

ספר תהילים פב | Tehillim / Psalms 82

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A discussion on “ye are gods”

In this week’s study from *Tehillim / Psalms 82:1-8*, the Psalm opens saying, א מִזְמוֹר לְאַסָּף אֱלֹהִים נִצָּב, *A psalm of Asaph. 82:1 God takes His stand in His own congregation; He judges in the midst of the rulers. (NASB)* Asaph states that the Lord God takes a stand in His own congregation. What does it mean that He is taking a stand? He says that the Lord judges in the midst of judges (יִשְׁפֹּט). The Apostle Peter said in *1 Peter 4:17 For it is the time for the judgment to have begun from the house of God; and if from us first, what will be the outcome of those disobeying the gospel of God? (NASB)* Note the Judgment is based upon obedience. Asaph continues saying, ב עַד־מְתֵי תִשְׁפֹּטוּ-עוֹל וּפְגִי רְשָׁעִים, *תִּשְׁאוּ-סֵלָה: ג שְׁפֹטוּ-תְל וַיְתוֹם עֲנִי וַיִּרְשׁ הַצְּדִיקוֹ: ד פְּלִטוּ-תְל וְאַבְיוֹן מִיַּד רְשָׁעִים הַצֵּילוּ: ה לֹא יִדְעוּ וְלֹא יָבִינוּ מוֹסְדֵי אֶרֶץ: ו אַנְי־אַמְרֵתִי אֱלֹהִים אַתֶּם וּבְנֵי עֲלִיוֹן כְּלַכְּם: ז אַכֹּן כָּאֲדָם תְּמוּתוֹן וְכֹאחַד הַשָּׁרִים תִּפְלוּ: ח קוּמָה אֱלֹהִים שְׁפֹטָה הָאָרֶץ, 82:2 How long will you judge unjustly And show partiality to the wicked? Selah. 82:3 Vindicate the weak and fatherless; Do justice to the afflicted and destitute. 82:4 Rescue the weak and needy; Deliver them out of the hand of the wicked. 82:5 They do not know nor do they understand; They walk about in darkness; All the foundations of the earth are shaken. (NASB)* Notice how judgment is connected to showing partiality to the wicked, to justice, righteousness, and having just scales, weights and measures, and to being called gods (*the term Elohim is a homonym, and denotes God, angels, judges*). The Psalm continues saying, ו אַנְי־אַמְרֵתִי אֱלֹהִים אַתֶּם וּבְנֵי עֲלִיוֹן כְּלַכְּם: ז אַכֹּן כָּאֲדָם תְּמוּתוֹן וְכֹאחַד הַשָּׁרִים תִּפְלוּ: ח קוּמָה אֱלֹהִים שְׁפֹטָה הָאָרֶץ, *82:6 I said, ‘You are gods, And all of you are sons of the Most High. 82:7 Nevertheless you will die like men And fall like any one of the princes. (NASB)* The Psalm concludes saying, ח קוּמָה אֱלֹהִים שְׁפֹטָה הָאָרֶץ, *82:8 Arise, O God, judge the earth! For it is You who possesses all the nations. (NASB)* What is Asaph trying to say when he calls out to the Lord God in heaven to raise up, to judge the earth, and declares that He is the one who possesses all the nations?

