

Tehillim / Psalms 136 | ספר תהילים קלו

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Suffering for the Sake of the Lord

א הודו ליהוה כי-טוב In this week's study from *Tehillim / Psalms 136:1-26*, the psalm opens saying *136:1 Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. 136:2 Give thanks to the God of gods, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. 136:3 Give thanks to the Lord of lords, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. (NASB)* Note how the lovingkindness (Grace) of God that is everlasting is repeated on every line of the psalms. The Psalmist continues saying, *ד לעשה נפלאות גדלות לבדו פי לעולם חסדו: ה לעשה* *136:4 To Him who alone does great wonders, For His lovingkindness is everlasting; 136:5 To Him who made the heavens with skill, For His lovingkindness is everlasting; (NASB)* In the Psalm, David praises the Lord listing the miracles He has done, he is the creator (136:7), he made the heavens, the sun and the moon (136:8-9), He struck the Egyptians killing their first born (136:10), He brought a nation out of another nation (136:11), He performs miracles on behalf of His people (136:12-14), He overthrew the Egyptian army (136:15), He led Israel through the wilderness (136:16), and He defeated great kings and armies (136:17-20). The Lord is powerful and He has established Himself as such in the midst of the nations defeating those who come against His people and given what they own to His people. The Psalm concludes saying, *כא ונתן ארצם לנחלה פי לעולם חסדו: כב נחלה לישראל עבדו פי לעולם חסדו: כג שבשפלבנו זכר-לנו פי לעולם חסדו: כד ויפרקנו מצרינו פי לעולם חסדו: כה נתן לחם לכל-בשר פי לעולם חסדו: כו הודו לאל השמים פי לעולם חסדו: 136:21 And gave their land as a heritage, For His lovingkindness is everlasting, 136:22 Even a heritage to Israel His servant, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. 136:23 Who remembered us in our low estate, For His lovingkindness is everlasting, 136:24 And has rescued us from our adversaries, For His lovingkindness is everlasting; 136:25 Who gives food to all flesh, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. 136:26 Give thanks to the God of heaven, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. (NASB)* The mercies of God are eternal, this psalm declares the glory of God within the context of His mercy and grace. This is illustrated in how the Lord God Almighty provides food for both the righteous and the unrighteous which is reminiscent of what Yeshua said in *Matthew 5:45*.

עברית	Hebrew	ארמי	Aramaic	ελληνικός	Greek
ספר תהילים פרק קלו	ספר תהילים פרק קלו	ספר טוביה פרק קלו	ספר טוביה פרק קלו	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 136	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 136
א הודו ליהוה כי-טוב פי לעולם חסדו: ב הודו לאלהי האלהים פי לעולם חסדו: ג הודו לא-דני האדנים פי לעולם חסדו: ד לעשה נפלאות גדלות לבדו פי לעולם חסדו: ה לעשה השמים בתבונה פי לעולם חסדו:	א הודו ליהוה כי-טוב פי לעולם חסדו: ב הודו לאלהי האלהים פי לעולם חסדו: ג הודו לא-דני האדנים פי לעולם חסדו: ד לעשה נפלאות גדלות לבדו פי לעולם חסדו: ה לעשה השמים בתבונה פי לעולם חסדו:	א שבחו קדם יהוה ארום טב ארום לעלם טוביה: ב שבחו לאלהי אלהי ארום לעלם טוביה: ג שבחו למרי מריא ארום לעלם טוביה: ד לעבד פרישן רברבן בלחודיה ארום לעלם טוביה: ה לעבד שמיא בסוכלתנו ארום לעלם טוביה:	א שבחו קדם יהוה ארום טב ארום לעלם טוביה: ב שבחו לאלהי אלהי ארום לעלם טוביה: ג שבחו למרי מריא ארום לעלם טוביה: ד לעבד פרישן רברבן בלחודיה ארום לעלם טוביה: ה לעבד שמיא בסוכלתנו ארום לעלם טוביה:	136:1 αλληλουια εξομολογεϊσθε τῷ κυρίῳ ὅτι χρηστός ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ 136:2 εξομολογεϊσθε τῷ θεῷ τῶν θεῶν ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ 136:3 εξομολογεϊσθε τῷ κυρίῳ τῶν κυρίων ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ 136:4 τῷ ποιῶντι θαυμάσια μεγάλα μόνῳ ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ 136:5 τῷ ποιήσαντι τοὺς οὐρανοὺς ἐν συνέσει ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ	136:1 αλληλουια εξομολογεϊσθε τῷ κυρίῳ ὅτι χρηστός ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ 136:2 εξομολογεϊσθε τῷ θεῷ τῶν θεῶν ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ 136:3 εξομολογεϊσθε τῷ κυρίῳ τῶν κυρίων ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ 136:4 τῷ ποιῶντι θαυμάσια μεγάλα μόνῳ ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ 136:5 τῷ ποιήσαντι τοὺς οὐρανοὺς ἐν συνέσει ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ

<p>ו לְרַקַּע הָאָרֶץ עַל-הַמַּיִם כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסָדוֹ: ז לְעֵשֶׂה אוֹרִים גְּדֹלִים כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסָדוֹ: ח אֶת- הַשָּׁמַשׁ לְמַמְשָׁלֶת בַּיּוֹם כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסָדוֹ: ט אֶת-הַיָּרֵחַ וְכּוֹכָבִים לְ- מַמְשָׁלוֹת בַּלַּיְלָה כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסָדוֹ: י לְמַפְּה מַצָּרִים בְּבִכּוֹרֵיהֶם כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסָדוֹ: יא וַיּוֹצֵא יִשְׂרָאֵל מִתּוֹכָם כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסָדוֹ: יב בְּיַד חֲזָקָה וּבְיָרֹעַ נְטוּיָה כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסָדוֹ: יג לְגִזְרֵם-סוּף לְגִזְרֵם כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסָדוֹ: יד וְהָעֶבֶר יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּתוֹכוֹ כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסָדוֹ: טו וַיַּעַר פְּרָעָה וַחֲיִלוֹ בְּיַם-סוּף כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסָדוֹ: טז לְמוֹלִיף עָמוּ בַמַּדְבָּר כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסָדוֹ: יז לְמַפְּה מְלָכִים גְּדֹלִים כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסָדוֹ: יח וַיַּהַרְג מְלָכִים אֲדִירִים כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסָדוֹ: יט לְסִיחוֹן מְלִיךָ הָאֲמֹרִי כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסָדוֹ: כ וְלִ- עוֹג מְלִיךָ הַבְּשָׁן כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסָדוֹ: כא וַנָּתַן אֲרָצָם לְנַחֲלָה כִּי לְעוֹ- לָם חֲסָדוֹ: כב גַּחֲלָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל עֲבָדוֹ כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסָדוֹ: כג שָׁבַר שִׁפְלָנוּ זָכַר-לָנוּ כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסָדוֹ: כד וַיַּפְּרֶקְנוּ מַצָּרֵינוּ כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסָדוֹ: כה נָתַן לָחֵם לְכָל-בְּשׂוֹר כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסָדוֹ: כו הוֹדוּ לְאֵל הַשָּׁמַיִם כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסָדוֹ:</p>	<p>ו לרדיד למרדיד ארעא עלוי מיא ארום לעלם טוביה: ז לעבר נהורין רברבין ארום לעלם טוביה: ח ית שימשא למשלט ביממא ארום לעלם טוביה: ט ית סיהרא וכוכביא למשלט בליליא ארום לעלם טוביה: י למחי מצראי במכתשין קטל בוכריא ארום לעלם טוביה: יא ואפיק ישראל פריי קין מביניהון ארום לעלם טוביה: יב באידא תקיפא ובדרע מרממא ארום לעלם טוביה: יג לצלח ימא דסוף לצילוחין ארום לעלם טוביה: יד ואעבר ישראל במציעיה ארום לעלם טוביה: טו ושניק פרעה וחילותיה בימא דסוף ארום לעלם טוביה: טז למהליך עמיה במדברא ארום לעלם טוביה: יז למחי מלכין רברבין ארום לעלם טוביה: יח וקטל מלכין גיותנין ארום לעלם טוביה: יט לסיחון מלכא אמוראה ארום לעלם טוביה: כ ול- עוג מלכא דמתנן דבותנן ארום לעלם טוביה: כא ויהב ארעהון לאחסנא ארום לעלם טוביה: כב אחסנתא לישראל עבדיה ארום לעלם טוביה: כג באתמככותנא באתמסכנותא דכר לנא קיימיה ארום לעלם טוביה: כד ופריקנא מן מעיקנא ארום לעלם טו- ביה: כה דיהב מזוניה לכל בסרא ארום לעלם טוביה: כו שבחו לאלה שמיא ארום לעלם טוביה:</p>	<p>136:6 τῷ στερεώσαντι τὴν γῆν ἐπὶ τῶν ὕδατων ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ 136:7 τῷ ποιήσαντι φῶτα μεγάλα μόνω ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ 136:8 τὸν ἥλιον εἰς ἐξουσίαν τῆς ἡμέρας ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ 136:9 τὴν σελήνην καὶ τὰ ἄστρα εἰς ἐξουσίαν τῆς νυκτός ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ 136:10 τῷ πατάξαντι Αἴγυπτον σὺν τοῖς πρωτοτόκοις αὐτῶν ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ 136:11 καὶ ἐξαγαγόντι τὸν Ἰσραὴλ ἐκ μέσου αὐτῶν ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ 136:12 ἐν χειρὶ κραταιᾷ καὶ ἐν βραχίονι ὑψηλῷ ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ 136:13 τῷ καταδιελόντι τὴν ἐρυθρὰν θάλασσαν εἰς διαιρέσεις ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ 136:14 καὶ διαγαγόντι τὸν Ἰσραὴλ διὰ μέσου αὐτῆς ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ 136:15 καὶ ἐκτινάξαντι Φαραὼ καὶ τὴν δύναμιν αὐτοῦ εἰς θάλασσαν ἐρυθρὰν ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ 136:16 τῷ διαγαγόντι τὸν λαὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ τῷ ἐξαγαγόντι ὕδωρ ἐκ πέτρας ἀκροτόμου ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ 136:17 τῷ πατάξαντι βασιλεῖς μεγάλους ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ 136:18 καὶ ἀποκτείναντι βασιλεῖς κραταιούς ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ 136:19 τὸν Σηὼν βασιλέα τῶν Ἀμορραίων ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ 136:20 καὶ τὸν Ὠγ βασιλέα τῆς Βασαν ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ 136:21 καὶ δόντι τὴν γῆν αὐτῶν κληρονομίαν ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ 136:22 κληρονομίαν Ἰσραὴλ δοῦλω αὐτοῦ ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ 136:23 ὅτι ἐν τῇ ταπεινώσει ἡμῶν ἐμνήσθη ἡμῶν ὁ κύριος ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ 136:24 καὶ ἐλυτρώσατο ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῶν ἐχθρῶν ἡμῶν ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ 136:25 ὁ διδούς τροφὴν πάσῃ σαρκὶ ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ 136:26 ἐξομολογεῖσθε τῷ θεῷ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ ἐξομολογεῖσθε τῷ κυρίῳ τῶν κυρίων ὅτι εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ</p>
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Tehillim / Psalms 136

136:1 Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. 136:2 Give thanks to the God of gods, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. 136:3 Give thanks to the Lord of lords, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. 136:4 To Him who alone does great wonders, For His lovingkindness is everlasting; 136:5 To Him who made the heavens with skill, For His lovingkindness is everlasting; 136:6 To Him who spread out the earth above the waters, For His lovingkindness is everlasting; 136:7 To Him who made the great lights, For His lovingkindness is everlasting; 136:8 The sun to rule by day, For His lovingkindness is everlasting, 136:9 The moon and stars to rule by night, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. 136:10 To Him who smote the Egyptians in their firstborn, For His lovingkindness is everlasting, 136:11 And brought Israel out from their midst, For His lovingkindness is everlasting, 136:12 With a strong hand and an outstretched arm, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. 136:13 To Him who divided the Red Sea asunder, For His lovingkindness is everlasting, 136:14 And made Israel pass through the midst of it, For His lovingkindness is everlasting; (NASB)

Toviyah / Psalms 136

136:1 Sing praise in the presence of the Lord, for he is good, for his goodness is forever. 136:2 Sing praise to the God of gods, for his goodness is forever. 136:3 Sing praise to the Lord of lords, for his goodness is forever. 136:4 To him who did great wonders by himself, for his goodness is forever. 136:5 To him who made the heavens by insight, for his goodness is forever. 136:6 To him who made firm the earth on the waters, for his goodness is forever. 136:7 To him who made great lights, for his goodness is forever. 136:8 The sun to rule by day, for his goodness is forever. 136:9 The moon and stars to rule by night, for his goodness is forever. 136:10 To him who smites the Egyptians with plagues, killing the firstborn, for his goodness is forever. 136:11 And brought out Israel redeemed from among them, for his goodness is forever. 136:12 With a mighty hand and upraised arm, for his goodness is forever. 136:13 To him who split the Sea of Reeds into pieces, for his goodness is forever. 136:14 And made Israel cross over in the middle of it, for his goodness is forever. (EMC)

Psalmoi / Psalms 136

Alleluia. 136:1 Give thanks to the Lord: for he is good: for his mercy endures for ever. 136:2 Give thanks to the God of gods; for his mercy endures for ever. 136:3 Give thanks to the Lord of lords: for his mercy endures for ever. 136:4 To him who along has wrought great wonders: for his mercy endures for ever. 136:5 To him who made the heavens by understanding; for his mercy endures for ever. 136:6 To him who established the earth on the waters; for his mercy endures for ever. 136:7 To him who alone made great lights; for his mercy endures for ever. 136:8 The sun to rule by day; for his mercy endures for ever. 136:9 The moon and the stars to rule the night; for his mercy endures for ever. 136:10 To him who smote Egypt with their first-born; for his mercy endures for ever. 136:11 And brought Israel out of the midst of them; for his mercy endures for ever: 136:12 with a strong hand, and a high arm: for his mercy endures for ever. 136:13 To him who divided the Red Sea into parts: for his mercy endures for ever: 136:14 and brought Israel through the midst of it: for his mercy endures for ever: (LXX)

