YESHIVAT HAR ETZION

ISRAEL KOSCHITZKY VIRTUAL BEIT MIDRASH (VBM)

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***Tehillim* (Series II)**

**Rav Elchanan Samet**

**Shiur#02: *Tehillim* 100 – "A Psalm of Thanksgiving"**

**(Part II)**

**The Difference Between the Praise of "All the Earth" and the Praise of "His People and the Sheep of His Pasture"**

### VI. The structure of the Psalm

Now that we have demonstrated that the words at the end of verse 3, "His people and the sheep of His pasture," actually belong to verse 4 and serve as an appeal to the people of Israel to praise God, the time has arrived to discuss the structure of the psalm as a whole.

We have already noted that our psalm falls into the category of psalms of praise, with a fixed framework of a call to praise God followed by a rationale justifying that appeal beginning with the word *ki.* We also noted that in some of the psalms falling into this category, including our psalm, this framework repeats itself, and it is this repetition that determines the structure of the psalm.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Indeed, the repetition of the aforementioned framework divides our psalm into two halves. We will now transcribe our psalm again in accordance with this understanding of its structure and our conclusion that the words "His people and the sheep of His pasture" belong to the second half of the psalm, with the two halves set across from one another:[[2]](#footnote-2)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **The first half: 1-3a** | **The second half:3b-5** |
| 1. A psalm of thanksgiving | |
| ***The call:***  Make a joyful noise to the Lord, **all the earth!**  (2) Serve the Lord with gladness;  Come before His presence with singing. | ***The call:***  **His people, and the sheep of His pasture!**  (4) Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise;  Give thanks to Him, And bless His name. |
| ***The rationale:***  (3) Know **that** (*ki*) the Lord He is God;  It is He who made us, and we belong to Him; | ***The rationale:***  (5) **For** (*ki*) the Lord is good;  His steadfast loves endures forever, and His faithfulness to all generations. |

Are the two halves equal in length? Indeed, they are: 20 words in the first half, and 21 words in the second half. This equality is found also with regard to the sub-sections of each half.

The call to praise God in the first half is comprised of 11 words. It opens with words of address to the audience to which it is directed: "All the earth,"[[3]](#footnote-3) and it includes three directives: "make a joyful noise," "serve," and "come" (*bo'u*).

The call to praise God in the second half is comprised of 12 words. It too opens with words of address to the audience to which it is directed, "His people and the sheep of His pasture," and it too includes three directives (the first of which is identical with the last directive in the first call): "enter" (*bo'u*), "give thanks," and "bless."

The rationale for the call in the first half is comprised of 9 words; it opens with the word *ki*,[[4]](#footnote-4) and it includes two components.[[5]](#footnote-5) The rationale for the call in the second half is also comprised of 9 words, and it too opens with the word *ki*, and includes two components.[[6]](#footnote-6)

We see, then, that our proposal to view the words, "His people and the sheep of His pasture," not as a rationale for the first call in the psalm, but as the beginning of the second call, in addition to the fact that it resolves various difficulties regarding the rationale for the first call and changes its meaning (as we explained in section V), also impacts upon our understanding of the structure of the psalm as a whole. According to this proposal, the psalm is divided into two equal halves, and it structure is rigorous and precise.[[7]](#footnote-7)

But in addition to clarifying the structure of the psalm, this proposal makes a crucial contribution to our understanding of the **distinction** between its two halves, and thus of the meaning of the psalm in its entirety. This matter will be discussed in the following sections.

### VII. The distinction between the two calls in the two halves

The first distinction between the two halves, which has already been noted, relates, of course, to the addressees to whom the call to praise God is directed. In the first half, the addressee is universal, "all the earth," whereas in the second half, the addressee is the people of Israel: "His people and the sheep of His pasture."

Now we must clarify the difference between the nature of the call directed at "all the earth" at the beginning of the first half and the nature of the call directed at "His people and the sheep of His pasture" at the beginning of the second half. Are the calls themselves different in accordance with the different addressees?

One directive repeats itself in both calls: *Bo'u,* come, enter. In the call to "all the earth," this is the last directive: "Come before His presence with singing." In the call to "His people and the sheep of His pasture," this is the first directive: "Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise." What is the difference between these two imperatives?

