

Mizmor 043

A Bright Future

Key Concepts

As the singer begins Mizmor 043, he senses that the consolations of the previous mizmor (042) have not been fully successful in assuaging the pain of the Exile. Reminders of the tragic past and present sufferings have made it difficult for the nation to be consoled. And so the singer makes another attempt in the new mizmor, this time focusing the nation's attention on the bright future that awaits when the *Geulah* (Redemption) comes. These thoughts lead the singer to invoke a vivid picture of the time when the nation will once more experience the intense joy of being welcomed by Hashem in Yerushalayim.

Exploring the Mizmor

This mizmor has no introductory *pasuk* (verse) because it was composed as the conclusion to the previous one. Together these *mizmorim* express the yearnings and *tefillos* of the Jewish nation in a time of Exile. The two *mizmorim* are linked by a key *pasuk* in which the nation tries to console its anguished soul with the assurance that the long-awaited *Geulah* will surely come. This consolation appears at two points in the previous mizmor and then again at the end of the current mizmor (see Part 3 below). The repetition is needed because so much has been lost and the sufferings are so great.

PART 1. A PLEA FOR JUSTICE. The singer begins with the nation's earnest plea, asking Hashem to come to our aid and grant us a *yeshuah* (deliverance) from a cruel and deceitful enemy.

(א) שְׁפֹטֵנִי אֱלֹקִים וְרִיבָה רִיבִי מְגוּי לֹא חָסִיד מְאִישׁ מְרָמָה וְעוֹלָה תִפְלֹטֵנִי: (ב) כִּי אַתָּה אֱלֹקֵי מְעוֹזַי לָמָּה זָנַחְתָּנִי לָמָּה קִדַּר אֶתְהַלֵּךְ בְּלַחַץ אֹיִב:

(1) Grant me justice, O G-d. Take up my struggle against a nation that does not practice humane principles. Liberate me from a man of deceit and injustice. (2) For You are the G-d of my strength. Why have You forsaken me? Why must I walk in gloom, under the oppression of the enemy?

PART 2. A PLEA FOR THE GEULAH. Thoughts of the *yeshuah* lead the singer to invoke a vivid picture of the glorious future when the *Geulah* comes and the nation will once more experience the intense joy of being welcomed by Hashem in Yerushalayim. Then

the thirst that was poetically described at the beginning of the previous mizmor will finally be quenched.

(ג) שְׁלַח אֹרֶךְ וְאַמְתָּךְ הַמָּה יִנְחוּנִי יְבִיאֹנִי אֶל הַר קִדְשֶׁךָ וְאֶל מִשְׁכְּנֹתֶיךָ: (ד)
וְאֲבוֹאָה אֶל מִזְבֵּחַ אֱלֹקִים אֶל קַל שְׁמַחַת גִּילִי וְאוֹדֶךָ בְּכִנּוֹר אֱלֹקִים אֱלֹקֵי:

(3) Send Your light and Your truth. They will guide me. They will bring me to Your holy mountain and to Your Sanctuaries. (4) I will then come to the altar of G-d, to G-d, the joy of my delight. I will praise You upon the lyre O G-d, my G-d.

PART 3. CONSOLATION. The mizmor concludes with the same *pasuk* of consolation that was used at the end of the previous mizmor. But this time the singer is confident that the consolation has become truly effective.

(ה) מַה תִּשְׁתַּוְּחָחִי נַפְשִׁי וּמַה תִּתְהַמֵּי עָלַי הוֹחִילִי לְאֱלֹקִים כִּי עוֹד אוֹדְנוּ יְשׁוּעַת פְּנֵי וְאֱלֹקֵי:

(5) [The nation consoles its soul:] “Why are you downcast, my soul, and confused within me? Wait and look to G-d! For I shall yet thank Him for yeshuos in my own lifetime, [demonstrating to all that He is] my G-d.”

Learning the Mizmor

PART 1. A PLEA FOR JUSTICE.

(א) שְׁפִטְנֵי אֱלֹקִים וְרִיבָה רִיבֵי
מְגוּי לֹא חֲסִיד
מְאִישׁ מְרָמָה וְעוֹלָה תִפְלִטְנֵי:

Grant me justice against the enemy that has tormented me, **O G-d** — שְׁפִטְנֵי **אֱלֹקִים**. **Take up my struggle against a cruel nation** — וְרִיבָה רִיבֵי מְגוּי **that does not practice the humane principles** — לֹא חֲסִיד to which it gives lip service. **Liberate me especially from** the vicious individuals in those nations, each of whom is **a man of deceit and injustice** — מְאִישׁ מְרָמָה וְעוֹלָה תִפְלִטְנֵי.

(ב) כִּי אַתָּה אֱלֹקֵי מְעוֹזֵי
לְמָה זִנְחָתָנִי
לְמָה קִדַּר אֶתְהַלֵּךְ בְּלַחַץ אוֹיֵב:

Only You can help me against my enemies **for You are the G-d of my strength** — כִּי אַתָּה אֱלֹקֵי מְעוֹזֵי. I depend on You and You have given me the intelligence to

appreciate Your wonders, so **why have You forsaken me** — לָמָּה זָנַחְתָּנִי from serving You in Yerushalayim? You helped me in the past. **Why must I now walk in gloom, under the oppression of the enemy** — לָמָּה קָדַר אֶתְהַלֵּךְ בְּלַחַץ אוֹיֵב ?

PART 2. A PLEA FOR THE GEULAH.

