

## Tehillim / Psalms 126 | ספר תהילים קכו

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### Being handed over for destruction and the Gospel Message

**א** שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת בְּשׁוּב יְהוָה, אֶת-שִׁיבַת צִיּוֹן הֵיינוּ כְּחֹלְמִים: *A Song of Ascents. 126:1 When the Lord brought back the captive ones of Zion, We were like those who dream. (NASB)* When held captive, is it but a dream to long for deliverance? The Lord is powerful to overcome strongholds, and it does not matter who stands against us when we have the Lord God in heaven on our side. The psalmist states, **ב** אֶז יִמְלֵא שְׁחֹק פִּינוּ וְלִשׁוֹנֵנוּ רִנָּה אֶז יֹאמְרוּ בְּגוֹיִם הַגֹּיִם: *126:2 Then our mouth was filled with laughter And our tongue with joyful shouting; Then they said among the nations, 'The Lord has done great things for them.'* (NASB) This sounds like *Devarim / Deuteronomy 4:7 For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as is the LORD our God whenever we call on Him?* (NASB) The Lord is great in His mercy to deliver His people. This brings great joy to His people, and is the meaning of the joy of the Lord. The psalm continues saying, **ג** הַגְדִּיל יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת עִמָּנוּ הֵיינוּ שְׂמֵחִים: *ד* שׁוֹבָה יְהוָה אֶת-שְׁבוּתֵנוּ [שְׁבִיתֵנוּ] כַּאֲפִיקִים בְּנִגְבִּ: *ה* הַזֹּרְעִים בְּדַמְעָה בְּרִנָּה יִקְצְרוּ: *126:3 The Lord has done great things for us; We are glad. 126:4 Restore our captivity, O Lord, As the streams in the South. 126:5 Those who sow in tears shall reap with joyful shouting. (NASB)* The Aramaic Targum states, *126:3 The Lord has done great good to us; we are joyful. 126:4 O Lord, make our exiles return, like a land that is made habitable when fountains of water flow during drought. 126:5 Those who sow with tears will harvest with praise. (EMC)* The interpretation of the psalm is asking the Lord to restore the people to the land. Restoration to the land is a part of the promises of God. The psalm concludes saying, **ו** *126:6 He who goes to and fro weeping, carrying his bag of seed, Shall indeed come again with a shout of joy, bringing his sheaves with him. (NASB)* The one who sows requires a place to sow the seed. The Land of Israel is the ideal place for His people. Considering the Word of God, the seed of truth may be sown anywhere!

