YESHIVAT HAR ETZION

ISRAEL KOSCHITZKY VIRTUAL BEIT MIDRASH (VBM)

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***TEHILLIM* (SERIES II)**

**Rav Elchanan Samet**

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In memory of Alice Stone, Ada Bat Avram, A"H

beloved mother, grandmother and great grandmother

whose Yarzheit is 2 Tammuz.

Dedicated by, Ellen & Stanley Stone,

Jake & Chaya, Micah, Adeline, Zack & Yael, Allie,

Isaac, Ezra & Talia, Yoni & Cayley, Marc & Eliana, Adina, Gabi & Talia.

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**Shiur #26: Psalm 82 – (Continuation)**

**“How Long Will You Judge Unjustly…**

**All the Foundations of the Earth Are Shaken” (2,5)**

### Appendix II: The controversy among the modern commentators about how to understand our psalm

### I. God Judges the Angels of the Nations

 Some of the modern commentators have proposed a new and daring interpretation of our psalm. According to them, "*Adat El*," "*Elohim*," and "the sons of the most High," mentioned in our psalm, are not human judges who are referred to in a borrowed sense by designations generally reserved for the heavenly angels. Rather, they are **actual angels,** and God – who stands among them to judge – comes to judge those angels themselves.[[1]](#footnote-1)

 About what does God judge His angels? This is spelled out in the rebuke delivered in stanzas II-III (verses 2-4), which is explained now of necessity **as God's words to His angels:** "How long will you judge unjustly… Judge the cause of the poor and fatherless…."

M. Buber is included among those modern commentators who understand that the subject of our psalm is the judgment of the angels (see note 1). In light of this new interpretation, he explains the structure and progress of the psalm, and also its dramatic uniqueness:

This psalm is different from the vast majority of the psalms in the book of *Tehillim*, as they express feelings, whereas it describes a process. **The process is an imaginary or visionary action,** in the center of which stands **two orations of God,** delivered at two different stages, and framed **by three statements of the psalmist.**

The first statement (verse 1: "God stands in the congregation of God; He judges among *Elohim*) indicates the state in which the process takes place. The second statement (verse 5: "They know not, nor do they understand…") is the transition from the first stage of the process to the second (from God's first oration to His second oration).

Whereas the third statement, with which the psalm concludes (verse 8: "Arise, O God, judge the earth…") is sort of a conclusion that the psalmist draws from the process in the vision, and its form – a call to God who had acted in this process….

The foreseen situation with which the psalm opens, that God "stands" among a "congregation" of creatures… a congregation that has assembled… based on a unique call… He assembled the congregation in order to judge the assembled…

 Who are those who assembled in response to God's call to stand for His judgement, according to Buber?

[These are] the heavenly **princes of the nations** in heaven, and He stands above them to judge them… This is not the same cosmic circle of the host of heaven, which according to the prophetic vision (I *Melakhim* 22:19) stands around the heavenly throne…. The powerful creatures in this psalm are not cosmic forces, but rather historical forces, as they are known to us from the book of *Daniel.*

 According to Buber (and additional commentators who preceded him), the "princes of the nations" gather before God for judgment. These heavenly figures are mentioned only once in Scripture in the Hebrew section of the book of *Daniel* (which according to many is the latest book in Scripture). In chapter 10 in the book of *Daniel*,reference is made to certain angels, one of whom is "the prince of the kingdom of Persia," and the other is "the prince of Greece." What compelled Buber and the commentators that preceded him to understand that our psalm refers specifically to angels of this type, "princes of the nations," who are mentioned in Scripture only once in such a late book? Surely there is no allusion to this in our psalm! Buber answers this question as follows:

This [that we are dealing not with ordinary angels, but with "the princes of the nations"] becomes clear from God's first oration (verses 2-4). **The primary role cast upon them is to judge on this earth,** and it is clear that they do not judge as a group, but rather the role is divided among them, each of them appointed over a particular land a particular nation.

 However, in the book of *Daniel*, the role of "the prince of Persia" and "the prince of Greece" is to bestow upon the nation over which they have been appointed might and strength vis-à-vis the outside world, and not to judge between the members of that same nation. This does not prevent Buber from connecting our psalm to the book of *Daniel*:

Each one of them [the princes of the nations in our psalm] is God's representative, and is certainly called to judge his people from within, that is to say, to do judgment, **and also** to judge them from without…

What God accuses them of [in our psalm] is internal injustice. To be more precise: their failure concerning the social injustice that is committed in their land. Instead of pleading the cause, as was cast upon them, of the weak, the poor, the fatherless, against their oppressor, they favor the oppressor, because he is strong, and fill his desires.

