

ספר תהילים קכח | Tehillim / Psalms 128

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Faith, Fasting, and Fear

In this week's study from *Tehillim / Psalms 128:1-6*, the psalm opens, א שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת אֲשֶׁר־יִרְאֶה-יְהוָה: 128:1 *How blessed is everyone who fears the Lord, Who walks in His ways. (NASB)* The fear of the Lord is coupled to walking in His ways. We respect the Lord for His power and His watchful eyes on our lives. We know His promises and how He wants us to live for Him, and He told us what we should do. The Psalmist states, ב יִגִּיעַ כַּפְּיָךְ כִּי תֹאכַל אֲשֶׁר־יָדְךָ וְטוֹב לָךְ: 128:2 *When you shall eat of the fruit of your hands, You will be happy and it will be well with you. (NASB)* The psalmist speaks of the fruit of our hands. This when coupled to the fear of the Lord and walking in His ways, the fruit of the hands will be that of righteousness, holiness, justice, and truth. This is why the psalmist states saying, ג אֲשֶׁתְּךָ | כְּגִפְנֵי 28:3 *Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine Within your house, Your children like olive plants Around your table. 128:4 Behold, for thus shall the man be blessed Who fears the Lord. (NASB)* The one who fears the Lord will take time to be with his family spending time in relationship and taking time to be with wife and children. The blessing of the Lord comes in many forms, to work in the hearts of men, women, and children, to be fruitful, a delight, and as the psalm describes, olive plants around the table. The Psalm concludes saying, ה יְבָרְכֶךָ: 128:5 *The Lord bless you from Zion, And may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life. 128:6 Indeed, may you see your children's children. Peace be upon Israel! (NASB)* The blessing of children provides us with the future expectation of the Lord's blessing continuing on as we pass His truth and salvation to future generations.

עברית	Hebrew	ארמי	Aramaic	ελληνικός	Greek
ספר תהלים פרק קכח	ספר טוביה פרק קכח	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 128			
א שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת אֲשֶׁר־יִרְאֶה-יְהוָה: 128:1 <i>How blessed is everyone who fears the Lord, Who walks in His ways. (NASB)</i>	א שִׁירָא דִּתְהוֹמָא טוֹבִיָּהוֹן דְּכָל דְּחִלִּיא דִּיהוּה דִּא-זְלִין בְּאוֹרְחַתִּיה: ב לִיעוֹת אִידְךָ אַרוֹם תִּיכּוֹל טוֹבְךָ בְּעֵלְמָא הַדִּין וְטַב לְךָ לְעֵלְמָא דִּאתִּי: ג אֲתַתְךָ הֵיךְ גּוֹפְנָא דְעַבְדַּת פִּירִין עַל שִׂידָא דְבִיתְךָ בְּנֵךְ הֵיךְ שְׁתִּילִיא דְזִיתִיא חֲזוֹר חֲזוֹר לְפַתּוֹרְךָ: ד הָא אַרוֹם הִיכִי-נָא מְתַבְרִיךְ גְּבֵרָא דְחִיל מִן קַדְמֵ יְהוּה: ה יְבָרְכֶיךָ יְהוָה: ו יִמֵּי חַיֶּיךָ: ז וְרֵאֵה-בְּנֵי לְבָנֶיךָ שְׁלוֹם עַל-יִשְׂרָאֵל:	א שִׁירָא דִּתְהוֹמָא טוֹבִיָּהוֹן דְּכָל דְּחִלִּיא דִּיהוּה דִּא-זְלִין בְּאוֹרְחַתִּיה: ב לִיעוֹת אִידְךָ אַרוֹם תִּיכּוֹל טוֹבְךָ בְּעֵלְמָא הַדִּין וְטַב לְךָ לְעֵלְמָא דִּאתִּי: ג אֲתַתְךָ הֵיךְ גּוֹפְנָא דְעַבְדַּת פִּירִין עַל שִׂידָא דְבִיתְךָ בְּנֵךְ הֵיךְ שְׁתִּילִיא דְזִיתִיא חֲזוֹר חֲזוֹר לְפַתּוֹרְךָ: ד הָא אַרוֹם הִיכִי-נָא מְתַבְרִיךְ גְּבֵרָא דְחִיל מִן קַדְמֵ יְהוּה: ה יְבָרְכֶיךָ יְהוָה: ו יִמֵּי חַיֶּיךָ: ז וְרֵאֵה-בְּנֵי לְבָנֶיךָ שְׁלוֹם עַל-יִשְׂרָאֵל:	128:1 ὠδὴ τῶν ἀναβαθμῶν μακάριοι πάντες οἱ φοβούμενοι τὸν κύριον οἱ πορευόμενοι ἐν ταῖς ὁδοῖς αὐτοῦ 128:2 τοὺς πόνους τῶν καρπῶν σου φάγεσαι μακάριος εἶ καὶ καλῶς σοι ἔσται 128:3 ἡ γυνὴ σου ὡς ἄμπελος εὐθηνούσα ἐν τοῖς κλίτεσι τῆς οἰκίας σου οἱ υἱοὶ σου ὡς νεόφυτα ἐλαιῶν κύκλω τῆς τραπέζης σου 128:4 ἰδοὺ οὕτως εὐλογηθήσεται ἄνθρωπος ὁ φοβούμενος τὸν κύριον 128:5 εὐλογῆσαι σε κύριος ἐκ Σιων καὶ ἴδοις τὰ ἀγαθὰ Ἱερουσαλημ πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας τῆς ζωῆς σου 128:6 καὶ ἴδοις υἱοὺς τῶν υἱῶν σου εἰρήνην ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ		

