

ו פְּלִיאָה [פְּלִיאָה] דַּעַת מְמַנִּי
נְשַׁגְבָּה לֹא-אוּכַל לָהּ: ז אָנָּה
אֵלֶּה מְרוּחָהּ וְאָנָּה מְפַנֶּיךָ אַבְרָחָ:
ח אִם-אָסַק שְׁמַיִם שָׁם אָתָּה
וְאַצְיִיעָה שְׂאוֹל הַנֶּגֶד: ט אֲשָׂא כִנֹּר
פִּי-שָׁחַר אֲשַׁכְנֶנָּה בְּאֶתְרֵי יָם: י
גַּם-שָׁם יָדָה תִּנְחַנְנִי וְתֹאחַזְנִי יְמִי-
נָדָה: יא וְאָמַר אֶה-חֲשֵׁךְ יְשׁוּפְנִי
וְלִילָה אִוֵּר בְּעַדְנִי: יב גַּם-חֲשֵׁךְ
לֹא-יִחְשֵׁיךָ מִמֶּךָ וְלִילָה כִּיּוֹם יֵאָרֵר
כְּחֵשִׁיכָה כְּאוֹרָה: יג כִּי-אָתָּה
קִנִּיתָ כְּלִיתִי תִסְכְּנִי בְּכֶטֶן אֲמִי: יד
אוֹדְךָ עַל כִּי נִוְרָאוֹת נִפְלִיתִי נִפְּ-
לָאִים מִעֲשֵׂיךָ וְנִפְשֵׁי יַדְעַת מְאֹד:
טו לֹא-נִכְחַד עֲצָמֵי מִמֶּךָ אֲשָׁר-
עֲשִׂיתִי בְּסִתֵּר רַקְמָתִי בְּתַחְתִּיּוֹת
אֶרֶץ: טז גְּלָמִי | רְאוּ עֵינֶיךָ וְעַל-
סִפְרֶךָ כֶּלֶם יִפְתְּבוּ יְמִים יִצְרוּ וְלֹא
[וְלוֹ] אֶחָד בָּהֶם: יז וְלִי מֵה-יִקְרוּ
רְעִיךָ אֵל מָה עֲצָמוּ רְאֵשֵׁיהֶם: יח
אֶסְפָּרֶם מִחוּל יִרְבוּן הַקִּיצֵתִי וְעוֹ-
דֵי עֲמָךְ: יט אִם-תִּקְטַל אֱלוֹהִי |
רְשַׁע וְאַנְשֵׁי דָמִים סוּרוּ מִנִּי: כ
אֲשָׁר יֹאמְרוּ לְמִזְמָה נִשְׂאָ לְשׂוֹאֵ
עֲרִיךָ: כא הֲלוֹא-מִשְׁנֵאֵיךָ יִהְיֶה
| אֲשַׁנָּא וּבְתַקוּמְיָהּ אֶתְקוּטֵט: כב
תִּכְלִית שְׁנָאָה שְׁנָאָתִים לְאוֹיְבָיִם
הֵיוּ לִי: כג תִּקְרַנִּי אֵל וְדַע לְבָבִי
בְּחַנְנִי וְדַע שְׂרַעְפִּי: כד וּרְאֵה
אִם-דֶּרֶךְ-עֲצָב כִּי וּנְחַנֵּי בְּדֶרֶךְ
עוֹלָם:

ו מכסיא למידע פרישא מנדעא מיני
איתקפת איזוקפת לא איכול לה: ז אן
האן אזיל מן קדם זעפך והאן מן קדמך
איפוך: ח אין אסק לשמיא תמן אנת
את ואימוך לשיוול הא תמן מימרך: ט
אזקוף ציצין דקריין אשרי בסופי ימא
מערבא: י לחוד תמן אידך תדבר יתי
ותחדינני ימינך: יא ואמרית ברם חושך
דמחברבר עלי וליליא קביל אמטולתי
קבלא עלי ברם ליליא מנהר עלי: יב
לחוד חשוכא לא יחשיך מן מימרך ולי-
ליא היך יומא ינהיר היך חשוכא היך
נהורא שויין: יג ארום אנת את קני-
תא כולייתי אישתיית לי בכריסא דאמי-
דאומי: יד אודינך מטול דדחילן עבדתא
פרישית פרישן עובדיך ונפשי חכמא
לחדא: טו לא אתכסא גרמי מינך די
אתעבידית בטומרא אצטיירית בכריסא
דאמא דאומי: טז גושמי חמיין עיינך
ועל ספר דכרנך כולהון יומי מכתבן
ביומא דאתברי עלמא מן שירויא אית-
בריין כולהון ביריתא בשיתא יומין ולית
בחד חד יומא ביניהון: יז ולי וקדמי
כמה יקירין אינון רחמיין צדיקיא אלהא
וכמה איתחיילו רבניהון: יח אימינון
בעלמא הדין יתיר מן חלא יסגעון את-
ערית בעלמא דאתי ועד כדון אנא גבך:
יט אין תקטול אלהא לרשיעא וגברין
דחייבין דין דקטול יזרון מיני: כ די
יימון בשמך על ניכלא משתבעין על מגן
בעלי דבכך: כא הלא מסנאך יהוה אנא
סני וכד קיימין לקובלך אנא מרג מרג:
כב עד שיציאות סניתא סניתינון לבע-
לי דבבין הויין לי: כג חקרני פשפש
יתי אלהא וידע רעיוני בחון יתי וידע
הירהורי: כד וחמי אין אורח דטעין בי
ודבר יתי באורח תריצי עלמא:

139:6 ἐθαυμαστώθη ἡ γνῶσις σου ἐξ ἑμοῦ
ἐκραταιώθη οὐ μὴ δύνωμαι πρὸς αὐτήν
139:7 τοῦ πορευθῆ ἀπὸ τοῦ πνεύματός
σου καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ προσώπου σου τοῦ φύγω
139:8 ἐὰν ἀναβῶ εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν σὺ εἶ
ἐκεῖ ἐὰν καταβῶ εἰς τὸν ἕδην πάρει 139:9
ἐὰν ἀναλάβοιμι τὰς πτέρυγάς μου κατ'
ὄρθρον καὶ κατασκηνώσω εἰς τὰ ἔσχατα
τῆς θαλάσσης 139:10 καὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖ ἡ χεῖρ
σου ὁδηγήσει με καὶ καθέξει με ἡ δεξιὰ σου
139:11 καὶ εἶπα ἄρα σκότος καταπατήσει
με καὶ νῦξ φωτισμὸς ἐν τῇ τρυφῇ μου
139:12 ὅτι σκότος οὐ σκοτισθήσεται ἀπὸ
σοῦ καὶ νῦξ ὡς ἡμέρα φωτισθήσεται ὡς
τὸ σκότος αὐτῆς οὕτως καὶ τὸ φῶς αὐτῆς
139:13 ὅτι σὺ ἐκτίσω τοὺς νεφρούς
μου κύριε ἀντελάβου μου ἐκ γαστρὸς
μητρὸς μου 139:14 ἐξομολογήσομαί σοι
ὅτι φοβερῶς ἐθαυμαστώθην θαυμάσια
τὰ ἔργα σου καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ μου γινώσκει
σφόδρα 139:15 οὐκ ἐκρύβη τὸ ὅστούν
μου ἀπὸ σοῦ ὃ ἐποίησας ἐν κρυφῇ καὶ
ἡ ὑπόστασις μου ἐν τοῖς κατωτάτοις
τῆς γῆς 139:16 τὸ ἀκατέργαστόν μου
εἶδον οἱ ὀφθαλμοί σου καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ
βιβλίον σου πάντες γραφήσονται ἡμέρας
πλασθήσονται καὶ οὐθεὶς ἐν αὐτοῖς
139:17 ἔμοι δὲ λίαν ἐτιμήθησαν οἱ φίλοι
σου ὁ θεὸς λίαν ἐκραταιώθησαν αἱ ἀρχαὶ
αὐτῶν 139:18 ἐξαριθμήσομαι αὐτούς καὶ
ὑπὲρ ἄμμων πληθυνθήσονται ἐξηγέρθη
καὶ ἔτι εἰμὶ μετὰ σοῦ 139:19 ἐὰν
ἀποκτείνης ἁμαρτωλοὺς ὁ θεὸς ἄνδρες
αἱμάτων ἐκκλίνατε ἀπ' ἑμοῦ 139:20
ὅτι ἔρεῖς εἰς διαλογισμὸν λήμψονται εἰς
ματαιότητα τὰς πόλεις σου 139:21 οὐχὶ
τοὺς μισοῦντάς σε κύριε ἐμίσησα καὶ
ἐπὶ τοῖς ἐχθροῖς σου ἐξετηκόμην 139:22
τέλειον μῖσος ἐμίσουν αὐτούς εἰς ἐχθροὺς
ἐγένοντό μοι 139:23 δοκίμασόν με ὁ θεὸς
καὶ γνῶθι τὴν καρδίαν μου ἔτασόν με καὶ
γνῶθι τὰς τρίβους μου 139:24 καὶ ἰδὲ εἰ
ὁδὸς ἀνομίας ἐν ἐμοί καὶ ὁδηγήσόν με ἐν
ὁδῷ αἰωνία

