

Tehillim / Psalms 138 | ספר תהילים קלח

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New Life through the Messiah

In this week's study from *Tehillim / Psalms 138:1-8*, the psalm opens א לְדָוִד | אוֹדָה בְּכָל-לְבַי נִגַּד אֱלֹהִים 138:1 אֶזְמַרְךָ: ב אֲשַׁתְּחֶנָּה אֶל-הֵיכַל קִדְשֶׁךָ וְאוֹדָה אֶת-שִׁמְךָ עַל-חַסְדֶּךָ וְעַל-אַמְתָּךָ כִּי-הִגְדַּלְתָּ עַל-כָּל-שִׁמְךָ אֶמְרָתֶךָ: *I will give You thanks with all my heart; I will sing praises to You before the gods. 138:2 I will bow down toward Your holy temple And give thanks to Your name for Your lovingkindness and Your truth; For You have magnified Your word according to all Your name. (NASB)* We praise the Lord for all that He has done in keeping His words and His promises. The Psalmist continues saying, ג בְּיוֹם קָרָאתִי וַתַּעֲנֵנִי תְהַבְנֵנִי בְנַפְשִׁי, ד יוֹדוּךָ יְהוָה כָּל-מַלְכֵי-אָרֶץ כִּי שָׁמְעוּ אֶמְרֵי-פִיךָ: ה וַיִּשְׁיֶרֶוּ בְּדַרְכֵי יְהוָה כִּי גָדוֹל כְּבוֹד יְהוָה: *On the day I called, You answered me; You made me bold with strength in my soul. 138:4 All the kings of the earth will give thanks to You, O Lord, When they have heard the words of Your mouth. 138:5 And they will sing of the ways of the Lord, For great is the glory of the Lord. (NASB)* It is interesting how the nations who do not have concern for the Word of the Lord, the Psalmist states they will give thanks when hearing His word. The psalm concludes saying, ו כִּי-רָם יְהוָה וְשָׁפַל יִרְאֶה וְגַבְהָ מִמָּרְחָק יִידָע: ז אִם-אֵלֶּךָ | בְּקָרֵב צָרָה תַּחֲיִנִי עַל אֶף, ח יְהוָה יִגְמַר בְּעַדֵי יְהוָה חַסְדֶּךָ לְעוֹלָם מַעֲשֵׂי יְדִיךָ אֶל-תַּרְרָה: *For though the Lord is exalted, Yet He regards the lowly, But the haughty He knows from afar. 138:7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, You will revive me; You will stretch forth Your hand against the wrath of my enemies, And Your right hand will save me. 138:8 The Lord will accomplish what concerns me; Your lovingkindness, O Lord, is everlasting; Do not forsake the works of Your hands.(NASB)*

עברית	Hebrew	ארמי	Aramaic	ελληνικός	Greek
ספר תהלים פרק קלח	ספר תהלים פרק קלח	ספר טוביה פרק קלח	ספר טוביה פרק קלח	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 138	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 138
א לְדָוִד אוֹדָה בְּכָל-לְבַי נִגַּד אֱלֹהִים אֶזְמַרְךָ: ב אֲשַׁתְּחֶנָּה אֶל-הֵיכַל קִדְשֶׁךָ וְאוֹדָה אֶת-שִׁמְךָ עַל-חַסְדֶּךָ וְעַל-אַמְתָּךָ כִּי-הִגְדַּלְתָּ עַל-כָּל-שִׁמְךָ אֶמְרָתֶךָ: ג בְּיוֹם קָרָאתִי וַתַּעֲנֵנִי תְהַבְנֵנִי בְנַפְשִׁי עז: ד יוֹדוּךָ יְהוָה כָּל-מַלְכֵי-אָרֶץ כִּי שָׁמְעוּ אֶמְרֵי-פִיךָ: ה וַיִּשְׁיֶרֶוּ בְּדַרְכֵי יְהוָה כִּי גָדוֹל כְּבוֹד יְהוָה: ו כִּי-רָם יְהוָה וְשָׁפַל יִרְאֶה וְגַבְהָ מִמָּרְחָק יִידָע: ז אִם-אֵלֶּךָ בְּקָרֵב צָרָה תַּחֲיִנִי עַל אֶף אֵיבֵי תִשְׁלַח יְדְךָ וַתוֹשִׁיעֵנִי מִיַּנְּךָ: ח יְהוָה יִגְמַר בְּעַדֵי יְהוָה חַסְדֶּךָ לְעוֹלָם מַעֲשֵׂי יְדִיךָ אֶל-תַּרְרָה:	א על יד דוד אודי קדמך יהוה בכל לבי קביל דיניא אזמרינך אשבחינך: ב אס-גוד קדם היכלא דקודשך ואודי ית שמך מטול טובך ומטול קושטך ארום אסגיתא על כל שמך מימרי תושבחתך: ג ביומא דקרית עני יתי אסגיעתני בנפשי עוש-נא: ד יודון קדמך יהוה כל מלכי ארעא ארום שמעו מימרי תושבחתך: ה ויש-בחון על כבישי יהוה ארום רב איקרא דיהוה: ו ארום רמא יהוה ומכיך יחמי לטב וגיותנא מן שמיא רחיקין ימאיד: ז אין אהלך במצע עקתא תחינני תקימינני על נחירא בעלי דבבי תושיט אידך לח-בלותהון ותפרקינני מינך: ח יהוה יש-לים מימרא דייי יפרע# בישא עילויהון אמטולתי יהוה טובך לעלם עובדי אידך לא תשבוק:	א על יד דוד אודי קדמך יהוה בכל לבי קביל דיניא אזמרינך אשבחינך: ב אס-גוד קדם היכלא דקודשך ואודי ית שמך מטול טובך ומטול קושטך ארום אסגיתא על כל שמך מימרי תושבחתך: ג ביומא דקרית עני יתי אסגיעתני בנפשי עוש-נא: ד יודון קדמך יהוה כל מלכי ארעא ארום שמעו מימרי תושבחתך: ה ויש-בחון על כבישי יהוה ארום רב איקרא דיהוה: ו ארום רמא יהוה ומכיך יחמי לטב וגיותנא מן שמיא רחיקין ימאיד: ז אין אהלך במצע עקתא תחינני תקימינני על נחירא בעלי דבבי תושיט אידך לח-בלותהון ותפרקינני מינך: ח יהוה יש-לים מימרא דייי יפרע# בישא עילויהון אמטולתי יהוה טובך לעלם עובדי אידך לא תשבוק:	א על יד דוד אודי קדמך יהוה בכל לבי קביל דיניא אזמרינך אשבחינך: ב אס-גוד קדם היכלא דקודשך ואודי ית שמך מטול טובך ומטול קושטך ארום אסגיתא על כל שמך מימרי תושבחתך: ג ביומא דקרית עני יתי אסגיעתני בנפשי עוש-נא: ד יודון קדמך יהוה כל מלכי ארעא ארום שמעו מימרי תושבחתך: ה ויש-בחון על כבישי יהוה ארום רב איקרא דיהוה: ו ארום רמא יהוה ומכיך יחמי לטב וגיותנא מן שמיא רחיקין ימאיד: ז אין אהלך במצע עקתא תחינני תקימינני על נחירא בעלי דבבי תושיט אידך לח-בלותהון ותפרקינני מינך: ח יהוה יש-לים מימרא דייי יפרע# בישא עילויהון אמטולתי יהוה טובך לעלם עובדי אידך לא תשבוק:	138:1 τῷ Δαυιδ ἐξομολογήσομαι σοι κύριε ἐν ὄλῃ καρδιά μου ὅτι ἤκουσας τὰ ῥήματα τοῦ στόματός μου καὶ ἐναντίον ἀγγέλων ψαλῶ σοι 138:2 προσκυνήσω πρὸς ναὸν ἅγιόν σου καὶ ἐξομολογήσομαι τῷ ὀνόματί σου ἐπὶ τῷ ἐλέει σου καὶ τῇ ἀληθείᾳ σου ὅτι ἐμεγάλυνας ἐπὶ πᾶν ὄνομα τὸ λόγιόν σου 138:3 ἐν ἧ ἂν ἡμέρᾳ ἐπικαλέσομαι σε ταχὺ ἐπάκουσόν μου πολυωρήσεις με ἐν ψυχῇ μου ἐν δυνάμει 138:4 ἐξομολογησάσθωσάν σοι κύριε πάντες οἱ βασιλεῖς τῆς γῆς ὅτι ἤκουσαν πάντα τὰ ῥήματα τοῦ στόματός σου 138:5 καὶ ἀσάτωσαν ἐν ταῖς ὁδοῖς κυρίου ὅτι μεγάλη ἡ δόξα κυρίου 138:6 ὅτι ὑψηλὸς κύριος καὶ τὰ ταπεινὰ ἐφορᾷ καὶ τὰ ὑψηλὰ ἀπὸ μακρόθεν γινώσκει 138:7 ἐὰν πορευθῶ ἐν μέσῳ θλίψεως ζήσεις με ἐπ' ὄργην ἐχθρῶν μου ἐξέτεινας χεῖρά σου καὶ ἔσωσέν με ἡ δεξιὰ σου 138:8 κύριος ἀνταποδώσει ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ κύριε τὸ ἔλεός σου εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὰ ἔργα τῶν χειρῶν σου μὴ παρῆς	138:1 τῷ Δαυιδ ἐξομολογήσομαι σοι κύριε ἐν ὄλῃ καρδιά μου ὅτι ἤκουσας τὰ ῥήματα τοῦ στόματός μου καὶ ἐναντίον ἀγγέλων ψαλῶ σοι 138:2 προσκυνήσω πρὸς ναὸν ἅγιόν σου καὶ ἐξομολογήσομαι τῷ ὀνόματί σου ἐπὶ τῷ ἐλέει σου καὶ τῇ ἀληθείᾳ σου ὅτι ἐμεγάλυνας ἐπὶ πᾶν ὄνομα τὸ λόγιόν σου 138:3 ἐν ἧ ἂν ἡμέρᾳ ἐπικαλέσομαι σε ταχὺ ἐπάκουσόν μου πολυωρήσεις με ἐν ψυχῇ μου ἐν δυνάμει 138:4 ἐξομολογησάσθωσάν σοι κύριε πάντες οἱ βασιλεῖς τῆς γῆς ὅτι ἤκουσαν πάντα τὰ ῥήματα τοῦ στόματός σου 138:5 καὶ ἀσάτωσαν ἐν ταῖς ὁδοῖς κυρίου ὅτι μεγάλη ἡ δόξα κυρίου 138:6 ὅτι ὑψηλὸς κύριος καὶ τὰ ταπεινὰ ἐφορᾷ καὶ τὰ ὑψηλὰ ἀπὸ μακρόθεν γινώσκει 138:7 ἐὰν πορευθῶ ἐν μέσῳ θλίψεως ζήσεις με ἐπ' ὄργην ἐχθρῶν μου ἐξέτεινας χεῖρά σου καὶ ἔσωσέν με ἡ δεξιὰ σου 138:8 κύριος ἀνταποδώσει ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ κύριε τὸ ἔλεός σου εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τὰ ἔργα τῶν χειρῶν σου μὴ παρῆς

