

ספר תהילים פד | Tehillim / Psalms 84

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Choose Today to Make Prayer and Torah Study the Way of Life!

In this week's study from *Tehillim / Psalms 82:1-8*, the Psalm opens saying, א למנצח על-הגתית לבני-קרח מן-מזמור: *For the director of music. According to gittith. Of the Sons of Korah. A psalm.* The Sons of Korah narrate this psalm, what is the purpose of the words *lemnatzakh hagittith*? The psalm continues saying, ב מה-ידידות משכנותיך יהוה צבאות: ג נכספה וגם-כלתה | נפשי לחצרות יהוה ופשתי ירננו אל-אל-הי: *84:1 How lovely are Your dwelling places, O Lord of hosts! 84:2 My soul longed and even yearned for the courts of the Lord; My heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God. (NASB)* The Sons of Korah did not participate in the temple service, was this why they yearned for the dwelling places, and the courts of the Lord? The psalm continues saying, ד גם-צפור | מצאה בית ודרור | קן לה אשר-שמה אפרחיה את-מזבחותיך, יהוה צבאות מלכי ואלהי: *84:3 The bird also has found a house, And the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, Even Your altars, O Lord of hosts, My King and my God. (NASB)* Why would the psalmist say the bird lays her nest/young on the altar of the Lord? The psalmist continues saying, ה אשרי יושבי ביתך עוד יהללוד סלה: ו אשרי אדם עוז לו-כה מסלות בלבכם: ז עברי | בעמק הבכא מעין ישיתוהו גם-ברכות: *84:4 How blessed are those who dwell in Your house! They are ever praising You. Selah. 84:5 How blessed is the man whose strength is in You, In whose heart are the highways to Zion! 84:6 Passing through the valley of Baca they make it a spring; The early rain also covers it with blessings. (NASB)* What is the valley of Baca? The psalmist says, ח ילכו מחיל אל-חיל יראה אל-אלהים בציון: ט יהוה אלהים צבאות, שמעה תפילתי האזינה אלהי יעקב סלה: *84:7 They go from strength to strength, Every one of them appears before God in Zion. 84:8 O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer; Give ear, O God of Jacob! Selah. 84:9 Behold our shield, O God, And look upon the face of Your anointed. (NASB)* The Psalm concludes saying, י מגנו ראה אלהים והבט פני משיחך: יא כי טוב-יום בחצריך מאלף בחרתי הסתופף בבית אלהי מדור באהל-ירשע: יב כי שמש | ומגן יהוה אלהים חן וכבוד יתן יהוה לא-ימנע טוב להלכים בתמים: יג יהוה צבאות אשרי אדם בטח: *84:10 For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand outside. I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God Than dwell in the tents of wickedness. 84:11 For the Lord God is a sun and shield; The Lord gives grace and glory; No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly. 84:12 O Lord of hosts, How blessed is the man who trusts in You! (NASB)*

עברית	Hebrew	ארמי	Aramaic	ελληνικός	Greek
ספר תהלים פרק פד	ספר תהלים פרק פד	ספר טוביה פרק פד	ספר טוביה פרק פד	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 84	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 84
א למנצח על-הגתית לבני-קרח מן-מזמור: ב מה-ידידות משכנותיך יהוה צבאות: ג נכספה וגם-כלתה נפשי לחצרות יהוה ופשתי ירננו אל-אל-הי: ד גם-צפור מצאה בית ודרור קן לה אשר-שמה אפרחיה את-מזבחותיך יהוה צבאות מלכי ואלהי:	א למנצח על-הגתית לבני-קרח מן-מזמור: ב מה-ידידות משכנותיך יהוה צבאות: ג נכספה וגם-כלתה נפשי לחצרות יהוה ופשתי ירננו אל-אל-הי: ד גם-צפור מצאה בית ודרור קן לה אשר-שמה אפרחיה את-מזבחותיך יהוה צבאות מלכי ואלהי:	א לשבחא על כינורא דאתיא מגת על ידיהון דבני קרח תושבחה: ב מה הינון רחימין משכנייך יהוה צבאות: ג ריגגת ולחוד תאיבת נפשי לדרת יהוה לבי ובסרי מרננן לאלהא קיים: ד לחוד יונתא אשכחת ביתא ושפניי נא שרכפא ליה די כשרין דמתכשרין גוזליה לאיתקרבא על על גבי מדבחת תך יהוה צבאות מלכי ואלהי:	א לשבחא על כינורא דאתיא מגת על ידיהון דבני קרח תושבחה: ב מה הינון רחימין משכנייך יהוה צבאות: ג ריגגת ולחוד תאיבת נפשי לדרת יהוה לבי ובסרי מרננן לאלהא קיים: ד לחוד יונתא אשכחת ביתא ושפניי נא שרכפא ליה די כשרין דמתכשרין גוזליה לאיתקרבא על על גבי מדבחת תך יהוה צבאות מלכי ואלהי:	84:1 εις τὸ τέλος ὑπὲρ τῶν ληνῶν τοῖς υἱοῖς Κορε ψαλμὸς ὡς ἀγαπητὰ τὰ σκηνώματά σου κύριε τῶν δυνάμεων 84:2 ἐπιποθεὶ καὶ ἐκλείπει ἡ ψυχὴ μου εἰς τὰς αὐλὰς τοῦ κυρίου ἡ καρδία μου καὶ ἡ σάρξ μου ἠγαλλιάσαντο ἐπὶ θεὸν ζῶντα 84:3 καὶ γὰρ στρουθίον εὗρεν ἑαυτῷ οἰκίαν καὶ τρυγῶν νοσσιὰν ἑαυτῇ οὐ θήσει τὰ νοσσία αὐτῆς τὰ θυσιαστήρια σου κύριε τῶν δυνάμεων ὁ βασιλεὺς μου καὶ ὁ θεός μου	84:1 εις τὸ τέλος ὑπὲρ τῶν ληνῶν τοῖς υἱοῖς Κορε ψαλμὸς ὡς ἀγαπητὰ τὰ σκηνώματά σου κύριε τῶν δυνάμεων 84:2 ἐπιποθεὶ καὶ ἐκλείπει ἡ ψυχὴ μου εἰς τὰς αὐλὰς τοῦ κυρίου ἡ καρδία μου καὶ ἡ σάρξ μου ἠγαλλιάσαντο ἐπὶ θεὸν ζῶντα 84:3 καὶ γὰρ στρουθίον εὗρεν ἑαυτῷ οἰκίαν καὶ τρυγῶν νοσσιὰν ἑαυτῇ οὐ θήσει τὰ νοσσία αὐτῆς τὰ θυσιαστήρια σου κύριε τῶν δυνάμεων ὁ βασιλεὺς μου καὶ ὁ θεός μου