<p>Tehillim Psalms 128 128:1 How blessed is everyone who fears the Lord, Who walks in His ways. 128:2 When you shall eat of the fruit of your hands, You will be happy and it will be well with you. 128:3 Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine Within your house, Your children like olive plants Around your table. 128:4 Behold, for thus shall the man be blessed Who fears the Lord. 128:5 The Lord bless you from Zion, And may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life. 128:6 Indeed, may you see your children's children. Peace be upon Israel! (NASB)</p>	<p>Toviyah Psalms 128 128:1 A song that was uttered on the ascents of the abyss. How happy all who fear the Lord, who walk in his ways. 128:2 [Happy] the work of your hands, for you will eat [it]; happy are you in this age and you shall have good in the age to come. 128:3 Your wife is like a vine that bore fruit on the side of your house; your sons are like olive plants around your table. 128:4 Behold, because of this, blessed is the man who is reverent in the presence of the Lord. 128:5 The Lord will bless you from Zion, and you will see the welfare of Jerusalem all the days of your life. 128:6 And you will see the sons of your sons. Peace be upon Israel. (EMC)</p>	<p>Psalmoi Psalms 128 A Song of Degrees. 127:1 Except the Lord build the house, they that build labor in vain: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman watches in vain. 127:2 It is vain for you to rise early: ye rise up after resting, ye that eat the bread of grief; while he gives sleep to his beloved. 127:3 Behold, the inheritance of the Lord, children, the reward of the fruit of the womb. 127:4 As arrows in the hand of a mighty man; so are the children of those who were outcasts. 127:5 Blessed is the man who shall satisfy his desire with them: they shall not be ashamed when they shall speak to their enemies in the gates. (LXX)</p>
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In this week's study from *Tehillim / Psalms 128:1-6*, the psalm opens, אִשִּׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת אֲשֶׁר־כָּל-יְרֵא יְהוָה, 128:1 *How blessed is everyone who fears the Lord, Who walks in His ways.* (NASB) The fear of the Lord is coupled to walking in His ways. We respect the Lord for His power and His watchful eyes on our lives. We know His promises and how He wants us to live for Him, and within the Scriptures He has told us what we should do. The Psalmist appears to be referring to passages from the Torah, *Devarim / Deuteronomy 8:5-6*.