<p>Tehillim / Psalms 136 136:15 But He overthrew Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. 136:16 To Him who led His people through the wilderness, For His lovingkindness is everlasting; 136:17 To Him who smote great kings, For His lovingkindness is everlasting, 136:18 And slew mighty kings, For His lovingkindness is everlasting: 136:19 Sihon, king of the Amorites, For His lovingkindness is everlasting, 136:20 And Og, king of Bashan, For His lovingkindness is everlasting, 136:21 And gave their land as a heritage, For His lovingkindness is everlasting, 136:22 Even a heritage to Israel His servant, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. 136:23 Who remembered us in our low estate, For His lovingkindness is everlasting, 136:24 And has rescued us from our adversaries, For His lovingkindness is everlasting; 136:25 Who gives food to all flesh, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. 136:26 Give thanks to the God of heaven, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. (NASB)</p>	<p>Toviyah / Psalms 136 136:15 And choked Pharaoh and his forces in the Sea of Reeds, for his goodness is forever. 136:16 To him who led his people in the wilderness, for his goodness is forever. 136:17 To him who smites great kings, for his goodness is forever. 136:18 And slew proud kings, for his goodness is forever. 136:19 Namely, Sihon the Amorite king, for his goodness is forever. 136:20 And Og, king of Mathnan, for his goodness is forever. 136:21 And gave their land as an inheritance, for his goodness is forever. 136:22 An inheritance to Israel his servant, for his goodness is forever. 136:23 In our humiliation he remembered his covenant with us, for his goodness is forever. 136:24 And redeemed us from our oppressors, for his goodness is forever. 136:25 Who gives his food to all flesh, for his goodness is forever. 136:26 Sing praise to the God of heaven, for his goodness is forever. (EMC)</p>	<p>Psalmoi / Psalms 136 136:15 and overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea: for his mercy endures for ever. 136:16 To him who led his people through the wilderness: for his mercy endures for ever. 136:17 To him who smote great kings: for his mercy endures for ever: 136:18 and slew mighty kings; for his mercy endures for ever: 136:19 Seon king of the Amorites: for his mercy endures for ever: 136:20 and Og king of Basan: for his mercy endures for ever: 136:21 and gave their land for an inheritance: for his mercy endures for ever: 136:22 even an inheritance to Israel his servant: for his mercy endures for ever. 136:23 For the Lord remembered us in our low estate; for his mercy endures for ever: 136:24 and redeemed us from our enemies; for his mercy endures for ever. 136:25 Who gives food to all flesh; for his mercy endures for ever. 136:26 Give thanks to the God of heaven; for his mercy endures for ever. (LXX)</p>
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א הודו ליהנהּ כּי-טוב הודו לַאֲלֹהֵי הַאֱלֹהִים כּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ: ב הודו לַאֲדֹנָי הָאֲדֹנִים כּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ: 136:1 Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. 136:2 Give thanks to the God of gods, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. 136:3 Give thanks to the Lord of lords, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. (NASB) Note how the lovingkindness (Grace) of God that is everlasting is repeated on every line of *Tehillim / Psalms 136*. Based upon this Psalm one gives thanks to the Lord, giving praise to the Lord for the mercies He shows us each day. According to Paul's letter to Timothy, the reading of the psalms was to have an important role in the worship of the Ekklesia (*1 Timothy 4:13*). Based upon Paul's letters to the Corinthians (*1 Corinthians 14:26 What is the outcome then, brethren? When you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification. NASB*), to the Ephesians (*Ephesians 5:19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; NASB*) and to the Colossians (*Colossians*

3:16 *Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. NASB*), we can conclude that the psalms were an important part of the corporate worship of the Lord. The Psalms were undoubtedly included in the broader sense of corporate and individual worship. In the history of the church, the Psalms were used by the early fathers who often chose to write commentaries on the Book of the Psalms (see Chrysostom and Augustine). The reason this is so is because the book of the Tehillim / Psalms speak to us even today. These Scriptures are divinely inspired which is how they continue to speak to us today. The Psalms function as a prayer book providing us a pattern for how to worship and seek the Lord for help. When Paul spoke of the psalms in his letters to the Corinthians, Ephesians, and Colossians, he was not only speaking of the Book of the Psalms, but also of using the psalms as a pattern for worship and seeking the Lord. Note that David wrote the following:

Tehillim / Psalms 22:2-3

22:2 O my God, I cry by day, but You do not answer; And by night, but I have no rest. 22:3 Yet You are holy, O You who are enthroned upon the praises of Israel. (NASB)

David pictures the Lord God in heaven as being enthroned upon the praises of His people. Now if the Lord God sits enthroned upon our praises, how glorious would that throne be? If the Lord God were seen enthroned upon the praises of our hearts, how glorious would that appear? This should be a sobering thought for each one of us.

The Torah speaks of the Tabernacle and the mercy seat upon which the Lord would rest His presence. The Ark of the Covenant would have blood sprinkled upon it once a year (Yom Kippur) at which time Israel would fast, offer up prayers, praises, and blood sacrifices. When the Ark was moved from place to place, notice the poles on either side of the ark required more than one man to carry. This illustrates for us that the presence of God was meant for more than one man. It was never meant for only one man to carry the presence of God or to set an atmosphere of worship. At this time (Yom Kippur) the people would come together in prayer and fasting all with the same heart to worship the Lord who is enthroned upon our praises. This illustrates for us something on the importance of the Lord God sitting enthroned by our praises. This throne is the exalting of the Lord above all others. We are told at a future time, every knee will bow and every tongue confess the Lord is God over all, and of His Messiah Yeshua as the one in whom the Lord has brought our salvation and redemption. The Psalms causes us to understand the way we are to worship the Lord, and how it is done in heaven.

The Psalmist continues saying, *ד לַעֲשֵׂה נִפְלְאוֹת גְּדֹלוֹת לְבָדּוֹ כִּי לַעֲוֹלָם חֶסֶדּוֹ: ה לַעֲשֵׂה הַשְּׁמַיִם בְּתַבּוּנָה, 136:4 To Him who alone does great wonders, For His lovingkindness is everlasting; 136:5 To Him who made the heavens with skill, For His lovingkindness is everlasting; (NASB)* One of the foundational truths of the Torah is that the Lord God Almighty is the creator of all that exists. Isaiah the prophet states in *Isaiah 40:28*, “Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom.” We are told in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth (*Bereshit / Genesis 1:1*). He spoke them into being (*Bereshit / Genesis 1:3, 1:6, 1:9*). The Lord started from nothing and created all that we know and those things that we do not know. He is not limited to our understanding, or by time, space, or matter. As creator, He was the designer of all things just as it is written in *Tehillim / Psalms 104:24* “How many are your works, LORD! In wisdom you made them all.” When we say that the Lord God is the Creator, we are crediting Him with singleness, that He alone is the Creator, there is only one God. Because He created everything, the conclusion is that everything belongs to Him (*Shemot / Exodus 19:5, Tehillim / Psalm 50:12*). As human beings, we are also His, and He has the right to rule over us. He gives us the freedom to choose Him or reject Him. The wise person bows before the Creator and willingly submits himself to the One who truly knows how we are made (*Tehillim / Psalm 78:39, 103:14, Romans 9:20*).

The Psalmist continues saying the following:

Tehillim / Psalms 136:6-20

136:6 To Him who spread out the earth above the waters, For His lovingkindness is everlasting; 136:7 To Him who made the great lights, For His lovingkindness is everlasting: 136:8 The sun to rule by day, For His lovingkindness is everlasting, 136:9 The moon and stars to rule by night, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. 136:10 To Him who smote the Egyptians in their firstborn, For His lovingkindness is everlasting, 136:11 And brought Israel out from their midst, For His lovingkindness is everlasting, 136:12 With a strong hand and an outstretched arm, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. 136:13 To Him who divided the Red Sea asunder, For His lovingkindness is everlasting, 136:14 And made Israel pass through the midst of it, For His lovingkindness is everlasting; 136:15 But He overthrew Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. 136:16 To Him who led His people through the wilderness, For His lovingkindness is everlasting; 136:17 To Him who smote great kings, For His lovingkindness is everlasting, 136:18 And slew mighty kings, For His lovingkindness is everlasting: 136:19 Sihon, king of the Amorites, For His lovingkindness is everlasting, 136:20 And Og, king of Bashan, For His lovingkindness is everlasting, (NASB)

