

Tehillim / Psalms 68 | ספר תהילים סח

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The Nations will come to be Converted

In this week's study from *Tehillim / Psalms 68:1-35*, the psalm opens saying, *For the director of music. Of David. A psalm. A song. 68:1 Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered, And let those who hate Him flee before Him. (NASB)* David describes the enemies being scattered where the Lord is fire (68:2), the wicked perish, whereas the righteous are glad and rejoice (68:3). The Righteous 68:4 *Sing to God, sing praises to His name; Lift up a song for Him who rides through the deserts, Whose name is the Lord, and exult before Him. (NASB)* The Lord is then described as upholding justice and righteousness (68:5) and how the Lord goes forth before His people (68:7). The Lord showers His people with blessings (68:8) whereas the kings of the wicked flee before the Lord (68:12). David continues saying, 68:14 *When the Almighty scattered the kings there, It was snowing in Zalmon. 68:15 A mountain of God is the mountain of Bashan; A mountain of many peaks is the mountain of Bashan. 68:16 Why do you look with envy, O mountains with many peaks, At the mountain which God has desired for His abode? Surely the Lord will dwell there forever. 68:17 The chariots of God are myriads, thousands upon thousands; The Lord is among them as at Sinai, in holiness. (NASB)* What is the importance of snow in Zalmon? What is the importance of the mountain of Bashan? The Psalm suggests the Lord has myriads of chariots alluding to the host of heaven and angels. The chariots are paralleled to the Lord ascending on high and leading captive His captives and receiving gifts of men (68:18). David says 68:19 *Blessed be the Lord, who daily bears our burden, The God who is our salvation. Selah. (NASB)* indicating that the Lord is the one who bears our burdens. How does the Lord God in heaven bear our burdens? He says the Lord is the one who delivers (68:20), He shatters the head of His enemies (68:21), and that He will bring them back to Bashan and from the depths of the sea (68:22). The foot of the Lord will shatter the enemy (68:23). He says, 68:28 *Your God has commanded your strength; Show Yourself strong, O God, who have acted on our behalf. 68:29 Because of Your temple at Jerusalem Kings will bring gifts to You. 68:30 Rebuke the beasts in the reeds, The herd of bulls with the calves of the peoples, Trampling under foot the pieces of silver; He has scattered the peoples who delight in war. (NASB)* What does it mean that God has commanded our strength? Who are the beasts in the reeds as compared to the bulls and calves of the peoples? Is this a reference to those who delight in war and bring sacrifices to the Tabernacle? The Psalm concludes saying, 68:32 *Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth, Sing praises to the Lord, Selah. 68:33 To Him who rides upon the highest heavens, which are from ancient times; Behold, He speaks forth with His voice, a mighty voice. 68:34 Ascribe strength to God; His majesty is over Israel And His strength is in the skies. 68:35 O God, You are awesome from Your sanctuary. The God of Israel Himself gives strength and power to the people. Blessed be God! (NASB)*

עברית

Hebrew

ארמי

Aramaic

ελληνικός

Greek

עברית	Hebrew	ארמי	Aramaic	ελληνικός	Greek
ספר תהלים פרק סח	ספר תהלים פרק סח	ספר טוביה פרק סח	ספר טוביה פרק סח	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 68	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 68
א למנצח לדוד תזמור שיר: ב יקום אלהים יפוצו אויביו וינוסו משנאיו מפניו: ג כהגדף עשן תגדף כהמס דונג מפני-אש יאבדו רשעים מפני אלהים: ד וצדיקים ישמחו ועלצו לפני אלהים וישישו בשמחה: ה שירו לאלהים ימרו שמו סלו לרכב בערבות ביה שמו ועלזו לפניו:	א למנצח לדוד תזמור שיר: ב יקום אלהים יפוצו אויביו וינוסו משנאיו מפניו: ג כהגדף עשן תגדף כהמס דונג מפני-אש יאבדו רשעים מפני אלהים: ד וצדיקים ישמחו ועלצו לפני אלהים וישישו בשמחה: ה שירו לאלהים ימרו שמו סלו לרכב בערבות ביה שמו ועלזו לפניו:	א לשבחא לדוד תושבחא ושירא: ב יקום אלהא יתבדרון בעלי דבבוי ויער-קון סנאוי מן קדמוי: ג היכמה דישקיה תננא קוטרא ישקפון היכמה די יתמסי שעוא מן קדם אשא יהובדון רשיעיא מן קדם אלהא: ד וצדיקיא יחדון וידור-צון קדם יהוה אלהא ויחדון בחדוא:	א לשבחא לדוד תושבחא ושירא: ב יקום אלהא יתבדרון בעלי דבבוי ויער-קון סנאוי מן קדמוי: ג היכמה דישקיה תננא קוטרא ישקפון היכמה די יתמסי שעוא מן קדם אשא יהובדון רשיעיא מן קדם אלהא: ד וצדיקיא יחדון וידור-צון קדם יהוה אלהא ויחדון בחדוא:	68:1 εις τὸ τέλος τῷ Δαυιδ ψαλμὸς ᾠδῆς ἀναστῆτω ὁ θεὸς καὶ διασκορπισθήτωσαν οἱ ἐχθροὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ φυγέτωσαν οἱ μισοῦντες αὐτὸν ἀπὸ προσώπου αὐτοῦ 68:2 ὡς ἐκλείπει καπνὸς ἐκλιπέτωσαν ὡς τήκεται κηρὸς ἀπὸ προσώπου πυρὸς οὕτως ἀπόλοιnton οἱ ἁμαρτωλοὶ ἀπὸ προσώπου τοῦ θεοῦ 68:3 καὶ οἱ δίκαιοι εὐφρανθήτωσαν ἀγαλλιᾶσθωσαν ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ τερφθήτωσαν ἐν εὐφροσύνῃ	68:1 εις τὸ τέλος τῷ Δαυιδ ψαλμὸς ᾠδῆς ἀναστῆτω ὁ θεὸς καὶ διασκορπισθήτωσαν οἱ ἐχθροὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ φυγέτωσαν οἱ μισοῦντες αὐτὸν ἀπὸ προσώπου αὐτοῦ 68:2 ὡς ἐκλείπει καπνὸς ἐκλιπέτωσαν ὡς τήκεται κηρὸς ἀπὸ προσώπου πυρὸς οὕτως ἀπόλοιnton οἱ ἁμαρτωλοὶ ἀπὸ προσώπου τοῦ θεοῦ 68:3 καὶ οἱ δίκαιοι εὐφρανθήτωσαν ἀγαλλιᾶσθωσαν ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ τερφθήτωσαν ἐν εὐφροσύνῃ

68:4 ἄσατε τῷ θεῷ ψάλατε τῷ ὄνοματι αὐτοῦ ὁδοποιήσατε τῷ ἐπιβεβηκότι ἐπὶ δυσμῶν κύριος ὄνομα αὐτῷ καὶ ἀγαλλιᾶσθε ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ ταραχθήσονται ἀπὸ προσώπου αὐτοῦ 68:5 τοῦ πατρὸς τῶν ὄρφανῶν καὶ κριτοῦ τῶν χηρῶν ὁ θεὸς ἐν τόπῳ ἁγίῳ αὐτοῦ 68:6 ὁ θεὸς κατοικίξει μονοτρόπους ἐν οἴκῳ ἐξάγων πεπεδημένους ἐν ἀνδρεία ὁμοίως τοὺς παραπικραίνοντας τοὺς κατοικοῦντας ἐν τάφοις 68:7 ὁ θεὸς ἐν τῷ ἐκπορευέσθαι σε ἐνώπιον τοῦ λαοῦ σου ἐν τῷ διαβαίνειν σε ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ διάψαλμα 68:8 γῆ ἐσειέσθι καὶ γὰρ οἱ οὐρανοὶ ἔσταξαν ἀπὸ προσώπου τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦτο Σινα ἀπὸ προσώπου τοῦ θεοῦ Ἰσραὴλ 68:9 βροχὴν ἐκούσιον ἀφοριεῖς ὁ θεὸς τῇ κληρονομίᾳ σου καὶ ἠσθένησεν σὺ δὲ κατηρτίσω αὐτήν 68:10 τὰ ζῶά σου κατοικοῦσιν ἐν αὐτῇ ἠτοίμασας ἐν τῇ χρηστότητί σου τῷ πτωχῷ ὁ θεὸς 68:11 κύριος δώσει ῥῆμα τοῖς εὐαγγελιζομένοις δυνάμει πολλῇ 68:12 ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν δυνάμεων τοῦ ἀγαπητοῦ καὶ ὠραιότητι τοῦ οἴκου διελέσθαι σκῦλα 68:13 ἐὰν κοιμηθῆτε ἀνὰ μέσον τῶν κλήρων πτέρυγες περιστερᾶς περιηργυρωμένοι καὶ τὰ μετάφρενα αὐτῆς ἐν χλωρότητι χρυσίου διάψαλμα 68:14 ἐν τῷ διαστελλεῖν τὸν ἐπουράνιον βασιλεῖς ἐπ' αὐτῆς χιονωθήσονται ἐν Σελμων 68:15 ὄρος τοῦ θεοῦ ὄρος πῖον ὄρος τετυρωμένον ὄρος πῖον 68:16 ἵνα τί ὑπολαμβάνετε ὄρη τετυρωμένα τὸ ὄρος ὃ εὐδόκησεν ὁ θεὸς κατοικεῖν ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ γὰρ ὁ κύριος κατασκηνώσει εἰς τέλος 68:17 τὸ ἄρμα τοῦ θεοῦ μυριοπλάσιον χιλιάδες εὐθηνούντων ὁ κύριος ἐν αὐτοῖς ἐν Σινα ἐν τῷ ἁγίῳ

ה שבחו קדם אלהא שבחו שום יקריה קלסון ליתבי על כורסי יקריה בערבות יה שמיה וביי עו קדמוי: ו אבוהון דיתמי ודיינהון דארמלן אלהא במדור בית שכנת קודשיה ז אלהא די מזויג זוגים יחידאין לבר זוגא לברזגא כחאד למיבני ביתא מנהון דאפיק בית ישראל דהוון אסירין במצרים על עובדיהון דאבהתהון כש רין פרקינן בפומבי ברם פרעה ומשיריתה דסריבו לשלחותהון שרון צחיחין צחיין: ח אלהא כד נפקתא בעמודא דענגא ובעמודא דאישתא קדם קומי עמך כד טיילתא במדברא דישימון לעלמין כד יהבתא אוריתא לעמך: ט ארעא איתרגישת לחוד ענני שמיא אטיי פו טלא דרעוא מן קדם יהוה דין סיני סליק תנניה כתננא דאתונא מן קדם דאתגלי עלוי יהוה אלהא דישראל: י כד שמעו בית ישראל ית קל גבורתך פרחו נפשיהון מן יד אחיתתא עילויהון טלין די תחיותא ומיטרין דרעוא אריי מתא אלהא על אחסנתך וכנשתא דאשתלהית את אנתא תקינתא: יא חייך תחייך אתיבתא בה אתקינתא משירית כיתי מלאכיא לאוטבא לעניי אלהא: יב יהוה מימרא דייי יהב תגמי אוריתא לעמיה ברם משה ואהרן מבשרן מימר אלהא לחילות רבא לאוכלוסין סגיעין יג מל- כוותא מלכיא עם חילהון אטלטלו מן פלטיהון וחכימא אטלטלו מן מדעיהון וכנישתא דישראל מפלגא עדאה מן שמיא: יד אמר אלהא דישראל אין אתון מלכיא רשיעיא שכבין דמיא כין ביני קילקלתא כנישתא דישראל דמיא ליונתא מיטלא מטלטלא בענני יקרא מפלגא ביזת מצראי סימא דזיקק וטיסברייהא מליין אובריזין סנין: {ת"א} אתון מלכיא רשיעיא אין דמכין אתון בבתי תיאטריכון דמתילין לקילקלתא הא דבני כנישתא דישראל דמתילין לאנפי יונתא מתחפייין אוריתא דמתילין לסימא ותלמידהא דמתילין לגדפי גוזלתא באופריזין סנין: טו כד פרסת אידהא על ימא בצלו שדי אמאיך מלכוון ואמטולתה ענן בכין גהנם היך תלגא פצא יתה מטולא דמותא: {ת"א} מטול היכנא כד פרסין כהניא ידיהון ומברכין עמא דישראל שדי מסכים עמהון ומלכיא מתכבשין תחותיהון ומטול זכוותהון חוביהון מתחוורן היך תלגא וגהינם מצטנין לרשיעיא דבבניהון קבילו מרדותא ותבו מעובדיהון בישיא:

ו אבי ותומים ודין אלמנות אלהים במעון קדשו: ז אלהים | מושב יחידים | ביתה מוציא אסירים בפשרות אף-סוררים שכנו צחיחה: ח אלהים בצאתך לפני עמך בצעך בישימון סלה: ט ארץ רעשה | אף-שמים נטפו מפני אלהים זה סיני מפני אלהים אלהי ישראל: י גשם נדבות תניף אלהים נחלתך ונלצה אתה כוננתה: יא תתך לשבו-בה תכין בטובתך לפני אלהים: יב אדני יתן-אמר המ בשורות צבא רב: יג מלכי צבאות ידדון ידדון ונות בית תחלק שלל: יד אם-תשכבון בין שפתים כנפי יונה נחפה בכסף ואברותיה ביר קרק חרוץ: טו בפרש שדי מלכים בה תשלג בצלמון: טז הר-אלהים הר-בשן הר-גבגבים הר-בשן: יז למה | תרצדון הרים גבגבים הנהר חמד אלהים לשבתו אף-יהוה ישפן לנצח: יח רכב אלהים רבתיים אלפי שגאן אדני כם סיני בקדש: יט עליית למרום | שביית שבי לקחת מתנות באדם ואף סוררים לשפן | זה אלהים: כ ברוך אדני יום | יום יעמס-לנו האל לשוער תנו סלה: כא האל | לנו אל למושעות וליהוה אדני לפנות תוצאות: כב אף-אלהים ימחן ראש איביו קדקד שער מתהלך באשמי: כג אמר אדני מבשן אשיב אשיב ממצלות ים: כד למען | תמחן רגלך קדם לשון בלך מלאיבים מנהו: כה ראו הליכותי אלהים הליכות אלי מלפי בקדש: כו קדמו שרים אחר נגנים בתוך עלמות תופפות: כז במקהלות ברכו אלהים יהוה מקור ישראל: כח שם בנגמן | צעיר רדם שרי יהודה רגמתם שרי זבלון שרי נפת ל: כט צנה אלהיך ענן ענן אלהים זו פעלת לנו: ל מהיכלך על-ירושלם לה יובילו מלכים שי: לא גער חית קנה עדת אבירים | בעגלי עמים מתרפס בראי-כסף בור עמים קרבות נקפצו: לב נאמתי חשמינים מני מצרים כוש תריץ נדי לאלהים: לג ממלכות הארץ שירו לאלהים זמרו אדני סלה: לד לרכב בשמי שמי-קדם הן-יתן בקולו קול עז: לה תנו עז לאלהים על-ישראל גאותו ועזו בשחקים: לו נורא אלהים ממקדשי אל ישראל הוא נתן | עז ותעצמות לעם ברוך אלהים:

טז טור מורייה אתר די פלחו אבהת עלמא קדם יהוה איתבחר לבניין בית מקדשא וטור סיני למוהבית אוריתא טור מתנן טור תבור וכרמל איתפסילו איתעביד להון גיבנא היך טור מתנן: {ת"א} טור מוריה איתבחר קדמי לפולחן אבהת עלמא קדם ייי ואיתבחר תיי ניין לאיתבנאה תמן בית מוקדשא וטור סיני איתתליש מתמן ואיתבחר תליתאי לאוריתא טור בותנן אתנס ואיתרחק טור תבור איתעבד ביה ניסא לברך ודבורה טור כרמל איתעבד ביה ניסא לאליהו נביאה והוון רהטין דין לקביל דין ומדיינין דין עם דין אמר עלי תשרי שכינתא ודין הוה אמר עלי תשרי שכינתא ומרי עלמא דשנין גיותנין ומרודיה עם מכיכיא נגף בהון ואיתפסילו איתעבד להון גיברנא היך טור בותנן: יז אמר אלהא למה אתון טפז זין טוריא מאתריכון לית רעותי למיתן אוריתא על טוריא גיותנין מבסרניא הא טור סיני דמכיך רגג מימרא דיהוה דאלהא לאשראה עלוי שכנתיה ביה בשמי שמיא יהוה"מימרא ישרי לעלמא: יח ארתיתכין די אלהא תרין ריבבן ריבוון דינור דליק תרין אלפין דאנגליא מדברין להון שכינתא דיהוה שרת עליהון על טורא דסיני בקדושה: יט סליקתא לרקיע משה נבייא שבייתא שבייתא אלפתא פיתגמי אוריתא יהבתא להון יהוון מתנן לבני נשא וברם סרבניא די מתגיירין תייבין בתתובא לאוריתא שרת עליהון שכינת יקרא דיהוה אלהים: כ בריך יהוה כל יומא ויומא טעין לנא יתנא מוסיף פיקודיא עלוי פיקודיא תקיפא די הוא פורקנא וסעיד {ב} נא וסעודנא לעלמין: כא אלהא לנא תקוף ופורקן ומן קדם ייי אלהא יהוה מתגרין ברשיעיא מותא ומפקנות נשמתא בסרנוקא: כב ברם אלהא יתבר ריש בעלי דבבוי יתבר שער גבר די מתהלך בחובוי: כג צדיקא דמיתו ואיתאכלו מן חיות ברא אמר יהוה מבותנן אתיב אתיב צדיקא די ישתניקו ובלועינן נוגיא במצולתיה דימא: כד מן בגלל דיחמון פורענות רשיעא יטמשון ריגליהון בדם קטילין לישן חיות ברא מן תרבהון ידהון מן בעלי דבבא מנהון יסבעון: כה חמון בית ישראל הליכות שכינתך על ימא אלהא אמרין הליכת אלהא מליך כל עלמא בקדושא: כו אקדימו ואמררו שירתא בתר משה ואהרן דמנגנין קדמיהון במצע נשיא צדיקתא די עם מרים מתופפן: כז ביני במצע כנישיא בריכו אלהא רוממו יהוה עובריא במעי אימהון זרעא דישראל: כח תמן בנימן זעיר בשבטיא דמן שירויא נחת לימא מטול היכנא קביל מלכותא מן שירויא ובתריהון נחתו רברבי יהודה רגמו יתהון שבטיא אבנין וקבילו רבנותא בתרהון ומבתר שאול מלך דוד משבט יהודה ורברבי יהודה לבשו ארגוונא לשמשותיה רבני זבולן הוון תגריהון רד בני נפתלי הוון גבריהון מספקין מזונא להון מאחסנתיהון: כט פקיד אלהא עושנך איתעשן אלהא שרי בבית מקדשא דנן דעבדת לנא: ל מן היכלך תקבל קורבניא על ירושלם שכינתך שריא מפנקטיהון לך ייתון מלכיא קורבניא: לא נזוף במשיריית חייבין תרע יתהון היך קניא כינשת גיברין גוברין דמתרחצין בעגליא טמעוות עמיא עממיא רעותיה בעמא דימתעסקין ברעותא באוריתא דזקיקא דסניא מן סימא דבר עמיא עממיא דלאגחא קרבא צבין: לב ייתון בנוי דחם אוסמנא חוסמניא אוכמיא ממצרים לאיתגיירא בנוי דכוש ירהטון למיפרש ידיהון בצלו קדם אלהא: לג מלכות ארעא עממיא שבחו קדם יהוה אלהא שבחו יהוה לעלמין: לד ליתיב על כורסיה בשמי שמיא מן לקדמין הוא במימריה יחב בקליה קל רוח נבואתא לנבייא לה הבו יקר עושנא לאלהא די על ישראל גיותנותיה ועושניה בשמיא: לו דחיל אלהא מן בית מקדשך תקיפא דישראל הוא יחב עושנא ותוקפא לעמיה בריך אלהא:

68:18 ἀνέβης εἰς ὕψος ἠχμαλώτευσας αἰχμαλωσίαν ἔλαβες δόματα ἐν ἀνθρώπῳ καὶ γὰρ ἀπειθοῦντες τοῦ κατασκευῶσαι κύριος ὁ θεὸς εὐλογητὸς 68:19 εὐλογητὸς κύριος ἡμέραν καθ' ἡμέραν κατευοδώσει ἡμῖν ὁ θεὸς τῶν σωτηριῶν ἡμῶν διάψαλμα 68:20 ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν θεὸς τοῦ σφῶζειν καὶ τοῦ κυρίου κυρίου αἱ διεξοδοὶ τοῦ θανάτου 68:21 πλὴν ὁ θεὸς συνθλάσει κεφαλὰς ἐχθρῶν αὐτοῦ κορυφὴν τριχὸς διαπορευομένων ἐν πλημμυλείαις αὐτῶν 68:22 εἶπεν κύριος ἐκ Βαβυλῶν ἐπιστρέψω ἐπιστρέψω ἐν βυθοῖς θαλάσσης 68:23 ὅπως ἂν βαφῆ ὁ πούς σου ἐν αἵματι ἢ γλῶσσα τῶν κυνῶν σου ἐξ ἐχθρῶν πα αὐτοῦ 68:24 ἐθεωρήθησαν αἱ πορεῖαι σου ὁ θεὸς αἱ πορεῖαι τοῦ θεοῦ μου τοῦ βασιλέως τοῦ ἐν τῷ ἁγίῳ 68:25 προέφθασαν ἄρχοντες ἐχόμενοι ψαλλόντων ἐν μέσῳ νεανίδων τυμπανιστριῶν 68:26 ἐν ἐκκλησίαις εὐλογεῖτε τὸν θεόν τὸν κύριον ἐκ πηγῶν Ἰσραὴλ 68:27 ἐκεῖ Βενιαμὴν νεώτερος ἐν ἐκστάσει ἄρχοντες Ἰουδα ἡγεμόνες αὐτῶν ἄρχοντες Ζαβουλῶν ἄρχοντες Νεφθαλί 68:28 ἔντειλαι ὁ θεὸς τῆ δύναμει σου δυνάμωσον ὁ θεὸς τοῦτο ὃ κατειργάσω ἡμῖν 68:29 ἀπὸ τοῦ ναοῦ σου ἐπὶ Ἱερουσαλὴμ σοὶ οἴσουσιν βασιλεῖς δῶρα 68:30 ἐπιτίμησον τοῖς θηρίοις τοῦ καλάμου ἢ συναγωγῇ τῶν ταύρων ἐν ταῖς δαμάλεσιν τῶν λαῶν τοῦ μὴ ἀποκλεισθῆναι τοὺς δεδοκιμασμένους τῷ ἀργυρίῳ διασκόρπισον ἔθνη τὰ τοὺς πολέμους θέλοντα 68:31 ἤξουσιν πρέσβεις ἐξ Αἰγύπτου Αἰθιοπία προφθάσει χεῖρα αὐτῆς τῷ θεῷ 68:32 αἱ βασιλεῖαι τῆς γῆς ἔσασθε τῷ θεῷ ψάλατε τῷ κυρίῳ διάψαλμα 68:33 ψάλατε τῷ θεῷ τῷ ἐπιβεβηκότι ἐπὶ τὸν οὐρανὸν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ κατὰ ἀνατολὰς ἰδοὺ δώσει ἐν τῇ φωνῇ αὐτοῦ φωνὴν δυνάμεως 68:34 δότε δόξαν τῷ θεῷ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ ἡ μεγαλοπρέπεια αὐτοῦ καὶ ἡ δύναμις αὐτοῦ ἐν ταῖς νεφέλαις 68:35 θαυμαστὸς ὁ θεὸς ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις αὐτοῦ ὁ θεὸς Ἰσραὴλ αὐτὸς δώσει δύναμιν καὶ κραταίωσιν τῷ λαῷ αὐτοῦ εὐλογητὸς ὁ θεός

Tehillim / Psalms 68

For the director of music. Of David. A psalm. A song. 68:1 Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered, And let those who hate Him flee before Him. 68:2 As smoke is driven away, so drive them away; As wax melts before the fire, So let the wicked perish before God. 68:3 But let the righteous be glad; let them exult before God; Yes, let them rejoice with gladness. 68:4 Sing to God, sing praises to His name; Lift up a song for Him who rides through the deserts, Whose name is the Lord, and exult before Him. 68:5 A father of the fatherless and a judge for the widows, Is God in His holy habitation. 68:6 God makes a home for the lonely; He leads out the prisoners into prosperity, Only the rebellious dwell in a parched land. 68:7 O God, when You went forth before Your people, When You marched through the wilderness, Selah. 68:8 The earth quaked; The heavens also dropped rain at the presence of God; Sinai itself quaked at the presence of God, the God of Israel. 68:9 You shed abroad a plentiful rain, O God; You confirmed Your inheritance when it was parched. 68:10 Your creatures settled in it; You provided in Your goodness for the poor, O God. 68:11 The Lord gives the command; The women who proclaim the good tidings are a great host: 68:12 'Kings of armies flee, they flee, And she who remains at home will divide the spoil!' 68:13 When you lie down among the sheepfolds, You are like the wings of a dove covered with silver, And its pinions with glistening gold. 68:14 When the Almighty scattered the kings there, It was snowing in Zalmon. 68:15 A mountain of God is the mountain of Bashan; A mountain of many peaks is the mountain of Bashan. 68:16 Why do you look with envy, O mountains with many peaks, At the mountain which God has desired for His abode? Surely the Lord will dwell there forever. 68:17 The chariots of God are myriads, thousands upon thousands; The Lord is among them as at Sinai, in holiness. (NASB)

Toviyah / Psalms 68

68:1 For praise, of David. A hymn and song. 68:2 God will arise, his enemies will be scattered, and his foes will flee from his presence. 68:3 Just as the smoke is driven out, they will be driven; just as wax will melt in the presence of fire, the wicked will perish in the presence of God. 68:4 And the righteous will rejoice and exult in the presence of the Lord, and they will rejoice joyfully. 68:5 Give praise in the presence of God, praise his glorious name; magnify the one who sits on his glorious throne in Araboth; Yah is his name; and be glad in his presence. 68:6 Father of the orphans, and judge of widows – such is God in the dwelling place of his holy presence. 68:7 God, who makes matches, joining the solitary to mates; who brought out the house of Israel, who were bound in Egypt; for the correct deeds of their fathers <he redeemed them> in public procession; but Pharaoh and his armies, who refused to let them go, dwelt in thirst. 68:8 O God, when you went forth in a pillar of cloud and in a pillar of fire before your people, when you traveled in the wilderness of Jeshimon forever, when you gave the Torah to your people – 68:9 The earth shook, also the heavens dropped dew in the presence of the Lord; as for this Sinai, its smoke went up like the smoke of a furnace before the Lord, God of Israel, was manifested upon it. 68:10 When the house of Israel heard the voice of your power, their souls flew away; at once he made to descend upon them the dew of resurrection; O God, you brought the favorable rain to your inheritance, and you supported the assembly which was exhausted. 68:11 You caused your vigor to go back to it; you appointed a troop of angels to do good to the poor of God. 68:12 The Lord gave the words of Torah to his people; truly, Moses and Aaron [were] proclaiming the word of God to the great army. 68:13. Kingdoms with their armies went into exile from their palaces, and the wise were exiled from their knowledge; but the assembly of Israel divides the spoil from heaven. (EMC)

Psalmoi / Psalms 68

For the end, a Psalm of a Song by David. 68:1 Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered; and let them that hate him flee from before him. 68:2 As smoke vanishes, let them vanish: as wax melts before the fire, so let the sinners perish from before God. 68:3 But let the righteous rejoice; let them exult before God: let them be delighted with joy. 68:4 Sing to God, sing praises to his name: make a way for him that rides upon the west (the Lord is his name) and exult before him. They shall be troubled before the face of him, 68:5 who is the father of the orphans, and judge of the widows: such is God in his holy place. 68: God settles the solitary in a house; leading forth prisoners mightily, also them that act provokingly, even them that dwell in tombs. 68:7 O God, when thou wentest forth before thy people, when thou wentest through the wilderness; Pause: 68:8 the earth quaked, yea, the heavens dropped water at the presence of the God of Sinai, at the presence of the God of Israel. 68:9 O God, thou wilt grant to thine inheritance a gracious rain; for it was weary, but thou didst refresh it. 68:10 Thy creatures dwell in it: thou hast in thy goodness prepared for the poor. 68:11 The Lord God will give a word to them that preach it in a great company. 68:12 The king of the forces of the beloved, of the beloved, will even grant them for the beauty of the house to divide the spoils. 68:13 Even if ye should lie among the lots, ye shall have the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her breast with yellow gold. 68:14 When the heavenly One scatters kings upon it, they shall be made snow-white in Selmon. 68:15 The mountain of God is a rich mountain; a swelling mountain, a rich mountain. 68:16 Wherefore do ye conceive evil, ye swelling mountains? this is the mountain which God has delighted to dwell in; yea, the Lord will dwell in it for ever. (LXX)

Tehillim / Psalms 68

68:18 You have ascended on high, You have led captive Your captives; You have received gifts among men, Even among the rebellious also, that the Lord God may dwell there. 68:19 Blessed be the Lord, who daily bears our burden, The God who is our salvation. Selah. 68:20 God is to us a God of deliverances; And to God the Lord belong escapes from death. 68:21 Surely God will shatter the head of His enemies, The hairy crown of him who goes on in his guilty deeds. 68:22 The Lord said, ‘I will bring them back from Bashan. I will bring them back from the depths of the sea; 68:23 That your foot may shatter them in blood, The tongue of your dogs may have its portion from your enemies.’ 68:24 They have seen Your procession, O God, The procession of my God, my King, into the sanctuary. 68:25 The singers went on, the musicians after them, In the midst of the maidens beating tambourines. 68:26 Bless God in the congregations, Even the Lord, you who are of the fountain of Israel. 68:27 There is Benjamin, the youngest, ruling them, The princes of Judah in their throng, The princes of Zebulun, the princes of Naphtali. 68:28 Your God has commanded your strength; Show Yourself strong, O God, who have acted on our behalf. 68:29 Because of Your temple at Jerusalem Kings will bring gifts to You. 68:30 Rebuke the beasts in the reeds, The herd of bulls with the calves of the peoples, Trampling under foot the pieces of silver; He has scattered the peoples who delight in war. 68:31 Envoys will come out of Egypt; Ethiopia will quickly stretch out her hands to God. 68:32 Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth, Sing praises to the Lord, Selah. 68:33 To Him who rides upon the highest heavens, which are from ancient times; Behold, He speaks forth with His voice, a mighty voice. 68:34 Ascribe strength to God; His majesty is over Israel And His strength is in the skies. 68:35 O God, You are awesome from Your sanctuary. The God of Israel Himself gives strength and power to the people. Blessed be God! (NASB)

Toviyah / Psalms 68

68:14 <The God of Israel said:> If you wicked kings lay down among the rubbish heaps, the assembly of Israel, likened to a dove flying in the clouds of glory, divides the spoil of the Egyptians – silver that is refined, and her treasures full of pure gold. Another Targum: If you wicked kings sleep in the theatres, which are likened to rubbish heaps, behold, the sons of the assembly of Israel, which are likened to the wings of a dove, are covered with the words of Torah, which are likened to silver, and her scholars, which are likened to the pinions of a young dove in pure gold. 68:15 When she spread her hands over the sea in prayer, Shaddai abased kingdoms, and on her account clouded over Gehinnom like snow; he delivered them from the shadow of death. Another Targum: Because of this, when the priests spread their hands and bless the people of Israel, Shaddai agrees with them and kings are subdued beneath them; and because of their merits, their sins are made white as snow, and Gehinnom is cooled for the wicked who have received punishment in their children and have repented of their bad deeds. (EMC)

