

## ספר תהילים פז | Tehillim / Psalms 87

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### Being Born New, a Rabbinic Concept in John chapter 3

In this week's study from *Tehillim / Psalms 86:1-17*, the Psalm opens saying, א לְבָנֵי-קִרְחַ מְזֻמֹּר שִׁיר, *Of the Sons of Korah. A psalm. A song. 87:1 His foundation is in the holy mountains.* (NASB) What does it mean that His foundation is in the holy mountains? The sons of Korach say, ב אֶהָב, *87:2 The Lord loves the gates of Zion More than all the other dwelling places of Jacob.* (NASB) Why does the Lord God in heaven love the gates of Zion more than anywhere else in Israel? What is it about Zion that is so important? The psalmist continues saying, ג נִכְבְּדוֹת מְדַבֵּר בָּךְ, *87:3 Glorious things are spoken of you, O city of God. Selah. 87:4 'I shall mention Rahab and Babylon among those who know Me; Behold, Philistia and Tyre with Ethiopia: 'This one was born there.'* *87:5 But of Zion it shall be said, 'This one and that one were born in her'; And the Most High Himself will establish her.* (NASB) There is a city in Israel that is called the "city of God." Which city is that and why would the Lord call a city by His Name? The Psalmist writes, ד אֶזְכִּיר | רַהַב וּבָבֶל לְיַדְעֵי הַגֵּה פְלִשְׁתִּים וְצוּר עַם-כּוּשׁ זֶה יֵלֵד-שָׁם: ה וְלַצִּיּוֹן יֹאמַר אִישׁ וְאִישׁ: *87:6 The Lord will count when He registers the peoples, 'This one was born there.'* (NASB) This suggests the one who seeks the Lord in heaven also counts himself as being numbered with Israel, the Lord sees such a person standing with His people and states such a person was born here. The psalm concludes saying, ו יְהוָה יִסְפָּר בְּכַתוּב עַמִּים זֶה יֵלֵד-שָׁם סְלָה: *87:7 Then those who sing as well as those who play the flutes shall say, 'All my springs of joy are in you.'* (NASB) Why is the spring of joy inside of a person?

עברית	Hebrew	ארמי	Aramaic	ελληνικός	Greek
ספר תהילים פרק פז	ספר תהילים פרק פז	ספר טוביה פרק פז	ספר טוביה פרק פז	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 87	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 87
א לְבָנֵי-קִרְחַ מְזֻמֹּר שִׁיר יְסוּדָתוֹ בְּהַרְרֵי-קָדְשׁ: ב אֶהָב יְהוָה שְׁעָרֵי צִיּוֹן מִכָּל מְשֻׁכְּנוֹת יַעֲקֹב: ג נִכְבְּדוֹת מְדַבֵּר בָּךְ עִיר הָאֲלֹהִים סְלָה: ד אֶזְכִּיר   רַהַב וּבָבֶל לְיַדְעֵי הַגֵּה פְלִשְׁתִּים וְצוּר עַם-כּוּשׁ זֶה יֵלֵד-שָׁם: ה וְלַצִּיּוֹן יֹאמַר אִישׁ וְאִישׁ יְסוּדָתוֹ בְּכַתוּב עַמִּים זֶה יֵלֵד-שָׁם סְלָה: ו יְהוָה יִסְפָּר בְּכַתוּב עַמִּים זֶה יֵלֵד-שָׁם סְלָה: ז וְשָׂרִים כָּחֲלָיִם כָּל-מַעְיָנֵי בָךְ:	א על ידיהוון דבני קרח איתאמר שבח שירתא דמתייסד על פום אבה-תא דמן לקדמין: ב רחיים יהוה מע-לני בתי מדרשיא דקביען בציון מכל בתי כנישיא דבית יעקב: ג מילין דיקר אתמליל עלך קרתא דאלהא לעלמין: ד אדכרו דכרין תושבחתך מצראי ובבלאי לידעי יתך הא פלי-שתאי וצוראי עם כושאי דין מליך איתרבא תמן: ה ולציון יתאמר דוד מלכא ושלמה בריה איתרבא בגוה ואלהא הוא ישכללינה לעילא לעל-מין: ו יהוה על סיפרא די מכת-בין ביה חושבן כל עלמיא דין מליך איתרבא איתרבא תמן לעלמין: ז ואמרי שירין על חניגאי כל מיני תו-שבחן על קורבנא מתאמרין בגווד:	א על ידיהוון דבני קרח איתאמר שבח שירתא דמתייסד על פום אבה-תא דמן לקדמין: ב רחיים יהוה מע-לני בתי מדרשיא דקביען בציון מכל בתי כנישיא דבית יעקב: ג מילין דיקר אתמליל עלך קרתא דאלהא לעלמין: ד אדכרו דכרין תושבחתך מצראי ובבלאי לידעי יתך הא פלי-שתאי וצוראי עם כושאי דין מליך איתרבא תמן: ה ולציון יתאמר דוד מלכא ושלמה בריה איתרבא בגוה ואלהא הוא ישכללינה לעילא לעל-מין: ו יהוה על סיפרא די מכת-בין ביה חושבן כל עלמיא דין מליך איתרבא איתרבא תמן לעלמין: ז ואמרי שירין על חניגאי כל מיני תו-שבחן על קורבנא מתאמרין בגווד:	א על ידיהוון דבני קרח איתאמר שבח שירתא דמתייסד על פום אבה-תא דמן לקדמין: ב רחיים יהוה מע-לני בתי מדרשיא דקביען בציון מכל בתי כנישיא דבית יעקב: ג מילין דיקר אתמליל עלך קרתא דאלהא לעלמין: ד אדכרו דכרין תושבחתך מצראי ובבלאי לידעי יתך הא פלי-שתאי וצוראי עם כושאי דין מליך איתרבא תמן: ה ולציון יתאמר דוד מלכא ושלמה בריה איתרבא בגוה ואלהא הוא ישכללינה לעילא לעל-מין: ו יהוה על סיפרא די מכת-בין ביה חושבן כל עלמיא דין מליך איתרבא איתרבא תמן לעלמין: ז ואמרי שירין על חניגאי כל מיני תו-שבחן על קורבנא מתאמרין בגווד:	87:1 τοῖς υἱοῖς Κορε ψαλμὸς ᾠδῆς οἱ θεμέλιοι αὐτοῦ ἐν τοῖς ὄρεσιν τοῖς ἁγίοις 87:2 ἀγαπᾷ κύριος τὰς πύλας Σιων ὑπὲρ πάντα τὰ σκηνώματα Ἰακωβ 87:3 δεδοξασμένα ἐλάληθη περὶ σοῦ ἡ πόλις τοῦ θεοῦ διάψαλμα 87:4 μνησθήσομαι Ρααβ καὶ Βαβυλῶνος τοῖς γινώσκουσίν με καὶ ἰδοὺ ἀλλόφυλοι καὶ Τύρος καὶ λαὸς Αἰθιοπῶν οὗτοι ἐγενήθησαν ἐκεῖ 87:5 μήτηρ Σιων ἔρει ἄνθρωπος καὶ ἄνθρωπος ἐγενήθη ἐν αὐτῇ καὶ αὐτὸς ἐθεμελίωσεν αὐτήν ὁ ὑψιστος 87:6 κύριος διηγῆσεται ἐν γραφῇ λαῶν καὶ ἀρχόντων τούτων τῶν γεγενημένων ἐν αὐτῇ διάψαλμα 87:7 ὡς εὐφραινομένων πάντων ἡ κατοικία ἐν σοί	87:1 τοῖς υἱοῖς Κορε ψαλμὸς ᾠδῆς οἱ θεμέλιοι αὐτοῦ ἐν τοῖς ὄρεσιν τοῖς ἁγίοις 87:2 ἀγαπᾷ κύριος τὰς πύλας Σιων ὑπὲρ πάντα τὰ σκηνώματα Ἰακωβ 87:3 δεδοξασμένα ἐλάληθη περὶ σοῦ ἡ πόλις τοῦ θεοῦ διάψαλμα 87:4 μνησθήσομαι Ρααβ καὶ Βαβυλῶνος τοῖς γινώσκουσίν με καὶ ἰδοὺ ἀλλόφυλοι καὶ Τύρος καὶ λαὸς Αἰθιοπῶν οὗτοι ἐγενήθησαν ἐκεῖ 87:5 μήτηρ Σιων ἔρει ἄνθρωπος καὶ ἄνθρωπος ἐγενήθη ἐν αὐτῇ καὶ αὐτὸς ἐθεμελίωσεν αὐτήν ὁ ὑψιστος 87:6 κύριος διηγῆσεται ἐν γραφῇ λαῶν καὶ ἀρχόντων τούτων τῶν γεγενημένων ἐν αὐτῇ διάψαλμα 87:7 ὡς εὐφραινομένων πάντων ἡ κατοικία ἐν σοί