עברית	Hebrew	ארמי	Aramaic	ελληνικός	Greek
ספר תהילים פרק קכו	ספר תהילים פרק קכו	ספר טוביה פרק קכו	ספר טוביה פרק קכו	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 126	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 126
א שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת בְּשׁוּב יְהוָה אֶת-שִׁיבַת צִיּוֹן הֵיינוּ כְּחֹלְמִים: ב אֶז יִמְלֵא שְׁחֹק פִּינוּ וְלִשׁוֹנֵנוּ רִנָּה אֶז יֹאמְרוּ בְּגוֹיִם הַגְדִּיל יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת עִמָּנוּ הֵיינוּ שְׂמֵחִים: ד שׁוֹבָה יְהוָה אֶת-שְׁבוּתֵנוּ [שְׁבִיתֵנוּ] כַּאֲפִיקִים בְּנִגְבִּ: ה הַזֹּרְעִים בְּדַמְעָה בְּרִנָּה יִקְצְרוּ: ו וְכֹכָה נִשְׂא מְשֶׁךְ-הַזֶּרַע בְּאֶ-יְבוֹא בְּרִנָּה נִשְׂא אֶלְמָתָיו:	א שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת בְּשׁוּב יְהוָה אֶת-שִׁיבַת צִיּוֹן הֵיינוּ כְּחֹלְמִים: ב אֶז יִמְלֵא שְׁחֹק פִּינוּ וְלִשׁוֹנֵנוּ רִנָּה אֶז יֹאמְרוּ בְּגוֹיִם הַגְדִּיל יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת עִמָּנוּ הֵיינוּ שְׂמֵחִים: ד שׁוֹבָה יְהוָה אֶת-שְׁבוּתֵנוּ [שְׁבִיתֵנוּ] כַּאֲפִיקִים בְּנִגְבִּ: ה הַזֹּרְעִים בְּדַמְעָה בְּרִנָּה יִקְצְרוּ: ו וְכֹכָה נִשְׂא מְשֶׁךְ-הַזֶּרַע בְּאֶ-יְבוֹא בְּרִנָּה נִשְׂא אֶלְמָתָיו:	א שִׁיר דאיתאמר על מסקיין מסור קין דתהומא כד יתיב יהוה ית גלוות ציון הוינא־נהוי דמיין היך מרעיא דאיתסיין היך מרעיא דאתסיוא ממרעיהון: ב הכדין אדין יתמלי פומנא חוכא ולישנא תושבחה בייע לתושבחתא הידין יימרון בעמיא בעממא אסגי יהוה למעבד טבא עם אילין: ג אסגי יהוה למעבד טבא עמנא הוינא חדין: ד אתיב יהוה ית גלוותן היך היך כמה דמיתבא דמתי־טבא ארעא כד נבעין מפקני מיא בבצורתא: ה ועמא דזרעין בדמעתא בשבחתא יחצ־דון בביע בחדוה יקצרון: ו מהלכא יהלך בבכותא תורא דמסובר ניגדא דבר זרעא מיתא ייתי בתושבחה כד יסובר איסרתוי ורעי חיזוי מן תלמא:	א שִׁיר דאיתאמר על מסקיין מסור קין דתהומא כד יתיב יהוה ית גלוות ציון הוינא־נהוי דמיין היך מרעיא דאיתסיין היך מרעיא דאתסיוא ממרעיהון: ב הכדין אדין יתמלי פומנא חוכא ולישנא תושבחה בייע לתושבחתא הידין יימרון בעמיא בעממא אסגי יהוה למעבד טבא עם אילין: ג אסגי יהוה למעבד טבא עמנא הוינא חדין: ד אתיב יהוה ית גלוותן היך היך כמה דמיתבא דמתי־טבא ארעא כד נבעין מפקני מיא בבצורתא: ה ועמא דזרעין בדמעתא בשבחתא יחצ־דון בביע בחדוה יקצרון: ו מהלכא יהלך בבכותא תורא דמסובר ניגדא דבר זרעא מיתא ייתי בתושבחה כד יסובר איסרתוי ורעי חיזוי מן תלמא:	126:1 ᾠδὴ τῶν ἀναβαθμῶν ἐν τῷ ἐπιστρέφει κύριον τὴν αἰχμαλωσίαν Σιων ἐγενήθημεν ὡς παρακεκλημένοι 126:2 τότε ἐπλήσθη χαρᾶς τὸ στόμα ἡμῶν καὶ ἡ γλῶσσα ἡμῶν ἀγαλλιάσεως τότε ἐροῦσιν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ἐμεγάλυνεν κύριος τοῦ ποιῆσαι μετ’ αὐτῶν 126:3 ἐμεγάλυνεν κύριος τοῦ ποιῆσαι μεθ’ ἡμῶν ἐγενήθημεν εὐφραϊνόμενοι 126:4 ἐπίστρεψον κύριε τὴν αἰχμαλωσίαν ἡμῶν ὡς χειμάρρους ἐν τῷ νότῳ 126:5 οἱ σπεύροντες ἐν δάκρυσιν ἐν ἀγαλλιάσει θεριοῦσιν 126:6 πορευόμενοι ἐπορευόντο καὶ ἔκλαιον αἶροντες τὰ σπέρματα αὐτῶν ἐρχόμενοι δὲ ἤξουσιν ἐν ἀγαλλιάσει αἶροντες τὰ δράγματα αὐτῶν	126:1 ᾠδὴ τῶν ἀναβαθμῶν ἐν τῷ ἐπιστρέφει κύριον τὴν αἰχμαλωσίαν Σιων ἐγενήθημεν ὡς παρακεκλημένοι 126:2 τότε ἐπλήσθη χαρᾶς τὸ στόμα ἡμῶν καὶ ἡ γλῶσσα ἡμῶν ἀγαλλιάσεως τότε ἐροῦσιν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ἐμεγάλυνεν κύριος τοῦ ποιῆσαι μετ’ αὐτῶν 126:3 ἐμεγάλυνεν κύριος τοῦ ποιῆσαι μεθ’ ἡμῶν ἐγενήθημεν εὐφραϊνόμενοι 126:4 ἐπίστρεψον κύριε τὴν αἰχμαλωσίαν ἡμῶν ὡς χειμάρρους ἐν τῷ νότῳ 126:5 οἱ σπεύροντες ἐν δάκρυσιν ἐν ἀγαλλιάσει θεριοῦσιν 126:6 πορευόμενοι ἐπορευόντο καὶ ἔκλαιον αἶροντες τὰ σπέρματα αὐτῶν ἐρχόμενοι δὲ ἤξουσιν ἐν ἀγαλλιάσει αἶροντες τὰ δράγματα αὐτῶν

