

קונטרס אורי וישעי

A LINE BY LINE GUIDE TO TEHILLIM CHAPTER 27

by

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לעי"נ

ר' יחיאל נתן ב"ר שמאי פעלדמאן ז"ל

In loving memory of
Mr Michael Feldman ז"ל

**A man of true integrity
who exemplified the values
expressed in this booklet.**

*Dedicated by
Stephen and Debbie Goldberg
and family*

This booklet is a collection of short ideas that I have had the privilege of sharing over the past month. It is by no means a comprehensive commentary and is really just the 'tip of the iceberg' of the depth of Dovid Hamelech's words.

Whilst this chapter of Tehillim becomes part of our davening for Elul and most of Tishrei, many of us don't have the opportunity to delve into the classical commentaries and see the relevance of the pesukim to our lives.

It is therefore a zechus to share these thoughts with the wider tzibbur with the hope and tefillah that they will provide an increased sense of focus and a heightened awareness of the power of these days.

This booklet is a fitting tribute to my late father in law Mr Michael Feldman, a Torah true Jew, a loyal husband and caring father and grandfather. He saw himself as the heir of the great Torah legacies of his grandfathers Rav Dovid Feldmann זצ"ל and Rav Yechiel Schwimmer זצ"ל whose manuscripts he had the privilege of publishing.

I would like to thank his family and friends for their support in making this booklet available to the public and feel that this is a fitting tribute to his exemplary character.

Rosh Hashana is a time where we take a step back and look at the big picture. We crown Hashem as King over ourselves and hope and dream for the time where all of mankind will do so too. On a personal level it is a privilege to work for an organisation that is dedicated to these values. Aish HaTorah UK reaches thousands of unaffiliated young Jews with inspiring and innovative programmes and shiurim through which they gain a greater awareness of their identity and appreciation for Torah and Mitzvos. It is an organisation that is truly worthy of the kehilla's support as it seeks to bring young Jews back to the Ribbono Shel Olam.

Many of the ideas mentioned here are those that I have learnt from the Rosh Yeshiva of Aish HaTorah Rav Noach Weinberg זצ"ל and my Rebbi Rav Yizchak Berkovits שליט"א, nossi and posek of Aish UK. Their words and teachings are a guiding light and impact our activities on a daily basis.

I would like to thank my dear parents and mother in law for all their love and support, and to express my appreciation to my wife for enabling and encouraging me to both learn and share the דבר ה'. May Hashem grant us the privilege להזות בנועם ה' ולבקר בהיכלו. Thank you to the Oneg Shabbos team and Jam Events for making turning these short thoughts into the booklet that you are reading.

I hope that you find this booklet meaningful and that in some way it enhances your appreciation of this beautiful perek of Tehillim. If you have any comments or corrections please feel free to contact me at rabbiroodyn@gmail.com

Wishing you a כתיבה וחתימה טובה

יהונתן זכריה רודין

פסוק א'

לְדוֹד ה' אֹרִי וְיִשְׁעִי מִמִּי אֵירָא ה' מַעֲזֵז חַיִּי מִמִּי אֶפְחָד:

Of Dovid, Hashem is my Light and My Salvation, whom shall I fear.

The Malbim explains that this whole chapter is explaining how Hashem's *hashgacha* depends on our level of *deveikus* (attachment) to Him. One who is constantly attached to Hashem will be the beneficiary of Hashem's constant providence, and as such no harm will befall him. That is why the *posuk* continues with Dovid saying that he will not have any fear, because, as the Rambam explains in the *Moreh Nevuchim*¹ the *tzaddik* is only susceptible to harm once his mind is detached from thinking about Hashem and he turns away from *avodas Hashem*. Therefore, (and this is a crucial message at this time of year) amongst all the many requests that we make of Hashem, there is one that really ought to be our main focus, namely that we develop a constant relationship with Hashem. Therefore in this chapter, Dovid Hamelech davens to Hashem and begs him to remove all circumstances and factors that can take him away from this central and most important goal of developing a constant sense of attachment to Hashem.

Throughout the month of Elul, we ought to set our sights on Rosh Hashana, the day when we focus on the big picture, on what life is all about, *malchus shamayim*. Chazal say² that אורי, my light refers to Rosh Hashana, a day of piercing clarity, where the truth is so evident to all who wish to see it. This light can however be blinding if we are not prepared. It is impossible to expect us to be able to be focussed and switched on when the big day comes, if we haven't thought about it beforehand.

