

Tehillim / Psalms 98 | ספר תהילים צח

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Giving glory to God by the way we live our lives

In this week's study from *Tehillim / Psalms 98:1-9*, the Psalm opens saying, **א** מְזֹמֹר שִׁירוֹ לַיהוָה | שִׁיר *A psalm. 98:1 O sing to the Lord a new song, For He has done wonderful things, His right hand and His holy arm have gained the victory for Him. (NASB)* The psalmist speaks of the right hand and the holy arm have gained the victory. What is meant by the right hand and the holy arm of God? Is the Messiah considered a part of these things, being seated at the right hand of God? The psalmist continues saying, **ב** הוֹדִיעַ יְהוָה יְשׁוּעָתוֹ לְעֵינֵי הַגּוֹיִם גְּלָה צְדָקְתוֹ: *ג* זָכַר חֲסֵדוֹ | וְאָמְנָתוֹ *98:2 The Lord has made known His salvation; He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the nations. 98:3 He has remembered His lovingkindness and His faithfulness to the house of Israel; All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. (NASB)* The Lord making known His salvation, how did He do this? If we take the Torah perspective, the Lord revealed His power through the hand of Moshe, to deliver His people. He revealed his faithfulness how? What does it mean that He has remembered His lovingkindness and faithfulness? Could this be a reference to the covenant promises? What implications does this have for us as believers in the Messiah Yeshua today? Could the reference to the ends of the earth suggest the gospel message going to all nations? (*Isaiah 2*) The psalm continues saying, **ד** הֲרִיעוּ לַיהוָה כָּל-הָאָרֶץ פָּצְחוּ וְרַנְּנוּ וְזָמְרוּ: *ה* זָמְרוּ לַיהוָה בְּכִנּוֹר בְּכִנּוֹר וְקוֹל זְמֶרָה: *ו* *98:4 Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth; Break forth and sing for joy and sing praises. 98:5 Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre, With the lyre and the sound of melody. 98:6 With trumpets and the sound of the horn Shout joyfully before the King, the Lord. (NASB)* This sounds like the imperative for all the peoples and all of the earth shouting to the Lord praising His glory and majesty, power and mercy. Musical instruments are a natural extension to the one who wants to bring glory to the name of God. The Psalm concludes saying, **ז** יִרְעַם הַיָּם וּמַלְאֵוֹ תִּבְּל וַיִּשְׁבְּי בָהּ: *ח* נְהַרֹת יִמְחָאוּ-כָּף *98:7 Let the sea roar and all it contains, The world and those who dwell in it. 98:8 Let the rivers clap their hands, Let the mountains sing together for joy 98:9 Before the Lord, for He is coming to judge the earth; He will judge the world with righteousness And the peoples with equity. (NASB)* Note the anthropomorphisms given to describe how even the creation itself brings glory to the Name of the Lord. If the natural elements are said to bring glory to God, should we also not seek to bring glory to His name by reason of simply who He is?

עברית **Hebrew** **ארמי** **Aramaic** **ελληνικός** **Greek**

עברית	Hebrew	ארמי	Aramaic	ελληνικός	Greek
ספר תהלים פרק צח	ספר תהלים פרק צח	ספר טוביה פרק צח	ספר טוביה פרק צח	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 98	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 98
א מְזֹמֹר שִׁירוֹ לַיהוָה שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ כִּי-נִפְלְאוֹת עָשָׂה הוֹשִׁיעָה- לוֹ יְמִינוֹ וּזְרוּעַ חֲדָשׁוֹ: ב הוֹדִיעַ יְהוָה יְשׁוּעָתוֹ לְעֵינֵי הַגּוֹיִם גְּלָה צְדָקְתוֹ: ג זָכַר חֲסֵדוֹ וְאָמְנָתוֹ לְבֵית יִשְׂרָאֵל רָאוּ כָל-אֶפְסֵי-אָרֶץ אֵת יְשׁוּעָתָא אֱלֹהֵינוּ:	א מְזֹמֹר שִׁירוֹ לַיהוָה שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ כִּי-נִפְלְאוֹת עָשָׂה הוֹשִׁיעָה- לוֹ יְמִינוֹ וּזְרוּעַ חֲדָשׁוֹ: ב הוֹדִיעַ יְהוָה יְשׁוּעָתוֹ לְעֵינֵי הַגּוֹיִם גְּלָה צְדָקְתוֹ: ג זָכַר חֲסֵדוֹ וְאָמְנָתוֹ לְבֵית יִשְׂרָאֵל רָאוּ כָל-אֶפְסֵי-אָרֶץ אֵת יְשׁוּעָתָא אֱלֹהֵינוּ:	א תושבחה נבואה שבחו קדם יהוה שבה חדת ארום פרישן עבד פריקת ליה ימיניה ואדרע שכנת קודשיה: ב הודע אודע יהוה פו- רקניה למיחמיהון דעמיא דעמיא גלי צדקתיה: ג דכר טוביה וקוש- טיה לבית ישראל וחמון כל סייפי ארעא ית פורקנא דאלהנא:	א תושבחה נבואה שבחו קדם יהוה שבה חדת ארום פרישן עבד פריקת ליה ימיניה ואדרע שכנת קודשיה: ב הודע אודע יהוה פו- רקניה למיחמיהון דעמיא דעמיא גלי צדקתיה: ג דכר טוביה וקוש- טיה לבית ישראל וחמון כל סייפי ארעא ית פורקנא דאלהנא:	98:1 ψαλμὸς τῷ Δαυὶδ ἄσατε τῷ κυρίῳ ἄσμα καινόν ὅτι θαυμαστά ἐποίησεν κύριος ἔσωσεν αὐτῷ ἡ δεξιὰ αὐτοῦ καὶ ὁ βραχίον ὁ ἅγιος αὐτοῦ 98:2 ἐγνώρισεν κύριος τὸ σωτήριον αὐτοῦ ἐναντίον τῶν ἐθνῶν ἀπεκάλυψεν τὴν δικαιοσύνην αὐτοῦ 98:3 ἐμνήσθη τοῦ ἐλέους αὐτοῦ τῷ Ἰακωβ καὶ τῆς ἀληθείας αὐτοῦ τῷ οἴκῳ Ἰσραὴλ εἶδον πάντα τὰ πέρατα τῆς γῆς τὸ σωτήριον τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν	98:1 ψαλμὸς τῷ Δαυὶδ ἄσατε τῷ κυρίῳ ἄσμα καινόν ὅτι θαυμαστά ἐποίησεν κύριος ἔσωσεν αὐτῷ ἡ δεξιὰ αὐτοῦ καὶ ὁ βραχίον ὁ ἅγιος αὐτοῦ 98:2 ἐγνώρισεν κύριος τὸ σωτήριον αὐτοῦ ἐναντίον τῶν ἐθνῶν ἀπεκάλυψεν τὴν δικαιοσύνην αὐτοῦ 98:3 ἐμνήσθη τοῦ ἐλέους αὐτοῦ τῷ Ἰακωβ καὶ τῆς ἀληθείας αὐτοῦ τῷ οἴκῳ Ἰσραὴλ εἶδον πάντα τὰ πέρατα τῆς γῆς τὸ σωτήριον τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν

<p>ד הָרִיעוּ לַיהוָה כָּל-הָאָרֶץ פָּצְחוּ וְרָנְנוּ וְזָמְרוּ: ה זָמְרוּ לַיהוָה בְּכִנּוֹר בְּכִנּוֹר וְקוֹל זְמִרָה: ו בְּחִצְצָרוֹת וְקוֹל שׁוֹפָר הָרִיעוּ לְפָנַי הַמְלִיךְ יְהוָה: ז יִרְעַם הַיָּם וּמְלֵאוּ תַבֵּל וַיִּשְׁבֵּי בָהּ: ח נְהַרְוֹת יִמְחָאוּ-כָּף יַחַד הָרִים יִרְנְנוּ: ט לְפָנַי-יְהוָה כִּי בָא לְשַׁפֵּט הָאָרֶץ יִשְׁפֹּט-תַבֵּל בְּצַדֵּק וְעִמִּים בְּמִישְׁרִים:</p>	<p>ד יביבו קדם יהוה כל יתבי ארעא בועו ושבחו וזמרו: ה זמרו קדם יהוה בכנרין בכנרין וקל זמריא: ו בחצוצרתא וקל שופרא יבבו קדם יכלי ימא ומלייהמלכא יהוה: ז תבל וכל דיירין עלה: ח נהרותא ימחון יקושון כפיא כחדא טוריא ירננון: ט קדם יהוה ארום אתא למידן ארעא ידון תבל בצדקתא ועמיא ועממיא בתירוצתא:</p>	<p>98:4 ἀλαλάξατε τῷ θεῷ πᾶσα ἡ γῆ ᾄσατε καὶ ἀγαλλιᾶσθε καὶ ψάλατε 98:5 ψάλατε τῷ κυρίῳ ἐν κιθάρα ἐν κιθάρα καὶ φωνῇ ψαλμοῦ 98:6 ἐν σάλπιγγιν ἐλαταῖς καὶ φωνῇ σάλπιγγος κερατίνης ἀλαλάξατε ἐνώπιον τοῦ βασιλέως κυρίου 98:7 σαλευθήτω ἡ θάλασσα καὶ τὸ πλήρωμα αὐτῆς ἡ οἰκουμένη καὶ οἱ κατοικοῦντες ἐν αὐτῇ 98:8 ποταμοὶ κροτήσουσιν χειρὶ ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ τὰ ὄρη ἀγαλλιᾶσονται 98:9 ὅτι ἦκει κρῖναι τὴν γῆν κρινεῖ τὴν οἰκουμένην ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ καὶ λαοὺς ἐν εὐθύτητι</p>
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<p>Tehillim / Psalms 98 A psalm. 98:1 O sing to the Lord a new song, For He has done wonderful things, His right hand and His holy arm have gained the victory for Him. 98:2 The Lord has made known His salvation; He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the nations. 98:3 He has remembered His lovingkindness and His faithfulness to the house of Israel; All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. 98:4 Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth; Break forth and sing for joy and sing praises. 98:5 Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre, With the lyre and the sound of melody. 98:6 With trumpets and the sound of the horn Shout joyfully before the King, the Lord. 98:7 Let the sea roar and all it contains, The world and those who dwell in it. 98:8 Let the rivers clap their hands, Let the mountains sing together for joy 98:9 Before the Lord, for He is coming to judge the earth; He will judge the world with righteousness And the peoples with equity. (NASB)</p>	<p>Toviyah / Psalms 98 98:1 A psalm and prophecy. Sing before the Lord a new hymn, for he has done wonders; his right hand has brought redemption, and the arm of his holy presence. 98:2 The Lord has made known his redemption; in the sight of the Gentiles he has revealed his righteousness. 98:3 He has called to mind his goodness and his truth to the house of Israel, and all the ends of the earth have seen the redemption of our God. 98:4 Give voice in the presence of the Lord, all inhabitants of the earth; rejoice and give praise and make music. 98:5 Sing in the presence of the Lord with harps, with harps and the sound of musical instruments. 98:6 With trumpets and the sound of the horn, give voice in the presence of the king, the Lord. 98:7 Let the sea call out, and its fullness; the world and all who dwell upon it. 98:8 Let the rivers smite their palms; as one, let the mountains sing aloud 98:9 In the presence of the Lord, for he has come to judge the earth; he will judge the world in righteousness, and the peoples with integrity. (EMC)</p>	<p>Psalmoi / Psalms 98 A Psalm of David. 98:1 Sing to the Lord a new song; for the Lord has wrought wonderful works, his right hand, and his holy arm, have wrought salvation for him. 98:2 The Lord has made known his salvation, he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations. 98:3 He has remembered his mercy to Jacob, and his truth to the house of Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. 98:4 Shout to God, all the earth; sing, and exult, and sing psalms. 98:5 Sing to the Lord with a harp, with a harp, and the voice of a psalm. 98:6 With trumpets of metal, and the sound of a trumpet of horn make a joyful noise to the Lord before the king. 98:7 Let the sea be moved, and the fullness of it; the world, and they that dwell in it. 98:8 The rivers shall clap their hands together; the mountains shall exult. 98:9 For he is come to judge the earth; he shall judge the world in righteousness, and the nations in uprightness. (LXX)</p>
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א מְזֹמֵר לַיהוָה | In this week's study from *Tehillim / Psalms 98:1-9*, the Psalm opens saying, | *A psalm. 98:1 O sing to the Lord a new song, For He has done wonderful things, His right hand and His holy arm have gained the victory for Him. (NASB)* The psalmist speaks of the right hand and the holy arm of God have gained the victory. Again, this is an anthropomorphism. What is meant by the right hand and the holy arm of God? Is the Messiah considered a part of these things, being seated at the right hand of God? The Scriptures implements a diverse usage of the term “right hand” as referring to the direction one must take (*not turning to the right or the left, Mishley / Proverbs 4:27*) to keep one's feet upon the correct path, to do what is right, the opposite of wrong, to be conformed unto an established standard, as a place of honor or authority, and as a place of power and strength to overcome the enemy (*Shemot / Exodus 15*). The earliest example that the right hand is given as a place of honor, respect, and authority, is found in the account of Jacob dividing the blessings of Joseph's sons before he died according to *Bereshit / Genesis 48:13-14*.

Bereshit / Genesis 48:11-19

48:11 Israel said to Joseph, 'I never expected to see your face, and behold, God has let me see your children as well.' 48:12 Then Joseph took them from his knees, and bowed with his face to the ground. 48:13 Joseph took them both, Ephraim with his right hand toward Israel's left, and Manasseh with his left hand toward Israel's right, and brought them close to him. 48:14 But Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on the head of Ephraim, who was the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh's head, crossing his hands, although Manasseh was the firstborn. 48:15 He blessed Joseph, and said, 'The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, The God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day, 48:16 The angel who has redeemed me from all evil, Bless the lads; And may my name live on in them, And the names of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; And may they grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.' 48:17 When Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on Ephraim's head, it displeased him; and he grasped his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. 48:18 Joseph said to his father, 'Not so, my father, for this one is the firstborn. Place your right hand on his head.' 48:19 But his father refused and said, 'I know, my son, I know; he also will become a people and he also will be great. However, his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his descendants shall become a multitude of nations.'

יא וַיֹּאמֶר יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל-יוֹסֵף רְאֵה פָנַיךָ לֹא פָלַתִּי וְהִנֵּה הִרְאָה אֹתִי אֱלֹהִים גַּם אֶת-זַרְעֶךָ: (NASB, יב וַיּוֹצֵא יוֹסֵף אֹתָם מֵעַם בְּרָכָיו וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ לְאֶפְרַיִם אָרְצָה: יג וַיִּקַּח יוֹסֵף אֶת-שְׁנֵיהֶם אֶת-אֶפְרַיִם בְּיָמֵינוּ מִשְׁמָאל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶת-מְנַשֶּׁה בְּשִׂמְלֹלוֹ מִיְמֵינוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּגַּשׁ אֵלָיו: יד וַיִּשְׁלַח יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת-יְמֵינוּ וַיָּשֶׁת עַל-רֹאשׁ אֶפְרַיִם וְהוּא הִצְעִיר וְאֶת-שְׂמָאלוֹ עַל-רֹאשׁ מְנַשֶּׁה שִׁפְלָא אֶת-יָדָיו כִּי מְנַשֶּׁה הַבְּכוֹר: טו וַיִּבְרַךְ אֶת-יוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר הָאֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר הִתְהַלְכוּ אֲבֹתַי לְפָנָיו אֲבָרְכֶם וַיִּצְחַק הָאֱלֹהִים הִרְעָה אֹתִי מֵעוֹדֵי עַד-הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: טז הַמְלֶאךָ הַגָּאֵל אֹתִי מִכָּל-רָע יִבְרַךְ אֶת-הַנְּעָרִים וַיִּקְרָא בָהֶם שְׁמֵי וְשֵׁם אֲבֹתִי אֲבָרְכֶם וַיִּצְחַק וַיִּדְגּוּ לְרֹב בְּקִרְבֵּי הָאָרֶץ: [שְׁלִישִׁי] יז וַיֹּרָא יוֹסֵף כִּי-יָשִׁית אָבִיו יָד-יְמֵינוּ עַל-רֹאשׁ אֶפְרַיִם וַיִּרַע בְּעֵינָיו וַיִּתְמַךְ יָד-אָבִיו לְהִסִּיר אֹתָהּ מֵעַל רֹאשׁ-אֶפְרַיִם עַל-רֹאשׁ מְנַשֶּׁה: יח וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף אֶל-אָבִיו לֹא-כֵן אָבִי כִּי-זֶה הַבְּכוֹר שֵׁם יְמֵינוּ עַל-רֹאשׁוֹ: יט וַיִּמָּאֵן אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר יְדַעְתִּי בְנֵי יְדַעְתִּי (גם-הוּא יִהְיֶה-לְעַם וְגַם-הוּא יִגְדֵּל וְאוֹלָם אֲחִיו הַקָּטָן יִגְדֵּל מִמֶּנּוּ וְזָרְעוֹ יִהְיֶה מְלֵא-הַגּוֹיִם:

The right hand is given as the chief position for pronouncing a blessing over another. Joseph objects to his father laying his right hand upon Ephraim's head because he is the second born (*Bereshit / Genesis 48:17*) and Jacob states that the younger will be greater than the older, and that is the purpose of switching the hand positions while pronouncing the blessing over each. The psalms also ascribe the position of the right hand, or the right arm of God as being a place of power and sustenance according to the psalms.

Tehillim / Psalms 63:8

63:8 My soul clings to You; Your right hand upholds me. (NASB, ט דְּבָקָה נַפְשִׁי אֶחְרִיךָ בִּי, (תְּמַכָּה יְמִינְךָ):

Tehillim / Psalms 110:1-2

110:1 The Lord says to my Lord: ‘Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.’ 110:2 The Lord will stretch forth Your strong scepter from Zion, saying, ‘Rule in the midst of Your enemies.’ (NASB, א לְדָוִד מִזְמוֹר נְאֻם יְהוָה | לְאֲדֹנָי שֵׁב לְיְמִינִי עַד-אֲשִׁית, (אֲבִיךָ הָדָם לְרַגְלֶיךָ: ב מִטָּה עֲזָךְ יִשְׁלַח יְהוָה מִצִּיּוֹן רִדָּה בְּקֶרֶב אֲבִיךָ:

Note how the one who is honored sits at the right hand and the Lord God, our Father in heaven, will establish justice and truth, and overcome the enemy. Note that Yeshua used this psalm (*Tehillim / Psalms 110:1-2*) as a reference to the Messiah, introduced as an answer to who the Messiah is to the Pharisees.

The rabbis have the following perspective on the right hand of God according to Rashi on *Bereshit / Genesis* and *Shemot / Exodus*.

