

Psalm 145

Psalm 145 is an unfolding of its first word **אֲרַמְּךָ** which is typically translated as *I will exalt you* or *I will extol you* or *I will laud you*. The root of this word is **רום** and it means to raise, elevate, make high, or put high. To understand more fully the meaning of this first word, we will let the Torah speak by examining other occurrences where this word occurs.

God speaking through Isaiah says,

בָּנִים גְּדַלְתִּי וְרוֹמַמְתִּי וְהֵם פָּשְׁעוּ בִּי

*Children have I made great and elevated, but they have rebelled against Me.*¹

Speaking about God, King David says,

מֵאֵיבֵי וּמִקְמֵי תְרוֹמַמְנִי

*From my enemies above me, You have raised me.*²

מִפְּלִטֵי מֵאֵיבֵי אֶף מִן קְמֵי תְרוֹמַמְנִי

*You rescued me from my enemies, even those above me, you raised me.*³

From these verses, we understand that as a verb the root **רום** implies a motion by the subject of the verb, the motion being to put high that which was not high. The subject is making a transformation of that which is not high to that which is high.

High is not always a good thing. There is a negative sense of some words constructed from the root **רום**. The negative sense is to make so high that it is too lofty, aloof.

Eliphaz says that perhaps Job is thinking that God is too high above, too far away to know what is happening to him on earth.

Is God not in the heights of the heavens.

You look to the tops of the stars, which are lofty,

וְרָאָה רֹאשׁ כּוֹכָבִים כִּי רָמוּ

*and you say, What does God know?*⁴

¹Isaiah: 1:2

²II Samuel 22:49

³Psalms 18:49.

⁴Job 22:12-13

Rashi comments on this verse and explains it as:

You say that God is too lofty to bother with earthly affairs.

Isaiah in telling the Israelites that they have despised the word of God tells them that now

*God will delay in showing you grace, and therefore He will be aloof from showing you mercy.*⁵

וְלִבְּךָ יָרוּם לְרַחֲמֶיךָ

Phrases like **עֵינַיִם רְמוֹת**⁶ literally high eyes, mean haughty eyes. When my eyes are high eyes, higher than your eyes, I think myself higher (better) than you. I then do not treat you as an equal. When I do not treat you as an equal, I become oblivious to the holiness in you. It is good for me to understand that God is exalted. For this is surely true. It is not good for me to be exalted. Not only is this surely false, but should I think of myself as exalted, I would be led to act in ways which are not Torah correct.

The first phrase of Psalm 145 is

*I will raise You, my God, the King*⁷

אַרְמְמֶךָ אֱלֹהֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ

This is very strange. God is certainly on high, higher than anything we can every imagine and yet the line says *I will raise You*. This verse must be understand from the point of view of the speaker who when beginning the psalm realizes that God is in the depths. To bring God on high, visible to everyone, the speaker must bring God out of the depths. Bringing God out of the depths is the same process as bringing holiness into the world. The only difference between the two is that the first perspective is with respect to God and the second perspective is respect to the world.

Psalm 145 elaborates one way of bringing God out of the depths.

The phrase concludes with *the King*. *The King* obviously refers to God. Notice it says, *my God, the King* rather than saying God, my King. The King is the name we give to the ruler. All who live in the world are subject

⁵Isaiah 30:18.

⁶Psalm 18:28.

⁷Psalm 145:1.

to the rule of the One King. The Creator did not create a world where each could have a different King , a world where my King rules one way and your King rules another. All are subject to the same rule. The world works the same for each.

Then we might ask why does it not say instead, I raise You, God, the King? For after all, there is only one God just as there is only One King. The difference is that by saying *my God*, we recognize the act *I will raise You* to be an act which engages in a personal relationship, a one-one relationship with God. Following this by *the King*, we recognize that however personal this relationship is, there is yet some distance between us. The One who I love is *my God*. The One of whom I stand in awe is *the King*.