Psalmoi / Psalms 68

68:17 The chariots of God are ten thousand fold, thousands of rejoicing ones: the Lord is among them, in Sina, in the holy place. 68:18 Thou art gone up on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for man, yea, for they were rebellious, that thou mightest dwell among them. 68:19 Blessed be the Lord God, blessed be the Lord daily; and the God of our salvation shall prosper us. Pause. 68:20 Our God is the God of salvation; and to the Lord belong the issues from death. 68:21 But God shall crust the heads of his enemies; the hairy crown of them that go on in their trespasses. 68:22 The Lord said, I will bring again from Basan, I will bring my people again through the depths of the sea. 68:23 That thy foot may be dipped in blood, and the tongue of thy dogs be stained with that of thine enemies. 68:24 Thy goings, O God, have been seen; the goings of my God, the king, in the sanctuary. 68:25 The princes went first, next before the players on instruments, in the midst of damsels playing on timbrels. 68:26 Praise God in the congregations, the Lord from the fountains of Israel. 68:27 There is Benjamin the younger one in ecstasy, the princes of Judah their rulers, the princes of Zabulon, the princes of Nephthali. 68:28 O God, command thou thy strength: strengthen, O God, this which thou hast wrought in us. 68:29 Because of thy temple at Jerusalem shall kings bring presents to thee. 68:30 Rebuke the wild beasts of the reed: let the crowd of bulls with the heifers of the nations be rebuked, so that they who have been proved with silver may not be shut out: scatter thou the nations that wish for wars. 68:31 Ambassadors shall arrive out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall hasten to stretch out her hand readily to God. 68:32 Sing to God, ye kingdoms of the earth; sing psalms to the Lord. Pause. 68:33 Sing to God that rides on the heaven of heaven, eastward: lo, he will utter a mighty sound with his voice. 68:34 Give ye glory to God: his excellency is over Israel, and his power is in the clouds. 68:35 God is wonderful in his holy places, the God of Israel: he will give power and strength to his people: blessed be God. (LXX)

Toviyah / Psalms 68

68:16 Mount Moriah, the place where the patriarchs worshiped in the presence of the Lord, was chosen for the building of the sanctuary; and Mount Sinai for the giving of Torah; Mount Mathnan, Mount Tabor, and Carmel were disqualified, and a hump was made for them like Mount Mathnan. Another Targum: Mount Moriah was chosen first for the worship of the patriarchs in the presence of the Lord, and was chosen second for the building there of the sanctuary; and Mount Sinai was pulled up from there and chosen third for the Torah; Mount Buthnin was removed and set far away; Mount Tabor – a miracle was performed there for Barak and Deborah; Mount Carmel – miracles were performed there for Elijah the prophet. And they were racing, one against the other, and arguing one with the other. One said, “On me the presence shall abide,” and the other would say, “On me the presence will abide.” And the Lord of the World, who sharpens the proud and rebellious with the humble, struck them down and they were disqualified. A hump was made for them like Mount Buthnin. 68:17 God said, Why do you leap, O mountains? It is not my will to give the Torah on proud, contemptuous mountains. Behold, Mount Sinai which is humble; the word of the Lord desires to place his presence upon it; [but] in the highest heaven the Lord will abide forever. 68:18 The chariots of God are two myriads of burning fire, two thousand angels guiding them; the presence of the Lord rests on them, on the mountain of Sinai, in holiness. 68:19 You ascended to the firmament, O prophet Moses; you captured captives, you taught the words of Torah, you gave gifts to the sons of men, and even the stubborn who are converted turn in repentance, [and] the glorious presence of the Lord God abides upon them. 68:20 Blessed be the Lord, every day he weighs us down, adding commandments to commandments; the mighty one, who is our redemption and our helper forever. 68:21 God is for us might and redemption; and from God the Lord death and loss of breath are inflicted on the wicked through suffocation. 68:22 Truly God will break the heads of his enemies, he will make fall out the hair of the man who keeps walking in his sins. 68:23 The Lord says, “I will bring back the righteous who have died and been eaten by wild beasts from Buthnin; I will bring back the righteous who have drowned in the depths of the sea.” 68:24 So that they will see the punishment of the wicked, they will dip their feet in the blood of the slain; the tongue of the wild beast will grow fat from their plumpness, some of them will be sated on the enemies. 68:25 The house of Israel has seen the paths of your presence on the sea, O God; they say, “The paths of God, king of all the world in holiness!” 68:26 They rose up early and uttered a song after Moses and Aaron who were playing melodies before them, in the midst of the righteous women who were with Miriam playing timbrels. 68:27 In the midst of the assemblies, bless God, exalt the Lord, O fetuses in the bellies of their mothers, O seed of Israel! 68:28 There Benjamin, least of the tribes, who first of all went into the sea -- because of this, he received kingship; and after them went down the princes of Judah; the tribes stoned them with stones, and they received dominion after them; the princes of Zebulun were their merchants, and the princes of Naphtali were their warriors. 68:29. God has commanded your strength; be strong, O God, abide in this sanctuary you have made for us! 68:30 From your temple you will accept sacrifices; your presence abides on Jerusalem; from their palaces the kings will bring to you sacrifices. 68:31 Rebuke the armies of sinners, shatter them like reeds, the assembly of warriors who trust in calves, the idols of the Gentiles. His favor is toward the people who are occupied willingly in the Torah, which is purer than silver. Scatter the peoples who desire to wage war! 68:32 The children of Ham, the Osmani, will come from Egypt to be converted; the children of Cush will run to spread their hands in prayer before God. 68:33 O kingdoms of the earth, sing praise in the presence of the Lord, sing praise to the Lord forever. 68:34 To the one who sits on his throne in the heaven of heavens; in the beginning he, by his command, gave through his voice the voice of the spirit of prophecy to the prophets. 68:35 Ascribe the glory of strength to God, whose excellence is over Israel, and whose strength is in heaven. 68:36 Fearful is God, from your sanctuary; the mighty one of Israel has given strength and might to his people. Blessed be God! (EMC)

א לְמַנְצֵחַ לְדָוִד מְזִמּוֹר שִׁיר: ב יְקוּם אֱלֹהִים יְפוצוּ אוֹיְבָיו וַיְנוּסוּ מִשְׁנֵאָיו מִפְּנֵי: *For the director of music. Of David. A psalm. A song. 68:1 Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered, And let those who hate Him flee before Him. (NASB) David describes the wicked as those who are driven away by the Lord, and who melt like wax. (68:2 As smoke is driven away, so drive them away; As wax melts before the fire, So let the wicked perish before God. NASB) The wicked are those who take their stand against the ways of the Lord. This reminds us of what the Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy in 2 Timothy 3:8-15.*

2 Timothy 3:8-15

3:8 *Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men of*

depraved mind, rejected in regard to the faith. 3:9 But they will not make further progress; for their folly will be obvious to all, just as Jannes' and Jambres' folly was also. 3:10 Now you followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance, 3:11 persecutions, and sufferings, such as happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium and at Lystra; what persecutions I endured, and out of them all the Lord rescued me! 3:12 Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. 3:13 But evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. 3:14 You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them 3:15 and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. (NASB)

Paul describes the men Jannes and Jambres as two men who opposed Moshe. The Torah does not describe these men, this may be an example given as midrash, the point of the matter is that these men stood against Moshe and it was obvious to all that their error was folly (done out of foolishness). Paul describes the righteous as those who follow his instruction, all who live godly lives in Yeshua the Messiah will be persecuted, and he continues saying, *3:13 But evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. (NASB)* The concept here is that as David says in *Tehillim / Psalms 68:2 As smoke is driven away, so drive them away; As wax melts before the fire, So let the wicked perish before God. (NASB)* so the wicked, evil men, will proceed from bad to worse, their state will not improve because they seek only to satisfy themselves, they deceive and are being deceived by reason that they fall into their own deception of wickedness. Paul speaks to the righteous, that having been taught the sacred writings from childhood (having been taught and learned the Torah), the Torah gives wisdom that leads to salvation through faith in Yeshua the Messiah. The Scriptures speak of Faith as being the composition of two things, (i) belief - in the Lord, in the Messiah, and in the Promises of God, the Sacred 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 *“those who are considered worthy of taking part in the age to come and in the resurrection from the dead”* Yeshua did not say *“just believe in me and you will be saved.”* He understood and taught that faith includes both belief and practice. True faith is that which is lived out, we are not to live two separate lives. If one has two separate lives, then be warned, based upon what Yeshua said in *Matthew 7*, there are those who will come before Me on that great day and I will tell them, depart from Me I never knew you, worker of lawlessness (anomia). This is what the writers of the Mishnah had in mind when they spoke of learning Torah in *Mishnah Pirkei Avot 4:20*.

Mishnah Pirkei Avot 4:20

Elisha ben Abuya says: One who learns as a child is compared to what? To ink written on new parchment. And one who learns as an elder is compared to what? To ink written on scraped parchment. Rabbi Yose bar Yehuda, man of the town of the Babylonian, says: One who learns from young ones is compared to what? To one who eats unripe grapes and drinks wine from its press. And one who learns from elders is compared to what? To one who eats ripe grapes and drinks aged wine. Rabbi says: Do not look at the jug but rather at what is in it. For there are new jugs full of old, and old that do not have even new within them. אלישע בן אבויה אומר, הלומד ילד למה הוא דומה, לדיו כתובה על ניר חדש. והלומד זקן למה הוא דומה, לדיו כתובה על ניר מחוק. רבי יוסי בר יהודה איש כפר הבבלי אומר, הלומד מן הקטנים למה הוא דומה, לאוכל ענבים קהות ושותה יין מגתו. והלומד מן הזקנים למה הוא דומה, לאוכל ענבים בשולות ושותה יין ישן. רבי אומר, אל תסתכל בקנקן, אלא במה שיש בו. יש קנקן חדש מלא ישן, וישן שאפלו חדש אין בו.

The rabbis speak of learning Torah when either young or old. The one who learns as a child is having the Torah written upon his heart, which is compared to *“new parchment,”* whereas, the one who learns as an

elder, the Torah is written upon his heart, which is compared to “*scrapped parchment.*” Note that when one wanted to reuse parchment, one would take a knife and scrape the ink off and the write over the bare spot. The issue might be that there are some ink spots showing through that may muddy the text of the Torah, as compared to that of fresh new parchment. And so we should be careful not to let the sins of our past, muddy the Torah that God is writing upon our hearts in the Messiah Yeshua. The mishnah continues saying that learning from a young man is as drinking unripe grape juice, it would be sower, whereas learning from an elder, is as drinking very good aged wine. This makes sense if we think about King Solomon’s son Rehoboam (רְחֹבָם). Rehoboam was 41 years old when he took over as king. Before his coronation took place which would officially make him king, the assembly requested certain reforms in the policy followed by his father, Solomon. The reforms requested would reduce the burden that Solomon had placed upon the people (the materials that were provided to the royal house. The older men counseled Rehoboam to speak to the people with kindness and in a civil manner. However, the new king sought the advice from the people he had grown up with, the younger men, who advised the king to show no weakness to the people, and to tax them even more, which Rehoboam did. He proclaimed to the people,

1 Kings 12:11

12:11 ‘Whereas my father loaded you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke; my father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions.’” (NASB)

The rabbis conclude in the mishnah saying that one should judged the contents of the jug rather than judging from external appearances. The application is that the wicked show forth their unrighteousness by their deeds which flow from the heart, the inside of the jug. The wicked will perish before God (68:2) whereas the righteous will be glad and rejoice. (68:3)

The Masoretic Text and the Aramaic Targum go on to say the following:

Masoretic Text

Tehillim / Psalms 68:4-7

68:4 Sing to God, sing praises to His name; Lift up a song for Him who rides through the deserts, Whose name is the Lord, and exult before Him. 68:5 A father of the fatherless and a judge for the widows, Is God in His holy habitation. 68:6 God makes a home for the lonely; He leads out the prisoners into prosperity, Only the rebellious dwell in a parched land. 68:7 O God, when You went forth before Your people, When You marched through the wilderness, Selah. (NASB)

ד וְצַדִּיקִים יִשְׁמְחוּ וְעַלְצוּ לְפָנַי אֱלֹהִים וַיִּשְׂאוּ בְשִׁמְחָה: ה שִׁירוּ | לְאֱלֹהִים זְמִירוֹ שְׂמוֹ סִלּוֹ לְרֹכֵב
 בְּעֲרֵבוֹת בְּיָהּ שְׂמוֹ וְעַלְזוּ לְפָנָיו: ו אָבִי יְתוּמִים וְדִין אֱלֹהִים בְּמַעֲוֹן קָדְשׁוֹ: ז אֱלֹהִים |
 מוֹשִׁיב יְחִידִים | בֵּיתָהּ מוֹצִיא אֲסִירִים בְּפוֹשְׁרוֹת אֶד-סוּרְרִים שְׁכָנוֹ צְחִיקָה:

Aramaic Targum

Toviyah / Psalms 68:5-8

68:5 Give praise in the presence of God, praise his glorious name; magnify the one who sits on his glorious throne in Araboth; Yah is his name; and be glad in his presence. 68:6 Father of the orphans, and judge of widows – such is God in the dwelling place of his holy presence. 68:7 God, who makes matches, joining the solitary to mates; who brought out the house of Israel, who were bound in Egypt; for the correct deeds of their fathers <he redeemed them> in public procession; but Pharaoh and his armies, who refused to let them go, dwelt in thirst. 68:8 O God, when you went forth in a pillar of cloud and in a pillar of fire before your peo-

ple, when you traveled in the wilderness of Jeshimon forever, when you gave the Torah to your people (EMC)

ה שבחו קדם אלהא שבחו שום יקריה קלסון ליתיב על כורסי יקריה בערבות יה שמיה וביעו קד-
מוי: ו אבוהון דיתמי ודיינהון דארמלן אלהא במדור בית שכינת קודשיה ז אלהא די מזויג זוגים
יחידאין לבר זוגא לברזגא כחדא למיבני ביתא מנהון דאפיק בית ישראל דהוון אסירין במצרים
על עובדיהון דאבהתהון כשרין פרקינן בפומבי ברם פרעה ומשיריתיה דסריבו לשלחותהון שרון
צחיחין צחיין: ח אלהא כד נפקתא בעמודא דעננא ובעמודא דאישתא קדם קומי עמך כד טיילתא
במדברא דישימון לעלמין כד יהבתא אורייתא לעמך:

The rabbis of the Aramaic Targum expand upon David's words significantly. The Righteous 68:4 *Sing to God, sing praises to His name; Lift up a song for Him who rides through the deserts, Whose name is the Lord, and exult before Him. (NASB)* whereas the Targum states, 8:5 *Give praise in the presence of God, praise his glorious name; magnify the one who sits on his glorious throne in Araboth; Yah is his name; and be glad in his presence. (EMC)* What is the "throne in Araboth?" According to the Scriptures, the Throne of God is the reigning position of the Father in heaven, and Araboth is the location of God's throne. The kabbalistic understanding of Araboth is that Araboth is the highest heaven of Yetzirah and corresponds to the sephira of the highest level. (Note that *Sephira* is singular for *Sephirot* (סְפִירוֹת), meaning emanations, referencing the 10 attributes/emanations in Kabbalah, through which Ein Sof reveals himself and continuously creates both the physical realm and the chain of higher metaphysical realms "Seder hishtalshelus.") The Apostle Paul spoke of the third heaven. (2 Corinthians 12:2 *I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago-- whether in the body I do not know, or out of the body I do not know, God knows-- such a man was caught up to the third heaven. NASB*) Judaism, according to kabbalistic thought, contains between seven and ten heavens which are paralleled to different spiritual levels. Maimonides, in his book the *Guide of the Perplexed* (1190 AD), tried to reconcile the apparent discrepancy between the Talmudic description and the science of his day. While asserting that the number seven could if necessary be justified on scientific grounds (where since some levels are grouped together), Maimonides argues that the Rabbinic tradition should not be taken literally, but as an allegory about God's guidance of the universe. The reason may be due to his investigations into the science of his day.

