Friday



1 I have loved God because He listens to my voice and my supplications, 2 for He turns His ear to me on the days when I call. 3 When the pangs of death encom-

passed me, and the misery of the grave came upon me, when I encountered trouble and sorrow, 4 I invoked the Name of God, saying, "Please, O God, deliver my soul!" 5 For God is gracious and righteous; our God is compassionate. 6 God watches over the fools; I was brought low, and He saved me. 7 Therefore, O my soul, return to your tranquility, for God has bestowed goodness upon you. 8 For You have always saved my soul from death, my eye from tears, my foot from wandering. 9 I shall yet walk before God in the lands of the living-in the Holy Land. 10 I had faith-for I spoke, even when I was greatly oppressed, and 11 I said as I hurried to escape Saul, "All men who deny that I will be king are lying." 12 With what sort of tribute can I repay God for all His beneficences to me! 13 I will raise the

PSALM 116

David recited this psalm in connection with the troubles he endured as he fled from one place to another in fear of Saul and of those who plotted against him. When God saved David from all of them, he recited this psalm (Meiri).

שמר פתאים יהוה God watches over the fools. The fool, who cannot figure out how to save himself from trouble but trusts in God, receives His protection. The clever person should therefore not put his trust in his intelligence and machinations, since they are futile without God's blessing (Radak).

№ RABBI AKIVA'S LOVE >>

Rabbi Gamliel said, "The children of the wicked are not admitted into the World to Come." But Rabbi Akiva disagreed, "Even the children of the wicked will merit to enter the World to Come—as it says, God watches over the fools. Now, I have traveled to the island cities, and there, the word for fool (פַתי) is used to refer to children (פַתְּיֵא). Thus, the verse implies that God will protect the children of the wicked, ensuring that they too will merit the World to Come" (Sanhedrin 110b).



The above teaching alludes to the extent of Rabbi Akiva's love for others. It was worthwhile for him to travel great distances, to the island cities, to learn an alternative meaning of a word so that he could interpret this verse as a source of comfort to the children of the wicked (The Rebbe).69

116:7

Therefore, O my שוּבִי נַפְּשִׁי לִמְנוּחְיָכִי בֵּי־יְהוָה גָּמֵל עָלֶיְכִי soul, return to your tranquility, for God has bestowed goodness upon you. When I was in dire straits, I would tell my soul: "From the dire straits that you are in, return to God, for He will be a source of tranquility for you. Just as he bestowed goodness upon you many times in the past, so will He do now" (Radak).

ו אֶתְהַלֵּךְ לְפָנֵי יְהֹוָה בָּאַרְצוֹת הַחַיֵּים I shall yet walk before God in the lands of the living-in the Holy Land. While hiding in exile among the Philistines, David spoke of returning to the Land of Israel, the home of God's presence. The lands of the living refer to the cities of the Holy Land, which is a land that supports life and good health (Radak).

In this verse, David alludes to the fact that in the future, he will walk before the righteous, before God, with the resurrection of the dead (Pesachim 118a).

69. Likkutei Sichot, vol. 25, pp. 184-185.

235a

Psalm 116 Day 24

> cup of deliverance and invoke the Name of God. 14 I will now pay my vows to God, in the presence of all His people. 15 Grievous in the eyes of God is the death of His pious ones. 16 I acknowledge, O God, the kindness You did because I am Your servant; I am Your servant, the son of Your maidservant-You have therefore loosened my bonds. 17 To You I will bring an offering of thanksgiving, and proclaim the Name of God. 18 I will now pay my vows to God, in the presence of all His people, 19 in the courtyards of the House of God, in the midst of Jerusalem—praise God!

***** A CUP OF PSALMS *****

The cup of deliverance alludes to the Jewish people who are a cup—a vessel—for God's deliverance. A cup cannot be filled if it is already full.71 If we are filled with our own desires and agendas, then God's blessings cannot rest in us. Only when we empty ourselves of ego and seek to align our will with God's will can we host the blessings He bestows upon us (The Rebbe).72

David's cup of deliverance also alludes to this Book of Psalms. With it, we are raised aloft and deliver, i.e., draw, blessings down below (Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak of Lubavitch).73

When we recite a blessing over a cup of wine, we lift the cup a handbreadth above the table. Similarly, the cup of deliverance, the Book of Psalms, raises us above our mundane existence and heightens our consciousness so we can appreciate the miraculous deliverances that God does for us (The Rebbe).74

■ DAVID'S CUP ■

In the future, God will make a banquet for the righteous. At the meal's conclusion, the cup of wine, over which the blessing after meals is recited, will be offered to each participant. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and Joshua will all decline the honor due to some shortcoming in their spiritual stature. David, however, will take the cup

and declare, "I will say the blessing, and it is fitting for me

to say it." Hence: I will raise the cup of deliverance and proclaim the Name of God (Pesachim 119b).