<p>Tehillim / Psalms 138 138:1 I will give You thanks with all my heart; I will sing praises to You before the gods. 138:2 I will bow down toward Your holy temple And give thanks to Your name for Your lovingkindness and Your truth; For You have magnified Your word according to all Your name. 138:3 On the day I called, You answered me; You made me bold with strength in my soul. 138:4 All the kings of the earth will give thanks to You, O Lord, When they have heard the words of Your mouth. 138:5 And they will sing of the ways of the Lord, For great is the glory of the Lord. 138:6 For though the Lord is exalted, Yet He regards the lowly, But the haughty He knows from afar. 138:7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, You will revive me; You will stretch forth Your hand against the wrath of my enemies, And Your right hand will save me. 138:8 The Lord will accomplish what concerns me; Your lovingkindness, O Lord, is everlasting; Do not forsake the works of Your hands.(NASB)</p>	<p>Toviyah / Psalms 138 138:1 Composed by David. I will give thanks in your presence, O Lord, with all my heart; before the judges I will sing to you. 138:2 I will bow down before your holy temple, and I will confess your name, because of your goodness and because of your truth; for you have magnified over every name of yours the utterance of your praise. 138:3 In the day that I call, answer me; you have magnified strength in my soul. 138:4 All the kings of the earth will give thanks in your presence, O Lord, for they have heard the utterance of your praise. 138:5 And they will sing praise on the pathways of the Lord, for great is the glory of the Lord. 138:6 For exalted is the Lord, but he will look on the humble for good; but he will humble the proud from heaven afar. 138:7 If I walk in the midst of trouble, you will keep me alive; you will stretch forth your hand against the nostrils of my enemies to destroy them, and your right hand will redeem me. 138:8 The Lord will pay them back evil on my account; O Lord, your goodness is forever, you will not forsake the works of your hands. (EMC)</p>	<p>Psalmoi / Psalms 138 A Psalm for David, of Aggaeus and Zacharias. 138:1 I will give thee thanks, O Lord, with my whole heart; and I will sing psalms to thee before the angels; for thou hast heard all the words of my mouth. 138:2 I will worship toward thy holy temple, and give thanks to thy name, on account of thy mercy and thy truth; for thou hast magnified thy holy name above every thing. 138:3 In whatsoever day I shall call upon thee, hear me speedily; thou shalt abundantly provide me with thy power in my soul. 138:4 Let all the kings of the earth, o Lord, give thanks unto thee; for they have heard all the words of thy mouth. 138:5 And let them sing in the ways of the Lord; for great is the glory of the Lord. 138:6 For the Lord is high, and yet regards the lowly; and he knows high things from afar off. 138:7 Though I should walk in the midst of affliction, thou wilt quicken me; thou hast stretched forth thine hands against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand has saved me. 138:8 O Lord, thou shalt recompense them on my behalf: thy mercy, O Lord, endures for ever: overlook not the works of thine hands. (LXX)</p>
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In this week's study from *Tehillim / Psalms 138:1-8*, the psalm opens א לְדָוִד | אֹדָה בְּכָל-לִבִּי נֶגְדְךָ אֱלֹהִים : 138:1 אֶזְמְרָךְ: ב אֲשַׁמְחָה אֶל-הֵיכַל קִדְשֶׁךָ וְאוֹדָה אֶת-שִׁמְךָ עַל-חַסְדֶּךָ וְעַל-אַמְתֶּךָ כִּי-הִגְדַּלְתָּ עַל-כָּל-שִׁמְךָ אֶמְרָתְךָ: *I will give You thanks with all my heart; I will sing praises to You before the gods. 138:2 I will bow down toward Your holy temple And give thanks to Your name for Your lovingkindness and Your truth; For You have magnified Your word according to all Your name. (NASB)* We praise the Lord for all that He has done in keeping His words and His promises. The lesson we receive from this speaks of singing praises unto the Lord and bowing down to God's holy Temple. David wrote this prior to the construction of the Temple and what he is explaining to us is that the Temple was not essential for worship to be true and deep and powerful. Considering the significance of singing praises, *2 Chronicles 20* speaks of a very unconventional way the king of Judah approached war with the neighboring nations. According to *2 Chronicles 20*, the king of Judah brought out the singers and musicians to lead his army against the armies of Ammon, Moab, and Seir. These three kingdoms formed an alliance against Judah. Jehoshaphat, knowing that his own army was no match for the invaders, turned to the Lord God of Israel for help. He proclaimed a time of prayer and fasting, and people throughout the land poured into the capital to take part. Jehoshaphat prayed saying,

