



LeoBaeckTemple

Bubble Up 2021-2022/5782

## ***Preparing to enter...Heart and Soul:***

A playful exploration pairing the insight of the podcast  
**Dolly Parton's America** with selections from *Songs Ascending:  
The Book of Psalms in a New Translation* by Rabbi Richard N. Levy, z"l

In 2019, two dynamic journalists, Jad Abumrad and Shima Oliaee recorded *Dolly Parton's America*. This non-fiction podcast series is infused with interviews with Dolly Parton and the poetry of her wisdom and enduring legacy.

**"In this intensely divided moment [in America], one of the few things everyone still seems to agree on is Dolly Parton—but why? That simple question leads to a deeply personal, historical, and musical rethinking of one of America's great icons."** Through the lens of Dolly Parton's life and songs, the podcast explores an understanding of America today, specifically through what binds us and tears us apart.

About the Psalms, writer, editor, and Rabbi Peretz Rodman [writes](#): "Some of the most widely recognized phrases and sentences from the Bible come to us from the Book of Psalms, referred to in Hebrew as *Tehillim* (תהילים). And it's no wonder. While the Torah presents itself as the divine word imparted to the people Israel, the 150 poems in the Book of Psalms represent a range of human voices: the sounds of lament and of thanksgiving to God, individuals extolling God's beneficence or imploring God to bring rescue and redemption. In short, **the poets in this ancient anthology give voice to sentiments we all share and seek to express at one time or another in our lives.** The Book of Psalms is among the most popular and widely read of all the books of the Hebrew Bible. Its continual subjects may be God's workings and God's relationships with humankind, but its passions are our own."

This program will explore themes within *Dolly Parton's America* podcast paired with short selections and commentary from *Songs Ascending: The Book of Psalms in a New Translation* by Rabbi Richard N. Levy, z"l. From this translation, "Levy brings in Jewish history and tradition, as well as the choices facing us in the 21st century [...]."

The Book of Psalms are understood to be songs, many of which explore themes of redemption, suffering, gratitude, home, and strife (personal and political) -- just like the music of Dolly Parton. **How can we make sense of these elements of the human experience, both through the lyrical Psalms liturgy as well as the music of an iconic American country singer?**