

Tehillim Psalms 122

A song of ascents. Of David. 122:1 I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord.' 122:2 Our feet are standing Within your gates, O Jerusalem, 122:3 Jerusalem, that is built As a city that is compact together; 122:4 To which the tribes go up, even the tribes of the Lord An ordinance for Israel To give thanks to the name of the Lord. 122:5 For there thrones were set for judgment, The thrones of the house of David. 122:6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: 'May they prosper who love you. 122:7 'May peace be within your walls, And prosperity within your palaces.' 122:8 For the sake of my brothers and my friends, I will now say, 'May peace be within you.' 122:9 For the sake of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek your good. (NASB)

Toviyah Psalms 122

122:1 A song that was uttered on the ascents of the abyss. I rejoiced with those who say to me, "Let us go to the sanctuary of the Lord." 122:2 Our feet were standing in your gates, O Jerusalem. 122:3 Jerusalem that is built in the firmament is like a city that has been joined together on earth. 122:4 Unto which the tribes have gone up, the tribes of the Lord, he who testifies to Israel that his presence abides among them when they go to give thanks to the name of the Lord. 122:5 For there thrones have been placed; in Jerusalem thrones are in the sanctuary for the kings of the house of David. 122:6 Seek the welfare of Jerusalem; those who love you will dwell in tranquility. 122:7 Let there be peace in your armies, tranquility in your citadels. 122:8 On account of my brothers and companions, I will now speak in you of peace. 122:9 Because of the sanctuary of the Lord our God, I will seek to do good to you. (EMC)

Psalmoi Psalms 122

A Song of Degrees. 122:1 I was glad when they said to me, Let us go into the house of the Lord. 122:2 Our feet stood in thy courts, O Jerusalem. 122:3 Jerusalem is built as a city whose fellowship is complete. 122:4 For thither the tribes went up, the tribes of the Lord, as a testimony for Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord. 122:5 For there are set thrones for judgment, even thrones for the house of David. 122:6 Pray now for the peace of Jerusalem: and let there be prosperity to them that love thee. 122:7 Let peace, I pray, be within thine host, and prosperity in thy palaces. 122:8 For the sake of my brethren and my neighbors, I have indeed spoken peace concerning thee. 122:9 Because of the house of the Lord our God, I have diligently sought thy good. (LXX)

In this week's study from *Tehillim / Psalms 122:1-9*, the psalm opens saying, א שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת לְדָוִד שְׁמֹחַ, א שִׁיר אֲשֶׁר שָׁחַד אֶת הַיְהוָה בְּאֲמָרָיו לִי בַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה נִגְלָה: *A song of ascents. Of David. 122:1 I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord.'* (NASB) The Aramaic Targum states the following, א שִׁירָא דְאִתְאַמַר עַל מַסִּיקִין, א שִׁירָא דְאִתְאַמַר עַל מַסִּיקִין 122:1 *A song that was uttered on the ascents of the abyss. I rejoiced with those who say to me, "Let us go to the sanctuary of the Lord."* (EMC) David speaks of the joy of going to the house of the Lord. Why is the house of God joyful? We read in the book of *Ezra 6:22* *And they observed the Feast of Unleavened Bread seven days with joy, for the LORD had caused them to rejoice, and had turned the heart of the king of Assyria toward them to encourage them in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.* (NASB) The people were joyful because of the way the Lord was working in their lives. The thankfulness of Israel was the result of the Lord having turned, the hearts of their civil rulers, whether Assyrians, Babylonians, or Persians, from hostility to friendship, having replaced the bitter enmity of Sennacherib and Nebuchadnezzar by the good-will of Cyrus and Darius. It is in this way we are obligated to recognize the Lord in all His mercies towards us, He has our back.

Remember the song, "I was glad when they said unto me, 'Let us go into the house of the Lord.' I was glad when they said unto me, 'Let us go into the house of the Lord.'" What we find here in the Psalm is David proclaiming the joy of going up unto the mountain, of ascending to the house of God. It is interesting today, in our society, many people have decided to stay away from the house of God altogether. The reason being, what they experience there does not make them glad in their hearts. Now when the Psalmist speaks of being glad by going into the house of the Lord, he is not just talking about going to church, but also about

going to the sanctuary and participating in worship and the whole fabric of faith and all it encompasses. The joy of the Lord is not just found in a physical house. It should be a part of wherever the God of Israel and His people meet. In this way, even in the absence of the Temple in Jerusalem, we have the ability to be joyful in the Lord. That is what was intended to be an experience of joy. However, many people today cannot truthfully say, *“I was glad when they said unto me, ‘Let us go into the house of the Lord.’”* The House of God is a place of joy, because it is in this place the people discover that what matters in life is not what they get but the mercy they are given. It is found within the remembering of the Word of God, how the Lord has worked in the lives of His people, that we learn what matters about us is not how high we climb, but how deeply we are loved by God. Note how in the parable Yeshua spoke of the lost brother, that the older brother remained outside the house and outside of being joyful. He did this because he was focusing upon making something of himself with what God had given him, as opposed to remaining in the Lord and being joyful in what the Lord has given us to freely share with others.

