**King David-s Haunted Past**

The premium course you are about to listen to was recorded in front of a live audience. Enjoy, and as always, please leave questions and thoughts in the comments.So today is our last session for the summer until we resume at the end of the summer - we're going away for a couple of weeks and things like that. So I'm going to do something new with you which I - you're one of the first people to hear about this. This is only about 48-hours old, something which I…

[Response from audience member: Hot off the press.] Hot off the press. These are the results of some ruminations of mine on Friday night, so I started working on them a - writing them up a little bit last night. So I thought I would go over it with you. One of the things I've been doing a little bit of work on piecing together is various parts of Sefer Tehillim. When we relate to Tehillim we often relate to it as just something you say, something you say to try to get somebody better, something you say because it's a Segulah for X, Y and Z, or something you're just supposed to say because it's a Frum thing to do to just say. But Tehillim really is a reservoir of - I don't know if reservoir is the right word, but it's a compilation of human beings' deep spiritual yearning for G-d in all the various forms that that takes. Yet it's often quite inaccessible to us, I think. I mean, it's accessible to us, we can say the words and stuff, but with the exception of a couple of choice Mizmorei Tehillim, sometimes it's hard to get into the words, or they seem to kind of sound the same.

The words are archaic, it's hard to figure out what's going on. It's poetry - poetry in the best of circumstances is hard to understand, if it's poetry written 2,800 years ago in a different language, how do you begin to get your handle on it, on really understanding it?

So I've been starting to do some work on Tehillim a little bit. I found some fascinating things. I can't say I'm surprised to have found it but I am surprised to have found it. I'm - it seems to me like there's a lot of work to be done on Tehillim, and let me preface this by telling you a little story. I was in Atlanta a while back - and I mentioned this to the Young Israel of Lawrence-Cedarhurst when I talked about Bentching - but I was in Atlanta a little while back and I was giving some talks there and there was a fellow Barry who was listening to them. He's a doctor there. Barry came over to me afterwards and said - actually about two minutes before Ma'ariv on Saturday night - he says he's really glad to meet me, he feels he finally found somebody who thinks like him and he really wants to talk to me. So I said, what's going on?

So he says, well he spent the last 20 years working on Tehillim. So I said, really? What's been going on? So he says, well he is quite certain that almost all of Sefer Tehillim is referencing various different events that took place in Chumash and is playing off of them. And if we really want to understand what's going on, you have to understand the references, and it lends a whole new complexion to Sefer Tehillim. So I didn't doubt that that was true, that sounded like - I didn't doubt that it would lend a whole complexion to Tehillim, and on the one hand I wasn't surprised, but on the other hand I was surprised. I wasn't - I shouldn't have been surprised because that's what the Torah does all over the place but I had never really seen it so much in Tehillim, I hadn't quite figured out how to do it in Tehillim. Then Barry gave me a little bit of a hint for the 60 seconds before Ma'ariv about how to understand Shir Hama'alos - the Shir Hama'alos that we say before Bentching. Just a couple of observations which struck me and I thought, you know, he's probably right.

I since went back and had a hard time concentrating during Ma'ariv and went back and built out Shir Hama'alos. But then I started noticing some other things in Al Naharos Bavel and then certain Mizmorim from Hallel and various places. Just last night actually I was working on something which I'm not going to share with you now, building out Loh Lanu and Hashem Zecharanu Yevarech and from Hallel, very fascinating stuff, that actually connects in the strangest way with the stories that you would least expect it to in Tanach. Just shed a whole new light on it. It seems to me that the Mizmor Hashem Zecharanu Yevarech and Loh Lanu Hashem Loh Lanu - which is actually one Mizmor, we just break it up in Hallel - actually believe it or not is playing off the story of Yisro's judges of all things and probably the Meraglim also. The strangest things because you would think those episodes would be the last things that would come to mind when you would see that, and the question is what does that mean and why is it there, and stuff. So I have some theories on that. That's still a little bit too new, that's only about 12 hours old, so I'm not going to share that with you just yet.

But what I am going to share with you is some stuff that I was thinking about on Friday night which deals with this Mizmor which we say in Davening. It's the Mizmor that begins Pesukei D'zimrah; Mizmor shir chanukat habayit l'Dovid. So I want to go through it with you, kind of using this approach and I want to kind of show you some of the rich potential I think is in Tehillim, because it really, I think, opens it up in a fascinating way. So what we are going to try to do is do two things. We are going to try to go through this and uncover the evidence, what are we looking at here? What is this talking about?

Then as we begin to piece together some evidence, try to piece together what it might mean also. Okay so let's just jump in - I'll expand this so you can see it on the screen. So Mizmor shir chanukat habayit l'Dovid, this is a Shir that was composed presumably by Dovid for the occasion of the Chanukat Habayit. Now there's something strange about that which is just that the Beit Hamikdash was not built in Dovid's lifetime, it was built by his son, so it's odd. But we do know that Dovid had wanted to build the Beit Hamikdash, had yearned to build the Beit Hamikdash, so possibly he composed a psalm that would be in honor of the Chanukat Habayit when the Chanukat Habayit would happen. So what is he saying here?

So one of the question is why of all things is this psalm a psalm that's Chanukat Habayit? What about this makes it a Mizmor specifically for the dedication of the Beit Hamikdash? Again, if I was dedicating the Beit Hamikdash what would you say if you had 11 sentences to herald the building of the Beit Hamikdash? You'd talk about the Beit Hamikdash I would think, right? Something like that. I'd talk about - right? You'd talk about the significance of being able to have this place where you could talk to G-d, where you could worship G-d, where G-d would be in your midst. Something like that. There even are some Mizmorei Tehillim later on in Tehillim that sort of talk about this; Yerushalayim Harim Saviv Lah, and all this, and you could imagine something like that; Yehi Shalom Becheilech Shalva B'armonotayich, maybe something like that. But that's not what the Mizmor shir chanukat habayit is, instead it has nothing to do with the Beit Hamikdash at all, it has nothing to do with G-d dwelling amongst the people really. It has nothing to do with having a place to talk to G-d, having a place to serve G-d. Nothing. It has nothing to do with any of that. Instead, it has to do, seemingly, with an intensely personal reflection by Dovid on issues of sin, forgiveness, personal, spiritual issues in which he feels that G-d has been there for him, didn't allow him to fail. The question is, why? Why? What does this - what does Dovid's personal, spiritual - inner spiritual turmoil have to do within Mizmor shir chanukat habayit l'Dovid? Okay so that is question number 1.

