

ספר תהילים לב | Tehillim / Psalms 32

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Free us from the Preoccupation of this World

This week's study is from *Tehillim / Psalms 32:1-11*, the opening verse states א לְדָוִד מִשְׁפִּיל אֲשָׁרֵי A Psalm of David. A Maskil. 32:1 How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered! (NASB) David states the blessedness of the one who has had his transgression forgiven and his sin covered. He continues saying ב אֲשָׁרֵי אָדָם לֹא יִחְשַׁב יְהוָה לוֹ עוֹן וְאֵין בְּרוּחוֹ רְמִיָּה: ג כִּי 32:2 הַחֲרָשְׁתִּי בְּלוֹ עֲצָמַי בְּשֹׁאֲגָתִי כָּל-הַיּוֹם: ד כִּי | יוֹמָם וְלַיְלָה | תִּכְבַּד עָלַי יְדָה נְהַפְּךָ לְשִׁדֵי בְּחַרְבְּנִי קִיץ סֵלָה: 32:3 *How blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit!* 32:3 *When I kept silent about my sin, my body wasted away Through my groaning all day long.* 32:4 *For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was drained away as with the fever heat of summer. Selah. (NASB)* David parallels the one who is without deceit with the Lord not holding sin against a person. He says that when he kept silent about his sin, his body made it known what he had done wrong because the hand of the Lord was weighing upon him. It is only when we humble ourselves and confess our sins that the Lord will forgive our guilt ה חֲטָאתִי אֹדִיעֶנָּה וְעֹנֵי לֹא-כַסִּיתִי אֶמְרָתִי אֹדְהָ עָלַי פִּשְׁעֵי לַיהוָה וְאַתָּה נִשְׂאתָ (NASB) David parallels the one who is without deceit with the Lord not holding sin against a person. He says that when he kept silent about his sin, his body made it known what he had done wrong because the hand of the Lord was weighing upon him. It is only when we humble ourselves and confess our sins that the Lord will forgive our guilt ו עַל- 32:5 *I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I did not hide; I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord'; And You forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah. NASB)* He goes on to say ז אֶתָּה | סִתְּרָה 32:6 *Therefore, let everyone who is godly pray to You in a time when You may be found; Surely in a flood of great waters they will not reach him. (NASB)* Does this suggest that there are times when the Lord cannot be found? David says ח אֲשַׁפְּלֶנָּה | וְאֹרְךָ בְּדַרְךָ-זוֹ תִּלְךָ אֵינִי עֵינַי: ט אֶל-תִּהְיוּ | כְּסוֹס 32:7 *You are my hiding place; You preserve me from trouble; You surround me with songs of deliverance. Selah.* 32:7 *You are my hiding place; You preserve me from trouble; You surround me with songs of deliverance. Selah.* 32:8 *I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you.* 32:9 *Do not be as the horse or as the mule which have no understanding, Whose trappings include bit and bridle to hold them in check, Otherwise they will not come near to you.* 32:10 *Many are the sorrows of the wicked, But he who trusts in the Lord, lovingkindness shall surround him. (NASB)* He concludes the Psalm saying יא 32:11 *Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, you righteous ones; And shout for joy, all you who are upright in heart. (NASB)*

עברית Hebrew

ארמי Aramaic

ελληνικός Greek

עברית Hebrew	ארמי Aramaic	ελληνικός Greek
ספר תהילים פרק לב	סמר טוביה פרק לב	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 32
א לְדָוִד מִשְׁפִּיל אֲשָׁרֵי נְשׁוּי-פִשְׁעֵי כְּסוּי חֲטָאָה: ב אֲשָׁרֵי אָדָם לֹא יִחְשַׁב יְהוָה לוֹ עוֹן וְאֵין בְּרוּחוֹ רְמִיָּה: ג כִּי הַחֲרָשְׁתִּי בְּלוֹ עֲצָמַי בְּשֹׁאֲגָתִי כָּל-הַיּוֹם: ד כִּי יוֹמָם וְלַיְלָה תִּכְבַּד עָלַי יְדָה נְהַפְּךָ לְשִׁדֵי בְּחַרְבְּנִי קִיץ סֵלָה:	א לדוד שכלא טבא אמר דוד טובוי דמן שבקין "דבר נשא דשבקוניה מרו" דוי חפיין על חטאוי: ב טב למשה בר עמרם "טובוהי דבר נשאדלא חשיב יהוה ליה עויין בדיל דלא הות ברוחיה נכלא: ג מטול ארוםדשתקית מן פתגמי אורייתא בליין גרמיי בנהמותי כולא יומא: ד ארום יימם וליילי תקיפת תוקפךעלי מחתך איתה" פיך רוטבי היך שרבא דקייטא לעלמא:	32:1 τῷ δαυιδ συνέσεως μακάριοι ὧν ἀφέθησαν αἱ ἀνομίας καὶ ὧν ἐπεκαλύφθησαν αἱ ἁμαρτίαι 32:2 μακάριος ἀνὴρ οὗ οὐ μὴ λογιῆται κύριος ἁμαρτίαν οὐδὲ ἔστιν ἐν τῷ στόματι αὐτοῦ δόλος 32:3 ὅτι ἐσίγησα ἐπαλαιώθη τὰ ὀσῆτά μου ἀπὸ τοῦ κράζειν με ὄλην τὴν ἡμέραν 32:4 ὅτι ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτὸς ἐβαρύνθη ἐπ' ἐμὲ ἡ χεὶρ σου ἐστράφην εἰς τάλαιπωρίαν ἐν τῷ ἐμπαγήναι ἄκανθαν διάψαλμα

<p>ה חֲטָאתִי אֹדְעֶיךָ וְעוֹנִי לֹא-כִסִּיתִי אֲמַרְתִּי אֹדְהָ עָלַי פֶּשְׁעֵי לִיהוָה וְאַתָּה נִשְׁאַתָּ עָוֹן חֲטָאתִי סֵלָה: ו עַל-זֹאת יִתְפַּלֵּל כָּל-חֹסֵד אֱלֹהֶיךָ לֵעֵת מִצָּא רַק לְשֹׁטֵף מִיָּם רַבִּים אֱלֹהֵי לֹא יִגִּיעוּ: ז אַתָּה סִתְּרֵ לִי מִצָּר תִּצְרַנִּי רַנִּי פְּלֹט תְּסֹבְבֵנִי סֵלָה: ח אֲשַׁכִּילֶךָ וְאוֹרְךָ בְּדָרְךָ-זוֹ תִלְךָ אֵינְעֶצֶה עֲלֶיךָ עֵינַי: ט אֶל-תִּהְיוּ כְּסוּס כִּפְרָד אֵין הֶבִין בְּמֶתֶג וְרָסוֹן עֲדִיו לְבָלוֹם בֶּל קָרַב אֱלֹהֶיךָ: י רַבִּים מְכַאֲוִבִים לְרָשָׁע וְהַבּוֹטֵחַ בִּיהוָה חֹסֵד יִסֹּבְבֵנוּ: יֵא שְׁמַחוּ בִּיהוָה וְגִילוּ צְדִיקֵי וְהִרְ- נִינוּ כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל-לֵב:</p>	<p>ה חובתי אודעינך ועויתי לא חפית אמרית אודי על מרודי קדם יהוה ואת ואנת שבקתא עויית חובי לע- למין: ו מטול דא יצלי כל חסידא קדמך לוותך לעידן רעותיה לחוד לעידן דייתון עממין סגיאין היך מיא לותיה לא ימטון למבאשא לא- באשא: ז את אנת הוא יהוה טמור לי ממעיקא בסיתרך תנטרינני ביעת שזכותא תחזרינני לעלמא: ח אש- כלינך ואלפינך באורחא דנן תהך אימלכינך ואישוי עלך לטבא עייני: ט לא תהוון כסוסיא והיך כודנא דלית בהום ביונא בזממא ופרומביא תיקוניה לאיתחסמא כחדא לא יתק- רב יקרב לותך: י סגיאין כיבין לר- שיעא ודכלי ודרחיץ ביהוה טיבותא יחזריניה: יא חדו במימרא דיהוה ובעו ובעו צדיקיא ושבחו כל תריצי לבא רעיונא:</p>	<p>32:5 τὴν ἁμαρτίαν μου ἐγνώρισα καὶ τὴν ἀνομίαν μου οὐκ ἐκάλυψα εἶπα ἐξαγορεύσω κατ’ ἐμοῦ τὴν ἀνομίαν μου τῷ κυρίῳ καὶ σὺ ἀφῆκας τὴν ἀσέβειαν τῆς ἁμαρτίας μου διάψαλμα 32:6 ὑπὲρ ταύτης προσευξεται πᾶς ὄσιος πρὸς σέ ἐν καιρῷ εὐθέτω πλην ἐν κατακλυσμῷ ὑδάτων πολλῶν πρὸς αὐτὸν οὐκ ἐγγιούσιν 32:7 σὺ μου εἶ καταφυγὴ ἀπὸ θλίψεως τῆς περιεχούσης με τὸ ἀγαλλιάμα μου λύτρωσαί με ἀπὸ τῶν κυκλωσάντων με διάψαλμα 32:8 συνετιῶ σε καὶ συμβιβῶ σε ἐν ὁδῷ ταύτη ἣ πορεύση ἐπιστηριῶ ἐπὶ σέ τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς μου 32:9 μὴ γίνεσθε ὡς ἵππος καὶ ἡμίονος οἷς οὐκ ἔστιν σύνεσις ἐν χαλινῷ καὶ κημῷ τὰς σιαγόνας αὐτῶν ἄγξαι τῶν μὴ ἐγγιζόντων πρὸς σέ 32:10 πολλὰ αἰ μάστιγες τοῦ ἁμαρτωλοῦ τὸν δὲ ἐλπίζοντα ἐπὶ κύριον ἔλεος κυκλώσει 32:11 εὐφράνθητε ἐπὶ κύριον καὶ ἀγαλλιᾶσθε δίκαιοι καὶ καυχᾶσθε πάντες οἱ εὐθεῖς τῇ καρδίᾳ</p>
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<p>Tehillim / Psalms 32 A Psalm of David. A Maskil. 32:1 How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered! 32:2 How blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit! 32:3 When I kept silent about my sin, my body wasted away Through my groaning all day long. 32:4 For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was drained away as with the fever heat of summer. Selah. 32:5 I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I did not hide; I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord'; And You forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah. 32:6 Therefore, let everyone who is godly pray to You in a time when You may be found; Surely in a flood of great waters they will not reach him. 32:7 You are my hiding place; You preserve me from trouble; You surround me with songs of deliverance. Selah. 32:8 I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you. 32:9 Do not be as the horse or as the mule which have no understanding, Whose trappings include bit and bridle to hold them in check, Otherwise they will not come near to you. 32:10 Many are the sorrows of the wicked, But he who trusts in the Lord, lovingkindness shall surround him. 32:11 Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, you righteous ones; And shout for joy, all you who are upright in heart. (NASB)</p>	<p>Toviyah / Psalms Chapter 32 32:1 Of David. Good counsel. David said, "How blessed is the one whose impieties they forgive, whose sins they cover over." 32:2 How happy was Moses, son of Amram, to whom the Lord did not reckon his sins, because there was no guile in his spirit. 32:3 Because I have been silent from the words of Torah, my bones waste away while I groan all day. 32:4 Because day and night your punishment is severe upon me, my moisture is turned to, as it were, the hot wind of summer forever. 32:5 My sin I will tell you and my iniquity I have not covered. I said, "I will confess my rebellions in the presence of the Lord;" and you forgave the iniquity of my sin forever. 32:6 Because of this let every pious man pray in your presence at the time of his favor; indeed, at the time when many Gentiles come like waters, to him they will not come near to do harm. 32:7 You are the Lord; hide me, from the oppressor guard me; the joy of salvation will surround me forever. 32:8 I will enlighten you and teach you; in this way you shall go; I will advise you and put my eye upon you for good. 32:9 Do not be like a horse or mule who have no intelligence; both muzzle and halter are its trappings to be kept silent; let it not come near you. 32:10 Many are the pains of the wicked; but favor will surround the one who trusts in the Lord. 32:11 Rejoice in the word of the Lord, and be glad, O righteous; and give praise, all you with upright hearts. (EMC)</p>	<p>Psalmoi / Psalms 32 A Psalm of instruction by David. 32:1 Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and who sins are covered. 32:2 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin, and whose mouth there is no guile. 32:3 Because I kept silence, my bones waxed old, from my crying all the day. 32:4 For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: I became thoroughly miserable while a thorn was fastened in me. Pause. 32:5 I acknowledged my sin, and hid not mine iniquity: I said, I will confess mine iniquity to the Lord against myself; and thou forgavest the ungodliness of my heart. Pause. 32:6 Therefore shall every holy one pray to thee in a fit time: only in the deluge of many waters they shall not come nigh to him. 32:7 Thou art my refuge from the affliction that encompasses me; my joy, to deliver me from them that have compassed me. Pause. 32:8 I will instruct thee and guide thee in this way wherein thou shalt go: I will fix mine eyes upon thee. 32:9 Be ye not as horse and mule, which have no understanding; but thou must constrain their jaws with bit and curb, lest they should come nigh to thee. 32:10 Many are the scourges of the sinner: but him that hopes in the Lord mercy shall compass about. 32:11 Be glad in the Lord, and exult, ye righteous: and glory, all ye that are upright in heart.(LXX)</p>
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This week's study is from *Tehillim / Psalms 32:1-11*, the opening verse states א לְדוֹד מִשְׁפִּיל אֲשֶׁרִי וְנָשׂוּי-פְשָׁע כָּסוּי הַטָּאָה: *A Psalm of David. A Maskil. 32:1 How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered! (NASB)* It is interesting looking at the Hebrew text, we find a word transliterated into the English language, the word “Maskil” (מִשְׁפִּיל). According to a modern Hebrew Lexicon, the word “Maskil” (מִשְׁפִּיל) means “adj./n. educated, erudite, learned, enlightened, scholarly, savant, literate, schooled, or intellectual.” According to Brown Driver and Briggs Lexicon, the word means “contemplative poem, a didactic poem, a skillful, artistic song.” Searching the Hebrew Scriptures for “Maskil” (מִשְׁפִּיל) reveals this word is used 28 times throughout the Scriptures, 2X (*1 Samuel 18*), 1X (*Jeremiah 50*), 1X (*Hosea 9*), 17X (*Tehillim / Psalms*), 6X (*Mishley / Proverbs*), and 1X (*Job 22*). Let's look at how this word is used elsewhere in the Scriptures (*1 Samuel 18:14-15*).

