

ספר תהילים סד | Tehillim / Psalms 64

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Being Rich towards God

In this week's study from *Tehillim / Psalms 64:1-10*, the psalm opens saying, **א לְמַנְצִיחַ מְזֻמּוֹר לְדָוִד: ב שְׁמַע אֱלֹהִים קוֹלִי בְשִׁיחִי**, *For the choir director. A Psalm of David. David begins asking the Lord to hear him, ב שְׁמַע אֱלֹהִים קוֹלִי בְשִׁיחִי*, *64:1 Hear my voice, O God, in my complaint; Preserve my life from dread of the enemy. (NASB)* Why does he ask the Lord to preserve his life from the “dread” of the enemy? He continues saying, **ג תְּסַתִּירֵנִי מִסּוּד מְרַעִים מְרַגְשֵׁת פְּעָלֵי אָנוּן: ד אֲשֶׁר שָׁנְנוּ כְחֶרֶב לְשׁוֹנָם דָּרְכוּ חֲצָצְרֵי דְבַר מָר: ה לִירוֹת בְּמִסְתָּרִים**, *64:2 Hide me from the secret counsel of evildoers, From the tumult of those who do iniquity, 64:3 Who have sharpened their tongue like a sword. They aimed bitter speech as their arrow, 64:4 To shoot from concealment at the blameless; Suddenly they shoot at him, and do not fear. (NASB)* Here David understands the tongue to be synonymous to the sword capable of striking and cutting deep, not so much as to cut the flesh, but to cut deep down to the soul. He continues describing the wicked in the following way, **ו חֲזָקוּ-לָמוּ | דְּבַר רָע יִסְפְּרוּ לְטָמוֹן מוֹקְשִׁים אָמְרוּ מִי יִרְאֶה-לָמוּ: ז יִחַפְּשׂוּ עוֹלֹת תַּמְנוּ חֲפֵשׂ וְקָרַב אִישׁ וְלֵב עֵמֶק:** *64:5 They hold fast to themselves an evil purpose; They talk of laying snares secretly; They say, ‘Who can see them?’ (NASB)* The ungodly man in the secret place of his heart devises evil towards his fellow man. David describes these evil plans as, **ח וַיִּרְם אֱלֹהִים חֵץ**, *64:6 They devise injustices, saying, ‘We are ready with a well-conceived plot’; For the inward thought and the heart of a man are deep. (NASB)* The plans that are conceived are “injustices,” as compared to God’s ways which are done in righteousness, holiness, truth, and justice. David believes the Lord will save him from the hidden plans of the enemy saying, **ט וַיִּכְשִׁילָהוּ עָלֵימוּ לְשׁוֹנָם יִתְגַּדְּדוּ כָּל-רְאֵה בָּם: י וַיִּירָאוּ כָּל-אָדָם וַיִּגִּדוּ פֶּעַל אֱלֹהִים וּמַעֲשָׂהוּ הַשְּׁפִילוּ:** *64:7 But God will shoot at them with an arrow; Suddenly they will be wounded. (NASB)* In their evil ways, even their own tongues will work against them, and this appears to be the work of God. **יא יִשְׂמַח צְדִיק בַּיהוָה**, *64:8 So they will make him stumble; Their own tongue is against them; All who see them will shake the head. 64:9 Then all men will fear, And they will declare the work of God, And will consider what He has done. (NASB)* David concludes his psalm bringing glory to the Lord in the statement of faith saying, **יב וַיִּשְׂרֵי-לֵב:** *64:10 The righteous man will be glad in the Lord and will take refuge in Him; And all the upright in heart will glory. (LXX)* Indeed what a wonderful God we serve!

עברית	Hebrew	ארמי	Aramaic	ελληνικός	Greek
ספר תהלים פרק סד	ספר טוביה פרק סד			ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 64	
א לְמַנְצִיחַ מְזֻמּוֹר לְדָוִד: ב שְׁמַע אֱלֹהִים קוֹלִי בְשִׁיחִי מִפְּחַד אוֹיֵב תִּצַּר חַיִּי: ג תְּסַתִּירֵנִי מִסּוּד מְרַעִים מְרַגְשֵׁת פְּעָלֵי אָנוּן: ד אֲשֶׁר שָׁנְנוּ כְחֶרֶב לְשׁוֹנָם דָּרְכוּ חֲצָצְרֵי דְבַר מָר:	א לשבחא תושבחתא לדוד: ב שמע אלהא קלי בעידן צלותי מדלוחא דב- עיל דבבי תנטור חיי: ג תטמרניני מרזהון דמבאשין מאיתרגושת עבדי שקר: ד די שנינוא היך סיפא ליי- שנהון נגדו קשתהון קשוותהון משחו גירריהון סמא דקטול ומריר:			64:1 εις το τέλος ψαλμὸς τῷ Δαυὶδ εἰσάκουσον ὁ θεὸς τῆς φωνῆς μου ἐν τῷ δέεσθαί με ἀπὸ φόβου ἐχθροῦ ἐξελοῦ τὴν ψυχὴν μου 64:2 ἐσκέπασάς με ἀπὸ συστροφῆς πονηρευομένων ἀπὸ πλῆθους ἐργαζομένων τὴν ἀνομίαν 64:3 οἵτινες ἠκόνησαν ὡς ῥομφαίαν τὰς γλώσσας αὐτῶν ἐνέτειναν τόξον αὐτῶν πρᾶγμα πικρὸν 64:4 τοῦ κατατοξεῦσαι ἐν ἀποκρύφοις ἄμωμον ἐξάπινα κατατοξεύουσιν αὐτὸν καὶ οὐ φοβηθήσονται	

<p>ה לירות בַּמִּסְתָּרִים תָּם פְּתָאֵם יִרְהוּ וְלֹא יִירָאוּ: וּ שְׁתָּקוּ-לָמוּ דְּבַר רַע יִסְפְּרוּ לְטֹמוֹן מוֹקְשִׁים אָמְרוּ מִי יִרְאֶה-לָמוּ: ז יִתְפָּשׂוּ עוֹלֹת תִּמְנֹנִי תִּפְשׂ מִחֶפֶז וְקָרַב אִישׁ וְלֵב עֲמֹק: ח וַיֵּרָם אֱלֹהִים חַץ פְּתָאוֹם הָיוּ מְכוֹתָם: ט וַיִּכְשִׁילֵהוּ עָלִימוֹ לְשׁוֹנָם יִתְנֹו- דָּדוּ כָּל-רְאֵה בָם: י וַיִּירָאוּ כָּל-אֲדָם וַיִּגְיָדוּ פֶּעַל אֱלֹהִים וּמַעֲשָׂהוּ הַשְּׁפִי- לוֹ: יא יִשְׁמַח צְדִיק בִּיהְוָה וְחָסְדָּהּ בּוֹ וַיִּתְהַלָּלוּ כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל-לֵב:</p>	<p>ה לגראה בטומריא בטומרא דלא מום בתכיף יגרון ליה ולא ידחלון: ו יתקפון להון פתגם ביש ישתעון למ- כמו תקלין אמרין מן חמי להון: ז יבלשון למשכח עילין לשיצאה זכאין בלושא דמתבליש בגוף בר נשא והירהורי ליבא עמיקא: ח ויגרי עילויהון אלהא גיררא בתכיף ויתנון על מחתיהון: ט ויתקלון להון ליי- שנהון יטלטלון כל דחמי בהון ברי- שיהון כל דחמי להון: י וידחלון כל בני נשא ויחוון ויתנון עובדא דיהוה אלהים ועובדיה יהוון מתביינין: יא יחדי צדיקא ביהוה ויתרחיץ במימ- ריה וישתבחון כל תריצי ליבא:</p>	<p>64:5 ἐκραταίωσαν ἑαυτοῖς λόγον πονηρόν διηγήσαντο τοῦ κρύψαι παγίδας εἶπαν τίς ᾔψεται αὐτούς 64:6 ἐξηρεύνησαν ἀνομίας ἐξέλιπον ἐξερευνῶντες ἐξερευνήσει προσελεύσεται ἄνθρωπος καὶ καρδία βαθεῖα 64:7 καὶ ὑψωθήσεται ὁ θεός βέλος νηπίων ἐγενήθησαν αἱ πληγαὶ αὐτῶν 64:8 καὶ ἐξησθένησαν ἐπ’ αὐτούς αἱ γλῶσσαι αὐτῶν ἐταράχθησαν πάντες οἱ θεωροῦντες αὐτούς 64:9 καὶ ἐφοβήθη πᾶς ἄνθρωπος καὶ ἀνήγγειλαν τὰ ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τὰ ποιήματα αὐτοῦ συνῆκαν 64:10 εὐφρανθήσεται δίκαιος ἐπὶ τῷ κυρίῳ καὶ ἔλπιεῖ ἐπ’ αὐτόν καὶ ἐπαινεσθήσονται πάντες οἱ εὐθεῖς τῇ καρδίᾳ</p>
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The Scriptures tell us that David was loved of God. Why was David so loved of God, so much so that he is called “a man after God’s own heart?” (*1 Samuel 13:14, Acts 13:22*) In *Tehillim / Psalms 64:1-10*, the psalm opens saying, לְמַנְצֵחַ מְזֻמֹּר לְדָוִד: & *For the choir director. A Psalm of David. (NASB)* To understand why David was given such an exalted description may be related to the opening words to the Psalms. According to the Book of Acts, Paul states, “After removing Saul, he made David their king. He testified concerning him: ‘I have found David son of Jesse a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do’” (*Acts 13:22*). The obvious question though is how could the Lord call David “a man after His heart” when David had so many issues (adultery and murder)? The answer to this question may be related to the character of David which is found within the Psalms. David’s life consists of both success and failure, and the Psalms highlight the fact that he was far from perfect. The point is that his heart was always pointed toward the Lord God in heaven. The Psalms describe David as having absolute faith in God. This is well illustrated in *1 Samuel 17* where David, as a young shepherd boy, he fearlessly slew the giant Goliath the Philistine. Prior to this, in *1 Samuel 17:37*, David said, “The LORD who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.’ And Saul said to David, ‘Go, and the LORD be with you!’” Based on his statement regarding God’s deliverance, he believed that God was in control of his life, and he had faith that the Lord would deliver him from any situation. Do you believe the Lord can deliver you from any situation? One of the most important characteristics of David was that he knew early on in life that the Lord was to be trusted and obeyed. According to the Scriptures, David’s faith pleased God, and he is rewarded for his faith. In addition, David absolutely loved God’s Torah. Out of the 150 chapters of the Psalms in the Bible, the opening verse in the Psalms credit him to writing over half of them, just as we see here in *Tehillim / Psalms 64*, לְמַנְצֵחַ מְזֻמֹּר לְדָוִד: & *For the choir director. A Psalm of David. (NASB)* Over and over again we read how David repeatedly mentions how much he loved the Lord’s perfect Torah. One example may be found in *Tehillim / Psalm 119:47-48*, which says: מִזֹּ וְאֶשְׁתַּעֲשַׂע בְּמִצְוֹתֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר אֶהְבֵּתִי: מִח וְאֶשָּׂא כַּפֵּי אֵל-מִצְוֹתֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר אֶהְבֵּתִי וְאֶשְׁיָחָה בְּחֻקֶּיךָ: *“For I delight in your commands because I love them. I lift up my hands to your commands, which I love, and I meditate on your decrees.”* The Hebrew Scriptures say “I love them,” the mitzvot (commands), repeatedly. It is not difficult to observe David’s love of God’s Word the importance of living in God’s truth. He also says that he “meditates” on God’s statutes. Wisdom and understanding are given to the one who meditates on God’s

