

## ספר תהילים קיב | Tehillim / Psalms 112

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### Tzedakah, Morality, Ethics, and Justice according to the Psalms

א הללויה | אֲשֶׁר־אֵישׁ תהילימ / Psalms 112:1-10, the Psalm opens saying, א הללויה | אֲשֶׁר־אֵישׁ תהילימ / Psalms 112:1 Praise the Lord! How blessed is the man who fears the Lord, Who greatly delights in His commandments. (NASB) The Psalmist speaks of the one who delights in the commandments of God. Modern theologies teach that the Law is not a delight. Why would the commands cause one to have great delight? The psalm continues saying, ב גבור בארץ יהיה זרעו דור ישירים יברך: ג הון ונעשר כביתו וצדקתו עמדת לעד: 112:2 His descendants will be mighty on earth; The generation of the upright will be blessed. 112:3 Wealth and riches are in his house, And his righteousness endures forever. 112:4 Light arises in the darkness for the upright; He is gracious and compassionate and righteous. (NASB) The concept here is that the one who fears the Lord, his descendants will be numerous and mighty on the earth. These people however will be upright (ישירים) meaning they will walk to straight and narrow path of righteousness, justice, holiness, and truth. This kind of righteousness will endure through generations, because the godly man will teach his children the ways of the Lord. This kind of man the Psalmist says, ד זרח בחשף אור לישירים חנון ורחום וצדיק: ה טוב איש חונן ומלוה יכלכל דבריו במשפט: 112:5 It is well with the man who is gracious and lends; He will maintain his cause in judgment. 112:6 For he will never be shaken; The righteous will be remembered forever. (NASB) The idea is that the one who does charity (Tzedakah) which is derived from the Hebrew text meaning righteousness, fairness or justice. The psalm brings this into context saying, ו כי-לעולם לא ימוט לזכר עולם יהיה צדיק: ז משמועה רעה לא ירא נכון לבו, ח סמוך לבו לא ירא עד אשר-יראה בצריו: ט פזר | נתן לאביונים צדקתו עמדת לעד קרנו תרום בטה ביהנה: י רשע יראה | וכעס שניו יחרק ונמס תאות רשעים תאבד: 112:7 He will not fear evil tidings; His heart is steadfast, trusting in the Lord. 112:8 His heart is upheld, he will not fear, Until he looks with satisfaction on his adversaries. 112:9 He has given freely to the poor, His righteousness endures forever; His horn will be exalted in honor. (NASB) The psalm concludes saying, י רשע יראה | וכעס שניו יחרק ונמס תאות רשעים תאבד: 112:10 The wicked will see it and be vexed, He will gnash his teeth and melt away; The desire of the wicked will perish. (NASB) In Judaism, giving to the poor is not viewed as a generous act; it is simply an act of justice, the performance of a duty, helping the poor. It is the right thing to do. The wicked are vexed because they do not understand such generosity.

עברית	Hebrew	ארמי	Aramaic	ελληνικός	Greek
<b>ספר תהילים פרק קיב</b>	<b>ספר טוביה פרק קיב</b>	<b>ספר טוביה פרק קיב</b>	<b>ספר טוביה פרק קיב</b>	<b>ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 112</b>	<b>ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 112</b>
א הללויה   אֲשֶׁר־אֵישׁ ירא את-יהוה במצותיו תפץ מאד: ב גבור בארץ יהיה זרעו דור ישירים יברך: ג הון ונעשר כביתו וצדקתו עמדת לעד: ד זרח בחשף אור לישירים חנון ורחום וצדיק:	א הללויה   אֲשֶׁר־אֵישׁ ירא את-יהוה במצותיו תפץ מאד: ב גבור בארץ יהיה זרעו דור ישירים יברך: ג הון ונעשר כביתו וצדקתו עמדת לעד: ד זרח בחשף אור לישירים חנון ורחום וצדיק:	א הללויה שבחו אלהא טוביה דגברא דבר נשא דחיל ית"מן קדם יהוה בפיקודוהי צבי לחדא: ב גבר גיבר באוריתא יהוין בנוי בדר תריציא יתברך: ג מזלא מולא ועתרא בביתיה וזכותיה קיימא לעלמין: ד דנח בחשוכא נהור לתריציא חינונא ורחמנא וצדיקא:	א הללויה שבחו אלהא טוביה דגברא דבר נשא דחיל ית"מן קדם יהוה בפיקודוהי צבי לחדא: ב גבר גיבר באוריתא יהוין בנוי בדר תריציא יתברך: ג מזלא מולא ועתרא בביתיה וזכותיה קיימא לעלמין: ד דנח בחשוכא נהור לתריציא חינונא ורחמנא וצדיקא:	112:1 αλληλουια μακάριος ἀνὴρ ὁ φοβούμενος τὸν κύριον ἐν ταῖς ἐντολαῖς αὐτοῦ θελήσει σφόδρα 112:2 δυνατὸν ἐν τῇ γῆ ἔσται τὸ σπέρμα αὐτοῦ γενεὰ εὐθειῶν εὐλογηθήσεται 112:3 δόξα καὶ πλοῦτος ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἡ δικαιοσύνη αὐτοῦ μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος 112:4 ἐξανετίλειν ἐν σκοτει φῶς τοῖς εὐθέσιν ἐλεήμων καὶ οἰκτίρμων καὶ δίκαιος	112:1 αλληλουια μακάριος ἀνὴρ ὁ φοβούμενος τὸν κύριον ἐν ταῖς ἐντολαῖς αὐτοῦ θελήσει σφόδρα 112:2 δυνατὸν ἐν τῇ γῆ ἔσται τὸ σπέρμα αὐτοῦ γενεὰ εὐθειῶν εὐλογηθήσεται 112:3 δόξα καὶ πλοῦτος ἐν τῷ οἴκῳ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἡ δικαιοσύνη αὐτοῦ μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος 112:4 ἐξανετίλειν ἐν σκοτει φῶς τοῖς εὐθέσιν ἐλεήμων καὶ οἰκτίρμων καὶ δίκαιος