<p><b>Tehillim Psalms 126</b>  A Song of Ascents. 126:1 When the Lord brought back the captive ones of Zion, We were like those who dream. 126:2 Then our mouth was filled with laughter And our tongue with joyful shouting; Then they said among the nations, ‘The Lord has done great things for them.’ 126:3 The Lord has done great things for us; We are glad. 126:4 Restore our captivity, O Lord, As the streams in the South. 126:5 Those who sow in tears shall reap with joyful shouting. 126:6 He who goes to and fro weeping, carrying his bag of seed, Shall indeed come again with a shout of joy, bringing his sheaves with him. (NASB)</p>	<p><b>Toviyah Psalms 126</b>  126:1 A song that was uttered on the ascents of the abyss. When the Lord makes the exiles of Zion return, we were like the sick who were healed. 126:2 Then will our mouths be full of laughter, and our tongue with praise; then will they say among the Gentiles, “The Lord has done great good to these.” 126:3 The Lord has done great good to us; we are joyful. 126:4 O Lord, make our exiles return, like a land that is made habitable when fountains of water flow during drought. 126:5 Those who sow with tears will harvest with praise. 126:6. He will surely go with weeping; the ox that bears a load of seed will surely come with praise, when he bears his sheaves and grazes on the young growth from the furrow. (EMC)</p>	<p><b>Psalmoi Psalms 126</b>  A Song of Degrees. 126:1 When the Lord turned the captivity of Sion, we became as comforted ones. 126:2 Then was our mouth filled with joy, and our tongue with exultation: then would they say among the Gentiles, 126:3 The Lord has done great things among them. The Lord has done great things for us, we became joyful. 126:4 Turn, O Lord, our captivity, as the steams in the south. 126:5 They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. 126:6 They went on and wept as they cast their seeds; but they shall surely come with exultation, bringing their sheaves with them. (LXX)</p>
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In this week’s study from *Tehillim / Psalms 126:1-6*, the psalm opens saying, אִשִּׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת בְּשׁוֹב יְהוָה, *A Song of Ascents. 126:1 When the Lord brought back the captive ones of Zion, We were like those who dream. (NASB)* When held captive, is it but a dream to long for deliverance? Many men throughout the Scriptures went through trials in their lives. Job lost everything including his health yet he continued to trust in the God of Israel. Joseph was sold into slavery by his own brothers then sent to prison for a crime he did not commit. Both Job and Joseph could have been angry with God and said “*WHY ME?*” Rather than question God in an accusatory manner, they chose to daily put their trust in the Lord. Sometimes the Lord brings us to rock bottom so that we may be more dependent on Him and lean on Him. As we think upon these things, we are reminded of the life of Joseph, and his return to the Promised Land. After having wrestled with God, his name was changed, and he limped forward as he moved. With each step he drew closer to his brother Esau and he became more and more terrified. His fear led to causing him to send everyone else across the river and stay behind alone. Did he want to pray himself? Was his fear so great that he could not bring himself to cross the river into the Land? We are not sure, however, in the years previous, he had twice cheated his brother. First he swindled Esau from his birthright for a bowl of stew. Later he tricked his blind father into giving him Esau’s blessing. He learned from his mother that Esau had been angry and vowed revenge, so Jacob had fled to another land, traveling hundreds of miles to stay with relatives in Mesopotamia. The brothers had not seen each other for 20 years. The Torah tells us that Esau was a mighty hunter, a rough and tough guy who knew how to kill. Jacob on the other hand was a shepherd. In a face to face fight with Esau, Jacob would have most likely lost and he knew this and so fear had gripped his heart. As Esau entered into the Promised Land, he heard that Esau was approaching with 400 men (assuming they were armed), he was scared and divided his family up into groups with gifts for Esau. He had a family full of women and children. He had flocks and herds and shepherds. He had a handful of armed guards to protect the livestock from predators, but he did not have an army. He did however have the

