

Tehillim / Psalms 114 | ספר תהילים קיד

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Do not be a People of Strange Language

א בְּצֵאת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם, 114:1 When Israel went forth from Egypt, The house of Jacob from a people of strange language (NASB) Israel being taken out of Egypt is described as being taken from a people of strange language. What does it mean that the Egyptian language is strange? The Psalm continues saying, ב הִיְתָה, 114:2 Judah became His sanctuary, Israel, His dominion. (NASB) The Aramaic Targum states, ב הוות כנישתא דבית יהודה אחידא, 114:1 When Israel came out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from barbarian peoples 114:2 The company of the house of Judah became property of his Holy One, Israel of his rulers. (EMC) The strange language is described by the rabbis as being taking from a barbarian people. The psalm continues saying, ג הַיָּם רָאָה וַיָּנֹס הַיַּרְדֵּן יֹסֵב לְאַחֹר: ד הַהָרִים רָקְדוּ כְּאֵילִים גְּבָעוֹת פְּבַנְי-צֹאן: ה מֶה-לָּךְ הַיָּם, 114:3 The sea looked and fled; The Jordan turned back. 114:4 The mountains skipped like rams, The hills, like lambs. 114:5 What ails you, O sea, that you flee? O Jordan, that you turn back? 114:6 O mountains, that you skip like rams? O hills, like lambs? (NASB) The Aramaic Targum reveals more saying the following, ג כד איתגלי מימרא דיי על ימא, ימא אסתכל חמא ואפך יורדנא חזר לאחור: ד במיתן אוריתא לעמיה טוריא טפזו היך דכרין גילמתא היך בנין דען: ה אמר אלהא מה לך ימא ארום תאפין יורדנא תחזור לאחור: ו טוריא טפזו מטפזין היך דכרין גילמתא היך בנין דען: 114:3 When the word of the Lord was revealed at the sea, the sea looked and retreated; the Jordan turned around. 114:4 When the Torah was given to his people, the mountains leapt like rams, the hills like offspring of the flock. 114:5 God said, "What is the matter, O sea, for you are retreating? O Jordan, that you are turning around?" 114:6 O mountains, leaping about like rams? O hills, like offspring of the flock? (EMC) It was the word of the Lord that caused the oceans to divide and the mountains to skip. The Psalm concludes saying, ז מִלִּפְנֵי אֲדוֹן חוּלֵי אֶרֶץ מִלִּפְנֵי אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב: ח הַהֶפְכִי הַצּוּר אֲגָם-מַיִם הַקְלְמִישׁ לְמַעַיְנוּ-מַיִם: 114:7 Tremble, O earth, before the Lord, Before the God of Jacob, 114:8 Who turned the rock into a pool of water, The flint into a fountain of water. (NASB) The Lord is capable of doing anything, and therefore He should be feared while realizing He is merciful, holy, righteous, and just.

