

## ספר תהילים צט | Tehillim / Psalms 99

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### Crediting Righteousness to Yourself?

In this week's study from *Tehillim / Psalms 98:1-9*, the Psalm opens saying, א יהוה מלך ירָגְזוּ עַמִּים יֹשֵׁב, א 99:1 *The Lord reigns, let the peoples tremble; He is enthroned above the cherubim, let the earth shake! (NASB)* In this psalm, David speaks of the authority and power of God, the people trembling, and His dwelling above the cherubim. Why does the psalmist speak of our Father dwelling above the cherubim? David continues saying, ב יהוה בציון גדול וְרָם הוּא עַל-כָּל-הָעַמִּים: ג יודו שְׁמֶךָ גְדוֹל וְנוֹרָא, ב 99:2 *The Lord is great in Zion, And He is exalted above all the peoples. 99:3 Let them praise Your great and awesome name; Holy is He. (NASB)* What does it mean “the Lord is great in Zion?” Why are the people called out to praise His Name? David explains this saying, ד וְעַז מְלֶךְ מִשְׁפָּט אָהֵב אֶת־הַכּוֹנֵנֶת, ד 99:4 *The strength of the King loves justice; You have established equity; You have executed justice and righteousness in Jacob. (NASB)* Because the Lord brings righteousness, holiness, and justice with Him and give these things to His people. It is for this reason we are called to ו מִשָּׁה וְאַהֲרֹן | בְּכַהֲנֵי וְשִׁמוּאֵל בְּקִרְיָאֵי שְׁמוֹ קִרְיָאֵי, ו 99:5 *Exalt the Lord our God And worship at His footstool; Holy is He. (NASB)* David continues saying, ז בְּעַמּוּד עָנָן יְדַבֵּר אֱלֹהֵי־הֵם שְׁמָרוּ יְעֻדְתֵּי וְחֻקֵּי-נְתִן-לָמוֹ: ח יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֶת־הַעֲנִיָּתָם אֵל נִשְׂא הַיִּיֵּת לָהֶם וְנִקְּמָם עַל-עֲלִילוֹתָם: ט רוממו יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִי לְהֵרָם רַגְלָיו קְדוֹשׁ הוּא: י 99:6 *Moses and Aaron were among His priests, And Samuel was among those who called on His name; They called upon the Lord and He answered them. 99:7 He spoke to them in the pillar of cloud; They kept His testimonies And the statute that He gave them. (NASB)* He speaks of the Torah account of Moshe and Aaron calling upon the name of the Lord, exalting His name. He also speaks of the prophet Samuel calling upon the name of the Lord. In both cases, the Lord answered Moshe, Aaron, and Samuel because they kept His testimonies. What does it mean to keep the Testimony of God? Is this not synonymous to obeying God's Torah? David concludes his psalm saying, יא יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֶת־הַעֲנִיָּתָם אֵל נִשְׂא הַיִּיֵּת לָהֶם וְנִקְּמָם עַל-עֲלִילוֹתָם: יב רוממו יהוה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִי לְהֵרָם, יב 99:8 *O Lord our God, You answered them; You were a forgiving God to them, And yet an avenger of their evil deeds. 99:9 Exalt the Lord our God And worship at His holy hill, For holy is the Lord our God. (NASB)* David says the Lord answered in the manner of forgiveness, and it is for these reasons we are to worship the Lord at His holy Hill in Jerusalem.

עברית	Hebrew	ארמי	Aramaic	ελληνικός	Greek
<b>ספר תהלים פרק צט</b>	<b>ספר טוביה פרק צט</b>	<b>ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 99</b>			
א יהוה מלך ירָגְזוּ עַמִּים יֹשֵׁב בְּרוּכִים תִּבְנוֹט הָאָרֶץ: ב יהוה בְּצִיּוֹן גְּדוֹל וְרָם הוּא עַל-כָּל- הָעַמִּים: ג יודו שְׁמֶךָ גְּדוֹל וְנוֹרָא קְדוֹשׁ הוּא: ד וְעַז מְלֶךְ מִשְׁפָּט אָהֵב אֶת־הַכּוֹנֵנֶת מִישְׁרֵים מִשְׁפָּט וְצִדְקָה בְּיַעֲקֹב   אֶת־הַעֲשִׂית:	א יהוה מלך יזועון עמיא די שכיי נתיה שריא בני כרוביא יזעזע ארעא: ב יהוה בציון רבא ורמא הוא על כל עממיא: ג יהודון שמך רבא ודחילא קדישא הוא: ד ועור שניה דמלכא דדינא רחים את את קינתא תריצותא דינא וצדקתא ביי עקב את עבדת:	99:1 ψαλμὸς τῷ Δαυιδ ὁ κύριος ἐβασίλευσεν ὀργιζέσθωσαν λαοὶ ὁ καθήμενος ἐπὶ τῶν χερουβιν σαλευθήτω ἡ γῆ 99:2 κύριος ἐν Σιων μέγας καὶ ὑψηλός ἐστιν ἐπὶ πάντα τοὺς λαοὺς 99:3 ἐξομολογησάσθωσαν τῷ ὀνόματί σου τῷ μεγάλῳ ὅτι φοβερόν καὶ ἅγιόν ἐστιν 99:4 καὶ τιμὴ βασιλείως κρίσιν ἀγαπᾷ σὺ ἠτοίμασας εὐθύτητας κρίσιν καὶ δικαιοσύνην ἐν Ἰακωβ σὺ ἐποίησας			