It seems that the directive in the first half, *bo'u*, does not mean that those who are called upon to praise God should physically come to a particular place. The two previous directives, "make a joyful noise to the Lord" and "serve the Lord with gladness," are certainly not connected to a particular place, but rather mean: "You, the inhabitants of all the earth, make a joyful noise to the Lord, and serve Him with gladness wherever you are." If so, this is also the meaning of the third directive, as it follows from the parallelism between the clauses of verse 2:

Serve the Lord with gladness;

Come before his presence with singing.

The directive, "come before His presence," is not very different in meaning from the directive, "serve the Lord." When you come before Him with singing, you will also fulfill the command to serve Him with gladness, and this will happen wherever the inhabitants of all the earth assemble to sing before God.

With regard to the directive *bo'u* in the second half, the situation is different: Here, "His people and the sheep of His pasture" are called upon to "enter **into His gates and into His courts,"** and this clearly refers to Israel's entry into the gates and courts of the Temple. Thus, they are being asked to assemble in a specific place, rather than to praise God wherever they are.[[8]](#footnote-8)

This difference in the meaning of the command "*bo'u*"is connected to another difference between the two directives – the manner in which those directed to praise the Lord in each half are called upon to come.

In the first half, we find, "come … with gladness" – in other words, come before God with sounds of gladness; in the second half, we find, "enter… with thanksgiving (*toda*)." The word *toda* usually refers to a thanksgiving-offering offered in the Temple. Thus, the phrase means, “Come to the Temple, bringing a thanksgiving-offering with you.”[[9]](#footnote-9) A thanksgiving-offering would be brought in a procession, in which the friends and relatives of the person bringing the offering would participate, and they would praise God for His steadfast love.[[10]](#footnote-10) This love is the reason for these people's gathering at the gates and in the courts of the Temple. Hence: "Enter… into His courts with praise."

We will now discuss the difference between the other directives in each of the two halves. In the first half: "**make a joyful noise** to the Lord… **serve** the Lord"; in the second half: "**give thanks** to Him, and **bless** His name." The inhabitants of "all the earth," God's creations, are called upon to accept upon themselves God's lordship, to make a joyful noise to Him and to serve Him in the broadest sense of the term "service" – to express their subservience to Him with gladness and with a joyful noise. In contrast, "His people and the sheep of His pasture" have already recognized God and accepted upon themselves the yoke of His kingdom. They are called upon to serve Him in a manner dictated by the relationship between a nation and its God. They must recognize the special love and kindness that He has shown them, which goes beyond the kindness shown to all of God's creations. For this special kindness, they are called upon to **thank** Him and to **bless** His name, and to come before Him with a thanksgiving-offering brought together with words of praise. This show of gratitude must take place in the place that is specially designated for this relationship between God and His people, in the Temple.

The difference between "universal religiosity," which pertains to all of humankind, and "particular religiosity," which relates to the relationship between the people of Israel and their God, is reflected in the differences that we have uncovered between these two calls to praise God.

### VIII. THe distinction between the two rationales in the two halves

We must now examine the differences between the rationales brought in the two halves and clarify whether each one fits the appeal preceding it, as well as whether it fits the fundamental distinction between the "universal" half and the "Jewish" half.

The universal character of the rationale in the first half was already discussed in the previous sections. The call to "all the earth" to make a joyful noise to the Lord and to serve Him with gladness and with singing is explained and reinforced by the call to internalize ("know") "that the Lord He is God" – He and no other, and you must accept His Lordship with gladness. Internalizing this religious consciousness suits all people because the idea that the Lord is God means that "it is He who made us" – He has created us, all people, and therefore, "we belong to Him." The recognition that they belong to their Creator will bring people to serve Him with gladness and come before Him with singing.

The call in the second half to "God's people and the sheep of His pasture" to come to the Temple in a procession of those bringing thanksgiving-offerings, to praise God, to give thanks to Him, and to bless His name, is justified by the love and kindness that God has shown them: "For the Lord is good; His steadfast love endures forever." In His goodness, God has shown you kindness, for which you are called upon to come before Him with thanksgiving.

The actual revelation of God's goodness is described by a pair of terms that appear together several times in the Bible: "love" (*chesed*) and "faithfulness" (*emuna*). These two terms appear in two parallel clauses:

His steadfast love (*chesed*) endures forever,

And his faithfulness (*emuna*) to all generations.