Rashi on Bereshit / Genesis 1:26, Part 1

נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם WE WILL MAKE MAN — *The meekness of the Holy One, blessed be He, they (the Rabbis) learned from here: because the man is in the likeness of the angels and they might envy him, therefore He took counsel with them (see Genesis Rabbah 8). And when He judges the kings He likewise consults His heavenly council, for thus we find in the case of Ahab to whom Micha said, (1 Kings 22:19) “I saw the Lord sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by Him on His right hand and on His left.” Has God, then, a right hand and a left hand? But it means that some stood on the right side to plead in favor of the accused and others stood on the left side to accuse; and similarly we read (Daniel 4:14), “the matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the sentence by the word of the holy ones”, — here, also, He consulted His heavenly council and asked permission of them, saying to them: “There are in the heavens beings after My likeness; if there will not be on earth also beings after My likeness, there will be envy among the beings that I have created.”*

Rashi on Shemot / Exodus 15:12

נָטִית יְמִינְךָ THOU INCLINEST THY RIGHT HAND — *When the Holy One, blessed be He, inclines His hand the wicked cease to be and fall — because everything is held in His hand and consequently falls when He inclines it. Similarly it states, (Isaiah 31:3) “When the Lord inclineth His hand, he that helpeth shall stumble and he that is helped shall fall”. A parable: it may be compared to glass vessels held in a man’s hand: if he inclines his hand a little they fall and are shattered to pieces (cf. Mekhilta).*

In Rashi’s commentary on *Bereshit / Genesis 1:26*, he asks the question of whether God has a right or a left hand? Rashi compares this language to the creatures God created above (the angels) and those he created below (man) after His likeness, which is considered a position of honor, and those who He created below (man on earth) will be envied among all of the beings God has created. Rashi’s commentary suggest the position of “right hand” has been given to man, in the manner of being created after the image of God.

Rashi comments on *Shemot / Exodus 15:12* saying that all things are sustained by the right hand of God. When the Lord inclines his hand, the wicked cease and the righteous prevail. The wicked are unable to stand, and must move from this position of the right, which may be why we are told in *Matthew 7* regarding the judgment seat of God, the righteous are moved to the right (a position of honor), whereas the unrighteous are moved to the left (the position of dishonor).

The term “*God’s right hand*” in the prophetic texts refers to the Messiah to whom is given the power and

authority to subdue His enemies (*Tehillim / Psalm 110:1 and 118:16*). According to *Matthew 22:44*, Yeshua speaks from *Tehillim / Psalm 110:1*, saying “*The Son of David*” is the Messiah and how He (Yeshua) is the “*greater son of David*” as the Messiah. In *Matthew 22*, Yeshua questions the Pharisees about who they think the Messiah will be? *Matthew 22:41-45* “*While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, Saying, What think ye of Christ? Whose son is He? They say unto him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make Thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call Him Lord, how is He his son?*” (KJV) Yeshua positioned the Messiah at God’s right hand because He is a man, created in the image of God, given authority and power, and a place of great honor. Therefore, what we can say is “*God’s right hand*” refers to the Messiah who comes with the position, honor, power and authority of God (*John 1:1-5*). Being seated suggests that he has been enthroned and that the Lord is putting his enemies at his feet as the end of the age approaches.

ב הוֹדִיעַ יְהוָה יְשׁוּעָתוֹ לְעֵינֵי הַגּוֹיִם גְּלָהּ צְדָקָתוֹ: ג זָכַר חַסְדּוֹ | וַאֲמִוּנָתוֹ, 98:2 *The Lord has made known His salvation; He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the nations. 98:3 He has remembered His lovingkindness and His faithfulness to the house of Israel; All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. (NASB)* The Lord making known His salvation, how did He do this? According to the Apostolic Writings, the Lord hath made known his salvation in the redemption of the world by the Messiah. This was performed secretly among the people of Israel and was not fully known by all of the people, but by a small number of people, 12 disciples and to those few who heard his ministry and believed. Yeshua’s righteousness was shown openly in His faithfulness to accomplish the promises the Lord God of Israel had made to our fathers long ago. The Psalmist states that this was done in the sight of the nations. In Jerusalem at that time, there were witnesses from the nations of the goodness and mercy of God in His Son Yeshua the Messiah. The Lord’s methodology of forgiveness and creating within His people the desire to draw near to Him. We read of the righteousness of God in the Apostolic Writings that is coupled to the concept that He has remembered His mercy and His truth, and the promises He made to our fathers. In the Messiah, He has provided that mercy which he had promised to the Israelites. As a result, the message of the Messiah has gone out to the ends of the earth and as the Psalm states, “... *All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.*” (NASB) All its inhabitants, from one end to another; have been told of the salvation of our God. It has been published plainly to be sought after such that he who runs for it may read it. This is the perspective of the Apostolic Writings, which has within its pages a systematic theology in the sense of ultimate goal of the revelation of Torah at Sinai and of the Prophets and the Writings as directing us to the Messiah as the redemptive power of God. Note that the rabbinic literature does not have a “*systematic theology*” of this sort, but is a collection of the sayings and teachings of the rabbis on the Tanach. The ideas and concepts of the Messiah of God do however come out in the vast amount of literature, but one must be well read and dig into the rabbinic literature to find it.

Now, if we take the Torah perspective, the Lord revealed His power through the hand of Moshe, to deliver His people from bondage. He revealed his faithfulness in the sense that He remembered the covenant that He made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Isaiah describes the significance of God’s salvation in the following way.

Isaiah 52:6-12

52:6 *‘Therefore My people shall know My name; therefore in that day I am the one who is speaking, ‘Here I am.’* 52:7 *How lovely on the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news, Who announces peace And brings good news of happiness, Who announces salvation, And says to Zion, ‘Your God reigns!’* 52:8 *Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices, They shout joyfully together; For they will see with their own eyes When the Lord restores Zion.* 52:9 *Break forth, shout joyfully together, You waste places of Jerusalem; For the Lord has comforted His people, He has redeemed Jerusalem.* 52:10 *The Lord has bared His holy arm In the sight of all the nations, That all the ends of the earth may see The salvation of our*

God. 52:11 Depart, depart, go out from there, Touch nothing unclean; Go out of the midst of her; purify yourselves, You who carry the vessels of the Lord. 52:12 But you will not go out in haste, Nor will you go as fugitives; For the Lord will go before you, And the God of Israel will be your rear guard. (NASB)

What implications does this have for us as believers in the Messiah Yeshua today? *Isaiah 52:10* does not say that he had merely “proclaimed” his salvation, or his willingness to save His people, but that He had shown His salvation, His power to save, through a public act. What that particular act is referring to here is found in the works of the Torah in the sense that one has shown or demonstrated a changed life, a life that desires to serve the Lord because of the great Love of God. The Lord has demonstrated His love for His people in the manner in which He delivered His people out of Egypt, where He came down from heaven Himself with a mighty arm to save His people from captivity. He also restored the Hebrews from the Babylonian captivity, because He remembers His people and even though they have fallen away from His truth. Those who had faith in the Lord God of Israel returned to the Land from which they were taken.

The rabbis speak of the power of the arm of God and His salvation being made known in the following way according to *Midrash Rabbah Shemot Parashat 3 Part 6*.

Midrash Rabbah Shemot Parashat 3, Part 6

6. And God said to Moses. R. Abba b. Mammel said: God said to Moses: ‘You wish to know My name; I am called according to My deeds. Sometimes I am called “El Shadday”, “Tzveo’ot”, “Elohim”, “YHVH”. When I judge the creations I am called “Elohim” [Judge]. When I am waging war against the wicked I am called “Tzveo’ot” [Lord of Hosts]. When I suspend [punishment] for a man’s sins I am called “El Shadday” (Almighty God). When I am merciful towards My world, I am called “YHVH,” for “YHVH” only refers to the attribute of mercy, as it is said: “The Lord, the Lord (YHVH, YHVH), God, merciful and gracious.” Hence, “ehyeh asher ehyeh” [I am that I am, or I will be that I will be] - I am called according to My deeds. R. Yitzhak said: God said to Moses: ‘Tell them, that I am who was, that I am now, and that I will be in the future.’ For this reason the word “ehyeh” is written three times. Another explanation of “ehyeh asher ehyeh”: R. Jacob b. R. Abina in the name of R. Huna of Tzipperi: God said to Moses: Tell them, in this servitude I will be with them, and in the continuing servitude I will be with them!’ Moses said to God: ‘I should tell them this? An evil is sufficient in its time [I should just mention the present servitude and not its continuation]?’ God replied: ‘No: Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: “Ehyeh has sent me to you.” I am [only] revealing this to you, but not to them.’ Another interpretation: “Ehyeh.” R. Yitzhak said in the name of R. Ammi: They are standing in clay and bricks and they will go on to [another servitude of] clay and bricks. So too in the case of Daniel: “And I Daniel fainted and was sick” (Daniel 8:27). Moses said to God: ‘I should tell them this?’ God replied: ‘No, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: “Ehyeh has sent me to you.”’ R. Yohanan said: I am that I am to individuals, but regarding the multitude I will rule over them even against their will and desires, even though they break their teeth, as it is said: “As I live, says the Lord God, surely with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out, will I be King over you” (Ezekiel 20:33). Another interpretation: R. Ananiel b. R. Sasson said: God said: When I desire, one of the angels who is one third of the world, stretches out his hand from heaven and touches the earth, as it says: “And the form of a hand was sent forth, and I was taken by a lock of my head” (ibid. 8:3). And when I desire three of them, I made them sitting beneath a tree, as it is said: “And recline under the tree” (Genesis 18:4). And when I desire, His glory fills the entire world, as it is said: “Do I not fill heaven and earth?” says the Lord (Jeremiah 23:24). And when I wished, I spoke with Job from the whirlwind, as it is said: “Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind” (Job 38:1). And when I wish, [I speak] from a thorn-bush.

