

Mizmor 078

Lessons of History

Key Concepts

In this mizmor the prophet Asaph offers a song of enlightenment (*maskil*) in the form of a historical review. It suggests the lessons to be learned from the experiences of the Jewish people in the years leading up to the establishment of the royal House of David. In a sense, everything that happened to the nation from the time that they left Mitzrayim was a preparation for this new era. This mizmor offers us a new perspective on the liberation of the Jewish people from Mitzrayim. The exodus from Mitzrayim could not be considered complete until the people had begun living a life of Torah in their ancestral home in Eretz Yisrael under the royal House of David. It was through David's accession to the throne that Yerushalayim became in fact the chosen dwelling place of the Divine Presence among His people.

The generation that came out of Mitzrayim and roamed the Midbar for 40 years was an essential link in the chain of the *Mesorah*. In a matter of weeks they rose from the lowest status of abject slavery to the glory of witnessing the greatness of Hashem at Sinai. To some extent they had earned this privilege by their devotion and trust in Hashem. Even so, they were very far from perfect. They quickly fell from their noble peak of spiritual greatness and loyalty to Hashem. Although they were to reach great heights of devotion, there were many times when they fell back from those heights.

Asaph does not relate the events of this era in strict chronological order because he is more concerned with the lessons to be learned. The key element of these lessons is to remember the past and the significance of what happened.

Asaph begins by reminding the people of the present generation not to forget the wonders that Hashem performed for their ancestors. He briefly reviews the locations in which these wonders occurred, starting with the wonders performed in Mitzrayim, and then going on to the parting of the Sea at the entrance to the Midbar.

Asaph then recalls how our ancestors were fed in the Midbar with the miraculous bread called manna. Despite this great blessing our ancestors foolishly challenged Hashem because He had not provided them with fresh meat as well. They convinced themselves that the lack of meat signaled an inability on the part of their Creator to provide them with whatever they craved.

Tragically, their lack of faith and trust in Hashem elicited a time of harsh judgment against them. But first He granted them their wish in the form of a miraculous flight of quail, which fell in the midst of their camp. While they were still gorging themselves on the meat, they were struck by calamity and many died.

Asaph then turns to the incident of the spies that had been sent to scout out the Land. The effects of their distorted report and the reaction of the people to that report were tragic indeed. They involved an entire generation of Klal Yisrael being deemed unworthy of entering Eretz Yisrael. As a result the people of that generation were brought to a premature end in the Midbar. Sadly, although they went through the motions of doing *teshuvah*, their repentance was not sincere and they were not completely forgiven.

However, Hashem ultimately softened His anger towards them and He allowed their children to enter the Land that they had treated with such disdain.

Nevertheless, Asaph emphasizes that the people failed to adequately respond to Hashem's forbearance. They sinned again in the Midbar, showing that they still did not adequately recall the miracles and the retributions which He had inflicted upon their cruel taskmasters in Mitzrayim. And so Asaph reviews how the nation of Mitzrayim was finally persuaded to release its hold on Yisrael by means of the 10 plagues.

Asaph then recalls how Hashem immediately took direct and active responsibility for His people and brought them to Eretz Yisrael. This sequence includes the miraculous parting of the Sea of Reeds and ends with the process of conquest of Canaan and settlement in the Land.

After the death of Yehoshua the brilliant progress that had been made in building a new nation was interrupted by a serious backward movement. This occurred during the period of the Shoftim (Judges) when the Holy Ark was temporarily housed in a Tabernacle that had been set up at Shiloh in the territory of the tribe Ephraim. Sadly, at this time, many of the people turned away from their total commitment to the laws the Torah. The tragic events of this period represented a rejection of the central role that had been played up to this time by the tribe of Ephraim.

All the factors that made Yehudah special now came together. Yehudah's territory was chosen as the site of the *Bais HaMikdash*, Hashem's permanent abode among His people. And David was chosen to found a line of kings that would govern the entire nation from their capital in Yerushalayim.

David rose to prominence from the lowest of positions, a shepherd tending his father's flocks. However, it was this background which demonstrated his special suitability to lead the nation with unlimited love, devotion, and humility.

Exploring the Mizmor

PART 1. INTRODUCTION. Asaph opens the mizmor with a call to the people to pay close attention to the lessons to be learned from their history. He emphasizes the authenticity of the events that he is about to describe. This authenticity is based on the *mesorah*, a handing down of trusted knowledge from generation to generation, starting with the great assemblage of people who personally witnessed the events being described. The first lesson of history is to trust in Hashem and observe His *mitzvos* because they are authentic and true.

(א) מְשַׁפֵּיל לְאַסָּף הָאֲזִינָה עִמִּי תוֹרָתִי הִטּוּ אֲזִנְכֶם לְאִמְרֵי־פִי: (ב) אֶפְתָּחָה בְּמִשְׁלַל פִּי אֲבִיעָה חִידוֹת מִנִּי־קֶדֶם: (ג) אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְנוּ וְנָדַעַם וְאֲבוֹתֵינוּ סִפְרוּ־לָנוּ: (ד) לֹא נִכְחַד מִבְּנֵיהֶם לְדוֹר אַחֲרוֹן מִסִּפְרֵים תְּהִלּוֹת ה' וְעִזּוּזוֹ וְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה: (ה) וַיִּקֶּם יְעֻדוֹת בְּיַעֲקֹב וְתוֹרָה שָׁם בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה אֶת־אֲבוֹתֵינוּ לְהוֹדִיעַם לְבְנֵיהֶם: (ו) לְמַעַן יִדְעוּ דוֹר אַחֲרוֹן בְּנִים יוֹלְדוּ יִקְמוּ וַיִּסְפְּרוּ לְבְנֵיהֶם: (ז) וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ בְּאֱלֻקִּים כְּסֻלָּם וְלֹא יִשְׁכַּחוּ מֵעֲלִי־אֵל וּמִצְוֹתָיו יִנְצְרוּ:

(1) A song of enlightenment by Asaph. Listen, my people, to my teaching; incline your ear to the words of my mouth. (2) I will open my mouth with allegorical language; I will resolve the riddles from early times. (3) [These are things] that we have heard and they are known to us. Our fore-fathers related them to us. (4) We will not withhold [them] from their descendants in the next generation, telling [them] the praises of Hashem, His might and the wondrous acts that He wrought. (5) For He established testimony in Yaakov and He ordained a Torah in Yisrael, which He charged our fathers to make known to their children. (6) So that a future generation may know, the children yet to be born; they will mature and tell their own children. (7) And they will place their unshakable trust in G-d, and not forget the acts of G-d, and observe his mitzvos.

PART 2. THE INCONSTANT GENERATION. Asaph admonishes the people not to emulate the negative qualities of their ancestors who entered the Midbar after being liberated by Hashem. The mere fact that the generation of the Midbar was not constant in their devotion was a great failing. How could they so quickly forget the wonders that were still fresh in their minds? There were even some elements associated with the tribe of Ephraim who opposed the will of Hashem and rejected the leadership destiny of the tribe of Yehudah. They resisted Hashem's wish to establish Yerushalayim as the seat of royalty and the domicile of the *Shechinah* in

the future *Bais HaMikdash*.

(ח) וְלֹא יִהְיוּ כְּאֲבוֹתֵם דּוֹר סוֹרֵר וּמְרָה דּוֹר לֹא־הֶכִּין לְבוֹ וְלֹא־נִאֲמְנָה אֶת־אֵל רוחו: (ט) בְּנֵי־אֶפְרַיִם נוֹשְׁקֵי רוּמֵי־קֶשֶׁת הִפְכוּ בַיּוֹם קָרֵב: (י) לֹא שָׁמְרוּ בְרִית אֱלֹהִים וּבִתְוֹרַתוֹ מֵאֲנוּ לְלַכֵּת: (יא) וַיִּשְׁכַּחוּ עֲלִילוֹתָיו וְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר הִרְאָם:
 (8) *That they not become like their fathers, a wayward and rebellious generation, a generation that did not dedicate its heart, and whose spirit was not steadfastly true to G-d. (9) Though the sons of Ephraim were armed archers, they retreated on the day of battle [and suffered a great defeat in retributiun for their sins]. (10) They did not keep the covenant of G-d and they refused to follow His Torah. (11) They forgot His deeds and the wonders that He had shown them.*

PART 3. A SERIES OF WONDERS. Asaph begins his review with the wonders that occurred in Mitzrayim itself. He emphasizes that the wonders were performed out in the open, even in the countryside of Tzoan, which was the capital district. He then goes on to the dramatic parting of the sea which occurred as soon as the people left Mitzrayim. He concludes with the wonders that sustained the people as they traveled through the Midbar. Especially notable were the columns of cloud and fire that guided the people through that wilderness. Also notable were the bountiful sources of fresh water which were made available to them despite the harsh land that they were passing through.

(יב) נִגַּד אֲבוֹתָם עָשָׂה פֶּלְא בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם שְׂדֵה־צֹעַן: (יג) בָּקַע יָם וַיַּעֲבִירם וַיִּצַּב־מַיִם כְּמוֹ־יַד: (יד) וַיִּנַּחֵם בְּעָנָן יוֹמָם וְכָל־הַלַּיְלָה בְּאוֹר אֵשׁ: (טו) וַיִּבְקַע צֻרִים בַּמִּדְבָּר וַיִּשְׁקֵם כְּתֵהֱמוֹת רַבָּה: (טז) וַיּוֹצֵא נוֹזְלִים מִסֶּלַע וַיּוֹרֵד כְּנִהְרוֹת מַיִם:

(12) *[The people of our generation should know that] He performed wonders in the presence of their ancestors in the land of Mitzrayim, the countryside of Tzoan. (13) He parted the sea and brought them through, and He stood the water [upright] like a wall. (14) He led them with a cloud by day and [then] throughout the night with a light of fire. (15) He split rocks in the Midbar and gave them [fresh water] to drink as if from the great deep. (16) He brought forth streaming water from the rock and caused waters to run down through the camp like rivers.*

PART 4. FEEDING THE MULTITUDES.**(1) Challenging Hashem**

This part of the Mizmor begins with the demand for meat, a request that was framed in the form of a brazen challenge rather than a humble request.

