

ד תן-לָהֶם כְּפַעֲלָם וּכְרַע מַעֲלָלֵיהֶם
כְּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיהֶם תֵּן לָהֶם הַשָּׁב גְּמוּלָם
לָהֶם: ה' כִּי לֹא יִבְיִנוּ אֶל-פְּעֻלַּת
יְהוָה וְאֶל-מַעֲשֵׂה יְדָיו יִהְרָסוּם וְלֹא
יִבְנִים: ו' בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה כִּי-שָׁמַע קוֹל
תַּחֲנוּנָי: ז' יְהוָה | עֲזֵי וּמְגִנֵי בּוֹ בָטַח
לְבִי וְנִעְזַרְתִּי וַיַּעֲזֵר לְבִי וּמְשִׁירֵי
אֲהוּדָדָיו: ח' יְהוָה עֲזֵ-לְמוֹ וּמְעוֹז
יְשׁוּעוֹת מְשִׁיחוֹ הוּא: ט' הוֹשִׁיעָה
אֶת-עַמֶּךָ וּבְרַךְ אֶת-נַחְלָתְךָ וְרַעַם
וּנְשָׂאֵם עַד-הָעוֹלָם:

Tehillim / Psalms 28

28:1 To You, O Lord, I call; My rock, do not be deaf to me, For if You are silent to me, I will become like those who go down to the pit. 28:2 Hear the voice of my supplications when I cry to You for help, When I lift up my hands toward Your holy sanctuary. 28:3 Do not drag me away with the wicked And with those who work iniquity, Who speak peace with their neighbors, While evil is in their hearts. 28:4 Requite them according to their work and according to the evil of their practices; Requite them according to the deeds of their hands; Repay them their recompense. 28:5 Because they do not regard the works of the Lord Nor the deeds of His hands, He will tear them down and not build them up. 28:6 Blessed be the Lord, Because He has heard the voice of my supplication. 28:7 The Lord is my strength and my shield; My heart trusts in Him, and I am helped; Therefore my heart exults, And with my song I shall thank Him. 28:8 The Lord is their strength, And He is a saving defense to His anointed. 28:9 Save Your people and bless Your inheritance; Be their shepherd also, and carry them forever. (NASB)

ד הבפרע להון ייי כעובדיהון וכביי-
שות עובדיהון מעלליהון כעובדי ידהון
פרעהב להון אתיב התיב פורענותהון
להון: ה מטול דלא מתבינין יתבר-
ננו לאוריתא דיהוה ולעובדי אידוי
ידוהי יפגרינון ולא יבנינון: ו בריך
יהוה מימרא דיי ארום קבל שמע קל
צלותי: ז יהוה עושני ותריסי ביה
סבר במימריה אתרחיץ לבי וסעדתני
ואיסתייעית ודאיץ לבי ומתושבחתני
אודה קדמוי: ח יהוה תקוף תקיף
להון ועושנא פורקנות משיחיה הוא:
ט פרוק ית עמך וברוך ית אחסנתך זון
להום יתהון וסובר יתהון עד עלמא:

Toviyah / Psalms Chapter 28

28:1 Of David. To you, O Lord, I cry; O my strength, do not be silent to me, lest, when you are silent, I become like those who descend to the pit. 28:2 Accept the voice of my petition when I pray to you, whenever I spread my hands in prayer before your holy temple. 28:3 Do not drag me away with the wicked or with those who do wrong; who speak peace with their fellows, while evil is in their hearts. 28:4 Give to them according to their deeds, and according to their evil deeds; according to the works of their hands, repay them; turn upon them their retribution. 28:5 Because they do not understand the Torah of the Lord or the works of his hands; he will tear them down and not rebuild them. 28:6 Blessed is the Lord because he has accepted the voice of my prayer. 28:7 The Lord is my strength and shield; on him my heart has set its hope; and you have aided me, and my heart exults; I will give thanks in his presence by my psalm. 28:8 The Lord is their strength and might; he is the redemption of his anointed. 28:9 Redeem your people and bless your inheritance; feed them and support them forever. (EMC)

28:4 δὸς αὐτοῖς κατὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτῶν καὶ κατὰ τὴν πονηρίαν τῶν ἐπιτηδεύματων αὐτῶν κατὰ τὰ ἔργα τῶν χειρῶν αὐτῶν δὸς αὐτοῖς ἀπόδος τὸ ἀνταπόδομα αὐτῶν αὐτοῖς 28:5 ὅτι οὐ συνήκαν εἰς τὰ ἔργα κυρίου καὶ εἰς τὰ ἔργα τῶν χειρῶν αὐτοῦ καθελεῖς αὐτούς καὶ οὐ μὴ οἰκοδομήσεις αὐτούς 28:6 εὐλογητὸς κύριος ὅτι εἰσήκουσεν τῆς φωνῆς τῆς δεήσεώς μου 28:7 κύριος βοηθός μου καὶ ὑπερασπιστής μου ἐπ' αὐτῷ ἤλπισεν ἡ καρδία μου καὶ ἐβοηθήθη καὶ ἀνέθαλεν ἡ σάρξ μου καὶ ἐκ θελήματός μου ἐξομολογήσομαι αὐτῷ 28:8 κύριος κραταίωμα τοῦ λαοῦ αὐτοῦ καὶ ὑπερασπιστής τῶν σωτηρίων τοῦ χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ ἐστίν 28:9 σῶσον τὸν λαόν σου καὶ εὐλόγησον τὴν κληρονομίαν σου καὶ ποιμανὸν αὐτούς καὶ ἔπαρον αὐτούς ἕως τοῦ αἰῶνος

Psalmoi / Psalms 28

A Psalm of David. 28:1 To thee, O Lord, have I cried; my God, be not silent toward me: lest thou be silent toward me, and so I should be likened to them that go down to the pit. 28:2 Hearken to the voice of my supplication, when I pray to thee, when I lift up my hands toward thy holy temple. 28:3 Draw not away my soul with sinners, and destroy me not with the workers of iniquity, who speak peace with their neighbours, but evils are in their hearts. 28:4 Give them according to their works, and according to the wickedness of their devices: give them according to the works of their hands; render their recompense unto them. 28:5 Because they have not attended to the works of the Lord, even to the works of his hands, thou shalt pull them down, and shalt not build them up. 28:6 Blessed be the Lord, for he has hearkened to the voice of my petition. 28:7 The Lord is my helper and my defender; my heart has hoped in him, and I am helped: my flesh has revived, and willingly will I give praise to him. 28:8 The Lord is the strength of his people, and the saving defender of his anointed. 28:9 Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: and take care of them, and lift them up for ever. (LXX)

א לְדוֹד אֵלֶיךָ יְהוָה | אֶקְרָא צוּרִי אֶל-תַּחֲרֹשׁ מִמְּנֵי אֶת-יְהוָה יְהוָה אֶת-תַּחֲרֹשׁ מִמְּנֵי וְנִמְשַׁלְתִּי עִם-יְהוָה בּוֹר: A Psalm of David. 28:1 To You, O Lord, I call; My rock, do not be deaf to me, For if You are silent to me, I will become like those who go down to the pit. (NASB) How does David understand those who go down to the pit? What does it mean to go down to the pit? Here David is saying that he does not want to be comparable to one who descends to the pit (בּוֹר) using the word (וְנִמְשַׁלְתִּי עִם-יְהוָה בּוֹר) using the word בּוֹר meaning nm “hole, pit, oubliette, dungeon.” It is interesting that the word בּוֹר is used only

six times in the Torah in *Bereshit / Genesis 37:22, 37:28-29, 41:14, Shemot / Exodus 12:29 and 21:33-34*. Let's review these verses from the Torah.

Bereshit / Genesis 37:22, 37:28-29, 41:14

37:22 Reuben further said to them, 'Shed no blood. Throw him into this pit that is in the wilderness, but do not lay hands on him' that he might rescue him out of their hands, to restore him to his father. (NASB) כב ויאמר אלהם | ראובן אל-תשפכו-דם השליכו אתו אל-הבור והנה אשור במדבר ויד אל-תשלו-בו למען הציל אתו מידם להשיבו אל-אביו:

37:28 Then some Midianite traders passed by, so they pulled him up and lifted Joseph out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. Thus they brought Joseph into Egypt. (NASB) כח ויעברו אנשים מדנינים סחרים ומשוכו ויעלו את-יוסף מן-הבור ומכרו את-יוסף לישמעאלים בעשרים כסף וביאו את-יוסף מצרמה:

37:29 Now Reuben returned to the pit, and behold, Joseph was not in the pit; so he tore his garments. (NASB) כט וישב ראובן אל-הבור והנה אין-יוסף בבור ויקרע את-בגדיו:

41:14 Then Pharaoh sent and called for Joseph, and they hurriedly brought him out of the dungeon; and when he had shaved himself and changed his clothes, he came to Pharaoh. (NASB) יד וישלח פרעה ויקרא את-יוסף ויריצהו מן-הבור ויגלח ויחלף שמלתיו ויבא אל-פרעה:

Shemot / Exodus 12:29, 21:33-34

12:29 Now it came about at midnight that the Lord struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of cattle. (NASB) כט ויהי | בחדאי הלילה והנה הבה כול-בכור בארץ מצרים מבכר פרעה הישב על-כסאו עד בכור השבי אשר בבית הבור וכל בכור בהמה:

21:33 'If a man opens a pit, or digs a pit and does not cover it over, and an ox or a donkey falls into it, 21:34 the owner of the pit shall make restitution; he shall give money to its owner, and the dead animal shall become his. (NASB) לג וכי-יפתח איש בור או כי-יכרה איש בר ולא יכסנו ונפל-שמה שור או חמור: לד בעל הבור ישלם כסף ישיב לבעליו והמת יהיה-לו:

According to the Torah, the word בור is used as a reference to a "pit," for example one in which the sons of Israel threw Joseph into because they hated him. This word is also used to refer to a dungeon, Joseph was cast into a dungeon and Pharaoh called for Joseph and they brought him out of the dungeon. During Pesach (Passover) the first born in Egypt who were locked up in a dungeon (בור) also died. In *Shemot / Exodus 21:33-34*, there is a mitzvah regarding digging a pit and what to do if a neighbors ox or donkey falls into it. In *Tehillim / Psalms 28*, David seeks the Lord so that he is not like one who goes down to the pit. Studying the interpretation of the word בור according to the Torah it appears that David is thinking of being compared to one who is guilty and deserving of punishment. In addition to this, the word בור is also used to refer to the grave in *Tehillim / Psalms 30:3, 88:4, and Isaiah 14:15, 14:19, and 38:18*.