ו לרקע הארץ על-המים פי לעולם חסדו: ז לעשה אורים גדלים פי לעולם חסדו: ח את-השמש לממשלת ביום פי לעולם חסדו: ט את-הירח וכוכבים לממשלות בלילה פי לעולם חסדו: י למכה מצרים בכוריהם פי לעולם חסדו: יא ויוצא ישראל מתוכם פי לעולם חסדו: יב ביד חזקה ובין רוע נטויה פי לעולם חסדו: יג לגר-ים-סוף לגגרים פי לעולם חסדו: יד והעביר ישראל בתוכו פי לעולם חסדו: טו ונער פרעה וחילו בים-סוף פי לעולם חסדו: טז למוליה עמו במדבר פי לעולם חסדו: יז למכה מלכים גדלים פי לעולם חסדו: יח ויהרג מלכים אדירים פי לעולם חסדו: יט לסיחון מלך האמרי פי לעולם חסדו: כ ולעוג מלך הבשן פי לעולם חסדו:

Toviyah / Psalms 136:6-20

136:6 To him who made firm the earth on the waters, for his goodness is forever. 136:7 To him who made great lights, for his goodness is forever. 136:8 The sun to rule by day, for his goodness is forever. 136:9 The moon and stars to rule by night, for his goodness is forever. 136:10 To him who smites the Egyptians with plagues, killing the firstborn, for his goodness is forever. 136:11 And brought out Israel redeemed from among them, for his goodness is forever. 136:12 With a mighty hand and upraised arm, for his goodness is forever. 136:13 To him who split the Sea of Reeds into pieces, for his goodness is forever. 136:14 And made Israel cross over in the middle of it, for his goodness is forever. 136:15 And choked Pharaoh and his forces in the Sea of Reeds, for his goodness is forever. 136:16 To him who led his people in the wilderness, for his goodness is forever. 136:17 To him who smites great kings, for his goodness is forever. 136:18 And slew proud kings, for his goodness is forever. 136:19 Namely, Sihon the Amorite king, for his goodness is forever. 136:20 And Og, king of Mathnan, for his goodness is forever. (EMC)

ו לרדיד למרדיד ארעא עלוי מיא ארום לעלם טוביה: ז לעבר נהורין רברבין ארום לעלם טוביה: ח ית שימשא למשלט ביממא ארום לעלם טוביה: ט ית סיהרא וכוכביא למשלט בליליא ארום לעלם טוביה: י למחי מצראי במכתשין קטל בוכריא ארום לעלם טוביה: יא ואפיק ישראל פריקין מביניהון ארום לעלם טוביה: יב באידא תקיפא ובדרע מרממא ארום לעלם טוביה: יג לצלח ימא דסוף לצילוחין ארום לעלם טוביה: יד ואעבר ישראל במציעיה ארום לעלם טוביה: טו ושניק פרעה וחילותיה בימא דסוף ארום לעלם טוביה: טז למהליך עמיה במדברא ארום לעלם טוביה: יז למחי מלכין רברבין ארום לעלם טוביה: יח וקטל מלכין גיותנן ארום לעלם טוביה: יט לסיחון

מלכא אמוראה ארום לעלם טוביה: כ ולעוג מלכא דמתנן דבותנן ארום לעלם טוביה:

In the Psalm, David praises the Lord listing the miracles He has done, he is the creator (136:7), he made the heavens, the sun and the moon (136:8-9), He struck the Egyptians killing their first born (136:10), He brought a nation out of another nation (136:11), He performs miracles on behalf of His people (136:12-14), He overthrew the Egyptian army (136:15), He led Israel through the wilderness (136:16), and He defeated great kings and armies (136:17-20). The Lord is powerful and He has established Himself as such in the midst of the nations defeating those who come against His people and giving what they own to His people. In the days of Abraham, we are told that both Sarah and Abraham were getting old and Sarah was barren. The Lord told Abraham in Parashat Vayera that Sarah would be the mother of Abraham's child. He would be a child of promise. Upon hearing this Sarah laughed. When Sarah laughed, the Lord spoke to Abraham in the following way:

Bereshit / Genesis 18:13-14

18:13 And the Lord said to Abraham, 'Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I indeed bear a child, when I am so old?' 18:14 'Is anything too difficult for the Lord? At the appointed time I will return to you, at this time next year, and Sarah will have a son.' (NASB)

The Lord is powerful and able to do anything, even to the strengthening of Sarah's body to become pregnant and have a child. When God rescued the nation Israel from bondage in Egypt, He led them into the wilderness, through the Red Sea, to the Mountain of Sinai, and even the giving of the manna, the miraculous provision of bread from heaven. The people however began to grumble because they could no longer enjoy the variety of foods they had eaten in Egypt. In response to their grumbling, the Lord God promised to give all of the people a diet of meat for an entire month. The Lord had promised that He would provide this multitude of people, and Moshe asks how that is possible.

Bamidbar / Numbers 11:21-22

11:21 But Moses said, 'The people, among whom I am, are 600,000 on foot; yet You have said, 'I will give them meat, so that they may eat for a whole month.' 11:22 'Should flocks and herds be slaughtered for them, to be sufficient for them? Or should all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, to be sufficient for them?' (NASB)

The Lord's response is found in the next verse:

Bamidbar / Numbers 11:23

11:23 The Lord said to Moses, 'Is the Lord's power limited? Now you shall see whether My word will come true for you or not.' (NASB, כג ויאמר יהוה אל-מִשֶׁה הַיָּד יְהוָה תִּקְצָר עֲתָה, (תראָה הַיְקָרָה דְבָרֵי אֱם-לֹא:

The response is clear, the Lord asks whether his hand is short (תִּקְצָר) or limited? God's response is that Moshe will see whether the Word of God will come true or not. This speaks to what we read in the Scriptures, "But our God is in the heavens; He does whatever He pleases." (Tehillim / Psalm 115:3) "Ah Lord GOD! Behold, Thou hast made the heavens and the earth by Thy great power and by Thine outstretched arm! Nothing is too difficult for Thee." (Jeremiah 32:17) "And looking upon [them] Jesus said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." (Matthew 19:26) "The LORD of hosts has sworn saying, "Surely, just as I have intended so it has happened, and just as I have planned so it will stand, to break Assyria in My land, and I will trample him on My mountains. Then his yoke will be removed from them, and his burden removed from their shoulder. This is the plan devised against the whole earth; and this is the hand that is stretched out against all the nations. For the LORD of hosts has planned, and

who can frustrate [it]? And as for His stretched-out hand, who can turn it back?” (Isaiah 14:21-26) The earliest manifestation of the Lord God’s power is seen in the creation of the world in which we live, “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.” (Romans 1:20) The creation itself is a testimony to the power of God. We are called to believe in that testimony, the Lord is the creator and He is powerful. When the Lord came to Abraham, He promised him and his wife a child. The greatest test of faith Abraham faced was when the Lord called him to take his son, the son in whom all Abraham’s hopes rested, and sacrifice him on Mount Moriah (*Bereshit / Genesis 22:1-19*). Here, Abraham set his heart to obey God, and ancient commentators tells us clearly how Abraham was convinced of the power of God to resurrect his son from the dead:

Hebrews 11:17-19

11:17 By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son 11:18 it was he to whom it was said, ‘In Isaac your descendants shall be called.’ 11:19 He considered that God is able to raise people even from the dead, from which he also received him back as a type. (NASB)

The point is what the commentator in Hebrews writes that “God is able” to do whatever He wants to. Abraham’s belief in the power of God (that He is able) to raise the dead led to his obedience to God’s command. Abraham had a resurrection faith, just as we are to have (see *Romans 10:9*). Abraham’s growth in his faith was paralleled to his increasing belief in the power of God, was to the extent that the Lord had the power to give two people who are as good as dead a child (*Romans 4:18-21*). If this is possible, then even raising a son from the dead is also possible. Abraham, who began with little faith grew to have great faith in the power of God. God’s Word is given to us so that we too will have that kind of faith.

