

ספר תהילים נט | Tehillim / Psalms 59

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The household Idol of the Heart

This week's study is from *Tehillim / Psalms 59:1-17*, the psalm opens saying, **א לְמִנְצַחַת אֶל-תַּשְׁחַת לְדָוִד** *For the choir director; set to Al-tashheth. A Mikhtam of David, when Saul sent men and they watched the house in order to kill him. (NASB)* David seeks the Lord saying, **ב הֲצִילֵנִי מֵאֵיבִי | אֱלֹהֵי מִמְתְּקוֹמִי תִשְׁגְּבֵנִי: ג הֲצִילֵנִי מִפְּעֻלֵי אֹן וּמֵאֲנָשֵׁי דְמַיִם הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי:** *59:1 Deliver me from my enemies, O my God; Set me securely on high away from those who rise up against me. 59:2 Deliver me from those who do iniquity And save me from men of bloodshed. (NASB)* Those who work iniquity, set traps for the life of the righteous and attack for no reason (59:3). David claims he is not guilty saying, **ה בְּלִי-עֵוֹן, יְרוּצוּן וַיִּכְוֶנְנוּ עוֹרָה לְקִרְאָתִי וַרְאָה: ו וְאַתָּה יְהוָה-אֱלֹהִים | צָבָאוֹת אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הִקִּיצָה לְפָקֹד כָּל-הַגּוֹיִם אֶל-תַּחֲנוּן סְלָה:** *59:4 For no guilt of mine, they run and set themselves against me. Arouse Yourself to help me, and see! 59:5 You, O Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel, Awake to punish all the nations; Do not be gracious to any who are treacherous in iniquity. Selah. (NASB)* He describes the wicked as those who howl as dogs (59:6) and who use there words like swords in their lips (59:7). The Lord laughs at the nations (59:8), and David sees the Lord as his strength (59:9), in His mercy He lets him look upon his enemies with triumph (59:10), and he asks the Lord to bring down the nations in a way so it is not forgotten (59:11). David says, **יג חֲטָאֹת פִּימוּ דְבַר-שִׁפְתֵימֹו וַיִּלְכְּדוּ בְּגֵאוֹנָם וּמֵאֲלָה וּמִפִּכְחֵשׁ יִסְפְּרוּ: יד כָּל־הַבְּחָמָה כָּל־הַיְּאִימוּ** *59:12 On account of the sin of their mouth and the words of their lips, Let them even be caught in their pride, And on account of curses and lies which they utter. 59:13 Destroy them in wrath, destroy them that they may be no more; That men may know that God rules in Jacob To the ends of the earth. Selah. (NASB)* The mouth, the words that proceed from our lips can become sin before God. How do words produce sin? David concludes his psalm saying, **יז וַאֲנִי | אֲשִׁיר עֲזָה וְאֶרְנֶן לְבַקֵּר, 59:16 בּוֹסֵם בְּיוֹם צָר-לִי: יח עֲזִי אֱלֹהֵי אֲזִמְרָה כִּי-אֱלֹהִים מִשְׁגָּבִי אֱלֹהֵי חֲסָדִי:** *59:16 But as for me, I shall sing of Your strength; Yes, I shall joyfully sing of Your lovingkindness in the morning, For You have been my stronghold And a refuge in the day of my distress. 59:17 O my strength, I will sing praises to You; For God is my stronghold, the God who shows me lovingkindness. (NASB)* David sees the Lord as his strength and his stronghold because the Lord is merciful.

עברית	Hebrew	ארמי	Aramaic	ελληνικός	Greek
ספר תהלים פרק נט	ספר טוביה פרק נט			ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 59	
א לְמִנְצַחַת אֶל-תַּשְׁחַת לְדָוִד מִכְתָּם בְּשִׁלַּח שְׂאוּל וַיִּשְׁמְרוּ אֶת-הַבַּיִת לְהַמִּיתוֹ: ב הֲצִילֵנִי מֵאֵיבִי אֱלֹהֵי מִמְתְּקוֹמִי תִשְׁגְּבֵנִי: ג הֲצִילֵנִי מִפְּעֻלֵי-עֲלֵי אֹן וּמֵאֲנָשֵׁי דְמַיִם הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי: ד כִּי הִנֵּה אֲרָבוּ לְנַפְשִׁי יְגוּרוּ עָלַי עֲזִים לֹא-פִשְׁעֵי וְלֹא-חֲטָאֹתַי יְהוָה: ה בְּ-לִי-עֵוֹן וַיִּכְוֶנְנוּ עוֹרָה לְקִרְאָתִי וַרְאָה:	א לשבחה על עקתא בזמן די אמר דוד לא תחבל על יד דוד מכיך ושלים כד שדר שאול ונטרו ית ביתא מטול ב פצי יתי מבעלי דבבי אלהי מן קיימין עלי תשזבינני: ג פצי יתי מעבדי שקר ומן גוברין קטולין פרוק יתי: ד ארום הא כמנו לנפשי מתכנשין עלי עשינין לא על מטול סורחני ולא על מטול חובי יהוה:			59:1 εις το τέλος μη διαφθείρης τῷ Δαυιδ εις στηλογραφίαν ὅποτε ἀπέστειλεν Σαουλ καὶ ἐφύλαξεν τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ τοῦ θανατῶσαι αὐτόν ἐξέλοῦ με ἐκ τῶν ἐχθρῶν μου ὁ θεὸς καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἐπανιστανομένων ἐπ’ ἐμὲ λύτρωσαι με 59:2 ῥῦσαί με ἐκ τῶν ἐργαζομένων τὴν ἀνομίαν καὶ ἐξ ἀνδρῶν αἱμάτων σῶσόν με 59:3 ὅτι ἰδοὺ ἐθήρευσαν τὴν ψυχὴν μου ἐπέθεντο ἐπ’ ἐμὲ κραταιοὶ οὔτε ἡ ἀνομία μου οὔτε ἡ ἁμαρτία μου κύριε	