So let's take a look and read it and see - just so we familiarize ourselves with the words and just put it out there and see what we've got. Mizmor shir chanukat habayit l'Dovid, Aromimcha Hashem ki dilitani, v'loh simachta oyvai li - I will raise You up G-d; Ki dilitani - because You have raised me up. Here the image is pull, like you'd pull a bucket up from a well, it's like You've pulled me up from a well. V'loh simachta oyvai li - and You have not allowed my enemies to rejoice over my downfall. Hashem Elokai - L-rd my G-d; Shivati eleicha vatirpa'eini - I screamed out to You and You healed me. Hashem he'elita min she'ol nafshi - G-d, You brought me up out of the - brought me up, brought my soul up out of the grave; Chiyitani miyordei bor - You enlivened me from being in the pits of despair.

Zamru laHashem chasidav v'hodu l'zecher kadsho - G-d's righteous ones will sing to Him and will praise Him. Ki regah b'apo chaim birtzono - because there can be moments in which one lives in G-d's anger but; Chaim birtzono - there's a whole life that we live; Birtzono - in His kindness, in His will. His will provides life for us. B'erev yellin bechi velaboker rina - at night I will go down crying; Velaboker rina - but in the morning song, rejoicing. V'ani amarti beshalvi bal emot l'olam - and yet I said in my tranquility; Bal emot l'olam - I would not be moved, I could not be moved, I could not be - I would be steadfast. Hashem birtzoncha he'emadata l'hareri oz - G-d through Your will You made me stand firm and gave me strength. Histarta panecha hayiti nivhal - had You hidden Your face I would have panicked. Eilecha Hashem ekra v'el Hashem etchanan - to You G-d I call, to You I beseech.

Mah betza b'dami beriditi el shachat - what good is my blood, is my death; Beriditi el shachat - if I would go down - again - to the grave? Hayodecha aphar hayagid amitecha - could mere dust - my corpse would decompose, could dust praise You? Hayagid amitecha - could dust tell of Your truth? Shema Hashem vechaneini Hashem heyeh ozer li - listen G-d and grant me my request freely without - not because I deserve it; Hashem heyeh ozer li - G-d will be my help. Hafachta mispedi lemochol li - You have changed my mourning and my eulogizing; Lemochol li - to celebration. Perhaps also a playoff of the word Mechilah - forgiveness/a celebration. Pitachta saki vate'azreini simcha - You opened up my sackcloth; Vate'azreini simcha - and You instead clothed me with clothes of happiness. Lema'an yezamercha kovod v'loh yidom Hashem Elokai le'olam odecha - so that I could praise You; Hashem Elokai - my G-d; Le'olam odecha - I will always praise You.

All right, so this is the Mizmor. Again, what does it have to with Chanukat Habayit l'Dovid? Very personal stuff in Dovid's reflections. Also the problem here is, is that - at least as far as I'm concerned - it's kind of hard to figure out how it all fits together. I don't know if you felt that. But it seems almost like a bunch of isolated poetic ideas and it's kind of hard to sew them together and figure out…

[Response from audience member: 16:24] Right, and there's a problem - for me it's a problem, maybe for you it's not a problem, and maybe it's just the way Tehillim is written…

[Response from audience member: 16:37]

Correct. Yeah, I'm not saying this is unusual for Tehillim. But a lot of Tehillim is disconnected. I wonder, I suspect that as we begin to understand the Mizmor more deeply we will be able to find its - you will be able to figure out how the pieces connect with each other. I don't think that they're - I don't think it's simply an abstract Impressionist painting where it's just a bunch of color that is meant to somehow create certain images in your mind. I think there's actually a theme that holds together. I had a mentor years and years and years ago when I was a kid, Rabbi Yosef Leibowitz, who taught me a lot about learning Tanach, and he said whenever you approach a Mizmor in Tehillim you have to ask yourself - you have to try to outline it. Ask yourself how you would divide the Mizmor into sections, and try to label the sections, see how the sections relate to each other. So that's kind of good advice and we can try to do that here.

But I think that something else is afoot which is going to help us understand what's going on here. I owe Eli Mayerfeld for the beginning of these insights. Eli Mayerfeld was one of the Rabbis in Detroit that I met on my recent trip there. So in chatting with him he dropped one or two little [hints 18:19] about this Mizmor which started me off on this path of thinking about Mizmor shir chanukat habayit l'Dovid with a couple of insights. I'm going to begin to share one or two of them with you and then kind of take off from there.

It begins with these words; Mah Betza - what do we gain - what G-d do You gain out of getting my blood and I would go down to die; Beriditi el shachat - and I would go down to the grave? Hayodecha aphar - would dust praise You? Hayagid amitecha? Shema Hashem vechaneini - listen G-d and grant me something freely. Shema Hashem vechaneini - listen G-d and grant me freely my request. G-d, You should be my Ozer, You should be my help. So the question is what is this referring to? Now it turns out - I actually looked this up - when I heard these words it immediately transformed me back to a story in Chumash. I suspected this was true but last night I actually looked it up. It turns out the words Mah Betza appear only twice in Tanach, here and the only other time they ever, ever appear in Tanach is in that other story in Sefer Bereishis.

If it was just that you might just say it's a coincidence, it could just be a coincidence. You try to see are there any other connections between the stories and I - between this Mizmor Tehillim and that story, and indeed I think there are probably about 25 other connections between them.

But let's just begin with this, Mah Betza. Where is the other place in Tanach - only other place in Tanach - where you have these words? [Response from audience member: 20:15] Correct. It's when Yehuda says, what do we gain from throwing Yosef in the pit? Let's look it up and I'm going to bring you over to PowerPoint - I started creating PowerPoints, incomplete, but I'll give you a little sense of it here.

[Response from audience member: 20:34] What? [Response from audience member: 20:36]

Right, and then if you go back also that idea - this language over here; Yordei Bor anyone? Those who would go down in the pit? Right? 'She'ol' also will show up there with Yaakov Avinu talks about that. So let's just begin to build it out and you'll see how really compelling it is. The mystery of course is why, but the fact of the connections here are pretty indisputable.

So here, take a look at this in PowerPoint. Okay so here's the Mah Betza in Mizmor Shir - the only other time we have Mah Betza in Tanach is in this story over here and there's the Mah Betza. Vayomer Yehuda el echov mah betza ki naharog et achinu vechisinu et damo? Lechu venimkerenu laYishmaelim veyadeinu al tehi bo, ki achinu besareinu hu, vayishme'u echov. Now what I want you to do is look carefully at the two Mah Betza phrases and see if there are any more connections in the phrases other than the Mah Betza. In other words, so I want you to compare this whole section over here in Yud to Mah Betza there.

[Response from audience member: 21:56]

Good. There's Dam - blood and listening. Recall that when Yehuda says what do we gain, the next thing he does is he talks about covering his brother's blood - Mah betza ki naharog et achinu vechisinu et damo? Then the brothers listen to him - Vayishme'u echov. So now listen to that in Mizmor Shir. Here are the Mah Betzas - you see that? Mah betza b'dami - G-d, what do You gain out of my blood? Mah betza ki naharog et achinu vechisinu et damo - what do we gain out of covering our brother's blood? So the paraphrase goes further. Mah betza b'dami - let's go a little bit further, there you go; Shema Hashem vechaneini, at the very end. At the very end of this Mah Betza; Vayishme'u echov. So Yehuda's brothers listen to him, now the psalmist is asking G-d to listen to him. Do you understand? So Mah Betza, blood and listening. Anything further?

