

Mizmor 068

On Silver Wings

Key Concepts

This mizmor takes the form of an extended song in which David visualizes the people in Exile praying earnestly for their *Geulah* (Redemption). The *tefillah* is modeled on the journey that Yisrael took through the *Midbar* (Wilderness) as they escaped the slavery of Mitzrayim, ultimately being gratified with entry into their own Land, the place where they would establish a permanent relation with Hashem in their midst.

The song recognizes that the progress of Yisrael to its goal was marked by periods in which Hashem distanced Himself from His people because of their sins. However, they never gave up their *emunah* and their hope that the relationship would be renewed.

When the people were at their low point the song compares their situation to that of a wretch laying in the dirt among the cooking pots on an open hearth. But no matter how bad things were, they continued to foresee that the day would come when they would take flight and their essential purity would take the form of a white dove against the sky, its wings sheathed in silver.

Exploring the Mizmor

PART 1. PLEA FOR REVELATION. The song begins with a plea for Hashem to rise and establish His sovereignty for all to see. The first evidence of this will be that Hashem's enemies, who are now united in their hatred, will be scattered. This plea is reminiscent of the plea that Moshe Rabbeinu made to Hashem whenever it was time for the Ark of Testimony to begin another leg of its journey through the Wilderness. (See *Bamidbar* 10:35.)

(א) לְמַנְצַחַ לְדָוִד מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר: (ב) יָקוּם אֱלֹהִים יִפּוּצוּ אוֹיְבָיו וַיְנוּסוּ מִשְׁנֵאָיו מִפְּנֵיו:
 (ג) כִּהְנִדִף עָשָׁן תִּהְנָדֵף כְּהֵמָס דּוֹנֵג מִפְּנֵי־אֵשׁ יֵאָבְדוּ רְשָׁעִים מִפְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים:
 (ד) וַיִּצְדִּיקִים יִשְׁמְחוּ יַעֲלֻצוּ לִפְנֵי אֱלֹהִים וַיִּשְׁיִשׁוּ בְשִׂמְחָה:

(1) For the musician, a mizmor by David, a song. (2) Let G-d arise. Let His enemies be scattered. And let His foes flee from before Him. (3) [Hashem,] May You disperse [them] as smoke is dissipated. As wax melts before fire,

so may the wicked perish from before G-d. Let the righteous rejoice. Let them exult before G-d. Let them revel in joy.

PART 2. A SONG OF PRAISE. The revelation of Hashem will elicit from the righteous a song of gratitude and praise:

(ה) שִׁירוּ לַאֲלֹקִים זִמְרוּ שְׁמוֹ סִלּוֹ לְרֹכֵב בְּעֲרָבוֹת בְּיָהּ שְׁמוֹ וְעֲלִזוּ לְפָנָיו: (ו) אָבִי יְתוּמִים וְדָן אֶלְמָנוֹת אֲלֹקִים בְּמַעוֹן קִדְשׁוֹ: (ז) אֲלֹקִים מוֹשִׁיב יְחִידִים בְּיַתֵּהּ מוֹצִיא אֲסִירִים בְּכוֹשְׁרוֹת אֶדְ-סוֹרְרִים שְׁכָנוּ צְחִיחָה:

(5) Sing to G-d, make music to His Name. Exalt the One Who rides upon the highest heavens, with His Name Y-ah. And exult in His presence. (6) Father of orphans and Defender of widows, G-d in the abode of His holiness. (7) G-d establishes solitary individuals to [form] a home. He releases [the slaves] bound in shackles. But the rebellious [are left to] dwell in a parched land.

PART 3. APPROACH TO SINAI. The travels through the *Midbar* are again recalled as the song visualizes the national experience of approaching Sinai and witnessing the power of Hashem and His kindness.

(ח) אֲלֹקִים בְּצֹאתְךָ לִפְנֵי עַמֶּךָ בְּצֵעֲדְךָ בִישִׁימוֹן סִלָּה: (ט) אַרְץ רַעֲשָׁה אֶף-שָׁמַיִם נָטְפוּ מִפְּנֵי אֲלֹקִים זֶה סִינַי מִפְּנֵי אֲלֹקִים יִשְׂרָאֵל: (י) גֶשֶׁם נִדְבוֹת תָּנִיף אֲלֹקִים נִחַלְתָּךְ וְנִלְאָה אַתָּה כּוֹנֵנְתָּה: (יא) חִזַּתְךָ יָשְׁבוּ-בָהּ תָּכִין בְּטוֹבְתָךְ לְעֵנִי אֲלֹקִים:

(8) O G-d, when You went forth before Your nation, when You strode through the wilderness, Selah. (9) The earth quaked. But the heavens dripped [with rain] before G-d. Even Sinai itself [trembled] before G-d, the G-d of Yisrael. (10) O G-d, You lavished a generous rain. Your heritage, was weary [but] You firmly established [them]. (11) Your creatures settled there. You prepared for the poor in Your goodness, O G-d.

PART 4. SILVER WINGS. The song continues with Hashem's promise of the great renewal that will take place when the enemies of Hashem are defeated. The people of Yisrael will emerge from the darkness of Exile and soar in flight like the wings of a dove sheathed in silver.