 Thus, through a convoluted – and, it should be said, exceedingly strange – exposition, we come to "what was to be proven" in connection with the book of *Daniel*. Can such an interpretation be accepted as the plain meaning of our psalm?

 This idea that God judges His angels appears in two places in the Bible in brief and poetic language:[[2]](#footnote-2)

*Yeshayahu* 24:21: And it shall come to pass on that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth.[[3]](#footnote-3)

*Iyov* 4:18: Behold, He puts no trust in His servants; and His angels He charges with folly (*tahala*).[[4]](#footnote-4)

 In these sources, however, it is not reported **for what** God will punish the host of the high ones or **what is** that folly with which He will charge His angels. It is doubtful that these verses refer to actual sins of the angels. The context of these verses suggest that they were stated merely as figures of speech (see notes 3-4).

 However, according to the modern commentators to our psalm, not only is a description given here – in unparalleled detail – of the judgment of the heavenly angels, but they are being judged for a specific sin, and this sin, to our great surprise, is the perversion of the judgments of the weak and the fatherless and favoring the wicked.

### II. What do the heavenly angels have to do with earthly judgement?

 Anyone reading this surely wonders: Where do we find that the heavenly angels, "the princes of the nations," or even the gods of the nations, involve themselves in human quarrels? Isn't there here a strange mixture of domains, which has no foundation either in Scripture or in human experience?

 Yechezkel Kaufmann already strongly negated the view of these commentators.[[5]](#footnote-5) He relates to the prevailing view among these commentators that "the princes of the nations" are but a development of the gods in which those nations believed (see note 1), an assumption which in itself Kaufmann utterly rejects (as according to him, "the princes are angels who minister to God"):

In all of Biblical literature there is no hint that the gods of the nations are **the gods of judgment** and responsible for violence and wickedness. This belief is not even presented as the belief of the idol worshippers. Those who worship idols attribute natural functions to them… but they are not mentioned as princes of judgment. And all the more so this is not the belief of the Biblical authors themselves… Kittel already rightly argued [in his commentary to our psalm] that nowhere is it alluded that **judgment** is in the hands of the princes of the nations, and that they themselves pervert justice.

 So too, Y. M. Grintz (in his book, *Motza'ei Dorot*[[6]](#footnote-6)) understands our psalm in the wake of Kaufmann and in similar fashion:

This entire explanation of Gunkel and his colleagues that we are dealing here with a judgment of the gods has no foundation whatsoever… In the psalm before us God stands to judge the earthly judges… and more precisely, the world's rulers… "Judge the cause of the poor and fatherless" is a primary obligation of every ruler… But the princes of the nations in the book of *Daniel*, there role is political – ruling over the peace of their nations and their victories, and they have no connection to individuals in need of financial assistance.

 The fact that nowhere in Scripture is practical judgment between people attributed to heavenly angels, to the princes of the nations, or even to God Himself, is not by chance. One who believes in Divine providence feels that it operates on the changes in the seasons of the year, in the blessing of the crops, in the events of his personal and national life, and the like. But when he comes with a monetary or any other claim against his fellow, he turns to a human court, which operates in human fashion, for better or for worse. If he feels that an injustice was committed against him, the address for his claim is the decision of the human judges, not an action of some heavenly factor.[[7]](#footnote-7)

 If so, the explanation of our psalm that was offered by the modern commentators is based on a perception that has no foundation in Scripture and does not accord with known human experience. The reader who encounters God's claim against the princes of the nations, as it were, "How long will You judge unjustly, and respect the persons of the wicked?" does not understand what the psalm is talking about.

### III. What underlies the new interpretation

The new interpretation purports to approach the task of Biblical exegesis without "prejudices," which tie the hands of the commentator and force him to deviate from the simple and primary meaning of the text. Here is a striking example of the emptiness of this pretense. The interpretation presented in this appendix is ostensibly based on adherence to the simple meaning of the words of the psalm: "The congregation of God," "*Elohim*," "sons of the most High" are heavenly entities of one sort or another, and therefore the reproach in the main part of the psalm is directed at them, and the party who rebukes is perforce God Himself.

