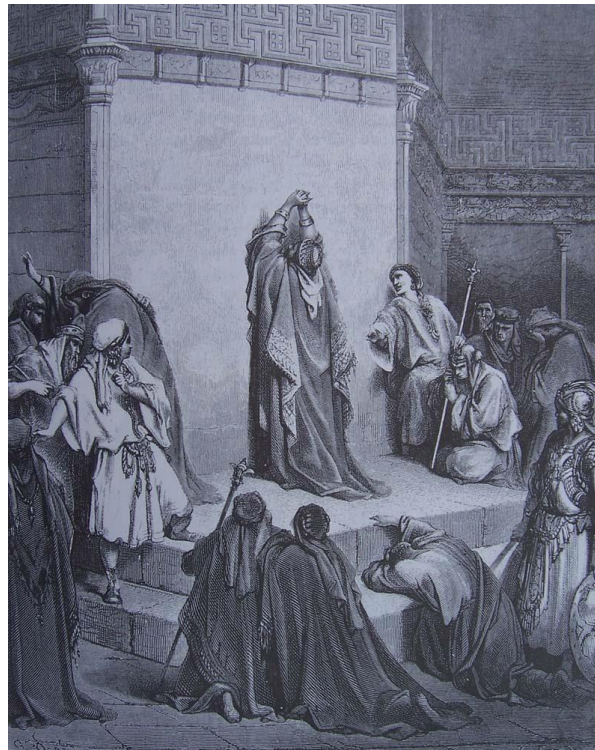

TEHILLIM 94: “UNTIL WHEN?”

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CONGREGATION KINS

פרשת ויגש תשפ"ג

TEXT OF THE MIZMOR

(1) TEHILLIM 94

(1) Hashem, God of vengeance! God of vengeance, shine forth!
 (2) Lift up Yourself, You Judge of the earth; render to the proud their recompense.
 (3) Hashem, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked exult?
 (4) They gush out, they speak arrogance; all the workers of iniquity bear themselves loftily.
 (5) They crush Your people, Hashem, and afflict Your heritage.
 (6) They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless.
 (7) And they say, "Hashem will not see. The God of Jacob will not pay heed."

(8) Consider, you brutish among the people, and you fools, when will you understand?
 (9) He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? He that formed the eye, shall He not see?
 (10) He that instructs nations, shall He not correct, even He that teaches man knowledge?
 (11) Hashem knows the thoughts of man, that they are vanity.
 (12) Happy is the man whom You instruct, Hashem, and whom You teaches out of Your law;
 (13) that You may give him rest from the days of evil, until the pit be dug for the wicked.
 (14) For Hashem will not cast off His people, He will not forsake His inheritance.
 (15) For right shall return to justice, and all the upright in heart shall follow it.

(16) Who will rise up for me against the evil-doers? Who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity?
 (17) Had Hashem not been my help, my soul would have soon dwelt in silence.
 (18) If I say, "My foot slips", your mercy, Hashem, holds me up.

How does Evil Persist? (1-7)

Understanding Hashem's Ways (8-15)

Hashem Stands with Me (16-23)

(א) אֵל נִקְמוֹת י"י אֵל נִקְמוֹת הוֹפִיעַ.
 (ב) הַנֶּשֶׂא שֹׁפֵט הָאָרֶץ הַשֶּׁבַח גְּמוּלָה עַל גָּאִים.
 (ג) עַד מָתִי רְשָׁעִים י"י עַד מָתִי רְשָׁעִים יַעֲלִזוּ.
 (ד) יִבְיַעוּ יִדְבְּרוּ עֲתָק יִתְאַמְרוּ כָּל פְּעֻלֵי אָוֶן.
 (ה) עֲמָהּ י"י יִדְכָּאוּ וְנִחַלְתָּהּ יַעֲנוּ.
 (ו) אֶלְמָנָה וְגֵר יִהְרָגוּ וַיְתוּמִים יִרְצָחוּ.
 (ז) וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֹא יִרְאֶה יְהוָה וְלֹא יִבִּין אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב.