[Response from audience member: Could it be the Ozer and over there that they're lifting him?

Vayimshechu va'ya'alu et Yosef and they were Ozrim Oto.] That's interesting. Shema Hashem vechaneini Hashem heyeh ozer li. Um, maybe. But just look in the Mah Betza section. What about this? Mah betza b'dami - what do you gain out of my blood; Beriditi el shachat - if I go down to the grave? What were the next words over here in the Mah Betza? Mah betza ki naharog et achinu - isn't that interesting, in both cases immediately after Mah Betza we're talking about death, killing. Yehuda spoke of plotting to kill his brother right after he said Mah Betza, so too in Mizmor Shir right after we speak of Mah Betza we also hear about death, the death of the psalmist. Mah betza ki naharog et achinu, and now instead of Yehuda talking about killing his brother, the psalmist is talking about what do we gain out of killing me? G-d, what do You gain with my blood if I were to die; Beriditi el shachat - if I were to go down to the grave?

Now look at this next phrase; Vechisinu et damo - does that remind you of anything in Pasuk Yud in Mizmor Shir? What would you cover blood with? Aphar. Yehuda speaks of covering blood, what would you cover blood with? Hayodecha aphar - could dust praise You? Now the dust here would have a double entendre, on the one hand it would mean the dust of his corpse, but it could also mean, if you read it in connection to this phrase, the dust of the earth that you might cover the blood with. So we're playing off of that image of covering blood, could dust praise You?

So you see how many - just in one sentence, you've got 1, 2, 3, 4 - I mean you've got five of these connections to the Yosef story. And as I mentioned to you it's the only other Mah Betza in Tanach. Doesn't seem to be coincidental. [Aside Comment]

And of course, if we're really talking about the story of Yosef again, how could we do so without speaking about going down into a pit? That brings us up over here; Vayashlichu oto haborah, and of course; Chiyitani miyordei bor. What?

[Response from audience member: 26:30]

Yes, when they bring him up from the Bor, right. Okay so now, what's going on? It turns out there are many more connections between the story of Yosef and the story of Mizmor Shir which we'll see in a moment, but let's try and read it from the beginning and see what we find. We're going to watch for more echoes and try to piece it through and try to figure out why is it that this Mizmor parallels the story of Yosef? What is it trying to say with all these hidden references?

But in order to do this we have to introduce one more background text and that is the words of Yehuda's King David's Haunted Past · King David's Haunted Past Page 6 of 20 blessing in Parshas Vayechi. Because there's echoes of that as well. So let's go to Yehuda's blessing in Parshas Vayechi. Here are the blessings of Shimon, Levi and Yehuda in Parshas Vayechi. Let's read them through. Shimon v'Levi achim klei chamas mecheiroseihem - Shimon and Levi you brothers; Klei chamas mecheiroseihem - your weapons are stolen goods. Besodom al tavoi nafshi bikhalam al teichad kevoidi - in their conspiracy let my soul not come, in their community let my honor not go. Ki b'apam hargu ish u'birtzonam ikru shor - because with anger they killed a man and with willful wantonness they uprooted the ox. Orrur apam ki az v'evratam ki kashata - cursed be their anger for it is brazen. Achalkem b'Yaakov, v'afitzem b'Yisrael - I will divide them up, I will scatter them in Jacob, in Israel.

This is the blessing - arguably, not much of a blessing - to Shimon and Levi that Yaakov gives on his deathbed. Now one of the interesting things is - one of the interesting questions is that the Torah leaves kind of dangling is whether Yaakov ever finds out what happened that day at the pit, does he ever figure that out? We never really know, we don't kind of get that information. But if you read through these Berachos there are these very heavy overtures to Mechiras Yosef that make you kind of wonder whether what exactly Yaakov is hinting to.

For example, take a look at this word, what does this remind you of? Shimon v'Levi achim klei chamas mecheiroseihem - Mecheiroseihem could be a double entendre for Mechiroteihem which would literally mean their sale. Of course we know from elsewhere that Shimon seems to have been active in the sale of Yosef, Levi we don't know as much. But Shimon and Levi tend to work as a pair as we know from the story of Dinah where Shimon and Levi go - and in fact the word Achim probably is borrowed from their activities, their military escapades in the story of the rape of Dinah where they're known as Achei Dinah. Also one might even think when Yehuda was speaking, who was Yehuda speaking to? Vayomer Yehuda el echov - so who would Yehuda be speaking to? Remember Yehuda is the fourth oldest child, so who does Yehuda really need to convince here? Yehuda needs to convince which brothers in particular?

Those who he is older than, those who are the Bnei Hashefachos probably are going to go along with him, the ones he really needs to convince are the ones who are older than him. Now who is older than him? Reuven, Shimon and Levi. Now does he need to convince Reuven? We already know that Reuven is on Yosef's side, Reuven is the one trying to get Yosef back, so Yehuda trying to convince the brothers not to kill Yosef is not trying to convince Reuven, Reuven is already on that side. So who is he really trying to convince? He's trying to convince Shimon and Levi. So when it says; Vayomer Yehuda el echov - and Yehuda says to his brothers; Mah betza ki naharog et achinu vechisinu et damo - what do we gain out of killing our brother? Then it says; Vayishme'u echov - and the brothers heard, who are those brothers really? Those brothers are Shimon and Levi.

And from those infamous words of Yehuda; Vayomer Yehuda el echov, you get over here; Shimon v'Levi achim - Shimon and Levi you two brothers, you brothers to whom Yehuda was speaking and convincing them not to kill Yosef. Klei chamas mecheiroseihem. It's as if Yaakov is sort of backhandedly assigning responsibility for the events of that day, it's your Mechirah. Besodom al tavoi nafshi - in your conspiracy let my soul not come. Ki b'apam hargu ish u'birtzonam ikru shor - who does that? They killed someone, who was that? It could be the people of Shechem, from the story of Shechem, but who is; U'birtzonam ikru shor? So the Mepharshim say that's really Yosef. Yosef is referred to later on with the imagery of an ox and so it seems to be a veiled reference to trying to uproot Yosef. You wantonly tried to uproot Yosef.

Then we get Yehuda's Beracha. Yehuda, atah yoducha achecha - Yehuda, your brothers will praise you.

