

## ספר תהילים מז | Tehillim / Psalms 47

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### Living as the Shields of God and the need for Circumcision

This week's study is from *Tehillim / Psalms 46:1-11*, David opens the Psalm saying, א לְמַנְצֵחַ | לְבַנְיָ— For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. A psalm. (NASB) The Psalm is written for the sons of Korach. The Psalmist continues saying ב כָּל-הָעַמִּים תִּקְעוּ-כַף הָרִיעוּ לְאֱלֹהִים בְּקוֹל רִנָּה: ג כִּי-יְהוָה עָלֶיךָ גְּדוֹל עַל-כָּל-הָאָרֶץ: 47:1 O clap your hands, all peoples; Shout to God with the voice of joy. 47:2 For the Lord Most High is to be feared, A great King over all the earth. (NASB) The Psalmist says that the people are to clap and shout for joy because the Lord is to be feared. How does the fear of God bring joy? The psalm continues saying ד יִדְבַר עַמִּים תִּתְחַתְּנוּ וְלְאֻמִּים תִּתַּח רַגְלֵינוּ: ה יִבְחַר-לָנוּ אֶת-נַחְלָתֵנוּ אֶת-סֵלָה: 47:3 He subdues peoples under us And nations under our feet. 47:4 He chooses our inheritance for us, The glory of Jacob whom He loves. Selah. (NASB) What is the inheritance that God chooses and what is the glory of Jacob? David says that ו 47:5 God has ascended with a shout, The Lord, with the sound of a trumpet. (NASB) The Lord who ascends with a shout of the trumpet sounds like a parallel to our Lord Yeshua who returns with the trumpet sound. The shout and trumpet sound have the power to call the dead to life during the resurrection. The Psalmist continues saying ז 47:6 Sing praises to God, sing praises; Sing praises to our King, sing praises. 47:7 For God is the King of all the earth; Sing praises with a skillful psalm. (NASB) The phrase “sing praises” is repeated three times. What is the significance of singing praises unto the Lord? The Psalm states that ט מִלֶּךְ אֱלֹהִים עַל-גּוֹיִם אֱלֹהִים יֵשֵׁב | עַל-כִּפֹּא קְדִשׁוֹ: 47:8 God reigns over the nations, God sits on His holy throne. (NASB) If God reigns over the nations, why does He allow the nations to attack Israel, or even us today? The Psalm concludes saying י 47:9 The princes of the people have assembled themselves as the people of the God of Abraham, For the shields of the earth belong to God; He is highly exalted. (NASB) Why does David say that the princes of the people of the earth have assembled themselves as the people of the God of Abraham? The princes of the people of the earth, are they not from the unsaved nations? How can he say that they call themselves the people of the God of Abraham? Is this a messianic expectation of the messianic age? The psalmist mentions the “shields of the earth.” What are the shields of the earth that belong to God? Might this be a reference to the nations and the Lord sitting and reigning over the nations?

עברית Hebrew	ארמי Aramaic	ελληνικός Greek
<b>ספר תהלים פרק מז</b>	<b>ספר טוביה פרק מז</b>	<b>ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 47</b>
א לְמַנְצֵחַ   לְבַנְיָ-קָרַח מְזֻמָּר: ב כָּל-הָעַמִּים תִּקְעוּ-כַף הָרִיעוּ לְאֱלֹהִים בְּקוֹל רִנָּה: ג כִּי-יְהוָה עָלֶיךָ גְּדוֹל עַל-כָּל-הָאָרֶץ: ד יִדְבַר עַמִּים תִּתְחַתְּנוּ וְלְאֻמִּים תִּתַּח רַגְלֵינוּ: ה יִבְחַר-לָנוּ אֶת-נַחְלָתֵנוּ אֶת גְּאוֹן יַעֲקֹב אֲשֶׁר-אָהַב סֵלָה:	לשבחא על ידיהון דבני קרח תוש-א בחתא: ב כל עמיא עממיא תקעו ידא בחדוא יבבו קדם יהוה אלהא בקל תור שבחתא: ג ארום יהוה עילאה דחילא מליך רב על כל יתבי ארעא: ד יקטל יקטול במותנא עמיא במותנא חילופנא ואומיא יכבוש תחות רגלנא:	47:1 εις τὸ τέλος ὑπὲρ τῶν υἱῶν Κορε ψαλμὸς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη κροτήσατε χεῖρας ἀλαλάξατε τῷ θεῷ ἐν φωνῇ ἀγαλλιᾶσεως 47:2 ὅτι κύριος ὑψιστος φοβερὸς βασιλεὺς μέγας ἐπὶ πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν 47:3 ὑπέταξεν λαοὺς ἡμῖν καὶ ἔθνη ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας ἡμῶν 47:4 ἐξελέξατο ἡμῖν τὴν κληρονομίαν αὐτοῦ τὴν καλλονὴν Ἰακωβ ἣν ἠγάπησεν διάψαλμα

<p>ו עֲלֵה אֱלֹהִים בְּתִרוּעָה יְהוָה בְּקוֹל שׁוֹפָר: ז זָמְרוּ אֱלֹהִים זָמְרוּ זָמְרוּ לְמִלְפָּנָיו זָמְרוּ: ח כִּי מִלֶּחַד כָּל-הָאָרֶץ אֱלֹהִים זָמְרוּ מִשְׁפָּיל: ט מִלֶּחַד אֱלֹהִים עַל-גּוֹיִם אֱלֹהִים יָשׁב   עַל-כִּסֵּא קִדְשׁוֹ: י נְדִיבֵי עַמִּים   נְאֻסְפוּ עִם אֱלֹהֵי אֲבֹרָהֶם כִּי לֵאלֹהִים מִגִּיֵּי-אָרֶץ מָאֵד נִעְלָה:</p>	<p>ה ירעי יתרעי לנא למירת ית אח- סנתנא ית בית מקדשא יקר תוקפיה דיעקב דרחים לעלמין: ו יתעלי יהוה ביבבא יהוה בקל שופרא: ז שבחו קדם יהוה שבחו למל- כנא שבחו: ח ארום מליך כל יתבי ארעא יהוה אלהא שבחו קדמוי בשי- כלא טבא: ט מליך יהוה אלהא על עמיא עממיא יהוה יתיב על כורסיה דקודשיה יקריה: י רבני עממיא אתכנשו עממיא די מהימנין לאלהא דאברהם ארום קדם יהוה אינון תרי- סי ארעא לחדא איתעלא:</p>	<p>47:5 ἀνέβη ὁ θεὸς ἐν ἀλαλαγμῷ κύριος ἐν φωνῇ σάλπιγγος 47:6 ψάλατε τῷ θεῷ ἡμῶν ψάλατε ψάλατε τῷ βασιλεῖ ἡμῶν ψάλατε 47:7 ὅτι βασιλεὺς πάσης τῆς γῆς ὁ θεὸς ψάλατε συνेतῶς 47:8 ἐβασίλευσεν ὁ θεὸς ἐπὶ τὰ ἔθνη ὁ θεὸς κάθηται ἐπὶ θρόνου ἁγίου αὐτοῦ 47:9 ἄρχοντες λαῶν συνήχθησαν μετὰ τοῦ θεοῦ Αβρααμ ὅτι τοῦ θεοῦ οἱ κραταιοὶ τῆς γῆς σφόδρα ἐπήρθησαν</p>
<p><b>Tehillim / Psalms 47</b> For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. A psalm. 47:1 O clap your hands, all peoples; Shout to God with the voice of joy. 47:2 For the Lord Most High is to be feared, A great King over all the earth. 47:3 He subdues peoples under us And nations under our feet. 47:4 He chooses our inheritance for us, The glory of Jacob whom He loves. Selah. 47:5 God has ascended with a shout, The Lord, with the sound of a trumpet. 47:6 Sing praises to God, sing praises; Sing praises to our King, sing praises. 47:7 For God is the King of all the earth; Sing praises with a skillful psalm. 47:8 God reigns over the nations, God sits on His holy throne. 47:9 The princes of the people have assembled themselves as the people of the God of Abraham, For the shields of the earth belong to God; He is highly exalted. (NASB)</p>	<p><b>Toviyah / Psalms Chapter 47</b> 47:1 For praise, by the sons of Korah, a psalm. 47:2 All you peoples, clap hands in joy, shout in the presence of the Lord with the sound of praise. 47:3 For the Lord Most High is to be feared, a great king over all the earth. 47:4 He will slay the peoples by plague instead of us, and he will subdue the nations under our feet. 47:5 He will favor us to inherit our heritage, the sanctuary of Jacob whom he loves forever. 47:6 Let the Lord be exalted with a shout, the Lord with the sound of the trumpet. 47:7 Sing praise in the presence of the Lord, sing praise; sing praise to our king, sing praise! 47:8 For the Lord is king over all inhabitants of the earth; sing praise before him with good understanding. 47:9 The Lord is king over the peoples; the Lord sits on his holy throne. 47:10 The leaders of the Gentiles have gathered, the Gentiles who believe in the God of Abraham, for in the presence of the Lord they are the shields of the earth; he has been greatly exalted. (EMC)</p>	<p><b>Psalmoi / Psalms 47</b> For the end, a Psalm for the sons of Core. 47:1 Clap your hands, all ye nations; shout to God with a voice of exultation. 47:2 For the Lord most high is terrible; he is a great king over all the earth. 47:3 He has subdued the peoples under us, and the nations under our feet. 47:4 He has chosen out his inheritance for us, the beauty of Jacob which he loved. Pause. 47:5 God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with a sound of a trumpet. 47:6 Sing praises to our God, sing praises: sing praises to our King, sing praises. 47:7 For God is king of all the earth: sing praises with understanding. 47:8 God reigns over the nations: God sits upon the throne of his holiness. 47:9 The rulers of the people are assembled with the God of Abraam: for God's mighty ones of the earth have been greatly exalted.(LXX)</p>