(יב) אֶדְ-נִי יִתֵּן-אֶמֶר הַמְּבַשְׂרוֹת צָבָא רָב: (יג) מַלְכֵי צְבָאוֹת יִדְדוּן יִדְדוּן וּנְגוֹת בַּיֵּת תִּחַלַּק שָׁלֵל: (יד) אִם-תִּשְׁכַּבּוּן בֵּין שְׁפָתַיִם כְּנִפֵי יוֹנָה נִחְפָה בְּכֶסֶף וְאֶבְרוֹתֶיהָ

בִּירְקָרְק חָרוּץ: (טו) בְּפִרְשׁ שְׂדֵי מְלָכִים בָּהּ תִּשְׁלַג בְּצִלְמוֹן:

(12) Hashem has issued a declaration. The heralds [are announcing the defeat] of a mighty host. (13) The kings of the [enemy] legions flee. They flee and the woman of the house divides the booty. (14) Even if you lie among the cooking pots, [you will emerge like] the wings of a dove sheathed in silver and her feathers in precious gold. (15) When the Almighty scatters kings, [the people] in shadowy darkness will be whitened [like snow].

PART 5. THE DIVINE PRESENCE. The song recall the Divine Presence at Sinai, and then again at Mount Moriah, which He has chosen as His permanent abode, the location of the *Bais HaMikdash*.

(טז) הַר־אֱלֹקִים הַר־בָּשָׁן הַר־גְּבֻנִים הַר־בָּשָׁן: (יז) לָמָּה תִרְצְדוּן הָרִים גְּבֻנִים הָהָר חָמַד אֱלֹקִים לְשִׁבְתוֹ אַף־ה' יִשְׁכֵּן לְנֶצַח: (יח) רָכַב אֱלֹקִים רִבְתִּים אֶלְפֵי שָׁנָן אֲדֹנָי בָּם סִינֵי בְקֹדֶשׁ:

(16) The mountain of G-d [provides sustenance like the fertile] Mount Bashan. A mountain [Moriah] among high mountains [is also like] Mount Bashan. (17) Why do you prance, O you high mountains? [Mount Moriah is] the mountain that G-d desired for his abode. Hashem will even abide there forever. (18) [Accompanying] the chariot of G-d's glory were myriads of thousands of angels. Hashem's Presence was in their midst at Sinai, in His holiness.

PART 6. DIVINE ASCENT FROM SINAI. But now the flow of glory is interrupted, as the song recalls Hashem's departure and ascent from Sinai to Heavenly realms. This event, signaled the advent of Exile, which was brought about by the sins of Yisrael.

(יט) עָלִיתָ לְמָרוֹם שְׁבִיתָ שְׁבִי לְקַחְתָּ מִתְּנוֹת בְּאָדָם וְאֵף סוֹרְרִים לְשָׁכֵן יְהִי אֱלֹקִים: (19) You ascended on high. You took captives [from Yisrael]. You took [back] the gifts from man. Even those who rebelled [made plans] to take up residence [in the precincts] of G-d.

PART 7. APPEAL FOR YESHUAH. But Yisrael has not given up its hope and trust that the relationship with Hashem will once again be restored. The song expresses this by recalling the small kindnesses that Hashem does for us every day, even in the darkest Exile. There are many kinds of *yeshuah* (salvation) and ultimately there are many kinds of death that Hashem may choose in defeating His enemies.

(כ) בְּרוּךְ אֲדֹנָי יוֹם יוֹם יַעֲמֹס־לָנוּ הָאֵל יִשׁוּעָתָנוּ סֵלָה: (כא) הָאֵל לָנוּ אֵל־

לְמוֹשָׁעוֹת וְלֵה' אֲדֹנָי לְמוֹת תּוֹצְאוֹת: (כב) אֲדֹ-אֱלֹקִים יִמְחַץ רֹאשׁ אֹיְבֵיו קִדְקֹד
שָׁעַר מִתְהַלֵּךְ בְּאֲשָׁמָיו: (כג) אָמַר אֲדֹנָי מִבֶּשֶׁן אָשִׁיב אָשִׁיב מִמְצֵלוֹת יָם:
(כד) לְמַעַן תִּמְחַץ רִגְלֶךָ בְּדָם לְשׁוֹן כְּלָבֶיךָ מֵאוֹיְבִים מִנֵּהוּ:

(20) *Blessed is Hashem, every day. Let Him load us up with yeshuah for He is the G-d of our yeshuah, Selah. G-d is for us a G-d of [many kinds] of yeshuah. Hashem/Elokim, my L-rd, has many avenues toward death [against our enemies]. (22) Indeed, G-d will crush the heads of His enemies, [including] the hairy crown of the one who goes about [insolently] with his guilt. (23) Hashem has promised, "I will bring you back from Bashan; I will bring [you back] from the depths of the sea. (24) So that your foot will be stained with blood, the tongue of your dogs will be stained with them."*

PART 8. PARTING OF THE SEA. The ultimate *yeshuah* is once again made real, by recalling the parting of the Sea of Reeds and the inspired song that Yisrael sang when they were privileged to see the destruction of Mitzrayim.