Notice that this is the signal quality of Yehuda, praise. Yehuda, your brothers will praise you. Notice that Yoducha is a playoff of Yehuda itself, it's the same letters as Yehuda just boiled down without the Heih in between. If you take out another letter, the Vavs, you get the next word here; Yehuda atah yodecha achecha yadcha b'oref oyvecha. You see that Yadecha just boils down Yoducha one more time. Yadcha b'oref oyvecha - your hand will be against your enemies' neck. You'll be able to defend yourself against your enemies. Okay, you with me? So this is Yehuda's Beracha; Yehuda, your brothers will praise you, you will defend yourselves against your enemies by putting your outstretched hand against your enemies' neck, keeping your enemies at bay. Yishtachavu lecha bnei avicha - your brothers will bow to you. Gur aryeh Yehuda - a lion cub is Yehuda.

Now aren't these words suggestive; Miteref beni alitah - from the torn up prey of a lion my son you have emerged. Well what does that remind you of in Mechiras Yosef? Tarof taraf Yosef - Yosef has been torn up alive. Is it coincidental that Yaakov just happens to use that term when referring to Yehuda? Yehuda is the responsible one for all of this. But; Miteref beni alitah - now this is interesting because - so here we get to Rashi. Rashi on Miteref beni alitah says the following. Let me go back to these words on the screen, so let's call up Mechiras Yosef for a moment… [Aside Discussion]

Okay, so look at Rashi over here; Birtzonam ikru shor: Ratzu l'akor et Yosef - as we talked about before, they were trying to uproot Yosef. So if we read a little bit more - okay, so let's take a look at Rashi over here; Miteref: Mimah shechashadticha b'tarof taraf Yosef chayah ra'ah achalos'hu - I had suspected you as being the mastermind of Mechiras Yosef, but; Miteref beni alitah: Salakta et atsmecha v'amarta mah betza - you extricated yourself from Mechiras Yosef. Because if you think about it what happened in the text if it weren't for Yehuda what was going to happen? The brothers were going to kill Yosef; Yosef was going to stay in that pit and starve to death. It was Yehuda who comes along and says; Mah betza ki naharog et achinu vechisinu et damo, that allows him to survive because that's the plan to sell him as opposed to allow him to die of starvation in the pit.

So the way Rashi is learning Miteref Beni Alitah, there really is a reference to Tarof Taraf Yosef but the idea of Beni Alitah - Miteref (comma), from the torn up - in other words it's - what you have over here is almost kind of a what if scenario. Which is that Yosef almost died, if would have died it really would have been - you would have had a torn-up body of Yosef in the pit. But Miteref, Beni Alitah - but you my son extricated yourself from this terrible morass and you found the strength somehow to say; Mah betza ki naharog et achinu vechisinu et damo, to convince the brothers not to kill him and instead to sell him. Even though that was morally ambiguous at best because you ended up selling your brother into slavery, not very good at all, but there's no doubt that you did not kill him, that those words allowed him to survive. Therefore Miteref (comma), Beni Alitah - this is how Rashi is learning it; Salakta et atsmecha - you got yourself - you extricated yourself out of this.

So I want to argue that all of Rashi's comments here are actually hinted to in Mizmor shir chanukat habayit l'Dovid actually. Rashi's perspective on this is the perspective that Tehillim confirms. You'll see it here also.

[Response from audience member: (Unclear 38:15) because Rashi wasn't around?]

Rashi wasn't - well Rashi lived much later. Gur Aryeh Yehuda: Al Dovid nisnabeh - interesting, who wrote this Tehillim? It was Dovid. Well here we have him. Al Dovid nisnabeh - that this prophecy was referring to Dovid, because Rashi is bothered by Gur and Aryeh. Gur is a cub, Aryeh is actually a lion. So even though together Gur Aryeh means lion cub but Rashi is bothered by this juxtaposition of the terms, because Aryeh alone would mean a fullgrown lion and Gur alone would mean a lion cub, so Rashi says, which is it? Is Yehuda referred to as a Gur, as a cub? Or he's referred to a full-grown lion? So Rashi says; Gur Aryeh: Al Dovid nisnabeh, b'techilah gur - in the beginning Dovid was just a cub; Biheyot Shaul malach aleinu - when Shaul was king. Atah hayita hamotzi vehameivi et Yisrael - he was still active in saving the Jews but was like a cub because there was another king that was present. But then; Ul'basof aryeh - later on he became a fullgrown lion; Keshehimlichuhu aleihem - when the Jews crowned him king. So this refers to Dovid. [Response from audience member: 39:49]

Yes, right, now, think also about Dovid Hamelech - okay so let's pull back now and let me ask you this question. We haven't seen that much yet of Mizmor Shir, we've only seen a little bit. But I want you to grant me for a moment - which I grant you I've not yet conclusively proven that Mizmor Shir borrows from the story of Mechiras Yosef, but certainly very strongly suggestive. So let's just buy this for a moment, let's say this is right, that Mizmor Shir borrows from the story of Yosef. Let's reflect a little bit about why. Why? Why would this be? Let's get to our question of what does this have to do with Mizmor shir chanukat habayit l'Dovid, what does it have to do with Chanukat Habayit? Why are we talking about Yosef? Why is Dovid talking about Mechiras Yosef?

Go ahead? Well Shlomo is going to descend from Dovid yes. [Response from audience member: 41:07] Who? No. Who does Dovid descend from? Let's talk about who Dovid descends from? Dovid descends from Yehuda. Dovid is the scion of Yehuda. So let's talk now about why Dovid should be talking about - with these words that will live in infamy; Mah betza ki naharog et achinu vechisinu et damo? Because his great, great grandfather said those words. Now why would he be talking about those words as a Mizmor shir chanukat habayit l'Dovid?

[Response from audience member: 41:37] What?

[Response from audience member: 41:40] In other words the idea - what? [Response from audience member: 41:43]

In other words the ability - if Dovid or his son is going to end up building the Beit Hamikdash, it doesn't really matter if it's Dovid or his son, I think what the Mizmor suggests is, what's the one thing that could have held back Shevet Yehuda from building the Beit Hamikdash? The answer is Mechiras Yosef. That is the one, huge stain on the reputation of Shevet Yehuda which might militate against Yehuda being able to build the Beit Hamikdash. How can you build the Beit Hamikdash if you have the sin of selling your brother into - on your mind? [Response from audience member: But he did Teshuva.]

Who did Teshuva? [Response from audience member: Yehuda with the whole Tamar story.]

Okay, maybe. So I'm not sure that Tamar counts as necessarily doing Teshuva, but… [Response from audience member: No but he went down to the lowest of the low, he went down to the pit of…]

Right so what I want to argue to you is that Mizmor Shir is in fact - the poetic effect of Mizmor Shir is the following. What's happening is, is that there is a - Dovid is sort of entering the persona of his great grandfather Yehuda and personifying Yehuda, the one who - here you have the man who is the culmination of Yehuda, who is going to create the dynasty of kings that was prophesized, that; Lo yosur shevet m'Yehuda - that the scepter will not leave Yehuda, this is Dovid. This man Dovid is now going back to the beginning, to the very beginning and talking about his ancestor, and is creating a spiritual reflection, so to speak, of Yehuda himself upon Mechiras Yosef, in light of the fact that this tribe is now called upon to build the Beit Hamikdash, and I want to read it with you in that light.

