

Mizmor 133

Brotherly Love

Key Concepts

In this mizmor David speaks for *Klal Yisrael*, joyfully visualizing a future time when the *Bais Hamikdash* (Temple) has been rebuilt and the people have come up to Yerushalyim to serve Hashem. The mizmor celebrates the feeling of brotherly love which the people now share and which has created the framework for the flow of Hashem's blessings to all. It was this unity and love which had been missing in previous generations and which had prevented the *Geulah* that has finally come.

Not only are the people united by being born into the family of Yisrael, they are united by brotherly love. None looks down upon the other because of the other's apparent failings; on the contrary, each appreciates the other's individual qualities. And each is secure in the knowledge that the other is not seeking to gain advantage at his expense.

Navigating Tehillim (1). This is the fourteenth in the series of 15 mizmorim to be sung by the Leviim in the *Beis HaMikdash* while standing on the 15 steps leading up from the women's courtyard to the men's courtyard.

Navigating Tehillim (2). Mizmorim 133 and 134 complete the cycle of the 15 *Shirei Hamaalos* on a note of exaltation. Both of these *mizmorim* visualize a time when the *Geulah* is here and the people have come to Yerushalayim to serve Hashem. The two *mizmorim* are linked by the theme of an unending flow of blessings from Hashem. In Mizmor 133 the people demonstrate their worthiness for the *Geulah* by the spirit of love and goodwill in which they receive Hashem's blessings. In Mizmor 134 the people show their gratitude to Hashem by closing the virtuous circle and giving Him their blessing in turn. They do so through their *tefillos* and *mitzvos*.

Exploring the Mizmor

THE FLOW OF BLESSINGS. The mizmor visualizes the flow of blessings as comparable to the flow of anointing oil over the head of Aharon HaKohen when he was anointed as *Kohen Gadol*. Aharon was the first person ever to be anointed. His anointing marked the inauguration of the *Mishkan* (Tabernacle), which was the

precursor to the *Bais HaMikdash*. The anointing of Aharon was done publicly in the presence of the people. This is how the future *Mashiach* (Messiah) will be anointed. In contrast, the anointing of David had taken place in secret.

Furthermore, Aharon was the model for the flow of blessings since his love of fellow Jews influenced them to join with him in his devotion to Hashem. Aharon demonstrated selfless love for his brother Moshe. Even though he was older than Moshe, he did not resent Moshe's being designated to the role of King over the nation.

(א) שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת לְדָוִד, הִנֵּה מָה טוֹב וַיְמָה נְעִים שָׁבֵת אֲחִים גַּם יַחַד: (ב) כְּשֶׁמֶן הַטּוֹב עַל הָרֹאשׁ יֵרֵד עַל הַזָּקֹן זָקֹן אֶהְרֹן שְׂיֵרֵד עַל פִּי מְדוּתָיו: (ג) כְּטֵל חֶרְמוֹן שְׂיֵרֵד עַל הַרְרֵי צִיּוֹן כִּי שָׁם צִוָּה ה' אֶת הַבְּרָכָה חַיִּים עַד הָעוֹלָם:

(1) A song of the steps, by David. See now, how good and how pleasant it is, brothers dwelling together in unity. (2) Like the fine oil on the head, flowing down upon the beard, the beard of Aharon, flowing down over his garment. (3) like the dew of [Mount] Chermon, which descends upon the mountains of Tzion, for there Hashem has commanded the blessing. [May there be] life forever.

Learning the Mizmor

THE FLOW OF BLESSINGS.

(א) שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת לְדָוִד

This is the 14th **song of the steps** — שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת. It was composed **by David** — לְדָוִד.

הִנֵּה מָה טוֹב וַיְמָה נְעִים
שָׁבֵת אֲחִים גַּם יַחַד:

See now — הִנֵּה , **how good and how pleasant it is** — מָה טוֹב וַיְמָה נְעִים that the people of Yisrael, who are **brothers, dwell together in unity** — שָׁבֵת אֲחִים גַּם יַחַד. Even if one has a special blessing, such as having been anointed the King or Kohen Gadol, there is no envy because the blessings of Hashem flow to all.