<p>ה רוממו יהוה אלהינו והשתחוו להדם רגליו קדוש הוא: ו משה ואהרן   בכהניו ושמואל בקראי שמו קראים אל-יהוה והוא יענם: ז בעמוד ענן ידבר אליהם שִׁמְרוּ עֲדֹתָיו וְחַק נִתֵּן-לָמוֹ: ח יהוה אלהינו אתה ענייתם אל נשאת הַיִּתְּ לָהֶם וְנִקֵּם עַל-עֲלִילוֹתָם: ט רוממו יהוה אלהינו והשתחוו להר קדשו כִּי-קָדוֹשׁ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ:</p>	<p>ה שבחו קדם יהוה אלהנא וסגידו לבית מקדשיה קדיש הוא: ו משה ואהרן בכהנוי דמסרו נפשהון מטול עמא דיהוה ושמואל אמטולהון צלי קדם יהוה היך אבהת עלמא דצלו בשמיה מצלין קדם יהוה והוא עני יתהון: ז בעמוד ענני יקרא ממליל עמהון נטרו פיקודתא סהידותיה וקיים דיהב להון: ח יהוה אלהנא את עניית יתהון להון אלהא שביק הויתא לעמך אמטולהון ומיתפרע על עובדיהון: ט שבחו קדם יהוה אלהנא וסגידו לטור בית מקדשיה ארום קדיש יהוה אלהנא:</p>	<p>99:5 ὑψοῦτε κύριον τὸν θεὸν ἡμῶν καὶ προσκυνεῖτε τῷ ὑποποδίῳ τῶν ποδῶν αὐτοῦ ὅτι ἅγιός ἐστιν 99:6 Μωσῆς καὶ Ααρων ἐν τοῖς ἱερεῦσιν αὐτοῦ καὶ Σαμουηλ ἐν τοῖς ἐπικαλουμένοις τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ ἐπεκαλοῦντο τὸν κύριον καὶ αὐτὸς ἐπήκουσεν αὐτῶν 99:7 ἐν στύλῳ νεφέλης ἐλάλει πρὸς αὐτοῦς ἐφύλασσον τὰ μαρτύρια αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰ προστάγματα ἃ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς 99:8 κύριε ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν σὺ ἐπήκουες αὐτῶν ὁ θεὸς σὺ εὐίλατος ἐγίνου αὐτοῖς καὶ ἐκδικῶν ἐπὶ πάντα τὰ ἐπιτηδεύματα αὐτῶν 99:9 ὑψοῦτε κύριον τὸν θεὸν ἡμῶν καὶ προσκυνεῖτε εἰς ὄρος ἅγιον αὐτοῦ ὅτι ἅγιος κύριος ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν</p>
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<p><b>Tehillim / Psalms 99</b> 99:1 The Lord reigns, let the peoples tremble; He is enthroned above the cherubim, let the earth shake! 99:2 The Lord is great in Zion, And He is exalted above all the peoples. 99:3 Let them praise Your great and awesome name; Holy is He. 99:4 The strength of the King loves justice; You have established equity; You have executed justice and righteousness in Jacob. 99:5 Exalt the Lord our God And worship at His footstool; Holy is He. 99:6 Moses and Aaron were among His priests, And Samuel was among those who called on His name; They called upon the Lord and He answered them. 99:7 He spoke to them in the pillar of cloud; They kept His testimonies And the statute that He gave them. 99:8 O Lord our God, You answered them; You were a forgiving God to them, And yet an avenger of their evil deeds. 99:9 Exalt the Lord our God And worship at His holy hill, For holy is the Lord our God. (NASB)</p>	<p><b>Toviyah / Psalms 99</b> 99:1 The Lord reigns, the peoples will tremble; he whose presence abides among the cherubim will shake the earth. 99:2 The Lord is great in Zion; and he is high over all the Gentiles. 99:3 They will confess his name, great and fearful; he is holy. 99:4 And you love the strength of the king of justice; you have established integrity; you have made justice and righteousness in Jacob. 99:5 Sing praise in the presence of the Lord our God, and bow down towards his sanctuary; he is holy. 99:6 Moses and Aaron are among his priests who gave their life for the people of the Lord, and Samuel prayed for them before the Lord, like the fathers of old, who prayed in his name; they would pray in his presence and he would answer them. 99:7 In the pillar of glorious clouds he would speak with them; they kept the commandments [of] his testimony, and the covenant that he gave to them. 99:8 O Lord our God, you answered them; you were a forgiving God for your people for their sake, and take vengeance for their deeds. 99:9 Sing praise in the presence of the Lord our God, and bow down towards the mount of his sanctuary, for the Lord our God is holy. (EMC)</p>	<p><b>Psalmoi / Psalms 99</b> A Psalm of David. 99:1 The Lord reigns; let the people rage; it is he that sits upon the cherubs, let the earth be moved. 99:2 The Lord is great in Sion, and is high over all the people. 99:3 Let them give thanks to thy great name; for it is terrible and holy. 99:4 And the king's honor loves judgment; thou hast prepared equity, thou hast wrought judgment and justice in Jacob. 99:5 Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy. 99:6 Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name; they called upon the Lord, and he heard them. 99:7 He spoke to them in a pillar of cloud; they kept his testimonies, and the ordinances which he gave them. 99:8 O Lord our God, thou heardest them; O God, thou becamest propitious to them, though thou didst take vengeance on all their devices. 99:9 Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his holy mountain; for the Lord our God is holy. (LXX)</p>
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In this week's study from *Tehillim / Psalms 98:1-9*, the Psalm opens saying, אִיְהוָה מְלֶכֶה יִרְגָזוּ עַמִּים יֵשֶׁב : 99:1 *The Lord reigns, let the peoples tremble; He is enthroned above the cherubim, let the earth shake! (NASB)* In this psalm, David speaks of the authority and power of God, the people trembling, and His dwelling above the cherubim. Why does the psalmist speak of our Father dwelling above the cherubim? There are various references in the Scriptures that speak of the Lord who dwells above the cherubim, such as what we find in *Shemot / Exodus 25:22, and Isaiah 37:16, and 40:22.*

***Shemot / Exodus 25:22***

*25:22 "There I will meet with you; and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, I will speak to you about all that I will give you in commandment for the sons of Israel. (NASB)*

***Isaiah 37:16***

*37:16 "O LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, who is enthroned above the cherubim, You are the God, You alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. (NASB)*

***Isaiah 40:22***

*40:22 It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, And its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, Who stretches out the heavens like a curtain And spreads them out like a tent to dwell in. (NASB)*

According to the Torah, God's presence, is located between the two cherubim over the mercy seat. There the Lord God would meet with His people, "to speak there unto them" (*Shemot / Exodus 29:42*). The special seat of the Divine presence was to be the empty space above the mercy seat, between the two cherubim, and above the ark of the covenant. This may be where David received his Torah based understanding on the Lord who reigns, the peoples tremble, and the Lord as being enthroned above the cherubim. Isaiah states something similar, of the Lord being enthroned above the cherubim, and in *Isaiah 40:22*, parallels the earth and the tent of the heavens as being a dwelling place, which alludes to the Ohel Moed. The word cherubim is described in two books of the Tanach, Bereshit / Genesis and Ezekiel. In *Bereshit / Genesis 3:24* the cherubim guard the Garden of Eden, following Adam and Eve's banishment from the Garden, and are described as holding flaming swords. Ezekiel speaks of the cherubim in the following way.

