

## ספר תהילים קא | Tehillim / Psalms 111

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### Paul's Argument for Gentile Inclusion

In this week's study from *Tehillim / Psalms 111:1-10*, the Psalm opens saying, א הללויה | אודה יהוה: *111:1 Praise the Lord! I will give thanks to the Lord with all my heart, In the company of the upright and in the assembly. (NASB)* How joyful and significant is dwelling in the company of the upright? Why does David say "in the company of the upright" and "in the assembly?" What is the difference between the upright and the assembly? He continues saying, ב גדלים מעשי יהוה דרושים, ג הוד-והדר פעלו וצדקתו עמדת לעד: ד זכר עשה לנפלאותיו חנון ורחום יהוה: *111:2 Great are the works of the Lord; They are studied by all who delight in them. 111:3 Splendid and majestic is His work, And His righteousness endures forever. 111:4 He has made His wonders to be remembered; The Lord is gracious and compassionate. (NASB)* In the Lord's wonders, what is David focusing upon here? David is not focusing upon the sign or the wonder of God, he is focusing upon the gracious compassion of God to forgive sin and bless His people. David says the blessing comes in the form of, ה טרף נתן ליראיו יזכר, ו פח מעשיו הגיד לעמו לתת להם נחלת גוים: *111:5 He has given food to those who fear Him; He will remember His covenant forever. 111:6 He has made known to His people the power of His works, In giving them the heritage of the nations. (NASB)* The food on our tables, the cloths on our back, the roof over our head, these are given as a blessing. If you have these things, know for certain the Lord "has" blessed you greatly. There are many today who do not have these things. These things are coupled to, ז מעשי ידיו אמת ומשפט נאמנים כל-פקודיו: ח סמוכים לעד לעולם עשויים, ט פדות | שלח לעמו צנה לעולם בריתו קדוש ונורא שמו: י ראשית חקמה | יראת יהוה שכל טוב באמת וישר: יא פדות | שלח לעמו צנה לעולם בריתו קדוש ונורא שמו: יב ראשית חקמה | יראת יהוה שכל טוב באמת וישר: יג פדות | שלח לעמו צנה לעולם בריתו קדוש ונורא שמו: יד ראשית חקמה | יראת יהוה שכל טוב באמת וישר: *111:7 The works of His hands are truth and justice; All His precepts are sure. 111:8 They are upheld forever and ever; They are performed in truth and uprightness. (NASB)* The Lord blesses in truth and justice. What does this mean? Can one live in sin and expect God's blessing claiming to believe in Yeshua (Jesus) as their messiah? The Psalm concludes saying, טז מעשי ידיו אמת ומשפט נאמנים כל-פקודיו: יז סמוכים לעד לעולם עשויים, יח פדות | שלח לעמו צנה לעולם בריתו קדוש ונורא שמו: יט ראשית חקמה | יראת יהוה שכל טוב באמת וישר: *111:9 He has sent redemption to His people; He has ordained His covenant forever; Holy and awesome is His name. 111:10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments; His praise endures forever. (NASB)* The Lord sent His redemption that is part of the covenant relationship.

עברית	Hebrew	ארמי	Aramaic	ελληνικός	Greek
<b>ספר תהלים פרק קיא</b>	<b>ספר טוביה פרק קיא</b>				
א הללויה   אודה יהוה בכל-לבב-ל- בב בסוד ישרים ועדה: ב גדלים מעשי יהוה דרושים לכל-הפציהם: ג הוד-והדר פעלו וצדקתו עמדת לעד: ד זכר עשה לנפלאותיו חנון ורחום יהוה:	א הללויה אשבח קדם יהוה בכל לבא ברזון דתריציא וכנישתא: ב רברבין עובדיא דיהוה מתב- עין לכל דצביין להון: ג שבחא ושבהורא עובדיה וזכותיה קיימא לעלמין: ד דכרן טב עבד לפר- שותיה חנינא ורחמנא יהוה:	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 111 111:1 αλληλουια εξομολογήσομαι σοι κύριε ἐν ὄλη καρδιά μου ἐν βουλῆ εὐθείων καὶ συναγωγῆ 111:2 μεγάλα τὰ ἔργα κυρίου ἐξεζητημένα εἰς πάντα τὰ θελήματα αὐτοῦ 111:3 ἐξομολόγησις καὶ μεγαλοπρέπεια τὸ ἔργον αὐτοῦ καὶ ἡ δικαιοσύνη αὐτοῦ μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος 111:4 μνεῖαν ἐποίησατο τῶν θαυμασίων αὐτοῦ ἐλεήμων καὶ οἰκτίρμων ὁ κύριος			