<p>ה אֲשֶׁרִי יוֹשְׁבֵי בֵיתְךָ עוֹד יִהְלֹלוּךָ סְלָה: ו אֲשֶׁרִי אָדָם עוֹז לוֹ-בְּךָ מִסֵּ- לוֹת בְּלִבְכֶם: ז עֲבָרִי בְּעֵמֶק הַבְּכָא מֵעֵין יִשְׁתוּהוּ גַם-בְּרִכּוֹת יַעֲטֶה מוֹרָה: ח יִלְכוּ מִחֵיל אֶל-חֵיל יִרְאֶה אֶל-אֱלֹהִים בְּצִיּוֹן: ט יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת שְׁמָעָה תִּפְלְתִי הֲאֲזִינָה אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב סְלָה: י מְגִנְנוּ רְאֵה אֱלֹהִים וְהִבֵּט פָּנָי מִשִּׁיחָךָ: יא כִּי טוֹב-יוֹם בְּחֻצְרֶיךָ מֵאֶלֶף בְּחֻרְתֵי הַסְּתוּפָף בְּבֵית אֱלֹהֵי מְדוּר בְּאֶהֱלִי-רְשָׁע: יב כִּי שָׁמַשׁ וּמִגֵּן יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים חֵן וְכֶ- בּוֹד יִתֵּן יְהוָה לֹא-יִמְנַע טוֹב לַהֲלֹכִים בְּתַמִּים: יג יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אֲשֶׁרִי אָדָם בְּטַח בָּךְ:</p>	<p>ה טוביהון דצדיקין דיתבין בבית מקדשך בעלמא הדין תוב ישבחונך לעלמין: ו טוביה דגבר דעושנא ליה במימרך רוחצנותא בלבביהון: ז רשיעיא דעברין על עומקי גהנם בכיין בכייתא היך מעיינא ישויניה לחוד בירכן יעטוף לדתייבין לדית- בין לאולפן אוריתיה: ח אזלין צדי- קיא מן בית מקדשא לבית מדרשיא יתחמי ליעות אוריתא דילהון קדם יהוה די שכינתיה שריא בציון: ט אמר דוד יהוה אלהים צבאות קביל צלתי אצית אלהא דיעקב לעלמין: י זכוות אבהתנא חמי אלהים ואיסתכל אנפי משיחך: יא ארום טב למיתב יומא חד בדרת מקדשך מן אלף בג- לותא בחרית לאידבקא בבית מקדש אלהא מן למידר במשכני רישעא: יב ארום היך שור רם ותריס תקיף יהוה אלהים חנא ויקרא יתן יהוה לא יכסי טבא מן דאזלין בשלימותא: יג יהוה צבאות טב לבר נשא דמתר- חיץ במימרך:</p>	<p>84:4 μακάριοι οἱ κατοικοῦντες ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ σου εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰῶνων αἰνέσουσίν σε διάψαλμα 84:5 μακάριος ἀνὴρ οὗ ἔστιν ἡ ἀντίληψις αὐτοῦ παρὰ σοῦ κύριε ἀναβάσεις ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ διέθετο 84:6 ἐν τῇ κοιλάδι τοῦ κλαυθμῶνος εἰς τόπον ὃν ἔθετο καὶ γὰρ εὐλογίας δώσει ὁ νομοθετῶν 84:7 πορεύονται ἐκ δυνάμεως εἰς δύναμιν ὀφθήσεται ὁ θεὸς τῶν θεῶν ἐν Σιων 84:8 κύριε ὁ θεὸς τῶν δυνάμεων εἰσάκουσον τῆς προσευχῆς μου ἐνώτισαι ὁ θεὸς Ἰακωβ διάψαλμα 84:9 ὑπερασπιστὰ ἡμῶν ἰδέ ὁ θεὸς καὶ ἐπίβλεψον ἐπὶ τὸ πρόσωπον τοῦ χριστοῦ σου 84:10 ὅτι κρείσσων ἡμέρα μία ἐν ταῖς ἀυλαῖς σου ὑπὲρ χιλιάδας ἐξελεξάμην παραρριπτεῖσθαι ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ τοῦ θεοῦ μᾶλλον ἢ οἰκεῖν ἐν σκηνώμασιν ἀμαρτωλῶν 84:11 ὅτι ἔλεον καὶ ἀλήθειαν ἀγαπᾷ κύριος ὁ θεὸς χάριν καὶ δόξαν δώσει κύριος οὐ στερήσει τὰ ἀγαθὰ τοὺς πορευομένους ἐν ἀκακίᾳ 84:12 κύριε τῶν δυνάμεων μακάριος ἄνθρωπος ὁ ἐλπίζων ἐπὶ σέ</p>
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<p>Tehillim / Psalms 84 For the director of music. According to gittith. Of the Sons of Korah. A psalm. 84:1 How lovely are Your dwelling places, O Lord of hosts! 84:2 My soul longed and even yearned for the courts of the Lord; My heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God. 84:3 The bird also has found a house, And the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, Even Your altars, O Lord of hosts, My King and my God. 84:4 How blessed are those who dwell in Your house! They are ever praising You. Selah. 84:5 How blessed is the man whose strength is in You, In whose heart are the highways to Zion! 84:6 Passing through the valley of Baca they make it a spring; The early rain also covers it with blessings. 84:7 They go from strength to strength, Every one of them appears before God in Zion. 84:8 O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer; Give ear, O God of Jacob! Selah. 84:9 Behold our shield, O God, And look upon the face of Your anointed. 84:10 For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand outside. I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God Than dwell in the tents of wickedness. 84:11 For the Lord God is a sun and shield; The Lord gives grace and glory; No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly. 84:12 O Lord of hosts, How blessed is the man who trusts in You! (NASB)</p>	<p>Toviyah / Psalms 84 84:1 For praise, on the lyre that comes from Gath; composed by the sons of Korah; a psalm. 84:2 How beloved are your tents, O Lord Sabaoth! 84:3 My soul craved and even yearned for the court of the Lord; my heart and flesh meditate on the enduring God. 84:4 Even the dove has found a house, and the turtledove a nest that is suitable for her hatchlings – to be sacrificed on your altars, O Lord Sabaoth, my king and my God. 84:5 Happy are the righteous who dwell in your sanctuary; again they will praise you forever. 84:6 Happy the man who has his strength in your word; trust is in their hearts. 84:7 The wicked who cross over the valleys of Gehenna, weeping – he will make their weeping like a fountain; also those who return to the teaching of his Torah he will cover with blessings. 84:8 The righteous go from the sanctuary to the academies; their toil in the Torah will be manifest before the Lord, whose presence abides in Zion. 84:9 David said, “O Lord, God Sabaoth, receive my prayer; hear, O God of Jacob, forever.” 84:10 See, O God, the merits of our fathers, and behold the face of your anointed. 84:11 For it is better to dwell one day in the courtyard of your sanctuary than a thousand in exile; I have chosen to adhere to the sanctuary of God rather than to live in the tents of wickedness. 84:12 For the Lord God is like a high wall and a strong shield; the Lord will give grace and glory; he will not hide goodness from those who walk in perfection. 84:13 O Lord Sabaoth, it is well for the son of man who trusts in your word. (EMC)</p>	<p>Psalmoi / Psalms 84 For the end, a Psalm for the sons of Core, concerning the wine-presses. 84:1 How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! 84:2 My soul longs, and faints for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh have exulted in the living god. 84:3 Yea, the sparrow has found himself a home, and the turtle-dove a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King, and my God. 84:4 Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will praise thee evermore. Pause. 84:5 Blessed is the man whose help is of thee, O Lord; in his heart he has purposed to go up 84:6 the valley of weeping, to the place which he has appointed, for there the law-giver will grant blessings. 84:7 They shall go from strength to strength: the God of gods shall be seen in Sion. 84:8 O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer: hearken, O God of Jacob. Pause. 84:9 Behold, O God our defender, and look upon the face of thine anointed. 84:10 For one day in thy courts is better than thousands. I would rather be an abject in the house of God, than dwell in the tents of sinners. 84:11 For the Lord loves mercy and truth: God will give grace and glory: the Lord will not withhold good things from them that walk in innocence. 84:12 O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusts in thee. (LXX)</p>
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In this week’s study from *Tehillim / Psalms 82:1-8*, the Psalm opens saying, א לְמִנְצַחַה עַל-הַגִּתִּית לְבָּ, *For the director of music. According to gittith. Of the Sons of Korah. A psalm.* The Sons of Korah narrate this psalm, what is the purpose of the words *lemnatzakh hagitit*? The direct translation is for the music director for the winepress, or upon or by reason of Gath. It is interesting that the psalm states the sons of Korach are the one’s who wrote the psalm. According to the Torah, the three sons of Levi were Gershon, Merari, and Kohath. According to the Torah, the Gershonites were responsible for the care of the tabernacle and tent, its coverings, the curtain at the entrance to the tent of meeting, the curtains of the

courtyard, the curtain at the entrance to the courtyard surrounding the tabernacle and altar, and the ropes and everything related to their use. The Merarites were appointed to take care of the frames of the tabernacle, its crossbars, posts, bases, all its equipment, and everything related to their use, as well as the posts of the surrounding courtyard with their bases, tent pegs, and ropes. The Kohathites were responsible for the care of the sanctuary. Their role was for the care of the ark, the table, the lamp stand, the altars, the articles of the sanctuary used in ministering, the curtain, and everything related to their use. They were placed under the direct supervision of Eleazar, son of Aaron. Unlike the Gershonites and the Merarites, who were allowed to transport the items under their care on carts, the Kohathites had to carry their items, the holy things of the tabernacle, on their shoulders. They basically had the arduous burden of transporting these items from place to place as the camp moved, but they were not allowed to actually touch the items or they would die. The priests were instructed to wrap the sacred objects in special coverings before they were transported (see *Bamidbar / Numbers 4:15*). As a result of the duties given to the Kohathites, many of the people began to disdain this task and to covet the role of the priests.

The Torah states that Korach was the grandson of Kohath, and he was involved with some of the men from the tribe of the Reubenites, they were discontented with their involvement in the Tabernacle services and their names were Dathan and Aviram, sons of Eliab, and On, son of Peleth. Pridefully, they brought together a group of 250 men to challenge both Moshe and Aaron to the priesthood (see *Bamidbar / Numbers 16*). Moshe summoned the rebellious men to stand before God and burn incense. God warned Moses to let the assembly know to get away from Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, their households, and the other rebels so that He could judge them for their rebelliousness.

Bamidbar / Numbers 16:28-35

16:28 Moses said, 'By this you shall know that the Lord has sent me to do all these deeds; for this is not my doing. 16:29 'If these men die the death of all men or if they suffer the fate of all men, then the Lord has not sent me. 16:30 'But if the Lord brings about an entirely new thing and the ground opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that is theirs, and they descend alive into Sheol, then you will understand that these men have spurned the Lord.' 16:31 As he finished speaking all these words, the ground that was under them split open; 16:32 and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, and their households, and all the men who belonged to Korah with their possessions. 16:33 So they and all that belonged to them went down alive to Sheol; and the earth closed over them, and they perished from the midst of the assembly. 16:34 All Israel who were around them fled at their outcry, for they said, 'The earth may swallow us up!' 16:35 Fire also came forth from the Lord and consumed the two hundred and fifty men who were offering the incense. (NASB)

Based upon the narrative in the Torah, it seems that this is the end of Korach, however, we discover that some of Korach's sons were spared (see *Bamidbar / Numbers 26:9–11*). The Lord God judged those who turned against Him in active rebellion and purified His people, but He still had a purpose and plan for the tribe of Korach, and He did not utterly destroy them, the Lord is a merciful God. After seven generations, the prophet Samuel arose from the tribe of Korach, the genealogy of which is recorded in *1 Chronicles 6:31–38*, *1 Chronicles 38*, and *1 Samuel 1:1, 20*. The Korahites became doorkeepers and custodians for the tabernacle. (*1 Chronicles 9:19–21*, *1 Chronicles 2*) One group of Korahites (*1 Chronicles 12:6*) joined King David in various military exploits and won the reputation of being expert warriors. However, the most remarkable thing to note about the sons of Korach is that during the time of King David, they became the leaders in music in the service of the tabernacle. We are told Heman the Korahite had a place of great importance as a singer, along with Asaph (a Gershonite) and Ethan or Jeduthan (a Merarite). These individuals played an important role in the services when the Ark of the Covenant was brought to Jerusalem. David formed an elaborate organization for song, instrumental music, and prophesying through these men.

In the Psalms, approximately 25 are attributed to the sons of Korach. These beautiful psalms express a spirit of great gratitude and humility to an awesome, mighty God. They express a longing for God and deep

devotion. The list of Psalms of the sons of Korach include 42-50, 62, and 72-85. *Tehillim / Psalm 42:1* contains the passage, “As the deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God.” *Tehillim / Psalm 84:1* states, “How lovely is your dwelling place, O God.” *Tehillim / Psalm 46:1-3* conveys the message, “God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.”

