

## Notes for Psalm 30, Temple Micah Study Group, 12/17/19

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Last year, I created a series of 30 posts on Psalm 30, including lots of different kinds of information and responses to the psalm and to individual verses. This month's notes comprise selections from those pieces:

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The whole collection is [here](https://songeveryday.org/category/thirty-on-psalm-30/) -- <https://songeveryday.org/category/thirty-on-psalm-30/> -- to proceed in order of posting, start at the bottom (collecting from newest to oldest must have made sense, or been easier, at the time.)

And here, from the blog, are some musical settings for Psalm 30:

- "[Three Israelis in Phoenix Arizona](#)" recorded their cover of the Shlomo Carlebach tune at [Fiddler's Dream Coffeehouse](#). You can hear a little of the call-and-response that many congregations employ with this chant. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j0FX6IWe-SQ>
- Largely wordless version. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mPfvgbR1FnE>
- [Shiyr Poets Psalm 30](#) (see previous psalms notes for background on Shiyr Poets) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XKGfw3yPF\\_8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XKGfw3yPF_8)

### "Dedication of THIS House" [11/12/18]

Thank you, God, for lifting me out of depths of my own making,  
for helping me over self-criticism and abdication of dreams,  
for keeping me from adopting an enemy's eye view of my life.

This house has seen some tranquility  
and it's seen days that seemed too much like the pit.  
We're grateful to have reached this point,  
and ask Your help through the future ups and downs.

With Your help, let this house be  
a place that hears crying,  
welcoming expressions of truth from those who suffer,  
a place of healing, working through the struggle,  
and a place of joy.

This house, built and maintained by humans,  
can seem pretty shaky,  
but if it's a place where the Name is recognized,  
in all the varied ways God comes through the door,  
maybe that mountain of strength won't seem so far off.

— V. Spatz, 2018, based on Psalm 30,

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## "The House: Bricks and Mortar?" [11/11/18]

Psalm 30 begins with the superscription: "Dedication of the House" —

מִזְמוֹר :שִׁיר-הַנְּכִיחַת הַבַּיִת לְדָוִד  
A Psalm; a Song at the Dedication of the House; of David.

### Which House?

Some bricks and mortar possibilities, per *The Jerusalem Commentary*:

- **First Temple:** "The commentators disagree about which dedication and which "house" the psalm is referring to. Some say that it refers to the dedication of the First Temple, and that David himself composed the psalm, and instructed his son Solomon to recite it when the Temple was dedicated."\*
- **Second Temple:** "Some commentators suggest that the dedication means that this psalm was recited by the Levites at the dedication of the Second Temple. See Ezra 6:16-18 and 3:10, though in the latter context we are dealing with the laying of the Temple's foundations and not its dedication. See also Nehemiah 12:27, though there we are dealing with the dedication of the city wall."\*\*
- **David's House:** "Others suggested that the "house" mentioned here is not the Temple, but rather David's house, mention in II Samuel 5:11 and 7:1-2."\*\*
- **Private Home:** "Other commentators maintain that the house mentioned here refers to privately owned houses, for there was an ancient custom to celebrate the dedication of a new house (see Deuteronomy 20:5)."\*\*\* -- \*p. 228, \*\*note 14, p.228

Some argue, as noted above, that David wrote the psalm and then instructed Solomon to recite it. We've already touched on [additional commentary](#) [post of 11/2/18] reconciling "Of David" with "the House" as the First Temple. Other teachers take different approaches to its physical and temporal location largely in support of commentary on its emotional content.

### And When?

The Mishnah, *Bikkurim*, reports that Psalm 30 was recited in connection with First Fruits. Other text links the psalm to Chanukah, and it is psalm of the day during that holiday. For several hundred years, Psalm 30 has also been recited first thing in the morning, leading to other associations and interpretations of "house." More on these ideas to come.

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## "The House and First Fruits" [11/12/18]

The Mishnah reports that Psalm 30, or at least its opening verse, was recited by the Levites when worshippers brought First Fruits:

THE FLUTE WAS PLAYING BEFORE THEM TILL THEY REACHED THE TEMPLE MOUNT; AND WHEN THEY REACHED THE TEMPLE MOUNT EVEN KING AGRIPPA WOULD TAKE THE BASKET AND PLACE IT ON HIS SHOULDER AND WALK AS FAR AS THE TEMPLE COURT. AT THE APPROACH TO THE COURT, THE LEVITES WOULD SING THE SONG: 'I WILL EXTOL THEE, O LORD, FOR THOU HAST RAISED ME UP, AND HAST NOT SUFFERED MINE ENEMIES TO REJOICE OVER ME'.

