

Tehillim / Psalms 67 | ספר תהילים 67

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The Ger Toshav and the Gentile Believer

In this week's study from *Tehillim / Psalms 67:1-7*, the psalm opens saying, א לְמַנְצַח בְּנִגְיִנַת מְזֻמֹּר שִׁיר: *For the director of music. With stringed instruments. A psalm. A song. (NASB)* David continues saying, ב אֱלֹהִים יִחַנְנוּ וַיְבָרְכֵנוּ יְיָ אֱתָנוּ סְלָה: *67:1 God be gracious to us and bless us, And cause His face to shine upon us Selah. (NASB)* He appears to be quoting from the Aaronic blessing (*Bamidbar / Numbers 6:22-27*). David desires for the glory of the Lord to be known throughout the earth, ג לְדַעַת בְּאֶרֶץ דְּרָכָה *67:2 That Your way may be known on the earth, Your salvation among all nations. 67:3 Let the peoples praise You, O God; Let all the peoples praise You. (NASB)* The Aramaic Targum states, *67:3 To make known your way in the land, your redemption among all the Gentiles. 67:4 The Gentiles will give thanks in your presence, O God, all the Gentiles will give thanks. (EMC)* What is the significance of the Gentiles giving praise and thanks in the presence of God? Generally, the nations posed a threat to David and to the nation of Israel. David says “*that Your way may be made known,*” and the rabbis translate “*to make known Your way in the land.*” The blessing of His deliverance, will be proclaimed among the nations because of God's mighty hand to deliver Israel. David continues saying, ה יִשְׁמְחוּ וַיִּרְנְנוּ לְאֻמִּים כִּי-תִשְׁפֹּט עַמִּים מִיִּשׁוּר וּלְאֻמִּים | בְּאֶרֶץ תִּנְחֵם סְלָה: *67:4 Let the nations be glad and sing for joy; For You will judge the peoples with uprightness And guide the nations on the earth. Selah. (NASB)* When thinking upon the idea of the nations who oppose the nation of Israel and who oppose God, coupled with the Lord's deliverance and David's calling out to the Lord to make known among the nations the salvation of God, it is surprising that David says the nations will be glad and sing for joy. The reason being, the nations who are coming against Israel will be destroyed by the hand of the Lord. Is David referring to evil or righteous men in the nations? Are there righteous men who live amongst the nations that God would consider righteous? David concludes His Psalm saying, ו יְיָ יִדְוָה עַמִּים | אֱלֹהִים יְיָ יִדְוָה עַמִּים כָּל־אֶפְסֵי-אֲרָץ: *67:5 Let the peoples praise You, O God; Let all the peoples praise You. 67:6 The earth has yielded its produce; God, our God, blesses us. 67:7 God blesses us, That all the ends of the earth may fear Him. (NASB)* It could be those who are righteous who live among the nations that David is referring to. With regard to the righteous who live among the nations, is there salvation outside of being joined with Israel? What does it mean to be joined with Israel? Is it possible to take hold of the Salvation of God and not be a part of the nation of Israel? Hopefully these questions and more will be answered within this study.

עברית	Hebrew	ארמי	Aramaic	ελληνικός	Greek
ספר תהלים פרק 67	ספר תהלים פרק 67	ספר טוביה פרק 67	ספר טוביה פרק 67	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 67	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 67
א לְמַנְצַח בְּנִגְיִנַת מְזֻמֹּר שִׁיר:	א לְמַנְצַח בְּנִגְיִנַת מְזֻמֹּר שִׁיר:	א לשבחא בנגינתא תושבחתא ושׁי-	א לשבחא בנגינתא תושבחתא ושׁי-	67:1	67:1 εἰς τὸ τέλος ἐν ὕμνοις ψαλμὸς ᾠδῆς ὁ θεὸς οἰκτιρήσαι ἡμᾶς καὶ εὐλογῆσαι ἡμᾶς ἐπιφάναι τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ ἐφ’ ἡμᾶς διάγαλμα
ב אֱלֹהִים יִחַנְנוּ וַיְבָרְכֵנוּ יְיָ אֱתָנוּ סְלָה:	ב אֱלֹהִים יִחַנְנוּ וַיְבָרְכֵנוּ יְיָ אֱתָנוּ סְלָה:	רתא: ב אלהא יחוס עלנא ויברכי-	רתא: ב אלהא יחוס עלנא ויברכי-	67:2	67:2 τοῦ γνῶναι ἐν τῇ γῆ τὴν ὁδὸν σου ἐν πᾶσιν ἔθνεσιν τὸ σωτήριόν σου 67:3 ἐξομολογησάσθωσάν σοι λαοὶ ὁ θεὸς ἐξομολογησάσθωσάν σοι λαοὶ πάντες
ג לְדַעַת בְּאֶרֶץ דְּרָכָה	ג לְדַעַת בְּאֶרֶץ דְּרָכָה	ג להודעא לאודעא בארעא אורחך	ג להודעא לאודעא בארעא אורחך	67:2	67:2 τοῦ γνῶναι ἐν τῇ γῆ τὴν ὁδὸν σου ἐν πᾶσιν ἔθνεσιν τὸ σωτήριόν σου 67:3 ἐξομολογησάσθωσάν σοι λαοὶ ὁ θεὸς ἐξομολογησάσθωσάν σοι λαοὶ πάντες
בְּכָל-גוֹיִם יְשׁוּעָתְךָ: ד יְיָ יִדְוָה עַמִּים	בְּכָל-גוֹיִם יְשׁוּעָתְךָ: ד יְיָ יִדְוָה עַמִּים	ד יודון קדמך	ד יודון קדמך	67:2	67:2 τοῦ γνῶναι ἐν τῇ γῆ τὴν ὁδὸν σου ἐν πᾶσιν ἔθνεσιν τὸ σωτήριόν σου 67:3 ἐξομολογησάσθωσάν σοι λαοὶ ὁ θεὸς ἐξομολογησάσθωσάν σοι λαοὶ πάντες
אֱלֹהִים יְיָ יִדְוָה עַמִּים כָּל־אֶפְסֵי-אֲרָץ:	אֱלֹהִים יְיָ יִדְוָה עַמִּים כָּל־אֶפְסֵי-אֲרָץ:	קומך עממיא אלהא יודון קדמך	קומך עממיא אלהא יודון קדמך	67:3	67:3 ἐξομολογησάσθωσάν σοι λαοὶ ὁ θεὸς ἐξομολογησάσθωσάν σοι λαοὶ πάντες
		עממיא אומיא כולהון:	עממיא אומיא כולהון:	67:3	67:3 ἐξομολογησάσθωσάν σοι λαοὶ ὁ θεὸς ἐξομολογησάσθωσάν σοι λαοὶ πάντες