<p>ו וְאֶתְהָ יְהוָה-אֱלֹהִים צָבָאוֹת אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הִקְיִצָּה לִפְקֹד כָּל-הַגּוֹיִם אֶל- תְּחִן כָּל-בְּגֵדֵי אָוֶן סֵלָה: ז וְיָשׁוּבוּ לְעָרָב יִהְיוּ כַּכֶּלֶב וַיִּסּוּכְבוּ עִיר: ח הִנֵּה יִבְעִיעוּן בְּפִיהֶם תְּרֻבוֹת בְּשִׁפְ- תוֹתֵיהֶם פִּי מִי שָׁמַע: ט וְאֶתְהָ יְהוָה תִּשְׁחַק-לָמוּ תִלְעַג לְכָל-גּוֹיִם: י עֲזֹז אֱלֹהֵי אֲשַׁמְרָהּ כִּי אֱלֹהִים מִשְׁגָּבִי: יא אֱלֹהֵי חֶסֶד [חֶסֶדִי] יִקְדָּמֵנִי אֱלֹהִים יִרְאֵנִי בְּשֹׁרְרִי: יב אֶל-תִּהְרָגֶם פֶּן- יִשְׁכַּחוּ עַמִּי הַנִּיעַמּוּ בְּחִילָהּ וְהוֹרִידֵמוּ מִגִּבּוֹ אֲדָנָי: יג חֲטֹאתַ פִּימוּ דְבַר-שִׁפְ- פְּתִימוֹ וַיִּלְכְּדוּ בְּגֹאוֹנָם וּמֵאֲלֵה וּמִפְּחָשׁ יִסְפְּרוּ: יד כִּלְהַ כְּחֵמָה כִּלְהַ וְאֵינָמוּ וַיִּדְעוּ כִּי-אֱלֹהִים מִשָּׁל בְּיַעֲקֹב לְאַפְסִי הָאָרֶץ סֵלָה: טו וַיָּשׁוּבוּ לְעָרָב יִהְיוּ כַּכֶּלֶב וַיִּסּוּכְבוּ עִיר: טז הִמָּה יִנּוּעוּן [יִנְיַעוּן] לְאָכַל אִם-לֹא יִשְׁבְּעוּ וַיִּלְיָנוּ: יז וְאֲנִי אֲשִׁיר עֲזָה וְאֲרִיז לְבַקֵּר חֶסֶדְךָ כִּי-הִיִּיתָ מִשְׁגָּב לִי וּמְנוֹס בְּיָוֶם צַר-לִי: יח עֲזֵי אֱלֹהֵי אֲזַמְרָה כִּי- אֱלֹהִים מִשְׁגָּבִי אֱלֹהֵי חֶסֶדִי:</p>	<p>ה עד לא עווין רהטין ומסדרין קרבא אתגבר לקדמותי וחמי: ו ואנת יהוה אלהים צבאות אלהא דישראל אית- ער למסער על כל עממיא לא תחוס כל שליטי שקר לעלמין: ז יתובון לרמשא יתרגשון היך ככלב ויחזרון קרתא: ח הא יבועון בפומהון מי- ליא דשנינן היך סייפא בספוותיהון אמרין נתגבר ארום מן הוא די שמע ויתפרע: ט ואנת יהוה תגחיד להון תתלעב לכל עממיא: י עושני לותך אנטור ארום אלהא שזבותי: יא אלהא טובי יקדמינני אלהא יחמינני נקמתא במעיקי: יב לא תקטלינון מן יד דילמא יתנשון עמי טלטל יתהון מן בתיהון בתוקפך ותמסכן יתהון מן ממוניהון תריסנא יהוה: יג מטול חובת פומהון וממלל סיפוותהון יתא- חדן בגיותנתהון ארום מן מומתא ומן שקרא ישתעיין: יד שיצי יתהון בכלו שיצי יתהון עד די ליתינון וינד- עון ארום אלהא שליט ביעקב לסייפי ארעא לעלמין: טו ויתובון לרמשא יתרגשון היך ככלב ויחזרון קרתא: טז הינון אינון יטלטלון למיבז ביזתא למיכל ולא יניחון עד די יסבעון ויבי- תון: יז ואנא אשבח עושנך ואבוע לעידן צפרא טובך ארום הויתא מש- יב לי ורוחצני ביומא דעייק לי: יח עושני לוותך אשבח ארום אלהא שז- בותי אלהא טובי:</p>	<p>59:4 άνευ άνομίας έδραμον και κατεύθυναν έξεγέρθητι εις συνάντησίν μου και ιδέ 59:5 και σύ κύριε ό θεός τών δυνάμεων ό θεός Ισραηλ πρόσχες του έπισκέψασθαι πάντα τά έθνη μη οικτιρήσης πάντας τους έργαζομένους την άνομιάν διάψαλμα 59:6 έπιστρέψουσιν εις έσπέραν και λιμώξουσιν ώς κύων και κυκλώσουσιν πόλιν 59:7 ιδου άποφθέγγονται έν τῷ στόματι αυτών και ρομφαία έν τοις χειλέσιν αυτών ότι τίς ήκουσεν 59:8 και σύ κύριε έγγελάση αυτους έξουδενώσεις πάντα τά έθνη 59:9 τó κράτος μου προς σε φυλάξω ότι ό θεός άντιλήμπτωρ μου εί 59:10 ό θεός μου τó έλεος αυτου προφθάσει με ό θεός δείξει μοι έν τοις έχθροις μου 59:11 μη άποκτεινης αυτους μήποτε έπιλάθωνται του λαου μου διασκόρπισον αυτους έν τη δυνάμει σου και κατάγαγε αυτους ό υπερασπιστής μου κύριε 59:12 άμαρτίαν στόματος αυτών λόγον χειλέων αυτών και συλλημφήτωσαν έν τη υπερηφανία αυτών και έξ άρās και ψεύδους διαγγελήσονται συντέλειαι 59:13 έν όργη συντελείας και ου μη υπάρξωσιν και γνώσονται ότι ό θεός δεσπόζει του Ιακωβ τών περάτων της γης διάψαλμα 59:14 έπιστρέψουσιν εις έσπέραν και λιμώξουσιν ώς κύων και κυκλώσουσιν πόλιν 59:15 αυτοι διασκορπισθήσονται του φαγειν άν δє μη χορτασθῶσιν και γογγύσουσιν 59:16 έγώ δε άσομαι τη δυνάμει σου και άγαλλιάσομαι τó πρωι τó έλεός σου ότι έγενήθης άντιλήμπτωρ μου και καταφυγη έν ήμέρα θλίψεώς μου 59:17 βοηθός μου σοι ψαλω ότι ό θεός άντιλήμπτωρ μου εί ό θεός μου τó έλεός μου</p>
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Tehillim / Psalms 59	Toviyah / Psalms Chapter 59	Psalmoi / Psalms 59
<p>For the choir director; set to Al-tashheth. A Mikhtam of David, when Saul sent men and they watched the house in order to kill him. 59:1 Deliver me from my enemies, O my God; Set me securely on high away from those who rise up against me. 59:2 Deliver me from those who do iniquity And save me from men of bloodshed. 59:3 For behold, they have set an ambush for my life; Fierce men launch an attack against me, Not for my transgression nor for my sin, O Lord, 59:4 For no guilt of mine, they run and set themselves against me. Arouse Yourself to help me, and see! 59:5 You, O Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel, Awake to punish all the nations; Do not be gracious to any who are treacherous in iniquity. Selah. 59:6 They return at evening, they howl like a dog, And go around the city. 59:7 Behold, they belch forth with their mouth; Swords are in their lips, For, they say, ‘Who hears?’ 59:8 But You, O Lord, laugh at them; You scoff at all the nations. 59:9 Because of his strength I will watch for You, For God is my stronghold. 59:10 My God in His lovingkindness will meet me; God will let me look triumphantly upon my foes. 59:11 Do not slay them, or my people will forget; Scatter them by Your power, and bring them down, O Lord, our shield. 59:12 On account of the sin of their mouth and the words of their lips, Let them even be caught in their pride, And on account of curses and lies which they utter. 59:13 Destroy them in wrath, destroy them that they may be no more; That men may know that God rules in Jacob To the ends of the earth. Selah. 59:14 They return at evening, they howl like a dog, And go around the city. 59:15 They wander about for food And growl if they are not satisfied. 59:16 But as for me, I shall sing of Your strength; Yes, I shall joyfully sing of Your lovingkindness in the morning, For You have been my stronghold And a refuge in the day of my distress. 59:17 O my strength, I will sing praises to You; For God is my stronghold, the God who shows me lovingkindness. (NASB)</p>	<p>59:1 For praise; concerning the distress when David said, “Do no harm”; composed by David, humble and innocent; when Saul sent and they guarded the house in order to kill him. 59:2 Deliver me from my enemies, O God; from those who rise against me, save me. 59:3 Deliver me from those who practice deceit, and from murderous men redeem me. 59:4 For behold, they have lain in wait for my soul, the strong gathering against me; not on account of my iniquity, and not on account of my sin, O Lord. 59:5 Before [there are] iniquities, they run and prepare battle; be strong towards me, and see! 59:6 But you, O Lord God Sabaoth, God of Israel, awake to punish all the Gentiles; do not pity any of the deceitful rulers forever. 59:7 They will return at evening, they will raise a tumult like a dog, and they will encircle the city. 59:8 Behold, they will spew forth with their mouth words sharp as swords; with their lips they say, “Let us boast, for who is the one who will hear and punish?” 59:9 But you, O Lord, will laugh at them; you will mock all the Gentiles. 59:10 O my strength, for you I will keep watch, for God is my deliverance. 59:11 God will precede me with my favor, God will show me vengeance on my oppressors. 59:12 Do not kill them immediately, lest my people forget; exile them from their houses by your might, and impoverish them from their wealth, our shield, O Lord. 59:13 Because of the sin of their mouth, and the speech of their lips, let them be caught in their arrogance, for they will speak with oaths and lies. 59:14 Destroy them in anger, destroy them until they are no more, that they may know that God rules in Jacob to the ends of the earth forever. 59:15 And they will return at evening, they will raise a tumult like a dog, and they will encircle the city. 59:16 They will wander about to take spoil to eat, and they will not rest until they are full and take lodging. 59:17 But I will praise your strength, and I rejoice in your goodness in the morning, for you have been a deliverer to me, and my trust in the day I am distressed. 59:18 O my strength, I will give you praise, for God is my deliverance, God is my goodness. (EMC)</p>	<p>For the end. Destroy not: by David for a memorial, when Saul sent, and watched his house to kill him. 59:1 Deliver me from mine enemies, O God; and ransom me from those that rise up against me. 59:2 Deliver me from the workers of iniquity, and save me from bloody men. 59:3 For, behold, they have hunted after my soul; violent men have set upon me: neither is it my iniquity, nor my sin, O Lord. 59:4 Without iniquity I ran and directed my course aright: awake to help me, and behold. 59:5 And thou, Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel, draw nigh to visit all the heathen; pity not any that work iniquity. Pause. 59:6 They shall return at evening, and hunger like a dog, and go round about the city. 59:7 Behold, they shall utter a voice with their mouth, and a sword is in their lips; for who, say they, has heard? 59:8 But thou, Lord, wilt laugh them to scorn; thou wilt utterly set at nought all the heathen. 59:9 will keep my strength, looking to thee; for thou, O God, art my helper. 59:10 As for my God, his mercy shall go before me: my God will shew me vengeance on mine enemies. 59:11 Slay them not, lest they forget thy law; scatter them by thy power; and bring them down, O Lord, my defender. 59:12 For the sin of their mouth, and the word of their lips, let them be even taken in their pride. 59:13 And for their cursing and falsehood shall utter destruction be denounced: they shall fall by the wrath of utter destruction, and shall not be; so shall they know that the God of Jacob is Lord of the ends of the earth. Pause. 59:14 They shall return at evening, and be hungry as a dog, and go round about the city. 59:15 They shall be scattered hither and thither for meat; and if they be not satisfied, they shall even murmur. 59:16 But I will sing to thy strength, and in the morning will I exult in thy mercy; for thou hast been my supporter, and my refuge in the day of mine affliction. 59:17 Thou art my helper; to thee, my God, will I sing; thou art my supporter, O my God, and my mercy. (LXX)</p>

This week’s study is from *Tehillim / Psalms 59:1-17*, the psalm opens saying, אֲלֹמְנִצָּחַ אֶל-תְּשֻׁחַת לְדָוִד For the choir director; set to Al-tashheth. A Mikhtam of David, when Saul sent men and they watched the house in order to kill him. (NASB) Again we find the Hebrew text transliterated into English, “Al-tashheth” (אֶל-תְּשֻׁחַת) similar to *Tehillim / Psalms 57 and 58*. The word “Al” (אֶל) is an adverb meaning “don’t, it is forbidden to; not, no,” and the word “tashheth” (תְּשֻׁחַת) is from the root word “Shakhat” (שָׁחַת) meaning “destruction.” The wisdom of David (a Mikhtam) is related to

“not causing destruction” even in the midst of Saul seeking his life as the introductory sentence states that Saul sent men and they watched the house in order to kill him. This is a reminder of *1 Samuel 19:11* which states, *19:11 Then Saul sent messengers to David’s house to watch him, in order to put him to death in the morning. But Michal, David’s wife, told him, saying, “If you do not save your life tonight, tomorrow you will be put to death.”* (NASB) Based upon the story in *1 Samuel 19*, Michal saved David.