<p>ה טוב איש חונן ומלון וכל-  פל דבריו במשפט: ו פי-לעולם  לא ימוט לזכר עולם יהיה צדיק:  ז משמועה רעה לא ירא נכון  לבן בטה ביהוה: ח סמוך לבן  לא ירא עד אשר-יראה בצריו:  ט פזר   נתן לאביונים צדקתו  עמדת לעד קרנו תרום בכבוד:  י רשע יראה   וכעס שניו יחרק  ונמס תאות רשעים תאבד:</p>	<p>ה גברא טבא חייס על עניי ומוזיף  יסובר מילוי כהלכתא: ו ארום לעלם  לא יזוע לדכרן עלם יהי זכי: ז מש-  מועתא בישתא לא ידחל תקין ליביה  רחיץ במימרא דיהוה: ח סמיך ליביה  לא ידחל עד זמן דיחמי פורקנא  בעקתא: ט בדר ממוניה יהב לחשיכי  זכותיה קיימא לעלמא תוקפיה תרום  באיקרא: י רשיעא יחמי ויכעוס ויר-  גוז עלוי שינוי יעסי ואיתמסא ריגוג  רשיעי תיביד תהובד:</p>	<p>112:5 χρηστός ἀνὴρ ὁ οἰκτίρων  καὶ κίχρων οἰκονομήσει τοὺς  λόγους αὐτοῦ ἐν κρίσει 112:6 ὅτι  εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα οὐ σαλευθήσεται εἰς  μνημόσυνον αἰῶνιον ἔσται δίκαιος  112:7 ἀπὸ ἀκοῆς πονηρᾶς οὐ  φοβηθήσεται ἐτοίμη ἡ καρδία αὐτοῦ  ἐλπίζειν ἐπὶ κύριον 112:8 ἐστήρικται  ἡ καρδία αὐτοῦ οὐ μὴ φοβηθῆ ἕως  οὗ ἐπίδη ἐπὶ τοὺς ἐχθροὺς αὐτοῦ  112:9 ἐσκόρπισεν ἔδωκεν τοῖς  πένησιν ἡ δικαιοσύνη αὐτοῦ μένει  εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος τὸ κέρας  αὐτοῦ ὑψωθήσεται ἐν δόξῃ 112:10  ἀμαρτωλὸς ὄψεται καὶ ὀργισθήσεται  τοὺς ὀδόντας αὐτοῦ βρῦξει καὶ  τακίησεται ἐπιθυμία ἀμαρτωλῶν  ἀπολεῖται</p>
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<b>Tehillim Psalms 112</b>	<b>Toviyah Psalms 112</b>	<b>Psalmoi Psalms 112</b>
<p>112:1 Praise the Lord! How blessed is the man who fears the Lord, Who greatly delights in His commandments. 112:2 His descendants will be mighty on earth; The generation of the upright will be blessed. 112:3 Wealth and riches are in his house, And his righteousness endures forever. 112:4 Light arises in the darkness for the upright; He is gracious and compassionate and righteous. 112:5 It is well with the man who is gracious and lends; He will maintain his cause in judgment. 112:6 For he will never be shaken; The righteous will be remembered forever. 112:7 He will not fear evil tidings; His heart is steadfast, trusting in the Lord. 112:8 His heart is upheld, he will not fear, Until he looks with satisfaction on his adversaries. 112:9 He has given freely to the poor, His righteousness endures forever; His horn will be exalted in honor. 112:10 The wicked will see it and be vexed, He will gnash his teeth and melt away; The desire of the wicked will perish. (NASB)</p>	<p>112:1 Hallelujah! Happy is the man who fears the Lord; he takes great pleasure in his commandments. 112:2 His children will be mighty in the Torah, he will be blessed in the generation of the upright. 112:3 Luck and riches are in his house, and his merit endures forever. 112:4 Light dawns in darkness for the upright, gracious, and merciful, and righteous. 112:5 A good man pities the poor and lends money; he will support his words according to rule. 112:6 For he will never be moved; the righteous man is [destined] for eternal memory. 112:7 He will not fear news of disaster; his heart is firm, trusting in the word of the Lord. 112:8 His heart is steady, he will not be afraid, until he sees redemption in distress. 112:9 He scattered his wealth, gave it to the needy; his merit endures forever, his might will rise up in glory. 112:10 The wicked man will see and be angry, he will grind his teeth at him and rot; the desire of the wicked will perish. (EMC)</p>	<p>Alleluia. 112:1 Blessed is the man that fears the Lord: he will delight greatly in his commandments. 112:2 His seed shall be mighty in the earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed. 112:3 Glory and riches shall be in his house; and his righteousness endures for evermore. 112:4 To the upright light has sprung up in darkness: he is pitiful, and merciful, and righteous. 112:5 The good man is he that pities and lends: he will direct his affairs with judgment. 112:6 For he shall not be moved for ever; the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. 112:7 He shall not be afraid of any evil report: his heart is ready to trust in the Lord. 112:8 His heart is established, he shall not fear, till he shall see his desire upon his enemies. 112:9 He has dispersed abroad; he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures for evermore: his horn shall be exalted with honor. 112:10 The sinner shall see and be angry, he shall gnash his teeth, and consume away: the desire of the sinner shall perish. (LXX)</p>

א הַלְלוּ יְהוָה | אֲשֶׁר־יֵאֵשׁ 112:1 Praise the Lord! How blessed is the man who fears the Lord, Who greatly delights in His commandments. (NASB) The Psalmist speaks of the one who delights in the commandments of God. Modern theologies teach that the Law is not a delight. Why would the commands cause one to have great delight? In *Tehillim / Psalm 37*, we are told to “*delight in the Lord*” (37:4, וְהִתְעַבֵּג) ד (עַל־יְהוָה וַיִּתְּן־לָהּ מְשָׁאֵלֹת לָבֶדָה) and we are reminded of the need to delight in Lord God of Israel above all things. How do we express our delight in the Lord? It is one thing for us to hear the statements, “*delight yourself in the Lord*” (37:4), or as Paul wrote “*rejoice in the Lord always*” (*Philippians 4:4*), and it is quite another thing to actually do “*rejoicing*” or “*delighting*.” How do we delight ourselves in the Lord? Or more practically speaking, how do we rejoice in the Lord always? In the first ten verses of *Tehillim / Psalm 40*, we are given ways to express our delight in the Lord.

### **Tehillim / Psalms 40:1-10**

40:1 I waited patiently for the Lord; And He inclined to me and heard my cry. 40:2 He brought me up out of the pit of destruction, out of the miry clay, And He set my feet upon a rock making my footsteps firm. 40:3 He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God; Many will see and fear And will trust in the Lord. 40:4 How blessed is the man who has made the Lord his trust, And has not turned to the proud, nor to those who lapse into falsehood. 40:5 Many, O Lord my God, are the wonders which You have done, And Your thoughts toward us; There is none to compare with You. If I would declare and speak of them, They would be too numerous to count. 40:6 Sacrifice and meal offering You have not desired; My ears You have opened; Burnt offering and sin offering You have not required. 40:7 Then I said, 'Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me. 40:8 I delight to do Your will, O my God; Your Law is within my heart.' 40:9 I have proclaimed glad tidings of righteousness in the great congregation; Behold, I will not restrain my lips, O Lord, You know. 40:10 I have not hidden Your righteousness within my heart; I have spoken of Your faithfulness and Your salvation; I have not concealed Your lovingkindness and Your truth from the great congregation. (NASB)

David says, (i) we are to wait patiently for the Lord, (ii) we are to trust in the Lord, and (iii) we are to hide the righteousness of the Lord in our hearts. It is interesting to note how this psalm is written, David says, *אָז אָמַרְתִּי הִנֵּה-בָאֲתִי בְּמַגֵּלֶת-סֵפֶר כְּתוּב עָלַי: ט לַעֲשׂוֹת רְצוֹנְךָ אֱלֹהֵי הַקְּפָצְתִּי וְתוֹרַתְךָ בְּתוֹךְ מִעַי: 40:7 Then I said, 'Behold, I come; In the scroll of the book it is written of me. 40:8 I delight to do Your will, O my God; Your Law is within my heart.'* (NASB) The Lord is describes the scroll of the book as a reference to the Torah. David writes, *"I waited patiently for the Lord; and He inclined to me, and heard my cry. He drew me up from the desolate pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure."* (40:1-2). We delight in the Lord because He has inclined Himself to us. Note that this is because we have also inclined ourselves to Him, to seek Him according to His word in the Scriptures, and to pray. The Lord inclined Himself to David at a time when he was in the desolate pit and in the miry clay. We also were in the mire of sin, and the Lord called us out. Not only did the Lord draw us out of the pit of sin, but He also set us upon solid ground. The Lord secured our steps in order that we might never fall into the pit again. This closeness to the Lord that David describes flows from his godly fear that is coupled to his great delight in the holy commandments of God. This is how David describes the commands, as *"Blessed is the man that fears the Lord, that delights greatly in his commandments"* (112:1). This speaks of the idea that fear develops a sense of respect and reverence in the ways of God to sanctify and structure one's footsteps, one's life for the glory of God. This is the great delight in the commands, where the fear of God leads to one despising sin and having a great desire to turn from sin. It is not possible to delight one's self in the commandments while at the same time holding onto the thing that is in opposition to God's ways (disobedience). So for the man who delights in the mitzvot, his heart is transformed and thus his affection for sin is changed, where his heart is set upon the commands for the purpose of walking in God's holy ways. This only possible by the indwelling of God's Holy Spirit by our faith in Yeshua the Messiah. When a man sets his heart upon God's holy ways, he is called *"blessed."* It is from this fear that one loves and delights in the holy commandments. What matters most is that our obedience to the Lord God of Israel is always done as an expression of our delight in Him. This is why David says, *"I delight to do Your will, O my God."* Yeshua stated in *John 14:23*, *"If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word."* This is again why the one who fears the Lord and puts His words into practice is called greatly blessed!

