

ספר תהילים פו | Tehillim / Psalms 86

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Affliction, Need, Justice, Righteousness, Wrath, an Mercy

In this week's study from *Tehillim / Psalms 86:1-17*, the Psalm opens saying, א תפלה לדוד הטתה יהוה אָנִי: *A prayer of David. 86:1 Incline Your ear, O Lord, and answer me; For I am afflicted and needy. (NASB)* The Psalmist calls upon the Lord based upon his affliction and need. Does this work in the same way today? The Psalmist continues describing who he is, ב שְׁמֵרָה נַפְשִׁי כִּי-חֹסֵד אָנִי הוֹשַׁע עֲבָדְךָ אֱלֹהֵי הַבּוֹטֵחַ אֵלֶיךָ: ג חַנּוּנִי אֱלֹהֵי כָּל-יְהוָה הַיּוֹשֵׁעַ כִּי-אֱלֹהֵי אֲדָנִי נַפְשִׁי אֶקְרָא כָּל-הַיּוֹם: ד שְׁמַח נַפְשִׁי עֲבָדְךָ כִּי אֱלֹהֵי אֲדָנִי נַפְשִׁי: 86:2 *Preserve my soul, for I am a godly man; O You my God, save Your servant who trusts in You. 86:3 Be gracious to me, O Lord, For to You I cry all day long. 86:4 Make glad the soul of Your servant, For to You, O Lord, I lift up my soul. 86:5 For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, And abundant in lovingkindness to all who call upon You. (NASB)* The Psalmist again pleads for the Lord to hear his prayer, ו הַאֲזִינָה יְהוָה תְּפִלָּתִי וְהַקְשִׁיבָה בְּקוֹל תַּחֲנוּנוֹתַי: ז בְּיוֹם צָרָתִי אֶקְרָאָה, פִּי תַעֲנֵנִי: ח אִין-כְּמוֹתָ בְּאֱלֹהִים | אֲדָנִי וְאִין כְּמַעֲשֵׂיךָ: ט כָּל-גּוֹיִם | אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ יְבוֹאוּ וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְפָנֶיךָ אֲדָנִי וַיִּכְבְּדוּ: י כִּי-גָדוֹל אַתָּה וְעָשָׂה נִפְלְאוֹת אַתָּה אֱלֹהִים לְבַדְּךָ: 86:6 *Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer; And give heed to the voice of my supplications! 86:7 In the day of my trouble I shall call upon You, For You will answer me. 86:8 There is no one like You among the gods, O Lord, Nor are there any works like Yours. 86:9 All nations whom You have made shall come and worship before You, O Lord, And they shall glorify Your name. 86:10 For You are great and do wondrous deeds; You alone are God. (NASB)* Because of who God is, the Psalmist asks the Lord to teach him His ways, יא הוֹרֵנִי יְהוָה דְרָכֶיךָ אֱהַלְךָ בְּאַמְתֶּךָ יַחַד לְבָבִי לִירְאָה שְׁמֶךָ: יב אוֹדְךָ, יג כִּי-חֹסֵדְךָ גָּדוֹל עָלַי וְהַצַּלֵּת נַפְשִׁי מִשְׂאוֹל תַּחֲתֵיךָ: 86:11 *Teach me Your way, O Lord; I will walk in Your truth; Unite my heart to fear Your name. 86:12 I will give thanks to You, O Lord my God, with all my heart, And will glorify Your name forever. 86:13 For Your lovingkindness toward me is great, And You have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol. (NASB)* The Psalm concludes saying, יד אֱלֹהִים | זָדִים קָמוּ עָלַי וְעַדֹת עָרִיצִים בְּקִשּׁוֹ נַפְשִׁי וְלֹא שָׁמוּךָ לְנַגְדָם: טו וְאַתָּה אֲדָנִי אֵל-רַחוּם וְחַנּוּן, יז עָשָׂה-עִמָּי אוֹת לְטוֹבָה אַרְךָ אַפִּים וְרַב-חֶסֶד וְאֱמֶת: טז פִּנָּה אֵלַי וְחַנּוּנִי תִנְהַ-עֲזֵךְ לְעַבְדְּךָ וְהוֹשִׁיעָה לְבִן-אִמְתֶּךָ: יז עָשָׂה-עִמָּי אוֹת לְטוֹבָה יְהוָה וְיִבְשׂוּ כִּי-אַתָּה יְהוָה עֲזָרְתָנִי וְנִחַמְתָּנִי: 86:14 *O God, arrogant men have risen up against me, And a band of violent men have sought my life, And they have not set You before them. 86:15 But You, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, Slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness and truth. 86:16 Turn to me, and be gracious to me; Oh grant Your strength to Your servant, And save the son of Your handmaid. 86:17 Show me a sign for good, That those who hate me may see it and be ashamed, Because You, O Lord, have helped me and comforted me. (NASB)*

עברית	Hebrew	ארמי	Aramaic	ελληνικός	Greek
ספר תהלים פרק פו	ספר טוביה פרק פו			ΨΑΛΜΟΙ 86	
א תפלה לדוד הטתה יהוה אָנִי: ב שְׁמֵרָה נַפְשִׁי כִּי-חֹסֵד אָנִי הוֹשַׁע עֲבָדְךָ אֱלֹהֵי הַבּוֹטֵחַ אֵלֶיךָ: ג חַנּוּנִי אֱלֹהֵי כָּל-יְהוָה הַיּוֹשֵׁעַ כִּי-אֱלֹהֵי אֲדָנִי נַפְשִׁי אֶקְרָא כָּל-הַיּוֹם: ד שְׁמַח נַפְשִׁי עֲבָדְךָ כִּי אֱלֹהֵי אֲדָנִי נַפְשִׁי אֶשָּׂא:	א צלותא דצלי דוד אצלי יהוה אוד- נך עני יתי ארום ענייא וחשיכא אנא: ב נטור נפשי ארום חסידא אנא פרוק עבדך את אלהי ייי די אנא מתרחיץ עלך: ג חוס עלי יהוה ארום קדמך קומך אצלי כל יומא: ד אחדי נפשא דעבדך ארום לותך יהוה נפשי אזקוף בצלו:			86:1 προσευχή τῷ Δαυιδ κλῖνον κύριε τὸ οὖς σου καὶ ἐπάκουσόν μου ὅτι πτωχὸς καὶ πένης εἰμι ἐγώ 86:2 φύλαξον τὴν ψυχὴν μου ὅτι ὁσῖος εἰμι σῶσον τὸν δοῦλόν σου ὁ θεός μου τὸν ἐλπίζοντα ἐπὶ σέ 86:3 ἐλέησόν με κύριε ὅτι πρὸς σέ κεκραξομαι ὅλην τὴν ἡμέραν	