The Malbim, consistent with his approach that there are no synonyms in Tanach and that each word has its own meaning and nuance, discusses the difference between יראה and פחד, which are generally translated into English as 'fear' and 'dread'.

He explains that יראה is fear of that which is known (possibly because it is similar to the word ראה to see) whereas פחד is the fear of the unknown.

1 מו"נ פרק נ"ג

2 מדרש שוחר טוב

He breaks up the *posuk* as follows:

לְדוֹד ה' אֹרִי וְיִשְׁעִי מִמֶּי אֵרָא

Of Dovid, Hashem is my Light and My Salvation, whom shall I fear,

ה' מַעֲזַי חַיִּי מִמֶּי אֶפְחָד:

Hashem is my life's strength whom shall I dread?

Since Hashem is my light and salvation, I am not afraid of someone who may come to attack me at night, since Hashem is my light. Neither am I afraid of enemies who are more numerous than me because Hashem is my salvation.

Nor am I afraid of those who plan to attack me in secret because Hashem is my life's strength.



***Dedicated by Mrs Brenda Feldman
in loving memory of her husband***

פסוקים ב'–ג'

(ב) בְּקִרְבִּי עָלַי מְרִיעִים לֶאֱכֹל אֶת בְּשָׂרִי צָרִי וְאֹיְבִי לִי הִמָּה כְּשֶׁלּוֹ וְנִפְּלוּ:

When evildoers approach me to devour my flesh, my tormentors and foes against me - it is they who stumble and fall.

(ג) אִם תַּחֲנֶנּה עָלַי מַחֲנֶנָּה לֹא יִירָא לִבִּי אִם תִּקְוִים עָלַי מִלְחָמָה בְּזֹאת אֲנִי בֹטָח:

If an army were to besiege me, my heart would not fear, if war were to arise against me, in this I trust...

The Malbim explains this as follows: Whether they arise against me in secret, either for their own benefit or just to cause me harm, since Hashem is my life's strength, they will fall apart and stumble even without me knowing anything about it.

And even if they attack me in the open, I will still remain confident.

This sense of security of Hashem as אורי וישעי, is the trait of *bitachon*, unwavering trust in Hashem, which itself is a practical expression of our own *emunah*, faith in Hashem. *Bitachon* is the way that we live with *emunah* and make it real³.

As we prepare for Rosh Hashana, the day when we renew our sense of belief in Hashem and declare ourselves to be His servants, we also need to ready ourselves to accept the implications of living with this reality.

We so by developing a sense of *bitachon*, as a result of internalising the idea that אין עוד מלבדו⁴, there is ultimately nothing other than Hashem.

Through realising that there is no other power apart from His will⁵, we prepare ourselves to accept the responsibility for living with עול מלכות שמים, the yoke of Heaven.

This is the best possible preparation for Rosh Hashana.

***Dedicated by Chananya and Anna Noe, Talia, Mira,
Mikey, Avi and Daniella
in loving memory of their father and zeide***

3 ע"פ אמונה ובטחון להחזו"א פ"ב

4 דברים ג':ל"ה

5 ע"י בה"ל או"ח א' ד"ה הוא כלל אות ב' בענין לא יהיה וכו'

פסוק ד'

(ד) אַחַת שְׁאַלְתִּי מֵאֵת ה' אֹתָהּ אֲבַקֵּשׁ שְׁבִתִּי בְּבֵית ה' כָּל יְמֵי חַיֵּי לַחַיּוֹת
בְּנֹעַם ה' וּלְבַקֵּר בְּהִיכְלוֹ:

One thing I asked of Hashem, that I shall seek: To live in the house of Hashem all the days of my life, to behold the sweetness of Hashem and to contemplate in His sanctuary.

The Ibn Ezra suggests that Dovid Hamelech wrote this psalm at the end of his life, once he had a sense of perspective on the meaning of life, this he states, is his life's goal: To see and understand the pleasantness of Hashem's *Torah*⁶ and to learn the secrets and inner meaning of the *Torah*⁷.

