

YERUSHALAYIM IN/OUT TIMES FOR SHABBAT PARSHAT DEVARIM CANDLES 6:57PM • EARLIEST 6:07PM • HAVDALA 8:11PM • RABBEINU TAM 8:49PM

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- Tisha Bay Times (Jerusalem) No eating after 7:36 pm on Shabbat (shkiva)
- Fast ends: Sunday 8:00 pm (according to myzmanim.com)

**KIDDUSH LEVANA** 

- Many wait to say Kiddush Levana until after the fast of Tisha B'av
- Last Opportunity to Say Kiddush Levana until 15 Av, Thurs. Aug. 11, All night



## This week's Torah Tidbits cover image!

#### Photo By: Richard Shavei-Tzion

My wife Cheryl and I came on Aliya in 1981 and have been living in Jerusalem for 28 years.

Where: The photo was taken in the synagogue of the Kotel Heritage Center. About the Photo: V'eileh Hadevarim- "These are the words..." Each word of Moshe Rabeinu's great oration, shines bright to this day, 3,300 years after they were uttered.

# CANDLE LIGHTING

CANDLES	EARLIEST	DEVARIM	HAVDALA		ETCHA		
6:57	6:07	Yerushalayim / Maale Adumim	8:11	Candles 6:50	Earliest 6:02	Havdala 8:04	
7:14	6:10	Aza area (Netivot, S'derot, Et al)	8:13	7:08	6:04	8:06	
7:15	6:08	Beit Shemesh / RBS	8:12	7:09	6:03	8:05	
7:12	6:08	Gush Etzion	8:11	7:06	6:02	8:04	
7:14	6:10	Raanana/ Tel Mond/ Herzliya/ K. Saba	8:14	7:07	6:04	8:06	
7:13	6:09	Modi'in / Chashmona'im	8:12	7:06	6:03	8:05	
7:14	6:10	Netanya	8:14	7:08	6:04	8:07	
7:13	6:09	Be'er Sheva	8:12	7:06	6:03	8:05	
7:14	6:09	Rehovot	8:13	7:07	6:04	8:06	
6:57	6:09	Petach Tikva	8:13	6:50	6:04	8:06	
7:13	6:09	Ginot Shomron	8:13	7:07	6:03	8:05	
7:05	6:10	Haifa / Zichron	8:15	6:58	6:04	8:07	
7:12	6:08	Gush Shiloh	8:12	7:06	6:02	8:04	
7:14	6:10	Tel Aviv / Giv'at Shmuel	8:14	7:08	6:04	8:06	
7:12	6:08	Giv'at Ze'ev	8:12	7:06	6:03	8:04	
7:12	6:08	Chevron / Kiryat Arba	8:11	7:06	6:02	8:04	
7:14	6:10	Ashkelon	8:14	7:08	6:05	8:06	
7:14	6:09	Yad Binyamin	8:13	7:07	6:04	8:06	
7:08	6:08	Tzfat / Bik'at HaYarden	8:13	7:01	6:02	8:05	
7:12	6:07	Golan	8:12	7:05	6:02	8:04	
Rabbeinu Tam (J'lem) - 8:49 PM • next week - 8:42 pm							

TImes According to MyZmanim (20 min. before sundown in most cities, 40 min. in Yerushalyim and Petach Tikva, 30 min. in Tzfat/Haifa)



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## OTHER z'manim



#### JERUSALEM Ranges 11 days Wed.- Shabbat Aug. 3-13 / 6-16 Av

Earliest Tallit and Tefillin	5:00 - 5:08
Sunrise	5:56 - 6:02
Sof Zman Kriat Shema	9:20 - 9:23
Magen Avraham	8:40-8:43
Sof Zman Tefila 1	0:28-10:30
(According to the Gra and Baal HaTany	ra)
Chatzot (Halachic Noon)	12:45-12:43
Mincha Gedola (Earliest Mincha)	1:19-1:17
Plag Mincha	6:08-6:01
Sunset (Including Elevation)	7:39-7:29

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## 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