<p>ה יִשְׁמְחוּ וַיִּרְנְנוּ לְאֲמִים כִּי-תִשְׁפֹּט עַמִּים מִיִּשׂוֹר וּלְאֲמִים בְּאֶרֶץ תִּנְחַם סֵלָה: ו יוֹדוּךָ עַמִּים אֱלֹהִים יוֹדוּךָ עַמִּים כָּלֵם: ז אֶרֶץ נִתְנָה: כְּבוֹלָה יִבְרַכְנוּ אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵינוּ: ח יִבְרַכְנוּ אֱלֹהִים וַיִּירָאוּ אֹתוֹ כָּל-אֲפֹסִי-אֶרֶץ:</p>	<p>ה יחדון וידוצון וירננון אומיא ארום תדין עמיא"עממיא" #1# בתירור צא קשוט ואומיא בארעא תדברינון לעלמין: ו יודון קדמך קומך עמיא עממיא אלהא יודון קדמך קומך עמיא אומיא כולהון: ח ארעא דישראל יהבת איבה יבריך יתן אלהא אלהנא: ט יבריך יתן אלהא וידחלון יתיה כל סיפי ארעא:</p>	<p>67:4 εὐφρανθήτωσαν καὶ ἀγαλλιάσθωσαν ἔθνη ὅτι κρινεῖς λαοὺς ἐν εὐθύτητι καὶ ἔθνη ἐν τῇ γῆ ὀδηγήσεις διάπαλμα 67:5 ἔξομολογησάσθωσάν σοι λαοὶ ὁ θεός ἔξομολογησάσθωσάν σοι λαοὶ πάντες 67:6 γῆ ἔδωκεν τὸν καρπὸν αὐτῆς εὐλογῆσαι ἡμᾶς ὁ θεὸς ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν 67:7 εὐλογῆσαι ἡμᾶς ὁ θεός καὶ φοβηθήτωσαν αὐτὸν πάντα τὰ πέρατα τῆς γῆς</p>
<p>Tehillim / Psalms 67 For the director of music. With stringed instruments. A psalm. A song. 67:1 God be gracious to us and bless us, And cause His face to shine upon us Selah. 67:2 That Your way may be known on the earth, Your salvation among all nations. 67:3 Let the peoples praise You, O God; Let all the peoples praise You. 67:4 Let the nations be glad and sing for joy; For You will judge the peoples with uprightness And guide the nations on the earth. Selah. 67:5 Let the peoples praise You, O God; Let all the peoples praise You. 67:6 The earth has yielded its produce; God, our God, blesses us. 67:7 God blesses us, That all the ends of the earth may fear Him. (NASB)</p>	<p>Toviyah / Psalms 67 67:1 For praise, with melodies; a psalm and a song. 67:2 God will pity us and bless us; he will make the splendor of his face shine on us forever. 67:3 To make known your way in the land, your redemption among all the Gentiles. 67:4 The Gentiles will give thanks in your presence, O God, all the Gentiles will give thanks. 67:5 The nations will rejoice and exult, for you will judge the peoples with honesty, and you will guide the nations in the land forever. 67:6 The peoples will give thanks in your presence, O God, all the peoples will give thanks. 67:7 The land has given its fruit; God, our God, will bless us. 67:8 God will bless us, and all the ends of the earth will fear him. (EMC)</p>	<p>Psalmoi / Psalms 67 For the end, a Psalm of David among the Hymns. 67:1 God be merciful to us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us. Pause. 67:2 That men may know thy way on the earth, thy salvation among all nations. 67:3 Let the nations, O God, give thanks to thee; let all the nations give thanks to thee. 67:4 Let the nations rejoice and exult, for thou shalt judge the peoples in equity, and shalt guide the nations on the earth. Pause. 67:5 Let the peoples, O God, give thanks to thee; let all the peoples give thanks to thee. 67:6 The earth has yielded her fruit; let God, our God bless us. 67:7 Let God bless us; and let all the ends of the earth fear him. (LXX)</p>