<p>Tehillim / Psalms 139 139:1 O Lord, You have searched me and known me. 139:2 You know when I sit down and when I rise up; You understand my thought from afar. 139:3 You scrutinize my path and my lying down, And are intimately acquainted with all my ways. 139:4 Even before there is a word on my tongue, Behold, O Lord, You know it all. 139:5 You have enclosed me behind and before, And laid Your hand upon me. 139:6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is too high, I cannot attain to it. 139:7 Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? 139:8 If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there. 139:9 If I take the wings of the dawn, If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, 139:10 Even there Your hand will lead me, And Your right hand will lay hold of me. 139:11 If I say, ‘Surely the darkness will overwhelm me, And the light around me will be night,’ 139:12 Even the darkness is not dark to You, And the night is as bright as the day. Darkness and light are alike to You. 139:13 For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother’s womb. (NASB)</p>	<p>Toviyah / Psalms 139 139:1 For praise, composed by David, a psalm. O Lord, you have searched me out and known me. 139:2 It is manifest before you when I sit down to study the Torah, and when I rise up to go to war; you understand my fellowship in your congregation from a people afar off. 139:3 Now when I walk in the road or when I recline to study the Torah, you have become a stranger; and you have made all my ways dangerous. 139:4 And when there is no speech on my tongue, behold, O Lord, you know the thought of my heart completely. 139:5 From behind me and in front of me you have confined me, and you have inflicted on me the blow of your hand. 139:6 It is hidden from my knowing; it is too mighty, I am not capable of it. 139:7 Where will I go from the presence of your storm-wind? And where shall I flee from your presence? 139:8 If I go up to the heavens, you are there; and if I lower myself to Sheol, behold, there is your word. 139:9 I will lift up the fringes of sunrise, I will abide at the ends of the sea. 139:10 Also there your hand will guide me, and your right hand will seize me. 139:11 And I said, “Truly darkness will blind me, and the night will become dark for my sake.” 139:12 Also the darkness will not be too dark for your word, and the night, like day, will give light; like darkness, like light – they are equal. 139:13 For you have created my kidneys; you established me in the belly of my mother. (EMC)</p>	<p>Psalmoi / Psalms 139 For the end, a Psalm of David. 139:1 O Lord, thou hast proved me, and known me. 139:2 Thou knowest my down-sitting and mine up-rising: thou understandest my thoughts long before. 139:3 Thou hast traced my path and my bed, and hast foreseen all my ways. 139:4 For there is no unrighteous word in my tongue: behold, O Lord, thou hast known all things, 139:5 the last and the first: thou hast fashioned me, and laid thine hand upon me. 139:6 The knowledge of thee is too wonderful for me; it is very difficult, I cannot attain to it. 139:7 Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? and whither shall I flee from my presence? 139:8 If I should go up to heaven, thou art there: if I should go down to hell, thou art present. 139:9 If I should spread my wings to fly straight forward, and sojourn at the extremity of the sea, it would be vain, 139:10 for even there thy hand would guide me, and thy right hand would hold me. 139:11 When I said, Surely the darkness will cover me; even the night was light in my luxury. 139:12 For darkness will not be darkness with thee; but night will be light as day: as its darkness, so shall its light be to thee. 139:13 For thou, O Lord, hast possessed my reins; thou hast helped me from my mother’s womb. (LXX)</p>
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<p>Tehillim / Psalms 139 139:14 I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Your works, And my soul knows it very well. 139:15 My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth; 139:16 Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; And in Your book were all written The days that were ordained for me, When as yet there was not one of them. 139:17 How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How vast is the sum of them! 139:18 If I should count them, they would outnumber the sand. When I awake, I am still with You. 139:19 O that You would slay the wicked, O God; Depart from me, therefore, men of bloodshed. 139:20 For they speak against You wickedly, And Your enemies take Your name in vain. 139:21 Do I not hate those who hate You, O Lord? And do I not loathe those who rise up against You? 139:22 I hate them with the utmost hatred; They have become my enemies. 139:23 Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts; 139:24 And see if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way. (NASB)</p>	<p>Toviyah / Psalms 139 139:14 I will give you thanks, for you have miraculously done awesome things; your works are wonderful, and my soul knows it well. 139:15 My self is not hidden from you, for I was made in secret, I was formed in the belly of my mother. 139:16 Your eyes see my body; and in the book of your remembrance all my days were written on the day the world was created; in the beginning all creatures were created but not on a single day among them. 139:17 And how precious to me are those who love you, the righteous, O God; and how mighty have their scholars become! 139:18 I will number them in this age: they will be more numerous than sand; I awake in the age to come and still I am with you. 139:19 If you slay, O God, the wicked man, [then] men who are worthy of the judgment of death will depart from me. 139:20 Who will swear in your name for deception, taking an oath in vain, your enemies. 139:21 Do I not hate all those who hate you, O Lord? And when they rise against you, I am incensed. 139:22 I hate them to the destruction of hatred; they have become enemies to me. 139:23 Search me out, O God, and know my thoughts; examine me and know my thinking. 139:24 And see if any way of error is in me; and guide me in the path of those eternally upright. (EMC)</p>	<p>Psalmoi / Psalms 139 139:14 I will give thee thanks; for thou art fearfully wondrous; wondrous are thy works; and my soul knows it well. 139:15 My bones, which thou madest in secret were not hidden from thee, nor my substance, in the lowest parts of the earth. 139:16 Thine eyes saw my unwrought substance, and all men shall be written in thy book; they shall be formed by day, though there should for a time be no one among them. 139:17 But thy friends, O God, have been greatly honoured by me; their rule has been greatly strengthened. 139:18 I will number them, and they shall be multiplied beyond the sand; I awake, and am still with thee. 139:19 Oh that thou wouldest slay the wicked, O God; depart from me, ye men of blood. 139:20 For thou wilt say concerning their thought, that they shall take thy cities in vain. 139:21 Have I not hated them, O Lord, that hate thee? and wasted away because of thine enemies? 139:22 I have hated them with perfect hatred; they were counted my enemies. 139:23 Prove me, O God, and know my heart; examine me, and know my paths; 139:24 and see if there is any way of iniquity in me, and lead me in an everlasting way. (LXX)</p>
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In this week's study from *Tehillim / Psalms 139:1-24*, the psalm opens saying, א לְמַנְצֶיךָ לְדָוֶד מִזְמוֹר יְהוָה חֲקַרְתָּנִי וַתֵּדַע: ב אַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ שִׁבְתִּי וְקוֹמִי בְּנֶתֶחַ לְרַעֵי מִרְחוֹק: ג אֶרְחִי וְרַבְעֵי זְרִית וְכָל-דְּרָכֵי הַסִּפְנֹתָה: ד יְהוָה יָדַעְתָּ כְּלָה: *139:1 O Lord, You have searched me and known me. 139:2 You know when I sit down and when I rise up; You understand my thought from afar. 139:3 You scrutinize my path and my lying down, And are intimately acquainted with all my ways. 139:4 Even before there is a word on my tongue, Behold, O Lord, You know it all. (NASB)* The psalmist states the Lord knows him at the most intimate level. Rising up and laying down and even to our thoughts. The Lord scrutinizes our ways. This is an important observation as this pertains to what we think and what we do each day. How important do you believe what we think and do each day is important to the Lord God of Israel? The Aramaic Targum states the following:

Toviyah / Psalms 139:1-4

139:1 For praise, composed by David, a psalm. O Lord, you have searched me out and known me. 139:2 It is manifest before you when I sit down to study the Torah, and when I rise up to go to war; you understand my fellowship in your congregation from a people afar off. 139:3 Now when I walk in the road or when I recline to study the Torah, you have become a stranger; and you have made all my ways dangerous. 139:4 And when there is no speech on my tongue, behold, O Lord, you know the thought of my heart completely. (EMC, א לשבחה
על יד דוד תושבחתא יהוה פשפשתני וידעת: ב את קדמך גלי אותבותי למיעסק באוריתא ואוקיי-
מותי למיזל למיעל בקרבא איתביינת לחברותי בכנישתך מן עם רחיק: ג כדון בהליכותי במיזולי
באורחא וברבעותי למעסק באוריתא איתעבדת חילוני וכל אורחותי אסכינתא: ד וכד ארום לית
(ממלל בלישני דשקר הא יהוה ידעת מחשבת לבי כולא כל גושמי)

The rabbis translate the sitting down and rising up in reference to the Torah and to a time of war. The idea is our thoughts should be always centered upon the Lord's word and His promises. When we rise up to go, we are at war, not just the things in the body, but with the spiritual forces at work in this world, and with those who would desire for us to be destroyed. The rabbinic translation of the psalm states, *139:3 Now when I walk in the road or when I recline to study the Torah, you have become a stranger; and you have made all my ways dangerous. (EMC)* Why exactly does the psalmist state the Lord makes his path dangerous, as the Lord becomes a stranger to him? The idea may be related to the need for us to carefully count our ways and our thoughts as we go through life each day. Faith is a central concept in both Judaism and Christianity. Considering faith, we have to consider our faithfulness to God, His Word, and His Messiah as it is related to our thoughts and our ways as we live our lives before him daily. Faith denotes trust, belief, and confidence in the Lord God in heaven. When we say we have faith in the Lord, we are making a statement about the trust worthiness of the Lord and the belief in the Lord's ability to do what He has promised. Having faith demands a radical change in one's lifestyle, turning from the ways of the world to the ways of God. This means that we change from the way we once behaved to a new way of life. We renounce the former way of life for the way of God which glorifies God. As a child of God, we are foreigners in this world and strive to live for God's kingdom. This is important because we are to count our ways, to consider our ways are in line with God's ways, not only our actions but our thought life as well. (*Hebrews 11:13-16, 1 Peter 1:1, 2:11*) This is related to our relationship to the culture that we live. In the Apostolic Writings, the Ephesians once lived like the Gentiles did, but now their lives revolve around Yeshua the Messiah which may lead to persecution since their godliness poses a threat to the sinful ways of the world (*1 Peter 4:1-6*). In addition to this, there was considerable pressure on the Gentile believers to continue to live as they used to. In Paul's letters to the Gentiles, he doesn't simply command his readers to cease living like unbelievers, he also commands us to not conduct ourselves as our unbelieving peers. The reason being, the gentile believers were still living in their culture, the very culture which threatened to influence them to live as they formerly did. This world is the culture in which we live which seeks to pressure us to conform it its values, standards, goals, and conduct. Take for example the gender values (being fluid) or the LGBT values this world wants

to force upon God's people. The Lord does not want us to be influenced by this world's standards in relation to God's standards as given to us in the Torah. God's standards often run across the grain of our culture, therefore we must determined our hearts to follow God's word and to cease walking to the drum of the world in which we live. This is why Paul wrote we are to walk worthy of the calling in which we have been called (*Ephesians 4:1*). In addition to this, Paul believes the moral conduct of men is the outgrowth of his mental processes. The concept here is that our thought life governs our conduct. This is why we are to bring not only our actions, but also our thought life into obedience to God's Torah.

The psalmist continues saying, וּפְלִיאָה [פְּלִיאָה] דַּעַת מִמְּנֵי נִשְׁגְּבָה לֹא-אוּכַל לָהּ: ז אָנָּה אֵלֶּךָ מְרוֹחֶךָ וְאַנָּה, מִפְּנֵיךָ אֶבְרַח: ח אִם-אֶסְסַק שָׁמַיִם שָׁם אָתָּה וְאֶצִּיעָה שָׁאוּל הַנֶּגֶד: ט אֶשָּׂא כַנְּפֵי-שָׁחַר אֶשְׁכְּנָה בְּאַחֲרֵית יָם: י גַּם-יְדֶךָ תִּנְחַנֵּי וְתֹאחֲזֵנִי יְמִינֶךָ: 139:5 You have enclosed me behind and before, And laid Your hand upon me. 139:6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is too high, I cannot attain to it. 139:7 Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? 139:8 If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there. 139:9 If I take the wings of the dawn, If I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, 139:10 Even there Your hand will lead me, And Your right hand will lay hold of me. (NASB) The psalmist believes the Lord has orchestrated all that is going on in his life. He speaks of the Lord being everywhere (omnipresent) and that it is not possible to find a place where the Lord God is not there. The power of God is found in His presence going with us wherever we may go and do, or whatever situation we may find ourselves in. The Aramaic Targum states the following:

Toviyah / Psalms 139:5-10

139:5 From behind me and in front of me you have confined me, and you have inflicted on me the blow of your hand. 139:6 It is hidden from my knowing; it is too mighty, I am not capable of it. 139:7 Where will I go from the presence of your storm-wind? And where shall I flee from your presence? 139:8 If I go up to the heavens, you are there; and if I lower myself to Sheol, behold, there is your word. 139:9 I will lift up the fringes of sunrise, I will abide at the ends of the sea. 139:10 Also there your hand will guide me, and your right hand will seize me. ה מאחוראי ומאפי אעיקתא יתי וגרית עלי מחתא דידך: ו מכסיא למידע פרישא מנדעא, (EMC, מיני איתקפת איזדקפת לא איכול לה: ז אן האן אזיל מן קדם זעפך והאן מן קדמך איפוך: ח אין אסק לשמיא תמן אנת את ואימוך לשיוול הא תמן מימרך: ט אזקוף ציצין דקריץ אשרי בסופי ימא (מערבא: י לחוד תמן אידך תדבר יתי ותחדניני ימינך:

The Targum translation is very similar to what we read in the Masoretic Text. What *Tehillim / Psalms 139* is telling us is there is no escape from God. Ultimately, the Lord God in heaven, His sight pierces the darkness, there is no hole or crevice where we can escape God's gaze. If we manage to doge Him in this life we can rest assured that we will stand before Him in the life to come on the fearful day of judgment. This illustrates how there is truly no place to hide from God. The Lord knows us at the most intimate level. For example, the closest we can get to knowing another human being takes place in the marriage relationship. A man and woman (husband and wife) live together in a lifelong commitment where they grow to know one another's actions, words, and to the extent that they openly communicate their thoughts and feelings to one another. The Masoretic text uses the verb "to know" (יָדַע) to describe the sexual relationship in marriage (see *Bereshit / Genesis 4:1*). Even after a man has been married to his wife for many years he still discovers new things about his wife. Even the closest human relationships fall short of total knowledge as the Lord has total knowledge of us at the most intimate level. The point is, we even have trouble knowing ourselves thoroughly. Life is a process of coming to know ourselves, this is the end result of the commands, we are able to recognize our limitations. Jeremiah said in *Jeremiah 17:9*, *The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately wicked; who can understand it?* (NASB) His point is that we do not even know ourselves very well, our motivations and inner drives apart from the Lord God revealing it to us in His Word. David's first reaction to this was "Where can I run to hide?" True intimacy is to know even the thoughts of our hearts. Because of the wickedness of our hearts, it is difficult not to experience shame because of who we

are at the most intimate level. The amazing thing is, the Lord God of Israel knows us thoroughly and knows every awful thing and who we truly are on the inside, but yet He loves us and wants a relationship with us. Adam and Eve sewed together leaves, and the Lord God slaughtered a animal and clothed His people showing how to have a restored relationship with a holy God. Blood is required due to sin. The inescapable conclusion is that we cannot escape from the living God. David thinks about searching out the knowledge of God, His presence, and His infinite wisdom, which led him to cry out to the Lord to destroy the wicked (139:19-22). David believed if sin still remained in the dark corners of his own life, he could root it out and needed the Lord God's help to walk in His everlasting ways. This shows us that we are to live in holiness and righteousness, and that we need the Lord God Almighty to help us to do so!

