

Tehillim / Psalms 140 | ספר תהילים קמ

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The Power of Immortality

In this week's study from *Tehillim / Psalms 140:1-13*, the psalm opens saying, א למנצח מזמור לדוד: ב 140:1 *Rescue me, O Lord, from evil men; Preserve me from violent men* 140:2 *Who devise evil things in their hearts; They continually stir up wars.* 140:3 *They sharpen their tongues as a serpent; Poison of a viper is under their lips. Selah. (NASB)* Only the Lord is able to save us from our enemies. This is what the Psalmist believes saying, ד שגנו לשונם כמו-נחש חמת עכשוי תחת שפתימו סלה: ה שמרני יהוה | מידי רשע מאיש חמסים, ו טמנו גאים | פח-לי וחבלים פרו רשת ליד מעגל מקשים, ז שתו-לי סלה: ח אמרתי ליהוה אלי אלה האזינה יהוה קול תחנוני: ט אל-תתן יהוה מאויי רשע זממו אל-תפק ירמו סלה: י ראש מסבי, יב איש לשון עמל שפתימו יכסמו [יכסמו]: יג ימיטו [ימוטו] עליהם גחלים באש יפלם במהמות בל-יקומו: יד אף בל-יכון בארץ איש-חמס רע יצודנו למדחפת: יה ידעת [ידעת] כי-יעשה יהוה דין עני משפט אבינים: יו אף 140:6 *I said to the Lord, 'You are my God; Give ear, O Lord, to the voice of my supplications.* 140:7 *'O God the Lord, the strength of my salvation, You have covered my head in the day of battle.* 140:8 *'Do not grant, O Lord, the desires of the wicked; Do not promote his evil device, that they not be exalted. Selah. (NASB)* The Psalm concludes saying, יא ראש מסבי, יב איש לשון עמל שפתימו יכסמו [יכסמו]: יג ימיטו [ימוטו] עליהם גחלים באש יפלם במהמות בל-יקומו: יד אף בל-יכון בארץ איש-חמס רע יצודנו למדחפת: יה ידעת [ידעת] כי-יעשה יהוה דין עני משפט אבינים: יו אף 140:9 *As for the head of those who surround me, May the mischief of their lips cover them.* 140:10 *'May burning coals fall upon them; May they be cast into the fire, Into deep pits from which they cannot rise.* 140:11 *'May a slanderer not be established in the earth; May evil hunt the violent man speedily.'* 140:12 *I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted And justice for the poor.* 140:13 *Surely the righteous will give thanks to Your name; The upright will dwell in Your presence. (NASB)* The psalmist believes the Lord will vindicate the righteous. The righteous are those who repent of their sins and seek the Lord all the days of their lives even in the midst of their calamity.

עברית	Hebrew	ארמי	Aramaic	ελληνικός	Greek	
	ספר תהילים פרק קמ		ספר טוביה פרק קמ	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 140		
	א למנצח מזמור לדוד: ב חל-צני יהוה מאדם רע מאיש חמסים תנצנני: ג אשר חשבו רעות בלב כל-יום גורו מלקמות: ד שגנו לשונם כמו-נחש חמת עכשוי תחת שפתימו סלה:		א לשבחא תושבחתא על יד דוד: ב פצי יתי יהוה אלהא מבר נש ביש מגבר חטופין תנטור יתי: ג די חשילו דחשיבו בישן בלבא כל יומא מגרגין מגרין קרביא: ד מתניין בלישנהון היך חיויא אירסא דעכוביתא דערבור-ביתא תחות ספוותהון לעלמין:		140:1 εἰς τὸ τέλος ψαλμὸς τῷ Δαυὶδ ἐξελοῦ με κύριε ἐξ ἀνθρώπου πονηροῦ ἀπὸ ἀνδρὸς ἀδίκου ῥῦσαί με 140:2 οἵτινες ἐλογίσαντο ἀδικίας ἐν καρδίᾳ ὅλην τὴν ἡμέραν παρετάσσοντο πολέμους 140:3 ἠκόνησαν γλῶσσαν αὐτῶν ὡσεὶ ὄφεως ἰδὸς ἀσπίδων ὑπὸ τὰ χεῖλη αὐτῶν διάψαλμα 140:4 φύλαξόν με κύριε ἐκ χειρὸς ἀμαρτωλοῦ ἀπὸ ἀνθρώπων ἀδίκων ἐξελοῦ με οἵτινες ἐλογίσαντο ὑποσκελίσαι τὰ διαβήματά μου	