King David is synonymous with the Divine trait of malchut-kingship. A cup, which receives and dispenses liquid, serves as a metaphor for malchut, whose function is to receive and dispense Divine energy.

Of all the Divine traits, malchut is the one that directly engages a lower spiritual plane. The "cup" of malchut is therefore in need of deliverance. Occasionally, it must be extracted from its entanglement with the spiritually distant worlds so it can concentrate on connecting to its Divine source. David, the voice of malchut, thus says that he must raise the cup of deliverance. In order to be delivered, to be replenished with Divine light, malchut must be raised and elevated from its contact with creation.

In the future, the process of imbuing creation with Divine meaning will be complete. The hierarchy will then be overturned: God will be manifest in the material world with an intensity not found in the spiritual worlds. Because of its involvement with creation, malchut will then be "closer" to God than the other Godly emanations. At that time, malchut will not need to be elevated to receive Divine light; it will be wholly one with God. In fact, it will be elevated above all other Divine traits.

At that time, the Divine qualities of our forefathers and leaders will be inadequate means of praise. Only David malchut—will be "fit to say Grace" (The Rebbe).75

יְהֹנֶתָה אֶת־קוֹלִי תַּחֲנוּנֵי: בּ כִּי־ הּמֶה אָזְנוֹ לֵי וּבְיָמֵי אֶקְרָא: גּ אֲפָפָוּנִי | חֶבְלֵי־כְּעָת

וּמְצָרֵי שְׁאַוֹל מְצָאַוּנִי צָרָה וְיָנָוֹן אֶמְצָא: דּ וּבְשַׁם־יְהֹוָה אֶקְרָא אָנָה יְהֹנָה מַלְּמָה נַפְשִׁי: הַ חַנַּוּן יְהֹנָה וְצַדֵּיק וַאַלֹהֵינוּ מְרַחֵם: שֹׁמֵר פָּתָאיָם יְהֹוָה דַּלֹּתִי וְלֵי יְהוֹשִׁיעַ: ז שׁוּבְי גַפְשִׁי לִמְנוּחָזְיְכִי בִּי־יְהוָה גָּמַל עָלֶיְכִי: הַ כִּי חַלַּצְתָ נַפְשִׁי מִׁפֶוֶת אֶת־עֵינֵי מִן־דִּמְעָה אֶת־רַגְלֵי מִהֶּחִי: מַ אֶתְהַלֵּךְ לִפְגַי יְהֹוָה בְּאַרְצוֹת הַחַיִּים: י הָאֶמַנְתִּי בִּי אֲדַבֵּר אֲנִי עָנִיתִי מְאָד: א אֲנִי אָמַרְתִּי בְחָפְזִי כָּל־הָאָדָם כֹּזֵב: ב מָה־אָשִׁיב לַיהֹנָה כָּל־תַּגִמוּלְוֹהִי עָלֵי: יג כְּוֹם־יִשׁוּעְוֹת אֵשָּׂא

שבחים גדולים להקדוש לו על כל הגמול שעשה עמו:

****** DIVINE SILENCE **

The Psalmist uses the plural—lands of the living—because the Land of Israel supports two modes of spiritual life. When the Temple stood in Jerusalem, Godliness was overt and obvious. The spirit of prophecy pervaded the land, and the nation as a whole lived a holy and spiritual life. After the Temple's destruction, God's presence receded. His influence no longer directly uplifts those living there.

And yet, God's presence is potentially more potent in the Holy Land now than it was in the times of the Temple. To illustrate: An idea, while still in the mind of its thinker, is inaccessible to others. Yet it is precisely then that it is most pure. The spoken idea, by contrast, is accessible to others, but it does not represent the purest form of the idea. Similarly, during Temple times, God's presence in the Holy Land was as if He were speaking, whereas now, it is as if He were thinking. In Temple times, He was more perceptible, but one could only perceive His "spoken" self. Today, God is less perceptible in the Holy Land-He no longer "speaks." But those righteous individuals, such as the Arizal, who manage to perceive God through the darkness, are perceiving God in His state of "thought." Their Divine perception is therefore even greater than the prophets of old (Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi).70

70. Torah Or, Vayeitzei 22d-23a.

116:10-11

Such was the strength of my faith that even at a time when I was hurried and greatly oppressed, I would say that anyone who denies the prophecy that I would ultimately be king is lying (Radak).

דל הַנְמוּלוֹהִי עָלֵי For all His beneficences to me. Translation follows Metzudot. Alternatively: All of His beneficences are upon me-it is my duty to repay God, if that were possible, for all the beneficences that He bestowed upon me, for He did so not because of any merit of mine but out of pure kindness (Radak).

