

ספר תהילים מד | Tehillim / Psalms 44

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Suffering and Atonement

This week's study is from *Tehillim / Psalms 44:1-26*, the Psalm opens saying “*For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. A maskil. 44:1 O God, we have heard with our ears, Our fathers have told us The work that You did in their days, In the days of old.*” (NASB) How have the fathers told David what the Lord did in the days of old? He continues describing what the Lord did saying “*44:2 You with Your own hand drove out the nations; Then You planted them; You afflicted the peoples, Then You spread them abroad. 44:3 For by their own sword they did not possess the land, And their own arm did not save them, But Your right hand and Your arm and the light of Your presence, For You favored them.*” (NASB) David says the Lord brings victories (44:4), He defeats the enemy (44:5), He puts the enemy to shame (44:7), David does not trust in his sword (44:6) but trusts in the Lord and gives Him thanks forever (44:8). The Psalmist then states that the Lord has brought dishonor upon their army (44:10), He has caused them to be scattered and to turn back from their enemy (44:10), He has given them as sheep to be eaten (44:11), the people have been sold cheaply (44:12), He made them to be a reproach to the neighbors (44:13) and to become a byword among the nations (44:14). David says: *44:16 Because of the voice of him who reproaches and reviles, Because of the presence of the enemy and the avenger.* (NASB) Who is he referring to? He says even in the midst of all these things, they have not forgotten the Lord and have not dealt falsely with God's covenant (44:17). What does it mean to deal falsely with the covenant? He continues saying they have not deviated from the way of God (44:18) and have not forgotten the name of their God (44:20). The Lord knows the secret things of the heart (44:21). David says they are killed all day long for the Lord's sake (44:22). Why is their dying all day long for the sake of God? He asks the Lord if He is asleep, to raise up and help (44:23-25). David concludes his Psalm saying: *44:26* asking the Lord to rise up, to help, and to redeem him for the sake of His grace (44:26).

עברית Hebrew

ארמי Aramaic

ελληνικός Greek

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<p>א לְמִנְצֵחַ לְבְנֵי-קָרַח מִשְׁכִּיל: ב אֱלֹהִים בְּאֲזִינֵינוּ שְׁמַעְנוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ סִפְרוּ-לָנוּ פֶּעַל-פְּעֻלָּתְךָ בִּימֵיהֶם בְּיָמֵי קָדְמָם: ג אַתָּה יְדָךְ גּוֹיִם הִרְשַׁפְתָּ וְתַטְעֵם תְּרַע לְאֻמִּים וְתִשְׁלַחֵם: ד כִּי לֹא בְחַרְפָּם יִרְשׁוּ-אֶרֶץ וְזָרוּעֵם לֹא- הוֹשִׁיעָה לָמוּ כִּי-יִמְיָךְ וְזָרוּעָךְ וְאוֹר פְּנֵיךָ כִּי רִצִּיתָם: ה אַתָּה-הוּא מֶלֶכִּי אֱלֹהִים צִוֵּה יְשׁוּעוֹת יַעֲקֹב: ו כָּךְ צָרִינוּ נִגַּח בְּשִׁמְךָ נְבוֹס קַמִּינוּ: ז כִּי לֹא בְקִשְׁתִּי אֶבְטַח וְחַרְבִּי לֹא תוֹשִׁי- עֵינַי: ח כִּי הוֹשַׁעְתָּנוּ מִצָּרֵינוּ וּמִשִׁ- נְאִינוּ הִבִּישׁוֹת:</p>	<p>א לשבחא לדוד על ידיהון דבני קרח שכלא טבא: ב יהוה אלהא באודננא שמענא אבה- תנא אשתעיו לנא עובדא דעבדתא בימיהון ביומיא די מלקדמין: ג אנת את בידא דגבר- רתך עמא עממא כנענאי תרכתא ונצבתנון לבית ישראל בארעהון תברת עמא אומיא ושלחתנון ופסדתנון ד ארום לא בגבר- רת סיפיהון יריתו ארעא ותקוף אדרעהון לא פרקת להון ארום ימינך ואדרע גבר- רתך ונהור זיו יקרך ארום כל זמן דעסיקו באוריתא איתרעיתא בהון: ה אנת את הוא מלכי אלהא בעידנא הדא היהא פקיד פורק- נות דבית יעקב: ו במימרך מעיקנא נגנח בשמך נכבוש כל דקיימין עלנא: ז ארום לא בקשתי אנא רחיץ וסייפי לא תפרוק יתי: ח ארום פריקתנא ממעיקנא ומשנאנא אייתיתא עיליהון בהתא:</p>	<p>44:1 εις τὸ τέλος τοῖς υἱοῖς Κορε εις σύνεσιν ψαλμός ὁ θεός ἐν τοῖς ὤσιν ἡμῶν ἠκούσαμεν οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν ἀνήγγειλαν ἡμῖν ἔργον ὃ εἰργάσω ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις αὐτῶν ἐν ἡμέραις ἀρχαίαις 44:2 ἡ χεὶρ σου ἔθνη ἐξωλόθρευσεν καὶ κατεφύτευσας αὐτοῦς ἐκάκωσας λαοὺς καὶ ἐξέβαλες αὐτοῦς 44:3 οὐ γὰρ ἐν τῇ ῥομφαίᾳ αὐτῶν ἐκκληρονόμησαν γῆν καὶ ὁ βραχίων αὐτῶν οὐκ ἔσωσεν αὐτοῦς ἀλλ' ἡ δεξιὰ σου καὶ ὁ βραχίων σου καὶ ὁ φωτισμὸς τοῦ προσώπου σου ὅτι εὐδόκησας ἐν αὐτοῖς 44:4 σὺ εἶ αὐτὸς ὁ βασιλεὺς μου καὶ ὁ θεός μου ὁ ἐντελλόμενος τὰς σωτηρίας Ἰακωβ 44:5 ἐν σοὶ τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ἡμῶν κερατιοῦμεν καὶ ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου ἐξουθενώσομεν τοὺς ἐπανιστανομένους ἡμῖν</p>