(כה) רָאוּ הַלִּיכוֹתֶיךָ אֱלֹקִים הַלִּיכוֹת אֵלַי מִלְפִי בְקִדְשׁ: (כו) קִדְמוּ שָׂרִים אַחַר נְגִינִים
בְּתוֹךְ עֲלָמוֹת תּוֹפְפוֹת: (כז) בְּמִקְהֵלוֹת בָּרְכוּ אֱלֹקִים ה' מִמִּקְוֹר יִשְׂרָאֵל: (כח) שָׁם
בִּנְיָמִן צָעִיר רִדָּם שָׂרֵי יְהוּדָה רִגְמָתָם שָׂרֵי זְבֻלוֹן שָׂרֵי נַפְתָּלִי: (כט) צֹהַ אֱלֹקֶיךָ עָזָד
עוֹזָה אֱלֹקִים זֶו פָּעֵלְתָּ לָנוּ:

(25) *They saw Your ways, O G-d, the ways of my G-d, my King, in holiness. (26) First went the singers, afterwards musicians, and in the middle were [Miriam with] tambourine-playing maidens. (27) [Exiled people of Yisrael in far-flung] congregations, bless G-d, the L-rd, [all you who are] from the fountain of Yisrael. (28) There [at the Sea], Binyamin, although the youngest, [was chosen] to rule them. The princes of Yehudah [were there] in their embroidered robes, the princes of Zevulun, the princes of Naftali [were also chosen]. (29) Your G-d has decreed your strength, O G-d, this strength, it is You Who has wrought this for us.*

PART 9. PLEA FOR GEULAH. As the nation senses that the time for the *Geulah* (Redemption) is once again approaching, the people renew their plea for the glory of Hashem to be revealed and for His present enemies to suffer the fate that was decreed upon the enemies of former times.

(ל) מִהִיכָלְךָ עַל-יְרוּשָׁלַם לֵךְ יוֹבִילוּ מְלָכִים שָׂי: (לא) גָּעַר חֵית קָנָה עֲדַת אַבְיָרִים
בְּעִגְלֵי עַמִּים מִתְרַפֵּס בְּרָצִי-כֶסֶף בְּזַר עַמִּים קָרְבוֹת יַחְפָּצוּ: (לב) יִאֲתָיו חֲשָׁמַיִם

מִנֵּי מִצְרַיִם כּוֹשׁ תִּרְיֹץ יָדָיו לְאֱלֹקִים:

(30) From Your Temple, beyond Yerushalayim. Kings shall deliver tribute to You. (31) Rebuke the wild beast of the marsh, the herd of bulls among the nations that are like calves, [until they] cower in the mud for pieces of silver. Scatter the nations who are eager for war. (32) Nobles will come from Mitzrayim. Cush will hasten to stretch out its hands to G-d.

PART 10. SONG OF THE GEULAH. David's song concludes with a call to all the nations of the world to recognize the truth of Hashem and to respect the bond that Hashem has made with His faithful people, Yisrael.

(לג) מִמְּלְכוֹת הָאָרֶץ שִׁירוּ לְאֱלֹקִים זָמְרוּ אֲדֹנָי סֶלָה: (לד) לְרֹכֵב בְּשָׁמַי שָׁמַי־קָדָם הַרְיִתְנוּ בְּקוֹלוֹ קוֹל עוֹ: (לה) תָּנוּ עוֹ לְאֱלֹקִים עַל־יִשְׂרָאֵל גִּבּוֹתָו וְעָזוֹ בְּשִׁחְקִים: (לו) נוֹרָא אֱלֹקִים מִמִּקְדָּשֶׁיךָ אֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל הוּא נִתָּן עוֹ וְתַעֲצֻמוֹת לָעַם בְּרוּךְ אֱלֹקִים: (33) O Kingdoms of the earth, sing to G-d, make music to the L-rd, Selah. (34) To [the One] Who rides upon the highest heavens of old. Indeed, He expresses [His power] with His voice, the voice of invincible might. (35) Acknowledge the invincible might of G-d, Whose majesty [shines] upon Yisrael. His invincible might is in the skies. (36) The awesomeness of G-d [emanates] from Your Mikdash, O G-d of Yisrael. It is He Who grants might and power to the people. Blessed is G-d.

Learning the Mizmor

PART 1. PLEA FOR REVELATION.

(א) לְמִנְצִיחַ לְדָוִד מִזְמוֹר שִׁיר:

This song has been prepared **for the musician** — **לְמִנְצִיחַ**, who will perform it. It is a **mizmor** composed **by David** — **לְדָוִד מִזְמוֹר** in the form of a **song** — **שִׁיר** that expresses impassioned gratitude to Hashem for the judgment He will bring to the world at the time of the *Geulah*.

(ב) יָקוּם אֱלֹקִים יַפּוּצוּ אוֹיְבָיו

וַיִּנּוּסוּ מִשְׂנֵאָיו מִפָּנָיו:

Let G-d arise — **יָקוּם אֱלֹקִים** to show His might and execute justice. **Let** our enemies, which are also **His enemies be scattered** — **יַפּוּצוּ אוֹיְבָיו** and

dissuaded from attempting to attack us. **And** as for **His foes**, who are more aggressive, even though they have attacked, **let** them **flee from before Him** — וַיִּנָּסוּ מִשְׁנֵאָיו מִפָּנָיו. It will be as it was in the *Midbar*, when Moshe Rabbeinu said, קוּמָה ה' וַיִּפְּצוּ אֵיבֹיךָ וַיִּנָּסוּ מִשְׁנֵאִיךָ מִפָּנֶיךָ, "Arise Hashem, let Your foes flee and let Your enemies be scattered from before You" (*Bamidbar* 10:35)

(ג) כְּהִנָּדֹף עָשָׁן תִּנָּדֹף

But even more, may their defeat be so complete that Your role in bringing it about is clearly discernible. **May You disperse** them **as smoke is** utterly **dissipated** by a slight breeze — כְּהִנָּדֹף עָשָׁן תִּנָּדֹף. Initially, a column of black smoke appears substantial, but it quickly fades away and no trace remains.