<p>ה פי-אָתָה אָדְנִי טוֹב וְסָלַח וְרַב־ חֶסֶד לְכָל-קַרְאֵיךָ: ו הַאֲזִינָה יְהוָה תְּפַלְתִּי וְהִקְשִׁיבָה בְּקוֹל תְּחִנּוּנֹתַי: ז בְּיוֹם צָרְתִי אֶקְרָאָךָ פִּי תַעֲנֵנִי: ח אִין-כְּמוֹךָ בְּאֱלֹהִים אָדְנִי וְאִין כְּמַעַ־ שִׁיךָ: ט כָּל-גּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ יְבוֹאוּ וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְפָנֶיךָ אָדְנִי וַיִּכְבְּדוּ לְשִׁמְךָ: י כִּי-גָדוֹל אַתָּה וְעָשִׂה נִפְלְאוֹת אַתָּה אֱלֹהִים לְבַדְּךָ: יא הוֹרֵנִי יְהוָה דְּרָכֶךָ אֶהְלֶךְ בְּאַמְתֶּךָ יַחַד לְבָבִי לִירְאֶה שְׁמֶךָ: יב אוֹדֶךָ אָדְנִי אֱלֹהֵי כָּל- לְבָבִי וְאֶכְבְּדֶךָ שְׁמֶךָ לְעוֹלָם: יג כִּי- חֶסֶדְךָ גָּדוֹל עָלַי וְהִצַּלְתָּ נַפְשִׁי מִשְׁאוּל תַּחְתֵּיךָ: יד אֱלֹהִים יָדִים קָמוּ עָלַי וְעַדֹת עָרִיצִים בְּקִשּׁוֹ נַפְשִׁי וְלֹא שָׁמוּךָ לְנַגְדָם: טו וְאַתָּה אָדְנִי אֵל-רַחוּם וְחַנּוּן אַרְךָ אַפִּים וְרַב-חֶסֶד וְאַמֶּת: טז פָּנֵה אֵלַי וְחַנּוּנִי תִּנְהַ-עַדְךָ לְעַבְדֶּךָ וְהוֹשִׁיעָה לְבִן-אַמְתֶּךָ: יז עֲשֵׂה-עִמִּי אוֹת לְטוֹבָה וַיֵּרְאוּ שׁוֹנְאֵי וַיִּבְשׂוּ כִּי- אַתָּה יְהוָה עֲזַרְתָּנִי וְנַחַמְתָּנִי:</p>	<p>ה ארום את הוא יהוה טב לצדיקיא ושביק לדתייבין לאוריתיה ומסגי טיבו לכל דמצלין קדמך קומך: ו אצית יהוה צלותי וקביל לקל תחד נוני: ז ביומא דעקתי אקרי לותך ארום את עני יתי: ח לית בר מינך באנגלי מרומא שמיא יהוה ולית כעבודך: ט כל עממיא די עבדתא ייתון ויסגדון קדמך קומך יהוה וית נון איקר לשמך: י ארום רבא את אלהא ועביד פרישן את הוא אלהא בלחודך לבלחודך: יא אליף יתי יהוה אורחתך אתהלך בקושטך יחד לבבי למידחל שמך: יב אודי קדמך לך יהוה אלהי בכל לבבי ואיקר שמך לעלם: יג ארום טובך רב עלי ופצי תא נפשי משיוול ארעיתא: יד אלהא זדונין קמון עלי ותקיפין תבעו נפשי ולא שויאו יתך לקבליהון: טו ואת יהוה אלהא רחמנא וחנונא מרחיק רגז ומסגי למעבד טבוון וקשוט: טז איתפני לותי וחוס עלי הב עושנדך לעבדך ופרוק לבר אמתך: יז עביד עמי את לטבא בזמן דיעיל שלמה ברי ית ארונא בבית מקדשא יתפתחן תרעיא אמטולתי ויחמון סנאי ארום שבקתא לי ויבהתון ויודון ארום את יהוה סיעתני ונחמתני:</p>	<p>86:4 εὐφρανον τὴν ψυχὴν τοῦ δούλου σου ὅτι πρὸς σέ κύριε ἦρα τὴν ψυχὴν μου 86:5 ὅτι σύ κύριε χρηστὸς καὶ ἐπιεικὴς καὶ πολυέλεος πᾶσι τοῖς ἐπικαλουμένοις σε 86:6 ἐνώτισαι κύριε τὴν προσευχὴν μου καὶ πρόσχευε τῇ φωνῇ τῆς δεήσεώς μου 86:7 ἐν ἡμέρᾳ θλίψεώς μου ἐκέκραξα πρὸς σέ ὅτι εἰσήκουσάς μου 86:8 οὐκ ἔστιν ὁμοίός σοι ἐν θεοῖς κύριε καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν κατὰ τὰ ἔργα σου 86:9 πάντα τὰ ἔθνη ὅσα ἐποίησας ἤξουσιν καὶ προσκυνήσουσιν ἐνώπιόν σου κύριε καὶ δοξάσουσιν τὸ ὄνομά σου 86:10 ὅτι μέγας εἶ σύ καὶ ποιῶν θαυμάσια σὺ εἶ ὁ θεὸς μόνος ὁ μέγας 86:11 ὁδήγησόν με κύριε τῇ ὁδῷ σου καὶ πορεύσομαι ἐν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ σου εὐφρανθήτω ἡ καρδία μου τοῦ φοβεῖσθαι τὸ ὄνομά σου 86:12 ἐξομολογήσομαί σοι κύριε ὁ θεὸς μου ἐν ὅλῃ καρδίᾳ μου καὶ δοξάσω τὸ ὄνομά σου εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα 86:13 ὅτι τὸ ἔλεός σου μέγα ἐπ' ἐμέ καὶ ἐρρῶσω τὴν ψυχὴν μου ἐξ ἄδου κατωτάτου 86:14 ὁ θεὸς παράνομοι ἐπανέστησαν ἐπ' ἐμέ καὶ συναγωγῇ κραταιῶν ἐζήτησαν τὴν ψυχὴν μου καὶ οὐ προέθεντό σε ἐνώπιον αὐτῶν 86:15 καὶ σύ κύριε ὁ θεὸς οἰκτίρμων καὶ ἐλεήμων μακρόθυμος καὶ πολυέλεος καὶ ἀληθινός 86:16 ἐπίβλεψον ἐπ' ἐμέ καὶ ἐλέησόν με δὸς τὸ κράτος σου τῷ παιδί σου καὶ σῶσον τὸν υἱὸν τῆς παιδίσκης σου 86:17 ποίησον μετ' ἐμοῦ σημεῖον εἰς ἀγαθόν καὶ ιδέτωσαν οἱ μισοῦντές με καὶ αἰσχυρθήτωσαν ὅτι σύ κύριε ἐβοήθησάς μοι καὶ παρεκάλεσάς με</p>
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<p>Tehillim / Psalms 86 A prayer of David. 86:1 Incline Your ear, O Lord, and answer me; For I am afflicted and needy. 86:2 Preserve my soul, for I am a godly man; O You my God, save Your servant who trusts in You. 86:3 Be gracious to me, O Lord, For to You I cry all day long. 86:4 Make glad the soul of Your servant, For to You, O Lord, I lift up my soul. 86:5 For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, And abundant in lovingkindness to all who call upon You. 86:6 Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer; And give heed to the voice of my supplications! 86:7 In the day of my trouble I shall call upon You, For You will answer me. 86:8 There is no one like You among the gods, O Lord, Nor are there any works like Yours. 86:9 All nations whom You have made shall come and worship before You, O Lord, And they shall glorify Your name. 86:10 For You are great and do wondrous deeds; You alone are God. 86:11 Teach me Your way, O Lord; I will walk in Your truth; Unite my heart to fear Your name. 86:12 I will give thanks to You, O Lord my God, with all my heart, And will glorify Your name forever. 86:13 For Your lovingkindness toward me is great, And You have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol. 86:14 O God, arrogant men have risen up against me, And a band of violent men have sought my life, And they have not set You before them. 86:15 But You, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, Slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness and truth. 86:16 Turn to me, and be gracious to me; Oh grant Your strength to Your servant, And save the son of Your handmaid. 86:17 Show me a sign for good, That those who hate me may see it and be ashamed, Because You, O Lord, have helped me and comforted me. (NASB)</p>	<p>Toviyah / Psalms 86 86:1 A prayer that David prayed. Incline, O Lord, your ear; answer me, for I am poor and needy. 86:2 Protect my soul, for I am pious; redeem your servant – you, O my God – for I do put my trust in you. 86:3 Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I will pray in your presence all the day. 86:4 Gladden the soul of your servant, for to you, O Lord, will I lift up my soul in prayer. 86:5 For you are the Lord, good to the righteous and forgiving to those who turn to his Torah, and multiplying favor to all who pray in your presence. 86:6 Hear, O Lord, my prayer; and accept the voice of my supplications. 86:7 On the day of my distress, I will call to you, for you answer me. 86:8 There is none besides you among the angels on high, O Lord, and there is nothing like your deeds. 86:9 All the Gentiles you have made shall come and bow down before you, O Lord; and they shall give glory to your name. 86:10 For you are great, O God, and you do wonders – you alone are God. 86:11 Teach me, O Lord, your ways; I will walk in your truth; unify my heart to fear your name. 86:12 I will give thanks in your presence, O Lord my God, with all my heart; and I will glorify your name forever. 86:13 For your goodness towards me is great; and you have delivered my soul from lowest Sheol. 86:14 O God, arrogant men have risen against me, and mighty men have sought my soul; and they have not kept you in front of them. 86:15 And you, O Lord, are a God compassionate and merciful, putting away anger, and showing much favor and truth. 86:16 Turn unto me and pity me; give your strength to your servant, and redeem the son of your handmaiden. 86:17 Perform for me a miracle for good; when my son Solomon shall bring the ark into the sanctuary, let the gates be opened on my account and my enemies will see that you have forgiven me, and they will be ashamed and confess; for you are the Lord, you have helped me and comforted me. (EMC)</p>	<p>Psalmoi / Psalms 86 A Prayer of David. 86:1 O Lord, incline thine ear, and hearken to me; for I am poor and needy. 86:2 Preserve my soul, for I am holy; save thy servant, O God, who hopes in thee. 86:3 Pity me, O Lord: for to thee will I cry all the day. 86:4 Rejoice the sold of thy servant: for to thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul. 86:5 For thou, O Lord, art kind, and gentle; and plenteous in mercy to all that call upon thee. 86:6 Give ear to my prayer, o Lord; and attend to the voice of my supplication. 86:7 In the day of my trouble I cried to thee: for thou didst hear me. 86:8 There is none like to thee, O Lord, among the god; and there are no works like to thy works. 86:9 All nations whom thou hast made shall come, and shall worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name. 86:10 For thou art great, and doest wonders: thou art the only and the great God. 86:11 Guide me, O Lord, in thy way, and I will walk in thy truth: let my heart rejoice, that I may fear thy name. 86:12 I will give thee thanks, O Lord my God, with all my heart; and I will glorify thy name for ever. 86:13 For thy mercy is great toward me; and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell. 86:14 O God, transgressors have risen up against me, and an assembly of violent men have sought my life; and have not set thee before them. 86:15 But thou, O Lord God, art compassionate and merciful, long-suffering, and abundant in mercy and true. 86:16 Look thou upon me, and have mercy upon me: give thy strength to thy servant, and save the son of thine handmaid. 86:17 Establish with me a token for good; and let them that hate me see it and be ashamed; because thou, O Lord, hast helped me, and comforted me. (LXX)</p>
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In this week’s study from *Tehillim / Psalms 86:1-17*, the Psalm opens describing that it is David who composed this psalm saying, תַּפְּלֶה לְדָוִד הַטָּה יְהוָה אֲזַנְּךָ עֲנֵנִי כִּי-עָנִי וְאֶבְיֹן אָנֹכִי: *A prayer of David. 86:1 Incline Your ear, O Lord, and answer me; For I am afflicted and needy. (NASB)* The Aramaic Targum states, צלותא דצלי דוד אצלי יהוה אודנך עני יתי ארום ענייא וחשיכא אנא: *86:1 A prayer that David prayed. Incline, O Lord, your ear; answer me, for I am poor and needy. (EMC)* The Septuagint states, 86:1 προσευχή τῷ Δαυιδ κλῆνον κύριε τὸ οὖς σου καὶ ἐπάκουσόν μου ὅτι πτωχὸς καὶ πένης εἰμι ἐγώ *A Prayer of David.*

86:1 O Lord, incline thine ear, and hearken to me; for I am poor and needy. (LXX) Notice how the Psalmist calls upon the Lord based upon affliction and need. Does this work in the same way today? Let's discuss afflictions and needs based upon the rabbinic commentary. The commentary Shney Luchot HaBrit speaks of affliction and trials in the following way.

Shney Luchot HaBrit, Nasso, Derech Chaim Tochachot Musar 39:

When the Israelites came out of Egypt and they came to Marah and found the water unfit to drink they were given the kind of מים המאזררים that one gives to a woman suspected of unproven marital infidelity. All the Egyptians had been saying that the children of the Israelites who left Egypt were in reality the offspring of Egyptians who had slept with Jewish women. As a result of such accusations a number of Jewish husbands suspected their wives of infidelities committed in Egypt. Also Jewish wives suspected their husbands of infidelities committed with Egyptian women. This is why G'd told Moses to examine the truth of these accusations by means of these waters, to eliminate unfounded suspicions. After that episode G'd gave them חוק ומשפט ושם נסהו, "there He gave them statutes and social laws, and there He examined them" (Exodus 15,25). The Torah attests to this by calling the tribes "שבטי ישראל י-ה עדות לישראל" that all these accusations had been unfounded. An allusion to this can be found in our verses in the peculiar description of the tribes as השמעוני, הראובני, etc, instead of שמעון, ראובן, etc. The extra letters ה and י, spell the two lettered name of G'd, י-ה, and indicate that all the tribes were pure, no one had committed any infidelity, otherwise the Torah would not bestow this compliment on them. When the Priest examines the Sotah in our paragraph, the purpose is similar to that of Moses at the time.

The rabbi speak of the waters at Marah (מַרָּה) one of the locations which the Torah identifies as having been traveled through by the Israelites, during the Exodus. (*Shemot / Exodus 15:23-24, Bamidbar / Numbers 33:8*) The Torah narrative states the Israelites reached Marah after traveling in the Wilderness of Shur. The rabbinic interpretation for the reason of Marah was to prove the people of Israel in the wilderness. The rabbis say that this was because of marital infidelity. This is why following this event, the Lord gave the mitzvot on social laws and marital relations. These waters are compared to the waters that are given to a wife of a Jewish husband who suspects his wife of infidelity. The parallel then is drawn to the people and the Lord God in heaven, whether the people had committed any infidelity in their relationship with the Lord. Shney Luchot HaBrit concludes saying Israel was pure, and she had not yet violated the covenant.

Rambam in his Guide for the Perplexed has the following to say concerning afflictions and need.

Guide for the Perplexed, Part 3 51:13:

Hence it appears to me that it is only in times of such neglect that some of the ordinary evils befall a prophet or a perfect and pious man: and the intensity of the evil is proportional to the duration of those moments, or to the character of the things that thus occupy their mind. Such being the case, the great difficulty is removed that led philosophers to assert that Providence does not extend to every individual, and that man is like any other living being in this respect, viz., the argument based on the fact that good and pious men are afflicted with great evils. We have thus explained this difficult question even in accordance with the philosophers' own principles. Divine Providence is constantly watching over those who have obtained that blessing which is prepared for those who endeavour to obtain it. If man frees his thoughts from worldly matters, obtains a knowledge of God in the right way, and rejoices in that knowledge, it is impossible that any kind of evil should befall him while he is with God, and God with him. When he does not meditate on God, when he is separated from God, then God is also separated from him; then he is exposed to any evil that might befall him; for it is only that intellectual link with God that secures the presence of Providence and protection

from evil accidents. Hence it may occur that the perfect man is at times not happy, whilst no evil befalls those who are imperfect; in these cases what happens to them is due to chance. This principle I find also expressed in the Law. Comp. “And I will hide my face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall befall them: so that they will say in that day, Are not these evils come upon us, because our God is not among us?” (Deut. 31:17). It is clear that we ourselves are the cause of this hiding of the face, and that the screen that separates us from God is of our own creation. This is the meaning of the words: “And I will surely hide my face in that day, for all the evils which they shall have wrought” (ibid. ver. 18). There is undoubtedly no difference in this regard between one single person and a whole community. It is now clearly established that the cause of our being exposed to chance, and abandoned to destruction like cattle, is to be found in our separation from God. Those who have their God dwelling in their hearts, are not touched by any evil whatever. For God says: “Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God” (Isa. 41:10). “When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee” (ibid. 42:2). For if we prepare ourselves, and attain the influence of the Divine Intellect, Providence is joined to us, and we are guarded against all evils. Comp. “The Lord is on my side; I will not fear; what can man do unto me?” (Ps. 118:6). “Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace” (Job 22:2 1); i.e., turn unto Him, and you will be safe from all evil.