(יז) וַיֹּסִיפוּ עוֹד לַחֲטֹא־לוֹ לַמְרוֹת עֲלִיּוֹן בְּצִיָּה: (יח) וַיִּנְסוּ־אֵל בַּלְבָּבָם לְשֹׂאֵל־אֲכֹל לִנְפֹשָׁם: (יט) וַיִּדְבְּרוּ בְּאֱלֻקִּים אָמְרוּ הֵיכֵל אֵל לַעֲרֹךְ שִׁלְחַן בְּמִדְבָּר: (כ) הֲנִי הִכָּה־צֹר וַיִּזְבּוּ מִים וַנְּחַלִּים יִשְׁטֹפוּ הַגַּם־לֶחֶם יוּכַל תַּת אִם־יִכִּין שְׂאֵר לַעֲמוֹ:
 (17) *But they continued to sin against Him, defying the Most High in the parched land. (18) They challenged G-d in their hearts by demanding food for their craving. (19) They spoke against G-d, saying, "Can G-d provide a [fully] set table in the wilderness?" (20) "True, He struck a rock and water flowed and streams gushed forth, but can He also provide bread? Can He also supply meat for His people?"*

(2) The Miraculous Manna

Asaph describes how the people's ingratitude angered Hashem, especially in light of the manna which they had already been receiving.

(כא) לָכֵן שָׁמַע ה' וַיִּתְעַבֵּר וַאֲשֵׁ נִשְׁקָה בַּיַּעֲקֹב וְגַם־אָף עָלָה בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל: (כב) כִּי לֹא הֶאֱמִינוּ בְּאֱלֹהִים וְלֹא בְטַחוּ בִישׁוּעָתוֹ: (כג) וַיִּצּוּ שְׁחָקִים מִמַּעַל וּדְלִיתִי שָׁמַיִם פָּתַח: (כד) וַיִּמְטֵר עֲלֵיהֶם מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיִּדְגּוּ־שָׁמַיִם נָתַן לֶמֶן: (כה) לֶחֶם אַבְּיָרִים אָכַל אִישׁ צִידָה שָׁלַח לָהֶם לְשֹׁבַע: (כו) יִסַּע קָדִים בְּשָׁמַיִם וַיִּנְהַג בְּעֵזוֹ תִימָן: (כז) וַיִּמְטֵר עֲלֵיהֶם כֶּעָפָר שְׂאֵר וּכְחוֹל יָמִים עוֹף כָּנָף:

(21) *And so Hashem heard [their thoughts] and became angry. A fire was kindled against Yaakov and wrath also flared against Yisrael ... (22) ... because they did not believe in G-d and they did not trust in His yeshuah ... (23) ... [although] He had already commanded the skies above and opened the gates of heaven ... (24) ... and rained upon them manna to eat, giving them heavenly grain. (25) Man ate the bread of angels; He sent [along with] them provisions in abundance.*

(3) The Miraculous Quail

The first reaction of Hashem to the demand for meat was to provide the people with a flight of quail, which they immediately consumed.

(כו) יסע קָדִים בְּשָׁמַיִם וַיִּנְהַג בְּעֵזוֹ תִימֹן: (כז) וַיִּמְטֵר עֲלֵיהֶם כְּעָפָר שָׁאֵר וַיַּחֲוֹל יָמִים עוֹף כָּנָף: (כח) וַיַּפֵּל בְּקֶרֶב מַחֲנֵהוּ סָבִיב לְמִשְׁכַּנְתּוֹ: (כט) וַיֹּאכְלוּ וַיִּשְׂבְּעוּ מְאֹד וַתִּאָּוְתָם יָבֵא לָהֶם:

(26) [Now] He made the east wind blow through the heavens and He guided the south wind with His strength. (27) He rained savory meat upon them like dust, winged birds like the sand of sea. (28) He let them fall inside His camp, all around His dwellings. (29) So they ate and were abundantly satisfied for He brought them what they craved.

(4) Divine Punishment

This part of the mizmor concludes with a brief description of the high price the people were made to pay for the pleasure they thought was so important to them.

(ל) לֹא־זָרוּ מִתִּאָּוְתָם עוֹד אָכְלָם בְּפִיהֶם: (לא) וְאָף אֱלֹהִים עָלָה בָּהֶם וַיַּהַרְג בְּמִשְׁמַנֵּיהֶם וּבַחֹרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הַכְּרִיעַ:

(30) They had not yet lost their craving; their food was still in their mouth ... (31) when the anger of G-d flared against them. So He slew the sturdiest among them and He struck down the finest among the young men of Yisrael.

PART 5. A TRAGIC SIN. Although the people had witnessed the power of Hashem with their own eyes, they still had difficulty believing that His sheltering presence would continue into the indefinite future. And so they were ready to be influenced by the frightening stories that the spies brought back from their scouting trip into the Land of Canaan. This failure of trust in Hashem was to cost them dearly. They were made to wander in the Midbar and when the time came to enter the Holy Land, the promise of a bright future would not be fulfilled until the entire generation had come to the end of their days in the desolate wilderness.

(לב) בְּכָל־זֹאת חֲטָאוּ־עוֹד וְלֹא־הֶאֱמִינוּ בְּנִפְלְאוֹתָיו: (לג) וַיִּכְל־בְּהֶבֶל יָמֵיהֶם וַיִּשְׁנוּתָם בְּבִהְלָה: (לד) אִם־הֶרְגָם וַדַּרְשׁוּהוּ וְשָׁבוּ וְשִׁחֲרוּ־אֵל: (לה) וַיִּזְכְּרוּ כִּי־אֱלֹקִים צוּרִם וְאֵל עֲלִיּוֹן גֹּאֲלָם: (לו) וַיִּפְתּוּהוּ בְּפִיהֶם וּבִלְשׁוֹנָם יִכְזְבוּ־לוֹ: (לז) וּלְבָם לֹא־נָכוֹן עָמוּ וְלֹא נֶאֱמְנוּ בְּבְרִיתוֹ:

(32) In spite of all this, they continued to sin; they did not have faith in [the power of] His wonders. (33) So He ended their days in futility and their years in bewildered fear. (34) When He struck them with death, they sought Him out. Then they turned back and prayed to G-d. (35) They then

realized that G-d was their Rock and their Redeemer was the Most High G-d. (36) But they [were still not sincere and] thought they could beguile Him with their mouths and deceive Him with their tongues. (37) Their heart was not steadfast with Him and they were not faithful to His covenant.

PART 6. FORGIVENESS. The two factors that contributed to Hashem's forgiveness are presented in two corresponding verses.

First of all, there is the eternal quality of mercy that characterizes Hashem. In effect, His mercy overcame His anger.

Secondly, Hashem knew that human beings are not perfect and so He chose not to demand perfection of them. The imperfection of human beings is inherent in the way they were created from base materials. Although they have the potential to rise above their limitations to the greatest spiritual heights, they are beset with a destructive spirit, the *yetzer hara* (evil inclination), which goads them to follow their imagination instead of the truth that is all around them.

(לח) וְהוּא רַחוּם יִכַּפֵּר עֲוֹן וְלֹא יִשְׁחִית וְהַרְבֵּה לְהַשִּׁיב אָפוּ וְלֹא יַעֲרִיר כָּל־חַמָּתוֹ:

(לט) וַיִּזְכֹּר כִּי־בֶשֶׂר הֵמָּה רוּחַ הוֹלֵךְ וְלֹא יָשׁוּב:

(38) But He is merciful. He forgives iniquity and does not impose utter destruction. Time and again He pulls back His rage and does not let all His wrathful feelings be provoked. (39) [And so He showed forgiveness to them] for He remembered that they were but flesh, with a capricious spirit that goes [after fantasies] and does not return [to G-d].

PART 7. REMEMBERING MITZRAYIM. Hashem had forgiven the sins of His people even though they were unworthy. But now Asaph recalls that Hashem's kindness did not prevent them from sinning again in the Midbar, and subsequently in Eretz Yisrael. These later sins suggested that the people had tragically put out of their minds the miraculous power that Hashem displayed in bringing about their freedom from the slavery of Mitzrayim.

And so Asaph reminds his listeners of the spectacular retribution that Hashem delivered in Mitzrayim, which His people failed to remember adequately. He especially calls attention to the most dramatic of the ten plagues, concluding with the most dramatic of all, the slaying of the firstborn.

(1) Failure to Remember.

(מ) כִּמָּה יִמְרוּהוּ בַמִּדְבָּר יַעֲצִיבוּהוּ בִישִׁימוֹן: (מא) וַיָּשׁוּבוּ וַיִּנָּסוּ אֶל וּקְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל

הַתְּוֹ: (מב) לֹא־זָכְרוּ אֶת־יְדוּ יוֹם אֲשֶׁר־פָּדַם מִנִּי־צָר: (מג) אֲשֶׁר־שָׂם בְּמִצְרַיִם

אתותיו ומופתיו בשדה-צען:

(40) How often did they rebel against Him in the Midbar and distress Him in that desolate wasteland! (41) They repeatedly tested [the patience of] G-d by setting bounds to the Holy One of Israel. (42) They did not remember the power of His hand, the day He redeemed them from the oppressor, (43) how he set His signs in Mitzrayim and His wonders in the countryside of Tzoan.