א לְמִנְצַח | לְבַנֵּי, This week's study is from *Tehillim / Psalms 46:1-11*, David opens the Psalm saying, *For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. A psalm. (NASB)* Again, the Psalm is written for the sons of Korach. According to the Scriptures, the Korahites were those who descended from Korach. They were musicians and singers given to praise the Lord from the Levite Kohathite division (2 *Chronicles 20:19*). According to the Scriptures, eleven psalms are attributed to the Korahites which include *Tehillim / Psalm 42, 44-49, 84, 85, 87, and 88*. 1 *Chronicles 9:17-19* states that some of the sons of Korach were "porters" of the temple and one of them was over "things that were made in the pans" (1 *Chronicles 9:31*),

for example, the pans involved in preparing the meat-offering (see *Vayikra / Leviticus 2:5*).

ב כָּל-הָעַמִּים תִּקְעוּ-כַף הַרְיֵעוּ לְאֱלֹהִים בְּקוֹל רִנָּה: ג כִּי-יִהְיֶה עֲלִיּוֹן נוֹרָא מְלֶךְ: 47:1 *O clap your hands, all peoples; Shout to God with the voice of joy. 47:2 For the Lord Most High is to be feared, A great King over all the earth. (NASB)* The Psalmist says that the people are to clap and shout for joy because the Lord is to be feared. How does the fear of God bring joy? What kind of relationship can one have with someone one fears? Fearing God hardly sounds like something that would bring joy, however, the “*fear of the Lord*” is the key that opens the door to a life of true knowledge, wisdom, blessing, and joy according to the Psalms of David.

ב כל עמיה עממיה תקעו ידא בחדוה יבבו קדם יהוה אלהא בקל תושבחתא: ג 47:2 *All you peoples, clap hands in joy, shout in the presence of the Lord with the sound of praise. 47:3 For the Lord Most High is to be feared, a great king over all the earth. (EMC)* The Septuagint states 47:1 εἰς τὸ τέλος ὑπὲρ τῶν υἱῶν Κορε ψαλμός πάντα τὰ ἔθνη κροτήσατε χεῖρας ἀλαλάξατε τῷ θεῷ ἐν φωνῇ ἀγαλλιάσεως 47:2 ὅτι κύριος ὑψιστος φοβερός βασιλεὺς μέγας ἐπὶ πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν 47:3 ὑπέταξεν λαοὺς ἡμῖν καὶ ἔθνη ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας ἡμῶν 47:1 *Clap your hands, all ye nations; shout to God with a voice of exultation. 47:2 For the Lord most high is terrible; he is a great king over all the earth. (LXX)* What do we learn of the “*fear of the Lord*” by studying the psalms? A summary of the Psalms on the “*fear of the Lord*” can help us to gain some insight into how ancient Israel understood the meaning of fearing the Lord.

### ***Summary of Psalms on the “Fear of the Lord”***

***Tehillim / Psalm 2:11*** *Serve the LORD with fear and rejoice with trembling. (NIV)*

***Tehillim / Psalm 19:9*** *The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever. The ordinances of the LORD are sure and altogether righteous. (NIV)*

***Tehillim / Psalm 22:23*** *You who fear the LORD, praise him! All you descendants of Jacob, honor him! Revere him, all you descendants of Israel! (NIV)*

***Tehillim / Psalm 25:12*** *Who, then, is the man that fears the LORD ? He will instruct him in the way chosen for him. (NIV)*

***Tehillim / Psalm 25:14*** *The LORD confides in those who fear him; he makes his covenant known to them. (NIV)*

***Tehillim / Psalm 33:8*** *Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the people of the world revere him. (NIV)*

***Tehillim / Psalm 33:18*** *But the eyes of the LORD are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love, (NIV)*

***Tehillim / Psalm 34:7*** *The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them. (NIV)*

***Tehillim / Psalm 34:9*** *Fear the LORD, you his saints, for those who fear him lack nothing. (NIV)*

***Tehillim / Psalm 40:3*** *He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear and put their trust in the LORD. (NIV)*

**Tehillim / Psalm 86:11** Teach me your way, O LORD, and I will walk in your truth; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name. (NIV)

**Tehillim / Psalm 96:4** For great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; he is to be feared above all gods. (NIV)

**Tehillim / Psalm 102:15** The nations will fear the name of the LORD, all the kings of the earth will revere your glory. (NIV)

**Tehillim / Psalm 103:13** As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him; (NIV)

**Tehillim / Psalm 103:17** But from everlasting to everlasting the LORD's love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children's children (NIV)

**Tehillim / Psalm 111:10** The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding. To him belongs eternal praise. (NIV)

**Tehillim / Psalm 112:1** Praise the LORD. Blessed is the man who fears the LORD, who finds great delight in his commands. (NIV)

**Tehillim / Psalm 115:11** You who fear him, trust in the LORD— he is their help and shield. The Fear of the Lord is to keep his commands: Psalm 128:1 Blessed are all who fear the LORD, who walk in his ways. (NIV)

**Tehillim / Psalm 135:20** O house of Levi, praise the LORD; you who fear him, praise the LORD. (NIV)

**Tehillim / Psalm 147:11** the LORD delights in those who fear him, who put their hope in his unfailing love. (NIV)

According to David in the Psalms, the Fear of the Lord is to have stability by delighting in the Torah of God as a guide for life. The Fear of the Lord is to experience the joy of respectful praise. The Fear of the Lord is to be open to instruction by God. Fear of the Lord is to experience the wonder of how God has revealed Himself to us throughout the Scriptures and specifically in the Torah by His deliverance of Israel. The Fear of the Lord is to have reverence (respect) for the Lord. The Fear of the Lord is to experience hope in the Lord God's unfailing love. The Fear of the Lord is to experience God's deliverance. The Fear of the Lord is to experience God's providence (supervision, protection). The Fear of the Lord is to be a guide or hope to others by sharing out faith and the Scriptures with others. The Fear of the Lord is to experience an undivided heart and to be unified in our thinking and understanding of God (i.e. not wavering). The Fear of the Lord is to take delight in praising God according to His greatness. The Fear of the Lord is to experience God's glory, His compassion, love, and righteousness. The Fear of the Lord is to experience God's wisdom and to gain understanding of his ways by following the Torah. The Fear of the Lord is to take delight in the command of God (in His Torah). The Fear of the Lord is to trust our Father in Heaven. The Fear of the Lord is the Praise of the Lord and hoping in His love. The Hebraic mindset on the "fear of the Lord" appears to be connected to doing what is right, serving the Lord God, and recognizing what He has done for us and for others in the past.

The psalm continues saying יְדַבֵּר עַמִּים תַּחֲתֵינוּ וְלְאֻמִּים תַּחַת רַגְלֵינוּ: ה' יְבַחֵר-לָנוּ אֶת-נַחֲלָתֵנוּ אֶת גְּאוֹן יְעַקֹּב אֱשֶׁר-אָהָב סֵלָה: 47:3 He subdues peoples under us And nations under our feet. 47:4 He chooses our

*inheritance for us, The glory of Jacob whom He loves. Selah. (NASB)* Reading *Tehillim / Psalms 47:4* from the Masoretic Text (4:3 from the English translation), David says יְדַבֵּר עַמִּים תְּהַתִּינוּ using the Infinitive Verb Hiphil Imperfect 3<sup>rd</sup> Masculine Singular “yadber” יְדַבֵּר meaning “to speak, declare, converse, command.” The NASB translates this phrase as “He subdues peoples under us.” The Hebrew text suggests that the Lord places the “words” of the peoples under us, which may allude to the fact that the nations boast against the Lord and against God’s people. The second clause of the verse states וְיִלְאֲמִים תַּתַּת רַגְלֵינוּ using the word וְיִלְאֲמִים from the root word לָאֵם which is used as a reference to “a people, a nation” in *Bereshit / Genesis 25:23, 27:29, and Tehillim / Psalms 7:8 and 9:9*. This clause is translated by the NASB as “And nations under our feet.” Though the nations boast against God and His people, the Lord will subdue the nations and place them under our feet.