The Radak says that even though Dovid was fully confident that Hashem would protect him from all his oppressors, he nonetheless asked Hashem to remove them and their threat totally, so that he can fully dedicate himself to spiritual pursuits. He asks to be able to visit the House of Hashem each morning (*levaker* is related to the word *boker*⁸) and to be able to learn from the kohanim who are totally focused on their service of Hashem⁹ and contemplate *Torah* ideas¹⁰.

The Malbim says that this request of 'שבתי בבית ה' is not to the exclusion of all other needs, rather, through his dedication to *Torah* study that he will receive his heart's desires.

However he did not ask for this in order to be able to take care of all his personal needs. His motivation behind asking to dwell in the House of Hashem, was not so that he would be freed of the need to wage war.

Rather he is asking that he needs be fulfilled despite the fact that he is not asking for them specifically. He is just asking for the most important thing, to dwell in the House of Hashem and to bask in His presence through *talmud Torah* and *tefillah*.

On Rosh Hashana we don't daven for ourselves per se. Although it is the *yom hadin*, the day of judgement, the *tefillos* are not full of personal requests. Rosh

6 מצודת דוד

7 אבן עזרא

8 רש"י

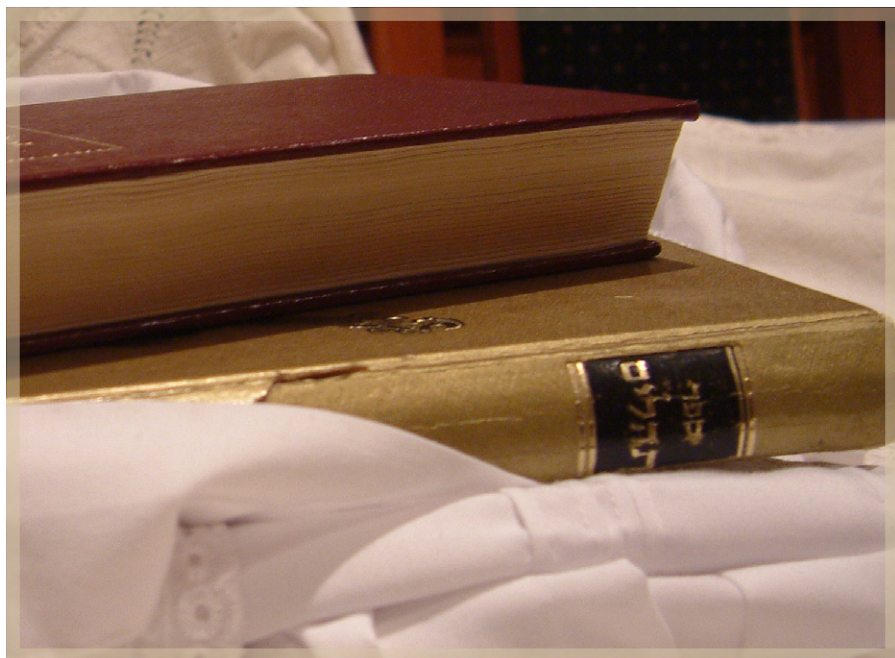
9 אבן עזרא

10 ספורנו

Hashana is the day of *בתוך עמי אנכי יושבת*¹¹, a day of dwelling amongst our people. We are judged as individuals on the basis of how much we actively identify with the Jewish people as a whole and most importantly, our national mission of Kiddush Hashem¹².

A brief look at the *tefillos* of Rosh Hashana will immediately show that the essence of the day is one of identifying with Hashem's plan for creation, to bring all of mankind to an awareness of, and connection with Him.

The extent to which we can honestly say this line of *achas sha'alti* is the degree to which we genuinely desire that connection with Hashem, which itself is the greatest pleasure possible. The message of Rosh Hashana is that this is the source of all blessing, and everything else that we require will just flow from there.



***Dedicated by Yonasan and Yael Roodyn, Dovid, Yedidya,
Chana, Yechiel, Leah and Tzivya
in loving memory of their father and zeide***

מלכים ב' ד': י"א-י"ג וע' זוה"ק ח"א סט. 11

עלי שור ח"ב עמ' תי"ט 12

פסוקים ה'–ו'

(ה) כִּי יִצְפְּנִי בְּסֻכָּה בְּיוֹם רָעָה יִסְתַּרְנִי בְּסֻכֶּת אֱהָלוֹ בְּצוּר יְרוּמֵמֶנִי:

That He will hide me in His tabernacle on the day of calamity; He will conceal me in the secrecy of His tent; He will lift me up on a rock.