(2) Five Plagues

(מד) ויִהְיֶה לָדָם יְאֲרִיָּהֶם וְנִזְלִיָּהֶם בְּלִישְׁתֵּינֹן: (מה) יִשְׁלַח בָּהֶם עָרֹב וַיֹּאכְלֵם וַיִּצְרְדֵעַ וַתִּשְׁחִיתֵם: (מו) וַיִּתֵּן לְחֹסִיל יְבוּלָם וַיִּגִּיעַם לְאַרְבֶּה: (מז) יִהְרַג בַּבָּרָד גִּפְנֹם וְשִׁקְמוֹתָם בַּחֲנָמַל: (מח) וַיִּסְגֹר לַבָּרָד בְּעֵרָם וּמִקְנֵיהֶם לַרְשָׁפִים:

(44) [They did not remember how] turned their rivers into blood and [made] their flowing waters undrinkable. (45) He sent against them [beasts of] the wild that devoured them, and frogs that poisoned them. (46) He gave their produce to the grasshopper and He gave [the fruit of] their toil to the locust. (47) He killed their grapevines with hail and their fig-trees with biting frost. (48) He delivered their cattle to the hail and their flocks to fiery [lightning] bolts.

(3) Conclusion

(מט) יִשְׁלַח בָּם חֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ עֲבָרָה וְזַעַם וְצָרָה מִשְׁלַחַת מְלֹאכֵי רָעִים: (נ) יִפְלֹס נְתִיב לְאֵפוֹ לֹא-חֶשֶׁד מִמּוֹת נַפְשָׁם וְחִיָּתָם לְדָבַר הַסִּגִּיר: (נא) וַיִּדַּע כָּל-בְּכוֹר בְּמִצְרַיִם רֵאשִׁית אוֹנִים בְּאֶהְלֵי־חָם:

(49) [In punishment for their wanton cruelty] He sent His burning rage against them, [which He expressed through] wrath, fury, and trouble. [In summary, it was] a mission of destructive emissaries. (50) He paved a path for His anger [to descend to earth]. He did not spare their lives from death and He delivered their animals to pestilence. (51) He struck every firstborn in Mitzrayim, the first fruit of their manhood in the tents of Cham.

PART 8. COMING HOME. Asaph now approaches the entry of the people into Eretz Yisrael. The first step was their physical exodus into the Midbar, immediately followed by the miraculous parting of the Sea of Reeds. Asaph has previously reviewed the events of the Midbar itself, and so he now skips directly to the arrival

in Eretz Yisrael, where he recalls how Hashem guided the tribes of Yisrael in the process of conquest and settlement.

(נב) וַיִּסַּע כְּצֹאן עֲמוֹ וַיְנַהֲגֵם כְּעֹדֵר בַּמִּדְבָּר: (נג) וַיְנַחֵם לְבֶטַח וְלֹא פָחַדוּ וְאֶת־אוֹיְבֵיהֶם כָּסָה הַיָּם: (נד) וַיְבִיאֵם אֶל־גְּבוּל קְדְשׁוֹ הַר־זֶה קִנְיָהּ יְמִינוֹ: (נה) וַיַּגְרֵשׁ מִפְּנֵיהֶם גּוֹיִם וַיְפִילֵם בְּחֹבֶל נַחְלָה וַיִּשְׁכֹּן בְּאֶהְלֵיהֶם שְׁבֻטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

(52) He led His nation [as a shepherd drives his] sheep and He drove them like a flock into the Midbar. (53) He led them securely and they had no fear for they had seen how the sea covered their foes. (54) He brought them to His sacred boundary [of Eretz Yisrael] and to this mountain [the Bais HaMikdash in Yerushalayim] that His right Hand acquired. (55) Then He drove out [the seven] nations from before them and apportioned [to each tribe its] inheritance with a measuring line. And He took residence in the tents [of His people].

PART 9. REJECTING EPHRAIM. During the period when the Tabernacle was in Shiloh, the people continued to recognize Hashem as the Supreme Power that created the world. However, they could not help being influenced by the culture of the surrounding nations. As a result they began to think there might be other powers that they needed to placate. Such an attitude is unacceptable because it denies a core concept of our *emunah*, that Hashem is the only true power in the universe.

As long as the *Shechinah* (Hashem's Divine presence) remained in Shiloh, this location and the tribe of Ephraim were effectively the center of the nation. But Yisrael's offense angered Hashem so much that He removed His presence from Shiloh. In conjunction with this, Hashem allowed the Ark to be captured by the Plishtim, a nation that had been Yisrael's enemy for many years. Furthermore, a fierce battle with the Plishtim resulted in the destruction of the Tabernacle at Shiloh and the loss of 30,000 Jewish warriors. These events were characterized by Asaph as the rejection of the central role that had been played up to this time by the tribe of Ephraim and by the memory of Yosef *HaTzadik*, the tribe's ancestor.

(נו) וַיִּנְסוּ וַיִּמְרוּ אֶת־אֱלֹהִים עֲלִיוֹן וְעֵדוּתָיו לֹא שָׁמְרוּ: (נז) וַיִּסְגּוּ וַיִּבְגְּדוּ כְּאֲבוֹתָם נִהְפְּכוּ כְּקִשְׁת רִמְיָה: (נח) וַיִּכְעִיסוּהוּ בְּבִמּוֹתָם וּבְפִסְלֵיהֶם יִקְנִיאוּהוּ: (נט) שָׁמַע אֱלֹהִים וַיִּתְעַבֵּר וַיִּמָּאֵס מְאֹד בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל: (ס) וַיִּטֹּשׁ מִשְׁכַּן שְׁלוֹ אֶהֱל שָׁכֵן בְּאֲדָם: (סא) וַיִּתֵּן לְשִׁבְי עֵזוֹ וַתִּפְאַרְתּוּ בְּיַד־צָר: (סב) וַיִּסְגֵּר לַחֲרָב עֲמוֹ וַבְּנַחֲלָתוֹ הִתְעַבֵּר: (סג) בַּחוּרָיו אֶכְלָה־אֶשׁ וּבַתּוֹלְתָיו לֹא הוֹלְלוּ: (סד) כִּהְנִיּוּ בַּחֲרָב נָפְלוּ וְאֶלְמְנָתָיו לֹא תִבְכְּיָהּ: (סה) וַיִּקַּץ כְּיִשָּׁן אֲדָנָי כְּגִבּוֹר מִתְרוֹנֵן מִיָּו: (סו) וַיִּדְ-צָרְיוֹ אַחֲזֹר חֲרַפְת

עוֹלָם נָתַן לָמוֹ: (סז) וַיִּמָּאֵס בְּאַהֲלֵי יוֹסֵף וַיִּשְׁבֹּט אֶפְרַיִם לֹא בָחַר:

(56) The people tried [the patience] of G-d the Most High and rebelled. And so they did not keep His precepts. (57) They backslid and betrayed [Him] as their ancestors [had done]. They reversed [direction] like a treacherous bow. (58) They angered Him with their high altars and they provoked Him with their idols. (59) G-d heard their voices [of idol worship] and became enraged. (60) He abandoned the Tabernacle of Shiloh, the very tent where He had dwelled among men. (61) He delivered [the holy Ark representing] His strength into captivity and [put] His splendor into the oppressor's hand. (62) He gave His people over to the sword and His anger overflowed against His inheritance. (63) Fire consumed His young men and His maidens had no marriage celebration. (64) His Kohanim fell by the sword; their widows did not [even have a chance to] weep. (65) Then Hashem awoke as if from sleep, like a warrior shaking off the [effects of] wine. (66) He [then] beat His enemies into retreat and dealt them a lasting insult. (67) But He rejected Shiloh, the tent of Yosef and did not choose the tribe of Ephraim.

PART 10. THE ASCENDANCE OF YEHUDAH. Here Asaph presents the climactic conclusion of the *mizmor*. All the travails that Yisrael experienced and all the lessons they learned brought the nation to a new level in their relationship with Hashem. At long last the tribe of Yehudah, was given the opportunity to realize its full potential of leadership.

(סח) וַיִּבְחַר אֶת־שֵׁבֶט יְהוּדָה אֶת־הָר צִיּוֹן אֲשֶׁר אָהֵב: (סט) וַיִּבֶן כְּמוֹ־רַמְמִים מִקְדָּשׁוֹ כְּאֶרֶץ יִסְדָּה לְעוֹלָם: (ע) וַיִּבְחַר בְּדָוִד עֶבְדוֹ וַיִּקְחֵהוּ מִמִּכְלָאת צֹאן: (עא) מֵאַחַר עָלוֹת הִבְיֵאוּ לְרַעוֹת בְּיַעֲקֹב עַמּוֹ וּבְיִשְׂרָאֵל נִחְלָתוֹ: (עב) וַיִּרְעַם כְּתָם לִבּוֹ וּבִתְבוּנוֹת כִּפְּיוֹ יִנְחָם:

(68) He chose the tribe of Yehudah, with Mount Tzion that He loves. (69) And He built His Bais HaMikdash, [everlasting] like the highest heavens; like the earth He established it forever. (70) He chose David, His servant, and took him from the sheep corrals. (71) From minding the nursing ewes He brought him to tend to Yaakov, His nation, and to Yisrael, His inheritance. (72) He tended them [with goodness and wisdom], consistent with the innocent conscientiousness of his heart. And he led them with the skill of his hands.