***Ezekiel 1:1-14***

*1:1 Now it came about in the thirtieth year; on the fifth day of the fourth month, while I was by the river Chebar among the exiles, the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God. 1:2 (On the fifth of the month in the fifth year of King Jehoiachin's exile, 1:3 the word of the Lord came expressly to Ezekiel the priest, son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and there the hand of the Lord came upon him.) 1:4 As I looked, behold, a storm wind was coming from the north, a great cloud with fire flashing forth continually and a bright light around it, and in its midst something like glowing metal in the midst of the fire. 1:5 Within it there were figures resembling four living beings. And this was their appearance: they had human form, 1:6 Each of them had four faces and four wings. 1:7 Their legs were straight and their feet were like a calf's hoof, and they gleamed like burnished bronze. 1:8 Under their wings on their four sides were human hands. As for the faces and wings of the four of them, 1:9 their wings touched one another; their faces did not turn when they moved, each went straight forward. 1:10 As for the form of their faces, each had the face of a man; all four had the face of a lion on the right and the face of a bull on the left, and all four had the face of an eagle. 1:11 Such were their faces. Their wings were spread out above; each had two touching another being, and two covering their bodies. 1:12 And each went straight*

forward; wherever the spirit was about to go, they would go, without turning as they went. 1:13 In the midst of the living beings there was something that looked like burning coals of fire, like torches darting back and forth among the living beings. The fire was bright, and lightning was flashing from the fire. 1:14 And the living beings ran to and fro like bolts of lightning. (NASB)

#### **Ezekiel 1:22-24**

1:22 Now over the heads of the living beings there was something like an expanse, like the awesome gleam of crystal, spread out over their heads. 1:23 Under the expanse their wings were stretched out straight, one toward the other; each one also had two wings covering its body on the one side and on the other. 1:24 I also heard the sound of their wings like the sound of abundant waters as they went, like the voice of the Almighty, a sound of tumult like the sound of an army camp; whenever they stood still, they dropped their wings. (NASB)

#### **Ezekiel 10:3-8**

10:3 Now the cherubim were standing on the right side of the temple when the man entered, and the cloud filled the inner court. 10:4 Then the glory of the Lord went up from the cherub to the threshold of the temple, and the temple was filled with the cloud and the court was filled with the brightness of the glory of the Lord. 10:5 Moreover, the sound of the wings of the cherubim was heard as far as the outer court, like the voice of God Almighty when He speaks. 10:6 It came about when He commanded the man clothed in linen, saying, 'Take fire from between the whirling wheels, from between the cherubim,' he entered and stood beside a wheel. 10:7 Then the cherub stretched out his hand from between the cherubim to the fire which was between the cherubim, took some and put it into the hands of the one clothed in linen, who took it and went out. 10:8 The cherubim appeared to have the form of a man's hand under their wings. (NASB)

#### **Ezekiel 10:12, 14, 20-22**

10:12 Their whole body, their backs, their hands, their wings and the wheels were full of eyes all around, the wheels belonging to all four of them. (NASB)

10:14 And each one had four faces. The first face was the face of a cherub, the second face was the face of a man, the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle. (NASB)

10:20 These are the living beings that I saw beneath the God of Israel by the river Chebar; so I knew that they were cherubim. 10:21 Each one had four faces and each one four wings, and beneath their wings was the form of human hands. 10:22 As for the likeness of their faces, they were the same faces whose appearance I had seen by the river Chebar. Each one went straight ahead. (NASB)

Ezekiel describes the cherubim as being in the presence and glory of God. Ezekiel's vision describes the cherubim as having six wings, and they function as part of holding up the temple in heaven. The text describes the glory of God as going up from the cherubim. *Ezekiel 10:20* describes the cherubim as being beneath the Lord in heaven, which suggests that the Lord is above all, the Lord is the one to be worshiped and praised, all things, everything takes second seat, a position below the Lord God our Father in heaven.

The Talmud Bava Batra 99a describes the cherubim on the kepret (הַכְּפֵרֶת) as being able to move according to the obedience of the Children of Israel.

#### **Talmud Bava Batra 99a**

But in another verse (*II Chronicles 3:13*) it says, "they faced [the walls of] the room"? When

*the people of Israel fulfilled God's will, the cherubim would face each other; and when the people of Israel did not fulfill God's will, the cherubim would face the walls of the room.*

While trying to understand what is meant by the cherubim facing each other where at times they faced the walls, depending upon the people's sins, think of the times when you were able to face someone else you were close to, and times when you needed to face away. What allows us to "face" someone? Companionship, peace, love, etc. What causes us to turn away? Shame causes us to turn our faces away from one another. In a similar manner, the Talmud describes the cherubim taking this approach, as being ashamed and facing away from one another when the people sin. So when the people sinned and the cherubim faced away from one another, they did not function on the keporet in the fashion the Lord wanted, and so the presence of God leaves. When the people repent and turn from their sin, the cherubim are said to turn back facing one another, and the presence of God returns.

Rambam's commentary the Guide for the Perplexed has the following to say concerning the Ezekiel account of the cherubim.

### **Guide for the Perplexed Part 3 1:1**

*(1) IT is well known that there are men whose face is like that of other animals thus the face of some person is like that of a lion, that of another person like that of an ox, and so on: and man's face is described according as the form of his face resembles the form of the face of other animals. By the expressions, "the face of an ox," "the face of a lion," "the face of an eagle" (Ezek, 1:10), the prophet describes a human face inclining towards the forms of these various species. This interpretation can be supported by two proofs. First, the prophet says of the Hayyot in general that "their appearance is this, they have the form of man" (ver. 5), and then in describing each of the Hayyot he attributes to them the face of a man, that of an ox, that of a lion, and that of an eagle. Secondly, in the second description of the Chariot, which is intended as a supplement to the first, the prophet says, Each hath four faces; the one is the face of a cherub, the second a man's face, the third a lion's face, and the fourth that of an eagle (ibid. x. W. He thus clearly indicates that the terms "the face of an ox" and "the face of a cherub" are identical. But cherub designates "a youth." By analogy we explain the two other terms--"the face of a lion" and "the face of an eagle" in the same manner. "The face of the ox" has been singled out on account of the etymology of the Hebrew term shor (ox), as has been indicated by me. It is impossible to assume that this second description refers to the perception of another prophetic vision, because it concludes thus: "This is the Hayyah which I saw at the river Chebar" (ibid. ver. 15). What we intended to explain is now clear:*