Rambam states that ordinary evils befall a prophet or a pious man and that the intensity of the evil that befalls him is proportional to his duration of lapsing or walking contrary to the mitzvot. Note how he also equates what one occupies one’s mind with as opposed to what one has done physically. The point is that good and pious men throughout history have been afflicted with great evils. He continues saying that if a man seeks knowledge of the Lord and to walk in His ways, it is impossible that any evil will befall him. Is this true? For the man who rejoices in the knowledge of the Lord, no matter the circumstance, his joy is complete. On the other hand, the one who does not meditate upon the Lord, ordering his thoughts to think upon Scripture, Rambam says this separates a man from the presence, and from protection. He says that we are the cause for the hiding of the face of God. There is no difference between a single person and an entire community. Rambam concludes saying, *“Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God” (Isa. 41:10). “When you pass through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee” (ibid. 42:2). For if we prepare ourselves, and attain the influence of the Divine Intellect, Providence is joined to us, and we are guarded against all evils. Comp. “The Lord is on my side; I will not fear; what can man do unto me?” (Ps. 118:6). “Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace” (Job 22:2 1); i.e., turn unto Him, and you will be safe from all evil.”*

King David calls upon the Lord based upon his affliction and need, and the idea may be that David always meditated upon the Lord and His Word, and remained in the providence and protection of God. His affliction and need are then reasons for calling out to the Lord God in heaven for help. If you are in a situation where evil befalls you, personal examination is necessary by reason that we are the cause of the hiding of the face of God. The tarrying in answer to prayer is for the purpose of drawing us near, so that we persevere in our seeking the Lord in heaven and His Messiah Yeshua. There is a reason for everything, even illness may be used by the Lord to draw us and our family members nearer to the Lord. Don’t let hardship be the cause and root of bitterness against the Lord God in heaven.

The Psalmist continues describing the kind of man he is saying, ב שְׁמֶרָה נִפְשִׁי כִּי-חֲסִיד אֲנִי הוֹשַׁע עֲבָדְךָ, אֶתְהַי אֱלֹהֵי הַבּוֹטֵחַ אֵלַיךָ: ג חָנַנִי אֲדֹנָי כִּי-אֵלֶיךָ אֶקְרָא כָּל-הַיּוֹם: ד שְׂמַח נַפְשׁ עֲבָדְךָ כִּי אֵלֶיךָ אֲדֹנָי נִפְשִׁי אֶשְׂאֵ: ה אֶתְהַי אֱלֹהֵי הַבּוֹטֵחַ אֵלַיךָ: 86:2 Preserve my soul, for I am a godly man; O You my God, save Your servant who trusts in You. 86:3 Be gracious to me, O Lord, For to You I cry all day long. 86:4 Make glad the soul of Your servant, For to You, O Lord, I lift up my soul. 86:5 For You, Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, And abundant in lovingkindness to all who call upon You. (NASB) The Aramaic Targum

states, ב נטור נפשי ארום חסידא אנה פרוק עבדך את אלהי יי די אנה מתרחיץ עלך: ג חוס עלי יהוה ארום, קדמך קומך אצלי כל יומא: ד אחדי נפשא דעבדך ארום לותך יהוה נפשי אזקוף בצלו: ה ארום את הוא יהוה טב: 86:2 *Protect my soul, for I am pious; redeem your servant – you, O my God – for I do put my trust in you.* 86:3 *Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I will pray in your presence all the day.* 86:4 *Gladden the soul of your servant, for to you, O Lord, will I lift up my soul in prayer.* 86:5 *For you are the Lord, good to the righteous and forgiving to those who turn to his Torah, and multiplying favor to all who pray in your presence.* (EMC) The Septuagint states, 86:2 φύλαξον τὴν ψυχὴν μου ὅτι ὁσιός εἰμι σῶσον τὸν δοῦλόν σου ὁ θεός μου τὸν ἐλπίζοντα ἐπὶ σέ 86:3 ἐλέησόν με κύριε ὅτι πρὸς σέ κεκράξομαι ὅλην τὴν ἡμέραν 86:4 εὐφρανὸν τὴν ψυχὴν τοῦ δούλου σου ὅτι πρὸς σέ κύριε ἦρα τὴν ψυχὴν μου 86:5 ὅτι σύ κύριε χρηστὸς καὶ ἐπιεικὴς καὶ πολυέλεος πᾶσι τοῖς ἐπικαλουμένοις σε 86:2 *Preserve my soul, for I am holy; save thy servant, O God, who hopes in thee.* 86:3 *Pity me, O Lord: for to thee will I cry all the day.* 86:4 *Rejoice the sold of thy servant: for to thee, O Lord, have I lifted up my soul.* 86:5 *For thou, O Lord, art kind, and gentle; and plenteous in mercy to all that call upon thee.* (LXX) David pleads his case based upon his own righteousness saying that he is a pious man. Merriam Webster’s dictionary defines pious as “marked by or showing reverence for deity and devotion to divine worship, sacred or devotional as distinct from the profane or secular.” David says that he will pray in the presence of the Lord all day long. He is separating himself to המקום (the Place) the Lord has established for us to draw near, and so he devotes himself to prayer and worship. The Targum states that the Lord God is good to the righteous and forgiving to those who turn to His Torah (instruction). The Mishnah and Rambam have the following to say concerning the one who is pious before God.

Mishnah Berakhot 5:1:

[One] should not stand up to pray unless he is in a serious frame of mind. The original pious ones used to wait one hour and then pray, in order to direct their hearts towards the Omnipresent. [While one is reciting Shemoneh Esrei,] even if the king greets him, he should not respond to him, and even if a snake wraps around his heel, he should not interrupt. (אין עומדין) להתפלל אלא מתוך כובד ראש. חסידים הראשונים היו שוהים שעה אחת ומתפללים כדי שיכוננו (את לבם למקום. אפילו המלך שואל בשלומו לא ישיבנו; ואפילו נחש כרוך על עקבו לא יפסיק)

Mishneh Torah, Human Dispositions 1:5:

One who is carefully self-reflective, and who thus moves oneself from one’s norm toward one side or the other: this one is called pious. For instance, one who moves oneself away from proud-heartedness toward the opposite side and attains a lowly spirit: he is called pious, and his is the middah of piety. But if he moves himself only toward the middle [of the scale] and becomes humble, he is called wise, and his is the middah of wisdom. And so on: this is so with all the rest of the middot. The early pious ones would incline their dispositions from the middle of the scale toward one of the two extremes: some would incline toward the first extreme and others would incline toward the other. This is going beyond what the law requires. We are commanded to walk in these intermediate paths which are good and straight, as it is said: “Walk in [God’s] ways.” [Deuteronomy 28:9]

The *Mishnah Berakhot 5:1* suggests that one is to kneel humbly before the Lord when praying. The kneeling versus standing indicates that one is more important (serious) as opposed to the other. The Mishnah continues saying that one should wait and prepare his or her heart before going before the Lord in prayer. In addition, it does not matter who comes to you, does not matter a persons social status (e.g. the king), do not interrupt your prayer because the one before whom you stand or kneel in prayer is greater. Rambam believes that being pious is the act of turning to one side or the other as opposed to the norm. The example he gives is of being proud hearted and turning from being proud towards having a lowly spirit and becomes humble. Rambam then speaks of going to extremes, some men go to the extreme being arrogant, and others

go to the extreme being lowly of spirit. His conclusion is that doing either one of these is going beyond what the Torah requires. The idea is that there is an intermediate path, one that sets between pride and humility, that is understood as the meaning of walking the good and straight path according to God’s Torah. The point is that David walked in this intermediate path, he was not too arrogant and not too lowly of spirit. He says, 86:2 *Protect my soul, for I am pious; redeem your servant – you, O my God – for I do put my trust in you.* (NASB) The sign of piety in one’s life is as David, to trust in the Lord God in heaven. The best way to study piety is to examine the lives of the great men of faith and of Yeshua the Messiah who humbled himself to the point of laying down his life for us upon the cross. Yeshua came not only to display the glory of God, but also to show us the way of life. All that we read and know of the life of Yeshua is that he was thoroughly Jewish. All that He conveyed to us is through the understanding of the Hebrew Bible, Judaism, and Jewish culture. From His circumcision (brit-milah) at eight days old, to his “*redemption of the firstborn*” (pidyon ha-ben) experience in the Temple, to His customarily attending synagogue services, to His eating the Passover the night he was betrayed, everything depicts a thoroughly committed Jewish Messiah! According to the Gospels, Yeshua celebrated not only Passover, but also all of the major feasts and festivals of Israel including Chanukah (“*Feast of Dedication*”) according to *John 10:22*. The Scriptures portray Yeshua as participating regularly in Shabbat services in local synagogues, particularly in Nazareth and Capernaum. He often read from the Hebrew scrolls and also offered Shabbat homilies. This is an example of a pious life, to observe what the Lord calls us to observe, and to live in righteousness, justice, truth, and love for one another. The Jewish masses followed Him everywhere and highly valued the teaching he offered in classic rabbinical style.

David (the Psalmist) in *Tehillim / Psalms 86*, pleads for the Lord to hear his prayer saying, וְהִאֲזִינָה יְהוָה תְּפִלָּתִי וְהִקְשִׁיבָה בְּקוֹל תַּחֲנוּנוֹתַי: ז בְּיוֹם צָרָתִי אֶקְרָאָךָ כִּי תַעֲנֶנִּי: ח אֵין-כְּמוֹךָ בְּאֱלֹהִים | אֲדַנִּי וְאֵין כְּמַעְשֶׁיךָ: ט כָּל-גּוֹיִם | אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ יְבוֹאוּ וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְפָנֶיךָ אֲדַנִּי וַיִּכְבְּדוּ לְשִׁמְךָ: י כִּי-גְדוֹל אַתָּה וְעֲשָׂה נִפְלְאוֹת אַתָּה אֱלֹהִים: 86:6 Give ear, O Lord, to my prayer; And give heed to the voice of my supplications! 86:7 In the day of my trouble I shall call upon You, For You will answer me. 86:8 There is no one like You among the gods, O Lord, Nor are there any works like Yours. 86:9 All nations whom You have made shall come and worship before You, O Lord, And they shall glorify Your name. 86:10 For You are great and do wondrous deeds; You alone are God. (NASB) Notice how David says: וְהִאֲזִינָה יְהוָה תְּפִלָּתִי וְהִקְשִׁיבָה בְּקוֹל תַּחֲנוּנוֹתַי: asking the Lord to give ear to his prayer, and to וְהִקְשִׁיבָה בְּקוֹל “give heed to the voice” using the word קשב meaning “attention.” David does not say please “listen” using the word שמע. The reason this is significant is because of the way in which שמע is used in the Hebrew Scriptures, such as in *Shemot / Exodus 19:5* which says, וְעַתָּה אִם-שָׁמוּעַ תִּשְׁמָעוּ בְּקוֹלִי “Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice...” The phrase וְעַתָּה אִם-שָׁמוּעַ תִּשְׁמָעוּ is translated as “indeed obey” taken from the root word שמע meaning “to listen/hear.” The meaning of the word to listen, as it is translated to hear and obey, is not the approach David is taking in his psalm pleading for the Lord to hear him. If he had used the word שמע to describe the way he sought the Lord, this may not have been an act of piety and being humble before the Lord. He instead seeks the Lord to please pay close attention to his prayer. David says וְאֵין כְּמוֹךָ בְּאֱלֹהִים | אֲדַנִּי וְאֵין כְּמַעְשֶׁיךָ there is none like the Lord, he states אֵין-כְּמוֹךָ to place emphasis on how there is none like the Lord God in heaven, there is none who are able to do His works. All the nations whom the Lord had created will come to worship and glorify the Name (וַיִּכְבְּדוּ לְשִׁמְךָ). This is similar to what we read in the exodus, when the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt with a mighty hand.

