

THE ROLE OF תפלה IN THE המקדש בית

We know from the משנה in 'א' that מסכת תמיד פרק ה', א' became an essential part of בית המקדש during the period which preceded the destruction of the Second עבודת ה'.

We also studied a תשובה from one of the גאונים that maintained that the same procedure took place in the First בית המקדש.

משנה תמיד פרק ה', א': אמר להם הממונה. ברכו ברכה אחת. והן ברכו. קראו עשרת הדברים. שמע. והיה אם שמוע. ויאמר. ברכו את העם שלש ברכות. אמת ויציב. ועבודה. וברכת כהנים. ובשבת מוסיפין ברכה אחת למשמר היוצא:

Professor Shaye D. Cohen of Brown University, in page 62 his book, *From the Maccabees to the Mishna*, points to תהילים as a basis for תפלה becoming a part of עבודת ה'.

The best evidence that prayer was part of the ritual of both the first and the second temple, if not for the priests, then for the laity, is the book of Psalms. Virtually all the biblical Psalms, even those that lament personal or national catastrophes or that hail a king at his coronation, are hymns of praise to G-d. They range in date from the period of the monarchy, if not earlier (some of them are Israelite versions of Canaanite or Egyptian hymns), to that of the Maccabees. But the fact that they were written down and assembled as a collection implies--most scholars agree--that they were meant to be recited liturgically, and it is most likely that the recitation took place at the temple. Having come to the temple, either with or without a sacrifice, the worshiper would recite either a psalm of joy and thanksgiving or a psalm of woe and lament, whichever was appropriate for his situation.

He points to the following פסוקים:

- תהלים פרק מ', פסוקים ז'-י'-זבח ומנחה לא חפצת אונים כרית לי עולה וחטאה לא שאלת: אז אמרתי הנה באתי במגלת ספר כתוב עלי: לעשות רצונך אלקי חפצתי ותורתך בתוך מעי: בשרתי צדק בקהל רב הנה שפתי לא אכלא ה' אתה ידעת:
- תהלים פרק סט', פסוקים לא'-לב'-אהללה שם אלקים בשיר ואגדלנו בתודה: ותיטב לה' משור פר מקרן מפריס:
- תהלים פרק נא' פסוק יט'-בחי אלקים רוח נשברה לב נשבר ונדכה אלקים לא תבוה:
- תהלים פרק קיט' פסוק קח'-נדבות פי רצה נא ה' ומשפטיך למדני:
- תהלים פרק קמא' פסוק ב'-תכון תפילתי קטרת לפניך משאת כפי מנחת ערב:

Chapter 51 of ספר בן סירא¹, a poem that scholars believe was recited in the Second בית

1. ספר בן סירא is a collection of poems that were compiled by בן סירא who was a scribe just before the period when the events occurred.

also reflects that תפלה entered into the service in the בית המקדש. It appears חז"ל drew upon this poem in composing שמונה עשרה and other ברכות:

הודו לבוחר בבני צדוק לכהן כי לעולם חסדו;	הודו לה' כי טוב כי לעולם חסדו;
הודו למגן אברהם כי לעולם חסדו;	הודו לקל התשבחות כי לעולם חסדו;
הודו לצור יצחק כי לעולם חסדו;	הודו לשומר ישראל כי לעולם חסדו;
הודו לאביר יעקב כי לעולם חסדו;	הודו ליוצר הכל כי לעולם חסדו;
הודו לבוחר בציון כי לעולם חסדו;	הודו לגואל ישראל כי לעולם חסדו;
הודו למלך מלכי מלכים כי לעולם חסדו;	הודו למקבץ נדחי ישראל כי לעולם חסדו;
וירם קרן לעמו לבני ישראל עם קרובו הללויה-ה.	הודו לבונה עירו ומקדשו כי לעולם חסדו;
	הודו למצמיח קרן לבית דוד כי לעולם חסדו;

The social environment prior to the destruction of the Second בית המקדש also contributed to the acceptance of תפלה as an alternative to קרבנות. Professor Lawrence Shiffman of New York University, in his book, *Reclaiming the Dead Sea Scrolls*, on page 290, provides us with some insight:

The sect that left us the Dead Sea Scrolls removed itself voluntarily from Hellenistic Jerusalem and forswore participation in the Jerusalem sacrificial service, regarding the conduct of that service's priestly rituals no longer acceptable. Sect members maintained that violations of the law marred the Temple and that its priests were illegitimate. Presumably, the founders of the sect believed that the Jerusalem cult no longer served as a vehicle for contact between Israel and its God; therefore, they saw no value in their continued participation in it . . .

The situation facing the Rabbis soon after the Destruction of the Temple, when the mishnaic sages assembled at Yavneh on the Mediterranean coast, was very similar. Judaism had long been based on sacrificial worship, which ensured Israel's relationship with God through the proper and orderly conduct of the rites required by the Levitical codes. Now, in the aftermath of the Great Revolt of 66-73 C.E., the Temple was gone. The priests no longer sacrificed; the Levites no longer sang; Israel no longer made pilgrimages to the holy Temple. Henceforth, only prayer and the life of rabbinic piety could ensure Israel's continued link to their Father in Heaven.

It is naive to assume that this catastrophe came upon Pharisaic-rabbinic Judaism with no warning. Indeed, it is clear to us now that throughout the Second Commonwealth period, sacrificial ritual was on the wane, and prayer and liturgy on the rise. Gradually, prayer made greater and greater inroads even in the Temple. Those distant from the Temple turned increasingly to prayer during the Second Commonwealth period. Pharisaism, in displacing Temple purity to the home and table, had helped to free the later sages from the inexorability of sacrifice.

TRANSLATION OF SOURCES

7-תהלים פרק מ', פסוקים ז'-י. You do not desire sacrifice and offering; You have dug open my ears; You have not required burnt offering and sin offering.

8. Then I said, behold, I come; in the scroll of the book it is written about me,

9. I delight to do your will, O my G-d; your Torah is in my heart.

10. I have preached righteousness in the great congregation; behold, I did not refrain my lips, O Lord, you know.

31-תהלים פרק סט', פסוקים לא'- לב'. I will praise the name of G-d with a song, and I will magnify him with thanksgiving.

32. And it shall please the Lord better than an ox or a bull that has horns and hoofs.

19-תהלים פרק נא' פסוק יט'. The sacrifices of G-d are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O G-d, you will not despise.

108-תהלים פרק קיט' פסוק קח'. Accept, I beseech you, the freewill offerings of my mouth, O Lord, and teach me your ordinances.

2-תהלים פרק קמא' פסוק ב'. Let my prayer be set forth before you like incense; and the lifting up of my hands like the evening sacrifice.