Yeshua the Messiah lived the Torah of truth, and so we should celebrate the Joy of Torah (Simchat Torah) in our lives. Yeshua, the living Torah, the living Word, which our Father is writing upon our hearts, He does this so we can truly celebrate and embrace the truth that is from the Lord. Yeshua did not come to destroy the Torah, but to fulfill it in our lives (*Matthew 5:17-20*). This very idea of *Jeremiah 31:31-34*, of the coming of a day when the Lord will make a new covenant and write his Torah upon our hearts, is the reason we celebrate the Torah as a way of life. The significance of believing in Yeshua and what He has done is found within this Jeremiah text, because he is able to do what Moshe was not able to do, that is to write the instructions of God within our inward parts and upon our hearts so that we might truly be the people of God. In addition, by the means of the sacrificial death, the righteous ruling of life for life atonement is satisfied, and the Lord is glorified as both merciful to us, and just in the sense that He is the justifier of those who put their trust in Him. It is in this mercy of God we are truly able to be joyful in the Lord and sing, *“I was glad when they said unto me, ‘Let us go into the house of the Lord.’”* The Torah is holy, just, and good (*Romans 7:12*), but those seeking righteousness based on its demands will discover tragically how powerless we are on our own in this life. Paul wrote that it is sin that imparts our weaknesses, but it is the Lord who is able to empower us to overcome. We are enabled by the Spirit of God, with His Torah written upon our hearts (*Hebrews 8:10-11*). We no longer seek righteousness by means of maintaining our abilities, but receive the gift of the Messiah who places within us His power and victory, and writes his commands upon our hearts so we are able to live by them. Our trust in the Messiah facilitates our acceptance before our Father in heaven.

David continues saying the following, א שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת לְדָוִד שְׁמֵחָתִי בְּאֶמְרִים לִי בֵּית יְהוָה נִלְדָּ: ב עֲמֻדֹת הַיָּם רִגְלֵינוּ בְּשַׁעְרֵיךָ יְרוּשָׁלַם: ג יְרוּשָׁלַם הַבְּנוּיָה כְּעִיר שְׁחֻבְרָה-לָהּ יַחְדָּו: ד שְׁשֵׁם עָלוּ שְׂבָטִים שְׂבָטֵי-יְהוָה עֲדוֹת לְיְהוָה: ה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל לְהַדוֹת לְשֵׁם יְהוָה: *122:2 Our feet are standing Within your gates, O Jerusalem, 122:3 Jerusalem, that is built As a city that is compact together; 122:4 To which the tribes go up, even the tribes of the Lord An ordinance for Israel To give thanks to the name of the Lord. (NASB)* What is the significance of standing within the gates of Jerusalem? What is it about this holy city that is so attractive to all peoples? Have you ever wondered these questions? During King David’s time, there were 9 gates into the city of Jerusalem. Four hundred years later the Babylonian army destroyed the city and left the walls and gates in ruins. The Book of Nehemiah records the rebuilding of the city around 445 B.C. In chapter three, repairs were made to ten gates. They are listed in the order of their locations, beginning with the Sheep Gate near the northeastern reaches of the wall corresponding to the general proximity of the modern Herod’s Gate. Nehemiah lists them in chapter 3.

1. Sheep Gate (3:1)
2. Fish Gate (3:3)
3. Old Gate (3:6)
4. Valley Gate (3:13)
5. Dung Gate (3:13)
6. Fountain Gate (3:15)