The rabbis state that He (God) is known according to His deeds. Are we not also known by how we live our lives? What we do does matter in the eyes of God. The midrash goes on to describe how the Lord is known by His actions:

1. *When I judge the creations I am called “Elohim” [Judge].*
2. *When I am waging war against the wicked I am called “Tzveo’ot” [Lord of Hosts].*
3. *When I suspend [punishment] for a man’s sins I am called “El Shadday” (Almighty God).*
4. *When I am merciful towards My world, I am called “YHVH,” for “YHVH” only refers to the attribute of mercy, as it is said: “The Lord, the Lord (YHVH, YHVH), God, merciful and gracious.”*

Note that the word Elohim is used of both man and God in the sense of being a judge of righteousness, justice, and truth. The word tzevo’ot means the “Lord of Hosts” in the sense that He is a God who makes war and is fully capable of overcoming the enemy. He is called El Shadday because He is the all sufficient One. And finally His name YHVH is connected to His mercy and grace. The rabbis discuss the meaning of the Lord being made known by His deeds in these ways. They also say that He will be made known by the way that He serves His people. How does the Lord serve His people? The interpretation is, *“I am that I am to individuals, but regarding the multitude I will rule over them even against their will and desires, even though they break their teeth, as it is said: “As I live, says the Lord God, surely with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out, will I be King over you” (Ezekiel 20:33).”* Does this suggest that He will force His will upon His people? The antinomians believe the Torah command is something that is evil and is forced upon the people of God by reason of their interpretation of grace according to the New Testament. Another interpretation that is consistent with the rabbinic tradition and the New Testament is that the rabbis are suggesting that the Lord is working in the lives of His people, where the Apostolic Writings interpretation on this is the Lord transforming us from the inside out according to Paul. The Lord has made us new and empowered us to overcome sin. He has transformed our understanding and created in us a desire to draw near and to live our lives in a manner that is pleasing to the Lord. The Torah becomes Simchat Torah (the Joy of Torah), in the life of a believer who has been transformed from the inside out for the glory of God. So consequentially, for such a person, the Lord may say *“I will rule over them even against their will and desires,”* which were formerly rooted in the flesh, and even as believers who are transformed we must daily to walk in the spirit and turn from the fleshly desires. Paul writes these things in the following way.

2 Corinthians 5:14-20

5:14 For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; 5:15 and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf. 5:16 Therefore from now on we recognize no one according to the flesh; even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him in this way no longer. 5:17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. 5:18 Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, 5:19 namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. 5:20 Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. (NASB)

Paul speaks of a type of corporate control that the Messiah holds over our lives, similar to the rabbinic concept from *Midrash Rabbah Shemot Parashat 3, Part 6*. His having died so too we have died in him so that we do not live for ourselves but for the Messiah who rose and for the Lord God of Israel in heaven. Because of the power of the death and resurrection in our lives, we have been transformed into a new creation where the old has passed and the new thing has come. These things come by a miracle of God in our lives through the Messiah Yeshua, such that we do not live according to the old man in sin and rebellion, we are made new and empowered to live holy and righteous lives. This performed on an individual basis, and for a multitude of individuals, this is similar to what the rabbis are suggesting of the Lord, that He will rule over the people even against their wills, because He has transformed the will of the one who seeks Him. Because of this transformation, when we do sin, the Holy Spirit of God which dwells within convicts us of sin and moves us to repent and turn from our sins. This is the meaning of “*As I live, says the Lord God, surely with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out, will I be King over you*” (Ezekiel 20:33). The Lord is not forcing us but has transformed us to want His holy ways in our lives. Do you have this kind of desire to serve the Lord according to His word because of your great love for Him? If not, why not? Note that some of the pat-responses that I have received are “*we are set free in Christ and so we do not have to do these things... etc*” The question I have, “*are these things really related to our freedoms in Christ or are they actually related to who we are in Christ?*”

The psalmist states, **ב הוֹדִיעַ יְהוָה יְשׁוּעָתוֹ לְעֵינֵי הַגּוֹיִם גְּלָה צְדָקָתוֹ: ג זָכַר חֲסֵדוֹ | וְאָמוּנָתוֹ לְבַיִת יִשְׂרָאֵל**
 98:2 *The Lord has made known His salvation; He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the nations. 98:3 He has remembered His lovingkindness and His faithfulness to the house of Israel; All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. (NASB)* Could the reference to the ends of the earth suggest the gospel message going to all nations? We are told prophetically of the last days in Isaiah chapter 2.

Isaiah 2:1-5

2:1 The word which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. 2:2 Now it will come about that In the last days The mountain of the house of the Lord Will be established as the chief of the mountains, And will be raised above the hills; And all the nations will stream to it. 2:3 And many peoples will come and say, ‘Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, To the house of the God of Jacob; That He may teach us concerning His ways And that we may walk in His paths.’ For the law will go forth from Zion And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. 2:4 And He will judge between the nations, And will render decisions for many peoples; And they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, And never again will they learn war. 2:5 Come, house of Jacob, and let us walk in the light of the Lord. (NASB, א
 הדְּבַר אֲשֶׁר חָזָה יִשְׁעִיָּהוּ בֶן-אָמוֹץ עַל-יְהוּדָה וִירוּשָׁלַם: ב וְהָיָה | בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים נִכּוֹן יְהִיָּה הַר בֵּית-
 יְהוָה בְּרֹאשׁ הַהָרִים וְנִשְׂאָ מִגְּבָעוֹת וְנִהְרָוּ אֵלָיו כָּל-הַגּוֹיִם: ג וְהָלְכוּ עַמִּים רַבִּים וְאָמְרוּ לְכוּ | וְנַעֲלֶה
 אֶל-הַר-יְהוָה אֶל-בֵּית אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב וִירְנוּ מִדְּרָכָיו וְנִלְכֶה בְּאַחֲרֵיתוֹ כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא תוֹרָה וְדְבַר-יְהוָה
 מִירוּשָׁלַם: ד וְשִׁפְטוּ בֵּין הַגּוֹיִם וְהוֹכִיחַ לְעַמִּים רַבִּים וְכִתְתוּ חַרְבוֹתָם לְאֵתִים וְחַנְיֹתוֹתֵיהֶם לְמִזְמֵרוֹת
 (לֹא-יִשְׂאָ גּוֹי אֶל-גּוֹי חֶרֶב וְלֹא-יִלְמְדוּ עוֹד מִלְחָמָה: ה בֵּית יַעֲקֹב לְכוּ וְנִלְכֶה בְּאוֹר יְהוָה:

Isaiah speaks of a time when the nations will stream to the chief of mountains, the place where the Temple stands. The Lord will rule over the nations and the people will not learn war but be peacemakers. The Talmud states that the Torah will go forth from Jerusalem.

Talmud Bavli Berakhot 63b, 8

Because it is said, “For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from

משום שנאמר (ישעיהו ב, ג) כי מציון תצא תורה ודבר ה' מירושלים. *Jerusalem*" (Is. ii. 3).

The word of the Lord, His Torah (Law) speaks and teaches peace between men, nations, and God. Sforno and the Pesikta Rabbati state the following concerning these things as they are connected to the salvation of God that goes out unto all the nations.

Sforno on Exodus 19:6:1

וְאַתֶּם תִּהְיוּ לִי מַמְלַכְת כַּהֲנִים, *this will make you special for only you will be a kingdom of priests, something that will be understood by all of mankind. This is because all of you will call on the holy name of G'd and serve Him simultaneously. This was to be a forerunner of what will happen in the distant future as predicted by the prophet Isaiah 61:6 "and you will be proclaimed 'priests' of the Lord."* This is also the true meaning of תוצא תורה, *"the Torah emanates from Zion."* (Isaiah 2:3) [This statement is attributed to the nations of the world at that time.

Pesikta Rabbati 40:1

... And He said to him 'go away to the land of Moriah and bring him up there for a burnt offering' (Bereshit 22:2) What is the land of Moriah? There is a whole bundle of Sages here, each saying their own answer. R' Yanai says 'what is Moriah? The place from which awe and fear (morah and yirah) go out to the world,' "You are feared, O G'd, from Your Sanctuary..." (Tehillim 68:36) R' Chiya the elder says 'the land from which instruction (hora'ah) goes out to the world,' as it says "...for out of Zion shall the Torah come forth..." (Yeshayahu 2:3) Another explanation: the land from which, in the future, the Holy One will teach that the wicked should descend to gehinnom, as it says "Like sheep, they are destined to the grave; death will devour them, and the upright will rule over them in the morning, and their form will outlast the grave..." From where? "...his dwelling place (zevul)." (Tehillim 49:15) Another explanation of the land of Moriah. R' Yehoshua ben Levi said 'the land from which the righteous teach (morim) and make decrees upon the Holy One which He does,' as it says "...and David and the elders, covered with sackcloth, fell upon their faces. And David said to G'd, "Did I not say to count the people?...I beg that Your hand be against me and against my father's house, but not against Your people for a plague." (Divre HaYamim I 21:16-17) Another explanation of the land of Moriah. R' Yehudah bar Padiiya said 'Moriah - he said to G'd, where is it? He replied - to the land which I will show (mareh) you.' Another explanation of Moriah. Avraham said to G'd, Master of the World! But am I fit to offer sacrifices? Am I a kohen? Let Shem the High Priest come and receive him from me. The Holy One replied to him - when you arrive at the place I will sanctify you and make you into a kohen. What is the meaning of Moriah? In exchange (temurah) for Shem. His replacement, as it says "He shall not exchange it or offer a substitute for it..." (Vayikra 27:10) Another explanation. What is Moriah? R' Pinchas said 'the land in which the master (maruto) of the world dwells,' as it says "...and My eyes and My heart shall be there at all times." (Melachim I 9:3) Another explanation. What is Moriah? R' Shimon bar Yochai said 'the land which was adorned opposite the altar above "...or cast down... (yaro yireh)" (Shemot 19:13) Another explanation. The land in which the incense is offered - "I will go to the mountain of myrrh (mor)..." (Shir HaShirim 4:6)

Sforno speaks of the Lord God making a kingdom of priests of which all the world will understand and consequentially stream to Jerusalem because this is also the true meaning of תוצא תורה, *"the Torah emanates from Zion."* It is for this reason the psalmist states, ד הָרִיעוּ לַיהוָה כָּל-הָאָרֶץ בְּצִחוֹ וּרְנִינוֹ וְזָמְרוּ: *98:4 Shout joyfully*

to the Lord, all the earth; Break forth and sing for joy and sing praises. 98:5 Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre, With the lyre and the sound of melody. 98:6 With trumpets and the sound of the horn Shout joyfully before the King, the Lord. (NASB) Applying the imperative for all peoples and all of the earth to shout to the Lord praising His glory and majesty, power and mercy. Musical instruments are a natural extension to the one who wants to bring glory to the name of God by implementing his own creative ability.

