

Didn't Pray Enough!

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A Sacred Time Av 4

During every *Shabbat Nachamu*—"the Shabbat of Comforting" that follows Tisha b'Av—we read *Parshat Va'etchanan*. This portion begins with Moses sharing how he offered five hundred and fifteen prayers to G-d, begging Him to reverse the decree that barred him from entering the Promised Land, before G-d said "Enough." Our sages tell us that if Moses had offered only one more prayer he would have been granted what he sought, and his

entry into the Land would have catalyzed the ultimate redemption. Even though the Jewish people were not ready for this, one more prayer would have forced it to happen. Deeper works explain that this is the real comfort to be found after Tisha b'Av: the power of our heartfelt prayers.

Some people feel discouraged when their sincere prayers appear to go unanswered. The Zohar reveals that, sometimes, the answer on High is "no," for reasons we often cannot understand. But even if the object of our prayer doesn't manifest itself, every prayer immediately accomplishes something on high—no prayer, no good intention even, ever goes lost. In terms of tangible results, sometimes the unanswered prayer teaches us that what we were asking for wasn't necessarily good for us. And sometimes the unanswered prayer just tells us to continue to pray more.

As Reb Nosson would say, "Whenever there is a lack, it is either because the person didn't pray...or didn't pray enough!"