ספר תהילים עז | Psalms 77

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Remember and the future expectation of the power of God in our lives

In this week's study from Tehillim / Psalms 77:1-21, the psalm opens saying, לָמָנַצֵּהַ עַל-יִדיּתוּן [יִדוּ־ ב קולי אל-אַלהים וַאָּצְעַקָה קוֹלי אֵל-אַלהים וַהָּאָזין אלַי: For the choir director; according to Jeduthun. A Psalm of Asaph. 77:1 My voice rises to God, and I will cry aloud; My voice rises to God, and He will hear me. (NASB) Asaph seeks the Lord in the day of his trouble (77:2), and he remembers the Lord (77:3) but says that he is disturbed by his memories. He speaks of remembering the days gone past (77:4-5), and he says that the Lord held his eyes open and so he could not speak (77:4) and he asks will the Lord reject forever? (77:6-7). Asaph asks, ט האפס לַנצח חסדו גַמר אמר לדר וַדר: י הַשַׁכח חנות אל אם-קפץ בָּאף 27:8 Has His lovingkindness ceased forever? Has His promise come to an end forever? 77:9 Has God forgotten to be gracious, Or has He in anger withdrawn His compassion? Selah. (NASB) Notice Asaph speaks of remembering the deeds of the Lord and how important it is, וַאַמר הלוֹתי היא שָׁנוֹת יָמִין עַלִיוֹן: יב אַזְכִּיר [אַזְכּוֹר] מַעַלְלֵי-יַה כִּי-אַזְכָּרָה מִקְּדֶם פָּלְאַךְ: יג וְהָגִיתִי בְּכַל-פַּעַלֶּךְ וּבַעַלִילוֹתִיךְ אַשִּׂיחַה: יד אֱלהַים בַּקֹּדֵשׁ דַּרְבֶּךְ מִי-אֱל גַּדוֹל כֵּאלֹהִים: טו אַתָּה הָאֵל עֹשֵׂה פַלֵא הוֹדַעִתַּ בַעַמִּים עָזַךְ: טז גַאַלְתַּ בִּזְרוֹעַ עַמֶּךְ :בני-יעַקֹב וְיוֹסף סֵלָה: 77:10 Then I said, 'It is my grief, That the right hand of the Most High has changed.' 77:11 I shall remember the deeds of the Lord; Surely I will remember Your wonders of old. 77:12 I will meditate on all Your work And muse on Your deeds. 77:13 Your way, O God, is holy; What god is great like our God? 77:14 You are the God who works wonders; You have made known Your strength among the peoples. 77:15 You have by Your power redeemed Your people, The sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah. (NASB) Asaph concludes his psalm saying the following, יז ראוד מַיִם אַלהִים רַאוּד מַיִם יַחִילוּ אַף יִרְגִזוּ תָהמוֹת: יח מים | עבות קול נַתָנוּ שָׁחַקִים אף-חַצַצֵידְ יתָהלַכוּ: יט קול רַעמָדְ | בּגלָגל האירוּ בָרַקִים תּבל רַגזָה ותּרָעשׁ הַאַרַץ: 27:16 כ בַּיַם דַרְכַּדְ וּשָׁבִילִידְ [וּשָׁבִילָדְ] בָּמים רבּים וְעַקְבוֹתֵיךָ לֹא נַדַעוּ: כֹא נַחיתַ כַצֹּאן עמֶךְ בִּיד-משֶׁה וְאַהָרֹן: The waters saw You, O God; The waters saw You, they were in anguish; The deeps also trembled. 77:17 The clouds poured out water; The skies gave forth a sound; Your arrows flashed here and there. 77:18 The sound of Your thunder was in the whirlwind; The lightnings lit up the world; The earth trembled and shook. 77:19 Your way was in the sea And Your paths in the mighty waters, And Your footprints may not be known. 77:20 You led Your people like a flock By the hand of Moses and Aaron. (NASB) The idea is the Lord is merciful and forgiving, however, His presence causes the earth and the people to tremble.

עברית Hebrew ארמי **Aramaic** ספר תהלים פרק עז ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 77 סמר טוביה פרק עז א לשבחא על יד ידותון לאסף תוש־ א למנצח על-יִדיתון [יִדוּתוּן] לְאַסַף מַזְמוֹר: ב קוֹלִי אֵל-אֱלֹהָים וְאֶצְעֵּד בחא: ב קלי ברם קדם יהוה ואקביל קָה קוֹלִי אֶל-אֱלֹהִים וְהַאַזִין אֱלָי: ג קלי קדם אלהא אצית מימרי: ג ביום עקתי אולפן מן קדם יהוה תבעית שרת בְּיוֹם צֶרָתִי אֲדֹנֶי דְּרָשְׁתִּי יָדִי | לַיְלָה עלי רוח נבואה בליליא זלגת עיני נָגָרָה וָלֹא תַפוּג מֵאֲנָה הַנַּחֶם נַפְשִׁי:

ד אַזַּכָּרָה אַלֹהִים וְאַהַמַּיָה אַשִּׂיחָה | וָתָתַעַטֵּף רוּחִי סֵלַה: דמעתא ולא תפוג סריבת לאיתנחמא נפשי: ד אידכר אלהא וארגוש קדם יהוה אמליל ותישתלהי רוחי לעלמיו:

ελληνικός

77:1 εἰς τὸ τέλος ὑπὲρ Ιδιθουν τῷ Ασαφ ψαλμός φωνή μου πρός κύριον έκέκραξα φωνή μου πρός τὸν θεόν καὶ προσέσχεν μοι 77:2 ἐν ἡμέρα θλίψεώς μου τὸν θεὸν ἐξεζήτησα ταῖς χερσίν μου νυκτὸς ἐναντίον αὐτοῦ καὶ οὐκ ήπατήθην ἀπηνήνατο παρακληθῆναι ή ψυχή μου 77:3 ἐμνήσθην τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ εὐφράνθην ἠδολέσχησα καὶ ἀλιγοψύχησεν τὸ πνεῦμά μου διάψαλμα