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

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*, *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 <u>www.</u> <u>jewishbakingcenter.com</u> 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, <u>kollel.ncsy.org/live-stream.</u>

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,

Rabbi Avi Berman Executive Director, OU Israel <u>aberman@ouisrael.org</u>

# DEVARIM





#### **Rabbi Reuven Tradburks** Director of RCA Israel Region

The book of Devarim is Moshe's soliloquy in the last week of his life. A rather long soliloquy, the better part of 28 chapters. He has a lot to say. He will not enter the Land of Israel. The Jewish people will. He has transferred leadership successfully; Aharon's successor is Elazar, Moshe's successor is Yehoshua.

We have seen parting words before: Yaakov in Parshat Vayechi charged his sons. But not for 28 chapters. Yaakov's was one chapter of 33 verses.

The English name for the book is

The community of Kehillat Nofei Hashemesh extends its deepest condolences to our beloved HaRav Shalom Rosner, on the passing of his mother

#### Saranne Rosner a"h חנה שרה בת הרב מיכל שמעון והרבנית מלכה ע"ה

Beloved wife, sister, mother, grandmother, and great grandmother

Condolences to the family Dr. Fred Rosner, Rav Mitch Rosner, Miriam Goldberg and Aviva Taragin המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים Deuteronomy; the Midrash calls it Mishneh Torah. Both mean 2 – the second version of the Torah, or the repetition of the Torah. But those names are misleading. Moshe does not review the entire Torah. He relates only some stories, reviewing with the people some of what has occurred earlier in the Torah. But he leaves out much more than he reviews. He does not mention any of the book of Breishit. Nor any of the story in Egypt; nothing of the slavery. Or the plagues. Or the splitting of the Sea. Or of the instructions for the Mishkan. Or most of the book of Vayikra relating to Tuma and Tahara and Offerings. So the review is not of the Torah; the review is of some, selected stories and laws of the Torah. We are compelled to ask why Moshe chose these stories as we encounter them; and not others. And the order is not at all as they occurred; he changes the order. What's he getting at? What's driving Moshe? And as a last point of introduction. The language of Devarim is different. It is emotional. There is a lot of concern, of worry, of fear. Concern of failure, challenges that will be unmet, or met with failure. There is love: love of G-d for us and love of us for Him. Lots of zeal and passion; many emphatic forms. Moshe, in this departing speech, is sharing a lot of himself in a most revelatory fashion to the people from whom he is imminently departing.



1<sup>st</sup> aliya (Devarim 1:1-10) Moshe related the events of the journey, the 11-day journey

from Chorev to Kadesh Barnea. On 1 Adar, year 40, Moshe related to the people all that G-d had instructed him about them. This was after the defeats of Sichon and Og, on the banks of the Jordan. He related: G-d instructed us to travel from Sinai and to take the Land of Israel, the Land promised to the forefathers. And I said: these people are now so numerous that I cannot bear them alone.

It took 40 years to go on an 11-day journey. That is not very good mileage. Moshe begins his parting words with a description of the journey to the Land of Israel. Not with the story of the Exodus. Not even with the story of the giving of the Torah. His emphasis is the journey to the Land. The people are about to enter the Land; they are preoccupied with that. Moshe meets them where they are, addressing their immediate concerns. He'll get to speaking about Sinai and about religious belief and about religious challenges. But right now, let's connect with the issue at hand: entering the Land.



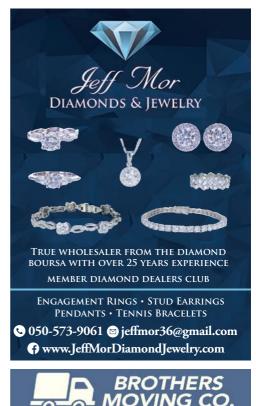
2<sup>nd</sup> **aliya (1:11-21)** I said then: Let's choose wise people to lead you. You agreed that this was a

good idea. Wise leaders were appointed over thousands, hundreds, tens and officers of enforcement as well. I charged the judges saying: listen and rule fairly without bias. I commanded you in all the things you are to do. We traveled the desert to the Mount of the Emori, Kadesh Barnea. There I said: let's go without fear and take the Land.

