

ספר תהילים כד | Tehillim / Psalms 24

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The Gate of our Hearts and the King of Glory

This week's study is from *Tehillim / Psalms 24:1-10*, David opens saying לְדָוִד מִזְמוֹר לַיהוָה הָאָרֶץ א *A Psalm of David. 24:1 The earth is the Lord's, and all it contains, The world, and those who dwell in it. (NASB)* Who is in control of this world? Is it God or is it the evil one? Yeshua said in *Matthew 28:18* "ALL power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Here David says that the earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, he goes on to say ב *24:2 For He has founded it upon the seas And established it upon the rivers. (NASB)* The reason the earth is the Lord's is because He is the one who formed the dry land and the seas and who established the rivers upon the land. David says ג *מי-יעלה בהר יהוה ומי-יקום במקום קדשו: ד נקי כפים ובר לבב אשר לא-נשא לשוא נפשי ולא מ-יעלה בהר יהוה ועל-נהרות יכוננה: 24:3 Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? And who may stand in His holy place? 24:4 He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood And has not sworn deceitfully. (NASB)* Those who are able to stand in the presence of God do so with clean hand and a pure heart and are not lifted up in falsehood, lies, and deceit. Such people will receive a blessing from the Lord ה *24:5 He shall receive a blessing from the Lord And righteousness from the God of his salvation. NASB*). David goes on to say ו *זוה דור דרשו [דרשיו] מבקשי פניו יעקב סלה: 24:6 This is the generation of those who seek Him, Who seek Your face even Jacob. Selah. (NASB)* What generation is David speaking of when he wrote this Psalm? He mentions Jacob, could the generation of people be a people who are spread out over particular points in time in history? David ends the Psalm with a sort of parable saying ז *שאו שערים | ראשיכם והנשאו פתחי עולם ויבוא מלך הכבוד: ח מי זה מלך הכבוד יהוה עזוי וגבור יהוה גבור מלחמה: ט שאו שערים | ראשיכם ושאו פתחי עולם ויבא מלך הכבוד: י מי הוא זה מלך הכבוד יהוה עזוי וגבור יהוה גבור מלחמה: 24:7 Lift up your heads, O gates, And be lifted up, O ancient doors, That the King of glory may come in! 24:8 Who is the King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, The Lord mighty in battle. 24:9 Lift up your heads, O gates, And lift them up, O ancient doors, That the King of glory may come in! 24:10 Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory. Selah. (NASB)* What are the gates that David is speaking of that have heads that may be lifted up? What is it about the gates that David is trying to emphasize in the question of "Who is this King of glory?"

עברית Hebrew

ארמי Aramaic

ελληνικός Greek

עברית Hebrew	ארמי Aramaic	ελληνικός Greek
ספר תהלים פרק כד	ספר טוביה פרק כד	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 24
א לְדָוִד מִזְמוֹר לַיהוָה הָאָרֶץ וּמִן הַלְוָאָה תִּבְּלַל וַיֵּשְׁבִי בָּהּ: ב כִּי הוּא עַל-יַמִּים יְסֻדָּהּ וְעַל-נְהַרֹת יְכוֹנְנָהּ: ג מִי-יַעֲלֶה בְּהַר יְהוָה וּמִי-יָקוּם בְּמָקוֹם קִדְשׁוֹ: ד נְקֵי כַפַּיִם וּבֵר לִבְבִּי אֲשֶׁר לֹא-נִשְׂאָ לְשׂוֹא נִפְשִׁי וְלֹא נִשְׁבַּע לְמַרְמָה:	א לדוד תושבחתא דיהוה הא היא ארעא וברייתהא ומלייתהא תבל ודיתבין בה: ב מטול ארום די הוא על שבע יממא שוי תיתאה שיתאסה ועל נהרותא אתקינ אתה: ג מאן יסק"יזכי למיסק לטור בית מקדשא דיהוה ומאן יקום באתר קודשיא: ד דכי אידיא ובריר רעיונא דלא אומי על שקרא מגן לחייבא נפשיה ולא קאים לניכלא בנכילו:	24:1 ψαλμὸς τῷ δαυὶδ τῆς μιᾶς σαββάτων τοῦ κυρίου ἡ γῆ καὶ τὸ πλῆρωμα αὐτῆς ἡ οἰκουμένη καὶ πάντες οἱ κατοικοῦντες ἐν αὐτῇ 24:2 αὐτὸς ἐπὶ θαλασσῶν ἐθεμελίωσεν αὐτήν καὶ ἐπὶ ποταμῶν ἠτοίμασεν αὐτήν 24:3 τίς ἀναβήσεται εἰς τὸ ὄρος τοῦ κυρίου καὶ τίς στήσεται ἐν τόπῳ ἁγίῳ αὐτοῦ 24:4 ἄθῳος χερσὶν καὶ καθαρὸς τῇ καρδίᾳ ὃς οὐκ ἔλαβεν ἐπὶ ματαίῳ τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ καὶ οὐκ ὤμοσεν ἐπὶ δόλῳ τῷ πλησίον αὐτοῦ

<p>ה יִשָּׂא בְרָכָה מֵאֵת יְהוָה וְצִדְקָה מֵאֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: ו זֶה דֹר דֹרְשׁוֹ [דִרְשׁוֹ] מִבְּקָשֵׁי פְּנֵיהֶם יַעֲקֹב סְלָה: ז שָׂאוּ שְׁעָרִים רְאִישֵׁיכֶם וְהִנְשְׂאוּ פְתָחֵי עוֹלָם וַיָּבֹאוּ מְלֶכֶת הַכְּבוֹד: ח מִי זֶה מְלֶכֶת הַכְּבוֹד יְהוָה עֲזֹז וּגְבוֹר יְהוָה גְּבוֹר מְלַחֲמָה: ט שָׂאוּ שְׁעָרִים רְאִישֵׁיכֶם וְשָׂאוּ פְתָחֵי עוֹלָם וַיָּבֹאוּ מְלֶכֶת הַכְּבוֹד: י מִי הוּא זֶה מְלֶכֶת הַכְּבוֹד בֹד יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת הוּא מְלֶכֶת הַכְּבוֹד סְלָה:</p>	<p>ה יקבל ברכתא מן קדם יהוה וצדקתא מאלהא פורקניה: ו דנן דין דרא די תבעין ליה יעקב דבעין דתבעין סבר אפוי יעקב לעלמין: ז זקפו תרעי בית מקדשא רישיכון ואזקופו מעלני עלמא ועול מלך יקירא דאיקר: ח מן הוא דיכי מלך יקירא יהוה עשין וגיבר יהוה מרי גבורתא ועביד קרבא: ט זקופו תרעי גינתא דעדן רישיכון ואזקפו מעלני עלמא ועול מלכא יקירא: י מן הוא דיכי מלכא יקירא יהוה צבאות הוא מלך יקירא לעלמין:</p>	<p>24"5 οὗτος λήμψεται εὐλογίαν παρὰ κυρίου καὶ ἐλεημοσύνην παρὰ θεοῦ σωτήρος αὐτοῦ 24:6 αὕτη ἡ γενεὰ ζητούντων αὐτόν ζητούντων τὸ πρόσωπον τοῦ θεοῦ ἰακωβ διάψαλμα 24:7 ἄρατε πύλας οἱ ἄρχοντες ὑμῶν καὶ ἐπάρθητε πύλαι αἰώνιοι καὶ εἰσελεύσεται ὁ βασιλεὺς τῆς δόξης 24:8 τίς ἐστὶν οὗτος ὁ βασιλεὺς τῆς δόξης κύριος κραταιὸς καὶ δυνατὸς κύριος δυνατὸς ἐν πολέμῳ 24:9 ἄρατε πύλας οἱ ἄρχοντες ὑμῶν καὶ ἐπάρθητε πύλαι αἰώνιοι καὶ εἰσελεύσεται ὁ βασιλεὺς τῆς δόξης 24:10 τίς ἐστὶν οὗτος ὁ βασιλεὺς τῆς δόξης κύριος τῶν δυνάμεων αὐτός ἐστιν ὁ βασιλεὺς τῆς δόξης</p>
<p>Tehillim / Psalms 24</p>	<p>Toviyah / Psalms Chapter 24</p>	<p>Psalmoi / Psalms 24</p>
<p>A Psalm of David. 24:1 The earth is the Lord's, and all it contains, The world, and those who dwell in it. 24:2 For He has founded it upon the seas And established it upon the rivers. 24:3 Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? And who may stand in His holy place? 24:4 He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood And has not sworn deceitfully. 24:5 He shall receive a blessing from the Lord And righteousness from the God of his salvation. 24:6 This is the generation of those who seek Him, Who seek Your face even Jacob. Selah. 24:7 Lift up your heads, O gates, And be lifted up, O ancient doors, That the King of glory may come in! 24:8 Who is the King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, The Lord mighty in battle. 24:9 Lift up your heads, O gates, And lift them up, O ancient doors, That the King of glory may come in! 24:10 Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory. Selah. (NASB)</p>	<p>24:1 Of David. A Psalm. Behold, the earth and its creatures are the Lord's, the world and those who dwell in it. 24:2 For he set a foundation on the seas and fixed it firmly on the rivers. 24:3 Who will ascend the mount of the Lord's sanctuary? And who will stand in his holy place? 24:4 One with clean hands and a pure mind, who has not sworn to a lie to make himself guilty, and who has not made an oath in guile. 24:5 He will receive blessings from the presence of the Lord, and generosity from God his redemption. 24:6 This is the generation that seeks him, that looks for his countenance, O Jacob, forever! 24:7 Lift up, O sanctuary gates, your heads; and stand erect, O eternal entrances, that the glorious king may enter. 24:8 Who is this glorious king? The Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord, a mighty ruler and one who wages battle. 24:9 Lift up your heads, O gates of the Garden of Eden; and stand erect, O eternal entrances, and the glorious king will enter. 24:10 Who is this glorious king? The Lord Shevuot, he is the glorious king forever. (EMC)</p>	<p>24:1 The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; the world, and all that dwell in it. 24:2 He has founded it upon the seas, and prepared it upon the rivers. 24:3 Who shall go up to the mountain of the Lord, and who shall stand in his holy place? 24:4 He that is innocent in his hands and pure in his heart; who has not lifted up his soul to vanity, nor sworn deceitfully to his neighbour. 24:5 He shall receive a blessing from the Lord, and mercy from God his Saviour. 24:6 This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek the face of the God of Jacob. Pause. 24:7 Lift up your gates, ye princes, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the king of glory shall come in. 24:8 Who is this king of Glory? the Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. 24:9 Lift up your gates, ye princes; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the king of glory shall come in. 24:10 Who is this king of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is this king of glory. (LXX)</p>

In *Tehillim / Psalms 24:1-10*, David opens saying א לְדָוִד מִזְמוֹר לַיהוָה הָאָרֶץ וּמְלוֹאֶת תְּבִל וַיִּשְׁבִּי בָהּ: *A Psalm of David. 24:1 The earth is the Lord's, and all it contains, The world, and those who dwell in it. (NASB)* According to standard reference bibles, this verse is quoted in the Apostolic Writings in *1 Corinthians 10:26*; the Apostle Paul quotes saying *10:26 for the earth is the Lord's, and all it contains.* (26τοῦ κυρίου γὰρ ἡ γῆ καὶ τὸ πλήρωμα αὐτῆς.) It is interesting that Paul appears to be making an argument regarding the Lord's table and things that are lawful and unlawful according to *1 Corinthians 10:15-31*. Let's begin by looking at the Scriptures in *1 Corinthians*.