Tehillim / Psalms 30:3, 88:4

30:3 O Lord, You have brought up my soul from Sheol; You have kept me alive, that I would not go down to the pit. (NASB) ד יהוה העלית מן-שאול נפשי הייתי מיורדי- [מירדי] בור:

88:3 For my soul has had enough troubles, And my life has drawn near to Sheol. 88:4 I am reckoned among those who go down to the pit; I have become like a man without strength, 88:5 Forsaken among the dead, Like the slain who lie in the grave, Whom You remember no more, And they are cut off from Your hand. (NASB) ד כִּי-שִׁבְעָה בְּרַעוֹת נַפְשִׁי וְחַיִּי לְשְׂאוֹל (NASB) הַגִּיעוּ: הַ נְחַשְׁבֹּתִי עִם-יֹרְדֵי בּוֹר הַיִּיטִי כַּגִּבֹּר אִיו-אַיִל: וּ בַמַּתִּים הַפְּשִׁי כְּמוֹ הַלְּלִים | שִׁכְבִּי קִבֵּר אֲשֶׁר לֹא זְכַרְתָּם עוֹד וְהִמָּה מִיָּדְךָ נִגְזְרוּ:

Isaiah 14:12-19, 38:18

14:12 'How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, You who have weakened the nations! 14:13 'But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, And I will sit on the mount of assembly In the recesses of the north. 14:14 'I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.' 14:15 'Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol, To the recesses of the pit. 14:16 'Those who see you will gaze at you, They will ponder over you, saying, 'Is this the man who made the earth tremble, Who shook kingdoms, 14:17 Who made the world like a wilderness And overthrew its cities, Who did not allow his prisoners to go home?' 14:18 'All the kings of the nations lie in glory, Each in his own tomb. 14:19 'But you have been cast out of your tomb Like a rejected branch, Clothed with the slain who are pierced with a sword, Who go down to the stones of the pit Like a trampled corpse. (NASB) יב אִיךָ נִפְלַת מִשָּׁמַיִם הִילַל כֶּן-שָׁחַר נִגְדַעְתָּ לְאֶרֶץ חוֹלֵשׁ עַל-גּוֹיִם: יג וְאַתָּה אִמְרַת בְּלִבְבְּךָ הַשָּׁמַיִם אֶעֱלֶה מִמֶּעַל לְכוֹכְבֵי-אֵל אֲרִים כִּסְאִי וְאָשֵׁב בְּהֶר-מוֹעֵד בְּיַרְכְּתֵי צָפוֹן: יד אֶעֱלֶה עַל-בְּמִתִּי עַב אֲדַמָּה לְעֵלְיוֹן: טו אַךְ אֶל-שְׂאוֹל תּוֹרַד אֶל-יַרְכְּתֵי-בוֹר: טז רְאִיךָ אֵלֶיךָ יִשְׁגִּיחוּ אֵלֶיךָ יִתְבֹּנְנוּ הַזֶּה הָאִישׁ מִרְגִּזוֹ הָאֶרֶץ מִרְעִישׁ מִמְּלָכוֹת: יז שָׁם תִּבֵּל כַּמְדָּבָר וְעָרְיוּ הָרַם אֲסִירָיו לֹא-פָתַח בְּיָתָהּ: יח כָּל-מַלְכֵי גוֹיִם כָּלֵם שָׁכְבוּ בְּכַבּוּד אִישׁ בְּבֵיתוֹ: יט וְאַתָּה הַשְׁלַכְתָּ מִקִּבְרְךָ כַּנֶּצֶר נִתְעַב לְבוֹשׁ הַרְגִים מִטְעָנִי חָרַב יֹרְדֵי אֶל-אֲבָנֵי-בוֹר כַּפְּגָר מוֹבָס:

38:18 'For Sheol cannot thank You, Death cannot praise You; Those who go down to the pit cannot hope for Your faithfulness. 38:19 'It is the living who give thanks to You, as I do today; A father tells his sons about Your faithfulness. (NASB) ח כִּי-לֹא שְׂאוֹל תּוֹדֶךָ מִוֹת יְהִלְלֶךָ (NASB) ט לֹא-יִשְׁכְּרוּ יֹרְדֵי-בוֹר אֶל-אַמְתָּה: יט חֵי חֵי הוּא יוֹדֶה כְּמוֹנֵי הַיּוֹם אָב לְבָנִים יוֹדִיעַ אֶל-אַמְתָּה:

In *Tehillim / Psalms 30:3*, the context of the verse is the Lord who brought David up from Sheol (the grave) and therefore he did not go down to the pit. Here the pit and the grave are drawn into parallel. In *Tehillim / Psalms 88:4*, the context states that the troubles of life have brought one's soul to Sheol and he has been reckoned as one who goes down to the pit (88:4) and like one who was slain who lays in the grave (88:5). Isaiah uses the word with reference to the one who has fallen from heaven, the one who boasted that he would be like the Most High God, this one was thrust down to the grave (Sheol) to the recesses of the pit (14:15). Isaiah continues saying that this one was cast out of his tomb, he was clothed with the slain who were pierced with the sword. This seems to indicate that he is covered in blood, and the verse continues saying that he goes down to the stones of the pit like a trampled corpse (14:19). In *Isaiah 28:18*, he says 38:18 'For Sheol cannot thank You, Death cannot praise You; Those who go down to the pit cannot hope for Your faithfulness. (NASB) paralleling "sheol," "death," and the "pit" with one another. When David makes the statement regarding the pit and asking the Lord not to be compared to one who is descending to the pit, he is referring to those who die. The word בור is a reference to the grave, to death, and he believes that if he did not obtain help from the Lord he would die and be overwhelmed with the despair of life. David says, "I become like them that go down into the pit" may either be like one that falls into a ditch and cannot help himself out, and they cry, and there is none to take me out from this ditch; or this may be like one who dies in battle, and are cast into a pit and there buried in a common grave with others. This sort of thing did

happen in those days when the people would clear off the land from the dead and burying the bodies. David might have feared that would be his case, as a result of Saul’s violent pursuit after him. The important point is that David was seeking the Lord for His help, just like he said in *Tehillim / Psalms 27:1* “*The Lord is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The Lord is the defense of my life; Whom shall I dread?*” (NASB) the Lord is our salvation.

David is seeking the Lord to hear him saying אֶל-דְּבִיר יְדֵי בְּנִשְׁאֵי יָדַי קוֹל תְּחַנּוּנַי בְּשׁוֹעֵי אֲלִיָּהּ בְּנִשְׁאֵי יְדֵי אֶל-דְּבִיר :28:2 *Hear the voice of my supplications when I cry to You for help, When I lift up my hands toward Your holy sanctuary.* (NASB) David cries out to the Lord to hear his prayer. It is interesting that the words David uses describes the response he is looking for. The Hebrew word דְּבִיר means “*Holy of Holies, interior sanctuary in the tabernacle and temple where the Ark of the Covenant was kept (was entered only by the high priest once a year).*” This is interesting since the root word for דְּבִיר is the word דבר meaning (noun) “*word, speech, saying, utterance, say*” and (verb) “*to talk, speak.*” The use of this word indicates that the sanctuary is where the Lord gives responses to the prayers of His people. In addition to this, the lifting up of the hands in and of itself denotes prayer. The Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy that he wanted men to lift up holy hands in prayer.

1 Timothy 2:8

2:8 *Therefore I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and dissension.* (NASB)

⁸Βούλομαι οὖν προσεύχεσθαι τοὺς ἄνδρας ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ, ἐπαίροντας ὁσίους χεῖρας χωρὶς ὀργῆς καὶ διαλογισμοῦ

The idea in the tabernacle was for the priest to stretch out his hands toward the דְּבִיר קִדְשֵׁךָ the holy sanctuary. Similarly, we stretch out our hands towards heaven the dwelling place of God. The דְּבִיר קִדְשֵׁךָ is indicative that the Lord spoke answering prayers. The Targum Pseudo Jonathan states ב קבל בקל בעותי במצלי 28:2 *Accept the voice of my petition when I pray to you, whenever I spread my hands in prayer before your holy temple.* (EMC) and the Septuagint states 28:2 εἰσάκουσον τῆς φωνῆς τῆς δεήσεώς μου ἐν τῷ δέεσθαί με πρὸς σέ ἐν τῷ με αἴρειν χεῖράς μου πρὸς ναὸν ἁγίόν σου 28:2 *Hearken to the voice of my supplication, when I pray to thee, when I lift up my hands toward thy holy temple.* (LXX) In the translations of the Hebrew text, the rabbis say “*when I lift up my hands towards your holy temple*” in prayer. As a result of this, some commentaries (i.e. Clarke’s Commentary) states that “*this is a presumptive proof that there was a temple now standing...*” This may have been a partial motivation for the reasoning in the International Critical Commentary on the Psalms stating that the Psalms were not written by David and that these were compiled following the exile and return from Babylon. The idea here is that the rabbis who translated the Psalm into Greek and Aramaic lived following the first and second temple periods and therefore would have translated using a reference to the holy Temple, this is consistent with the time period of the translation and not necessarily a proof that David did not write this Psalm.

David continues knowing the Lord will answer him saying אֶל-תִּמְשַׁכְּנִי עִם-רְשָׁעִים וְעִם-פְּעֻלֵי אָוֶן :28:3 *Do not drag me away with the wicked And with those who work iniquity, Who speak peace with their neighbors, While evil is in their hearts.* (NASB) Why does David feel the Lord will drag him away with the wicked and those who work iniquity? Those who do walk in the way of the Lord (believers) such people should dread the way of the wicked. The righteous are those who are careful not to partake or participate in the deeds of the wicked. We seek the Lord in prayer to keep us from being drawn aside and pray earnestly to the Lord to keep us from sin. We see the lifting of the hands in prayer quite frequently in the Psalms of David, for example, in *Tehillim / Psalms 63:4, 134:2, and 141:2*, etc.