David continues saying that 47:4 *He chooses our inheritance for us, The glory of Jacob whom He loves. Selah. (NASB)* What is the inheritance that God chooses and what is the glory of Jacob? Here David uses the word “yivkhar” יִבְחַר which is the Hebrew word “to choose” (בחר) written in the verb form Qal imperfect tense. The verb form in the imperfect tense, is a form which expresses an ongoing action. Here our Father is choosing our inheritance for us. In the biblical context, God is choosing Canaan for Israel and placing them in the land. He (God) is bestowing upon Israel their inheritance. If we must consider the relationship of the Torah to the New Covenant, the term New Covenant is first found in the Prophets of the Hebrew Bible in *Jeremiah 31:31* and the Apostle Paul makes the connection in *Ephesians 1:11-14*.

#### ***Ephesians 1:11-14***

*In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. (ESV)*

The Torah tells us that God is our inheritance and David says in *Tehillim / Psalm 16:5* that God is our portion. According to *Ephesians*, Paul says that “we have obtained an inheritance” in Yeshua the Messiah, this inheritance is guaranteed by the Holy Spirit, but we have not yet acquired possession of the inheritance. What exactly is Paul trying to say? According to the Torah, God Himself is the portion of His people because He has chosen to dwell in their midst. This on going choice that is demonstrated by the Qal imperfect verb tense of “yivkhar” יִבְחַר in *Tehillim / Psalms 47:4*, the Lord is choosing to dwell in our midst, indwelling each of us by the presence of the Holy Spirit. The Lord chose Israel and resolved to set them apart from the Gentiles. The second clause of *Tehillim / Psalms 47:4* states “the glory of Jacob whom He loves.” Here the word Geon גָּאוֹן is a masculine noun meaning “majesty, pride,” suggesting that God gloried or takes pride in other people (i.e. Jacob). Note that the people of Israel are sometimes figuratively called “Jacob” and “Israel” was the new name given to Jacob by God Himself. Israel is also the name of the nation of God’s people and we are grafted into Israel by our faith. The psalmist is bringing into the picture here the context of the promises God made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the promised inheritance of Canaan, and the presence of God in his sanctuary which ultimately directs us to the Messiah who makes a sanctuary in each one of us, in our hearts, for the Holy Spirit to dwell. According to Oarshiot Va’etchanan and Ekev, the choosing of the inheritance of His presence is freely given as it is described in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 7:6-8 and 9:4-6*.

#### ***Devarim / Deuteronomy 7:6-8***

*7:6 ‘For you are a holy people to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. 7:7 ‘The Lord did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than*

any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples, 7:8 but because the Lord loved you and kept the oath which He swore to your forefathers, the Lord brought you out by a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. (NASB)

### **Devarim / Deuteronomy 9:4-6**

9:4 'Do not say in your heart when the Lord your God has driven them out before you, 'Because of my righteousness the Lord has brought me in to possess this land,' but it is because of the wickedness of these nations that the Lord is dispossessing them before you. 9:5 'It is not for your righteousness or for the uprightness of your heart that you are going to possess their land, but it is because of the wickedness of these nations that the Lord your God is driving them out before you, in order to confirm the oath which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. 9:6 'Know, then, it is not because of your righteousness that the Lord your God is giving you this good land to possess, for you are a stubborn people. (NASB)

The Lord is doing these things for His Name's Sake (Ezekiel 36:32 "I am not doing this for your sake," declares the Lord God, "let it be known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your ways, O house of Israel!" NASB) This follows through with the idea that the Torah does not teach man to earn his own salvation, and the purpose of the sacrifice, the sacrifices were not given so man could have the ability to earn forgiveness. The Lord desires obedience and the covenant is dependent upon the obedience of His people who walk in faith.

David continues saying that עָלָה אֱלֹהִים בְּתִרְוָעָה יְהוָה בְּקוֹל שׁוֹפָר: 1 47:5 God has ascended with a shout, The Lord, with the sound of a trumpet. (NASB) The Lord who ascends with a shout of the trumpet sounds like a parallel to our Lord Yeshua who returns with the trumpet sound. The word that catches our attention in Tehillim / Psalms 47:5 is "Teruah" (בְּתִרְוָעָה) which reminds us of the day, יוֹם תִּרְוָעָה (Yom Teruah) found in Bamidbar / Numbers 29:1. In Vayikra / Leviticus 23:24, it's called זִכְרוֹן תִּרְוָעָה (zich'rone teruah), meaning "remembrance (with) teruah." Yom Teruah is the Feast of Trumpets, and it is the first day of the seventh Hebrew month. It can fall anywhere from mid-September to early October. This day signals the beginning of the end of the Holy Days that come in autumn. Nine days after this feast is Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement), and four days after that is the Feast of Succot (Tabernacles), the last feast of the biblical year. The Lord declares in Vayikra / Leviticus 23:24-25.

### **Vayikra / Leviticus 23:24-25**

23:24 'Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'In the seventh month on the first of the month you shall have a rest, a reminder by blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation. 23:25 'You shall not do any laborious work, but you shall present an offering by fire to the Lord.' (NASB)

כִּד דְּבַר אֵל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר בַּחֲדָשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי בְּאֶחָד לַחֲדָשׁ יְהוָה לָכֶם שַׁבְּתוֹן זִכְרוֹן תִּרְוָעָה מִקְרָא-קֹדֶשׁ: כה-כָּל-מְלָאכָת עֲבֹדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם אֹשֶׁה לַיהוָה:

The Feast of Trumpets centers around the "glory of God" and for the "praise of His name" using various musical instruments and our voices. Here in Vayikra / Leviticus 23:24 the Hebrew words זִכְרוֹן תִּרְוָעָה meaning "to remember, recollect, call to mind, commemorate" implies that we are to remember the mighty deeds the Lord had done for Israel. There is great joy in remembering what the Lord has done. By doing this we place ourselves back into the events that God has done and this is to be a living remembrance. The significance of this "remembering" allows both ancient Israel and us today to participate in past and future events. The sound of the trumpet was a reminder of Israel to place themselves back at the events that caused them such great joy and the salvation God provided against the Egyptians army. Note the events of the Exodus, (i) they were set free from Egyptians slavery and saved from death by the blood of the lamb, (ii) they stood



say the following:

## Aramaic Targum

ז שבחו קדם יהוה שבחו שבחו למלכנא שבחו: ה ארום מליך כל יתבי ארעא יהוה אלהא שבחו  
קדמוי בשיכלא טבא:

### **Toviyah / Psalms Chapter 47:7-8**

47:7 Sing praise in the presence of the Lord, sing praise; sing praise to our king, sing praise!

47:8 For the Lord is king over all inhabitants of the earth; sing praise before him with good understanding. (EMC)

## Septuagint

47:6 ψάλατε τῷ θεῷ ἡμῶν ψάλατε ψάλατε τῷ βασιλεῖ ἡμῶν ψάλατε 47:7 ὅτι βασιλεὺς  
πάσης τῆς γῆς ὁ θεός ψάλατε συνετῶς

### **Psalmoi / Psalms 47:6-7**

7:6 Sing praises to our God, sing praises: sing praises to our King, sing praises. 47:7 For God is king of all the earth: sing praises with understanding. (LXX)

Note how Aramaic Targum states שבחו קדם יהוה שבחו שבחו למלכנא שבחו ז translating “zamru” (זַמְרוּ) “to sing” using the word “shavakhu” (שבחו) meaning “praise, glorification.” The rabbis understood singing within the context of singing praises unto the Lord. Note the Aramaic translation says to sing “praises before Him with good understanding” (שבחו קדמוי בשיכלא טבא), similar to the Hebrew text (מְשִׁיבִיל) to say with “good understanding?” (Note also that we have seen this Hebrew word before in the introduction to the Psalms, see Psalms 22, 44, 52, 54, 55, 74, 78, 81, and 142.) The Septuagint states the same saying συνετῶς “intelligent, wise.” The purpose for praising God “with good understanding” is that we praise Him for what He has done (remembering) so we are then able to praise Him for what He will do in the future. Our hope is in the Lord, our salvation, and our deliverer.