<p>ט בְּאֵלֵהֶם הִלְלֵנוּ כָּל-הַיּוֹם וְשִׁמְךָ לְעוֹלָם נוֹדָה סְלָה: י אַף-וַיִּנְחַתְךָ וַתְּכַלִּימֵנוּ וְלֹא-תִצָּא בְּצַבְאוֹתֵינוּ: יא תְּשִׁיבֵנוּ אַחֲזֹר מִנִּי-צָר וּמִשְׁנֵאֵינוּ שְׁסוּ לָמוּ: יב תִּתְּנֵנוּ כְּצֹאן מֵאֲכָל וּבְגוּזִים וַיְרִיתֵנוּ: יג תִּמְכֹּר עֲמֶךָ בְּלֹא-הוֹן וְלֹא-רִבִּיתַתְּ בְּמַחֲרֵי־הָיִם: יד תְּשִׁימֵנוּ חֲרָפָה לְשִׁכְנֵינוּ לְעַג וְקָלָס לְסִבְיבוֹ- תֵינוּ: טו תְּשִׁימֵנוּ מִשָּׁל בְּגוּזִים מְנוֹד־ רֹאשׁ בְּלֵאמֹים: טז כָּל-הַיּוֹם כְּלַמְתִּי נְגִדִי וּבִשְׁתַּת פְּנֵי כְּסֹתָי: יז מְקוֹל מְחַרְרֵךְ וּמְגַדְרֵךְ מִפְּנֵי אוֹיֵב וּמִתְּנַקֵּם: יח כָּל-זֹאת בְּאַתְּנֵנוּ וְלֹא שְׁכַחְנוּךָ וְלֹא-שָׁקַרְנוּ בְּכִרְיֶתְךָ: יט לֹא-נִסּוּג אַחֲזֹר לְבָנוּ וְתַטְּ אֲשֵׁרֵינוּ מִנִּי אֲרָחֶךָ: כ פִּי דִכְּתִיתָנוּ בְּמִקּוֹם תְּנִים וְתִכַּס עֲלֵינוּ בְּצִלְמֹת: כא אִם-שְׁכַחְנוּ שֵׁם אַלְהֵינוּ וְנִפְרַשׁ פְּפִינוּ לְאֵל זָר: כב הֲלֹא אֱלֹהִים יִקְרָ-זֹאת כִּי הוּא יִדְעַ תְּעַלְמוֹת לֵב: כג כִּי-עֲלִיךָ הִרְגָנוּ כָּל-הַיּוֹם נִחַשְׁבָנוּ כְּצֹאן טְבֻחָה: כד עוֹרָה לְמָה תִישָׁן אֲדֹנָי הַקִּיץָה אֵל- תִּזְנַח לְנִצָּח: כה לְמָה פָּנִיךָ תִסְתִּיר תְּשַׁכַּח עֲנֵינוּ וְלִחְצָנוּ: כו כִּי שָׁחָה לְעַפְרָן נִפְשָנוּ דְבַקָה לְאַרְץ בְּטָנֵנוּ: כז קוּמָה עֲזָרְתָה לָנוּ וּפְדָנוּ לְמַעַן חֲסֹדֶךָ:</p>	<p>ט במימרא דיהוה אנן משבחין כל יומא ושמך ייי נודי לעלמי עלמין: י לחוד אשליתא אנשיתא ואכספתנא ולא תשרי שכנתך בחילוותנא: יא אחזרתנא קדל קדם מעיקא ומשנאנא כבשו לנא יתנא: יב מסרתנא היך ענא למיכלא וביני עממיא בדרתא יתנא: יג זבנתא עמך מגן דלא בלא ממונא ולא אסגיתא קי- ניינא בפירוגיהון: יד שויתנא קלנא לחיסודא לשיבבנא ממקני ותא ותור- פיתא לחזרניתנא: טו שויתנא למת- לא למותלא בעממיא טילטול רישא באומיא: טז כל יומא כיסופי לקובלי ובהתת אפיי חפתני: יז מן קלא דמת- סד ומגדף ומתריף מן קדם בעיל דבבא ונקים נקמתא: יח כל דא ערעת יתנא ולא אשלינך אנשיתא לך ולא שיקרנא בקיימך: יט לא נזור פליג וזוחחין ליי- בנא ואת אסיתא איסתורנא מן תריצת אורחתך: כ ארום אמכתנא אמאיכתנא באתר ירורי וחפיתא עלנא בטולא דמו- תא: כא אין אשלינא איתנשינא שום אלהנא ופרישנא בצלו ידנא לטעותא דעממין נוכראין: כב הלא אלהא יב- שקר דא ארום הוא חכים קדמוהי גליין טמירי לבא: כג ארום מטולתך אמ- טולתך איתקטלנא כל יומא אתחשבנא כענא דמסירא לנכסא: כד איתגבר יי למה תהי כגבר דמיך יהוה איתער אלהנא לא תתנשי לעלמא: כה למה שכינת יקרך תסלק תשלי סיגופנא ודו- חקנא: כו ארום שיחא לעפרא נפשנא דבקת לארעית גובה מעיננא כריסנא: כז קום סייע לנא ופרוק יתנא מטול טובך:</p>	<p>44: 6 οὐ γὰρ ἐπὶ τῷ τόξῳ μου ἐλπῶ καὶ ἡ ῥομφαία μου οὐ σώσει με 44:7 ἔσωσας γὰρ ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῶν θλιβόντων ἡμᾶς καὶ τοὺς μισοῦντας ἡμᾶς κατήσχυνας 44:8 ἐν τῷ θεῷ ἐπαινεσθῆσόμεθα ὅλην τὴν ἡμέραν καὶ ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου ἐξομολογησόμεθα εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα διάψαλμα 44:9 νυνὶ δὲ ἀπόσω καὶ κατήσχυνας ἡμᾶς καὶ οὐκ ἐξελεύσῃ ἐν ταῖς δυνάμεσιν ἡμῶν 44:10 ἀπέστρεψας ἡμᾶς εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω παρὰ τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ἡμῶν καὶ οἱ μισοῦντες ἡμᾶς διήραξαν ἑαυτοῖς 44:11 ἔδωκας ἡμᾶς ὡς πρόβατα βρώσεως καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν διέσπειρας ἡμᾶς 44:12 ἀπέδου τὸν λαόν σου ἄνευ τιμῆς καὶ οὐκ ἦν πλῆθος ἐν τοῖς ἀλλάγμασιν αὐτῶν 44:13 ἔθθ ἡμᾶς ὄνειδος τοῖς γείτοσιν ἡμῶν μυκτηρισμὸν καὶ καταγέλωτα τοῖς κύκλῳ ἡμῶν 44:14 ἔθου ἡμᾶς εἰς παραβολὴν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν κίνησιν κεφαλῆς ἐν τοῖς λαοῖς 44:15 ὅλην τὴν ἡμέραν ἡ ἐντροπή μου κατεναντίον μου ἐστὶν καὶ ἡ αἰσχύνη τοῦ προσώπου μου ἐκάλυπέν με 44:16 ἀπὸ φωνῆς ὄνειδίζοντος καὶ παραλαλοῦντος ἀπὸ προσώπου ἐχθροῦ καὶ ἐκδιώκοντος 44:17 ταῦτα πάντα ἦλθεν ἐφ' ἡμᾶς καὶ οὐκ ἐπελαθόμεθά σου καὶ οὐκ ἠδικήσαμεν ἐν διαθήκῃ σου 44:18 καὶ οὐκ ἀπέστη εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω ἡ καρδία ἡμῶν καὶ ἐξέκλινας τὰς τρίβους ἡμῶν ἀπὸ τῆς ὁδοῦ σου 44:19 ὅτι ἐταπεινώσας ἡμᾶς ἐν τόπῳ κακώσεως καὶ ἐπεκάλυπεν ἡμᾶς σκιά θανάτου 44:20 εἰ ἐπελαθόμεθα τοῦ ὀνόματος τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ εἰ διεπετάσαμεν χεῖρας ἡμῶν πρὸς θεὸν ἀλλότριον 44:21 οὐχὶ ὁ θεὸς ἐκζητήσει ταῦτα αὐτὸς γὰρ γινώσκει τὰ κρύφια τῆς καρδίας 44:22 ὅτι ἔνεκα σοῦ θανατούμεθα ὅλην τὴν ἡμέραν ἐλογίσθημεν ὡς πρόβατα σφαγῆς 44:23 ἐξεγέρθητι ἵνα τί ὑπνοῖς κύριε ἀνάστηθι καὶ μὴ ἀπόσῃ εἰς τέλος 44:24 ἵνα τί τὸ πρόσωπόν σου ἀποστρέφεις ἐπιλανθάνῃ τῆς πτωχείας ἡμῶν καὶ τῆς θλίψεως ἡμῶν 44:25 ὅτι ἐταπεινώθη εἰς χοῦν ἡ ψυχὴ ἡμῶν ἐκολλήθη εἰς γῆν ἡ γαστήρ ἡμῶν 44:26 ἀνάστα κύριε βοήθησον ἡμῖν καὶ λύτρωσαι ἡμᾶς ἔνεκεν τοῦ ὀνόματος σου</p>
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<p>Tehillim / Psalms 44 For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. A maskil. 44:1 O God, we have heard with our ears, Our fathers have told us The work that You did in their days, In the days of old. 44:2 You with Your own hand drove out the nations; Then You planted them; You afflicted the peoples, Then You spread them abroad. 44:3 For by their own sword they did not possess the land, And their own arm did not save them, But Your right hand and Your arm and the light of Your presence, For You favored them. 44:4 You are my King, O God; Command victories for Jacob. 44:5 Through You we will push back our adversaries; Through Your name we will trample down those who rise up against us. 44:6 For I will not trust in my bow, Nor will my sword save me. 44:7 But You have saved us from our adversaries, And You have put to shame those who hate us. 44:8 In God we have boasted all day long, And we will give thanks to Your name forever. Selah. 44:9 Yet You have rejected us and brought us to dishonor, And do not go out with our armies. 44:10 You cause us to turn back from the adversary; And those who hate us have taken spoil for themselves. 44:11 You give us as sheep to be eaten And have scattered us among the nations. 44:12 You sell Your people cheaply, And have not profited by their sale. 44:13 You make us a reproach to our neighbors, A scoffing and a derision to those around us. (NASB)</p>	<p>Toviyah / Psalms Chapter 44 44:1 For praise; for David, composed by the sons of Korah, good discernment. 44:2 O Lord, with our ears we have heard, our fathers have told us of the deed you did in their days, in the days of old. 44:3 You drove out the Canaanite Gentiles with your mighty hand; and you planted them, the house of Israel, in their land; you broke the peoples and sent them away. 44:4 For they did not inherit the land by the strength of their swords, and the might of their arms did not redeem them, for [it was] your right hand, and your strong arm and the light of your glorious splendor; for whenever they occupied themselves with the Torah, you were pleased with them. 44:5 You are my king, O God; at this time command the redemption of the house of Jacob. 