כְּהֵימָס דֹּוֹג מִפְּנֵי אֵשׁ יֵאבְדוּ רְשָׁעִים מִפְּנֵי אֱלֹקִים:

As wax melts before fire — כְּהֵימָס דֹּוֹג מִפְּנֵי אֵשׁ, **so may the wicked perish from before G-d** — יֵאבְדוּ רְשָׁעִים מִפְּנֵי אֱלֹקִים. Even as wax cannot abide the presence of fire, so the enemies of G-d's Law will all melt away.

(ד) וַיִּצְדִּיקִים יִשְׂמְחוּ יַעֲלִצוּ לִפְנֵי אֱלֹקִים וַיִּשְׂשׂוּ בְשִׂמְחָה:

Let the righteous rejoice — וַיִּצְדִּיקִים יִשְׂמְחוּ with a sense of inner inner growth because the freedom from the oppression of the wicked will give them the opportunity to reach their full potential. Furthermore, **let them exult before G-d** — יַעֲלִצוּ לִפְנֵי אֱלֹקִים with a sense of relief from restraining bonds. **Let them revel in joy** — וַיִּשְׂשׂוּ בְשִׂמְחָה with a sense of blossoming forth. The very circumstance which makes Hashem's adversaries melt like wax, i.e. the heat of His fire, will shine for them, and it will be a source of healing.

The very thought that there is a God to Whom we are all accountable is one that the wicked man cannot ignore and is a source of torment in the midst of all his pleasures and success. But for the righteous man, who is faithful to his duty, this very same thought is the source of supreme joy. He derives his own sense of fulfillment from the knowledge that he has lived his life in the presence of G-d, the Judge of all mankind.

PART 2. A SONG OF PRAISE.

(ה) שִׁירוּ לַאֲלֹהִים זִמְרוּ שְׁמוֹ
 סֵלוֹ לָרֶכֶב בְּעָרְבוֹת בְּיָהּ שְׁמוֹ
 וְעֲלֹזוֹ לִפְנֵינוּ:

You righteous people who know what bliss the awareness of G-d can bring, do not keep this knowledge to yourselves. **Sing to G-d – שִׁירוּ לַאֲלֹהִים, make music to His Name – זִמְרוּ שְׁמוֹ. Exalt the One Who rides upon the highest heavens – סֵלוֹ לָרֶכֶב בְּעָרְבוֹת** as a rider directs his horse. Acknowledge Him **with His Name Y-ah – בְּיָהּ שְׁמוֹ**, the Name that signifies He is the Creator of the world and the One Who gives it existence. **And exult in His presence – וְעֲלֹזוֹ לִפְנֵינוּ** in the *Bais Hamikdash*.

(ו) אָבִי יְתוֹמִים וְדִין אֶלְמָנוֹת
 אֱלֹהִים בְּמַעוֹן קָדְשׁוֹ:

Although the greatness of Hashem is beyond human conception, He is concerned with the personal well-being of even the lowliest of His creatures. He is sensitive to all the needs of the Jewish people and acts to alleviate their suffering. Thus, Hashem is known as the **Father of orphans – אָבִי יְתוֹמִים**, for He offers them the guiding hand of a father. And He is the **Defender of widows – וְדִין אֶלְמָנוֹת**, for He champions their cause against any who seek to take advantage. And He does all this in our lowly world while continuing to be **G-d in the lofty abode of His holiness – אֱלֹהִים בְּמַעוֹן קָדְשׁוֹ** in all His majesty.

(ז) אֱלֹהִים מוֹשִׁיב יְחִידִים בְּיַתֵּהּ
 מוֹצִיא אֲסִירִים בְּכוֹשְׁרוֹת
 אֶךְ סוֹרְרִים שְׁכֵנוֹ צַחֲיָהּ:

G-d establishes solitary individuals to form a home – אֱלֹהִים מוֹשִׁיב יְחִידִים בְּיַתֵּהּ. He releases the slaves bound in shackles – מוֹצִיא אֲסִירִים בְּכוֹשְׁרוֹת. But the rebellious are left to dwell in a parched land – אֶךְ סוֹרְרִים שְׁכֵנוֹ צַחֲיָהּ, for the ground upon which they stand is barren, with no hope for growth or development.

PART 3. APPROACH TO SINAI.

(ח) אֶלְקִים בְּצֵאתְךָ לִפְנֵי עַמְּךָ
בְּצֵעְדְךָ בְּיַשִּׁימוֹן סֵלָה:

O G-d — אֶלְקִים, I will sing of the time **when You went forth before Your nation** — בְּצֵאתְךָ לִפְנֵי עַמְּךָ to lead them out of Mitzrayim in a pillar of cloud (*Shemos* 12:21). I will recall **when You strode through the wilderness** — בְּצֵעְדְךָ בְּיַשִּׁימוֹן **Selah** — סֵלָה. G-d did not rush them through the desert; He caused Yisrael to stride through it steadily and deliberately, and with each step that the nation took, He let His people sense that He was near.

