

ספר תהילים לו | Tehillim / Psalms 36

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Seeking God with Faith and Confidence

This week's study is from *Tehillim / Psalms 36:1-12*, can be divided into two major sections, part one describes the wicked and part 2 describes the character of God and the righteous who seek the Lord. The opening verses state: *For the choir director. A Psalm of David the servant of the Lord. 36:1 Transgression speaks to the ungodly within his heart; There is no fear of God before his eyes. (NASB)* According to David, transgression (פֶשַׁע) speaks to the heart of the ungodly that results in the ungodly not having the fear of God. Transgression continues to speak saying: *36:2 For it flatters him in his own eyes Concerning the discovery of his iniquity and the hatred of it. 36:3 The words of his mouth are wickedness and deceit; He has ceased to be wise and to do good. (NASB)* Notice how the ungodly, when their sin is found out, he does not find shame but is flattered. His response is more ungodliness and deceit. David says this kind of person: *36:4 He plans wickedness upon his bed; He sets himself on a path that is not good; He does not despise evil. (NASB)* The wicked have sin constantly upon their minds to do evil and not good. Having described the ungodly, David says: *36:5 Your lovingkindness, O Lord, extends to the heavens, Your faithfulness reaches to the skies. 36:6 Your righteousness is like the mountains of God; Your judgments are like a great deep. O Lord, You preserve man and beast. (NASB)* The Lord's grace extends to the heavens and David describes the grace of God saying: *36:7 How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God! And the children of men take refuge in the shadow of Your wings. 36:8 They drink their fill of the abundance of Your house; And You give them to drink of the river of Your delights. 36:9 For with You is the fountain of life; In Your light we see light. (NASB)* David concludes his Psalm saying: *36:10 O continue Your lovingkindness to those who know You, And Your righteousness to the upright in heart. 36:11 Let not the foot of pride come upon me, And let not the hand of the wicked drive me away. 36:12 There the doers of iniquity have fallen; They have been thrust down and cannot rise. (NASB)* In this Psalm, David singles out pride as the sin of the ungodly who do not fear the Lord.

עברית Hebrew	ארמי Aramaic	ελληνικός Greek
<p>ספר תהלים פרק לו</p> <p>א לַמְנַצֵּחַ לְעֶבֶד-יְהוָה לְדָוִד: ב נְאֻם-פֶשַׁע לְרָשָׁע בְּקֶרֶב לִבִּי אִין-פִּתְחַד אֱלֹהִים לִנְגַד עֵינָיו: ג כִּי-הִחְלִיק אֱלֹיו בְּעֵינָיו לְמַצָּא עֲוֹנוֹ לְשֹׂנְאֵ: ד דְּבַר־יְפִיו אָנוּן וּמְרָמָה חֲדַל לְהַשְׁפִּיל לְהִיטִיב: ה יְהוּיִן הֵיךְ מוֹזָא קַדָּם זַעֲפָא וּמְלַאכָא דִיהוּה דְחִי:</p>	<p>ספר טוביה פרק לו</p> <p>א לשבחא לעבדא דיהוה לדוד: ב אמר מרדא לחייבא במציעות לבבי לית דחלתא דיהוה לקביל עינוי: ג ארום שעיע ליה בעינוי למשכח חובין למיסני אולפנא: ד מילי פומיה רישעא ונכילו פסק למשכל לאוטבא: ה רישעא חשיל חשיב על שיוויה יתעתד על אורח דלא טב ביש לא ירחק:</p>	<p>ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 36</p> <p>36:1 εἰς τὸ τέλος τῷ δούλῳ κυρίου τῷ δαυὶδ (2) φησὶν ὁ παράνομος τοῦ ἀμαρτάνειν ἐν ἑαυτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν φόβος θεοῦ ἀπέναντι τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν αὐτοῦ 36:2 ὅτι ἐδόλωσεν ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ τοῦ εὐρεῖν τὴν ἀνομίαν αὐτοῦ καὶ μισῆσαι 36:3 τὰ ῥήματα τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ ἀνομία καὶ δόλος οὐκ ἔβουλήθη συνιέναι τοῦ ἀγαθῶν 36:4 ἀνομίαν διελογίσαστο ἐπὶ τῆς κοίτης αὐτοῦ παρέστη πάση ὀδῷ οὐκ ἀγαθῇ τῇ δὲ κακίᾳ οὐ προσώχθισεν</p>

