

ספר תהילים ד | Tehillim / Psalms 5

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Nehiloth (Inheritance) is based upon the Grace of God!

This week's study is from *Tehillim / Psalms 5: 1-13*. The Psalm begins by stating this is "To the chief Musician upon Nehiloth, A Psalm of David." In the opening verses David is calling out to the Lord saying:

5:2 *Heed the sound of my cry for help, my King and my God, For to You I pray.* **5:3** *In the morning, O Lord, You will hear my voice; In the morning I will order my prayer to You and eagerly watch.* (NASB) The Lord hears the voice of the righteous and does not have pleasure in wickedness and evil (ה | לא אל חפץ רשע | אַתָּה לא יגַרָה רַע:), and the foolish do not stand in the sight of God because He hates workers of iniquity (ו | לא-יִתְיַצְּבוּ הוֹלְלִים). The Lord will destroy the bloody and deceitful man (*Tehillim / Psalms 5:6*). David then speaks of himself saying: **5:7** *But as for me, by Your abundant lovingkindness I will enter Your house, At Your holy temple I will bow in reverence for You.* (NASB) the Lord in His abundant mercy has enabled him to come into the house of worship (אֲשַׁתְּחֶנָּה), the Holy Temple. He asks the Lord to lead him in righteousness because of his enemies (ט | יְהוָה | נַחֲנִי בְצַדִּיקְתָּה לְמַעַן שׁוּרְרֵי הַנֶּשֶׁר [הַיֹּשֶׁר] לְפָנַי דַּרְכָּךְ:), and to make straight before him His path / way. David contrasts his faithfulness with the unfaithfulness of the mouths of his enemies. These men who live in a covenant community and claim to have a covenant relationship with the Lord, by their actions they live in unrighteousness and unfaithfulness to God (*Tehillim / Psalms 5:9*). Because of the wickedness of these men, David asks that they be destroyed, to let them fall by reason of their own counsel (יֵא הָאֲשִׁימִם), their rebellion against David, against God's anointed one, against the precepts and statutes that are laid out in the Torah which are to be lived by within the covenant community, is rebellion against God Himself. He contrasts this with those who place their trust in the Lord. They will shout for joy because the Lord will defend them. The Lord God Almighty will bless the righteous and protect us like one who is protected by a shield (יג | כִּי-אַתָּה תִּבְרַךְ צַדִּיק יְהוָה כַּצִּנֵּה רְצוֹן), (תַּעֲטֶרְנוּ:).

עברית Hebrew	ארמי Aramaic	ελληνικός Greek
<p>ספר תהלים פרק ה</p> <p>א לְמַנְצֵחַ אֶל-הַנְּחִילוֹת מְזִמּוֹר לְדוֹד: ב אֲמַרִי הָאֲזִינָה יְהוָה בִּינָה הִגִּיגִי: ג הַקְּשִׁיבָה לְקוֹל שׁוֹעֵי מִלְּפִי וְאֱלֹהֵי כִי-אֲתַפְּלֵל: ד יְהוָה בְּקָר תִּשְׁמַע קוֹלִי בְּקָר אֲעַרְבֶךָ- לָךְ וְאַצְפֶּה: ה כִּי לֹא אֵל חִפְצֵךְ רָשָׁע אַתָּה לֹא יִגְרָה רַע:</p>	<p>ספר טוביה פרק ה</p> <p>א לשבחא על חִינְגִין תושבחתא לדוד: ב מימרי אצית יהוה אתבין רינוני בינה רגגי: ג <א>צית לקל בעותי מלכי ואלהי ארום קדמך אצלי: ד יהוה בצפרא שמע קלי בצפרא אסדר קדמך ואסתכי: ה מטול דלא אלהא רעי צבי רשעא אנת לא איתותב עמך בישא:</p>	<p>ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 5</p> <p>Eis tò télos, úpēr tḗs klhronomoussḗs- psalmòs tḗ Δαυίδ. - 5:2 TA rḗmatá mou éνώτισαι, Kýrie, súnēs tḗs krauyḗs mou· 5:3 prósxēs tḗ φωνḗ tḗs deḗsew̄s mou, ó basileús mou kai ó Θεός μου. ὅτι πρὸς σὲ προσεύξομαι, Kýrie· 5:4 tò prw̄í eisakoussḗ tḗs φωνḗs mou, tò prw̄í parasḗssomai soi kai épópsēi me, 5:5 ὅτι οὐχὶ Θεὸς θέλων ἀνομίαν σὺ εἶ· οὐ παροικῆσει σοι πονηρευόμενος, 5:6 οὐδὲ διαμενοῦσι παράνομοι κατέναντι τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν σου. ἐμίσησας πάντας τοὺς ἐργαζομένους τὴν ἀνομίαν·</p>

<p>ו לא-תִּיַצְבוּ הוֹלְלִים לְגַדְדַי עֵינַיִךְ שְׁנֵאתָ כָּל-פְּעֻלַי אֲנִי: ז תִּאֲבֹד דְּבָרֵי כָּזָב אִישׁ- דְּמִים וּמְרָמָה יִתְעַב יְהוָה: ח וְאֲנִי בָּרַב חֶסֶדְךָ אָבוֹא בִּיתְךָ אֲשַׁמְחֶנּוּ אֶל-הַיְכָל קִדְשֶׁךָ בְּיִרְאַתְךָ: ט יְהוָה נִחַנִּי בְּצַדִּיקוֹתֶיךָ לְמַעַן שׁוֹרְרֵי הַנֶּשֶׁר [הַיְשָׁר] לְפָנַי דְּרַפְּךָ: י כִּי אֵין בְּפִיהוּ נְכוֹנָה קִרְבָּם הוֹת קָבֶר-פְּתוּחַ גְּרוֹנָם לְשׁוֹנָם יִחְלִיקוּן: יא הַאֲשִׁימָם אֱלֹהִים יִפְלוּ מִמַּעְצוֹתֵיהֶם בָּרַב פְּשָׁעֵיהֶם הַדִּיחֵמוּ כִּי מָרוּ בָךְ: יב וַיִּשְׁמָחוּ כָּל-חוֹסֵי בָךְ לְעוֹלָם יִרְנְנוּ וְתִסַּף עָלֵינוּ וַיַּעֲלֵצוּ בָךְ אֲהַבֵּי שְׁמֶךָ: יג כִּי-אֲתָה תִּבְרַךְ צְדִיק יְהוָה כַּצֵּנֶה כָּצוֹן תַּעֲטָרְנוּ:</p>	<p>ו לא יתעתדון מתלעבין קבל עייניך שנאת שנאת כל עובדי עבדי שקר: ז תובד תאבד ממללי כדבותא כדבא אנש שדי דם זכאי וניכלא ירחק יהוה: ח ואנא בסגאי בסוגי טובך אעול לביתך אסגוד להיכלא דקודשך בדחלתך: ט יהוה דבר יתי בצדקתך מן בגלל תושבחי תושבחתי תקין קדמי אורחתך: י מטול ארום דלית בפומהון דרשיעי כיוונתא כונתה גופיהון מליין מליאן איתרגושתא היך שיול פתיה גרונהון לישנהון משעעין: יא חייב להון אלהא יתבטלון ממילכתהון בסי- געא בסוגי מרדהון אתקל להון ארום מרדו במימרך: יב ויהדון כל דסברין מסברין במי- מרך לעלם ישבחון ותטיל ותטיל עילויהון ויבדחון בך במימרך רחמי שמך: יג מטול די אנת תברך לצדיקיא יהוה היך תריסא טבא רעוא טבא תכללינה:</p>	<p>5:7 ἀπολείς πάντας τοὺς λαλοῦντας τὸ ψεῦδος, ἄνδρα αἱμάτων καὶ δόλιον βδελύσσεται Κύριος. 5:8 ἐγὼ δὲ ἐν τῷ πλήθει τοῦ ἔλέους σου εἰσελεύσομαι εἰς τὸν οἶκόν σου, προσκυνήσω πρὸς ναὸν ἁγίόν σου ἐν φόβῳ σου. 5:9 Κύριε, ὀδήγησόν με ἐν τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ σου ἕνεκα τῶν ἐχθρῶν μου, κατεύθυνον ἐνώπιόν σου τὴν ὁδόν μου. 5:10 ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν τῷ στόματι αὐτῶν ἀλήθεια, ἢ καρδία αὐτῶν ματαία· τάφος ἀνεωγμένος ὁ λάρυγξ αὐτῶν, ταῖς γλώσσαις αὐτῶν ἔδολιούσαν. 5:11 κρίνον αὐτούς, ὁ Θεός. ἀποπεσάτωσαν ἀπὸ τῶν διαβουλιῶν αὐτῶν· κατὰ τὸ πλήθος τῶν ἀσεβειῶν αὐτῶν ἔξωσον αὐτούς, ὅτι παρεπίκρανάν σε, Κύριε. 5:12 καὶ εὐφρανθήϊσαν πάντες οἱ ἐλπίζοντες ἐπὶ σέ· εἰς αἰῶνα ἀγαλλιάσονται, καὶ κατασκηνώσεις ἐν αὐτοῖς, καὶ καυχῆσονται ἐν σοὶ πάντες οἱ ἀγαπῶντες τὸ ὄνομά σου. 5:13 ὅτι σὺ εὐλογῆσεις δίκαιον· Κύριε, ὡς ὄπλω εὐδοκίας ἔστεφάνωσας ἡμᾶς. (LXX)</p>
<p>Tehillim / Psalms 5 To the chief Musician upon Nehiloth, A Psalm of David. 5:1 Give ear to my words, O Lord, Consider my groaning. 5:2 Heed the sound of my cry for help, my King and my God, For to You I pray. 5:3 In the morning, O Lord, You will hear my voice; In the morning I will order my prayer to You and eagerly watch. 5:4 For You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness; No evil dwells with You. 5:5 The boastful shall not stand before Your eyes; You hate all who do iniquity. 5:6 You destroy those who speak falsehood; The Lord abhors the man of bloodshed and deceit. 5:7 But as for me, by Your abundant lovingkindness I will enter Your house, At Your holy temple I will bow in reverence for You. 5:8 O Lord, lead me in Your righteousness because of my foes; Make Your way straight before me. 5:9 There is nothing reliable in what they say; Their inward part is destruction itself. Their throat is an open grave; They flatter with their tongue. 5:10 Hold them guilty, O God; By their own devices let them fall! In the multitude of their transgressions thrust them out, For they are rebellious against You. 5:11 But let all who take refuge in You be glad, Let them ever sing for joy; And may You shelter them, That those who love Your name may exult in You. 5:12 For it is You who blesses the righteous man, O Lord, You surround him with favor as with a shield. (NASB)</p>	<p>Toviyah / Psalms Chapter 5 5:1 For praise, with dancing. A hymn of David. 5:2 Hear my utterance, O Lord, consider my murmuring. 5:3 Hear the sound of my petition, my king and God, for I will pray in your presence. 5:4 O Lord, in the morning hear my voice; in the morning I set myself before you and keep watch. 5:5 Because you are not a God who takes pleasure in[13] wickedness; evil did not abide with you. 5:6 Scoffers shall not stand before your eyes; you hate all deeds[14] of falsehood. 5:7 You will destroy tellers of lies; the Lord will loath the man who sheds innocent blood and the deceiver. 5:8 And I, through your great goodness, will enter your house; I will bow down to your holy temple in awe of you. 5:9 O Lord, guide me by your righteousness; because of my hymn, make firm your paths before me. 5:10 Because there is no reliability in the mouths of the wicked; their bodies are full of tumult; like Sheol, their throat is open; their tongues flatter. 5:11 God has accused them; they will be done away with by their counsel; for their great sin he overturned them, for they rebelled against your command. 5:12 And all who trust in your word will rejoice forever; they will give praise and you will protect them; and those who love your name will rejoice in you. 5:13 Because you will bless the righteous, O Lord; as with a shield, you will crown him with good will. (EMC)</p>	<p>Tehillim / Psalms Chapter 5 For the end, a Psalm of David, concerning her that inherits. 5:1 Hearken to my words, O Lord, attend to m cry. 5:2 Attend to the voice of my supplication, my King, and my God: for to thee, O Lord, will I pray. 5:3 In the morning thou shalt hear my voice: in the morning will I wait upon thee, and will look up. 5:4 For thou art not a god that desires iniquity; neither shall the worker of wickedness dwell with thee. 5:5 Neither shall the transgressors continue in thy sight: thou hatest, O Lord, all them that work iniquity. 5:6 Thou wilt destroy all that speak falsehood: the Lord abhors the bloody and deceitful man. 5:7 But I will enter into thine house in the multitude of thy mercy: I will worship in thy fear toward thy holy temple. 5:8 Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness because of mine enemies; make my way plain before thy face. 5:9 For there is no truth in their mouth; their heart is vain; their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit. 5:10 Judge them, O God; let them fail of their counsels: cast them out according to the abundance of their ungodliness; for they have provoked thee, O Lord. 5:11 But let all that trust on thee be glad in thee: they shall exult for ever, and thou shalt dwell among them; and all that love thy name shall rejoice in thee. 5:12 For thou, Lord, shalt bless the righteous: thou hast compassed us as with a shield of favour. (LXX)</p>

