

Tehillim / Psalms 117 | ספר תהילים קיז

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Praise the Lord all You Nations

א הַלְלוּ אֶת-יְהוָה כָּל-גּוֹיִם, In this week's study from *Tehillim / Psalms 117:1-2*, the psalm opens saying, *117:1 Praise the Lord, all nations; Laud Him, all peoples! (NASB)* David writes in his psalm for the nations to praise the Lord God of Israel. *Sforno on Bereshit / Genesis 14:20 Part 1* wrote saying, *וברוך אל עליון, this power G'd gave to Avram to enable him to overcome his enemies, is a blessing for the Lord. He is able to rejoice in the deeds of His creatures when the wicked perish, and when He makes the righteous rejoice in their success. David expressed it in these words in Psalms 117:1-2* שְׂבַחְוָהוּ כָל-הָאֲמִים: *גי גבר עלינו חסדו* *“Praise the Lord all you nations. Extol Him, all you peoples; for great is His steadfast love toward us;”* Sforno states that the Lord's love surpasses all understanding, and so great is his love that all of the nations are called to give praises to His Name. David continues saying the following, *ב כִּי גָבַר* *117:2 For His lovingkindness is great toward us, And the truth of the Lord is everlasting. Praise the Lord! (NASB)* David says that the grace (חַסְדּוֹ) of God is great towards His people and the truth of the Lord is everlasting. What is the grace and truth of God? *Rashbam on Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:43 Part 1* wrote the following concerning Tehillim / Psalms 117, *ומע (לע) סיוג וניגרה, similar in meaning to the word הללו in Psalms 117:1* כל גוים ה' הללו את ה' *“praise the Lord all you nations, etc.”* *Just as the psalmist calls upon the nations to acknowledge G'd, to praise Him and exalt Him for the loving kindness He has shown His creatures, so Moses concludes here with a similar call addressed to these same nations at the time of the redemption of mankind, or those who deserve it, to praise the Lord because they have finally seen what He has done for His people. By addressing them already now, Moses implies that G'd would relate to them similarly if they would take all these lessons to heart as of now (and convert to Judaism).* Note how the nations are included in praising the Lord as this relates to the time of redemption of mankind. Those who would take to hear the commands of God to live for the Lord, the lessons learned and that are taken to heart will cause one to change from the inside out.

עברית	Hebrew	ארמי	Aramaic	ελληνικός	Greek	
ספר תהלים פרק קיז	א הַלְלוּ אֶת-יְהוָה כָּל-גּוֹיִם שְׂבַחְוָהוּ כָל-הָאֲמִים: ב כִּי גָבַר עָלֵינוּ חַסְדּוֹ וְאֵמֶת-יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם הַלְלוּיָהּ:	א שְׂבַחוּ יְת יְהוּה כָּל עַמִּיָּא עַמִּיָּא שְׂבַחוּ לִיָּה כָּל אוּמִיָּא: ב אַרוּם אַגְבַּר עַלְנָא טוּבִיָּה וְקוּשְׁ-טִיָּה דִיְהוּה לְעַלְמָא הַלְלוּיָהּ שְׂבַחוּ אֱלֹהָא:	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 117	117:1 αλληλουια αινειτε τον κυριον παντα τα εθνη επαινεσατε αυτον παντες οι λαοι 117:2 οτι εκραταιωθη το ελεος αυτου εφ' ημας και η αληθεια του κυριου μενει εις τον αιωνα		
Tehillim Psalms 117 117:1 Praise the Lord, all nations; Laud Him, all peoples! 117:2 For His lovingkindness is great toward us, And the truth of the Lord is everlasting. Praise the Lord! (NASB)		Toviyah Psalms 117 117:1 Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles; praise him, all you nations. 117:2 For he has increased his goodness towards us; and the truth of the Lord is forever. Hallelujah! (EMC)		Psalmoi Psalms 117 Alleluia. 117:1 Praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise him, all ye peoples. 117:2 For his mercy has been abundant toward us: and the truth of the Lord endures for ever. (LXX)		

In this week's study from *Tehillim / Psalms 117:1-2*, the psalm opens saying, א הָלְלוּ אֶת-יְהוָה כָּל-גּוֹיִם, :אָמִים: 117:1 Praise the Lord, all nations; Laud Him, all peoples! (NASB) The Aramaic Targum states, :אָמִים: 117:1 Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles; praise him, all you nations. (EMC) David writes in his psalm for the nations to praise the Lord God of Israel. *Tehillim / Psalms 117* is considered one of the hallel psalms. The Hallel (הלל, "Praise") is a Jewish prayer, a recitation from *Tehillim / Psalms 113-118*, which is used for praise and thanksgiving. This is the context of the *Talmud Bavli in Pesachim 118a:19* on the Rabbis comments in relation to the hallel.

Talmud Bavli Pesachim 118a:19

This hallel also alludes to the ascent of Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah from the fiery furnace, as it is written: "Praise the Lord, all you nations, laud Him all you peoples. For His mercy is great toward us, and the truth of the Lord endures forever, halleluya" (Psalms 117). Hananiah recited: "Praise the Lord, all you nations," for the overt miracle performed for them before the nations. Mishael recited: "Laud Him all you peoples." Azariah recited: "For His mercy is great toward us." They all recited together: "And the truth of the Lord endures forever, halleluya."