ה אָוֶן | יִחַשְׁבַּע עַל-מִשְׁכָּבוֹ? תִּצְיָב עַל-
 דְּרָךְ לֹא-טוֹב רָע לֹא יִמָּאָס׃ ו יִהְיֶה
 בְּהַשְׁמִים תְּסַדֵּךְ אֲמוֹנָתְךָ עַד-שְׁחֻקִים׃ ז
 צְדָקָתְךָ | כְּהַרְרֵי-אֵל מִשְׁפָּטָה תַּהוֹם רַבָּה
 אָדָם וּבְהִמָּה תוֹשִׁיעַ יְהוָה׃ ח מֵה-יִקָּר
 חֻקְךָ אֱלֹהִים וּבְנֵי אָדָם בְּצַל כְּנָפֶיךָ יִחַ-
 סִיּוֹן׃ ט יְרַוְּנוּ מִדְּשֹׁן בֵּיתְךָ וְנַחַל עֲדִינִי
 תִּשְׁקֵם׃ י כִּי-עָמְדָה מְקוֹר חַיִּים בְּאֹרֶךְ
 נְרָאָה-אוֹר׃ יא מִשֶׁךְ חֻקְךָ לִידְעִי
 וְצִדְקָתְךָ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל׃ יב אֶל-תְּבוֹאֲנֵי
 רַגְלִי גִּאָוָה וְיַד-רַשְׁעִים אֶל-תִּגְדְּנִי׃ יג
 שָׁם נָפְלוּ פְעֻלֵי אָוֶן דָּחוּ וְלֹא-יָקְלוּ קוֹמֵם׃

Tehillim / Psalms 36

For the choir director. A Psalm of David the servant of the Lord. 36:1 Transgression speaks to the ungodly within his heart; There is no fear of God before his eyes. 36:2 For it flatters him in his own eyes Concerning the discovery of his iniquity and the hatred of it. 36:3 The words of his mouth are wickedness and deceit; He has ceased to be wise and to do good. 36:4 He plans wickedness upon his bed; He sets himself on a path that is not good; He does not despise evil. 36:5 Your lovingkindness, O Lord, extends to the heavens, Your faithfulness reaches to the skies. 36:6 Your righteousness is like the mountains of God; Your judgments are like a great deep. O Lord, You preserve man and beast. 36:7 How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God! And the children of men take refuge in the shadow of Your wings. 36:8 They drink their fill of the abundance of Your house; And You give them to drink of the river of Your delights. 36:9 For with You is the fountain of life; In Your light we see light. 36:10 O continue Your lovingkindness to those who know You, And Your righteousness to the upright in heart. 36:11 Let not the foot of pride come upon me, And let not the hand of the wicked drive me away. 36:12 There the doers of iniquity have fallen; They have been thrust down and cannot rise. (NASB)

ו יהוה בשמי שמיא טובך הימנותך עד
 שחקי׃ ז צדקתך אלהא רמא היך טוריאי
 תקיפאי דינך עמיקין היך תהומא רבא בני
 נשא ובעירא תפרוק יהוה׃ ח כמה יקר
 יקיר טובך יהוה ובני נשא בטלל שכינתך
 ישׁוֹרוֹן לרוחצן׃ ט יתרוויון מדהן בר-
 כתא דביתך ומבוע בסימותך תשקינן׃ י
 ארום עמך טיפי טופי מיין חיון בזיו בדיל
 נהור יקרך נחמי נהורא אורה׃ יא נגוד
 טובך על ידעך וצדקתך על תריצי ליבא׃
 יב לא תאירעינני ריגלא דגיוותנא וידיהון
 דרשיעיא לא תטלטלנני תטלטל יתי׃ יג
 תמן נפלו עבדי שקר ידחיון ולא יוספוֹן
 למיקם׃

