

ספר תהילים מב | Tehillim / Psalms 42

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[title]

This week's study is from *Tehillim / Psalms 42:1-11*, the Psalm opens saying א לְמַנְצַחַת מְשֻׁכֵּיל לְבְנֵי־קֶרַח: *For the choir director. A Maskil of the sons of Korah. (NASB)* It appears that the sons of Korah are the authors of this Psalm. The Psalmist continues saying ב כָּאֵיל תַעְרָג עַל־אֶפְיקַי־מַיִם כִּן נִפְשִׁי תַעְרָג אֶלֶיךָ: *As the deer pants for the water brooks, So my soul pants for You, O God. 42:1* As the deer pants for the water brooks, So my soul pants for You, O God. 42:2 *My soul thirsts for God, for the living God; When shall I come and appear before God? (NASB)* The emotional response of the desire (longing) to draw near to the Lord is paralleled to the deer that needs water. The stream of water is the location of the most danger but is also the source of life. 42:3 *My tears have been my food day and night, While they say to me all day long, 'Where is your God?'* (NASB) The son of Korah notes that he used to lead the procession to the house of God with praise (42:4). The Psalmist's soul is in despair and remembers the Lord from the Jordan and the peaks of Hermon and from Mount Mizar (42:5-6). He says ח תְּהוֹם אֶל־תְּהוֹם קוֹרָא לְקוֹל צְנוּרִיךָ כָּל־מְשַׁבְּרִיךָ וְגַלְיָךָ עָלַי עֲבָרוּ: ט יוֹמָם | יְצוּהָ יְהוָה | עֲמִי תִפְלֶה לְאֵל חַיִּי: *42:7 Deep calls to deep at the sound of Your waterfalls; All Your breakers and Your waves have rolled over me. 42:8 The Lord will command His lovingkindness in the daytime; And His song will be with me in the night, A prayer to the God of my life. (NASB)* What does it mean that “deep calls to deep?” What does it mean that the Lord “commands” His lovingkindness in the daytime? Is His lovingkindness something that goes forth in a way that is separate from Himself? It is written that “His song” will be with me at night, does the Lord sing? The Psalmist says י אוֹמְרָה | לְאֵל: *42:9 I will say to God my rock, 'Why have You forgotten me? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?'* (NASB) Who is the enemy that is being referred to? The Psalm concludes saying יא בְּרִצָּח | בְּעֲצָמוֹתַי חֲרַפּוּנֵי צוּרֵי בְּאֶמְרָם אֵלַי כָּל־הַיּוֹם אֵיךָ אֶלֶיךָ: *42:10 As a shattering of my bones, my adversaries revile me, While they say to me all day long, 'Where is your God?'* 42:11 *Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him, The help of my countenance and my God. (NASB)* According to the Psalmist, the enemy has the power to shatter bones and while at the same time asking the question “where is your God” which is an accusation against the Lord Himself. Nonetheless, we are told to Hope in the Lord, He will deliver!

עברית Hebrew

ארמי Aramaic

ελληνικός Greek

עברית Hebrew	ארמי Aramaic	ελληνικός Greek
ספר תהלים פרק מב	ספר טוביה פרק מב	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 42
א לְמַנְצַחַת מְשֻׁכֵּיל לְבְנֵי־קֶרַח: ב כָּאֵיל תַעְרָג עַל־אֶפְיקַי־מַיִם כִּן נִפְשִׁי תַעְרָג אֶלֶיךָ אֶלֶיךָ אֶלֶיךָ: ג צְמָאָה נִפְשִׁי לְאֵלֵיךָ לְאֵל חַי מְתִי אָבוּא וְאֶרְאֶה פְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים: ד הִיָּתָה־לִּי דְמַעְתִּי לְחֶם יוֹמָם וְלַיְלָה בְּאֶמְרָא אֵלַי כָּל־הַיּוֹם אֵיךָ אֶלֶיךָ:	א לשבחא בשכלא טבא על ידיהון דבני קרח: ב היך איילא די מרגג על פרציי די פצידי מיא היכנא נפשי מרגגא לותך יהוה אלהים: ג צחת לך נפשי לאלהא תקיפא חייא וקיימא אימתי איעול ואח־מי זיו שכינתא דיהוה: ד הות לי דמע־תי דומעתי למברי ימם וילי לי בדיימר לי סנאה כל יומא אן האנ הוא אלהך:	42:1 εις τὸ τέλος εἰς σύνεσιν τοῖς υἱοῖς Κορε ὃν τρόπον ἐπιποθεῖ ἡ ἔλαφος ἐπὶ τὰς πηγὰς τῶν ὑδάτων οὕτως ἐπιποθεῖ ἡ ψυχὴ μου πρὸς σέ ὁ θεός 42:2 ἐδίψησεν ἡ ψυχὴ μου πρὸς τὸν θεὸν τὸν ζῶντα πότε ἤξω καὶ ὀφθῆσομαι τῷ προσώπῳ τοῦ θεοῦ 42:3 ἐγενήθη μοι τὰ δάκρυά μου ἄρτος ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτὸς ἐν τῷ λέγεσθαί μοι καθ’ ἐκάστην ἡμέραν ποῦ ἐστὶν ὁ θεός σου

<p>ה אלה אֶזְפָּרָה וְאֶשְׁפָּכָה עָלַי נַפְשִׁי כִּי אֶעְבֹּר בְּסֶף אֲדָדִים עַד-בֵּית אֱלֹהִים בְּקוֹל-רִנָּה וְתוֹדָה הֶמּוֹן חוֹגֵג: ו מה- תִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה נַפְשִׁי וְתִהְיֶה עָלַי הוֹחִילִי לְאֱלֹהִים כִּי-עוֹד אוֹדְנֹו יִשׁוּעוֹת פְּנִי: ז אֱלֹהֵי עָלַי נַפְשִׁי תִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה עַל-פֶּן אֶזְכָּרָה מֵאַרְץ יִרְדֵּן וְחֶרְמוֹנִים מִהַר מִצְעָר: ח תְּהוֹם אֶל-תְּהוֹם קוֹרָא לְקוֹל צְנוּרִיָּה כָל-מִשְׁבְּרֵיָּה וְגִלְיָה עָלַי עָבְרוּ: ט יוֹמָם יִצְנֶה יְהוָה חֲסִדֹו וּבְלִילָה שִׁירָה [שִׁירוֹ] עָמִי תִפְלָה לְאֵל חַיִּי: י אוֹמְרָה לְאֵל סְלַעֵי לְמָה שָׁכַחְתָּנִי לְמָה-קִזְרַר אֱלֹהֶ בְּלַחֵץ אוֹיֵב: יא בְּרִצָּח בְּעֶצְמוֹתַי חֶרְפוֹנֵי צוֹרְרֵי בְּאֶמְרָם אֱלֵי כָל-הַיּוֹם אֵינִי אֱלֹהֵי: יב מֵה-תִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה נַפְשִׁי וּמֵה-תִּהְיֶה עָלַי הוֹחִילִי לְאֱלֹהִים כִּי-עוֹד אוֹדְנֹו יִשׁוּעַת פְּנֵי וְאֱלֹהֵי:</p>	<p>ה אילין ניסיא אנא דכיר ואישוד עלי רעיוני רעות נפשי כד אעבר תחות טללא בלחודי לבלחודי אתחיל במ- שריין דצדיקי עד בית מוקדשא דיהוה בקל בעותא ותושבחתא אתרגושת עממין דאתיין למחג לירושלם: ו מה תתמכין נפשי ותירגושי עלי אוריכי לאלהא ארום טוב אשבחיניה"אודי קדמוהי בפורקנא דמן קדמוי: ז אלהי עלי נפשי תתמכין תתמכך בגין כן מטול היכנא אדכרינך יתבי ל{ח}>ה לא בארעא יורדנא ויתבי טורי חרמוני ועמא דקבילו אוריתא בטורא דסיני דמכין וזעיר: ח תהומא עילאה לתהומא ארעאה תתאה קרי לקל זלחי מרזביין היכנא כולהון מת- בריך וגלליך עלי עברו בזמן דנפקנא ממצרים: ט יימם יפקוד יהוה טוביה ובליליא תושבחתיה שבחיה עמי צלר- תא לאל לאלהא די נטיר חיי: י אימר לאלהא רוחצני תוקפי למה אשליתני אנשיתני למה בקבלא אזיל בדחוק בעיל דבבא: יא בדקטלין לי ומפש- חין גרמי בזמן דמחרפין דמחסדין יתי מעיקי כד אמרין לי כל יומא אן האן הוא אלהך: יב מה תתמכין נפשי ומה תרגישי עלי אוריכי לאלהא ארום טוב אשבחיניה אודי קדמוהי בפורק- ניה דמן קדמוי די ארום הוא אלהי:</p>	<p>42:4 ταῦτα ἐμνήσθην καὶ ἐξέχεα ἐπ' ἐμὲ τὴν ψυχὴν μου ὅτι διελεύσομαι ἐν τόπῳ σκηνῆς θαυμαστῆς ἕως τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν φωνῇ ἀγαλλιάσεως καὶ ἐξομολογήσεως ἤχου ἑορτάζοντος 42:5 ἵνα τί περίλυπος εἶ ψυχὴ καὶ ἵνα τί συνταράσσεις με ἔλπισον ἐπὶ τὸν θεόν ὅτι ἐξομολογήσομαι αὐτῷ σωτήριον τοῦ προσώπου μου ὁ θεός μου 42:6 πρὸς ἑμαυτὸν ἢ ψυχὴ μου ἐταράχθη διὰ τοῦτο μνησθήσομαι σου ἐκ γῆς Ἰορδάνου καὶ Ἐρμωνιμ ἀπὸ ὄρους μικροῦ 42:7 ἄβυσσος ἄβυσσον ἐπικαλεῖται εἰς φωνὴν τῶν καταρακτῶν σου πάντες οἱ μετεωρισμοί σου καὶ τὰ κύματά σου ἐπ' ἐμὲ διήλθον 42:8 ἡμέρας ἐντελεῖται κύριος τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ καὶ νυκτὸς ὧδῆ πα ἐμοί προσευχὴ τῷ θεῷ τῆς ζωῆς μου 42:9 ἔρῳ τῷ θεῷ ἀντιλήμπτωρ μου εἶ διὰ τί μου ἐπελάθου ἵνα τί σκυθρωπάζων πορεύομαι ἐν τῷ ἐκθλίβειν τὸν ἐχθρόν μου 42:10 ἐν τῷ καταθλάσαι τὰ ὀστά μου ὠνείδισάν με οἱ θλίβοντές με ἐν τῷ λέγειν αὐτοῦς μοι καθ' ἐκάστην ἡμέραν ποῦ ἐστὶν ὁ θεός σου 42:11 ἵνα τί περίλυπος εἶ ψυχὴ καὶ ἵνα τί συνταράσσεις με ἔλπισον ἐπὶ τὸν θεόν ὅτι ἐξομολογήσομαι αὐτῷ ἢ σωτηρία τοῦ προσώπου μου ὁ θεός μου</p>
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This week's study is from *Tehillim / Psalms 42:1-11*, the Psalm opens saying אֶזְפָּרָה מִשְׁכִּיל לְבָבִי For the choir director. A Maskil of the sons of Korah. (NASB) According to the first verse in the Masoretic Text for *Tehillim / Psalms 42*, the sons of Korach are the authors of this Psalm. According to the book of Numbers (Bamidbar), the Korahites are the portion of the Kohathites that descended from Korach. They were an important branch of the singers of the Kohathite division (see *2 Chronicles 20:19*). Eleven psalms are attributed to the Korahites (*Tehillim / Psalm 42, 44 - 49, 84, 85, 87, and 88*). Some of the sons of Korach were also responsible for guarding the threshold of the Tabernacle according to *1 Chronicles 9:17-19*. Additional tasks of the Korachites included the following:

1 Chronicles 9:31-34
9:31 Mattithiah, one of the Levites, who was the firstborn of Shallum the Korahite, had the responsibility over the things which were baked in pans. 9:32 Some of their relatives of the sons of the Kohathites were over the showbread to prepare it every sabbath. 9:33 Now these are the singers, heads of fathers' households of the Levites, who lived in the chambers of the

temple free from other service; for they were engaged in their work day and night. 9:34 These were heads of fathers' households of the Levites according to their generations, chief men, who lived in Jerusalem. (NASB)

<p>Tehillim / Psalms 42 For the choir director. A Maskil of the sons of Korah. 42:1 As the deer pants for the water brooks, So my soul pants for You, O God. 42:2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God; When shall I come and appear before God? 42:3 My tears have been my food day and night, While they say to me all day long, ‘Where is your God?’ 42:4 These things I remember and I pour out my soul within me. For I used to go along with the throng and lead them in procession to the house of God, With the voice of joy and thanksgiving, a multitude keeping festival. 42:5 Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him For the help of His presence. 42:6 O my God, my soul is in despair within me; Therefore I remember You from the land of the Jordan And the peaks of Hermon, from Mount Mizar. 42:7 Deep calls to deep at the sound of Your waterfalls; All Your breakers and Your waves have rolled over me. 42:8 The Lord will command His lovingkindness in the daytime; And His song will be with me in the night, A prayer to the God of my life. 42:9 I will say to God my rock, ‘Why have You forgotten me? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?’ 42:10 As a shattering of my bones, my adversaries revile me, While they say to me all day long, ‘Where is your God?’ 42:11 Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him, The help of my countenance and my God. (NASB)</p>	<p>Toviyah / Psalms Chapter 42 41:1 For praise, with good discernment, by the sons of Korah. 42:2 As the deer that longs for streams of water, thus my soul longs for you, O Lord. 42:3 My soul is thirsty for you, for the mighty, living, and enduring God. When will I enter and see the splendor of the presence of the Lord? 42:4 My tears have become my sustenance day and night, because the enemy says to me all day, “Where is your God?” 42:5 These miracles I remember; and I will pour out the thoughts of my soul whenever I pass beneath the shelter alone; I will be strong in the camps of the righteous, [who are going] to the sanctuary of the Lord with a voice of petition and praise, a tumult of peoples coming to keep festival in Jerusalem. 42:6 Why will you be lowly, O my soul, and [why] will you rage against me? Wait for God, for again I will praise him for the redemption that is from his presence. 42:7 O God, my soul will be for me lowly, therefore I will remember you [among] those who dwell yonder in the land of Jordan, and those who dwell on the mountains of Hermoni, and the people who accepted the Torah on mount Sinai, which is lowly and small. 42:8 The upper deep calls to the lower deep, at the sound of the pouring of spouts – thus all your breakers and waves passed over me at the time we came forth from Egypt. 42:9 By day the Lord will command his goodness, and by night his praise is with me, a prayer to the God who preserves my life. 42:10 I will say to God my trust, “Why have you neglected me, why do I go about in darkness in the oppression of the enemy?” 42:11 Because they kill my bones whenever my oppressors mock me, when they say to me every day, “Where is your God?” 42:12. Why will you be lowly, O my soul, and [why] will you rage against me? Wait for God, for again I will praise him for the redemption that comes from his presence, for he is my God. (EMC)</p>	<p>Psalmoi / Psalms 42 For the end, a Psalm for instruction, for the sons of Core. 42:1 As the hart earnestly desires the fountains of water, so my soul earnestly longs for thee, O God. 42:2 My soul has thirsted for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God? 42:3 My tears have been bread to me day and night, while they daily said to me, Where is thy God? 42:4 I remembered these things, and poured out my soul in me, for I will go to the place of thy wondrous tabernacle, even to the house of God, with a voice of exultation and thanksgiving and of the sound of those who keep festival. 42:5 Wherefore art thou very sad, O my soul? and wherefore dost thou trouble me? hope in God; for I will give thanks to him; he is the salvation of my countenance. 42:6 O my God, my soul has been troubled within me: therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Ermonites, from the little hill. 42:7 Deep calls to deep at the voice of thy cataracts: all thy billows and thy waves have gone over me. 42:8 By day the Lord will command his mercy, and manifest it by night: with me is prayer to the God of my life. 42:9 I will say to God, Thou art my helper; why hast thou forgotten me? wherefore do I go sad of countenance, while the enemy oppresses me? 42:10 While my bones were breaking, they that afflicted me reproached me; while they said to me daily, Where is thy God? 42:11 Wherefore art thou very sad, O my soul? and wherefore dost thou trouble me? hope in God; for I will give thanks to him; he is the health of my countenance, and my God. (LXX)</p>
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One of them was over “*things that were made in the pans*” (1 Chronicles 9:31), for example, the baking in pans for the meat-offering according to Parashat Vayikra in Vayikra / Leviticus 2:5. In Parashat Bamidbar (Bamidbar / Numbers Chapter 3), the Lord set aside the Levites from out of the tribes of Israel, for full

time service to Him. They were ordained to take care of the tabernacle and all of its instruments including the Ark of the Covenant. According to the Scriptures, only the descendants of Moshe and Aaron, were allowed to serve as priests. The three sons of Levi were Gershon, Merari and Kohath (*Bamidbar / Numbers 3:17*). The Gershonites were responsible (see *Bamidbar / Numbers 4:28*) for the care of the tabernacle, its coverings, the curtain at the entrance to the tent of meeting, the curtains of the courtyard, the curtain at the entrance to the courtyard surrounding the tabernacle and altar, the ropes, and everything related to their use. The Merarites were appointed (see *Bamidbar / Numbers 3:36*) to take care of the frames of the tabernacle, its crossbars, posts, bases, all its equipment, and everything related to their use, as well as the posts of the surrounding courtyard with their bases, tent pegs and ropes. The Kohathites were responsible (see *Bamidbar / Numbers 4:4-20*) for the care of the sanctuary. They were responsible for the care of the ark, the table, the lamp stand, the altars, the articles of the sanctuary used in ministering, the curtain, and everything related to their use. It says that they were under the direct supervision of Eleazar, son of Aaron. Unlike the Gershonites and the Merarites, who were allowed to transport the items under their care on carts, we are told the Kohathites had to carry their items, the holy things of the Tabernacle, on their shoulders. They had the arduous burden of transporting these items from place to place as the camp moved, and they were not allowed to actually touch the items or they would die. The priests had to wrap the sacred objects in special coverings before they were transported (see *Bamidbar / Numbers 4:15*). As a result, many of the Kohathites began to disdain this task and to covet the role of the priests which eventually led to the rebellion according to Parashat Korach (*Bamidbar / Numbers 16:1-18:32*). Are the sons of Korach writing this Psalm on behalf of David or with David in mind?

ב כִּאֵיל תַעְרָג עַל-אַפְיָקִי-מִים כִּן נִפְשֵׁי תַעְרָג אֵלֶיךָ אֱלֹהִים: ג צִמְאָה נִפְשִׁי | לְאֱלֹהִים:
 42:1 *As the deer pants for the water brooks, So my soul pants for You, O God.* 42:2 *My soul thirsts for God, for the living God; When shall I come and appear before God?* (NASB)
 The psalmist says as the “deer” (אֵיל) “longs for” or “languishes for” (תַעְרָג) for the “bed of water” (עַל-), (אַפְיָקִי-מִים), “yes, so does my soul” (כִּן נִפְשִׁי) “long” or “languish” (תַעְרָג) “unto You God” (אֵלֶיךָ אֱלֹהִים). It is interesting to note that this word “taarog” (תַעְרָג) is used only twice throughout the Tanach and right here in *Tehillim / Psalms 42:2* to describe both the deer and the author who longs and languishes for the Lord. The word “taarog” (תַעְרָג) is used to express a fervent desire to draw near to the Lord or to enter into His presence that is paralleled with the animal who must quench its thirst. The psalmist has a desire to participate in the worship of God by saying that his “soul thirsts in this way for God” (לְאֱלֹהִים | נִפְשִׁי) and he longs to appear before the Lord. Does your heart long for the Lord and His presence like the Psalm is describing? In the deer-water analogy, water is a necessary essential element for life. Is your relationship with God considered an essential element of your life? The psalmist believes the Lord is the “living God” (לְאֵל חַי) in whose presence and favor leads to life and salvation as the Torah states in Parashat Nitzavim (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 29:9-30:20*).

Devarim / Deuteronomy 30:20

30:20 by loving the Lord your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days, that you may live in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give them.’ (NASB)

כ לְאֶהֱבָה אֶת-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשִׁמְעַת בְּקוֹלוֹ וּלְדַבְרָתוֹ-בּו כִּי הוּא חַיִּיהָ וְאַרְךָ יָמֶיךָ לְשִׁבְתָּ עַל-הָאָדָמָה
 אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע יְהוָה לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק וּלְיַעֲקֹב לְתַתּ לָהֶם:

The emotional response of the desire (longing) to draw near to the Lord is paralleled to the stream of water, a source of both danger and life. Is there danger in the presence of God at the Tabernacle? Think about Parashat Shemini (*Vayikra / Leviticus 9:1-11:47*) Nadab (נדב, Nadav “generous, giving”) and Abihu (אביהוא, Avihu “He is my father”) were respectively the eldest and second-eldest of the sons of Aaron. They

offered a sacrifice with strange fire before the LORD, disobeying his instructions. As a result, Nadav and Avihu were consumed immediately by God's fire and died. Being at the Tabernacle, and/or at the altar of God, in the presence of God, did not prevent one from being put to death. King Saul slaughtered the priests that helped David in *1 Samuel 22*. We also read that Adonijah went to the Tabernacle and grabbed hold of the horns on the altar asking Solomon to have mercy upon him. Solomon had Adonijah brought from the Tabernacle in *1 Kings 1:51-53* and told him to go to his house and remain there. If evil men were near at the Tabernacle, it is possible, if so ordered by the king, they would kill a person in the presence of the Lord. The Psalmist states that he wants to come to appear before God saying to “see the face of God” (וַיִּרְאֶה) (פְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים). The face (פְּנֵי) of God designates a personal presence of the Lord as indicated in the following verses.