Learning the Mizmor

PART 1. INTRODUCTION

(א) מְשָׁכִיל לְאַסָּף
הָאֲזִינָה עִמִּי תוֹרָתִי
הֵטוּ אָזְנוֹכֶם לְאִמְרֵי פִי:

A song of enlightenment by Asaph — מְשָׁכִיל לְאַסָּף. Listen, my worthy people, to my teaching — הָאֲזִינָה עִמִּי תוֹרָתִי. Even if you are not in need of my sermon, you will receive a reward for just listening. And to the multitudes of the nation I say, **incline your ear** and pay special attention **to the words of my mouth** — הֵטוּ אָזְנוֹכֶם לְאִמְרֵי פִי, so that you will not be punished as were your ancestors.

(ב) אֶפְתָּחָה בְּמִשְׁלַל פִּי
אֲבִיעָה חִידוֹת מִנִּי קִדְּם:

I will open my mouth with allegorical language — אֶפְתָּחָה בְּמִשְׁלַל פִּי to help you visualize my themes and concepts. **I will resolve the riddles** posed by the relationship between historical events that have been handed down **from early times** — אֲבִיעָה חִידוֹת מִנִּי קִדְּם.

(ג) אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְנוּ וַיִּנְדְּעוּ
וְאֲבוֹתֵינוּ סִפְרוּ לָנוּ:

The things that I will tell you are not folk tales. They are things **that we have heard** — אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְנוּ through an authentic *mesorah* passed down by righteous people. **And they are known — וַיִּנְדְּעוּ to us** from the Torah of Moshe Rabbeinu. These are stories that were originally told by those who witnessed the events. In fact it was **our fore-fathers** that went out of Mitzrayim who have **related them to us** — וְאֲבוֹתֵינוּ סִפְרוּ לָנוּ and it is not in the nature of a father to give false reports to his children.

(ד) לֹא נִכְחַד מִבְּנֵיהֶם לְדוֹר אַחֲרוֹן
מִסִּפְרֵים תְּהִלּוֹת ה'

וְעִזּוֹז וְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה:

We, in turn, will not withhold these things **from** our own children who are **their descendants** — **לֹא נִכְחַד מִבְּנֵיהֶם** in the next generation — **לְדוֹר אַחֲרוֹן**, and to every generation that follows, **telling** them **the praises of Hashem** — **מְסַפְּרִים** וְעִזּוֹז וְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו, **His might and the wondrous acts that He wrought** — **תְּהִלּוֹת ה'** וְעִזּוֹז וְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה. We thereby continue the *mesorah*, making our sons and daughters the spiritual heirs of our own fathers and mothers.

(ה) וַיִּקַּם עֲדוּת בְּיַעֲקֹב וְתוֹרָה שָׁם בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל

אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה אֶת אֲבוֹתֵינוּ לְהוֹדִיעַם לְבְנֵיהֶם:

For He established an eternal **testimony in Yaakov** — **וַיִּקַּם עֲדוּת בְּיַעֲקֹב**, attesting to all that happened to the nation over the centuries. **And He ordained a Torah in Yisrael** — **וְתוֹרָה שָׁם בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל**, teaching His laws and principles of morality and integrity, **which He charged our fathers** — **אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה אֶת אֲבוֹתֵינוּ** — **to make known to their children** — **לְהוֹדִיעַם לְבְנֵיהֶם** throughout all the generations..

(ו) לְמַעַן יֵדְעוּ דוֹר אַחֲרוֹן בָּנִים יוֹלְדוּ

יִקְמוּ וַיִּסְפְּרוּ לְבְנֵיהֶם:

So that a future generation may know — **לְמַעַן יֵדְעוּ דוֹר אַחֲרוֹן**, the children **yet to be born** — **בָּנִים יוֹלְדוּ**. So that **they will mature and tell their own children** — **יִקְמוּ וַיִּסְפְּרוּ לְבְנֵיהֶם** so that the chain will be unbroken throughout all the future Exiles and persecutions. When one center of Torah learning is destroyed, another will rise up in its place.

(ז) וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ בְּאֱלֹקִים כְּסֶלֶם

וְלֹא יִשְׁכְּחוּ מַעֲלָלֵי אֱלֹהִים וּמִצְוֹתָיו יִנְצְרוּ:

So that upon hearing and being convinced of everything that He has done, that **they will place their unshakable trust in G-d** — **וַיִּשְׂמְחוּ בְּאֱלֹקִים כְּסֶלֶם**, and **not forget the acts of G-d** — **וְלֹא יִשְׁכְּחוּ מַעֲלָלֵי אֱלֹהִים**. Despite all the challenges that they may face they will never give up their hope and trust in His mercy. **And** as a result, they will continue to faithfully **observe His mitzvos** — **וּמִצְוֹתָיו יִנְצְרוּ**. For they will realize that there is no other power in heaven or earth that could have

done and would have done what He did for them in the past.

PART 2. THE INCONSTANT GENERATION

(ח) וְלֹא יִהְיוּ כְּאֲבוֹתָם דֹּר סוֹרֵר וּמֵרָה
דֹּר לֹא הִכִּין לְבוֹ וְלֹא נֶאֱמְנָה אֶת אֱלֹהֵי רוּחוֹ:

That they not become like their fathers — וְלֹא יִהְיוּ כְּאֲבוֹתָם who went out of Mitzrayim, **a wayward and rebellious generation** — דֹּר סוֹרֵר וּמֵרָה. It was **a generation that did not** consistently **dedicate its heart** — דֹּר לֹא הִכִּין לְבוֹ to the word of Hashem, **and whose spirit was not steadfastly true to G-d** — וְלֹא נֶאֱמְנָה אֶת אֱלֹהֵי רוּחוֹ.

(ט) בְּנֵי אֶפְרַיִם נוֹשְׁקֵי רוּמֵי קֶשֶׁת
הִפְכוּ בַיּוֹם קָרֵב:

The failings of that generation were seen in **the sons of Ephraim** — בְּנֵי אֶפְרַיִם, who resisted the establishment of Yerushalayim as the location of the future *Bais HaMikdash*, preferring to see it in Shiloh instead. They defied the will of Hashem and so they were ultimately punished by being defeated in battle against the Plishtim. Though **they were armed archers** — נוֹשְׁקֵי רוּמֵי קֶשֶׁת, **they retreated on the day of battle** — הִפְכוּ בַיּוֹם קָרֵב.

(י) לֹא שָׁמְרוּ בְרִית אֱלֹקִים
וּבְתוֹרָתוֹ מֵאֲנוּ לְלַכֵּת:

Hashem wanted to save them but in three ways they failed to take advantage of what they should have done to be worthy of His support. (1) **They did not keep the covenant of G-d** — לֹא שָׁמְרוּ בְרִית אֱלֹקִים, which He made with them at Sinai, **and (2) they refused to follow His Torah** — וּבְתוֹרָתוֹ מֵאֲנוּ לְלַכֵּת.

(יא) וַיִּשְׁכְּחוּ עֲלִילוֹתַי
וּנְפִלְאוֹתַי אֲשֶׁר הִרְאִים:

(3) **They forgot His deeds** — וַיִּשְׁכְּחוּ עֲלִילוֹתַי that he performed in Mitzrayim to bring about the redemption, **and the spectacular wonders which He showed them** — וּנְפִלְאוֹתַי אֲשֶׁר הִרְאִים at the Sea and in the *Midbar*. Besides the openly visible miracles, there were so many that were apparent, although hidden.

PART 3. A SERIES OF WONDERS

(יב) נִגְדוּ אֲבוֹתֶם עֲשֵׂה פֶלֶא
בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם שִׁדְה צֵעוֹן:

Surely the people alive today are aware how **He performed wonders in the presence of their ancestors** – נִגְדוּ אֲבוֹתֶם עֲשֵׂה פֶלֶא, in the land of Mitzrayim – בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם, in public view in **the countryside of Tzoan** – שִׁדְה־צֵעוֹן, the capital of Mitzrayim, where the most important people of that nation resided.

(יג) בָּקַע יָם וַיַּעֲבִירָם
וַיִּצָּב מַיִם כְּמוֹ נֹד:

And then after they left Mitzrayim, **He parted the sea and brought them through** – בָּקַע יָם וַיַּעֲבִירָם as a father carries a child, **and He stood the water upright like a wall** – וַיִּצָּב מַיִם כְּמוֹ־נֹד in a way that His hand was made obvious to all the world.

(יד) וַיִּנְחֶם בְּעֵנָן יוֹמָם
וְכָל־הַלַּיְלָה בְּאוֹר אֵשׁ:

As they traveled through the desolate Midbar **He led them with a cloud by day** – וַיִּנְחֶם בְּעֵנָן יוֹמָם to show them the way and protect them from the heat of the sun. **And He led them throughout the night with a light of fire** – וְכָל־הַלַּיְלָה בְּאוֹר אֵשׁ until the day had fully dawned. The fire was not only to light their path, but also to provide light for all their needs at night, and also to provide warmth during the cold desert nights.

(טו) יִבְקַע צְרִים בַּמִּדְבָּר
וַיִּשְׁקוּ כְּתֵהֱמוֹת רַבָּה:

He split rocks in the wilderness of **the Midbar** – יִבְקַע צְרִים בַּמִּדְבָּר on many occasions, **and gave them fresh water to drink** – וַיִּשְׁקוּ. Even though they were in the middle of a parched desert the water flowed in abundance **as if from** an unending supply in **the great deep** – כְּתֵהֱמוֹת רַבָּה, .