Devarim / Deuteronomy 8:5-11

8:5 *'Thus you are to know in your heart that the Lord your God was disciplining you just as a man disciplines his son.* 8:6 *'Therefore, you shall keep the commandments of the Lord your God, to walk in His ways and to fear Him.* 8:7 *'For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing forth in valleys and hills;* 8:8 *a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey;* 8:9 *a land where you will eat food without scarcity, in which you will not lack anything; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you can dig copper.* 8:10 *'When you have eaten and are satisfied, you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land which He has given you.* 8:11 *'Beware that you do not forget the Lord your God by not keeping His commandments and His ordinances and His statutes which I am commanding you today;* (NASB)

In Parashat Ekev, we are told how the Lord delivered Israel from Egypt and how the Lord was in the process of humbling His people so they would know that He is Lord and He is the One who sustains them (8:5). Moshe writes in the Torah that the Lord God disciplines us as a man does his son. The conclusion is therefore to perform “*Shomer Mitzvah*” keeping the commands, to walk in His ways, and to fear Him. The fear of the Lord is not as one walks in fear of his life, but as one who reveres the Lord (וְשָׁמַרְתָּ אֶת-מִצְוֹתַי וְלִירְאָהוּ אֱתוֹ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְלַכֵּת בְּדַרְכָּיו וְלִירְאָהוּ אֱתוֹ *Therefore keep the commandments of the LORD your God: walk in His ways and revere (וְלִירְאָהוּ) Him.*) The rabbis have the following to say concerning these Scriptures on

Chizkuni, Devarim / Deuteronomy 8:5 Part 1

רַךְ ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ מִיִּסְרְךָ, “the Lord your G-d chastens you. By not providing you with a food supply sufficient for a week or even longer, so that you will be afraid to rebel against Him for fear He might withhold your food, He has succeeded in making you a chastened nation.” Only the feeling that one can exist independently of G-d results in one's rebelling against the Torah laws. He has taught you to be dependent on His largesse (noun: generosity) daily.

Ibn Ezra on Devarim / Deuteronomy 8:5 Part 1

you will know with your heart You will have a heartfelt (i.e., a fundamental) understanding. Because you listen to the Lord when He disciplines you — even though He may discipline you by famishing you, or by afflicting you with thirst along the way — your reward shall be that He will bring you into the good land.

Rabbeinu Bahya, Devarim / Deuteronomy 8:5 Part 1

רַךְ ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ מִיִּסְרְךָ, “the Lord your G'd is disciplining you.” Moses means that the denial of regular food and the strain imposed on the people by their journeying are examples of how the Lord subjected them to discipline, to tests of obedience and faith. The principal virtue of a Torah-true Jew is his faith in the Lord. The two examples of “afflictions” mentioned by Moses were designed to test this faith.

Tur HaAroch, Devarim / Deuteronomy 8:5 Part 2

רַךְ ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ מִיִּסְרְךָ, כֵּן ה', “so is the Lord your G'd disciplining you.” The temporary afflictions experienced by the Israelites in the desert are examples of G'd's using educational tools at His disposal. Solomon in Proverbs 29,17 phrases it thus: וְיִנְיַחְךָ, “Discipline your son and he will give you rest;” he continues with וְיִתֶּן מְעַדְנִים לְנַפְשְׁךָ, “and he will be a cause of delight to your soul.” By first disciplining one's son, the goodies the father will provide will be so much more appreciated.

Chizkuni states the Lord provides only a small portion of food, not even sufficient for a week, so that we are afraid to rebel against him out of fear that He might withhold our food. The idea here is to cultivate a heart that seeks the Lord in all these things daily, for His provisions, because He is the one who sustains us. Chizkuni states this is so we are to become a chastened nation such that we do not believe in our hearts that we can exist independently from God and His Messiah. The moment we believe we are independent of the Lord comes rebellion against God's ways and sin. Ibn Ezra states we will know that we have understanding because we have listened to the Lord when He disciplines us. The purpose of God's discipline is to draw us near, and to cause us to enter into His promises. This comes back to the idea of chastening, calamity, bringing us to the point that we will listen and take to heart what the Lord wants us to do, to live our lives in service to Him. Tur HaAroch speaks of the lack of food as an educational tool at God's disposal. He causes times of hardship in order to discipline, to humble, and to eventually bring peace and delight to the soul. Rabeinu Bahya agrees with the other commentaries that the Lord causes a denial of food for the purpose of allowing His hand to move in the lives of His people. Note how this draws with it the concept of fasting.