<p>ה טָרַף נָתַן לִירְאָיו יִזְכֹּר לְעוֹלָם  בְּרִיתוֹ: ו כַּח מַעֲשָׂיו הִגִּיד לְעַמּוֹ  לְתֵת לָהֶם נִחְלָת גּוֹיִם: ז מַעֲשֵׂי  יָדָיו אָמַת וּמִשְׁפָּט נֶאֱמָנִים כָּל-  פְּקוּדָיו: ח סְמוּכִים לְעַד לְעוֹלָם  עֲשׂוּיִם בְּאֵמֶת וַיִּשָּׂר: ט פְּדוּת    שְׁלַח לְעַמּוֹ צְוָה לְעוֹלָם בְּרִיתוֹ  קְדוֹשׁ וְנוֹרָא שְׁמוֹ: י רְאשִׁית  קְכָמָה   יִרְאֵת יְהוָה שְׂכָל טוֹב  לְכָל-עֲשִׂיהֶם תְּהַלְתּוּ עֲמֻדָת לְעַד:</p>	<p>ה מזונא יהב לדחלוי ידכיר לעלם  קיימיה: ו חיל עובדוי חוי תני לעמיה  למתן להון אחסנת עממיה: ז עובדי  ידוי קושטא ודינא מהימנין כל פיקור-  דוי: ח סמוכין לעלמי עלמא מיתע-  בדין בקושטא ותירוצא: ט פורקנא  שלח לעמיה פקיד לעלם קיימיה קדי-  שא ודחילא שמיה: י שירוי חוכמתא  \דחלתא דיהוה למדחל קדם ייי סכלא  שכלתנו טבא לכל עובדיהון תושבח-  תיה קיימא לעלמין:</p>	<p>111:5 τροφήν ἔδωκεν τοῖς  φοβουμένοις αὐτόν μνησθήσεται  εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα διαθήκης αὐτοῦ 111:6  ἰσχὺν ἔργων αὐτοῦ ἀνήγγειλεν  τῷ λαῷ αὐτοῦ τοῦ δοῦναι αὐτοῖς  κληρονομίαν ἔθνων 111:7 ἔργα  χειρῶν αὐτοῦ ἀλήθεια καὶ κρίσις  πιστᾶι πᾶσαι αἱ ἐντολαὶ αὐτοῦ 111:8  ἐστηριγμένοι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ  αἰῶνος πεπονημένοι ἐν ἀληθείᾳ καὶ  εὐθύτητι 111:9 λύτρωσιν ἀπέστειλεν  τῷ λαῷ αὐτοῦ ἐνετείλατο εἰς τὸν  αἰῶνα διαθήκην αὐτοῦ ἅγιον καὶ  φοβερὸν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ 111:10  ἀρχὴ σοφίας φόβος κυρίου σύνεσις  ἀγαθὴ πᾶσι τοῖς ποιοῦσιν αὐτήν ἢ  αἴνεσις αὐτοῦ μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα  τοῦ αἰῶνος</p>
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<p><b>Tehillim Psalms 111</b>  111:1 Praise the Lord! I will give thanks to the Lord with all my heart, In the company of the upright and in the assembly. 111:2 Great are the works of the Lord; They are studied by all who delight in them. 111:3 Splendid and majestic is His work, And His righteousness endures forever. 111:4 He has made His wonders to be remembered; The Lord is gracious and compassionate. 111:5 He has given food to those who fear Him; He will remember His covenant forever. 111:6 He has made known to His people the power of His works, In giving them the heritage of the nations. 111:7 The works of His hands are truth and justice; All His precepts are sure. 111:8 They are upheld forever and ever; They are performed in truth and uprightness. 111:9 He has sent redemption to His people; He has ordained His covenant forever; Holy and awesome is His name. 111:10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments; His praise endures forever. (NASB)</p>	<p><b>Toviyah Psalms 111</b>  111:1 Hallelujah! I will sing praise in the presence of the Lord with all my heart in the secret of the upright and the assembly. 111:2 The deeds of the Lord are great; they are sought for by all who desire them. 111:3 His work is praise and glory, and his merit endures for ever. 111:4 He made a good memorial for his wonders; the Lord is gracious and merciful. 111:5 He gave food to those who fear him; he will remember his covenant forever. 111:6 The might of his deeds he told to his people, to give them the inheritance of the Gentiles. 111:7 The works of his hands are truth and justice; all his commands are faithful. 111:8 They are reliable for ever and ever; they are done in truth and uprightness. 111:9 He sent redemption to his people; he commanded his covenant for ever; his name is holy and awesome. 111:10 The beginning of wisdom is fear of the Lord, good understanding to all who do them; his praise endures forever. (EMC)</p>	<p><b>Psalmoi Psalms 111</b>  Alleluia. 111:1 I will give thee thanks, O Lord, with my whole heart, in the council of the upright, and in the congregation. 111:2 The works of the Lord are great, sought out according to all his will. 111:3 His work is worthy of thanksgiving and honor: and his righteousness endures for ever and ever. 111:4 He has caused his wonderful works to be remembered: the Lord is merciful and compassionate. 111:5 He has given food to them that fear him: he will remember his covenant for ever. 111:6 He has declared to his people the power of his works, to give them the inheritance of the heathen. 111:7 The works of his hands are truth and judgment: all his commandments are sure: 111:8 established for ever and ever, done in truth and uprightness. 111:9 He sent redemption to his people: he commanded his covenant for ever: holy and fearful is his name. 111:10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and all that act accordingly have a good understanding; his praise endures for ever and ever. (LXX)</p>
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In this week’s study from *Tehillim / Psalms 111:1-10*, the Psalm opens saying, א הַלְלוּ יְהוָה | אֲדָהּ יְהוָה, *111:1 Praise the Lord! I will give thanks to the Lord with all my heart, In the company of the upright and in the assembly. (NASB)* How joyful and significant is dwelling in the company of the upright? *Mishley / Proverbs 2:21* states “*For the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it.*” (NASB) which is similar to *Tehillim / Psalms 37:29* which states, “*The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein forever.*” Based upon the covenant promises, the faithful will remain secure and peaceful dwelling in the land which the Lord had promised to His people (*Mishley / Proverbs 10:30*). According to the Scriptures, to dwell in the land was always put forward as the reward for obedience to God’s commandments (see *Shemot / Exodus 20:12, Vayikra / Leviticus 25:18 and 26:5*). This phrase conveyed to the Hebrew mind the idea of knowing the blessing of God in this life is to be at peace in the land that God

had promised. The Hebraic life took the home and the Land as the most important gift of God. As a result, the people have a patriotic approach to the Land and to the people, this is especially demonstrated in the psalm, and may be what is being illustrated here in *Tehillim / Psalms 111:1* in the use of the words יְשָׁרִים וְעֲדָהּ “*the upright and the assembly.*” The land (אֶרֶץ arets) was the Promised Land, the land of Canaan. This word is a reference to the Land of Israel, in a narrower sense as compared to *Matthew 5:5*, “*Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.*” Here the context of the Psalm speaks of the perfect (תְּמִימִים temimim), the holy (LXX., ὅσιος), the spotless (immaculati, Targum), those without a stain (qui sine labe, Syriac), the guileless (simplices, Vulgate). These are the types of people who will remain; יְיָתְּרֵי (yivratru). The context has use to seek out the יְשָׁרִים וְעֲדָהּ “*the upright and the assembly*” of people who are upright and to forsake the unrighteous ways. Why does David describe “*in the company of the upright*” and “*in the assembly*” in this way? The difference between the upright and the assembly may be related to the individual and the community of believers. This may be paralleled to what the author of the book of Hebrews wrote saying the following:

**Hebrews 12:19-29**

*12:19 and to the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words which sound was such that those who heard begged that no further word be spoken to them. 12:20 For they could not bear the command, ‘If even a beast touches the mountain, it will be stoned.’ 12:21 And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, ‘I am full of fear and trembling.’ 12:22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, 12:23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, 12:24 and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel. 12:25 See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven. 12:26 And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, ‘Yet once more I will shake not only the earth, but also the heaven.’ 12:27 This expression ‘Yet once more,’ denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, so that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. 12:28 Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; 12:29 for our God is a consuming fire. (NASB)*

In *Hebrews 12:22*, we read ἀλλὰ προσελήλυθατε Σιών ὄρει καὶ πόλει θεοῦ ζῶντος, Ἱερουσαλὴμ ἐπουρανίῳ, καὶ μυριάσιν ἀγγέλων, πανηγύρει. *12:22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels. (NASB)* The idea is that the people who live in righteousness, in God’s holy city, and are attended by the angels of God. *Hebrews 12:23* states, *12:23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect (NASB)*, the assembly is a reference to the righteous congregation of people. We are told to seek the assembly of the righteous, because godly friends will keep us upon the straight and narrow path. The author of the book of Hebrews references the Torah in regards to those who would not listen to the voice from heaven and they perished, and speaks of the Lord God shaking both the heavens and the earth, and only those things that are unshakable will remain. As a result of these things, we are to seek the Lord in fear and trembling, because our God is a consuming fire, He is to be greatly respected, and those to whom we make friends with and seek counsel from is to be taken very seriously.

The Psalmist continues saying, בְּגִדְלִים מְעֻשִׁי יְהוָה דְּרוּשִׁים לְכָל-הַפְּצִיָּהֶם: ג הוֹד-וְהֶדָר פָּעֵלוֹ וְצִדְקָתוֹ  
:הָהָה: ד זְכַר עֲשָׂה לְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו חֲנוּן וְרַחֲמֵי יְהוָה: *111:2 Great are the works of the Lord; They are studied by all who delight in them. 111:3 Splendid and majestic is His work, And His righteousness endures forever. 111:4 He has made His wonders to be remembered; The Lord is gracious and compassionate. (NASB)* The

