

Mizmor 035

Searching for Self-Respect

Key Concepts

At the time when David composed this mizmor he was facing bitter enemies who hated him. Not only did his enemies want to kill him, they were out to demoralize him and to destroy his good name. David knew he had an important mission as a servant of Hashem and that by giving in to despondency he would lose everything – his mission in this world and his life in the next .

The mizmor is in the form of a *tefillah* for David's personal *yeshuah*. But it is more than a *tefillah*. It is a search for self-respect by a man who has suffered humiliation and insult from his enemies.

In this mizmor David emphasizes the possibility of a complete reversal at a time when circumstances appear the bleakest. David had sought to live at peace with his enemies but they reversed his efforts, responding to his goodwill with ingratitude and hatred. They proceeded to humiliate and belittle him but David foresaw that he would be vindicated and his enemies would suffer that fate.

Exploring the Mizmor

PART 1. VICTORY IN BATTLE. David begins by appealing to Hashem to be at his side as he fights his enemies, so that his hoped for victory will be achieved through Hashem's direct action. Even as David holds a shield in battle, he realizes that it is the hand of G-d that is grasping it. Furthermore, David strengthens his own self-confidence by visualizing the destruction of the wicked people who have been making his life miserable. Their arrogance is not to be feared because it will be replaced with their humiliation.

(א) לָדוֹד רִיבָה ה' אֶת יְרִיבֵי לֶחֶם אֶת לְחֶמִי: (ב) הַחֲזֹק מִגֹּן וְצָנָה וְקוֹמָה בְּעִזָּרְתִּי:
 (ג) וְהָרַק חֲנִית וְסֹגֵר לְקִרְאֵת רֹדְפֵי אָמֹר לְנַפְשִׁי יִשְׁעֲתֵךְ אָנֹכִי: (ד) יִבְשׁוּ וַיִּכְלְמוּ
 מִבְּקִשֵׁי נַפְשִׁי יִסְגּוּ אַחֲוֹר וַיִּחְפְּרוּ חֲשָׁבֵי רַעְתִּי: (ה) יִהְיוּ כְּמֵץ לִפְנֵי רוּחַ וּמִלְאָךְ ה'
 דוֹחָה: (ו) הֲיֵי דְרָכֶם חֲשֵׁךְ וְחִלְקִלְקוֹת וּמִלְאָךְ ה' רֹדְפִים: (ז) כִּי חֲנָם טָמְנוּ לִי שַׁחַת
 רִשְׁתֶּם חֲנָם חָפְרוּ לְנַפְשִׁי: (ח) תְּבוֹאָהּ שׂוֹאָה לֹא יִדַע וְרִשְׁתּוּ אֲשֶׁר טָמְנוּ תִלְכְּדוּ
 בְּשׂוֹאָה יִפֹּל בָּהּ:

(1) *By David. Hashem, contend with my adversaries and fight my foes. (2) Hold a shield and armor [to protect me]. Rise up in my defense. (3) Release a spear to block my pursuers. Say to my soul, "I am your yeshuah."* (4) *May those who seek my life be embarrassed and shamed. May those who plot my harm be turned back. Let them want to hide themselves in humiliation (5) May they be [dispersed] like chaff before the wind. May the angel of Hashem be [continually] shoving [them]. (6) May their way be dark and slippery and may the angel of Hashem pursue them. (7) For without cause they have concealed a pit [to kill] me with their net. Without cause they dug [a pit] to [destroy] my soul. (8) May a devastating darkness come upon each [of them] without warning. May his net which he concealed ensnare him. May he fall into it in the devastating darkness.*

PART 2. ANTICIPATED RELIEF. David stops to contemplate the relief and joy he will feel when his prayers are answered. Every bone in his body will then be able to serve Hashem.

(ט) וַנִּפְשֵׁי תִגִּיל בְּה' תִּשְׂשֵׂשׁ בִּישׁוּעָתוֹ: (י) כָּל עַצְמוֹתַי תִּאֲמַרְנָה ה' מִי כְמוֹךָ מַצִּיל עֲנִי מִחַזָּק מִמֶּנּוּ וְעֲנִי וְאֲבִיוֹן מִגְזֵלוֹ:

(9) *My soul will feel an intense gladness in Hashem. It will openly rejoice in His yeshuah. (10) All my bones will proclaim, "Hashem, who is like You. You save the poor man from [the enemy who is] stronger than he, the poor and the destitute from one who would rob him."*

PART 3. THE PAIN OF INSULT. But David still feels the pain of the ill-will that has been directed against him. And so he dwells on the unfair and cruel treatment to which he has been subjected. His concern for the well-being of his enemies has been repaid with spite and mockery.

