

Tehillim / Psalms 48 | ספר תהילים מז

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Connecting to the Land and the People

This week's study is from *Tehillim / Psalms 48:1-14*, David opens the Psalm saying, א שִׁיר מְזֻמָּר לְבְנֵי־ ב גְדוֹל יְהוָה וּמְהַלָּל מְאֹד בְּעִיר אֱלֹהֵינוּ A Song; a Psalm of the sons of Korah. (NASB) David then says יְהוָה וּמְהַלָּל מְאֹד בְּעִיר אֱלֹהֵינוּ 48:1 Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, In the city of our God, His holy mountain. (NASB) It is interesting how the psalmist directs our attention to praising the Lord, the city Jerusalem, and the holy mountain. Notice how the land, the people, and the place are connected to the Lord and His praises. The psalmist continues saying יְהוָה וּמְהַלָּל מְאֹד בְּעִיר אֱלֹהֵינוּ 8:2 Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, Is Mount Zion in the far north, The city of the great King. 48:3 God, in her palaces, Has made Himself known as a stronghold. (NASB) Modern replacement theology today however say it is a mistake to believe God is connected to a people, a land, a city, and a place. The Psalm continues saying 448:4 For, lo, the kings assembled themselves, They passed by together. 48:5 They saw it, then they were amazed; They were terrified, they fled in alarm. 48:6 Panic seized them there, Anguish, as of a woman in childbirth. 48:7 With the east wind You break the ships of Tarshish. (NASB) The nations flee and are terrified at the presence of the Lord in this place. David says ט כַּאֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְנוּ | כַּאֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְנוּ 48:8 As we have heard, so have we seen In the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God; God will establish her forever. Selah. (NASB) The city of God will be established forever. The land, the city, and the people are a reminder of the lovingkindness of God who saves His people and brings blessing to the land and the people by establishing a place for them to live (48:9). The psalmist continues saying יְהוָה וּמְהַלָּל מְאֹד בְּעִיר אֱלֹהֵינוּ 48:9 Let Mount Zion be glad, Let the daughters of Judah rejoice Because of Your judgments. 48:10 Walk about Zion and go around her; Count her towers; 48:11 Consider her ramparts; Go through her palaces, That you may tell it to the next generation. 48:12 For such is God, Our God forever and ever; He will guide us until death. (NASB) The psalmist equates the number of towers in the holy place, in the city of God, as a picture of blessing upon God's people. *Tehillim / Psalms 48* speaks of the Torah's connecting the land, the people, and mount Zion to God, a relationship with God, and blessing. He concludes saying that the Lord is eternal and He will guide us until the day that we die.

עברית Hebrew	ארמי Aramaic	ελληνικός Greek
ספר תהילים פרק מז	ספר טוביה פרק מז	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 48
א שִׁיר מְזֻמָּר לְבְנֵי־קְרָח: ב גְדוֹל יְהוָה וּמְהַלָּל מְאֹד בְּעִיר אֱלֹהֵינוּ הַר־קְדֹשׁ: ג יְפֵה נוֹף מְשׁוֹשׁ כָּל־הָאָרֶץ הַר־צִיּוֹן יִרְפָּתִי צָפוֹן קְרַנִּית מְלֹךְ רַב: ד אֱלֹהִים בְּאַרְמְנוֹתֶיהָ נוֹדַע לְמִשְׁבָּב: ה כִּי־הִנֵּה הַמְּלָכִים נוֹעְדוּ עָבְרוּ יִתְדוּ:	א שירתא ותושבחתא על ידהון דבני קרח: ב רב יהוה ומשבח לחדא ביי רושלם קרתא דאלהנא ובטור בית מקד דשיה: ג שפיר היך חתנא חדות כל יתבי ארעא טורא דציון שידא דמשודא דצפונא קרייתא דמלכא רבא: ד יהוה אלהא בבירניתהא אתיידע אישתמודע לתקוף:	48:1 ψαλμός ᾠδῆς τοῖς υἱοῖς Κορε δευτέρα σαββάτου μέγας κύριος καὶ αἰνετός σφόδρα ἐν πόλει τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν ὄρει ἁγίῳ αὐτοῦ 48:2 εὖ ριζῶν ἀγαλλιᾶματι πάσης τῆς γῆς ὄρη Σιών τὰ πλευρὰ τοῦ βορρᾶ ἢ πόλις τοῦ βασιλέως τοῦ μεγάλου 48:3 ὁ θεὸς ἐν ταῖς βάρεσιν αὐτῆς γινώσκεται ὅταν ἀντιλαμβάνηται αὐτῆς 48:4 ὅτι ἰδοὺ οἱ βασιλεῖς συνήχθησαν ἤλθοσαν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ

<p>ו הַמָּה רָאוּ כִּן תִּמְהוּ נִבְהָלוּ נִחְפְּזוּ: ז רָעַדָה אֲחֻזְתָּם שָׁם חֵיל פִּיּוֹלְדָה: ח בְּרוּחַ קָדִים תִּשְׁבֵּר אֲנִיּוֹת תִּרְשִׁישׁ: ט כְּאֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְנוּ כִּן רָאִינוּ בְּעִיר יְהוָה צָבָאוֹת בְּעִיר אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֱלֹהִים יְכוֹנְנָה עַד-עוֹלָם סֵלָה: י דְּמִינוּ אֱלֹהִים חֲסֵדָה בְּקֶרֶב הַיְכָלָה: יא כְּשָׁמָּה אֱלֹהִים כִּן תִּהְלֹתָה עַל-קֶצְוֵי-אֶרֶץ צִדְקַת מְלֹאָה יְמִינָה: יב יִשְׁמַח הַר- צִיּוֹן תִּגְלָנָה בְּנוֹת יְהוָה לְמַעַן מִשֶׁ- פִּטְיָה: יג סִבּוּ צִיּוֹן וְהִקְיפוּהָ סִפְרוּ מִגְדָּלֶיהָ: יד שִׁיתוּ לְבַבְכֶם לְחִילָה פִּסְגוּ אֶרְמְנוֹתֶיהָ לְמַעַן תִּסְפְּרוּ לְדוֹר אֲחֵרוֹן: טו כִּי זֶה אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵינוּ עוֹלָם וָעֶד הוּא יְנַהַגְנוּ עַל-מוֹת:</p>	<p>ארום הא מלכיא אתחברו עברו ה כחדא: ו הינון אינון חמון היכנא תמהו על ניסיא ופרישתא איתבהילו אוף ערקו: ז זעייא זוועא אחדתינון תמן רתיתא היך איתא ילדה: ח בקי- דום ברוח קידום תקיף כאשא דמן קדם יהוה תתבר אילפיא דטרסיס: ט יימרון בני ישראל כולהון כחדא היך מה די שמענא היכנא חמינא בקרתא דיהוה צבאות בקרתא דאלהנא יהוה אלהים ישכללינה עד עלמי עלמין: י אשוינו אשויננא יהוה אלהא טובך במציעות במצע היכלך: יא היך כשמך יהוה היכדין תושבחתך על עד סייפי ארעא צדקתא מליא ימינד: יב ייחדי טור ציון יבועון בועא בתושב- חן כנישתא דבית יהודה מטול דינד: יג אקיפו ציון יבועון וחזרו עלה מנו מגדלהא מוגדלייהא: יד שיוו לבכון לאוכלוסהא דמן לעיל בירנייתהא מטול דתשתעון לדר אוחרן: טו ארום דין דנן יהוה הוא אלהנא שכ- נתיא בגוה ומדוריה בשמיא לעלמי עלמין הוא ידבריננא ביומי טליותנא:</p>	<p>48:5 αὐτοὶ ἰδόντες οὕτως ἐθαύμασαν ἐταράχθησαν ἐσαλεύθησαν 48:6 τρόμος ἐπελάβετο αὐτῶν ἐκεῖ ᾠδῖνες ὡς τικτούσης 48:7 ἐν πνεύματι βιαίῳ συντρίψεις πλοῖα Θαρσις 48:8 καθάπερ ἠκούσαμεν οὕτως εἶδομεν ἐν πόλει κυρίου τῶν δυνάμεων ἐν πόλει τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν ὁ θεὸς ἐθεμελίωσεν αὐτὴν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα διάψαλμα 48:9 ὑπελάβομεν ὁ θεὸς τὸ ἔλεός σου ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ ναοῦ σου 48:10 κατὰ τὸ ὄνομά σου ὁ θεὸς οὕτως καὶ ἡ αἴνεσίς σου ἐπὶ τὰ πέρατα τῆς γῆς δικαιοσύνης πλήρης ἡ δεξιά σου 48:11 εὐφρανθήτω τὸ ὄρος Σιων ἀγαλλιάσθωσαν αἱ θυγατέρες τῆς Ἰουδαίας ἕνεκεν τῶν κριμάτων σου κύριε 48:12 κυκλώσατε Σιων καὶ περιλάβετε αὐτὴν διηγῆσασθε ἐν τοῖς πύργοις αὐτῆς 48:13 θέσθε τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν εἰς τὴν δύναμιν αὐτῆς καὶ καταδιέλεσθε τὰς βάρεις αὐτῆς ὅπως ἂν διηγῆσησθε εἰς γενεὰν ἐτέραν 48:14 ὅτι οὕτως ἐστὶν ὁ θεὸς ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα καὶ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος αὐτὸς ποιμανεῖ ἡμᾶς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας</p>
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This week's study is from *Tehillim / Psalms 48:1-14*, David opens the Psalm saying, א שִׁיר מְזֻמָּר א :
: A Song; a Psalm of the sons of Korah. (NASB) According to *Shemot / Exodus 6:24* The sons of
Korah: Assir and Elkanah and Abiasaph; these are the families of the Korahites. (NASB) The sentence from
Parashat Va'era is taken to denote Assir, Elkanah, and Abiasaph, Korah's three individual sons (*Shemot / Ex-*
odus 6:24, Bamidbar / Numbers 26:11). The Sons of Korach are used as titles to some of the Psalms as we
have been studying previously and we read in *1 Chronicles 6:31-32* which states "6:31 Now these are those
whom David appointed over the service of song in the house of the Lord, after the ark rested there. 6:32
They ministered with song before the tabernacle of the tent of meeting, until Solomon had built the house of
the Lord in Jerusalem; and they served in their office according to their order." In 1 Chronicles, the author
mentions first "Heman the singer, the son of Joel, the son of Samuel," listing the genealogy back to Korach
and Levi. The author then speaks of "his brother Asaph, who stood on his right hand," and traces Asaph's
descent back to Gershom the son of Levi; and then says, "and on the left hand their brethren the sons of
Merari." Of these the principal leader is Ethan (otherwise called Jeduthun), and his descent is again traced
back to Levi. David's interest in writing the Psalms is for music to be used before the Lord in connection to
Solomon's temple. *Tehillim / Psalms 48* appears to be a psalm of praise that is given to the Sons of Korach
to sing praises to the Lord for the great triumphs He has brought to His people. In *Tehillim / Psalms 48* Da-
vid says ב גְּדוֹל יְהוָה וּמְהִלָּל מְאֹד בְּעִיר אֱלֹהֵינוּ הַר-קְדְּשׁוֹ: 48:1 Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, In
the city of our God, His holy mountain. (NASB) In verse one of the psalm, the psalmist directs our attention
to praising God, the city Jerusalem, and the holy mountain. Notice how the land, the people, and the place
(Jerusalem) are connected to the Lord and His praises.