— Bikkurim 3:4 [not meant as shouting: all caps printers' custom distinguishes Mishnah from Gemara]

## Psalm 30, p.3

### "The House and First Fruits" cont.

The First Fruits ceremony also included the recitation beginning “My father was a wandering Aramean” (Deut 26:5-10) now included in the Passover Haggadah (Bikkurim 3:6). This passage recalls years of affliction and oppression before getting to “Now I bring the first fruits of the soil which You, God, have given me.” Together with Psalm 30, these verses convey the theme that all wealth, success, and well-being come from God.

Together, the “Wandering Aramean” passage and Psalm 30 warn against the kind of complacency described in Ps 30:7: “When I was well, I said, ‘Never will I falter.’” They also convey the theme that struggle, too, is part of relationship with God.

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### "Where God is Hidden" [11/7/18]

No one knows where God is hidden. Not even the ministering angels who tend God’s Throne of Glory know where God can be found, nor do the heavenly creatures who carry the Throne, for God has encircled Himself with darkness and cloud all around, as it is said, *He made darkness his screen* (Ps. 18:12). Indeed, some say that the true meaning of the verse, *You hid Your face* (Ps. 30:8) is that God is hidden from Himself. — Howard Schwartz, *The Tree of Souls: The Mythology of Judaism*, p.13

The passage goes on to explain that this might be “about the absence of God” or “a metaphor for the hidden nature of God: just as no person knows where his soul is located within himself, so too does no one know the place of God.” It also mentions teaching of Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav, which “interprets “*You hid Your face* (Ps. 30:8) as meaning that God has turned his back on the Jewish people during the Exile” (*Likutei Moharan*).

Citations are to B. Sanhedrin 39a, Exodus Rabbah 23, Pirkei de-Rabbi Eliezer 4, and Masekhet Hekhalot 3...

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### "The Whole Nine Yards?" [11/7/18]

Following [previous] post about the hiddenness of God, alluded to in Psalm 30:8, here is a comment about prevalence of God’s name in the psalm:

Psalm 30 was added to the liturgy in the 17th century under the influence of Lurianic mysticism. It mentions the name of God ten times, and Jewish mystics saw in this a hint of the *s’firot*, the ten aspects of the Godhead. — *Siddur Lev Shalem* (Rabbinical Assembly, 2016)

By my count, there are **nine** uses of the Name, YHVH, in Psalm 30 plus one “My Master” or “My Lord.” In Hebrew the common substitute for the four-letter Name of God [יהוה] (often written: ADONAI) and the expression “My Lord” [אֲדֹנָי] (Adonai) are homophones. Thus, e.g., this translation (1985 Jewish Publication Society) uses LORD and Lord:

אֲלִיךָ יְהוָה אֶקְרָא וְאַל-אֲדֹנָי אֶתְחַנֵּן;

I called to You, O LORD [יהוה]; to my Lord [אֲדֹנָי] I made appeal

— Psalm 30:9

The use of “Adonai” is aurally indistinguishable from the nine uses of “ADONAI.” Perhaps that’s what the Lurianic mystics — or *Siddur Lev Shalem* — see in Psalm 30. Or maybe the tenth is hidden. But I suspect I’m [missing something](#)...or maybe we all are and that’s just fine.

## Psalm 30, p.4

[Additional note 12/21/18 for Whole Nine Yards?]

...here is one way to find ten mentions of God's name in Psalm 30:

שִׁמְעֵ-יְהוָה וְחַנּוּנִי; יְהוָה, הָיִה-עֲזָר לִי

Hear, O Lord, and be gracious to me. O Lord, be my helper.

The formulation “O Lord, be my helper,” alludes to the meaning of the Tetragrammaton: “For I will be with you” (see Exodus 3:12-15, and [Onkelos](#), according to *Ramban*’s reading in his commentary on the words: אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה אִתְּךָ *eHyeh asher eHyeh*). At all events, the combination הִי הָיִה, *Hashem heyeh*, “O Lord, be,” is a play on the spelling of the two words.”

— *The Jerusalem Commentary*, p.226

In this way, verse 11 suggests the tenth mention of God's name in Psalm 30 without spelling it out directly. Hinting at the Name seems quite fitting with many themes of the psalm and with musical and chant settings for this verse in particular.