The Psalmist continues saying, יא וְאָמַר אֶה-חֲשֵׁה יְשׁוּפְנֵי וְלִילָה אֹר בְּעֵדְנִי: יב גַּם-חֲשֵׁה לֹא-יִחְשֵׁה מִמֶּה, וְלִילָה כִּיּוֹם יֵאִיר כְּחֲשִׁיכָה כְּאוֹרָה: יג כִּי-אֵתָה קָנִיתִי כְלִיטִי תִסְכְּנֵי בְּבֶטֶן אִמִּי: יד אֲוֹדָה עַל כִּי נִזְרָאוֹת נִפְלִיטִי נִפְלָאִים מַעֲשֵׂיךָ וְנַפְשִׁי יִדְעַת מְאֹד: טו לֹא-נִכְחַד עֲצָמֵי מִמֶּךָ אֲשֶׁר-עָשִׂיתִי בְּסֶתֶר רַקְמָתִי בְּתַחְתֵּיּוֹת אֲרָץ: טז גְּלָמִי | רָאוּ עֵינַיךָ וְעַל-סִפְרֶךָ כֻּלָּם יִפְתְּבוּ יָמִים יֵצְרוּ וְלֹא [וְלוֹ] אֶחָד בָּהֶם: יז וְלִי מֵה-יִקְרוּ רַעִיךָ אֵל מֶה עֲצָמוֹ רֵאשִׁיָּהֶם: יח אֶסְפְּרָם מִחוּל יִרְבוּן הִקְיַצְתִּי וְעוֹדֵי עִמָּךָ: *139:11 If I say, 'Surely the darkness will overwhelm me, And the light around me will be night,' 139:12 Even the darkness is not dark to You, And the night is as bright as the day. Darkness and light are alike to You. 139:13 For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother's womb. 139:14 I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Your works, And my soul knows it very well. 139:15 My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth; 139:16 Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; And in Your book were all written The days that were ordained for me, When as yet there was not one of them. 139:17 How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How vast is the sum of them! 139:18 If I should count them, they would outnumber the sand. When I awake, I am still with You. (NASB)* The psalmist says even darkness will not overcome us (139:11), the Lord knows all, he formed us (139:13) and we are wonderfully made. Our mothers womb is called a place of secrecy, a hidden place in which the Lord created us (139:15), and the Lord has a book in which our names are written (139:16). The Lord's thoughts about us are unimaginable (139:17-18) and His love for us is immeasurable.

The Aramaic Targum states the following:

Toviyah / Psalms 139:11-18

139:11 And I said, "Truly darkness will blind me, and the night will become dark for my sake." 139:12 Also the darkness will not be too dark for your word, and the night, like day, will give light; like darkness, like light – they are equal. 139:13 For you have created my kidneys; you established me in the belly of my mother. 139:14 I will give you thanks, for you have miraculously done awesome things; your works are wonderful, and my soul knows it well. 139:15 My self is not hidden from you, for I was made in secret, I was formed in the belly of my mother. 139:16 Your eyes see my body; and in the book of your remembrance all my days were written on the day the world was created; in the beginning all creatures were created but not on a single day among them. 139:17 And how precious to me are those who love you, the righteous, O God; and how mighty have their scholars become! 139:18 I will number them in this age: they will be more numerous than sand; I awake in the age to come and still I am with you. (EMC, יא וְאָמַרְתִּי בְרַם חוֹשֶׁךְ דְּמַחְבְּרֵי עָלֵי וְלִילִיא עָלֵי קָבִיל אִמְטוּלַתִּי, קָבִיל עָלֵי בְרַם לִילִיא מְנַהֵר עָלֵי: יב לְחוּד חֲשׁוּכָא לֹא יַחְשִׁיךְ מִן מִימְרֵךְ וְלִילִיא הֵיךְ יוֹמָא יִנְהִיר הֵיךְ חֲשׁוּכָא הֵיךְ נְהוּרָא שׁוּיִין: יג אַרוּם אַנְתָּ אַתְּ קָנִיתָ כּוֹלִיטִי אִישְׁתִּיתִי לִי בְּכַרִּיסָא דְאַמִּידְאוּמִי: יד אֲוִדִינְךָ מִטוּל דְּדַחִילֵךְ עֵבְדַתָּא פְּרִישִׁית פְּרִישֵׁן עוּבְדִיךְ וְנַפְשִׁי חֲכָמָא לְחֵדָּא: טו לֹא אַתְכְּסָא גְּרָמֵי מִינְךָ דִּי אַתְעֵבִידִית בְּטוּמְרָא אֲצִיירִית בְּכַרִּיסָא דְאַמָּא דְאוּמִי: טז גּוֹשְׁמֵי חֲמִיִין עֵינְךָ וְעַל סִפְּרֵךְ דְּכֻרְנֵךְ כּוֹלְהוּן יוּמֵי מַכְתְּבֵן בְּיוֹמָא דְאַתְבְּרִי עֲלֵמָא מִן שִׁירוּיא אִיתְבְּרִיין כּוֹלְהוּן בִּירִיתָא בְּשִׁיתָא יוּמִין וְלִית בְּחֵד חֵד יוֹמָא בִּינֵיהוּן: יז וְלִי וְקִדְמֵי כִמָּה יִקְרִיין אִינוּן רַחֲמֵיךָ צְדִיקִיא אֱלֹהָא וְכִמָּה אִיתְחִיילוּ רַבְנֵיהוּן: יח אִימְנִינוּן בְּעֲלֵמָא הֵדִין יִתִּיר מִן חֵלָא יִסְגְּעוּן אַתְעֵרִית בְּעֲלֵמָא דְאַתִּי וְעַד כְּדוּן אַנָּא גַבְךָ:

The rabbis write darkness has the ability to blind. The darkness however is not too dark for God's Word where the Word of God has the ability to produce light, like the day, revealing truth, righteousness, holiness, and justice. The psalmist speaks of the wonders of God who creates the body and he writes that the Lord has written all of our days down in a book, suggesting the Lord has a plan for each one of us. The rabbis parallel the rising up from slumber to awakening in the age to come. Though we may die, we are still with the Lord and when we rise up we will be with Him! Judaism teaches that death is not the end of existence. Judaism does however have its primary focus upon our lives here and now rather than on the afterlife. As a result, Judaism does not have much dogma in regard to the afterlife which leaves this in a large part to personal opinion. For example, it is possible for an Orthodox Jew to believe a person's soul (the soul of a righteous man) after death will go to a place similar to the Christian's understanding of heaven or that the soul will simply wait until the coming of the Messiah when he will be resurrected. The souls of the wicked, on the other hand, will be tormented by demons. The Torah does emphasize the immediate, concrete, physical rewards and punishments as opposed to future ones in the world to come. For example, in *Vayikra / Leviticus 26:3-9* and *Devarim / Deuteronomy 11:13-15*.

Vayikra / Leviticus 26:3-9

26:3 'If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments so as to carry them out, 26:4 then I shall give you rains in their season, so that the land will yield its produce and the trees of the field will bear their fruit. 26:5 'Indeed, your threshing will last for you until grape gathering, and grape gathering will last until sowing time. You will thus eat your food to the full and live securely in your land. 26:6 'I shall also grant peace in the land, so that you may lie down with no one making you tremble. I shall also eliminate harmful beasts from the land, and no sword will pass through your land. 26:7 'But you will chase your enemies and they will fall before you by the sword; 26:8 five of you will chase a hundred, and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand, and your enemies will fall before you by the sword. 26:9 'So I will turn toward you and make you fruitful and multiply you, and I will confirm My covenant with you. (NASB)

Devarim / Deuteronomy 11:13-15

11:13 'Where am I to get meat to give to all this people? For they weep before me, saying, 'Give us meat that we may eat!' 11:14 'I alone am not able to carry all this people, because it is too burdensome for me. 11:15 'So if You are going to deal thus with me, please kill me at once, if I have found favor in Your sight, and do not let me see my wretchedness.' (NASB)

Moshe speaks of how the Lord will bless His people if they obey and keep His commandments. Seeking to live by God's word will cause us to become powerful to overcoming our enemies were five will chase a hundred and a hundred will chase ten thousand. Scholars say there is evidence in the Torah of existence of life after death indicated in several places where the righteous will be reunited with their loved ones after death, while the wicked will be excluded from this reunion. The following references from the Torah speaks of several noteworthy people being "gathered to their people." See, in *Bereshit / Genesis 25:8 (Abraham), 25:17 (Ishmael), 35:29 (Isaac), 49:33 (Jacob), Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:50 (Moses and Aaron) and 2 Kings 22:20 (King Josiah)*. Jewish Scholars say this gathering is described as a separate event from the physical death of the body or the place of burial. Sins on the other hand are punished by the sinner being "cut off from his people." See *Bereshit / Genesis 17:14 and Shemot / Exodus 31:14*.

