

ספר תהילים יח | Tehillim / Psalms 18

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Living in His Ways by Obeying the Gospel of Christ!

Part a:

This week's study is from *Tehillim / Psalms 18:1-50*. The Psalm begins saying א לְמַנְצֵחַ | לְעֶבֶד יְהוָה לְדָוִד אֲשֶׁר: *“For the choir director. A Psalm of David the servant of the Lord, who spoke to the Lord the words of this song in the day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul.”* According to this Psalm, these are the words that David spoke to the Lord and the Lord God Almighty delivered him from all of his enemies and from the hand of Saul. Because of the deliverance of the mighty hand of God, David sings ב וַיֹּאמֶר אֲרַחֲמָהּ יְהוָה חֲזָקִי: ג יְהוָה סִלְעִי וּמְצִוְדָתִי וּמְפַלְטִי אֵלַי צוּרִי אֲחֻסָּה-בּוּ מִגְּנִי וּקְרֹן יִשְׁעֵי מִשְׁגָּבַי: ד מְהַלֵּל אֶקְרָא יְהוָה וּמִן-אֵיבֵי אֲנִישָׁע: *18:1 ‘I love You, O Lord, my strength.’ 18:2 The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. 18:3 I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised, And I am saved from my enemies. (NASB)* David continues describing the way in which he felt when his enemies surrounded him on all sides saying ה אֶפְפוּנֵי הַבְּלִי-מָוֶת וְנַחְלֵי בְלִיעֵל יִבְעֲתוּנִי: ו הַבְּלִי שְׂאוֹל סָבְבוּנִי קִדְמוּנֵי מוֹקְשֵׁי מָוֶת: *18:4 The cords of death encompassed me, And the torrents of ungodliness terrified me. 18:5 The cords of Sheol surrounded me; The snares of death confronted me. (NASB)* Because of his grief over the enemies that surround him, David called out to the Lord God Almighty for help ז בָּצָר-לִי | אֶקְרָא יְהוָה וְאֵל-אֱלֹהֵי אֲשׁוּעַ יִשְׁמַע מִהִיכְלוֹ קוֹלִי and He heard his cry from heaven. David then said that ח וַתִּגַּעַשׁ וַתִּרְעַשׁ | הָאָרֶץ וּמוֹסְדֵי הָרִים רִגְזוּ וַיִּתְגַּעְשׂוּ כִּי חָרָה לוֹ: ט עָלָה עֶשֶׂן בְּאֶפְסוֹ וְאֵשׁ מִפִּי תֹאכַל גְּחָלִים בְּעָרוֹ מִמְּנוֹ: י וַיִּט שָׁמַיִם וַיִּרְדּוּ וַעֲרָפֶל וַיִּרְכַּב עַל-כְּרוּב וַיַּעֲפֵ וַיִּדָּא עַל-כַּנְפֵי-רוּחַ: *18:7 Then the earth shook and quaked; And the foundations of the mountains were trembling And were shaken, because He was angry. 18:8 Smoke went up out of His nostrils, And fire from His mouth devoured; Coals were kindled by it. 18:9 He bowed the heavens also, and came down With thick darkness under His feet. (NASB)* Nahum 1:5 states *“1:5 The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burned at his presence, yes, the world, and all that dwell therein.”* It is a dangerous to come against the children of the Lord God whose presence causes the earth to tremble. The earth is described as burning in His presence, how much more so will the wicked burn on His coming?

עברית Hebrew	ארמי Aramaic	ελληνικός Greek
ספר תהלים פרק יח	ספר טוביה פרק יח	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 18
א לְמַנְצֵחַ לְעֶבֶד יְהוָה לְדָוִד אֲשֶׁר דָּבָר לִיהוָה אֶת-דְּבָרֵי הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת בַּיּוֹם הַצֵּיל-יְהוָה אוֹתוֹ מִכָּף כָּל-אֵיבָיו וּמִיַּד שְׂאוֹל: ב וַיֹּאמֶר אֲרַחֲמָהּ יְהוָה חֲזָקִי: ג יְהוָה סִלְעִי וּמְצִוְדָתִי וּמְפַלְטִי אֵלַי צוּרִי אֲחֻסָּה-בּוּ מִגְּנִי וּקְרֹן יִשְׁעֵי מִשְׁגָּבַי: ד מְהַלֵּל אֶקְרָא יְהוָה וּמִן-אֵיבֵי אֲנִישָׁע:	א לשבחא על נסיה דאיתרחישו לעבדא דיהוה לדוד דשבח בנבואה קדם יהוה ית פתגמי שירתא הדא על כל יומיא דשד ביה יהוה יתיה מן אידא דכל בעלי דבבו ומחרבא דשאוּל: ב ואמר אחבבנך יהוה תוקפי: ג יהוה תוקפי ורוחצני ומשיזיב יתי אלהא דאתרעי בי קרבני לדחלתיה תריסי דמן קדמוי מתיחב לי תקוף ופורקן על בעלי דבבי רוחצני:	18:1 εἰς τὸ τέλος τῷ παιδί κυρίου τῷ δαυιδ ἃ ἐλάλησεν τῷ κυρίῳ τοὺς λόγους τῆς ψδῆς ταύτης ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἣ ἐρρύσατο αὐτὸν κύριος ἐκ χειρὸς πάντων τῶν ἐχθρῶν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐκ χειρὸς σαουλ καὶ εἶπεν ἀγαπήσω σε κύριε ἢ ἰσχύς μου 18:2 κύριος στερέωμά μου καὶ καταφυγή μου καὶ ῥύσσης μου ὁ θεὸς μου βοηθός μου καὶ ἐλπῶ ἐπ' αὐτὸν ὑπερασπιστής μου καὶ κέρας σωτηρίας μου ἀντιλήπτωρ μου

ה אֶפְפוּנֵי חֻבְלֵי-מִנְתַּי וְנִחְלֵי בְלִיעַל
 יִבְעֲתוּנִי: ו חֻבְלֵי שְׂאוֹל סְבֻבֹנֵי
 קִדְמוּנֵי מוֹקְשֵׁי מִנְתַּי: ז בְּצַר-לִי |
 אֶקְרָא יְהוָה וְאֶל-אֱלֹהֵי אֲשׁוּעַ יִשְׁמַע
 מִהֵיכָלֹ קוֹלִי וְשׁוֹנְעֵתִי לְפָנָיו | תְּבוֹא
 בְּאָזְנוֹי: ח וַתִּגְעַשׁ וַתַּרְעֵשׁ | הָאָרֶץ
 וּמוֹסְדֵי הָרִים יִרְגְּזוּ וַיִּתְגַּעְעֻשׁוּ כִּי
 חָרָה לֹ: ט עָלָה עָשָׁן בְּאֵפוֹ וְאֵשׁ
 מִפִּיו תֹאכַל גְּחָלִים בְּעָרוֹ מִמֶּנּוּ:
 י נִיט שְׁמַיִם וַיִּרְדַּ וַעֲרַפֵּל תַּחַת
 רְגְלָיו: יא וַיִּרְכַּב-עַל-כְּרוּב וַיַּעֲף
 וַיָּדָא עַל-כַּנְפֵי-רוּחַ: יב יָשַׁת חֲשׁוֹךְ
 | סִתְרוּ סְבִיבוֹתָיו סִפְתוֹ חֲשֹׁכֶת-מַיִם
 עָבִי שְׁחָקִים: יג מִנְגִּה נִגְדוּ עֵבְרֵי
 עָבְרוּ בְּרֶד וְגִחְלֵי-אֵשׁ: יד וַיִּרְעַם
 בְּשָׁמַיִם | יְהוָה וַעֲלִיוֹן יִתֵּן קֶלֶף בְּרֶד
 וְגִחְלֵי-אֵשׁ: טו וַיִּשְׁלַח חֲצָיו וַיִּפְיֹצוּ
 וּבְרָקִים רָב וַיִּהַמּוּ: טז וַיִּרְאוּ
 | אֶפְיָקֵי מַיִם וַיִּגְלוּ מוֹסְדוֹת תְּהִלָּה
 מִגְעָרְתָּהּ יְהוָה מִנְשַׁמַּת רוּחַ אֶפְדָּה:
 יז יִשְׁלַח מְמָרוֹם יִקְחֵנִי יִמְשְׁנֵי
 מִמַּיִם רַבִּים: יח יִצְיִלְנִי מֵאֲיָבֵי עֵז
 וּמִשְׁנֵאֵי כִּי-אֶמְצֹו מִמֶּנּוּ:

ד אמר דוד בתושבחתא אנה מצלי
 קדם יהוה ומן בעלי דבבי פריק יתי:
 ה אקפתני עקא כאיתא דיתבא על
 מתברא וחיל לית לה למילד והיא
 מסכנא מסתכנא ליממת וסיעתא טלומיא
 בעתת יתי: ו משריית חייבין אקפוני
 אקדימו יתי דמזיינין במני בזייני קטול:
 ז בדעייקא לי אנה מצלי קדם יהוה
 וקדם אלהי אנה מתחנן ומקבל צלותי מן
 היכליה ומהיכל קודשיה דבשמיא ובעותי
 קדמוי מתקבלא באודנוי ומתעבדא: ח
 ואתרגיפת ואתרגישת ארעא ואשיית
 טוריא זעו ואיתרטישו מטול דתקיף
 ליה: ט סליק זדוניה דפרעה רשיעא
 היך קוטרא קדמוי הבכין שלח רוגזיה
 כאישיא בערא דמן קדמוי מישתיציא
 מזופיתיה כגומרין די נור דלקא
 ממימריה: י וארכין שמיא ואיתגלי
 יקריה וענן אמיטתא כיבש קדמוי: יא
 ואתגלי בגבורתיה על כרובין קלילין
 ודבר בתקוף על גדפי זעפא: יב ואשרי
 שכינתיה בערפילא ואתחזר בענני יקריה
 היך מטללתא ואחית מיטרין דרעוא על
 עמיה ומיין תוקפין תקיפין מן ריכפת
 עננין דקיבלא על רשיעא מן רומיה
 דעלמא: יג מן זהור יקריה ענני שמיא
 עברו במזופיתא כגומרין דנור וברדא
 דלקא מן מימריה: יד ואכלי מן שמיא
 יהוה ועילאה ארים מימריה רמא ברדא
 וגומרין די נור: טו ושדר מימריה
 היך גיררין ובדרינון וברקין סגיאין
 ושגישיון: טז ואתחמיאו עמקי מיא
 ואתגליאו שתאסיא דתבל ממזופיתא
 מן קדם יהוה ממימר תקוף רוגזך: יז
 שלח נבייהי מלך תקיף דיתיב בתקוף
 רומא דברני שזבני מעממין סגיעין: יח
 שזבני מן סנאי בעלי דבבי ארום עשינין
 הינון אינון ומן בעלי דבבי משנאי ארום
 איתגברו עלי:

18:3 αἰνῶν ἐπικαλέσομαι κύριον καὶ
 ἐκ τῶν ἐχθρῶν μου σωθήσομαι 18:4
 περιέσχον με ὠδίνες θανάτου καὶ
 χεῖμαρροι ἀνομίας ἐξετάραζάν με
 18:5 ὠδίνες ἄδου περιεκύκλωσάν με
 προέφθασάν με παγίδες θανάτου 18:6
 καὶ ἐν τῷ θλίβεσθαί με ἐπεκαλεσάμην
 τὸν κύριον καὶ πρὸς τὸν θεόν μου
 ἐκέκραξα ἤκουσεν ἐκ ναοῦ ἁγίου
 αὐτοῦ φωνῆς μου καὶ ἡ κραυγὴ μου
 ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ εἰσελεύσεται εἰς τὰ ὦτα
 αὐτοῦ 18:7 καὶ ἐσαλεύθη καὶ ἔντρομος
 ἐγενήθη ἡ γῆ καὶ τὰ θεμέλια τῶν
 ὄρεων ἐταράχθησαν καὶ ἐσαλεύθησαν
 ὅτι ὠργίσθη αὐτοῖς ὁ θεός 18:8 ἀνέβη
 καπνὸς ἐν ὄργῃ αὐτοῦ καὶ πῦρ ἀπὸ
 προσώπου αὐτοῦ κατεφλόγισεν
 ἄνθρακες ἀνήφθησαν ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ 18:9
 καὶ ἐκλινεν οὐρανὸν καὶ κατέβη καὶ
 γνόφος ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ 18:10
 καὶ ἐπέβη ἐπὶ χερουβὶν καὶ ἐπετάσθη
 ἐπετάσθη ἐπὶ περυγῶν ἀνέμων 18:11
 καὶ ἔθετο σκότος ἀποκρυφῆν αὐτοῦ
 κύκλω αὐτοῦ ἡ σκηνὴ αὐτοῦ σκοτεινὸν
 ὕδωρ ἐν νεφέλαις ἀέρων 18:12 ἀπὸ
 τῆς τηλαυγῆσεως ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ αἱ
 νεφέλαι διήλθον χάλαζα καὶ ἄνθρακες
 πυρός 18:13 καὶ ἐβρόντησεν ἐξ
 οὐρανοῦ κύριος καὶ ὁ ὑψιστος ἔδωκεν
 φωνὴν αὐτοῦ 18:14 καὶ ἐξαπέστειλεν
 βέλη καὶ ἐσκόρπισεν αὐτοὺς καὶ
 ἀστραπάς ἐπλήθυνεν καὶ συνετάραξεν
 αὐτούς 18:15 καὶ ὠφθησαν αἱ πηγαὶ τῶν
 ὑδάτων καὶ ἀνεκαλύφθη τὰ θεμέλια τῆς
 οἰκουμένης ἀπὸ ἐπιτιμήσεώς σου κύριε
 ἀπὸ ἐμπνεύσεως πνεύματος ὀργῆς
 σου 18:16 ἐξαπέστειλεν ἐξ ὕψους καὶ
 ἔλαβέν με προσελάβετό με ἐξ ὑδάτων
 πολλῶν 18:17 ῥύσεται με ἐξ ἐχθρῶν
 μου δυνατῶν καὶ ἐκ τῶν μισούντων
 με ὅτι ἐστερεώθησαν ὑπὲρ ἐμέ 18:18
 προέφθασάν με ἐν ἡμέρα κακώσεώς
 μου καὶ ἐγένετο κύριος ἀντιστήριγμά
 μου

Tehillim / Psalms 18

For the choir director. A Psalm of David the servant of the Lord, who spoke to the Lord the words of this song in the day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul. And he said, 18:1 'I love You, O Lord, my strength.' 18:2 The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. 18:3 I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised, And I am saved from my enemies. 18:4 The cords of death encompassed me, And the torrents of ungodliness terrified me. 18:5 The cords of Sheol surrounded me; The snares of death confronted me. 18:6 In my distress I called upon the Lord, And cried to my God for help; He heard my voice out of His temple, And my cry for help before Him came into His ears. 18:7 Then the earth shook and quaked; And the foundations of the mountains were trembling And were shaken, because He was angry. 18:8 Smoke went up out of His nostrils, And fire from His mouth devoured; Coals were kindled by it. 18:9 He bowed the heavens also, and came down With thick darkness under His feet. 18:10 He rode upon a cherub and flew; And He sped upon the wings of the wind. 18:11 He made darkness His hiding place, His canopy around Him, Darkness of waters, thick clouds of the skies. 18:12 From the brightness before Him passed His thick clouds, Hailstones and coals of fire. 18:13 The Lord also thundered in the heavens, And the Most High uttered His voice, Hailstones and coals of fire. 18:14 He sent out His arrows, and scattered them, And lightning flashes in abundance, and routed them. 18:15 Then the channels of water appeared, And the foundations of the world were laid bare At Your rebuke, O Lord, At the blast of the breath of Your nostrils. 18:16 He sent from on high, He took me; He drew me out of many waters. 18:17 He delivered me from my strong enemy, And from those who hated me, for they were too mighty for me. 18:18 They confronted me in the day of my calamity, But the Lord was my stay. (NASB)

Toviyah / Psalms Chapter 18

18:1 For praise. About the miracles that occurred to the servant of the Lord, David, who sang in prophecy in the presence of the Lord the words of this song about all the days that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and from the sword of Saul. 18:2 And he said: I will love you, O Lord, my strength. 18:3 O Lord, my strength and my security and the one who delivers me; the God who has chosen me has brought me near to fear him; my shield, from whose presence is given me strength and redemption over my enemies; my security. 18:4 David said in praise: "I pray in the Lord's presence, and from my enemies he redeems me." 18:5 Distress has surrounded me, like a woman who sits on the birthstool and has no strength to give birth and so is in danger of death; a band of abusive men has terrified me. 18:6 Armies of sinners have surrounded me; those armed with deadly weapons have confronted me. 18:7 When I am in distress, I pray in the presence of the Lord; and in the presence of my God I make supplication; and he accepts my prayer from his temple, and my petition in his presence is received by his ears, and is granted. 18:8 The earth trembled and shook and the foundations of the mountains tottered, and split, for he was angry with it. 18:9 The arrogance of Pharaoh went up like smoke; then he sent his anger like a burning fire that consumes before him; his rebuke burns at his utterance like coals of fire. 18:10 And he bent down the heavens, and his glory was manifested, a dark cloud a path before him. 18:11 So he was manifested in his strength over swift cherubs; and he proceeded in might on the wings of the storm-wind. 18:12 And he made his presence dwell in the mist, and surrounded himself with the clouds of his glory as a covering; and he made favorable rains to fall on his people, and mighty waters from the massed clouds of darkness on the wicked from the eternal heights. 18:13 From the splendor of his glory the clouds of heaven passed by in rebuke like the coals of fire and burning hail from his word. 18:14 And the Lord gave a shout from heaven, and the Most High raised up his utterance; he cast hail and coals of fire. 18:15 And he sent his word like arrows, and scattered them; [he sent] many lightning bolts, and confounded them. 18:16 And the depths of the sea became visible, and the pillars of the world were uncovered at the rebuke of the Lord,⁷⁸ from the utterance of your mighty wrath. 18:17 He sent his prophets, [he who is] a mighty king who reigns in strength; he took me [and] delivered me from many Gentiles. 18:18 He delivered me from my enemies, for they are strong; from my foes, for they prevailed against me. (EMC)

Psalmoi / Psalms 18

For the end, a Psalm of David, the servant of the Lord; the words which he spoke to the Lord, even the words of this Song, in the day in which the Lord delivered him out the hand of all his enemies, and out the hand of Saul: and he said: 18:1 I will love thee, O Lord, my strength. 18:2 The Lord is my firm support, and my refuge, and my deliverer; my God is my helper, I will hope in him; he is my defender, and the horn of my salvation, and my helper. 18:3 I will call upon the Lord with praises, and I shall be saved from mine enemies. 18:4 The pangs of death compassed me, and the torrents of ungodliness troubled me exceedingly. 18:5 The pangs of hell came round about me: the snares of death prevented me. 18:6 And when I was afflicted I called upon the Lord, and cried to my God: he heard my voice out of this holy temple, and my cry shall enter before him, even into his ears. 18:7 Then the earth shook and quaked, and the foundations of the mountains were disturbed, and were shaken, because God was angry with them. 18:8 There went up a smoke in his wrath, and fire burst into a flame at his presence: coals were kindled at it. 18:9 And he bowed the heaven, and came down: and thick darkness was under his feet. 18:10 And he mounted on cherubs and flew: he flew on the wings of winds. 18:11 And he made darkness his secret place: round about him was his tabernacle, even dark water in the clouds of the air. 18:12 At the brightness before him the clouds passed, hail and coals of fire. 18:13 The Lord also thundered from heaven, and the Highest uttered his voice. 18:14 And he sent forth his weapons, and scattered them; and multiplied lightnings, and routed them. 18:15 And the springs of waters appeared, and the foundations of the world were exposed, at thy rebuke, O Lord, at the blasting of the breath of thy wrath. 18:16 He sent from on high and took me, he drew me to himself out of many waters. 18:17 He will deliver me from my mighty enemies, and from them that hate me; for they are stronger than I. 18:18 They prevented me in the day of mine affliction: but the Lord was my stay against them. (LXX)

יט יקדמוני ביום אידי ויהי יהנה
 למשען לי: כ ויוציאני למרחב
 יחלצני פי חפץ בי: כא יגמלני
 יהנה פצדקי פבר ידי ישיב לי:
 כב פי-שמרתי דרכי יהנה ולא-
 רשעתי מאלהי: כג פי כל-משפטיו
 לנגדי וחקתי לא-אסיר מני: כד
 ואהי תמים עמו ואשתמר מעוני:
 כה וישב-יהנה לי כצדקי פבר ידי
 לנגד עיניו: כו עם-חסיד תתחסד
 עם-גבר תמים תתמם: כז עם-נבר
 תתברר ועם-עקש תתפתל: כח פי-
 אהה עם-עני תושיע ועינים רמות
 תשפיל: כט פי-אהה תאיר נרי
 יהנה אלהי גיהה חשפי: ל פי-כה
 ארץ גדוד ובאלהי אדלג-שור: לא
 האל תמים דרכו אמרת יהנה צרופה
 מגן הוא לכל | החוסים בו: לב פי
 מי אלוה מבצעדי יהנה ומי-צור
 זולתי אלהינו

יט אקדמו לי ביום טילטולי והוה מימרא
 דיהוה סמיך לי: כ ואפיק יתי לרווחא
 שזבני מטול דאיתרעי בי אמר דוד: כא
 יגמלני ישלמיני יהוה כזכותי כברירות
 א{י} ידי יתיב לי: כב מטול דנטרית
 אורחן דתקנן קדם יהוה ולא הליכית
 ברשע קדם יהוה אלהי: כג מטול
 דכל דינוי גלו גליין לקבלי למעבדהון
 וקימוי לא אעדי מני: כד והויתי ואיהי
 שלים בדחלתיה והוית נטיר נפשי
 מחובין: כה ופרע יהוה לי היך זכותי
 כברירות אידי ידי קדם מימריה: כו עם
 אברהם דאשתכח חסיד קדמך אסגיתא
 למעבד חסדא עם זרעיה יצחק דהוה
 שלים בדחלתך אשלימתא מימר רעותך
 עימיה: כז עם יעקב דהוה בריר דהליך
 בברירותא קדמך בחרתא בנוי מן כל
 עממיא ואפרשתא זרעיה מן כל פסילא
 ועם פרעה וזרעיה ומצראי דחשיבו
 מחשבן בישן על עמך ישראל בילבתנון
 במחשבתהון: כח מטול דאנת ית עמא
 בית ישראל דחשיבין חשיכין ביני
 עממיא בגלותא אנת את עתיד למיפרק
 ובמימרך אומיא תקיפא דמיתגברין
 עליהון תמאיך: כט מטול דאנת תנהר
 שרגא דישראל דמיטפא בגלותא דאנת
 הוא מריה דינהורא דישראל יהוה אלהי
 יפקיני מחשכא לניהור וינהר קבלי
 יחמיני בניחמותיה דעלמא דעתיד
 למיתי לצדיקיא: ל מטול דבמימרך
 אסגי משריין ובמימר אלהי אכבוש
 כרכין תקיפין: לא אלהא דכוונן דכיונן
 אורחתיא אוריתא דיהוה בחירא תריס
 הוא לכל דמתרחצין עלוי במימריה: לב
 ארום על ניסא ופורקנא דתעביד למשיחך
 ולשירי עמך דישתארו יודון כל עממיא
 אומיא ולישניא וימרון לית אלהא אלא
 יהוה ארום לית בר מינך ועמך בית
 ישראל יימרון לית דתקיף אלא אלהנא:

18:19καὶ ἐξήγαγέν με εἰς πλατυσμόν
 ῥύσεται με ὅτι ἠθέλησέν με ῥύσεται
 με ἐξ ἐχθρῶν μου δυνατῶν καὶ
 ἐκ τῶν μισούντων με 18:20καὶ
 ἀνταποδώσει μοι κύριος κατὰ
 τὴν δικαιοσύνην μου καὶ κατὰ
 τὴν καθαριότητα τῶν χειρῶν μου
 ἀνταποδώσει μοι 18:21 ὅτι ἐφύλαξα
 τὰς ὁδοὺς κυρίου καὶ οὐκ ἠσέβησα
 ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ μου 18:22 ὅτι πάντα
 τὰ κρίματα αὐτοῦ ἐνώπιόν μου καὶ
 τὰ δικαίωμα αὐτοῦ οὐκ ἀπέστησα
 ἀπ' ἐμοῦ 18:23 καὶ ἔσομαι ἄμωμος
 μετ' αὐτοῦ καὶ φυλάξομαι ἀπὸ τῆς
 ἀνομίας μου 18:24 καὶ ἀνταποδώσει
 μοι κύριος κατὰ τὴν δικαιοσύνην
 μου καὶ κατὰ τὴν καθαριότητα
 τῶν χειρῶν μου ἐνώπιον τῶν
 ὀφθαλμῶν αὐτοῦ 18:25 μετὰ ὀσίου
 ὀσιωθήσῃ καὶ μετὰ ἀνδρὸς ἀθῶου
 ἀθῶος ἔσῃ 18:26 καὶ μετὰ ἐκλεκτοῦ
 ἐκλεκτὸς ἔσῃ καὶ μετὰ στρεβλοῦ
 διαστρέψει 18:27 ὅτι σὺ λαὸν
 ταπεινὸν σώσεις καὶ ὀφθαλμοὺς
 ὑπερηφάνων ταπεινώσεις 18:28
 ὅτι σὺ φωτιεῖς λύχνον μου κύριε
 ὁ θεός μου φωτιεῖς τὸ σκότος μου
 18:29 ὅτι ἐν σοὶ ῥυσθήσομαι ἀπὸ
 πειρατηρίου καὶ ἐν τῷ θεῷ μου
 ὑπερβήσομαι τεῖχος 18:30 ὁ θεός
 μου ἄμωμος ἡ ὁδὸς αὐτοῦ τὰ λόγια
 κυρίου πεπυρωμένα ὑπερασπιστῆς
 ἐστὶν πάντων τῶν ἐλπίζοντων ἐπ'
 αὐτόν 18:31 ὅτι τίς θεὸς πλην τοῦ
 κυρίου καὶ τίς θεὸς πλην τοῦ θεοῦ
 ἡμῶν 18:32 ὁ θεὸς ὁ περιζωννύων
 με δύναμιν καὶ ἔθετο ἄμωμον τὴν
 ὁδόν μου

18:19 He brought me forth also into a broad place; He rescued me, because He delighted in me. 18:20 The Lord has rewarded me according to my righteousness; According to the cleanness of my hands He has recompensed me. 18:21 For I have kept the ways of the Lord, And have not wickedly departed from my God. 18:22 For all His ordinances were before me, And I did not put away His statutes from me. 18:23 I was also blameless with Him, And I kept myself from my iniquity. 18:24 Therefore the Lord has recompensed me according to my righteousness, According to the cleanness of my hands in His eyes. 18:25 With the kind You show Yourself kind; With the blameless You show Yourself blameless; 18:26 With the pure You show Yourself pure, And with the crooked You show Yourself astute. 18:27 For You save an afflicted people, But haughty eyes You abase. 18:28 For You light my lamp; The Lord my God illumines my darkness. 18:29 For by You I can run upon a troop; And by my God I can leap over a wall. 18:30 As for God, His way is blameless; The word of the Lord is tried; He is a shield to all who take refuge in Him. 18:31 For who is God, but the Lord? And who is a rock, except our God, 18:32 The God who girds me with strength And makes my way blameless? (NASB)

18:19 They confronted me in the day of my wandering; but the word of the Lord was my support. 18:20 And he brought me out to a broad place, he delivered me because he was pleased with me. 18:21 The Lord will requite me[86] according to my merit; according to the cleanness of my hands he will answer me. 18:22 For I have kept the proper ways in the Lord's presence; and I have not walked in evil before the Lord. 18:23 For all his judgments are revealed in my sight, to do them; and his covenants I will not remove from me. 18:24 And I was blameless in fear of him; and I kept my soul from sins. 18:25 And the Lord rewarded me according to my merit; according to the cleanness of my hands in the presence of his word. 18:26 With Abraham, who was found pious in your presence, you showed much mercy; with his seed, Isaac, who was complete in fear of you, you completed your favorable word. 18:27 With Jacob, who was pure in your presence, you chose his sons from all the Gentiles, and separated his seed from all that is unfit; but with Pharaoh and his seed, and the Egyptians who thought evil thoughts against your people, you confounded them in their thoughts. 18:28 Because you are going to redeem the people, the house of Israel, who are esteemed among the peoples in exile; and by your word you will abase the mighty nations who prevail over them. 18:29 For you will light the lamp of Israel that was extinguished in the exile, for you are the lord of the light of Israel. The Lord my God will bring me out of darkness into light; he will show me his eternal consolation which is to come to the righteous. 18:30 For by your word I will pass through armies; and by the word of my God I will subdue mighty citadels. 18:31 God [is he] whose ways are true; the Torah of the Lord is pure; he is a shield to all who trust in him. 18:32 For because of the miracle and deliverance that you will perform for your Messiah, and for the remnants of your people who will remain, all the Gentiles, nations, and tongues will confess and say, There is no God but the Lord, for there is none besides you; and your people will say, There is none mighty except our God. (EMC)

18:19 And he brought me out into a wide place: he will deliver me, because he has pleasure in me. 18:20 And the Lord will recompense me according to my righteousness; even according to the purity of my hands will he recompense me. 18:21 For I have kept the way of the Lord and have not wickedly departed from my God. 18:22 For all his judgments were before me, and his ordinances departed not from me. 18:23 And I shall be blameless with hem, and shall keep myself from mine iniquity. 18:24 And the Lord shall recompense me according to my righteousness, and according to the purity of my hands before his eyes. 18:25 With the holy thou wilt be holy; and with the innocent man thou wilt be innocent. 18:26 And with the excellent man thou wilt be excellent; and with the perverse thou wilt shew frowardness. 18:27 For thou wilt save the lowly people, and wilt humble the eyes of the proud. 18:28 For thou, O Lord, wilt light my lamp: my God, thou wilt lighten my darkness. 18:29 For by thee shall I be delivered from a troop; and by my God I will pass over a wall. 18:30 As for my God, his way is perfect: the oracles of the Lord are tried in the fire; he is a protector of all them that hope in him. 18:31 For who is God but the Lord? and who is a God except our God? 18:32 It is God that girds me with strength, and has made my way blameless: (LXX)

לג האל המאזרני חיל ויתן תמים
 דרכי: לד משנה רגלי פאלות
 ועל במתי יעמידני: לה מלמד
 ידי למלחמה ונחתה קשת-נחשה
 זרועתי: לו ותתן-לי מגן ישעך
 וימינה תסעדני וענותה תרבני:
 לז תרחיב צעדי תחתי ולא מעדו
 קרסלי: לח ארדוף אויבי ואשיגם
 ולא-אשוב עד-כלותם: לט אקחצם
 ולא-יכלו קום יפלו תחת רגלי:
 מ ותאזרני חיל למלחמה תכריע
 קמי תחתי: מא ואיבי נתתה לי
 ערך ומשנאי אצמיתם: מב ישועו
 ואין מושיע על-יהנה ולא ענם:
 מג ואשחקם כעפר על-פני-רוח
 כטיט חוצות אריקם: מד תפלטני
 מריבי עם תשימני לראש גוים עם
 לא-ידעתי יעבדוני: מה לשמע און
 ישמעו לי בני-נכר יכחשו-לי: מו
 בני-נכר יבלו ויחרגו ממסגרותיהם:
 מז חי-יהנה וברוך צורי נרום
 אלוהי ישעי: מח האל הנותן
 נקמות לי ונדבר עמים תחתי: מט
 מפלטי מאיבי אף מן-קמי תרוממי
 מאיש חמס תצילני: נ על-כן |
 אודה בגוים | יהנה ולשמך אומרה:
 נא מגדל [מגדיל] ישועות מלכו
 ועשה חסד | למשיחו לדוד ולזרעו
 עד-עולם

לג אלהא דמזריו לי קמור בחילא ומתקן
 שלים אורחי: לד דמשוי ריגלי קלילין
 היך אילאתא ועל בית תוקפי יקיימיני:
 לה מליף אידי למעבד קרבא ומתקיף היך
 קשת כרכומי אדרעי דרעי: לו ויהבת
 לי תקוף ופורקן וימינך תסייענ>נ<
 ובמימך אסגעתני: לז אפתית אסגעת
 פסיעתי באתרי ולא איזדעזע רכובתי:
 לח ארדוף סנאי בעלי דבבי ושיציתיון
 ולא תבית ואדבקיון ולא איתוב עד
 דגמרתיון: לט אגמריון ולא יכילו
 יכלין למיקם ונפלו קטילין תחות פרסת
 ריגליי: מ וזריתא לי חילא היך קמור
 למעבד קרבא תברתא עממין דקיימין
 לאבאשא לי חמטתנון תחות: מא ובעלי
 דבבי תברתא קדמי יהביתנון מחזרי קדל
 וסנאי אשיציון: מב בען סעיד ולית
 להון פריק מצלן קדם יהוה ולא מקבל
 צלותהון: מג ורוששתיון ודוששתיון
 היך גרישתא דארעא על אנפי זעפא
 והיך סיון אשקקי בעטית אינון הינון:
 מד תשזביני מפלוגת מפלגותא עממיא
 תנטריני מניתא יתי במזלי מזיון בריש
 עממיא עמא דלא חכימית יפלחונני: מה
 לשמע אודן ישמעון לי בני עממיא
 נוכראין יכדבון קדמי: מו בני עממיא
 נוכראין יסופון ויטלטלון מבירנתהון:
 מז קיים הוא יהוה וברוך תקיפא דמן
 קדמוהי דמן קדמוהי מתייב לי תקוף
 ופורקן ומרום ומרום אלהא תקוף
 פורקני: מח אלהא דעבד פורענותא לי
 דיילי ומתבר עממיא דקיימין לאבאשא
 לי תחותי: מט משזבי ופריקי מבעלי
 דבבי לחוד על דקיימין לאבאשא לי
 תגבריני מן גוג ומשיריית עממין חטופין
 דעמיה תשזביני: נ מטול היכנא אודה
 קדמך ביני עממיא יהוה ולשמך אזמיר
 תושבחתא: נא מסגי למעבד פורקן
 עם מלכיה ועביד טיבו למשיחיה לדוד
 ולזרעיה עד עלמא:

18:33 ó καταρτιζόμενος τοὺς πόδας
 μου ὡς ἐλάφου καὶ ἐπὶ τὰ ὑψηλὰ ἰστών
 με 18:34 διδάσκων χεῖράς μου εἰς
 πόλεμον καὶ ἔθου τόξον χαλκοῦν τοὺς
 βραχίονάς μου 18:35 καὶ ἔδωκάς μοι
 ὑπερασπισμὸν σωτηρίας μου καὶ ἡ δεξιὰ
 σου ἀντελάβετό μου καὶ ἡ παιδεία σου
 ἀνῶρθωσέν με εἰς τέλος καὶ ἡ παιδεία
 σου αὐτὴ με διδάξει 18:36 ἐπλάτυνας
 τὰ διαβήματά μου ὑποκάτω μου καὶ οὐκ
 ἠσθένησαν τὰ ἴχνη μου 18:37 καταδιώξω
 τοὺς ἐχθρούς μου καὶ καταλήμψομαι
 αὐτούς καὶ οὐκ ἀποστραφήσομαι ἕως
 ἂν ἐκλίπωσιν 18:38 ἐκθλίψω αὐτούς καὶ
 οὐ μὴ δύνωνται στήναι πεσοῦνται ὑπὸ
 τοὺς πόδας μου 18:39 καὶ περιέζωσάς
 με δύναμιν εἰς πόλεμον συνεπόδισας
 πάντας τοὺς ἐπανιστανομένους ἐπ’ ἐμὲ
 ὑποκάτω μου 18:40 καὶ τοὺς ἐχθρούς μου
 ἔδωκάς μοι νῶτον καὶ τοὺς μισοῦντάς
 με ἐξωλέθρευσας 18:41 ἐκέκραξαν καὶ
 οὐκ ἦν ὁ σῶζων πρὸς κύριον καὶ οὐκ
 εἰσήκουσεν αὐτῶν 18:42 καὶ λεπτυνῶ
 αὐτούς ὡς χοῦν κατὰ πρόσωπον ἀνέμου
 ὡς πηλὸν πλατειῶν λεανῶ αὐτούς 18:43
 ῥύσῃ με ἐξ ἀντιλογιῶν λαοῦ καταστήσεις
 με εἰς κεφαλὴν ἔθνῶν λαός ὃν οὐκ ἔγνω
 ἐδούλευσέν μοι 18:44 εἰς ἀκοὴν ὠτίου
 ὑπήκουσέν μοι υἱοὶ ἀλλότριοι ἐψεύσαντό
 μοι 18:45 υἱοὶ ἀλλότριοι ἐπαλαιώθησαν
 καὶ ἐχώλαναν ἀπὸ τῶν τριβῶν αὐτῶν
 18:46 ζῆ κύριος καὶ εὐλογητὸς ὁ θεός μου
 καὶ ὑψωθήτω ὁ θεὸς τῆς σωτηρίας μου
 18:47 ὁ θεὸς ὁ διδοὺς ἐκδικήσεις ἐμοὶ καὶ
 ὑποτάξας λαοὺς ὑπ’ ἐμέ 18:48 ὁ ῥύστης
 μου ἐξ ἐχθρῶν μου ὀργίλων ἀπὸ τῶν
 ἐπανιστανομένων ἐπ’ ἐμὲ ὑψώσεις με ἀπὸ
 ἀνδρὸς ἀδίκου ῥύσῃ με 18:49 διὰ τοῦτο
 ἐξομολογήσομαί σοι ἐν ἔθνεσιν κύριε καὶ
 τῷ ὀνόματί σου ψαλῶ 18:50 μεγαλύνων
 τὰς σωτηρίας τοῦ βασιλέως αὐτοῦ καὶ
 ποιῶν ἔλεος τῷ χριστῷ αὐτοῦ τῷ δαυὶδ
 καὶ τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ ἕως αἰῶνος

<p>18:33 He makes my feet like hinds' feet, And sets me upon my high places. 18:34 He trains my hands for battle, So that my arms can bend a bow of bronze. 18:35 You have also given me the shield of Your salvation, And Your right hand upholds me; And Your gentleness makes me great. 18:36 You enlarge my steps under me, And my feet have not slipped. 18:37 I pursued my enemies and overtook them, And I did not turn back until they were consumed. 18:38 I shattered them, so that they were not able to rise; They fell under my feet. 18:39 For You have girded me with strength for battle; You have subdued under me those who rose up against me. 18:40 You have also made my enemies turn their backs to me, And I destroyed those who hated me. 18:41 They cried for help, but there was none to save, Even to the Lord, but He did not answer them. 18:42 Then I beat them fine as the dust before the wind; I emptied them out as the mire of the streets. 18:43 You have delivered me from the contentions of the people; You have placed me as head of the nations; A people whom I have not known serve me. 18:44 As soon as they hear, they obey me; Foreigners submit to me. 18:45 Foreigners fade away, And come trembling out of their fortresses. 18:46 The Lord lives, and blessed be my rock; And exalted be the God of my salvation, 18:47 The God who executes vengeance for me, And subdues peoples under me. 18:48 He delivers me from my enemies; Surely You lift me above those who rise up against me; You rescue me from the violent man. 18:49 Therefore I will give thanks to You among the nations, O Lord, And I will sing praises to Your name. 18:50 He gives great deliverance to His king, And shows lovingkindness to His anointed, To David and his descendants forever. (NASB)</p>	<p>18:33 God, who girds on me a belt in strength, and makes blameless my way. 18:34 Who makes my feet like hinds'; and he will sustain me in my stronghold. 18:35 Who teaches my hands to do battle, and who makes my arms as strong as a bronze bow. 18:36 And you have given me strength and redemption; and your right hand will help me; and by your word you have multiplied me. 18:37 You have broadened my steps in my place, and my knee has not buckled. 18:38 I will pursue my enemies; [now] have I destroyed them, and I did not return until I finished them off. 18:39 I will destroy them, and they are unable to rise; and the slain have fallen under the soles of my feet. 18:40 And you have girded me with strength as a belt to do battle; you have defeated beneath me the Gentiles who rise up to do me harm. 18:41 And my foes you have broken in my presence; you have made them turn tail; [thus] my enemies I will destroy. 18:42 They seek help, but they have no redeemer; they pray in the presence of the Lord, but he does not accept their prayer. 18:43 I have crushed them like clods of earth before the storm-wind; and like the mud of the streets I have trodden them. 18:44 You will deliver me from the discords of the Gentiles; you will keep me by my destiny a benefactor at the head of the Gentiles; a people that I did not know shall worship me. 18:45 At the hearing of the ear, they will obey me; the sons of the peoples will desert in my presence. 18:46 The sons of the peoples above will perish, and will go into exile from their palaces. 18:47 The Lord lives, and blessed is the mighty one; for from his presence strength and redemption are given to me; and exalted is God, the strength of my redemption. 18:48 It is God who works retribution for me, and defeats beneath me the Gentiles who arise to do me harm. 18:49 He delivers me from my foes; indeed against those who arise to do me harm you will make me prevail; you will deliver me from Gog and the armies of rapacious Gentiles with him. 18:50 Because of this, I will give praise in your presence among the Gentiles, O Lord; and I will sing praises to your name. 18:51 He works abundant redemption with his king, and shows favor to his Anointed, to David and his seed forever. (EMC)</p>	<p>18:33 who strengthens my feet as hart's feet, and sets me upon high places. 18:34 He instructs my hands for war: and thou hast made my arms as a brazen bow. 18:35 And thou hast made me secure in my salvation: and thy right hand has helped me, and thy correction has upheld me to the end; yea, thy correction itself shall instruct me. 18:36 Thou has made room for my goings under me, and by footsteps did not fail. 18:37 I will pursue mine enemies, and overtake them; and I will not turn back until they are consumed. 18:38 I will dash them to pieces and they shall not be able to stand: they shall fall under my feet. 18:39 For thou hast girded me with strength for war: thou hast beaten down under me all that rose up against me. 18:40 And thou has made mine enemies turn their backs before me; and thou hast destroyed them that hated me. 18:41 They cried, but there was no deliverer: even to the Lord, but he hearkened not to them. 18:42 I will grind them as the mud of the streets: and I will beat them small as dust before the wind. 18:43 Deliver me from the gain sayings of the people: thou shalt make me head of the Gentiles: a people whom I knew not served me, 18:44 at the hearing of the ear they obeyed me: the strange children lied to me. 18:45 The strange children waxed old, and fell away from their paths through lameness. 18:46 The Lord lives; and blessed be my God; and let the God of my salvation be exalted. 18:47 It is God that avenges me, and has subdued the nations under me; 18:48 my deliverer from angry enemies: thou shalt set me on high above them that rise up against me: thou shalt deliver me from the unrighteous man. 18:49 Therefore will I confess to thee, O Lord, among the Gentiles, and sing to thy name. 18:50 God magnifies the deliverances of his king; and deals mercifully with David his anointed, and his seed, for ever. (LXX)</p>
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This week's study is from *Tehillim / Psalms 18:1-50*. The Psalm begins saying אֲלֵמִנְצַח | לְעֶבֶד יְהוָה | *“For the choir director. A Psalm of David the servant of the Lord, who spoke to the Lord the words of this song in the day that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul.”* According to the introductory line, this Psalm was composed as a result of the Lord God Almighty delivering David from the hand of his enemies and from the arm of Saul. Interestingly, the Aramaic Targum states אֲלֵשְׂבַחָא עַל נְסִיא

דאיתרחישו לעבדא דיהוה לדוד דשבח בנבואה קדם יהוה ית פתגמי שירתא הדא על כל יומיא דשזביה יהוה יתיה
:18:1 *For praise. About the miracles that occurred to the servant of the Lord, David, who sang in prophecy in the presence of the Lord the words of this song about all the days that the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and from the sword of Saul. (EMC)* The rabbis believed that David spoke in the spirit of prophecy (בנבואה) of the miracles that God had performed for David. What miracles did God provide for David during his life?

Because of the deliverance and the miracles of the mighty hand of God, David sings to the Lord ב
וַיֹּאמֶר אֶרְחֶמְךָ יְהוָה חַזְקִי: ג יְהוָה סִלְעִי וּמְצִוְדָתִי וּמִפְלִטֵי אֱלֹהֵי צוּרֵי אֶחָסֶה-בּוּ מִגְּנֵי וְקָרָן יִשְׁעֵי מִשְׁגָּבַי: ד מְהִלָּל
:18:1 *'I love You, O Lord, my strength.'* 18:2 *The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.* 18:3 *I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised, And I am saved from my enemies. (NASB)* Tehillim / Psalms 18:2 is referenced in Hebrews 2:13, shown below.

Hebrews 2:11-16

2:11 *For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, 2:12 saying, 'I will proclaim Your name to My brethren, In the midst of the congregation I will sing Your praise.'* 2:13 *And again, 'I will put My trust in Him.'* And again, *'Behold, I and the children whom God has given Me.'* 2:14 *Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, 2:15 and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives. 2:16 For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendant of Abraham. (NASB)*

¹¹ὁ τε γὰρ ἁγιάζων καὶ οἱ ἁγιαζόμενοι ἐξ ἑνὸς πάντες: δι' ἣν αἰτίαν οὐκ ἐπαισχύνεται ἀδελφοὺς αὐτοὺς καλεῖν, ¹²λέγων, Ἀπαγγελῶ τὸ ὄνομά σου τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς μου, ἐν μέσῳ ἐκκλησίας ὑμνήσω σε: ¹³καὶ πάλιν, Ἐγὼ ἔσομαι πεποιοῦς ἐπ' αὐτῶ: καὶ πάλιν, Ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ καὶ τὰ παιδία ἃ μοι ἔδωκεν ὁ θεός. ¹⁴ἐπεὶ οὖν τὰ παιδία κεκοινωνήκεν αἵματος καὶ σαρκός, καὶ αὐτὸς παραπλησίως μετέσχευεν τῶν αὐτῶν, ἵνα διὰ τοῦ θανάτου καταργήσῃ τὸν τὸ κράτος ἔχοντα τοῦ θανάτου, τοῦτ' ἔστιν τὸν διάβολον, ¹⁵καὶ ἀπαλλάξῃ τούτους, ὅσοι φόβῳ θανάτου διὰ παντὸς τοῦ ζῆν ἔνοχοι ἦσαν δουλείας. ¹⁶οὐ γὰρ δήπου ἀγγέλων ἐπιλαμβάνεται, ἀλλὰ σπέρματος Ἀβραὰμ ἐπιλαμβάνεται.