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### "There's Glory for You! - Part 1" [11/18/18]

Rabbi Diane Elliot noted, a few posts back, her practice of taking “the time to work with a word or a phrase” from the prayers and then using that “backstory” when returning to the same prayer in other settings (“[Wordless Verses](#)”). Abraham Joshua Heschel also wrote, addressing fellow rabbis in 1953, about the importance of spending time with individual words in the prayers:

We must learn how to study the inner life of the words that fill the world of our prayerbook....A word has a soul, and we must learn how to attain insight into its life....We forgot how to find the way to the word, how to be on intimate terms with a few passages in the prayerbook. Familiar with all the words, we are intimate with none. — “The Spirit of Prayer” (citation below)

One of the many words and phrases worth pausing to consider in Psalm 30 is “glory” —

לְמַעַן, יִזְמְרֶךָ כְּבוֹד— וְלֹא יִדָּם  
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי, לְעוֹלָם אָדָּךְ

So that my glory may sing praise to Thee, and not be silent;  
O LORD my God, I will give thanks unto Thee for ever.

— Ps. 30:13 (1917 JPS translation; others below)

### Translating “Glory,” Part 1

To begin, it is usually instructive to notice where translators vary in rendering a particular phrase. Verse 13 yields a lot of variety. Here is a selection of Jewish translations, offered in reverse chronological order:

1. that I might sing of Your glory and not be silent:  
ADONAI my God, I thank You, always — Rabbinical Assembly, *Siddur Lev Shalem*, 2016
2. that my soul may sing Your praises and never cease.  
I will acknowledge You forever, LORD my God. — R. Eli Cashdan, *Koren Tehillim*, 2015
3. So that my depths might sing out to you and never be stilled,  
God, my Help, I will spill out gratitude to you forever. — Pamela Greenberg, *The Complete Psalms*, 2010

## Psalm 30, p.4

### Translating "Glory," cont.

4. Therefore my glory will sing praise to You, and will not be silent.  
O Lord, my God, I will give thanks to You forever.  
— *The Jerusalem Commentary*, Mosad Harav Kook, 2003 (see note\*)
5. that I might sing praise to You. I will not be silent!  
Adonai my God, I will laud you forever! — *My People's Prayer Book*, Lawrence Hoffman (ed) 2001
6. That I might sing Your praises unceasingly,  
that I might thank You, Adonai my God, forever  
— R. Jules Harlow 1985 trans, adapted for *Or Hadash* 1998
7. that [my] whole being might sing hymns to You endlessly;  
O LORD my God, I will praise You forever. — JPS 1985 (via [Sefaria](#)); 1917 JPS is above

\*“The expression ‘glory will sing, praise to You, and will not be silent,’ implies that the silence of grief will be turned into a song of gladness, and thus this verse is a continuation of what was stated in the previous verse, ‘You loosened my sackcloth...’

\*“Some commentaries explain the word **כָּבוֹד**, *kavod*, to mean ‘I myself,’ like **כִּיבוֹדִי**, *k’vodi*.” [cf. commentary on 7:6, explaining that “my glory” or “my honor,” like “my soul,” means just plain, “me.”]

So, we have *kavod* translated as:

- glory,
- soul,
- just plain “I.”
- depths,
- whole being, and

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### "There's Glory for You! - Part 2" [11/19/18]

In “The Spirit of Prayer,” Abraham Joshua Heschel warned:

It is not enough to know how to translate Hebrew into English; it is not enough to have met a word in the dictionary and to have experienced unpleasant adventures with it in the study of grammar. A word has soul and we must learn how to attain insight into its life. — see [previous post](#) for citation

Translation alone may not be enough, but it can give us some insight into the life of a word or a phrase.

In the previous look at “*kavod*” in Psalm 30, we saw the word translated in Jewish versions as “glory,” “depths,” “soul,” “whole being,” and just plain “I.” Here, for additional perspectives, are some Christian translations and notes for verse 13 (or 12 — NOTE: Christian scholars generally do not count superscriptions as verses in psalms, so the numbering differs by one from Jewish sources) of the psalm.