Reading the first verse from *Tehillim / Psalms 5* in the Hebrew bible, the Psalm begins by stating
לְמַנְצֵחַ אֶל-הַנְּחִילוֹת מְזִמּוֹר לְדָוִד: “*To the chief Musician upon Nehiloth, A Psalm of David.*” Here the
English translators choose to transliterate the word הַנְּחִילוֹת (Nehiloth) in the English translation. Easton’s
Bible Dictionary states on this word: “*only in the title of Ps. 5. It is probably derived from a root mean-*

ing “to bore,” “perforate,” and hence denotes perforated wind instruments of all kinds. The psalm may be thus regarded as addressed to the conductor of the temple choir which played on flutes and such-like instruments.” It is interesting that Easton’s Dictionary questions the meaning of this word. Looking at this word, the root word of הַנְּחִילוֹת appears to be נחל meaning “to inherit, get, receive; attain.” This word can also have the meaning “be bestowed, bequeathed, brought about, bestow, cause.” Commentaries such as Easton’s dictionary believe that this is a reference to wind instruments. Midrash Tehillim on the other hand uses this word with homily as a reference to inheritance. Was this a Psalm for “stringed or wind instruments” or could this be translated as “To the chief musician on inheritance, a Psalm of David?” Looking at the content of *Tehillim / Psalm 5*, the Lord hearing prayer, the foolish will not stand and the wicked will be destroyed, those who place their trust in the Lord will rejoice and be protected, the word הַנְּחִילוֹת may possibly have the meaning of inheritance indicating that the faithful will stand and be protected by God’s mercy. Searching the Hebrew Scriptures for occurrences of this word הַנְּחִילוֹת, interestingly, this word occurs only once, right here in *Tehillim / Psalms chapter 5* making the exact translation of this word difficult.

The David’s Psalm begins stating בְּאָזְנוֹתַי | יְהוָה בִּינָה הִגִּיגִי: “give ear to my words, Lord, discern my thoughts.” David is assured that the Lord would hear his prayer, saying “what I say is at the ear of the Lord,” his words are at the Lord’s ear for Him to hear. The phrase בִּינָה הִגִּיגִי literally means “between or divide my thoughts” and is translated as “discern my thoughts.” The word בִּינָה is used as a verb and the word הִגִּיגִי comes from the same root word as found in *Tehillim / Psalms 1:2* (יְהַגֶּה) meaning “to moan, utterance, sound.” This verb is translated frequently as the “meditations of the heart,” as it is used here in *Tehillim / Psalms 19:15* יְהִיו לְרִצּוֹן | אִמְרֵי-פִי וְהִגִּיוֹן לְבִי לְפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה צוּרִי וְגֹאֲלִי: 19:15 *Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my rock and my Redeemer.* (NASB) As reassuring as David’s statements are in *Tehillim / Psalms 5:3* he asks the Lord to הִקְשִׁיבָה גְּהִיגֵי אֶתְפִּלְתִּי: “Hearken.” This word for “Harken” is written in the hiphil verbal pattern from the root word קשב meaning “to listen.” This hiphil has a causative meaning “to make someone do something” and indicates an intense response on the part of the listener, David is asking God to listen very intently upon what he is saying. David cries out asking God to hear the voice of his cry (לְקוֹל שְׁוֹעֵי) written in the construct form, his voice is crying out for help. Hear the voice of my cry my King and my God, these statements appeal to the Lord as a servant, saying “For to You do I pray” (פִּי-אֶלֶיךָ אֶתְפַּלֵּל). The Aramaic translation states: 5:3 *Hear the sound of my petition, my king and God, for I will pray in your presence.* (EMC) The Aramaic translation parallels the prayers that are heard by God as literally praying in the presence of God. The Greek translation says 5:3 *πρόσχεε τῆ φωνῆ τῆς δεήσεώς μου, ὁ βασιλεύς μου καὶ ὁ Θεός μου. ὅτι πρὸς σὲ προσεύξομαι, Κύριε* 5:2 *Attend to the voice of my supplication, my King, and my God: for to thee, O Lord, will I pray.* (LXX) agrees with the Hebrew text.

He goes on to say: 5:3 *In the morning, O Lord, You will hear my voice; In the morning I will order my prayer to You and eagerly watch.* (NASB) In Judaism the morning is considered an opportune time to pray because one is free from the distractions of the day. Here David says he will prepare himself by watching and waiting on the Lord in the morning. David believes that God is merciful and gracious rather than judgmental and hard. David anticipated the Lord’s mercy to be shown to him based upon God’s revelation of Himself to him in the past and in the Scriptures. We learn this by what he says in *Tehillim / Psalms 5:8* וְאֲנִי בְּרַב חֲסִדֶּךָ אָבוֹא בֵּיתְךָ אֲשַׁתְּחַנֶּה אֶל-הַיִּכַּל קִדְשֶׁךָ בִּירְאָתְךָ: 5:7 *But as for me, by Your abundant lovingkindness I will enter Your house, At Your holy temple I will bow in reverence for You.* (NASB) It is interesting while reading through *Tehillim / Psalms 5:8*, David uses the word חֲסִדֶּךָ that is almost always translated in the English translations in the Tanach as “lovingkindness” and

not as “grace.” Brown Driver and Briggs lexicon suggests that the word רַחֲמִים has the meaning “*favor, grace, charity, kindness, benevolence, graciousness, mercy, prayerful, benignity.*” The mercy of God is contained within the word “lovingkindness” throughout the Tanach. In fact, God’s Mercy has been revealed to us throughout the Torah and the Prophets and the Writings of the Scriptures. Let’s study this a little further asking the question how has God revealed His Mercy to us within the Text of the Tanach (The Old Testament)? The Torah, the five books of Moshe, and the Apostolic Writings together are inseparable from one another meaning that without the Torah we would not understand the fall of man into sin and how we come short of perfection which caused in the past and today a separation between God and each individual on this earth. This is the way Isaiah understood the condition of man saying כִּי אִם-עֲוֹנוֹתֵיכֶם הָיוּ מִבְּדֵלִים בֵּינֵיכֶם : 59:2 *But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, And your sins have hidden His face from you so that He does not hear.* (NASB) Isaiah is saying it is because of sin we are separated from God and the way of salvation is revealed only in God’s grace. As a result of man’s sin God made a covenant of grace with His people in the Torah. This may sound a little strange at first, how is the Mosaic covenant a covenant of Grace? I will try to illustrate this by an example. Frequently in the Apostolic Writings, Yeshua made reference to Jonah and the sign of Jonah. Why do you think Yeshua used the Jonah illustration at various times during his ministry? The reason is, Jonah illustrates for us the grace of God and His covenant as it is revealed in the pages of the Torah.

While studying the bible, it is important to appreciate what God has intended for us to understand we need to be able to appreciate the themes, motifs, and imagery that are put forth in the Torah as it was understood by the First Century believers. The historical critical methods of interpretation provide insightful background information and help us to gain a framework and point of reference for the rest of the given biblical text. One of the ways we study the bible is to appreciate the way in which various places throughout the scriptures the narratives allude to and cites earlier biblical works such as the Torah. The citation of earlier portions of Scripture is a literary technique referred to as “intertextuality” and provides clues regarding the message and purpose of the given scripture being cited. While studying the scriptures, if the author makes a reference to an earlier text within the Bible then it is our assumption that the author did so for a particular reason. It is therefore the reader’s responsibility to study the earlier text and consider the meaning of the citation within the context of Scripture being studied. Every person who involves themselves in studying the bible is involved in the process of biblical exegesis (the process of interpretation and application of the biblical texts). As a result, it is the reader’s task not only to point out when occurrences of “intertextuality” occur but also to attempt to explain how a given instance of intertextuality affects the meaning and purpose of the Scriptures as it is applied to our lives each day.

Within the book of Jonah (יוֹנָה) there is a very important theme that is revealed consisting of the Covenant God has made with His people. Scholars have long pointed out the covenant connections found within the pages of the book of Jonah. Jonah cites from various placed within the Tanach, such as from *Shemot / Exodus 32:14, 34:6, 1 Kings 19:4-6, and Jeremiah 18:7-8*, and gives an allusion to *Jeremiah 36*. The importance on studying these Scriptures is related to the intertextual connections being made between Jonah and *Shemot / Exodus, 1 Kings, and Jeremiah*. How do these connections affect the theological message of the book of Jonah? The way the book of Jonah is written, it appears that Jonah engages in a dialog with the earlier books from the bible. “*What is the nature of this theological impact within the dialog that is occurring?*” The scripture in Jonah center upon the foundational question of God’s covenant and all the World. When studying the Torah, we learn that these earlier books of the Bible directly challenge the Jewish audience in the days of Jonah and latter throughout history as it should challenge you and I in our concept of God’s covenant and what it truly means to be His people.