It is curious that the first story Moshe feels a need to review is the appointing of the

May the learning from this issue of TT be לע"ג **Rose Edith Cohen ע"יה** איטה רייזל בת גנשא ואריה לייב הכהן ע"ה on her 14th yahrzeit, י"ג מנחם אב

Missed very much by her daughters, Janica Weinreb, Barbara Yasgur and Benay Devora Cohen Nesher and families







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various upper court and lower court judges. After all, it doesn't seem to have anything to do with the march to the Land. In fact, there are other stories that do occur as part of the march, like the complaints for water that are simply skipped. Why mention the appointment of judges? Perhaps Moshe is addressing the unspoken concern of the people; how in the world are we going to manage without the leadership of Moshe? We will not prevail in the battles without him. Moshe, subtlety tempers his indispensability. I can't do it all. I couldn't do it all then; I needed help from the beginning. And now too. I am dispensable.



**3**<sup>rd</sup> **aliya** (1:22-38) You approached me to send spies to scout out the Land. I thought

that was a good idea, choosing the leaders of the tribes for the task. They toured and returned with fruits of the Land exclaiming: The Land G-d is giving us is good. But you refused to go and rebelled against G-d saying: these have damaged our resolve telling us of the large people and the fortified cities. I insisted that G-d will fight the battle as He has done until now. But you did not trust in G-d Who has been guiding you by cloud and fire. You were told that all who do not believe they can enter the Land, will not enter the Land. And I too was told I would not enter; Yeshoshua will lead the people into the Land.

Moshe is creating a bond with the people: I asked you for judges and you thought my

Condolences to Barry Ernstoff and family on the passing of his wife **Judy a''h** המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים idea a good one. You asked me for spies and I thought your idea a good one. The differences in how Moshe relates this famous story of the spies and how the Torah itself described it is rich material for discussion. One of numerous differences is the role of the spies in this account: it's missing. Little is said of the spies. In Bamidbar it sounds like their bad report started a cascade of fear. Here, Moshe places the guilt on the people: based on the report of the spies, but clearly at the feet of the people. Perhaps Moshe is deliberately shifting emphasis from leaders to the followers. You need good leaders: but you also need to be good followers. Blame for all national failures cannot be laid at the feet of the leaders. The people need to also bear full responsibility for their decisions. And here the decision of the people was to rebel against G-d.



4<sup>th</sup> **aliya (1:39-2:1)** Upon hearing that you would not enter the Land, you regretted your sin.

You said: let us go to the Land. But you were warned that G-d would not be with you in this and the Emori chased you away like bees to the region of Seir. We dwelt in Kadesh and Har Seir for a long time.

When we follow the Divine plan, we will succeed. When we venture off on our own,

In honor and in loving memory of **Chana (Leah) Lerba a"h** לעילוי נשמת חנה לאה בת שולם מאיר וצביה ע"ה יא מנחם אב On her first Yahrzeit Monday, August 8th 18:00 Har Hamenuchot..-שער יוסף. 20:00 Mizpe Ramot Shul -3 Even Shmuel (light refreshments) devoid of Divine support, then we will be chased away like bees. Our success in taking the Land is due to our Divine partner.



5<sup>th</sup> **aliya (2:2-30)** It was time to travel northward. Do not confront the descendants of your

brother Esav who dwell in Seir. Circle their land; pay for the food and water that you need from them. In addition, do not confront Moav for it is the rightful possession of the descendants of Lot. Past the Land of Moav is Amon; do not confront Amon for it too is the rightful possession of the descendants of Lot. The region north of the Arnon is the land of Sichon and Og; those lands I have given to you. I offered to Sichon to pass through his land, but he refused; G-d made him stubborn so that we could take his land.

This description of our family ties is surprising. We have relatives. And we are to give regard to those relatives. Yaakov's brother Esav settled in Seir. He deserves brotherly deference and hence leave him alone. Moav and Amon are nations from Lot, Avraham's nephew. Leave them alone as well; they are your relatives. Brothers, even when pursuing entirely different legacies, remain brothers nonetheless.