Bereshit / Genesis 17:14

17:14 'But an uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant.' (NASB, יד וְעָרַל | זָכַר, אֲשֶׁר לֹא-יְמוּל אֶת-בְּשָׂרוֹ עָרְלָתוֹ וְנִכְרְתָה הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַהוּא מֵעַמּוּיָהּ אֶת-בְּרִיתִי הַפֶּר:

Shemot / Exodus 31:14

31:14 *Therefore you are to observe the sabbath, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people.* (NASB, יד וישמר אתם את-השבת כי קדש הוא לכם מחלליה מות יומת כי, כַּל-הַעֲשֹׂה בָּהּ מְלָאכָה וְנִכְרְתָה הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַהוּא מִקִּרְבֵּי עַמִּיהָ:

This punishment is referred to as *nikretah hanefesh* (נִכְרְתָה הַנֶּפֶשׁ) meaning literally, “cutting off of the soul,” which is a reference to “spiritual excision,” and it means that the soul loses its portion in the World to Come. The later prophets of the Tanach speak more clearly of life after death and the World to Come. (See *Daniel 12:2*, *Nehemiah 9:5*) Belief in the eventual resurrection of the dead is a fundamental belief of traditional Judaism. It was a belief that distinguished the Pharisees (intellectual ancestors of Rabbinical Judaism) from the Sadducees. The Sadducees rejected the concept, because it is not explicitly mentioned in the Torah. The Pharisees found the concept implied in certain verses as shown previously. In addition, belief in the resurrection of the dead is one of Rambam’s 13 Principles of Faith, and the second blessing of the Shemoneh Esrei prayer, which is recited three times daily, contains several references to the resurrection.

The psalmist concludes saying, 139:19 *O that You would slay the wicked, O God; Depart from me, therefore, men of bloodshed.* 139:20 *For they speak against You wickedly, And Your enemies take Your name in vain.* 139:21 *Do I not hate those who hate You, O Lord? And do I not loathe those who rise up against You?* 139:22 *I hate them with the utmost hatred; They have become my enemies.* 139:23 *Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts;* 139:24 *And see if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way.* (NASB, יט אַם-תִּקְטַל אֱלֹהֶיךָ | רָשָׁע וְאֲנָשֵׁי דָמִים סוּרוּ מִנִּי: כ אֲשֶׁר יֹאמְרוּ לְמִזְמָה נִשְׂאָ לְשׁוֹא עֲרִיד: כֹּא הֲלוֹא-מִשְׂנֵאֵיךָ יְהוָה | אֲשֵׁנָא וּבִתְקוּמָיךָ אֲתִקּוּטִי: כִּב תְּכַלִּית שְׂנֵאָה שְׂנֵאֲתִים (לְאוֹיְבִים הָיוּ לִי: כִּג חֲקַרְנִי אֵל וְדַע לְבָבִי בְּחַנְנִי וְדַע שְׂרַעֲפִי: כִּד וְרָאָה אִם-דָּרָךְ-עֲצָב בִּי וְנִחַנִּי בְּדָרְךָ עוֹלָם: The Aramaic Targum states the following:

Toviyah / Psalms 139:19-24

139:19 *If you slay, O God, the wicked man, [then] men who are worthy of the judgment of death will depart from me.* 139:20 *Who will swear in your name for deception, taking an oath in vain, your enemies.* 139:21 *Do I not hate all those who hate you, O Lord? And when they rise against you, I am incensed.* 139:22 *I hate them to the destruction of hatred; they have become enemies to me.* 139:23 *Search me out, O God, and know my thoughts; examine me and know my thinking.* 139:24 *And see if any way of error is in me; and guide me in the path of those eternally upright.* (EMC, ינס אנא הוהי דאנסם אלה אכ: דבבד ילעב וגמ לע יעבתשמ אלכני לע דמשב וומיי יד כ: ינימ גכ: יל וייהו יבבד ילעבל ווניתינס אתינס תואיציש דע בכ: גגרמ גרגמ אנא דלבוקל וימייק דכו רבדו יב ויעטד חרוא ויא ימחו דכ: ירוהריה עדיו יתי ווחב ונויער עדיו אהלא יתי שפשפ ינרקח (:אמלע יצירת חרואב יתי

David seeks for the Lord to bring justice by slaughtering the men who are worth of judgment and death due to their wickedness towards God’s people. The unrighteousness of godless men causes the Lord to rise up against them. The Torah was given to God’s people such that we become holy and separate unto God. As we live our lives for the Lord according to His Word, we grow in the knowledge how imperfect we are and the great debt that we owe to the Lord God in heaven. We realize how short we come to keeping God’s mitzvot (commandments) and seek His help to enable us to do so. Living a righteous life before God in this world is not unattainable. But we need the Lord to help us to overcome the world and its ways of unrighteousness. The Messiah Yeshua come to show us the way of truth and life. This is why the Torah speaks so pointedly about this life, the immediate, and concrete ways, practical examples to live our lives for the

Lord for His glory! Our faith in the Messiah Yeshua leads us to righteousness, holiness, and truth according to God's Word. Our abiding in the Messiah should lead us to keeping God's commands. This is what the Scriptures teach us found in the life of God's Messiah and the Messiah's disciples. Let's Pray!

Rabbinic Commentary

The Rabbinic Commentary (Midrash) on *Tehillim / Psalms 139* has 6 parts. Reading through the Midrash we will be looking at Part 4, 5 and 6. Let's begin by outlining *Midrash Tehillim Chapter 139, Part 4, 5 and 6*.

Outline of Midrash Tehillim / Psalms, Chapter 139, Part 4, 5 and 6

Part 4

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying, *“For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, You know it altogether (Tehillim / Psalms 139:4).”*
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, *“David spoke as follows to the Holy One blessed be He, You know my sitting down and my rising up.”*
- The **משל** (mashal) *“the parable,”* goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis discuss the Lord knowing all of our steps
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) *“expansion on the parable”* expands upon the **משל** (mashal), the rabbis say the Lord forming us in the womb was the first step to His having ordered our ways.
- The Concluding phrase says, *“Hence my saying that There is not a word in my tongue, etc., means There is no Psalm, no song, no meditation which I am yet to compose, that is not already known to You, For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, You know it altogether (Tehillim / Psalms 139:4).”*

Part 5

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying, *“You have fashioned me behind and before (Tehillim / Psalms 139:5).”*
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, *“Why is it said behind and before?”*
- The **משל** (mashal) *“the parable,”* goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis speak of the Lord forming us uniquely.
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) *“expansion on the parable”* expands upon the **משל** (mashal), the rabbis parallel the Lord creating his people for righteousness, and speak of rewards and punishments and the world to come.
- The Concluding phrase says, *“Hence, it follows that both man and the sanctuary were fashioned with God's two hands. Thus also it is written, Your hands have made me and fashioned me (Tehillim / Psalms 119:73) and Your sanctuary, O Lord, which Your hands have established (Shemot / Exodus 15:17).”*

Part 6

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying, *“Another interpretation, You have fashioned me behind and before refers to two fashionings, a fashioning for this world and a fashioning for the world to come.”*
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, *“Therefore, God will not need to fashion man a new in the Resurrection because of the beginning of time He prepared man by two*

fashionings. Thus, it was that the Holy One blessed be He, set to and fashioned Adam as he lay stretched out in a shapeless mass before Him, as is said Your eyes did see my unformed substance (Tehillim / Psalms 139:16)."