2 Chronicles 20:5-13

20:5 Then Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the Lord before the new court, 20:6 and he said, 'O Lord, the God of our fathers, are You not God in the heavens? And are You not ruler over all the kingdoms of the nations? Power and might are in Your hand so that no one can stand against You. 20:7 'Did You not, O our God, drive out the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel and give it to the descendants of Abraham Your friend forever? 20:8 'They have lived in it, and have built You a sanctuary there for Your name, saying, 20:9 'Should evil come upon us, the sword, or judgment, or pestilence, or famine, we will stand before this house and before You (for Your name is in this house) and cry to You in our distress, and You will hear and deliver us. 20:10 'Now behold, the sons of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir, whom You did not let Israel invade when they came out of the land of Egypt (they turned aside from them and did not destroy them), 20:11 see how they are rewarding us by coming to drive us out from Your possession which You have given us as an inheritance. 20:12 'O our God, will You not judge them? For we are powerless before this great multitude who are coming against us; nor do we know what to do, but our eyes are on You.' 20:13 All Judah was standing before the Lord, with their infants, their wives and their children. (NASB)

Jehoshaphat said, "O Lord, God of our fathers, are You not God in Heaven? You rule over kingdoms and nations, and power and might are in Your hand. None can withstand You." These words of the king strengthened the heart of the people. Then the Spirit of the Lord come upon a man and he spoke the following:

2 Chronicles 20:14-26

20:14 Then in the midst of the assembly the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jahaziel the son of Zechariah, the son of Benaiah, the son of Jeiel, the son of Mattaniah, the Levite of the sons of Asaph; 20:15 and he said, 'Listen, all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat: thus says the Lord to you, 'Do not fear or be dismayed because of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours but God's. 20:16 'Tomorrow go down against them. Behold, they will come up by the ascent of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the valley in front of the wilderness of Jeruel. 20:17 'You need not fight in this battle; station yourselves, stand and see the salvation of the Lord on your behalf, O Judah and Jerusalem.' Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out to face them, for the Lord is with you.' 20:18 Jehoshaphat bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell down before the Lord, worshiping the Lord. 20:19 The Levites, from the sons of the Kohathites and of the sons of the Korahites, stood up to praise the Lord God of Israel, with a very

loud voice. 20:20 They rose early in the morning and went out to the wilderness of Tekoa; and when they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, 'Listen to me, O Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, put your trust in the Lord your God and you will be established. Put your trust in His prophets and succeed.' 20:21 When he had consulted with the people, he appointed those who sang to the Lord and those who praised Him in holy attire, as they went out before the army and said, 'Give thanks to the Lord, for His lovingkindness is everlasting.' 20:22 When they began singing and praising, the Lord set ambushes against the sons of Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; so they were routed. 20:23 For the sons of Ammon and Moab rose up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir destroying them completely; and when they had finished with the inhabitants of Seir, they helped to destroy one another. 20:24 When Judah came to the lookout of the wilderness, they looked toward the multitude, and behold, they were corpses lying on the ground, and no one had escaped. 20:25 When Jehoshaphat and his people came to take their spoil, they found much among them, including goods, garments and valuable things which they took for themselves, more than they could carry. And they were three days taking the spoil because there was so much. 20:26 Then on the fourth day they assembled in the valley of Beracah, for there they blessed the Lord. Therefore they have named that place 'The Valley of Beracah' until today. (NASB)

The king had appointed people to sing before the Lord and before the Army of Judah. The Scriptures say the praises of God's people set up ambushes before the enemy to destroy the sons of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Sier. The king realized how the Lord supports His people during times of calamity and peril. If we stand before the Lord and cry out to Him in our distress, He will hear us and save us. The king said "We have no power against this great army that comes against us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are upon You!" The Lord gave a word to the young priest to speak to the people and to the king. The word of the Lord said "You will not need to fight in this battle," God's message through Jahaziel continued saying "Position yourselves, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, who is with you!" As a result of these words, the king and all the people bowed down to the ground in worship. The priests continued to raise their voices in praise to the Lord. The next morning as the troops made preparations for battle, King Jehoshaphat encouraged them. "Believe in the Lord your God, and so shall you be established. Have faith in His prophets, and so shall you have good success." When the king decided to have the singers lead the troops in battle, this demonstrated their faith being put into action as they believed the Lord God of Israel would fight for them. King Jehoshaphat instructed the singers as they took their position. "Give thanks to the Lord, for His mercy endures forever." They were thanking the Lord God Almighty in advance for the victory He had promised the day before. The Scriptures say the Lord "set ambushes against the people of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who had come against Judah; and they were defeated." The Scriptures do not specify what those "ambushes" were, but we are told the men of those three invading kingdoms began to fight among themselves. First the men of Ammon and Moab rose up against those of Seir, and when they had destroyed them, the two armies destroyed each other. When the army of Judah arrived at a place overlooking the battlefield, they saw only dead bodies on the ground. No one had escaped. We are then told Jehoshaphat and his men gathered so many valuables from the bodies that it took them three days to collect them all. On the fourth day they assembled in the valley and called the valley of Beracah, which means "the Valley of blessing," and there they blessed God. Then they returned home with joy, for the Lord had triumphed over their enemies. This is the fulfillment of the psalm which states, א לְדָוִד | אֹדֶה בְּכָל-לְבַי נִגַּד, אֱלֹהִים אֲזַמְרֵךְ: ב אֲשַׁמְחָה אֶל-הֵיכַל קִדְשֶׁךָ וְאוֹדֶה אֶת-שִׁמְךָ עַל-חַסְדֶּךָ וְעַל-אַמְתֶּךָ כִּי-הִגְדַּלְתָּ עַל-כָּל-שִׁמְךָ אֲמַרְתָּךְ: 138:1 I will give You thanks with all my heart; I will sing praises to You before the gods. 138:2 I will bow down toward Your holy temple And give thanks to Your name for Your lovingkindness and Your truth; For You have magnified Your word according to all Your name. (NASB) We praise the Lord for all that He has done in keeping His words and His promises. As a result of these things, the fear of God came on all the neighboring kingdoms when they heard how He had interceded for Judah, and the kingdom of Judah was quiet because the Lord God had given him rest. This stands as an everlasting testimony to the power of faith

and faithfulness, prayer and praise. This same power of God is available to us today. Whenever we face a problem that is too big for us, if we pray in faith and seek Him and His ways, believing upon the promises God has given us in His Word, we can rest assured the Lord is fighting on our behalf. The act of praise and giving praise is putting faith into action. The reason being, we praise His holy name because we believe He answers prayer, even before we see our prayers answered.