Shemot / Exodus 8:6:

8:6 And he said: ‘Against to-morrow.’ And he said: ‘Be it according to thy word; that thou mayest know that there is none like unto the LORD our God. (KJV, וַיֹּאמֶר לְמַחָר וַיֹּאמֶר כְּדַבְּרֶךָ, (לְמַעַן תֵּדַע כִּי-אֵין כִּיהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ:)

Note how the miracles are designed to bring glory to the Name of the Lord our God. Sforno describes what this means, that there is none like the Lord our God, in the following way.

Sforno on Exodus 8:6, Part 2

למען תדע כי אין כה' אלוֹקֵנוּ, *that there is no power in the universe other than the G'd of the Israelites who possesses the power to fundamentally effect changes in natural law. At that time, consigning crocodiles exclusively to the river Nile was a fundamental change in the habitat of this species. This species is different from all other known species in that instead of moving its lower jaw when eating, it moves its upper jaw. It also ingests food without excreting waste products. G'd will banish the species only from you and your houses, as this is all you asked for.*

Sforno states that the Lord has the power to fundamentally effect changes in natural law. He is able to adjust the laws of thermodynamics, chemistry and physics according to His will for the purpose of saving His people and bringing glory to His Name. In addition, the Mekhilta has the following to say concerning *Tehillim* / *Psalms* 86:8 and the phrase “*There is none like You...*”

Mekhilta 15:1, Part 5

(*Ibid.* 1) “*I shall sing to the L rd*”: Befitting is (the ascription of) “*strength*” to the L rd. And thus did David say (*I Chronicles* 29:11) “*To you, O L rd, is (befitting [the ascription of]) greatness, might, splendor, triumph, and majesty.*” A king of flesh and blood enters a province, and all praise him as “*strong*” — when he is weak; as “*rich*” — when he is poor; as “*wise*” — when he is foolish; as “*merciful*” — when he is cruel; as “*trusty*” — when he is not. He is lacking in all of these (fine) attributes — All men are flattering him. But it is not so with Him who spoke and brought the world into being. He transcends all that He is praised for. “*I shall sing to the L rd,*” who is strong — (*Devarim* 10:17) “*the G d who is great and strong and awesome,*” (*Psalms* 24:8) “*the L rd, mighty and strong, the L rd, strong in war,*” (*Isaiah* 42:13) “*The L rd as a mighty one shall go forth. As a man of war, He will stir up wrath. He will shout; He will scream. He will overpower His foes,*” (*Jeremiah* 10:14) “*There is none like You, O L rd. Great are You and great is Your name in strength.*” “*I shall sing to the L rd,*” who is rich — (*Devarim* 10:19) “*To the L rd your G d are the heavens, etc.*”, (*Psalms* 24:1) “*To the L rd is the earth and its fullness, etc.*”, (*Ibid.* 95:5) “*His is the sea and He has made it,*” (*Chaggai* 2:8) “*Mine is the silver and Mine is the gold,*” (*Ezekiel* 18:4) “*All of he souls are Mine. The soul of the father and the soul of the son alike are Mine.*” “*I shall sing to the L rd,*” who is wise — (*Mishlei* 2:6) “*For the L rd shall give wisdom. From His mouth are knowledge and understanding*”, (*Daniel* 2:21) “*He gives wisdom to the wise, and knowledge to the knowers of understanding*”. (*Jeremiah* 10:7) “*Who will not fear You, King of the nations? For among all the sages of the nations and in all of their kingdoms, there is none like You.*” “*I shall sing to the L rd,*” for He is merciful — (*Exodus* 34:6) “*Hashem, Hashem, the G d who is merciful and gracious*”, (*Devarim* 4:31) “*For a merciful G d is the L rd your G d*”, (*Psalms* 25:6) “*Remember Your mercies, Hashem, etc.*”, (*Ibid.* 145:8) “*Good is the L rd to all, and His mercies are on all his works*”, (*Daniel* 9:9) “*To the L rd our G d is mercy and forgiveness.*” “*I shall sing to the L rd,*” who is a Judge — (*Devarim* 1:17) “*... for the judgment is G d's*”, (*Psalms* 82:1) “*G d stands in the assembly of the almighty. (In the midst of the judges shall He judge,;), (Devarim 32:4) “The Rock, perfect is His work, (for all of His ways are judgment.”). “I shall sing to the L rd,*” who is trusty (*Ibid.* 7:9) “*the trusty G d, etc.*” (*Ibid.* 32:4) “*... a G d of trust, without wrong, etc.*” “*I shall sing to the L rd,*” who is comely, who is glorious, who is exalted, whose like does not exist — (*Psalms* 89:7) “*For who in the heavens can be compared to the L rd, can be likened to the L rd among the sons of the mighty*”? (*Ibid.* 8) “*G d greatly dreaded in the great council of the holy, (held in awe by*

all around Him?”) And it is written (Ibid. 9), “O L rd, the G d of hosts (“tzeva’oth”), who, as You, is mighty, O L rd?: What is “tzeva’oth” (acronymically)? He is an “oth” (i.e., unique) in the midst of His retinue (“tzava”). And thus is it written (Devarim 33:2) “Ve’atha” (‘and He shall come’) from Rivevoth Kodesh” (figuratively: “the ten thousands of His holy ones.”) And thus did David say (Psalms 86:8) “There is none like You among the great ones, O L rd, and there are none like Your works.” And (Song of Songs 5:19-15) “My Beloved is clear and red,” “His head is finest gold,” “His eyes are like doves by water-courses,” “His cheeks are like beds of spice,” His hands are rods of gold,” “His legs are pillars of marble” — His are comeliness, greatness, strength, and glory! R. Yossi says (Psalms 8:3) “From the mouths of olelim and yonkim You have founded strength. “olelim” — infants in their mothers’ womb, as in (Iyyov 3:16) “Why was I not like a buried stillbirth, like olelim who never saw the light”? “yonkim” — those who seek their mothers’ breasts, as in (Joel 2:16) “Gather olelim and suckers (“yonkei”) of the breasts.” Rebbi says: “Olelim are infants outside (their mothers’ womb), viz. (Jeremiah 9:20) “to cut off the olel outside,” and (Eichah 4:4) “Olelim begged for bread. “Yonkim” are those at their mother’s breasts, viz.: “and suckers (“yonkei”) of the breasts.” These and those (at the splitting of the sea) opened their mouths and chanted song before the L rd. R. Meir says: Even fetuses in their mothers’ wombs opened their mouths and chanted song before the L rd, viz. (Psalms 68:27) “In assemblies bless G d — the L rd, from the source of Israel.” And not Israel alone chanted song before the L rd, but also the ministering angels, as it is written (Ibid. 8:2) “How mighty is Your name in all the earth — (You) who have spread Your splendor on the heavens!”

The Mekhilta is Aramaic (מכילתא) and is a halakhic midrash to the Book of Exodus. The name “*Mekhilta*,” corresponds to the Hebrew “*middah*” (“*measure*,” “*rule*”), and is used to denote a compilation of Scriptural exegesis (“*middot*,” *Talmudic Hermeneutic*). The Makhilta is connected to the Psalm by the way it describes the Lord, His strength, greatness, splendor, and majesty. The rabbis say that the Lord transcends all of the praises of men, in the sense that He is not moved by the respect of men, He is simply to be praised for who He is, mighty, powerful, merciful, and loving.

David then asks the Lord to teach him His ways saying, יֵא הוֹרְנִי יְהוָה דְרָכֶךָ אֱהַלְךָ בְּאַמְתֶּךָ יַחַד לְבָבִי לִי־ רָאָה שְׁמֶךָ: יב אֹדְךָ | אֲדַנִּי אֱלֹהִי בְּכָל־לִבִּי וְאֶכְבְּדָה שְׁמֶךָ לְעוֹלָם: יג כִּי־חִסְדֶּךָ גְּדוֹל עָלַי וְהִצַּלְתָּ נַפְשִׁי מִשְׂאוֹל תַּחֲ- 86:11 Teach me Your way, O Lord; I will walk in Your truth; Unite my heart to fear Your name. 86:12 I will give thanks to You, O Lord my God, with all my heart, And will glorify Your name forever. 86:13 For Your lovingkindness toward me is great, And You have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol. (NASB) What is the significance of David asking the Lord to teach him His ways? What does that mean? How does that look in our lives today? What ways is David referring to? He asks the Lord to teach (הוֹרְנִי) him his ways (דְרָכֶךָ), where to teach is to ask the Lord to be diligent in instructing him in the way that he should go. He asks the Lord to lead him, to guide him, and to send him forth, these things are paralleled to the wilderness journey when the people of Israel were led by the pillar of God. This is an act of respect towards the Lord, seeking to be guided by the Lord in all his ways, and the purpose should be so we may be capable of teaching others the way of the Lord as well. The manner in which the Lord teaches us His ways is according to His Word, in the Torah, and all of Scripture. Walking in God’s ways, the acts of righteousness we do for the glory of God, promote the fear of the Lord. The fear of the Lord produces the actions that indicate that one has the fear of the Lord, the very thing that He wants us to possess in our lives. What does the fear of the Lord produce? Obedience to God’s Word. The clearest evidence that we have of Fearing God in our lives is by how completely and consistently we follow His Torah, the חוקים (statutes) and mitzvot (מצוות, commands).

Tehillim / Psalms 86 concludes saying, יד אֱלֹהִים | וְיָדִים קָמוּ עָלַי וְעַדַת עָרִיצִים בִּקְשׁוּ נַפְשִׁי וְלֹא שָׁמוּךְ לִנְגָדִם: טו וְאַתָּה אֲדַנִּי אֶל־רַחוּם וְחַנוּן אַרְךָ אַפַּיִם וְרַב־חֶסֶד וְאַמֶּת: טז פִּנָּה אֱלִי וְחַנּוּנִי תִנְה־עֲזָךְ לְעַבְדֶּךָ וְהוֹשִׁיעָה

זו עשה-עמי אות לטובה ויראו שנאי ויבשו כי-אתה יהיה עורתי ונחמתי:
 86:14 O God, arrogant men have risen up against me, And a band of violent men have sought my life, And they have not set You before them. 86:15 But You, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, Slow to anger and abundant in loving-kindness and truth. 86:16 Turn to me, and be gracious to me; Oh grant Your strength to Your servant, And save the son of Your handmaid. 86:17 Show me a sign for good, That those who hate me may see it and be ashamed, Because You, O Lord, have helped me and comforted me. (NASB) David describes the men who are coming against him as being arrogant, violent, and not having set the Lord before them, meaning they are not seeking the Lord God in heaven, and they do not choose to walk in His ways. There is no fear of God in their lives. The Torah speaks both of God's justice and His wrath over disobedience (sin). The Lord's justice is described as "There is no other God besides me, a just God and a Savior" (Isaiah 45:21) and "He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is He" (Devarim / Deuteronomy 32:4). These descriptions of God are unique in the sense that God's mercy is shown through His justice. This appears to be what David is hopeful for, the Lord would show His mercy through His justice against the men who are being arrogant, violent, and have not set the Lord before them. Notice how justice and mercy work together according to the rabbis in Akeidat Yitzchak.