David trusted in the strength of God and gave Him praise. The author of Hebrews states that “*I will place my trust in Him*” just like David. Trust and faith are in the Lord who has the power to overcome death. In *Hebrews 2:16*, interestingly the Scripture states that ¹⁶οὐ γὰρ δήπου ἀγγέλων ἐπιλαμβάνεται, ἀλλὰ σπέρματος Ἀβραὰμ ἐπιλαμβάνεται. 2:16 *For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendant of Abraham. (NASB)* Based upon *Hebrews 2:16*, it appears all of the previous verses are restricted to those who are descendants of Abraham. Does this mean that only the descendants of Abraham (Israel, the Jews) are saved, that God sent His son only for the descendants of Abraham? What does it mean to be a descendant of Abraham? Can a person of non-Jewish descent be a child of Abraham? (Read *John chapter 8*)

Reading through *Tehillim / Psalms 18:1-2*, David says וַיֹּאמֶר אֶרְחֶמְךָ יְהוָה חַזְקִי: ג יְהוָה סִלְעִי וּמְצִוְדָתִי וּמִפְלִטֵי אֱלֹהֵי צוּרֵי אֶחָסֶה-בּוּ מִגְּנֵי וְקָרָן יִשְׁעֵי מִשְׁגָּבַי: ד מְהִלָּל אֶקְרָא יְהוָה וּמִן-אִבֵּי אֲנִשְׁע:
:18:1 *'I love You, O Lord, my strength.'* 18:2 *The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. (NASB)* In verses 1 and 2 David describes God as the following:

Summary of the indirect ways David refers to God

1. Strength (חֲזָקָה)
2. Rock (סֶלֶעַי, צוּרֵי)
3. Fortress (וּמְצוּדָתִי)
4. Deliverer (יִשְׁעֵי)
5. Shield (מִגְנֵי)
6. Horn of Salvation (וַיִּקְרָן יִשְׁעֵי)
7. Stronghold (מִשְׁגָּבִי)

David refers to the Lord as his strength, his rock, his fortress, his deliverer, his shield, the Horn of his salvation, and his stronghold. The use of these attributes of God, in the security, unmovable nature of God's promises, we are reminded of the Torah portion from Parashat Ha'azinu, "to listen, give ear" *Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:1-52*. In Parashat Ha'azinu, Moshe writes a song that he spoke to the children of Israel in *Devarim Deuteronomy 32:1-52*. Previously in the Torah, the Lord God told Moshe that Joshua will lead the people after his death. The Lord told Moshe to write down this song (וְעַתָּה כְּתֹבוּ לְכֶם אֶת-הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת) and the song will be a witness against them - לְמַעַן תִּהְיֶה-לִּי הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת לְעֵד בְּבִנְיֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּדְבֵּר מֹשֶׁה מִתְּשֻׁבָה בְּאָזְנֵי כָל-לְמַעַן תִּהְיֶה-לִּי הַשִּׁירָה הַזֹּאת לְעֵד בְּבִנְיֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל קָהֵל (Devarim / Deuteronomy 31:29-30). *31:30 Then Moses spoke in the hearing of all the assembly of Israel the words of this song, until they were complete: (NASB.)* In the opening verse of Parashat Ha'azinu Moshe calls Heaven (הַשָּׁמַיִם) and Earth (הָאָרֶץ) as witnesses to the covenant (הַאֲזִינוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאֲדָמָה וְתִשְׁמַע הָאָרֶץ אִמְרֵי-פִי). Calling the solid unmovable (unchanging) Heaven and Earth as a witness implies that the unmovable things are watching should the children of Israel break the covenant and disobey God. Moshe proclaims the name of the Lord (כִּי שֵׁם יְהוָה אֶקְרָא) saying He is our Rock (הַצּוּר), that His work is perfect (תְּמִימֵי פִעְלוֹ), all of his ways are in truth (אִמּוֹנָה), there is no injustice (אֵין עָוֹל), only righteousness (צְדִיקָה) and that He is straight (יָשָׁר) meaning that God is upright and just. It is highly likely that David obtained his understanding on the strength of God, the Rock, the unmovable nature of God from Parashat Ha'azinu. Moshe then says שָׁחַת לוֹ לֹא בָנָיו מוֹמָם דּוֹר עָקָשׁ וּפְתִלְתֵּל meaning "They have acted corruptly toward Him, They are not His children, because of their defect; But are a perverse and crooked generation." In these opening verses, Moshe is contrasting the absolute goodness of God with our impoverished and fallen lives. In these verses, the Lord God is described as our "Rock" (הַצּוּר) in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:4*; David also describes God as his rock and fortress. King Solomon describes God as a strong tower in *Mishley / Proverbs 18:10* which says, "The name of Adonai is a strong tower; The righteous runs into it and are safe." The reason David describes God as his rock and fortress is because of the Torah principle that the Lord our Father has purchased us (אֲבִיךָ קָנָה הוּא) and that He establishes us (עָשָׂה וַיְכַנְנֶנּוּ). Throughout Scripture the Lord is described using these solid and unmovable characteristics (i.e. Heaven and earth, rocks, etc). In the covenantal song found in Parashat Ha'azinu, the words and phrases are representative providing greater meaning by what they stand for. Thinking hebraically, the words carry meaning beyond what the plane dictionary definition may provide.

The insight the Torah provides for us this week, in regard to *Tehillim / Psalms 18:1-2*, is on the use of the word "rock" as a circumlocution for the Name of God (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:4*). *Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:4*, states "The Rock! His work is perfect. For all His ways are just. A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He." The context of the verse in *Tehillim / Psalms 18* brings us right back to the Torah that "The Rock" is a reference to God. Stones were commonly used for buildings

and for memorials of important events (see *Genesis 28:18, Joshua 24:26, 27; 1 Samuel 7:12*). Note that two words for rock is used in *Tehillim / Psalms 18:1-2* Rock (צוֹרִי, סֶלֶעִי, צוֹרִי) that may be used for a foundation and for building. According to the Scriptures, the word rock or stone is also used figuratively of believers (see *1 Peter 2:4-5*), and of the Messiah (see *Psalms 118:22, Isaiah 28:16, Matthew 21:42, and Acts 4:11*). Note also that in *Daniel 2:45* the Messiah is described as being “cut out of the mountain.” The use of the “rock” as a circumlocution is well established in the Tanakh and in the Apostolic Writings. One of the oldest of several ancient translations of the Hebrew Bible into Greek is the LXX (Septuagint). The LXX was held in great respect in ancient times as described by Philo and Josephus to having divine inspiration to its authors. This means that, according to historical accounts, the Greek translation of the Tanach was considered the inspired Word of God. Comparing the text of the LXX to that of Ginsburg’s Masoretic text it is interesting to note that the Hebrew word צוֹר (*Rock*) is translated as “*Theos*” (θεός, *God*). There are a few differences in the translation of the Septuagint from the Masoretic text but it is widely accepted that the Septuagint provides an accurate record of the Semitic textual variants. The textual variant here is that the translators used the word *Theos* (θεός, *God*) rather than *Petra* for the word צוֹר (*Rock*). According to Paul’s writings in *Romans 4:13-5:1* the promises of God are made firm (εἶναι βεβαίαν τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν) by faith (πίστεως) not only to those who are of the Torah but to all of those who are of the faith of Abraham (*Romans 4:16*). All of those who have the faith of Abraham in the Lord God Almighty become the children of Abraham; having faith in God, in the Rock (הַצּוֹר) of our Salvation, in the Name of God and the sure foundation stone in the Name of Yeshua our Savior. To worship the Name is to worship God. The relationship of Yeshua to the Father is that of a foundation stone, cut right out of the mountain of the Lord (*Daniel 2:45*). It is this foundation stone that God is building His ecclesia (ἐκκλησία). The use of the name throughout the scriptures and the various ways in which the Name has been described, there is an emphasis God desires for us to see and to receive. The emphasis that is being taught is the Torah principle the Lord our Father has done, to purchased us (אָבִיךָ קָנָה הוּא) and established us (עָשָׂה וְיִסְדָּנִיךָ), and all of Scriptures direct us to Yeshua the Messiah, which is the ultimate and final goal of the revelation of scripture. The love of the Father being demonstrated through the Son (Yeshua) offering redemption in His blood and salvation in His name so that we might have the opportunity to know and experience the abiding presence of the Father in our lives and in our communities. The love of God is then manifest in us by living through Him (Yeshua) *1 John 4:9* *By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him.* (NASB) Rightly so, as David says in *Tehillim / Psalms 18*, the Lord is our Strength, our Rock, our Fortress, our Deliverer, our Shield, the Horn of our Salvation, and our Stronghold הַיְהוָה אֲרֹחֵנוּ וְיָהוָה חֲזַקֵּנוּ וְיָהוָה סֶלֶעִי וּמְצֻדָּתִי וּמְפַלְטֵי אֱלֹהֵי צוּרֵי אֶחְסֶה-בּוֹ מִגְּנִי וְקַרְנֵי יִשְׁעֵי מִשְׁגָּבַי: ד מִהֶלֶל אֶקְרָא יְהוָה וּמִן-אֲבִי: 18:1 *I love You, O Lord, my strength.* 18:2 *The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.* (NASB) Note something else, the Lord described as “the Horn of our Salvation” provides the illustration that the Lord has made a great noise to arouse those who have fallen asleep that He is present and Salvation is at hand. Do our lives proclaim His Salvation in this way to the world around us? Drawing this as an illustration or example for our lives, how might we apply this principle to our lives? How do we proclaim the Salvation of God to others?

David continues describing the way in which he feels his enemies have surrounded him on all sides saying in *Tehillim / Psalms 18:5-6*:

Hebrew:

ה אֶפְפוּנֵי חֲבָלֵי-מָוֶת וְנַחְלֵי בְלִיעַל יְבַעֲתוּנֵי: ו חֲבָלֵי שָׂאוֹל סָבְבוּנֵי קִדְמוּנֵי מוֹקְשֵׁי מָוֶת:

18:4 The cords of death encompassed me, And the torrents of ungodliness terrified me. 18:5

The cords of Sheol surrounded me; The snares of death confronted me. (NASB)

Aramaic:

ה אקפתני עקא כאיתא דיתבא על מתברא וחיל לית לה למילד והיא מסכנא מסכנא ליממת וסיעת טלומיא בעתת יתי: ו משריית חייבין אקפוני אקדימו יתי דמזיינין במני בזייני קטול:

18:5 Distress has surrounded me, like a woman who sits on the birthstool and has no strength to give birth and so is in danger of death; a band of abusive men has terrified me. 18:6 Armies of sinners have surrounded me; those armed with deadly weapons have confronted me. (EMC)

David says that death has gotten him bound up and according to the Hebrew text says חֲבָלֵי-מָוֶת. The word חבל means “rope, cord, line” when used as a noun, and also may have the meaning “throes of (birth or death).” So David is saying that his enemies that surround him has placed him in the throes of death. The rabbis translate this in the Aramaic Targum as “a woman who sits on the birthstool and has no strength to give birth and so is in danger of death.” So David is describing the manner in which he feels by his enemies that surround him, his strength is gone from laboring for a long time as if at the moment of death. Because his enemies have surrounded him, he seeks the Lord for help saying ז בַּצָּר-לִי | אֶקְרָא יְהוָה וְאֶל-אֱלֹהֵי אֲשׁוּעַ. *18:6 In my distress I called upon the Lord, And cried to my God for help; He heard my voice out of His temple, And my cry for help before Him came into His ears. (NASB)* Crying out to the Lord for help is a form of seeking the Lord God Almighty. In *Tehillim / Psalms 14*, David said ב יְהוָה מִשָּׁמַיִם הִשְׁקִיף עַל-בְּנֵי-אָדָם לִרְאוֹת הֲיֵשׁ מִשְׁפִּיל דָּרֵשׁ אֶת-אֱלֹהִים: *14:2 The Lord has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men To see if there are any who understand, Who seek after God. (NASB)* The Lord looks down from heaven upon the sons of men and examines our hearts. Yeshua said in *Matthew 6:33*, ³³ζητείτε δὲ πρῶτον τὴν βασιλείαν [τοῦ θεοῦ] καὶ τὴν δικαιοσύνην αὐτοῦ, καὶ ταῦτα πάντα προστεθήσεται ὑμῖν *6:33 ‘But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. (NASB)* Therefore we may conclude that the Lord God is looking down from heaven to see who is seeking Him. David also said ג הַכֹּל סָר יַחַדָּו וְנֶאֱלָחוּ אֵין עֲשֵׂה-טוֹב אֵין גַּם-אֶחָד: *14:3 They have all turned aside, together they have become corrupt; There is no one who does good, not even one. (NASB)* The way of mankind is corrupt, and there is none that do good. In David’s case, he is seeking the Lord for help and because he seeks the Lord’s help and not man’s, his cry for help has made it to God’s ears. As a result of hearing his cry for help, the Lord’s response is ח וַתִּגַּעַשׁ וַתִּרְעַשׁ | הָאָרֶץ וּמוֹסְדֵי הָרִים יִרְגָּזוּ וַיִּתְגַּעַשׁוּ כִּי חָרָה לֹ: ט עָלָה עָשָׁן בְּאָפוֹ וְאֵשׁ מִפִּי תֹאכַל גְּחָלִים בְּעָרוֹ מִמָּנוֹ: י וַיֵּט שָׁמַיִם וַיִּרְדּוּ וַעֲרָפֶל תַּחַת רַגְלָיו: יא וַיִּרְכַּב עַל-לוֹ: *18:7 Then the earth shook and quaked; And the foundations of the mountains were trembling And were shaken, because He was angry. 18:8 Smoke went up out of His nostrils, And fire from His mouth devoured; Coals were kindled by it. 18:9 He bowed the heavens also, and came down With thick darkness under His feet. (NASB)* *Nahum 1:5* states “1:5 The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burned at his presence, yes, the world, and all that dwell therein.” It is interesting reading through the Scriptures, on the judgment of God, when the Lord comes to earth His holy presence will burn this sinful world. Take for example the Apostle Paul’s understanding on that great day of the Lord God Almighty from *2 Thessalonians 1:4-12*.

2 Thessalonians 1:4-12

1:4 therefore, we ourselves speak proudly of you among the churches of God for your perseverance and faith in the midst of all your persecutions and afflictions which you endure. 1:5 This is a plain indication of God’s righteous judgment so that you will be considered worthy

of the kingdom of God, for which indeed you are suffering. 1:6 For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, 1:7 and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, 1:8 dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. 1:9 These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, 1:10 when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed for our testimony to you was believed. 1:11 To this end also we pray for you always, that our God will count you worthy of your calling, and fulfill every desire for goodness and the work of faith with power, 1:12 so that the name of our Lord Jesus will be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ. (NASB)

⁴ὥστε αὐτοὺς ἡμᾶς ἐν ὑμῖν ἐγκαυχᾶσθαι ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τοῦ θεοῦ ὑπὲρ τῆς ὑπομονῆς ὑμῶν καὶ πίστεως ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς διωγμοῖς ὑμῶν καὶ ταῖς θλίψεσιν αἷς ἀνέχεσθε, ⁵ἔνδειγμα τῆς δικαίας κρίσεως τοῦ θεοῦ, εἰς τὸ καταξιωθῆναι ὑμᾶς τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ, ὑπὲρ ἧς καὶ πάσχετε, ⁶εἴπερ δίκαιον παρὰ θεῷ ἀνταποδοῦναι τοῖς θλίβουσιν ὑμᾶς θλίψιν ἔτι καὶ ὑμῖν τοῖς θλιβομένοις ἄνεσιν μεθ' ἡμῶν ἐν τῇ ἀποκαλύψει τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ μετ' ἀγγέλων δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ ⁸ἐν πυρὶ φλογός, διδόντος ἐκδίκησιν τοῖς μὴ εἰδόσιν θεὸν καὶ τοῖς μὴ ὑπακούουσιν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ, ⁹οἵτινες δίκην τίσουσιν ὄλεθρον αἰώνιον ἀπὸ προσώπου τοῦ κυρίου καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς δόξης τῆς ἰσχύος αὐτοῦ, ¹⁰ὅταν ἔλθῃ ἐνδοξασθῆναι ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις αὐτοῦ καὶ θαυμασθῆναι ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς πιστεύσασιν, ὅτι ἐπιστεύθη τὸ μαρτύριον ἡμῶν ἐφ' ὑμᾶς, ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ. ¹¹εἰς ὃ καὶ προσευχόμεθα πάντοτε περὶ ὑμῶν, ἵνα ὑμᾶς ἀξιώσῃ τῆς κλήσεως ἧς ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν καὶ πληρώσῃ πᾶσαν εὐδοκίαν ἀγαθωσύνης καὶ ἔργον πίστεως ἐν δυνάμει, ¹²ὅπως ἐνδοξασθῇ τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ ἐν ὑμῖν, καὶ ὑμεῖς ἐν αὐτῷ, κατὰ τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

According to 2 Thessalonians 1:7, Yeshua will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire. This is parallel to Isaiah 66:15 *For behold, the Lord will come in fire And His chariots like the whirlwind, To render His anger with fury, And His rebuke with flames of fire.* NASB (כִּי-הֵינָה יְהוָה בָּאֵשׁ יָבוֹא וְטוֹרְנֵי-הַיָּם כִּלְבַּיִם-אֵשׁ וְנִכְסוּפָה מְרֻכְבֹּתָיו לְהִשִּׁיב בְּחֵמָה אֶפֶס וְגַעְרָתוֹ בְּלֶהֱבִי-אֵשׁ) and to Shemot / Exodus 19:18 *Now Mount Sinai was all in smoke because the LORD descended upon it in fire; and its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked violently.* NASB (וְהָרַ סִּינַי עָשָׁן כְּלוֹ מִפְּנֵי אֲשֶׁר יָרַד עָלָיו יְהוָה בָּאֵשׁ וְיַחַד כָּל-הָהָר מָאָד: וַיַּעַל עָשָׁנוּ כְּעָשָׁן הַכְּבֹשֶׁן וַיִּתְרַד כָּל-הָהָר מְאֹד: Scripture also says in Shemot / Exodus 3:2 that God manifest Himself “in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush.” We see in Shemot / Exodus 3, a burning bush, a man (Moshe), and God Himself, speaking to Moshe from out of the flame that was in the midst of the bush. Why does God throughout the Scriptures reveal Himself in a flame of fire? The flame is certainly a supernatural phenomenon, since the bush burned without being consumed. On the mountain of Sinai, the Lord descended in a flame and the mountain burned. The flame is more than a supernatural phenomenon, it is a manifestation of God. How do we know this? The Scriptures say that Moshe was afraid to look, not upon the flame, but upon God; yet the flame was the only thing visible in the bush. According to the Scriptures, there are quite a few passages that state that God is invisible (*John 1:17, 1 Timothy 1:17, and Hebrews 11:27* to list a few). Yet, the passage from Tehillim / Psalms 18, and in Shemot / Exodus chapters 3 and 19, says that Moshe, realized who he was speaking to and was afraid to look upon God. This is because God had manifest Himself in the flame. In the Tanach, a manifestation of God was any kind of visible appearance of God, for example in the cloud known as the Shekhinah (a word that describes dwelling or settling, and is used to denote the dwelling or settling divine presence of God, especially in the Temple in Jerusalem). Scholars call the manifestation of God a “theophany,” according to Concise Oxford English Dictionary

meaning “a visible manifestation to humankind of God.” In these cases, God appears as a flame of fire in the midst of a burning bush to speak to Moshe. According to *Mark 12:26*, Yeshua confirmed this when He said, *12:26 ‘But regarding the fact that the dead rise again, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the burning bush, how God spoke to him, saying, ‘I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? (NASB)* The Apostle Paul states in *2 Thessalonians* that Yeshua will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire. In the Tanach, God was manifested in the flame and therefore we could also say that the flame was an image, a visible representation, of the invisible God. Clearly, God was in the flame; therefore, to see the flame was to see God. Since no one struck a match to ignite this fire, it is clear that the flame came from God in the sense that God originated it. As the originator of the flame, the Lord God brought it forth. The God who was in the flame was the same God Yeshua referred to as His Father. In *John 17:3*, Yeshua identified His Father as “the only true God.” In *1 Corinthians 8:6*, Paul affirmed that “for us there is one God, the Father.” In *Jeremiah 10:10*, the prophet declared, “The LORD is the true God.” The One in the burning bush called Himself “The LORD God of your fathers” (*Shemot / Exodus 3:15*). In a sense, when we come before the Lord God Almighty, sin will be burned up, consumed by the very presence of God Himself. If we do not have the Lord’s righteousness and the forgiveness of sins in Yeshua the Messiah, standing in the presence of God we would be consumed by the glory of His presence. This is why Paul wrote what he did in *2 Thessalonians 1:7 and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, 1:8 dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. 1:9 These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, 1:10 when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed for our testimony to you was believed. (NASB)* When the Lord returns, judgment will come and utter destruction (eternal destruction) will come to those who do not know God, those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah. According to the text in *2 Thessalonians*, to know the Lord God Almighty is synonymous with obeying the gospel of Yeshua. Have you ever noticed this in the Apostolic Writings before? What does it mean to obey the gospel of Yeshua? How do we do this? Is this nothing less than obeying the Torah of God? As the Scriptures say in Him, in Christ we establish the Torah (*Romans 3:31*). The earth is described as burning in His presence throughout the Scriptures, how much more so will the wicked burn on His coming? Prevention of utter destruction in the presence of God is reliant upon Yeshua and His teaching, obeying His teaching, and our knowing God.

David said that when the Lord heard his prayer, the earth shook, the mountains trembled, and smoke went up from His nostrils, fire from His mouth, and He bowed down the heavens and thick darkness was under His feet (*Tehillim / Psalms 18:7-9*). He then states in *Tehillim / Psalms 18:10-18*.

י וַיֵּט שָׁמַיִם וַיִּרְדּוּ וַעֲרָפֶל תַּחַת רַגְלָיו: יא וַיִּרְפַּב עַל-כְּרוּב וַיַּעֲפֵף וַיִּדָּא עַל-כַּנְפֵי-רוּחַ: יב יָשַׁת חֲשֵׁךְ | סָתְרוּ סְבִיבוֹתָיו סָכְתוּ חֲשֵׁכֹת-מַיִם עָבִי שְׁחָקִים: יג מִנְגֵה נִגְדוּ עָבְיו עָבְרוּ בְּרֶד וּגְחָלֵי-אֵשׁ: יד וַיִּרְעַם בְּשָׁמַיִם | יְהוָה וַעֲלִיוֹן יְתֵן קֶלֶוּ בְּרֶד וּגְחָלֵי-אֵשׁ: טו וַיִּשְׁלַח חֲצָיו וַיִּפְיִצֵם וּבְרָקִים רַב וַיְהַמֵּם: טז וַיִּרְאוּ | אֶפְיָקֵי מַיִם וַיִּגְלוּ מוֹסְדוֹת תְּבַל מִגְעַרְתָּךְ יְהוָה מִנְשַׁמַּת רוּחַ אַפְדָּךְ: יז יִשְׁלַח מִמְרוֹם יְקַחֲנִי יְמִשְׁנֵי מַמְיָם רַבִּים: יח יִצְיִלְנִי מֵאֲיָבִי עֲזוּ וּמִשְׁנָאֵי כִּי-אֶמְצֹו מִמְּנִי:

18:10 He rode upon a cherub and flew; And He sped upon the wings of the wind. 18:11 He made darkness His hiding place, His canopy around Him, Darkness of waters, thick clouds of the skies. 18:12 From the brightness before Him passed His thick clouds, Hailstones and coals of fire. 18:13 The Lord also thundered in the heavens, And the Most High uttered His voice, Hailstones and coals of fire. 18:14 He sent out His arrows, and scattered them, And lightning flashes in abundance, and routed them. 18:15 Then the channels of water ap-

peared, And the foundations of the world were laid bare At Your rebuke, O Lord, At the blast of the breath of Your nostrils. 18:16 He sent from on high, He took me; He drew me out of many waters. 18:17 He delivered me from my strong enemy, And from those who hated me, for they were too mighty for me. 18:18 They confronted me in the day of my calamity, But the Lord was my stay.

Tehillim / Psalms 18:10 states that the Lord God rode upon a cherub and flew. Does the Lord God really need to ride upon a cherub for wings to fly? The Psalm describes the Lord making darkness his dwelling place using thick clouds from the sky. The Lord Himself is light (brightness) and the clouds hide His glory. The Lord thunders when He utters His voice and from out of His word comes coals, hailstones, and fire. This description seems to parallel what took place at the mountain of Sinai, and of the construction of the Tabernacle, the Holy of Holies (a dark place), and the cloud that is manifest from burning incense before the priest enters in to make atonement on Yom Kippur. The cherub upon which the Lord rides is a parallel to the construction of the Ark of the covenant in *Shemot / Exodus 25*. Let's look at select verses from *Shemot / Exodus 25* from the Hebrew and Aramaic Targum.

