



Ruach Chaim Living with Spirit Lifting Up our Lives in Trying Times

Mussar Gathering - January 26, 2025

Spiritual Sustenance and Renewal through the Psalms

By Rabbi David Jaffe

Psalm 146:2

אֶהְלֵלָה יְהוָה בְּחַיִּי אֶזְמַרָה לֵאלֹהֵי בְעוֹדִי:

I will praise the LORD all my life,
sing hymns to my God while I exist.

Psalm 139:8

אִם־אֶסָּק שָׁמַיִם שָׁם אַתָּה וְאִצִּיעָה שְׂאוֹל הַנֶּחֱדָ:

If I ascend to heaven, You are there;
if I descend to Sheol, You are there too.

Psalm 2:7

אֶסְפָּרָה אֶל־חֵק יְהוָה אָמַר אֵלַי בְּנִי אַתָּה אֲנִי הַיּוֹם יִלְדֶּתִיךָ:

Let me tell of the decree:
the LORD said to me,
“You are My child,
I have birthed you this day.



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Psalm 5:8

וְאֲנִי בְּרַב חֶסֶדְךָ אֲבֹא בֵּיתְךָ אֲשַׁתְּחֶוּהָ אֶל־הִכַּל־קִדְשֶׁךָ בִּירְאָתְךָ:

But I, through Your abundant love, enter Your house;

I bow down in awe at Your holy temple.

Isaiah 38:19

חַי חַי הוּא יוֹדֵךָ כְּמוֹנֵי הַיּוֹם אָב לְבָנִים יוֹדִיעַ אֶל־אִמָּתְךָ:

The living, only the living

Can give thanks to You

As I do this day;

Talmud Bavli Kiddushin 40b

וְאִפְּלוּ רָשָׁע גָּמֹר כָּל יָמָיו וְעָשָׂה תְּשׁוּבָה בְּאַחֲרוֹנָה - אֵין מְזַכְּרִים לוֹ שׁוֹב רָשָׁעוֹ,
שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "וְרָשָׁעֵת הָרָשָׁע לֹא יִכָּשֶׁל בָּהּ בַּיּוֹם שׁוֹבָו מִרָשָׁעוֹ"

...even if one was **completely wicked all their life and repented in the end, they are no longer reminded of their wickedness, as it is stated** in the continuation of the verse: **"And as for the wickedness of the wicked, they shall not stumble over it on the day that they turn from wickedness (Ezekiel 33:12)."**

Journal Prompts:

- Which of these sources resonates most for you? What resonates?
- In what ways are you feeling "stuck" or detached from your vitality in the current moment? Is there a spiritual element to this sense of being "stuck?"
- How might applying the wisdom in these sources move you from being "stuck" into feeling more alive and vital?
- What does vitality and being spiritually alive feel and look like for you?



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Learning *B'Hispailus*

There are three steps to learning a text *B'hispailus*:

Step 1: Understand what the words mean. Use your power of analysis just like when studying any piece of Torah.

Step 2: Relate the text to your life. Do I agree with this teaching? If not, why not? How does this teaching speak to my life, the way it is right now. In this step it is good to think of specific examples from your life.

Step 3: Make the wisdom in the text “come alive” for you. Do something that will help the words of the text enter into your heart and make an impact on you. The traditional Mussar practice involves repeating and chanting the words. Each individual may need to use a different method.