(ט) אֶרֶץ רָעָשָׁה
אֶף שָׁמַיִם נָטְפוּ מִפְּנֵי אֱלֹקִים

At the revelation of the Torah to Yisrael, **the earth quaked** — אֶרֶץ רָעָשָׁה together with all the forces of nature, in awe of the Presence of G-d. **But** even though it does not usually rain in the desert, **the heavens dripped** with bountiful, blissful rain **before** the Presence of **G-d** — אֶף שָׁמַיִם נָטְפוּ מִפְּנֵי אֱלֹקִים as a sign of His fatherly concern for His people.

זֶה סִינֵי מִפְּנֵי אֱלֹקִים אֶלְקֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

Even Mount **Sinai itself** trembled — זֶה סִינֵי **before** the Presence of **G-d**, **the G-d of Yisrael** — מִפְּנֵי אֱלֹקִים, אֶלְקֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל. (See *Shemos* 19:18) When God lowered Himself and came down to earth to give the Torah to His people, all of nature trembled, but Yisrael sensed only His fatherly concern and His loving nearness.

(י) גָּשֶׁם נְדָבוֹת תִּנְיֹף אֱלֹקִים
נִחַלְתְּךָ וְנִלְאָה אֶתָּה כּוֹנֵנְתָּה:

O G-d, **You lavished a generous rain** upon us — גָּשֶׁם נְדָבוֹת תִּנְיֹף אֱלֹקִים, to restore our spirits. And then, when Yisrael, **Your heritage, was weary** and broken by their suffering in Mitzrayim — נִחַלְתְּךָ וְנִלְאָה, **You firmly established** them — אֶתָּה כּוֹנֵנְתָּה by granting them a *Mishkan* where You would dwell in their midst.

(יא) חִיְתָּךְ יֵשְׁבוּ בָּהּ
תִּכְיֶן בְּטוֹבְתְךָ לְעֵנֵי אֱלֹקִים:

Your creatures — חִיתָךְ, restored to life by Your care, **settled there** in the wilderness — יָשְׁבוּ בָהּ, a place that is ordinarily inhospitable to human habitation. **You prepared for the poor**, a nation without a land of their own, **in Your goodness, O G-d** — תַּכִּין בְּטוֹבֶתְךָ לְעַנֵּי אֱלֹקִים.

PART 4. SILVER WINGS.

(יב) אֲדַנִּי יְתֵן אִמָּר
הַמְבַשְּׂרוֹת צָבָא רַב:

Hashem has issued a historic declaration — אֲדַנִּי יְתֵן אִמָּר. **The heralds** — הַמְבַשְּׂרוֹת are announcing the defeat of **a mighty host** — צָבָא רַב, the armies of the enemy nations who have invaded Eretz Yisrael.

(יג) מַלְכֵי צְבָאוֹת יִדְדוּן יִדְדוּן
וַיִּנָּת בַּיִת תַּחֲלֵק שָׁלָל:

The kings of the enemy legions flee — מַלְכֵי צְבָאוֹת יִדְדוּן from before Yisrael, **they** completely **flee** — יִדְדוּן from the land, **and the woman of the house** — וַיִּנָּת בַּיִת, who symbolizes the Jewish nation that fulfills its destiny in the quiet, simple practice of the "home virtues," **divides the booty** — תַּחֲלֵק שָׁלָל and emerges victorious at the end of time.

(יד) אִם תִּשְׁכַּבּוּן בֵּין שְׁפֵתַיִם
כַּנְפֵי יוֹנָה נְחֹפָה בְּכֶסֶף
וְאַבְרוֹתֶיהָ בִּירְקַרְק חֲרוֹץ:

Even if you are temporarily overwhelmed by your enemy and you **lie** on the floor of the fireplace, blackened **among the cooking pots** — אִם תִּשְׁכַּבּוּן בֵּין שְׁפֵתַיִם, you will emerge in splendor like **the white wings of a dove sheathed in silver** — כַּנְפֵי יוֹנָה נְחֹפָה בְּכֶסֶף and with **her feathers** shining in **precious gold** — וְאַבְרוֹתֶיהָ בִּירְקַרְק חֲרוֹץ.

(טו) בְּפִרְשׁ שְׂדֵי מַלְכִים
בָּה תִשְׁלַג בְּצִלְמוֹן:

When the A-Imighty scatters the **kings** — בְּפִרְשׁ שְׂדֵי מַלְכִים who came to contend with it (Yerushalayim), the people who are **in shadowy darkness will be whitened** like snow — בָּה תִשְׁלַג בְּצִלְמוֹן.

PART 5. THE DIVINE PRESENCE.

(טז) הַר אֱלֹקִים הַר בְּשֹׁן

הַר גְּבֻנִים הַר בְּשֹׁן:

Mount Sinai, the **mountain of G-d** – הַר אֱלֹקִים, is not physically impressive, but because of the Torah that Hashem gave us there, it is like **Mount Bashan** – הַר בְּשֹׁן, a fertile mountain that provides sustenance to the people. Likewise, Mount Moriah, the lowly **mountain** set **among high mountains** – הַר גְּבֻנִים, is for us like **Mount Bashan** – הַר בְּשֹׁן because it is the site of Hashem's dwelling on earth.

