

## Tehillim / Psalms 76 | ספר תהילים עו

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### Great is His Name to Keep Us!

In this week's study from *Tehillim / Psalms 76:1-12*, the psalm opens: **א לַמְנַצֵּחַ בְּנִגְיֹנֹת מְזֻמּוֹר לְאַסָּף שִׁיר:** *For the choir director; on stringed instruments. A Psalm of Asaph, a Song. (NASB)* The introduction sounds very reminiscent of David's Psalms that have the similar wording. Asaph begins saying, **ב נוֹדַע בִּיהוּדָה**, *Asaph begins saying, 76:1 God is known in Judah; His name is great in Israel. 76:2 His tabernacle is in Salem; His dwelling place also is in Zion. (NASB)* Why does Asaph say the tabernacle is in Salem? The Lord's power and victory is described saying, **ד שָׁמָּה שָׁבַר רִשְׁפֵי-קִשְׁתֹּת מִגֵּן**, *76:3 There He broke the flaming arrows, The shield and the sword and the weapons of war. Selah. 76:4 You are resplendent, More majestic than the mountains of prey. 76:5 The stouthearted were plundered, They sank into sleep; And none of the warriors could use his hands. (NASB)* The power of God is described as being greater than the mountains, the mountains of prey. What are the mountains of prey? Why does the enemy sleep after being plundered? Asaph says, **ז מִגְעַרְתֶּךָ אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב נִרְדָּם וְרֹכֵב וְסוּסִים:** *76:6 At Your rebuke, O God of Jacob, Both rider and horse were cast into a dead sleep. (NASB)* Both the horse and rider are cast into a deep sleep, does the Hebrew text appear to be different from what the English translation states? The psalmist says, **ז מִגְעַרְתֶּךָ אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב נִרְדָּם וְרֹכֵב וְסוּסִים:** *76:7 You, even You, are to be feared; And who may stand in Your presence when once You are angry? 76:8 You caused judgment to be heard from heaven; The earth feared and was still (NASB)* When God gave Israel His Torah, it is said that the earth trembled. When the Lord brings His judgment, it is said the earth stands still. The psalm says, **ט מִשְׁמַיִם הַשְׁמַעְתָּ דִּין אֶרֶץ יִרְאַה**, *76:9 When God arose to judgment, To save all the humble of the earth. Selah. 76:10 For the wrath of man shall praise You; With a remnant of wrath You will gird Yourself. (NASB)* How does the wrath of man praise the Lord? Could this be a reference to the Lord having a hand in causing the nations to move against Israel due to her sins? The Psalm concludes saying, **יא כִּי-תִחַמַּת אֲדָם תוֹדֶךָ שְׂאֵרֵית חֶמַת תַּחֲגֹר:** *76:11 Make vows to the Lord your God and fulfill them; Let all who are around Him bring gifts to Him who is to be feared. 76:12 He will cut off the spirit of princes; He is feared by the kings of the earth. (NASB)* The Lord is to be feared because He is just and true!

עברית	Hebrew	ארמי	Aramaic	ελληνικός	Greek
	ספר תהלים פרק עו		ספר טוביה פרק עו	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 76	
	א לַמְנַצֵּחַ בְּנִגְיֹנֹת מְזֻמּוֹר לְאַסָּף שִׁיר: ב נוֹדַע בִּיהוּדָה אֱלֹהִים בִּישׁ-רָאֵל גְּדוֹל שְׁמוֹ: ג וַיְהִי בְשָׁלֹם סִפּוֹ וּמְעוֹנָתוֹ בְּצִיּוֹן: ד שָׁמָּה שָׁבַר רִשְׁפֵי-קִשְׁתֹּת מִגֵּן וַתִּרְבַּב וּמִלְחָמָה סָלָה: ה נָאוֹר אַתָּה אֲדִיר מִהַרְרֵי-טָרְף:		א לשבחה בתושבחתא ותשבחה על ידא דאספ שירא: ב אתידע איתודע בדבית יהודה אלהא בדבית ישראל רב שמיה: ג והוה בירושלם בית מקדשיה ומדור בית שכינת קודשיה בציון: ד כד עבדו בית ישראל רעותיה אשרי שכיי נתיה ביניהון תמן תבר גיררין וקשתין דעמיא דעממיא מגיהי קרבא תריסא וסידרי קרבא בטל לעלמין: ה נהיר דחיל את אנת אלהא משבח מן בית מקדשך יזועון מן קדמך מלכיא דיתבין בכרכי טוריא אתר בית כנישות ביזתהון:	ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 76 76:1 εις τὸ τέλος ἐν ὕμνοις ψαλμὸς τῷ Ἀσαφ ὠδὴ πρὸς τὸν Ἀσσύριον γνωστὸς ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ ὁ θεὸς ἐν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ μέγα τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ 76:2 καὶ ἐγενήθη ἐν εἰρήνῃ ὁ τόπος αὐτοῦ καὶ τὸ κατοικητήριον αὐτοῦ ἐν Σιών 76:3 ἐκεῖ συνέτριψεν τὰ κράτη τῶν τόξων ὄπλον καὶ ῥομφαίαν καὶ πόλεμον διάψαλμα	

