

P&F | Day 18: Forgive

Make Room for God's Heart • Chaim Bentorah Word Study

Focus: Matthew 6:13 — “And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.” (NIV)

Why these studies matter

All four supplied readings focus chiefly on Matthew 6:13 rather than on the forgiveness command in verses 12 and 14–15. They explore what it means to ask God for protection from temptation, testing, and distorted thinking. This complements Day 18 without replacing the direct teaching on forgiveness.

1 | The apparent tension: Matthew 6:13 and James 1:13

Bentorah asks why Jesus teaches us to pray not to be led into temptation when James teaches that God does not tempt people with evil. His answer explores the possibility that the prayer is a plea for God to guard us from entering temptation, not a suggestion that God tries to seduce us into sin.

Study insight: The prayer expresses dependence. We ask God to guard our hearts in situations where our desires, fears, or interpretations could pull us away from Him.

2 | Greek word: *peirasmos* (πειρασμός)

Meaning: testing, trial, or temptation, depending on context. Matthew 6:13 uses a form of this Greek noun. A trial may test faith; temptation involves enticement toward wrongdoing. The same word family can carry either sense.

Important distinction: The Greek text does not itself say “wrong thinking.” That is part of Bentorah’s interpretive proposal through an Aramaic comparison, not the standard lexical definition of *peirasmos*.

3 | Aramaic proposal: *nesiona*

Across the 2014, 2015, and 2016 studies, Bentorah discusses an Aramaic term he transliterates *nesiona*. He argues that an ancient Semitic idiom may convey a plea such as “do not allow us to enter wrongful thinking or testing.” He appeals to the Peshitta and a claimed parallel in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

How to read this responsibly: This is a devotional interpretation, not a scholarly consensus about the original wording of Matthew. The canonical Gospel of Matthew is preserved in Greek, and the later Syriac Peshitta cannot by itself establish Jesus’ exact original words. The cited studies do not identify a specific Dead Sea Scroll manuscript for independent verification.

4 | Protection from distorted thinking

The 2016 study particularly emphasizes mistaken beliefs about God, including the fear that He is waiting to punish every failure. Bentorah encourages prayer for protection against ideas that misrepresent God’s character.

Day 18 connection: Forgiveness requires discernment. We can ask God to expose beliefs that feed bitterness or retaliation, without calling genuine grief or appropriate boundaries sinful. The goal is not to deny

what happened but to let truth and mercy guide our response.

5 | Daily bread, worldly desires, and deliverance

The 2013 devotional offers a different emphasis: after asking for daily bread, we may also be asking not to become trapped in dissatisfaction, materialism, or constant wanting. Bentorah connects deliverance with being separated from what draws us away from God.

This is a possible spiritual application, not a required translation of the Aramaic words. Its useful question is: When God provides what we need, do we remain oriented toward Him, or do our desires become our master?

6 | Bringing the study back to forgiveness

The Lord's Prayer places requests for provision, forgiveness, and protection close together. In Matthew 6:12, 14–15, forgiveness is explicit. In verse 13, the prayer turns to our need for God's guidance and deliverance. Together they remind us that mercy and spiritual dependence are not separate parts of discipleship.

Reflection: What ways of thinking might keep me from seeing God, myself, or others truthfully? Where do I need His help to choose mercy without abandoning wisdom?

Prayer prompt

Father, teach me to recognize Your heart. Guard me from temptation, distorted thinking, and the desire to hold tightly to what You are asking me to surrender. Help me forgive as You have forgiven me, with compassion, truth, and discernment. Amen.

Source readings

[Chaim Bentorah — 2013 devotional](#)

[Chaim Bentorah — 2014 word study](#)

[Chaim Bentorah — 2015 word study](#)

[Chaim Bentorah — 2016 word study](#)