The psalm continues saying, 68:8 *The earth quaked; The heavens also dropped rain at the presence of God; Sinai itself quaked at the presence of God, the God of Israel. 68:9 You shed abroad a plentiful rain, O God; You confirmed Your inheritance when it was parched. (NASB)*, the Aramaic Targum states, 68:9 *The earth shook, also the heavens dropped dew in the presence of the Lord; as for this Sinai, its smoke went up like the smoke of a furnace before the Lord, God of Israel, was manifested upon it. 68:10 When the house of Israel heard the voice of your power, their souls flew away; at once he made to descend upon them the dew of resurrection; O God, you brought the favorable rain to your inheritance, and you supported the assembly which was exhausted. (EMC)* The rabbis expand upon 68:9 to say that when Israel had heard the power of His voice, their souls fled, and the Lord descended upon the people in the dew of the resurrection. This appears to be an allusion to *Shemot / Exodus 33:20 But He said, "You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!" (NASB)* This is an interesting comparison, that when Israel heard the power of God's voice speaking from the cloud over the mountain of Sinai, the rabbis are saying that their souls fled, they died, and the Lord descended upon them in the dew of the resurrection, saying the Lord needed to raise Israel back to life when they stood before the mountain. The word of God being spoken to the people, their having died and then raised up, sounds reminiscent of Yeshua's words in *John 6:61 But Jesus, conscious that His disciples grumbled at this, said to them, 'Does this cause you to stumble? 6:62 'What then if you see the Son of Man ascending to where He was before? 6:63 'It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life. 6:64 'But there are some of you who do not believe.' For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who it was that would betray Him. (NASB)* The concept here is that one must hear and obey him for any spiritual progress to be made. The

letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. One can read the entire Bible, memorize all of Scripture, and it will not yield life or spiritual growth. The letter or the words of the Torah should motivate one to change and to seek the spirit of the Lord for help to be different. It is the Spirit of the Lord that imparts life, as we see here in the Targum in the concept of the Lord descending upon the people, in the dew of the resurrection, to raise them up from the dead. The point is that the Scriptures are good for understanding and good for maintaining hope, however, it is no substitute for coming to the Lord, seeking Him in repentance and truth, and seeking His help to change. This is what Yeshua meant when he said, “*You search the scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are those that testify of me. But you will not come to me, so that you may have life.*” (John 5:38-40). Yeshua the Messiah sends forth the Spirit to cause change, life, and truth in us for the glory of God.

The Masoretic Text continues saying, 68:10 *Your creatures settled in it; You provided in Your goodness for the poor; O God.* 68:11 *The Lord gives the command; The women who proclaim the good tidings are a great host:* 68:12 *‘Kings of armies flee, they flee, And she who remains at home will divide the spoil!’* 68:13 *When you lie down among the sheepfolds, You are like the wings of a dove covered with silver, And its pinions with glistening gold.* 68:14 *When the Almighty scattered the kings there, It was snowing in Zalmon.* (NASB) The Aramaic Targum however expands upon this section of David’s words significantly to say the following:

Toviyah / Psalms 68:11-15

68:11 *You caused your vigor to go back to it; you appointed a troop of angels to do good to the poor of God.* 68:12 *The Lord gave the words of Torah to his people; truly, Moses and Aaron [were] proclaiming the word of God to the great army.* 68:13. *Kingdoms with their armies went into exile from their palaces, and the wise were exiled from their knowledge; but the assembly of Israel divides the spoil from heaven.* 68:14 *<The God of Israel said:> If you wicked kings lay down among the rubbish heaps, the assembly of Israel, likened to a dove flying in the clouds of glory, divides the spoil of the Egyptians – silver that is refined, and her treasures full of pure gold. Another Targum: If you wicked kings sleep in the theatres, which are likened to rubbish heaps, behold, the sons of the assembly of Israel, which are likened to the wings of a dove, are covered with the words of Torah, which are likened to silver, and her scholars, which are likened to the pinions of a young dove in pure gold.* 68:15 *When she spread her hands over the sea in prayer, Shaddai abased kingdoms, and on her account clouded over Gehinnom like snow; he delivered them from the shadow of death. Another Targum: Because of this, when the priests spread their hands and bless the people of Israel, Shaddai agrees with them and kings are subdued beneath them; and because of their merits, their sins are made white as snow, and Gehinnom is cooled for the wicked who have received punishment in their children and have repented of their bad deeds.* (EMC, יא חיייתך אתיבתא בה אתקינתא משירית כיתי מלאכיא לאוטבא לעניי אלהא: יב יהוה מימרא דייי יהב פתגמי אוריתא לעמיה ברם משה ואהרן מבשרן מימר אלהא לחילות רבא לאוכלוסין סגיעין יג מלכותא מלכיא עם חילהון אטלטלו מן פלטיהון וחכימא אטלטלו מן מדעיהון וכנישתא דיי שראל מפלגא עדאה מן שמיא: יד אמר אלהא דישראל אין אתון מלכיא רשיעיא שכבין דמכין ביני קילקלתא כנישתא דישראל דדמא ליונתא מיטללא מטלטלא בענני יקרא מפלגא ביזת מצראי סימא דזקיק וטיסברייהא מליין אובריון סנין: {ת׳א} אתון מלכיא רשיעיא אין דמכין אתון בבתי תיאטריכון דמתילין לקילקלתא הא דבני כנישתא דישראל דמתילין לאנפי יונתא מתחפיין אוריתא דמתילין לסימא ותלמידהא דמתילין לגדפי גוזלתא באופריון סנין: טו כד פרסת אידהא על ימא בצלו שדי אמאיך מלכוון ואמטולתה ענן בכין גהנם היך תלגא פצא יתה מטולא דמותא: {ת׳א} מטול היכנא כד פרסין כהניא ידיהון ומברכין עמא דישראל שדי מסכים עמהון ומלכיא מתכבשין תחותיהון ומטול זכוותהון חוביהון מתחורון היך תלגא וגהנם מצטנין לרשיעיא דבבניהון קבילו (מרדותא ותבו מעובדיהון בישיא:

The rabbis who translated the Aramaic Targum jump immediately into the spiritual realm speaking of the Lord appointing angels to do good to the poor of God, as compared to *Tehillim / Psalms 68:10 Your creatures settled in it; You provided in Your goodness for the poor, O God. (NASB)* יֵאָמְרוּ יְשׁוּבוּ-בָהּ תִּכְיֶין בְּטוֹי־ אֵלֹהִים: בְּתַרְדּוֹ לְעַנְיֵי אֱלֹהִים: Note how the MT states בְּתַרְדּוֹ לְעַנְיֵי אֱלֹהִים: “Your life settled/dwelt upon it/her (feminine),” using the word תִּיֶתֶד from the root תִּיָּה meaning “to live, have life, remain alive, sustain life,” the Hebrew text draws us back to the idea of the Lord being the One who sustains and gives life, e.g. the “dew of the resurrection.” The rabbis parallel this to the Lord giving the words of Torah to his people (68:12) and how the nations were exiled while Israel divided the spoils from heaven. The spoils from heaven are paralleled to silver, pure gold, and the words of the Torah. The idea is that the Lord stands against the nations who hate Him, whereas He is for Israel who loves Him. David says 68:14 *When the Almighty scattered the kings there, It was snowing in Zalmon. (NASB)* There is prophetic mention of snow being symbolically linked with salvation of the human soul, for example from *Isaiah 1:18* which states “come now, let us reason together; says the Lord, though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool.” In *Tehillim / Psalms 68*, David prophetically speaks of the Lord scattering the enemy, and states that when the Almighty scatters the kings, it will be snowing in Zalmon. Mount Zalmon is a reference to Mount Ebel, near Shechem, the hill country of Ephraim. Taking the *Isaiah* text into consideration, with the snow in Zalmon as a way of declaring the salvation and deliverance of God, the rabbis interpret David’s words to say that the Lord abased the kingdoms and clouded over Gehinnom like snow, he delivered Israel from the shadow of death and because of their merits their sins were made as white as snow, whereas Gehinnom is cooled slightly due to the wicked nations repentance of their evil deeds.

David continues saying, 68:14 *When the Almighty scattered the kings there, It was snowing in Zalmon. 68:15 A mountain of God is the mountain of Bashan; A mountain of many peaks is the mountain of Bashan. 68:16 Why do you look with envy, O mountains with many peaks, At the mountain which God has desired for His abode? Surely the Lord will dwell there forever. 68:17 The chariots of God are myriads, thousands upon thousands; The Lord is among them as at Sinai, in holiness. (NASB)* The Aramaic Targum states the following:

Aramaic Targum

Toviyah / Psalms 68:16-17

68:16 Mount Moriah, the place where the patriarchs worshiped in the presence of the Lord, was chosen for the building of the sanctuary; and Mount Sinai for the giving of Torah; Mount Mathnan, Mount Tabor; and Carmel were disqualified, and a hump was made for them like Mount Mathnan. Another Targum: Mount Moriah was chosen first for the worship of the patriarchs in the presence of the Lord, and was chosen second for the building there of the sanctuary; and Mount Sinai was pulled up from there and chosen third for the Torah; Mount Buthnin was removed and set far away; Mount Tabor – a miracle was performed there for Barak and Deborah; Mount Carmel – miracles were performed there for Elijah the prophet. And they were racing, one against the other, and arguing one with the other. One said, “On me the presence shall abide,” and the other would say, “On me the presence will abide.” And the Lord of the World, who sharpens the proud and rebellious with the humble, struck them down and they were disqualified. A hump was made for them like Mount Buthnin. 68:17 God said, Why do you leap, O mountains? It is not my will to give the Torah on proud, contemptuous mountains. Behold, Mount Sinai which is humble; the word of the Lord desires to place his presence upon it; [but] in the highest heaven the Lord will abide forever. 8:18 The chariots of God are two myriads of burning fire, two thousand angels guiding them; the presence of the Lord rests on them, on the mountain of Sinai, in holiness. (EMC)

סיני למוהבית אוריתא טור מתנן טור תבור וכרמל אתפסילו איתעביד להון גיבנא היך טור מתנן: {ת"א} טור מוריה איתבחר קדמי לפולחן אבהת עלמא קדם ייי ואיתבחר תיניין לאיתבנאה תמן בית מוקדשא וטור סיני איתתליש מתמן ואיתבחר תליתאי לאוריתא טור בותנן אתנס ואיתרחק טור תבור איתעבד ביה ניסא לברך ודבורה טור כרמל איתעבד ביה נסיא לאליהו והווי רהטין דין לקביל דין ומדיינין דין עם דין דין אמר עלי תשרי שכינתא ודין הוה אמר עלי תשרי שכינתא ומרי עלמא דשנין גיותנין ומרודיה עם מכיכיא נגף בהון ואיתפסילו איתעבד להון גיברנא היך טור בותנן: יז אמר אלהא למה אתון טפזין טוריא מאתריכון לית רעותי למיתן אוריתא על טוריא גיותנין מבסרניא הא טור סיני דמכיך רגג מימרא דיהוה דאלהא לאשראה עלוי שכנתיה ביה בשמי שמיא יהוה"מימרא ישרי לעלמא: יח ארתיכין די אלהא תרין ריבבן ריבוון דינור דליק תרין אלפיין דאנגליא מדברין להון שכינתא דיהוה שרת עליהון על טורא דסיני בקדושה:

David speaks of the mountain of Bashan and of Bashan having many peaks. Bashan (בַּשָּׁן) is a biblical place first mentioned in *Bereshit / Genesis 14:5*, where it is said *14:5 In the fourteenth year Chedorlaomer and the kings that were with him, came and defeated the Rephaim in Ashteroth-karnaim and the Zuzim in Ham and the Emim in Shaveh-kiriathaim, (NASB)* This is the place of residence of Og the king of Bashan. At the time of Israel's entrance into the Promised Land, Og came out against them. The Lord gave Og and Bashan into Israel's hands and they were utterly routed (see *Bamidbar / Numbers 21:33-35 and Devarim / Deuteronomy 3:1-7*). Bashan extended from Gilead in the south to Hermon in the north, and from the Jordan river on the west to Salcah on the east. Along with half of Gilead it was given to the half-tribe of Manasseh (*Joshua 13:29-31*). In addition, Golan, one of its cities, became a city of refuge (*Joshua 21:27*).

According to the Torah, the Israelites invaded Bashan and conquered it from the Amorites, as we read in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 3:1* *Next we turned and went up along the road toward Bashan, and Og king of Bashan with his whole army marched out to meet us in battle at Edrei. 3:2 The LORD said to me, "Do not be afraid of him, for I have handed him over to you with his whole army and his land. Do to him what you did to Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon. 3:3 So the LORD our God also gave into our hands Og king of Bashan and all his army. We struck them down, leaving no survivors. 3:4 At that time we took all his cities. There was not one of the sixty cities that we did not take from them—the whole region of Argob, Og's kingdom in Bashan. 3:5 All these cities were fortified with high walls and with gates and bars, and there were also a great many unwalled villages. 3:6 We completely destroyed them, as we had done with Sihon king of Heshbon, destroying every city men, women and children. 3:7 But all the livestock and the plunder from their cities we carried off for ourselves. (NASB)* David asks the question, *68:16 Why do you look with envy, O mountains with many peaks, At the mountain which God has desired for His abode? Surely the Lord will dwell there forever. 68:17 The chariots of God are myriads, thousands upon thousands; The Lord is among them as at Sinai, in holiness. (NASB)* He seems to be blending these locations, of the dwelling place of the Lord, Mount Moriah, Sinai, and Bashan. Who are the ones who are looking upon the mountain of Bashan with envy? Could this be an allusion to the righteous looking to the life and wealth of the wicked and being envious? The rabbis recognize the locational issues within the Psalm and interpret the Psalm speaking of Mount Moriah, Mount Sinai, Mount Mathnan, Mount Tabor, and Mount Carmel. The rabbis order these mountains based upon the way in which they are presented in the Torah, Mount Moriah come first with Abraham and Isaac (The Binding of Isaac עֲקִידָה, the Akedah), then the Mountain of Sinai for the giving of the Torah. What is the mountain of Mathnan? In the Targum Onkelos, we read in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 3:3* *And the Lord our God delivered Og the king of Mathnan into our hand with all his people, and we smote him until not a remnant of him escaped. ג וּמָסַר יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּיַדְנוּ אֶת יְתֵעוּג מֶלֶכָא דְמַתְנָן וַיִּתֵּן* The mountain of Mathnan is synonymous to the mountain of Bashan. Mount Tabor (הַר תְּבוֹר) is located in lower Galilee, at the eastern end of the Jezreel Valley, eleven miles (18 km) west of the Sea of Galilee. This was the site of the Mount Tabor battle between Barak under

the leadership of the Israelite judge Deborah, and the army of Jabin commanded by Sisera, in the mid 12th century BCE. It is also believed to be the location of the Transfiguration of Yeshua. (*Catholic Encyclopedia*) The Targum also mentions Mount Carmel where Elijah slew the prophets of Baal. (*1 Kings 18*) One Targum mentions these mountains, and another Targum provides the interpretation, miracles were performed on all of these mountains examining the biblical texts, and the rabbis provide a midrashic interpretation, that the mountains argued that each would have the glory and the presence of God dwell upon them. The mountains were boasting and proud, and the rabbis interpret this to say that the Lord God struck them down and disqualified them and Moriah was chosen because it is lowly and humble in the city of Jerusalem. The rabbis say that the mountain of Sinai was humble and so the glory of the Lord dwelled upon that mountain in the giving of the Torah. Could this be an allusion to the glory of the Lord dwelling upon the person who studies Torah? *Tehillim / Psalms 8:18* from the Targum states, *8:18 The chariots of God are two myriads of burning fire, two thousand angels guiding them; the presence of the Lord rests on them, on the mountain of Sinai, in holiness. (EMC)* The Psalm suggests the Lord has myriads of chariots alluding to the host of heaven and angels. The chariots are paralleled to the Lord ascending on high and leading captive His captives and receiving gifts of men (*68:18*).

In the rabbinic literature, the rabbis have a lot to say about Moshe who goes up and he goes down on the mountain of Sinai, he ascends to heaven and descends, etc. The concept of “*ascending and descending*” has Messianic overtones (see the *Tehillim / Psalms 24* study). In addition to this, while reading *Romans 10:5-11*, the Apostle Paul speaks of the one who “*ascends and descends.*” Studying Paul’s letters after having studied the Midrashic literature, his letters appear to be very midrashic, particularly in *Romans 10:5-11*.

Romans 10:5-11

10:5 For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness. 10:6 But the righteousness based on faith speaks as follows: ‘Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’ (that is, to bring Christ down), 10:7 or ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’ (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead).’ 10:8 But what does it say? ‘The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart’ that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, 10:9 that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; 10:10 for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. 10:11 For the Scripture says, ‘Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed.’ (NASB)

Ἐπισημασθῆναι γὰρ γράφει τὴν δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐκ [τοῦ] νόμου ὅτι ὁ ποιήσας αὐτὰ ἄνθρωπος ζήσεται ἐν αὐτοῖς. Ἡ δὲ ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοσύνη οὕτως λέγει, Μὴ εἴπῃς ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου, Τίς ἀναβήσεται εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν; τοῦτ’ ἔστιν Χριστὸν καταγαγεῖν. ἢ, Τίς καταβήσεται εἰς τὴν ἄβυσσον; τοῦτ’ ἔστιν Χριστὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναγαγεῖν. Ἄλλὰ τί λέγει; Ἐγγύς σου τὸ ῥῆμά ἐστιν, ἐν τῷ στόματί σου καὶ ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου: τοῦτ’ ἔστιν τὸ ῥῆμα τῆς πίστεως ὃ κηρύσσομεν. Ὅτι ἐὰν ὁμολογήσῃς ἐν τῷ στόματί σου κύριον Ἰησοῦν, καὶ πιστεύσῃς ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου ὅτι ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸν ἤγειρεν ἐκ νεκρῶν, σωθήσῃ: ¹⁰καρδία γὰρ πιστεύεται εἰς δικαιοσύνην, στόματι δὲ ὁμολογεῖται εἰς σωτηρίαν. ¹¹λέγει γὰρ ἡ γραφή, Πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ’ αὐτῷ οὐ κατασχευθήσεται.