א לְמַנְצֵחַ בְּנִינֵת מְזֻמֹּר In this week's study from *Tehillim / Psalms 67:1-7*, the psalm begins saying, א לְמַנְצֵחַ בְּנִינֵת מְזֻמֹּר :פִּיר For the director of music. With stringed instruments. A psalm. A song. (NASB) David wrote music giving praise to the Lord in thanksgiving for His powerful deliverance and blessings upon his life. 2 Samuel 22 is one such example where David expresses his joy in the Lord's deliverance from the hands of his enemies, and out of the hand of Saul. This week's Psalm opens saying, ב אֱלֹהִים יִתְנֶנּוּ וַיִּבְרַכְנוּ יָאֵר פְּנֵינוּ אֲתָנוּ ב אֱלֹהִים יִתְנֶנּוּ וַיִּבְרַכְנוּ יָאֵר פְּנֵינוּ אֲתָנוּ 67:1 God be gracious to us and bless us, And cause His face to shine upon us Selah. (NASB) What do these opening words remind us of from the Torah? David appears to be thinking upon God's deliverance of Israel from the Egyptians in the Torah by quoting a line from the Aaronic blessing (*Bamidbar / Numbers 6:22-27*).

Bamidbar / Numbers 6:22-27

6:22 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 6:23 'Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying, 'Thus you shall bless the sons of Israel. You shall say to them: 6:24 The Lord bless you, and keep you; 6:25 The Lord make His face shine on you, And be gracious to you; 6:26 The Lord

lift up His countenance on you, And give you peace.’ 6:27 ‘So they shall invoke My name on the sons of Israel, and I then will bless them.’ (NASB)

כב וַיִּדְבֹר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: כג דִּבֶּר אֶל-אַהֲרֹן וְאֶל-בָּנָיו לֵאמֹר כֹּה תִבְרְכוּ אֶת-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
אָמֹר לָהֶם: ס כד יְבָרְכֶה יְהוָה וַיִּשְׁמְרֶה: ס כה יָאֵר יְהוָה | פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיְחַנֶּךָ: ס כו יִשָּׂא
יְהוָה | פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיִּשֶׂם לָךְ שְׁלוֹם: ס כז וַיִּשְׂמוּ אֶת-שְׁמִי עַל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֲנִי אֲבָרְכֶם:

Most people are familiar with the beginning of the Aaronic blessing which states, “*May the LORD bless you and keep you*” (*Bamidbar / Numbers 6:24-25*). David appears to be quoting from *Bamidbar / Numbers 6:24-25*. Notice David writes, *יְבָרְכֶה יְהוָה וַיִּשְׁמְרֶה* using the words the Lord will “*bless*” and “*keep*” us. The word *bless* (ברך) means “*to kneel*,” and *keep* (שמר) means “*to guard*.” The idea is that the king serves His people, and our King, the Lord in heaven is the one who humbles himself and come to his people. The Lord desires to draw near to us, and similarly, He desires for us to draw near to Him.

Traditionally, the priests blessed the people following the morning sacrifice at the Temple. Today, many synagogues end their service with the Aaronic blessing as a benediction. The Torah defines only the descendants of Aaron were allowed to convey this blessing over the people. In an Orthodox Shul, the leader will ascend to the ark, and lift his hands unto the Lord based upon the Scripture from *Tehillim / Psalms 134:2*, “*Lift up your hands to the holy place and bless the Lord!*” When he ascends to the ark, everyone covers their head and arms with a tallit while privately reciting the blessing, “*Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, Who makes us holy with the holiness of Aaron, and has commanded us to bless His people Israel with love.*” When finished, the cantor will say, “*Kohanim...*” as a signal to begin. The priest would then place his hands in the form of the letter “*Shin*” and raise his hands up towards heaven. Jewish tradition states the Divine Presence would shine through the fingers of the priest as they blessed the people and no one was allowed to look out of respect for God. It is important to note that the Lord does not command the priests to bless the people using their own words, rather, the Lord provides the exact formulation for the blessing, indicated by the words from the Torah, *כֹּה תִבְרְכוּ אֶת-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל* “*Thus you shall bless the sons of Israel.*” This suggests that Moshe received the command directly from the Lord and the priests are to pass the blessing of the Lord unto the people. This is indicated in *Bamidbar / Numbers 6:27*, *כֹּה יִשְׂמוּ אֶת-שְׁמִי* *6:27 ‘So they shall invoke My name on the sons of Israel, and I then will bless them.’ (NASB)* According to the midrashic literature, in the beginning only God could bless other people. His first blessing was to Adam and Eve saying, “*be fruitful and multiply*” (*Bereshit / Genesis 1:28*). Later the Lord blessed Noah and his sons when they left the ark. The Torah then describes God blessing Abraham the tzaddik, who was then given the ability of blessing others (*Bereshit / Genesis 12:3* “*Who you bless, I will bless*”). The Scriptures tell us that this was then given to Isaac to bless, and then to Jacob (*Bereshit / Genesis 27:30*), who then blessed his twelve sons before he died (*Bereshit / Genesis 48-49*). In the Torah, the Lord later taught Moshe how to bless others, and this would occur through the appointed kohanim. The mitzvah of *birkat kohanim* (“*priestly blessing*”) is unique in that if a kohen is unhappy, he must not recite the blessing. For example, a kohen who is in *aveilut* (אבלות, mourning over the death of a parent) is required to leave during the *birkat kohanim*. Traditionally, the priests blessed the people every morning after the sacrifice at the *mishkan* (and later at the Temple). The *Talmud Bavli Sotah 39a* states that before the kohanim bless the congregation they must make a blessing in which praise is given to the LORD for the honor of blessing the people. The blessing is called *באהבה* *לברך את עמו ישראל באהבה* “*l’varekh et amo Yisrael b’ahava*” (“*to bless His nation Israel with love*”):

Talmud Bavli Sota 39a

Blessed are You, LORD our God, King of the universe, Who makes us holy with the holiness of Aaron, and has commanded us to bless His people Israel with love.