<p>ו אֲשַׁתּוֹלְלוּ   אֲבִירֵי לֵב נָמוּ שְׁנָתָם וְלֹא-מָצְאוּ כָל-אֲנָשֵׁי-חַיִל יְדִיקָהֶם: ז מִגַּעַרְתָּהּ אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב נִרְדָּם וְרָכַב וְסוּסֵיָהּ אָתָּה   נִוְרָא אָתָּה וּמִי-יַעֲמֵד לְפָנֶיךָ מֵאֵז אֲפָה: ט מְשֻׁמִּים הַשְׁמַעְתָּ דִּין אֶרֶץ יִרְאָה וְשָׁקָטָה: י בָּקוּם- לְמִשְׁפָּט אֱלֹהִים לְהוֹשִׁיעַ כָּל-עַנְיֵי- אֶרֶץ סְלָה: יא כִּי-חָמַת אָדָם תִּוְדָךְ שְׁאֵרִית חָמַת תִּחְגַּר: יב נִדְרוּ וְשָׁלְמוּ לִיהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם כָּל-סִבְיָיו יִבִּילוּ שִׁי לְמוֹרָא: יג יִבְצַר רוּחַ נְגִידִים נִוְרָא לְמַלְכֵי-אֶרֶץ:</p>	<p>ו אשלו מעליהון זני קרבא גיברי ליבא איתנמנו בשינתהון ולא ספיקו כל גברי גיברי חילא למיחד זינהון בדיהון: ז ממזופיתך אלהא דיעקב דמכון ארתכין ופרשין איתעקרו: ח את אנת דחיל את אנת הוא אלהא ומן יקום קדמך מעידן דיתקוף רוגדך: ט מן שמיא אשמעתא דין ארעא דעממי דחילת ארעא דישראל שדוכת: י אמרין צדיקיא יקום לדינא עם רשיעיא אלהא למפרק מן ידהון כל עינוותני ארעא לעלמין: יא כד אנת רגז על עמך אנת מרחים עליהון והינן יודון לשמך ושאר דריתחיא דאישתיירו לך מן רוגז די רגזתא תזרין לחבלא עמיא עממא: {ת'א} ארום כד יתקוף רוגדך על עמך יתובון ויודון לשמך ואנת תאיב מן רוגז ברם על שאר עמא עממא מני רוגז תזרין: יב נדרו נדרין ושלימו קדם יהוה אלהכון כל דיתבין חזר חזר למקדשיה יתון קורבניא לבית מוקדש דחיל: יג יזעיר גסות רוחהון דברבניא דחילא על כל מלכי ארעא:</p>	<p>76:4 φωτίζεις σὺ θαυμαστῶς ἀπὸ ὀρέων αἰωνίων 76:5 ἐταράχθησαν πάντες οἱ ἀσύνετοι τῇ καρδίᾳ ὑπνώσαν ὑπνον αὐτῶν καὶ οὐχ εὔρον οὐδὲν πάντες οἱ ἄνδρες τοῦ πλοῦτου ταῖς χερσὶν αὐτῶν 76:6 ἀπὸ ἐπιτιμῆσεώς σου ὁ θεὸς Ἰακωβ ἐνύσταξαν οἱ ἐπιβεβηκότες τοὺς ἵππους 76:7 σὺ φοβερὸς εἶ καὶ τίς ἀντιστήσεται σοι ἀπὸ τότε ἡ ὀργὴ σου 76:8 ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἠκούτισας κρίσιν γῆ ἐφοβήθη καὶ ἠσύχασεν 76:9 ἐν τῷ ἀναστῆναι εἰς κρίσιν τὸν θεὸν τοῦ σῶσαι πάντας τοὺς πρᾶεῖς τῆς γῆς διάναγμα 76:10 ὅτι ἐνθύμιον ἀνθρώπου ἐξομολογήσεται σοι καὶ ἐγκατάλειμμα ἐνθυμίου ἐορτάσει σοι 76:11 εὐξασθε καὶ ἀπόδοτε κυρίῳ τῷ θεῷ ὑμῶν πάντες οἱ κύκλω αὐτοῦ οἴσουσιν δῶρα 76:12 τῷ φοβερῷ καὶ ἀφαιρουμένῳ πνεύματα ἀρχόντων φοβερῷ παρὰ τοῖς βασιλεῦσι τῆς γῆς</p>
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**Tehillim / Psalms 76**  
For the choir director; on stringed instruments. A Psalm of Asaph, a Song. 76:1 God is known in Judah; His name is great in Israel. 76:2 His tabernacle is in Salem; His dwelling place also is in Zion. 76:3 There He broke the flaming arrows, The shield and the sword and the weapons of war. Selah. 76:4 You are resplendent, More majestic than the mountains of prey. 76:5 The stouthearted were plundered, They sank into sleep; And none of the warriors could use his hands. 76:6 At Your rebuke, O God of Jacob, Both rider and horse were cast into a dead sleep. 76:7 You, even You, are to be feared; And who may stand in Your presence when once You are angry? 76:8 You caused judgment to be heard from heaven; The earth feared and was still (NASB)