The opening verses speak of dwelling place of God saying, בַּמָּה-יְדִידוֹת מְשֻׁכְּנוֹתֶיךָ יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת: ג נֶכְ־
 : הַיְ: | נַפְשִׁי לְחֻצְרוֹת יְהוָה לְבִי וּבִשְׂרִי יִרְנְנוּ אֶל-אֱלֹהֵי הַיְ: *84:1 How lovely are Your dwelling places, O Lord of hosts! 84:2 My soul longed and even yearned for the courts of the Lord; My heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God. (NASB)* Note how the psalmist speaks of the loveiness of the dwelling places (מְשֻׁכְּנוֹתֶיךָ) plural which is a reference to the courts of the Lord. The word used here may be a reference to different locations surrounding the tabernacle or temple, within which many of the services of public worship were conducted, and which were frequented by different classes of persons. Note the court of the gentiles, and the various rooms that are mentioned at the end of the book of Ezekiel. As we had mentioned earlier, the Sons of Korah did not participate in the temple service, was this why they yearned for the dwelling places, and the courts of the Lord? These words do not imply that the writer is absent from the temple, but only that his delight in it is never satisfied, that he wants more of the Lord. He says “My soul” (נַפְשִׁי) using the word “*naphshi*” which encompass both the heart and my flesh, his whole nature, all of his being cries out for the living God. He rejoices, sings out a note of joy unto the living God. The Aramaic Targum states, בַּמָּה הֵינּוּן רַחֲמִין מְשַׁכְּנֵיךָ יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת: ג רִיגַגְתָּ וּלְחֹדוֹ תֵאֵיבַת נַפְשִׁי לְדֶרֶת יְהוָה לְבִי וּבִסְרִי מִרְנָן, *84:2 How beloved are your tents, O Lord Sabaoth! 84:3 My soul craved and even yearned for the court of the Lord; my heart and flesh meditate on the enduring God. (EMC)* The Septuagint states, 84:1 εἰς τὸ τέλος ὑπὲρ τῶν ληνῶν τοῖς υἱοῖς Κορε ψαλμός ὡς ἀγαπητὰ τὰ σκηνώματά σου κύριε τῶν δυνάμεων 84:2 ἐπιποθεῖ καὶ ἐκλείπει ἡ ψυχὴ μου εἰς τὰς ἀλύγας τοῦ κυρίου ἡ καρδία μου καὶ ἡ σὰρξ μου ἠγαλλιάσαντο ἐπὶ θεὸν ζῶντα *84:1 How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! 84:2 My soul longs, and faints for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh have exulted in the living god. (LXX)* The Aramaic Targum states that the soul craves and yearns, and the Septuagint states that the soul longs and faints. What does it mean to long and faint? This may be a reference to some thing that is required in order to sustain us, one faints from lack of water in a desert. This may be the analogy that is being drawn by the psalmist, that the courts of the Lord are places for us to draw near, and the attitude we should have towards the dwelling place of God is that our souls should long for and never be satiated with the desire to draw near. Our drawing near is essential and necessary for life, and our spiritual health. This is why it is so important to give ourselves to prayer and studying God’s Word!

ד גַּם-צִפּוֹר | מְצֵאָה בַּיַּת וְדָרוֹר | קָן לָהּ אֲשֶׁר-שָׁתָה אֶפְרָחֶיהָ אֶת-מִזְבְּחוֹתֶיךָ יְהוָה, *84:3 The bird also has found a house, And the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, Even Your altars, O Lord of hosts, My King and my God. (NASB)* Why would the psalmist say the bird lays her nest/young on the altar (מִזְבְּחוֹתֶיךָ) of the Lord? The Psalmist sees the sparrow how the birds are privileged to build their nests within the confines of the Temple. The birds are not restricted from drawing near, in fact, this provides us with a wonderful picture of drawing near and making our home near to the Lord God in heaven. This imagery provides the psalmist something to think upon, that the courts of the Temple are the place of his longing. The Temple courts and the sparrow expresses the longing of his heart to draw near and remain forever in the presence of God.

The rabbis take a kabbalistic approach to understanding the meaning of the text saying the following:

Shney Luchot HaBrit, Vaetchanan, Torah Ohr 86-87:

This is the deeper meaning of Psalms 84,4: וְדָרוֹר קָן לָהּ, where the letter ק is written larger and which separates between דָרוֹר and the letter ך. This is to alert us to the fact that דָרוֹר, freedom is equated with בִּינָה, i.e. יוֹבֵל = 50. קִין was predominantly part of חוּה, who repre-

sented בינה; this is why she said 'קניתי איש את ה' when she bore him. By this she meant to say: "I have acquired a man with G'd, i.e. as distinct from "with Adam."

Shney Luchot HaBrit, Vaetchanan, Torah Ohr 87:

קין was predominantly part of חוה, who represented בינה; this is why she said את איש את ה' when she bore him. By this she meant to say: "I have acquired a man with G'd, i.e. as distinct from "with Adam."

Shney Luchot HaBrit, Vaetchanan, Torah Ohr 88:

Having said that קין was the "receptacle" of input from both חכמה and בינה, and in view of the letter ך at the end of his name alluding to the fifty gates of בינה, we can understand what G'd meant when He asked Cain אי הבל אחיך, "Where is your brother Abel?" G'd criticized Cain who should have remembered that he was the שומר, the receptacle for his brother. Cain represented the female, Abel the male. The female is the receptacle for the male. The word א may be understood as an acronym of יודע איך "Don't you know?" Furthermore, the letter א alludes to בינה, whereas the letter י alludes to חכמה. When G'd's name is spelled א-ה-י-ה, this symbolizes His manifestation in the emanation בינה, whereas when it is spelled י-ה-ו-ה it symbolizes His being manifest in the emanation חכמה.

The kabbalistic approach the rabbis take is related to the word קן (nest, cell, chamber; shell, habitation) and the words מְצָאָה בֵּית וְדָרוֹר | קן לָהּ "has found a house, and a nest, a nest for herself." This is taken to be interpreted as understanding the Lord God in heaven. The Lord God is understood in the two Sefarot, Understanding (בינה), and Wisdom (חכמה).

Wisdom (חכמה)

wisdom

חכמה, תבונה, בינה, דעה, דעת, נבונות

intelligence

מודיעין, אינטליגנציה, תבונה, ביון, כושר
חשיבה, חכמה

knowledge

ידע, ידיעה, דעת, חכמה, דעה, מדע

prudence

זהירות, תבונה, בינה, חכמה, מתינות, פקחות

insight

תובנה, הבנה, הבחנה מעמיקה, בינה, דעה,
חכמה

Understanding (בינה)

wisdom

חכמה, תבונה, בינה, דעה, דעת, נבונות

understanding

הבנה, בינה, תבונה, הסכם, נבונות, קליטה

intellect

בינה, שכל

insight

תובנה, הבנה, הבחנה מעמיקה, בינה, דעה,
חכמה

prudence

זהירות, תבונה, בינה, חכמה, מתינות, פקחות

comprehension

הבנה, הבנת הנקרא, השגה, בינה, תפישה,
קליטה

Note the possible translations of the word for Understanding (בִּינָה) and for wisdom (חִכְמָה). Understanding is related to intellect, prudence, and comprehension. Wisdom is related to intelligence, knowledge, prudence, and insight. The rabbis say that “When G’d’s name is spelled א-ה-י-ה, this symbolizes His manifestation in the emanation בִּינָה, whereas when it is spelled י-ה-ו-ה it symbolizes His being manifest in the emanation חִכְמָה.” The name of the Lord (י-ה-ו-ה) is manifested in understanding and wisdom. The concepts the rabbis provide here are drawing us to understand that the Lord is manifest in the wisdom and understanding of Torah. How does this work? This occurs by walking and living in the commandments. We also know according to the Tanach, the Holy Spirit is responsible for writing the commandments of God upon our heart. This means that we are to endeavor to keep the commandments by actively placing them on our hearts. This could also be read to imply a future expectation. *Jeremiah 31:33* says in the new covenant, God will write his Torah upon our hearts. He says, “I will put My Torah within them and on their heart I will write it” (*Jeremiah 31:33*). This means that God will actually change our nature, circumcising our hearts as it were, to remove from us the waywardness of our evil inclinations. Paul speaks of this transformation as “the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit” (*Titus 3:5*). Living and obeying God’s Torah leads us to Understanding (בִּינָה), and Wisdom (חִכְמָה) where both understanding and wisdom lead us to be faithful to God and not sin. In another passage, Paul states, “Therefore if anyone is in Messiah, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come” (*2 Corinthians 5:17*). Paul points to the lives of believers as evidence of being in a covenant relationship with the Lord when he says, “being manifested that you are a letter of Christ, cared for by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.” (*2 Corinthians 3:3*). All of these things happen to believers as a fulfillment of the promise of the covenant of God in the Messiah Yeshua. And so, being obedient to the Torah, obeying the Lord God according to His word is walking according to the Spirit, and not according to the flesh. These are the things that Paul is teaching in his epistles. He is not doing away with the Torah, he is substantiating the Torah as a way of life!

The psalmist continues saying, אֲשֶׁרֵי יוֹשְׁבֵי בֵיתְךָ עוֹד יְהַלְלוּךָ סְלָה: 84:4 *How blessed are those who dwell in Your house! They are ever praising You. Selah. (NASB)* What an awesome picture of the dwelling place of God, he who sits in His dwelling placed are ever praising the Lord! The MT and the Septuagint state “blessed” (אֲשֶׁרֵי, μακάριοι) whereas the Targum translates as the “Happy, good” (טוביה טובוהי) are the righteous who dwell in the sanctuary.