(יא) יְקוּמוּן עַדֵי חָמָס אֲשֶׁר לֹא יָדַעְתִּי וְשִׂאֲלוֹנֵי: (יב) יִשְׁלַמוּנֵי רָעָה תַחַת טוֹבָה שָׂכוּל לְנַפְשִׁי: (יג) וְאֲנִי בַחֲלוֹתֶם לְבוּשִׁי שָׁק עֲנִיתִי בְצוּם נַפְשִׁי וְתַפְלָתִי עַל חֵיקִי תָשׁוּב: (יד) פָּרַע כְּאֵח לִי הִתְהַלַּכְתִּי כְּאֶבֶל אִם קִדָּר שְׁחוּתִי: (טו) וּבְצַלְעֵי שְׂמֹחוּ וְנִאֲסָפוּ נִאֲסָפוּ עָלַי גַּכִּים וְלֹא יָדַעְתִּי קָרְעוּ וְלֹא דָמוּ: (טז) בְּחִנְפֵי לַעֲגִי מְעוּג חָרַק עָלַי שְׂנִימוּ:

(11) *Corrupt witnesses rise up to make demands [concerning] which I have no knowledge. (12) They are repaying me with evil for good. [Their betrayal] is for my soul like the death of a child. (13) But as for me, when they were ill, my clothing was sackcloth. I afflicted myself with fasting. May my tefillah come back to my bosom. (14) [When they were ill] I went about as for a good friend and as for my own brother. I was bent over in a dark melancholy like one who is in mourning for a mother (15) But when I limped*

they were cheerful and gathered [to jeer me]. [Even] the cripples gathered against me. I don't know why. They laughed and didn't stop. (16) With malicious, mocking talk they chewed away at me with their teeth.

PART 4. TIME FOR YESHUAH. David turns again directly to Hashem in tefillah, asking that the time of the anticipated *yeshuah* not be delayed any longer.

(יז) אֲדַנְי פְּמָה תִּרְאֶה הַשִּׁיבָה נַפְשִׁי מִשְׂאִיָּהֶם מִכְּפִירִים יַחֲדָתִי: (יח) אֹדֶךְ בְּקֶהֱל רַב בְּעַם עֲצוּם אֶהְלֶלְךָ: (יט) אֵל יִשְׁמְחוּ לִי אֵיבֵי שֶׁקֶר שֶׁנְּאִי חֲנָם יִקְרְצוּ עֵינַי: (כ) כִּי לֹא שָׁלוֹם יִדְבְּרוּ וְעַל רִגְעֵי אֶרֶץ דְּבָרֵי מִרְמוֹת יַחֲשִׁבוּ: (כא) וַיִּרְחִיבוּ עָלַי פִּיהֶם אָמְרוּ הָאֵחַ הָאֵחַ רָאֵתָה עֵינֵינוּ:

(17) Hashem, how long will You look on? Rescue my soul from their darkness, my life from the young lions. (18) [Then] I will publicly thank You in a great congregation. I will praise You in a mighty throng. (19) Let my enemies of falsehood not rejoice over me, nor those who hate me without reason wink an eye in mockery. (20) For it is not peace that they speak. They are plotting words of deceit against the humble people of the earth. (21) They opened their mouths wide against me. They exclaimed, "Hurrah, Hurrah! Our own eyes have seen [his downfall]!"

PART 5. TIME OF JUDGEMENT. David continues his tefillah, asking that the cruel enemy be subjected to the judgement which they so richly deserve.