Note the connection here with Paul’s statement to *Midrash Tehillim 24, Part 7, 8, and 9*. Paul speaks on “*righteousness*” and not our own righteousness but a righteousness that is given by faith. He says that if a man practices righteousness based on the Torah, he will live by that righteousness. Then he goes on to describe the righteousness that is by faith. He uses the “*ascending and descending*” language to explain the righteousness that is by faith. The Greek text literally states Ἡ δὲ ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοσύνη οὕτως λέγει, Μὴ εἴπῃς ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου, Τίς ἀναβήσεται εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν; τοῦτ’ ἔστιν Χριστὸν καταγαγεῖν: ἢ, Τίς καταβήσεται εἰς τὴν ἄβυσσον; τοῦτ’ ἔστιν Χριστὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναγαγεῖν. “*But of the believe righteousness*

thus he says, *You should not say in your heart, who shall ascend unto heaven? that is to say Christ to lead down; or who shall go down into the abyss? that is to say, Christ from the dead to lead.*” Paul is saying here that our righteousness in the Torah command does not have the power to “ascend and descend,” that is to lead the Messiah Yeshua in “ascending or descending” to or from heaven or even to or from the grave. Paul uses this “ascending and descending” rabbinic illustration to a point out that the “Word of God” is powerful, it is near us, it is in our hearts, it is the Word of faith that is accredited to us just like God had credited Abraham according to His faith in the Lord and His promises, and living out his faith by obeying His commands. Paul goes on to say ὅτι ἐὰν ὁμολογήσῃς ἐν τῷ στόματί σου κύριον Ἰησοῦν, καὶ πιστεύσῃς ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου ὅτι ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸν ἤγειρεν ἐκ νεκρῶν, σωθήσῃ: ¹⁰καρδίᾳ γὰρ πιστεύεται εἰς δικαιοσύνην, στόματι δὲ ὁμολογεῖται εἰς σωτηρίαν. 10:9 *that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; 10:10 for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. (NASB)* Note how this is a righteousness that is counted to each one of us. Each Midrash in Tehillim 24, Part 7, 8, and 9 concludes on “righteousness” and the rabbis say it is a “righteousness from God” (וצדקה מאלהי). Each of these men Abraham, Jacob, and Moshe believed in the Lord and He (God) counted it to them for righteousness. It is interesting that the theme of “ascending and descending” is linked to the righteousness of God and the purity of heart here in Tehillim / Psalms 24. Could this be the reason the Apostle Paul thought to use the “ascending and descending” theme to illustrate the righteousness of the Torah, living by righteousness, and being accredited with righteousness by faith in the Lord God, in the Messiah Yeshua, and in His Word?

David continues saying, יום יעמם-לנו האל ישועתנו סלה: 68:19 *Blessed be the Lord, who daily bears our burden, The God who is our salvation. Selah. (NASB)* indicating that the Lord is the one who bears our burdens. How does the Lord God in heaven bear our burdens? David says in Tehillim / Psalms 55:21-23 the following, כָּא שְׁלַח יָדָיו בְּשִׁלְמֵיו חָלַל בְּרִיתוֹ: כִּב חָלְקוּ | מִחֶמְאָת פִּיו וַיִּקְרַב-לְבוֹ רַפּוּ דְבָרָיו מִשְׁמֶן וְהִמָּה פְתָחוֹת: כִּג הַשְׁלִיךְ עַל-יְהוָה | יְהַבֶּה וְהוּא יִכְלֶפְלָה לֹא-יִתֵּן לְעוֹלָם מוֹט לְצַדִּיק: כִּד וְאַתָּה אֱלֹהִים | תּוֹרִדֵם: 55:20 *He has put forth his hands against those who were at peace with him; He has violated his covenant. 55:21 His speech was smoother than butter; But his heart was war; His words were softer than oil, Yet they were drawn swords. 55:22 Cast your burden upon the Lord and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken. 55:23 But You, O God, will bring them down to the pit of destruction; Men of bloodshed and deceit will not live out half their days. But I will trust in You. (NASB)* The Aramaic Targum states, כָּא אוּשִׁיט יְדוּי בְּאִנְשֵׁי שְׁלָמִיה אִפְס קִימִיה: כִּב שְׁעִיעַן יִתִּיר מִן שְׁמֵן דְּגוּבְנִין מִלִּי פּוּמִיה וְהִיךְ זֵינִי קִרְבָּא לְבִיה לְבַבִּיה רַכִּיכֵן מִלּוּי יִתִּיר מִן מִשְׁחָ דְּפוּטְמִין וְאִינּוֹן וְהִינּוֹן מוֹרְנִיין דְּקִטּוֹל: כִּג טְלוֹק דּוּד עַל יְהוָה סִיבֵרְךְ וְהוּא יִזֵּן יִתְךְ לֹא יִתֵּן לְעֵלְמָא חוֹסְרָנָא לְצַדִּיקָא: כִּד וְאַתָּה אֱלֹהִים בְּמִימְרֵךְ תּוֹחִית יִתְהוֹן לְגַהֲנָם עִמְיָקָא גְבֵרִי מְרִי קִטּוֹל וְנִכִּילוּ לֹא יִחְמוֹן פְּלָגוֹת יוּמִיהוֹן וְאַנָּא אֶתְרַחֵץ בְּמִימְרֵךְ: 55:21 *He stretched out his hands against the men of his peace; he desecrated his covenant. 55:22 Smoother than oil of curds are the words of his mouth; and like weapons of war his heart. Softer are his words than tallow, but they are deadly lances. 55:23 Cast your confidence on the Lord, and he will feed you; he will never allow privation to the righteous. 55:24 But you, O God, by your word will bring them down to deep Gehenna; murderous and deceitful men will not see half of their days; but I will trust in your word. (EMC)* In Tehillim / Psalms 55:21, David is describing the kind of men who do not regard the covenant of God. Earlier David says, 55:15 *Let death come deceitfully upon them; Let them go down alive to Sheol, For evil is in their dwelling, in their midst. 55:16 As for me, I shall call upon God, And the Lord will save me. 55:17 Evening and morning and at noon, I will complain and murmur, And He will hear my voice. 55:18 He will redeem my soul in peace from the battle which is against me, For they are many who strive with me. 55:19 God will hear and answer them Even the one who sits enthroned from of old Selah. With whom there is no change, And who do not fear God. (NASB)* The one who comes against the men of peace desecrates the covenant of God by the words of his lips and by what is in his heart according to the Aramaic Targum. The point is that if we have evil, deceit, and unrighteousness in our hearts, these things will come forth into our lives. This is the meaning of David’s words that such a person is deceitful, he has violated the covenant of

God because of what he has kept in his heart. The real person is shown by what he does which comes from the heart or what one meditates upon. What do you spend most of your time doing or thinking upon? In addition, the things that we allow our hearts to dwell upon today is building what we will be for tomorrow and the day after that, etc. The Lord desires that we set out hearts upon Him and His Word. This is what David meant when he said 55:22 *Cast your burden upon the Lord and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken.* 55:23 *But You, O God, will bring them down to the pit of destruction; Men of bloodshed and deceit will not live out half their days. But I will trust in You.* (NASB) The burden can be any one of those things listed above. Our worries, or the things others have done to hurt us. Many times the reason we dwell upon these things listed above, is because we want justice, but we are seeking to find justice by our own hand and not by the hand of the Lord. Seek the Lord and allow Him to do the rest.

In a similar manner, David says the Lord is the one who delivers (68:20), He shatters the head of His enemies (68:21), and that He will bring them back to Bashan and from the depths of the sea (68:22). The foot of the Lord will shatter the enemy (68:23). He continues saying the following:

Tehillim / Psalms 68:24-27

68:24 *They have seen Your procession, O God, The procession of my God, my King, into the sanctuary.* 68:25 *The singers went on, the musicians after them, In the midst of the maidens beating tambourines.* 68:26 *Bless God in the congregations, Even the Lord, you who are of the fountain of Israel.* 68:27 *There is Benjamin, the youngest, ruling them, The princes of Judah in their throng, The princes of Zebulun, the princes of Naphtali.* כה ראו הליכותיך אלהים הליכות אלי מלכי בקדש: כו קדמו שרים אחר נגנים בתוף עלמות תופפות: כז במקלות ברכו אלהים יהנה ממקור ישראל: כח שם בנימן | צעיר רדם שרי יהודה רגמתם שרי זבלון שרי נפתלי: כט צנה אלהיך ענה עונה אלהים זו פעלת לנו:

David goes on to describe the musicians and the Lord who is worthy to be praised because He is the foundation of Israel, and a ruler from Benjamin who is ruling over the princes of Judah, Zebulun, and Naphtali. Why does David say a ruler from Benjamin is ruling over Judah, Zebulun, and Naphtali? The Aramaic Targum sheds some light on this question.

Toviyah / Psalms 68:21-28

68:21 *God is for us might and redemption; and from God the Lord death and loss of breath are inflicted on the wicked through suffocation.* 68:22 *Truly God will break the heads of his enemies, he will make fall out the hair of the man who keeps walking in his sins.* 68:23 *The Lord says, "I will bring back the righteous who have died and been eaten by wild beasts from Buthnin; I will bring back the righteous who have drowned in the depths of the sea."* 68:24 *So that they will see the punishment of the wicked, they will dip their feet in the blood of the slain; the tongue of the wild beast will grow fat from their plumpness, some of them will be sated on the enemies.* 68:25 *The house of Israel has seen the paths of your presence on the sea, O God; they say, "The paths of God, king of all the world in holiness!"* 68:26 *They rose up early and uttered a song after Moses and Aaron who were playing melodies before them, in the midst of the righteous women who were with Miriam playing timbrels.* 68:27 *In the midst of the assemblies, bless God, exalt the Lord, O fetuses in the bellies of their mothers, O seed of Israel!* 68:28 *There Benjamin, least of the tribes, who first of all went into the sea -- because of this, he received kingship; and after them went down the princes of Judah; the tribes stoned them with stones, and they received dominion after them; the princes of Zebulun were their merchants, and the princes of Naphtali were their warriors.* כא אלהא לנא תקוף ופורקן ומן קדם ייי אלהא יהוה מתגרין ברשיעיא מותא ומפקנות נשמתא בסרנוקא: כב ברם אלהא יתבר ריש בעלי דבבוי ינתר שער גבר די מתהלך בחבובי: כג צדיקיא דמיתו ואיתאכלו מן חיות ברא אמר יהוה מבותנן אתיב אתיב צדיקיא די ישתניקו ובלועינן נוניא במצולתיה דימא: כד

מן בגלל דיחמון פורענות רשיעא יטמשון ריגליהון בדם קטילין לישן חיות ברא מן תרבהון ידהגון מן בעלי דבבא מנהון יסבעון: כה חמון בית ישראל הליכות שכינתך על ימא אלהא אמרין הליכת אלהא מליך כל עלמא בקדושא: כו אקדימו ואמרו שירתא בתר משה ואהרן דמנגנין קדמיהון במצע נשיא צדיקתא די עם מרים מתופפן: כז ביני במצע כנישיא בריכו אלהא רוממו יהוה עובריא במעי אימהון זרעא דישראל: כח תמן בנימן זעיר בשבטיא דמן שירויה נחת לימא מטול היכנא קביל מלכותא מן שירויה ובתריהון נחתו רברבי יהודה רגמו יתהון שבטיא אבנין וקבילו רבנותא בתרהון ומבתר שאול מלך דוד משבט יהודה ורברבי יהודה לבשו ארגוונא לשמשותיה רבני זבולן הוון תגריהון רד בני נפתלי הוון גבריהון מספקין מזונא להון מאחסנתיהון:

The Targum says that Benjamin was the least of the tribes and the first of all who went into the sea. Thinking on the first one to enter the red sea, according to Jewish Tradition (midrash), Nahshon (נַחֲשׁוֹן) was the person who initiated Israel's passage into the Red Sea, by walking in head-deep until the sea parted. Nahshon is described as being a descent from Judah and therefore being the progenitor of many kings. The rabbis describe Nahshon as a noble man. Nahshon's sister Elisheva married Aaron, (*Shemot / Exodus 6:23 Aaron married Elisheba, the daughter of Amminadab, the sister of Nahshon, and she bore him Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar. NASB*) and this is mentioned as a hint that one should take care to select a wife whose brothers are noble. (*Talmud Bavli Baba Batra 110a*) The Midrash relates that during the Exodus, when the Israelites reached the Red Sea, it did not automatically part. The Israelites stood at the banks of the sea and wailed with despair, but Nahshon entered the waters. Once he was up to his nose in the water, the sea parted. This is the origin of his name "Nahshol," that is, "stormy sea-waves". Nahshon was a model prince, (*Talmud Bavli Horayot 11a; Zevachim 9b, 101b*) and was called "king." (*Sifre, Bamidbar / Numbers 47*) Another example from the rabbis is "When the princes of the different tribes were required to bring their offerings, each on a separate day, Moses was embarrassed, not knowing who should be the first; but all Israel pointed at Nahshon, saying, 'He sanctified the name of God by springing first into the Red Sea; he is worthy to bring down the Shekhinah; therefore he shall be the first to bring the offering.'" (*Midrash Rabba Bamidbar 7:26, 13:7, Talmud Bavli Sotah 37a*) In addition, the offering brought by Nahshon is pointed out as having been his own and not that of his tribe. (*Sifre, Bamidbar / Numbers 48*) From a kabbalistic perspective, in the account of the offering the words Va'korbano ("and his sacrifice") and Etodim each have a ם (vav), while the same words in the accounts of the other princes' offerings have no ם (vav). By reason of the letter ם (vav), the numerical value of which is six, according to the rabbis suggests that Nahshon was the ancestor of six men (David, the Messiah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah), each of whom are distinguished by six praiseworthy qualities. (*Midrash Rabba Bamidbar 8:11*) The idea here is that one's righteous life has an effect on future generations by reason that one's generational line is not destroyed due to the wickedness of the present generation.

כט צַוֵּה אֱלֹהֶיךָ עֲזֵךְ עֲזֵךְ אֱלֹהִים זֶה פְּעֻלַּתְּ לָנוּ: ל מִהִיכָלְךָ עַל- יְרוּשָׁלַם לָךְ יוֹבִילוּ מְלָכִים שִׁי: לֹא גָעַר חַיִּית קִנְיָה עֲדַת אֲבִירִים | בְּעֵגְלֵי עַמִּים מְתַרְפֵּס בְּרֵצִי-כֶסֶף בְּזַר עַמִּים קָרְבוֹת יִחַפְּצוּ: 68:28 Your God has commanded your strength; Show Yourself strong, O God, who have acted on our behalf. 68:29 Because of Your temple at Jerusalem Kings will bring gifts to You. 68:30 Rebuke the beasts in the reeds, The herd of bulls with the calves of the peoples, Trampling under foot the pieces of silver; He has scattered the peoples who delight in war. (NASB) What does it mean that God has commanded our strength? The Aramaic Targum states, כט פקיד אלהא עושנך איתעשן אלהא שרי בבית מקדשא דנן דעבדת לנא: ל מן היכלך תקבל קורבניא על ירושלם שכינתך שריא מפנקטיהון לך ייתון מלכיא קורבניא: לא גזוף במשיריית חייבין תרע יתהון היך קניא כינשת גיברין גוברין דמתרחצין בעגליא טמעוות עמיא עממיא רעותיה בעמא דימתעסקין 68:29. God has commanded your strength; be strong, O God, abide in this sanctuary you have made for us! 68:30 From your temple you will accept sacrifices; your presence abides on Jerusalem; from their palaces the kings will bring to you sacrifices. 68:31 Rebuke the armies of sinners, shatter them like reeds, the assembly of warriors who trust

in calves, the idols of the Gentiles. His favor is toward the people who are occupied willingly in the Torah, which is purer than silver. Scatter the peoples who desire to wage war! (EMC) David speaks of beasts in the reeds, herds of bulls, and calves of the peoples. It almost appears that He is speaking of the people as brute beasts, trampling under foot the pieces of silver, and the Lord will scatter those who delight in war. The rabbis interpret David's words in this way, saying *68:31 Rebuke the armies of sinners, shatter them like reeds, the assembly of warriors who trust in calves, the idols of the Gentiles. (EMC)* Whereas, the Lord shows favor to those who occupy themselves in the study of the Torah, which is for gaining wisdom, something that is purer than silver. From these things we can conclude that we are called to be men of peace, the children of God, and students of His holy Word, the Scriptures.