44:6 At your command we will gore our oppressors; in your name we will subdue all who rise against us. 44:7 For I do not trust in my bow, and my sword will not redeem me. 44:8 For you have redeemed us from our oppressors and from those who hate us, you have brought shame upon them. 44:9 By the word of the Lord we sing praise all day; and your name we will confess forever and ever. 44:10 Only you have neglected [us] and put us to shame; and your presence will not abide with our forces. 44:11 You have made us turn our back in the presence of our enemies, and those who hate us have subdued us. 44:12 You have handed us over like sheep for food, and you have scattered us among the Gentiles. 44:13 You sold your people for nothing, for no money; and you did not increase property by their exchange. (EMC)</p>	<p>Psalmoi / Psalms 44 For the end, a Psalm for instruction, for the sons of Core. 44:1 O God, we have heard with our ears, our fathers have told us, the work which thou wroughtest in their days, in the days of old. 44:2 Thine hand utterly destroyed the heathen, and thou didst plant them: thou didst afflict the nations, and cast them out. 44:3 For they inherited not the land by their own sword, and their own arm did not deliver them; but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou wert well pleased in them. 44:4 Thou art indeed my King and my God, who commandest deliverances for Jacob. 44:5 In thee will we push down our enemies, and in thy name will we bring to nought them that rise up against us. 44:6 For I will not trust in my bow, and my sword shall not save me. 44:7 For thou hast saved us from them that afflicted us, and hast put to shame them that hated us. 44:8 In God will we make our boast all the day, and to thy name will we give thanks for ever. Pause. 44:9 But now thou hast cast off, and put us to shame; and thou wilt not go forth with our hosts. 44:10 Thou hast turned us back before our enemies; and they that hated us spoiled for themselves. 44:11 Thou madest us as sheep for meat; and thou scatteredst us among the nations. 44:12 Thou hast sold thy people without price, and there was no profit by their exchange. 44:13 Thou hast made us a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and derision them that are round about us. (LXX)</p>
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<p>44:14 You make us a byword among the nations, A laughing-stock among the peoples. 44:15 All day long my dishonor is before me And my humiliation has overwhelmed me, 44:16 Because of the voice of him who reproaches and reviles, Because of the presence of the enemy and the avenger. 44:17 All this has come upon us, but we have not forgotten You, And we have not dealt falsely with Your covenant. 44:18 Our heart has not turned back, And our steps have not deviated from Your way, 44:19 Yet You have crushed us in a place of jackals And covered us with the shadow of death. 44:20 If we had forgotten the name of our God Or extended our hands to a strange god, 44:21 Would not God find this out? For He knows the secrets of the heart. 44:22 But for Your sake we are killed all day long; We are considered as sheep to be slaughtered. 44:23 Arouse Yourself, why do You sleep, O Lord? Awake, do not reject us forever. 44:24 Why do You hide Your face And forget our affliction and our oppression? 44:25 For our soul has sunk down into the dust; Our body cleaves to the earth. 44:26 Rise up, be our help, And redeem us for the sake of Your lovingkindness. (NASB)</p>	<p>44:14 You have made us a disgrace to our neighbors, a mockery and scandal to our surroundings. 44:15 You have made us a proverb among the Gentiles, a shaking of the head among the nations. 44:16 All the day my disgrace is before me, and shame has covered my face. 44:17 From the sound of the reviler and vilifier, from the presence of the enemy and revenge-taker; 44:18 All this has come upon us, yet we have not neglected you, and we have not been false to your covenant. 44:19 We will not turn back hesitating, our hearts being proud, but you have diverted our steps from the straightness of the path. 44:20 For you have humbled us in a place of jackals, and you have covered us with the shadow of death. 44:21 If we have neglected[22] the name of our God and spread our hands in prayer to an idol of foreign nations 44:22 Truly God will search this out, for he knows the hidden things of the heart. 44:23 For on your account we are killed all the day; we are accounted as sheep handed over for slaughter. 44:24 Act mightily; why will you be like a sleeping man, O Lord? Arouse yourself, do not forever be forgetful. 44:25 Why will you remove your glorious presence, why neglect our shame and oppression? 44:26 For our soul is bent to the dust; our bowels cleave to the bottom of the pit. 44:27 Arise, help us, and redeem us, for the sake of your goodness. (EMC)</p>	<p>44:14 Thou hast made us a proverb among the Gentiles, a shaking of the head among the nations. 44:15 All the day my shame is before me, and the confusion of my face has covered me, 44:16 because of the voice of the slanderer and reviler; because of the enemy and avenger. 44:17 All these things are come upon us: but we have not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt unrighteously in thy covenant. 44:18 And our heart has not gone back; but thou hast turned aside our paths from thy way. 44:19 For thou hast laid us low in a place of affliction, and the shadow of death has covered us. 44:20 If we have forgotten the name of our God, and if we have spread out our hands to a strange god; shall not God search these things out? 44:21 for he knows the secrets of the heart. 44:22 For, for thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for slaughter. 44:23 Awake, wherefore sleepest thou, O Lord? arise, and do not cast us off for ever. 44:24 Wherefore turnest thou thy face away, and forgettest our poverty and our affliction? 44:25 For our soul has been brought down to the dust; our belly has cleaved to the earth. 44:26 Arise, O Lord, help us, and redeem us for thy name's sake.(LXX)</p>
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This week's study is from *Tehillim / Psalms 44:1-26*, the Psalm opens saying, א לְמִנְצִיחַ לְבְנֵי-קֹרַח "For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. A maskil." Again we see the words "for the Sons of Korah" (לְבְנֵי-קֹרַח) and "Maskil" (מִשְׁפִּיל) meaning the psalm is for the "educated or learned." The opening verse states, ב 44:1 אֱלֹהִים | בְּאָזְנוּנוּ שָׁמַעְנוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ סִפְרוּ-לָנוּ פֶּעַל-פְּעֻלָּתְךָ בְיָמֵיהֶם בְּיָמֵי קִדְמוֹתָם "O God, we have heard with our ears, Our fathers have told us The work that You did in their days, In the days of old" (NASB) suggesting that they have been taught what God has done in ancient days. The works of God has been made known through the educational process. This parallels the words of the Apostle Paul by what he said to the believers in the Apostolic Writings highlighting the importance of education in the following verses:

Romans 10:17

10:17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. (KJV)

Colossians 3:16

3:16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

1 Thessalonians 2:13

2:13 For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.

Hebrews 4:2

4:2 For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.

Based upon Paul's words to the Romans, the people hearing the message is necessary for faith to come. We are to be engaged in learning about God's mercy and His great power to deliver and save from our enemies and from sin. The Psalm opening with a note to the educated or learned, the "Maskil" (מִשְׁכִּיל), highlights the importance of studying God's word to increase our faith.

The Aramaic Targum states, ב יהוה אלהא באודנא: א לשבחא לדוד על ידיהון דבני קרח שכלא טבא: 4:1 For praise; for David, composed by the sons of Korah, good discernment. 44:2 O Lord, with our ears we have heard, our fathers have told us of the deed you did in their days, in the days of old. (EMC) According to the Aramaic Targum, this psalm was composed by the sons of Korah for understanding. The Targum also speaks of hearing and how their fathers have told them what the Lord had done for them. Notice how studying the Scriptures is synonymous to being told by our fathers of the Works of the Lord. The scriptures have much to say about how God works in human history which speak specific to our situations we encounter today. Like David is saying in the psalm of knowing what the Lord has done, the Scriptural witness on understanding what God has done in the past builds our faith in what He is able to do in our future. As a result we are able to trust in Him and not forsake the way or path in which He wants us to live our lives.

ג אָתָּה | יָדָה גוֹיִם הוֹרִשְׁתָּ וַתְּטַעֵם תְּרַע לְאֻמִּים 44:2 וַתִּשְׁלַחֵם: ד כִּי לֹא בְחַרְבָּם יָרְשׁוּ-אֶרֶץ וְזָרוּעָם לֹא-הוֹשִׁיעָה לָמוֹ כִּי-יִמְיָנָה וְזָרוּעָה וְאוֹר פְּנֵיהָ כִּי רָצִיתָם: 44:3 For by their own sword they did not possess the land, And their own arm did not save them, But Your right hand and Your arm and the light of Your presence, For You favored them." (NASB) David says that the Lord drove out the nations by His hand and planted His people. He also says that by the sword they did not possess the land. If we read through the book of Joshua, we see that Israel took the land by the sword, what exactly is David speaking of saying that they did not possess the land by the sword? According to Parashat Tetzave (*Shemot / Exodus 27:20-30:10*) the Lord said that He would send the hornet ahead of the people into the Promised land to drive them out before them.

Shemot / Exodus 23:25-32

23:25 'But you shall serve the Lord your God, and He will bless your bread and your water; and I will remove sickness from your midst. 23:26 'There shall be no one miscarrying or barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days. 23:27 'I will send My terror ahead of you, and throw into confusion all the people among whom you come, and I will make all your enemies turn their backs to you. 23:28 'I will send hornets ahead of you so that they will drive out the Hivites, the Canaanites, and the Hittites before you. 23:29 'I will not drive them out before you in a single year, that the land may not become desolate and the beasts of the field become too numerous for you. 23:30 'I will drive them out before you little by little,

until you become fruitful and take possession of the land. 23:31 'I will fix your boundary from the Red Sea to the sea of the Philistines, and from the wilderness to the River Euphrates; for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you will drive them out before you. 23:32 'You shall make no covenant with them or with their gods. (NASB)

The Lord said that He would send a terror ahead to cause the enemy to be in confusion and cause them to flee before them. (Note that these things would also come upon us if we forsake Him, His covenant, and His word.) He will send hornets ahead of Israel to drive out the inhabitants of the land. In fulfillment of these words, we read the following in the book of Joshua.

Joshua 24:11-14

24:11 'You crossed the Jordan and came to Jericho; and the citizens of Jericho fought against you, and the Amorite and the Perizzite and the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Girgashite, the Hivite and the Jebusite. Thus I gave them into your hand. 24:12 'Then I sent the hornet before you and it drove out the two kings of the Amorites from before you, but not by your sword or your bow. 24:13 'I gave you a land on which you had not labored, and cities which you had not built, and you have lived in them; you are eating of vineyards and olive groves which you did not plant.' 24:14 'Now, therefore, fear the Lord and serve Him in sincerity and truth; and put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. (NASB)

According to the book of Joshua, the Lord sent hornets ahead of the people and drove the kings of the Amorites from the land. In performing these deeds, the people knew the Lord was with them and within their midst. Knowing God's word (the Bible) we are able to look back on our lives and see how the Lord has been working and we can give Him praise for the works of His hands. Studying the Scriptures, we can look back on what the Lord has done in the past and we can praise Him for the work of His hands.

The Aramaic Targum states, ג אנת את בידא דגבורתך עמיא עממיא כנענאי תרכתא ונצבתנון לבית ישׁ, ראל בארעהון תברת עמיא אומיא ושלחתנון ופסדתינון ד ארום לא בגבורת סייפיהון יריתו ארעא ותקוף אדרעהון: 44:3 לא פרקת להון ארום ימינך ואדרע גבורתך ונהור זיו יקרך ארום כל זמן דעסיקו באוריתא איתרעיתא בהון: *You drove out the Canaanite Gentiles with your mighty hand; and you planted them, the house of Israel, in their land; you broke the peoples and sent them away. 44:4 For they did not inherit the land by the strength of their swords, and the might of their arms did not redeem them, for [it was] your right hand, and your strong arm and the light of your glorious splendor; for whenever they occupied themselves with the Torah, you were pleased with them. (EMC)* The Targum clarifies those whom the Lord planted, the house of Israel, in their land. The Targum also states that “*whenever they occupied themselves with the Torah, you were pleased with them*” (כל זמן דעסיקו באוריתא איתרעיתא בהון). This is consistent with the rabbis teaching in *Mishnah Pirkei Avot 3:7*.

Mishnah Pirkei Avot 3:7

7. Rabbi Chalafta ben Dosa of Kefar Chanania used to say: If ten men sit together and occupy themselves with the Torah, the Divine Presence rests among them as it is written (Psalm 82:1) “God has taken his place in the divine council.” And from where do we learn that this applies even to five? Because it is written (Amos 9:6) “And founds his vault upon the earth.” And how do we learn that this applies even to three? Because it is written (Psalm 82:1) “In the midst of the gods he holds judgment.” And from where can it be shown that the same applies even to two? Because it is written (Malachi 3:16) “Then those who revered the Lord spoke with one another. The Lord took note and listened.” And from where even of one? Because it is written (Exodus 20:24) “In every place where I cause my name to be remembered I will come to you and bless you.”

According to the Mishnah, the idea is that if a minimum of ten men sit together and study the Scriptures (Torah) the presence of God rests among them. The Mishnah then begins to deduce the validity of the statement by reasoning whether the presence of God rests among them when there is only 5 men. The rabbis continue in their discussion to reduce the number to three, two, and one person who studies the Torah, the presence of God rests among him. This sounds to be a close parallel to Yeshua's words according to *Matthew 18*.

