

Tehilim Perek 25

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 25.

This chapter was written with almost every verse beginning with the next letter of the aleph beis. It is brought down that any chapter said in accordance with the aleph beis is considered extra special.

Sefardim have the custom to also say this perek after Shemona Esrey for nefilas apayim for tachanun. They lower their heads and lean on their arms while saying it.

Interestingly enough, the letters of "beis, vav and kuf" aren't written at the beginning of any of the pessukim. The Radak doesn't know why those three letters are missing.

The Meiri notes that Dovid did not intentionally leave out these letters, but wrote down this perek as he prophetically received it.

However, the Abudraham explains that the letters "beis, vav and kuf" spell out the word "buk- empty." Dovid chose to leave out these three letters because this chapter tells us that anyone can do teshuvah and come close to Hashem. He didn't want to hint to the word empty, implying that God would not answer our tefilos.

Alternatively, Rav Chaim Vital explains, in Pre Etz Chaim, Shaar Nefilaat Apayim, that beis, vav and kuf have the numerical value of Gehenim, purgatory, ninety-eight. A person who says this perek will merit avoiding the sight of the fire of Gehenim.

In place of the letters "beis, vav and kuf," the letters of aleph, reish and fay are doubled. These letters combine to create the word, "Erpah- I will heal." God will heal the wounds caused by our struggles.

Dovid opens up his heart to God and pleads to be drawn close to Him. Directing his heart towards Him, he asks that his enemies not be allowed to shame him.

“Let me know your ways, show me the right path,” Dovid begs. “Please don’t recall the sins of my youth.” He continues to affirm his unwavering belief in God’s goodness, that He wants people to succeed in life, and certainly someone who truly, sincerely wants to grow, will be shown the light.

We continue to get glimpses into Dovid’s intimate relationship with the Almighty: “My eyes are always turned towards You. Turn to me, have mercy on me. Look at how much I’ve been tortured! Forgive me for all my sins and protect my soul, because I hope for You.”

The first two pessukim in the perek read as follows

לְדָוִד אֵלֶיךָ יְהוָה נַפְשִׁי אֶשָּׂא: לֹהִי בְּךָ בִּטְחוֹתִי אֶל-אֲבוֹשָׁה אֶל-יַעֲלֹצוֹ אִיְבִי לִי:

Of David. To You God, I lift my soul. I set my hope on You; My God, I trust in You. Let me not be ashamed. Let my enemies not rejoice over me.

The Alshich notes that any psalm that begins with simply L’Dovid and no other accolade, means that Dovid was speaking as his simple self, and not as the king of Yisrael.

It can be said that the reason for this is that when it comes to doing Teshuvah, we need to approach God with great simplicity, not pretending that we are something we are not. Dovid therefore chose to write this perek as a commoner, and not as the king of Yisrael, so as to humble himself before the Creator.

In regard to this perek being said in conjunction with the alpeh beis, the Ramad Walli explains, al pi kaballah, that the words *To You God, I lift my soul* is referring to the clarifying and uplifting of the netzivot of kedusha, sparks of holiness, that fell between the klipos, husks of impurity.

This perek was said according to the aleph beis because Dovid was speaking about raising up the sparks of holiness, and the aleph beis is always a general reference to the entire creation.

The first passuk in the Torah is “Bereishis barah Elokim es hashamayim v’es haaretz.” In the beginning God created “es,” which is spelled aleph tuf, which means that He created all the letters of the aleph beis, from the first to the last. As the sefer Tanya and others explain, God created the world utilizing the letters of the aleph beis.

This also explains the custom that many have to lean on their arm when saying this during davening. Lowering the body represents going down into the klipos to raise up the sparks of holiness that are contained there.

This also contains the ultimate secret of Teshuvah. Every yerida is for the purpose of aliyah, every descent is for the purpose of ascent. Therefore, when we say this perek, let us simply ask for God to draw us close to Him, with the simple Emunah that even when we mess up, it’s part of God’s plan.

Thank you for listening and have a wonderful day.