word daily. In similar manner, we would do well to study God’s Word and meditate on the Word throughout the day. Meditation can be even a single scripture that we thinking about all the day long. *Tehillim / Psalms 119:2-3* “*Blessed are they who keep his statutes and seek him with all their heart. They do nothing wrong; they walk in his ways.*” (NASB)

<p>Tehillim / Psalms 64 For the choir director. A Psalm of David. 64:1 Hear my voice, O God, in my complaint; Preserve my life from dread of the enemy. 64:2 Hide me from the secret counsel of evildoers, From the tumult of those who do iniquity, 64:3 Who have sharpened their tongue like a sword. They aimed bitter speech as their arrow, 64:4 To shoot from concealment at the blameless; Suddenly they shoot at him, and do not fear. 64:5 They hold fast to themselves an evil purpose; They talk of laying snares secretly; They say, ‘Who can see them?’ 64:6 They devise injustices, saying, ‘We are ready with a well-conceived plot’; For the inward thought and the heart of a man are deep. 64:7 But God will shoot at them with an arrow; Suddenly they will be wounded. 64:8 So they will make him stumble; Their own tongue is against them; All who see them will shake the head. 64:9 Then all men will fear, And they will declare the work of God, And will consider what He has done. 64:10 The righteous man will be glad in the Lord and will take refuge in Him; And all the upright in heart will glory. (NASB)</p>	<p>Toviyah / Psalms 64 64:1 For praise, a psalm of David. 64:2 Hear my voice, O God, in the time of my prayer; guard my life from the fear of the enemy. 64:3 You will hide me from the secret [council] of those who do evil, from the turmoil of those who practice deceit. 64:4 Who have sharpened their tongue as a sword, bent their bows, smeared their arrows with deadly and bitter poison. 64:5 To shoot in secret, without blame; suddenly they will shoot him and they will not fear. 64:6 They will strengthen themselves with an evil word; they will talk of hiding traps, saying, “Who sees them?” 64:7 They will search to find pretexts to destroy the pure, a search carried out in the body of a son of man, and the thoughts of a secret heart. 64:8 But God will shoot arrows at them suddenly; and they will tell of their wounds. 64:9 And their tongue will make them stumble; all who see them shall move aside. 64:10 And all the sons of men will be afraid, and tell of the work of the Lord God; and his works will be understood. 64:11 The righteous man will rejoice in the Lord, and trust in his word, and all the upright of heart will boast. (EMC)</p>	<p>Psalmoi / Psalms 64 For the end, a Psalm of David. 64:1 Hear my prayer, O God, when I make my petition to thee; deliver my soul from fear of the enemy. 64:2 Thou hast sheltered me from the conspiracy of them that do wickedly; from the multitude of them that work iniquity; 64:3 who have sharpened their tongues as a sword; they have bent their bow maliciously; 64:4 to shoot in secret at the blameless; they will shoot him suddenly, and will not fear. 64:5 They have set up for themselves an evil matter, they have given counsel to hide snares; they have said, Who shall see them? 64:6 They have searched out iniquity; they have wearied themselves with searching diligently, a man shall approach and the heart is deep, 64:7 and God shall be exalted, their wounds were caused by the weapon of the foolish children, 64:8 and their tongues have set him at nought, all that saw them were troubled; 64:9 and every man was alarmed, and they related the works of God, and understood his deeds. 64:10 The righteous shall rejoice in the Lord, and hope on him, and all the upright in heart shall be praised. (LXX)</p>
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The Psalms also describe David as being thankful for the Lord’s mercy. He says in *Tehillim / Psalms 26:6-7* “*I wash my hands in innocence, and go about your altar, O LORD, proclaiming aloud your praise and telling of all your wonderful deeds.*” (NASB) Because of his faith, David’s life was marked by periods of peace and prosperity as well as times of fear and despair. However, through all of the situations that occurred in his life, he never forgot to thank the Lord for everything that he had. *Tehillim / Psalms 100:4*

states, “Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name!” As followers of Yeshua the Messiah, we would do well to follow David’s example of persistent faithfulness and the continual offering of praise through thanksgiving to our Lord, by thought, word, and deed. Remember how in *Tehillim / Psalms 63, Part 1* we learned how our words, our thoughts, and our actions are all interconnected. Our offering of praise unto the Lord consists of our entire being! In addition to all of these things, the Psalms describe David as truly repentant. This is illustrated in the narrative from *2 Samuel 11* in David’s sin of adultery, lying, and murder. He had sinned against the Lord and he admits it in *2 Samuel 12:13* saying, “David said to Nathan, ‘I have sinned against the LORD.’ And Nathan said to David, ‘The LORD also has put away your sin; you shall not die.’” (NASB) David’s admitting his sin and asking for forgiveness is only half of the equation. The other half is a heart that is bent upon Teshuvah (Repentance). *Tehillim / Psalms 51* describes his prayer of repentance because of his sin of adultery with Batsheva, “Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!” (*Tehillim / Psalm 51:1-2*). The reason David was so loved, was that he demonstrated his faith on a daily basis. Daily faith pleases the Lord greatly. Because David was a man of faith, his faith was also tested. The Scriptures tell us that David loved God’s Torah and sought to obey God’s commands as best that he could. He spent his life meditating upon the Torah and applying it to his own life. He knew that God’s Torah had the power to change lives if it was sought for wisdom in life and obeyed. Note also how David did not credit his obedience to giving him the ability to wield God’s hand for his benefit. On the contrary, David exhibited a thankful attitude for the mercy of God and for the Lord giving him a love of his Word to live and to walk in His ways. David thanked God every day no matter the circumstances. He is a role model for us all, to seek the Lord, to have a humble heart, and to live repentant lives. All of these things about David may be understood from the opening phrase of the psalm, לְמַנְצֵחַ מְזֻמֹּר לְדָוִד א For the choir director. A Psalm of David. (NASB)

David begins his psalm asking the Lord to hear him, ב שָׁמַע אֱלֹהִים קוֹלִי בְּשִׁיחֵי מִפְּחַד אוֹיֵב תִּצַּר חַיִּי 64:1 Hear my voice, O God, in my complaint; Preserve my life from dread of the enemy. (NASB) Why does he ask the Lord to preserve his life from the “dread” of the enemy? What is the meaning of the “dread of the enemy?” The Aramaic Targum states, ב שָׁמַע אֱלֹהֵא קִלִּי בַעֲיֵדן צִלּוֹתֵי מִדְּלוּחָא דְּבַעֲיֵל דְּבַבֵּי תַנְטוֹר חַיִּי 64:2 Hear my voice, O God, in the time of my prayer; guard my life from the fear of the enemy. (NASB) The Septuagint states, 64:1 ... εἰσάκουσον ὁ θεός τῆς φωνῆς μου ἐν τῷ δέεσθαί με ἀπὸ φόβου ἐχθροῦ ἐξελοῦ τὴν ψυχῆν μου 64:1 Hear my prayer, O God, when I make my petition to thee; deliver my soul from fear of the enemy. (LXX) In both the Aramaic and Septuagint, the word “dread” (מִפְּחַד) is translated as “fear” (מִדְּלוּחָא). David asks the Lord in the MT to hear the “complaint” (בְּשִׁיחֵי) he is voicing. The word translated “complaint” is שִׁיחָ meaning “meditation, prayer, talking, communication, babbling, and complaint.” It is important to note that David’s “complaint” is not against the Lord and how He is handling things, but rather, a “complaint” about his enemies. This is something that he is bringing to the Lord and not against the Lord. There is a significant difference here in the mode in which he is bringing his complaint. David goes on to seek the Lord for deliverance from the dread or fear of his enemies. This kind of dread or fear seems to be a description of his worrying about what is going to happen in his life. David is fretting over and worrying about his enemies constantly. By fretting or worrying in this way, it is possible to exhaust one’s faith and belief that the Lord God is going to bring a positive outcome. This kind of worrying can have a draining effect on life and faith. Here David is showing us how he seeks the Lord for wisdom and the power to stand against this kind of fear. The dictionary defines “dread” as, “fear,” “anxiety,” and “uneasiness.” We are told not to be afraid, anxious, or in fear according to the apostolic Writings. Both Yeshua and the Apostles wrote that our fear should be directed to a fear of the Lord rather than to our own lives since the Lord God is in control of all things, therefore do not be afraid, do not fear (*Luke 12:4, Acts 18:9, 1 Peter 3:14*). Yeshua and the disciples taught this principle.