<p>ה שְׁמֵרְנִי יְהוָה מִיַּד רָשָׁע מֵאִישׁ חֲמָסִים תִּנְצְרֵנִי אֲשֶׁר חָשְׁבוּ לְךָ- חֹת פְּעָמַי: ו טָמְנוּ גֵאִים פַּח- לִי וְחִבְלִים פָּרְשׂוּ רָשָׁת לִיד מַעְגְּל מִקְשִׁים שָׁתוּ-לִי סֵלָה: ז אֲמַרְתִּי לִיהוָה אֵלֵי אַתָּה הֶאֱזִינָה יְהוָה קוֹל תַּחֲנוּנָי: ח יְהוָה אֲדַנִּי עֹז יְשׁוּעָ- תִי סְכוּתָה לְרֵאשִׁי בְיוֹם נַשְׁק: ט אֶל-תִּתֵּן יְהוָה מֵאֹנֵי רָשָׁע זְמָמוֹ אֶל-תִּפְקֵן יְרוּמוֹ סֵלָה: י רֵאשׁ מִסִּבֵּי עֲמַל שְׁפָתַימוּ יִכְסוּמוּ [יִכ- סֵמוּ]: יא יְמִיטוּ [יְמִוּטוּ] עֲלֵיהֶם גְּחֹלִים בְּאֵשׁ יִפְלֹם בְּמַהֲמָרוֹת בַּל- יִקוּמוּ: יב אִישׁ לָשׁוֹן בַּל-יִפּוֹן בְּאֶרֶץ אִישׁ-חֲמָס רָע יִצְוֹדְנוּ לְמִ- דְּחַפְת: יג יִדְעַת [יִדְעַתִּי] פִּי- יַעֲשֶׂה יְהוָה דִּין עָנִי מִשְׁפָּט אָבִי- נִים: יד אַךְ צַדִּיקִים יוֹדוּ לְשִׁמְךָ יִשְׁבוּ יִשְׂרָיִם אֶת-פְּנֵיךָ:</p>	<p>ה נטור יתי יהוה מן יד רשיעיא מן גבר חטופין תנטור יתי די חשילו למ- נקוף אסתוריי: ו כמנו גיוותנין פחא קולא לי קדמי ואשלייא פרסון מצד- תא לסטר אורחא תקלין שוון לי תדי- רא לעלמין: ז אמרית ליהוה אלהי אנת את אצית יהוה לקל בעותי: ח אלהים יהוה עושנא דפורקני טלילתא על רישי ביום קרבא: ט לא תתן יהוה רגוגי דואג רשיעא מחשבתי לא תספיק יסתלקון ולא יתרוממו לעלמין: י אחיתופל ריש סנהדרי תלמידי דמסתחרין לאלפא ליעות מלשינותא דסיפוותהון יחפיאונון: יא ימטון עילויהון גומרין מן שמיא בנורא דגהינם יפילינן בגיצינ דמחמ- רין דלא יקומון לחיי עלמא: יב גבר דמשתעי לישן תליתי לא לית אפשר דיתבן בארעא דחיי גבר"אינשי מרי חטופא ועבדין ביש יצודיניה מלאך דמותא ינקפיניה בגהינם: יג הבכין גלי קדמי ארום יעבד יהוה דינהון דע- ניי דינא דחשיכי: יד ברם צדיקיא יהודון לשמך יתבון תריצי לצלאה קדמך:</p>	<p>140:5 ἔκρυψαν ὑπερήφανοι παγίδα μοι καὶ σχοινία διέτειναν παγίδας τοῖς ποσίν μου ἐχόμενα τρίβου σκάνδαλον ἔθεντό μοι διάψαλμα 140:6 εἶπα τῷ κυρίῳ θεός μου εἴ σύ ἐνώτισαι κύριε τὴν φωνήν τῆς δεήσεώς μου 140:7 κύριε κύριε δύναμις τῆς σωτηρίας μου ἐπεσκίασας ἐπὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν μου ἐν ἡμέρᾳ πολέμου 140:8 μὴ παραδῶς με κύριε ἀπὸ τῆς ἐπιθυμίας μου ἀμαρτωλῶ διελογίσαντο κατ' ἐμοῦ μὴ ἐγκαταλίπης με μήποτε ὑψοθῶσιν διάψαλμα 140:9 ἡ κεφαλὴ τοῦ κυκλώματος αὐτῶν κόπος τῶν χειλέων αὐτῶν καλύψει αὐτούς 140:10 πεσοῦνται ἐπ' αὐτούς ἄνθρακες ἐν πυρὶ καταβαλεῖς αὐτούς ἐν τάλαιπωρίαις οὐ μὴ ὑποστῶσιν 140:11 ἀνὴρ γλωσσώδης οὐ κατευθυνθήσεται ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἄνδρα ἄδικον κακὰ θηρεύσει εἰς διαφθοράν 140:12 ἔγνω ὅτι ποιήσει κύριος τὴν κρίσιν τοῦ πτωχοῦ καὶ τὴν δίκην τῶν πενήτων 140:13 πλὴν δίκαιοι ἐξομολογήσονται τῷ ὀνόματί σου καὶ κατοικήσουσιν εὐθεῖς σὺν τῷ προσώπῳ σου</p>
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<p>Tehillim / Psalms 140 140:1 Rescue me, O Lord, from evil men; Preserve me from violent men 140:2 Who devise evil things in their hearts; They continually stir up wars. 140:3 They sharpen their tongues as a serpent; Poison of a viper is under their lips. Selah. 140:4 Keep me, O Lord, from the hands of the wicked; Preserve me from violent men Who have purposed to trip up my feet. 140:5 The proud have hidden a trap for me, and cords; They have spread a net by the wayside; They have set snares for me. Selah. 140:6 I said to the Lord, ‘You are my God; Give ear, O Lord, to the voice of my supplications. 140:7 ‘O God the Lord, the strength of my salvation, You have covered my head in the day of battle. 140:8 ‘Do not grant, O Lord, the desires of the wicked; Do not promote his evil device, that they not be exalted. Selah. 140:9 ‘As for the head of those who surround me, May the mischief of their lips cover them. 140:10 ‘May burning coals fall upon them; May they be cast into the fire, Into deep pits from which they cannot rise. 140:11 ‘May a slanderer not be established in the earth; May evil hunt the violent man speedily.’ 140:12 I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted And justice for the poor. 140:13 Surely the righteous will give thanks to Your name; The upright will dwell in Your presence. (NASB)</p>	<p>Toviyah / Psalms 140 140:1 For praise; a psalm composed by David. 140:2 Deliver me, O Lord, from an evil son of man; protect me from the man of rapacity. 140:3 Who have plotted evil things in the heart; all the day they incite wars. 140:4 They teach with their tongue like a snake; the venom of the spider is under their lips forever. 140:5 Protect me, O Lord, from the hand of wicked men; protect me from the man of rapacity; who have plotted to attack my steps. 140:6 The proud have hidden a trap for me, and they spread out ropes as a net beside the path; they have placed snares for me always. 140:7 I said to the Lord, “You are my God.” Hear, O Lord, the sound of my petition. 140:8 God, the Lord, is the strength of my redemption; you have covered my head in the day of battle. 140:9 Do not grant, O Lord, the desires of Doeg the wicked; do not support his thoughts; let them be removed forever. 140:10 Ahithophel, head of the Sanhedrin of disciples -- may the toil of the slander of their lips cover them. 140:11 May coals from heaven come upon them; may he make them fall into the fire of Gehenna, in sparks that glow, lest they rise to eternal life. 140:12 The man who speaks with deceitful tongue – they cannot dwell in the land of life; the angel of death will hunt down the men of evil rapacity, he will smite them in Gehenna. 140:13 Then it is manifest before me; for the Lord will work justice for the poor, justice for the needy. 140:14 Truly the righteous will give thanks to your name; the upright will sit to pray before you. (EMC)</p>	<p>Psalmoi / Psalms 140 For the end, a Psalm of David. 140:1 Rescue me, O Lord, from the evil man; deliver me from the unjust man. 140:2 Who have devised injustice in their hearts; all the day they prepared war. 140:3 They have sharpened their tongue as the tongue of a serpent; the poison of asps is under their lips. Pause. 140:4 Keep me, O Lord, from the hand of the sinner; rescue me from unjust men; who have purposed to overthrow my goings. 140:5 The proud have hid a snare for me, and have stretched out ropes for snares for my feet; they set a stumbling-block for me near the path. Pause. 140:6 I said to the Lord, Thou art my God; hearken, O Lord, to the voice of my supplication. 140:7 O Lord God, the strength of my salvation; thou hast screened my head in the day of battle. 140:8 Deliver me not, O Lord, to the sinner, according to my desire: they have devised mischief against me; forsake me not, lest they should be exalted. Pause. 140:9 As for the head of them that compass me, the mischief of their lips shall cover them. 140:10 Coals of fire shall fall upon them on the earth; and thou shalt cast them down in afflictions: they shall not bear up under them. 140:11 A talkative man shall not prosper on the earth: evils shall hunt the unrighteous man to destruction. 140:12 I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the poor, and the right of the needy ones. 140:13 Surely the righteous shall give thanks to thy name: the upright shall dwell in thy presence. (LXX)</p>
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א לְמִנְצִיָּה מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד: ב 140:1 Rescue me, O Lord, from evil men; Preserve me from violent men 140:2 Who devise evil things in their hearts; They continually stir up wars. 140:3 They sharpen their tongues as a serpent; Poison of a viper is under their lips. Selah. (NASB) Only the Lord is able to save us from our enemies. The Lord can accomplish this by either causing their complete destruction or by causing our enemy to see the error of their ways and repent. The idea of our calling for the wicked to repent is actually a Torah concept and is part of halachah (Torah law), as may be shown from the episode described in the Talmud Bavli Berachot 10a.