God's "steadfast love" and "faithfulness" denote the fulfillment of the covenant which He made with His followers. This is the case in the verses containing this pair of terms.[[11]](#footnote-11) It is clear then that God's "steadfast love" and "faithfulness" are the rationale for the call directed to the members of His covenant, and that this rationale does not suit humanity as a whole – "all the earth."

Let us summarize all the differences between the two halves:

* The call in the first half is directed toward "all the earth," whereas the call in the second half is addressed to "His people and the sheep of His pasture" – to Israel.
* In the first half, humanity is called upon to accept the Lord as their God and to express this with gladness and with singing before God, whereas in the second half the people of Israel are called upon to enter the Temple and to bring thanksgiving-offerings accompanied by words of praise and blessing for God.
* The rationale for the call to all of humanity relates to the fact that all men were created by God, whereas the rationale for the call to the people of Israel relates to the love and kindness that God showed them and the fulfillment of the eternal covenant with them.

The sharp distinction that we made between the two halves reveals profound differences between them. However, the equal lengths of the two halves and the rigorous structural parallels between them allude to a connection between them. **What, then, is the common denominator between the two halves, the inner connection between them that gives unity, and perhaps even uniqueness, to the psalm as a whole?** How do the two "praise frameworks" which are so different in character join together to make a single statement?

### IX. To What historical circumstances does our Psalm relate?

In order to answer the question relating to the connection between the two halves, we must first clarify an issue that has not yet been discussed in connection with our psalm. To what historical circumstances does our psalm relate? Is the psalmist's call directed to all the inhabitants of the earth and to the people of Israel **in his generation,** or perhaps to those of **the future,** in the end of days, in the Messianic period?

We will begin to consider this issue with respect to the second half of the psalm. Ostensibly, the call to Israel to come to the Temple and bring a thanksgiving-offering with praise and thanksgiving to God for His steadfast love can have been directed to the psalmist's generation, and so there is no reason to explain it as referring to the end of days. When the psalmist wrote this psalm, the Temple was standing, and nothing stood in the way of entering into its gates, bringing a thanksgiving-offering to God in the framework of a celebratory procession, and praising God for His love and kindness.

Amos Chakham *z"l* understands our psalm in accordance with its heading, "A psalm which was recited as a prayer of thanksgiving, and which accompanied the sacrifice of a thanksgiving-offering," and he explains it as belonging to the time and place of its author. The "life setting"[[12]](#footnote-12) of our psalm is the celebration that accompanied the sacrifice of a thanksgiving-offering in the Temple. In his opinion, the psalm describes the actual ceremony as it was conducted in the time of the Temple.[[13]](#footnote-13)

But the question must be raised: Why is it appropriate to call upon "all the earth" to make joyful sound to God and serve Him with gladness in the midst of the private ceremony of an individual who is offering a thanksgiving-offering for a miracle that had been performed for him during the time of the Temple? Amos Chakham answers as follows:

"Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth" – Those who offer thanks to God generally praise Him in public, and they ask that the congregation join them in their thanksgiving and their joy. Here the joy of the grateful psalmist is so great that he asks all those who dwell on earth to make a joyful noise to God, both vocal and instrumental… **The imperative: "Make a joyful noise," is addressed poetically to all the inhabitants of the earth, but in practice it is directed at the congregation of celebrants who are going up to the Temple in a thanksgiving procession.**

According to this understanding, Chakham explains also the continuation of the call, "serve the Lord," as "addressed to the congregation of celebrants."

This is an example of a psalm being explained not in accordance with its plain meaning, based on the assumption that a psalm's heading dictates its contents. We expressed our reservations regarding this assumption in section II and in note 15. A reading of the psalm itself teaches us that it falls not into the category of psalms of thanksgiving, but rather into the category of psalms of praise. A similar framework of a psalm of praise, which includes an appeal **to all of humanity** to praise God that is then followed by a rationale, is found is several other psalms in the book of *Tehillim.*[[14]](#footnote-14)The first half of our psalm is very similar to those psalms, and there is no reason to explain it contrary to its plain sense, as directed to some other addressee, as suggested by Chakham.

The second half of our psalm is also built in the manner of a typical psalm of praise (an appeal to praise God and a rationale), and it too is difficult to understand as it was understood by Chakham as referring to individuals bringing a thanksgiving-offering to the Temple.

