
TEHILLIM 34: A SONG OF שטות

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CONGREGATION KINS

פרשת משפטים תשפ"ג

(1) TEHILLIM 34

- (1) By David, when he changed his demeanor before Abimelech, who drove him away, and he departed.
- (2) I will bless Hashem at all times. His praise shall continually be in my mouth.
- (3) My soul shall glory in Hashem; the humble shall hear and be glad.
- (4) O magnify Hashem with me, and let us exalt His name together.
- (5) I sought Hashem, and He answered me, and delivered me from all my fears.
- (6) They looked to Him, and were radiant; and their faces shall never be abashed.
- (7) This poor man cried and Hashem heard and saved him out of all his troubles.
- (8) The angel of Hashem encamps around those that fear Him and delivers them.
- (9) O consider and see that Hashem is good; happy is the man that takes refuge in Him.
- (10) O fear Hashem, you His holy ones; for there is no want to those that fear Him.
- (11) The young lions lack and suffer hunger; but those that seek Hashem do not want any good thing.
- (12) Come, you children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of Hashem.
- (13) Who is the man that desires life, and loves days, that he may see good?
- (14) Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit.
- (15) Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.
- (16) The eyes of Hashem are toward the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry.
- (17) The face of Hashem is against those that do evil, to cut off their memory from the earth.
- (18) They cried, and Hashem heard and delivered them out of all their troubles.
- (19) Hashem is near to those that are of a broken heart, and saves those who are crushed in spirit.
- (20) Many are the ills of the righteous, but Hashem delivers him from all of them.
- (21) He guards all his bones; not one of them is broken.
- (22) Evil shall kill the wicked; and those that hate the righteous shall be held guilty.
- (23) Hashem redeems the soul of His servants; and none of those that take refuge in Him shall be desolate.

- (א) לְדָוִד בְּשִׁנּוֹתָו אֶת טַעֲמוֹ לִפְנֵי אַבִּימֶלֶךְ וַיִּגְרָשֶׁהוּ וַיֵּלֶךְ.
- (ב) אֲבָרְכָה אֶת יְהוָה בְּכָל עֵת תְּמִיד תְּהִלָּתוֹ בְּפִי.
- (ג) בִּיהוָה תִּתְהַלֵּל נַפְשִׁי יִשְׁמְעוּ עֲנֻיִם וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ.
- (ד) גִּדְּלוּ לַיהוָה אֹתִי וּגְרוּמָמָה שְׂמוֹ יַחְדָּו.
- (ה) דַּרְשֵׁתִי אֶת יְהוָה וְעֲנֵנִי וּמְכַל מַגֵּרוֹתַי הֲצִילֵנִי.
- (ו) הִבִּיטוּ אֵלָיו וַנִּהְרֹו וּפְנֵיהֶם אֵל יִחְפְּרוּ.
- (ז) זֶה עֲנִי קָרָא וַיהוָה שָׁמַע וּמְכַל צָרוֹתַי הוֹשִׁיעוּ.
- (ח) חָנָה מְלֵאָה יְהוָה סְבִיב לִירְאָיו וַיִּחַלְצֵם.
- (ט) טַעֲמוּ וּרְאוּ כִי טוֹב יְהוָה אֲשֶׁרִי הַגִּבֹּר יִחְסֶה בּוֹ.
- (י) יִרְאוּ אֶת יְהוָה קִדְּשׁוּ כִי אֵין מַחְסוֹר לִירְאָיו.
- (יא) כְּפִרְיִים רָשׁוּ וְרַעֲבוּ וְדָרְשׁוּ יְהוָה לֹא יִחְסְרוּ כָּל טוֹב.
- (יב) לִכּוֹ בָּנִים שְׁמְעוּ לִי יִרְאַת יְהוָה אֲלַמְּדֵכֶם.
- (יג) מִי הָאִישׁ הִתְחַפֵּץ חַיִּים אֲהַב יָמִים לְרְאוֹת טוֹב.
- (יד) נָצַר לִשְׂוֹנֵה מַרְעַע וּשְׁפָתַיִךְ מִדַּבֵּר מִרְמָה.
- (טו) סוֹר מַרְעַע וַעֲשֵׂה טוֹב בְּקֶשׁ שְׁלוֹם וַרְדִּפְהוּ.
- (טז) עֲיִנֵי יְהוָה אֵל צַדִּיקִים וְאֲנִי אֵל שׁוֹעֲתָם.
- (יז) פָּנֵי יְהוָה בַּעֲשֵׂי רַע לְהַכְרִית מֵאֶרֶץ זָכָרָם.
- (יח) צַעֲקוּ וַיהוָה שָׁמַע וּמְכַל צָרוֹתָם הֲצִילָם.
- (יט) קָרוֹב יְהוָה לְנִשְׁבָּרֵי לֵב וְאֶת דַּכְּאֵי רוּחַ יוֹשִׁיעַ.
- (כ) רַבּוֹת רַעוֹת צַדִּיק וּמְכַלָּם יִצִּילֵנּוּ יְהוָה.
- (כא) שְׁמֵר כָּל עַצְמוֹתָיו אַחַת מֵהֵנָּה לֹא נִשְׁבְּרָה.
- (כב) תְּמוֹתַת רִשָׁע רַעַע וְשִׁנְאֵי צַדִּיק יֶאֱשָׁמוּ.
- (כג) פִּדְּהָ יְהוָה נַפְשׁ עַבְדָּיו וְלֹא יֶאֱשָׁמוּ כָּל הַחַסִּים בּוֹ.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