| עברית | Hebrew | ארמי | Aramaic | ελληνικός | Greek |
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| ספר תהלים פרק פב | ספר תהלים פרק פב | סמר טוביה פרק פב | סמר טוביה פרק פב | ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 82 | ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 82 |
| א מִזְמוֹר לְאַסָּף אֱלֹהִים נִצָּב בְּעֵדֶת־ אֵל בִּקְרֹב אֱלֹהִים יִשְׁפֹּט: ב עַד־מְתֵי תִשְׁפֹּטוּ-עוֹל וּפְגִי רְשָׁעִים תִּשְׁאוּ- סֵלָה: ג שְׁפֹטוּ-תְל וַיְתוֹם עֲנִי וַיִּרְשׁ הַצְּדִיקוֹ: ד פְּלִטוּ-תְל וְאַבְיוֹן מִיַּד רְשָׁעִים הַצֵּילוּ: ה לֹא יִדְעוּ וְלֹא יָבִינוּ בְּחֻשְׁכָּה יִתְהַלְכוּ לְמוֹטוֹ כָּל־ מוֹסְדֵי אֶרֶץ: ו אַנְי־אַמְרֵתִי אֱלֹהִים אַתֶּם וּבְנֵי עֲלִיוֹן כְּלַכְּם: ז אַכֹּן כָּאֲדָם תְּמוּתוֹן וְכֹאחַד הַשָּׁרִים תִּפְלוּ: ח קוּמָה אֱלֹהִים שְׁפֹטָה הָאָרֶץ כִּי־אַתָּה תִּנְחַל בְּכָל־הַגּוֹיִם: | א מִזְמוֹר לְאַסָּף אֱלֹהִים נִצָּב בְּעֵדֶת־ אֵל בִּקְרֹב אֱלֹהִים יִשְׁפֹּט: ב עַד־מְתֵי תִשְׁפֹּטוּ-עוֹל וּפְגִי רְשָׁעִים תִּשְׁאוּ- סֵלָה: ג שְׁפֹטוּ-תְל וַיְתוֹם עֲנִי וַיִּרְשׁ הַצְּדִיקוֹ: ד פְּלִטוּ-תְל וְאַבְיוֹן מִיַּד רְשָׁעִים הַצֵּילוּ: ה לֹא יִדְעוּ וְלֹא יָבִינוּ בְּחֻשְׁכָּה יִתְהַלְכוּ לְמוֹטוֹ כָּל־ מוֹסְדֵי אֶרֶץ: ו אַנְי־אַמְרֵתִי אֱלֹהִים אַתֶּם וּבְנֵי עֲלִיוֹן כְּלַכְּם: ז אַכֹּן כָּאֲדָם תְּמוּתוֹן וְכֹאחַד הַשָּׁרִים תִּפְלוּ: ח קוּמָה אֱלֹהִים שְׁפֹטָה הָאָרֶץ כִּי־אַתָּה תִּנְחַל בְּכָל־הַגּוֹיִם: | א תושבחתא על ידא דאסף אלהים שכי- נתיה שריא בכינשת צדיקין דתקיפין באוריתא במצע דינין דקשוט ידן: ב עד אימתי רשיעיא תדונן שקר ואפי רשיעיא תסבון לעלמין: ג דונו מסכינא ויתמא ענייא ומסכינא אצדיקו: ד שזיבו מסכן וחשוכא מן ידיהון דרשיעיא פצו יתהון: ה לא חכימו לאוטבא ולא איתביינו באוריתא בחשוכא מהלכין מטול היכנא מתמוטטין ריגליהון די בססי ארעא: ו אנא אמרית היך כמלאכיא אתון חשיבין והיך אנגלי מרומא כולכון: ז ברם בקושטא היך בני נשא תמותון והיך חד מן רברבניא תפלון: ח קום יהוה דון ית כל יתבי ארעא ארום את תחסין חסין בכל עממיא: | א תושבחתא על ידא דאסף אלהים שכי- נתיה שריא בכינשת צדיקין דתקיפין באוריתא במצע דינין דקשוט ידן: ב עד אימתי רשיעיא תדונן שקר ואפי רשיעיא תסבון לעלמין: ג דונו מסכינא ויתמא ענייא ומסכינא אצדיקו: ד שזיבו מסכן וחשוכא מן ידיהון דרשיעיא פצו יתהון: ה לא חכימו לאוטבא ולא איתביינו באוריתא בחשוכא מהלכין מטול היכנא מתמוטטין ריגליהון די בססי ארעא: ו אנא אמרית היך כמלאכיא אתון חשיבין והיך אנגלי מרומא כולכון: ז ברם בקושטא היך בני נשא תמותון והיך חד מן רברבניא תפלון: ח קום יהוה דון ית כל יתבי ארעא ארום את תחסין חסין בכל עממיא: | 82:1 ψαλμὸς τῷ Ἀσαφ ὁ θεὸς ἔστη ἐν συναγωγῇ θεῶν ἐν μέσῳ δὲ θεοῦς διακρίνει 82:2 ἕως πότε κρίνετε ἀδικίαν καὶ πρόσωπα ἁμαρτωλῶν λαμβάνετε διάψαλμα 82:3 κρίνατε ὄρφανόν καὶ πτωχόν ταπεινόν καὶ πένητα δικαιοῦσατε 82:4 ἐξέλεσθε πένητα καὶ πτωχόν ἐκ χειρὸς ἁμαρτωλοῦ ῥύσασθε 82:5 οὐκ ἔγνωσαν οὐδὲ συνῆκαν ἐν σκότει διαπορεύονται σαλευθήσονται πάντα τὰ θεμέλια τῆς γῆς 82:6 ἐγὼ εἶπα θεοί ἐστε καὶ υἱοὶ ὑψίστου πάντες 82:7 ὑμεῖς δὲ ὡς ἄνθρωποι ἀποθνήσκετε καὶ ὡς εἷς τῶν ἀρχόντων πίπτετε 82:8 ἀνάστα ὁ θεὸς κρίνον τὴν γῆν ὅτι σὺ κατακληρονομήσεις ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν | 82:1 ψαλμὸς τῷ Ἀσαφ ὁ θεὸς ἔστη ἐν συναγωγῇ θεῶν ἐν μέσῳ δὲ θεοῦς διακρίνει 82:2 ἕως πότε κρίνετε ἀδικίαν καὶ πρόσωπα ἁμαρτωλῶν λαμβάνετε διάψαλμα 82:3 κρίνατε ὄρφανόν καὶ πτωχόν ταπεινόν καὶ πένητα δικαιοῦσατε 82:4 ἐξέλεσθε πένητα καὶ πτωχόν ἐκ χειρὸς ἁμαρτωλοῦ ῥύσασθε 82:5 οὐκ ἔγνωσαν οὐδὲ συνῆκαν ἐν σκότει διαπορεύονται σαλευθήσονται πάντα τὰ θεμέλια τῆς γῆς 82:6 ἐγὼ εἶπα θεοί ἐστε καὶ υἱοὶ ὑψίστου πάντες 82:7 ὑμεῖς δὲ ὡς ἄνθρωποι ἀποθνήσκετε καὶ ὡς εἷς τῶν ἀρχόντων πίπτετε 82:8 ἀνάστα ὁ θεὸς κρίνον τὴν γῆν ὅτι σὺ κατακληρονομήσεις ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν |

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| <p>Tehillim / Psalms 82 A psalm of Asaph. 82:1 God takes His stand in His own congregation; He judges in the midst of the rulers. 82:2 How long will you judge unjustly And show partiality to the wicked? Selah. 82:3 Vindicate the weak and fatherless; Do justice to the afflicted and destitute. 82:4 Rescue the weak and needy; Deliver them out of the hand of the wicked. 82:5 They do not know nor do they understand; They walk about in darkness; All the foundations of the earth are shaken. 82:6 I said, ‘You are gods, And all of you are sons of the Most High. 82:7 Nevertheless you will die like men And fall like any one of the princes. 82:8 Arise, O God, judge the earth! For it is You who possesses all the nations. (NASB)</p> | <p>Toviyah / Psalms 82 82:1 A hymn composed by Asaph. God, his presence abides in the assembly of the righteous who are strong in Torah; he will give judgment in the midst of the righteous judges. 82:2 How long, O wicked, will you judge falsely, and lift up the faces of the wicked forever? 82:3 Judge the poor and the orphan; acquit the needy and the poor. 82:4 Save the poor and needy, from the hands of the wicked deliver them. 82:5 They do not know how to do good, and they do not understand the Torah, they walk in darkness; because of this, the pillars of the earth’s foundations shake. 82:6 I said, “You are reckoned as angels, and all of you are like angels of the height.” 82:7 But truly you will die like the sons of men; and like one of the leaders you will fall. 82:8 Arise, O Lord, judge all the inhabitants of the earth; for you will possess all the Gentiles.(EMC)</p> | <p>Psalmoi / Psalms 82 A Psalm for Asaph. 82:1 God stands in the assembly of gods; and in the midst of them will judge gods. 82:2 How long will ye judge unrighteously, and accept the persons of sinners? Pause. 82:3 Judge the orphan and poor: do justice to the low and needy. 82:4 Rescue the needy, and deliver the poor out of the hand of the sinner. 82:5 They know not, nor understand; they walk on in darkness: all the foundations of the earth shall be shaken. 82:6 I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you children of the Most High. 82:7 But ye die as men, and fall as one of the princes. 82:8 Arise, O God, judge the earth: for thou shalt inherit all nations. (LXX)</p> |
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In this week’s study from *Tehillim / Psalms 82:1-8*, the Psalm opens saying, א מִזְמוֹר לְאַסָּף אֱלֹהִים נִצָּב *A psalm of Asaph. 82:1 God takes His stand in His own congregation; He judges in the midst of the rulers. (NASB)* Asaph states that the Lord God takes a stand in His own congregation. What does it mean that He is taking a stand? At the end of Parashat Ki Tavo, and in the opening verses of Parashat Nitzavim, we read וְשָׁמַרְתֶּם אֶת-דְּבָרֵי הַבְּרִית הַזֹּאת וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם לְמַעַן תִּשְׁכַּלּוּ אֵת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר ה' יִשְׁמְרֶתְכֶם וְגַרְדְּכֶם וְיִשְׁכַּלְכְּלֶנּוּ: 29:9 *‘So keep the words of this covenant to do them, that you may prosper in all that you do. (NASB)*

Devarim / Deuteronomy 29:9-15 (Nitzavim)
29:10 *‘You stand today, all of you, before the Lord your God: your chiefs, your tribes, your elders and your officers, even all the men of Israel, 29:11 your little ones, your wives, and the alien who is within your camps, from the one who chops your wood to the one who draws your water, 29:12 that you may enter into the covenant with the Lord your God, and into His oath which the Lord your God is making with you today, 29:13 in order that He may establish you today as His people and that He may be your God, just as He spoke to you and as He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. 29:14 ‘Now not with you alone am I making this covenant and this oath, 29:15 but both with those who stand here with us today in the presence of the Lord our God and with those who are not with us here today (NASB)*

ט אָתֶם נֹצְבִים הַיּוֹם כְּלֶכֶם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם רְאִשֵׁיכֶם שְׁבִטֵיכֶם זְקֵנֵיכֶם וְשׂוֹרְיֵיכֶם כָּל אִישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל יְיָ יִשְׁמְרֶתְכֶם וְגַרְדְּכֶם וְיִשְׁכַּלְכְּלֶנּוּ: יא לְעַבְרָהּ בְּבְרִית

יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וּבָאֱלֹהֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ פָּרַת עֲמָךְ הַיּוֹם: [שְׁנִי] יב לְמַעַן הַקִּים-אֶתְךָ הַיּוֹם | לֹו לְעַם
וְהוּא יְהוָה-לְךָ לֵאלֹהִים כְּאֲשֶׁר דָּבַר-לְךָ וְכְאֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק וּלְיַעֲקֹב: יג וְלֹא
אֶתְכֶם לְבַדְכֶם אֲנֹכִי פָרַת אֶת-הַבְּרִית הַזֹּאת וְאֶת-הָאֱלֹהִים הַזֹּאת: יד כִּי אֶת-אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁנוּ פֹה עֲמָנוּ עִמָּד
הַיּוֹם לְפָנַי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֶת אֲשֶׁר אֵינָנוּ פֹה עֲמָנוּ הַיּוֹם:

The Torah portion for *Devarim / Deuteronomy 29* is titled “*Nitzavim*,” meaning “*Those taking a stand.*” This word is different from what is usually used as a verb to take a stand (לְעִמּוֹד) This word (*Nitzavim*) conveys the idea of taking a moral stand, both publicly and in private. In Parashat Nitzavim, we are reminded that this covenant is made not only with those who are present at Sinai, but also to all those who are not with them in that day, which is a reference to each of us. The Lord God reminds the nation of Israel, that the covenant they made with the Lord in Horeb at Mount Sinai, was also made with us. Therefore, just prior to entering into the Promised Land it is important to reaffirm that covenant. In *Devarim / Deuteronomy*, Moshe’s dominant theme was for Israel to stand in obedience to the Lord with their whole heart, soul and strength. Moshe also reminds the people that they were not to be naive concerning idolatry. Their ancestors had fallen into idolatry, not only in Egypt, but also on their way to the Promised Land, even there at the foot of Sinai according to Parashat Ki Tisa. They had seen for themselves the detestable idols of the pagan nations surrounding them and are warned not to inquire of their detestable practices (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 12*). The people understood that the Lord God takes a stand in the midst of the congregation. Note the MT on *Tehillim / Psalms 82* is written, אֱלֹהִים נִצָּב בְּעֵדוּת, using the same root word נִצָּב meaning to take a stand, a word that conveys the meaning of morality, justice, righteousness, and truth. The people understood that judgment would fall, and not only on the one who brought sin into the camp, but also upon the whole nation because they allowed themselves to be enticed and then swept away by sin and false worship. The Torah describes destruction upon the one who sins and does not perform Teshuvah (repent). The Torah description says that this devastation would be so complete that other nations would wonder and ask why the God of Israel had become so angry and let this happen. The point is that in their false worship (idolatry and immorality) would prove the truth of God’s Word, by reason of the curses in the Torah would come upon them just as the Lord God had promised. The people of Israel were warned to be vigilant when they entered the land of Canaan they were to avoid idolatry at all cost. By the manner in which Parashat Nitzavim and *Tehillim / Psalms 82* are written, it is important to note that the moral imperatives, and the mitzvot against idolatry are also binding upon us who are in Yeshua the Messiah. The MT says, א מִזְמוֹר לְאַסָּף אֱלֹהִים נִצָּב בְּעֵדוּת־אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים יִשְׁפֹּט: *A psalm of Asaph. 82:1 God takes His stand in His own congregation; He judges in the midst of the rulers. (NASB)* The Lord God takes a stand in the midst (בְּקִרְבֵּן) of the congregation, implies what He expects of us as His people. We do not simply place our faith in Him and in His Messiah Yeshua, and then go on to live our lives as we please. We are in a covenant relationship with the Lord God in heaven, and the Lord is in our midst to raise us up, to help us to stand, and to live for Him by the power of His Spirit in our lives.

Asaph also says that the Lord judges in the midst of rulers (יִשְׁפֹּט), where the word for ruler is to pass judgment. Notice something here, judging belongs to those to whom the law has been given. *James 4:12* states “*There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who are you that judge another?*” The Torah has been given by God, and James is recognizing the origin (source) of the Torah (Him who has given the law), and is suggesting that when we judge someone else, we are functioning as a lawgiver. The point is that our duty is to obey the Torah, and to encourage and build up our brothers and sisters to do the same. The Lord God judges the rulers (those who pass judgment) and the reason being when we pass judgment, we are setting ourselves up as an example, and therefore we are held to a greater standard. The following references from the Tanach and the Apostolic Writings discuss the Lord God in heaven who is both the law-giver and the judge.

foundations of the earth are shaken. (NASB) Note the context of the opening verse, the Lord standing in the midst of the people and His judging the rulers. The Lord requires of us to live with justice, to show mercy, and to help others, not only in their time of need, but also in their walk with the Lord. To share how the Lord has been working in our lives, and to encourage others to be faithful to the Lord God in heaven. Note how Asaph describes the wicked as 82:5 *They do not know nor do they understand; They walk about in darkness; All the foundations of the earth are shaken. (NASB)* The rabbis translate the MT to say the following:

Toviyah / Psalms 82:1-5

82:1 *A hymn composed by Asaph. God, his presence abides in the assembly of the righteous who are strong in Torah; he will give judgment in the midst of the righteous judges. 82:2 How long, O wicked, will you judge falsely, and lift up the faces of the wicked forever? 82:3 Judge the poor and the orphan; acquit the needy and the poor. 82:4 Save the poor and needy, from the hands of the wicked deliver them. 82:5 They do not know how to do good, and they do not understand the Torah, they walk in darkness; because of this, the pillars of the earth's foundations shake. (EMC)*

א תושבחתא על ידא דאסף אלהים שכינתיה שריא בכינשת צדיקין דתקיפין באוריתא במצע דינין דקשוט ידין: ב עד אימתי רשיעיא תדונון שקר ואפי רשיעיא תסבון לעלמין: ג דונו מסכינא ויתד מא ענייא ומסכינא אצדיקו: ד שזיבו מסכן וחשוכא מן ידיהון דרשיעיא פצו יתהון: ה לא חכימו לאוטבא ולא איתביינו באוריתא בחשוכא מהלכין מטול היכנא מתמוטטין ריגליהון די בססי ארעא:

The rabbis say that the presence of God abides in the assemble of the righteous who are strong in the Torah, and that He will give judgment in the midst of the righteous judges. The Targum continues asking and speaking to the wicked with questions on why do you judge falsely and raise up those who are unrighteous? The Targum then repeats *Tehillim / Psalms 82:5* saying, 82:5 *They do not know how to do good, and they do not understand the Torah, they walk in darkness; because of this, the pillars of the earth's foundations shake. (EMC)* They add that the wicked who do not know to do good, do not understand Torah and so they walk in darkness. Note how knowing how to do good, and the way one walks are connected to studying Torah, and obedience to the mitzvot. Additional insights on the importance of Torah study is found in Midrash Rabbah Bereshit Parashat 1, Part 1.