Akeidat Yitzchak 98:2-3

You will note that Abraham bestowed two qualities on his children, i.e "righteousness and justice." (Genesis 18,19) To match this, G'd had equipped Abraham's children with two qualities also, "loving kindness and mercy," as it is written in Deut. 7,9, "and He will preserve for you the covenant and the kindness. It is further written in Deut. 13,18 "He will give you mercy and have mercy on you." When Israel lost its distinctive qualities, G'd withdrew His contribution as we read in Amos 6,12, "you turned justice into gall and the fruit of the righteous into wormwood." So G'd says "I have withdrawn My peace from this people, and the loving kindness and mercy." (Jeremiah 16,5) When the Jewish people cleanse themselves, as is written "Zion is being redeemed through justice and its penitent sinners through righteousness," (Isaiah 1,27) G'd also restores kindness and mercy. We read in Isaiah 54,10, "even if mountains were to disappear as well as the hills be shaken, My kindness will not depart from you and My covenant of peace will not be shaken, says the Lord who has mercy upon you." Since Israel contributed its share, G'd contributes His own share, and places it on the head of His chosen lady, as is written "I betroth you unto Me through righteousness and justice, through loving kindness and mercy." (Hosea 2,21)

It is said that Abraham "bestowed" ("confer on, grant, accord, afford, endow someone with, vest in, present, award, give") on his children "righteousness and justice." This suggests that he lived with righteousness and justice and his children learned to do the same. As a result, God equipped his children with "loving kindness and mercy." The Lord gives mercy and has mercy on His people. The commentary concludes with Hosea 2:21 which states, "I betroth you unto Me through righteousness and justice, through loving kindness and mercy." There is a connection to the people of God who choose to "cleanse themselves, as is written 'Zion is being redeemed through justice and its penitent sinners through righteousness,'" (Isaiah 1:27) and the mercy of God. David is seeking the Justice and Mercy of the Lord against his enemies. This is clearly stated in Tehillim / Psalms 86:15 But You, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, Slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness and truth. 86:16 Turn to me, and be gracious to me; Oh grant Your strength to Your servant, And save the son of Your handmaid. (NASB) The Lord is gracious and merciful, and this is all the more reason why we should diligently seek Him and His Messiah Yeshua. Let's Pray!

Rabbinic Commentary

The Rabbinic Commentary (Midrash) on Tehillim / Psalms 86 has 8 parts. Reading through the Midrash

we will be looking at Part 1, 2, 4, 6, 7 and 8. Let's begin by outlining *Midrash Tehillim Chapter 85, Parts 1, 2, and 3.*

Outline of Midrash Tehillim / Psalms, Chapter 86, Part 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, and 8

Part 1

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying, “*A prayer of David. Bow down Your ear, O Lord, hear me (Tehillim / Psalms 86:1).*”
- The פתיחתא (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*Rabbi Levi said, At the time he had to leave the earth, the farewell blessing that Moshe gave to Judah, Hear, Lord, the voice of Judah (Devarim / Deuteronomy 33:7), and therefore David was entitled to say, Bow down Your ear, O Lord, hear me.*”
- The משל (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis discuss the idea of David asking the Lord to listen to his prayer
- The נמשל (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the משל (mashal), the rabbis make a comparison between the Lord calling Himself holy, and David calling himself holy.
- The Concluding phrase says, “*So, when David heard himself reviled, but remained silent, he could say, Keep my soul, for I am holy.*”

Part 2

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying, “*Be merciful unto me, O Lord; for unto You do I cry out all the day (Tehillim / Psalms 86:3).*”
- The פתיחתא (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*But it is likely that a man would be praying all the day?*”
- The משל (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis discuss this concept in the context of a master and a servant relationship.
- The נמשל (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the משל (mashal), the rabbis expand upon the mashal by discussing the Lord taking the writ of debt from a person.
- The Concluding phrase says, “*He snatches a writ of debt out of the evil deeds, and tips the balance toward the pan of good deeds, as is said, Who is a God like unto You, that carries away the iniquity? (Micah 7:18).*”

Part 4

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the דיבור המתחיל (Dibur Hamathil) saying, “*All nations whom You have made will come and prostrate themselves before You, O Lord (Tehillim / Psalms 86:9) whether they want to, or do not want to.*”
- The פתיחתא (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*After their proud necks will have been bent low, they will glorify your name because You are great and do wondrous things (Tehillim / Psalms 86:10).*”
- The משל (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the פתיחתא (Petihta), the rabbis discuss the meaning of being forced to bow before the Lord God Almighty.
- The נמשל (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the משל (mashal), the rabbis expand upon the mashal with people being praised because they helped the Lord with His burden.
- The Concluding phrase says, “*You can see that this is true, for Rabbi Hanina and Rabbi Johanan taught, The angels were created on the second day, so that the nations of the earth could not say, Michael stood in the north and Gabriel in the south, and together with God they stretched out the heavens.*”

Part 6

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying, “*I will praise You, O Lord my God, with all my heart (Tehillim / Psalms 86:12)...*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “... *that is, with its good Inclination and its evil Inclination, so that there will be no wavering in me because of them.*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis discuss the meaning of praising the Lord and having a heart devoted to Him.
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal), the rabbis expand upon the mashal discussing the Yetzer Hara and Yetzer hatov.
- The Concluding phrase says, “*Rabbi Aha observed, to what can the words You have delivered my soul from the lowest hell (Tehillim / Psalms 86:13) allude, except to the way of adulterers which, according to Rabbi Yudan, leads down into the lowest hell.*”

Part 7

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying, “*In the verse O God, the proud are risen up against me, and the company of violent men have sought after my soul (Tehillim / Psalms 86:14),*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*David was alluding to Doeg and Ahithophel. And the end of the verse, And have not set You before them, means that David said, What You said to Samuel concerning me, namely, Arise, anoint him; for this is he (1 Samuel 86:15).*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis discuss the meaning of the verse in the psalm regarding the wicked who raise up against David.
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal), the rabbis expand upon the mashal saying that the Lord shows patience toward the wicked, but eventually makes them pay, whereas, the righteous he allows bad things to happen, but in the end he gives good things unto His people.
- The Concluding phrase says, “*No, more, He keeps them locked up, for it is said, The Lord has opened His armory, and has brought forth the weapons of His indignation (Jeremiah 50:25). But before God unlocks His armory, and before He thrusts with the weapons, He, long-suffering, rethinks Himself, if one may be permitted to speak thus of God.*”

Part 8

- The Midrash introduces the Psalm with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying, “*O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me (Tehillim / Psalms 86:16).*”
- The **פתיחתא** (Petihta) the homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*David said, Master of the universe, turn away from all Your concerns, and turn unto me.*”
- The **משל** (mashal) “*the parable,*” goes on to explain the **פתיחתא** (Petihta), the rabbis discuss the meaning of the Lord showing mercy to David using examples of different people showing him favor..
- The **נמשל** (Nimshal) “*expansion on the parable*” expands upon the **משל** (mashal), the rabbis expand upon the mashal saying the Lord God forgave David’s sin, this is the way the Lord shows His favor.
- The Concluding phrase says, “*For You Lord, have helped me with New Year’s Day, and have comforted me with the Day of Atonement, of which it is said, For on this day will atonement be made for you (Vayikra / Leviticus 16:30).*”

Midrash Tehillim 86, Part 1 opens with the **דיבור המתחיל** (Dibur Hamathil) saying, “*A prayer of David. Bow down Your ear, O Lord, hear me (Tehillim / Psalms 86:1).*” The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*Rabbi Levi said, At the time he had to leave the earth, the farewell blessing that Moshe gave to Ju-*

dah, Hear, Lord, the voice of Judah (Devarim / Deuteronomy 33:7), and therefore David was entitled to say, Bow down Your ear, O Lord, hear me.” The entire midrash states the following:

<p>מדרש תהלים פרק פו סימן א</p> <p>א תפלה לדוד הטה (אלהי) [ה'] אזנך ענני. אמר ר' לוי אגיסטרון זה נתן משה ליהודה בשעה שביקש ליפטר מן העולם, שנאמר וזאת ליהודה [ויאמר שמע ה' קול יהודה] (דברים לג ז), לפיכך הטה (אלהי) [ה'] אזנך ענני. שמרה נפשי כי חסיד אני. הקב"ה נקרא חסיד, שנאמר כי חסיד אני נאם ה' (ירמיה ג יב), ודוד קרא עצמו חסיד, אמר ר' אבא בשם ר' אלכסנדרי כל מי ששומע קללתו ושותק, וספוקה בידו למחות, נעשה שותף להקב"ה, שכן שומע שמ" חרפים לפניו אומות העולם ושותק, ודוד היה שומע קללתו ושותק, לפיכך אמר שמרה נפשי כי חסיד אני.</p>	<p>Midrash Tehillim 86, Part 1</p> <p>1. A prayer of David. Bow down Your ear, O Lord, hear me (Tehillim / Psalms 86:1). Rabbi Levi said, At the time he had to leave the earth, the farewell blessing that Moshe gave to Judah, Hear, Lord, the voice of Judah (Devarim / Deuteronomy 33:7), and therefore David was entitled to say, Bow down Your ear, O Lord, hear me. Keep my soul, for I am holy (Tehillim / Psalms 86:2). The Holy One blessed be He, called Himself Holy, as it is said, For I am Holy, says the Lord (Jeremiah 3:12). But for David to call himself holy? Rabbi Abba explained in the name of Rabbi Alexandri, Any man who remains silent when he hears himself reviled, even though he has at hand the means to strike back, becomes a partner of the Holy One blessed be He, who likewise remains silent as He hears the nations of the earth revile Him to His face. So, when David heard himself reviled, but remained silent, he could say, Keep my soul, for I am holy.</p>
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Note how the MT states, א תפלה לדוד הטה יהוה אזנך ענני כי-עני ואביון אני: A prayer of David. 86:1 Incline Your ear, O Lord, and answer me; For I am afflicted and needy. (NASB) and the rabbis say in the midrash, “Bow down Your ear, O Lord, hear me.” They say הטה אזנך “tilt/bow the ear.” Then they say David had to leave the earth and then quote from Moshe in Devarim / Deuteronomy 33:7 And this regarding Judah; so he said, ‘Hear, O Lord, the voice of Judah, And bring him to his people. With his hands he contended for them, And may You be a help against his adversaries.’ (NASB, והנה ויאמר שמע יהוה) ז וזאת ליהודה ויאמר שמע יהוה (קול יהודה ואל-עמו תביאנו ידיו רב לו ועזר מצריו תהיה: Because Moshe said “Hear, O Lord, the voice of Judah,” David was able to pray “Bow down Your ear, O Lord, hear me.” The midrash continues saying that the Lord calls Himself holy, but how is David able to call himself holy? The MT states, ב שמרה נפשי כי-, ב נטור נפשי ארום חסידא אנה 86:2 Preserve my soul, for I am a **godly** man; O You my God, save Your servant who trusts in You. (NASB) The Aramaic Targum states, ב נטור נפשי ארום חסידא אנה 86:2 Protect my soul, for I am **pious**; redeem your servant – you, O my God – for I do put my trust in you. (EMC) The rabbis say the way David comments about himself as a khasid הקסיד, a pious one, is another way of saying that “I am holy.” They ask, how could David call himself holy in light of his sins? The conclusion is “Any man who remains silent when he hears himself reviled, even though he has at hand the means to strike back, becomes a partner of the Holy One blessed be He, who likewise remains silent as He hears the nations of the earth revile Him to His face.” Remaining silent is synonymous to being humble before both the Lord and men on earth. The idea of being humble for most people brings to mind that one is weak (a form of weakness). The fact is being humble takes great strength. Why do you suppose the Tanach and the Apostolic Writings have so much to say concerning being humble? The Apostle Peter said in 1 Peter 5:6-7 “Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time He may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on Him, because He cares for you.” (NASB) The Lord cares for us, He is in control, and He calls us to humble ourselves before Him. This is not about control, but about having understanding, and the need for us to recognize the source of our strength, the Lord God in heaven, and His Messiah Yeshua. When we humble ourselves, it is only then that we truly worship Him, submitting our lives to His word, and living our lives for Him. In humility, we trust the Lord with what’s going on in our lives and believing He is the provider instead of trusting in ourselves.