Fasting is a willing abstinence of something for a period of time. Fasting is generally thought of as being from some or all food, drink, or both. Note how the denial of food is connected to the Lord working powerfully in our lives according to the Torah. In *Matthew 9*, John the Baptist's disciples visited Yeshua and asked him the question, 9:14 *Then the disciples of John came to Him, asking, 'Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?'* 9:15 *And Jesus said to them, 'The attendants of the bridegroom cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they? But the days will come when the bridegroom is*

taken away from them, and then they will fast. 9:16 'But no one puts a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; for the patch pulls away from the garment, and a worse tear results. 9:17 'Nor do people put new wine into old wineskins; otherwise the wineskins burst, and the wine pours out and the wineskins are ruined; but they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved.' (NASB) The basic premise is there is a time to fast and a time not to fast. Yeshua speaks of fasting and the bridegroom, and wine and the wineskins. Yeshua speaks of placing new wine into new skins because the wine ferments and expands, the wineskins need to be pliable as well. What is it about new wine, new wineskins, and fasting that are related? From the book of Esther, we read in *Esther 4:16* "... fast for me, and do not eat nor drink three days, night or day. My maidservants and I will also fast in the same way." The fast here is related to not ingesting any food or water. Note also that fasting is from sunset of one day to sunset of the next. The reason fasting is so important is that we live in an evil world. We are to guard our hearts, to be careful not to be lured into indulging in sin just like those who are among the nations. For example, we are not to be like Lot who chose to live near sin, of whom Peter wrote withstood the evil influences around him that came from living in Sodom and near Gomorrah (2 Peter 2:7-8).

The prophet Isaiah says the following concerning the fast:

Isaiah 58:2-10

58:2 'Yet they seek Me day by day and delight to know My ways, As a nation that has done righteousness And has not forsaken the ordinance of their God. They ask Me for just decisions, They delight in the nearness of God. 58:3 'Why have we fasted and You do not see? Why have we humbled ourselves and You do not notice?' Behold, on the day of your fast you find your desire, And drive hard all your workers. 58:4 'Behold, you fast for contention and strife and to strike with a wicked fist. You do not fast like you do today to make your voice heard on high. 58:5 'Is it a fast like this which I choose, a day for a man to humble himself? Is it for bowing one's head like a reed And for spreading out sackcloth and ashes as a bed? Will you call this a fast, even an acceptable day to the Lord? 58:6 'Is this not the fast which I choose, To loosen the bonds of wickedness, To undo the bands of the yoke, And to let the oppressed go free And break every yoke? 58:7 'Is it not to divide your bread with the hungry And bring the homeless poor into the house; When you see the naked, to cover him; And not to hide yourself from your own flesh? 58:8 'Then your light will break out like the dawn, And your recovery will speedily spring forth; And your righteousness will go before you; The glory of the Lord will be your rear guard. 58:9 'Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; You will cry, and He will say, 'Here I am.' If you remove the yoke from your midst, The pointing of the finger and speaking wickedness, 58:10 And if you give yourself to the hungry And satisfy the desire of the afflicted, Then your light will rise in darkness And your gloom will become like midday. (NASB)

Isaiah indicates that the acceptable fast is not merely abstinence from food or water, but a decision to fully obey God's commands to care for the poor and oppressed. Notice how Isaiah says true fasting is to loose the bonds of wickedness and to be released from the yoke, and to let the oppressed go free (breaking the yoke), and to give our food to the needy, the hungry and homeless, and to take care of those who are naked. When we have this sort of mindset, the light of God's righteousness will shine forth from us. It is only then will the Lord answer when we call upon Him. Zechariah also repeats this message (7:5 'Say to all the people of the land and to the priests, 'When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months these seventy years, was it actually for Me that you fasted? 7:6 'When you eat and drink, do you not eat for yourselves and do you not drink for yourselves NASB). The opening chapter of the Book of Daniel (1:8 *But Daniel made up his mind that he would not defile himself with the king's choice food or with the wine which he drank; so he sought permission from the commander of the officials that he might not defile himself. NASB*) describes a partial Daniel Fast and its effects on the health and defilement of its observers. Fasting is an important spiritual discipline that is not just about what we take into our bodies but how we live our lives for the Lord

and our treatment towards others. It is tied to the principle of the connection between the body (Hebrew: basar, Greek: soma) and the soul (Hebrew: neshamah, Greek: pneuma). The Scriptures describe fasting in this manner, as having a deep spiritual meaning which illuminates our motives before God and men.

