

Sukkos

On Chol Hamoed Sukkos and Hoshana Rabbah, add the following.

מזמור לתודה—תהילים ק

Serve Hashem with Simchah

מזמור לתודה—A song of thanks-giving, and/or: a song sung when the Korban Todah was brought in the Beis Hamikdash: הריעו ליהוה כל הארץ—The entire earth should call out to Hashem (*in thanks*). עבדו את יהוה בשמחה—Serve Hashem with simchah, happiness, and peace of

מזמור לתודה, הריעו ליהוה כל הארץ: עבדו את יהוה בשמחה, באו לפניו ברננה: דעו כי יהוה הוא אלהים, הוא עשנו, ולו אנחנו עמו וצאן מרעיתו: באו שערי בתודה, חצרתיו בתהלה, הודו לו ברכו שמו: כי טוב יהוה לעולם חסדו, ועד דר ודר אמונתו:

mind! באו לפניו ברננה—(*The way to*) get close to Him (*is*) through gladness! דעו כי יהוה הוא אלהים—Know that Hashem is **the** One Who takes care of us, and/or: יי-הוה—the name that represents God’s attribute of mercy, is the same as אלהים—the name that represents God’s attribute of Justice (*since Hashem’s judgments of us are all for our benefit!*). הוא עשנו—He created us; וצאן מרעיתו—and we Bnei Yisrael are His unique nation, that He shepherds throughout history. באו שערי בתודה חצרתיו בתהלה—We enter the Beis Hamikdash (*today, we enter our mini-Beis Hamikdash, i.e., our shuls and homes*) with thanks giving; הודו לו ברכו שמו—praise Hashem for all that He does for us. כי טוב יהוה לעולם חסדו—For Hashem is the sole absolute good, His kindness is constant and daily in our lives (*even when we cannot see it*); ועד דר ודר אמונתו—and His Presence is consistent in all generations, past and future.

Instant Insight: It is so hard to “serve Hashem with happiness and peace of mind (בשמחה)” when our lives seem so difficult! The key is that the word שמחה rearranged spells the word מחשבה, thinking. Happiness and peace of mind does not happen by itself. It comes from choosing to look at your life from a certain perspective. If you put your mind (מחשבה) to it, you can have peace of mind (בשמחה)!

Pesach

On Chol Hamoed Pesach, skip to Yehi Chevod; see page 101.

Sukkos

On Chol Hamoed Sukkos (excluding Hoshana Rabbah), skip to Yehi Chevod; see page 101.

Special Yom Tov, Hoshana Rabbah,
and Shabbos Additions to Pesukei D'Zimrah

The simplest reason given why we expand Pesukei D'Zimrah on Yom Tov and Shabbos is that since we are not rushing to school or work, we have the time! But there is more to it than that. The point of the Yamim Tovim and Shabbos is

to stop thinking of what we need and instead focus on what we have. And as explained in the introduction, specifically on the Shalosh Regalim, we focus on what direction our feet are facing! Each Yom Tov brings with it the clarity and simchah of that particular Regel. Shabbos as well helps us focus, thanks to our special Shabbos neshamah yeseirah. Thus, it is especially appropriate that on these days we add these extra chapters of Tehillim, which focus on Shabbos Bereishis—the wonderful creation Hashem has given us; and Shabbos Matan Torah—His Torah, which gives us the tools we need to use that creation to accomplish our mission here on earth, which was forged by the Shalosh Regalim! So, sit back and take advantage of this unique opportunity to enjoy these extra chapters of Tehillim!

תהילים יט

The focus of the first few pesukim (2-7) of this chapter is Shabbos Bereishis. By looking into the wonders and marvels of the creation, it becomes clear that there is a Creator Who rules the world and controls “nature” and history. But how do we know how to use His world properly? Pesukim 8-10 tell us that it is only Shabbos Matan Torah, the study of Torah, that gives us the wisdom and tools needed to utilize Hashem’s world properly, which leads us to the reward described in pesukim 11-12. No matter how difficult it may seem, pesukim 13-14 tell us that Hashem will always be there to help us, and that we must realize that without Hashem’s help, we will not succeed in our mission.