Bereshit / Genesis 33:10

33:10 Jacob said, 'No, please, if now I have found favor in your sight, then take my present from my hand, for I see your face as one sees the face of God, and you have received me favorably. (NASB, וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל-נָא אִם-נָא מָצָאתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ וְלִקְחָתָּ מִנְּחָתִי מִיָּדִי כִּי עַל-כֵּן, רְאִיתִי פְּנֵיךָ כְּרֵאת פְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים וְתִרְצָנִי:

Shemot / Exodus 10:28-29

10:28 Then Pharaoh said to him, 'Get away from me! Beware, do not see my face again, for in the day you see my face you shall die!' 10:29 Moses said, 'You are right; I shall never see your face again!' (NASB, כַּח וַיֹּאמֶר-לוֹ פַּרְעֹה לֵךְ מֵעַלֵּי הַשָּׁמַר לֵךְ אֶל-תַּחֲסֹף רְאוֹת פְּנֵי כִּי בְיוֹם, רְאִיתָהּ פְּנֵי תַמּוּת: כֹּט וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה כִּן דְּבַרְתָּ לֹא-אֶסָף עוֹד רְאוֹת פְּנֵיךָ:

2 Samuel 17:11

17:11 'But I counsel that all Israel be surely gathered to you, from Dan even to Beersheba, as the sand that is by the sea in abundance, and that you personally go into battle. (NASB, כִּי יַעֲצָתִי הָאֶסֶף יֵאָסֵף עָלֶיךָ כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל מִדָּן וְעַד-בְּעֵר שֶׁבַע כַּחֹל אֲשֶׁר-עַל-הַיָּם לְרַב וּפְנֵיךָ הֶלְכִים בְּקָרֵב:

In each of these examples, the Scriptures use the word “face” (פְּנֵי) to indicate the presence of someone (2 *Samuel 17:11*). The Aramaic Targum and the Septuagint state the following:

Aramaic Targum

Toviyah / Psalms 42:1-3

41:1 For praise, with good discernment, by the sons of Korah. 42:2 As the deer that longs for streams of water, thus my soul longs for you, O Lord. 42:3 My soul is thirsty for you, for the mighty, living, and enduring God. When will I enter and see the splendor of the presence of the Lord? (EMC)

א לשבחא בשכלא טבא על ידיהון דבני קרח: ב היך איילא די מרגג על פרצידי פצידי מיא היכנא נפשי מרגגא לותך יהוה אלהים: ג צחת לך נפשי לאלהא תקיפא חייא וקיימא אימתי איעול ואחמי זיו שכינתא דיהוה:

Septuagint

Psalmoi / Psalms 42:1-2

For the end, a Psalm for instruction, for the sons of Core. 42:1 As the hart earnestly desires the fountains of water, so my soul earnestly longs for thee, O God. 42:2 My soul has thirsted for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God? (LXX)

42:1 εἰς τὸ τέλος εἰς σύνεσιν τοῖς υἱοῖς Κορε ὄν τρόπον ἐπιποθεῖ ἡ ἔλαφος ἐπὶ τὰς πηγὰς τῶν ὑδάτων οὕτως ἐπιποθεῖ ἡ ψυχὴ μου πρὸς σέ ὁ θεός 42:2 ἐδίψησεν ἡ ψυχὴ μου πρὸς τὸν θεὸν τὸν ζῶντα πότε ἦξω καὶ ὀφθήσομαι τῷ προσώπῳ τοῦ θεοῦ

The Targum Pseudo Jonathan states “when will I enter and see the splendor of the presence of the Lord?” What does it mean “the splendor of the presence of the Lord?” *Tehillim / Psalms 96* states that splendor and majesty are before the Lord.

Tehillim / Psalms 96:6-13

96:6 Splendor and majesty are before Him, Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary. 96:7 Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples, Ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. 96:8 Ascribe to the Lord the glory of His name; Bring an offering and come into His courts. 96:9 Worship the Lord in holy attire; Tremble before Him, all the earth. 96:10 Say among the nations, ‘The Lord reigns; Indeed, the world is firmly established, it will not be moved; He will judge the peoples with equity.’ 96:11 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; Let the sea roar, and all it contains; 96:12 Let the field exult, and all that is in it. Then all the trees of the forest will sing for joy 96:13 Before the Lord, for He is coming, For He is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness And the peoples in His faithfulness. (NASB)

ו הוד-והדר לפניו עז ותפארת במקדשו: ז הבו ליהנה משפחות עמים הבו ליהנה כבוד ועז: ח הבו ליהנה כבוד שמו שאו-מנחה ובאו לחצרותיו: ט השתחוו ליהנה בהדרת-קדש חילו מפניו כל-הארץ: י אמרו בגוים | יהנה מלך אר-תכון תבל כל-תמוט דין עמים במישרים: יא ישמחו השמים ותגל הארץ ירעם הים ומלאו: יב יעלו שדי וכל-אר-בו אז ירננו כל-עצי-יער: יג לפני יהנה | כי בא כי בא לשפט הארץ ישפט-תבל בצדק ועמים באמונתו:

The splendor (הוד) and majesty (והדר) the Psalm is speaking of is of God’s creation, his strength and glory are manifested in the heavens, by the roar of the sea, the fields, the trees of the forest, etc. The creation should elicit the fear of God in a sense of awe. The psalmist consistently speaks of the fear of God, not only as “the beginning of wisdom” (*Tehillim / Psalm 111:10*), but as required of every man during his whole life (see *Tehillim / Psalm 19:9, 34:9, 40:3, 64:9, 86:11, and 119:63*).

ד היתה-לי דמעתי להם יומם ולילה באמר אלי כל-היום איה אלהיך: ז 42:3 *My tears have been my food day and night, While they say to me all day long, ‘Where is your God?’ (NASB)* The son of Korach indicate that he used to lead the procession to the house of God with praise (42:4). The Psalmist’s soul is in despair and remembers the Lord from the Jordan and the peaks of Hermon and from Mount Mizar (42:5-6, ז, ו). *מה-תשתוהי | נפשי ותהמי עלי הוהי לי לאלהים כי-עוד אודנו ישועות פניו: ז, ו (אלהי עלי נפשי תשתוה על-כן אןכרך מארץ ירדן ותרמונים מהר מצער: ז, ו (אלהי עלי נפשי תשתוה על-כן אןכרך מארץ ירדן ותרמונים מהר מצער: ז, ו* Where is Mount Mitsar? According to Easton’s Dictionary, Mitsar (מצער) is a small mountain or hill near Mount Hermon. The word “mitsar” (מצער) is translated as “distressing, sad, grievous, hurtful, lamentable, painful, regrettable, rueful, saddening, sore, sorrowful, afflictive, deplorable, or distressful” This word is also used in *Bereshit / Genesis 19, Jeremiah 48, Tehillim / Psalms 42, and Job 8*. Since the Psalmist is speaking of his tears being his food

(42:3), how his soul is in despair and disturbed within him (42:4), could he be referring to “*the mountain of distress or despair?*” In the Septuagint and Vulgate translations, Mitsar is translated as a common noun, “*the small mountain*” from “*ορους μικρου*” and “*monte modico*” respectively (42:6). It is interesting that the Aramaic Targum follows the Septuagint and Vulgate translations on Mitsar referring to “*the small mountain.*”

Septuagint

Psalmoi / Psalms 42:4-6

42:4 I remembered these things, and poured out my soul in me, for I will go to the place of thy wondrous tabernacle, even to the house of God, with a voice of exultation and thanksgiving and of the sound of those who keep festival. 42:5 Wherefore art thou very sad, O my soul? and wherefore dost thou trouble me? hope in God; for I will give thanks to him; he is the salvation of my countenance. 42:6 O my God, my soul has been troubled within me: therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Ermonites, from the little hill.

42:4 ταῦτα ἐμνήσθην καὶ ἐξέχεα ἐπ’ ἐμὲ τὴν ψυχὴν μου ὅτι διελεύσομαι ἐν τόπῳ σκηνῆς θαυμαστῆς ἕως τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν φωνῇ ἀγαλλιάσεως καὶ ἐξομολογήσεως ἡχοῦ ἑορτάζοντος 42:5 ἵνα τί περίλυπος εἶ ψυχὴ καὶ ἵνα τί συνταράσσεις με ἔλπισον ἐπὶ τὸν θεόν ὅτι ἐξομολογήσομαι αὐτῷ σωτήριον τοῦ προσώπου μου ὁ θεός μου 42:6 πρὸς ἑμαυτὸν ἡ ψυχὴ μου ἐταράχθη διὰ τοῦτο μνησθήσομαι σου ἐκ γῆς Ἰορδάνου καὶ Ἐρμωνιμ ἀπὸ ὄρους μικροῦ

Aramaic Targum

Toviyah / Psalms 42:5-7

42:5 These miracles I remember; and I will pour out the thoughts of my soul whenever I pass beneath the shelter alone; I will be strong in the camps of the righteous, [who are going] to the sanctuary of the Lord with a voice of petition and praise, a tumult of peoples coming to keep festival in Jerusalem. 42:6 Why will you be lowly, O my soul, and [why] will you rage against me? Wait for God, for again I will praise him for the redemption that is from his presence. 42:7 O God, my soul will be for me lowly, therefore I will remember you [among] those who dwell yonder in the land of Jordan, and those who dwell on the mountains of Hermoni, and the people who accepted the Torah on mount Sinai, which is lowly and small.