Lord God Almighty on his side, but his fear led him to believe there was no escape. If Esau made good on his threat, they would be like lambs to the slaughter. It is because of all of these things that Esau remained on the other side of the river to pray meeting with God and wrestling with the Lord for his life. We are told in the Scriptures that a stranger came and fought him where they struggled until daybreak, when something strange had occurred. The opponent touched the socket of his thigh, dislocating it. All Jacob could do was keep holding on to the man. He demanded a blessing, from one so obviously powerful, and the man changed his name to Israel, meaning “*he strives with God.*” The Lord humbled Jacob by striking his hip making him limp and forcing him to place all of his faith and trust in the Lord. What we learn from this story of Jacob is that he had prayed for deliverance, and the Lord God had weakened him further. Jacob then chose to divide his family and send gifts to Esau bowing down in honor, respect, and homage to his brother. All he could do was be submissive and hope the best trusting in the Lord. Esau runs to his brother, after 20 years, and embraces him, hugs, and kisses him. This is an important story as it is related to *Tehillim / Psalms 126:1 When the Lord brought back the captive ones of Zion, We were like those who dream. (NASB)* When we are taken captive, when we are on the ropes, and believe there is no hope without anything else to do, we pray! When we do pray for the Lord God to rescue us, protect us, deliver us, the situation seems to get worse. Is this what happened to Jacob, his situation got worse, his hip was dislocated so he could hardly walk? Consider another situation, when Moshe went to Pharaoh and the result, Pharaoh stopped giving them straw to make bricks (*Shemot / Exodus 5*). Or even of Gideon when the Lord reduced his army from 32,000 to 300 men (*Judges 6-7*). The Lord says to Gideon in *Judges 7:2* “*The people who are with you are too many for me to give Midian into their hands, for Israel would become boastful, saying, ‘my own power has delivered me.’*” The Lord delivered his people so there would be no doubts about who it was that delivered them. It is not the size, the strength, intellect, zeal, money, or any other human resource that saves. The Lord is powerful to overcome strongholds, and it does not matter who stands against us when we have the Lord God in heaven on our side. The point is will we live by faith no matter what happens, even if the circumstances seem to get worse. The same concept is found in relation to sin. Sin (disobedience) seems to be an insurmountable enemy. And while God never tempts anyone to sin (*James 1:13*), he does put his people in places and situations where temptation and hardship are inevitable. This is the concept put forward by Yeshua when he said that he sends his disciples out “*as sheep among wolves*” (*Matthew 10:16*). Note that throughout the Tanach and the Apostolic Writings, we are told that God’s people are never safe from the threat of temptation and the realities of suffering. Yeshua said in fact that we will be persecuted for his name’s sake (*Matthew 10:22*) Yeshua tells us that persecutions and sufferings are coming. The reason is we are surrounded by people and nations who do not know God or his ways, who call evil good and good evil, and who want us to do the same. It is not as if we have enough tendency to sin within ourselves, but we are also enticed by others as well. It is at this point that our faith seems to be stretched to its limit, just as was going on with Jacob, Israel and Moshe, and Gideon, etc. When things seem to go from bad to worse, we must contend with the fact that while God is good, life is hard. When we think our faith cannot be stretched any further, the Lord allows some other injury, and something worse happens. And then I must limp toward that which I fear, hoping in the Lord God of Israel who allows me to be weakened, so that He is glorified. As we understand these things, will we continue in the faith when such things happen, will we believe the God of Abraham who promises good to us, or will we believe only what we can grasp and accomplish? Will we walk by faith, or by sight? The Lord God has a purpose for us just as he did for Job, Joseph, Jacob, Moshe, and Gideon, etc. This purpose is alluded to in the commentary *Tur HaAroch on Bereshit / Genesis 32:26 Part 2*.

#### ***Tur HaAroch, Bereshit / Genesis 32:26 Part 22***

*ויגע בכף ירכו*, “*he ‘touched’ his thigh-joint.*” *He intended thereby to cause Yaakov to fall to the ground, in the manner of two people wrestling, when each one attempts to first force his opponent to the ground. Some commentators claim that the angel tried to inflict a disabling blow on Yaakov, one that would disqualify him from performing service on the altar, as a penalty for his having taken the birth right from Esau, i.e. Esau’s privilege to perform such service for G’d. on the altar. Prior to the building of the Tabernacle all such service was*

*performed by the firstborn of each Jewish household.*

Tur HaAroch comments upon when Jacob wrestled with the angel and the angel saw he could not get free from Jacob's grip and so touched his hip and dislocated his hip joint so the struggle would be more painful. It is interesting how when under pain or duress, we are more willing to seek the Lord as opposed to when we are not in pain or duress. The reason being is the circumstance is out of our control and we need someone who is all powerful and who has the capability to help. Here Yaakov (Jacob) was struggling with what he was to do in returning to the Promised Land. He struggled with whether he would even return. His reservations is demonstrated by his sending everyone else over and he himself remaining. The Lord inflicted him so his perspective would change. I am sure he was thinking about how he could physically overcome Esau if they had met face to face. The Lord inflicting his hip (dislocation) so he would have trouble walking in pain, he would have to rely wholly upon the Lord in heaven to take care of the relationship with his brother. Tur HaAroch states, "*Some commentators claim that the angel tried to inflict a disabling blow on Yaakov, one that would disqualify him from performing service on the altar...*" Note how unrepentant sin has the capability to disqualify us from performing services unto the Lord. The reason being sin can lead us away from the Lord, away from His ways, and to rely upon our own understanding in which the Lord states that the ways of man lead to death (*Mishley / Proverbs 14:12*), this is why we are not to lean on our own understanding. The concepts we receive from Jacob's life is when we choose to serve the Lord, suffering may come as the Lord prunes and refines our lives to be conformed unto the likeness of His Son Yeshua the Messiah. (*Romans 8:29*)