לְמַנְצֵחַ מְזִמּוֹר לְדָוִד: הַשָּׁמַיִם
מְסַפְּרִים כְּבוֹד אֱלֹהִים, וּמַעֲשֵׂה
יָדָיו מַגִּיד הֶרְקִיעַ: יוֹם לְיוֹם
יְבִיעַ אִמָּה, וְלֵילָה לְלֵילָה יִחוּהָ
דַּעַת: אֵין אִמָּר וְאֵין דְּבָרִים,
בְּלִי נִשְׁמָע קוֹלָם: בְּכָל הָאָרֶץ
יֵצֵא קוֹם, וּבִקְצָה תִּבְלַל מְלִיָּהֶם,
לִשְׁמֹשׁ שֵׁם אֱהֵל בָּהֶם: וְהוּא
כִּחְתָּן יֵצֵא מִחֻפְתּוֹ, יִשְׁיֵשׁ כְּגִבּוֹר
לְרוּץ אֶרֶץ: מִקְצָה הַשָּׁמַיִם
מוֹצֵאוֹ, וּתְקוּפָתוֹ עַל קְצוֹתָם,
וְאֵין נִסְתָּר מִחֻמָּתוֹ: תּוֹרַת יְהוָה
תְּמִימָה, מְשִׁיבַת נֶפֶשׁ, עֲדוּת
יְהוָה נֶאֱמָנָה, מִחֻכְמַת פִּתִּי:
פְּקוּדֵי יְהוָה יִשְׁרִים, מְשַׁמְּחֵי

לְמַנְצֵחַ מְזִמּוֹר לְדָוִד: הַשָּׁמַיִם
מְסַפְּרִים כְּבוֹד אֱלֹהִים, וּמַעֲשֵׂה
יָדָיו מַגִּיד הֶרְקִיעַ: יוֹם לְיוֹם
יְבִיעַ אִמָּה, וְלֵילָה לְלֵילָה יִחוּהָ
דַּעַת: אֵין אִמָּר וְאֵין דְּבָרִים,
בְּלִי נִשְׁמָע קוֹלָם: בְּכָל הָאָרֶץ
יֵצֵא קוֹם, וּבִקְצָה תִּבְלַל מְלִיָּהֶם,
לִשְׁמֹשׁ שֵׁם אֱהֵל בָּהֶם: וְהוּא
כִּחְתָּן יֵצֵא מִחֻפְתּוֹ, יִשְׁיֵשׁ כְּגִבּוֹר
לְרוּץ אֶרֶץ: מִקְצָה הַשָּׁמַיִם
מוֹצֵאוֹ, וּתְקוּפָתוֹ עַל קְצוֹתָם,
וְאֵין נִסְתָּר מִחֻמָּתוֹ: תּוֹרַת יְהוָה
תְּמִימָה, מְשִׁיבַת נֶפֶשׁ, עֲדוּת
יְהוָה נֶאֱמָנָה, מִחֻכְמַת פִּתִּי:
פְּקוּדֵי יְהוָה יִשְׁרִים, מְשַׁמְּחֵי

Instant Insight:

The phrase מְשִׁיבַת נֶפֶשׁ literally means that it “brings the soul back.” But where did our soul go, and to where is it being brought back? Every person’s neshamah seeks meaning, contentment, and satisfaction. It looks to the outside world and finds causes to support, material wealth to amass, or if all else fails—keeping busy with mindless “fun” while creating a virtual life that appears to be amazing! But at some point in life (hopefully not before it is too late—“I should’ve, could’ve, would’ve”), the neshamah realizes that all this is empty. It is the Torah of Hashem, which is תְּמִימָה—all-encompassing, which is מְשִׁיבַת נֶפֶשׁ—brings the soul back on track, restores it to its original true state, and helps it find answers to all its questions. And there is nothing more מְשִׁיבַת נֶפֶשׁ—refreshing than that!

Instant Insight:

David HaMelech tells us that משפטי ה' אמת, צדקו יחדו—the judgments of Hashem are אמת, true and altogether righteous. This seems to be repetitious. What is the point of the second half of that phrase? Many times, we look at things that happen to us as individuals or to the Jewish People, and they seem very unfair or unjust! Therefore, David HaMelech tells us that only יחדו—when taken all together as one long continuum, then we will be able to see the truth in Hashem's plan and realize that all He does is righteous. Shabbos and Yom Tov give that ability to look back and put it together, and certainly when Mashiach comes, “Yom Shekulo Shabbos,” we will be able to put all the events of Jewish history together and see that יחדו, taken all together, צדקו, they are righteous!

to use His world properly, and that is) תורת יהוה תמימה—the Torah of Hashem, which is all-encompassing and משיבת נפש—refreshes and restores the soul (see Instant Insight). הנחמדים מזהב—Torah is more precious than gold, and is sweeter than honey. בשמךם—And for observing the Torah, there is great reward. שגיאות מי יבין—Hashem, we all make mistakes—sometimes without even realizing it! מנסתרות נקני—Please forgive and cleanse my mistakes. גם—And help

me stay away from sinful situations so that the yetzer hara will not get the better of me. יהיו לרצון אמרי פי—May all that I have (just) said; והגיון לבי לפניך—and all the thoughts in my heart (that I was not able to articulate but *do mean!*) be acceptable to You; יהוה צורי וגאלי—Hashem, my rock and my redeemer.