ב רברבין עובדיא דיהוה מתבעין לכל דצביין להון: ג שבחא ושבהורא עובדיה וזכותיה, Aramaic Targum states, *111:2 The deeds of the Lord are great; they are sought for by all who desire them. 111:3 His work is praise and glory, and his merit endures for ever. 111:4 He made a good memorial for his wonders; the Lord is gracious and merciful. (EMC)* In the Lord's wonders, what is David focusing upon here? David is not focusing upon the sign or the wonder of God, he is focusing upon the gracious compassion of God to forgive sin and bless His people. Yeshua said in *John 4:48* "Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe." In *John 4*, Yeshua healed the son of an official. John tells us that this man asked Yeshua to follow him to where his son was because he was sick and wanted Yeshua to heal him. Yeshua responded with *John 4:48*. His rebuke was for the crowd that followed. The only reason they followed was to see the signs and wonders of healing. Yeshua healed the son without touching him and the official believed him. This in stark contrast to the multitudes who followed him desiring to see over and over again the miraculous signs and wonders. In *John 6* Yeshua directly rebukes the crowd for seeking and demanding the signs and wonders. Spurgeon's commentary on this verse said that "A craving after marvels was a symptom of the sickly state of men's minds in our Lord's day; they refused solid nourishment, and pined after mere wonder. The gospel which they so greatly needed they would not have; the miracles which Jesus did not always choose to give they eagerly demanded. Many nowadays must see signs and wonders, or they will not believe." It is not a person of faith that demands to be shown a miracle. Based upon Scripture, doing such demonstrates one's spiritual immaturity and lack of faith. Yet there are whole churches and ecclesiastical movements that exist for the sole purpose of focusing upon asking for, praying for, and seeking the miraculous. This is not to say that we are not to do such things, to seek the Lord for healing or a miraculous move in our lives, but this should not be our focus. We are to focus upon our relationship with the Lord and with others. The most important part of who we are as God's people is to draw near to Him, to seek His righteousness, holiness, justice, and truth, and to lean on Him for guidance in life. I have been in prayer groups, where the leader many times opened up with a request for the Lord to work miraculously in healings and tongues in the church. Rather than to their credit, this fixation is to their reproach; the same reproach of the multitudes in *John 6* who were rebuked by Yeshua from wanting bread rather than Gospel. Yeshua said the following to his disciples.

**Mark 16:16-20**

*16:16 'He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned. 16:17 'These signs will accompany those who have believed: in My name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues; 16:18 they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.' 16:19 So then, when the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. 16:20 And they went out and preached everywhere, while the Lord worked with them, and confirmed the word by the signs that followed. And they promptly reported all these instructions to Peter and his companions. And after that, Jesus Himself sent out through them from east to west the sacred and imperishable proclamation of eternal salvation. (NASB)*

Note how believing and being baptized are related to the salvation of the individual. Remember baptism is a reference to the Mikvah, which is a technical term for repentance. The concept of having faith (believing) and baptism (repentance) are related to drawing near to the Lord, seeking forgiveness of sins, and turning from the ways and lifestyle of sin. These things comes first in our lives as His children. In *Matthew 6:33* Yeshua said "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." Seeking the kingdom of God is not the seeking of the sign and wonder, or the miraculous. Seeking the kingdom of God and His righteousness is related to who we are as God's people, to live according to the commands, to take upon ourselves the testimonies of God, and to love one another, to help one another when he or she is in need. It is only when we step out in faith, to serve the Lord, and helping others will the Lord move powerfully in our lives. The disciples went out and preached the gospel message, which is

Yeshua as the Mashiach of the God of Israel, and to live our lives according to His word, according to the commands of God in His Torah.

Many contemporary Christians feel disconnected when considering the vibrant ministries of the prophets and apostles as described in the Tanach and the Apostolic Writings. The Tanach describes the Lord God taking the people of Israel through miraculous event after miraculous event. The important thing to note is these events occurred over the span of 1400 years until the time when Yeshua come upon the earth in the Apostolic Writings. Those who watched the ministry of Yeshua were seized with amazement at the miracles he performed (*Luke 5:25*), and the apostles in the early church regularly performed signs and wonders among the people (*Acts 5:12*). Today however, these miraculous events seem rare, at the very least, the feeling one gets is that there is something different about the way the Lord God worked in the Tanach and New Testament periods as compared to the way He works today. This raises a valid question: “*Why don’t we experience the miracles today like we read about in the Bible?*” The reason is due to the theologies that are being taught that do not lead one to seek the kingdom of God in the sense of taking upon the testimonies of God according to the commands. The point of the commands of God is to bring things out into the light, the inner rebelliousness to the Word of the Lord, the unwillingness to seek Him in His ways, and to be set free from bondage and the darkness that we have gotten ourselves into. The commands lead us not only to seek the Lord God our Father in heaven, but also to seeking Yeshua His Messiah. The commands reveal the secret and hidden intentions of our hearts. This is what the author of the book of Hebrews meant in Hebrews chapter 4. Hidden shame due to horrific sins that one has committed in secret or in public, the Lord never intended us to live in the shame of sin. This is the message of Yeshua, to deliver us from sin, and to empower us to overcome sin and to live in God’s ways of righteousness and holiness. Shame is crippling, and we are not called to live in shame, He wants to set us free. If you are living in a secret sin and feel shameful about it, talk to the Lord about it, and then maybe even someone else in your life that you trust. I am not saying that one needs to post their current or past struggles for all to see shouting from the rooftops, but that we need to examine our hearts. It is these things that hold back the power of God in your life, and is the reason we do not see the Lord working the kinds of miracles that He did in the past. This should be our focus, and this speaks against the theologies which have crippled the church from since its inception following the death of the disciples.

David says the blessing comes in the form of, הַ טָרַף נָתַן לִירְאָיו יִזְכֹּר לְעוֹלָם בְּרִיתוֹ: וּ בְּחַ מַעֲשָׂיו הַגִּיד וּ 111:5 *He has given food to those who fear Him; He will remember His covenant forever. 111:6 He has made known to His people the power of His works, In giving them the heritage of the nations. (NASB)* The food on our tables, the cloths on our back, the roof over our heads, these are given as a blessing from God. If you have these things, know for certain the Lord “has” blessed you greatly. Remember the Torah context of God’s blessing according to *Devarim / Deuteronomy 8:1-20*.

### ***Devarim / Deuteronomy 8:1-20***

*8:1 ‘All the commandments that I am commanding you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the Lord swore to give to your forefathers. 8:2 ‘You shall remember all the way which the Lord your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. 8:3 ‘He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord. 8:4 ‘Your clothing did not wear out on you, nor did your foot swell these forty years. 8:5 ‘Thus you are to know in your heart that the Lord your God was disciplining you just as a man disciplines his son. 8:6 ‘Therefore, you shall keep the commandments of the Lord your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him. 8:7 ‘For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing forth in valleys and hills; 8:8 a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey; 8:9 a land where you will*

*eat food without scarcity, in which you will not lack anything; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you can dig copper. 8:10 'When you have eaten and are satisfied, you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land which He has given you. 8:11 'Beware that you do not forget the Lord your God by not keeping His commandments and His ordinances and His statutes which I am commanding you today; 8:12 otherwise, when you have eaten and are satisfied, and have built good houses and lived in them, 8:13 and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and gold multiply, and all that you have multiplies, 8:14 then your heart will become proud and you will forget the Lord your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. 8:15 'He led you through the great and terrible wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water; He brought water for you out of the rock of flint. 8:16 'In the wilderness He fed you manna which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might test you, to do good for you in the end. 8:17 'Otherwise, you may say in your heart, 'My power and the strength of my hand made me this wealth.' 8:18 'But you shall remember the Lord your God, for it is He who is giving you power to make wealth, that He may confirm His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day. 8:19 'It shall come about if you ever forget the Lord your God and go after other gods and serve them and worship them, I testify against you today that you will surely perish. 8:20 'Like the nations that the Lord makes to perish before you, so you shall perish; because you would not listen to the voice of the Lord your God. (NASB)*