Greek

אָחַזָתַ שָׁמַרוֹת עֵינֵי נָפַעַמִתִּי וְלֹא אַדַבֶּר: ו חַשַּׁבְתִּי יַמִים מְקֵדֶם שְׁנוֹת אֶזְכָּרָה נְגִינָתִי בַּלָּיִלָה עולמים: ז עם-לְבַבִי אַשִּיחַה וַיִחַפֵּשׂ רוּחִי: ח הַלְעוֹלַמִים יִזְנַח | אַדנַי וַלֹא-יִסִיף לָרְצוֹת עוֹד: ט הַאָפֶס לַנֵצַח חַסְדּוֹ גַּמַר אֹמֶר לְדֹר וָדֹר: י הַשָּׁכַח חַנּוֹת אַל אָם-קָפַץ בָּאַף רַחֲמָיו סֶלָה: יא וָאֹמַר חַלּוֹתִי הִיא שָׁנוֹת יִמִין עֵלְיוֹן: בּיִר [אַזְכּוֹר] מַעַלְלֵי-יַהּ כִּי-אַזְכַּרָה מִקּדֵם פָּלְאַדְ: יג וָהַגִיתִי בָכַל-פַּעַלֶּדְ וּבַעַלִילוֹתֵידְ אַשִּׁיחַה: יד אַלהִים בַּקֹּדֵשׁ דַּרְכַּדְ מִי-אֵל גַּדוֹל כאלהים: טו אתַה הַאל עשה פַּלָא הוֹדַעָהַ בַעַמִּים עָזָּך: טז גַאַלָּהַ בִּזְרוֹעַ עַמֶּדְ בִּנִי-יַעַקֹב וְיוֹסֵף סֵלָה: יז רַאוּדְ מַיִם | אַלהָים רַאוּךְ מַיָם יַחִילוּ אַף ירגזו תהמות: יח זרמו מים | עבות קוֹל נַתִנוּ שָׁחָקִים אַף-חַצַצֵיך יִתְהַלַּ־ כו: יט קול רַעַמָּדְ | בַּגַּלְגַּל הַאַירוּ בָרָקִים הַּבֵל רָגְזָה וַתִּרְעַשׁ הָאָרֶץ: כ בַּיָם דַּרְכֶּךְ וּשְׁבִילִיךְ [וּשְׁבִילְךְ רַבִּים וְעָקְבוֹתֶיךָ לֹא נֹדָעוּ: כא נַחִיתָ ַכַצֹּאן עַמֵּךָ בִּיַד-מֹשֶׁה וָאַהַרֹן:

ה אחדתא תימורתייא דעייני איטר־ פית ולא אמליל: ו מניתי יומין טבין דמן לקדמין שניא טביא דמן עלמין: ז אידכר תושבחתי בליליא עם הירהורי לבבי אמליל ויבלש ניסיא מנדע רוחי: ח האפשר די לעלמין ירחק יהוה ולא יוסיף למיתרעיא תוב: ט האפשר די פסק לעלמין טוביה שלים פתגם דביש על כל דר ודר: י האיפשר דאיתנשי לחייסא אלהא אין סליק ברוגזיה מן למכמר רחמוי לעלמין: יא ואמרית מרעותי היא אישתניןו גבורת ימין דמן עילאה: {ת"} ואמרית בעותי היא שנין דקץ מימין: יב אדכר עובדי אלהא ארום אדכר מן לקדמין פרישותך: יג ורננית בכל עובדך טביא ובתסקופי ני־ סייך אמליל: יד אלהא דקדישין אורח־ תך מן אלהא רבא כאלהא דישראל: טו את הוא אלהא עביד פרישן הודעת בע־ מיא עושנך: טז פרקתא בגבורת אד־ רעך עמך בניא דאוליד יעקב וזן יוסף לעלמין: יז חמון שכינתך בגו מגו ימא אלהא חמון גבורתך על ימא רתיתון עמיא עממיא לחוד יתרגזון תהומיא: יח אחיתו מיא ענני שמיא קלין יהבו שחקי לחוד כיפי גיררך אזלין ומשתלהבין: קל אכליותך בגלגלא אשתמע אנהירו ברקין תבל רגזת ואיתרגיפת ארעא: כ בימא דסוף אורחך וכבשך במין סגיעיא ורושמת ורשמת פסיעתך לא איתידעו: כא דברתא היך ענא עמך ביד משה ואהרן: 77:4 προκατελάβοντο φυλακάς οί όφθαλμοί μου έταράχθην καὶ οὐκ έλάλησα 77:5 διελογισάμην ήμέρας άρχαίας καὶ ἔτη αἰώνια ἐμνήσθην καὶ ἐμελέτησα 77:6 νυκτὸς μετὰ τῆς καρδίας μου ἠδολέσχουν καὶ ἔσκαλλεν τὸ πνεῦμά μου 77:7 μὴ είς τούς αίωνας απώσεται κύριος καὶ οὐ προσθήσει τοῦ εὐδοκῆσαι ἔτι 77:8 ἢ εἰς τέλος τὸ ἔλεος αὐτοῦ ἀποκόψει ἀπὸ γενεᾶς εἰς γενεάν 77:9 ἢ ἐπιλήσεται τοῦ οἰκτιρῆσαι ό θεὸς ἢ συνέξει ἐν τῆ ὀργῆ αὐτοῦ τούς οἰκτιρμούς αὐτοῦ διάψαλμα 77:10 καὶ εἶπα νῦν ἠρξάμην αὕτη ἡ άλλοίωσις τῆς δεξιᾶς τοῦ ὑψίστου 77:11 ἐμνήσθην τῶν ἔργων κυρίου ότι μνησθήσομαι ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρχῆς τῶν θαυμασίων σου 77:12 καὶ μελετήσω έν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔργοις σου καὶ ἐν τοῖς έπιτηδεύμασίν σου άδολεσχήσω 77:13 ὁ θεός ἐν τῷ ἀγίῳ ἡ ὁδός σου τίς θεὸς μέγας ὡς ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν 77:14 σὸ εἶ ὁ θεὸς ὁ ποιῶν θαυμάσια έγνώρισας έν τοῖς λαοῖς τὴν δύναμίν σου 77:15 έλυτρώσω έν τῷ βραχίονί σου τὸν λαόν σου τοὺς υἱοὺς Ιακωβ καὶ Ιωσηφ διάψαλμα 77:16 εἴδοσάν σε ύδατα ὁ θεός εἴδοσάν σε ύδατα καὶ ἐφοβήθησαν καὶ ἐταράχθησαν άβυσσοι πλήθος ήχους ύδάτων 77:17 φωνήν ἔδωκαν αἱ νεφέλαι καὶ γὰρ τὰ βέλη σου διαπορεύονται 77:18 φωνή τῆς βροντῆς σου ἐν τῷ τροχῷ ἔφαναν αἱ ἀστραπαί σου τῆ οἰκουμένη έσαλεύθη καὶ ἔντρομος ἐγενήθη ἡ γῆ 77:19 ἐν τῆ θαλάσση ἡ ὁδός σου καὶ αί τρίβοι σου ἐν ὕδασι πολλοῖς καὶ τὰ ἴχνη σου οὐ γνωσθήσονται 77:20 ώδήγησας ώς πρόβατα τὸν λαόν σου έν χειρί Μωυσῆ καί Ααρων