The question was asked “If God reigns over the nations, as these Scriptures are saying, why does He allow the nations to attack Israel, or even us today?” Because of disease, famine, poverty, suffering, natural disasters (earthquakes, fires, floods, volcanoes, tornadoes, hurricanes, blizzards, violent storms, drought, infestations due to weather, etc), terrorism, war, violence, many people ask the questions:

1. Why isn't God intervening?
2. Why does God allow this to continue?
3. Why doesn't God banish war?
4. Why doesn't God control the weather and nature better?

Many times we hear that God is working out an unseen purpose through these conditions and we wonder what that purpose is really all about? According to the Scriptures we are told that the Lord God possesses infinite understanding (*Tehillim / Psalms 147:5*) and perfect character. Yeshua the Messiah said that we are to develop that same spotless character (*Matthew 5:48*), while growing in God's understanding (*Mishley / Proverbs 2:6, 9, 11*). We are also told that the Holy Spirit is given to those who believe and obey the Lord (*Acts 2:38, 5:32*) and we are characterized by the fruit of the Spirit which is “love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance...” (*Galatians 5:22-23*). Peter says in *2 Peter 3:5-10* saying:

**2 Peter 3:5-10**

3:5 For when they maintain this, it escapes their notice that by the word of God the heavens existed long ago and the earth was formed out of water and by water, 3:6 through which the world at that time was destroyed, being flooded with water. 3:7 But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. 3:8 But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. 3:9 The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. (NASB)

Peter describes the Lord as long suffering. It is interesting that “long suffering” is listed as a part of the Father’s characteristics. According to the Torah, before the Lord flooded the world in Noah’s time, the Scriptures say “it repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart” (Bereshit / Genesis 6:6, וַיִּנְחַם יְהוָה כִּי-עָשָׂה אֶת-הָאָדָם בְּאָרֶץ וַיִּתְעַצֵּב אֵל-לְבוּ: ). Based upon these Scriptures, the Lord felt pain in the form of “grief” at what mankind had become, utterly wicked. The Lord brought the flood as judgment against the sin of man. According to Parshiot Ki Tisa and Shelach Lecha we read that the Lord was long suffering towards His people Israel.

**Shemot / Exodus 34:5-7**

34:5 The Lord descended in the cloud and stood there with him as he called upon the name of the Lord. 34:6 Then the Lord passed by in front of him and proclaimed, ‘The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; 34:7 who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations.’ (NASB)

ה וַיֵּרֶד יְהוָה בְּעָנָן וַיִּתְיַצֵּב עִמּוֹ שֵׁם וַיִּקְרָא בְשֵׁם יְהוָה: ו וַיַּעֲבֹר יְהוָה | עַל-פְּנָיו וַיִּקְרָא יְהוָה | יְהוָה אֵל רַחוּם וְחַנוּן אַרְוֵה אַפַּיִם וְרַב-חֶסֶד וְאַמֶּת: ז נִצַּר חֶסֶד לְאֲלֹפִים נִשְׂא עֹון וּפְשָׁע וְחַטָּאָה וְנִקְיָה לֹא יִנְקֶה פְקֹד | עֹון אָבוֹת עַל-בְּנִים וְעַל-בְּנֵי בָנִים עַל-שְׁלִשִׁים וְעַל-רִבְעִים:

**Bamidbar / Numbers 14:18**

14:18 ‘The Lord is slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generations. (NASB)

יח יְהוָה אַרְוֵה אַפַּיִם וְרַב-חֶסֶד נִשְׂא עֹון וּפְשָׁע וְנִקְיָה לֹא יִנְקֶה פְקֹד עֹון אָבוֹת עַל-בְּנִים עַל-שְׁלִשִׁים וְעַל-רִבְעִים:

Here in the Torah text, the concept of “long suffering” is found in the Hebrew words אַרְוֵה אַפַּיִם meaning “a lengthened face” which is a Hebraic way of saying that the Lord is slow to anger. The idea is that the Lord is not quick to bring punishment. The purpose of the Lord’s slow response, and for allowing the nations to attack, is so that we (His people) can choose to make the right choices even in the midst of pain and suffering. We are to choose righteousness and justice, peace, mercy, gentleness, goodness, meekness, and temperance, all of the fruits of the Spirit in faith, even when faced with pain, suffering, and war. By doing these things we glorify God our Father who is in Heaven.

47:9 י נְדִיבֵי עַמִּים | נְאֻסָּפוּ עִם אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם כִּי לֹא־לֵהִים מְגִי־אֶרֶץ מֵאֵד נַעֲלָה:

*The princes of the people have assembled themselves as the people of the God of Abraham, For the shields of the earth belong to God; He is highly exalted. (NASB)* Reading through the last verse of the Psalm raises a number of questions:

### Questions on the last verse

1. *Why does David say that the princes of the people of the earth have assembled themselves as the people of the God of Abraham?*
2. *The princes of the people of the earth, are they not from the unsaved nations?*
3. *How can he say that they call themselves the people of the God of Abraham? Is this a messianic expectation of the messianic age?*
4. *The psalmist mentions the “shields of the earth.” What are the shields of the earth that belong to God? Might this be a reference to the nations and the Lord sitting and reigning over the nations?*

It is important to remember that the Psalms often repeats a similar idea in two or three phrases for the purpose of reinforcing what is being said. The psalmist uses repetition and parallelisms to make poetic points. Here in *Tehillim / Psalms 47:9*, the psalmist says the following:

- “*God reigns over the nations*” (47:8)
- “*The princes of the peoples*” (47:9)
- “*the shields of the earth*” (47:9)

The way the last two verses are written, the “*shields*” appear to be a reference to “*rulers*.” The logic can be summarized as (i) God has authority over everyone, (ii) non-Israelite rulers assemble before His throne as do His own people, and (iii) all authorities belong to God and he has authority over them. The Aramaic Targum and the Septuagint appear to support this interpretation saying:

### Aramaic Targum

#### ***Toviyah / Psalms Chapter 47:10***

*47:10 The leaders of the Gentiles have gathered, the Gentiles who believe in the God of Abraham, for in the presence of the Lord they are the shields of the earth; he has been greatly exalted. (EMC)*

י רבני עממיא אתכנשו עממיא די מהימנין לאלהא דאברהם ארום קדם יהוה אינון תריסי ארעא  
לחדא איתעלא:

### Septuagint

#### ***Psalmoi / Psalms 47:9***

*47:9 The rulers of the people are assembled with the God of Abraam: for God's mighty ones of the earth have been greatly exalted. (LXX)*

47:9 ἄρχοντες λαῶν συνήχθησαν μετὰ τοῦ θεοῦ Ἀβρααμ ὅτι τοῦ θεοῦ οἱ κραταιοὶ τῆς γῆς σφόδρα ἐπήρθησαν

The Aramaic Targum states that the Gentiles believe in the God of Abraham and that in His presence they are the shields of the earth suggesting that the rulers are called shields for God's people, they will help in the times of troubles, war, humanitarian support, etc. The Gentile believers choose to obey God, to gather to His presence and to choose to live with justice, righteousness, and truth towards all peoples. What a great example and picture for us today.

## Rabbinic Commentary

The Rabbinic Commentary (Midrash) on *Tehillim / Psalms 47* has 2 parts. Reading through the Midrash we will be looking at Part 1 and 2. Let's begin by outlining *Midrash Tehillim Chapter 46, Part 1 and 2*.

### Outline of Midrash Tehillim / Psalms, Chapter 47, Part 1 and 2

#### Part 1

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*For the leader; a Psalm of the sons of Korach. O clap your hands, all you people (Tehillim / Psalms 47:1-2).*”
- The פתיחתא (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*These words are to be considered in the light of the verse When the righteous are increased, the people rejoice; but when the wicked bears rule, the people sigh (Mishley / Proverbs 29:2).*”
- The משל (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis go on to discuss the opening words of the Psalm for the Sons of Korach in contrast to Mishley / Proverbs 29:2 and wicked men who rule.
- The נמשל (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the משל (mashal), the rabbis speak of the righteous who have power over men verses the wicked who have power and hurt men. The Lord rescues His people by breaking the power of the wicked.
- The Concluding phrase says “*For the Holy One blessed be He, will do away with the dominion of mortals over you, as it is said, The Lord most high is terrible; He is a great king over all the earth (Tehillim / Psalms 47:3).*”