The Talmud relates the plight of Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah in the book of Daniel saying that the hallel was said in the Diaspora (Babylon). The rabbis provide reasons for giving praises to the Lord saying the nations give praise because of God's mercy to Israel and His truth endures forever. Why do you think praise is to be given by the nations as a result of the Lord having mercy upon Israel? The Talmudic reasoning was because miracles had been performed before the nations due to God's people Israel. Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were saved from the fiery furnace that killed the guards who threw them into the furnace. The angel of God come to save them from the flames. The king called them out of the furnace, they climbed out of the furnace and not a hair on their heads were burned, neither were their cloths burned. Another reason for the nations to give praises to the God of Israel is in His preserving Israel and giving us His Messiah.

The Talmud continues the discussion in *Pesachim 118b:1*.

Talmud Bavli Pesachim 118b:11

He sent back to him: My father said as follows: What is the meaning of that which is written: "Praise the Lord, all you nations, laud Him all you peoples. For His mercy is great toward us, and the truth of the Lord endures forever, halleluya" (Psalms 117)? What are the nations of the world doing by praising God for His great mercies toward Israel? Rabbi Yosei explained: Rather, this is what the verse is saying: "Praise the Lord, all you nations" for the mighty acts and the wonders that God performed before their eyes. All the more so we, the recipients of these acts, should praise and thank Him, as His mercy is great toward us.

The rabbis ask the question "what are the nations of the world doing by praising God for His great mercies towards Israel?" The idea is that the Lord had shown Himself to the nations in the mighty acts that He had performed on behalf of Israel. Even more so should the people of Israel praise the Lord because these mighty wonders were performed on their behalf.

Ein Yaakov has the following to say concerning *Tehillim / Psalms 117:1*.

Ein Yaakov (Glick Edition), Pesachim 10:19

R. Cahana said : "When R. Ishmael, the son of R. Jose, became ill, Rabbi sent to him the following request: 'Tell us the two or three things which you spoke of in the name of your father. Whereupon R. Ishmael sent back word to him: 'Thus said my father: What is the meaning of the passage (Ps. 117:1) Praise the Lord, all ye nations. How do heathens come to

praise God? This is intended to mean: All the nations shall praise him for the power and the miracles He has done to them; how much more should we, Israel, praise Him, Since mighty is His kindness unto us.’ R. Ishmael sent also the following to him : ‘In the future, Egypt will send presents unto Messiah, who will hesitate whether to accept them or not.’ But the Holy One, praised be He will say to Messiah, ‘Accept it from them because Egypt was a place of hospitality for my children.’ (Ps. 68:32) Soon nobles will come out of Egypt. Then Ethiopia will conclude a fortiori, saying: ‘If they (the Egyptians) who treated them as slaves, fare thus, I (Ethiopia) who did not enslave them, will surely [be permitted to offer a gift to Messiah].’ Whereupon the Holy One, praised be He will say unto Messiah, ‘Accept also of them,’ and soon (Ib.) Ethiopia will eagerly stretch forth his hands unto God. Then the Aramites will conclude a fortiori, saying: ‘If [acceptance of gifts was permitted] of these (Ethiopians) who had no family relations with Israel, how much more should a gift be acceptable of us, who are their brothers !’ Whereupon the Holy One, praised be He ! will say unto Gabriel (Ib.) Rebuke the wild beasts hiding among the reeds; i.e., rebuke the heathens and create a community for thyself.” The above passage can be explained in another way, [reject with] rebuke the wild beast that lives among the reeds, as it is written (Ib. 80, 14) The bear out of the forest doth gnaw at it, and what moveth on the field feedeth on it. R. Chiya b. Abba said in the name of R. Jochanan: “The above passage means as follows, [reject with] “rebuke the beast (Rome), whose acts are recorded with the same pen [of tyranny]. (Ib. 68, 31) The multitude of bulls, with the calves of the peoples, refers to [the nations] who have slain the best [of Israel] like fat bulls; everyone submitted himself with pieces of silver; i.e., they stretch forth their hands to accept the silver [as bribes], and then refuse to do the givers’ desire; He scattereth nations that are eager to become near; i.e., Why was Israel scattered among the nations? Because of his eagerness to become [near] very friendly with the nations.” He also sent Rabbi the following: “There is a big city in the Roman Empire which contains three hundred and sixty-five streets, and in each street there are three hundred and sixty-five castles, and around each castle there are three hundred and sixty-five steps, and on each step there was sufficient wealth to feed the entire world.” Whereupon R. Simon, the son of Rabbi, said to him, and according to others, it was R. Ishmael, the son of R. Jose, who said to Rabbi: “To whom will all this belong?” “To thee and thy associates and to thy associates’ friends,” was the answer, as it is said (Is. 23, 18) And her gain and her hire shall be holy to the Lord; it shall not be treasured nor laid up, but for those that dwell before the Lord shall her gain be.” What is the meaning of It shall not be treasured nor laid up? R. Joseph explained that It shall not be treasured, refers to his store-house [for grain]; Nor laid up, refers to the treasury house [for gold].” But for those that dwell before the Lord shall her gain be, to eat to fullness, and to wear stately clothing. What is the meaning of But for those that dwell before the Lord? R. Elazar said: “This refers to one who recognizes his colleague’s place in the house of study [because of the former’s frequenting it]. According to others (Fol. 119), it refers to one who greets his colleague in the house of study. What is meant by Stately clothing? This refers to one who covers (conceals) things which those of ancient days desired to be unrevealed; this is Sisrei Torah. According to others, this refers to one who discovers what was concealed by those of ancient days, and what is it? The reasons [of various laws] of the Torah.