Aramaic Targum

Toviyah / Psalms 84:5

84:5 *Happy are the righteous who dwell in your sanctuary; again they will praise you forever. (EMC)*

ה טוביהון דצדיקין דיתבין בבית מקדשך בעלמא הדין תוב ישבחונך לעלמין:

Septuagint

Psalmoi / Psalms 84:4

84:4 *Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will praise thee evermore. Pause. (LXX)*

84:4 μακάριοι οἱ κατοικοῦντες ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ σου εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων αἰνέσουσίν σε διάπαλα

These people who are said to remain in the dwelling place of God, who are they? Most of the Christian commentaries state that this is a reference to the Levitical priest who performed the ritual service before God

daily. But one could also be as Joshua the son of Nun according to *Shemot / Exodus 33:11*, which states אֶל-מֹשֶׁה פָּנִים אֶל-פָּנִים כְּאִשֶּׁר יְדַבֵּר אִישׁ אֶל-רֵעֵהוּ וְשָׁב אֶל-הַמַּחֲנֶה וּמִשְׁרָתוֹ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן-נוּן נָעַר לֹא יִמָּיֵשׁ וְדַבָּר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה פָּנִים אֶל-פָּנִים כְּאִשֶּׁר יְדַבֵּר אִישׁ אֶל-רֵעֵהוּ וְשָׁב אֶל-הַמַּחֲנֶה וּמִשְׁרָתוֹ יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן-נוּן נָעַר לֹא יִמָּיֵשׁ : 33:11 מִתּוֹךְ הָאֵהָלָה: *Thus the LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his friend. When Moses returned to the camp, his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart from the tent. (NASB)* Both the priest who was constantly at work in the service to the Lord, and the non-Priest are capable of always being in the presence and service to the Lord. Note how these people are constantly employed in that blessed and glorious work, of praising God and serving through prayer. We must not forget to to obey the Torah command to serve others as well. The service to the Lord included being in prayer for others, in the place (הַמְקוֹם) which He has established the Holy Temple. This also may allude to the angels of God who dwell in the holy place and praise His name forever and ever.

ו אֲשֶׁרִי אָדָם עוֹז לוֹ-בְּךָ מְסֻלוֹת בְּלִבָּבְכֶם: ז עֲבָרִי | בְּעֵמֶק 84:5 הַבָּכָא מְעִין יְשִׁיתוּהוּ גַם-בְּרִכּוֹת יַעֲטָה מוֹרָה: 84:6 *How blessed is the man whose strength is in You, In whose heart are the highways to Zion! 84:6 Passing through the valley of Baca they make it a spring; The early rain also covers it with blessings. (NASB)* What is the valley of Baca? Barne's notes on *Tehillim / Psalms 84:4* state the following:

Who passing through the valley of Baca - This is one of the most difficult verses in the Book of Psalms, and has been, of course, very variously interpreted. The Septuagint and the Latin Vulgate, Luther, and Professor Alexander, render it a valley of tears. The word "Baca" (בכא bākā) means properly weeping, lamentation; and then it is given to a certain tree - not probably a mulberry tree, but some species of balsam - from its weeping; that is, because it seemed to distil tears, or drops of balsam resembling tears in size and appearance. It is translated mulberry trees in 2 Samuel 5:23-24; 1 Chronicles 14:14-15; and so in the margin here, "mulberry trees make him a well." There is no reason, however, to think that it has that meaning here. The true rendering is, "valley of lamentation," or weeping; and it may have reference to some lonely valley in Palestine - where there was no water - a gloomy way - through which those commonly passed who went up to the place of worship. It would be vain, however, to attempt now to determine the locality of the valley referred to, as the name, if ever given to it, seems long since to have passed away. It may, however, be used as emblematic of human life - "a vale of tears;" and the passage may be employed as an illustration of the effect of religion in diffusing happiness and comfort where there was trouble and sorrow - as if fountains should be made to flow in a sterile and desolate valley.

Barne's commentary states that this is the most difficult verse in the book of Psalms to be interpreted. The commentary states that this is interpreted as the valley of tears since the word Baca (בכא) means "weeping" and "lamentation," which is given to a tree which is translated as mulberry bush in 2 Samuel 5:23-24. The commentary says that here it is translated as valley of weeping, and so it must be some valley that is very sad (or some lonely valley). The author also states that it would be a vain thing to attempt to locate the valley. It is interesting how he does not even consider the rabbinic understanding on this verse, or the Targum translation which provides the meaning of the valley of sorrows, tears, or weeping. Barne continues saying that the valley of tears was employed as an illustration of the effect of religion in diffusing happiness and comfort. The Septuagint agrees with the translation of the MT, and is most likely the reason Barne interprets in the manner that he does not having a working knowledge of the Aramaic or the rabbinic literature. The Septuagint states, 84:5 μακάριος ἀνὴρ οὗ ἔστιν ἡ ἀντιλημψις αὐτοῦ παρὰ σοῦ κύριε ἀναβάσεις ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ διέθετο 84:6 ἐν τῇ κοιλάδι τοῦ κλαυθμῶνος εἰς τόπον ὃν ἔθετο καὶ γὰρ εὐλογίας δώσει ὁ νομοθετῶν 84:5 *Blessed is the man whose help is of thee, O Lord; in his heart he has purposed to go up 84:6 the valley of weeping, to the place which he has appointed, for there the law-giver will grant blessings. (LXX)*

ו טוביה דגבר דעושנא ליה במימרח רוחצנותא בלבביהון: ז רשיעיא

דעברין על עומקי גהנם בכיין בכייתא היך מעיינא ישוניא לחוד בירכן יעטוף לדתיבין לדיתבין לאולפן אוריתיה: 84:6 *Happy the man who has his strength in your word; trust is in their hearts.* 84:7 *The wicked who cross over the valleys of Gehenna, weeping – he will make their weeping like a fountain; also those who return to the teaching of his Torah he will cover with blessings.* (EMC) The rabbis say that this valley of weeping is nothing other than the valley of Gehenna. Gehenna (γέεννα), or according to the Rabibnic literature Gehinnom (גהנום/גהנם), are terms derived from a place outside ancient Jerusalem known in the Hebrew Bible as the Valley of the Son of Hinnom (גיא בן-היננום ro גיא בן-היננום, Gai Ben-Hinnom). The Valley of Hinnom is the modern name for the valley surrounding Jerusalem's Old City, including Mount Zion, from the west and south. It meets and merges with the Kidron Valley, the other principal valley around the Old City, near the southeastern corner of the city. In the Hebrew Bible, Gehenna was where Israel worshiped Baal and other Canaanite gods, including Molech who sacrificed their children by fire (see *2 Chronicles 28:3, 33:6*) and was undoubtedly a place of great weeping and sorrow. Thereafter it was deemed to be a cursed valley (*Jer.emiah7:31, 19:2-6*). In the rabbinic literature and according to the Gospels in the Apostolic Writings and Yeshua's words, Gehenna is the destination of the wicked. It is very likely that the valley of weeping mentioned by the psalmist is the location of the valley of Gehenna.

ח ילכו מחיל אל-חיל יראה אל-אלהים בציון: ט יהנה אלהים צבאות שמעה, 84:7 *They go from strength to strength, Every one of them appears before God in Zion.* 84:8 *O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer; Give ear, O God of Jacob! Selah.* 84:9 *Behold our shield, O God, And look upon the face of Your anointed.* (NASB) The rabbis interpret Tehillim / Psalms 84:7 according to the Talmud in the following way.

Talmud Bavli Berakhot 64a

He who goes out from the Synagogue and enters the House of Study to occupy himself with Torah is worthy to receive the presence of the Shekinah; as it is said, "They go from strength to strength, every one of them appeareth before God in Zion." (היוצא מבית הכנסת ונכנס לבית המדרש ועוסק בתורה זוכה ומקבל פני שכינה שנאמר (תהלים פד, ח) ילכו מחיל אל חיל יראה אל אלהים בציון.)

The rabbis say that this going from strength to strength is a reference to the one who goes from the Synagogue to the House of Study. The strength to strength is of one who occupies himself with the study of Torah for the purpose of dwelling in the presence of the Glory (Shekinah) of God. The reason for the Talmudic interpretation may be the result of the Aramaic Targum which states, ח אזלין צדיקא מן בית מקדשא לבית מדרשיא יתחמי ליעות אוריתא דילהון קדם יהוה די שכינתיה שריא בציון: ט אמר דוד יהוה אלהים צבאות: 84:8 *The righteous go from the sanctuary to the academies; their toil in the Torah will be manifest before the Lord, whose presence abides in Zion.* 84:9 *David said, "O Lord, God Sabaoth, receive my prayer; hear, O God of Jacob, forever."* (EMC) It also could be that the Targum is translated in this way by reason of what is written in the Talmud, but considering that the Targum is much earlier than the Talmud, one may conclude that it was the Targum influence on the Talmud that gives the interpretation of strength to strength referring to the one who occupies himself in the study of Torah. Judaism and the rabbis are always emphasizing the importance of studying Torah. This is a very important observation because many problems would be resolved in the Christian church by simple studying and applying Torah to our daily lives. One issue that would be immediately resolved is the question of gay marriage. The Torah strickly forbids homosexuality (Vayikra / Leviticus) and so there would be no question or possiblity to reason or convince one's self that gay marriage would be a God ordained thing.

It is also interesting how Ein Yaakov's comentary on Berakhot 9:22 interprets the meaning of this Psalm.

Ein Yaakov on Berakhot 9:22

And further said R. Abin the Levite: "He who leaves his friend [after escorting him a dis-

tance] must not say 'Go in peace' but Go with peace.' for Jethro said unto Moses (Ex. 4:18) Go with peace. He went and succeeded, but David said to Abshalom (II Sam. 15:9) Go in peace. He went and hanged himself." Further said R. Abin the Levite: "He who takes leave of the dead body [after burial] must not say 'Go with peace' but 'Go in peace,' for it is said (Gen. 15:15) But thou shalt come to thy fathers in peace." R. Levi b. Chiya said: "He who goes out from the synagogue [after prayer] and enters the house of learning and studies the Torah will be permitted to wait on the Divine Presence, for it is said (Ps. 84:8) They go from strength to strength; each of them will appear before God in Zion." R. Elazar in the name of R. Chanina said: "Scholars advance peace in the world, as it is said (Is. 54, 13.) And all thy children shall be taught by the Lord and great shall be the peace of thy children. Read not Banaich (Thy Children), but read it Bonaich (thy builders)"; Great peace have they who love thy Torah and there is no stumbling for them (Ps. 119:115). Peace be within thy rampart, prosperity within thy palaces (Ib. 122, 7). For my brethren and associates' sake I would fain speak peace concerning Thee (Ib.). For the sake of the house of the Lord our God. I would seek thy good. The Lord will give strength unto his people; The Lord will bless his people with peace.