(יז) לָמָּה תִרְצְדוּן הָרִים גְּבֻנִים

הָהָר חָמַד אֱלֹקִים לְשִׁבְתּוֹ

אֵף ה' יִשְׁכֵן לְנֶצַח:

Why do you smugly **prance** around – לָמָּה תִרְצְדוּן, **O you high mountains** – הָרִים גְּבֻנִים ? You cannot match Hashem's preferred mountain. Although Mount Moriah is not high, it is **the mountain that G-d desired for His abode** – הָהָר חָמַד אֱלֹקִים לְשִׁבְתּוֹ because it symbolizes modesty and because it is where Avraham demonstrated his devotion when he bound his son Yitzchak. **Hashem will even abide there forever** – אֵף ה' יִשְׁכֵן לְנֶצַח !

(יח) רָכַב אֱלֹקִים רִבְתִּים אֶלְפֵי שָׁנָאן

אֲדֹנָי בָּם סִינֵי בִקְדָשׁ:

When Hashem descended to Sinai, He came with an entourage of angels accompanying **the chariot of G-d's glory** – רָכַב אֱלֹקִים. **There were myriads of thousands** upon thousands **of angels** – רִבְתִּים אֶלְפֵי שָׁנָאן. The intensity of **Hashem's Presence was in their midst at Sinai** – אֲדֹנָי בָּם סִינֵי, but only **in His holiness** – בִּקְדָשׁ, while Sinai was performing its sacred mission. It was Hashem's Presence that lent holiness and importance to Sinai. Afterwards it reverted to the status of an ordinary mountain.

PART 6. DIVINE ASCENT FROM SINAI.

(יט) עָלִיתָ לְמָרוֹם
 שָׁבִיתָ שְׁבִי לְקַחְתָּ מִתְּנוּת בְּאָדָם
 וְאַף סוֹרְרִים לְשֹׁכֵן יְהוָה אֱלֹקִים:

When You removed Your favor from Yisrael, it was as though **You** departed from our midst and **ascended on high** — **עָלִיתָ לְמָרוֹם**. Then Yisrael was defeated by its enemies and taken into exile because You removed Your protection from us. It is as though **You took captives** — **שָׁבִיתָ שְׁבִי** from Yisrael. **You took back the gifts** of Your Presence and Your protection **of man** — **לְקַחְתָּ מִתְּנוּת בְּאָדָם**. As a result, the enemies of Yisrael, **even those who rebelled** against You — **וְאַף סוֹרְרִים** made plans **to take up residence** in the precincts of **G-d** — **לְשֹׁכֵן יְהוָה אֱלֹקִים**.

PART 7. APPEAL FOR YESHUAH.

(כ) בָּרוּךְ אַדְּנֵי
 יוֹם יוֹם יַעֲמֵס לָנוּ הָאֵל יְשׁוּעַתָּנוּ סֵלָה:

But even if Hashem has estranged Himself from us, we readily acknowledge that **blessed is Hashem** — **בָּרוּךְ אַדְּנֵי**, the Source of all blessing. We thank him for the new blessings that He grants us **every day** — **יוֹם יוֹם**. And so we ask that our difficult life in Exile be tempered with *yeshuah*. We have not forgotten the *yeshuos* of ancient times and we ask that **He load us up with** those *yeshuos* — **יַעֲמֵס לָנוּ**, for He is **the G-d of our yeshuah, Selah** — **הָאֵל יְשׁוּעַתָּנוּ סֵלָה**.

(כא) הָאֵל לָנוּ אֵל לְמוֹשָׁעוֹת
 וְלֵה' אַדְּנֵי לְמֹת תּוֹצְאוֹת:

G-d is for us a G-d of many kinds of yeshuah — **הָאֵל לָנוּ אֵל לְמוֹשָׁעוֹת** so that no matter how difficult our situation might be, He will always find a way to save us. And by the same token **Hashem/Elokim, my L-rd, has many avenues toward death** — **וְלֵה' אַדְּנֵי לְמֹת תּוֹצְאוֹת**, which He will apply to our enemies in order to save us.

(כב) אֵךְ אֱלֹקִים יִמְחֵץ רֹאשׁ אִיְבֵיו
 קִדְקֵד שִׁעָר מִתְּהִלָּךְ בְּאַשְׁמִיּוֹ:

Indeed, G-d will crush the heads of His enemies — **אֵךְ אֱלֹקִים יִמְחֵץ רֹאשׁ**

אִיבִּי, including **the hairy crown of the one who goes about** insolently **with his guilt** — **קָדַדְדוּ שֵׁעַר מִתְהַלֵּךְ בְּאַשְׁמִי** — making no effort to repent and possibly even wearing his hair in a style which demonstrates his attitude.

(כג) אָמַר אֲדֹנָי מִבְּשֵׁן אָשִׁיב
אָשִׁיב מִמְצֻלוֹת יָם:

Hashem has promised Yisrael — **אָמַר אֲדֹנָי**, "**I will bring you back from your Exile**, even if you have been driven to the isolated mountains of **Bashan** — **מִבְּשֵׁן אָשִׁיב**; **I will even bring you back from far across the depths of the sea** — **אָשִׁיב מִמְצֻלוֹת יָם**."

(כד) לְמַעַן תִּמְחַץ רִגְלְךָ בְּדָם
לְשׁוֹן כְּלָבִיךָ מֵאִיבִים מִנְהוּ:

"You will be victorious in battle **so that** — **לְמַעַן** you will be able to walk through the battlefield strewn with the corpses of your enemies and **your foot will be stained with their blood** — **לְמַעַן תִּמְחַץ רִגְלְךָ בְּדָם**. And even **the tongue of your dogs** will be stained red **from them** — **לְשׁוֹן כְּלָבִיךָ מֵאִיבִים מִנְהוּ**."