(ו) וְעָתָה יָרוּם רֹאשִׁי עַל אֹיְבֵי סְבִיבוֹתַי וְאֶזְבְּחָה בְּאַהֲלוֹ זִבְחֵי תְרוּעָה אֲשִׁירָה וְאֶזְמְרָה לָהּ:

And now, my head will be raised over my enemies around me, and I will sacrifice in His tent sacrifices with joyous song; I will sing and chant praise to Hashem.

Dovid Hamelech continues and says. Once I have expressed my deepest desire to dwell in the House of Hashem, this becomes a source of tremendous security for me.

Hashem will be my shade and my fortress so that no enemy can attack me.

Moreover, since I have developed a sense of confidence in Hashem's protection, I will raise up my head above my enemies that surround me.

And like one who has vanquished his enemies, I will offer up זבחי תרועה, thanksgiving offerings to Hashem.

Since I have such confidence in Hashem's protection, my dwelling in His tent is considered to be as if I have both fought and emerged victorious.

And because of this I sing to Hashem.

The very existence of the Jewish nation as Hashem's people is testimony to Hashem's presence and providence in this world. Rav Yaakov Emden famously writes¹³ that the survival of the Jewish people throughout this long and difficult exile is a miracle greater than the Exodus from Egypt.

Although like Dovid Hamelech, we realise that there is most certainly a time to wage war to protect ourselves, we have never prided ourselves on being a nations of warriors. Rather as the Navi says אִם בְּרוּחִי כִּי אֵם בְּחַיִל וְלֹא בַּחַ כִּי¹⁴, 'Not by military force and not by physical strength, but by My spirit,' says the L-rd of Hosts.

This greatness of spirit is palpable during the days of the *Yamim Noraim*.

¹³ הקדמה לסידור בית יעקב

¹⁴ זכריה ד':

Observant Jews deepen their connection and performance of *Torah* and *Mitzvos* and even those who are ostensibly less observant up their game at this time.

This is the greatness of spirit of those who spend time in the בית ה' during this time of year.

This is the true source of our security.



*Dedicated by Mrs Elena Grosskopf in memory of her son in
law*

פסוק ז'

(ז) שְׁמַע ה' קוֹלִי אֶקְרָא וַחֲנֹנִי וַעֲנֵנִי:

Hashem, hear my voice when I call, be gracious towards me and answer me.

The first six *pesukim* were essentially words of introduction to his real request. Dovid Hamelech now asks Hashem to remove anything and everything that is an impediment to his *avodas Hashem*.

He realises that this physical world is just a means to an end, which is readily attainable. He therefore asks for peace and tranquillity, not as an end in itself but rather as a means to be able to better serve Hashem.

This is really the message of the second paragraph of the Shema¹⁵ where Hashem promises us rain if we perform the *Mitzvos* and threatens us with drought if we don't. It is self-evident that observance of Hashem's commandments are not some elaborate rain dance. Rather, if we perform *Mitzvos*, Hashem says that He will bless us with the ability to do even more. And if G-d forbid we don't, then the opposite will happen.

On Rosh Hashana, we are encouraged to evaluate our priorities.

When we ask for life, we are not just requesting continued existence, to indulge in this world for its own sake. Rather we ask for *chayim lemaancha*¹⁶ life to be able to serve Hashem, for His sake.

We are supposed to use these days to gain clarity on the place and context within which we can make use of the physical world, and just as importantly, we are enjoined to make use of it for the right reasons.

Dedicated anonymously

15 דברים י"א:יג-כ"א

16 עלי שור ח"ב עמ' תי"ח בשם רבי ישראל סלנטר זצ"ל

פסוק ח'

(ח) לֵךְ אָמַר לִבִּי בִקְשׁוּ פָנַי אֶת פְּנֵיהֶּ ה' אֲבַקֵּשׁ:

For You, my heart says, "Seek My presence." Your presence, Hashem, I will seek.

Dovid Hamelech asks Hashem to listen to his heartfelt prayer and rescue him from his enemies, but before he does so he gives an important caveat.

He says, whilst it's true that I am asking for salvation from all those who seek to harm me, my heart's desire is something far greater than that, and this is my primary request, to seek out the presence of Hashem.

