
TEHILLIM 6: TALKING TO GOD

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פרשת נח תשפ"ג

THE TEXT OF THE MIZMOR

(1) TEHILLIM 6

<p>(1) For the leader, with string-music on the Sheminith. A Psalm of David.</p>	<p>(א) לְמִנְצַח בְּגִיטוֹת עַל־הַשְּׁמִינִית מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד:</p>
<p>(2) Hashem, do not rebuke me in Your anger; do not chasten me in Your wrath.</p>	<p>(ב) יְהוָה אֵל־בְּאַפְּךָ תוֹכִיחֵנִי וְאֵל־בְּחַמְתְּךָ תִּסְרְבֵנִי:</p>
<p>(3) Be gracious to me, Hashem, for I languish away. Heal me, Hashem, for my bones are terrified.</p>	<p>(ג) חֲנֹנִי יְהוָה כִּי אֲמַלֵּל אֲנִי רַפְּאֵנִי יְהוָה כִּי נִבְהַלּוּ עַצְמֵי:</p>
<p>(4) My soul also is very afraid; and You, Hashem, how long?</p>	<p>(ד) וְנַפְשִׁי נִבְהַלָּה מְאֹד [וְאַתָּה] וְאַתָּה יְהוָה עַד־מָתַי:</p>
<p>(5) Return, Hashem, deliver my soul; save me for Your mercy's sake.</p>	<p>(ה) שׁוּבָה יְהוָה חַלְצֵה נַפְשִׁי הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי לְמַעַן חֲסִדְךָ:</p>
<p>(6) For in death there is no remembrance of You; in the nether-world who will give You thanks?</p>	<p>(ו) כִּי אֵין בַּמָּוֶת זְכָרְךָ בְּשָׂאוֹל מִי יוֹדֵה־לָּךְ:</p>
<p>(7) I am weary with my groaning. Every night I flood my bed; I melt away my couch with my tears.</p>	<p>(ז) יִגְעַתִּיו בְּאַנְחוֹתַי אֲשַׁחַה בְּכָל־לַיְלָה מִטְּתִי בְּדַמְעוֹתַי עַרְשִׁי אֲמַסָּה:</p>
<p>(8) My eye is dimmed because of vexation; it grows old because of all my adversaries.</p>	<p>(ח) עֵשְׂשָׂה מִכְעַס עֵינַי עֲתָקָה בְּכָל־צוּרָי:</p>
<p>(9) Depart from me all you workers of iniquity; for Hashem has heard the voice of my weeping.</p>	<p>(ט) סוּרוּ מִמֶּנִּי כָל־פְּעֻלֵי אֲוֹן כִּי־שָׁמַע יְהוָה קוֹל בְּכִי:</p>
<p>(10) Hashem has heard my supplication; Hashem receives my prayer.</p>	<p>(י) שָׁמַע יְהוָה תַּחֲנוּנֵי יְהוָה תַּפְלִתִּי יִקַּח:</p>
<p>(11) All my enemies shall be ashamed and very terrified. They shall turn back; they shall be ashamed suddenly.</p>	<p>(יא) יִבְשׂוּ וַיִּבְהַלּוּ מְאֹד כָּל־אֹיְבֵי יוֹשְׁבוֹ יִבְשׂוּ רַגְעַ:</p>

MODES OF READING

(2) IBN EZRA TEHILLIM 6:2

(ב) י"י – הקרוב אלי כי זה המזמור חברו דוד בחלותו ויחי מחליו. או היה דרך נבואה על ישראל שהן בגלות כמו חולים

(2) God – It seems to me that this *mizmor* was composed by David in his illness, when he was healed of it. Or it is, by way of prophesy, about the nation of Israel who, in exile, are like the ill.

(3) RADAK TEHILLIM 6:1

המזמור הזה אפשר שאמרו דוד על חליו, ואפשר גם כן שנאמר על לשון כל אדם המדוכא בחליים. כי הרבה מזמורים שהם תפלה ובקשה חברם דוד להיותם מזומנים לכל מתפלל; וכן דעתי בזה המזמור.

It is possible that this *mizmor* was recited by David in his illness. It is also possible that it is said in the voice of anyone who is afflicted with illness. Many *mizmorim* of prayer and supplication were composed by David to be available to anyone who prays. That is my opinion about this *mizmor*.

WHAT'S AFFLICHTING THE MESHORER?

(4) RASHI TEHILLIM 6:5

חלצה נפשי – מחוליי .

Rescue my soul – from my illness.

(5) R' ELCHANAN SAMET

In the concluding portion of the psalm, beginning with the second half of verse 8, mention is made of the author's "adversaries," who are "workers of iniquity" (v. 9), and "his enemies" (v. 11). This suggests that it is they who are causing the psalmist such distress and endangering his life.

(6) R' AVI BAUMOL

In psalm six, David expresses seeming despair. He describes a physical ailment in verses three and eight, a psychological disease in verse seven, a spiritual low in verse four, and his enemies in verse eleven. Could it be that David suffered from all of those difficulties at one juncture in his life? Or perhaps he was being figurative, trying to reflect on one aspect of his sickness through metaphors. A third possibility is that the author combined all of his fears and lonely feelings into one, in order to drive home his message... It seems to me that David describes the feelings of a person suffering a depression.