1 Corinthians 10:15-31

10:15 I speak as to wise men; you judge what I say. 10:16 Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread which we break a sharing in the body of Christ? 10:17 Since there is one bread, we who are many are one body; for we all partake of the one bread. 10:18 Look at the nation Israel; are not those who eat the sacrifices sharers in the altar? 10:19 What do I mean then? That a thing sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? 10:20 No, but I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God; and I do not want you to become sharers in demons. 10:21 You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. 10:22 Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? We are not stronger than He, are we? 10:23 All things are lawful, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful, but not all things edify. 10:24 Let no one seek his own good, but that of his neighbor. 10:25 Eat anything that is sold in the meat market without asking questions for conscience' sake; 10:26 for the earth is the Lord's, and all it contains. 10:27 If one of the unbelievers invites you and you want to go, eat anything that is set before you without asking questions for conscience' sake. 10:28 But if anyone says to you, 'This is meat sacrificed to idols,' do not eat it, for the sake of the one who informed you, and for conscience' sake; 10:29 I mean not your own conscience, but the other man's for why is my freedom judged by another's conscience? 10:30 If I partake with thankfulness, why am I slandered concerning that for which I give thanks? 10:31 Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. (NASB)

¹⁵ὡς φρονίμοις λέγω: κρίνατε ὑμεῖς ὃ φημι. ¹⁶τὸ ποτήριον τῆς εὐλογίας ὃ εὐλογοῦμεν, οὐχὶ κοινωνία ἐστὶν τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ; τὸν ἄρτον ὃν κλῶμεν, οὐχὶ κοινωνία τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐστὶν; ¹⁷ὅτι εἷς ἄρτος, ἐν σῶμα οἱ πολλοὶ ἐσμεν, οἱ γὰρ πάντες ἐκ τοῦ ἐνὸς ἄρτου μετέχομεν. ¹⁸βλέπετε τὸν Ἰσραὴλ κατὰ σάρκα: οὐχ οἱ ἐσθίοντες τὰς θυσίας κοινωνοὶ τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου εἰσίν; ¹⁹τί οὖν φημι; ὅτι εἰδωλόθυτόν τί ἐστίν; ἢ ὅτι εἰδωλόν τί ἐστίν; ²⁰ἀλλ' ὅτι ἂ θύουσιν, δαιμονίοις καὶ οὐ θεῷ [θύουσιν], οὐ θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς κοινωνοὺς τῶν δαιμονίων γίνεσθαι. ²¹οὐ δύνασθε ποτήριον κυρίου πίνειν καὶ ποτήριον δαιμονίων: οὐ δύνασθε τραπέζης κυρίου μετέχειν καὶ τραπέζης δαιμονίων. ²²ἢ παραζηλοῦμεν τὸν κύριον; μὴ ἰσχυρότεροι αὐτοῦ ἐσμεν; ²³Πάντα ἔξεστιν, ἀλλ' οὐ πάντα συμφέρει. πάντα ἔξεστιν, ἀλλ' οὐ πάντα οἰκοδομεῖ. ²⁴μηδεὶς τὸ ἑαυτοῦ ζητεῖω ἀλλὰ τὸ τοῦ ἑτέρου. ²⁵Πᾶν τὸ ἐν μακέλλῳ πωλούμενον ἐσθίετε μηδὲν ἀνακρίνοντες διὰ τὴν συνείδησιν, ²⁶τοῦ κυρίου γὰρ ἡ γῆ καὶ τὸ πλήρωμα αὐτῆς. ²⁷εἴ τις καλεῖ ὑμᾶς τῶν ἀπίστων καὶ θέλετε πορευέσθαι, πᾶν τὸ παρατιθέμενον ὑμῖν ἐσθίετε μηδὲν ἀνακρίνοντες διὰ τὴν συνείδησιν. ²⁸ἐὰν δὲ τις ὑμῖν εἴπῃ, Τοῦτο ἱερόθυτόν ἐστίν, μὴ ἐσθίετε δι' ἐκεῖνον τὸν μηνύσαντα καὶ τὴν συνείδησιν ²⁹συνείδησιν δὲ λέγω οὐχὶ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἀλλὰ τὴν τοῦ ἑτέρου. ἵνατί γὰρ ἡ ἐλευθερία μου κρίνεται ὑπὸ ἄλλης συνειδήσεως; ³⁰εἰ ἐγὼ χάριτι μετέχω, τί βλασφημοῦμαι ὑπὲρ οὗ ἐγὼ εὐχαριστῶ; ³¹εἴτε οὖν ἐσθίετε εἴτε πίνετε εἴτε τι ποιεῖτε, πάντα εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ ποιεῖτε.

Reading through these Scriptures, it is interesting that Paul begins with the Lord's table and discussing the cup and the bread which represent His blood and body. Paul parallels the drinking of the cup and eating of bread makes us partakers with Yeshua in his death and sacrifice. Paul uses Torah based examples within his parallel saying *10:18 Look at the nation Israel; are not those who eat the sacrifices sharers in the altar? (NASB)* making a reference to the priests in the Temple service taking upon themselves sin (in the sin sacrifice) by consuming a portion of the sacrifice and then making atonement before God with the blood, according to Parashat Tzav. (*Vayikra / Leviticus 6:24 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 6:25 "Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying, 'This is the law of the sin offering: in the place where the burnt offering is slain the sin offering shall be slain before the LORD; it is most holy. 6:26 'The priest who offers it for sin*

shall eat it. It shall be eaten in a holy place, in the court of the tent of meeting. NASB) Paul then says 10:19 What do I mean then? That a thing sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? 10:20 No, but I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God; and I do not want you to become sharers in demons. 10:21 You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. 10:22 Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Paul asks the question of what he means by sacrificing to idols. He says that he does not want them to become sharers in demons, because the people of Rome sacrifice to their idols and demons are the underlying forces behind idol worship. He then goes on to say that it is not possible to drink of the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons, one cannot participate in the table of the Lord and the table of demons. He asks whether they are provoking the Lord to jealousy? Based on what Paul is saying, it seems there are some in the Ekklesia that are arguing the food that is present is unclean by reason of idolatry and may be arguing that it should not be used for the remembrance meal of Passover. Notice what Paul says next:

10:23 All things are lawful, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful, but not all things edify. 10:24 Let no one seek his own good, but that of his neighbor. 10:25 Eat anything that is sold in the meat market without asking questions for conscience' sake; 10:26 for the earth is the Lord's, and all it contains. 10:27 If one of the unbelievers invites you and you want to go, eat anything that is set before you without asking questions for conscience' sake. 10:28 But if anyone says to you, 'This is meat sacrificed to idols,' do not eat it, for the sake of the one who informed you, and for conscience' sake; 10:29 I mean not your own conscience, but the other man's for why is my freedom judged by another's conscience? 10:30 If I partake with thankfulness, why am I slandered concerning that for which I give thanks? 10:31 Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. (NASB)

It is interesting that through this whole discussion, Paul is speaking upon whether meat sacrificed to an idol is acceptable for food? Paul is not arguing over whether the kashrut laws (*the dietary Laws in the Torah, i.e. what foods are Kosher*) are valid following Yeshua's death and resurrection. In the last verse *1 Corinthians 10:31*, Paul says that whatever you eat or drink do so to the glory of God. Is it possible to give glory to God and doing so through disobedience? (Read *Vayikra / Leviticus 19, Parashat Kedoshim*) Paul is actually speaking on the issue of Halachah, the body of Jewish religious law, including the biblical law (*the 613 mitzvot*) and their rabbinic interpretation (*customs, interpretations, and traditions*). Rabbinically speaking, food that had been laid down before an idol would not have been acceptable as food to eat and certainly not for food for use in services before the Lord. In *1 Corinthians 10*, Paul is essentially saying that idols are nothing and that an idol does not make a food unclean. However, for consciousness sake, do not ask about the food that is set before you when you sit down to eat. He concludes saying that *10:31 Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. (NASB)* It is interesting while studying these Scriptures closely, Paul is not teaching contrary to the Torah command.

David opens saying *וְלַדְּוָד מִזְמוֹר לַיהוָה הַאֲרָץ וּמְלוֹאֶתָהּ תִּבְלֵ וַיִּשְׁבֵּי בָהּ: א Psalm of David. 24:1 The earth is the Lord's, and all it contains, The world, and those who dwell in it. (NASB)* Who is in control of this world? Is it God or is it the evil one? Yeshua said in *Matthew 28:18* "ALL power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." Have you ever thought upon or discussed whose rule the world was under, God's or Satan's? On the one hand, Scripture states what we read here in *Tehillim / Psalms 24:1* that the earth is the Lord's, while on the other hand we read Scripture states that Satan is the god of this world. At the beginning of time, the evil one was temporarily granted a tremendous amount of power over this world, because of Adam and Chava (Eve) as can be seen from the following passages:

John 12:31

12:31 'Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. (NASB)

³¹νῦν κρίσις ἐστὶν τοῦ κόσμου τούτου, νῦν ὁ ἄρχων τοῦ κόσμου τούτου ἐκβληθήσεται ἔξω:

2 Corinthians 4:4

4:4 in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. (NASB)

⁴ἐν οἷς ὁ θεὸς τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου ἐτύφλωσεν τὰ νοήματα τῶν ἀπίστων εἰς τὸ μὴ ἀγᾶσαι τὸν φωτισμὸν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τῆς δόξης τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὃς ἐστὶν εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ.

1 John 5:19

5:19 We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. (NASB)

¹⁹οἶδαμεν ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐσμεν, καὶ ὁ κόσμος ὅλος ἐν τῷ πονηρῷ κεῖται.

These Scriptures that speak of the evil one indicate that within Judaism there existed the concept of a ruling power that stood against God and His Messiah Yeshua. God is however the One who ultimately rules and reigns over all things. He is the Creator of all that exists and all things are ultimately subject to His will and power. Note how the Aramaic Targum states “the earth and its creatures are the Lord’s” א לדוד תושבחתא 24:1 *Of David. A Psalm. Behold, the earth and its creatures are the Lord’s, the world and those who dwell in it. (EMC)* Many passages of Scripture bear this out (see *Tehillim / Psalms 9:7, 22:28, 47:8, 59:13, 66:7, 97:1, 99:1, 103:19, 146:10*). In addition to this, we see God’s authority in other passages of Scripture as well as passages such as *Bereshit / Genesis 1-2, Job 1-2, John 1, Ephesians 1, Colossians 1, Romans 9-11, and Revelation 19-22*. The evil one is a created creature and the Lord God Almighty is his creator. The evil one does not do anything that the Lord does not permit him to do (see *Job 1-2*) and according to the Apostolic Writings, one day the evil one will be cast into the lake of fire for all eternity (*Revelation 20:10*).