The Torah tells us that our soul is a part of God. Furthermore, our soul resides in our blood. To help bring God out of our depths, we will focus our attention in a journey through our soul. Breath in. Take a long slow breath inward. Expand out your stomach. Hold the breath a moment and breath out slowly. Breath in and breath out. Focus your attention on the air that you are breathing in. Breath in with it. Enter through your nose, descend down your bronchial tubes. Observe how the big tube successively divides into smaller and smaller bronchia tubes. Travel inward into the midst of your lungs. Arrive at the smallest of the bronchiole tubes, then at the alveoli, the microscopic sacs through which the oxygen and carbon dioxide exchange is made between the air and the blood. Focus your attention on this exchange. Breath in, raising the pressure inside the lungs so that the breath's oxygen goes into the hemoglobin of your blood. Breath out, creating a negative pressure in the aveoli so that the hemoglobin releases the carbon dioxide waste product. Take a ride on the oxygen and focus your attention to the world within the blood. Observe the complexity of the hemoglobin molecule. Slowly breath in. Breath out. Along with the oxygen enter into the hemoglobin molecule. Observe its atoms and the electron cloud around each of its atoms. Continue to focus inward. Go through the electron cloud and enter the nucleus of one of the atoms. Focus your attention and enter the passageways between the protons and neutrons of the nucleus of the atom. When you get deep inside, you are not inside one nucleus of one atom in your blood, you are in all atoms in your blood. You are not in one place you are where there is no place. You are not in one time. You are where there is no time.

Breathe in. Breathe out. You have come to the depths. You have come to the holiness of your soul. As the body is the garment of the soul. The

soul is the garment of God. To elevate God, means to bring God outward. Then you will recognize the King.

Effect a transformation in your own consciousness like turning a sock inside out. That which is holy within must be expressed, brought outside the depths, and this holiness must be made manifest in the world. That which is holy within is my God and my soul is His garment. To make this holiness which is in the depths manifest in the world, it must be elevated, put on high, so that everyone can see it.

When you effect the transformation in your own consciousness, you become more aware of this precious holiness, you are in awe. You are excited about the magnificence of the King's presence. What is it that you feel like doing? You feel like blessing. For blessing is one of the ways that puts us in a frame of reference where our deeds become connected with God's holiness. Breathe in. Breathe out.

*And I will bless your Name forever and ever.*⁸

וְאֶבְרַכְּהָ שְׁמֶךָ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:

What does blessing God's Name mean? With respect to God, whenever there is a reference to שֵׁם, name, it means God immanent, God who is in this world, the same world where our bodies have existence. This world where physicality has existence is the world of action. To be manifest (known) in this world, there must be action. Action is the name we give to a sequence of events where through time something changes by our words or deeds. So Psalm 145 continues. Breathe in. Breathe out.

*Every day I will bless You, and I will laud Your Name forever and ever.*⁹

בְּכָל יוֹם אֶבְרַכְּךָ וְאֶהַלְלֶךָ שְׁמֶךָ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:

The action sequence I will commit to is that every day I will recognize You, I will acknowledge You, I will love You, and I will bless You. As a consequence of this action, I will find myself lauding Your Name forever and ever.

Logically, this is confusing. God gives us a hundred and twenty years. How can it be that as a consequence I will find myself lauding Your Name

⁸Psalm 145:1.

⁹Psalm 145: 2.

forever and ever? Forever and ever is more than a hundred and twenty years. So in this verse we see there is a secret. Everyday in this world will I bless You. As a consequence I will find that I will be lauding Your Name in the world to come, forever and ever. This world is everyday. The world to come is forever and ever. Such magnificance. Such beauty.

Psalm 145 continues. Breathe in. Breathe out.

*God is great and exceedingly lauded. And His Greatness is beyond investigatability.*¹⁰

גְּדוֹלַת יְהוָה וּמְחַלְלֵי מַאֲד וְלִגְדָּלְתוּ אֵין חֶקֶר:

Indeed, in this world God is great. In this world God is exceedingly lauded. But also in the world to come, God is great. In the world to come God is exceedingly lauded.

Perhaps you might think that in the world to come you might understand the full greatness of God. But Psalm 145 tells us not. Psalm 145 tells us that so great is His greatness that no matter how much searching and investigating we may do, in this world or in the world to come, that God's greatness is yet beyond whatever it is that we come to understand it is. This is the meaning of infinity.

Psalm 145 continues. Breathe in. Breathe out.

*Each generation will praise Your deeds to the next and of Your mighty deeds they will tell.*¹¹

דוֹר לְדוֹר יִשְׁבַּח מַעֲשֵׂיךָ וּגְבוּרֹתֶיךָ יְגִידוּ:

How will God be exceedingly lauded? He will be lauded by each generation praising and telling God's deeds to their children.

Psalm 145 continues. Breathe in. Breathe out.