#### Part 2

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*He will subdue the peoples under us, and the nations under our feet (Tehillim / Psalms 47:4).*”
- The פתיחתא (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*When? When He will choose our inheritance for us, the Excellency of Jacob (Tehillim / Psalms 47:5).*”
- The משל (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis go on to expand upon David's words speaking of the Lord giving Israel her inheritance..
- The נמשל (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the משל (mashal), the rabbis speak of how the Lord will give the inheritance when He overthrows the strength of the kingdoms of this world.
- The Concluding phrase says “*But as the sound of the Shofar rises up in a blast, at the sound of the Shofar He becomes Lord of mercy (Tehillim / Psalms 47:6), and deals mercifully, for the term Lord connotes mercy, as in the Lord, the Lord, merciful and gracious (Shemot / Exodus 34:6).*”

Midrash Tehillim 47, Part 1 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying “*For the leader; a Psalm of the sons of Korach. O clap your hands, all you people (Tehillim / Psalms 47:1-2).*” The homiletic introduction to the Midrash states “*These words are to be considered in the light of the verse When the righ-*

teous are increased, the people rejoice; but when the wicked bears rule, the people sigh (Mishley / Proverbs 29:2).” The midrash quotes from *Mishley / Proverbs 29:2* which says the following:

**Mishley / Proverbs 28:28-29:3**

28:28 When the wicked rise, men hide themselves; But when they perish, the righteous increase. 29:1 A man who hardens his neck after much reproof Will suddenly be broken beyond remedy. 29:2 When the righteous increase, the people rejoice, But when a wicked man rules, people groan. 29:3 A man who loves wisdom makes his father glad, But he who keeps company with harlots wastes his wealth. (NASB)

כח בקום רשעים יסתר אדם ובאבדם ירבו צדיקים: א איש תוכחות מקשה-עָרַף פתע ישבר ואין מרפא: ב ברבות צדיקים ישמח העם ובמשל רשע יאנה עם: ג איש-אהב חכמה ישמח אביו ורעה זונות יאבד-הון:

Solomon said that men hide themselves from wicked men, and the righteous increase when the wicked decrease. There is an inverse relationship between the righteous and the wicked. As wickedness increases, righteousness will decrease, and visa versa. This is a truth that follows *Revelation 22:11* “Let the one who does wrong continue to do wrong; let the vile person continue to be vile; let the one who does right continue to do right; and let the holy person continue to be holy.” (NASB) The midrash continues saying “When the wicked rule in the world all men sigh and all are distressed, and no man walks about with his head up. As Solomon says, When the wicked rise, men hide themselves; but when they perish, the righteous increase (Mishley / Proverbs 28:28). Grievous for the Holy One, blessed be He, is the day when He gives power to one man to rule over another to the others hurt.” The midrash speaks of the Lord who is grieved when He gives power to a man and rule over another man who turns around and uses that power to hurt others. According to the Torah, we are supposed to be a blessing to others and not a curse. If we are a curse to others, are we choosing to be cursed? According to *Mishley / Proverbs 26:2*, curses do not come without a cause. A person chooses to receive a curse. In Parashat Lech Lecha, the Lord made it clear on the source of blessings and curses. What is it that drives men to continually choose a curse? The Torah tells us that Israel chose the curse by reason of disobedience to the commandments. We observe the effect of the curse when we study the history of Israel in the book of the prophets. It is recorded in Scripture that those who curse Israel will be cursed. In pride the wicked consider themselves above the curses and exempt from God’s word. The source of the curse is in pride and arrogance, and the nation that turns against Israel reveals themselves as ultimately arrogant. (Note that replacement theology, Kingdom now, Supersessionism, etc are all attempts at minimizing the importance of the state of Israel today and in future events by saying the church has replaced Israel when in fact believers are grafted into Israel.)

On the other hand, the blessed are those who live in humility, innocence, righteousness, and justice, trusting in a wise and loving King. The Lord is the sole source of all blessings. We are simply obedient subjects to the King of the Universe. David said in *Tehillim / Psalms 1:1-6*:

**Tehillim / Psalms 1:1-6**

1:1 How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers! 1:2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night. 1:3 He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water; Which yields its fruit in its season And its leaf does not wither; And in whatever he does, he prospers. 1:4 The wicked are not so, But they are like chaff which the wind drives away. 1:5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. 1:6 For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, But the way of the wicked will perish. (NASB)

David says that the righteous serve God and the wicked will perish. This is what we see in Parashat Korach (*Bamidbar / Numbers 16:1-18:32*), Korach's rebellious statements against Moshe and Aaron. It is interesting to think about this for a moment, Korach's statements today may be accepted within some quarters of Christianity. It is interesting to observe that the rebellion of Korach continues to this day. The rebellion of Korach has in fact been institutionalized within every level of the religious establishment. Note that the rebellion of Korach is not simply a rebellion against leadership. The rebellion of Korach (the Spirit of Korach) is a spirit that come against two things:

1. *The Prophecy of Moses*
2. *The Priesthood of Aaron*

When one rebels against these two things, one is rebelling against promises of God and the Lord God Himself.

### ***Bamidbar / Numbers 16:1-3***

*16:1 Now Korah the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, with Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took action, 16:2 and they rose up before Moses, together with some of the sons of Israel, two hundred and fifty leaders of the congregation, chosen in the assembly, men of renown. 16:3 They assembled together against Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "You have gone far enough, for all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is in their midst; so why do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the Lord?" (NASB)*

Korach and the men that gathered stood against Moshe and Aaron, and said to them, "*You take too much upon yourselves, for all the congregation is holy, every one of them, and HaShem is among them. Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the Lord?*" On hearing this, Moshe fell upon his face and spoke to Korach and the men telling them what to do, to draw near to the Lord with their censors and bring burning incense to the Lord in the morning. Korach was a Kohathite and was not a part of the priests who performed the service in the Tabernacle however he was involved in taking care of certain aspects of the Tabernacle. When considering Korach's point of view, he appears to have a valid point that all of the congregation is holy before God. However, He did not believe the Lord or the words of Moshe. Remember earlier from Parashat Beha'alotcha when Miriam rebelled against Moshe's authority and the Lord struck her with tzaraat and she was forced to leave the congregation for a period of time and then the Lord healed her. Note also the words from *Bamidbar / Numbers 12:6-8*, "*Then He [God] said, "Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, I, HaShem, make Myself known to him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream. Not so with My servant Moses; He is faithful in all My house. I speak with him face to face, even plainly, and not in dark sayings; and he sees the form of HaShem. Why then were you not afraid to speak against My servant Moses?"*" One would have thought that Korach and the 250 men would have learned from what happened to Aaron and Miriam? Something important to recognize here is the Lord said that He will speak to a person in a dream or vision calling him to His service. Korach did not receive a call, the Scriptures do not state that He had been spoken to by God. His basic claim was that Moshe had set himself up as priest and that he wanted to be priest too. Korach was minimizing Moshe and the Torah, similar to what we see happening today. It is important to note how Korach and the men that followed him were in the process of "*throwing off*" the Law of Moshe. They were essentially making a law for themselves to live by. The enemy desires that we throw off God's Word and to speak against the Torah and Moshe (*Acts 6:13*). The Spirit of Korach (the spirit that ruled Korach) is the same spirit that rules the anti-christ, and is the same spirit that rebels against the Lord God in heaven. This is the same spirit that declares that Yeshua is not the Messiah (*1 John 4:3*) and the same spirit that says "*Moshe did not receive an eternal revelation from God, the words he wrote are not valid, they are annulled.*" This same spirit also says that "*the Torah does not apply to me,*" and "*To disobey the 'Law of Moses' is not a sin.*" The *Talmud Bavli Sanhedrin 110a* states "*Moses and his*

*Torah are true, but Korah's company are liars."*

The midrash states *"Therefore Scripture says, what time one man had power over another is to His hurt (Ecclesiastes 8:9), and also says, Behold it is harsh and bitter for the Lord, as a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, when He causes the earth to lie under a hand (Isaiah 28:2). What can under a hand mean except under the hand of a man who has power over one like himself?"* Midrash Tehillim 27, Part 1 speaks of a man who has power over another. One man should be a shield over another having a gentle hand rather than a heavy hand to hurt and destroy. *Midrash Rabbah Devarim, Parashat 2, Part 24* speaks of the shields of the earth.