(א) ידוע שמבני אדם - אנשים שצורת פניהם דומה לצורת אחד משאר בעלי החיים - עד שתראה איש כאילו פניו דומים לפני אריה ואחר כאילו פניו דומים לפני השור וכיוצא בהם; וכפי אלו הצורות הנוטות אל צורות פני בעלי החיים מכונים בני אדם. כן מה שאמר 'פני שור' ופני אריה ופני נשר' והם כולם 'פני אדם' נוטות אל אלו הצורות של אלו המינים. ויש לך בזה שתי ראיות האחת מהן - אמרו ב'חיות' בכלל "וזה מראיהן - דמות אדם להנה" ואחר כך תאר כל 'חיה' מהן שיש לה 'פני אדם' ופני נשר ופני אריה ופני שור; והראיה השנית - מה שבאר ב'מרכבה' השנית אשר הביא אותה לבאר ענינים שלא נזכרו ב'מרכבה' הראשונה אמר ב'מרכבה' השנית "וארבעה פנים לאחד פני האחד פני הכרוב ופני השני פני אדם והשלישי פני אריה והרביעי פני נשר" - הנה באר שמה שאמר עליו 'פני שור' הוא 'פני הררוב' ו'כרוב' הוא הצעיר לימים מבני אדם - והוא ההקש בשני הפנים הנשארים; ואמנם לא אמר מלת 'פני שור' - להעיר גם כן מצד קצת גזרה כמו שרמזנו בו. ואי אפשר שיאמר אולי זאת השגת צורות אחרות? - מפני שהוא אמר בסוף זה הסיפור השני "היא (החיה אשר ראיתי תחת אלוקי ישראל בנהר כבר". כבר התבאר מה שהחילונו לבאר:

Rambam states that the cherubim according to Ezekiel had the appearance of a man, but their faces resem-

bled a particular animal. These cherubim incline towards the appearance of a particular animal in the sense that there is a particular attribute the vision is attempting to ascribe to each of the four cherubim that were seen in the vision. The ox and the lion have strength and authority. The eagle soars high above, and the man was created as the crown of God's creation having rule over all the living creatures. The description then of the glory of God ascending from the cherubim into the throne room, if we are able to find a parallel here in the context of these angels, created in the image of God, in the form of a man, but having a likeness of the ox, lion, eagle, and man, suggest the manner in which these angels live, having been given power from on high. The ox represents strength, the lion authority, the eagle in the heights, and man as the crown of God's creation. This seems to be an allusion to what the Lord has done for man, creating us in His image, with authority and power over this earth, when we study Torah and apply it to our lives, we soar above the nations, and yet we are men who were designed to live out our lives bringing glory to God. The Lord has endowed these angels with great power, just as He has enabled us giving us the power to make wealth (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 8:18*), we recognize the source of our abilities and give the credit to the Lord in heaven. This is the manner in which the cherubim functioned, they are creatures of great power and authority, and yet their entire lives are directed to the lifting up and bringing glory, honor, and praise unto the Lord God our Father in heaven. In a similar manner, we too are to bring glory and honor and praise unto the Lord God our Father in heaven by the way we live our lives.

David continues in his psalm saying, בִּיהוָה בְּצִיּוֹן גָּדוֹל יְרֵם הוּא עַל-כָּל-הָעַמִּים: ג יוֹדוּ שְׁמֶךָ גָּדוֹל וְנוֹרָא :  
 99:2 *The Lord is great in Zion, And He is exalted above all the peoples.* 99:3 *Let them praise Your great and awesome name; Holy is He.* (NASB) What does it mean “the Lord is great in Zion?” Why are the people called out to praise His Name? Radak (רדק) (Rabbi David Kimhi, 1160–1235 AD), was a medieval rabbi, biblical commentator, philosopher, and grammarian. He has the following to say concerning the Lord being great in Zion.

**Radak on Psalms 99:2 Part 1**

*The Lord is great in Zion – Then He will be great in Zion because there He will be magnified above all the nations when He executes judgment on the wicked. In the midrash Shachar Tov it says: The Lord is great in Zion, when He returns His Presence to Zion, in that moment He is great.*

Note how Radak believes the phrase “The Lord is great in Zion” is referring to His being glorified in Zion above the nations in the sense that He brings judgment upon the wicked. A midrash on this phrase states that the returning of His presence to Zion is what makes Him great. Why do you think that is? The reason may be that the Lord is actively working in men's hearts to turn from sin and walk in His ways. His presence is dependent upon our seeking Him and His ways and His presence returning to Zion suggests Israel has repented and turned from her sinful ways and are seeking the Lord for His help. Radak continues saying the following:

**Radak on Psalms 87:2 Part 1**

*The Lord loves the gates of Zion – It says ‘gates’ because the elders and the wise sit in the gates, as it says “...up to the gate, to the elders...” (Deuteronomy 25:7) and so too in the words of Boaz which describe the elders who were at the gate. (Ruth 4:11) Even though God loves all of the dwelling places of Yaakov, as it says “How goodly are your tents, O Jacob, your dwelling places, O Israel!” (Numbers 24:6) nevertheless He loves the gates of Zion more because there the wise are occupied with the service of God.*

Radak states that the greatness of God in Zion is related to the elders who sit at the gates of Zion. Those who sit at the gates are concerned with what is going on in the city. Looking at the word “gates” (πύλαι) in Hebrew שַׁעֲרִים. In the Tanach, the word “gates” is used in various ways, (i) gates function as a defense against

the enemy, (ii) the word gate may refer to an entire city and to the rulers or army of a city. In *Deuteronomy 16:5* it says ‘You are not allowed to sacrifice the Passover in any of your towns which the Lord your God is giving you; (NASB, הָ לֹא תֹכֵל לְזַבֵּחַ אֶת-הַפֶּסַח בְּאַחַד שַׁעְרֵי אֲשֶׁר-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נָתַן לָךְ; where “gates” is translated as “towns” in the commandment to not sacrifice the Passover in any of your towns which the Lord God is giving you. (*Deuteronomy 17:2* shows a similar use). The City Gate is a Place of Power and Authority!