ג ביום קראתי ותענני תרהבני בנפשי עז: ד יודוך יהוה כל-מלכי-ארץ כי 138:3 *On the day I called, You answered me; You made me bold with strength in my soul. 138:4 All the kings of the earth will give thanks to You, O Lord, When they have heard the words of Your mouth. 138:5 And they will sing of the ways of the Lord, For great is the glory of the Lord. (NASB)* It is interesting how the nations who do not have concern for the Word of the Lord, the Psalmist states they will give thanks when hearing His word. The rabbis in the Talmud Bavli Kiddushin 31a state the following:

Talmud Bavli Kiddushin 31a

דרש עולא רבה אפיתחא דבי נשיאה דבי דכתיב (תהלים קלה, ד) יודוך ה' כל מלכי ארץ כי שמעו אמרי פיך מאמר פיך לא נאמר אלא אמרי פיך בשעה שאמר הקב"ה (שמות כ, ב) אנכי ולא יהיה לך אמרו אומות העולם לכבוד עצמו הוא דורש

§ Ulla the Great interpreted a verse homiletically at the entrance to the house of the Nasi. What is the meaning of that which is written: "All the kings of the earth shall give You thanks, O Lord, for they have heard the words of Your mouth" (Psalms 138:4)? It is not stated: The word of Your mouth, in the singular. Rather, the verse uses the expression: "The words of Your mouth," in the plural. To what is this phrase referring? When the Holy One, Blessed be He, said: "I am the Lord your God" (Exodus 20:2), and, in the same verse: "You shall have no other gods before Me," the nations of the world said: He teaches this for His own honor, as both statements entail respect for God.

כיון שאמר (שמות כ, יא) כבד את אביך ואת אמך חזרו והודו למאמרות הראשונות רבא אמר מהכא (תהלים קיט, קס) ראש דברך אמת ראש דברך ולא סוף דברך אלא מסוף דברך ניכר שראש דברך אמת

Once He said: "Honor your father and your mother" (Exodus 20:11), they returned and conceded the truth of the first statements, which is why the verse uses the plural expression: "Words of Your mouth," i.e., all the words of God's mouth. Rava said: This can be derived from here: "The beginning of Your word is truth" (Psalms 119:160). Is the beginning of Your word truth but not the end of Your word? Rather, from the end of Your word it is apparent to everyone that the beginning of Your word is truth.

בעו מיניה מרב עולא עד היכן כיבוד אב ואם אמר להם צאו וראו מה עשה עובד כוכבים אחד באשקלון ודמא בן נתינה שמו פעם אחת בקשו חכמים פרקמטיא בששים ריבוא שכר והיה מפתח מונה תחת מראשותיו של אביו ולא ציערו

The Sages raised a dilemma before Rav Ulla: How far must one go to fulfill the mitzva of honoring one's father and mother? Rav Ulla said to them: Go and see what one gentile did in Ashkelon, and his name was Dama ben Netina. Once the Sages sought to purchase merchandise [perakmatya] from him for six hundred thousand gold dinars' profit, but the key for the container in which the merchandise was kept was placed under his father's head, and he was sleeping at the time. And Dama ben Netina would not disturb his father by waking him, although he could have made a substantial profit.

The rabbis focus on the words of the mouth of God being written in the plural form as opposed to the singu-

lar. The kings giving praise to the Lord due to all of His words and not just a few words (commandments, or NT only) while discarding the rest. This is connected to having no other gods before the Lord God Almighty in heaven. The rabbis say the Lord teaches us this for His own honor. The reason being, as His people, His children, we are to bear His testimonies for His glory. This is paralleled to “All the kings of the earth shall give You thanks, O Lord, for they have heard the words of Your mouth” (*Tehillim / Psalms 138:4*) and one honoring your father and mother (*Shemot / Exodus 20:11*). Our words and our actions should demonstrate honor for our parents, as the Lord says if we do so we will live long in the land. In addition, references to *Tehillim / Psalms 119:160* “The beginning of Your word is truth...” the Lord’s word is truth, and so should ours be if we are modeling our lives after the Lord God in heaven. The extent of honoring our parents is paralleled to honoring the Lord God in heaven. A parable is given of a gentile who had the opportunity to make a large sum of money but out of honor for his father, he did not wake him to get the key to the safe and so he honored his father being a gentile. The idea is if a gentile is doing this, how much more should we be living in the same way?

ו כִּי-רַם יְהוָה וְשָׁפֵל יִרְאֶה וְגִבּוֹהַּ מִמָּרוֹחַק יִידָע: ז אִם-אֵלֶּיךָ | בְּקִרְבַּי צָרָה תִּחַיֵּנִי
 138:6 For though the Lord is exalted, Yet He regards the lowly, But the haughty He knows from afar. 138:7 Though I walk in the midst of trouble, You will revive me; You will stretch forth Your hand against the wrath of my enemies, And Your right hand will save me. 138:8 The Lord will accomplish what concerns me; Your loving-kindness, O Lord, is everlasting; Do not forsake the works of Your hands.(NASB) The Psalmist is saying the Lord takes care of those who are in need, those whom the Psalmist calls “the lowly.” On the other hand, the proud we are told the Lord knows from afar, suggesting that the lowly seek Him in prayer daily, while the proud do not. David believes the hand of the Lord (His right hand) will raise him up and save him from his adversaries. The Psalmist concludes asking the Lord to not forsake the work of His hands within the context of the Lord using him for His purposes. This suggests the Lord has had a hand working in David’s life. The comments about the Lord accomplishing what concerns him parallels what we read in the book of Isaiah.

Isaiah 55:3-11

55:3 ‘Incline your ear and come to Me. Listen, that you may live; And I will make an everlasting covenant with you, According to the faithful mercies shown to David. 55:4 ‘Behold, I have made him a witness to the peoples, A leader and commander for the peoples. 55:5 ‘Behold, you will call a nation you do not know, And a nation which knows you not will run to you, Because of the Lord your God, even the Holy One of Israel; For He has glorified you.’ 55:6 Seek the Lord while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near. 55:7 Let the wicked forsake his way And the unrighteous man his thoughts; And let him return to the Lord, And He will have compassion on him, And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon. 55:8 ‘For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,’ declares the Lord. 55:9 ‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts. 55:10 ‘For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, And do not return there without watering the earth And making it bear and sprout, And furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; 55:11 So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it. (NASB, ג הָטוּ אָזְנוֹכֶם, וּלְכוּ אֵלַי שְׁמְעוּ וּתְחִי נַפְשְׁכֶם וְאָכַרְתֶּם לָכֶם בְּרִית עוֹלָם חֲסִדֵי דָוִד הַנְּאֻמָּנִים: ד הֵן עַד לְאוֹמִים נִתְּתִיו נְגִיד וּמְצִיָּה לְאֻמִּים: ה הֵן גּוֹי לֹא-תִדְעַתְּמוּ וְגוֹי לֹא-יִדְעוּךָ אֵלֶיךָ יִרְוּצוּ לְמַעַן יִהְיֶה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְלִקְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי פִאֲרָךְ: ו דְּרָשׁוּ יְהוָה בְּהִמְצָאוֹ קִרְאוּהוּ בְּהִיּוֹתוֹ קְרוֹב: ז יַעֲזֹב רָשָׁע דְּרָכּוֹ וְאִישׁ אָוֶן מִחֲשַׁבְתּוֹ וְיָשָׁב אֶל-יְהוָה וִירַחֲמֵהוּ וְאֶל-אֱלֹהֵינוּ כִּי-יִרְבֶּה לְסִלּוֹחַ: ח כִּי לֹא מִחֲשַׁבּוֹתַי מִחֲשַׁבּוֹתֵיכֶם וְלֹא דְרָכֵיכֶם דְּרָכֵי נְאֻם יְהוָה: ט כִּי-גִבְהוֹ שָׁמַיִם מְאֹרֶץ כֵּן גִּבְהוֹ דְּרָכֵי מְדַרְכֵיכֶם וּמִחֲשַׁבְתֵּי