6<sup>th</sup> aliya (2:31-3:14) G-d told us to take the lands of Sichon in war. The lands were conquered up to

the Gilad. Og confronted us in the region toward the Bashan and he too was conquered. Their lands were given to Reuven, Gad and half the tribe of Menashe.

These confrontations with Sichon and Og are the last stories in the book of Bamidbar, not too long ago. Moshe relates these stories right at the beginning of his long speech, even though if he were reviewing our

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Honoring the memory of Malka Chana Roth T"" 1985-2001, killed in the Sbarro bombing. history chronologically they would have to wait 25 chapters. He does so to begin his long speech with success and with encouragement. He will want to warn the people, chastise them, tell them of their future failures: but that can all wait. Start positive.



7<sup>th</sup> **aliya (3:15-22)** The lands on the east of the Jordan including the Gilad and the Lands from

the Kineret to the Dead Sea were settled by Reuven and Gad and half of Menashe. I instructed these tribes to join the battle for the Land of Israel and then to return to



44th of the 54 sedras; first of 11 in D'varim Written on 196.5 lines (rank: 26th) 5 parshiyot; 1 open, 4 closed 105 p'sukim - ranks 32, 6th in D'varim tied with Chayei Sara, but larger 1548 words - ranks 26th, 6th in D'varim 5972 letters - ranks 24, 5th in D'varim tied with Vayeishey, but smaller Jump in capkings from p'cukim to words & letters due

Jump in rankings from p'sukim to words & letters due to relatively long p'sukim



## MITZVOT

2 mitzvot - both prohibitions One of only three sedras that have only prohibitions (LO TAASEI). Vayishlach and B'shalach are the other two, with one LAV each. their lands.

This is a very large patch of land: on the east side of the Jordan from the Dead Sea all the way up to the Hermon has been conquered and will be settled by the Jewish people. These early victories and Moshe's repetition of their stories allows Moshe to begin his long directives to the people on a high note, an optimistic one. And he has described how we journeyed to the border of the Land. Now he will focus on the much more crucial directives: to live *in* the Land.

#### HAFTORAH YESHAYAHU 1:1-27

This week's *haftorah* is the third of a series of three "*haftarot* of affliction." Yeshayahu conveys to the Jewish people of a G-dly vision he experienced, chastising the residents of Judah and Jerusalem for having rebelled against G-d. He criticized them for repeating their errors and not engaging in *teshuva.* "Woe to a sinful nation, a people heavy with iniquity, evildoing seed, corrupt children. They forsook G-d; they provoked the Holy One of Israel." The navi employs harsh words by comparing the Jewish leaders to

#### A SHORT VORT | BY RABBI CHANOCH YERES Rav, Beit Knesset Beit Yisrael, Yemin Moshe

(א:ה) בעבר הירדן בארץ מואב הואיל משה "באר" את התורה הזאת (א

"On the other side of the Jordan, in the land of Moav, Moshe began explaining this Torah." (1:5)

Rashi quotes the Midrash Tanchuma that Moshe explained the Torah in seventy languages. Why the need for seventy languages?

Rav Yitzchak Meir Alter (First Gerer Rebbe- 1799-1866) explains that G-d was aware of the future exiles of the people of Israel, thereby Jews would be able to study the Torah in the language that they would understand.

Others give insight to Moshe's timing of these seventy explanations.

Now, after the victory over Sichon and Og, soon to be crossing over the Jordan and conquering the 7 Nations in Canaan, Moshe wanted to publicize the Torah to all nations that G-d has left the legacy of Israel to the Jewish people. In order to prevent any accusations that the Israelites stole theLand from others. Shabbat Shalom the rulers of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Yeshayahu then speaks gentler words, encouraging the people to repent sincerely and to perform acts of justice and chesed towards the needy, orphans and widows, and promising them the best of the land in return for their obedience. "If your sins prove to be like crimson, they will become white as snow; if they prove to be as red as crimson dye, they shall become as wool." The haftorah concludes with an uplifting promise that G-d will one day reestablish Israel's judges and leaders, when "Zion shall be redeemed through justice and her penitents through righteousness."