Parashat Vayishlach (*Bereshit / Genesis 32:3-36:43*) offers some additional insights into the importance of the city gates. The Lord gives Jacob a new name “Israel” and Jacob returns and settles in Eretz Canaan. While in the land, Jacob settles down near the city of shechem (*Bereshit / Genesis 33:18*). While dwelling near Shechem, according to the Scriptures, Shechem the son of Khamor sees Dina, the daughter of Jacob, and desires to take her as a wife. א וַתֵּצֵא דִינָה בִת-לֵאָה אֲשֶׁר יִלְדָה לְיַעֲקֹב לְרָאוֹת בְּכַנּוֹת הָאָרֶץ: ב וַיֵּרָא אֹתָהּ שָׁכֵם בֶּן-חַמּוֹר הַחִוִּי נָשִׂיא הָאָרֶץ וַיִּקַּח אֹתָהּ וַיִּשְׁכַּב אִתָּהּ וַיַּעֲנֶנָּה: ג וַתְּדַבֵּק נַפְשׁוֹ בְּדִינָה בִת-יַעֲקֹב וַיִּצְאֶה אֶת-הַנְּעָר וַיְדַבֵּר עַל-לֵב הַנְּעָר: ד וַיֹּאמֶר שָׁכֵם אֶל-חַמּוֹר אָבִיו לֵאמֹר קַח-לִי אֶת-הַיְלָדָה הַזֹּאת לְאִשָּׁה: ה וַיַּעֲקֹב שָׁמַע פִּי טָמֵא אֶת-דִּינָה בִתּוֹ וּבָנָיו הָיוּ אֶת-מִקְנֵהוּ בַשָּׂדֶה וְהִחַרְשׁ יַעֲקֹב עַד-בָּאָם: ו וַיֵּצֵא חַמּוֹר אָבִי-שָׁכֵם אֶל-יַעֲקֹב לְדַבֵּר אִתּוֹ: ז וּבְנֵי יַעֲקֹב בָּאוּ מִן-הַשָּׂדֶה פְּשָׁמָעַם וַיִּתְעַצְבוּ הַחַנְּנִישִׁים וַיַּחַר לָהֶם מְאֹד כִּי נָבְלָה עָשָׂה בִישְׁרָאֵל לְשָׁכֵם אֶת-בִּת-יַעֲקֹב Now Dinah the daughter of Leah, whom she had borne to Jacob, went out to visit the daughters of the land. 34:2 When Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, the prince of the land, saw her, he took her and lay with her by force. 34:3 He was deeply attracted to Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the girl and spoke tenderly to her. 34:4 So Shechem spoke to his father Hamor, saying, ‘Get me this young girl for a wife.’ 34:5 Now Jacob heard that he had defiled Dinah his daughter; but his sons were with his livestock in the field, so Jacob kept silent until they came in. 34:6 Then Hamor the father of Shechem went out to Jacob to speak with him. 34:7 Now the sons of Jacob came in from the field when they heard it; and the men were grieved, and they were very angry because he had done a disgraceful thing in Israel by lying with Jacob’s daughter, for such a thing ought not to be done. 34:8 But Hamor spoke with them, saying, ‘The soul of my son Shechem longs for your daughter; please give her to him in marriage. (NASB) The sons of Jacob tell Shechem and Khamor that if they are circumcised, they will exchange their sons and daughters and they will be one people. (*Bereshit / Genesis 34:13-16*) Hearing this, Khamor and his son Shechem go to the “gate of the city” and tell the men of the city what they want to do, to be circumcised. Notice how this may be paralleled to conversion and circumcision and entering into the kingdom of heaven. Abraham was giving the promises of God prior to being circumcised, he believed by faith, and then lived out his life according to the mitzvot and chukim of God. On the other hand, these men at Shechem were involving themselves in a conversion ritual in order to become a part of Israel, or to become “acceptable” so they could take part in the blessing, but more likely their motivations were driven by greed and covetousness. So the people of Shechem died because of their sins, their lack of faith, and their reliance upon a conversion ritual to enter into the family of God. This was what the Apostle were afraid would happen with the new gentile believers in *Acts 15*.

It is then written that all of the city agreed (*Bereshit / Genesis 34:24-26*) desiring to acquire all of Israel’s wealth.

<p><b>ספר בראשית פרק לד</b></p>	<p><b>Bereshit / Genesis 34:24-26</b></p>
<p>כד וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אֶל-חַמּוֹר וְאֶל-שָׁכֵם בְּנוֹ כָּל-יִצְחָאִי שְׁעַר עִירוֹ וַיִּמְלּוּ כָּל-זָכָר כָּל-יִצְחָאִי שְׁעַר עִירוֹ: כה וַיְהִי בַיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי בְהִיוֹתָם פְּאֵ-בָיִם וַיִּקְחוּ שְׁנֵי-בְנֵי-יַעֲקֹב שְׁמֹעוֹן וְלֵוִי אֲחֵי דִינָה אִישׁ חָרְבוּ וַיָּבֵאוּ עַל-הָעִיר בָּטָח וַיַּהַרְגוּ כָּל-זָכָר: כו וְאֶת-חַמּוֹר וְאֶת-שָׁכֵם בְּנוֹ הָרְגוּ לְפִי-חֶרֶב וַיִּקְחוּ אֶת-דִּינָה מִבֵּית שָׁכֵם וַיֵּצְאוּ:</p>	<p>34:24 All who went out of the gate of his city listened to Hamor and to his son Shechem, and every male was circumcised, all who went out of the gate of his city. 34:25 Now it came about on the third day, when they were in pain, that two of Jacob’s sons, Simeon and Levi, Dinah’s brothers, each took his sword and came upon the city unawares, and killed every male. 34:26 They killed Hamor and his son Shechem with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah from Shechem’s house, and went forth. (NASB)</p>

Based upon this context, the gate of the city was known biblically as a place of power. The one who controls the gate is the one who has the power to allow someone in or out of the city. Sitting at the gates enabled one to know everything that was going on in the city, especially that of a walled city. In God's Kingdom, the gate is the only way whereby we gain access to the Lord. Yeshua said in *John 10:1* "I tell you the truth, the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. (NIV) Yeshua then states in *John 10:9* I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture. (NIV) and in *John 14:6* Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. (NIV) Note that these men of Shechem were following this gate analogy but were trusting in their ritual conversion as opposed to trusting in the Lord God of Israel, and in the context of the NT in Yeshua the Messiah. In Parashat Vayishlach, all of the men who entered in and went out through the gate of the city needed to be circumcised according to the agreement. Similarly today, we must have circumcised hearts in order to enter in through the gates to the Kingdom of Heaven. This is accomplished by faith in God's gate keeper, Yeshua the Messiah! These Scriptures direct us to the true gate, the door, the way, the truth, and the life, the only way to the Lord our Father who is in heaven. This is the significance of Radak's statement of the Lord who loves the gates of Zion because of the elders and the wise who sit in the place of authority, the righteous who seek the counsel of the Lord for their judgments. Note again, the righteous seek the counsel of God and trust in Him, whereas the unrighteous trust in themselves or in some deed which they count to themselves as merit.