116:13

I will raise the cup of כַּוֹם־יִשׁוּעוֹת אַשָּׂא וּבְשַׁם יִהֹוָה אֶקְרֵא deliverance and invoke the Name of God. When I make a feast and celebration, I will raise a cup of wine and thank God in public for His deliverance. Hence, the cup of deliverance.

The second half of the verse is identical to the first half of verse 4, which is a continuation of the verse before it: I encountered trouble and sorrow, and I invoked the Name of God. By using the same words in both verses, the Psalmist suggests: Just as I would invoke God's Name in difficult times, so will I do at the time of deliverance (Radak; see Berachot 60b).

235b

ליום ששי

וּבְשַׁהַ יְהֹוָה אֶקְרָא: דְּ נֻדְרֵי לִיהֹוָה אֲשַׁלֵּם נֶגְדָה־נָּא לְכָל־עַמְּוֹ: בּ יָקָר בְּעֵינֵי יְהֹנָה הַבְּּוֹתָה לַחֲסִידֵיו: בּ אָנָה יְהֹנָה בִּי־אָנֶי עַׁבְהֶּךְ אָנֵי עַבְרַדְּ בֶּן־אָמָתֶדְ פִּׁתַּחְתָּ לְמִוֹםַרֵי: " לְדְּ אֶזְבַּח זֶבַח תּוֹדֶה וּבְשַׁהַ יְהֹוֶה אֶקְרָא: יה גָדָרֵי לַיהֹוֶה אֲשַׁלֵּם נֶגְדָה־נָּא לְכָל־עַמְּוֹ:

מ בַּחַצְרָוֹת | בֵּית יְהוָה בִּתוֹבֵכִי יְרְוּשָׁלָּחָ הַלְּלוּיָה:

גָּדְרֵי לֵיהֹוָה אֲשַׁלֵּם..נָא I will now pay my vows to God. While fleeing from his enemies, David would say, "If God will return me to my home, I pledge to do such-and-such." David now declares that he will fulfill those vows (Radak).

116:14

יַקר בְּעֵינֵי יְהֹוָה הַמְּוְתָה לַחֲסִידֵיו Grievous in the eyes of God is the death of His pious ones. God is loath to see His pious ones die before their time. He therefore rescued me from death, since I am one of His pious ones (Radak).

■ PRECIOUS PIETY ≫

The word for grievous (יָקר) also means "precious." Hence, a homiletical reading of the verse: "Precious" in the eyes of God is the death of His pious ones. When we suppress our drives and urges, we "kill" our animalistic, selfish soul. God cherishes this sacrifice. Thus, the death of His pious ones is precious in the eyes of God (Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak of Lubavitch).76

אני עבדף אני עבדף בּן־אַמַתְדּ I am Your servant, the son of Your maidservant. I am Your servant (a) because I have accustomed myself to serving You, and (b) because it was in my nature from birth, since my mother was Your maidservant. The nature of a person is influenced primarily by the mother, who carries the fetus in her womb and then nurses the baby once it is born (Radak).

76. Sefer Hamaamarim 5688, p. 101.

וּבְיָמַי אֶקְרֵא On the days when I call (116:2).

Days of Hallel. There are eighteen days when the complete Hallel is recited (in the Holy Land): (1) the first day of Pesach; (2) Shavuot; (3-10) the eight days of Sukkot and Shemini Atzeret; (11-18) the eight days of Chanukah. This is alluded to in the gematria of the first and last letters of the words for on the days when I call—אָקרַא, which equals 18 (Rokeach).

(Outside of the Holy Land, the Hallel is completed on three additional days: the second days of Pesach and Shavuot respectively, and on Simchat Torah.)

That Hallel is recited on Chanukah is alluded to below, 118:27: God is Almighty, and He has illuminated for us (Pesikta Rabbati 2:1).

כָּוֹם־יִשוּעוֹת אֶשָא וּבְשֵם יָהֹוָה אֶקְרֵא I will raise the cup of deliverance and invoke the Name of God (116:13).

Raising the Cup. The cup of wine over which the blessing after meals is recited should be raised one handbreadth from the ground-as it is written: I will raise the cup of deliverance and invoke the Name of God (Berachot 51b). The Talmud is referring to one who is sitting on the ground. One who is sitting at a table raises the cup one handbreadth above the table. We raise the cup so that all present should gaze upon it (Shulchan Aruch Harav, Orach Chaim 183:8). According to Chabad custom, the cup is raised three handbreadths above the table (Sefer Haminhagim-Chabad, p. 28).

236a 236b

^{71.} See Berachot 40a.

^{72.} Sefer Hamaamarim 5713, p. 63.

^{73.} Letters appended to Tehillim Ohel Yosef Yitzchak, p. 210. English ed., p. 255.

Torat Menachem—Hitvaaduyot 5714, vol. 1, p. 101.

^{75.} Sefer Hamaamarim 5726, pp. 49-51.