The commentary states the reason for the psalm calling for the nations to praise the Lord God of Israel was due to the miracles that were done to them. The praises that are being attributed to the nations is that they will give gifts unto the Messiah and the Lord God in heaven will tell the Messiah to accept these gifts. It seems as if the nations, though they gave gifts to the Messiah, the rabbis say, “Whereupon the Holy One, praised be He ! will say unto Gabriel (Ib.) Rebuke the wild beasts hiding among the reeds; i.e., rebuke the heathens and create a community for thyself,” where the beast is a reference to Rome.” The idea is that Rome contains enough wealth to feed the entire world, but this nation does not do so. The Lord separates

for Himself a people that delight in His word and greet each other in houses of study because of the love for God's word.

Sforno on Bereshit / Genesis 14:20 Part 1 wrote saying, וברוך אל עליון, *this power G'd gave to Avram to enable him to overcome his enemies, is a blessing for the Lord. He is able to rejoice in the deeds of His creatures when the wicked perish, and when He makes the righteous rejoice in their success. David expressed it in these words in Psalms 117:1-2 שבוהו כל האומים גי גבר עלינו חסדו*, "Praise the Lord all you nations. Extol Him, all you peoples; for great is His steadfast love toward us;" Sforno states that the Lord's love surpasses all understanding, and so great is his love that all of the nations are called to give praises to His Name.

Midrash Rabbah has the following to say concerning the nations giving praise to the Lord.

Midrash Rabbah Shemot 18:5

Another explanation: "And it was in the middle of the night" - David said (Psalms 77:7), "I recall my music at night:" The congregation of Israel said, "I recall the breakings, that You broke the enemies for my sake at night." And [the term], 'my music' (niginati) only means breaking, as you would say (Lamentations 3:63), "I am their song." And I [would also] say (Genesis 14:20), "who gave over (migen) your enemies into your hand." Sancheriv came against us - You broke him at night, as it is stated (II Kings 19:35), "And it was on that night and the angel of the Lord came out and he smote in the camp of Assyria." Rabbi Nechemia said, "Come and see the love of the Holy One, blessed be He for Israel; as behold, the ministering angels - who are mighty of strength, doers of His will - the Holy One, blessed be He, made them guardians over Israel. And who are they? Michael and Gavriel, as it is stated (Isaiah 62:6), 'Upon your walls Jerusalem, I have appointed guardians.' And when Sancheriv came, Michael went out and smote them; and Gavriel, from the command of the Holy One, blessed be He, saved Chanania and his friends." Why was it like that? Rather the Holy One, blessed be He, made a condition with them. When? When He wanted to go down to save Avraham from the fiery pit: Michael and Gavriel said in front of Him, "We will go down to save him." He said [back] to them, "If [even] one of you would go down there to the pit, you would save him, but [since Avraham] went down for My name, then I will go down and save him," as it is stated (Genesis 15:7), "I am the Lord who took you out of the Ur Kasdim (understood here as the fire of Kasdim);" "but I will give you a time [to go down and save others.]" When did they go down? "Since you were prepared to save him for My honor; you, Michael [will descend] against the camp of Assyria; and you, Gavriel [will descend] against the camp of Kasdim (the Chaldeans)." When Gavriel went down to save Chanania, Mishael and Azaria, he tore the fire and came out and set aflame all those that had thrown them in, as it is stated (Daniel 3:22), "those men that raised Shadrakh, Meshakh, etc." And some say, "Four nations died there: At first, it is written (Ibid. 3), 'Then were gathered the satraps, the prefects, the governors[, etc.]' and the advisers of the king and, here, four [of them] are lacking, as it states (Ibid. 27), 'And the satraps gathered.'" Hence Chanania said (Psalms 117:1), "Praise the Lord, all nations;" Mishael said (Ibid.), "exalt him all peoples;" and Azaria said (Ibid. 2), "Since His kindness has overwhelmed us;" and the angel said (Ibid.), "'and the truth of the Lord is forever' - what He said to me when I went down to save Avraham is true."

Note the Love of God according to the Midrash. The Lord states that Abraham went down to the grave for His name's sake and for this reason, the Lord Himself went down to save him. The Lord even en-scripts his angels to save a righteous man for the sake of His name. Note how the commentary speaks of the fiery pit. The rabbis are not speaking of hell but of the grave as having its place in the furnace that Mishael and his friends Hananiah and Azariah were being thrown into in the book of Daniel. The place that one is laid down to rest, this is called Sheol, the grave, a place of darkness. The place these three men were being laid

down in was a fiery furnace in which the Lord sent His angel to save them from perishing. The king Nebuchadnezzar saw in the flames four men walking around and not just the three, and he said that the fourth one looked like the son of God. This miracle that was performed before the nations is what the rabbis say is the reason for the psalm which states, *הַלְלוּ אֶת-יְהוָה כָּל-גּוֹיִם שִׁבְחוּהוּ כָּל-הָאֲמִיּוֹת*: *117:1 Praise the Lord, all nations; Laud Him, all peoples! (NASB)*