(2) SHMUEL ALEPH 21:11-22:2

(יא) וַיָּקָם דָּוִד וַיִּבְרַח בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא מִפְּנֵי שָׂאוּל וַיָּבֵא אֶל אַכִּישׁ מֶלֶךְ גַּת. (יב) וַיֹּאמְרוּ עֲבָדֵי אַכִּישׁ אֵלָיו הֲלוֹא זֶה דָּוִד מֶלֶךְ הָאָרֶץ הֲלוֹא לְזֶה יַעֲנוּ בְּמַחְלוֹת לְאֹמֶר הִכָּה שָׂאוּל בְּאַלְפֵי וַדָּוִד בְּרִבְבֹתָיו. (יג) וַיִּשְׂם דָּוִד אֶת הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה בְּלִבָּבוֹ וַיֵּרָא מֵאֲדָמִי מִפְּנֵי אַכִּישׁ מֶלֶךְ גַּת. (יד) וַיִּשְׁנוּ אֶת טַעְמוֹ בְּעֵינֵיהֶם וַיִּתְהַלֵּל בְּיָדָם וַיִּתְּנוּ עַל דְּלֹתוֹת הַשַּׁעַר וַיִּוֹרְדוּ רִירוֹ אֶל זִקְנוֹ. (טו) וַיֹּאמְרוּ אַכִּישׁ אֶל עֲבָדָיו הֲנִיחָה תֵּרְאוּ אִישׁ מִשְׁתַּגֵּעַ לָמָּה תִּבְיֵאוּ אֹתוֹ אֵלָי. (טז) חָסֵר מִשְׁגָּעִים אֲנִי כִי הִבֵּאתֶם אֶת זֶה לְהַשְׁתַּגֵּעַ עָלַי הֲזֶה יָבוֹא אֶל בֵּיתִי.

(א) וַיֵּלֶךְ דָּוִד מִשָּׁם וַיִּמְלֹט אֶל מְעָרַת עַדְלָם וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אַחֲיוֹ וְכָל בֵּית אָבִיו וַיֵּרְדוּ אֵלָיו שָׁמָּה. (ב) וַיִּתְקַבְּצוּ אֵלָיו כָּל אִישׁ מִצּוֹק וְכָל אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר לוֹ נֶשֶׂא וְכָל אִישׁ מֵר נֶפֶשׁ וַיְהִי עֲלֵיהֶם לְשָׂר וַיְהִיו עִמּוֹ כְּאַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת אִישׁ.