<p><b>Tehillim / Psalms 86</b>  Of the Sons of Korah. A psalm. A song. 87:1 His foundation is in the holy mountains. 87:2 The Lord loves the gates of Zion More than all the other dwelling places of Jacob. 87:3 Glorious things are spoken of you, O city of God. Selah. 87:4 ‘I shall mention Rahab and Babylon among those who know Me; Behold, Philistia and Tyre with Ethiopia: ‘This one was born there.’‘ 87:5 But of Zion it shall be said, ‘This one and that one were born in her’; And the Most High Himself will establish her. 87:6 The Lord will count when He registers the peoples, ‘This one was born there.’ Selah. 87:7 Then those who sing as well as those who play the flutes shall say, ‘All my springs of joy are in you.’ (NASB)</p>	<p><b>Toviyah / Psalms 86</b>  87:1 Uttered by the sons of Korah. A song that was established at the instruction of the fathers of old. 87:2 The Lord loves the entrances to the academies established in Zion more than all the synagogues of the house of Jacob. 87:3 Glorious words have been spoken of you, O city of God, forever. 87:4 The Egyptians and Babylonians have reminded those who know you of your praises; behold, the Philistines and Tyrians, with the Ethiopians; this king was brought up there. 87:5 And of Zion it will be said, “King David and Solomon his son were brought up within it; and God shall build it above.” 87:6 O Lord, in the book in which they write the account of all the ages [it is written], “This king was brought up there forever.” 87:7 And they utter songs with celebration – all kinds of psalms with sacrifice are uttered in your midst. (EMC)</p>	<p><b>Psalmoi / Psalms 86</b>  A Psalm of a Song for the sons of Core. 87:1 His foundations are in the holy mountains. 87:2 The Lord loves the gates of Sion, more than all the tabernacles of Jacob. 87:3 Glorious things have been spoken of thee, O city of God. Pause. 87:4 I will make mention of Raab and Babylon to them that know me: behold also the Philistines, and Tyre, and the people of the Ethiopians: these were born there. 87:5 A man shall say, Zion is my mother; and such a man was born in her; and the Highest himself has founded her. 87:6 The Lord shall recount it in the writing of the people, and of these princes that were born in her. 87:7 The dwelling of all within thee is as the dwelling of those that rejoice. (LXX)</p>
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In this week’s study from *Tehillim / Psalms 86:1-17*, the Psalm opens saying, א לְבָנֵי-קִרְחַ מְזֻמֹּר שִׁיר יְסוּדָתוֹ בְּהַרְרֵי-קִדְשׁ: *Of the Sons of Korah. A psalm. A song. 87:1 His foundation is in the holy mountains.* (NASB) What does it mean that His foundation is in the holy mountains? The MT states, יְסוּדָתוֹ בְּהַרְרֵי-קִדְשׁ “*His foundation is in the holy mountains.*” What are the holy mountains? Rashi says the following, רש"י על תהילים פז, א יסודתי בהררי קדש . יסודת מזמור זה על הר ציון וירושלים יסדו המשורר: *foundation psalm, this is mount Zion and Jerusalem, foundation song.*” Rashi believes this is a reference to mount Zion upon which the Temple was built. The Aramaic Targum states, א על ידיהון דבני קרח איתאמר שבח שירתא, *87:1 Uttered by the sons of Korah. A song that was established at the instruction of the fathers of old.* (EMC) The rabbis translate the MT in the Targum to say that this is a song that was composed by their fathers (Sons of Korach) from long ago. The Septuagint states, 87:1 τοῖς υἱοῖς Κορε ψαλμὸς ᾠδῆς οἱ θεμέλιοι αὐτοῦ ἐν τοῖς ὄρεσι τοῖς ἁγίοις *A Psalm of a Song for the sons of Core. 87:1 His foundations are in the holy mountains.* (LXX) The difficulty in the interpretation is related to “*holy mountains*” plural, where one might think the holy mountain (singular) may be a reference to Sinai, or to Zion as Rashi states. If this is a reference to Israel and to Jerusalem, we are reminded of what is written in Parashat Beshalach, in the Torah, in *Shemot / Exodus 15:17*.

