

Counting of the Omer

Day 8

by Marc Gravelle

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Psalms 119: 57- 64

The best times for me, to meditate on the Word of Yahweh, is during the early hours of the day, when everything is very quiet. It is at those solemn moments, that I often get into deep thoughts about what Yahweh wants from me, and from all of His children. Furthermore, I believe, it is a time when it is easier for me, to hear the still small voice of the Spirit of Yahweh. Whether you are a morning person or a night person, if you are indeed seeking Yahweh, you can and should find the time to get on your face, and spend some quality alone time with Him in prayer, and then, take time to enjoy Him, and the Words of His written Torah of Life. Let your heart wonder as to what Mosheh, or Abraham, or Yitzchaq and many others, more than likely did, when they had some alone time with our heavenly Father, and perhaps, your silent watch, will bring forth the same kind of thoughts that they had, to your heart.

Psalm 23:1-7

1 Yahweh is my shepherd; I shall not want. 2 He makes me to lie down in green pastures: he leads me beside the still waters. 3 He restores my soul: he leads me in the paths of righteousness for his Name's sake. 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies: You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over. 6 Surely, goodness and mercy shall follow me, all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of Yahweh for ever.

Now that together with the Psalmist we have gone through the Valley of the Shadow of death and all that the image represents, what is the next step or thought that comes into the Psalmist's mind. He says, I will fear no evil, in Hebrew it says, לֹא-אֶיִרָא רָע, Lo Iyra Ra, where the word Lo, means, no or not, the word Iyra, means, will I fear, and the word Ra, means evil. The english words seem to capture the sense of what the Psalmist is saying, but when we look at the complete definitions of the Hebrew words, especially the word Iyra, we get a more profound message. The word Iyra, is from the word Yirah, יִרָא with an Aleph prefix, and the letter Aleph means, self referential, therefore these two words together Lo Iyra, means, I will not fear, and then, we have the word Ra, which means, evil, wickedness, harm, misfortune, calamity, distress, misery, injury, wrong. Now since the word, Yirah, יִרָא, means, fear, terror, reverence, and without the Hey suffix, אִירָא, it means, to fear, he feared, was afraid, he revered, honoured, was fearful, was dreadful, was awe inspiring, he made afraid, terrified, terror, reverence, and if we change the suffix letter Aleph, א, to the letter Hey, ה, we form the **word** Yirah, יִרָה, which sounds the same, but it means, to throw, to cast, shoot, was shot through, to teach, to instruct, he pointed out, showed, he taught, instructed.

Therefore, if we look at this part of the *verse* once more, we can see that the reason that the Psalmist does **NOT FEAR**, is because he has been **taught** by Yahweh, **NOT TO FEAR**. What do you think it **IS**, that Yahweh taught the Psalmist, that could possibly cause him **NOT** to fear? Well, in *John 8:32*, it says, *You shall know the TRUTH, and the TRUTH shall set you FREE*. The Word Truth in

Scripture, is defined as the Words of our heavenly Father's Torah of Life, (*Psalm 119:142, Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness and Your Torah, IS the TRUTH*)

Now to confirm that the Psalmist believes Yahweh, and that the reason that he does **NOT FEAR, IS BECAUSE, Yahweh IS** with Him, he says, Your Rod, Your, Shebet, שֵׁבֶט, and Your Staff, Your Mishenah, מִשְׁעָנָה or מִשְׁעָנֹת, is with me. The word Shebet, translated as Rod, represents Yahweh's Torah, which gives all who believe, follow and obey it, **REST**, and as you can see, the word Shebet, sound a lot like the word Shabat, except that the suffix letter, is the letter Tet, rather than the letter, Tav, and the word Mishenah, means, support, stay, staff, and it represents the authority of the Creator of the universe, over all of His creation. The Psalmist says, that these two items, Yahweh's Torah and His authority, they יְנַחֲמֵנִי, YeNachamuniy, they comfort me. The word YeNachamuniy is from the word Nacham, נָחַם, which means, to have compassion, to console oneself, he was consoled, he comforted himself, he comforted someone else, he consoled himself, he had compassion. So here, the Psalmist is saying, that the Words of our heavenly Father's Torah of Life, **comforted him**, they showed him compassion, they consoled him, and that is why he did **NOT FEAR**.