Yom Kippur is considered to be the most important day of the Jewish year and fasting as a means of repentance is expected of every Jewish man or woman above the age of bar/ bat mitzvah. This is the only fast day mentioned in the Torah (see *Vayikra / Leviticus 23:26-32*). It is very important to fast on this day, and the only exclusion is for those who would be in danger due to fasting (health reasons). Such as those who are ill or frail where endangering a life is against a core principle of Judaism. Those that do eat on this day are encouraged to eat as little as possible at a time and to avoid a full meal. For some, fasting on Yom Kippur is considered more important than the prayers of this holy day. If one fasts, even if one is at home in bed, one is considered as having participated in the full religious service. The second major day of fasting is Tisha B'Av, the day approximately 2500 years ago on which the Babylonians destroyed the first Holy Temple in Jerusalem, as well as on which the Romans destroyed the second Holy Temple in Jerusalem about 2000 years ago, and later after the Bar Kokhba revolt when the Jews were banished from Jerusalem, the day of Tisha B'Av was the one allowed exception. Tisha B'Av ends a three-week mourning period beginning with the fast of the 17th of Tammuz. This is also the day when observant Jews remember the many tragedies which have befallen the Jewish people, including the Holocaust. Tisha B'Av and Yom Kippur are the major fasts and are observed from sunset to the following day's dusk.

The Psalmist states, *ב יגיע כפיה כי תאכל אשפיה וטוב לך: 128:2 When you shall eat of the fruit of your hands, You will be happy and it will be well with you. (NASB)* The Aramaic Targum states, *ב ליעות אידך 128:2 [Happy] the work of your hands, for you will eat [it]; happy are you in this age and you shall have good in the age to come. (EMC)* The psalmist speaks of the fruit of our hands. This when coupled to the fear of the Lord and walking in His ways, the fruit of the hands will be that of righteousness, holiness, justice, and truth. This is clearly the point in the process of Teshuvah which involves a return to the Torah as given to Moshe. Israel will not be redeemed until she returns to the Torah. The circumcised heart for Israel that *Devarim / Deuteronomy 30* talks about is not something that conflicts with the Torah, rather, a circumcised heart and keeping the Torah go hand in hand. Moshe is not the only one who said this. Ezekiel made the same point in chapters 36-37, the prophet says the following:

Ezekiel 36:23-27

36:23 'I will vindicate the holiness of My great name which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. Then the nations will know that I am the Lord,' declares the Lord God, 'when I prove Myself holy among you in their sight. 36:24 'For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands and bring you into your own land. 36:25 'Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. 36:26 'Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 36:27 'I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances. (NASB)

According to Moshe and according to Ezekiel, a new heart and a new spirit for Israel, and the Spirit within us leads us to walk in God's statutes and compels us to be careful to obey his Torah (instructions). The Torah is a blessing and a standard for righteousness in our lives. Why would the Lord God Almighty do away with such a thing? When we change the way we view the Torah, so many passages fall into place. The cycle of Teshuvah definitely involves the return to Torah, just as it was given to Moshe on that day on Sinai in the wilderness. This is how the Psalmist is able to state, *ב יגיע כפיה כי תאכל אשפיה וטוב לך: 128:2 When you shall eat of the fruit of your hands, You will be happy and it will be well with you. (NASB)* The Apostle Paul wrote the Spirit of God living within a person is what produces the fruit of the Spirit. *"But the fruit of*

the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control” (Galatians 5:22-23). This is the kind of fruit characterizing the life of those who have faith in the Messiah Yeshua. We are to be filled with love, we are to have joy, we are to have peace, we are to have patience, we are to be gentle and kind, we are to be filled with goodness, we are to have faith, we are to have meekness, and we are to have temperance. The question is though, what do we find in the average Christian today? Do we find the opposite? Love is the key to everything. This is coupled with self control, love is what holds everything together and why so much emphasis is placed upon love in the Apostolic Writings. It is love that surpasses human understanding and causes a person to be filled with the fullness of God (Ephesians 3:18-19). Love is detailed in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 when Paul wrote, “Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.” Joy is the emotion that brings great delight or happiness, it is what brings satisfaction in life and to the heart. Joy gives strength just as the author of Hebrews wrote in 12:2 “Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Notice how suffering is endured when we have the future expectation of joy and peace. The Lord gives us peace of heart which enables us to endure and persevere through the tough times. When we are living in the flesh, doing the works of the flesh, we are rebelling against God’s commands. When we come to our senses, perform Teshuvah, and seek God’s forgiveness, we are forgiven and we are given peace. The peace of God is not achieved through laying around on vacation, entertainment, drugs, alcohol, sex or wealth. The spiritual fruit of peace results from being justified by faith and applying God’s Word to our lives. Romans 5:1 states, “Therefore, since we have been justified [made right; declared innocent or guiltless] through faith [in what Christ accomplished for us on the cross], we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” It is only when we put our faith into practice, with the help of the Lord, do these things come to be, and fruit is produced in our lives.