Talmud Bavli Berachot 10a

There were certain hooligans who resided in the neighborhood of Rabbi Meir, and they caused him much misery and anguish. Once, Rabbi Meir prayed for mercy regarding them, so that they would die. His wife Beruriah said to him, "What makes you think that such a prayer is permitted? Is it because the verse states 'Let sinners [chataim] cease from the earth'? But is it written 'chotim'—sinners? Rather it is written 'chataim'—that which causes one to sin, namely the evil inclination. Furthermore, the end of the verse continues, '...and let the wicked be no more.' Since the sins will cease, there will be no more wicked men! "Rather," she concluded, "pray for them that they should repent, and there will be no more wicked people." He did pray for them, and they repented.

As we can see according to this episode, one should not pray for others to be punished, rather we should pray that they repent and do teshuvah. Which brings us to the point, we are to pray always for the wicked to be brought to repentance. Furthermore, if we look at the book of the Psalms, we read in the midrashim of a woman named Bruriah. Bruriah (ברוריה) is one of several women quoted as a sage in the Talmud. She was the wife of the Tanna Rabbi Meir and the daughter of Rabbi Hananiah Ben Teradion, who is listed as one of the "Ten Martyrs." She is greatly admired for her breadth of knowledge in matters pertaining to both halachah and aggadah. (*Talmud Bavli Pesachim 62b*) Her parents were put to death by the Romans for teaching Torah, but she carried on their legacy. Bruriah was very involved in the halachic discussions of her time, and even challenges her father on a matter of ritual purity (*Tosefta Keilim Kamma 4:9*). Her comments are praised by Rabbi Judah ben Bava. In another instance, Rabbi Joshua praises her intervention in a debate between Rabbi Tarfon and the sages, saying "Bruriah has spoken correctly" (*Tosefta Keilim Metzia 1:3*). In the Midrash on *Tehillim / Psalms 118* (see *Talmud Bavli Berachot 10a*) it states that Bruriah taught her husband, Rabbi Meir, to pray for the repentance of the wicked, rather than for their destruction. According to the story, she once found Rabbi Meir praying that an annoying neighbor would die. Appalled by this, she responded to him by explaining the verse "Let the sinners be consumed from the earth, and the wicked shall be no more" (*Tehillim / Psalms 104:35*), that the verse actually states, "Let sin be consumed from the earth," adding that "the wicked shall be no more" because they have repented. Another interpretation of the passage suggests that Bruriah explained that the verse does not refer to "those who sin" (as a participle), but habitual "sinners" (as a noun). Bruriah is cited to teach us that one should pray for the cessation of sins rather than the punishment of the wicked. We find King David doing the exact opposite! We find King David praying that "when he [King David's enemy] is judged, let him emerge guilty, and let his prayer be accounted as a sin. May his days be few, and may someone else take his office of dignity. May his sons be orphans and his wife a widow. May his sons wander, and [people] should ask and search from their ruins. May a creditor search out all he has, and may strangers despoil his labor. May he have none who extends kindness, and may no one be gracious to his orphans..." (*Tehillim / Psalms 109*) This Psalm is hardly a prayer for the repentance of the wicked. In *Ethics of the Fathers* we read the following:

Ethics of the Fathers (Pirkei Avot) 4:19

Shmuel Hakatan would say: "When your enemy falls, do not rejoice; when he stumbles, let your heart not be gladdened. Lest God see, and it will be displeasing in His eyes, and He will turn His wrath from him to you."

Shmuel Hakatan is quoting the Book of Proverbs (*Mishley / Proverbs 24:17-18*). Note how the Mishnah cites this in his name. Why? The reason being, it is because this was a statement that typified him; something that would be continually not just on his lips but reflected in his actions. Shmuel HaKatan believed that we are not to rejoice over the punishment of the wicked. This is the person who it is attributed to who formulated the 19th amidah the prayer for the destruction of the heretic as a reference to Christians. Seems strange his being the one who raised to the occasion of formulating a prayer for the wicked to be punished. The point is it is the Lord who exacts revenge for His people. We are not to pray out of a mindset of revenge but of one that loves our enemies as Yeshua taught in *Matthew 5:44*. (*But I say unto you, Love your enemies,*

bless those that curse you, do good to those that hate you, and pray for those who speak evil about you, and persecute you; King James 2000 Bible But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them who despitefully use you ...)

This is what the Psalmist believes saying, ה' שְׁמַרְנִי מִיַּד רָשָׁע מֵאִישׁ חֲמָסִים תִּנְצְרֵנִי אֲשֶׁר הִשְׁבּוּ לְדַחֹת פְּעָמַי: 140:4 *Keep me, O Lord, from the hands of the wicked; Preserve me from violent men Who have purposed to trip up my feet.* 140:5 *The proud have hidden a trap for me, and cords; They have spread a net by the wayside; They have set snares for me. Selah.* (NASB) Here David is asking the Lord to protect him from his enemies and provides details on the nature of the enemy who sets a trap for him in such a way as he is not aware (the snare and the trap). We are told in the Apostolic Writings we are to turn the other cheek and to love our enemy. One of the more popular polemics against Judaism is that Judaism is a harsh, cold religion of laws, devoid of love and compassion. This charge is based on New Testament statements (*Matthew 5:38-44*) attributed to what Yeshua said, “*You have heard that it was said, An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. But I say to you,... If anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other. You have also heard that it was said, You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I say to you, Love your enemy and pray for those who persecute you.*” Yeshua makes it clear the extent at which one is to go, to turn from personal retribution and to give the right to repayment to the Lord. Note something here, in the Torah we read the “*eye for eye*” statement, however the instruction to “*love your neighbor and hate your enemy*” is actually nowhere to be found in the Torah. Nowhere in the entire Torah can such a decree be found. However, the Torah does address what our attitude toward our enemy should be. In the Torah portion, Mishpatim, the Torah states, “*When you encounter your enemy’s ox or ass wandering, you must take it back to him. When you see the ass of your enemy lying under its burden and would refrain from raising it, you must, nevertheless, raise it with him.*” (*Shemot / Exodus 23:4-5*). Just as we are responsible when we damage our neighbor’s eye or arm or tooth, we are also responsible when we cause or are accessories to the performance of that damage. The Lord God Almighty instructs us in His Torah to be fair and just, and to be giving even to our enemy. The Torah does not command us to love our enemies, but neither does it tell us to hate him either. Note how Judaism teaches that we also have the ability to battle the power of the Yetzer Hara (the evil inclination). Considering these things, we learn that we may hate our enemy, but we are not to allow that hatred to consume us, to destroy us, and to lead us to forfeit the opportunity to remain in a covenant with God. In fact, doing the right thing despite how we feel is one of the ways we remain victorious over the Yetzer Hara. The rabbis say the following according to the Mishnah Pirkei Avot.