First of all, the call in the second half of the psalm is directed to the people of Israel – "His nation and the sheep of His pasture." It is the whole people whom the psalmist calls upon to come to the Temple with thanksgiving. But the situation that Amos Chakham describes is the offering of a thanksgiving-offering of an individual, which that individual brings for some personal act of kindness that had been performed for him. Second, the rationale for the call makes no mention of any kindness performed by God for any individual, but rather the rationale is that God's "steadfast love" and "faithfulness" are forever. We have already explained that this pair of words denotes a "covenant," and God made a covenant with Israel as a people, and not with its individual members (with the exception of a chosen few, such as David).[[15]](#footnote-15) Thus, this rationale suits a call directed at all of the people of Israel, to thank God for the fulfillment of His covenant with them.

We see, then, that the second half of the psalm is not directed to individual members of the people of Israel to come and offer thanksgiving-offerings in the Temple, but rather contains a call to the entire people of Israel to praise God for a great event of redemption and salvation, in which God revealed Himself as fulfilling His covenant with them. What event is that?

### X. A psalm that is directed toward the future

Let us go back to the first half of our psalm and state what seems to be obvious. The call to "all the earth" to make a joyful noise to God and serve Him with gladness, based on the recognition that He alone is the Lord who created us, relates, of course, to a future time in the end of days. This call is not at all suited for the religious-political reality in which our psalm was written! For that period, and for many periods afterwards, the words of the prophet are more appropriate (*Yeshayahu* 60:2): "For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the peoples." Mankind was shrouded in the darkness of crude idolatry, and the call to all the nations on earth to make a joyful noise to the Lord would not have been heard at all.

Rather, the psalmist's call is addressed to the Messianic age, when the words of the prophet in the continuation will be fulfilled:

But the Lord shall arise upon you, and His glory shall be seen upon you. (Ibid.60:2).

And only then:

And nations shall walk at Your light, and kings at the brightness of Your rising. (Ibid. 60:3)

When this period will arrive, all the inhabitants of earth will be ready for the call sounded by the people of Israel to them – to recognize God and serve Him shoulder to shoulder, to praise Him and to come before His presence with gladness.

This conclusion is true not only in relation to our psalm. All the psalms in which all the nations are called upon to praise God and crown Him as their king[[16]](#footnote-16) are psalms that describe the Messianic period and were written for that period.[[17]](#footnote-17)

This period will arrive only after the people of Israel will be redeemed by God and they will be exalted among the nations. When the people of Israel are shrouded in darkness, they cannot illuminate the world of the nations. When the people of Israel are "a reproach of men, and despised of the people" (*Tehillim* 22:7), the words of *Kohelet* are fulfilled in them: "The poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard" (9:16). But when God will redeem His people, "the glory of God shall be seen upon you," and then its call to all the peoples will be heard.[[18]](#footnote-18)

The call in our psalm to "all the earth" to make a joyful noise to God and to serve Him with gladness grows out of a situation in which the people of Israel have already been redeemed by God, for before they are redeemed, their words and the words of their psalmists will not be heard at all. This follows not only from logical reasoning. **The redemption of the people of Israel serves as the background of the second half of our psalm,** and in this half the time to which the first half of the psalm relates becomes clarified retroactively.

Now let us explain the second half of our psalm in accordance with what we have said here, and we will see how the difficulties raised in the previous section regarding Amos Chakham's understanding of the psalm as a personal psalm of thanksgiving are resolved.

"His nation and the sheep of His pasture" – the psalmist turns to **the entire** people of Israel after they have been redeemed. "Enter His gates" of God "with thanksgiving" – bring a thanksgiving-offering to the Temple for your redemption,[[19]](#footnote-19) and accompany your offerings "with praise," "give thanks to Him, and bless His name." The rationale for this call is "for the Lord is good; His steadfast love endures forever, and His faithfulness to all generations." The covenant that He made with you proves to be an eternal covenant, for it is because of that covenant that He has redeemed you from among the nations.

### XI. the Relationship between the two halves: A Psalm of Praise for the end of days

We can now answer the question raised at the end of section VIII. What is the common denominator between the two halves of our psalm? What is the inner connection between them that unifies the psalm as a whole? The answer is that the future background of the end of days is the common backdrop shared by the two halves of our psalm. We are not dealing with a technical-chronological connection, but rather with an essential connection. This connection would be clearer had our psalm been prefaced by a short introductory sentence such as the following: "When God will redeem His nation and renew His covenant with them, the psalmists of Israel will turn both to the nations of the world and to the people of Israel themselves, and call upon each party to respond with a fitting religious response."