Tehillim / Psalm 63:4 So I will bless You as long as I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name. (NASB) הַ כֹּן אֲבָרְכֶךָ בְּחַיֵּי בְשִׁמְךָ אֲשָׂא כָפְי:

Tehillim / Psalm 134:2 Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the LORD. (NASB) בְּשָׂאוֹ-יְדֵיכֶם קִדְשׁ וּבְרַכּוּ אֶת-יְהוָה:

Tehillim / Psalm 141:2 May my prayer be counted as incense before You; The lifting up of my hands as the evening offering. (NASB) תִּפְלֹתַי קִטְרֹת לְפָנֶיךָ מִשְׁאַת כֶּפֶי מִנְחַת-עֶרֶב: בְּשָׂאוֹת יְדָי כַּעֲשֵׂת עֲרֹב:

David wrote in *Tehillim / Psalms 141:2* saying “*May my prayer be counted as incense before You; The lifting up of my hands as the evening offering.*” Literally he says “*may his prayer be counted as a sweet fragrance before God and the lifting of the hands as in the Evening Mincha.*” The Mincha is also known as the afternoon prayer service in Judaism. In the Psalm the word is spelled מִנְחָה (minchat) and in the Torah, the word spelled as מִנְחָה occurs 23 times. Looking at the very first occurrence of the word Mincha we find it is used with regard to Cain and Abel, the sons of Adam and Chavah (Eve). In *Bereshit / Genesis 4:3* the Scriptures say וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ יָמִים וַיָּבֵא קַיִן מִפְּרֵי הָאֲדָמָה מִנְחָה לַיהוָה the son of Adam and Chavah (Eve) brought a Mincha to Adonai. Cain was bringing a grain offering to the Lord and this was not acceptable, he needed to bring a offering in blood to make atonement. In other places in the Torah, in *Vayikra / Leviticus*, the Mincha is known as the “*Korban Mincha*” as the grain offering. The KJV translates this as a “*meat offering,*” the NASB translates this more correctly as “*grain offering.*” Based on the first use of the word Mincha in *Bereshit / Genesis 4:3*, Cain brought from the fruit of the land as a Mincha, a grain offering. The Mincha also refers to a “*present, gift, or offering*” according to the standard Hebrew Lexicons (i.e. BDB). David said his prayer is intended to be pleasant and sweet fragrance. The lifting of the hands is a form of praise and worship to the Lord. In addition to this, Yeshua the Messiah also said a few things regarding prayer in *Matthew 6:5-14*.

Matthew 6:5-14

6:5 ‘*When you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.* 6:6 ‘*But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.* 6:7 ‘*And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words.* 6:8 ‘*So do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.* 6:9 ‘*Pray, then, in this way: ‘Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.* 6:10 ‘*Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.* 6:11 ‘*Give us this day our daily bread.* 6:12 ‘*And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.* 6:13 ‘*And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. [For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.]’* 6:14 ‘*For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. (NASB)*

⁵Καὶ ὅταν προσεύχησθε, οὐκ ἔσεσθε ὡς οἱ ὑποκριταί: ὅτι φιλοῦσιν ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς καὶ ἐν ταῖς γωνίαις τῶν πλατειῶν ἑστῶτες προσεύχεσθαι, ὅπως φανῶσιν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις: ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, ἀπέχουσιν τὸν μισθὸν αὐτῶν. ⁶σὺ δὲ ὅταν προσεύχη, εἰσελθε εἰς τὸ ταμεῖόν σου καὶ κλείσας τὴν θύραν σου πρόσευξαι τῷ πατρί σου τῷ ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ: καὶ ὁ πατήρ σου ὁ βλέπων ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ ἀποδώσει σοι. ⁷Προσευχόμενοι δὲ μὴ βατταλογήσητε ὡς περ οἱ ἔθνηκοί, δοκοῦσιν γὰρ ὅτι ἐν τῇ πολυλογίᾳ αὐτῶν εἰσακουσθήσονται. ⁸μὴ οὖν ὁμοιωθῆτε αὐτοῖς, οἶδεν γὰρ ὁ πατήρ ὑμῶν ὃν χρεῖαν ἔχετε πρὸ τοῦ ὑμᾶς αἰτῆσαι αὐτόν. ⁹Οὕτως οὖν προσεύχεσθε ὑμεῖς: Πάτερ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου, ¹⁰ἐλθέτω ἡ

βασίλειά σου, γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημά σου, ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς. ¹¹Τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον δὸς ἡμῖν σήμερον: ¹²καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰ ὀφειλήματα ἡμῶν, ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀφήκαμεν τοῖς ὀφειλέταις ἡμῶν: ¹³καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πειρασμόν, ἀλλὰ ῥύσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ.

The text literally says 6:10 “Let come to pass your will as in heaven also upon the earth,” and in 6:12 “forgive us our debts as also we forgive our debtors.” (NASB) Yeshua goes on to say in 6:14 “For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.” (NASB) Here in Mathew 6:12 Yeshua is instructing us in order to receive forgiveness “afes” (ἄφες) we must forgive “afiemen” (ἀφήκαμεν) others. The one who seeks forgiveness in prayer must be conscious of forgiving others their sins. Yeshua is saying that in prayer, a correct relationship with God, drawing near to the Lord and seeking forgiveness requires one to forgive others their sins as well. The purpose is so that we do not come before the Lord with malice (hostility) towards others in our hearts. Based on these scriptures, what Yeshua taught and what David is saying, prayer was not intended to manipulate God into giving us our own way, but a way to draw near to the Lord and to be pleasing as an evening sacrifice. Prayer should be a pleasing aroma before the Lord. It seems to be in this way that David is seeking the Lord in prayer, his faith is in the Lord God his rock upon whom he places his hope (אֶקְרָא צוּרִי אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה | אֶקְרָא צוּרִי אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה וְנִמְשַׁלְתִּי עִם-יְהוָה) (בֹּר: ד). He prays that he is not numbered with the wicked and asks for justice to be meted out to the wicked for their works in Tehillim / Psalms 28:4-5, תִּן-לָהֶם כְּפַעְלָם וּכְרַע מַעַלְלֵיהֶם כְּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיהֶם תִּן לָהֶם הַשֵּׁב, 28:4 Requite them according to their work and according to the evil of their practices; Requite them according to the deeds of their hands; Repay them their recompense. 28:5 Because they do not regard the works of the Lord Nor the deeds of His hands, He will tear them down and not build them up. (NASB) David is asking the Lord to deal with the wicked in a just manner. It doesn't appear that he is asking the Lord to maliciously repay the wicked. According to these verses, it is not wrong to pray for justice to be done to those who do not love their neighbors, and do harm to the innocent (those who violate the Torah). Notice how David is asking for the Lord's help. He says תִּן-לָהֶם כְּפַעְלָם “give to them according to their works” where כְּפַעְלָם is from the root פועל which gives the sense of “laborious work.” The wicked labor in their sin, meaning that they work hard at committing great evils. David appears to be expressing a strong desire not to be united with the wicked in life or in death. He prays with the understanding that it may be a temptation to associate with the wicked and that he should not yield to become associated with these evil men. The Aramaic Targum states ד הבפרע להון יי כעובדיהון וכבישות עובדיהון מעלליהון כעובדי ידהון פרעהב להון אתיב התיב פורענותהון להון: ה מטול דלא 28:4 Give to them according to their deeds, and according to their evil deeds; according to the works of their hands, repay them; turn upon them their retribution. 28:5 Because they do not understand the Torah of the Lord or the works of his hands; he will tear them down and not rebuild them. (EMC) and the Septuagint states 28:4 δὸς αὐτοῖς κατὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτῶν καὶ κατὰ τὴν πονηρίαν τῶν ἐπιτηδεύματων αὐτῶν κατὰ τὰ ἔργα τῶν χειρῶν αὐτῶν δὸς αὐτοῖς ἀπόδος τὸ ἀνταπόδομα αὐτῶν αὐτοῖς 28:5 ὅτι οὐ συνῆκαν εἰς τὰ ἔργα κυρίου καὶ εἰς τὰ ἔργα τῶν χειρῶν αὐτοῦ καθελεῖς αὐτούς καὶ οὐ μὴ οἰκοδομήσεις αὐτούς 28:4 Give them according to their works, and according to the wickedness of their devices: give them according to the works of their hands; render their recompense unto them. 28:5 Because they have not attended to the works of the Lord, even to the works of his hands, thou shalt pull them down, and shalt not build them up. (LXX) It is interesting that the Aramaic translation says the wicked do not understand the Torah (דלא מתבינין יתבוננו לאוריתא) literally saying that they “do not pay attention to the Torah” of God and the works of His hands. Having a closer look at Tehillim / Psalms 28:5, ה 28:5 Because they do not regard the works of the Lord Nor the deeds of His hands, He will tear them down and not build them up. (NASB) notice the parallel here in the 28:5, they are making a distinction between (כִּי לֹא יְבִינּוּ) the works of the Lord and the work of his hands, two different words are being used here. What are the works of the Lord? Note the word here is

פַּעֲלַת from the root פועל which gives the sense of “laborious work.” Does the words מַעֲשֵׂה יָדָיו (Ma’aseh yadav) parallel מַעֲשֵׂה הַתּוֹרָה (ma’aseh haTorah)? Throughout the Scriptures, we see the anthropomorphic use of the arm to symbolize the power and strength of God to reach into the affairs of man.

