

Tehillim / Psalms 29 | ספר תהילים כט

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Breaking the Cedars of Lebanon

This week's study is from *Tehillim / Psalms 29:1-11*, David opens saying **א** מְזִמֹּר לְדָוִד הָבוּ לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ כְּבוֹד וְעֹז: *A Psalm of David. 29:1 Ascribe to the Lord, O sons of the mighty, Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. (NASB)* What does it mean to “ascribe” to the Lord glory and strength? David answers this saying **ב** הָבוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ הַשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לַיהוָה בְּהַדְרַת-קִדְשׁ: *29:2 Ascribe to the Lord the glory due to His name; Worship the Lord in holy array. (NASB)* David provides examples of the glory of the Lord saying **ג** קוֹל יְהוָה עַל-הַמַּיִם אֵל-הַכְּבוֹד הִרְעִים יְהוָה עַל-מַיִם רַבִּים: *ד* קוֹל-יְהוָה בִּפְתַח קוֹל יְהוָה בְּהַדְרַת: *ה* קוֹל יְהוָה הִלְכִינוּ: *29:3 The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; The God of glory thunders, The Lord is over many waters. 29:4 The voice of the Lord is powerful, The voice of the Lord is majestic. 29:5 The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars; Yes, the Lord breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon. (NASB)* Many times we hear throughout the Scriptures of Lebanon and of the cedars of Lebanon. What is it about the cedars of Lebanon that is amazing that the Lord is able to break these cedars with His voice? David continues saying **ו** וַיִּרְקִידֵם כָּמוֹ-עֵגֶל לְבָנוֹן וְשָׂרִיִן כָּמוֹ בֶן-רְאֵמִים: *ז* קוֹל-יְהוָה חֲצַב לְהַבּוֹת אֲשׁ: *ח* קוֹל יְהוָה יַחֲלִי מְדָבָר יְהוָה יַחֲלִי מְדָבָר קִדְשׁ: *29:6 He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, And Sirion like a young wild ox. 29:7 The voice of the Lord hews out flames of fire. 29:8 The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; The Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh. (NASB)* What is the importance of the Lord causing Lebanon to skip like a calf and Sirion like a wild ox? According to David **ט** קוֹל יְהוָה | יְחֹלֵל אֵילֹת וַיִּחַשֵׁף יַעֲרוֹת וּבִהֲיַכְלוֹ פְּלוֹ: *29:9 The voice of the Lord makes the deer to calve And strips the forests bare; And in His temple everything says, ‘Glory!’ (NASB)* What is it about the voice of the Lord that goes forth into the world and helps the deer to calve and strips forest bare? David concludes his psalm saying **י** יְהוָה לְמַבּוּל יִשָּׁב וַיִּשָּׁב: *29:10 The Lord sat as King at the flood; Yes, the Lord sits as King forever. 29:11 The Lord will give strength to His people; The Lord will bless His people with peace. (NASB)* The Lord sits as King over all, He brought the flood to destroy the wicked and it is only by His mercy and grace that we do not see destruction. According to David, the Lord gives strength to His people and blesses his people with peace. How does He give strength to His people? When the Lord blesses His people with peace, is this an internal peace or simply an external form of peace?

| עברית | Hebrew | ארמי | Aramaic | ελληνικός | Greek |
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| א מְזִמֹּר לְדָוִד הָבוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד וְעֹז: ב הָבוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ הַשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לַיהוָה בְּהַדְרַת-קִדְשׁ: ג קוֹל יְהוָה עַל-הַמַּיִם אֵל-הַכְּבוֹד הִרְעִים יְהוָה עַל-מַיִם רַבִּים: ד קוֹל-יְהוָה בִּפְתַח קוֹל יְהוָה בְּהַדְרַת: ה קוֹל יְהוָה שָׁבַר אַרְזִים וַיִּשָּׁבַר יְהוָה אֶת-אַרְזֵי הַלְּבָנוֹן: | א מְזִמֹּר לְדָוִד הָבוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד וְעֹז: ב הָבוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד שְׁמוֹ הַשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לַיהוָה בְּהַדְרַת-קִדְשׁ: ג קוֹל יְהוָה עַל-הַמַּיִם אֵל-הַכְּבוֹד הִרְעִים יְהוָה עַל-מַיִם רַבִּים: ד קוֹל-יְהוָה בִּפְתַח קוֹל יְהוָה בְּהַדְרַת: ה קוֹל יְהוָה שָׁבַר אַרְזִים וַיִּשָּׁבַר יְהוָה אֶת-אַרְזֵי הַלְּבָנוֹן: | א תושבחתא לדוד הבו קדם יהוה תושבחתא כתי מלאכיא בני אלים הבון קדם יהוה איקר ועישונא: ב הבון קדם יהוה איקר שמיה סגידו סגודו קדם יהוה בשיבהורת קודשא: ג קלא דיהוה שמיע על מיא בת-קוף איקריתא בית שכינתא אכלי יהוה על מיין סגיעין: ד קלא דיהוה שמיע בחיי לא קלא דיהוה שמיע בשיבהורא: ה קלא דיהוה מתבר ארזיא ותבר מימרא דיהוה ית ארזי לבנון: | א תושבחתא לדוד הבו קדם יהוה תושבחתא כתי מלאכיא בני אלים הבון קדם יהוה איקר ועישונא: ב הבון קדם יהוה איקר שמיה סגידו סגודו קדם יהוה בשיבהורת קודשא: ג קלא דיהוה שמיע על מיא בת-קוף איקריתא בית שכינתא אכלי יהוה על מיין סגיעין: ד קלא דיהוה שמיע בחיי לא קלא דיהוה שמיע בשיבהורא: ה קלא דיהוה מתבר ארזיא ותבר מימרא דיהוה ית ארזי לבנון: | 29:1 ψαλμὸς τῷ δαυὶδ ἐξοδίου σκινηῆς ἐνέγκατε τῷ κυρίῳ υἱοὶ θεοῦ ἐνέγκατε τῷ κυρίῳ υἱοὺς κριῶν ἐνέγκατε τῷ κυρίῳ δόξαν καὶ τιμὴν 29:2 ἐνέγκατε τῷ κυρίῳ δόξαν ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ προσκυνήσατε τῷ κυρίῳ ἐν αὐλῇ ἁγία αὐτοῦ 29:3 φωνὴ κυρίου ἐπὶ τῶν ὑδάτων ὁ θεὸς τῆς δόξης ἐβρόντησεν κύριος ἐπὶ ὑδάτων πολλῶν 29:4 φωνὴ κυρίου ἐν ἰσχύι φωνὴ κυρίου ἐν μεγαλοπρεπείᾳ 29:5 φωνὴ κυρίου συντρίβοντος κέδρους καὶ συντρίψει κύριος τὰς κέδρους τοῦ λιβάνου | 29:1 ψαλμὸς τῷ δαυὶδ ἐξοδίου σκινηῆς ἐνέγκατε τῷ κυρίῳ υἱοὶ θεοῦ ἐνέγκατε τῷ κυρίῳ υἱοὺς κριῶν ἐνέγκατε τῷ κυρίῳ δόξαν καὶ τιμὴν 29:2 ἐνέγκατε τῷ κυρίῳ δόξαν ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ προσκυνήσατε τῷ κυρίῳ ἐν αὐλῇ ἁγία αὐτοῦ 29:3 φωνὴ κυρίου ἐπὶ τῶν ὑδάτων ὁ θεὸς τῆς δόξης ἐβρόντησεν κύριος ἐπὶ ὑδάτων πολλῶν 29:4 φωνὴ κυρίου ἐν ἰσχύι φωνὴ κυρίου ἐν μεγαλοπρεπείᾳ 29:5 φωνὴ κυρίου συντρίβοντος κέδρους καὶ συντρίψει κύριος τὰς κέδρους τοῦ λιβάνου |