Psalms 119: 57- 64

Yahweh is my portion; I have promised to keep Your Words (Torah). I sought – Your favor with all my heart; Be gracious to me according to Your Word (Torah). I considered my ways and turned my feet to Your testimonies (Torah). I hastened and did not delay to keep Your commandments (Torah). The cords of the wicked have encircled me, but I have not forgotten Your Torah (Law). At midnight I shall rise to give thanks to You because of Your righteous ordinances (Torah). I am a companion of all those who fear You, and of those who keep Your precepts (Torah). The earth is full of Your loving kindness, O Yahweh; teach me Your statutes (Torah).

One thing that I uncover on a regular basis, when I dig deeper into the Word of Yahweh Elohim, whether I am prompted to do so, by the Holy Spirit, or whether I am commanded to do so, as we are Commanded to do, in counting of the Omer, **IT IS** a humbling experience, because, the more I study and research the infinitely wise Words of our heavenly Father, the more I realize how **LITTLE** I really do know. The notion of finite creatures, such as myself, attempting to understand our infinite Creator is, in and of itself, a clear indication, that I will never be able to plumb the depths of His knowledge, as I seek to know Him better. However, as a Believer, I have, residing in my heart, the Holy Spirit of the Most High Elohim, placed there by Yahweh Himself, as He promised us He would do in *Ezekiel 36:27*, and our heavenly Father's Holy Spirit, not only desires to teach me all the things pertaining to our heavenly Father, He is actually mandated to do so, He is mandated to cause all people, who will **ALLOW** Him, to cause them to believe, follow and obey the Words of the Father's Torah of Life. And Messiah said in *John 14:26, the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father WILL send in My Name, He WILL teach you ALL things, and bring to your REMEMBRANCE ALL that I Messiah said to you.*

What I learn from these words, is that, as we relinquish our will, and willingly permit, and or allow ourselves to be led by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit of Elohim; He is faithful to reveal to us, more and more about the heart of our Creator. This in turn enhances our love for Him and our desire to be His obedient servants during our personal sojourns, while we inhabit our physical bodies.

As I have been spending more and more time reflecting on the various Psalms during the counting of the Omer, I believe that the Ruach HaKodesh, is guiding me into a deeper understanding of Yahweh's Word on a number of levels. And, what I am discovering, is that some passages, that I had read many times before, are now, coming to life before my very eyes, and these treasures, are being lodged in my heart, and they will remain with me forever, and the great news about that, is that they connect other passages in Scripture that at one time seemed to be vague to me in the past. And now, I am able to comprehend, some of the *verses* that were once vague to me in the past. These verses are actually lining up with my ever expanding understanding of Elohim's Word, **IT IS** very exciting to witness and receive these clarifications. He is indeed, the One who James the Just calls, the Father of Lights. *Every good thing given and every perfect GIFT (and understanding His Word on a deeper level is indeed a GIFT) is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of changing. (James 1:17).*

In *Psalm 119*, each section of the **twenty two** sections starts with one of the Hebrew letters. There are eight *verses* to each section and in the section we are studying today, we have the letter Chet, ח, which is the eighth letter in the Hebrew Alephbet. The number eight in Scripture, speaks of a new beginning, the eighth day, for example, it is the beginning of a new week, which leads us to anticipate the coming of Yahweh's Hallowed Shabat. Each *verse* of this section, has a word that starts with the letter Chet. In the Hebrew Scriptures the first word of *verse 57* is the word *portion*, Chelek, חֶלֶק, *verse 58* has the words, *I entreated*, or *I pleaded*, Chilitiy, חִלִּיתִי, *verse 59*, has the words, *I thought*, Chishavtiy, חִשְׁבֹתִי, *verse 60* has the words *I hastened*, Chashtiy, חָשַׁתִּי, *verse 61* has the words *the bands*, or *the cords*, Chevley, חֶבְלַי, *verse 62* has the words *at midnight*, Chatzot, חֲצוֹת, *verse 63* has the word *companion*, Chavar, חָבֵר, and *verse 64* has the word *mercy*, Chasdeka, חַסְדֶּךָ, which also means, your kindness.

