

**Mizmor 097****The Seeds of Light****Key Concepts**

This is the eighth in the series of 11 *mizmorim* that were originally composed by Moshe Rabbeinu and subsequently incorporated into Tehilim by David. Like the previous mizmorim, the mizmor paints a picture of a promised future, when the patience of the righteous will have been vindicated.

The mizmor is essentially a message of hope: Don't despair in this dark and bitter Galus – the Geulah will surely come. In fact, the seeds of light pointing to that glorious future have already been sown. The light is not yet visible but will soon shine upon the righteous and the upright. With the light will come great joy.

The Geulah will be identified as the era when the world finally recognizes Hashem as the one true Power of the universe and will resolve to live by His principles of righteousness and justice .

The mizmor is presented in three parts, the first of which visualizes the revelation to the world that Hashem reigns. The Geulah is here! The second part describes the recognition by the nations that the gods that they have been worshipping are false. The third part speaks of the great joy that has been held in store for the righteous and the upright, waiting for the day that it will be finally released. The seeds of light have been planted and when they sprout, the joy will surely follow.

**Exploring the Mizmor**

**PART 1. REVELATION OF THE KING.** The mizmor begins with a consoling vision of the Geulah when Hashem is revealed as the only true Power of the universe.

(א) ה' מֶלֶךְ תִּגַּל הָאָרֶץ יִשְׂמְחוּ אַיִם רַבִּים: (ב) עָנַן וְעָרַפֶּל סְבִיבָיו צִדְקָה וּמִשְׁפָּט  
מְכוֹן כְּסֵאוֹ: (ג) אֵשׁ לְפָנָיו תִּלְדָּה וּתְלַהֵט סְבִיב צָרָיו: (ד) הָאֵירוּ בְרָקָיו תִּבְּל רְאֵתָהּ  
וּתַחַל הָאָרֶץ: (ה) הָרִים כְּדוֹנָג נִמְסוּ מִלְּפָנָי ה' מִלְּפָנָי אֲדוֹן כָּל־הָאָרֶץ: (ו) הִגִּידוּ  
הַשָּׁמַיִם צִדְקוֹ וְרָאוּ כָּל־הָעַמִּים כְּבוֹדוֹ:

*(1) Hashem reigns! Let the earth be glad; let the many islands rejoice. (2) Cloud and mist are around him; righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne. (3) Fire goes before Him and consumes His adversaries all around. (4) His lightning bolts illuminate the world; the earth*

*sees and trembles. (5) Mountains melt like wax before Hashem; before the Master of all the earth. (6) The heavens proclaim His righteousness and all the peoples see His glory.*

**PART 2. REJECTION OF FALSE GODS.** Those who worship false gods have come to regret their misplaced loyalties. The Jewish people in the Holy Land are gratified to see the vindication of their devotion.

(ז) יבִּשׁוּ כָּל-עֲבָדֵי פֶסֶל הַמִּתְהַלְּלִים בְּאֵלֵי־לִילִים הַשֹּׁתְחוּ-לוֹ כָּל-אֱלֹהִים: (ח) שָׁמְעָה וַתִּשְׂמַח צִיּוֹן וַתִּגְלַנָּה בְּנוֹת יְהוּדָה לְמַעַן מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ ה': (ט) כִּי-אַתָּה ה' עָלְיוֹן עַל-כָּל-הָאָרֶץ מֵאֵד נִעְלִיתָ עַל-כָּל-אֱלֹהִים:

*(7) All the idol worshippers are humiliated, those who pride themselves with false gods. Bow to Him, all you gods. (8) Tzion hears it and rejoices; the towns and villages of Yehudah exult, because of Your judgments, Hashem. (9) For You, Hashem, are supreme above all the earth; You are exalted high far above all powers.*

**PART 3. JOY FOR THE RIGHTEOUS.** The righteous of the world rejoice in the protection of Hashem. He has proven His faithfulness to them by rewarding them with the ever-growing light of His blessing.