The first word of the *haftorah* is "*Chazon*" ("The vision [of Isaiah]"). The Shabbat when this *haftorah* is read, the Shabbat before Tisha b'Av, is thus called "Shabbat Chazon," the "Shabbat of the Vision." ■

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# Why Are There So Many **Jewish Lawyers?**

At the beginning of the book of Devarim, Moses reviews the history of the Israelites' experience in the wilderness, starting with the appointment of leaders throughout the people, heads of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens. He continues:

And I charged your judges at that time, "Hear the disputes between your people and judge fairly, whether the case is between two Israelites or between an Israelite and a foreigner residing among you. Do not show partiality in judging; hear both small and great alike. Do not be afraid of anyone, for judgement belongs to God. Bring me any case too hard for you, and I will hear it. (Deut. 1:16-17)

Thus at the outset of the book in which he summarised the entire history of Israel and its destiny as a holy people, he already gave priority to the administration of justice: something he would memorably summarise in a later chapter (Deut. 16:20) in the words, "Justice, justice, shall you pursue." The words for justice, *tzedek* and *mishpat*, are repeated, recurring themes of the book. The root *tz-d-k* appears eighteen times in Devarim; the root *sh-f-t*, forty-eight times.

Justice has seemed, throughout the generations, to lie at the beating heart of Jewish faith. Albert Einstein memorably spoke of Judaism's "pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, an almost fanatical love of justice, and the desire for personal independence – these are the features of the Jewish tradition which make me thank my lucky stars that I belong to it." In the course of a television programme I made for the BBC, I asked Hazel Cosgrove, the first woman to be appointed as a judge in Scotland, and

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#### Judy a"h

המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים

an active member of the Edinburgh Jewish community, what had led her to choose law as a career, she replied as if it was self-evident, "Because Judaism teaches: Justice, justice shall you pursue."

One of the most famous Jewish lawyers of our time, Alan Dershowitz, wrote a book about Abraham,<sup>1</sup> whom he sees as the first Jewish lawyer, "the patriarch of the legal profession: a defence lawyer for the damned who is willing to risk everything, even the wrath of God, in defence of his clients,"2 the founder not just of monotheism but of a long line of Jewish lawyers. Dershowitz gives a vivid description of Abraham's prayer on behalf of the people of Sodom ("Shall the Judge of all the earth not do justice?" [Gen. 18:25]) as a courtroom drama, with Abraham acting as lawyer for the citizens of the town, and God, as it were, as the accused. This was the forerunner of a great many such episodes in Torah and Tanach, in which the prophets argued the cause of justice with God and with the people.

In modern times, Jews reached prominence as judges in America - among them Brandeis, Cardozo, and Felix Frankfurter. Ruth Bader Ginsburg was the first Jewish woman to be appointed to the Supreme Court. In Britain between 1996 and 2008, two of Britain's three

1 Alan Dershowitz, Abraham: The World's First (But Certainly Not the Last) Jewish Lawyer, New York, Schocken, 2015.

2 Ibid., 11.





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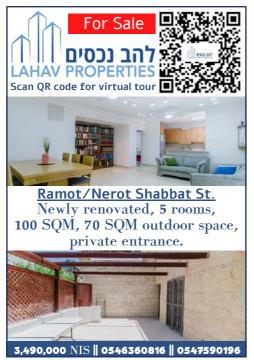
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Lord Chief Justices were Jewish: Peter Taylor and Harry Woolf. In Germany in the early 1930s, though Jews were 0.7 per cent of the population, they represented 16.6 per cent of lawyers and judges.