*The magnificent glory of Your splendour and Your wondrous deeds I shall discuss.*¹²

תִּדְרַר כְּבוֹד הַזֶּה וְדַבְּרִי נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ אֲשֵׁיחָה:

¹⁰Psalm 145:3.

¹¹Psalm 145:4.

¹²Psalm 145:5.

How will God be exceedingly lauded? He will be lauded by our everyday discussing of the magnificent glory of His splendour and by our discussion of His wondrous deeds. For getting a glimpse of God's rule and control over everything is to see God's glory. When we recall a glimpse we have seen, we automatically step back in profound wonder so that when we speak, we speak of his wondrous deeds.

Psalm 145 continues. Breathe in. Breathe out.

*And of Your awesome power they will speak, and Your greatness I shall relate.*¹³

וְעֹזוֹ נִזְרָאֲתֶיךָ יֹאמְרוּ וּגְדוּלָתֶיךָ אֲסַפְּרֶנָּה:

How will God be exceedingly lauded? The generation who we teach, will speak of God's awesome power because today I will tell them about God's greatness. More so, I will tell them how to recognize God's greatness through their own living so they themselves will have personal knowledge of God's greatness.

Psalm 145 continues. Breathe in. Breathe out.

*A recollection of Your abundant goodness they will utter, and of Your righteousness they will sing exultantly.*¹⁴

זָכַר רַב טוֹבְךָ יְבִיעוּ וְצִדְקָתֶךָ יִרְנְנוּ:

How will God be exceedingly lauded? The generation who we teach will remember all the abundant goodnesses that we have taught them. They will utter them. And they will recognize God's abundant kindnesses in their own lives. Even that which seems harsh or seems like Divine punishment they will recognize as Divine goodness.

The generation who we teach about your righteousness and about recognizing your righteousness, will exultantly sing about your righteousness. What will they sing?

Psalm 145 continues. Breathe in. Breathe out.

Gracious and compassionate is God, מְנוּן וְרַחוּם יְיָ הוּא
Slow to anger, אַרְךָ אַפַּיִם

¹³Psalm 145:6.

¹⁴Psalm 145:7.

And great in bestowing kindness.

וְגָדוֹל חֶסֶד:

God is good to all;

טוֹב יְהוָה לְכָל

*His compassion is on all His works.*¹⁵

וְרַחֲמָיו עַל כָּל מַעֲשָׂיו:

For though in truth our sins deserve immediate retribution, God delays and is slow to anger, giving us a chance to repent and return to Him. We are truly thankful.

How will God be exceedingly lauded? God will be lauded by the generations singing these verses and then elaborating the details how in their own lives that God has shown graciousness, how in their own lives that God has shown compassionateness, how in their own lives when they missed the mark, God was slow to anger and great in bestowing kindness. They will tell details about how God is good to all people and how His compassion is on all His works.

Psalm 145 continues. Breathe in. Breathe out.

*All Your works shall thank You, God. And your devout ones will bless You.*¹⁶

יְדוּדָה יְהוָה כָּל מַעֲשֵׂיךָ וְחַסְדֵיךָ יְבָרְכוּכָה:

This verse requires some thought. Certainly some people thank God. But some people do not. Look carefully. The word thank is in the future tense. The future tense in Hebrew represents something not yet completely done. Perhaps a better rendering would be, All Your works shall come to thank You, God. Those who are not now, will eventually come to thank God later.

Also, some of God's work like rocks, plants and animals do not speak. So how can they thank God? Here we must understand that by being exactly what they are and not deviating from what they are, they praise God by their very being. For they do exactly what God wants them to do.

Rabbi Hirsch teaches that this verse means that every one of God's creatures becomes a medium through which the acknowledgement and homage of God can be taught.

The second part of the verse is also in the future tense. The devout ones who bless God now, will continue to bless God in the future.

¹⁵Psalm 145:8-9.

¹⁶Psalm 145:10.

All of God's work will speak of the glory of God's kingdom. Either by words they will speak or by their very being they will speak. How do they speak by their very being? We read in psalm 19:

The heavens declare the glory of God.¹⁷ There is no speech and there are no words; their sound is unheard.¹⁸

So the heavens declare the Glory of God, but without words. Their declaration is by their astoundingly precise orbits. This declaration is vivid and eloquent.

Psalm 145 continues. Breathe in. Breathe out.