ה אילין ניסיא אנא דכיר ואישוד עלי רעיוני רעות נפשי כד אעבר תחות טללא בלחודי בלחודי אתחיל במשריין דצדיקי עד בית מוקדשא דיהוה בקל בעותא ותושבתתא אתרגושת עממין דאתיין למחג לירושלם: ו מה תתמככין נפשי ותירגושי עלי אוריכי לאלהא ארום תוב אשבחיניה"אודי קדמוהי בפורקנא דמן קדמוי: ז אלהי עלי נפשי תתמככין תתמכך בגין כן מטול היכנא אדכרינך יתבי ל {ה} <ה> לא בארעא יורדנא ויתבי טורי חרמוני ועמא דקבילו אוריתא בטורא דסיני דמכך וזעיר:

The Targum Pseudo Jonathan states that “42:7 O God, my soul will be for me lowly, therefore I will remember you [among] those who dwell yonder in the land of Jordan, and those who dwell on the mountains of Hermoni, and the people who accepted the Torah on mount Sinai, which is lowly and small.” (EMC) The rabbis translate these words to mean that like the people in the Jordan and those who dwell on the mountains of Hermoni, these are like the people who accepted the Torah on mount Sinai and states Sinai was lowly and small. Why do you think they consider Mount Sinai to be lowly and small? What is so significant about Mount Hermon? Mount Hermon is a high and lofty mountain whereas Sinai was lowly and small. Mount

Hermon is Israel's highest and most difficult mountain to climb. Mount Hermon (הַר הַרְמוֹן) is a mountain cluster in the Anti-Lebanon mountain range. Its summit straddles the border between Syria and Lebanon and raises 2,814 m (9,232 ft) above sea level. The southern slopes of Mount Hermon extend to the Israeli-occupied portion of the Golan Heights. Mount Hermon has seasonal winter and spring snow falls which cover all three of its peaks for most of the year. Melt water from the snow-covered mountain's western and southern bases seeps into the rock channels and pores, feeding springs at the base of the mountain, which form streams and rivers. These merge to become the Jordan River in which the runoff facilitates fertile plant life below the snow line, where vineyards and pine, oak, and poplar trees are abundant. This snow-fall and water runoff may be why Yeshua chose Mount Hermon, Israel's highest and most difficult mountain to climb for the transfiguration before his disciples. Richard France and Suson Meyboom believed Mount Hermon was the location of the transfiguration of the Messiah (see *France, Richard. Tyndale Commentary Matthew 1987 IVP, Louis Suson Pedro Meyboom (1817–74), Protestant theologian, Het Leven van Jezus (7 vols., 1853–61)*). *Tehillim / Psalms 133* sheds some light on this topic.

Tehillim / Psalms 133:1-3

133:1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brothers to dwell together in unity! 133:2 It is like the precious oil upon the head, Coming down upon the beard, Even Aaron's beard, Coming down upon the edge of his robes. 133:3 It is like the dew of Hermon Coming down upon the mountains of Zion; For there the Lord commanded the blessing life forever. (NASB)

א שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת לְדָוִד הַיְהוָה מֵהַטּוֹב וּמֵהַנְּעִים שְׁבֶתֶ אֲחִים גַּם-יַחַד: ב פֶּשֶׁמֶן הַטּוֹב | עַל-הָרֹאשׁ יֵרֵד עַל-הַנְּזָנוֹ וְזָמֵן אֶהְרֹן שְׂיֵרֵד עַל-פִּי מְדוֹתָיו: ג כָּטַל-הַרְמוֹן שְׂיֵרֵד עַל-הַרְרֵי צִיּוֹן כִּי שֵׁם | צְנוּהַ יְהוָה אֶת-הַבְּרָכָה חַיִּים עַד-הָעוֹלָם:

When choosing a mountain Yeshua wanted to attract the attention of His disciples to what it represents as it is described in the Psalms. Here in *Tehillim / Psalms 133* we read David speaking of Mount Hermon. *Tehillim / Psalms 133* speaks of being at peace and dwelling in unity, of the anointing oil that was poured upon Aaron's head that run down upon his beard and clothing as described in Parashat Tzav (see *Vayikra / Leviticus 8:12*). *Tehillim / Psalms 133:3* describes dwelling together in unity as like the dew of Hermon that comes down upon the mountains of Zion. This is something the Lord commanded as a blessing for life. These Scriptures speak of unity among the children of God. The dew of Mount Hermon is the three sources of water that form three rivers, which come together to form the Jordan River. Mount Hermon is currently responsible for the water supply to all of Israel. In a desert region, water is very precious and the greatest wealth of a community. Cities were built around wells and locations of fertile streams and lakes. Water is life and it is impossible to live without its existence. Yeshua chose the perfect place to be transfigured in order to portray himself as the dew of Hermon that descends upon the mountains of Zion, He is portraying the fullness of life that God's children enjoy in His presence. The Synoptic Gospels (*Matthew 17:1–9, Mark 9:2-8, Luke 9:28–36*) describe Yeshua's glory, and *2 Peter 1:16–18* refers to his glory as well stating that they do not follow "cunningly devised fables" making known to the people the power of God in the Messiah.

In addition to this, *Tehillim / Psalms 42:5* is given as a reference to the Apostolic Writings in *Matthew 26:38* and *Mark 14:34*.

Matthew 26:37-39

26:37 And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and distressed. 26:38 Then He said to them, 'My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me.' 26:39 And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, 'My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will.'

Mark 14:33-35

14:33 And He took with Him Peter and James and John, and began to be very distressed and troubled. 14:34 And He said to them, ‘My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death; remain here and keep watch.’ 14:35 And He went a little beyond them, and fell to the ground and began to pray that if it were possible, the hour might pass Him by. (NASB)

Yeshua’s heart was in despair regarding what was about to take place, he was laying down his life for ours, he was bearing the burden of sin upon himself for atonement on our behalf. *Tehillim / Psalms 42:5* states 42:5 *Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him For the help of His presence. (NASB)* In the midst of a heavy heart and despair, Yeshua looked for his help from our Father in Heaven setting the example.

The Psalmist continues saying ח תהום אל-תהום קורא לקול צנוריה כל-משבריך וגלגליך עלי עברו: ט
42:7 *Deep calls to deep at the sound of Your waterfalls; All Your breakers and Your waves have rolled over me. 42:8 The Lord will command His loving-kindness in the daytime; And His song will be with me in the night, A prayer to the God of my life. (NASB)*
What does it mean that “deep calls to deep?” The psalmist states קורא אל-תהום meaning “deep calls to deep” where *tehom* (תהום) may also have the meaning “abyss, chasm, bottom, gulf, abyssm.” This word occurs 21 times in the Tanach and its first occurrence is found in the Torah in Parashat Bereshit (*Bereshit / Genesis 1:2*), and Parashat Noach (*Bereshit / Genesis 7:11*).

Bereshit / Genesis 1:2

1:2 The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters. (NASB)

ב והארץ הייתה תהו ובהו וחשך על-פני תהום ורוח אלהים מרחפת על-פני המים:

Bereshit / Genesis 7:11

7:11 In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day all the fountains of the great deep burst open, and the floodgates of the sky were opened. (NASB)

יא בשנת שש-מאות שנה לחיי-נח בחדש השני בשבעה-עשר יום לחדש ביום הזה נבקעו כל-מעיינות תהום רבה וארבת השמים נפתחו:

The first two occurrences of the word “*tehom*” speak of the darkness over the surface of the deep and the fountains of the great deep, in both cases making a reference to water in the sense of chaos and destruction. In the case of Parashat Noach, the Lord brought destruction by releasing the fountains of the deep. The statement קורא אל-תהום “*deep calls to deep*” might be a metaphor for affliction that comes again and again (one after another). This may be derived from the references of *tehom* use in the Torah and is consistent with the second clause of the verse (42:7) which states “*All Your breakers and Your waves have rolled over me.*” The phrase might be developed from the Torah on the depth of the sea, when waves rage that brings destruction. The Aramaic Targum states ח תהומא עילאה לתהומא ארעאה תתאה קרי לקל זלחי 42:8 *The upper deep calls to the lower deep, at the sound of the pouring of spouts – thus all your breakers and waves passed over me at the time we came forth from Egypt. (EMC)* and the Septuagint states 42:7 ἄβυσσος ἄβυσσον ἐπικαλεῖται εἰς φωνὴν τῶν καταρρακτῶν σου πάντες οἱ μετεωρισμοὶ σου καὶ τὰ κύματά σου ἐπ’ ἐμὲ διῆλθον 42:7 *Deep calls to deep at the voice of thy cataracts: all thy billows and thy waves have gone over me. (LXX)* It is interesting

that the Aramaic Targum states *תהומא עילאה לתהומא ארעאה* using these words *עילאה* meaning “upper or supreme, highest, exalted” and *ארעאה* meaning “lower or terrestrial” could this be a reference to the Lord calling down to earth? Thinking Kabbalistically could this be a rabbinic reference to the Keter (crown) calling down to the Malkhut (kingdom) through the sefirot? Also, something to consider, Kabbalah proposes that the human soul has three elements, the nefesh, ruach, and neshamah:

- **Nefesh** (נפש): the lower part of the soul. It is linked to instincts and bodily cravings. This part of the soul is provided at birth. This is the part of the soul the yetzer harah is birthed, from the fleshly desires.
- **Ruach** (רוח): the middle soul, the “spirit.” It contains the moral virtues and the ability to distinguish between good and evil.
- **Neshamah** (נשמה): the higher soul, or “upper soul.” This separates man from all other life-forms. It is related to the intellect and allows man to enjoy and benefit from the afterlife. It allows one to have some awareness of the existence, presence, and interaction with God.