<p>Tehillim / Psalms 48 A Song; a Psalm of the sons of Korah. 48:1 Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, In the city of our God, His holy mountain. 48:2 Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, Is Mount Zion in the far north, The city of the great King. 48:3 God, in her palaces, Has made Himself known as a stronghold. 48:4 For, lo, the kings assembled themselves, They passed by together. 48:5 They saw it, then they were amazed; They were terrified, they fled in alarm. 48:6 Panic seized them there, Anguish, as of a woman in childbirth. 48:7 With the east wind You break the ships of Tarshish. 48:8 As we have heard, so have we seen In the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God; God will establish her forever. Selah. 48:9 We have thought on Your lovingkindness, O God, In the midst of Your temple. 48:10 As is Your name, O God, So is Your praise to the ends of the earth; Your right hand is full of righteousness. 48:11 Let Mount Zion be glad, Let the daughters of Judah rejoice Because of Your judgments. 48:12 Walk about Zion and go around her; Count her towers; 48:13 Consider her ramparts; Go through her palaces, That you may tell it to the next generation. 48:14 For such is God, Our God forever and ever; He will guide us until death. (NASB)</p>	<p>Toviyah / Psalms Chapter 48 48:1 A song and psalm by the sons of Korah. 48:2 Great is the Lord and very praiseworthy, in Jerusalem, the city of our God, and on the mount of his sanctuary. 48:3 Beautiful as a bridegroom, the joy of all the inhabitants of the earth, Mount Zion, on the north side, the city of the great king. 48:4 The Lord is in its palaces; it is known for strength. 48:5 For behold, the kings have joined forces, they have passed by together. 48:6 They have seen, so they were amazed at the miracles and wonders; they were astonished, yea, they fled. 48:7 Trembling seized them there, agitation like a woman giving birth. 48:8 With an east wind strong as fire from the presence of the Lord, you will shatter the ships of Tarsis. 48:9 The children of Israel will say, “Just as we have heard, so we have seen; in the city of the Lord Sabaoth, in the city of our God – the Lord will establish it forever and ever.” 48:10 Make us worthy, O Lord, of your goodness in the midst of your temple. 48:11 As your name, O Lord, so is your praise to the ends of the earth; your right hand is full of generosity. 48:12 Let Mount Zion rejoice, let the assemblies of the house of Judah rejoice with psalms, because of your judgments. 48:13 Surround Zion, let them rejoice, and encircle her, number her towers. 48:14 Set your mind on her thrones above, [even on] her citadels, that you may tell it to another generation. 48:15 For this, the Lord, he is our God; his presence is in her midst and his dwelling is in heaven forever and ever; he will guide us in the days of our youth. (EMC)</p>	<p>Psalmoi / Psalms 48 A Psalm of praise for the sons of Core on the second day of the week. 48:1 Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in his holy mountain. 48:2 The city of the great King is well planted on the mountains of Sion, with the joy of the whole earth, on the sides of the north. 48:3 God is known in her palaces, when he undertakes to help her. 48:4 For, behold the kings of the earth were assembled, they came together. 48:5 They saw, and so they wondered: they were troubled, they were moved. 48:6 Trembling took hold on them: there were the pangs as of a woman in travail. 48:7 Thou wilt break the ships of Tharsis with a vehement wind. 48:8 As we have heard, so have we also seen, in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God: God has founded it for ever. Pause. 48:9 We have thought of thy mercy, O God, in the midst of thy people. 48:10 According to thy name, O God, so is also thy praise to the ends of the earth: thy right hand is full of righteousness. 48:11 Let mount Sion rejoice, let the daughters of Judaea exult, because of thy judgments, O Lord. 48:12 Go round about Sion, and encompass her: tell ye her towers. 48:13 Mark ye well her strength, and observe her palaces; that ye may tell the next generation. 48:14 For this is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide for evermore. (LXX)</p>
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David’s words in *Tehillim / Psalms 48:1* present a fundamental problem today in modern Christianity due to the teaching of *Supersessionism* (also known as “*replacement theology*”). Supersessionism is a Christian theological view on the current status of the Jewish people, Judaism, and Christianity. Supersessionism, according to *Oxford’s Dictionary*, is a theology that states it is the tradition or belief the church has replaced Israel as God’s chosen people. Israel has lost its place and Christianity now occupies a central position. Supersessionism also designates that the Mosaic covenant has been replaced or superseded by the New Covenant. This view leads to the idea of dual-covenant theology, that Israel has the Torah, and Christians

have only grace and love. Early Christian theologians saw the New Covenant in Christ as a replacement of the Mosaic Covenant. (*Fonrobert, Charlotte Elisheva. "Jewish Christians, Judaizers, and Christian Anti-Judaism." A People's History of Christianity, Volume 2: Late Ancient Christianity. Ed. Virginia Burrus. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2005*) Historically, statements by the Roman Catholic Church have followed replacement ecclesiastical (*adj. of or pertaining to the church*) structures stating that the church is a fulfillment and replacement of Jewish ecclesiastical structures. This means that the way of life as described by the Torah has been done away with and something new has come in its place. For example, allegorically Jerusalem is now the Church and I have heard pastors teach "*we are Jerusalem now*" which is clearly a departure from Scripture and a replacement theology. As recently as 1965 Vatican Council II affirmed that, "*the Church is the new people of God,*" and by this reasoning Israel becomes irrelevant in terms of eschatology. Modern Catholicism affirms these teachings as authoritative for doctrine, through the self substantiating claims of "*apostolic succession*" from the New Testament Scriptures (e.g. *Matthew 16:18*). Modern Protestants hold to a range of positions on the topic. The early church fathers reveal a similar mindset on the place of Israel, the people, and the Land today.

Many Early Christian commentators taught that the Old Covenant was fulfilled and replaced (superseded) by the New Covenant in Christ. The following is a brief summary of the early church views that were clearly of a replacement mindset.

Early Christian Commentators

- **Justin Martyr** (100 to 165 CE) states "*For the true spiritual Israel ... are we who have been led to God through this crucified Christ.*" (*Justin Martyr, Dialogue With Trypho 11, in Ante-Nicene Fathers 1:200*)
- **Hippolytus of Rome** (martyred 13 August 235 CE) states "*The Jews have been darkened in the eyes of your soul with a darkness utter and everlasting.*" (*Hippolytus, Treatise Against the Jews 6, in Ante-Nicene Fathers 5.220*)
- **Tertullian** (160 – 220 CE): "*Who else, therefore, are understood but we, who, fully taught by the new law, observe these practices,—the old law being obliterated, the coming of whose abolition the action itself demonstrates. . . . Therefore, as we have shown above that the coming cessation of the old law and of the carnal circumcision was declared, so, too, the observance of the new law and the spiritual circumcision has shone out into the voluntary observances of peace.*" (<http://www.tertullian.org>, August 4, 2014)

Augustine (354–430 CE) also follows the opinion of the earlier Church Fathers, however, he emphasizes the importance to Christianity of the continued existence of the Jewish people. For example he says, "*The Jews ... are thus by their own Scriptures a testimony to us that we have not forged the prophecies about Christ.*" Thus the importance of the prophecies relies upon the existence of Israel as a proof or testimony that Yeshua was not a fabrication of the church. Pope Benedict XVI said the following.

Pope Benedict XVI

"In this Torah, which is Jesus himself, the abiding essence of what was inscribed on the stone tablets at Sinai is now written in living flesh, namely, the twofold commandment of love ... To imitate him, to follow him in discipleship, is therefore to keep Torah, which has been fulfilled in him once and for all. Thus the Sinai covenant is indeed superseded. But once what was provisional in it has been swept away, we see what is truly definitive in it." (*Scott Hahn, Many Religions, One Covenant: Israel, the Church, and the World, Ignatius Press, September 1, 1999*)

As we can see in this brief summary of the church fathers, very early on in church history, replacement theology was prevalent. The example we have from history is the purging from tradition the moedim and dietary mitzvot. This is evident in the writings of the early church fathers such as Clement of Rome, Mathetes, Polycarp, Ignatius, Barnabas, Papias, Justin Martyr, and Irenaeus. Note that Polycarp lived between 69–155 CE and was a 2nd-century Christian bishop of Smyrna. He was a contemporary of the Apostle John. According to the Martyrdom of Polycarp he died a martyr, bound and burned at the stake, then stabbed when the fire failed to touch him.