Yeshua was the ultimate example of humility. Out of obedience to His Father, He humbled Himself all the way to the point of death upon the cross. The Scriptures say because of this the Lord God exalted Him, and in a similar manner, at a future time, He will exalt us (1 Peter 5:6-7). Paul writes of Yeshua saying, *Philippians 2:8 Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 2:9 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, 2:10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 2:11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (NASB)* Yeshua practiced humility and holiness as a **הַקְּטִידִים**, a righteous one, and we are told to walk in the manner that He walked, and therefore we need to strive for the same in our lives. Midrash Tehillim 86, Part 1 concludes saying, “So, when David heard himself reviled, but remained silent, he could say, *Keep my soul, for I am holy.*” Holiness and Righteousness are key aspects of our lives in the Messiah Yeshua.

Midrash Tehillim 86, Part 2 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (**דיבור המתחיל**) saying, “*Be merciful unto me, O Lord; for unto You do I cry out all the day (Tehillim / Psalms 86:3).*” The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*But it is likely that a man would be praying all the day?*” The entire midrash states the following:

<p>מדרש תהלים פרק פו סימן ב</p> <p>ב חנני ה' כי אליך אקרא כל היום. וכי אפשר לו לאדם להתפלל כל היום, אלא העולם הזה שהוא יום לאומות העולם, ולילה לישראל, הוי חנני ה' כי אליך אקרא כל היום. שמח נפש עבדך כי אליך ה' נפשי אשא. בר קפרא אמר אם יש לו לאדם עבד בתוך ביתו, אם אומר לו אני לוקח לך בגד, מיד משמחו, מה בשר ודם אומר לעבדו כן כדי לשמחו, אנו שעבדיך אנחנו ואתה חי וקים, על אחת כמה וכמה, הוי שמח נפש עבדך. כי אתה ה' טוב וסלה [ורב חסד]. אמר ר' פנחס הכהן כף מאזנים מעויין הוא, כאן עוונות, כאן זכויות, מה הקב"ה עושה, חוטף שטר אחד מן החובות, ומטה אותן לכף זכות, שנאמר מי אל כמוך נושא עון (מיכה ז יח).</p>	<p>Midrash Tehillim 86, Part 2</p> <p>2. <i>Be merciful unto me, O Lord; for unto You do I cry out all the day (Tehillim / Psalms 86:3). But it is likely that a man would be praying all the day? Yes, for in this verse the day stands for this world, which is day for the nations about night for Israel. Hence, I cry out all the day. Be gracious unto me, O Lord, Rejoice the soul of Your servant; for unto You, O Lord, do I lift up my soul (Tehillim / Psalms 86:4). Bar Kappara said, If a man who has a servant in his house says to him, I will get you a garment, he at once makes his servant rejoice. Now, If a mortal says such a thing to his servant, and it is enough to make him rejoice, for You live forever. Hence, it is said, Be gracious unto me, O Lord, Rejoice the soul of Your servant; for unto You, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. For You, Lord, are good, and ready to pardon, and plenteous in mercy (Tehillim / Psalms 86:5). Rabbi Pinchas the Priest taught, When the pans of a scale balance exactly, with the evil deeds on one side and the good deeds on the other, what does the Holy One blessed be He do? He snatches a writ of debt out of the evil deeds, and tips the balance toward the pan of good deeds, as is said, Who is a God like unto You, that carries away the iniquity? (Micah 7:18).</i></p>
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The rabbis ask “... is likely that a man would be praying all the day?” What do you think? It is possible for a man to pray all day, for example, for those who are imprisoned by reason of their faith, such a person would cry out all the day for the Lord to bring justice. The midrash agrees saying, “*Yes, for in this verse the day stands for this world, which is day for the nations about night for Israel. Hence, I cry out all the day.*” The day for the nations and night for Israel may be an illustration of Israel being oppressed by her enemies, it is as daytime for the nation that is coming against Israel, however it seems as if it is night for Israel, where there is no light to see, and there is little one can do besides trusting in the Lord God in heaven for his Justice and Mercy. Bar Kappara said a parable to illustrate the meaning of crying out all the day and the Lord’s mercy.

Bar Kappara said, If a man who has a servant in his house says to him, I will get you a garment, he at once makes his servant rejoice. Now, If a mortal says such a thing to his servant, and it is enough to make him rejoice, for You live forever. Hence, it is said, Be gracious unto me, O Lord, Rejoice the soul of Your servant; for unto You, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. For You, Lord, are good, and ready to pardon, and plenteous in mercy (Tehillim / Psalms 86:5).

The idea here is that the master is getting his servant clothing, and his servant rejoices. The master is paralleled to the Lord God in heaven, who seeks for our well being. If a man says this to his servant and the servant rejoices, how much more so when the Lord God in heaven does so? The rabbis say that when the Lord does this the soul rejoices. When we think about what Bar Kappara said concerning the Lord and his blessings, consider that this is what the Lord does for the righteous, His children. The righteous received פְּעֻלָּה (recompense, reward, *Vayikra / Leviticus 19:13*), as a reward of one's labor, whereas the godless receive תְּבוּאָה (produce, product, revenue) as income which does not necessarily reflect the wicked man's unrighteous deeds. The Scriptures use the words לְהַטָּאת וּמוֹת and לְהַחְיִים צְדָקָה to illustrate that righteousness brings life and sin brings with it death. The reward for righteous labor serves to establish his life, to establish his position and elevate his happiness as the midrash states the soul rejoices. On the other hand, the income of the godless serves to ruin his life, because by his prosperity, he presumes he is well, and therefore, he adds sin unto more sin, whose wages are death. This is why the Scriptures say in *Revelation 22:11* 'Let the one who does wrong, still do wrong; and the one who is filthy, still be filthy; and let the one who is righteous, still practice righteousness; and the one who is holy, still keep himself holy.' (NASB) The wages of sin requires one to continue in his sins. The wages of righteousness requires one to continue in righteousness. The fleeting moment of the pleasures of sin is so appetizing to the flesh, that we need God's help to overcome the desire of unrighteousness. We need the Lord's help to empower us to be overcomers for the sake of His Name, and for His glory.

The midrash continues saying, "Rabbi Pinchas the Priest taught, When the pans of a scale balance exactly, with the evil deeds on one side and the good deeds on the other, what does the Holy One blessed be He do?" The concept here is in regard to our deeds being placed upon a balance, maasim tovim (מַעֲשִׂים טוֹבִים) versus maasim raim (מַעֲשִׂים רַעִים). Midrash Tehillim 68, Part 2 concludes saying, "He snatches a writ of debt out of the evil deeds, and tips the balance toward the pan of good deeds, as is said, Who is a God like unto You, that carries away the iniquity? (*Micah 7:18*)." The idea here is that we are guilty, and our salvation is only because of the mercy of the Lord. The Lord God Himself snatches the writ of debt that has been placed upon us due to our sins. This is what occurs by faith in the Messiah Yeshua. It is interesting how all of these concepts are consistent with what we find in the Apostolic Writings. The Lord is working in our lives, to empower us to overcome sin, to live for Him, and to change us from the inside out, writing His Torah upon our hearts. The Lord has His hand upon our lives, and He sent His son Yeshua to set the example, and to lay his life down for ours. What a wonderful God we serve, just as the prophet Micah said, "Who is a God like unto You, that carries away the iniquity?" Praise the Lord for the way in which He carries away our iniquities!

Midrash Tehillim 86, Part 4 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דִּבּוּר הַמַּתְחִיל) saying, "All nations whom You have made will come and prostrate themselves before You, O Lord (*Tehillim / Psalms 86:9*) whether they want to, or do not want to." The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, "After their proud necks will have been bent low, they will glorify your name because You are great and do wondrous things (*Tehillim / Psalms 86:10*)." The entire midrash states the following:

<p style="text-align: center;">מדרש תהלים פרק פו סימן ד</p> <p>ד כל גוים אשר עשית יבואו וישתחוו לפניך ה'. בעיין ולא בעיין תבירי קדל. ויכבדו לשמך. למה כי גדול אתה ועושה נפלאות. אמר ר' תנחום בשר ודם מקלסין אותו בפניו, ומקלסין איפרכין עמו, למה שהן מקלסין עמו בקילוסו, והן נוטלין עמו במשאו, אבל הקב"ה אינו כן, אין אדם נושא עמו במשאו, תדע לך שהוא כן ר' חנינא ור' יוחנן אמרו בשני נבראו המלאכים, כדי שלא יאמרו אומות העולם, מיכאל היה עומד מן הצפון, וגבריאל מן הדרום, והן מותחין עמו את השמים.</p>	<p>Midrash Tehillim 86, Part 4</p> <p>4. All nations whom You have made will come and prostrate themselves before You, O Lord (Tehillim / Psalms 86:9) whether they want to, or do not want to. After their proud necks will have been bent low, they will glorify your name because You are great and do wondrous things (Tehillim / Psalms 86:10). Rabbi Tanhum said, A mortal king, when he is praised to his face, the implication is that the governors of his provinces are praised with him. Why? Because they help him carry his burden, and so share with him the praise he receives. But it is not so with the Holy One blessed be He, for no one helps Him carry His burden. You can see that this is true, for Rabbi Hanina and Rabbi Johanan taught, The angels were created on the second day, so that the nations of the earth could not say, Michael stood in the north and Gabriel in the south, and together with God they stretched out the heavens.</p>
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The midrash opens with a statement that the nations will bow down and acknowledge the greatness and power of God, they will do so to glorify the name of God because He is great. The midrash states, “*Rabbi Tanhum said, A mortal king, when he is praised to his face, the implication is that the governors of his provinces are praised with him.*” Does this sound familiar from the Apostolic Writings? The Apostle Paul wrote to the Ephesians saying the following:

Ephesians 2:4-8

2:4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 2:5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 2:6 and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 2:7 so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; (NASB)

Paul says something very similar to the conclusion of the midrash, that the Lord God, our Father in heaven, raises us up in the Messiah, and we are seated with Him in heavenly places. What does it mean to be seated with Him? The Mishnah Pirkei Avot 3:2 states the following.