(טז) וַיּוֹצֵא נוֹזְלִים מִסָּלַע

וַיּוֹרֵד בְּנִהְרוֹת מַיִם:

He brought forth streaming water from the rock — וַיּוֹצֵא נוֹזְלִים מִסֶּלַע, and caused waters to run down in torrents from the high rock through the camp like rivers — וַיּוֹרֵד בְּנִהְרוֹת מַיִם.

PART 4. FEEDING THE MULTITUDES

(1) Challenging Hashem

(יז) וַיּוֹסִיפוּ עוֹד לַחֲטֹא לוֹ
לְמַרְוֹת עֲלִיּוֹן בְּצָיָה:

But after having sinned with their impatient demands for water and then seeing the miracles by which the water came, **they continued to sin against Him — וַיּוֹסִיפוּ לְמַרְוֹת עֲלִיּוֹן בְּצָיָה, defying the Most High in the parched land — עוֹד לַחֲטֹא לוֹ.**

Even in the vast desert where they had no one beside Him, they challenged the omnipotence of Hashem, thinking that His power was delegated to lesser gods.

(יח) וַיִּנְסוּ אֶל בְּלִבָּם
לְשֹׂאֵל אֶכֶל לִנְפֹשָׁם:

They challenged G-d in their hearts — וַיִּנְסוּ אֶל בְּלִבָּם, by demanding food that they did not need, only to satisfy their craving — לְשֹׂאֵל אֶכֶל לִנְפֹשָׁם. The manna was good and tasty, yet they asked for meat to see if He could do it. However, they didn't say this outright. Their claim was that they needed meat. Although their defiance was primarily in their heart, Hashem heard their thoughts (verse 21).

(יט) וַיִּדְבְּרוּ בְּאֱלֻקִּים
אָמְרוּ הֵיכַל אֶל לַעֲרֹךְ שִׁלְחֹן בַּמִּדְבָּר:

They spoke against G-d — וַיִּדְבְּרוּ בְּאֱלֻקִּים, as if to be saying, "Can G-d provide a fully set table to serve meat in the wilderness — אָמְרוּ הֵיכַל אֶל לַעֲרֹךְ שִׁלְחֹן בַּמִּדְבָּר where there is no human habitation?" Why did they raise the level of their expectation to an unreasonable level, if not to challenge Hashem?

(כ) הֵן הִכָּה צוּר וַיִּזְוְבוּ מַיִם וַיִּנְחָלִים יִשְׁטָפוּ
הַגַּם לֶחֶם יוֹכֵל תֵּת אִם יָכִין שְׂאֵר לְעַמּוֹ:

"Where is the limit of His capacity? **True, He struck a rock and water flowed and streams gushed forth** — הֵן הִכָּה צוּר וַיִּזְבּוּ מִים וַיִּנְחָלִים וַיִּשְׁטֹפוּ, **but can He also provide bread** — הֲגַם לֶחֶם יוּכַל תַּת? Is He not using up His resources? And if He provided water and bread (manna), **can He also supply meat for His people** — "אִם יִכִּין שְׂאֵר לְעַמּוֹ"

(2) The Miraculous Manna

(כא) לָכֵן שָׁמַע ה' וַיִּתְעַבֵּר
וַאֲשֶׁר נִשְׁקָה בְּיַעֲקֹב וְגַם אֶף עָלָה בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל:

And so — לָכֵן, even though they spoke in their hearts and not aloud, **Hashem heard their thoughts and became angry** — שָׁמַע ה' וַיִּתְעַבֵּר. **A fire of rage was kindled against Yaakov** — וַאֲשֶׁר נִשְׁקָה בְּיַעֲקֹב, referring to the people who were seeking pretexts for complaint as mentioned in *Bamidbar* 11:1. **And wrath also flared against Yisrael** — וְגַם אֶף עָלָה בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל, referring to the finer elements of the people who were influenced by the riff-raff among them in a separate incident, as mentioned in 11:4 *ibid*.

(כב) כִּי לֹא הֶאֱמִינוּ בֵּאלֹהִים
וְלֹא בִטְחוּ בִישׁוּעָתוֹ:

The anger of Hashem was not so much because of the request for meat as such, but **because it meant that they did not believe in** the ability of **G-d** — כִּי לֹא הֶאֱמִינוּ בֵּאלֹהִים to give them what they asked nor did they believe He had their interest at heart in everything He did. **And so they did not place their trust in His yeshuah** — וְלֹא בִטְחוּ בִישׁוּעָתוֹ. They did not feel they could completely rely upon Him to save them in the future.

(כג) וַיִּצֹו שְׁחָקִים מִמַּעַל
וַיִּדְלְתִי שָׁמַיִם פֶּתַח:

Furthermore, Hashem was angry because they did not learn a lesson from His previous kindness to them. **He had already commanded the skies above** — וַיִּדְלְתִי שָׁמַיִם פֶּתַח, **and opened the gates of heaven** — וַיִּצֹו שְׁחָקִים מִמַּעַל, changing the very laws of nature to provide them with a generous supply of miraculous food on a daily basis.

(כד) וַיִּמְטֵר עֲלֵיהֶם מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם לֶאֱכֹל
וַיִּדְגֵן שָׁמַיִם נִתְּנוּ לָמוֹ:

From heaven **He rained upon them manna to eat** – וַיִּמְטֵר עֲלֵיהֶם מִן הַשָּׁמַיִם לֶאֱכֹל, and **He gave them heavenly grain** – וַיִּדְגֵן שָׁמַיִם נִתְּנוּ לָמוֹ to help them develop the spiritual side of their being.

(כה) לָחֶם אַבְיָרִים אָכַל אִישׁ
צִידָה שָׁלַח לָהֶם לְשֹׁבַע:

Man ate the bread of angels – לָחֶם אַבְיָרִים אָכַל אִישׁ, a miracle food that left no residue in the body. Wherever the people went **He sent** along with **them provisions in abundance** – צִידָה שָׁלַח לָהֶם לְשֹׁבַע so that even though the manna had the characteristics of a spiritual food each person who ate it felt satiated.

(3) The Miraculous Quail

(כו) יִסַּע קָדִים בַּשָּׁמַיִם
וַיִּנְהַג בְּעֶזְוֹ תִימָן:

And now order to provide fresh meat to the people Hashem used a combination of winds to bring up huge quantities of quail from the south-east. **He made the east wind blow through the heavens** – יִסַּע קָדִים בַּשָּׁמַיִם to drive the quail across the sea **and He guided the south wind with His strength** – וַיִּנְהַג בְּעֶזְוֹ תִימָן to waft them in the direction of the camps of Yisrael.

(כז) וַיִּמְטֵר עֲלֵיהֶם כְּעָפָר שְׂאֵר
וּכְחוֹל יַמִּים עוֹף כָּנָף:

And He rained savory meat upon them like dust – וַיִּמְטֵר עֲלֵיהֶם כְּעָפָר שְׂאֵר, in the form of **winged birds**, which did not fly away but plummeted to earth **like the sand of sea** – וּכְחוֹל יַמִּים עוֹף כָּנָף. There were so many of them that they were like dust, but instead of being blown away like dust, they fell to the ground like sand at the seashore.

(כח) וַיִּפֹּל בְּקֶרֶב מַחֲנֵהוּ
סָבִיב לְמִשְׁכַּנְתָּיו:

Hashem **let** them **fall inside His camp** — וַיִּפֹּל בְּקֶרֶב מַחֲנֵהוּ, **all around His dwellings** — סָבִיב לְמִשְׁכְּנֵתוֹ, clearing showing the people that the quail were being provided to feed them. The quail fell conveniently nearby but not directly on the dwellings.

(כט) וַיֹּאכְלוּ וַיִּשְׂבְּעוּ מְאֹד
וַתֵּאָוֶתֶם יְבֵא לָהֶם:

So they ate and their appetites **were abundantly satisfied** — וַיֹּאכְלוּ וַיִּשְׂבְּעוּ **מְאֹד, for He brought them what they craved** — וַתֵּאָוֶתֶם יְבֵא לָהֶם. Despite the fact that the people continued eating eating the quail day after day, they did not find it revolting. On the contrary, their appetites kept increasing. This was a sign that their motivation was not simple appetite, but defiance.

(4) Divine Punishment

(ל) לֹא זָרוּ מִתֵּאָוֶתֶם
עוֹד אֲכָלִים בְּפִיהֶם:

They had not yet lost their craving — לֹא־זָרוּ מִתֵּאָוֶתֶם; their craving had not yet turned into disgust even they had eaten more than their fill. **Their food was still in their mouth** — עוֹד אֲכָלִים בְּפִיהֶם and they were still enjoying it, ...

(לא) וַאֲף אֱלֹקִים עָלֶיהָ בָּהֶם
וַיִּהְרֹג בְּמִשְׁמַנֵּיהֶם
וּבַחֹרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הַכְּרִיעַ:

... **when the anger of G-d flared against them** — וַאֲף אֱלֹקִים עָלֶיהָ בָּהֶם because they should have been satisfied with the manna of Heaven, which was designed their spiritual health. And they should have regretted their having pressed for rich meat instead of eating it gluttonously. **So He slew the sturdiest among them** — וַיִּהְרֹג בְּמִשְׁמַנֵּיהֶם, so that no one could claim they were brought down by the rigors of overeating. **And He struck down the finest among the young men of Yisrael** — וּבַחֹרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הַכְּרִיעַ to clearly demonstrate that this was a punishment for their sin.