Mishnah Pirkei Avot 2:4

הוא היה אומר, עשה רצונו כרצונך, כדי שיעשה רצונך כרצונו. בטל רצונך מפני רצונו, כדי שיבטל רצון אחרים מפני רצונך. הלל אומר, אל תפרש מן הצבור, ואל תאד מין בעצמך עד יום מותך, ואל תדין את חברך עד שתגיע למקומו, ואל תאמר דבר שאי אפשר לשמע, שסופו להשמע. ואל תאמר לכשאפנה אשנה, שמא לא תפנה:

He was accustomed to say: Make His [God's] will like your will, so that He will make your will like His will. Nullify your will to His will, so that He will nullify the will of others to your will. Hillel says: Do not separate yourself from the community. Do not believe in yourself until the day of your death. Do not judge your fellow until you come to his place. Do not say something that cannot be heard, for in the end it will be heard. Do not say, “When I will be available I will study [Torah],” lest you never become available.

Rabban Gamliel the son of Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi said in the Mishnah to make God’s will our will and not to judge another man until you have walked in His footsteps. Doing the right thing despite how we feel is one of the ways we can remain victorious and it is in this way that we help our enemy in spite of the fact that we may not want to. The end result of our doing what is right, it may be that he will come to love a God who

בְּאֵשׁ יִפְלֹם בְּמַהֲמָרוֹת בַּל-יִקוּמוּ: יב אִישׁ לְשׁוֹן בַּל-יִכּוֹן בְּאָרְץ אִישׁ-הַמָּס רַע יִצְוֹדְנוּ לְמַדְחַתְּךָ: יג יָדַעְתָּ [יָדַעְתִּי]:
As for the head of those who surround me, May the mischief of their lips cover them. 140:9
May burning coals fall upon them; May they be cast into the fire, Into deep pits from which they cannot rise. 140:10
May a slanderer not be established in the earth; May evil hunt the violent man speedily. 140:11
I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted And justice for the poor. 140:12
Surely the righteous will give thanks to Your name; The upright will dwell in Your presence. (NASB)
The psalmist believes the Lord will vindicate the righteous. The righteous are those who repent of their sins and seek the Lord all the days of their lives even in the midst of their calamity. The wicked on the other hand are unrepentant and there is no faithfulness in their lives. In Parashat HaaZinu Moshe writes being inspired by God the following:

Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:20-39

32:20 *'Then He said, 'I will hide My face from them, I will see what their end shall be; For they are a perverse generation, Sons in whom is no faithfulness. 32:21 'They have made Me jealous with what is not God; They have provoked Me to anger with their idols. So I will make them jealous with those who are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation, 32:22 For a fire is kindled in My anger, And burns to the lowest part of Sheol, And consumes the earth with its yield, And sets on fire the foundations of the mountains. 32:23 'I will heap misfortunes on them; I will use My arrows on them. 32:24 'They will be wasted by famine, and consumed by plague And bitter destruction; And the teeth of beasts I will send upon them, With the venom of crawling things of the dust. 32:25 'Outside the sword will bereave, And inside terror Both young man and virgin, The nursling with the man of gray hair. 32:26 'I would have said, 'I will cut them to pieces, I will remove the memory of them from men,' 32:27 Had I not feared the provocation by the enemy, That their adversaries would misjudge, That they would say, 'Our hand is triumphant, And the Lord has not done all this.' 32:28 'For they are a nation lacking in counsel, And there is no understanding in them. 32:29 'Would that they were wise, that they understood this, That they would discern their future! 32:30 'How could one chase a thousand, And two put ten thousand to flight, Unless their Rock had sold them, And the Lord had given them up? 32:31 'Indeed their rock is not like our Rock, Even our enemies themselves judge this. 32:32 'For their vine is from the vine of Sodom, And from the fields of Gomorrah; Their grapes are grapes of poison, Their clusters, bitter. 32:33 'Their wine is the venom of serpents, And the deadly poison of cobras. 32:34 'Is it not laid up in store with Me, Sealed up in My treasuries? 32:35 'Vengeance is Mine, and retribution, In due time their foot will slip; For the day of their calamity is near, And the impending things are hastening upon them.' 32:36 'For the Lord will vindicate His people, And will have compassion on His servants, When He sees that their strength is gone, And there is none remaining, bond or free. 32:37 'And He will say, 'Where are their gods, The rock in which they sought refuge? 32:38 'Who ate the fat of their sacrifices, And drank the wine of their drink offering? Let them rise up and help you, Let them be your hiding place! 32:39 'See now that I, I am He, And there is no god besides Me; It is I who put to death and give life. I have wounded and it is I who heal, And there is no one who can deliver from My hand. (NASB)*

The Lord God sees the wickedness in the hearts of men and He states that He will hide his face from those who are the perverse generation and then will see what their end will be. *Ibn Ezra on Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:35 Part 3* states, “the moment cf. “even the wicked for the day of evil” [Proverbs 16: 4]. There is a profound mystery [i.e., Divine foreknowledge of human choices — Translator] concealed here.” The Lord God has a foreknowledge of the choices we are going to make. He says they provoke him to anger by their idolatry. Because of the people’s wickedness the Lord will 32:23 *‘... will heap misfortunes on them; I will use My arrows on them. 32:24 ‘They will be wasted by famine, and consumed by plague And bitter destruc-*

tion; And the teeth of beasts I will send upon them, With the venom of crawling things of the dust. 32:25 'Outside the sword will bereave, And inside terror Both young man and virgin, The nursling with the man of gray hair. (NASB) Note what David is saying here in the Psalm, he seeks the Lord for vindication and help from the enemy. This is consistent with what we read in the Torah, in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:35* 'Vengeance is Mine, and retribution, In due time their foot will slip; For the day of their calamity is near, And the impending things are hastening upon them.' 32:36 'For the Lord will vindicate His people, And will have compassion on His servants, When He sees that their strength is gone, And there is none remaining, bond or free. (NASB) We are to wait upon the Lord for His vindication and not take matters into our own hands. The final point is what we read in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:39* 'See now that I, I am He, And there is no god besides Me; It is I who put to death and give life. I have wounded and it is I who heal, And there is no one who can deliver from My hand. (NASB) This verse speaks of how the Lord is to be feared. Daat Zkenim says this in the following way:

Daat Zkenim on Deuteronomy 32:39 Part 3

מַהֲצַתִּי וְאֲנִי אֲרַפָּא, "I have wounded and I am able to heal." I will heal them, (My people). Concerning what you gentiles have said sarcastically: יְקוּמוּ וַיִּעֲזְרוּכֶם, "let them arise and help you," there is no one who can help other than I who can help you. By the same token, no one can save you from Me. (if I decide your destruction).

Daat Zkenim speaks of the gentiles who seek the inanimate object (idols) and others for help as opposed to the Lord God who is able to raise up and cast down, give life or take life away. Ibn Ezra has the following to say concerning this section of the Torah.

Ibn Ezra on Deuteronomy 32:39 Part 1

I, I Either a mere stylistic repetition, as in "I, I" [Isaiah 51: 12], or, more correctly, "I am I", meaning, I am the same One — I have not changed. There is no other actor working with Him — I am the One Who has brought death to Israel, and I am also the One Who shall bring life to them. And just as they did not escape from Me, so, too, there will be none to save you from My hand — i.e., you, too, are in My hands, until I shall have done you justice. Many say [Pesachim 68a] that this is the verse from which we learn the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, since the verse first says I slay, and then says I bring life (as in "God kills and gives life" [I Samuel 2: 6], as evidenced by the subsequent statement that God "lowers to the grave, and raises up" [I Samuel 2: 6]). Others [Breshit Rabba on Genesis 9: 5] have said that the doctrine is derived from the verse "Surely your blood of your souls" [Genesis 9: 5] [because the prohibition of suicide that is derived from the verse would be meaningless without an afterlife — Translator], or from "It will be our privilege" [6: 25] or [Qiddushin 40a] from "For He is your life" — in this world — "and your longevity" — in the World to Come [30: 20], or [Qiddushin 39b] from "that it may be well with you" [5: 16] [see also Sanhedrin 90b — Translator]. Hai Gaon, of blessed memory, has said that Scripture did not need to explain the doctrine of the World to Come, because it has been transmitted to us through tradition. My opinion is that the Torah was given to everyone, not to the lone individual, and that not one man in a thousand can comprehend the doctrine of the World to Come, on account of its profundity. To understand the reward of the World to Come requires an understanding of the nature of the soul. It comes about in return for one's "service of the heart", the service of which is to contemplate the works of God, for they are the ladder by means of which one ascends to the level of knowledge of God, the ultimate goal. Moreover, the Torah has provided, for the discerning, the illustration of the "Tree of Life" [cf. comment on Genesis 3: 24], through which the Cherubim [Genesis 3: 24] receive the power of immortality. Whoever eats of the Tree of Life will live forever, like the ministering angels [cf. Genesis 3: 22]. Similarly, in the forty-ninth Psalm, there is the mysterious passage, "But God will redeem my soul from

the power of the grave, for He will take me” [Psalms 49: 16], and also, “afterward, You will take me into honor” [Psalms 73: 24]. Both passages employ the verb “to take”, just as is used to describe H v nokh [Genesis 5: 24] and Elijah [II Kings 2: 10]. The discerning will understand how the Psalmist can say “their soul’s redemption is too costly” [Psalms 49: 9] and then say later “He will redeem my soul” [Psalms 49: 16].

Ibn Ezra states the Lord never changes, He is eternal, and His character is also eternal. He states that it is from this verse we receive the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead since the verse first speaks of being put to death, and then of being given life. He then leads into the blessing of the World to Come and states the following:

“My opinion is that the Torah was given to everyone, not to the lone individual, and that not one man in a thousand can comprehend the doctrine of the World to Come, on account of its profundity. To understand the reward of the World to Come requires an understanding of the nature of the soul. It comes about in return for one’s “service of the heart”, the service of which is to contemplate the works of God, for they are the ladder by means of which one ascends to the level of knowledge of God, the ultimate goal. Moreover, the Torah has provided, for the discerning, the illustration of the “Tree of Life” [cf. comment on Genesis 3: 24], through which the Cherubim [Genesis 3: 24] receive the power of immortality. Whoever eats of the Tree of Life will live forever, like the ministering angels [cf. Genesis 3: 22].”

Ibn Ezra gets kabbalistic in his interpretation of the world to come, speaking of the service of the heart and its connection to having faith in God and what He has done, and then connects this to the Torah and the Tree of life and the power of immortality. The taking hold of the commands, meaning that one is applying God’s Word to his or her life, speaking of life that is bound to faith in the Lord God in heaven. This is the promise that we have יג ידעת [ידעתי] כי-יעשה יהוה דין עני משפט אבנים: יד אף צדיקים יודו לשמך ישבו ישרים: 140:12 I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted And justice for the poor. 140:13 Surely the righteous will give thanks to Your name; The upright will dwell in Your presence. (NASB) The psalmist believes the Lord will vindicate the righteous. Those who seek the Lord each day, who desire to know Him, to walk in His ways, believing in the Messiah, the Anointed One of God, and seeking to dwell in His presence! God’s Sanctuary represents immortality and incorruptibility. In His presence, there is no death, no decay, and no decomposition. Therefore, He bans from His Sanctuary the disease that represents a living decomposition which is sin. This is why Paul writes, “Who will set me free from the body of this death? Thanks be to God through Yeshua the Messiah our Master!” (Romans 7:24-25) Let’s Pray!

Rabbinic Commentary

The Rabbinic Commentary (Midrash) on *Tehillim / Psalms 140* has 2 parts. Reading through the Midrash we will be looking at Part 1 and 2. Let’s begin by outlining *Midrash Tehillim Chapter 140, Part 1 and 2*.

Outline of Midrash Tehillim / Psalms, Chapter 140, Part 1 and 2

Part 1

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying, “For the leader, A Psalm of David. Deliver me, O Lord, from the evil man; preserve me from the violent man (*Tehillim / Psalms 140:1*).”
- The פתיחה (Petilhta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “Solomon said, Get wisdom,

get understanding, Forsake her not, and she will preserve you; love her, and she will keep you (Mishley / Proverbs 4:5-6)."