(ASHKENAZI) TACHANUN¹

(7) TACHANUN, NUSACH ASHKENAZ

וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד אֶל־גָּד, צַר־לִי מְאֹד
 נִפְלְאָה נָא בְיַד־יְהוָה, כִּי רַב־יְרַחֵם, וּבְיַד־אָדָם אֶל־אֶפְלָה:
 רַחוּם וְחַנוּן, חֲטָאתִי לִפְנֶיךָ.
 יְהוָה מְלֵא רַחֲמִים, רַחֵם עָלַי וּקְבַל תְּחִנּוּתִי.
 יְהוָה, אֱלֹהֵי בָאֶפֶךָ תּוֹכִיחֵנִי, וְאֱלֹהֵי בְחִמּוֹתֶיךָ תִּיְסָרֵנִי: חָנּוּן יְהוָה, כִּי אֶמְלֵל אֹנִי,
 דַּפְאֵנִי יְהוָה, כִּי נִבְהָלוּ עַצְמֵי: וּנְפֹשֵׁי נִבְהָלוּ מְאֹד, וְאֶת־יְהוָה, עַד־מָתַי: שׁוּבָה
 יְהוָה, חֲלֹצָה נַפְשִׁי, הוֹשִׁיעֵנִי לְמַעַן חֲסֹדְךָ: כִּי אֵין בַּמָּוֶת זְכוּרְךָ, בְּשֵׁאוֹל מִי
 יוֹדֶה־לָּךְ: יִגְעַתִּי בְּאַנְחָתִי, אֲשַׁחֶה בְּכָל־לַיְלָה מִטְּתִי, בְּדַמְעָתִי עֵרְשִׁי אֲמַסֶּה:
 עָשָׂשָׁה מִכַּעַס עֵינַי, עָתָקָה בְּכָל־צוּרֶיךָ: סוּרוּ מִמֶּנִּי כָּל־פְּעֻלֵי אוֹן, כִּי שָׁמַע
 יְהוָה קוֹל בְּכִי: שָׁמַע יְהוָה תְּחִנָּתִי, יְהוָה תִּפְלֹתַי יִקַּח: יִבְשׁוּ וַיִּבְהָלוּ מְאֹד
 כָּל־אֵיבֵי, יִשְׁבוּ וַיִּבְשׁוּ רַגְעַ:

וַיֹּאמֶר דָּוִד David said to Gad, "I am in great distress.
 Let us fall into God's hand, for His mercy is great;
 but do not let me fall into the hand of man."

Compassionate and gracious One, I have sinned before You.
 LORD, full of compassion, have compassion on me and accept my pleas.

LORD, do not rebuke me in Your anger or chastise me in Your wrath. Be gracious to me, LORD, for I am weak. Heal me, LORD, for my bones are in agony. My soul is in anguish, and You, O LORD – how long? Turn, LORD, set my soul free; save me for the sake of Your love. For no one remembers You when he is dead. Who can praise You from the grave? I am weary with my sighing. Every night I drench my bed, I soak my couch with my tears. My eye grows dim from grief, worn out because of all my foes. Leave me, all you evildoers, for the LORD has heard the sound of my weeping. The LORD has heard my pleas. The LORD will accept my prayer. All my enemies will be shamed and utterly dismayed. They will turn back in sudden shame.

¹ Others use Tehillim 22 or 25 for Tachanun. Originally, Tachanun was a personal Tefillah. See Netiv Binah v. 1 pp. 345-346

MISCELLANEOUS SOURCES

(8) MENACHOT 43B

בשעה שנכנס דוד לבית המרחץ וראה עצמו עומד ערום אמר אוי לי שאעמוד ערום בלא מצוה וכיון שנזכר במילה שבבשרו נתייבשה דעתו לאחר שיצא אמר עליה שירה שנאמר (תהלים יב, א) למנצח על השמינית מזמור לדוד על מילה שניתנה בשמיני

When David entered the bathhouse and saw himself standing naked, he said: Woe to me that that I stand naked without any mitzva. But once he remembered the mitzva of circumcision that was in his flesh his mind was put at ease, as he realized he was still accompanied by this mitzva. After he left the bathhouse, he recited a song about the mitzva of circumcision, as it is stated in the verse: "For the leader, on the Sheminith: A Psalm of David" (Psalms 12:1). This is interpreted as a psalm about circumcision, which was given to be performed on the eighth [bashemini] day.

(9) DA'AT MIKRA TEHILLIM P. 24

ומסתבר שירמיהו לא היה חולה באותה שעה, אלא נרדף מאויביו. אפשר לומר עוד, שעקר מצוקת המתפלל היא אימת אויביו המשלל עליו. ואימה זו גורמת לו למחשבים מעין מחלה. (והדברים מפרסמים, שאימה חזקה עשויה לגרום לחליים רעים ממש).

(10) R' SHIMSHON REPHAEL HIRSCH, TEHILLIM 6:6

The death of a human being is only a consequence of the law of nature handed down by God when the world began, and this is merely a manifestation of the existence of that order of nature the power of which no man can escape. But life, and resurrection in particular, the regaining of a life once lost – that force which truly reveals God in His power. It shows Him standing above the forces of nature which He Himself had ordained, and proves that He is always ready to grant renewed life and vigor to man for all his future loyal endeavors in his service to God on earth. This is the basic difference between the heathen idea of idolatry on one hand and Jewish Divine truth on the other. To the heathen mind the power of its idols is demonstrated when those deities overthrow the strongest of human forces, a display of the degraded lethal force to which all living things succumb. This is so because the heathen deities are in reality the forces of nature ordained by God. Jewish truth, however, tells us this: "As truly as I live," says God, 'as the One Who loves even when I must chastise, I do not find pleasure in the death of the wicked but in the repentance of the sinner from his path so that he may attain new life.'"

(11) IBN EZRA, TEHILLIM 6:6

כי – הקשה עלי מאד במותי שלא אוכל להזכיר בלשוני ולא אודה לך בגלוי.

Death will be very difficult for me because I will not be able to mention You with my lips, nor will I be able to publicly praise You.