The *Peskita Rabbati 40:1* speaks of the land of Moriah as a place filled with Sages. A sage, from the Greek σοφός, sophos, in classical philosophy, is someone who has attained the wisdom which a philosopher seeks. In the rabbinic context a sage is a man who is renowned within Judaism as a scholar and Torah teacher. In these days, the prophet Isaiah is speaking of the land being filled with Sages, and so the nations will stream to Jerusalem, and the fear of God and His Sanctuary will be upon the people. Note the importance of seeking the Lord and striving for His righteousness in our lives, as the rabbis interpret the meaning of *Isaiah 2*, saying *the land from which, in the future, the Holy One will teach that the wicked should descend to gehinnom, as it says "Like sheep, they are destined to the grave; death will devour them, and the upright will rule over them in the morning, and their form will outlast the grave..."* The Land where the Lord has made His name known, the righteous teach of the Holy One blessed be He. If we are new creations, if we have the indwelling of God's Spirit (*1 Corinthians 3:16*), if we are as the Scriptures say made to be priests and kings unto God (*Revelation 1:6*), are we doing as we should, teaching God's truth and of the glory of the Messiah Yeshua to everyone we know? The rabbis continue with describing what is Moriah, a place the Lord will sanctify, a place He will make priests to serve and to sacrifice, a place where the Lord dwells, a place where the Lord has established His Name forever. This is clear based upon the book of Isaiah. Because of what the Messiah Yeshua has done, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in our lives, this does not do away with the Land of Israel and the place where the Lord God our Father in heaven has established His Name forever. For example, the freedoms that we have in Christ is not to exempt us from obedience to God's Torah. The freedoms we have are from sin. We are not being given an exemption from the Torah in Christ. Let's read *Galatians 4:21-5:25*.

Galatians 4:21-5:25

4:21 Tell me, you who want to be under law, do you not listen to the law? 4:22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the bondwoman and one by the free woman. 4:23 But the son by the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and the son by the free woman through the promise. 4:24 This is allegorically speaking, for these women are two covenants: one proceeding from Mount Sinai bearing children who are to be slaves; she is Hagar. 4:25 Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. 4:26 But the Jerusalem above is free; she is our mother. 4:27 For it is written, 'Rejoice, barren woman who does not bear; Break forth and shout, you who are not in labor; For more numerous are the children of the desolate Than of the one who has a husband.' 4:28 And you brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise. 4:29 But as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so it is now also. 4:30 But what does the Scripture say? 'Cast out the bondwoman and her son, For the son of the bondwoman shall not be an heir with the son of the free woman.' 4:31 So then, brethren, we are not children of a bondwoman, but of the free woman. 5:1 It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery. 5:2 Behold I, Paul, say to you that if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no benefit to you. 5:3 And I testify again to every man who receives circumcision, that he is under obligation to keep the whole Law. 5:4 You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. 5:5 For we through the Spirit, by faith, are waiting for the hope of righteousness. 5:6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love. 5:7 You were running well; who hindered you from obeying the truth? 5:8 This persuasion did not come from Him who calls you. 5:9 A little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough.

5:10 I have confidence in you in the Lord that you will adopt no other view; but the one who is disturbing you will bear his judgment, whoever he is. 5:11 But I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why am I still persecuted? Then the stumbling block of the cross has been abolished. 5:12 I wish that those who are troubling you would even mutilate themselves. 5:13 For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. 5:14 For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' 5:15 But if you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another. 5:16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. 5:17 For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. 5:18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. 5:19 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, 5:20 idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, 5:21 envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 5:23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. 5:24 Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 5:25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. (NASB)

Paul is speaking of the Lord God having empowered us to overcome in Christ, to not rely upon the flesh but upon the Spirit that moves within which is the Holy Spirit of God. He compares the flesh as equal to walking in sin. He also compares the Law of God as being equal to walking in righteousness and walking in the Spirit. He is not advocating that the Torah is a form of bondage. This is clear because He is using examples from the Torah to describe these things where he begins by setting up the comparison with the birth of two sons, Ishmael and Isaac, and how Ishmael was born based upon the desire of the flesh, whereas Isaac was born based upon faith and the promises of God. He speaks of the bond woman (Hagar) and the free woman (Sarah) saying, *4:30 But what does the Scripture say? 'Cast out the bondwoman and her son, For the son of the bondwoman shall not be an heir with the son of the free woman.'* *4:31 So then, brethren, we are not children of a bondwoman, but of the free woman. 5:1 It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery. (NASB)* He is saying that we are not to rely upon the flesh which is inherently sinful, we are not to be subjected to a yoke of slavery, which is sin. Paul is not saying that the Law of God is a form of slavery. He is speaking of being led by the spirit (walking according to the Torah) and not the flesh (walking according to sin), and leads his conversation into the act of circumcision as being opposed to faith in the sense that one does not rely upon the flesh to enter into the kingdom of God. This is why he says to the gentile, *5:2 Behold I, Paul, say to you that if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no benefit to you. (NASB)* Because the works of righteousness are not a means for entering into heaven. Paul uses the Torah to justify his reasoning because from since the beginning, the salvation of God had come by faith and a life that was lived by faith. Paul explains that if we rely upon our flesh, then we have fallen from truth because we are attempting to justify ourselves by our own works (*Galatians 5:1-4*). Our works should be the result of our faith. Our works do not produce faith, it is our faith that produces works. Paul goes on to say, *5:13 For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. 5:14 For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'* (NASB) What freedom he speaking of? Freedom from the Torah of God? That cannot be the case since the second part of the sentence states that love fulfills Torah. This freedom that he speaks of, he warns not to give opportunity to the flesh. What is the opportunity for the flesh? Is this not a reference to the opportunity to sin? If one sins is he or she not violating God's Law? So is this freedom Paul is speaking of a freedom from the Law of God? The idea of the freedoms in Christ as having set us free from the Law of God is not what Paul is speaking of here. Paul is speaking of the differences between relying upon the flesh as opposed to faith. He

concludes saying that we are to talk in the spirit, 5:17 *For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. (NASB)* His statement here is very important, because Paul is saying that the spirit leads us which is in opposition to the flesh, so that “you may not do the things that you please.” This is a reference doing what we want too in the flesh, and this is the similarity to what we read the rabbis interpreting in Midrash Rabbah Shemot Parashat 3, Part 6 saying, “I am that I am to individuals, but regarding the multitude I will rule over them even against their will and desires, even though they break their teeth, as it is said: “As I live, says the Lord God, surely with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out, will I be King over you” (Ezekiel 20:33),” suggesting the Lord is working in the lives of His people, where Paul’s interpretation is of the Spirit that dwells within that causes us to “...not do the things that you please.” Paul contrasts walking in the spirit (5:22 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 5:23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.*) to walking in the flesh (5:19 *Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, 5:20 idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, 5:21 envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.*) Take note of the list of things that correspond to walking in the spirit as opposed to those things that indicate one is walking in the flesh. Paul states 5:18 *But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. (NASB)* and describes the deeds of the flesh next, followed by the deeds of the spirit then saying 5:23 *gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. (NASB)* The concept of being “under the law” is related to sin, which is a reference to breaking (disobedience to) the Law of God, as opposed to obeying the Law of God saying “against such things there is no law.” The concept of being “under the Law of God” is a reference to guilt, it is the judgment that results from disobedience. Paul again is not saying the Torah of God is sinful or bad. We are called as the children of God to walk in the spirit, and in doing so we are living our lives in obedience to His commands because we love the Lord God of Israel. (*Romans 3:31*)

The Psalm concludes saying, ז ירעם הים ומלאו תבל וישבי בה: ה נהרות ומחאו-כף יחד הרים יריגו: ט 98:7 *Let the sea roar and all it contains, The world and those who dwell in it. 98:8 Let the rivers clap their hands, Let the mountains sing together for joy 98:9 Before the Lord, for He is coming to judge the earth; He will judge the world with righteousness And the peoples with equity. (NASB)* Note the anthropomorphisms given to describe how even the creation itself brings glory to the Name of the Lord. If the natural elements are said to bring glory to God, should we also not seek to bring glory to His name by reason of simply who He is? Does righteous living come simply by having faith in the Lord God in heaven and in Yeshua the Messiah? Or, does righteous living come by practicing our faith, planning, and looking to serve the Lord at every opportunity that we get? Your faith and the practice of the biblical concepts of faithful living will actually begin to set you apart from the rest of society, you will be different and you will begin to grow and change first on the inside and then on the outside. This is what is meant when the Scriptures speak of being sanctified and set apart for holy use by our faith (*Acts 20:32 and 26:18*).

