
TEHILLIM 48: THE VIEW FROM JERUSALEM

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פרשת וישלח תשפ"ג

TEXT OF THE MIZMOR

(1) TEHILLIM 48

(1) A Song. A Psalm of the sons of Korah.

(2) Great is Hashem, and highly to be praised in the city of our God, His holy mountain,

(3) Most fair in the region, the joy of the whole earth; even mount Zion, the uttermost parts of the north, the city of the great King.

(4) God in her palaces has made Himself known for a stronghold.

(5) For, lo, the kings assembled themselves; they came onward together.

(6) They saw, straightway they were amazed; they were terrified, they hastened away.

(7) Trembling took hold of them there, pangs, as of a woman in travail.

(8) With the east wind You broke the ships of Tarshish.

(9) As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of Hashem of hosts, in the city of our God—God establish it forever. Selah.

(10) We have thought about Your loving kindness, O God, in the midst of Your temple.

(11) As is Your name, O God, so is Your praise to the ends of the earth. Your right hand is full of righteousness.

(12) Let mount Zion be glad, let the daughters of Judah rejoice because of Your judgments.

(13) Walk about Zion, and go round about her; count her towers.

(14) Pay attention to her ramparts, traverse her palaces, that you may tell it to the next generation.

(15) For such is God, our God, forever and ever; He will guide us eternally.

**Heading
(1)**

**The Praise
of
Jerusalem
(2-4)**

**Defending
Jerusalem
(5-8)**

Verse 9?

**Our Praise
of
Jerusalem
(10-12)**

**Studying
Jerusalem
(13-15)**

(א) שִׁיר מִזְמוֹר לְבְנֵי קֹרַח.

(ב) גָּדוֹל יְיָ וּמְהֻלָּל מְאֹד בְּעִיר אֱלֹהֵינוּ הַר קֹדֶשׁוֹ.

(ג) יְפֵה נוֹף מְשׁוֹשׁ כָּל הָאָרֶץ הַר צִיּוֹן יִרְכָּתִי צִפּוֹן קִרְיַת מְלֶכֶךְ רַב.

(ד) אֱלֹהִים בְּאַרְמוֹתֶיהָ נִדְעָה לְמִשְׁגָּב.

(ה) כִּי הִנֵּה הַמְּלָכִים נֹעְדוּ עָבְרוּ יַחְדָּו.

(ו) הִמָּה רָאוּ כִּן תִּמְהוּ וְנִבְהָלוּ נַחֲפָזוּ.

(ז) רָעְדָה אַחֲזָתֶם שֵׁם חַיִּל כִּינִלְדָה.

(ח) בְּרוּחַ קִדְיִם תִּשְׁבֵּר אֲנִיּוֹת תִּרְשִׁישׁ.

(ט) כַּאֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְנוּ כִּן רָאִינוּ בְּעִיר יְיָ צְבָאוֹת בְּעִיר אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֱלֹהִים יְכוֹנְנָה עַד עוֹלָם סֶלָה.

(י) דָּמִינוּ אֱלֹהִים חִסְדְּךָ בְּקִרְבִּי הִיכָלְךָ.

(יא) כְּשָׁמַךְ אֱלֹהִים כִּן תִּהְלֶתֶךָ עַל קִצְוֵי אָרֶץ צְדָק מְלֵאָה יְמִינְךָ.

(יב) יִשְׂמַח הַר צִיּוֹן תִּגְלַלְנָה בָנוֹת יְהוּדָה לְמַעַן מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ.

(יג) סָבוּ צִיּוֹן וְהִקִּיפוּהָ סָפְרוּ מִגְדָּלֶיהָ.

(יד) שִׁיתוּ לְבַבְכֶם לְחִילָהּ פִּסְגוֹ אַרְמוֹתֶיהָ לְמַעַן תִּסְפְּרוּ לְדוֹר אַחֲרוֹן.

(טו) כִּי זֶה אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵינוּ עוֹלָם וָעֶד הוּא יְנַהַגְנוּ עַל מוֹת.

SHIR SHEL YOM FOR MONDAY

(2) ROSH HASHANAH 31A

תנא, רבי יהודה אומר משום רבי עקיבא: בראשון מה היו אומרים — "לה' הארץ ומלוכה", על שם שקנה והקנה ושלט בעולמו.
בשני מה היו אומרים — "גדול ה' ומהולל מאד", על שם שחילק מעשיו ומלך עליהן.

