

## Mizmor 072

# Tefillah for Shlomo

### Key Concepts

In this mizmor David expressed his hopes and prayers for the reign of his son Shlomo, who was shortly to assume the throne. David knew that his son was uniquely qualified to lead the nation at this critical stage of its history. The key to Shlomo's success would be his Divinely inspired wisdom. With that wisdom he would rule the nation judiciously and establish Yisrael in a leadership role among the nations of the world.

In looking ahead to the reign of his son, David was also writing a conclusion to his own reign. That reign was symbolized by the Book of Tehillim, which David closes in the final verse of this mizmor. He positioned the mizmor at the end of the second of the five books of Tehillim because he wanted to place it in the historical and spiritual context of the first two books, which were predominantly inspired by events in his lifetime.

### Exploring the Mizmor

**PART 1. WISE JUDGE AND ENLIGHTENED LEADER.** David begins this portion of the *mizmor* with a *tefillah* that Hashem guide Shlomo in his future role of being a wise judge and and enlightened leader, maintaining justice and peace.

(א) לְשִׁלְמוֹהַ אֱלֹקִים מְשַׁפְּטֶיךָ לְמֶלֶךְ תֵּן וְצִדְקָתְךָ לְבֶן־מֶלֶךְ: (ב) יָדִין עַמֶּךָ בְּצִדְקָה וְעֲנִיִּיךָ בְּמִשְׁפָּט: (ג) יִשְׂאוּ הָרִים שְׁלוֹם לְעַם וְגִבְעוֹת בְּצִדְקָה: (ד) יִשְׁפֹּט עֲנִיִּי־עַם יִתְשִׁיעַ לְבָנֵי אֲבִיוֹן וַיְדַכֵּא עוֹשֵׂק: (ה) יִירָאוּךָ עִם־שָׁמַשׁ וְלַפְּנֵי יָרֵחַ דּוֹר דּוֹרִים: (ו) יִרַד כְּמָטָר עַל־גִּזְרֵי כְּרִבִּיבִים זְרִיף אֲרָץ: (ז) יִפְרַח־בְּיָמָיו צַדִּיק וְרֵב שְׁלוֹם עַד־בְּלֵי יָרֵחַ:

(1) For Shlomo. O G-d, give Your laws to the king and Your goodness in judgment to the king's son. (2) May he judge Your nation with tzedek and Your poor with mishpat. (3) May the mountains bring peace to the nation and the hills with charitable justice. (4) May he champion the nation's poor, save the children of the destitute, and crush the oppressor. (5) May they fear You in the presence of the sun and the moon, from generation to generation. (6) May [his words] descend like rain upon moun grass, like showers that water the earth. (7) May the tzadik flourish in his days and

*may there be abundant peace until the moon is no more.*

**PART 2. EFFECTIVE RULER.** David now addresses the political role of the king, asking that Hashem guide him in maintaining a leadership status among the nations. Shlomo was to be a strong and respected sovereign who would maintain peace through strength.

(ח) וַיִּרְדּוּ מִיָּם עַד-יָם וּמִנְהַר עַד-אֶפְסַי-אֲרָץ: (ט) לִפְנֵי וַיִּכְרְעוּ צִיִּים וְאִיְבֵי עֶפְרָיִם  
 וְיִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ-לוֹ כָּל-מְלָכִים כָּל-גּוֹיִם יַעֲבֹדוּהוּ: (י) מִלְכֵי תַרְשִׁישׁ וְאִיִּים מִנְחָה יִשִּׁיבוּ מִלְכֵי שֶׁבָא וְסֶבְא אֲשֶׁכֶר יִקְרִיבוּ: (יא)  
 וְיִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ-לוֹ כָּל-מְלָכִים כָּל-גּוֹיִם יַעֲבֹדוּהוּ:

*(8) May he extend his region of influence from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth (9) May the inhabitants of the wilderness areas kneel before him, and may his foes lick the dust. (10) May the kings of Tarshish and the islands submit tribute. May the kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts. (11) May all kings prostrate themselves before Him. May all the peoples serve him.*

**PART 3. BENEFACTOR.** David expresses his hope that Shlomo will employ the wealth and power of royalty to help those among the people who are needy and suffering misfortune.