The difficulty we have with the modern theology of supersessionism is with regard to what David is saying here in *Tehillim / Psalms 48:2*, *גְּדוֹל יְהוָה וּמְהֻלָּל מְאֹד בְּעִיר אֱלֹהֵינוּ הֶרֶם-קְדוֹשׁ׃* *48:1 Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, In the city of our God, His holy mountain. (NASB)* This one verse brings into context the people, the Land, and the city of God (Jerusalem), the place where He has established His name. The city Jerusalem, according to *Tehillim / Psalms 48:8*, will be established forever, *ט כַּאֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְנוּ׃* *48:8 As we have heard, so have we seen In the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God; God will establish her forever. (NASB)* The rabbis translate this into Aramaic in the Targum Pseudo-Jonathan to say *ט יימרון בני ישראל כולהון כחדא היך מה* *48:9 The children of Israel will say, “Just as we have heard, so we have seen; in the city of the Lord Sabaoth, in the city of our God – the Lord will establish it forever and ever.” (EMC)* According to this verse, the psalmist directs our attention to praising the Lord, and the importance of the city Jerusalem, and the holy mountain (the Temple mount). How do we harmonize these Scriptures with the theology of supersessionism? Is the theology of supersessionism valid based upon these words of David? Throughout the Torah, Moshe repeatedly warns the people to remain faithful to the Lord. These warnings are contrasted with the mighty works God did to preserve His people in the wilderness and the purpose of the deliverance from Egypt, because of the promises to our fathers (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) and the Promised Land. These major concepts are brought out and placed before us which begs the question, “*is the non-Jew (gentile) who is graft into the family of God able to take hold of the Torah and lay claim to what God has done?*”

Supersessionism proposes that the Mosaic covenant has been fulfilled and replaced by the New Covenant in Christ, and that the Church is the “*New Israel*.” The theologies that are developed are far reaching. For example, did you know that the rapture theology is deeply antisemitic? According to the theology of supersessionism, the church has replaced Israel (the Jewish people) and therefore Israel has become irrelevant in terms of eschatology and Bible prophecy. Only when the Church is “*raptured*” out will God turn back towards godless Israel and bring His wrath upon them and the entire world. The Church however is saved from His wrath. The view of supersessionism revolves around the miss-application and miss-understanding of the relationship between the various covenants found within the Scriptures. Some of the most prevalent Protestant views on supersessionism are known as “*Covenant theology, New Covenant Theology, and Dispensationalism*.” These views are not restricted to a single denomination but are in fact prevalent throughout all churches and replacement theology runs so deeply that even if one states that they reject the concepts of supersessionism, the rapture theology and its replacement / antisemitism has been accepted by a majority. From a Jewish perspective, however, the Torah was given to God’s people as an eternal covenant (*Shemot / Exodus 31:16-17 and 12:14-15*) and the Scriptures themselves say it will never be replaced or added to (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 4:2 and 13:1*). Supersessionism therefore is unable to provide an answer adequately to Judaism’s claims that Yeshua is not the Messiah in regard to the eternal covenant statements that are made in the Torah. Is it surprising that the unbelieving Jewish person would make a claim that believing in Yeshua is to change religions? Supersessionism is contrary to the Hebrew Bible and very antisemitic.

The psalmist continues saying *ג יִפְּה נוֹף מְשׁוֹשׁ כָּל-הָאָרֶץ הֶרֶם-צִיּוֹן יִרְבֹּתִי צִפּוֹן קִרְיַת מְלֶכֶךְ רַב׃ ד אֱלֹהִים׃* *8:2 Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, Is Mount Zion in the far north, The city of the great King. 48:3 God, in her palaces, Has made Himself known as a stronghold. (NASB)*

The psalmist continues to draw our attention to the Land and the Place (Mount Zion) and makes reference to the city of the great King. The importance of the city and the people is the distinction that is made in all the earth, that all peoples and nations are joyful because of the Lord God who is in this Place. Replacement theology on the other hand sates it is a mistake to believe God is connected to a people, a land, a city, and a place. The Aramaic Targum states *ג שפיר היך חתנא הדות כל יתבי ארעא טורא דציון שידא דמשודא דצפונא ד יהוה אלהא בבירניתהא אתיידע אישתמודע לתקון:* *48:3 Beautiful as a bridegroom, the joy of all the inhabitants of the earth, Mount Zion, on the north side, the city of the great king. 48:4 The Lord is in its palaces; it is known for strength. (EMC)* The Septuagint states *48:2 εὖ ῥιζῶν ἀγαλλιάματι πάσης τῆς γῆς ὄρη Σιων τὰ πλευρὰ τοῦ βορρᾶ ἢ πόλις τοῦ βασιλέως τοῦ μεγάλου 48:3 ὁ θεὸς ἐν ταῖς βάρεσιν αὐτῆς γινώσκειται ὅταν ἀντιλαμβάνηται αὐτῆς 48:2 The city of the great King is well planted on the mountains of Sion, with the joy of the whole earth, on the sides of the north. 48:3 God is known in her palaces, when he undertakes to help her. (LXX)* The rabbis bring in the concepts of the marriage covenant with the inhabitants of the earth who worship God at Zion. In today's theology, we are told to place our faith and trust in Yeshua the Messiah, our lives "turn" in repentance and we are saved and good to go bound for heaven. The thing that is overlooked, eschatologically speaking according to the book of Revelation, we are given a message from God regarding what the Lord expects of His children, how we are to turn in repentance and then live for Him. I have heard some say "all I want is Jesus and that is it nothing else," as if our faith in Yeshua causes our life to cease, to end, and there is nothing we should do to serve God? In Ephesians, the Apostle Paul told the Ephesians that we were created for maasim tovim (good works) for the purpose of bringing glory to our Father in Heaven. In addition to this, studying the book of Revelation, in the narrative, we find two principal characters described as the "Harlot-Babylon" and the "Bride-New Jerusalem." We see this in the variety of parallels that are drawn between the Babylon (see *Revelation 17-18*) and the New Jerusalem (see *Revelation 21-22*) the author of Revelation (John) is contrasting the two, one against the other. We see this by the way John adopts similar introductory phraseology, thematic sequences, and verbal patterns (*Jan Fekkes III, Journal of Biblical Literature, Vol. 109, No. 2 (1990), pp. 269-287, Publisher: The Society of Biblical Literature*). In *Revelation 21*, the Apostle John introduces the bride (*19:9-21*) where the bride is described using terminology from the Torah and to the people, the Land, and the Place (Jerusalem) to explain the marriage symbolism, relationship, and role of the faithful bride to her husband. Based upon this summary from the Apostolic Writings, Supersessionism again is contrary to the Greek Bible and is very antisemitic.

The Psalm continues saying *44:4 For, lo, the kings assembled themselves, They passed by together. 44:5 They saw it, then they were amazed; They were terrified, they fled in alarm. 44:6 Panic seized them there, Anguish, as of a woman in childbirth. 44:7 With the east wind You break the ships of Tarshish. (NASB)* The nations flee and are terrified at the presence of the Lord in this place. *Tehillim / Psalms 48* is the completion of a series of psalms which begins from *Tehillim / Psalms 44*.

Summary

- **Tehillim / Psalm 44** - the children of God have been told by their fathers of God's deliverance in days of old (e.g. the testimony given in the Torah. Note Yeshua's words on the parable of the Rich man and Lazarus that the Rich man's brothers have Moshe and the Torah to speak to them). We are told to look to God to redeem Israel (and us who are grafted in) from the power of the enemy.
- **Tehillim / Psalm 45** - presents the redeemer and deliverer, that God is going to send On for help to answer to their cry. Yeshua ultimately being the One through whom deliverance will come.

- **Tehillim / Psalm 46** - speaks of the confidence we have in the Lord God Almighty which is gained by the experiencing God's mercy in the present, and not simply the report of what God has done in the past.
- **Tehillim / Psalm 47** - speaks of the joy of realizing God intervening on behalf of His people. The Lord exalting Israel over all of the nations and we find the Lord actually calling the nations to join with Israel in praise to our Father in Heaven.
- **Tehillim / Psalm 48** - speaks of the Lord forever establishing in Jerusalem (Zion) a name for Himself, and creating a center of government for the whole earth. This is why the godly say in *Tehillim / Psalms 48:8*, "As we have heard, so have we seen In the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God; God will establish her forever. Selah."

In light of church history and replacement theology that the church replaces Israel, by this reasoning we would need to discard all of these psalms because David is very pro-Israel and continually emphasizes and connecting the praises of God with the Land, the People, and the Place where He has established His name.