Tehillim / Psalms 77

For the choir director; according to Jeduthun. A Psalm of Asaph. 77:1 My voice rises to God, and I will cry aloud; My voice rises to God, and He will hear me. 77:2 In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord; In the night my hand was stretched out without weariness; My soul refused to be comforted. 77:3 When I remember God, then I am disturbed; When I sigh, then my spirit grows faint. Selah. 77:4 You have held my eyelids open; I am so troubled that I cannot speak. 77:5 I have considered the days of old, The years of long ago. 77:6 I will remember my song in the night; I will meditate with my heart, And my spirit ponders: 77:7 Will the Lord reject forever? And will He never be favorable again? 77:8 Has His lovingkindness ceased forever? Has His promise come to an end forever? 77:9 Has God forgotten to be gracious, Or has He in anger withdrawn His compassion? Selah. 77:10 Then I said, 'It is my grief, That the right hand of the Most High has changed.' (NASB)

Toviyah / Psalms 77

77:1 For praise; composed by Jeduthun for Asaph; a psalm. 77:2 My voice is [raised] in the presence of the Lord, and I will complain; my voice is [raised] in the presence of God; hear my utterance! 77:3 In the day of my distress, I sought instruction from the presence of the Lord; the spirit of prophecy rested on me in the night; my eye ran with tears and will not stop; my soul refused to be comforted. 77:4 I will remember God and I will tremble in the presence of the Lord; I will speak, and my spirit will be weary forever. 77:5 You have shut the lids of my eyes: I am smitten, and I will not speak. 77:6 I have counted up the good days which were at the beginning, the good years of long ago. 77:7 I will remember my psalm in the night; I will speak with the thoughts of my heart, and the mind of my spirit will examine miracles. 77:8 Can the Lord be far off forever, and no longer show favor again? 77:9 Can he have cut off his favor forever? Is the decree of evil complete for all generations? 77:10 Can God have forgotten to have pity? Or has he gotten too angry to sustain his

compassion forever? (EMC)

Psalmoi / Psalms 77

For the end, for Idithun, a Psalm of Asaph. 77:1 I cried to the Lord with my voice, yea, my voice was addressed to God; and he gave heed to me. 77:2 In the day of mine affliction I earnestly sought the Lord; even with my hands by night before him, and I was not deceived; my soul refused to be comforted. 77:3 I remembered God, and rejoiced; I poured out my complaint, and my soul fainted. Pause. 77:4 All mine enemies set a watch against me: I was troubled, and spoke not. 77:5 I considered the days of old, and remembered ancient years. 77:6 And I meditated; I communed with my heart by night, and diligently searched my spirit, saying, 77:7 Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be well pleased no more? 77:8 Will he cut off his mercy for ever, even for ever and ever? 77:9 Will God forget to pity? or will he shut up his compassions in his wrath? Pause. 77:10 And I said, Now I have begun; this is the change of the right hand of the Most High. (LXX)

Tehillim / Psalms 77

77:11 I shall remember the deeds of the Lord; Surely I will remember Your wonders of old. 77:12 I will meditate on all Your work And muse on Your deeds. 77:13 Your way, O God, is holy; What god is great like our God? 77:14 You are the God who works wonders: You have made known Your strength among the peoples. 77:15 You have by Your power redeemed Your people, The sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah. 77:16 The waters saw You, O God; The waters saw You, they were in anguish; The deeps also trembled. 77:17 The clouds poured out water: The skies gave forth a sound: Your arrows flashed here and there. 77:18 The sound of Your thunder was in the whirlwind; The lightnings lit up the world; The earth trembled and shook. 77:19 Your way was in the sea And Your paths in the mighty waters, And Your footprints may not be known. 77:20 You led Your people like a flock By the hand of Moses and Aaron. (NASB)