<p>פרשת תרומה ספר שמות פרק כה פסוק כב-כג כב וְנִוְעַדְתִּי לְךָ יְשֵׁם וְדִבַּרְתִּי אִתְּךָ מֵעַל הַכַּפֹּרֶת מִבֵּין שְׁנֵי הַכְּרֻבִּים אֲשֶׁר עַל-אֲרוֹן הָעֵדֻת אֵת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר אֶצְוֶה אוֹתְךָ אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: פ כג וְעָשִׂיתָ שְׁלֶחַן עֲצֵי שִׁטִּים אֲמָתִים אָרְכוֹ וְאִמָּה רַחְבּוֹ וְאִמָּה וְחֲצֵי קַמָּתוֹ</p>	<p>Masoretic Text <i>Shemot / Exodus 25:22</i> 25:22 'There I will meet with you; and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, I will speak to you about all that I will give you in commandment for the sons of Israel. (NASB)</p>
<p>תרגום אונקלוס ספר שמות פרק כה פסוק כב-כג כב וְאִיזְמֵן מִיְמְרֵי לְךָ תִּמְן וְאִמְלִיל עִמָּךְ מֵעִלְיוֹי כְּפוֹרֶתָא מִבֵּין תְּרִין כְּרוּבֵיָא דִּי עַל אֲרוֹנָא דְסִהְדוּתָא ית כָּל דִּי אֶפְקִיד ? תְּךָ לִנְת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: כג וְתַעֲבִיד פְּתוּרָא דְאָעֵי שִׁיטִּין תְּרִתִּין אֲמִין אוֹרְכֵיהָ וְאִמָּתָא פּוֹתֵיהָ וְאִמָּתָא וּפְלָגָא רוּמֵיהָ: כד וְתַחֲפֵי יְתִיהָ דְהַב דְכִי וְתַעֲבִיד לֵיהָ דִּיר דְדִּהַב סְחֹר סְחֹר:</p>	<p>Aramaic Targum (Onkelos) <i>Shemot / Exodus 25:22</i> 25:22 And I will appoint My Word (Memra) with thee there; and I will speak with thee from above the Propitiatory, from between the two kerubin that are upon the Ark of the Testimony, all that I may command thee for the sons of Israel. (EMC)</p>

In *Shemot / Exodus 25:22*, God is describing the construction of the mercy seat upon the Ark of the Covenant saying in *Shemot / Exodus 25:21* 'You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the testimony which I will give to you. 25:22 'There I will meet with you; and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, I will speak to you about all that I will give you in commandment for the sons of Israel. (NASB) The phrase "mercy seat" is a translation of the Hebrew text that actually says "kapporet" in the Masoretic text or of the Greek term "hilasterion" from the Septuagint (LXX). The Hebrew text of *Shemot / Exodus 25:22* states that the Lord God will meet with Moshe to speak to him (and to the Kohen HaGadol, High Priest) from between the Cherubim. According to the Aramaic Targum, the text says "And I will appoint my Word for you there." And so, it is "the Word" of God (מִיְמְרֵי, Memra) that will meet with and speak to Moshe from between the Cherubim.

Next, the verses 19-25 from *Tehillim / Psalms 18*, are outlined in the following way:

Outline of Tehillim 18:19-25

1. וַיּוֹצֵיאֲנִי לְמִרְהָב לְמִרְהָב יִחְלֶצְנִי כִּי חָפֵץ בִּי: 18:19 He brought me forth also into a broad place; He rescued

me, because He delighted in me. (NASB)

2. יִגְמְלֵנִי יְהוָה כְּצִדְקָתִי כְּבָר יְדֵי יִשְׁיב לִי כֹא 18:20 *The Lord has rewarded me according to my righteousness; According to the cleanness of my hands He has recompensed me. (NASB)*
3. כִּי-שָׁמַרְתִּי דְרָכֵי יְהוָה וְלֹא-רָשַׁעְתִּי מֵאֱלֹהֵי: כֹב 18:21 *For I have kept the ways of the Lord, And have not wickedly departed from my God. (NASB)*
4. כִּי כָל-מִשְׁפָּטָיו לִנְגִדִי וְחֻקֹּתָיו לֹא-אָסִיר מִנֵּי: כֶג 18:22 *For all His ordinances were before me, And I did not put away His statutes from me. (NASB)*
5. כִּד 18:23 *I was also blameless with Him, And I kept myself from my iniquity. (NASB)*
6. וַיִּשָׁב-יְהוָה לִי כְצִדְקָתִי כְּבָר יְדֵי לִנְגִד עֵינָיו: כֶה 18:24 *Therefore the Lord has recompensed me according to my righteousness, According to the cleanness of my hands in His eyes. (NASB)*
7. עִם-חֶסֶד תִּתְחַסֵּד עִם-גְּבֹר תִּמְיָם תִּתְמָם: כֹו 18:25 *With the kind You show Yourself kind; With the blameless You show Yourself blameless; (NASB)*

According to David, the Lord brought him forth into an open place, this is a form of rescuing and the Lord rescued him because His delight was in him (David). David is obviously in hiding some place in Israel and the Lord taking and moving him to an open place suggests that he would have no enemies to attack him on either side. He continues saying that the Lord rewarded him according to his righteousness and the cleanness of his hands. The reason being that he has kept the ways of the Lord and have not departed from the Lord and His ways. David says all of the Lord's ordinances were before him and he did not put His statutes away from him, He says that he is blameless and has kept himself from his own iniquity. Thus The Lord has returned towards him according to the cleanness of his hands. What is interesting about these verses is how David describes his reward, the Lord turning back towards him (יִשְׁיב) from the Hebrew word "Shuv" (שוב) is a result of his living in righteousness. So according to David, the way that we live effects our walk with the Lord. Let's studying this concept a little further from the Torah text. In Parashat Re'eh (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 11:26-12:28*) Moshe says: רְאֵה אָנֹכִי נֹתֵן לְפָנֶיכֶם הַיּוֹם בְּרִכָּה וּקְלָלָה: "See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse." Moshe says the blessing comes if we "listen and obey." This is exactly what David is saying here in *Tehillim / Psalms 18*. Whereas, the curse comes to those who turn aside from the way God has commanded. Moshe says that when the Lord brings you into the land, place the blessing (הַבְּרָכָה) on mount Gerizim and the curse (הַקְּלָלָה) on mount Ebal. Mount Gerizim and Ebal are two mountains in the vicinity of the West Bank city of Nablus (in Hebrew known as Shechem). These form the southern side of the valley in which Nablus is situated on the north side. This mountain is one of the highest peaks in the West Bank and is the highest peak in all of Israel. The blessing and the curse here represents those who remain "within" the covenant (הַבְּרָכָה) on mount Gerizim with God and those who remain "outside" of the covenant (הַקְּלָלָה) on mount Ebal. Those inside the covenant live inside of the Promised Land and enjoy the blessing and protection of God living according to God's ways as detailed according to the Torah. Those outside do not live according to God's ways, do not have regard for the mitzvot, for the precepts or statutes of God and therefore have no part in God's promises. Remaining within the covenant is emphasized as Moshe continues to speak to the people stating five times saying that יְהוָה יִבְחַר אֱשֶׁר-הֵמָּקוֹם אֲנִי אֶל-הַמְּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר יְהוָה 12:5 'But you shall seek the LORD at the place which the Lord your God will choose from all your tribes, to establish His name there for His dwelling, and there you shall come. (NASB) (See *Devarim / Deuteronomy 12:5, 11, 14, 18, 21*). According to the Scriptures, God revealed himself through Israel in order to make His Name known to the World. Today, do we allow the Lord to establish within us a place where He can make His name known in the way we live? This brings us back to the previous question on how do we proclaim the Salvation of God to others?

<p>פרשת ראה בספר דברים פרק יב פסוק כו-ל</p> <p>כו ראה אנכי נתן לפניכם היום ברכה וקללה: כז את-הברכה אשר תשמעו אל-מצות יהוה אלהיכם אשר אנכי מצוה אתכם היום: כח ונהקללה אם-לא תשמעו אל-מצות יהוה אלהיכם וסרתם מן-הדרך אשר אנכי מצוה אתכם היום ללכת אחרי אלהים אחרים אשר לא-ידעתם: ס כט והנה פי יביאך יהוה אלהיך אל-הארץ אשר-אתה בא-שמה לרשתה ונתתה את-הברכה על-הר גרזים ואת-הקללה על-הר עיבל: ל הלא-המה בעבר הירדן אחרי דרך מבוא השמש בארץ הפנימי הישב בערבה מול הגלגל אצל אלוני מרה:</p>	<p>Devarim / Deuteronomy 11:26-30</p> <p>11:26 'See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: 11:27 the blessing, if you listen to the commands of the Lord your God, which I am commanding you today; 11:28 and the curse, if you do not listen to the commandments of the Lord your God, but turn aside from the way which I am commanding you today, by following other gods which you have not known. 11:29 'It shall come about, when the Lord your God brings you into the land where you are entering to possess it, that you shall place the blessing on Mount Gerizim and the curse on Mount Ebal. 11:30 'Are they not across the Jordan, west of the way toward the sunset, in the land of the Canaanites who live in the Arabah, opposite Gilgal, beside the oaks of Moreh? (NASB)</p>
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The opening word of Parashat Reah is the Hebrew word ראה which is written in the singular form meaning “see” followed by the phrase נתן לפניכם היום, a phrase containing the plural pronominal suffix “you.” According to the Hebrew text, based on the singular-plural forms written in Parashat Reah, each person, on an individual basis (ראה, “see” in the singular form) will be affected by the blessing and the curse. Note the use of the singular and plural forms here in the text are meant to emphasize that the Torah has been given to all “who have ears to hear” and it is the personal responsibility of each individual to choose life, hold onto the Lord God, obey His voice, and walk in God’s word (in His ways) in our daily lives as Moshe says in sefer Devarim / Deuteronomy 30:19-20, והמנת נתתי לפניך הברכה והקללה ובחרת בחיים למען תחיה אתה וזרעך: כ לאהבה את-יהוה אלהיך לשמע בקלו ולדבקה-בו פי הוא תייד וארץ ימיה לשבת על-הארצה אשר נשבע יהוה לאבותיך לאברהם ליצחק וליעקב לתת להם: Devarim / Deuteronomy 30:19 ‘I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live, you and your descendants, 30:20 by loving the Lord your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days, that you may live in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them.’ (NASB) According to these scriptures, there is no room for compromise in this decision making process to “choose life.” The Scriptures say לשמע את-יהוה אלהיך לאהבה את-יהוה אלהיך לשמע בקלו ולדבקה-בו פי הוא תייד וארץ ימיה “love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, holding fast to the Lord is your life and the length of your days;” these Scriptures show the absolute necessity of living each day by holding onto and drawing near to the Lord God Almighty in the Messiah. I say in the Messiah because it is because of the Messiah and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that enables us to do these things in a way that is pleasing to the Lord God Almighty.

ח לא תעשונו כלא תעשונו היום פה איש פל-הישר בעיניו: Devarim / Deuteronomy 12:8 that states “you shall not do at all what we are doing here today, every man doing whatever is right in his own eyes.”

פרשת ראה בספר דברים פרק יב פסוק ה-יא

ח לא תעשונו ככל אשר אנחנו עשים פה היום איש פל-הישר בעיניו: ט כי לא-באתם עד-עתה אל-המנוחה ואל-הנחלה אשר-יהוה אלהיך נתן לך: י ועברתם את-הירדן וישבתם בארץ אשר-יהוה אלהיכם מנחיל אתכם והניח לכם מכל-איביכם מסביב וישבתם-בטח: [שני] יא והנה

הַמְקוֹם אֲשֶׁר-יִבְחַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם בּוֹ לְשִׁכֹּן שְׁמוֹ שָׁמָּה תָבִיאוּ אֶת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוֶּה אֶתְכֶם
עוֹלְתֵיכֶם וְזִבְחֵיכֶם מִעֲשׂוֹתֵיכֶם וּתְרִמַת יְדֹכֶם וְכֹל מִבְּחַר נְדָרֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר תִּדְרוּ לַיהוָה:

Devarim / Deuteronomy 12:8-11

12:8 'You shall not do at all what we are doing here today, every man doing whatever is right in his own eyes; 12:9 for you have not as yet come to the resting place and the inheritance which the Lord your God is giving you. 12:10 'When you cross the Jordan and live in the land which the Lord your God is giving you to inherit, and He gives you rest from all your enemies around you so that you live in security, 12:11 then it shall come about that the place in which the Lord your God will choose for His name to dwell, there you shall bring all that I command you: your burnt offerings and your sacrifices, your tithes and the contribution of your hand, and all your choice votive offerings which you will vow to the Lord. (NASB)

According to the Modern Hebrew lexicons, the phrase הַיֵּשֶׁר בְּעֵינָיו appears to be a Hebrew idiom meaning “*whatsoever is right in his own eyes.*” Dissecting this phrase, יֵשֶׁר means “*straight, even, level, smooth*” and בְּעֵינָיו means “*in his eyes.*” The straightness of the eye is a way of describing the path one is taking, the choice that one is making in one’s life to choose life or to choose death, to walk with God or to walk contrary to what God has commanded. We walk where our eyes tell us to go. What we look at for extended periods of time is the direction our mind and body will proceed into. According to Moshe, before entering into the Promised Land, each was doing what they thought was right in his or her own eyes. Therefore, the straightness of the eye was indicative of the way one walked before God. The warning is given just prior to *Devarim / Deuteronomy 12:8* to destroy all of the idols and places of worship and to not do as the nations do when serving the Lord God Almighty. So the “*straightness of the eye*” is related to whether one is walking in righteousness or in sin. Is part of the gospel message of Yeshua to walk in righteousness and not walk in sin? It is interesting, in the Apostolic Writings, Yeshua warned the people of the kind of treasure one seeks in this world drawing a parallel with whether the eye is good or bad in *Matthew 6:20-23* follows prototypical to the teaching here in the Torah and with what David is saying in *Tehillim / Psalms 18*. Here the Torah tells us to fear (יִרְאַה) the Lord, to walk in all His ways (לְלַכֵּת בְּכָל-דְּרָכָיו), to love Him (לְאַהֲבָה אֹתוֹ), and to serve Him with all our heart (בְּכָל-לִבְבְּךָ) and all our soul (בְּכָל-נַפְשְׁךָ). *Devarim / Deuteronomy 10:12* summarizes beginning with fearing the Lord God. What does it mean to fear the Lord? Are we to be afraid of God’s approval of us or be afraid of the future expectation of judgment? According to King Solomon, “*the fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom*” (*Mishley / Proverbs 9:10*) since without fear we would not turn from our sins but would continue to walk in darkness.

The Hebrew word translated as “*fear*” is יִרְאַה has a range of meanings throughout the scriptures. The fear of the Lord as described in the Tanakh is a designation for true devoutness to the Lord (see *Mishley / Proverbs 1:7, Job 28:28, and Tehilim / Psalms 19:9*). Fear is also synonymous with love and hope, not a slavish dread, but rather reverence towards God (Compare: *Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:6, Hosea 11:1, and Isaiah 1:2, 63:16, 64:8*). The Lord God is also called “*the Fear of Yitzchak*” in sefer *Bereshit / Genesis 31:42 and 31:53* as it is translated as “*the God whom Yitzchak feared.*” Fear is also paralleled in the Apostolic Writings as a way to prevent carelessness in ones faith and as an incentive leading to repentance (see *Matthew 10:28, 2 Corinthians 5:11, 7:1, Philippians 2:12, Ephesians 5:21, and Hebrews 12:28-29*). Based on these Scriptures, fear can lead to anticipation of danger or as a reference to the reverence of God. Therefore, according to the Scriptures, the fear of the Lord includes an overwhelming sense of glory, worth, and beauty of the Lord God Almighty. It is also interesting that fear (יִרְאַה) appears to be derived from the root word יָרָא (see). Does the fear of the Lord come from a sense of seeing God’s power at work in the Scriptures, in this world or in our lives? Should we fear the Lord God in the sense of being threatened by Him

for our sins or are we to regard Him in wonder and with respect? These are important questions because the type of fear (יִרְאָה) that we have will reflect upon how we walk in all His ways (לְלַכֵּת בְּכָל-דְּרָכָיו), love Him (לְאַהֲבֵהוּ אֹתוֹ), and serve Him with all our heart (בְּכָל-לִבְבָךְ) and all our soul (בְּכָל-נַפְשְׁךָ).

Yeshua told us that unless one is born new having a spiritual rebirth one cannot see the kingdom of God according to *John 3:3* while he was talking to Nicodemus, saying “amein amein” (Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν) “*truly truly*” I say to you unless one is born from above (ἄνωθεν) he is not able to behold the kingdom (βασιλείαν) of God. The principle of “*life from above*” is revealed in God’s covenant and the process in which God would bless His people. The covenant was to bring the people to God and to teach them to trust Him, to delight in Him, and to be one with Him. Being born from above is God working in our lives to change us from the inside out because of His great love for us. Because it is written לְאַהֲבֵהוּ אֹת-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשִׁמְעַת בְּקוֹלוֹ “... love the Lord your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days, ...” The Lord loves His children as it is written in *Jeremiah 31:2* says מֵרַחֵק יְהוָה נִרְאָה לִי וְאַהֲבַת עוֹלָם אֶהְבֵּתִיךָ עַל-כֵּן מִשְׁכַּתִּיךָ חֲסֵד “*I love you with an everlasting love and in chased (חֲסֵד, mercy/grace) I draw you to me.*” According to Jeremiah, God the Father draws us to Himself. Yeshua believed the Scriptures saying in *John 6:44* οὐδεὶς δύναται ἔλθειν πρὸς με εἰὰν μὴ ὁ πατήρ ὁ πέμψας με ἔλκύσῃ αὐτόν, κἀγὼ ἀναστήσω αὐτὸν ἐν τῇ ἔσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ. ‘*No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.* (NASB) God’s chased (חֲסֵד, mercy) takes action, allowing us to come to our senses and turn from our sin and turn to Yeshua the Messiah. Being born from above is an action of creation by the hand of God as it says in *John 1:13* אֲשֶׁר לֹא מֵאֵם מֵאֱלֹהִים נוֹלְדוֹ: “*not of blood, or of the will of the flesh, or of the will of man, but of God.*” The Hebrew translation of the Greek says “מֵאֱלֹהִים נוֹלְדוֹ” meaning “*from God he is born,*” The reference here is to the Word of God (*John 1:1*) and of being born new. The Lord God makes a place in our hearts through which He works His will in our lives. As a result, rather than fear (יִרְאָה) the Lord in the sense of judgment, we fear the Lord to walk in His ways, and to seek Him for help. It is written לְאַהֲבֵהוּ אֹת-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשִׁמְעַת בְּקוֹלוֹ וְלִדְבָקָה-בּוֹ “... love the Lord your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days, ...” Is this what David meant when he tells us the Lord has rewarded him according to his righteousness and the cleanness of his hands? Is this what is meant when Paul wrote to the believers in Thessalonica in *2 Thessalonians 1:7* and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, *1:8* dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. (NASB) those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah? It says in the Hebrew text “לְשִׁמְעַת בְּקוֹלוֹ” “*to hear His voice*” and the English translation says “*by obeying His voice*” and “וְלִדְבָקָה-בּוֹ” “*to be devoted in Him*” and the English translation says “*by holding fast to Him.*” According to Paul, to know the Lord God Almighty is synonymous with obeying the gospel of Yeshua in *2 Thessalonians 1:7-8*. In the Torah portion (Parashat Re’eh) to hear His voice is synonymous with obeying His voice. To be devoted to Him is synonymous with holding fast to Him. We hear the Word of God and we believe by faith (*Romans 10:17*). We hold fast to the Word of God because He is the length of our days, He gives us life. David describes the way of his live is being devoted to following God’s Torah (His ways) and the Lord God Almighty turns back (יָשׁוּב) to him because he seeks to walk righteously before the Lord. Today, believing in Yeshua the Messiah, the Living Word of God (*John 1:14*), we are obeying the Torah command for substitutionary atonement. But if our lives do not change to follow God in His ways, are we really holding fast and being devoted to Him according to the gospel of Yeshua? If you listen and obey you have the blessing of God, Scripture says so. If we do not listen and obey, there is nothing more than the expectation of judgment on that great day of the Lord according to the book of Hebrews.

Hebrews 10:26-31

10:26 For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 10:27 but a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries. 10:28 Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 10:29 How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace? 10:30 For we know Him who said, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay.’ And again, ‘The Lord will judge His people.’ 10:31 It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (NASB)

26Εκουσίως γὰρ ἁμαρτανόντων ἡμῶν μετὰ τὸ λαβεῖν τὴν ἐπίγνωσιν τῆς ἀληθείας, οὐκέτι περὶ ἁμαρτιῶν ἀπολείπεται θυσία, 27φοβερὰ δέ τις ἐκδοχὴ κρίσεως καὶ πυρὸς ζῆλος ἐσθίειν μέλλοντος τοὺς ὑπεναντίους. 28ἀθετήσας τις νόμον Μωϋσέως χωρὶς οἰκτιρμῶν ἐπὶ δυσὶν ἢ τρισὶν μάρτυσιν ἀποθνήσκει: 29πόσω δοκεῖτε χείρονος ἀζωθήσεται τιμωρίας ὁ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ καταπατήσας, καὶ τὸ αἷμα τῆς διαθήκης κοινὸν ἠγησάμενος ἐν ᾧ ἡγιασθη, καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς χάριτος ἐνυβρίσας; 30οἶδαμεν γὰρ τὸν εἰπόντα, Ἐμοὶ ἐκδίκησις, ἐγὼ ἀνταποδώσω: καὶ πάλιν, Κρινεῖ κύριος τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ. 31φοβερὸν τὸ ἐμπεσεῖν εἰς χεῖρας θεοῦ ζῶντος.

Believing in Yeshua (the salvation of God) has always been coupled with listening and obeying the word of the Lord. Outside of Yeshua, there is no salvation, no redemption, no deliverance from sin, there is nothing left but the curse. If we willfully walk and live in sin, there is only the expectation of judgment. David said in *Tehillim / Psalms 18:23*, *וְאָשַׁתְּמַר מִעֲוֹנַי: כִּד 18:23 I was also blameless with Him, And I kept myself from my iniquity. (NASB)* He kept himself from “his iniquity.” Only with the Lord’s help, and persevering to seek the kingdom of God, walking in His ways, and seeking Yeshua for help is victory made possible. Scripture says in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 30* to “... love the Lord your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days, ...” Truly, the Lord God Almighty and Yeshua His Son are the length of our days. What an awesome God we serve! Let’s pray!