7. Water Gate (3:26)
8. Horse Gate (3:28)
9. East Gate (3:29)
10. Miphkad or Inspection Gate (3:31)

The city gate was part of a city's protection against invaders and were also places of central activities. According to the Scriptures, it was at the city gates that important business transactions were made, court was convened, and public announcements were made. As a result of these things, the Scriptures speak frequently of "sitting in the gate" and of the activities that took place at the gate. In *Mishley / Proverbs 1*, wisdom is said to be "At the head of the noisy streets she cries out, in the gateways of the city she makes her speech" (1:21). The reason being is to spread her words in the best possible way and to maximize the number of people that are reached. Wisdom then naturally takes to the gates of the city. The first mention of a city gate in the Torah is found in *Bereshit / Genesis 19:1* in Parashat Vayera. Here we find Lot sitting at the entrance to the city discussing or conducting business. In the Torah, we are told in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 21:18-21* יח כִּי-יְהִיֶה לְאִישׁ בֶּן סוֹרֵר וּמוֹרֵה אֵינָנוּ שְׁמַע בְּקוֹל אָבִיו וּבְקוֹל אִמּוֹ וַיִּסְרוּ אֹתוֹ וְלֹא יִשְׁמַע אֲלֵיהֶם: יט וְתַפְּשׂוּ בּוֹ אָבִיו וְאִמּוֹ וְהוֹצִיאוּ אֹתוֹ אֶל-זִקְנֵי עִירוֹ וְאֶל-שַׁעַר מְקוֹמוֹ: כ וְאָמְרוּ אֶל-זִקְנֵי עִירוֹ בְּנֵנוּ זֶה סוֹרֵר וּמוֹרֵה אֵינָנוּ שְׁמַע 21:18 בְּקִלְנוּ זוֹלֵל וְסוֹבֵא: כא וּרְגַמְהוּ כָּל-אֲנָשֵׁי עִירוֹ בְּאֲבָנִים וְמַת וּבַעֲרַת הָרַע מִקְרַבָּהּ וְכָל-יִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁמְעוּ וַיִּרְאוּ: 'If any man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey his father or his mother, and when they chastise him, he will not even listen to them, 21:19 then his father and mother shall seize him, and bring him out to the elders of his city at the gateway of his home town. 21:20 'They shall say to the elders of his city, 'This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey us, he is a glutton and a drunkard.' 21:21 'Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death; so you shall remove the evil from your midst, and all Israel will hear of it and fear. (NASB) The parents of a rebellious son were to bring him to the city gate and the elders would pass judgment. The city gate functions is a place of judgment. In the book of Ruth (*Ruth 4:1-11*), Boaz claimed the position of kinsman redeemer by meeting the people at the gate to Bethlemin. This was the location where the legal rulings for marriage were settled. In *1 Samuel 4:18* we read 4:18 When he mentioned the ark of God, Eli fell off the seat backward beside the gate, and his neck was broken and he died, for he was old and heavy. Thus he judged Israel forty years. (NASB) Eli waited at the city gate for news about the ark of the covenant. When king David stood before his troops, he did so at the city gate (*2 Samuel 18:1-5*). After his son Absalom died, David mourned but eventually returned to the city gate along with his people (*2 Samuel 19:1-8*). The king's appearance at the gate symbolized the mourning was over, and the king was once again attending to the business of governing the people and the land. Note that the importance of the city gate was not restricted to Israel. In *Esther 2:5-8* we read that some of the king's servants plotted at the king's gate to murder him. Mordecai, a leader of the Jewish people in Persia, heard the plot and reported it to Esther, who gave the news to the king (*Esther 2:19-23*). The text describes the Persian court officials as being "at the king's gate" (3:3). The significance of the city gate is found within the promises of God, where the Lord promised to Abraham, "your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies." (*Bereshit / Genesis 22:17*) To control one's enemies requires one to conquer their city and take captive their gate. In addition to this, Yeshua promised to build the congregation of God's people (ekklesia) saying, "The gates of Hell will not overcome it." (*Matthew 16:18*) This understanding of the biblical implications of "the city gates" helps us to understand David's words, א שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת לְדָוִד שְׁמַחְתִּי בְּאֲמָרִים לִי בֵּית יְהוָה נִלְדָּה: ב עֲמֻדוֹת הָיוּ רַגְלֵינוּ בְּשַׁעְרֶיהָ יְרוּשָׁלַם: ג יְרוּשָׁלַם הַבְּנוּיָה כְּעִיר שֶׁחִבְרָה-לָהּ יַחְדָּו: ד שְׁשֻׁם עָלוּ: 122:2 Our feet are standing Within your gates, O Jerusalem, 122:3 Jerusalem, that is built As a city that is compact together; 122:4 To which the tribes go up, even the tribes of the Lord An ordinance for Israel To give thanks to the name of the Lord. (NASB) And helps us to interpret Yeshua's words. Since a gate was a place where rulers met and counsel was given, Yeshua was saying that all the evil plans of Satan himself would not overcome God's people.