In *Tehillim / Psalms 24*, David goes on to say ב פי הוא על-ימים יסדה ועל-נהרות יכוננה: 24:2 *For He has founded it upon the seas And established it upon the rivers. (NASB)* providing the reason the earth belongs to the Lord is because He is the one who formed the dry land and the seas and who established the rivers upon the land. David says ג מי-יעלה בהר יהוה ומי-יקום במקום קדשו: ד נקי כפיים ובר לבב אשר 24:3 *Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? And who may stand in His holy place? 24:4 He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood And has not sworn deceitfully. (NASB)* Those who are able to stand in the presence of God do so with clean hand and a pure heart and are not lifted up in falsehood, lies, and deceit. Notice the Aramaic Targum states מאן יסקיזכי למיסק לטור בית מקדשא דיהוה ומאן יקום באתר קודשיא: ד דכי אידיא ובריר רעיונא דלא אומי 24:3 *Who will ascend the mount of the Lord’s sanctuary? And who will stand in his holy place? 24:4 One with clean hands and a pure mind, who has not sworn to a lie to make himself guilty, and who has not made an oath in guile. (EMC)* The Targum states דכי אידיא “clean hands” where the word דכי means “to be clean, pure, to be cleared, acquitted, cleansed from sin.” The rabbis translate this word from the word נקי that is derived from ניקה << לנקות that means “to clean, cleanse; exonerate, acquit, exculpate, to be innocent.” Those who may stand before the Lord are those who have been acquitted and cleansed from sin. David also says those who may ascend to the mountain of the Lord, are those who also have been acquitted of their sin (clean hands) and a בר לבב “-able, worthy of, deserving heart.” If we think about this today, are our hearts worthy or deserving of God’s love? Thinking on the wretchedness of my own heart, I thank God for His mercy and unfailing love. This should make us think about our attitude towards life and our relationship with the Lord. Do you think that we can come before the Lord with uncleanness and impurity in our hearts while simply saying “Yeshua makes me right and I can come before the Lord?” Do we need to come before the Lord with a pure heart? Is the purifying of the heart a work of man or a work of God? Is there a cooperative work involved?

According to the cleanness and purity of a persons hands and heart, David says such people will receive a blessing from the Lord ה, ישא ברכה מאת יהוה וצדקה מאלהי ישעו: 24:5 *He shall receive a blessing from the Lord And righteousness from the God of his salvation. NASB*). Do you have strong desires

that you pray about, yet somehow it feels like God's not listening to you? Deep down inside, you wonder, what is wrong, you believe in Yeshua as your Savior and that He has promised to supply all your needs, yet somehow there is still something missing or that there is something that has gone unmet? *Tehillim / Psalm 145:18–19* promises, *145:18 The Lord is near to all who call upon Him, To all who call upon Him in truth. 145:19 He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him; He will also hear their cry and will save them.* (NASB) יְהוָה קָרוֹב יְהוָה לְכָל-קֹרְאָיו לְכָל-אֲשֶׁר יִקְרָאֵהוּ בְּאֱמֶת: יֵט רְצוֹן-יִרְאָיו יַעֲשֶׂה וְאֶת-שׁוֹעֲתָם יִשְׁמַע (ויִּוְשִׁיעֵם) The Lord is willing to bless, but only if our hearts are pure before him. What does it mean to have a pure, able, worthy of, and deserving heart? Does this wording suggest that we need to seek a humble life before the Lord? Do we really trust Him today? Do we truly believe that He is the God of goodness, love, mercy, power, wisdom, and kindness? How about a God of justice, righteousness, and a God who requires the same from us too? These are the things the Scriptures speak of regarding our relationship with the Lord through the covenant of God and in Yeshua His Messiah. If there is injustice and unrighteousness in our hearts, would the Lord bring a blessing to our lives?

David goes on to say: זֶה דּוֹר דֹּרְשׁוֹ [דִּרְשׁוֹ] מִבְּקָשׁוֹ פְּנֵי יְעֻקֵּב סְלָה: 24:6 *This is the generation of those who seek Him, Who seek Your face even Jacob. Selah.* (NASB) What generation is David speaking of when he wrote this Psalm? It is interesting that he says “*this is a generation that seeks Him*” (זֶה דּוֹר דֹּרְשׁוֹ) and David uses the word דֹּרְשׁוֹ means as a verb “*to demand, seek, look for, preach, interpret*” and a noun “*interpretation of holy scriptures.*” The Scriptures describe this generation as those that seek the Lord and those who speak of the Lord, who study His word, and who truly look for and seek the face of God. He mentions Jacob. Could this be because Jacob saw God face to face and did not die at Peniel? Could the “*generation of people*” be a reference to people who are spread throughout particular points in time and history? It may possible be. The emphasis here is on setting our hearts to seek the Lord, to study His Word, to live our lives according to His word, and to teach others, and to speak of the Lord just like Ezra did in *Ezra 7:10 For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the LORD and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel* (NASB)

David ends the Psalm with a sort of parable saying ז שָׂאוּ שְׁעָרֵי | רְאִישֵׁיכֶם וְהִנְשֹׂאוּ פִתְחֵי עוֹלָם וַיָּבֹאוּ מִלְּךְ הַכְּבוֹד: ח מִי זֶה מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד יְהוָה עֲזִוּוֹ וְגִבּוֹר יְהוָה גִּבּוֹר מִלְחָמָה: ט שָׂאוּ שְׁעָרֵי | רְאִישֵׁיכֶם וַיָּבֹאוּ פִתְחֵי עוֹלָם: י מִי הוּא זֶה מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת הוּא מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד סְלָה: 24:7 *Lift up your heads, O gates, And be lifted up, O ancient doors, That the King of glory may come in! 24:8 Who is the King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, The Lord mighty in battle. 24:9 Lift up your heads, O gates, And lift them up, O ancient doors, That the King of glory may come in! 24:10 Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory. Selah.* (NASB) What are the gates that David is speaking of that have heads that may be lifted up? What is it about the gates that David is trying to emphasize in the question of “*Who is this King of glory?*” Is there a metaphor here that David is utilizing that sheds some light upon the king of glory mentioned here in the last three verses of the Psalm? The Aramaic Targum and the Septuagint both translate the Psalm in this way.

Aramaic Targum

24:7 Lift up, O sanctuary gates, your heads; and stand erect, O eternal entrances, that the glorious king may enter. 24:8 Who is this glorious king? The Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord, a mighty ruler and one who wages battle. 24:9 Lift up your heads, O gates of the Garden of Eden; and stand erect, O eternal entrances, and the glorious king will enter. 24:10 Who is this glorious king? The Lord Shevuot, he is the glorious king forever. (EMC)

ז זקפו תרעי בית מקדשא רישיכון ואזדקופו מעלני עלמא ויעול מלך יקירא דאיקר: ח מן הוא דיכי מלך יקירא יהוה עשין וגובר יהוה מרי גבורתא ועביד קרבא: ט זקופו תרעי גינתא דעדן רישיכון ואזדקפו מעלני עלמא ויעול מלכא יקירא: י מן הוא דיכי מלכא יקירא יהוה צבאות הוא מלך יקירא לעלמין:

Septuagint

24:7 Lift up your gates, ye princes, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the king of glory shall come in. 24:8 Who is this king of Glory? the Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. 24:9 Lift up your gates, ye princes; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the king of glory shall come in. 24:10 Who is this king of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is this king of glory. (LXX)

24:7 ἄρατε πύλας οἱ ἄρχοντες ὑμῶν καὶ ἐπάρθητε πύλαι αἰώνιοι καὶ εἰσελεύσεται ὁ βασιλεὺς τῆς δόξης 24:8 τίς ἐστὶν οὗτος ὁ βασιλεὺς τῆς δόξης κύριος κραταιὸς καὶ δυνατός κύριος δυνατὸς ἐν πολέμῳ 24:9 ἄρατε πύλας οἱ ἄρχοντες ὑμῶν καὶ ἐπάρθητε πύλαι αἰώνιοι καὶ εἰσελεύσεται ὁ βασιλεὺς τῆς δόξης 24:10 τίς ἐστὶν οὗτος ὁ βασιλεὺς τῆς δόξης κύριος τῶν δυνάμεων αὐτός ἐστιν ὁ βασιλεὺς τῆς δόξης

What is interesting is the added words in the Septuagint “princes” (ἄρχοντες) that is juxtaposed to the word for “gate” (πύλαι). What is the meaning of to lift the gates you princes and the everlasting doors so the king of glory may come in? This reminds us of the Scripture from *Matthew 16:19* when Yeshua spoke to the disciples. Is there a possible connection here to the greater understanding of *Matthew 16:19*?

Matthew 16:18-19

16:18 ‘I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. 16:19 ‘I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.’ (NASB)

¹⁸καὶ ἐγὼ δὲ σοὶ λέγω ὅτι σὺ εἶ Πέτρος, καὶ ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρᾳ οἰκοδομήσω μου τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, καὶ πύλαι ᾧδου οὐ κατισχύσουσιν αὐτῆς. ¹⁹δώσω σοὶ τὰς κλεῖδας τῆς βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν, καὶ ὃ ἐὰν δήσῃς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἔσται δεδεμένον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, καὶ ὃ ἐὰν λύσῃς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἔσται λελυμένον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς.

What is meant by the use of the word “gates” in *Matthew 16:18*? What is the metaphoric use of “gates” (πύλαι, pulai) in the phrase “gates of Hades” (πύλαι ᾧδου, pulai hadou)? Does “Hades” equal “Sheol” in meaning from the Hebrew Scriptures? Also note *Matthew 16:18* when Yeshua was speaking directly to the Apostle Peter. The last clause of *Matthew 16:18* states: καὶ πύλαι ᾧδου οὐ κατισχύσουσιν αὐτῆς “and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.” In order to begin to unravel the meaning of this clause we begin by looking at the word “gates” (πύλαι) in Hebrew שַׁעַר. In the Tanach, the word “gates” is used in various ways, (i) gates function as a defense of guard against enemies, and (ii) the word gate refers to an entire city and to the rulers or army of a city. In *Deuteronomy 16:5* it says ‘You are not allowed to sacrifice the Passover in any of your towns which the Lord your God is giving you; (NASB) where the word “gates” is translated as “towns” in the commandment to not sacrifice the Passover in any of your gates / towns which the Lord God is giving you. (*Deuteronomy 17:2* shows a similar use).

