

¹كَلَامَ تَحْمِيَا بْنِ حَكَلِيَا، حَدَثَ فِي شَهْرِ كَيْسَلُو فِي السَّنَةِ الْعِشْرِينَ بَيْتَمَا كُنْتُ فِي شُوشَنَ الْقَصْرِ² أَنَّهُ جَاءَ خَتَايِي، وَاحِدٌ مِنْ إِخْوَتِي، هُوَ وَرَجَالٌ مِنْ يَهُودَا، فَسَأَلْتُهُمْ عَنِ الْيَهُودِ الَّذِينَ تَجَوَّأُوا، الَّذِينَ بَقُوا مِنَ السَّبْيِ، وَعَنْ أُورَشَلِيمَ.³ فَقَالُوا لِي، إِنَّ الْبَاقِينَ الَّذِينَ بَقُوا مِنَ السَّبْيِ هُنَاكَ فِي الْبِلَادِ هُمْ فِي شَرٍّ عَظِيمٍ وَعَارٍ. وَشَوَّرَ أُورَشَلِيمَ مُنْهَدِمٌ وَأَبْوَابُهَا مَحْرُوقَةٌ بِالنَّارِ.⁴ فَلَمَّا سَمِعْتُ هَذَا الْكَلَامَ جَلَسْتُ وَبَكَيتُ وَنَحْتُ أَبَامًا، وَصُمْتُ وَصَلَّيْتُ أَمَامَ إِلَهِ السَّمَاءِ⁵ وَقُلْتُ، أَيُّهَا الرَّبُّ إِلَهَ السَّمَاءِ، الْإِلَهَ الْعَظِيمَ الْمُخَوِّفَ، الْحَافِظَ الْعَهْدِ وَالرَّحْمَةَ لِحُبَّيْبِهِ وَخَافِظِي وَصَاتِي⁶ لَتَكُنْ أذُنُكَ مُصْغِيَةً وَعَيْنُكَ مَفْتُوحَتَيْنِ لِتَسْمَعَ صَلَاةَ عَبْدِكَ الَّذِي يُصَلِّي إِلَيْكَ الْآنَ تَهَارًا وَلَيْلًا لِأَجْلِ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَبِيدِكَ، وَتَعْتَرِفُ بِخَطَايَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ الَّتِي أَخْطَأْنَا بِهَا إِلَيْكَ. فَإِنِّي أَنَا وَبَيْتُ أَبِي قَدْ أَخْطَأْنَا.⁷ لَقَدْ أَفْسَدْنَا أَمَامَكَ، وَلَمْ تَحْقِطِ الْوَصَايَا وَالْفَرَائِضَ وَالْأَحْكَامَ الَّتِي أَمَرْتَ بِهَا مُوسَى عَبْدَكَ.⁸ أَذْكَرُ الْكَلَامَ الَّذِي أَمَرْتَ بِهِ مُوسَى عَبْدَكَ قَائِلًا، إِنَّ خُتْنَكُمْ فَإِنِّي أَقَرُّكُمْ فِي السُّعُوبِ،⁹ وَإِنْ رَجَعْتُمْ إِلَيَّ وَحَفِظْتُمْ وَصَايَايَ وَعَمِلْتُمُوهَا إِنْ كَانَ الْمُنْفِيُّونَ مِنْكُمْ فِي أَقْصَاءِ السَّمَاوَاتِ، فَمِنْ هُنَاكَ أَجْمَعُهُمْ وَأَتِي بِهِمْ إِلَى الْمَكَانِ الَّذِي اخْتَرْتُ لِإِسْكَانِ اسْمِي فِيهِ.¹⁰ قَهْمُ عَبْدِكَ وَسَعْبُكَ الَّذِي اقْتَدَيْتَ بِقُوَّتِكَ الْعَظِيمَةِ وَبِدَكَ الشَّدِيدَةِ.¹¹ يَا سَيِّدِي، لَتَكُنْ أذُنُكَ مُصْغِيَةً إِلَى صَلَاةِ عَبْدِكَ وَصَلَاةِ عَبِيدِكَ الَّذِينَ يُرِيدُونَ مَخَافَةَ اسْمِكَ. وَأَعْطِ النَّجَاحَ الْيَوْمَ لِعَبْدِكَ وَامْنَحْهُ رَحْمَةً أَمَامَ هَذَا الرَّجُلِ. لِأَنِّي كُنْتُ سَاقِيًا لِلْمَلِكِ.

¹The words of Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah. And it came to pass in the month Chisleu, in the twentieth year, as I was in Shushan the palace,² That Hanani, one of my brethren, came, he and certain men of Judah; and I asked them concerning the Jews that had escaped, which were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem.³ And they said unto me, The remnant that are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Jerusalem also is broken down, and the gates thereof are burned with fire.⁴ And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven,⁵ And said, I beseech thee, O LORD God of heaven, the great and terrible God, that keepeth covenant and mercy for them that love him and observe his commandments:⁶ Let thine ear now be attentive, and thine eyes open, that thou mayest hear the prayer of thy servant, which I pray before thee now, day and night, for the children of Israel thy servants, and confess the sins of the children of Israel, which we have sinned against thee: both I and my father's house have sinned.⁷ We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgments, which thou commandedst thy servant Moses.⁸ Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandedst thy servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations:⁹ But if ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them; though

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there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there.¹⁰ Now these are thy servants and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power, and by thy strong hand.¹¹ O Lord, I beseech thee, let now thine ear be attentive to the prayer of thy servant, and to the prayer of thy servants, who desire to fear thy name: and prosper, I pray thee, thy servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man. For I was the king's cupbearer.