Solomon's prayer in *1 Kings 8:33-34* speaks of the Temple of God as a place where the God of Israel dwells, and also as a place of worship where all people may come to offer their prayers to God. Could

this be why the city of Jerusalem is considered the most important city in all of history? It is important to note Solomon's prayer also included foreigners who come to the Temple because they are attracted to the religious values of ancient Israel. The morality, righteousness, holiness, and truthfulness of God is said to attract all the nations to the service of the Lord. These things may be the reason for the centrality of the place the Lord has chosen to establish His Name, in Jerusalem, and why the rabbinic traditions also reflect the importance of these things. It is interesting how history bears out in both the Torah and extra-biblical texts that the key to remaining in the Land, and remaining in God's favor was for the children of God to choose to keep their covenant with God through repentance. The key to Israel's future, and our future, is found in repentance, to recognize our sin, to turn from our sin, and to seek the forgiveness of God for our sins. The book of *2 Maccabees 5:19-20* speaks of Israel being punished due to her sins. This follows from the Torah perspective that seeks the future of God's people as being depending upon repentance and obedience. Jerusalem, that holy city plays a central roll in the joy of the Lord as David says, *122:4 To which the tribes go up, even the tribes of the Lord An ordinance for Israel To give thanks to the name of the Lord. (NASB)* This place of worship is important, but is not essential to live as it is to be obedient to the Torah of God, to seek His ways in order to live for Him, and to repent of our sins. The love and loyalty of the people to Jerusalem are coupled to this concept of repentance and forgiveness and the Love of God, as it is described in the righteousness, holiness, and truthfulness of god, and the moral life of the believer. As a result, the city, and Jerusalem have a central place in the hearts of all God's people, as the city in which God chose to establish His Name and His presence. The restoration of God's people to Jerusalem is dependent upon their commitment to the Torah, and love for the Lord God in heaven.

The Torah is God's pattern for Kingdom living because it is His guide for living in the family of God and as an instruction manual for life. The issue for most is what has been taught for the last 1900 years by the church that "*we are not under the law but under grace.*" The most important aspect to understand is Torah is best translated as instruction. If the Torah is the instruction of God for His people, then the Torah is all about the grace of God towards His people. The Lord graciously gave us His instructions for the best way to live as a citizen of His Kingdom. King David told us in his psalm in *Tehillim / Psalms 19:7* that the Torah of God is perfect for restoring the soul. *Tehillim / Psalms 119* speaks many times for the God of Israel because He had given His Torah. Do you have a soul that needs restoring? The Apostle Paul wrote in *Acts 28:17* that he had never gone against the Torah or against the traditions or customs of the rabbis. In addition to this, in *1 Corinthians 11:1* he calls for us to imitate him as he imitates Yeshua the Messiah. The point is we are designed to become conformed unto the likeness of the Messiah, our greatest role model. (*Romans 8:29*) Consider the WWJD acronym (What would Jesus do?), what is understood based upon this acronym is the awareness that we are to be like our Master (Yeshua) who was a Torah observant Jew. If we truly want to be more like Yeshua, then we need to, as best we can, live the way He lived. The difficulty is found in the modern theologies being taught that Yeshua had abolished the Torah. A careful examination of the Scriptures reveals this is not true:

Matthew 5:16-19

5:16 'Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. 5:17 'Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. 5:18 'For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished. 5:19 'Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (NASB)

Matthew 23:1-7

23:1 Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and to His disciples, 23:2 saying: 'The scribes and the Pharisees have seated themselves in the chair of Moses; 23:3 therefore all that they tell you, do and observe, but do not do according to their deeds; for they say things and do not do

them. 23:4 'They tie up heavy burdens and lay them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are unwilling to move them with so much as a finger. 23:5 'But they do all their deeds to be noticed by men; for they broaden their phylacteries and lengthen the tassels of their garments. 23:6 'They love the place of honor at banquets and the chief seats in the synagogues, 23:7 and respectful greetings in the market places, and being called Rabbi by men. (NASB)

Matthew 28:18-20

28:18 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 28:19 'Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 28:20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.' (NASB)

John 14:15

14:15 Yeshua said If you love me, obey my commandments (NASB)

1 John 2:6

2:6 If we abide in Him, we should walk as He walked (NASB)

Revelation 14:12

14:12 Here is a call for the endurance of the Saints, those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Yeshua (NASB)