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| <p>ו וַיִּרְקִידֵם כְּמוֹ-עֵגֶל לְכַנּוֹן וְשָׂרִיץ כְּמוֹ בֶן-רְאֵמִים: ז קוֹל-יְהוָה חֲצֹב לְהַבּוֹת אֵשׁ: ח קוֹל יְהוָה יַחֲיֵל מִדְּבַר יַחֲיֵל יְהוָה מִדְּבַר קֹדֶשׁ: ט קוֹל יְהוָה חוֹלֵל אֵילֹת וַיַּחֲשֶׁף יַעְרוֹת וּבְהִיכְלוֹ פָלוּ אֲמָר כְּבוֹד: י יְהוָה לְמַבּוּל יִשָּׁב וַיִּשָּׁב יְהוָה מִלְּאֵי לְעוֹלָם: יא יְהוָה עָז לְעַמּוֹ יְהוָה יְבָרֵךְ אֶת-עַמּוֹ בְּשָׁלוֹם:</p> | <p>ו ושוורינון היך עגלא לבנן וטור מסרי פרי היך בר ביר רמיא רימנין: ז קלא דיהוה מנסר שלהובין דינור: ח קלא דיהוה מרטט מדברא מרטט מימרא דיהוה מדברא חיווי די במדברא דרקם: ט קלא דיהוה מבטיין איילתא ומזליח חיוות חור- שא ובמוקדשיה ובהיכל בית מוקדשיה די עיל כולהון שמשוי אמרין איקר קדמוי: י יהוה בדר טופנא טובענא יתיב על כורסי דינא למיתפרע לאתפרעא מנהון ויתיב יהוה על כורסי רחמותא רחמין ושזיב ית נח ומלך על בנוי לעלמי עלמין: יא יהוה אוריתא לעמיה יהב יהוה יברך ית עמיה בשלם:</p> | <p>29:6 καὶ λεπτυνεῖ αὐτὰς ὡς τὸν μόσχον τὸν λίβανον καὶ ὁ ἡγαπημένος ὡς υἱὸς μονοκερώτων 29:7 φωνὴ κυρίου διακόπτοντος φλόγα πυρός 29:8 φωνὴ κυρίου συσσειόντος ἔρημον καὶ συσσειεῖ κύριος τὴν ἔρημον καθὼς 29:9 φωνὴ κυρίου καταρτιζομένου ἐλάφους καὶ ἀποκαλύψει δρυμούς καὶ ἐν τῷ ναῶ αὐτοῦ πᾶς τις λέγει δόξαν 29:10 κύριος τὸν κατακλυσμὸν κατοικεῖ καὶ καθίεται κύριος βασιλεὺς εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα 29:11 κύριος ἰσχύει τῷ λαῷ αὐτοῦ δώσει κύριος εὐλογίησιν τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν εἰρήνῃ</p> |
| <p>Tehillim / Psalms 29 A Psalm of David. 29:1 Ascribe to the Lord, O sons of the mighty, Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. 29:2 Ascribe to the Lord the glory due to His name; Worship the Lord in holy array. 29:3 The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; The God of glory thunders, The Lord is over many waters. 29:4 The voice of the Lord is powerful, The voice of the Lord is majestic. 29:5 The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars; Yes, the Lord breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon. 29:6 He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, And Sirion like a young wild ox. 29:7 The voice of the Lord hews out flames of fire. 29:8 The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; The Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh. 29:9 The voice of the Lord makes the deer to calve And strips the forests bare; And in His temple everything says, ‘Glory!’ 29:10 The Lord sat as King at the flood; Yes, the Lord sits as King forever. 29:11 The Lord will give strength to His people; The Lord will bless His people with peace. (NASB)</p> | <p>Toviyah / Psalms Chapter 29 29:1 A psalm of David. Give praise in the presence of the Lord, O bands of angels; give glory and might in the Lord’s presence. 29:2 Give the glory of his name in the presence of the Lord; bow down before the Lord in the splendor of holiness. 29:3 The voice of the Lord is heard above the waters; in his glorious might the Lord called out over many waters. 29:4 The voice of the Lord is heard in strength; the voice of the Lord is heard in splendor. 29:5 The voice of the Lord shatters cedars; the word of the Lord has shattered the cedars of Lebanon. 29:6 And he made them jump like a calf – Lebanon, and the Mount of Noisome Fruit, like the young of oxen. 29:7 The voice of the Lord splits flames of fire. 29:8 The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; the word of the Lord shakes the wilderness of Rekem. 29:9 The voice of the Lord impregnates the hinds, and makes the beasts of the forest give birth; and in his sanctuary above, all his servants say, “Glory,” in his presence. 29:10 In the generation of the Flood, the Lord sat on his throne of judgment to take vengeance on them; and the Lord sat on the throne of mercy and saved Noah; and he reigns over his children forever and ever. 29: 11 The Lord gave the Torah to his people; the Lord will bless his people in peace. (EMC)</p> | <p>Psalmoi / Psalms 29 A Psalm of David on the occasion of the solemn assembly of the Tabernacle. 29:1 Bring to the Lord, ye sons of God, bring to the Lord young rams; bring to the Lord glory and honour. 29:2 Bring to the Lord glory, due to his name; worship the lord in his holy court. 29:3 The voice of the Lord is upon the waters: the God of glory has thundered: the Lord is upon many waters. 29:4 The voice of the Lord is mighty; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty. 29:5 There is the voice of the Lord who breaks the cedars; the Lord will break the cedars of Libanus. 29:6 And he will beat them small, even Libanus itself, like a calf; and the beloved one is as a young unicorn. 29:7 There is a voice of the Lord who divides a flame of fire. 29:8 A voice of the Lord who shakes the wilderness; the Lord will shake the wilderness of Cades. 29:9 The voice of the Lord strengthens the hinds, and will uncover the thickets: and in his temple every one speaks of his glory. 29:10 The Lord will dwell on the waterflood: and the Lord will sit a king for ever. 29:11 The Lord will give strength to his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace. (LXX)</p> |