אמר רבי זירא אמר רב חסדא אשר קדשנו בקדושתו של אהרן וצונו לברך את עמו ישראל באהבה

The phrase “with love” is intended to represent the love of the LORD for His people. The point is that as the Lord God blesses us by His mercy and kindness, so too the kohen must seek to display God’s love in this manner. The preparatory blessing is intended to induce a state of kavanah in the heart of the one performing the commandment. According to the sages, the obligation to bless the people “with love” comes from the Torah. This is derived from the verse that immediately precedes the commandment to bless the people which says, פֶּה תְּבָרְכוּ אֶת-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אָמֹר לָהֶם “Thus you shall bless the people of Israel: you shall say to them...” If we consider the Hebrew text, and specifically the Hebrew words, the full verses the defective spellings of the words in the Torah, according to this verse, the word “say” (אָמֹר) is spelled in the full spelling. This has been interpreted to mean the blessing is not to be conducted half heartedly or in an impatient manner. One must be whole-hearted, and sincere in one’s desire to send forth the blessing of God to the people. This indicates the importance of the one who is blessing having a deep desire to see others being blessed. In a similar manner, the one who is receiving the blessing is also to be sincere and whole-hearted in his desire to receive the blessing. Thus, when the priest lifts his hands during the recitation, “May the LORD bless you and keep you...,” the Sages regard this as vital for every blessing that is proclaimed by the kohen.

The text of the Aaronic blessing appears to be organized in three parts:

1. 6:24 The Lord bless you, and keep you; כִּד יְבָרְכֶךָ יְהוָה וַיִּשְׁמְרֶךָ:
2. 6:25 The Lord make His face shine on you, And be gracious to you; כֹּה יֵאָר יְהוָה | פְּנֵי אֱלֹהֵי וַיַּחַנְנֶךָ:
3. 6:26 The Lord lift up His countenance on you, And give you peace. כֹּו יִשָּׂא יְהוָה | פְּנֵי אֱלֹהֵי וַיִּשֶׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם:

Things to note while reading the Aaronic blessing, it is phrased in the singular form rather than the plural. This is indicative of a personal application, as opposed to a group or crowd blessing. The phrase, “The LORD lift up His face toward you...” (יִשָּׂא יְהוָה פְּנֵי אֱלֹהֵי) illustrates a parents face shining or smiling upon their child in joy. The repetition of the Lord “lifting up His face” (יְהוָה | פְּנֵי אֱלֹהֵי) indicates the Lord’s compassion and love for His people. As a chosen people today, we are a holy nation, a people of His own possession, and we are to proclaim His glory who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9). It is also important to note that Yeshua recited the “priestly blessing” over his disciples when he ascended back to heaven, speaking in the 1st person, he said,

Luke 24:45-53

24:45 Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, 24:46 and He said to them, ‘Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, 24:47 and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. 24:48 ‘You are witnesses of these things. 24:49 ‘And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.’ 24:50 And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. 24:51 While He was blessing them, He parted from them and was carried up into heaven. 24:52 And they, after worshiping Him, returned to Jerusalem with great joy, 24:53 and were continually in the temple praising God. (NASB)

Note that Yeshua says “Teshuvah” for the forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations. Repentance is a leading factor in the forgiveness of sins. Yeshua said to his followers, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you” (John 14:27 and 20:19). He is the Prince of Peace, as he is prophetically spoken of in Isaiah 9:6 For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government

will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. 9:7 There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this. (NASB) In the manner in which we read the Aaronic blessing is to be given, the Gospel account of Yeshua, just before he ascended to heaven says, *24:50 And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. (NASB)* This blessing he gave over his disciples was Torah based and very familiar, and in doing so, Yeshua was establishing the Torah as a way of life for his disciples. This is what led them to return to the Temple, to worship God and continually praise Him in the Temple in Jerusalem.

David opens the Psalm saying, *ב אֱלֹהִים יִתְנַנְּנוּ וַיִּבְרַכְנוּ יְיָ אֱמֹנֵי סֵלָה: 67:1 God be gracious to us and bless us, And cause His face to shine upon us Selah. (NASB)* According to *Tehillim / Psalms 67:2-4*, David desires for the glory of the Lord to be known throughout the earth, *ג לְדַעַת בְּאֶרֶץ דְּרָכָה בְּכָל-גּוֹיִם, 67:2 That Your way may be known on the earth, Your salvation among all nations. 67:3 Let the peoples praise You, O God; Let all the peoples praise You. (NASB)* The Aramaic Targum states, *67:3 To make known your way in the land, your redemption among all the Gentiles. 67:4 The Gentiles will give thanks in your presence, O God, all the Gentiles will give thanks. (EMC)* What is the significance of the Gentiles giving praise and thanks in the presence of God? There are a couple of places in the Neviim section of the Tanach that describe the last days and the holy mountain of the Lord (see *Isaiah 2, Micah 4*).