In *Matthew 5* Yeshua said that he did not come to abolish the Torah. In *Matthew 23:1-3* he told the crowd and His disciples that the scribes and Pharisees sit in Moshe seat, therefore do and observe all that they tell you to do. In *Matthew 28:18-20* Yeshua gave the disciples the great commission to go into all the world teaching them to do all that He had commanded them to do. Some may say that these things were for the early Church only. The prophet Isaiah states otherwise saying, *Isaiah 2:1 The word which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. 2:2 Now it will come about that In the last days The mountain of the house of the Lord Will be established as the chief of the mountains, And will be raised above the hills; And all the nations will stream to it. 2:3 And many peoples will come and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, To the house of the God of Jacob; That He may teach us concerning His ways And that we may walk in His paths.'* For the law will go forth from Zion And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. (NASB) Isaiah says in the later days the Torah will go forth from Zion. Based upon these Scriptures and more, we are still to do our best to following God's instructions that He had given us from heaven in order to live life to the fullest.

David continues saying, ויִלְשְׁוּ מִלְשׁוֹרֵי מוֹלֵשׁ וּלְאֵשׁ וּ דְיוֹד תִּיבֵל תּוֹאסֵב טַפְשָׁמֶל תּוֹאסֵב וּבִשְׁנֵי | הַמֶּשֶׁךְ יֵב דְיִבְהָא 122:5 For there thrones were set for judgment, The thrones of the house of David. 122:6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: 'May they prosper who love you. (NASB) Jerusalem is described as a place of Judgment and also a place of joy and peace. Tehillim / Psalms 122 concludes saying, דְלִיחָב מוֹלֵשׁ-יְהִי זֶה וְנִיחָבָא וְנִיחָבָא הָהִי-תִיב וְעִמָּל ט דָּב מוֹלֵשׁ אֲנִי-הַרְבֵּדָא יַעֲרוּ יַחֲא-וְעִמָּל ח דְיִתְוֹנְמָרָאב הוֹלֵשׁ 122:7 'May peace be within your walls, And prosperity within your palaces.' 122:8 For the sake of my brothers and my friends, I will now say, 'May peace be within you.' 122:9 For the sake of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek your good. (NASB) This holy city is again called the place of peace and prosperity. This psalm is not speaking of the prosperity gospel, but of finding joy in the Lord, in His commandments, and in His promises. This psalm speaks to our helping others to become more like Yeshua, and He was, is and forever will be a Torah keeping rabbi, where the goal of every Believer is to become more like Yeshua every day. What we are learning here today, is that if we want the best for our families, then we ought to live by God's Torah. The reason these things are true, is the Torah lays down a system of holidays that remind us

throughout the year of the Lord and the great love that He has for us. The Torah is a health manual, both spiritually and physically. The Torah is a marriage manual, how to treat one another and how to show our love for one another. The Torah describes how we should raise our family (see *Devarim / Deuteronomy 4-10*). The Torah describes how we are to treat our friends, strangers, and even our enemies. The Torah is a business manual (having just scales), and teaches us extensively about times of war. We are given instruction on how to fear and respect the Lord, how to take care of ourselves, personal hygiene and food, and how we relate to our spouses, children, servants, and workers. There are too many verses to reference here from the Torah to provide all of the examples, because from cover to cover the five books of Moshe details all of these things. Yeshua said the two most important commands, Love God with all your heart, and love your neighbor as yourself. He focused upon these three areas of the Torah and if we succeed in them we have fulfilled the Torah (lived it). Paul’s writings further clarify what Yeshua taught. Paul reinforces a central tenant of the Torah in the covenant relationship, that a spouse is bound to the other spouse by the covenant of blood until one of them dies, then the marriage covenant is no longer in place. Similarly, a person dies to sin as being in Yeshua the Messiah, and the new master (Yeshua) takes over and we live according to the Spirit. The point is that every person who has the expectation of eternal life in the Kingdom of God, and wants to enjoy a good, healthy and prosperous life now, ought to do the best to follow the Creator’s instructions. The bottom line is, the more of the Torah we succeed to keep, the better our life will be and the better life will be for every one around us. It is also only with God’s help that we are able to do as He wants, to walk according to the Spirit. The commands were given to us in order to humble our lives for the glory of God. Instead of arrogantly declaring that we are “*not under the law, but under grace,*” which is an insult to the grace and goodness of God in His Word, we are to humble our lives, and to seek first His kingdom according to the commandment. He is looking for His sons and daughters to have the correct heart attitude towards His Torah, and like King David, thank Him and praise Him for giving us His perfect instructions, and to do the best we can to live by them. And when we fail, we get back up, repent, and continue to walk in the Spirit with the help of the Lord.

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