א מְזִמּוֹר לְיְהוָה הָבוּ לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד וְעֹז: א Psalm of David. 29:1 Ascribe to the Lord, O sons of the mighty, Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. (NASB) It is interesting that verses 1 and 2 both begin saying “Ascribe to the Lord” (הָבוּ לַיהוָה) and that *Brown Driver and Briggs Lexicon* does not list the definition for the work הָבוּ. *Sefer Milim, a Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Bavli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* by Marcus Jastrow on the other hand does list the word הָבוּ and states the meaning of this word is “to give.” David is saying

“give to the Lord” both glory and strength. Marcus Jastro references *Mishley / Proverbs 30:15* which says: *לְעֹלָהּ | שְׁתֵּי בָנוֹת הֵב הֵב שְׁלוֹשׁ הֵנָּה לֹא תִשְׂבַּעְנָה אַרְבַּע לֹא-אֶמְרוּ הוּן: 30:15 The leech has two daughters, ‘Give,’ ‘Give.’ There are three things that will not be satisfied, Four that will not say, ‘Enough’:(NASB)* In *Mishley / Proverbs 30:15* this word is translated as “give” supporting Marcus Jastro’s definition. Searching the Tanach for the word הָבוּ (Hovu), this word as it is spelled occurs three times in the torah.

הָבוּ in the Torah

Bereshit / Genesis 47:16 וַיֹּאמֶר יוֹסֵף הָבוּ מִקְנֵיכֶם וְאֶתְנֶנָּה לָכֶם בְּמִקְנֵיכֶם אִם-אָפֶס כֶּסֶף: 47:16 *Then Joseph said, ‘Give up your livestock, and I will give you food for your livestock, since your money is gone.’ (NASB)*

Devarim / Deuteronomy 1:13 יֵג הָבוּ לָכֶם אֲנָשִׁים חֲכָמִים וְנִבְנִים וַיִּדְעִים לְשִׁבְטֵיכֶם וְאֲשִׁימָם 1:13 *‘Choose wise and discerning and experienced men from your tribes, and I will appoint them as your heads.’ (NASB)*

Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:3 כִּי יֵשׁ יְהוָה אֶקְרָא הָבוּ גִדְל לְאֱלֹהֵינוּ: 32:3 *‘For I proclaim the name of the Lord; Ascribe greatness to our God! (NASB)*

It is interesting in the opening verses to Parashat Haazinu (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:1-32:52*) we find Moshe declaring the Glory of God saying: *כִּי יֵשׁ יְהוָה אֶקְרָא הָבוּ גִדְל לְאֱלֹהֵינוּ: 32:3 ‘For I proclaim the name of the Lord; Ascribe greatness to our God! (NASB)* Studying these verses from Parashat Haazinu, it is interesting to compare these verses from the Aramaic Targums (Onkelos and Pseudo Jonathan). Let’s compare the text from three translations of the first four verse from Parashat Haazinu.