Luke 12:4-5

12:4 I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that have

no more that they can do. 12:5 'But I will warn you whom to fear: fear the One who, after He has killed, has authority to cast into hell; yes, I tell you, fear Him! (NASB)

Acts 18:8-10

18:8 Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his household, and many of the Corinthians when they heard were believing and being baptized. 18:9 And the Lord said to Paul in the night by a vision, 'Do not be afraid any longer but go on speaking and do not be silent; 18:10 for I am with you, and no man will attack you in order to harm you, for I have many people in this city.' (NASB)

1 Peter 3:12-15

3:12 'For the eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous, And His ears attend to their prayer; But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.' 3:13 Who is there to harm you if you prove zealous for what is good? 3:14 But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. And do not fear their intimidation, and do not be troubled, 3:15 but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence; (NASB)

The Lord equips us to overcome fear in our lives by the power of His Holy Spirit. Fear robs us of the joy and peace that we are supposed to live in regardless of the circumstances. Yeshua said in *Luke 12:4-5* to fear the Lord God, our Father in heaven, who is able to cast one into Hell, rather than to fear those who can harm the body. The idea is that the Lord has the power over both the body and the spirit of a man, whereas on this earth, the enemy has only the power to destroy the body. The Lord promised Paul to be protected in the city he was staying in, and his teaching about the Messiah led to Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, believing in Yeshua as the Messiah. *Acts 18:8* states that Crispus and all his house believed and performed a mikva (baptized). Peter encourages to remain faithful in the midst of suffering for righteousness sake, and not to fear intimidation, do not be troubled. These texts from the Apostolic Writings, and David's Psalm are reminiscent of Moshe's words from Parashat Vayelech just prior to Israel entering the Promised Land, Moshe told the people not to fear.

Devarim / Deuteronomy 31:1-13

31:1 So Moses went and spoke these words to all Israel. 31:2 And he said to them, 'I am a hundred and twenty years old today; I am no longer able to come and go, and the Lord has said to me, 'You shall not cross this Jordan.' 31:3 'It is the Lord your God who will cross ahead of you; He will destroy these nations before you, and you shall dispossess them. Joshua is the one who will cross ahead of you, just as the Lord has spoken. 31:4 'The Lord will do to them just as He did to Sihon and Og, the kings of the Amorites, and to their land, when He destroyed them. 31:5 'The Lord will deliver them up before you, and you shall do to them according to all the commandments which I have commanded you. 31:6 'Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or tremble at them, for the Lord your God is the one who goes with you. He will not fail you or forsake you.' 31:7 Then Moses called to Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, 'Be strong and courageous, for you shall go with this people into the land which the Lord has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall give it to them as an inheritance. 31:8 'The Lord is the one who goes ahead of you; He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.' 31:9 So Moses wrote this law and gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi who carried the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and to all the elders of Israel. 31:10 Then Moses commanded them, saying, 'At the end of every seven years, at the time of the year of remission of debts, at the Feast of Booths, 31:11 when all Israel comes to appear before the Lord your God at the place which He will choose, you

shall read this law in front of all Israel in their hearing. 31:12 'Assemble the people, the men and the women and children and the alien who is in your town, so that they may hear and learn and fear the Lord your God, and be careful to observe all the words of this law. 31:13 'Their children, who have not known, will hear and learn to fear the Lord your God, as long as you live on the land which you are about to cross the Jordan to possess.' (NASB)

Moshe explains how the Lord will go before the people and fight for them, and he says, *31:6 'Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or tremble at them, for the Lord your God is the one who goes with you. He will not fail you or forsake you.'* (NASB) David seeks the Lord in prayer, to not be afraid, just as the Torah portion describes for us, to not be afraid, *31:8 'The Lord is the one who goes ahead of you; He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.'* (NASB) The Torah tells us that Moshe wrote all of these words and gave them to the Priests. Each year, the Torah is to be read as a reminder of these things, and as a reminder to our children to take heart, to be careful to obey God's word, and to learn to fear the Lord God as long as we live. These words also echo Yeshua's words in *Luke 12:4-5*. Yeshua continues saying in *Luke 12:16-32* the following:

Luke 12:16-32

12:16 And He told them a parable, saying, 'The land of a rich man was very productive. 12:17 'And he began reasoning to himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?' 12:18 'Then he said, 'This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. 12:19 'And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come take your ease, eat, drink and be merry.' 12:20 'But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?' 12:21 'So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.' 12:22 And He said to His disciples, 'For this reason I say to you, do not worry about your life, as to what you will eat; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. 12:23 'For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. 12:24 'Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap; they have no storeroom nor barn, and yet God feeds them; how much more valuable you are than the birds! 12:25 'And which of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life's span? 12:26 'If then you cannot do even a very little thing, why do you worry about other matters? 12:27 'Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; but I tell you, not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. 12:28 'But if God so clothes the grass in the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, how much more will He clothe you? You men of little faith! 12:29 'And do not seek what you will eat and what you will drink, and do not keep worrying. 12:30 'For all these things the nations of the world eagerly seek; but your Father knows that you need these things. 12:31 'But seek His kingdom, and these things will be added to you. 12:32 'Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom. (NASB)

Notice how Yeshua says, *12:20 'But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?' 12:21 'So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.'* (NASB) What does it mean to be "rich towards God?" Are you rich towards God? The meaning of being "rich" towards God, our all consuming thoughts should be towards the Lord God in heaven and for working in His kingdom. We are to be about serving the Lord and not worrying about what we eat or wear. Worry is a major point, since worrying denotes the person who does not fully trust in the Lord to provide. Yeshua says, *12:32 'Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom. (NASB)*

In the Greek language, the word kingdom (βασιλεία Basileia) appears 162 times in the Apostolic Writings, most of these uses relate to either Basileia tou Theou (βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ), meaning "Kingdom of God"

or to Basileia tōn Ouranōn, (Βασιλεία τῶν Ουρανῶν) meaning “*Kingdom of Heaven.*” The words Kingdom of Heaven (Basileia tōn Ouranōn) appears 32 times in the book of Matthew and nowhere else in the Apostolic Writings. Matthew also uses the term Kingdom of God (Basileia tou Theou) in a number of cases, and his usage is considered interchangeable with “*Kingdom of Heaven.*” (Basileia tōn Ouranōn). An interesting concept regarding the phrase “*Kingdom of Heaven,*” is in Judaism’s restriction on the use of the Name of God and the frequent use of the word “*God,*” Elohim. It is highly likely that Matthew used the term Heaven due to the fact that Judaism imposed restrictions on the frequent use of the name of God where he himself (Matthew) followed the rabbinic teaching on the matter. In addition, Yeshua never used the Name of God (YHVH) in his teachings. This is another indication of Yeshua’s compliance with Judaism’s teaching on the sacredness of the Name of God and preserving the holiness of the Name and thereby preserving the holiness and sacredness of the Lord God in heaven.

The Tanach describes God as “*the Judge of all*” with the idea that all of mankind will eventually “*be judged.*” This is an essential element of the Apostolic Writings and the teachings of both Yeshua and the disciples. From the perspective of the Tanach, and from Judaism, within the Second Temple period, the people were looking for the restoration of Israel to the Davidic Kingdom. The concept of the coming of the kingdom of God brought with it the direct involvement of God taking and delivering Israel from the rule of pagan Empires that ruled the nations. The midrashim both for Tehillim and Midrash Rabbah contain Jewish sources that imagine the restoration of Israel and the destruction of the nations and/or the gathering of the nations to obedience to the One True God and to worship at His holy hill (Zion). Yeshua’s teachings appear to stand firmly in this tradition (interpretation), and with the coming of the “*Son of Man*” taken from a prophetic perspective (*Daniel 7*), Yeshua suggests that this process has begun in Him (Yeshua). Yeshua’s suffering death seemed to cast doubt on Yeshua’s teachings about himself, but his resurrection established his claim and clarified the interpretation of the Scriptures according to the Torah, Neviim, and Ketuvim (Tanach). Based upon this understanding of the Scriptures, our calling is to set our hands at work for God’s kingdom. Any interpretation or use of the phrase, “*the Kingdom of God,*” needs to be understood from this Jewish perspective and historical framework. The interpretations must be consistent with the Jewish hope of a Messiah, and this is David’s understanding in his request seeking the Lord to hear his prayer, to listen to his complaint, and seeking the Lord God in heaven for help.