- The מִשָּׁל (mashal) "*the parable,*" goes on to explain the פְּתִיחָה (Petihta), the rabbis describe the importance of wisdom which is founded upon living our lives according to God's ways!
- The נִמְשָׁל (Nimshal) "*expansion on the parable*" expands upon the מִשָּׁל (mashal), the rabbis conclude that the preservation of God's word is found in making it a part of our lives.
- The Concluding phrase says, "*If the children of Israel say, Even if Esau is to be cut off for ever, yet what he swallowed is gone, the Holy One blessed be He, will reply, I will bring it back from between his teeth, as is said, I will bring back from between the teeth (Tehillim / Psalms 68:23). Hence, it is said, Preserve me from the violent man.*"

Part 2

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דִּבְרוֹר הַמְתַּחֵיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying, "*Who devise evil things in their heart (Tehillim / Psalms 140:3).*"
- The פְּתִיחָה (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, "*What is meant by evil things in their heart?*"
- The מִשָּׁל (mashal) "*the parable,*" goes on to explain the פְּתִיחָה (Petihta), the rabbis speak of the wickedness that is found in the heart of man and use Esau as the example.
- The נִמְשָׁל (Nimshal) "*expansion on the parable*" expands upon the מִשָּׁל (mashal), the rabbis compare this to the beast according to Daniel's prophecy.
- The Concluding phrase says, "*But the Scripture goes on to say I behold even till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed, and it was given to be burnt with fire (Daniel 7:11); and it is also written, And the house of Jacob will be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble (Obadiah 1:18).*"

Midrash Tehillim 140 Part 1 opens with the דִּבְרוֹר הַמְתַּחֵיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying, "*For the leader, A Psalm of David. Deliver me, O Lord, from the evil man; preserve me from the violent man (Tehillim / Psalms 140:1).*" The פְּתִיחָה (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, "*Solomon said, Get wisdom, get understanding, Forsake her not, and she will preserve you; love her, and she will keep you (Mishley / Proverbs 4:5-6).*" What we find here is wisdom personified. Solomon is telling us to take hold of the divine instruction of God, the Word which comes from the Lord God Almighty, our Father in heaven. This wisdom is found in the Written Word of God which was taught and spoken of by the Messiah Yeshua. In order to most completely understand God's Word we must put His words into action through faithfulness. Obedience to the will of God and diligently learning of those saving truths which the Lord has set before us in His word. Just as the Apostolic Writings say we are to take hold of the Messiah, to dwell in His wisdom, and knowledge, we are not to let him go but to keep him and to hold fast to him for he is our life. It is in this manner we hold onto the Word of God as John wrote "*In him was life, and the life was the light of men.*" Abiding in the Messiah is synonymous to abiding in His teachings, in God's Word. The more we abide in God's Word, the more firmly we take hold of Wisdom as Solomon is calling us to do. This is connected to being the people of God who really believe what we profess to believe, who know the truth of God according to His Word. We must be persuaded with certainty that God's Word is truth and life for us. Within this context we read of David in His psalm seeking the Lord God Almighty to deliver him from evil men and to preserve him from the violent man.

The entire midrash states the following:

מדרש תהלים פרק קמ סימן א

א למנצח מזמור לדוד חלצני ה' מאדם רע מאיש חמסים תנצרני. אמר שלמה אל תעזבה ותשמרך וגו' (משלי ד ו), בהתהלכך תנחה אותך וגו' (שם משלי ו כב), כך אמר הקב"ה לדוד רצונך שאצרך, נצור את התורה, שנאמר נצרה כי היא חייך, (שם משלי ד יג), רצונך שאפלטך מיד רשעים, רנן לפני ואני מפלטך, רני פלט תסובבני סלה (תהלים לב ז). חלצני ה' מאדם רע. מי הוא זה עשו הרשע, ומה היא רעתו מות, כך אמר הקב"ה כשאפדה אתכם, מידי מות אני אפדה אתכם, שנאמר מיד שאול אפדם ממות אגאלם אהי דברך מות (הושע יג יד), הרי המות עשו הרשע, לכך נאמר חלצני ה' מאדם רע וגו', וכן יעקב אמר הצילני נא מיד אחי מיד עשו וגו' (בראשית לב יב), איזה מות מאיש חמסים תנצרני, ומה היה חמסו, וילן שם בלילה ההוא ויקח מן הבא בידו וגו', עזים מאתים וגו' (שם שם בראשית ל"ב יד טו), אין זה חמס, וכה"א מהמס אחיך יעקב תכסך בושה ונכרת לעולם (עובדיה א י), אמר ישראל הרי נכרת לעולם, ומה שבלע בלע, אמר הקב"ה אני מוציא מבין שיניו, שנאמר אמר ה' מבשן אשיב (תהלים סח כג), לכך נאמר מאיש חמסים תנצרני.

Midrash Tehillim 140, Part 1

1. *For the leader, A Psalm of David. Deliver me, O Lord, from the evil man; preserve me from the violent man (Tehillim / Psalms 140:1). Solomon said, Get wisdom, get understanding, Forsake her not, and she will preserve you; love her, and she will keep you (Mishley / Proverbs 4:5-6). Solomon also said, My son, keep your Father's commandment, when you go it will lead you; when you sleep, it will keep you' and when you awake, it will talk with you (Mishley / Proverbs 6:20, 22). Accordingly, the Holy One blessed be He, said to David, Is it your desire that I preserve you? Then preserve the Torah, as it is said, Take fast hold of instruction, let her not go; keep her, for she is your life (Mishley / Proverbs 4:13). Is it your desire that I deliver you from the power of violent men? Then chant the words of Torah before Me, and I will deliver you, as is said, Compass Me about with songs and I will give deliverance (Tehillim / Psalms 32:7). Deliver me, O Lord, from the evil man (Tehillim / Psalms 140:2). Who is he? The evil Esau. And what is the evil he does? Death. Hence the Holy One blessed be He, declared, When I redeem you, I will redeem you from death, for it is said, I will ransom them from the power of the nether-world; I will redeem them from death, O death, I will be your plagues, O grave, I will be your destruction (Hosea 13:14). Thus, behold that the evil Esau is death. Hence, it is said, Deliver me, O Lord, from the evil man. Likewise, when Jacob said, Deliver me, I pray You, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, etc. (Bereshit / Genesis 32:12) was he not referring to death? Preserve me from the violent man. What verse implies Esau's violence? The verse And he lodged there that night; and took of that what he had with him a present for Esau his brother; two hundred she-goats, and twenty he-goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, thirty milch camels and their colts, forty kine and ten bulls, twenty she-asses and ten foals (Bereshit / Genesis 32:14-16). Is not the fear of violence implied by such lavish giving? Thus Scripture says also For the violence done to your brother Jacob shame will cover you, and you will be cut off forever (Obadiah 1:10). If the children of Israel say, Even if Esau is to be cut off for ever, yet what he swallowed is gone, the Holy One blessed be He, will reply, I will bring it back from between his teeth, as is said, I will bring back from between the teeth (Tehillim / Psalms 68:23). Hence, it is said, Preserve me from the violent man.*