עברית	Hebrew	ארמי	Aramaic	ελληνικός	Greek
ספר תהלים פרק קיד	ספר תהלים פרק קיד	ספר טוביה פרק קיד	ספר טוביה פרק קיד	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 114	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 114
א בְּצֵאת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם בֵּית יַעֲקֹב מֵעַם לְעֹז: ב הִיְתָה יְהוּדָה לְקַדְשׁוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמְשֻׁלֹתָיו: ג הַיָּם רָאָה וַיָּנֹס הַיַּרְדֵּן יֹסֵב לְאַחֹר: ד הַהָרִים רָקְדוּ כְּאֵילִים גְּבָעוֹת פְּבַנְי-צֹאן:	א בְּצֵאת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם בֵּית יַעֲקֹב מֵעַם לְעֹז: ב הִיְתָה יְהוּדָה לְקַדְשׁוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמְשֻׁלֹתָיו: ג הַיָּם רָאָה וַיָּנֹס הַיַּרְדֵּן יֹסֵב לְאַחֹר: ד הַהָרִים רָקְדוּ כְּאֵילִים גְּבָעוֹת פְּבַנְי-צֹאן:	א במיפק ישראל ממצרים בית יעקב מעמי ברבראי: ב הוות כנישתא דבית יהודה אחידא לק-דישיה לקודשיה ישראל לשלי-טוי: ג כד איתגלי מימרא דיי על ימא אסתכל חמא ואפך יורדנא חזר לאחור: ד במיתן אוריתא לעמיה טוריא טפזו היך דכרין גילמתא היך בנין דען:	א במיפק ישראל ממצרים בית יעקב מעמי ברבראי: ב הוות כנישתא דבית יהודה אחידא לק-דישיה לקודשיה ישראל לשלי-טוי: ג כד איתגלי מימרא דיי על ימא אסתכל חמא ואפך יורדנא חזר לאחור: ד במיתן אוריתא לעמיה טוריא טפזו היך דכרין גילמתא היך בנין דען:	114:1 αλληλουια ἐν ἐξόδῳ Ἰσραὴλ ἐξ Αἰγύπτου οἴκου Ἰακωβ ἐκ λαοῦ βαρβάρου 114:2 ἐγενήθη Ἰουδαία ἅγιασμα αὐτοῦ Ἰσραὴλ ἐξουσία αὐτοῦ 114:3 ἡ θάλασσα εἶδεν καὶ ἔφυγεν ὁ Ἰορδάνης ἐστράφη εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω 114:4 τὰ ὄρη ἐσκίρτησαν ὡσεὶ κριοὶ καὶ οἱ βουνοὶ ὡς ἀρνία προβάτων	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 114 114:1 αλληλουια ἐν ἐξόδῳ Ἰσραὴλ ἐξ Αἰγύπτου οἴκου Ἰακωβ ἐκ λαοῦ βαρβάρου 114:2 ἐγενήθη Ἰουδαία ἅγιασμα αὐτοῦ Ἰσραὴλ ἐξουσία αὐτοῦ 114:3 ἡ θάλασσα εἶδεν καὶ ἔφυγεν ὁ Ἰορδάνης ἐστράφη εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω 114:4 τὰ ὄρη ἐσκίρτησαν ὡσεὶ κριοὶ καὶ οἱ βουνοὶ ὡς ἀρνία προβάτων