(י) אֲהַבֵּי ה' שְׂנְאוּ רָע שִׁמְרוּ נַפְשׁוֹת חֲסִידָיו מִיַּד רָשָׁעִים יִצִּילֵם: (יא) אִוֵּר זָרַע לְצַדִּיק וְלִישְׂרֵי-לֵב שִׂמְחָה: (יב) שִׂמְחוּ צַדִּיקִים בְּה' וְהוֹדוּ לְזִכְרֵךְ קֹדֶשׁ:

*(10) O lovers of Hashem, hate evil; He guards the lives of His devout ones. He rescues them from the hand of the wicked. (11) Light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright of heart. (12) Be joyful, O righteous, in Hashem and give thanks at the mention of His Holy [Name].*

## Learning the Mizmor

### **PART 1. REVELATION OF THE KING.**

(א) ה' מֶלֶךְ תִּגַּל הָאָרֶץ  
יִשְׂמְחוּ אֲיִים רַבִּים:

Do not despair for the time will come when **Hashem** reveals that He and no other power **reigns** everywhere — **ה' מֶלֶךְ**. **Let** all of **the earth be glad** — **תִּגַּל הָאָרֶץ**. **Let** even the **many** isolated **islands** of humanity **rejoice** — **יִשְׂמְחוּ אֲיִים רַבִּים** for

they are all under His protection.

(ב) עָנָן וְעַרְפָּל סְבִיבָיו  
צֶדֶק וּמִשְׁפָּט מְכוֹן כְּסֵאוֹ:

**Cloud and mist are around him** – עָנָן וְעַרְפָּל סְבִיבָיו because no mortal man can see Him. But His presence is evident from His acts, which reflect His core principles of **righteousness and justice** – צֶדֶק וּמִשְׁפָּט. Those principles are the **foundation** of His throne – צֶדֶק וּמִשְׁפָּט מְכוֹן כְּסֵאוֹ.

(ג) אֵשׁ לִפְנֵי תֵלֶךְ  
וּתְלַהֵט סְבִיב צְרֵיוֹ:

The purifying **fire** of justice **goes before Him** – אֵשׁ לִפְנֵי תֵלֶךְ and **consumes His evil adversaries all around** – וּתְלַהֵט סְבִיב צְרֵיוֹ, so that for them there is no escape.

(ד) הָאִירוּ בְרָקָיו תִּבְלֵ  
רָאֲתָהּ וּתַחַל הָאֲרֶץ:

**His lightning bolts illuminate the world** – הָאִירוּ בְרָקָיו תִּבְלֵ to reveal the effects of His justice to all. The inhabitants of **the earth see** His fury and **tremble** – רָאֲתָהּ וּתַחַל הָאֲרֶץ.

(ה) הָרִים כְּדוֹנֵג נִמְסוּ מִלִּפְנֵי ה'  
מִלִּפְנֵי אֲדוֹן כָּל הָאֲרֶץ:

The wicked kings are craggy **mountains** of arrogance, but they **melt like wax** in the heat of the fire that goes **before Hashem** – הָרִים כְּדוֹנֵג נִמְסוּ מִלִּפְנֵי ה', **before the true Master of all the earth** – מִלִּפְנֵי אֲדוֹן כָּל הָאֲרֶץ.

(ו) הִגִּידוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם צְדָקוֹ  
וְרָאוּ כָּל הָעַמִּים כְּבוֹדוֹ:

**The angels in the heavens proclaim His righteousness** – הִגִּידוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם צְדָקוֹ by doing His will. **And all the peoples**, even those far from the Torah, **see** and become aware of **His glory** – וְרָאוּ כָּל הָעַמִּים כְּבוֹדוֹ.

PART 2. REJECTION OF FALSE GODS.