Of the glory of Your Kingdom they will speak, and of Your Power they will tell.¹⁹

כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתְךָ יֹאמְרוּ וְגִבּוֹרֹתֶיךָ יְדַבְּרוּ:

Glory of Your Kingdom means the outward seeable majesty of all that God has created and is still creating. And when we realize that the creating is still going on, it is natural to realize that this continuing creating takes place by a transcendental power of which we have no possibility of understanding. But although we do not understand it, we can tell of it.

God, today the way that I will do my part is going to help make a world where all your works shall thank You. There will indeed be devout ones and they will bless You, for the devout ones are the ones who seek You out and marvel at the complexity, intricacy, harmony, and balance of all that You created. And because they seek You out, they have a glimpse of Your glory and the glory of your Kingdom. So they will speak of it. They will realize the infinite emmensity of your strength and power and they will tell of it.

Psalm 145 continues. Breathe in. Breathe out.

To inform the children of mankind of His strength and the glorious magnificence of His kingdom.²⁰

לְהוֹדִיעַ לְבְנֵי הָאָדָם גִּבּוֹרֹתַי וְכְבוֹד תְּדַר מַלְכוּתְךָ:

¹⁷Psalm 19:1.

¹⁸Psalm 19:4.

¹⁹Psalm 145:11.

²⁰Psalm 145:12.

When Your devout ones bless You and speak of the Glory of Your Kingdom, they will not just speak of it among themselves. They will do so publicly. Publicly, they will speak of Your strength. Publicly, they will speak of the glory of the majesty of Your Kingdom. And this will lead those who hear their declarations to know awe before You.

Psalm 145 continues. Breathe in. Breathe out.

*Your kingdom is a kingdom spanning all eternities and Your dominion is in every generation after generation.*²¹

מְלִכּוּתְךָ מְלִכּוּת כָּל עֲלָמִים וּמִשְׁלֹתֶיךָ בְּכָל דּוֹר וָדוֹר:

The glory and strength and magnificence spoken about is not about some one event a long time ago. It is about the glory and strength and magnificence in the past, in the present, and in the future. Glory, strength, and magnificence throughout all time in this world and throughout all eternity in the world to come.

Psalm 145 continues. Breathe in. Breathe out.

*God supports all the fallen ones, and straightens all the hunched ones.*²²

סוּמְךָ יְיָ יִהְיֶה כָּל הַנִּפְּלִים וְיִזְקַךְ לְכָל הַכְּפוּפִים:

So if God is so great that His glory, strength and magnificence are throughout all time and throughout all eternity, then we might think that God is so great and so removed that He has no time for the fallen ones. But it is just the opposite. It is precisely the ones who are not great, who have little strength, and who have no magnificence that God is focussed on. They who have fallen and are poor and who need additional help, they are to whom God is attentive. It is on behalf of the weak that God wields His strength. It is on behalf of the powerless that God exercises His might.

Psalm 145 continues. Breathe in. Breathe out.

*The eyes of all look to You with hope, and You give them their food in its proper time.*²³

עֵינֵי כָל אֱלֹהִים יִשְׁבְּרוּ וְאַתָּה נוֹתֵן לָהֶם אֶת אֲכָלָם בְּעֵתוֹ:

²¹Psalm 145:13.

²²Psalm 145:14.

²³Psalm 145:15.

Those who look to you from their poor and fallen place, look to You with hope. And You respond by giving them nourishment in an appropriate time. And although they may have no understanding, You provide for them according to their nature.

Psalm 145 continues. Breathe in. Breathe out.

*You open Your hand and satisfy every living thing with favor.*²⁴

פֹּתַח אֶת יָדְךָ וּמְשַׁבֵּיעַ לְכֹל חַי רִצּוֹן:

In any situation, there can be a difference between what will satisfy our Godly soul and what we think will satisfy our body. God always satisfies the living thing within us, our Godly soul. Even a situation that appears bad and deficient from its outside is in its essence and in its deficiency full of what can satisfy our Godly soul. To be on a spiritual level that we always have this awareness is hard. The best we can do is discover ourselves in it and try to maintain ourselves in this level of consciousness. And when we realize we are out of this level of consciousness work hard at trying to return to this level. Returning to this level is not easy. It means we have to give something up. Usually what we have to give up is what our body and heart is most tightly attached to. Such a level of attachment actually means that we have placed it ahead of God. So by giving up our attachment we can make a place for God consciousness and with God consciousness we become aware how God is indeed satisfying our highest level of spiritual desires in each moment.