Ein Yaakov interprets the "strength to strength" as going from the synagogue to house of study, refers to going from prayer to studying Torah. He then draws a parallel to being at peace, and the one who studies Torah and applies it to his or her life is at peace with God. He says "Great peace have they who love thy Torah and there is no stumbling for them (Ps. 119:115). Peace be within thy rampart, prosperity within thy palaces (Ib. 122, 7). For my brethren and associates' sake I would fain speak peace concerning Thee (Ib.). For the sake of the house of the Lord our God. I would seek thy good. The Lord will give strength unto his people; The Lord will bless his people with peace." Going from prayer to studying God's word will help to focus ones heart and life for the Lord God in heaven in Yeshua the Messiah! Doing these things will bring peace from within that only the Lord Himself can give us.

The Psalm concludes saying, י מְגַנְנוּ רְאֵה אֱלֹהִים וְהִבֵּט פְּנֵי מְשִׁיחָהּ: יא כִּי טוֹב-יּוֹם בְּחֻצְרוֹתַי מֵאֶלֶף בְּחַרְתַּי הַסְתּוֹפֵף בְּבֵית אֱלֹהֵי מְדוּר בְּאֶהְלֵי-רָשָׁע: יב כִּי שֶׁמֶשׁ | וּמִגֵּן יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים הוּא וְכַבֹּד יְהוָה לֹא-יִמְנַע טוֹב לַהֲלֻכִים: יג יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אֲשֶׁר־יְאֻדָּם בְּטֶחַ בְּרָךְ: 84:10 For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand outside. I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God Than dwell in the tents of wickedness. 84:11 For the Lord God is a sun and shield; The Lord gives grace and glory; No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly. 84:12 O Lord of hosts, How blessed is the man who trusts in You! (NASB) Note how Ein Yaakov interprets the meaning of Tehillim / Psalms 84:10 and standing in the courts.

Ein Yaakov on Shabbat 2:10

(Fol. 30a) The following question was asked of R. Tanchum of Noy: "Is it permissible to extinguish the light on the Sabbath for the sake of a sick person?" He began his answer by saying: "O thou King Solomon! Where is thy wisdom and where is thy understanding? Not only do the words contradict your father's words but [they are at variance with] thine own utterances also. Thy father David said (Ps. 116, 17.) Not the dead can praise the Lord, and thou sayest (Ecc. 4, 2.) Thereupon praise I the dead that are already dead, and again thou sayest (Ib. 9., 4.) For a living dog fareth better than a dead lion. But this is not difficult to explain. When David said. Not the dead can praise the Lord, he meant thus: 'A man should always occupy himself with the study of the Torah and meritorious deeds before he dies; for, as soon as he dies, he becomes free from the obligation of [studying] the Torah and [fulfilling] meritorious deeds and the Holy One, praised be He! accepts no praise of him.' This is what R. Jochanan said: 'What is meant by the passage (Ps. 88, 61.) Free among the dead, i.e., as soon as a man dies he is freed from the obligation of [studying] the Torah and [fulfilling] meritorious deeds, And when Solomon says (Ecc. 4. 2.) Thereupon praise I the dead

that are already dead, he refers to the time when Israel sinned in the deserts. Moses stood up before the Holy One, praised be He ! and offered many prayers and supplications unto Him but was not answered. However, as soon as he said (Ex 32, 13.) Remember Abraham, Isaac and Israel, Thy servants, he was forthwith answered...

Notice how Ein Yaakov compares the living and the dead, and interprets that the one who is living is able to praise the Lord in his deeds, in the way that he lives his life. The one who dies is released from obeying the Torah because he is not able to work good deeds as he did hear on earth. Thus, the meaning of being better to stand in the courts of the Lord for one day than a 1000 days outside or to dwell in the tents of wickedness, is that one accomplishes his praise for the Lord God in heaven by the way he lives his life. This is why this verse is interpreted in the Aramaic Targum in the following way, י זכוות אבהתנא חמי אלהים ואיסתכל אנפי משיחך: יא ארום טב למיתב יומא חד בדרת מקדשך מן אלף בגלותא בחרית לאידבקא בבית מקדש אלהא מן למידר במשכני רישעא: יב ארום היך שור רם ותריס תקיף יהוה אלהים חינא ויקרא יתן יהוה לא יכסי טבא: יג יהוה צבאות טב לבר נשא דמתרחיץ במימרך: 84:10 See, O God, the merits of our fathers, and behold the face of your anointed. 84:11 For it is better to dwell one day in the courtyard of your sanctuary than a thousand in exile; I have chosen to adhere to the sanctuary of God rather than to live in the tents of wickedness. 84:12 For the Lord God is like a high wall and a strong shield; the Lord will give grace and glory; he will not hide goodness from those who walk in perfection. 84:13 O Lord Sabaoth, it is well for the son of man who trusts in your word. (EMC) The importance of prayer and studying God's word daily are without question. The rabbis say the interpretation of the psalm is to ask the Lord to look upon our fathers in the past, look from where we come from a godly family, our parents raised us to know the Lord and how we today choose to pray and study His word for the purpose of dwelling in his Shekhina. This is not about merits earning salvation. This is about our desire to live our lives for the Glory of God with a pure heart and with pur intentions and pur motivations. If you did not have godly parents and if your parents did not raise you to know the Lord, then it is just as important to speak to the Lord about making this something that will be true in your house and in your life from this time forward. This is possible in the Messiah Yeshua, and by the power of God's Spirit that dwells within. If you choose to do this and live God's word today, then most assuredly what the psalmist wrote will be true of you, 84:12 For the Lord God is like a high wall and a strong shield; the Lord will give grace and glory; he will not hide goodness from those who walk in perfection. (NASB) Let's Pray!

Rabbinic Commentary

The Rabbinic Commentary (Midrash) on *Tehillim / Psalms 84* has 4 parts. Reading through the Midrash we will be looking at Part 1, 2, 3, and 4. Let's begin by outlining *Midrash Tehillim Chapter 84, Parts 1, 2, 3, and 4*.

Outline of Midrash Tehillim / Psalms, Chapter 84, Part 1, 2, 3, and 4

Part 1

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying, “*For Him who triumphs; at treading in the winepress (Gittith). A Psalm of the sons of Korach (Tehillim / Psalms 84:1).*”
- The פתיחתא (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*These words are to be considered in the light of what Scripture says elsewhere, Wherefore are Your garments like him that treads in the winepress?*”
- The משל (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis discuss the idea of the garments of the one who treads in the winepress of God's wrath.

- The **משל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal), the rabbis compare this to the ones who raise their hand against the Lord’s Tempel, that the Lord will place them in His winepress of His wrath.
- The Concluding phrase says, “The Temple is called beloved. And he who built it is called beloved, as is said, And he called his name Beloved of the Lord (2 Samuel 12:25). And he in whose territory it was built was called beloved, for Moshe said of Benjamin the beloved of the Lord will dwell in safety (Devarim / Deuteronomy 33:12). And likewise David said, That Your Beloved may be delivered (Tehillim / Psalms 60:7).”

Part 2

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying, “*My soul longs, yes, even faints for the courts of the Lord (Tehillim / Psalms 84:3)*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*longs not only now, but longed for the holy court of the Lord even when the children of Israel were at the Red Sea, as is said, You in Your love have led Your people that You have redeemed; You have guided them in Your strength to Your holy habitation, till You bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of Your inheritance (Shemot / Exodus 15:13, 17).*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis discuss how the sparrow is capable of fleeing when the enemy comes.
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal), the rabbis expand upon the mashal by discussing the sparrow and the Lord allowing the enemy to come.
- The Concluding phrase says, “*Thus the wicked liken the Holy One blessed be He, to a sparrow, and Israel to the fledglings. Therefore, God declares, Yes, the sparrow has found a house, and the swallow a nest for herself.*”

Part 3

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying, “*Blessed are they that dwell in Your house. They will again praise You, and forever (Tehillim / Psalms 84:5).*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*Rabbi Joshua son of Levi taught, He who is in the habit of entering houses of prayer and houses of study in the world to come, as is said, Blessed are they that dwell in Your house.*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis say that in the world to come we will be going to the house of prayer and the house of study.
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal), the rabbis expand upon the mashal contrasting Gehenna to the Garden of Eden.
- The Concluding phrase says, “*And so every single one who is above his fellow praises the Holy One blessed be He, as is said You the Teacher is clothed with blessings. Rabbi Johanan commented, What do they say in Gehenna? They say, You did teach well. You did instruct well. But we would not need.*”

Part 4

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying, “*They go from company to company (Tehillim / Psalms 84:8).*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*Our Masters commented as follows, Whenever a man comes from a house of prayer and goes into a house of study, Scripture says for such as he, They go from strength to strength.*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis say that the one who goes from the house of prayer to the house of study earns the right to the Shekhina, and will see the glory of God.

- The נמשל (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the משל (mashal), the rabbis expand upon the mashal by drawing upon the days of the Messiah.
- The Concluding phrase says, “*Rabbi Levi said, The farewell blessing that Moshe gave to Judah was, as Scripture says, And this is the blessing of Judah, Hear, Lord, the voice of Judah (Devarim / Deuteronomy 33:7), and therefore David was entitled to say, O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer, and also, Incline Your ear; O Lord, and answer me (Tehillim / Psalms 86:1).*”

Midrash Tehillim 84, Part 1 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying, “*For Him who triumphs; at treading in the winepress (Gittith). A Psalm of the sons of Korach (Tehillim / Psalms 84:1).*” What is interesting is the midrash opens with the comments about one who “*triumphs*” at treading the winepress. What does that mean? What is the purpose of the winepress illustration and how has this been used in the Tanach and the Apostolic Writings regarding the people of Israel and sin? The פתיחה (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*These words are to be considered in the light of what Scripture says elsewhere, Wherefore are Your garments like him that treads in the winepress?*” The rabbis ask the question of whether one’s garments are like those who tread the winepress. Could this refer to one who claims to be treading in the winepress and yet does not exhibit the signs of doing so? The Midrash continues saying the following:

I have trodden the winevat alone for the day of vengeance that was in My heart, and My year of redemption are come, I trod down the peoples in My anger (Isaiah 63:2-3, 4, 6). And what should we say of this prophetic vision? I will declare the mercies of the Lord (Isaiah 63:7). Whosoever has a vision of this winepress, the symbol of redemption, gives forth a song in praise of God’s triumph.