It would appear, however, that these commentators have not reached this interpretation of the psalm with clean hands, but rather with an agenda. In order to identify this agenda, it suffices to read Prof. Alexander Rofe's introductory words to our psalm:

The existence of the mythic-idolatrous stage in the Israelite (!) faith is confirmed by Psalm 82… However… this is already a new stage, a stage of confrontation and ideological struggle with the polytheistic concepts that were implanted into Israel (!).

These commentators planted this "mythic-idolatrous stage" in Psalm 42 by means of convoluted expositions, and then claimed that they found it explicit in the Bible.

### IV. The impact of the new interpretation on its opponents

Among the modern commentators, quite a few opposed the interpretation of our psalm proposed by Gunkel and his followers for our psalm, and explained it as did the traditional commentators – as a rebuke of mortals who pervert the judgment of the poor and orphaned and show favoritism to the wicked.[[8]](#footnote-8) Some of these commentators have already been mentioned above.

Nevertheless, they were to a certain degree influenced by Gunkel's interpretation, and because of this they deviated from the traditional interpretation regarding one of the verses – but this deviation brought no benefit to their explanation of the psalm. We are referring to the first verse in the psalm: "God stands in the congregation of *El*; He judges among *Elohim*." Yechezkel Kaufmann (vol. 2, p. 707) explains this verse alone as referring to heavenly angels:

God "stands in the congregation of *El*" and judges the rulers [= on earth] while he stands among *Elohim* – that is, **the celestial retinue.** Those who are being judged are not "the congregation of *El*" or "*Elohim*," but rather the rulers on earth, for wherever we find such imagery in Scripture, those being judged are human beings. (See I *Melakhim* 22:19-23; *Yeshayahu* 6:1-13; *Iyov* 1:6-12; 2:1-6; *Daniel* 7:10).

Kaufmann was followed by Y. M. Grintz (*Motza'ei Dorot*, p. 254):

In the psalm that is before us, God stands to judge the judges of the earth… and more precisely, the rulers of the earth… The judgment itself which is discussed in the psalm is conducted (as in I *Melakhim* 22:9) **among the celestial retinue**… But the words, "I had said, You are *Elohim*," are the psalmist's words of scorn for the rulers of the nations, who ordinarily trace their lineage to the gods…

In the wake of both of them, Amos Chakham explains as follows:

The psalmist begins with a metaphor, as if God has risen, so to speak, from His place and is standing **amidst this celestial retinue** in order to judge the wicked… *Adat El*,"the congregation of God," is what is described in rabbinic literature as "the celestial retinue," or "the celestial court."[[9]](#footnote-9)

These commentators agree with Gunkel and his followers that verse 1 depicts a **heavenly vision,** "the psalmist's vision of God coming with His retinue to execute judgment against the wicked" (Amos Chakham). They agree that the terms "*Adat El*" and "*Elohim*" in this verse are not borrowed designations referring to human judges, as they were understood by the traditional commentators, but rather they refer to actual angels. They further agree that the word *yishpot* means "He will come to judge the sinners," as it was understood by Gunkel and his followers, and not "He will judge among them," as it was understood by the traditional commentators (their main stream).[[10]](#footnote-10) But they disagree with Gunkel about how to interpret the essence of the psalm: In their opinion, the angels referred to in verse 1 are not those who are being judged by God, and they are not the sinners who are the object of the rebuke in the continuation of the psalm. Rather, they are merely "the backdrop" for God's appearance to judge **the earthly judges.**

This interpretation of verse 1 is not successful for two reason, both of them following from the context in which the verse is found. One reason stems from the immediate context: What is the connection between verse 1 and verse 2? To whom is the question of rebuke in verse 2: "How long will You judge unjustly" addressed? The psalm does not offer an answer to this question according to these commentators, and the reader must infer it on his own from the content of the rebuke itself, which continues until verse 4. The rebuke in verses 2-4 starts suddenly, without our having received any prior preparation, so that we would know to whom it is being addressed. Verse 1, according to the interpretation presently under discussion, told us nothing, other than that God is about to judge some party, whose identity is unknown to us, and will also not be clarified with certainty in the continuation.