PART 5. A TRAGIC SIN

(לב) בְּכֹל זֹאת חָטְאוּ עוֹד
וְלֹא הֶאֱמִינוּ בְּנִפְלְאוֹתָיו:

In spite of all this, they continued to sin — בְּכֹל־זֹאת חָטְאוּ־עוֹד. Their most fateful sin was to support the spies (*Bamidbar* 13:27-33) who wanted to give up the dream of the Land of Canaan and return to Mitzrayim. Despite the miracles they had witnessed, **they did not have faith in** the power of **His wonders** — וְלֹא־הֶאֱמִינוּ בְּנִפְלְאוֹתָיו and so they questioned His ability to deliver the Land of Canaan into their hands.

(לג) וַיִּכַּל בְּהֶבֶל יְמֵיהֶם
וַשְּׁנוֹתָם בַּבְּהֵלָה:

— וַיִּכַּל־בְּהֶבֶל יְמֵיהֶם for even when they found courage, they were not permitted entry into the Holy Land. **And He ended their years in bewildered fear** — וַשְּׁנוֹתָם בַּבְּהֵלָה for they had been sentenced to die in the Wilderness.

(לד) אִם הֲרָגָם וַדָּרְשׁוּהוּ
וַשְּׁבוּ וַשְּׁחֲרוּ־אֵל:

When He struck them with the penalty of death in the wilderness , **they sought Him out** — אִם־הֲרָגָם וַדָּרְשׁוּהוּ in the desperate hope that they would still be able to annul the decree. It was only then that **they turned back and prayed to G-d** — וַשְּׁבוּ וַשְּׁחֲרוּ־אֵל.

(לה) וַיִּזְכְּרוּ כִּי אֱלֹקִים צוּרָם
וְאֵל עֲלִיוֹן גָּאֻלָּם:

They then recognized in their prayers **that G-d was their Rock** — וַיִּזְכְּרוּ and that **their Redeemer was the Most High G-d** — וְאֵל עֲלִיוֹן גָּאֻלָּם, Who does not depend on any other power.

(לו) וַיִּפְתּוּהוּ בְּפִיהֶם
וּבְלִשׁוֹנָם יִכְזְּבוּ לוֹ:

But they were still not sincere and **thought they could beguile Him with their**

mouths — וּבְלִשׁוֹנָם — וַיִּפְתּוּהוּ בְּפִיָּהֶם, and deceive Him with their tongues — יִכְזְבוּ-לוֹ. They thought Hashem would forgive them based on their prayerful words alone, as if He did not know what was in their hearts. Their teshuvah was not sincere but a misguided attempt to fool G-d.

(לז) וְלִבָּם לֹא נָכוֹן עִמּוֹ
וְלֹא נֶאֱמְנוּ בְּבְרִיתוֹ:

The essence of tefillah was missing because **their heart was not steadfast with Him — וְלִבָּם לֹא נָכוֹן עִמּוֹ.** They did not resolve never to sin again **and they were not faithful to His covenant — וְלֹא נֶאֱמְנוּ בְּבְרִיתוֹ.** By rights Hashem should not have forgiven them, but He did ultimately grant forgiveness in order to encourage future generations to do *teshuvah* and ask forgiveness for their sins.

PART 6. FORGIVENESS

(לח) וְהוּא רַחוּם יִכַּפֵּר עָוֹן וְלֹא יִשְׁחִית
וְהִרְבָּה לְהִשְׁיב אָפוֹ
וְלֹא יַעִיר כָּל חֲמָתוֹ:

But even when *teshuvah* is inadequate, **He is Merciful — וְהוּא רַחוּם. He forgives iniquity and** although harsh measures may be needed **He** does not impose utter **destruction — יִכַּפֵּר עָוֹן וְלֹא יִשְׁחִית.** **Time and again He pulls back His rage — וְהִרְבָּה לְהִשְׁיב אָפוֹ, and does not let all His wrathful feelings be provoked — וְלֹא יַעִיר כָּל חֲמָתוֹ.**

(לט) וַיִּזְכֹּר כִּי בֶּשֶׂר הֵמָּה
רוּחַ הוֹלֵךְ וְלֹא יָשׁוּב:

And so when He punished our ancestors, He did not expose them to the full brunt of His anger. **For He remembered that they were but flesh — וַיִּזְכֹּר כִּי בֶּשֶׂר הֵמָּה,** which is subject to powerful physical appetites. And they are subject to a capricious **spirit that goes — רוּחַ הוֹלֵךְ** after fantasies of the flesh. This is the *yetzer hara* (evil inclination), which **does not return — וְלֹא יָשׁוּב** from its materialistic path to reflect upon the ways of G-d.

PART 7. REMEMBERING MITZRAYIM.

(1) Failure to Remember

(מ) כַּמָּה יַמְרוּהוּ בַּמִּדְבָּר
יַעֲצִיבוּהוּ בִישִׁימוֹן:

Despite Hashem's merciful forgiveness our ancestors continued to defy Him. **How often did they rebel against Him in the Midbar ! — כַּמָּה יַמְרוּהוּ בַּמִּדְבָּר** . And how often did they **distress Him in** that desolate **wasteland** — **יַעֲצִיבוּהוּ בִישִׁימוֹן** , a place which turned out to be very fitting for them !

(מא) וַיִּשׁוּבוּ וַיִּנְסוּ אֶל-
וּקְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל הַתְּנוּ:

They repeatedly tested the patience of **G-d** — **וַיִּשׁוּבוּ וַיִּנְסוּ אֶל-**, alternately doing *teshuvah* and then sinning again. They effectively tried to see how much disobedience He would tolerate. **They set bounds to the Holy One of Israel** — **וּקְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל הַתְּנוּ**, by assuming His power to be limited and then asking for signs that His power went even further.

(מב) לֹא זָכְרוּ אֶת יָדוֹ
יוֹם אֲשֶׁר פָּדַם מִנִּי צָר:

They did not remember with fear **the power of His hand** — **לֹא זָכְרוּ אֶת יָדוֹ** which He showed in Mitzrayim, **the day He redeemed them from Pharaoh the oppressor** — **יוֹם אֲשֶׁר פָּדַם מִנִּי צָר**. They thought the power of miracles had come to an end with the final dramatic event of the death of the firstborn.

(מג) אֲשֶׁר שָׂם בַּמִּצְרַיִם אֶת־וֹתָיו
וּמוֹפְתָיו בְּשֵׂדֵה צֹעַן:

They did not remember **how he set His signs in Mitzrayim** — **אֲשֶׁר שָׂם בַּמִּצְרַיִם אֶת־וֹתָיו**. The signs were the marvelous occurrences within nature, such as the plagues of hail and locusts. **And** they did not remember **His wonders in the countryside of Tzoan** — **וּמוֹפְתָיו בְּשֵׂדֵה צֹעַן**, the capital of *Mitzrayim*, where the most important people of that nation resided. The wonders were the miraculous events that went beyond the framework of nature like the plague of blood.

(2) Five Plagues

(מד) וַיִּהְפֹּךְ לְדָם יְאֲרִיֵּהֶם
וְנִזְלִיֵּהֶם בִּלְיִשְׁתֵּיֹן:

They did not remember how He **turned their sacred rivers into blood** — וַיִּהְפֹּךְ לְדָם יְאֲרִיֵּהֶם and how He made **their flowing waters undrinkable** — וְנִזְלִיֵּהֶם בִּלְיִשְׁתֵּיֹן. Even though flowing water is usually fresh, their waters reeked with a foul odor and became not even drinkable by animals.

(מה) יִשְׁלַח בָּהֶם עֲרֵב וַיֹּאכְלֵם
וַצִּפְרִידַע וַתִּשְׁחִיתֵם:

He sent against them ferocious beasts of the wild — יִשְׁלַח בָּהֶם עֲרֵב that attacked men, women, and children, and devoured them — וַיֹּאכְלֵם . And into their ovens and their bread He sent diseased frogs — וַצִּפְרִידַע that poisoned and disgusted them — וַתִּשְׁחִיתֵם.

(מו) וַיִּתֵּן לְחֹסִיל יְבוּלָם
וַיִּגְיַעַם לְאַרְבֶּה:

He gave their produce, which they counted on for food, to the grasshopper — וַיִּגְיַעַם לְאַרְבֶּה, and He gave the fruit of their toil to the locust — וַיִּתֵּן לְחֹסִיל יְבוּלָם. Several types of locust attacked Mitzrayim at once.

(מז) יַהֲרֹג בַּבָּרָד גִּפְנֹם
וַשְׁקִמוֹתָם בַּחֲנָמַל:

The succulent grapes and figs had been the pride of Mitzrayim, but He killed their grapevines with hail — יַהֲרֹג בַּבָּרָד גִּפְנֹם, which had the effect of drying out the vines so they could not grow again. And He killed their fig-trees with biting frost — וַשְׁקִמוֹתָם בַּחֲנָמַל. The calamities of hail and frost were totally unknown to Mitzrayim, a dry tropical land.

(מח) וַיִּסְגֹּר לַבָּרָד בְּעֵינֵיהֶם
וּמִקְנֵיהֶם לְרֶשְׁפִּים:

He delivered their cattle to the hail – וַיִּסְגֹּר לַבָּרָד בְּעֵינֵיהֶם, and their flocks to fiery lightning bolts – וּמִקְנֵיהֶם לְרֶשְׁפִּים that appeared in the hail.

(3) Conclusion

(מט) יִשְׁלַח בָּם חֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ
עֲבָרָה וְזַעַם וְצָרָה
מִשְׁלַחַת מַלְאֲכֵי רָעִים:

In reaction to the wanton cruelty of the people of Mitzrayim, Hashem **sent His burning rage against them – יִשְׁלַח בָּם חֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ** in the form of all the 10 plagues. Because of Hashem's burning rage, each of the 10 plagues was as severe as if it consisted of several plagues.