(ב) כִּשְׁמֵן הַטּוֹב עַל הָרֹאשׁ
 יֵרֵד עַל הַזָּקוֹן זָקוֹן אֶהְרֹן
 שְׂיֵרֵד עַל פִּי מְדוֹתָיו:

The blessings of Hashem flow **like the fine** sweet-smelling **oil** that was poured **on the head** — כִּשְׁמֵן הַטּוֹב עַל הָרֹאשׁ of Aharon Hakohen when he was anointed, **flowing down** abundantly **upon the beard** — יֵרֵד עַל הַזָּקוֹן, **the beard of Aharon** — שְׂיֵרֵד עַל פִּי מְדוֹתָיו, **flowing down over** the edges of **his garment** — זָקוֹן אֶהְרֹן.

(ג) כְּטַל חֶרְמוֹן שְׂיֵרֵד עַל הַרְרֵי צִיּוֹן
 כִּי שָׁם צָוָה ה' אֶת הַבְּרָכָה
 חַיִּים עַד הָעוֹלָם:

The blessings of Hashem flow from the *Kohanim* down to the people like **the dew** from the high peak of Mount **Chermon, which descends upon** the people who have come to Yerushalayim in **the mountains of Zion** — כְּטַל חֶרְמוֹן שְׂיֵרֵד עַל הַרְרֵי צִיּוֹן, **for there Hashem has commanded the blessing** — כִּי שָׁם צָוָה ה' אֶת הַבְּרָכָה. **May there be life forever** — חַיִּים עַד הָעוֹלָם, extending into the World to Come!

Living the Mizmor

Listed below are some of the thoughts you might have in mind when you say the words of the mizmor as a *tefillah* to Hashem.

Lessons for Life - Your Behavior.

[133:1] PEACE. – הֲנִינָה מֵה טוֹב וּמֵה נְעִים שְׁבֵת אֲחִים גַּם יַחַד – “See now, how good and how pleasant it is, brothers dwelling together in unity.” Make a conscious effort to promote peace and goodwill among Jews.

Tefillos for Life - Your Berachah.

[133:2] FLOW. – כִּשְׁמֵן הַטּוֹב עַל הָרֹאשׁ יֵרֵד עַל הַזָּקוֹן – “Like the fine oil on the head, flowing down upon the beard.” Ask Hashem to grant you and your loved ones a continuing flow of blessings.

[133:3] – כְּטַל חֶרְמוֹן שְׂיֵרֵד עַל הַרְרֵי צִיּוֹן כִּי שָׁם צָוָה ה' אֶת הַבְּרָכָה – “like the dew of [Mount] Chermon, which descends upon the

mountains of Tzion, for there Hashem has commanded the blessing."

[133:3] LIFE. – חיים עד העולם – "[May there be] life forever." Ask Hashem to grant you and your loved ones eternal life in the World to Come.

Additional Thoughts

This mizmor speaks of the flow of Hashem's blessings (*berachos*) as being comparable to the flow of anointing oil. A thoughtful reader has brought to my attention the relationship between the root **נזל**, meaning "flow," and the word "*mazal*." So when we wish someone Mazal Tov, we are offering a *tefillah* that the flow of *berachah* from Hashem to that person should continue, get stronger and wash over them, and that it should continue to spread to all those around them. The constellations of stars are also referred to as **מזלות**, because the flow of blessing to the Jewish people is directed by Hashem from on high. Of course, that flow is not arbitrary, but reflects His will and our own deeds. It is surely not a matter of "luck".

Sources

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

ג - אבן עזרא, רד"ק, המאירי, נר לרגלי

א - מצודות, נר לרגלי, מזמור לתודה
 ב - רש"י, אבן עזרא, רד"ק, המאירי, ספורנו,
 נר לרגלי, מזמור לתודה

© COPYRIGHT NOTICE

All rights to this document are reserved by the author. For further information contact Isaac Kirzner at isaac@kirzner.com