(ח) כִּיֵּנוּ בְּעָרִים בָּעַם וַיִּכְסִּילִים מָתִי מִשְׁכִּילוֹ.
 (ט) הִנֵּטַע אָזֶן הֲלֹא יִשְׁמַע אִם יִצָּר עֵינֶיךָ הֲלֹא יִבִּיט.
 (י) הֲיִסֵּר גּוֹיִם הֲלֹא יוֹכִיחַ הַמִּלְמַד אָדָם דַּעַת.
 (יא) י"י יִדַּע מִחֻשְׁבוֹת אָדָם כִּי הֵמָּה הַקָּל.
 (יב) אֲשֶׁרֵי הַגִּבֹּר אֲשֶׁר תִּיַסְרֶנּוּ יְהוָה וַיִּמְתוֹרְתֶהּ תִּלְמִדָנּוּ.
 (יג) לְהִשְׁקִיט לוֹ מִיָּמִי רַע עַד יִכְרֶה לְרִשְׁעֵי שְׂחַת.
 (יד) כִּי לֹא יִטַּשׁ י"י עַמּוֹ וְנִחַלְתּוֹ לֹא יַעֲזֹב.
 (טו) כִּי עַד צָדֵק יָשׁוּב מִשְׁפָּט וְאַחֲרָיו כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵב.

(טז) מִי יָקוּם לִי עִם מְרַעִים מִי תִיַצֵּב לִי עִם פְּעֻלֵי אָוֶן.
 (יז) לוֹלִי י"י עֲזָרְתָהּ לִי כִּמְעַט שְׂכָנָה דוֹמָה בְּפִשִּׁי.
 (יח) אִם אֲמַרְתִּי מָטָה רַגְלִי חֲסָדֶךָ י"י יִסְעָדָנִי.

(19) When my cares are many within me, Your comforts delight my soul.
 (20) Shall the seat of wickedness have fellowship with You, which devises mischief by statute?
 (21) They gather themselves together against the soul of the righteous and condemn innocent blood.
 (22) But Hashem has been my stronghold, and my God as the rock of my refuge.
 (23) And He has brought upon them their own iniquity, and will cut them off in their own evil. Hashem our God will cut them off.

(יט) בָּרַב שָׂרָעַפִּי בְּקִרְבִּי תִנְחַמְיָהוּ
 יִשְׁעֶשְׂעוּ נַפְשִׁי.
 (כ) הֲיִתְבָּרַךְ כִּסֵּא הַיּוֹת יִצָּר עֲמָל
 עָלַי חֶק.
 (כא) יִגֹּדְדוּ עַל נַפְשׁ צְדִיק וְדָם נָקִי
 יִרְשִׁיעוּ.
 (כב) וַיְהִי י"י לִי לְמִשְׁגָּב וְאֱלֹהִי
 לְצִוֵּר מַחְסִי.
 (כג) וַיֵּשֶׁב עֲלֵיהֶם אֶת אוֹנָם וּבְרָעָתָם
 יִצְמִיתֵם יִצְמִיתֵם י"י אֱלֹהֵינוּ.

SHIR SHEL YOM FOR WEDNESDAY

(2) ROSH HASHANAH 31A

בְּרַבֵּיעֵי הַיּוֹם אוֹמְרִים: "אֵל נְקָמוֹת ה' ", עַל שֶׁם שֶׁבָּרָא חֲמָה וּלְבָנָהּ, וְעַתִּיד לִפְרַע מְעוֹבְדֵיהֶן.

On the fourth day of the week they would recite the psalm beginning: "O Lord God, to Whom vengeance belongs" (Psalms 94:1), because on the fourth day of Creation He created the sun and the moon, and in the future He will punish and take vengeance upon those who worship them.