David continues saying the following, *כִּי גָבַר עָלֵינוּ | חֶסְדּוֹ וְאֱמֶת-יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם הַלְלוּיָהּ*: *117:2 For His lovingkindness is great toward us, And the truth of the Lord is everlasting. Praise the Lord! (NASB)* David says that the grace (חֶסֶד) of God is great towards His people and the truth of the Lord is everlasting. What is the grace and truth of God? *Rashbam on Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:43 Part 1* wrote the following concerning *Tehillim / Psalms 117*, *ומע (לע) פיוג וניגרה*, *similar in meaning to the word הללו in Psalms 117:1* *הַלְלוּ אֶת ה' כָּל גּוֹיִם*, “*praise the Lord all you nations, etc.*” *Just as the psalmist calls upon the nations to acknowledge G'd, to praise Him and exalt Him for the loving kindness He has shown His creatures, so Moses concludes here with a similar call addressed to these same nations at the time of the redemption of mankind, or those who deserve it, to praise the Lord because they have finally seen what He has done for His people. By addressing them already now, Moses implies that G'd would relate to them similarly if they would take all these lessons to heart as of now (and convert to Judaism).* Note how the nations are included in praising the Lord as this relates to the time of redemption of mankind. Those who would take to heart the commands of God to live for the Lord, the lessons learned in the struggle to live for the Lord will cause one to change from the inside out.

Rabbinic Commentary

The Rabbinic Commentary (Midrash) on *Tehillim / Psalms 117* has 3 parts. Reading through the Midrash we will be looking at Part 1, 2, and 3. Let's begin by outlining *Midrash Tehillim Chapter 117, Parts 1, 2, and 3*.

Outline of Midrash Tehillim / Psalms, Chapter 117, Part 1, 2, and 3

Part 1

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the *דיבור המתחיל* (Dibur Hamathil) saying, “*O praise the Lord, all you nations; laud Him, all you peoples (Tehillim / Psalms 117:1).*”
- The *פתיחתא* (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*Elsewhere, this is what Scripture says, Among gods there is none like You, O Lord; neither are there any works like unto Your works (Tehillim / Psalms 86:8).*”
- The *משל* (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the *פתיחתא* (Petihta), the rabbis speak of the Lord making man after His own image, something that is impossible for the other false gods in this world.
- The *נמשל* (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the *משל* (mashal), with a discussion on the Lord giving man this ability too to make children after his own image as well. It is for this reason the rabbis said the nations are to give praise unto the Lord.
- The Concluding phrase says, “*What is the meaning of watesokekah? You have satisfied her thirst, or its meaning is You have given her her desire, as in the verse, Your desire (tesukah) will be to your husband (Bereshit / Genesis 3:16). You crown the year with Your goodness (Tehillim / Psalms 65:12). And what verse follows? Shout unto God, all the earth (Tehillim / Psalms 66:1).*”

Part 2

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the *דיבור המתחיל* (Dibur Hamathil) saying, “*Another inter-*

pretation of O praise the Lord, all you nations; laud Him all you peoples (Tehillim / Psalms 117:1)."

- The פתיחתא (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, *"Rabbi Simeon, the son of our holy Rabbi, asked his father, What nations are meant by all you nations, and what peoples by all you peoples?"*
- The מִשָּׁל (mashal) *"the parable,"* goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis define the nations that are being spoken of in the psalm as those who oppose Israel.
- The נִמְשָׁל (Nimshal) *"expansion on the parable"* expands upon the מִשָּׁל (mashal), with discussion on those who did not oppress Israel saying that they will sing all the more of the greatness and glory of God.
- The Concluding phrase says, *"The Holy One blessed be He, Said to Elijah, When I first watered My world, did there even exist a human being for whose sake I should water My world? And yet, it is said, There went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground (Bereshit / Genesis 2:6). And so now Go, show yourself unto Ahab, and I will send rain upon the land (1 Kings 18:1)."*

Part 3

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דִּבְרוֹר הַמַּתְחִיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying, *"Another comment on O praise the Lord, all you nations, When Abraham was cast into the fiery furnace, Gabriel came and wanted to save him."*
- The פתיחתא (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, *"The Holy One blessed be He, said, I am one in My world, and Abraham is one in his world, as is said, Abraham was one, and he inherited the land (Ezekiel 33:24)."*
- The מִשָּׁל (mashal) *"the parable,"* goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis speak of bringing Abraham up out of the fire from Ur and bringing him to a new land.
- The נִמְשָׁל (Nimshal) *"expansion on the parable"* expands upon the מִשָּׁל (mashal), with discussion on Hananiah, Mishael, and Azaria being cast into the fiery furnace and the Lord delivering them.
- The Concluding phrase says, *"The Holy One blessed be He, said to him, go down, and Gabriel went down and saved them. Hananiah said, O praise the Lord, all you nations. Mishael said, Laud Him, all you peoples. Azariah said, For His mercy is great towards us. Gabriel said, True is the Lord forever. What You did promise me in the days of Abraham, You have done and fulfilled. Hence, True is the Lord forever."*