Shemot / Exodus 6:6-7

6:6 ‘Say, therefore, to the sons of Israel, ‘I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage. I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. 6:7 ‘Then I will take you for My people, and I will be your God; and you shall know that I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. (NASB)

ו לָכֵן אָמַר לְבְנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲנִי יְהוָה וְהוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מִתַּחַת סְבֻלַת מִצְרַיִם וְהִצַּלְתִּי אֶתְכֶם מֵעֲבֹדֹתָם וְגִאֲלֹתִי אֶתְכֶם בְּזְרוּעַ נְטוּיָה וּבְשִׁפְטִים גְּדֹלִים: ז וְלִקְחֹתִי אֶתְכֶם לִי לְעָם וְהִיִּיתִי לָכֶם לֵאלֹהִים וַיִּדְעֻם כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם הַמּוֹצִיא אֶתְכֶם מִתַּחַת סְבֻלוֹת מִצְרַיִם:

Isaiah 48:13

48:13 ‘Surely My hand founded the earth, And My right hand spread out the heavens; When I call to them, they stand together. (NASB) ג אֶף-יָדִי יִסְדָּה אֶרֶץ וַיְמִינִי טִפְחָה שָׁמַיִם קָרָא אֲנִי וְאֵלֵיהֶם יַעֲמָדוּ יַחְדָּו:

Isaiah 53:1

53:1 Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? (NASB) א מִי הֶאֱמִין לְשִׁמְעָתֵנוּ וּזְרוּעַ יְהוָה עַל-מִי נִגְלְתָה:

Isaiah 59:1

59:1 Behold, the Lord’s hand is not so short That it cannot save; Nor is His ear so dull That it cannot hear. (NASB) א הֲנֹן לֹא-קִצְרָה יַד-יְהוָה מִהוֹשִׁיעַ וְלֹא-כִבְדָּה אָזְנוֹ מִשְׁמוֹעַ:

Isaiah 62:8

62:8 The Lord has sworn by His right hand and by His strong arm, ‘I will never again give your grain as food for your enemies; Nor will foreigners drink your new wine for which you have labored.’ (NASB) ח נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה בְּיָמֵינוּ וּבְזְרוּעַ עֲזוֹ אִם-אֶתֶן אֶת-דְּגַנֵּךְ עוֹד מֵאֲכָל לְאֹיְבֶיךָ וְאִם-יִשְׁתּוּ בְנֵי-נֹכַר תִּירוֹשְׁךָ אֲשֶׁר יִגְעַתְּ בּוֹ:

Isaiah 63:5

63:5 ‘I looked, and there was no one to help, And I was astonished and there was no one to uphold; So My own arm brought salvation to Me, And My wrath upheld Me. (NASB) ה וְאֲבִיט וְאֵין עֹזֵר וְאֲשַׁתּוֹמֵם וְאֵין סוֹמֵךְ וְתוֹשַׁע לִי זְרַעִי וְחֻמָּתִי הִיא סִמְכָתִנִּי:

We find in the book of Exodus, the Lord says that He will redeem Israel with an outstretched arm. Isaiah uses the arm and hand to describe the power of God, the arm of the Lord is revealed (53:1) for salvation (63:5), the Lord set the foundations of the earth and stretched out the heavens, the Lord swears by his right hand, and the Lord’s hand is not short to save. Numerous Scriptures also combine both the arm and hand. “So the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm” (Devarim / Deuteronomy 26:8, 5:15, 7:19, 11:2, Tehillim / Psalms 44:3, Jeremiah 32:21, and Ezekiel 20:33). Deliverance was accomplished by The Angel (messenger) of the Lord. The Lord God upholds and saves with His right hand (Tehillim / Psalms 108:6, 138:7, 139:10, and Isaiah 41:10) in the phrase the “arm of the Lord,” brings salvation (לְמַעַן יִחְלְצוּן יְדִידֶיךָ הוֹשִׁיעָה יְמִינְךָ וְעַנְיִי: ז). In Tehillim / Psalms 28:4-5, the wicked are described

as having no regard for the works of the Lord, what the Lord has done in creation, through His Torah (His commands), and by His Holy Spirit. The wicked do not find pleasure in His works, or in the works of His hands, in the Scriptures, they do not listen to His Word or the calling influence of his Spirit. The Apostle Paul had some words as a commentary on this regarding those who do not take pleasure in the works of the Lord in Romans chapter 2. Remember in Romans 1 Paul introduces himself and begins speaking on the gospel of Christ being the power of God to save and then contrasts this with how the wrath of God is poured out on those who suppress the truth in unrighteousness. Romans 2 begins within this context.

Romans 2:1-29

2:1 Therefore you have no excuse, everyone of you who passes judgment, for in that which you judge another, you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things. 2:2 And we know that the judgment of God rightly falls upon those who practice such things. 2:3 But do you suppose this, O man, when you pass judgment on those who practice such things and do the same yourself, that you will escape the judgment of God? 2:4 Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance? 2:5 But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, 2:6 who will render to each person according to his deeds: 2:7 to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; 2:8 but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation. 2:9 There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek, 2:10 but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 2:11 For there is no partiality with God. 2:12 For all who have sinned without the Law will also perish without the Law, and all who have sinned under the Law will be judged by the Law; 2:13 for it is not the hearers of the Law who are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified. 2:14 For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, 2:15 in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them, 2:16 on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus. 2:17 But if you bear the name 'Jew' and rely upon the Law and boast in God, 2:18 and know His will and approve the things that are essential, being instructed out of the Law, 2:19 and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, 2:20 a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of the immature, having in the Law the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth, 2:21 you, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that one shall not steal, do you steal? 2:22 You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? 2:23 You who boast in the Law, through your breaking the Law, do you dishonor God? 2:24 For 'the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you,' just as it is written. 2:25 For indeed circumcision is of value if you practice the Law; but if you are a transgressor of the Law, your circumcision has become uncircumcision. 2:26 So if the uncircumcised man keeps the requirements of the Law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? 2:27 And he who is physically uncircumcised, if he keeps the Law, will he not judge you who though having the letter of the Law and circumcision are a transgressor of the Law? 2:28 For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. 2:29 But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God. (NASB)

It is interesting to note the line of reasoning that Paul is using in his letter to the Romans. He begins speak-

take care of them, and lift them up for ever.(LXX) It is interesting in the Aramaic translation, David states בריך יהוה מימרא דיי “*blessed is YHVH Word of the Lord*” note how the YHVH (יהוה) is given, the Memra (מימרא), and then the abbreviation for the Tetragram (דיי), and that his prayer was accepted (קבל שמע) or to be willingly received by God. The rabbis translate David believing the Lord has “heard the voice of his prayer” to having “accepted the voice of his prayer.” The Greek translation states 28:6 εὐλογητὸς κύριος ὅτι εἰσήκουσεν τῆς φωνῆς τῆς δεήσεώς μου 28:6 *Blessed be the Lord, for he has hearkened to the voice of my petition.* (LXX) the Lord “hearkened to the voice” meaning that God paid attention to David’s prayer. Does the Lord hearing our prayer correspond with His accepting the prayer? How are we to understand the meaning of God hearing verses accepting prayer? Some people believe that, if the Lord does not do miracles, then He must not be listening. Others see only psychological benefits in prayer or perhaps just the fact that we have obeyed God’s command to pray. Even though we pray Scripturally, these people claim God does not actually intervene in the course of earthly events to bring about what we asked for. The interesting thing is in *Matthew 18:19*, Yeshua said, when we ask God to do something, it will be done by our Father in heaven. Therefore the Lord does hear our prayer, but does He act in the way we desire for Him to respond to the prayer? The Scriptures are clear that prayer to the Lord produces results that cannot be achieved by people who do not serve the one true God (see *James 5:16, 1 John 3:22, Mishley / Proverbs 15:8, 29, and Tehillim / Psalm 34:15-19*). In addition to this, we are also called to work, to the extent of our ability, to achieve what we prayed for. The Lord God does act in response to prayers, but He will not act if we are not willing to do our part. Take for example the following examples, in *Matthew 6:11* Yeshua teaches that we are to pray for our daily bread, but we must also continue to work for it (2 *Thessalonians 3:10 For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either. NASB*). *James 1:5* tells us to pray for wisdom, but we must also continue to study the word to show ourselves approved unto God (*Acts 17:11, 2 Timothy 3:15-17*). The Lord provides us with opportunities to learn and He blesses our study so we learn what we might not have known had we not studied and prayed. The Apostle John tells us in 3 *John 2:2* to pray for good health, this does not exclude us from having to take care of our bodies. In a similar way, we should pray for the spread of the gospel, but we must also work to teach the gospel truth to the lost. But because we prayed, the Lord blesses our work so it accomplishes good that may not have been accomplished had we not prayed. John also says in *1 John 1:5-2:11* the following:

1 John 1:5-2:11

1:5 This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. 1:6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; 1:7 but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1:10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us. 2:1 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; 2:2 and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world. 2:3 By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. 2:4 The one who says, ‘I have come to know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; 2:5 but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: 2:6 the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked. 2:7 Beloved, I am not writing a new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning; the old commandment is the word which you have heard. 2:8 On the other hand, I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true

Light is already shining. 2:9 The one who says he is in the Light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness until now. 2:10 The one who loves his brother abides in the Light and there is no cause for stumbling in him. 2:11 But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes. (NASB)

The question is “are we sons of righteousness” or “are we sons of unrighteousness?” Do you walk in darkness and expect the Lord to answer your prayers? Yeshua has cleansed us from our sins but have we turned our backs on sin and unrighteousness? Do we want Yeshua the Messiah more than we want our sins? Note something the Lord said to Ezekiel in the prophecy about the Temple and of Israel in *Ezekiel 44:4-17*.