It is also important to note what is said in verses 8-10:

Masoretic Text

Tehillim / Psalms 48:8-10

8:8 *As we have heard, so have we seen In the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God; God will establish her forever. Selah.* 48:9 *We have thought on Your lovingkindness, O God, In the midst of Your temple.* 48:10 *As is Your name, O God, So is Your praise to the ends of the earth; Your right hand is full of righteousness. (NASB)*

ט פֶּאֶשֶׁר שָׁמַעְנוּ | בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעִיר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת בְּעִיר אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֱלֹהִים יְכוֹנְנָה עַד-עוֹלָם סֻלָּה: י דְּמִינוּ
אֱלֹהִים חֲסִדָּךְ בְּקֶרֶב הַיְכָלְךָ: יא בְּשִׁמְךָ אֱלֹהִים בְּנֵי תְהַלְתֶּךָ עַל-קַצְוֵי-אֶרֶץ צִדְקַת מְלֹאָה יְמִינֶךָ:

Aramaic Targum

Toviyah / Psalms Chapter 48:9-11

48:9 *The children of Israel will say, "Just as we have heard, so we have seen; in the city of the Lord Sabaoth, in the city of our God – the Lord will establish it forever and ever."* 48:10 *Make us worthy, O Lord, of your goodness in the midst of your temple.* 48:11 *As your name, O Lord, so is your praise to the ends of the earth; your right hand is full of generosity. (EMC)*

ט יִימְרוּן בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל כּוֹלְהוֹן כַּחַדָּא הֵיךְ מַה דִּי שְׁמַעְנָא הֵיכְנָא חֲמִינָא בְּקִרְתָּא דִּיהוּהַ צְבָאוֹת בְּקִרְתָּא
דְּאַלְהָנָא יְהוּהַ אֱלֹהִים יִשְׁכַּלְלִינָה עַד עַלְמֵי עַלְמִין: י אֲשׁוּיְנוּ אֲשׁוּיְנָא יְהוּהַ אֱלֹהָא טוּבְךָ בְּמַצִּיעוֹת
בְּמַצַּע הֵיכְלְךָ: יא הֵיךְ כְּשִׁמְךָ יְהוּהַ הֵיכְדִין תּוֹשְׁבַחְתְּךָ עַל עַד סִיפֵי אַרְעָא צְדָקְתָּא מְלֵיא יְמִינְךָ:

Septuagint

Psalmoi / Psalms 48:8-10

48:8 *As we have heard, so have we also seen, in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God: God has founded it for ever. Pause.* 48:9 *We have thought of thy mercy, O God, in the*

midst of thy people. 48:10 According to thy name, O God, so is also thy praise to the ends of the earth: thy right hand is full of righteousness. (LXX)

48:8 καθάπερ ἠκούσαμεν οὕτως εἶδομεν ἐν πόλει κυρίου τῶν δυνάμεων ἐν πόλει τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν ὁ θεὸς ἐθεμελίωσεν αὐτὴν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα διάψαλμα 48:9 ὑπελάβομεν ὁ θεὸς τὸ ἔλεός σου ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ ναοῦ σου 48:10 κατὰ τὸ ὄνομά σου ὁ θεὸς οὕτως καὶ ἡ αἰνεσίς σου ἐπὶ τὰ πέρατα τῆς γῆς δικαιοσύνης πλήρης ἡ δεξιὰ σου

Tehillim / Psalms 48:8-10 speak of the children of God praising the name of God for the fact that they not only heard of what the Lord had done in the Torah, but that they have also experienced God's mercy and saving power for themselves. The Place, Jerusalem, that was delivered by God is established forever. The Psalmist states that *48:9 We have thought on Your lovingkindness, O God, In the midst of Your temple. (NASB)* while the rabbis who translated the text into Aramaic state *48:10 Make us worthy, O Lord, of your goodness in the midst of your temple. (EMC)* The statement אַשׁוּיְנֵנוּ אֱלֹהֵי טוֹבָךְ בְּמִצִּיעוֹת בְּמִצְעָךְ to "make us worthy" (אַשׁוּיְנֵנוּ אֱלֹהֵי) is not for the purpose of earning our salvation. Making us worthy is a cry for God's help to empower us to live redeemed, delivered, and righteous lives. Remember, we are redeemed, saved, delivered, and made righteous in Yeshua the Messiah, now we are called to live like we are redeemed, saved, delivered and righteous in the Messiah. *Tehillim / Psalms 48:10* states, *48:10 As is Your name, O God, So is Your praise to the ends of the earth; Your right hand is full of righteousness. (NASB)* The Aramaic Targum states, *48:11 As your name, O Lord, so is your praise to the ends of the earth; your right hand is full of generosity. (EMC)* The Septuagint states, *48:10 According to thy name, O God, so is also thy praise to the ends of the earth: thy right hand is full of righteousness. (LXX)* The Lord is praised according to all that is set forth in His name.

There are two locations in the Torah where God explicitly reveals the meaning of the Name (יְהוָה, YHVH). The first is in Parashat Shemot at the mountain of Sinai and the second time is during Parashat Ki Tisa again at the mountain of Sinai and following the sin of the golden calf. In *Shemot / Exodus 3:14* the Lord said: וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל-מֹשֶׁה אֲהִיָּה אֲשֶׁר אֲהִיָּה וַיֹּאמֶר כֹּה תֹאמַר לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲהִיָּה שְׁלַחְנִי אֲלֵיכֶם: *3:14 God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM'; and He said, 'Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.' (NASB)* During Moshe's encounter with God at the burning bush he also explicitly requested to know God's Name in order to authenticate the messenger (himself) and the message to the children of Israel. The Lord responded saying אֲהִיָּה אֲשֶׁר אֲהִיָּה "ehyeh asher ehyeh." According to the NASB this phrase is translated as "I AM WHO I AM" since the word is derived from the verb Haya (היה, "to be") indicating that God is the source of all life, the creator. Comparing the Targum Onkelos to *Shemot / Exodus 3:14*, the Aramaic Targum states, וַיֹּאמֶר יְיָ לְמֹשֶׁה אֲהִיָּה אֲשֶׁר אֲהִיָּה וַאֲמַר כְּדָנָן תִּימַר לְבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲהִיָּה שְׁלַחְנִי וַיֹּאמֶר יְיָ לְמֹשֶׁה אֲהִיָּה אֲשֶׁר אֲהִיָּה "ehyeh asher ehyeh." It is believed that the letters of the name are an acronym for the words "hayah," "hoveh," "v'yihyeh," (היה הוה ויהיה) meaning "the One who was, the One who is, and the One who always shall be." Note that each word is derived from the verb Haya (היה, "to be") indicating the eternal nature of God (His eternal existence). By using this name God is declaring His existence. The Lord's revelation of Himself provides for us a framework within which we are able to begin to comprehend who He is. For example, we begin by having faith that God exists (*Hebrews 11:6 χωρὶς δὲ πίστεως ἀδύνατον εὐαρεστῆσαι, πιστεῦσαι γὰρ δεῖ τὸν προσερχόμενον τῷ θεῷ ὅτι ἔστιν καὶ τοῖς ἐκζητοῦσιν αὐτὸν μισθαποδότης γίνεται. 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please Him for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him. NASB*) Within the statement from the Torah אֲהִיָּה אֲשֶׁר אֲהִיָּה "ehyeh asher ehyeh," God is declaring His eternal existence and in His Name declaring that we must believe He exists and is all powerful to deliver us.

The second place the name is mentioned is toward the end of Exodus in Parashat Ki Tisa (*Shemot / Exodus 30:11-34:35*) Moshe asks the Lord again saying וַיֹּאמֶר הָרֹאֵנִי נָא אֶת-כְּבוֹדְךָ: *33:18 Then Moses said,*

וַיַּעֲבֹר יְהוָה | על-פְּנֵיו (NASB) The Lord God answers Moshe saying וַיִּקְרָא יְהוָה | יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְחַנוּן אַרְךָ אַפַּיִם וְרַב-חַסְדֵּךָ וְאֱמֶת: ז נֶצֶר חֶסֶד לְאֻלָּפִים נִשָּׂא עֵוֹן וְפָשַׁע וְחַטָּאת וְנָקָה לֹא יִנְקָה פֶקֶד | עֵוֹן אָבוֹת עַל-בָּנִים וְעַל-בְּנֵי בָנִים עַל-שְׁלֵשִׁים וְעַל-רִבְעִים: ח וַיִּמְהַר מֹשֶׁה וַיִּקַּד אֶרְצָה וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה: 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 (Grace, חֶסֶד) and truth; 34:7 who keeps loving-kindness (Grace, חֶסֶד) 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.' 34:8 Moses made haste to bow low toward the earth and worship. (NASB) The Lord describes Himself and His divine attributes which we find reiterated throughout scripture (*Bamidbar / Numbers 14:18, Nehemiah 9:17, Tehilim / Psalms 103:8,17, 145:8, Jeremiah 32:18-19, Joel 2:13, and Jonah 4:2*). What God says about himself falls within the context of Parashat Ki Tisa on the sin of idolatry by the children of Israel and their breaking the newly established covenant by worshiping an idol of their own making. This was a great sin but yet God fulfilled His promise, in the midst of the sin of the people and the Lord gives Moshe a fresh revelation of His glory. The repetition of the Name in Exodus tells the listener to stop and reflect on the meaning and the description that follows. The meaning of God's Name was first revealed in *Shemot / Exodus 3:14* the Lord said וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֲנִי אֲנִי וַיֹּאמֶר לְבָנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֱלֹהֵיךְ אֲנִי: 3:14 God said to Moses, 'I AM WHO I AM'; and He said, 'Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.' (NASB) The attributes God lists of Himself in *Shemot / Exodus 34*, His compassion demonstrated in *Shemot / Exodus 32:14* all of these things describe His unchanging love and reliability for His people. These are the things the people have heard and God has worked in the life of the child of God that we find here in *Tehillim / Psalms 48:8-10* that states, 8:8 As we have heard, so have we seen In the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God; God will establish her forever. Selah. 48:9 We have thought on Your lovingkindness, O God, In the midst of Your temple. 48:10 As is Your name, O God, So is Your praise to the ends of the earth; Your right hand is full of righteousness. (NASB) The Lord has shown Himself to be faithful to His people, not only has He sent His Son Yeshua the Messiah, He works daily in our lives to draw us nearer, for fellowship, relationship, and maasim tovim.

