

Tehilim Perek 22

Welcome to NachDaily, covering the entire TANACH one perek at a time. I'm Rabbi Shaya Sussman, and today we'll be discussing Tehilim, chapter 22.

Due to the length of this chapter, we will split it up into two shiurim. Hopefully, we'll finish the perek in the next shiur.

The Malbim and Rashi explain that this perek is essentially split up into two parts. In the first part, pessukim aleph through yud zayin, Dovid prays to Hashem for the Jewish nation in exile, considered the lowest nation. He implores God not to abandon us, as every moment that we are in exile is considered a chilul Hashem, desecration of God's Name.

In the second part of the perek, Dovid switches gears and davens from a place of confidence and emunah in God. One day God will redeem His nation that seems to have been cast aside, and slowly but surely take us from galus to Geulah.

It is important to mention that Rashi also brings the Gemarah in Megilah 15B which says that this is the perek of Tehilim said by Esther when she went to speak with Achashverosh. The perek starts with the words, "Ayeles Hashachar." Ayeles means a "doe," which is represented by Esther.

It can be said, on a deeper level, that Esther in the palace of Achashverosh and Am Yisrael in exile point towards the same thing.

Esther wondered how a good, frum Jewish woman could end up in the house of Achashverosh.

The same is true with Am Yisrael in exile. We often wonder how God's chosen nation has sunk so low. The greatest people, who are supposed to shine God's light over all, is shamed and disgraced by the nations of the world. How did we get here?

Rav Nosson explains in Hilchos Nefilas Apayim that Esther had a lesson to teach Am Yisrael: You can call out to Hashem even in the lowest, filthiest places.

Esther and Dovid Hamelech taught every single individual, in every generation throughout our long exile, never to cease crying out to God. No matter where you may find yourself in life, and no matter how terrible and hopeless the situation may seem, God is with you!

The perek begins with the words,

לְמַנצֵחַ עַל-אַיֶּלֶת הַשָּׁחַר מְזֻמָּר לְדָוִד:

For the leader; on ayeleth ha-shaḥar. A psalm of David.

The simple meaning of ayeles hashachar is that it is the name of a musical instrument that Dovid would use to accompany this perek. In the same manner that the shachar, morning star, slowly rises and brings light, this particular instrument would start with a low deep tone and gradually reach a higher pitch as the musician played it.

Shachar is an interesting word, as it has both double and opposite meanings. Shachar means not only black, but also means dawn, which connotes light. This is because it is precisely from the blackest part of the night that the first rays of dawn break.

The Yerushalmi in Tannis says that the final redemption will come about “kima kima, little by little.” Just as the rays of the shachar begin to slowly glow, so will the rays of the final redemption begin to sprout in a slow, yet unrecognizable manner.

Rav Hillel M’Shklov explains in Sefer Kol Hator, in the name of his Rebbe the Vilna Gaon, that the initial stages of the final redemption will occur in a seemingly non-miraculous way, just like the slow rise of the morning star. The process of Geulah will be almost unrecognizable, and will occur through natural processes. This is obviously also a miracle, although to our eyes it may not look like one.

The Vilna Gaon goes on to compare the final redemption to the story of Purim and Esther, which unfolded slowly over the course of many years. If you lived in

the times of Shushan, prior to the salvation, you would not have even recognized that a miracle was happening. It was a nes besoch hatevah, a seemingly non-miraculous miracle.

This should be a great source of encouragement for us. We are living in truly amazing times, as the process of redemption has begun. Just as the words of the prophets predicted, one-day Hashem will bring Am Yisrael from the four corners of the earth back to Eretz Yisrael. There are currently about 6 million Jews now in Eretz Yisrael, and we're rebuilding and repopulating the ancient ruins.

May we merit seeing the complete rising of the shachar, with the revelation of Mashiach ben Dovid, as predicted in this chapter.

Be"H, we'll be giving delving further into this perek in the next shiur.

Thank you for listening and have a wonderful day.