***Shemot / Exodus 15:17:***

*Thou bringest them in, and plantest them in the mountain of Thine inheritance, The place, O LORD, which Thou hast made for Thee to dwell in, The sanctuary, O Lord, which Thy hands*

*have established.* (תבאמו ותטעמו בקר נחלתך מכון לשבתך פעלת יהוה מקנש אדני כוננו ידיו:)

In *Shemot / Exodus 15:17*, Moshe writes that the Lord brings His people and plants them in the mountain of His inheritance. The mountain is the place where he has caused Himself to dwell, the sanctuary which the Lord has established. This describes a place the Lord Himself has created, a specific mountain by which He has established (המקום) for His name. The Lord plants us into this mountain, drawing in the imagery that we take part in and are nourished by this holy place. The Mishnah has the following to say concerning the mountain and the possessions of God.

***Mishnah Pirkei Avot 6:10***

*Five possessions has the Holy One, Blessed be He, declared His own in His world, And they are: The Torah [is] one possession, Heaven and earth [are] one possession, Abraham [is] one possession, Israel [is] one possession, [And] the Sanctuary [is] one possession. From where [do we infer that] the Torah [is] one possession? For it is written: “The Lord possessed me at the beginning of His way, the first of His of old.” (Proverbs 8:22) From where [do we infer that] heaven and earth [are] one possession? For it is written: “Thus says the Lord: ‘The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool. Which house might you build for Me? And which place might be My resting-place?’” (Isaiah 66:1), And it [also] says: “How manifold are Your works, O Lord! In wisdom have You made them all; full is the earth, Your possession.” (Psalm 104:24) From where [do we infer that] Abraham [is] one possession? For it is written: “And [Melchizedek] blessed him, and said: ‘Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Maker of heaven and earth.’” (Genesis 14:19) From where [do we infer that] Israel [is] one possession? For it is written: “Till Your people pass over, O Lord, till the people pass over whom You have made Your own” (Exodus 15:16), And it [also] says: “As for the holy that are in the earth, they are the excellent in whom is all My delight.” (Psalm 16:3) From where [do we infer that] the Sanctuary [is] one possession? For it is written: “The Sanctuary, O Lord, that Your hands have established” (Exodus 15:17), And it is [also] said: “And He brought them to His holy border, to the mountain, which His right hand had possessed.” (Psalm 78:54)*

The Mishnah describes 5 things that are the possession of God, (i) the Torah, (ii) Heaven and earth, (iii) Abraham, (iv) Israel, and (v) the Sanctuary. It is interesting how the rabbis separate Abraham from Israel. What is the point of separating Abraham as a possession of the Lord? The point is out of all men on earth, Abraham was blessed of God in a particular way. The Lord had drawn him out from his people and made him into a great nation because of his faith and faithfulness to the promises of God. The Mishnah describes the instruction of the Lord (Torah), how He is possessor of all that exists (heaven and earth), and the importance of the place where He has established His name, the Sanctuary. All of these concepts are drawn in to the idea of “*His foundations are in the holy mountains.*” The Talmud Bavli Megilla 18a states that joy comes to those who are in the house of prayer, which is located at God’s holy mountain.

***Talmud Bavli Megillah 18a***

*“Afterwards the children of Israel shall return and seek the Lord their God, and David their king” (Hosea 3:5) (הושע ג, ה) אחר ישובו בני ישראל ובקשו את ה' אלהיהם ואת דוד מלכם. And when David comes, prayer will come, as it says, “Even then will I bring them to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer” (Isaiah 56:7). וכיון שבא דוד באתה. And when prayer has come, the Temple service will come, as it says, “Their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be acceptable upon my altar” (Isaiah 56:7). וכיון שבאת תפלה באת עבודה שנאמר עולו. And when the Temple service comes, thanksgiving will come,*

as it says, “Whoever offers the sacrifice of thanksgiving honors me” (Psalms 50:23). וכיון שבאת עבודה באתה תודה שנאמר (תהלים נ, כג) זובה תודה יכבדנני

המקום (the Place), the Sanctuary, the offering, prayer, and the Holy mountain of God are drawn together in context and the rabbis say joyful is the one who is in the house of prayer. The idea is such a person is communing with God and at peace. The foundation of God is at the root of His Word, His promises. The Lord is known by His Word and His promises which he keeps to His people. The holy mountains comes back to the Word of God, where the Lord chose המקום (the Place) for His Name to be revealed and to be spread throughout all the earth, which is in Jerusalem.