- The משל (mashal) "the parable," goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis speak of the Lord fashioning us and the world to come
- The נמשל (Nimshal) "expansion on the parable" expands upon the משל (mashal), the rabbis say the Lord fashions us for a purpose to serve in His kingdom.
- The Concluding phrase says, "And so Isaiah said, The Lord has called me from the womb, from the bowels of my mother has He made mention of my name. (Isaiah 49:1) And as he said again, Who has wrought and done it, calling generations from the beginning? (Isaiah 41:4) that is, from the time of Adam."

Midrash Tehillim 139 Part 4 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying, "For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, You know it altogether (Tehillim / Psalms 139:4)." The פתיחתא (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, "David spoke as follows to the Holy One blessed be He, You know my sitting down and my rising up." The Lord is all powerful, He also knows what our next words will be. The Rabbis are speaking of how the Lord knows all things, even before they will happen to us. The entire midrash states the following.

<p style="text-align: center;">מדרש תהלים פרק קלט סימן ד</p> <p>ד כי אין מלה בלשוני הן ה' ידעת כלה. כך אמר דוד לפני הקב"ה אתה ידעת שבתי וקומי, ולא עוד אלא (על) כל פסיעה ופסיעה שאני עתיד לפסוע כבר גלויה לפניך, וכן אמר הכתוב כי (אתה) [עתה] צעדי תספור (איוב יד טז), ולא מעכשו, אלא עד שלא באתי לעולם, וכה"א ל"רמיהו בטרם אצרך בבטן ידעתך (ירמיה א ה), וכן אמר (הכתוב) [ישעיה] לסנחריב יען התר"גזך אלי ושאנך עלה באזני (מ"ב מלכים ב' יט כח). א"ל שוטה מה אתה סבור, הלא ידעת אם לא שמעת, ושבתך וצאתך ובואך ידעתי ואת התרגזך אלי (שם שם מלכים ב' י"ט כז), לכך נאמר כי אין מלה בלשוני, אין מזמור אין נצח אין שיחה שאני עתיד לומר שאינם גלויין לפניך, לכך נאמר כי אין מלה בלשוני הן ה' (אתה) ידעת.</p>	<p>Midrash Tehillim 139, Part 4</p> <p>4. <i>For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, You know it altogether (Tehillim / Psalms 139:4). David spoke as follows to the Holy One blessed be He, You know my sitting down and my rising up. No, more. Each and every step which I am to take is known to You now. As Scripture says, Now You order my steps (Job 14:16). And known not only now, but even before I formed you in the belly I knew you (Jeremiah 1:5). Thus when Isaiah said to Sennacherib, because of your raging against Me, and for that your tumult is come up into My ears (2 Kings 19:28), he meant, Fool, what fanciest you? Do you not truly know? Have you not heard that I know your sitting down and your going up, and your coming in, and your raging against Me? (2 Kings 19:27) Hence my saying that There is not a word in my tongue, etc., means There is no Psalm, no song, no meditation which I am yet to compose, that is not already known to You, For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, You know it altogether (Tehillim / Psalms 139:4).</i></p>
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The rabbis speak of the Lord ordering all of our steps. The Lord does this according to His Word. This is a good way to think of why God gave us His Torah and His command to obey His Mitzvot. King Solomon states something similar in *Mishley / Proverbs 16*.

Mishley / Proverbs 16:1-9

16:1 *The plans of the heart belong to man, But the answer of the tongue is from the Lord.*
 16:2 *All the ways of a man are clean in his own sight, But the Lord weighs the motives.* 16:3 *Commit your works to the Lord And your plans will be established.* 16:4 *The Lord has made everything for its own purpose, Even the wicked for the day of evil.* 16:5 *Everyone who is*

proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord; Assuredly, he will not be unpunished. 16:6 By lovingkindness and truth iniquity is atoned for, And by the fear of the Lord one keeps away from evil. 16:7 When a man's ways are pleasing to the Lord, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him. 16:8 Better is a little with righteousness Than great income with injustice. 16:9 The mind of man plans his way, But the Lord directs his steps. (NASB, אַלְדָּם מְעַרְכִּי- לֵב וּמִיְהוָה מַעֲנֶה לְשׁוֹן: ב כָּל-דְּרָכַי-אִישׁ וְהַ בְּעֵינָיו וְתִכְן רִחוּת יְהוָה: ג גַּל אֶל-יְהוָה מַעֲשֵׂיךָ וַיִּכְנֹו מַחֲשַׁבְתֶּיךָ: ד כָּל פְּעַל יְהוָה לְמַעֲנֵהוּ וְגַם-רָשָׁע לְיוֹם רָעָה: ה תּוֹעֵבַת יְהוָה כָּל-גְּבוּהַ-לֵּב יָד לְיָד לֹא יִנְקָה: ו בְּחֶסֶד וְאֵמֶת יִכְפֹּר עֲוֹן וּבִירְאַת יְהוָה סוּר מֵרָע: ז בְּרִצּוֹת יְהוָה דְּרָכַי-אִישׁ גַּם-אוֹיְבָיו יִשְׁלַם (אֲתוֹ: ח טוֹב-מַעֲט בְּצַדִּיקָה מֵרַב תְּבוּאוֹת בְּלֹא מִשְׁפָּט: ט לֵב אָדָם יִחֲשֵׁב דְּרָכּוֹ וַיְהוָה יִכְן צַעֲדוֹ:

Here Proverbs speaks of the Lord making everything, even the wicked for the day of evil. This suggests to us the Lord orchestrates all things. The midrash states, “Each and every step which I am to take is known to You now. As Scripture says, Now You order my steps (Job 14:16). And known not only now, but even before I formed you in the belly I knew you (Jeremiah 1:5). Thus when Isaiah said to Sennacherib, because of your raging against Me, and for that your tumult is come up into My ears (2 Kings 19:28), he meant, Fool, what fanciest you? Do you not truly know? Have you not heard that I know your sitting down and your going up, and your coming in, and your raging against Me? (2 Kings 19:27)” The Lord knows our ways even before we do them. This is how we can experience the covenant in our relationship with God, because He knows our ways and so He provides us with the covenant which describes the sacred relationship that we have with Him. We have all kinds of relationships in our lives that are covenantal. Marriage is called a covenant. Parents have a covenantal relationship with their children. Teachers have a covenantal relationship with their students. Covenantal relationships are relationships that matter so much they shape who we are at our core. They involve a deep caring and give expression to who we are as a community. This is what it means to have a covenantal relationship with God, just as we have a covenant relationship with others, we have a relationship with God that has great meaning and importance to our lives. The Talmud states “All the Jewish people are responsible to and for each other.” (Talmud Bavli Shevuot 39a) And the same is said we also experience covenant with all human beings just as the Torah states “V’ahavta l’re-acha kamocho,” “Love your neighbor as yourself.” The covenant relationship is the underlying principle that all human beings are being called to experience through relationship which facilitates the idea that all of humanity belonging or being responsible for one another, an interdependence of a sort. The covenant reminds us that we are not alone, but that we are part of relationships that fundamentally matter, and therefore that it matters what we do. This is why it is important for us to allow God to order our steps. We do so beginning with asking the Lord in His Messiah Yeshua to help us, to have faith, to be faithful, to trust in Him, and to walk in His Commandments. King Solomon said in Mishley / Proverbs 3:5-6 says, “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct your paths.” We seek the Lord in daily prayer. In Jeremiah 33:3, the LORD says, “Call unto me, and I will answer thee and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.” Finally, if we want the Lord to help order our steps, we must believe that He will do so. David said in Tehillim / Psalm 37:23 says, “The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord and he delights in his way.” We do not know what will happen to us each day, but what we do know is the Lord orders our steps and helps us to overcome sin and accomplish His purposes each day. (Jeremiah 29:11)

Midrash Tehillim 139 Part 4 concludes saying, “Hence my saying that There is not a word in my tongue, etc., means There is no Psalm, no song, no meditation which I am yet to compose, that is not already known to You, For there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, You know it altogether (Tehillim / Psalms 139:4).” The rabbis reinforce the idea that the Lord knows us, He knows our inner most thoughts and He knows what we will do before they happen. Therefore it is utmost important that we seek the Lord’s help to step outside of our sinful ways, to walk in His ways, and to live our lives for Him and for others.

Midrash Tehillim 139 Part 5 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying, “You have fashioned me behind and before (Tehillim / Psalms 139:5).” The פתיחה (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to

the midrash states, “*Why is it said behind and before?*” The rabbis explain behind and before in the following way.