COMMENTARY

(3) ROBERT ALTER TEHILLIM 94:1

God of vengeance. This boldly aggressive characterization of God, *‘el neqamot*, which occurs only here, is fudged by the modern translations that render it in mitigating language as “God of retribution.” As in many psalms of supplication, to which this poem is roughly allied, the speaker is filled with rage at the dominance of injustice in the world and exhorts God to manifest a spectacular appearance (“shine forth”) in order to exact grim vengeance against the perpetrators of evil.

(4) YALKUT SHIMONI TEHILLIM 94:7

(ז) וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֹא יִרְאֶה יְהוָה – (כתוב ברמז ס"ו). ד' הופעות הן אחת במצרים יושב הכרובים הופיעה, שניה במתן תורה הופיע מהר פארן, שלישית לימות גוג ומגוג אל נקמות הופיע, רביעית לימות המשיח מציון מכלל יופי אלהים הופיע.

(7) They said, “Hashem does not see.”... There are 4 “appearances”: The first in Egypt... the second at the giving of the Torah... the third in the days of Gog u’Magog... and the fourth in the days of Mashiach...

(5) YESHAYAHU 29:15-16

(טו) הוּי הַמַּעֲמִיקִים מִי"י לְסֹתֵר עֲצָה וְהִנֵּה בְּמַחְשָׁב מַעֲשֵׂיהֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ מִי רֹאנוּ וּמִי יִדְעֵנוּ. (טז) הַפְּכֶכֶם אִם כְּהֶמֶר הַיֵּצֵר יִחְשָׁב כִּי יֹאמֶר מַעֲשֵׂה לַעֲשֵׂהוּ לֹא עֲשֵׂנִי וְנִצֵּר אִמֶּר לִיִּצְרוּ לֹא הִבִּין.

(15) Woe to them that seek deep to hide their counsel from Hashem, and their works are in the dark, and they say, "Who sees us? And who knows us?" (16) O your perversity! Shall the potter be esteemed as clay, that the thing made should say of him that made it, "He did not make me", or the thing framed say of him that framed it, "He has no understanding?"

(6) IBN EZRA TEHILLIM 94:5

(ה) עֵמֶךְ – יִדְכֹּאוּ – הַפֶּךְ יִתְאֲמְרוּ – בִּלְבָב, וַיִּדְכֹּאוּ – בַּמַּעֲשֵׂה.

וְעֵמֶךְ וְנִחַלְתֶּךָ – הַפֶּךְ רָשָׁעִים.

(5) THEY CRUSH. "They crush" is the reverse of "bear themselves loftily" (verse 4). All the workers of iniquity bear themselves loftily in their hearts and they crush Thy people in deed.

Thy people ... "Thy heritage" is the reverse of the "wicked" (verse 3).

(7) METZUDAT DAVID TEHILLIM 94:10

(י) הַיּוֹסֵר – הַמַּיִסֵּר אֶת הַגּוֹיִם בַּמַּבּוּל וּבַהַפְּלָגָה הַלּוֹא יוֹכִיחַ אֶתְכֶם.

(10) The one who afflicts – The one who afflicted the nations at the Flood and at the Dispersion, will he not rebuke you?

(8) BERACHOT 5A

אָמַר רַבָּא, וְאִיתִימָא רַב חֲסִידָא: אִם רוּאָה אָדָם שְׂיִסוּרִין בָּאִין עָלָיו — יִפְשָׁפֵשׂ בְּמַעֲשָׂיו, שְׁנַאֲמַר: "נִחְפָּשָׂה דְרַכֵּינוּ וְנִחְקְרָה וְנִשׁוּבָה עַד ה'". פְּשָׁפֵשׂ וְלֹא מָצָא — יִתְלָה בְּבִטּוּל תּוֹרָה, שְׁנַאֲמַר: "אֲשֶׁרִי הִגְבַּר אֲשֶׁר תִּיִסְרְנוּ יְהוָה וּמִתּוֹרַתְךָ תִּלְמַדְנוּ". וְאִם יִתְלָה וְלֹא מָצָא — בְּיָדוּעַ שְׂיִסוּרִין שֶׁל אֶהְבָּה הֵם, שְׁנַאֲמַר: "כִּי אֵת אֲשֶׁר יֶאֱהָב ה' יוֹכִיחַ".