ב גִּבּוֹר בְּאַרְץ יִהְיֶה זְרַעוֹ דוֹר יִשְׂרָאֵל יִבְרָךְ: ג הוֹן-וְנֶעֱשָׂר בְּבֵיתוֹ וְצִדְקָתוֹ 112:2 His descendants will be mighty on earth; The generation of the upright will be blessed. 112:3 Wealth and riches are in his house, And his righteousness endures forever. 112:4 Light arises in the darkness for the upright; He is gracious and compassionate and righteous. (NASB) The concept here is that the one who fears the Lord, his descendants will be numerous and mighty on the earth. Why do you

think the descendants of the righteous will be mighty on the earth? The Aramaic Targum states, ב גבר גיבר באוריתא יהוין בנוי בדר תריציא יתברך: ג מזלא מולא ועתרא בביתיה וזכותיה קיימא לעלמין: ד דנה בחשוכא: *112:2 His children will be mighty in the Torah, he will be blessed in the generation of the upright. 112:3 Luck and riches are in his house, and his merit endures forever. 112:4 Light dawns in darkness for the upright, gracious, and merciful, and righteous.* (EMC) The Targum translates the children of the upright will be mighty in the Torah. Rashi on *Tehillim / Psalms 112:2* states, דור ישרים. here Rashi focuses upon the “*generation of the upright*” (דור ישרים) this is the blessing that will be upon his children (seed). The blessing of God will fall upon those who seek to walk in His ways, to live for His glory, and to seek the benefit of others. The rabbis say the Gematria of ‘מכבים’, ‘Maccabees’, is 112, and thus makes reference to *Tehillim / Psalms 112* which speaks of four things: (i) The God fearing (Matityahu) having mighty children (the Maccabees), (ii) the kindling of light (the Menorah) amidst the darkness, (iii) the everlasting remembrance of the righteous (Maccabees: why we celebrate Chanukah, until this very day), and (iv) the frustration of the wicked (Seleucid Empire) when their desire (Judean assimilation) falls out of their grasp. It is easy to see how the rabbis apply the Psalm to the Maccabees. It is also easy to understand how significant the concepts of the attack of the enemy, the salvation of God, and repentance (turning from sin and towards the righteous ways of the Lord) are being emphasized here in the Psalm.

While thinking on the mightiness of the children of the upright, which is coupled to his righteousness that endures forever, we are reminded of the characteristics of God’s people, and of the Messiah.

1. The physical line through whom Messiah was to come included Gentiles. The blessings of the Abrahamic covenant extended to the Gentiles. In addition, in the genealogies, a few Gentiles were included in the messianic line, the line of the promised “*seed.*” The Tanach includes Gentiles (Tamar, Rahab, and Ruth) in the lineage of Messiah Yeshua. While Gentile women are included, never is a Gentile man included in the line. This gives one food for thought.
2. The coming “*seed*” was spoken of as a prophet, a priest, and a king. Moshe told the nation of Israel that God would raise up a prophet like him (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 18:17-19*). In *Bereshit / Genesis 14:17-20* we are told Melchizedek whom the writer to the Hebrews believed was a proof text of the promised “*seed,*” the Lord Yeshua the Messiah (see *Tehillim / Psalm 110:4 and Hebrews 7:1-28*). Repeatedly through the Scriptures the “*seed*” is identified as Israel’s king, who will sit on the throne of His father, David (see 2 *Samuel 7:12-16, Tehillim / Psalm 2*).

The mightiness of the children of the upright, these things come about as a result of the man Yeshua living a righteous life. If we are His children by faith, these Scriptures speak prophetically of the people becoming the children of God. These people the Psalms speaks of however will be upright (יְשָׁרִים) meaning they will walk the straight and narrow path of righteousness, justice, holiness, and truth. This kind of righteousness will endure through generations, because the godly man will teach his children the ways of the Lord.

The Psalmist continues saying, ד זרח בַּחשֶׁךְ אֹר לְיִשְׂרָאֵל חֲנוּן וְרַחֲמִים וְצַדִּיק: ה טוֹב אִישׁ חֲנוּן וּמְלֹה, *112:5 It is well with the man who is gracious and lends; He will maintain his cause in judgment. 112:6 For he will never be shaken; The righteous will be remembered forever.* (NASB) The idea is that the one who does charity (Tzedakah) which is derived from the Hebrew text meaning righteousness, fairness or justice. Tzedakah is often translated as charity in Judaism and is a mainstay of Jewish life. The sages teach that the world was built upon kindness. However, tzedakah goes one step beyond. Literally translated as “*justice*” or “*righteousness,*” tzedakah tells us that sharing what we have with others isn’t

just something special, it is the honest and just thing to do. In addition, Tzedakah is not limited to gifts of money but may also be performed by the sharing of our time with others, showing love in the same way the Lord has shown us love. Charity is a fundamental part of the Torah way of life, this is why the Targum translates *112:2 His children will be mighty in the Torah, he will be blessed in the generation of the upright.* (EMC) Giving to the poor is an obligation in Judaism, a duty that cannot be forsaken even by those who are themselves in need. If these things are true, why then does Christianity not consider tzedakah obligatory? Some sages have said that tzedakah is the highest of all commandments, equal to all of them combined, and that a person who does not perform tzedakah is equivalent to an idol worshiper. It does not matter whether a limited amount of resources are provided to God's people or whether wealth has been distributed unevenly in the earth. Some nations (or people) have given a greater share and some a lesser share. But since all are created equally in the image of God, there is a duty that develops from the Scriptures, that those people who "have" are to give of their substance to those who do not "have" in order to effect justice. This is the definition of tzedakah. It is a way of looking at the world and understanding the human role in helping others where by doing so one is imitating qualities of the Lord in heaven.

