



Finding the Path of Life

Todi'eini Orach Chayim . . .

תוֹדִיעֵנִי אֶרֶחַ חַיִּים שְׂבַע שְׂמֵחוֹת אֶת־פְּנֶיךָ נְעֻמּוֹת בְּיַמִּינְךָ נֹצֵחַ

*Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy;
at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore. (Psalm 16:11)*

What is more important than finding the “path of life?”

Consciously or not, every day billions of people all over the world are seeking that which will satisfy their heart’s deepest longings for unending life, unbounded joy, and abiding pleasure. As C.S. Lewis pointed out, this ultimate longing is a “message” from another world.

Many people are seduced from heeding this message. Some believe that life consists of a series of *sensual* pleasures – eating, drinking, having sexual relations, etc., while others attempt to “lose themselves” in various kinds of entertainment. However, such fleeting moments of pleasure invariably cause an inward fragmentation of the soul, thereby weakening the will and inducing a state of forgetfulness regarding the deepest needs of life.



Others are deluded into attempting to find life by means of creating some sort of “legacy” for themselves. To earn respect, to experience fame, or to be heroically remembered is considered the path of life. However, as Shakespeare poignantly reminds us, *human* history is at best a “tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.”

Still others hope to find life through various placating religious rituals and practices. In Orthodox Judaism, for example, the *Orach Chayim* is a handbook that meticulously provides a set of rules and regulations (*halakhah*) regarding sleeping, waking, wearing clothes, reciting blessings, observing Sabbath and the holidays, and so on. The path of life, according to the religionist, is the performance of various ritual acts in order to win God’s approval and blessing.



Now let’s look at our verse. Notice that the Hebrew verb *todieini* is the Hiphil form of *yada’* (to know) and could better be translated “you will *cause* me to know,” indicating that God is active in the knowing process. Here King David, despite the anxiety he felt regarding death, voiced his trust that God’s love would personally intervene to deliver him from the prospect of physical corruption in the grave (v10).

From the New Testament, we know that this verse ultimately refers not to David (who eventually died), but to the Messiah Jesus, the greater Son of David (Mark 12:35-6, Psalm 110:1). Peter cited this verse on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:25-28), as did Paul at Antioch (Acts 13:35-37). Despite the grisly prospect of the crucifixion, Jesus trusted that God, by raising him from the dead, would not allow him to suffer corruption (Matt. 16:21).

Interestingly, the word *netzach* (“forever”) denotes both “victory” and “eternity,” and reveals that Jesus’ resurrection provides the everlasting victory over the sting of death itself. Jesus is forever enthroned at the very side of the Majesty on High as the Key Holder to life and death (Rev. 1:18).

The ultimate longing we have in our hearts is really a message from God – to come to Him to have our deepest needs met. The true *orach chayim* is only found in a personal, trusting relationship with the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ (John 14:6). When we receive the message of His gracious love, our heart’s deepest longings will be truly satisfied. We will experience fullness of joy in God’s loving presence, and we will enjoy abiding pleasures in our communion with God.

Transliteration:

תוֹדִיעַ	נִי	אֶרְחַ	חַיִּים	שֶׁבַע	שְׂמֵחֹת
(4)	(3)	(2)	(2)	(2)	(3)
to-di-	'ei-ni	o-rach	cha-yim	so-va'	se-ma-choth
Thou wilt show me		the path of	life	fullness of joys (are)	

אֶת־	פָּנֶיךָ	נְעִמֹת	בִּימִינְךָ	נֶצַח
(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)	(2)
et-pa-	ne-kha	ne-'i-mot	bi-min-kha	ne-tzach
in thy presence		pleasures (are)	at your right hand	evermore

*todi'eini orach chayim, sova semichot
et-panykha, ne'imot biminkha netzach.*