Based upon the midrash, the psalm is written in a time of God’s wrath, and the people are said to have been treading in the winepress of God’s wrath. This implies being forced to work the press of God’s wrath, and it is by reason of Israel’s sins that have caused them to be in this situation. This is also interpreted to be a prophetic vision according to the account of Isaiah. The point seems to emphasize the mercy of God because the people are still alive yet they are going through a time of His wrath. The midrash states that the winepress is said to be a symbol of God’s redemption. How is that so? Note what is written in the *Mishnah Sukkah 1:4*.

Mishnah Sukkah 1:4

If he suspended over it a grape-vine, or gourd, or ivy, using them as schach, it is pasul, [what is attached (to the ground) not being kosher as schach]. But if the (kosher) schach was more (abundant) than the others, or if he cut them, it is kosher. [(“if the schach was more”):] If there were much more kosher schach than vine or gourd, it is kosher. This, if he pressed them down and intermixed them with the kosher schach so that they are not conspicuous. For, the kosher schach predominating, it “cancels them out” when they are intermixed. (“or if he cut them:”) Even after he suspended them as schach it is kosher; this, on condition that he move them about after cutting them. For if he does not do so, it is pasul, it being written (Leviticus 16:13): “The festival of succoth shall you make for yourself” — and not from what is already made. That is, when you make it, it must be (from what is) fit for a succah, and not “from what is made,” i.e., something pasul, which is not fit for a succah but which you amend, as when you attempt to make it kosher by (merely) cutting it and not undoing it. But moving it about is like undoing it and then using it as schach, lifting one and putting it down, and repeating the process with the others.] This is the rule: Whatever can acquire tumah and does not grow in the ground cannot be used as schach, [to exclude (from use) wooden vessels, flaxen clothing, and mats, which, even though they originate in the ground, cannot be used as schach, since

they can acquire tumah.] And whatever cannot acquire tumah and grows in the ground can be used as schach, [it being written (Deuteronomy 16:13): “The festival of succoth shall you make for yourself ... from your threshing floor and from your winepress.” Scripture speaks of the discards of the threshing floor and the winepress, i.e., what is left over after you have gathered in (the fruits of) your threshing floor and your winepress, such as straws and vines. From them, make a succah.] (הַדְּלָה עֲלֶיהָ אֶת הַגֶּפֶן וְאֶת הַדְּלָעַת וְאֶת הַקְּסוּם וְסֹכֵךְ עַל גִּבְהָ - פְּסוּרִי) לַהּ. וְאִם הָיָה סֹכֵךְ הַרְבֵּה מֵהֵן, אִם שִׁקְצָצָן - כִּשְׂרָה. זֶה הַכֹּלֵל: כֹּל שֶׁהוּא מִקְּבֵל טְמֵאָה וְאִין גְּדוּלוֹ מִן הָאָרֶץ אִין מִסְכֵּכִין בּוֹ, וְכֹל דְּבַר שְׂאִינוֹ מִקְּבֵל טְמֵאָה וְגְדוּלוֹ מִן הָאָרֶץ, מִסְכֵּכִין בּוֹ.

The Mishnah equates the threshing floor to the winepress, and describes what may or may not be used upon a Sukkah. The Mishnah states, “*And whatever cannot acquire tumah and grows in the ground can be used as schach, [it being written (Deuteronomy 16:13): “The festival of succoth shall you make for yourself ... from your threshing floor and from your winepress.” Scripture speaks of the discards of the threshing floor and the winepress, i.e., what is left over after you have gathered in (the fruits of) your threshing floor and your winepress, such as straws and vines. From them, make a succah.]*” Note also that the sukkah itself symbolizes our dependence upon God’s care and sustenance, it represents a time of renewed fellowship with God remembering His sheltering provision and care for us while we traveled in the desert. Note how in many instances in Scripture, the winepress is connected to the wrath of God. The desert may be descriptive of going through and treading the wrath of the winepress. Note also the four species involved in the festival, the Etrog (lemon like citrus fruit) symbolizes the heart. The sages say the etrog is an acronym for “*faith*” (אמונה), “*repentance*” (תשובה), “*healing*” (רפואה), and “*redemption*” (גאולה). And so when we think about the winepress, and its relation to the Sukkah, we are reminded as the midrash states, of the symbol of God’s redemption.

Midrash Tehillim continues saying the following:

Isaiah saw it in a vision and said, I will declare the mercies of the Lord. David saw it in a vision and said, For Him who triumphs; at treading in the winepress. A psalm (Tehillim / Psalms 8:1). Asaph saw it in a winepress. A psalm of Asaph (Tehillim / Psalms 81:1). The sons of Korach saw it in a vision and said, For Him who triumphs; at treading in the winepress. A psalm of the sons of Korach (84:1). How beloved are Your Tabernacles, O Lord of hosts (Tehillim / Psalms 84:2), How much in them is so beloved of You that for their sake You, O Lord, will tread in this winepress. Anyone who stretches out his hand against the Holy Tabernacle, him the Holy One blessed be He, will put into the winepress. As Scripture says, A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the Temple, the voice of the Lord that renders recompense to His enemies (Isaiah 66:6), A voice of noise because of what our enemies in His city; a voice from the Temple because of what they did in the Temple. Hence it is known How beloved are Your Tabernacles, O Lord of hosts.

The rabbis say that David, Asaph, and the sons of Korach, all saw the redemption of God in a vision regarding the one who triumphs at treading the winepress of God’s wrath. What do you think the “*triumph*” is a reference to? The idea of triumph having gone through the winepress of God’s wrath as the result of one’s mounting sins, might be suggesting that having come through, one is reestablished by God our Father in heaven, forgiven of sin, and he or she has maintained the faith. There is a testimony that has been established through the process that brings glory to the Lord God in heaven. The midrash draws the image of those who strike the Tabernacle of God the Lord will place them in the winepress.

Midrash Tehillim 84, Part 1 concludes saying, “*The Temple is called beloved. And he who built it is called beloved, as is said, And he called his name Beloved of the Lord (2 Samuel 12:25). And he in whose territory it was built was called beloved, for Moshe said of Benjamin the beloved of the Lord will dwell in safety (Devarim / Deuteronomy 33:12). And likewise David said, That Your Beloved may be delivered*

(Tehillim / Psalms 60:7).” The midrash is drawing upon tension between ideas, the one who stretches his hand against the Tabernacle to tear it down as opposed to the one who stretches out his hand to build it up. The conclusion is that the one who builds it up, loves the mitzvot, loves God, desires for His presence to dwell in their midst, seeks the Lord by faith, is repentant, and looks forward to God’s redemption, these things consist of the one who stretches out the hand to build up the Temple. The Lord calls such a person “beloved” (יָדִיב). The beloved of God is taken care of, forgiven, and called a child of God, and the rabbis say that David believed “*That Your Beloved may be delivered (Tehillim / Psalms 60:7).*” This is true, and consistent with what we read in the Apostolic Writings, according to the Gospel of John with regard to the Lord God in heaven so loving the world that He gave His only son:

John 3:14-18

3:14 ‘As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; 3:15 so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life. 3:16 ‘For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. 3:17 ‘For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. 3:18 ‘He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. (NASB, ¹⁴καὶ καθὼς Μωϋσῆς ὑψώσεν τὸν ὄφιν ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ, οὕτως ὑψωθῆναι δεῖ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, ¹⁵ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ἐν αὐτῷ ἔχη ζωὴν αἰώνιον. ¹⁶Οὕτως γὰρ ἠγάπησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν κόσμον, ὥστε τὸν υἱὸν τὸν μονογενῆ ἔδωκεν, ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν μὴ ἀπόληται ἀλλ’ ἔχη ζωὴν αἰώνιον. ¹⁷οὐ γὰρ ἀπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν υἱὸν εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἵνα κρίνῃ τὸν κόσμον, ἀλλ’ ἵνα σωθῆ ὁ κόσμος δι’ αὐτοῦ. ¹⁸ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν οὐ κρίνεται. ὁ δὲ μὴ πιστεύων ἤδη κέκριται, ὅτι μὴ πεπίστευκεν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ μονογενοῦς υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ.)

The point of the winepress, and succeeding in or being triumphant in treading the winepress, is when the Lord brings trials into our lives due to sin, we repent, and persevere in the midst of the trial continuing to seek the Lord God in heaven for His mercy, in the name of the Messiah Yeshua.

Midrash Tehillim 84, Part 2 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דִּבְרוֹר הַמַּתְחִיל) saying, “*My soul longs, yes, even faints for the courts of the Lord (Tehillim / Psalms 84:3)*” The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*longs not only now, but longed for the holy court of the Lord even when the children of Israel were at the Red Sea, as is said, You in Your love have led Your people that You have redeemed; You have guided them in Your strength to Your holy habitation, till You bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of Your inheritance (Shemot / Exodus 15:13, 17).*” What does it mean to be planted in the mountain of inheritance? These concepts appear to be taken from *Shemot / Exodus 15:13-18*.