1 Samuel 19:12-17

19:12 So Michal let David down through a window, and he went out and fled and escaped. 19:13 Michal took the household idol and laid it on the bed, and put a quilt of goats’ hair at its head, and covered it with clothes. 19:14 When Saul sent messengers to take David, she said, “He is sick.” 19:15 Then Saul sent messengers to see David, saying, “Bring him up to me on his bed, that I may put him to death.” 19:16 When the messengers entered, behold, the household idol was on the bed with the quilt of goats’ hair at its head. 19:17 So Saul said to Michal, “Why have you deceived me like this and let my enemy go, so that he has escaped?” And Michal said to Saul, “He said to me, ‘Let me go! Why should I put you to death?’” (NASB)

Michal helped David escape out a window while she deceived Saul’s messengers about David being sick. It is interesting the text says that Michal took the household idol and laid it on the bed using goats’ hair for the head and covered the idol in cloths. According to the Scripture, David allowed an idol in his house. What is going on here? David, a man after God’s own heart, allowing an idol in his home? The MT says, יג וַתִּקַּח מִיכָל אֶת-הַתְּרָפִים וַתִּשֶׂם אֶל-הַמִּטָּה וְאֵת כְּבִיר הָעֵצִים שָׂמָה מֵרָאשָׁיתוֹ וַתִּכְסֶה בְּבָגָד: *19:13 Michal took the household idol and laid it on the bed, and put a quilt of goats’ hair at its head, and covered it with clothes.* (NASB)

The word teraphim (הַתְּרָפִים) occurs 16 times in the Tanach. In each occurrence it is used in reference to an idol. The household teraphim reminds us of the penates or household images of the Roman culture. These penates or household images, according to the Torah, are the idols that were brought originally from their Chaldean home (*Bereshit / Genesis 31:19*) as is in the case of Leah, Jacobs second wife. The Torah gives strict prohibitions against idolatry, however, idols became a part of the worship of God in the time of the Judges (see *Judges 17:5 and 18:14*). It is apparent, according to the Scriptures, that these idols were present even down to the later days of the Kings (see *2 Kings 23:24*). The household idol (image) was used as a kind of household charm for good luck rather than for worship and were used in divination (*Zechariah 10:2 and Ezekiel 21:19-22*). According to Zechariah and Ezekiel, these things are an abomination before God and are the practice of wicked men. It is surprising to find the teraphim in David’s house. It may be that Michal, like Rachel, kept them in secret. The difficulty with that assumption is this teraphim (household idol) appears to be in human form and it is life-sized. Something so big could not be kept in secret, David had to have known of the teraphim in his house.

The worship of the teraphim is described as iniquity in *1 Samuel 15:23* כג כִּי חַטָּאת-קָסָם מְרִי וְאָוֶן 15:23 *“For rebellion is as the sin of divination, And insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He has also rejected you from being king.”* (NASB) It is important to note in *1 Samuel 15:23* we find the same word “teraphim,” and so if we take a Torah example from Rachel and Jacob, Rachel stole the idol from her father, the issue here with David and his house may seem to be of the same sort where the penates or household gods of the Heathens, which were privately kept by Michal. This may be one of the reasons why Saul was rejected as God’s chosen one and the mashiakh (anointing) was passed on to David to later become King of Israel. According to the rabbinic literature, Aben Ezra supposes they were images made in the form of men as an object to receive the heavenly influences, and which being consulted, foretold things to come. Rabbi Isaiah states that Michal chose and placed these in the bed, that her father might conclude, when he should hear of them, that David had found them; and by thus means know that his intention was to kill him, and therefore fled; but to consult such images was very far from David, and that without having consulted the

household idol, he knew Saul’s intention. Other interpretations on the teraphim is that this was not some form of idolatry in David’s home, rather, this was simply the form of a man, an image made in the form and features of a man. This kind of statue was used to remember loved one’s such as a statue of one’s husband, that they might have them continually before them, because of the great love they had to them. This kind of teraphim that Michal had in David’s house would have been approved of being in the likeness of the human face of David, this might be how Michal thought to deceive the messengers from Saul that David was sick. This might also explain how David would have accepted or allowed the teraphim to remain in his home. It is difficult to determine the nature and the purpose of the idol that was kept in David’s house, we can merely speculate on what was occurring in the day and the purpose for the teraphim in David’s home. *Tehillim / Psalm 59* is devoted to the time when Saul sent me to watch for him at David’s house to put him to death.

David continues in his Psalm, seeking the Lord in prayer and in song saying, **ב הַצִּילֵנִי מֵאֵיבֵי | אֱלֹהֵי** *59:1 Deliver me from my enemies, O my God; Set me securely on high away from those who rise up against me. 59:2 Deliver me from those who do iniquity And save me from men of bloodshed. (NASB)* Why do the wicked prosper and why do they seem to have power? Another question, why have the godly been silenced in their presence or why have the godly not been allowed to speak up? Many men throughout the Tanach have asked those questions, David, Jeremiah, the Psalmist Asaph (*Tehillim / Psalms 73*) and Habakkuk all felt this way. David asks in his psalm for the Lord to deliver him from those who raise up against him. Yeshua said in *John 18:36*, “*Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.*” The Apostle Paul said in *Ephesians 6:12*, “*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*” The sins of the wicked are very great, for example from *Ezekiel 28*, the King of Tyre exalts himself as God.

Ezekiel 28:1-10

28:1 The word of the Lord came again to me, saying, 28:2 ‘Son of man, say to the leader of Tyre, ‘Thus says the Lord God, ‘Because your heart is lifted up And you have said, ‘I am a god, I sit in the seat of gods In the heart of the seas’; Yet you are a man and not God, Although you make your heart like the heart of God 28:3 Behold, you are wiser than Daniel; There is no secret that is a match for you. 28:4 ‘By your wisdom and understanding You have acquired riches for yourself And have acquired gold and silver for your treasuries. 28:5 ‘By your great wisdom, by your trade You have increased your riches And your heart is lifted up because of your riches 28:6 Therefore thus says the Lord God, ‘Because you have made your heart Like the heart of God, 28:7 Therefore, behold, I will bring strangers upon you, The most ruthless of the nations. And they will draw their swords Against the beauty of your wisdom And defile your splendor. 28:8 ‘They will bring you down to the pit, And you will die the death of those who are slain In the heart of the seas. 28:9 ‘Will you still say, ‘I am a god,’ In the presence of your slayer, Though you are a man and not God, In the hands of those who wound you? 28:10 ‘You will die the death of the uncircumcised By the hand of strangers, For I have spoken!’ declares the Lord God!’” (NASB)

א וַיְהִי דְבַר-יְהוָה אֵלַי לֵאמֹר: ב בֶּן-אָדָם אָמַר לְגִיד צַר כֹּה-אָמַר | אֲדַנִּי יְהוָה יַעַן גָּבַהּ לְבָבְךָ וַתֹּאמֶר
אֵל אֲנִי מוֹשֵׁב אֱלֹהִים יִשְׁבְּתִי בְּלֵב יַמִּים וְאַתָּה אָדָם וְלֹא-אֵל וַתִּתֵּן לְבָבְךָ כְּלֵב אֱלֹהִים: ג הִנֵּה חָכָם
אַתָּה מִדָּנְיָאֵל [מִדָּנְיָאֵל] כָּל-סֻתּוֹם לֹא עֲמָמוֹה: ד בְּחָכְמָתְךָ וּבְתַבּוּנָתְךָ עָשִׂיתָ לָּךְ חֵיל וַתַּעַשׂ זֶהָב וְכֶסֶף
בְּאוֹצְרוֹתֶיךָ: ה בָּרַב חָכְמָתְךָ בְּרַכְלֶתְךָ הִרְבִּיתָ חֵילָה וַיִּגְבַּהּ לְבָבְךָ בְּחֵילָה: ו לָכֵן כֹּה אָמַר אֲדַנִּי
יְהוָה יַעַן תַּתָּה אֶת-לְבָבְךָ כְּלֵב אֱלֹהִים: ז לָכֵן הִנְנִי מְבִיא עָלֶיךָ זָרִים עָרִיצִי גוֹיִם וְהִרְקוּ חֲרָבוֹתָם
עַל-יָפִי חָכְמָתְךָ וַחֲלָלוּ יַפְעָתְךָ: ח לִשְׁחַת יוֹרְדוֹה וּמָתָה מְמוֹתֵי חָלָל בְּלֵב יַמִּים: ט הִאֲמַר תֹּאמֶר
אֱלֹהִים אֲנִי לִפְנֵי הַרְגָה וְאַתָּה אָדָם וְלֹא-אֵל בְּיַד מַחֲלִיקָה: י מוֹתֵי עַרְלִים תָּמוּת בְּיַד-זָרִים כִּי אֲנִי

ב כּוּן-אָדָם אָמַר לְנִגִּיד צַר כֹּה-אָמַר | אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה יַעַן גָּבַהּ לְבָב וּתְאֹמַר אֵל אֲנִי, Note the way the MT is written, וּתְאֹמַר אֵל אֲנִי where the king of Tyre says “*a god I sit/dwell as God,*” and how the king of Tyre makes his heart like the heart of God (וּתְאֹמַר לְבָב אֱלֹהִים). The ultimate result of such a person who will be brought down and die the death of the uncircumcised. What does it mean to die the death of the uncircumcised? (מוֹתֵי עֶרְלִים תָּמוּת בְּיַד-זָרִים כִּי אֲנִי דְבַרְתִּי נְאֻם אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה) The term uncircumcised is used of the prophet to describe the dead who are slain by the sword and whose bodies remain unburied and dishonored. For example in *Ezekiel 39:11-13*, says 39:11 ‘*On that day I will give Gog a burial ground there in Israel, the valley of those who pass by east of the sea, and it will block off those who would pass by. So they will bury Gog there with all his horde, and they will call it the valley of Hamon-gog.* 39:12 ‘*For seven months the house of Israel will be burying them in order to cleanse the land.* 39:13 ‘*Even all the people of the land will bury them; and it will be to their renown on the day that I glorify Myself,*’ declares the Lord God. (NASB) The concept here is that the dead who are slain by the sword are not buried in a proper and honorable manner, their bodies are drug off and cast into a community grave and covered over by dirt. There is no marking, gravestone, or indication the dead are buried under this section of the earth, so in dishonor they are buried. Deprivation of a proper burial did not however prevent one from descending to Sheol and the phrase “*you will be brought down to the pit,*” signifies the lowest part of the earth, dark and unknown, the deepest part of hell, this is the place for the wicked, the place for those who place idols in their hearts making themselves to be a god.

The Apostle John said in *1 John 5:19*, *And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.* (NASB) The prophet Isaiah said, “*Let the wicked change their ways and banish the very thought of doing wrong. Let them turn to the Lord that he may have mercy on them. Yes, turn to our God, for he will forgive generously.*” (Isaiah 55:7) The point is the one who does unrighteousness is to turn from his evil ways, and seek the Lord God for mercy so as not to be destroyed. David says that those who work iniquity, set traps for the life of the righteous and attack for no reason (59:3).