Part b:

David continues saying to the Lord *כֹּו עַם-הַסִּיד תִּתְחַסֵּד עַם-גְּבַר תִּמְיָם תִּתְמָם: כֹּו עַם-נָבָר תִּתְבָּרַךְ 18:25 With the kind You show Yourself kind; With the blameless You show Yourself blameless; 18:26 With the pure You show Yourself pure, And with the crooked You show Yourself astute. (NASB)* The Scriptures say that with the kind, the blameless, and the pure, the Lord shows Himself to be kind, blameless, and pure, and with the crooked the Lord shows himself to be astute. Here the word translated “crooked” (עֲקָשׁ) means “stubborn, obstinate, adamant, intractable, perversive, willful, bigoted, bulldog, bullish, contrary, contumelious; perverted” and the word *תִּתְפַתֵּל*, from the root word *פָּתַל*, means “be twisted, bent, curved” is written in the Hiphil verbal pattern to have the meaning “be twisted, bent, be perverted, struggle, or evasive, wriggle, writhe (in pain).” This verse says that the Lord will cause trouble for those who are crooked or perverse. Does God send bad things to the wicked? I have heard it taught that only good things come from the Lord, not bad things following by the reasoning “how could I trust a God who sends bad things to me?” Is this judgmental of the Lord God Almighty? Thinking in this way, is one conforming the Lord unto one’s own likeness? In *Tehillim / Psalms 18:26-27 (25-26)* the Scripture states that He will show kindness to those who are kind, blameless to those who are blameless, and pure to those who are pure. What would God show to those who are not kind, blameless, and pure? What about to those who say they are His children (I believe in Jesus) but do not exhibit kindness, blamelessness, and purity? Does God bring

bad things into our lives for the purpose of bringing us back to Him? When bad things do happen to us, if we question God rather than examining our lives, are we missing the mark? Consider the historical account from Parashat Ki Tisa (*Shemot / Exodus 30:11-34:35*) the Scriptures say **פרשת כי תשא ספר שמות פרק לב** *32:14 So the Lord changed His mind about the harm which He said He would do to His people. (NASB)* The reason God changed His mind is because of who he is according to *Shemot / Exodus 34:6-7*, **פרשת כי תשא ספר שמות פרק לד פסוק ו-ז, וַיַּעֲבֹר יְהוָה | עַל-פָּנָיו** *34:6 Then the Lord passed by in front of him and proclaimed, 'The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; 34:7 who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations.'* (NASB) The reason for the Lord's repenting and turning from His wrath is found within the word **חֶסֶד** which is most often translated as “steadfast love” or “lovingkindness” in the English translations. According to the Scriptures, the word **חֶסֶד** (Chesed) is most often connected in relation to God's covenant with His people. Brown, Driver, and Briggs lexicon define Chesed as “favor, grace, charity, kindness, benevolence, graciousness, mercy, prayerful, benignity.” Another way to think about Chesed (**חֶסֶד**) is within the context of the covenant; God's “Covenant Love” that He has for His people. It was this covenant love that the Lord God decided to enter into even after the people's sin of idolatry at the mountain of Sinai. So when we read *Tehillim / Psalms 18:25*, showing kindness to those who are kind, the word **חֲסִיד** from the root **חֶסֶד** suggests that the one who is kind, is doing so as having a covenant relationship with God. It is because of the covenant grace that we have in the Lord that kindness proceeds from each one of us; the covenant relationship with God is transforming. What is being indicated here is God expects faithfulness on our part in His Covenant with His people, that is paralleled to the Lord's faithfulness to Abraham and the covenant that He made with Abraham in Parashat Lech Lecha (*Bereshit / Genesis 12-17*) where God promises Abraham that His covenant will be an everlasting covenant for Abraham's offspring (descendent's, seed, etc). Therefore, it was because of God's covenant with Abraham that He extended His grace (**חֶסֶד**) to the people at Sinai and made them His people. Similarly, in the book of Jonah, it is by His grace (**חֶסֶד**) that the people of Nineveh were forgiven and He turned from His wrath. It is also by His grace that he brought Yeshua into this world to make atonement for our sins. As we study the Scriptures, we learn that throughout Israel's history God extends his grace (**חֶסֶד**) because of the covenant that He entered into with Abraham, and with all of Israel at the mountain of Sinai. The emphasis on the character of God in *Shemot / Exodus 34 verses 6-7* reveals God's mercy and grace (**חֶסֶד** Chesed) towards His chosen people. As a result of these things, the Lord proceeds to give the Torah to the people and establish His covenant with them exactly as He had promised 400 years prior to Abraham. The Aramaic Targum states **כו עם אברהם דאשתכח חסיד קדמך אסגיתא למעבד חסדא עם זרעיה יצחק דהוה שלימ בדחלתך אשלימתא מימר רעותך עימיה: כז עם יעקב דהוה בריר דהליך בברירותא קדמך בחרתא בנוי מן כל עממא ואפרשתא זרעיה מן כל פסילא ועם פרעה זרעיה ומצראי דחשיבו מחשבן בישן על עמך ישראל בילבלתנון** *18:26 With Abraham, who was found pious in your presence, you showed much mercy; with his seed, Isaac, who was complete in fear of you, you completed your favorable word. 18:27 With Jacob, who was pure in your presence, you chose his sons from all the Gentiles, and separated his seed from all that is unfit; but with Pharaoh and his seed, and the Egyptians who thought evil thoughts against your people, you confounded them in their thoughts. (EMC)* The Rabbis parallel the patriarchs with piety (**חסיד**, “follower, adherent; pious, kind”) Abraham exhibited kindness in the presence of the Lord, and Isaac had the fear of God in him. On the other hand, the rabbis say, according to the Aramaic Targum, that Jacob was pure in

God's presence, however, reading the narrative on Jacob's life, he did many things that were not so nice cheating his brother out of his inheritance and the things he did to Laban, etc. The Aramaic Targum then parallels this to how God treated Pharaoh and all the gentiles separating Israel for a people to himself. These things of being kind, blameless, and pure are paraphrased in the lives of the patriarchs and how God dealt with Pharaoh and the gentile nations. The Septuagint (LXX) states the following, 18:25 μετὰ ὁσίου ὁσιωθήσῃ καὶ μετὰ ἀνδρὸς ἀθῶου ἀθῶος ἔσῃ 18:26 καὶ μετὰ ἐκλεκτοῦ ἐκλεκτὸς ἔσῃ καὶ μετὰ στρεβλοῦ διαστρέψει 18:25 *With the holy thou wilt be holy; and with the innocent man thou wilt be innocent. 18:26 And with the excellent man thou wilt be excellent; and with the perverse thou wilt shew frowardness.* (LXX) Here the rabbis translate the Hebrew text חסיד to refer to "holiness" that being holy, God will be holy, and to the innocent, God will be innocent. Note that the rabbis translate the word חסיד using the Greek word ὁσίου which means "sacred" and is translated into English as "holy." This suggests that the man who walks in holiness walks a sacred life, a life that is holy and separate unto God. The one who does this the Lord will show holiness and sacredness back to him. Therefore, walking in God's ways, to be kind to others (whether friend or foe), being blameless, and living pure lives, will result in the Lord God Almighty showing Himself to be kind, blameless, and pure. This should be reason for us to examine our own lives each day, what we see, what we listen to, what we say, how we treat others, and what is going on in our thought life, because all of these things are visible before the Lord in heaven. The most important of all of these things is to seek the Lord for His help, ask in the name of Yeshua the Messiah, by the power of the Holy Spirit. In doing this we must humble ourselves and seek His guidance. The reason we are to humble ourselves and seek Him is found in David's words in *Tehillim / Psalms 18:28*, כח 18:27 *For You save an afflicted people, But haughty eyes You abase.* (NASB) The Lord saves those who are afflicted and who seek Him (עֲנִי תוֹשִׁיעַ) and the proud are described as having "haughty eyes" (וְעֵינַיִם רְמוֹת) God will cause them to become "weaker" (תִּשְׁפִּיל) here the word is translated as abase, but its meaning says "become lower, become weaker, to humiliate." If we do not humble ourselves before men and before the Lord, we will be subjected to the Lord working humbleness in our lives meaning that He will bring situations into our lives to help us realize that He is in control, He is to be praised, and He is the One whom we are to seek daily.

David continues saying כט כִּי-אַתָּה תֵּאִיר נְרִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יְגִיָּה תִּשְׁפִּי: ל כִּי-בָרָךְ אֶרֶץ גְּדוּד וּבְאֵלֵהֶי 18:28 *For You light my lamp; The Lord my God illumines my darkness. 18:29 For by You I can run upon a troop; And by my God I can leap over a wall.* (NASB) Strange thing is that reading the Hebrew text the Scripture appears to say that David is able "jump over a bull" (אֶדְלֶג-שׁוֹר) with God's help. On the other hand, the English translation says "leap over a wall." What does it mean to jump or leap a bull? In Crete, there is a Bull-Leaping Fresco known as the "Knossos." The Bull was a central theme in the Minoan civilization, with bull heads and bull horns used as symbols in the Knossos palace. The Minoan fresco and Minoan ceramics depict the bull-leaping ritual were both male and female jumped over bulls by grasping their horns. In the Mesopotamian - Sumerian "Epic of Gilgamesh" depicts Gilgamesh killing Enkidu the Bull of Heaven. This was an act of defiance to the gods. Note that bulls were depicted as messengers of God in the ancient culture. Killing the messenger was synonymous with defying the one who sent the messenger. (i.e. *Just like the examples given in the parables Yeshua told on the steward and the vineyard.*) From the earliest times, the bull is depicted as lunar in Mesopotamia (i.e. *its horns representing the crescent moon*), (Information taken from Jules Cashford, *The Moon: Myth and Image 2003*, begins the section "Bull and cow" pp 102). The bull was also known as a sacred animal in Egypt and in the late Hellenistic and Roman syncretic cult of Mithras. The question before though on *Tehillim / Psalms 18:28 (29)* is whether David was really referring to "jumping a bull" (אֶדְלֶג-שׁוֹר) or was he referring to jumping a wall as all English translations of the Scriptures suggest? The Aramaic Targum translates the verse as ל מטול דבמימך אסגי משריין 18:30 *For by your word I will pass through armies; and by the word*

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of my God I will subdue mighty citadels. (EMC) and the Septuagint translates the verse as 18:29 ὅτι ἐν σοὶ ῥυθισομαι ἀπὸ πειρατηρίου καὶ ἐν τῷ θεῷ μου ὑπερβήσομαι τεῖχος 18:29 For by thee shall I be delivered from a troop; and by my God I will pass over a wall. (LXX) The rabbis of 200-250 BC translate the verse to say “I will pass over a wall.” The rabbis of the late first and second centuries translate as “I will subdue mighty citadels.” Interestingly, examining Brown Drivers and Briggs Lexicon, the word שׁוֹר as a masculine noun does have the meaning of wall. The Aramaic translation of wall is שׁוֹרָא and in fact there are some Scriptural examples on the use of the word שׁוֹר as “wall” in the Tanach found in Bereshit / Genesis 49:22, 2 Samuel 22:30, and Jeremiah 5:10. Let’s look at these verses:

ספר בראשית פרק מט

כב בֵּן פֶּתַת יוֹסֵף בֶּן פֶּתַת עָלִי-עַיִן בְּנוֹת צַעֲדָה עָלִי-שׁוֹר:

49:22 ‘Joseph is a fruitful bough, A fruitful bough by a spring; Its branches run over a wall. (NASB)

ספר שמואל ב פרק כב

ל כִּי בָּקָה אֲרוּץ גְּדוּד בְּאַלְהֵי אֲדָלְג-שׁוֹר:

22:30 ‘For by You I can run upon a troop; By my God I can leap over a wall. (NASB)

ספר ירמיה פרק ה

י עָלוּ בְּנִשְׂרוֹתֶיהָ וְשַׁחֲתוּ וְכָלָה אֶל-תַּעֲשׂוּ הַסִּירוּ נְטִישׁוֹתֶיהָ כִּי לֹא לַיהוָה הֵמָּה:

5:10 ‘Go up through her vine rows and destroy, But do not execute a complete destruction; Strip away her branches, For they are not the Lord’s. (NASB)

Based on these examples, the use of the word שׁוֹר is attested in these Scriptures examples from Bereshit / Genesis 49:22, 2 Samuel 22:30, and Jeremiah 5:10. Therefore, David is speaking of the Lord saying כט 18:28 כִּי-אֶתָּה תֹאדִיר נְרִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יְגִיָּה תְשִׁפֵּי: ל כִּי-בָקָה אֲרוּץ גְּדוּד וּבְאַלְהֵי אֲדָלְג-שׁוֹר: The Lord shows us the way in which we should walk, gives us the strength to defeat our enemies, and the ability to leap over what we perceive to be a wall blocking our way.

David continues stating לא הָאֵל תָּמִים דָּרְכּוֹ אֲמַרְתָּ יְהוָה צְרוּפָה מָגֵן הוּא לְכֹל | הַחֹסִים בּוֹ: לב כִּי מִי הָאֵל הַמְאֲזִינִי חֵיל וַיִּתֵּן תָּמִים דָּרְכָי: 18:30 אֵלֹהִים מִבְּלַעֲדֵי יְהוָה וּמִי-צוּר זִוְלָתִי אֱלֹהֵינוּ: לג הָאֵל הַמְאֲזִינִי חֵיל וַיִּתֵּן תָּמִים דָּרְכָי: 18:31 כִּי מִי הוּא אֱלֹהֵי אֲדָמָה וְיִמְרוֹן לֵית הַיְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ? 18:32 הַיְיָ הַמְאֲזִינִי חֵיל וַיִּתֵּן תָּמִים דָּרְכָי: Here David appears to be reiterating a part of Tehillim / Psalms 18:1-3, the Lord is his rock, and gives him strength, and makes his way blameless. Examining the Aramaic Targum and the Septuagint, it is interesting to note how the rabbis say that by the Word of God, In His Memra (במימר) we can pass through armies and conquer mighty citadels. That God’s way is perfect, his oracles have been tried in fire, and he is a protector to them that hope in Him. Let’s look at these texts:

Aramaic Targum

ל מטול דבמימרך אסגי משריין ובמימר אלהי אכבוש כרכין תקיפין: לא אלהא דכוונן דכוונן אורחתיא אוריתא דיהוה בחירא תריס הוא לכל דמתרחצין עלוי במימריה: לב ארום על ניסא ופורקנא דתעביד למשיחך ולשיורי עמך דישתארוון יודון כל עממיא אומיא ולישניא ויימרון לית אלהא אלא יהוה ארום לית בר מינד ועמד בית ישראל יימרון לית דתקיף אלא אלהנא:

18:30 For by your word I will pass through armies; and by the word of my God I will subdue mighty citadels. 18:31 God [is he] whose ways are true; the Torah of the Lord is pure; he is a shield to all who trust in him. 18:32 For because of the miracle and deliverance that you will perform for your Messiah, and for the remnants of your people who will remain, all the Gentiles, nations, and tongues will confess and say, There is no God but the Lord, for there is none besides you; and your people will say, There is none mighty except our God. (EMC)

Septuagint (Greek)

18:30 ὁ θεός μου ἄμωμος ἡ ὁδὸς αὐτοῦ τὰ λόγια κυρίου πεπυρωμένα ὑπερασπιστὴς ἐστὶν πάντων τῶν ἐλπίζόντων ἐπ’ αὐτόν 18:31 ὅτι τίς θεὸς πλην τοῦ κυρίου καὶ τίς θεὸς πλην τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν 18:32 ὁ θεὸς ὁ περιζωνύων με δύναμιν καὶ ἔθετο ἄμωμον τὴν ὁδόν μου

18:30 As for my God, his way is perfect: the oracles of the Lord are tried in the fire; he is a protector of all them that hope in him. 18:31 For who is God but the Lord? and who is a God except our God? 18:32 It is God that girds me with strength, and has made my way blameless: (LXX)

לא האל תמים דרכו אמרת? הנה צרופה מגן הוא לכל | החוסים בו: 18:30 As for God, His way is blameless; The word of the Lord is tried; He is a shield to all who take refuge in Him. 18:31 For who is God, but the Lord? And who is a rock, except our God, 18:32 The God who girds me with strength And makes my way blameless? (NASB) The Lord is described as being a rock, blameless, He has been tried, and that He is a shield. What does it mean that the Lord God is a shield? For us today the shield no longer plays a significant part in our lives. There is a disconnect in our culture because battles now are fought at a great distance, with missiles and rapid-firing guns, against which soldiers to protect themselves cover themselves in the ground or behind very heavily armored vehicles. But in the days when David wrote his psalm, hand to hand combat was the primary means for attacking your enemy. Fighting was done at close range, sometimes foot touching foot, the sword of one clashing against that of the other. Two men would struggle together that would not end until one of the two was bathed in his own blood. In such a situation, the shield was one's life. In such battles, for some, going without a shield meant certain death, especially if the enemy shot arrows to your position. Therefore, among the nations of antiquity, the shield was the main item for protection in fighting, and even to this day there are tribes in Africa that use the shield for protection. The shield caught the arrow; it broke the blow of the lance, and repelled the stroke of the sword. When thousands and thousands of men in Jerusalem were handling the shield themselves, they owed their lives to it, and raised the song of praise in the outer courts of Zion, and gloried in the Lord God Almighty as "the shield of their confidence." Thinking on these things, the people of that day felt in a way we can never fully know, what it means to rejoice in God as in one's Shield. The shield was a cover for the body which, was handled by the man himself who was sent into battle. For a right handed man, the shield was grasped by the left hand and held before the arm; In case of an assault one involuntarily raises his arm, and at the risk of having it wounded, tries to cover his face and his heart with it. Keeping all of these things in mind, the Scriptures say "The Lord is my Shield" and does not say, that God protects us from afar. These Scriptures suggest that He does this without effort on our part. Note how the Aramaic Targum says "For by Your Word I will pass through armies," indicating that the Lord is doing all by the power of His Word. The wording in Scripture as "The Lord is my Shield," is the language of faith. In battle, one has faith that their shield will hold up to the attack. With this parallelism, the use of the Lord as our shield come from the sense that God is close at hand, that our faith lays hold on Him, that we use Him as a defense against the assailant, and thus

by faith, in His Messiah, we know and feel that we are covered with His presence. This does not mean that we can “use” God but that we can trust and believe that He will protect us, similar to the words in *Tehillim / Psalms 18:28*, כִּי-אַתָּה עִם-עֲנֵי תוֹשִׁיעַ וְעֵינַיִם רָמוֹת תִּשְׁפִּיל: 18:27 For You save an afflicted people, But haughty eyes You abase. (NASB) The Lord saves those who are afflicted and who seek Him (כִּי-אַתָּה) (עִם-עֲנֵי תוֹשִׁיעַ) The Aramaic Targum on *Tehillim / Psalms 18:32* states that God will perform a miracle and deliverance from His Messiah for the remnants of His people who remain and “all the Gentiles, nations, and tongues will confess and say, There is no God but the Lord, for there is none besides you; and your people will say, There is none mighty except our God.” In a time of danger a mother stands before her child, so as to cover her baby with her own body, and therefore it is said that mother is a shield to her child. In the same way, God is the shield of the little ones who as yet do not know Him. The interesting point is that it is not the imagery of a mother that we understand the Lord being our shield, it is in the imagery of the man who handles the shield himself and saved his life by it. The shield is also paralleled to the wing of an eagle, it belongs to the body of the warrior, a part of his arm, and his armor. The Lord God is a Shield to those who trust in Him, to those who believe, to those who in times of distress and danger know the never failing use of faith, and who by reason of this faith understand that God Himself gives direction to their arm and to their very footsteps. The Lord therefore is our Shield against contagious disease, against the forces of nature, and against even death itself. Our God is a Shield against disease and pestilence, and against flood and fire. Can you see how all of these things are connected together in the Lord God who loves and cares for us? In addition to this, God is our shield in the struggle to save our soul, in the struggle for our souls, we must stretch out our hands in faith and seek Him, His ways and His Messiah Yeshua. Now thinking on the shield and armor of a warrior, there is also something known as the “*escutcheon*,” meaning “*shield on which a coat of arms is pictured*.” The coat of arms is a picture, an image by which a person is recognized in battle. The escutcheon is a sign of personal recognition to those who know him, the escutcheon tells others who it is that is hiding behind the shield. The Shield therefore expresses the person, and becomes the personification of the warrior himself. Having God as our shield, we know Him because of who He is, His presence, He is the one who delivered Israel from bondage in Egypt, He holds the forces of nature in His hand, He has the ultimate power and majesty over all, and He is the One who works in our lives each day. Believing in God our Shield is to believe in the Savior of the World.

לִדְ מְשׁוּהָ רַגְלֵי כְּאַיִלוֹת וְעַל כַּפְּתַי יַעֲמִידֵנִי: לֵה מְלַמֵּד יָדַי לְמַלְחָמָה וְנִחַתָּה קִשְׁת־נְחוּשָׁה זְרוּעֹתַי: לוֹ וּתְתֶנּוּ-לִי מִגֵּן יִשְׁעָה וַיְמִינָה תִסְעֵדֵנִי וְעִנּוּתָה תִרְבֵּנִי: לז תִּרְחִיב צַעְדֵי תַחְתִּי וְלֹא מְעַדוּ: 18:33 He makes my feet like hinds’ feet, And sets me upon my high places. 18:34 He trains my hands for battle, So that my arms can bend a bow of bronze. 18:35 You have also given me the shield of Your salvation, And Your right hand upholds me; And Your gentleness makes me great. 18:36 You enlarge my steps under me, And my feet have not slipped. (NASB) What does it mean that God has given us the Shield of His Salvation? When David was thinking of Salvation, what was he thinking? When we think about Salvation today, what is our understanding of this? Is our understanding the same as David’s? In *Tehillim / Psalms 18:33-36*, David says that God gives him feet that can run fast (hind’s feet) and sets him upon a high place. A high place has the advantage of seeing everyone who is approaching. He also says that God trains his hands for battle, strong, and the Lord enlarges his steps so his feet do not slip. Studying the shield imagery previously, and seeing David’s use of shield referring to God’s Salvation; in heaven for you and I, we are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation. The Lord God Almighty is acting to help, keep, and train. The Aramaic Targum says לִדְ דְּמִשׁוּי רִיגְלֵי לֵה מְלִיף אִידי לְמַעַבְד קַרְבָּא וּמִתְקִיף הֵיךְ קִשְׁת כְּרוּמֵי אֲדַרְעֵי דְרַעֵי: לוֹ וַיְהִיבֵת לִי תְקוּף וּפּוֹרְקָן וַיְמִינְךָ תְּסִיעֵנִי >נִי וּבְמִימְרֵךְ אֲסַגְעֵנִי: לז אֲפַתִּית אֲסַגְעֵת פְּסִיעֵתִי בְּאַתְרֵי וְלֹא: 18:34 Who makes my feet like hinds’; and he will sustain me in my stronghold. 18:35 Who teaches my hands to do battle, and who makes my arms as strong as a bronze bow. 18:36 And you have

given me strength and redemption; and your right hand will help me; and by your word you have multiplied me. 18:37 You have broadened my steps in my place, and my knee has not buckled. (EMC) The rabbis say the Lord has given David strength and redemption, that the right hand of God has helped him and the word has multiplied him. Note how the rabbis connect the Shield of Salvation to the Strength and Redemption of God. Redemption is the purchase back of something that had been lost, by the payment of a ransom. The Greek word for redemption is written as apolutrosis (stem: λύτρον) a word occurring nine times in Scripture, and always with the idea of a ransom or price paid (see *Matthew 20:28 and Mark 10:45*). There are instances in the LXX (Septuagint) of the use of the word lutron (λύτροις) in man's relation to man (*Vayikra / Leviticus 19:20, 25:51, Shemot / Exodus 21:30, Bamidbar / Numbers 35:31-32, Isaiah 45:13, and Mishley / Proverbs 6:35*), and in the same sense of man's relation to God (*Bamidbar / Numbers 3:49 and 18:15*). Do you think the rabbis connection of the "Shield of God's Salvation" to "Strength and Redemption" is in the sense of redemption from sin or between men? The LXX (Greek translation) states the following, 18:33 ὁ καταρτιζόμενος τοὺς πόδας μου ὡς ἐλάφου καὶ ἐπὶ τὰ ὑψηλὰ ἰστῶν με 18:34 διδάσκων χεῖράς μου εἰς πόλεμον καὶ ἔθου τόξον χαλκοῦν τοὺς βραχίονάς μου 18:35 καὶ ἔδωκάς μοι ὑπερασπισμὸν σωτηρίας μου καὶ ἡ δεξιὰ σου ἀντελάβετό μου καὶ ἡ παιδεία σου ἀνῶρθωσέν με εἰς τέλος καὶ ἡ παιδεία σου αὐτὴ με διδάξει 18:36 ἐπλάτυνας τὰ διαβήματά μου ὑποκάτω μου καὶ οὐκ ἠσθένησαν τὰ ἴχνη μου 18:33 who strengthens my feet as hart's feet, and sets me upon high places. 18:34 He instructs my hands for war: and thou hast made my arms as a brazen bow. 18:35 And thou hast made me secure in my salvation: and thy right hand has helped me, and thy correction has upheld me to the end; yea, thy correction itself shall instruct me. 18:36 Thou has made room for my goings under me, and by footsteps did not fail. (LXX) Here, the rabbis say that the Lord makes David secure in his salvation, that God's right hand has helped him and that God's correction has upheld him to the end, and that Gods correction itself has instructed him. This suggests that the Shield of Salvation is in fact related to the Salvation of God from Sin. The Lord is correcting David and God's correction has caused him to walk securely in the ways of the Lord. This is exactly what happens to us today in Yeshua the Messiah. By faith in God's Messiah, we are the children of God, and being a child of God, the Scriptures say in *Hebrews 12:6 For the LORD disciplines those he loves, and he punishes each one he accepts as his child. (NIV)*

לח אַרְדּוֹף אוֹיְבַי וְאַשְׁיֵגֶם וְלֹא-אַשׁוּב עַד-כְּלוֹתָם: לט אֶמְחָצֵם וְלֹא-יָכְלוּ קוּם יִפְּלוּ תַחַת רַגְלִי: מ וְתִאָזְרֵנִי חֵיֶל לְמַלְחָמָה תִּכְרִיעַ קַמִּי תִּחַתִּי: מא וְאוֹיְבֵי נַתְתָּה לִּי עֶרְף וּמִשְׁנָאִי אֶצְמִיתָם: מב יִשְׁוּעוּ וְאֵין מוֹשִׁיעַ עַל-יְהוָה וְלֹא עָנָם: מג וְאַשְׁחָקֶם כְּעַפְרָ עַל-פְּנֵי-רוּחַ כְּטִיט חוּצוֹת אֲרִיקָם: 18:37 I pursued my enemies and overtook them, And I did not turn back until they were consumed. 18:38 I shattered them, so that they were not able to rise; They fell under my feet. 18:39 For You have girded me with strength for battle; You have subdued under me those who rose up against me. 18:40 You have also made my enemies turn their backs to me, And I destroyed those who hated me. 18:41 They cried for help, but there was none to save, Even to the Lord, but He did not answer them. 18:42 Then I beat them fine as the dust before the wind; I emptied them out as the mire of the streets. (NASB) Here he is describing his victory over his enemies. He overtook them, consumed them, shattered them, they fell under his feet and cant rise, God girded him with strength for battle, the Lord caused his enemies to flee, David destroyed those who hated him, they cried for help but none were there to help and the Lord God did not answer their cry. Both the Aramaic and Greek translations parallel the Hebrew text. The Aramaic Targum says לח ארדוף סנאי בעלי דבבי ושיציתיון ולא תבית ואדבקיון ולא איתוב עד דגמרתיון: לט אגמריון ולא יכילו יכלין למיקם ונפלו קטילין תחות פרסת ריגליי: מ וזריזתא לי חילא היך קמור למעבד קרבא תברתא עממין דקיימין לאבאשא לי חמטתנון תחותי: מא ובעלי דבבי תברתא קדמי יהביתיון מחזרי קדל וסנאי אשיציון: מב בען סעיד ולית להון פריק מצלן קדם יהוה ולא מקבל צלותהון: מג ורוששתיון ודוששתיון היך גרגישתא דארעא על אנפי זעפא והיך סיינ אשקקי בעטית אינון הינון: 18:38 I will pursue my enemies; [now] have I destroyed them, and I did not return until I finished them off. 18:39 I will destroy them, and they are unable to rise; and the slain have fallen under the soles of my feet.