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| <p>ספר דברים פרק לב</p> <p>א הֲאֲזִינוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֲדַבְּרָה וְתִשְׁמַע הָאָרֶץ אֶמְרֵי-פִי: ב יַעֲרֹף כַּמָּטָר לְקֹחֵי תִזְל כַּטֶּל אֶמְרֵי תִתִּי כַּשְּׁעִירִים עָלֵי-דְשָׁא וְכַרְבִּיבִים עָלֵי-עֵשֶׂב: ג כִּי יֵשׁ יְהוָה אֶקְרָא הָבוּ גִדְל לְאֱלֹהֵינוּ: ד הַצּוֹר תְּמִים פְּעֻלוֹ כִּי כָל-דְּרָכָיו מִשְׁפָּט אֵל אֱמוּנָה וְאִין עוֹל צְדִיק וְיֵשֶׁר הוּא:</p> | <p>Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:1-4</p> <p>32:1 ‘Give ear, O heavens, and let me speak; And let the earth hear the words of my mouth. 32:2 ‘Let my teaching drop as the rain, My speech distill as the dew, As the drop-lets on the fresh grass And as the showers on the herb. 32:3 ‘For I proclaim the name of the Lord; Ascribe greatness to our God! 32:4 ‘The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He.</p> |
| <p>תרגום אונקלוס ספר דברים פרק לב</p> <p>א אֲצִיתוּ שָׁמַיָא וְאֶמְלִל וְתִשְׁמַע אַרְעָא אֶמְרֵי פִי: ב בִּבְסָם כַּמָּטָרָא אֶלְפָנֵי תִקְבֵּל כַּטֶּלָא מִי מְרֵי כְרוּחֵי מְטָרָא דְנִשְׁבִּין עַל-דְתָאָה וְכַרְסִיסֵי מְלֻקוּשָׁא דִי-עַל-עֵשֶׂבָא: ג אֲרֵי בְשָׁמָא דִי אֲנָא מְצַלֵי הָבו רְבוּתָא קְדָם אֶלְהֵנָא: ד תִּקְיָא דְשָׁ-לְמִין עוֹבְדוּהֵי אֲרֵי כָל-אַרְחֻתֵיהּ דִּינָא אֶלְהָא מְהִימָנָא דְמוֹ-קְדָמוּהֵי עוֹלָה לָא נִפְקֵי דְמוֹ-קְדָם-זְכִי וְקִשִׁיט הוּא:</p> | <p>Targum Onkelos, Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:1-4</p> <p>LISTEN, ye heavens, and I will speak ; give ear, O earth, to the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall be soft as rain; let it be received as the dew, and my word be as the breath of the rain that breathes upon the grass, and as the showers of the latter rain upon the herbage. For in the Name of the Lord do I invoke: Ascribe ye greatness unto our God; the Mighty One whose works are perfect; for all His ways are justice; a faithful God from whom no iniquity proceedeth, just and true is He.</p> |

Targum Onkelos is very similar to the Masoretic text saying that we are to Ascribe greatness to the Lord our God and the reason is that His works are perfect, His ways are justice and truth. The Targum Pseudo Jona-

than on the other hand contains a significantly expanded text on the first four verses from Parashat Haazinu.