Rava, and some say Rav Hisda, said: If a person sees that suffering has befallen him, he should examine his actions. Generally, suffering comes about as punishment for one's transgressions, as it is stated: **"We will search and examine our ways, and return to God"** (Lamentations 3:40). **If he examined his ways and found no transgression for which that suffering is appropriate, he may attribute his suffering to dereliction in the study of Torah.** God punishes an individual for dereliction in the study of Torah in order to emphasize the gravity of the issue, as it is stated: **"Happy is the man whom You punish, Lord, and teach out of Your law"** (Psalms 94:12). This verse teaches us that his suffering will cause him to return to Your law.

And if he did attribute his suffering to dereliction in the study of Torah, and did not find this to be so, he may be confident that these are afflictions of love, as it is stated: "For whom the Lord loves, He rebukes, as does a father the son in whom he delights" (Proverbs 3:12).

(9) RADAK TEHILLIM 94:12

(יב) אשרי הגבר – וכי יאמרו הרשעים לנו ואם אתם צדיקים ממנו ואוחזים דרך טובה ואמונה טובה לכם איך ישבתם כמה שנים בגלות בחרפה וברעה, אנו אומרים להם כי לטובתנו תעשה זאת, כי אשרי הגבר אשר תיסרנו יה כי מאהבתך אותו תיסרנו.

(12) Fortunate is the person – When the wicked say to us, “and if you are more righteous than we are, and grasp the good path and good faith for yourselves, how have you dwelled for some many years in exile, disgrace, and evil?”, we say to them, “it was for our own good that this was done, because ‘fortunate is the one who God afflicts,’ for from His love of him does He afflict him.”

Midrash Tehillim 94

וישב עליהם את אונם – אר"י בן חלפתא אותו היום שחרב בית המקדש מוצאי שבת היה ומוצאי שמטה היה ומשמרתו של יהויריב היתה בראשונה ובשניה ובזה ובוזה היו הלויים עומדין על דוכן ואומרים וישב עליהם את אונם. ולא הספיקו לומר יצמיתם ה' אלהינו עד שבאו אויבים ותפשו.

(An earlier passage talked at length in praise of Yisurin as part of acquiring Torah, Olam Haba, freedom – maybe relevant theme?)

Yalkut Shimoni *remez* 849

(ז) ויאמרו לא יראה יה – (כתוב ברמז ס"ו). ד' הופעות הן אחת במצרים יושב הכרובים הופיעה, שניה במתן תורה הופיע מהר פארן, שלישית לימות גוג ומגוג אל נקמות הופיע, רביעית לימות המשיח מציון מכלל יופי אלהים הופיע.

Revelation of Hashem for good and for punishment

Malbim Tehillim 94

Vv. 1-3, 5-6 are the words of the Po'alei Aven themselves – since Hashem should be appearing and isn't, we can infer that he's not listening.

Even if Malbim is wrong, his reading is interesting – the *meshorer* seemingly sees the world just like the Po'alei Aven, but he believes that things can be different.

Two kinds of heresy: denial of Hashem's knowledge of individuals and denial of Hashem's awareness in toto.

Our suffering is for protection from later punishment

Sarna – our suffering is for growth

Da'at Mikra

Three parts – the wicked, the righteous know Hashem's nature and accept punishment since they know that justice will come, and a personal story of danger and salvation

Yeshayahu 29:15-16 is a great model for these Resha'im (see Sarna for more)

Extra

Why day 4? Idolatrous ideas of God can lead to a belief in an uninterested God, which leads to evil and punishment

Staircase parallelism in the Mizmor (vv. 1, 3)