Toviyah / Psalms Chapter 36

36:1 For praise. Of the servant of the Lord, David. 36:2 Rebellion said to the sinner within my heart, "There is no fear of the Lord before his eyes." 36:3 Because he flatters him with his eyes to find sins, to hate instruction. 36:4 The words of his mouth are wickedness and deceit; he has ceased to be wise in doing good. 36:5 Wickedness plots on his bed; he will take his stand in a way not good; he will not reject evil. 36:6 O Lord, your goodness is in the heaven of heavens, your faithfulness reaches to the skies. 36:7 Your righteousness is as high as the great mountains; your judgments are as deep as the great abyss; you will redeem both the sons of men and beasts, O Lord. 36:8 How precious is your goodness, O Lord; and the sons of men will dwell securely in the shadow of your presence. 36:9 They will drink deeply of the plenteous blessings of your house; and you will let them drink of your pleasant fountain. 36:10 For with you are streams of living water; in the splendor of your glory we will see light. 36:11 Extend your goodness over those who know you; and your generosity over the upright of heart. 36:12 May the foot of the proud not reach me; and may the hands of the wicked not make me wander. 36:13 There fell those who commit falsehood; they will be struck down, and will not rise again. (EMC)

36:5 κύριε ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ τὸ ἔλεός σου καὶ ἡ ἀλήθειά σου ἕως τῶν νεφελῶν 36:6 ἡ δικαιοσύνη σου ὡσεὶ ὄρη θεοῦ τὰ κρίματά σου ἄβυσσος πολλῆ ἀνθρώπους καὶ κτήνη σώσεις κύριε 36:7 ὡς ἐπλήθυνας τὸ ἔλεός σου ὁ θεός οἱ δὲ υἱοὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐν σκέπη τῶν πτερύγων σου ἐλπιοῦσιν 36:8 μεθυσθήσονται ἀπὸ πλότητος τοῦ οἴκου σου καὶ τὸν χειμάρρουν τῆς τρυφῆς σου ποτιεῖς αὐτούς 36:9 ὅτι παρὰ σοὶ πηγὴ ζωῆς ἐν τῷ φωτί σου ὀψόμεθα φῶς 36:10 παράτεινον τὸ ἔλεός σου τοῖς γινώσκουσίν σε καὶ τὴν δικαιοσύνην σου τοῖς εὐθέσι τῇ καρδίᾳ 36:11 μὴ ἐλθέτω μοι πούς ὑπερηφανίας καὶ χεῖρ ἁμαρτωλῶν μὴ σαλεύσαι με 36:12 ἐκεῖ ἔπεσον οἱ ἐργαζόμενοι τὴν ἀνομίαν ἐξώσθησαν καὶ οὐ μὴ δύνωνται στήναι

Psalmoi / Psalms 36

For the end, by David the servant of the Lord. 36:1 The transgressor, that he may sin, says within himself, that there is no fear of God before his eyes. 36:2 For he has dealt craftily before him, to discover his iniquity and hate it. 36:3 The words of his mouth are transgression and deceit: he is not inclined to understand how to do good. 36:4 He devises iniquity on his bed; he gives himself to every evil way; and does not abhor evil. 36:5 O Lord, thy mercy is in the heaven; and thy truth reaches to the clouds. 36:6 Thy righteousness is as the mountains of God, thy judgments are as a great deep: O Lord, thou wilt preserve men and beasts. 36:7 How hast thou multiplied thy mercy, O God! so the children of men shall trust in the shelter of thy wings. 36:8 They shall be fully satisfied with the fatness of thine house; and thou shalt cause them to drink of the full stream of thy delights. 36:9 For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light we shall see light. 36:10 Extend thy mercy to them that know thee; and thy righteousness to the upright in heart. 36:11 Let not the foot of pride come against me, and let not the hand of sinners move me. 36:12 There have all the workers of iniquity fallen: they are cast out, and shall not be able to stand. (LXX)

In this week's study from *Tehillim / Psalms 36:1-12*, David opens by describing the ungodly, the wicked man, and sin saying, אֶל-תִּצְיָב לְעַבְד־יְהוָה לְיָוֹד׃ ב נְאֻם-פֶּשַׁע לְרָשָׁע בְּקִרְבֵּי לְבִי אִין-פָּחַד אֱלֹהִים לְנַגֵּד, *For the choir director. A Psalm of David the servant of the Lord. 36:1 Transgression speaks to the ungodly within his heart; There is no fear of God before his eyes. (NASB)* According to David, transgression (פֶּשַׁע) speaks to the heart of the ungodly that results in the ungodly not having a fear of God. Notice how the Hebrew text is written, the Scripture states נְאֻם-פֶּשַׁע לְרָשָׁע בְּקִרְבֵּי לְבִי, David uses the word Pesha (פֶּשַׁע)