The psalmist states, אָז יִמְלֵא שְׂחוֹק פִּינוּ וּלְשׁוֹנֵנוּ רִנָּה אֲזַיִּאמְרוּ בְּגוֹיִם הַגְּדִיל יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת עִם-אֱלֹהֵ: 126:2 *Then our mouth was filled with laughter And our tongue with joyful shouting; Then they said among the nations, 'The Lord has done great things for them.'* (NASB) This sounds like *Devarim / Deuteronomy 4:7 For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as is the LORD our God whenever we call on Him?* (NASB) The Lord is great in His mercy to deliver His people. This brings great joy to His people, and is the meaning of the joy of the Lord. The rabbis interpret this to say the following according to the *Talmud Bavli Berakhot 31a Part 4*.

#### ***Talmud Bavli Berakhot 31a Part 4***

*In a similar vein, Rabbi Yoḥanan said in the name of Rabbi Shimon ben Yoḥai: One is forbidden to fill his mouth with mirth in this world, as long as we are in exile (ge'anim), as it is stated: "When the Lord returns the captivity of Zion we will be as dreamers" (Psalms 126:1). Only "then will our mouths fill with laughter and our lips with song" (Psalms 126:2). When will that joyous era arrive? When "they will say among nations, the Lord has done great things with these" (Psalms 126:2). They said about Reish Lakish that throughout his life he did not fill his mouth with laughter in this world once he heard this statement from his teacher, Rabbi Yoḥanan.*

The rabbis speak of being joyful always in this life. The only exception is when we are in exile are we to fill our mouth with mirth. When the people are returned to the Land from their captivity, then our mouths will be filled with laughter and our lips filled with song (*Tehillim / Psalms 126:2*). The Apostle Paul wrote of the following in *Philippians 4:6-13*:

#### ***Philippians 4:6-13***

*4:6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 4:7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. 4:8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable--if anything is excellent or praiseworthy--think about such things. 4:9 Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me--put it into practice.*



*And the God of peace will be with you. 4:10 I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you have renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you have been concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. 4:11 I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. 4:12 I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. 4:13 I can do everything through him who gives me strength. (NASB)*

Paul speaks of complete trust in the Lord saying that it is possible to be contented and happy in the midst of our troubles. He says the key to doing so is to set our hearts and minds upon what is noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, and praiseworthy, and to do as Paul had done in order for the God of peace to be with us. Paul says this is the way the Lord has renewed him, and it is the way the Lord will renew us as well. The rabbis say the following in Midrash Tanchuma Beshlach 10:7.

#### **Midrash Tanchuma Beshlach 10:7**

*Then sang Moses. At times the word then refers to events that happened in the past, and at other times it refers to events that are to transpire in the future. The word then refers to past events in the following verses: Then began man to call upon the name of the Lord (Gen. 4:26), Then she said: “A bridegroom of blood” (Exod. 4:26), Then sang Israel this song (Num. 21:17), Then Solomon spoke (I Kings 18:12). All of these refer to past events. Instances in which the word then alludes to future events are: Then thou shalt see (Isa. 60:5), Then shall thy light break forth (ibid. 58:8), Then shall the lame man leap as a hart (ibid. 35:6), Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened (ibid., v. 5), Then shall the virgin rejoice (Jer. 31:13), Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing (Ps. 126:2), and Then said they among the nations (ibid.). All these allude to future events. From this we learn that the concept of the resurrection of the dead is derived from the Torah.*

The rabbis refer to the Word of God, how the Word makes reference to both past and future events. Remembering what the Lord has done for us brings joy to our hearts and lives. In the Tanach, the Scriptures speak of God’s people experiencing periods of time when they have no joy. For example, Job wished he had never been born (*Job 3:11*). David prayed to be taken away to a place where he would not have to deal with reality (*Tehillim / Psalm 55:6-8*). Elijah after defeating 450 prophets of Baal with fire called down from heaven (*I Kings 18:16-46*), fled into the desert and asked God to take his life (*I Kings 19:3-5*). With these things in mind, it is evident that one way to experience joy in our lives is to focus upon the Lord in His Word. This helps us to stop dwelling on our difficulties or those things that are robbing us of our contentment. Taking this approach does not cause us to deny our discontent or negative emotions, but that we are to persevere in our faith and faithfulness in the Lord. The Apostle Paul wrote to the Philippians about joy having written this epistle from prison. *Philippians 4:4-8* provides us with guidelines for experiencing joy in lives saying, “Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! . . . The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Yeshua also gave instructions on being joyful in *John 15* saying that we are to abide in Him and obey His commands. We can take joy in walking in God’s Ways and thereby remaining in His love. Yeshua said, “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete” (*John 15:9-11*). According to Paul, the key to joy is living in obedience to God. Another way to experience joy is through community. The Lord God gave Elijah rest and then sent a man, Elisha, to help him (*I Kings 19:19-21*). This gives us the example and importance of finding friends that can build us up, pray for us, we can share our troubles with, our hurts and pains with (*Ecclesiastes 4:9-12*). The author of Hebrews wrote in *Hebrews 10:19-25* saying, “Brothers