(יב) כִּי-יִצִיל אֶבְיֹן מִשּׁוּעַ וְעָנִי וְאִין-עֲזָר לוֹ: (יג) יַחַס עַל-דָּל וְאֶבְיֹן וְנַפְשׁוֹת  
 אֶבְיֹנִים יוֹשִׁיעַ: (יד) מִתַּוְךְ וּמִחֶמֶס יִגְאֵל נַפְשָׁם וַיִּיקַר דָּמָם בְּעֵינָיו: (טו) וַיַּחֲיֵ  
 וַיִּתֵּן-לוֹ מִזֶּהָב שֶׁבָא וַיִּתְּפַלֵּל בְּעֵדוֹ תְּמִיד כָּל-הַיּוֹם יִבְרַכְנָהוּ:

*(12) Because he will rescue the needy person crying out and the lowly person who has no one to help him. (13) He will pity the impoverished and the needy, he will save the souls of the needy. (14) He will redeem their soul from fraud and extortion, and their blood will be precious in his eyes. (15) And may he live [long]. May [Hashem] give him of the gold of Sheba And may He continually wish him well and bless him every day.*

**PART 4. BLESSINGS FOR PROSPERITY.** David prays that Hashem will reward the future king with peace and prosperity for the entire nation.

(טז) יְהִי פֶסֶת-בֵּר בְּאֲרָץ בְּרֵאשׁ הָרִים יִרְעַשׁ כְּלָבָנוֹן פְּרִי וַיִּצִצוּ מֵעִיר כְּעֶשֶׂב  
 הָאָרֶץ: (יז) יְהִי שָׂמוֹ לְעוֹלָם לִפְנֵי-שֶׁמֶשׁ [ינין] יָנוֹן שָׂמוֹ וַיִּתְּבָרְכוּ בוֹ כָּל-גּוֹיִם  
 וַיִּשְׂרֹוהוּ:

*(16) May there be an abundance of grain in the land [even] on the*

mountaintops. May its produce thrive like [the cedars of] Lebanon. May [Yisrael] flourish in the city like the grass of the earth. (17) May his name be forever; may May his name be projected [to his descendants] as long as the sun endures. May all nations bless themselves through him. May they count him as [the symbol of] happiness.

**PART 5. CONCLUSION.** David concludes the mizmor with praise to Hashem, thanking Him for having been allowed to reach this point in his life when he could see the successful completion of Tehillim, thanking Him for the many miracles he experienced in being saved from his enemies, and thanking Him for the privilege of seeing his son take on the role of king in his place.

(יח) בָּרוּךְ ה' אֱלֹקִים אֱלֹקֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עֲשֵׂה נִפְלְאוֹת לְבָדוּךָ: (יט) וּבָרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹדוֹ לְעוֹלָם וַיִּמְלֵא כְבוֹדוֹ אֶת־כָּל הָאָרֶץ אָמֵן וְאָמֵן: (כ) כָּלוּ תִפְלוֹת דָּוִד בֶּן־יִשָּׁי:  
(18) Blessed is Hashem, G-d, the G-d of Yisrael, Who alone does wondrous things. (19) Blessed is His glorious Name forever and may all the earth be filled with His glory. (20) The tefillos of David, the son of Yishai, are concluded.

## Learning the Mizmor

### PART 1. WISE JUDGE AND ENLIGHTENED LEADER

(א) לְשִׁלְמֹה

אֱלֹקִים מְשַׁפְּטֶיךָ לְמֶלֶךְ תָּנוּ

וְצִדְקַתְּךָ לְבֶן־מֶלֶךְ:

**For Shlomo — לְשִׁלְמֹה. O G-d, give the wisdom of Your laws to Shlomo, the new king — אֱלֹקִים מְשַׁפְּטֶיךָ לְמֶלֶךְ תָּנוּ**, whom I have designated to reign after me and who is worthy of being king in his own right. **And also give him the wisdom of Your goodness in judgment** because he is **the king's son — וְצִדְקַתְּךָ לְבֶן־מֶלֶךְ**. Let his judgements in practice be analogous to Your judgments, taking into account all of the circumstances of the situation being judged.