18:40 *And you have girded me with strength as a belt to do battle; you have defeated beneath me the Gentiles who rise up to do me harm. 18:41 And my foes you have broken in my presence; you have made them turn tail; [thus] my enemies I will destroy. 18:42 They seek help, but they have no redeemer; they pray in the presence of the Lord, but he does not accept their prayer. 18:43 I have crushed them like clods of earth before the storm-wind; and like the mud of the streets I have trodden them. (EMC)* The Septuagint says, 18:37 καταδιώξω τοὺς ἐχθροὺς μου καὶ καταλήψομαι αὐτοὺς καὶ οὐκ ἀποστραφήσομαι ἕως ἄν ἐκλίπωσιν 18:38 ἐκθλίψω αὐτοὺς καὶ οὐ μὴ δύνωνται στήναι πεσοῦνται ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας μου 18:39 καὶ περιέξωσάς με δύναμιν εἰς πόλεμον συνεπόδισας πάντας τοὺς ἐπανιστανομένους ἐπ’ ἐμὲ ὑποκάτω μου 18:40 καὶ τοὺς ἐχθροὺς μου ἔδωκάς μοι νῶτον καὶ τοὺς μισοῦντάς με ἐξωλέθρευσας 18:41 ἐκέκραξαν καὶ οὐκ ἦν ὁ σῶζων πρὸς κύριον καὶ οὐκ εἰσήκουσεν αὐτῶν 18:42 καὶ λεπτυνῶ αὐτοὺς ὡς χοῦν κατὰ πρόσωπον ἀνέμου ὡς πηλὸν πλατειῶν λεανῶ αὐτοὺς 18:37 *I will pursue mine enemies, and overtake them; and I will not turn back until they are consumed. 18:38 I will dash them to pieces and they shall not be able to stand: they shall fall under my feet. 18:39 For thou hast girded me with strength for war: thou hast beaten down under me all that rose up against me. 18:40 And thou has made mine enemies turn their backs before me; and thou hast destroyed them that hated me. 18:41 They cried, but there was no deliverer: even to the Lord, but he hearkened not to them. 18:42 I will grind them as the mud of the streets: and I will beat them small as dust before the wind. (LXX)* The interesting point of this section of Scripture is the question of how these verses relate to Yeshua’s words to us in *Matthew 5:43-48*? Does this comparison show a transition between the way the Lord operates today with regard to the Tanach (Old Testament) and the Apostolic Writings (New Testament)? Let’s read Yeshua’s words in Matthew Chapter 5.

Matthew 5:43-48

5:43 *‘You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ 5:44 ‘But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 5:45 so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. 5:46 ‘For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? 5:47 ‘If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others Do not even the Gentiles do the same? 5:48 ‘Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect. (NASB)*

⁴³Ἠκούσατε ὅτι ἐρρέθη, Ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου καὶ μισήσεις τὸν ἐχθρόν σου. ⁴⁴ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν, ἀγαπάτε τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ὑμῶν καὶ προσεύχεσθε ὑπὲρ τῶν διωκόντων ὑμᾶς, ⁴⁵ὅπως γένησθε υἱοὶ τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς, ὅτι τὸν ἥλιον αὐτοῦ ἀνατέλλει ἐπὶ πονηροὺς καὶ ἀγαθοὺς καὶ βρέχει ἐπὶ δικαίους καὶ ἀδίκους. ⁴⁶ἐὰν γὰρ ἀγαπήσητε τοὺς ἀγαπῶντας ὑμᾶς, τίνα μισθὸν ἔχετε; οὐχὶ καὶ οἱ τελῶναι τὸ αὐτὸ ποιοῦσιν; ⁴⁷καὶ ἐὰν ἀσπάσησθε τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς ὑμῶν μόνον, τί περισσὸν ποιεῖτε; οὐχὶ καὶ οἱ ἔθνηκοὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ποιοῦσιν; ⁴⁸Ἔσεσθε οὖν ὑμεῖς τέλειοι ὡς ὁ πατήρ ὑμῶν ὁ οὐράνιος τέλειός ἐστιν.

In *Tehillim / Psalms 18:37-42* we read David praising God for the destruction of his enemies. In *Matthew 5:43-48*, Yeshua tells us that we have heard that it was “said.” Note Yeshua says “that it was said” and not “that it is written.” Did Yeshua say here that the Law says to hate your enemy? Does the Torah tell us to hate our enemies? Studying the Torah (Law), no where does it say that one is to hate their enemies. In fact, this statement cannot be found in the Mishnah either (*the oral law that was passed by memorization and written down in the 3rd century CE by Judah ha-Nasi*). The saying “You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy” must have been a statement that was common in the midst of the occupying army of Rome in

Israel in the first century. Yeshua said “love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.” The reason is so that we may be the sons of our Father who is in heaven. Today, studying these verses, is it wrong to thank God and to praise His Name for having victory over our enemies, in their death? What if we lived in Syria today and were innocent people living in the midst of the Muslim war? If we were attacked, and the enemy was destroyed, would it be wrong to thank God for their destruction?

David continues saying, מִד תִּפְלְטֵנִי מֵרִיבֵי עַם תִּשְׂיִמְנִי לְרֹאשׁ גּוֹיִם עִם לֹא-יָדַעְתִּי יַעֲבֹדוּנִי: מִה לְשִׁמֶע, 18:43 You have delivered me from the contentions of the people; You have placed me as head of the nations; A people whom I have not known serve me. 18:44 As soon as they hear, they obey me; Foreigners submit to me. 18:45 Foreigners fade away, And come trembling out of their fortresses. (NASB) Notice in Tehillim / Psalms 18:43 states “A people whom I have not known serve me” using the world יַעֲבֹדוּנִי from the root word עבד meaning “to work, to labor, to serve” provides us with a picture of slavery, forced labor, or servitude. The Rabbis translate this saying מִד תשזבינני מפלוגת מפלגותא עממיא תנטרינני מניתא יתי במזלי מזיין בריש עממיא עמא דלא חכימית יפלחונני: מה לשמע אודן ישתמעון לי בני עממיא נוכראין יכדבון קדמיי: מו בני עממיא נוכראין יספון ויטלטלון מברנתהון: 18:44 You will deliver me from the discords of the Gentiles; you will keep me by my destiny a benefactor at the head of the Gentiles; a people that I did not know shall worship me. 18:45 At the hearing of the ear, they will obey me; the sons of the peoples will desert in my presence. 18:46 The sons of the peoples above will perish, and will go into exile from their palaces. (EMC) using the word יפלחונני that is translated to mean “to worship me.” The Septuagint says 18:43 ῥύσῃ με ἐξ ἀντιλογιῶν λαοῦ καταστήσεις με εἰς κεφαλὴν ἔθνῶν λαός ὃν οὐκ ἔγνων ἐδούλευσέν μοι 18:44 εἰς ἀκοὴν ὠτίου ὑπήκουσέν μοι υἱοὶ ἀλλότριοι ἐψεύσαντό μοι 18:45 υἱοὶ ἀλλότριοι ἐπαλαιώθησαν καὶ ἐχώλαναν ἀπὸ τῶν τριβῶν αὐτῶν 18:43 Deliver me from the gain sayings of the people: thou shalt make me head of the Gentiles: a people whom I knew not served me, 18:44 at the hearing of the ear they obeyed me: the strange children lied to me. 18:45 The strange children waxed old, and fell away from their paths through lameness. (LXX) the Septuagint agrees with both the Hebrew text and the Aramaic targum. This Psalm of David (Tehillim / Psalms 18) is a bit unpleasant thinking on how David praises God for the destruction of his enemies or of having the ability to slay his enemies in light of what Yeshua said in Matthew 5:43-48. Studying the Psalms, some psalms are soothing, such as Tehillim / Psalm 23. Others like Tehillim / Psalm 91 are comforting. There are soul-stirring psalms which inspire us to worship and praise such as Tehillim / Psalm 103. Whereas, other psalms are troubling, such as here in Tehillim / P alms 18 and David thanking God for the destruction of his enemies. Tehillim / Psalm 109 is another example where there psalter is calling upon God to destroy his enemies in the most horrible ways. Other Psalms contain similar prayers for the punishment of evildoers, for example from Tehillim / Psalms 69:27-28 that says “Do Thou add iniquity to their iniquity, and may they not come into Thy righteousness. May they be blotted out of the book of life, and may they not be recorded with the righteous.” Here one is asking God to even blot his enemies out of the book of life. In Tehillim / Psalm 137 we find a cry of vengeance against the Babylonians. Moshe said in Bamidbar / Numbers 10:35 Then it came about when the ark set out that Moses said, ‘Rise up, O Lord! And let Your enemies be scattered, And let those who hate You flee before You.’ (NASB) The prophet Jeremiah also spoke words of imprecation (invoking evil) which parallel the prayers of David and others in the psalms. For example, Jeremiah 18:19 Do give heed to me, O Lord, And listen to what my opponents are saying! 18:20 Should good be repaid with evil? For they have dug a pit for me. Remember how I stood before You To speak good on their behalf, So as to turn away Your wrath from them. 18:21 Therefore, give their children over to famine And deliver them up to the power of the sword; And let their wives become childless and widowed. Let their men also be smitten to death, Their young men struck down by the sword in battle. 18:22 May an outcry be heard from their houses, When You suddenly bring raiders upon them; For they have dug a pit to capture me And hidden snares for my feet. 18:23 Yet You, O Lord, know All their deadly designs against me; Do not forgive their iniquity Or blot out

their sin from Your sight. But may they be overthrown before You; Deal with them in the time of Your anger! (NASB) Do these prayers that call for God to destroy one's enemies, run contradictory to Yeshua's words in *Matthew 5:43-48*? Is this simply a matter of God's revelation in Yeshua the Messiah for today as compared to God's revelation to those before Yeshua came? Are these simply the passionate plea of David and others for God's help against their enemies?

The imprecation psalms (*psalms that seem to call upon God to invoke evil*) are not merely the passionate pleas of one man, whether spiritually or fleshly motivated, these psalms were used in worship before God in Israel. Could you imagine coming together to worship and singing a psalm like *Tehillim / Psalm 109*? Ancient Israel did and so we should look and think very carefully on these passages to learn its message to us. How does thanking God for the destruction of our enemies apply to us today? Is there a time for praying for the salvation of our enemies and a time for praying for their destruction? When praying for our own salvation from harm, are we asking in a round about way for the destruction of the enemy? Think about those who are in Syria or Israel with the constant thread of bombs and missiles. The righteousness of the psalter shows us that he is first looking (seeking) God's help. It is to the God of Israel to whom these prayers were addressed and His Spirit who inspired them. Therefore, these psalms should be taken seriously with regard to who God is and who we are as His children.

David concludes the Psalm saying מִזְחֵה־יְהוָה וְכָרוֹךְ צוּרֵי יְרוּשָׁה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הָאֵל הַבּוֹתֵן נַקְמוֹת לִי יְהוָה | לִי וַיִּדְבֹּר עַמִּים תַּחֲתָי: מִטְּמַפְלִטֵי מְאִיבֵי אֶף מִן־קַמֵי תְרוּמִמְנֵי מְאִישׁ חָמָס תַּצִּילֵנִי: ג עַל־כֵּן | אֹדְךָ בְּגוֹיִם | יְהוָה לִי וְיִשְׁמְךָ אֲזַמְרָה: נֹא מִגְדֹּל [מִגְדֹּל] יְשׁוּעוֹת מִלְּכֹו וְעִשָׂה חֶסֶד | לְמִשִּׁיחוֹ לְדָוִד וּלְזַרְעוֹ עַד־עוֹלָם 18:46 *The Lord lives, and blessed be my rock; And exalted be the God of my salvation, 18:47 The God who executes vengeance for me, And subdues peoples under me. 18:48 He delivers me from my enemies; Surely You lift me above those who rise up against me; You rescue me from the violent man. 18:49 Therefore I will give thanks to You among the nations, O Lord, And I will sing praises to Your name. 18:50 He gives great deliverance to His king, And shows lovingkindness to His anointed, To David and his descendants forever.* (NASB) The Scripture says "God executes vengeance for me, And subdues peoples under me," how is this the case if David is the one who is subduing the nations according to the previous text? (*Tehillim / Psalms 18:37-42*) Studying these Scriptures, there is one reference from the Apostolic Writings, Romans 15:9 quotes from *Tehillim / Psalms 18:49*. Let's read *Romans 15:7-13*:

Romans 15:7-13

15:7 Therefore, accept one another, just as Christ also accepted us to the glory of God. 15:8 For I say that Christ has become a servant to the circumcision on behalf of the truth of God to confirm the promises given to the fathers, 15:9 and for the Gentiles to glorify God for His mercy; as it is written, 'Therefore I will give praise to You among the Gentiles, And I will sing to Your name.' 15:10 Again he says, 'Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people.' 15:11 And again, 'Praise the Lord all you Gentiles, And let all the peoples praise Him.' 15:12 Again Isaiah says, 'There shall come the root of Jesse, And He who arises to rule over the Gentiles, In Him shall the Gentiles hope.' 15:13 Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. (NASB)

⁷Διὸ προσλαμβάνεσθε ἀλλήλους, καθὼς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς προσελάβετο ὑμᾶς, εἰς δόξαν τοῦ θεοῦ.
⁸λέγω γὰρ Χριστὸν διάκονον γεγενῆσθαι περιτομῆς ὑπὲρ ἀληθείας θεοῦ, εἰς τὸ βεβαιῶσαι τὰς ἐπαγγελίας τῶν πατέρων, ⁹τὰ δὲ ἔθνη ὑπὲρ ἐλέους δοξάσαι τὸν θεόν: καθὼς γέγραπται, Διὰ τοῦτο ἔξομολογήσομαι σοι ἐν ἔθνεσιν, καὶ τῷ ὀνοματί σου ψαλῶ. ¹⁰καὶ πάλιν λέγει, Εὐφράνθητε, ἔθνη, μετὰ τοῦ λαοῦ αὐτοῦ. ¹¹καὶ πάλιν, Αἰνεῖτε, πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, τὸν κύριον, καὶ ἐπαινεσάτωσαν αὐτὸν πάντες οἱ λαοί. ¹²καὶ πάλιν Ἡσαΐας λέγει, Ἔσται ἡ ρίζα τοῦ Ἰεσσαί, καὶ ὁ ἀνιστάμενος ἄρχειν ἐθνῶν: ἐπ' αὐτῷ ἔθνη ἐλπιούσιν. ¹³ὁ δὲ θεὸς τῆς ἐλπίδος πληρῶσαι ὑμᾶς

πάσης χαρᾶς καὶ εἰρήνης ἐν τῷ πιστεύειν, εἰς τὸ περισσεύειν ὑμᾶς ἐν τῇ ἐλπίδι ἐν δυνάμει πνεύματος ἁγίου.

Here, the Apostle Paul uses *Tehillim / Psalms 18* to say *15:9 and for the Gentiles to glorify God for His mercy; as it is written, 'Therefore I will give praise to You among the Gentiles, And I will sing to Your Name.'* In the context of *Tehillim / Psalms 18*, David is praising God for the destruction of the Gentiles, but Paul uses this verse to speak of the mercy of God in His Son so Gentiles will glorify God for His mercy. In *John 3:3*, Yeshua says “*amein amein*” (אָמֵן אָמֵן) “*truly truly*” I say to you unless one is born from above (ἄνωθεν) he is not able to behold the kingdom (βασιλείαν) of God. The principle of “*life from above*” is revealed in God’s covenant and the process in which God blesses His people. The covenant was to bring the people to God and to teach them to trust Him, to delight in Him, and to be one with Him and to walk in His ways. This is the reason and the purpose that David seeks the Lord above throughout all of his days according to the Psalms. Being born from above reveals to us that God is actively working in our lives to change us from the inside out because of His great love for us. It is written in the Scriptures לְאַהֲבָה אֶת-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשִׁמְעַתְּ בְּקוֹלֵי יְהוָה וְלִדְבָקָה-בּוֹ כִּי הוּא תְּיָיֶךָ וְאַהֲבָה יְמִיךָ מְרַחֵק יְהוָה גְּרָאָה לִי “... *love the Lord your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days, ...*” *Jeremiah 31:2* says לִי וְאַהֲבָה עוֹלָם אֶהְבֶּתִיךָ עַל-כֵּן מְשַׁכְּתִיךָ חֶסֶד וְרַחֲמִים “*I love you with an everlasting love and in chased (חֶסֶד, mercy/grace) I draw you to me.*” According to Jeremiah, God the Father draws us to Himself. Yeshua said in *John 6:44* οὐδεὶς δύναται ἐλθεῖν πρὸς με ἢ ἂν ὁ πατήρ ὁ πέμψας με ἑλκύσῃ αὐτόν, κἀγὼ ἀναστήσω αὐτόν ἐν τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ. ‘*No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day.* (NASB) In God’s mercy the non-Jew will give praise to the God of Israel. Becoming born new, God makes a place in our hearts through which He works His will in our lives. As we walk in the fear (יִרְאָה) of the Lord, we are to pray for those who persecute us, pray for our enemies, and love those who hate us. This is very difficult to do without God’s help. The Torah says לְאַהֲבָה אֶת-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשִׁמְעַתְּ בְּקוֹלֵי יְהוָה וְלִדְבָקָה-בּוֹ כִּי הוּא תְּיָיֶךָ וְאַהֲבָה יְמִיךָ מְרַחֵק יְהוָה גְּרָאָה לִי “... *love the Lord your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days, ...*” In this Hebrew text it says “לְשִׁמְעַתְּ בְּקוֹלֵי” meaning “*to hear His voice*” and the English translation says “*by obeying His voice*” and “וְלִדְבָקָה-בּוֹ” meaning “*to be devoted in Him*” where the English translation says “*by holding fast to Him.*” The Torah of God does not call us to invoke evil upon our enemies. We are called to seek God, to seek His Messiah, His Salvation, and to listen to His voice which synonymous to obeying His voice and being devoted to Him (*synonymous with holding fast to Him*). We hear the Word of God to believe by faith (*Romans 10:17*) and we hold fast to the Word of God because He is the length of our days and He gives us life. Without Yeshua there is no Salvation, no Redemption, no Deliverance from sin, there is nothing left but the sting of the enemy. David throughout *Tehillim / Psalms 18* sought the Salvation of God just as he said in *Tehillim / Psalms 18:46* *The Lord lives, and blessed be my rock; And exalted be the God of my salvation,* (NASB). In order to see the Kingdom of God, receive Redemption, and the Forgiveness of sins, ask Yeshua, God’s Messiah to be Lord of your life. Let’s pray!

Christian Commentary

The *International Critical Commentary on the Psalms (ICCP)*, Driver, Plummer, and Briggs, 2005, states that *Tehillim / Psalms 18* was originally an ode of the victory of David over his enemies, and then was subsequently adapted for public worship. David praises YHVH as his Savior from a deadly peril described under the metaphor of drowning. He heard the cry for help (*18:3-7*); the Lord’s anger caused heaven and earth to quake; He descended upon the wings of a cherubim in a storm cloud (*18:8-13*). Thunder, lightning,

and an earthquake are His weapons, and He delivered David from his peril and became his stay (18:14-20). David praises God as his lamp and shield, who girded him with strength for war (18:29-35), giving him a broad position on which to pursue his enemies and exterminate them (18:37-43). The Lord delivered David from the strivings of his own people, made him head of nations, and did kindness to the anointed seed of David forever (18:44-45, 18:47-49, and 51). The commentators state that the ode of David was generalized for public worship in several ways, (i) by prefixing an assertion of love to YHVH (18:2), (ii) by inserting two glosses, the first teaching that God rewards according to righteousness (18:21-24) the second, that God acts towards men just as they act towards others, especially in saving the humble and humiliating the lofty (18:25-28), (iii) a reference to nations cringing in the spirit of later times (18:46-46), and (iv) a resolution of liturgical praise (18:50).

The commentators next direct our attention to the title of the Psalm, the Psalm is described in the title as השירה "the song," just as other odes of victory over enemies bear this title, for example in *Shemot / Exodus 15:1*, the ode of victory over the Egyptians, *Devarim / Deuteronomy 31:30*, Moshe's ode of triumph of YHVH, of *Judges 5:1*, Deborah's ode over her victory. David spoke the words of this song in the day that YHVH delivered him from the hands of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul. The commentators say this phrase at the introduction of the Psalm was adopted by an editor of the Psalm changing the second כף to the יד for richness of expression, and removing the name of David into the principal clause, making the rest of a relative clause and prefixing יהוה לרוד אשר and raise the question of whether the word לרוד has the same meaning here as in the other titles of the Psalms and all the more since the term servant of YHVH precedes the name of David. The commentators then state that this ode of David was probably taken from 2 Samuel 22. Comparing the text of 2 Samuel 22 to *Tehillim / Psalms 18*, there are many variations from that of the Psalms that 2 Samuel 22 lacks. The commentators direct the reader to missing Aramaisms in *Tehillim / Psalms 18:1, 26, 46, and 48*. The commentators state that 2 Samuel 22 also uses many vav consecutive imperfects as a historical aorist, which in the Psalm are simply imperfect with a more general reference to the present or future (18:7, 12, 39). The text of 2 Samuel is said to be more archaic. The ode in both forms gives evidence of a later date. Examples of late words are given and it is said these are all glosses (additions) to the Psalms text meaning that they believe the Scribes at various times through history were changing the biblical text. The commentators state that if the ode in its present form, in the text of 2 Samuel 22 or *Tehillim / Psalms 18*, is regarded as a unit, one composition without interpolation, there can be no escape from the opinion that it was composed at the earliest in the late Persian period, more probably in the early Greek period. However, the commentators state that if we remove the glosses the editors (Scribes) made to adapt the ode of the victory of David to later religious uses, the ode stands out in simply grandeur as fitting appropriately into the historical experience of David whether he wrote it or another wrote it for him by historic imagination, entering into the experience of the heroic king. So basically, removing the assumptions of the commentators over the glosses introduced by the various editors (Scribes), there is nothing that bars the way to his (David's) authorship.