Ezekiel 44:4-17

44:4 Then He brought me by way of the north gate to the front of the house; and I looked, and behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord, and I fell on my face. 44:5 The Lord said to me, ‘Son of man, mark well, see with your eyes and hear with your ears all that I say to you concerning all the statutes of the house of the Lord and concerning all its laws; and mark well the entrance of the house, with all exits of the sanctuary. 44:6 ‘You shall say to the rebellious ones, to the house of Israel, ‘Thus says the Lord God, ‘Enough of all your abominations, O house of Israel, 44:7 when you brought in foreigners, uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in My sanctuary to profane it, even My house, when you offered My food, the fat and the blood; for they made My covenant void this in addition to all your abominations. 44:8 ‘And you have not kept charge of My holy things yourselves, but you have set foreigners to keep charge of My sanctuary.’ 44:9 ‘Thus says the Lord God, ‘No foreigner uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, of all the foreigners who are among the sons of Israel, shall enter My sanctuary. 44:10 ‘But the Levites who went far from Me when Israel went astray, who went astray from Me after their idols, shall bear the punishment for their iniquity. 44:11 ‘Yet they shall be ministers in My sanctuary, having oversight at the gates of the house and ministering in the house; they shall slaughter the burnt offering and the sacrifice for the people, and they shall stand before them to minister to them. 44:12 ‘Because they ministered to them before their idols and became a stumbling block of iniquity to the house of Israel, therefore I have sworn against them,’ declares the Lord God, ‘that they shall bear the punishment for their iniquity. 44:13 ‘And they shall not come near to Me to serve as a priest to Me, nor come near to any of My holy things, to the things that are most holy; but they will bear their shame and their abominations which they have committed. 44:14 ‘Yet I will appoint them to keep charge of the house, of all its service and of all that shall be done in it. 44:15 ‘But the Levitical priests, the sons of Zadok, who kept charge of My sanctuary when the sons of Israel went astray from Me, shall come near to Me to minister to Me; and they shall stand before Me to offer Me the fat and the blood,’ declares the Lord God. 44:16 ‘They shall enter My sanctuary; they shall come near to My table to minister to Me and keep My charge. 44:17 ‘It shall be that when they enter at the gates of the inner court, they shall be clothed with linen garments; and wool shall not be on them while they are ministering in the gates of the inner court and in the house. (NASB)

ד ויביאני דָרָה-שַׁעַר-הַצֶּפוֹן אֶל-פְּנֵי הַבַּיִת וְאָרָא וְהִנֵּה מָלֵא כְבוֹד-יְהוָה אֶת-בַּיִת יְהוָה וְאָפֵל אֶל-פְּנֵי הַ' וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלַי יְהוָה בֶּן-אָדָם שִׁים לְבָךְ וְרָאָה בְעֵינֶיךָ וּבְאָזְנֶיךָ שְׁמַע אֶת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְדַבֵּר אִתָּךְ לְכָל-תְּחִיבֵי בַיִת-יְהוָה וְלְכָל-תּוֹרָתוֹ [תּוֹרָתוֹ] וְשָׁמַתָּ לְבָךְ לְמַבּוֹא הַבַּיִת בְּכָל מוֹצְאֵי הַמִּקְדָּשׁ: ו אֶמְרָתָּ אֶל-מְרִי אֶל-בַּיִת יִשְׂרָאֵל כֹּה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה רַב-לְכֶם מִכָּל-תּוֹעֲבוֹתֵיכֶם בַּיִת יִשְׂרָאֵל: ז בְּהִבְיָאֲכֶם בְּנֵי-נָכַר עֵרְלֵי-לֵב וְעֵרְלֵי בָשָׂר לְהִיּוֹת בְּמִקְדָּשִׁי לְחַלְלוֹ אֶת-בַּיִתִּי בְּהַקְרִיבְכֶם אֶת-לֶחֶמִי חֶלֶב וְדָם וַיִּפְרוּ אֶת-בְּרִיתִי אֶל כָּל-תּוֹעֲבוֹתֵיכֶם: ח וְלֹא שָׁמַרְתֶּם מִשְׁמַרְתִּי קִדְשִׁי וְתַשְׁמִיּוֹן לְשִׁמְרִי

Part 2

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*Another comment on Unto You O Lord do I call, do not draw me away with the wicked (Tehillim / Psalms 28:3).*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*These words are to be considered in the light of the verse O Lord our God, other lords beside You wished to have dominion over us (bealunu, בעלוננו) (Isaiah 26:13).*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis discuss David’s words asking the Lord to not draw him away from with the wicked with parables on hallowing the name of God.
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal) goes on to expand upon how the people hallowed the name of God with a discussion of the exile in Babylon from the book of Daniel (Nebuchadnezzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego), a example from the plague of frogs who jumped into the furnaces to die, and how Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were obligated to offer their lives for the Lord.
- The Concluding phrase says “*What is meant by the words by You alone? They mean in Your presence that is, we bless You and mention Your name to You alone and not to any other God.*”

Part 3

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*Another comment, Unto You, O Lord, do I call, etc Draw mean not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity (Tehillim / Psalms 28:1-3).*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*Solomon said, Better it is to be of a lowly spirit with the humble, than to divide the spoil with the proud (Mishley / Proverbs 16:19). Blessed is the man who takes his portion with the humble.*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis discuss the taking of one’s portion with the wicked.
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal) goes on to expand what it means to take one’s portion with the wicked and draws a parallel with the wicked who go down to hell (Gehenna) and with Esau.
- The Concluding phrase says “*Unto You O Lord, do I call; my Rock, do not be deaf unto me; lest, if You be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit (Tehillim / Psalms 28:1).*”

Part 4

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity; who speak peace with their neighbors, but evil is in their hearts (Tehillim / Psalms 28:3).*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*Rabbi Abba son of Ze’era said, Even in the shortcomings of the tribes you discover their worth, for it is said of them They hated him and could not speak peaceably unto him (Bereshit / Genesis 37:4)*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis discuss the wicked, what they have in their heart is in their lips.
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal) goes on to expand the thing that is in a person’s heart and use examples from the tribes of Israel and from Absalom.
- The Concluding phrase says “*Of others, however, as of Absalom it is said, Absalom spoke unto Amnon neither good nor bad (2 Samuel 13:22); that is, what was in Absalom’s heart was not in his mouth.*”

Part 6

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in Him, and I am helped (Tehillim / Psalms 28:7).*”
- The פתיחתא (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*Rabbi Simon told a parable of a king who had a single pearl.*”
- The משל (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis discuss opening verse using a parable of a king and his son and a great pearl.
- The נמשל (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the משל (mashal) goes on to expand upon the parable of the king, his son, and the great pearl and draw a parallel with the giving of the Torah and the children of Israel.
- The Concluding phrase says “*According to rabbi Jochanan, Israel then said, Let us repay God with the sons of praise which He gave us; as Scripture says, Therefore my heart greatly rejoices; and with my song will I praise Him (Tehillim / Psalms 28:7).*”

Midrash Tehillim 28, Part 2 opens with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*Another comment on Unto You O Lord do I call, do not draw me away with the wicked (Tehillim / Psalms 28:3).*” The פתיחתא (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*These words are to be considered in the light of the verse O Lord our God, other lords beside You wished to have dominion over us (bealunu, בעלונו) (Isaiah 26:13).*” The rabbis ask what the literal meaning of the word “*bealunu*” (בעלונו) is and quote from Mishley / Proverbs 27:22.

Mishley / Proverbs 27:17-23

27:17 Iron sharpens iron, So one man sharpens another. 27:18 He who tends the fig tree will eat its fruit, And he who cares for his master will be honored. 27:19 As in water face reflects face, So the heart of man reflects man. 27:20 Sheol and Abaddon are never satisfied, Nor are the eyes of man ever satisfied. 27:21 The crucible is for silver and the furnace for gold, And each is tested by the praise accorded him. 27:22 Though you pound a fool in a mortar with a pestle along with crushed grain, Yet his foolishness will not depart from him. 27:23 Know well the condition of your flocks, And pay attention to your herds; 27:24 For riches are not forever, Nor does a crown endure to all generations. (NASB)

יז בַּרְזֵל בְּבַרְזֵל יַחַד וְאִישׁ יַחַד פְּנֵי-רֵעֵהוּ: יח נֹצֵר תְּאֵנָה יֹאכַל פְּרִיָּהּ וְשֹׁמֵר אֲדָנָיו יִכְבֵּד: יט כַּמִּים הַפְּנִים לַפְּנִים כֹּן לֵב-הָאָדָם לְאָדָם: כ שְׂאוֹל וְאֹבְדָה [וְאֹבְדוֹ] לֹא תִשְׁבַּעְנָה וְעֵינֵי הָאָדָם לֹא תִשְׁבַּעְנָה: כא מִצָּרֶף לְכֶסֶף וְכוֹר לְזָהָב וְאִישׁ לְפִי מִהֲלָלוֹ: כב אִם-תִּכְתּוֹשׂ אֶת-הָאֵוִיל | בְּמִכְתֵּשׁ בְּתוֹךְ הָרִיפּוֹת בְּעֵלֵי לֹא-תִסּוֹר מֵעֲלִיו אֱוִלָתוֹ: כג יָדַע תִּדְעַע פְּנֵי צֹאנֶךָ שִׁית לְבָךָ לְעִדְרֵיהֶם:

The rabbis are discussing the meaning of David’s words, what did David mean by asking the Lord to not draw him away with the wicked? The comment was that others wish to have dominion over us making reference to the word “*bealunu*” (בעלונו) and Mishley / Proverbs 27:22. What is interesting here is the parallel that is being drawn here to those who are drawn away with the wicked and the fool. The fool, though he is worked as one does with a mortar and pestle, he will not depart from his foolishness. In addition to this, the midrash says “*Crushed as with a pestle, as in Crush a fool in the mortar with a pestle (baeli) among goats*” while quoting from Mishley / Proverbs 27:22. What do the rabbis mean by being crushed as with a pestle and mortar and among goats? Notice the next statement, “*rabbi Judah taught in the name of rabbi Simai that Bealunu is derived from baal (husband) and that this is like a husband who draws his wife to sexual union, so would they draw us to union with their idols.*” This reminds us of Parashat Acharei Mot (Vayikra / Leviticus 16:1-18:30), the Torah explains in Vayikra / Leviticus 17:7 giving a prohibition against sacrificing upon a private altar

and this was intended to keep the Children of Israel from sacrificing to the Seiyrim. (וְלֹא-יִזְבְּחוּ עוֹד אֶת-זִבְחֵיהֶם) (לְשֵׁעִירִם אֲשֶׁר הֵם זֹנִים אַחֲרֵיהֶם חֲקַת עוֹלָם תְּהִיָּה-זֹאת לָהֶם לְדֹרֹתָם: The rabbinic commentaries such as Rashi, Rambam, and many others translate Seiyrim as “demons” (Shaydim). On the other hand, some of also translated Seiyrim as “he-goats.” As a result, note the various translations of *Vayikra / Leviticus 17:7*:

17:7 ‘They shall no longer sacrifice their sacrifices to the goat demons with which they play the harlot. This shall be a permanent statute to them throughout their generations.’ (NASB)

17:7 And they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils, after whom they have gone a whoring. This shall be a statute for ever unto them throughout their generations. (KJV)

17:7 They must no longer offer any of their sacrifices to the goat idols to whom they prostitute themselves. This is to be a lasting ordinance for them and for the generations to come.’ (NIV)

Is there a connection with this verse from Parashat Acharei Mot, the differences on the translation of “Seiyrim” and the midrash regarding being drawn away with the wicked? Note also that in Parshiot Acharei Mot and Kedoshim (*Vayikra / Leviticus 16:1-18:30, 19:1-20:27*), there are four main topics (i) the Yom Kippur service as performed by the High Priest in the Beit Hamikdash, (ii) the prohibition against bringing a sacrifice outside of the altar in the tabernacle (Temple), (iii) the prohibition against eating and drinking blood, and (iv) the fifteen forbidden sexual relationships that are listed. The prohibition against sacrificing outside of the tabernacle needs to be understood that one is not to bring a sacrifice upon a personal altar of any form. Note also that these Parshiot follow the aftermath of the deaths of Aaron’s two oldest sons, Nadava and Avihu. They died because they went before the Lord to express their devotion and love for God in a manner that had not been commanded or prescribed. We learn that regardless of their intentions, they sinned by not taking the time to know God’s true will regarding offering incense in the Tabernacle. Instead, they attempted to define the parameters of their relationship with God on the basis of their personal feelings and thoughts and by doing so they transgressed the boundaries of holiness that resulted in their deaths. This is why the midrash continues on with a discussion regarding sanctifying the name of God and holiness. Yom Kippur, the first topic of the Parashat Acharei Mot, we read the High Priest functions as a servant of the people to perform the service of effecting forgiveness for the nation of Israel. The High Priest enters the sanctuary and makes atonement where the focal point of the service is on the two Seiyrim “he-goats” where one is sacrificed and the other one is the Azazel (*scape goat*). One of the goats is set apart and sanctified as a part of the service to make atonement and receive forgiveness in the inner sanctuary. The other goat goes out into the wilderness to die. Based upon these two goats and Yom Kippur, we are given two choices, one is to live our lives according to the dictates of the Torah, and in a relationship with the Lord within the Sanctuary, or to live our lives outside of the Torah in the wilderness in sin and die. The prohibition against making a sacrifice on an altar of our own making (*Vayikra / Leviticus 17:7*) follows with the idea of our making an offering whenever and however we chose rather than doing so in the manner prescribed by God. This would become a love of self (*doing it our way*) rather than a love of God (*doing it in God’s way*). The concept of sacrifice to “demons” or “he-goats” is similar. In the biblical times, people would create gods that served their own personal needs and desires. If one become demon possessed, he or she would become an animal in their outward appearance seeking to gratify their every urge and instinct. The Torah prohibited the offering of sacrifices outside of the Tabernacle to prevent the people from slaughtering their offerings to “demons” or “he-goats” after which they would follow and stray from the God of Israel. Making the Lord and His ways a part of our lives is what Parshiot Acharei Mot and Kedoshim is all about. The final topic in Parashat Acharei Mot, is regarding the fifteen prohibited intimate relationships. This section of the Scriptures clearly describes our most powerful desire (sexual relations) with sanctification. We are created in God’s image, and therefore we are not animals. We are told to rise above our sexual desires and be Godly where we are to express our sensual and sexual needs within the framework of God’s commands. It is not for us to define the parameters of moral behavior, like Nadav and Avihu did. These fifteen prohibited intimate relationships are the foundation of God’s moral code.

Midrash Tehillim 28, Part 2, we see the rabbis drawing a parallel to the word “bealunu” (בעלוננו) and “*rabbi Judah taught in the name of rabbi Simai that Bealunu is derived from baal (husband) and that this is like a husband who draws his wife to sexual union, so would they draw us to union with their idols.*” The rabbis suggest that בעלוננו (bealunu) is derived from the word בעל (baal) meaning “*husband, lord, master, owner, keeper.*” In the ancient semitic culture, this word בעל (baal) became the designation of the sun god. Now In Hebrew, the word baal means “*husband*” or “*owner,*” and is related to a verb meaning to take possession of, or for a man, to consummate a marriage. The word “*baal*” is used in many Hebrew phrases, denoting both concrete ownership as well as possession of different qualities in one’s personality. In addition to this, thinking on the meaning of “*lord*” as a member of royalty or nobility this is more accurately translated as Adon in the Semitic cultures. This is very interesting because the one being a “baal” worshiper, one is allowing the idol god to take ownership and to become husband, master, and owner of the life of the worshiper. Notice the parallel of the husband who draws his wife away for a sexual relationship and the drawing away to idol worship. Also note how baal worship is a part of the fertility religions and was heavily involved in sexual relations, and specifically those sexual relations that were part of the fifteen prohibitions in Parshiot Acharei Mot and Kedoshim. Sex is a physical act but it is also deeply spiritual. This is why out of the commandments in the Torah the Apostles thought first to give to the gentile believers saying to abstain from things contaminated by idols, from what is strangled and from drinking blood, and from sexual immorality (see *Acts 15:19-21*). Each of these things are interrelated. This is also why the Apostle Paul wrote in *1 Corinthians 6:16* that when a man unites himself to a prostitute he becomes one with her in body including all of her spiritual garbage. David asking the Lord to not draw him away with the wicked was not only his asking the Lord to keep him from being destroyed, but a call to keep him in holiness. This may be the reason why the rabbis discuss sanctifying the name in *Midrash Tehillim 28, Part 2*, they say that even though the Lord did not perform miracles, Israel hallowed the name. When king Nebuchadnezzar ordered that they worship idols and to bow down before his image that they were more willing to die than to sin against the Lord. The example that is given is taken from the book of Daniel, the rabbis say:

Thereupon, to hallow the name of the Holy One blessed be He, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah threw themselves into the fiery furnace. From what verse did Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah infer that they were to throw away their lives for the hallowing of the Name? They drew the inference from the verse concerning the frogs in Egypt. What is written of the frogs? The river will bring forth frogs abundantly which will go up and come into your ovens, and into your dough (Shemot / Exodus 7:28), Now when is dough placed near an oven? When the oven is hot. Accordingly this verse proves that frogs came and threw themselves into ovens in order to hallow the name of the Holy One blessed be He. And how did the Holy One blessed be He, reward the frogs? All other frogs in Egypt died, as is said The frogs died out of the houses, out of the courts, and out of the fields (Shemot / Exodus 8:9), but the frogs which went into the ovens to fulfill the decree of the Holy One blessed be He, did not die, because they were willing to be burnt. And so the frogs sprang up alive out of the ovens and went back into the river, for it is said They alone will remain in the river (Shemot / Exodus 8:7). (Midrash Tehillim 28, Part 2)

מיד השליכו עצמן לכבשן האש, לקדש שמו של הקב"ה, ומניין דרשו חנניה מישאל ועזריה לה-
 שלך נפשם על קדושת השם, נשאו קל וחומר מצפרדעים, מה כתיב בהן, ובתנורך ובמשאר-
 תיך (שמות ז כח), אימתי משארת מצויה אצל התנור, בשעה שהוא חם, מלמד שהיו הצפרדעים
 משליכות עצמן לתוך התנור, ויורדות לקדש שמו של הקב"ה, ומה פרע להם הקב"ה, כל הצפרד-
 עים שבמצרים מתו, שנאמר וימותו הצפרדעים מן הבתים ומן החצרות ומן השדות (שם שמות ח
 ט), ואותן שירדו לתנור לא מתו, מפני שמסרו עצמן לשריפה, לקיים גזירתו של הקב"ה, לפיכך
 עלו חיים מן התנור, וירדו ליאור, שנאמר רק ביאור תשארנה (שם שמות ח' ז).

The midrash says that Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah reasoned in their minds why the Lord would save

them; they thought back to the plagues of Egypt of the frogs and how the frogs jumped into the furnace giving their lives because of the command of God. They also reasoned that since the frogs obeyed the command of the Lord to jump into the furnace and die, the Holy One blessed be He caused the frogs to become alive and jumped out of the furnace and went back into the Nile river. It is difficult to believe that the Lord raised frogs back to life, the illustration was given to reason why Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah would have allowed themselves to die. *Theudas of Rome taught that the inference of Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah was this, since frogs, which do not have the merit of the fathers, were saved because they offered their lives for the hallowing of the Name, how much more are we obligated to offer our lives for the hallowing of the Name? We the children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who have been given the precept of hallowing the Name, and whom God will reward in full.* The idea is that Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah reasoned the Lord would save them based upon the merit of the fathers. There is some disagreement about what exactly these men were thinking, Palton of Rome says they were thinking of *Devarim / Deuteronomy 4:29*, others taught that they were thinking on *Jeremiah 29:13* and others say *Isaiah 26:13*.