ספר שמואל א פרק יח

יח וַיְהִי דוֹד לְכָל-דְּרָכָו [דְּרָכָיו] מִשְׁפִּיל וַיִּהְיֶה עִמּוֹ: טו וַיִּרְא שָׂאוּל אֲשֶׁר-הוּא מִשְׁפִּיל מְאֹד וַיִּגָּר מִפָּנָיו:

1 Samuel 18:14-15

18:14 David was prospering in all his ways for the Lord was with him. 18:15 When Saul saw that he was prospering greatly, he dreaded him. (NASB)

What is interesting is that this word is translated in *1 Samuel 18:14-15* to mean “prospering.” Saul saw that he was prospering greatly and he dreaded him. Why do the translators of the Psalms have difficulty translating this word in *Tehillim / Psalms 32:1*? If we study the Psalm overall, David is praising the Lord for the blessing of having his sins forgiven. Would the translation “*A Psalm of David's prosperity*” because of his having his sins forgiven be a possible translation of this Scripture?

The Aramaic Targum states א לדוד שכלא טבא אמר דוד טובוי דמן שבקין “דבר נשא דשבקין ליה מרודוי *Of David. Good counsel. David said, “How blessed is the one whose impieties they forgive, whose sins they cover over.” (EMC)* and the Septuagint states 32:1 τῷ δαυιδ συνέσεως μακάριοι ὧν ἀφέθησαν αἱ ἀνομίαι καὶ ὧν ἐπεκαλύφθησαν αἱ ἀμαρτίαι *A Psalm of instruction by David. 32:1 Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and who sins are covered. (LXX)* The Septuagint translates the Hebrew text reasonably well, it is interesting though how the rabbis translate the Hebrew in the Aramaic Targum. The rabbis say how blessed is the one whose sins “they forgive” and whose sins “they cover over.” Who are “they” the rabbis are speaking of? It might be, according to the Torah, the relationship of the Priest in the process of making atonement and drawing near to God. Note that according to the Torah, being cleansed and pardoned (‘atoned for’) are integrally connected. According to the Scriptures, the Priest eats a portion of the offering for the purpose of bearing away the iniquity or guilt of the one bringing the offering (*Vayikra / Leviticus 10:17*) and then makes atonement on behalf of the gift bearer. This may be found in *Vayikra / Leviticus 10:12-20*.

Vayikra / Leviticus 10:12-20

10:12 Then Moses spoke to Aaron, and to his surviving sons, Eleazar and Ithamar; ‘Take the grain offering that is left over from the Lord's offerings by fire and eat it unleavened beside the altar, for it is most holy. 10:13 ‘You shall eat it, moreover, in a holy place, because it is your due and your sons' due out of the Lord's offerings by fire; for thus I have been commanded. 10:14 ‘The breast of the wave offering, however, and the thigh of the offering you may eat in a clean place, you and your sons and your daughters with you; for they have been given as your due and your sons' due out of the sacrifices of the peace offerings of the sons of Israel. 10:15 ‘The thigh offered by lifting up and the breast offered by waving they shall bring along with the offerings by fire of the portions of fat, to present as a wave offering be-

fore the Lord; so it shall be a thing perpetually due you and your sons with you, just as the Lord has commanded.’ 10:16 But Moses searched carefully for the goat of the sin offering, and behold, it had been burned up! So he was angry with Aaron’s surviving sons Eleazar and Ithamar, saying, 10:17 ‘Why did you not eat the sin offering at the holy place? For it is most holy, and He gave it to you to bear away the guilt of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the Lord. 10:18 ‘Behold, since its blood had not been brought inside, into the sanctuary, you should certainly have eaten it in the sanctuary, just as I commanded.’ 10:19 But Aaron spoke to Moses, ‘Behold, this very day they presented their sin offering and their burnt offering before the Lord. When things like these happened to me, if I had eaten a sin offering today, would it have been good in the sight of the Lord?’ 10:20 When Moses heard that, it seemed good in his sight. (NASB)

Here the text details the importance of consuming a portion of the offering for the purpose of the priest bearing the iniquity and making atonement. It is interesting to study the rabbinic understanding of atonement from the Talmud, and particularly Rashi’s commentary on scriptures related to the atonement the priest makes for the people: (i) *Vayikra / Leviticus 10:16-18*, (ii) *Vayikra / Leviticus 6:24-26*, (iii) *Shemot / Exodus 28:38*, and (iv) *Bamidbar / Numbers 18:1*. These particular scripture references are chosen because of their relationship to one another dealing with the Priest consuming the sin-offering and bearing our sin (iniquity), and guilt for the purpose of making atonement before God.

Vayikra / Leviticus 10:16-18

10:16 But Moses searched carefully for the goat of the sin offering, and behold, it had been burned up! So he was angry with Aaron’s surviving sons Eleazar and Ithamar, saying, 10:17 ‘Why did you not eat the sin offering at the holy place? For it is most holy, and He gave it to you to bear away the guilt of the congregation, to make atonement for them before the Lord. 10:18 ‘Behold, since its blood had not been brought inside, into the sanctuary, you should certainly have eaten it in the sanctuary, just as I commanded.’ (NASB)

Vayikra / Leviticus 6:24-26

6:24 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 6:25 ‘Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying, ‘This is the law of the sin offering: in the place where the burnt offering is slain the sin offering shall be slain before the Lord; it is most holy. 6:26 ‘The priest who offers it for sin shall eat it. It shall be eaten in a holy place, in the court of the tent of meeting. (NASB)

Vayikra / Leviticus 6:27-30

6:27 ‘Anyone who touches its flesh will become consecrated; and when any of its blood splashes on a garment, in a holy place you shall wash what was splashed on. 6:28 ‘Also the earthenware vessel in which it was boiled shall be broken; and if it was boiled in a bronze vessel, then it shall be scoured and rinsed in water. 6:29 ‘Every male among the priests may eat of it; it is most holy. 6:30 ‘But no sin offering of which any of the blood is brought into the tent of meeting to make atonement in the holy place shall be eaten; it shall be burned with fire. (NASB)

Shemot / Exodus 28:38

Exo28:38 ‘It shall be on Aaron’s forehead, and Aaron shall take away the iniquity of the holy things which the sons of Israel consecrate, with regard to all their holy gifts; and it shall always be on his forehead, that they may be accepted before the Lord. (NASB)

Vayikra / Leviticus 22:16

22:16 and so cause them to bear punishment for guilt by eating their holy gifts; for I am the