to describe “*fear or fearfulness*” and that this Pesha (transgression) makes a declaration (נִאָם) to the wicked (לְרָשָׁע) in the nearness of his heart (בְּקִרְבֵי לִבִּי). Do you see the significance of this statement that David is making by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit? He is saying that sin speaks in the nearness of one’s heart. The root word for “*near*” is *krv* (קרב) refers to “*nearness*” or “*intimacy*” and this is the word in Hebrew that gives us the word *korban* (קרבן, sacrifice). A *korban* (sacrifice) is the means by which one draws near to the Lord. It is within this sense that sin draws near to one’s heart, speaking to the ungodly to not fear the Lord. This reminds us of Parashat Bereshit that states in *Bereshit / Genesis 4:7*, וְהָלָא אִם-תִּיטִיב שְׂאֵת, זֶה הַלֹּא אִם-תִּיטִיב שְׂאֵת, וְאִם לֹא תִיטִיב לִפְתָּח הַטָּאָת רִבֵּץ וְאֵלֶיךָ תִּשְׁוֹקֶתוּ וְאַתָּה תִּמְשָׁל-בּוֹ: *“If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it.”* (NIV) In the story of Cain and Abel found in Parashat Bereshit, the sons of Adam and Eve (see *Bereshit / Genesis 4*), we read that Abel was a shepherd and Cain was a farmer, and that there came a day when they made an offering to the Lord. According to the narrative, Abel’s offering was accepted and Cain’s was rejected. As Cain sat there, angry and depressed, the Lord appeared to him and asked him, “*Why are you angry and depressed? For if you do well you will not be so.*” He then gave Cain a warning, saying, “*If you do not do well, sin is crouching at your door; and its desire is to master you, but you must master it.*” Cain didn’t listen to the Lord, this is obvious since he did not bring a sacrifice of blood (*he gave produce from the land instead*) and so he did not listen to the word of the Lord in this instance regarding sin. The sin of anger mastered him, and he killed his brother. The Scriptures say that if we do not do what is right, sin is crouching at our door, and if we sit and dwell upon the things that we do not do right, sin is literally crouching at the door waiting to take more from our lives. Note also that when we are close to someone we say that they are our “*nearest and dearest*,” which is a phrase that usually denotes one’s family and friends. This terminology of intimacy is not out of place in David’s discussion of the intimacy experienced in the life of the wicked and sin (transgression). The interesting fact is that we are called to draw “*near*” to God, and there appears to always be something that is fighting to take first place in our lives as a substitute for the Lord.

The Aramaic Targum and the Septuagint say the following:

Aramaic Targum

Tehillim / Psalms 36:1-2

36:1 For praise. Of the servant of the Lord, David. 36:2 Rebellion said to the sinner within my heart, “There is no fear of the Lord before his eyes.” (EMC)

א לשבחא לעבדא דיהוה לדוד: ב אמר מרדא לחייבא במציעות לבבי לית דחלתא דיהוה לקביל עינוי:

Septuagint

Tehillim / Psalms 36:1

For the end, by David the servant of the Lord. 36:1 The transgressor, that he may sin, says within himself, that there is no fear of God before his eyes. (LXX)

36:1 εἰς τὸ τέλος τῷ δούλῳ κυρίου τῷ δαυὶδ (2) φησὶν ὁ παράνομος τοῦ ἁμαρτάνειν ἐν ἑαυτῷ οὐκ ἔστιν φόβος θεοῦ ἀπέναντι τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν αὐτοῦ

The rabbis translate David’s words saying *מרדא לחייבא במציעות לבבי* that “*Rebellion said to the guilty in the middle of his heart*,” translating very similar to the Psalm. The act of rebellion speaks to the guilty to not fear the Lord. The Septuagint states that “*The transgressor*” himself speaks to his heart and says