Because at the first Adam’s face in front, and Eve’s in back. As Scripture says, And the Lord God built into a woman the side (sela) which He had taken from the man (Bereshit / Genesis 2:22). Hence, it is said, You have fashioned me behind and before. On the meaning of sela, Rab and Samuel differed, One maintained that it means face; the other, that it means appendage. Now according to the one who maintained that sela means face, Scripture is precise in saying You have fashioned me behind and before; but according to the other who maintained that the word means appendage, in what sense is behind and before to be taken? In the sense that Rabbi Ammi taught; for Rabbi Ammi said, In the order of Creation Adam came hindermost, but in the order of punishment he was put foremost.

The concept here is the Lord God had originally created Adam and Even as one person having two faces, one looking in the forward direction (man) and the other looking towards the back watching out for those who approach, and examining the path that he had taken. The Lord then separated Adam and formed the woman, this led to the interpretation of behind and before. This seems to be consistent with the biblical description the woman was to help the man. The midrash suggests that according to the order of creation, Adam came second, while in the order of punishment, he was the first. Adam may have been put forward in punishment because He was the one who was put in charge over all of God’s creation. In the case of the eating of the forbidden fruit, Adam was not put foremost. The first punishment (curse) came to the serpent, then to Eve, and then to Adam last. There is a subtle suggestion here of the man standing behind those who go before him. If the man had obeyed, been proactive to respond to the serpent with God’s word, the curse against all three could have been averted. Note how significant of a place and responsibility man has on behalf of his family and all of the world.

The midrash continues to say the following:

Therefore it was during the flood that man (Adam) was put foremost in the order of punishment, as it is said, And every living substance was destroyed, which was upon the face of the ground, man and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven (Bereshit / Genesis 7:23). According to him who maintained that sela means face, which of the two faces was in the front? It is likely that the face of the male was in front, since it was taught that when they are walking together, a man should not walk behind a woman, even if she is his wife; that if a man encounters a woman at the entrance to a narrow bridge, he should see to it that she stand aside to let him go first; and that a man who permits himself to follow a woman when they are fording a stream, will have no share in the world to come. In a different exposition, the verse is read, You have guarded me literally and formerly; You have laid Your hand upon me (Tehillim / Psalms 139:5). Rabbi Johanan taught If a man is worthy, he will enjoy the two worlds, the latter world and the former world. But if a man is not worthy, he will have to account for all his deeds, for You have laid Your hand upon me implies God’s punishment, as in the verse, Withdraw Your hand far from me; and let not Your terror make me afraid (Job 13:21).

At first glance this seems to put women’s rights in second place according to the midrash. When we look at western society, we see a role for women that is not what is described in the Scriptures. For example, western society has women taking the lead before men as if they are property to take hold of. Women leading unhappy lives in a career that do not satisfy their natural instincts as women. Western society portrays women in a miserable marriage with men who take them for granted and often leave them for a younger girl or cheat on them (i.e. we see this all the time on television). We see one out of two marriages (50%) ending in divorce even amongst God’s people. We are given the idea of women attaining freedom and emancipation

ho come home from a long day at work to do 90% of the housework. We are also shown women are free to wear whatever cloths they want to but choose to wear little to nothing in order to get recognition from the opposite gender. We see pregnant teens who loose their innocence before understanding what it means to be in a real relationship and what any kind of relationship is all about. All of these things come out of our so called “Free” society. This is the society that supposedly treats women with some degree of respect. What appears to be freedom is not always what it seems since these forms of “women’s rights” lead to the most degrading, self humiliating behavior lacking self respect. The Torah however offers a balanced approach which brings out the true essence of every individual. This is what the midrash is trying to establish saying a man is not to walk behind a woman and if he follows a woman he looses his right to the olam haba (world to come). What is being explained here is the uniqueness of each gender and setting parameters and boundaries that should not be violated. The rabbis are not saying a woman does not have the capability of making an informed decision for a man. The context that is being put in place here is to the creation of being fashioned “before and behind” as the rabbis are speaking to the creation event, and the fall into sin eating of the forbidden fruit. Man is responsible for his sins as much as woman is for her sins. The midrash is pointing this out when the rabbis say “If a man is worthy, he will enjoy the two worlds, the latter world and the former world. But if a man is not worthy, he will have to account for all his deeds, for You have laid Your hand upon me implies God’s punishment, as in the verse, Withdraw Your hand far from me; and let not Your terror make me afraid (Job 13:21).”

The Midrash Tehillim 139 Part 5 concludes saying,

So, too, the laws concerning man come in Scripture only after the laws concerning cattle, beasts, and fowl. Scripture says first, These are the living things which you may eat among all the beasts that are on the earth, This is the law of the beast, and of the fowl, and of every living creature that swarms upon the earth; to make a difference between the unclean and the clean, and between the living thing that may be eaten and the living thing that may not be eaten (Vayikra / Leviticus 11:2, 46-47). Only after this, does Scripture say, If a woman be delivered, and bear a man-child, then she will be unclean seven days, etc (Vayikra / Leviticus 12:2). You have fashioned me behind and before, and laid Your hands upon me. (Tehillim / Psalms 139:5) Hence, it follows that both man and the sanctuary were fashioned with God’s two hands. Thus also it is written, Your hands have made me and fashioned me (Tehillim / Psalms 119:73) and Your sanctuary, O Lord, which Your hands have established (Shemot / Exodus 15:17).

The rabbis conclude with stating “the laws concerning man come in Scripture only after the laws concerning cattle.” The phrase “Man is what man eats” is very descriptive for understanding the purpose of the Kashrut laws. The word kosher is familiar and, at the same time, foreign. In Hebrew, “Kashrut” is from the root kosher (or “kasher”), means suitable and/or “pure,” and has the purpose of ensuring something as fit for consumption. According to the Torah, the only types of meat that may be eaten are cattle and game that have “cloven hooves” and “chew the cud.” If an animal species fulfills only one of these conditions, for example the pig, which has split hooves but does not chew the cud, or the camel, which chews the cud, but does not have split hooves, then its meat may not be eaten. Examples of kosher animals in this category are bulls, cows, sheep, lambs, goats, veal, venison, etc. The laws concerning man only following those laws concerning cattle, may be related to what man takes into his body becoming a part of him that effects every aspect of his life. This concept is paralleled to Wisdom speaking in *Mishley / Proverbs 9:5 Come, eat my food and drink the wine I have mixed. (NASB)* where Wisdom is calling for man to partake of what she has prepared, where the food and drink being consumed becomes a part of the person to the point of influencing one’s life and values before God. Here Wisdom calls out to him who lacks understanding she says, “Come, eat of my food And drink of the wine I have mixed,” where wine is associated with blessing. The reason the Lord led with the kashrut laws in the Torah (Sefer Vayikra) was to guide man to be weary of what he takes into his body which influences who we are at a cellular level (a core level). This is tied

to being fashioned “*behind and before*” in the Midrash with the rabbis concluding, “Hence, it follows that both man and the sanctuary were fashioned with God’s two hands. Thus also it is written, Your hands have made me and fashioned me (Tehillim / Psalms 119:73) and Your sanctuary, O Lord, which Your hands have established (Shemot / Exodus 15:17).” This leads us back to the concept of the Lord guiding and directing us. His putting order our lives, and setting the course of our lives. Because of these things, we should seek the Lord’s help to have these things to be true in our lives, to have His influence, His commandments, and His love in our lives.