Vayikra / Leviticus 22:14-20

22:14 *‘But if a man eats a holy gift unintentionally, then he shall add to it a fifth of it and shall give the holy gift to the priest. 22:15 ‘They shall not profane the holy gifts of the sons of Israel which they offer to the Lord, 22:16 and so cause them to bear punishment for guilt by eating their holy gifts; for I am the Lord who sanctifies them.’ 22:17 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 22:18 ‘Speak to Aaron and to his sons and to all the sons of Israel and say to them, ‘Any man of the house of Israel or of the aliens in Israel who presents his offering, whether it is any of their votive or any of their freewill offerings, which they present to the Lord for a burnt offering 22:19 for you to be accepted it must be a male without defect from the cattle, the sheep, or the goats. 22:20 ‘Whatever has a defect, you shall not offer, for it will not be accepted for you. (NASB)*

Bamidbar / Numbers 18:1

18:1 *So the Lord said to Aaron, ‘You and your sons and your father’s household with you shall bear the guilt in connection with the sanctuary, and you and your sons with you shall bear the guilt in connection with your priesthood. (NASB)*

Rashi’s commentary (see Rashi’s commentary online free, “*The Complete Jewish Bible with Rashi’s Commentary*,” http://www.chabad.org/library/bible_cdo/aid/63255/jewish/The-Bible-with-Rashi.htm, Access Date: 2013). Studying Rashi’s commentary, it is interesting that the commentary is focused upon the iniquity of the sanctuary and not on the role of the priest to make atonement for the people. Rashi neglects to discuss the importance of having a priest make atonement for sin in the Tabernacle / Temple in Jerusalem and this is very significant. The central feature of these verses which have not been addressed, (i) the Priest bears the iniquity of the non-Priest, and (ii) how does the priest make atonement with regards to himself having bore the guilt that is in connection with the sinner? The nature of the role of the Priest was to take care of and make atonement for the one bringing the offering. The focus on the holy things and absence of discussion from Rashi on this very important aspect of the text is remarkable.

Summary of Rashi’s commentary

1. *Vayikra / Leviticus 10:16-18*, Rashi neglects to specifically discuss the need for the Priest to eat of the sacrifice in order to bear the guilt of the one bringing the offering as the Torah states. The Torah indicates the role of the Priest is to bear ones iniquity and then make atonement before God.
2. *Vayikra / Leviticus 6:24-26*, is the source text on eating the offering in the holy place. The Priest who is making atonement is the one who is responsible for consuming part of the sin-offering. Rashi neglects to comment on this particular mitzvah (command). What are the reasons why the Priest is commanded by God to consume the sacrifice? Why does Rashi neglect to discuss this interesting commandment?
3. *Shemot / Exodus 28:38*, the text states that the Tzitzit is to be placed upon the High Priest forehead and he is supposed to take away the iniquity of the holy things. The simple meaning of the text does not indicate the Tzitzit is that which will be used by the Priest to remove the sin of the holy things. The Torah is a little unclear on the use of the Tzitzit which gives commentators a little bit of leg room to work with. As a result, Rashi has a lengthy discussion on the use of the Tzitzit saying it is the Tzitzit which bears the sin of the holy things and not the priest.

4. *Vayikra / Leviticus 22:16*, Moses instructs on what happens when one eats a holy gift unintentionally. Here Rashi's comments are confusing and it goes without saying the discussion on consumption of the offering with bearing one's guilt is not elucidated in the rabbinic literature.
5. *Bamidbar / Numbers 18:1*, God is telling the Priests they will bear the guilt of the sanctuary that is in connection with the priesthood. Rashi indicates the text here is in relation to the sacred things, the Priest will bear the iniquity of the non-Priests when they sin with a sacred thing. The most interesting feature of the text is not addressed (i) why does the Priest bear the iniquity of the non-Priest and (ii) how does the Priest make atonement for after the one who is guilty?

According to the Torah, the role of the Priest in the process of atonement is very significant. Studying the rabbinic commentary, a lot of discussion is given however, there is something distinctly missing. The point that is missing is what God is trying to show us in the use of the priest to bear our iniquity or guilt and then make atonement with regard to "food and drink." The need for the priest to bear one's iniquity and lack of discussion in Rashi's commentary is the result of atonement being answered in Judaism's teaching on Teshuvah (Repentance). However, does repentance supersede the Torah requirement of a Priest? The all encompassing teaching of repentance doing away with the Torah requirement of the Priest is difficult to accept when significant portions of the Torah are specifically written detailing the necessity of the various sacrifices for the forgiveness of sins. For example, Parashat Vayikra (*Vayikra / Leviticus 1:1-5:26*) and Tzav (*Vayikra / Leviticus 6:1-8:36*) detail the procedures regarding how each type of sacrifice is offered. Parashat Tzav deals with the procedures for offering the various Sacrifices and Parashat Vayikra discusses which Sacrifice is to be offered under which circumstance. Take for example the following summary for the Chatat (sin) and Asham (guilt) offerings:

Chatat (Sin, *Vayikra / Leviticus 6:17-23*)

- The procedure of how to offer the korban.
- The portion eaten by the Priest.
- Instructions on where it may be eaten.

Asham (Guilt, *Vayikra / Leviticus 7:1-7*)

- The procedure of how to offer the korban.
- The portion eaten by the Priest.
- Instructions on where it may be eaten.

Compare the biblical text and list the steps for the Asham (guilt) and Chatat (sin) offerings. There is great importance in the need for the blood offered in the sacrifice and the need for the portion of meat to be eaten by the Priest for the purpose of bearing away our sin. Over and over again the command to consume a portion of the offering is given. What can we learn from or say about this very important role of eating a portion of the sacrifice in the process of making atonement? Is this an example of the shadow of things to come from the notion of earthly copies and heavenly originals like what the author of Hebrews is trying to say? This concept is very Hebraic and well grounded in the Tanach. The Torah contains a shadow of the good things to come but not the actual manifestation of the originals. In respect to the sacrificial system, the Messiah's death and entry into the heavenly Holiest Place brings to humanity the actual manifestation here and now of what the Torah previewed. In the Torah we find evidence on the necessity for Yeshua to go to the cross for the purpose of bearing our sins. Yeshua bore our sins upon the cross, and then made atonement on our behalf in the Heavenly Holiest Place. Having this understanding on the Priest eating a portion of the sacrifice for the purpose of incorporating the sin of the sacrifice in his body, is detailed in *Vayikra /*

Leviticus 10:17, these Scriptures become a very significant messianic expectation on the work of the Messiah. Yeshua, our High Priest, has taken our sins once and for all and made atonement in His own blood, just as it is written in *Hebrews 9:28*. The bearing of our sins and making atonement by the Priest is very important as it is written in *Hebrews 9:28*, Yeshua the Messiah fulfilled this Torah command. The Aramaic Targum (*32:1 א לודוד שכלא טבא אמר דוד טובוי דמן שבקין "דבר נשא דשבקין ליה מרודוי חפיין על חטאוי: Of David. Good counsel. David said, "How blessed is the one whose impieties they forgive, whose sins they cover over." EMC*) reveals the rabbinic understanding on the forgiveness of sins saying how blessed is the one whose sins "they forgive" and whose sins "they cover over." The rabbis are referring to the priesthood, their function was to help someone obtain atonement before God.

David continues saying *ב אַשְׁרֵי אָדָם לֹא יִחַשֵׁב יְהוָה לֹו עֲוֹן וְאֵין בְּרוּחוֹ רְמִיָּה: ג כִּי הִתְרַשְׁטִי בְּלוֹ עֲצָמַי* *32:2 How blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit! 32:3 When I kept silent about my sin, my body wasted away Through my groaning all day long. 32:4 For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was drained away as with the fever heat of summer. Selah. (NASB)* It is interesting how David says *ב אַשְׁרֵי אָדָם לֹא יִחַשֵׁב יְהוָה לֹו עֲוֹן* "How blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity" using the word אָדָם (Adam) rather than אִישׁ. This suggests that the man he is referring to is in a general sense, drawing a contrast against the one who is under a covenant (man, אִישׁ). What would be the reason for his use of the word "Adam" here in the text? It might be that the Adam (אָדָם), not being a man who is a covenant member (*i.e. not married or a son of Israel*) and therefore would not or had not repented of his sin. David says *32:3 When I kept silent about my sin, my body wasted away Through my groaning all day long. (NASB)* may suggest a connection to the one who is blessed being forgiven by the Lord and the man that may not be in the covenant blessing of Israel. David goes on to say that the hand of the Lord was heavy upon him because of his sin, so much so that his life was drained from him. The Aramaic Targum translates the Masoretic text to say the following, *ב טב למשה בר עמרם "טובוהי דבר נשא" דלא חשיב יהוה ליה עויין בדיל דלא הות ברוחיה נכלא: ג מטול ארוםדשתקית מן פתגמי אורייתא בליין גרמיי בנהמותי כולא יומא: ד ארום וליילי תקיפת תוקפךעלי מחתך איתהפיך רוטבי היך שרבא דקייטא לעלמא: 32:2 How happy was Moses, son of Amram, to whom the Lord did not reckon his sins, because there was no guile in his spirit. 32:3 Because I have been silent from the words of Torah, my bones waste away while I groan all day. 32:4 Because day and night your punishment is severe upon me, my moisture is turned to, as it were, the hot wind of summer forever. (EMC)* It is interesting the rabbis parallel these verses to Moshe whom the Lord did not impute his sins against him. They say there is no guile (נכלא) in his soul and this was the reason the Lord did not hold his sins against him. The word "guile" is defined as "*n. deceit, duplicity; fraud, cunning; trickery,*" so Moshe did not treat others or God with deception. The rabbis also say that it was because David was silent from the words of the Torah that his bones wasted away and groaned all day. Are the rabbis saying that not studying Torah is a sin? It is interesting that when one sins, the last thing one wants to do is to study the Scriptures, let alone read the Scriptures. So when David sinned, he did not study the words of the Torah, had he done so he would have known that he is not to sleep with another man's wife, or to commit murder, stealing from his neighbor, etc. The Aramaic Targum also says that because of the Lord's punishment, his moisture is turned to a hot wind of summer. This is analogous to the death of a plant when it is dried out in the desert heat, no fruit may be produced because there is no life, because of sin. This does make sense regarding the rabbis interpretation of David's words, deceit, sin, the Torah, etc. While studying the Apostolic Writings, do we see a similar parallel in thought regarding David's words and the rabbis? Let's look at the book of *1 John* in the Apostolic Writings.