Matthew 18:18-22

18:18 'Truly I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven. 18:19 'Again I say to you, that if two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask, it shall be done for them by My Father who is in heaven. 18:20 'For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst.' 18:21 Then Peter came and said to Him, 'Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?' 18:22 Jesus said to him, 'I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven. (NASB)

In *Matthew 18:18-22*, Yeshua speaks of having authority to bind and loose on earth and in heaven, anything we ask in Yeshua's name when two or three come together it will be done, when two or three come together then He is in their midst, and Peter asks how many times he is to forgive his brother's sin against him. It appears that the presence of God brings authority in His name and that the authority and power comes when we are merciful and forgiving of others. In Catholicism, these verses are utilized as proof texts for papal authority on the question of whether these Scriptures (*Matthew 18:18-19*) were given only to the apostles, or to all believers? What is the application for these Scriptures today? How do these Scriptures apply to us? Some say that this is a reference to having the authority to develop doctrine or theology. Could this also be a reference to binding up evil spirits and loosing those who have been bound up by these spirits or by illness or disease? If God's presence rests among those who gather together as the Mishnah states and as Yeshua said, wouldn't each of us also have the authority to do these things by the power and presence of God?

The Psalmist continues speaking of the Lord who brings victories (44:4), He defeats the enemy (44:5), He puts the enemy to shame (44:7), David does not trust in his sword (44:6) but trusts in the Lord and gives Him thanks forever (44:8).

Tehillim / Psalms 44:4-9

44:4 You are my King, O God; Command victories for Jacob. 44:5 Through You we will push back our adversaries; Through Your name we will trample down those who rise up against us. 44:6 For I will not trust in my bow, Nor will my sword save me. 44:7 But You have saved us from our adversaries, And You have put to shame those who hate us. 44:8 In God we have boasted all day long, And we will give thanks to Your name forever. Selah.

ה אַתָּה-הוּא מֶלֶכִּי אֱלֹהִים צִוֵּה יְשׁוּעוֹת יַעֲקֹב: ו בָּךְ צָרִינוּ וְנִגַּח בְּשִׁמְךָ נְבוֹס קִמִּינוּ: ז כִּי לֹא
בְּקִשְׁתִּי אֲבֹטָה וְחֶרֶב־י לֹא תוֹשִׁיעֵנִי: ח כִּי הוֹשַׁעְתֶּנוּ מִצָּרֵינוּ וּמִשְׁנֵאֵינוּ הִבִּישׁוֹת: ט בְּאֱלֹהִים הִלְלָנוּ
כָּל-הַיּוֹם וְשִׁמְךָ | לְעוֹלָם נוֹדֶה סְלָה:

Aramaic Targum

Toviyah / Psalms Chapter 44:5-9

44:5 You are my king, O God; at this time command the redemption of the house of Jacob. 44:6 At your command we will gore our oppressors; in your name we will subdue all who rise against us. 44:7 For I do not trust in my bow, and my sword will not redeem me. 44:8 For you have redeemed us from our oppressors and from those who hate us, you have brought

shame upon them. 44:9 By the word of the Lord we sing praise all day; and your name we will confess forever and ever.

ה אנת את הוא מלכי אלהא בעידנא הדא ההיא פקיד פורקנות דבית יעקב: ו במימך מעיקנא ננגח בשמך נכבוש כל דקיימין עלנא: ז ארום לא בקשתי אנא רחיץ וסייפי לא תפרוק יתי: ח ארום פריקתנא ממעיקנא ומשנאנא אייתיתא עילויהון בהתא: ט במימרא דיהוה אנן משבחין כל יומא ושמך ייי נודי לעלמי עלמין:

Septuagint

Psalmoi / Psalms 44:4-8

44:4 *Thou art indeed my King and my God, who commandest deliverances for Jacob. 44:5 In thee will we push down our enemies, and in thy name will we bring to nought them that rise up against us. 44:6 For I will not trust in my bow, and my sword shall not save me. 44:7 For thou hast saved us from them that afflicted us, and hast put to shame them that hated us. 44:8 In God will we make our boast all the day, and to thy name will we give thanks for ever. Pause.*

44:4 σὺ εἶ αὐτὸς ὁ βασιλεύς μου καὶ ὁ θεός μου ὁ ἐντελλόμενος τὰς σωτηρίας Ἰακωβ
44:5 ἐν σοὶ τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ἡμῶν κερατιοῦμεν καὶ ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου ἐξουθενώσομεν τοὺς ἐπανιστανομένους ἡμῖν 44: 6 οὐ γὰρ ἐπὶ τῷ τόξῳ μου ἐλπῖω καὶ ἡ ῥομφαία μου οὐ σώσει με
44:7 ἔσωσας γὰρ ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῶν θλιβόντων ἡμᾶς καὶ τοὺς μισοῦντας ἡμᾶς κατήσχυνας 44:8 ἐν τῷ θεῷ ἐπαινεσθῆσόμεθα ὅλην τὴν ἡμέραν καὶ ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί σου ἐξομολογησόμεθα εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα διάψαλμα

The NASB translates *Tehillim / Psalms 44:4 You are my King, O God; Command victories for Jacob.* (NASB), however, the Hebrew text states, אַתָּה-הוּא מֶלֶכִי אֱלֹהִים צִוְּהָ יְשׁוּעוֹת יַעֲקֹב: “You-He is my King, God commands salvations for Jacob.” The Hebrew word “yeshuot” (יְשׁוּעוֹת) from the root ישע (yasha) meaning “salvation, rescue, help” and is written in the feminine plural form. The Aramaic Targum states that the Lord commands the redemption of the house of Jacob (אלהא בעידנא הדא ההיא פקיד פורקנות דבית יעקב), and the Septuagint states that the Lord commands deliverances for Jacob (θεός μου ὁ ἐντελλόμενος τὰς σωτηρίας Ἰακωβ). The Psalmist continues saying, 44:5 Through You we will push back our adversaries; Through Your name we will trample down those who rise up against us. (NASB) How does this compare to Yeshua’s words in *Matthew 5:39-48*?

Matthew 5:39-48

5:39 ‘But I say to you, do not resist an evil person; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. 5:40 ‘If anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, let him have your coat also. 5:41 ‘Whoever forces you to go one mile, go with him two. 5:42 ‘Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you. 5:43 ‘You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ 5:44 ‘But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 5:45 so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. 5:46 ‘For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? 5:47 ‘If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others Do not even the Gentiles do the same? 5:48 ‘Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect. (NASB)

David speaks of the Lord who brings victories (44:4), through and in His name we will defeat the enemy (44:5), the Lord puts the enemy to shame (44:7), we are not to trust in the sword for our help (44:6), we are to trust in the Lord and gives Him thanks forever for what He has done (44:8). Yeshua on the other hand says do not resist an evil person, turn the other cheek, give the person your shirt or coat, give to those who want to borrow, love your enemy, pray for those who persecute you, and by doing these things, we will be sons of our Father in heaven. Yeshua goes on to say if we love those who love us what reward is there in doing that? We are told to be perfect just like our heavenly Father is perfect. How do we understand these two standards? Was David's prayer in relation to a time of war and Yeshua's statements a time of persecution? Is there a difference between war when fighting an enemy and persecution from an enemy? The Aramaic and Greek translations of the Masoretic text are in agreement that the Lord will deliver his people, in His name we will subdue all who rise against us, we do not trust in sword or bow but in the Lord God Almighty for our help, and we will praise the Lord all day because of His salvation and His great name.

Following these statements of praise and trust in the Lord, the Psalmist says that the Lord has brought dishonor upon their army (44:10), He has caused them to be scattered and to turn back from their enemy (44:10), He has given them as sheep to be eaten (44:11), the people have been sold cheaply (44:12), He made them to be a reproach to the neighbors (44:13) and to become a byword among the nations (44:14). Have you ever felt like that because of persecution of your faith?