The Psalm with the glosses removed can be divided into two parts, each part of three four lined trimeters; the first part sets forth David's deliverance by the Lord God Almighty from peril of death, the second part his strengthening for war by his God and his victory over all his enemies. The two chief glosses, the legal gloss (18:21-24), and the ethical gloss (18:25-28), are inserted between the two parts. Remove them and the unity and harmony of the ode appear. The other minor glosses are easy to distinguish, their removal improves the poetic conception and movement of the poem. There are very few departures from the trimeter measure, and these are clearly due to textual errors. ("The International Critical Commentary: Psalms (in 2 volumes)" by Charles A. Briggs, Varda Books, 2005, 1112p. Page Vol. I, page 141) The major comments concerning the editors of the International Critical Commentary of the Psalms is the assumption that the text is a later compilation or copy from 2 Samuel 22, that David did not author the Psalm, based upon the textual analysis that is presented. The interesting remarks made by Driver, Plummer, and Briggs regarding

removing the glosses is revealing. Take for example the consideration of the author of the book of Samuel. Who recorded the book of Samuel and when was the book of Samuel completed? Did the author of Samuel obtain his account directly (*as first hand witness*) or was his information taken from second hand witness of the events of David's life? Did David write the Psalms prior to or following the time at which the book of Samuel was written? Did David's writing ability change with time? Did the author of the book of Samuel use David's psalm as he wrote the Psalm down, and was the ancient Scribal tradition for the exactness of the text being employed here? Given time everyone's writing ability improves (practice makes perfect). Since the original authors were writing an original form of the text it would not be expected that Scribal tradition would have been held if this was being done in the books other than the Torah text itself. The variations between the texts of 2 Samuel and the Psalm could simply be the result of two sets of authors (i) King David and (ii) the author of the book of 2 Samuel. It is interesting that these things are neither mentioned nor considered in the discussion of the textual criticism of the *International Critical Commentary on the Psalms (ICCP)*, Driver, Plummer, and Briggs, 2005.

Rabbinic Commentary

The rabbinic commentary (Midrash) on *Tehillim / Psalms 18* has 36 parts. Reading through this week's Midrash we will be looking at Parts 8, 17, 22, 25, and 36. Let's begin by outlining Midrash *Tehillim Chapter 18 Parts 8, 17, 22, 25, and 36*.

Outline of Midrash Tehillim / Psalms, Chapter 18, Parts 8, 17, 22, 25, and 36

Part 8:

- The Midrash opens with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) “*My God, my Rock in whom I take refuge (Tehillim / Psalms 18:3).*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihata) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*The rabbis said that David sang a verse containing ten words of praise to the Lord concerning ten enemies who fell by his hand, Saul, Doeg, Ahithophel, Sheba the son of Bichri, Shimei the son of Gera, Shobach, Goliath and his three brothers of whom it is said These four were born to the giant in Gath; and they fell by the hand of David (2 Samuel 21:22).*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihata), the rabbis say that five of these men were from the nations of the earth and five were from the nation of Israel.
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal), the rabbis discuss the number ten, the ten men, the ten words of praise of David, etc.
- The Concluding phrase says “*My Shield, Even as the blessing Shield of Abraham is said in the Eighteen Benedictions, so is the blessing Shield of David said immediately after the lesson from the Prophets. Horn of my salvation, implies that the anointing oil flowing of itself came down over David.*”

Part 17:

- The Midrash opens with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) “*At the brightness that was before Him, His thick clouds passed (Tehillim / Psalms 18:13).*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihata) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*When a wind blows and the brightness of the sun shines out, His clouds pass away.*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihata), the rabbis speak of the

Holy One blessed be He making war with the Egyptians and the ministering angels who came with their swords drawn.

- The **משל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal), the rabbis discuss the Lord who makes war and parallels to the mortal king who goes out to make war.
- The Concluding phrase says “*The chariots of God are many thousands of angels, the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place (Tehillim / Psalms 68:18), and also The Lord my God will come, and all the holy ones with You (Zechariah 14:5).*”

Part 22:

- The Midrash opens with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) “*With the merciful You will show Yourself merciful, with the single-hearted You will show Yourself single-hearted; with the pure You will show Yourself pure; and with the subtle You will show Yourself subtle (Tehillim / Psalms 18:26-27).*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*Rabbi Judah interpreted this passage as referring to our father Abraham, When Abraham went to the Holy One blessed be He, met him with mercy.*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis go on to speak of Abraham and the Lord God Almighty, God met him with mercy, Abraham went with singleness of heart, God guided his heart, etc.
- The **משל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal), the rabbis discuss these various aspects of God meeting with Abraham and Moshe.
- The Concluding phrase says “*Rabbi Khelbo said, On each of the seven days of the investiture of the priests, Moshe performed the duties of the high priesthood. But what does Scripture finally say? On the eighth day Moshe called Aaron and his sons (Vayikra / Leviticus 9:1).*”

Part 25:

- The Midrash opens with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) “*As for God, His way is perfect (Tehillim / Psalms 18:31).*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*Rabbi said, The Holy One blessed be He, gave the commandments only that He might purify Israel by them, as is said The word of the Lord is purifying.*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis state that God’s ways are perfect and if God who heeds his own ways, who is perfect, how much more should we heed our ways?
- The **משל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal), the rabbis discuss the purifying nature of the Word of God.
- The Concluding phrase says “*Then David supplicated that Shield of David be mentioned in the benediction after the lesson from the prophets; and indeed this benediction reads, By Your holy name You have sworn unto him that his lamp will not be quenched forever and ever. Blessed are You, O Lord, the shield of David. Hence David said, You have given me the shield of Your salvation (Tehillim / Psalms 18:36).*”

Part 36:

- The Midrash opens with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) “*Great deliverance gives He to His king to David and to his seed for evermore (Tehillim / Psalms 18:51).*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*What verse follows this one? The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows His handiwork (Tehillim /*

Psalms 19:2).”

- The מִשַּׁל (mashal) “*the parable*,” goes on to explain the פְּתִיחָתָא (Petihta), the rabbis speak of the seed of David, God establishes forever and builds his throne.
- The נִמְשַׁל (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the מִשַּׁל (mashal), the rabbis discuss deliverance and freedom that God provides for his people.
- The Concluding phrase says “*And can mighty tower in the verse from Samuel be understood in any other way except that the lord Messiah will become as a tower unto them? Thus Scripture says, The name of the Lord is like a strong tower; the righteous runs into it, and is set on high (Mishley / Proverbs 18:10).*”

Midrash Tehillim 18, Part 8 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דִּבּוּר הַמַּתְחִיל) stating “*My God, my Rock in whom I take refuge (Tehillim / Psalms 18:3).*” The rabbis introduce the midrash with a commentary that follows a reading of the verse of scripture to set the context for discussion. The Midrash says “*The rabbis said that David sang a verse containing ten words of praise to the Lord concerning ten enemies who fell by his hand, Saul, Doeg, Ahithophel, Sheba the son of Bichri, Shimei the son of Gera, Shobach, Goliath and his three brothers of whom it is said These four were born to the giant in Gath; and they fell by the hand of David (2 Samuel 21:22).*” Who are these men?

1. **Saul** - King of Israel, Saul did not whole heartedly follow the Lord God Almighty and the Lord ripped the kingdom from him and gave Israel into David’s hands. He was a man destroyed by jealousy. King Saul had the honor of being Israel’s first king, but his life turned into a tragedy for one reason, he did not trust in God. Saul had the looks for his role as king, he was tall, handsome, and noble. He became king when he was 30 years old and reigned over Israel 42 years. Early in his career he made a fatal mistake. He disobeyed God by failing to completely destroy the Amalekites and all their possessions, as God had commanded. The LORD withdrew his favor from Saul and had Samuel the prophet anoint David as king. More can be learned about Saul in 1st and 2nd Samuel in the Tanach. Studying the history of David and Saul, it was because of the schism (division) between David and Saul that led to the splitting of Israel into two kingdoms, the kingdom of Israel on the north, and of Judah on the south.
2. **Doeg** - his name means “*fearful*,” he was an Edomite, and the chief overseer of Saul’s flocks (read *1 Samuel 21:7*). After parting from Jonathan, David fled from Saul’s jealous anger and went to Nob. He went to Ahimelech, the High Priest, claiming to be on a clandestine royal mission. Ahimelech fed David and his men with the showbread, and gave David the sword of Goliath. Doeg was present and witnessed Ahimelech’s service to David. (*1 Samuel 21*) At the command of Saul he slew the high priest Ahimelech at Nob, together with all the priests to the number of eighty-five persons. In rabbinic Judaism, Doeg is considered a gentile proselyte, a Gentile who had converted to Judaism. He is the subject of many rabbinical legends, the origin of which is to be found in part in *Tehillim / Psalm 52*.
3. **Ahitophel** - was a counselor of King David and a man greatly renowned for his sagacity (*wisdom, shrewdness, judiciousness, cleverness*). At the time of Absalom’s revolt he deserted David (*Tehillim / Psalm. 41:9; 55:12-14*) and espoused the cause of Absalom (*2 Samuel 15:12*). David sent his old friend Hushai back to Absalom, in order that he might counteract the counsel of Ahitophel (*2 Samuel 15:31-37*). Ahitophel, seeing that his good advice against David had not been followed due to Hushai’s influence, correctly predicted that the revolt

would fail. He then left the camp of Absalom at once. He returned to Giloh, his native place, and after arranging his worldly affairs, hanged himself, and was buried in the sepulcher of his fathers (2 Samuel 17:1-23). The Talmud speaks of this counselor of David as “a man, like Bilaam, whose great wisdom was not received in humility as a gift from heaven, and so became a stumbling-block to him” (Midrash Rabba Bamidbar 22). He was “one of those who, while casting longing eyes upon things not belonging to them, lose also the things they possess” (Tosefta Sotah, 4.19).

4. **Sheba the son of Bichri** - in the Tanach, Sheba led a revolt against King David. Sheba was a son of Bichri, of the family of Becher, the son of Benjamin, and of the family stem from which Saul was descended (2 Samuel 20:1-22). When David returned to Jerusalem after the defeat of Absalom, strife arose between the ten tribes and the Tribe of Judah, because the latter took the lead in bringing back the king. Sheba took advantage of this state of things, and raised the standard of revolt, proclaiming, “We have no part in David.” With his followers he proceeded northward. David seeing it necessary to check this revolt, ordered Abishai to take the gibborim, “mighty men,” and the body-guard and such troops as he could gather, and pursue Sheba. Joab joined the expedition, and having treacherously put Amasa to death, assumed the command of the army. Joab and Abishai arrived in the North of the nation at the city of Abel-beth-maacah, where they knew Sheba to be hiding. They besieged the city. A wise woman from the city (unnamed) convinced Joab not to destroy Abel-Beth-Maacah, because the people did not want Sheba hiding there. She told the people of the city to kill Sheba, and his head was thrown over the wall to Joab. Sheba’s head was thrown down according to the Scriptures (2 Samuel 20).
5. **Shimei the son of Gera** - The Biblical account of Shimei, son of Gera, is a brief one. Only four passages of Scripture refer to him. They show a contrast between forgiveness and judgment. Shimei was of the same family as King Saul and evidently opposed the accession of David to the throne of Israel. We first meet him on one of the darkest days in King David’s life. David’s son, Absalom, has gained the upper hand in his bid to replace his father on the throne. David and his entourage flee Jerusalem in disarray. Adding to the humiliation of David and his men, the young Benjamite run parallel to the road, cursed David and pelted him with dirt and stones. Read more about him in 2 Samuel 6:5-13.
6. **Shobach** - was captain of the army of Hadarezer, King of Aram, who was defeated and slain by David at Helam (2 Samuel 10:15-18). According to Tosefta Sotah 8, Shobach was as famous for his strength as Goliath, and the Ammonites, as allies of Aram, expected through him to be led to victory; but his defeat brought defeat also on them. The Talmudic Haggadah dwells on the fame of Shobach. The two forms of his name are explained by Rab and Samuel. One says that his real name was Shophach, and that he was called Shobach because he had the figure of a dove-cot (“shobach”). The other states that his real name was Shobach, and that he was called Shophach (“the melter”) because he looked so fierce and terrible that those who saw him “melted” away from mere fright. Shobach is also called Shophach in I Chronicles 19:16. (Jewish Encyclopedia)
7. **Goliath** - was the champion of the Philistines, who had encamped between Shochoh and Azekah against Saul and the men of Israel arrayed for battle in the valley of Elah. He is described as being six cubits and a span in height, having upon his head a helmet of brass, and

wearing a coat of mail weighing five thousand shekels of brass, with greaves of brass upon his legs and a target or gorget of brass between his shoulders. The staff of his spear is said to have been like a weaver's beam, the spear's head weighing six hundred shekels of iron. David, meeting him in battle, run forward slings one of the stones, striking the giant between the eyes. The Scriptures say the stone sunk deep into his forehead, Goliath falls to the ground. David drew Goliath's own sword and severs the head from his body.

Reading about the lives of these men in David's life, we read in *Tehillim / Psalms 18*, David giving praise to God for the destruction of his enemies. Studying the Scriptures, we read that God was instrumental in defeating many of David's enemies. Is it OK to praise God for the destruction of our enemies? Does this thought of thanking God for their destruction run contrary to your theology? The Scriptures describe God as our Rock, our Fortress, our Deliverer, the one in whom we take refuge, our Shield, and the horn of our Salvation (*Tehillim / Psalms 18:2-3*). When we trust in the Lord God Almighty for everything, we can't but give thanks for all He (the Lord) has done. The midrash says that "*Rabbi Judah said, Because David acknowledged God's gifts with ten words of praise in one verse in this Psalm, so at the end of the book of Psalms in the Psalm of Hallelujah Praise God in His sanctuary, David returned thanks to God with ten exclamations of praise, the word Hallelujah being repeated ten times. My Shield, Even as the blessing Shield of Abraham is said in the Eighteen Benedictions, so is the blessing Shield of David said immediately after the lesson from the Prophets. Horn of my salvation, implies that the anointing oil flowing of itself came down over David.*" ר' יהודה אומר לפי שקילסו בעשרה קילוסין, לפיכך קילסו בעשרה הלולים בסוף תילים) במזמור הללויה הללו אל בקדשו (תהלים קנ א), שבו עשר הלולים. מגני. כשם שאומרים מגן אברהם בתפלה, כך (אומרים מגן דוד אחר הפטרה. וקרן ישעי. שהיה שמן המשחה מפעפע ויורד עליו. I feel the important point we can take from Part 8 of *Midrash Tehillim 18*, is that of being thankful to God in the purity of our hearts having the correct motivation for our thankfulness. We can be thankful for the ways in which God chooses to bring deliverance and salvation to His people. We should not be thankful out of a dark hatred for our enemies, but from a perspective that God is working to save His people (to Save Us). The Lord God Almighty did great and mighty things for His people in the Scriptures. In these last days, He sent His only Son, a great and mighty thing of bringing His Word into this world and becoming a man (*John 1:1-14*) for the purpose of bringing blood atonement for His people. Today, the Lord is working just as mightily as he did in the days of King David, and Yeshua said *John 14:12 Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father. (NASB)* He said we will do greater and mightier things than these that he did. Each day that we live we should be going expecting great and mighty things in the Lord. Are you doing this?

Midrash Tehillim 18, Part 17 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) stating "*At the brightness that was before Him, His thick clouds passed (Tehillim / Psalms 18:13).*" The midrash states that "*Rabbi Yudan said in the name of Rabbi Abba, When the Holy One blessed be He, was about to make war against the Egyptians at the Red Sea, the ministering angels came to help him, some came with the sword, others came bearing bows, and others came bearing spears.*" ר' יודן בשם ר' אבא אמר כשבא הקב"ה לעשות) מלחמה עם המצריים בים, באו מלאכי השרת לסייעו, אלו באו בחרבות, ואלו היו טוענין קשתות, ואלו היו טוענין ר' יודן בשם ר' אבא אמר כשבא הקב"ה לעשות) However, the Holy One blessed be He stated "*I have no need of you, go hence.*" At that instant His thick clouds passed away. What is the purpose of the thick clouds? How do the rabbis understand the meaning or purpose of the clouds? Did these clouds represent the angels who came with sword, bows, and spears? Another parable is told of the king who goes out to war, that the mortal king goes out with all his troops and his body guards. However, the Lord God Almighty does not, he has no need for anyone else. The Midrash has the rabbis quoting from scripture saying "*The Lord is a man of war, the Lord is His name (Shemot / Exodus 15:3)*" (שנאמר ה' איש מלחמה ה' שמו (שמות טו ג)) Reading from the Torah concerning the Lord God

Almighty, do we know God to be a “man of war” like the Scriptures describe him?

The rabbis speak of the cloud and the angels of God; are there any parallels in the Apostolic Writings? In *Hebrews 12:1* we read “Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,” (NASB) (1Τοιγαροῦν καὶ ἡμεῖς, τοσοῦτον ἔχοντες περικείμενον ἡμῖν νέφος μαρτύρων, ὄγκον ἀποθέμενοι πάντα καὶ τὴν εὐπερίστατον ἁμαρτίαν, δι’ ὑπομονῆς τρέχωμεν τὸν προκείμενον ἡμῖν ἀγῶνα.) What is this great cloud of witnesses the author of the book of Hebrews is describing? Is the cloud of witnesses a parallel to the rabbinic understanding of the thick clouds and of the angels who are with the Lord? The concluding phrase of the Midrash says “The chariots of God are many thousands of angels, the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place (*Tehillim / Psalms 68:18*), and also The Lord my God will come, and all the holy ones with You (*Zechariah 14:5*).” The rabbis speak of the chariots of God, of the angels, and that the Lord is among them as in Sinai in the holy place. Chariots may also be paralleled with fire (i.e. *Elijah was taken to heaven in a chariot of fire*), the fire, smoke, and the dark clouds that surrounded the mountain of Sinai seem to be given as a picture of the mighty angels of God. Today, in Yeshua, our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit, God’s Spirit dwells in our bodies. Knowing that God’s Spirit makes a dwelling in our bodies, reading *Hebrews 12:1*, the cloud of witnesses that surround us, are these the angels of God that observe our lives? We know that Satan the accuser observes the life of men and goes before the Lord bringing accusation against His children. *Zechariah 14:5* states הַ וְנִסְתָּם גִּיאֵהָרִי כִי־יִגִיעַ גִּי־הָרִים אֶל־אֶצֶל וְנִסְתָּם כַּאֲשֶׁר נִסְתָּם מִפְּנֵי הַ 14:5 You will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the Lord, my God, will come, and all the holy ones with Him! (NASB) Here we find the Hebrew word קְדוֹשִׁים “holy ones” which may refer to angels or to men as we studied in *Tehillim / Psalms 16*. The important point we can take away from here in *Midrash Tehillim 18, Part 17* is that we do not need to help God fight His battles. If we choose to exact revenge on our enemies, we are in fact attempting to help God fight His battles, the Lord God to whom we seek for help. If we have plans for receiving payment back for the wrong that was done to us, why bother going to the Lord seeking His help? In addition to this, there is a cloud of witnesses that surround us observing what we are doing. Is taking things into our own hands a righteous or unrighteous thing to do? In the opening verse of Parashat Ha’azinu (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:1-52*) Moshe calls Heaven (הַשָּׁמַיִם) and Earth (הָאָרֶץ) as witnesses to the covenant (הָאֲזִינוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶדְבָּרָה וְתִשְׁמַע הָאָרֶץ אִמְרֵי־פִי); Moshe calls upon the solid unmoving (unchanging) Heaven and Earth as a witness implying that the unmovable things are watching should the children of Israel break the covenant and disobey God. The point is that we cannot escape observation before God. Yeshua said in *Luke 19:40* that even the rocks would cry out if the people kept silent. Do you think that your sin is hidden? In judgment day, even the rocks will give testimony of sin and wickedness. Yeshua said that if a town will not listen to the message of the gospel, shake the dust off of your feet as a testimony (*Matthew 10:14, Luke 9:3-5*). The testimony of a witness. Thinking upon these things, the cloud, the angels of God, heaven and earth, as believers in the Messiah we need to consider very carefully how we behave as the children of God before men and in our private lives.

Midrash Tehillim 18, Part 22 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying “With the merciful You will show Yourself merciful, with the single-hearted You will show Yourself single-hearted; with the pure You will show Yourself pure; and with the subtle You will show Yourself subtle (*Tehillim / Psalms 18:26-27*).” The rabbis in the homiletic introduction interpret this Scripture “... as referring to our father Abraham, When Abraham went to the Holy One blessed be He, met him with mercy.” The rabbis go on to speak of Abraham and the Lord God Almighty in the midrash saying that God met him with mercy, Abraham went with singleness of heart, God guided his heart, etc. The נמשל (Nimshal) “expansion on the parable” expands upon the משל (mashal), the rabbis discuss these various aspects of God meeting with Abraham and

Moshe. For example, God met Abraham and guided him in his doings. The rabbis ask “*When did the Holy One blessed be He, guide Abraham in his doings? When He said to Abraham, Take now your son, your only son and offer him for a burnt offering (Bereshit / Genesis 22:2). And what does Scripture say directly after this? Abraham rose early in the morning and took Isaac his son and took the knife to slay his son (Bereshit / Genesis 22:3).*” (מה כתיב תמן, ידוע תדע כי גר יהיה זרעך (שם בראשית ט”ו יג)), ואימתי נתברר לו על) (שם עסקיו, בשעה שאמר לו קח נא את בנך את יחידך (שם בראשית כב ב), ומה כתיב תמן, וישכם אברהם בבקר (שם ג) The rabbis refer to Parashat Vayera (*Bereshit / Genesis 18:1-22:24*) on the binding of Isaac which is also known as the “Akedah,” the “binding” of Isaac. After Abraham had received the son of the promise God had spoken to him in *Bereshit / Genesis 18*, the Lord asks him to sacrifice his son on Mount Moriah.

<p>פרשת לך לך ספר בראשית פלק כב פסוק א-ח</p> <p>א וַיְהִי אַחֲרֵי הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה וְהָאֱלֹהִים נִסָּה אֶת-אַבְרָהָם וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אַבְרָהָם וַיֹּאמֶר הִנְנִי: ב וַיֹּאמֶר קַח-נָא אֶת-בְּנֶךָ אֶת-יִחִידְךָ אֲשֶׁר-אַהַבְתָּ אֶת-יִצְחָק וְלֶךְ-לְךָ אֶל-אֶרֶץ הַמֹּרְיָה וְהַעֲלֵהוּ שָׁם לְעֹלָה עַל אֶחָד הַהָרִים אֲשֶׁר אָמַר אֱלֹהִים: ג וַיִּשְׁכֶּם אַבְרָהָם בַּבֹּקֶר וַיַּחֲבֹשׂ אֶת-חֲמֹרוֹ וַיִּקַּח אֶת-שְׁנֵי נְעָרָיו אִתּוֹ וְאֶת יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ וַיִּבְקַע עֵצִי עֹלָה וַיָּקָם וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל-הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר-אָמַר-לוֹ הָאֱלֹהִים: ד בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי וַיִּשָּׂא אַבְרָהָם אֶת-עֵינָיו וַיִּרְא אֶת-הַמָּקוֹם מֵרְחֹק: ה וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אֶל-נְעָרָיו שְׁבוּ-לָכֶם פֹּה עִם-הַחֲמֹר וְאֲנִי וְהַנְּעָר גִּלְכָה עַד-כֹּה וְנִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה וְנָשׁוּבָה אֵלֵיכֶם: ו וַיִּקַּח אַבְרָהָם אֶת-עֵצִי הָעֹלָה וַיִּשֶׂם עַל-יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ וַיִּקַּח בְּיָדוֹ אֶת-הָאֵשׁ וְאֶת-הַמַּאֲכָלֹת וַיֵּלְכוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם יַחְדָּו: ז וַיֹּאמֶר יִצְחָק אֶל-אַבְרָהָם אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר אָבִי וַיֹּאמֶר הִנְנִי בְנִי וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה הָאֵשׁ וְהָעֵצִים וְאַיֵּה הַשֶּׂה לְעֹלָה: ח וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אֱלֹהִים יִרְאֵה-לוֹ הַשֶּׂה לְעֹלָה בְנִי וַיֵּלְכוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם יַחְדָּו:</p>	<p>Bereshit / Genesis 22:1-8</p> <p>22:1 Now it came about after these things, that God tested Abraham, and said to him, ‘Abraham!’ And he said, ‘Here I am.’ 22:2 He said, ‘Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you.’ 22:3 So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him and Isaac his son; and he split wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. 22:4 On the third day Abraham raised his eyes and saw the place from a distance. 22:5 Abraham said to his young men, ‘Stay here with the donkey, and I and the lad will go over there; and we will worship and return to you.’ 22:6 Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son, and he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So the two of them walked on together. 22:7 Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, ‘My father!’ And he said, ‘Here I am, my son.’ And he said, ‘Behold, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?’ 22:8 Abraham said, ‘God will provide for Himself the lamb for the burnt offering, my son.’ So the two of them walked on together. (NASB)</p>
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The Lord tested Abraham by asking him to turn his son into a burnt offering (וַיֹּאמֶר קַח-נָא אֶת-בְּנֶךָ (אֶת-יִחִידְךָ אֲשֶׁר-אַהַבְתָּ אֶת-יִצְחָק וְלֶךְ-לְךָ אֶל-אֶרֶץ הַמֹּרְיָה וְהַעֲלֵהוּ שָׁם לְעֹלָה עַל אֶחָד הַהָרִים אֲשֶׁר אָמַר אֱלֹהִים)). Imagine what was running through Abraham’s mind when the Lord asked this of him. This would run contrary to man’s natural instinct; killing his own son and not to mention the only son that was a gift from God. I am certain that Abraham had to be internally torn by this request and had run scenarios through his head in an attempt to resolve this while recognizing that the command to offer his son as a sacrifice was not an immoral act. The conclusion Abraham had come to is found in *Bereshit / Genesis 22:7*, (וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אֱלֹהִים) that God would provide a lamb for the burnt offering. When God asked Abraham to offer his son, Abraham had two choices (i) to refuse to kill his son or (ii) to obey. While Abraham and his son Isaac walked I am sure Abraham understood the implications of what he was about to do. Yet he remained faithful in the Lord that all was going to be OK. For Abraham, there was a connection between faith and reality which drove him forward in his obedience to the Lord. The Lord saw his obedience and stopped him short of carrying out the command in *Bereshit / Genesis 22:12*.