The psalm brings these things into context saying, *ו כִּי-לְעוֹלָם לֹא יִמוּט לְזִכָּר עוֹלָם יְהִי צְדִיק: ז מִשְׁמוּעָה, רָעָה לֹא יִירָא נֶכּוֹן לְבוֹ בְּטַח בֵּיהֶנָּה: ח סְמוּךְ לְבוֹ לֹא יִירָא עַד אֲשֶׁר-יִרְאֶה בְּצָרָיו: ט פֶּזֶר | נָתַן לְאֲבִיוֹנִים צְדָקָתוֹ: י* *112:7 He will not fear evil tidings; His heart is steadfast, trusting in the Lord. 112:8 His heart is upheld, he will not fear, Until he looks with satisfaction on his adversaries. 112:9 He has given freely to the poor; His righteousness endures forever; His horn will be exalted in honor.* (NASB) The Aramaic Targum states, *ז מִשְׁמוּעָתָא בִישְׁתָּא לֹא יִדְחַל תְּקִין לִיבִיה רַחִיץ בְּמִימְרָא דִיהוּה: ח סְמִיךְ לִיבִיה לֹא יִדְחַל: ט עַד עַד זְמַן דִּיחְמִי פּוֹרְקָנָא בְעַקְתָּא: י בְּדַר מְמוּנִיה יֵהֵב לְחֲשִׁיכֵי זְכוּתִיה קִימָא לְעֵלְמָא תּוֹקֶפִיה תְּרוּם בְּאִיקְרָא: י* *112:7 He will not fear news of disaster; his heart is firm, trusting in the word of the Lord. 112:8 His heart is steady, he will not be afraid, until he sees redemption in distress. 112:9 He scattered his wealth, gave it to the needy; his merit endures forever, his might will rise up in glory.* (EMC) The act of tzedakah is what Yeshua describes in *Matthew 10:42 And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward.* (NIV) Yeshua's words are essentially saying, "Whosoever shall do the smallest service, were it but to give a drink to one of these little ones..." (ἕνα τῶν μικρῶν τούτων, *Matthew 25:40*) indicate that the smallest gift done is big in the eyes of the Lord. Abraham was the first to link individual belief and worship in the one true God to social values and responsibilities. The ethical principles of monotheism recognize that "there is one Creative Source of creation, but that this very unity conveys a moral imperative concerning ethical treatment and conduct." This comes from observation of creation itself (*Bereshit / Genesis 18:19*), we are to take care of this world and those who live in it (brothers, sisters, neighbors, and strangers). The study and practice of these ethical principles not only constitute individual worship, but lead to the establishment of a just social system and the promotion of the common good for everyone. This is the purpose for studying the Torah, because contained within the pages of the first five books of the Bible are the moral and ethical principles the Lord wants to teach to His people. Many of the biblical virtues (midot) are also commandments (mitzvot), where the practice of the commands causes one to understand what the Lord requires of us and draws us nearer to Him. Of the 613 commands found in the Torah, 248 are positive commandments (things to do), and 365 are negative commandments (things not to do). Many of the commands concern the individual's relationship with God (*Mitzvot Bayin Adam La'Makom*), more than half of the mitzvot that are applicable today, in the absence of the Temple, govern interpersonal relations (*Hilchos Beyin Adom Le'Chavero*), and relate to a comprehensive range of everyday social interactions. This form the basic moral guidelines and ethical parameters of how God's people are commanded to treat others are found in the Torah. This is what is taught in the Torah and what the Lord wants to teach His people today! The Hebrew Prophets and Talmudic Rabbis have made clear that while commandments between individuals and God are extremely important, God commanded that ethical behavior toward one another is of greater importance and concern and this may be why the Apostolic Writings (NT) focus more upon morality, ethics, and our behavior towards one another as opposed to the dietary laws. King Solomon wrote that "To do righteousness and justice is preferred by God

*above sacrifice.” (Mishley / Proverbs 21:3) Rabbi Akiva famously observed that the greatest principle in Torah is to “Love your neighbor as yourself.” (Talmud Yerushalami Nedarim 9:4). The famed scholar Hillel added to this by summarizing all of Judaism in the sentence, “What is hateful to you, do not do to others,” adding that “the rest is commentary. Now go and study.” (Talmud Bavli Shabbat 31a) The conclusion is that the Torah is an instruction tool on the manner of living an ethical life. Life is thus to be ethically centered and is viewed to be celebrated as a source of Simkhah (joy). It is understood that our deeds, our values, and our responsibilities are reflected in our behavior which is linked to the larger community of believers as well as to the Lord God of Israel. This is why both “Faith” and “Works” are not distinguished (separated) in Judaism, and why James could say what he did that “faith without works is dead.” (see James 2:14-26) The Scriptures emphasize ethical and moral living which speaks to a strong sense of mutual responsibility (Averut, Kol Yisrael Arevim Shavuot 39a) and community identity (Klal Yisrael Kehillah). We are told to not hate our fellow man (Vayikra / Leviticus 19:17, and love your enemies, Matthew 5:44) and to love one another (Ahavat Yisrael) (Vayikra / Leviticus 19:18), including converts (Devarim / Deuteronomy 10:19). In the Torah, emphasis is given saying “Tzedek, tzedek tirdof” (Justice, justice shall you pursue) (Devarim / Deuteronomy 16:20). It is because of these things that every act of our lives is in service to the Lord where matters of individual worship are often tied to ethics and social justice. Vayikra / Leviticus 5:21 speaks of the unity of the spiritual practice to ethical and moral living:*

### **Vayikra / Leviticus 6:1-7**

*6:1 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 6:2 ‘When a person sins and acts unfaithfully against the Lord, and deceives his companion in regard to a deposit or a security entrusted to him, or through robbery, or if he has extorted from his companion, 6:3 or has found what was lost and lied about it and sworn falsely, so that he sins in regard to any one of the things a man may do; 6:4 then it shall be, when he sins and becomes guilty, that he shall restore what he took by robbery or what he got by extortion, or the deposit which was entrusted to him or the lost thing which he found, 6:5 or anything about which he swore falsely; he shall make restitution for it in full and add to it one-fifth more. He shall give it to the one to whom it belongs on the day he presents his guilt offering. 6:6 ‘Then he shall bring to the priest his guilt offering to the Lord, a ram without defect from the flock, according to your valuation, for a guilt offering, 6:7 and the priest shall make atonement for him before the Lord, and he will be forgiven for any one of the things which he may have done to incur guilt.’ (NASB)*

כ וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: כֹּא נִפְשׁ כִּי תִחַטָּא וּמְעַלָּה מֵעַל בֵּיהוָה וְכַחֵשׁ בְּעַמִּיתוֹ בְּפִי-קִדּוֹן אוֹ-בִתְשׁוּמַת יָד אוֹ בְגִזְל אוֹ עֲשָׂק אֶת-עַמִּיתוֹ: כֵּב אוֹ-מִצָּא אַבְדָּה וְכַחֵשׁ בָּהּ וְנִשְׁבַּע עַל-שָׁקָר עַל-אַחַת מִכָּל אֲשֶׁר-יַעֲשֶׂה הָאָדָם לְחַטָּא בְהִנָּה: כִּג וְהִיָּה כִּי-יִחַטָּא וְאִשָּׁם וְהָשִׁיב אֶת-הַגִּזְלָה אֲשֶׁר גָּזַל אוֹ אֶת-הַעֲשָׂק אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂק אוֹ אֶת-הַפְקָדוֹן אֲשֶׁר הִפְקִיד אֹתוֹ אוֹ אֶת-הָאֲבָדָה אֲשֶׁר מִצָּא: [מִפְטִיר] כֹּד אוֹ מִכָּל אֲשֶׁר-יִשְׁבַּע עָלָיו לְשָׁקָר וְשָׁלַם אֹתוֹ בְּרֵאשׁוֹ וְחִמְשָׁתוֹ יוֹסֵף עָלָיו לְאֲשֶׁר הוּא לוֹ יִתְּנֶנּוּ בְיוֹם אֲשֶׁמְתוֹ: כֵּה וְאֶת-אֲשָׁמוֹ יָבִיא לַיהוָה אֵיל תְּמִים מִן-הַצֹּאן בְּעֶרְכָּהּ לְאִשָּׁם אֶל-הַכֹּהֵן: כו וְכִפֶּר עָלָיו הַכֹּהֵן לִפְנֵי יְהוָה וְנִסְלַח לוֹ עַל-אַחַת מִכָּל אֲשֶׁר-יַעֲשֶׂה לְאִשְׁמָה בָּהּ:

These Scriptures speak saying that a person also sins by committing a treachery against God by lying to his fellow man. The conclusion may be that if one deals falsely with his fellow man, then he repudiates the very belief in the existence of God. Early Christians were very concerned with the way in which Christians relate to one another, as 2 Timothy 2:22-25 illustrates, Paul wrote:

*Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. Don't have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels. And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. Those who oppose*

*him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth.*

Self-deception and the concept of the ends justifying means kind of attitudes are denounced in Christian teaching (see *Galatians 6:7-8, James 1:26, John 1:8*), where Yeshua taught that holiness is a way of living itself (*Matthew 4:8-10, 16:26*). Yeshua also taught to focus upon righteousness and the inner kingdom, it is in these things the disciple could find comfort and sustenance from the Lord God of Israel through faith. The Lord God would reward them in the Olam Habah and their needs on earth would be met. Yeshua also taught in *Matthew 6:31-34* saying:

*So do not worry, saying, "What shall we eat" or "What shall we drink" or "What shall we wear?" For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*

The bedrock of who we are is to have absolute faith in God, from which leads to ethical and righteous actions in our lives. Through faith in the Messiah in the belief that Yeshua died for our sins and thereby provided atonement for us, we are given the mercy and salvation of God in this life and in the next (see *Ephesians 1:6-8*). The Torah context draws in the concept that our deeds will be consistent with our faith. Faith in the God of Israel rescues us from worldly temptations, while those who trust in the Lord and His mercy will repent of their transgressions, forgive others, and open their heart to do what the Lord has called us to do on this Earth. The Scriptures teach that those who do so will be saved (see *Matthew 13:15, Acts 2:38, 10:42-44, and 13:37-39*).