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| <p>תרגום פסאודו יונתן ספר דברים פרק לב א והוה די מטה קיציה דמשה נביא למתכנשא מיגו עלמא אמר בליביה ליתנא מסהיד בעמא הדין סהדין דטעמין מיתותא בעלמא הדין האנא מסהיד בהון סה- דין דלא טעמין מיתותא בעלמא הדין ברם סופיהון לאתחדתא לעלמא דאתי ישעיה נביא כד הוה מתנ- בי בכנישתהון דישראל יהב שמיעא לשמיא וצייתא לארעא מן בגלל דהוה קריב לארעא ורחיק מן שמיא ברם משה נביא כד הוה מתנבי בכנישתהון דישראל יהב שמיעא לארעא וצייתא לשמיא מן בגלל דהוה קריב לשמיא ורחיק מן ארעא דהכין כתיב אציתו שמיא ואימליל ותישמע ארעא ממלל פמי ב ינקוף על מרודיא היך מיטרא סחפא אולפני ותתקבל ברעוא על מקבלי אולפנא היך טלא ממללי דילי כרביעות רוחי מיטרא דמנתבין על דיתאין בירח מרחשוון וכ- רסיסין לקושין דמרווין צימחוני ארעא בירחא דניסן ג ווי להון לרשיעייא דמדכרין שמא קדישא בגידו- פין ארום משה דהוה רבהון דישראל לא הוה איפשר ליה למידכר ית שמא קדישא עד דהוה מחניך פומיה בריש שירתא בתמניין וחמשין אתין דהינן עשרין וחד מילין ומן ברת כדין אמר ארום בשמא דיי אנא מצלי ואתון עמא בית ישראל הבו איקר ורבותא קדם אלקנא ד אמר משה נביא כד סליקית לטוורא דסיני חמית רבון כל עלמא ייי מרבע יומא לארבעא חולקין תלת שעין עסיק באורייתא ותלת עסיק בדינא ותלת מברזג בין גבר לאיתא וגזר למרום ומאיך ותלת מפ- רנס כל ברייתא דהכין כתיב תקיף דשלמין עובדוי ארום כל אורחתוי דינא אלקא מהימנא דמן קדמוי עוולא לא נפיק דזכיי וקשיט הוא</p> | <p><i>And when the last end of Moshe the prophet was at hand, that he should be gathered from among the world, he said in his heart: I will not attest against this people with witnesses that taste of death in this world, behold, I attest against them with witnesses which do not taste of death in this world, and whose destination is to be renewed in the world to come. Isaiah the prophet, when he prophesied in the congregation of Israel, attributed hearing to the heavens, and attentiveness to the earth; because (in his case) earth was nearest and heaven more remote: but Moshe the prophet, when he now prophesied in the congregation of Israel, attributed hearing to the earth, and attentiveness to the heavens; because (in his case) heaven was nearest and earth more remote; for so it is written, Attend, ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall smite the rebellious like heavy rain; but shall be enjoyed with pleasantness by those who receive instruction, as the dew: my words shall be like the down-falling rain of the wind that breathes upon the grass in the month of Marchesvan, and as the droppings of the latter rain which water the springing herbage of the earth in Nisan. Woe to the wicked who make memorial of the Holy Name with blasphemies. Wherefore Moshe, who was the Doctor of Israel, would not permit himself to pronounce the Holy Name until he had dedicated his mouth at the beginning of his hymn with eighty and five letters, making twenty and one words, and afterwards be spake: In the Name of the Lord I invoke you, O house of Israel, to ascribe glory and greatness before our God. Moshe the prophet said: When I ascended the mountain of Sinai, I beheld the Lord of all the worlds, the Lord, dividing the day into four portions; three hours employed in the law, three with judgment, three in making marriage bonds between man and woman, and appointing to elevate or to abase, arid three hours in the care of every created thing: for so it is written: The Mighty One whose works are perfect, for all His ways are judgment, a faithful God before whom no iniquity comes forth, pure and upright is He.</i></p> |
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Notice how the rabbis go on to provide a rich description (interpretation) in Targum Pseudo Jonathan on the first four verses from Parashat Haazinu, the rabbis describe the reason why Moshe called upon “Heaven and Earth” to listen. They say that Moshe searched for a witness against these people who did not taste death in this world and is destined to be renewed in the world to come. Heaven and earth would become an everlasting witness against the wicked. They also say that “hearing” is attributed to the earth and “attentiveness” is attributed to the heavens. Moshe says that his words will strike at the heart of the wicked whereas the righteous will delight in his words. The rabbis also say that Moshe dedicated (sanctified) his mouth before pronouncing the Holy Name of God. Following these things, Moshe calls upon the people to “ascribe glory and greatness before our God.” What does it mean to “ascribe” or “to give” to the Lord glory and strength? Are not greatness and glory already a part of who God is? How do we ascribe glory and strength to the Lord God Almighty who is glorious and strong? The Aramaic Translation of the Psalms (*Targum Pseudo Jonathan*) states א תושבתא לדוד הבו קדם יהוה תושבתא כתי מלאכיא בני אלים הבון קדם יהוה איקר

Cedars of Lebanon mentioned in the Bible

- *“Open thy doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour thy cedars. Howl, fir tree; for the cedar is fallen; because the mighty are spoiled: howl, O ye oaks of Bashan; for the forest of the vintage is come down.” (Zechariah 11:1-2)*
- *“He moves his tail like a cedar; The sinews of his thighs are tightly knit.” (Job 40:17)*
- *“The priest shall take cedar wood and hyssop and scarlet material and cast it into the midst of the burning heifer.” (Bamidbar / Numbers 19:6)*
- *“The righteous man will flourish like the palm tree, He will grow like a cedar in Lebanon.” (Tehillim / Psalm 92:12)*
- *“I will put the cedar in the wilderness, The acacia and the myrtle and the olive tree; I will place the juniper in the desert Together with the box tree and the cypress.” (Isaiah 41: 19)*
- *“Behold, Assyria was a cedar in Lebanon With beautiful branches and forest shade, And very high, And its top was among the clouds.” (Ezekiel 31:3)*
- *“Yet it was I who destroyed the Amorite before them, Though his height was like the height of cedars And he was strong as the oaks; I even destroyed his fruit above and his root below.” (Amos 2:9)*
- *“For the Lord of hosts will have a day of reckoning Against everyone who is proud and lofty And against everyone who is lifted up, That he may be abased. And it will be against all the cedars of Lebanon that are lofty and lifted up, Against all the oaks of Bashan, Against all the lofty mountains, Against all the hills that are lifted up,” (Isaiah 2:12-14)*
- *“The king made silver as common as stones in Jerusalem, and he made cedars as plentiful as sycamore trees that are in the lowland.” (1 Kings 10:27)*

The cedars of Lebanon are commonly referred to in Scripture. Cedar wood is an aromatic, durable wood and was highly desirable for building in Israel. David used it in building his palace (2 Samuel 5:11 and 1 Chronicles 17:1), and Solomon used it in the construction of the temple and a palace for himself (2 Chronicles 2:3-8). Solomon was said to have made the cedar as plentiful in Jerusalem as the sycamore-fig trees in the Shephelah (2 Chronicles 1:15). In addition to this, the second temple was also constructed from cedars (Ezra 3:7). According to the Scriptures, the cedars of Lebanon were a prized wood, it was special enough for the construction of the holy Temple of God. The Palermo Stone, a large fragment of a pillar known as the Royal Annals of the Old Kingdom of Ancient Egypt, contains records of the kings of Egypt from the first dynasty through the fifth dynasty. The Palermo Stone indicates that cedar was imported to Egypt in the reign of the 4th dynasty during king Sneferu's reign, (2613-2589 BCE). One of the primary uses of cedar was for boat construction (*el-Awady, T. 2009. Sahure – the pyramid causeway: History and decoration program in the Old Kingdom. Czech Institute of Egyptology; Abusir 16. Prague.*). The Egyptian tale of Wen-Amun, from the 11th century BCE, recounts the travels of an Egyptian official to Byblos to negotiate for cedar wood. One of the earliest references to cedar in Mesopotamia comes from the reign of Sargon of Akkad (2334-2279 BCE). It is interesting to note the context of Solomon acquiring the cedars of Lebanon in 1 Kings 10.