<p>ה מה-לך הים פי תנוס הירדן תסב לאחור: ו הקרים תרקדו כאילים גבעות פכני-צאן: ז מל- פני אדון חולי ארץ מלפני אלוה יעקב: ח ההפכי הצור אגם-מים תלמיש למענינו-מים:</p>	<p>ה אמר אלהא מה לך ימא ארום תא- פיך יורדנא תחזור לאחורא: ו טוריא טפוז מטפזין היך דכרין גילמתא היך בנין דען: ז מן קדם קיריס אתחלחלי ארעא מן קדם אלהא דיעקב: ח דה- פיך טינרא לאריתא דמיא שמיר לעיין לעינון דמיין:</p>	<p>114:5 τί σοί ἐστὶν θάλασσα ὅτι ἔφυγες καὶ σοί Ἰορδάνη ὅτι ἀνεχώρησας εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω 114:6 τὰ ὄρη ὅτι ἐσκιρτήσατε ὡσεὶ κριοὶ καὶ οἱ βουνοὶ ὡς ἀρνία προβάτων 114:7 ἀπὸ προσώπου κυρίου ἐσαλεύθη ἡ γῆ ἀπὸ προσώπου τοῦ θεοῦ Ἰακωβ 114:8 τοῦ στρέψαντος τὴν πέτραν εἰς λίμνας ὑδάτων καὶ τὴν ἀκρότομον εἰς πηγὰς ὑδάτων</p>
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<p>Tehillim Psalms 114 114:1 When Israel went forth from Egypt, The house of Jacob from a people of strange language, 114:2 Judah became His sanctuary, Israel, His dominion. 114:3 The sea looked and fled; The Jordan turned back. 114:4 The mountains skipped like rams, The hills, like lambs. 114:5 What ails you, O sea, that you flee? O Jordan, that you turn back? 114:6 O mountains, that you skip like rams? O hills, like lambs? 114:7 Tremble, O earth, before the Lord, Before the God of Jacob, 114:8 Who turned the rock into a pool of water, The flint into a fountain of water. (NASB)</p>	<p>Toviyah Psalms 114 114:1 When Israel came out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from barbarian peoples 114:2 The company of the house of Judah became property of his Holy One, Israel of his rulers. 114:3 When the word of the Lord was revealed at the sea, the sea looked and retreated; the Jordan turned around. 114:4 When the Torah was given to his people, the mountains leapt like rams, the hills like offspring of the flock. 114:5 God said, "What is the matter, O sea, for you are retreating? O Jordan, that you are turning around?" 114:6 O mountains, leaping about like rams? O hills, like offspring of the flock? 114:7 In the presence of the lord, dance, O earth, in the presence of the God of Jacob. 114:8 Who turns the flint into a channel of water, the adamant to springs of water. (EMC)</p>	<p>Psalmoi Psalms 114 Alleluia. 114:1 At the going forth of Israel from Egypt, of the house of Jacob from a barbarous people, 114:2 Judea became his sanctuary, and Israel his dominion. 114:3 The sea saw and fled: Jordan was turned back. 114:4 The mountains skipped like rams, and the hills like lambs. 114:5 What ailed thee, O sea, that thou fleddest? and thou Jordan, that thou wast turned back? 114:6 Ye mountains, that ye skipped like rams, and ye hills, like lambs? 114:7 The earth trembled at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob; 114:8 who turned the rock into pools of water, and the flint into fountains of water. (LXX)</p>
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In this week's study from *Tehillim / Psalms 114:1-8*, the psalm opens saying, אֲבָצְאָת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם, 114:1 *When Israel went forth from Egypt, The house of Jacob from a people of strange language (NASB)* Israel being taken out of Egypt is described as being taken from a people of strange language. What does it mean that the Egyptian language is strange? The earliest known complete written sentence in the Egyptian language has been dated to about 2690 BCE, making it one of the oldest recorded languages known, along with Sumerian. (Allen, James P., 2013-07-11, *The Ancient Egyptian Language: An Historical Study*. Cambridge University Press. p. 2. ISBN 9781107032460) The Egyptian language was spoken until the late seventeenth century in the form of Coptic. The national language of modern Egypt today is Egyptian Arabic, which gradually replaced Coptic as the language of daily life in the centuries after the Muslim conquest of Egypt. The Coptic language is still used as the liturgical language of the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria. It has several hundred fluent speakers today.

The concept of a strange and obscure language reminds us of *Ezekiel 3:1-7*.

Ezekiel 3:1-7

3:1 Then He said to me, 'Son of man, eat what you find; eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel.' 3:2 So I opened my mouth, and He fed me this scroll. 3:3 He said to me, 'Son of man, feed your stomach and fill your body with this scroll which I am giving you.' Then I ate it, and it was sweet as honey in my mouth. 3:4 Then He said to me, 'Son of man, go to the house of Israel and speak with My words to them. 3:5 'For you are not being sent to a people of unintelligible speech or difficult language, but to the house of Israel, 3:6 nor to many peoples of unintelligible speech or difficult language, whose words you cannot understand. But I have sent you to them who should listen to you; 3:7 yet the house of Israel will not be willing to listen to you, since they are not willing to listen to Me. Surely the whole house of Israel is stubborn and obstinate. (NASB)