Psalm 145 continues. Breathe in, breathe out.

*The Lord is righteous in all His ways, and His works are full of His lovingkindness.*²⁵

צְדִיק יְיָ הוֹיָה בְּכָל דְרָכָיו וְחַסִּיד בְּכָל מַעֲשָׂיו:

The previous verse tells us that God satisfies *every living thing with favor*. By outward appearance this is surely not so. So we might be tempted to believe that only sometimes is every living thing satisfied with favor. In that case this verse comes and tells us that indeed, even when it appears that every living thing is not satisfied with favor, nevertheless even in that

²⁴Psalm 145: 16.

²⁵Psalm 145: 17.

situation, God is righteous, God's judgement is righteous, and what happens is indeed full of God's lovingkindness. We may not understand it. But then we know that we cannot understand all of God's ways. They are too deep for us.

Psalm 145 continues. Breathe in. Breathe out.

*The Lord is near to all those who call upon Him, to all who call upon Him in truth.*²⁶

קְרוֹב יְהוָה לְכָל קֹרְאָיו לְכָל אֲשֶׁר יִקְרְאוּ בְּאֵמֶת:

On the one hand, that which is great is far away from that which is not significant. And we are not significant in comparison with God. Yet God's greatness is of a different order than greatness in the human world. God's greatness is so great that God is always close to those who call upon Him. God is always as near to us as we would have him be.

We cannot be in a state in which we want God's closeness one moment when we feel we need Him and not want God's closeness in another moment when we seem to be happy with the way things are. We have to want God to be close all the time, regardless of our momentary state of happiness. We have to want God to enter our lives and guide our actions all the time. We have to truly want God to be close. And this is said by the words *to all those who call upon Him in truth*. Truth means that we turn to God not only for the satisfaction of our will, but as well for the satisfaction of His will.

Psalm 145 continues. Breathe in. Breathe out.

*He will fulfill the desire of those who awe Him. He will hear their cry and save them.*²⁷

רָצוֹן יִרְאִיו יַעֲשֶׂה וְאֵת שׁוֹעֲתָם יִשְׁמַע וְיִוֹשִׁיעֵם:

We serve God in awe and with love. God will certainly hear those who serve Him mainly in awe. He will hear their cry of troubles and save them. We read:

*The poor man called, and the Lord heard, and delivered him from all his tribulations. The angel of the Lord camps around those who fear Him and rescues them.*²⁸

²⁶Psalm 145: 18.

²⁷Psalm 145: 19.

²⁸Psalm 34: 7.

Psalm 145 continues. Breathe in. Breathe out.

*The Lord preserves all those who love Him; but all the wicked He will destroy.*²⁹

שׁוֹמֵר יְהוָה אֶת כָּל אֲהַבָיו וְאֶת כָּל הָרָשָׁעִים יִשְׁמֵד:

In comparison to verse 19, as stated in this verse for those who serve God mainly in love, God will preserve and guard them from even having troubles from which they have to be saved.

Those who serve God mainly in love, will be at a higher level of God consciousness. Even though from the outside, it appears as if they have troubles like everyone else, because their God consciousness is deeper, they themselves will not judge that they have deep troubles. For they use the troubles themselves as a means of bringing Godliness into the world and so the troubles are in their own way a blessing.

In contrast to those who serve God with love and bring God close to them, there are those who do not serve at all. They keep as far away from God as possible. These are the wicked. They will be destroyed. We read:

*A brutish man cannot know, a fool cannot comprehend this: when the wicked thrive like grass, and all evildoers flourish – it is in order that they may be destroyed forever.*³⁰

Psalm 145 continues. Breathe in Breathe out.

*For my mouth will speak the praise of the Lord; and all flesh will bless His holy name forever and ever.*³¹

תְּהַלֵּל יְהוָה יְהוָה יִדְבָר פִּי וַיְבָרֵךְ כָּל בֶּשָׂר שֵׁם קְדֹשׁוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:

King David says that this psalm is not enough praise. That after singing this psalm, there is still more praise to be said and that he commits himself to praising God in the future. And when we sing the psalm, we too commit ourselves to a continuing praise of God. In the future at the time of Mashiach, all people will bless God's holy name, in this world and in the world to come, forever and ever.

²⁹Psalm 145: 20.

³⁰Psalm 92: 6.

³¹Psalm 145: 21.