The Midrash states, “Solomon also said, My son, keep your Father's commandment, when you go it will lead you; when you sleep, it will keep you' and when you awake, it will talk with you” quoting from Mishley / Proverbs 6:20-22, *My son, keep your father's commandment; Do not forsake your mother's teaching. 6:21 Tie them over your heart always; Bind them around your throat. 6:22 When you walk it will lead you; When you lie down it will watch over you; And when you are awake it will talk with you.* Solomon speaks of the importance of the instructions (תורה) of God and how God's commands keep us, leads us, and watches over us. The rabbis continue in the Midrash to say, “Accordingly, the Holy One blessed be He, said to David, Is it your desire that I preserve you? Then preserve the Torah, as it

is said, Take fast hold of instruction, let her not go; keep her, for she is your life (Mishley / Proverbs 4:13)." Why do you think the rabbis say God says to David in order to seek preservation one should do the same (preserve) the Torah? This is the very thing the Apostle John is writing in His epistle.

1 John 1:4-10

1:4 These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete. 1:5 This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. 1:6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; 1:7 but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1:10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us. (NASB)

We are to take hold of the Messiah and His teachings. We are to walk in them, in God's ways according to His Torah. If we do not seek the Lord God in heaven in righteousness, holiness, justice, and truth, we will not receive what we ask for. We must be honest, confess our sins, and rely upon the Lord for His salvation and not a salvation of our own making. The Midrash states, "*Is it your desire that I deliver you from the power of violent men? Then chant the words of Torah before Me, and I will deliver you, as is said, Compass Me about with songs and I will give deliverance (Tehillim / Psalms 32:7).*" This is the rabbinic way of saying we are to place God's Word upon our hearts, and in our lives, so much so, that it becomes a part of our lives to the point of overflowing, we speak, we chant God's Word. All of these things are a reference to our being faithful to God's Word, just as John is writing about those who claim to have fellowship with the Lord. We are not to walk in darkness, but to walk in the light, in God's truth, and living in righteousness according to His Word.

The rabbis in the Midrash ask who is the evil man David is speaking of and then compare him to Esau, the one who forsook the covenant promises, and did not care about the Word of the Lord.

Deliver me, O Lord, from the evil man (Tehillim / Psalms 140:2). Who is he? The evil Esau. And what is the evil he does? Death. Hence the Holy One blessed be He, declared, When I redeem you, I will redeem you from death, for it is said, I will ransom them from the power of the nether-world; I will redeem them from death, O death, I will be your plagues, O grave, I will be your destruction (Hosea 13:14). Thus, behold that the evil Esau is death. Hence, it is said, Deliver me, O Lord, from the evil man. Likewise, when Jacob said, Deliver me, I pray You, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, etc. (Bereshit / Genesis 32:12) was he not referring to death? Preserve me from the violent man. What verse implies Esau's violence? The verse And he lodged there that night; and took of that what he had with him a present for Esau his brother; two hundred she-goats, and twenty he-goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams, thirty milch camels and their colts, forty kine and ten bulls, twenty she-asses and ten foals (Bereshit / Genesis 32:14-16). Is not the fear of violence implied by such lavish giving? (Midrash Tehillim 140 Part 1)

Here the Midrash speaks of the Lord God redeeming his people from Death, from the nether-world, from the grave, and from destruction. Here the rabbis are connecting the redemption of God to both this world and the world to come. They are connecting the physical and spiritual together in the redemption of God. In the Apostolic Writings, the Messiah was said to have brought these things to His people. The belief in the eventual coming of the Messiah is a basic and fundamental part of traditional Judaism. It is part of Rambam's 13 Principles of Faith, the minimum requirements of Jewish belief. In the Shemoneh Esrei prayer, recited three times daily, we pray for all of the elements of the coming of the Messiah, the in-gathering of

the exiles, the restoration of the religious courts of justice, and the end of wickedness, sin and heresy, the reward to the righteous, the rebuilding of Jerusalem, the restoration of the line of King David, and the restoration of Temple service. Now some would claim that Yeshua the Messiah did not fulfill these requirements of the Messiah. The interesting point about the time period in which Yeshua lived, a few of these elements such as the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the Temple service were in existence during His life, the restoration of these things were not needed. As a result these could be considered a later addition to the daily prayers. Could this be a polemic against the Christian interpretation of Yeshua being the Messiah? Judaism teaches the Messiah will bring about the physical and spiritual redemption of the Jewish people by bringing us back to Israel and restoring Jerusalem (*Isaiah 11:11-12, Jeremiah 23:8, 30:3, and Hosea 3:4-5*). He will establish a government in Israel that will be the center of all world government, both for Jews and gentiles (*Isaiah 2:2-4, 11:10, and 42:1*). He will rebuild the Temple and re-establish its worship (*Jeremiah 33:18*). He will restore the religious court system of Israel and establish Jewish law as the law of the land (*Jeremiah 33:15*). Note how all of these events were necessary after Yeshua had died and was resurrected. These things were necessary following the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in Jerusalem. To turn and apply these as a proof text against Yeshua as the Messiah is a little dishonest and is a significant anachronistic error. Note that anachronism is taking something that belongs to a period other than that being portrayed. This is what the anti-missionaries are attempting to do.

Midrash Tehillim 140 Part 1 concludes saying, “*Thus Scripture says also For the violence done to your brother Jacob shame will cover you, and you will be cut off forever (Obadiah 1:10). If the children of Israel say, Even if Esau is to be cut off for ever, yet what he swallowed is gone, the Holy One blessed be He, will reply, I will bring it back from between his teeth, as is said, I will bring back from between the teeth (Tehillim / Psalms 68:23). Hence, it is said, Preserve me from the violent man.*” The Lord God calls us to be a people of peace, this is why the psalmist speaks of the violent man, and seeking the Lord to preserve him from those who would seek his destruction. The Lord is the One whom we can trust, He is the One who redeems us from our sins, from death, from the grave, from the nether-world, and from destruction. He sent His Son Yeshua the Messiah to accomplish these things on our behalf.