The psalmist will first turn to the nations of the world and demand that they recognize that the Lord – the God of Israel who redeemed them from among the nations – is the one and only God. It is He who created all of mankind, and therefore all men are His servants, and all the earth must make a joyful noise to Him and serve Him with gladness.

The psalmist will then turn to Israel, His nation, and demand that they come to God's Temple to thank and praise Him for their redemption and deliverance and for His keeping His covenant with them forever.

The author of our psalm does, in fact, turn in each of the two halves to a different addressee; to each addressee he directs a different call, and also offers an entirely different rationale for each call, but the point of departure for the two calls is the same: the redemption of the people of Israel and the keeping of the covenant with them.

Israel's redemption should bring the inhabitants of "all the earth" to the religious-universalist conclusion "that the Lord [the God of Israel and their redeemer] He is God; it is He who made us, and we belong to Him." For "God's people and the sheep of His pasture," who already know this from ancient times, their redemption at the hand of their Redeemer should bring them to praise and thanksgiving in His Temple.

### Appendix I – Psalms dealing with the end of days in the book of *Tehillim*

According to our conclusion in this study, Psalm 100 was written with reference to the future, and is directed at the end of days. Just as in the books of the prophets, we find many prophecies dealing with the end of days which describe the Messianic era in brilliant colors, both with regard to Israel and with regard to the nations of the world, the same is true about the book of *Tehillim*. A not insignificant number of psalms (not only psalms of praise, but other psalms as well; see note 16) deal with this future period.

What is the difference between the eschatological prophecies and the psalms in *Tehillim* dealing with this period?

These are two different literary genres, the difference between them following from the difference between **a prophetic vision about the future,** which is revealed to a prophet, and **a prayer about the future** offered by one of the psalmists of Israel by way of Divine inspiration.

The prophet usually announces at the beginning of his vision, "And it shall be at the end of days," or something similar, and then proclaims what will happen in the future, as it was revealed to him by God. The psalmist, in contrast, does not see a vision about the future, but rather experiences the future in his imagination in his own time, composing the psalm as if he had been planted in that future period.[[20]](#footnote-20) Therefore, there is no explicit announcement at the beginning of the psalm that the words of the psalm refer to the distant future, but rather the content of the psalm testifies to this, as if the words of the psalmist were uttered at the time of the realization of that future.

The prophets who prophesy about the redemption of Israel are interested in **the acts of God** with respect to His nation – how He redeemed them from exile and brought them back to their land, and how He improved the situation of the people and of the land through their redemption. The psalmists who deal with the period of the redemption are interested in **the human, religious conclusion** that follows from the redemption – the change in man's attitude toward God in its wake. Therefore, they emphasize the demand made of mankind to recognize the God of Israel who redeemed His nation, and they demand of the nations that they turn to God in various ways of recognizing and accepting His kingdom upon them. At the same time, the psalmists do not ignore the people of Israel who have been redeemed or their duty to thank God for their redemption. This is reflected in the second half of our psalm. (See also our study [on the VBM website] of Psalm 147, section XI.)

It turns out that the difference between "prophecies concerning the end of days" and "psalms concerning the end of days" is the fundamental difference between prophecy and prayer. The prophecies describe the actions of God in this world "from above downward," whereas the psalms describe man's reaction to these actions of God "from below upward."

In our study of Psalm 44 in our book (pp. 148-152), we wrote that the assumption on the basis of which we explain the psalms in the book of *Tehillim* is that the psalmists who offered their prayers (or complaints) before God in connection with specific historical events lived in that very generation and experienced that event in relation to which they offered their prayer. We emphasized there that the psalms of *Tehillim* are not prophecies, nor do they predict the future. Rather, their objective is to give expression to the authentic emotional state of a person who turns to God out of the historical situation in which he finds himself.

Do our remarks in this appendix concerning psalms dealing with the end of days contradict that assumption? One who closely examines what we wrote there in context will see that there is no contradiction. There we dealt with psalms of supplication dealing with the serious troubles befalling the people of Israel and with psalms of complaint in the wake of those troubles, and our remarks there are fully valid. In this appendix, we are dealing with psalms founded upon an entire corpus of prophecies concerning the end of days, which the various prophets of Israel delivered in all periods. "Psalms concerning the end of days" are not "psalms of prophecy," and they do not predict or reveal specific events that will take place in the future. These psalms assume the future redemption of Israel, about which all the prophets of Israel prophesied, as general knowledge, and this serves as the basis and inspiration for the writing of general prayers and psalms founded upon that wonderful future known already in advance.