Shemot / Exodus 15:13-18

15:13 ‘In Your lovingkindness You have led the people whom You have redeemed; In Your strength You have guided them to Your holy habitation. 15:14 ‘The peoples have heard, they tremble; Anguish has gripped the inhabitants of Philistia. 15:15 ‘Then the chiefs of Edom were dismayed; The leaders of Moab, trembling grips them; All the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away. 15:16 ‘Terror and dread fall upon them; By the greatness of Your arm they are motionless as stone; Until Your people pass over, O Lord, Until the people pass over whom You have purchased. 15:17 ‘You will bring them and plant them in the mountain of Your inheritance, The place, O Lord, which You have made for Your dwelling, The sanctuary, O Lord, which Your hands have established. 15:18 ‘The Lord shall reign forever and ever.’ (NASB)

The Scriptures say that “*You will bring them in... Into the land of Canaan,*” which is often ascribed to the Lord bringing the people into Canaan as well as delivering Israel out of Egypt. (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 8:8*)

The concept of being planted into the mountain of inheritance is a reference to the Lord choosing a place for His people and Himself to dwell. The Place (המקום) is the hill country of Judea, and Jerusalem, and the mountains round about with regard to Mount Moriah and Zion, on which the temple stood. This place is called the mountain of the Lord's house, and seems to be the Place (המקום) being referred to. Note that elsewhere we are told the Lord calls Israel a vine whom He took out of Egypt and planted in the land of Canaan, where it took root and was settled, (*Tehillim / Psalm 80:8*). The entire midrash states the following:

<p>מדרש תהלים פרק פד סימן ב</p> <p>ב נכספה וגם כלתה נפשי לחצרות (בית) ה'. ולא משל עכשיו, אלא משהיו ישראל בים נתאוו לבית המקדש, שנאמר נחית בחסדך עם זו גאלת [וגו' אל נזה קדשך] (שמות טו יג), תביאמו ותטעמו [וגו'] (שם שם שמות ט"ו יז). [גם צפור מצאה בית]. אמרו יש-אל עד מתי יהיו שונאין אותנו ואומרים כצפור נודדת (מקנה) [מן קנה] כן איש נודד ממקומו (משלי כז ח), וכן הוא אומר נודי הרכם צפור (תהלים יא א), לא אמר כיונה, אלא כצפור, היונה היו נוטלין גוזליה והיא חוזרת למקומה, שנאמר כיונה פותה אין לב (הושע ז יא), אבל הצפור הזה אינו כן, אלא ילדה במקומה, וכשנוטלין גוזליה אינה חוזרת למקומה, כך משלו הרשעים הקב"ה וישראל כצפור, אמר להם גם צפור מצאה בית ודרור קן לה.</p>	<p>Midrash Tehillim 84, Part 2</p> <p>2. <i>My soul longs, yes, even faints for the courts of the Lord (Tehillim / Psalms 84:3) longs not only now, but longed for the holy court of the Lord even when the children of Israel were at the Red Sea, as is said, You in Your love have led Your people that You have redeemed; You have guided them in Your strength to Your holy habitation, till You bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of Your inheritance (Shemot / Exodus 15:13, 17). Yes, the sparrow has found a house (Tehillim / Psalms 84:4). The children of Israel said, How long will our enemies be allowed to hate us and say, As a sparrow that wonders from her nest, so is a man that wonders from His place (Mishley / Proverbs 27:8)? Our enemies say to God, Flee as a sparrow to your mountain (Tehillim / Psalms 11:1); they do not say, Flee as a dove, but Flee as a sparrow. A dove, when even her fledglings are taken away, returns to her nest, as Scripture says, Like a silly dove, without understanding (Hosea 7:11), but this is not so with the sparrow. True, she hatches her chicks in her nest, but when her fledglings are taken away from her, she does not go back to the nest. Thus the wicked liken the Holy One blessed be He, to a sparrow, and Israel to the fledglings. Therefore, God declares, Yes, the sparrow has found a house, and the swallow a nest for herself.</i></p>
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The rabbis continue drawing a comparison between the sparrow and the dove with regard to the dwelling place, the Temple mount, the Temple, the Sanctuary, and fleeing from the enemy. The reason for the word sparrow is significant when observing the way in which the sparrow and the dove behave. The dove, when driven from his nest, and when the young are taken, returns to its nest to start again. On the other hand, when this happens to the sparrow, it does not return to its nest. The contrast between the sparrow and the dove, the dove does not make a permanent home in the Temple, it returns to its home, which may be paralleled to returning to a life of sin. Whereas, the sparrow forsakes its former ways and makes a new home, one that is in the midst of the Temple of God. The sparrow draws near to the Lord God in heaven and does not depart. This is an excellent picture of our lives, we should be as the sparrow and not as the dove.

Midrash Tehillim 84, Part 2 concludes saying, "Thus the wicked liken the Holy One blessed be He, to a sparrow, and Israel to the fledglings. Therefore, God declares, Yes, the sparrow has found a house, and the swallow a nest for herself." The conclusion spins the interpretation of the sparrow, and states that the wicked consider the Lord to be as the sparrow and Israel the fledglings. For example, Israel has been plundered and the Lord has fled to the mountain. However, the Lord God declares the sparrow found a house and the swallow a nest. The idea may be that the Lord established His house, and the next as a reference to Israel and the Temple where Israel draws near to the Lord and never leaves. The concepts that are being drawn out here are with regard to who we are in the Messiah and in the Lord in heaven. The Place (המקום, *the Temple*) reminds us of the Lord God in heaven, and His ways. We are called to walk in righteousness, holiness, and

truth, to show love towards our neighbors and Yeshua expanded this to even loving our enemies. Though the enemy comes to kill and destroy, we are called to share God's love with them, and to be persistent in our lives in bringing glory to the Lord by living our lives for Him.

Midrash Tehillim 84, Part 3 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying, "*Blessed are they that dwell in Your house. They will again praise You, and forever (Tehillim / Psalms 84:5).*" The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, "*Rabbi Joshua son of Levi taught, He who is in the habit of entering houses of prayer and houses of study in the world to come, as is said, Blessed are they that dwell in Your house.*" The Homiletic introduction states something very interesting. Rabbis said "*He who is in the habit of entering houses of prayer and houses of study in the world to come, as is said, Blessed are they that dwell in Your house.*" The concept here is that in the world to come, one will be entered into the houses of study and prayer. This is a very important concept because this describes what will be taking place in the World to come (Olam Haba). The significance of this rabbinic statement is found in *Matthew 6:33* when Yeshua said, *6:33 'But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. (NASB)* What does it mean to seek the "*Kingdom of Heaven?*" In the Apostolic writings, we find the authors use both the "*Kingdom of Heaven*" and the "*Kingdom of God*" interchangeably. What is the difference between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven? Studying the Apostolic Writings, the Kingdom of God and Kingdom of Heaven are referring to the same thing. The phrase "*kingdom of God*" occurs 68 times in 10 different New Testament books, while "*kingdom of heaven*" occurs only 32 times, and only in the Gospel of Matthew. The book of Matthew appears to have an exclusive use of the phrase. In addition, due to the Jewish nature of his Gospel, some Christian commentators have concluded that Matthew was writing concerning the millennial kingdom while the other New Testament authors were referring to the universal kingdom. However, a closer study of the use of the phrase reveals that this interpretation is in error.

Yeshua speaking to the rich young ruler, uses both the phrases "*kingdom of heaven*" and "*kingdom of God*" interchangeably, e.g. "*Then Jesus said to his disciples, 'I tell you the truth, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven'*" (*Matthew 19:23*). In the very next sentence, Yeshua proclaims, "*Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God*" (*Matthew 19:24*). Yeshua makes no distinction between the two terms but seems to consider them synonymous. In addition, note the parallel accounts of these throughout the gospels, compare *Matthew 11:11-12 with Luke 7:28; Matthew 13:11 with Mark 4:11 and Luke 8:10; Matthew 13:24 with Mark 4:26; Matthew 13:31 with Mark 4:30 and Luke 13:18; Matthew 13:33 with Luke 13:20; Matthew 18:3 with Mark 10:14 and Luke 18:16; and Matthew 22:2 with Luke 13:29*. In each instance, Matthew uses the phrase "*kingdom of heaven*" while Mark and Luke use the phrase "*kingdom of God.*" Clearly, the two phrases refer to the same thing.

Back to the question of what does it mean to "*Seek first the Kingdom of Heaven?*" Asking this question of various persons produces various results. It seems today people have different opinions regarding what it means to seek first the kingdom of heaven. The Pentecostal would say we should seek speaking in tongues, or seeking the gift of healing, or one of the other spiritual gifts. But is this really what it means to seek first the Kingdom of Heaven? The person who believes seeking the kingdom of heaven is synonymous to seeking the spiritual gifts is going to be greatly disappointed. The rabbis comments on the psalm, "*Blessed are they that dwell in Your house. They will again praise You, and forever*" (*Tehillim / Psalms 84:5*). The midrash states, *Rabbi Joshua son of Levi taught, He who is in the habit of entering houses of prayer and houses of study in the world to come, as is said, Blessed are they that dwell in Your house.* The phrase "*world to come,*" or "*age to come,*" are eschatological phrases reflecting the belief that the "*current world*" or "*current age*" is flawed and will be replaced in the future by a better world or age which in many instances is also connected to the Messiah. The Olam HaBa ("*the world to come*") is an important part of Jewish eschatology, although Judaism concentrates on the importance of the HaOlam HaZeh ("*this world*"). The afterlife is known as Olam haBa, Gan Eden, and Gehinom in the rabbinic literature. The rabbis in the midrash state that in the world to come the righteous will be going from houses of prayer and houses of study. The concept here is that in the world to come, we will be engaged in prayer and Torah study. Therefore according to the Rabbis, the Kingdom of Heaven is connected to prayer and studying Torah. It is interesting to study what Yeshua

has to say concerning the Kingdom of heaven according to *Matthew 5:16-20*.

Matthew 5:16-20

5:16 'Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. 5:17 'Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. 5:18 'For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished. 5:19 'Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 5:20 'For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. (NASB)

Yeshua speaks of good works that are meant to glorify the Father in heaven, and he speaks of the Torah not passing away, but as something that is to be fulfilled in our lives here on earth. He goes on to contrast those who annul the command as opposed to those who teach to obey the commands. Then he concludes saying that in order to enter the kingdom of heaven, one's righteous deeds must exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees. Notice the parallel here to what the rabbis are teaching in the midrash. Studying Torah is synonymous to obeying, or applying God's word to our lives, which is what it means to walk in righteousness before God. The kingdom of God (Heaven) consists of prayer, studying God's word, seeking the Lord God in heaven, and living a righteous and holy life. This is what Yeshua meant when he spoke in *Matthew 6:33* saying, *6:33 'But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. (NASB)* If we seek these things first in our life in the Messiah, then we will see the Lord working in our lives in powerful ways.