The Psalm concludes saying, כַּא וְנָתַן אֶרְצָם לְיִתְחַלֵּה בִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדְךָ: כַּב נִחַלְתָּ לְיִשְׂרָאֵל עֲבָדְךָ בִּי לְעוֹלָם, חֶסֶדְךָ: כַּג שְׁבַשְׁפָּלְנוּ וְזָכַר-לָנוּ בִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדְךָ: כַּד וַיִּפְרֹקֵנוּ מִצָּרֵינוּ בִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדְךָ: כַּה נָתַן לָחֶם לְכָל-בָּשָׂר: חֶסֶדְךָ: כַּו הוֹדוּ לְאֵל הַשָּׁמַיִם בִּי לְעוֹלָם חֶסֶדְךָ: חֶסֶדְךָ: כַּז 136:21 And gave their land as a heritage, For His lovingkindness is everlasting, 136:22 Even a heritage to Israel His servant, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. 136:23 Who remembered us in our low estate, For His lovingkindness is everlasting, 136:24 And has rescued us from our adversaries, For His lovingkindness is everlasting; 136:25 Who gives food to all flesh, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. 136:26 Give thanks to the God of heaven, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. (NASB) The mercies of God are eternal, this psalm declares the glory of God within the context of His mercy and grace. This is illustrated in how the Lord God Almighty provides food for both the righteous and the unrighteous which is reminiscent of what Yeshua said in *Matthew 5:45*. We read in *Shemot / Exodus 6:8* “And I will bring you into the land that I promised to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it you as a [morashah, מוֹרָשָׁה] heritage: I am the LORD.” ח וְהִבַּאתִי אֶתְכֶם אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר) (נְשִׂאתִי אֶת-יְדֵי לְתַת אֶתְּהָ לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק וְלְיַעֲקֹב וְנָתַתִּי אֶתְּהָ לָּכֶם מוֹרָשָׁה אֲנִי יְהוָה: The concept of yerushah is used throughout the Torah to describe the passing down of material possessions from parents to children. A far less common word is the concept of morashah, mentioned in the Torah in reference to only two things, (i) the Torah where Moshes prescribed the Torah to us as an eternal heritage (morashah) for the children of Israel (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 33:4*) and (ii) the Land of Israel itself (*Shemot / Exodus 6:8*). These words are used within different contexts revealing the kind of relationship between parents and children, and those things that are passed down from generation to generation. These differences are illustrated in the *Jerusalem Talmud Bava Batra 8:2* which speaks of yerushah as something that comes easily. When a person dies, leaving a yerushah, the heir need not do anything other than receive the gift. Morashah on the other hand requires much more. The Jerusalem Talmud states the added letter mem in morashah is a grammatical sign of intensity, the piel form in Hebrew grammar. In order for an individual to come into possession by means of a morashah, they must work for it. This explains why morashah was used only with regard to Torah and the Land of Israel. The rabbis in the Babylonian Talmud, *Berachot 5a* state that there are three

gifts that God gave the Jewish people that can be acquired only through commitment and suffering, (i) the Torah, (ii) the Land of Israel and, (iii) the World to Come. All of these come by reason of obedience to the commandments. In the *Mishnah Pirkei Avot 2:10* the rabbis say “*Prepare yourself to study Torah, for it is not an inheritance for you.*” Therefore, our relationship with God according to the Torah depends on an individual’s own efforts. A student of Torah must be willing to suffer for the sake of the Lord God Almighty and His Messiah. This is an important concept since we know our relationship with the Messiah Yeshua comes with it suffering and persecutions. When the Lord tells us in the Psalm that *136:21 And gave their land as a heritage, For His lovingkindness is everlasting, 136:22 Even a heritage to Israel His servant, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. 136:23 Who remembered us in our low estate, For His lovingkindness is everlasting, 136:24 And has rescued us from our adversaries, For His lovingkindness is everlasting; 136:25 Who gives food to all flesh, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. 136:26 Give thanks to the God of heaven, For His lovingkindness is everlasting.* (NASB) These things do not come without suffering for the sake of the Lord. Let’s Pray!

Rabbinic Commentary

The Rabbinic Commentary (Midrash) on *Tehillim / Psalms 136* has 12 parts. Reading through the Midrash we will be looking at Part 1, 2, 5, and 10. Let’s begin by outlining *Midrash Tehillim Chapter 136, Part 1, 2, 5, and 10.*

Outline of Midrash Tehillim / Psalms, Chapter 136, Part 1, 2, 5, and 10

Part 1

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying, “*O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endures forever (Tehillim / Psalms 136:1).*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*Rabbi Joshua son of Levi taught, Give thanks unto the Lord who makes a man pay for his sins out of his property, a rich man pays with his ox; a poor man, with his lamb; and orphan, with his egg; and a widow, with her hen.*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis discuss the meaning of a man paying for his own sins according to the Torah command.
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal), the rabbis lead then into the repetition of the mercy of God towards His people.
- The Concluding phrase says, “*And rabbi Akha said, It begins with For the Lord has chosen Jacob unto Himself (Tehillim / Psalms 135:4) and goes up to the rivers of Babylon (Tehillim / Psalms 137:1).*”

Part 2

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying, “*To Him who alone does great wonders (Tehillim / Psalms 136:4).*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*Why alone?*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis speak of the wonders of God and the purpose for the Lord doing such great things.
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal), explaining how man is not aware of the many times the Lord has saved him from death and sorrow.
- The Concluding phrase says, “*They cannot be reckoned up in order unto You (Tehillim / Psalms 40:6). That is to say, I cannot reckon up the praise of You and am not competent to declare Your wonderful works.*”

Part 5

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying, “*It is taught that Rabbi Jose said, Alas for the people that see and do not know what they see, that stand and do not know what they stand upon.*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*The earth, what does it stand upon?*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis discuss the importance of what the earth is being sustained upon?
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal), explaining how the earth is sustained on account of Israel and righteousness.
- The Concluding phrase says, “*But rabbi Eleazar son of Shammua mountains that the earth stands upon one pillar, whose name is the Righteous, for it is said, But the Righteous is the foundation of the earth (Mishely / Proverbs 10:25).*”

Part 10

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying, “*It was taught in the School of Elijah, Once when I was traveling from one place to another, a man who had Scripture but did not have the Oral Law, came up to me, He said, My master, there is a certain thing I want to say to you, but I am afraid that you will be angry with me.*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*I replied, God’s mercy, no!*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis use a parable to teach a spiritual truth.
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal), explaining how the blessing of God doesn’t come without our having to labor first.
- The Concluding phrase says, “*Even so are the children of men, when their wisdom is gone from them, they are accounted as cattle, as wild animals, and as birds, and therefore it is clear that the Holy One blessed be He, apportions food to all inhabitants of the earth.*”

Midrash Tehillim 136 Part 1 opens with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying, “*O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endures forever (Tehillim / Psalms 136:1).*” The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*Rabbi Joshua son of Levi taught, Give thanks unto the Lord who makes a man pay for his sins out of his property, a rich man pays with his ox; a poor man, with his lamb; and orphan, with his egg; and a widow, with her hen.*” So Rabbi Joshua taught that the Lord should be blessed for causing a man to pay for his sins from his own property. This may be paralleled to the one who pays for his sins from his own body, or even his own soul. Considering this context, Yeshua taught something very similar in *Matthew 5:23-30*.