Mishnah Pirkei Avot 3:2

“... But two who are sitting together and there are words of Torah [spoken] between them, the Divine Presence rests with them, as it is said (Malachi 3:16): “Then those who feared the Lord spoke one with another, and the Lord hearkened and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before Him, for those who feared the Lord and for those who thought upon His Name.” I have no [Scriptural support for this] except [in a case of] two. From where [is there proof that] 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 (Lamentations 3:28): “He sits alone and is silent, since he takes [a reward] for it.”

The rabbis say that the two that sit together are in agreement, and the godly ones who sit together speak words of Torah together and the presence of God rests with them. This is consistent with what Yeshua said of Himself and our Father in heaven. He is seated in the heavenly, and he is in agreement with our Father in heaven, and he speaks words of Torah with the Father, he is One with the Father. When we live our lives according to God’s Torah, we are in agreement with Yeshua, with our Father, and with one another. When

two sit together, speaking words of Torah, the rabbis say a book of remembrance is written. And when two sit together and speak words of Torah, the Lord decides the reward for such a person. Based upon the Mishnah, there is great significance to the meaning of being seated together with the Messiah! It is all tied back to obedience to the Word of God, and the Lord empowering us to live for Him. And the implication is as the rabbis say in the midrash, that we will be honored and glory will be given to us because we are seated with him, Yeshua the Messiah. In addition to this, we read the words to Laodicea in *Revelation 3:18-22* which state the following.

Revelation 3:18-22

3:18 I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. 3:19 'Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent. 3:20 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and will dine with him, and he with Me. 3:21 'He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. 3:22 'He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.' (NASB)

Note how Laodicea is told to buy refined gold to become rich and have the ability to wear white garments to cloth the shame of nakedness, and eye salve to anoint the eye so that one may see. This is a reference to maasim tovim, the white garment is a reference to righteous deeds, and the righteous deeds that are coupled to a pure heart are what enable a man to be able to see God (*Matthew 5:8*). *Revelation 3:21* states for the one who overcomes, Yeshua will grant for him to sit down with him on his throne. Why do you think Yeshua would do such a thing for us? The reason is found in the midrash, which states, “*Why? Because they help him carry his burden, and so share with him the praise he receives. But it is not so with the Holy One blessed be He, for no one helps Him carry His burden.*” The idea here is that we are included, we are raised up with Yeshua, and have the opportunity to sit upon his throne, because we bore the testimony of faith, and a life lived for the glory of God. We bore the shame and the affliction for choosing righteousness over wickedness. The midrash states that the Lord God on the other hand does not have anyone to help Him carry His burden, and Midrash Tehillim 86, Part 4 concludes saying, “*You can see that this is true, for Rabbi Hanina and Rabbi Johanan taught, The angels were created on the second day, so that the nations of the earth could not say, Michael stood in the north and Gabriel in the south, and together with God they stretched out the heavens.*” The rabbinic understanding of the angels is they were created on the second day and not on the first, by reason that it was the Lord God in heaven who is the author of creation and He did not receive the help of anyone else!

Midrash Tehillim 86, Part 6 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying, “*I will praise You, O Lord my God, with all my heart (Tehillim / Psalms 86:12)...*” The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*... that is, with its good Inclination and its evil Inclination, so that there will be no wavering in me because of them.*” The entire midrash states the following:

<p>מדרש תהלים פרק פו סימן ו ו אודך [ה' אלהי] בכל (לבי) [לבבי]. ביצר הטוב וביצר הרע, שלא יהא בהם עקב. אמר ר' אחא מהו הצלת נפשי משאול תחתיה, ר' יודן אמר דרכן של מנאפים נתון בעמקה של שאול, ר' ברכיה בשם ר' יצחק אמר כי חסדך גדול עלי והצלת נפשי משאול תחתיה.</p>	<p>Midrash Tehillim 86, Part 6 6. <i>I will praise You, O Lord my God, with all my heart (Tehillim / Psalms 86:12) that is, with its good Inclination and its evil Inclination, so that there will be no wavering in me because of them. Rabbi Aha observed, to what can the words You have delivered my soul from the lowest hell (Tehillim / Psalms 86:13) allude, except to the way of adulterers which, according to Rabbi Yudan, leads down into the lowest hell.</i></p>
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The rabbis say that both the **יצר הרע** and the **יצר הטוב** give praise to the Lord because He is the One to whom praise is to be given. Both the evil and good inclination of man acknowledges the Lord as the author of life and mighty. Midrash Tehillim 86, Part 6 concludes saying, “*Rabbi Aha observed, to what can the words You have delivered my soul from the lowest hell (Tehillim / Psalms 86:13) allude, except to the way of adulterers which, according to Rabbi Yudan, leads down into the lowest hell.*” It is interesting how Rabbi Aha interprets the meaning of delivering the soul from the lowest hell, as a reference to the Lord delivering one from the way of the adulterer which leads to the lowest hell. Why does adultery lead one to the lowest hell? The rabbinic commentary Ein Yaakov has some to say concerning this question.

Ein Yaakov (Glick Edition), Bava Metzia 4:4:

A disciple has taught before R. Nachman b. Isaac: “He who exposes his neighbor to shame in public is considered as if he shed blood.” “Your statement is correct,” remarked R. Isaac, “for we see in the man who is exposed to shame in public that the red color of his face disappears and he becomes white.” Abaye said to R. Dimi: “What is the thing which is strictly observed in Palestine ?” And he answered : “To be careful [not] to make pale the face (i.e., putting people to shame) ; for R. Chanina said that all descend to Gehenna, except three. All! Is it possible? Say thus: All who descend to Gehenna return hence, except the following three descend and do not return: An adulterer, one who exposes his fellowman to shame in public, and one who applies vile names to his neighbor.” But is applying vile names not the same as exposing his fellowman to shame in public? The former refers even when he was already used to be named so. Rabba b. Chana said in the name of R. Jochanan: “(Fol. 59) A man should rather commit adultery than expose his fellowman to shame in public.” Whence is it inferred? From Raba’s lecture: What is the meaning of the passage (Ps. 35, 15) But when I halt they rejoice, and gather themselves together; . . . they tear me, and cease not. Thus said David before the Holy One, praised be He ! “Sovereign of the Universe, it is known and revealed before Thee that if they would tear my flesh the blood would not run. Even when they are occupied in the study of Negaim and Ahaloth they say to me: ‘David, who is an adulterer, with what kind of a death must he be punished?’ And I answered them: ‘He is to be hanged: he, however, has a share in the world to come, but he who exposes his fellowmen to shame in public has no share in the world to come.’” Mar Zutra b. Tubia in the name of Rab, according to others R. Chana b. Bizna in the name of R. Simeon the Pious, and still according to others, R. Jochanan in the name of R. Simon b. Jochai, said: “It is better that one throw himself in a burning furnace than expose his fellowman to shame in public. Whence do we infer it? From the act of Tamar, concerning whom it is written (Gen. 38, 25) When she was brought forth, she sent to her father-in-law, etc.”

The concepts put forward here is in regard to not exposing another to public shame. Adultery is the act of the violation of a covenant between a husband and wife, and the Lord God in heaven. Marriage is something that is performed in public, and with great honor. Adultery breaks up a marriage, and becomes public, causing public shame. The rabbis believe that this is the act of dishonoring one’s husband or wife, and shame causes one to become pale in the face, a reference to death, because violating the covenant leads to death, the death of the love between the two involved. The person who commits adultery descends into hell, and this is compared to slander (Lashon Hara), the evil tongue, the public act of applying vile names to a person, which brings shame and dishonor. That is how the rabbis connect the sin of Lashon Hara to the sin of Adultery. The commentary concludes with King David and the difficulty of understanding his having committed adultery while at the same time having a share in the world to come. He exposed his fellow man to shame.

In the conclusion of the midrash “*Rabbi Aha observed, to what can the words You have delivered my soul from the lowest hell (Tehillim / Psalms 86:13) allude, except to the way of adulterers which, according to Rabbi Yudan, leads down into the lowest hell.*” The point may be that the Lord God is capable of forgiving all our sins, with David being used as the example. David did not act in premeditation. He seemed

to act on the moment, and due to his lusts, he fell short of the command to not commit adultery. The more difficult text is his premeditation of murdering Uriah, BatSheva's husband, David ordered him to be slain with the sword of the children of Ammon.

Midrash Tehillim 86, Part 7 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying, ז אלהים זדים קמו, עלי ועדת עריצים בקשו נפשי *"In the verse O God, the proud are risen up against me, and the company of violent men have sought after my soul (Tehillim / Psalms 86:14),"* The Aramaic Targum states, יד אלהא, 86:14 זדונין קמון עלי ותקיפין תבעו נפשי ולא שויאו יתך לקבליהון: *O God, arrogant men have risen against me, and mighty men have sought my soul; and they have not kept you in front of them. (EMC)* The Septuagint states, 86:14 ὁ θεός παράνομοι ἐπανάστησαν ἐπ' ἐμέ καὶ συναγωγὴ κραταιῶν ἐζήτησαν τὴν ψυχὴν μου καὶ οὐ προέθεντό σε ἐνώπιον αὐτῶν 86:14 *O God, transgressors have risen up against me, and an assembly of violent men have sought my life; and have not set thee before them. (LXX)* The idea is wicked men do not keep the Lord God in front of them, meaning those who seek David's life are not obedient to the Torah command to love your neighbor as yourself, they seek his destruction, and thus are on the path to destruction themselves, seeking to harm the Lord's anointed one. The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, *"David was alluding to Doeg and Ahithophel. And the end of the verse, And have not set You before them, means that David said, What You said to Samuel concerning me, namely, Arise, anoint him; for this is he (1 Samuel 86:15)."* Doeg (דֹּיֵג) was an Edomite, he was the chief herdsman to King Saul. After parting from Jonathan, David fled from Saul's jealous anger and went to Nob. He went to Ahimelech, the High Priest, claiming to be on a mission sent by King Saul. Ahimelech fed David and his men with the bread of the presence, and gave David the sword of Goliath. Doeg was present and witnessed Ahimelech's service to David. (1 Samuel 21) Later, Saul asked about the whereabouts of David, and Doeg spoke upsaying, *"I saw the son of Jesse coming to Nob, to Ahimelech the son of Ahitub."* (1 Samuel 22:9) Doeg is mentioned in the MT in 1 Samuel 21-22, where he is described as responsible for the deaths of a large number of priests in Shilo at the Tabernacle. Ahitophel (אֲחִיתוֹפֵל) was a counselor of King David and a man greatly renowned for his words. At the time of Absalom's revolt he deserted David and supported the cause of Absalom. (2 Samuel 15:12) David sent his old friend Hushai back to Absalom, in order that he might counteract the counsel of Ahitophel. (2 Samuel 15:31-37) Ahitophel, seeing that his good advice against David had not been followed due to Hushai's influence, correctly predicted that the revolt would fail. He then left the camp of Absalom at once. He returned to Giloh, his native place, and after setting in order his house, he hanged himself, and was buried in the sepulcher of his fathers (2 Samuel 17:1-23).