One feature of Tanach is noteworthy in this context. Throughout the Hebrew Bible some of the most intense encounters between the prophets and God are represented as courtroom dramas. Sometimes, as in the case of Moses, Jeremiah, and Habakkuk, the plaintiff is humanity or the Jewish people. In the case of Job it is an individual who has suffered unfairly. The accused is God himself. The story is told by Elie Wiesel of how a case was brought against God by the Jewish prisoners in a concentration camp during the Holocaust.<sup>3</sup>

3 Elie Wiesel, The Trial of God, Schocken,



At other times, it is God who brings a case against the Children of Israel.

The word the Hebrew Bible uses for these unique dialogues between heaven and earth<sup>4</sup> is *riv*, which means a lawsuit, and it derives from the idea that at the heart of the relationship between God and humanity – both in general, and specifically in relation to the Jewish people – is *covenant*, that is, a binding agreement, a mutual pledge, based on obedience to God's law on the part of humans, and on God's promise of loyalty and love on the part of Heaven. Thus either side can, as it were, bring the other to court on grounds of failure to fulfil their undertakings.

Three features mark Judaism as a distinctive faith. First is the radical idea that when God reveals Himself to humans He does so in the form of law. In the ancient world, God was power. In Judaism, God is order, and order presupposes law. In the natural world of cause and effect, order takes the form of scientific law. But in the human world, where we have freewill, order takes the form of moral law. Hence the name of the Mosaic books: *Torah*, which means 'direction, guidance, teaching,' but above all 'law.' The most basic meaning<sup>5</sup> of the most fundamental principle of Judaism, *Torah min haShamayim*, 'Torah from

1995. The story is believed to be fictional, although on one occasion Wiesel said that it happened and that he was there.

4 On the subject in general, see Anson Laytner, Arguing with God: A Jewish Tradition, Jason Aronson, 1977.

5 Not the only meaning, to be sure. See Rambam, Hilchot Teshuvah 3:5.

Heaven,' is that God, not humans, is the source of binding law.

Second, we are charged with being interpreters of the law. That is our responsibility as heirs and guardians of the Torah she*be-al peh*, the Oral Tradition. The phrase in which Moses describes the voice the people heard at the revelation at Sinai, kol gadol velo yasaf, is understood by the commentators in two seemingly contradictory ways. On the one hand it means 'the voice that was never heard again'; on the other, it means 'the voice that did not cease,' that is, the voice that was ever heard again.6 There is, though, no contradiction. The voice that was never heard again is the one that represents the Written Torah. The voice that is ever heard again is that of the Oral Torah.

The Written Torah is *min ha-shamayim*, "from Heaven," but about the Oral Torah the Talmud insists *Lo ba-shamayim hi*, "It is not in Heaven."<sup>7</sup> Hence Judaism is a continuing conversation between the Giver of the law in Heaven and the interpreters of the law on Earth. That is part of what the Talmud means when it says that "Every judge who delivers a true judgement becomes a partner with the Holy One, blessed be He, in the work of creation." (Shabbat 10a)

Third, fundamental to Judaism is education, and fundamental to education is

6 Deut. 5:19, and see Rashi ad loc., who gives both interpretations.

7 Bava Metzia 59b.



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instruction in Torah, that is, the law. That is what Isaiah meant when he said, "Listen to Me, you who know justice, *the people in whose heart is My law*; do not fear the reproach of men, nor be afraid of their insults." (Is. 51:7)

This is what Jeremiah meant when he said, "This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: *I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts*; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people." (Jer. 31:33)

This is what Josephus meant when he said, nineteen hundred years ago, "Should any one of our nation be asked about our laws, he will repeat them as readily as his own name." The result of our thorough education in our laws from the very dawn of intelligence is that they are, as it were,



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Small wonder, then, that there are so many Jewish lawyers.

Covenant and Conversation 5782 is kindly supported by the Maurice Wohl Charitable Foundation in memory of Maurice and Vivienne Wohl z"I.These weekly teachings from Rabbi Sacks zt"I are part of the 'Covenant & Conversation' series on the weekly Torah reading. Read more on www.rabbisacks.org.