Could this “upper deep” calling to the “lower deep” be a reference to the “upper soul” (Neshamah) calling to the “lower soul” (Nefesh)? There is an obvious linking to the Yetzer Harah and the Tetzzer Hatov, the evil and good inclination calling to one another or the one becoming known to the other which one could drash on extensively. (For example, reread the study on *Tehillim / Psalms 34* regarding the Yetzer Harah and Hatov and make a comparison). Note also how the Aramaic Targum states “thus all your breakers and waves passed over me at the time we came forth from Egypt.” This suggests a reference to the parting of the red sea. The reference to the red sea may also be directing us to the mercy of God to deliver His people. This most likely a safe conclusion based upon the following verse in *Tehillim / Psalms 42:8* *The Lord will command His lovingkindness in the daytime; And His song will be with me in the night, A prayer to the God of my life.* (NASB, ט יומם | יצונה יהוה | חסדו ובלילה שירה [שירו] עמי תפלה לאל חי:). The Lord commands “His Grace” (חסדו) during the day and “His song” (שירו) at night. What does it mean that the Lord “commands” His lovingkindness in the daytime and “His song” will be with me at night? Is His lovingkindness something that goes forth in a way that is separate from Himself? The verse is literally translated as “By day the Lord will command his mercy,” in other words, the Lord will order His mercy or favor in the day time suggesting that relief and the day of deliverance is coming. The Psalmist has the expectation that the Lord will turn His face towards him and bring prosperity, hope, and better days. Jonah speaks about these things when he was in the belly of the whale:

Jonah 2:1-7

2:1 Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the stomach of the fish, 2:2 and he said, ‘I called out of my distress to the Lord, And He answered me. I cried for help from the depth of Sheol; You heard my voice. 2:3 ‘For You had cast me into the deep, Into the heart of the seas, And the current engulfed me. All Your breakers and billows passed over me. 2:4 ‘So I said, ‘I have been expelled from Your sight. Nevertheless I will look again toward Your holy temple.’ 2:5 ‘Water encompassed me to the point of death. The great deep engulfed me, Weeds were wrapped around my head. 2:6 ‘I descended to the roots of the mountains. The earth with its bars was around me forever, But You have brought up my life from the pit, O Lord my God. 2:7 ‘While I was fainting away, I remembered the Lord, And my prayer came to You, Into Your holy temple. (NASB)

Note that Jonah, son of Amittai, lived in a period after King David and his name appears in *2 Kings 14:25*

as a prophet from Gath-hepher (*a few miles north of Nazareth*) during the reign of Jeroboam (786-746 BC), where he predicts that Jeroboam will recover certain lost territories. Therefore, Jonah may very well be aware of David’s words in *Tehillim / Psalms 42*. Jonah speaks of his own punishment from God and being cast into the deep which is the heart of the seas. Jonah states that the Lord heard his prayer and delivered his life from the pit. This seems to parallel the concept in *Tehillim / Psalms 42* that the Lord commanded His mercy and caused the whale to spit Jonah up on the beach.

The Psalmist continues saying: *אִמְרָה י' 42:9 | לָאֵל סִלְעֵי לָמָּה שָׁכַחְתָּנִי לָמָּה-קִדְרַת אֱלֹהִים בְּלַחֲץ אוֹיֵב: I will say to God my rock, 'Why have You forgotten me? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?'* (NASB) Who is the enemy that is being referred to? Note the psalmist asks why “koder” (קִדְרַת) why has his soul become “darkened, obscured, depressed, or gloomy?” In *Tehillim / Psalms 35:14* David said: *כָּרַעַתְּ כָּאִמָּה-לִי הַתְהַלֵּלְתָּנִי כְּאָבִל-אִם קִדְרַת שְׁחֹתִי: 35:14 I went about as though it were my friend or brother; I bowed down mourning, as one who sorrows for a mother.* (NASB) Based upon *Tehillim / Psalms 35:14*, the idea is that of being bowed down, made sad, deeply afflicted, as one who is forsaken. The psalmist states that he is oppressed by the enemy which may be a reference here to Absalom who drove David from his kingdom and his throne. The oppression (בְּלַחֲץ, “pressure, duress; stress, strain”) of the enemy caused David to be distressed and in the midst of his depression the psalmist turns to prayer. Despite his situation he trusts the Lord to deliver him from his sorrow so that he may enter the Tabernacle (or Temple) and praise Him once again.

The Psalm concludes saying: *יֵא בְרָצָח | בְּעֲצָמוֹתַי תִּרְפוּנִי צוֹרְרֵי בְּאִמְרָם אֵלַי כָּל-הַיּוֹם אֵינָה אֶלְהֵיךָ: יב 42:10 As a shattering of my bones, my adversaries revile me, While they say to me all day long, 'Where is your God?' 42:11 Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him, The help of my countenance and my God.* (NASB) According to the Psalmist, the enemy has the power to shatter bones and while at the same time asking the question “where is your God” which is an accusation against the Lord Himself. It is interesting that he says “as a shattering of my bones, my adversaries revile me.” Throughout the Hebrew bible, “bones” may be used as a hyperbole to refer to a living person (*Micah 3:2, Job 10:11, Job 19:20, Lamentations 4:8, Psalm 102:6, and Ecclesiastes 11:5, Brown Driver Briggs*) and may also be used figuratively of a close relationship (*Bereshit / Genesis 2:23*). Written in its plural form may represent the entire person (one’s whole being). Absalom was close to his father David in the sense that he was his son. Absalom on the other hand did not obey the Torah and dishonored his Father. The psalmist states that even in the midst of our sorrows, we are to hope in the “Salvation” (יְשׁוּעָה) of God. *Tehillim / Psalms 42* is telling us that even in the midst of troubles, we are to develop a capacity to adjust and follow through standing firm in what the Lord God has commanded. We may have not experienced the challenges of the great men of faith in the Scriptures (i.e. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph), we will however face our own set of difficulties. The Lord has given us the unique ability (capacity) to rise above our circumstances with His help. Until we come to terms with this, that our hope is found in the Lord, we will never cultivate happiness. The key to success is to rest in the knowledge that God is ultimately in control. This appears to be what the psalmist is confident in. In the pages of the Torah and the Psalms of David, we are given a future expectation that God was going to send His Messiah into the world to fulfill the covenantal promises. Studying the Scriptures, we know that our Father in heaven has revealed Himself to us in many ways. Each of these ways God revealed himself established a precedent looking forward to the Messiah so that “in these last days He has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.” (*Hebrews 1:2*) so that we may know Him and fellowship with Him. The point of the Psalm, is to hold on to the hope that we have in the Lord and in His deliverer (יְשׁוּעָה, Yeshua). Though life comes with many twists and turns, the one thing is for sure, we can trust in the Living Word of God, Yeshua the Messiah, and rest in the sure and solid foundation of our faith. Let’s pray.

Rabbinic Commentary

The Rabbinic Commentary (Midrash) on *Tehillim / Psalms 42* has 6 parts. Reading through the Midrash we will be looking at Part 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7. Let's begin by outlining *Midrash Tehillim Chapter 42, Part 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7.*

Outline of Midrash Tehillim / Psalms, Chapter 42, Part 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7

Part 1

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*For the leader; Maskil (the wisdom) of the sons of Korah.*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*These words are to be considered in the light of the verse, To the wise (Maskil) the way of life is above (Mishley / Proverbs 15:24)*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis go on to expand upon David's words regarding the deer that pants after water brooks.
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal), the rabbis parallel the deer that pants for water to the sons of Korach who called out to the Holy One blessed be He.
- The Concluding phrase says “*In another comment, the verse is read, As the hind pants even as the hind pants for the Holy One blessed be He, so did Esther say, I am as a hind, hasten to help me (Tehillim / Psalms 22:20).*”

Part 2

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*Israel is asked, for what do you thirst?*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis say Israel neither thirsts for food or drink.
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal), the rabbis say the thirsting is for the face (presence) of God.
- The Concluding phrase says “*Hence, it is said, My soul thirsts for God, for the living God (Tehillim / Psalms 42:3).*”

Part 3

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*My tears have been my food (Tehillim / Psalms 42:4).*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*From this one learns that trouble so fills up a man that he does not want to eat.*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis speak about eating and crying.
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal), the rabbis ask the question why do you cry?
- The Concluding phrase says “*From this verse it follows that weeping fills one up. Hence, My tears have been my food.*”

Part 4

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*These things I*

remember, and pour out my soul within me (Tehillim / Psalms 42:5)."

- The פתיחתא (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*I recall what You did to our fathers in the wilderness, because they said, These things be your gods, O Israel (Shemot / Exodus 32:4)*”
- The משל (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis go on to expand upon David’s paralleling the going up before the Lord during the festival of Succot to the pouring out of the soul within.
- The נמשל (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the משל (mashal), the rabbis say they traveled as a litter in shade under a succa and the nations were struck dumb in the presence of God (i.e. when the Temple stood).
- The Concluding phrase says “*In the phrase, A multitude hogeg, what is meant by hogeg? It come s from the Greek agogos, and means aqueduct, thus like the water of an aqueduct which has no definite limit, there was no limit to the multitude of the children of Israel as they came up to the festivals. Hence, it is said, A multitude overflowing (hogeg).*”

Part 5

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why do you moan within me? Hope in God; for I will yet praise Him for the salvation of His countenance (Tehillim / Psalms 42:6).*”
- The פתיחתא (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*By this verse is meant, I will not praise Him as I have before, for working miracles for our fathers*”
- The משל (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis go on to expand upon David’s words on the downcast of the soul.
- The נמשל (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the משל (mashal), the rabbis parallel being downcast to being cast down because of jealousy over the nations.
- The Concluding phrase says “*As Scripture says, By day the Lord will command His lovingkindness, as in the night His song will be with me (Tehillim / Psalms 42:9).*”

Part 6

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*I will say unto God my Rock, Why have You forgotten me? (Tehillim / Psalms 42:10).*”
- The פתיחתא (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*They who were in Egypt obeyed but a single commandment and went forth that very night; but what of me?*”
- The משל (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis parallel the Lord as our Rock to the meodim on the month of Aviv (Pesach).
- The נמשל (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the משל (mashal), the rabbis speak of going before God and there is no resulting deliverance from our enemies.
- The Concluding phrase says “*Accordingly, I say unto God my Rock, why have You forgotten me? (Tehillim / Psalms 42:10).*”

Midrash Tehillim 42, Part 1 opens with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*For the leader; Maskil (the wisdom) of the sons of Korah.*” The homiletic introduction (פתיחתא, Petihta) to the Midrash says “*These words are to be considered in the light of the verse, To the wise (Maskil) the way of life is above (Mishley / Proverbs 15:24)*” Why do the rabbis parallel Davids words to Mishley / Proverbs 15:24? According to the introductory line to Tehillim / Psalms 42, David says “*For the leader; Maskil of the sons of Korach.*” (א) לְמִנְצֵחַ מְשֻׁכֵּיל לְבָנֵי-קֹרַח: The word Maskil (מְשֻׁכֵּיל) means “*educated, learned, enlightened, wise,*” and the rabbis pick up on this word and say to the wise the way of life is above. The reason they

כד אַרְחָ חַיִּים לְמַעַלָּה לְמַשְׁכִּיל Mishley / Proverbs 15:24 לְמַעַן סוּר מִשְׂאוֹל מָטָה: quote from Proverbs is we find the same word in *Mishley / Proverbs 15:24 The path of life leads upward for the wise That he may keep away from Sheol below. (NASB)* These words seem to faintly echo the Apostle Paul in *Philippians 3:20* and *Colossians 3:1-2*.