(כב) רָאִיתָה ה' אֵל תִּתְרַשׁ אֲדַנְי אֵל תִּתְרַחַק מִמּוֹנֵי: (כג) הָעִירָה וְהִקִּיצָה לְמִשְׁפָּטַי אֱלֹהֵי וְאֲדַנְי לְרִיבֵי: (כד) שִׁפְטֵנִי כְּצִדְקָךְ ה' אֱלֹהֵי וְאֵל יִשְׁמְחוּ לִי: (כה) אֵל יֹאמְרוּ בְּלִבָּם הָאֵחַ נַפְשֵׁנוּ אֵל יֹאמְרוּ בְּלַעְנוֹהוּ: (כו) יִבְשׁוּ וַיִּחְפְּרוּ יַחְדָּו שְׂמֵחֵי רָעָתִי יִלְבְּשׁוּ בְּשֵׁת וּכְלֵמָה הַמְּגַדִּילִים עָלַי:

(22) You have seen, Hashem! Don't be silent. O my L-rd, don't be distant from me. (23) Arouse and waken my judgement, my G-d. (24) Judge me by Your righteous justice, Hashem, my G-d. Let them not rejoice over me. (25) Let them not even exclaim in their hearts, 'Hurrah for us!' Let them not say, 'We devoured him.' (26) May they be embarrassed and shamed together, those who have been glad over my misfortune. May they be garbed in embarrassment and disgrace, those who were speaking with boastfully arrogance toward me.

PART 6. CONCLUSION. David concludes the mizmor by invoking Hashem's blessing upon the righteous people who have been loyal to him throughout his travails. Finally, he adds his personal thanks and praise to Hashem.

(כז) יִרְנוּ וַיִּשְׁמְחוּ חֲפִצֵי צִדְקֵי וַיֹּאמְרוּ תִּמְיֵד יִגְדַּל ה' הַחֲפֵץ שְׁלוֹם עֲבָדָיו: (כח)

וּלְשׁוֹנֵי תְהַגֵּה צְדִיקָךְ כָּל הַיּוֹם תְּהַלְתֶּךָ:

(27) *May those who desire my vindication sing joyfully and be glad. Let them continually declare, 'Great is Hashem, Who desires the well-being of His servant'. (28) Hashem, my tongue will declare Your righteousness all day long.*

Learning the Mizmor

PART 1. VICTORY IN BATTLE.

(א) לְדָוִד

רִיבָה ה' אֶת יְרִיבֵי
לַחֵם אֶת לַחֲמֵי:

This is a *mizmor* by David — לְדָוִד. Hashem, there is no way that I can defend myself against my attackers without You by my side. So I ask You **Hashem, contend with my adversaries** — רִיבָה ה' אֶת יְרִיבֵי who attack me with words. And **fight my foes** — לַחֵם אֶת לַחֲמֵי who take up arms against me.

(ב) הַחֹזֶק מִגֹּן וְצִנָּה

וְקוֹמָה בְּעִזָּרְתִּי:

Hold a protective shield — הַחֹזֶק מִגֹּן to defend me against those who attack me with words. **And hold protective armor** — וְצִנָּה to save me from those who attack me with violence. In either case I am dependent upon You, so I ask that You **rise up in my defense** — וְקוֹמָה בְּעִזָּרְתִּי.

(ג) וְהִרְק חֲנִית וְסָגַר לְקִרְאֵת רֹדְפֵי

אָמַר לְנַפְשִׁי יִשְׁעֲתֶךָ אָנִי:

Unleash an angel wielding a **spear** — וְהִרְק חֲנִית so as **to block my pursuers** — וְסָגַר לְקִרְאֵת רֹדְפֵי. I am anxious about the danger because I may not be worthy, so I ask for Your comfort. Now is the time for You to **say to my soul** — אָמַר לְנַפְשִׁי, "I am your *yeshuah* — יִשְׁעֲתֶךָ אָנִי.

(ד) יִבְשׁוּ וַיִּכְלְמוּ

מִבְּקֵשֵׁי נַפְשִׁי

As for my enemies **who seek my life** — מִבְּקֵשֵׁי נַפְשִׁי, **may they be**

embarrassed — יבשו when they realize their plans have failed **and may they be shamed** — ויכלמו before the world when it becomes evident that You are protecting me.

יסגו אַחור וַיִּחְפְּרוּ
חֲשָׁבֵי רָעָתִי:

May **those who plot my harm** — חֲשָׁבֵי רָעָתִי **be turned back** — יסגו אַחור with great embarrassment from their aggressive stance. **Let them want to hide themselves** from the world **in humiliation** — וַיִּחְפְּרוּ.