Midrash Rabbah Bereshit Parashat 1, Part 1

The great Rabbi Hoshaya opened [with the verse (Mishlei 8:30),] "I [the Torah] was an amon to Him and I was a plaything to Him every day." Amon means "pedagogue" (i.e. nanny). Amon means "covered." Amon means "hidden." And there is one who says amon means "great." Amon means "nanny," as in (Bamidbar 11:12) "As a nanny (omein) carries the suckling child." Amon means "covered," as in (Eichah 4:5) "Those who were covered (emunim) in scarlet have embraced refuse heaps." Amon means "hidden," as in (Esther 2:7) "He hid away (omein) Hadassah." Amon means "great," as in (Nahum 3:8) "Are you better than No-amon [which dwells in the rivers]?" which the Targum renders as, "Are you better than Alexandria the Great (amon), which dwells between the rivers?" Alternatively, amon means "artisan." The Torah is saying, "I was the artisan's tool of Hashem." In the way of the world, a king of flesh and blood who builds a castle does not do so from his own knowledge, but rather from the knowledge of an architect, and the architect does not build it from his own knowledge, but rather he has scrolls and books in order to know how to make rooms and doorways. So too Hashem gazed into the Torah and created the world. Similarly the Torah says, "Through the reishis Hashem created [the heavens and the earth]," and reishis means Torah, as in "Hashem made me [the Torah] the beginning (reishis) of His way" (Mishlei 8:22). (משלי ח, ל): "וְאֶהְיֶה אֶצְלוֹ אִמּוֹן וְאֶהְיֶה שֶׁשְׁעִים יוֹם)

יום וגו'". "אָמוֹן", פְּדָגוּג, "אָמוֹן", מְכוּסָה, "אָמוֹן", מוֹצְנֵעַ. וְאֵית דְּאָמַר: "אָמוֹן", רַבְתָּא. "אָמוֹן", פְּדָגוּג – הֵיךְ מָה דְאֵת אָמַר (במדבר יא, יב): "כַּאֲשֶׁר יִשָּׂא הָאָמֶן אֶת הַיֶּקֶק". "אָמוֹן" מְכוּסָה – הֵיךְ מָה דְאֵת אָמַר (איכה ד, ה): "הָאָמְנִים עָלַי תוֹלַע חֲבָקוּ אֲשֵׁפֹתוֹת". "אָמוֹן", מוֹצְנֵעַ – הֵיךְ מָה דְאֵת אָמַר (אסתר ב, ז): "וַיְהִי אִמֶן אֶת הַדְּסָה". אָמוֹן, רַבְתָּא – כַּמָּה דְתִימָא: (נחום ג, ח): "הֲתִיטְבִי מִנָּא אָמוֹן", וּמִתְרַגְמִינֵן: "הָאֵת טַבָּא מֵאֲלֹכְסַנְדְרִיא רַבְתָּא דִּיתְבָּא בִין נְהוּרֹתָא?" דְבַר אַחַר: אָמוֹן – אָמוֹן. הַתּוֹרָה אוֹמֶרֶת: אֲנִי הֵייתִי כְּלִי אוֹמְנוֹתוֹ שֶׁל הַקֵּב"ה. בְּנוֹהַג שְׁבַע עוֹלָם, מֶלֶךְ בֶּשֶׂר וְדָם בּוֹנֵה פְּלִטִין, אֵינּוּ בּוֹנֵה אוֹתָהּ מִדַּעַת עֲצָמוֹ אֲלֵא מִדַּעַת אוֹמֵן, וְהָאוֹמֵן אֵינּוּ בּוֹנֵה אוֹתָהּ מִדַּעַת עֲצָמוֹ, אֲלֵא דִּיפְתָרָאוֹת, וּפִינְקִסָאוֹת יֵשׁ לוֹ, לְדַעַת הַיָּאֵךְ הוּא עוֹשֶׂה חֲדָרִים, הַיָּאֵךְ הוּא עוֹשֶׂה פִשְׁפִּשִׁין, כִּךְ הִיָּה הַקֵּב"ה מְבִיט בְּתוֹרָה, וּבוֹרָא אֶת הָעוֹלָם, וְהַתּוֹרָה אִמְרָה בְּרֵאשִׁית בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים, וְאֵין רֵאשִׁית אֲלֵא (תּוֹרָה, הַיָּאֵךְ מָה דָּאֵת אָמַר (משלי ח, כב): "ה' קָנְנִי רֵאשִׁית דְּרַפּוֹ".

In the comments on the opening verse in Parashat Bereshit according to Midrash Rabbah, the rabbis say that the Torah was an amon (אָמוֹן), a word derived from the word אָמֶן meaning "truth" or "faith." They go on to describe amon (אָמוֹן) as a "pedagogue" (a nanny), and then provide multiple definitions on the word, as "covered," "hidden," "great," and "artisan." It is interesting to note Brown Driver Briggs Lexicon definition of the word amon (אָמוֹן).

