “*Gehenna*” eleven times to describe life reserved for those who are not in the Kingdom of God (*Mark 9:43-48*). Gehenna is a place where both the soul and the body are destroyed (*Matthew 10:28*) in “*unquenchable fire*” (*Mark 9:43*). Gehenna is also mentioned in the Epistle of *James 3:6*, (καὶ ἡ γλῶσσα πῦρ, ὁ κόσμος τῆς ἀδικίας, ἡ γλῶσσα καθίσταται ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν ἡμῶν, ἡ σπιλοῦσα ὅλον τὸ σῶμα καὶ φλογίζουσα τὸν τροχὸν τῆς γενέσεως καὶ φλογιζομένη ὑπὸ τῆς γεέννης, *3:6 And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell. NASB*) It is said that Hell (Gehenna γεέννης) sets the tongue on fire, and the tongue in turn sets on fire the entire “*course*” of life.

Midrash Tehillim 66, Part 1 states that the Torah refers to prayer as “*the service of the heart,*” along with all the earth coming before the Lord at His Holy Hill, to worship Him with one consent, shows that our worshipping Him is a matter of the heart. We also know that our hearts are the place by which our tongues are set on fire. The point that James is making (*James 3:6*) is that the tongue defiles the body, sets on fire the entire

course of our lives, which is set on fire by hell. The concept being put forward here is that the tongue is the outlet for the full range of iniquity. Note again that the Greek word used here marks the significance of the issue, Gehenna (γέεννης), the location of a valley that was turned into a waste dump and is set on fire to burn the garbage, the location in ancient times where human sacrifice was occurring. Do the words that come out of your mouth smell like smoldering trash, or worse yet, human sacrifice? James says that the tongue no man can tame (3:7-8) discussing the capability of man to tame his own tongue. The point is having faith in the Messiah Yeshua, and the indwelling of God's Holy Spirit, the Lord gives us the power to overcome by transforming our hearts so that it is possible to take full control of the tongue. What is impossible with man, with God all things are possible (*Matthew 19:26*). In addition, King Solomon said in *Ecclesiastes 5:1-7*:

Ecclesiastes 5:1-7

5:1 Guard your steps as you go to the house of God and draw near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools; for they do not know they are doing evil. 5:2 Do not be hasty in word or impulsive in thought to bring up a matter in the presence of God. For God is in heaven and you are on the earth; therefore let your words be few. 5:3 For the dream comes through much effort and the voice of a fool through many words. 5:4 When you make a vow to God, do not be late in paying it; for He takes no delight in fools. Pay what you vow! 5:5 It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay. 5:6 Do not let your speech cause you to sin and do not say in the presence of the messenger of God that it was a mistake. Why should God be angry on account of your voice and destroy the work of your hands? 5:7 For in many dreams and in many words there is emptiness. Rather, fear God. (NASB)

יז שְׁמֹר רַגְלֶיךָ [רַגְלֶיךָ] כַּאֲשֶׁר תֵּלֵךְ אֶל-בֵּית הָאֱלֹהִים וְקָרוֹב לְשֹׁמְעֵי מִתַּת הַכְּסִילִים זְבַח כִּי-אֵינָם יוֹדְעִים לַעֲשׂוֹת רָע: א אֶל-תְּבַהֵל עַל-פִּיךָ וּלְבָבְךָ אֶל-יַמְהַר לְהוֹצִיא דְבָר לִפְנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים כִּי הָאֱלֹהִים בְּשִׁמְמִים וְאַתָּה עַל-הָאָרֶץ עַל-כֵּן יִהְיוּ דְבָרֶיךָ מְעֻטִּים: ב כִּי בָּא הַחֲלוֹם בְּרַב עֲנָן וְקוֹל כְּסִיל בְּרַב דְּבָרִים: ג כַּאֲשֶׁר תִּדְרֹךְ לְאֱלֹהִים אֶל-תִּאָחֵז לְשִׁלְמוֹ כִּי אֵין חֶפֶץ בְּכִסְיִלִים אֶת אֲשֶׁר-תִּדְרֹךְ שְׁלֹם: ד טוֹב אֲשֶׁר לֹא-תִדְרֹךְ מִשְׁתַּדְּדוֹר וְלֹא תִשְׁלֹם: ה אֶל-תִּתֵּן אֶת-פִּיךָ לְחַטִּיא אֶת-בְּשָׂרְךָ וְאֶל-תִּאָמַר לִפְנֵי הַמְּלָאָךְ כִּי שָׁגַגְתָּ הִיא לְמָה יִקְצַף הָאֱלֹהִים עַל-קוֹלְךָ וְחַבֵּל אֶת-מַעֲשֵׂה יְדֶיךָ: ו כִּי בְרַב חֲלָמוֹת וְהִבָּלִים וְדְבָרִים הִרְבֵּה כִּי אֶת-הָאֱלֹהִים יִרְא:

Solomon says to “shemor” (שְׁמֹר), to “keep” or “guard” your feet on the path to the house of the Lord. The guarding of one’s steps is to keep watch that one does not go off the path towards sin. What is the Sacrifice of fools? Solomon is saying that it is better to avoid sin than to offer sacrifices; but, if offered, they should be presented in a repentant attitude, and not merely, as fools offer them, for the purpose of complying with the Law. This is similar to what is written in the *Talmud Bavli Berakhot 23a*.

Talmud Bavli Berakhot 23a

רבי שמואל בר נחמני אמר רבי יונתן מ”ד (קהלת ד, יז) שמור רגלך כאשר תלך אל בית האלהים שמור עצמך שלא תחטא ואם תחטא הבא קרבן לפני וקרוב לשמוע (דברי חכמים) אמר רבא הוי קרוב לשמוע דברי חכמים שאם חוטאים מביאים קרבן ועושים תשובה מתת הכסילים [זבח] אל תהי ככסילים שחוטאים ומביאים קרבן ואין עושים תשובה כי אינם יודעים לעשות רע אי הכי צדיקים נינהו אלא אל תהי ככסילים שחוטאים ומביאים קרבן ואינם יודעים אם על הטובה הם מביאים אם על הרעה הם מביאים אמר הקב”ה בין טוב לרע אינן מבחינים והם מביאים קרבן לפני

Rabbi Shmuel Nachmani said Rabbi Jonathan MD (Ecclesiastes 4:17) Keep your foot when you go to the house of God, keep yourself from sin, if sin comes before the sacrifice, then draw near to hear (the words of the wise ones / Sages) Raba said Hoyi, draw near to hear the words of the wise, if sinners bring a sacrifice and do Teshuvah, a gift of the fools [sacrifice]

Do not be as fools that sin and bring a sacrifice and do not perform Teshuvah, for they know not that they do evil as compared to the righteous. They will be as fools that sin and bring sacrifice and they will not know what is good, they come with evil, they come to the Lord not knowing the difference between good and evil.

The idea is that the fool brings a sacrifice by route, just to fulfill the mitzvah, and does so without a repentant heart. Solomon said to guard the feet, and if making a vow, to do so and make good on the vow paying what is required based upon the vow that is made. It is easy to allow our speech to cause us to sin, as in the case of making a vow, one should do so for spiritual reasons and not by reason of the fleshly desire.

Midrash Tehillim 66, Part 1 concludes saying, “*So, too, the sons of Korach said, O clap your hands, all you peoples; shout unto God with the voice of triumph (Tehillim / Psalms 47:2). Why? Because the Lord Most High, fearful, will be the great King over all the earth (Tehillim / Psalms 47:3). Then The Lord will be King over all the earth; in that day will the Lord be one, and His name one (Zephaniah 14:9). So, too, the sons of Korach said, O clap your hands, all you peoples; shout unto God with the voice of triumph (Tehillim / Psalms 47:2). Why? Because the Lord Most High, fearful, will be the great King over all the earth (Tehillim / Psalms 47:3). Then The Lord will be King over all the earth; in that day will the Lord be one, and His name one (Zephaniah 14:9).*” The midrash describes the absolute sovereignty of the Lord God in heaven. He is awesome in power, which is too terrible for the wicked to even think of. David expresses joy and confidence in the Lord, that He is all powerful and able to subdue the enemy. This shows us the faith and submission of David in the Lord who is both great in power and merciful and forgiving. Let’s Pray!

Heavenly Father,

We glorify and praise Your Holy Name because great and mighty are Your works. We praise Your Holy Name for the strength and the faith that You have given us. We thank You for keeping our feet on the path of righteousness and truth according to Your Word (the Scriptures). Thank You for David’s words which reveal to us how we should be living our lives with David as our example. Please create in us a deep respect and fear of You Lord, coupled with a desire to draw near to You in a greater way in our lives. Thank You for giving us the faith to believe in Yeshua the Messiah! Please have mercy on us, forgive us for our sins. We thank You Lord for sending Your son Yeshua that we may enter into the covenant of peace that You have promised to Your people. Help us to grow in our faith, to walk in the spirit, and apply these truths to our lives. We praise Your Holy Name and give You all of the honor, and the glory, and the praise forever and ever.

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

Be Blessed in Yeshua, Christ our Messiah!

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

Notes