Rabbinic Commentary

The Rabbinic Commentary (Midrash) on *Tehillim / Psalms 98* has 2 parts. Reading through the Midrash we will be looking at Part 1 and 2. Let’s begin by outlining *Midrash Tehillim Chapter 98, Parts 1 and 2*.

Outline of Midrash Tehillim / Psalms, Chapter 98, Part 1 and 2

Part 1

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying, “A Psalm. O

sing unto the Lord a new song, etc. (Tehillim / Psalms 98:1)."

- The פתיחתא (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, *"Elsewhere, this is what Scripture says, Sing unto the Lord a new song to be sung at the deliverance of Israel. His right hand, and His holy arm, has brought deliverance for Him (Tehillim / Psalms 98:1)."*
- The משל (mashal) *"the parable,"* goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis speak of the the arm of the Lord and the exile of Israel out of the Land of Israel.
- The נמשל (Nimshal) *"expansion on the parable"* expands upon the משל (mashal), the rabbis conclude all of the nations will see the glory of God in His deliverance of Israel.
- The Concluding phrase says, *"Let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof (Tehillim / Psalms 98:4-7) all this rejoicing at the end of Israel's exile. These verse prove that no rejoicing can be complete unto the children of Israel are redeemed."*

Part 2

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying, *"Let the floods clap their hands (kaf) (Tehillim / Psalms 98:8) at the rejoicing of the children of Israel."*
- The פתיחתא (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, *"Rabbi Nehemiah observed, there are three references in Scripture to the clapping of the hands..."*
- The משל (mashal) *"the parable,"* goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis speak of the the clapping hands of those who praise the Lord.
- The נמשל (Nimshal) *"expansion on the parable"* expands upon the משל (mashal), the rabbis expand upon the mashal saying the trees clap their hands ascribing anthropomorphic attributes to the trees.
- The Concluding phrase says, *"Let the waters lap against the bank (kef) of the river, lap in rejoicing against the bank of the river. Why? Before the Lord, for He is come to judge the earth (Tehillim / Psalms 98:9)."*

Midrash Tehillim 98, Part 1 opens with the Dibur Hamatil (דיבור המתחיל) saying, *"A Psalm. O sing unto the Lord a new song, etc. (Tehillim / Psalms 98:1)."* The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, *"Elsewhere, this is what Scripture says, Sing unto the Lord a new song to be sung at the deliverance of Israel. His right hand, and His holy arm, has brought deliverance for Him (Tehillim / Psalms 98:1)."* The opening to the midrashic commentary draws in a very important aspect of redemption, of the right hand and the holy arm of God which is sent forth to deliver, where the MT states, אֲמַזְמֹר שִׁירוֹ לַיהוָה | שִׁיר הַקֹּדֶשׁ, *A psalm. 98:1 O sing to the Lord a new song, For He has done wonderful things, His right hand and His holy arm have gained the victory for Him. (NASB)* using the word הוֹשִׁיעָה which is a verb meaning:

save

לְהַצִּיל, לְחַסֹּךְ, לְהוֹשִׁיעַ, לְנַצֵּל

rescue

לְהַצִּיל, לְחַלֵּץ, לְגָאוֹל, לְחַלּוֹץ, לְנַצֵּל, לְהוֹשִׁיעַ

salvage

לְהַצִּיל, לְחַלֵּץ, לְגָאוֹל, לְהוֹשִׁיעַ

It is important to note that Israel belonged to the Lord God before the people had descended into Egypt, just as is written in *Shemot / Exodus 4:21 The Lord said to Moses, 'When you go back to Egypt see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders which I have put in your power; but I will harden his heart so that he will not let the people go. 4:22 'Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the Lord, 'Israel is My son, My*

firstborn. (NASB) There is a very important question regarding this text which describes Israel as God's first born. If Israel was so precious to the Lord, why would He have allowed Israel to go into bondage into slavery in the first place? If the Scriptures are true and the Lord had ownership of Israel, meaning that they were His people, then why would He have allowed Israel to be subjected to slavery? What was the basic premise that was on the minds of the Sages who wrote the midrash? The Tanach answers this question saying, "he whom the Father loves, He chastens" (Mishley / Proverbs 3:12, 13:14, Hebrews 12:8, and Midrash Rabbah Shemot 1:1). It is important to note that great gifts were given to Israel only following a great amount of suffering, where those gifts are (i) the Torah, (ii) the Land of Israel, and (iii) the Olam Haba. As we study the Tanach, in the Neviim (the Prophets), the chastening of Israel came by the hand of God upon Israel, and the reason was because of Israel's natural tendency to sin and then believe in self redemption, believing that it was by their own hands that they had delivered themselves. This was the whole point for what Moshe wrote in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 8:16-9:6*.

Devarim / Deuteronomy 8:16-9:6

8:16 'In the wilderness He fed you manna which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might test you, to do good for you in the end. 8:17 'Otherwise, you may say in your heart, 'My power and the strength of my hand made me this wealth.' 8:18 'But you shall remember the Lord your God, for it is He who is giving you power to make wealth, that He may confirm His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day. 8:19 'It shall come about if you ever forget the Lord your God and go after other gods and serve them and worship them, I testify against you today that you will surely perish. 8:20 'Like the nations that the Lord makes to perish before you, so you shall perish; because you would not listen to the voice of the Lord your God. 9:1 'Hear, O Israel! You are crossing over the Jordan today to go in to dispossess nations greater and mightier than you, great cities fortified to heaven, 9:2 a people great and tall, the sons of the Anakim, whom you know and of whom you have heard it said, 'Who can stand before the sons of Anak?' 9:3 'Know therefore today that it is the Lord your God who is crossing over before you as a consuming fire. He will destroy them and He will subdue them before you, so that you may drive them out and destroy them quickly, just as the Lord has spoken to you. 9:4 'Do not say in your heart when the Lord your God has driven them out before you, 'Because of my righteousness the Lord has brought me in to possess this land,' but it is because of the wickedness of these nations that the Lord is dispossessing them before you. 9:5 'It is not for your righteousness or for the uprightness of your heart that you are going to possess their land, but it is because of the wickedness of these nations that the Lord your God is driving them out before you, in order to confirm the oath which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. 9:6 'Know, then, it is not because of your righteousness that the Lord your God is giving you this good land to possess, for you are a stubborn people. (NASB)

The manna was given from above for the purpose of humbling and testing, and to remind the people that it was not by their own strength that they made wealth in this life. It is interesting how the manna is connected to making wealth. The Lord says that He has given us the ability to make wealth (to work) in order to confirm His covenant which He swore to our fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Israel had a natural tendency to believe in themselves as opposed to having faith in the Lord God in heaven. This is a natural tendency of all mankind, that we are able to pull ourselves up out of the mud. It is only when we are faced with an insurmountable trial (calamity) that we are forced to admit that we are weak and unable to overcome on our own and cry out to the Lord God of Israel for help. The Lord brings us under a rod of chastening by putting us into difficult situations (calamity) for the purpose of drawing us back to Himself. The calamities that happen to us do not necessarily show that we are no longer His, or that He no longer loves us. It is in the place of trouble the Lord demonstrates the power of His right hand and the redeeming property of His outstretched arm. His power is then demonstrated to us if we repent and turn back to Him and His ways, and

it is only then that the Lord assures us of His unfailing faithfulness to His promises. In addition, this reminds us that apart from Him we can do nothing. (*John 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*) Note how apart from the Messiah, we can do nothing. This is how the redeemed soul is characterized. The redeemed one has the ability to admit his or her inabilities, and entrusts himself or herself into God’s care. The concept of self reliance is obviously opposed to having faith and living a life of faith. Therefore, it is the Lord God who brings calamity into our lives in order to show us that we are not a “*self made*” people. The Lord brings us into situations so that we admit we cannot make it on our own and need His help. However, our hearts and minds are still effected by the natural or worldly way of thinking and have a tendency to move towards self reliance, the way of the flesh, and this is the purpose of being consistent in studying God’s word, to put God’s word in our hearts and minds, and to feed the spirit. The tendency towards self reliance leads to rebellion which is the concept of believing that we are able to get along fine without the Lord God of Israel. However, it is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit of God that enables us to overcome and redeem our souls, sets us on the straight and narrow path, and brings us to the place of repentance, truth, and confession before the Lord God in heaven of our sins. With these things in mind, this is how we are able to give thanks to the Lord for the struggles, trials, and calamity that come into our lives. These things bring with them the desire to draw near to the Lord and the power of His redemption, the redemption that He has made for us, His right hand and His outstretched arm. This is why James wrote what he did in *James 1:2-12*:

James 1:2-12

1:2 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, 1:3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. 1:4 And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. 1:5 But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. 1:6 But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. 1:7 For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, 1:8 being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways. 1:9 But the brother of humble circumstances is to glory in his high position; 1:10 and the rich man is to glory in his humiliation, because like flowering grass he will pass away. 1:11 For the sun rises with a scorching wind and withers the grass; and its flower falls off and the beauty of its appearance is destroyed; so too the rich man in the midst of his pursuits will fade away. 1:12 Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. (NASB)