מִמְחֻשְׁבְּתֵיכֶם: י כִּי כַּאֲשֶׁר יֵרֵד הַגֶּשֶׁם וְהַשֶּׁלֶג מִן-הַשָּׁמַיִם וְשָׁמָּה לֹא יָשׁוּב כִּי אִם-הֲרִוּהָ אֶת-הָאָרֶץ
וְהוֹלִידָהּ וְהִצְמִיחָהּ וְנָתַן גֶּרֶע לְזֶרַע וְלֶחֶם לְאֹכְלֵי: יא כִּן יִהְיֶה דְבַרִּי אֲשֶׁר יֵצֵא מִפִּי לֹא-יָשׁוּב אֵלַי רִיקָם
(כִּי אִם-עֲשֹׂהָ אֶת-אֲשֶׁר חִפְצָתִי וְהִצְלִיחַ אֲשֶׁר שָׁלַחְתִּיו:

The prophet Isaiah calls out to the people of Israel to listen to the Lord (וּלְכוּ אֵלַי שְׁמְעוּ וּתְהִי נִפְשְׁכֶם). Listening in this case is the word שְׁמְעוּ meaning to hear. Hearing the Lord, actually hearing the Lord means that one must pay attention to what the Lord is saying. This is paralleled to the everlasting covenant and life. Note Isaiah suggests this is due to the faithful mercies shown to David, this draws in his merits, and his way of life as an example to us that we are to always listen to the word of the Lord and to repent when we have sinned. This is explained in his statement, 55:6 *Seek the Lord while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near. 55:7 Let the wicked forsake his way And the unrighteous man his thoughts; And let him return to the Lord, And He will have compassion on him, And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon. 55:8 'For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,' declares the Lord. (NASB)* Notice how the Lord allows a certain amount of time for repentance. Once we have passed that time, there is little hope. The Lord is compassionate and merciful to forgive. The Lord says through Isaiah, 55:10 *'For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, And do not return there without watering the earth And making it bear and sprout, And furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; 55:11 So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it. (NASB)* This parallels the Psalmist in *Tehillim / Psalms 138:8* when the Psalmist states the Lord will accomplish what concerns him. Ibn Ezra on Isaiah 55:3 Part 2 and 3 states the following:

Ibn Ezra on Isaiah 55:3 Part 2

And your soul shall live. That is, your soul shall live for ever after the death of the body, or you will receive new life through Messiah, when you will return to the Divine Law.

Ibn Ezra on Isaiah 55:3 Part 3

An everlasting covenant, that will never expire. The sure mercy of David, that is, like the covenant which I made with David and the kindness which I showed to him, promising him my mercy will I keep for him for evermore, etc. (Ps. 89:29). It is also possible, that by David in this verse Messiah is meant, who will be of the family of David; as the prophet is sometimes called Israel for the same reason; and the meaning of חסדי דוד הנאמנים is in that case: for the kindness of Messiah is sure. This explanation is supported by the next verse.

Ibn Ezra believes in the afterlife saying the soul will live forever after the death of the body. He also states that we will receive “*new life through the Messiah*” when one returns to the Torah. Note how the Torah and the Messiah are connected. The commentary states “*for the kindness of Messiah is sure. This explanation is supported by the next verse,*” 55:4 *'Behold, I have made him a witness to the peoples, A leader and commander for the peoples. (NASB)* This parallels the NT descriptions of the Messiah Yeshua. We do not have to doubt who Yeshua is as the Messiah of God and His purpose to lead us in righteousness, holiness, and truth, and by faith in his life and his merits we have eternal life. If we truly believe this, we will apply these truths and Yeshua’s way of life to ours, for the glory of God.

Rabbinic Commentary

The Rabbinic Commentary (Midrash) on *Tehillim / Psalms 138* has 2 parts. Reading through the Midrash we will be looking at Part 1 and 2. Let’s begin by outlining *Midrash Tehillim Chapter 138, Part 1 and 2.*

Outline of Midrash Tehillim / Psalms, Chapter 138, Part 1 and 2

Part 1

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying, “A Psalm of David. I will give You thanks with my whole heart (Tehillim / Psalms 138:1).”
- The פתיחתא (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “Isaiah said, The grass withers, the flower fades (Isaiah 40:7). When these things occur, what should you do?”
- The משל (mashal) “the parable,” goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis discuss what do you do when the grass withers and the flower fades?
- The נמשל (Nimshal) “expansion on the parable” expands upon the משל (mashal), the rabbis say this refers to the wicked nations, the Lord will cause our enemies to fade and wither.
- The Concluding phrase says, “Even after death, the Prophets are called gods, as you find it said of Samuel, I saw gods ascending our of the earth (1 Samuel 28:13). Accordingly, Before the gods will I sing praises unto You means that even under the weight of the judgments upon us, we will sing praise unto You.”

Part 2

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying, “I will bow down toward Your Holy Temple, and give thanks unto Your name (Tehillim / Psalms 138:2).”
- The פתיחתא (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “As Scripture says, The Lord has taken away your judgments, He has cast out your enemy; the King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of you; you will not fear evil any more.”
- The משל (mashal) “the parable,” goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis speak of the enemies of Israel waning away (withering).
- The נמשל (Nimshal) “expansion on the parable” expands upon the משל (mashal), the rabbis say the name of the Lord will be glorified because He saves His people, His word comes true!
- The Concluding phrase says, “Hence, it is also written, Then was our mouth filled with laughter; and our tongue with singing; then said they among the nations, The Lord has magnified to do with them (Tehillim / Psalms 126:2).”

Midrash Tehillim 138 Part 1 opens with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying, “A Psalm of David. I will give You thanks with my whole heart (Tehillim / Psalms 138:1).” The פתיחתא (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “Isaiah said, The grass withers, the flower fades (Isaiah 40:7). When these things occur, what should you do?” The midrash begins with grass withering, flowers fading, and man praising the Lord giving thanks for how He has worked in our lives. This sounds like a description of growing old gracefully. In Tehillim / Psalms 71, the psalm is permeated with a deep personal understanding and practical knowledge of the Lord God Almighty. The author of the psalm wrote that he had been taught of God even from his youth (71:17) which states that he had godly parents. The man knew God as his refuge (71:1 and 7 “strong refuge”), and as his righteous Savior (71:2). The psalmist mentions the righteousness of God frequently in Tehillim / Psalms 71 (71:2, 15, 16, 19, 24), which illustrates His faithfulness to His own people in keeping His promises. David calls God his rock of habitation, his rock and fortress (71:3), his hope and confidence (71:5). The psalmist speaks of God’s mighty deeds (71:16), His strength and power (71:18), and the great things He has done (71:19). He believes it was the Lord who brought him into trouble and Lord who delivered and restored him (71:20). The God of Israel was his source of comfort in this trial (71:21). The Lord God had redeemed his soul (71:23). He proclaimed that his mouth was filled with God’s praise and glory and righteousness all day long (71:8, 22, 23, 24). As this man grew older, he knew God. Based upon his writings, he had known the Lord for many years and had proved God’s faithfulness

in a number of previous difficult situations. Because he could see the Lord working in his life, his trusting in the Lord was not a matter of, “*God, if You exist, whoever You are, if You’re out there I need your help!*” David was not taking a blind leap of faith because he knew his God in a personal, practical, and proven way. The practical aspect to our faith is found in the Torah.