Toviyah / Psalms 77

77:11 And I said, "It is my sickness; they have forgotten the might of the right hand of the Most High." Another Targum: And I said, "It is my petition, years that he shortened by days." 77:12 I will remember the acts of God. for I will remember your wonders from of old. 77:13 And I meditated on all your good works, and I will speak of the intricacy of your miracles. 77:14 O God, because your ways are holy, what god is great like the God of Israel? 77:15 You are the God who works wonders: you have made known your might among the peoples. 77:16 You have redeemed your people with the strength of your arm, the sons that Jacob sired and whom Joseph fed, forever. 77:17 They saw your presence in the midst of the sea, O God; they saw your might by the sea; the Gentiles trembled, even the deeps will be shaken. 77:18 The clouds of heaven made water descend, the heights gave voice; also comes the hail, your arrows, and are ablaze. 77:19 The sound of your outcry was heard in the sphere; lightning lit up the world, the earth rattled and shook. 77:20 In the sea of Suph [was] your path, and your highway in the many waters; and the track of your steps were not discerned. 77:21 You guided your people as a flock, by the hand of Moses and Aaron. (EMC)

Psalmoi / Psalms 77

77:11 I remembered the works of the Lord; for I will remember thy wonders from the beginning. 77:12 And I will meditate on all thy works, and will consider thy doings. 77:13 O God, thy way is in the sanctuary; who is a great God as our God? 77:14 Thou art the God that doest wonders: thou hast made known thy power among the nations. 77:15 Thou hast with thine arm redeemed thy people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph. Pause. 77:16 The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee, and feared; and the depths were troubled. 77:17 There was an abundant sound of waters: the clouds uttered a voice; for thine arrows went abroad. 77:18 The voice of thy thunder was abroad, and around thy lightnings appeared to the world; the earth trembled a quaked. 77:19 Thy way is in the sea, and thy paths in many waters, and thy footsteps cannot be known. 77:20 Thou didst guide thy people as sheep by the hand of Moses and Aaron. (LXX)

In this week's study from *Tehillim / Psalms 77:1-21*, the psalm opens saying, אַלְרִיְדִיּתוּן [יְדוּ־ *For the choir director; according to Jeduthun. A Psalm of Asaph.* In the opening line of the psalm from the Masoretic text according to Ginsburg, there is a note in the marginal Masorah of a textual variant on both the words עַל-יִדיּתוּן. Ginsburg notes in his Masoretic text saying, ווֹ בּרְעִיא בּרִי אַלּר. בּרִי אַל-יִדיּתוּן the Maqeph, a horizontal line that joins two words, is written as such according to the traditions of Ben-Asher (בן נפתלי) and Ben-Naftali (בן נפתלי). In Ginsburg's time there were two traditions for copying a MSS according to Ben-Asher (בן אַשר) or Ben-Naftali (בן נפתלי). Ben-Asher (בן אַשר) and Ben-Naftali

are two rival schools of thought and here Ginsburg states that they both agree on the placement fo the Maqeph. Ben Naphtali copied an MSS with vowels, accents, and Masorah, wherein he differed in some respects from his contemporary and rival, Aaron ben Moses ben Asher. The original Bible codex has not been preserved, but the differences between these schools of thought, ben Naphtali and Ben Asher, are found in incomplete Masoretic lists located in quotations from David Kimḥi, Norzi, and other medieval writers as well as in MSS such as British Museum MSS. These lists are printed in the rabbinical Bibles, in the texts of Baer-Delitzsch and Ginsburg's Masorah (the one we are using). The differences between ben Naphtali and ben Asher number about 860, of which nine-tenths refer to the placing of the accents "meteg" and "gaia" אנשיא. The remaining ones have reference to "dagesh" ממעא and "rapheh" הבה להעיא הוא בכפחts, and consonantal spelling. For a simple list of differences between ben Naphtali and ben Asher, see ben Naphtali at the Jewish Encyclopedia.

The differences between these two Masoretes do not represent solely personal opinions; the differences represent rival schools of thought. In "Ginsburg's introduction," we read the statement of E. Levita (p. 144), that the Westerns follow ben Asher, and the Easterns ben Naphtali. The Masoretic lists often do not agree on the precise nature of the differences between the two rival authorities; it is, therefore, impossible to define with exactness their differences in every case; and it is probably due to this fact that the received text does not follow uniformly the system of either ben Asher or ben Naphtali. The issues between the differences are therefore lost and so it is futile to describe a given codex as either Western or Eastern. Ginsburg also notes saying, "ידיתון כתיב, בס"א ידותון כתיב וקרי א ידיתון כתיב וקרי די"א. According to Ginsburg's Masorah, there is a Qere and Ketiv on the opening words to Tehillim / Psalms 77. The Qere and Ketiv is from the Aramaic qere, קרי meaning "what is read," and the ketiv, בְּחִיב meaning "what is written." According to Ginsburg there is a variation in the way the word יָדיּתוּן; is written, there is a yod (י) written and a vav (ו) spoken. Ginsburg says that Jedytun is written and Jeduthun is read (ידיתון כתיב, ידותון קרי), "in one book as compared to another" (\aleph " \triangleright 3) saying that it is read as Jeduthun in the Complutensian Polyglot (\aleph " \triangleright 7). What is the significance of the variation in the written text? The point is that the translation and interpretation of the text is not altered based upon one school of thought versus another. The differences illustrates the careful attention that was ascribed to the copying of the MSS, even the slightest detail, a moved or changed letter, is noted. This is significant for us because it helps us to realize the importance of God's Word in the lives of those who had gone before us. The Masoretic period is represented as occurring between 500-1000 CE, and was the period ion which the Hebrew text was "fixed" in pronunciation (cantilation) during the Tanach manuscript copying. The copying process included a complete review of established rules for copying, a deep reverence for the Scriptures, and a systematic renovation of transmission techniques. Copies were made by an official class of scribes who labored under very strict rules. The Masoretes went above and beyond the call of duty in order to make the most accurate copies humanly possible. Out of respect for the Word of God, these copyists took numerous precautions to guarantee a precise duplication. When a scribe completed the laborious task of copying an MSS, the scribe would count the number of verses, words, and letters that should occur in the book. The catalog also listed the word and the letter that should fall in the middle of the book. The system of checks resulted in a very high degree of copying accuracy. In addition, the exacting conditions under which the Masoretes worked, and the lengths to which they went to ensure fidelity in their copies of the Scriptures, could attest to the fact that their goal was to produce accurate copies, even to the point of reproducing errors already present in the much older copies from which they were working, wherein the errors were noted. We can be assured that the copies we have today are of the utmost accuracy. The comparisons to the Dead Sea Scrolls is a testimony to that fact. The Scriptures that we have is the Word of God, and we should have no doubts as to its accuracy!