David continues in his Psalm saying, ג תַּסְתִּירֵנִי מִסּוּד מְרַעִים מְרַגְּשֵׁת פְּעָלֵי אֲוֹן: ד אֲשֶׁר שָׁנְנוּ כְּחֶרֶב לְשׁוֹנָם, ה לִירוֹת בְּמִסְתָּרִים תָּם פְּתָאֵם יִרְהוּ וְלֹא יִרְאוּ: 64:2 *Hide me from the secret counsel of evildoers, From the tumult of those who do iniquity, 64:3 Who have sharpened their tongue like a sword. They aimed bitter speech as their arrow, 64:4 To shoot from concealment at the blameless; Suddenly they shoot at him, and do not fear. (NASB)* The Aramaic Targum and the Septuagint state the following:

Aramaic Targum

Toviyah / Psalms 64:3-5

64:3 *You will hide me from the secret [council] of those who do evil, from the turmoil of those who practice deceit. 64:4 Who have sharpened their tongue as a sword, bent their bows, smeared their arrows with deadly and bitter poison. 64:5 To shoot in secret, without blame; suddenly they will shoot him and they will not fear.*

ג תַּסְתִּירֵנִי מִסּוּד מְרַעִים מְרַגְּשֵׁת פְּעָלֵי אֲוֹן: ד די שְׁנִינוּ אֵיךְ סִיפָא לִישְׁנָהוֹן נִגְדוּ קִשְׁתָּהוֹן קִשּׁוּוֹתָהוֹן מִשְׁחוּ גִירִיָּהוֹן סִמָּא דְקִטּוּל וּמְרִיר: ה לְגִרָאָה בְּטוּמְרִיא בְּטוּמְרָא דְלֹא מוּם בְּתַכְיָף יִגְרוּן לֵיהּ וְלֹא יִדְחִלוּן:

Septuagint

Psalmoi / Psalms 64:2-4

64:2 *Thou hast sheltered me from the conspiracy of them that do wickedly; from the multitude of them that work iniquity; 64:3 who have sharpened their tongues as a sword; they have bent their bow maliciously; 64:4 to shoot in secret at the blameless; they will shoot him suddenly, and will not fear.*

64:2 ἐσκέπασάς με ἀπὸ συστροφῆς πονηρευομένων ἀπὸ πλήθους ἐργαζομένων τὴν ἀνομίαν
64:3 οἵτινες ἠκόνησαν ὡς ῥομφαίαν τὰς γλώσσας αὐτῶν ἐνέτειναν τόξον αὐτῶν πρᾶγμα
πικρὸν 64:4 τοῦ κατατοξεῦσαι ἐν ἀποκρύφοις ἄμωμον ἐξάπινα κατατοξεύσουσιν αὐτὸν καὶ
οὐ φοβηθήσονται

The Aramaic Targum states that in David's request of God, he seeks the Lord to hide him from the secret council of those who do evil. What is the secret council of those who do evil? He says that those who take council in secret are those who practice deceit. Those who do this seek to encourage themselves in an evil matter. The secret place is a reference to one's heart, the inward thoughts that are full of evil and sin. The judgment of God will come upon those who secretly conceive to do evil and who deceive themselves in their own hearts. This reminds us of the prophet Jeremiah's words in *Jeremiah 23:15-20*.

Jeremiah 23:15-20

23:15 *'Therefore thus says the Lord of hosts concerning the prophets, 'Behold, I am going to feed them wormwood And make them drink poisonous water, For from the prophets of Jerusalem Pollution has gone forth into all the land.'* 23:16 *Thus says the Lord of hosts, 'Do not listen to the words of the prophets who are prophesying to you. They are leading you into futility; They speak a vision of their own imagination, Not from the mouth of the Lord. 23:17 'They keep saying to those who despise Me, 'The Lord has said, 'You will have peace"; And as for everyone who walks in the stubbornness of his own heart, They say, 'Calamity will not come upon you.'* 23:18 *'But who has stood in the council of the Lord, That he should see and hear His word? Who has given heed to His word and listened? 23:19 'Behold, the storm of the Lord has gone forth in wrath, Even a whirling tempest; It will swirl down on the head of the wicked. 23:20 'The anger of the Lord will not turn back Until He has performed and carried out the purposes of His heart; In the last days you will clearly understand it. (NASB)*

Jeremiah speaks of walking in the stubbornness of one's heart that is due to despising the Lord God in heaven and despising His commands. The stubbornness of the heart, the evil heart, of the wicked is paralleled to the righteous who stand in the council of the Lord. The council of the Lord is to see and hear His word, the Scriptures. But not only this, the one who seeks and hears also gives heed and listens meaning that one obeys. Remember in Parashat Ki Tavo (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 26:1-29:8*), Moshe lists the blessing that follows the one who listens and obeys (השמעים והשמרים) God's Word and the curse that follows when one chooses not to listen and obey. *Devarim / Deuteronomy 28:1* states יהי א-שמוע תשמע בקול יהוה אלהיך saying "now it comes to be that you listen hearing the voice of the Lord God to keep and to do ..." Note how the phrase א-שמוע תשמע is translated as "diligently obey" according to the NASB. The first word א-שמוע is a 3rd—ע Qal noun meaning "to hear or to listen" and תשמע is written in the imperfect Qal second person masculine singular form denoting a past action that is in progress but not completed at the time in question. This Hebrew phrase is translated in English as to "diligently obey" the Lord your God. It is interesting that, the verse says "if you listen to the voice of the Lord your God" (יהי א-שמוע תשמע) in Hebrew, the imperfect form indicates that listening is an ongoing process that is not yet complete. This suggests the process of listening (hearing) and obeying God's voice is an

ongoing, daily, life long process. A parallel is drawn within the sentence on “listening or hearing the voice of the Lord God” and “to keep” (לְשַׁמֵּר) and “to do” (לַעֲשׂוֹת) what God has commanded. This is the Torah context for the book of Jeremiah. This is the Torah context for David’s words in the Psalm. The ungodly seek the secret council of their hearts rather than the open council of God in His Word.

Based on *Tehillim / Psalms 64:2-4*, David understands the tongue to be synonymous to the sword capable of striking and cutting deep, not so much as to cut the flesh, but to cut deep down to the soul. They desire to shoot in secret so that no one sees their actions, and their thought is that if no one sees, they are without blame (64:5 *To shoot in secret, without blame; suddenly they will shoot him and they will not fear. EMC*) The idea is that if nobody sees the thoughts in their hearts, they do not fear. The point is that we should be very concerned with the thoughts of our hearts, because the Lord God in heaven sees the thoughts of our hearts. In addition, the rabbis interpret the intent of the heart as being synonymous to having performed the act of sin and being guilty of sin. Yeshua also taught this according to Matthew chapter 5 and lusting for a woman and hating your brother. Lusting for a woman, one has already committed adultery, and hating your brother, one has already committed murder. We should seek the Lord as David is seeking the Lord to purify our hearts, and to motivate our hearts to study His word for the purpose of the washing of the water of the word (*Ephesians 5:26*) to cleans us and our hearts. The Word of God has the function of wiping clean the junk that we put into our hearts. The junk that we put in has the capacity to lead us to sin. Similarly, the light of God’s word that we place in our hearts through study, has the capacity to lead us to live a life of holiness and righteousness, with the help of God!

David continues describing the wicked in the following way, וְיַחֲזִיקוּ-לְמוֹ | דְּבַר רָע יִסְפְּרוּ לְטֹמוֹן מוֹקְשִׁים, 64:5 *They hold fast to themselves an evil purpose; They talk of laying snares secretly; They say, ‘Who can see them?’ (NASB)* The Aramaic Targum states, וְיִתְקַפּוּן לְהוֹן פִּתְגָם בִּישׁ יִשְׁתַּעוֹן לְמַכְמָן, 64:6 *They will strengthen themselves with an evil word; they will talk of hiding traps, saying, “Who sees them?” (EMC)* The Septuagint states, 64:5 ἐκρᾶταιώσαν ἑαυτοῖς λόγον πονηρὸν διηγήσαντο τοῦ κρύψαι παγίδας εἶπαν τίς ὄψεται αὐτούς 64:5 *They have set up for themselves an evil matter; they have given counsel to hide snares; they have said, Who shall see them? (LXX)* The ungodly man in the secret place of his heart devises evil towards his fellow man. The only reason that an unrighteous person would continue in his ways is because he believes God does not see him. This reminds us of David’s words in *Tehillim / Psalms 94:1-14* which say the following:

Tehillim / Psalms 94:1-14

94:1 O Lord, God of vengeance, God of vengeance, shine forth! 94:2 Rise up, O Judge of the earth, Render recompense to the proud. 94:3 How long shall the wicked, O Lord, How long shall the wicked exult? 94:4 They pour forth words, they speak arrogantly; All who do wickedness vaunt themselves. 94:5 They crush Your people, O Lord, And afflict Your heritage. 94:6 They slay the widow and the stranger And murder the orphans. 94:7 They have said, ‘The Lord does not see, Nor does the God of Jacob pay heed.’ 94:8 Pay heed, you senseless among the people; And when will you understand, stupid ones? 94:9 He who planted the ear, does He not hear? He who formed the eye, does He not see? 94:10 He who chastens the nations, will He not rebuke, Even He who teaches man knowledge? 94:11 The Lord knows the thoughts of man, That they are a mere breath. 94:12 Blessed is the man whom You chasten, O Lord, And whom You teach out of Your law; 94:13 That You may grant him relief from the days of adversity, Until a pit is dug for the wicked. 94:14 For the Lord will not abandon His people, Nor will He forsake His inheritance. (NASB)

David points out that 94:7 *They have said, ‘The Lord does not see, Nor does the God of Jacob pay heed.’ (NASB)* The abuse and misuse of the widow, the stranger, the orphan, comes by the person who does not believe in truth, justice, mercy, and righteousness and does not believe God sees or cares. David says however the Lord God does hear, the proof is the Lord created the ear and the eye, the Lord is the one who

gives man knowledge. The idea here is that as a man grows and learns, it is the Lord God who enables the man to learn. Learning is not simply a work of our own hands. An important point to take note of is when one wants to learn and is studying, ask the Lord to help because these Scriptures say it is the Lord God in heaven who teaches a man knowledge. The description David gives in *Tehillim / Psalms 94*, of the wicked, their affliction, their arrogance, how they crush God's people, and deal deceitfully with man, even their own brothers, this is very similar to the way David is describing the ungodly in *Tehillim / Psalms 64*.