Note how taking possession of what the Lord has for us is dependent upon our obeying His commands. Our physical needs are designed for us to seek the Lord God of Israel. Moshe writes concerning the food and clothing and the knowing how the Lord disciplines His children, then proceeds to say, 8:6 *'Therefore, you shall keep the commandments of the Lord your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him. (NASB)*. He also gives a warning to not forget the Lord to be disobedient when the blessing does come. The key verse is 8:18 *'But you shall remember the Lord your God, for it is He who is giving you power to make wealth, that He may confirm His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day. (NASB)* The Lord provides us with what we need, and this perspective should not be forgotten. Forgetting, becoming lazy to continue in sin in unrepentance, leads to serving and worshiping the sinful way, just as Moshe writes, 8:19 *'It shall come about if you ever forget the Lord your God and go after other gods and serve them and worship them, I testify against you today that you will surely perish. 8:20 'Like the nations that the Lord makes to perish before you, so you shall perish; because you would not listen to the voice of the Lord your God. (NASB)* In context to what Moshe is writing in Parashat Ekev, this reminds us of the relationship of faith to the manner in which we serve the Lord as Paul wrote in *Romans 3:30-4:22*.

### ***Romans 3:30-4:22***

*3:30 since indeed God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith is one. 3:31 Do we then nullify the Law through faith? May it never be! On the contrary, we establish the Law. 4:1 What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, has found? 4:2 For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. 4:3 For what does the Scripture say? 'Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.' 4:4 Now to the one who works, his wage is not credited as a favor, but as what is due. 4:5 But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness, 4:6 just as David also speaks of the blessing on the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works: 4:7 'Blessed are those whose lawless deeds have been forgiven, And whose sins have been covered. 4:8 'Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will not take into account.' 4:9 Is this blessing then on the circumcised, or on the uncircumcised also? For we say, 'Faith was credited to Abraham as righteousness.' 4:10 How then was it credited? While he was*

*circumcised, or uncircumcised? Not while circumcised, but while uncircumcised; 4:11 and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised, so that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be credited to them, 4:12 and the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also follow in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham which he had while uncircumcised. 4:13 For the promise to Abraham or to his descendants that he would be heir of the world was not through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith. 4:14 For if those who are of the Law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise is nullified; 4:15 for the Law brings about wrath, but where there is no law, there also is no violation. 4:16 For this reason it is by faith, in order that it may be in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the descendants, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, 4:17 (as it is written, ‘A father of many nations have I made you’) in the presence of Him whom he believed, even God, who gives life to the dead and calls into being that which does not exist. 4:18 In hope against hope he believed, so that he might become a father of many nations according to that which had been spoken, ‘So shall your descendants be.’ 4:19 Without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah’s womb; 4:20 yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, 4:21 and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform. 4:22 Therefore it was also credited to him as righteousness. (NASB)*

While reading Romans, due to the church theologies that we have been taught over the centuries, it is difficult to understand how Paul’s words are not in stark contradiction to the Torah. Paul writes of the ones to whom the Law was given and says, *3:30 since indeed God who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith is one. (NASB)* Note how he is writing, he says of the circumcision, God justifies “*by faith*” whereas for the circumcision God justifies “*through faith.*” He writes this way in the sense that we establish God’s Law (3:31) by the way that we live our lives. Notice how he is speaking of justification before God and of the commands of God. The Lord saves those who were not given the Law (the gentiles) in the same way that He saves those who were given the Law (Israel). The idea is that those who were given the promises to be heirs of the world, was not accomplished through the Law but through the righteousness of faith. He says the Law brings wrath, and for those who have faith, who repent, and turn from their sins seeking the Lord God of Israel receive mercy. Paul’s argument is for the non-Jewish person (gentiles) to enter into the covenant relationship with God through faith, and beginning to live their lives by their new found faith. The proof text is from Parashat Lech Lecha, in the promise the Lord had given him, his bodying being dead (his and Sarah’s bodies being old), it was not by the works of the flesh which caused their son to be born, but by a miracle of God. His faith was credited as righteousness, meaning that he kept the commands of God because of his faith and love of God. Now when thinking on all of these things, I have been told the following, “*Thought should be given as to why non-Jews are so eager to observe a law never intended for them.*” This is an interesting and deeply theological statement. The idea that the Law was only given to Israel, and that Israel are the only ones who are responsible to keep the commandments is deeply rooted in the minds of Christians today. The point of the Torah, as Paul wrote, is *4:15 for the Law brings about wrath, but where there is no law, there also is no violation. (NASB)* He is not advocating that the Torah is done away with in the Messiah. He is speaking of the weakness of the body to keep the commands, just as is his example of Abraham and Sarah (*4:19 Without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah’s womb*). The weakness of the body leads to death when keeping the commands because we always fall short and are weak, which is why Paul is emphasizing faith and righteousness. The point is that due to our sin, we are not to remain unfaithful, but to be built up in our faith to get back up and try again, to turn from our sins (Teshuvah / Repentance), and seek the mercy of God. The Apostolic Writings speak of the Lord sending



His Messiah Yeshua, because of that specific purpose, because of the mercy of God. Thus, Yeshua is the goal of the Torah, and therefore the bedrock of our faith. If we continue to study the book of Romans, Paul writes in *Romans II*, clearly stating that non-Jews are grafted into the covenant, the olive tree, the remnant of Israel by their conversion from paganism, to faith in the God of Israel. Therefore, part of being Yeshua's disciple is following the Torah that God gave to Israel and recognizing that the Torah does not save, and never could. Thought should be given as to why Christians always miss this point over and over again. The reason being are the theologies that have been, are, and continue to be taught in churches today without a Torah centric understanding of First Century life. The whole point Paul is trying to make is in relation to the gentiles receiving the promises of God and how that is achieved in the Messiah Yeshua.

All of these things are coupled to, *111:7 The works of His hands are truth and justice; All His precepts are sure. 111:8 They are upheld forever and ever; They are performed in truth and uprightness. (NASB)* The Lord blesses in truth and justice. What does this mean? Can one live in sin and expect God's blessing claiming to believe in Yeshua (Jesus) as their messiah? The point is to not be deliberately sinning. But whenever we sin, we are deliberately sinning. This seems to be a problem, when sin, no matter what it is, is deliberate disobedience to the commands. The key is found in the idea of struggling with sin, to overcome, doing all that is possible to restrain and prevent sin in our lives, and to seek the Lord for help to overcome sin. This is a battle, the battle that Paul describes in *Romans 7*.

### **Romans 7:18-25**

*7:18 For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not. 7:19 For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want. 7:20 But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. 7:21 I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good. 7:22 For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, 7:23 but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members. 7:24 Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? 7:25 Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin. (NASB)*

Paul describes the wretchedness of the body, and the blessedness of the spirit. He says that his inner man, his spirit, concurs with the Torah, but he sees something in his body that is at war with the spirit, making him a prisoner to sin. He concludes saying, *7:25 Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin. (NASB)* Paul speaks of the struggle one has with sin, and it is this struggle that marks the life of the one who is a child of God. This struggle is coupled to Teshuvah (Repentance) where once having sinned, we turn back to the Lord, seek His forgiveness turning from our sins returning to the fight for righteousness, holiness, justice, and truth.