The story of Jonah begins with the Lord God Almighty (YHVH) telling Jonah (a prophet of the northern kingdom of Yisrael) to travel to Nineve and cry out against the city for the greatness of its sins has risen up before the Lord and their destruction is at hand. Jonah however decides to board a ship and sale to

Tarshish. The Lord God then sends a storm on the sea that threatens the ship to destruction. The crew gets together and asks each other to pray to their respective gods. During this discussion, Jonah tells the Gentile sailors that he is a prophet of the Most High God who created the Heavens and the Earth, and the sailors become very afraid. Jonah tells the sailors the only way to make the storm stop is by throwing him into the sea. The sailors pray to the Lord for mercy and then cast Jonah into the sea (1:14, וַיִּקְרְאוּ אֶל־יְהוָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ, אָנָּה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ נִבְרָא נִבְרָא נִבְרָא בְּנִפְשׁ הָאִישׁ הַזֶּה וְאֵל־תִּתֵּן עָלֵינוּ דָם נִקְיָא כִּי־אַתָּה יְהוָה כַּאֲשֶׁר הִפְצַתָּ עֵשִׂיתָ:). With Jonah in the sea the winds do in fact calm down and the Scriptures say that the sailors feared the Lord God of Heaven and Earth. Jonah being cast into the sea is then swallowed by what the bible describes is a great fish (דָּג גָּדוֹל) which is symbolic of the grave (Sheol). From the belly of the fish (Sheol, the grave) Jonah prays to the Lord and after three days and three nights Jonah is vomited from the belly of the great fish onto dry land. Jonah then obeys God’s call on his life and goes to Nineve and proceeds to prophecy to the people of Nineve that the city will be destroyed in 40 days. The people of Nineve surprisingly repent of their evil ways and the Lord forgives them of their sins and chooses not to destroy them. Jonah is then furious with the Lord for forgiving these people and begins to complain to the Lord that the reason he chose not to go to Nineve in the first place was because he knew that God is gracious, merciful, loving, and forgiving. Jonah is making a reference to Parashat Ki Tisa in *Shemot / Exodus 34*. After telling the Lord that he wanted to die, Jonah goes outside of the city and builds himself a Succa and waits to see if the Lord will destroy the city. During this time, the Lord provides Jonah with shade from a plant but then allows the plant to be destroyed by a worm so the heat beats down on Jonah and again Jonah tells the Lord that he wants to die. The Lord then proceeds to teach Jonah a lesson. Jonah showed concern over this plant that he had no part in planting. The lesson the Lord was teaching Jonah is on having concern for all peoples. Shouldn’t the Lord God show concern and have mercy on the lost souls of Nineve whom He created? It is at this point the story line ends and we are not told how Jonah responded. The book of Jonah leaves us hanging and therefore causes us to wonder, what is this story really about? Is the Lord showing us that we should forgive our enemies? Throughout the book of Jonah there are numerous intertextual citations that challenge us as God’s people to examine the importance of who God is and how we are to relate to others in this world. Not only are we challenged to examine the relationship the Mosaic Covenant has to the Abrahamic Covenant, we also wrestle with the Mosaic Covenant and its relationship to the Lord’s promised “*New Covenant*” that is found in Yeshua His Messiah.

The first reference Jonah makes is to Parashat Ki Tisa, Let’s look at this portion of Scripture from the Torah. In Parashat Ki Tisa (*Shemot / Exodus 30:11-34:35*) Moshe is on the Mountain of Sinai receiving the stone tablets of the Lord’s covenant. At the same time the people (Children of Yisrael) while waiting on Moshe to return make a golden calf and bow down to worship the calf sinning in idolatry at the foot of the mountain of Sinai. On returning from the Mountain Moshe finds the people sinning a great sin before the Lord worshipping the golden calf and he breaks the stone tablets of the covenant and the Lord then threatens to destroy the people. Moshe returns to the mountain and following forty days of fasting and speaking to the Lord, the Lord does not destroy the people as the scriptures say in *Shemot 32:14* וַיִּנָּחֵם יְהוָה עַל־הָרָעָה וַיִּדְבֹּר לַעֲשׂוֹת לְעַמּוֹ: the Lord repented of the thing He was going to do unto the people. After returning to the mountain, Moshe asks to see the face of the Lord and the Lord responds saying that he may not see His face but only His backside. The Lord then tells Moshe to make two more stone tablets וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה פֶּסֶל־לֶחֶד שְׁנַי־לַחַת אֲבָנִים כְּרַאשֵׁינִי וְכָתַבְתִּי עַל־הַלְּחָת אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר הָיוּ עַל־הַלְּחָת הַרְּאשֵׁינִים אֲשֶׁר שָׁבַרְתָּ: ב וְהָיָה נִכּוֹן לְבַקֵּר וְעֹלִיתָ בְּבַקֵּר אֶל־הָרַי וְנִצַּבְתָּ לִּי שָׁם עַל־רֹאשׁ הָהָר: ג וְאִישׁ לֹא־יַעֲלֶה עִמָּךָ וְגַם־אִישׁ אֶל־יְרֵא בְּכָל־הָהָר גַּם־הַצֹּאֵן וְהַבְּקָר אֶל־יִרְעוּ אֶל־מוֹל הָהָר הַהוּא: ד וַיִּפְסַל שְׁנַי־לַחַת אֲבָנִים כְּרַאשֵׁינִים וַיִּשְׁכַּח מֹשֶׁה בְּבַקֵּר וַיַּעַל אֶל־הָרַי סִינַי כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֹתוֹ וַיִּקַּח בְּיָדוֹ שְׁנַי־לַחַת אֲבָנִים: ה וַיֵּרֶד יְהוָה בְּעָנָן וַיִּתְיַצֵּב עִמּוֹ שָׁם וַיִּקְרָא: *34:1 Now the Lord said to Moses, ‘Cut out for yourself two stone tablets like the former ones, and I will write on the tablets the words that were on the former tablets which you shattered. 34:2 ‘So be*

ready by morning, and come up in the morning to Mount Sinai, and present yourself there to Me on the top of the mountain. 34:3 'No man is to come up with you, nor let any man be seen anywhere on the mountain; even the flocks and the herds may not graze in front of that mountain.' 34:4 So he cut out two stone tablets like the former ones, and Moses rose up early in the morning and went up to Mount Sinai, as the Lord had commanded him, and he took two stone tablets in his hand. 34:5 The Lord descended in the cloud and stood there with him as he called upon the name of the Lord. (NASB) The Lord then passes before Moshe before giving the commandments on the stone tablets. While passing before Moshe the Lord declares וַיַּעֲבֹר יְהוָה | עַל-פְּנֵי וַיִּקְרָא יְהוָה | יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי רַחוּם וְחַנוּן אַרְבֵּי אַפַּיִם וְרַב-חֶסֶד וְאֱמֶת: ז נִצַּר חֶסֶד לְאֲלֹפִים נִשְׂא עוֹן וְפָשַׁע 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 Lord declares "YHVH, YHVH, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in Chesed (Grace, וְרַב-חֶסֶד) and in truth (וְאֱמֶת) keeping His Chesed for the thousandth generation, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin." It is interesting to note here that these statements about the character of God were not made during the giving of the first set of stone tablets. It appears that the giving of the second set of stone tablets and the forgiveness of the people of their sin required a declaration of the character of God emphasizing the sole reason and purpose why the people were given a second chance to enter into a covenant relationship with the Lord. The reason being God is merciful (רַחוּם), gracious and full of grace (חֶסֶד). The connection that is found in the Book of Jonah is in *Jonah 3:10* that states וַיִּרְא הָאֱלֹהִים אֶת-מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם כִּי-שָׁבוּ מִדְּרָכָם הִרְעָה 3:10 When God saw their deeds, that they turned from their wicked way, then God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them. And He did not do it. (NASB) Specifically וַיִּנָּחֵם הָאֱלֹהִים עַל-הִרְעָה אֲשֶׁר-דִּבֶּר לַעֲשׂוֹת-לָהֶם וְלֹא עָשָׂה: וַיִּנָּחֵם יְהוָה עַל-הִרְעָה אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר לַעֲשׂוֹת לָהֶם וְלֹא עָשָׂה" that parallels the text in *Shemot 32:14* "וַיִּנָּחֵם יְהוָה עַל-הִרְעָה אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר לַעֲשׂוֹת לָהֶם וְלֹא עָשָׂה" the key word is וַיִּנָּחֵם from the Hebrew word להינחם meaning "to repent." 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 Chesed (חֶסֶד) 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) within the context of the covenant is that this is God's "Covenant Love" that He has for His people. It was this covenant love that God decided to enter into even after the people's sin of idolatry. What is being indicated here is God's faithfulness in His Covenant with His people is connected 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 (descendants, 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 even in the midst of their sin. Similarly, it is by His grace (חֶסֶד) that the people of Nineve were forgiven and He turned from His wrath. As we study the Scriptures, we learn that throughout Yisrael's history God extended his grace (חֶסֶד) because of the covenant that He entered into with them at Sinai. The emphasis on the character of God in *Shemot / Exodus 34* verses 6-7 reveal 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. Looking at *Jonah 3:10* and *4:2* in comparison to *Shemot / Exodus 32:14* and *34:6-7* we can see that the statements in *Jonah 3:10*

are very similar to *Shemot / Exodus 32:14*.

ספר יונה פרק ג פסוק י

וַיֵּרָא הָאֱלֹהִים אֶת־מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם כִּי־שָׁבוּ מִדְרָכָם הָרָעָה וַיִּנְחַם הָאֱלֹהִים עַל־הָרָעָה אֲשֶׁר־דִּבֶּר לַעֲשׂוֹת־לָהֶם וְלֹא עָשָׂה:
3:10 *When God saw their deeds, that they turned from their wicked way, then God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them. And He did not do it. (NASB)*

ספר יונה פרק ד פסוק ב

ב וַיִּתְפַּלֵּל אֶל־יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר אָנָּה יְהוָה הֲלוֹא־זֶה דִּבַּרִי עַד־הַיּוֹתַי עַל־אֲדַמְתִּי עַל־כֵּן קִדַּמְתִּי לְבָרַח תַּרְשִׁישָׁה כִּי יִדְעַתִּי
4:2 *He prayed to the Lord and said, 'Please Lord, was not this what I said while I was still in my own country? Therefore in order to forestall this I fled to Tarshish, for I knew that You are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, and one who relents concerning calamity. (NASB)*

פרשת כי תשא ספר שמות פרק לב פסוק יד

יֵד וַיִּנְחַם יְהוָה עַל־הָרָעָה אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר לַעֲשׂוֹת לְעַמּוֹ

32:14 *So the Lord changed His mind about the harm which He said He would do to His people. (NASB)*

פרשת כי תשא ספר שמות פרק לד פסוק ו-ז

ו וַיַּעֲבֹר יְהוָה | עַל־פְּנֵיו וַיִּקְרָא יְהוָה | יְהוָה אֵל רַחוּם וְחַנּוּן אַרְךָ אַפַּיִם וְרַב־חֶסֶד וְנֶאֱמַת: ז נִצַּר חֶסֶד לְאֲלֹפִים נִשְׂא
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)

In *Shemot / Exodus* we are told that the Lord (YHVH) repented of the evil that He had spoken to do to His people. *Jonah 3:10* states that the Lord (Elohim) saw what the people did (their deeds, *מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם*) that they “repented or turned from the path of their evil ways” (*הָרָעָה*) and as a result, the Lord God repented over the evil He spoke to do against them and did not do it (*וַיִּנְחַם הָאֱלֹהִים*). In addition to this, it is interesting to now that in Parashat Ki Tisa (*Shemot / Exodus 30:11-34:35*) the Lord repents of the evil He was going to do to the people because Moshe fasted and prayed, a parallel is drawn here in *Jonah 3:10* that the Lord turns from destroying the people because the people of Nineve repent, fast, and pray. The comparison of Jonah with Parashat Ki Tisa, we see in Jonah the people repent and fast and they are spared, whereas in *Shemot / Exodus* the people are unrepentant, the Torah does not say they repented but we do know that Moshe fasted and repented on the people’s behalf. The Ninevites (the non-Israelite) actually show to be quicker to repent than the children of Yisrael.