**Toviyah / Psalms 76**  
76:1 For praise, as a psalm; a psalm composed by Asaph, a song. 76:2 God has become known among those of the house of Judah; his name is great among those of the house of Israel. 76:3 And his sanctuary has come to be in Jerusalem, and the dwelling of the house of his holy presence is in Zion. 76:4 When the house of Israel did his will, he made his presence abide among them; there he broke the arrows and bows of the Gentiles who were making war; he made forever the shields and battle-lines of no account. 76:5 Bright [and] awful are you, O God, acclaimed from your sanctuary; the kings who dwell in the mountain fortresses, the place where their spoil is gathered, will tremble in your presence. 76:6 The mighty in heart have stripped from them the weapons of war; they have slumbered in their sleep; and all the men of might have not been able to grasp their weapons in their hands. 76:7 At your rebuke, O God of Jacob, the chariots have fallen asleep, and the cavalry have been disabled. 76:8 You are awesome, you are God; and who will stand before you from the time your anger becomes strong? (EMC)

**Psalmoi / Psalms 76**  
For the end, among the Hymns, a Psalm for Asaph; a Song for the Assyrian. 76:1 God is known in Judea: his name is great in Israel. 76:2 And his place has been in peace, and his dwelling-place in Zion. 76:3 There he broke the power of the bows, the shield, and the sword, and the battle. Pause. 76:4 Thou dost wonderfully shine forth from the everlasting mountains. 76:5 All the simple ones in heart were troubled; all the men of wealth have slept their sleep, and have found nothing in their hands. 76:6 At thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, the riders on horses slumbered. 76:7 Thou art terrible; and who shall withstand thee, because of thine anger? 76:8 Thou didst cause judgment to be heard from heaven; the earth feared, and was still, 76:9 when God arose to judgment, to save all the meek in heart. Pause. (LXX)

Tehillim / Psalms 76	Toviyah / Psalms 76	Psalmoi / Psalms 76
<p>76:9 When God arose to judgment, To save all the humble of the earth. Selah. 76:10 For the wrath of man shall praise You; With a remnant of wrath You will gird Yourself. 76:11 Make vows to the Lord your God and fulfill them; Let all who are around Him bring gifts to Him who is to be feared. 76:12 He will cut off the spirit of princes; He is feared by the kings of the earth. (NASB)</p>	<p>76:9 From heaven you proclaimed judgment on the land of the Gentiles; the land of Israel was afraid [and] became silent. 76:10 The righteous say, “Let God arise for judgment with the wicked, to redeem from their hands all the meek of the earth forever.” 76:11 When you are angry at your people, you show mercy to them, and they will give thanks to your name; but the remainder of fury that is left to you, out of the wrath that you showed, you will gird on to destroy the Gentiles. Another Targum: For when your anger grows strong against your people, they will repent and give thanks to your name, and you turn from anger; but against the remnant of the Gentiles you will gird on the instruments of anger. 76:12 Make vows and fulfill [them] in the presence of the Lord your God, all you who dwell around his sanctuary; let them bring offerings to his awesome temple. 76:13 He will diminish the arrogant spirits of the leaders; [he is] dreadful to all the kings of the earth. (EMC)</p>	<p>76:10 For the inward thought of man shall give thanks to thee: and the memorial of his inward thought shall keep a feast to thee. 76:11 Vow, and pay your vows to the Lord our God; all that are round about him shall bring gifts, even to him that is terrible, 76:12 and that takes away the spirits of princes; to him that is terrible among the kings of the earth. (LXX)</p>

In this week’s study from *Tehillim / Psalms 76:1-12*, the psalm opens saying, א לְמַנְצֵחַ בְּנִגְיֹת מְזֻמֹּר *For the choir director; on stringed instruments. A Psalm of Asaph, a Song. (NASB)* The introduction sounds very reminiscent of David’s Psalms that have the similar wording. The Aramaic Targum states, א לשבחה בתושבחה תושבחה על ידא דאסף שירא: *76:1 For praise, as a psalm; a psalm composed by Asaph, a song. (EMC)* Brown, Driver, Briggs Lexicon states that לְמַנְצֵחַ is from the root word נָצַח, a verb “to be pre-eminent, enduring,” in the Piel verbal patten means “to make brilliant” (see *Ecclesiastes 43:5 and 43:13*), “to act as an overseer, superintendent, director, Psalms titles.” As a title for the psalm, לְמַנְצֵחַ is probably a simile meaning, “musical director or choirmaster,” and is the most likely reason for the interpretation of the word לְמַנְצֵחַ to say, “For the choir director.” As we know, Asaph was one of the men assigned to the music ministry in the 1<sup>st</sup> Temple service (see *1 Chronicles 6:39*). Asaph’s duties are described in detail in *1 Chronicles 16* and according to *2 Chronicles 29:30*, both Asaph and David were skilled singers and poets. Asaph is also mentioned as being a “seer” or prophet.

76:1 ב נודע ביהודה אלהים בישראל גדול שמו: ג ויהי בשלם סכו ומעונתו בציון: *God is known in Judah; His name is great in Israel. 76:2 His tabernacle is in Salem; His dwelling place also is in Zion. (NASB)* Why does Asaph say the tabernacle is in Salem? In the Torah, we learn about the first appearance of a priest of the Lord God Almighty according to *Bereshit / Genesis 14:18* which states, יח ומלכי-צדק מלך שלם הוציא לחם ויין והוא כהן לאל עליון: meaning “And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High.” (NASB) The Hebrew word כהן (Cohen) is