Asaph begins his Psalm saying the following, : קוֹלִי אֶל-אֱלֹהִים וְהָאֲזִין אֱלִי אֶל-אֱלֹהִים וְאָצְעָקָה קוֹלִי אֶל-אֱלֹהִים וְהָאֲזִין אֵלִי אָל-אֵלֹהִים וְאָצְעָקָה קוֹלִי אֶל-אֱלֹהִים וְהַאֲזִין אֵלִי אָל-אֵלֹהִים וְאָצְעָקָה קוֹלִי אֶל-אֱלֹהִים וְהַאֲזִין אֵלִי: 77:1 My voice rises to God, and He will hear me. (NASB) Asaph calls out to the Lord to answer his prayer, He raises his voice and proclaims that He will hear him. Would there or could there be any circumstances under which the Lord would not hear or answer our prayers? The following list provides some reasons why prayer may go unanswered:

List of reasons prayer may go unanswered

- 1. Our Prayers go unanswered when we are not praying according to God's will.
- 2. Our Prayers may go unanswered when the prayer is designed to fulfill an inner lust, dream, or imagination that is based on the flesh.
- 3. Our Prayers may go unanswered when we show "No Diligence" to assist God in the answer.
- 4. Our Prayers may go unanswered by a secret grudge in the heart against another.
- 5. Our Prayers may go unanswered by not expecting much to come of them.
- 6. Our Prayers may go unanswered when we ourselves attempt to prescribe how God should answer.

Each of these are good points, and there are a couple that are related to one another. Do you expect your prayers to get God working for you while we sit idly by doing nothing? Depending upon the situation, we need to take "steps of faith," take measures to minimize sin, and to be diligent in striving for the good of others. A secret grudge, or a secret sin will also cause one to loose ground in prayer, because this demonstrates ones desire to give his members to sin as opposed to yielding to righteousness. In addition, prayer may go unanswered if one is not listening to the Lord's call to obedience. What ends up happening is blaspheming God by the rejection of the commandments, in the neglecting of the commandments, which is synonymous to saying "I want no part with God or His ways." Is this what happens to those who say "I only want God's grace" as opposed to being obedient in God's grace which Paul spoke of so often in his letters? (see Romans 1:5, 1:17, 10:17, 16:26, Philippians 2:12, James 2:17, and 1 Peter 1:22, to list a few...)

Asaph continues in his psalm saying the following:

Masoretic Text

Tehillim / Psalms 77:2-6

77:2 In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord; In the night my hand was stretched out without weariness; My soul refused to be comforted. 77:3 When I remember God, then I am disturbed; When I sigh, then my spirit grows faint. Selah. 77:4 You have held my eyelids open; I am so troubled that I cannot speak. 77:5 I have considered the days of old, The years of long ago. 77:6 I will remember my song in the night; I will meditate with my heart, And my spirit ponders (NASB)

ג בְּיוֹם צָּרָתִי אֲדֹנֵי דָּרָשְׁתִּי יָדִי | לַיְלָה נִגְּרָה וְלֹא תָפוּג מֵאֲנָה הָנָּחֵם נַפְשִׁי: ד אֶזְכְּרָה אֱלֹהִים וְאֶהֶמְיָה אָשִׂיחָה | וְתִתְעַטֵּף רוּחִי סֶלָה: ה אָחַזְתָּ שְׁמֵרוֹת עֵינָי נִפְעַמְתִּי וְלֹא אֲדַבֵּר: ו חִשַּׁבְתִּי יָמִים מִקֶּדֶם שְׁנוֹת עוֹלָמִים: ז אֶזְכְּרָה נְגִינָתִי בַּלִּיְלָה עִם-לְבָבִי אָשִׂיחָה וַיְחַפֵּשׁ רוּחִי:

Aramaic Targum

Toviyah / Psalms 77

77:3 In the day of my distress, I sought instruction from the presence of the Lord; the spirit of prophecy rested on me in the night; my eye ran with tears and will not stop; my soul refused

to be comforted. 77:4 I will remember God and I will tremble in the presence of the Lord; I will speak, and my spirit will be weary forever. 77:5 You have shut the lids of my eyes; I am smitten, and I will not speak. 77:6 I have counted up the good days which were at the beginning, the good years of long ago. 77:7 I will remember my psalm in the night; I will speak with the thoughts of my heart, and the mind of my spirit will examine miracles. (EMC)

ג ביום עקתי אולפן מן קדם יהוה תבעית שרת עלי רוח נבואה בליליא זלגת עיני דמעתא ולא תפוג סריבת לאיתנחמא נפשי: ד אידכר אלהא וארגוש קדם יהוה אמליל ותישתלהי רוחי לעלמין: ה אחדתא תימורתייא דעייני איטרפית ולא אמליל: ו מניתי יומין טבין דמן לקדמין שניא טביא דמן עלמין: ז אידכר תושבחתי בליליא עם הירהורי לבבי אמליל ויבלש ניסיא מנדע רוחי:

Psalmoi / Psalms 77

77:2 In the day of mine affliction I earnestly sought the Lord; even with my hands by night before him, and I was not deceived; my soul refused to be comforted. 77:3 I remembered God, and rejoiced; I poured out my complaint, and my soul fainted. Pause. 77:4 All mine enemies set a watch against me: I was troubled, and spoke not. 77:5 I considered the days of old, and remembered ancient years. 77:6 And I meditated; I communed with my heart by night, and diligently searched my spirit, saying, (LXX)

77:2 ἐν ἡμέρᾳ θλίψεώς μου τὸν θεὸν ἐξεζήτησα ταῖς χερσίν μου νυκτὸς ἐναντίον αὐτοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἠπατήθην ἀπηνήνατο παρακληθῆναι ἡ ψυχή μου 77:3 ἐμνήσθην τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ εὐφράνθην ἠδολέσχησα καὶ ἀλιγοψύχησεν τὸ πνεῦμά μου διάψαλμα 77:4 προκατελάβοντο φυλακὰς οἱ ὀφθαλμοί μου ἐταράχθην καὶ οὐκ ἐλάλησα 77:5 διελογισάμην ἡμέρας ἀρχαίας καὶ ἔτη αἰώνια ἐμνήσθην καὶ ἐμελέτησα 77:6 νυκτὸς μετὰ τῆς καρδίας μου ἠδολέσχουν καὶ ἔσκαλλεν τὸ πνεῦμά μου

Asaph seeks the Lord in the day of his trouble (77:2), he says that "the way of his hands" (דְּרָשְׁתִּי יָדִי) which is translated as the stretching out of his hands, he is not weary, however his soul refuses to be comforted, to be at peace, or at rest (יְלֹא תְפוֹג מֵאֲנָה הַנְּחֵם וַפְּשִׁי). He is saying that his ways are right before the Lord, but his spirit is not allowing him to be at peace and so he is praying. The Aramaic Targum states, 77:3 In the day of my distress, I sought instruction from the presence of the Lord; the spirit of prophecy rested on me in the night; my eye ran with tears and will not stop; my soul refused to be comforted. (EMC, ביום עקתי אולפן מן עקתי אולפן מן הוה תבעית שרת עלי רוח נבואה בליליא זלגת עיני דמעתא ולא תפוג סריבת לאיתנחמא נפשי The rabbis speaking of Asaph seeking instruction from the presence of the Lord. How does one seek instruction from the presence of God? What does it mean to seek instruction from the presence of God? The Mishnah Pirkei Avot chapter 3, pasuk 2 has the following to say concerning the rabbis comments on the divine presence.

Mishnah Pirkei Avot 3:2

Rabbi Chanina, the Deputy High Priest, said: Pray for the welfare of the government, For were it not for the fear of it, One person would eat the other alive. Rabbi Chanania ben Tradyon said: [When] two sit together and there are no words of Torah [spoken] between them, This is a session of scorners, As it is said (in Psalm 1:1): "[Happy is the man who has] not . . . sat in the seat of the scornful." But [when] two sit together and there are words of Torah [spoken] between them, The Divine Presence rests with them, As it is said (in Malachi 3:16): "Then they who feared the Lord spoke one with another, and the Lord hearkened and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before Him, for them who feared the Lord and who thought upon His Name." [The Mishnah asks:] I have no [Scriptural support for the proposition that the Divine Presence rests with them] except [with] two. From where [is there proof that] even [when there is only] one [person studying Torah], The Holy One, Blessed be He, determines a reward for him? As it is said (in Lamentations 3:28): "Though

he sits alone and [meditates] in silence, yet he takes [a reward] to himself." רבי חנינא סגן הכהנים אומר, הוי מתפלל בשלומה של מלכות , שאלמלא מוראה, איש את רעהו חיים בלעו. רבי חנניא בן תרדיון אומר, שנים שיושבין ואין ביניהן דברי תורה, הרי זה מושב לצים , שנאמר (תהלים א), ובמושב לצים לא ישב.אבל שנים שיושבין ויש ביניהם דברי תורה, שכינה שרויה ביניהם , שנאמר (מלאכי ג), אז נדברו יראי יי איש אל רעהו ויקשב יי וישמע ויכתב ספר זכרון לפניו ליראי יי ולחשבי שמו.אין לי אלא שנים.מנין שאפלו אחד שיושב ועוסק בתורה , שהקדוש ברוך הוא קובע לו שכר, שנאמר (איכה ג), ישב בדד וידם כי נטל עליו.