According to *Jonah 4:2* we read Jonah speaking to the Lord saying *וְרַחוּם וְחַנּוּן אַרְךָ אַפַּיִם וְרַב־חֶסֶד וְנֶאֱמַת* “*I knew that You are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness/grace*” drawing a parallel with *Shemot / Exodus 34:6-7* where the Lord passes before Moshe and declares *וַיִּקְרָא יְהוָה | יְהוָה אֵל רַחוּם וְחַנּוּן אַרְךָ אַפַּיִם וְרַב־חֶסֶד וְנֶאֱמַת* “*The Lord proclaimed, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness/grace and truth.*” Jonah declares that “*I know you are a gracious and merciful God...*” What is happening here in the book of Jonah is that this *חֶסֶד* (grace) which was given to the children of Yisrael in Parashat Ki Tisa has now be-

come an object of anger because the Lord is extending His grace to the people of Nineve who are not of the descendants of Abraham.

Studying Jonah chapter 3 reveals an even larger set of parallels when performing a textual comparison of the Torah with this section of scripture. The children of Yisrael received a similar threat as Nineve in Parashat Ki Tisa because of their worship of the golden calf (see *Shemot / Exodus 32:1-10*). Note that the city of Nineve was known as **יְקָם יוֹנָה וַיִּלֶךְ אֶל־נִינְוָה כְּדַבֵּר יְהוָה וְנִינְוָה הָיְתָה עִיר־גְּדוֹלָה לְאֱלֹהִים מְהֻלָּה** the “great city of the gods” in *Jonah 3:3*, this city and the people were committing a great amount of sin in idolatry. There are similarities in fasting between Moshe who fasts for 40 days and Jonah’s proclaiming that the city would be destroyed in 40 days, the people of Nineve fasted through the 40 day period. The fasting was performed as a sign of repentance (*Jonah 3:7-8*). In both stories there is the demonstration of God’s **חֶסֶד** (grace) where Moshe repented as an intercessor for the unrepentant people, and the people of Nineve actually repented themselves and in both cases the Lord God spares the people from destruction (*Jonah 3:5-10*). In both stories, Parashat Ki Tisa and Jonah, there are covenantal overtones in the establishment of the covenant of God with His people. The fact that this **חֶסֶד** (grace) is applied to the people of Nineve is the very thing that caused Jonah to become angry against the Lord. The importance of these Scriptures found in the book of Jonah is the emphasis that is placed upon the covenant that God has established as we read in *Shemot / Exodus 34* **וְחַסְדֵּךָ וְחַנּוּן אַרְךָ אֲפִים וְרַב־חֶסֶד וְאֱמֶת** the Lord’s mercy, grace, and faithfulness to His promises despite the sin of the people. It was God’s mercy and grace that spared the children of Yisrael at the mountain of Sinai and it is this same mercy and grace that spared the people of the city of Nineve. Jonah’s attitude of being angry with the Lord for extending His grace to the people of Nineve is grossly misplaced. These Scriptures should help us to realize the significance and importance of the covenant the Lord has made with us. God’s plan of establishing a covenant extends beyond Yisrael as is indicated in Parashat Lech Lecha (*Bereshit / Genesis 12:1-17:27*) where the Lord said **וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־אַבְרָם לֵךְ־לְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ וּמִמּוֹלַדְתְּךָ וּמִבֵּית אָבִיךָ אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲרָאָךְ ב** **וְאֶעֱשֶׂה לְךָ גְּדוֹל וְאַבְרָכָךָ** *12:1 Now the Lord said to Abram, ‘Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father’s house, To the land which I will show you; 12:2 And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; 12:3 And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.’ (NASB)* All the nations of the earth will be blessed in the seed of Abraham. These are the implications of God’s gracious character that the Lord will extend his grace to even the most hated from the Gentile nations, Gentile Idolators. The Lord God forgave the city of Nineve in their sin of idolatry. If the Lord was willing to forgive the people before the mountain of Sinai who cowered before the Lord while Moshe interceded on their behalf in order to establish His covenant with them, He will also forgive a sinful Gentile people who repent and trust in Him.

Another intertextual connection that we find in the Scriptures with Jonah is found in *1 Kings 19*, the recorded account of Elijah asking to die in a similar fashion as Jonah asked the Lord that he would die. *1 Kings 19:1-4* states **א וַיִּגַּד אַחָאָב לְאִיזָבֵל אֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה אֱלֹהֵיהוּ וְאֵת כָּל־אֲשֶׁר הָרַג אֶת־כָּל־הַנְּבִיאִים כְּחָרָב: ב וַתִּשְׁלַח אִיזָבֵל מִלְאָךְ אֶל־אֱלֹהֵיהוּ לֵאמֹר כֹּה־יַעֲשׂוּן אֱלֹהִים וְכֹה יוֹסְפוּן כִּי־כַעֲת מְחַר אֲשִׁים אֶת־נַפְשְׁךָ כְּנַפְשׁ אֶחָד מֵהֶם: ג וַיִּרָא וַיִּקָּם וַיִּלֶךְ אֶל־נַפְשׁוֹ וַיָּבֵא בְּאֵר שֶׁבַע אֲשֶׁר לַיהוּדָה וַיִּנַּח אֶת־נַעְרוֹ שָׁם: ד וְהוּא־הָלַךְ בְּמִדְבַר דֶּרֶךְ יוֹם וַיָּבֵא: 19:1 נַיִשֵּׁב תַּחַת רַתֵּם אֶחָת [אֶחָד] וַיִּשְׁאַל אֶת־נַפְשׁוֹ לָמוֹת וַיֹּאמֶר | רַב עָפָה יְהוָה קַח נַפְשִׁי כִּי לֹא־טוֹב אֲנִי מֵאַבְתָּי: 19:2 Now Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. 19:2 Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, ‘So may the gods do to me and even more, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time.’ 19:3 And he was afraid and arose and ran for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there. 19:4 But he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree; and he requested**

for himself that he might die, and said, 'It is enough; now, O Lord, take my life, for I am not better than my fathers.' (NASB) This compares to the text in *Jonah 4:3-6* which states וַיֵּצֵא יוֹנָה מִן־הָעִיר וַיֵּשֶׁב מִקְדָּם לְעִיר וַיַּעַשׂ לוֹ שָׂם סִבָּה כִּי טוֹב מוֹתִי מִחַיִּי: ד וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה הֲהֵיטֵב חָרָה לָךְ: ה וַיֵּצֵא יוֹנָה מִן־הָעִיר וַיֵּשֶׁב מִקְדָּם לְעִיר וַיַּעַשׂ לוֹ שָׂם סִבָּה כִּי טוֹב מוֹתִי מִחַיִּי: ו וַיִּמֶן יְהוָה אֲלֵהֶם קִיקְיוֹן וַיַּעַל אֶל מַעַל לַיּוֹנָה לְהִיּוֹת צֶלַע עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ וַיֵּשֶׁב תַּחְתָּיהָ בְּצֶלַע עַד אֲשֶׁר יִרְאֶה מֵה־יְהוָה בְּעִיר: 4:3 'Therefore now, O Lord, please take my life from me, for death is better to me than life.' 4:4 The Lord said, 'Do you have good reason to be angry?' 4:5 Then Jonah went out from the city and sat east of it. There he made a shelter for himself and sat under it in the shade until he could see what would happen in the city. 4:6 So the Lord God appointed a plant and it grew up over Jonah to be a shade over his head to deliver him from his discomfort. And Jonah was extremely happy about the plant. (NASB) In *1 Kings 19* Elijah is fleeing from Jezebel (אֵיזֶבֶל) following having defeated the prophets of Baal on the Mountain of Carmel. The Lord had performed such a great miracle, fire came down from heaven and consumed the sacrifice and the altar to prove Baal does not stand up to the Lord God Almighty. The similarities in the text has Elijah asking the Lord to let him die saying וַיִּשְׁאַל אֶת־נַפְשׁוֹ לְמוֹת וַיֹּאמֶר | רַב עֲתָה יְהוָה קַח נַפְשִׁי כִּי לֹא־טוֹב אֲנֹכִי מֵאֲבֹתַי "it is enough now Lord take my life because I am not good/better than my fathers." In a similar fashion Jonah said וַיֵּצֵא יוֹנָה מִן־הָעִיר וַיֵּשֶׁב מִקְדָּם לְעִיר וַיַּעַשׂ לוֹ שָׂם סִבָּה כִּי טוֹב מוֹתִי מִחַיִּי "and now take my life Lord because it is good/better for me to die than live." Following both Elijah and Jonah's request to die, Elijah sat down under a juniper tree and Jonah under a bush the Lord had provided. In both these biblical narratives we see the prophet of God dejected depressed, disheartened, and discouraged to the point of death. The most interesting thing is that these stories from *Shemot / Exodus 32-34*, *1 Kings 19*, and *Jonah* have quite a lot in common. In *Shemot / Exodus 32* the Children of Yisrael broke the covenant before it had even been given before the Mountain of Sinai worshipping a golden calf and faced utter destruction. In *Jonah* the Ninevites faced destruction because of their evil ways (paganism). In *1 Kings 19*, Elijah is running away because he knew that Yisrael has broken its covenant and that Jezebel had killed the prophets of God and Jezebel is now seeking to kill him (see *1 Kings 19:10, 19:14*). We are also told that Elijah traveled to Horeb (Sinai) for 40 days and nights on the strength of only one meal that was provided by the angel (*19:5-8*; וַיֵּשֶׁב וַיִּישָׁן תַּחַת רְתֹם אֶחָד וְהִנֵּה־זֶה מִלֶּאֱדָה נֹגַע בּוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ קוּם אֲכֹל: 19:5-8). All three of these stories are the result of God's חֶסֶד (grace). The Children of Yisrael received God's חֶסֶד (grace) because of the prayer and fasting of Moshe upon the Mountain of Sinai. The Ninevites received God's חֶסֶד (grace) because they fasted and prayed to the God of Yisrael. And in *1 Kings 19*, Elijah fasted and prayed and then learned that the Lord had kept 7000 people in Yisrael faithful to Himself who had not bowed their knee to Baal and who were also spared from death (*19:11-18*).