Isaiah 2:1-5

2:1 The word which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. 2:2 Now it will come about that In the last days The mountain of the house of the Lord Will be established as the chief of the mountains, And will be raised above the hills; And all the nations will stream to it. 2:3 And many peoples will come and say, ‘Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, To the house of the God of Jacob; That He may teach us concerning His ways And that we may walk in His paths.’ For the law will go forth from Zion And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. 2:4 And He will judge between the nations, And will render decisions for many peoples; And they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, And never again will they learn war. 2:5 Come, house of Jacob, and let us walk in the light of the Lord. (NASB) א הדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר חָזָה יִשְׁעִיָהוּ בֶן-אֲמוֹץ עַל-יְהוּדָה וִירוּשָׁלַם: ב וְהָיָה | בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים נִכּוֹן יִהְיֶה הַר בֵּית-יְהוָה בְּרֹאשׁ הַהָרִים וְנִשְׂאָ מִגְבְּעוֹת וְנִהְרֹו אֵלָיו כָּל-הַגּוֹיִם: ג וְהָלְכוּ עַמִּים רַבִּים וְאָמְרוּ לָכוּ | וְנִעְלָה אֶל-הַר-יְהוָה אֶל-בֵּית אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב וְיִרְנוּ מִדְּרָכָיו וְנִלְכָה בְּאַרְחֻתָיו כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא תוֹרָה וְדִבְרֵ-יְהוָה מִירוּשָׁלַם: ד וְשָׁפַט בֵּין הַגּוֹיִם וְהוֹכִיחַ לְעַמִּים רַבִּים וְכִתְתוּ חַרְבוֹתָם לְאֵתִים וְחִנִּיתוּתֵיהֶם לְמִזְמָרוֹת: ה-א יִשְׂאָ גוֹי אֶל-גּוֹי חָרֵב וְלֹא-יִלְמְדוּ עוֹד מִלְחָמָה: ה בֵּית יַעֲקֹב לָכוּ וְנִלְכָה בְּאוֹר יְהוָה:

Micah 4:1-8

4:1 And it will come about in the last days That the mountain of the house of the Lord Will be established as the chief of the mountains. It will be raised above the hills, And the peoples will stream to it. 4:2 Many nations will come and say, ‘Come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord And to the house of the God of Jacob, That He may teach us about His ways And that we may walk in His paths.’ For from Zion will go forth the law, Even the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. 4:3 And He will judge between many peoples And render decisions for mighty, distant nations. Then they will hammer their swords into plowshares And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation will not lift up sword against nation, And never again will they train for war. 4:4 Each of them will sit under his vine And under his fig tree, With no one to make them afraid, For the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken. 4:5 Though all the peoples

walk Each in the name of his god, As for us, we will walk In the name of the Lord our God forever and ever. 4:6 'In that day,' declares the Lord, 'I will assemble the lame And gather the outcasts, Even those whom I have afflicted. 4:7 'I will make the lame a remnant And the outcasts a strong nation, And the Lord will reign over them in Mount Zion From now on and forever. 4:8 'As for you, tower of the flock, Hill of the daughter of Zion, To you it will come Even the former dominion will come, The kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem. (NASB)

Isaiah prophesied that the mountain of the house of the Lord will be established as the head of mountains (יְהִי הַר בְּיַת-יְהוָה בְּרֹאשׁ הַהָרִים). When we think about the mountain of the Lord, mountains have been used as a means for drawing nearer to the Lord. The illustration of the mountain draws us back to a Torah context, in the last days, the mountain of God will be raised up higher than the other mountains, and the nations will seek the Lord at this mountain, the eyes of the people will be upon this mountain and have a desire to draw near to God. Isaiah says, 2:3 *And many peoples will come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, To the house of the God of Jacob; That He may teach us concerning His ways And that we may walk in His paths.'* For the law will go forth from Zion And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. (NASB) In this prophecy of the last days, the people are seeking the Lord to walk in His ways, and in His paths. This is similar to *Shemot / Exodus 24:17-18* which states, 24:17 *And to the eyes of the sons of Israel the appearance of the glory of the Lord was like a consuming fire on the mountain top. 24:18 Moses entered the midst of the cloud as he went up to the mountain; and Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights. (NASB)* We are told in *1 Kings 3:1* *Solomon made an alliance with Pharaoh king of Egypt and married his daughter. He brought her to the City of David until he finished building his palace and the temple of the Lord, and the wall around Jerusalem. 3:2 The people, however, were still sacrificing at the high places, because a temple had not yet been built for the Name of the Lord. 3:3 Solomon showed his love for the Lord by walking according to the instructions given him by his father David, except that he offered sacrifices and burned incense on the high places. 3:4 The king went to Gibeon to offer sacrifices, for that was the most important high place, and Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. 3:5 At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon during the night in a dream, and God said, "Ask for whatever you want me to give you."* (NIV) Here we find the people in the time of King Solomon were sacrificing at the high places (in the mountains), since the Temple of the Lord had not been built. It is interesting that nothing is stated concerning the Ark of God being in the city of David as opposed to the Tabernacle being in Gibeon. We are told that Gibeon was the most important high place. Why was Gibeon the most important high place? Gibeon was located in the territory of Benjamin (*Joshua 18:25*), and it was one of the cities for the Levites (*Joshua 21:17*). The city is also the place where God made the sun stand still during Israel's war with the Amorites. (*Joshua 10:12*) In *1 Chronicles 9:35-39*, Jeiel is mentioned as the "father of Gibeon" and is an ancestor of King Saul. The fight between the soldiers of Joab and those of Abner took place beside the Pool of Gibeon (*2 Samuel 2:12*). It was also in this area that David conquered the Philistines (see *2 Samuel 5:25 and 1 Chronicles 14:16*). After David became king of Israel, a three year drought made him ask the Lord for the reason of the drought. The Lord indicated that He was angry at Saul for massacring the Gibeonites with whom Israel had made a covenant in the Lord's name. David then spoke to the Gibeonites and asked them how he shall repay them. The Gibeonites asked for seven of Saul's male descendants to be given to them to kill. David handed over Armoni and Mephibosheth, two of the sons of Saul and the five sons of Merab (Saul's daughter) to the Gibeonites, and they were put to death (they were hanged). David saved Jonathan's son Mephibosheth from this peril because of his covenant with Jonathan (*2 Samuel 21:1-9*).