(ה) יִהְיוּ כְּמֶצֶץ לְפָנֵי רוּחַ
וּמִלְאָךְ ה' דוֹחָה:

But let there not be any place for them to hide. In fact, **may they** lose their strength so that it will seem as if they can **be dispersed like chaff before the wind** — יִהְיוּ כְּמֶצֶץ לְפָנֵי רוּחַ. Even though every wind has moments of calm, **may the angel of Hashem be** continually **shoving** — וּמִלְאָךְ ה' דוֹחָה them along so that they never find a place to hide or rest.

(ו) יִהְיֶה דֶרֶכָם חֲשֵׁךְ וַחֲלַקְלָקוֹת
וּמִלְאָךְ ה' רֹדְפָם:

And may they suffer losses as they flee in panic. **May their way be dark** — יִהְיֶה דֶרֶכָם **and slippery** — וַחֲלַקְלָקוֹת so that they lose their footing and don't know which way to turn. **And** all the while **may the angel of Hashem be pursuing them** — וּמִלְאָךְ ה' רֹדְפָם so that they cannot take the time to feel their way in the darkness.

(ז) כִּי חֲנָם טָמְנוּ לִי שַׁחַת רְשָׁתָם

My enemies deserve this harsh fate **for** — כִּי their actions against me have been completely **without cause** — חֲנָם. It is as though **they concealed a pit to kill me** — טָמְנוּ לִי שַׁחַת, covering it **with their net** — רְשָׁתָם so that I would fall into it unawares.

חֲנָם חֲפְרוּ לְנַפְשִׁי:

And more than that. They acted **without cause** — חֲנָם to destroy my eternal life, separating me from my people and the source of holiness. It is as though **they dug** — חֲפְרוּ the pit of Gehinnom in which **to destroy my soul** — לְנַפְשִׁי.

(ח) תְּבוֹאֵהוּ שׁוֹאֵה לֹא יֵדַע
וְרִשְׁתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר טָמַן תִּלְכְּדוּ
בְּשׁוֹאֵה יִפֹּל בָּהּ:

May a devastating darkness come upon each of them without warning — תְּבוֹאֵהוּ שׁוֹאֵה לֹא יֵדַע. May his hunter's net which he spread out and concealed to trap me ensnare him — וְרִשְׁתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר טָמַן תִּלְכְּדוּ instead. May he fall into it in the devastating darkness — בְּשׁוֹאֵה יִפֹּל בָּהּ.

PART 2. ANTICIPATED RELIEF.

(ט) וְנִפְשִׁי תִגִּיל בָּהּ
תִּשְׂשֵׂי בִישׁוּעָתוֹ:

When the *yeshuah* comes and I am privileged to witness the downfall of those who seek my destruction, **my soul will feel an intense gladness in** gratitude to **Hashem** — 'וְנִפְשִׁי תִגִּיל בָּהּ'. I will no longer have to be preoccupied with defending myself and I will be able to devote myself to serving Him. Thus, my entire being **will openly rejoice in His yeshuah** — תִּשְׂשֵׂי בִישׁוּעָתוֹ.

(י) כָּל עֲצָמוֹתַי תִּתְאַמְרְנָה ה' מִי כָמוֹךָ
מִצִּיל עָנִי מִחֲזָק מְמַנּוּ
וְעָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן מִגְזָלוֹ:

All my bones — כָּל עֲצָמוֹתַי, which symbolize the devotion of my body as it sways in *tefillah*, will praise Hashem for my *yeshuah*. They **will proclaim** — תִּתְאַמְרְנָה, "Hashem, who is like You — ה' מִי כָמוֹךָ. You intervene in human affairs to **save the poor man** — מִצִּיל עָנִי — like me **from the enemy who is stronger than he** — מִחֲזָק מְמַנּוּ. Through Your laws You save **the poor and the destitute from one who would rob him** — וְעָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן מִגְזָלוֹ."

PART 3. THE PAIN OF INSULT.

(יא) יְקוּמוּן עֲדֵי חָמָס
אֲשֶׁר לֹא יִדְעֵתִי יִשְׁאַלּוּנִי:

My enemies **rise up as corrupt witnesses** — יְקוּמוּן עֲדֵי חָמָס to make false claims against me. **They make spurious demands** — יִשְׁאַלּוּנִי regarding financial

dealings **of which I have no knowledge** — אֲשֶׁר לֹא יָדַעְתִּי.