Tehillim / Psalms 59:3

59:3 *For behold, they have set an ambush for my life; Fierce men launch an attack against me, Not for my transgression nor for my sin, O Lord.* (NASB)

ד כִּי הִנֵּה אָרְבוּ לְנַפְשִׁי יְגוּרוּ עָלַי עֲזִים לֹא-פִשְׁעֵי וְלֹא-חַטָּאתַי יְהוָה:

ד ארום הא כמנו לנפשי מתכנשין עלי עשינין לא על מטול סורחני ולא על מטול 59:4 *For behold, they have lain in wait for my soul, the strong gathering against me; not on account of my iniquity, and not on account of my sin, O Lord.* (EMC) The Septuagint states, 59:3 ὅτι ἰδοὺ ἐθήρευσαν τὴν ψυχὴν μου ἐπέθεντο ἐπ’ ἐμὲ κραταιοὶ οὐτε ἢ ἀνομία μου οὐτε ἢ ἁμαρτία μου κύριε 59:3 *For, behold, they have hunted after my soul; violent men have set upon me: neither is it my iniquity, nor my sin, O Lord.* (LXX) The concept here speaks of the idea that the Lord causes the unrighteous to attack due to a man’s iniquity. Do you think the Lord works in this way today? David claims he is not guilty saying, ה בְּלִי-עוֹן יְרוּצוֹן וַיְכַוְּנוּנִי עוֹרָה לְקִרְאָתִי וַרְאֵה: ו וְאִתָּה יְהוָה-אֱלֹהִים | צָבָאוֹת אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הִקְיֹצָה לְפָקֵד כָּל-הַגּוֹיִם 59:4 *For no guilt of mine, they run and set themselves against me. Arouse Yourself to help me, and see!* 59:5 *You, O Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel, Awake to punish all the nations; Do not be gracious to any who are treacherous in iniquity.* Selah. (NASB) The Aramaic Targum states, ו ואנת, 9:6 *But you, O Lord God Sabaoth, God of Israel, awake to punish all the Gentiles; do not pity any of the deceitful rulers forever.* (EMC) The Septuagint states, 59:5 καὶ σύ κύριε ὁ θεὸς τῶν δυνάμεων ὁ θεὸς Ἰσραηλ πρόσχες τοῦ ἐπισκέψασθαι πάντα τὰ ἔθνη μὴ οἰκτιρήσης πάντας τοὺς ἐργαζομένους τὴν ἀνομίαν διάψαλμα 59:5 *And*

thou, Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel, draw nigh to visit all the heathen; pity not any that work iniquity. Pause. (LXX) Notice David requests for the Lord to punish the Nations (Gentiles, Goyim, גוֹיִם). Is this incompatible with our understanding of God according to the Apostolic Writings? The Nations are those who do not know God or His ways and thus sin before Him and commit sins against His people. Let's look at a few verses regarding sin from the Scriptures:

Short Survey of the Scriptures

1. *“O Lord, rebuke me not in Your wrath, And chasten me not in Your burning anger. For Your arrows have sunk deep into me, And Your hand has pressed down on me. There is no soundness in my flesh because of Your indignation; There is no health in my bones because of my sin. For my iniquities are gone over my head; As a heavy burden they weigh too much for me. My wounds grow foul and fester Because of my folly. ... Lord, all my desire is before You; And my sighing is not hidden from You. ... For I am ready to fall [die], And my sorrow [depression] is continually before me. For I confess my iniquity; I am full of anxiety because of my sin.” (Tehillim / Psalm 38:1-5, 9, 17-18)*
2. *“Reproach has broken my heart and I am so sick. And I looked for sympathy, but there was none, And for comforters, but I found none.” (Tehillim / Psalm 69:20)*
3. *“But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, That shines brighter and brighter until the full day. The way of the wicked is like darkness; They do not know over what they stumble.” (Mishley / Proverbs 4:18-19)*
4. *“But he who listens to me shall live securely And will be at ease from the dread of evil.” (Mishley / Proverbs 1:33)*
5. *“The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it?” (Jeremiah 17:9)*
6. *“And you groan at your final end, When your flesh and your body are consumed; And you say, “How I have hated instruction! And my heart spurned reproof! “I have not listened to the voice of my teachers, Nor inclined my ear to my instructors! “I was almost in utter ruin In the midst of the assembly and congregation.” (Mishley / Proverbs 5:11-14)*
7. *“His own iniquities will capture the wicked, And he will be held with the cords of his sin.” (Mishley / Proverbs 5:22)*
8. *“But he who sins against me injures himself; All those who hate me love death.” (Mishley / Proverbs 8:36)*
9. *“In the mouth of the foolish is a rod for his back, But the lips of the wise will protect them.” (Mishley / Proverbs 14:3)*
10. *“There is a way which seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.” (Mishley / Proverbs 14:12)*

11. *“A tranquil heart is life to the body, But envy is rottenness to the bones.” (Mishley / Proverbs 14:30)*
12. *“and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.” (Romans 1:27)*
13. *“Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.” (1 Corinthians 6:18)*
14. *“How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered! How blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit! When I kept silent about my sin, my body wasted away Through my groaning all day long. For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was drained away as with the fever heat of summer.” (Tehillim / Psalm 32:1-4)*
15. *“So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the Lord of the fruit of the ground. Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and for his offering; but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell. Then the Lord said to Cain, “Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? “If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.” (Bereshit / Genesis 4:3-7)*
16. *“Alas, sinful nation, People weighed down with iniquity, Offspring of evildoers, Sons who act corruptly! They have abandoned the Lord, They have despised the Holy One of Israel, They have turned away from Him. Where will you be stricken again, As you continue in your rebellion? The whole head is sick And the whole heart is faint. From the sole of the foot even to the head There is nothing sound in it, Only bruises, welts and raw wounds, Not pressed out or bandaged, Nor softened with oil.” (Isaiah 1:4-6)*
17. *“For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.” (Romans 1:21)*
18. *“For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many grief’s.” (1 Timothy 6:10)*

The point that is brought out in this short survey of the Scriptures is David illustrating the need to seek the Lord for mercy, and forgiveness of sins. These Scriptures reveal that the nations do not seek the Lord, Isaiah says that they are a people weighed down with iniquity and an offspring of children who perform evil, and are corrupt. The wicked love darkness, they hate instruction and reproof, they pursue unrighteousness, and run towards immorality and impurity, their hearts are full of murders and envy. In *Tehillim / Psalms 59*, David describes the wicked as those who howl as dogs (59:6) and who use their words like swords in

their lips (59:7). The Lord laughs at the nations (59:8), and David sees the Lord as his strength (59:9), in His mercy He lets him look upon his enemies with triumph (59:10), and he asks the Lord to bring down the nations in a way so it is not forgotten (59:11). The MT on *Tehillim / Psalms 59:6-11*, the Aramaic Targum and the Septuagint state the following:

Masoretic Text

Tehillim / Psalms 59:6-11

59:6 They return at evening, they howl like a dog, And go around the city. 59:7 Behold, they belch forth with their mouth; Swords are in their lips, For, they say, 'Who hears?' 59:8 But You, O Lord, laugh at them; You scoff at all the nations. 59:9 Because of his strength I will watch for You, For God is my stronghold. 59:10 My God in His lovingkindness will meet me; God will let me look triumphantly upon my foes. 59:11 Do not slay them, or my people will forget; Scatter them by Your power, and bring them down, O Lord, our shield. (NASB)

ז ישובו לערב יהמו כפלב ויסוכבו עיר: ח הנה | יביעון בפיהם חרבות בשפתותיהם פי מי שמע:
ט ואתה יהוה תשחק-למו תלעג לכל-גוים: י עזו אליך אשמרה פי אלהים משגבי: יא אלהי חסדו
[חסדי] יקדמיני אלהים יראני בשררי: יב אל-תהרגם | פן-ישפחו עמי הניעמו בחילך והורידמו
מגגנו אדני:

Aramaic Targum

Toviyah / Psalms Chapter 59:7-12

59:7 They will return at evening, they will raise a tumult like a dog, and they will encircle the city. 59:8 Behold, they will spew forth with their mouth words sharp as swords; with their lips they say, "Let us boast, for who is the one who will hear and punish?" 59:9 But you, O Lord, will laugh at them; you will mock all the Gentiles. 59:10 O my strength, for you I will keep watch, for God is my deliverance. 59:11 God will precede me with my favor, God will show me vengeance on my oppressors. 59:12 Do not kill them immediately, lest my people forget; exile them from their houses by your might, and impoverish them from their wealth, our shield, O Lord. (EMC)

ז יתובון לרמשא יתרגשון היך ככלב ויחזרון קרתא: ח הא יבועון בפומהון מיליא דשנינן היך
סייפא בספוותיהון אמרין נתגבר ארום מן הוא די שמע ויתפרע: ט ואנת יהוה תגחיד להון תתלעב
לכל עממיא: י עושני לותך אנטור ארום אלהא שזבותי: יא אלהא טובי יקדמיני אלהא יחמיני
נקמתא במעיקי: יב לא תקטלינון מן יד דילמא יתנשון עמי טלטל יתהון מן בתיהון בתוקפך ותמ-
סכן יתהון מן ממוניהון תריסנא יהוה:

Septuagint

Psalmoi / Psalms 59:6-11

59:6 They shall return at evening, and hunger like a dog, and go round about the city. 59:7 Behold, they shall utter a voice with their mouth, and a sword is in their lips; for who, say they, has heard? 59:8 But thou, Lord, wilt laugh them to scorn; thou wilt utterly set at nought all the heathen. 59:9 will keep my strength, looking to thee; for thou, O God, art my helper. 59:10 As for my God, his mercy shall go before me: my God will shew me vengeance on mine enemies. 59:11 Slay them not, lest they forget thy law; scatter them by thy power; and bring them down, O Lord, my defender. (LXX)

mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom, but a perverse tongue will be cut out. The lips of the righteous know what is fitting, but the mouth of the wicked only what is perverse.” (Mishley / Proverbs 10:31, 32). Solomon also said, *“The tongue of the righteous is choice silver, but the heart of the wicked is of little value.” (Mishley / Proverbs 10:20)* and *“The lips of the wise spread knowledge; not so the hearts of fools.” (Mishley / Proverbs 15:7).* These Scriptures reveal the characteristics of the unrighteous man, that one’s words are connected to one’s actions. Rightly so David says in *Tehillim / Psalms 59:12* *On account of the sin of their mouth and the words of their lips, Let them even be caught in their pride, And on account of curses and lies which they utter. (NASB)* The actions and the words reveal the intent of the heart revealing the spiritual condition of the ungodly. Does your life exhibit these characteristics? The Apostle Paul speaking to the Colossians said in *Colossians 3:1*:

Colossians 3:1

3:1 Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. (NASB)

Paul says to seek the things which are above. Many times, much error in doctrine and practice is introduced into one’s faith by looking for the truth in the wrong places. People put their trust in leadership and in money, and seek peace and security in these things. We have read thus far in the Psalms how the wicked do these things, and by doing these things they rely upon themselves rather than upon the Lord God in heaven. The problem is one of looking for things in the context of what this world values and when disappointment comes, one’s world is shaken because their basis for security has been destroyed. When a person accepts the Messiah Yeshua, believing in what He has done, and making Him Lord of his life, the Lord produces a change in direction as Paul says, to seek the things above rather than the things below. The concept of repentance involves turning from sins, turning from the things that are involved in this world, and turning towards the things which are from above, turning to God’s ways of truth, justice, righteousness, and holiness. The word used for seek in *Colossians 3:1* (Ἔι οὖν συνηγέρθητε τῷ Χριστῷ, τὰ ἄνω **ζητεῖτε**, οὗ ὁ Χριστός ἐστὶν ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ θεοῦ καθήμενος) is a verb from the Greek stem, ζητέω (zay-teh’-o) meaning “*I to seek in order to find 1a) to seek a thing 1b) to seek [in order to find out] by thinking, meditating, reasoning, to enquire into 1c) to seek after, seek for, aim at, strive after.*” The aorist verb describes an action that is on going in nature. “*Seek*” implied in the English language is present tense, but in the aorist tense it means to “*continually seek.*” Paul is literally saying that those who have come to a faith in the Messiah should be continually seeking after those things of God. Paul continues saying in *Colossians 3:2* *Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. (NASB)* This statement is a continuation of the previous statement and carries a similar message, we are to set our minds on things above and not on the things on the earth. We are not to be concerned with the things that the unrighteous or ungodly are concerned with. Our lives are to be characterized by Holiness, Righteousness, and Truth and lives that continually seek after the Lord and His Messiah Yeshua. It is in the Lord that we are to be continually motivated to find security, peace, and truth by looking to God, His Word, and His Son Yeshua the Messiah rather than the things of this world.

יז וְאָנִי | אֲשִׁיר עֲזָרָה וְאֲרִנָּה לְבִקְרָתְךָ כִּי-הָיִיתָ מִשְׁגָּב לִי וּמְנוּסָה בַיּוֹם, יח עֲזָרְךָ אֱלֹהִים מִשְׁגָּבִי אֱלֹהֵי חֲסָדֶי: 59:16 *But as for me, I shall sing of Your strength; Yes, I shall joyfully sing of Your lovingkindness in the morning, For You have been my stronghold And a refuge in the day of my distress. 59:17 O my strength, I will sing praises to You; For God is my stronghold, the God who shows me lovingkindness. (NASB)* The point is that we are to look to the Lord for strength, hope, help, and life. David sees the Lord as his strength and his stronghold because the Lord is merciful. Paul speaks of seeking the things from above, David exhibits this characteristic in his life by recognizing the protection that God provides. The Lord sets us apart, sanctifies us, and draws us to Himself, and there is no one who can take this action out of God’s hands. The life that David and Paul are describing is one of integrity, a life that recognizes separation from the world in the sense of setting our hearts upon the Lord and not upon the things of this world. We know that when our hearts are pointed in the right direction, the

rest of the body will follow. In a parallel manner, as the wicked set their hearts upon destruction, deceit, and murders, their actions follow through by what they set their hearts upon. The righteous, who set their hearts upon the things above, their actions will follow through by what they have set their hearts upon, which is essentially to reject the things of this world and trust and rely upon the Lord. The Lord is our Stronghold, and He shows us mercy, lovingkindness, and grace (חֶסֶד). By the mercy of God, and by power of His Spirit that dwells within, let us continually seek the Lord for His help and to live in such a way that demonstrates that we truly believe these words from *Tehillim / Psalms 59*. Let's Pray!

Rabbinic Commentary

The Rabbinic Commentary (Midrash) on *Tehillim / Psalms 59* 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 58, Part 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5*.

Outline of Midrash Tehillim / Psalms, Chapter 59, Part 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.

Part 1

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*To the Eternal God who said, Do not destroy David, Michtam; when Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him (Tehillim / Psalms 59:1).*”
- The פתיחתא (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*These words are to be read in the light of what Scripture says elsewhere, Two are better than one, For if they fall, the one who lift up his fellow, and if a man prevail against him that is alone, two will withstand him, a threefold cord is not quickly broken (Ecclesiastes 4:9, 10, 12).*”
- The משל (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis go on to discuss the opening verse and the importance of having a helper, one man, two men, three men who work together for the glory of God.
- The נמשל (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the משל (mashal), the rabbis expand upon the mashal drawing providing parables to illustrate the importance of two or three working together.
- The Concluding phrase says “*Hence, it is written, To the Eternal God, who said, Do not destroy David; Michtam; when Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him (Tehillim / Psalms 59:1).*”

Part 2

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*Another comment. The words Two are better than one are to be read in the light of what Scripture says elsewhere, whoso finds a wife finds a great good (Mishley / Proverbs 18:22).*”
- The פתיחתא (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*Yet in still another place, Scripture is saying, I find more bitter than death the woman (Ecclesiastes 7:26).*”
- The משל (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis go on to discuss the alternative interpretation on the good wife.
- The נמשל (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the משל (mashal), the rabbis expand upon the mashal discussing all the advantages of finding a good wife and its effect upon a man.
- The Concluding phrase says “*And in the Writings, it is said, A prudent wife is from the Lord (Mishley / Proverbs 19:4). From these verses, it follows that the Holy One blessed be He, links His own name to the estate of marriage.*”

Part 3

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*Another comment, Whoso finds a wife finds a great good, whereas a bad wife, is there anything more bitter?*”
- The פתיחתא (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*A story of rabbi Akiva’s son when he married.*”
- The משל (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis go on to discuss the comments on the good wife is the one who helps her husband study the Torah.
- The נמשל (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the משל (mashal), the rabbis expand upon the mashal in the discussion of a good wife who is of great value.
- The Concluding phrase says “*When Saul sent men to watch David’s house. Of this it is written to the Eternal God who said, Do not destroy David; Michtam; when Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him (Tehillim / Psalms 59:1).*”

Part 4

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*When he fled from Saul (Tehillim / Psalms 57:1).*”
- The פתיחתא (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*How did David escape?*”
- The משל (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis go on to discuss the opening sentence and how David escaped.
- The נמשל (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the משל (mashal), the rabbis expand upon the mashal and discuss the way in which David escaped..
- The Concluding phrase says “*Eglah refers to Michal. And why was the name Eglah, heifer, given to Michal? Because like a heifer that will not take the yoke upon her neck, so Michal did not take the yoke from her father, but bucked against it.*”

Part 5

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*You, therefore, O Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel, Arouse Yourself and punish the nations (Tehillim / Psalms 59:6).*”
- The פתיחתא (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*This is said because the Holy One blessed be He, makes Himself out to be asleep in this world.*”
- The משל (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis go on to discuss the opening verse to question why it appears the Lord remains silent in this world.
- The נמשל (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the משל (mashal), the rabbis expand upon the mashal by explaining that justice and righteousness delay the Lord’s hand in deliverance..
- The Concluding phrase says “*In that hour, Show no mercy to any iniquitous traitors, ever (Tehillim / Psalms 59:6).*”

Midrash Tehillim 59, Part 1 opens with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*To the Eternal God who said, Do not destroy David, Michtam; when Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him (Tehillim / Psalms 59:1).*” The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*These words are to be read in the light of what Scripture says elsewhere, Two are better than one, For if they fall, the one who lift up his fellow, and if a man prevail against him that is alone, two will withstand him, a threefold cord is not quickly broken (Ecclesiastes 4:9, 10, 12).*” The rabbis relate the introductory sentence to the Psalm, verse 1 in the MT, to

what Scripture says elsewhere regarding two are better than one, two men can help each other out by lifting the other when he falls, and in a battle, each man has the other's back to protect. The rabbis quote from King Solomon in *Ecclesiastes 4:9-12*.

Ecclesiastes 4:7-14

4:7 Then I looked again at vanity under the sun. 4:8 There was a certain man without a dependent, having neither a son nor a brother, yet there was no end to all his labor. Indeed, his eyes were not satisfied with riches and he never asked, 'And for whom am I laboring and depriving myself of pleasure?' This too is vanity and it is a grievous task. 4:9 Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. 4:10 For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up. 4:11 Furthermore, if two lie down together they keep warm, but how can one be warm alone? 4:12 And if one can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him. A cord of three strands is not quickly torn apart. 4:13 A poor yet wise lad is better than an old and foolish king who no longer knows how to receive instruction. 4:14 For he has come out of prison to become king, even though he was born poor in his kingdom. (NASB)

Solomon speaks of laboring with no end and asking for whom am I laboring? Note how he says that the laboring is depriving himself of pleasure. Could this be a reference to one who is laboring in the Torah? Does performing the mitzvot (commandments) equal depriving ourselves of pleasure? I suppose that depends upon one's perspective on sin. Sin is pleasurable to the flesh, but not to the spirit. Obeying God is pleasurable to the spirit, but not to the flesh. I have talked to a few people who claim that it is impossible to keep from sinning, the example that person gave was of pornography and the television. The problem with this approach to sin is that one needs to understand that sexual sin inflames the flesh. The Apostle Paul wrote in *Galatians 5:19* "Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality..." He also wrote in *Colossians 3:5* "Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. (NASB) Sexual sin inflames the flesh, because the body wants more of this type of pleasurable sin. If one is giving into sexual sin (pornography) on a frequent basis, the body craves this and the thoughts of the mind are continually focused upon this type of sin. This is why Paul writes that these things (sexual sin) amount to idolatry. Idolatry is something that is lifted up, not only as a graven image, but as an image created in one's own heart (see *Ezekiel 14*). We are told to flee sexual sin and this is the reason, it is inflaming and nearly impossible to turn from without the help of the Lord and the power of the Holy Spirit. One must exercise Teshuvah (repentance), turning away from sin and not returning to sexual sin to find freedom. If the television is causing you to sin, get rid of the television.