1 John 1:5-8

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. (NASB)

1 John 2:24-29

2:24 As for you, let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father. 2:25 This is the promise which He Himself made to us: eternal life. 2:26 These things I have written to you concerning those who are trying to deceive you. 2:27 As for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him. 2:28 Now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming. 2:29 If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone also who practices righteousness is born of Him. (NASB)

1 John 5:2-5

5:2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. 5:3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. 5:4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world our faith. 5:5 Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? (NASB)

John speaks of the differences between walking in the light versus walking in darkness and having fellowship with the Lord (*1 John 1:5-8*). He then says that if you abide in what you heard from the beginning. What are the things that were heard from the beginning? Is that a reference to the Torah? In the Aramaic Targum, the rabbis say that because David was silent from the words of the Torah that his bones wasted away and groaned all day. Notice how John then says all who practices righteousness is born of Him (*1 John 2:29*). Our understanding of righteousness, how to be righteous, comes from the Torah which draws us back to the comment in *1 John 2:24* the commandments we heard from the beginning. John concludes his epistle (*1 John 5*) saying that we obey his commandments because we love God and the commandments are not burdensome. David says *32:4 For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was drained away as with the fever heat of summer. Selah. (NASB)* If we who are called to walk in holiness, righteousness, and justice do not do so, would the Lord's hand not be heavy upon our lives until we repent and turn from our sins and walk in the way God would want us to walk? The victory that we have to overcome the world is our Savior Yeshua the Messiah, the Son of God.

The Septuagint states *32:2 μακάριος ἀνὴρ οὗ οὐ μὴ λογίσῃται κύριος ἁμαρτίαν οὐδὲ ἔστιν ἐν τῷ στόματι αὐτοῦ δόλος 32:3 ὅτι ἐσίγησα ἐπαλαιώθη τὰ ὀστέα μου ἀπὸ τοῦ κράζειν με ὅλην τὴν ἡμέραν 32:4 ὅτι ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτὸς ἐβαρύνθη ἐπ' ἐμὲ ἡ χεὶρ σου ἐστράφην εἰς ταλαιπωρίαν ἐν τῷ ἐμπαγῆναι ἄκανθαν διάψαλμα 32:2 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin, and whose mouth there is no guile. 32:3 Because I kept silence, my bones waxed old, from my crying all the day. 32:4 For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: I became thoroughly miserable while a thorn was fastened in me. Pause. (LXX)* The Septuagint is very similar to the Masoretic text, it is interesting however that the rabbis translate *32:4 For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was drained away as with the fever heat of summer. Selah. (NASB)* to say that the heavy hand of the Lord has fastened a thorn (ἄκανθαν) in David. This is fascinating since this brings to memory the Apostle Paul's thorn in the flesh in *2 Corinthians 12:7-9*.

2 Corinthians 12:7-9

12:7 Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me

to keep me from exalting myself! 12:8 Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me. 12:9 And He has said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.' Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. (NASB)

Thorn in the flesh is a colloquialism used to describe a chronic illness, annoyance, or trouble in one's life. It is most commonly used by Christians as a result of the source expression written by the Apostle Paul in his Second Epistle to the *Corinthians 12:7–9*. According to the Tanach, the “*thorn*” is used as a metaphor, such as in *Ezekiel 28:24* and *Joshua 23:13*.

Joshua 23:13

23:13 know with certainty that the Lord your God will not continue to drive these nations out from before you; but they will be a snare and a trap to you, and a whip on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from off this good land which the Lord your God has given you. (NASB)

Ezekiel 28:24

28:24 'And there will be no more for the house of Israel a prickling brier or a painful thorn from any round about them who scorned them; then they will know that I am the Lord God.' (NASB)

What is interesting, studying Christian commentary on the thorn, most commentaries do not reference the Septuagint and *Tehillim / Psalms 32:4* when listing verse references for *2 Corinthians 12:7*. What is interesting is that some interpret the thorn as persecutions and unfortunate accidents that characterized Paul's life. The Reformers Martin Luther, John Calvin, and others interpret the expression as denoting temptation to unbelief (see *Easton, Matthew George (1897). "Thorn in the flesh". Easton's Bible Dictionary (New and revised ed.). T. Nelson and Sons.*). Others focus mainly upon the infirmity that Paul had with discussions on what exactly was Paul's thorn in the flesh. What is distinctly missing is a discussion on the thorn (ἄκανθᾶν) that God gave David because of unrepentant sin. The rabbis say that the Lord placed a heavy hand upon David because of his sin and fastened a thorn to torment him according to the Septuagint. David in the Psalm is discussing the parallels of the one who is with or without deceit, keeping God's Word in our hearts (the study of Torah), not keeping silent about sin (hiding sin), and the Lord being weighty upon his heart for what he had done. The interesting question is, do you think the Lord would give a child of God a thorn in the flesh to draw him back to himself, to keep one humble, and to draw one to repentance? He certainly would, he did that to the Apostle Paul. David said that when he kept silent about his sin, his body made it known that he had done wrong because the hand of the Lord was weighing upon him. Do you think the hand of the Lord would weigh heavy upon our lives if we were walking in darkness or trying to walk in both light and darkness at the same time? These Scriptures seem to indicate so. We do not have a “*safety net*” simply because we believe in Yeshua and are saved. Our lives must demonstrate the fruit of our salvation! We must take our faith seriously and watch what we see, hear, and do. According to John's epistle, we are to live our lives according to the commands of God.

David said that it is only when we humble ourselves and confess our sins that the Lord will forgive our guilt (הַ חַטָּאתַי אֹדְיָעָה וְעוֹנֵי לֹא-כַסִּיתִי אֶמְרָתִי אֹדְהָ עָלַי פִּשְׁעֵי לִיהוָה וְאֶתָּה נִשְׂאָתָ עוֹן חַטָּאתַי סְלָה :) 32:5 *I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I did not hide; I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord'; And You forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah. NASB*) He goes on to say וְעַל-זֹאת יִתְפַּלֵּל כָּל-הַחַסִּיד | 32:6 *Therefore, let everyone who is godly pray to You in a time when You may be found; Surely in a flood of great waters they will not reach him. (NASB)* Does this suggest that there are times when the Lord cannot be found? Is there Scriptural evidence that states a time in Israel's history when God could not be found? One instance that comes to mind is from *Ezekiel 14*

that states the people had idols in their hearts and the Lord would answer the people according to their idols thus receiving a wrong answer so that they would be destroyed. We know this happened a lot, God gave King Saul a lying spirit. The northern tribes of Israel also were given false prophecies by their prophets because of their sins. Do you think the Lord could not be found in this instance? In the Tanach, there are many examples of prayers that were not answered. In the Scriptures, the Lord usually responded to one praying, we are told that when we pray to expect that He will answer us (*James 1:5 and Jeremiah 33:3*). Out of the prayers that we find in the Scriptures, many times the reason the Lord responded with no or did not respond at all was because of the sin of the individual of the people as a whole. The other reason was because it was not the Lord's will or that it did not glorify the Lord. One example may be taken from King Saul's life, he asked for guidance from the Lord to help him defeat his enemy, however, because of Saul's disobedience the Lord did not respond to his prayer. King David also received the same response from the Lord following his sin with Bathsheba and the death of his child (see *2 Samuel 12:14-31*). Other examples of the Lord not answering prayer, Jonah and Elijah both asked to die because of their difficult circumstances and His answer was no (see *Jonah 4 and 1 Kings 19:1-14*). Yeshua also asked for the Lord to take the cup of suffering from Him (*Luke 22:42*) but it was God's will and plan for him to drink the cup and Submit to the will of the father. In these instances of prayer, would this have been considered a time when the Lord could not be found? The rabbis translate this in the Aramaic Targum to say ה חובתי אודעינך ועויתי לא הפית אמרית אודי על מרודיי קדם יהוה ואת ואנת שבקתא עויית חובי לעלמין: 1 ו מטול דא יצלי כל חסידא קדמך לוותך 32:5 My sin I will tell you and my iniquity I have not covered. I said, "I will confess my rebellions in the presence of the Lord;" and You forgave the iniquity of my sin forever. 32:6 Because of this let every pious man pray in Your presence at the time of His favor; indeed, at the time when many Gentiles come like waters, to him they will not come near to do harm. (EMC) Note how the rabbis say "I will confess my iniquities before the Lord and He forgave his iniquities forever" (אמרית אודי על מרודיי קדם יהוה ואת ואנת שבקתא עויית חובי לעלמין) and "On account of / Because of this..." (מטול דא) the pious man is to pray in God's presence at the time of His favor. Notice the parallel with being open with our sins before the Lord and his being available to hear the prayer of the pious (חסידא).

The time of God's favor is also paralleled with the times when Gentiles come near to do no harm. It is interesting how David says 1 על-זאת יתפלל כל-חסיד | אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְעֵת מְצֵא רַק לְשֹׁטֵף מִיַּם רַבִּים אֲלֵיו לֹא יִגִּיעוּ: 32:6 Therefore, let everyone who is godly pray to You in a time when You may be found; Surely in a flood of great waters they will not reach him. (NASB) The flood of great waters (לְשֹׁטֵף מִיַּם רַבִּים) is used here as an allegory to convey a powerful message striving in prayer for the Lord. This most likely is a reference to the story of Noah and the Flood, and this story from the Torah is used throughout the Scriptures. King Solomon said in *Song 8:7* 2 מִיַּם רַבִּים לֹא יוֹכְלוּ לְכַבּוֹת אֶת-הָאֵהָבָה וְנִהְרֹת לֹא יִשְׁטְפוּהָ אִם-יִתֵּן אִישׁ אֶת-כָּל-הוֹן 8:7 Many waters cannot quench love, Nor will rivers overflow it; If a man were to give all the riches of his house for love, It would be utterly despised. (NASB) The phrase "many waters" is a reference to the waters of Noah and the unquenchable love that is within the human soul for God, the kind of love is on fire like what is found in coals, a mighty flame (*Song 8:6 Put me like a seal over your heart, Like a seal on your arm. For love is as strong as death, Jealousy is as severe as Sheol; Its flashes are flashes of fire, The very flame of the LORD. NASB*) In Solomon's words, the "many waters" symbolizes ones struggle with the world (i.e. preoccupation with worldly concerns). Note how the preoccupation with worldly concerns, for instance working for a living, sometimes the business of work can make a person feel like they are "drowning" in life. The preoccupation with ones livelihood may also cause a person to lose sight of what is truly important, to seek the Lord and devote one's self to prayer and studying God's Word. With this in mind, it is interesting what David is saying in the Psalm, 32:6 Therefore, let everyone who is godly pray to You in a time when You may be found; Surely in a flood of great waters they will not reach him. (NASB) he may have been referring to the business of life and the need to seek the Lord when we have the opportunity to do so and not allow the flood of great waters of this world overtake us.