Studying the Torah (*Shemot / Exodus 32-34*) and *Jonah 4* there are clear covenantal overtones. In *Shemot / Exodus* there is the establishment of the covenant purely as a result of God extending his mercy and grace וַיִּקְרָא יְהוָה | יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ רַחוּם וְחַנּוּן אַרְךָ אַפַּיִם וְרַב־חֶסֶד וְאֱמֶת וְאֱמֶת וְאֱמֶת "The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness/grace and truth." In *Jonah* God's mercy and grace of the covenant extended to the Gentile nation, the Ninevites indicated in *Jonah* saying וַיֵּדַעְתִּי כִּי יְדַעְתִּי "I knew that You are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness/grace" that draws a parallel with *Shemot / Exodus 34:6-7* where the Lord passes before Moshe declaring His majesty in character. In *1 Kings 19*, after Elijah had become disheartened and asked to die, the Lord God Almighty revealed to Elijah that He had kept 7000 people in Yisrael from bowing to Baal. The Lord then instructs that Elisha will succeed him as a prophet and to return to Yisrael and Elijah regained his confidence and returned to Yisrael. In all of these examples from the Scriptures, the parallels that we find in the texts from *Shemot / Exodus 32-34*, *Jonah 3-4*, and *1 Kings 19*, we learn that Elijah was truly afraid for his life and despaired over the extinction of the faithful men and women

in Yisrael. We learn that Elijah's encounter with the Lord resulted in renewal of spirit. Jonah on the other hand fled from the Lord because he was against the idea that God would forgive the Ninevites. Jonah did not want God to extend His mercy and חַסְדֵּךָ (grace) to the gentile nation. Jonah's encounter with the Lord resulted in his having to accept the fact that God was going to extend His חַסְדֵּךָ (grace) to the gentile nation. How could God extend his covenant of חַסְדֵּךָ (grace) to a hated idolatrous gentile nation? The intertextual connections found in the Jonah narrative within *Shemot / Exodus 32-34* draws into context the very covenant that bound the Children of Yisrael to the Lord that God is extending to all peoples of this earth. This reveals to us the very nature of who God is וַיִּקְרָא יְהוָה | יְהוָה אֵל רַחוּם וְחַנּוּן אַרְוֶה אַפַּיִם וְרַב-חַסְדֵּךָ וְנֶאֱמַת “The Lord proclaimed, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness/grace and truth.” In each of these stories, the narrative centers upon the covenant of God. In light of the parallels found within the text of the book of Jonah, we are forced to consider the idea that the Lord's covenant is at the heart and reason for the story of Jonah. Is this the heart and reason why Yeshua (Jesus) challenged the people in his day on the sign of Jonah for the Son of Man, because of the covenant and faithfulness of God which we know to be true according to the Torah? The challenge that was given to Jonah is the idea that God's חַסְדֵּךָ (grace) is contained within God's covenant and is being extended to the gentile nations. The central reason for the extending of חַסְדֵּךָ (grace) to the people of Yisrael at Sinai and later to Nineve is the Lord's faithfulness to Abraham and Abraham's offspring according to Parashat Lech Lecha (*Bereshit / Genesis 12:1-17:27*): א וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-אַבְרָם לֵךְ-לְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ אֲרָם וּמְמֹלַתְךָ וּמִבְּיַת אָבִיךָ אֶל-הָאֲרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲרַאֲךָ: ב וַאֲעֲשֶׂה לְךָ גְדוֹל וְאַבְרָכְךָ וְאֶגְדְּלָהּ שְׁמִי וְהָיָה בְרָכָה: ג וְאַבְרָכָה מְבָרְכֶיךָ וּמְקַלְלֶיךָ אֲאָר וּנְבָרְכֶנּוּ כִּי כָל מְשַׁפְּחֹת: *12:1 Now the Lord said to Abram, ‘Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father’s house, To the land which I will show you; 12:2 And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; 12:3 And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.’ (NASB)* All the nations of the earth will be blessed in the seed of Abraham. The Lord's covenantal promise of חַסְדֵּךָ (grace) in the covenant of Abraham had always been aimed to bless all nations and all peoples of this earth. In the story of Jonah, the Lord accomplished this through the disobedience and rebelliousness of His own prophet. In a similar manner, the Lord God accomplished His work of the Messiah in Yeshua (Jesus) by the disobedience and rebelliousness of His own people (Yisrael). The Lord's glory was made known to the gentile nations in the forgiveness of Nineve, the exile of His own people to Babylon (Jeremiah), and in the exodus from Mitzrayim (Egypt) before the Mountain of Sinai. The challenge that is put forth then in Jonah is would the people (or you and I) accept the fulfillment of the Lord's covenant with Abraham and welcome God's mercy and חַסְדֵּךָ (grace) being shown to the gentile nations, or would this extension of חַסְדֵּךָ (grace) be called evil and insist that the Lord's חַסְדֵּךָ (grace) may only be extended to them? Do you welcome the new covenant that was spoken of by Jeremiah the prophet in *Jeremiah 31*, הִנֵּה לִּי-לֵד לֹא פְסוּק לֹא פָרַק יִרְמְיָה פָּרַק לֹא פְסוּק לִי-לֵד לֹא יָמִים בָּאִים נְאֻם-יְהוָה וְכָרַתִּי אֶת-בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶת-בֵּית יְהוּדָה בְּרִית חֲדָשָׁה: לֹא לֹא כְבָרִית אֲשֶׁר כָּרַתִּי אֶת-אֲבוֹתָם בְּיוֹם הַחֲזִיקִי בְיָדָם לְהוֹצִיאֵם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם אֲשֶׁר-הִמָּה הִפְרוּ אֶת-בְּרִיתִי וְאָנֹכִי בָעַלְתִּי בָם נְאֻם-יְהוָה: לִב פִּי זֹאת הִבְרִית אֲשֶׁר אֶכְרַת אֶת-בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל אַחֲרַי הַיָּמִים הֵהֵם נְאֻם-יְהוָה נִתְתִּי אֶת-תּוֹרַתִּי בְקִרְבָּם וְעַל-לִבָּם אֶכְתְּבֶנָה וְהָיִיתִי לָהֶם לְאֱלֹהִים וְהִמָּה יְהִי-לִי לְעָם: לֵג וְלֹא יִלְמְדוּ עוֹד אִישׁ אֶת-רַעְיָהוּ וְאִישׁ אֶת-אָחִיו לֵאמֹר דַּעוּ אֶת-יְהוָה כִּי-כֹוֹלָם יִדְעוּ אוֹתִי לְמַקְטָנָם וְעַד-גְּדוֹלָם נְאֻם-יְהוָה כִּי אֶסְלַח לְעוֹנָם וְלַחַטָּאתָם לֹא אֶזְכֹּר-עוֹד: לֵד פֹּה | אָמַר יְהוָה נִתְּן הִנֵּה יָמִים בָּאִים God says וְשָׁמַשׁ לְאֹר יוֹמָם חֶקֶת יָרַח וְכוֹכְבִּים לְאֹר לְיָלָה רַגַע הַיּוֹם וְיִהְיֶה גִלְיוֹ יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת שְׁמוֹ: *‘Behold, days are coming,’ declares the Lord, ‘when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, (NASB)* In *31:32*, the Lord says that this is not the covenant that He cut/made with your Fathers in the day that He delivered them by the hand from eretz Mitzrayim (land of Egypt). This is a new covenant, a different covenant, an

eternal covenant a covenant that says will cause God to be **וְהָיָה לְהֵיכָל יְהוָה לְהֵיכָל יְהוָה לְהֵיכָל יְהוָה** that “*I will be there God and they will be a people to me.*” Here, not only is there a parallel with the Torah text in Parashat Bekhukotai (*Vayikra / Leviticus 26:12*) God is also declaring that He will make a new covenant that will lead to Him being our God and us being His people.

The question of God’s mercy and **חַסֵּד** (grace) being extended to the gentile nations is not answered in Jonah. The reason being the challenge and the answer was given to a small group of Jewish men who followed another prophet from Galilee, the Messiah Yeshua (Jesus). This concept was revealed in Yeshua the Messiah and his use of the sign of Jonah (see *Matthew 12:38-45, 16:4, Luke 11:29-30*) to describe his death, burial, and bodily resurrection. The Apostle Paul picks up this topic in *Galatians 3* in his statements on the promises in the covenant to Abraham, that God justified the gentiles by faith, and that all people who believe are true descendents of Abraham (3:6-9, *καθὼς Ἀβραὰμ ἐπίστευσεν τῷ θεῷ, καὶ ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην. Ἐπίστευτε ἄρα ὅτι οἱ ἐκ πίστεως, οὗτοι υἱοὶ εἰσὶν Ἀβραάμ. Προϊδοῦσα δὲ ἡ γραφή ὅτι ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοῦ τὰ ἔθνη ὁ θεὸς προεγγεγάριστο τῷ Ἀβραάμ ὅτι Ἐνευλογηθήσονται ἐν σοὶ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη. Ὅστε οἱ ἐκ πίστεως εὐλογοῦνται σὺν τῷ πιστῷ Ἀβραάμ. 3:6 Even so Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. 3:7 Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham. 3:8 The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying ‘All the nations will be blessed in you.’ 3:9 So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer. (NASB)). Paul went on to say that this covenant of Abraham was not annulled by the later covenant at Sinai (3:17, *ἵνα τοῦτο δὲ λέγω: διαθήκην προκεκυρωμένην ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ μετὰ τετρακόσια καὶ τριάκοντα ἔτη γεγωνὸς νόμος οὐκ ἀκυροῖ, εἰς τὸ καταργῆσαι τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν. 3:17 What I am saying is this: the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise. (NASB)). This covenant of **חַסֵּד** (grace) is present throughout the Hebrew Scriptures. The **חַסֵּד** (grace) of the Lord God was in the story of Jonah where He revealed that the gentiles would receive the mercy of the covenant not because they converted to Judaism but because they repented from their evil ways and believed in the Lord. When the Apostle Paul wrote to the Galatians, he was seeking to show in Yeshua we are established in the New Covenant by faith that was born out of the Mosaic Covenant and is the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant. Today, the Lord God Almighty continues to fulfill the Covenant of Abraham in the New Covenant in Yeshua the Messiah that is established according to the Torah of God. The hope of the Messiah truly runs throughout all of Scripture contained within the promised covenant of God that is distinctly revealed and identified in the Torah. When we study and learn about the Torah, we gain a deeper understanding on the key passages found in the Tanakh on the idea of the Messianic King who would rule in righteousness and obtain universal dominion in the hearts of mankind.**

David said in *Tehillim / Psalms 5:8*: **וְנִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לְפָנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יְהוָה** *5:7 But as for me, by Your abundant lovingkindness I will enter Your house, At Your holy temple I will bow in reverence for You. (NASB)* The word **חַסֵּד** (Chesed) has the meaning “grace, favor, lovingkindness, covenantal faithfulness, or loyal love.” **חַסֵּד** (Chesed) includes the concept of “faithful” love and faith incurs action, therefore, it may also be translated as “lovingkindness” or “gracious action.” The giving of one’s self in regard to another. Studying the Scriptures, God has been extending His grace throughout time and it is through our faith in Him, in His way for salvation that we are saved.