According to the Psalm, the sons of Korach say, *The Lord loves the gates of Zion More than all the other dwelling places of Jacob.* (NASB) Why does the Lord God in heaven love the gates of Zion more than anywhere else in Israel? What is it about Zion that is so important? The Rabbis ask the same question in the Talmud.

### **Talmud Bavli Berakhot 8a, Part 67**

What means that which is written, “The Lord loveth the gates of Zion [Siyon] more than all the dwellings of Jacob” (Ps. lxxxvii. 2)? The Lord loveth the gates distinguished [mesuyyanim] for Halakah more than Synagogues and Houses of Study. (תהלים פז, מאי דכתיב) (אוהב ה' שערי ציון מכל משכנות יעקב אוהב ה' שערים המצויינים בהלכה יותר מבתי כנסיות) (ומבתי מדרשות)

### **Ein Yaakov Berakhot 1:43**

Raba said to Rafram b. Papa: “Speak to us, Master, of those excellent things you said in the name of R. Chisda in reference to the synagogue.” “This is what R. Chisda said,” said [Rafram] to him : “ ‘What is the meaning of the passage (Ps. 87:2) The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. The Lord loveth the gates that are marked with the signs of Halacha (laws) more than the synagogues and the houses of study.’ and this agrees with R. Chiya b. Ami who said, in the name of Ulla: ‘Since the destruction of the Temple, nothing has remained to the Holy One, praised be He! in His world, but four cubits of the Halacha [where it is studied].’ “ Abaye said : “At first I was accustomed to study in the house and pray in the synagogue, but since I heard what R. Cliya b. Ami said in the name of Ulla, that since the destruction of the Temple, nothing has remained to the Holy One, praised be He! in his world but four cubits of the Halacha, I never prayed but where I studied.” K. Ami and R. Assi, although they both had twelve synagogues in Tiberia, still did not pray elsewhere but between the pillars where they had studied. R. Chiya b. Ami, in the name of Ulla said : “A man shall always live in the same place where his teacher lives, for as long as Shimi b. Geira lived, solomon did not marry Pharaoh’s daughter.” Behold, we are taught that a man shall not live in the same place with his teacher! This is not difficult to explain, for the former deals with a disciple who bends before (obeys) his teacher, and the latter deals with a disciple who does not bend before (obey) his teacher. Another thing said R. Chiya b. Ami, in the name of Ulla: “He who enjoys life through the labor of his hand, is greater than he who fears God, for concerning the man who fears God, it is written (Ps. 112:1) Happy is the man who feareth the Lord; while concerning the man who enjoys the labor of his hand, it is written (Ib. 128, 2.) When thou eateth of the labor of thy hands: (then) wilt thou be happy, and it shall be well with thee. — Wilt thou be happy, in this world. And it shall be well with thee, in the world to come; but concerning the one who fears God it is not said, And it shall be well with thee.”

The rabbis say that the Lord loves the gates of Zion for the purpose of Halakah, the reason being, Halakah is



the way one applies God's word to one's life. The point is that the reason the Lord says over and over again throughout the Tanach, *Hosea 6:6 For I desire mercy, and not sacrifice, And the knowledge of God rather than burnt-offerings. (NASB)*, and why Yeshua said in *Matthew 9:13 "But go and learn what this means: 'I DESIRE COMPASSION, AND NOT SACRIFICE,' for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners."* (NASB) is by reason of what the Torah says over and over again, for example in *Vayikra / Leviticus 5:1 "Now if a person sins..."* and in *5:17 "Now if a person sins and does any of the things which the LORD has commanded not to be done..."* the key phrase is "if a man sins" suggests that the Lord seeks for righteousness, for man not to sin. This is why the rabbis say "the Lord loves the gates of Zion for the purpose of Halakah."