David describes the evil plans of the wicked as, ז יִחַפְּשׂוּ עוֹלֹת תִּמְנְנוּ חֶפְזֵי מְחַפְּשׁ וְקָרַב אִישׁ וְלֵב עֲמִיקָא: 64:6 *They devise injustices, saying, 'We are ready with a well-conceived plot'; For the inward thought and the heart of a man are deep. (NASB)* The plans that are conceived are "injustices," as compared to God's ways which are done in righteousness, holiness, truth, and justice. The Aramaic Targum states, ז יִבְלִשׁוּן: 64:7 *They will search to find pretexts to destroy the pure, a search carried out in the body of a son of man, and the thoughts of a secret heart. (EMC)* and the Septuagint states, 64:6 ἐξήρησύνησαν ἀνομίας ἐξέλιπον ἐξερעυνῶντες ἐξερעυνήσει προσελεύσεται ἄνθρωπος καὶ καρδία βαθεῖα 4:6 *They have searched out iniquity; they have wearied themselves with searching diligently, a man shall approach and the heart is deep, (LXX)* Note how the Aramaic Targum states that the wicked will search to find pretexts in order to destroy the poor. What does it mean to search for pretexts? A pretext is an excuse to do something or say something that is not accurate. Pretexts may be based on a half-truth or a person may develop a context (a story, a fabrication) for the purpose of misleading. Pretexts have been used to conceal the true purpose or rationale behind actions and words. In the case of the wicked from this Psalm perspective, the pretext is used to hide the hidden desire to do injustice to another. In US law, a pretext describes false reasons that hide the true intentions or motivations for a legal action. For example, a "pretextual" arrest by law enforcement officers is one carried out for illegal purposes such as to conduct an unjustified search and seizure. The rabbis, translating the Masoretic text into Aramaic, speak of the pretext in the sense that the wicked do such within the body, within the thoughts of a "secret" heart. The idea of a secret heart suggests that there are those who do not have a secret heart, those whose hearts are open for all to see in their good deeds. The Septuagint states that the wicked search out iniquity and they do so much so that their weary themselves in their schemes and plans of unrighteousness.

David concludes his Psalm saying the Lord will save him from the hidden plans of the enemy, ה וַיִּרְם: 64:7 *But God will shoot at them with an arrow; Suddenly they will be wounded. (NASB)* In the plans of the unrighteous, even their own tongues will work against them, and this appears to be the work of God. ט וַיִּכְשִׁילְהוּ עֲלִימוֹ לְשׁוֹנָם יִתְנוּדְדוּ כָּל-רֵאֵה כָּם: י וַיִּירָאוּ כָּל-אֲדָם וַיִּגִּידוּ פֶּעַל אֱלֹהִים: 64:8 *So they will make him stumble; Their own tongue is against them; All who see them will shake the head. 64:9 Then all men will fear; And they will declare the work of God, And will consider what He has done. (NASB)* The glory belongs to the Lord in David's statement of faith when he says, יא וְיִשְׂרָיִל-לֵב: 64:10 *The righteous man will be glad in the Lord and will take refuge in Him; And all the upright in heart will glory. (LXX)* The Aramaic and Septuagint translate these verses to say the following:

Aramaic Targum

Toviyah / Psalms 64:8-11

64:8 *But God will shoot arrows at them suddenly; and they will tell of their wounds. 64:9 And their tongue will make them stumble; all who see them shall move aside. 64:10 And all the sons of men will be afraid, and tell of the work of the Lord God; and his works will be understood. 64:11 The righteous man will rejoice in the Lord, and trust in his word, and all the upright of heart will boast. (EMC)*

ה ויגרי עילויהון אלהא גיררא בתכיה ויתנון על מחתיהון: ט ויתקלון להון לישנהון יטלטלון כל

דחמי בהון ברישיהון כל דחמי להון: י וידחלון כל בני נשא ויחון ויתגון עובדא דיהוה אלהים
ועובדיה יהון מתביינין: יא יחדי צדיקא ביהוה ויתרחיץ במימריה וישתבחון כל תריצי ליבא:

Septuagint

Psalmoi / Psalms 64:7-10

664:7 and God shall be exalted, their wounds were caused by the weapon of the foolish children, 64:8 and their tongues have set him at nought, all that saw them were troubled; 64:9 and every man was alarmed, and they related the works of God, and understood his deeds. 64:10 The righteous shall rejoice in the Lord, and hope on him, and all the upright in heart shall be praised. (LXX)

64:7 και ὑψωθήσεται ὁ θεός βέλος νηπίων ἐγενήθησαν αἱ πληγαὶ αὐτῶν 64:8 και ἐξησθένησαν ἐπ' αὐτοὺς αἱ γλῶσσαι αὐτῶν ἐταράχθησαν πάντες οἱ θεωροῦντες αὐτοὺς 64:9 και ἐφοβήθη πᾶς ἄνθρωπος και ἀνήγγειλαν τὰ ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ και τὰ ποιήματα αὐτοῦ συνῆκαν 64:10 εὐφρανθήσεται δίκαιος ἐπὶ τῷ κυρίῳ και ἐλπιδί ἐπ' αὐτόν και ἐπαινεσθήσονται πάντες οἱ εὐθεῖς τῆ καρδία

The Aramaic Targum states that God shoots arrows at the wicked. The Septuagint states that God will be exalted in their wounds. Solomon said in *Mishley / Proverbs 11:21* *Be sure of this: The wicked will not go unpunished, but those who are righteous will go free. (NIV)* These words echo Parashat Vayelech (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 31:1-31:30*) and *Devarim / Deuteronomy 31:3-8*:

Devarim / Deuteronomy 31:3-8

31:3 'It is the Lord your God who will cross ahead of you; He will destroy these nations before you, and you shall dispossess them. Joshua is the one who will cross ahead of you, just as the Lord has spoken. 31:4 'The Lord will do to them just as He did to Sihon and Og, the kings of the Amorites, and to their land, when He destroyed them. 31:5 'The Lord will deliver them up before you, and you shall do to them according to all the commandments which I have commanded you. 31:6 'Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or tremble at them, for the Lord your God is the one who goes with you. He will not fail you or forsake you.' 31:7 Then Moses called to Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel, 'Be strong and courageous, for you shall go with this people into the land which the Lord has sworn to their fathers to give them, and you shall give it to them as an inheritance. 31:8 'The Lord is the one who goes ahead of you; He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.' (NASB)

Notice how the Lord God goes ahead of Israel to destroy the nations before them. This is synonymous to the words David is saying in the Psalm. The Lord will go before us if we are moving about in life with pure motivations and with a pure heart. Note that there are many Torah concepts found within the Psalms. For example, the Torah speaks of uncleanness, both spiritually and physically, protection from death, and protection by innocent blood. David is applying the concept of the Lord going before His people for their protection. In *Tehillim / Psalms 51*, David asks to be cleansed from sin by the phrase **תְּתַטְּאֵנִי בְּאֶזוֹב וְאֶטְהַר** which translates literally as “my sins in hyssop and I will be clean.” Based on the way he worded his psalm, he is asking the Lord to cleans him both inwardly and outwardly. David desires not only that his sins be forgiven him but that his heart would be made pure in *Tehillim / Psalms 51:12-13*, **יְבַרְכֵנוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, וְלֹא תִקַּח מִמֶּנִּי רוּחַ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, וְלֹא תִקַּח מִמֶּנִּי רוּחַ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, וְלֹא תִקַּח מִמֶּנִּי רוּחַ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, וְלֹא תִקַּח מִמֶּנִּי רוּחַ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ.** “Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.” (NASB) David asks the Lord to literally, “return to me” (**הֲשִׁיבָה לִּי**) which provides

for us the idea of the Lord God “returning” to David. This is reminiscent of having a repentant attitude, the turning from sin, returning to the Way of the Lord, etc. Isn’t it interesting how all of these requests suggest that the Lord is the one who is doing these things on David’s behalf, even helping him to have a sustained spirit within (וְרוּחַ נְדִיבָה תִּסְמְכֵנִי) or to “uphold” his spirit within. It may be in this way David is understanding God’s role in his life, just as Moshe said in Parashat Vayelech that the Lord is going before Israel into the land to defeat the nations for them. The Psalms suggest the Lord’s role in our lives is to keep us willing, to create in us a willing spirit to be obedient and not sin, and it is by the power of His Holy Spirit that enables us to be successful in our daily lives. This should be our prayer today that the Lord would help us to live obedient lives. And then we can stand beside David and say as he said in *Tehillim / Psalms 64:10* *The righteous man will be glad in the Lord and will take refuge in Him; And all the upright in heart will glory.* (NASB) Let’s Pray!