(ג) שְׁלַח אֹרֶךְ וְאַמְתָּךְ הִמָּה יִנְחוּנִי
 בְּיִאוּנִי אֶל הַר קְדֻשֶׁךָ וְאֶל מִשְׁכְּנוֹתֶיךָ:

Send Your light — שְׁלַח אֹרֶךְ (the *Mashiach*) to displace the gloom in which I am now walking and to reveal Your wonders. Send **Your truth** — וְאַמְתָּךְ to fulfill Your promise of the *Geulah* and overcome the cruel deceit of the enemy. Your light and Your truth **will guide me** — הִמָּה יִנְחוּנִי out of this Exile. **They will bring me to Your holy mountain** — בְּיִאוּנִי אֶל הַר קְדֻשֶׁךָ in Yerushalayim **and to Your Sanctuaries** — וְאֶל מִשְׁכְּנוֹתֶיךָ, the courtyards and structures in the Bais HaMikdash, once more to be rebuilt.

(ד) וְאָבוֹאָה אֶל מִזְבֵּחַ אֱלֹקִים
 אֶל קַל־שִׁמְחַת גִּילִי

I will then once more **come to the altar of G-d** — וְאָבוֹאָה אֶל מִזְבֵּחַ אֱלֹקִים, Who will be recognized by all as the Judge of the earth. There I will offer sacrifices of thanksgiving as in former days, **to G-d, the joy of my delight** — אֶל קַל־שִׁמְחַת גִּילִי. I will find my true inner joy only if I can know that it was G-d Who granted this happiness to me. I will then again experience a sublime closeness to Hashem, which will truly be the highest delight that man can experience in this world.

וְאוֹדֶךָ בְּכִנּוֹר אֱלֹקִים אֱלֹקֵי:

To accompany the offerings, I will **praise You upon the lyre** — וְאוֹדֶךָ בְּכִנּוֹר in gratitude for my *yeshuah*, **O G-d** — אֱלֹקִים. You will be revealed to the world as **my G-d** — אֱלֹקֵי, Who has not abandoned me forever in the Exile.

PART 3. CONSOLATION.

(ה) מָה תִּשְׁתַּוְּחָחִי נַפְשִׁי
 וּמָה תִּהְיֶמֶי עָלַי

[*The nation consoles its soul:*] **Why are you downcast, my soul** — מָה תִּשְׁתַּוְּחָחִי נַפְשִׁי, **and why are you confused within me** — וּמָה תִּהְיֶמֶי עָלַי ? Why are you allowing yourself to be affected by the taunts of your tormentors? Why do you let

them shake your *emunah*?

הוֹחִילִי לְאֱלֹקִים כִּי עוֹד אֶזְדַּנּוּ יְשׁוּעוֹת פָּנָי וְאֱלֹקָי:

Wait confidently **and look to G-d** — הוֹחִילִי לְאֱלֹקִים for the *yeshuah*! **For** — כִּי just as I praised Him for past *yeshuos*, **I shall yet** have the opportunity to answer the nations who have been humiliating me and I will be able to **thank Him** — עוֹד אֶזְדַּנּוּ **for yeshuos in my own lifetime** — יְשׁוּעוֹת פָּנָי, demonstrating to all that He is **my G-d** — וְאֱלֹקָי, as He has always been.

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.

[43:1] DEFENSE. – שְׁפִטֵנִי אֱלֹקִים וְרִיבָה רִיבִי מִגּוֹי לֹא חָסִיד – “Grant me justice, O G-d. Take up my struggle against a nation that does not practice humane principles.” When you are confronted by cruel enemies who seek to harm you, ask Hashem to act for you by defeating them.

[43:1] LIBERATION. – מֵאִישׁ מְרֵמָה וְעוֹלָה תִּפְלֹטֵנִי – “Liberate me from a man of deceit and injustice.” When you are being victimized by an unscrupulous individual, ask Hashem to frustrate his evil intentions.

Tefillos for Life - Your Relationship with Hashem.

[43:2] STRENGTH. – כִּי אַתָּה אֱלֹקֵי מְעוּזֵי לְמָה זִנְחָתָנִי – “For You are the G-d of my strength. Why have You forsaken me?” Declare your continued reliance upon Hashem and ask Him to restore His closeness to you.

[43:3] GUIDANCE. – שְׁלַח אֹרֶךְ וְאִמְתָּךְ הַמָּה יִנְחוּנֵי – “Send Your light and Your truth. They will guide me.” Look for Hashem’s guidance, based upon the light of the Torah.

[43:4] DELIGHT. – וְאָבוֹאָה אֶל מִזְבֵּחַ אֱלֹקִים אֶל קַל־שְׂמֵחַת גִּילִי – “I will then come to the altar of G-d, to G-d, the joy of my delight.” – Visualize your delight in restoring your closeness with Hashem.

Lessons for Life - Your Attitude.

[43:5] COMFORT. – **מַה תִּשְׁתַּחֲוִי נַפְשִׁי וַיִּמָּה תִּהְיֶה עָלַי הוֹחִילִי לְאֱלֹקִים** –
"Why are you downcast, my soul, and confused within me? Wait and look to G-d!" Work on yourself to restore your optimism and have faith that your Geulah will surely come.

Sources

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

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| א - אבן עזרא, רד"ק, המאירי, בן־רמון, רשר"ה | ד - רש"י, אבן עזרא, רד"ק, בן־רמון, אבן יחיאל, |
| ב - אבן עזרא, בן־רמון, ספורנו | רשר"ה |
| ג - אבן עזרא, מלבי"ם | ה - אבן יחיאל, ספורנו, מצודות, עמוס חכם |

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