Hashem's rage was expressed through the emotions of **wrath – עֲבָרָה** which caused Him to overcome His quality of mercy, **fury – זַעַם**, which caused Him to want to destroy them completely, and **trouble – וְצָרָה**, which caused Him to want to extend their punishment, even when they began to regret their behavior. In summary, the plagues were **a mission of destructive emissaries – מִשְׁלַחַת מַלְאֲכֵי רָעִים**, expressing the will of Hashem.

(נ) יִפְלֹס נְתִיב לְאַפּוֹ
לֹא חֲשַׁד מִמּוֹת נַפְשָׁם וַחֲתָתָם לְדַבֵּר הַסִּגִּיר:

He paved a path for His anger to descend to earth – יִפְלֹס נְתִיב לְאַפּוֹ so that death came only to those for whom it was intended. **He did not spare their lives from death – לֹא חֲשַׁד מִמּוֹת נַפְשָׁם** if they were destined to die, **and He delivered their animals to pestilence – וַחֲתָתָם לְדַבֵּר הַסִּגִּיר**.

(נא) וַיִּךְ כָּל בְּכוֹר בְּמִצְרַיִם
רֵאשִׁית אוֹנִים בְּאֹהֲלֵי חָם:

He struck every firstborn in Mitzrayim – וַיִּךְ כָּל בְּכוֹר בְּמִצְרַיִם, the first fruit of their manhood in the tents of Cham. – רֵאשִׁית אוֹנִים בְּאֹהֲלֵי חָם. Cham was

the ancestor of the people of Mitzrayim. His lack of respect for his father Noach (*Bereishis* 1:22) demonstrated a character defect which was reflected in the behavior of his descendants in the Land of Mitzrayim.

PART 8. COMING HOME.

(נב) וַיִּסַּע כְּצֹאן עֲמוֹ
וַיְנַהֲגֵם כְּעֹדֵר בַּמִּדְבָּר:

After the tenth plague **He led His nation** from Mitzrayim at their own pace **as** a shepherd drives his **sheep** — **וַיִּסַּע כְּצֹאן עֲמוֹ**. **He drove them like a flock into the** desolate **Midbar** — **וַיְנַהֲגֵם כְּעֹדֵר בַּמִּדְבָּר**, where he provided for all their needs with the manna and the water from the miraculous well of Miriam. The people followed His lead like a flock of sheep responding to their shepherd.

(נג) וַיְנַחֲם לְבַטַח וְלֹא פֶחַדוֹ
וְאֶת אוֹיְבֵיהֶם כָּסָה הַיָּם:

He led them securely through the Sea of Reeds into the *Midbar* — **וַיְנַחֲם לְבַטַח**. They were initially afraid when they saw the might of Mitzrayim hemming them in at the shore of the sea, but they began to recover their confidence when Moshe Rabbeinu assured them that Hashem would bring a great *yeshuah*. Then the sea parted miraculously and they successfully crossed to the other side. At that point **they had no fear** at all — **וְלֹא פֶחַדוֹ**, for they saw with their own eyes that **the sea had covered their foes** — **וְאֶת אוֹיְבֵיהֶם כָּסָה הַיָּם**.

(נד) וַיְבִיאֵם אֶל גְּבוּל קְדִישׁוֹ
הַר זֶה קִנְיָתָהּ יְמִינוֹ:

And He brought them to Eretz Yisrael, **His sacred boundary** — **וַיְבִיאֵם אֶל גְּבוּל** **קְדִישׁוֹ**, **and to** the Bais HaMikdash, **this mountain that His right hand acquired** — **הַר זֶה קִנְיָתָהּ יְמִינוֹ** in order to maintain His permanent presence there.

(נה) וַיִּגְרֹשׁ מִפְּנֵיהֶם גּוֹיִם
וַיִּפְּלֵם בְּחֶבֶל נֹחֵלָה
וַיִּשְׁכֵּן בְּאֶהְלֵיהֶם שְׁבֵטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

Then He drove out the seven **nations from before them** — **וַיִּגְרֹשׁ מִפְּנֵיהֶם גּוֹיִם** **and apportioned** to each tribe its **inheritance with a measuring line** — **וַיִּפְּלֵם בְּחֶבֶל נֹחֵלָה**. After the Land had been subdivided His presence **settled in the tents** — **וַיִּשְׁכֵּן בְּאֶהְלֵיהֶם שְׁבֵטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל** of Yisrael.

PART 9. REJECTING EPHRAIM.

(נו) וַיִּנְסוּ וַיִּמְרוּ אֶת אֱלֹקִים עֲלִיוֹן
וַעֲדוֹתָיו לֹא שָׁמְרוּ:

But in the era of the *Shoftim* (Judges), soon after the death of Yehoshua and the Elders **the people tried** the patience of **G-d the Most High and** ultimately they **rebelled** against Him— **וַיִּנְסוּ וַיִּמְרוּ אֶת אֱלֹקִים עֲלִיוֹן**. They conjectured that perhaps Hashem's place was in Heaven and that He was not concerned with the affairs of man, **and so they did not keep His precepts** — **וַעֲדוֹתָיו לֹא שָׁמְרוּ**. In effect they were challenging Him to see whether He would respond to their misbehavior.

(נז) וַיִּסְגּוּ וַיִּבְגְּדוּ כְּאֲבוֹתָם
נִהְפְּכוּ כְּקֶשֶׁת רְמִיָּה:

They backslid and betrayed — **וַיִּסְגּוּ וַיִּבְגְּדוּ** their commitment to Hashem **as their ancestors** — **כְּאֲבוֹתָם**, who came out of Mitzrayim had done. In effect, **they reversed** their direction **like a treacherous bow** — **נִהְפְּכוּ כְּקֶשֶׁת רְמִיָּה**, whose arrows strike the shooter instead of the enemy. They were to continue the progress made by the previous generation that settled Eretz Yisrael. But instead they reverted to the faults of that generation's forefathers who had sinned in the Midbar.

(נח) וַיִּכְעִיסוּהוּ בְּבַמֹּתָם

They angered Him with their unauthorized **high altars** — **וַיִּכְעִיסוּהוּ בְּבַמֹּתָם**.

Even though some of the sacrifices on these private altars were exclusively devoted to Hashem, they were unsupervised in contrast to the sacrifices offered at the Sanctuary in Shiloh. Thus, they were subject to gross violations, such as offerings to heavenly bodies because many people were not yet convinced that Hashem was

the only G-d.

וּבִפְסִילֵיהֶם יִקְנִיאוּהוּ:

They provoked Him with their idols – וּבִפְסִילֵיהֶם יִקְנִיאוּהוּ. Even though in some idols were used as icons for Hashem, they were clear violations of the Torah's strict injunction against graven images.

(נט) שָׁמַע אֱלֹקִים וַיִּתְעַבֵּר

וַיִּמְאֵס מְאֹד בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל:

When **G-d heard** the voices of Yisrael raised in worship at their high altars, **He became enraged** – שָׁמַע אֱלֹקִים וַיִּתְעַבֵּר. Indeed, at that time **He found Yisrael utterly loathsome** – וַיִּמְאֵס מְאֹד בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל. As a result, He removed His Shechinah (Divine presence) from the Tabernacle (*Mishkan*) that housed the holy Ark in Shiloh. The Ark itself was then captured by the Plishtim and taken into exile.

(ס) וַיִּטֵּשׁ מִשְׁכַּן שְׁלוֹ

אֶהָל שֹׁכֵן בְּאֶדְס:

Hashem's anger was felt by the entire nation for **He abandoned the Tabernacle of Shiloh** – וַיִּטֵּשׁ מִשְׁכַּן שְׁלוֹ, and it was destroyed by the Plishtim. **This Tabernacle was the very tent where** the Shechinah had **dwelled among men** – אֶהָל שֹׁכֵן בְּאֶדְס, **as it says** "I shall rest My Presence among the Children of Yisrael" (*Shemos* 29:45).

(סא) וַיִּתֵּן לַשְּׁבִי עֹז

וַתִּפְאֲרְתּוּ בְיַד צָר:

In His rage **He delivered** the holy Ark representing **His strength into captivity** – וַיִּתֵּן לַשְּׁבִי עֹז, and with it He gave over **His splendor into the oppressor's hand** – וַתִּפְאֲרְתּוּ בְיַד צָר for He allowed the Plishtim to be victorious.

(סב) וַיִּסְגֵּר לַחֶרֶב עַמּוֹ

וּבִנְחָלְתּוֹ הִתְעַבֵּר:

He gave His people over to the sword – וַיִּסְגֵּר לַחֶרֶב עַמּוֹ, and **His anger overflowed against His inheritance** – וּבִנְחָלְתּוֹ הִתְעַבֵּר. In the tragic war with the Plishtim 30,000 men of Yisrael died in battle. In effect, Hashem was angry that

Yisrael was His inheritance for they were unworthy.

(סג) בַּחֹרֵיוֹ אֶכְלָה אֵשׁ
וּבְתוֹלְתָיו לֹא הוּלְלוּ:

The **fire** of war and the heat of Hashem's anger **consumed His young** fighting men — **בַּחֹרֵיוֹ אֶכְלָה אֵשׁ**, and **His maidens had no marriage celebration** — **וּבְתוֹלְתָיו לֹא הוּלְלוּ**, because there were no young men for the maidens to marry.

(סד) כִּהְנִיוּ בַּחֶרֶב נָפְלוּ
וְאַלְמָנָתָיו לֹא תִבְכְּיָנָה:

His Kohanim, including the sons of Eli the Kohen Gadol, **fell by the sword** — **כִּהְנִיוּ בַּחֶרֶב נָפְלוּ** when the Ark was captured. **Their widows did not** have a chance to **weep**— **וְאַלְמָנָתָיו לֹא תִבְכְּיָנָה** because they were overwhelmed by the pain of the loss of the Ark.