(יב) יִשְׁלְמוּנֵי רָעָה תַּחַת טוֹבָה
שְׂכוֹל לְנַפְשִׁי:

In so doing **they are repaying me with evil for good** — יִשְׁלְמוּנֵי רָעָה תַּחַת טוֹבָה. Their betrayal of my goodwill is as painful **for my soul** as the **death of a child** — שְׂכוֹל לְנַפְשִׁי.

(יג) וְאֲנִי בַּחֲלוֹתָם לְבוּשִׁי שָׁק
עֲנִיתִי בְצוּם נֶפֶשִׁי
וּתְפִלָּתִי עַל חֵיקֵי תְּשׁוּבָה:

But as for me — וְאֲנִי, I was concerned for their well-being. **When they were ill** — בַּחֲלוֹתָם, I could not bring myself to wear my fine clothing. Instead, **my clothing was sackcloth** — לְבוּשִׁי שָׁק. **I afflicted myself with fasting** — עֲנִיתִי בְצוּם נֶפֶשִׁי because I could not enjoy good food when others were suffering. I sincerely prayed for their recovery. **May my own tefillah come back to my bosom** — וּתְפִלָּתִי עַל חֵיקֵי תְּשׁוּבָה and may I receive the blessings of Hashem.

(יד) כָּרַע כְּאָח לִי הִתְהַלַּכְתִּי
כְּאֶבֶל אִם קִדָּר שְׁחוֹתִי:

I walked about — הִתְהַלַּכְתִּי feeling my concern for their problems **as I would for a good friend** — כָּרַע and **as I would for my own brother** — לִי. **I was bent over in a dark melancholy** — קִדָּר שְׁחוֹתִי like one who is in mourning for a mother — כְּאֶבֶל אִם.

(טו) וּבְצַלְעֵי שְׂמֹחוּ וְנֶאֱסָפוּ
נֶאֱסָפוּ עָלַי נְכִים וְלֹא יָדַעְתִּי
קָרְעוּ וְלֹא דָמוּ:

But when I limped — וּבְצַלְעֵי because of a leg injury **they were cheerful and gathered** — שְׂמֹחוּ וְנֶאֱסָפוּ to make fun of me. In contrast to my being concerned for their well-being when they were stricken, they rejoiced in my misfortune. Even **the cripples** among them **gathered against me** — נֶאֱסָפוּ עָלַי נְכִים. Since I had not harmed them, **I don't know** — וְלֹא יָדַעְתִּי what they had against me. Their mouths **gaped** — קָרְעוּ in raucous laughter. Their mirth was unrestrained **and**

they didn't stop — וְלֹא דָמוּ their vicious jeering.

(טז) בְּחִנְפֵי לַעְגֵי מְעוֹג
חָרַק עָלַי שְׁנֵימוּ:

With their malicious — בְּחִנְפֵי, **mocking** — לַעְגֵי **talk** — מְעוֹג, **they chewed away at me with their teeth** — חָרַק עָלַי שְׁנֵימוּ.

PART 4. TIME FOR YESHUAH.

(יז) אֲדַנֵּי כַּמָּה תִרְאֶה
הַשִּׁיבָה נַפְשִׁי מִשְׂאִיָּהֶם
מִכַּפְּרִים יַחֲדָתִי:

Hashem, how long will You be patient and continue to **observe** — אֲדַנֵּי כַּמָּה **their hateful revelry?** **Rescue my soul** — הַשִּׁיבָה נַפְשִׁי **from their dark** — מִשְׂאִיָּהֶם **and cruel viciousness. Rescue my life** — יַחֲדָתִי **from the brutishness of those who have the savagery of young lions** — מִכַּפְּרִים.

(יח) אֲוֹדֶךָ בְּקֶהֱל רַב
בְּעַם עֲצוֹם אֶהְלֶךָ:

I hope to be inspired with the experience of Your rescue **to publicly** thank and **acknowledge You in a great congregation** — אֲוֹדֶךָ בְּקֶהֱל רַב, for then the entire nation will be united. Indeed, **I will praise You** to all mankind **in a mighty throng** — בְּעַם עֲצוֹם אֶהְלֶךָ.