David then asks the Lord: **יְהוָה יְהוָה | נְחַנֵּנִי בְצִדְקָתְךָ לְמַעַן שׁוּרְרֵי הַיְשָׁר [הַיְשָׁר] לְפָנַי דְּרָכְךָ** *“Lead me, O Lord, in Your righteousness because of my enemies; make Your way straight before my face.”* Here he asks the Lord to **נְחַנֵּנִי** place on me, or rest on me **בְּצִדְקָתְךָ** “Your righteousness.” The righteousness of the Lord is the justice and goodness that is revealed to those whom He leads. David then says **[הַיְשָׁר] הַיְשָׁר** *“Make Your way straight before my face”* and here in the text there is a Ketiv Qere on the word

Hosher (הַיָּשָׁר) that is attested in the Pentateuch of Bologna 1482, the Prophets Soncino 1485-1486, and the Hagiographa of Naples 1486-1487, and in the Complutensian Polyglot. It says what is written is הַיָּשָׁר and what is to be read is הַיָּשָׁר; the word Yashar (יָשָׁר) used as an adjective means “straight, even, level, unswerving, virtuous,” and used as an adverb means “upright, forthrightly, direct.” This gives us the meaning of being “upright and full of integrity.” Interestingly, this word is also used to spell the world ישורון (Yeshrun) which means “law keeping,” and so the one who is upright and full of integrity is the person who keeps God’s Torah and lives by His law in righteousness and justice. This interpretation is supported by David’s statement : לְפָנַי דְּרָכְךָ: [הַיָּשָׁר] הַיָּשָׁר asking God to make His “way” (דְּרָכְךָ) straight before him. The word דרך has the meaning “way or mode of life” representing the path or road that one walks in this life. This walking righteously before the Lord is achieved by faithfully believing in Him, in His Messiah, and living our lives, in righteousness and truth. The righteousness and truth of God that is revealed to us in the Scriptures is that God loves us and has extended His mercy and חֶסֶד (grace). In these last days, He (God) provided atonement for our sins in His Messiah Yeshua because of His mercy and Grace. Are you read to take hold of the חֶסֶד (grace) of God today?

Christian Commentary

Tehillim / Psalms 5 is a prayer that was composed for public worship. The group of singers during the morning service would pray asking the Lord to listen to their cry for help (5:2-4) since no evil or wickedness of speech or action has a place in His presence, these things are abhorrent to Him (5:5-7). The choir standing in the court and worshiping towards the Temple, they pray asking for guidance (5:8-9); because their adversaries have abundant wickedness in mind, speech, and action, they plead that the Lord God would thrust their enemies forth from His people (5:10-11). They then intercede for blessing upon all who seek refuge in Him (5:12-13). Studying *Tehillim / Psalms 5*, there appears to be an antithesis between the assignment of *Tehillim / Psalms 4* as an evening prayer that includes stringed instruments and *Tehillim / Psalms 5* being a morning prayer for fluit instruments (אל הנחילות). Stringed instruments are better for the evening and preparation for bed whereas flute instruments are more energetic to prepare the worshiper for work later in the day. The international commentary on the Psalms states that the antithesis between the righteous and the wicked differs significantly from that of *Tehillim / Psalms 1*, this implies the Psalm is of a much earlier date. The reason being that this Psalm lacks the personal experience of *Tehillim / Psalms 3 and 4*. Justification is given that the wicked are the wicked men in Israel itself. It is difficult to understand this reasoning given by the commentary which states “*They are chiefly wicked in tongue, expressions are heaped up for its boasters (5:6), speakers of a lie, men of deceit (5:7), no right in their mouth, an open grave their throat, with their tongue they flatter (5:10)*” as proof that this is not a pre-exilic literature but that this is a Psalm from the peaceful times of Persian and Greek dominion. Does the case that this kind of reasoning is not extant in the pre-exilic literature exclude the Psalm from being composed by David? The International Commentary on the Psalms continues saying that these men, in their minds plot ruin (5:10) and have plans against the righteous (5:11) being known as the workers of trouble (5:6), men of blood (5:7), and rebels against the Lord God Almighty (5:11). On the other hand, the righteous are those who observe morning prayer and offer sacrifices in the courts of the Temple (5:4,8) from which evil is excluded from being a guest (5:5), the righteous seek refuge in the Lord and love His Name (5:12). The commentary concludes that the author is not David and states that the author may have been one of the Levitical singers of the 2nd Temple period. The Psalm must have been composed in a time of peace after the second Temple had been long built and the sacrifices were habitual in its courts and therefore had to have been in the middle Persian period.

Tehillim / Psalms 5 has five stanzas. The first stanza has the choir standing in the court of the Temple

praying asking the Lord to *give ear to my words*, to the words of this Psalm. The Psalmist says “consider my murmuring,” the faint utterance which accompanies the words of the petition. This parallels the meditation of the heart. The clause “*O harken to the voice of my crying for help*,” the righteous need help as the next stanza indicates that their words are a cry aloud to the Lord who is “*King and God*” indicating the personal relationship God has as the King of Israel and God of His people. The reason for God’s hearing is given in the statement “*For unto You I pray in the morning*” at the appointed hour of sacrifice when the Lord was accustomed to hearing the voice of His worshippers in the liturgical morning prayer at the morning sacrifice. The Psalmist says in 5:3 “*In the morning, O Lord, You will hear my voice; In the morning I will order my prayer to You and eagerly watch*,” the keeping watch, the Psalmist is being watchful for the manifestation of God that indicates His acceptance of the prayer. The commentary says that it was believed that the prayers ascended to God in the flame of the sacrifice of the altar. This parallels the idea that the prayer of the saints are as incense before God in the book of Revelation.

Stanza 2, verses 5:5-7, provides the reason for help that is given by God. Those praying need help from those who are wicked and evil, men who boast of their evil acts which they plan to do, they are workers of trouble and speakers of lies, men of blood and deceit. Here in Stanza 2 the wickedness and evil speech are emphasized as characteristics of wickedness in post exilic Israel. Here wickedness is characterized as first, in the heart, in the thoughts and minds of these men and secondly, in the wickedness of violent action. Here the Psalmist states that “*You are not a God taking delight in*” (כִּי | לֹא אֵל תִּפְזֹר רִשְׁעִי | אַתָּה לֹא יִגְדֹּךָ רַע) the sin of these men, is indicated by the fact that evil and sin can not be found in the house, and courts of the Lord God and among His worshippers who stand before the eyes of God (לֹא-יִתְיַצְבוּ הוֹלְלִים לְנֶגֶד עֵינֶיךָ). The worshippers stand before the Lord in His Temple and the attitude given of God towards those who stand against God’s people is that the Lord hates evil and unrighteousness, therefore the Lord will give help to those who cry out to Him.

Stanza 3, verse 5:8, in verse 5:7 the Psalmist states “*But as for me, by Your abundant lovingkindness I will enter Your house, At Your holy temple I will bow in reverence for You. (NASB)*” (ח וְאֲנִי בָרַב חַסְדֶּיךָ | אֲבֹא בֵיתְךָ אֲשַׁתְחִנֶּה אֶל-הַיְכָל קִדְשֶׁךָ בִּירְאָתְךָ:) indicating that the prayer is being made in the Temple having the person prostrating themselves in the court looking towards the Temple and the holy of holies, the abode of the Lord. We know this by the use of the word אֲשַׁתְחִנֶּה which means literally to bow down and prostrate one’s self. The choir returns to the direct petition of the first stanza stating “*O Lord, lead me in Your righteousness because of my foes; Make Your way straight before me.*” paralleled with the giving ear, hearkening, hearing the prayer, the request for the Lord to lead us in His righteous ways because of our foes. Guidance in life is needed because our enemies lay in wait to destroy us.

Stanza 4, verses 5:10-11, is a stronger representation of how God feels about the wicked. The emphasis is placed upon the wickedness of speech saying “*There is no right in their mouth*,” along with the phrase “*in their heart*,” meaning in their mind is ruin and plans for hurting the righteous. These men flatter with their tongues and the last line of wickedness of action states “*in the abundance of their wickedness for they rebel against You.*” The Lord passes judgment upon these wicked men and “*declares them guilty, and lets them fall by their plans*” and the result is that they will be thrust out from among their people.

Stanza 5, verses 5:12-13, the final part of the prayer states that the wicked have been left behind, thrust out from the community as well as being excluded from the Temple. The choir therefore raises the petition for help and intercession for the righteous. The righteous are those who seek refuge in the Lord and in the Temple worship (Love Your Name, וְיִעֲלֶצוּ בָךְ אֱהִי שְׁמֶךָ). The Holy Name of the Lord is connected to the Temple and to worship. Those who seek refuge in the Lord and love the Name of the Lord shout for joy and are happy. The Psalm concludes stating “*5:12 For it is You who blesses the righteous man, O Lord, You surround him with favor as with a shield. (NASB)*” (יג כִּי-אַתָּה תְּבָרֵךְ צַדִּיק יְהוָה כַּצֶּנֶה רְצוֹן תַּעֲטֹרֶנּוּ:). The Lord blesses the righteous man and covers him with a very large shield protecting him from his enemies,

guarding him from all evil and aversaries, and directing him in His righteousness.

Rabbinic Commentary

The Midrash on *Tehillim / Psalms 5* has 11 parts. Reading through this week's Midrash we will be looking at Parts 1 thru 5. The most interesting portion of the midrash this week is the first half of the Midrash on *Tehillim / Psalms 5*. Let's begin by outlining Midrash Tehillim Chapter 5 Parts 1 thru 5.

Outline of Midrash Tehillim / Psalms, Chapter 5, Parts 1 thru 5

Part 1:

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) “*the beginning word,*” “*For the leader upon the Nehiloth (possessions). A Psalm of David*” (*Tehillim / Psalms 5:1*).
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*This verse is to be considered in the light of the Scripture says elsewhere, From the wilderness to Mattanah, and from Mattanah to Nahaliel, and from Nahaliel to Bamoth, and from Bamoth to the valley that is in the country of Moab*” (*Bamidbar / Numbers 21:18-20*).
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” there appears to be multiple parables through Midrash Tehillim Part 1, each describes the meaning of the **פתיחתא** (Petihta) and what it means to travel from Mattanah to Nahaliel, from Nahaliel to Bamoth, etc.
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal) in each case that is given in Part 1 and references a Scripture from the Tanach.
- The Concluding statements says that because the people of Israel are willing to suffer the decrees of the Lord they are called Trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord that He might be glorified (*Isaiah 61:3*).

Part 2:

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) “*the beginning word,*” “*In a different exposition, the verse is read For the leader upon hanhilot that is for Him who causes to inherit.*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*Elsewhere Scripture says, I lead in the way of righteousness that I may cause those that love me to inherit substance*” (*Mishley / Proverbs 8:19-20*).
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” states “*the Torah is speaking of herself and saying, length of days is in her right hand and in her left hand are riches and honor*” (*Mishley / Proverbs 3:16*)
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal) discussing one's occupation with Torah and being poor.
- The Concluding statements says that it is the duty of man to put aside his own work and to occupy himself with the Torah, the Torah comes before all else and the justification for this statement is taken from *Mishley / Proverbs 8:22* saying that the Lord made me as the beginning of His way before His works of old.