The Psalm concludes saying, **ז מַעֲשֵׂי יְדֵיו אֲמֵת וּמִשְׁפָּט נְאֻמִּים כָּל-פְּקוּדָיו: ח סְמוּכִים לְעֵד לְעוֹלָם עֲשׂוּיִם, בְּאֲמַת וַיִּשֶׁר: ט פְּדוּת | שְׁלַח לְעַמּוֹ צְנֹה לְעוֹלָם בְּרִיתוֹ קְדוֹשׁ וְנוֹרָא שְׁמוֹ: י רֵאשִׁית חֻקָּהּ | יִרְאֵת יְהוָה שְׂכָל טוֹב** *111:9 He has sent redemption to His people; He has ordained His covenant forever; Holy and awesome is His name. 111:10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments; His praise endures forever. (NASB)* The Lord brought His redemption from bondage as we read according to the Torah making a covenant with His people in blood. Paul wrote that the body serves as the seat of death into which the soul sinks down into death through the power of sin. This body he is referring to is the literal body in which he considers is the principal instrument which sin uses to enslave and destroy the soul. The idea of being enslaved in the body is very Torah centric. The opening chapters to Sefer Vayikra (book of Leviticus) speak to the need for atonement when a sin is committed and the connection to the body in the sense of the shedding of blood and the death

of the animal. The entanglement of sin to the body as a form of bondage is the purpose for the Lord to send redemption to His people. The Lord does not want us to remain in bondage, but wants to set us free and to empower us to overcome sin in our lives. These things are why even in Paul's words to the Romans, we can agree with the Psalm which states, *111:10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments; His praise endures forever. (NASB)* Praise the Lord for His mercy and for His working in our lives to give us victory over sin. Let's Pray!

## Rabbinic Commentary

The Rabbinic Commentary (Midrash) on *Tehillim / Psalms 111* has 2 parts. Reading through the Midrash we will be looking at Part 1 and 2. Let's begin by outlining *Midrash Tehillim Chapter 111, Parts 1 and 2*.

### Outline of Midrash Tehillim / Psalms, Chapter 111, Part 1 and 2

#### Part 1

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying, "Praise you the Lord. I will give thanks unto the Lord with my whole heart, in the counsel of the upright, and in the congregation He sent redemption unto His people. He has commanded His covenant forever (Tehillim / Psalms 111:1-9)."
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, "*These verses are to be considered in the light of what Scripture says elsewhere, And there will be upon every high mountain, and upon every high hill, rivers and streams of waters in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall (Isaiah 30:25);*"
- The **משל** (mashal) "*the parable,*" goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis speak of the upright and the wicked, and how the wicked quench the light of the righteous in this world.
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) "*expansion on the parable*" expands upon the **משל** (mashal), the rabbis continue saying will defend the righteous and slay the wicked for their deeds of unrighteousness.
- The Concluding phrase says, "*This is the manner of prophecy, as is said, And call unto it with the calling that I bid you (Jonah 3:2). And what gave Israel the gift of prophecy? IT was the counsel which I revealed to them in Torah. Hence, it is said, In the counsel of the upright, and in the congregation.*"

#### Part 2

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying, "*The works of the Lord are great (Tehillim / Psalms 111:2).*"
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, "*Great is the Lord, as it is written, Great is the Lord, and highly to be praised (Tehillim / Psalms 48:2), and thus His works are great, as it is also written, The Lord has done great things with us (Tehillim / Psalms 126:2).*"
- The **משל** (mashal) "*the parable,*" goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis speak of what the Lord has done for His people.
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) "*expansion on the parable*" expands upon the **משל** (mashal), the rabbis expand upon the mashal speaking of the work of the Lord being manifest in the life of His people.
- The Concluding phrase says, "*All that He does for the righteous in this world is as nothing, indeed, merely a token of that which He will do in the world to come, where His righteousness endures forever (Tehillim / Psalms 111:3), and where as Scripture says also, Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness (Tehillim / Psalms 119:142).*"

Midrash Tehillim 111, Part 1 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying, “Praise you the Lord. I will give thanks unto the Lord with my whole heart, in the counsel of the upright, and in the congregation He sent redemption unto His people. He has commanded His covenant forever (Tehillim / Psalms 111:1-9).” The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “These verses are to be considered in the light of what Scripture says elsewhere, And there will be upon every high mountain, and upon every high hill, rivers and streams of waters in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall (Isaiah 30:25);” Why do the high mountains stream rivers of water during a great slaughter? Is this a reference to water or to blood? The entire midrash states the following:

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>מדרש תהלים פרק קיא סימן א</b></p> <p>א [הללויה] אודה ה' בכל לבב בסוד ישרים ועדה. זהו שאמר הכתוב והיה על כל הר גבוה (ישעיה ל כה), וכתוב והיה אור הלבנה כאור החמה (שם שם ישעיהו ל' כו) ואימתי ביום הרג רב בנפול מגדלים (שם שם ישעיהו ל' כה), אלו הרשעים שגבוהין כמגדל, ומונעין את האור מלבוא בעולם, וכתוב וימנע מרשעים אורם (איוב לח טו), וכתוב כן יאבדו [כל] אויביך ה' (שופטים ה לא), אותה השעה ואוהביו כצאת השמש בגבורתו (שם שם שופטים ה'), ואותה השעה הקב"ה מרפא שבר עמו, שנאמר ביום חבוש ה' את שבר עמו (ישעיה ל כו) [במה הוא מרפא, שמשפיל הרשעים ביום הרג רב, כמה הם] המונגים המונגים בעמק החרוץ (יואל ד יד), מהו החרוץ, שכל שנופל שם דינו חרוץ, וכן הוא אומר והיו חללי ה' ביום ההוא מקצה הארץ ועד קצה הארץ (ירמיה כה לג), עד עכשיו אין אנו יודעין כמה הם, עד שבא דוד ואמר ידין בגוים מלא גויות וגו' (תהלים קי ו), נהרות יורדין מדמן של רשעים, והעוף בא לשתות מן הנחל ההוא של דם, שנאמר מנחל בדרך ישתה (שם שם תהלים ק"י ז), מהו על כן ירים ראש (שם שם תהלים ק"י), בא לשתות והנחל עושה גלים, והגל בא לשוטפו, והוא מרים ראשו, אמר דוד הלל יהודיה אני עתיד ליתן לך, ולכך נאמר הללויה אודה ה' בכל לבב, בכל לב ולא בלב חלוק, בסוד ישרים ועדה, לפי שהקב"ה מגלה סוד [לישראל, וכן הוא אומר כי לא יעשה ה' אלהים דבר כי אם גלה סודו] אל עבדיו הנביאים (עמוס ג ז), וכן ישראל נקראו נביאים, שנאמר אל תירא עבדי יעקב וישרון בחרתי בו כי אצק מים על צמא [וגו'] אצק רוחי (עליו) [על זרעך וגו'] וצמחו בבין הציר (ישעיה מד ב ג ד), ואין צריכין מי שילמדם, אלא זה יאמר לה' אני וזה יקרא בשם (אלהי) יעקב (שם שם ישעיהו מ"ד ה), זו הנבואה, שנאמר וקרא (עליה את כל הקריאה הזאת) [אליה את הקריאה אשר אנכי דובר אליך] (יונה ג ב), ומי גרם להם סוד שגיליתי להם, לכך נאמר בסוד ישרים ועדה.</p>	<p><b>Midrash Tehillim 111, Part 1</b></p> <p>1. Praise you the Lord. I will give thanks unto the Lord with my whole heart, in the counsel of the upright, and in the congregation He sent redemption unto His people. He has commanded His covenant forever (Tehillim / Psalms 111:1-9). These verses are to be considered in the light of what Scripture says elsewhere, And there will be upon every high mountain, and upon every high hill, rivers and streams of waters in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall (Isaiah 30:25); and Scripture also says, Moreover the light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, in the day that the Lord binds up the breach of His people (Isaiah 30:26), towers alluding to the wicked who, tall as towers, hinder the light from coming into the world. Of them it is written, But because of the wicked their light is withheld (Job 38:15), and it is also written So perish all Your enemies, O Lord (Judges 5:31). Then They that love Him will be as the sun when he goes forth in his might. Then also, the Holy One blessed be He, will heal the breach of His people, as is said In that day the Lord binds up the breach of His people. How will He heal? By casting down the wicked on the day of great slaughter. How many of them will there be? Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision (Joel 4:14). What is meant by decisions? It means that whoever is then cast down, his doom is decided. Scripture says also, And the slain of the Lord will be at that day for one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth (Jeremiah 25:33). Yet we did not realize how many of them ehre would be until David cam and said, He that is enrobed with the names of the martyred dead will spread doom among the nations (Tehillim / Psalms 110:6). Streams will flow from the blood of the wicked, and birds will come to drink out of each brook of blood, for it is said, He will drink of the brook in the way. And what is meant by Therefore will he lift up the head (Tehillim / Psalms 110:7)? It means, As a bird comes to drink, the brook raises waves, and as a wave is about to overwhelm him, the bird lifts up his head. David said, I will give you praise and thanksgiving. Therefore he said, Praise the Lord. I will give thanks unto the Lord with my whole heart, with my whole heart, and not with a divided heart. In the counsel of the upright, and in the congregation. For the Holy One blessed be He, reveals His counsel to the congregation of Israel, even as Scripture says, For the Lord God will do nothing, but He reveals His counsel unto His servants the prophets (Amos 3:7). Thus, the children of Israel are called prophets, as is said, fear not, O Jacob My servant, and you, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen. For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, I will pour My spirit upon your seed, and My blessing upon your offspring; and they will spring up among the grass, as willows by the watercourses (Isaiah 44:2-4). And they will require no one to teach them. For One will say, I am the Lord's; and another will call himself by the name of Jacob (Isaiah 44:5). This is the manner of prophecy, as is said, And call unto it with the calling that I bid you (Jonah 3:2). And what gave Israel the gift of prophecy? IT was the counsel which I revealed to them in Torah. Hence, it is said, In the counsel of the upright, and in the congregation.</p>
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The rabbis speak of the praise of the Lord God almighty with all the heart, is the result of the Lord's mighty power to deliver from our enemies. The midrash states:

*These verses are to be considered in the light of what Scripture says elsewhere, And there will be upon every high mountain, and upon every high hill, rivers and streams of waters in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall (Isaiah 30:25); and Scripture also says, Moreover the light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, in the day that the Lord binds up the breach of His people (Isaiah 30:26), towers alluding to the wicked who, tall as towers, hinder the light from coming into the world. Of them it is written, But because of the wicked their light is withheld (Job 38:15), and it is also written So perish all Your enemies, O Lord (Judges 5:31).*

When the rabbis say “every high mountain and hill will have rivers and streams of water in the day of great slaughter,” does this refer to streams of the blood of our enemies? The idea of the light of the moon being as bright as the sun suggests the Lord will in a future time cause the light to shine intensely both during the day and at night time. Is this a reference to the light of His righteousness? The light has been understood according to Scripture as a reference to the righteousness of God and of His people. This great time of deliverance will be marked by bountiful blessing upon the land with streams of waters flowing, and the Lord binding up the breach of His people. The wicked on the other hand stand as towers that block the light (righteousness of God). The midrash speaks of the wicked cause light to be withheld, indicating that the people and the place will shine forth the light of God (His righteousness) if we are all seeking to live righteous lives. Those who entertain unrighteousness, their lives will be dim and obscure. Those who choose to entertain unrighteousness will have trouble walking in the truth of God.

The midrash continues saying, *Then They that love Him will be as the sun when he goes forth in his might.* This very similar to Yeshua’s words in the parable of the sower.

#### **Matthew 13:37-43**

*13:37 And He said, ‘The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man, 13:38 and the field is the world; and as for the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the tares are the sons of the evil one; 13:39 and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are angels. 13:40 ‘So just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age. 13:41 ‘The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, 13:42 and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 13:43 ‘Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear. (NASB)*

Note how the enemy sows wicked men in the midst of God’s people. These wicked men hinder the righteousness of God’s people. Once the unrighteous have been identified, Yeshua speaks of a time when the Lord will send His angels forth to gather out all of the unrighteous men and cast them into the fire which he calls a “place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” Then God’s people, the righteous, will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He concludes with “He who has ears, let him hear” speaking of those who have understanding. To have understanding requires effort to study God’s word and to put His word into practice. This parable speaks of realizing the methods of the enemy and the importance of being good seed, growing in the kingdom of God, seeking His face, and continually looking to serve the Lord and to draw near. This presupposes the hearts desire of one to turn from sin (Teshuvah) and to seek for the Lord to help with doing so. Being His people, we are told in the midrash the following:

*Then also, the Holy One blessed be He, will heal the breach of His people, as is said In that day the Lord binds up the breach of His people. How will He heal? By casting down the wicked on the day of great slaughter. How many of them will there be? Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision (Joel 4:14). What is meant by decisions? It means that whoever is*

*then cast down, his doom is decided. Scripture says also, And the slain of the Lord will be at that day for one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth (Jeremiah 25:33). Yet we did not realize how many of them would be until David came and said, He that is enrobed with the names of the martyred dead will spread doom among the nations (Tehillim / Psalms 110:6). Streams will flow from the blood of the wicked, and birds will come to drink out of each brook of blood, for it is said, He will drink of the brook in the way.*

The Lord healing the breach of His people is said to be by the casting down of the wicked. Healing comes by the removal of the wicked from the midst of God's people. How is this considered healing? Could it be a comment related to whom we keep as friends, or what we take into our bodies through our eyes and our ears? Consider what Yeshua said in *Matthew 6:19-24*.

#### ***Matthew 6:19-24***

*6:19 'Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 6:20 'But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; 6:21 for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. 6:22 'The eye is the lamp of the body; so then if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light. 6:23 'But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! 6:24 'No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth. (NASB)*

Yeshua says that the eye is the lamp of the body and the objective is to keep the eye full of light (righteousness) as opposed to darkness (unrighteousness). The point is if we are looking towards sin, our bodies will be filled with it, and we know that sin functions as a master over the person who is involved in it. Yeshua says that such a person will be governed by two masters, and such a person will love the one and despise the other using the example of God and wealth. The midrash relates the healing of the people to the casting down of the wicked and then asking the question, "*How many of them will there be? Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision (Joel 4:14).*" The rabbis then ask "*What is meant by decisions?*" and respond "*It means that whoever is then cast down, his doom is decided.*" This is an important comment. The reason being is in the context of what Yeshua wrote in *Matthew 7*.