This is not the case according to the traditional interpretation: Verse 1 serves as a preface to verse 2, both from a substantive-religious perspective, which we discussed in section III, but also from an informative perspective. It informs us in advance to whom the rebuke in verse 2 is directed: They are the judges designated as "*Adat El*" and "*Elohim*." They are being called to judge righteously and not to show favoritism to the wicked, owing to the presence of God among them while they are engaged in judgment.[[11]](#footnote-11)

The other reason for our reservations regarding the proposed interpretation of verse 1 is the broader context. How do the three commentators referred to above explain verse 6: "I had said, You are angels, all of you sons of the most High"? Kaufmann writes as follows:

I had said that you are "gods" and "sons of the most High" – that is, that you are superior to mortals, but owing to your crimes you will die like one of them…

Here is what Grintz says:

But the words, "I had said, You are *Elohim*," are the psalmist's words of scorn for the rulers of the nations…

And we will conclude with the words of Amos Chakham:

These are words of mockery directed by the psalmist at the wicked judges…

All three of them sever verse 1 from verse 6: "*Elohim*" in verse 1 means angels, whereas the same term appears in verse 6 in reference to people – rulers of the nations or judges – and there is no connection between the use of the term in verse 1 and the use of the term in verse 6! But we cannot really separate between the two verses, as we have demonstrated a clear connection between them (see the beginning of section IV).

Even the literary structure of our psalm, as we described it at the end of section VI – its division into two halves that stand in contrasting chiastic parallelism – depends on a connection between verse 1 and verse 6, but this is completely canceled according to the explanation of the commentators cited above.

### Appendix III: Our psalm and "the philosophy of Law"

 In the previous sections of this study, we defined Psalm 82 as a universal psalm of contemplation, its concern being the nature of the human judicial system. As such, our psalm has several contact points with the field of the philosophy of law. The latter deals primarily with the questions: what is law itself, what is the source of its legitimacy, and what is the source of its authority? Our psalm, on the other hand, focuses not on the **laws** that underlie the human judicial system, but rather on the **people** who are responsible for executing judgment – namely, the judges. The psalmist's disappointment with the human judicial system does not stem from wicked laws, but from corrupt judges. The laws that serve as the foundation of the human judicial system might be fitting, but the way that these laws are exploited by the judges themselves pervert justice and corrupt society.

 If we come to summarize the "the legal thought" that is reflected in our psalm, we can discuss four areas that come under discussion, some explicitly and in detail, others in brief and by allusion:

1. The role of judges in society

2. The connection between God and the judicial process

3. The connection between judgment and the world

4. The special status of the judges

 We will devote a few words to our psalm's position on each of these issues.

### 1. The role of Judges in society

 In a healthy society (if such a thing exists), the role of judges is to judge fairly, without showing favor to one sector of society or another: "You shall not respect the person of the poor, nor favor the mighty" (*Vayikra* 19:15). However, in the society with which the psalmist is familiar, the wicked have the upper hand, and they exploit and oppress the poor. In such a society, the role of the judges is to protect the poor and the orphaned, the destitute and the weak from the villainy of the wicked. Therefore, the psalm emphasizes: "Judge… vindicate… deliver… rescue" these weak people out of the hand of the wicked.

In such a society, judges cannot remain neutral between the socio-economic extremes that are found in every society. They must "take a side" and serve as a shield for the oppressed, and stand as a wall in the face of the wicked. This is not a perversion of justice, but rather using it for the sake of fulfilling its essential purpose – improving society so that justice will prevail.

### 2. The connection between God and the Judicial process

The important innovation of our psalm is found already in the first verse, which serves as the starting point for everything that is said in the continuation: God is present in the human judicial process! This assertion associates our psalm with concepts in the philosophy of law known as "natural law." "The judgment is God's," and the role of the judges is to implement the principles of absolute justice.

Although it is reasonable to attribute to the Bible such a conception of human law, and not the views of modern legal positivism, this is not what is expressed in our psalm. God stands in the congregation of God; He judges among the judges, not because He dictates to the judges their legal decision, and not even because He is the source of law based on which the judges issue their rulings.

The law under discussion in our universal psalm is the creation of human beings! Human society, according to the view of the Bible and according to *Chazal's* understanding, was not commanded to observe the laws of God's Torah. But it was commanded (as one of the seven commandments given to the descendants of Noach, according to *Chazal's* definition) about "laws" – about creating a system of human law, and appointing judges who will judge fairly in accordance with these laws.