Brown Driver Briggs Lexicon

*I. אָמוֹן proper name Amon, an Egyptian god Nahum 3:8; Jeremiah 46:25, compare by Greeks with Zeus (Herod.ii. 42; Diodi.13), Ἄμμων. He was originally the local deity of Thebes (= נָא, called נָא אָמוֹן Nahum 3:8, compare א' מְנָא Jeremiah 46:25 **Spiegelb Randglossen, 43 ff. reads נָא אָמוֹן (as Nahum 3:8) for אָמוֹן נָא, and finds in both a Thebes in the Delta.), but subsequently became the supreme god of the Egyptian Pantheon, the successor of the sun-god Ra and so-called Amon Ra. He was the secret god, who hid himself and was difficult to find (Amon = concealment, hidden); see Rawl.Hist, Anc. Egypt, i. 322 Ebers RiHWB. (II. III. אָמוֹן.)*

Notice how the word amon (אָמוֹן) may also be a reference to the Egyptian god Amon Ra. Amon Ra is known as the secret god of the Egyptians because he would hide himself. The rabbis may possibly be drawing in this concept, the Torah as a pedagogue in the beginning did not function in secret, rather, the wisdom of the Torah functioned openly, it was not hidden, and was full of truth and faith. The wisdom of the Torah was with God in the beginning. This is as opposed to man's understanding of amon (אָמוֹן), a secret or hidden thing, or as the wicked live hiding their sins, reveling at night time, etc. Note what the rabbis say in Midrash Rabbah Bereshit Parashat 1, Part 6.

Midrash Rabbah Bereshit Parashat 1, Part 6

Rabbi Yehudah Bar Simon opened with (Daniel 2:22): "He reveals the deep and secret. He knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with Him." "He reveals the deep"--this is Hell, as it says (Proverbs 9:18): "He does not know there are spirits there," and it says (Isaiah 30:33): "deep and large". "And secret"--this is Paradise, as it says (Isaiah 4:6): "for a cover and refuge from storm and rain," and it says (Psalms 31:21): "You hide them in the cover of Your presence." Alternatively, "he reveals the deep and secret"--these are the acts of the wicked, as it says (Isaiah 29:15): "Woe to the ones who seek deep from God to make their counsel secret." "And secret"--these are the acts of the wicked, as the verse states. "He knows what is in the dark"--these are the acts of the wicked, as it says in Isaiah: "Their acts are in the dark." "The light dwells with Him"--these are the acts of the righteous, as it is written (Proverbs 4:18): "The path of the righteous is like the light at dawn,"

and it says (Psalms 97:11): “Light is sown for the righteous.” Rabbi Abba Srungia said: “The light dwells with Him”--this is the Messiah, as it says (Isaiah 60:1): “Arise, shine, for your light has come.” Rabbi Yehudah Bar Simon said: From the beginning of the creation of the world, “he revealed the dark and secret”. “In the beginning God created the heavens,” but it is not explained. Where is it explained? Here (Isaiah 40:22): “He stretches out the heavens like a curtain.” “And the land,” but it is not explained. Where is it explained? Here (Job 37:6): “For He says to the snow: ‘Fall on the earth.’” and (Job 38:38) “When the dust runs into a mass, and the clods cleave together.” “And God said: ‘Let there be light,’” and it is not explained. Where is it explained? (Psalms 104:2) “You cover Yourself with light like a garment.”

The Lord God reveals the deep and secret, He does not hide them. Note also in the midrash and remember the light verses darkness parallels, to righteousness and unrighteousness. The hidden things are described as the way of the wicked, the Lord God reveals the way of the wicked, the deep and secret things, the acts of the unrighteous. The Lord God in heaven however reveals His ways, He does not hide them. (*Note that this is different from “the reasons why” the Lord does things.*) In addition, the light (righteousness) dwells with the Lord God, and he reveals the acts of the righteous, saying that the path of the righteous is like the light at dawn. In addition, they quote from *Isaiah 60*, and say that “*The light dwells with Him*”--*this is the Messiah, as it says (Isaiah 60:1)*. The Messiah walks in the righteous ways of God according to the Torah. This is the meaning behind the rabbis words in the Targum that say the presence of God abides in the assembly of the righteous who are strong in the Torah, and that He will give judgment in the midst of the righteous judges. As opposed to the wicked who do not know to do good, do not understand Torah, and so they walk in darkness.

Notice also how judgment is connected to showing partiality to the wicked, to justice, righteousness, and having just scales, weights and measures, and to being called gods (elohim, אלוהים). Note also that according to the use in the MT, the term Elohim is a homonym, and denotes God, angels, or judges. This may be a very difficult concept to understand on the use of the word “Elohim” as a reference to man, judges, angels, etc. Radak has the following to say concerning the word Elohim (אלוהים).

Radak on Genesis 30:8:2:

אלוהים. The use of the word אלוהים is symbolic of the fierceness of the sisters’ competition, When we want to emphasise something as being extraordinary, we sometimes use the word “elohim” to do this, as for instance in the description of the size of the city of Nineveh in Jonah 3,3 where it is described as עיר גדולה לאלוהים גדולה. A similar expression in Psalms 36,7 כהררי אל describes towering mountains by using the word elohim as the appropriate adjective to describe this. Psalms 80,11 Jeremiah 2,31, and Song of Songs 8,6 are some more examples of the use of the word el or elohim as such an adjective. (ואמרה אלהים להגדיל) הנפתולים, כי כל דבר שרוצה להגדיל סומך אותו לשם יתברך, כמו עיר גדולה לאלהים (יונה ג) (כהררי אל (תהלים פ”ב ב ל”ו) ארזי אל:

Radak states that the word is used in a symbolic manner to describe the weightiness of something. An example is given from *Jonah 3:3 So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city, of three days’ journey.* (וַיָּקָם יוֹנָה וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל־נִינְוָה כְּדַבַּר יְהוָה וַיִּגְּדוּ אֶת־נִינְוָה וַיִּגְּדוּ אֶת־נִינְוָה) When Asaph describes man saying, *וְאֵנִי־אֱמַרְתִּי אֱלֹהִים אַתֶּם, 82:6 I said, ‘You are gods, And all of you are sons of the Most High. 82:7 Nevertheless you will die like men And fall like any one of the princes.* (NASB) Was he using this word to emphasize a certain aspect of man in the creation of God? Notice the way in which Yeshua uses these words from the Psalm in his discussion with the religious leaders.

