

Tehilim Perek 49

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 49, continuing the block of chapters written by the sons of Korach.

The Ramad Walli explains that the previous perek related that Reshaim will be destroyed at the time of the final tikkun, rectification. This perek thus urges people to do teshuva and return to Hashem before it's too late.

Although there is a harsh tone to this chapter, he relates, this is due to God's deep concern about mankind. The harsh tone is really an outpouring of God's love, so that all people can attain to reach their final tikkun and mission on this earth.

This chapter is considered to be somber and sad. While the previous chapter was upbeat, this one reminds us of man's mortality. The end of man is death, regardless of race, religion, family background, or financial status.

The author relates that no matter how much money you make, it cannot be taken with you to the next world. No sum of money will be enough to ransom your soul from God.

Verse 4 says:

פִּי יְדַבֵּר חֲכָמּוֹת וְהָגִיתִי לִבִּי תְבוּנוֹת:

My mouth utters wisdom, my speech is full of insight.

Rav Nosson in Hilchos Shechitz says that since we all know that we will die eventually, why does the author of the perek say, "Listen to my wisdom?" Why is the temporary nature of this world considered wisdom?

Rav Nosson answers that in truth, we need this brought to our awareness. This knowledge constantly evades us, and it is wise to be aware of the temporary,

fleeting nature of this world. Through all the generations, Tzaddikim and Chachomim understood that their days were numbered.

Now, says Rav Nosson, we can understand the opening of this perek with the words:

שְׁמַעוּ זֶאת כָּל-הָעַמִּים הָאֲזִינוּ כָּל-יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָדָם:

Hear this, all you peoples; give ear, all inhabitants of the world,

The Gemara Yerushalmi in Shabbos says that the reason “chaled” is used in reference to the people of the world is because it comes from the world “chulda,” meaning weasel. A weasel constantly hides in cracks and crevices.

Rav Nosson says that just as a chulda hides, the purpose of this world is hidden from us.

The psalmist asks us to listen to the wise words of his mouth because he was revealing the truth of the temporary nature of this world. In verse 12, the perek relates that people often try to “live on” or reach immortality by leaving behind their names on buildings as a legacy. This is also a waste, because at the end of the day you can’t die and take your money with you to the next world.

May we merit seeing through the illusions of this world and not to take ourselves too seriously, to appreciate life from a deeper place of love and gratitude for our fellow man and God.

Thank you for listening, and have a wonderful day.