The idea of people making sacrifices at the high places is disconcerting by reason of the negative association we are given of the high places to places of pagan worship in the MT. The description that is given here indicates that the high places were not necessarily connected to pagan worship, but reflected the non-centralized worship that was taking place in Israel, with the Ark of God in the city of David, the Tabernacle in Gibeon, and the statement that Gibeon was the most important high place in Israel at that time. We are told in *1 Kings 3*, that this high place was the most important high place, suggesting that this was a legitimate place of worship. In addition to this, we are told that the Ohed Moel (Tent of Meeting) made by Moshe and

the bronze altar for burnt offerings, crafted by Bazelel (*Shemot / Exodus 38:1-2, 2 Chronicles 1:5*) were located at Gibeon (*1 Chronicles 21:29*). It might be with the death of Eli and his sons, and the final removal of Eli's descendant, Abiathar, the fourth in descent from Eli (*1 Samuel 23:6*) and the last of Eli's House. Abiathar was the only one of the priests to escape from Saul's massacre, he fled to David at Keilah, taking with him the ephod (*1 Samuel 22:20 and 23:6, 9*). Abiathar was of great service to David, especially at the time of the rebellion of Absalom (*2 Samuel 15:24-35 and 20:25*). In *1 Kings 4:4*, Zadok and Abiathar are found acting together as priests under Solomon. In *1 Kings 1:7-25*, however, Abiathar appears as a supporter of Adonijah, and in *1 Kings 2:22-26* it is said that he was deposed by Solomon and banished to Anathoth. It may be that the Tabernacle was moved from Shilo to this location in Gibeon following the death of the priests that occurred at Shilo by the command of Saul at the hand of Doeg.

1 Chronicles 21:26-22:1

21:26 Then David built an altar to the Lord there and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. And he called to the Lord and He answered him with fire from heaven on the altar of burnt offering. 21:27 The Lord commanded the angel, and he put his sword back in its sheath. 21:28 At that time, when David saw that the Lord had answered him on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite, he offered sacrifice there. 21:29 For the tabernacle of the Lord, which Moses had made in the wilderness, and the altar of burnt offering were in the high place at Gibeon at that time. 21:30 But David could not go before it to inquire of God, for he was terrified by the sword of the angel of the Lord. 22:1 Then David said, 'This is the house of the Lord God, and this is the altar of burnt offering for Israel.' (NASB)

The mention of the Tent of Meeting at Gibeon underscores the continuity of the Tabernacle and Israel's sacrificial system that was set up by Moshe, Israel was serving the Lord God in the manner in which He designed. It is interesting to note the Ark of God being located in the city of David, while the Tabernacle and altar stood at Gibeon. However, these details of Solomon going to Gibeon to offer sacrifices, makes it clear that the high place at Gibeon was a legitimate and sacred place prior to the construction of the Temple in Jerusalem. In the Scriptures, the "high places" were given a negative connotation, but only following the completion of the Temple in Jerusalem. The construction of the Temple in Jerusalem seems to have inaugurated a time of centralized worship, which was anticipated according to the Torah in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 12:13-14*, however before the Temple there was a sort of decentralized worship occurring. Following the construction of the Temple, the high places were then associated with the worship of foreign deities, idolatry, and syncretism (the combining of the sacred and the profane). *1 Kings 3* mentions that Solomon offered 1000 sacrifices upon the altar indicating his reverence of the Lord God at the start of his rule as king of Israel. In addition, Solomon also offered a large number of sacrifices in the dedication of the Temple.

In His Psalm, David sought for the glory of the Lord to be known throughout the earth saying, **ג זָדַעַת**, *67:2 That Your way may be known on the earth, Your salvation among all nations. 67:3 Let the peoples praise You, O God; Let all the peoples praise You. (NASB)* The Aramaic Targum states, *67:3 To make known your way in the land, your redemption among all the Gentiles. 67:4 The Gentiles will give thanks in your presence, O God, all the Gentiles will give thanks. (EMC)* Generally, the nations posed a threat to David and to the nation of Israel. When there is peace on every side, we know that the Lord's is at work in the hearts of men. David says "that Your way may be made known," and the rabbis translate "to make known Your way in the land." The way of the Lord is peace, righteousness, holiness, and justice, note these are the mitzvot found in the Torah. The blessing of His deliverance, will be proclaimed among the nations because of God's mighty hand to deliver Israel.