and sisters . . . let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” This illustrates our need for others and why we are not called to be islands but a nation and community of faithful people.

The psalm continues saying, *ג הגדיל יהוה לעשות עמנו היינו שמחים: ד שובה יהוה את-שבותנו [שביתנו] ה הזרעים בדםעה ברנה יקצרו: 126:3 The Lord has done great things for us; We are glad. 126:4 Restore our captivity, O Lord, As the streams in the South. 126:5 Those who sow in tears shall reap with joyful shouting. (NASB) The Aramaic Targum states, 126:3 The Lord has done great good to us; we are joyful. 126:4 O Lord, make our exiles return, like a land that is made habitable when fountains of water flow during drought. 126:5 Those who sow with tears will harvest with praise. (EMC) The interpretation of the psalm is asking the Lord to restore the people to the land. Restoration to the land is a part of the promises of God. Because of the mercy of God, we can approach Him confidently in prayer (*Hebrews 10:19*). The author of Hebrews says the following:*

### **Hebrews 10:15-31**

*10:15 And the Holy Spirit also testifies to us; for after saying, 10:16 ‘This is the covenant that I will make with them After those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws upon their heart, And on their mind I will write them,’ He then says, 10:17 ‘And their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.’ 10:18 Now where there is forgiveness of these things, there is no longer any offering for sin. 10:19 Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, 10:20 by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, 10:21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 10:22 let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. 10:23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; 10:24 and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, 10:25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another and all the more as you see the day drawing near. 10:26 For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 10:27 but a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries. 10:28 Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 10:29 How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace? 10:30 For we know Him who said, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay.’ And again, ‘The Lord will judge His people.’ 10:31 It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (NASB)*

The author of Hebrews speaks of the Lord writing His Laws upon our heart (*Jeremiah 31*). This is referring to the Lord enabling us to walk in obedience to His Word for His glory and because we have been forgiven of our past lawlessness. He says for those who neglect their salvation and forgiveness by continuing in sin by setting aside the Torah, there is no forgiveness of sins. This illustrates how important the Torah is in our lives, because it is related to our faithfulness before God. This is why the author of Hebrews speaks of faithfulness before the faith chapter in *Hebrews II*. It is because of the mercy of God that we are able to approach Him. We are cleansed from sin (*Hebrews 10:22*) and so we are to walk in newness of life according to the commands and not in sin. It is in this way that we are joined in community with other believers. Our brothers and sisters in the faith hold firm to the faith trusting in the Lord and encouraging each other to live for the Lord according to His Word. It is in this way that Joy is made manifest in the lives of God’s people because it is the fruit of the Spirit and a gift from God in our lives. We receive this gift when we focus on the truth of the Lord, commune with Him through prayer, and remain in His Word applying His Word to our lives.

126:6 *He who goes to and fro weeping, carrying his bag of seed, Shall indeed come again with a shout of joy, bringing his sheaves with him. (NASB)* The one who sows requires a place to sow the seed. The Land of Israel is the ideal place for His people. Considering the Word of God, the seed of truth may be sown anywhere! The rabbis state the following in the *Talmud Bavli Taanit 5a:7*.

### **Talmud Bavli Taanit 5a:7**

*And with regard to that generation the verse says: “They who sow in tears shall reap with songs of joy. Though he goes on his way weeping, who bears the measure of seed, he shall come home with joy, bearing his sheaves” (Psalms 126:6). The Gemara asks: What is the meaning of the expression: “Though he goes on his way weeping, who bears the measure of seed”? Rabbi Yehuda said: An ox, when it plowed at that time, it went on its way weeping and lamenting its labor; and yet upon its return, through the same furrow, it was able to eat the young shoots [haziz] of crops that had already sprouted from the furrow. And this is the meaning of the phrase: “He shall come home with songs of joy.”*

The rabbis say this refers to a generation of peoples as those who sow in tears and reaping songs of joy. The explanation is to the ox who plows who doesn't know any better, laments his labor in plowing the field. Later on the ox reaps what was sown. This speaks as if the ox does not understand what he is doing, but later reaps the reward of his labor. Notice how the this sounds similar to the parable of the sower in the Apostolic Writings.