derived from the word כהן *“kahan”* meaning *“to serve as an attendant, or a servant, to mediate, or to officiate.”* According to the Scriptures, this is the earliest mention where a man operated in an intermediary role on behalf of the Lord God Almighty, between Abraham and the Lord. In *Bereshit / Genesis 14*, the role of the priest is clearly laid out saying: וְהוּא כֹהֵן לְאֵל עֶלְיוֹן: *“and he was a priest of God Most High.”* The name Melchizedek (מֶלְכִי-צֶדֶק) means *“king of righteousness,”* and was the one that stood to mediate for Abraham on behalf of the Most High God. The role of priest functions as an intermediary on behalf of someone else and as an intermediary the priest preserves the people in the sense so that the wrath of God does not fall upon the people. This is why the priests were commanded to camp between the people and the Tabernacle following Chet Haegel in Parashat Ki Tisa. It is important to note that this priest was a priest of Shalem (שָׁלֵם), translated as *“Salem”* in English. The idea here may be that if there was a priest in this place (Shalem, Salem, שָׁלֵם) who received Abraham’s tithe, there must have been a Tabernacle of some sort, how else would Abraham have known of this place?

This location, this place is known later on to be the place where Jerusalem was built. According to the rabbis, Jerusalem is known by many names. The names of Jerusalem refers to the multiple names by which the city of Jerusalem has been called and the etymology of the name in different languages. According to the Midrashim, *“Jerusalem has 70 names.”* (*Midrash Rabbah Bamidbar 14, Part 12, ע' כנגד ע' דבר אחר: כנגד ע' ע' שמות לירושלים*) Today, Jerusalem is called Yerushalayim (יְרוּשָׁלַיִם) which is the transliteration of the Hebrew name. The name Salem refers to Jerusalem indicated according to *Tehillim / Psalms 76:2* which states specifically that *“Salem”* as a parallel for *“Zion,”* the citadel of Jerusalem. Note that the same identification is made by Josephus and the Aramaic translations of the Bible. The Aramaic Targum states, ב אַתִּידַע אִיתוּדַע בְּדַבִּית יְהוּדָה אֱלֹהָא בְּדַבִּית יִשְׂרָאֵל רַב, *76:2 God has become known among those of the house of Judah; his name is great among those of the house of Israel. 76:3 And his sanctuary has come to be in Jerusalem, and the dwelling of the house of his holy presence is in Zion.* (EMC) Here the Aramaic Targum states explicitly the translation and location of Salem is that of Jerusalem, the place of the house of God’s holy presence, mount Zion. Mount Zion (הַר צִיּוֹן) was originally the name of the hill where the Jebusite fortress stood (see *2 Samuel 5:6-7*), and the name was later applied to the Temple Mount just to the north of the fortress (also known as Mount Moriah, הַר מוֹרִיָּה). Later, during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple period, the name came to be applied to a hill just to the south-west of the walled city, where this hill is still known as Mount Zion today. Following the Babylonian exile which occurred in approximately the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE, Zion has come to be used as a synonym for the city of Jerusalem as a whole. Mount Moriah, which is now known as the Temple mount, was a part of the city Jebus according to *Judges 19:10*, and was the city inhabited by the Jebusites. According to the Scriptures, this land was sold to King David by Ornan the Jebusite, for the full price of purchase (six hundred shekels of gold). *1 Chronicles 21:26* states the purpose was to build an altar in the threshing floor for sacrifice, to stop the plague God had visited upon Israel due to David’s sin of numbering the people. King Solomon later built the Temple at this location. The Jebusite stronghold at that time was called Zion which David took by force, and it afterward began to be called *“The City of David.”* (*2 Samuel 5:7-10*)

Asaph continues, He describes the Lord’s power and victory over the enemy saying, ד אֲשַׁמָּה שְׂפֵר רִשְׁׁ פִּי-קִשְׁתַּי מִגֶּן וְחֶרֶב וּמִלְחָמָה סָלָה: ה נָאוּר אֶתָּה אֲדִיר מִהַרְרֵי-טָרֶף: ו אֲשַׁתּוּלְלוּ | אֲבִירֵי לֵב נִמוּ שְׁנַתְּם וְלֹא-מִצָּאוּ: *76:3 There He broke the flaming arrows, The shield and the sword and the weapons of war. Selah. 76:4 You are resplendent, More majestic than the mountains of prey. 76:5 The stouthearted were plundered, They sank into sleep; And none of the warriors could use his hands.* (NASB) The power of God is described as being greater than the mountains, the mountains of prey. What are the mountains of prey? Why does the enemy sleep after being plundered? The psalmist states, נָאוּר אֶתָּה אֲדִיר מִהַרְרֵי-טָרֶף, saying that the Lord is more majestic than *“me’harrey taref”* (the mountains of prey, מִהַרְרֵי-טָרֶף). Note the word taref (טָרֶף) is the root word for the Yiddish word Treif (טרייף) the word that describes food that does