David continues saying, **ה יִשְׂמְחוּ וַיִּרְנְנוּ לְאֲמִים כִּי-תִשְׁפֹּט עַמִּים מִיִּשׁוּר וּלְאֲמִים | בְּאֶרֶץ תִּנְחַם סְלָה:** *67:4 Let the nations be glad and sing for joy; For You will judge the peoples with uprightness And guide the nations on the earth. Selah. (NASB)* When thinking upon the idea of the nations who oppose the nation of Israel and who oppose God, coupled with the Lord's deliverance and David's calling out to the Lord to

make known among the nations the salvation of God, it is surprising that David says the nations will be glad and sing for joy. The reason being, the nations who are coming against Israel will be destroyed by the hand of the Lord. Is David referring to evil or righteous men in the nations? Are there righteous men who live amongst the nations that God would consider righteous? The righteous Among the Nations (חסידי אומות העולם, khassidey umot ha-olam) translated literally means the “*piety of faith (plural) of the world’s*,” is an honor given by the State of Israel to describe non-Jews who risked their lives during the Holocaust to save Jews from extermination by the Nazis. A more ancient parallel to the חסידי אומות העולם “*Pious People of the World*” is the “*Ger Toshav*” (גר תושב) a term in Judaism for a gentile living in the Land of Israel who observes the Noahide Laws along with certain religious and cultural traditions under Jewish law. Such a person commonly called a righteous gentile or a חסידי אומות העולם “*Pious People of the World.*” The Noahide Laws are the Seven Laws of Noah (שבע מצוות בני נח, “*Sheva mitzvot B’nei Noach*”), are a set of moral imperatives that, according to the Talmud, were given by God as a binding set of laws for the “*children of Noah*,” another term for all of humanity. Any non-Jewish person who keeps these laws is regarded as a righteous gentile, and is assured of a place in the world to come, the final reward of the righteous according to *Maimonides Mishneh Torah, Hilkhot M’lakhim 8:14*. The seven Noahide laws as traditionally enumerated are as follows:

Noahide Laws

1. Do not deny God.
2. Do not blaspheme God.
3. Do not murder.
4. Do not engage in incestuous, adulterous or homosexual relationships.
5. Do not steal.
6. Do not eat of a live animal.
7. Establish courts/legal system to ensure law and justice.

The rabbinic concession is that the seven laws were given to the sons of Noah, however, they disagree on precisely which laws were given to Adam and Eve. Six of the seven laws are exegetic-ally derived from passages in Genesis (see *Talmud Bavli, Sanhedrin 56a and 56b*). For example,

Talmud Bavli Sanhedrin 56b

Whence do we know this? — R. Johanan answered: The Writ saith: And the Lord God commanded the man saying, of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat. (Gen. II, 16) And [He] commanded, refers to [the observance of] social laws, and thus it is written, For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment. (Gen. XVIII, 19) The Lord — is [a prohibition against] blasphemy, and thus it is written, and he that blasphemeth the name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death. (Lev. XXIV, 16) God — is [an injunction against] idolatry, and thus it is written, Thou shalt have no other gods before Me. (Ex. XX, 3) The man — refers to bloodshed [murder], and thus it is written, Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed. (Gen. IX, 6) Saying — refers to adultery, and thus it is written, They say, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and became another man’s. (Jer. III, 1) Of every tree of the garden — but not of robbery. Thou mayest freely eat — but not flesh cut from a living animal. (<http://www.halakhah.com>)

A ger toshav is a Gentile who accepts the authority of the Torah and the Rabbis upon himself, but specifically as applied to Gentiles. Note the concept here is that the Lord God provides leniency towards the Gentiles in the sense that one may accept only a portion of the Torah and are allowed to disregard the rest. Christianity