So as part of this, a fascinating thing, let's talk about Gur Aryeh - these ideas of Rashi that Gur is a reference to Dovid, the lion cub and that Aryeh is a reference to Dovid as full-grown, and Miteref Beni Alitah. So if you think about it just in terms of Yaakov's Beracha isn't it interesting? Gur Aryeh Yehuda - a lion cub is Yehuda - let's just read the words; Miteref - what does Miteref mean? From torn-up prey you extricated yourself. Well who creates torn-up prey? How does prey get torn up, what animal tears up prey? A lion. A lion is the animal that tears up its prey par excellence. So if you read it correctly it's Yehuda - Gur Aryeh Yehuda - you are a lion cub. What do lion cubs do? They tear up prey. You, you know what your greatness is? Miteref (comma), Beni Alitah - you had torn-up prey in front of you, it's like blood to a shark, it's tempting you, all you had to do was sit there and eat, but you extricated yourself, you took yourself out of what lions do, which is mercilessly pounce on their prey. If you think about by the way what a king needs to do, that's kind of what a king needs to do. If you think about the number one role of a king, if you think about a lion as the symbol of a king, in what sense is the lion the symbol of a king? National defense, right? The lion is the king of the animal kingdom because it's the most fierce, so I want a fierce king, a king that can be counted upon to show no mercy to one's enemies. Now that's all very fine when one's enemies are one's enemies, but what if you start thinking that your enemies are your brothers? Then the challenge for Yehuda is will you also show no mercy to your brothers when you're convinced that they are your enemies? This is the challenge to a Yehuda, that if your power is that you can show no mercy to enemies and therefore you are brazen and therefore you can conquer and therefore you can defend, and everyone can rely on you, the challenge to a person like that is, but what about civil war? In civil war will you show no mercy to your brothers?

Think about Abraham Lincoln by the way in civil war, I mean that was the challenge, which is that on the one hand to win you have to be brazen, on the other hand you're fighting against your brothers, and if you show no mercy what have you really done in the end? This is the challenge with Lincoln, with Reconstruction and with other things as well.

In any case, so this is the idea; Miteref beni alitah - so you extricated yourself, you went against your instincts and - in other words you had Yosef where you wanted him, you and the other brothers representing the children of Leah, ready to pounce, you could have killed him. You could have done away with him. Your instincts as a lion would be to show no mercy against your enemies and yet you did, you said; Mah betza ki naharog et achinu vechisinu et damo? You understood he was your brother enough to at least not kill him and sell him to slavery and therefore you extricated yourself. Even though that was morally ambiguous but it allowed there to be another day, it allowed Yosef to continue to survive so that another history could be written.

Now, if you think about that there's a beautiful part of the story of Shaul and Dovid which really resonates there, if you think about it. I want to tell you about two little pieces of that story. If you go to the story of Shaul and Dovid - let me see if I can find it for you. This is the only time this word appears in Tanach, it's a strange word, this is Yishai telling Dovid to go down - by the way what does this remind you of? There are a whole bunch of brothers okay and then there are these older brothers, there's this one little brother that no one likes very much, and all the other brothers go out on this mission and the one brother stays home with his father. What does this story remind you of? Sure sounds a lot like Yosef. But it's not Yosef, what story is this? This is the story of Dovid and his brothers.

Now in the middle of that story which sounds so much like Yosef so - father dispatches brothers to go check on the welfare of their brother. Dovid why don't you check that; Achecha tifkod l'shalom - check on the peace of your brothers. Very similar to the language that Yaakov sends Yosef out. And by the way, Yosef is the un-favorite brother and Dovid is the un-favorite brother. When Dovid goes to check on them the other brothers say what are you doing here? I bet you've just come for the war and all of that. But in the middle of that he says this very strange phrase; V'et arubotom tikach - oh and make sure to take the Orev. Well what's that?

So Chazal - so the Mepharshim say it means snacks, go bring snacks to them. But Chazal say it means something else. The Orev - let's talk about an Orev… [Response from audience member: Noach and the raven.]

With the raven or in the Yosef story what's the Orev? The Orev is the collateral. Who pledged himself as collateral in that story? Yehuda. Who is Dovid? Dovid even though he's sounding like Yosef here, Dovid comes from Yehuda. Make sure to take your Orev with you. So Chazal say an amazing thing and let me show it to you, because it's really wild. [Aside Discussion]

Here you go. [Aside Comment]

Okay this is a Tanchuma here in Parshas Vayigash. Ready? Omar Yishai l'Dovid beno - that fateful morning when Yishai dispatched Dovid to check on his brothers and said; V'et arubotom tikach. Omar Yishai l'Dovid beno harei hasha'ah lekayem oso ha'orevah shel zekeinecha - the time has come for you to fulfill that ancient promise that your forefather Yehuda made to his brother Binyamin. He pledged to be the collateral for Binyamin; She'arav et Binyamin - he was the Orev for Binyamin; M'yad aviv - for his father; Shene'emar onochi e'ervenu - he said, I will be your Orev. Elah leich v'hotzi oso m'arvusoh.

Now look at the situation, Goliath is threatening the Jewish people, who should stand up to Goliath? Whose responsibility is it to stand up to Goliath? Shaul. But Shaul feels that he can't do it. What tribe is Shaul from? Shaul is from Binyamin. Binyamin is stuck, Binyamin can't move, Binyamin has a debt that he has to repay, he has an obligation that he has to repay that he can't repay. What's the whole point of collateral? Whenever you pledge yourself as the third party guarantor what are you pledging to do? I'm pledging to help someone out with an obligation that they can't fulfill. That's what Yehuda promised for Binyamin. The time has come, Chazal say, what Yishai was saying was the time has come for you to stand up and to extricate Shaul from Binyamin from a debt that he feels that he cannot pay. You have to kill Goliath, you have to be the one - Yehuda who will stand up for Binyamin.

[Response from audience member: What's his debt?]

The debt is - this is complicated, it's get into the story, but it sounds like Shaul has a personal debt - in other words, there's a… [Response from audience member: No, what's Binyamin's debt?]