Even the legal decision-making of the judges is entirely the product of the human mind of the judge who sets as his goal the doing of justice.

What, then, is God's place in the legal process, the place about which our psalm testifies: "He judges among the judges"?

This place is a place designed **to respect** human law, and to transform the judicial act into a religious act, a Divine act! Human judgment is man's partnership with God in maintaining the world on the foundations of justice and righteousness. And seniority in this partnership is given to man! This is why the judges sit during the legal proceedings, while God is described as standing among them (see section IV, note 5). As it were, it is not they who serve Him while exercising judgment, but rather it is He who is at their service at that time.

This ambivalence of the legal process, which, on the one hand, is entirely human, while on the other hand entails the presence of God, was noted by the following *midrash* (*Sanhedrin* 6b):

Judges should also know whom it is they are judging, before whom they are judging, and who will call them to account [if they pervert justice], as it is written: "God stands in the congregation of God; He judges among the judges." And thus it is said, concerning Yehoshafat: "He said to the judges: Consider what you do, for you judge not for man, but for the Lord" (II *Divrei Ha-Yamim* 19:6). And lest the judge should say: Why have all this trouble and responsibility? [Rashi: If I err, I will be punished.] It is further said: "He is with you in giving judgment." [Rashi: According to what is in your heart, to what your heart inclines.] **The judge is to be concerned only with what he actually sees with his own eyes** [and he should have in mind to issue a ruling that is righteous and true].

### 3. The connection between Judgment and the world

The partnership discussed in the previous section between God and the judges, which takes place at the time when justice is being done and which pertains to the legal process itself, also constitutes an additional partnership between them: "Every judge who judges with complete fairness… Scripture gives him credit as though he had become a partner to the Holy One, blessed is He, in the creation" (*Shabbat* 10a). The righteous judgment executed by judges maintains the world that God created! This view is expressed in our psalm by implication and by way of the opposite: Unjust judges who walk in darkness and do not heed the rebuke about their actions lead to the situation in which "all the foundations of the earth are shaken." We already dealt with this issue at length in section II of our study.

These two "partnerships" between the judges and God are not alike. In the partnership in the legal process itself, the human action of the judges is primary, while God lowers Himself from above so that He stands in the congregation of God and judges among the judges. But as for the partnership in the maintenance of the world, "the creation," God's action is primary, while the judges **rise** through the judicial act (when it is true judgment) to become the Creator's partners in responsibility for the existence of His world.

In any event, we can add to the *midrash* brought in the previous section as follows: The judges should also know what is at stake as they come to judge people – the continued existence of "the foundations of the earth" hangs on their actions.

### 4. The special status of the Judges

Judges enjoy a distinguished social status in every civilized society, but in our psalm they are referred to with superlative designations: "the congregation of God," "*Elohim*," "the sons of the most High," designations that they share with the heavenly angels. In section IV of our study we expanded on the matter, and here we will say briefly: Relating to judges as mortals with some Divine quality, unlike ordinary human beings, follows of necessity from the concept of human law in the two previous sections. If the judges are God's partners in the very act of judgment and they share responsibility with Him for the very existence of the world, they are not ordinary people. They function as part of God's retinue in the human world!

The ideal legal thought that emerges from our psalm is, of course, found in the context of bitter disappointment and despair from realizing these lofty principles in the social reality. In his despair, the psalmist appeals to God that He should take in to His hands the responsibility that had been given to man.

Let us conclude with an optimistic reflection: Is the murky reality described in our psalm appropriate for the human legal system that exists in the democratic countries in today's world? It seems that civilized human society has succeeded in shaping independent legal systems that strive to achieve social justice. The legal system is far from perfect, and one of the evils that perpetuates the gaps between rich and poor is the influence of expensive lawyers on judicial verdicts. Nevertheless, we seem to have progressed from the time that the author of our psalm lambasted the judges with his grave reproach. Perhaps this progress of civilized humanity is the hidden answer to the psalmist's cry: "Arise, O God, judge the earth: for You possess all the nations!"

