



WOMEN'S LEAGUE FOR CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM

The Eikhah Project 5777

Psalm 28 *(see illuminations on Appendix 3)*

This illuminated Psalm comes from artist Debra Band's *I Will Wake the Dawn: Illuminated Psalms*.

1
Of David
O Lord, I call to You;
my rock, do not disregard me,
for if You hold aloof from me,
I shall be like those gone down into the pit.

2
Listen to my plea for mercy
when I cry out to You,
when I lift my hands toward Your inner
sanctuary.

3
Do not count me with the wicked and evil-
doers
who profess good will toward their fellows
while malice is in their heart.

4
Pay them according to their deeds, their
malicious acts;
according to their handiwork pay them, give
them their deserts.

5
For they do not consider the Lord's deeds,
the work of His hands.,
May He tear them down, never to rebuild
them!

6
Blessed is the Lord, for He listens to my plea
for mercy.

7
The Lord is my strength and my shield; my
heart trusts in Him.
I was helped, and my heart exulted,
so I will glorify Him with my song.

8
The Lord is their strength;
He is a stronghold for the
deliverance of His anointed.

9
Deliver and bless Your very own people;
tend them and sustain them forever.

Instruction for illuminated Psalm 28

This is a visual exercise, and participants need to study the image closely. This can be done either by photocopying it (copies can be shared) or by projecting it on a screen from the computer.

Ask the participants to read Psalm 28, once to themselves and once aloud. Then ask the following question:

1. What images do you see reflected in Band's illumination of this psalm? [see answers below]
2. How do you understand the visual imagery of hands/arms in Band's illumination, and imagery of hands and handiwork in the written psalm?
3. How do you account for the change in tone, from despair to optimism, as reflected in this psalm?

This interpretation of the illumination is the artist's, but there could be other interpretations, as well. With art, imagery is often subjective.

The woman's outstretched arms bear witness to the threats and terrors that beset humankind, grim visions of human disaster pervaded by blood and suffering;

Her flesh is imprinted with images:

1. September 11, 2001 World Trade Center bombing
2. Yassir Arafat's black and white khaffiyeh next to a suicide bomb belt
3. Nazi "Juden" badge
4. Military rifle emerging from smoke
5. Wreck of homes flooded in the 2004 Tsunami, amid which bobs a child's beach ball
6. Images of cancerous tumors, all surrounded and suffused with blistered and bloodied flesh.

The figure of the woman herself, dwarfed by the enormity of the suffering that threatens her world, sits nearly hidden by the smoke and blood at the bottom of the image.

The pose of the arms, reaching upward and echoing a typical pose of biblical prayer, with palms inward and fingers stretched tense and wide expresses her urge in conversation with God, begging for deliverance.