

## Mizmor 085

# Revive Us

### Key Concepts

This mizmor by the sons of Korach continues the theme of the previous mizmor composed by the prophet Asaph. Thus, the singer express the yearnings and *tefillos* of the Jewish nation for the end of *Galus* (Exile). Most commentators interpret it as applying specifically to our present *Galus*, which seems endless in comparison with previous *Galus*.

Through the power of prophecy the singer is able to visualize a time such as the present when the people have been mourning the loss of the Second *Beis Hamikdash* (Temple). The people look back at the *Galus* of Bavel which began with the destruction of the first *Beis Hamikdash* and lasted 70 years. They fondly remember the great joy that they experienced when Hashem restored His favor after 70 years of being rejected by their Creator. They now appeal to Him to recreate that good feeling and restore His favor as it was then. Despite the much greater duration of the present *Galus*, the people have not given up hope. In fact they express confidence that the *Geulah* (Redemption) is surely at hand.

### Exploring the Mizmor

The mizmor consists of three parts, corresponding to the singer's thoughts of the past, the present, and the future. The past that the singer recalls is the period of Hashem's favor that saw the construction of the Second *Bais HaMikdash*. In Part 2 the singer turns to the present. Our *Galus* has lasted so long that it seems if we are dead and forgotten. Thus, he pleads with Hashem to bring us back to life again as He did so long ago.

In Part 3 the singer visualizes the close relationship between Hashem and His people that the future will surely bring. He acknowledges that in a way, it is all up to us (verse 12). "*Truth sprouts from earth,*" that is, from the efforts of mankind, and "*righteousness gazes down from heaven,*" as it awaits the time it can enter into earthly affairs. When that happens, "*righteousness and peace will have kissed.*" (Verse 11).

**PART 1. GRATITUDE FOR THE PAST.** The singer begins by expressing his fond gratitude to Hashem for showing Yisrael His favor at the end of 70 years of exile in

Bavel.

(א) לְמִנְצַחַ לְבָנֵי קֹרַח מִזְמוֹר: (ב) רְצִיתָ ה' אֶרְצָךְ שְׁבַת שְׁבוֹת שְׁבִית יַעֲקֹב: (ג) נִשְׂאתָ עֵוֹן עַמְּךָ כַּסִּיתָ כָּל חַטָּאתָם סְלַח: (ד) אָסַפְתָּ כָּל עֲבֹרֹתָ הַשִּׁיבוֹת מִחֲרוֹן אַפֶּךָ:

(1) For the musician, a mizmor by the sons of Korach. (2) Hashem, You restored [Your] favor to Your land. You returned the captivity of Yaakov. (3) You forgave the iniquity of Your people. You covered over all their sin, Selah. (4) You withheld Your entire fury. You drew back from the fierceness of Your anger.

**PART 2. PLEA FOR THE PRESENT.** The singer now moves directly to a plea for Hashem to once again grant His forgiveness to the people. He asks Hashem to revive us again from this long exile, which is like death, and grant us *yeshuah* (salvation).

(ה) שׁוּבוּנָנוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְהִפֵּר כַּעֲסֶךָ עִמָּנוּ: (ו) הֲלֵעוֹלָם תִּתְאַנֶּן בְּנוֹ תַמְשֹׁךְ אַפֶּךָ לְדֹר וָדֹר: (ז) הֲלֹא אֶתָּה תִּשׁוּב תִּחַיֵּנוּ וְעַמְּךָ יִשְׂמְחוּ בָּךְ: (ח) הֲרֵאֵנוּ ה' חֲסִידֶךָ וְיִשְׁעֶךָ תִּתֵּן לָנוּ:

(5) Return to us [once more and] bring us back, O G-d of our *yeshuah*. Cease Your anger with us. (6) Will You be angry with us forever? [Will You] prolong Your wrath for all generations? (7) Surely You will revive us again so that Your people may rejoice in You! (8) Show us Your kindness, Hashem and grant us Your *yeshuah*.

**PART 3. VISION OF THE FUTURE.** The singer calls upon Hashem to help him visualize a future of peace for the nation based on the merging of truth and righteousness. The *yeshuah* will come when man acknowledges the truth of his existence and adopts the ways of righteousness, whereby he lives as his Creator wants him to. Then, just as lush crops grow through the efforts of the hard-working farmer, the spiritual labors of earthly man will elicit the flow of kindness from Heaven.