### More Translations

*The book of psalms from the original Hebrew with various readings and notes by the late Alexander Geddes, LL. D (1807):*

Therefore I will praise thee, my glory!  
Never will I be silent in thy praise  
[“f” — as in “filent in thy praife” — changed to “s” for readability]

The Greek interpreters read another word, the English of which is honour; as if the psalmist had said, thou hadst so firmly established mine honour; and this reading by some late translators. The other I think more poetical and expressive – Ver. 12. I will praise thee, my glory!

## Psalm 30, p.6

### Glory translations, cont.

Hebrew runs thus: Glory will praise thee, and will not be silent. But the Syriac translator read both verbs in the first person; and I have no doubt of his being the original lection.

— Geddes, p.46 (London: printed for J. Johnson in St. Paul's Courtyard by Richard Taylor & Co, Shoe-Lane)

*Bay Psalm Book being the earliest New England Version (1862):*

That sing to thee my glory may  
and may not silent be  
Lord my God I will give thanks  
evermore to thee

*The Psalms: A historical and spiritual commentary* offers two readings:

- many, with the Septuagint (LXXX), “my glory” for “that my glory should make music to you and not be silent,” taken as a reference to “his soul restored in royal glory.”
- others “change the vowels to give ‘my liver’ and then render ‘my heart,’”  
— J.H. Eaton, *The Psalms: A historical and spiritual commentary* (T&T Clark, A Continuum Imprint 2003), p.143

*NIV Study Bible (1985)* gives us, “that my heart may sing to you and not be silent,” with the following footnotes:

[30:12] *heart*. Lit. “glory (see note on 7:5)

[7:5] *me*. Lit. “my glory,” a way of referring to the core of one’s being (see 16:9; 30:12; 57:8; 108:1 and notes).

Most of the 50+ translations available through “Bible Gateway” similarly use “heart” or “soul,” a few “glory” or “whole being.” But there are also more interpretive offerings:

- To the end that my tongue and my heart and everything glorious within me may sing praise to You and not be silent.  
— [Amplified Bible](#) (1965-1987)
- You have restored my honor. My heart is ready to explode, erupt in new songs! It’s impossible to keep quiet!  
— [The VOICE](#) (2012)
- How could I be silent when it’s time to praise you?  
Now my heart sings out loud, bursting with joy—  
a bliss inside that keeps me singing,  
“I can never thank you enough!”  
— [Passion Translation](#) (2017)

### Beyond Translation

“...There’s glory for you!”

“I don’t know what you mean by ‘glory,’” Alice said.

Humpty Dumpty smiled contemptuously. “Of course you don’t—till I tell you....”

— [more on “glory”](#) *Through the Looking Glass*

Translating "Glory," cont.

Whatever English is chosen to translate “*kavod*,” or however we relate to the Hebrew directly, one aspect of its life seems to be that it is antithetical to silence. All the tribulations in the psalm — enemy triumph, the underworld or the pit, God’s anger and hiding of God’s face, mourning and sackcloth — cannot keep it from singing.

Rabbi Shefa Gold teaches a practice to help in “finding the glory inside and pouring it out to God.” She asks us to “examine what it is that silences that glory,” and then “look beneath the obstacle” for the “glory that wants to be acknowledged and celebrated.” Here’s her [chanting practice for this verse](#).

In that sense, we’re all part Alice, waiting for Humpty Dumpty to tell us what “*kavod*” means in the context of the psalm, and part Humpty Dumpty, knowing that it’s up to us to identify whatever obstacles are blocking our own glory in this particular instance.

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**Weeping Abides, Or Does it Lodge? [12/25/18]**

Joy comes in the morning,” or a similar translation of “*v’laboker rinah*,” is probably the most often quoted phrase in Psalm 30. The phrase preceding this, however, is one that translators disagree on rendering. Exploring the many ways “יָלִין [yalin]” is translated has made it a favorite word of mine. Here, in the penultimate set of comments on Psalm 30, from a series that began November 1, are some thoughts about this word and about translation of bible and prayers, more generally.

**Complexities of Verse 6**

Here is the Hebrew, along with transliteration:

כִּי רָגַע, בְּאֶפְסוֹ-חַיִּים בְּרִצּוֹנוֹ  
בַּעֲרֵב, יָלִין בְּכִי; וְלִבְקֹר רָנָה  
*ki rega' b'appo — chayyim birtzono*  
*ba-erev yalin bekhi; v'laboker rinah*

Here is one translation:

...for momentary is His anger, lifelong His favor.  
6: By night weeping abides,  
but morning brings joy!  
— pp.193-94, *My People’s Prayer Book*

6: “*Weeping abides*” Literally, “weeping spends the night,” but we don’t have a verb for that in English. Another possible reading of the Hebrew is “one spends the night weeping.”  
— p. 195, J. Hoffman (TRANSLATION), one of several commentary threads in *My People’s Prayer Book*

I chose this translation, instead of those more often quoted in this blog (JPS 1917 and JPS 1985, found at [Mechon-Mamre](#) and [Sefaria](#), respectively), because I think it makes clear some of the complexities and because it specifically discusses the verb “יָלִין [yalin].”