The name Zion was used initially in Scripture for the small citadel inside Jerusalem where David placed his throne. Over time, however, the concept of Zion broadened and came to refer to Jerusalem (e.g. *Tehillim / Psalm 76:2*), or even to the entire nation of Israel (e.g., *Isaiah 3:16*). When the place of Zion is mentioned in the Scriptures, the precise meaning of the term may vary a bit depending upon the context. Zion is used in the promises of God to establish the Son of David upon the throne of Zion forever (*Tehillim / Psalm 89:3-4, 29, 35-37; 132:11-18*). The Lord said the following concerning Zion, "For Zion's sake I will not hold My peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burns." (*Isaiah 62:1*) The Lord God Himself is resolved to labor without rest until Jerusalem's righteousness and salvation shines brightly in the earth. David said in *Tehillim / Psalms 48:2 "Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion on the sides of the north, the city of the great King."* The city Jerusalem and Zion have a profound history in the Torah. The first mention of המקום (the Place) Jerusalem in the Torah occurs in *Bereshit / Genesis 14*, at a time when Lot had been carried captive by invading forces. Abraham and his men pursue the enemy and have a great military victory, Abraham delivered Lot from his captors and brought him safely home. On his return, Melchizedek met Abraham and blessed him. Melchizedek was the king of Jerusalem (Salem) and also the priest of God Most High according to *Bereshit / Genesis 14:14-24*. The second time המקום (the Place) is mentioned is when Abraham led his son, Isaac, to Mount Moriah, bound him, and placed him on an altar (*Bereshit / Genesis 22*), this happened on mount Moriah, known as the Akeida (the binding of Isaac). It is interesting to note that Melchizedek was the first priest of God to appear in Scripture, and it was no coincidence that his throne was in Zion. According to the Apostolic Writings, Yeshua the Messiah is declared to be a Priest after the order of Melchizedek (*Tehillim / Psalm 110:4*). Based upon the NT commentary on Yeshua, He is the heir to the throne of Zion. (see *Hebrews 5-7*) Zion is connected to King David, and according to the Tanach, David was called of God to function in both a kingly and priestly capacity. This is why we see David putting on a linen ephod at the procession of the ark to Zion (*1 Chronicles 15:27*). In addition, David was not pretending to be a Levite or to function as a priest as a levite, he was not from the Tribe of Levi. While serving in this priestly capacity, David has shown that the Messiah would serve before God in a similar priesthood. This is why David wrote, "The LORD has sworn and will not relent, 'You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek'" (*Tehillim / Psalm 110:4*). David's zeal for Zion was rooted in his understanding that one day the Messiah would rule in Jerusalem as Priest and King, this is why the psalmist wrote, *87:2 The Lord loves the gates of Zion More than all the other dwelling places of Jacob. (NASB)* Jerusalem is a city like none other! It holds the distinction of being the only place on earth God chose as His eternal home (*Tehillim / Psalm 132:13-14*). This is also the reason history revolves around this city because it is the place of God's dwelling.

Considering this holy place in which the Lord God in heaven makes His name known, and sends forth both his Torah and His Messiah, note the significance the Mishnah places upon the presence and the teaching of God.

***Mishnah Pirkei Avot 6:1:***

*Rabbi Meir says: Anyone who involves himself in Torah for its own sake merits many things, and moreover the entire world is worthwhile for his sake; He is called "friend," "beloved," "lover of the Ominpresent," "lover of [all] creatures," "delighter of the Ominpresent," "delighter of [all] creatures;" He is clothed in humility and reverence, and it prepares him to*

*be righteous, devout, upright and trustworthy, and it distances him from sin, and draws him near to merit; We enjoy from him counsel and comprehension, understanding and strength, as it is said (Proverbs 8:14): “Mine is counsel and comprehension, I am understanding, mine is strength;” It gives him kingship and dominion, and [the ability to] investigate in judgment, and the secrets of the Torah are revealed to him, and he becomes like an ever-strengthening spring, and like a river that does not stop; He is modest and long-tempered, and forgives insult to him; And it enlarges him and raises him above all [that God] made. ( שנו )* החכמים בלשון המשנה. ברוך שבחר בהם ובמשנתם. רבי מאיר אומר כל העוסק בתורה לשמה, זוכה לדברים הרבה. ולא עוד אלא שכל העולם כלו כדאי הוא לו. נקרא רע, אהוב, אוהב את המקום, אוהב את הבריות, משמח את המקום, משמח את הבריות, ומלבשתו ענוה ויראה, ומכשרתו להיות צדיק חסיד ישר ונאמן, ומרחקתו מן החטא, ומקרבתו לידי זכות, ונהנין ממנו עצה ותושיה בינה וגבורה. שנאמר (משלי ח) לי עצה ותושיה אני בינה לי גבורה, ונותנת לו מלכות וממשלה וחקור דין, ומגלין לו רזי תורה, ונעשה כמעין המתגבר וכנהר שאינו פוסק, והוי צנוע וארך רוח, ומוחל (על עלבונו, ומגדלתו ומרוממתו על כל המעשים).

The Mishnah describes the instruction of God as important when one obeys the Torah for the sake of the command, and not for some other ulterior motive (profit, gain, pride, etc). The one who occupies himself in studying God’s Word is called a friend and lover of the Lord in heaven, and of all creatures. For the one who desires to draw near, to live for the Lord, and to become like Him in the sense of walking in His ways, the Lord will give to such a one “*kingship and dominion, and [the ability to] investigate in judgment, and the secrets of the Torah are revealed to him, and he becomes like an ever-strengthening spring, and like a river that does not stop; He is modest and long-tempered, and forgives insult to him*” The describes the Rabbis give in the Mishnah has a very close parallel to what we find in the Apostolic Writings. (e.g. *Revelation 1:6* and elsewhere.)

ג נְכַבְּדוֹת מְדַבֵּר בְּךָ עִיר הָאֱלֹהִים סְלָה: ד אֲזַכִּיר | רַהַב וּבָבֶל לְיָדַעַי הִנֵּה, The psalmist continues saying, *Glorious things are spoken of you, O city of God. Selah. 87:3* 87:4 ‘*I shall mention Rahab and Babylon among those who know Me; Behold, Philistia and Tyre with Ethiopia: ‘This one was born there.’*’ 87:5 *But of Zion it shall be said, ‘This one and that one were born in her’; And the Most High Himself will establish her. (NASB)* According to the Psalm, there is a city in Israel that is called the “*city of God.*” Which city is that and why would the Lord call a city by His Name? The Tanach and the Apostolic Writings contain many reference to Jerusalem being called “*the City of our God*” (e.g. *Tehillim / Psalms 48:1, 8*). Jerusalem the city of Zion, is God’s city because He has invested His name there (*Daniel 9:19*).

