

# DEAR TORAH TIDBITS FAMILY



**RABBI AVI BERMAN**

Executive Director, OU Israel



This week's article is written *lilui nishmat* my special Bubby, **Chana Ita bat Moshe** whose *yahrzeit* is on *Tish'a B'Av*.

By the time this week's Torah Tidbits issue is graphically designed by Zahava, submitted to the printer, shipped to the OU Center, and packed and delivered by our dedicated group of volunteers to communities around Israel, I hope that my message for this week's issue will be entirely irrelevant.

The Jewish calendar is cyclical in nature. Every week ends with *Shabbat*. Every year brings *Rosh HaShana*, *Yom Kippur*, *Sukkot*, *Chanukka*, *Purim*, *Pesach* and *Shavuot*. We also have fast days such as *Tzom Gedaliah*, *Shivah Asar b'Tammuz* and *Tish'a B'Av*. But despite the repetition we are tasked with evolving the way in which we engage with each momentous day of the year - particularly *Tish'a B'Av*.

Each year as we approach *Tish'a B'Av*, many feel a sense of disappointment. Despite all that we have experienced on a personal and national level, we still have

not merited the rebuilding of the third *Beit HaMikdash*. Personally, in the weeks leading up to *Tish'a B'Av* I often find myself feeling restless. Moreover, even though the *issurim* (restrictions) and *halachot* (laws) of the three weeks and nine days were implemented to help us connect to this time period of mourning, I often struggle to connect to their meaning.

This year I felt compelled to make a change in the way I relate to *Tish'a B'Av* and turned to my family to see if we could find some solutions over the *Shabbat* table. We imagined the discussions that must have taken place when *Chazal* first sat down to decide how to help *Am Yisrael* feel the ache and loss of the *Beit HaMikdash* for generations to come, and tried to come up with our own list of ideas. Unsurprisingly, the list we developed echoed the *issurim* that *Chazal* implemented so many years ago - limiting fun activities, restricting food intake and removing distractions. Ultimately, we agreed that these *issurim* and *halachot* help us enter *Tish'a B'Av* with the right mindset and that we should use this time to internalize their messages.

As I was flipping through this past week's Torah Tidbits I came across a beautiful ad that caught my eye. Saidel Jewish Baking Center helps bring the Torah to life, offering a three-hour hands-on *Beit HaMikdash* Baking Adventure workshop, in which participants can bake in the *Beit HaMikdash* bakery, preparing the *Lechem Hapanim*,

The OU Israel Family  
sends its heartfelt condolences to  
Rabbi Shalom Rosner and family  
on the passing of his mother  
**Saranne Rosner a"h**

המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים

*Korban Toda* and *Shtei HaLechem*. I was immediately taken by this idea and hope to bring my family in the coming weeks. You can find more information via [www.jewishbakingcenter.com](http://www.jewishbakingcenter.com) or call +972 507202521 to make a reservation.

This ad brought me a deep sense of joy, hope and renewed purpose. As members of *Am Yisrael*, we have so much to be proud of. In the face of pain and suffering, *Am Yisrael* continues to cling to *HaShem*, actively engaging in activities that bring *Am Yisrael* closer to one another and support those in need. With programs like the OU Israel Center's Shurim to prepare for Tisha B'Av, apps that help people learn *Daf Yomi* across all levels of education, the Shabbat Project, OU programs for youth and college students, we are bringing Jews closer to one another and to the Almighty.

Despite our challenges, in just 74 years *Medinat Yisrael* serves as a *kiddush HaShem*, recognized for its global contributions and support. The IDF, which incorporates *Torah* values, continues to be recognized for its brilliance and ingenuity. Medical and technological innovation continues to flow from Israeli startups and leading institutions to help people around the world. Today, Israel is counted on to support global crises around the world.

Our successes to date are clear and we must use this time to focus our attention on rebuilding the *Beit HaMikdash*. As we

approach this *Tish'a B'Av*, I am challenging myself not to take on more *issurim*, but rather to invest my time in activities that help me appreciate what we once had while connecting me to my fellow Jew. If you'd like to join me, take a look at the resources produced by the Temple Institute, learn *halachot* of *korbanot*, or book a tour at the Western Wall Tunnels.

I'll use this opportunity to call your attention to an amazing initiative that takes place at the *Kotel* every year in the final hours of *Tish'a B'Av*. NCSY Kollel brings its students to the *Kotel* for hours of meaningful singing and *davening*. Although weak and tired, hundreds of people join NCSY Kollel, uniting arm in arm as we look toward *Har HaBayit*. Having participated

in the past I can tell you that seeing tears stream down the faces of those around me at the *Kotel* helps me connect as we yearn for the rebuilding of the *Beit HaMikdash*. I invite you all to join in person or remotely via, [kollel.ncsy.org/live-stream](http://kollel.ncsy.org/live-stream).

May our prayers be answered swiftly and may we merit seeing the coming of *Mashiach* and the rebuilding of the *Beit HaMikdash*!

Wishing you all an uplifting and inspiring Shabbat,



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