Tehillim / Psalms 44:9-13

44:9 Yet You have rejected us and brought us to dishonor, And do not go out with our armies.

44:10 You cause us to turn back from the adversary; And those who hate us have taken spoil for themselves. 44:11 You give us as sheep to be eaten And have scattered us among the nations. 44:12 You sell Your people cheaply, And have not profited by their sale. 44:13 You make us a reproach to our neighbors, A scoffing and a derision to those around us.

י אף-זנחת ותכלימנו ולא-תצא בצבאותינו: יא תשיבנו אחר מני-צָר ומשנאינו שָׁסוּ לְמוֹ: יב תתנו כצאן מאכל ובגוים זריתנו: יג תמכר עמך בלא-הון ולא-רְבִית בְּמַחֲרֵיהֶם: יד תשימנו חרפה לשכנינו לעג וקלס לסביבותינו:

Aramaic Targum

Toviyah / Psalms Chapter 44:10-14

44:10 Only you have neglected [us] and put us to shame; and your presence will not abide with our forces. 44:11 You have made us turn our back in the presence of our enemies, and those who hate us have subdued us. 44:12 You have handed us over like sheep for food, and you have scattered us among the Gentiles. 44:13 You sold your people for nothing, for no money; and you did not increase property by their exchange 44:14 You have made us a disgrace to our neighbors, a mockery and scandal to our surroundings.

י לחוד אשליתא אנשיתא ואכספתנא ולא תשרי שכנתך בחילוותנא: יא אחזרתנא קדל קדם מעי-קא ומשנאנא כבשו לנא יתנא: יב מסרתנא היך ענא למיכלא וביני עממיא בדרתא יתנא: יג זבנתא עמך מגן דלא בלא ממונא ולא אסגיתא קינינא בפירוגיהון: יד שויתנא קלנא לחיסודא לשיבנא ממקני ותא ותורפיתא לחזרניתנא:

Septuagint

Psalmoi / Psalms 44:9-13

44:9 But now thou hast cast off, and put us to shame; and thou wilt not go forth with our

hosts. 44:10 *Thou hast turned us back before our enemies; and they that hated us spoiled for themselves. 44:11 Thou madest us as sheep for meat; and thou scatteredst us among the nations. 44:12 Thou hast sold thy people without price, and there was no profit by their exchange. 44:13 Thou hast made us a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and derision them that are round about us.*

44:9 νυνὶ δὲ ἀπόσω καὶ κατήσχυνας ἡμᾶς καὶ οὐκ ἐξελεύση ἐν ταῖς δυνάμεσιν ἡμῶν 44:10 ἀπέστρεψας ἡμᾶς εἰς τὰ ὀπίσω παρὰ τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ἡμῶν καὶ οἱ μισοῦντες ἡμᾶς διήρπαζον ἑαυτοῖς 44:11 ἔδωκας ἡμᾶς ὡς πρόβατα βρώσεως καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν διέσπειρας ἡμᾶς 44:12 ἀπέδου τὸν λαόν σου ἄνευ τιμῆς καὶ οὐκ ἦν πλήθος ἐν τοῖς ἀλλάγμασιν αὐτῶν 44:13 ἔθο ἡμᾶς ὄνειδος τοῖς γείτοσιν ἡμῶν μυκτηρισμὸν καὶ καταγέλωτα τοῖς κύκλῳ ἡμῶν

There are times when we go through temptation, affliction, and discouragement just like the Psalmist is going through here in the Psalm. He may be going through a season of persecution. When we go through a time of persecution, thoughts may come to our mind that the Lord has forsaken us and cast us off. It would appear that we are being dishonored and become a scorn amidst the nations. The Psalmist however looks to the Lord for help, since even the worst of enemies have no power against Him who created the heavens and the earth. One example maybe taken from *2 Chronicles 32:1-22*:

2 Chronicles 32:1-22

32:1 After these acts of faithfulness Sennacherib king of Assyria came and invaded Judah and besieged the fortified cities, and thought to break into them for himself. 32:2 Now when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib had come and that he intended to make war on Jerusalem, 32:3 he decided with his officers and his warriors to cut off the supply of water from the springs which were outside the city, and they helped him. 32:4 So many people assembled and stopped up all the springs and the stream which flowed through the region, saying, ‘Why should the kings of Assyria come and find abundant water?’ 32:5 And he took courage and rebuilt all the wall that had been broken down and erected towers on it, and built another outside wall and strengthened the Millo in the city of David, and made weapons and shields in great number. 32:6 He appointed military officers over the people and gathered them to him in the square at the city gate, and spoke encouragingly to them, saying, 32:7 ‘Be strong and courageous, do not fear or be dismayed because of the king of Assyria nor because of all the horde that is with him; for the one with us is greater than the one with him. 32:8 ‘With him is only an arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord our God to help us and to fight our battles.’ And the people relied on the words of Hezekiah king of Judah. 32:9 After this Sennacherib king of Assyria sent his servants to Jerusalem while he was besieging Lachish with all his forces with him, against Hezekiah king of Judah and against all Judah who were at Jerusalem, saying, 32:10 ‘Thus says Sennacherib king of Assyria, ‘On what are you trusting that you are remaining in Jerusalem under siege? 32:11 ‘Is not Hezekiah misleading you to give yourselves over to die by hunger and by thirst, saying, ‘The Lord our God will deliver us from the hand of the king of Assyria?’ 32:12 ‘Has not the same Hezekiah taken away His high places and His altars, and said to Judah and Jerusalem, ‘You shall worship before one altar, and on it you shall burn incense?’ 32:13 ‘Do you not know what I and my fathers have done to all the peoples of the lands? Were the gods of the nations of the lands able at all to deliver their land from my hand? 32:14 ‘Who was there among all the gods of those nations which my fathers utterly destroyed who could deliver his people out of my hand, that your God should be able to deliver you from my hand? 32:15 ‘Now therefore, do not let Hezekiah deceive you or mislead you like this, and do not believe him, for no god of any nation or kingdom was able to deliver his people from my hand or from the hand of my fathers. How much less will your God deliver you from my hand?’ 32:16 His servants spoke further against the

Lord God and against His servant Hezekiah. 32:17 He also wrote letters to insult the Lord God of Israel, and to speak against Him, saying, 'As the gods of the nations of the lands have not delivered their people from my hand, so the God of Hezekiah will not deliver His people from my hand.' 32:18 They called this out with a loud voice in the language of Judah to the people of Jerusalem who were on the wall, to frighten and terrify them, so that they might take the city. 32:19 They spoke of the God of Jerusalem as of the gods of the peoples of the earth, the work of men's hands. 32:20 But King Hezekiah and Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, prayed about this and cried out to heaven. 32:21 And the Lord sent an angel who destroyed every mighty warrior, commander and officer in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned in shame to his own land. And when he had entered the temple of his god, some of his own children killed him there with the sword. 32:22 So the Lord saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria and from the hand of all others, and guided them on every side. (NASB)

According to 2 Chronicles 32, Sennacherib king of Assyria invaded Judah and besieged the fortified cities with the intention of destroying Judah. Here in the Scriptures it says that both King Hezekiah and Isaiah the prophet prayed to the Lord for help. The Lord sent an angel who destroyed the mighty warriors in the camp of the king of Assyria. The king returned home in shame and his own sons killed him with the sword. It was not by Israel's own might that the Lord gives them supremacy over the nations. It is the Lord's might in the midst of our weakness that He saves us from our enemies. It is in this way the Lord is glorified. The Lord is Israel's glory and pride. In the same way, the Lord is our glory and pride. In *Tehillim / Psalms 44:13*, it says "You make us a reproach to our neighbors" (*Tehillim / Psalm 42:10, Tehillim / Psalm 79:4, Tehillim / Psalm 80:6*). The idea is not so much based upon the idea that He has made us to be cowards, or weak and powerless, but that the nations believe we have a weak and powerless God (*2 Kings 18:33-35 and 2 Kings 19:12*). The point is that the Lord is able to deliver us, we are to maintain our faith in Him, and it is for His glory that we appear to be weak and powerless. This brings us back to the teaching of Yeshua the Messiah in *Matthew 5*, Yeshua says do not resist an evil person, turn the other cheek, give the person your shirt or coat, give to those who want to borrow, love your enemy, pray for those who persecute you, and by doing these things, you will be sons of our Father in heaven. Being gracious, merciful, humble, and innocent, in the midst of the enemy appears to be weak and powerless, but this does in fact show the power of God at work in our lives. It takes a lot of strength to be merciful to those who harm us. This also allows the Lord to bring the victory, deliverance, and salvation by His hand and not by our own hands. The message that we are seeing throughout the Scriptures is to seek the Lord for His help and deliverance with an innocent heart, and to live in righteousness and justice towards others, even towards those who are considered our enemies (those who persecute us).