(11) And David arose and fled that day because of Saul, and he went to Achish the king of Gath. (12) And the servants of Achish said to him, "Is this not David the king of the land? Did they not sing one to another of him in dances, saying, 'Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands?'" (13) And David laid up these words in his heart and was very afraid of Achish the king of Gath. (14) And he changed his demeanor before them, and he feigned himself mad in their hands, and scribbled on the doors of the gate, and let his spit fall down upon his beard. (15) Then Achish said to his servants, "Behold, you see a man that is mad; why do you bring him to me? (16) Do I lack madmen that you have brought this fellow to play the madman in my presence? Shall this fellow come into my house?"

(1) David therefore departed from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam; and when his brothers and all his father's house heard it, they went down there to him. (2) And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves to him; and he became captain over them. And there were with him about four hundred men.

(3) RADAK TEHILLIM 34:1

(א) לדוד בשנותו את טעמו לפני אבימלך אבימלך – הוא אכיש מלך גת, ושנים שמות היו לו. או היה שם כנוי לכל מלך מפלשתים אבימלך, כי כן מצאנום בימי אברהם ובימי יצחק.

This is Achish, king of Gat, and he had two names. Alternatively, the title of every Philistine king was Avimelech, as we find in the days of Avraham and in the days of Yitzchak.

(4) MIDRASH TEHILLIM 34

לדוד בשנותו את טעמו – זה שאמר הכתוב (קהלת ג' י"א) את הכל עשה יפה בעתו... כל מה שעשה הקב"ה בעולמו יפה עשה. אמר דוד לפני הקב"ה כל מה שעשית יפה והחכמה יפה מן הכל... אבל השטות שבראת מה הנאה יש לפניך. כשאדם מהלך בשוק ומקרע את בגדיו והתינוקות רצין אחריו והעם משחקין ממנו זה נאה לפניך. אמר לו הקב"ה דוד על השטות אתה קורא תגר חייך שתצטרך לו... דבר אחר אמר לו הקדוש ברוך הוא דוד על השטות אתה קורא תגר חייך שתצטער ותתפלל עליה עד שאתננה לך.

לא עשה מעט עד שהלך דוד אצל אכיש... באו אצל אכיש אמרו לו נהרוג למי שהרג את אחינו. אמר להם אכיש ולא במלחמה הרגו. ואילו אחיכם הרג אותו לא במלחמה הרגו. ועכשיו שהרג זה אחיכם לא כך התנה עמו (שמאול א י"ז טי) אם יוכל להלחם אתי והכני. אמרו לו אם כן עמוד מכסאך ותן המלכות לדוד... ואנחנו נהיה עבדים. הטוהו בדברים.

באותה שעה נתיירא דוד... התחיל דוד מבקש ומתפלל ואומר רבונו של עולם ענני בשעה הזו. אמר לו הקדוש ברוך הוא מה את מבקש. אמר לו מאותו השטות שבראת שקראתי עליך תגר. אמר לו ולא אמרתי לך (משלי י"ג: ג) בז לדבר יחבל לו. הואיל וכן הוא אני נותנו לך... באותה השעה שמח דוד שיצא לו השטות ומתוך אותה השמחה עשה לו השירה הזאת.

“Of David, when he changed his demeanor” – This is what the verse says, “He created all, which is good in its time...” Everything Hashem created in His world was for good. David said to Hashem, “everything You created is good, and Wisdom is better than everything... But the insanity that you created, what good is in it for you? When a person walks in the market and tears his clothing and children race after him and the people mock him, is this good before You?” Hashem said to him, “David, you are complaining about insanity. By your life, you will need it...” Alternatively, Hashem said to him, “David, you are complaining about insanity. By your life, you will be in pain and pray for it until I give it to you.”