Philippians 3:16-21

3:16 however, let us keep living by that same standard to which we have attained. 3:17 Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us. 3:18 For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, 3:19 whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things. 3:20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; 3:21 who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself. (NASB)

Colossians 3:2-1

3:1 Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 3:2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. (NASB)

Wisdom is from above and is given by God to all of those who seek it. Paul says that our citizenship is in heaven and to keep seeking the things from above and that we are to set our minds on things from above and not on the things that are on the earth. The idea may be that the introductory phrase the “*Maskil of the sons of Korach*” is setting the stage for the entire psalm: the longing for God, the tears of sorrow, seeking the Lord to save us, to deliver our souls from sorrow, the lovingkindness and mercy of God, deliverance from our enemies and salvation in God’s presence. The wisdom (Maskil) that is from above causes us to consistently turn towards the Lord and to seek His help and guidance. With this in mind, the psalm introduces the deer that pants for water brooks (*Tehillim / Psalms 42:2*).

The midrash seems to take issue with the way the sons of Korach wrote the psalm. The midrash states the following:

As the deer pants after the water brooks (Tehillim / Psalms 42:2). What is meant by the words as the deer pants? The verse does not say, as the kind, but as the deer pants; furthermore, the noun is masculine, but the form of the verb is feminine. Thus, the deer suffering pain in her labor, and panting to the Holy One blessed be He, who answers her, stands for the sons of Korach calling in their trouble to the Holy One blessed be He, who answered them. Hence, it is said, As the deer pants. What is meant by the words after the water brooks? The hind is the most God fearing of animals, and so when the animals are thirsty, the gather near the hind. (Midrash Tehillim 42, Part 1)

כאיל תערוג על אפיקי מים. מהו כאיל תערוג, כאילת אינו אומר, אלא כאיל תערוג, זכר ונקבה, מה האיילה הזו כשהיא יושבת על המשבר היא מצטערה ועורגת להקב"ה, והוא עונה אליה, כך קראו בני קרח מצרה להקב"ה, והוא עונה אותם, לכך נאמר כאיל תערוג. [על אפיקי מים]. מהו על אפיקי מים, האיילה הזו חסידה שבחיות, בזמן שהחיות צמאות הן מתכנסות אצל האיילה, וכו' למעלה.

The rabbis asks the question “What is meant by the words as the deer pants?” (מהו כאיל תערוג) They state that the verse does not say “hind/roe” (כאילת) but it says “deer” (איל). They conclude that the hind is the most God fearing of the animals. Why is the hind or roe the most God fearing of the animals? When studying these creatures, the hind or roe after being born is very vulnerable to predators. They cannot run and

they have no defenses. In the very early part of their lives, the roe/hind hides in the deep grass from predators and it may be said they trust in the Lord to save them because they know that they are small and weak.

ב כַּאֲזֵל תַּעְרַג עַל-אֶפְקַי-מַיִם בֶּן נַפְשִׁי תַּעְרַג 42:2 *The rabbis discuss the verse in Tehillim / Psalms 42:2* אֲזֵל תַּעְרַג עַל-אֶפְקַי-מַיִם בֶּן נַפְשִׁי תַּעְרַג 42:1 *As the deer pants for the water brooks, So my soul pants for You, O God. (NASB)* saying that the noun is masculine but the form of the verb is feminine and conclude that the deer suffers pain in her labor and seeks the Holy One blessed be He for help. This is paralleled to the sons of Korach who sought the help of the Lord in their trouble who answered them. When did the sons of Korach seek the Lord for help? When thinking about the sons of Korach, we are reminded of Parashat Korach (*Bamidbar / Numbers 16:1-17:15*). In Parashat Korach, we read that Korach, Datan, and Aviram rose up and assembled themselves against Moshe and against Aharon and questioned whether their role as priests was really the will of God (ב וַיִּקְמוּ לְפָנַי מִשֶּׁה וְאֲנָשִׁים מִבְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל חֲמִשִּׁים וּמְאַתָּהִים נְשִׂאֵי עֵדָה קְרָאִי מוֹעֵד אֲנָשֵׁי-שָׁם). Two hundred and fifty men went to offer incense by fire before the Lord. As a result, the entire assemble of men died by fire that proceeded from the Lord God because of their sin. The entire camp of Korach, Datan, and Aviram were also swallowed up in the earth going down to the grave alive. After these things, the congregation (sons of Israel) complained against Moshe and Aaron and a plague broke out in their midst. Moshe told Aaron to take a censor filled with burning incense and stand in the gap between the dead and the living. Parashat Korach speaks of a rebellious Spirit against Moshe, Aaron, and God. The midrash on the other hand speaks of the faithfulness of the sons of Korach who sought the Lord. In the Torah portion, the people did not appear to understand that rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft (*1 Samuel 15:23*). The peoples response over the death of Korach, Datan, and Aviram is recorded in *Bamidbar / Numbers 17:6* in the Hebrew translation and *16:41* in the English translation וַיִּלְנוּ כָּל-עֵדַת בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל מִמִּחַרַת עַל-מִשֶּׁה וְעַל-אַהֲרֹן לֵאמֹר אַתֶּם הֵמְתֶם אֶת-יְהוָה: *16:41 But on the next day all the congregation of the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron, saying, ‘You are the ones who have caused the death of the Lord’s people.’ (NASB)* The second sin of rebellion causes the Lord to say הֲרַמּוּ מִתּוֹךְ הָעֵדָה הַזֹּאת וְאֲכַלְהָ אֶתֶם כְּרָגַע וַיִּפְּלוּ עַל-פְּנֵיהֶם “*part from the midst of the congregation so that I can consume them.*” Rebellion and having a rebellious spirit before the Lord is certain death. Does our spirit today exhibit aspects of rebellion like Israel in the wilderness or like the deer that pants for water and the one who longs for the Lord? Is the title of *Tehillim / Psalms 42* rhetorical in the sense that the sons of Korach, they were not really Wise (Maskil)? The midrash does not really give an answer to these questions. We know that Korach’s family line did not cease to exist based upon the genealogy and the fact that David assigned some of them to the Temple service. This is related to David and not necessarily to the wisdom of the sons of Korach. Midrash Tehillim 42, Part 1 concludes saying “*In another comment, the verse is read, As the hind pants even as the hind pants for the Holy One blessed be He, so did Esther say, I am as a hind, hasten to help me (Tehillim / Psalms 22:20).*”

Midrash Tehillim 42, Part 2 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying “*My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.*” The homiletic introduction to the Midrash says “*Israel is asked, for what do you thirst?*” The entire midrash states the following:

מדרש תהלים פרק מב סימן ב	Midrash Tehillim 42, Part 2
ב צמאה נפשי לאלהים. ממה את צמאה, אמרה להם איני צמאה לא לאכול ולא לשתות, אני צמאה לראות פניך, לך אמר לבי בקשו פני את פניך ה' אבקש (שם תהלים כז ח), לכך נאמר צמאה נפשי לאלהים לאל חי.	2. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. Israel is asked, for what do you thirst? She replies, I thirst neither for food or for drink, I thirst to see Your face, as is said, My heart said unto You, Your face, Lord, will I seek (Tehillim / Psalms 27:8). Hence, it is said, My soul thirsts for God, for the living God (Tehillim / Psalms 42:3).

According to Parashat Mishpatim in *Shemot / Exodus 23:14-17*, we are told the men of Israel were to appear before the Lord three times a year. The psalm is a description of the distance of David from the Tabernacle in Shiloh and is asking the Lord to hear his prayer, to not forsake his servant, etc. Here in *Tehillim / Psalms*

42:3, David says that his soul thirsts for the living God. Do we characterize our lives like David is doing here in the psalm? David's soul thirsts for the Lord and he is thirsting for His presence. In his day, in order to seek the presence of the Lord, did David need to go to Shiloh to the Tabernacle? Today, what are we to do? In *John 4:19-26* we read Yeshua had something to say on this topic.

John 4:19-26

4:19 The woman said to Him, 'Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. 4:20 'Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.' 4:21 Jesus said to her, 'Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. 4:22 'You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. 4:23 'But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. 4:24 'God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.' 4:25 The woman said to Him, 'I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us.' 4:26 Jesus said to her, 'I who speak to you am He.' (NASB)

Yeshua was speaking to the woman at the well in Samaria and said that she worships what she does not know and that the Jews worship what they do know, and he states that “*Salvation is from the Jews*” (*John 4.22*). Saying what he did about salvation being from the Jews, is it surprising what the Judaizers were teaching to the Galatians? Yeshua then says “*an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers.*” (*John 4:23*) Does this mean that the Temple mount has no significance for us as believers today? Based upon what Yeshua said about worshiping the Lord in spirit and truth, we can approach the Lord in prayer, including His presence, that is not geographically limited. David had a desire to go before the Lord at the Tabernacle to dwell in His presence, because he felt exiled from God's presence because of his enemies. Today there are many circumstances that can make it seem as if we are far off from the Lord and that our Father in Heaven is far from us. We become distant by reason of sin in our lives. Because of sin we too can feel exiled, distant, far off, etc. This was the purpose of the coming of the Messiah, to deliver us from sin and to reestablish our relationship with God. Midrash Tehillim 42, Part 2 concludes saying “*Hence, it is said, My soul thirsts for God, for the living God (Tehillim / Psalms 42:3).*” In your daily prayer life, do you have the same thirst and excitement for His presence and ask “*When can I go and meet with the Lord?*” Are you excited to meet with the Lord each day to see what He has for you or to see what He will do in this new day?

Midrash Tehillim 42, Part 3 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying “*My tears have been my food (Tehillim / Psalms 42:4).*” The homiletic introduction to the Midrash says “*From this one learns that trouble so fills up a man that he does not want to eat.*”

<p>מדרש תהלים פרק מב סימן ג</p> <p>ג היתה לי דמעתי לחם. מיכן אתה למד שהצרה מש- בעה את האדם ואינו מבקש לאכול, וכן אלקנה אמר חנה למה תבכי ולמה לא תאכלי (ש"א שמואל א' א ה), מיכן שהבכיה משביע, לכך נאמר היתה לי דמעתי לחם.</p>	<p>Midrash Tehillim 42, Part 3</p> <p>3. My tears have been my food (Tehillim / Psalms 42:4). From this one learns that trouble so fills up a man that he does not want to eat. As Elkanah said to Hanna, Why do you cry and why do you not eat? (1 Samuel 1:8). From this verse it follows that weeping fills one up. Hence, My tears have been my food.</p>
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Notice that the Midrash states that the one who has trouble is filled up to the point of not wanting to eat. Later on the Midrash states that it is weeping that fills one up and as the psalmist states “*My tears have been my food*” (*Tehillim / Psalms 42:4*). The psalm is a prayer seeking the Lord and when we think about prayer and not eating, “*Fasting*” comes to mind. Fasting throughout the Scriptures has been an important part of the prayer life of the great men of faith and even Yeshua himself. Fasting is used as a means for humbling

our body and soul for the purpose of seeking God and His presence, seeking an answer, or seeking something very specific in prayer. In the Midrash, the rabbis are discussing the concept that sorrow and trouble that results in weeping can cause one not to have a desire to eat (ואינו מבקש לאכול). Fasting on the other hand is an intentional action to show our desire to yield our bodily desires to God's Holy Spirit, to order our lives, to exercise self discipline, to sacrifice something for the purpose of devoting ourselves to prayer and seeking our Father in Heaven. Midrash Tehillim 42, Part 3 concludes saying *"From this verse it follows that weeping fills one up. Hence, My tears have been my food."* The example the Midrash gives is of Hanna who desired a baby who was so sorrowful that she would not eat (1 Samuel 1:8). Her praying and weeping at the Tabernacle caused Eli to speak to her about being drunken. She was not drunk but in fervent prayer and the Lord heard her prayer and enabled her to have a child. The point of the Midrash appears to be to get us thinking on the topic of sorrow, prayer, and seeking God for help.