(סה) וַיִּקַּץ כִּי־שָׁן אֲדֹנָי
כְּגִבּוֹר מִתְרוֹנֵן מִיַּיִן:

It seemed **then** to the Plishtim that **Hashem awoke as if from sleep** — **וַיִּקַּץ כִּי־שָׁן** **וְאֲדֹנָי**, like a warrior shaking off the effects of **wine** — **כְּגִבּוֹר מִתְרוֹנֵן מִיַּיִן**. Hashem had been quiet for a long time while His Ark was treated like spoils of war and Yisrael was devastated by war.

(סו) וַיִּדָּן צָרָיו אַחֲוֹר
חֶרְפַּת עוֹלָם נָתַן לָמוֹ:

He beat His enemies the Plishtim **into retreat**— **וַיִּדָּן צָרָיו אַחֲוֹר**. **He dealt them a lasting insult**— **חֶרְפַּת עוֹלָם נָתַן לָמוֹ** in the form of an embarrassing affliction of hemorrhoids, and compelled them to return the Ark accompanied by gifts of tribute.

(סז) וַיִּמָּאֵס בְּאַהֲלֵי יוֹסֵף
וּבְשֵׁבֶט אֶפְרַיִם לֹא בָחַר:

But the long-term effect of this incident was that **He rejected** Shiloh, **the tent of Yosef** — **וַיִּמָּאֵס בְּאַהֲלֵי יוֹסֵף** and **did not choose the tribe of Ephraim** — **וּבְשֵׁבֶט אֶפְרַיִם לֹא בָחַר**. After that time, the Ark was no longer stationed in the territory of

Ephraim nut was shifted from location to location until David HaMelech finally brought it to Yerushalayim.

PART 10. THE ASCENDANCE OF YEHUDAH.

(סח) וַיִּבְחַר אֶת שֵׁבֶט יְהוּדָה
אֶת הַר צִיּוֹן אֲשֶׁר אָהֵב:

He chose the tribe of Yehudah — וַיִּבְחַר אֶת שֵׁבֶט יְהוּדָה as the family of royalty to lead his His nation. And in the territory of Yehudah He chose **Mount Zion** — אֶת הַר צִיּוֹן אֲשֶׁר אָהֵב as the site of His permanent presence. This was the location **that He loves** — אֶת הַר צִיּוֹן אֲשֶׁר אָהֵב: because it is there that Yitzchak was bound upon the altar in a demonstration of faith.

(סט) וַיִּבֶן כְּמוֹ רָמִים מְקֻדָּשׁוֹ
כְּאֶרֶץ יִסְדָּה לְעוֹלָם:

And there He built His Bais HaMikdash to be in that location forever **like the highest heavens** — וַיִּבֶן כְּמוֹ רָמִים מְקֻדָּשׁוֹ, which are eternally changeless. And **like the earth He established** the location of His residence **forever** — כְּאֶרֶץ יִסְדָּה לְעוֹלָם. This was in contrast to the previous Sanctuaries in Gilgal, Shiloh, Nov, and Givon, each which was meant to be temporary.

(ע) וַיִּבְחַר בְּדָוִד עֶבְדּוֹ
וַיִּקְחֵהוּ מִמִּכְלֵאת צֹאן:

He chose David, His servant — וַיִּבְחַר בְּדָוִד עֶבְדּוֹ to rule as king over Yisrael, **and took him from the sheep corrals** — וַיִּקְחֵהוּ מִמִּכְלֵאת צֹאן to inaugurate a royal dynasty that would last forever. It was there in the sheep corrals that David demonstrated his devotion and selflessness that were to make him the model of a worthy king for all time.

(עא) מֵאַחַר עֲלוֹת הַבְּיָאוֹ
לְרֵעוֹת בְּיַעֲקֹב עֲמוֹ וּבְיִשְׂרָאֵל נַחֲלָתוֹ:

From minding the nursing ewes and their young lambs with sensitivity and patience **He brought him** — מֵאַחַר עֲלוֹת הַבְּיָאוֹ to Yerushalayim **to tend to Yaakov, His nation, and to Yisrael, His inheritance** — לְרֵעוֹת בְּיַעֲקֹב עֲמוֹ

וּבִישְׂרָאֵל נִחְלָתוּ.

(עב) וַיְרַעַם כְּתָם לִבָּבוֹ

וּבְתַבּוּנוֹת כַּפָּיו יִנְחָם:

He tended them with goodness and wisdom, consistent with the innocent conscientiousness of his heart – וַיְרַעַם כְּתָם לִבָּבוֹ. And he led them with the skill of his hands – וּבְתַבּוּנוֹת כַּפָּיו יִנְחָם which he guided with his wisdom.

Sources

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

PART 1. INTRODUCTION

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ה - מצודות, המאירי | א - אלשיך, המאירי, ספורנו, אבן יחייא |
| ו - רד"ק, נר לרגלי | ב - אבן עזרא, רשר"ה |
| ז - רד"ק, בן רמון, ספורנו | ג - אבן עזרא, רד"ק, מצודות |
| | ד - רש"י, רשר"ה, נר לרגל |

PART 2. THE INCONSTANT GENERATION

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| י - אבן עזרא, מלבי"ם | ח - רש"י, רד"ק, מצודות, בן רמון |
| יא - אבן עזרא, אבן יחייא | ט - רש"י, אבן עזרא, אבן יחייא |

PART 3. A SERIES OF WONDERS

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| טו - אבן עזרא, בן־רמון, דעת סופרים | יב - רד"ק, מלבי"ם, בן־רמון, אבן יחייא |
| טז - מצודות, בן־רמון, דעת סופרים | יג - רד"ק, דעת סופרים |
| | יד - אבן עזרא, רד"ק, אלשיך, דעת סופרים |

PART 4. FEEDING THE MULTITUDES

- | | |
|---|--|
| כה - רש"י, המאירי, נר לרגלי | יז - אבן עזרא, רד"ק, מצודות, מלבי"ם, רשר"ה |
| כו - רד"ק, אלשיך, רשר"ה | יח - אבן עזרא, רד"ק, מצודות, ספורנו |
| כז - רד"ק, בן־רמון | יט - אבן עזרא, רד"ק, המאירי |
| כח - אלשיך, מצודות, מלבי"ם | כ - מלבי"ם, בן־רמון, ספורנו |
| כט - רד"ק, אלשיך, מלבי"ם | כא - רש"י, רד"ק, מלבי"ם, רשר"ה |
| ל - רד"ק, מצודות, המאירי, בן־רמון, ספורנו | כב - רד"ק, מלבי"ם, נר לרגלי |
| לא - רש"י, מלבי"ם, המאירי, נר לרגלי | כג - אבן עזרא, רד"ק, בן־רמון, ספורנו, נר לרגלי |
| | כד - מצודות, אבן יחייא |

PART 5. A TRAGIC SIN

לו - אבן עזרא, רד"ק, מצודות, המאירי, אבן יחיאל
לו - אבן עזרא, רד"ק, מצודות, ספורנו

לב - רד"ק, מצודות, ספורנו
לג - אבן עזרא, מצודות, בן-רמון
לד - אבן עזרא, רד"ק, מצודות, בן-רמון
לה - מצודות, מלבי"ם

PART 6. FORGIVENESS

לח - רש"י, מצודות, מלבי"ם, אבן יחיאל
לט - רד"ק, מצודות, מלבי"ם, בן-רמון, אבן יחיאל

PART 7. REMEMBERING MITZRAYIM.

מו - רד"ק
מז - רד"ק, המאירי, בן-רמון, אבן יחיאל, נר לרגלי
מח - רד"ק, מצודות
מט - אבן עזרא, רד"ק, המאירי, נר לרגלי
נ - רש"י, אבן עזרא, רד"ק, מצודות
נא - רד"ק

מ - תהלים המפורש
מא - אבן עזרא, רד"ק, מצודות, מלבי"ם, ספורנו
מב - אבן עזרא, מלבי"ם
מג - מצודות, מלבי"ם, בן-רמון
מד - בן-רמון
מה - אבן עזרא, בן-רמון, אבן יחיאל, נר לרגלי

PART 8. COMING HOME.

נד - רד"ק
נה - אבן עזרא, מצודות, אבן יחיאל, מלבי"ם

נב - אבן עזרא, רד"ק, מצודות, מלבי"ם
נג - רד"ק, המאירי

PART 9. REJECTING EPHRAIM.

סג - רש"י, אבן עזרא, רד"ק, מצודות, בן-רמון,
נר לרגלי
סד - רש"י, רד"ק, מצודות, בן-רמון, אבן יחיאל,
נר לרגלי
סה - אבן עזרא, רד"ק, מצודות, בן-רמון
סו - רש"י, בן-רמון, אבן יחיאל, רש"י, נר לרגלי
סז - רש"י, אלשיך

נו - רש"י, רד"ק, אלשיך, מצודות, נר לרגלי
נז - רש"י, אלשיך, מלבי"ם
נח - אלשיך, בן-רמון, רש"י, דעת סופרים
נט - אבן עזרא, רד"ק, בן-רמון
ס - רד"ק, מצודות
סא - רש"י, מצודות, מלבי"ם
סב - רד"ק, מלבי"ם, נר לרגלי

PART 10. THE ASCENDANCE OF YEHUDAH.

עא - בן-רמון, ספורנו
עב - רד"ק, מצודות

סח - רד"ק, מצודות
סט - רש"י, רד"ק, מצודות
ע - נר לרגלי

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