Little happened before David went to Achish... [His servants] came to Achish and said to him, “let us kill the one who killed our brother [Goliath].” Achish said to them, “Was he not killed in a war? If your brother had killed him, would he not have been killed in a war? And now that he killed your brother, was that not the condition they stipulated, “if he will be able to do battle with me and strike me...” They said to him, “if so, rise from your throne and give kingship to David... and we will be servants.” They persuaded him with words. At that time, David was afraid... David began to ask and pray, and said, “Master of the World, answer me in this time!” Hashem said to him, “what do you request?” He said, “from the insanity that you created, which I complained about.” He said, “and did I not tell you ‘one who disgraces something will be dependent on it’? Since this is so, I will give it to you... At that time [after his salvation], David rejoiced that his insanity had departed, and from that joy, he created this song.

COMMENTARY

(5) R' HIRSCH, TEHILLIM 34:3

“Even now,” says David, “when my soul is despised and rejected by men, it knows that its dignity, its support, its existence and its strength rest with the Lord. Let the ענוים, all those who must take a humble, lowly position in society, hear it and know that one may remain happy and of good cheer even if one is homeless and driven away as an idiot. Let them all hear this so that, whatever their lot may be, they may not only find comfort, but also retain שמחה, their inner joy and serenity.”...

At the time of David, much as is the case now, one could not get very far in life with humility. As a rule, he who is ענו will be עני as well.

(6) MALBIM, TEHILLIM 34:1

(א) לדוד – במזמור הזה באר איך השגחת ה' הפרטיית חופפת את הצדיקים ודבוקה עמהם לשמרם ולהצילם מכל פגע, וביחוד איך הוא קרוב לשמוע תפלה, וילמד את העולם יראת ה' ומהותה, כי זה שגרשהו אבימלך ולא שמע לקול עבדו להמתו היה השגחה פרטית.

(1) Of David – In this *mizmor*, he explains how the particular Providence of Hashem surrounds the righteous and adheres to them, to protect them and save them from all injury, and especially how He is close, to hear prayer, and to teach the world the nature of fear of Hashem. For the fact that Avimelech expelled him and did not heed the voice of his servants, to kill him, is particular Providence.

(7) DA'AT MIKRA TEHILLIM 34 (AMOS HAKHAM)

אָכִישׁ מְלֶךְ גֵּת (ש"א כא יג). אָבָא ז"ל הָיָה רָגִיל לְפָרֵשׁ, שְׁנִשְׁבְּרֵי לֵב וְיִדְכְּאֵי רוּחַ שְׁבַמְזֻמֹּר זֶה הֵם הָאֲנָשִׁים שְׁנִתְקַבְּצוּ אֶל דָּוִד לְאַחַר שְׁנִמְלֹט מֵאֲכִישׁ – אֲבִימֶלֶךְ, כִּכְתוּב: וַיִּתְקַבְּצוּ אֵלָיו כָּל אִישׁ מִצֹּק וְכָל אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר לוֹ נִשְׂא וְכָל אִישׁ מֵרַגְשׁ וַיְהִי עֲלֵיהֶם לְשָׁר (שם כב ב), וְאֵת הָאֲנָשִׁים הָאֵלֶּה, הַסָּרִיסִים אֶל מְשֻׁמְעֵתוֹ, מִזְהִיר דָּוִד: נִצֹּר לְשׁוֹנֶה מֵרַע... בְּקִשׁ שְׁלוֹם וְרַדְפֵהוּ. וְכֵן מְצִינֵנוּ, שְׂצוּהָ דָוִד אֶת נַעֲרָיו בְּלִכְתָּם אֶל גִּבְלֵי: וְשָׁאֲלָתֶם לוֹ בְּשִׁמְיִ לְשְׁלוֹם וְאִמְרָתֶם כִּה לְחֵי וְאִתָּהּ שְׁלוֹם וּבֵיתָהּ שְׁלוֹם וְכָל אֲשֶׁר לָהּ שְׁלוֹם (שם כה ה-ו). – עַל כָּל פְּנִימִים, כִּבְרַת הַבְּאֵנוּ לְעֵיל כִּמְהָ פְעָמִים אֶת דְּבָרֵי חַז"ל: כָּל הַמְזֻמְרִים אָמַר דָּוִד כְּנִגְדוֹ וְכִנְגְדוֹ כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְכִנְגְדוֹ כָּל הָעַתִּים.