I also like the above translation because it employs the less usual verb “abides” for “יָלִין [yalin].” (More on this below.) More common translations of the same verb in Psalm 30:6 are “weeping may...

- stay for the night,”
- last...,”
- endure...,” or
- tarry...”

**Complexities of Verse 6 cont.**

The latter is used in the 1917 JPS, the King James Version (1611) has “endureth,” and Christian Standard (Holman, 2017) has “may stay overnight.”

A few variations are

- “One may lie down weeping at nightfall,” 1985 JPS
- “Tears may flow in the night,” Good News, 1992
- “Weeping may lodge for the night,” Int’l Standard Version 1996-2012
- “One may experience sorrow during the night,” NET, 1996-2006\*
- “At night we may cry,” Contemporary English, Amer. Bible Society, 2006
- “At even remaineth weeping,” Young’s Literal, 2013

\*New ENGLISH Translation, not to be confused with Evangelical and other NETs.

All of the above translations, with the exception of the 1985 Jewish Publication Society and *My People’s Prayer Book*, can be found on the very useful Christian resource site, [Bible Hub](#).

**Lingers, Beds Down, Abides, and Lodges**

**Lingers and Beds Down**

*Sim Shalom* chooses a less usual verb for “לִיַן [yalin]”:

Tears may linger for a night,  
but joy comes with the dawn. — Rabbinical Assembly, 1989

“Lingers” can have a light, harmless, connotation: We might linger over coffee or a cross-word puzzle, for example, without ill effect, unless we’re delaying someone else or needed activity. So, tears might stick around past their desired or expected departure time without provoking abject desperation. It’s more sinister, however, when symptoms or doubts, fears, and grief linger — and in that sense, lingering tears could make for a deeply troubled night. The verb might work in both senses, for Psalm 30.

Similarly, Robert Alter opts for a less usual expression:

At evening one beds down weeping,  
and in the morning, glad song.  
— *The Book of Psalms: a translation with commentary* (NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 2007)

Rather than dwelling on possible consequences for the psalmist of “bedding down weeping,” Alter explains this verse by saying, “This upbeat vision of life has, of course, been manifested in recent experience of the speaker.”

Alter does say that verse 9 “recalls the words of desperate supplication that he [the psalmist] addressed to God from his straits.” This seems a distant, maybe faint, memory, though, as Alter translates and comments on psalm 30, which he describes, simply, as “a thanksgiving psalm.”

Both “lingers” and “beds down” are choices that seem a little distant from the general usage of *lamed-vav-nun* in the Bible: Jacob is neither lingering nor bedding down in the ladder and wrestling incidents (Gen 28:11, Gen 32:22), for example, and neither verb would work for leaving the Pesach sacrifice over til morning (Exod 34:25). In context of the psalm, though, these phrases provoke some thought about how we understand our own and others’ relationship to weeping:

## Psalm 30, p.9

### Lingers and Beds Down, cont.

Does it show up and linger, uninvited, like a bad cold?

Do we have the choice to bed down without it? Should we?

Or is it a property of the night?

Are tears and joy, weeping and glad song an inevitable and regular cycle?

Can we, as individuals or communities, ever view the weeping as long ago and focus on the song?

### Abides

I should probably confess here that, while I love several of the Coen brothers' movies, "[The Big Lebowski](#)" was not originally, and never became, a favorite of mine. But I realize that many people today, because of that film, attach specific connotations to "abides." (See, e.g., "[The Dude Abides.](#)")

Even Merriam-Webster knows this:

Comments by users of this dictionary suggest that many people who are interested in the meaning of the word *abide* are motivated by one of two rather distinct things: the Bible, in which, for instance, Jesus calls upon his followers to "abide in me"; and the movie *The Big Lebowski*, in which Jeffrey Lebowski (aka "The Dude") proclaims that "The Dude abides"....The exact meaning of "The Dude abides" is a topic of some debate, but clearly there is some notion of the constancy of Lebowski himself—metaphysically perhaps—being asserted. — Merriam-Webster's [abide](#) page, scroll way down

For me, "weeping abides" carries the meaning of "remaining stable or fixed in a state" or "continuing in place," which I find captures at least one mood of the psalm: there is exultation and praise for rescue, but that doesn't necessarily imply that the depths were fleeting or trivial. "Abides" captures the psalm's palpable sense of despair and fear remaining fixed long enough to leave a mark — whether on an individual or a people.