(ט) אֲשַׁמְעָה מִה יְדַבֵּר הָאֵל ה' כִּי יְדַבֵּר שְׁלוֹם אֶל עַמּוֹ וְאֶל חֲסִידָיו וְאֵל יְשׁוּבוֹ לְכִסְלָה: (י) אֵךְ קָרוֹב לִירְאָיו יִשְׁעוּ לְשֹׁכֵן כְּבוֹד בְּאֶרְצָנוּ: (יא) חֶסֶד וְאֱמֶת נִפְגְּשׁוּ צָדֵק וְשְׁלוֹם נִשְׁקֹו: (יב) אֱמֶת מֵאֲרֶץ תִּצְמַח וְצָדֵק מִשְׁמַיִם נִשְׁקֹו: (יג) גַּם ה' יִתֵּן הַטּוֹב וְאֶרְצָנוּ תִּתֵּן יְבוּלָהּ: (יד) צָדֵק לִפְנֵי יְהוָה וְיִשְׁמַע לְדָרְךָ פְּעַמָּיו:

(9) Grant me the ability to hear what the Almighty, Hashem, says when He

*proclaims peace for His people and His devout ones so that they will not revert to folly. (10) Surely His yeshuah is near for those who fear Him so that His glory will [once more] dwell in our land (11) Kindness and truth have met; righteousness and peace have kissed. (12) Truth sprouts from earth and righteousness gazes down from heaven. (13) Hashem, too, will provide the goodness and our land will yield its produce. (14) The righteousness [of man] must go before him and he must set his footsteps on its way.*

## Learning the Mizmor

### PART 1. THE RESTORATION OF FAVOR.

(א) לְמַנְצַחַ לְבַנֵי קֶרַח מִזְמוֹר:

This song was prepared **for the musician** — לְמַנְצַחַ. It is a **mizmor** composed **by the sons of Korach** — לְבַנֵי קֶרַח מִזְמוֹר..

(ב) רָצִיתָ ה' אֶרְצִי  
שָׁבַתְּ שְׁבִית יַעֲקֹב:

**Hashem, You restored Your favor to Your land** — רָצִיתָ ה' אֶרְצִי when **You returned the captivity of Yaakov** from Bavel — שָׁבַתְּ שְׁבִית יַעֲקֹב and forgave that generation their sins. You demonstrated that even though Yisrael had some failings (as hinted by the name Yaakov, which does not contain the Name of G-d as does Yisrael) their spiritual state was sufficient to make them the only nation worthy of settling that Land and harvesting its crops. And You will have restored Your favor to Your Land once more when you forgive this generation our sins.

(ג) נָשָׂאתָ עֵוֹן עַמֶּךָ  
כִּסִּיתָ כָּל חַטָּאתָם סֵלָה:

**You forgave the iniquity of Your people** — נָשָׂאתָ עֵוֹן עַמֶּךָ, which been instrumental in their having to go into Exile. **You covered over all their sin** and treated it as though it was committed by accident, **Selah** — כִּסִּיתָ כָּל חַטָּאתָם סֵלָה.

(ד) אָסַפְתָּ כָּל עֲבֹרֹתֶיךָ  
הִשְׁיבוֹתָ מִחֲרוֹן אַפֶּיךָ:

**You withheld Your entire fury — אָסַפְתָּ כָּל עֲבָרְתֶךָ. You drew back from the fierceness of Your anger — הִשִּׁיבוֹת מִחֲרוֹן אַפֶּךָ.**

**PART 2. PLEA FOR THE PRESENT.**

(ה) שׁוּבֵנוּ אֱלֹקֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל  
וְהִפֵּר כַּעֲסֶךָ עִמָּנוּ:

Just as You did in ending the Exile in Bavel, **return to us** once more and **bring us back** from this long *Galus*, **O G-d of our yeshuah** — **וּבִנוּ אֱלֹקֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל**. We refer to You as G-d of our *yeshuah* because our *yeshuah* is dependent on You and no other. Although we have sinned, we look to Your help in overcoming our sinful habits. Then You will be able **cease Your anger with us** — **וְהִפֵּר כַּעֲסֶךָ עִמָּנוּ** as You did before.

(ו) הֲלֵעוֹלָם תִּתְאַנֶּן בְּנוּ  
תִּמְשַׁךְ אַפֶּךָ לְדֹר וָדֹר:

The Exile to Bavel lasted 70 years, but this Exile seems to have no end. **Will You be angry with us forever** — **הֲלֵעוֹלָם תִּתְאַנֶּן בְּנוּ** ? Will You **prolong Your wrath for all generations** — **תִּמְשַׁךְ אַפֶּךָ לְדֹר וָדֹר**, who have never seen and experienced the closeness to You that existed in times of old ? Will you deny us forever?

(ז) הֲלֹא אַתָּה תִּשְׁוֶב  
תִּחְיֶינוּ וְעִמָּךְ יִשְׂמְחוּ בְךָ:

While in Exile we are like the dead. No one can bring us back to life other than You. **Surely You will revive us again** — **הֲלֹא אַתָּה תִּשְׁוֶב** as Your prophets promised, **so that Your people may rejoice in You** — **תִּחְיֶינוּ וְעִמָּךְ יִשְׂמְחוּ בְךָ** ! For there is no other true happiness than that which comes from the knowledge of Your having forgiven us.

(ח) הֲרֵאֵנוּ ה' חֲסִדֶךָ  
וְיִשְׂעָךְ תִּתֵּן לָנוּ:

Because Your nature is kindness, we know that You will eventually have pity on us, so let it be soon. **Show us Your kindness, Hashem** — **הֲרֵאֵנוּ ה' חֲסִדֶךָ**, and **grant us Your yeshuah** in our lifetime — **וְיִשְׂעָךְ תִּתֵּן לָנוּ**. Grant it as a gift of

kindness even if we are not worthy of it.