Midrash Tehillim 117, Part 1 opens with the דִּבְרוֹר הַמַּתְחִיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying, *"O praise the Lord, all you nations; laud Him, all you peoples (Tehillim / Psalms 117:1)."* The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, *"Elsewhere, this is what Scripture says, Among gods there is none like You, O Lord; neither are there any works like unto Your works (Tehillim / Psalms 86:8)."* The entire midrash states the following:

מדרש תהלים פרק קיז סימן א

א הללו את ה' כל גוים. זהו שאמר הכתוב אין כמוך באלהים ה' ואין כמעשיך (תהלים פו ח), כיצד בשר ודם צר צורה על גבי הכותל, אין צורתו עושה צורה, אבל הקב"ה האדם הוא צורתו, שנאמר (וייצר ה') [ויברא] אלהים את האדם בצלמו (בראשית א כז), ואף האדם מו-ליד בנים כצלמו, שנאמר ויולד בדמותו כצל-מו (שם בראשית ה ג), המים מעשה ידיו של הקב"ה והם שורצים, שנאמר ישרצו המים (שם בראשית א כ), מלך בשר ודם כשבאין לקלסו, אוהביו באים, שמא שונאים, אבל הקב"ה הכל מקלסין אותו, שנאמר כל גוים אשר עשית יבואו וישתחוו לפניך (תהלים פו ט). שאל פוליפוס אחד את ר' יהושע בן חנניה איזה יום שכל העולם שוין והאומות משת-חוים לפני הקב"ה, אמר לו יום - אחד הכל שמחים, אימתי, אלא כיון שהגשמים נעצרין הכל מצירין, וכשהגשמים יורדין הכל שמחין ומקלסין להקב"ה, שנאמר כל גוים אשר עשית וגו' (שם תהלים פ"ו), אימתי כי גדול אתה ועושה נפלאות (שם שם תהלים פ"ו י), ואין נפלאות אלא גשמים, שנאמר נפלאות עד אין מספר הנותן מטר על פני ארץ (איוב ה ט י), לכך נאמר הללו את ה' כל גוים. אמר ר' תנחום בר חייא גדולה ירידת גשמים ממתן תורה, שמתן תורה שמחה לישראל, וירידת גשמים שמחה לכל העולם, לבהמה ולחיה ולעופות, שנאמר פקדת הארץ ותשוקקיה (תהלים סה י), מה היא ותשוקקיה, תן לה שוקה. דבר אחר ותשוקקיה תן לה תאותה, כענין שנאמר ואל אישך תשוקתך (בראשית ג יו), עטרת שנת טובתך (תהלים שם ס"ה יב), מה כתיב בתריה, הריעו לאלהים כל הארץ (שם תהלים סו א).

Midrash Tehillim 117, Part 1

1. O praise the Lord, all you nations; laud Him, all you peoples (Tehillim / Psalms 117:1). Elsewhere, this is what Scripture says, Among gods there is none like You, O Lord; neither are there any works like unto Your works (Tehillim / Psalms 86:8). Why not? A mortal can figure an image upon a wall, but the image he figures cannot beget another image. Behold, the Holy One blessed be He, man is His image, as is said, And God created man in His own image (Bereshit / Genesis 1:27), and man begets children in his own image, as is said, And Adam begot in his own likeness, after his image (Bereshit / Genesis 5:3). The waters also are the handiwork of the Holy One blessed be He, and they too bring forth as is said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly (Bereshit / Genesis 1:20). When the praises of a mortal king are to be sung, his friends come, but do his enemies? Behold the Holy One blessed be He, all praise Him, as is said, All nations whom You have made will come and worship before You, O Lord, and will glorify Your name (Tehillim / Psalms 86:9). A philosopher asked Rabbi Joshua son of Hananiah, Is here a day when all the world is of one mind and the nations worship before the Holy One blessed be He? Rabbi Joshua son of Hananiah replied, There is one such day when all rejoice as one. What day is that? When the rains have held back and all the world is troubled, comes the day when the rains fall, and then all the world rejoices and glorifies the Holy One blessed be He, as is said, All the nations whom You have made will come and worship before You, O Lord, and will glorify Your name. Glorify it when? Whenever You, great as You are, does wondrous things (Tehillim / Psalms 86:10), the rains being the wondrous things, as again in the verse, Who does marvelous things without number; who give rain upon the earth (Job 5:9-10). For this, O praise the Lord, all you nations. Rabbi Tanhum son of Hiyya taught, The sending of rain is greater than the giving of the Torah, for while the giving of Torah was a joy to the children of Israel, the sending of rain gives joy to all the world, to cattle, to beast, and to fowl, as is said, You have remembered the earth, watesokekah (Tehillim / Psalms 65:10). What is the meaning of watesokekah? You have satisfied her thirst, or its meaning is You have given her her desire, as in the verse, Your desire (tesukah) will be to your husband (Bereshit / Genesis 3:16). You crown the year with Your goodness (Tehillim / Psalms 65:12). And what verse follows? Shout unto God, all the earth (Tehillim / Psalms 66:1).