#### ***Matthew 7:18-23***

*7:18 'A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. 7:19 'Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 7:20 'So then, you will know them by their fruits. 7:21 'Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter 7:22 'Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' 7:23 'And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.' (NASB)*

Yeshua said 7:21 '*Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter (NASB)* Take this in consideration of what the rabbis are saying in the midrash, how "*whoever is then cast down, his doom is decided.*" What may be suggested here is the one who has an eye filled with sin, he does not know that he is on the path of unrighteousness. These people claim to have cast out demons and performed many miracles in the name of the Lord. The response however is '*I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.*' Those who do not study and put into practice the ways of God are the one's he is speaking of. When we do not listen and obey, both the land and our lives will become a desert waste. The Lord's hand is required for sustaining life. The rabbis said that David came and said, "*He that is enrobed with the names of the martyred dead will*

*spread doom among the nations (Tehillim / Psalms 110:6).*” The martyred dead is somebody who suffers persecution and death for advocating, renouncing, refusing to renounce, or refusing to advocate a belief or cause as demanded by an external party. This refusal to comply with the presented demands results in the punishment or execution of the martyr by the oppressor. In the biblical context, generally the nations come and try and force the people to turn from the ways of God, and from serving, and from worshiping the Lord God of Israel in heaven. The purpose of the Torah is to give God’s people direction in righteousness, holiness, justice, and truth. When we fall short of doing so, this leads us to seeking the Lord God in heaven, and to repentance, to turn from our sins, and to seek the Messiah, the One whom the Lord brought to deliver, provide atonement, and pay the redeemer’s price. The Torah was given so God’s people would bear witness to the testimonies of God. The process of bearing witness was not intended to lead to the death of the witness, although it is known from ancient writers (e.g. Josephus) and according to the Apostolic Writings the witnesses often died for their testimonies. We are commanded by God to not let sin reign in our bodies, obeying its lusts, but instead we are to present ourselves to Him as instruments of righteousness (*Romans 6:12–14*). This is why the Torah was given in order to understand what it means to be an instrument of righteousness. In *Romans 6:16-18* we’re told that we are slaves to the one we obey, either of obedience to sin or of obedience to righteousness. We are to be enslaved to God from whom we not only receive the gift of sanctification and eternal life, but also the empowering of our lives to overcome sin for the specific point of the separation and sanctification in this life. We do this because the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Yeshua the Messiah our Lord (*Romans 6:23*). The enemy desires to draw us back to sin again and again. This is why the midrash states of the enemy, “*Streams will flow from the blood of the wicked, and birds will come to drink out of each brook of blood, for it is said, He will drink of the brook in the way*” living in unrighteousness results in destruction and death. For the righteous however, the Targum states, ז עובדי ידוי קושטא ודינא מהימנין כל פיקודוי: ה סמוכין לעלמי עלמא מיתעבדין בקושטא, *111:7 The works of his hands are truth and justice; all his commands are faithful. 111:8 They are reliable for ever and ever; they are done in truth and uprightness. (EMC)* Note how the Psalmist states “*all his commands are faithful.*” The reason the Psalmist can make this statement is because the faithful will live their lives for Him (God).

The midrash continues saying the following:

*And what is meant by Therefore will he lift up the head (Tehillim / Psalms 110:7)? It means, As a bird comes to drink, the brook raises waves, and as a wave is about to overwhelm him, the bird lifts up his head. David said, I will give you praise and thanksgiving. Therefore he said, Praise the Lord. I will give thanks unto the Lord with my whole heart, with my whole heart, and not with a divided heart. In the counsel of the upright, and in the congregation. For the Holy One blessed be He, reveals His counsel to the congregation of Israel, even as Scripture says, For the Lord God will do nothing, but He reveals His counsel unto His servants the prophets (Amos 3:7). Thus, the children of Israel are called prophets, as is said, fear not, O Jacob My servant, and you, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen. For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, I will pour My spirit upon your seed, and My blessing upon your offspring; and they will spring up among the grass, as willows by the watercourses (Isaiah 44:2-4). And they will require no one to teach them. For One will say, I am the Lord’s; and another will call himself by the name of Jacob (Isaiah 44:5)*

Note how the Lord reveals his counsel to His servants. The apostle Paul wrote that he knows how difficult it can be to not live in sin because he struggled with sin even after he became a follower of the Messiah. This is important for all of us to know. In the Messiah we are set free from the penalty of sin, we still live in the presence of sin while we are alive on this earth. For this we give thanks just as the midrash is stating, “*I will give thanks unto the Lord with my whole heart, with my whole heart, and not with a divided heart.*” We are thankful for the way the Lord has transformed our lives and our hearts in a desire to live for Him. By drawing our lives to be in line with His word, we bear the testimonies of God, and we will not have a divided

heart, but a unified heart with the truth of God's Word, just as Paul wrote in *Romans 7*,

**Romans 7:14-25**

*7:14 For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin. 7:15 For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I would like to do, but I am doing the very thing I hate. 7:16 But if I do the very thing I do not want to do I agree with the Law, confessing that the Law is good. 7:17 So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. 7:18 For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good is not. 7:19 For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want. 7:20 But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. 7:21 I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good. 7:22 For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, 7:23 but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members. 7:24 Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? 7:25 Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin. (NASB)*

Notice how Paul says that he was sold into bondage to sin. He was sold, this is different than what we read in Parashat Mishpatim where one would sell himself due to his destitution and the need to help pay his financial debts. Sin has the capacity to sell one into slavery without the permission of the sinner. Paul writes that he agrees with the Law (7:16) because he does the things he does not want to do, meaning that he sins. He reiterates this saying, 7:19 *For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want. (NASB)* Paul writes of the Torah being substantiated by the spirit, in his heart his desire is to live an obedient life, and in the body, there is a different law that desires sin. The midrash states that “*For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, I will pour My spirit upon your seed, and My blessing upon your offspring; and they will spring up among the grass, as willows by the watercourses (Isaiah 44:2-4). And they will require no one to teach them. For One will say, I am the Lord's; and another will call himself by the name of Jacob (Isaiah 44:5).*” The Lord has this plan to send His Spirit to His people. The way we can be free from the power of sin is by the power of God's Spirit which is given to His people who live for him by faith in the Messiah (see *Ephesians 1:13-14*). The midrash speaks of the Lord pouring out His Spirit for the purpose of prophecy. Midrash Tehillim 111, Part 1 concludes saying, “*This is the manner of prophecy, as is said, And call unto it with the calling that I bid you (Jonah 3:2). And what gave Israel the gift of prophecy? It was the counsel which I revealed to them in Torah. Hence, it is said, In the counsel of the upright, and in the congregation.*” The Lord reveals Himself to us in His word.

Midrash Tehillim 111, Part 2 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying, “*The works of the Lord are great (Tehillim / Psalms 111:2).*” The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*Great is the Lord, as it is written, Great is the Lord, and highly to be praised (Tehillim / Psalms 48:2), and thus His works are great, as it is also written, The Lord has done great things with us (Tehillim / Psalms 126:2).*” The point seems to be the Lord is great and thus His works are great. The Lord is not great because His works are great. It is the works that are great as a result of the Lord being great because of who He is. Of the works of God and His greatness, the Zohar has the following to say:

**Zohar 1:33b**

*(1) R. Hiya said: It is written, God maketh the earth by his strength (Jer. X, 12). He who maketh the earth is the Holy One, blessed be He, above; by his strength means by the Zaddik; he establishes the universe, this is the earth beneath; by his wisdom,, refers to Zedek (justice). Also it is written, makes the earth, and not made, because God constantly regulates the earth and its activities through the agency of His strength, as just explained... R. Isaac said: It is*

