

Mizmor 065

A Celebration of Rain

Key Concepts

David composed this mizmor as a song of praise and gratitude to Hashem in celebration of a generous rainfall which miraculously appeared after a long drought. David realized that the drought was a punishment for his sins and those of his people. It resulted in an intense period of *teshuvah* (penitence), which in turn brought about the sign of favor that Hashem showed in the form of rain.

David places the blessing of rain within the context of all the miracles of nature for which we must be thankful. He ends the mizmor with a vivid panorama of meadows, valleys, and hills clothed with vegetation and livestock, all a direct result of the blessing of rain.

Exploring the Mizmor

PART 1. FAVOR RESTORED. David begins the mizmor by acknowledging his sins and expressing appreciation for once more having been granted Hashem's goodwill. He takes this opportunity to ask Hashem to grant him the privilege of experiencing the holiness of the *Bais Hamikdash*, which is yet to be built.

(א) לְמַנְצַחַ מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד שִׁיר: (ב) לֵךְ דְּמִיָּה תִּהְיֶה אֱלֹקִים בְּצִיּוֹן וְלֵךְ יִשְׁלַם נֶדֶר: (ג)
 שִׁמְעֵ תִפְלֵה עֲדִידָה כָּל בֶּשֶׂר יָבֹאוּ: (ד) דְּבָרֵי עֲוֹנֹת גָּבְרוּ מֵנִי פִשְׁעֵינוּ אַתָּה תִכְפֹּרם:
 (ה) אֲשֶׁרִי תִבְחַר וּתִקְרַב יִשְׁכֵן חֲצֵרֶיךָ נִשְׁבְּעָה בְּטוֹב בֵּיתְךָ קֹדֶשׁ הַיְכָלְךָ:

(1) For the musician, a mizmor by David, a song. (2) Silence is [the only suitable] praise to You. [You are] G-d in Zion and to You will vows be paid. (3) [You are the] One that hears prayer. All mankind may come to You. (4) The consequences of sins have overwhelmed me. [Yet] You forgive our transgressions. (5) Fortunate is he whom You choose and bring near. He will dwell [in] Your courtyards. May we receive our fill of goodness [in] Your house, [the Bais Hamikdash]. [May we experience] the holiness of Your Sanctuary.

PART 2. EARTH, SKY, AND WATER. David praises the awesome miracles by which the *yeshuah* has come, and compares them to the miracles of nature on the earth,

in the sky and across the distant seas.

(ו) נוֹרְאוֹת בְּצִדְקַתְּ תַעֲנֵנֵנוּ אֱלֹקֵי יִשְׁעֵנוּ מִבְּטָח כָּל קֶצְוֵי אֶרֶץ וְיָם רְחֹקִים: (ז) מִכִּין הַרִים בְּכַחוֹ נֶאֱזַר בְּגִבוֹרָה: (ח) מִשְׁבִּיחַ שְׁאוֹן יָמִים שְׁאוֹן גְּלִיהֶם וְהִמּוֹן לְאֲמִים: (ט) וַיִּירָאוּ יִשְׁבֵי קְצוֹת מְאוֹתֶיךָ מוֹצְאֵי בִקָר וְעֶרֶב תִּרְנִין:

(6) *With awesome deeds, You answer [our tefillos] justly, O G-d of our Yeshuah. [You are the] trustworthy Refuge [to] all the ends of the earth and the far off seas. (7) [You are He Who] sets mountains with [rich vegetation], [and Who is] girded with might. [8] [You are He Who] calms the roar of the seas, the roar of their waves, and the turbulences of nations. (9) Those who dwell at the ends [of the earth] are awed by Your signs. [With the coming out of morning and evening, You [inspire] serenade with joyous song.*

PART 3. BLESSED RAIN. David expresses gratitude to Hashem for the miracle of rain and its blessed effect upon the earth. He offers a lyrical picture of the panorama of fields and mountains clothed in their bucolic finery with flourishing vegetation and livestock.