Midrash Tehillim 139 Part 6 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying, “Another interpretation, You have fashioned me behind and before refers to two fashionings, a fashioning for this world and a fashioning for the world to come.” The פתיחתא (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the Midrash states, “Therefore, God will not need to fashion man a new in the Resurrection because of the beginning of time He prepared man by two fashionings. Thus, it was that the Holy One blessed be He, set to and fashioned Adam as he lay stretched out in a shapeless mass before Him, as is said Your eyes did see my unformed substance (Tehillim / Psalms 139:16).” The rabbis speak of the intimate nature of God having fashioned man after His image before creating and having a forethought of both this world and the world to come. The entire Midrash states the following:

<p>מדרש תהלים פרק קלט סימן ו ו ד"א אחור וקדם צרתני. [שתי יצירות], יצירה בעולם הזה ויצירה בעולם הבא, אינו צריך לצור אותם עוד לתחיית המתים, שכבר צר אותם שתי יצירות, כך הקב"ה (חשב) [יושב] וצר את האדם (והיה) [והוא] מושלך לפניו כגולם, שנאמר גלמי ראו עיניך וגו'. מהו ועל ספרך כלם יכתבו מיום שברא הקב"ה לאדם הראשון כתב לו בספרו מה שהוא עתיד להעמיד ממנו עד שיחיו המתים, וכה קורא לפניו דור דור ודורשיו, דור דור ופרנסיו, דור דור וחכמיו, דור דור ונביאיו, דור דור וסופריו ותלמידיו עד שיחיו המתים, וכה"א זה ספר תולדות אדם (בראשית ה א), וכן אמר ישעיהו ה' מבטן קראני ממעי אמי הזכיר שמי (ישעיה מט א), וכן הוא אומר מי פעל ועשה קורא הדורות מראש (שם ישעיהו מא ד), רצה לומר מאדם הראשון.</p>	<p>Midrash Tehillim 139, Part 6 6. Another interpretation, You have fashioned me behind and before refers to two fashionings, a fashioning for this world and a fashioning for the world to come. Therefore, God will not need to fashion man a new in the Resurrection because of the beginning of time He prepared man by two fashionings. Thus, it was that the Holy One blessed be He, set to and fashioned Adam as he lay stretched out in a shapeless mass before Him, as is said Your eyes did see my unformed substance (Tehillim / Psalms 139:16). What is meant by the words that conclude the verse, And in Your book all of them were written, what days they should be fashioned, when as yet there was none of them? They mean that upon the day God fashioned Adam, He wrote down in His book the names of those He would cause to spring from Adam up to the time the dead are resurrected. And so God read out to Adam the names of every generation and its preachers, of every generation and its leaders, of every generation and its sages, of every generation and its prophets, of every generation and its scribes and scholars up to the time the dead are resurrected. As Scripture says, This is the book of the generations of Adam (Bereshit / Genesis 5:1). And so Isaiah said, The Lord has called me from the womb, from the bowels of my mother has He made mention of my name. (Isaiah 49:1) And as he said again, Who has wrought and done it, calling generations from the beginning? (Isaiah 41:4) that is, from the time of Adam.</p>
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The rabbis discuss the need for the Lord to fashion man a new in the world to come (in the Resurrection). Their conclusion is the Lord fashioned man by two fashionings in the beginning and so He does not need to do so at a future time in the Olam Haba. Why do you think the rabbis make this comment in relation to being formed “*before and behind?*” Remember previously the rabbis considered this in the context of God creating man as a composition of two people (man and woman) who have many similarities but who are also fundamentally different. Note also that the differences between the body in this world, and the resurrection body also has similarities but are fundamentally different at a physical and spiritual aspect. The resurrection

of the dead is a core belief in traditional Judaism. The understanding is that during the Messianic Age, the temple will be rebuilt in Jerusalem, the Jewish people ingathered from the far corners of the earth, and the bodies of the dead will be brought back to live and reunited with their souls. This belief is connected to the belief in the immortality of the soul which is mentioned in the book of Daniel and Isaiah. The Medieval philosopher Maimonides includes this as one of his 13 principles of the Jewish faith, and the Mishnah states that those who don't believe in resurrection "*have no share in the world to come.*" (*Mishnah Sanhedrin 10:1*) In addition, the Amidah prayer recited three times daily in traditional Judaism includes a blessing praising God as the One who resurrects the dead. It is not surprising the disciples of Yeshua the Messiah believed in the resurrection as a part of faith in God and His promises as it is recorded in the Apostolic Writings. The doctrine of resurrection has proved to be controversial throughout Jewish history. For example, Maimonides wrote in his *Mishneh Torah* that the idea that the Messiah will revive dead bodies is something that "*fools*" say. This is the result of anti-messianic influences from the Christian push for Yeshua and the power of the Messiah to resurrect the dead. However, when critics charged that he denied resurrection, he penned a scathing essay in which he emphatically argued that he did in fact believe in resurrection. Among Orthodox Jews, belief in the resurrection is still generally understood as a literal prophecy that will come to fruition when the messiah comes. Note something about this interpretation, prior to the Messianic Era is the day of judgment as described in the Jewish Encyclopedia (<https://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/12697-resurrection>)

The trumpet blown to gather the tribes of Israel (Isa. xxvii. 13) will also rouse the dead (Ber. 15b; Targ. Yer. to Ex. xx. 15; II Esd. iv. 23; comp. I Cor. xv. 52; I Thess. iv. 16; see Enoch, x. 12 et seq., xxv. 4 et seq., xlv. 2, xc. 25, xci. 11, xcvi. 12; Test. Patr., Simeon, 61; Judah, 25; Zebulun, 10; Benjamin, 10). The nations, together with their guardian angels and stars, shall be cast into Gehenna (Enoch, xc. 24-25). According to R. Eleazar of Modi'im, to the angelic princes of the seventy-two nations who will protest because, though it has sinned like the rest, God favors Israel, God will answer, "Let each nation go through the fire together with its guardian deity"; then all the nations will be consumed in common with their deities, who can not shield them, but Israel will be saved by its God (Cant. R. ii. 1; comp. Tan., Shofetim, ed. Buber, end, after Isa. lxvi. 14, Ps. xxiii. 4, and Micah iv. 5). Another view is that the glare of the sun will test the heathen's loyalty to the Law they promised to observe, and they will be cast into the eternal fire ('Ab. Zarah).

The conception of God entering Hades to save Israel from Gehenna gave rise to the Christian conception of the Messiah descending into Hades to reclaim his own among those who are imprisoned there (Test. Patr., Benjamin; Sibyllines, i. 377, viii. 310; Yalk. ii. 359; Jellinek, "B. H." ii. 50 [comp. I Peter iii. 19]; Ascensio Isaia, iv. 21, with reference to Isa. ix. 16, lii.-liii.; see Epstein, "Bereshit Rabbati," 1888, p. 31). The sole end of the judgment of the heathen is, according to R. Eleazar of Modi'im (Mek., Beshallah, 'Amalek), the establishment of the kingdom of God. "When the Messiah appears on the roof of the Temple announcing Israel's redemption, the light emanating from him shall cause the nations to fall prostrate before him; and Satan himself will shudder, for the Messiah will cast him into Gehenna, and death and sorrow shall flee forever" (Pesik. R. 36; Sibyllines, ii. 167, iii. 46-72).

The Midrashim describes every nation going down into hell, and each nations deity will be known by his power to save them. The point is "*all the nations will be consumed in the fire along with their deities.*" This is why the rabbis speak of Israel going down to hell, and God going with Israel and saving His people, delivering His people from the fire. This may be also why the Apostle Paul wrote of Yeshua the Messiah descending into Hades to reclaim his own among those who are imprisoned there. (See The Apostles Creed and *Ephesians 4*)

The rabbinic answer to the Lord not fashioning man a new in the world to come is explained by the fol-

lowing:

They mean that upon the day God fashioned Adam, He wrote down in His book the names of those He would cause to spring from Adam up to the time the dead are resurrected. And so God read out to Adam the names of every generation and its preachers, of every generation and its leaders, of every generation and its sages, of every generation and its prophets, of every generation and its scribes and scholars up to the time the dead are resurrected. As Scripture says, This is the book of the generations of Adam (Bereshit / Genesis 5:1).

The idea here may be that to be fashioned a new would be to rewrite what the Lord has written and established from before the creation of the world? Here the midrash shows the belief that the Lord God has set in writing the names of every generation of His people, those who live their lives for Him, and seek Him all the days of their lives. The significance of the resurrection is in our having faith in the Lord God our Father in heaven and in His Messiah, and then living our lives for His glory each day. Midrash Tehillim 139 Part 6 concludes saying, “*And so Isaiah said, The Lord has called me from the womb, from the bowels of my mother has He made mention of my name. (Isaiah 49:1) And as he said again, Who has wrought and done it, calling generations from the beginning? (Isaiah 41:4) that is, from the time of Adam.*” The final words of the midrash call upon the book of Isaiah referencing the Lord who has called us from since the beginning of creation, even from the womb of our mother. The Lord calls the generations of His people from since the beginning, from the time of Adam. This suggests that the Lord is calling out to mankind to listen, to hear, and to move, to have faith, and to live in righteousness, justice, and truth according to God’s Word!

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