David concludes his Psalm saying, לִגְמֻלְכוֹת הָאָרֶץ שִׁירוּ לְאֱלֹהִים וְזָמְרוּ אֲדָנָי סֵלָה: לְדָ לְרֶכֶב בְּשָׂמִי שְׂמִי-קָדָם הֵן-יִתֵּן בְּקוֹלוֹ קוֹל עוֹ: לֵה תִּבְנוּ עוֹ לְאֱלֹהִים עַל-יִשְׂרָאֵל גְּאֹנֹתוֹ וְעִזּוֹ בְּשִׁחְקִים: לוֹ נוֹרָא אֱלֹהִים מִמְּקַדְשׁוֹ: 68:32 *Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth, Sing praises to the Lord, Selah. 68:33 To Him who rides upon the highest heavens, which are from ancient times; Behold, He speaks forth with His voice, a mighty voice. 68:34 Ascribe strength to God; His majesty is over Israel And His strength is in the skies. 68:35 O God, You are awesome from Your sanctuary. The God of Israel Himself gives strength and power to the people. Blessed be God! (NASB)* The Aramaic Targum states, לֵב יִיתֹן בְּנוֹי דְחָם אוֹסְמָנָא חוֹסְמָנָא אוֹכְמָיָא מִמְצָרִים לְאִיתְגִּירָא בְנוֹי דְכוּשׁ יִרְהוּטוֹן לְמִיפְרֵשׁ יִדְיָהוֹן בְּצִלוֹ קְדָם אֱלֹהָ: לֵג מְלָכוֹת אֶרְעָא עִמְמָיָא שְׁבַחוּ קְדָם יְהוָה אֱלֹהָ שְׁבַחוּ יְהוָה לְעֵלְמִין: לְד לִיתִּיב עַל כּוֹרְסִיָּה בְשָׂמִי שְׁמִיָּא מִן לְקַדְמִין הוּא בְּמִימְרִיָּה יֵהֵב בְּקִלְיָה קֵל רוּחַ נְבוּאָתָא לְנַבִּיָּא לֵה הֵבּוּ יִקְרַ עוֹשְׁנָא לְאֱלֹהָ דִּי עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל גִּיּוֹתוֹתִיָּה וְעוֹשְׁנִיָּה בְשָׂמִיָּא: לוֹ דְחִיל אֱלֹהָ מִן בֵּית מְקַדְשֶׁךָ תְּקִיפָא דִּישְׂרָאֵל הוּא יֵהֵב עוֹשְׁנָא וְתוֹקְפָא לְעַמִּיָּה בְּרִיךְ אֱלֹהָ: 68:32 *The children of Ham, the Osmani, will come from Egypt to be converted; the children of Cush will run to spread their hands in prayer before God. 68:33 O kingdoms of the earth, sing praise in the presence of the Lord, sing praise to the Lord forever. 68:34 To the one who sits on his throne in the heaven of heavens; in the beginning he, by his command, gave through his voice the voice of the spirit of prophecy to the prophets. 68:35 Ascribe the glory of strength to God, whose excellence is over Israel, and whose strength is in heaven. 68:36 Fearful is God, from your sanctuary; the mighty one of Israel has given strength and might to his people. Blessed be God! (EMC)* The idea is that the nations will come to be converted. One must be converted, there must be a fundamental change in a person in order to sing to the Lord God Almighty Praises and to pray. The point is that in order to be able to draw near to the Lord God in heaven, one must be fundamentally changed. This fundamental change is a core tenet of the teaching of the Messiah Yeshua in the Apostolic Writings. And thus we have what is written and what the Apostles taught according to *Acts 16:31 They said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."* (NASB) This concept appears to be a logical conclusion based upon the Aramaic Targum, the rabbinic translation, and the Psalm of David. Let's Pray!

Rabbinic Commentary

The Rabbinic Commentary (Midrash) on *Tehillim / Psalms 68* has 15 part. Reading through the Midrash we will be looking at Part 1, 2, 5, 9, and 11. Let's begin by outlining *Midrash Tehillim Chapter 68, Parts 1, 2, 5, 9, and 11*.

Outline of Midrash Tehillim / Psalms, Chapter 68, Part 1, 2, 5, 9, and 11

Part 1

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the *דיבור המתחיל* (Dibur Hamathil) saying "For the leader: A Psalm of David, a song, Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered (*Tehillim / Psalms 68:1-2*)."
- The *פתיחתא* (Petihata) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, "These words are to be con-

sidered in the light of what Scripture says elsewhere, When the wicked rise, men hide themselves; but when they perish, the righteous increase (Mishley / Proverbs 28:28)."

- The מַשָּׁל (mashal) "*the parable,*" goes on to explain the פְּתִיחָתָא (Petihta), the rabbis comment upon David's words speaking about the righteous as opposed to the wicked. The Lord uses the wicked to punish the righteous.
- The נִמְשָׁל (Nimshal) "*expansion on the parable*" expands upon the מַשָּׁל (mashal), the rabbis expand upon the mashal stating that the righteous cannot raise their head in the presence of the wicked. The hand of the Lord is needed to save His people.
- The Concluding phrase says, "*When Zophar the Naamite said, But the eyes of the wicked will fail, and they will have no way to flee (Job 11:20), he meant that the wicked have nowhere a refuge, for wherever they flee, their hope will be a puff of breath. Of them, Jeremiah said, These will perish from the earth, and from under the heavens (Jeremiah 10:11). Hence it is said, Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered.*"

Part 2

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דִּבּוּר הַמַּתְחִיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying "*As smoke after it has been driven away, so drive them away (Tehillim / Psalms 68:3).*"
- The פְּתִיחָתָא (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, "*Drive them away not only as smoke is driven away, but make it seem as if they never existed.*"
- The מַשָּׁל (mashal) "*the parable,*" goes on to explain the פְּתִיחָתָא (Petihta), the rabbis comment upon David's words with a discussion on the deeds of the wicked.
- The נִמְשָׁל (Nimshal) "*expansion on the parable*" expands upon the מַשָּׁל (mashal), the rabbis expand upon the mashal citing examples of the wicked and ultimately the Lord God will come to Israel's rescue.
- The Concluding phrase says, "*The righteous will then rejoice, as is said, But the righteous will be glad, they will exult before God, as is said, But the righteous will be glad, they will exult before God; yes, they will rejoice with gladness (Tehillim / Psalms 68:4).*"

Part 5

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דִּבּוּר הַמַּתְחִיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying "*The earth trembled (Tehillim / Psalms 68:9).*"
- The פְּתִיחָתָא (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, "*and at once all the living in the Land of Israel died, But the dead came to life as the Holy One blessed be He, dropped the dew of resurrection on them, for the verse goes on to say, The heavens also dropped as the presence of God.*"
- The מַשָּׁל (mashal) "*the parable,*" goes on to explain the פְּתִיחָתָא (Petihta), the rabbis comment upon David's words with a discussion on the dew of the resurrection.
- The נִמְשָׁל (Nimshal) "*expansion on the parable*" expands upon the מַשָּׁל (mashal), the rabbis expand upon the mashal with a discussion on whether the Lord would give His Torah to the dead or to the quickened?
- The Concluding phrase says, "*Note that it is written in Deuteronomy of this occasion if we hear the voice of the Lord our God any more, then we will die, Go near and hear all that the Lord our God may speak to you (Devarim / Deuteronomy 5:22-24). Thereupon, the Holy One blessed be He, told Moshe, They have well said all that they have spoken (Devarim / Deuteronomy 5:25).*"

Part 9

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דִּבּוּר הַמַּתְחִיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying "*When kings expound, the Almighty is within it (Tehillim / Psalms 68:15).*"

- The פתיחתא (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*when Israel engages continually in the study of Torah, the Holy One blessed be He, makes His presence dwell within Israel.*”
- The משל (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis comment upon David’s words with a discussion on the presence of God dwelling upon those who study the Torah.
- The נמשל (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the משל (mashal), the rabbis expand upon the mashal with a discussion of the mountains, arrogance, and the mountain that is humble is the one upon whom the presence of the Lord dwells.
- The Concluding phrase says, “*And whence do we know that Mount Moriah will be restored to its preeminence? Because it is said, The mountains of the Lord’s house will be established as the top of the mountains (Isaiah 2:2), mountains referring to Tabor, Carmel, Sinai, and Zion. The mountains (heharim), however, implies five mountains, equaling in number the five books of the Torah.*”

Part 11

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying “*You have gone up on high, you have led captivity captive; you have received gifts for me (Tehillim / Psalms 68:19).*”
- The פתיחתא (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*These words are to be read in the light of what Scripture says elsewhere, A wise man goes up to the city of the mighty, and brings down the strength wherein it trusts (Mishley / Proverbs 21:22).*”
- The משל (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis comment upon David’s words with a discussion on the one who ascends and descends.
- The נמשל (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the משל (mashal), the rabbis expand upon the mashal with the example of Moshe as the one who ascends and descends.
- The Concluding phrase says, “*among the rebellious refers to the children of Israel who had also been rebellious, but among whom, the presence of God came to dwell after they accepted the Torah.*”

Midrash Tehillim 68, Part 1 opens with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamatil) saying “*For the leader. A Psalm of David, a song, Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered (Tehillim / Psalms 68:1-2).*” The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*These words are to be considered in the light of what Scripture says elsewhere, When the wicked rise, men hide themselves; but when they perish, the righteous increase (Mishley / Proverbs 28:28).*” Why do the righteous increase when the wicked perish? Historically, when the wicked rise up to power, men hide themselves. The reason being, when wicked men are raised to places of power and authority, rich men hide themselves so they do not become a prey to them. The example that comes to mind is that of Ahab, Jezebel, and Naboth’s vineyard in *1 Kings 21*.

1 Kings 21:1-11

21:1 Now it came about after these things that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard which was in Jezreel beside the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. 21:2 Ahab spoke to Naboth, saying, ‘Give me your vineyard, that I may have it for a vegetable garden because it is close beside my house, and I will give you a better vineyard than it in its place; if you like, I will give you the price of it in money.’ 21:3 But Naboth said to Ahab, ‘The Lord forbid me that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers.’ 21:4 So Ahab came into his house sullen and vexed because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him; for he said, ‘I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers.’ And he lay down on his bed and turned away his face and ate no food. 21:5 But Jezebel his wife came to him and said to him, ‘How is it that your spirit is so sullen that you are not eating food?’ 21:6 So he said to her, ‘Because I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite and said to him, ‘Give me your vineyard for money; or else, if it pleases you, I will give you a vineyard in its place.’ But he said, ‘I will not give you my vineyard.’’ 21:7 Jezebel his wife said to him, ‘Do you now reign over Israel? Arise, eat bread, and let your heart be joyful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.’ 21:8 So she wrote

letters in Ahab's name and sealed them with his seal, and sent letters to the elders and to the nobles who were living with Naboth in his city. 21:9 Now she wrote in the letters, saying, 'Proclaim a fast and seat Naboth at the head of the people; 21:10 and seat two worthless men before him, and let them testify against him, saying, 'You cursed God and the king.' Then take him out and stone him to death.' 21:11 So the men of his city, the elders and the nobles who lived in his city, did as Jezebel had sent word to them, just as it was written in the letters which she had sent them. (NASB)

Ahab was a wicked man, and Jezebel was an even more wicked woman. Ahab, a wicked man, rose to power and desired Naboth's vineyard. He offered money but Naboth would not sell his vineyard. Jezebel devised a plan to put Naboth to death, and the plan succeeded and Naboth was stoned to death and Ahab took the vineyard. Note how Ahab coveted what Naboth had. For this reason rich men hide themselves when the wicked raise to positions of power. In addition, good men also hide themselves so that they will not be put to death. The reason is the wicked will be shamed by their evil actions and desire to put them to death, as in the case of John the Baptist who was beheaded because he told Herod that he was sinning by taking Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, whom he had married. According to the commandment, this is a sin before God. In both of these examples, neither Naboth or John hid themselves when wicked men were in power; nor did they withhold the word of the Lord. As the children of God, the righteous, when put in places or in the company of the wicked, should encourage truth and righteousness. In this way, the number of good men are multiplied which becomes a joy and happiness to a nation, by reason of the leadership of the nation who stand for truth, justice, and righteousness, and for the glory of God our Father in heaven. On the other hand, those men who are unrighteous and in positions of power will put the righteous in jail and sentence them to death.

The midrash continues saying the following:

How so? Because it is through the wicked that the Holy One blessed be He, punishes the righteous; when the wicked rule, the righteous cannot lift up their heads nor open their mouths. When the wicked perish, the righteous increase. Hence, it is said, When the wicked rise, men hide themselves; but when they perish, the righteous increase. So too, when Deborah said, So perish all Your enemies, O Lord; but they that love Him be as the sun when he goes forth in his might (Judges 5:31), she meant that when the wicked perish, at once They that love Him are as the sun when he goes forth in his might. And so too, David said, I will keep a curb upon my mouth, while the wicked is before me (Tehillim / Psalms 39:2). From this verse it follows that the righteous can neither open their mouths nor raise their heads in the presence of the wicked. David pleaded, Deal with these as You have dealt with former enemies. Even as Moshe prayed to You, Rise up, O Lord, and let Your enemies be scattered (Bamidbar / Numbers 10:35), so I pray You scatter these, Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered (Tehillim / Psalms 68:2). (Midrash Tehillim 68, Part 1)

The midrash questions David's words in *Tehillim / Psalms 39:2* saying גַּלְמָתִי דוּמְיָה הֶחְשִׁיתִי מְטוֹב וּכְאַבִּי | בְּקִרְבִּי בְּהִגִּי תְבַעַר-אֵשׁ דְּבַרְתִּי בְּלִשׁוֹנִי : 39:2 *I was mute and silent, I refrained even from good, And my sorrow grew worse. 39:3 My heart was hot within me, While I was musing the fire burned; Then I spoke with my tongue:* (NASB) David's silence seems to have prevented him from doing what was good (מְטוֹב, correct or right). Has this ever happened to you before? He says גַּלְמָתִי דוּמְיָה הֶחְשִׁיתִי מְטוֹב וּכְאַבִּי נֶעְכָּר "I was mute and silent, I refrained even from good, And my sorrow grew worse." He was "dumb or bound" (גַּלְמָתִי), "silent" (דוּמְיָה), he was "silent from doing good" (הֶחְשִׁיתִי מְטוֹב), and his "pain (mental and physical) sorrow was stirred up with troubles" (וּכְאַבִּי נֶעְכָּר). He goes on to say that "his heart was hot" (חֵם-לְבָבִי) "his thoughts within were on fire" (בְּקִרְבִּי בְּהִגִּי תְבַעַר-אֵשׁ) and then "he spoke with his mouth" (דְּבַרְתִּי בְּלִשׁוֹנִי). Jeremiah said something similar in *Jeremiah 20:9* saying ט וְאַמְרָתִי לֹא-אֶזְכְּרֶנּוּ

20:9 *But if I say, 'I will not remember Him Or speak anymore in His name,' Then in my heart it becomes like a burning fire Shut up in my bones; And I am weary of holding it in, And I cannot endure it. (NASB)* Have you ever had this kind of feeling on the inside for keeping your mouth shut when you should have spoken up? Both David and Jeremiah describe their not saying anything as burning, pain, and sorrows being stirred up within by not responding to doing what is right in the presence of the wicked. The Spirit of the Lord that dwells within burns if we do not obey the move of the Spirit in doing what is right. The Apostle's Paul and Peter said the following with regard to doing what is right and good in *Galatians 6* and *1 Peter 2*.