The book of *Ruth 3:11* says 'Now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you whatever you ask, for all my people in the *city* know that you are a woman of excellence. (NASB, תַּיִתּוּן בְּתוּלַת אֱלֹהִים אֵלֶיךָ וְעַתָּה בְּתוּלַת אֱלֹהִים אֵלֶיךָ וְעַתָּה בְּתוּלַת אֱלֹהִים אֵלֶיךָ) equating "gate" with the "city." *Isaiah 14:31* also equates "gate" with "city." In these various instances the noun is used as a substitute for something with which it is closely associated. Take for example *Tehillim / Psalms 24:7* that states *24:7 Lift up your heads, O gates, And be lifted up, O ancient doors, That the King of glory may come in!* (NASB, שִׂאוּ שַׁעְרֵיכֶם וְהִנְשִׂאוּ מַדְבָּעֵיכֶם) whereas the LXX says "lift up your gates, O rulers." Here the rulers of the city control the gates and therefore the gates refer to the city. The power and protection of the city. Keeping this in mind, *Judges 16:1-3* has the following to say:

### **Judges 16:1-3**

*16:1 Now Samson went to Gaza and saw a harlot there, and went in to her. 16:2 When it was told to the Gazites, saying, 'Samson has come here,' they surrounded the place and lay in wait for him all night at the gate of the city. And they kept silent all night, saying, 'Let us wait until the morning light, then we will kill him.' 16:3 Now Samson lay until midnight, and at midnight he arose and took hold of the doors of the city gate and the two posts and pulled them up along with the bars; then he put them on his shoulders and carried them up to the top of the mountain which is opposite Hebron. (NASB)*

According to *Judges 16:1-3* the men of the city were laying in wait for Samson to kill him at the gate of the city which illustrates the strength of the city. Samson then rose up at midnight and took the city gate and carried them to the top of the mountain. Samson was making a show of his strength and the empowering of God and how their strength was nothing compared to the Lord's power.

Radak also says the following:

### **Radak on Psalms 87:3 Part 1**

*Glorious things – This means glorious attributes, and is speaking of those that inhabit you. Or its explanation is that glorious virtues will be attributed to you, that you are elevated over all lands in many things. The settled world is divided into seven portions, and Jerusalem is in the center portion, which is in the center of the civilized world. Thus it says "...dwelling on the navel of the earth." (Ezekiel 38:12) Therefore its air is good, mingled from all airs, good for the health of the body and wisdom as it says "The fairest of branches, the joy of the*



*entire earth...*” (Psalms 48:3) and our Sages said “the air of the land of Israel makes one wise.” (Baba Batra 158b)

Note how Radak connects the glorious things to those who inhabit the city. He speaks of the glorious virtues which are attributed to the people who are the sons of God by the way the Lord has worked in their lives and how they live their lives for the Lord God of Israel. This has the effect of elevating the people above the nations. Jerusalem is considered at the center of the civilized world because of the attributes of God and His ways (the Torah). Men do not run amok with wickedness but are commanded to be good to one another, to help a brother, and to love their neighbor and God. It is for these things the Lord is praised, and we are called to give praise unto the Lord God in heaven because of what He has done and who He is.

ד וְעַז מְלֶךְ מִשְׁפָּט אָהֵב אֶתָּה כּוֹנֵנֶת מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל מִשְׁפָּט וְצִדְקָה | אֶתָּה עָשִׂיתָ : 99:4 *The strength of the King loves justice; You have established equity; You have executed justice and righteousness in Jacob. (NASB)* Notice the psalmist writes עָשִׂיתָ אֶתָּה saying “you have done” as a reference to the Lord causing righteousness and justice to be found in Israel. Because the Lord brings righteousness, holiness, and justice with Him and give these things to His people. It is for this reason we are called to ה רוממו יהוה אלהינו והשתחויו להדם רגליו קדוש הוא : 99:5 *Exalt the Lord our God And worship at His footstool; Holy is He. (NASB)* The Aramaic Targum states, ד ועושניה דמלכא דדינא רחיים את, אתקינתא תריצותא דינא וצדקתא ביעקב את עבדת: ה שבחו קדם יהוה אלהנא וסגידו לבית מקדשיה קדיש הוא: 99:4 *And you love the strength of the king of justice; you have established integrity; you have made justice and righteousness in Jacob. 99:5 Sing praise in the presence of the Lord our God, and bow down towards his sanctuary; he is holy. (EMC)* The rabbis translate the MT to say the Lord makes justice and righteousness in Israel, and we sing in the presence of the Lord bowing towards His sanctuary, which is considered synonymous to רגליו להדם רגליו bowing down at his footstool.

ו מִשֶּׁה וְאַהֲרֹן | בְּכֹהֲנָיו וְשִׁמְוֵאל בְּקִרְאֵי שְׁמוֹ קְרָאִים אֶל־יְהוָה וְהוּא יַעֲנֵם: ז בְּעֹמֹד, 99:6 *Moses and Aaron were among His priests, And Samuel was among those who called on His name; They called upon the Lord and He answered them. 99:7 He spoke to them in the pillar of cloud; They kept His testimonies And the statute that He gave them. (NASB)* He speaks of the Torah account of Moshe and Aaron calling upon the name of the Lord, exalting His name. Note how the Targum translates this verse to say, ו משה ואהרן בכהנוי דמסרו נפשהון מטול עמא דיהוה ושמואל אמטולהון, צלי קדם יהוה היך אבהת עלמא דצלו בשמיה מצלין קדם יהוה והוא עני יתהון: ז בעמוד ענני יקרא ממליל עמהון: 99:6 *Moses and Aaron are among his priests who gave their life for the people of the Lord, and Samuel prayed for them before the Lord, like the fathers of old, who prayed in his name; they would pray in his presence and he would answer them. 99:7 In the pillar of glorious clouds he would speak with them; they kept the commandments [off] his testimony, and the covenant that he gave to them. (EMC)* The Targum translates Moshe and Aaron giving their lives for the people. What does that mean? The classical commentators have the following to say concerning the meaning of Moshe and Aaron giving their lives for the people.