Oh Binyamin doesn't have a debt, Binyamin - well Binyamin, there it's sort of - it's borrowed language. But the idea is I will be his Orev, I will be his guarantor, it's not really a debt over there, but it means I will make sure he comes back alive. I will be the one who is collateral for him. Shene'emar et achecha tifkod l'shalom, v'et arubotom tikach - check on the welfare of your brothers; V'et arubotom tikach, v'ein arubotom elah arvut - and arubotom in reference - refers to arvut. Mah osoh Dovid - what did Dovid do? Halach v'kayem et ha'arvut - he fulfilled the ancient arvut of Yehuda; V'horag et Goliyas. Amar leih Hakadosh Baruch Hu - when G-d saw that Dovid was able to kill Goliyas and fulfill the Orev for his grandfather, G-d said; Chayecha - by your life; Keshem shenatata et nafshecha al Shaul - because you have risked your life for Shaul; Shehu m'shivto shel Binyamin - from the other side of the family, from Rachel's children, even though you were from Leah's children. Keshem she'asah Yehuda zekeinecha al Binyamin - just like your forefather Yehuda risked himself for Binyamin, because you have done that; Shene'emar v'atah yeishev nah avdecha tachat hana'ar - just like Yehuda himself said, I will be - let me be the slave instead of Binyamin. Kach - G-d says, so too Dovid; Ani nosen Beis Hamikdash b'gevulecha ub'gevul Binyamin. That's why the Beit Hamikdash sits on the crossroads of the territory of both Binyamin and Yehuda, because you were able to bring peace between these two sides of the family and because you were able to give yourself over for him.

Now we have Mizmor shir chanukat habayit l'Dovid, we have Dovid singing a song about this Bayit which is in the territory of both himself and Binyamin, because of Yehuda's ability to extricate himself; Miteref Beni Alitah, and ultimately to redeem Binyamin. It's a two-step process. It's - isn't that something? It's the Miteref Beni Alitah and then to redeem Binyamin. That, I believe, is what Mizmor Shir is all about. It's Dovid going back and saying, do you believe we're at this stage where we could really build the Beit Hamikdash? It must be that we found healing for this terrible wound of Mechiras Yosef. Then it's Dovid going back into the persona of Yehuda and composing a psalm expressing his gratitude to G-d for the spiritual help that G-d lent Yehuda to be the Aryeh that resisted the smell of blood and to be able to slowly build his way back into the story. I think that's what is going on here. It's really kind of remarkable. This helps you understand one other beautiful piece of Sefer Shmuel - and this is the following. Isn't that something?

[Response from audience member: Who would have known?]

And that's the Medrash, like this isn't even Fohrman, [laughter], this time when they say where did he get it from, you say well he actually - it's right over here. [Response from audience member: 56:03] Yeah. [Response from audience member: So wait you first figured this - you worked this out with the words and then how did you find the Tanchuma?]

Oh so honestly the real truth is, is that the Tanchuma I had seen years ago, I was aware of this Tanchuma, and I was aware of that; V'et arubotom tikach. What I didn't - I hadn't seen the connections between that and Mizmor shir chanukat habayit l'Dovid. Mizmor shir chanukat habayit l'Dovid is the real crowning thing, that's what confirms the Tanchuma really. In other words, if the Tanchuma needed confirmation from the text, the greatest confirmation of the text is Mizmor shir chanukat habayit l'Dovid, which is where Dovid sees what happened in that as a - so what do you call it? So I just put that together.

Actually that wasn't Friday night, that was Shabbos day because I did tell one other person this and they said, oh you know there's a lot of similarities between Yosef and Dovid. I said, oh my gosh, how could I not have thought of that? Because I was aware of those similarities also from years ago, but it didn't click with Mizmor Shir until that person said it, and then I remembered the Tanchuma and this whole piece.

So that's how that piece was. But I hadn't thought of all that on Friday night, I thought of that from before. A lot - by the way, a lot of this kind of stuff that I do it sounds like oh wow, how could he think of all that, but a lot of it is - it's like when you're putting together a jigsaw puzzle, so it's like - Tanach is really just one big, huge jigsaw puzzle. So you get these pieces and you put them together and then you don't know quite where it goes in the puzzle but you [can leave it over there 57:32], and then you put these pieces over there. So all that happened is like I had these pieces over here that were sitting there for the last 10 years, and they were over there, and then - no really, it was about 10 years ago that I saw that, and then Mizmor Shir Chanukat - so I started putting together on Friday night, and it was like, oh that connects with this. That's all it was.

[Response from audience member: (Unclear 57:53) all it was - that recall thing, my gosh.] It's not recall, it's if you have pieces together in a puzzle you don't have to remember each individual piece, it's the head. If I taught you a song and it was Old Macdonald Had a Farm, you wouldn't walk out of here and say, wow I learnt 75 different notes, I can't imagine how I know these 75 different notes. It's a song, right, it fits together. Once something fits together it's very easy to remember. I have a terrible memory for things that don't fit together, the only thing I can remember are things that fit together. So if they fit together you can remember them. [Aside Comments]

It helps by the way also when you have a disconnected Mizmor, even with memorization, at the end of this you'll actually be able to remember Mizmor shir chanukat habayit l'Dovid, because it's going to make sense. Whereas before it was just like what's going on? So the other thing here is…

[Aside Comment]

Okay so the beautiful piece of Tehillim which this explains is this. So remember with - so Dovid says, I'm going to kill Goliath for you. Shaul says you're crazy, it's never going to work, who are you, you're a nothing, you can't go and kill Goliath. So this is what Dovid says to Shaul. Vayomer Dovid el Shaul ro'eh haya avdecha l'aviv - I used to be a shepherd; Batzon - a shepherd of sheep. U'ba ha'ari v'et hadov v'nosah seh meha'eder - and the lion came and the bear and they took a sheep from the flock. Veyatzati acharav - and I went after it; Vehikitiv vehitzalti mipiv - and I killed the lion and I saved the Seh just from the mouth of the lion. Vayakam alai v'hechezakti b'zakano vehikitiv - and I grabbed the lion by his beard, by his mane; Va'hamitiv - and I killed him. Gam et ha'ari gam et hadov hikah avdecha - I have killed the lion; Vehaya haplishti he'aral hazeh k'echad meihem - and this Plishti that threatens you will just be like one of them, because; Ki chereph ma'archot Elokim chayim - because he has blasphemed against G-d.

It strikes me that was Dovid really saying. There was a metaphor here, this wasn't just any story when he says don't worry I can do it. Gam et ha'ari gam et hadov hikah avdecha - I have killed the lion. Who is speaking? The lion is speaking. Dovid is Gur Aryeh Yehuda, as Chazal tell us Gur Aryeh, a prophecy to Dovid the cub, Dovid the lion. Dovid is the lion of Yehuda. Dovid is now saying I have faced myself and I have killed the lion inside of me. What's he really talking about? When was the time when he, so to speak, or his tribe, or Yehuda, was a shepherd and they were all shepherding and the lion came and took one from the flock? The answer is Mechiras Yosef. The flock - remember everyone was shepherding, that was the scene, the brothers were all shepherding together.