In this section of *Psalm 119*, we have the words, *portion*, *I entreated* or *I pleaded*, *I thought*, *I hastened*, *the bands* or *cords*, *midnight*, *companion* and *mercy* or *kindness*. Therefore I believe that the Psalmist, David, has hidden a message in the first words of these twenty two portions of *Psalm 119*. I believe that the Psalmist, wants us to see the Chen, חן of Yahweh, His favour, His Grace, the longing that He has towards us His children, and His desire to see us come home to Him, where we can be assured, that He will shed His great love, grace and mercy upon us.

The Psalmist wants us to understand, that our heavenly Father wants to be, our portion and therefore, entreats and pleads with us to turn or return to Him, He wants us to think and meditate on His Words of Life, and not wait any longer, but hasten our return to Him, so that we can reconnect with Him, reconnect the cords that was severed by Sin, for He knows that apart from Him, we can do nothing. This is already the midnight hour, and there is no time to waste, we must return, teshuvah to Him, for no one knows when their life will end. Yahweh has made it very clear through His grace, **mercy** and **kindness**, that He wants to be our **companion** on our life journey. **LET US THEREFORE** willingly surrender our hearts to Him, in complete loving surrendered obedience and let Yahweh teach us His Statutes, His Precepts, His Judgements and His Testimonies through His Holy Spirit, whom Yahweh has given to us, as our comforter, and who is tasked with the very specific purpose of **CAUSING** every surrendered obedient heart, that will **ALLOW** Him, to believe, follow, obey and **DO** the Father's Torah of Life. Amein

These are the gifts that James is talking about when he said, *Every **GOOD, TOV GIFT** and every perfect **GIFT** is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of changing. (James 1:17).*

Please take the time to re-read *verse 57 – 64* reproduced below and I want you to meditate on what we receive from our heavenly Father, when we willingly turn to Him with surrendered contrite obedient hearts, and forget about what we supposedly give up of this world, for what the world has to offer, **IS AS FILTHY RAGS**, compared to what our heavenly Father offers us, and I am convinced that as you meditate on Yahweh's perfect gifts, you **WILL** see that **IT IS** much, much more than a fair exchange, and remember that it is yours for eternity. Amein

Verse 57 You are my portion, Chelqiy, חֶלְקִי, O Yahweh: I have said that I would keep Your words.

Here the Psalmist is joyfully admitting, that Yahweh **IS** his *portion*, his part, his *Chelqiy*, חֶלְקִי his destiny in life, and that, because Yahweh, **IS** indeed everything to Him, he swears that he will keep or better yet, he swears that he will **guard** Yahweh's Words with all of his heart, mind, soul and strength. The Psalmist is making a lifetime commitment to Shema, to hear, listen, pay very close attention to, understand, believe, follow, and obey the Words of our heavenly Father's inerrant and everlasting teaching and instructions, the Words of His Torah of Life.

Verse 58 I intreated Your favour, paniym, פָּנִים, with my whole heart: be merciful unto me according to Your Word.

The Psalmist is telling Yahweh, I pleaded, I longed, I desired, I hoped, I beseeched You, to allow me to see and experience Your Face, Your Paniym, Your character, Your favour, because I know, without a shadow of a doubt, that your Word, Your Torah **IS TRUTH**, and that surrendered obedience to Your Words of Life, guarantees, that **ALL** who seek You, with **ALL** of their whole heart, **WILL** indeed **find** You, and I am relying on that **TRUTH** also, so that I can get to know You on a much more intimate basis.

Verse 59 I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto Your Testimonies.

Here the Psalmist tells Yahweh that he has considered his own ways and found that they were inadequate and therefore he has turned his life around, so that now he faces who he is, and willingly chooses to walk in Yahweh's Ways, His Testimonies, His inerrant and everlastings Words of Life.