not conform with the Jewish dietary laws of kashrut. The word is derived from the Hebrew טְרֵפָה (trēfáh) meaning “*torn*,” and designated foods that are either inherently forbidden or rendered unacceptable due to an incorrect preparation. The author of the psalm speaks of the mountain that tears, the mountain of prey. The idea that we get here is of non-kosher meat, a type of meat from an animal that has been torn apart in the field by a wild animal. The mountain of treif also provides us with an interpretation of defect, disease, or inflicted wound, non-kosher, something that is consumed which causes one to be unclean. The mountain of which the Lord is greater is described as being the mountain of terefa (טרפה), literally, the mountain “*Torn*” by a beast of prey. Note the helplessness of the one who is torn by a beast of prey, the Lord is greater than such a thing. The prohibition of eating terefah is derived from the Torah verse which states, וְאַנְשֵׁי קִדְשׁ וְאֹתוֹ תִהְיוּ לִי וּבֶשֶׂר בְּשָׂדֵה טְרֵפָה לֹא תֹאכְלוּ לְכָלֵב תִּשְׁלַכּוּן אֹתוֹ “*And you shall be holy people to Me, and flesh torn in the field you shall not eat; you shall throw it to the dogs.*” (Shemot / Exodus 22:30) By extension, the Rabbis apply the meaning, interpretation, and application of this verse to any kosher animal which had sustained an injury of any kind. The conclusion is that this verse implies regardless whether a clean (kosher) animal suffered a mortal injury or not, if the animal received an injury from a wild beast or from a fall, the animal would become unfit (non Kosher) for ritual slaughter or human consumption. However, if the injury to the animal is not life-threatening (if the animal will not die within a year of its injury), the animal may be ritually slaughtered. (Talmud Bavli Chullin 37a) According to the Talmud, there were originally 8 types of terefah, however, the authors of the Mishnah added 18 more specifics to the list. Maimonides added even more to the list of terefah bringing the conditions to 70. According to the Torah, it is forbidden to eat of any animal which died by itself. (Devarim / Deuteronomy 14:21) Such meat is called Nevelah (a carcass). Any animal that dies by any means other than that of the ritual slaughter (shechita) is considered to fall within this class. This may also be the reason Peter up on he roof top declared to the Lord that nothing that has not been ritually slaughtered (note the Greek text use of the word for ritual slaughter) when the sheet of animals was let down from heaven. Nevelah differs from Terefah in the sense that Nevelah imparts ritual impurity by touch (the touching of a dead body or a carcass), whereas Terefah does not. The 8 types of Terefah that would make an animal unfit for ritual sacrifice according to the Torah are as follows:

### **Talmudic listing of the 8 types of Terefah**

1. Clawing: the clawing of an animal by a wild beast or of a bird by a bird of prey.
2. Perforation: a perforation to the cavity of one of the following 11 organs: the pharynx, the membrane of the brain, the heart and its aorta, the gall bladder, the vena cava inferior, abomasum, rumen, omasum, intestines, the lung and trachea.
3. Deficiency: the absence from birth of one of the lobes of the lung, or one of the feet.
4. Missing: the absence of converging sinews in the thigh, or the liver, or the upper jaw.
5. Severing: the severing of the membrane covering the spinal cord whether the spinal column be broken or not.
6. Falling: the crushing of one of the internal organs of an animal as the result of a fall.

7. Tearing: the tearing of most of the flesh covering the rumen.

8. Fracturing: such as the fracturing of most of its ribs

The damages include, clawing, perforation, deficiency, missing organs, severed organs, falling, tearing, and fracturing. (*Talmud Bavli Chullin 43a*) So the idea is that this mountain of tearing or of prey, has the capability of destroying the man who climbs such a mountain. The Psalm sates that the Lord God is greater than such a mountain, having the capability of both destroying and sustaining. The context (the previous verse) states 76:3 *There He broke the flaming arrows, The shield and the sword and the weapons of war. Selah.* The idea is the one who rejects God's Torah is the one who sends the flaming arrows, the weapons of war which are raised up against God's people. Those who love God's Torah do no such thing, we don't go out to destroy or to make war, etc.

The psalmist continues saying, 176:5 *The stouthearted were plundered, They sank into sleep; And none of the warriors could use his hands. (NASB)* The enemy going to sleep seems to parallel the NT description of those who have died (*1 Corinthians 11:30*) and the description we find in *Daniel 12:2* "Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt. (NASB) The idea here is that if one has died and is asleep in the dust of the earth, he will have no power to lift up the sword, in fact, he will have no use of his hands because they are turned to dust. The verb אֶשְׁתּוֹלְלוּ is a Hithpoel Perfect 3<sup>rd</sup> Com. Plural meaning (Qal) "to draw out" or "to spoil, plunder, take," so the sense that is given as a result of the way the MT is written, the enemy sleeps after being plundered, taking away the enemies wealth, the Lord takes away his ability to oppress the poor and needy because he becomes poor and needy himself. They become quiet as if one is sleeping. In addition, the planning, scheming, plotting to do evil to the righteous, the poor, and the needy is what motivates the unrighteous, and without these things, the wicked have nothing to live for and so they sleep and await the judgment day.