On the second day of the week what psalm would the Levites recite? The psalm that begins: **“Great is the Lord, and highly to be praised in the city of our God, His sacred mountain”** (Psalms 48:2). This is **because** on the second day of Creation **He separated His works**, dividing between the upper waters and the lower waters, **and ruled over them** as King; and this psalm speaks of Jerusalem as **“The city of a great King”** (Psalms 48:3).

(3) RASHI ROSH HASHANAH 31A

שחילק מעשיו - הבדיל רקיע בין עליונים לתחתונים ונתעלה וישב במרום דוגמת שכנו בעירו והר קדשו:

He separated His works – He used the firmament to distinguish between the upper and lower [waters], rose up, and dwelled on high, just like He dwells in His city and the mountain of His holiness.

(4) MAHARSHA ROSH HASHANAH 31A

בב' היו אומרים גדול ה' ומהולל וגו'. שחילק מעשיו בין עליונים לתחתונים וכן חילק מעשיו בתחתונים גופיה יפה נוף משוש כל הארץ וגו' ומלך עליהם כמ"ש ביה קרית מלך רב:

Because he distinguished His works, between the upper and the lower, and He distinguished among His works even within the lower plane. “Most fair in the region, the joy of the whole earth...” And He ruled over them, as it says “city of the great King.”

(5) RESISEI LAYLA 48

פירוש דההבדל בין שליט למלך דגם אדם בביתו נקרא שליט אבל מלך אינו בלא עם... שמצד ממשלתו על ריבוי אנשים שונים שאין דעתן שוה צריך לב רחב ועצה על זה איך לאחד ריבוי דיעות שונות ההפכיות. ולכך כשרצה השם יתברך להגדיל ולהוסיף הילולו ברא גם הבריאה דיום שני שהוא ההבדלה בברואים דהיינו שיהיו ברואים שונים... ועל כן שירו אמרו בני קרח שהם עמדו על סוד קילוס זה דמהולל מאד בעיר וגו' כי הגה המלכים וגו' רצה לומר במלחמה ומחלוקת וכל מחלוקת בני אדם ומלחמה הוא מצד שינוי הדיעות וזהו מצד השינוי שהיה בנבראים שאין דעתן שוה. והניצוח הוא בעיר וגו' במקום שהשם יתברך שוכן שם דעצת ה' היא תקום.

It's explanation: The difference between a “ruler” and a “king” is that even a person in own home can be called a “ruler,” while there is no such thing as a “king” without a nation... Because of his reign over multitudes of different people who don't agree, he needs a broad heart and insight regarding how to unite multiple different, opposing thoughts. Therefore, when Hashem wanted to grow and add to His praise, He

created the creation of the second day, which was the distinction between creations, such that there should be distinct creations... Therefore, the sons of Korach recited this song, as they understood the secret of this praise, that "He is greatly praised in his city... For, behold, the kings..." This means that with war and dispute, as all human disputes and war is based on difference of opinion, which is a consequence of the differences that exist among people, whose views are not the same. Victory is in "the city..." in the place that Hashem dwells, for the insight of Hashem stands [forever].

IS JERUSALEM REALLY IN THE NORTH?

(6) IBN EZRA TEHILLIM 48:3

הר ציון – בצפון ירושלים.

Mountain of Tziyon – in the north of Yerushalayim.

(7) YALKUT SHIMONI TEHILLIM 48:3

אמר רב שמואל בר רב יצחק שזה שאמר הכתוב הר ציון ירכתי צפון, וכי בצפון היה והלא בדרום היה, אלא בצפון היה עומד ומקריב חטאתו ונשחט בצפון שנאמר ושחט אותו על ירך המזבח צפונה.

Rav Shmuel bar Rav Yitzchak said, "this is what the verse means when it says, 'the mountain of Tziyon, the northern side.' Is it in the north? Is it not in the south? Rather, one would stand in the north and offer his sin-offering and slaughter it in the north, as it says, 'he will slaughter it on the northern side of the altar.'"