Part 3:

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) “*the beginning word,*”

“Another exposition of the leader; upon the inheritances.”

- The פתיחתא (Petihta) *“the homiletic introduction”* to the Midrash says *“This verse is to be read in light of what Scripture says elsewhere, What will I render to the Lord for all His benefits toward me?”* (Tehillim / Psalms 116:12).
- The משל (mashal) *“the parable,”* states *“Rabbi Samuel taught, there are four Psalms which one would have expected Adam to compose, but which David composed.”*
- The נמשל (Nimshal) *“expansion on the parable”* expands upon the משל (mashal) and the idea of David vurses Adam composing the Psalm.
- The Concluding statements asks *“why would we have expected Adam to compose this? Because he was the first inheritor of the world.”*

Part 4:

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) *“the beginning word,”* *“In another exposition of For the leader, upon the inheritances.”*
- The פתיחתא (Petihta) *“the homiletic introduction”* to the Midrash says *“rabbi Samuel son of Nakhmani took inheritance to mean two inheritances, for David inherited kingship in both this world and in the world to come.”*
- The משל (mashal) *“the parable,”* speaks of the one who is first born and the highest of the kings of the earth.
- The נמשל (Nimshal) *“expansion on the parable”* expands upon the משל (mashal) and the reasons given for why David would have inherited a double portion.
- The Concluding statements says that *“because of the two portions, David Said I will compose For the Leader, upon the inheritance.”*

Part 5:

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) *“the beginning word,”* *“For the Leader, upon the inheritance.”*
- The פתיחתא (Petihta) *“the homiletic introduction”* to the Midrash says *“Rabbi Joshua son of Levi said that the phrase inheritance is to be interpreted by the numerical values of its letters...”*
- The משל (mashal) *“the parable,”* speaks of the meaning of the numerical values of each letter in the word הנחילות.
- The נמשל (Nimshal) *“expansion on the parable”* expands upon the משל (mashal) provides the rabbinic meaning of each letter.
- The Concluding statements says *“Hence it is upon the inheritance.”*

Midrash Tehillim, Chapter 5, Parts 1 thru 5 contains quite a few interesting points concerning the phrase לְמַנְצֵחַ אֶל-הַנְּחִילוֹת מְזֻמֹּר לְדָוִד: & *To the chief Musician upon Nehiloth, A Psalm of David.* It is interesting that Searching the Hebrew Scriptures for occurrences of this word הַנְּחִילוֹת, this word occurs only once, right here in *Tehillim / Psalms chapter 5* thus making the exact translation of this word difficult. The English translations and commentaries stumble over the meaning of this word and conclude this is a reference to wind instruments. Trying to learn the meaning of the word using a Hebrew Lexicon, the root word of הַנְּחִילוֹת appears to be נחל meaning *“to inherit, get, receive; attain.”* This word can also have the meaning *“be bestowed, bequeathed, brought about, bestow, cause.”* The rabbinic commentary on the other hand devotes significant amount of paper to the idea that הַנְּחִילוֹת refers to possession or inheritance. It is

interesting that the rabbis of old took from the root word נחל meaning “to inherit, get, receive; attain” in their homiletic explanations on this opening verse to the Psalm. We know this because in the first 5 parts of Midrash Tehillim 5, the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) “the beginning word” directs our attention to the inheritance or possession of Israel, and of David. The פתיחה (Petihta) “the homiletic introduction” to the Midrash of all five parts direct us to consider the meaning of this word (הנחילות) in light of various scriptures from various places throughout the Tanach. The משל (mashal) “the parable” in each part are written in an attempt to clarify the meaning of the word הנחילות (inheritance/possession). The נמשל (Nimshal) “expansion on the parable” touches on various משלי (parables), to help us understand why David would have written a Psalm upon the inheritance. The final concluding sentence for each part of Midrash Tehillim 5 (Parts 1 thru 5) is related to the final concluding נמשל (Nimshal) it is for the glory of God, because of His works, and for the inheritance that we have in Him.

In Midrash Tehillim 5, Part 1, the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) states למנצח אל הנחילות מזמור (לדוד) “For the leader upon the Nihiloth (possessions/inheritance). A Psalm of David.” In order to understand what David means by the word הנחילות (Nihiloth) references to other scriptures are given (זהו שאמר) [הכתוב] [ממתנה נחליאל]. The reference given is to Bamidbar / Numbers 21:18-20 that states “From the wilderness to Mattanah, and from Mattanah to Nahaliel, and from Nahaliel to Bamoth, and from Bamoth to the valley that is in the country of Moab.” It is difficult to understand why the rabbis chose to refer to this verse as being connected to the opening verse of the Psalm. Looking at the Hebrew text from Bamidbar 21:18-20, יח באר חפרוה שרים פרוה נדיבי העם במחקה במשענתם וממדבר מתנה: יט וממתנה נחליאל, it does not appear that there is any correlation made based upon the composition of the Hebrew letters that spell out the word הנחילות (Nihiloth) and it is not readily apparent whether they are using the gematria (numerical values of the Hebrew letters) as a justification for referencing this particular text. Rabbi Judah took the meaning “from the wilderness to Mattanah” to mean that the children of Israel were deemed worthy to be given the Torah. The meaning of the root word for מתנה (Mattanah) is “to give” that Moshe gave them two tablets (Shemot / Exodus 31:18) containing the commandments of God. On the one hand, the children of Israel took possession (הנחילות) of the false gods of Moab that delayed their entrance into the inheritance (into the Promised Land) and on the other hand, from Mattanah to Nahaliel the rabbis took to mean that their children took possession (הנחילות) of God (הקב"ה, the Holy One blessed be He) and the rabbis conclude that David thus said I will compose a Psalm about both acts of possession for the leader upon the הנחילות (inheritance/possession). The next משל (mashal) “parable” we encounter is from Rabbi Yanni, he says אמר ר' ינאי מי שמשים עצמו כמדבר שהכל דשין בו, זוכה לתורה, וכיון שזכה לתורה, נחלו אל, “He who makes himself a pasture whereon all may trample, gains the gift of Torah, and after he gains the gift of Torah, God takes possession of Him, and after God takes possession of him, he rises to high places.” The next statement in the Midrash says that “if he then becomes arrogant, affliction will visit him.” This is very interesting, Rabbi Yanni is describing how a man should make himself. He says that a man should make himself a pasture whereon all may trample. Is this not walking in a humble and forgiving attitude towards others? How about loving our enemies (Matthew 5:43-48) and feeding our enemies? (Mishley / Proverbs 25:21, Romans 12:20, etc) The humble person, who makes themselves a pasture to be trampled will be given the gift of the Torah. The Rabbi says that God will take possession of such a person. Taking possession, living our lives according to righteousness and justice, is to live according to the Torah (God’s way) and this in effect will demonstrate that we are children of the living God. Rabbi Yanni then states that God taking possession, that He will rise this person up to high places. Then a warning is given, if a man becomes arrogant, affliction will visit him.

Do you know anyone who has become arrogant in the observance of Torah or in the knowledge that they are a child of the Most high God? The warning to not become arrogant and affliction coming suggests that the Lord will “chasten” those who are His (*Hebrews 12:6, Revelation 3:19*). It is interesting how there are many New Testament parallels that can be found within the rabbinic commentary, note the references that are given. The midrash, part 1 continues on to say that there were two inheritances (i) we took You and Your testimoneis as a heritage and (ii) we took the Torah. The Temple is also called an inheritance and a reference to *Devarim / Deuteronomy 12:9* is given along with the reference to *Bamidbar / Numbers 24:9* that state “*How goodly are your tents, O Jacob, and your tabernacles, O Israel.*” The rabbis ask what is the goodliness of Jacob? The goodliness is found in the waterbrooks that are spread forth, like the flowing water in which a man goes down unclean and comes up clean, the cleansing waters of the Mikvah (ritual bath). The final משל (mashal) is related to affliction, that it is a blessing and a part of the inheritance. The reason that is given is that when I sit in darkness, the Lord will be a light unto me (*Micah 7:8*). Yeshua said in *Matthew 5:11* “*Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me*” (NASB) it is when we are in that dark place, we know and can be assured that we are truly blessed of God.

In *Midrash Tehillim 5, Part 2*, the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) states דבר אחר למנצה אל “*In a different exposition, the verse is read For the leader upon Hanhiloth.*” In order to understand what David means by the word הַנְּחִילוֹת (Nihiloth) references to other scriptures are given beginning with *Mishley / Proverbs 8:19-21* that state “*I lead in the way of righteousness that I may cause those that love me to inherit substance.*” In Part 2 of the Midrash, the major point that is made is the statement ובני עניים עוסקים בתורה מתוך עניותם, הריני מנחילם ש”י עולמות, שנאמר להנחיל אוהבי יש ואוצרותיהם (שם משלי ח כא) “*Nevertheless, says the Lord, because they occupy themselves with Torah even in their poverty, I will cause them to inherit the substance of three hundred and ten worlds, for it is said That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance, and I will fill their treasures (Mishley / Proverbs 8:21)*” and follows with the statement ולמה הם עניים בעולם הזה, כדי שלא יעסקו בדברים בטלים וישכחו את התורה “*And why are My children poor in this world? So that they might not occupy themselves with vain things, and thus forsake the Torah.*” Here this reminds us of Yeshua’s words in *Matthew 5:3* “*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*” (NASB) Being poor is not a bad thing like is taught by so many prosperity preachers today. According to the rabbis of old, the poor are blessed for the reason that they do not occupy themselves with vain things and forsake the Torah. How often do we today occupy ourselves with vain things and forsake reading or studying God’s word? Take as an example the amount of time we spend watching television, sports (football, baseball, hockey?). These things amount to nothing in this life, they certainly will not be something that can be taken with us in the Olam Habah (the world to come). If we were so poor that we did not have a television our relationship with God would most likely increase significantly having more time to spend with him and to think upon His works and what he has done and is doing in our lives.