Midrash Tehillim 42, Part 4 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying *"These things I remember, and pour out my soul within me (Tehillim / Psalms 42:5)."* The homiletic introduction to the Midrash says *"I recall what You did to our fathers in the wilderness, because they said, These things be your gods, O Israel (Shemot / Exodus 32:4)"* The rabbis mention Parashat Ki Tisa (Shemot / Exodus 30:11-34:35) when the children of Israel asked Aaron to build them a golden calf and the thing that God did, causing some of the people to die because of their sin. The Midrash states *"and recalling what You did, my soul pours out within me"* (ואני נזכרת ונשפכת נפשי) because their brothers and sisters were dying as a result of their sin. The Midrash continues saying the following:

"Another comment, I recall that Moshe said, These things will you do unto the Lord in your set festivals (Bamidbar / Numbers 29:39). When I traveled the land in shade I struck them dumb for as long as the house of God was standing (Tehillim / Psalms 42:5). What is meant by the words in shade (sak)? They mean that when we went up to the festivals to see Your face, we traveled in litters that had shades, resembling a sukkah; and we came, we and our children, in such a great throng that the nations were struck dumb in our presence. When I traveled the land in shade I struck them dumb for as long as the house of God was standing, that is, as long as the Temple was standing, the nations were struck dumb in my presence. But now I am struck dumb in their presence. Hence the words, I struck them dumb for as long as the house of God was standing. With the voice of joy and praise. When I traveled the land, how did I travel? With the voice of joy and praise, with son, with cymbals, and with shouts of joy. Hence the phrase, with the voice of joy." (Midrash Tehillim 42, Part 4)

דבר אחר נזכרת אני מה שאמר משה, אלה תעשו לה' במועדיכם (במדבר כט לט). כי אעבור בסך אדם עד בית אלהים. מהו בסך, כשעולים לרגלים לראות פניך בסקפסטאות כמין סוכה, והיינו באין אנו ובנינו בחיל גדול, והאומות דוממות בפנינו, לכך נאמר כי אעבור בסך אדם עד בית אלהים, כשהיה בית המקדש קיים היו דוממים מלפני, ועכשיו אני דוממת לפניהם, לכן אדם עד בית אלהים. בקול רנה ותודה. כשהייתי עוברת במה הייתי עוברת, בקול רנה ותודה ושיר וצלצלים ותרועה, לכך נאמר בקול רנה.

The rabbis are continuing the thought of coming into the presence of God at the Tabernacle and reference Moshe who instructed on what should be done during the set festivals (Bamidbar / Numbers 29:39 *'You shall present these to the Lord at your appointed times, besides your votive offerings and your freewill offerings, for your burnt offerings and for your grain offerings and for your drink offerings and for your peace offerings.'* NASB) They go on to speak of going up before the Lord in shades, how the nations were struck dumb in the presence of Israel, and this occurred because of the presence of the Tabernacle. They go on to repeat that the nations were struck dumb in Israel's presence and now the psalmist is struck dumb in the presence of the nations. The rabbis repeat that *"I struck them dumb for as long as the house of God was*

standing.” How are the nations struck dumb (*mute, unable to speak*) in our presence? What exactly are the rabbis trying to say here in the Midrash with regard to “*These things I remember, and pour out my soul within me (Tehillim / Psalms 42:5)?*” The Midrash sort of answers that question, saying “*With the voice of joy and praise. When I traveled the land, how did I travel? With the voice of joy and praise, with son, with cymbals, and with shouts of joy. Hence the phrase, with the voice of joy.*” The Midrash states that the voice of joy and praise causes the nations to be quiet (*dumb, mute, unable to speak*). How does this happen? There may be a biblical example found in *1 Samuel 4:4-8*.

1 Samuel 4:4-8

4:4 So the people sent to Shiloh, and from there they carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord of hosts who sits above the cherubim; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God. 4:5 As the ark of the covenant of the Lord came into the camp, all Israel shouted with a great shout, so that the earth resounded. 4:6 When the Philistines heard the noise of the shout, they said, ‘What does the noise of this great shout in the camp of the Hebrews mean? Then they understood that the ark of the Lord had come into the camp. 4:7 The Philistines were afraid, for they said, ‘God has come into the camp.’ And they said, ‘Woe to us! For nothing like this has happened before. 4:8 ‘Woe to us! Who shall deliver us from the hand of these mighty gods? These are the gods who smote the Egyptians with all kinds of plagues in the wilderness. (NASB)

ד וישלח העם שלה וישאו משם את ארון ברית-יהוה צבאות ישב הכרבים ושם שני בני-עלי עם-ארון ברית האלהים חפני ופינקס: ה ויהי כבוא ארון ברית-יהוה אל-המחנה וירעו כל-ישראל תרועה גדולה ותהם הארץ: ו וישמעו פלשתים את-קול התרועה ויאמרו מה קול התרועה הגדולה הזאת במחנה העברים וידעו כי ארון יהוה בא אל-המחנה: ז ויראו הפלשתים כי אמרו בא אלהים אל-המחנה ויאמרו אוי לנו כי לא היתה כזאת אתמול שלשם: ח אוי לנו מי יצילנו מיד האלהים האדירים האלה הם האלהים המכים את-מצרים בכל-מכה במדבר:

When the Ark of the covenant of God came into the camp, all Israel shouted and the Philistines heard the noise and the shout for joy and they trembled. The shouting for joy caused them to become silent and cease their boasting. What about today in this present age? If we are joyful, no matter the circumstance, not complaining, not worrying, always having a good word for everyone, praising the Lord, and keeping His praises upon our lips, would this not silence those who would have a desire to see us hurt? Would this not cause the enemy to be struck “*dumb*” (אדם) in our presence? The description in the Midrash speaks of the people who go up before the Lord during the moedim (appointed times) with joy, shouts, and song in their hearts and on their lips. The Torah states that this should happen three times a year during God’s three major festivals (Pesach, Shavuot, and Succot). Midrash Tehillim 42, Part 4 concludes saying “*In the phrase, A multitude hogue, what is meant by hogue? It comes from the Greek agogos, and means aqueduct, thus like the water of an aqueduct which has no definite limit, there was no limit to the multitude of the children of Israel as they came up to the festivals. Hence, it is said, A multitude overflowing (hogue).*” In the concluding phrase the rabbis draw a parallel to an aqueduct, water, and no limit to the number of people coming to God’s festivals. The unlimited number of people bears the statement of “*unlimited praises.*” Our lives should be characterized as that of praise unto the Lord no matter the circumstance. This is exactly what the Apostle Paul was saying in his letter to the Thessalonians.

1 Thessalonians 5:11-21

5:11 Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing. 5:12 But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction, 5:13 and that you esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Live in peace with one another. 5:14

We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone. 5:15 See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for all people. 5:16 Rejoice always; 5:17 pray without ceasing; 5:18 in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. 5:19 Do not quench the Spirit; 5:20 do not despise prophetic utterances. 5:21 But examine everything carefully hold fast to that which is good; (NASB)

Paul says give thanks (rejoice) always (5:15-18) and pray with without ceasing. Giving thanks is God's will for us in Yeshua the Messiah. Paul's statements in *1 Thessalonians 5* appears to be a direct parallel to Midrash Tehillim 42, Part 4.

Midrash Tehillim 42, Part 5 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתהיל) saying “*Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why do you moan within me? Hope in God; for I will yet praise Him for the salvation of His countenance (Tehillim / Psalms 42:6).*” The homiletic introduction to the Midrash states “*By this verse is meant, I will not praise Him as I have before, for working miracles for our fathers...*” The Midrash continues saying the following:

Now I will praise Him again because He will save me again from the nations. Hence, it is said I will yet praise Him. O My God, my soul is cast down within me (Tehillim / Psalms 42:7). The congregation of Israel said, I am envious and cast down when I see the prosperity of the nations. Yes, I am angry. But You of what concern is it to You? You O Lord, are enthroned forever; Your throne is from generation to generation (Lamentations 5:19); as Scripture says, Honor and majesty are before Him; strength and gladness are in His place (1 Chronicles 16:27). Of what concern is it to You? But as for me, my soul is cast down within me. Thereupon do I remember You from the land of Jordan (Tehillim / Psalms 42:7), that is, I remember what You did for me when I crossed the Jordan. Even when we provoked You at Shittim, You worked miracles for us in bringing us across the Jordan, as it is said, And Joshua rose up early in the morning, and they removed from Shittim, and came to the Jordan (Joshua 3:1). When I remember my troubles and your miracles, I think of other doubts of You in the past, as when it was said, the Lord is not able to bring this people into the land (Bamidbar / Numbers 14:16), as if to ask, Where is the Spirit? And where is the mighty? And it was said in the house of Jacob, is the Spirit of the Lord straitened? (Michah 2:7). Then I said, My infirmity is the changing of the right hand of the Most High (Tehillim / Psalms 77:11). What can be meant by the phrase my infirmity? That there is infirmity above? That the right hand of the Most high is changed? No, for the Holy One blessed be He, says, behold the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save (Isaiah 59:1). (Midrash Tehillim 42, Part 5)

The rabbis speak of not praising the Lord as has been done before speaking of praising God for the working of miracles that God had performed for our fathers. The rabbis are looking for the Lord to do something new, to save them from a new set of enemies, and to work in their lives. Based upon the way the Midrash is written, the rabbis speak of how the soul of the psalmist is cast down (*Tehillim / Psalms 42:7*) and being envious of the nations seeing their prosperity, how the Lord is not concerned because His throne is eternal and how majesty, joy, gladness are always before Him. They then remember the miracles God had performed for their fathers and a reference is given to the book of Joshua how the Lord divided the Jordan river for the nation of Israel to cross over into the Promised Land. The question is whether God's promises to Israel are also amendable to the psalmist for salvation from his enemy? Doubting the Lord's ability to save is synonymous to doubting the power (might) and presence (Spirit) of God to deliver the people into the Promised Land (see Parashat Shelach). In addition to this they mention Parashat Beha'alotcha and the people complaining to Moshe about their not having bread or meat to eat in the desert (*Bamidbar / Numbers 11*). Because of the people's complaints, Moshe went doubtfully before the Lord and the Lord replied saying “*Is the Lord's hand short? Now you shall see whether My word will come true for you or not.*” - וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵל-

