

Tehilim Perek 79

Welcome to NachDaily, covering the entire TANACH one perek at a time. I'm Rabbi Shaya Sussman, and today we'll be discussing Tehilim, Chapter 79.

This perek is primarily about the destruction of Yerushalyim. Asaph said it, with divine insight, as a lament over the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash.

All of the Meforshim ask why this is called a mizmor, song, as it really should be considered a kina, lament?

The Midrash Socher Tov answers with the following parable: A king became angry at his son, the prince, and wanted to kill him. Instead, the king banished his son from the palace and destroyed all of the prince's possessions. The king knew that he could always rebuild his son's quarters and replace his possessions.

So too, instead of destroying Am Yisrael, Hashem took out His wrath on sticks and stones. The perek opens with mizmor l'Asaph, Asaph's song, because Hashem poured his anger out on sticks and stones and didn't destroy His children.

We each need to take to heart God's amazing love for every member of the Jewish nation.

Asaph begins by describing what the destruction looks like. Yerushalyim has been turned into heaps of rubble. Corpses have become food for animals. Blood is flowing in the streets. We've become a disgrace.

Asaph now asks God how long we will suffer. Why does He allow us to be devoured by our enemies?

Asaph pleads with Hashem not to hold our sins against us, asking Him to rescue us and lift us up from degradation.

The perek ends with a prayer for Hashem to repay those who harmed His nation. Then Am Yisrael will truly be able to recognize and serve God with no hindrances.

Verse 1 says:

מִזְמוֹר לְאַסָּף אֱלֹהִים בָּאוּ גוֹיִם | בְּנִחְלָתָךְ טִמְאוּ אֶת־הַיְכָל קִדְשְׁךָ שָׁמוֹ אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַם לְעֵיַיִם:

A psalm of Asaph. O God, heathens have entered Your land, defiled Your holy temple, and turned Jerusalem into ruins.

The Gemara in Sanhedrin 96B explains that at the moment the Beis Hamikdash was destroyed, a heavenly voice came down saying that burning the sanctuary is like grinding flour that was already ground.

The Ba'al ShemTov explains the deeper meaning. The heavenly voice was essentially saying that, if not for the p'nemius, hidden part of the sanctuary being ruined, the revealed part of the sanctuary would have never been destroyed. In other words, what the Beis Hamikdash spiritually represented was already gone. Its physical destruction, therefore, was only a manifestation of its spiritual representation.

The Ba'al ShemTov goes on to explain that the Heichel, Sanctuary, represents the heart of a Jew and Yerushalyim represents yiras Shamayim, fear of Heaven. The heart of every Jew needs to be filled with yiras Shamayim.

Therefore, in a way, if we want to rebuild the Beis Hamikdash, we need to internalize our connection with Hashem by bringing Him into the innermost chambers of our hearts. We need to place Him on our hearts for everything we do.

May we merit proper fear of, and faith in, God, which in return will further the rebuilding of Yerushalayim and the ultimate building of the third Beis Hamikdash.

Thank you for listening, and have a wonderful day.