#### ***Midrash Rabbah Devarim, Parashat 2, Part 24***

*"... The rabbis thereupon applied to him (her husband) the following Scriptural verse, 'the princes of the peoples gather together; the people of the God of Abraham; for unto God belong the shields of the earth. He is greatly exalted (Tehillim / Psalms 47:10). What is the meaning of, the shields of the earth? God said, To Abraham I became a strong shield. Whence this? For it is said, I am your shield (Bereshit / Genesis 15:1); whereas to this one, the senator; I will become many shields. How? God first said to Abraham, And I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great (Bereshit / Genesis 12:2), and only after that assurance did Abraham circumcise himself; but this one received no such assurance from Me and yet he circumcised himself. What is the meaning of, He is greatly exalted? This one is exalted above Abraham."*

Midrash Devarim Rabbah provides a parable and then follows with these statements and asking the meaning of the shields of the earth? The midrash states that God is the strong shield, the Lord will bless Abraham to make him a great nation, and that Abraham after this assurance circumcised himself. It is interesting that these three things are written in close proximity suggesting that the shield of the earth, the Lord, and circumcision are somehow connected. According to the Scriptures, circumcision was performed on male children on the eighth day and also to their slaves whether they were born in the house or not. Scripture states that this is a sign of the covenant of Abraham (*Bereshit / Genesis 17:10-14, 21:4, Vayikra / Leviticus 12:3*). Foreigners were also required to be circumcised before partaking in the covenant feast of Pesach (Passover) (*Shemot / Exodus 12:48*) and marrying into a Jewish family (*Bereshit / Genesis 34:14-16*). As a result of these Scriptures, it was considered a reproach for an Israelite to be uncircumcised (see *Joshua 5:9 on the reproach of Egypt*). Thus, the name "arelim" (הַעֲרֵלִים, uncircumcised) became a shameful term, denoting the Philistines and other non-Israelites (*1 Samuel 14:6, 31:4, 2 Samuel 1:20, compare Judges 14:3, and 1 Samuel 17:26*). The uncircumcised were also equated to those who were "tame" (טָמֵא, unclean) and for the heathen (*Isaiah 52:1*). The word "arel" (uncircumcised) is also employed for "unclean" (*Vayikra / Leviticus 26:41 as a reference to "their uncircumcised hearts," compare Jeremiah 9:25 and Ezekiel 44:1-9*) and it is also applied to the first three years' fruit of a tree, which is forbidden (*Vayikra / Leviticus 19:23*). These Scriptures reveal how deeply rooted within the minds of the ancient Hebrews was the idea of circumcision. Circumcision was also considered a national act of consecration and purification. In addition to this, according to *Shemot / Exodus 4:24-26*, the circumcision of Moshe's first born appears to have been omitted because the Lord sought to kill him whereupon Zipporah took a knife and cut off the foreskin of her son and cast it at Moshe's feet saying *"A bridegroom of blood art thou to me."* The Torah suggests that Moses was ransomed by the blood of his son's circumcision. The omission on the part of Moshe to circumcise his son, we also see the children of Israel omitting the act of circumcision in the wilderness as recorded in *Joshua 5:2-9*. The people coming out of Egypt were circumcised, the children born in the wilderness were not circumcised. What exactly is the Lord trying to tell us in the Scriptures regarding circumcision? The rabbis equate circumcision as being a shield; how is circumcision a shield based upon *Midrash Rabbah Devarim, Parashat 2, Part 24*?

The book of Joshua contrasts the differences between those who come out of Egypt with circumcised flesh but having uncircumcised hearts. The people who were allowed to enter into the Promised Land were

those who had circumcised hearts. The circumcision of the heart is something the Lord does in each one of us upon placing our faith in Yeshua the Messiah. A circumcised heart is absolutely necessary for every person to have a relationship with God.

The prophets attitude towards circumcision speak of the circumcision of the heart giving heart circumcision a spiritual meaning. For example, *Jeremiah 9:25-26* states the following:

***Jeremiah 9:25-26***

*9:25 “Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will punish all those who are circumcised merely in the flesh— 9:26 Egypt, Judah, Edom, the sons of Ammon, Moab, and all who dwell in the desert who cut the corners of their hair, for all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in heart.” (ESV)*

Jeremiah states that both the circumcised and uncircumcised will be punished alike by the Lord. All of the nations are uncircumcised, and all of the house of Israel are uncircumcised in heart. The prophetic view of circumcision related back to the examples of the Torah on its connection to sin, uncleanness, and impurity before God. Note also how circumcision is connected to the right of marriage. We learn this from *Shemot / Exodus 4:21-26*.

***Shemot / Exodus 4:21-26***

*4:21 The Lord said to Moses, ‘When you go back to Egypt see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders which I have put in your power; but I will harden his heart so that he will not let the people go. 4:22 ‘Then you shall say to Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the Lord, ‘Israel is My son, My firstborn. 4:23 ‘So I said to you, ‘Let My son go that he may serve Me’; but you have refused to let him go. Behold, I will kill your son, your firstborn.’’ 4:24 Now it came about at the lodging place on the way that the Lord met him and sought to put him to death. 4:25 Then Zipporah took a flint and cut off her son’s foreskin and threw it at Moses’ feet, and she said, ‘You are indeed a bridegroom of blood to me.’ 4:26 So He let him alone. At that time she said, ‘You are a bridegroom of blood’ because of the circumcision. (NASB)*

Here we read that Moshe neglected to circumcise Gershom his son and this may be associated in some way with Moshe’s marriage to a Midianite woman (Zipporah). Ultimately however, she showed her allegiance to the God of Israel by performing the rite herself and then casting the foreskin at the foot of Moshe. How this applies to us today is the need to be circumcised in heart in order to be married to God in the Messiah Yeshua (the bridegroom). Circumcision is a necessary requirement for marriage with God, having been changed on the inside and not merely on the outside. The Jewish Encyclopedia states that “*in Arabic ‘ḥatana’ signifies both ‘to marry’ (compare the Hebrew = “bridegroom,” and = “father-in-law”) and ‘to circumcise’ shows an original connection between the rite and the nuptial ceremony; whereas the terms ‘tuhur’ and ‘tathir’ (purification), applied to circumcision in Arabia (see Wellhausen, “Skizzen und Vorarbeiten,” 1887, iii. 154 et seq.), indicate the later religious view (see also Kohler, in “Z. D. M. G.” xxiii. 680, and Nöldeke, ib. xl. 737).*” The Jewish Encyclopedia reveals the cultural middle eastern connection between circumcision and marriage.

Midrash Tehillim 47, Part 1 continues saying:

*It is said, O clap your hands. Why? Because The Lord has broken the staff of the wicked, the scepter of the rulers, that smote the peoples in wrath, the whole earth is at rest, and is quiet (Isaiah 14:5-7). As Scripture says, all that hear the report of you clap the hands over you (Nahum 3:19). (Midrash Tehillim 47, Part 1)*

The staff of the wicked according to Isaiah is the scepter of the king of Babylon. The word rendered ‘staff’ (מטה *matah*) may mean either a bough, stick, staff, rod, or a scepter. The scepter was the symbol of ruling

power. It was in the form of a staff, and was made of wood, ivory, or gold. Note how each of the sons of Israel who were the heads of the tribes of Israel had a wooden staff (*Bamidbar / Numbers 17*). Here it means that HaShem had taken away the power from Babylon, and destroyed his dominion. In the Midrash it means that the Lord has broken the wicked man who ruled over the people causing hurt (harm). With the removal of the wicked man from power, the entire earth was at rest and quiet. The idea of clapping is connected to rejoicing over the Lord establishing a righteous man to rule who brings peace, justice, and God's truth to all peoples. Midrash Tehillim 47, Part 1 concludes saying "For the Holy One blessed be He, will do away with the dominion of mortals over you, as it is said, The Lord most high is terrible; He is a great king over all the earth (*Tehillim / Psalms 47:3*). שהקב"ה מעביר ממשלתו של בשר ודם מכם, וימלוך עליכם הוא לבדו. כי ה' עליון נורא מלך כל (אלהים) [הארץ]. Note the rabbis say "לכך נאמר כי ה' עליון נורא מלך גדול על כל (אלהים) [הארץ]." The words in brackets is a reference to a textual variant, where "gods" and "the earth" have an inter-changeable usage. The Lord is lord over all the earth, and not to give credence to false gods, but that He is also God over all of the false gods the nations serve. The usage of "gods" and "the earth" also speaks of the things of this earth, material wealth can become a god to some and it is the Lord God Most High that we are to serve, not the things of this world or to amass wealth (fortunes) for ourselves.