The reading from Parashat Vayishlach (*Bereshit / Genesis 32:3-36:43*) offers some additional insights into the importance of the city gates. The Lord gives Jacob a new name “Israel” and Jacob returns and settles in Eretz Canaan. While in the land, Jacob settles down near the city of Shechem (*Bereshit / Genesis 33:18*). While dwelling near Shechem, according to the Scriptures, Shechem the son of Khamor saw Dina, the daughter of Jacob, and desires to take her as a wife:

א וַתַּצֵּא דִינָה בֶּת-לֵאָה אִשְׁרָת יַלְדָּהּ לְיַעֲקֹב לְרֵאוֹת בְּכָנוֹת הָאָרֶץ: ב וַיֵּרָא אֹתָהּ שָׁכֵם בֶּן-חָמֹר הַחִוִּי נָשִׂיא הָאָרֶץ וַיִּקַּח אֹתָהּ וַיִּשְׁכַּב אִתָּהּ וַיַּעֲבֹד: ג וַתִּדְבַּק נַפְשׁוֹ בְּדִינָה בֶּת-יַעֲקֹב וַיֹּאמְרָהּ

אֶת-הַנְּעֹר וַיִּדְבֹּר עַל-לֵב הַנְּעֹר: ד וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁכֶם אֶל-חָמוֹר אָבִיו לֵאמֹר קַח-לִי אֶת-הַיְלָדָה הַזֹּאת לְאִשָּׁה: ה וַיַּעֲקֹב שָׁמַע כִּי טָמְא אֶת-דִּינָה בְתוֹ וּבָנָיו הָיוּ אֶת-מִקְנֵהוּ בַשָּׂדֶה וְהַחֲרָשׁ יַעֲקֹב עַד-בֹּאֵם: ו וַיֵּצֵא חָמוֹר אָבִי-שָׁכֶם אֶל-יַעֲקֹב לְדַבֵּר אִתּוֹ: ז וּבְנֵי יַעֲקֹב בָּאוּ מִן-הַשָּׂדֶה כְּשָׁמְעֵם וַיִּתְעַצְבוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים וַיַּחַר לָהֶם מְאֹד כִּי גִבְלָה עָשָׂה בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל לְשֹׁכְבֵי אֶת-בֵּת-יַעֲקֹב וְכֵן לֹא יַעֲשֶׂה: ח וַיִּדְבֹּר חָמוֹר אִתָּם לֵאמֹר שָׁכֶם בְּנֵי הַשָּׂדֶה נִפְשׁוּ בְּבִתְכֶם תָּנוּ נָא אֶתָּה לּוֹ לְאִשָּׁה

34:1 Now Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob, went out to visit the daughters of the land. 34:2 When Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, the prince of the land, saw her, he took her and lay with her by force. 34:3 He was deeply attracted to Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the girl and spoke tenderly to her. 34:4 So Shechem spoke to his father Hamor, saying, 'Get me this young girl for a wife.' 34:5 Now Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter; but his sons were with his livestock in the field, so Jacob kept silent until they came in. 34:6 Then Hamor the father of Shechem went out to Jacob to speak with him. 34:7 Now the sons of Jacob came in from the field when they heard it; and the men were grieved, and they were very angry because he had done a disgraceful thing in Israel by lying with Jacob's daughter, for such a thing ought not to be done. 34:8 But Hamor spoke with them, saying, 'The soul of my son Shechem longs for your daughter; please give her to him in marriage. (NASB)

The sons of Jacob tell Shechem and Khamor that if they are circumcised, they will exchange their sons and daughters and they will be one people. (*Bereshit / Genesis 34:13-16*) Hearing this, Khamor and his son Shechem go to the gate of the city and tell the men of the city what they want to do, to be circumcised. It is then written in the Torah that all of the city agreed (*Bereshit / Genesis 34:24-26*) desiring to acquire all of Israel's wealth. And then when the men had been circumcised and were in pain Simeon and Levi killed all the men of the city.

ספר בראשית פרק לד	<i>Bereshit / Genesis 34:24-26</i>
<p>כד וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶל-חָמוֹר וְאֶל-שָׁכֶם בְּנוֹ כָּל-יִצְאֵי שַׁעַר עִירוֹ וַיִּמְלֹוּ כָּל-זָכָר כָּל-יִצְאֵי שַׁעַר עִירוֹ: כה וַיְהִי בַיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי בַּהֲיוֹתָם כְּאֹכִיִּם וַיִּקְחוּ שְׁנֵי-בְנֵי-יַעֲקֹב שָׁמְעוֹן וְלֵוִי אֲחֵי דִינָה אִישׁ חֶרֶב וַיָּבֹאוּ עַל-הָעִיר בְּטָח וַיַּהַרְגוּ כָּל-זָכָר: כו וְאֶת-חָמוֹר וְאֶת-שָׁכֶם בְּנוֹ הָרְגוּ לְפִי-חֶרֶב וַיִּקְחוּ אֶת-דִּינָה מִבֵּית שָׁכֶם וַיֵּצְאוּ:</p>	<p>34:24 All who went out of the gate of his city listened to Hamor and to his son Shechem, and every male was circumcised, all who went out of the gate of his city. 34:25 Now it came about on the third day, when they were in pain, that two of Jacob's sons, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, each took his sword and came upon the city unawares, and killed every male. 34:26 They killed Hamor and his son Shechem with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah from Shechem's house, and went forth. (NASB)</p>

The gate of the city was known biblically as a place of power and sitting at the gate can have the meaning of sitting in a place of authority. The one who controls the gate is the one who has the power to allow someone in or out of the city. Sitting at the gates enabled one to know everything that is going on in the city, especially that of a walled city. These Scripture verses reveal the importance of the city gates. In God's Kingdom, the gate is the only way whereby we gain access to the Lord. Yeshua said in *John 10:1* "I tell you the truth, the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. (NIV) Yeshua then says in *John 10:9* I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture. (NIV) and in *John 14:6* Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. (NIV) Yeshua was drawing upon the biblical meaning of the city gate in his explanations of who he is. In Parashah Vayishlach, all of the men who entered in and went out through the gate of the city must be circumcised according to the agreement. Similarly today, we must have circumcised hearts in order to enter in through the gates to the Kingdom of Heaven. This may only be accomplished by faith in God's gate keeper, Yeshua the Messiah! These Scrip-

tures direct us to the true gate, the door, the way, the truth, and the life, the living word of God, Yeshua the only way to the Lord our Father who is in heaven.

The book of *Ruth 3:11* says ‘Now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you whatever you ask, for all my people in the city know that you are a woman of excellence. (NASB) equating the word “gate” with the “city.” *Isaiah 14:31* also equates “gate” with “city.” In these various instances the noun is used as a substitute for something with which it is closely associated. *Tehillim / Psalms 24:7* states *24:7 Lift up your heads, O gates, And be lifted up, O ancient doors, That the King of glory may come in!* (NASB) whereas the LXX says “*lift up your gates, O Princes / rulers.*” Here the rulers of the city control the gates and therefore the gates refer to the city. The gates provided power and protection for the city. Keeping this in mind, read *Judges 16:1-3*.

Judges 16:1-3

16:1 Now Samson went to Gaza and saw a harlot there, and went in to her. 16:2 When it was told to the Gazites, saying, ‘Samson has come here,’ they surrounded the place and lay in wait for him all night at the gate of the city. And they kept silent all night, saying, ‘Let us wait until the morning light, then we will kill him.’ 16:3 Now Samson lay until midnight, and at midnight he arose and took hold of the doors of the city gate and the two posts and pulled them up along with the bars; then he put them on his shoulders and carried them up to the top of the mountain which is opposite Hebron. (NASB)

א ויִלְדֵּם שְׁמִשׁוֹן עֲזַתָּה וַיֵּרֶא-שָׁם אִשָּׁה זֹנָה וַיָּבֵא אֵלֶיהָ: ב לַעֲזֻתָיִם | לֵאמֹר בָּא שְׁמִשׁוֹן הִנֵּה וַיִּסְבּוּ
וַיֵּאָרְבוּ-לוֹ כָּל-הַלְּיָלָה בְּשַׁעַר הָעִיר וַיִּתְחַרְשׁוּ כָּל-הַלְּיָלָה לֵאמֹר עַד-אוֹר הַבֶּקֶר וַהֲרַגְנָהּ: ג וַיִּשְׁכַּב שְׁמִשׁוֹן
עַד-חֲצֵי הַלְּיָלָה וַיָּקָם | בַּחֲצֵי הַלְּיָלָה וַיֵּאָחֶז בְּדַלְתוֹת שַׁעַר-הָעִיר וּבִשְׁתֵּי הַמְּזוּזוֹת וַיִּסָּעֵם עִם-הַבְּרִיחַ וַיִּשֶׂם
עַל-כַּתְּפָיו וַיַּעֲלֵם אֶל-רֹאשׁ הַהָר אֲשֶׁר עַל-פְּנֵי הַכְּרוֹן:

According to *Judges 16:1-3* the men of the city were laying in wait for Samson to kill him at the gate of the city which symbolizes the strength of the city. Samson then rose up at midnight and took the city gate and carried the gates to the top of the mountain. Samson was making a show of his strength that was in the Lord and how their strength was nothing compared to his and the Lord God Almighty who empowered him.

The word “*Hades*” (ᾍδου) is used 66 times in the LXX translation of the OT for the word Sheol meaning the “grave” or a reference to the place where the dead lay. The grave is regarded as an enemy according to the Scriptures, *Isaiah 5:14* says “*Therefore Sheol has enlarged its throat and opened its mouth without measure; And Jerusalem’s splendor, her multitude, her din of revelry and the jubilant within her, descend into it.*” (NASB), *Job 24:19* ‘*Drought and heat consume the snow waters, So does Sheol those who have sinned.* (NASB), and *Psalms 18:5* *The cords of Sheol surrounded me; The snares of death confronted me.* (NASB) The description of Sheol is all consuming having the power of death.

The Apostle John has a similar description of Sheol in *Revelation 9:1-11*.

Revelation 9:1-11

9:1 Then the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star from heaven which had fallen to the earth; and the key of the bottomless pit was given to him. 9:2 He opened the bottomless pit, and smoke went up out of the pit, like the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke of the pit. 9:3 Then out of the smoke came locusts upon the earth, and power was given them, as the scorpions of the earth have power. 9:4 They were told not to hurt the grass of the earth, nor any green thing, nor any tree, but only the men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. 9:5 And they were not permitted to kill anyone, but to torment for five months; and their torment was like the torment of a scorpion when it stings a man. 9:6 And in those days men will seek death and will not find it; they will long to die, and death flees from them. 9:7 The appearance of the locusts was like horses prepared for battle; and on their heads appeared to be crowns like gold, and their faces were like the faces of men. 9:8 They had hair like the hair of women, and their teeth were like the teeth of lions. 9:9 They had breastplates like breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was like the sound of chariots, of many horses rushing

to battle. 9:10 They have tails like scorpions, and stings; and in their tails is their power to hurt men for five months. 9:11 They have as king over them, the angel of the abyss; his name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in the Greek he has the name Apollyon. (NASB)

The angel sounded and a star from heaven which fell to earth had the key to the bottomless pit given to him (9:1). This angel opened the pit and smoke went up from the pit like the smoke of a great furnace and the sun and air were darkened by the smoke of the pit, and out from the smoke come locust upon the earth and power was given to them to strike the earth but to not hurt the grass, field, or trees and to strike the men of the earth.

With all of this information, the meaning of the phrase “*the gates of Hades*” (καὶ πύλαι ᾄδου οὐ κατισχύουσιν αὐτῆς) comes into focus. According to the Scriptures, Hades is seen as the domain of death, controlled by death, Satan, and his demonic forces. Specifically, the “*gates*” (πύλαι) of Hades symbolize the power of the satanic forces and their purpose to tear down Yeshua’s assembly (ekklesia) that He promised to build. According to the Scriptures, the “*gates of hades*” is more powerful than man having the power to subdue even the greatest of enemies therefore the victory of Yeshua’s assembly (ekklesia) is guaranteed according to Yeshua’s words.