to himself that he can sin because “*there is no higher authority whereby he is accountable to*” since there is no fear of God. The Psalm states אֵין-פֶּחַד אֱלֹהִים לְנֶגֶד עֵינָיו that there is no fear (פֶּחַד, Pakhad) of God and it is interesting that David uses the word Pakhad rather than yare (יָרָא) to describe the fear of the Lord. It is interesting to note that this word (Pakhad) is not used in the Torah as compared to the word “*yare.*” The Hebrew word “*yare*” (see *Strongs H3372*) carries a number of meanings having both the meaning of being “*terrified*” or “*afraid*” along with the definition of having “*reverence*”, “*awe*”, or “*respect.*” In Greek, the word phobeō φόβος (see *Strongs G5399*) carries similar meanings of both “*being afraid*” and “*having reverence or awe.*” Based upon these definitions, we must take words in context in order to determine whether the word is being used in the sense of “*fear*” or of “*reverence?*” For example, in Parashat Va’etchanan (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 3:23-7:11*) we read in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 6:13* (אֵת-יְהוָה יִגַּד אֱלֹהֶיךָ תִירָא וְאֵתוֹ תַעֲבֹד וּבְשִׁמוֹ תִשָּׁבַע: that one should fear the Lord your God, which is clearly referring to having “*awe, reverence, and respect.*” By comparison, in *Bereshit / Genesis 26:24* the Lord God says do not fear, for I am with you. He is clearly saying that we shouldn’t be terrified. It should also be noted that there is a difference between fear (as in “*fear and trembling*”) and dread. In the book *Yirat Shamayim: The Awe, Reverence, and Fear of God Edited by Marc Stern; p.21 (Introduction)*, Rabbi Soloveichik, states that God requires “*yirat shamayim,*” the fear of heaven and not fear as in terror. The Bible never commands us to have pakhad (פֶּחַד) for God, but only yare; and the Talmud teaches the idea of “*yirat shamayim,*” not “*pakhad shamayim.*” While Judaism does not advocate pakhad, “*the whole Torah in its entirety is based upon the idea of yare.*” With these things in mind, yare is translated fear while pakhad is more accurately translated as “*dread.*” The phrase *yirah shamayim* is “*fear of heaven*” as compared to *pakhad shamayim*, the “*dread of heaven.*” This simply provides the example of why pakhad is not used in the Torah, whereas the word “*yare*” is used. There is a component of being afraid in the word “*fear,*” and there’s not the complete sense of “*dread*” (pakhad) for God’s children. The interesting thing to note is David’s use of the word pakhad (פֶּחַד) of the ungodly who do not fear God and continue in their sin. The wicked does not even have a dread of “*what might happen*” in the Olam Habah (the world to come). They reason that the Lord will not judge and their sins will not be called into account before a Holy God.

ג כִּי-הִחֲלִיק אֱלֹוֹ בְּעֵינָיו לְמִצָּא עֲוֹנוֹ לְשָׂנֵא: ד דְּבָרַי-כִּי אֶנֶן Transgression continues to speak saying 36:2 *For it flatters him in his own eyes Concerning the discovery of his iniquity and the hatred of it. 36:3 The words of his mouth are wickedness and deceit; He has ceased to be wise and to do good. (NASB)* It is interesting David uses the Hiphil Perfect 3rd Masculine Singular Verb “*Hekhelik*” (הִחֲלִיק) saying that when his sin is found out, it is his portion or that it is smooth or flattering “*unto him*” (אֵלָיו) “*in his eyes*” (בְּעֵינָיו). This is interesting to note that the ungodly, when their sin is found out, they do not find shame but are flattered (they laugh). Sin is considered their portion in this life. Recently, I have read about a man who gave himself to living righteously according to God’s word and when something bad come upon him, he ended up stating that all of these things that he did, and this bad thing (cancer) comes upon my life, how can I believe in the God of the bible? (*Story taken from a social networking site (Facebook).*) His next comment was, “*I missed out on so much fun in life because I tried to live righteously and not live life to the fullest!*” What exactly does it mean to live life to the fullest? It is impossible to live a righteous life and travel, see the world, water ski, swim, mountain climb, ride four wheelers, dirt bikes, etc? Does a righteous life prevent one from living in these ways? Is his comment based on the idea that he has missed out on “*his portion*” of sin in this life because he chose to live a righteous life instead? Should our desire to live a righteous life be bent towards receiving something from the Lord in Heaven? The desire to live a righteous life should be motivated out of our love for the Lord God Almighty and Yeshua the Messiah and not purely out of a want or desire to receive something from the Lord in this life.

The Aramaic Targum and the Septuagint say the following:

Aramaic Targum

Tehillim / Psalms 36:5

36:5 Wickedness plots on his bed; he will take his stand in a way not good; he will not reject evil. (EMC)

ה רישעא חשיל חשיב על שיווייה יתעתד על אורה דלא טב ביש לא ירחק:

Septuagint

Tehillim / Psalms 36:5

36:4 He devises iniquity on his bed; he gives himself to every evil way; and does not abhor evil. (LXX)

36:4 ἀνομίαν διελογίσατο ἐπὶ τῆς κοίτης αὐτοῦ παρέστη πάση ὁδῶ οὐκ ἀγαθῇ τῇ δὲ κακίᾳ οὐ προσώχθισεν

As the children of God we are to abhor, reject, and despise evil.