*Verse 60 I made haste, and delayed **NOT** to **KEEP** Your Commandments.*

Here the Psalmist adds a level of urgency. He says that once he realized and understood who Yahweh was, he did **NOT** delay, he immediately turned his whole life around and chose to follow **ALL** of the Commandments of Yahweh, the Words of His inerrant and everlasting directives for a full and complete life, here on earth and for eternity.

*Verse 61 The bands of the wicked have robbed me: but I have **NOT** forgotten Your Torah (Law)*

The Psalmist is aware of the wickedness and evil that is predominant in this world of ours, and, in his own heart, and that evil thoughts, can, and often do, rob him of his desire to **OBEY** and **KEEP**

the Word of Elohim, **BUT**, he has determined in his heart, to **NOT** forget the Words of the Torah of our heavenly Father, to **NOT** forget His inerrant and everlasting teaching and instructions, His Directives for everlasting Life, because now, the Psalmist knows, that the Word of Yahweh **IS** the tool or the weapon with which he can defeat **ALL** evil, that tries to deceive him and do him harm.

Verse 62 At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto You because of Your righteous Judgments.

The Psalmist is saying, when I encounter darkness in my life, I will turn to You and Your Word, because Your Word is Righteous, and it **IS TRUTH**, and I know that I can depend on it, and because I can depend on Your Word, I know that it will deliver me in times of trouble. For that is what Your Word, Your **TRUTH**, promises us, **IF** and when it is obeyed, for it is the one and only Light that can and does illuminate a dark world.

*Verse 63 I am a companion of all them that fear You and of them that **KEEP** Your precepts.*

In Scripture we are told that the fear of Yahweh **IS** the **BEGINNING** of wisdom, and here, the Psalmist says, I am a companion of all them that **FEAR** Yahweh. In other words, the Psalmist is saying, that he has surrounded himself with people that have chosen to follow the **WISDOM** of Yahweh, and since the **WISDOM** of Yahweh **IS** contained in the Words of His Torah of Life, it means that the Psalmist has chosen to **KEEP and** or **GUARD** the Word, the precepts of Yahweh, His inerrant and everlasting teaching and instructions, His Torah of Life. The Psalmist is aware that if he surrounds himself with people that love and obey Yahweh, that it will help him to do the same. Therefore, I have chosen to come to the very same conclusion as the Psalmist, and I too want to surround myself with people of like mind, and that **IS** one of the many reasons that I love to keep Shabat with all of you, at our house. I love to surround myself with people that love and obey Yahweh on a daily basis, because, we really do become what we choose to surround ourselves with. Therefore I recommend that we choose to surround ourselves with **TRUE BELIEVERS** in the Word of Yahweh, people who believe that **ALL** the Words of Yahweh's Torah, **ARE everlasting**, because, it will strengthen our own resolve to obey Yahweh, and help others to do the same. Amein.

Verse 64 The earth, O Yahweh, is full of Your mercy: teach me Your Statutes.

Here the Psalmist is aware of Yahweh's omnipresence and His boundless mercy, and that no matter where he goes, Yahweh will always be with him, and therefore, since Yahweh is everywhere, and with him at all times, the Psalmist humbly asks Yahweh to teach him His Statutes, His inerrant and everlasting teaching and instructions, the Words of His Torah of Life.

As you can see, each *verse* is filled with the Psalmist's awe, the awe that he has towards Yahweh's omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence, as all of us should be. And the awe that the Psalmist shows towards Yahweh, should be sufficient for all of us to believe everything that Yahweh says and does, **BUT** unfortunately for many people, it is **NOT**, and many will choose to walk their own paths. **DON'T BE LIKE THEM**, follow in the footsteps of the Psalmist, turn to Yahweh in every aspect of your life, as the Psalmist chose to do, and you will be greatly rewarded. Amein

Studying and keeping Torah together as a community.

*Have a great Elohim blessed week and may YHVH bless your every thought,
and your every deed. Until we meet again. Amein*