The entire Midrash states the following:

<p>מדרש תהלים פרק קלח סימן א</p> <p>א לדוד אודך בכל לבי וגו'. אמר ישעיה יבש חציר נבל ציץ (ישעיה מ ז), ואתם מה לכם לעשות, על הר גבוה עלי לך מבשרת ציון (שם שם ישעיהו מ' ט), אמרו ישראל מתייראין אנו מפני שונאים, אמר הקב"ה השונאים חציר היו, כלומר כל זמן שהיו קיימים הייתם מתייראים מהם, עכשיו שאבדו, כי רוח ה' נשבה בו (שם שם ישעיהו מ' ז), ממי אתם מתייראים, הרימי בכח קולך וגו' הרימי אל תיראי וגו' (שם שם ישעיהו מ' ט), אמרו ישראל אימתי אנו מקל-סין, כשישלם גמול לרשעים, שנאמר כאשר עשית יעשה לך גמולך ישוב בראשך (עובדיה א טו), מה היה הגמול שנפץ את עוללי ישראל אל הסלע, שנאמר אשרי שיאחז ונפץ את עו-לליך, אל הסלע (תהלים קלז ט), אותה השעה מקלסין ישראל בכל לבם להקב"ה, שנאמר אודך בכל לבי, מכאן אתה למד שכל זמן שהר-שעים בעולם הם משעבדים את ישראל, ודוח-קים אותם, ואינם פנויים לקלס בכל לבם, ואם אובדים אותה שעה אודך בכל לבי וגו'. נגד אלהים אזמרך. נגד סנהדרין, שנאמר אלהים לא תקלל (שמות כב כז), ונגד הנביאים שנק-ראו אלהים, שנאמר ומשה איש האלהים (דה"א דברי הימים א' כג יד), ויבא איש אלהים אל עלי (ש"א שמואל א' ב כז), ואף במיתתו נק-ראו אלהים, שכן אתה מוצא בשמואל (ראיתי) אלהים [ראיתי] עולים מן הארץ (שם שמואל א' כח יג), לכך נאמר נגד אלהים אזמרך, נגד הצרות הבאות עלינו אנו מזמרין לך.</p>	<p>Midrash Tehillim 138, Part 1</p> <p>1. A Psalm of David. I will give You thanks with my whole heart (Tehillim / Psalms 138:1). Isaiah said, The grass withers, the flower fades (Isaiah 40:7). When these things occur, what should you do? Then, O you that tell good tidings to Zion, get you up into the high mountain (Isaiah 40:9). When the children of Israel say, We are afraid of them that hate us, the Holy One blessed be He, will answer, They that hate you are become like grass that is, as long as they were standing, you had reason to fear them, but now that they had withered the breath of the Lord blows upon it (Isaiah 40:7) what have you to fear? Therefore, O you that tell good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up your voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid (Isaiah 40:9). The children of Israel say, when will we offer praise? When God requites the wicked for their dealing, as it is said, As you have done, it will be done unto you; your dealing will return upon your own head (Obadiah 1:15). What was Edom's dealing? Edom dashed the little ones of Israel against the rock. For this reason it is said, O Edom, Happy will he be that takes and dashes your little ones against the rock (Tehillim / Psalms 137:9). In that hour the children of Israel will give thanks with all their heart to the Holy One blessed be He, as it is said I will give You thanks with my whole heart. Thus you learn that as long as the wicked are in the world, they enslave the children of Israel and oppress them, so that the children of Israel cannot take breath to thank God with all their heart. But when the wicked wither away, then I will give You thanks with my whole heart. Before the gods will I sing praise unto You (Tehillim / Psalms 138:1) that is, before the judges of the Sanhedrin, concerning whom it is said, You will not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of your people (Shemot / Exodus 22:27). Or, the phrase before the gods may refer to the Prophets who are called gods, as it is said Moshe, the man, the god (1 Chronicles 23:14), and as it is also said There came a man, a god, unto Eli (1 Samuel 2:27). Even after death, the Prophets are called gods, as you find it said of Samuel, I saw gods ascending our of the earth (1 Samuel 28:13). Accordingly, Before the gods will I sing praises unto You means that even under the weight of the judgments upon us, we will sing praise unto You.</p>
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The rabbis ask the question of what should be done when the grass withers and the flowers fade? Rather than aging gracefully, the rabbis say this refers to the wicked nations, the Lord will cause our enemies to fade and wither. The rabbis interpret this to say the following:

When these things occur, what should you do? Then, O you that tell good tidings to Zion, get you up into the high mountain (Isaiah 40:9). When the children of Israel say, We are afraid of them that hate us, the Holy One blessed be He, will answer, They that hate you are become like grass that is, as long as they were standing, you had reason to fear them, but now that they had withered the breath of

the Lord blows upon it (Isaiah 40:7) what have you to fear? Therefore, O you that tell good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up your voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid (Isaiah 40:9). The children of Israel say, when will we offer praise? When God requites the wicked for their dealing, as it is said, As you have done, it will be done unto you; your dealing will return upon your own head (Obadiah 1:15). What was Edom's dealing? Edom dashed the little ones of Israel against the rock. For this reason it is said, O Edom, Happy will he be that takes and dashes your little ones against the rock (Tehillim / Psalms 137:9).

The Midrash has the rabbis calling upon the people to sing praises to the Lord in the midst of her enemies. The Edomites are said to have dashed the little children upon the rocks in Israel. The sins of the wicked are said to return unto them, and the same will happen to them. This draws in the concept of doing what is right as Obadiah states, “*As you have done, it will be done unto you; your dealing will return upon your own head (Obadiah 1:15).*” To live righteously, its fruit, its reward is a life that is filled with joy and peace, and within the context of what we do returning upon our head. This relates to living in righteousness, justice, and truth, and this is the desirable thing. This also draws in the context of getting old (grass withers and flower fades) and doing so for the glory of God. This means growing old while bearing His testimonies in a way that brings glory to His name! This means living and dying in a way that shows others that the Lord God of Israel is the all-satisfying Treasure that He is. This suggests that we not live in ways that makes this world look like our treasure instead. Growing old as Isaiah describes the grass withering and the flower fading means we take whatever strength that we have, and the resources at our disposal to treasure the Lord God Almighty, our Father in heaven, and His Messiah Yeshua, in the joy of serving others. This is what Paul meant when he wrote to Timothy in *2 Timothy 4:7-8*, “*I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.*” Paul wrote of the reward of the final righteousness that comes to those who love the Lord’s appearing, who are treasuring Him, and who continue to serve Him with what they have been given. The treasuring of the Lord God Almighty, His Words, and His Messiah involves the fight that is fought, the finished-race, and the kept-faith (faithfulness). One example of this is found in Christian history, Polycarp the Bishop of Smyrna in Asia Minor.

