

Tehilim Perek 60

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 60.

This chapter corresponds to what happened to Dovid in Shmuel Beis, chapter 8. Check out the NachDaily archives for further information.

The chapter was written after the wars which Dovid fought with Aram Naharayim, Aram Sova, and Edom, specifically about a battle that took place at the Dead Sea.

The commentators point out a discrepancy between what Dovid wrote regarding the wars' casualties, and the account in the book of Divrey Hayomim, chapter 19.

In Divrey Hayomim it says that there were eighteen thousand casualties, but Dovid mentions only twelve thousand. While these wars were attributed to Dovid, they were actually won by two of his great generals, Yoav and Avishai. According to our perek, Yoav killed twelve thousand men, while in another war Avishai killed six thousand. It makes sense to assume that there were different accounts because wars were fought by different generals. Therefore, when Divrey Hayomim recounts the casualties at eighteen thousand, all of the wars were included.

Dovid begins this chapter by recalling a time when the nation was in trouble. It seemed as if God had abandoned Am Yisrael by allowing them to be attacked by another nation.

In verse 8, Dovid recalled God's promise that he would rule over the region. After winning these battles, he now had dominion over all the surrounding areas and felt a deep sense of contentment on seeing God's promise come true.

In verse 11 until the end of the perek, Dovid acknowledges that only through Hashem's assistance was he able to achieve such military strength. Dovid ends by proudly stating that God will continue to help him be victorious.

The perek opens with: **לְמַנְצֶה עַל־שׁוֹנֵן עֵדוּת מִכְתָּם לְדָוִד לְלִמָּד**

For the leader, on shushan eduth. A michtam of David (to be taught),

What is the meaning of the word “shushan” here?

The simple meaning is that it was the name of a musical instrument used to accompany the psalm.

The Meforshim explain that the word shushan also means a rose, which alludes to the Sanhedrin, High Court. When Yoav initially came to war against Aram Naharayim, its leaders said that he was breaking the pact that Yaakov made with his father-in-law, as they were Lavan’s descendants!

Yoav brought the question to Dovid, who asked the Sanhedrin what to do. The Sanhedrin answered that because the people of Aram Naharayim had broken the covenant many times, the pact no longer needed to be honored. Yoav then began the war against them.

Rav Shimshon Raphael Hirsch explains that “shoshana,” rose, refers to the Jewish nation, which is a rose amongst thorns. Regardless of how strongly the wind blows, the rose needs to remain upright so as not to be injured by the thorns. The Jewish nation throughout its exile has needed to be firmly rooted in Torah not to be swayed and injured by the thorns of the galus. Only through a deep commitment to learning and keeping Torah have we survived as a nation, and will continue to do so throughout our exile.

The Ramad Wallli explains that “shoshana” also refers to the Shechina, the feminine aspect of the Divine Presence, which protects the Jewish nation throughout all of its wars.

That’s why the passuk uses the word “aidus,” testimony. Dovid was testifying for all generations that the Shechina is with Am Yisrael. One needs to give honor to God, Who is the only Source of strength.

May we merit acknowledging that true strength comes from God, who protects His nation like a rose amongst the thorns.



Thank you for listening, and have a wonderful day.