But it wasn't just that the brothers were all shepherding together, metaphorically the flock was the children of Yaakov themselves and when one was taken from the flock by a lion, that one was Yosef. In the mouth of the lion about to be destroyed; here was Yehuda with power of life over death over Yosef.

Yehuda says kill him he dies, Yehuda says save him, he's saved. When Yehuda said; Mah betza ki naharog et achinu vechisinu et damo, it was the equivalent of the lion dropping the prey out of his jaws. A lion never drops prey out of its jaws, why would he do that. It's like someone took the mane of the lion and forced the mouth open. Who was it that did that? It was the lion himself, it was Yehuda himself that went against - in other words it's exactly like Rashi says in Miteref Beni Alitah. Miteref (comma), Beni Alitah - you were - a lion does nothing but kills, you didn't. And in doing so you killed the lion inside of you.

In other words, if you think about a lion the lion is vicious, so the viciousness has two sides, it can express itself externally in terms of defense, but when it expresses itself internally - so what do you do when that lion-like quality threatened the internal safety of the family? You were able to kill the lion inside you and to make the lion do something that a lion never does.

That's what he was saying, he says, look I have experience with this, I have killed a lion before. What's he saying? He's talking to Binyamin. Right? He's talking to Binyamin. Binyamin is from the same side of the family as from Rachel's children, what is he saying? He says, you have nothing to fear from me, I'm on your side, I was on your side once before, I was the one who could have killed Yosef and ended up saving him. I saved him. I saved him at the beginning, I saved him at the end when I pledged myself as collateral for you and I brought back Yosef and I brought back you, I've done all of that and now the Plishti is going to be just like them. Because what's the Plishti? The Plishti is just an external force that's coming now to threaten you, so you've been threatened before by me, by Yehuda, by our tribe, and I stopped that threat. The same way I was able to stop that threat I will stop this threat that threatens you Binyamin one more time, I will always be there for Binyamin. That's really what he's saying. So, yeah, I think it's very powerful.

Anyway, we're out of time but I want to come back to - I want to just take five minutes to read through Mizmor Shir with you, to just show you how it all flows and then we'll kind of end. I realize this is really more than one talk, getting kind of crunched into two…

[Response from audience member: 64:49]

Okay. So going back, okay, Mizmor shir chanukat habayit l'Dovid, Aromimcha Hashem - I will lift You up Hashem, why? Ki dilitani - because You pulled me up. Now this is the image of pulling up a bucket with rope from a well. Where was Yosef? In a dried well in the desert. It's like You pulled me up from the well, in other words what this is, is Dovid imaging Yehuda's spiritual response at the end of Mechiras Yosef, at the very end, looking back and saying, I could not have done this all myself. Looking at his heroism, looking at his courage and then saying, it wasn't just me, You were there by my side G-d. I was down in that pit and You helped pull me up out of it. So Aromimcha - I will raise You up because You raised me up, because You pulled me up from the pit.

If you think about secular, Christian songs by the way, that playoff of this image. Think about Amazing Grace by the way, coming from here, but anyway, you can do that on your own. Many of the themes from this are emerging in Amazing Grace. Amazing Grace - it's really the same thing. Right, you raised me up when I - right? Anyway, let's just leave that aside. They got it from us that's all, which one came first, right?

[Response from audience member: 66:48]

Right yeah, probably it did, right? Where else do you think it came from? [Response from audience member: Judeo-Christians it's Judeo.] It's Judeo, where do you think they got it from? They obviously took it from Tehillim. V'loh simachta oyvai li - now think of Yehuda's blessings. Yehuda's blessings is; Gur Aryeh Yehuda. Yadcha b'oref oyvecha - your hand is against your enemies. What Yehuda is now imagining - is what would have happened if I had failed? What would have happened if I had allowed Mechiras Yosef to take its normal trajectory and for Yosef to be killed in that pit? I would have never been - I would have been the lion cub that destroyed, it wouldn't have been; Miteref Beni Alitah. What if I had not extricated myself from that? What if I had torn up that child? There never would have been a Malchus Yehuda, there never would have been a Beit Hamikdash, there never would have been anything. I would never even had the strength to defend anyone against their enemies, because if I would have been guilty of having taken my Middah of being a lion and taking the violence of the lion and using that inwards against the family, then how could I have ever expected G-d to be on my side, to defend the people ever again? I wouldn't do that. And were I to face my enemies I would not even be able to count on my lionlike qualities then. And what would have happened? I would be - my enemies would have conquered me.

So the reason why I have the ability to be the lion - I have the continued ability to be able to use my trait of no mercy against my foes, is because I was able to not use that trait of no mercy against my family. Because; Miteref Beni Alitah and therefore; Yadcha b'oref oyvecha - my hand can keep my enemies at bay. Had it not been that way; Simachta oyvai li - my enemies would have conquered me. What he is talking about is my ability - You allowed me to preserve my ability to use my strength to keep my enemies at bay, because I used my propensity towards violence successfully in a constructive way instead of a destructive way. Are you with me?

Hashem Elokai shivati eleicha vatirpa'eini - I cried out to You and You healed me. Well what is this talking about? You healed me; I was besmirched by the sin of almost fratricide, but I called out to You - in that moment where Yehuda felt that he's with a mob of brothers how is ever going to convince them? He knows this is wrong, but how can he go back? He somehow had the strength to be able to pull himself out a little bit to at least sell Yosef as a slave and not kill him, and ultimately You worked to heal me from this terrible wound.

Hashem he'elita min she'ol nafshi - the He'elita is - again, think about Yehuda's Beracha; Miteref Beni Alitah - You allowed me to emerge, but the word for emerge is You allowed me to emerge from the torn up-ness of Yosef. Over here that word appears; Hashem he'elita - You helped me emerge, it didn't happen on its own, You helped me emerge from that.

Min she'ol nafshi - now She'ol in the story is going to remind you of what? Well Shaul possibly but also She'ol in the Yosef story is what Yaakov talks about. Yaakov says; Ki eired el beni avel she'olah - I will go down to my grave - She'ol - mourning Yosef. So You helped me to emerge not just from my own problems but what was I going to do to my father? I was going to send my father down to the grave. Hashem he'elita min she'ol - You have picked me up out of what I was going to do to my father, putting him down to his grave. Chiyitani miyordei bor - there were going to be two people that were going to be devastated as a result of my actions, both Yosef and my father. He'elita min she'ol - You helped me emerge from what I was going to do to my father and You helped me emerge from; Miyordei bor - what I was going to do to Yosef, that he was going to be in that pit never to come up. Zamru laHashem chasidav v'hodu l'zecher kadsho - so therefore I will praise You.