The Aramaic Targum states, ד כד עבדו בית ישראל רעותיה אשרי שכנתיה ביניהון תמן תבר גיררין וקשׁ תין דעמיא דעממיא מגיחי קרבא תריסא וסידרי קרבא בטל לעלמין: ה נהיר דחיל את אנת אלהא משבח מן בית מקדשך יזועון מן קדמך מלכיא דיתבין בכרכי טוריא אתר בית כנישות ביזתהון: ו אשלהו מעלויהון זיני קרבא 76:4 *When the house of Israel did his will, he made His presence abide among them; there he broke the arrows and bows of the Gentiles who were making war; he made forever the shields and battle-lines of no account. 76:5 Bright [and] awful are you, O God, acclaimed from your sanctuary; the kings who dwell in the mountain fortresses, the place where their spoil is gathered, will tremble in your presence. 76:6 The mighty in heart have stripped from them the weapons of war; they have slumbered in their sleep; and all the men of might have not been able to grasp their weapons in their hands. (EMC)* The Septuagint sates, 76:4 φωτίσεις σὺ θαυμαστῶς ἀπὸ ὀρέων αἰωνίων 76:5 ἐταράχθησαν πάντες οἱ ἀσύνετοι τῇ καρδίᾳ ὑπνωσαν ὑπνον αὐτῶν καὶ οὐχ εὖρον οὐδὲν πάντες οἱ ἄνδρες τοῦ πλοῦτου ταῖς χερσὶν αὐτῶν 76:6 ἀπὸ ἐπιτιμῆσεώς σου ὁ θεὸς Ἰακωβ ἐνύσταξαν οἱ ἐπιβεβηκότες τοὺς ἵππους 76:3 *There he broke the power of the bows, the shield, and the sword, and the battle. Pause. 76:4 Thou dost wonderfully shine forth from the everlasting mountains. 76:5 All the simple ones in heart were troubled; all the men of wealth have slept their sleep, and have found nothing in their hands. (LXX)* The rabbis translate the MT saying that the one who does the will of God, who obeys His Torah, the Lord causes His presence to abide in their midst. The Lord breaks the arrows and the bows of the Gentiles who make war against Israel, and the Lord causes the battle lines to be of no account forever. Asaph's words, according to the rabbis, appears to set forth what will happen "if you follow My statutes" as opposed to what will happen "if you do not obey Me, and do not perform all of these commandments." While studying the book of Deuteronomy, and the listings of the blessings and the curses, note how there appears to be a fundamental discrepancy between these concepts, in the question of "Who comes to whom?" In other words, is it man who approaches and enters the boundaries of the Mitzvot, fulfilling and obeying His word, or is it the Lord God Who enters man's boundaries, impacting his life, his will, and his ability to

be obedient to the Mitzvot? The Lord says in Parashat Bekhukotai, *“if you follow My statutes and keep My commandments and do them, then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield its increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. And your threshing shall reach to the vintage, and the vintage shall reach to the sowing time, and you shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely.”* (Vayikra / Leviticus 26:3-5) In Deuteronomy, the Lord describes what will happen *“if you follow My statutes and observe the commandments.”* While studying the Psalms, the Torah, and these Scriptures specifically from Parashat Bekhukotai, is the subject here concerning *“following My statutes,” “observance,” and “performing the commandments,” “man’s obedience or ability,”* is the subject about obeying God? The subject is not about man and what is happening on the inside with regard to his struggle or ability to be obedient. The subject is actually on the *“behavioral statutes and commandments”* upon which man’s existence is based. If a man *“enters the boundaries”* of these rules and behaves in accordance with their truth, then his existence will be firm and stable, and he will enjoy the resulting abundance the Lord God in heaven provides in which the Torah states, *“I will give you rain in due seas, and the land shall yield its increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.” And I will set My Sanctuary among you and My soul shall not abhor you. And I will walk among you and will be your God, and you shall be My people. I am the Lord your God Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that you should not be their bondmen, and I have broken the bars of your yoke, and caused you to walk upright.* (Vayikra / Leviticus 26:11-13) The Scripture continues saying, *“And it shall be, if you obey diligently the voice of the Lord your God, to observe and to perform all His commandments which I command you this day, that the Lord your God will set you on high above all the nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you obey the voice of the Lord your God. Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of your body, and the fruit of your ground, and the fruit of your beasts, the increase of your cattle and the flocks of your sheep. Blessed shall be your basket and your store. Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out.”* In Parashat Bechukotai, and in the blessings and curses found within the book of Deuteronomy, we find the Scriptures formulated in both the plural and the singular form, which indicates that the Lord is speaking to us both as a nation, and also at the individual level within the nation. The approach that is taken from the Torah, the Lord is addressing us at a more inward level, from both a national perspective, which consists of the individuals who are called to live within the boundaries of God’s commandments. In the book of Deuteronomy, the approach is *“hearing His voice,”* and the Lord God who will *“set you on high above all the nations of the earth.”* (Devarim / Deuteronomy 28:1) These statements are related to an inner status that is relative to all the nations of the world. The condition of the nation that belongs to God is filled with men and women who seek the Lord God in heaven and desire to live according to His commandments because of the great love that He has for His people. From this point of view, of the nation that steps into the boundaries of the commandments, there follows an assortment of blessings, expressing the abundance that can fill a person’s world and the goodness that surrounds him. On the other hand, there are also the curses, the one who does not choose or seek to live according to God’s ways, the curses will fall upon and overtake such a person. From this point on, the subject is the individual and/or the nation and the status or position that they will occupy which is described as, *“Cursed shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the field...”* (Devarim / Deuteronomy 28:16), *“The Lord shall cause you to be smitten before your enemies; you shall go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them, and shall be a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth”* (Devarim / Deuteronomy 28:25), and the list goes on. Within the context of the Psalm, according to the Aramaic Targum, when the house of Israel chooses to walk in God’s commands, the Lord will break the arrows and bows of the enemy. The purpose of the enemy is to draw the nation, and the individual to repentance and to turn back to the ways of the Lord God in heaven. With the Lord on our side, there is nothing that can stand against us. Even the enemy who dwell in mountain fortresses, the fear of the Lord will cause them to tremble in the presence of God. As a result, the Lord God has stripped the mighty men of war of their weapons, they will not be able to grasp their weapons to make war because it is the Lord God in heaven who enables both the righteous and the unrighteous to do what they do.