Yeshua is telling us that even the worst enemy of all time, Satan and his demons who seek to kill, steal, and destroy will not have the victory over his “*assembly*” (ekklesia) that he promised to build. The proof that the “*Gates of Hades*” would not prevail came with the resurrection of Yeshua overcoming the grave and death itself. Looking back on history, we see Yeshua entered the city of Jerusalem through the gates, in whom the leadership stood against him, and the gates being the power of the city, Yeshua prevailed. The power of the rulers of Jerusalem was established by Satan himself where it says “*Satan entered into Judas*” (Luke 22:3 and John 13:27) and Peter’s desire to protect Yeshua from death and his rebuke that it was an act of Satan (Matthew 16:23 and Mark 8:33). Even from Yeshua’s birth Satan attempted to destroy him with Herod. Yeshua’s temptation in the desert was also another attempt by Satan to destroy him (Matthew 4). It is obvious that Satan ultimately thought that destroying Yeshua would effect a victory for his evil plan. The resurrection proved Yeshua’s place as the head of the ekklesia (ἐκκλησίαν) and as the Son of God, the Messiah, our Redeemer, the head of the ekklesia (ἐκκλησίαν) Yeshua prevailed against the “*gates of Hades*” in victory.

So how does this relate to David’s last words of the Psalm that say **זָשָׂאוּ שְׁעָרַיִם | רָאשֵׁיכֶם וְהִנָּשְׂאוּ** **פְתַחֵי עוֹלָם וְיִבֹאוּ מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד: ח מִי זֶה מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד: ה** **מִי הוּא זֶה מֶלֶךְ הַכְּבוֹד וְהִנָּה עֲזוּז וְגִבּוֹר יְהוָה גְּבוֹר מִלְחָמָה: ט שָׂאוּ שְׁעָרַיִם | רָאשֵׁיכֶם: י** **24:7 Lift up your heads, O gates, And be lifted up, O ancient doors, That the King of glory may come in! 24:8 Who is the King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, The Lord mighty in battle. 24:9 Lift up your heads, O gates, And lift them up, O ancient doors, That the King of glory may come in! 24:10 Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory. Selah. (NASB)** The gates that David may be speaking of are a place of power that is supposed to open up and allow the Lord of hosts, the King of glory to come in. Does this sound like anything familiar? Where is a place of power in man? The place of power in a man is in his heart. Within a man’s heart are devised evil plans, sin, murders, and adulteries, and the list goes on. The heart is the place that each individual man has the utmost and total control over. Nobody knows the heart of a man except God. What are the gates that David is speaking of that have heads that may be lifted up? What is it about the gates that David is trying to emphasize here? The gates is a reference to men, and our hearts that need to be humbled and opened up for the King of glory to come through and enter into. The metaphor David is using here on the gates sheds light upon the meaning of the king of glory and that each individual person is to seek the Lord, open our hearts, humble ourselves, and allow the Lord to enter in. Note the Aramaic Targum says *Tehillim / Psalms 24:7 Lift up, O sanctuary gates, your heads; and stand erect, O eternal entrances, that the glorious king may enter. (EMC)* What is mentioned here is that these gates are “*sanctuary gates*” and lifting up our heads and standing erect, the eternal entrances, this place is where the King of glory enters. David couldn’t be speaking of anything else other than the human heart. Have you humbled your heart, opened the gate to your heart and allowed the King of glory to come in? Let’s Pray!

Rabbinic Commentary

The Rabbinic Commentary (Midrash) on *Tehillim / Psalms 24* has 12 parts. Reading through the Midrash we will be looking at Parts 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 11, and 12. Let's begin by outlining *Midrash Tehillim Chapter 24, Parts 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 11, and 12*.

Part 2

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) “*Another comment. To David, A Psalm. The Land is the Lord's (Tehillim / Psalms 24:1).*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*A parable of a king who had a retainer in a certain city.*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis discuss the introductory line with a parable of the king's retainer.
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal) goes on to expand upon the parable with a king's parable and the ownership of the land of Israel.
- The Concluding phrase says “*Or, say a mortal builds a house of fifty cubits, maybe a large house of a hundred cubits, and all together he stands no more than three cubits high. But it is not so with the Holy One blessed be He, for He created the earth and He fills it. As Scripture says, The whole earth is full of His glory (Isaiah 6:3).*”

Part 3

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) “*Another comment on The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof.*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*when the Holy One blessed be He, created days, He set aside the Shabbat.*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis discuss the way God created the heavens and the earth, the moedim and the nations.
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal) goes on to expand upon the parable with a discussion on the Holy Spirit.”
- The Concluding phrase says “*God spoke unto Israel in the visions of the night (Bereshit / Genesis 46:2), a verse, which the Aramaic Targum renders, The Holy Spirit rested on Jacob.*”

Part 4

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) “*Another comment, Consider The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof...*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*in the light of the verse You, even You are Lord alone, You have made heaven with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein (Nehemiah 9:6).*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis discuss the fullness of the Lord in the context of the creation.
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal) goes on to expand upon the parable with a discussion on the role the angels had in the creation process.”
- The Concluding phrase says “*Therefore David said to the Holy One blessed be He, Since You alone did create the heaven and the earth, I will call them after Your name alone, The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof.*”

Part 7

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) “*Another comment, The passage beginning Who will ascend into the mountain of the Lord (Tehillim / Psalms 24:3).*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*alludes to Moshe, of whom it is said, Moshe went up unto God and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain (Shemot / Exodus 19:3).*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis discuss how Moshe went up and went down in reference to who will ascend into the mountain of the Lord.
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal) goes on to expand upon the discussion of the one who ascends the mountain and the righteousness of Moshe.”
- The Concluding phrase says “*Hence it is said, He will receive the blessing from the Lord (Tehillim / Psalms 24:5), Moshe was made king and master of all Israel. And righteousness from the God of His salvation, Moshe was thought so deserving that the Torah was given to Israel by his hand.*”

Part 8

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) “*Another comment, The passage beginning Who will ascend into the mountain of the Lord?*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*Alludes to Abraham, to whom God said, Get you into the land of Moriah upon one of the mountains which I will tell you of (Bereshit / Genesis 22:2).*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis discuss how Abraham had the right to ascend and descend.
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal) goes on to expand upon the discussion on Abraham and the purity of his heart.”
- The Concluding phrase says “*And righteousness from the God of his salvation, as Scripture says of Abraham, He believed in the Lord, and He counted it to him for righteousness (Bereshit / Genesis 15:6).*”

Part 9

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) “*Another comment, The passage beginning Who will ascend into the mountain of the Lord?*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*Alludes to Jacob, to whom God said, Arise, go up to Bethel (Bereshit / Genesis 35:1).*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis discuss how Jacob had the right to ascend and descend.
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal) goes on to expand upon the discussion of Jacob with the story of Laban and the purity of Jacob’s heart.”
- The Concluding phrase says “*And righteousness from the God of his salvation, for Jacob said, so will my righteousness witness against me hereafter (Bereshit / Genesis 30:33).*”

Part 11

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) “*Who is this King of glory? (Tehillim / Psalms 24:8).*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*Rabbi Simon said, who is the one King who sets a portion of His own glory upon them that fear Him?*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis discuss the Lord is the one who sets glory upon His hosts.

- The *נמשל* (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the *משל* (mashal) goes on to expand upon the discussion of glory of God with regard to Jacob and Joseph.”
- The Concluding phrase says “*When the camp set forward, a covering of sealskin was spread over all the vessels in the Tabernacle. But of the Ark of Testimony, it is written, And will spread over it a cloth all of blue (Bamidbar / Numbers 4:6). Why such a covering? So that the Ark of the Testimony would be set apart. Hence it is said That the King of glory may enter (Tehillim / Psalms 24:9).*”

Part 12

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the *דיבור המתחיל* (Dibur Hamathil) “*Another comment on Who is this King of glory?*”
- The *פתיחה* (Petihtha) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*Rabbi Hezekiah said, Why is blue different from all other colors?*”
- The *משל* (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the *פתיחה* (Petihtha), the rabbis discuss the appearance of the color blue and the reason for its choice.
- The *נמשל* (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the *משל* (mashal) goes on to expand upon the discussion of the color blue with the appearance of the Lord God Almighty and His glory.”
- The Concluding phrase says “*Who is this King who gives a portion of His own glory to them that fear Him?*”

Midrash Tehillim 24, Part 2 opens with the *דיבור המתחיל* (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*Another comment. To David, A Psalm. The Land is the Lord’s (Tehillim / Psalms 24:1).*” The homiletic introduction to the Midrash opens with the rabbis saying “*a parable of a king who had a retainer in a certain city.*” In the first century period, there was a vast contrast between the wealthy and the poor. The wealthy households of the elites and aristocrats who headed powerful families resulted in the need for assistance internally to handle and manage their wealth. This is where the idea of a “*retainer*” enters into the picture; a household retainer included stewards, scribal accountants, tutors, and others who were involved in helping wealthy families manage their wealth and families each day. (*Parables as Subversive Speech: Jesus as Pedagogue of the Oppressed, by William R. Herzog, Westminster John Knox Press; 1st edition (May 1, 1994), p. 312*) The head of the household could not stay home by reason that he needed to be away to protect his interests and expand his influence. Retainers were therefore not slaves but were given authority to operate on behalf of the head of the household. This is the background for the parable spoken of by the rabbis in *Midrash Tehillim 24, Part 2* and similarly by the parable spoken of by Yeshua in *Luke 19:11-27*.