מִלֶּשֶׁה הַיַּד יְהוָה תִּקְצָר עִתָּהּ תִּרְאֶה הַיְקָרָה דְּכָרִי אִם-לֹא (Bamidbar / Numbers 11:23) The point is that we should not doubt God and we need to live by faith using Moshe's conversation here in Parashat Beha'alotcha to understand that the Lord is able to do anything. Midrash Tehillim 42, Part 5 concludes stating the following:

Behold, You did command our fathers that they should kill the Pesach Lamb. When they killed the Pesach Lamb, they obeyed but a single command, and yet they went forth in the night out of Egypt. As Scripture says, By day the Lord will command His lovingkindness, as in the night His song will be with me (Tehillim / Psalms 42:9). (Midrash Tehillim 42, Part 5)

מִרְצַמֵּם וְאֵצִי הַלֵּילֵב חִסְפָּה תָא וְטַחְשׁוּ, וְשַׁע תַּחַּא הוּצַמ, חִסְפָּה תָא וְטַחְשִׁישׁ מִתְיוּצַ מִתָּא אֱלֹהוּ,
יִמַע הַרִישׁ הַלֵּילְבוּ וְדַסָּה יְהוָה הוּצִי מִמּוֹי רְמוּא אֹוֹה נְכוּ.

The rabbis say that by the merit of the Pesach Lamb, obedience to one command, the Lord delivered the people from the Egyptians and they went forth from Slavery. In all of these verses coupled with the Midrash that we have been looking at, are the rabbis saying the Lord God is asking our help to save us from our sins? In Parashat Ha'azinu (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:6*), did Moshe write because we observe the Torah, the Lord our Father has purchased us (אֲבִיךָ קָנָה הוּא) and that He has established (לְכוֹנֵן) us (עֲשֵׂה וְיִכְנֹנֶה)? In the Midrash, what is the point of the rabbis? The point is to seek the Lord for help, and to remember what He has done in the past for our Fathers and believe He is able to do the same for us today. The Torah command is related to our relationship with the Lord because he lives in our midst and therefore we need to be reminded to in justice (מִשְׁפָּט) toward others and in righteous (צְדָקָה) before God. The Lord God Almighty does not ask us to save ourselves from our sins and observance of the Torah according to Parashat Ki Tisa and Parashat Vayak'hel (i.e. *Shemot / Exodus 34*) was not meant for enabling God to drive the enemy out of the Promised Land. According to the Torah, it is the act of willful unrighteousness after having been saved (already being in the Land) that causes the people to lose their place. This concept is similar to the Apostles teachings in the Apostolic Writings on willful sin and salvation (see *Ephesians 5:11, 2 Corinthians 6:14, 1 John 1*, etc). The purpose of the mitzvot was to be made aware of sin and to stay clear of it and to live as a holy people before the Lord because we are already a chosen people and saved.

Midrash Tehillim 42, Part 6 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דִּבְרוֹר הַמַּתְחִיל) saying “*I will say unto God my Rock, Why have You forgotten me? (Tehillim / Psalms 42:10).*” The homiletic introduction to the Midrash states “*They who were in Egypt obeyed but a single commandment and went forth that very night; but what of me?*” The rabbis seem to be following up on the last interpretation on the previous Midrash on obedience to a single command (slaughtering the Pesach Lamb). The entire Midrash states the following:

Midrash Tehillim 42, Part 6

I will say unto God my Rock, Why have You forgotten me? (Tehillim / Psalms 42:10). They who were in Egypt obeyed but a single commandment and went forth that very night; but what of me? I obeyed, I have been told, Observe the month of Aviv (Devarim / Deuteronomy 16:1), and so I observed the festival during it and I kept the Pesach during it; and I have been told, You will keep the feast of Shavuot (Devarim / Deuteronomy 16:10), the Feast of Succot (Devarim / Deuteronomy 16:13); and on the tenth day of this seventh month you will have a holy convocation (Bamidbar / Numbers 29:7), and I observe them all. Why the phrase this seventh month? Is there another seventh month? The this, however, means that this is the month of which You say year after year; during the seventh month, the coming of the month of Tishri, I will redeem you. But this Tishri has come and another Tishri as well, and yet You have not redeemed me. Accordingly, I say unto God my Rock, why have You forgotten me? (Tehillim / Psalms 42:10).

ו וְנִמִּיס בַּמִּקְרָא מִלֵּילַת שְׂרָדְמָא

ינא, הלילב ואציו תחא הוצמ אלא ושע אל מירצמב ויהש נתוא. ינתחכש המל יעלס לאל הרמוא ו גחה תא וב השוע ינאו, (א וי מירבד) ביבאה שדח תא רומש, השוע ינא יתיוטצנש תוצמ לכש מירבד מש מש) תוכסה גח, (י ז"ט מירבד מש מש) תועובש גח תישעו, חספה תא וב תרמשמו שי יכו, הזה יעיבשה שדחל והמ, השוע ינאו, (ז טכ רבדמב) הזה יעיבשה שדוחל רושעבו, (בי ז"ט הז, דלאוג ינא אביש הז ירשתב (מירמוא) הנשו הנש לכב יל רמוא התאש אלא, רחא יעיבש שדוח. ינתחכש המל יעלס לאל הרמוא יוה, ינתלאג אלו רחא סגו אב

In the Midrash the Rabbis speak of the Pesach, Shavuot, and Yom Kippur. The Midrash states “*I have been told, Observe the month of Aviv (Devarim / Deuteronomy 16:1)*” The Hebrew word Aviv (אביב) actually translates as the season of “spring.” The phrase “month of Aviv” occurs several times in the Biblical writings (*Shemot / Exodus 34:18*). For example in *Shemot / Exodus 13:4* we read:

Shemot / Exodus 13:3-4

13:3 Moses said to the people, ‘Remember this day in which you went out from Egypt, from the house of slavery; for by a powerful hand the Lord brought you out from this place. And nothing leavened shall be eaten. 13:4 ‘On this day in the month of Abib, you are about to go forth. (NASB)

ג וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל-הָעָם זְכוֹר אֶת-הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר יֵצְאוּתֶם מִמִּצְרַיִם מִבֵּית עַבְדִּים כִּי בַחֹדֶשׁ יָד הוֹצִיא יְהוָה אֶתְכֶם מִזֶּה וְלֹא יֵאָכֵל חֻמֶּץ: ד הַיּוֹם אֲתֶם יֵצְאוּתֶם בַּחֹדֶשׁ הָאָבִיב:

Rashi (Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki) explains the importance of this month and the word Aviv (אביב) “spring:”

“See the loving-kindness that He bestowed upon you, that He took you out in a month in which it is suitable to go out, when there is neither heat nor cold nor rain.”

The word “Aviv” used here in the Torah to describe the month is very significant. “Aviv” is the description of one of the four seasons, and the Pesach (Passover) is always mentioned as being in the “month of Aviv” or in the month of “spring.” The sages explain the significance of Aviv in the Talmud Bavli Sanhedrin 11b and Berakhot 9a.

<p>שמור את חדש האביב: מקור דם בואו שמור, שיהא ראוי לאביב להקריב בו את מנחת העומר, ואם לאו, עבר את השנה:</p>	<p>Talmud Bavli Sanhedrin 11b <i>Keep the month of spring: Heb. אָבִיב. Before it [Nissan] arrives, watch that it should be fit for the אָבִיב, ripening [capable of producing ripe ears of barley by the sixteenth of the month], to offer up in it the omer meal offering. And if not, proclaim it a leap year [thereby enabling you to wait another month, until the barley ripens].</i></p>
<p>ממצרים לילה: והלא ביום יצאו, שנאמר (במדבר לג, ג) ממחרת הפסח יצאו בני ישראל וגו', אלא לפי שבבילה נתן להם פרעה רשות לצאת, שנאמר (שמות יב, לא) ויקרא למשה ולאהרן לילה וגו':</p>	<p>Talmud Bavli Berakhot 9a <i>[for in the month of spring the Lord, your God, brought you] out of Egypt at night: But did they not go out by day, as it is said, “on the morrow of the Passover the children of Israel went out...” (Bamidbar / Numbers 33:3)? However, since during the night Pharaoh gave them permission to leave, as it is said, “So he called for Moses and Aaron at night [and said, ‘Rise up, go out from among my people...]’ ” (Shemot / Exodus 12:31), [therefore, here it says “at night”].</i></p>

They explain based upon the verse from *Devarim / Deuteronomy 16:1*, saying “Guard the month of Aviv, and make [then] the Passover offering,” where the use of “spring” is telling us that we should ensure that Passover will always coincide with the right season, during the Aviv, spring. In Midrash Tehillim 42, Part 6, the rabbis are speaking of keeping Pesach, Shavuot, and deliverance will come on Yom Kippur (month of Tishri) but deliverance as not come year after year. What exactly is the point of the Midrash? Can we say, the point is that observance of the moedim is not meant for us to save ourselves or to get the Lord to do something for us? Observing the moedim functions to remind us of what the Lord has done in the past and we can trust, hope, believe, and seek the Lord for help today. The mitzvot and the moedim direct us to holiness and to the Messiah Yeshua the Holy One of God. The Lord will drive out the enemy, even set our enemies to flight if we are faithful to Him. How do we remain faithful to the Lord? Let’s Pray!

Heavenly Father,

We thank You for these texts that help us to think about our lives, our faith, and our trusting in You. We glorify You and give You Praise because You have always kept Your promises! Help us Lord to be people of faith and let our lives reflect our faithfulness. We need Your help to live transformed lives and to always trust and hope in You. We ask Lord for Your help to produce good fruit by the power of Your Spirit. We ask that You would empower us by Your Spirit to walk in Your ways and to follow Yeshua the Messiah. Help us to walk and abide in Christ as the Scriptures say we are supposed to do. Thank You Lord for sending Your son Yeshua that we may enter into the salvation You have provided. Thank You for helping us to realize that observing the Torah is not a form of salvation by our own hands but the way in which we express our love for You. Thank you for helping us to grow in our faith and know who we are in the Messiah Yeshua. Help us to apply these truths to our lives. We praise Your Holy Name and give You all of the honor, and the glory, and the praise forever and ever.

In Yeshua’s (Jesus’) Name we 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