(י) פָּקַדְתָּ הָאָרֶץ וַתִּשְׁקַקְהָ רַבַּת תַּעֲשִׂרְנָהּ פֶּלַג אֱלֹקִים מְלֵא מַיִם תִּכְוִן דְּגָנָם כִּי כֹן תִּכְנִינָה: (יא) תִּלְמִיחָהּ רוּחַ נַחַת גְּדוּדֶיהָ בְּרִבִּיבִים תִּמְלֹגְנָה צִמְחָהּ תִּבְרָךְ: (יב) עֲטַרְתָּ שָׂנֵת טוֹבֶתָּךְ וַמְעַגְלֶיהָ יִרְעֲפוּן דָּשֶׁן: (יג) יִרְעֲפוּ נְאוֹת מִדְבָר וְגִיל גְּבְעוֹת תַּחֲגֹרְנָה: (יד) לִבְשׁוֹ כְרִים הִצֵּאתָ וַעֲמָקִים יַעֲטֹפוּ בָר יִתְרוֹעְעוּ אֶף יִשִּׁירוּ:

(10) *You restore Your attention to the earth and You irrigate it. You greatly enrich it with a stream of G-d, filled with water. You prepare their grain [by alternating drought with rain], for so do You prepare it. (11) Saturating [the earth's] furrows, gratifying its inhabitants, You soften it with a fine rain. You bless its growth. (12) You crown the year [with] Your bounty and [the clouds] drip with plenty. (13) They drip onto the pastureland of the wilderness and the hills are girded with celebration. (14) The meadows are clothed with flocks and the valleys are covered with grain. They shout for joy, even breaking into song.*

Learning the Mizmor

PART 1. FAVOR RESTORED.

(א) לְמַנְצַח מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד שִׁיר:

This song has been prepared **for the musician** — לְמַנְצַח, who will perform it. It is **a mizmor** composed **by David** — מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד in the special form of a **song** — שִׁיר that expresses enthusiasm in praise and gratitude to Hashem.

(ב) לָךְ דְּמִיָּה תְהִלָּה

Hashem, although I stand here to sing to You, I am overwhelmed. How could a human voice begin to express Your glory? A stunned **silence** filled with admiration and awe **is** the only **praise** that I should dare to offer **to You** — לָךְ דְּמִיָּה תְהִלָּה. And yet You have asked for my *tehillas*.

אֱלֹקִים בְּצִיּוֹן וְלָךְ יִשְׁלַם נֶדֶר:

You are the all-powerful **G-d** — אֱלֹקִים of the entire universe, but You have honored mankind by choosing to make Your presence known **in Tzion** — בְּצִיּוֹן. And although everything is Yours, You have allowed **vows to be paid to You** — וְלָךְ יִשְׁלַם נֶדֶר in the form of sacrifices accompanied by sincere prayer.

(ג) שִׁמְעַתְּ תִפְלָה

עֲדִידָךְ כָּל בָּשָׂר יָבֹאוּ:

You are the **One that hears** the personal **prayer** — שִׁמְעַתְּ תִפְלָה and the deepest yearnings of every individual. Therefore, **all of mankind may come to You** — עֲדִידָךְ כָּל בָּשָׂר יָבֹאוּ, each person approaching You directly with his personal *tefillah*.

(ד) דְּבַרְי עֲוֹנֹת גְּבָרוֹ מִנִּי

פִּשְׁעֵינוּ אֶתָּה תִכְפֹּרֵם:

There are times when I am filled with guilt because **the consequences of my sins have overwhelmed me** — דְּבַרְי עֲוֹנֹת גְּבָרוֹ מִנִּי. And yet I and my fellows are comforted by the knowledge that **You** accept our sincere repentance and **forgive our transgressions** — פִּשְׁעֵינוּ אֶתָּה תִכְפֹּרֵם.

(ה) אֲשֶׁרִי תִבְחַר וּתִקְרַב
יִשְׁכֵּן חֲצֵרֶיךָ

Fortunate is the person **whom You choose** — אֲשֶׁרִי תִבְחַר, to enable his continued spiritual growth **and** thereby **bring** him **near** to You — וּתִקְרַב. **He will** surely **dwell** in **Your courtyards** — יִשְׁכֵּן חֲצֵרֶיךָ, in the places of *tefillah* and Torah all the days of his life.

נִשְׁבְּעָה בְּטוֹב בֵּיתֶךָ
קֹדֶשׁ הַיְכָלֶךָ:

May we be among those fortunate few to **receive** and enjoy **our fill of** the spiritual **goodness** — נִשְׁבְּעָה בְּטוֹב that is present in **Your house** — בֵּיתֶךָ, the *Bais Hamikdash*, when it is built. May we experience in abundant measure **the holiness of** the *Shechinah* in **Your Sanctuary** — קֹדֶשׁ הַיְכָלֶךָ.

PART 2. EARTH, SKY, AND WATER.