The rabbis speak of the Lord God being glorified by the nations and compare this to none other who is able to do the works the God of Israel is able to do. Man is able to fashion, design, and build a figure on the wall but that figure is not able to create an image after its own self. This figure is unable to see, hear, speak, walk, or talk, and is not able to do anything. The glory of God is found in His ability to create something after His own image. The rabbis say, “the Holy One blessed be He, man is His image, as is said, And God created man in His own image (Bereshit / Genesis 1:27), and man begets children in his own image, as is said, And Adam begot in his own likeness, after his image (Bereshit / Genesis 5:3).” It is interesting how all of God’s creation

is able to reproduce after its own kind having the ability to make children in their own likeness. Animals, and even plants and trees, though they do not have a living soul, do produce more plants and trees after their own image. Man in the image of God; what does this mean in practical terms? It cannot be a reference to body or biological form since God is a Spirit and man is made of flesh and bone. It is true that the body does not belong to the image that we read of in the Scriptures, it is language, creativity, and love, the three most important parts of the image of God, that the Lord has shared with each one of us. In addition, the Lord God of Israel also gave man dominion and authority over the animal kingdom (*Bereshit / Genesis 1:28*). If we think about these things, the idea of man having dominion and authority over the animal kingdom, this activity involves the mind (language, creativity, and love) as well as the body. The Word of God (Yeshua) also honored the human body by becoming flesh and dwelling among men (*John 1:14 and Hebrews 2:14*) and obeying the commandments, the things which the body was made for (*Ephesians 2:10*). Notice how the word for created (בָּרָא) is repeated three times here in the text, כו וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים | אֶת-הָאָדָם בְּצַלְמוֹ בְּצַפְלָם, 1:27 God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. (NASB) This emphasizes the creative impartation of creativity and love to man. We read elsewhere how the Lord created the living creatures “After its kind,” this refers to all the living creatures, each of which had its peculiar species. In *Bereshit / Genesis 1:25*, the word of God is fulfilled, that the creation was completed. After the act of creation the Lord then said that it is “good” to be in accordance with the will of God. All the nations should give glory to the Lord for having a life to live. The midrash states, “A philosopher asked Rabbi Joshua son of Hananiah, Is there a day when all the world is of one mind and the nations worship before the Holy One blessed be He? Rabbi Joshua son of Hananiah replied, There is one such day when all rejoice as one. What day is that? When the rains have held back and all the world is troubled, comes the day when the rains fall, and then all the world rejoices and glorifies the Holy One blessed be He, as is said, All the nations whom You have made will come and worship before You, O Lord, and will glorify Your name.” Note how the Lord has caused the nations to come before Him to worship. This is done on behalf of His glory and the rabbis say the nations will give glory to the Lord “Whenever You, great as You are, does wondrous things (*Tehillim / Psalms 86:10*), the rains being the wondrous things, as again in the verse, Who doe marvelous things without number; who give rain upon the earth (*Job 5:9-10*). For this, O praise the Lord, all you nations. Rabbi Tanhum son of Hiyya taught, The sending of rain is greater than the giving of the Torah, for while the giving of Torah was a joy to the children of Israel, the sending of rain gives joy to all the world, to cattle, to beast, and to fowl..” It is interesting the interpretation is that the giving of rain is greater than the giving of the Torah, and the reason is the Torah is a joy to Israel, and the rain is a joy to all the earth. It is important to note how great it is when one finds joy in the Torah, especially for he who is not a part of Israel. The Joy of the Torah is found in drawing near to the Lord God of Israel, and by faith it is possible to join ourselves with Israel, as the Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 11 by faith in God’s Messiah.

Midrash Tehillim 117, Part 1 concludes saying, “What is the meaning of watesokekah? You have satisfied her thirst, or its meaning is You have given her her desire, as in the verse, Your desire (*tesukah*) will be to your husband (*Bereshit / Genesis 3:16*). You crown the year with Your goodness (*Tehillim / Psalms 65:12*). And what verse follows? Shout unto God, all the earth (*Tehillim / Psalms 66:1*).” The amazing thing is the Lord does give us the desire of our hearts. And for this we all are given the ability to shout unto God and praise His name for His mercies.

Midrash Tehillim 117, Part 2 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying, “Another interpretation of O praise the Lord, all you nations; land Him all you peoples (*Tehillim / Psalms 117:1*).” The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “Rabbi Simeon, the son of our holy Rabbi, asked his father; What nations are meant by all you nations, and what peoples by all you peoples?” The entire midrash states the following:

<p>מדרש תהלים פרק קיז סימן ב</p> <p>ב דבר אחר הללו את ה' כל גוים [שבחוהו כל האומים]. שאל ר' שמעון בן רבינו הקדוש את אביו מי הם כל גוים, מי הם כל האומים, אמר לו כל גוים אלו הגוים ששיעבדו את ישראל, כל האומים אלו האומות שלא שיעבדו בהם, אמרו כל האומות מה אם אלו שנשתעבדו עם בני ישראל מקלסין להקב"ה, אנו שלא שיעבדנו בהם על אחת כמה וכמה, לכך נאמר הללו את ה' כל גוים שבחוהו כל האומים, אמרו ישראל אנו על אחת כמה וכמה התחילו לומר כי גבר עלינו חסדו, אמרה הארץ ואמת ה' לעולם, מהו ואמת אמת ברית שקיימת עם האבות, שנאמר וזכרתי את בריתי יעקב (ויקרא כו מב). דבר אחר ואמת ה' לעולם. היה הקב"ה מפתה לאליהו שילך ויראה אל אחאב, שנאמר לך הראה אל אחאב (מ"א מלכים א' יח א), אמר לו אליהו היאך אני הולך, ועד עכשיו לא עשה עוד תשובה, אמר לו הקב"ה כשהייתי משקה את עולמי, אדם אחד היה בעולם והשקיתי את עולמי בעבורו, שנאמר ואד יעלה מן הארץ (בראשית ב ו) אף עכשיו לך הראה אל אחאב ואתנה מטר (מ"א שם שם מלכים א' י"ה).</p>	<p>Midrash Tehillim 117, Part 2</p> <p>2. <i>Another interpretation of O praise the Lord, all you nations; land Him all you peoples (Tehillim / Psalms 117:1). Rabbi Simeon, the son of our holy Rabbi, asked his father, What nations are meant by all you nations, and what peoples by all you peoples? Rabbi replied, The nations are all those nations which opposed the children of Israel, and the peoples are all the peoples which did not oppress them. All these peoples said, If they who oppressed the children of Israel sing praise to the Holy One blessed be He, we who did not oppress them should sing all the more. Hence, it is said, O praise the Lord, all you nations; laud Him, all you peoples. The children of Israel also said, Even more should we sing His praise. And then they went on to say For His mercy is great towards us (Tehillim / Psalms 117:2). And the earth said, True is the Lord forever. True to what? True to the covenant made with the fathers, as is said, Then will I remember MY covenant with Jacob (Vayikra / Leviticus 26:42). Another interpretation of True is the Lord forever, When the Holy One blessed be He, was urging Elijah to go and show himself to Ahab, as is said, Go, show yourself unto Ahab (1 Kings 18:1), Elijah replied, How can I go, seeing that up to this moment Ahab has not repented? The Holy One blessed be He, Said to Elijah, When I first watered My world, did there even exist a human being for whose sake I should water My world? And yet, it is said, There went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground (Bereshit / Genesis 2:6). And so now Go, show yourself unto Ahab, and I will send rain upon the land (1 Kings 18:1).</i></p>
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The rabbis say the nations referred to in the psalms, are all of those who opposed Israel, and all of the peoples the psalm refers to are those who did not oppose Israel. The midrash reports the words of those peoples who did not oppose Israel saying, “All these peoples said, *If they who oppressed the children of Israel sing praise to the Holy One blessed be He, we who did not oppress them should sing all the more.*” Reason given for being joyful for God’s people is when the nations are giving praises to the Lord. According to the Scriptures, we are commanded to sing and give thanks to the Lord for what He has done on our behalf. When we consider what is being discussed where the nations sing praises, those who did not oppose Israel, and those who are Israel are singing together, this completes our joy where singing is a sign of brotherhood that unites generations. When we sing, we are speaking from our hearts and so we are what we sing, and this demonstrates how our singing bears testimony to our faith. The midrash speaks of the Lord being True which is in reference to His covenant that He made with our fathers as it is written in *Vayikra / Leviticus 26:42* “*Then will I remember MY covenant with Jacob.*”

Midrash Tehillim 117, Part 2 concludes saying, “*Another interpretation of True is the Lord forever, When the Holy One blessed be He, was urging Elijah to go and show himself to Ahab, as is said, Go, show yourself unto Ahab (1 Kings 18:1), Elijah replied, How can I go, seeing that up to this moment Ahab has not repented? The Holy One blessed be He, Said to Elijah, When I first watered My world, did there even exist a human being for whose sake I should water My world? And yet, it is said, There went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground (Bereshit / Genesis 2:6). And so now Go, show yourself unto Ahab, and I will send rain upon the land (1 Kings 18:1).*” It is interesting how Elijah says that a prophet is not to go to a person until he has repented. In this instance Ahab was a very wicked man, and his wife

was even more wicked. Ahab wanted to kill Elijah and so this may be the reason why Elijah had commented that he had not repented and so why should he go down to see him. The Lord responds according to the midrash, that He watered this world even before there were men to merit the reward of rain. The idea is the mercy of God extended into past eternity, to the present, and unto the future. And so the Lord glorified His Name before the peoples that rejected him serving the Baals and the golden calves that were setup in Israel. The Lord brought rain at the prayer of Elijah and the people killed all of the prophets of Baal because of their deception. The Lord is merciful, **הָאֲמִים כָּל-שְׂבַחְוָהוּ כָּל-הָאֲמִים**: *117:1 Praise the Lord, all nations; Laud Him, all peoples! (NASB)* The praises to the Lord lead us to walk in His ways so that we would want to do the things our Father does. This is how we understand *John 5:19*, “*The Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.*” The Son learns from the Father based upon the commands, he learns by walking in His Father’s ways and is then able to do the same things that He does because he has learned the work from his Father. Yeshua learned his trade as the Messiah from observation of the Father. It is in this similar way that we learn from our Father and from Yeshua the Messiah according to the commands of God.