תהילים לד

The focus of this chapter is to never despair! No matter how bad your life is, Hashem listens to your tefillos and can get you out of any mess! Even if at times we cannot see it, the truth is that all that Hashem does is for our good! To highlight this point, this chapter follows the aleph-beis to impress on us that in all areas of our life (aleph to tav), we are supported by Hashem and that His providence is constant.

To appreciate the power of this message, and to understand the first pasuk, a little background is needed. David HaMelech had to flee for his life from Shaul HaMelech, his father-in-law. The only safe place he could find was among the Philistines—the enemy! Had they realized who he was, they would have killed him. So, David pretended to be insane, and miraculously the king of the Philistines fell for it and sent him away, thus allowing him to escape. That is the meaning of the first pasuk: לְדָוִד—A song of praise sung by David HaMelech; לְפָנֵי אֲבִימֶלֶךְ—when he pretended to be insane; בְּשׁוֹנוֹתָ אֶת טַעְמוֹ—in front of the Philistine King Avimelech (all Philistine kings were referred to as “Avimelech”; this one’s real name was Achish); וַיִּגְרְשֵׁהוּ—and the king, (against the advice of all his ministers) drove him away (thinking that this person could never be his archenemy, David HaMelech); וַיֵּלֶךְ—thus allowing David HaMelech to walk free!

לִב, מִצֹּת יְהוָה בָּרָה, מְאִירַת עֵינַיִם: יִרְאֵת יְהוָה טְהוֹרָה, עוֹמֶדֶת לַעַד, מִשְׁפָּטֵי יְהוָה אֱמֶת, צִדְקוֹ יַחְדּוֹ: הַנְּחֻמָּדִים מִזָּהָב וּמִפָּז רָב, וּמִתּוֹקִים מִדְּבַשׁ וְנוֹפֶת צוּפִים: גַּם עֲבָדֶךָ נוֹהֵר בָּהֶם, בְּשִׁמְרָם עֲקֹב רָב: שְׂגִיאוֹת מִי יִבִּין, מְנַסְתָּרוֹת נִקְנִי: גַּם מִזֵּדִים חֲשֹׁךְ עֲבָדֶךָ, אֶל יִמְשְׁלוּ בִי, אֲזֵי אֵיתָם, וְנִקִּיתִי מִפֶּשַׁע רָב: יְהִיו לְרָצוֹן אֱמָרֵי פִי, וְהִגִּיוֹן לִבִּי לְפָנֶיךָ, יְהוָה צוּרִי וְגֹאֲלִי:

אֲבָרְכָה אֶת יְהוָה בְּכָל עֵת —
(Based on his own personal
miraculous experience, David
proclaims:) I will bless
Hashem constantly, at all
times and in all circum-
stances! —גִּדְלוּ לַיהוָה אֹתִי (and
not only should I praise
Hashem, but) all who fear
Hashem should declare
the greatness of Hashem
together with me; וְנִרְמָמָה
וְיַחְדּוּ שְׁמוֹ —and together we
should praise all that He
does. (Why? Because) חֲנָה
—מַלְאָךְ יְהוָה סָבִיב לִירְאֵי
an angel of Hashem camps
constantly around all those
who fear Him; וְיִחְלָצֵם; and
He rescues them from all
their troubles. All who put
their trust in Hashem and
fear Him will never lack any-
thing! (How does one become
a person who is worthy of
such miraculous protection?)
נֹצֵר לְשׁוֹנֶךְ מִרַע —Guard your
tongue from speaking evil;
וּשְׁפָתֶיךָ מִדִּבֵּר מִרְמָה
—and (guard) your lips from
deceiving people (that way
you will never be a hypocrite).
סוּר מִרַע וַעֲשֵׂה טוֹב —Keep away
from evil, and do mitzvos;
בִּקֵּשׁ שְׁלוֹם —your goal
should be to create peace
among people; וְרַדְּפֵהוּ; and
run after opportunities to
accomplish that. And to
sum up the entire chapter:
פּוֹדֶה יְהוָה נַפְשׁ עֲבָדָיו
Hashem saves His servants (from
those who oppress them); וְלֹא
וְיִתְּנוּ אֶת חֲסִידֵי יְהוָה
—and those who place their trust in Hashem
will never regret it!