The rabbis in *Pirkei Avot 3:2* state that when two people come together to discuss the words of the Torah. the Scriptures, the Presence of God rests upon them. Isn't that awesome? Yeshua taught a similar concept in Matthew 18:20 "For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst." (NASB) Asaph sought the instruction of the Lord, and the Targum states that the spirit of prophecy rested upon him with this understanding that the Lord God, His presence dwells upon the one who meditates upon or remembers His name. The spirit of prophecy is given to help facilitate understanding and knowing God's will for our lives. We know and understand God's will for our lives based upon the written Scriptures. This is what Asaph meant when he said, 77:3 When I remember God, then I am disturbed; When I sigh, then my spirit grows faint. Selah. (NASB) and the rabbis translated, 77:4 I will remember God and I will tremble in the presence of the Lord; I will speak, and my spirit will be weary forever. (EMC) He is remembering the great deeds the Lord did in His Torah, to deliver Israel, the fearsome and awesome God that we serve, whereupon no nation or god is able to stand against Him! Asaph remembers, and in the remembering of God's word, he has the hope, and the future expectation of the Lord working in his life to deliver, and to save him. What is interesting is that in the MT, Asaph states the Lord has held his eyes open (אַקרוֹת שָׁמְרוֹת עינֵי), the Hebrew text states that the Lord took hold of (אַהָוֹהַ) and kept (שֶׁמֶרוֹת) his eyes which is translated as the Lord held his eyes open in the NASB. Asaph does not say מתח "open." He uses the concept of the Lord seizing his hold and keeping his eyes, and then says that he is "thrust or impelled and could not speak" (נְפַעַמְתִּי וַלֹא אֲדבר) The rabbis translate this sentence in the MT to say, 77:5 You have shut the lids of my eyes; I am smitten, and I will not speak. (EMC, ל אמליל: איטרפית ולא אמליל: Why do you think there are differenced here in the interpretation, the NASB translates to hold open the eyes, whereas the rabbis Targum says the Lord shut his eyes? Which is the better translation? The Lord seizing and keeping Asaph's eyes seems to follow from the previous verses that he is remembering the Lord God in heaven, the Mishnah on studying God's Word and His Divine Presence resting upon him, and the Lord being the guiding factor in his life, it seems this would suggest on the one hand, the Lord is leading him so his eyes should be open. On the other hand, based on the rabbis Targum, with the Lord leading him, he does not need to keep his eyes open, the Lord is guiding him and if he is smitten he is smitten, he will not speak against the Lord has all things in his hands. It appears that both translations have their merits. Asaph then states, 77:6 I will remember my song in the night; I will meditate with my heart, And my spirit ponders (NASB) the Aramaic text states, 77:7 I will remember my psalm in the night; I will speak with the thoughts of my heart, and the mind of my spirit will examine miracles. (EMC), and the Septuagint states, 77:6 And I meditated; I communed with my heart by night, and diligently searched my spirit ..., (LXX) This brings us back to the word of God, the Scriptures being the place of meditation upon the Lord, His deeds, and the remembering of his song during the night is a picture of his hope and expectation of God's deliverance. Even in the midst of hope, there are still times when we have our doubts, and Asaph seems to have written a psalm about his doubts with regard to the Lord ceasing his loving-kindness (grace, mercy, 1707) due to the continued exile of Israel in Babylon.

Asaph asks, :י הָשָׁכַח חַנּוֹת אֵל אָם-קָפַץ בְּאַף רַחֲמָיו סֶלָה: י הָשָׁכַח חַנּוֹת אֵל אָם-קָפַץ בְּאַף רַחֲמָיו סֶלָה: י הָשָׁכַח חַנּוֹת אֵל אָם-קָפַץ בְּאַף רַחֲמָיו סֶלָה: 77:8 Has His lovingkindness ceased forever? Has His promise come to an end forever? 77:9 Has God forgotten to be gracious, Or has He in anger withdrawn His compassion? Selah. (NASB) Notice Asaph speaks of

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remembering the deeds of the Lord and how important it is, יא נאמר חַלּוֹתִי הִיא שָׁנוֹת יָמִין עֵלְיוֹן: יב אָזְכֹיר [אַזְכּוֹר] מַעַלֹנִי-יָה כִּי-אַזְכָּרָה מִקְדָם פָּלאַדּ: יג וְהָגִיתִי בְכַל-פַּעַלֶּדְּ וּבַעַלִילוֹתִידְ אַשִּׂיחָה: יד אֵלֹהִים בַּקֹּדֵשׁ דַּרְכֵּדְ מי-אל גַדוֹל כּאלהים: טו אתַה הַאל עשה פֶּלֶא הוֹדעָתַּ בַעמים עָזַדְ: טז גַאלְתַּ בּזְרוֹע עמֶדְ בִּני-יַעֵקֹב וְיוֹסף סֵלְה: 77:10 Then I said, 'It is my grief, That the right hand of the Most High has changed.' 77:11 I shall remember the deeds of the Lord; Surely I will remember Your wonders of old. 77:12 I will meditate on all Your work And muse on Your deeds. 77:13 Your way, O God, is holy; What god is great like our God? 77:14 You are the God who works wonders; You have made known Your strength among the peoples. 77:15 You have by Your power redeemed Your people, The sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah. (NASB) Notice how the MT is written translated literally "naught, nothing" (הַאַבֶּם) "forever" (לְנַצַה) "His grace" (חַסָּדוֹ) "finish, end" (גַּמַר) "said" (אֹמֵר) "from generation to generation" (לְדֹר וַדֹר). The phrases "Ledor Vador" לדר ודר סכער frequently in the Torah. Ledor Vador is the Hebrew phrase which alludes to the legacies we leave and it means literally "From Generation to Generation." A major component of Judaism is passing traditions ledor vador and to keep them alive. This is significant in light of what Asaph is saving, 77:8 Has His lovingkindness ceased forever? Has His promise come to an end forever? (NASB) We are instructed in the Scriptures to remember the promises of God so that we are able to give Him praise, and so that we have hope, joy, and life. Contained within the promises of God are the traditions which are passed on as part of the covenant. For example, the covenant found in *Bereshit / Genesis 12-17* is the basis for the brit milah (the covenant of circumcision) in Judaism. The covenant was for Abraham and his seed, or offspring, both of natural birth and adoption. In *Bereshit / Genesis 12–17* three parts to the covenant can be distinguished. In chapters 12 and 15, the Lord gives Abraham and his descendants the Land of Canaan and does not place any stipulations on the covenant making it an unconditional covenant. In contrast, Bereshit / Genesis 17 contains the covenant of circumcision which is conditional. The covenant promises may be broken down in the following way:

- 1. To make of Abraham a great nation and to bless him by making his name great so that he will be a blessing to all peoples. Those who bless him will be blessed, those who curse him will be cursed, and all the peoples on earth would be blessed through Abraham. (*Bereshit / Genesis 12:1-3*)
- 2. The Lord gave Abraham's descendants all the land from the river of Egypt to the Euphrates. (*Bereshit / Genesis 15:18-21*) Later, this land came to be referred to as the Promised Land, the Land of Israel.
- 3. The Lord promised to make Abraham the father of many nations and of many descendants and give "the whole land of Canaan" to his descendants. (Bereshit / Genesis 17:2-9) Circumcision is to be the permanent sign of this everlasting covenant with Abraham and his male descendants. (brit milah, Bereshit / Gen 17:9-14) Note the differences between the circumcision of the flesh as opposed to the heart according to the Torah.