Rabbinic Commentary

The Rabbinic Commentary (Midrash) on *Tehillim / Psalms 64* has 1 part. Reading through the Midrash we will be looking at Part 1. Let’s begin by outlining *Midrash Tehillim Chapter 64, Part 1*.

Outline of Midrash Tehillim / Psalms, Chapter 64, Part 1.

Part 1

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דִּבּוּר הַמַּתְחִיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*For the leader. A Psalm of David/ Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer; preserve my life from fear of the enemy (Tehillim / Psalms 64:1-2)*”
- The פְּתִיחָה (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*These words are to be read in the light of what Scripture says elsewhere, Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He reveals His secret unto His servants the prophets (Amos 3:7).*”
- The מִשָּׁל (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the פְּתִיחָה (Petihta), the rabbis comment upon David’s words saying that the Lord showed David what would happen to Daniel. The midrash continues with examples of how this was so in Daniel’s life.
- The נִמְשָׁל (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the מִשָּׁל (mashal), the rabbis expand upon the mashal by contrasting what happened to Daniel, the lion’s den, the king, and those who were cast into the lion’s den following Daniel’s deliverance.
- The Concluding phrase says, “*How many were cast into the den of lions? Mark what Scripture says, It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom a hundred and twenty satraps and over them three presidents, of whom Daniel was one (Daniel 6:2-3). Thus, there were one hundred and twenty two men, and one hundred and twenty two wives, and one hundred and twenty two children, for Scripture says, them, their children, and their wives, making three hundred four lions who tore each one into four pieces, one piece for every beast, the beasts tearing them apart even before they got down to the bottom of the den, as is said, They had not come to the bottom of the den; there were one thousand four hundred and sixty four lions. Hence, it is said, He that is righteous will be glad in the Lord, and will take refuge in Him; and all the upright in heart will glory (Tehillim / Psalms 64:11).*”

Midrash Tehillim 64, Part 1 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דִּבּוּר הַמַּתְחִיל) saying “*For the leader. A Psalm of David, Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer; preserve my life from fear of the enemy (Tehillim / Psalms 64:1-2)*” The rabbis open looking at David’s calling out to the Lord to hear his prayer and to preserve his life. The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*These words are to be read in the light of what Scripture says elsewhere, Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but He reveals His secret unto His servants the prophets (Amos 3:7).*” (הוּא שֶׁאָמַר הַכְּתוּב כִּי לֹא יַעֲשֶׂה (ה') [אֲדַנִּי אֱלֹהִים] דְּבַר כִּי אִם גְּלוּהוּ סוּדוֹ אֵל)

(עבדיו הנביאים) (עמוס ג ז) The rabbis say the Lord will surely do nothing? Why do they say that God will do nothing? Could this be related to the question of “*why does God allow bad things to happen to good people,*” and the consequences that fall upon our choices in life? The Torah tells us, “*God created man in His image, in the image of God He created him*” (*Bereshit / Genesis 1:27*). How are we to understand what it means to be created in God’s image? Man is finite and corporal so how are we created in God’s image? The “*image of God*” that is described in the Scriptures may be dealing with the non-physical part of us, the spirit and the soul. The example of this may be related to our desire for morality and meaning in life. Our desire to make a difference may be derived from the soul which is made in the “*image of God.*” By this image, we are given the ability to make independent choices, such as that of moral character. In addition, the one thing that sets us apart from the rest of creation is our ability to create new things and to improve our living conditions. The concept of “*choice*” is most important here because it is our ability to choose that makes life meaningful for each of us. An example is found in the difference in being “*programmed to love*” versus the choice to love. The difference between these types of love is what makes love significant. Similarly, if I don’t have the choice to do maasim tovim (to do good), but am programmed to do good, then there’s nothing meaningful about doing good. Whereas if I have the ability to do both good and evil, then the concept of “*good*” becomes significant. The message here goes deeper, because our choices have consequences. For example, if every time I get in trouble, my dad comes to bail me out, that’s not real choice. Choice brings with it consequences. Throughout history, from a national perspective, down to the individual, consequences follow from our choices. For example, in Parashat Devarim, the people’s fear leads to a failure to trust God. As a result they rebel against God’s plan for them to enter the land he promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 1:7-8*). The Lord had brought Israel out of slavery in Egypt, given them His Torah on Mt. Horeb (Sinai), and brought the people swiftly to the borders of the promised land (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 1:19-20*). Moshe then announces it is time to enter the land, but the people are fearful of the Amorites who occupy the borders. Their choice to fear the Amorites rather than God, and lack of trust in God led to their spending an additional 40 years in the wilderness and dying in the wilderness. Could our fear and lack of trusting in the Lord lead to the Lord not doing anything?

The “*image of God*” means that God created beings who have the ability to make decisions, and those decisions will create consequences which make us co-partners with the Lord in the direction and development of the world. Based on these things (this understanding), we have our answer to “*why bad things happen to good people.*” When “*bad*” things happen, there are many possibilities as to why it’s happening. A few questions come to mind regarding the question:

Why do bad things happen?

1. Is this a challenge in life that was given to me so I could become an example to inspire others?
2. Is this to get me to fix a wrong I’ve done?
3. Is this due to historical or national consequences that are affecting me as an individual?
4. Is what’s happening to me now the result of a choice that I’ve made in the past?
5. Am I on my own because I have distanced myself from the Lord through sin?

These are all very important questions that need to be worked on a person by person basis. This question of why bad things happen may be the reason why the Rabbis open with the comment based on David’s cry to the Lord to hear his prayer and to preserve his life from his enemies. The rabbis quote from *Amos 3:6-8* which states, *3:6 If a trumpet is blown in a city will not the people tremble? If a calamity occurs in a city has not the Lord done it? 3:7 Surely the Lord God does nothing Unless He reveals His secret counsel To His servants the prophets. 3:8 A lion has roared! Who will not fear? The Lord God has spoken! Who can but prophesy? (NASB)* The Scriptures say the Lord reveals to His prophets the reasons trouble comes. The

midrash continues by drawing a parallel between David and Daniel, saying that the Lord made known to David what he would do to Daniel.

Rabbi Tahalifa maintained, The Holy One blessed be He, made known to David what would be done to Daniel. Indeed, had the heathen any power at all to do anything to the Holy One blessed be He, they would have done it. This, the sons of Korach implied when they said, They have cast fire into Your Sanctuary (Tehillim / Psalms 74:7) that is, had the heathen been able to ascend so as to break into the heavens, they would have broken in; for the words But now they break down and carved work thereof, with axes and hammers (Tehillim / Psalms 74:6) mean that since the heathen were unable to break into heaven, they broke down the sanctuary on earth; and the words The kings of the earth stand up, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against His anointed (Tehillim / Psalms 2:2) mean that because the heathen could not prevail against God in heaven, they took counsel against Daniel, as is said, All the presidents of the kingdom, the prefects and the satraps, took counsel together that the king should establish a statute, and make a strong interdict, that whosoever will ask a petition of any god or man for thirty days, save of you, O king, he will be cast into the den of lions. Now, O King, establish the interdict, and sign the writing (Daniel 6:8-9). (Midrash Tehillim 64, Part 1)

The concept here is that if the heathen, the ungodly, the unrighteous, the wicked, had the power to do anything to the Lord God in heaven, they would have done it. If they could have broken into heaven, they would have done so. But since they do not have the ability to do these things to the Lord God in heaven, they do these things to God's servants, and this may be the reason why the rabbis say God reveals (makes known) to David what would happen to Daniel. This statement in the midrash alludes to the rabbinic thought that David was also a prophet. The comparison here is regarding the anointed one, David is the anointed one of God, and Daniel was also the anointed one of God. The rabbis maintain that the Scriptures speak of the Lord God bringing His anointed one to deliver Israel. In both of these instances, David and Daniel function as a deliverer for God's people. The idea behind the story of Daniel was that nobody was to pray to any god besides to king Darius for 30 days. This may have been an attempt to wipe out the Jewish people in exile in Babylon. The rabbis also believe that the Lord God has kept an anointed one for each generation, and presently the anointed one (the messiah) is hidden.

In Jewish eschatology, the term *mashiach* (מָשִׁיחַ) "*Messiah*," came to refer to a future Jewish King from the Davidic line, who is expected to be anointed with holy anointing oil and rule the Jewish people during the Messianic Age. (see '*The Jewish Virtual Library*' on "*The Messiah*") In the MT, the Messiah is often referred to as "*King Messiah*" (מֶלֶךְ הַמְּשִׁיחַ), and in Aramaic, "*malka meshiḥa*" (מַלְכָּא מְשִׁיחָא). Orthodox views have generally held that the Messiah will be descended from his father through the line of King David, and will gather the Jews back into the Land of Israel, usher in an era of peace, build the Third Temple, father a male heir and re-institute the Sanhedrin, among other things. In addition, Jewish tradition alludes to two redeemers, both of whom are called *mashiach* and are involved in ushering in the Messianic age, "*Mashiach ben David*" and "*Mashiach ben Yosef*." The Talmud discusses the coming of the Messiah (*Talmud Bavli Sanhedrin 98a*) and describes a period of freedom and peace, which will be the time of ultimate goodness for the Jews and for all of mankind. The tractate Sanhedrin contains a long discussion of the events leading to the coming of the Messiah, for example:

Talmud Bavli Sanhedrin 98a

R. Johanan said: When you see a generation ever dwindling, hope for him [the Messiah], as it is written, "And the afflicted people thou wilt save." [2 Samuel 22:28] R. Johanan said: When thou seest a generation overwhelmed by many troubles as by a river, await him, as it is written, "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him;" which is followed by, "And the Redeemer shall come to Zion."