David contrasts the ungodly by next describing the faithfulness of God saying יהוה בְּהַשְׁמִימִים חֶסֶדְךָ וְיְהוָה יִהְיֶה כְּהַרְרֵי-אֵל מְשַׁפְּטֶךָ תְּהוֹם רַבָּה אָדָם וּבְהֶמָּה תוֹשִׁיעַ יְהוָה: 36:5 Your lovingkindness, O Lord, extends to the heavens, Your faithfulness reaches to the skies. 36:6 Your righteousness is like the mountains of God; Your judgments are like a great deep. O Lord, You preserve man and beast. (NASB) Notice something interesting here in *Tehillim / Psalms 36:5*, the verse can be divided into two parts.

Part 1

- יהוה בְּהַשְׁמִימִים חֶסֶדְךָ
- Your lovingkindness, O Lord, extends to the heavens

Part 2

- אַמּוֹנְתְּךָ עַד-שְׁחַקִּים
- Your faithfulness reaches to the skies

Here David contrasts the “lovingkindness” (grace) of God in Heaven (הַשְׁמִימִים), verses the “faithfulness” of God in the sky (שְׁחַקִּים). Is David trying to contrast something here? What can we say regarding this contrast? David appears to be separating God’s “Grace” in Heaven from His “Faithfulness” in the sky or the clouds or on Earth. The way David writes this sentence in the Psalm suggests that the mercy of God is very exalted; to the very heavens (הַשְׁמִימִים), as high as the highest object of which man can conceive, even to the Heaven where God’s throne sits. The mercy of the Lord is in the heavens being a description possible of the abundant and infinite mercy and grace that He extends to His people. For the ungodly, God’s mercy should lead them to repentance and to seek the Lord for the forgiveness of sins. Part 2 states that Your faithfulness reaches unto the clouds (skies) עַד שְׁחַקִּים (ad shechakim), His faithfulness, His blessings from the heavens, from the clouds, from the earth, are promised by God to his followers and therefore His faithfulness is to be extended unto all those places, to His people, the mercies He has promised according to the Scriptures. The faithfulness that reach “unto the clouds” provides us with the imagery of the clouds which are among the highest objects raising above the loftiest trees and mountains and thus gives the idea again as in Part 1 of the verse that God’s faithfulness is elevated or exalted above all else.

It is interesting that *Tehillim / Psalms 36:6*, the verse can be divided into two parts similar to 36:5.

Part 1

- פְּהַר־יְאֵל | צְדָקָתְךָ
- *Your righteousness is like the mountains of God*

Part 2

- מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ תְהוֹם רַבָּה אָדָם וּבְהֵמָה תוֹשִׁיעַ יְהוָה
- *Your judgments are like a great deep. O Lord, You preserve man and beast.*

Here David again elevates the righteousness of God to the mountains but here he says God's righteousness is like "*the mountains of God*" (פְּהַר־יְאֵל). What are the mountains of God? Can you think of any examples from the Torah? According to the Book of Exodus, Mount Sinai (הַר סִינַי, Har Sinai) is the mountain at which the Ten Commandments were given to Moshe by God. It is interesting that performing a search on the word סִינַי (Sinai) results are produced mentioning the name in Shemot / Exodus, Vayikra / Leviticus, and Bamidbar / Numbers but not in the book of Devarim / Deuteronomy. In the Book of Deuteronomy, Moshe describes these events as having transpired at Mount Horeb. (*Note the Documentation hypothesis and the difference between the Yawehists and Elohist's arguments.*) Horeb was the name for the mountain complex of which Mount Sinai was one of the summits. Studying the Scriptures, the Mountain of God is said to be the mountain of Horeb, the mountain of Sinai and the mountain of Paran, all of which are names for the mountain of Sinai. The Wilderness or Desert of Paran is said to be the place where Abraham's servant Hagar and their first-born son Ishmael were sent into exile from Abraham's dwelling in Beersheba (see *Bereshit / Genesis 21*).