Polycarp was the Bishop of Smyrna in Asian Minor. He lived from about AD 70 to 155. He is famous for his martyrdom which is recounted in The Martyrdom of Polycarp and found in Henry Bettenson's Documents of the Christian Church (Oxford, 1967, pp. 9-12). Tensions had risen between the Christians and those who venerated Caesar. The Christians were called atheists because they refused to worship any of the Roman gods and had no images or shrines of their own. At one point, a mob cried out, “Away with the atheists; let search be made of Polycarp.” At a cottage outside the city, he remained in prayer and did not flee. He had a vision of a burning pillow and said to his companion, “I must needs be burned alive.” The authorities sought him, and he was betrayed to them by one of his servants under torture. He came down from an upper room and talked with his accusers. “All that were present marveled at his age and constancy, and that there was so much ado about the arrest of such an old man” (p. 9). He asked for permission to pray before being taken away. They allowed it and “being so filled with the grace of God that for two hours he could not hold his peace” (p. 10). In the town, the sheriff met him and took him into his carriage and tried to persuade him to deny Christ, “Now what harm is there in saying ‘Lord Caesar,’ and in offering incense . . . and thus saving thyself?” He answered, “I do not intend to do what you advise.” Angered, they hastened him to the stadium where there was a great tumult. “How Can I Blaspheme My King Who Saved Me?” The proconsul tried again to persuade him to save himself, “Have respect to thine age . . . Swear by the genius of Caesar . . . Repent . . . Say, ‘Away with the atheists! [that is, Christians].” Polycarp turned to the “mob of lawless

heathen in the stadium, and he waved his hand at them, and looking up to heaven he groaned and said, 'Away with the atheists.'" Again the proconsul said, "Swear, and I will release thee; curse the Christ." To this Polycarp gave his most famous response, "Eighty and six years have I served him, and he hath done me no wrong; how then can I blaspheme my king who saved me?" The proconsul said again, "Swear by the genius of Caesar." And Polycarp answered, "If thou dost vainly imagine that I would swear by the genius of Caesar, as thou sayest, pretending not to know what I am, hear plainly that I am a Christian." The proconsul replied, "I have wild beasts; if thou repent not, I will throw thee to them." To which Polycarp replied, "Send for them. For repentance from better to worse is not a change permitted to us; but to change from cruelty to righteousness is a noble thing" (p. 11). The proconsul said, "If thou dost despise the wild beasts I will make thee to be consumed by fire, if thou repent not." Polycarp answered, "Thou threatenest the fire that burns for an hour and in a little while is quenched; for thou knowest not of the fire of the judgment to come, and the fire of the eternal punishment, reserved for the ungodly. But why delayest thou? Bring what thou wilt." The proconsul sent word that it should be proclaimed aloud to the crowd three times, "Polycarp hath confessed himself to be a Christian." After the crowd found out that there were no beasts available for the task, they cried out for him to be burned alive. The wood was gathered, and as they were about to nail his hands to the timber he said, "Let me be as I am. He that granted me to endure the fire will grant me also to remain at the pyre unmoved, without being secured with nails." The fire did not consume him, but an executioner drove a dagger into his body. "And all the multitude marveled at the great difference between the unbelievers and the elect." (p. 12).

Polycarp ended well, he maintained the faith, he went to his death believing words are synonymous to disobedience, to acknowledge Caesar as Lord would be to blaspheme Yeshua and the Father in heaven. This is what Paul meant of the reward of the final righteousness that comes to those who love the Lord's appearing, who are treasuring Him, and who continue to serve Him with what they have been given. The treasuring of the Lord God Almighty, His Words, and His Messiah include the fight that is fought, the finished-race, and the kept-faith (faithfulness).

Midrash Tehillim 138 Part 1 concludes saying, "Even after death, the Prophets are called gods, as you find it said of Samuel, I saw gods ascending out of the earth (1 Samuel 28:13). Accordingly, Before the gods will I sing praises unto You means that even under the weight of the judgments upon us, we will sing praise unto You." This is the very thing Polycarp did according to the record of his death. He stood still while the fire burned and the fire did not kill him, so the executioner drove a dagger into his body and he died. Praises to the Lord go by reason that we are counted worthy to suffer for the Messiah. Acts 5:41 *The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name. (NIV)* When you suffer for the Name of Yeshua, suffering disgrace, pain, or hardship, do you praise the Lord being counted worthy to suffer for His Name?

Midrash Tehillim 138 Part 2 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying, "I will bow down toward Your Holy Temple, and give thanks unto Your name (Tehillim / Psalms 138:2)." The פתיחה (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, "As Scripture says, The Lord has taken away your judgments, He has cast out your enemy; the King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of you; you will not fear evil any more." Based upon this interpretation, the judgments of God are found within the enemy being present to cause harm. The entire Midrash states the following:

<p>מדרש תהלים פרק קלח סימן ב</p> <p>ב אשתחוה אל היכל קדשך ואודה את שמך. וכה"א ביום ההוא יאמר לירושלים אל תיראי וגו' (צפניה ג טז), כך כשיאבדו רשעים מן העולם, ישראל מקלסין להקב"ה, כשיבנה היכל ובית מקדשו אותה שעה אשתחוה אל היכל קדשך, למה כי הגדלת על כל שמך אמרתך, אמרו ישראל להקב"ה הגדלת על כל מה שאמרת לנו על ידי הנביאים, ומה אמרת, והיה אחרי כן אשפוך את רוחי וגו' (יואל ג א), והיה ביום ההוא יטפו ההרים עסס (שם יואל ד יח), וכה"א אל תיראי אדמה וגו' (שם יואל ב כא), למה, כי הגדיל ה' לעשות (שם שם יואל ב'), וכתוב אז ימלא שחוק פינו וגו' הגדיל ה' לעשות עם אלה וגו' (תהלים קכו ב).</p>	<p>Midrash Tehillim 138, Part 2</p> <p>2. <i>I will bow down toward Your Holy Temple, and give thanks unto Your name (Tehillim / Psalms 138:2). As Scripture says, The Lord has taken away your judgments, He has cast out your enemy; the King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of you; you will not fear evil any more. In that day it will be said to Jerusalem, Fear you not; O Zion, let not your hands be slack (Zephaniah 3:15-16). So after the wicked have withered away from the earth, the children of Israel will praise the Holy One blessed be He. And when the Temple and its holy shrine are rebuilt, in that hour I will bow down toward Your mercy and for Your truth. Wherefore? Because You have magnified Your name and Your word above all things (Tehillim / Psalms 138:2). That is, the children of Israel will say to the Holy One blessed be He, You have made Your name and Your word greater than all the things which You did promise us through the Prophets. And what did You promise? Not merely And it will come to pass afterward, that I will pour out My spirit upon all flesh (Joel 3:1); but also, it will come to pass in that day, that the mountains will drop down sweet wine (Joel 4:18). Hence, Scripture says, Fear not, O land, be glad and rejoice (Joel 2:21). Wherefore rejoice? Because The Lord will do great things. Hence, it is also written, Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing; then said they among the nations, The Lord has magnified to do with them (Tehillim / Psalms 126:2).</i></p>
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The Rabbis say the benefit of the covenant relationship with God is *“the King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of you; you will not fear evil any more.”* This causes us to understand that the Lord God is going with His people, He will be in their midst, He will protect them, and not allow harm to fall upon them. In the Torah we read of the Lord God of Israel commanding himself and the people to move out and to lead the nation toward Canaan after having spent time (about a year) at the mountain of Sinai. Note how this command is not a new command, to lead the people. Note what Moshe says in *Shemot / Exodus 33:12* *“Moshe said to the LORD, “You have been telling me, ‘Lead these people,’ but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. You have said, ‘I know you by name and you have found favor with me.’” (NIV)* The phrase *“you have been telling me”* suggests that the Lord has been giving Moshe the command to lead Israel up to the Land of Canaan. The Lord states in *Shemot / Exodus 3* *“Therefore, come now, and I will send you to Pharaoh, so that you may bring My people, the sons of Israel, out of Egypt.” (NIV)* The same command is reiterated in chapter 32:34 *“But go now, lead the people where I told you.”* What is bothering Moshe is what he is not being told, who will go with him. Here it seems as if Moshe is all alone. His fear isn't over Pharaoh or Egypt, but of Canaan and the populations inhabiting Canaan. Take for example in *Shemot / Exodus 17* the war with the Amalekites. This war was won only by prevailing prayer, Moshe had uplifted hands before God praying on behalf of the people. Because of this, Moshe may now have been more aware of the rebelliousness and waywardness of the people then ever before. In order to conquer the Land, they needed to be a faithful and praying people. Take Aaron Moshe's brother, who initially had been a help, comfort, and encouragement has now become something other than Moshe had hopped in Parashat Ki Tisa having facilitated idolatry in Moshe's absence. Having this in mind, it is not surprising Moshe had some reservations about setting out for Canaan, and it is no wonder he asked the Lord who is going with him as the Lord had promised. The Lord told Moshe he would send His messenger ahead of Israel into the Land previously. (*Shemot / Exodus 23:20* *“Behold, I am going to send an angel before you to guard you along the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared.” NASB*) Here in *Shemot / Exodus 33:14* the Lord says Him himself will go with Moshe and the people. *And He said, “My presence shall*