James speaks of living our faith, where this is accomplished through the encounter of various trials. We are called to endure, and through endurance we will lack nothing. He then speaks of seeking the wisdom of God, and having solid faith that does not waver, where having a wavering sort of faith, one should not expect to receive anything from the Lord because the Lord is not looking for a double minded man. We are to be humble, and our perseverance will lead to the approval of God and the receiving of the crown of life which was promised to those who love the Lord (*James 1:12*). Once the soul belongs to the Lord, the faith that works within him and the indwelling of the Spirit of God causes him to be at rest with the Lord in His promised care. The Scriptures describe these things, the one admitting that he is unable to overcome without the Lord’s help, and relying upon the Lord God of Israel in the name of Yeshua the Messiah. These things go hand in hand. This is the difference between those who have faith and those who do not. Those who have true faith recognize and confess their inabilities and turn to and rely upon the Lord for eternal salvation, and for both help and salvation in the Olam Haba and in the Olam Haze. Those without faith try to find their own way and attempt to secure their own redemption. This is what Paul meant when he wrote in *Romans 7:18* “*there dwells in me, that is in my flesh, not one good thing.*” This is the way in which the great men of faith believed and served the Lord saying, whereas those who do not believe state *Shemot / Exodus 5:2*, “*Who is Adonai, that I should obey His voice?*” It is for these reasons the psalmist opens with saying, “*A Psalm. O*

sing unto the Lord a new song, etc. (Tehillim / Psalms 98:1),” and the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “Elsewhere, this is what Scripture says, Sing unto the Lord a new song to be sung at the deliverance of Israel. His right hand, and His holy arm, has brought deliverance for Him (Tehillim / Psalms 98:1).” Because of the greatness of God and the manner in which He works in our lives do we praise him daily.

The entire midrash states the following:

<p>מדרש תהלים פרק צה סימן א</p> <p>א מזמור שירו לה' שיר חדש וגו'. זהו שאמר הכתוב שירו לה' שיר חדש תהלתו (בקצה) [מקצה] הארץ (ישעיה מב י), שעתידין לשורר שירה על תשועתן של ישראל. הושיעה לו ימינו [וזרוע קדשו]. אמר ר' אחא כל זמן שישראל בגלות כביכול ימינו של הקב"ה משעבדת, אבל כשישראל נגאלין ראה מה כתיב הושיעה לו ימינו וזרוע קדשו, וכתיב חשף ה' את זרוע קדשו (גאל יעקב עבדו) [לעיני כל הגוים] וראו כל אפסי ארץ את ישועת אלהינו (ישעיה נב י), הוי זכר חסדו ואמונתו לבית ישראל. הריעו לה' כל הארץ [וגו'] זמרו לה' בכנור [בכנור וקול זמרה] בחצוצרות וקול שופר [וגו'] ירעם הים ומלואו. כל זה בשביל גלותן של ישראל, ללמדך שאין שמחה שלימה עד שישראל נגאלין.</p>	<p>Midrash Tehillim 98, Part 1</p> <p>1. A Psalm. O sing unto the Lord a new song, etc. (Tehillim / Psalms 98:1). Elsewhere, this is what Scripture says, Sing unto the Lord a new song to be sung at the deliverance of Israel. His right hand, and His holy arm, has brought deliverance for Him (Tehillim / Psalms 98:1). Rabbi Akha taught, As long as the people of Israel are in exile, the right hand of the Holy One blessed be He, is held in thrall, if one dare to speak thus. But when Israel is redeemed, mark that it is written His right hand, and His holy arm, has brought deliverance for Him. And it is also written, The Lord has made bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth will see the deliverance of our God (Isaiah 52:10). Hence, it is said, He has remembered His mercy and His faithfulness toward the house of Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the deliverance of our God (Tehillim / Psalms 98:3). Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth, sing unto the Lord with the harp; with the harp and the voice of a Psalm. With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the Lord, the King. Let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof (Tehillim / Psalms 98:4-7) all this rejoicing at the end of Israel's exile. These verse prove that no rejoicing can be complete unto the children of Israel are redeemed.</p>
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According to the Midrash, Rabbi Akha spoke of two aspects of God's redemption in the following way,

1. As long as the people of Israel are in exile, the right hand of the Holy One blessed be He, is held in thrall, if one dare to speak thus. (אמר ר' אחא כל זמן שישראל בגלות כביכול ימינו של הקב"ה משעבדת)
2. But when Israel is redeemed, mark that it is written His right hand, and His holy arm, has brought deliverance for Him. (אבל כשישראל נגאלין ראה מה) (כתיב הושיעה לו ימינו וזרוע קדשו)

If we look at the Aramaic text of the Midrash, it states “as long as the people of Israel are in exile, the right hand of the Holy One blessed be He enslaves (משעבדת).” But when Israel is redeemed, meaning she is set free, then the right hand of God brings salvation (הושיעה), and the reason is because this is what is written in the Scriptures and is part of the promises of God as it is recorded in the Scriptures. Rabbi Akha concludes saying, “And it is also written, The Lord has made bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth will see the deliverance of our God (Isaiah 52:10). Hence, it is said, He has remembered His mercy and His faithfulness toward the house of Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the deliverance of our God (Tehillim / Psalms 98:3).” [לעיני] (כל הגוים) וראו כל אפסי ארץ את ישועת אלהינו (ישעיה נב י), הוי זכר חסדו ואמונתו לבית ישראל. When the

Lord saves and redeems Israel, all the earth will see and make a joyful noise unto the Lord God in heaven.

In *Shemot / Exodus 13*, we are told the Lord dwells with His people. This is a major theme throughout the book of Exodus, that the Lord God of Israel is not in some far off place, rather, He is close to His people. In *Shemot / Exodus 13*, we are told “*And Adonai was walking before them...*” According to the Torah, His visible presence was seen in the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. *Shemot / Exodus 13:22* (כב לא-יָמִישׁ עַמּוּד הָעָנָן יוֹמָם וְעַמּוּד הָאֵשׁ לְלַיְלָה לְפָנֵי הָעָם:) states that the Lord did not take away the pillar of cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people. The sages say this Scripture indicates that the pillars overlapped, at one point during the day the pillars would both be present when transitioning from one to the other (from day to night time) according to the *Mekhilta Beshallah 2*. As a result, the Lord was with His people at all times and His presence was manifested continually. This analogy from the Torah is true for us as well in the sense that we do not have the visible pillar during the day or night of God’s presence, yet His presence dwells among us nonetheless, just as Yeshua promised in the last verse in the book of *Matthew 28:20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.* (NASB) We are told to observe what He commanded, and to believe in His presence being with us daily, at all times just as it was in the days of the writing of the Torah. The Holy Spirit of God who indwells us is the comforter and companion, working in our lives to convict us of sin, which offers a continual manifestation of the presence of God in our midst. This is the power of God to convict us of sin and to overcome sin in our lives, and is related in the Apostolic Writings as the arm of the Lord, the right hand of God working in our lives. This should give us pause to consider the mysterious nature of God’s leading, and cause us to seek the Lord daily for His leading in our lives. As in the case of *Shemot / Exodus 13-15*, the people of Israel were told to make camp at the Red Sea, which placed them between the Egyptian army and the Sea. Note that it is the Lord God who leads us in paths of righteousness (*Tehillim / Psalms 23*) and He may lead us to diverse places, even places of great calamity, for the purpose of demonstrating His power and greatness, where in His grace and mercy he delivers us with His outstretched arm and might of His right hand, just as He did for the people of Israel at the Red Sea.

All of Israel watched as the right hand of God (*Shemot / Exodus 14:31*) accomplished His victory over the enemy and redemption for His people. A similar expression, which is translated as “*outstretched arm*” is used throughout the Tanach to describe the sovereign work of salvation by the Lord God of Israel on behalf of His people (see *Shemot / Exodus 6:6, Devarim / Deuteronomy 4:34, 5:15, 7:19, 9:29, 11:2, 26:8, 1 Kings 8:42, 2 Kings 17:36, 2 Chronicles 6:32, Tehillim / Psalms 136:12, Jeremiah 27:5, 32:17-21, and Ezekiel 20:33-34*). Another expression is “*with a mighty hand*” (see *Shemot / Exodus 13:9, 32:11, Bamidbar / Numbers 20:20, Devarim / Deuteronomy 4:34, 5:15, 6:21, 7:8, 9:26, 26:8, Jeremiah 32:21, Ezekiel 20:33-34, Tehillim / Psalms 136:12, and Daniel 9:15*), which is most often used in connection to the Lord’s deliverance of Israel from Bondage in Egypt. The Apostle Peter refers to God’s “*mighty hand*” in *1 Peter 5:6, “Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time.”* Similarly, “*Your right hand*” is used to denote the power of God (see *Shemot / Exodus 15:6-12, Tehillim / Psalms 16:11, 17:7, 18:35, 21:8, 44:3, 45:4-9, 48:10, 60:5, 63:8, 74:11, 80:15-17, 89:13, 91:7, 108:6, 110:5, 121:5, 138:7, 139:10, and Isaiah 41:13*), particularly in the act of providing refuge and salvation for His people. The “*right hand*” in Hebrew usage denotes a place of honor, power, and authority. All of these expressions speak of the Lord’s sovereign power, His ability to order the affairs of our lives and of this world. When used in connection with the story of Egypt and the deliverance of Israel, these expressions speak of the Lord God’s infinite power to accomplish all of His will on behalf of His chosen people. This is why it is so important to study the Torah and to see how all of Scripture has its foundations in the five books of Moshe. When we considered the context of Parashat Beshalach (*Shemot / Exodus 13:17–17:16*), the Torah portion concludes with the “*Song at the Sea,*” a poetic expression of praise and joy for the Lord’s deliverance; it could be that within this section of the Torah the psalmist may have obtained His understanding of the arm of God, the right hand of God and the singing of praise unto the Lord in which the psalm is introduced making the connection between each of these things.