Solomon continues saying that two are better than one, and various examples are given, if one falls, keeping warm, a greater return in one's labor, and protecting each other in a time of war or battle. If we are to take Solomon's words as being spoken with regard to keeping the Torah, one man can encourage by building another up (encouraging to keep) in the mitzvot, can strengthen a brother who falls to return to his walk with God, to pray, and to walk along side in the struggles of life. This is one of the reasons the Lord God in heaven sent His word, Yeshua the Messiah, to live on this earth, to suffer, and to give his life for ours. He knows the suffering and the struggles that we go through. Solomon says that "a poor yet wise lad is better than an old and foolish king." A wise man flees from sin, whereas the foolish run towards it. The midrash continues saying the following:

Two are better than one, it is better that two men go forth on the highway than that one man go forth alone. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow, if either falls, his companion will lift him up. And if a man prevail against him that is alone, to shall withstand him, If a wicked man comes at one of the two, the two can withstand him. And if three men go forth, it is best, for A threefold cord is not quickly broken. Another exposition, two are better than

one. It is better to be a righteous man and the son of a righteous man than to be a righteous man and a son of a wicked man. (Midrash Tehillim 59, Part 1)

The rabbis appear to have this same perspective quoting from Ecclesiastes since in the midrash they parallel the two are better than one to a righteous man, and the son of a righteous man in contrast to the wicked man. The differences between the two, is that the son of a wicked man does not have a help to live and walk in the Lord as compared to the case when both the father and son are righteous. The midrash provides us with an example of how two men are to encourage, build up, and sustain one another, to help one another. This was the point of the Lord creating woman, to help one another (husband and wife) live for the Lord.

The midrash continues saying, “Another exposition, *two are better than one. It is better to be a righteous man and the son of a righteous man than to be a righteous man and a son of a wicked man.*” This statement is written within the following context:

For the merit of the one righteous man is not to be compared with the merit of the two, whose reward is such that if adversity should be fall the family, the merit of the two will stand by to save it. And if there are three, a righteous man, the son of a righteous man, and the grandson of a righteous man, their merit will never break apart, as is said of a threefold cord. It was asked of rabbi Ze'era, But was not so and so a righteous man, and the son of a righteous man, and the grandson of a righteous man? And yet the fourth generation was wicked. Rabbi Ze'era replied, Solomon did not say A threefold cord is never broken, but that it is not quickly broken. Even if it be broken, it will again be made whole, as is said, My words will not depart out of your mouth, nor out of the mouth of your seed, nor out of the mouth of our seed's seed, says the Lord, from henceforth and forever (Isaiah 59:21). For if a man is a disciple of the wise, and so is his son, and his son's son, the words of Torah will never wholly depart from them, since it is said from henceforth and forever. (Midrash Tehillim 59, Part 1)

The rabbis follow with a discussion on the merit of one, two, and three men. The merit of one is dependent upon the merit of the previous, “*For if a man is a disciple of the wise, and so is his son, and his son's son, the words of Torah will never wholly depart from them, since it is said from henceforth and forever.*” This idea is placed within the context of the two is better than one, and the three fold chord is not quickly broken, and the instruction of the generations on the Torah. A righteous father will instruct his son in God's ways. Not only will a righteous father walk in God's ways he will also walk in God's ways as an example to his son. This doesn't always guarantee that one's son will choose righteousness as the rabbis point out that the fourth generation was wicked. But it illustrates the faithfulness of parents and its effect upon their children and the importance of raising our children to know the Lord.

The midrash continues with multiple interpretations saying, “*Another exposition, Two are better when they engage in a business than one alone. And when there are three, it is best as it is said of A threefold cord. Still another exposition, the phrase Two are better, alludes to Michal, the daughter of Saul, and to Jonathan, both of whom loved David. It is written of Michal and Michal, Saul's daughter loved him (1 Samuel 18:28); and it is written of Jonathan, And Jonathan loved him as his own soul (1 Samuel 18:1).*” All of these things are written within the perspective of not bringing destroying and walking in God's ways. Midrash Tehillim 59, Part 1 concludes saying, “*Michal saved David from danger inside the house, and Jonathan from danger outside the house. Hence, the Two are better than one, And A threefold cord was made by adding the love of Israel and Judah for David, as it is said, All Israel and Judah loved David (1 Samuel 18:16). Hence, it is written, To the Eternal God, who said, Do not destroy David; Michtam; when Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him (Tehillim / Psalms 59:1).*” The michtam of David is not to bring destruction, and the way of the Lord is to bring salvation to a household, and to save life. The two are better than one, and three are better than one (threefold cord) is a reference to the importance of being in a community of believers who love God and obey his commands. When we surround ourselves with righteous people, our own walk before the Lord is improved by reason that we are lifting one another up by encouragement to walk in His

ways. I encourage everyone to study God's Torah and to walk in His ways, as the Torah instructs, to love God, and to love one another; these are the pillars of the Torah, the very things in which Yeshua and the disciples taught in the Apostolic Writings.

Midrash Tehillim 59, Part 2 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying "Another comment. The words Two are better than one are to be read in the light of what Scripture says elsewhere, whoso finds a wife finds a great good (Mishley / Proverbs 18:22)." The rabbis appear to be continuing the thought from the previous midrash saying "two words" rather than "two men" are better than one, and this is equated to the one who finds a wife finds a great good. How are two words equated to two people (husband and wife) and considered a great good? The homiletic introduction (פתיחה, Petihta) to the midrash states, "Yet in still another place, Scripture is saying, I find more bitter than death the woman (Ecclesiastes 7:26)." The midrash continues saying the following:

What Scripture means, however, is that if she is a good wife, there is no end to her goodness, but if she is a bad wife, there is no end to her badness. Hence, whoso finds a wife, finds a great good. We find that before woman was created, it is written It is not good that a man should be alone (Bereshit / Genesis 2:18), but that after she was created, it was written And God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good (Bereshit / Genesis 1:31). Hence, whoso finds a wife finds a great good. Our masters taught, A man without a wife lives without blessing, without life, without joy, without help, without good, and without peace. Without blessing, for it is said Enjoy life with the wife whom you love (Ecclesiastes 9:9); without joy, for it is said Have joy of the wife of your youth (Mishley / Proverbs 5:18); without help, for it is said I will make him a help meet for him (Bereshit / Genesis 2:18); without good, for it is said, Whoso finds a wife finds a great good (Mishley / Proverbs 18:22); without peace, for it is said And you will know that your tent is in peace (Job 5:24), tent plainly meaning wife, as in the verse, Go say to them, return you to your tents (Devarim / Deuteronomy 5:27).

The rabbis consider the blessing of having a good wife, and a wife who does not live in sin and rebellion against God, husband, and family, etc. Scripture is used to back up the assertion that the man who finds a wife has found a great good. The midrash does not speak extensively on the contrast between a good wife versus a bad wife, but concludes that the one who finds a wife finds a great good. The rabbis suggests that there is a consensus on this topic with regard to finding a wife as it is compared to the man who does not find a wife, they say, "A man without a wife lives without blessing, without life, without joy, without help, without good, and without peace. Without blessing, for it is said Enjoy life with the wife whom you love (Ecclesiastes 9:9)" the midrash continues by explaining why the one without a wife is without joy, without good, and without peace. Why do the rabbis bring out this meaning from the psalm text? Each of these things, joy, help, good, and peace are coupled with companionship. In the beginning, God created man and the first observation that God made that was described as "not good" was the loneliness of man. We read in the Torah, it was the sixth day, the Lord God Almighty had just completed creating all the living creatures that move along the ground. The Lord evaluated His work and Scripture states, "And God saw that it was good." (Bereshit / Genesis 1:25) In Bereshit / Genesis 2:7 we read, "And the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being." Here, something unique had occurred, the Lord pressed His lips against man, and breathed into man, creating him after His image, filling him with the knowledge of God his Creator. We find a very intimate interaction in the way in which the Lord created man, He formed him with his hands and then breathed life into him. This is more than simply speaking man into existence. The reason being, Adam would fulfill a role no other creature could, he would have fellowship with the Lord God and be the object of His love. However, after placing Adam in the Garden, God observed that there was still something missing. Bereshit / Genesis 2:18 says, "The Lord God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.'" The Lord recognized that Adam would have the need for contact with another human being,

something the Lord had built into him. Something more than just the companionship of a dog or cat. A companion who would be the object of Adam's love and would love him in return. She would share the wonders of creation and the responsibilities of stewardship. With the creation of Eve, Adam's relationship with God was complemented by communion and companionship with someone like himself. In addition to this, the companion could help in serving the Lord. This is why the rabbis say in the midrash,

Some say that a man without a wife lives also without Torah, for it is said If I have no help with me, then sound wisdom is driven quite from me (Job 6:13). Hence, whoso finds a wife finds a great good. Another comment, When a wife is good, a man finds a great good. But when a wife is bad, she drains the good things, all of them, out of his house and makes him a poor man. But if she is good, what is written of her? A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband (Mishley / Proverbs 12:4), and A woman of valor who can find? (Mishley / Proverbs 31:10); and of her husband, it is said He obtains favor of the Lord (Mishley / Proverbs 18:22), and also A prudent wife is from the Lord (Mishley / Proverbs 19:4). (Midrash Tehillim 59, Part 2)

The idea is that a good wife helps a man to live for the Lord. By God's design we have an innate need to be loved and belong and one of the most important ministries for the Lord is unto our family, one's wife and children. As children we learn to give and receive affection and are taught the skills that will help us find acceptance in society. If the love and affection in the family is corrupted, children grow up with distorted views on love and relationships, a warped view of the interaction with friends, co-workers and others. Rather than community, one forms a sense of individuality and selfishness rather than community. Having a full relationship with God, family, and community are all part of a Torah based life. It is when these things are warped from what they should be that children grow up not knowing God's way of truth, righteousness, and peace, the things a husband and father are to teach his children, with the help of his wife. This is the rabbinic understanding of "*the man who finds a wife finds a good thing,*" and "*the man who lives without a wife lives without the Torah.*" Midrash Tehillim 59, Part 2 concludes saying, "*Come see how solemn is the estate of marriage; in the Torah, in the Prophets, and in the Writings, the Holy One blessed be He, links His own name with marriage. In the Torah, it is written, Then Laben and Bethuel answered and said, The thing proceeds from the Lord (Bereshit / Genesis 24:50). In the Prophets, it is written, But his father and his mother knew not that it was of the Lord (Judges 14:4). And in the Writings, it is said, A prudent wife is from the Lord (Mishley / Proverbs 19:4). From these verses, it follows that the Holy One blessed be He, links His own name to the estate of marriage.*" Note how the rabbis say that the Lord God links His own name with marriage. This is why it is of utmost importance to seek the Lord for help in our relationships to eliminate the personal issues and other circumstances that can warp our ability to connect with our spouses or others.