### **Matthew 13:1-17**

*13:1 That day Jesus went out of the house and was sitting by the sea. 13:2 And large crowds gathered to Him, so He got into a boat and sat down, and the whole crowd was standing on the beach. 13:3 And He spoke many things to them in parables, saying, ‘Behold, the sower went out to sow; 13:4 and as he sowed, some seeds fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate them up. 13:5 ‘Others fell on the rocky places, where they did not have much soil; and immediately they sprang up, because they had no depth of soil. 13:6 ‘But when the sun had risen, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. 13:7 ‘Others fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked them out. 13:8 ‘And others fell on the good soil and yielded a crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty. 13:9 ‘He who has ears, let him hear.’ 13:10 And the disciples came and said to Him, ‘Why do You speak to them in parables?’ 13:11 Jesus answered them, ‘To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted. 13:12 ‘For whoever has, to him more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him. 13:13 ‘Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. 13:14 ‘In their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says, ‘You will keep on hearing, but will not understand; You will keep on seeing, but will not perceive; 13:15 For the heart of this people has become dull, With their ears they scarcely hear, And they have closed their eyes, Otherwise they would see with their eyes, Hear with their ears, And understand with their heart and return, And I would heal them.’ 13:16 ‘But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear. 13:17 ‘For truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it (NASB)*

Yeshua does not speak of the sower laboring and lamenting the sowing of seed; however, the parable does describe the sower as not understanding what he is doing by the illustration of the seed falling upon rocky places, the road side, and also on good soil. The idea is the sower should have been more careful where he



sowed the seed. If he would have taken more care, he could have reaped a greater reward. The point is we send out the word of truth (seed) into the world, which is composed of both the righteous and the unrighteous. It is the Lord God our Father in heaven who causes the seed to grow. We trust in him to provide the growth and provision.

The Midrash on Parashat Vayera speaks of our Psalm this week in the following way.

**Midrash Tanchuma Buber, Vayera 39:1**

*(Gen. 22:1:) NOW IT CAME TO PASS AFTER THESE THINGS, <THAT GOD TESTED ABRAHAM>. This text is related (to Ps. 126:6): THOUGH HE GOES AWAY WEEPING, BEARING HIS SEED BAG, HE SHALL SURELY COME BACK BEARING HIS SHEAVES WITH REJOICING. THOUGH HE GOES AWAY: This refers to Abraham in the hour that the Holy One tested him and said to him (in Gen. 22:2): PLEASE TAKE <YOUR SON ... AND OFFER HIM ... AS A BURNT OFFERING>. Even though he was weeping in his heart, he told him with his mouth (in vs. 1): HERE I AM. When? When BEARING HIS SEED BAG. Thus it is stated (in Gen. 21:12): FOR IN ISAAC SHALL SEED BE SUMMONED FOR YOU. (Ps. 126:6:) HE SHALL COME BACK WITH REJOICING, BEARING HIS SHEAVES. (Cf. Gen. 22:19:) SO ABRAHAM RETURNED UNTO HIS YOUNG MEN. What caused him to receive a reward? <It was> because he kept silent and made himself like a one who is dumb, as stated (in Ps. 38:14 [13]): LIKE ONE WHO IS DEAF I DO NOT HEAR, [AND LIKE ONE WHO IS DUMB ('LM) HE DOES NOT OPEN HIS MOUTH]. Then he had an excuse for saying to him: Yesterday you said to me (in Gen. 21:12): FOR IN ISAAC SHALL SEED BE SUMMONED FOR YOU; but now you are telling me to slaughter him. Still, he did not say anything but kept silent. Ergo (in Ps. 126:6): HE SHALL COME BACK WITH REJOICING, BEARING HIS SHEAVES (rt.: 'LM).*

Here the rabbis speak of being faithful to the Lord and the greatness of the reward that follows which brings rejoicing and happiness. The story of Abraham draws in the concept of the covenant promises that were found in the Seed of Abraham (Isaac and his children), where the Lord tested Abraham's faith, and he remained faithful to obey the Lord. When we are faithful to go forth, to do the will of God, our joy is complete. These things illustrate the Chasidic concept of tzaddikism where the merit and favor of a single righteous person can be extended to others. Note how this is illustrated in the sowing of God's Word into the hearts of others. Just as Yeshua stated, 13:8 *'And others fell on the good soil and yielded a crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty. (NASB)* The Word of God goes forth and produces a good thing in the hearts of the people, to produce good fruit (righteousness), salvation (faith) and obedience (faithfulness). Similarly, on the basis of God's gracious favor for one man (see *Shemot / Exodus 33*), the entire nation of Israel received the forgiveness of sin and a restoration of relationship with the Almighty. On the merit of one righteous man's standing with God, all Israel was granted standing with God. This is the basic mechanism of the gospel message that is coupled to the message of the Torah, the Word of God that is sown in the hearts of men.