Matthew 5:23-30

5:23 ‘Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, 5:24 leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering. 5:25 ‘Make friends quickly with your opponent at law while you are with him on the way, so that your opponent may not hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. 5:26 ‘Truly I say to you, you will not come out of there until you have paid up the last cent. 5:27 ‘You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery’; 5:28 but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 5:29 ‘If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole

body to be thrown into hell. 5:30 'If your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to go into hell. (NASB)

Here Yeshua taught about going before the Lord and having something against a brother or a friend. Having something against someone else would have an effect on the sacrifice that is being offered, and most importantly the heart which goes before the Lord in prayer and petition. The idea is one should not go before the Lord as if all is well when having outstanding debt, discontent, or disagreement towards someone else. The idea is that one takes from what one owns to bring the sacrifice before the Lord. It costs money and it is more important to pay what is owed before taking from what we owe and giving it to the Lord. The idea here is we are to give to the Lord from our increase and not go into debt in order to do so. Yeshua taught that if we do not make right with our brother, we could be handed over to the judge and then put into jail and one wouldn't get out until the debt is paid. Yeshua then brings in the context of sin and debt by paralleling this to being put in jail as opposed to being put into hell. He said it is better to pluck out the eye or cut off the hand if these things cause us to sin because it is better to be without these things than to be cast into hell. This brings us back to the Midrash, which the rabbis state that the Lord is blessed to cause a man to pay out of his own property than to have to pay from his person, such as what Yeshua is speaking about plucking the eye and cutting off the hand.

The entire Midrash states the following:

<p>מדריש תהלים פרק קלו סימן א</p> <p>א הודו לה' וגו'. אמר ריב"ל הודו למי שגובה חובתו של אדם בטור- בתו, עשיר בשורו, עני בשיו, יתום בביצתו, אלמנה בתרנגולתה, ואריב"ל הני עשרים וששה כי לעור- לם חסדו כנגד מי, כנגד כ"ו דורות שברא הקב"ה [בעולמו], ולא נתן להם תורה, וזן אותם בחסדו. למה נקרא שמו הלל הגדול, אמר רבי יוחנן מפני שיושב הקב"ה ברומו של עולם ומחלק מזונות לכל בריה. מהיכן הלל הגדול, (א"ר יהודה) [ר' יהודה אומר] מהודו ועד על נהרות בבל, ר' יוחנן אומר משיר המעלות ועד על נהרות בבל, רב אחא ברבי יעקב אמר מכי יעקב בחר לו יה עד על נהרות בבל.</p>	<p>Midrash Tehillim 136, Part 1</p> <p><i>1. O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endures forever (Tehillim / Psalms 136:1). Rabbi Joshua son of Levi taught, Give thanks unto the Lord who makes a man pay for his sins out of his property, a rich man pays with his ox; a poor man, with his lamb; and orphan, with his egg; and a widow, with her hen. Rabbi Joshua son of Levi said further, With reference to whom is His mercy endured forever repeated twenty six times in this Psalm? With reference to the twenty six generations which God created in His world, generations to which He did not give the Torah, but which in His mercy He sustained. Why is this Psalm called the Great Hallel? Rabbi Johanan explained, Because this Psalm says that the Holy One blessed be He, sits in the highest heaven of the universe and apportions food to every creature. Where does the Great Hallel begin? Rabbi Judah said, it begins with O give thanks unto the Lord (Tehillim / Psalms 136:1) and goes up to By the rivers of Babylon (Tehillim / Psalms 137:1). But Rabbi Johanan maintained, It begins with A song of Ascents and goes up to By the rivers of Babylon (Tehillim / Psalms 137:1). And Rabbi Akha said, It begins with For the Lord has chosen Jacob unto Himself (Tehillim / Psalms 135:4) and goes up to the rivers of Babylon (Tehillim / Psalms 137:1).</i></p>
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The rabbis discuss the meaning of a man paying for his own sins according to the Torah command and then lead into the repetition of the mercy of God towards His people. The great mercy of God as it is presented in the Psalm is why this psalm is called “*the Great Hallel*.” The term Hallel ha-Gadol (“*Great Hallel*”, הלל הגדול) refers only to *Tehillim / Psalm 136* (see *Tosefta Ta’an. 3:5*) which is recited at the morning service on Sabbaths and on festivals (*Tosefta to Ta’an 26a*). It is the daily psalm on the last day of Passover and is added to the seder Hallel (*Talmud Bavli Pesachim 118a, 5:7, 32c*). According to the *Mishnah Ta’an 3:9*, this psalm was sung on joyous communal occasions, for example, the long-awaited rain after a period of severe

drought. In the Talmud Bavli, various origins are attributed to the custom of chanting Hallel. R. Eleazar claims that it was Moses and the people of Israel who first recited the Hallel. R. Judah differed stating that it was the Prophets who instituted its recitation for every occasion that the people of Israel should be redeemed from potential misfortune (*Talmud Bavli Pesachim 117a*). The rabbis of the Talmud claim that the Hallel was recited by the levites in the Temple (*Toseftah to Pes. 95b*), and it was also chanted on Passover eve while the Passover lambs were being slaughtered (*Pes. 5:7*). The Hallel became part of the synagogue service at an early stage, and in Talmudic times, communities in Eretz Yisrael added it to the end of the evening service for Passover (*Pes. 10:1, 37c*). *Tehillim / Psalms 136* was sung during times of great blessing, the passover, morning Shabbat Services, and may be the reason why Moshe and the people of Israel recited this psalm as it describes the mercy of God throughout the generations of Israel.

Midrash Tehillim 136 Part 1 concludes saying, “*And rabbi Akha said, It begins with For the Lord has chosen Jacob unto Himself (Tehillim / Psalms 135:4) and goes up to the rivers of Babylon (Tehillim / Psalms 137:1).*” In the Lord’s mercy He has chosen Israel and He goes with her into captivity to deliver her from her enemies. Though our sins may lead us to discipline from the Lord, He remains faithful to save us if we repent of our sins and seek His mercy.

Midrash Tehillim 136 Part 2 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying, “*To Him who alone does great wonders (Tehillim / Psalms 136:4).*” The פתיחה (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*Why alone?*” The entire midrash states the following:

<p style="text-align: center;">מדרש תהלים פרק קלו סימן ב</p> <p>ב לעושה נפלאות גדולות לבדו. וכי אחר עשה עמו דבר שהוא אומר לבדו, אלא הוא לבדו יודע מה פלאים עושה, כיצד אדם נתון על המטה והנחש לפניו על הארץ, בא לעד מוד הרגיש לו הנחש מלפניו, ואינו יודע מה פלאים עשה הקב"ה עמו, ומי יודע הקב"ה, וכה"א רבות עשית אתה ה' אלהי נפלאותיך ומחשבותיך אלינו אין ערוך אליך (תהלים מ ו), אין לי להעריך שבחך, ואיני כדאי לספר נפלאותיך.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Midrash Tehillim 136, Part 2</p> <p>2. <i>To Him who alone does great wonders (Tehillim / Psalms 136:4). Why alone? Is it conceivable that anyone else would be helping Him to do great wonders? Along implies, however that God alone knows what wonders He does. For example, a man is lying on his bed, and on the ground before him there is a snake. As the man is about to get up from his bed, the snake is startled away, yet the man has not the slightest knowledge of what wonders the Holy One blessed be He, has just done for him. And who knows? The Holy One blessed be He. Likewise, the Psalmist says, Many, O Lord God, are Your wonderful works which You have done, and Your thoughts which are towards us. They cannot be reckoned up in order unto You (Tehillim / Psalms 40:6). That is to say, I cannot reckon up the praise of You and am not competent to declare Your wonderful works.</i></p>
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ד שָׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה 7 The concept put forward here in the beginning of the midrash is that God is One. 6:4 ‘Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one!’ (NASB) What a great blessing it is to see and hear what the Lord has prepared and promised to us. We stand in awe listening to the blessing of God giving Him praises and glory for the miracle of sight and hearing. He is the One and only creator. The Rabbis in the midrash illustrated this by describing our inability to know how the Lord has helped to sustain us each day. The Midrash states saying,

For example, a man is lying on his bed, and on the ground before him there is a snake. As the man is about to get up from his bed, the snake is startled away, yet the man has not the slightest knowledge of what wonders the Holy One blessed be He, has just done for him. And who knows? The Holy One blessed be He. (Midrash Tehillim 136 Part 2)

The idea is the poisonous snake likes warm places and crawls into bed with you at night. You are in danger

rolling around all night long. The snake is then startled away as the man gets up, and is unaware of the danger he was in. The man who fell into this situation did not have the slightest knowledge of what had happened to him and the rabbis say, such a person “has not the slightest knowledge of what wonders the Holy One blessed be He, has just done for him.” This may also be paralleled to the enemy who plans and schemes behind our backs to do us harm. The Lord however protects us and we do not know to what extent this occurs. How true is this of our own lives, how often has the Lord saved us and we are totally unaware?