Midrash Tehillim 59, Part 3 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתהי) saying "*Another comment, Whoso finds a wife finds a great good, whereas a bad wife, is there anything more bitter?*" The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, "*A story of rabbi Akiva's son when he married.*" The entire midrash states the following:

<p style="text-align: center;">מדרש תהלים פרק נט סימן ג</p> <p>ג דבר אחר מצא אשה מצא טוב. אבל אשה רעה מרה ממנה, מעשה בבנו של ר' עקיבא שנשא אשה, מה עשה כיון שנכנסה עמו לחדר היה עומד כל הלילה וקורא בתורה ושונה בהגדות, אמר לה סבי לון בוצינא ומנהרין לי, סבת ליה בוצינא ואנהרה ליה כל לילה, והות קיימא קמיה ומנהרא, והוה פתיחא ספרא וגלייה ליה מן רישא לסיפא ומן סיפא לרישא, וכל ליליה איתקיימא ומנהרא ליה עד דאתא צפרא, בצפרא קרב ר' עקיבא לגביה, אמר ליה מצא או מוצא, אמר ליה מצא, הוי מצא אשה מצא טוב. דבר אחר [מצא אשה מצא טוב]. זו מיכל בת שאול שהיתה אוהבת לדוד בעלה יותר מאביה, שמילטה נפשו מאביה, אימתי בשעה ששלח שאול לשמור את הבית, הדא הוא דכתיב למנצח אל תשחת [וגו'].</p>	<p>Midrash Tehillim 59, Part 3</p> <p>3. Another comment, Whoso finds a wife finds a great good, whereas a bad wife, is there anything more bitter? A story of rabbi Akiva's son when he married. How did he conduct himself? After his wife entered the nuptial chamber with him, he stayed awake the whole night, reading in the Torah and studying Haggadot. He said to her, Fetch a lamp for me and light it, and she fetched a lamp for him and kept it lighted for him the whole night. Stand by his side, she held the light for him. He opened the scroll, and he unrolled it from the beginning to end, and from end to the beginning, and all night she remained standing, holding the light for him until dawn came. At dawn, rabbi Akiva approached his son and asked him, Is she well found or ill found? And his son replied, She is well found. Hence, whoso finds a wife finds a great good. A different comment, whoso finds a wife finds a great good. Such was Michal, Saul's daughter, who loved her husband David more than she loved her father, for she saved David from her father. When? When Saul sent men to watch David's house. Of this it is written to the Eternal God who said, Do not destroy David; Michtam; when Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him (Tehillim / Psalms 59:1).</p>
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This midrash continues from the previous one and contrasts the one who finds a wife finds a great good whereas a bad wife is very bitter. The first example is taken from Akiva's son who married. The good wife of rabbi Akiva's son helped the son read the Torah and study Haggadot. Note how the Haggadot, plural for Haggadah, is a text that sets forth the order of the Passover Seder. Reading the Haggadah at the Seder table is a fulfillment of the Scriptural commandment to each believer to "tell your son" of God's miraculous deliverance from slavery in Egypt as described in the Book of Exodus chapter 12 in the Torah. Note also in the midrash how the wife held the light (the lamp) so her husband could read. Remember how light is a description of righteousness, both in the Apostolic Writings (*1 John*) and also in the rabbinic literature. The idea is that the righteous life of a wife will encourage a man to study Torah. She held her light up so that the son could read the Torah and study Haggadot which is related to the salvation of God. The Passover can be equated to the beginning of months (Scripture states this explicitly), the beginning of the festivals in Israel, the beginning of Israel's salvation, the beginning of a covenant relationship, the beginning of the marriage of Israel with the Lord. The words used here of a good wife in the midrash are rich and full of depth and meaning, drawing us to consider the way we walk and behave before our wives and our family (children). The midrash states, "He opened the scroll, and he unrolled it from the beginning to end, and from end to the beginning, and all night she remained standing, holding the light for him until dawn came. At dawn, rabbi Akiva approached his son and asked him, Is she well found or ill found? And his son replied, She is well found." Notice how wife toiled with her new husband staying up to help him being involved in his studies by shining the light. Remember also that the night time, darkness, is also paralleled to sin and wickedness in the Apostolic Writings and in the rabbinic literature. The illustration from the midrash of the wife who helps her husband in this way, in this context we can interpret the wife to be one who remains faithful to God and to her husband in righteousness and to show the way for her husband. Could this be what the apostle Paul and Peter were drawing upon when they said the following in their epistles?

1 Corinthians 7:12-17

7:12 But to the rest I say, not the Lord, that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he must not divorce her. 7:13 And a woman who has an unbelieving husband, and he consents to live with her, she must not send her husband away.

7:14 For the unbelieving husband is sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified through her believing husband; for otherwise your children are unclean, but now they are holy. 7:15 Yet if the unbelieving one leaves, let him leave; the brother or the sister is not under bondage in such cases, but God has called us to peace. 7:16 For how do you know, O wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save your wife? 7:17 Only, as the Lord has assigned to each one, as God has called each, in this manner let him walk. And so I direct in all the churches. (NASB)

1 Peter 3:1-6

3:1 In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, 3:2 as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior. 3:3 Your adornment must not be merely external braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; 3:4 but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God. 3:5 For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands; 3:6 just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear. (NASB)

Both Paul and Peter are drawing a similar conclusion, that our behavior is to be conducted in righteousness before God, before our spouses, and before our children. Our good conduct may lead to the eventual salvation of our family by seeing the way we live out our faith and our love for the Lord and His Messiah Yeshua. Midrash Tehillim 59, Part 3 concludes saying, “A different comment, whoso finds a wife finds a great good. Such was Michal, Saul’s daughter, who loved her husband David more than she loved her father, for she saved David from her father. When? When Saul sent men to watch David’s house. Of this it is written to the Eternal God who said, Do not destroy David; Michtam; when Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him (Tehillim / Psalms 59:1).” The concluding concept here is Michal loved David more than her father Saul. When a woman leaves her family to be married, her love, concern, and care is firstly for her husband and family, and secondly for relatives. In addition to this, her way of life has changed, she is now living in a covenant relationship with her husband and is not to turn back to the old way of life, living as if she is on her own and not married. If she was not righteous before, she is to behave and live righteously now in her covenant relationship with her husband, and her interactions with others. This is in fact a parallel to our relationship with God in the Messiah Yeshua. With the help of our Father in heaven, His Messiah Yeshua, and the Holy Spirit we are able to turn from our old way of life and live for Him. In addition to this, Yeshua must be placed in a central position in the marriage as Lord, and taken as the example for our sacrificial behavior to our spouse.

Midrash Tehillim 59, Part 4 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying “When he fled from Saul (Tehillim / Psalms 57:1).” The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “How did David escape?” The entire midrash states the following:

מדרש תהלים פרק נט סימן ד

ד [בברחו מפני שאול במערה]. והיאך ברח דוד, ר' אייבו ורבנן, ר' אייבו אמר שני שערים היו לו לדוד בביתו, והאחד היה נעול, ומשמרין אותו מן השער הזה, ויצא בשער אחר וברח, ורבנן אמרו שער אחד היה לו, והיו עומדין על השער והיו משמרים שלא יברח, מה עשתה מיכל, שילשלה אותו בעד החלון וברח, כיון שעלו שלוחים של שאול לבית, מה עשתה נטלה התרפים ונתנם על המטה, ונתנה כביר העזים מראשותיו, שנאמר (ומיכל בת שאול לקחה את התרפים) [ותקח מיכל את התרפים וגו'] (ש"א שמואל א' יט ג), כיון שנכנסו ובקשו את דוד, אמרה להם מיכל חולה הוא ומוטל על המטה, הלכו ואמרו לשאול, אמר להם הביאוהו במטה לכאן, הלכו והביאו את המטה אצלו והוא מצא את התרפים במטה, והתחיל כועס על מיכל בתו, אמר לה למה רמיתני והברחת את שונאי, אמרה לו אתה השיאתני ללסטים שלך, ועמד עלי עם החרב להרגני, ואמר לי אם אין את מברחת אותי אני אהרוג אותך, מיד נתפחדתי ויראתי ממנו, והברחתיו, הדא הוא דכתיב הוא אמר אלי שלחני למה אמיתך (ש"א שמואל א' יט ז), ולכך נקרא שמה עגלה, הדא הוא דכתיב וה' ששי יתרעם לעגלה אשת דוד (ש"ב שמואל ב' ג ה), זו מיכל ולמה נקרא שמה עגלה, מה העגלה הזאת אינה מקבלת עול על צוארה, כך מיכל לא קיבלה עול מאביה, אלא קינטרה אותו.

Midrash Tehillim 59, Part 4

4. When he fled from Saul (Tehillim / Psalms 57:1). How did David escape? Rabbi Aivu and Rabbis gave different answers. Rabbi Aivu said, David had two gates in his house, one of which was locked; they watched for him at this gate, but he went out through the other gate and so escaped. The Rabbis maintained, David had only one gate, and they stood by the gate and watched that he not escape. What did Michal do? With a rope she lowered David from a window, and so he escaped. When the messengers of Saul came to the house, what did Michal do? She took the teraphim, and laid them on the bed, and put a quilt of goats hair at its head, as is said, And Michael took the teraphim, etc. (1 Samuel 19:13). When they entered and asked for David, Michal said, He is ill and laying in bed. They went back and told Saul. He said to them, Bring him hither in the bed. They went and brought the bed to Saul, and Saul found the teraphim in the bed. Now he became angry at his daughter Michal, and said to her, Why have you deceived me and let my enemy flee? Michal answered, You did wed me to your brigand, and he stood over me with his sword as if to kill me, saying If you do not help me escape, I will kill you. Whereupon I was frightened, so fearful of him that I helped him escape. As Scripture tells us, Michal said, He said unto me, Let me go; why should I kill you? (1 Samuel 19:7) Because of this incident the name Eglah was given to Michal, for in the verse Unto David were born sons, the sixth, Ithream of Eglah, David's wife (2 Samuel 3:2-5). Eglah refers to Michal. And why was the name Eglah, heifer, given to Michal? Because like a heifer that will not take the yoke upon her neck, so Michal did not take the yoke from her father, but bucked against it.