It is because of these things, love, joy, and peace, the psalmist states saying, **ג אשתך | כגפן פריה ברכתי**, **28:3** *Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine Within your house, Your children like olive plants Around your table.* **128:4** *Behold, for thus shall the man be blessed Who fears the Lord. (NASB)* The one who fears the Lord will take time to be with his family spending time in relationship and taking time to be with wife and children. The blessing of the Lord comes in many forms, to work in the hearts of men, women, and children, to be fruitful, a delight, and as the psalm describes, olive plants around the table. We maintain peace with God by believing and trusting Him and by not sinning. We maintain peace with our fellow man by not allowing strife to be a part of our relationships with other people, especially in our marriages. We maintain peace with ourselves by being happy with who we are the way God made us. This takes patient endurance on our part in the midst of injury, trouble, or provocation. For example, when someone consistently tries to make us angry, picking on us, we just let it go and maintain self control. This is what characterizes the Lord God our Father in heaven, just as we read in *Shemot / Exodus 34:5-7*.

Shemot / Exodus 34:5-7

34:5 The Lord descended in the cloud and stood there with him as he called upon the name of the Lord. 34:6 Then the Lord passed by in front of him and proclaimed, ‘The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; 34:7 who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations.’ (NASB)

ה וירד יהוה בענן ויתמצב עמו שם ויקרא בשם יהוה: ו ויעבר יהוה | על-פניו ויקרא יהוה |
יהוה אל רחום וחנון ארך אפים ורב-חסד ואמת: ז ניצר חסד לאלפים נשא עון ופשע וחסא
ינקה לא ינקה פקד | עון אבות על-בנים ועל-בני בנים על-שלישים ועל-רבעים:

This long suffering enables us to be emotionally strong and forgive others just as Paul wrote in *Colossians 3:13 bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. (NASB)* This long suffering with others is coupled with gentleness, of being moderate, kind, and not harsh towards others. Paul again illustrates this in *1 Thessalonians 2:4-13*.

1 Thessalonians 2:4-13

2:4 but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who examines our hearts. 2:5 For we never came with flattering speech, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed God is witness 2:6 nor did we seek glory from men, either from you or from others, even though as apostles of Christ we might have asserted our authority. 2:7 But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing mother tenderly cares for her own children. 2:8 Having so fond an affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us. 2:9 For you recall, brethren, our labor and hardship, how working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. 2:10 You are witnesses, and so is God, how devoutly and uprightly and blamelessly we behaved toward you believers; 2:11 just as you know how we were exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father would his own children, 2:12 so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory. 2:13 For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe. (NASB)

We are called to goodness, moral excellence, and virtue. The Lord God of Israel provides us with this kind of goodness put into practice as He treats us with long suffering, patience, and goodness each day. It is the goodness and mercy of God that leads us to repentance, and this is why we are called to be good towards others. Our bearing the testimony of God will have no power if we are not kind towards others. This is how Yeshua explained we are called to be a light in a dark world, and we must make up our minds that we are going to shine the truth of God into this world. (*Matthew 5:15, Luke 11:33*) All of these things are examples of faithfulness, which is the act of being faithful. Doing what Scripture says we are to do. Webster’s Dictionary defines faithful as “*maintaining allegiance; constant; loyal; marked by or showing a strong sense of duty or responsibility; conscientious; accurate; reliable; exact.*” Yeshua said in *Matthew 7:20* “*Wherefore by their fruits you shall know them.*”