Midrash Tehillim 136 Part 2 concludes saying, “Likewise, the Psalmist says, Many, O Lord God, are Your wonderful works which You have done, and Your thoughts which are towards us. They cannot be reckoned up in order unto You (Tehillim / Psalms 40:6). That is to say, I cannot reckon up the praise of You and am not competent to declare Your wonderful works.” The psalmist declares the great works of God and concludes his inability to declare those wonderful works because we have no knowledge of all the Lord has done on our behalf. The Lord working in the background of our lives to do wonders, miracles, such that even the breath that we have is a miracle each day. This is further illustrated in Midrash Tehillim 136 Part 5. Midrash Tehillim 136 Part 5 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying, “It is taught that Rabbi Jose said, Alas for the people that see and do not know what they see, that stand and do not know what they stand upon.” The פתיחה (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “The earth, what does it stand upon?” The entire midrash states the following:

<p>מדרש תהלים פרק קלו סימן ה</p> <p>ה תניא ר' יוסי אומר אוי להם לבריות שרואות ואינם יודעים מה רואות, עומר דין ואינם יודעין על מה עומדים, הארץ על מה היא עומדת, על העמודים, שנאמר המרגיז ארץ ממקומה ועמודיה יתפלצון (איוב ט ו), ועמודים על המים, שנאמר לרוקע הארץ על המים, ומים על ההרים, שנאמר על הרים יעמדו מים (תהלים קד ו), והרים על הרוח, שנאמר כי (הנני) [הנה] יוצר הרים ובורא רוח (עמוס ד יג), ורוח בסערה, שנאמר רוח סערה עושה דברו (תהלים קמח ח), וסערה תלוי בזרועו של הקב"ה, שנאמר ומתחת זרועות עולם (דברים לג כז), וחכמים אומרים על ייב עמודים עומדת, שנאמר יצב גבולות עמים למספר בני ישראל (שם דברים לב ח), וי"א על ז' עמודים עומדת [שנאמר הצבה עמודיה שבעה (משלי ט א)], ר' אלעזר בן שמוע אומר על עמוד א' עומדת, וצדיק שמו, שנאמר וצדיק יסוד עולם (שם משלי י כה).</p>	<p>Midrash Tehillim 136, Part 5</p> <p>5. It is taught that Rabbi Jose said, Alas for the people that see and do not know what they see, that stand and do not know what they stand upon. The earth, what does it stand upon? Upon the pillars, as it is said, God shakes the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble (Job 9:6). And the pillars? Upon the waters, for it is said, To Him that stretched out the earth above the waters (Tehillim / Psalms 136:6). And the waters? Above the mountains, for it is said, The waters stand above the mountains (Tehillim / Psalms 104:6). And the mountains? Above the wind, for it is said, For low, He that formed the mountains, and created the wind (Amos 4:13). And the wind? Above the storm, for it is said, Wind and storm, fulfilling His word (Tehillim / Psalms 148:8). And the storm hangs above the arms of the Holy One blessed be He, for it is said, And underneath are the everlasting arms (Devarim / Deuteronomy 33:27). The sages say that the earth stands upon the twelve pillars, for it is said, When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel (Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:8). Some say that the earth stands upon seven pillars, for, as it is said, Wisdom has built her house; she has hewn out her seven pillars (Mishley / Proverbs 9:1). But rabbi Eleazar son of Shammua mountains that the earth stands upon one pillar, whose name is the Righteous, for it is said, But the Righteous is the foundation of the earth (Mishley / Proverbs 10:25).</p>
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Within the context of not knowing how the Lord has helped us, the rabbis discuss the importance of what the earth is being sustained upon? Their conclusion is how the earth is sustained on account of Israel and righteousness. Note that Righteousness is the fulfillment of the Torah obligations. Righteousness is not an abstract concept but consists of what it means to be faithful to the Lord God in all of our relationships. *Vayikra / Leviticus 19:17 You shall not hate your fellow countryman in your heart; you may surely reprove*

your neighbor, but shall not incur sin because of him. 19:18 You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the Lord. (NASB) Being faithful to our neighbor is synonymous to being faithful to the Lord according to the Torah. The rabbis have the following to say concerning this aspect of having love for one another.

Ibn Ezra on Vayikra / Leviticus 19:17 Part 1

Do not hate your brother This is the negative aspect of “love your fellowman as yourself” [18]. Although these commandments all involve a person’s private emotions, only through their observance will Israel be permitted to remain on its land (The Second Temple was destroyed because of groundless hatred [Yoma 9b]). Perhaps you hate someone because you suspect him of something which never happened; therefore, reprove your fellowman . On the other hand, perhaps he actually did something which calls for reproof. In that case, do not bear sin because of him; because if you do not correct him, you might be punished on his account.

Ibn Ezra states the idea of loving your brother is involved in one’s private emotions towards others. The inner recesses of the heart however are revealed by how one treats their neighbor and this is related to one’s right to remain in the land of Israel. Having love for someone also involves reproofing your fellow man. This is because if we observe sin and do not speak to a person about it, we will be held accountable (Ezekiel 3) on account of this persons sin.

Rashbam on Vayikra / Leviticus 19:17 Part 1

לֹא תִשָּׂא אֶת אַחֶיךָ בְּלִבְבְּךָ, if he has done something evil to you, do not behave as if you continue to love him, all the time setting an ambush for him in your heart. (compare Jeremiah,7) Such an attitude is unhealthy...

Rashbam speaks of a neighbor doing evil towards us. He suggests that we are to maintain a loving attitude towards him and not to set an ambush for him in our hearts. (*Matthew 5:44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless those that curse you, do good to those that hate you, and pray for those who speak evil about you, and persecute you. NASB*) This is consistent with what Yeshua taught us in the Apostolic Writings since it is difficult to pray for someone that we think evil about.

Rashi on Vayikra / Leviticus 19:17 Part 1

וְלֹא תִשָּׂא עִלּוּי חַטָּא [THOU SHALT IN ANY WISE REBUKE THY COMPANION] AND NOT BEAR A SIN ON ACCOUNT OF HIM — i. e. though rebuking him thou shalt not expose him to shame (lit., make his face grow pale) in public, in which case you will bear sin on account of him (cf. Sifra, Kedoshim, Chapter 4 8; Arakhin 16b).

Rashi states when we speak to a neighbor about his sin, we are not to rebuke him in such a way to expose him to shame. We are not here to shame others. Causing shame to come upon a person is said to cause us to bear his sin on this account.

Tur HaAroch, Vayikra / Leviticus 19:17 Part 1

לֹא תִשָּׂא אֶת אַחֶיךָ בְּלִבְבְּךָ, “do not hate your brother in your heart.” Some commentators interpret this line as “if you see your fellow man commit some sin do not say to yourself: ‘I wish he would continue in this way,’ but remonstrate with him and try to get him to desist and to improve his ways. Nachmanides writes that seeing the Torah uses real life examples, i.e. people keeping their disapproval of others or even hatred of others to themselves, the Torah urges that If one has a legitimate reason to disapprove of one’s neighbour’s lifestyle, one

should not bottle this up within oneself, but should discuss it openly with the party concerned so as to give him a chance to mend his ways.