Devarim / Deuteronomy 4:29 *‘But from there you will seek the Lord your God, and you will find Him if you search for Him with all your heart and all your soul.* (NASB) **כט** וּבְקִשְׁתֶּם מִשָּׁם אֶת-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיךָ וּמְצֹאתָ כִּי תִדְרֹשְׁנֻוּ בְּכָל-לִבְבְּךָ וּבְכָל-נַפְשְׁךָ:

Jeremiah 29:13 *‘You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.* (NASB) **יג** וּבְקִשְׁתֶּם אֹתִי וּמְצֹאתֶם כִּי תִדְרֹשְׁנִי בְּכָל-לִבְבְּכֶם:

Isaiah 26:13 *O Lord our God, other masters besides You have ruled us; But through You alone we confess Your name.* (NASB) **יג** יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּעֵלֹנֵנוּ אֲדֹנָיִם זֹלָתְךָ לְבַד-כֶּךָ נִזְכִּיר שְׁמֶךָ:

The Concluding phrase of Midrash Tehillim 28, PART 2 states “What is meant by the words by You alone? They mean in Your presence that is, we bless You and mention Your name to You alone and not to any other god.” The hallowing of God’s Name is done not by word of mouth only, it is accomplished by our deeds, what we do, how we live our lives, and whether or not we take a stand by faith in God’s Word. The rabbis say there is reward for hallowing the name of God, the Apostle Paul said the same (*1 Corinthians 9:24-25, 2 Timothy 4:8*).

Midrash Tehillim 28, Part 3 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying “Another comment, Unto You, O Lord, do I call, etc Draw mean not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity (Tehillim / Psalms 28:1-3).” The homiletic introduction to the Midrash says “Solomon said, Better it is to be of a lowly spirit with the humble, than to divide the spoil with the proud (Mishley / Proverbs 16:19). Blessed is the man who takes his portion with the humble.” They continue saying Woe unto him who takes his portion with the wicked. For the wicked take what is theirs, and then go out of the world, as is said And yet a little while and the wicked will not be but the meek will inherit the earth; and will delight themselves in the abundance of peace (Tehillim / Psalms 37:10-11). Thus the Holy One blessed be He, declared, the wicked have but a single hour. They eat what is theirs in this world; then they pass away and go down into Gehenna, they, their retainers, and anyone who had anything to do with them. (אוי לו למי שנוטל בחלקו את) הרשעים, שהרשעים נוטלין את שלהן והולכין מן העולם, שנאמר ועוד מעט ואין רשע (תהלים לז י), אמר הקב"ה (שעה אחת היא לרשעים, אוכלין את שלהן בעולם הזה, והולכין ויורדין לגיהנם הן ומסייעיהן ומי שנשתתף עמהם) This midrash it sounds as if the rabbis are calling upon Parashat Korach (*Bamidbar / Numbers 16:1-18:32*) In Parashat Korach, we read that Korach, Datan, and Aviram rose up and assembled themselves against Moshe and against Aaron and questioned whether their role as priests was really the will of God (ב וַיִּקְמוּ) (לִפְנֵי מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן שְׁנֵי מֵאָה וְחָמֵשׁ אָנָּשִׁים מִבְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל חָמֵשִׁים וּמְאָתַיִם נְשִׂאֵי עֹדָה קְרָאִי מוֹעֵד אָנָּשִׁים-שָׁם). As a result, two hundred and fifty men challenged Moshe and Aaron and went to offer incense by fire before the Lord. The result was the entire assemble of men died by fire that proceeded from the Lord God because of their sin. Because the

sin of rebellion was so great in the camp of Korach, Datan, and Aviram, the Lord cause the ground to open up and they were all swallowed up in the earth going down to the grave alive. Following these events, the congregation (*sons of Israel*) complained against Moshe and Aaron and a plague broke out in their midst. Moshe told Aaron to take a censor filled with burning incense and stand in the gap between the dead and the living. Studying Parashat Korach, the children of Israel persisted in a rebellious Spirit against Moshe, Aaron, and God. The rabbis say *Thus the Holy One blessed be He, declared, the wicked have but a single hour. They eat what is theirs in this world; then they pass away and go down into Gehenna, they, their retainers, and anyone who had anything to do with them. (Midrash Tehillim 28, Part 3)* The wicked did not appear to understand that rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft (*1 Samuel 15:23*). The peoples response over the death of Korach, Datan, and Aviram is recorded in *Bamidbar / Numbers 17:6* in the Hebrew translation and *16:41* in the English translation וַיִּלְנוּ כָּל-עֵדַת בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּחֶרֶת עַל-מֹשֶׁה וְעַל-אַהֲרֹן לֵאמֹר אַתֶּם הֵמָּתֶם יְהוָה: *16:41 But on the next day all the congregation of the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron, saying, 'You are the ones who have caused the death of the Lord's people.'* (NASB) The second sin of rebellion causes the Lord to say וְרָמְזוּ מִתּוֹךְ הָעֵדָה הַזֹּאת וְאָכְלָה אֹתָם כְּרָגַע וַיִּפְּלוּ עַל-פְּנֵיהֶם “*part from the midst of the congregation so that I can consume them.*” Rebellion and having a rebellious spirit before the Lord is certain death. The rabbis parallel the wicked with Esau who did not care about God’s promises. The midrash concludes saying “*Hence David said I will not eat of their meal, so that I will not go down into the pit with them, as it is said A Psalm of David. Unto You O Lord, do I call; my Rock, do not be deaf unto me; lest, if You be silent to me, I become like them that go down into the pit (Tehillim / Psalms 28:1).*” אמר) דוד לא אוכל בסעודתן, ולא ארד עמהם לגיהנם, שנאמר לדוד אליך ה' אקרא צורי אל תחרש ממני, פן תחשה (ממני ונמשלתי עם יורדי בור). It is interesting how the rabbis reason David’s words saying “*I will not eat their meal, so that I will not go down into the pit with them.*” Were the rabbis saying that David should not have a meal with his enemies? Were they thinking about table fellowship with his enemies? What does it mean to eat a meal with the wicked? Are there any parallels from the Scriptures that would help understand what they mean? According to *Mishley / Proverbs 9*, King Solomon speaks of wisdom saying in *Mishley / Proverbs 9:5* “*Come, eat of my food and drink of the wine I have mixed.*” (NASB) Here we are instructed to drink what wisdom has prepared. The description of “*wisdom*” (חכמה) in the Scriptures is that of having qualities that are traditionally associated with women such as that of being nurturing and gentle, of being precious (*Mishley / Proverbs 2:1-10*), beautiful, pretty, something to be acquired that is very highly valued. There is a connection given within this text regarding sanctifying the name of the Lord. In the midrash the rabbis are discussing how the wicked will go down to the grave. King Solomon also writes in *Mishley / Proverbs 9* that wisdom calls us to drink the wine she has mixed. The eating and drinking of the food of wisdom (*Mishley / Proverbs 9:5*) is synonymous with one internalizing the wisdom of God. Also note that Yeshua said *John 6:54*, ⁵⁴ὁ τρώγων μου τὴν σάρκα καὶ πίνων μου τὸ αἷμα ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον, καὶ γὰρ ἀναστήσω αὐτὸν τῇ ἑσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ: *6:54 “He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day,”* (NASB) *John 6:53* Yeshua said “*ean me*” (ἐὰν μὴ, unless) “*phagete*” (φάγητε, you should have eaten) the flesh of the son of man and should have drunk of his blood, you shall not have life in yourself. Yeshua gets even more graphic and says ὁ τρώγων μου τὴν σάρκα “*o trogon mou ten sarka*” meaning “*to gnaw, crunch, chew*” literally saying “*The one chewing of my flesh and drinking of my blood in me abides and I in him.*” When we eat, the food we eat nourishes us and a part of the food, the essential vitamins and minerals become a part of our bodies. This graphic teaching, that caused so many of Yeshua’s disciples to leave, is describing that if one internalizes His teachings and places their faith in Him, He will raise him up on the last day. The consumption of wisdom’s food and drink suggests that wisdom will nourish our soul and change us from the inside out; this is exactly what happens when we place our faith in God and His Messiah Yeshua and daily study the Scriptures. After having confessed our sins and need for a savior and believing upon the One in whom we are saved (Yeshua), the Lord sends His Holy Spirit to dwell within us and give us wisdom. The rabbis reason David’s words saying “*I will not eat their meal, so that I will not go down into the pit with them.*” They understood that eating a meal with the wicked involved being in unity with unrighteousness and that this would drag one down to the pit, to hell away from the Lord

God Almighty.

Midrash Tehillim 28, Part 4 opens with the Dibut Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying “*Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity; who speak peace with their neighbors, but evil is in their hearts (Tehillim / Psalms 28:3).*” The homiletic introduction to the Midrash says “*Rabbi Abba son of Ze’era said, Even in the shortcomings of the tribes you discover their worth, for it is said of them They hated him and could not speak peaceably unto him (Bereshit / Genesis 37:4)*” We find a continuation of thought from the previous midrash. Let’s read the midrash:

מדרש תהלים פרק כח סימן ד	Midrash Tehillim 28, Part 3
ד אל תמשכני עם מרעים ועם פועלי און [דוברי שלום עם רעיהם ורעה בלבבם]. אמר ר' אבא בר זעירא מתוך גנותן של שבטים, את מוצא שבחן, שנאמר וישנאו אותו ולא יכלו דברו לשלום (בראשית לז ד), דבליבא בפומא, ברם להלן ולא דבר אבשלום עם אמנון (מטוב ועד רע) [למרע ועד טוב] (ש"ב שמואל ב' יג כב), מה דבליבא לא בפומא.	<i>Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity; who speak peace with their neighbors, but evil is in their hearts (Tehillim / Psalms 28:3). Rabbi Abba son of Ze'era said, Even in the shortcomings of the tribes you discover their worth, for it is said of them They hated him and could not speak peaceably unto him (Bereshit / Genesis 37:4) that is, what was in their hearts was also in their mouths. Of others, however, as of Absalom it is said, Absalom spoke unto Amnon neither good nor bad (2 Samuel 13:22); that is, what was in Absalom's heart was not in his mouth.</i>