PART 8. PARTING OF THE SEA.

(כה) רָאוּ הַלִּיכוֹתֶיךָ אֱלֹקִים
הַלִּיכוֹת אֱ-לֹי מִלְכִי בִקְדוֹשׁ:

When Yisrael faced the might of Mitzrayim at the Sea of Reeds, **they saw Your ways, O G-d** — **רָאוּ הַלִּיכוֹתֶיךָ אֱלֹקִים**. They saw how You drowned the enemy in the waters and they understood that the enemy was experiencing the very fate they had intended to impose upon Yisrael. The Jewish people appreciated that it was Your doing and that these were **the ways of my G-d** — **הַלִּיכוֹת אֱ-לֹי**, **my King** — **מִלְכִי**, Who dwells **in holiness** — **בִּקְדוֹשׁ**. Although the heavens are Hashem's first place of holiness, His Presence is made known on earth.

(כו) קִדְמוּ שָׁרִים אַחַר נְגִינִים
בְּתוֹךְ עֲלָמוֹת תּוֹפְפוֹת:

They were so inspired by what they saw that they sang to You in praise and gratitude. **First went singers** — **קִדְמוּ שָׁרִים**, **afterwards** came the **musicians** — **אַחַר נְגִינִים**, **and in the middle were** Miriam and her **tambourine-playing**

maidens – בתוך עלמות ותופפות –

(כז) בְּמִקְהֵלוֹת בְּרָכוּ אֱלֹקִים
אֲדֹנָי מִמְּקוֹר יִשְׂרָאֵל:

O Yisrael, even in Exile when you are scattered in far-flung **congregations** – **בְּמִקְהֵלוֹת** throughout the world you should continue to **bless G-d** – **בְּרָכוּ אֱלֹקִים**. Act in united service, recognizing **the L-rd** – **אֲדֹנָי** of the world, all you who are **from the fountain of Yisrael** – **מִמְּקוֹר יִשְׂרָאֵל**.

(כח) שָׁם בְּנִימֵן צָעִיר רִדָּם

The behavior of the tribe of Binyamin at the Sea of Reeds influenced their future destiny. **There** at the Sea of Reeds, **Binyamin** – **שָׁם בְּנִימֵן**, although **the youngest** – **צָעִיר** of the tribes, gained authority by bravely entering the waters of the Sea before any other tribe. As a result, Shaul, the first king of Yisrael, was chosen from Binyamin **to rule them** [the entire nation] – **רִדָּם**.

שָׂרֵי יְהוּדָה רְגָמְתָם

For a time Binyamin was to gain supremacy. But Yehudah's destiny as the true tribe of royalty was recaptured by their prince Nachshon ben Aminadav who jumped into the Sea, leading his tribe and all the other tribes. Yehudah's stature was suggested by the appearance of **the princes of Yehudah** in **their embroidered robes** – **שָׂרֵי יְהוּדָה רְגָמְתָם**.

שָׂרֵי זְבֻלוֹן שָׂרֵי נַפְתָּלִי:

Among the other notable princes of tribes that would gain prominence in future years were **the princes of Zevulun** – **שָׂרֵי זְבֻלוֹן**, which would gain influence by dominating the nations's economy and **the princes of Naftali** – **שָׂרֵי נַפְתָּלִי**, which would be recognized for its military prowess.

(כט) צָוָה אֱלֹקֶיךָ עֲזָדְךָ
עוֹזָה אֱלֹקִים זוֹ פְּעֻלַּתְךָ לָנוּ:

People of Yisrael, you have overcome your enemies in the past because **your G-d has decreed your strength** – **צָוָה אֱלֹקֶיךָ עֲזָדְךָ**. This will always be your source of might as long as you observe *Hits mitzvos*. Whenever you achieve victory, acknowledge it and say, "**O G-d, this strength, it is You Who has wrought this for us** – **עוֹזָה אֱלֹקִים זוֹ פְּעֻלַּתְךָ לָנוּ**."

PART 9. PLEA FOR GEULAH.

(ל) מֵהִיכָלְךָ עַל יְרוּשָׁלַם
 לְךָ יוֹבִילוּ מְלָכִים שָׁי:

O G-d, Your Name has been carried by Yisrael in Exile **from your Temple** — **מֵהִיכָלְךָ** throughout the world, far **beyond Yerushalayim** — **עַל יְרוּשָׁלַם**. **Kings shall yet deliver tribute to You** — **לְךָ יוֹבִילוּ מְלָכִים שָׁי**.

(לא) גְּעַר חַיֵּת קִנָּה
 עֲדַת אַבִּירִים בְּעֵגְלֵי עַמִּים מְתַרְפֵּס בְּרָצֵי כָסֶף
 בְּזַר עַמִּים קְרָבוֹת יַחְפְּצוּ:

O G-d, **rebuke** the enemy power that is compared to **the wild beast of the marsh** — **גְּעַר חַיֵּת קִנָּה**. Suppress the alliance of Yishmael that is like a **herd of bulls among the nations that are like calves** — **עֲדַת אַבִּירִים בְּעֵגְלֵי עַמִּים**. Rebuke them until they **cower in the mud for pieces of silver** — **מְתַרְפֵּס בְּרָצֵי כָסֶף**. **Scatter the nations who are eager for war** — **בְּזַר עַמִּים קְרָבוֹת יַחְפְּצוּ** against the Jewish people.