Here in Ezekiel, the Lord instructs Ezekiel to eat a scroll that had been given him. He is then to take the Words of God to the people of Israel. Consuming the scroll suggests that Ezekiel is internalizing God's word and making it a part of his life. The Lord then tells Ezekiel that he is not being sent to a people of obscure or difficult language but to the house of the people of Israel. They will understand Ezekiel's words but they will not listen because they are stubborn and obstinate. The idea is that though they understand what he will say, they will behave as if they do not understand because of their unwillingness to obey God's Word. The context is if Ezekiel had gone to a strange people, they would not listen either because they do not understand the way in which Ezekiel is speaking, which is directly related to walking in the ways of God. In Stephen's Address to the Sanhedrin, he said the following, *Acts 7:5 He gave him no inheritance here, not even a foot of ground. But God promised to give possession of the land to Abraham and his descendants, even though he did not yet have a child. 7:6 God told him that his descendants would be foreigners in a strange land, and they would be enslaved and mistreated four hundred years. 7:7 'But I will punish the nation that enslaves them,' God said, 'and afterward they will come forth and worship Me in this place.'* (NASB) Notice how being a foreigner in a strange land is paralleled to being enslaved and mistreated. The idea contained within the Psalm which states, אֲבָצְאָת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּצְרַיִם בֵּית יַעֲקֹב מֵעַם לֵעֲזָ: 114:1 *When Israel went forth from Egypt, The house of Jacob from a people of strange language (NASB)* is that the people of the foreign land would not know God's ways and consequentially would enslave the people who had originally helped them (i.e. Joseph). *Isaiah 55:7-9* states the following:

Isaiah 55:7-9

55:7 Let the wicked forsake his way And the unrighteous man his thoughts; And let him return to the LORD, And He will have compassion on him, And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon. 55:8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. 55:9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways

ז יַעֲזֹב רָשָׁע דַּרְכּוֹ וְאִישׁ אֶן מִחֲשַׁבְתּוֹ וְיָשֻׁב אֶל-יְהוָה וִירְחַמֵּהוּ וְאֶל-אַלְהֵינוּ כִּי-יִרְפָּה לְסִלּוּחַ: ה כִּי לֹא מִחֲשַׁבּוֹתַי מִחֲשַׁבּוֹ-תֵיכֶם וְלֹא דַרְכֵיכֶם דַּרְכֵי נְאֻם יְהוָה: ט כִּי-גָבַהּ שָׁמַיִם מֵאָרֶץ כִּן גָּבַהּ דַּרְכֵי מִדְרָכֵיכֶם וּמִחֲשַׁבְתֵּי (מִמִּחֲשַׁבְתֵּיכֶם):

The Lord desires for the wicked man to forsake not only his ways but his thoughts also. The concept here is *“the wicked is to forsake his ways and the man of sin his thoughts,”* and then *“return/turn to the Lord,”* to perform Teshuvah in repentance for the Lord is merciful (וִירְחַמֵּהוּ). Rambam describes repentance in the following way.

Mishneh Torah, Repentance 2:2

What is teshuvah? It is when a person abandons the sin that he sinned and removes it from his thoughts and commits in his heart that he will not do it again, as it says, The wicked should abandon his path etc. (Isaiah 55:7). And also that he regrets sinning, as it says, After I returned I regretted (Jeremiah 31:18). And the One Who Knows Hidden Things testifies about him that he will never return to this sin, as it says, And we will no longer call the work of our hands “god” etc. (Hosea 14:4). And he must confess verbally and say these things that he has committed in his heart.