The psalm concludes saying, **יְרָשֶׁעַ יְרָאָה | וְכַעַס שְׁנָיו יִחְרֹק וְנִמַּס תְּאֵזוֹת רְשָׁעִים תֵּאבֹד:** *112:10 The wicked will see it and be vexed, He will gnash his teeth and melt away; The desire of the wicked will perish. (NASB)* In Judaism, giving to the poor is not viewed as a generous act; it is simply an act of justice, the performance of a duty, and helping the poor. It is the right thing to do. The wicked are vexed because they do not understand such generosity. They will become indignant due to our generosity and we will be persecuted for exercising our faith in the Lord God of Israel and in His Messiah Yeshua. Let's Pray!

## **Rabbinic Commentary**

The Rabbinic Commentary (Midrash) on *Tehillim / Psalms 112* has 2 parts. Reading through the Midrash we will be looking at Part 1 and 2. Let's begin by outlining *Midrash Tehillim Chapter 112, Parts 1 and 2*.

### **Outline of Midrash Tehillim / Psalms, Chapter 112, Part 1 and 2**

#### **Part 1**

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דִּבּוּר הַמַּתְחִיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying, "Praise the Lord. Blessed is the man that fears the Lord (Tehillim / Psalms 112:1)."
- The **פְּתִיחָה** (Petihata) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, "*These words are to be considered in the light of the verse Grace is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that fears the Lord, she will be praised (Mishley / Proverbs 31:30).*"
- The **מִשָּׁל** (mashal) "*the parable,*" goes on to explain the **פְּתִיחָה** (Petihata), the rabbis speak of beauty and riches and how the Lord does not value either.
- The **נִמְשָׁל** (Nimshal) "*expansion on the parable*" expands upon the **מִשָּׁל** (mashal), the rabbis continue saying a God fearing man is is whom the Lord loves and he will teach his children to walk in



the ways of the Lord.

- The Concluding phrase says, “Therefore, this Psalm, going from alef to tav, was composed about him. Likewise from alef to tav goes the Psalm A woman of valor (Mishley / Proverbs 31), composed about Sarah his wife, as it is said, A woman that fears the Lord, she will be praised. The two of them observed the Torah from alef to tav.”

## Part 2

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying, “Blessed is the man that delights greatly in His commandments (Tehillim / Psalms 112:1).”
- The פתיחתא (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “For Abraham kept the commandments not under compulsion, but with delight, as is said, That delights greatly in His commandments.”
- The משל (mashal) “the parable,” goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis speak of obedience to the commands as not being compulsion.
- The נמשל (Nimshal) “expansion on the parable” expands upon the משל (mashal), the rabbis expand upon the mashal speaking of some of the commands that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob obeyed due to their love for the Lord God in heaven.
- The Concluding phrase says, “The generation of the upright will be blessed (Tehillim / Psalms 112:4). Who are the generation of the upright? These are the generation of the upright? These are the twelve tribes of Israel (Bereshit / Genesis 49:28).”

Midrash Tehillim 112, Part 1, opens with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying, “Praise the Lord. Blessed is the man that fears the Lord (Tehillim / Psalms 112:1).” The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “These words are to be considered in the light of the verse Grace is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that fears the Lord, she will be praised (Mishley / Proverbs 31:30, לֹא שֶׁקֶר הַחֵן וְהַבֶּלֶל הַיְפִי אֲשֶׁה, יִרְאַת-יְהוָה הִיא תִתְהַלֵּל: (יראת-יהוה היא תתהלל:).” The midrash speaks of Grace being deceitful coupled with beauty being vain in relation to a woman that fears the Lord. The idea of the grace of God being deceitful may seem like a strange one. Note in the Hebrew text, the word that is used is חֵן meaning “grace, favor, charm, beauty, prettiness, loveliness.” This word is first used in the Torah in Bereshit / Genesis 6:8. (וַיִּבֶן הַמָּצָא חֵן בְּעֵינָיו.) חֵן (יהוה) Noah finds “favor in the eyes of the Lord.” The context is that the Lord was grieved at “how great man’s wickedness on the earth had become” (Bereshit / Genesis 6:5). This statement about how the Lord feels toward man is followed by his promise that he will wipe humankind from the face of the earth, to completely destroy mankind, because of his sins. Noah is then described as having found favor (חֵן) in the eyes of the Lord. The themes of judgment and salvation due to sin, that in which the vast majority of mankind are condemned to destruction, while God finds favor on a few (Noah and his family), reoccurs often in connection with the idea of grace. So the topic that “grace is deceitful” is an interesting one. In the Hebrew Bible, the word translated for grace comes from two Hebrew words (Strongs, BDB, Gesenius):

חֶסֶד

grace, mercy, kindness, charity, favor, graciousness, favor

חֵן

grace, mercy, favor, charm, beauty, prettiness, loveliness

The first occurrence of the word חֶסֶד is found in Bereshit / Genesis 19:19 with Lot saying, “Now behold, your servant has found favor in your sight, and you have magnified your lovingkindness, which you have shown me by saving my life; but I cannot escape to the mountains, for the disaster will overtake me and I will die.” (NASB) Here Lot speaks of finding mercy, kindness, graciousness in the eyes of the Lord in

fleeing from the destruction at Sodom. The question though is how can this idea of “grace” or “favor” be considered deceitful? The entire Midrash states the following:

<p><b>מדרש תהלים פרק קיב סימן א</b>  א הללויה אשרי איש ירא [את] ה'. זהו שאמר הכתוב שקר החן והבל היופי אשה יראת ה' היא תתהלל (משלי לא ל), אין הקב"ה מבקש לא יופי ולא עושר, אלא יראת חטא, שנאמר אשה יראת ה' היא תתהלל, כמו שנתהלל אברהם, שנאמר כי ידעתיו למען אשר יצוה [וגו' ושמרו דרך ה' לעשות צדקה ומשפט] (בראשית יח יט), וכתוב כי עתה ידעתי כי ירא אלהים אתה (שם בראשית כב יב), וכן הוא אומר כה אמר ה' אל יתהלל חכם בחכמתו וגו' כי אם בזאת יתהלל המתהלל השכל וידוע אותי (ירמיה ט כב כג), ומי הוא המתהלל, מי שעוסק בתורה מאל"ף ועד תי"ו, ואין זאת אלא תורה, שנאמר וזאת התורה (דברים ד מד), אברהם שמר את התורה מאל"ף ועד תי"ו, שנאמר עקב אשר שמע אברהם בקולי (בראשית כו ה), לפיכך נאמר עליו המזמור הזה מאל"ף ועד תי"ו, ואף המזמור אשת חיל נאמר על שרה אשתו מאל"ף ועד תי"ו, שנאמר אשה יראת ה' היא תתהלל (משלי לא ל), [שניהם עשו את התורה מאל"ף ועד תי"ו].</p>	<p><b>Midrash Tehillim 112, Part 1</b>  1. Praise the Lord. Blessed is the man that fears the Lord (Tehillim / Psalms 112:1). These words are to be considered in the light of the verse Grace is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that fears the Lord, she will be praised (Mishley / Proverbs 31:30). For the Holy One, blessed be He, values neither beauty nor riches, only fear of sin, as it is said, A woman that fears the Lord, she will be praised. So was Abraham praised, as it is said, For I have known him, to the end that he may command his children and his household after him, that they may keep the way of the Lord, to do righteousness and justice (Bereshit / Genesis 18:19); and again, For now I know that you are a God fearing man (Bereshit / Genesis 22:12). Scripture says also, Thus says the Lord, Let not the wise man be praised for his wisdom, But let him that is praised, be praised for this, that he understands and knows Me (Jeremiah 9:22-23). Therefore, who is to be praised? He who occupies himself with Torah from alef to tav. For this, in the words, let him be praised for this, clearly refers to Torah, as is said, And this is the Torah (Devarim / Deuteronomy 4:44). Now Abraham kept the Torah from alef to tav, as is said, Because Abraham listened to My voice (Bereshit / Genesis 26:5). Therefore, this Psalm, going from alef to tav, was composed about him. Likewise from alef to tav goes the Psalm A woman of valor (Mishley / Proverbs 31), composed about Sarah his wife, as it is said, A woman that fears the Lord, she will be praised. The two of them observed the Torah from alef to tav.</p>
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The rabbis say that the man who fears the Lord is blessed, and this is to be taking into consideration with respect to *Mishley / Proverbs 31:30*: ל שקר החן והבל היופי אשה יראת ה' היא תתהלל: which speaks of Grace being deceitful. The Midrash states, “For the Holy One, blessed be He, values neither beauty nor riches, only fear of sin, as it is said, A woman that fears the Lord, she will be praised.” This concept of “fearing sin” is related to the fear of God and His judgment that would lead to death, paralleled to an eternal separation from His presence (*Luke 12:5, Hebrews 10:31*). The fear of the Lord God is having a reverence for the Lord and His ways. *Hebrews 12:28-29* states, “Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.” This reverence and awe is exactly what the fear of God means for His children. Solomon said in *Mishley / Proverbs 1:7* The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge. (NASB) Until we understand who God is and develop a reverential fear of Him, we cannot have true wisdom. The understanding of who God is comes by our living out our lives according to His Word. True wisdom comes only from understanding who the Lord God is by living out the commandments. This teaches us what it means by He is Holy, Just, and Righteous. *Devarim / Deuteronomy 10:12, 20-21* (יב ועתה ישראל מה יהוה אתה ואלהיך שאל מעמך כי אם ליראה את יהוה אלהיך ללכת בכל דרכיו ולאהבה אתו ולעבד את יהוה אלהיך בכל לבבך ובכל נפשך: ... כ את יהוה אלהיך תירא אתו תעבד ובו תדבק ובשמו תשבוע: כא הוא תהלתך והוא אלהיך אשר עשה את הגדלות ואת הנוראת האלה אשר ראו עיניך: כב בשבעים נפש ירדו אבותיך מצרימה ועתה: (שמה יהוה אלהיך פכוכבי השמים לרב: 10:12 ‘Now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require from you,

*but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and love Him, and to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, ... 10:20 'You shall fear the Lord your God; you shall serve Him and cling to Him, and you shall swear by His name. 10:21 'He is your praise and He is your God, who has done these great and awesome things for you which your eyes have seen. (NASB)* The fear of God is the basis for our walking in His ways, serving Him, and, yes, loving Him by reason of the manner in which He loves us and has delivered us again and again. The biblical definition of the fear of God, for the believer, includes understanding how much the Lord hates sin and fearing His judgment on sin even in the life of a believer. This is illustrated in the Apostolic Writings according to *Hebrews 12:5-11* which describes God's discipline of the believer. While it is done in love (*Hebrews 12:6*), it is still a fearful thing. Consider the life of David, it was said that David was a man after God's own heart, but when he sinned, the punishment went either to himself, to his family, or to the nation of Israel. How important it is to watch and guard against sin in our lives. The Scriptures suggest our own personal sin could be affecting our immediate family by reason of God's discipline in our lives. As children, the fear of discipline from our parents no doubt prevented some evil actions. The same should be true in our relationship with God, right? We should fear His discipline, and therefore seek to live our lives in such a way that pleases Him. The way this is accomplished is in His Torah which was lived out for our example in Yeshua the Messiah. Based upon the Scriptures, we have His promise that nothing can separate us from His love (*Romans 8:38-39*). We also have His promise that He will never leave us or forsake us (*Hebrews 13:5*). Fearing God means having such a reverence for Him that it has a great impact on the way we live our lives. The fear of God is respecting Him, obeying Him, submitting to His discipline, and worshiping Him and His awesomeness.

The Midrash states in relation to fearing the Lord, "*So was Abraham praised, as it is said, For I have known him, to the end that he may command his children and his household after him, that they may keep the way of the Lord, to do righteousness and justice (Bereshit / Genesis 18:19); and again, For now I know that you are a God fearing man (Bereshit / Genesis 22:12).*" This fear led Abraham to teach his children of God's ways, and in keeping them himself and teaching them to his children, Abraham demonstrated that he was a God fearing man. Does your life demonstrated you are a God fearing man or woman? The rabbis cite the following passage, "*Thus says the Lord, Let not the wise man be praised for his wisdom, But let him that is praised, be praised for this, that he understands and knows Me (Jeremiah 9:22-23).*" They speak of the words of Jeremiah.

#### ***Jeremiah 9:20-24***

*9:20 Now hear the word of the Lord, O you women, And let your ear receive the word of His mouth; Teach your daughters wailing, And everyone her neighbor a dirge. 9:21 For death has come up through our windows; It has entered our palaces To cut off the children from the streets, The young men from the town squares. 9:22 Speak, 'Thus says the Lord, 'The corpses of men will fall like dung on the open field, And like the sheaf after the reaper, But no one will gather them. ' 9:23 Thus says the Lord, 'Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; 9:24 but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things,' declares the Lord. (NASB)*

Take note of Jeremiah's words, the wise man is not to boast of his own might, or of wealth, he is to boast that he "*understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth.*" Understanding and knowing the Lord presupposes that we understand and know how the Lord has been working in our own lives. To see the Lord exercise lovingkindness (Mercy, Chesed), Justice, and Righteousness leads one to realize it is by the Lord's mercy that He has done these things on our behalf in the midst of our sin and unfaithfulness. The key is to perform Teshuvah (Repentance) and turn for our ways towards the ways of the Lord and try-try again! Our lives as God's people are to live in repentance daily, meaning that we are continually seeking God's ways and to have success in our lives for God's glory! Jere-

miah says the Lord delights in Mercy, Justice, and Righteousness, and likewise we as His children who live by our faith are to love and do justice and righteousness towards others, and to show mercy to all!

The midrash continues saying,

*Therefore, who is to be praised? He who occupies himself with Torah from alef to tav. For this, in the words, let him be praised for this, clearly refers to Torah, as is said, And this is the Torah (Devarim / Deuteronomy 4:44). Now Abraham kept the Torah from alef to tav, as is said, Because Abraham listened to My voice (Bereshit / Genesis 26:5). (Midrash Tehillim 112, Part 1)*

These things are expounded upon by the rabbis to say that the one who occupies himself with the Torah from lef to tav, this is what one is to be praised for. To be occupied with the Torah means that one is seeking to live in the kingdom of God according to God’s ways. It is interesting how the rabbis state that reading Torah from alef to tav is the method by which one is to occupy himself. The phrase “from alef to tav” is a phrase that may be familiar to some of us from the Apostolic Writings. Yeshua the Messiah testified in the book of *Revelation 1:8* he says that he is the alpha and omega (a reference to the alef and tav), and in *Revelation 22:13*, he says this again that he is the alef and the tav. This is a reference to the First (Reshon) and the Last (Acharon), the Beginning (Rosh) and the Ending (Sof). When Yeshua was making these statements, he was referencing *Isaiah 41:4, 44:6, and 48:12*.