The idea here is we are to promote righteousness in the land that we live and if we see our brother sinning, we are to gently and compassionately go to him and speak to him about improving his ways, performing Teshuvah (repentance) and turning from sin. The Torah uses real life examples to illustrate that we are not to keep our feelings bottled up in our hearts, and that the Torah speaks to us that we are to have legitimate reasons to disapprove of one's neighbor's lifestyle. Righteousness involves the fulfillment of all legal and moral obligations according to the Torah. Righteousness is not an abstract notion but consists in doing what is just, right, and moral in all our relationships ("keep justice and do righteousness at all times" Tehillim / Psalms 106:3, Isaiah 64:4, Jeremiah 22:3, Ezekiel 18:19). These are basic principles that have far reaching consequences. The reason being, righteous action results in social stability and ultimately in peace. (Isaiah 32:17, Hosea. 10:12, Mishnah Pirkei Avot 2:7).

Midrash Tehillim 136 Part 5 concludes saying, "But rabbi Eleazar son of Shammua mountains that the earth stands upon one pillar, whose name is the Righteous, for it is said, But the Righteous is the foundation of the earth (Mishley / Proverbs 10:25)." The most important point is that righteousness is not an inherent human characteristic, but is a learned trait. We have to train ourselves in righteousness by sustained performance of the mitavot. We need to create habits and then live by them. Note that man cannot attain perfect righteousness, we are called to strive for the righteousness of God and with His help all things are possible.

Midrash Tehillim 136 Part 10 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying, "It was taught in the School of Elijah, Once when I was traveling from one place to another, a man who had Scripture but did not have the Oral Law, came up to me, He said, My master, there is a certain thing I want to say to you, but I am afraid that you will be angry with me." The פתיחה (Petihata) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, "I replied, God's mercy, no!" The entire midrash states the following:

<p style="text-align: center;">מדרש תהלים פרק קלו סימן י</p> <p>י תנא דבי אליהו פעם אחת הייתי עובר ממקום למקום מצאני אדם אחד שהיה בו מקרא ואין בידו משנה אמר לי רבי רוצה אני לומר לפניך דבר אחד ומתי-רא אני שמא תקפיד אמרתי לו ח"ו אם אתה שואלני בדבר תורה, א"ל ר' מפני מה כתיב נותן לחם לכל בשר, וכתיב נותן לבהמה לחמה (תהלים קמז ט), וכי אין אדם מכין לחמו, א"ל זהו דרך ארץ עושה בידיו והקב"ה מברך מעשה ידיו, שנאמר למען יברכך ה' אלהיך בכל מעשה ידך (דברים יד כט), יכול יהא יושב ובטל, ת"ל אשר תעשה (שם שם דברים י"ד) א"ל תשובה זו היא שטה ראשונה שאמרת לי, והיא מקובלת בעיני, אמר לו בני אשיבך צא ולמד מן השוטה כשנטלה ממנו חכמה אינו יכול לפרנס עצמו שעה אחת, כך בני אדם כשנטלה מהם דעה חשובים כבהמה וכחיה ועוף, והקב"ה מחלק מזון נות לכל באי עולם.</p>	<p>Midrash Tehillim 136, Part 10</p> <p>10. <i>It was taught in the School of Elijah, Once when I was traveling from one place to another, a man who had Scripture but did not have the Oral Law, came up to me, He said, My master, there is a certain thing I want to say to you, but I am afraid that you will be angry with me. I replied, God's mercy, no! Not if you ask me something about Scripture. Whereupon the man said, My master, why does Scripture say To Him who gives food to all human flesh (Tehillim / Psalms 136:25), and then say God gives to the beast his food (Tehillim / Psalms 147:9), as though the giving were equally free? Is it not true that a man must work with his hands to provide for himself, and the Holy One blessed be He, blesses the work of his hands, as it is said, That the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands (Devarim / Deuteronomy 14:29). But lest it be thought that a man may sit in idleness, the verse ends with the phrase which you must do. He said to me, This answer supports what I said first. And so it is acceptable to me. Then I said to the man, My son, I have more to say to you. Go out and look at the simpleton. With his wisdom gone, he is unable to get food for himself. Even so are the children of men, when their wisdom is gone from them, they are accounted as cattle, as wild animals, and as birds, and therefore it is clear that the Holy One blessed be He, apportions food to all inhabitants of the earth.</i></p>
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Here the rabbis speak of the written Torah and the Oral Torah and the importance of both. The rabbis pose the question of the mercy of God by His provision of food to man and to beast. The idea is man must work for his food, whereas the beast does not. According to the Torah, the Lord has established His covenant in such a way such that a man must work in order to feed his family, and in order for the Lord to bless him in what he puts his hand to doing. (see Parashat Ekev, *Devarim / Deuteronomy 8:18*) In addition to this, we read the following in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 14:22-29*.

Devarim / Deuteronomy 14:22-29

14:22 'You shall surely tithe all the produce from what you sow, which comes out of the field every year. 14:23 'You shall eat in the presence of the Lord your God, at the place where He chooses to establish His name, the tithe of your grain, your new wine, your oil, and the first-born of your herd and your flock, so that you may learn to fear the Lord your God always. 14:24 'If the distance is so great for you that you are not able to bring the tithe, since the place where the Lord your God chooses to set His name is too far away from you when the Lord your God blesses you, 14:25 then you shall exchange it for money, and bind the money in your hand and go to the place which the Lord your God chooses. 14:26 'You may spend the money for whatever your heart desires: for oxen, or sheep, or wine, or strong drink, or whatever your heart desires; and there you shall eat in the presence of the Lord your God and rejoice, you and your household. 14:27 'Also you shall not neglect the Levite who is in your town, for he has no portion or inheritance among you. 14:28 'At the end of every third year you shall bring out all the tithe of your produce in that year, and shall deposit it in your town. 14:29 'The Levite, because he has no portion or inheritance among you, and the alien, the orphan and the widow who are in your town, shall come and eat and be satisfied, in order that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hand which you do. (NASB)

Note how the Lord speaks of the Levite, the widow, and the orphan in regard to the tithe. The Torah states that one may spend his money on anything he wants, but he must not neglect these three. These three are connected to the Tabernacle and the mercy of God. Widows and orphans are among the most defenseless in any culture because the existence of wicked men, the Lord said, *"They slay the widow and the alien; they murder the fatherless."* (*Tehillim / Psalms 94:6*) We are told to help the fatherless in *Tehillim / Psalms 10:14* and to defend the widows in *Tehillim / Psalms 68:5*. The Torah description is not to mistreat or oppress strangers and not to take advantage of widows or orphans. The Torah goes further to say we are to treat strangers as we would people in our local community (*Vayikra / Leviticus 19:34 and 25:35*). The Lord God of Israel defends the cause of the fatherless, widow, orphan (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 10:18, 14:28-29*) and we are not to be tight fisted against those who are in need (*Devarim / Deuteronomy 15:7-11*). Midrash Tehillim 136 Part 10 concludes saying, *"Even so are the children of men, when their wisdom is gone from them, they are accounted as cattle, as wild animals, and as birds, and therefore it is clear that the Holy One blessed be He, apportions food to all inhabitants of the earth."* The midrash speaks of men who are not a part of Israel as wild animals, and yet in the mercy of God He provides food for all the inhabitants of the earth. This demonstrates the greatness of God's love for everyone. 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

— Tehillim / Psalms 136 | ספר תהילים קלו —

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