go with you, and I will give you rest.”) This is significant because the presence of God includes the power of God going with His people to overcome evil in the Land, to live righteously before Him, and to walk in His ways. Without the Lord’s help to do these things it is impossible. This is the point and purpose of the Messiah coming to show us the way, to lead us in righteousness, and to empower us by God’s Spirit. Rashi states the following in His commentary regarding this statement:

Rashi on Exodus 33:14 Part 1

וַיֹּאמֶר פָּנַי יֵלְכוּ AND HE SAID, MY FACE SHALL GO WITH THEE Understand this as the Targum renders it: My Shechinah will go — I will no more send an angel with you, but I Myself will go. פָּנַי here has the sense of “Self” as in (II Samuel 17:11) “and that thou go in the battle in thine own person (פָּנֶיךָ)”. (תְּהִי וְאֶנִּיחָ לָךְ):

The term messenger draws in the context of Moshe having doubts as this is related to being a reminder of Aaron his brother and the failures of the people again and again. Moshe was apprehensive about the Lord sending a fellow laborer, this messenger. Moshe made the petition, “Now, therefore, I pray Thee, if I have found favor in Thy sight, let me know Thy ways, that I may know Thee, so that I may find favor in Thy sight. Consider too, that this nation is Thy people” (Shemot / Exodus 33:13). Moshe asked that the Lord Himself go with him and Israel because without the Lord guiding, protecting, and sustaining them, all of Israel will be destroyed. All of these things are related to what the Midrash states “The Lord has taken away your judgments, He has cast out your enemy; the King of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of you; you will not fear evil any more. In that day it will be said to Jerusalem, Fear you not; O Zion, let not your hands be slack (Zephaniah 3:15-16).” We do not have to fear with the Lord dwelling in our midst. However, if we are living in unrepentant sin, there is much to worry about!

The Midrash goes on to speak of the Lord keeping His promises found in the rebuilding of the Temple. Midrash Tehillim 138 Part 2 concludes saying, “You have magnified Your name and Your word above all things (Tehillim / Psalms 138:2). That is, the children of Israel will say to the Holy One blessed be He, You have made Your name and Your word greater than all the things which You did promise us through the Prophets. And what did You promise? Not merely And it will come to pass afterward, that I will pour out My spirit upon all flesh (Joel 3:1); but also, it will come to pass in that day, that the mountains will drop down sweet wine (Joel 4:18). Hence, Scripture says, Fear not, O land, be glad and rejoice (Joel 2:21). Wherefore rejoice? Because The Lord will do great things. Hence, it is also written, Then was our mouth filled with laughter; and our tongue with singing; then said they among the nations, The Lord has magnified to do with them (Tehillim / Psalms 126:2).” Note how the Midrash emphasizes the Lord placing His name and His word about all things. Within the Psalmists words, the rabbis claim are a prophetic message “You have magnified Your name and Your word above all things (Tehillim / Psalms 138:2)” leads to the prophet Joel.

Joel 2:26-3:2

וְאִכְלֹתֶם אֶכּוֹל וְשָׂבוּעַ וְהִלַּלְתֶּם אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה עִמָּכֶם לְהַפְלִיא וְלֹא־יִבְשׂוּ עַמִּי וַיִּדְעוּתֶם כִּי בִקְרֹב יִשְׂרָאֵל. 2:26 And you shall eat your fill And praise the name of the LORD your God Who dealt so wondrously with you— My people shall be shamed no more. 2:27 אֲנִי וְאַנְי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם וְאֵין עוֹד וְלֹא־יִבְשׂוּ עַמִּי לְעוֹלָם: (ס) וְהָיָה אֲחֵרֵיכֶם אֲשַׁפְּוּ אֶת־רוּחִי עַל־כָּל־בָּשָׂר וְנִבְּאוּ בְנֵיכֶם וּבָנוּתֵיכֶם וְקָנִיכֶם. 3:1 After that, I will pour out My spirit on all flesh; Your sons and daughters shall prophesy; Your old men shall dream dreams, And your young men shall see visions. 3:2 I will even

pour out My spirit Upon male and female slaves in those days.

Note how in the prophet Joel, he states that the Lord will also pour out His Spirit upon the male and female slaves. (*Joel 3:2*) This is significant if we consider the slaves, from a Torah perspective, the Lord God Almighty set Israel free from slavery. Who are these slaves? If we remember what is written in the Torah and in the book of Joshua, those nations that remained in the Land, Israel put them to work as slaves. So what He may be referring to here is the Lord will also pour out His Spirit on the nations in the last days. This will then cause “*our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing; then said they among the nations, The Lord has magnified to do with them (Tehillim / Psalms 126:2).*” The nations will glorify the Lord God of Israel. To glorify God is related to speaking of his wonders and living as if we believe it. glorifying God involves honoring His name, praising His name, and worshiping the Lord, to acknowledge His greatness and giving him honor, particularly in the way we treat others. Stephen, in his final comments before he was stoned to death for his faith, retold the story of God’s dealings with Israel from the time Abraham left his country in obedience to God’s command, all the way to the coming of the Messiah, the “*Righteous One of God,*” whom the religious leaders had betrayed and murdered. When we speak of God’s work in our lives, how He saved us from sin, and to overcome sin in our lives by the marvelous works He does in our hearts and minds every day, we glorify Him before others. The way we live our lives, if we do so according to His Word, we bear His testimonies before all the world. Even though others don’t always want to hear our glorifying God, the Lord is pleased when we obey His commands and speak of His mercies each day. The crowd who heard Stephen hated what he said, covering their ears and rushing at him to stone him. “*But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God*” (*Acts 7:55*). To glorify God is to proclaim His attributes, His holiness, faithfulness, mercy, grace, love, majesty, sovereignty, power, and omniscience, and telling others about the awesome nature of the salvation only He can offer. Let’s Pray!

Heavenly Father,

Thank You Lord for Your mercy and the great work that you are doing in our lives. We believe You are able to overcome all things, from saving us from our enemies, to the deliverance from sin, and even to work in our hearts to deeply, truly, and honestly seek you all the days of our lives. We recognize the weaknesses in our strength and resolve to serve You and to do what is expected, to be humble and to pray and to remain in Your word. Lord help us to have the strength to stand for truth and life, to have the desire to seek You in prayer and in Your Word, to have faith in Yeshua Your Messiah, and to love our neighbor each day. We thank You Lord for Your continued faithfulness to Your promises and to us. Help us to grow in our faith, to walk in the spirit, and apply these truths to our lives. We praise Your Holy Name and give You all of the honor, and the glory, and the praise forever and ever.

In Yeshua’s (Jesus’) Name we pray! Amen!

Be Blessed in Yeshua, Christ our Messiah!

הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:

Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,
“Yeshua” King Messiah forever and ever

Notes