Midrash Tehillim 140 Part 2 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying, “*Who devise evil things in their heart (Tehillim / Psalms 140:3).*” The פתיחתא (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*What is meant by evil things in their heart?*” The entire Midrash states the following:

<p>מדרש תהלים פרק קמ סימן ב</p> <p>ב אשר חשבו רעות בלב וגו'. מהו רעות בלב אינו מוציא מפיו, אלא טמון הוא בלבו, אשר חשבו רעות בלב, רעה בלב אין כתיב כאן, אלא רעות בלב, וכשהן חושבין לא עלינו בלבד הן חושבין, אלא גם עליך, שנאמר כי נטו עליך רעה וגו' (תהלים כא יב), וכה"א וארו חיוה רביי עי"א דחילה וגו', משתכל הוית בקרניא וגו' (דניאל ז ז ה). מדבר כנגד אלהים מוציא דברים קשים וחרופים וגדופים, וכתוב חזה הוית עד די קטילת חיותא והובד גשמה ויהיבת ליקדת אשא (שם שם דניאל ז' יא), וכתוב והיה בית יעקב אש וגו' (עובדיה א יח).</p>	<p>Midrash Tehillim 140, Part 2</p> <p>2. <i>Who devise evil things in their heart (Tehillim / Psalms 140:3). What is meant by evil things in their heart? The evil things which Esau did not speak out, but hid in his heart. Who devise evil things in their heart. It is not written here, an evil thing in their heart, but evil things in their heart. For when the house of Esau devise evil things, they devise them not only against us, but also against You, as is said, For they intended evil against You, they imagined a device which they are not able to perform (Tehillim / Psalms 21:12). Likewise, Scripture says, And behold a forth beast dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly, I considered the horns, and behold, there came up among them another horn, a little one (Daniel 7:7-8) speaking against God, spitting out harsh words, blasphemies, and reviling's. But the Scripture goes on to say I behold even till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed, and it was given to be burnt with fire (Daniel 7:11); and it is also written, And the house of Jacob will be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble (Obadiah 1:18).</i></p>
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The rabbis speak of not just one evil thing that is devised in the heart, but the plural form, “evil things” that are devised in the heart. The idea here is the evil things consists as two parts, (i) the evil things one speaks about (everyone knows about) and (ii) the evil things that one hides within his heart for nobody to see. It is interesting while watching You-tube videos Online of people who have had near death experiences, I have seen some people give a testimony of having gone to hell and then coming back. The testimony they give is when in hell, one can look at a person and know all of the sins he had committed and the reasons why he was there in the torment that he is suffering. This reminded me of the words Yeshua wrote in *Luke 8:17* *For all that is secret will eventually be brought into the open, and everything that is concealed will be brought to light and made known to all. (ESV)* If what is said in these near death experiences is true, what Yeshua speaks of is also true, whatever was done in secret will be revealed and made known to all. On the other hand, if we perform Teshuvah (Repent) and turn from our sins, seeking the Lord for forgiveness in faith and faithfulness, He will forgive us. And the Scriptures says in *Isaiah 43:25* ‘*I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake, And I will not remember your sins. (NASB)* The Lord says on multiple occasions that He will wipe out our transgressions, similar to what we read here in *Tehillim / Psalms 103*.

Tehillim / Psalms 103:11-13

103:11 For as high as the heavens are above the earth, So great is His lovingkindness (His Grace/Mercy, חַסְדּוֹ) toward those who fear Him. 103:12 As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. 103:13 Just as a father has compassion on his children, So the Lord has compassion on those who fear Him. (NASB, יֵא כְּבִבְהָ, שְׁמַיִם עַל-הָאָרֶץ גָּבַר חַסְדּוֹ עַל-יִרְאָיו: יב כְּרַחֵק מִזְרַח מִמְעַרְב הִרְחִיק מִמֶּנּוּ אֶת-פְּשָׁעֵינוּ: יג כְּרַחֵם אָב עַל-בָּנָיִם רַחֵם יְהוָה עַל-יִרְאָיו:

Consider that if we confess our sins, and seek the Lord’s forgiveness, His mercy will wipe away our sins as far as the east is from the west and He will not remember them any longer. This is within the context of the Lord having compassion upon those who fear Him and seeking to live in faithfulness to His words and His ways. This is also in contrast to those who do not repent and do not seek the Lord, their sins will be remembered and all will know of them.

In the Talmud Bavli Chagigah 12b Part 10 the rabbis say the following:

Talmud Bavli Chagigah 12b Part 10

מכון שבו אוצרות שלג ואוצרות ברד ועליית טללים רעים ועליית אגלים וחדרה של סופה [וסערה] ומערה של קיטור ודלתותיהן אש שנאמר (דברים כח, יב) יפתח ה' לך את אוצרות-הטוב *Makhon, dwelling place, is where there are storehouses of snow and storehouses of hail, and the upper chamber of harmful dews, and the upper chamber of drops, and the room of tempests and storms, and the cave of mist. And the doors of all these are made of fire. How do we know that there are storehouses for evil things? For it is stated: “The Lord will open for you His good storehouse, the heavens” (Deuteronomy 28:12), which indicates the existence of a storehouse that contains the opposite of good.*

The rabbis make a case that there is a storehouse for evil things, because the Lord has a storehouse for good things. This storehouse is the place of residence, just as the Midrash is saying the heart devises evil things and stores them up not just against one or two persons, but against an entire nation. The Midrash continues saying,

For when the house of Esau devise evil things, they devise them not only against us, but also against You, as is said, For they intended evil against You, they imagined a device which they are not able to perform (Tehillim / Psalms 21:12). Likewise, Scripture says, And behold a

forth beast dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly, I considered the horns, and behold, there came up among them another horn, a little one (Daniel 7:7-8) speaking against God, spitting out harsh words, blasphemies, and reviling's. (Midrash Tehillim 140 Part 2)

The Midrash parallels the evil things that one stores up within the heart to the beast with horns in *Daniel 7*. The concept here is the evil things we store up may give birth to something even more wicked than its predecessor to boast and speak blasphemies against both man and God. Because of this we need to guard our hearts against such things.

Midrash Tehillim 140 Part 2 concludes saying, *“But the Scripture goes on to say I behold even till the beast was slain, and its body destroyed, and it was given to be burnt with fire (Daniel 7:11); and it is also written, And the house of Jacob will be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble (Obadiah 1:18).”* This reminds us of *2 Peter 3:7 And by that same word, the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. (NASB)* The struggle that we have with sin in our lives us the earmark of our relationship with God and His presence in our lives. This is why the scriptures speak of fire and flame in the house of Jacob, since the Lord is refining us each day. The wicked on the other hand will perish. 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