

<p>ה פי-אָתָה אָדְנִי טוֹב וְסָלַח וְרַב־ חֶסֶד לְכָל-קַרְאֵיךָ: ו הַאֲזִינָה יְהוָה תְּפַלְתִּי וְהִקְשִׁיבָה בְּקוֹל תְּחִנּוּבוֹתַי: ז בְּיוֹם צָרְתִי אֶקְרָאָךְ פִּי תַעֲנֵנִי: ח אִין-כְּמוֹךָ בְּאֱלֹהִים אָדְנִי וְאִין כְּמַעַ־ שִׁיךָ: ט כָּל-גּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ יְבוֹאוּ וְיִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְפָנֶיךָ אָדְנִי וַיִּכְבְּדוּ לְשִׁמְךָ: י כִּי-גָדוֹל אַתָּה וְעָשִׂה נִפְלְאוֹת אַתָּה אֱלֹהִים לְבַדְּךָ: יא הוֹרֵנִי יְהוָה דְּרָכֶךָ אֶהְלֶךְ בְּאַמְתֶּךָ יַחַד לְבָבִי לִירְאָה שְׁמֶךָ: יב אֹדְךָ אָדְנִי אֱלֹהֵי כָּל- לְבָבִי וְאַכְבְּדָה שְׁמֶךָ לְעוֹלָם: יג כִּי- חֶסֶדְךָ גָּדוֹל עָלַי וְהִצַּלְתָּ נַפְשִׁי מִשְׂאוּל תַּחְתֵּיךָ: יד אֱלֹהִים יָדִים קָמוּ עָלַי וְעַדֹת עָרִיצִים בְּקִשְׁוֹ נַפְשִׁי וְלֹא שָׁמוּךָ לְנַגְדָם: טו וְאַתָּה אָדְנִי אֵל-רַחוּם וְחַנּוּן אַרְךָ אַפִּים וְרַב-חֶסֶד וְאַמֶּת: טז פָּנֶה אֵלַי וְחַנּוּנִי תִּנְהַ-עַדְךָ לְעַבְדְּךָ וְהוֹשִׁיעָה לְבִן-אַמְתֶּךָ: יז עֲשֵׂה-עִמִּי אוֹת לְטוֹבָה וַיִּרְאוּ שֹׁנְאֵי וַיִּבְשׁוּ 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 מינדך באנגלי מרומא שמיא יהוה ולית כעבדך: 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 ופציי תא נפשי משיוול ארעיתא: יד אלהא זדונין קמון עלי ותקיפין תבעו נפשי ולא שויאו יתך לקבליהון: טו ואת יהוה אלהא רחמנא ורחמנא 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, תְּפִלָּה לְדָוִד הַטֵּה יְהוָה אָזְנְךָ עֲנֵנִי כִי-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 המאררים 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

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 לצדיקיא ושביק : *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 ὁσὶός εἰμι σῶσον τὸν δοῦλόν σου ὁ θεός μου τὸν ἐλπίζοντα ἐπὶ σέ 86:3 ἐλέησόν με κύριε ὅτι πρὸς σέ κεκράζομαι ὄλην 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, וְהִשְׁמַע אֱזְוֹנֹתַי וְהִקְשִׁיבָה בְּקוֹל תַּחֲנוּנֹתַי: ז בְּיוֹם צָרָתִי אֶקְרָאָךְ כִּי תַעֲנֵנִי: ח אֵין-כְּמוֹךָ בְּאֱלֹהִים | אֲדַנִּי וְאֵין כְּמַעַשֶׁיךָ: ט כָּל-גּוֹיִם | אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ יְבוֹאוּ וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לְפָנֶיךָ אֲדַנִּי וַיִּכְבְּדוּ לְשִׁמְךָ: י כִּי-גְדוֹל אַתָּה וְעֲשֵׂה 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: וְהִשְׁמַע אֱזְוֹנֹתַי וְהִקְשִׁיבָה בְּקוֹל תַּחֲנוּנֹתַי: 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 וְהִשְׁמַע אֱזְוֹנֹתַי וְהִקְשִׁיבָה בְּקוֹל תַּחֲנוּנֹתַי: 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 לְמַחֵר וַיֹּאמֶר כְּדַבְּרֶךָ, (לְמַעַן תֵּדַע כִּי-אֵין כִּי־הוּנָה 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' אלוֹקנו, *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 דְרָכֶיךָ אֱהַלְךָ בְּאַמְתֶּךָ יַחַד לְבָבִי לִי־ רָאָה שְׁמֶךָ: יב אֹדְדֶךָ | אֲדַנִּי אֱלֹהִי בְּכָל־לִבִּי וְאֶכְבְּדֶךָ 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 (דְרָכֶיךָ), 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 בְּקִשׁוֹ נַפְשִׁי וְלֹא שָׁמוּךְ לִנְגָדִם: טו וְאַתָּה אֲדַנִּי אֶל־רַחוּם וְחַנוּן אַרְךָ אַפַּיִם וְרַב־חֶסֶד וְאַמֶּת: טז פִּנְהָ אֱלֹהִי וְחַנּוּנִי תִנְהֶ־עֲזָדֶךָ לְעִבְדֶּךָ וְהוֹשִׁיעָה

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!

Heavenly Father,

We glorify Your Holy Name! We thank You for Your Justice and Righteousness, and Mercy and Grace

You give to us. 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!

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