יב יִשְׂמַח | הֶרֶץ צִיּוֹן תִּגְלַגֵּל בְּנוֹת יְהוּדָה לְמַעַן מִשְׁפְּטֶיהָ: יג סָבוּ צִיּוֹן וְהִקִּיפוּהָ יב סָפְרוּ מִגְדְּלֶיהָ: יד שִׁיתוּ לְבַבְכֶם | לְחִילָה פְּסוּגוֹ אֶרְמְנוֹתֶיהָ לְמַעַן תִּסְפְּרוּ לְדוֹר אַחֲרוֹן: טו כִּי זֶה | אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵינוּ עוֹלָם סָפְרוּ מִגְדְּלֶיהָ: 48:11 Let Mount Zion be glad, Let the daughters of Judah rejoice Because of Your judgments. 48:12 Walk about Zion and go around her; Count her towers; 48:13 Consider her ramparts; Go through her palaces, That you may tell it to the next generation. 48:14 For such is God, Our God forever and ever; He will guide us until death. (NASB) The psalmist equates the number of towers in the holy place, in the city of God, as a picture of blessing upon God's people. We read סָבוּ צִיּוֹן "sovu tzion" using the word סָבוּ meaning "to encircle, revolve, rotate, sit around," David is telling people to walk about Zion, to הִקִּיפוּהָ to go about Zion, from the root word נִקַּף (naqaph), we get the idea that he is telling the people to fasten together or join together, to make a circle around Zion. The remainder of the verse סָפְרוּ מִגְדְּלֶיהָ "to number her towers" suggests that the people are to go around Zion, or around the city and take a survey of the city, to count or number her towers. What is the purpose of numbering the towers? Based upon *Tehillim / Psalms 48:13-14*, the idea is to examine the beauty of the city, of Zion, and how the Lord has helped her to escape her enemies. Towers are a description of a cities defense and protection, and our attention is directed to God who protects His city for His name's sake, the Lord has enabled the men to build these towers for defense. The city is surrounded by walls with towers from which arrows could be launched against the adversary. Again we find these verses from *Tehillim / Psalms 48* speaking of God's connection to the land, the people, and mount Zion. The covenant and relationship the people have with God, is exemplified in the Lord, His love and His mercy being eternal, and that He will guide us until the day that we die.

David concludes with a call to Mount Zion to rejoice and to the cities of Judah to be glad. The purpose of this gladness is found in *Tehillim / Psalms 48:8* which states, ט כַּאֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְנוּ | כִּן רָאינוּ בְּעִיר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת,

:עַד-עוֹלָם סְלָה: 48:8 אֶלֶּהֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵים יְכוֹנֶנֶה עַד-עוֹלָם סְלָה: *As we have heard, so have we seen In the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God; God will establish her forever. Selah. (NASB)* The city of God will be established forever and in peace the inhabitants can contemplate the beauty of the city in peace and focus upon their relationship with the Lord in worship and in service. The land, the city, and the people are a reminder of the lovingkindness of God who saves His people and brings blessing to the land and the people by establishing a place for them to live (48:9). The concluding verse of the psalm states that throughout our lives God will be our God and our Guide: “*For this God is our God for ever and ever: for He will be our Guide even unto death.*” The Aramaic Targum states טו ארום דין דנן יהוה הוא אלהנא שכנתיה בגוה ומדוריה 48:15 *For this, the Lord, he is our God; his presence is in her midst and his dwelling is in heaven forever and ever; he will guide us in the days of our youth. (EMC)* The Septuagint states 48:14 ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ θεὸς ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα καὶ εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος αὐτὸς ποιμανεῖ ἡμᾶς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας 48:14 *For this is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide for evermore. (LXX)* It is interesting the rabbis do not translate as the Hebrew text states וְעַד הוּא יְנַהֵגנוּ עַל-מוֹת “*He will guide us until death,*” but instead translate as “*he will guide us in the days of our youth*” (Targum) and “*he will be our guide for evermore*” (Septuagint). The idea is that the Lord does not guide us to death, but that He will be there to guide us all of our days while we are yet alive. The point is that the Lord is faithful to His people who were an unfaithful people.

Considering the faithfulness of God who extends His mercy and grace to an unfaithful people, this should encourage us in our lives with the hope and trust in our Father in Heaven because of what the Lord Yeshua, the Messiah has done in His name. Despite the fact that often we are unfaithful, we sin, and we let Him down, He will never go back on what He has promised. We who are grafted into Israel, are also partakers of both an earthly blessing as well as the coming heavenly blessing because of what the Messiah has done for each one of us. By God’s mercy, grace, and faithfulness we are saved every day. These things are exemplified by David’s words that draw us to the Land, the Place, and the People that God has chosen to establish His name forever. What a wonderful God we serve! Let’s Pray!

Rabbinic Commentary

The Rabbinic Commentary (Midrash) on *Tehillim / Psalms 48* has 5 parts. Reading through the Midrash we will be looking at Part 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Let’s begin by outlining *Midrash Tehillim Chapter 48, Part 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.*

Outline of Midrash Tehillim / Psalms, Chapter 48, Part 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5

Part 1

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דִּבּוּר הַמַּתְחִיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*A song; a Psalm of the sons of Korach. Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, in the city of our God, His holy mountain (Tehillim / Psalms 48:1-2).*”
- The פְּתִיחָה (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*The ministering angels said, From the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same My name will be great among the nations (Malachi 1:11)...*”
- The מַשָּׁל (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the פְּתִיחָה (Petihta), the rabbis go on to discuss the opening words of the Psalm for the Sons of Korach in contrast to the greatness of the Lord and the city Jerusalem.
- The נִמְשָׁל (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the מַשָּׁל (mashal), the rabbis continue with their discourse and ask if God is only great in His city? What the Lord does to His city He will also do to the peoples of this earth in reference to punishment for transgressions.

- The Concluding phrase says “*And so, the sons of Korach really mean, Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, because of the city of our God, because of His holy mountain.*”

Part 2

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*Beautiful, declared beautiful, the joy of the whole earth, Mount Zion (Tehillim / Psalms 48:3).*”
- The פתיחתא (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*Why is it said Beautiful, declared beautiful?*”
- The משל (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis discuss the beauty of mount Zion. Why is mount Zion beautiful?
- The נמשל (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the משל (mashal), the rabbis say that all men declare the beauty of Zion. The beauty of Zion is connected to the mercy, grace, and forgiveness that is found in drawing near to the Lord.
- The Concluding phrase says “*For as the guards in the city do, going about at night from door to door, so the Holy One blessed be He, will do in the age to come, protecting each and every chamber. Hence, it is said, God Himself will be known in her palaces.*”

Part 3

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*The verses For, lo, the Kings assemble themselves, they passed by together. They saw it, and so they marveled; they were troubled, and hastened away (Tehillim / Psalms 48:5-6).*”
- The פתיחתא (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*refers to the time when Jerusalem was destroyed.*”
- The משל (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis consider how the kings of this earth conspire together to destroy Jerusalem.
- The נמשל (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the משל (mashal), the rabbis say as the kings passed by they marveled at the destruction of Jerusalem.
- The Concluding phrase says “*Hence, it is said They saw it, and so they marveled; they were troubled, and hastened away (Tehillim / Psalms 48:6).*”

Part 4

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*Walk about Zion, and go round about her; number the towers thereof; mark you well her bulwark, consider her palaces; that you may tell it to the generation following (Tehillim / Psalms 48:13-14).*”
- The פתיחתא (Petihta) “*the homiletic introduction*” to the Midrash says “*Rabbi Nakhman said, The thing that has been, it is that which will be (Ecclesiastes 1:9)...*”
- The משל (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis go on to discuss how the Lord saves his people wrapping them up in clouds of glory.
- The נמשל (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the משל (mashal), the rabbis speak of the towers and gardens by numbering them and the great number causes the children of Israel to sing.
- The Concluding phrase says “*How many pools will there be in Jerusalem? Thirteen hundred and sixty nine. And how many gates will there be? One hundred and forty four, twelve from each tribe. Hence, it is said, Walk about Zion, and go round about her; Number the towers thereof, etc.*”

Part 5

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*Mark well her*

khel, mark you her troops (khelot) which will have come to her out of exile. Or, mark you her dance (khol) which she will dance. Or, mark you her song (khil), as in the verse See, and behold, if the daughters of Shiloh come out to sing (khul) the songs' (Judges 21:21)."

- The פתיחתא (Petihta) "*the homiletic introduction*" to the Midrash says "*Passegu her palaces, build high the palaces of her inhabitants.*"
- The משל (mashal) "*the parable,*" goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis do not appear to be using a verse from the Psalm but speak of her khel, her troops, her dance, and her song.
- The נמשל (Nimshal) "*expansion on the parable*" expands upon the משל (mashal), the rabbis explain the dibur hamathil drawing a parallel to Moshe ascending upon Pisgah and the Lord's deliverance.
- The Concluding phrase says "*He will guide us through the worlds (Tehillim / Psalms 48:15), that is to say, through two worlds. And all the peoples will hear of the miracles which the Holy One blessed be He, works for Israel as is said Hear this, all you peoples; give ear, all you inhabitants of the earth (Tehillim / Psalms 49:2).*"

Midrash Tehillim 48, Part 1 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying "A song; a Psalm of the sons of Korach. Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, in the city of our God, His holy mountain (Tehillim / Psalms 48:1-2)." The homiletic introduction to the Midrash states "The ministering angels said, From the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same My name will be great among the nations (Malachi 1:11)..." Malachi chapter 1 speaks of the disobedience of Israel, that the people would take the sick and diseased, the blind and the lame animal for the sacrifice before the Lord which is an act of unfaithfulness and disobedience to the command that the animals chosen for sacrifice are to be perfect and without blemish (Shemot / Exodus 12:5, Vayikra / Leviticus 22:24, Devarim / Deuteronomy 17:1, etc). Here Israel is described as walking in their unfaithfulness in the sacrifices, they brought blemished animals to offer to the Lord. Throughout the Scriptures the relationship that is described between Israel and the Lord is that of the marriage relationship. When Israel goes off to worship false gods, the relationship is spoken of as one of infidelity (e.g. Ezekiel 16). In most instances, the act of idolatry was considered the adulterous affair, the infidelity of Israel. Infidelity however does not necessarily refer specifically to sexual relations. The idea of infidelity is typified "When the relationship has to be kept secret from your partner it is wrong. Otherwise you could bring the person in and sit them down in the living room and visit like a friend!" A November 14, 2012 article posted on "cnn.com" discussed a survey regarding infidelity and what people considered constituted infidelity in a marriage relationship. Drawing the line at sex was the second most popular choice, but it only got 20% overall. The other forms of unfaithfulness involved touch like kissing (13%) and hugging (less than 1%). There were some who drew the line at flirtatious behavior (11%). A few readers stated fantasizing was an important aspect of infidelity (8%). The overall conclusion was that the readers seemed to place a lot of power in the mental aspect of love. The point is that infidelity comes first as a mental aspect of love and the Lord God desires that all of our mental faculties be devoted to Him. The people in the days of Malachi felt the command could be fulfilled by bringing a sacrifice but it was not done in a love for God, the sacrifices were chosen from the worst of the flock to give to God. Today do we choose from the worst of what we have to give to the Lord?