1 Kings 10:26-28

10:26 Now Solomon gathered chariots and horsemen; and he had 1, 400 chariots and 12, 000 horsemen, and he stationed them in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem.

10:27 The king made silver as common as stones in Jerusalem, and he made cedars as plentiful as sycamore trees that are in the lowland. 10:28 Also Solomon's import of horses was from Egypt and Kue, and the king's merchants procured them from Kue for a price. (NASB)

Here Solomon was acquiring chariots, horsemen, cities, silver, cedars, and he was importing horses from Egypt, etc. What is the significance of these things? Chariots and boats may be used for war. These are the strength of nations. The short survey of the Scriptures on “cedars” suggest that cedars are a reference to the power and strength of Behemoth (*Job 40 :15-17*) and to the pride of Assyria and Lebanon. David words: *קול יהוה שִׁבַּר אֲרָזִים וַיִּשְׁבַּר יְהוָה אֶת-אֲרָזֵי הַלְבָנוֹן: 29:5 The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars; Yes, the Lord breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon. (NASB)* suggests that it is the Lord who tears down strongholds and removes the pride and strength of the nations. “The cedars of Lebanon” appear to take on a symbolism of the nations and their strength and pride.

David continues saying: *וַיִּרְקִידֵם כְּמוֹ-עֵגֶל לְבָנוֹן וּשְׂרִיִן כְּמוֹ בֶן-רְאֵמִים: ז קול-יְהוָה הִצִּיב לְהַבֹּת אֲשׁ: 29:6 He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, And Sirion like a young wild ox. 29:7 The voice of the Lord hews out flames of fire. 29:8 The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; The Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh. (NASB)* What is the importance of the Lord causing Lebanon to skip like a calf and Sirion like a wild ox?

Sirion is another name for Mount Hermon. Note also that Lebanon is north of Israel. “Mount Hermon” is a mountain cluster in the Eastern Lebanon mountain range. Its summit straddles the border between Syria and Lebanon (9,232 ft above sea level) and is the highest point in Syria. The southern slopes of Mount Hermon extend to the Israeli portion of the Golan Heights. David's comment making Lebanon skip like calves and Sirion like a wild ox, he is obviously speaking of the mountains of Lebanon in the context of the Psalm. The power of the Word of God, the voice of the Lord is capable of causing the mountains to jump around. Could he be referring to earthquakes or volcanoes? These comments regarding the mountains of Lebanon speak of the strength of God and seem to parallel Parashat Haazinu and Bereshit as discussed earlier. The Lord has the power to deliver us and even to cast down mountains. David also says that “The voice of the Lord hews out flames of fire” (*ז קול-יְהוָה הִצִּיב לְהַבֹּת אֲשׁ*). There are many references throughout the Scriptures that speak of the Lord and the use of fire and/or flame. Parashat Chukat (*Bamidbar / Numbers 19:1-22:1*) speaks of Israel's destruction of Heshbon during their wilderness journey.



Lebanon to skip like a calf and Sirion like a wild ox? Sirion is another name for Mount Hermon. Note also that Lebanon is north of Israel. “Mount Hermon” is a mountain cluster in the Eastern Lebanon mountain range. Its summit straddles the border between Syria and Lebanon (9,232 ft above sea level) and is the highest point in Syria. The southern slopes of Mount Hermon extend to the Israeli portion of the Golan Heights. David's comment making Lebanon skip like calves and Sirion like a wild ox, he is obviously speaking of the mountains of Lebanon in the context of the Psalm. The power of the Word of God, the voice of the Lord is capable of causing the mountains to jump around. Could he be referring to earthquakes or volcanoes? These comments regarding the mountains of Lebanon speak of the strength of God and seem to parallel Parashat Haazinu and Bereshit as discussed earlier. The Lord has the power to deliver us and even to cast down mountains. David also says that “The voice of the Lord hews out flames of fire” (*ז קול-יְהוָה הִצִּיב לְהַבֹּת אֲשׁ*). There are many references throughout the Scriptures that speak of the Lord and the use of fire and/or flame. Parashat Chukat (*Bamidbar / Numbers 19:1-22:1*) speaks of Israel's destruction of Heshbon during their wilderness journey.

Bamidbar / Numbers 21:26-31

21:26 For Heshbon was the city of Sihon, king of the Amorites, who had fought against the former king of Moab and had taken all his land out of his hand, as far as the Arnon. 21:27 Therefore those who use proverbs say, ‘Come to Heshbon! Let it be built! So let the city of Sihon be established. 21:28 ‘For a fire went forth from Heshbon, A flame from the town of Sihon; It devoured Ar of Moab, The dominant heights of the Arnon. 21:29 ‘Woe to you, O Moab! You are ruined, O people of Chemosh! He has given his sons as fugitives, And his

daughters into captivity, To an Amorite king, Sihon. 21:30 'But we have cast them down, Heshbon is ruined as far as Dibon, Then we have laid waste even to Nophah, Which reaches to Medeba.' 21:31 Thus Israel lived in the land of the Amorites. (NASB)