(ב) יָדִין עַמֶּךָ בְּצֶדֶק

וְעִנִּיךָ בְּמִשְׁפָּט:

**May he judge Your nation with tzedek — יָדִין עַמֶּךָ בְּצֶדֶק**, acting with fair-mindedness and concern for the welfare of those being judged, whether they

are rich or poor. **And** may he pay extra attention to treat **Your poor with** the justice of *mishpat* – וְעֲנִיךָ בְּמִשְׁפָּט so that they are protected from the power of the wealthy and the well-connected. Who are "Your poor"? They are the ones that Hashem has chosen to endure poverty through economic misfortune, in contrast to those who suffer poverty as victims of extortion.

(ג) יִשְׂאוּ הָרִים שְׁלוֹם לְעָם  
וּגְבְעוֹת בְּצִדְקָה:

**May** the **mountains bear** fruit in abundance, thereby creating a vibrant economy and bringing **peace to the nation** – יִשְׂאוּ הָרִים שְׁלוֹם לְעָם. **And may** the fruitful **hills** bring peace, inspired **by** the model of *tzedakah* (charitable justice) set by the king – וּגְבְעוֹת בְּצִדְקָה.

(ד) יִשְׁפֹּט עֲנִיֵי עָם  
יוֹשִׁיעַ לְבָנֵי אֶבְיוֹן  
וַיִּדְכֵּא עוֹשֵׂק:

**May** he **champion the nation's poor** – יִשְׁפֹּט עֲנִיֵי-עָם, who are victims of extortion. May he **save the children of the destitute** – יוֹשִׁיעַ לְבָנֵי אֶבְיוֹן, and use his wisdom to **crush** their **oppressor** – וַיִּדְכֵּא עוֹשֵׂק.

(ה) יִירָאוּךָ עַם שָׁמֶשׁ וְלַפְנֵי יָרַח  
דֹּר דֹּרִים:

**May** the king's example and his guidance raise the spiritual level of the nation so that **they fear You** by day and by night as long as **the sun and moon** shine throughout his reign – יִירָאוּךָ עַם-שָׁמֶשׁ וְלַפְנֵי יָרַח, and may that culture of spiritual integrity be passed down ever after from **generation to generation** – דֹּר דֹּרִים.

(ו) יֵרֵד כְּמָטָר עַל גֶּזַז  
כְּרִבִּיבִים זְרִיף אֶרֶץ:

**May** his words **descend** and penetrate the minds of his subjects **like rain** that falls **upon mown grass** – יֵרֵד כְּמָטָר עַל-גֶּזַז that is receptive to the influence of moisture. May they be **like** light **showers that water the earth** – כְּרִבִּיבִים זְרִיף אֶרֶץ.

(ז) יִפְרַח בְּיָמָיו צַדִּיק  
וְרַב שָׁלוֹם עַד בְּלֵי יָרַח:

**May the tzadik flourish in his days – יִפְרַח בְּיָמָיו צַדִּיק. And may there be abundant peace that lasts forever until the moon is no more – וְרַב שָׁלוֹם עַד בְּלֵי יָרַח.**

## PART 2. EFFECTIVE RULER

(ח) וַיִּרְדּוּ מֵיָם עַד יָם  
וּמִנְהַר עַד אֶפְסַי אֶרֶץ:

**May he extend his region of influence to many nations from the Red Sea (Yam Suf) to the Mediterranean Sea – וַיִּרְדּוּ מֵיָם עַד יָם, and from the Euphrates River to the Negev Desert (the Midbar) at the ends of the earth – וּמִנְהַר עַד אֶפְסַי אֶרֶץ, that is, to the ends of the inhabited regions .**

(ט) לִפְנֵי וַיִּכְרְעוּ צִיִּים  
וְאִיבֵי עֶפֶר יִלְחֹכוּ:

**May the inhabitants of the far-off wilderness areas kneel before him – לִפְנֵי וְאִיבֵי עֶפֶר, and may his foes lick the dust as they kiss his feet – וְאִיבֵי עֶפֶר, that is, may they totally subservient to him.**

(י) מַלְכֵי תַרְשִׁישׁ וְאֵיִים מִנְחָה יִשִּׁיבוּ  
מַלְכֵי שֶׁבָא וְסִבָּא אֶשְׁכֶּר יִקְרִיבוּ:

**May the kings of Tarshish and the distant islands submit annual tribute to him – מַלְכֵי תַרְשִׁישׁ וְאֵיִים מִנְחָה יִשִּׁיבוּ –**

*Tarshish was an African seaport associated with Tzur (Lebanon). They were known as the wealthiest power of that time. A fleet of Tarshish was destroyed in the time of Yehoshafat. (See I Melachim 22:49.)” This event was memorialized in Mizmor 048 (v. 48:8).*

**May the kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts – מַלְכֵי שֶׁבָא וְסִבָּא אֶשְׁכֶּר יִקְרִיבוּ.**

*The queen of Sheba came with gifts for Shlomo Hamelech. (See I Melachim 10:1-2.)”*

(יא) וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ לּוֹ כָּל מְלָכִים

## כָּל גּוֹיִם יַעֲבֹדוּהוּ:

May he be universally admired and respected because of his wisdom and his refined character. Beyond just sending gifts, **may all the kings** be personally subservient to him. May they come and **prostrate themselves before Him** – וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲווּ-לוֹ – **כָּל-מְלָכִים**. **May all the peoples serve him** – כָּל-גּוֹיִם יַעֲבֹדוּהוּ.

*This request finds its fulfillment in the following verses: "Shlomo ruled over all the kingdoms, from the [Euphrates] River [to] the land of the Plishtim, until the border of Mitzrayim; they brought tributes and served Shlomo all the days of his life." (I Melachim 5:1) "And the whole world wanted to see Shlomo to hear his wisdom, which G-d had put in his heart." (ibid. v. 24)*

PART 3. BENEFACTOR

(יב) כִּי יִצִּיל אֶבְיוֹן מִשׁוֹעַ  
וְעֲנִי וְאִין עֲזָר לוֹ:

The king will receive this universal homage **because he will rescue the needy person** even as he is **crying out** – כִּי-יִצִּיל אֶבְיוֹן מִשׁוֹעַ. **And he will rescue the lowly who has no one to help him** – וְעֲנִי וְאִין-עֲזָר לוֹ.

(יג) יָחַס עַל-דָּל וְאֶבְיוֹן  
וְנַפְשׁוֹת אֶבְיוֹנִים יוֹשִׁיעַ:

After rescuing the needy and lowly he will be concerned for their well-being. **He will pity the impoverished and the needy** – יָחַס עַל-דָּל וְאֶבְיוֹן. This will not be a one-time occurrence for **he will** continue to **save the souls of the needy** – וְנַפְשׁוֹת אֶבְיוֹנִים יוֹשִׁיעַ from those who rise up against them. By providing for their physical survival, he will make it possible for them to serve Hashem in the right way and in that way he will be saving their souls as well.

(יד) מִתּוֹךְ וּמַחֲמָס יִגָּאֵל נַפְשָׁם  
וַיִּיקַר דָּמָם בְּעֵינָיו:

By administering justice with integrity **he will redeem their soul from** being victims of **fraud and extortion** – מִתּוֹךְ וּמַחֲמָס יִגָּאֵל נַפְשָׁם. **And the shedding of their blood will be precious in his eyes** – וַיִּיקַר דָּמָם בְּעֵינָיו so that he will enforce the law to protect them from killers.

(טו) ויחי ויתן לו מזהב שְׁבָא  
ויתפלל בעדו תמיד כל היום וברכנהו:

**And may Shlomo live – ויחי** a long and prosperous life. **May Hashem give him of the gold of Sheba – ויתן לו מזהב שְׁבָא**. **And may Hashem continually wish him well and bless him every day – ויתפלל בעדו תמיד כל היום וברכנהו**.