The Septuagint states 32:5 τὴν ἁμαρτίαν μου ἐγνώρισα καὶ τὴν ἀνομίαν μου οὐκ ἐκάλυψα εἶπα ἐξαγορεύσω κατ' ἐμοῦ τὴν ἀνομίαν μου τῷ κυρίῳ καὶ σὺ ἀφήκας τὴν ἀσέβειαν τῆς ἁμαρτίας μου διάψαλμα 32:6 ὑπὲρ ταύτης προσεύξεται πᾶς ὄσιος πρὸς σὲ ἐν καιρῷ εὐθέτω πλην ἐν κατακλυσμῷ ὑδάτων πολλῶν πρὸς αὐτὸν οὐκ ἐγγιούσιν 32:5 *I acknowledged my sin, and hid not mine iniquity: I said, I will confess mine iniquity to the Lord against myself; and thou forgavest the ungodliness of my heart. Pause. 32:6 Therefore shall every holy one pray to thee in a fit time: only in the deluge of many waters they shall not come nigh to him. (LXX)* Here the rabbis say that everyone is to pray in a “fit time” and that only in the deluge of many waters will they not come near to the Lord. The point we can take away from the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts is to realize that this world can cause us to be preoccupied with life, so much so that we might neglect our time with the Lord to seek Him, forgiveness, to pray, and to study His Word. The waters mentioned here in the text are important because water possesses the ability to spiritually purify. In the story of Noah, the corruption of that generation had defiled the entire earth, as we are told, “for the earth is filled with violence” (*Bereshit / Genesis 6:13*) and therefore the Lord destroyed and reshaped the earth itself while eliminating those who had defiled it. In doing so the Lord purified the world. The Lord chose water, which has the ability to accomplish this, as it is written in *Ezekiel 36:25* “And I will sprinkle upon you pure waters and you will be purified; from all your defilements and from all your idols I will purify you.” The floodwaters are similar to a spiritually purifying mikvah (ritual bath).

David concludes his Psalm saying | אֲשַׁכְּיֶלֶךָ הַ אֶשְׁכְּיֶלֶךָ ז אָתָּה | סִתְרָ לִי מִצָּר תִּצְרֶנִי רְנִי פִלְט תְּסוּבְּבֵנִי סְלֵה: הַ אֶשְׁכְּיֶלֶךָ וְאוֹרֶךְ בְּדָרְךָ-זו תִּלְדֶּה אֵינְעֶצֶה עָלֶיךָ עֵינַי: ט אֶל-תְּהִיֹו | כְּסוֹס כְּפָרָד אִין הִבִּין בְּמִתְג וְרָסוּן עָדִיו לְבָלוֹם בֵּל קָרַב אֶלֶיךָ: 32:7 *You are my hiding place; You preserve me from trouble; You surround me with songs of deliverance. Selah. 32:8 I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you. 32:9 Do not be as the horse or as the mule which have no understanding, Whose trappings include bit and bridle to hold them in check, Otherwise they will not come near to you. 32:10 Many are the sorrows of the wicked, But he who trusts in the Lord, lovingkindness shall surround him. (NASB)* The last verse says יֵא שְׂמַחוּ בִיהוָה וְגִילוּ צְדִיקִים וְהִרְנִינוּ כֹּל-לֵב 32:11 *Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, you righteous ones; And shout for joy, all you who are upright in heart. (NASB)* David says that the Lord is his hiding place because God preserves him from trouble. The Lord will instruct in the path he should go. How does the Lord instruct David in the path he should go? How does the Lord instruct us in the path we should go? According to *Devarim / Deuteronomy 6:3* we are told 6:3 ‘O Israel, you should listen and be careful to do it, that it may be well with you and that you may multiply greatly, just as the Lord, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey. (NASB) The Lord instructs us in His ways according to His Word, the Torah. David continues warning not to be like the horse or mule without understanding that requires a bridle to hold them in check. This is why there are many sorrows for the wicked, but for the righteous who trust in the Lord, he will be surrounded by the mercy of God. The Aramaic Targum and the Septuagint say the following:

Targum Pseudo Jonathan

Toviyah / Psalms Chapter 32:7-11

32:7 You are the Lord; hide me, from the oppressor guard me; the joy of salvation will surround me forever. 32:8 I will enlighten you and teach you; in this way you shall go; I will advise you and put my eye upon you for good. 32:9 Do not be like a horse or mule who have no intelligence; both muzzle and halter are its trappings to be kept silent; let it not come near you. 32:10 Many are the pains of the wicked; but favor will surround the one who trusts in the Lord. 32:11 Rejoice in the word of the Lord, and be glad, O righteous; and give praise, all you with upright hearts. (EMC)

ז את אנת הוא יהוה טמור לי ממעיקא בסיתרך תנטרינני ביעת שזבותא תחזרינני לעלמא: ה אשׁ-כלינך ואלפינך באורחא דנן תהך אימלכינך ואישוי עלך לטבא עייני: ט לא תהוון כסוסיא והיך

כודנא דלית בהום ביונא בזממא ופרומביא תיקוניה לאיתחסמא כחדא לא יתקרר יקרר לותך: י
סגיאין כיבין לרשיעא ודכלי ודרחיץ ביהוה טיבותא יחזרניה: יא חדו במימרא דיהוה ובעו ובעו
צדיקיא ושבחו כל תריצי לבא רעיונא:

Septuagint

Psalmoi / Psalms 32:7-11

32:7 *Thou art my refuge from the affliction that encompasses me; my joy, to deliver me from them that have compassed me. Pause. 32:8 I will instruct thee and guide thee in this way wherein thou shalt go: I will fix mine eyes upon thee. 32:9 Be ye not as horse and mule, which have no understanding; but thou must constrain their jaws with bit and curb, lest they should come nigh to thee. 32:10 Many are the scourges of the sinner: but him that hopes in the Lord mercy shall compass about. 32:11 Be glad in the Lord, and exult, ye righteous: and glory, all ye that are upright in heart.*(LXX)

32:7 σύ μου εἶ καταφυγή ἀπὸ θλίψεως τῆς περιεχούσης με τὸ ἀγαλλιάμα μου λύτρωσαί με ἀπὸ τῶν κυκλωσάντων με διάψαλμα 32:8 συνειῶ σε καὶ συμβιβῶ σε ἐν ὁδῷ ταύτη ἣ πορεύση ἐπιστηριῶ ἐπὶ σὲ τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς μου 32:9 μὴ γίνεσθε ὡς ἵππος καὶ ἡμίονος οἷς οὐκ ἔστιν σύνεσις ἐν χαλινῷ καὶ κημῷ τὰς σιαγόνας αὐτῶν ἄγξαι τῶν μὴ ἐγγιζόντων πρὸς σὲ 32:10 πολλὰ αἰ μάστιγες τοῦ ἁμαρτωλοῦ τὸν δὲ ἐλπίζοντα ἐπὶ κύριον ἔλεος κυκλώσει 32:11 εὐφράνθητε ἐπὶ κύριον καὶ ἀγαλλιᾶσθε δίκαιοι καὶ καυχᾶσθε πάντες οἱ εὐθεῖς τῇ καρδίᾳ

Both the Septuagint (Greek Translation) and the Aramaic Targum agrees well with the Masoretic Text. The Targum states: 32:11 *Rejoice in the word of the Lord, and be glad, O righteous; and give praise, all you with upright hearts.* (EMC) The rabbis say to “rejoice in the word of the Lord.” There is always cause for rejoicing in the Lord, even in times of affliction, distress, and persecution. The reason being the “word of the Lord” always remains the same which speaks of God’s mercy and Grace. The Scriptures always speaks for peace and forgiveness, the righteousness of God and His Messiah Yeshua are everlasting, and so is His salvation and mercy and consequentially His love. The concluding verse that states 32:11 *Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, you righteous ones; And shout for joy, all you who are upright in heart.* (NASB) David states that the one who may be glad and rejoice are the righteous ones (צדיקים) and all who are upright in heart (כל-ישרי-לב). This brings us back to the topic of righteousness and justice in our lives, being innocent before the Lord, not having deception in our hearts before the Lord. These things we should strive for, seek the Lord and only serve the God of Israel, respect all people (love your neighbor), be humble before the Lord, be honest, live a moral life, be generous with time and money, practice what you preach (don’t be a hypocrite), and forgive others their sins against you. The rabbis say that we are not to be preoccupied with this world because worldly values include wealth, power, pleasure, revenge, fame, vanity and status. These are the most important things to the unrighteous (wicked) people who desire nothing beyond serving themselves. Worldly values promote jealousies, resentments and conflicts among people in accordance with the purposes of Satan (*John 8:44, Acts 5:3, Romans 16:17-20, 2 Corinthians 4:4, Ephesians 2:1-3, 4:25-32, 2 Timothy 2:22-26, 1 John 3:8-10*). According to *Tehillim / Psalms 32*, the Lord wants to teach us His ways according to the Torah. The Lord’s values are the opposite of worldly values. The good way, the good path, the one the Lord want us to walk is kindness to all people instead of power; humility instead of status; honesty and generosity instead of wealth, self-control instead of self-indulgence, and forgiveness instead of revenge. The Lord’s values promote peace in our hearts and among people in accordance with the purposes of God. We who are called by His name are to strive in obedience to God, then, by the help of Holy Spirit and in the Messiah Yeshua we will find a sense of joy and peace that no worldly rewards can match!

Rabbinic Commentary

The Rabbinic Commentary (Midrash) on *Tehillim / Psalms 32* has 4 parts. Reading through the Midrash we will be looking at Parts 1, 2, 3, and 4. Let's begin by outlining *Midrash Tehillim Chapter 32, Parts 1, 2, 3, and 4*.