The midrash states that Rabbi Aivu gave different answers on the question of how David escaped. The first was that David's house had two gates, the first which was locked, they were watching that one and David escaped from the other one. The other opinion follows the biblical account of Michal lowering David out of the window. Michal takes the teraphim, places it in the bed, and Saul's men carry the bed to Saul and he finds the teraphim. Saul is angry with Michal and the rabbis make the story that she blamed David forcing her to deceive her father. Midrash Tehillim 59, Part 4 concludes saying, "As Scripture tells us, Michal said, He said unto me, Let me go; why should I kill you? (1 Samuel 19:7) Because of this incident the name Eglah was given to Michal, for in the verse Unto David were born sons, the sixth, Ithream of Eglah, David's wife (2 Samuel 3:2-5). Eglah refers to Michal. And why was the name Eglah, heifer, given to Michal? Because like a heifer that will not take the yoke upon her neck, so Michal did not take the yoke from her father, but bucked against it." In the conclusion to the midrash, the rabbis refer to 2 Samuel 3:2-5 pointing out that David's wife Eglah bore him Ithream, his sixth son.

2 Samuel 3:2-5

3:2 Sons were born to David at Hebron: his firstborn was Amnon, by Ahinoam the Jezreelitess; 3:3 and his second, Chileab, by Abigail the widow of Nabal the Carmelite; and the third, Absalom the son of Maacah, the daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur; 3:4 and the fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith; and the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital; 3:5 and the

The word Eglah (עגלה) means heifer and the midrash states that this is David's wife Michal. (2 Samuel 3:5; 1 Chronicles 3:3, BCE 1055). In the rabbinic literature, the rabbis present Michal as a beautiful woman, who was lusted after by all who saw her (*Talmud Bavli, Megillah 15a*). They claim that she was David's favorite wife and this was the reason she was called "Eglah" (calf / heifer), because she was as beloved to him as a calf. The identification between these two wives of David (Eglah and Michal) resulted from the Rabbis desire to limit the number of David's wives. The Torah according to *Devarim / Deuteronomy 17:17*, mandates that the king "shall not have many wives." We are told a king is not to multiply his wives and the reason being the many wives may deceive the king, similar to what had happened to king Solomon in his later days and his wives causing him to sacrifice to the false gods of the land of Canaan (the surrounding nations). The maximum number of wives permitted to a king during his rule, according to the rabbis, is eighteen. 2 Samuel 3:2-5 records that David had six wives when he was in Hebron: Ahinoam of Jezreel, Abigail wife of Nabil the Carmelite, Maacah daughter of Talmai, Haggith, Abital, and Eglah. Later on in David's life, the prophet Nathan tells him (2 Samuel 12:8), "I would give you twice as much over," which the rabbis understand to mean that the number of wives that David already had would be tripled from six to eighteen. Since Michal was not identified in the list of his first six wives, she was already married to him, the rabbis thus interpret Eglah as being Michal. They considered the name "Eglah" as a name of endearment, rather than a proper name, and then derive from this name various meanings. (see the *Talmud Bavli, Sanhedrin 21a*).

The midrash tells us about Michal's wise actions in saving her husband's life and the intelligent manner in which she withstood her father's rage. Later on Saul gave Michal to Patiel, making light of the sexual prohibitions listed in the Torah by giving a married woman to another man. The Rabbis emphasize that even when Michal was given to another, she remained faithful to David. 1 Samuel 25:44 records that during one of the times that David fled from Saul, Michal was given to Paltiel son of Laish. According to the Rabbis, Saul did so upon the evil counsel of Doeg the Edomite. (*Midrash Rabbah Bereshit, Parashat 32, Part 1*) Doeg told Saul that since David had rebelled against the king, he deserved to die, he was thus already considered to be a dead man and this may be why Michal was given to Paltiel. The Rabbis maintain that although Michal and Paltiel lived together as a married couple, they did not engage in intercourse. However, according to the Tanach, Michal was punished by David for this marriage because it demonstrated a lack of faithfulness in their marriage. The punishment prescribed for Michal (2 Samuel 6:23) was that "until her dying day she had no children," which the Rabbis interpret as her having no children until her dying day, but on her dying day she bore a son. The midrash speaks of three women who had difficult deliveries and died in childbirth, (i) Rachel, (ii) the wife of Phinehas, and (iii) Michal daughter of Saul. Michal bleated like a sheep when giving birth and died, and therefore she was called "Eglah" (*Midrash Rabbah Bereshit, Parashat 82, Part 7*). This aggadic tradition was meant to resolve the difficulty raised by the identification of Michal with Eglah and the number of wives that David had acquired. The Scripture from 2 Samuel 3:5 states that Eglah had a son named Ithream, while Michal was said not to have had a child to her dying day. This difficulty could be circumvented if Michal gave birth to Ithream on her dying day. Another Rabbinic proposal is that from that day on Michal was punished by not bearing any further children, but before that fateful day she already had a son by this name (*Talmud Bavli, Sanhedrin 21a*).

The point of Midrash Tehillim 59, Part 4 is that Michal did not take upon herself the yoke of her father Saul, however, she did take the yoke of becoming a wife to another man. She did what was right in the beginning, but ended up falling into the sin of adultery. She started out right and ended poorly. This should be a good example for each of us to remain strong in the faith, being faithful to the Messiah Yeshua, do what is right, true, and just, all the way to the end. This is similar to Paul's teaching in 1 Corinthians 9:23 I do all things for the sake of the gospel, so that I may become a fellow partaker of it. 9:24 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. 9:25 Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. 9:26 Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in

such a way, as not beating the air; 9:27 but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified. (NASB) We are running a race, to live and to serve the Lord in a consistent manner so as to bring honor and glory to the Lord God in heaven.

Midrash Tehillim 59, Part 5 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחי) saying “You, therefore, O Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel, Arouse Yourself and punish the nations (Tehillim / Psalms 59:6).” The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “This is said because the Holy One blessed be He, makes Himself out to be asleep in this world.” The entire midrash states the following:

מדרש תהלים פרק נט סימן ה	Midrash Tehillim 59, Part 5
<p>ה ואתה ה' אלהים [צבאות] אלהי ישראל הקיצה לפקוד (את) כל הגוים. לפי שבעולם הזה עושה הקב"ה עצמו כישן, ולמה שעדיין אין הדין נותן שיגאלו, שנאמר ויקץ כישן ה' (תהלים עח סה), אבל לעתיד לבא כשיבוא הקץ כביכול הקב"ה נוער עליהם, שנאמר הקיצה לפקוד (את) כל הגוים, באותה שעה אל תחון כל בוגדי און סלה.</p>	<p>5. You, therefore, O Lord God of hosts, the God of Israel, Arouse Yourself and punish the nations (Tehillim / Psalms 59:6). This is said because the Holy One blessed be He, makes Himself out to be asleep in this world. Why? Because justice does not yet permit that the children of Israel be redeemed, as is said, Until the time the Lord is as one asleep (Tehillim / Psalms 78:65). Verily, in the time to come, when the time of redemption comes, the Holy One blessed be He, will shake and arouse Himself, if one dare speak thus against the nations, as is said, Arouse Yourself to punish all the nations. In that hour, Show no mercy to any iniquitous traitors, ever (Tehillim / Psalms 59:6).</p>

The rabbis open explaining the verse where David requests for the Lord to punish the nations, by saying the Lord makes Himself out to be asleep in this world. Does the Lord seem to be asleep in this world? The midrash asks “why” is this so? The conclusion is justice does not permit immediate redemption. Why would justice not permit immediate redemption? Midrash Tehillim 59, Part 5 concludes saying, “Verily, in the time to come, when the time of redemption comes, the Holy One blessed be He, will shake and arouse Himself, if one dare speak thus against the nations, as is said, Arouse Yourself to punish all the nations. In that hour, Show no mercy to any iniquitous traitors, ever (Tehillim / Psalms 59:6).” Homer in the Iliad illustrates that both the gods and men slept all night. The Phrygians (an ancient Indo-European people) also had a belief that their god slept in winter, and was awake in summer. Other religions, such as in the fertility religions, Baal died and was raised again during the summer/winter solstices so he was missing for a given length of time during the year. According to Tehillim / Psalms 121:4 we read “Behold, He who keeps Israel Will neither slumber nor sleep.” (NASB) The Lord God Almighty does not sleep but at times it does seem that He is slow in responding to distress and meeting out punishment to the unrighteous. The point of the midrash may be to illustrate that though the Lord appears to be slow in His response, we are to continue to seek Him, and to do righteousness and justice towards others. I believe the purpose of God’s slow response is to humble us, and to put us upon the path of seeking His help. In addition to this, in the midst of our troubles, difficulties, illnesses, and problems, we continue to live by faith and to walk in the way of the Lord, remaining in Christ, in the Messiah, and obeying His commandments. We are not to use our circumstances as an excuse to walk away from the covenant that we have made with the Lord. We are to take our circumstances, no matter what they might be, and use them to bring glory to God by the way that we live our lives. Thank you Lord for sending Your Son Yeshua the Messiah, and Your Holy Spirit to empower our lives to walk in Your ways and bring glory to Your name. Let’s Pray!

Heavenly Father,

We thank You for the strength that only You can provide to increase our faith and remain upon the straight and narrow path of righteousness and truth. We also thank You for the constant reminder to seek You and Your ways O Lord. Please have mercy on us, forgive us for our sins, help us to live righteous lives, and remain true in our faith and consistent in our walk before You even in the midst of troubling times. Give

us the strength to overcome sin, to have true and pure hearts, to seek Your righteousness, truth, and to have patience to wait upon Your deliverance. Help us to set our minds on those things that are wholesome and righteous, with those things that are from above, with a desire to show mercy and love toward one another. We 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