Galatians 6:6-10

6:6 *The one who is taught the word is to share all good things with the one who teaches him*
6:7 *Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.*
6:8 *For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. 6:9 Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. 6:10 So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith. (NASB)* ו המלמד בדבר יחלק מכל טובו למלמדהו: ז אל תתעו לא יתן אלהים להתל) בו כי מה שזרע האדם אתו יקצר: ח הזרע בבשרו יקצר כליון משברו והזרע ברוח יקצר מן הרוח חיי עולם: ט ואנחנו בעשות הטוב אל נחת כי נקצר בעתו אם לא נרפה: י לכן כאשר העת בידנו (נעשה נא את הטוב עם כל אדם וביותר עם בני אמונתנו)

1 Peter 2:19-25

2:19 *For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a person bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly. 2:20 For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God. 2:21 For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, 2:22 who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth; 2:23 and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously; 2:24 and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed. 2:25 For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls. (NASB)*

It is interesting that the Apostle Paul states “*hazorea bivsaro yiatsor kilyon mivsaro, v'hazorea ba'ruach yiktsor min ha'ruach chai olam.*” (ח הזרע בבשרו יקצר כליון משברו והזרע ברוח יקצר מן הרוח חיי עולם): 6:8 *For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. (NASB)* He equates doing what is good, to sowing in the spirit and reaping eternal life whereas if one sows to the flesh, one reaps corruption. Basically, one who gives into the flesh will reap dishonesty and immorality. Note that this is not simply a philosophical or theological thought exercise. If one gives into the fleshly desires, one is cultivating immoral decisions, which corrupts the spirit. The moral impurity corrupts the spirit and then leads to other immoral activities such as bribery, embezzlement (contentiousness), not doing what is right, and keeping silent when one should be speaking up in the right time, etc. Paul says that if you live by the Spirit, you will do what is right, and reap eternal life. Does eternal life depend upon our doing what is right? If we are abiding in the Messiah, will we choose what is right verses what is wrong? The righteous are the salt of the earth, and if we keep our mouths shut, the wicked will continue to raise.

Midrash Tehillim 68, Part 1 concludes saying, “*When Zophar the Naamite said, But the eyes of the wicked will fail, and they will have no way to flee (Job 11:20), he meant that the wicked have nowhere a refuge,*

for wherever they flee, their hope will be a puff of breath. Of them, Jeremiah said, *These will perish from the earth, and from under the heavens (Jeremiah 10:11). Hence it is said, Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered.*” The midrash states the wicked have nowhere a refuge, however, the righteous, we have a refuge in the Lord God Almighty. He is able to overcome all things, He works in the hearts of men, both the righteous and the unrighteous, and He is able to deliver us in our time of need. In this we know that God has preeminence, to Him is the glory, as Jeremiah says, *These will perish from the earth, and from under the heavens (Jeremiah 10:11). Hence it is said, Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered, And let those who hate Him flee before Him. (NASB)*

Midrash Tehillim 68, Part 2 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying “*As smoke after it has been driven away, so drive them away (Tehillim / Psalms 68:3).*” The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*Drive them away not only as smoke is driven away, but make it seem as if they never existed.*” Rashi states, *כהתנודף כאשר יתנודף העשן כן תנדפם . כהתנודף . As smoke is driven away as it is driven away. As the smoke is driven away so will You drive [them] away. From before God From before the Ark in the days of Moses. (And it came to pass when the Ark traveled, that Moses said, “Arise, O Lord, and Your enemies will scatter.” Shem Ephraim) And when it rested, he would say, “Return, O Lord, etc.”* Here we find an interesting parallel, the smoke of the altar raising in the presence of the Lord during the Sacrificial service, the Ark (and the community) moving where the presence of the Lord ascends and then descends moving, guiding, and directing them, and the Ark coming to rest where the presence of the Lord descends again and the smoke of the sacrifices may then continue to rise from the altar before the Tabernacle. This imagery is opposed to the wicked, who are driven away as smoke, being driven by their passions and lustful desires which are aspects of one’s nature that functions as the wind and waves being blown to-and-fro. These images of the smoke raising in the Torah may suggest that sin is burned up upon the altar which is contained within the sacrifice (*note how one’s sins are transferred to the animal by the laying on of the hands prior to the spilling of blood and placing the animal upon the altar*). David sought that his enemies being driven away, and the midrash states that the driving be done in such a way as if they never existed. The idea is that if we live our lives without regard for the Lord God in heaven and His Messiah Yeshua, our lives will be as if never existing, there is no eternality in our deeds. Remember our deeds have merit for future generations in the sense that as we live righteous lives, our children will see and learn and love the Lord our God and His Messiah as we demonstrate our love for the Lord God in heaven and His Messiah. There is a great importance to serving the Lord God in heaven and walking in His ways.

The midrash continues saying the following:

In a different interpretation the verse is read Like smoke that is made to come up are the wicked. A parable of a king and the slaves in his palace. He was in the upper part of the palace and the slaves were in the lower part of the palace, and they raised such a smoke that the smoke came up to him. So the wicked, as Isaiah says, are a people that provoke Me to My face continually, that sacrifice in gardens and burn incense upon bricks; that sit among the graves, and lodge in the vaults, that eat swine’s flesh, and broth of abominable things is in their vessels, These are a smoke in My nose (Isaiah 65:3-5). Like makers of smoke are the wicked, and when they make smoke come up in My face, that is provoke Me, then, as it is said, The anger of the Lord and His jealousy will smoke against that man (Devarim / Deuteronomy 29:19); and it is also written Smoke arose up in His nostrils (Tehillim / Psalms 18:9), which is to say that the wicked make themselves go up in smoke, as it is said, The enemies of the Lord will be as the fat of lambs, they will pass away in smoke, they will pass away (Tehillim / Psalms 37:20). A different interpretation. Taking the first part of this verse to read, The enemies of the Lord will be as the glory of the dwellers on the plain, Rabbi Johanan said, The enemies of the Lord will come to such glory as will be fall the dwellers on the plain, so called in the vision of Moshe when the Lord showed him The south and the plain (Devarim / Deuteronomy 34:3), as will befall them on the day when God raises such a cloud of smoke that in the murk no man will be able to see his fellow. So it will be with the wicked. (Midrash

Note how the rabbis point out what Isaiah states “*So the wicked, as Isaiah says, are a people that provoke Me to My face continually, that sacrifice in gardens and burn incense upon bricks; that sit among the graves, and lodge in the vaults, that eat swine’s flesh, and broth of abominable things is in their vessels, These are a smoke in My nose (Isaiah 65:3-5).*” All of these things provoke the Lord God in heaven, including what we eat, because this is paralleled to what we allow into our bodies which become a part of our lives which is lived out. Do we allow the Lord into our lives, His Word, and His commands? What about Yeshua the Messiah? Do we allow sin in our lives, evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. Notice how Yeshua says in *Mark 7:22* “*deeds of coveting*” where the sin of coveting is a matter of the heart, an internal action as opposed to an external action. Yeshua said in *John 14:23* *Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. (NASB)* He says “*We will come to him and make Our abode with him.*” Note the significance of His statement, both He and our Father will make their abode in us. Note how this is paralleled to our keeping Yeshua’s word in our heart, coupled with the commandments, and the Holy Spirit.

In the Psalm, King David looks at the Torah and picks up on the mountain where the Lord God revealed Himself to Israel and to Moshe in a more intimate manner. The Mountain of Sinai is described “*lowly and humble*” and that is why it was chosen as the place in which the Lord God would reveal His will to His people (*the Torah*). This idea is picked up by Yeshua in the gospel of Matthew saying in *Matthew 11:25-26* “*You have hidden these words for the Sages and intellectuals but makes them known to little ones [to the humble]. Amen, my Father; such is Your gracious will.*” (NASB) The idea is that if we are willing to humble ourselves, to repent, and seek the Lord God in heaven, and the Messiah Yeshua, and to please the Lord in heaven by our being obedient, He will come to dwell in our midst. Note that salvation is found within the covenant relationship, being obedient is a part of the covenant relationship, obedience is a matter of remaining within the will of God. Those who do not obey the commands, they will not be doing as is described of Israel by the prophet Isaiah burning incense to false gods, sitting among the graves, or eating swine’s flesh (bringing evil into one’s heart and life).

Another interpretation of the midrash states, “*Taking the first part of this verse to read, The enemies of the Lord will be as the glory of the dwellers on the plain, Rabbi Johanan said, The enemies of the Lord will come to such glory as will befall the dwellers on the plain, so called in the vision of Moshe when the Lord showed him The south and the plain (Devarim / Deuteronomy 34:3), as will befall them on the day when God raises such a cloud of smoke that in the murk no man will be able to see his fellow. So it will be with the wicked.*” The point is that the wicked in their selfishness will not see his fellow, and the Lord will facilitate (cause) that to a great extent due to their rebellion and wickedness. Midrash Tehillim 68, Part 2 concludes saying, “*Hence, it is said, As smoke is driven away, so drive them away, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God (Tehillim / Psalms 68:3). The righteous will then rejoice, as is said, But the righteous will be glad, they will exult before God; yes, they will rejoice with gladness (Tehillim / Psalms 68:4).*” We rejoice because we have a refuge to whom we may turn and be saved.

Midrash Tehillim 68, Part 5 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying “*The earth trembled (Tehillim / Psalms 68:9).*” The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*and at once all the living in the Land of Israel died, But the dead came to life as the Holy One blessed be He, dropped the dew of resurrection on them, for the verse goes on to say, The heavens also dropped as the presence of God.*” *Isaiah 29:16* states, *29:16 Your dead will live; Their corpses will rise. You who lie in the dust, awake and shout for joy, For your dew is as the dew of the dawn, And the earth will give birth to the departed spirits. (NASB)* Here Isaiah says the Lord’s dead men will live and that their corpses will rise. Isaiah is expressing a belief in the resurrection, similar to what we find in *Ezekiel 37:1-14*, the valley of dry bones, and in *Romans 11:15*, Paul speaking of the “*life from the dead.*” Isaiah says “*Your dew is as the dew of the dawn.*” The idea here is to parallel water which is given from heaven to plant life that if withered due to the heat of the day is refreshed

and springs to life once watered. I have witnessed this personally, having hanging baskets of flowers on my front porch, during the heat of summer and forgetting to water the plants every day, the plants wither, after watering the spring back to life. With this imagery in mind, the dew of the morning has healing properties for those who are partially and almost dead. The dew of God has complete restorative properties, thus the interpretation of David's words in the Targum is that Israel stood before the presence of God at Sinai and immediately died and the morning dew of the resurrection was given to quicken or revive them, after which the Lord God gave His Torah. In the midrash, the rabbis say that all of the living in the land of Israel died, but the dead came to life as the Holy One blessed be He dropped the dew of the resurrection on them. One interpretation of this may be, due to Israel's sin, they died in the presence of God. The Lord had mercy and resurrected them and then giving them His Torah. These are very important concepts because when one turns from sin, seeks the Lord God our Father in heaven and the Messiah Yeshua, and turns one's life in Teshuva (repentance) to walk in His ways, one's life is as if he has been resurrected, completely transformed for righteousness. Note how the Lord resurrects for the purpose of giving His Torah. Unless one is resurrected, one cannot receive the Torah at Sinai. This may also be paralleled to the transformation of the person so that he is able to both receive and obey. The rabbis appear to have this sort of understanding regarding the manner in which the Lord works in our lives, drawing us to Himself, and enabling us to live obedient lives. Note what Yeshua states in *John 6:37* "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. (NASB) Yeshua's words follow a similar pattern of the Lord drawing, and the Lord enabling one's eyes to see and ears to hear, and body to obey.

The Midrash continues to saying the following:

Zeh Sinai means Sinai was on fire. Here zeh is clearly a term for fire and conflagration as in the verse It was wont to be fired (mezyeh) (Daniel 3:19) for it is said, The mountain burned with fire unto the heart of heaven (Devarim / Deuteronomy 4:11). A bounteous rain (Tehillim / Psalms 68:10). When the ministering angels saw that the breath of life had flown out of the children of Israel, they asked the Holy One blessed be He, To whom will You give the Torah, to the dead or to the quick? At once the Holy One blessed be He, waved out rains of life over the children of Israel so that they should receive the Torah with abounding spirit. And the ministering angels waved the rain along with fans upon the children of Israel, as is said, You did pour out, O God. When Your inheritance was weary, When Your inheritance grew weary at the noise of thunder and of the earthquake, You did steady it. Through Your quickening, they inhabited it (Tehillim / Psalms 68:11), Your quickening them enabled the children of Israel to inhabit the Land. The end of the verse, You O God, by saying it is well, did approve the plea of the poor (Tehillim / Psalms 68:11), refers to the occasion when They said unto Moshe, Speak with us, and we will hear (Shemot / Exodus 20:16). (Midrash Tehillim 68, Part 5)

The midrash continues saying that the Angels saw the breath of life had left the children of Israel and asked the Lord to give them life. The purpose was so they could receive the Torah with an abounding Spirit. Notice how the rabbis provide a similar interpretation as noted earlier regarding the necessity of having a transformed life, the drawing of our hearts by our Father in heaven to Himself, His enabling power, etc. Note also how the midrash states "Your quickening them enabled the children of Israel to inhabit the Land." What are the rabbis implying here in the sense that the children of Israel needed quickened in order to inhabit the Land of Israel? This statement may be based upon the blessings and the curses in the Torah. In Parashat Re'eh (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 11:26-16:17*), Moshe tells the people, 'See! I give you today (a choice of) a blessing and a curse. The blessing, when you listen to the commandments of God your Lord, which I command you today. The curse, if you do not listen to the commandments of God your Lord, and you deviate from the path which I command you today, in order to follow other gods which you did not know.' (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 11:26-28*) Moshe places before the people two choices, a blessing or a curse. The basic premise is what will happen when one follows and obeys the Word of God, or alternatively, abandoning the Word of

God and proceeding on the path leading to idolatry, immorality, murders, and injustice. Much of Parashat Re'eh is a polemic against idolatry, and we know that contained within the idolatrous practices were immoralities, murders, and injustices (e.g. *the immorality of Baal worship, the murder of children in the worship of Molech, etc.*). In the Torah portion, Moses describes the catastrophes and horrors which will inevitably result from deviation from the teachings of God. (see *Devarim / Deuteronomy 29:26 and 30:1, 'And God will get exceedingly angry with that land, to bring upon it all the curses written in this book ... And behold when all these things befall you, the blessing and the curse which I placed before you ...'*) Moshe concludes the Torah portion saying, *Devarim / Deuteronomy 30:19 'See I have placed before you today life and good, and death and evil ... I call upon heaven and earth to witness against you, life and death I have placed in front of you, the blessing and the curse - choose life in order that you and your children can live!* This is remarkably similar to the beginning of the Torah portion in which Moshe says, “*See I have placed before you...*” Moshe is making a distinction between life and death. This is the understanding the rabbis have regarding the Lord’s quickening that enables the children of Israel to inhabit the Land. The Lord is at work to facilitate, to resurrect, to transform our lives for the purpose of living and walking before Him in His ways. This was the whole purpose of Yeshua the Messiah, in addition to making atonement by the laying down of his life for ours. Midrash Tehillim 68, Part 5 concludes saying, “*Note that it is written in Deuteronomy of this occasion if we hear the voice of the Lord our God any more, then we will die, Go near and hear all that the Lord our God may speak to you (Devarim / Deuteronomy 5:22-24). Thereupon, the Holy One blessed be He, told Moshe, They have well said all that they have spoken (Devarim / Deuteronomy 5:25).*” The point was the people realized they would die in the presence of God due to their sins and that they requested an intermediary, one who was without sin, and who could stand before the Lord God Almighty on their behalf. The Lord said what they had spoken was good. It is in this manner, the Lord brought His Messiah Yeshua for the purpose of being our intermediary, to make atonement, and to stand before our Father in heaven making petitions before the Lord on our behalf.