Luke 19:11-27

19:11 While they were listening to these things, Jesus went on to tell a parable, because He was near Jerusalem, and they supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately. 19:12 So He said, ‘A nobleman went to a distant country to receive a kingdom for himself, and then return. 19:13 ‘And he called ten of his slaves, and gave them ten minas and said to them, ‘Do business with this until I come back. 19:14 ‘But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, ‘We do not want this man to reign over us.’ 19:15 ‘When he returned, after receiving the kingdom, he ordered that these slaves, to whom he had given the money, be called to him so that he might know what business they had done. 19:16 ‘The first appeared, saying, ‘Master, your mina has made ten minas more.’ 19:17 ‘And he said to him, ‘Well done, good slave, because you have been faithful in a very little thing, you are to be in authority over ten cities.’ 19:18 ‘The second came, saying, ‘Your mina, master, has made five minas.’ 19:19 ‘And he said to him also, ‘And you are to be over five cities.’ 19:20 ‘Another came, saying, ‘Master, here is your mina, which I kept put away in a handkerchief; 19:21 for I was afraid of you, because you are an exacting man; you take up what you did not lay down and reap what you did not sow.’ 19:22 ‘He said to him, ‘By your own words I

will judge you, you worthless slave. Did you know that I am an exacting man, taking up what I did not lay down and reaping what I did not sow? 19:23 'Then why did you not put my money in the bank, and having come, I would have collected it with interest?' 19:24 'Then he said to the bystanders, 'Take the mina away from him and give it to the one who has the ten minas.' 19:25 'And they said to him, 'Master, he has ten minas already. 19:26 'I tell you that to everyone who has, more shall be given, but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away. 19:27 'But these enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, bring them here and slay them in my presence.' (NASB)

In the parable of the rabbis, the rabbis speak of the retainer who was given honor in the king's city and in the presence of the king, whereas when the king gave up the city, the people rebelled against the retainer. And when the king reclaimed the city, the people again honored the retainer. The rabbis parallel the king with the Holy One blessed be He (The Lord God Almighty), and the "retainer" is referring to David because of the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying "Another comment. To David, A Psalm. The Land is the Lord's (Tehillim / Psalms 24:1)." On the other hand, Yeshua speaks of the king's parable with the retainer who is unfaithful rather than the people of the city being unfaithful to the retainer. It is interesting that both parables speak of those who are rebellious, in one case the people rebel and in the other case the retainer rebels. In the midrash, the king says "Thereupon the king said, When I gave up my city, you rebelled against him. Was he not my retainer then, even as he is my retainer now? Yet only now do you again honor him. The king is the Holy One blessed be He, and the city is the Land of Israel; and the king's retainer is David, king of Israel." (אמר להם המלך כשמכרתי פשעתם בי ולא היה בן ביתי, עכשיו הוא בן ביתי, ואתם מכבדים אותו.) so the people who rebelled against the retainer was in fact rebelling against the king. In both parables the Lord God was who the people were rebelling against. The idea present in Yeshua's parable is the faithful will be rewarded whereas the unfaithful, the wicked, those who plot against the king, they will be taken and executed in his presence. The rabbis do not go so far as that in the midrash, however, they do say that at one point God gave the land of Israel over to her enemies, and this would result in the destruction of the people, at least those wicked men who would stand against God's anointed, and that is exactly what happened when the people rebelled against David, their eventual end was to their destruction. This is the same thing that happens with those who reject Yeshua the Messiah, their eventual end is their destruction!

Midrash Tehillim 24, Part 3 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying "Another comment on The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof." The פתיחה (Petihata) "the homiletic introduction" to the Midrash says "when the Holy One blessed be He, created days, He set aside the Shabbat." The rabbis go on to say "When He created months, He set aside the festivals. When He created years, He chose Sabbatical years for Himself. When He created Sabbatical years, He chose the years of Jubilee for Himself. When he created the nations of the earth, He chose the nation of Israel for Himself. When He created the nation of Israel, He chose the Levites for Himself. When he created the Levites, He chose the priests for Himself. When he created the countries, He set aside the Land of Israel out of all the countries as a heave offering, as is said, The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof." (ברא חדשים נטל את המועדות), ברא שנים בחר לו שמטים, ברא שמטים בחר לו יובלות, ברא לו האומות בחר לו ישראל, ברא לו את הלויים, ברא את הלויים בחר לו את הכהנים, ברא ארצות נטל ארץ ישראל תרומה מכל הארצות, שנאמר לה' (הארץ ומלוואה) Based upon this interpretation, the Lord created all the earth and then he set aside these times suggesting that He has a plan for everything. The Lord God also has a plan for salvation. In the Tanach, the concept of salvation is rooted in Israel's deliverance from Egypt according to the Torah. When the ancient people thought of God's salvation and deliverance they thought so within the context of the Lord delivering His people from bondage, slavery, sin, and were called to live in righteousness and holiness. The Apostolic Writings describe the salvation of God through the Word of God that become flesh, Yeshua the Messiah (John 1:1-14). The the source of salvation in the Messiah Yeshua is the Lord God Almighty, we are saved

from God’s judgment of sin and its consequence. The point of this Midrash is that the Lord God has a plan, he planned out the Moedim for the purpose of bringing glory to His name and so we would remember His salvation and redemptive power. The Lord does have a plan and ultimately we must believe and trust in the Lord and His mercy and in the work of the Messiah Yeshua who made the everlasting sacrifice to make atonement for our sins.

Midrash Tehillim 24, Part 4 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying “*Another comment, Consider The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof...*” and the rabbis say in the homiletic introduction “*in the light of the verse You, even You are Lord alone, You have made heaven with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein (Nehemiah 9:6).*” They go on to ask the question “*on what day was the host of heaven created?*” Rabbi Johanan said that the host of heaven was created on the second day and quotes from *Tehillim / Psalms 104:3*, because He made His angels ministers a flaming fire. On the other hand, Rabbi Simeon said that the host of heaven were created on the fifth day quoting from *Bereshit / Genesis 1:20*, saying that God spoke and the waters brought froth abundantly. Here Rabbi Johanan was thinking of the angels as the host of heaven and Rabbi Simeon was thinking of the birds in the sky. Rabbi Lulyani argued that it was not the second day because then a heretic could argue that the angels helped stretch out the heavens, whereas the Scriptures say that “*The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof*” meaning that the Lord God Almighty is the One and He alone stretched out the heavens. The rabbis conclude *Midrash Tehillim 24, Part 4* saying “*Therefore David said to the Holy One blessed be He, Since You alone did create the heaven and the earth, I will call them after Your name alone, The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof.*” There is no doubt that the earth is the Lord’s! Thinking on this topic, the rabbis reason when the host of heaven were created in such a way as to rule out any external influences upon who created the heavens and the earth. If the earth is the Lord’s we should take the perspective that the earth is not ours to do with as we please. This is not simply a reference to the earth’s natural resources, but to all of creation, meaning those who we share this earth with (other people). Do we treat other people the way Christ treats us? In this life, we have all mistreated others at one point or another. Growing up as young men and women, as husbands and wives, occasionally we mistreat people even the ones we love. A fundamental principle that is taught in the Scriptures is to learn how to treat others as the Lord God would have us do. It is imperative that we treat others in a godly and Spirit-filled way. This midrash is a reminder of this of a sort that “*the earth and the fullness thereof is the Lord’s,*” and this includes people.

Midrash Tehillim 24, Part 7, 8, and 9 all appear to be related. The following is an outline of the contents of these three commentaries:

Outline of Midrash Tehillim 24, Part 7, 8, and 9

דיבור המתחיל: Another comment, The passage beginning Who will ascend into the mountain of the Lord (<i>Tehillim / Psalms 24:3</i>).	דיבור המתחיל: Another comment, The passage beginning Who will ascend into the mountain of the Lord?	דיבור המתחיל: Another comment, The passage beginning Who will ascend into the mountain of the Lord?
פתיחתא: Alludes to Moshe, of whom it is said, Moshe went up unto God and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain (<i>Shemot / Exodus 19:3</i>).	פתיחתא: Alludes to Abraham, to whom God said, Get you into the land of Moriah upon one of the mountains which I will tell you of (<i>Bereshit / Genesis 22:2</i>).	פתיחתא: Alludes to Jacob, to whom God said, Arise, go up to Bethel (<i>Bereshit / Genesis 35:1</i>).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • And who will stand in His holy place? • The one who is able to ascend and descend? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • And who will stand in His holy place? • The one who is able to ascend and descend? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • And who will stand in His holy place? • The one who is able to ascend and descend?

Studying these three Midrashim, the rabbis correlate those who are able to ascend the mountain of the Lord (*Tehillim / Psalms 24:3*) with the Patriarchs Abraham and Jacob, and also Moshe. Do you have any idea why the rabbis neglected to include Isaac in the list of examples of those who may ascend the mountain of the Lord? In Midrash Tehillim 24, Part 7, the rabbis state that it is Moshe that may ascend the mountain of the Lord. They say that his passage alludes to Moshe when God said “stand here by Me” (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 5:28*). The Psalm states that it is “*he who has clean hands*” that may ascend, therefore the rabbis need to justify their choice of Moshe as having clean hands. So the rabbis say “*Who has not taken without cause any life (Tehillim / Psalms 24:4) alludes to Moshe who, not without good cause, took the life of the Egyptian, for it is said He looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian (Shemot / Exodus 2:12). What can He looked this way and that way mean except that Moshe behold in that instant a court of angels, and with them he consulted, so that, rightly empowered, he smote the Egyptian.*” אשר לא נשא לשוא נפשו. זה משה, שלא נטל [לשוא] נפשו של מצרי, שנאמר ויפן כה) וכה וירא כי אין איש (שמות ב יב), מה ראה, ראה את המלאכים ונמלך בהם והרגו בדין, שהסתכל שאין גר עומד (ממנו, שנאמר וירא כי אין איש. ולא נשבע למרמה They reasoned that Moshe realized a proselyte would not descend from the Egyptians. Thus they cleared Moshe of having blood on his hands making him clean and able to ascend the mountain of the Lord.

In Midrash Tehillim 24, Part 8 states that this verse “*Alludes to Abraham, to whom God said, Get you into the land of Moriah upon one of the mountains which I will tell you of (Bereshit / Genesis 22:2).*” The Midrash asks the question “*Who will stand in His holy place*” and quote from *Bereshit / Genesis 19:27* saying that Abraham got up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the Lord. This is following the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and when Abraham arrives at the place he sees the smoke of their destruction ascended into the sky. They attribute “*clean hands*” and a “*pure heart,*” to one who has not taken a life without a cause, and one who has not deceived a neighbor to Abraham. Abraham was righteous in all of these things, the Scriptures do not say Abraham had violated either one of these things.

In Midrash Tehillim 24, Part 9, the rabbis say that the verse “*Who will ascend into the mountain of the Lord*” alludes to Jacob “*to whom God said, Arise, go up to Bethel (Bereshit / Genesis 35:1).*” The Midrash asks again the question “*Who will stand in His holy place*” and reference Scripture that says “*He lighted upon a certain place.*” (*Bereshit / Genesis 28:11*) The rabbis attribute to Jacob clean hands paralleling the relationship of Jacob and Laban; Laban robbed Jacob of his wages by changing them again and again. The pure heart is attributed by the way Jacob treated Laban. Did Jacob really treat Laban with a pure heart? In addition to this, Jacob did not take any man’s life, and he did not deceive his neighbor. Therefore, in all three Midrashim, the rabbis conclude saying:

Concluding Phrases

<p>Midrash Tehillim 24, Part 7: <i>“Hence it is said, He will receive the blessing from the Lord (Tehillim / Psalms 24:5), Moshe was made king and master of all Israel. And righteousness from the God of His salvation, Moshe was thought so deserving that the Torah was given to Israel by his hand.”</i></p>	<p>Midrash Tehillim 24, Part 8: <i>“And righteousness from the God of his salvation, as Scripture says of Abraham, He believed in the Lord, and He counted it to him for righteousness (Bereshit / Genesis 15:6).”</i></p>	<p>Midrash Tehillim 24, Part 9: <i>“And righteousness from the God of his salvation, for Jacob said, so will my righteousness witness against me hereafter (Bereshit / Genesis 30:33).”</i></p>
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Each Midrash concludes on “*righteousness*” and interestingly, the rabbis say it is the “*righteousness from God*” (וצדקה מאלהי). Each of these men believed in the Lord and He (God) counted it to him for righteous-

ness. It is interesting that the theme of “*ascending and descending*” is linked to the righteousness of God and the purity of heart. There are numerous places in the Scriptures where we read of someone “*ascending and descending*.” One example that is given by the rabbis is at the place where Abraham offered the Sacrifice of His Son Isaac on the mountain identified as Moriah in *Bereshit / Genesis 22*. This is also the place where Jacob dreamed of angels ascending and descending upon a ladder. Yeshua uses Jacob’s dream as an example of Himself in *John 1:51* In *Bereshit / Genesis 28:10-14*, the Lord reminds Jacob of the promise that He had made to his father Isaac and to Abraham. The scripture says וַיִּקְהַל יְהוָה וַיְהִי סֵלֶם מְצַב אַרְצָה וְרֵאשֻׁוּ meaning “*He had a dream, and behold, a ladder was set on the earth with its top reaching to heaven; and behold, the angels of God were ascending and descending on it.*” The Hebrew text states literally “*behold, angels of God ascending and descending in him.*” The final word in the sentence is the 3rd person singular masculine pronoun “*in him*” which can also mean “*in it*” when making a reference to an object. The use of the 3rd person singular masculine pronoun is notable since Yeshua quoted this verse from *John 1:48-51*.