Notice what Rabbi Abba says concerning the workers of iniquity, he says “... *Even in the shortcomings of the tribes you discover their worth, for it is said of them They hated him and could not speak peaceably unto him (Bereshit / Genesis 37:4) that is, what was in their hearts was also in their mouths.*” Notice how they say “*what was in their hearts was also in their mouths.*” Note also that Yeshua said in *Luke 6:45*, ⁴⁵ὁ ἀγαθὸς ἄνθρωπος ἐκ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ θησαυροῦ τῆς καρδίας προφέρει τὸ ἀγαθόν, καὶ ὁ πονηρὸς ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ προφέρει τὸ πονηρόν: ἐκ γὰρ περισσεύματος καρδίας λαλεῖ τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ. *The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good; and the evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth what is evil; for his mouth speaks from that which fills his heart. (NASB)* Does what we say we believe match up with how we live? The point of the midrash was that the wicked, what is in their hearts is in their mouths. They speak blasphemously, swearing and cursing everyone and every thing. This is not how the righteous are to behave. We are called to live and behave in a sanctified (set apart) way because the Lord has sanctified us. When studying the mitzvot concerning the Cohen (Priest) we learn that the Cohen, because of his service before the Lord, needed to watch what he does, what he touches, and how he behaves when he goes before the Lord. In a similar manner, we need to watch what we do, what we touch, and how we behave for the purpose of sanctifying His Name because He (Yeshua) has sanctified us. This is what David had in mind when he wrote *Tehillim / Psalms 1:1-2* אֲשֶׁר־יֵהְיֶה אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר לֹא הֵלֵךְ בְּעֵצַת רְשָׁעִים וּבְדַרְךַּ חַטָּאִים לֹא יִשָּׁב: *1:1 How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers! 1:2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night. (NASB)* What is a person really saying to the Lord when he or she internalizes those things the Lord God Almighty calls unclean? Consider what happens when a person consumes large quantities of alcohol? When consuming alcohol, our behavior changes because the alcohol becomes a part of us and we begin acting out of character and doing stupid things. According to Parashat Shemini (*Vayikra / Leviticus 9:1-11:47*), Nadav and Avihu died by going before the Lord drunk. They failed to sanctify God’s Name by drinking and going before the Lord with their offering of incense. The scriptures say that Nadav and Avihu failed to sanctify (*make holy*) the Lord in their offering and in their lives when they were drinking. The consequence of this was death for Nadav and Avihu, they died because of God’s Holiness and they were consumed in fire that proceeded from the Lord in the Tabernacle. These things apply to us today that we are to sanctify God’s Name in the way that we live our lives. We believe by faith in Yeshua HaMoshiach (*Yeshua the Messiah/Christ*) and we are saved. We are sanctified in Mashiach, the Scriptures say we are sanctified in the washing of the water of the

Word (*Ephesians 5:26*) thus, we are to daily study God’s Word, and we also are commanded to sanctify the Lord in all that we do. How are you sanctifying God’s Name in your life?

Midrash Tehillim 28, Part 6 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying “*The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in Him, and I am helped (Tehillim / Psalms 28:7).*” The homiletic introduction to the Midrash says “*Rabbi Simon told a parable of a king who had a single pearl.*” The Midrash is short and says the following:

<p style="text-align: center;">ו נמיס חכ קרפ מילהת שרדמ</p> <p>היהש דלמל לשמ נומיס ר רמא ינגמו יזע ה' ו התוא יל ות ול רמאו ונב אב, תחא תילגרמ ול ול הנתנו וילע חירטה, דלש הניא ול רמא ה"בקה ינפל מיה לע הריש ורמא לארשי דכ קבמ נהו, (ב וט תומש) הי תרמזו יזע רמאנש הניא מהל רמא דימ, הרותה תא מהל ותיש מיש וילע וחירטהש נויכ, איה מינוילע לש, מכלש טכ מילהת) ותי ומעל זוע ה' רמאנש, מהל הנתנ ירישמ ול ותינ לארשי ורמא ונחוי ר רמא, (א) ונדוהא ירישמו רמאנש, ונל ונתנש תוידוה</p>	<p>Midrash Tehillim 28, Part 6</p> <p>6. <i>The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in Him, and I am helped (Tehillim / Psalms 28:7). Rabbi Simon told a parable of a king who had a single pearl. When his son came and said to him, Give it to me, the king answered, it is not yours. But when the son wearied him with begging, the king gave it to his son. Just so, Israel singing a song at the Red Sea to the holy One blessed be He, and saying may strength be mine, and the Lord's the son (Shemot / Exodus 15:2), entreated Him to give them the Torah. Thus, God said to them, It is not yours. It belongs to those above. But when they wearied him with begging, He gave it to them, as is said The Lord gave strength to His people (Tehillim / Psalms 29:7). According to rabbi Jochanan, Israel then said, Let us repay God with the sons of praise which He gave us; as Scripture says, Therefore my heart greatly rejoices; and with my song will I praise Him (Tehillim / Psalms 28:7).</i></p>
---	---

Summary of Midrash Tehillim 28, Part 6

1. The Rabbis are commenting on *Tehillim / Psalms 28:7 The Lord is my strength and my shield; My heart trusts in Him, and I am helped; Therefore my heart exults, And with my song I shall thank Him. (NASB)*
2. Rabbi Simon tells a parable of a king who had a single pearl and his son asked for the pearl.
3. The son begged the king for the pearl, similarly the children of Israel begged for the giving of the Torah at Sinai.
4. Rabbi Jochanan said to repay God with praises (*Tehillim / Psalms 28:7*)

The rabbis are commenting on *Tehillim / Psalms 28:7*, what is the purpose of the parable and the parallel with Israel begging for the giving of the Torah? Why do the rabbis say that Israel begged for the Torah at the mountain of Sinai? Let’s see what the rabbis have to say concerning this question. To begin we need to go to Parashat Yitro and the Scriptures that lead up to Matan Torah (the giving of the Torah). According to Rashi on Parashat Yitro (*Shemot / Exodus 18:1-20:23*) on the first verse (*18:1*) Rashi says (א) וישמע (שמות יח) וישמע יתרו כהן מדין - מה שמועה שמע ובא ונתגייר(?) “*what did Yitro hear that caused him to come?*” He is quoting from the *Talmud Bavli, Gemara Zevachim 116a* (שמות יח) וישמע יתרו כהן מדין - מה שמועה שמע ובא ונתגייר(?) which says essentially the same thing as “*what did Yitro hear that prompted him to come and convert?*” Rashi answers in the same way that Scripture says in *Shemot / Exodus 18:1* (א) וישמע יתרו כהן מדין הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם כִּי-יָצָא יְהוָה מִן-מִצְרָיִם: (עֲשֵׂה אֱלֹהִים לְמֹשֶׁה וּלְיִשְׂרָאֵל עִמּוֹ כִּי-הוֹצִיא יְהוָה אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרָיִם: that Yitro heard all that the Lord had done for Israel about the splitting of the Red sea and the war against Amalek. The unique thing about Yitro was that He was a priest of Midean and the father of Moshe’s wife. As a priest, according to the rabbis, he was a person who was relentless in his quest for truth. They say that he had tried serving every single avodah zarah (*idol worship*) in the world and had found only emptiness and that he was never satisfied with

anything less than absolute truth. So essentially Yitro was a man who was seeking the truth of God and having heard of the God of Israel he decided to go to Moshe and Israel (see *Shemot / Exodus 18*). When Yitro heard of what the Lord had done, he decided to take action and go to find out what was happening directly from the mouth of Moshe. Today, most people settle for things that are less than perfect because “*this fits my lifestyle*” and “*it is easy.*” Matters of faith has become something that is easy and we behave by what is expected from us regarding “*how we should live*” or appear to live outwardly. According to *Shemot / Exodus 15:14*: פְּלִשְׁתִּים יִשְׁבְּי פְּלִשְׁתִּים: 7 which says the “*Nations heard and trembled with fear.*” While reading through the narrative in Exodus, a number of days following the splitting of the Red sea it was back to business as usual, basically nothing had changed and all was forgotten, the people began to sin again before the Lord. Has this ever happened to you before, following hearing a sermon or teaching, a couple hours pass or even a couple days and all is forgotten? The story of Yitro (Parashat Yitro) sets the stage for Kabbalat HaTorah (*the receiving of the Torah*) and the rabbi’s reasoning (*in Midrash Tehillim 28, Part 6*) behind the parable and the parallel with Israel begging for the giving of the Torah. What we find in the life of Yitro, according to the rabbis, is Yitro spent his life seeking truth. Midrash Tehillim 28, Part 6 we find the rabbis believe Israel was seeking the truth of God and begged God to give them the Torah at the foot of Sinai. Are we like Yitro in our pursuit of truth? The Lord God Almighty, by His Holy Spirit, calls us to repentance, truth, and faith in Yeshua the Messiah. Are we seeking the truth to be revealed to us in our lives daily? In order to receive the Lord, we must seek the truth of God with an uncompromising heart. The pursuit of truth consists of be willing to make the necessary changes when being called of God and being confronted with the truth of His Word. This is one interpretation of the midrash by the rabbis regarding the giving of the Word of God (the Torah) at the mountain of Sinai and Israel begging God for His Torah. Do you want God’s truth and His presence in your life today? Have you begged God for His truth and His presence in your life? Let’s pray!

Heavenly Father,

The rabbis speak of seeking truth Your truth. Today we pray in faith believing asking You to lead us into all truth. We repent Lord of not living our lives wholly devoted to righteousness for Your name’s sake; please forgive us of allowing darkness to come into our lives. It is not just our allowing darkness to come into our lives but our giving approval of those who walk in darkness as a form of own entertainment. Please have mercy on us oh Lord. Lord, we ask that You would make known Your ways, Your truth, and the path in which You want us to walk in as Sons of Righteousness. We Thank You Lord for giving us Your Word, teaching us Your ways, and revealing these truths to us today. Have mercy Lord and save us from our sins in Yeshua’s name. Thank You for sending Your son Yeshua the Messiah who laid His life down on our behalf so that we may enter into Your salvation. Thank You Lord for paying the covenant price for the forgiveness of our sins. We believe that Your Word directs us to Your Son Yeshua, and that in Him we have the hope of eternal life. Help us to trust in You Lord as we wait patiently for You and Your presence each day. Help us to dedicated our lives to You each day, fill us with Your presence Lord and thank You for revealing these truths to our hearts. We praise Your Holy Name and give You all of the honor, and the glory, and the praise forever and ever.

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

Be Blessed in Yeshua, Christ our Messiah!

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

Notes