R. Johanan also said: The son of David will come only in a generation that is either altogether righteous or altogether wicked. In a generation that is altogether righteous, — as it is written, “Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever.” Or altogether wicked, — as it is written, “And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor;” and it is [elsewhere] written, “For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it.”

The talmudic story of the coming of the messiah is coupled with the belief in the ability of one’s actions to hasten his arrival. The rabbis provide many stories about the Messiah, some of which represent famous Talmudic sages as receiving personal visitations from Elijah the Prophet and the Messiah. One example taken from the *Talmud Bavli Sanhedrin 98a* is as follows:

Talmud Bavli Sanhedrin 98a

R. Joshua b. Levi met Elijah standing by the entrance of R. Simeon b. Yohai’s tomb. He asked him: “Have I a portion in the world to come?” He replied, “if this Master desires it.” R. Joshua b. Levi said, “I saw two, but heard the voice of a third.” He then asked him, “When will the Messiah come?” — “Go and ask him himself,” was his reply. “Where is he sitting?” — “At the entrance.” “And by what sign may I recognize him?” — “He is sitting among the poor lepers: all of them untie [them] all at once, and re-bandage them together; whereas he unties and re-bandages each separately, [before treating the next], thinking, should I be wanted, [it being time for my appearance as the Messiah] I must not be delayed [through having to bandage a number of sores].” So he went to him and greeted him, saying, “Peace upon thee, Master and Teacher.” “Peace upon thee, O son of Levi,” he replied. “When wilt thou come, Master?” asked he. “Today,” was his answer. On his returning to Elijah, the latter inquired, “What did he say to thee?” — “peace Upon thee, O son of Levi,” he answered. Thereupon he [Elijah] observed, “He thereby assured thee and thy father of [a portion in] the world to come.” “He spoke falsely to me,” he rejoined, “stating that he would come today, but has not.” He [Elijah] answered him, “This is what he said to thee, To-day, if ye will listen to his voice.”

The point is that the Lord God provides for His people a deliverer, and according to the Midrash, the wicked are opposed to the Lord God in heaven, and His ways, and hold such strong opposition to God’s ways that they would break into heaven if it were possible. The midrash states the wicked, not being capable of breaking into heaven, they instead attack God’s anointed one, and His people.

The Midrash continues saying,

The presidents and the satraps said to Darius, Are you not a king to do just such? All kings establish statutes and make laws, as it is said according to the law of the Medes and Persians (Daniel 6:9). But in your life time, you have not established any statute. The king, hearing them say, Now, O King, establish the interdict and sign the writing, gave in to them and King Darius signed the writing and the interdict (Daniel 6:9-10). And when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed (Daniel 6:11) saying, Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer; preserve my life from the terror of the enemy (Tehillim / Psalms 64:1). When they sought out Daniel, they found him as he stood praying, as it is said Then these men came tumultuously, and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God (Daniel 6:12). Whereupon, Daniel uttered the following words before God, These men come tumultuously upon me, Hide me from the council of the evil doers; from the tumult of the workers of iniquity (Tehillim / Psalms 64:3).

The rabbis recount the story of king Darius establishing a law forcing everyone in his kingdom to worship the image he built. Daniel maintained praying to the Lord God in heaven rather than Darius' image. The men inspired the king to establish this law and then laid in wait for Daniel to disobey the Law and sought to have him killed. The Midrash states that “*Daniel praying and making supplication before his God (Daniel 6:12). Whereupon, Daniel uttered the following words before God, These men come tumultuously upon me, Hide me from the council of the evil doers; from the tumult of the workers of iniquity (Tehillim / Psalms 64:3).*” The rabbis are saying that David prophetically recorded the words that Daniel would say at a future time. Daniel is understood as being anointed of God. Anointed, in the plural, “*my anointed ones*” in the midrash may refer to the patriarchs. However, the patriarchs were never anointed with oil, like priests, prophets, and kings in later times. David speaks of the anointed ones (plural) according to *Tehillim / Psalms 105*.

Tehillim / Psalms 105:6-15

105:6 O seed of Abraham, His servant, O sons of Jacob, His chosen ones! 105:7 He is the Lord our God; His judgments are in all the earth. 105:8 He has remembered His covenant forever, The word which He commanded to a thousand generations, 105:9 The covenant which He made with Abraham, And His oath to Isaac. 105:10 Then He confirmed it to Jacob for a statute, To Israel as an everlasting covenant, 105:11 Saying, ‘To you I will give the land of Canaan As the portion of your inheritance,’ 105:12 When they were only a few men in number, Very few, and strangers in it. 105:13 And they wandered about from nation to nation, From one kingdom to another people. 105:14 He permitted no man to oppress them, And He reproved kings for their sakes: 105:15 ‘Do not touch My anointed ones, And do My prophets no harm.’ (NASB)

ו זַרַע אַבְרָהָם עֲבָדוֹ בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב בְּחִירָיו: ז הוּא יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּכָל-הָאָרֶץ מְשֹׁפְטִיו: ח זָכַר לְעוֹלָם בְּרִיתוֹ דָּבָר צְוָה לְאַלְף דּוֹר: ט אֲשֶׁר כָּרַת אֶת-אַבְרָהָם וּשְׁבוּעָתוֹ לְיִשְׁחָק: י וַיַּעֲמִידָהּ לְיַעֲקֹב לְחַק לְיִשְׂרָאֵל בְּרִית עוֹלָם: יא לְאֹמֵר לָהּ אֲתָן אֶת-אָרֶץ כְּנָעַן חֶבְל נְחֻלְתְּכֶם: יב בְּהִיוֹתָם מְתֵי מִסְפָּר כְּמַעֲט וְגָרִים בָּהּ: יג וַיִּתְּהַלְכוּ מִגּוֹי אֶל-גּוֹי מִמַּמְלָכָה אֶל-עַם אַחֵר: יד לֹא-הִנִּיחַ אֶדָם לְעַשְׂקָם וַיּוֹכַח עֲלֵיהֶם מְלָכִים: טו אֶל-תִּגְעוּ בְּמִשְׁיָחַי וּלְנַבְיָאֵי אֵל-תִּרְעוּ:

Here the term בְּמִשְׁיָחַי “*My anointed ones*” is a reference to the Lord’s prophets (וְלְנַבְיָאֵי). Note that the Anointed ones are also applied to the covenant people as a whole according to *Tehillim / Psalm 89:38 and 89:51*.

The midrash continues saying,

As soon as the presidents and the satraps found the means, they approached the king, as is said, Then they came near, and spoke before the king concerning the king’s interdict, Have you not signed the interdict that every man that will make petition unto any god or man within thirty days, save unto you, O king, will be cast into the den of lions? The king answered and said, The thing is true, according to the law of the Medes and the Persians, which is not altered. Then they answered and said before the king, That Daniel, who is of the children of the captivity of Judah, does not regard you, O king, nor the interdict that you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day. Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore displeased, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him; and he labored till the going down of the sun to rescue him (Daniel 6:13-15). As the presidents and the satraps reproached the king, he said, Look you, you are not to be believed, and so they kept quiet the whole day. At the going down of the sun, Daniel began to pray, saying, Because of these wicked men, should not a man pray? Hence, it is said, The king labored till the going down of the sun to rescue him. Surely, if Daniel did what he did for the sake of a prayer which a man may omit without

fear of being cut down by heaven or being put to death by a court, how much more ought we to heed other obligations for whose neglect we are liable to be cut down by heaven to save Daniel, he could not do so, for the presidents and the satraps said to him, You have told us You are not to be believed. Behold. You have seen for yourself. (Midrash Tehillim 64, Part 1)

The concept put forward here in the midrash, is that Daniel feared the Lord God in heaven more than the courts of men and their legal ruling. Daniel realized that compromising with temporal powers can never lead to redemption. Generally speaking, compromise leads to falling away from God's Mitzvot. For example, most "Believers" today have accepted the unrighteous code of Law makers, instead of insisting that the Law makers follow God's morality as described in His Torah. The kingdoms of this world use force, for there is no love in what they do. Whereas the kingdom of God uses the Torah and love is the keeping of the Torah (*Romans 13:8*). There is a big difference between these two types of actions. The apostle James said there is only one lawgiver (*James 4:12*) who is the Lord (*Isaiah 33:22*). According to the Scriptures, governments have historically led people to sin (see *Daniel 3:4-6, 1 Kings 12:25-33, 14:21-24, 2 Kings 13:2, 17:21, 21:11,16, 2 Chronicles 21:6,11-13, Isaiah 9:16*), just as we are seeing here in Daniel chapter 7. According to the Prophets, in *1 Samuel 8:4-20*, the Lord God condemned Israel for wanting to be ruled like other nations, by a human king. When they chose to be ruled by a human leader, our Father in heaven considered that decision to be a rejection of Himself. The reason being, the people were choosing someone else to reign over them rather than God (*1 Samuel 8:7, 10:19*). Only later did the people realize their sin against the Lord when the man who was elected to govern them turned out to be unfaithful and disobedient to God's command (*1 Samuel 12:19*). The major thrust of the Prophets was not in the creation of new laws, but in the return and observance of God's Torah. Such is the case with Hezekiah and Josiah, it was a return to the ways of the Lord was made among them, God was pleased with their directing and requiring the judges, and other officers, to act according to the Torah. In addition, this is the thrust of the Apostolic Writings and the new covenant the Lord has made (*Jeremiah 31*) in the Messiah by writing His Torah on our hearts.