(ו) נוֹרְאוֹת בְּצִדְקַתְּ תַעֲנִנֵנוּ אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
מִבְּטָח כָּל קִצּוֹי אֶרֶץ וְיָם רְחֹקִים:

With awesome and miraculous **deeds** — נוֹרְאוֹת that impress all the world, **You answer** our *tefillas* **justly** — בְּצִדְקַתְּ תַעֲנִנֵנוּ, **O G-d of our yeshuah** — אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל. You are the **trustworthy Refuge** — מִבְּטָח of the Jewish people, even those dispersed to **all the ends of the earth** — כָּל קִצּוֹי אֶרֶץ — **and the far off seas** — וְיָם רְחֹקִים.

(ז) מִכֵּין הָרִים בְּכַחוֹ
נֶאֱזַר בְּגִבּוֹרָה:

You are G-d **Who with His strength sets** the rock-hard **mountains** with rich vegetation — מִכֵּין הָרִים בְּכַחוֹ. You are G-d Who is **girded with the might** — נֶאֱזַר בְּגִבּוֹרָה that generates life-sustaining rain .

(ח) מִשְׁבִּית שְׂאוֹן יָמִים
שְׂאוֹן גְּלִיהֶם וְהִמּוֹן לְאֲמִים:

You are G-d Who restrains and controls the violence of the powerful forces in nature and in history. Thus, it is You Who **calms the violent roar of the seas** — מִשְׁבִּית שְׂאוֹן יָמִים, **the violent roar of their waves** — שְׂאוֹן גְּלִיהֶם, **and the turbulence**

of nations — **והמון לאמים**. The nations have been persistent in their relentless wave-like drive to overwhelm the Jewish people, but it is You Who have prevented them from achieving our destruction.

(ט) וַיִּירָאוּ יֹשְׁבֵי קְצוֹת מְאוֹתֶיךָ
מוֹצְאֵי בֹקֶר וְעֶרֶב תִּרְנִין:

Those who dwell at the ends of the earth **are awed by Your signs** — **וַיִּירָאוּ** **יֹשְׁבֵי קְצוֹת מְאוֹתֶיךָ**, that is, by the thunder and lightning that mark the appearance of rain. And with **the coming out** of the sun and the moon to demarcate **morning and evening** — **מוֹצְאֵי בֹקֶר וְעֶרֶב**, **You** inspire Your creations to **serenade** You **with joyous song** — **תִּרְנִין**.

PART 3. BLESSED RAIN.

(י) פָּקַדְתָּ הָאָרֶץ וַתִּשְׁקַקְהָ
רַבַּת תַּעֲשֶׂרְנָהּ פֶּלַג אֱלֻקִּים מָלֵא מַיִם
תִּכְוִן דָּגָנָם כִּי כֹן תִּכְוִינָהּ:

You restore Your attention to the earth after a period of drought **and You irrigate it** — **פָּקַדְתָּ הָאָרֶץ וַתִּשְׁקַקְהָ**. Then **You greatly enrich it** — **רַבַּת תַּעֲשֶׂרְנָהּ** **with** an abundance of blessed rain, pouring out like a Divine **stream of G-d, filled with water** — **פֶּלַג אֱלֻקִּים מָלֵא מַיִם**. **You prepare their grain** — **תִּכְוִן דָּגָנָם** by alternating drought with abundant rain, **for so do You prepare it** — **כִּי כֹן תִּכְוִינָהּ**, to teach man to not take it for granted.

(יא) תִּלְמִיחַ רוּחַ
נַחַת גְּדוּדֶיךָ בְּרַבִּיבִים תִּמְגַּגְנָהּ
צִמְחָה תִּבְרָךְ:

Saturating its furrows — **תִּלְמִיחַ רוּחַ**, **gratifying its inhabitants** — **נַחַת גְּדוּדֶיךָ**, **You soften it with a fine rain** — **בְּרַבִּיבִים תִּמְגַּגְנָהּ**. **You bless its growth** — **צִמְחָה תִּבְרָךְ** to protect the produce from harm.

(יב) עֲטַרְתָּ שָׁנַת טוֹבֶתְךָ
וּמַעֲגָלֶיךָ יִרְעִפוּן דְּשָׁן:

With abundant crops **You crown the year** in which You choose to make available **Your bounty** — **עֲטַרְתָּ שָׁנַת טוֹבֶתְךָ** **and** the clouds, which are **Your** heavenly

walkways, drip with plenty – וּמַעַנְלֵידָ יִרְעֵפוּן דְּשֹׁן –

(יג) יִרְעֵפוּ נְאוֹת מִדְּבָר
וְגִיל גְּבָעוֹת תַּחְגֹּרְנָה:

Not only do the clouds shed their blessed rain on cultivated fields, **they drip onto the pastureland of the wilderness** – יִרְעֵפוּ נְאוֹת מִדְּבָר – to provide grasses for flocks and cattle. **And the hills are girded with celebration** – וְגִיל גְּבָעוֹת תַּחְגֹּרְנָה – because vegetation is made available to all the wild creatures of the forests.