פרשת לך לך ספר בראשית פלק כב פסוק יב
יב ויאמר אל-תשלח ידך אל-הנער ואל-תעש לו מאומה כי | עתה ידעתי כי-ירא אלהים אתה
ולא חשכת את-בנה את-יחידך ממני:

Bereshit / Genesis 22:12

22:12 He said, 'Do not stretch out your hand against the lad, and do nothing to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.'
(NASB)

While reading *Bereshit / Genesis 22:12* the phrase “כי-ירא אלהים אתה” is quite interesting. Abraham’s readiness to offer his son proved to God that he was a *“a God fearer.”* The phrase *ירא אלהים* occurs five times in all of the Tanakh, once in *Bereshit / Genesis 22*, once in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 25*, twice in *Job chapter 1 and 2*, and once in *Ecclesiastes 7*.

ספר בראשית פרק כב

| עתה ידעתי כי-ירא אלהים אתה ולא חשכת את-בנה את-יחידך ממני: יג וישא אברהם
את-עיניו וירא והנה-איל אחר נאחו בסבך בקרניו

ספר דברים פרק כה

ענה ונגע ולא ירא אלהים: יט והיה בהניח יהנה אלהיה | לה מפל-איביה מסביב בארץ
אשר יהנה-אלהיה גתן לה נחלה לרשתה תמחה

ספר איוב פרק א

איש תם וישר ירא אלהים וסר מרע: ט ויען השטן את-יהנה ויאמר החנם ירא איוב
אלהים: י הלא את [אתה] שכת בעדו ובעד-ביתו ובעד

ספר איוב פרק ב

איש תם וישר ירא אלהים וסר מרע ועדנו מחזיק בתמתו ותסיתני בו לבלעו חנם: ד
ויען השטן את-יהנה ויאמר עור בעד-עור וכל אשר

מגילת קהלת פרק ז

את-ידך כי-ירא אלהים יצא את-בלם: יט החכמה תעז לחכם מעשרה שליטים אשר היו
בעיר: כ כי אדם אין צדיק בארץ אשר יעשה-טוב

Abraham chose to follow the mitzvah (command) to offer his son rather than to follow his own feelings. As a result, the Lord calls him a *ירא אלהים (God fearer)*. The reason being, Abraham was a man of high moral character, the thought of killing his own son had to have been very difficult. (Note that the biblical text does not detail the struggle Abraham had to have had in his heart over this command from God). As a result of Abraham overcoming his thoughts and following through with God’s command (up until the point when God stopped him see *Bereshit / Genesis 22:12*), God promised Abraham with an oath (see *Bereshit / Genesis 22:16*) that he shall never break His covenant with him and his children. טו ויקרא מלאך יהנה אל-

אֲבָרָהֶם שְׁנֵית מֶ-הַשָּׁמַיִם: טז וַיֹּאמֶר בִּי נִשְׁפָּעֵתִי נְאֻם-יְהוָה כִּי יַעַן אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ אֶת-הַדְּבָר הַזֶּה וְלֹא חִשַׁכְתָּ אֶת-בְּנֵי אֶת-יִחְיֵדָה: יז כִּי-בָרַךְ אֲבָרְכָה וְהִרְבָּה אֲרַבָּה אֶת-זֶרְעֵךָ כְּכֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְכַחֲוֹל אֲשֶׁר-עַל-שְׁפַת הַיָּם וַיִּרְשׂ זֶרְעֵךָ אֶת The oath that God made with Abraham to his children could only have been fulfilled in his only son (Isaac). The oath that God makes with Abraham includes a blessing to all of the nations of the earth (כָּל גּוֹיֵי הָאָרֶץ), in his seed (וְהִתְבָּרַכְוּ בְּזֶרְעֵךָ). As a result of Abraham’s faith and willingness to offer his only son, we find a “*Messianic expectation*” of what God was planning to do in Yeshua the Messiah. The Torah provides for us a future expectation, that all of the people of the earth would be blessed and that God would provide a Lamb for atonement.

The rabbis draw up parables between Moshe and Abraham through the midrash (18, part 22) and conclude the midrash with Moshe. The midrash states that in the month of Adar, Moshe sought God to be allowed to enter into the Promised Land. The Lord says that Moshe will not enter the Promised Land and the Concluding phrase of *Midrash Tehillim 18, Part 22* says “*Rabbi Khelbo said, On each of the seven days of the investiture of the priests, Moshe performed the duties of the high priesthood. But what does Scripture finally say? On the eighth day Moshe called Aaron and his sons (Vayikra / Leviticus 9:1).*” Because of Moshe’s lack of obedience to the Word of the Lord, he was not allowed to enter into the Promised Land. And because of Abraham’s obedience, it was through his seed that God brought the Messiah Yeshua into this world. The important take away point from the midrash is that we are to have faith like Abraham like the Apostle Paul wrote to the Romans in *Romans 4:16* *For this reason it is by faith, in order that it may be in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, (NASB)* (16διὰ τοῦτο ἐκ πίστεως, ἵνα κατὰ χάριν, εἰς τὸ εἶναι βεβαίαν τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν παντὶ τῷ σπέρματι, οὐ τῷ ἐκ τοῦ νόμου μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ τῷ ἐκ πίστεως Ἀβραάμ {ὃς ἐστὶν πατὴρ πάντων ἡμῶν}). We are called to have the faith of Abraham, not the faith of Moshe (see *John 8*). Have you ever thought about that before? We are called to have faith like Abraham and not faith like Moshe.

Midrash Tehillim 18, Part 25 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying “*As for God, His way is perfect (Tehillim / Psalms 18:31).*” Here in the Petihta (פתיחתא) “the homiletic introduction” to the Midrash, the “*Rabbi said, The Holy One blessed be He, gave the commandments only that He might purify Israel by them, as is said The word of the Lord is purifying.*” How do you understand the meaning of “*the word of the Lord is purifying?*” How is the word of the Lord purifying? What kind of purification is this referring to? Ritual purity? The Hebrew word that is used in the Midrash is צְרוּפָה, an adjective meaning “*refined, pure (metals), smelted.*” The rabbis say that the word of the Lord is purifying in the sense of being purified in a refiners fire. In the Apostolic Writings, we also read in various places where the “word of God” is referred to as being purifying. Two examples (there are more than these) from *John 14:31-5:8* and *Ephesians 5:21-27* are given, one by Yeshua, and the other by the Apostle Paul.

John 14:31-15:8

14:31 but so that the world may know that I love the Father, I do exactly as the Father commanded Me. Get up, let us go from here. 15:1 ‘I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 15:2 ‘Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. 15:3 ‘You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. 15:4 ‘Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. 15:5 ‘I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. 15:6 ‘If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned. 15:7 ‘If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you,

ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 15:8 'My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. (NASB)

³¹ἀλλ' ἵνα γινῶ ὁ κόσμος ὅτι ἀγαπῶ τὸν πατέρα, καὶ καθὼς ἐνετείλατο μοι ὁ πατήρ, οὕτως ποιῶ. Ἐγείρεσθε, ἄγωμεν ἐντεῦθεν. Ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ ἄμπελος ἡ ἀληθινή, καὶ ὁ πατήρ μου ὁ γεωργός ἐστιν. Ἐάν κλημα ἐν ἐμοὶ μὴ φέρον καρπὸν, αἶρει αὐτό, καὶ πᾶν τὸ καρπὸν φέρον καθαίρει αὐτὸ ἵνα καρπὸν πλείονα φέρῃ. ἤδη ὑμεῖς καθαροὶ ἐστε διὰ τὸν λόγον ὃν λελάληκα ὑμῖν: ἔμειναι ἐν ἐμοί, κἀγὼ ἐν ὑμῖν. καθὼς τὸ κλημα οὐ δύναται καρπὸν φέρειν ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ ἐὰν μὴ μένη ἐν τῇ ἀμπέλῳ, οὕτως οὐδὲ ὑμεῖς ἐὰν μὴ ἐν ἐμοὶ μένητε. Ἐγὼ εἰμι ἡ ἄμπελος, ὑμεῖς τὰ κληματα. ὁ μένων ἐν ἐμοὶ κἀγὼ ἐν αὐτῷ οὗτος φέρει καρπὸν πολὺν, ὅτι χωρὶς ἐμοῦ οὐ δύνασθε ποιεῖν οὐδέν. Ἐὰν μὴ τις μένη ἐν ἐμοί, ἐβλήθη ἔξω ὡς τὸ κλημα καὶ ἐξηράνθη, καὶ συνάγουσιν αὐτὰ καὶ εἰς τὸ πῦρ βάλλουσιν καὶ καίεται. Ἐὰν μείνητε ἐν ἐμοὶ καὶ τὰ ῥήματά μου ἐν ὑμῖν μείνη, ὃ ἐὰν θέλητε αἰτήσασθε καὶ γενήσεται ὑμῖν. Ἐν τούτῳ ἐδοξάσθη ὁ πατήρ μου, ἵνα καρπὸν πολὺν φέρητε καὶ γένησθε ἐμοὶ μαθηταί.

Ephesians 5:21-27

5:21 and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ. 5:22 Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. 5:24 But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything. 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, 5:26 so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 5:27 that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. (NASB)

²²Αἱ γυναῖκες τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ, ²³ὅτι ἀνὴρ ἐστὶν κεφαλὴ τῆς γυναικὸς ὡς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς κεφαλὴ τῆς ἐκκλησίας, αὐτὸς σωτὴρ τοῦ σώματος. ²⁴ἀλλὰ ὡς ἡ ἐκκλησία ὑποτάσσεται τῷ Χριστῷ, οὕτως καὶ αἱ γυναῖκες τοῖς ἀνδράσιν ἐν παντί. ²⁵Οἱ ἄνδρες, ἀγαπάτε τὰς γυναῖκας, καθὼς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς ἠγάπησεν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν καὶ ἑαυτὸν παρέδωκεν ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς, ²⁶ἵνα αὐτὴν ἀγιάσῃ καθαρίσας τῷ λουτρῷ τοῦ ὕδατος ἐν ῥήματι, ²⁷ἵνα παραστήσῃ αὐτὸς ἑαυτῷ ἕνδοξον τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, μὴ ἔχουσαν σπίλον ἢ ῥυτίδα ἢ τι τῶν τοιούτων, ἀλλ' ἵνα ᾦ ἁγία καὶ ἄμωμος.

In *John 15:3* Yeshua says *15:3 'You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. (NASB)* stating that we are already clean because of the word that he has spoken to us. In *Ephesians*, in the midst of Paul's exhortation to the Ephesians on husbands and wives, he says in *Ephesians 5:26 so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, (NASB)* here Paul is telling husbands to love their wives like Yeshua does the ecclesia (ἐκκλησίαν). The Greek word Paul uses here is ἀγιάση (agiase) meaning "1) to render or acknowledge, or to be venerable or hallow 2) to separate from profane things and dedicate to God 2a) consecrate things to God 2b) dedicate people to God 3) to purify 3a) to cleanse externally 3b) to purify by expiation: free from the guilt of sin 3c) to purify internally by renewing of the soul." It appears that Paul is drawing a parallel between the ritual purification from Niddah (נִדָּה, a Hebrew term that describes a woman during menstruation, or a woman who has menstruated and not yet been cleansed by immersion in a mikveh or ritual bath) and the washing of Mayim Chayim (מַיִם חַיִּים) with the word of God.

The rabbis in the midrash state "But of what concern can it be to Him, to the Holy One blessed be

He, whether a man, preparing his meat, do his slaughtering a windpipe or gullet? His concern in giving precepts in a matter of this kind is to purify Israel. Rabbi Berechiah said in the name of rabbi Jacob, It is written You will not eat of anything that dies of itself (Devarim / Deuteronomy 14:21)” (וכי מה איפכת לו) להקב"ה אם אדם שוחט מן הגרגרת או מן הוושט ואוכל, אמר ר' ברכיה בשם ר' יעקב [כתוב] לא תאכלו כל נבלה (דברים יד כא)). The rabbis are contrasting slaughtering meat, and the kinds of meat that are eaten with the word of God and purity of Israel. In the Apostolic Writings, Yeshua and the Apostle Paul speak on “purity” and the word of God. *Tehillim / Psalms 119:9 states בְּכָל-לִבִּי יִשְׁמַר פְּדֻכָּךָ: י ט בְּמָה יִנְפֶה-נַעַר אֶת-אָרְחוֹ לְשֹׁמֵר פְּדֻכָּךָ: י 119:9 How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Your word. 119:10 With all my heart I have sought You; Do not let me wander from Your commandments. 119:11 Your word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against You. (NASB)* So remaining pure before the Lord in this life is achieved by obeying God’s word, obeying Yeshua (2 *Thessalonians 1*) and by faith in the Messiah. What is interesting is the rabbis state that the word of God is purifying in the sense of the Lord refining our lives in fire. The word of God helps to remove the dross from our lives. Later on, in the midrash, the rabbis parallel this to how one slaughters and what one eats, and then to the ten trials of Abraham. The midrash states that word of the Lord is given for the purpose of revealing to us that God’s ways are perfect and if God who heeds his own ways, who is perfect, how much more should we heed our ways? The word of God is given to us to guide us in our ways, to lead and direct us in ways of righteousness and justice. So, how is the word of the Lord purifying? Both Yeshua and Paul spoke of the word that purifies. Yeshua said 15:4 ‘*Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. 15:5 ‘I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. (NASB)* we must abide in the word of God, in God’s Torah. (Note that the Torah is a reference to all of Scripture.) The word “abide” is a verb meaning “*stay; live, dwell; continue, tolerate, put up with, wait; comply, submit, obey, or conform.*” To abide is to obey. The Concluding phrase in *Midrash Tehillim 18, Part 25* says “*Then David supplicated that Shield of David be mentioned in the benediction after the lesson from the prophets; and indeed this benediction reads, By Your holy name You have sworn unto him that his lamp will not be quenched forever and ever. Blessed are You, O Lord, the shield of David. Hence David said, You have given me the shield of Your salvation (Tehillim / Psalms 18:36).*” The Lord God Almighty is the shield of David, and He is the shield of Our Salvation as well.

Midrash Tehillim 18, Part 36 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying “*Great deliverance gives He to His king to David and to his seed for evermore (Tehillim / Psalms 18:51).*” The homiletic introduction to the Midrash states “*What verse follows this one? The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows His handiwork (Tehillim / Psalms 19:2).*” The rabbis speak of the seed of David, God establishes forever and builds his throne and expounds upon the deliverance that God provides.

Even so when God makes secure to David, Your seed will I establish forever, and build up your throne to all generations (Tehillim / Psalms 89:5). And what verse follows this one? The heavens will praise Your wonders, O Lord (Tehillim / Psalms 89:6). In Samuel it is said God is the mighty tower (migdol) of deliverance for His king (2 Samuel 22:51), while the corresponding verse in Psalms, taken literally, reads, Mightily He enlarged (magdil) deliverance for His king (Tehillim / Psalms 18:51). This means, rabbi Yudan said, that deliverance will not come to this people all at once, but little by little. Can Mightily He enlarges be understood in any other way except that deliverance for Israel will grow larger and larger gradually? The children of Israel now live in great sorrows, and if deliverance were to come all at once, they would be unable to bear such great deliverance, especially since it would be accompanied by even greater sorrows. Hence, deliverance will come little by little, and will

be enlarged gradually for Israel.

וכן בשעה שהקב"ה מכין כסאו על בן דוד הכל שמחין, שנאמר עד עולם אכין זרעך (תהלים פט ה'), מה כתיב בתריה, ויודו שמים פלאך ה' (שם שם תהלים פט ו). כתוב אחד אומר מגדול (ש"ב שמואל ב' כב נא), וכתוב אחד אומר מגדיל (תהלים יח נא), ר' יודן אומר לפי שאין הגאולה באה על אומה זו בבת אחת, אלא קימעא קימעא, ומהו מגדיל, לפי שהיא מתגדלת והולכת לפני ישראל, עכשיו הן שרוין בצרות גדולות, [וכשתבא הגאולה בבת אחת, אינן יכולין לסבול ישועה גדולה, לפי שהיא באה בצרות גדולות], לפיכך היא באה קימעא קימעא ומתגדלת והולכת לפניו

The midrash speaks of deliverance coming only little by little; the reason being if deliverance come great and quick the people would not be able to bear it. The rabbis seem to suggest that great deliverance and freedom leads to sin. Do you think this is true? The interesting point here is that when the Children of Israel were delivered from Egypt, they come to the foot of the mountain of Sinai and there waiting on Moshe to come down from the mountain, they began to sin greatly in idolatry. Think about this for a moment, the Lord tarrying to answer prayer leads us to seek Him for guidance. If we were delivered from something immediately, like addiction, sickness, etc, would maturity be in place for one to walk in obedience to the Lord following the healing and deliverance? Does the Apostolic Writings have anything to say on this question? *John 5* does in fact shed some light on this question.

John 5:5-15

5:5 A man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. 5:6 When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had already been a long time in that condition, He said to him, 'Do you wish to get well?' 5:7 The sick man answered Him, 'Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, but while I am coming, another steps down before me.' 5:8 Jesus said to him, 'Get up, pick up your pallet and walk.' 5:9 Immediately the man became well, and picked up his pallet and began to walk. Now it was the Sabbath on that day. 5:10 So the Jews were saying to the man who was cured, 'It is the Sabbath, and it is not permissible for you to carry your pallet.' 5:11 But he answered them, 'He who made me well was the one who said to me, 'Pick up your pallet and walk.' 5:12 They asked him, 'Who is the man who said to you, 'Pick up your pallet and walk'?' 5:13 But the man who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had slipped away while there was a crowd in that place. 5:14 Afterward Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, 'Behold, you have become well; do not sin anymore, so that nothing worse happens to you.' 5:15 The man went away, and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well. (NASB)

⁵δέ τις ἄνθρωπος ἐκεῖ τριάκοντα [καὶ] ὀκτῶ ἔτη ἔχων ἐν τῇ ἀσθενείᾳ αὐτοῦ: ⁶τοῦτον ἰδὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς κατακείμενον, καὶ γνοὺς ὅτι πολὺν ἤδη χρόνον ἔχει, λέγει αὐτῷ, Θέλεις ὑγιῆς γενέσθαι; ⁷ἀπεκρίθη αὐτῷ ὁ ἀσθενῶν, Κύριε, ἄνθρωπον οὐκ ἔχω ἵνα ὅταν παραχθῆ τὸ ὕδωρ βάλῃ με εἰς τὴν κολυμβήθραν: ἐν ᾧ δὲ ἔρχομαι ἐγὼ ἄλλος πρὸ ἐμοῦ καταβαίνει. ⁸λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Ἐγειρε ἄρον τὸν κράβαττόν σου καὶ περιπάτει. ⁹καὶ εὐθέως ἐγένετο ὑγιῆς ὁ ἄνθρωπος, καὶ ἤρην τὸν κράβαττον αὐτοῦ καὶ περιεπάτει. ἦν δὲ σάββατον ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ. ¹⁰ἔλεγον οὖν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι τῷ θεραπευμένῳ, Σάββατόν ἐστιν, καὶ οὐκ ἔξεστίν σοι ἄραι τὸν κράβαττόν σου. ¹¹ὁ δὲ ἀπεκρίθη αὐτοῖς, Ὁ ποιήσας με ὑγιῆ ἐκεῖνός μοι εἶπεν, ἄρον τὸν κράβαττόν σου καὶ περιπάτει. ¹²ἠρώτησαν αὐτόν, Τίς ἐστιν ὁ ἄνθρωπος ὁ εἰπὼν σοι, ἄρον καὶ περιπάτει; ¹³ὁ δὲ ἰαθεὶς οὐκ ᾔδει τίς ἐστιν, ὁ γὰρ Ἰησοῦς ἐξένευσεν ὄχλου ὄντος ἐν τῷ τόπῳ. ¹⁴μετὰ ταῦτα εὗρίσκει αὐτόν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ, Ἴδε ὑγιῆς γέγονας: μηκέτι ἀμάρτανε, ἵνα

μη χειρόν σοί τι γένηται. ¹⁵ἀπῆλθεν ὁ ἄνθρωπος καὶ ἀνήγγειλεν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις ὅτι Ἰησοῦς
ἔστιν ὁ ποιήσας αὐτὸν ὑγιῆ.

Here Yeshua healed a man who had been ill for 38 years. Following being healed, Yeshua found the man and told him to stop sinning or something worse will happen to him. This man sought the Lord's healing for 38 years and having been healed, he turned and continued to sin. This should be a stark warning for each of us, and for those who are seeking healing from the Lord. The Lord wants us to turn from our sins and to walk in a new direction. This can be achieved with the Lord's help, in His Son Yeshua, and by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Concluding phrase of *Midrash Tehillim 18, Part 36* says "And can mighty tower in the verse from Samuel be understood in any other way except that the lord Messiah will become as a tower unto them? Thus Scripture says, *The name of the Lord is like a strong tower; the righteous runs into it, and is set on high (Mishley / Proverbs 18:10).*" The Lord God Almighty is our strong tower, He has provided for all of our needs, He provided the lamb for our salvation, and He is searching and seeking for those who are seeking Him. The Midrash states that the lord Messiah will become as a tower to them. This is indeed exactly what Yeshua has become to each and every one of us. He is our strength, our life, our protection, our tower. What a wonderful God we serve! Let's pray!

Heavenly Father,

Thank you for making for us a strong tower in which we go and be safe. In Your Messiah You have revealed Your Salvation, Your Mercy, Your Love, and by Your enabling each of us to stand before You in Your Righteousness! The Apostle Paul said that destruction is reserved for those who do not know God and who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Yeshua. Help us to "obey the gospel of Yeshua" and to live by the power of Your Spirit. Standing in You and in Your Son Yeshua we stand in a strong tower and will not be moved. We thank you Lord for sending us Your Son Yeshua who paid the covenant price for the forgiveness of our sins. We believe that in Your Son Yeshua we are unmovable, and have the hope of eternal life. Help us to trust in You Lord as we seek You and Your presence each day. We believe in the Righteous work of Yeshua who made atonement for our sins. Help us to live and dedicated our lives to You, fill us with Your presence Lord and thank You for revealing these truths to our hearts. We praise Your Holy Name and give You all of the honor, and the glory, and the praise forever and ever.

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

Be Blessed in Yeshua, Christ our Messiah!

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