The Malbim explains that in this *posuk*, Dovid is expressing his deepest desires, to understand, appreciate and be attached to Hashem.

The days of Elul are known as *yemei haratzon*¹⁷, days of desire. They are days of getting in touch with what are really looking for in life.

Of course we all need to have our physical needs taken care of, but we also know that material acquisitions alone do not bring lasting happiness.

The Chassidic masters talk about Elul as being the time when the King is in the field, when He is readily available to all who seek Him.

The Gemara itself¹⁸ says that during the Ten days between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, He is as close as can be.

Rabbi Nachman of Breslov comments on the *Kedusha* of Shabbos Morning, we say *מלא עולם*, Hashem's glory fills the world, yet we then ask *מאי מקום כבודו*, where is the place of His glory? If Hashem's glory fills the world, why are we asking where the place of His glory is?

He answers by saying that actually *ayeh* is *makom kevodo*. That when a Jew genuinely seeks Hashem, that itself is the place of His glory.

Our job is to reach out to His outstretched Hand and now is the time to ask Hashem to give us the wisdom and understanding to be able to do so.

Dedicated by Simon and Paula Feiner and family

17 ע' בני יששכר חודש אלול

18 יבמות מט:

פסוק ט'

(ט) אֵל תִּסְתֵּר פָּנֶיךָ מִמֶּנִּי אֵל תֵּת בְּאֵף עֲבֹדְךָ עֲזָרְתִּי הִי יֵת אֵל תִּטְשֵׁנִי וְאַל
תַּעֲזֹבֵנִי אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעִי:

Do not hide Your presence from me; do not turn Your servant away with anger. You were my help; do not forsake me and do not abandon me, O G-d of my salvation.

For any relationship to flourish, both parties need to be committed to its success and actively engaged in investing in making things work.

In this *posuk*, Dovid asks that there should be no obstacles in the way of his relationship with Hashem. He begs Hashem not to conceal His face from him and also asks this his own shortcomings should not be the source of any Divine distancing. This two-way process is the oxygen that fuels man's relationship with the Creator.

Furthermore, Dovid points out that Hashem has a track record of always being there to help him attain achievements that were beyond his own ability. Dovid is the greatest king we have ever had, a man whose, piety and wisdom coupled with military prowess and leadership abilities will never been matched until the arrival of Moshiach. Instead of the arrogance that we would expect of a monarch of his calibre, Dovid's humility is exceptional. He is well aware of his achievements and is humble enough to exclaim that without Hashem, none of them would have ever been possible.

As we reflect on the year that has just gone by, as we reflect on our successes and achievements, we would do well to emulate Dovid Hamelech. Once we realise that our talents, abilities and achievements are a gift from Hashem, we are able to restore harmony to the relationship between ourselves and our Creator. It is our own arrogance that leads us to forget Hashem, belittling His involvement in our lives.

These ideas are reflected in the immortal words of the Ramban in his famous ethical letter to his son¹⁹.

“Once you have distanced yourself from anger, the quality of humility will enter your heart. This radiant quality is the finest of all admirable traits... Through humility you will also come to fear Hashem... When you think about all these things, you will come to fear Hashem who created you, and you will protect yourself from sinning and therefore be happy with whatever happens to you.”

Dedicated by Harry and Connie Ganz and family

פסוק י'

(י) כִּי אָבִי וְאִמִּי עֲזָבוּנִי וְה' יִגְאַסְפֵנִי:

Though my father and mother have forsaken me, Hashem will gather me in.

Few leaders in Jewish history have had as difficult an upbringing as Dovid. Rejected by his parents from the point of conception²⁰ or adolescence²¹ there were serious questions regarding his legitimacy. This was compounded by the fact that when he was little, he used to prophesy (in an episode reminiscent of Yosef) that he would become a great leader of the Jewish people. As such he was rejected by the family, distanced from them and sent out to pasture the sheep by his father²².

During this challenging formative upbringing, Dovid made the most of his circumstances to develop a palpable sense of reliance on Hashem. Whilst tending to the sheep in the desert, he would serve Hashem and sing His praises through the Tehillim that he composed. It was out there in the solitude of the fields that he forged his relationship with his Creator, who he realised was providing him with all his needs²³. At this point he asks Hashem to both protect him and guide him to an awareness of his life's mission and how to achieve it, as will be seen in the next *posuk*.