(יט) אֶל יִשְׁמְחוּ לִי
אִיבֵי שִׁקֵּר

Therefore, let my mission in life not be endangered by my foes. **Let them not rejoice over me** — אֶל יִשְׁמְחוּ לִי when I am in distress, especially not those who are **my enemies** by virtue of **falsehood** — אִיבֵי שִׁקֵּר with which they publicly slander me.

שִׁנְאֵי חִנָּם יִקְרְצוּ עֵינַי:

And as for **those who hate me** in their hearts **without reason** — שִׁנְאֵי חִנָּם, let them not **wink an eye** — יִקְרְצוּ עֵינַי to each other as they mock me.

(כ) כִּי לֹא שָׁלוֹם יִדְבְּרוּ
וְעַל רִגְעֵי אָרֶץ דְּבָרֵי מְרֻמוֹת יַחְשְׁבוּן:

For — כִּי despite their pretense, **it is not peace that they speak — לֹא שָׁלוֹם** יִדְבְּרוּ. Their intent is to foment ill will towards me **and** ultimately **it is against** all **the humble people of the earth — וְעַל רִגְעֵי אָרֶץ** that they are plotting their **words of deceit — דְּבָרֵי מְרֻמוֹת יַחְשְׁבוּן**.

(כא) וַיִּרְחִיבוּ עָלַי פִּיהֶם
אָמְרוּ הָאֵחַ הָאֵחַ רְאֵתָה עֵינֵינוּ:

They opened their mouths wide against me — וַיִּרְחִיבוּ עָלַי פִּיהֶם in glee when they see what they have been hoping for. **They joyfully exclaimed** to each other, "**Hurrah, Hurrah — אָמְרוּ הָאֵחַ הָאֵחַ** ! Did you see it? Yes, **our own eyes have** finally **seen — רְאֵתָה עֵינֵינוּ** his downfall !"

PART 5. TIME OF JUDGEMENT.

(כב) רְאִיתָה ה' אֵל תִּתְחַרֵּשׁ

But it is **You** that **have seen** the full truth, **Hashem — רְאִיתָה ה'** ! You know that they are lying about what they claim to have seen. Therefore, **don't be silent — אֵל תִּתְחַרֵּשׁ**; declare the truth and demand that they desist from their insults!

אֲדֹנָי אֵל תִּרְחַק מִמְּנִי:

My L-rd — אֲדֹנָי and Master, You have given me a mission. Let me carry it out and **don't be distant from me — אֵל תִּרְחַק מִמְּנִי**. Hear my *tefillah* and help me serve You.

(כג) הָעִירָה וְהַקִּיצָה לְמִשְׁפָּטִי
אֵלֶקִי וְאֲדֹנָי לְרִיבִי:

Arouse — הָעִירָה Your quality of mercy to accept my *tefillah* **and waken — וְהַקִּיצָה** Your quality of justice **to** establish **my** vindication in **judgment — לְמִשְׁפָּטִי** — against those who persecute me. I ask this of You, **my God — אֵלֶקִי**, for I have no other judge. **My L-rd — וְאֲדֹנָי**, I am Your servant. Therefore, I count upon You to ensure justice for **my cause — לְרִיבִי**.

(כד) שְׁפִטְנֵי כְצִדְקָךָ ה' אֱלֹקֵי
וְאַל יִשְׂמְחוּ לִי:

But in judging me I ask You not to hold my sins against me. **Judge me by Your righteous justice** — שְׁפִטְנֵי כְצִדְקָךָ, in which You show mercy for the repentant sinner, **Hashem, my G-d** — ה' אֱלֹקֵי. **Let** my undeserving enemies **not** continue to **rejoice** unjustly **over me** — וְאַל יִשְׂמְחוּ לִי.

(כה) אֵל יֹאמְרוּ בְלִבָּם הֲאֵח נִפְשָׁנוּ
אֵל יֹאמְרוּ בְלַעֲנוּהוּ:

Let them not even be able to **exclaim in their hearts** — אֵל יֹאמְרוּ בְלִבָּם, "Hurrah for us — הֲאֵח נִפְשָׁנוּ" — **Let them not** be able to **say** — אֵל יֹאמְרוּ, "We devoured him — בְלַעֲנוּהוּ."