(ז) יבֹשׁוּ כָּל עֲבָדֵי פֶסֶל  
הַמִּתְהַלְּלִים בְּאֱלִילִים  
הַשִּׁתְחַוּוּ לוֹ כָּל אֱלֹהִים:

**All the idol worshippers are humiliated – יבֹשׁוּ כָּל-עֲבָדֵי פֶסֶל**, especially those who **pride themselves with** the empty achievements of their **false gods – הַמִּתְהַלְּלִים בְּאֱלִילִים**. **Bow to Him, all** you heavenly bodies, who are the **gods worshipped by the nations – הַשִּׁתְחַוּוּ-לוֹ כָּל-אֱלֹהִים**.

(ח) שָׁמְעָה וַתִּשְׂמַח צִיּוֹן  
וַתִּגְלַנָּה בְּנוֹת יְהוּדָה  
לְמַעַן מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ ה':

While the sound of the wicked receiving their punishment causes the rest of the world to tremble, **Tzion hears it and rejoices – שָׁמְעָה וַתִּשְׂמַח צִיּוֹן**. The desolated **towns and villages of Yehudah exult – וַתִּגְלַנָּה בְּנוֹת יְהוּדָה**, because of **Your judgments** that are being carried out, **Hashem – לְמַעַן מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ ה'**.

(ט) כִּי אַתָּה ה' עֲלִיוֹן עַל כָּל הָאָרֶץ  
מְאֹד נְעֻלִיתָ עַל כָּל אֱלֹהִים:

**For You, Hashem, are supreme above all the earth – עֲלִיוֹן** – **עַל-כָּל-הָאָרֶץ** and none can question your justice. **You are exalted on high far above all powers – מְאֹד נְעֻלִיתָ עַל-כָּל-אֱלֹהִים** because whatever power they have emanates from You.

PART 3. JOY FOR THE RIGHTEOUS.

(י) אֲהַבֵּי ה' שְׂנְאוּ רָע  
שִׁמְרֵם נַפְשׁוֹת חֲסִידָיו  
מִיַּד רָשָׁעִים וַצִּילֵם:

**O lovers of Hashem, if You love Him, you must hate evil – אֲהַבֵּי ה' שְׂנְאוּ רָע**! Don't pity the evil doers and don't be afraid of them because **He guards the lives of His devout ones – שִׁמְרֵם נַפְשׁוֹת חֲסִידָיו**. **He rescues them from the hand of**

the wicked – מִיַּד רְשָׁעִים יֵצִילֶם.

(יא) אור זָרַע לַצַּדִּיק  
וּלְיִשְׁרָיִל בְּשִׂמְחָה:

**Light is sown for the righteous – אור זָרַע לַצַּדִּיק, and joy is sown for the upright of heart – וּלְיִשְׁרָיִל בְּשִׂמְחָה** to be harvested in the time of Mashiach. They will reap much more than they have sown.

(יב) שִׂמְחוּ צַדִּיקִים בְּה'  
וְהוֹדוּ לְזִכְרֵ קְדָשׁוֹ:

**Be joyful, O you righteous,** for you are immersed in serving Him and recognize the judgments of Hashem – **שִׂמְחוּ צַדִּיקִים בְּה'**, and **give thanks at the mention of His Holy Name – וְהוֹדוּ לְזִכְרֵ קְדָשׁוֹ** for He has guaranteed that the bliss of the promised future will surely prevail.

## Sources

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

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| ח - רד"ק, מצודות,                             | א - רד"ק, המאירי, בן רמוך, רשר"ה              |
| ט - רד"ק, מלבי"ם, אלשיך, ספורנו, נר לרגלי     | ב - מלבי"ם, ספורנו                            |
| י - אבן עזרא, רד"ק, מצודות, ספורנו, נר לרגלי, | ג - רד"ק, מלבי"ם, ספורנו, אבן יחיאל, רשר"ה    |
| רשר"ה   | ד - רד"ק, ספורנו, רשר"ה                       |
| יא - אבן עזרא, רד"ק, ספורנו                   | ה - אבן עזרא, רד"ק, ספורנו, מלבי"ם, אבן יחיאל |
| יב - רד"ק, נר לרגלי, רשר"ה                    | ו - אבן עזרא, מצודות, נר לרגלי                |
|   | ז - רד"ק, מצודות, נר לרגלי                    |