Midrash Tehillim 47, Part 2 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying "He will subdue the peoples under us, and the nations under our feet (*Tehillim / Psalms 47:4*). When? When He will choose our inheritance for us, the Excellency of Jacob (*Tehillim / Psalms 47:5*)." The entire midrash states the following:

<p><b>מדרש תהלים פרק מז סימן ב</b>  ב ידבר עמים תחתינו ולאומים תחת רגלינו. אימתי כשיבחר את נחלתנו את גאון יעקב. דבר אחר אימתי הוא יבחר ונותן לנו את נחלתנו, כשישב על כסא קדשו, וכן הוא אומר והפכתי כסא ממלכות (חגי ב כב), וכן אמר דניאל חזה הוית עד די כרסוון (רמא) [רמיו] ועתיק יומין [יתיב] (דניאל ז ט), ואימתי הוא יושב, ועלו מושיעים בהר ציון [וגו] והיתה לה' המלוכה] (עובדיה פסוק כא), ר' יהודה בר נחמן בשם ר' שמעון בן לקיש אמר כיון שהקב"ה עלה לדין ויושב על כסא דין וכיון שהשופר תוקעין, הוא הולך והופך מדת הדין למדת הרחמים, עלה בדין ומה שופר עולה בתרועה, וה' בקול שופר ברחמים, שנאמר ה' ה' אל רחום וחנון (שמות לד ו).</p>	<p><b>Midrash Tehillim 47, Part 2</b>  <i>He will subdue the peoples under us, and the nations under our feet (Tehillim / Psalms 47:4). When? When He will choose our inheritance for us, the Excellency of Jacob (Tehillim / Psalms 47:5). Another comment, when will God choose us and give us our inheritance? When God will sit upon the throne of His holiness (Tehillim / Psalms 47:9). As Scripture says, I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen in that day (Haggai 2:22). And as Daniel says, I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit (Daniel 7:9). When will God sit? When saviors will come up on Mount Zion and the kingdom will be the Lord's (Obadiah 1:21). Rabbi Judah son of Nakhman said in the name of rabbi Simeon son of Lakhish, When the Holy One blessed be He, rises up for judgment and sits on the throne of judgment, and the Shofar is blown, He turns the measure of justice again and again into the measure of mercy. In wrath, He rises up for judgment. But as the sound of the Shofar rises up in a blast, at the sound of the Shofar He becomes Lord of mercy (Tehillim / Psalms 47:6), and deals mercifully, for the term Lord connotes mercy, as in the Lord, the Lord, merciful and gracious (Shemot / Exodus 34:6).</i></p>
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The midrash asks the question "When He will choose our inheritance for us, the Excellency of Jacob (*Tehillim / Psalms 47:5*)." What exactly are the rabbis referring to? What is the inheritance that God chooses, and what is the "Excellency of Jacob?" Note also that the Aramaic Targum states ה ירעי יתרעי לנא למירת ה ירעי ית אהסנתנא ית בית מקדשא יקר תוקפיה דיעקב דרחים לעלמין: 47:5 *He will favor us to inherit our heritage, the sanctuary of Jacob whom he loves forever. (EMC)* and the Septuagint states ἐξελέξατο ἡμῖν τὴν κληρονομίαν αὐτοῦ τὴν καλλονὴν Ἰακωβ ἣν ἠγάπησεν διάψαλμα 47:4 *He has chosen out his inheritance for us, the beauty of Jacob which he loved. Pause. (LXX)* The Excellency of Jacob reminds us of the prophet

Amos who said the following:

**Amos 8:7-14**

*8:7 The LORD hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never forget any of their works. 8:8 Shall not the land tremble for this, and every one mourn that dwelleth therein? and it shall rise up wholly as a flood; and it shall be cast out and drowned, as by the flood of Egypt. 8:9 And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord GOD, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day: 8:10 And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation; and I will bring up sackcloth upon all loins, and baldness upon every head; and I will make it as the mourning of an only son, and the end thereof as a bitter day. 8:11 Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: 8:12 And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it. 8:13 In that day shall the fair virgins and young men faint for thirst. 8:14 They that swear by the sin of Samaria, and say, Thy god, O Dan, liveth; and, The manner of Beersheba liveth; even they shall fall, and never rise up again.*

Amos speaks of the excellency of Jacob and the works of Jacob. He goes on to speak of Egypt and the Lord darkening the sky, how the Lord will bring mourning drawing parallels to the Passover and the death of the first born son, of famine and thirst from hearing the word of God, that these things come upon those who swear by the king of Samaria who worshiped false gods. By the statement “*excellency of Jacob*” and the parallels to the Exodus, it appears that God Himself is who is the glory of Jacob. The prophet Samuel calls Him “*the Strength or glory of Israel*” in *1 Samuel 15:29*. In the book of Amos it says earlier that, “*God swears by His Holiness,*” “*by Himself,*” or by “*His soul.*” In similar manner, He pledges that He has become the Glory of His people. He reminds them, who is the sole Source of their glory. The source of their glory is not the offerings or the calves. God does not glory in death. This is why the statement that man had to “*earn*” his forgiveness and salvation under the Law, and today in Christ forgiveness and salvation is free is a doctrine that is in great error. It is the Lord our Creator who is our Salvation. According to the midrash, we see in the inheritance that the Lord chooses for us, the comment by the rabbis, the excellency of Jacob may be a reference to the Lord who is Himself our inheritance. The Lord swore by the excellency of Jacob means that He swore by Himself in whom Jacob’s seed glories by the very presence of God dwelling in their midst. (Thing about how that applies to us today?)

The midrash continues saying “*Another comment, when will God choose us and give us our inheritance? When God will sit upon the throne of His holiness (Tehillim / Psalms 47:9). As Scripture says, I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen in that day (Haggai 2:22). And as Daniel says, I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit (Daniel 7:9). When will God sit? When saviors will come up on Mount Zion and the kingdom will be the Lord’s (Obadiah 1:21).*” This is fascinating how an alternate interpretation on the Dibur Hamathil “*He will subdue the peoples under us, and the nations under our feet (Tehillim / Psalms 47:4)*” and “*God choosing us and giving the inheritance*” is thought of in the sense of the Lord sitting upon His throne. Sitting and standing may be taken as working having been complete, and work that is yet on going, or yet to be completed, or currently being performed leading to completion. The idea that God sits is what brings the inheritance and choosing us is brought into parallel to the Lord destroying the kingdoms of the heathens and to saviors who come up on Mount Zion and the kingdom being the Lord’s kingdom. This reminds us of the Apostolic Writings and the finished work of the Messiah Yeshua who took his place seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven. The midrash speaking of the Lord, our inheritance, His kingdom, and destroying the “*strength*” of the kingdoms (destroying their thrones or possibly a reference to the Evil One and his throne) appears to draw a close parallel to the Apostles teachings on Yeshua the Messiah, the Savior of God who come to destroy the power of Satan, death, and sin. He is now seated at the right hand of the Father and we know that

the right hand is understood as the place of righteousness and walking according to the Spirit. The Rabbis have a lot to say on this topic of the right hand according to *Midrash Rabbah Bamidbar, Parashat 22, Part 9* in their exposition on Parashat Mattot. *Midrash Rabbah Bamidbar, Parashat 22, Part 9* (מדרש רבה במדבר ט (פרשה כב סימן ט)).

***Midrash Rabbah Bamidbar, Parashat 22, Part 9***

*An alternative exposition of the text, Now a very great multitude of cattle (Bamidbar / Numbers 32:1). This bears on what Scripture says, A wise man's understanding is at his right hand; but a fool's understanding at his left (Ecclesiastes 10:2). The expression, A wise man's understanding is at his right hand, applies to the good inclination which is set on one's right, while the expression, A fool's understanding at his left, applies to the evil inclination which is set on one's left. Another exposition is that the expression, A wise man's understanding is at his right hand, refers to the righteous who apply their minds to the Torah, which is on the right; as it says, At His right hand was a fiery law unto them (Devarim / Deuteronomy 33:2), while A fool's understanding at his left, alludes to the wicked, who set their minds on getting rich; as it says, In her left hand are riches and honor (Mishley / Proverbs 3:16). Another exposition, the expression A wise man's understanding is at his right hand, applies to Moshe, while A fool's understanding at his left, applies to the children of Reuben and the children of Gad, who made the main thing the subordinate, and put the subordinate thing first, for they cherished their property more than human life, saying to Moshe, We will build sheepfolds here for our cattle, and cities for our little ones (Bamidbar / Numbers 32:16). Moshe said to them, That is not right. Rather, do the more important things first, build you cities for your little ones (Bamidbar / Numbers 32:24), and afterwards Folds for your sheep. Thus, we have explained the expression, A wise man's understanding is at his right hand as applying to Moshe, and a fools understanding at his left as applying to the children of Reuben and the children of Gad. The Holy One blessed be He, said to them, Seeing that you have shown greater love for your cattle than for humans souls, by your life, there will be no blessing in it. Of them it says, an estate may be gotten hastily at the beginning; but the end thereof shall not be blessed (Mishley / Proverbs 20:21). In the same strain it says, Weary not yourselves to be rich; cease from your own wisdom (Mishley / Proverbs 23:4). And who is rich? He that is contented with his lot; as it says, When you eat the labor of your hands, happy will you be, and it will be well with you (Tehillim / Psalms 128:2).*