לְדוֹד, בְּשָׁנוֹתָיו אֶת טַעְמוֹ לִפְנֵי
אֲבִימֶלֶךְ, וַיִּגְרְשֵׁהוּ וַיֵּלֶךְ: אֲבָרְכָה
אֶת יְהוָה בְּכָל עֵת, תָּמִיד תִּתְּלֶנּוּ
בְּפִי: בִּיהוָה תִּתְּלֶנּוּ נַפְשִׁי, יִשְׁמְעוּ
עֲנוּיִם וַיִּשְׁמְחוּ: גִּדְלוּ לַיהוָה אֹתִי,
וְנִרְמָמָה שְׁמוֹ יַחְדּוּ: דִּרְשֵׁתִי אֶת
יְהוָה וְעֲנֵנִי, וּמִכָּל מְגוּרֹתַי הֲצִילֵנִי:
הִבִּיטוּ אֵלָיו וְנִתְּרוּ, וּפְנִיָּהֶם אֵל
יִחְפְּרוּ: זֶה עָנִי קָרָא וַיהוָה שָׁמַע,
וּמִכָּל צָרוֹתָיו הוֹשִׁיעוּ: חֲנָה מִלְּאָךְ
יְהוָה סָבִיב לִירְאָיו, וַיִּחְלָצֵם:
טַעְמוּ וְרִאוּ כִּי טוֹב יְהוָה, אֲשֶׁר־
הִגְבִּיר יַחֲסֶה בּוֹ: יִרְאוּ אֶת יְהוָה
קִדְּשׁוּ, כִּי אֵין מַחְסוֹר לִירְאָיו:
כְּפִירִים רָשׁוּ וְרָעִבוּ, וְדִרְשֵׁי יְהוָה
לֹא יַחֲסְרוּ כָּל טוֹב: לָכֵן בָּנִים
שָׁמְעוּ לִי, יִרְאֵת יְהוָה אֲלֻמְדָּכֶם:
מִי הָאִישׁ הַחֲפִיץ חַיִּים, אֲהֵב יָמִים
לְרֵאוֹת טוֹב: נֹצֵר לְשׁוֹנֶךְ מִרַע,
וּשְׁפָתֶיךָ מִדִּבֵּר מִרְמָה: סוּר
מִרַע וַעֲשֵׂה טוֹב, בִּקֵּשׁ שְׁלוֹם
וְרַדְּפֵהוּ: עֲנֵי יְהוָה אֶל צְדִיקִים,
וְאֲזַנּוֹ אֶל שׁוֹעֲתָם: פְּנֵי יְהוָה
בַּעֲשֵׂי רַע, לְהַכְרִית מֵאֶרֶץ זָכָר:
צַעֲקוּ וַיהוָה שָׁמַע, וּמִכָּל צָרוֹתֵם
הֲצִילֵם: קָרוֹב יְהוָה לְנֹשְׁבְרֵי לֵב,
וְאֵת דִּכְאֵי רוּחַ יוֹשִׁיעַ: רַבּוֹת
רָעוֹת צְדִיק, וּמִכָּל־יִצְלָנוּ יְהוָה:
שָׁמַר כָּל עֲצֻמוֹתָיו, אַחַת מִהֶנָּה
לֹא נִשְׁבְּרָה: תִּמְוֹתֶיךָ רָשָׁע רָעָה,
וּשְׁנֵאֵי צְדִיק יִאֲשָׁמוּ: פּוֹדֶה יְהוָה
נַפְשׁ עֲבָדָיו, וְלֹא יִאֲשָׁמוּ כָּל
הַחֲסִידִים בּוֹ:

FAQ:

"All who put their trust in Hashem and fear Him will never lack anything!" —but that's not what it looks like!

Answer:

Correct! That is the classic (and very important) question of tzaddik v'ra lo—why the righteous suffer! See Appendix 2.

Instant Insight:

Pasuk 15 takes two very nice but very different ideas and sticks them together in one pasuk (סוּר מִרַע וַעֲשֵׂה טוֹב —keep away from evil and do mitzvos on one hand, and בִּקֵּשׁ שְׁלוֹם —your goal should be to create peace among people; וְרַדְּפֵהוּ —and run after opportunities to accomplish that on the other hand). Why were those two ideas stuck together in one pasuk? Though creating peace is wonderful and must be pursued with all our strength, it cannot come at the cost of compromising what is right, watering down mitzvos, or condoning what our Torah tells us is evil.