Within these verses, the Lord is establishing traditions that are to be passed down from generation to generation. In *Bereshit / Genesis*, Abraham is promised land because he obeyed God and followed his commands. The Abraham covenant is part of a tradition of covenant of sacrifices, the animals that are slaughtered in the covenant in *Bereshit / Genesis 15* are considered a sacrificial offering. In Asaph's writing "*Ledor Vador*" he may be drawing in the Torah context of the everlasting promises the Lord made to Abraham, the promises to give, to keep, and to protect, in relation to the Lord forsaking his people in a foreign land. He asks whether the Lord has caused his loving kindness to cease, come to an end forever? 77:9 Has God forgotten to be gracious, Or has He in anger withdrawn His compassion? (NASB) While taking the context of the Torah in this way, we can see how it was because of Abraham's obedience according to His faith, that

led to the blessings God had given him. In the time of Asaph, it was the disobedience of Israel due to their lack of faith that led to their exile. It appears as if after even a generation or two, the anger of the Lord is still burning hotly against Israel because of her sins. However, He remembers the covenant and returns His people to the Land. The return may have been expedited if the people had returned to faith in the Lord at a sooner time. The return to the faith is synonymous to returning to God's ways, His righteousness, justice, and truth. In the concept of "holiness," we find the traditions which help us to interpret, understand, and apply the Scriptures to our lives. The question is though, did God nullify the covenant when He sent His people into exile? The obvious answer is no, the people were paying for their sinful lifestyles. This happens even today for those who are in the Messiah Yeshua if one continues in his or her sinful lifestyle, and choose to not turn from their sins. Repentance, Teshuvah (תשובה) means "to turn from" and both historically and traditionally means to turn from our sins and turn towards the Lord God, to seek Him and His ways. Repentance is not a mental exercise only, it is the active choice to believe and follow the Messiah who lived as our example. This is what faith is about, by our faith we step out and live for Him, and the Lord then empowers us to do so. Paul said faith comes by hearing and hearing every word of God (Romans 10:17). We are being told by Paul the importance of both being taught and remembering the power of God to deliver us from bondage as we read in the book of Exodus, the Lord's mercy and grace to sustain His people during our wilderness journey (Shemot / Exodus 34, and all of Bamidbar / Numbers), His ability to fulfill His promises (Bereshit / Genesis 12, 15, 17), and His plan for the ultimate redemption of His people (Bereshit / Genesis 3:15). It is in the act of hearing and remembering all of these things, the all of Scripture that Paul is speaking of to the Romans in the remembering what God has promised and what He has done in His son Yeshua the Messiah. In Christ we have the future expectation of the power of God in our lives! In addition, Yeshua said to the woman caught in adultery, your sins are forgiven, now go and leave your life of sin (John 8:11). That is the most important message on repentance (תשובה), to turn, and to leave behind one's life of sin. A truly repentant heart is the one that lives it. Where is the power of God in your life?

Asaph concludes his psalm saying the following, יז ראוּד מֵיִם | אַלהִים רַאוּד מֵיִם יַחִילוּ אַף יָרְגִזוּ תָהֹמוֹת: יח זֹרָמוּ מֵיָם | עַבוֹת קוֹל נַתָנוּ שָׁחַקִים אַף-חַצַצֵיך יָתָהַלַכוּ: יט קוֹל רַעַמְד | בַּגַלְגַל הָאִירוּ בְרַקִים תָּבֶל רָגָזָה וַתִּרְעֵשׁ ָּבָאָרָץ: כֹּ בַּיָּם דַּרְכֶּךְ וּשְׁבִילְידְ [וּשְׁבִילְדְ בְּמֵיִם רַבִּים וְעִקְבוֹתֶיךְ לֹא נֹדָעוּ: כֹא נָחִיתָ כַצֹּאן עַמֶּךְ בִּיַד-מֹשֶׁה וְאַהֶרֹן: 77:16 The waters saw You, O God; The waters saw You, they were in anguish; The deeps also trembled. 77:17 The clouds poured out water; The skies gave forth a sound; Your arrows flashed here and there. 77:18 The sound of Your thunder was in the whirlwind; The lightnings lit up the world; The earth trembled and shook. 77:19 Your way was in the sea And Your paths in the mighty waters, And Your footprints may not be known. 77:20 You led Your people like a flock By the hand of Moses and Aaron. (NASB) Asaph speaks of the rain, the lightening (flashing arrows), and the thunder, as being an illustration of God's power and might. Does man have the power to stop the rain or to cause the lightening and thunder to cease? He speaks of the unknowable way of God. This is not as a reference to the commands, but in the sense of why the Lord chooses to deal with His people in the way that He does. The concluding verse, כא נַחִיתַ כצֹאן עמֶּך בִּיִר־ משה ואהרן: 77:20 You led Your people like a flock By the hand of Moses and Aaron. (NASB) draws with it the idea that the Lord is merciful and forgiving, and willing to lead a sinful people through the wilderness and to bring them to where they belong. Doesn't this sound a lot like us? His presence causes the earth and the people to tremble, yet He is gentle and kind and merciful. What a awesome God we serve! 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 so that we are able to bring glory to Your name. 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

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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!

:תרנו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi, "Yeshua" King Messiah forever and ever

Notes