Bereshit / Genesis 21:19-22

Then God opened her [Hagar's] eyes and she saw a well of water. So she went and filled the skin with water and gave the boy a drink. God was with the boy as he grew up. He lived in the desert and became an archer. While he was living in the Desert of Paran, his mother got a wife for him from Egypt.

Paran is mentioned in the Book of Bamidbar / Numbers as a place where the Israelites temporarily settled during the Exodus.

Bamidbar / Numbers 10:12

Then the Israelites set out from the Desert of Sinai and traveled from place to place until the cloud came to rest in the Desert of Paran.)

Paran is again mentioned in the opening lines of the Book of Devarim / Deuteronomy.

Devarim / Deuteronomy 1:1

These are the words Moses spoke to all Israel in the desert beyond the Jordan--that is, in the Arabah--opposite Suph, between Paran and Tophel, Laban, Hazeroth and Dizahab.

Devarim / Deuteronomy 33:2

He said: "The LORD came from Sinai and dawned over them from Seir; he shone forth from Mount Paran. He came with myriads of holy ones, from his right hand went a fiery law for them."

King David spent some time in the wilderness of Paran after Samuel died (*1 Samuel, 25:1*) and *1 Kings 11:17-18* states that when Hadad the Edomite fled from Edom to Egypt, he passed through Midian and Paran on the way to Egypt. This has led some commentators to suggest the possibility that Paran was a place on

the way to Egypt from Edom and Midian. It is not certain precisely where the wilderness of Paran is to be located and it is often associated with Mount Sinai. David appears to be drawing a parallel to the loftiness of the mountain of God and the righteousness of God. Remember the mountain of Sinai, no man or beast is to come approaching the mountain or he will die (*i.e. read Parashat Ki Tisa*). God's righteousness, no man may achieve the level of righteousness that God requires of us. Therefore we are to trust in His righteousness and not in our own.

David then states that the judgments (מִשְׁפָּטֵי) are like the great deep (תְּהוֹם רַבָּה), and the Lord preserves man and beast. It is interesting how David uses the word rabbah (רַבָּה) rather than gedolah (גְּדוּלָה) to describe the "greatness of the deep." The use of the word rabbah describes "many" and the judgment of God is many for those who do not obey his Torah. Here David appears to be paralleling the salvation of God with the flood of Noah. The waters covered the earth because of the judgment of God on sin and both man and beast died, yet He (God) preserved both man and beast from His judgment in Noah's ark. When David said "You preserve man and beast" he says literally, "YHVH will save" (תוֹשִׁיעַ יְהוָה) He is saving from destruction. The idea is, that the Lord keeps both man and beast alive. Life continues because He is the sustainer of all life. David utilizes the illustration of what he had just said about the "greatness" of God in His mercy, grace, faithfulness, and righteousness in His ability to sustain life as we know it today.

The Aramaic Targum and the Septuagint say the following:

Aramaic Targum

Tehillim / Psalms 36:6-7

36:6 O Lord, your goodness is in the heaven of heavens, your faithfulness reaches to the skies. 36:7 Your righteousness is as high as the great mountains; your judgments are as deep as the great abyss; you will redeem both the sons of men and beasts, O Lord. (EMC)

ו יהוה בשמי שמיא טובך הימנותך עד שחקי: ז צדקתך אלהא רמא היך טוריאי תקיפאי דינך עמיקין היך תהומא רבא בני נשא ובעירא תפרוק יהוה:

Septuagint

Tehillim / Psalms 36:5-6

36:5 O Lord, thy mercy is in the heaven; and thy truth reaches to the clouds. 36:6 Thy righteousness is as the mountains of God, thy judgments are as a great deep: O Lord, thou wilt preserve men and beasts. (LXX)

36:5 κύριε ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ τὸ ἔλεός σου καὶ ἡ ἀλήθειά σου ἕως τῶν νεφελῶν 36:6 ἡ δικαιοσύνη σου ὡσεὶ ὄρη θεοῦ τὰ κρίματά σου ἄβυσσος πολλή ἀνθρώπους καὶ κτήνη σώσεις κύριε

The Aramaic Targum states literally "YHVH in the heaven of heavens is your goodness" (יהוה בשמי שמיא) (טובך) and the faithfulness of God reaches to the skies (הימנותך עד שחקי), the rabbis use the same words to describe David's words in their Aramaic translation. They continue saying היך טוריאי רמא היך תקיפאי "the righteousness of God is in the manner of a strong mountain." They say that the Lord redeems (תפרוק, ransoms) both the sons if men and beasts. The Septuagint has the basic interpretation of the modern translations today (NASB), the mercy of God is in the heavens and His truth (faithfulness) reaches to the clouds, His righteousness is as the mountains of God, etc.