Midrash Tehillim 68, Part 9 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתהיל) saying “*When kings expound, the Almighty is within it (Tehillim / Psalms 68:15).*” The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*when Israel engages continually in the study of Torah, the Holy One blessed be He, makes His presence dwell within Israel.*” The rabbis are saying studying Torah causes the presence of the Lord to dwell amidst his people. How does studying Torah cause God’s presence to dwell in our midst? At the beginning of the Book of Ezekiel the prophet describes how “*the heavens opened and I saw visions of God*” (*Ezekiel 1:1*). *Ezekiel 1* is dubbed the “*Chariot Vision*” by the Sages, and is one of the most difficult to understand in all of Scripture. The Sages’ remark in the *Mishnah Hagigah 2:1*, “*The subject of the Chariot may not be expounded before one person alone,*” is well-known: “*You may speak thus far, but from here on in you are not permitted to speak. For it says in Ben Sira: do not expound that which is wondrous beyond your grasp, and do not investigate that which is hidden from you; ponder that which is permitted you, for you have no business with the occult*” (*Talmud Bavli Hagigah 13a*). The idea is that when one begins to speculate upon heavenly things, it is the business of the occult and thus the rabbis are drawing a parallel to the Torah command against idolatry. Understanding how God’s presence dwells in our midst by reason of studying the Torah is not a mystical thing. *Ezekiel 43* begins with a description of the Presence of the Lord entering the Temple. This can be seen as the climax of Ezekiel’s prophecies regarding the future, since the objective of building the Temple, with all its details, was that the Presence of the Lord should dwell in it. The importance of this prophecy is also evident from the fact that the prophet receives it in the first person saying, “*O mortal, this is the place of My throne and the place for the soles of My feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the people Israel forever. The House of Israel and their kings must not again defile My holy name (34:7) ...and I will dwell among them forever (34:9).*” The purpose of studying the Torah is to learn how to walk in God’s ways. We are preparing a place for His presence by the way we live, the Lord tells Ezekiel that this place is holy for it is the place where His throne sits, and where His feet rest upon. If we can midrashically compare the Tabernacle and the Temple in Jerusalem to our bodies, obeying God’s Word (the study of Torah) we establish the Lord upon the throne of our lives, placing Him in control. With these things, it is a reasonable conclusion that the study of the Torah causes the presence of God to dwell in our

midst. The Midrash continues saying the following:

You will make Zalmon as white as snow, even if the interpretation of a law be obscured from Israel as if by a shadow (zalmut), the Holy One blessed be He, makes it white as snow and clarifies it from them. Whence do we know that the disciples of the wise are called kings? Because it is said, By me kings reign and princes decree justice (Mishley / Proverbs 8:15). A mountain of God, the mountain of Bashan. A mountain of peaks, the mountain of Bashan (Tehillim / Psalms 68:16). Rabbi Nathan taught, When the Holy One blessed be He, sought to give the Torah to the children of Israel, Carmel came from Aspamea and Tabor came from Bethelim. Later revelation refers to their coming in the verse As I live, says the King, whose name is the Lord of hosts, surely like Tabor among the mountains, and like Carmel by the sea, so will he come (Jeremiah 46:18). The one said, I am called Mount Tabor. It is fitting that the Presence should rest upon me, for I am the highest of all the mountains, and not even the water of the deluge overwhelmed me. And the other said, I am called Mount Carmel. It is fitting that the Presence should rest upon me, for I put myself in the middle of the Red Sea, and it was by my help that the children of Israel got across. The Holy One blessed be He, replied, By the blemish of arrogance in you, you have already made yourselves unworthy of My presence. Each of you is unworthy of My presence. The mountains asked, Are You partial to another? Is it possible that You will deprive us of our due? The Holy One blessed be He, replied, Because you put yourselves to trouble for My honor, I will give you a reward. Behold, in the time of Deborah, I will give deliverance to the children of Israel upon Mount Tabor, as is said God and draw toward Mount Tabor (Judges 4:6); and also I will give deliverance to Elijah upon Mount Carmel, as is said, Ahab gathered the prophets together unto Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:20). All the other mountains then began to thunder protests and to make a commotion, as is said, The mountains quaked in contesting for the presence of the Lord (Judges 5:5). Thereupon, the Holy One blessed be He, asked Why look you askance (teressedum)? (Tehillim / Psalms 68:17). That is, why do you wish (tiresu) to contend (dun) with Sinai? You are all peak backed mountains. Here, peak backed has the sense of blemished, as in the verse, He that has a blemish will not approach, a man that is, peak backed (Vayikra / Leviticus 21:18-20). At the mountain which God has desired for His abode (Tehillim / Psalms 68:17). God said, My wish is to dwell only on Sinai because Sinai is the lowliest of all of you, for, as Scripture says, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and lowly spirit (Isaiah 57:15), and also For Though the Lord be high, yet He regards the lowly, and the haughty He knows from afar (Tehillim / Psalms 138:6). Lest it be thought, however, that God has dwelt upon Sinai for all the generations since, the verse ends by saying But the Lord will dwell in eternity (Tehillim / Psalms 68:17) that is, God returned His presence to heaven. Whence did Sinai come? Rabbi Jose taught, Out of the Mount Moriah, out of the place where our father Isaac had been bound as a sacrifice, Sinai plucked itself as a priest's portion is plucked out of the bread. For the Holy One blessed be He, said, since their father Isaac was bounded upon this place, it is fitting that his children receive the Torah upon it. (Midrash Tehillim 68, Part 9)

The midrash continues with a discussion on the boasting of the mountains amongst themselves where mount Tabor claimed to be higher than the deluge to overwhelm him, and mount Carmel claims to have been placed in the middle of the Red Sea to help Israel cross. These mountains were arrogant and by reason of arrogance they are disqualified from having the presence of God dwell upon them. It is said the mountains labored for the Lord and the Lord gave them a reward by having their names inscribed in the Scriptures with the deliverance of Israel occurring upon their hills. The other mountains argue for the presence of the Lord and the Lord tells them that they are blemished quoting “He that has a blemish will not approach, a man that is, peak backed” (Vayikra / Leviticus 21:18-20). If these mountains might be paralleled to men,

the one who is prideful and boastful is blemished and he will not have the presence of the Lord dwelling in his midst. How important do you think it is to root out pride in our lives based upon these things? The point of the midrash, it seems the rabbis take the position that the study of Torah alone is not enough for the presence of the Lord to come; one must also be humble in their desire for studying God’s word and for drawing near to Him. One’s knowledge of the Scriptures should not be used as a means for boasting and becoming arrogant. One’s motivation should be to study Torah to serve the Lord, to proclaim His salvation, and glorify His name to the nations.

Midrash Tehillim 68, Part 9 concludes saying, “*And whence do we know that Mount Moriah will be restored to its preeminence? Because it is said, The mountains of the Lord’s house will be established as the top of the mountains (Isaiah 2:2), mountains referring to Tabor, Carmel, Sinai, and Zion. The mountains (heharim), however, implies five mountains, equaling in number the five books of the Torah.*” According to Parashat Yitro Moshe states when making an altar to bring the burnt offering and peace offering, “*in every place that my name is remembered, I will come and bless you*” (בְּקִרְוֵי בְּכָל-הַמְּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר אֶזְכֵּיר אֶת-שְׁמִי אָבוֹא) and the Lord says (אֲלֵיךָ וּבִרְכָתֶיךָ וְאִם-מִזְבַּח אֲבָנִים תַּעֲשֶׂה-לִּי לֹא-תִבְנֶה אֶתְהֶן גְּזִית פִּי חֲרָבָה הַנִּפְתָּ עָלֶיךָ וַתְּחַלְלֶנָּה) ‘*If you make an altar of stone for Me, you shall not build it of cut stones, for if you wield your tool on it, you will profane it.* (NASB) The possibility of changing/modifying what God has established for our salvation is a serious temptation and substituting the synagogue service for the actual temple service, or the offering of the bulls of our lips for the actual bulls profanes (וַתְּחַלְלֶנָּה) the very process of atonement. However, when we study the Torah, God’s name is remembered, and based upon *Shemot / Exodus 20:24*, the Lord is present to bless us. Similarly, Yeshua said in *Matthew 18:20* “*For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst.*” (NASB) When we study all of Scripture and remember the HaShem (The Name) and Yeshua, the Lord is there to bless us, He is present just as the Scriptures say!

Midrash Tehillim 68, Part 11 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying “*You have gone up on high, you have led captivity captive; you have received gifts for me (Tehillim / Psalms 68:19).*” The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*These words are to be read in the light of what Scripture says elsewhere, A wise man goes up to the city of the mighty, and brings down the strength wherein it trusts (Mishley / Proverbs 21:22).*”

<p>מדרש תהלים פרק סח סימן יא יא עלית למרום שבית שבי. זהו שאמר הכתוב עיר גבורים עלה חכם ויורד עוז מבטחה (משלי כא כב), זה משה, שנאמר ומשה עלה אל האלהים (שמות יט ג). לקחת מתנות באדם. זו תורה שניתנה במתנה בחנם לישראל. (ואף) [אך] סוררים שכנו צחיחה (תהלים ס"ח פסוק ז). אלו אומות העולם שלא רצו לקבלה. ואף סוררים לשכון יה אלהים. אלו ישראל שהיו סוררים, וכשקיבלו את התורה שרתה בם שכינה.</p>	<p>Midrash Tehillim 68, Part 11 11. <i>You have gone up on high, you have led captivity captive; you have received gifts for me (Tehillim / Psalms 68:19). These words are to be read in the light of what Scripture says elsewhere, A wise man goes up to the city of the mighty, and brings down the strength wherein it trusts (Mishley / Proverbs 21:22). This wise man is Moshe of whom it is said, And Moshe went up unto God (Shemot / Exodus 19:3); the words you have received gifts for men refer to the Torah which was bestowed upon Israel as a gift, at no cost. The words, The rebellious dwell but in a parched land (Tehillim / Psalms 68:7) refer to the nations of the earth who were unwilling to accept the Torah; on the other hand, in the words, Yea, among the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them (Tehillim / Psalms 68:19), among the rebellious refers to the children of Israel who had also been rebellious, but among whom, the presence of God came to dwell after they accepted the Torah.</i></p>
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Thus far studying the Midrashim on the Psalms and Midrash Rabbah on the Torah, we have found many instances in which the rabbis draw upon the “*ascending and descending*” imagery in the Torah on Moshe going up the mountain and then back down the mountain of Sinai. For example, in Midrash Rabbah, the rabbis describe the making of an offering with the concepts of “*ascending*” (to the altar) and “*leading cap-*

tivity captive” quoting from the psalms, to Moshe who ascended up to the Lord God on the mountain of Sinai. Moshe drawing near to the cloud on the mountain, leading captivity captive, and gifts given unto men are all drawn into the context of the free will offering of Terumah in Parashat Terumah. The Lord received gifts from the children of Israel, and the rabbis say “*it is as if God said to them, it is as if I bestowed a gift to you.*” The gifts given is the His Torah. The idea is Moshe will return with the power of God and the Lord will be with him. This is contrasted to the heathen who serve idols, the Lord does not totally abandon for the sake of His word in Midrash Rabbah on Parashat Terumah. The meaning of “*ascending and descending*” with regard to the Torah in Parashat Terumah, is expanded upon in Midrash Tehillim 36, Part 1. Midrash Tehillim 36, Part 1 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דִּבּוּר הַמַּתְחִיל) saying “*To the Lord of victories, A Psalm of David, the servant of the Lord (Tehillim / Psalms 36:1).*” The homiletic introduction to the Midrash states “*The phrase Lord of victories is to be considered in the light of the verse Happy are you, O Israel, who is like you? A people saved by the Lord (Devarim / Deuteronomy 33:29).*” The rabbis continue saying,

The Holy One blessed be He, wages Israel’s wars, but victory is ascribed to Israel. Thus, Scripture says, In all the signs and wonders and in all the mighty hand, and in all the great terror; which Moshe wrought (Devarim / Deuteronomy 34:11-12), here it is not written, Which the Lord wrought, but which Moshe wrought. (Midrash Tehillim 36, Part 1)

Midrash Tehillim 36 speaks of the victories of the Lord and point out an example saying the victory that is the Lord may also be ascribed to someone else. This corresponds to the idea that Moshe will return with the power of God and the Lord will be with him, the emissary of God will ascend/descend in a similar manner. The proof text that is given is from *Devarim / Deuteronomy 34:10-12*.

Devarim / Deuteronomy 34:10-12

34:10 Since that time no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face, 34:11 for all the signs and wonders which the Lord sent him to perform in the land of Egypt against Pharaoh, all his servants, and all his land, 34:12 and for all the mighty power and for all the great terror which Moses performed in the sight of all Israel. (NASB)

Note how the MT is written וְלִכְלֵל הַיָּד הַחֲזָקָה וְלִכְלֵל הַמּוֹרָא הַגָּדוֹל אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה מֹשֶׁה לְעֵינֵי כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל “*and all the hand of power, and all the great fear or terror that Moshe did / performed (הַשֵּׁם הַשָּׂעָ) before the eyes of all of Israel.*” The MT states “*asher oseh Moshe*” (אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה מֹשֶׁה) “*that Moshe did / performed*” where the previous verses states that the Lord is who sent him to perform these signs and wonders. Based upon the Scriptures, the Lord empowered Moshe to perform the miracles in Egypt and the victory was ascribed to Moshe according to the Torah while at the same time, the victory was the Lord God in heaven. In a similar manner, Yeshua performed many miracles, died and was resurrected, descended and ascended, all in typical form as compared to Moshe according to the Torah. He is the Messiah of God according to the Torah.

In a similar manner, Midrash Tehillim 68, Part 11 states that “*A wise man goes up to the city of the mighty, and brings down the strength wherein it trusts (Mishley / Proverbs 21:22).*” The parallel is that Moshe was wise, he went up to God on the mountain, and brought back the power of God. The receiving of gifts for men refers to the giving of the Torah that was given to Israel at no cost. The rebellious are the nations who reject the Torah. The phrase “*leads captivity captive*” reminds us of the Apostle Paul’s words in *Ephesians 4:8-10*. In *Ephesians 4:1-27*, pay close attention to who is being led captive? According to Ephesians chapter 4, Paul speaks of himself being a prisoner of the Lord (4:1). He appeals to the Ephesians to walk according to their calling, to be humble, meek, and to love one another, and to be one in spirit with one another in peace. Paul speaks of one body and one Spirit, One Lord, one faith, one immersion (baptism, Teshuvah), and one God and Father of all, and that the Lord has given each of us grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ (Χριστοῦ, of the Messiah). In *Ephesians 4:8*, Paul says 4:8 *Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (KJV)* What is interesting is

that this phrase “*led captivity captive*” appears to parallel all of these concepts we have been looking at here in Midrash Tehillim 68. The Lord God Almighty is the one who is the victor, and the victory is ascribed to Yeshua the Messiah while at the same time being ascribed to our Father, the Lord God Almighty in heaven. Because of this, He has given gifts to us; the gifts of eternal life, peace, fellowship with God, salvation, and including God’s Torah written upon our hearts. Note the parallel here, the gift of God is the giving of His Torah to Israel, and the gift of Yeshua the Messiah is the writing of the Torah upon our hearts (*Jeremiah 31*). Paul leads into what appears to be a midrashic understanding of Yeshua ascending and descending where he is the one who comes down from heaven (remember “*I am the bread from heaven,*” *John 6:35 and 6:51*) bringing with him the power of the Lord God Almighty evidenced by the miracles he was able to preform, etc.

Midrash Tehillim 68, Part 11 concludes saying, “*among the rebellious refers to the children of Israel who had also been rebellious, but among whom, the presence of God came to dwell after they accepted the Torah.*” This again draws us back to Parashat Yitro with Moshe saying when making an altar to bring the burnt offering and peace offering, “*in every place that my name is remembered, I will come and bless you*” (בְּכָל־הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר אֶזְכֵּר אֶת־שְׁמִי אָבוּא אֵלֶיךָ וּבֵרַכְתִּיךָ) The Scriptures say “*in every place*” (בְּכָל־הַמָּקוֹם) which may be paralleled to our own lives, if we remember the Lord each day and remember His Messiah Yeshua, and accept and believe in the Word of God as the way in which the Lord wants us to live our lives, to govern our lives, His presence will dwell in our midst. Do you believe this? Let’s Pray!

Heavenly Father,

We hallow Your Name in word, thought, and deed, for Yours is the glory, the power, and the majesty, forever. Thank you Lord for Your one and greatest mighty work, which is to move hearts of men to draw him to repentance. We praise Your Holy Name for strength and faith because these are the things that we give credit to Your Name and Your presence in our midst, in our lives. We thank You for keeping our feet on the path of righteousness and truth according to Your Word (the Scriptures). Thank You for the words of the Rabbis according to the Midrashim which help us to think about how we should be living our lives. Please create in us a deep respect, fear, and love for You Lord, coupled with a desire to dwell in Your presence, to study Your word, and to pray. 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