כו כי חֲשַׁבּוֹן עִיר סִיחֹן מִלֶּדֶת הָאֱמֹרִי הוּא וְהוּא נִלְחַם בְּמִלְחָה מוֹאָב הִרְאִישׁוֹן וַיִּקַּח אֶת-כָּל-אֲרָצוֹ מִיַּד עַד-אֲרֹנָן: כז עַל-כֵּן יֹאמְרוּ הַמַּשְׁלִים בְּאוֹ חֲשַׁבּוֹן תִּבְּנֶה וְתִכּוֹנֵן עִיר סִיחֹן: כח כִּי-אֵשׁ יִצְאָה מִחֶד-שָׁבוֹן לְהִבָּה מִקְרִית סִיחֹן אֶכְלָה עַר מוֹאָב בְּעֵלֵי בְמוֹת אֲרֹנָן: כט אוֹי-לָהּ מוֹאָב אֶבְדָּתָ עִם-כְּמוֹשׁ נָתַן בְּנָיו פְּלִיטָם וּבְנֵתָיו בְּשֹׁבֵית לְמִלְחָה אֱמֹרִי סִיחֹן: ל וַיִּרְם אֶבֶד חֲשַׁבּוֹן עַד-דִּיבֹן וַנָּשִׂים עַד-נַפְחָ אֲשֶׁר עַד-מִיַּדְכָּא: לא וַיֵּשֶׁב יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאֶרֶץ הָאֱמֹרִי:

The Scriptures say that a fire went forth from Heshbon and a flame from the town of Sihon which devoured Ar of Moab the heights of the Arnon. The Arnon is the southern boundary of the territory of Israel beyond Jordan, that separates Israel from the land of Moab (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 3:8, 3:16*). This river (*referred to twenty-four times in the Bible*) rises in the mountains of Gilead, and falls into the Dead Sea. It is interesting how Parashat Chukat speaks of the destruction of these high places which are known as strongholds, the places of power of the nations and of their gods. There also may be a spiritual connection with regard to the high places being the places of worship to the gods of the nations. Parashat Shemot (*Shemot / Exodus 1:1-6:1*) speaks of the Lord appearing in a blazing flame in *Shemot / Exodus 3:2* וַיֵּרָא מִלְּאֲפִי יְהוָה אֵלָיו 3:2 *The angel of the Lord appeared to him in a blazing fire from the midst of a bush; and he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, yet the bush was not consumed. (NASB)* The Lord can divide the flame, David said that the voice of the Lord hews out flames of fire literally saying הִצַּבּ the Lord “carves out” flames of fire. The Lord uses these things for his purposes to burn away the dross or the chaff to make us into the image that He chooses. Not only does the voice of the Lord carve out flames of fire, David says 29:8 *The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; The Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh. (NASB)* (ח קול יהוה יחיל מדבר יחיל יהוה מדבר קדש:) “Kadesh” (קדש) that David is speaking of is not “Kadesh-barnea” (*Joshua 15:23*) the place the children of Israel went to while in the wilderness; it is “Kadesh-Naphtali” (*Judges 4:6*) which is located near Lebanon, indicated by the mountains of Lebanon that are spoken of in *Tehillim / Psalms 29:6*. The word קדש “Kadesh” comes from the root word Kadosh meaning sanctified, holy, separate, to be devoted or dedicated. The wilderness and Kadesh are placed in parallel in this verse. From the name “holy” (קדש “Kadesh”) this place may have been an ancient sanctuary. This is indicated by the decision for the city to be one of the cities of refuge, a place of peace and protection (*Joshua 20:1-9*). Kedesh in Galilee in Mount Naphtal was given to the children of Naphtali and assigned to the Gershonite Levites. (*Joshua 21:32*). It was the home of Barak, and here his host assembled. When the Assyrians invaded the land under Tiglath-pileser, it was among the first cities to be captured, and its inhabitants were deported (*2 Kings 15:29*). Near Kedesh was also fought the great battle between Jonathan the Maccabee and Demetrius (*1 Maccabees 11:63*).

According to David 29:9 *The voice of the Lord makes the deer to calve And strips the forests bare; And in His temple everything says, 'Glory!' (NASB)* It is interesting that the voice of the Lord also causes the deer to calve and strips the forest bare. It seems that the voice of the Lord does everything, from the gentle care of helping a deer to calve to destroying the forests (*the pride of the nations*), like that of Lebanon which represented power, covetousness, and pride. In addition to that, the voice of the Lord says “Glory!” in His Temple. What is it about the voice of the Lord that goes forth into the world and helps the deer to calve and strips forest bare? In Parashat Vayetze (*Bereshit / Genesis 28:10-32:2*) Jacob made a vow in *Bereshit / Genesis 28:20-21* saying “If God will be with me and watch over me on this journey I am taking and will give me food to eat and cloths to wear so that I return safely to my father’s house, then the Lord will be my God;” (כ וַיִּדַר יַעֲקֹב נֶדֶר לְאֹמֵר) אם-יהוה אלהים עמדי ושמרני בדרך הנה אשר אנכי הולך ונמתן-לי לחם לאכל ובגד ללבוש: כא ושבתי בשלום