Asaph continues saying, מְגַעֲרָתָהּ אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב נִרְדָּם וְרָכַב וְסוּסֵי: 76:6 *At Your rebuke, O God of Jacob,*

Both rider and horse were cast into a dead sleep. (NASB) The Hebrew text states that “from your rebuke” (מִגְעַרְתֶּךָ) God of Jacob (אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב) put to sleep (נִרְדָּם) both the horse and rider (וְרֹכֵב וְסוּס). Why are both the rider and the horse put to sleep? We read in 2 Samuel 8:4 וַיִּלְכֹּד דָּוִד מִמֶּנּוּ אֶלְפֵי וְשִׁבְעֵ-מֵאוֹת פָּרָשִׁים 8:4 David captured from him 1,700 horsemen and 20,000 foot soldiers; and David hamstringed the chariot horses, but reserved enough of them for 100 chariots. (NASB) Why did David hamstring the horses? Note that a horse that cannot walk is put to death. In 2 Samuel 8, King David captured both the horseman and the horse. We are told that he hamstrung the horses, all but 100 of them for chariots (see also 1 Chronicles 18:4). There are two other instances (Bereshit / Genesis 49:6 and Joshua 11:9) where we are told people hamstrung animals.

**Bereshit / Genesis 49:5-7**

49:5 ‘Simeon and Levi are brothers; Their swords are implements of violence. 49:6 ‘Let my soul not enter into their council; Let not my glory be united with their assembly; Because in their anger they slew men, And in their self-will they lamed oxen. 49:7 ‘Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce; And their wrath, for it is cruel. I will disperse them in Jacob, And scatter them in Israel.

(NASB)

**Joshua 11:9**

11:9 Joshua did to them as the LORD had told him; he hamstrung their horses and burned their chariots with fire. (NASB)

In Bereshit / Genesis 49:5-7, Jacob calls his sons, he speaks of Simeon and Levi who put to death the inhabitants of Shechem, and says that in their anger they slew men and they hamstrung oxen as they pleased. The idea here is that innocent animals were made lame by their anger. The parallel appears to be to the inhabitants of the land of Canaan (the city of Shechem), they killed the innocent. In the book of Joshua, he captured horses and chariots and proceeded to hamstring the horses and burn the chariots. What we find here is that Joshua did not trust in horses or in chariots. His trust was in the Lord to overcome and defeat the enemy. The idea here from Asaph’s words, of putting both the horse and the horseman to sleep is that we are not to act with anger and vengeance as Simeon and Levi did to hurt the innocent, and that we are to trust in the Lord for His sustaining power, as opposed to trusting in our own wealth, power, and military strength.

The psalmist says, ז מִגְעַרְתֶּךָ אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב נִרְדָּם וְרֹכֵב וְסוּס: ה אַתָּה | נִרְאָה אַתָּה וּמִי-יֵצֵמַד לְפָנֶיךָ מֵאִז אֶפְרָי: 76:7 You, even You, are to be feared; And who may stand in Your presence when once You are angry? 76:8 You caused judgment to be heard from heaven; The earth feared and was still (NASB) Rightly so the people and the nations tremble in the presence of God because He is able to overturn the evil intentions for good. The Aramaic Targum and the Septuagint state the following:

**Aramaic Targum**

**Toviyah / Psalms 76**

76:8 You are awesome, you are God; and who will stand before you from the time your anger becomes strong? 76:9 From heaven you proclaimed judgment on the land of the Gentiles; the land of Israel was afraid [and] became silent. (EMC)

ה את אנת דחיל את אנת הוא אלהא ומן יקום קדמך מעידן דיתקוף רוגזך: ט מן שמיא אשמעתא דין ארעא דעממי דחילת ארעא דישראל שדוכת:

**Septuagint**



**Psalm / Psalms 76**

76:8 *Thou didst cause judgment to be heard from heaven; the earth feared, and was still,*  
76:9 *when God arose to judgment, to save all the meek in heart. Pause. (LXX)*

76:7 σὺ φοβερὸς εἶ καὶ τίς ἀντιστήσεται σοὶ ἀπὸ τότε ἢ ὀργή σου 76:8 ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἠκούσας κρίσιν γῆ ἔφοβήθη καὶ ἠσύχασεν

The Septuagint states that the Lord caused His judgment to be made know from heaven. The Targum states, 6:9 *From heaven you proclaimed judgment on the land of the Gentiles; the land of Israel was afraid [and] became silent. (EMC)* How does the Lord make his judgment known from heaven? The rabbis say that his judgment was proclaimed upon the land of the Gentiles. In *Joel 3:9-17*, the prophet gives a challenge to the enemies of God’s people. He says there is no escaping the judgments of the Lord. Those who have hardened their hearts to hearing the Lord, in the day of wrath they will be cut off from all comfort and joy. Most of the prophets in the Tanach speak of the final victory of the Lord God over all that oppose Him and His people. To the wicked it will be a terrible day, but to the righteous it will be a day of joy and victory.