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s I sat down to share thoughts about this week's haftarah, it occurred to me that, over these years, I have never commented on the haftarah reading of Tish'a B'Av. The omission of this haftarah over the years is not surprising, as the fast itself is never observed on Shabbat and, therefore, the haftarah is never read on Shabbat. Yet, although this "omission" may be understandable -- it is also unfortunate. Yirmiyahu's message in the 8th and 9th chapters of his book requires proper review and study if we hope to fully absorb the lessons of the day. And, given that this Shabbat is, actually, Tish'a B'av, the ninth of Av, it behooves us to delve into this selection, a reading that, all too often, we fail to appreciate, overwhelmed, as we are, by the emotions of the day.

Sefer Yirmiyahu is replete with descriptions of Israel's corruption, of prophecies of doom and warnings of the impending punishments. Given this truth, it should be no surprise that the selection for this solemn day, taken from the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> prakim of the



book, is one quite difficult to read and most painful to study. However, I believe that it is essential for us to do so and, while doing so, to ponder why these specific two prakim were chosen for this day.

The haftarah opens with two terrifying words – Hashem's declaration to Yirmiyahu - "Asof asifem". Yet, I dare say, most of us do not understand how terrifying those words are! G-d's statement is not a promise of "gathering" Israel (a,s,f – to gather") but rather a prophecy stating: "I will utterly destroy them!" (s,o,f – to destroy [see Tzephanya 1` 1-2]). Hashem's terrible promise is followed by Israel's reaction to flee and hide from the coming destruction because "We have sinned to Hashem".

As the haftarah continues, we find a kind of conversation-almost a give and take between the prophet, the people and Hashem, lending an atmosphere of dialogue between the parties. G-d reiterates his commitment to bring the punishments while, as the eighth perek draws to an end, we hear the heart-rending cries of the prophet over the impending destruction of his nation.

Yirmiyahu continues bemoaning the fate of Israel and even expresses his own pain for his failure to turn the people from sin. And,



after reinforcing the navi's description of Israel's corruption, Hashem closes the condemnations with a play on words that brings us back to his opening statement. For, in describing the total destruction, G-d tells the people that their corpses would be strewn on the field "v'ayn <u>me'asef</u>" –none will be there to <u>gather</u> (a,s,f) them for burial.

I know; pretty gruesome. So what positive thing did the Rabbis see –if any - in such a depressing and frightening selection?

I believe that there are a number of subtle but hopeful moments found in this prophecy that may have moved Chazal to establish that it be read on Tish'a B'Av. We find, for example, Israel's admission of their guilt and their acceptance of the inevitability of their fate (8; 14). We also hear the emotional outpouring of the navi and the pain he expresses upon their doom, helping us understand the terrible struggles that Yirmiyahu suffered in carrying out Hashem's mission. And, I believe, we might even glimpse some of G-d's "pain" - even His reluctance to mete out the necessary punishment - when He cries: "How can I not punish such a people?" (9; 8) almost expressing a desire to find a reason to withdraw His threatened punishments. Perhaps.

But, for me, it is the dialogue that seems to be taking place between the three affected parties: the contrition expressed by the punished, the pain shared by the agent and the reluctance implied by the "Executor". Even before the consoling words that close the haftarah, we sense a certain comfort in the fact that they're still talking to each other.

The sinner, the accuser and the Judge are in a dialogue.

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# Lack of Unity Led to the Destruction of the Beit HaMikdash

מקדש שני שהיו עוסקין בתורה ובמצות וגמילות חסדים"

מפני מה חרב מפני שהיתה בו שנאת חנם" (יומא ט:). The Second Beit HaMikdash, which stood during a period where the nation was engaged in the study of Torah, in the performance of mitzvot and in acts of loving kindness- why was it destroyed? Because there existed "sinat chinam" (unwarranted hatred among the people)! (Yoma 9b).

From the gemara cited above it appears that the main reason for the destruction of the second Beit Hamikdash was *sinat chinam.* We can appreciate that not treating others with respect is unjustifiable behavior, but why would such a severe punishment, such as destroying the Beit HaMikdash be warranted? Is there a direct connection between this transgression and the destruction of the Beit HaMikdash?