The entire midrash states the following:

<p>מדרש תהלים פרק פד סימן ג</p> <p>ג אשרי יושבי ביתך עוד יהללוך סלה. אמר ר' יהושע בן לוי כל מי שהוא נכנס לבתי כנסיות ובתי מדרשות, זוכה ונכנס בבתי כנסיות ובבתי מדרשים לעולם הבא, שנאמר אשרי יושבי ביתך עוד יהי ללך סלה. אשרי אדם עוז לו בך. יכול לכל, תלמוד לומר מסלות בלבבם. עוברי בעמק הבכא מעין ישיתוהו. עמק הבכא זו גיהנם, אמר ר' אלעזר דהוא קטלא בהון. מעין ישיתוהו. שהדמעות שלהן נמשכות כמעין. גם ברכות יעטה מורה. אמר ר' יוחנן קילוסו של הקב"ה עולה מן גיהנם יותר מן גן עדן, שכל מי שהוא למעלה מחבירו מקלס להקב"ה ואמר אשרי שאני למעלה מזה שהוא נתון תחת, וכן כל אחד ואחד מקלס להקב"ה שהוא למעלה מחבירו, שנאמר גם ברכות יעטה מורה, אמר ר' יוחנן מה הן אומרים, יפה לימדת, יפה הורית, ולא שמענו.</p>	<p>Midrash Tehillim 84, Part 3</p> <p>3. <i>Blessed are they that dwell in Your house. They will again praise You, and forever (Tehillim / Psalms 84:5). Rabbi Joshua son of Levi taught, He who is in the habit of entering houses of prayer and houses of study in the world to come, as is said, Blessed are they that dwell in Your house. They will again praise You, and forever. Blessed is the man whose strength is in You (Tehillim / Psalms 84:6), lest it be thought that these men apply to any man, the verse ends by saying in whose heart are the ways. Passing through the valley of weeping they make it a place of springs (Tehillim / Psalms 84:7). The valley of weeping is Gehenna, for, as rabbi Eleazar said, It is the place where the wicked will be slaughtered. They make it a place of springs, that is, their tears will flow as copiously as a spring. Even there, the Teacher is clothed with blessings (Tehillim / Psalms 84:7). Rabbi Johanan taught, The praise of the Holy One blessed be He, goes up out of Gehenna even more than out of the Garden of Eden, for in Gehenna every man that is above his fellow praises the Holy One blessed be He, saying, How fortunate I am to be above this man who has been put beneath me. And so every single one who is above his fellow praises the Holy One blessed be He, as is said You the Teacher is clothed with blessings. Rabbi Johanan commented, What do they say in Gehenna? They say, You did teach well. You did instruct well. But we would not listen.</i></p>
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The rabbis continue asking the question of whether these things apply to any man, and that passing through the valley of weeping is a reference to Gehenna, since this is the place where the wicked will be slaughtered. The midrash continues saying, “*Rabbi Johanan taught, The praise of the Holy One blessed be He, goes up out of Gehenna even more than out of the Garden of Eden, for in Gehenna every man that is above his fellow praises the Holy One blessed be He, saying, How fortunate I am to be above this man who has been put beneath me.*” The concept here is that of levels in Gehenna, the lower one goes, the more miserable he is and so the one who is higher will suffer less than the one who is below him and thus will give praise to the Lord God in heaven for his position. Midrash Tehillim 84, Part 3 concludes saying, “*And so every single one who is above his fellow praises the Holy One blessed be He, as is said You the Teacher is clothed with blessings. Rabbi Johanan commented, What do they say in Gehenna? They say, You did teach well. You did instruct well. But we would not listen.*” The point appears to be that the Lord sends His blessings even upon the wicked, and their place and positions of power are given by God, to whom all the praise should be given. The Torah teacher did what he was called by God to do, but the wicked would not listen and so they perish in Gehenna.

Midrash Tehillim 84, Part 4 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying, “*They go from company to company (Tehillim / Psalms 84:8).*” The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*Our Masters commented as follows, Whenever a man comes from a house of prayer and goes into a house of study, Scripture says for such as he, They go from strength to strength.*” The interpretation of Tehillim / Psalms 84:4 going from strength to strength is that prayer and studying the Scriptures are refuges of strength and not weakness. The entire midrash states the following:

<p style="text-align: center;">מדרש תהלים פרק פד סימן ד</p> <p>ד ילכו מחיל אל חיל. [כך למדונו רבותינו כל היוצא מבית הכנסת ונכנס לבית המדרש, עליו הכתוב אומר ילכו מחיל אל חיל], ולא עוד אלא שזוכה ומקבל פני השכינה, שנאמר יראה אל אלהים בציון. דבר אחר ילכו מחיל אל חיל. אמר ר' יונה בשם ר' לוי תלמידי חכמים אין להם מנוחה לעסוק בתורה אפילו לעולם הבא, שנאמר ילכו מחיל אל חיל, עד איכן, אמר ר' פנחס הכהן מכלל שאחרים מקטרגין. ה' אלהים צבאות שמעה תפילתי. אמר ר' לוי אגיסטרון זה נתן משה ליהודה, [שנאמר וזאת ליהודה ויאמר שמע ה' קול יהודה (דברים לג ז)], לפיכך ה' אלהים צבאות שמעה תפילתי, וכן הוא אומר הטה ה' אזנך ענני (תהלים פו א).</p>	<p>Midrash Tehillim 84, Part 4</p> <p>4. <i>They go from company to company (Tehillim / Psalms 84:8). Our Masters commented as follows, Whenever a man comes from a house of prayer and goes into a house of study, Scripture says for such as he, They go from strength to strength. No more. Such a man earns the privilege of being received in the presence of the Shekhinah, as is said, He will be seen of God in Zion. In another comment on They go from company to company, rabbi Jonah said in the name of rabbi Levi, In the days of the Messiah the disciples of the wise will not have the leisure to engage in study of Torah, for it is said, They go from company to company. Until when will it be thus with them? Until Every one of them is seen of God in Zion. Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of Your Messiah (Tehillim / Psalms 84:10). Rabbi Phinehas the Priest taught, This verse implies that in the days of the Messiah the nations will still be making accusations against Israel. O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer (Tehillim / Psalms 84:9). Rabbi Levi said, The farewell blessing that Moshe gave to Judah was, as Scripture says, And this is the blessing of Judah, Hear, Lord, the voice of Judah (Devarim / Deuteronomy 33:7), and therefore David was entitled to say, O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer, and also, Incline Your ear, O Lord, and answer me (Tehillim / Psalms 86:1).</i></p>
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The rabbis teach in the midrash that the one who goes from houses of prayer to houses of study, he receives the privilege being taken into the Shekhinah (השכינה) of God. Here, the midrash speaks also of another interpretation regarding going from strength to strength, as in the days of the Messiah, the disciples of the Messiah will go from strength to strength, from houses of prayer to houses of study, the Targum states,

זכוות אבהתנא חמי אלהים ואיסתכל אנפי משיחך: 84:10 See, O God, the merits of our fathers, and behold the face of your anointed. (EMC) where the anointed one is written משיחך as “your Messiah.” The midrash states, “Rabbi Phinehas the Priest taught, This verse implies that in the days of the Messiah the nations will still be making accusations against Israel.” The most interesting point is that in the days of the Messiah, the nations will still bring accusation against him, just as we read in the gospel account of Yeshua. Another interesting point is how the Messiah is connected to the going from houses of prayer to houses of study, from strength to strength, and to the kingdom of heaven. Note how this is similar to what Yeshua taught that if you abide in him and his words abide in you (John 15:7). Remember that studying Torah is synonymous to obeying, or applying God’s word to our lives, which is what it means to walk in righteousness before God, and these are the things that Yeshua the Messiah taught while he was here on earth.

Midrash Tehillim 84, Part 4 concludes saying, “Rabbi Levi said, The farewell blessing that Moshe gave to Judah was, as Scripture says, And this is the blessing of Judah, Hear, Lord, the voice of Judah (Devarim / Deuteronomy 33:7), and therefore David was entitled to say, O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer, and also, Incline Your ear, O Lord, and answer me (Tehillim / Psalms 86:1).” The conclusion of the psalm is in seeking the Lord God in heaven to hear the prayer of His servant David and to the voice of Judah. Rashi says, לבנות ביתך שמעה תפלת. meaning “listen to my prayer, to the children of your house.” The midrash is speaking of seeking the Lord, and specifically that the Lord would hear the prayer of His people. In addition, Rashi has the following to say concerning Tehillim / Psalms 89.

Rashi on Genesis 31:30, Part 1

נכספּתּהּ means THOU DIDST LONG—It occurs many times in Scripture: (Psalms 89:3) “My soul yearneth (נכספּהּ) yea, pineth;” (Job 14:15) “Thou wouldst have a desire (תכסוף) to the work of hands.” (תה ‘פ’ ד), לְמַעֲשֵׂהָ, נכספת חמדת, והרבה יש במקרא נכספה וגם פלתה נפשי (תה ‘פ’ ד), לְמַעֲשֵׂהָ, (איוב י“ד):

The question is on seeking the Kingdom of Heaven, and our hearts, does your soul yearn, crave, long (נכספּהּ) for the presence of God in your life? How is this achieved? Based upon this study, this is achieved by seeking first the Kingdom of Heaven. How do we seek the Kingdom of Heaven? This is done by faith in the Lord God in heaven and in His Messiah, and then to live out our faith by walking humbly before God, devoting ourselves to prayer, and studying Torah which is synonymous to obeying, or applying God’s word to our lives, walking in righteousness before God, loving our brother, and taking care of the poor and needy, the widows and the orphans. These are the things that Yeshua the Messiah taught while he was here on earth. These are the things that are being taught in God’s Torah, according to the Psalms, all of the Tanach, and the Apostolic Writings. Let’s Pray!

Heavenly Father,

We glorify Your Holy Name! We thank You for being a shield and a high wall, we thank You for Your grace, love, and glory, and the mercies You show us each day. Thank You for the joy you have placed in our hearts to serve you and to live our lives for you. The Scriptures say that we can know that You are present in our lives. We thank You for the promises You have made and Your continued faithfulness to Your promises and to us. Thank You Lord 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.

Be Blessed in Yeshua, Christ our Messiah!

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

Notes