תנ"ך עם פירוש דעת מקרא - כה (תהלים א) / תנ"ך דעת מקרא / עמוד 299
הודפס מאתר אוצר החכמה

(8) SEFORNO TEHILLIM 34:9

טעמו - הרגישו בחוש, וראו - בעיון השכלי

“Taste” – feel it in your senses, “and see” – with intellectual analysis

(9) VAYIKRA RABBAH 16:2

מעשה ברוכל אחד שהיה מחזיר בעגרות שהיו סמוכות לצפורי והיה מכריז ואומר, מאן בעי למיזבן סם חיים, אודקין עליה, רבי ינאי הנה יתביב ופשיט בתורקליניה שמעיה דמכריז מאן בעי סם חיים, אומר ליה תא סק להקא זבין לי, אומר ליה לאו אנת צריד ליה ולא דכנותד, אטרר עליה סליק לגביה הוציא לו ספר תהלים הרצה לו פסוק: מי האיש החפץ חיים, מה פתיב בתריה (תהלים לד, יד טו): נצר לשונך מרע, סור מרע ועשה טוב. אומר רבי ינאי אף שלמה מכריז ואומר (משלי כא, כג): שמר פיו ולשונו שמר מצרות נפשו. אומר רבי ינאי כל ימי הייתי קורא הפסוק הזה ולא הייתי יודע היכן הוא פשוט עד שבא רוכל זה והודיעו

There is a story of a peddler who would go around to towns that were close to Tzippori. He would shout out and say, "Who wants to buy the [potion] of life?" They would [all] cling to him. Rabbi Yannai was sitting and interpreting [texts] in his reception room [and] heard him shouting out, "Who wants to buy the [potion] of life?" [Rabbi Yannai] said, "Come down to here, sell [it] to me." He said [back] to him, "You do not need it and those like you do not [need it]." [Nonetheless,] he made the effort to come and go down to him. He took out a book of Psalms and showed him the verse, "Who is the man who desires life?" [The peddler said,] "What is written after it - 'guard your tongue from evil [...] Turn away from evil and do good' (Psalms 34:14-15)." Rabbi Yannai said, "Shlomo also shouted out and said (Proverbs 21:23), 'He who guards his mouth and his tongue, guards his soul from troubles.'" Rabbi Yannai said "All of my days I was reading this verse and I did not know how to interpret it until this peddler came and made it understood.

(10) R' HIRSCH, TEHILLIM 34:14

It is significant that the instruction in the practical application of the fear of the Lord begins with the behest that we exercise control over our words and, as we shall see, even over our thoughts. For speech and thought are activities which we constantly practice... The fulfillment of this one task requires a constant self-observation and affords a unique opportunity for practice in attaining that control over oneself which is the essential basis of all God-fearing moral endeavor... It is only by means of a word, that is, a symbol composed of sounds to be uttered, that we can retain a thought. Therefore our training course in the fear of the Lord must begin with practice in the control of the thought which, though still unuttered, is already being mulled over by the tongue.

(11) ROBERT ALTER, TEHILLIM 34:19

If one is inclined to argue with Job that this psalm puts forth a view of the implementation of divine justice that disintegrates in the harsh crucible of experience, the poet nevertheless succeeds, at moments like this, in articulating a moving vision of hope for the desperate. Part of the spiritual greatness of Psalms, part of the source of its enduring appeal through the ages, is that it profoundly recognizes the bleakness, the dark terrors, the long nights of despair that shadow most lives, and, against all this, evokes the notion of a caring presence that can reach out to the broken-hearted.