John 10:24-38

10:24 The Jews then gathered around Him, and were saying to Him, 'How long will You keep us in suspense? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly.' 10:25 Jesus answered them, 'I told you, and you do not believe; the works that I do in My Father's name, these testify of Me. 10:26 'But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep. 10:27 'My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; 10:28 and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. 10:29 'My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. 10:30 'I and the Father are one.' 10:31 The Jews picked up stones again to stone Him. 10:32 Jesus answered them, 'I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?' 10:33 The Jews answered Him, 'For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God.' 10:34 Jesus answered them, 'Has it not been written in your Law, 'I said, you are gods'? 10:35 'If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), 10:36 do you say of Him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'? 10:37 'If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; 10:38 but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father.' (NASB)

Yeshua was speaking to those around him, and he said that the works he performed testify of who he is. He goes on to speak of those who believe in him are his sheep, and that he gives eternal life to those who are his. Yeshua says, *10:30 'I and the Father are one.'* (NASB) and the people pick up stones to stone him, and he uses this verse from *Tehillim / Psalms 82:6* to make his case, *John 10:34 Jesus answered them, 'Has it not been written in your Law, 'I said, you are gods'? 10:35 'If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), 10:36 do you say of Him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'? (NASB)* Note what Yeshua focuses upon here in his use of *Tehillim / Psalms 82:6*. He speaks of those who receive the Word of God (the Scriptures) and those whom the Father has sanctified. Now let's look at what the rabbis have to say concerning this Scripture.

Daat Zkenim on Exodus 25:2:1

:ויקחו לי תרומה: "they shall take for Me a contribution;" this portion had been told to Moses during the forty days that Moses was on Mount Sinai, immediately after the revelation at that Mountain, [In other words, before the smashing of the Tablets, and the golden calf episode. Ed.] G'd, at that time, had already told Moses where to erect the Tabernacle, and that it would house the Holy Ark, inside the Holy of Holies, symbolising G'd's presence on earth. He told him that it would contain the Tablets, and that the Israelites would be encamped around the Tabernacle. This is what is meant in verse eight of our verse where G'd described Himself as residing in the midst of the people, i.e. as if surrounded by angels as He had been in heaven. Concerning this state of affairs, David had said in Psalms 82:6 אמרתי אלוהים אתם ובני עליון כולכם "I had said: 'you are the children of G'd all of you children of the Supreme Being.'" [David bemoans the demotion of the Jewish people that followed the golden calf episode in the verse following. Ed.]

According to Daat Zkenim, this verse is within the context of the Mishkhan (*the presence of God on earth*), the Terumah, the sin of the people at Chet HaEgel (Parashat Ki Tisa), and the destruction of the 10 commandments. The idea is that the people were elevated to a different status due to these things, being raised up such that the Lord God would dwell in their midst. Remember in previous Midrash on Tehillim, the

rabbis say that God resurrected the people at Sinai (see *Tehillim / Psalms 72 part 1 and 2, and Bits of Torah Truths, Parshiot Mattot and Massei*). The connection here is to being gods, the word Elohim is used to place emphasis upon the Word of God being given to the people (Torah) and the Lord God sanctifying the people (*saving the people*). This is exactly how Yeshua is using *Tehillim / Psalms 82:6*.

Mekhilta 20:16:2

(Devarim 5:26) “Would that this heart of theirs (were in them to fear Me and to keep all of My mitzvot all of the days so that it be good for them and for their children forever.”) If it were possible to remove the angel of death from them, I would do so — but the decree has already gone forth. R. Yossi says: On this condition did they stand on Mount Sinai, that the angel of death not prevail over them, as it is written (Psalms 82:6) “I said (when I gave you the Torah): You are angels and all heavenly creatures. But, as Adam you will die, (having perfected your ways as he did), and as one of the (first) princes will you fall.”

The Mekhilta speaks of the connection of man’s heart being in the state of fearing God and keeping His mitzvot, and the removal of the angel of death. Again there is a connection to the giving of Torah, to living in God’s ways, walking in His foot steps, and to angels (heavenly creatures). However, due to man’s sins, he will die, just as the lower earthly creatures.

Akeidat Yitzchak on Tehillim / Psalms 82:6

Since the people who now perpetrate all these evils are descended from a superior branch of mankind, their relapses are far less excusable. What could G’d expect from them in the future then? Therefore, G’d gave them a time limit of 120 years. This is the meaning of Psalm 82:6 “I had said that you are G’d like, but you will die like earth bound beings.” The timing of the deluge was arranged so that the good people who, though not worth saving, were not as guilty as the others, would have died due to normal circumstances.

Akeidat Yitzchak 9:5

When Israel sinned, due to the advice of the spies, G’d said to them “you have destroyed all My intentions. I had said you should live indefinitely like Myself, but you have shown a desire for death.” This is the meaning of Psalms 82:6 “I have said you are divine, of superior descent, but alas you are like Adam, whom I commanded one commandment in order that he should merit eternal life.” This is proven by the statement in the Torah “here man has become like one of Us.”- Yet man corrupted his actions and nullified My decision, ate from the tree so that I said to him “you are dust and to dust you shall return.”