Outline of Midrash Tehillim / Psalms, Chapter 32, Parts 1, 2, 3, and 4

Part 1

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*Of David, Maskil. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is pardoned (Tehillim / Psalms 32:1).*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*The Word maskil is to be considered in the light of the verse The way of life is above to the wise (maskil) (Mishley / Proverbs 15:24).*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis discuss David's words regarding the man who looks up to heaven.
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal) goes on to expand upon the man who looks up to heaven, the way of life is from above to the wise.
- The Concluding phrase says “*And how does one come to be a man whose sin is pardoned? By telling his evil deeds and acknowledging each to the Holy One blessed be He. So David said, I acknowledged my sin unto You, and my iniquity have I hid (Tehillim / Psalms 32:5).*”

Part 2

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord who does not regard iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile (Tehillim / Psalms 32:2).*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*Rabbi Jose son of Rabbi Judah said. When a man's repentance is so complete that his heart is torn within him, the Holy One blessed be He, forgives him.*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis discuss David's words regarding confessing one's sins before the Lord.
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal) goes on to expand upon David's words regarding confessing one's sins before the Lord and the length of time one is required to confess their sins before God.
- The Concluding phrase says “*Hence in saying These may be forgotten (Isaiah 49:15), Scripture means sins may be forgotten, and in saying Yet will I not forget you means that your good works will not be forgotten. Hence, David said, blessed is he whose transgression is pardoned.*”

Part 3

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*A further comment, Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord does not regard his iniquity (Tehillim / Psalms 32:2).*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*to be sure, that the man has done a good deed to offset the iniquity.*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis discuss David's words regarding whether a man has deceit or guile in his heart and praying before the Lord?
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal) goes on to expand

upon how deceit in one's heart led to the exile and shame.

- The Concluding phrase says “*But he that trusts in the Lord, mercy will compass him about. Rabbi Eleazar said in the name of rabbi Abba, Even the wicked who trusts in the Lord, him mercy compasses about.*”

Part 4

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, you righteous; and sin for joy, all you that are upright in heart (Tehillim / Psalms 32:11).*”
- The פתיחתא (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*Rabbi Berechiah taught in the name of rabbi Yudan, the righteous should say, In this verse, we are separated from the company of the upright; therefore, singing for joy is meant for the righteous also, for in the next Psalm it is said Sing for Joy in the Lord O you righteous (Tehillim / Psalms 33:1).*”
- The משל (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis discuss David's words regarding the righteous and rejoicing before the Lord.
- The נמשל (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the משל (mashal) goes on to expand upon the discussion of sin, the righteous, and rejoicing before the Lord.
- The Concluding phrase says “*Should it bring you to sin, take care to repent, and I will relieve you of your sin, as is said, I have made, and I will lift up; I Myself will carry, and will deliver you (Isaiah 46:4) from the punishment of Gehenna. Hence it is said Blessed is he whose transgression is lifted up, and whose sin is pardoned (Tehillim / Psalms 32:1).*”

Midrash Tehillim 32, Part 1 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying “*Of David, Maskil. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is pardoned (Tehillim / Psalms 32:1).*” The homiletic introduction to the Midrash says “*The Word maskil is to be considered in the light of the verse The way of life is above to the wise (maskil) (Mishley / Proverbs 15:24).*” The Midrash continues saying אורה חיים למעלה למעלה “*The way of life is above to the wise, to men who look up to heaven.*” The example that is given by the rabbis regarding the wise who look to heaven are the sons of Korach saying “*Thus, also to the eternal God, of the sons of Korach, Maskil (Tehillim / Psalms 44:1) means that when the sons of Korach looked up to heaven, they escaped.*” (וכן הוא אומר למנצח לבני קרח משכיל) It is interesting that they say the sons of Korach escaped and that they looked to heaven. Is this what is described in Parashat Korach (*Bamidbar / Numbers 16:1-18:32*)? The Torah describes a specific function to the Kohathites, namely care of the vessels and objects within the sanctuary, the Ark of the Covenant, the Menorah, the Table of the bread of the presence (*Bamidbar / Numbers 3:31-32*). According to *Joshua 21:20-26*, the Kohathites possessed several cities scattered throughout the geographic region in the Kingdom of Israel south of the Jezreel Valley, and in the region north of the Galilee.

Joshua 21:20-26

21:20 Then the cities from the tribe of Ephraim were allotted to the families of the sons of Kohath, the Levites, even to the rest of the sons of Kohath. 21:21 They gave them Shechem, the city of refuge for the manslayer, with its pasture lands, in the hill country of Ephraim, and Gezer with its pasture lands, 21:22 and Kibzaim with its pasture lands and Beth-horon with its pasture lands; four cities. 21:23 From the tribe of Dan, Elteke with its pasture lands, Gibbethon with its pasture lands, 21:24 Aijalon with its pasture lands, Gath-rimmon with its pasture lands; four cities. 21:25 From the half-tribe of Manasseh, they allotted Taanach with its pasture lands and Gath-rimmon with its pasture lands; two cities. 21:26 All the cities with their pasture lands for the families of the rest of the sons of Kohath were ten. (NASB)

What is interesting is that Not all of the sons of Korach died during the rebellion of Korach, Datan, and Aviram. The biblical text suggests that some from the family of Korach survived and were settled in the land of Israel. Because the Scriptures list the Kohathites as having land, the rabbis say “*As Scripture says, they looked above to Him, and were radiant; and their faces will never be confounded (Tehillim / Psalms 34:6). But their father who did not look up to heaven, and Datan and Aviram also, they went down alive into the pit, as is said, So they, and all that pertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them (Bamidbar / Numbers 16:33)*” A parallel is then drawn to David saying he looked to heaven, he escaped, and as a result David can say with confidence that the Lord brought his enemies down to the pit of destruction (*Tehillim / Psalms 55:24*). Another example is given in the midrash on “*he who raises his eyes to heaven,*” a parallel is drawn to Nebuchadnezzar who was driven from men because of his pride and arrogance.

Thus also, after Nebuchadnezzar was driven from the midst of men, you find that he said, I Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up my eyes unto heaven, and my understanding returned to me (Daniel 4:31). If even the wicked who deserve extermination but look to heaven, the Holy One, blessed be He, forthwith gives them pardon, how much more and more pardon, therefore, to Israel, children of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, if they look up to heaven. David said, I will look up to heaven, Of David, Maskil. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven (Tehillim / Psalms 32:1).

וכן אתה מוצא בנבוכדנאצר, דכתיב (אנא) [אנה] נבוכדנאצר עיני לשמיא נטלת (דניאל ד לא),
ומה הרשעים שהן חייבין כלייה, כיון שמסתכלין למעלה, מיד הקב"ה מוחל להן, לישראל שהן
בני אברהם יצחק ויעקב בזמן שמסתכלין למעלה על אחת כמה וכמה, אמר דוד אני אסתכל למע-
לה, שנאמר לדוד משכיל אשרי נשוי פשע

The rabbis say that even the wicked who deserve to die, if they look to heaven, the Lord will pardon them. They continue saying how much more will the Lord pardon the children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob if they too look to heaven. Midrash Tehillim 32, Part 1 concludes saying “*For he who looks up to heaven is one whose sin is pardoned, as it is said And David looked above (maskil), and the Lord was with him (1 Samuel 18:14); and also it is said, When Saul saw that he looked above (maskil), he stood in awe of him (1 Samuel 18:15). And how does one come to be a man whose sin is pardoned? By telling his evil deeds and acknowledging each to the Holy One blessed be He. So David said, I acknowledged my sin unto You, and my iniquity have I hid (Tehillim / Psalms 32:5).*” This is consistent with the Apostle John’s writing in his first Epistle, *1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (NASB)* The concluding point of the midrash is not living in deceit before the Lord in an attempt to hide our sins. The Apostle John speaks at length on this in his first Epistle.

1 John 1:8-2:6

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. (NASB)

If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and lie. If we confess our sins, the Lord will forgive us of our sins. And additionally, what is missing in the rabbinic commentary, if we do sin we have an Advocate with the Father, Yeshua the Messiah the righteous one. John speaks of the righteous one and then how we are to also live righteous lives. If we are to abide in Him, we are to walk in the same manner as He (Yeshua) walked (1 John 2:6).

Midrash Tehillim 32, Part 2 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying “*Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord who does not regard iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile (Tehillim / Psalms 32:2).*” The homiletic introduction to the Midrash states “*Rabbi Jose son of Rabbi Judah said. When a man’s repentance is so complete that his heart is torn within him, the Holy One blessed be He, forgives him.*” The rabbis continue saying the following:

Rabbi Eliezer son of Jacob said, The sins which a man confesses one year, he is forbidden to confess the next year; but if he repeats his sins, he must, of course, confess them again the next year. But if he does not repeat them, yet confesses them the next year, Scripture says of him As a dog returns to his vomit, so a fool repeats his folly (Mishley / Proverbs 26:11). But the rabbis said, The sins a man confesses one year, even though he does not repeat them, he should nonetheless confess again the next year, to fulfill the verse I acknowledge my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me (Tehillim / Psalms 51:5). (Midrash Tehillim 32, Part 2)

ר' אליעזר [בן יעקב] אומר עבירות שהתוודה עליהם שנה זו אסור להתוודות שנה אחרת, ואם חזר עליהן הרי הוא מתוודה עליהן שנה אחרת, [ואם לא חזר עליהן ומתוודה שנה אחרת], עליו הכתוב אומר ככלב שב אל קאו כסיל שונה באולתו (משלי כו יא). ורבנן אמרו עבירות שנתוודה עליהם שנה זו, אף על פי שלא חזר עליהן, צריך להתוודות עליהן שנה אחרת, לקיים מה שנאמר כי פשעי אני אדע וחטאתי נגדי תמיד (תהלים נא ה)

It is interesting what the rabbis reason regarding iniquity and the one whom the Lord does not find guile (רמיה). Rabbi Eliezer says that the sins one confesses one year, he is forbidden to confess the next year, however this is dependent upon whether he repents of the sin. Is it possible to confess a sin before the Lord and not be repentant? The rabbis say that though a man confesses on year, even if he does not repeat his sin, he should confess again the same sins the next year to fulfill the verse that speaks of our sins being ever before the Lord (Tehillim / Psalms 51:3). The Scriptures state specifically a person is to “*repent from his sin*” תשובה where the word תשובה “*Heshiv*” means “*to turn*” indicating that repentance consists also of a physical response (*action in one’s life*) to turn from sin and not simply showing remorse in the heart. Repentance is all encompassing going from our head to our feet. If repentance does not reach our feet then we will not turn from our evil ways which is the very nature of the word repentance (תשובה) to turn from the paths of unrighteousness to the path of righteousness that God wants for us. The Lord calls us to turn from the path of unrighteousness taking it upon ourselves to never do such a thing ever again; essentially, these scriptures show us that confession is a necessary part of Teshuvah (repentance) leading to salvation. The rabbinic mindset, according to Midrash Tehillim 32, Part 2, is that we are to be ever seeking the Lord for forgiveness of our sins, regardless of whether we have committed them and repented previously. We are to acknowledge our sins, which again is consistent with what the Apostle John says in his epistle 1 John 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. (NASB)*

According to the Torah we are told that we are to confess our sins before the Lord and repent. We are not to remain in sin, we are to strive against sin. We are called to live holy lives, to walk in righteousness

and justice towards others. *Bamidbar / Numbers 5:5-10* says the following:

Bamidbar / Numbers 5:5-10

5:5 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 5:6 ‘Speak to the sons of Israel, ‘When a man or woman commits any of the sins of mankind, acting unfaithfully against the Lord, and that person is guilty, 5:7 then he shall confess his sins which he has committed, and he shall make restitution in full for his wrong and add to it one-fifth of it, and give it to him whom he has wronged. 5:8 ‘But if the man has no relative to whom restitution may be made for the wrong, the restitution which is made for the wrong must go to the Lord for the priest, besides the ram of atonement, by which atonement is made for him. 5:9 ‘Also every contribution pertaining to all the holy gifts of the sons of Israel, which they offer to the priest, shall be his. 5:10 ‘So every man’s holy gifts shall be his; whatever any man gives to the priest, it becomes his.’ (NASB)

פרשת נשא ספר במדבר פרק ה פסוק ה-י

ה וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: ו דַּבֵּר אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אִישׁ או-אִשָּׁה כִּי יַעֲשׂוּ מִכָּל-חַטָּאת הָאֵדָם לְמַעַל מֵעַל בֵּיהוָה וְאָשָׁמָה הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַהוּא: ז וְהִתְוַדּוּ אֶת-חַטָּאתָם אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ וְהִשָּׁיב אֶת-אֲשָׁמוֹ בְּרֹאשׁוֹ וְחִמֵּיתוּ יוֹסֵף עָלָיו וְנָתַן לְאִשֶּׁר אָשָׁם לוֹ: ח וְאִם-אֵין לְאִישׁ גֹּאֵל לְהִשָּׁיב הָאָשָׁם אֵלָיו הָאָשָׁם הַמּוֹשֵׁב לִיהוָה לִפְהֶן מִלְּבַד אֵיל הַכִּפָּרִים אֲשֶׁר יִכְפֹּר-בוֹ עָלָיו: ט וְכָל-תְּרוּמָה לְכָל-קֹדֶשׁ בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר-יִקְרִיבוּ לִפְהֶן לוֹ יִהְיֶה: י וְאִישׁ אֶת-קֹדֶשׁוֹ לוֹ יִהְיֶה אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר-יִתֵּן לִפְהֶן לוֹ יִהְיֶה:

According to *Bamidbar / Numbers 5:5-10*, confession is a part of making restitution to the person that has been wronged. King David said in *Tehillim / Psalms 32:3* *When I kept silent about my sin, my body wasted away through my groaning all day long. 32:4 For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was drained away as with the fever heat of summer. Selah. 32:5 I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I did not hide; I said, ‘I will confess my transgressions to the Lord’; And You forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah. 32:6 Therefore, let everyone who is godly pray to You in a time when You may be found; Surely in a flood of great waters they will not reach him. (NASB)* David said that “when I kept silent, my “bones” (*בְּשָׂאֲגָתִי* *atsmay* *עֲצָמַי*) “*beshaagati*” “roared.” David is saying that deep within his body, sin was causing his bones to roar as the NASB translates “groan all day long.” The hand of the Lord was *tichbad* (*תִּחְבַּד*) heavy upon him day and night (32:4) indicating that the Lord was working in David leading him to repent from his sin. It is interesting to note that the word *tichbad* (*תִּחְבַּד*) is from the root word *כבד* meaning “heavy” the same root for the word “glory” (*כבוד*). Will the glory of God which rests upon us will be heavy on our lives and our souls if we sin? David says “*I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I did not hide; I said, ‘I will confess my transgressions (בְּשָׂאֲגָתִי) to the Lord’; And You forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah.*” (32:5) even the smallest sin needs to be confessed before the Lord. In the Torah in *Bamidbar / Numbers 5:7* we find that repentance (*וְהִשָּׁיב*) and confession work together. This is very similar to what the Apostle John said in *1 John 1:9* *ἔὰν ὁμολογῶμεν τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν, πιστὸς ἐστὶν καὶ δίκαιος ἵνα ἄφῃ ἡμῖν τὰς ἁμαρτίας καὶ καθαρῖση ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ πάσης ἀδικίας. 1:9 “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (NASB)* We find a consistent understanding of these verses from the Torah on repentance and confession in the Apostolic Writings when John the Baptist called Israel to immerse as a sign of repentance. Note that this is not something new to the Apostolic writings. Immersion comes right out of the Torah (*Vayikra / Leviticus 15:13*). Yeshua did not institute baptism as a sign of the covenant as what is taught in Catholicism. Baptism was and is simply a sign of repentance and faith. Note how John’s baptism was a baptism of repentance in the Jordan River “*Confessing their sins*” (*ἐξομολογούμενοι τὰς ἁμαρτίας*) according to *Mark 1:5* (“*And all the country of Judea was going out to him, and all the people of Jerusalem; and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.*”) Yeshua also said *ἄγω ὑμῖν ὅτι οὕτως χαρὰ ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ ἔσται ἐπὶ*

ἐνὶ ἀμαρτωλῷ μετανοοῦντι ἢ ἐπὶ ἐνενήκοντα ἐννέα δίκαιοις οἵτινες οὐ χρεῖαν ἔχουσιν μετανοίας. “*There will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.*” (Luke 15:7) These examples coupled with the rabbinic understanding on repentance from the midrash, we can conclude that through all of scripture, confession (ἐξομολογούμενοι) and repentance (μετανοίας, וְהִשִּׁיב) work together. This is a picture of our continually seeking the Lord for forgiveness of our sins, seeking His righteousness and seeking to live in justice towards others on a daily basis.

In the remainder of Midrash Tehillim 32, Part 2, the rabbis say the following:

And what does rabbi Eliezer make of the words my sin is ever before me, which are cited by the Rabbis? They mean, he says, that a man should hold his sins ever before him, but that he need not keep speaking of them. Rabbi Phinchas said in the name of rabbi Abba son of Papa, when you say you have nothing new to confess, boasting that this year you have no sins, you disdain the command of your Maker stilled by the lying lips which to the Righteous One in pride and with disdain speak of old sins (Tehillim / Psalms 31:19). Rabbi Huna taught in the name of Rabbi Abbahu that God said to Israel, for your sake, I wrote to Myself that I am one who forgets, if such a thing is conceivable, for I am A God that pardones iniquity, and passes by transgression (Micah 7:18), I forget iniquity and transgression. Hence in saying These may be forgotten (Isaiah 49:15), Scripture means sins may be forgotten, and in saying Yet will I not forget you means that your good works will not be forgotten. Hence, David said, blessed is he whose transgression is pardoned. (Midrash Tehillim 32, Part 2)

[ומה עביד ר' אליעזר לההיא דרבנן וחסטאתי נגדי תמיד], שיהיו כנגד דעתו אבל אינו מזכירן בפיו. אמר ר' פנחס הכהן בשם ר' אבא בר פפא על ידי שאין לך מן החדש, אתה מבזה על דיבור קונך, שאמר תאלמנה שפתי שקר הדוברות על צדיק עתק בגאווה ובוז (שם תהלים לא יט), שאתה מתגאה שאין לך עונות של שנה זו. אמר ר' הונא בשם ר' אבהו בשביל כבודך כתבתי על עצמי כביכול שאני שכחן, שנאמר מי אל כמוך נושא עון ועובר על פשע (מיכה ז יח), דאינשי חובין, וכן הוא אומר גם אלה תשכחנה (ישעיה מט טו), אלו העונות, ואנכי לא אשכחך (שם שם ישעיהו מ"ט), אלו המצות, לכך אמר אשרי נשוי פשע.

The rabbis cite the Scripture that one's sin is ever before the Lord and say that the interpretation is: “*that a man should hold his sins ever before him, but that he need not keep speaking of them.*” This means that the one who has nothing to confess, if he boasts that he has no sins, he has disdain for the command of God and he is found a liar. (Note the Apostle John's comments in *1 John 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. NASB*) In addition to this, studying the seven churches of *Revelation 2-3*, we have find that all have one thing in common: the need to overcome. Note that some are receive more chastening and harsher criticism than others, yet Christ admonishes even the “*best*” or “*least criticized*” to overcome. This suggests that all these churches fall short of God's standard of holiness. All lack a certain amount of faith, hope, love, obedience, dedication, and responsiveness, all seem to still produce the works of the flesh, man's carnal nature and selfishness. These are examples of the necessity of always seeking the Lord each day because we all fall short of His glory and perfection. According to the Psalms, David says the Lord forgets our sins in *Tehillim / Psalms 103:12* יב כְּרַחֵק מִזֶּרֶחַ מִמְעַרְבֵי הָרְחִיק מִמְּנוֹ: “*As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.*” (NASB) On the other hand, the Rabbis use this verse to say that our sin is always before the Lord. Why do the rabbis use this verse to say that our sin is always before the Lord? The rabbis seem to be making an antithetical contrast between “*sin*” and “*good works,*” saying “*Hence in saying These may be forgotten (Isaiah 49:15), Scripture means sins may be forgotten, and in saying Yet will I not forget you means that your good works will not be forgotten. Hence, David said, blessed is he whose transgression is pardoned.*” They seem to setup a counter-proposition and denote a direct contrast to the original proposition of sin being before the

Lord forever, whereas, our sins are forgiven and forgotten, and our works of righteousness (good works) are before the Lord forever. The point of the midrash seems to be drawn out in setting up the opposition, the rabbis bring out the contrast in the meaning that we will not to be forever sinning, there are times when we do not sin and yet we are to continue to seek the Lord and to do what is good. The good news is that we are not destined to sin, we have been made free from sin by the power of the Holy Spirit and because of Yeshua the Messiah our Savior. The Apostle John said in *1 John 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.* (NASB) The Apostle John appears to be on a similar thought process regarding sin, forgiveness, and obedience to the word of the Lord.