The Gemara²⁴ recounts the famous story of Elazar ben Dordaya, a man who after having lived the most depraved existence is given a rude awakening from the most unlikely of places. His teshuva process comes to a climax when he exclaims בי אין הדבר תלוי אלא בי - if it has to be, it's up to me!

All too often we seek to use our circumstances as an excuse to avoid addressing our issues. We are willing to blame everyone apart from ourselves for our lack of growth. Dovid Hamelech and Elazar ben Dordaya achieve greatness in very different ways, but both of them reach great heights through taking responsibility for themselves rather than wallowing in self-pity.

נא להתפלל לרפואת חנה ברכה בת רות בתוך שאר חולי ישראל

20 רש"י

21 ספורנו

22 מדרש הגדול

23 מצודת דוד

24 עבודה זרה יז.

פסוק י"א

(יא) הוֹרֵנִי ה' דִּרְכֶּךָ וְנִהְיֶה בְּאֶרֶץ מִישׁוֹר לְמַעַן שׁוֹרְרֵי:

Teach me your way Hashem, and lead me in path of integrity because of my watchful foes.

After having expressed his sense of total awareness of his reliance on Hashem, Dovid then asks him to play an even more intimate role in his life. Until now he has been asking for salvation and protection from his enemies. Now he asks Hashem for guidance and direction in all areas of his life.

The Malbim explains that הוֹרֵנִי - teach me, is a request that all that one needs in order to have an understanding and deep recognition of Hashem and His Truth should come easily and smoothly. He therefore asks that Hashem should instruct him on this great path, that which he refers to as the הגדול דרך.

However when it comes to his own person *tafkid*, mission in this world, even more guidance is needed. Dovid therefore says that instruction is not enough, rather he asks Hashem to actually lead him on his own personal path.

The Nesivos Sholom explains in a number of places that our individual *tafkid* in life is not to just to fulfil *Torah* and *Mitzvos* (that which the Malbim has just referred to as the הגדול דרך). *Torah* study and mitzvah observance are a given, they are oxygen for the soul. Without them we are spiritually dead. However that is just the "hard wiring" and is not necessarily unique to each one of us as individuals.

Rather, each one of us was created to fulfil a crucial role in this world, we all have a unique part to play in bringing this world to perfection. That role is unique to us as individual and is a product of the Hashem's *hashgacha* that determines our *mazal*, circumstances, resources and abilities. No two of us have the same DNA and no two of us have the same role to play in bringing *geulah* to the world. The challenge lies in recognising these talents and finding the best possible ways to express them. This requires major Divine assistance, hence we ask Hashem וְנִהְיֶה בְּאֶרֶץ מִישׁוֹר .

The Malbim then offers an additional explanation, saying that when one is on a journey there are two main problems that can prevent a person from arriving at their destination.

Not knowing the way to their destination - to this Dovid says ה' דרכך - show me the way.

The many obstructions and challenges that one can encounter on the way. For that Dovid asks ונחני בארץ מישור - lead me in the straight path.

He explains that this is a mashal for man's spiritual quest in life. Dovid asks to be taught and informed of that which he does not know and in addition he asks Hashem to save him from his yetzer hara which is the greatest impediment to spiritual growth and achievements.

Both of these factors serve to save him from his enemies on two levels. Namely the physical adversaries who are threatening his life and the spiritual challenges that are threatening his eternity.

On Rosh Hashana, a day when we are able to see things clearly, we have to make sure that we are not blinded by that light and that it can indeed serve to guide us. In order for this to be a possibility, we need to ask Hashem both for clarity and awareness of our challenges and for the help that we need in order to overcome them.



פסוקים י"ב-י"ג

(יב) אֵל תִּתְּנֵנִי בְּנֶפֶשׁ צָרִי כִּי קָמוּ בִי עֲדֵי שֹׁקֵר וַיִּפַּח חָמָס:

Do not deliver me to the wishes of my tormentors, for false witnesses who breathe violence have arisen against me.

(יג) לֹיְלֵא הָאֱמֻנָתִי לְרֹאוֹת בְּטוֹב ה' בְּאֶרֶץ חַיִּים:

Had I not trusted that I would see the goodness of Hashem in the land of life.

The essence of these two verses is as follows:

Do not deliver me into the hands of my tormentors because I have trusted in Hashem. Were it not for the *emunah* that I had in Hashem during the most challenging periods of my life, I would have been totally lost.