In addition, we are told when God gave Israel His Torah, it is said that the earth trembled. Midrash Tehillim 75, Part 1 tells us, “*When the Holy One blessed be He, sought to give the Torah to Israel, the earth began to quake and totter out of fear that the children of Israel would not, God have mercy, accept the Torah, and that the earth would turn back to emptiness and chaos. But as soon as the children of Israel said, We will do and obey (Shemot / Exodus 24:7), the earth established itself again on its foundation, as is said, I myself established the pillars of it. Selah.*” The idea here is that the world was created for the purpose of the giving of the Torah to Israel. If Israel had refused, the world would have been destroyed. When the Lord brings His judgment, it is said the earth stands still. According to the *Talmud Bavli, Pirkei Avot 1:2 Shimon the Righteous was of the last of the Great Assembly. He would say: On three things the world stands—on the Torah, on the service, and on acts of kindness.* על הַיְהוָה אֹמֵר, עַל הַתּוֹרָה וְעַל הַעֲבוּדָה וְעַל גְּמִילוּת חַסְדִּים: The world was created and stands on three things, the Torah, the service, and acts of kindness towards others. In the Song of Deborah we are told, “*The earth trembled, ... the mountains quaked, before the Lord, Him of Sinai*” (*Judges 5:4-5*), and similarly in one of the Psalms (68:9). These references are said to allude to the giving of the Torah at the Mountain of Sinai according to Midrash Rabbi Shemot, Parashat Yitro (29 part 9). The earth quakes, the mountains tremble, the enemy stands in fear due to God’s righteous judgments, His justice, and His truth.

ט מְשַׁמְּחִים הַשְּׂמֵעָתָּ דִּין אֲרָץ יִרְאַה וְשָׁקֵטָה: י בְּקוֹם-לְמִשְׁפָּט אֱלֹהִים לְהוֹשִׁיעַ כָּל-עַנּוּי-אֲרָץ, 76:9 *When God arose to judgment, To save all the humble of the earth. Selah.* 76:10 *For the wrath of man shall praise You; With a remnant of wrath You will gird Yourself. (NASB)* How does the wrath of man praise the Lord? Based upon the psalm thus far, this very well could be a reference to the Lord having a hand in causing the nations to move against Israel due to her sins.

יא כִּי-חַמַּת אָדָם תּוֹדֶךָ שְׂאֵרִית חַמַּת תַּחֲגֹר: יב נִדְרֹו וְשָׁלְמוּ לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיכֶם, 76:11 *Make vows to the Lord your God and fulfill them; Let all who are around Him bring gifts to Him who is to be feared.* 76:12 *He will cut off the spirit of princes; He is feared by the kings of the earth. (NASB)* The Torah states the following about vows to the Lord God in heaven.

**Bamidbar / Numbers 30:2**

30:2 *When a man makes a vow to the LORD or takes an oath to obligate himself by a pledge, he must not break his word but must do everything he said. (NASB)*

**Devarim / Deuteronomy 23:21**

23:21 *If you make a vow to the LORD your God, do not be slow to pay it, for the LORD your God will certainly demand it of you and you will be guilty of sin. (NASB)*

**Ecclesiastes 5:4**

*5:4 When you make a vow to God, do not be late in paying it; for He takes no delight in fools. Pay what you vow! (NASB)*

The author of Ecclesiastes gives us a warning concerning the making of vows. The making of vows consisted of a doing something for the sake of the Lord God in heaven. The vow throughout history however became an occasion of much irreverence and profanity. When you make a vow to the Lord God in heaven, do not delay in paying it. This is obviously a reference to *Devarim / Deuteronomy 23:21-23*, where the Lord God will demand, require it of you, if you make a vow, and not fulfilling the vow will cause one to be guilty of sin. Note also that vows are not regarded as absolute duties which every one was obliged to perform. The vow is voluntary, however, when a vow is made, it is to be strictly performed. For example, the vow might consist of a promise to dedicate certain things or persons to God (see *Bereshit / Genesis 38:20, Judges 11:30*), or to abstain from doing certain things, as in the case of the Nazarite vow. The rabbinical injunction quoted by Yeshua in *Matthew 5:33*, “*Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths,*” was most likely spoken against the profane swearing, or by making light of the invoking God’s Name. It is for this the Lord God is to be feared because He is just and true, and this is the reason Asaph sates, *76:11 Make vows to the Lord your God and fulfill them; Let all who are around Him bring gifts to Him who is to be feared. 76:12 He will cut off the spirit of princes; He is feared by the kings of the earth. (NASB)* Let’s Pray!

Heavenly Father,

We thank you for the mercies You have shown us every day and the way of salvation that You have provided. We ask that You would help us to overcome sin in our lives by the power of Your Spirit and Your Son Yeshua. We ask for help, strength, and the resolve to daily live for you. Especially in our private lives so that we are able to bring glory to Your name, even when nobody sees. We thank You for the promises You have made and Your continued faithfulness. Help us to keep our feet on the path of righteousness and truth according to Your Word, and also to have the desire to walk in Your ways. Thank You for giving us the faith to believe in Yeshua the Messiah and for always calling our hearts back to You Lord! Please have mercy on us, forgive us for our sins. We thank You Lord for sending Your son Yeshua that we may enter into the covenant of peace that You have promised to Your people. Help us to grow in our faith, to walk in the spirit, and apply these truths to our lives. We praise Your Holy Name and give You all of the honor, and the glory, and the praise forever and ever.

In Yeshua’s (Jesus’) Name we pray! Amen!

Be Blessed in Yeshua, Christ our Messiah!

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הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:  
Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,  
“Yeshua” King Messiah forever and ever

## Notes