(אֶל-בַּיִת אָבִי וְהָיָה יְהוָה לִי לֵאלֹהִים: whereas, the Targum Onkelos we read “*If the Word of the Lord will be with me ... then the Word of the Lord will be my God*” (כּ וְקַיִים יַעֲקֹב קָיָם לְמִמְרָא אִם יְהִי מִמְרָא דִּי בְּסַעֲדִי) וְיִטְרִינְנִי בְּאַרְחָא הָדָא דִּי אָנָּא אֶזְיִל וְיִתֵּן לִי לְחַמָּא לְמִיכַל וְכִסּוּ לְמַלְבָּשׁ: כּא וְאִיתּוּב בְּשָׁלֵם לְבַיִת אָבָּא וְיְהִי מִמְרָא דִּי (לִי לֵאלֹהֵא: According to the Aramaic translation, the Word of the Lord will be Jacob’s God. The rabbinic interpretation (translation) of the nature of the Word as equal to the Lord God Almighty is fascinating. Is this what David was thinking when he made His comments regarding the voice of the Lord? The voice of the Lord is powerful, majestic, breaks the cedars of Lebanon, makes the mountains skip like calves, carves out flames of fire, shakes the wilderness and Kadesh, helps to calve the deer, strips forests bare, and says “*Glory!*” in His Temple. Studying the Torah from the Targum Onkelos, Jacob believes the Lord’s Memra (מִמְרָה, Word) will be his God, the Lord God says I will save Israel through My Memra (מִמְרָה, Word), Abraham was justified through the Memra (מִמְרָה, Word) of God, the Memra (מִמְרָה, Word) gave Israel the Torah, Moshe prayed to the Memra (מִמְרָה, Word), the Memra (מִמְרָה, Word) spoke from the burning bush, and the Memra (מִמְרָה, Word) of the Lord created the World, it is no far stretch to understand how David sees the voice of God in light of the rabbinic understanding on the Word of the Lord according to the Aramaic translations. The Word of the Lord, the voice of God is not simply a element of speech or writing. According to early traditions (i.e. Targum Neofiti) man was created in the image of the Memra (מִמְרָה, Word) of the Lord (*Bereshit / Genesis 1:27*, וּבְרָא מִמְרָה דִּי יֵת בַּר נִשְׂא בְדַמּוּתֵיהּ בְּדַמּוּ מִן קִדְמָא יֵי בְרָה יֵתִיָּהּ, דְּכַר וְזוּגִיָּהּ בְּרָא יֵתֵהוּן). The Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, a Targum printed in the Rabbinic bibles on *Devarim / Deuteronomy 4:7* in the Masoretic Text reads “*What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the Lord our God is near us whenever we pray to him?*” Whereas, the Aramaic Targum states “*The Memra of Lord God sits upon His throne high and lifted up ...*” The concept of “*the Word*” obtained from the Aramaic translations of the Torah reveals profound truths that open up our understanding on David’s words in *Tehillim / Psalms 29*.

י יְהוָה לְמַבּוּל יִשָּׁב וְיִשָּׁב יְהוָה מְלֹךְ לְעוֹלָם: יָא יְהוָה עֹז לְעַמּוֹ יִתֵּן יְהוָה | 29:10 *The Lord sat as King at the flood; Yes, the Lord sits as King forever. 29:11 The Lord will give strength to His people; The Lord will bless His people with peace. (NASB)* The Lord sits as King over all, He brought the flood to destroy the wicked and it is only by His mercy and grace that we do not see destruction today. According to David, the Lord gives strength to His people and blesses his people with peace. How does He give strength to His people? The Apostle John told us that it was the divine Word of God that had come down to dwell among us. It is through the Word that we can know God personally. In the Apostolic Writings, *Matthew 24:35, Mark 8:38, 13:31, Luke 6:47, 9:26, 21:33, 24:44, John 5:47, 14:24, and 15:7*, Yeshua says “*my words*” in these verses. Yeshua, He is the living Word of God, He is the creative work of God, the agent by which God created the world and even more importantly the agent through whom we are saved and redeemed from the curse of sin. David says that the Lord sits as King forever. The Apostolic Writings explain to us that Yeshua is the one through whom the world was created and in whom all things consist (*Colossians 1:12-29*). Examining the Aramaic Targums, the theology of the Memra (מִמְרָה, Word) of God who created all things and the voice of God that is powerful, majestic, breaks the cedars of Lebanon, makes the mountains skip like calves, carves out flames of fire, shakes the wilderness and Kadesh, helps to calve the deer, strips forests bare, and says “*Glory!*” in His Temple. Can you see the Power that is in the Name of Yeshua the living Word of God? Studying *Tehillim / Psalms 29* reveals the power in the Name. The Hebrew and Aramaic texts provide evidence that by God’s Word, He truly has spoken to us in these last days by His Son, Yeshua the Messiah. The Lord has provided atonement in Yeshua according to His Word. The significance of what we have studied today is that there is power in the name to receive the forgiveness of sins. In order to be forgiven of our sins, we must believe in the one God had sent to save us from our sins, at the name of Yeshua every knee will bow (powerful, majestic), nobody will be able to stand before Him in their pride or by their own power (He breaks the cedars of Lebanon, makes the mountains skip like calves, carves out flames of fire, shakes the wilderness and Kadesh, helps to calve the deer, strips

forests bare). So David says: מְזִמֹּר לְדָוִד הָבֹהַן לַיהוָה בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים הָבֹהַן לַיהוָה כְּבוֹד וְעֹז: *A Psalm of David. 29:1 Ascribe to the Lord, O sons of the mighty, Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. (NASB)*, Let's give glory and honor and praise to the Lord God Almighty, the Lord has given strength to His people in His Son, the living Word! Halelluia! Let's Pray.

Heavenly Father,

David says “Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength!” We proclaim to You ... Glory ... and Strength! We pray in faith believing and thanking You for leading us into all truth. We thank you for your mercy and grace Lord. According to the Scriptures You would make known Your ways, Your truth, and the path in which You want us to walk in as Sons of Righteousness and we thank you for calling us and drawing us near to You. We Thank You Lord for giving us Your Word, teaching us Your ways, and revealing these truths to us today. Have mercy Lord and save us from our sins in Yeshua’s name. Thank You for sending Your son Yeshua the Messiah who laid His life down on our behalf so that we may enter into Your salvation. Thank You Lord for paying the covenant price for the forgiveness of our sins. We believe that Your Word directs us to Your Son Yeshua, and that in Him 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