ח מה-יִקָּר תִּסְדָּד אֱלֹהִים וּבְנֵי אָדָם בְּצֵל כְּנָפֵיךָ מֵה-יִקָּר תִּסְדָּד אֱלֹהִים וּבְנֵי אָדָם בְּצֵל כְּנָפֵיךָ יְיָ כִּי-עֲמָדָה מְקוֹר חַיִּים בְּאֹרֶךְ נְרָאָה-אֹר: 36:7 How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God! And the children of men take refuge in the shadow of Your wings. 36:8 They

drink their fill of the abundance of Your house; And You give them to drink of the river of Your delights. 36:9 For with You is the fountain of life; In Your light we see light. (NASB) David describes the “lovingkindness” of God as being very “precious” (יִקָּר). Note that this word for lovingkindness is translated as the “grace” and “mercy” of God. The word used for “precious” (יִקָּר) is one that is applied to precious stones (*1 Kings 10:2, 1 Kings 10:10-11*) and the more costly kind of stones utilized in building, such as marble (*2 Chronicles 3:6*). The word יִקָּר is used for anything that is costly or valuable. Therefore, the grace, mercy, and lovingkindness of God is to be understood as being equal to the value set on the most rare, costly, and precious of things. The imagery that David uses in *Tehillim / Psalms 36:8-9*, drinking to one’s fill, the abundance of God’s house, the river of God’s delights, the fountain of life and the light that only the Lord himself shows forth are descriptions that come right out of the Torah and the wilderness journey. The Lord provided rivers of running waters for the children of Israel when they were thirsty. The Lord is known as the source of light and life and David describes the preciousness of God’s mercy within that context. The Aramaic Targum and the Septuagint agree on David’s use of the Torah to describe the mercy of God.

Aramaic Targum

Tehillim / Psalms 36:8-10

36:8 How precious is your goodness, O Lord; and the sons of men will dwell securely in the shadow of your presence. 36:9 They will drink deeply of the plenteous blessings of your house; and you will let them drink of your pleasant fountain. 36:10 For with you are streams of living water; in the splendor of your glory we will see light. (EMC)

ח כמה יקר יקיר טובך יהוה ובני נשא בטלל שכינתך יש {ו}רון לרוחצן: ט יתרוויון מדהן ברכתא דביתך ומבוע בסימותך תשקינן: י ארום עמך טיפי טופי מייך חייך בזיו בדיל נהור יקרך נחמי נהורא אורה:

Septuagint

Tehillim / Psalms 36:8-10

36:7 How hast thou multiplied thy mercy, O God! so the children of men shall trust in the shelter of thy wings. 36:8 They shall be fully satisfied with the fatness of thine house; and thou shalt cause them to drink of the full stream of thy delights. 36:9 For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light we shall see light. (LXX)

36:7 ὡς ἐπλήθυνας τὸ ἔλεός σου ὁ θεός οἱ δὲ υἱοὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐν σκέπη τῶν πτερῶν σου ἐλπιοῦσιν 36:8 μεθυσθήσονται ἀπὸ πίότητος τοῦ οἴκου σου καὶ τὸν χεიმάρρουν τῆς τρυφῆς σου ποτιεῖς αὐτοῦς 36:9 ὅτι παρὰ σοὶ πηγὴ ζωῆς ἐν τῷ φωτί σου ὁψόμεθα φῶς

Note how the rabbis say, according to the Septuagint, *36:8 They shall be fully satisfied with the fatness of thine house...* making a reference to the house of the Lord and the fat. It is interesting, according to Parashat Tzav, we read in *Vayikra / Leviticus 7:1* ‘Now this is the law of the guilt offering; it is most holy. (NASB) In the book of *Vayikra / Leviticus*, the five major Korbanot (offerings) are described as being “most holy” as we see here in *Vayikra / Leviticus 7:1* and the detailing of the guilt offering. There are two major components of the guilt offering:

1. Slaying of the animal taking its blood and sprinkling it upon the altar (7:2)
2. Offering all its fat upon the altar, including the fat on the tail, the fat that covers the entrails (7:3) and the fat that is upon the kidneys and the liver.

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