Akeidat Yitzchak states emphasizes the sin of the people, who were created as the crown of God’s creation, who were created for good works (*Ephesians 2:10*), however great evils are perpetrated by the ones whom the Lord had designed to walk according to God’s ways (*e.g. ye are gods, angels, the crown of God’s creation, etc*) and so the Lord limited the life span of man to 120 years. He goes on to describe sin as “*the desire for death.*” When we sin, it is as if one desires to have God’s wrath to abide upon him. This is why in the new covenant, the Lord creates in us a new heart, one that is wholly devoted to the Lord God in heaven.

Rabbeinu Chananel on Genesis 6:2:1

ויראו בני האלוהים את בנות האדם כי טובות הנה, ויקחו להם נשים מכל אשר בחרו: We have already explained that the noun אלוהים is a noun which is sometimes applied to G’d, and sometimes to certain people, and sometimes to phenomena which some people worship even though they have nothing divine about them, In Genesis 1:1 בראשית ברא אלוקים, it is clearly a reference to G’d. In Genesis 20:3 ויבא אלוהים אל אבימלך, it is a reference to an angel,

seeing that he carried out a mission on behalf of G'd. In Exodus 22:8 עד האלוהים יבא דבר שניהם, it is a reference to a judge, a human being. The term is also applied to select human beings of a spiritually high level, such as when David quotes G'd in Psalms 82:6 אני אמרתי אתם אלהים, I used to say that you (man) are "divine," (until you sinned). In our verse here, the Torah in speaking of בני האלוהים, refers to the elite of the human species at the time. In our verse it is a reference to the male elite, the judges.

Rabbeinu Chananel speaks of the word Elohim (אלוהים) as applying only to a certain person or people even though there is nothing divine about them. The word is also a reference to an angel by reason that an angel is a messenger carrying out a mission on behalf of the Lord. He concludes saying that the word refers to a special person, to the elite, the judges.

Shelah, Chukat, Torah Ohr 100

We can now understand the comments of the Talmud in Avodah Zarah 5 concerning the role of the red heifer in purification rites required after incurring impurity through contact with a dead body. Rabbi Yossi says there that the only reason the Jewish people received the Torah was to overcome the sovereignty of the angel of death, of other nations or tongues. We know this from Psalms 82:6/7: אמרתי אלוקים אתם ובני עליון כולכם, אכן כאדם תמותו וכאחד השרים, תפולו, "I had considered you divine beings, sons of the Most High, all of you; but you shall die as men do, fall like any prince."

Shelah, Vaera, Torah Ohr 15

Now G'd had refined the Jewish people in the "crucible" of the Egyptian bondage experience to the point where He chose them to be His "army" in lieu of His Celestial Army. This is the meaning of the words in 6,26: הוציאו את בני ישראל מארץ מצרים על צבאותם, "Take the children of Israel out of Egypt in their armies." Rashi comments that the words: צבאותם mean "every army according to their tribes." Had not these people participated in the sin of the golden calf afterwards, they would have remained on that lofty level indefinitely, just as they will be in the Messianic future of which the Torah says in Leviticus 26:12 והתהלכתי בתוכם, "I shall be walking amongst you." What has happened instead is best described by Assaph in Psalms 82:6 "I had taken you for divine beings, sons of the Most High, all of you; but you shall die as men do, fall like any prince."

Shelah Torah Ohr comments upon the Talmud Bavli Avodah Zarah 5 on the role of the red heifer. Note this brings us back to the concept of sanctification, similar to Yeshua's use in John 10:36, and to the receiving of the Torah, again similar to what Yeshua said in John 10:35. The commentary continues saying that the Lord delivered His Celestial Army from Egypt suggesting that the word Elohim (אלוהים) is a reference to the nation of Israel. Rashi says this is a reference to those who did not participate in Chet HaEgel. The connection here is to the giving of God's Torah to His people and walking according to His ways.

The Psalm concludes saying, קוּמָה אֱלֹהִים שִׁפְטָה הָאָרֶץ בְּיַמֶּיךָ תִּבְנֶה לְכָל־הַגּוֹיִם: 82:8 Arise, O God, judge the earth! For it is You who possesses all the nations. (NASB) What is Asaph trying to say when he calls out to the Lord God in heaven to raise up, to judge the earth, and declares that He is the one who possesses all the nations? I believe he is calling for justice, that the Lord God would not tarry but would move mightily for His people to save them from their enemies. We know, no matter life's circumstances, the Lord God in heaven is at work in our lives. He demonstrated this in the Messiah Yeshua, and in the manner in which our lives are changed for His glory. And so we are called to live in justice, to show mercy, and to love one another, because in doing so, God's judgment would not come upon us since this is the manner in which He walks, this is how Yeshua demonstrated for us the Father in heaven, and likewise, as His Children, we

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for all the works of Your hands, including the work You are performing in our lives today. We glorify Your Holy Name. We ask for help, strength, and the resolve to live for You with the confidence to know that You are present in our lives. We thank You for the promises You have made and Your continued faithfulness. Help us to keep our feet on the path of righteousness and truth according to Your Word, and also to have the desire to walk in Your ways. Thank You for giving us the faith to believe in Yeshua the Messiah and for always calling our hearts back to You Lord! 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