The Midrashic commentary continues to say the following:

**Midrash Tanchuma, Vayigash 10:1**

*And he sent Judah before him (Gen. 46:28). Scripture states elsewhere: Behold, I send My messenger, and he shall clear the way before Me (Mal. 3:1). Observe that every misfortune that occurred to Joseph likewise befell Zion. It is written of Joseph: and Israel loved Joseph more than all his children (Gen. 38:3), and of Zion it is written: God loves the gates of Zion (Ps. 87:2). Concerning Joseph it is stated: And they hated him (Gen. 37:8), and about Zion: She hath uttered her voice against Me, therefore I have hated her (Jer. 12:8). With reference to Joseph it is said: For behold, we are binding sheaves (Gen. 37:7), and in regard to Zion: Ye shall come home with song, bearing sheaves (Ps. 126:6). It is written of Joseph: Shalt thou*



*indeed rule over us? (Gen. 36:8), and of Zion: That sayeth unto Zion: “Thy God reigneth” (Isa. 52:7). Joseph: And Joseph dreamed a dream (Gen. 37:5), and Zion: When the Lord brought back those that returned to Zion, we were like unto them that dream (Ps. 126:1). Joseph: Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down to thee? (Gen. 37:10), Zion: They shall bow down to thee with their face to the earth (Isa. 49:23). Joseph: And his brothers envied him (Gen. 37:11), Zion: I am jealous of Zion with great jealousy (Zech. 8:2). Joseph: Go now, see whether it is well with thy brethren (Gen. 37:14), Zion: Seek the peace of the city (Jer. 29:7). Joseph: They saw him from afar off (Gen. 37:18), Zion: Remember the Lord from afar off (Jer. 51:50). Joseph: And before he came near unto them they conspired (Gen. 37:18), Zion: They hold crafty converse against the people (Ps. 83:4). Joseph: And they stripped Joseph of his coat (Gen. 37:23), Zion: They shall strip thee of thy clothes (Ezek. 23:26). Joseph: They took him and cast him into the pit (Gen. 37:24), Zion: They have cut off my life in the dungeon (Lam. 3:53). Joseph: And the pit was empty (Gen. 37:24), Zion: And in the pit there was no water (Jer. 38:6). Joseph: And they sat down to eat bread (Gen. 37:25), Zion: We have given the hand to Egypt, and to Assyria, to have bread enough (Lam. 5:6). Joseph: And they drew near and lifted up Joseph (Gen. 37:28), Zion: Ebed-Melech the Cushite drew him up (Jer. 38:13). Joseph: And Jacob rent his garments (Gen. 37:34), Zion: And in that day did the Lord, the God of hosts, call to the weeping (Isa. 22:12). Joseph: All his sons and all his daughters rose to comfort him (Gen. 37:35), Zion: Strain not to comfort me (Isa. 22:4). Joseph: And the Midianites sold him into Egypt (Gen. 37:36), Zion: The children also of Jerusalem have ye sold unto the sons of the Jevanim (Joel 4:6).*

The Midrash speaks of a conversation between Joseph and Zion and the righteousness of Joseph who lives to serve the Lord and obey His word. Because he does such things, we are told the enemy comes to kill, destroy, and sell us into slavery if he gets the chance. This is connected to the idea when we serve the Lord, we are not always given a supply of milk and honey. Life is hard, and Yeshua warned us over and over again to be on guard because we will be persecuted for his name sake.

**Matthew 5:11** *Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. (NASB)*

**Matthew 10:22** *You will be hated by all because of My name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved. (NASB)*

**Matthew 24:9** *Then they will deliver you to tribulation, and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations because of My name. (NASB)*

Our devotion to the Lord does not cause us to receive a get out of jail free ticket. We can expect persecution and tribulation from wicked men. We may also expect tribulation under the Lord’s pruning hand. This is illustrated by the unrighteous sitting down and eating bread, whereas we are handed over for destruction. Our faith and faithfulness are designed to be a testimony to this world on behalf of the Lord God in heaven and Yeshua His Messiah. When we persevere and maintain the faith in the midst of trials and persecutions, we are bearing the testimony of God for all to see. This perseverance is what the Lord is looking for in our lives. Our perseverance is for the glory of God! 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!

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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