David says: *מִקּוֹל מְהַרְרֵי וּמְגִדְדֵי מִפְּנֵי אוֹיֵב וּמְתַנְקָם: 44:16 Because of the voice of him who reproaches and reviles, Because of the presence of the enemy and the avenger. (NASB)* Who is he referring to saying "the voice of him who reproaches and reviles?" The one that reproaches are the ungodly, the heathen, those who blaspheme the Lord. The ungodly or unrighteous person brings contemptuous expressions against the Lord God of Israel. An example from the Scriptures may be taken from *Isaiah 37:21-32*.

Isaiah 37:21-32

37:21 Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent word to Hezekiah, saying, 'Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, 'Because you have prayed to Me about Sennacherib king of Assyria, 37:22 this is the word that the Lord has spoken against him: 'She has despised you and mocked you, The virgin daughter of Zion; She has shaken her head behind you, The daughter of Jerusalem! 37:23 'Whom have you reproached and blasphemed? And against whom have you raised your voice And haughtily lifted up your eyes? Against the Holy One of Israel! 37:24 'Through your servants you have reproached the Lord, And you have said, 'With my many chariots I came up to the heights of the mountains, To the remotest parts of Lebanon; And I

cut down its tall cedars and its choice cypresses. And I will go to its highest peak, its thickest forest. 37:25 'I dug wells and drank waters, And with the sole of my feet I dried up All the rivers of Egypt.' 37:26 'Have you not heard? Long ago I did it, From ancient times I planned it. Now I have brought it to pass, That you should turn fortified cities into ruinous heaps. 37:27 'Therefore their inhabitants were short of strength, They were dismayed and put to shame; They were as the vegetation of the field and as the green herb, As grass on the housetops is scorched before it is grown up. 37:28 'But I know your sitting down And your going out and your coming in And your raging against Me. 37:29 'Because of your raging against Me And because your arrogance has come up to My ears, Therefore I will put My hook in your nose And My bridle in your lips, And I will turn you back by the way which you came. 37:30 'Then this shall be the sign for you: you will eat this year what grows of itself, in the second year what springs from the same, and in the third year sow, reap, plant vineyards and eat their fruit. 37:31 'The surviving remnant of the house of Judah will again take root downward and bear fruit upward. 37:32 'For out of Jerusalem will go forth a remnant and out of Mount Zion survivors. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.' (NASB)

This section of Isaiah is speaking about Sennacherib king of Assyria attacking Jerusalem and Hezekiah asking the Lord to deliver him from his enemy. The one who blasphemed (Sennacherib) reproaches were uttered against Israel and against the Lord God in heaven. We know that according to the historical account in *2 Chronicles 32:1-22*, the Lord destroyed the mighty fighting men of Sennacherib's army and he returned home where his sons killed him. Therefore, no matter what the circumstance may be, whether we need help by deliverance from our enemies, help in healing, help even on an exam or test, we are to seek the Lord, He is able to work in our lives for His glory.

The psalmist continues saying, כָּל-זֹאת בָּאֲתָנוּ וְלֹא שָׁכַחְנוּךָ וְלֹא-שָׁקַרְנוּ בְּבְרִיתֶךָ: 44:17 *All this has come upon us, but we have not forgotten You, And we have not dealt falsely with Your covenant.* (NASB) He says even in the midst of all these things, they have not forgotten the Lord and have not dealt falsely (וְלֹא-שָׁקַרְנוּ) with God's covenant (בְּבְרִיתֶךָ, 44:17). What does it mean to deal falsely with the covenant? The Hebrew word "Shakar" (שָׁקַר) means "lie, fib, untruth, falsity, falsehood, invention, to tell a tale," would this indicate that someone is making something up about God's covenant? Making up a falsehood, to lie, or to invent something about the covenant of God? When one breaks the covenant of God, is this the result of someone inventing a lie so as to circumvent the need to obey God's commandment? When studying the topic of the covenant and breaking the covenant, there are a wide range of expressions that describe the breaking of the covenant. For example, in *Bereshit / Genesis 17:9-14* (Parashat Lech Lecha), we read that circumcising your children is equivalent to keeping God's covenant, while he who is not circumcised has broken the covenant. In *Shemot / Exodus 19:5* (Parashat Beshalach) we read, הֲיִשְׁמָעוּ אֶם-שָׁמוֹעַ תִּשְׁמָעוּ listening, hearing the voice of the Lord is synonymous to obeying and keeping His covenant which is the opposite of breaking His covenant by not listening to God's voice. In *Shemot / Exodus 31:16* (Parashat Ki Tisa), we read that the Shabbat is a perpetual covenant (וְשָׁמְרוּ בְנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת-הַשַּׁבָּת לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת-הַשַּׁבָּת לְדֹרֹתָם בְּרִית עוֹלָם:), "and the sons of Israel are to keep the Shabbat, to do the Shabbat, an everlasting covenant for their generations"). *Vayikra / Leviticus 26:14-15* (Parashat Bechukotai, וְאִם-בְּחֻקֵּי תִמְאַסוּ, יֵד וְאִם-לֹא תִשְׁמָעוּ לִי וְלֹא תַעֲשׂוּ אֶת כָּל-הַמִּצְוֹת הָאֵלֶּה: טו) states that if one does not listen to all God's commandments and statutes and abhor or loathe His judgments (מִשְׁפָּטִי), this is equivalent to breaking His covenant. In *Devarim / Deuteronomy 4:23* (Parashat Va'etchanan), we are told that manufacturing an idol is synonymous to forgetting and breaking God's covenant. *Devarim / Deuteronomy 17:2* (Parashat Shoftim) speaks of the transgression of the covenant by the wicked and the ungodly who engage in idolatry. The Scriptures say that one can transgress the covenant by taking of the accursed thing (*Joshua 7*) or to serving other gods (*Joshua 23:16*). We also read in *2 Kings 18:12* that forsaking God's covenant is synonymous to transgressing all that Moshe commanded.

The Lord states, on the other hand, that He will not forsake His covenant with His people. In addition to this, the Scriptures speak of Lord's covenant as being everlasting. In *Isaiah 24:5* we read, *24:5 The earth is also polluted by its inhabitants, for they transgressed laws, violated statutes, broke the everlasting covenant. (NASB)* Many passages of Scripture emphasize in one way or another that God's covenant is maintained by the Lord Himself, that it is everlasting. *Isaiah 24* speaks of both the inhabitants of the land transgressing and the everlasting covenant. How can an everlasting covenant be broken? The entire chapter of *Isaiah 24* speaks of the judgment of the world because of the sin of the world which is taken as a basis for the final judgment. So when David says that they did not deal falsely with the covenant of God, he appears to be specifically referencing the fact that they have not transgressed the Torah or changed the mitzvot (הַמִּצְוֹת), statutes (חוק), and judgments (מִשְׁפָּטִי) to suit their needs and therefore did not break the everlasting covenant of God.