The Midrash goes on to say the following:

the sons of Korach said, Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, in the city of our God, His holy mountain. Does this mean that our God is great only in His city? No, the sons of Korach really meant, in His sanctuary. So too, Scripture says, The Lord is great in Zion; and He is high above all the peoples (Tehillim / Psalms 99:2) (Midrash Tehillim 48, Part 1)

The sons of Korach praise the name of the Lord and the rabbis ask whether God's name is great only in His city? We are again drawn back to the Land, the Place, and the People in the minds of the rabbis based

upon the Scriptures (the Psalm of David). The conclusion is that Korach really meant God's Sanctuary, that His name is praised in His Sanctuary. The Lord being great in Zion places Him high above all the peoples. Based upon this line of reasoning, the midrash states the following:

If He has done such a thing to His city, how much more will He do to the peoples of the earth, for it is said, Lo, I begin to bring evil on the city, upon which My name is called, and should you be utterly unpunished? You will not be unpunished; for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, says the Lord of hosts (Jeremiah 25:29). (Midrash Tehillim 48, Part 1)

The point is that the Lord has brought judgment down upon Jerusalem because of her infidelity, her unfaithfulness to God. The rabbis discuss the idea that if God has done such a thing to His city, how much more will He do to the peoples of the earth? The point is that those who do not believe in the God of Israel will one day be held accountable to the God of Israel by reason of His being the creator of all things, including those who do not believe. Faith can get you into right standing with the Lord, but can it keep you from His wrath if you live in open disobedience to His commands? What do the apostles have to say about this topic?

Hebrews 10:26-31

10:26 For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 10:27 but a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries. 10:28 Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 10:29 How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace? 10:30 For we know Him who said, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay.' And again, 'The Lord will judge His people.' 10:31 It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (NASB)

1 John 1:5-10

1:5 This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. 1:6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; 1:7 but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1:10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us. (NASB)

According to the author of Hebrews, he speaks of willful sin after having received the truth. Willful sin leads to one not being able to make atonement for sin but only having a terrifying expectation of judgment and fury with fire that consumes the adversaries as described in the Torah (e.g. *Parashat Korach*). He speaks of those who “*set aside the Law (Torah) of Moshe,*” and dying without mercy. The midrash states that the wicked will not go unpunished and all of the inhabitants of the earth will be accountable before the Lord. Even we who are in Yeshua the Messiah will be accountable for what we have done. John says that if we walk in darkness, we do not practice the truth, we speak a lie. The idea is that the persons John is speaking of are those who say they have no sin, they do not confess their sins, they say they walk in the light but in truth they walk in darkness. With this concept of “*infidelity*” described earlier, it is very easy to be unfaithful, not only to our spouses, but also to the Lord God of Heaven. By what we do, the way we talk to people (flirtatious) what we look at, what we listen to, what we consider to be our treasure (where is your treasure) in heaven or hear on earth? By these things do we trample the blood of Christ under foot

by the uncleanness of our lives which have been sanctified in His blood? We know that Scripture states (*Hebrews 10:30*) the Lord says “*Vengeance is Mine,*” and this is what we are seeing in the midrash that states “*You will not be unpunished; for I will call for a sword upon all the inhabitants of the earth, says the Lord of hosts (Jeremiah 25:29)*” The Midrash concludes saying “*And so, the sons of Korach really mean, Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, because of the city of our God, because of His holy mountain.*” The Scriptures, as well as the Psalms draws us back to the Land, the Place, and the People, because in the actions of the Lord to make a place for His name, He saves the Land and His People, and these things are greatly to be praised. The midrash states “*Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, because of the city of our God, because of His holy mountain.*” Not just because of what He has done in the past as we read in the Torah, but also because of what we know. “*He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*” in Yeshua the Messiah. We are drawn back to the context of the Land, the Place, and the People for the purpose of having good reason (the knowledge of) to give God the praises for what He has done and continues to do in our lives. We can see how the Lord has worked in the past and how he is working in our lives even today, His faithfulness is forever, now we too are to remain faithful to Him because of what He has done for us.

Midrash Tehillim 48, Part 2, opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying “*Beautiful, declared beautiful, the joy of the whole earth, Mount Zion (Tehillim / Psalms 48:3).*” The Homiletic introduction (פתיחתא, Petihta) to the Midrash states “*Why is it said Beautiful, declared beautiful?*” The rabbis say יפה נוף מהו יפה נוף *“beautiful landscape, joy upon the earth. Why beautiful landscape?”* What is beautiful about the city of Jerusalem? Have you been to Jerusalem? What is it about the beauty of the Land, the Place, and the People of God that is so important? The midrash continues saying the following:

By this phrase the sons of Korach meant, Beautiful, because all men declare it beautiful; beautiful, because there is none like it. Though Scripture declares of Tyre, You, O Tyre, have said, I am of perfect beauty (Ezekiel 27:3), the words indicate only that the city of Tyre said this of herself, not that others said this of her. The common saying is, One is not what one’s mother says, but what one’s neighbors say. Not so of Zion; all men admit her beauty, even when she lay in ruins, it was said, is not this the city which men call the perfection of beauty (Lamentations 2:15). (Midrash Tehillim 48, Part 2)

The beauty of the city is brought into context of Tyre who calls herself beautiful. Jerusalem does not call herself beautiful, but it is others who declare the beauty of Jerusalem. The midrash states that even when she lay in ruins, men call the place, the city the perfection of beauty. Why do you think men call a place that lays in ruins beautiful? The beauty of Zion is connected to the mercy, grace, and forgiveness that is found in drawing near to the Lord. The rabbis describe this in the following way:

Hence the sons of Korach said, Beautiful, declared beautiful, the joy of the whole earth, Mount Zion. Why was Mount Zion a joy? Because it made the whole earth joyful. Thus, if a man committed a sin, and was troubled in his heart so that his heart was bowed down in him, as Solomon said, Care in the heart of a man bows down. But a good thing makes it glad (Mishley / Proverbs 12:25), he would go up to Jerusalem and there make an offering, so that his sin would be forgiven him, and his heart would rejoice, and he would go forth glad heart from the city. Hence, it is said, The joy of the whole earth, Mount Zion. You can see for yourself that this was true of his offering, for Mount Zion is described as being on the sides of the north (Tehillim / Psalms 48:3). (Midrash Tehillim 48, Part 2)

The beauty of Jerusalem is connected to the ability to be forgiven, the opportunity for a man to draw near to the Lord and to participate in the service of the Lord by his obedience in bringing a sacrifice and be forgiven of his sins. This is the thing that makes glad the heart and even in the midst of ruin. The midrash continues

saying:

What does great connote in the phrase The city of the great King (Tehillim / Psalms 48:3)? The King is great because He has ordained such things for His own city. He has ordained such things for this world, but in the world to come God Himself will be known in her palaces as a protection (Tehillim / Psalms 48:4).

Notice how the rabbis say that God is great for ordaining such things on His own city. Are the things that make God great the judgments that He brings upon His city? Is God great in judgment? Does this seem counter intuitive to the modern grace teaching? The midrash states that the Lord ordains such things for this world, for judgments to be brought upon sin. But in the Olam Habah (world to come) the Lord Himself will be known in her palaces as a protection. What kind of protection will be necessary in the world to come? It is interesting that in the book of Revelation, we are drawn back to the Land, the Place, and the City of God (e.g. the New Jerusalem) just like David is doing here in the Psalm. The Concluding phrase states “For as the guards in the city do, going about at night from door to door, so the Holy One blessed be He, will do in the age to come, protecting each and every chamber. Hence, it is said, God Himself will be known in her palaces.” The way this is described, God Himself being known in her palaces as a protection, is a way of stating that even in the world to come the Lord has established His name in the Land, the Place, and the People, just like it is written of the New Jerusalem in Revelation 21:21-27:

Revelation 21:21-27

21:21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was a single pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass. 21:22 I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. 21:23 And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb. 21:24 The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. 21:25 In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed; 21:26 and they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it; 21:27 and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life. (NASB)

Midrash Tehillim 48, Part 3 opens with the Dibut Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying “The verses For, lo, the Kings assemble themselves, they passed by together. They saw it, and so they marveled; they were troubled, and hasted away (Tehillim / Psalms 48:5-6).” The homiletic introduction to the Midrash states “this refers to the time when Jerusalem was destroyed.” The entire midrash states the following:

<p>מדרש תהילים פרק מה סימן ג ג כי הנה המלכים נועדו. כשהיא חריבה, ועברו יחדו עליה להורסה, שנאמר ועברו גוים רבים על העיר הזאת (ירמיה כב ח), ותמהו על חורבנה, כדכתיב ואמרו [איש אל רעהו] על מה עשה ה' ככה (לארץ) [לעיר הגדולה] הזאת (שם שם ירמיהו כ"ב), לכך נאמר המה ראו כן תמהו נבהלו נחפזו.</p>	<p>Midrash Tehillim 48, Part 3 3. The verses For, lo, the Kings assemble themselves, they passed by together. They saw it, and so they marveled; they were troubled, and hasted away (Tehillim / Psalms 48:5-6) refer to the time when Jerusalem was destroyed. They passed by together means that the kings passed by together to destroy Jerusalem, for it is said And many nations will pass by this city (Jeremiah 22:8). And they marveled means that they marveled at its destruction, as is written, They will say every man to his neighbor, Wherefore, has the Lord done thus unto this great city? (Jeremiah 22:8) Hence, it is said They saw it, and so they marveled; they were troubled, and hasted away (Tehillim / Psalms 48:6).</p>
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The midrash introduces Tehillim / Psalms 48:5-6 as referring to a time when Jerusalem is destroyed and

kings come together to not only destroy Jerusalem but to also marvel at its destruction. The kings give credit to the Lord who brought this destruction and are amazed at the way in which the Lord brought His judgment. The destruction of Jerusalem reminds us of *Luke 21* when Yeshua describes another time when Jerusalem is destroyed. In *Luke 21:20* Yeshua describes Jerusalem's destruction in detail. He says the sign of its destruction will come when armies surround Jerusalem. This sounds very similar to the rabbis interpretation on the destruction of Jerusalem on *Tehillim / Psalms 48:5-6*. Yeshua had already predicted the destruction in *Luke 19:41-44*. According to History, we know that Yeshua was speaking upon the near event of Jerusalem's fall following His death, burial, and resurrection. Yeshua's focus throughout *Luke 21* is the city's destruction, a destruction that is all encompassing and is not limited to the temple only. Based upon this description, this will be a time of tension, that is described as Jerusalem being trampled on until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. The Lord's judgment on Jerusalem remains until that time is completed. Then, when the time of final destruction comes, it will be time to flee and hide. Those who are in Judea should head for the mountains, so they can hide in safety, while those in the city should get out. Those in the country should avoid the city. The destruction will be complete and the nation will suffer and according to Yeshua, these events will fulfill all that has been written. The allusion that we are given here is to prophetic warnings of the price of the nation's unfaithfulness (see *Devarim / Deutonomy 28:32, Jeremiah 7:14-26, 7:30-34, 16:1-9, 17:27, 19:10-15, Mica 3:12, and Zephania 1:4-13*). The Concluding phrase of Midrash Tehillim 48, Part 3 states "*Hence, it is said They saw it, and so they marveled; they were troubled, and hastened away (Tehillim / Psalms 48:6).*" The kings saw, marveled, and hurried away. This reference may be to God's pattern of judgment suggesting that the wicked may be consumed in the nations judgment and therefore the kings move on so as not to be consumed in the ensuing destruction.

Midrash Tehillim 48, Part 4 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying "*Walk about Zion, and go round about her; number the towers thereof; mark you well her bulwark, consider her palaces; that you may tell it to the generation following (Tehillim / Psalms 48:13-14).*" The homiletic introduction to the Midrash states "*Rabbi Nakhman said, The thing that has been, it is that which will be (Ecclesiastes 1:9)...*"

Even as the Holy One blessed be He, lifted up the children of Israel in clouds of glory, and wrapped them around and bore them up, as it is said And I bore you on eagles wings (Shemot / Exodus 19:4), so will He do again, and it will be said Who are these that fly as a cloud? (Isaiah 60:8). (Midrash Tehillim 48, Part 4)

Throughout the Scriptures we learn that God is the one who is delivering His people, He is the one who is saving His people, He is the one who cleanses His people, and He is the one providing His people with a sacrifice for sins. This is may be why Parashat Yitro describes God as having taken the children of Israel out of Egypt "*on eagles' wings.*" This metaphor that is used frequently throughout the Tanakh does not literally mean that God airlifted the children of Israel out of Egypt. How did God bear Israel on eagles' wings and what does it mean that He bore them on eagles' wings?

Shemot / Exodus 19:4-8

19:4 'You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you to Myself. 19:5 'Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; 19:6 and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.' 19:7 So Moses came and called the elders of the people, and set before them all these words which the Lord had commanded him. 19:8 All the people answered together and said, 'All that the Lord has spoken we will do!' And Moses brought back the words of the people to the Lord. (NASB)

פרשת יתרו ספר שמות פרק יט פסוק ד-ה

ד אַתֶּם רְאִיתֶם אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתִי לְמִצְרַיִם וְאֲשָׂא אֶתְכֶם עַל-כַּנְפֵי נְשָׁרִים וְאָבֵא אֶתְכֶם אֵלַי: ה וְעַתָּה אִם-שָׂמוּעַ תִּשְׁמָעוּ בְּקוֹלִי וְשִׁמְרֶתֶם אֶת-בְּרִיתִי וְהֵייתֶם לִי סִגְלָה מִכָּל-הָעַמִּים כִּי-לִי כָל-הָאָרֶץ: ו וְאַתֶּם תִּהְיוּ-לִי מִמְּלַכֶת כְּהַנְּגִים וְגוֹי קָדוֹשׁ אֵלֶּה הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר תִּדְבֹר אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: [חמישי] ז וַיָּבֵא מֹשֶׁה וַיִּקְרָא לְזִקְנֵי הָעָם וַיִּשָּׂם לִפְנֵיהֶם אֵת כָּל-הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר צִוָּהוּ יְהוָה: ח וַיַּעֲנוּ כָל-הָעָם יַחְדָּו וַיֹּאמְרוּ כָל אֲשֶׁר-דִּבֶּר יְהוָה נַעֲשֶׂה וְיִשָּׁב מִשָּׂה אֶת-דְּבָרֵי הָעָם אֶל-יְהוָה:

The word “*eagles*” is found in a few places in the Tanakh. The word “*Nesharim*” (נְשָׁרִים) in *Shemot / Exodus 19:4* refers to great birds of prey and is not specifically to the word “*eagle*.” There are a number of raptors in Israel, kestrels, black kites, vultures, and golden eagles and there are a variety of Hebrew terms that refer to them (see *Vayikra / Leviticus 11:13*, אֶת-הַנְּשָׂר, יג וְאֶת-אֵלֶּה תִּשְׁקָצוּ מִן-הָעוֹף לֹא יֵאָכְלוּ שֶׁקֶץ הֵם אֶת-הַנְּשָׂר, (וְאֶת-הַפֶּרֶס וְאֶת הָעֵזְנִיָּה); terms such as that for unclean birds ayah, dayah, and racham. The translators of the NASB and most English translations choose to translate “*Nesharim*” (נְשָׁרִים) as eagle. Some scholars regard the “*Nesharim*” (נְשָׁרִים) as vulture. In English the vulture has unpleasant connotations whereas the eagle is seen as a noble and imperial bird. In *Micah 1:16*, the context of the verse suggests the identification as a vulture (e.g. *bald head*), however, eagle is used as the translation for neshar. In *Job 9:26* ‘*They slip by like reed boats, Like an eagle that swoops on its prey*. Vultures can be seen around the Dead Sea region and in the northern region of Israel they can be seen soaring over Gamala (גמלא). The remains of the Gamala may be seen in the Golan Heights even to this day. Watching eagles soar, the question is what did God mean saying that He had taken the children of Israel out of Egypt “*on eagles’ wings*” (*Shemot / Exodus 19:4*) or like we see in the midrash that the Lord “*lifted up the children of Israel in clouds of glory, and wrapped them around and bore them up, as it is said And I bore you on eagles wings?*”

The Scriptural use of the word eagle denotes lofty and distant heights, the swooping down upon its unknowing prey and strength suggests that the eagle is a metaphor that foretells no obstacles whatsoever would be allowed to stand before you if you are in God’s hands. For example, *Isaiah 40:31* says, לֹא יִקְוִי יְהוָה, 40:31 Yet those who wait for the Lord Will gain new strength; They will mount up with wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary. The simple poetic substitution tells us that those who wait for the Lord and mounting up on eagles wings indicates the strength that we obtain by trusting in the Lord. This signifies God’s dominant role in delivering the children of Israel out of Egypt and this is why God brought Yeshua into this world (*The Word become Flesh, John 1:1-14*) the Lord is taking an active role in delivering us in His Messiah. If we rely upon our own works, we exchange God’s active participation in our salvation for our own ability to save ourselves. Believing in Yeshua places God in control and allows His Ruach HaKodesh (Holy Spirit) a place to lead, guide, and direct us as we live for Him.

In *Shemot / Exodus 19:4* God tells Moshe, ד אַתֶּם רְאִיתֶם אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתִי לְמִצְרַיִם וְאֲשָׂא אֶתְכֶם עַל-כַּנְפֵי נְשָׁרִים וְאָבֵא אֶתְכֶם אֵלַי: רים וְאָבֵא אֶתְכֶם אֵלַי: “*You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings, and brought you to Myself.*” Three things are emphasized here; (i) divine judgment against Egypt, (ii) divine deliverance out of bondage, and (iii) divine drawing to God, to the place God wants us to be. The Lord reminds the people and us how he bore us on eagles’ wings an image of divine deliverance. At the Red Sea, He told them to stand still and watch what I do for you. In the wilderness, the people wouldn’t have survived without the manna (bread from heaven in the morning) and meat (in the evening) that was provided by the Lord. The children of Israel did not gain their deliverance by their own hands, the Lord Himself “*bore them on eagles’ wings*” (עַל-כַּנְפֵי נְשָׁרִים). Taking all of these things into consideration, the metaphor in *Shemot / Exodus 19:4*, in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:11*, and in the Midrash suggests that the phrase “*bore them on eagles’ wings*” is a picture of God’s loving protection.

Parashat Yitro (*Shemot / Exodus 18:1-20:26*) detail how the Lord rescued Israel and Rescues us from our enemies and from our sins in the use of the metaphor of carrying on eagles’ wings and bringing us to Himself. Today the Lord has delivered each and every one of us from the bondage of sin if we believe in

Yeshua the Messiah, and walk in the way that God has provided. These scriptures detail God's desire to rescue and deliver us, just as he would carry us on mighty wings to bring us to Himself.