*written, By the word of the Lord the heavens were made and by the breath of his mouth all their hosts. The heavens mentioned here are the lower heavens, which were made by the word of the upper heavens, through the spirit which sent forth a voice until it reached that stream which issues and flows perennially. By all their hosts is meant the lower world, which exists through that breath, which is male. A similar lesson is derived from the verse, Who watereth the mountains from his upper chambers, the earth is full of the fruit of thy works (Ps. CIV, 13). The upper chambers we have already explained, and the term can be further illustrated by the verse, Who lays the beams of his upper chambers in the waters. The expression the fruit of thy works alludes to that stream which ever flows and issues forth; hence it is written, Yielding fruit whose seed is in it, as explained.*

The Zohar draws in the context of the Lord's mighty works as Creator. Note how the text states the Lord created the earth by His strength which refers to His righteousness and to His righteous ones (the Zaddik). His establishing of the earth by His strength in wisdom, in His righteousnesses and in the righteousness of His people, reminds us of the way of the unrighteous in the sense that the unrighteous do not have wisdom, in fact, they do not have understanding when he or she commits sin (*for example that of adultery, see Mishley / Proverbs 6:32*). The rabbis say that "God constantly regulates the earth and its activities through the agency of His strength" (*His righteousness and the righteousness of His people*) and as a result, the earth is full of the fruit of His works. The earth being full of His works is not only in the sense of recognizing His hand in His creation, but also in the sense of our being His people and bearing the testimonies of God in our lives for His glory.

The Shulchan Arukh Orach Chayyim 1:1 states this in the following way:

***Shulchan Arukh, Orach Chayyim 1:1***

*(1) One should strengthen himself like a lion to get up in the morning to serve his Creator, so that it is he who awakens the dawn...And when he lies on his bed he should know before Whom he lies, and as soon as he wakes up from sleep he should rise eagerly to the service of his Creator, May He Be Blessed and Exalted (Tur).*

The idea here is that we are to show forth the streams of living waters the Lord has placed within us. This expression is in the sense that what the Lord has put in our hearts, flows outward and overflows into this world for God's glory, to love one another, and to live righteously before Him. This is the concept of our service to the Lord, when we lay down and when we get up, we are to think upon what we will do in the service of the Lord. We are to rise eagerly to the service of the Lord God of Israel for His glory, as the Shulchan Arukh says doing so results in Him being "*Blessed and Exalted.*" Note the difference here, our laying down and rising up always having upon our minds to do service unto the Lord blesses the Lord God of Israel. This is not a matter of our seeking our own blessing. This is about seeking to bless the Lord God in heaven simply for who He is and for what He has done on our behalf.

The entire midrash states the following:



<p><b>מדרש תהלים פרק קיא סימן ב</b></p> <p>ב גדולים מעשי ה'. הוא גדול כדכתיב גדול ה' ומהולל מאד (תהלים מח ב), ומעשיו גדולים, וכן הוא אומר הגדיל ה' לעשות עם אלה (שם תהלים קכו ב), ומה שכרן, מי שהוא עושה אותן מלבישו הוד והדר, שנאמר הוד והדר פעלו, וכן הוא אומר יראה אל עבדיך פעלך והדר-רך על בניהם (שם תהלים צ טז). זכר עשה לנפלאותיו. כל מה שעשה לצדיקים בעולם הזה לא כלום הוא, אלא זכר הוא, אבל כשיעשה לעולם הבא צדקתו עומדת לעד, וכן הוא אומר צדקתך צדק לעולם (שם תהלים קיט קמב).</p>	<p><b>Midrash Tehillim 111, Part 2</b></p> <p>2. <i>The works of the Lord are great (Tehillim / Psalms 111:2). Great is the Lord, as it is written, Great is the Lord, and highly to be praised (Tehillim / Psalms 48:2), and thus His works are great, as it is also written, The Lord has done great things with us (Tehillim / Psalms 126:2). And what is the reward of him who does the Lord's work? He who does the Lord's work will be clothed in glory and majesty, as is said, His work is glory and majesty (Tehillim / Psalms 111:3). Scripture says, also Your work appears unto Your servants, and Your glory upon their children (Tehillim / Psalms 90:16). He has made His wonderful works as a token (Tehillim / Psalms 111:4). All that He does for the righteous in this world is as nothing, indeed, merely a token of that which He will do in the world to come, where His righteousness endures forever (Tehillim / Psalms 111:3), and where as Scripture says also, Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness (Tehillim / Psalms 119:142).</i></p>
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The midrash speaks of receiving a reward for the one who does the Lord's work. The answer is, "*He who does the Lord's work will be clothed in glory and majesty, as is said, His work is glory and majesty (Tehillim / Psalms 111:3).*" We are told that the work of the Lord contained in the mitzvot is glory and majesty. The commands (mitzvot) is the glory of God and His ways or righteousness and truth. We are clothed in God's glory and majesty in the sense that we bear the testimonies of God in our lives by obeying His word, living it, and applying His word to our lives. When the God of Israel gave Moshe the pattern of the Tabernacle with all its furnishings on the mountain of Sinai, He was very detailed and precise in the manner in which it was to be constructed. On the one hand, when we read *Shemot / Exodus 25* we see a picture of the ark of the testimony and its precise construction, realizing that the specific details were related to the spiritual life of His people. The deeper meaning is in the application of the Torah in the sense of repentance, turning from the ways of sin to the way of the Lord, bearing his testimonies. The Lord provided us a way to repent and turn, and in doing so, the Lord leads us daily in our lives. The Lord wants to reach all men through His people as His testimony, where the linking factor for the Jew and Gentile is the Messiah Yeshua. It is in the power of God's Holy spirit that enables us and strengthens us to bear God's testimonies. We do not bear God's testimony merely by speaking the word of God but by our whole being. We are to live out His testimonies, and this is the meaning of "*He who does the Lord's work will be clothed in glory and majesty, as is said, His work is glory and majesty (Tehillim / Psalms 111:3).*"

Midrash Tehillim 111, Part 2 concludes saying, "*All that He does for the righteous in this world is as nothing, indeed, merely a token of that which He will do in the world to come, where His righteousness endures forever (Tehillim / Psalms 111:3), and where as Scripture says also, Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness (Tehillim / Psalms 119:142).*" Those who are destined for the Olam Haba (world to come) are not those who simply give lip service to the name of Jesus. Those who are destined for the world to come are those who put into practice their faith. When we say we have something in our hearts, it will invariably come out in the way that we live our lives. This is most significantly demonstrated in the way that we treat our spouses (husband and wife interactions). If one says he or she has love for his spouse, but treats the spouse with hatred, that thing that is claimed to be in the heart (love) is a lie. Our relationship with our spouses has a direct correlation to our relationship with the Lord God our Father in heaven and Yeshua His Messiah. It does not matter how much one does of is involved in the church, if one does not treat his or her spouse with respect and love, they are as Paul wrote, a sounding gong (*1 Corinthians 13:1*) where all that one does is worthless. The reason being, it is easy to put on a show in public, it is difficult to show real unconditional love in private and with the ones who are most close to us (family). Let's pray!

Heavenly Father,

We are weak and we are in need of Your powerful work in our lives to overcome selfishness and pride, we need Your selflessness and unconditional love. We believe You are able to overcome all things, to save us from our enemies, from the deliverance from sin, and even to work in our hearts to deeply and truly love those who are closest to us. We recognize the weaknesses in our strength and resolve to serve you and to do what is expected, to be humble and pray and remain in Your word. Lord help us to have the strength to stand for truth and life, to have the desire to seek You in prayer and in Your Word, and to have faith in Yeshua Your Messiah, and to love our neighbor each day. We thank You Lord for Your continued faithfulness to Your promises and to us. 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