The psalmist says they have not deviated from the way of God (*44:18*) and have not forgotten the name of their God (*44:20*). This appears to be consistent with the various examples from the Torah regarding keeping and breaking the covenant. David and his men did not deviate from the way of God and they did not forget the name of their God, they continually sought the Lord for His help. How do these things we are learning about the covenant and David apply to our lives today? David says that the Lord knows the secret things of the heart (*44:21*). He knows the intentions of the heart, whether we are honestly and truthfully seeking Him, or whether we are simply going about life as usual without a second thought about our lives. When we think about who we are in the Messiah Yeshua, we should be on the path of choosing “*intentional*” righteousness and justice in our daily lives. Intentional living is what it means to abide in the Messiah, this is what it is all about and it is by the power of His Spirit (the Holy Spirit) that enables us to do so. Our walk before our Father in Heaven in Yeshua the Messiah demands integrity. Righteousness and justice are the foundation of God's Throne (*Tehillim / Psalms 89:14*) and therefore our lives are to be characterized as such. We are to live in complete truth and innocence before God with regard to ourselves and others.

David says they are killed all day long for the Lord's sake (*44:22*). What is this “*dying all day long for the sake of God*” all about? The Apostolic Writings brings this into perspective when we read, for Christ's sake we face death daily (*Romans 8:36*). Paul says that we are to die daily (*1 Corinthians 15:31*), we should count it worthy to suffer for His name sake (*Acts 5:41, 9:16*), we also suffer with Him so that we may be glorified with Him (*Romans 8:17*). The apostle Paul also says that the power of the resurrection and having fellowship with his sufferings is how we know Him (Yeshua, *Philippians 3:10*). How do we receive or use the power of the resurrection? *James 5:10* states, “*As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord*” indicating that suffering and patience was a common outcome of obeying God. The apostle Peter says that suffering is not something to be ashamed of but to glorify God in the name of Yeshua (*1 Peter 4:16*). Yeshua said in *Matthew 5:11* “*Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me.*” It is because of who we are and what we stand for that we are persecuted because of our faith in Yeshua and our Father in heaven. David said in *Tehillim / Psalms 44:22*, כִּי-עָלִיף הָרִגְנוּ כָּל-הַיּוֹם נִהְשָׁבְנוּ כְּצֹאן טְבָחָהּ, *44:22 But for Your sake we are killed all day long; We are considered as sheep to be slaughtered. (NASB)* The word he used here is “*horegnu*” (הָרִגְנוּ) meaning “*we are killed, murdered, destroyed*” all day long (כָּל-הַיּוֹם). Is suffering the same as being killed, murdered, and destroyed all the day long?

The rabbis take a different approach to suffering. Looking at the rabbinic literature, according to the Rabbis man is responsible for the conduct of others (see *the Rachmal, Rabbi Moses Chaim Luzzatto, Derech Hashem and Ma'amar halkkarim, Feldheim Publishers, Jerusalem, New York, 1998, pg 312-315*), and he is liable to punishment, if he is indifferent to the wrong that is being perpetrated about him. The greater the man the greater is his responsibility. They say that he may suffer for the sins of his family which is first reached by his influence; he may also suffer for the sins of the whole community if he could hope to find a “*willing ear*” among them, and he may even suffer for the sins of the whole world if his influence extend so far, and he forbear from exerting it for good. (*Talmud Bavli Sabbath 54a*) According to the Rabbis, the possibility is given that a righteous man may suffer with justice, though he himself has never committed any transgression. This is an interesting perspective since the rabbis appear to be speaking of taking the mes-

sage of God (repentance) to his family, the community, or even the world, in the hopes of finding a “willing ear” to listen. This suffering may be the result of persecution. Under another opinion, the rabbis consider suffering of the righteous as an atonement for the sins of their contemporaries: “When there will be neither Tabernacle nor the Holy Temple,” Moses is said to have asked God, “what will become of Israel?” Whereupon God answers, “I will take from among them the righteous man whom I shall consider as pledged for them, and will forgive all their sins”; the death of the perfect man, or even his suffering being looked upon as an expiation for the shortcoming of his generation. (Midrash Exodus Rabbah Parashat 35) This comes from the Torah principle of the sacrifices in general, where the innocent creature must suffer for the sins of another creature. This parallels the theme of the suffering Messiah (our Savior). With this idea of suffering, Rabbi Ishmael said, “I am the atonement for the Jews,” which means that he took upon him all their sins to suffer for them. (see Mishnah Negaim, 2:1, http://www.sefaria.org/Mishnah_Negaim.2.1, Shulchan Aruch 4) The point is that suffering for righteousness sake is a common biblical theme and is consistent with the teaching of the rabbis. When Paul and Peter speak of suffering for the Messiah (Christ) and His name sake, we are not suffering to atone for sin but rather for living righteous lives, for being a testimony of truth and righteousness before others. Like it states in the *Talmud Bavli Sabbath 54a*, suffering for family, community, or the world, their sin of not listening or hearing the word of the Lord becomes persecution and reviling. We therefore suffer and are persecuted, reviled, put to death, destroyed all the day long like David is saying in his Psalm for the sake of the Lord God Almighty, His truth, and the Messiah Yeshua, His Savior. We realize that we cannot make atonement for someone else, only one who is perfect may do so and that is what Yeshua the Messiah did, He lived a perfect life and made atonement for the sins of the world. Note how his influence was so great that he is capable of suffering for the entire world, a principle that is consistent with the teachings of the rabbis (*Talmud Bavli Sabbath 54a*).

David asks the Lord if He is asleep, to raise up and help (44:23-25). Based upon a later Psalm we know that our Father in heaven does not slumber or sleep.

Tehillim / Psalms 121:1-7

121:1 I will lift up my eyes to the mountains; From whence shall my help come? 121:2 My help comes from the Lord, Who made heaven and earth. 121:3 He will not allow your foot to slip; He who keeps you will not slumber. 121:4 Behold, He who keeps Israel Will neither slumber nor sleep. 121:5 The Lord is your keeper; The Lord is your shade on your right hand. 121:6 The sun will not smite you by day, Nor the moon by night. 121:7 The Lord will protect you from all evil; He will keep your soul. 121:8 The Lord will guard your going out and your coming in From this time forth and forever. (NASB)

David concludes his Psalm saying קוֹמָה עֲזַרְתָּהּ לָנוּ וּפְדֵנוּ לְמַעַן חַסְדֶּךָ: 44:26 *Rise up, be our help, And redeem us for the sake of Your lovingkindness (NASB)* asking the Lord to rise up, to help, and to redeem him for the sake of His grace (חַסְדֶּךָ). It is by the grace of God and by His empowering (by His Spirit) that we are able to overcome this world and to take His message of truth to the world. Let's Pray!

Heavenly Father,

We thank You Lord for David's words and for the words of the rabbis that help us to understand the Bible, our lives and who we are in Yeshua the Messiah. We glorify You and give You Praise because You have always kept Your promises! Help us to be people of faith and that our lives would reflect our faithfulness to You. We ask that You would empower us by Your Spirit to walk in Your ways and to follow Yeshua the Messiah and to produce good fruit. Help us to walk and abide in Christ as the Scriptures say we are supposed to do (*John 14:15-17*). 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

— Tehillim / Psalms 44 | ספר תהילים מד —

each day. 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