#### **Akeidat Yitzchak 88:14**

*Our conduct vis a vis G'd is based on the very same principles. Some people expect G'd to do their bidding, relying on their merit and presenting their claim to G'd. Once these merits have been exhausted, they appear before G'd pleading their case through prayer. Concerning these two groups of people, the Psalmist says “Moses and Aaron of His priests, and Samuel who called on His name,” meaning the former have deeds to their credit, the latter employed the venue of prayer. (Psalms 99:6)*

Akeidat Yitzchak states that there are certain principles of the faith that people use to get the Lord to do their bidding. These principles he is speaking of is related to living and striving for righteousness, which is

credited as merit in the sense that by doing what is right, the Lord has no reason to turn away from answering one's prayer. Moshe and Aaron are said to have this kind of credit to their account going before the Lord on behalf of the people in prayer. Shney Lichot explains further the meaning of these verses.

### **Shney Luchot HaBrit Korach Torah Ohr 71**

*I have explained already that these three virtues have to be practiced both vis-a-vis G'd and vis-a-vis man. This is the meaning of ומצא חן ושכל טוב בעיני אלוקים ואדם, "and you will find favor and high esteem in the eyes of G'd and man" (Proverbs 3:4). This is what is meant that Samuel was טוב עם אלוקים ועם אנשים, that Samuel was "good to G'd and to men." This also explains what זרע אנ"י meant when she prayed to G'd that He should grant her שים, which our sages explained to mean that she asked for a son who would combine within himself the virtues of Moses and Aaron (Samuel I 1:11). We also find that Moses and Aaron are compared to Samuel in Psalms 99:6 "Moses and Aaron among His priests and Samuel amongst those who call on His name, and He answers them."*

Sheny Lichot states that there are virtues that are to be practiced by both the Lord God in heaven and by man. The practice of righteousness on God's behalf is connected to His mercy, and to the Psalm saying that the Lord will make righteousness and justice to prevail in Israel. These virtues are given to man, and then the man is to have faith in the God of Israel and walk in His ways based on his faith and practice righteous living.

### **Sforno on Deuteronomy 32:3:1**

*אקרא 'כי שם ה' אקרא, If this is as I said, then you Israel who have received these words of wisdom, will appreciate that the thrust of my address is a prayer; a prayer that all of us, including myself, will experience the ultimate redemption after the last exile. [Moses includes this in his preamble in order to make sure that his listeners will not fail to see the forest by concentrating too much on the individual trees. Ed.] Our author first proceeds to quote examples of such formulations as Moses uses here meaning prayer. We find in Lamentations 3:55 קראתי 'שמך ה' מבור תחתיות, "I have called on Your Name from the depths of the Pit." Clearly, Jeremiah refers to his prayer. We read in Psalms 99:6 concerning the trio of Moses, Aaron, and Samuel, that they were known as יענם וקראי שמו והוא יענם, "that whenever they prayed to G'd He would respond to them favorably." Moses therefore tells the people: "when I pray for the in-gathering of the exiles I want G'd to orchestrate this so that it is like the eagle rousing his young and carrying them to a new destination on the back of his wings." (verse 11) Moses continues, focusing in his prayer on the arrival of the Messiah by saying 'ה' בדד ינחנו, G'd will do this all on His own, without anyone's assistance (verse 23). At the very end of his shirah, (verse 43) he exclaims 'ה' בדד ינחנו עמו, which is equivalent to the instruction in our verse here of 'ה' בדד ינחנו עמו, render glory to our G'd.*

Sforno opens with the words 'כי שם ה' אקרא "I will call upon the name of the Lord" connecting this to receiving the words of wisdom (Torah) and the redemption of His people from exile. The redemption of God is based upon the Lord God of Israel and not upon the people, this is described as Moshe and Aaron going before the Lord in prayer saying, "when I pray for the in-gathering of the exiles I want G'd to orchestrate this so that it is like the eagle rousing his young and carrying them to a new destination on the back of his wings." Both Moshe and Aaron go before the Lord with their own lives in their hands and seek the counsel of God on behalf the people. Sforno states "Moses continues, focusing in his prayer on the arrival of the Messiah by saying 'ה' בדד ינחנו, G'd will do this all on His own, without anyone's assistance (verse 23)." Salvation and redemption coming at the hand of the Messiah is a function of the Lord God alone. The Lord

answered their prayers, and it is for this reason glory and praise are rendered unto the Lord.

### **Rashi on Numbers 16:7:1**

לוי רב לכם בני לוי means, “It is a great (an important) thing that I have told you, ye sons of Levi”). But were they not fools in that although he so sternly warned them they nevertheless undertook to offer! They, however, sinned against their own souls (i.e., they were regardless of their lives) as it is said, (17:3) “the censurers of these sinners against their souls”. — But Korah who certainly was a clever (lit., open-eyed) man, what reason had he to commit this folly? His mind’s eye misled him. He saw by prophetic vision a line of great men (more lit., a great chain) descending from him, amongst them the prophet Samuel who was equal in importance to Moses and Aaron together (cf. Psalms 99:6 **בְּקִרְאֵי מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֲרֹן בְּכַהֲנֵי וְשִׂמְוֵאל בְּקִרְאֵי** (שמו), and he said to himself, “On his account I shall escape the punishment”. And he further saw twenty-four Mishmars (shifts of Levites who formed the Temple Choir) arising among his grand-children, all of them prophesying by the Holy Spirit, — as it is said, (I Chronicles 25:5) “All these (prominent musicians) were sons of Heiman” (Heiman was a descendant of Korah; cf. I Chronicles 6:18–23). — He said, “Is it possible that all this dignity is to arise from me and I shall remain silent (be myself of no importance)?” On this account he joined the others in order to attain to that prerogative, because he had indeed heard from the mouth of Moses that all else of them would perish and one would escape: “He whom the Lord will choose will be holy”. He mistakenly applied this to himself. But he had not seen correctly, for his sons repented of their rebellious attitude and therefore did not die at that time (cf. Numbers 26:11), and it was from them that Samuel and the Levitical singers were descended. Moses, however, foresaw this. *Tanchuma.*

Rashi contrasts sin to the righteousness of God. Men credit to themselves righteousness by their deeds, and mislead themselves to believe the Lord will work to their benefit because of their deeds. Rashi says the correct perspective is to rely upon the Lord for the accreditation of righteousness. Paul agrees saying in *Romans 4:24* but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness--for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead. (NIV) We believe in our Father in heaven, the Lord God of Israel, who raised Yeshua to life from the dead. Having Faith in this powerful work of the Messiah causes one to receive the righteousness of God. Living our lives by faith causes righteousness to be credited to our lives by the way we live.