The midrash opens saying the wise man has understanding at his “right hand” and the fool, his understanding is at his “left hand.” The idea taken from the midrashic perspective is that the righteous stand on the right side, whereas the wicked are on the left. The rabbis equate the fools understanding to the left hand, to the wicked, and to the children of Reuben and Gad because they desired to get rich by remaining on this side of the Jordan. Note how they say that they cherished their wealth over life. The last time the congregation decided not to go over to the Promised Land they had to stay 40 years in the wilderness and many died. The rabbis say that the Lord (the Holy One blessed be He) said to the children of Reuben and Gad “*Seeing that you have shown greater love for your cattle than for humans souls, by your life, there will be no blessing in it.*” The idea is that they desired wealth rather than human souls and since their focus was on material things, there would be no blessing from God not to mention that the blessing was supposed to come inside of the Promised Land and not outside. Remember mount Ebal and Gerizim, the blessing and the curses in Parashat Re’eh (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 11:29*) the blessing and the curses, inside and outside of the Promised Land respectively, the curse is paralleled to those who are outside. The midrash also equates the right hand with Moshe, and the left hand with a fool’s understanding. The interesting point here is with regard to the right-verses-left imagery that is being illustrated. Why do the rabbis correlate the right hand with righteousness and the left with wickedness? In the Scriptures, we often find the use of the right-verses-left imagery and so the question is “*why do the Scriptures emphasize the right hand so often?*”

Today we have a phrase that is known as one's "Right hand man." According to Merriam-Websters Dictionary, the definition of "Right hand man" is the following:

**Websters' Definition of "Right hand man"**

3. *A soldier holding a position of responsibility or command on the right of a troop of horses*
4. *A valuable assistant upon whom one is accustomed to rely*

The idea of the right hand man is as a servant who works on behalf of his master, the one who is at the right hand has the authority of the master to go forth on his behalf, similar to the soldier who has authority to command the troop of horses. The Scriptures also equate the right hand to the "arm of the Lord" in the Torah.

According to the book of Exodus and Deuteronomy, Israel attained her liberation from slavery (Egypt) by the power of God, symbolized by his victorious conquering arm. There are several expressions used to describe the victorious arm, two stand out as being the most frequently occurring, yad hazaqah (הַקְזָחָה דָּ) "hand / arm of strength," and zeroa netuiah (הַיְזוּתָן עוֹרֵזָה) "outstretched arm." These two expressions are found most frequently in Exodus and Deuteronomy.

**yad khazakah (הַקְזָחָה דָּ)**

*Shemot / Exodus 3:19*

*Shemot / Exodus 13:3, 14, 16*

*Shemot / Exodus 32:11*

*Devarim / Deuteronomy 3:14*

*Devarim / Deuteronomy 6:21*

*Devarim / Deuteronomy 9:26*

**zeroa netuiah (הַיְזוּתָן עוֹרֵזָה)**

*Shemot / Exodus 6:6*

*Devarim / Deuteronomy 9:29*

*Devarim / Deuteronomy 26:8*

Both expressions are paralleled in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 4:34, 5:15, and 7:19*. For example, according to *Devarim / Deuteronomy 4:34*:

**Devarim / Deuteronomy 4:34**

4:34 'Or has a god tried to go to take for himself a nation from within another nation by trials, by signs and wonders and by war and by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm and by great terrors, as the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes? (NASB)

הַקְזָחָה דָּבָּי הַמְחַלְמָבוּ מִיִּתְפּוֹמְבוּ תִּתְאַבְּ תִּסְמַבְּ יוֹג בְּרַקְמָּ יוֹג וְלֹ תַחֲקֵל אֹבֵל מִיְהֻלָּהּ הַסְּנָה | וְאֵ דֵל  
:דִּינִיעֵל מִיִּרְצָמָּבְּ מְכִיְהֻלָּהּ הַזְּהִי מְכָל הַשְׁעָ-רִשָּׂא לְכַפּ מִיִּלְדָּ מִיִּאֲרֹמְבוּ הַיְזוּתָן עוֹרֵזָבּוּ

The Scriptural use of the "right hand" range from a description of direction to the opposite of doing wrong (doing what is right). Being on the right suggests that one lives with justice and righteousness and conforms to a standard of holiness (Torah principle) thus the right hand is a place of honor and authority. According to *Bereshit / Genesis 48:13-14* (48:13 *Joseph took them both, Ephraim with his right hand toward Israel's left, and Manasseh with his left hand toward Israel's right, and brought them close to him. 48:14 But Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on the head of Ephraim, who was the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh's head, crossing his hands, although Manasseh was the firstborn. NASB*) Jacob divided the blessings over Joseph's sons and emphasis is given making the distinction between the right and the left hands, and the older and younger sons.

In the first century, the believers understood the "right hand" as a place of honor, dignity, and authority according to the Apostle Paul's words to the Ephesians in *Ephesians 1:19-21* (1:19 *and what is the surpass-*

ing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might 1:20 which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places 1:21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. NASB) Paul says that our Father in heaven exalted Yeshua above all others and seated Him at His right hand. The “right hand” is used in prophecy relating to the Messiah looking forward to what God was going to do, to give the Messiah power and authority to subdue His enemies (see *Tehillim / Psalms 110:1 and 118:16*). Yeshua being seated at the right hand of God enables him to intercede on our behalf (*Romans 8:34*).

In addition to this, the Mishneh Torah (הַרְרֵוֹת הַנְּשָׁאָה, “second Torah”) is subtitled “*Sefer Yad HaHazaka*” (הַקְּזָה דִּי רַפְסָא, “Book of the Strong Hand”) written by Maimonides (Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon) also known as Rambam. This Torah principle of the “right hand” has made its way into Judaism in the following manner. Based upon *Tehillim / Psalms 118:15*, the Scripture says “*God’s right hand does valiantly*” which has become the source text for the right hand taking preference to the left. For example, when performing the ritual washing (netilat yadayim) the right hand is washed first. When one lays hold of an object such as the cup of wine for the Kiddush, one holds it in the right hand to illustrate its importance. When holding food for the Berachah (the blessing) one holds it in the right hand. When giving charity, one is to give money with the right hand to illustrate how we are to give back to the Lord with great importance (*Midrash Rabbah Devarim, Parshah 5*). The midrash states “*two things are in the right hand of the Holy One - charity and Torah. Charity, as it says (Tehillim / Psalms 48) Charity fills your right hand.*” According to the *Shulchan Aruch (OH 651:3)*, is the teaching that a left-handed person should hold the mitzvah in their right hand - as the right-hand side is spiritually always on the right; e.g. the laws of shaking lulav and etrog, where the Ashkenazi and Sephardi traditions are explained. There are many more ways in which the “right hand” illustration is used in Judaism, but I think you get the point that based upon the Scriptures there is a significance to the use of the right hand that not only brings glory to God but is known as a reference to honor, power, and authority that is given by both man and God.

The point is that God sits “*When saviors will come up on Mount Zion and the kingdom will be the Lord’s (Obadiah 1:21).*” Yeshua the Messiah, God’s Savior came even upon Mount Zion when the Second Temple was standing, and won victory over the Evil One, over death, and over sin. Today he sits at the right hand of the Father in Heaven as the author of Hebrews states:

### **Hebrews 12:1-3**

*12:1 Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 12:2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 12:3 For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. (NASB)*

Midrash Tehillim 47, Part 2 concludes stating *Rabbi Judah son of Nakhman said in the name of rabbi Simeon son of Lakhish, When the Holy One blessed be He, rises up for judgment and sits on the throne of judgment, and the Shofar is blown, He turns the measure of justice again and again into the measure of mercy. In wrath, He rises up for judgment. But as the sound of the Shofar rises up in a blast, at the sound of the Shofar He becomes Lord of mercy (Tehillim / Psalms 47:6), and deals mercifully, for the term Lord connotes mercy, as in the Lord, the Lord, merciful and gracious (Shemot / Exodus 34:6).* The last part of the midrash speaks of the mercies of God. Based upon the Torah, we are judged worthy of death, but the Lord is a God of mercy who deals mercifully and graciously with His people. We can see this in the fulfillment of these things in the Messiah Yeshua, Praise the Lord for such a wonderful Savior, Lord, King, and the God that we serve. Let’s Pray!

Heavenly Father,

We thank You for what You have done for each one of us. We glorify You and give You Praise because You have always kept Your promises! Lord deliver us from sin in our lives and increase our faith. Empower us by Your Spirit to walk in Your ways and to follow Yeshua the Messiah. Help us to live spirit filled lives. We desire to live holy and righteous lives because You have separated us as holy unto Yourself. You have demonstrated the greatness of Your love for us in Your Son Yeshua the Messiah. Thank You Lord for sending Your son Yeshua that we may enter into the covenant of peace that You have promised to Your people. Help us to grow in our faith, to walk in the spirit, and 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!

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