Midrash Tehillim 117, Part 3 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying, “*Another comment on O praise the Lord, all you nations, When Abraham was cast into the fiery furnace, Gabriel came and wanted to save him.*” The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*The Holy One blessed be He, said, I am one in My world, and Abraham is one in his world, as is said, Abraham was one, and he inherited the land (Ezekiel 33:24).*” The entire midrash states the following:

<p style="text-align: center;">מדרש תהלים פרק קיז סימן ג</p> <p>ג דבר אחר הללו את ה' כל גוים. כיון שהושלך אברהם לכבשן האש, בא גבריאל ורצה להצילו, אמר הקב"ה אני יחיד בעולמי מי והוא יחיד בעולמו, שנאמר אחד היה אב"הם ויירש את הארץ (יחזקאל לג כד), נאה ליחיד להציל ליחיד, שנאמר אני ה' אשר הוצאתיך מאור כשדים (בראשית טו ז), אף על פי כן איני מקפח שכרך, עתידין לירד שלשה צדיקים לתוך כבשן האש לקדש את שמי, ואתה יורד ומצילן, כיון שהולשכו חנניה מישאל ועזריה לתוך כבשן האש עמד יורקמי שר הברד לפני הקב"ה ואמר לפניו רבש"ע אני שר של ברד ארד ואכבה האש של כבשן, אמר לו גבריאל אני שר של אש אלך ואקדיח מבחוץ ואצנן מבפנים ואעשה נס בתוך נס, אמר לו הקב"ה רד, ירד והצ"ל לן, חנניה אמר הללו את ה' כל גוים מישאל אמר שבחוהו כל האומים, עזריה אמר כי גבר עלינו חסדו, גבריאל אמר ואמת ה' לעולם, מה שאמרת לי בימי אברהם עשית וקיימת, הוי ואמת ה' לעולם.</p>	<p>Midrash Tehillim 117, Part 3</p> <p>3. <i>Another comment on O praise the Lord, all you nations, When Abraham was cast into the fiery furnace, Gabriel came and wanted to save him. The Holy One blessed be He, said, I am one in My world, and Abraham is one in his world, as is said, Abraham was one, and he inherited the land (Ezekiel 33:24). It is fitting that One save the one, as is said I am the Lord that brought you out of Ur (Fire) of Chaldees (Bereshit / Genesis 15:7). Nevertheless, I will not withhold your reward, There will come a time when three righteous men will go down into the fiery furnace to hallow My name. Then you will go down, and you will save them. When Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were cast into the fiery furnace, Yurkami, the Prince of Hail, appeared before the Holy One blessed be He, and said, Master of the universe, I am the Prince of Hail. Let me go down and I will quench the fire of the furnace. But Gabriel said, I am the Prince of Fire. Let me go down, and I will burn up those who are outside of the furnace and keep cool those who are inside it, and thus perform a miracle within a miracle. The Holy One blessed be He, said to him, go down, and Gabriel went down and saved them. Hananiah said, O praise the Lord, all you nations. Mishael said, Laud Him, all you peoples. Azariah said, For His mercy is great towards us. Gabriel said, True is the Lord forever. What You did promise me in the days of Abraham, You have done and fulfilled. Hence, True is the Lord forever.</i></p>
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The rabbis speak of all the nations praising the Lord within the context of Abraham. The idea is the Lord saved Abraham from the fiery furnace, a land of paganism (Ur of Chaldees, *Bereshit / Genesis 15:7*). This

land is paralleled to a place of Fire. The midrash states, “*It is fitting that One save the one,*” note how the Lord saves “*the one*” suggesting a principle of one saving another. The idea here is of one saving another and the one being saved leading others into the salvation of God. The midrash continues saying,

There will come a time when three righteous men will go down into the fiery furnace to hallow My name. Then you will go down, and you will save them. When Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were cast into the fiery furnace, Yurkami, the Prince of Hail, appeared before the Holy One blessed be He, and said, Master of the universe, I am the Prince of Hail. Let me go down and I will quench the fire of the furnace. But Gabriel said, I am the Prince of Fire. Let me go down, and I will burn up those who are outside of the furnace and keep cool those who are inside it, and thus perform a miracle within a miracle. (Midrash Tehillim 117, Part 3)

The midrash gives the example of going down into the fire and the Lord saving and raising up those who do so for the sake of sanctifying the Name of God. The hallowing the Name of God is synonymous to sanctifying the Name of God. And when we live our lives hallowing the name of God, we can expect great things, the Lord working miracles in our lives just as He did so many years ago. The wicked (the unrighteous) who stand against God’s people, a warning, just as the midrash recounts what happened to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, the soldiers who threw these three men into the fire, they lost their lives. Refusing to repent, turn from sin and seek the Lord God of Israel and His Messiah Yeshua will result in destruction. The Lord kept these righteous men from dying because they Hallowed the Name of God and did not bow down to false gods. We are called to do the same today.

Midrash Tehillim 117, Part 3 concludes saying, “*The Holy One blessed be He, said to him, go down, and Gabriel went down and saved them. Hananiah said, O praise the Lord, all you nations. Mishael said, Laud Him, all you peoples. Azariah said, For His mercy is great towards us. Gabriel said, True is the Lord forever. What You did promise me in the days of Abraham, You have done and fulfilled. Hence, True is the Lord forever.*” The midrash concludes with reasons to praise the Lord, each of these men who were saved from the fire gave praise to the Lord. How much more should we do so today, praise the Lord God of Israel for all that He has done on our behalf. Praise the Lord for such a wonderful salvation that He provides in His son Yeshua the Messiah. Let’s Pray!

Heavenly Father,

Thank You Lord for Your mercy and the great work that you are doing in our lives. 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, truly, and honestly seek you all the days of our lives. 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!

הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:

Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,

“Yeshua” King Messiah forever and ever

Notes