Notice how Rambam defines Teshuvah as when the person confesses his sin, removes sinful thoughts from his heart, and commits his heart to not sin any further. This is the major premise of what one was to do when bringing a sacrifice before the Lord at the Tabernacle and the laying on of the hands on the head of the animal. According to *Vayikra / Leviticus 1:4-5* we read the following, *ד וְסָמַךְ יָדוֹ עַל רֹאשׁ הָעֹלָה וְנִרְצָה לוֹ לְכַפֵּר עָלָיו: ה וְשָׁחַט אֶת-בֶּן הַבָּקָר לְפָנֵי יְהוָה וְהִקְרִיבוּ בְנֵי אֹהֶלן הַכֹּהֲנִים אֶת-הַדָּם וְזָרְקוּ אֶת-הַדָּם עַל-הַמִּזְבֵּחַ סָבִיב* *1:4 ‘He shall lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, that it may be accepted for him to make atonement on his behalf. 1:5 ‘He shall slay the young bull before the Lord; and Aaron’s sons the priests shall offer up the blood and sprinkle the blood around on the altar that is at the doorway of the tent of meeting. (NASB)* We receive atonement for sin through blood and we trust in the anointed priest to do this on our behalf. Notice how Rambam states *“And we will no longer call the work of our hands “god” etc. (Hosea 14:4).”* This suggests that sin becomes a god in one’s life. The idea is that the Lord will help to break down the idol that has been established in the heart due to sin. Rambam says *“he must confess verbally and say these things that he has committed in his heart.”* This drives home the point that the Lord wants for us to outwardly show what has taken place on the inside in the deliverance from sin.

Mishneh Torah, Repentance 2:3

Anyone who confesses verbally and does not commit in his heart to abandon [sin], this is like a person who immerses [in a purity pool] while holding an unclean creature in his hand, so that the bath is not effective until he sends away the unclean creature, and so it says, One who admits and abandons is given mercy (Proverbs 28:13). And he must specify the sin, as it says, This nation has sinned a great sin and made a golden god for themselves (Exodus 32:31).

Rambam continues in his definition with an analogy to the mikvah. The mikvah, which was later shown to be baptism in the sense that John performed on the people in the Jordan river according to the Gospels, was performed in order to cleanse one of uncleanness. This was performed as a part of the Teshuvah process as Rambam states, *“Anyone who confesses verbally and does not commit in his heart to abandon [sin], this is like a person who immerses [in a purity pool] while holding an unclean creature in his hand, so that the bath is not effective until he sends away the unclean creature.”* The concept here is in the connection of the inward with the outward. This is similar to the spiritual counterparts that are part of the sacrificial ritual,

that one repents, lays his hand upon the head of the animal, confesses his sins, and the animal is slaughtered and the blood is spread around the altar. (*Vayikra / Leviticus 1:4-5*) Rashbam continues in his definition on Repentance (Teshuvah) saying the following:

Mishneh Torah, Repentance 7:3

Do not say that there is only teshuvah for sins that have an action, such as fornication, robbery, and theft; rather, just as a person must do teshuvah for these, so too he must search out his bad character traits, and do teshuvah for anger, hatred, jealousy, laziness, pursuit of money and honor, gluttony, and so on. A person must return in teshuvah from all of these. And these sins are harder than those which have an action, because once a person is immersed in them it is difficult for him to break free from them. Thus the verse says, Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts (Isaiah 55:7).

Teshuvah involves both the physical sins and those that are involved in the heart. We understand this based upon *Isaiah 55:7*, יַעֲזֹב רָשָׁע דְרָכָו וְאִישׁ אֶנּוּן מִחֻשְׁבֹתָיו, “the wicked is to forsake his ways and the man of sin his thoughts,” and then he is to יָשֻׁב אֶל-יְהוָה “return/turn to the Lord.” The Gospel Message that is related to the Torah is in regards to our turning from sin, being delivered from the sin in our lives, being transformed from the inside out, being set free from bondage, and the Lord God empowering us to do so by His Spirit, through faith in His Messiah Yeshua.