(לב) יִאָּתְיוּ חֲשָׁמַנִּים מִנִּי מִצְרַיִם
 כּוֹשׁ תְּרִיץ יָדָיו לְאֱלֹקִים:

When Hashem brings the *Geulah* and the exiled Jewish people are returned to their Land, **nobles will come from Mitzrayim** — **יִאָּתְיוּ חֲשָׁמַנִּים מִנִּי מִצְרַיִם** to pay homage to Hashem and the distant nation of **Cush will hasten to stretch out its hands to G-d** — **כוֹשׁ תְּרִיץ יָדָיו לְאֱלֹקִים**.

PART 10. SONG OF THE GEULAH.

(לג) מִמְּלָכוֹת הָאָרֶץ שִׁירוּ לְאֱלֹקִים
 זָמְרוּ אֲדֹנָי סֵלָה:

O Kingdoms of the earth — **מִמְּלָכוֹת הָאָרֶץ**, who have gathered to pay homage to the Creator. Reflect upon His greatness and what He has done for His nation. Sense the blessed feeling of being able to call Him your Master and **sing** about it in praise **to G-d** — **שִׁירוּ לְאֱלֹקִים**. Express your glorious emotion in tuneful song as you **make music to the L-rd, Selah** — **זָמְרוּ אֲדֹנָי סֵלָה**.

(לד) לָרִכֵּב בְּשָׁמַי שָׁמַי קָדָם
הוּ יִתֵּן בְּקוֹלוֹ קוֹל עוֹז:

Pay homage **to** the One **Who rides upon the highest heavens of old** — לָרִכֵּב בְּשָׁמַי שָׁמַי קָדָם, and continues to control the entire universe since it was created. **Indeed, He expresses** His power **with His voice** of thunder — הוּ יִתֵּן בְּקוֹלוֹ, **the voice of invincible might** — קוֹל עוֹז.

(לה) תִּנּוּ עוֹז לְאֱלֹקִים
עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל גְּאֻתוֹ וְעֹזוֹ בְּשַׁחֲקִים:

Acknowledge the invincible might of G-d — תִּנּוּ עוֹז לְאֱלֹקִים, **Whose majesty** shines miraculously **upon Yisrael** when they are worthy — עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל גְּאֻתוֹ. Then **His invincible might is** revealed for their benefit **in the skies** — וְעֹזוֹ בְּשַׁחֲקִים.

(לו) נוֹרָא אֱלֹקִים מִמִּקְדָּשֶׁיךָ אֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל
הוּא נִתֵּן עוֹז וְתַעֲצֻמוֹת לְעַם בְּרוּךְ אֱלֹקִים:

The reverence for awesomeness of G-d — נוֹרָא אֱלֹקִים in the world emanates **from** the devotion of Yisrael in **Your Mikdash** in Yerushalayim and the corresponding *Mikdash* in Heaven — מִמִּקְדָּשֶׁיךָ. That *Mikdash* is the focal point of the *Shechinah* on earth, **O G-d of Yisrael** — אֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל. **It is He Who grants might and power to the people** — הוּא נִתֵּן עוֹז וְתַעֲצֻמוֹת לְעַם — **Blessed is G-d** — בְּרוּךְ אֱלֹקִים and His goodness flows to all the world.

Sources

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

ט - רד"ק, ספורנו	א - ספורנו
י - ספורנו, אבן יחייא, רשר"ה	ב - רד"ק, אבן יחייא, מלבי"ם, נר לרגלי
יא - אלשיך, רשר"ה	ג - רש"י, ספורנו, אלשיך, מצודות, רשר"ה, נר לרגלי
יב - אבן עזרא, אבן יחייא, מצודות, רשר"ה	ד - אלשיך, רשר"ה, נר לרגלי
יג - רש"י, רד"ק, המאירי, מצודות	ה - רד"ק
יד - רד"ק, המאירי, מצודות	ו - אבן עזרא, רד"ק, אלשיך, רשר"ה
טו - המאירי	ז - רד"ק, אלשיך, רשר"ה
טז - רד"ק, מצודות	ח - ספורנו, מצודות, נר לרגלי
יז - המאירי, נר לרגלי	

כח - רש"י, מצודות, תרגום
כט - רד"ק, נר לרגלי
ל - רשר"ה
לא - רש"י, רד"ק, מצודות
לב - רש"י, המאירי, מלבי"ם
לג - רש"י, רד"ק, רשר"ה
לד - מצודות, רשר"ה
לה - אבן עזרא, המאירי, מצודות, מלבי"ם
לו - אבן עזרא, רד"ק, מלבי"ם, נר לרגלי

יח - רש"י, מצודות
יט - רד"ק, המאירי
כ - רש"י, רד"ק, המאירי, מלבי"ם, נר לרגלי
כא - רש"י, רד"ק
כב - מצודות, נר לרגלי
כג - רשר"ה, נר לרגלי
כד - רד"ק, דעת סופרים
כה - רד"ק, מצודות, נר לרגלי
כו - רש"י, המאירי, רשר"ה
כז - רשר"ה

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