The entire midrash states the following:

מדרש תהלים פרק פו סימן ז

ז אלהים זדים קמו עלי ועדת עריצים בקשו נפשי. [זה דואג ואחיתופל. ולא שמוך לנגדם. לא נזכרת מה שאמרת לשמואל קום משחהו כי זה הוא (ש"א שמואל א' טז יב)]. ואתה ה' אל רחום וחנון [ארך אפים ורב חסד ואמת]. אמר ר' שמואל בר נחמני מאריך רוחו עם הרשעים, וחוזר וגובה מהם, ומאריך רוחו עם הצדיקים, ומשפיע להם טובה ושלוה. אמר ר' אחא בשם ר' תנחום בר חייה מאריך רוחו [עד שלא יגבה, אבל אם התחיל לגבות הוא גובה, וכשמאריך רוחו] הוא מרחיק את האף, שנאמר באים מארץ מרחק [מקצה השמים] ה' וכלי זעמו (ישעיה יג ה), משל למלך שהיו לו שני לגיונות רעים, וכל מדינה שמרדה בו משלחן והולכין ומחריבין אותה, מה עשה המלך, הרחיק אותן ממנו, ואומר מרחיק אני אותן כדי שלא יהא מחבלין את המדינות, אמר ר' ברכיה בשם ר' לוי כך מלאך שהוא ממונה על האף רחוק הוא, שנאמר באים מארץ מרחק, אמר הקב"ה אם כעסתי על בניי עד שהאף בא לכלות, הן באים ונכפפים לי, ואני מקבלן ותוהא אני כביכול, אמר ר' יצחק יפתח ה' לך את אוצרו הטוב (דברים כח יב), עד שהוא פותח, עד שהוא נודד כביכול תוהא ארך אפים.

Midrash Tehillim 86, Part 7

7. *In the verse O God, the proud are risen up against me, and the company of violent men have sought after my soul (Tehillim / Psalms 86:14), David was alluding to Doeg and Ahithophel. And the end of the verse, And have not set You before them, means that David said, What You said to Samuel concerning me, namely, Arise, anoint him; for this is he (1 Samuel 86:15). Rabbi Samuel son of Nahmani taught, God keeps His patience with the wicked, but finally turns upon them and makes them pay; God keeps His mercy from the righteous, but finally bestows goodness and ease in plenty upon them. Rabbi Aha said in the name of Rabbi Tanhum son of Hiyya, God is patient during the long time He does not make a man pay, but once He begins to make him pay, He makes him pay in full. And during the long time God is patient, He puts His anger far off, as is said, They come from a far country, from the end of heaven, the Lord and the weapons of His indignation, to destroy the whole land (Isaiah 13:5). A parable of a king who had two savage legions, whenever a province rebelled against him, he sent them into it, and they went and laid waste to it. What did the king finally do? He sent two legions far away from him, saying, I send them far away from me so that they cannot ravage the provinces. Rabbi Berechiah said in the name of Rabbi Levi, Likewise, the angel that is given care of God's anger is far off, as is said, They come from a far country. For the Holy One blessed be He, said, When I am angry with My children, even as anger approaches to ravage them, the children of Israel come and bow down before Me, and I receive them, and I, if one is permitted to impute such words to God, rethink Myself. Rabbi Isaac said, Not only does god put the weapons of His indignation far off. No, more, He keeps them locked up, for it is said, The Lord has opened His armory, and has brought forth the weapons of His indignation (Jeremiah 50:25). But before God unlocks His armory, and before He thrusts with the weapons, He, long-suffering, rethinks Himself, if one may be permitted to speak thus of God.*

The rabbis make the comparison of Doeg and Ahimelech with David and say, “*Rabbi Samuel son of Nahmani taught, God keeps His patience with the wicked, but finally turns upon them and makes them pay; God keeps His mercy from the righteous, but finally bestows goodness and ease in plenty upon them.*” This clarifies the actions of the Lord in heaven, that the Lord is patient for the purpose of allowing a man to perform Teshuvah and to turn back to His ways of righteousness and truth. The rabbis tell a parable to illustrate their point saying the following:

A parable of a king who had two savage legions, whenever a province rebelled against him, he sent them into it, and they went and laid waste to it. What did the king finally do? He sent two legions far away from him, saying, I send them far away from me so that they cannot ravage the provinces.

This illustrates the way in which the Lord waits, sending his wrath far off, this is paralleled to the legion of warriors the king would send to the rebellious province. The concept here is of a province that lives in a state of continual rebellion before the Lord. This illustrates for us the mercy of God should not lead us to a

continued state of rebellion, and that God’s mercy should not lead to the belief that the Lord is not watching our actions. We need to be very aware that the Lord is merciful and patiently waits on us to seek Him and His ways, to turn for sin, and to believe in His Messiah Yeshua. The rabbis also draw a parallel to the angle the Lord uses to bring punishment upon the rebellious. This may be a reference to the Torah, Parashat Beshalach (*Shemot / Exodus 13:17–17:16*) and the angel of death. Midrash Tehillim 68, Part 7 concludes saying, “*Rabbi Isaac said, Not only does god put the weapons of His indignation far off. No, more, He keeps them locked up, for it is said, The Lord has opened His armory, and has brought forth the weapons of His indignation (Jeremiah 50:25). But before God unlocks His armory, and before He thrusts with the weapons, He, long-suffering, rethinks Himself, if one may be permitted to speak thus of God.*” This midrash clearly describes the Lord as merciful, and His mercy leads to long-suffering in the sense that He does not bring His wrath immediately, but allows a period of time for His people to turn from their sins.

Midrash Tehillim 86, Part 8 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying, “*O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me (Tehillim / Psalms 86:16).*” The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*David said, Master of the universe, turn away from all Your concerns, and turn unto me.*” The entire midrash states the following:

<p>מדרש תהילים פרק פו סימן ח</p> <p>ח פנה אלי וחנני. אמר דוד רבונו של עולם תפנה מכל עסקיך ופנה אלי. עשה עמי אות לטובה. באחיתופל. כי אתה ה' עזרתני. בחושי הארכי. ונחמתני. בנתן הנביא, כשאמר גם ה' העביר חטאתך לא תמות (ש"ב שמואל ב' יב יג). דבר אחר עשה עמי אות לטובה. ביעקב נאמר הפסוק הזה, אמר יעקב עשה עמי אות לטובה, זה עשו ואלופיו. כי אתה ה' עזרתני. ברחל. ונחמתני. ביוסף. דבר אחר [עשה עמי אות לטובה]. מדבר בישראל בשעה שהיה לשון של זהורית נתלה על פתח ההיכל מתל-בן היו יודעין שנשמעה תפלתם, שהיו אומות העולם אומרים אינו נמחל להם. כי אתה ה' עזרתני. בראש השנה. ונחמתני. ביום הכפורים, שנאמר כי ביום הזה יכפר עליכם (ויקרא ר"א טז ל).</p>	<p>Midrash Tehillim 86, Part 8</p> <p>8. <i>O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me (Tehillim / Psalms 86:16). David said, Master of the universe, turn away from all Your concerns, and turn unto me. Work in my behalf a sign for good (Tehillim / Psalms 86:17) upon Ahithophel; for You Lord, through Hushai the Archite, has helped me, and through the prophet Nathan have comforted me, he having said to me, The Lord also has put away your sin; you will not die (2 Samuel 12:13). Another comment, Work in my behalf a sign for good alludes to Jacob. Thus, Jacob said, Work in my behalf a sign for good upon Esau and his chiefs; for you Lord, through Rachel, has helped me, and through Joseph has comforted me. Another comment, At the time when the crimson strap hung at the entrance to the Temple, if the strap turned white, the children of Israel knew that their prayer was hard, even though the nations of the earth kept saying that the children of Israel were not forgiven. For You Lord, have helped me with New Year’s Day, and have comforted me with the Day of Atonement, of which it is said, For on this day will atonement be made for you (Vayikra / Leviticus 16:30).</i></p>
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The midrash gives various examples asking the Lord for a sign to know that He is with David, meaning that the Lord God is working on behalf of David to help him overcome his enemies. *Midrash Rabbah Bereshit, Parashat 9, Part 7* has the following to say what is good.

מדרש רבה בראשית פרשה ט סימן ז

ז רבי נחמן בר שמואל בר נחמן בשם רב שמואל בר נחמן אמר הנה טוב מאד זה יצר טוב והנה טוב מאד זה יצר רע, וכי יצר הרע טוב מאד, אתמהא, אלא שאלולי יצר הרע לא בנה אדם בית ולא נשא אשה, ולא הוליד ולא נשא ונתן, וכן שלמה אומר (קהלת ד) כי היא קנאת איש מרעהו.

Midrash Rabbah Bereishit, Parashat 9, Part 7

Rabbi Nahman said in Rabbi Samuel’s name: ‘Behold, it was good’ refers to the Good Desire; ‘And behold, it was very good’ refers to the Evil Desire. (It only says ‘very good’ after

man was created with both the good and bad inclinations, in all other cases it only says 'and God saw that it was good') Can then the Evil Desire be very good? That would be extraordinary! But without the Evil Desire, however, no man would build a house, take a wife, beget children or conduct business; and thus said Solomon: 'Again, I considered all labour and all excelling in work, that it is a man's rivalry with his neighbour.' (Ecclesiastes 4:4).

The rabbis comment upon the creation account saying the good is a reference to both the Yetzer Hara and the Yetzer Hatov. The point is that the Lord created man with both the good and the evil inclinations, but man is to be careful not to allow the evil inclination to overcome the good inclination as the nations do who come against David and Israel. Avot d'Rabbi Natan 16 states, "*The yetzer hara is 13 years older than the yetzer hatov. While still in the mother's womb, the yetzer hara begins to develop in a person. If he begins to violate the Sabbath, nothing stops him. If he commits murder, nothing stops him. If he goes off to another sin, nothing stops him. But 13 years later, the yetzer hatov is born. When he violates the Sabbath, it rebukes him, "Airhead [literally: "empty one"]! Don't you know it says 'Everyone who violates it will surely be put to death' (Exodus 31:14)?" If he is about to commit murder, it rebukes him, "Airhead! Don't you know it says 'Whoever sheds a man's blood, by man will his blood be shed' (Genesis 9:6)?" If he is about to engage in a sexual sin, it rebukes him, "Airhead! Don't you know it says 'Both the adulterer and the adulteress will surely be put to death' (Leviticus 20:10)?"* Both the good and the bad inclinations of a man are what motivate him to have the desire to serve God, and to seek prosperity for himself (e.g. *build a house, take a wife, beget children, conduct business, etc*). The evil inclination however causes a man to seek things that lead to sin and rebellion.

The sign for good Midrash Tehillim 86 is speaking of, is not for the purpose of proving God exists or as proof to have faith. The idea is that David is seeking the Lord God for His help in prayer, and he continues doing so. He has faith the Lord will work a miracle to help him overcome his enemies. Asking the Lord for a sign for good in answered prayer is not a matter of the lack of faith. Midrash Tehillim 86, Part 8 concludes saying, "*For You Lord, have helped me with New Year's Day, and have comforted me with the Day of Atonement, of which it is said, For on this day will atonement be made for you (Vayikra / Leviticus 16:30).*" We take comfort in the Lord's salvation and the atonement that has been provided for us in the Messiah Yeshua. Let's Pray!

Heavenly Father,

We Praise Your Holy Name! Thank You Lord for equipping us to live our lives for Your glory. Thank You for the joy you have placed in our hearts to serve you and to live our lives for you. We thank You for the promises You have made and Your continued faithfulness to Your promises and to us. Thank You Lord 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!

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Be Blessed in Yeshua, Christ our Messiah!

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

Notes