The midrash continues and says "so will He do again, and it will be said Who are these that fly as a cloud" saying that that the Lord will do this again. The midrash continues saying the following:

Number the towers thereof, etc. (Tehillim / Psalms 48:13). How many gardens will there be in Jerusalem? Eleven hundred and eighty four. How many towers will there be in Jerusalem? Fourteen hundred and eighty five. How many mansions will there be in Jerusalem? Fourteen hundred and ninety six. How many fountains? Sixteen hundred and sixty six. And whence will the waters of the fountains come up? From nine hundred aqueducts. Again, Rabbi Nakhman said, The thing that has been, it is that which will be (Ecclesiastes 1:9). Even as the children of Israel in the wilderness, sang a song, and the well sprang up for them, as is said, Then sang Israel this song, Sprint up, O well, sing you unto it (Bamidbar / Numbers 21:17), so they will sing a song in the time to come, and the waters will spring up for them, as is said As well the singers as the players on instruments will be there, all my springs are in you (Tehillim / Psalms 87:7). (Midrash Tehillim 48, Part 4)

The rabbis proceed with a discussion on towers, gardens, and fountains in Jerusalem. They say 1148 gardens, 1485 towers, 496 mansions, and 666 fountains. It is difficult to say what the reason is for this particular numbering, but the point is Jerusalem has many gardens, towers, mansions, and fountains and the Lord is to be praised for the beauty of Jerusalem which is connected to the Lord's carrying on eagles' wings which is synonymous to His ability to forgive our sins and His providing us the opportunity to draw near to Him, to participate in the service of the Lord. These things draw us again back to the Land, the Place, and the People. Midrash Tehillim 48, Part 4 concludes saying, "How many pools will there be in Jerusalem? Thirteen hundred and sixty nine. And how many gates will there be? One hundred and forty four, twelve from each tribe. Hence, it is said, Walk about Zion, and go round about her; Number the towers thereof, etc."

Midrash Tehillim 48, Part 5 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying "Mark well her khel, mark you her troops (khelot) which will have come to her out of exile. Or, mark you her dance (khol) which she will dance. Or, mark you her song (khil), as in the verse See, and behold, if the daughters of Shiloh come out to sing (khul) the songs' (Judges 21:21)." The homiletic introduction to the Midrash states "Passegu her palaces, build high the palaces of her inhabitants." All of Midrash Tehillim 48, Part 5 says the following:

<p>מדרש תהלים פרק מה סימן ה</p> <p>ה שיתו לבכם לחילה. לחילותיה דסלקון לה מן גלותא. דבר אחר לאותה חולה שהיא עתידה להיות חולה. דבר אחר לחילה. לשיר שלה, כמה דאת אמר לחול במחולות (שופטים כא כא). פסגו ארמנותיה. גבהו בירניותיהם, כמה דאת אמר (על) [עלה] ראש הפסגה (דברים ג כז), ומתרגמינן רמותא. כי זה אלהים אלהינו. מהו כי זה, ר' ברכיה ור' חלבו ור' אלעזר בשם ר' יוסי בר חנינא אמר עתיד הקב"ה לעשות מחול לצדיקים לעתיד לבא, והקב"ה חל עמהם, והן מראין אותו באצבע, שנאמר הנה אלהינו זה (ישעיה כה ט), לכך נאמר כי זה אלהים אלהינו. והוא ינהגנו על מות. בשני עולמות, והכל שומעין בכנויו של הקב"ה שעושה עם ישראל, שנאמר שמעו (נא) זאת כל העמים (תהלים מט ב).</p>	<p>Midrash Tehillim 48, Part 5</p> <p>5. Mark well her khel, mark you her troops (khelot) which will have come to her out of exile. Or, mark you her dance (khol) which she will dance. Or, mark you her song (khil), as in the verse See, and behold, if the daughters of Shiloh come out to sing (khul) the songs' (Judges 21:21). Passegu her palaces, build high the palaces of her inhabitants. Here passegu comes from the same stem as Pisgah in the verse Get up into the top of Pisgah (Devarim / Deuteronomy 3:27), a word rendered height in the Aramaic Targum. What is meant by the words For this God is our God (Tehillim / Psalms 48:15)? Rabbi Berechiah, Rabb Khelbo, and Rabbi Eleazar said in the name of Rabbi Jose son of Khani-na, in the time to come the Holy One blessed be He, will prepare a dance for the righteous, and the Holy One Himself, blessed be He, will dance with them, and the righteous will point Him out with their fingers, for it will be said in that day, Lo, this is our God (Isaiah 25:9). Hence, it is said, This is our God. He will guide us through the worlds (Tehillim / Psalms 48:15), that is to say, through two worlds. And all the peoples will hear of the miracles which the Holy One blessed be He, works for Israel as is said Hear this, all you peoples; give ear, all you inhabitants of the earth (Tehillim / Psalms 49:2).</p>
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Here the word “*Pesegu*” (פסגו) is said to be derived from the word “*pisgah*” (פסגה) meaning “*summit, peak, top.*” This reminds us of the place where the Lord told Moshe to go up upon Pisgah in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 3:27*.

Devarim / Deuteronomy 3:25-27

3:25 *‘Let me, I pray, cross over and see the fair land that is beyond the Jordan, that good hill country and Lebanon.’* 3:26 *‘But the Lord was angry with me on your account, and would not listen to me; and the Lord said to me, ‘Enough! Speak to Me no more of this matter. 3:27 ‘Go up to the top of Pisgah and lift up your eyes to the west and north and south and east, and see it with your eyes, for you shall not cross over this Jordan. (NASB)*

The idea is that the palaces of the people will be built upon the high places. This alludes back to the Lord who has established His city on high (the beautiful elevation, mount Zion, the Temple mount, 48:2) and who has made Himself to be known as a stronghold (48:3) according to *Tehillim / Psalms 48*.

Tehillim / Psalms 48:1-8

48:1 *Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised, In the city of our God, His holy mountain.* 48:2 *Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, Is Mount Zion in the far north, The city of the great King.* 48:3 *God, in her palaces, Has made Himself known as a stronghold.* 48:4 *For, lo, the kings assembled themselves, They passed by together.* 48:5 *They saw it, then they were amazed; They were terrified, they fled in alarm.* 48:6 *Panic seized them there, Anguish, as of a woman in childbirth.* 48:7 *With the east wind You break the ships of Tarshish.* 48:8 *As we have heard, so have we seen In the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God; God will establish her forever. Selah. (NASB)*

The Lord establishes His city for ever. The eternality of “*the Place*” the Lord establishes for His name, consistently draws us back to understanding who the Lord God is, what He has done, and what He is going to do in the future. In the midrash, the rabbis ask “*What is meant by the words For this God is our God (Tehillim / Psalms 48:15)?*” The response is made with a reference to the world to come and the rejoicing and dancing that will take place because of the Lord and His Salvation.

in the time to come the Holy One blessed be He, will prepare a dance for the righteous, and the Holy One Himself, blessed be He, will dance with them, and the righteous will point Him out with their fingers, for it will be said in that day, Lo, this is our God (Isaiah 25:9). Hence, it is said, This is our God. He will guide us through the worlds (Tehillim / Psalms 48:15), that is to say, through two worlds. (Midrash Tehillim 48, Part 5)

Note how the rabbis speak again of the “*two worlds.*” In *Tehillim / Psalms 46, Part 2* we discussed how the rabbinic commentary uses the Hebrew word תּוֹמְלוֹעַ which is read to mean “*worlds*” (תּוֹמְלוֹעַ) and is used as a reference to the sons of Korach seeing “*two worlds*” (תּוֹמְלוֹעַ יָנַשׁ). This was taken to mean the sons of Korach saw (i) the world of the righteous, and (ii) the world of the wicked. *Tehillim / Psalms 1* speaks of two ways of life that is open to us, one is the way of God, the other is the way of the world in its attitudes, actions, and sin (e.g. *walk not in the way of the wicked according to Tehillim / Psalms 1*). We know that the wicked are not in like the righteous. Yeshua made similar parallels in his parable of the narrow gate in *Matthew 7:13-24*. The “*narrow gate*” leads to salvation (one world), and the “*wide gate*” that leads to destruction (second world). How do the rabbis understand *Tehillim / Psalms 48* on the Lord guiding us through these two worlds? (Note this is not a reference to the world to come.) Yeshua said to enter into the narrow gate which leads to life. He is obviously speaking of two roads, to ways of life, to worlds, one that is in righteousness and the other in wickedness. He also parallels the narrow and broad gates to good and bad fruit. The good fruit are produced from those who are righteous, and the bad from those who are wicked.

Yeshua is speaking to his Jewish listeners about these things which is definitely a Torah based hermeneutic in his day, and may possibly be drawing upon the rabbinic understanding of two worlds and making a parable to illustrate God's ways (the Torah) and faith in him as being the narrow gate. Other parallels of two worlds might be drawn to fasting, one fasts in order to take away the power of the flesh, to make the flesh weak so the Spirit can have more of an influence, etc (*two words: the flesh and the spirit*). Here the rabbis may be suggesting that the Lord guides and directs us through the two worlds, empowering us by the Spirit to walk in His ways, to live in righteousness rather than wickedness. In the world to come we will greatly rejoice in the work the Lord has done in our lives. Midrash Tehillim 48, Part 5 concludes saying, "And all the peoples will hear of the miracles which the Holy One blessed be He, works for Israel as is said Hear this, all you peoples; give ear, all you inhabitants of the earth (Tehillim / Psalms 49:2)." In the world to come we will hear how the Lord has worked wondrously in each of our lives, to save, redeem, to lift up, to encourage, and walking along side of us during the difficult times of our lives. This will bring great joy in celebration. Praise the Lord! Let's Pray!

Heavenly Father,

We thank You for always drawing us back to the Land, the Place, and the People, for the purpose of our having the knowledge of what You have done, what You are doing, and what You will do in the future. 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!

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

Notes