**Daniel 9:16-19**

9:16 ‘*O Lord, in accordance with all Your righteous acts, let now Your anger and Your wrath turn away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; for because of our sins and the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people have become a reproach to all those around us. 9:17 ‘So now, our God, listen to the prayer of Your servant and to his supplications, and for Your sake, O Lord, let Your face shine on Your desolate sanctuary. 9:18 ‘O my God, incline Your ear and hear! Open Your eyes and see our desolations and the city which is called by Your name; for we are not presenting our supplications before You on account of any merits of our own, but on account of Your great compassion. 9:19 ‘O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action! For Your own sake, O my God, do not delay, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name.’ (NASB, אֲדַבְּרָה יְשׁוּבָה נָא, אֶפְרָיִם וְחַמְתָּהּ מֵעִירָהּ יְרוּשָׁלַם הִר-קִדְשָׁהּ כִּי בַחֲטָאֵינוּ וּבַעֲוֹנוֹת אֲבֹתֵינוּ יְרוּשָׁלַם וְעַמָּהּ לְהַרְפָּה לְכָל-סְ-בִיבְתֵינוּ: יז וְעַתָּה | שְׁמַע אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֶל-תְּפִלַּת עַבְדְּךָ וְאֶל-תְּחִנּוֹתַי וְהָאֵר פְּנֵיךָ עַל-מִקְדָּשְׁךָ הַשְּׁמַם לְמַעַן אֲדַבְּרָה יְיָ הִטָּה אֱלֹהֵי | אֲזַנְךָ וְשָׁמַע פְּקוּחָה [פְּקוּחָה] עֵינֶיךָ וִירָאָה שְׁמֵמֵתֵינוּ וְהִעִיר אֶשְׁר-נִקְרָא שְׁמָךְ*

עָלֶיהָ כִּי | לֹא עַל-צְדָקֹתֶיהָ אֲנַחְנוּ מִפִּילִים תִּחְנוּנֵינוּ לְפָנֶיהָ כִּי עַל-רַחֲמֶיהָ הִרְבִּים: יט אֲדֹנָי | שְׁמָעָה  
(אֲדֹנָי | סִלְחָה אֲדֹנָי הַקְּשִׁיבָה וַעֲשֵׂה אֶל-תַּאֲחָר לְמַעַנְךָ אֱלֹהֵי כִּי-שְׁמָךְ נִקְרָא עַל-עִירָךְ וְעַל-עַמֶּךָ:

Daniel describes Jerusalem as “*Your*” (*God’s*) city, praying for the Lord to forgive her iniquity and sin. He connects Jerusalem with המקום (the Place) of His sanctuary. Daniel says the city of Jerusalem is called by God’s name, where both the people and the city are called by God’s name. It is interesting what the *Mishnah Sanhedrin 10:2* states about Jerusalem.

### ***Mishnah Sanhedrin 10:2***

*Three kings and four commoners have no share in the World to Come. The three kings are: Jeroboam, Ahab, and Manasseh. Rabbi Yehudah says, Manasseh does have a share in the World to Come, as it says (II Chronicles 33:13), “And [Manasseh] prayed unto Him; and He was entreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him back to Jerusalem into his kingdom.” [The Sages] said to him, to his kingdom He brought him back, but He did not bring him back to life in the World to Come. The four commoners are: Balaam, Doeg, Achitophel, and Gehazi.* (שלשה מלכים וארבעה הדיוטות אין להם חלק לעולם הבא. שלשה מלכים, ירבעם, אחאב, ומנשה. רבי יהודה אומר, מנשה יש לו חלק לעולם הבא, שנאמר (דברי הימים ב לג, יג) ויתפלל אליו ויעתר לו וישמע תחנונו וישיבהו ירושלם למלכותו. אמרו לו, למלכותו השייכו, ולא לחיי העולם הבא השיבו. ארבעה הדיוטות, בלעם, ודואג, ואחיתפל, וגחזי.

The Mishnah speaks of prayer causing the Lord to bring a person back to Jerusalem, which is paralleled to the Lord bringing one back into his kingdom, but prayer alone does not cause the Lord to raise a person to live in the Olam Haba (World to Come). Jerusalem appears to be the center and place of the kingdom of God. References to the city of Jerusalem appear throughout the Tanakh and through the ages it has been called by the names, Salem, Mount Moriah, Adonai Urah, Jebus, Jerusalem, Zion, the City of David, and Ariel (Lion of God). The Lord has declared that this is the place where He will establish His Name and will dwell there forever (*1 Kings 9.3*). It is interesting that at the end of the Apostolic Writings, in the book of Revelation, the center of worship and the throne of God is found in the New Jerusalem, which descends from heaven to Israel. In fact, the 12 gates entering into the city are named by the 12 tribes of Israel. Our understanding of the Lord and who He is, Israel is central to our service to the Lord, we are said to be grafted into Israel, etc. It’s clear that Jerusalem has played, and will continue to play, an important part in the Lord’s deliverance of this world, and in the new world (Olam Haba) which is to come. Should we not seek God’s guidance and direction concerning how we should support Israel, His Holy City, and our involvement with the nation and its people? This is the way things will be in the Olam Haba according to the Apostolic Writings. The point is the church does not replace Israel!

