Midrash Tehillim

Midrash Tehillim / Psalms 54 | מדרש תהלים דכ

1. For the leader; with stinged music. Maschil of David; when the Ziphites came and said to Saul, Does not David hide himself with us? (Tehillim / Psalms 54:1). Elsewhere, this is what Scripture says, if a ruler listens to lies, all his servants are wicked (Mishley / Proverbs 29:12). Rabbi Meir said in the name of rabbi Joseph, such were the children of Israel. When the Ziphites beheld Saul incline his ear to listen to slanders, they came and betrayed him to Saul saying, Does not David hide himself with us? (Tehillim / Psalms 54:2). Scripture tells us that Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul (Tehillim / Psalms 54:2), and tells also that Nabal asked mockingly Who is David? And who is the son of Jesse? (1 Samuel 25:10). Therefore, when the Ziphites observed that Saul accepted the others’ slanders, they also came, as it is written, The Ziphites came and said to Saul, Does not David hide himself with us? (Tehillim / Psalms 54:1-2).

2. Save me O God, by Your name (Tehillim / Psalms 54:3). David said to the Holy One blessed be He, Master of the universe, when a centenaries persecutes a man, the man may complain against him to the prefect, and when the prefect persecutes him, the man may complain against him to the emperor. But when the emperor persecutes the prefect, to whom may the prefect complain? He has no one to complain to except to You Lord. Just so David said to the Holy One blessed be He, Master of the universe, Saul is king. To whom am I to complain against him? I can only complain to You. Thus David said, Same me, O God, by Your name, and judge me by Your strength (Tehillim / Psalms 54:3). What did he mean by the words, And judge me by Your strength? He meant judge me by Your Torah in which You have written, You will not deliver unto his master a bondman that is escaped from his master unto you (Devarim / Deuteronomy 23:16). If You have said even of a bondman who yesterday served idols that When he...
You will not deliver me into the hand of King Saul, for I am a
prince, and the son of a prince, as is said Nahshon begot Salmon;
Salmon begot Boaz, and Boaz begot Obed; and Obed begot Jesse,
and Jesse begot David (Ruth 4:20-22). And so Judge me by
Your strength, that is by the strength of Torah, which says, Coun-
sel is mind, and sound wisdom; I am understanding, strength is
mind (Mishley / Proverbs 8:14).

Midrash Tehillim 54, Part 3

3. Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the words of my mouth
(Tehillim / Psalms 54:4). According to rabbi Hoshiaia, David
said to the Holy One blessed be He, Master of the universe, Doeg
came and slandered me, and Saul accepted the slander from him
and listened to him. The Ziphites came, and Saul heeded them
also. I will not go to Saul, but to You. Hear me. Give ear unto
me. Hear my prayer Or God. For strangers have risen up against
me, they have not set God before them (Tehillim / Psalms 54:5).
They have not set their minds on what is written in the Torah,
cursed be he that smites his neighbor in secret (Devarim / Deu-
teronomy 27:24). But what have they set their minds on? On
what Saul said to them, Blessed be you of the Lord (1 Samuel
23:21). But of what avail Saul’s blessing, if they are accursed
men? They have been long accursed, for Moshe cursed them saying,
Cursed be he that smites his neighbor in secret. Hence it
is said, They have not set God before them. Behold, God is my
helper; the Lord is for me as the upholder of my soul (Tehillim /
Psalms 54:6). They asked David, Who told you this? According
to rabbi Simeon son of Pazzi, David replied, When I was in the
womb of my mother, Ethan and Ezrahite prophesied that God
would say of me, I have found David My servant; with My holy
oil I anointed him (Tehillim / Psalms 89:21). Hence, The Lord is
for me as the upholder of my soul.

Midrash Tehillim 54, Part 3

3. Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the words of my mouth
(Tehillim / Psalms 54:4). According to rabbi Hoshiaia, David
said to the Holy One blessed be He, Master of the universe, Doeg
came and slandered me, and Saul accepted the slander from him
and listened to him. The Ziphites came, and Saul heeded them
also. I will not go to Saul, but to You. Hear me. Give ear unto
me. Hear my prayer Or God. For strangers have risen up against
me, they have not set God before them (Tehillim / Psalms 54:5).
They have not set their minds on what is written in the Torah,
cursed be he that smites his neighbor in secret (Devarim / Deu-
teronomy 27:24). But what have they set their minds on? On
what Saul said to them, Blessed be you of the Lord (1 Samuel
23:21). But of what avail Saul’s blessing, if they are accursed
men? They have been long accursed, for Moshe cursed them saying,
Cursed be he that smites his neighbor in secret. Hence it
is said, They have not set God before them. Behold, God is my
helper; the Lord is for me as the upholder of my soul (Tehillim /
Psalms 54:6). They asked David, Who told you this? According
to rabbi Simeon son of Pazzi, David replied, When I was in the
womb of my mother, Ethan and Ezrahite prophesied that God
would say of me, I have found David My servant; with My holy
oil I anointed him (Tehillim / Psalms 89:21). Hence, The Lord is
for me as the upholder of my soul.