(In the coming weeks, we will add Appendices II and III to this study.)

(Translated by David Strauss)

1. See section I. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. In this transcription of the psalm, we did not indicate the smaller stanzas of which the psalm is comprised (as we did in the transcription of the psalm at the beginning of this study). Rather, we joined stanzas 3 and 4 into a single stanza under the heading, "the call" (the second). In order to show the parallelism between the halves, we also did not preserve the division into lines, as we did in the transcription of the psalm at the beginning of this study. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The words of address, "all the earth," do not actually appear at the beginning of the call, but after the words of command, "make a joyful noise to the Lord." This is explained by the general tendency in the psalms of *Tehillim* to open with the mention of God's name, so that God's name is either the first or the second word in the psalm. This tendencey is evident in many psalms. See our book, p. 469, note 5, and especially subnotes a-b. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The word *ki* in this rationale is part of the phrase “*de'u ki*.” The reason for this seems to be that this part of the rationale, "that the Lord He is God," is not connected to a clearly evident fact, but rather to an abstract religious cognition that one is to "know," to internalize. The second component of this rationale – "it is He who made us," is connected to our very existence, which is manifest to the eye; similarly, the rationale in the second half – "for the Lord is good" – is connected to the manifest acts of kindness that God performed for His people. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. We distinguished between these two components in section III, and according to what we said in section V, we concluded that both of them are universal in nature and that the second component follows from the first one. Since "the Lord He is God," the one and only, "it is He who made us, and we belong to Him." The first component is connected to God Himself, whereas the second component is connected to the revelation of His lordship in human reality. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The relationship between these two components in this rationale is similar to the relationship between the two components in the first rationale (see previous note). The first component is "for the Lord is good" – this is an attribute of God Himself. From this attribute follow "His steadfast love" and "His faithfulness" to His people forever and to all generations. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Were we to understand the words, "His people and the sheep of His pasture," as part of the rationale in the first half of the psalm, as they were understood by all of the commentators, this would change the quantitative relationship between the number of words in each half (23-18), and it would also disrupt the equality between the sub-parts. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. In several psalms, we find a call to the nations to come to the Temple. In Psalm 96:8, the families of the peoples are asked to "bring an offering **and come into His courts."** But in our psalm, no such demand is made of the nations, but only of Israel. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. The word "*toda*" in all its forms is found 32 times in Scripture. In half of these cases, the word clearly relates to the sacrifice called by that name; in several cases, the word refers to the procession or to the choir that accompanied the offering of this sacrifice (e.g., *Nechemya* 38:31, 38), and this might be the situation in our psalm as well. In other places, the word refers to the sounding of praise to God, and in some cases it is difficult to decide whether it refers to a thanksgiving-offering or to thanksgiving that is not connected to a sacrifice. For example, *Tehillim* 42:5: "I would lead them in procession to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise (*toda*), a crowd keeping holiday" (see our study of *Parashat Ki-Tavo*, third series, *Vidui Ma'aser*, section IV, and notes 18-20, which deal with the term *toda* and the verbs derived from the root *yod-dalet-heh* in Scripture). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. In *Parashat Tzav* (*Vayikra* 7:11-21) we find "the Torah of the peace-offerings." There are two types of peace-offerings: those that are offered "for a thanksgiving" (vv. 12-15), and those that are offered for a vow or a voluntary-offering (vv. 16-18). The most striking difference between them is that the thanksgiving-offering is eaten for one day and one night, as is stated in verse 15: "And the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace-offering for thanksgiving shall be eaten the same day that it is offered; he shall not leave any of it until the morning." Regarding a peace-offering that is offered for a vow or a voluntary-offering, a different time frame is presented in the next verse: "It shall be eaten on the same day tht he offers his sacrifice: and on the morrow also the remainder of it shall be eaten," that is, for two days and the night between them. R. Yitzchak Abarbanel (at the beginning of his commentary to *Parashat Tzav*, question no. 17) questions the reason for this difference, and he explains as follows:

    "This was to publicize the miracle. That is, a person bringing a peace-offering for thanksgiving, when he sees that his peace-offering can only be eaten on that day and that night until midnight, he will invite his relatives, his friends, and his acquaintances to eat of his thanksgiving peace-offering and to rejoice with him. And they will ask each other: For what did he bring his thanksgiving-offering? And he will tell them of the miracles and marvels that God performed for him. 'Let them exalt Him also in the congregation of the people, and praise Him in the assembly of the elders' (*Tehillim* 107:32)… When he sees the large amount of meat and bread in his house, and that it can only be eaten for one day and one night, perforce he will invite many of his acquaintances and friends to eat, lest he become the subject of scorn and derision the next day among those people who see him burning a large quantity of his thanksgiving peace-offering, and he did not invite his friends and relatives." [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. These two words appear together as a pair (and not singly in parallel verses) in the following two verses: "But my faithfulness and My steadfast love shall be with him [David]" (*Tehillim* 89:25); "He remembered his love and his faithfulness toward the house of Israel" (*Tehillim* 98:3). Both verses relate to a covenant made by God. The first verse deals with the covenant that God made with David, as is explicitly stated in the continuation (v. 29): "I will keep My truth with him for evermore, and My covenant shall stand fast with him." The second verse deals with the covenant that God made with the people of Israel, which He remembered, and by virtue of which He delivered His people, as is stated in the continuation of that same verse: "All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God."

    Even in the verses where the pair of words *chesed-emuna* appear in two parallel components (as is the case in our psalm), the reference is to a covenant that God made with the members of His covenant. See *Tehillim* 89:2-3, where the pair appears in both verses; the source of the pair is explained in verses 4-5: "I have made a covenant with My chosen, I have sworn to David My servant." And see also v. 34. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. "Life setting" (a translation of the German expression *Sitz im Leben*) refers to the cultural, social, or ritual context of a literary work under discussion. According to the form criticism developed by H. Gunkel (see note 3 in the first part of this study), identifying the "life setting" of a Biblical literary unit is a critical condition for understanding it. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. This understanding is expressed over the course of his commentary to the psalm. For example: "'Enter his gates with thanksgiving' - … With this command, the celebrants are given permission to enter the Temple, after they have proclaimed: We are His people, and the sheep of His pasture. It is also possible that the Levite gatekeeper of the Temple said these words." Additional examples of this can be found in other places of his commentary. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Psalms 33, 47, 66, 96, 98, 117, 148. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Even Amos Chakham himself explains the last words in our psalm in the manner that we have suggested: "'His steadfast love is forever' - … The word *chasdo*, 'His steadfast love,' refers to **God's promise to preserve and deliver those with whom He has entered into a covenant** and those who fear Him, and it parallels *emunato*, 'His faithfulness,'… His faithfulness – His fidelity to keep **His promise and His covenant** – endures to the end of all the generations."  [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Psalms of praise of this type were noted in note 14, and there are additional psalms that deal with the end of days that are not included in this list (for example, Psalm 67). [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Regarding the nature of psalms dealing with the end of days, see Appendix I. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Not only will the people's call be heard, but their redemption will serve as an argument in their appeal to the nations. In several psalms, the nations are called upon to recognize God and to praise Him for having delivered His nation from among them, and thus opening their eyes to recognize God's control over human history and nature. We already pointed to four such psalms in section IV of this study. And as we noted in section V, our psalm does not use this argument as a rationale for calling upon the nations to praise God, as the rationale in our psalm for the call to the nations is of a universal nature and does not mention Israel or its redemption. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Can a thanksgiving-offering be brought by all of Israel for their redemption? There is no reason to answer this in the negative. *Nechemya* 12:27 and on describes the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem. For this purpose, all of the Levites were invited to come to Jerusalem "to keep the dedication with gladness, both with thanksgiving (*toda*) and with singing." The simple understanding of the verse is that they celebrated the successful building of the wall of Jerusalem, in a short time and despite the objection of the enemies of Yehuda, with thanksgiving-offerings. If thanksgiving-offerings were brought for the completion of the building of the wall of Jerusalem, all the more so would they be brought for the redemption of Israel from among the nations and for their return to their homeland. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. At the end of our study of Psalm 47 (p. 175 in our book), we wrote with respect to the psalmist that he gives life to the vision of a Messianic future (see note 26a there). [↑](#footnote-ref-20)