### PART 3. VISION OF THE FUTURE.

(ט) אֲשַׁמְעָה מִה יִדְבַר הָאֵל ה'  
כִּי יִדְבַר שְׁלוֹם אֶל עַמּוֹ וְאֶל חֲסִידָיו  
וְאֶל יְשׁוּבוֹ לְכַסְלָהּ:

**Grant me the ability to hear what the Almighty, Hashem, says — אֲשַׁמְעָה מִה** — **יִדְבַר הָאֵל ה'** when He proclaims peace for His people and especially His devout ones — **כִּי יִדְבַר שְׁלוֹם אֶל עַמּוֹ וְאֶל חֲסִידָיו**. He will rule over them using an optimal balance of firmness and merciful kindness **so that they will** no longer revert to the **folly** of sin — **וְאֶל יְשׁוּבוֹ לְכַסְלָהּ**.

(י) אֵד קָרוֹב לִירְאָיו יִשְׁעוּ  
לְשַׁכֵּן כְּבוֹד בְּאֶרְצָנוּ:

**Surely His yeshuah is near for those who fear Him — אֵד קָרוֹב לִירְאָיו יִשְׁעוּ** — and repent their sins, for the *yeshuah* must be earned. People should not expect to be saved through His kindness alone. But if they show an appropriate degree of sincere devotion His kindness will again become dominant, **so that His glory will** once more  **dwell in our land** — **לְשַׁכֵּן כְּבוֹד בְּאֶרְצָנוּ**.

(יא) חֶסֶד וְאֱמֶת נִפְגְּשׁוּ  
צְדָק וְשְׁלוֹם נִשְׁקוּ:

The *yeshuah* will come when **kindness and truth have met** — **חֶסֶד וְאֱמֶת נִפְגְּשׁוּ**. This will be when people appreciate not only easy-going kindness, but truth as well, even when the truth is hard to take. Then **righteousness** (living according to the will of the Creator) **and peace** (expressed as human happiness) will **have kissed** — **צְדָק וְשְׁלוֹם נִשְׁקוּ**.

(יב) אֱמֶת מֵאֶרֶץ תִּצְמַח  
וְצְדָק מִשָּׁמַיִם נִשְׁקֶף:

The *yeshuah* will come when man here on earth acknowledges the truth of his existence. Then, just as lush crops grow through the efforts of the hard-working farmer, the spiritual labors of earthly man will elicit the flow of kindness from

Heaven. The process is initiated when **truth sprouts from earth** — אֱמֶת מֵאָרֶץ וְצֶדֶק. Until that happens, **righteousness gazes down from heaven** — וְצֶדֶק מִשָּׁמַיִם נֹשֵׂקָה, and awaits the time it can enter into earthly affairs.

(יג) גַּם ה' יִתֵּן הַטּוֹב  
וְאֶרְצֵנוּ תִתֵּן יְבוּלָהּ:

When men make them selves worthy of *yeshuah*, **Hashem, too, will provide** the blessed rain, symbolizing **the** flow of **goodness** — גַּם ה' יִתֵּן הַטּוֹב, and our land **will yield its produce** — וְאֶרְצֵנוּ תִתֵּן יְבוּלָהּ.

(יד) צֶדֶק לְפָנָיו יִהְיֶה  
וַיֵּשֶׁם לְדַרְךָ פְּעָמָיו:

But the **righteousness** of man **must go before him** — צֶדֶק לְפָנָיו יִהְיֶה. The goal of doing right must always be in front of his eyes **and he must set his footsteps on its way** — וַיֵּשֶׁם לְדַרְךָ פְּעָמָיו.

## Sources

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

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| ח - מלבי"ם, ספורנו, נר לרגלי<br>בן רמוך, רשר"ה,     | א - אבן עזרא, רד"ק, המאירי, ספורנו, אבן יחייא                |
| ט - רש"י, רד"ק, מלבי"ם, המאירי, רשר"ה,<br>נר לרגלי, | ב - רש"י, אבן עזרא, רד"ק, מצודות, המאירי,<br>נר לרגלי        |
| י - רד"ק, מלבי"ם, אבן יחייא                         | ג - אבן עזרא, רד"ק   |
| יא - מצודות, מלבי"ם, רשר"ה                          | ד - רד"ק, מצודות   |
| יב - רד"ק, מלבי"ם, רשר"ה                            | ה - רש"י, אבן עזרא, רד"ק, בן רמוך, אלשיך,<br>רשר"ה, נר לרגלי |
| יג - רש"י, רד"ק, מלבי"ם, רשר"ה                      | ו - אבן עזרא, מצודות, נר לרגלי                               |
| יד - רש"י, רד"ק, מצודות, נר לרגלי                   | ז - רש"י, אבן עזרא, נר לרגלי                                 |

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