(כו) יִבְשׁוּ וַיִּחְפְּרוּ יַחְדָּו
שְׂמִיחֵי רַעְתִּי

In the same way that they gathered together to mock me, **may they be embarrassed and shamed together** — יִבְשׁוּ וַיִּחְפְּרוּ יַחְדָּו, each one seeing the other's disgrace, all **those who have been glad over my misfortune** — שְׂמִיחֵי רַעְתִּי.

יִלְבָּשׁוּ בִשְׂת וּכְלָמָה
הַמְגִדִילִים עָלַי:

Let them not be able to hide their humiliation. On the contrary, **may they be garbed in embarrassment and disgrace** — יִלְבָּשׁוּ בִשְׂת וּכְלָמָה, all **those who were speaking with arrogance**, opening their mouths **wide toward me** — הַמְגִדִילִים עָלַי.

PART 6. CONCLUSION.

(כז) יִרְנוּ וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ חֲפִצֵי צִדְקֵי

But as for the righteous people who have befriended me, **may they sing in joy and rejoice** — יִרְנוּ וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ, all **those who desire my vindication** — חֲפִצֵי צִדְקֵי.

וַיֹּאמְרוּ תָמִיד
יִגְדַל ה' הֶחָפֵץ שְׁלוֹם עַבְדּוֹ:

Let them continually declare — וַיֹּאמְרוּ תָמִיד, "Great is Hashem — יגדל ה', Who desires the well-being of David, His servant — יְהַחֲפֵץ שְׁלוֹם עַבְדּוֹ!" The greatness of Hashem is magnified when He protects his faithful servants and grants them peace. Those who see the benefits of serving Hashem are encouraged to publicize the greatness of His Name and bring others into His service.

(כח) וּלְשׁוֹנֵי תְהִלָּה צְדָקָה

Hashem, when others praise You because of what You did for me, it is all the more reason that I should express my gratitude to You. **And so my tongue — וּלְשׁוֹנֵי will declare Your righteousness — תְהִלָּה צְדָקָה**, which is the quality whereby Your mercy tempers Your judgment.

כָּל הַיּוֹם תְּהַלְתֶּךָ

And just as those Who love You continually declare Your greatness, it is right for me to sing to You **all day long**, whenever the opportunity presents itself, with songs of **Your praise — כָּל הַיּוֹם תְּהַלְתֶּךָ**. I will praise You for Your quality of Kingship which allows You to temper judgment with mercy.

Living the Mizmor

Listed below are some of the lessons that you can draw from this mizmor, as well as some of the thoughts you might have in mind when you say the words of the mizmor as a *tefillah*, expressing your devotion to Hashem.

Tefillos for Life - Your Yeshuah.

[35:1] BATTLE. – רִיבָה ה' אֶת יְרִיבֵי לְחָם אֶת לְחָמֵי – "*Contend with my adversaries and fight my foes.*" When you are confronted by enemies who seek to harm you, ask Hashem to act for you by defeating them. Even when you need to use the implements of war, it will be Hashem Who is actually wielding them.

[35:2] – הַחֹזֶק מִגֹּן וְצָנָה – "*Hold a shield and armor [to protect me].*"

[35:17] RESCUE. – הַשִּׁיבָה נַפְשִׁי מִשְׂאֵיהֶם מִכְּפִירִים יַחֲדֵתֵי – "*Rescue my soul from their darkness, my life from the young lions.*" Save me from the cruelty and greed of my enemies.

Tefillos for Life - Your Anguish.

[35:7] WITHOUT CAUSE. – כִּי חָנַם טָמְנוּ לִי שַׁחַת רְשָׁתָם חָנַם חָפְרוּ לְנַפְשִׁי –
 “For without cause they have concealed a pit [to kill] me with their net.
 Without cause they dug [a pit] to [destroy] my soul..” I have been the object
 of unfair and cruel treatment by those who hate me. I look to You to come to
 my aid and restore my life.

[35:15] MOCKERY. – וּבְצַלְעֵי שְׂמֵחוּ וְנִאֲסָפוּ נִאֲסָפוּ עָלַי – “But when I limped
 they were cheerful and gathered [to jeer me].” Instead of sympathy I was
 subjected to mockery. My overtures for peace were repaid with hatred.