ד אֲזַכִּיר | רַהַב וּבָבֶל לִידְעֵי הַנְּהַ פְּלִשְׁתִּים וְצוּר עַם-כּוּשׁ זֶה יֵלֵד-שָׁם: ה וּלְצִיּוֹן, הַיְיָ אֲמַר אֵיךְ וְאֵיךְ יֵלֵד-בָּהּ וְהוּא יְכוּנְנָה עָלֵינוּ:  
*87:4 ‘I shall mention Rahab and Babylon among those who know Me; Behold, Philistia and Tyre with Ethiopia: ‘This one was born there.’ 87:5 But of Zion it shall be said, ‘This one and that one were born in her’; And the Most High Himself will establish her.* (NASB) It is interesting how Rahab the prostitute is connected to Babylon as knowing the Lord Almighty. Rahab believed by faith that Israel was coming and God would destroy Jericho. She put her faith into action by hiding the spies and saving their lives. The psalmist also states Philistia, Tyre, and Ethiopia were born in Israel? The point maybe that the Lord is working to draw all nations to Himself. Egypt in the south, being a world power at one time, the same with Babylon in the north. Philistia is a reference to a people that harassed Israel for centuries, and Tyre which represents the pride of life. Ethiopia may represent a more distant nation, each of these nations, and all of the world will one day recognize the Lord as God of all. The psalmist states that the Lord will establish the one who was born in Zion. This obviously is not a reference to these pagan nations, but is a reference to something or someone else.



ד אדכרו דכרין תושבחתך מצראי ובבלאי לידעי יתך הא פלישתאי וצוראי עם, כושאי דין מליך איתרבא תמן: ה ולציון יתאמר דוד מלכא ושלמה בריה איתרבא בגוה ואלהא הוא ישכללינה: 87:4 לעילא לעלמי: *The Egyptians and Babylonians have reminded those who know you of your praises; behold, the Philistines and Tyrians, with the Ethiopians; this king was brought up there. 87:5 And of Zion it will be said, “King David and Solomon his son were brought up within it; and God shall build it above.”* (EMC) The Septuagint states, 87:4 *μνησθήσομαι Ρααβ καὶ Βαβυλῶνος τοῖς γινώσκουσίν με καὶ ἰδοὺ ἀλλόφυλοι καὶ Τύρος καὶ λαὸς Αἰθιοπῶν οὗτοι ἐγενήθησαν ἐκεῖ 87:5 μήτηρ Σιών ἐρεῖ ἄνθρωπος καὶ ἄνθρωπος ἐγενήθη ἐν αὐτῇ καὶ αὐτὸς ἐθεμελίωσεν αὐτήν ὁ ὕψιστος 87:4 I will make mention of Raab and Babylon to them that know me: behold also the Philistines, and Tyre, and the people of the Ethiopians: these were born there. 87:5 A man shall say, Zion is my mother; and such a man was born in her; and the Highest himself has founded her.* (LXX) Notice how the rabbis say Egypt and Babylon know the praises of the Lord. The praises of the Lord are found within His might and power to deliver His people, and the fulfillment of His promises. The Targum translates the MT saying that the one who was born and the one who bore him, and the one whom the Lord establishes, is a reference to King David and Solomon His son. The Septuagint has an interesting interpretation on the MT saying, 87:5 *A man shall say, Zion is my mother; and such a man was born in her; and the Highest himself has founded her.* (LXX) This translation seems to suggest the one who joins himself to the Lord saying that Zion is his mother, such a man was born in her. This interpretation is interesting how a man who calls Zion his mother is as if he had been born of her, born in that place. Rightly so, such a man who seeks the Lord God in heaven will the Lord establish because such a man is walking in God’s ways. The rabbis say the following regarding being born במקום (in the place).

### ***Akeidat Yitzchak 75.7***

*The description of Israel as “the good ones,” has a dual meaning. A) There will always be found some good people in Israel, people whose merit will suffice to insure the nation’s survival, people such as the prophets whose very existence has made our people unparalleled among all the nations since Abraham. Psalms 87:5-6 clearly reflects this sentiment.*

### ***Ein Yaakov Ketubot 7.3***

*(Fol. 75) (Ps. 87:5) But of Zion it shall be said: “This man and that was born in her; and Most High Himself doth establish her.” R. Meyasha, the grandson of R. Joshua, said: “No matter whether he is one who was born in it, or one that looks forward and hopes for its restoration [to both of them refer the passages with its promise.] “And one of them from the land of Israel,” added Abayi, “is better than two of us [of Babylon.]” “Nevertheless,” remarked Raba, “if one of ours comes up here (in the land of Israel) he surpasses two of their in wisdom, as the instance of R. Jeremia who, before he came up there, did not understand what the Rabbis would say, but after he had been there he called us ‘foolish Babylonians.’”*

Akeidat Yitzchak describes the one who is born of Zion, “the good ones” as some people whose merits sustain the nations survival, and the prophets whom the Lord sends to call the people back to Him. Ein Yaakov states that this is related to both the one who was born in it, and to the one who looks forward to and hopes for the restoration of המקום (the Place), the promise belongs to both kinds of people. Based upon the rabbinic translations of the Psalm (Targum, Septuagint), and the rabbinic commentary, the psalm appears to describe a transformation of the person who seeks the Lord and seeks to join himself with God’s people. Note when one joins himself with the people of God, his live changes, the old life passes away, and new life comes, he stops living in the way that he did before and is transformed, and walks in God’s Instruction. Note also what the psalmist writes in *Tehillim / Psalms 87:6*: וְשָׂרִים כְּהַלְלִים כָּל-מַעְיָנֵי בָדָד: 87:6 *The Lord will count when He registers the peoples, ‘This one was born there.’ Selah.* (NASB) This suggests that one is present, or that the one who looks forward to the building of the Temple, and says that Zion is his mother, counts himself as one among the children of Israel, and so the Lord God in heaven counts him as one who