The Psalm continues saying, ב הִיְתָה יְהוּדָה לְקִדְשׁוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמְשֻׁלֹתָיו: *Judah became His sanctuary, Israel, His dominion. (NASB)* The Aramaic Targum states, א במיפק ישראל ממצרים בית יעקב מעמי, *When Israel came out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from barbarian peoples* 114:1 ברבראי: ב הוות כנישתא דבית יהודה אחידא לקדישיה לקודשיה ישראל לשליטוי: *The company of the house of Judah became property of his Holy One, Israel of his rulers. (EMC)* The strange language is described by the rabbis as being taking from a barbarian people, a people with no rule of law in their lives. The Lord God of Israel knows that for a nation to be prosperous and free, this is only possible when each individual is governed by a rule of law that is coupled with ethics and morality. When this rule is weakened (*i.e. when theologies are developed causing the Torah to become non-applicable to one’s life, etc.*) then society becomes a nation of barbarians which have no use for any rules or laws that they perceive to get in their way. This idea of a barbarian people, is in the sense of not having the Torah, and not conforming our lives to God’s ways, which essentially causes one to develop a fantasy world, and the desire to force one’s imaginary concept of how the world should be upon others (*i.e. LGBT movement*). When the rules of civil society are tossed aside, brutality, plunder, and tyranny enter into the picture, and this was demonstrated very well in the President Trump election 2017 where the “left” went crazy destroying property and violating the law because of what they perceived as an unjust election. Such an outcome is nothing less than the individual doing things the way he pleases having no rule of law in his or her life except what he decides is right or wrong. The Torah causes us to take ownership of our sins and to confess them, to turn from them, and to lead us back to God’s ways and His Messiah (the Anointed One). The moral standards that each individual is given based upon the Torah, each person is then to decide whether he is part of a civil society or a barbarian society. This is the point of individual ethics and why the Torah (the Law of Moses) focuses upon loving God and loving those around us and not on the formal, ceremonial worship service in a physical temple. The Law of God does not solely depend upon “*temple worship*,” and this is why Yeshua did not mention temple worship when asked about the greatest commandment that is found in the Torah. God’s Law is focused on instructing us in how to love our Creator and how to love each other rather than on the worship service at the physical temple which may or may not be available, because our worshiping God in heaven is coupled to our faith, which are also coupled to our actions. This is how the two greatest commandments summarize all of the rest of the commandments. The Torah is all about loving our Creator and loving each other.

The psalm continues saying, ג הַיָּם רָאָה וַיִּנָּס הַיַּרְדֵּן יִסָּב לְאַחֹר: ד הַהָרִים רָקְדוּ כְאֵילִים גְּבַעוֹת פְּבַנִי-צֹאן: *The sea looked* 114:3 ה מֵה-לָּךְ הַיָּם פִּי תָנוּס הַיַּרְדֵּן תִּסָּב לְאַחֹר: ו הַהָרִים תִּרְקְדוּ כְאֵילִים גְּבַעוֹת פְּבַנִי-צֹאן:

and fled; The Jordan turned back. 114:4 The mountains skipped like rams, The hills, like lambs. 114:5 What ails you, O sea, that you flee? O Jordan, that you turn back? 114:6 O mountains, that you skip like rams? O hills, like lambs? (NASB) The Psalm speaks of Parashat Beshalach (*Shemot / Exodus 13:17-17:16*) and the splitting of the Red Sea, and from the book of Joshua when Israel crossed the Jordan river during flood stage (see *Joshua 3*). *Tehillim / Psalms 114:4 and 114:6* speak of the mountains that skip like rams and hills like lambs. Why does the psalmist speak of the mountains and the hills? Is he speaking of the Lord's involvement in an earthquake? According to the Psalm, the mountains and the hills moved so much that they appeared to be skipping about like sheep in the midst of the flock, and this seems to be connected to the Red Sea and the Jordan river splitting. When we consider the Scriptures, have the mountains ever skipped like rams or the hills played like lambs? Searching back into the pages of the Bible, into the history of Israel or even into the sayings and the visions of the prophets, it is not possible to find any event like what is being described here. There is no historical time recorded in the Scriptures when the mountains and the hills "skipped like rams." *Tehillim / Psalms 97* speaks of the mountains in the following way:

Tehillim / Psalms 97:1-9

97:1 The Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice; Let the many islands be glad. 97:2 Clouds and thick darkness surround Him; Righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne. 97:3 Fire goes before Him And burns up His adversaries round about. 97:4 His lightnings lit up the world; The earth saw and trembled. 97:5 The mountains melted like wax at the presence of the Lord, At the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. 97:6 The heavens declare His righteousness, And all the peoples have seen His glory. 97:7 Let all those be ashamed who serve graven images, Who boast themselves of idols; Worship Him, all you gods. 97:8 Zion heard this and was glad, And the daughters of Judah have rejoiced Because of Your judgments, O Lord. 97:9 For You are the Lord Most High over all the earth; You are exalted far above all gods. (NASB)