[35:14] – כָּרַע כְּאָח לִי הִתְהַלַּכְתִּי – “[When they were ill] I went about
 as for a good friend and as for my own brother.” Instead of sympathy
 I was subjected to mockery. My overtures for peace were repaid with
 hatred.

Lessons for Life - Your Attitude.

[35:8] CONFIDENCE. – תְּבוֹאֵהוּ שׂוֹאָה לֹא יָדַע, וְרִשְׁתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר טָמַן תִּלְכְּדוּ, בְּשׂוֹאָה, בְּיָפֶל בָּהּ
 יִפֹּל בָּהּ – “May a devastating darkness come upon each [of them] without
 warning. May his net which he concealed ensnare him. May he fall into it in
 the devastating darkness.” Restore your confidence in the victory against
 your enemies by visualizing their defeat.

Tefillos for Life - Your Gratitude.

[35:9] REJOICING. – וְנִפְשִׁי תִגִּיל בְּה' תִשְׂשֵׂי בִישׁוּעֹתָיו – “My soul will feel an
 intense gladness in Hashem. It will openly rejoice in His yeshuah.” Openly
 and joyfully declare your gratitude to Hashem for His yeshuah.

Tehillos for Life - Contemplation of Hashem.

[35:10] INTERVENTION. – ה' מִי כְמוֹךָ מְצִיל עֲנִי מִחֶזֶק מְמַנּוּ – “Hashem, who
 is like You. You save the poor man from [the enemy who is] stronger than
 he.” Hashem intervenes in human affairs when necessary to protect the
 weak.

[35:10] LAWS. – וְעֲנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן מִגֹּזְלוֹ – “And [You save] the poor and the
 destitute from one who would rob him.” The Torah’s laws protect the poor

from exploitation.

Tefillos for Life - Your Relationship with Hashem.

[35:17] ACTION NOW. – אֲדֹנָי כַּמָּה תִרְאֶה – “Hashem, how long will You look on?” Plead with Hashem to take action now.

[35:22] – רְאִיתָהּ ה' אֶל תַּחֲרֹשׁ אֲדֹנָי אֶל תִּרְחַק מִמֶּנִּי – “You have seen, Hashem! Don't be silent. O my L-rd, don't be distant from me.”

Lessons for Life - Your Actions.

[35:28] PRAISE. – וּלְשׁוֹנִי תִהְיֶה צְדָקָךָ כָּל הַיּוֹם תִּהְלֶתֶךָ – “Hashem, my tongue will declare Your righteousness all day long with songs of praise.”

Whenever the opportunity presents itself, praise the righteousness of Hashem's laws and actions.

Sources

The primary sources used in the interpretation of the *pesukim* of this mizmor are listed below.

א - רש"י, המאירי, בן-ארוך, רשר"ה	טז - רד"ק, המאירי
ב - אבן עזרא, בן-ארוך	יז - רש"י, אבן עזרא, רד"ק, אבן יחיאל, מצודות
ג - רש"י, רד"ק, בן-ארוך, נר לרגלי	יח - אבן עזרא, רד"ק, רשר"ה
ד - רד"ק, בן-ארוך, מלבי"ם	יט - רש"י, אבן עזרא, רד"ק, מלבי"ם, נר לרגלי
ה - אבן עזרא, רד"ק, בן-ארוך, נר לרגלי	כ - אבן עזרא, רד"ק, המאירי, בן-רמוך, ספורנו, אבן יחיאל, רשר"ה
ו - רש"י, אבן עזרא, רד"ק	כא - רש"י, רד"ק, מצודות
ז - רש"י, רד"ק, המאירי, אבן יחיאל	כב - אבן עזרא, ספורנו, מלבי"ם, רשר"ה
ח - רש"י, אבן עזרא, רד"ק, מצודות, נר לרגלי	כג - רד"ק, ספורנו
ט - רש"י, המאירי, מלבי"ם	כד - רד"ק, ספורנו, אבן יחיאל
י - רש"י, אבן עזרא, רד"ק, בן-ארוך	כה - רד"ק
יא - רד"ק, בן-ארוך, רשר"ה	כו - אבן עזרא, רד"ק
יב - רד"ק, בן-ארוך, רשר"ה	כז - רד"ק, מלבי"ם, נר לרגלי
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יד - רד"ק, המאירי,	
טו - רש"י, רד"ק, המאירי, בן-רמוך, מצודות	

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