Midrash Tehillim 98, Part 2 concludes saying, “*Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth, sing unto the Lord with the harp; with the harp and the voice of a Psalm. With trumpets and sound of cornet*”

make a joyful noise before the Lord, the King. Let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof (Tehillim / Psalms 98:4-7) all this rejoicing at the end of Israel's exile. These verse prove that no rejoicing can be complete unto the children of Israel are redeemed." Note how the Midrash concludes saying that singing is not complete until the children of Israel are redeemed. The creation of God is drawn into context where the sea roars for the glory of God and because the people are redeemed. The redemption of God is a theme that proceeds throughout the Scriptures (Tanach and Apostolic Writings) and it is the Lord God of Israel who is able to accomplish our redemption no matter the circumstances!

Midrash Tehillim 98, Part 2 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying, "Let the floods clap their hands (kaf) (Tehillim / Psalms 98:8) at the rejoicing of the children of Israel." Again we find the author giving the waters anthropomorphic attributes to the floods, giving them hands to clap at the rejoicing of the children of Israel. The Aramaic Targum states, : 8:8 נהרותא ימחון יקושון כפיא כחדא טוריא ירננון. *Let the rivers smite their palms; as one, let the mountains sing aloud (EMC)* where both the rivers and the mountains are giving praise. Why do you think the psalmist chose the floods (rivers) and the mountains as giving praise? While studying the Scriptures, we read of Israel's deliverance from the Egyptian army at the Red Sea, in Parashat Beshalach, where the waters piled up towering on the left and the right as Israel passed through the midst of the Sea (*Shemot / Exodus 14*). We also read of another instance where the Jordan river piled up at a distant place (*Joshua 3:16*) when Israel crossed over into the Promised Land. The mountains, rivers, oceans, and hills, all the earth watched as the Lord worked His wonders of deliverance for His people. And so it is a logical conclusion to say that the rivers and the mountains give praise of the Lord God of Israel, or will give praise at a future time, because of Israel's redemption and rejoicing before the Lord. It is also logical then to conclude that with eager expectation all of creation waits for that redemption and deliverance from the bondage of decay, just as Paul wrote in *Romans 8:11-24*. Could Paul's conclusions been made based upon the Torah portion as well? I believe it was.

Romans 8:11-24

8:11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. 8:12 So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh 8:13 for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 8:14 For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 8:15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, 'Abba! Father!' 8:16 The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, 8:17 and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him. 8:18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. 8:19 For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. 8:20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope 8:21 that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. 8:22 For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. 8:23 And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. 8:24 For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees? (NASB)

Paul speaks of the power of God that dwells within those who are in the Messiah. His conclusion is not to live according to the flesh, but according to the spirit, because our obligation is not to the flesh but to the Spirit of God, because the Holy Spirit that indwells us is putting to death the deeds of the body (sin), and we must preserve in pursuing the way of God, walking in the Spirit, and in the power of God to overcome

sin (obeying His word). This is the great expectation that we have in Yeshua, because we (God’s children) bring glory to the Lord by how He has changed our lives. This is why what we do matters in this life and in the life to come. It is for this reason then that Paul states *8:19 For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. 8:20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope 8:21 that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.* (NASB) This is synonymous to what we find in the Torah, and of what the Psalmist is attempting to state in *Tehillim / Psalms 98* with the coupling of the redemption of God, His people (Israel), and rejoicing before the Lord. We eagerly wait for the redemption of the body, when the Lord will ultimately put away all sin, and the creation (this earth) waits for its redemption as well, restoring the “*it is good*” aspect of the ground, as opposed to the ground being cursed because of man having sinned in disobedience. The creation, the land, the mountains, the rivers, the oceans, etc are intimately coupled with the redemption of man because of these things, and we have the hope of salvation in Yeshua the Messiah that at a future time these things will become true, according to God’s Word and promises to His people.

The entire Midrash states the following:

<p>מדרש תהלים פרק צח סימן ב</p> <p>ב נהרות ימחאו כף. בשמחתן של יש- ראל, אמר ר' נחמיה בשלשה מקומות נאמר דבר זה, כל העמים תקעו כף (תהלים מז ב), כף אל כף בשמחתן של ישראל, והוא כף ממש, וכל עצי השדה ימחאו כף (ישעיה נה יב), שהיו מכים ענף על ענף, אין כף אלא ענף, שנאמר פרי עץ הדר כפת תמרים (ויקרא כג מ), נהרות ימחאו כף, על כיף נהרה על כפיין דבנהרא מחיין בחדוה, למה לפני ה' כי בא לשפוט את הארץ.</p>	<p>Midrash Tehillim 98, Part 2</p> <p>2. <i>Let the floods clap their hands (kaf) (Tehillim / Psalms 98:8) at the rejoicing of the children of Israel. Rabbi Nehemiah observed, there are three references in Scripture to the clapping of the hands, (i) O clap your hands, all you peoples (Tehillim / Psalms 47:2), hand against hand because of Israel’s rejoicing. Here hand is used literally. (ii) And all the trees of the field will clap their hands (kaf) (Isaiah 55:2). This verse implies that the trees will clap branch against branch, hand here clearly referring to branch, as in the verse, The fruit of good trees, branches (kappot) of palm trees (Vayikra / Leviticus 23:40). (iii) Let the floods clam their hands. Let the waters lap against the bank (kef) of the river; lap in rejoicing against the bank of the river. Why? Before the Lord, for He is come to judge the earth (Tehillim / Psalms 98:9).</i></p>
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The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*Rabbi Nehemiah observed, there are three references in Scripture to the clapping of the hands...*” He goes on to list those observations:

1. *O clap your hands, all you peoples (Tehillim / Psalms 47:2), hand against hand because of Israel’s rejoicing. Here hand is used literally.*
2. *And all the trees of the field will clap their hands (kaf) (Isaiah 55:2). This verse implies that the trees will clap branch against branch, hand here clearly referring to branch, as in the verse, The fruit of good trees, branches (kappot) of palm trees (Vayikra / Leviticus 23:40).*
3. *Let the floods clam their hands. Let the waters lap against the bank (kef) of the river; lap in rejoicing against the bank of the river.*

Of course there are more references to the trees clapping of hands than these three, such as in *Isaiah 55:12* “*For you will go out with joy And be led forth with peace; The mountains and the hills will break forth into shouts of joy before you, And all the trees of the field will clap their hands.* (NASB) Are the trees and riv-

ers that clap their hands, and mountains that burst into song simply metaphors about how creation inspires people to praise the Lord God of Israel? The Scriptures speak continually of the glory of God and for good reason, He is patient, merciful, and kind, and desires that all men would draw near to Him. It is for these reasons and more that we are invited to Praise the Lord God. These things also provide for us an expectation of some great work the Lord God will do in the future that will be coupled to a testimony of what He has done in the past. This idea that nature itself will praise the Lord in the end also provides for us the expectation that suffering in this world will not last forever. The praise of both the human and non-human creation alike is the looking forward to that day. The writer of *Tehillim / Psalm 19* writes more cautiously saying that although “*there is no speech,*” the heavens still “*declare the glory of God.*” This is similar to what Yeshua stated concerning the rocks giving praise in *Luke 19:40*.

Luke 19:36-44

19:36 As He was going, they were spreading their coats on the road. 19:37 As soon as He was approaching, near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the miracles which they had seen, 19:38 shouting: ‘Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord; Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!’ 19:39 Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Him, ‘Teacher, rebuke Your disciples.’ 19:40 But Jesus answered, ‘I tell you, if these become silent, the stones will cry out!’ 19:41 When He approached Jerusalem He saw the city and wept over it, 19:42 saying, ‘If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes. 19:43 ‘For the days will come upon you when your enemies will throw up a barricade against you, and surround you and hem you in on every side, 19:44 and they will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation.’ (NASB)

Note the significance and importance of recognizing the power of God and giving Him praise. If we keep silent, even the creation (the stones) will shout out in praise unto the Lord. Yeshua states, *19:42* “... ‘If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes.’” Those things that make peace are to seek the Lord God our Father in heaven and His Messiah, to walk in His ways, to turn from evil, and walk in righteousness, justice, and truth. The Lord dwelling in our midst, and loving both our neighbor and our enemy, it is in these things the Lord God of Israel will bring peace. If we do not seek these things, the Lord will cause every stone to be torn apart and destroyed. Midrash Tehillim 98, Part 2 concludes saying, “*Why? Before the Lord, for He is come to judge the earth (Tehillim / Psalms 98:9).*” When the Lord’s judgment comes justice, righteousness, and truth go before Him. If we are doing what is right and abiding in the Messiah, God’s judgment is nothing to be feared. However, if you are playing around with sin, riding the fence, or do not take God’s words seriously, consider the possibility that your faith is lacking and the wrath of the Messiah will come upon those who do not obey His word (*2 Thessalonians 1*). Let’s Pray!

Heavenly Father,

We thank You for Your mercies each day. Please forgive us and have mercy for we are a sinful people. We truly do seek to serve You all the days of our lives. Lord help us to have the strength to stand for truth and life, and to have faith in Yeshua and a devotion to Your Word each day. We thank You Lord for Your continued faithfulness to Your promises and to us. Thank You Lord for giving us the faith to believe in Yeshua the Messiah and for always calling our hearts back to You! Please have mercy on us, forgive us for our sins. Help us to grow in our faith, to walk in the spirit, and apply these truths to our lives. We praise Your Holy Name and give You all of the honor, and the glory, and the praise forever and ever.

Be Blessed in Yeshua, Christ our Messiah!

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

Notes