was born there. These Scriptures agree with the Apostolic Writings and interpretation on the non-Jewish person who seeks the Lord God in heaven and does so by joining himself with Israel in the Messiah Yeshua. (see *Romans 11*) The Aramaic Targum states, ו יהוה על סיפרא די מכתבין ביה חושבן כל עלמא דינ מליך, 87:6 *O Lord, in the book in which they write the account of all the ages [it is written], “This king was brought up there forever.”* (EMC) Note how the rabbis translate the MT to say that men of all ages are accounted for. The Torah describes the age of a man who is to be counted, which was a reference to military service and the strength of the armies of Israel. Here however, we find the one who joins himself with Israel by looking to Zion, looking to המקום (the Place), and seeks to walk in God’s ways, even his family is numbered, because his children will grow to know the Lord as a result of his faithful walk before the Lord. The Septuagint states, 87:6 κύριος διηγήσεται ἐν γραφῇ λαῶν καὶ ἀρχόντων τούτων τῶν γεγεννημένων ἐν αὐτῇ διάψαλμα 87:6 *The Lord shall recount it in the writing of the people, and of these princes that were born in her.* (LXX) So these men who look to Zion will be raised up by the Lord to leadership positions as it says in *Tehillim / Psalms 87:6*, princes that were born in her.

The psalm concludes saying, ו יהוה יספר בכתוב עמים זה ילד-שם סלה: 87:7 *Then those who sing as well as those who play the flutes shall say, ‘All my springs of joy are in you.’* (NASB) What is a spring of joy? Why is the spring of joy inside of a person? The Aramaic Targum states, ואמרי שירין על חנגיא ז, 87:7 *And they utter songs with celebration – all kinds of psalms with sacrifice are uttered in your midst.* (EMC) The Septuagint states, 87:7 ὡς εὐφραينوμένων πάντων ἡ κατοικία ἐν σοί 87:7 *The dwelling of all within thee is as the dwelling of those that rejoice.* (LXX) This may be related to what the Lord told Israel in *Shemot / Exodus 25*, to make a מִקְדָּשׁ (Mikdash) and a מִשְׁכָּן (Mishkhan). The rabbis say in the commentary *Shney Luchot HaBrit, Shmini, Torah Ohr 17* the following.

***Shney Luchot HaBrit, Shmini, Torah Ohr 7:***

*Man is composed of body and soul, a visible as well as an invisible part. This is the deeper meaning of Exodus 25,8: ועשו לי מקדש ושכנתי בתוכם, “They shall make for Me a Sanctuary and I shall dwell amongst them.” The difficulty here is that the verse speaks about the Tabernacle. Our Rabbis in Shavuot 16 tell us that the expression Tabernacle and Sanctuary may be used interchangeably. This was not the only difficulty in the verse. Why, if the Sanctuary is a single unit, does the Torah report G’d saying that He will dwell amongst them (pl)? The Torah should have written בתוכו! We have here an allusion to the fact that the cause is fond of the effect, i.e. the hidden longs for the revealed. Our sages (Pessachim 112) articulated this thought when they said that more than the calf desires to suckle on the teats of its mother, the cow is anxious to nurse its calf. In 36,1 פרשת ויקהל the Torah writes: חכמה אשר נתן ה’ ותבונה בהמה, “whom G’d had given wisdom and insight.” Shemot Rabbah 48,3 states that the word ba-heyimah in the above verse is to teach us that it was not only man whom G’d imbued with wisdom but also the animals. Betzalel was the only one who was privy to the wisdom possessed by the animals. Perhaps the Torah wants to hint at the proverb we quoted earlier that the mother cow is more anxious to nurse its calf than the calf is anxious to be nursed. It is all an allusion to the close connection between cause and effect. We are taught a lesson in reciprocal attachment and unity, i.e. that nothing exists outside of G’d Himself, that He is inextricably involved with all that He has created. It is this lesson the Rabbis wanted to teach us when they said that מקדש and משכן can be used interchangeably; the exterior, visible part, is called משכן, whereas the interior, invisible part, is called מקדש. We have a further clear allusion to this relationship between cause and effect, the visible and the invisible, when the Torah describes the way the קרשים, planks of the Tabernacle, were joined together. The Torah (Exodus 26,24) uses the term “תאמם, twins,” when describing the manner in which these planks were joined to each other. When ??? they are described as*

תמים, perfect. We have here a description of the essence of the Tabernacle, i.e. that it was a microcosm.

The way man is created, body and soul, is compared to the meaning of *Shemot / Exodus 25:8*, מִקְדָּשׁ וְשֹׁכְנֵתִי 25:8 'Let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them. (NASB) The idea is that the מִקְדָּשׁ and מִשְׁכָּן may be used interchangeably, where the exterior, visible part, is called מִשְׁכָּן, whereas the interior, the invisible part, is called מִקְדָּשׁ. Note how significant these comments are if we compare this to the opening comment, that man is composed of body and soul. The body is the visible part, the soul is the invisible part, and there is an interchangeable quality between the body/soul based upon the Torah concept of sanctification, setting apart, making a place for the Lord to dwell, the Lord preparing our hearts in Yeshua the Messiah, and by giving us His Spirit. As a result of these things, we are called to live in the manner that demonstrates the spiritual condition, our hearts have been sanctified, and set apart as a holy place for the Lord to dwell. The way we live our lives effects our soul. If one lives in sin, the soul becomes dark, whereas, if one lives in righteousness, the soul becomes bright and filled with the things of God. These are very rabbinic concepts, and these very same concepts may be found throughout the Apostolic Writings. Let's Pray!

Heavenly Father,

We Praise Your Holy Name! Thank You Lord for equipping us to live our lives for Your glory. Thank You for the joy you have placed in our hearts to serve you and to live our lives for you. 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.

In Yeshua's (Jesus') Name we pray! Amen!

Be Blessed in Yeshua, Christ our Messiah!

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

## Notes