The Psalm concludes saying, הַ יְבָרְכֶה יְהוָה מִצִּיּוֹן וְרֵאָה בְּטוֹב יְרוּשָׁלַם כָּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ: וּ וְרֵאָה-בְּנִים לְבָנֶיךָ, 128:5 *The Lord bless you from Zion, And may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life. 128:6 Indeed, may you see your children’s children. Peace be upon Israel! (NASB)* The Aramaic Targum states, הַ יְבָרְכִינְךָ יְהוָה מִצִּיּוֹן וְתַחֲמִי בְטוֹבָא דִירוּשָׁלַם כָּל יוֹמֵי חַיֶּיךָ: וּ וְתַחֲמִי בְנִין לְבָנֶיךָ, 128:5 *The Lord will bless you from Zion, and you will see the welfare of Jerusalem all the days of your life. 128:6 And you will see the sons of your sons. Peace be upon Israel. (EMC)* The blessing of children provides us with the future expectation of the Lord’s blessing continuing on as we pass His truth and salvation to future generations. The commentary Malbim and Metzudat David have the following to say concerning *Tehillim / Psalms 128:5*.

Malbim on Tehillim / Psalms 128:5 Part 1

May the Lord bless you from Zion – You will yet merit to be blessed from Zion which is the blessing of the wholeness of Israel that comes out from Zion where the Lord commanded blessing for the whole people. You will receive this blessing from the whole and you will also

strive for the good of the whole. and see the good of Jerusalem – to see the good of Jerusalem and the success of the whole. Through this all the days of your life will be special, because you will devote all your days to the good of the whole, to see their happiness and good:

Metzudat David on Tehillim / Psalms 128:5 Part 1

May the Lord bless you – Because the Lord will bless from Zion the source of influx and all blessings:

The rabbis speak of Zion as being the place through which blessings flow from the Lord God in heaven based upon what the psalmist is stating in *Tehillim / Psalms 128*. The blessing of the Lord comes in many forms, to work in the hearts of men, women, and children, to be fruitful, and a delight. The Midrash Tanchuman Bubar Nasso 29:1 states the following:

Midrash Tanchuma Bubar Nasso 29:1

(Numb. 7:2:) THAT THE PRINCES OF ISRAEL DREW NEAR TO MAKE AN OFFERING. You find <the following>: when Moses proclaimed and said (in Exod. 35:5): TAKE FROM AMONG YOU AN OFFERING <FOR THE LORD>, what did the princes do?126 They said: Moses did not know <enough> to tells us that the Tabernacle was being made. What did they do? They did not give a freewill offering. They said: These people are making the Tabernacle. Now he is telling us to give a freewill offering! The Holy One said: By your life, you should know that I do not need you (princes). What is written there (in Exod. 36:3)? AND THEY (i.e., the children of Israel) [STILL] BROUGHT FREEWILL OFFERINGS UNTO HIM IN THE MORNING, IN THE MORNING.127 R. Johanan said: For two mornings they brought all the supplies (mela'khah) for the Tabernacle, and they were more than enough, as stated (in Exod. 36:7): FOR THEY HAD SUFFICIENT SUPPLIES (mela'khah), [MORE THAN ENOUGH FOR ALL THE WORK (mela'khah) TO MAKE IT]. (Exod. 39:43:) WHEN MOSES SAW ALL THE WORK (mela'khah), [...; THEN MOSES BLESSED THEM].128 And with what blessing did he bless them? He said to them: May the Divine Presence dwell in the work of your hands. In this world Moses has blessed them; but in the world to come, the Holy One will bless them, as stated (in Ps. 128:5–6): THE LORD WILL BLESS YOU FROM ZION. <HE IS> MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH. [MAY YOU SEE THE PROSPERITY OF JERUSALEM ALL THE DAYS OF YOUR LIFE,] AND MAY YOU SEE YOUR CHILDREN'S CHILDREN. PEACE BE UPON ISRAEL!

The Midrash reiterates the idea that how we live and what we do each day should be for the glory of God. The rabbis say this is why Moshe blessed the people saying “*May the Divine Presence dwell in the work of your hands.*” The Lord works in our lives to do these things, to move in our hearts such that the light of God’s righteousness will shine forth from us. These things describe the Lord God who moves in our hearts for the purpose of our being faithful to His word. 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,

— Tehillim / Psalms 128 | ספר תהילים קכח —

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