Tehillim / Psalms 97 speaks of the day of the Lord and when Israel stood before the mountain of Sinai being reminded of the *97:2 Clouds and thick darkness surround Him; Righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne. 97:3 Fire goes before Him And burns up His adversaries round about. (NASB)* which draws in a Torah context to the emphasis being placed upon the Lord, powerful and mighty is He to overcome all things. The Psalm says that in the presence of the Lord the mountains will melt away like wax and speaks of the people who have seen His glory. Ezekiel also speaks of the mountains in the following way:

Ezekiel 38:17-23

38:17 'Thus says the Lord God, 'Are you the one of whom I spoke in former days through My servants the prophets of Israel, who prophesied in those days for many years that I would bring you against them? 38:18 'It will come about on that day, when Gog comes against the land of Israel,' declares the Lord God, 'that My fury will mount up in My anger. 38:19 'In My zeal and in My blazing wrath I declare that on that day there will surely be a great earthquake in the land of Israel. 38:20 'The fish of the sea, the birds of the heavens, the beasts of the field, all the creeping things that creep on the earth, and all the men who are on the face of the earth will shake at My presence; the mountains also will be thrown down, the steep pathways will collapse and every wall will fall to the ground. 38:21 'I will call for a sword against him on all My mountains,' declares the Lord God. 'Every man's sword will be against his brother. 38:22 'With pestilence and with blood I will enter into judgment with him; and I will rain on him and on his troops, and on the many peoples who are with him, a torrential rain, with hailstones, fire and brimstone. 38:23 'I will magnify Myself, sanctify Myself, and make Myself known in the sight of many nations; and they will know that I am the Lord.' (NASB)

Ezekiel speaks to a people who have been exiled from the Land of Israel and of the Lord who sought His people through the prophets whom they did not listen to. In this message that Ezekiel is giving the people, he speaks of the day when a nation will come against the people of Israel and God's fury will be released, an earthquake will occur, and all creatures, both man and beast will shake at God's presence. Notice how the Lord says that He will call a sword upon all of His mountains where every man's sword will be against his brother (*Ezekiel 38:21*). Note also that from a Torah context, the people are the inheritance of the Lord, and so the mountains are being paralleled to the people of the Lord. Because of the sin of the people, the Lord magnified Himself such that His word is righteous, true, and just, sending His people into a foreign land. The people here are being paralleled to the mountains, a solid foundation that is shaken. This may be why the Targum translates the Psalm in the way that it does. The Aramaic Targum reveals more to us in relation to the interpretation of the psalm which may be taking from our understanding of *Tehillim / Psalms 97* and *Ezekiel 38*, saying the following, *ג כד איתגלי מימרא דיי על ימא ימא אסתכל חמא ואפך יורדנא חזר, לאחזר: ד במיתן אוריתא לעמיה טוריא טפזו היך דכרין גילמתא היך בנין דען: ה אמר אלהא מה לך ימא ארום: 114:3 When the word of the Lord was revealed at the sea, the sea looked and retreated; the Jordan turned around. 114:4 When the Torah was given to his people, the mountains leapt like rams, the hills like offspring of the flock. 114:5 God said, "What is the matter, O sea, for you are retreating? O Jordan, that you are turning around?" 114:6 O mountains, leaping about like rams? O hills, like offspring of the flock? (EMC)* It was the word of the Lord that caused the oceans to divide and the mountains to skip. Note how the word of the Lord (His instruction, His Torah) when given to the people, the people are analogized to having become a great nation, and mighty mountains in the midst of the nations. This is the way the Torah describes the nation that takes hold of God's Law and makes it a part of their lives.