In addition, the Scriptures tell us that to serve an earthly king, or his government, is to serve other gods (*1 Samuel 8:8-9*). This may have been the result of the nations who believed their rulers to be gods or the son of the gods as in the Egyptian religion and Pharaoh. The Scriptures describe following disobedient government as a form of disobedience (*1 Samuel 12:17-19, 2 Kings 17:7-8*). The Lord rejected those who followed the statutes of governments instead of His Commandments (*2 Kings 17:19-20*). The reason being, throughout the history of Israel, the majority of the kings of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord (*1 Kings 11:4-9, 2 Kings 8:18*), showing us that the ruler who does not trust in the Lord results in governments that are corrupt. In the Apostolic Writings, the Jewish leaders, in similar historical fashion, chose king Caesar over the King Messiah Yeshua (*John 19:15*). Based upon the covenant agreement we have in Yeshua, and on all of Scripture, the duty of man is to live by God's commandments (*Ecclesiastes 12:13*), and not man's commandments which turn from the Truth (*Mark 7:7, Colossians 2:20-22, Titus 1:14*). The Apostle Paul said, the servant of the Messiah is to keep God's Torah (*Romans 13:8*). When we pray, we pray to do our Father's Will, not man's will (*Matthew 6:10, Luke 11:2*). The Lord rewards those who place His Laws above man-made laws (*Shemot / Exodus 1:17,20*). We are even instructed to avoid going to courts of law before the unjust and unbelievers (*1 Corinthians 6:1-8*) mostly for the reason of the corruption in the courts. David expounded upon these things according to His Psalms, saying *Tehillim / Psalms 1:1*, "Blessed is the man that walks not in the counsel of the ungodly." (NASB) The kings and rulers of the earth are against the Lord, and against his anointed (*Tehillim / Psalm 2:2*) where the wicked frame mischief and sin in their hearts.

Tehillim / Psalms 94:20

94:20 Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law? (KJV)

Isaiah 10:1-2

10:1-2 Woe unto them that prescribe grievous laws and take away the right from the poor.

Talmud Bavli Bekhorot 30

It is written (Gen. xxviii. ii), “And he took from the stones of the place;” and again it is written (ver. 18), “And he took the stone.” Rabbi Isaac says this teaches that all these stones gathered themselves together into one place, as if each were eager that the saint should lay his head upon it. It happened, as the Rabbis tell us, that all the stones were swallowed up by one another, and thus merged into one stone.

The rabbis speak of stones miraculously moving together with a reference to *Bereshit / Genesis 28:18*, the stone that Jacob slept upon and then arranged into a pillar and anointed with oil. They taught that the stones moved together into one place being eager that a saint (a righteous man) would lay his head upon it. Could the midrashic interpretation of the stone that covered the lion’s den having flew from Israel, be taken from this context, the stone moving so Daniel, the righteous man, would lay his head upon the rock? Thinking on stones and rocks moving, we are reminded of Yeshua’s words from *Matthew 17:20, 21:21, and Mark 11:23*.

Matthew 17:19-21

17:19 Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, ‘Why could we not drive it out?’ 17:20 And He said to them, ‘Because of the littleness of your faith; for truly I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you. 17:21 [‘But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.’] (NASB)

Matthew 21:20-22

21:20 Seeing this, the disciples were amazed and asked, ‘How did the fig tree wither all at once?’ 21:21 And Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Truly I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and cast into the sea,’ it will happen. 21:22 ‘And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.’ (NASB)

Mark 11:22-26

11:22 And Jesus answered saying to them, ‘Have faith in God. 11:23 ‘Truly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says is going to happen, it will be granted him. 11:24 ‘Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they will be granted you. 11:25 ‘Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father who is in heaven will also forgive you your transgressions. 11:26 [‘But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your transgressions.’] (NASB)

Yeshua speaks of having faith and moving mountains. The midrash speaking of the stone that flew from Israel to cover the mouth of the lion’s den, its movement is miraculous, and this occurs by the power of God. It was by the power of God, Daniel survived the situation. The midrash goes on saying, “*Rabbi Huna, in the name of rabbi Jose, interpreted the word stone as meaning that an angel, in the likeness of a lion, came and sat at the mouth of the den. And the proof? The verse My God has sent His angel, and has shut the lions’ mouths, and they have not hurt me (Daniel 6:23).*” They are indeed thinking of the miraculous work of the Lord to deliver Daniel. The midrash recounts the king’s anguish over Daniel, and the next morning he comes and asks Daniel if the living God has saved him from the lion’s mouths, and the midrash states that though David heard the king, he did not reply because he was reading the Shema. Was he also given a Torah scroll and cast into the lion’s den? This again may be a reference to the heathen who rage against the Lord, against His Torah (His ways), and against His anointed one. Daniel then answers the king and says the Lord sent His angel to close the mouth of the lions. The men who accused Daniel were then brought and

cast into the den, and they were consumed immediately.

Midrash Tehillim 64, Part 1 concludes saying, *“How many were cast into the den of lions? Mark what Scripture says, It pleased Darius to set over the kingdom a hundred and twenty satraps and over them three presidents, of whom Daniel was one (Daniel 6:2-3). Thus, there were one hundred and twenty two men, and one hundred and twenty two wives, and one hundred and twenty two children, for Scripture says, them, their children, and their wives, making three hundred four lions who tore each one into four pieces, one piece for every beast, the beasts tearing them apart even before they got down to the bottom of the den, as is said, They had not come to the bottom of the den; there were one thousand four hundred and sixty four lions. Hence, it is said, He that is righteous will be glad in the Lord, and will take refuge in Him; and all the upright in heart will glory (Tehillim / Psalms 64:11).”* The Scriptures say Darius set 120 satraps over the provinces and appointed three men over these satraps, one of whom was Daniel. Notice how the midrash adds, *וקכ"ב נשים, וקכ"ב בנים, וקכ"ב בנים* *“122 men, 122 wives, and 122 children.”* Why do the rabbis add two more men, wives, and children? Throughout the Psalms we find David expressing his total commitment and reliance in the Lord. Generations later, David’s descendant, Daniel, embodies this same character despite his power to interpret dreams, the authority that was given by Darius, and the challenges he faced each day trying to live a Torah observant life in the midst of Babylon. Daniel had been given all of these things and yet he did not become arrogant, he remained humble before the Lord. The addition of two more, may be the midrashic understanding of this psalm as prophetically referring to Daniel’s story and Darius the Mede taking over the rule and appointed 120 satraps to govern his country. These men were greedy and corrupt. Daniel was appointed as the head of all of them (along with 2 others). Some of these 120 satraps got together and tried to take Daniel down as they were jealous of him. Daniel was a righteous man who prayed three times daily, these men pressured Darius to decree that it was prohibited for one to pray to anyone other than Darius for the first 30 days of his reign. The satraps succeeded in having the king to make this decree into law, that any prayers recited not directly to the king would be punished by execution by being thrown into the lion’s pit. Daniel refused to stop praying to the living God and was *“caught.”* In addition, that this decree may have been a form of idolatry or individual persecution against Judaism in Babylon.

Tehillim / Psalms 64:6-8 states, 64:6 They devise injustices, saying, ‘We are ready with a well-conceived plot’; For the inward thought and the heart of a man are deep. 64:7 But God will shoot at them with an arrow; Suddenly they will be wounded. 64:8 So they will make him stumble; Their own tongue is against them; All who see them will shake the head. (NASB) Ungodly men will stumble by their own words and actions because the Lord God is shooting them with arrows due to their sin and wickedness. When the satraps saw that Daniel was untouched by the lions, they may have argued to the king that Daniel was not touched by the lions because they must not be hungry. The king threw them into the den, and the Scriptures say they were devoured immediately. He ordered that they all be thrown into the den to test if the lions were indeed hungry. The midrash asks how many were cast into the den? The rabbis refer to all 120 satraps being cast into the den. The wicked stumbled and fell into their own trap, and died. When the people witnessed the great miracle of Daniel’s salvation and the downfall of his conspirators they were brought to awe before the Lord, whom Daniel credited with his salvation. King Darius sent out a decree publicizing the miracle and giving credit to the Great God of Daniel who saved him. He acknowledged the Lord as the living God, eternal and all-powerful. When we experience the miracles and kindness of the Lord in our own lives, we strive to share it with others and pass on the faith that we have and to encourage others in the same. Daniel followed in the footsteps of his great predecessors King David who used the psalms as a powerful tool for showing the mercies of God, and singing praises to His name. Let’s Pray!

Heavenly Father,

You are a blessing to us always in the way in which You work to strengthen our faith, and giving us a willing spirit within to live obediently to Your words. We thank You for revealing Your truth and righteousness to us, and we thank You for David’s words which bring out these important discussion points which

help us to look more closely to our lives. Thank You for giving us the faith to believe in Yeshua the King Messiah! Please have mercy on us, forgive us for our sins, help us to live righteous lives, and to set our minds on those things that bring glory to Your Name. 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!

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

Notes