Dovid Hamelech suffered greatly at the hands of those who wished to malign him, especially during the period when Shaul Hamelech sought to kill him. During this challenging period, it was his trust in Hashem that enabled him to continue to fight for his life.

The Gemara²⁵ says that ארץ החיים refers to *olam haba*. Based on this, the Malbim explains allegorically that עדי שקר, the false witnesses referred to here are the doubts of faith that Dovid experienced during this troubled period of his life. He, like so many others, was bothered by the fundamental question of צדיק ורע לו, why the righteous seem to suffer whereas the wicked appear to prosper. This question, which is the motif of the book of Iyov is an attack on the belief that an all-powerful, all knowing, benevolent G-d runs the world.

Dovid himself was deeply bothered by these questions and says that he could only answer them through his belief in the world to come. In this world of truth all will become clear and all accounts will be settled. The suffering that the *tzaddikim* go through in this world serves to increase their portion for all of eternity. It was his *emunah*, loyalty to the truth that even during the darkest periods of his life, that he would ultimately merit to see the טוב ה', goodness of Hashem in the world to come, that carried him through.

In life, it is all too easy to get knocked off course by our challenges, we often feel that we deserve a smooth ride, yet we very rarely get one. Dovid is teaching

us that the only way to get through them, לולא האמנתי, is to keep our eye on the bigger picture, to realise that this world is transient and the world to come is the ultimate world of truth. It really is the ארץ החיים, the dimension where actually start to experience existence in its fullest sense, לראות בטוב ה', where we can actually see the goodness of Hashem.



לעי"נ הילד רפאל יוסף ז"ל בן ילחט"א ר' משה דוד הי"ו

פסוק י"ד

(יד) קוֹה אֶל ה' חֲזַק וַיִּאֲמֵץ לִבּוֹ וַקְוֶה אֶל ה':

Hope to Hashem, strengthen yourself and He will give you courage and hope to Hashem!

Our perek concludes with a message of hope and strength. Rashi explains that the reason why the words 'Hope to Hashem' are repeated is to teach us that if at first we don't see our prayers being answered, we should never give up.

The Radak adds that Dovid used to walk around whispering positive affirmations to himself all day long. Saying words like 'Hope to Hashem' have the effect of strengthening one's *bitachon* and fortify them against all adversaries.

The Malbim says that Dovid's success wasn't just due to his positive attitude, rather it was in the merit of his *emunah* in Hashem. He explains that placing one's trust in Hashem is fundamentally different to trusting in man²⁶. When one creates a sense of dependence on another human being, this can cause tremendous feelings of insecurity. There is no guarantee that that person will be willing or able to help in the future, thus leaving them totally disheartened. Trust in Hashem, however causes a person to strengthen their heart, as the Infinite source of all existence always has the ability to deliver that which is best for us.

Furthermore, when a place their trust in another, it is to achieve a certain outcome or desire. The hoping itself is very much a means to an end rather than an end in itself. In fact in an ideal world a person would not like to have to need anyone else or place their trust in them at all. One they have attained all that they need, they don't want to have to trust in others to be indebted to them at all. Not so when one places their trust in Hashem. The goal of *bitachon* is not the outcome or the achievement rather the ability to trust in Hashem is the goal itself. This explains why the words 'קוֹה אֶל ה', hope to Hashem are repeated.

The Malbim therefore ends this chapter with the theme that he started with. The goal of life is to develop a sense of consciousness of and a relationship with Hashem²⁷. The challenges that we face are in fact opportunities to develop a sense of reliance on Hashem and to ask Him to guide us to the right responses so that we can be shining examples of Kiddush Hashem.

26 ע'י חזק"ל שער הביטחון באירכות

27 ע'י רמ"א או"ח א'א' ע"פ הרבנים מו"נ ח"ג פ' נ"ב והוא בחינת סוף מעשה במחשבה תחילה.

When we ask for life on Rosh Hashana we are asking for a life where we can both feel Hashem's presence constantly and in turn reflect Hashem's presence to others through the way that we conduct ourselves, especially during challenging times.

Not only did Dovid Hamelech choose to live this way, he also taught us that this is within our grasp.



Dedicated by Yaakov and Gila Opat and family





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כתיבה וחתימה טובה