Translated by David Strauss

1. The commentators who follow this path are Gunkel, Wellhausen, Schmidt, Osterley, and later Wright. Among the Hebrew commentators who followed in their footsteps, of notable mention are M. Buber, "*Ha-Tzedek Ve-Ha-Avel al pi Tzeror Mizmorei Tehillim*," in his book, *Darkho shel Mikra* (Jerusalem, 5724), pp. 157-162; A. Sh. Lowenstam, *Pirsumei Ha-Chevra Le-Cheker Ha-Mikra* 5 (5718), pp. 120ff; A. Rofe, *Malakhim Ba-Mikra* (Jerusalem, 5772), pp. 62-64. Among these commentators we also find the interpretation that we are dealing here not with angels, but with actual gods – the gods of the nations.

It should be noted that even according to the traditional interpretation, which sees "*Adat El*" and "*Elohim*" as designations for human judges, we find the interpretation that God stands among them in order to judge them themselves, whether they are righteous judges or corrupt ones. See section III above, note 22. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. In the wake of these sources in the Bible, the idea appears also in post-Biblical sources. A well-known source is the *piyyut U-Netaneh Tokef*, which states that Israel's Day of Judgment (Rosh Hashana) is also the Judgment Day of the angels: "The angels, quaking with fear, declare: The Day of Judgment is here to bring the hosts of heaven to justice. Indeed, even they are not guiltless in Your sight." [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. From the continuation of the prophecy two verses later, it seems that "the host of the high ones" are the sun and the moon: "Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His elders will be His glory" (verse 23, and compare with *Yeshayahu* 60:19-20). If indeed this is the intent of verse 21, this is merely a poetic expression of the appearance of the glory of the Lord on "this day," in such a way that the light of the sun and the moon will pale vis-a-vis His light. In that case, this verse is irrelevant to our discussion. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. This is the only instance of the word "*tahala*" in Scripture. Its presumed meaning from the context is "sin, fault." The verse is part of a *kal va-chomer* argument: If God finds fault in His angels, all the more so will He find sin and iniquity in man, who was taken from the ground. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. *Toledot He-Emuna Ha-Yisraelit*, vol. 2, pp. 652-653, note 17, which is the source of the citation below. On pp. 707-708, note 90, Kaufmann deals with our psalm and explains it in a manner close to the traditional interpretation. In his opinion, the judges whom the psalmist reproaches are the earthly rulers. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. *Ha-Kibbutz Ha-Meuchad*, pp. 253-254, note 41. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. One should make no mistakes about the biblical conception presented in detail in section III of our study, "For judgment is the Lord's" (*Devarim* 1:17). The concept expressed in this verse and those similar to it (in II *Divrei Ha-Yamim* 19, at the beginning of our psalm, and in the recurring designation for judges in the book of *Shemot –* "*Elohim*") is that the human action of **doing justice with human tools** is a religious act to which God is a partner – not as one who influences the verdict, but as one who rests His *Shekhina* in the place in which **human beings** do justice. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. As to the question of who these people are, whether they are the judges or the rulers of the countries, the commentators offer a variety of opinions; see note 11 below. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. The first to offer this interpretation of verse 1 in our psalm was the Ibn Ezra, who raised this interpretative possibility in his first explanation of verse 1 (Grintz even mentions him): "Among *Elohim* – these are the judges, who are *'Elohim'* and 'the host of heaven' (II *Melakhim* 22:19), and 'the sons of God' (*Iyov* 1:6), for by way of the angels is all judgment of God on earth."

But the Ibn Ezra immediately continues to a different explanation, which is the interpretation of *Chazal* and of traditional interpretation across the generations: "Some say that 'among *Elohim'* is like 'You shall not curse the judges (*Elohim*)' (*Shemot* 22:27) – and the reason is that He is among them, and they must be careful not to judge unjustly." Based on this second explanation, he continues to explain the psalm in verse 2: "How long – now He reproves the judges, **who are *Elohim*."** [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. See section III, and note 22, and the end of note 1 to this appendix. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Perhaps Kaufmann and Grintz's decision to interpret the rebuke as directed at the rulers of the countries, and not at the judges among whom God stands to be a partner in their judgments, is what led them to interpret verse 1 as they interpreted it. However, it seems that even this interpretive decision was influenced by the interpretation of Gunkel and his followers. Gunkel understands that the objects of the reproach are the heavenly angels of the nations, while Kaufmann and Grintz replaced them with their earthly counterparts – the rulers of these countries. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)