In *Midrash Tehillim 5, Part 3*, the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) states למנצה אל הנחילות מזמור “*For the leader upon the Nihiloth (possessions/inheritance). A Psalm of David.*” In order to understand what David means by the word הַנְּחִילוֹת (Nihiloth) references to other scriptures are given beginning with *Tehillim / Prsalms 116:12* that state “*What will I render to the Lord for all His benefits towards me?*” Rabbi Samuel taught that there are four Psalms that one would expect Adam to have composed if he would have composed a Psalm related to הַנְּחִילוֹת (Nihiloth) inheritance, (i) *Tehillim / Psalm 24*, (ii) *Tehillim / Psalm 19*, (iii) *Tehillim / Psalm 92*, and (iv) למנצה אל הנחילות מזמור לדוד “*For the leader upon the Nihiloth (possessions/inheritance)*” because he was the first to inherit the earth. It is interesting in Part 3 of

the rabbinic commentary that in the third Psalm that Adam would have composed the question is asked why would Adam have composed this Psalm? The reason given is that it was the Shabbat day that saved Adam from immediate destruction. In the Scriptures, to remember the Shabbat means to distinguish it from all the other days of the week. Israel was identified by their observance of rest from work on the seventh day because they were a nation of God's children. Thinking on the Shabbat, there are many Shabbats that do not fall specifically upon the seventh day, such as during special festival times, etc. Therefore, the word Shabbat should not be limited to the narrow meaning of the seventh day only. The Shabbat means rest, to cease from work. The true Shabbat was not just one day of rest in seven but involved a complete change of life. Could this be the reason the rabbis took the Shabbat to be the way in which Adam was saved from destruction or judgment (יְיָ) as it is written in the rabbinic commentary? According to the author of the book of Hebrews, those who believe in Yeshua enter into the true Shabbat rest of God.

Hebrews 4:3-11

4:3 For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said, 'As I swore in My wrath, They shall not enter My rest,' although His works were finished from the foundation of the world. 4:4 For He has said somewhere concerning the seventh day 'And God rested on the seventh day from all His works'; 4:5 and again in this passage 'They shall not enter My rest.' 4:6 Therefore, since it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly had good news preached to them failed to enter because of disobedience, 4:7 He again fixes a certain day, 'Today,' saying through David after so long a time just as has been said before, 'Today if you hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts.' 4:8 For if Joshua had given them rest, He would not have spoken of another day after that. 4:9 So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God. 4:10 For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His. 4:11 Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through following the same example of disobedience. (NASB)

Greek

³εἰσερχόμεθα γὰρ εἰς [τὴν] κατάπαυσιν οἱ πιστεύσαντες, καθὼς εἶρηκεν, Ὡς ὤμοσα ἐν τῇ ὀργῇ μου, Εἰ εἰσελεύσονται εἰς τὴν κατάπαυσίν μου, καίτοι τῶν ἔργων ἀπὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου γενηθέντων. ⁴εἶρηκεν γὰρ που περὶ τῆς ἑβδόμης οὕτως, Καὶ κατέπαυσεν ὁ θεὸς ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ἑβδόμῃ ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν ἔργων αὐτοῦ: ⁵καὶ ἐν τούτῳ πάλιν, Εἰ εἰσελεύσονται εἰς τὴν κατάπαυσίν μου. ⁶ἐπεὶ οὖν ἀπολείπεται τινὰς εἰσελθεῖν εἰς αὐτήν, καὶ οἱ πρότερον εὐαγγελισθέντες οὐκ εἰσῆλθον δι' ἀπειθείαν, ⁷πάλιν τινὰ ὀρίζει ἡμέραν, Σήμερον, ἐν Δαυὶδ λέγων μετὰ τοσοῦτον χρόνον, καθὼς προεῖρηται, Σήμερον ἐὰν τῆς φωνῆς αὐτοῦ ἀκούσητε, μὴ σκληρύνετε τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν. ⁸εἰ γὰρ αὐτοὺς Ἰησοῦς κατέπαυσεν, οὐκ ἂν περὶ ἄλλης ἐλάλει μετὰ ταῦτα ἡμέρας. ⁹ἄρα ἀπολείπεται σαββατισμὸς τῷ λαῷ τοῦ θεοῦ: ¹⁰ὁ γὰρ εἰσελθὼν εἰς τὴν κατάπαυσιν αὐτοῦ καὶ αὐτὸς κατέπαυσεν ἀπὸ τῶν ἔργων αὐτοῦ ὡς περ ἀπὸ τῶν ἰδίων ὁ θεός. ¹¹σπουδάσωμεν οὖν εἰσελθεῖν εἰς ἐκείνην τὴν κατάπαυσιν, ἵνα μὴ ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ τις ὑποδείγματι πέσῃ τῆς ἀπειθείας.

This Shabbat rest is a type of Messiah (Mashiach/Christ) that we enter into and our lives are changed. We are at peace with God, Yeshua is the lamb of God offered for our sins. Believe upon Him and you will have eternal life and a place in the world to come.

In *Midrash Tehillim 5, Part 4*, the דִּבּוּר הַמַּתִּיל אֶל [לְמַנְצֵה] דְּבַר אַחֵר (Dibur Hamathil) states הַנְּחִילוֹת “*In another exposition of For the Leader, upon the inheritances.*” In order to understand what David means by the word הַנְּחִילוֹת (Nihiloth) Rabbi Samuel son of Nakhmani understood הַנְּחִילוֹת (Nihiloth)

to refer to two inheritances. David inherited a double portion of kingship, one portion in this world, and one portion in the world to come. How does this apply to us? We obtain a portion in this world, in the blessing of God and we receive a portion in the world to come, eternal life. We have an inheritance in this world and on in the world to come.

In *Midrash Tehillim 5, Part 5*, the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) states למנצה אל הנחילות “*For the leader, upon the inheritance.*” In order to understand what David means by the word הנחילות (Nihiloth) Rabbi Joshua son of Levi said the phrase הנחילות (Nihiloth, the inheritance) is to be interpreted by the numerical values. In Part 5, the rabbis use the gematria, a Kabbalistic method of interpreting the Hebrew scriptures by computing the numerical value of words, based on the values of their constituent letters (*Concise Oxford's English dictionary*) to interpret the meaning of the phrase הנחילות (Nihiloth, the inheritance). Examining at the numerical values of הנחילות, in the midrash the rabbis look at the individual weights of each Hebrew letter.

Numerical Values for הנחילות (Nihiloth)

ה	<--	5
נ	<--	50
ח	<--	8
י	<--	10
ל	<--	30
ו	<--	6
ת	<--	400

The rabbis say the five (ה) Stands for the five books of Moshe. The fifty (נ) Stands for the fifty days between Pesach (Passover) and Shavuot (Feast of Weeks). The Eight (ח) Stands for the eight days that must elapse before the circumcision of a new born baby. The ten (י) Stands for the Ten Commandments. The thirty (ל) Stands for thirty “righteous men as Abraham” the world is never without. *Bereshit / Genesis 15:5* (ה וַיֹּצֵא אֹתוֹ הַחֹצֵה וַיֹּאמֶר הִבֶּט-נָא הַשָּׁמַיְמָה וּסְפֹר הַכּוֹכָבִים אִם-תּוּכַל לְסַפֵּר אֹתָם וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ כֹּה יִהְיֶה זְרַעְךָ:) is referenced to say thirty because it is written זְרַעְךָ כֹּה יִהְיֶה “*So will your seed be*” and also *Bereshit / Genesis 18:8* (יח וַאֲבָרְקֶם הָיָה יְהִי לְגוֹי גָדוֹל וְעָצוּם וְנִבְרַכְו-בוּ פֶלֶא גוֹיֵי הָאָרֶץ:) because it is written יְהִי לְגוֹי גָדוֹל “*Abraham will surely become a great nation.*” The justification is that the numerical value of יְהִי is 10+5+10+5=30. What happens next in the midrash is that the rabbis provide the נמשל (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” the mashal (*the numerical value kabbalistic interpretation appears to be the parable*) saying that the people of Israel are worthy of having 18 righteous men live inside of Israel and 12 live outside (18+12=30). A greater weight is given to Israel over the nations for the number of righteous men who live, Israel outweighs the nations in righteousness. Rabbi Zeera parallels the worthiness of studying the Torah in the land of Israel and the greeting “May you become as the brother of seven and the father of eight.” Rabbi Joshua son of Levi says that the phrase “father of eight” refers to Abraham who was the father of eight children Isaac, Ishmael, and the six sons of Keturah, and the phrase “the brother of seven” refers to Isaac the brother of Ishmael and the six sons of Keturah. Note that Keturah was the wife of Abraham, whom he married following Sarah’s death (see *Bereshit / Genesis 25:1-6*), according to the Scriptures he had six sons, whom he sent away into the east country. Her nationality is unknown. She is called “Abraham’s concubine” in *1 Chronicles 1:32*. Through the offshoots of the six sons Abraham had with Keturah he became “father of many nations.” Rabbi Samuel on the other hand said that eight refers to Jesse who had eight sons (*1 Samuel 17:12*). The six (ו) stands for the six orders of the Mishnah. The four hundred (ת) Stands for the

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four hundred years that the children of Israel stayed in Egypt and at the end of the four hundred years they took the Torah as their inheritance and God took them as His inheritance. The concluding sentence states “Hence it is said upon the inheritances” (לכך אמר אל הנחילות).

It is interesting studying the rabbinic commentary that the rabbis take the meaning of the root word נחל “to inherit, get, receive; attain” as the starting place for their homiletic explanations on this opening verse to the Psalm. The first 5 parts of *Midrash Tehillim 5*, the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) “the beginning word” directs our attention to the inheritance or possession of Israel, and of David. The פתיחה (Petihta) “the homiletic introduction” to the Midrash of all five parts direct us to consider the meaning of the word (הנחילות) and the reason for David writing this Psalm in light of various scriptures from various places throughout the Tanach. The משל (mashal) “the parable” in parts 1 thru 5 make an attempt to clarify the meaning of the word הנחילות (inheritance/possession). The נמשל (Nimshal) “expansion on the parable” touches on various משלי (parables), to help clarify the reasons David would have had to motivate him to write a “Psalm upon the inheritance.” Thinking on the Rabbinic commentary (*Midrash Tehillim 5, Parts 1 thru 5*) it is interesting that many New Testament concepts can be found within the rabbinic thought process. If David was writing on inheritance, a part of the inheritance of God is God’s grace as David had recorded in *Tehillim / Psalms 5:8*: וְאֲנִי בְּרַב חַסְדֶּךָ אָבוֹא בְּיַתְּךָ אֲשַׁתְּחֶנָּה אֶל-הַיְכָל קִדְשֶׁךָ בְּיִרְאַתְךָ: 5:7 *But as for me, by Your abundant lovingkindness I will enter Your house, At Your holy temple I will bow in reverence for You. (NASB)* The mercy and grace of God is contained within the word “lovingkindness” throughout the Tanach. The inheritance that we have in Yeshua, in the Lord God Almighty is His Mercy and Grace (חַסְדֶּךָ) and the greatness of the covenant that He has made with us because of His love for us that is revealed to us throughout the Torah, the Prophets, and the Writings of the Scriptures. Let’s pray.

Heavenly Father,

We thank You for this Psalm of David and for the covenant חַסְדֶּךָ (grace) that You have established in Your Messiah Yeshua. Thank You Lord for these encouraging words from David’s life that help us to know You better and to trust in You alone. We praise Your holy Name and thank You Lord for all of these things. Our words are insufficient to describe the awesomeness of Your glory and for the greatness of Your presence in our lives. Thank You for Your love and Your provision, Your portion that You have given Your only Son for the forgiveness of sins. Help us to walk in righteousness and draw closer to You each day and fill us with Your presence. Please forgive us of our sins, we believe You sent Your only Son to die on our behalf and three days later He was raised from the grave. Thank you for revealing these truths to our hearts. Thank You for everything You have done for us. 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