Devarim / Deuteronomy 4:4-9

4:4 'But you who held fast to the Lord your God are alive today, every one of you. 4:5 'See, I have taught you statutes and judgments just as the Lord my God commanded me, that you should do thus in the land where you are entering to possess it. 4:6 'So keep and do them, for that is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.' 4:7 'For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as is the Lord our God whenever we call on Him? 4:8 'Or what great nation is there that has statutes and judgments as righteous as this whole law which I am setting before you today? 4:9 'Only give heed to yourself and keep your soul diligently, so that you do not forget the things which your eyes have seen and they do not depart from your heart all the days of your life; but make them known to your sons and your grandsons. (NASB)

Devarim / Deuteronomy 33:26-29

33:26 'There is none like the God of Jeshurun, Who rides the heavens to your help, And through the skies in His majesty. 33:27 'The eternal God is a dwelling place, And underneath are the everlasting arms; And He drove out the enemy from before you, And said, 'Destroy!' 33:28 'So Israel dwells in security, The fountain of Jacob secluded, In a land of grain and new wine; His heavens also drop down dew. 33:29 'Blessed are you, O Israel; Who is like you, a people saved by the Lord, Who is the shield of your help And the sword of your majesty! So your enemies will cringe before you, And you will tread upon their high places.' (NASB)

Moshe describes those who take hold of the Torah as those who hold fast to the Lord God of Israel, those who do so are still alive. The statutes, judgments, and commandments are call the wisdom of the people in the Land of Israel. The Lord God of Israel will be near and the people will be a great nation in the midst of

the other nations. Moshe warns to listen (take heed) such that we keep our souls to remain faithful to the Lord and to teach our sons and grandsons how important it is to obey the Lord. The Lord is described as mighty and powerful to drive out our enemies and to cause us to live with security

The Psalm concludes saying, ז מִלְפָּנֵי אֲדוֹן חוּלֵי אֶרֶץ מִלְפָּנֵי אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב: ה הִהְפְּכֵי הַצּוּר אֲגָם-מָיִם חֲלָמִישׁ, 114:7 Tremble, O earth, before the Lord, Before the God of Jacob, 114:8 Who turned the rock into a pool of water, The flint into a fountain of water. (NASB) The Lord is capable of doing anything, and therefore He should be feared while realizing He is merciful, holy, righteous, and just to His people. The destruction of the enemy is a favor to everyone because just as the arrest and punishment of a thief this is having mercy upon society because a thief will rob anyone. With this in mind, a prison is a display of mercy as well as justice to society as a whole. The Lord God does this because of His אמונה, truthfulness, with which He confirms the truth of His promises by His faithfulness to His promises and His צדקה, righteousness. The Lord establishes all of these things because of His great love for us. It is because of this the Aramaic Targum states, ז מן קדם קיריס אתחלהלי ארעא מן קדם אלהא דיעקב: ה דהפיך טינרא לאריתא, 114:7 In the presence of the lord, dance, O earth, in the presence of the God of Jacob. 114:8 Who turns the flint into a channel of water, the adamant to springs of water. (EMC) Truly we are able to rejoice in the presence of the Lord. Let's Pray!

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for Your great love. We believe You are able to overcome all things, from saving us from our enemies, to the deliverance from sin, and even to work in our hearts to deeply, truly, and honestly seek you all the days of our lives. We recognize the weaknesses in our strength and resolve to serve You and to do what is expected, to be humble and to pray and to remain in Your word. Lord help us to have the strength to stand for truth and life, to have the desire to seek You in prayer and in Your Word, to have faith in Yeshua Your Messiah, and to love our neighbor each day. We thank You Lord for Your continued faithfulness to Your promises and to us. Help us to grow in our faith, to walk in the spirit, and apply these truths to our lives. We praise Your Holy Name and give You all of the honor, and the glory, and the praise forever and ever.

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

Be Blessed in Yeshua, Christ our Messiah!

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

Notes