John 1:48-51

1:48 Nathanael said to Him, ‘How do You know me?’ Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.’ 1:49 Nathanael answered Him, ‘Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel.’ 1:50 Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Because I said to you that I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You will see greater things than these.’ 1:51 And He said to him, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see the heavens opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.’ (NASB)

λέγει αὐτῷ Ναθαναήλ, Πόθεν με γινώσκεις; ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ, Πρὸ τοῦ σε Φίλιππον φωνῆσαι ὄντα ὑπὸ τὴν συκῆν εἰδόν σε. ἀπεκρίθη αὐτῷ Ναθαναήλ, Ῥαββί, σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, σὺ βασιλεὺς εἶ τοῦ Ἰσραήλ. ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ, Ὅτι εἰδόν σε ὑποκάτω τῆς συκῆς πιστεύεις; μείζω τούτων ὄψη. καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ, Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, ὄψεσθε τὸν οὐρανὸν ἀνεωγῶτα καὶ τοὺς ἀγγέλους τοῦ θεοῦ ἀναβαίνοντας καὶ καταβαίνοντας ἐπὶ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου.

When Yeshua told Nathanael that he had seen him under the fig tree, his response was Ῥαββί, σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, σὺ βασιλεὺς εἶ τοῦ Ἰσραήλ “*Rabbi, You are the Son of God, You are the King of Israel.*” Nathanael realized that only the Son of God, the true King of Israel would have been able to see and know him before this moment when he had met Yeshua for the first time. As a result of Nathanael’s statement, Yeshua uses Parashat Vayetze and Jacob’s dream to illustrate who he is, the Messiah, the one who “*ascends and descends.*” Yeshua said “*truly truly I say to you, from now on you shall see heaven opening and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the son of man*” (Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν, ὄψεσθε τὸν οὐρανὸν ἀνεωγῶτα καὶ τοὺς ἀγγέλους τοῦ θεοῦ ἀναβαίνοντας καὶ καταβαίνοντας ἐπὶ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου). Here Yeshua links the discussion with Nathanael to the Patriarch Jacob and the dream that he had at Bethel. A parallel is made between the “*Son of God,*” the “*King of Israel,*” and Yeshua on בֵּית-אֵל (Beit-El) the house of God, the angels ascending and descending, and Yeshua stating that from now on you will see heaven opening and the angels of God “*ascending and descending*” upon the son of man. In Jacob’s dream of the ladder from heaven, we read וַיִּהְיֶה יְהוָה נֹצֵב עָלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם אָבִיךָ וְאֵלֹהֵי יִצְחָק הָאֵרָץ אֲרָצְךָ וְלִדְרָעָךָ אֶתְנַתְּנָה לְךָ אֶתְנַתְּנָה וְלִדְרָעָךָ אֶתְנַתְּנָה וְלִדְרָעָךָ אֶתְנַתְּנָה “*And behold, the Lord stood upon him and said, ‘I am the Lord, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie, I will give it to you and to your seed.’*” The English translation has the Lord God standing “*above*” the ladder. The word נֹצֵב עָלָיו could also mean that the Lord stood “*upon*” the ladder. The Lord God Almighty stood upon this ladder and proclaimed the promises that He had made to Abraham and Isaac, and that the land upon which Jacob lays he will give to his seed (descendants). The Lord God standing upon the ladder and Yeshua using this portion of scripture as

a reference to him being the ladder (from Parashat Vayetze) these scriptures begin to reveal to us the nature of the Messiah being the Son of God and the King of Israel, and the one who “ascends and descends.”

Another Scripture where we read the rabbis discussing the one who “ascends and descends,” is located in *Mishley / Proverbs 30:1-6*.

<p>ספר משלי פרק ל פסוק א-ו</p> <p>א דְּבָרַי אָגוּר בֶּן-יָקֵה הַמְּשָׂא נָאֵם הַגִּבֹּר לְאִיתִיאל לְאִיתִיאל וְאָכַל: ב פִּי בְעַר אֲנֹכִי מֵאִישׁ וְלֹא-בִינַת אָדָם לִי: ג וְלֹא-לְמַדְתִּי חֲכָמָה וְדַעַת קְדוֹשִׁים אָדָּע: ד מִי עָלָה-שָׁמַיִם וַיֵּרֵד מִי אֶסְפָּה-רוּחַ בְּחַפְנָיו מִי צָרַר-מַיִם בְּשָׂמְלָה מִי הִקִּים כָּל-אֶפְסֵי-אָרֶץ מִה-שָׁמוֹ וּמִה-שָׁם-בָּנוּ כִּי תִדְעַ: ה כָּל-אֲמַרַת אֱלֹהִים צְרוּפָה מִגֵּן הוּא לַחֲסִים בּוֹ: ו אֶל-תּוֹסֶף עַל-דְּבָרָיו פֶּן-יֹכִיחַ בָּךְ וְנִכְזַבְתָּ:</p>	<p>Mishley / Proverbs 30:1-6</p> <p>30:1 The words of Agur the son of Jakeh, the oracle. The man declares to Ithiel, to Ithiel and Ucal: 30:2 Surely I am more stupid than any man, And I do not have the understanding of a man. 30:3 Neither have I learned wisdom, Nor do I have the knowledge of the Holy One. 30:4 Who has ascended into heaven and descended? Who has gathered the wind in His fists? Who has wrapped the waters in His garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is His name or His son's name? Surely you know! 30:5 Every word of God is tested; He is a shield to those who take refuge in Him. 30:6 Do not add to His words Or He will reprove you, and you will be proved a liar. (NASB)</p>
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It is interesting studying the Midrash on *Mishley / Proverbs 30*, the rabbis struggle with the one who “ascends and descends” from heaven and the name of His son. According to *Mishley / Proverbs 30* these are the words of “Agur Ben Yakeh.” We know very little of Agur, for example what tribe he was from, or when he lived? *Mishley / Proverbs 30:1-3* Agur writes that he is more stupid than any man saying: “Surely I am more stupid than any man, and I do not have the understanding of a man. Neither have I learned wisdom, nor do I have the knowledge of the Holy Ones.” Agur laments that he is not wise in spiritual matters and uses examples of the “holy ones” or “holy things” (עָדָע) (Neither have I learned wisdom, Nor do I have the knowledge of the Holy One.) Agur states that his understanding is not sufficient like the קְדוֹשִׁים “kiddoshim.” This may be a reference to the priesthood, Agur may be one who is looking in from the outside and desires to know more about God. To make his point, Agur includes five questions which illustrate the limitations of man’s understanding, and to show that it is absurd for man to think that he can explain God’s works or presume that he understands the holy, infinite, all-knowing and all-powerful Creator. He asks the question (1) “Who has ascended into heaven and descended? (2) Who has gathered the wind in His fists? (3) Who has wrapped the waters in His garment? (4) Who has established all the ends of the earth? and (5) What is His name or His Son’s name? Surely you know!” (*Mishley / Proverbs 30:4*). In the statement “What is His name, or His Son’s name?” he asks the question of who understands the Name of God (יְהוָה) and what man knows the name of God’s Son? The question suggests to mean that the God of Israel has a Son. Is the Son the Nation of Israel? (*Shemot / Exodus 4:22*) or is there something more to this Son of God? The questions asked suggest that this Son is eternal who had a part in the creation, who God alone is able to reveal. Reading Midrash Mishley 30, Part 2, the rabbis open with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying “who has ascended into heaven and descended?” The say “this is Moshe” or “this is Abraham,” and they ask “what is his name” and state “the Lord is His name.”

מדרש משלי פרק ל סימן ב

ד מִי עָלָה שָׁמַיִם וַיֵּרֵד. זֶה מֹשֶׁה. מִי אֶסְפָּה רוּחַ בַּחפְנָיו. זֶה אַהֲרֹן. מִי צָרַר מַיִם בְּשִׂמְלָה. זֶה אֱלִיהוּ. מִי הִקִּים כָּל [אֶפְסֵי] אָרֶץ. זֶה אַבְרָהָם אַבְיָנוּ. מִה שָׁמוֹ. הִי שָׁמוֹ, שְׁנֵאמַר הִי אִישׁ מִלְחָמָה [הִי שָׁמוֹ] (שְׁמוֹת טו ג). וּמִה שָׁם בָּנוּ כִּי תִדְעַ. אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, שְׁנֵאמַר בְּנֵי בְכוּרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל (שֵׁם שְׁמוֹת ד כב). ד”א מִי עָלָה שָׁמַיִם. מִי הוּא זֶה שֶׁתִּפְלְתוּ עוֹלָה לְשָׁמַיִם וְהוּא מוֹרִיד הַגְּשָׁמִים, זֶה שֶׁמַּחֲלֵק מַעֲשָׂרוֹתָיו כְּרָאוּי. וַיֵּרֵד. שֶׁהוּא מוֹרִיד טַל וּמֵטֵר לְעוֹלָם, וּבְזִכּוֹתוֹ רוּחוֹת טוֹבוֹת מְנַשְׁבוֹת לְגַדְלֵי הַעֵץ-