Now what does this remind you of; Ki regah b'apo chaim birtzono? We've heard that before, remember the Berachos right before Yehuda, the Berachos to Shimon and Levi the coconspirators in Mechiras Yosef along with Yehuda? Ki b'apam hargu ish u'birtzonam ikru shor. Ki regah b'apo chaim birtzono. B'apam hargu ish u'birtzonam ikru shor. So G-d, Your wrath may be for a moment but You understand rehabilitation, You give us life.

B'erev yellin bechi velaboker rina - there's crying at night but in the morning there's rejoicing. Now what are we talking about here? I'm not sure, this could be talking - there's two sources of tears here. One could be; Vayevk oto aviv - my father went to bed at night, so to speak, mourning Joseph but in the end, Laboker, there was a morning time, there was a time when he could rejoice. Alternatively, it might mean when Yosef reveals himself; Vayiten et kolo b'bechi - he gives his voice in crying, and in the morning the brothers rejoice among themselves.

Now if you were Yehuda what does this remind you of; V'ani amarti beshalvi bal emot l'olam? When in the story of Mechiras Yosef did Yehuda say in tranquility, in smugness, I will never be moved, I am steadfast, I can always be counted on? He said that when he promised his father that he would bring back Binyamin alive. I was sure I could do it. [What's with 72:43] Binyamin, Dad give Binyamin to me, I'll bring him back. Little did Yehuda know how difficult it was going to be, to be able to make good on that promise. He didn't know that there was Yosef there that was determined to get Binyamin come what may, that he'll lie, cheat or steal to do it, and that's in fact what happened, Binyamin is framed. He never realized that. So; V'ani amarti beshalvi - I said in my innocent tranquility, in my smugness; Bal emot l'olam - I will never be moved, I am the steadfast pillar. I was guilty of arrogance when I told my father don't worry you can count on me, I'll bring back Binyamin. How did I know I will be able to bring back Binyamin? I had no idea what I was going to be facing going down to Mitzrayim.

Then when the jaws snapped shut of the ruse and Yosef framed him, I was stuck, I was between a rock and a hard place. Hashem birtzoncha He'emadata l'hareri oz - G-d it was only through Your will that You gave me strength to persevere and to be able to bring Binyamin back and to fulfill that promise. You were the one who lent me the strength. I thought that I would have the strength to bring back Binyamin, it wasn't me, it was You. Histarta panecha - had You not been with me at that moment; Hayiti nivhal - I would have panicked. Had You left me - in other words, he's saying it wasn't just me that had the strength to be able to stand up to Yosef and say, let me be the slave instead of him, it's because I sensed You at my side that I had the strength. Had You hidden Your face from me then I would have panicked.

Now there's a beautiful double entendre over here, because who was hiding his face at that time? Yosef. Yosef was the one who was hiding his face. And, what about the word Nivhal? Nivhal is the very word that is used to describe the brothers' reaction when Yosef reveals his face. V'loh yachlu echov la'anot oto ki nivhalu mipanav - they were panicked in front of him. If you take that double entendre in, what Yehuda is really saying is, G-d when I - I had no idea what I was getting into when I promised I could bring Binyamin back, it's only because You were with me. Had You not been with me, had You hid Your face, then had I been unable to redeem Binyamin, had I allowed Binyamin to go with Yosef, then had Yosef ever revealed himself; Hayiti nivhal - I would have been Nivhal. I think what this suggests is a fascinating thing.

What it suggests is Yehuda was not Nivhal. Meaning, that when Yosef revealed himself to his brothers, all the brothers panicked, except for Yehuda, because Yehuda knew that he could sleep at night. In other words, when Yehuda promised himself for Binyamin that was it, then when Yosef revealed himself Yehuda could take it. All the other brothers couldn't, but Yehuda could take it, Yehuda wasn't panicked. That's the double entendre over here, that had You not been with me at that moment; Hayiti nivhal - I would have had no moral leg to stand on, I would have been panicked in seeing Yosef and anything, I would have given up Binyamin, I would - but You were with me and therefore I was able to have some tranquility. I was able to have that Shalva. I was arrogant to think that I could, but You stood by my side and gave me the strength to be able to stand up and say, I will be the slave instead of Binyamin.

Eilecha Hashem ekra V'el Hashem etchanan - I called out to You G-d and You freely granted me this gift, and I - in the future I will call out to You and You will again freely grant to me gifts. Now here are these words that will live in infamy; Mah betza b'dami beriditi el shachat. He recalls his sinful words. I mean these were the words that - morally ambiguous, it's true that I saved him but I also sent him off to slavery with these words. I realize G-d that I am culpable for those words, if You wanted to You could kill me on the basis of those words. You could - right? But the plea that I give to You is the same plea that I made to my brothers not to kill Yosef I am going to make to You now G-d. Mah betza b'dami - what do You gain G-d out of killing me for my culpability in sending Yosef down to the pit?

What do You gain by having my blood; Beriditi el shachat - if I were to die in repayment of me having contemplated the death of my brother - because the next word in Mah Betza is; Mah betza ki naharog et achinu. What do You gain G-d of holding me culpable for my plot of; Naharog et achinu, by putting me down; Beriditi el shachat - but putting me down to the grave? Hayodecha aphar? It's true that I said those words shall I cover Yosef blood, but; Hayodecha aphar - could Aphar ever - what? Ever praise You? Hayagid amitecha? Shema Hashem vechaneini Hashem heyeh ozer li.

Finally; Hafachta mispedi lemochol li - at the end You changed my mourning - we were in mourning when Binyamin was caught that; Vayikre'u simlotam - they literally were in mourning. You've changed my mourning to celebration when Yosef revealed himself. Pitachta saki, very fascinating. Pitachta saki - literally, You opened up my sackcloth. But Saki here can also refer to the Sak, remember the sacks of Binyamin were referred to as either Amtechot or Sak - there are two synonyms. So what he's saying is, You opened up my sack. Now who opened up whose sack? Remember when Binyamin opens up his sack and he finds the Gavi'ah? So now he's saying; Pitachta saki- now Yehuda is saying I opened my sack, what do you mean you opened up your sack, Binyamin opened up his sack? But Yehuda had pledged himself for - the collateral for Binyamin, standing in Binyamin's place I will be the slave. So what is really saying? When Binyamin's sack was opened, exposing the Gavi'ah that incriminated him, that was really my sack, because I said I would be in his place. So You opened up my sack, You allowed me to the Orev for him, and when You opened up my sack You again; Vate'azreini simcha - You changed the sackcloth for clothes of happiness.

Therefore; Lema'an yezamercha kovod v'loh yidom - I will always praise You. Hashem Elokai le'olam odecha - the last words, I will praise You, and over here; Hayodecha aphar - could I praise You? Again, because what is Yehuda's signal Middah? Which is; Yehuda, atah yoducha achecha - Yehuda your brothers will praise you because you extricated yourself from Mechiras Yosef. But - and therefore because I did so; Le'olam odecha - I will always praise You G-d. That's the Mizmor.