has for the most part accepted this approach, that these Noahide Laws are the only requirements of God that are binding upon the non-Jewish person. It is interesting however, in the Talmudic discussions regarding the ger toshav, there are other differing opinions (see *Talmud Bavli Avodah Zarah 64b*) as to what the ger toshav accepts upon himself (see *Talmud Bavli Sanhedrin 56a, 56b*). The alternate opinions state that the ger toshav must abstain from idolatrous practices that are detailed in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 29:09-30:20*, and to uphold all the 613 commandments according to the rabbinical enumeration, except for the prohibition against eating kosher animals that died by means other than ritual slaughter. Note the importance of the words “*ritual slaughter*,” indicate that these animals are kosher based upon Parashat Kedoshim mandate (*Vayikra / Leviticus 19*). In addition, the ger toshav is obligated to any prohibition not involving kareth (*the term kareth means “cutting off,” and is derived from the Hebrew verb karat meaning “to cut off”*). There are both informal and formal concepts on the ger toshav in the rabbinic literature. In the formal sense, the accepted legal definition is the ger toshav must accept the seven Noahide Laws before a rabbinical court of three. Such a person then receives certain legal protections and privileges from the community, and there is a Biblical obligation to render him aid when in need. The informal sense has ger toshav accept the Noahide Law on his own. In the case of the one who accepts the Seven Mitzvot of Noah, though not before a beit din, such a person is known as a *chasidei umot ha’olam* (חסיד אומות העולם), a “*Pious Person of the World*.” There is also a rabbinic discussion among the halakhic authorities as to which of the rules regarding a ger toshav would apply in the informal case. It is important to note that the formal making of a ger toshav have been discontinued due to the cessation of the Year of Jubilee, therefore, there are no formal geirim toshvim (plural) extant today. However, it may be argued that there are a large number of “*informal*” ones under the idea of the חסיד אומות העולם “*Pious People of the World*” even when the Jubilee Year is not observed. Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneersohn states that the status of ger toshav will continue to exist, even in the Messianic era. This is based on the statement in Rambam’s *Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Melachim 12:5* that states “*the entire world’s (kol ha’olam) occupation will be nothing but to know God.*” In its plain meaning, he asserts the phrase *kol ha’olam* includes Gentiles. The proof text he uses is from Rambam’s *Mishneh Torah 11:4* which deals with the Messianic era, where a similar term is used “*ha’olam kulo*,” meaning “*the world in its entirety*,” which refers specifically to the Gentiles. In the *Mishneh Torah Hilchot Melachim 12:5*, Maimonides changes the topic to the Jewish people by using the term “*Israel*,” stating “*Therefore, the Jews will be great sages and know the hidden matters, grasping the knowledge of their Creator according to the full extent of human potential*,” indicating that Jew and Gentile will co-exist in the time of the Messiah. Could this be the understanding that the Apostle Paul had when he wrote to the Gentiles that there is no difference between Jew and Gentile in the Messiah? (see *Romans 10:12, Galatians 3:28, Colossians 3:11*)

Romans 10:11-13

10:11 For the Scripture says, ‘Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed.’ 10:12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; 10:13 for ‘Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.’ (NASB)

Galatians 3:26-29

3:26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 3:27 For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 3:29 And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s descendants, heirs according to promise. (NASB)

Colossians 3:10-12

3:10 and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him 3:11 a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but

Christ is all, and in all. 3:12 So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; (NASB)

The rabbinic understanding of the ger toshav, and the חסיד אומות העולם “Pious People of the World” most likely is what Paul was thinking upon when he wrote what he did to the Romans, the Galatians, and Colossians. Take for example what he wrote to the Colossians.

Colossians 2:20-3:9

2:20 If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees, such as, 2:21 ‘Do not handle, do not taste, do not touch!’ 2:22 (which all refer to things destined to perish with use) in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men? 2:23 These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom in self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, but are of no value against fleshly indulgence. 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. 3:2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. 3:3 For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 3:4 When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory. 3:5 Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. 3:6 For it is because of these things that the wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience, 3:7 and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them. 3:8 But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth. 3:9 Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, (NASB)

Paul speaks of worshiping angels (idolatry), to fleshly indulgence (immorality), to not lie, or steal, etc, Paul is drawing us back to the Torah command. While reading *Colossians 2:20-22*, this must be kept in mind that Paul is not speaking against the Torah command, rather, he is trying to say what good is the command if one lives with fleshly indulgence? We cannot live with partial obedience (3:6), all of one’s life must be consistent in the sense that one does not have “hidden sin” in the eyes of God for He sees all!

David concludes His Psalm saying, אֲרָץ נְתַנָּהּ בְּבוֹלָהּ בְּרַכְנוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל | אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל יְדוּוּהָ עַמִּים כָּלֵם: ז 67:5 *Let the peoples praise You, O God; Let all the peoples praise You. 67:6 The earth has yielded its produce; God, our God, blesses us. 67:7 God blesses us, That all the ends of the earth may fear Him. (NASB)* David is very likely referring to the righteous who live among the nations (both Jew and Gentile). With regard to the righteous who live among the nations, is there salvation outside of being joined with Israel? What does it mean to be joined with Israel? According to Paul (*Galatians 3:26-29*) in the Messiah we are joined with Israel (*Romans 11*) and we are obligated to obey all of God’s Torah (*Colossians 2:20-3:12*). Paul, like some of the rabbis in the Talmud, believes in One Torah for all people. Therefore, even in the Messiah Yeshua, it is important to take hold of God’s Salvation by faith, and live out our salvation by being obedient to His command (see *John 10 and 14*). Faith is the composition of two things, (i) a belief in the Lord, in the Messiah, and in the Scriptures, and (ii) practice, we live what we believe. Faith is not authentic if these two things are not coupled together. This is what Yeshua meant when he said in *Luke 20:35 But those who are considered worthy of taking part in the age to come and in the resurrection from the dead will neither marry nor be given in marriage. (NASB)* Yeshua did not say “just believe in me and you will be saved.” Yeshua understood and taught that faith includes both belief and practice. True faith is that which is lived out, we are not to live separate lives. If one has two separate lives, then be warned based upon what Yeshua said in *Matthew 7*, there are those who come before Me on that great day and I will tell them, depart from Me I never knew you, working of lawlessness (anomia). Let’s Pray!

Heavenly Father,

We glorify and praise Your Holy Name because great and mighty are Your works. We praise Your Holy Name for the strength and the faith that You have given us. We thank You for keeping our feet on the path of righteousness and truth according to Your Word (the Scriptures). Thank You for David's words which reveal to us how we should be living our lives with David as our example. Please create in us a deep respect and fear of You Lord, coupled with a desire to draw near to You in a greater way in our lives. Thank You for giving us the faith to believe in Yeshua the Messiah! Please have mercy on us, forgive us for our sins. 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