Perhaps fans of *The Dude* also hear "weeping abides" in a way that fits with verse 6's cyclical rhythm and the psalm's overall sense — reinforced in daily recitation — that life is full of ups and downs, and that we, individually and communally, must learn to ride them out and celebrate joy when it manifests. (Fans please share your thoughts.)

I am unsure if the 1998 film had reached cult status when *My People's Prayer Book* chose the verb "abide" for its translation. I think it's fair to say that the movie's popularity changed the way many people heard the word in later years. But I also venture to say that language is always changing in both predictable and unpredictable ways which affect how Bible translations are heard post-publication.

### Lodges

Discussing "לַיְלָה [yalin]" (above), Joel Hoffman says: "We don't have a verb for ['spend the night'] in English." We do, however, have the travel-industry argot in which "overnight" is a verb — although I think it fails to strike the right mood for Psalm 30. And, while "lodge," on its own, is more general than "spend the night," it's pretty close. Moreover, "lodge" has several meanings that work with verse 6:

- weeping may be temporarily residing before joy comes in the morning;
- tears might be quartered with us (like it or not) til morning's reprieve;
- weeping might be fixed in place until dawn.

## Psalm 30, p.10

### Lodges, cont.

I find that all of these meanings work for me when I read, “Weeping may lodge for the night, but shouts of joy will come in the morning” (International Standard Version). This translation prompts me to ask different questions about how this lodger arrived at my door and where we will go from here.

But landlords no longer advertise “lodgings,” and it is more common now to “lodge a complaint” than “lodge in town.” When is a word too old-fashioned to make its point? And what do we lose when we allow words to fall out of favor or lose varieties of meaning?

Can any mortal mixture of earthly mould  
Breathe such divine enchanting ravishment?  
Sure something holy lodges in that breast  
and with these raptures moves the vocal air;  
to testify his hidden residence  
— Milton, *Comus* (1634)

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### "The Pits and the Lights" 12/6/18 [week of Torah portion *Mikeitz*; also: Chanukah]

There are several parallels between Psalm 30 and the Joseph story, including their pits.

Psalm 30 praises God for having “preserved me from going down into the Pit [*bor*, בֹּר]:

יְהוָה הֶעֱלִיתָ מִן־שְׁאוֹל נַפְשִׁי חַיִּיתָנִי מִיֹּרְדֵי־[מְיֹרְדֵי] בֹּר:  
O LORD, You brought me up from Sheol, preserved me from going down into the Pit. [Ps. 30:4]

In this week’s Torah portion (*Mikeitz*, Gen 41:1-44:17), Joseph is finally brought up from the dungeon [*min-habor*, מִן־הַבּוֹר] (Gen 41:14), while Joseph is earlier thrown into a pit by his brothers (Gen 37: 23-24).

During the earlier incident, Judah says, “What profit is it if we slay our brother and conceal his blood?” (Gen 37:26) — language that is similar to Ps 30:10: “What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit?” And then Jacob, upon learning of his son’s apparent demise, says he will go down to Sheol in mourning (37:35), like the psalmist in verse 4.

In addition to these language echoes, Psalm 30 and the Joseph story share basic themes of extreme reversals from despair to joy, from strength to terror and back again. Many teachers have noticed the parallels, although no favorite *dvrei torah* on the subject come to mind. (Please share any that you find helpful.) Moreover, the context of Chanukah brings additional light-and-darkness focus to Psalm 30.

Does Psalm 30 sound different while we’re reading the Joseph story? During these festival days?

### Citation:

“The Spirit of Prayer” was published in the *Proceedings of the Rabbinical Assembly of America* [Conservative], Vol. XVII, 1953, and reprinted as a pamphlet. Eventually (1996), the lecture was included in *Moral Grandeur and Spiritual Audacity*.

All other citations can be found on the blog if not listed fully above.