**Isaiah 41:4**

41:4 ‘Who has performed and accomplished it, Calling forth the generations from the beginning?’ ‘I, the Lord, am the first, and with the last. I am He.’ (NASB, מִי-פָעַל וְעָשָׂה קָרָא, הַדְּרוֹת מֵרֵאשִׁית אֲנִי יְהוָה רֵאשִׁוֹן וְאֶת-אַחֲרָיִם אֲנִי-הוּא:)

**Isaiah 44:6**

44:6 ‘Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel And his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: ‘I am the first and I am the last, And there is no God besides Me. (NASB, כֹּה-אָמַר יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ-יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְגֵאֲלוֹ יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אֲנִי רֵאשִׁוֹן וְאֲנִי אַחֲרוֹן וּמִבְּלָעָדֵי אֵין אֱלֹהִים:)

**Isaiah 48:12**

48:12 ‘Listen to Me, O Jacob, even Israel whom I called; I am He, I am the first, I am also the last. (NASB, יִבְ שָׁמַע אֵלַי יַעֲקֹב וְיִשְׂרָאֵל מִקְרָאִי אֲנִי-הוּא אֲנִי רֵאשִׁוֹן אֶף אֲנִי אַחֲרוֹן:)

According to the prophet Isaiah, Adonai Himself says that He is the First and the Last, and explicitly declares that there are no other gods besides Him. Yeshua as Masihach (Messiah) was declaring that it is through him all the nations of the earth would be redeemed, for those who would have faith in him. It is interesting to note that the Hebrew word Emet (אמת) for truth begins and ends with Aleph and Tav.



The Hebrew word Emet is more concrete than the English word for truth in which the English word is derived from the Greek or Western view of truth. Based upon “the Torah,” from a Hebraic mindset, the one who exercises emet (truth) is one who can be trusted (see *Bereshit / Genesis 24:49, 42:16, 47:26, Joshua*

2:14). Based upon the Torah, our actions reports what we say, and God's judgments are emet (truth) because they are reliable. In the Tanakh, emet is often coupled with Chesed (Mercy/Grace), covenant faithfulness, which designates God's loyalty in fulfilling His promises that are based upon His covenant. Both Emet and Chesed were revealed in the giving of the covenant at Sinai according to Shemot / Exodus 34:6.

***Shemot / Exodus 34:6***

*34:6 Then the Lord passed by in front of him and proclaimed, 'The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; (NASB,*

*וַיַּעֲבֹר יְהוָה | עַל-פְּנֵי וַיִּקְרָא יְהוָה | יְהוָה אֵל רַחוּם וְחַנּוּן אַרְךָ אַפַּיִם וְרַב-חֶסֶד וְאֱמֶת:*

Based upon these words from the Torah, truth (emet) is deeply personal. It is an integral component of HaShem, and is not something that is objective or static that is studied only at a distance. It is a personal disclosure of the character of a person. The reason being, when we know the truth about something, we learn something deeply personal about what was in a persons heart. When emet is understood in this way, truth is a way of living, a mode of existence, that is deeply connected to relations and interactions, and what we do in the midst of one another (husbands, wives, brothers sisters, neighbors, and our enemies).

Midrash Tehillim 112, Part 1 concludes saying, "Therefore, this Psalm, going from alef to tav, was composed about him. Likewise from alef to tav goes the Psalm A woman of valor (Mishley / Proverbs 31), composed about Sarah his wife, as it is said, A woman that fears the Lord, she will be praised. The two of them observed the Torah from alef to tav." When Yeshua declared himself to be the alef and tav, he was speaking of who he is in a deeply personal manner. He is the Messiah, He is the One in whom we receive redemption, He is our Savior, He is the right hand of the Lord God of Israel who did, has, and will deliver His people from all things, including from the failings of sin and rebellion. In *John 14:6*, Yeshua spoke of being "The truth, and the life." This is coupled to the thought of His being the Way through which men come to the Father, where declaring himself to be the truth and the life is understood to mean that in Him the Father is revealed to men, that He is the Eternal Truth, and that He is the Source of eternal life. (compare: *John 1:14 John 1:17 John 6:50-51 John 11:25-26*) Remember that He lived out the Torah for our example and in doing so, we recognize his character of righteousness, justice, truth, and love. This is the characteristic of the Messiah, the One through whom would bring the mediation of salvation, to go before God, and to make the request of the people known before our Father in heaven, just as Moshe functioned. Yeshua does not merely point out the way and teach the truth and bestow life. He claimed to be "the way, the truth, and the life," so that by attaching ourselves to Him in faith, in this way one may possess the truth and the life. "The way" that is referred to here is being the way to the Father and the way of the Father. He is the goal as our example and Messiah where there is but one way to the Father, "no one comes," καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια, "and the truth," are primarily about the Lord God of Israel and His righteous and holy ways. The way to Him is led by the Messiah who leads his people in holiness and righteousness which provides us with all knowledge which is what leads us to life everlasting by faith, what is required for life.

Midrash Tehillim 112, Part 2 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying, "Blessed is the man that delights greatly in His commandments (Tehillim / Psalms 112:1)." The פתיחה (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, "For Abraham kept the commandments not under compulsion, but with delight, as is said, That delights greatly in His commandments." What does it mean to delight greatly in His commands? The Apostle Paul wrote to the *Philippians 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! (NASB)* Is this what it means to be joyful in all that we do? To rejoice in the Lord always is not primarily a matter of feeling, but of obedience. Paul speaks in *Philippians 4:4* a commandment, which is repeated twice for emphasis, so that we will not shrug it off. The motivations of our hearts is to deliberately be happy and to deliberately choose to obey, especially when we are in difficult circumstances. The delighting greatly in the mitzvot (commandments) has to do with our attitudes which are directly related to our mental attitudes in our choices. Many times, the choice to rejoice often goes directly against how we feel. Considering Job and what had happened to him, when we go through trials, when we are treated unfairly, when we are disappointed by people or circumstances, even when disasters or great calamity occurs, we are

faced with a decision. Will we continue to obey this commands and to rejoice in the Lord or will we allow ourselves to be swept along by our feelings?

The entire midrash states the following:

<p><b>מדרש תהלים פרק קיב סימן ב</b></p> <p>ב במצותיו חפץ מאד. שלא עשה את המצוה באנגריא, אלא בשמחה, שנאמר במצותיו חפץ מאד, אמר לו הקב"ה לך מארצך (בראשית יב א), לא עשה באנגריא, אלא וילך אברם כאשר דיבר אליו ה' (שם שם בראשית י"ב ד), ויקח אברם את שרי אשתו וגו' (שם שם בראשית י"ב ה), א"ל הקב"ה המול ימול (שם בראשית יז ג), ומל מיד, בעצם היום הזה נמול אברהם (שם שם בראשית י"ז כו), אמר ליה קח נא את בנך וגו' (שם בראשית כב ב), מיד וישכם אברהם בבוקר (שם שם בראשית כ"ב ג), חפץ לעשות מצוה בזריזות [וכשנולד יצחק בן שמונת ימים הגישו למילה, שנאמר וימל אברהם את יצחק בנו בן שמונת ימים (בראשית כא ד) והגישו (למנחה) [כמנחה] על גבי המזבח, ועשה שמחה ומשתה, מכאן אמרו חכמים חייב אדם לעשות שמחה ומש"תה באותו היום שזוכה למול את בנו, כאבינו אברהם, שנאמר ויעש אברהם משתה גדול ביום הגמל את יצחק (שם שם בראשית כ"א ח),[הוא במצותיו חפץ מאד, ומה שכרו, גבור בארץ יהיה זרעו, זה יצחק, שנאמר כי ביצחק יקרא לך זרע (שם בראשית כא יב), ומה גבורתו, ויעתר יצחק לה' וגו' (שם בראשית כה כא), ואין זה גבור שעשה לעקרה שתלד. דבר אחר גבור בארץ. זה יעקב, שנאמר (ועתה) [ואתה] ישראל עבדי (ישעיה מא ח), ומה גבורתו, וישר אל מלאך ויכול (הושע יב ה) נטל את המלאך ורפשו לארץ. דור ישרים יבורך [ואיזה דור ישרים], כל אלה שבטי ישראל (בראשית מט כח).</p>	<p><b>Midrash Tehillim 112, Part 2</b></p> <p>2. Blessed is the man that delights greatly in His commandments (Tehillim / Psalms 112:1). For Abraham kept the commandments not under compulsion, but with delight, as is said, That delights greatly in His commandments. Note that when the Holy One blessed be He, said to him, you are to get out of your country (Bereshit / Genesis 12:1), he did not go under compulsion, but instead willingly went, as the Lord had spoke unto him (Bereshit / Genesis 12:4), and took Sarai his wife (Bereshit / Genesis 12:5). When the Holy One blessed be He said to him he that is born in your house must be circumcised (Bereshit / Genesis 17:13), he circumcised himself forthwith. In the self same day was Abraham circumcised (Bereshit / Genesis 17:26). When God said to him Take now your son and offer him for a burnt offering (Bereshit / Genesis 22:2), straight away, Abraham rose early in the morning, and saddled his donkey, and took Isaac his son (Bereshit / Genesis 22:3), for Abraham delighted to do God's commandment speedily. And after Isaac was born and was born and was eight days old, Abraham presented Isaac for circumcision, as is said, And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old (Bereshit / Genesis 21:4), and in presenting him thus as an offering upon the altar, he prepared a joyous feast. From this the Sages interpreted that it is the duty of a man to prepare a joyous feast on the day that he is privileged to circumcise his son, even as our father Abraham had done, for it is said, And Abraham made a great feast Hence it is said, Blessed is the man that delights greatly in His commandments. And what was Abraham's reward? His seed will be mighty upon earth (Tehillim / Psalms 112:2), his seed referring to Isaac, for it is said In Isaac will seed be called to you (Bereshit / Genesis 21:12). And where was Isaac's might? Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife, because she was barren (Bereshit / Genesis 25:21), and is he not mighty whose entreaty results in a barren woman's bearing a child? A different comment on His seed will be mighty upon earth, His seed refers to Jacob, to whom it was said, But you Israel, My servant (Isaiah 41:8). And wherein was Jacob's might? He strove with an angel, and prevailed (Hosea 12:5) that is, he lifted up the angel and threw him to the ground. The generation of the upright will be blessed (Tehillim / Psalms 112:4). Who are the generation of the upright? These are the generation of the upright? These are the twelve tribes of Israel (Bereshit / Genesis 49:28).</p>
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The rabbis the delight in the commands to Abraham who was not under compulsion to obey. Note how this is the same in our case, obedience to the commands are because of our great love for the Lord! The example of Abraham was “When the Holy One blessed be He said to him he that is born in your house must be circumcised (Bereshit / Genesis 17:13), he circumcised himself forthwith.” This is quite the example, since it is related to the cutting of the flesh, painful, and not something that one just does on a whim. This demonstrates his love for the Lord and his desire to be connected to the most high taking a form of physical separation from the world. Note that circumcision is not something of public display. This is related to something that is very “private” which illustrates for us the significance of the intimate nature of the commands in our

lives, that are related to our relationship with God. Note what the author of the book of Hebrews writes, *4:12 For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. 4:13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. (NASB)* The word of God creates a dividing line between the soul and the spirit, and reveals the intentions of the heart. Can you see the intimacy that is created in our understanding of who we are and our nature when we seek to live our lives according to God's Word? This is the process of maturing and growing up in God's Word to live for Him by examining the intentions of our hearts. This is how delighting in the mitzvot (commandments) is related to our attitudes which are directly related to our mental attitudes in our choices. The choice to obey and to rejoice in doing so goes directly against how we feel, note the connection to the Midrash and the example of Abraham, circumcising himself which would go contrary to how he would feel. The act of circumcision at the age of 70 years old is not a pleasant thing to do.

The rabbis continue saying the following:

*When God said to him Take now your son and offer him for a burnt offering (Bereshit / Genesis 22:2), straight away, Abraham rose early in the morning, and saddled his donkey, and took Isaac his son (Bereshit / Genesis 22:3), for Abraham delighted to do God's commandment speedily. And after Isaac was born and was born and was eight days old, Abraham presented Isaac for circumcision, as is said, And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old (Bereshit / Genesis 21:4), and in presenting him thus as an offering upon the altar, he prepared a joyous feast.*

The idea is that when the Lord told Abraham to offer his son as a sacrifice, that he obeyed right away. This was paralleled to when Isaac was born, he was circumcised on the eighth day, which is synonymous to Abraham presenting him as a sacrifice, and an offering unto the Lord. The midrash states that following this Abraham prepared a joyous feast. To rejoice in the Lord always is an attitude of contentment and hope that transcends our circumstances. This joy in the Lord which we must aim for is not a superficial happiness based on circumstances or on the absence of trials, but rather is a solid contentment and hope that is as steady and certain as our faithful God who has given us His promises in His Word. Yeshua demonstrated this attitude as He faced death on the cross (*John 15:11, 17:13*). The apostles knew what this meant when they were flogged for preaching the gospel, and we are told that they went on their way "*rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His name*" (*Acts 5:41*). Paul and Silas knew that joy when they were unjustly thrown in the Philippian jail, note how they sang hymns of praise to God (*Acts 16:25*) regardless of their circumstance. Also note how many martyrs died singing praises in the flames as their enemies gloated. Joy is a fruit of the Holy Spirit and the Tanach and the Apostolic Writings are filled with men who obeyed God's commands regardless of the circumstance (see *Tehillim / Psalms 5:11, 33:1, and 64:10*). Therefore the commands are a matter of obedience and not a matter of temperament.

Midrash Tehillim 112, Part 2 concludes saying,

*"From this the Sages interpreted that it is the duty of a man to prepare a joyous feast on the day that he is privileged to circumcise his son, even as our father Abraham had done, for it is said, And Abraham made a great feast Hence it is said, Blessed is the man that delights greatly in His commandments. And what was Abraham's reward? His seed will be mighty upon earth (Tehillim / Psalms 112:2), his seed referring to Isaac, for it is said In Isaac will seed be called to you (Bereshit / Genesis 21:12). And where was Isaac's might? Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife, because she was barren (Bereshit / Genesis 25:21), and is he not mighty whose entreaty results in a barren woman's bearing a child? A different comment on His seed will be mighty upon earth, His seed refers to Jacob, to whom it was said, But you Israel, My servant (Isaiah 41:8). And wherein was Jacob's might? He strove with an angel,*

*and prevailed (Hosea 12:5) that is, he lifted up the angel and threw him to the ground. The generation of the upright will be blessed (Tehillim / Psalms 112:4). Who are the generation of the upright? These are the generation of the upright? These are the twelve tribes of Israel (Bereshit / Genesis 49:28)."*

Note how Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife because she was barren (*Bereshit / Genesis 25:21*). He prayed on behalf of his wife, he was not angry with her for her inability to have children. This demonstrates how his compulsion to pray for his wife was out of love for her, and not based upon her ability to have children. The same example may be given from Abraham and Sarah. The generation of the upright, as the children of Abraham, will live their lives for others in this same manner, and realizing that doing so is synonymous to living for the Lord God our Father in heaven and for His Messiah Yeshua. Let's pray!

Heavenly Father,

We recognize what it is that You require of us to live as Your people. Help us to live as Your people in Justice, Righteousness, and Truth, that is coupled to Moral and Ethical living. Father, we believe You are able to overcome all things, from saving us from our enemies, to the deliverance from sin, and even to work in our hearts to deeply and truly love others, whether at home or even our enemies. We recognize the weaknesses in our strength and resolve to serve You and to do what is expected, to be humble and to pray and to 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, 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