(יד) לְבָשׁוּ כְּרִים הַצֹּאן
וְעַמְקִים יַעֲטֹפוּ בָר
יִתְרוֹעְעוּ אֶף יִשִּׁירוּ:

The meadows clothe themselves **with flocks** of sheep and goats – לְבָשׁוּ כְּרִים הַצֹּאן – and the **valleys cover themselves with grain** – וְעַמְקִים יַעֲטֹפוּ בָר – for human consumption. **They all shout for joy, even breaking into song** – יִתְרוֹעְעוּ אֶף יִשִּׁירוּ !

Living the Mizmor

Listed below are some of the thoughts you might have in mind when you say the words of the mizmor as *tefillos* expressing your gratitude to Hashem and as *tehillos* expressing your recognition of Hashem.

Tehillos for Life - Contemplation of Hashem.

[65:2] **STUNNED AWE.** – לֶךְ דְּמִיָּה תְהִלָּה – “*Silence is [the only suitable] praise to You.*” You should feel a stunned awe in the presence of Hashem, an awe that makes it difficult for you to take it upon yourself to praise Him.

[65:2] **TZION.** – אֱלֹקִים בְּצִיּוֹן – “[*You are*] *G-d in Tzion.*” Although G-d’s presence fills the entire universe, He has chosen Tzion as a special focus.

[65:2] **VOWS.** – וּלְךָ יִשְׁלַם נֶדֶר – “*to You will vows be paid.*” Despite the unlimited greatness of Hashem He has chosen to accept mankind’s payments in fulfillment of vows, accompanied by sincere prayer.

[65:3] **PRAYER.** – שִׁמְעַתְּ תִפְלָה עֲדִידָה כָּל בָּשָׂר יִבְאוּ – “[*You are the*] *One that hears prayer. All mankind may come to You.*” Although G-d’s power is

unlimited, He is concerned with the prayers of each person.

[65:6] **TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH.** – **מִבְּטַח כָּל קְצוֹי אֶרֶץ וְיָם רְחֻקִים** – “[You are the] trustworthy Refuge [to] all the ends of the earth and the far off seas.” No matter where you are, in the farthest regions of the earth, you can be close to Hashem.

[65:7] **VEGETATION AND RAIN.** – **מִכִּיִּן הָרִים בְּלַחֹ נֶאֱזַר בְּגִבּוֹרָה** – “[You are He Who] sets mountains with [rich vegetation], [and Who is] girded with might.” All the wonders of nature are the work of Hashem, provided for the benefit of mankind. We should aspire to be worthy of His kindness.

[65:8] **RESTRAINT.** – **מִשְׁבִּיחַ שְׁאוֹן יָמִים שְׁאוֹן גְּלִיָּהֶם** – “[You are He Who] calms the roar of the seas, the roar of their waves.” The greatness of Hashem is revealed, not so much in the massive power He wields, but in His ability to control and restrain that power. This is an important lesson for mankind — the art of self-restraint.

Tefillos for Life - Your Teshuvah.

[65:4] **GUILT.** – **דְּבַרְי עֲוֹנֹת גְּבִרוּ מִנִּי פִשְׁעֵינוּ אַתָּה תִּכְפְּרֵם** – “The consequences of sins have overwhelmed me. [Yet] You forgive our transgressions.” You should feel overwhelming guilt because of your sins against Hashem. But that still shouldn’t stop you from turning to Him and begging forgiveness.

Lessons for Life - Your Attitude.

[65:5] **NEARNESS.** – **אֲשֶׁרִי תִבְחַר וּתְקַרֵב** – “Fortunate is He Whom You choose and bring near.” Aspire to achieve spiritual closeness to Hashem and ask Him to help you towards this goal.

Sources

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

ח - רש"י, אבן עזרא, רד"ק, אלשיך, רשר"ה
ט - רד"ק, מצודות
י - רש"י, רד"ק, מלבי"ם, רשר"ה
יא - רש"י, מצודות, דעת סופרים
יב - רש"י, רד"ק, מצודות
יג - רד"ק, אלשיך,
יד - רש"י

א - מלבי"ם, דעת סופרים
ב - רש"י
ג - מצודות, מלבי"ם, רשר"ה
ד - אלשיך, מצודות, רשר"ה
ה - רש"י, אבן עזרא, מלבי"ם
ו - אבן עזרא, רד"ק, מצודות
ז - רש"י, אלשיך

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