### **Darashos HaRan 9:10**

*It is, nonetheless, true, however, that the greater the man the less he requires of such mediation; and the lesser [the man], the more, less refined, mediation he requires. This is what was intimated by Moses our teacher, may peace be upon him, in this parshah (Deuteronomy 4:11): “And you drew near and stood at the foot of the mountain; and the mountain burned with fire until the heart of heaven: darkness, cloud, and mist.” The last three words are stressed to inform them that the profusion of Divine effluence at that exalted encounter required (in point of their frailty) many mediating agents tending to thickness. This is the intent of the numeration: “darkness, cloud, and mist.” The duplication here stresses the grossness of the mediating agents. And all this was needed for Israel, but not for Moses. For though when the Blessed One spoke with Moses there was a pillar of cloud between them, as indicated by the plain meaning of the verse, viz. (Exodus 33:9): “And it was when Moses came to the tent that the pillar of cloud descended and stood at the entrance to the tent...,” and (Psalms 99:6-7): “Moses and Aaron among His priests, and Samuel among those who call upon His name; they called upon the L-rd and He answered them. In a pillar of cloud He spoke to them...”, these verses seeming to indicate that most of G-d’s converse with Mo-*

*ses was mediated by a pillar of cloud — still, even if we say that this was so, this mediation was not so gross as to be referred to as “darkness, cloud, and mist.” The latter variety was necessitated by the relative frailty of Israel.*

Darashos HaRan speaks of the greater and the lesser mediation on behalf of the one who sins. The commentary goes on to stress the significance of the wording in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 4:11* on the descriptions of the mountain of Sinai “*the mountain burned with fire until the heart of heaven: darkness, cloud, and mist.*” These things separated man from the Lord God in heaven. Even Moshe was separated by the pillar indicated by the meaning of *Shemot / Exodus 33:9*, the cloud stood at the entrance to the tent standing in between them as he called upon the name of God. This occurred for Moshe, Aaron, and Samuel all who called upon the Lord and He answered them from the cloud. The Lord worked in this way because of the frailty of Israel, because of her sins. The people need a mediator, and this was the reason the Torah speaks prophetically of another mediator coming, of a Messiah greater than Moshe. This Messiah is described according to Hebrews in the following way.

### **Hebrews 1:1-3**

*1:1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, 1:2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. 1:3 And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high (NASB)*

Both Moshe, Aaron, and Samuel bore the testimony of God by the way they lived their lives. Yeshua the Messiah also bore the testimony of God, and according to Hebrews, he is the radiance of the glory of God. The rabbinic commentary also states that it is in a similar manner we take on the glory of God, according to the *Mishnah Pirkei Avot 3:2*.

### **Mishnah Pirkei Avot 3:2**

*Rabbi Chanina, the Deputy High Priest, says: Pray for the welfare of the government, for were it not for the fear of it, man would swallow his fellow alive. Rabbi Chananya ben Teradyon says: Two who are sitting together and there are no words of Torah [spoken] between them, this is a session of scorners, as it is said (Psalms 1:1): “[Happy is the man who has] not . . . sat in the session of the scorners.” But two who are sitting together and there are words of Torah [spoken] between them, the Divine Presence rests with them, as it is said (Malachi 3:16): “Then those who feared the Lord spoke one with another, and the Lord hearkened and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before Him, for those who feared the Lord and for those who thought upon His Name.” I have no [Scriptural support for this] except [in a case of] two. From where [is there proof that] that even [when there is only] one [person studying Torah], the Holy One, blessed be He, determines a reward for him? As it is said (Lamentations 3:28): “He sits alone and is silent, since he takes [a reward] for it.”*

The Mishnah states that when two sit together speaking and discussing God’s word, the glory of God descends upon them and God’s presence is in their midst. The Apostle Peter had similar conclusions with regard to being reviled for the sake of the name of the Messiah.

### **1 Peter 4:14**

*4:14 If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. (NASB)*

The Targum translates that Moshe and Aaron gave their lives for the people, and Samuel prayed for the people where all three prayed in various instances in an intercessory manner, ו משה ואהרן בכהנני דמסרו נפשהון מטול עמא דיהוה ושמואל אמטולהון צלי קדם יהוה היך אבהת עלמא דצלו בשמיה מצלין קדם יהוה והוא נפשהון מטול עמא דיהוה ושמואל אמטולהון צלי קדם יהוה היך אבהת עלמא דצלו בשמיה מצלין קדם יהוה והוא: *Moses and Aaron are among his priests who gave their life for the people of the Lord, and Samuel prayed for them before the Lord, like the fathers of old, who prayed in his name; they would pray in his presence and he would answer them. 99:6* In the pillar of glorious clouds he would speak with them; they kept the commandments [of] his testimony, and the covenant that he gave to them. (EMC) They bore the testimony of God by keeping the ways of God in their lives and encouraging the people to do the same. So in essence, they functioned as a type of messiah in the sense of living for the Lord and guiding the people to seek the Lord God in heaven and His ways.

David concludes his psalm saying, ה יהוה אלהינו אַתָּה עֲנִיתָם אֵל נִשְׂא הַיִּתְּ לָהֶם וְנִקְּמָם עַל-עֲלִילוֹתָם: ט *O Lord our God, You answered them; You were a forgiving God to them, And yet an avenger of their evil deeds. 99:8* Exalt the Lord our God And worship at His holy hill, For holy is the Lord our God. (NASB) David says the Lord answered in the manner of forgiveness, and it is for these reasons we are to worship the Lord at His holy Hill in Jerusalem. The Lord God of Israel is described as “the avenger of evil deeds” yet He is merciful and forgave His people. The Lord desires mercy and provides a time for us to repent from sin and turn from our evil ways. Lord, please help us to recognize sin in our lives, to repent, and to turn from our evil ways. Amen! Let’s Pray!

Heavenly Father,

We thank You for Your mercies each day. Please forgive us and have mercy for we are a sinful people. We truly do seek to serve You all the days of our lives. Lord help us to have the strength to stand for truth and life, and to have faith in Yeshua and a devotion to Your Word each day. We thank You Lord for 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! Please have mercy on us, forgive us for our sins. 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