(8) YESHAYAHU 14:4,12-19

(ד) וּנְשֹׂאת הַמִּשְׁלַח הַזֶּה עַל מֶלֶךְ בָּבֶל וְאֶמְרָת אִיד שְׁבַת נִגְשׁ שְׁבַתָּה מִדְּהַבָּה... (יב) אִיד נִפְלְתָּ מִשָּׁמַיִם הִילַל בְּךָ שָׁחַר נִגְדַעְתָּ לְאָרֶץ חוֹלֵשׁ עַל גּוֹיִם. (יג) וְאֵתָה אֶמְרָת בְּלִבְבָרָה הַשָּׁמַיִם אֶעֱלֶה מִמַּעַל לְכוֹכְבֵי אֵל אָרִים כְּסֹאֵי וְאֶשֶׁב בְּהָר מוֹעֵד בִּינְרִכְתֵי צִפּוֹן. (יד) אֶעֱלֶה עַל בְּמַתֵּי עֵב אֶדְמָה לְעֵלְיוֹן. (טו) אִד אֶל שְׂאוֹל תוֹרֵד אֶל יִרְכְתֵי בּוֹר. (טז) רֵאִיד אֶלִיָּה וְשִׁגְיָחוּ אֶלִיָּה יִתְבוֹנְנוּ הַזֶּה הָאִישׁ מְרַגֵּז הָאָרֶץ מִרְעִישׁ מִמְּלָכוֹת. (יז) שָׁם תִּבַּל כַּמְדָּבָר וְעָרְיוּ הָרִס אֶסִירְיוּ לֹא פִתַח בְּיָתָהּ. (יח) כָּל מַלְכֵי גּוֹיִם כָּלָם שָׁכְבוּ בְּכַבוֹד אִישׁ בְּבֵיתוֹ. (יט) וְאֵתָה הִשְׁלַכְתָּ מִקְבָּרָךְ כְּנֹצָר נִתְעַב... (יז)

(4) that you shall take up this parable against the king of Babylon, and say, "How has the oppressor ceased! The golden city ceased!"... (12) How have you fallen from heaven, O day-star, son of the morning! How are you cut down to the ground, who cast lots over the nations! (13) And you said in your heart, "I will ascend into heaven; above the stars of God I will exalt my throne. And I will sit upon the mount of meeting in the uttermost parts of the north. (14) I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High." (15) Yet you shall be brought down to the nether-world, to the uttermost parts of the pit. (16) Those that saw you, look carefully upon you; they gaze earnestly at you, "Is this the man that made the earth tremble, that shook kingdoms? (17) That made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed its cities? That did not open the house of his prisoners??" (18) All the kings of the nations, all of them, sleep in glory, every one in his own house. (19) But you are cast forth away from your grave like an abhorred offshoot...

(9) SHEMOT 14:9

(ט) וַיִּרְדְּפוּ מִצְרַיִם אַחֲרֵיהֶם וַיִּשְׁיגוּ אוֹתָם חֲנִימִים עַל הַיָּם כָּל סוּס רֶכֶב פָּרְעֹה וּפָרָשָׁיו וַחֲיִילוֹ עַל פִּי הַחִירֹת לִפְנֵי בַעַל צְפֹן.

(9) The Egyptians chased after them, all of Paroh's horses and chariots, his horsemen and his army, and overtook them camping by the sea, at Pi HaCherot before Baal Tzefon.

(10) NACHUM SARNA, "ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS," PP. 156-157

Of course, no biblical writer or audience would have failed to realize that the language employed was poetic and mythic, not intended to be understood literally. Sacred mountains were conceived to be channels of communication between the world of the divine and the world of human beings. This conception is well illustrated by the names of temples in Mesopotamia, those ziggurats, or temple towers, that were architectural representations of mountains. Thus, the temple of Inanna in Nippur was know as Dur-anki, "The Bond of Heaven and Earth."; that of Marduk in Babylonia was called E-temen-anki, "The House, Foundation-Platform of Heaven and Earth."...

This passage clearly describes Mount Zaphon in a way that makes it the equivalent of Mount Olympus, the special abode of the higher gods of Greek mythology, where Zeus had his throne and the assemblies of the gods took place. In Ugaritic literature, Zaphon is the name of a holy mountain on which Baal, the foremost Canaanite god, had his palace, and to which the gods were summoned to assemble... In Israel, the term Zaphon, like Olympus in English, lost its geographic denotation, was divested of its pagan origins and mythic associations, and became purely metaphorical for the divine abode, the "city of the great King."

CIRCLING THE CITY

(11) NACHUM SARNA, "ON THE BOOK OF PSALMS," P. 165

In each instance [of ritual "circumambulation"], one of two objectives is involved. The circuiting may set up a "magic circle" around the targeted site or person in order to provide protection from the intrusion of evil spirits; or it can be to assert or affirm sovereignty over the area encompassed.