שבים. מי אסף רוח בחפניו. זה שמחלק מעשרותיו בחפניו, וכן הוא אומר הביאו את כל המעשר אל בית האוצר ויהי טרף בביתי ובחנוני נא בזאת אמר ה' צבאות אם לא אפתח לכם את ארובות השמים והריקותי לכם ברכה עד בלי די (מלאכי ג י). ומנין שהרוחות צורך התבואה, דכתיב יערוף כמטר לקחי וגו' (דברים לב ב). מי צרר מים בשמלה. מי שאינו מחלק מעשרותיו בחפניו אין תפלתו עולה לשמים ואינה מורידה למים, אלא צורר המים ואינן יורדות לארץ. מי הקים כל אפסי ארץ. כד"א יתן ה' את מטר ארצך אבק ועפר וגו' (דברים כח כד). מה שמו. זה אברהם שהפריש מעשר תחלה, שנאמר ויתן לו מעשר מכל (בראשית יד כ), והקנה לו הקב"ה שמים וארץ, [שמים לגשמים ורוחות, וארץ לפירות, שכן כתיב ויברכהו ויאמר ברוך אברם לאל עליון קונה שמים וארץ (שם שם בראשית י"ד יט)], ברכו שיקנה לו האלהים שמים, וארץ לזרעותיו. ומה שם בנו. זה יצחק שנתן מעשר ונתברך, שנאמר ויזרע יצחק בארץ ההיא וימצא בשנה ההיא מאה שערים ויברכהו ה' (שם בראשית כו יב), מלמד שמדדן לעשרן. כי תדע. וכן הזהיר הקב"ה את ישראל שאם יעשרו תבואתם יברכם, שנאמר עשר תעשר (דברים יד כב), עשר בשביל שתתעשר. ד"א מי עלה שמים וירד. זה משה, דכתיב ומשה עלה אל האלהים (שמות יט ג). וירד. שנאמר וירד משה מן ההר אל העם (שם שם שמות י"ט יד). מי אסף רוח בחפניו. שנאמר כצאתי את העיר אפרוש [את] כפי אל ה' (שם שמות ט כט). מי צרר מים בשמלה. שנאמר נצבו כמו נד נוזלים (שם שמות טו ח). מי הקים כל אפסי ארץ. זה אהל מועד שהוא שקול כנגד מעשה שמים וארץ, שנאמר אלה פקודי המשכן משכן העדות (שמות לח כא), נאמר כאן משכן העדות, ונאמר להלן בשמים ובארץ העידותי בכם היום את השמים ואת הארץ (דברים ד כו). ד"א מי אסף רוח בחפניו. זה אהרן, שנאמר ויאמר משה אל אהרן קח את המחטה ותן עליה אש וגו' (במדבר יז יא), וכתיב ויעמוד בין המתים ובין החיים (שם שם במדבר י"ז יג). מי הקים. זה אברהם אבינו. מה שמו. זהו שנאמר ה' שמו (שמות טו ג). ומה שם בנו. אלו ישראל, שנאמר בני בכורי ישראל (שם שמות ד כב). ד"א מי הקים כל אפסי ארץ. זה משה, שהקים אהל מועד, שהעולם הוקם עמו, (ויקם אין כתיב כאן אלא משכן) [להקים המשכן לא נאמר אלא להקים את המשכן], העולם הוקם עמו, שעד הוקם המשכן היה העולם רותת, ומשהוקם (נתבסס) העולם, לכך נאמר ויהי ביום כלות משה להקים את המשכן (במדבר ז א). ד"א מי עלה שמים. זה אליהו, שנא' ויעל אליהו בסערה (השמימה) [השמים] (מ"ב מלכים ב' ב יא). מי אסף רוח בחפניו. זה אליהו, דכתיב אם יהיה השנים האלה טל ומטר כי אם לפי דברי (מ"א מלכים א' יז א). מי צרר מים בשמלה. דכתיב ויקח אליהו את אדרתו (מ"ב מלכים ב' ב ח). מי הקים כל אפסי ארץ. ראי חי בנך (מ"א מלכים א' יז כג).

The rabbis say Moshe goes up and he goes down, he ascends to heaven and descends, etc. The concept of "ascending and descending" has Messianic overtones and speaks particularly on the one with "clean hands" and a "pure heart," one who has not taken a life without a cause, and one who has not deceived a neighbor. In addition to this, it is interesting, while reading *Romans 10:5-11*, the Apostle Paul speaks of the one who "ascends and descends." Studying Paul's letters after having studied the Midrashic literature, his letters take on a very midrashic flavor. Let's read *Romans 10:5-11*.

Romans 10:5-11

10:5 For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness. 10:6 But the righteousness based on faith speaks as follows: 'Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' (that is, to bring Christ down), 10:7 or 'Who will descend into the abyss?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).' 10:8 But what does it say? 'The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart' that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, 10:9 that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; 10:10 for

with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. 10:11 For the Scripture says, 'Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed.' (NASB)

⁵Μωϋσῆς γὰρ γράφει τὴν δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐκ [τοῦ] νόμου ὅτι ὁ ποιήσας αὐτὰ ἄνθρωπος ζήσεται ἐν αὐτοῖς. ⁶ἢ δὲ ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοσύνη οὕτως λέγει, Μὴ εἴπῃς ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου, Τίς ἀναβήσεται εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν; τοῦτ' ἔστιν Χριστὸν καταγαγεῖν: ⁷ἢ, Τίς καταβήσεται εἰς τὴν ἄβυσσον; τοῦτ' ἔστιν Χριστὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναγαγεῖν. ⁸ἀλλὰ τί λέγει; Ἐγγύς σου τὸ ῥῆμά ἐστιν, ἐν τῷ στόματί σου καὶ ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου: τοῦτ' ἔστιν τὸ ῥῆμα τῆς πίστεως ὃ κηρύσσομεν. ⁹ὅτι ἐὰν ὁμολογήσῃς ἐν τῷ στόματί σου κύριον Ἰησοῦν, καὶ πιστεύσῃς ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου ὅτι ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸν ἤγειρεν ἐκ νεκρῶν, σωθήσῃ: ¹⁰καρδίᾳ γὰρ πιστεύεται εἰς δικαιοσύνην, στόματι δὲ ὁμολογεῖται εἰς σωτηρίαν. ¹¹λέγει γὰρ ἡ γραφή, Πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ' αὐτῷ οὐ καταισχνθήσεται.

Note the connection here with Paul's statement to *Midrash Tehillim 24, Part 7, 8, and 9*. Paul speaks on "righteousness" and not our own righteousness but a righteousness that is given by faith. He says that if a man practices righteousness based on the Torah, he will live by that righteousness. Then he goes on to describe the righteousness that is by faith. He uses the "ascending and descending" language to explain the righteousness that is by faith. The Greek text literally states ἢ δὲ ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοσύνη οὕτως λέγει, Μὴ εἴπῃς ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου, Τίς ἀναβήσεται εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν; τοῦτ' ἔστιν Χριστὸν καταγαγεῖν: ἢ, Τίς καταβήσεται εἰς τὴν ἄβυσσον; τοῦτ' ἔστιν Χριστὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναγαγεῖν. "But of the believe righteousness thus he says, You should not say in your heart, who shall ascend unto heaven? that is to say Christ to lead down; or who shall go down into the abyss? that is to say, Christ from the dead to lead." Paul is saying here that our righteousness does not have the power to "ascend and descend," that is to lead the Messiah Yeshua in "ascending or descending" to or from heaven or even to or from the grave. Paul uses this "ascending and descending" rabbinic thought to illustrate a point, that the "Word of God" is powerful, it is near us, it is in our hearts, it is the Word of faith that is accredited to us just like God had credited Abraham according to His faith in the Lord and His promises. Paul goes on to say ⁹ὅτι ἐὰν ὁμολογήσῃς ἐν τῷ στόματί σου κύριον Ἰησοῦν, καὶ πιστεύσῃς ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου ὅτι ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸν ἤγειρεν ἐκ νεκρῶν, σωθήσῃ: ¹⁰καρδίᾳ γὰρ πιστεύεται εἰς δικαιοσύνην, στόματι δὲ ὁμολογεῖται εἰς σωτηρίαν. *10:9 that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; 10:10 for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. (NASB)* Note how this is a righteousness that is counted to each one of us. Each Midrash in Tehillim 24, Part 7, 8, and 9 concludes on "righteousness" and the rabbis say it is a "righteousness from God" (וּצְדִיקָה מֵאֱלֹהִים). Each of these men Abraham, Jacob, and Moshe believed in the Lord and He (God) counted it to them for righteousness. It is interesting that the theme of "ascending and descending" is linked to the righteousness of God and the purity of heart here in *Tehillim / Psalms 24*. Could this be the reason the Apostle Paul thought to use the "ascending and descending" theme to illustrate the righteousness of the Torah, living by righteousness, and being accredited with righteousness by faith in God, in the Messiah, and in His Word?

Midrash Tehillim 24, Part 11 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דִּבְרוּר הַמַּתְהִיל) saying "Who is this King of glory? (*Tehillim / Psalms 24:8*)." The "homiletic introduction" to the Midrash says "Rabbi Simon said, who is the one King who sets a portion of His own glory upon them that fear Him?" Notice how the rabbis say that the King of glory, the Lord God Almighty is the One who sets his glory upon those who fear Him. This is consistent with the Lord who credits righteousness to those who believe by faith in the Lord God and in His promises. The Concluding phrase of Midrash Tehillim 24, Part 11 says "When the camp set forward, a covering of sealskin was spread over all the vessels in the Tabernacle. But of the Ark of Testimony, it is written, And will spread over it a cloth all of blue (*Bamidbar / Numbers 4:6*). Why such a covering? So that the Ark of the Testimony would be set apart. Hence it is said That the King of glory may enter (*Tehillim / Psalms 24:9*)." The rabbis draw upon the imagery of the Tabernacle and the Ark of

the covenant, the Ark of the covenant is covered in blue so as to set apart the testimony of God. They say this is so that the King of glory may enter (*Tehillim / Psalms 24:9*). Midrash Tehillim 24, Part 12 expands on the covering of blue saying in the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) “*Another comment on Who is this King of glory?*” *The rabbis ask why “blue” is different from all other colors? They give examples saying: “blue has the appearance of the sea; the sea, the appearance of grass; grass, the appearance of heaven; heaven, the appearance of a rainbow; the appearance of a cloud on a rainy day; a cloud on a rainy day, the appearance of the throne of glory; and the throne of glory, the appearance of the glory of the Lord, for it is said As the appearance of the blow that is in the Lord, for it is said as the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about.”* They conclude saying that the color blue is the appearance of the likeness of the glory of God. The Lord gives a portion of His glory to those who fear him. The rabbis say this is the reason why Tzitzit are to be worn, it is the appearance of the likeness of the glory of God. A reminder of God’s Word, and of His glory, of His accrediting to us righteousness because of our faith. Can you see how the Apostle Paul reasoned how we are saved, by faith in Yeshua the Messiah? Sometimes the motivation for observing Torah comes from a selfish and self centered approach. A means to bring glory to ourselves that leads to pride and arrogance. The righteousness of the Torah was not meant to be practiced with that kind of attitude. It is meant to be a way of life as being the children of the Most High God. We are to live with clean hands and a clean heart. The way this is achieved is by truly relying upon the Lord God Almighty, His Messiah Yeshua, and His righteousness. This is an action that is performed in the heart, and keeps our hands clean and pure before the Lord. This does not negate the purpose of living righteously before the Lord, certainly our faith will bear much fruit. However, being accredited with the righteousness of Yeshua by faith is the point Paul was trying to make and the most important point we should be taking to heart. Let’s Pray!

Heavenly Father,

You are the King of glory! And Your word states that Yeshua the Messiah has shared in Your glory as the living Word of God. Forgive us of our sins Lord, we believe Yeshua the Messiah laid His life down on our behalf so that we may enter in through the gates of heaven. We thank you Lord for sending us Your Son Yeshua who paid the covenant price for the forgiveness of our sins. We believe that in Your Son Yeshua, we have the hope of eternal life. Help us to trust in You Lord as we wait patiently for You and Your presence each day. Help us to dedicated our lives to You each day, fill us with Your presence Lord and thank You for revealing these truths to our hearts. We praise Your Holy Name and give You all of the honor, and the glory, and the praise forever and ever.

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

Be Blessed in Yeshua, Christ our Messiah!

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

Notes