Midrash Tehillim 32, Part 3 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying “A further comment, Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord does not regard his iniquity (Tehillim / Psalms 32:2).” The homiletic introduction to the Midrash says “to be sure, that the man has done a good deed to offset the iniquity.” Remember that the Aramaic Targum translates the Masoretic text to say, ב טב למשה בר עמרם, “טובוהיה דבר נשאלדלא חשיב יהוה ליה עויין בדיל דלא הות ברוחיה נכלא: ג מטול ארוםדשתקית מן פתגמי אורייתא בליין גרמיי בנהמותי כולא יומא: ד ארום יימם וליילי תקיפת תוקפךעלי מחתך איתהפיך רוטבי היך 32:2 How happy was Moses, son of Amram, to whom the Lord did not reckon his sins, because there was no guile in his spirit. 32:3 Because I have been silent from the words of Torah, my bones waste away while I groan all day. 32:4 Because day and night your punishment is severe upon me, my moisture is turned to, as it were, the hot wind of summer forever. (EMC) The rabbis parallel these verses to Moshe whom the Lord did not impute his sins against him. They say there is no guile (נכלא) in his soul and this was the reason the Lord did not hold his sins against him. Note the word “guile” is defined as “n. deceit, duplicity; fraud, cunning; trickery,” so Moshe did not treat others or God with deception. The rabbis also say that it was because David was silent from the words of the Torah that his bones wasted away and groaned all day. In the midrash, the rabbis say “And in whose spirit there is no guile, that is, he must be a man whose prayer is not deceitful, a man whose study of Torah is not deceitful.” The rabbis suggest that it is possible to study the Torah with deceit. Do you think is it possible to study the Torah with deceit? This comment from the rabbis seems to come directly from the translation of the Aramaic Targum (*Pseudo Jonathan*) shown above. Can you think of any biblical examples where someone had studied the Torah for the purpose of deceit? Is it possible to study the bible and deceive ourselves? How about those who feel that God and His word are something to be used verses those who believe God and His Word are to be submitted to. Consider those people who argue theology and make it a point of their lives to argue theology (I am right and you are wrong) rather than seeking the Lord God Almighty? Is theology the same was the Word of God? Consider now the biblical character from David’s life, Adonijah, he originally wanted to become king instead of Solomon David’s son. According to the Scriptures, Adonijah was Solomon’s older brother and he asked for Abishag the Shunammite as wife (see *1 Kings*) . According to *1 Kings 1*, she was the virgin that laid with King David to keep him warm because of his old age, she was very beautiful. Adonijah was planning to use her to get closer to the throne. Solomon recognized Adonijah’s plan and he said that his request was his death warrant. As a result of this, according to *1 Kings 1:50* we read *1:50 And Adonijah was afraid of Solomon, and he arose, went and took hold of the horns of the altar.* (NASB) We know, according to the Scriptures, that Adonijah was not a godly man, he had no use for God or the Scriptures, however, when he

needed to save his life, he run to the Tabernacle and grabbed hold of the horns of the altar so as to save his life. If someone run to the Tabernacle and grabbed hold of the horns on the altar there would have been a need to have a trial and determination of what was going on. In these Scriptures, Adonijah was utilizing the Lord and His Word with deceit, by cunning or trickery, the sole purpose was to save his life. Today do we see God as someone to be used to get things rather than to be submitted to? Do you hold God hostage to His word, hostage to His promises, or to the things we may think the Scriptures are saying, is this you? God's Word is something to be submitted to, we are to submit to the authority of the Lord God Almighty and to His Word, and according to the Apostolic Writings we are to submit to Yeshua the Messiah also.

Studying the seven churches according to *Revelation 2-3*, it is interesting that all the churches have one thing in common, *"the need to overcome."* John's vision of the *"ekklesion"* seems to categorize the believers into separate groups, each are found doing more or less of what the Lord wants them to do. *Revelation 2-3* suggests that all these churches fall short of God's standard of holiness. All lack faith, hope, love, obedience, dedication, and responsiveness, among other aspects of who they should be as the children of God. All of these people still produce the works of the flesh and selfishness. Note how all of these are connected, we have faith, hope, and love for the Messiah Yeshua, and this is why we dedicate our lives to Him, we are responsive to Him, and obedient to God's Word. The flesh on the other hand does not want to be obedient, dedicated, or responsive to the Word of God. Because of the desires of the flesh, for some, God's Word becomes something that is casually read while life goes on as usual. Is this a form of self deception like the rabbis are saying in the midrash, studying Torah with or without deceit? Considering *"Torah"* as a reference to all of Scripture, is it possible to read the Scriptures to make us feel like we have accomplished something (feel better about ourselves) and then go and do nothing physically, such as acts of repentance? According to these Scriptures regarding the churches in *Revelation 2-3*, the Apostle James in his epistle, and others, faith requires action. If we study God's Word and do not put our faith into action, what can we say about our faith, hope, love, obedience, dedication, and responsiveness as a child of God?

Midrash Tehillim 32, Part 4 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying *"Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, you righteous; and sin for joy, all you that are upright in heart (Tehillim / Psalms 32:11)."* The homiletic introduction to the Midrash says *"Rabbi Berechiah taught in the name of rabbi Yudan, the righteous should say, In this verse, we are separated from the company of the upright; therefore, singing for joy is meant for the righteous also, for in the next Psalm it is said Sing for Joy in the Lord O you righteous (Tehillim / Psalms 33:1)."* The remainder of the midrash says the following:

Rabbi Judah son of rabbi Simon taught that the Holy One blessed be He, said Within your body are two hundred and forty eight precepts. If you keep the Torah, I will keep your body, as it is said, He keeps all his bones, not one of these precepts is broken (Tehillim / Psalms 34:21). Rabbi Eliezer son of Jacob taught in the name of rabbi Phinehas son of Jair that the Holy One blessed be He said, I made the inclination to evil. Watch that it bring you not to sin. Should it bring you to sin, take care to repent, and I will relieve you of your sin, as is said, I have made, and I will lift up; I Myself will carry, and will deliver you (Isaiah 46:4) from the punishment of Gehenna. Hence it is said Blessed is he whose transgression is lifted up, and whose sin is pardoned (Tehillim / Psalms 32:1). (Midrash Tehillim 32, Part 4)

אמר ר' יהודה בר' סימון אמר הקב"ה, רמ"ח איברים יש בכך, ורמ"ח מצות עשה יש בתורה, אם קיימת את התורה אני מקיים את גופך, שנאמר שומר כל עצמותיו אחת מהנה לא נשברה (שם תהלים לד כא). אמר ר' אליעזר [בר יעקב] בשם ר' פנחס בן יאיר אמר הקב"ה אני עשיתי את יצר הרע, הזהר שלא יחטיאך, משהחטיאך הוי זהיר לעשות תשובה, ואז אשא עונך, שנאמר אני עשיתי ואני אשא ואני אסבול ואמלט (ישעיהו מו ד), מדין של גיהנם, לכך נאמר אשרי נשוי פשע כסוי חטאה.

It is interesting the midrash states, *"Rabbi Judah son of rabbi Simon taught that the Holy One blessed be*

He, said Within your body are two hundred and forty eight precepts. If you keep the Torah, I will keep your body, as it is said, He keeps all his bones, not one of these precepts is broken (Tehillim / Psalms 34:21)." According to the *Talmud Bavli Makkot 23b-24a*, Rabbi Simlai says "Six hundred and thirteen precepts were communicated to Moshe, three hundred and sixty five negative precepts corresponding to the number of solar days in the year, and two hundred and forty eight positive precepts, corresponding to the number of the members of man's body." **מכות דף כג.ב** דרש רבי שמלאי: שש מאות ושלוש עשרה מצות נאמרו לו למשה, (שלוש מאות וששים וחמש לאוין כמנין ימות החמה, ומאתים וארבעים ושמונה עשה כנגד איבריו של אדם. אמר רב שלש מאות וששים וחמש לאוין כמנין ימות החמה, ומאתים וארבעים ושמונה עשה כנגד איבריו של אדם. אמר רב According to rabbinic Judaism, the rabbis sought to determine the exact number of commandments found in the Torah. The interesting observation regarding the midrash is the comment on the 240 precepts is consistent with the rabbis in the *Talmud Bavli Makkot 23b*, that these precepts are the positive precepts from the Torah which are paralleled to the human body. The rabbis continue saying that "If you keep the Torah, I will keep your body, as it is said, He keeps all his bones, not one of these precepts is broken (Tehillim / Psalms 34:21)." If one does not obey the Lord (disobedience) one sins. According to the Rabbis, if we do not keep the Torah, the Lord will not keep our bodies. Do you think that some sicknesses come as a result of living a disobedient life? Today, many believers disconnect sickness from sin and do not consider the possibility that some sicknesses are the result of the Lord working to bring humbleness into one's life. One way to think about this would be that it is the Lord who holds back illness that results from the fall of Adam (the corruption of the body). According to *John 9:1-3*, we read "As he passed by, he saw a man blind from birth. And his disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?' Jesus answered, 'It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.'" The point of *John 9:1-3* is that it is difficult to judge whether sickness is the result of sin or continual (habitual) sin. We are in the position as the children of God to seek the Lord, to have hope in the Lord God Almighty and His Messiah Yeshua, to love God and others, to live in obedience to His Word, to dedicate our lives to Him, and to be responsive to His calling in our lives which is connected to being obedient to His Word. We should be constantly judging ourselves, our lives, the path that we walk, whether it is in righteousness or unrighteousness.

Midrash Tehillim 32, Part 4, concludes saying "Rabbi Eliezer son of Jacob taught in the name of rabbi Phinehas son of Jair that the Holy One blessed be He said, I made the inclination to evil. Watch that it bring you not to sin. Should it bring you to sin, take care to repent, and I will relieve you of your sin, as is said, I have made, and I will lift up; I Myself will carry, and will deliver you (Isaiah 46:4) from the punishment of Gehenna (Hell). Hence it is said Blessed is he whose transgression is lifted up, and whose sin is pardoned (Tehillim / Psalms 32:1)." This is a fair warning which is supported by the Scriptures, our sinful desires can and do draw us away and entice us to sin. Note how closely the Apostle John writes as compared to the rabbis in *1 John 2:1-4*, which says 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; (NASB) Praise the Lord that we have an advocate before the Father who according to His righteousness we are saved and receive the forgiveness of sins. Note that this does not exclude us from having to repent. Note also that the Torah was not given so we could "earn" our salvation, the Lord gave us his instructions to live righteous and holy lives because He has made us to be Holy and Righteous in Christ, therefore we who are in Christ are not excluded from having to live holy and righteous lives. Can you see the significance of these things and how the Scriptures reveals the kind of lives we are to live in the Messiah? Let's Pray!

Heavenly Father,

Help us to live holy and righteous lives so that in the way we live our lives we can bring glory and honor to Your name. Help us to have a desire to study Your Word so that we can know You better and understand Your ways and the glory of Your name. Help us to serve You more and be more focused upon our relationship with You and with others rather than just ourselves. We Thank You Lord for giving us Your Word to teach us Your ways, and for revealing the truth of Your Word in the Messiah Yeshua. Thank You for sending Your son Yeshua that we may enter into the salvation You have provided. Thank You Lord for paying the covenant price for the forgiveness of our sins. Lord restore to us the joy of Your salvation. Help us to dedicated our lives to You each day, fill us with Your presence Lord each day. 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