#### PART 4. BLESSINGS FOR PROSPERITY

(טז) יהי פֶּסֶת בַּר בְּאֶרֶץ בְּרָאשׁ הָרִים  
יִרְעַשׂ כַּלְבַּנוֹן פְּרִיֹו  
וְיִצְיָצוּ מֵעִיר כְּעֵשֶׂב הָאָרֶץ:

**May there be an abundance of grain in the land even on the mountaintops – יהי פֶּסֶת בַּר בְּאֶרֶץ בְּרָאשׁ הָרִים** where the soil is less fertile. **May its produce thrive like the cedars of Lebanon – יִרְעַשׂ כַּלְבַּנוֹן פְּרִיֹו**. **May the people of Yisrael flourish in the city of Yerushalayim like the grass of the earth – וְיִצְיָצוּ מֵעִיר כְּעֵשֶׂב הָאָרֶץ**.

(יז) יהי שְׁמוֹ לְעוֹלָם  
לְפָנֵי שֶׁמֶשׁ יָנוֹן שְׁמוֹ  
וְיִתְבָּרְכוּ בוֹ כָּל גּוֹיִם וְיִאֲשְׁרוּהוּ:

**May his name of Shlomo Hamelech be forever – יהי שְׁמוֹ לְעוֹלָם** remembered for his wisdom and prosperity. **May his name be projected** through endless generations, casting his light of wisdom to mankind **as long as the sun endures – לְפָנֵי שֶׁמֶשׁ יָנוֹן שְׁמוֹ**. **May all nations bless themselves through him – וְיִתְבָּרְכוּ בוֹ כָּל גּוֹיִם**, referring to his example as a model of success. And in so doing **may they count him as the symbol of happiness – וְיִאֲשְׁרוּהוּ**.

#### PART 5. CONCLUSION

(יח) בְּרוּךְ ה' אֱלֹקִים אֱלֹקֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל  
עֹשֶׂה נִפְלְאוֹת לְבָדוֹ:

Inspired by the influence of Shlomo and his success in ruling Yisrael the nations of the world will be drawn to say, **"Blessed is Hashem, G-d, the G-d of Yisrael – בְּרוּךְ ה' אֱלֹקִים אֱלֹקֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל עֹשֶׂה נִפְלְאוֹת – Who alone does wondrous things – וְיִתְבָּרְכוּ לוֹ לְבָדוֹ** for His people."

(יט) וּבְרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹדוֹ לְעוֹלָם  
וַיִּמְלֵא כְבוֹדוֹ אֶת כָּל הָאָרֶץ  
אָמֵן וְאָמֵן:

And so I say to Hashem in gratitude for having allowed me to complete this second Book of *Tehillim*, "Blessed is His glorious Name forever – **וּבְרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹדוֹ לְעוֹלָם**. **And may all the earth be filled with His glory – וַיִּמְלֵא כְבוֹדוֹ אֶת כָּל הָאָרֶץ** so that this awareness is spread to all of mankind. **Amen – אָמֵן** to the truth of his Name, **and Amen – וְאָמֵן** to its acknowledgement by mankind."

(כ) כָּלֹ תַפִּלוֹת דָּוִד בֶּן יִשָּׂי:

The *tefillos* of David, the son of Yishai, in this second Book of Tehillim **are concluded** – **כָּלֹ תַפִּלוֹת דָּוִד בֶּן יִשָּׂי**. Even those mizmorim which were composed by others were adopted and edited by David so that the entire Book of Tehillim is identified with him.

## Sources

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

יא - רש"י, ספורנו, אלשיך	א - רש"י, רד"ק, המאירי, בן-רמון
יב - רד"ק, באר אברהם,	ב - המאירי, בן-רמון, מצודות, באר אברהם,
יג - אבן יחיאל, מצודות	מלבי"ם
יד - רש"י, רד"ק, מצודות, נר לרגלי	ג - רש"י, רד"ק, אלשיך, מצודות
טו - רש"י	ד - אבן עזרא, רד"ק, בן-רמון, אלשיך
טז - רש"י, רד"ק, אבן יחיאל	ה - רש"י, רד"ק, מצודות, רשר"ה
יז - רש"י, רד"ק, המאירי, מלבי"ם	ו - רש"י, רד"ק, מצודות, מלבי"ם
יח - אבן עזרא, אבן יחיאל, נר לרגלי	ז - רש"י
יט - ספורנו	ח - רש"י, אבן עזרא, המאירי, בן-רמון
כ - רש"י	ט - רד"ק, המאירי, ספורנו
	י - רש"י, רד"ק, בן-רמון

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