The main purpose of the Beit HaMikdash is to create an environment in which the Shechinah could dwell. As we are informed when directed to erect the Mishkan "Make for me a Temple and I will dwell in their

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Pediatric and Geriatric Foot Care, Bunions, Hammertoes, and Diabetic Wound Care midst" (Shemot 25:8). However, the Shechinah does not dwell among Am Yisrael when there is discord. The Sefer Haredim (citing the Zohar) derives from a pasuk in Iyov (23:13) והוא באחד ומי ישיבנו (*But He is One, and who will answer Him*) – that God only dwells among Am Yisrael when they are united as one – אחד –.

When we were instructed to build the Mishkan, each individual had to contribute an equal share. The rich could not contribute an abundance and the poor could not contribute a deficiency. Everyone's contribution was identical to instill a feeling of uniformity. Only in that cohesive and integrated community could the Shechinah reside.

In addition, when Moshe commanded the people to build the Mishkan it was done



in a communal manner – ויקהל משה את כל The nation was assembled as a congregation! When the Mishkan was inaugurated as well the same verb is used:

ואת כל העדה הקהל אל פתח אהל מועד (ויקרא ח:ג)

The nation was assembled as a congregation!

When Shlomo inaugurated the First Beit HaMikdash the same term is used: ויקהלו אל המלך שלמה כל איש ישראל (מלכים א ח-ב). The repetitive use of the word הקהל to congregate or assemble is required when both the Mishkan and Mikdash are dedicated because without Am Yisrael coming together as one – the Shechinah is unable to reside in the Temple or among the nation.

Now we can understand the connection between the transgression of *sinat chinam* and the destruction of the Beit HaMikdash. Hatred causes a rift among the people. If the nation is divided, God is unable to reside within their midst and so there is no purpose for a Mikdash.

God despises when Jews are hostile to each other, like a parent who gets upset when his children fight. Sometimes the parent reaches a stage where he states: "I had enough, I am leaving" and he removes himself from their presence to let them work things out among themselves. When Am Yisrael is divided, Hashem takes a similar approach.

May we take it upon ourselves to be more respectful of others and to avoid unnecessary conflicts and disputes. To take positive measures to instill a feeling of togetherness among not only our friends but those who may have a *hashkafa* or opinion that differs from ours. It is in our hands to correct the mistake that led to our exile. May we be *zoche* to merit a *geula shlema* in our time.

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# Remarkable Rebuke

The first *pasuk* in *Sefer Devarim* is very curious. It begins, "These are the words that Moshe spoke to all of Israel." (*Devarim* 1:1) But instead of his words, we find a detailed description of his location, listing all the places in the area, "...on the east bank of the Jordan, in the desert and in the Aravah, near Suf, in the vicinity of Paran, Tofel, Lavan, Chatzerot, and Di Zahav." (*Ibid.*) What is the significance of recording this information?

The *Malbim* explains that these were the various places at which Moshe Rabbeinu "spoke words" to the people. Rashi, however, teaches that the name of each place hints at a different sin that was committed in that location during the Jews' sojourn in the desert. Unlike the *Malbim*, Rashi understands these names as actually expressing

the words of rebuke that Moshe Rabbeinu spoke, as opposed to describing the places in which he spoke them. Rashi continues to explain that to protect the honor of the Jewish people, Moshe Rabbeinu spoke words that implied or suggested rebuke, rather than chastising the people directly.

This sensitivity that Moshe Rabbeinu displayed is the hallmark of a Jew. Each Jew is created in the image of G-d and has a spark of G-dliness in him. It is therefore most appropriate to treat each person with the dignity that he deserves. The *mishnah* in Avot teaches, "The dignity of your student should be as precious to you as your own; the dignity of your colleague, as your awe of your master; and your awe of your master as your awe of Heaven." (Avot 4:12). In Alei Shur, Rav Wolbe quotes his rebbe, Rav Yerucham, and asks, why are we exhorted to treat another one notch above our own level? His response is powerful. It is so hard to give others the honor they deserve, therefore, if one aims high, then there is



hope that the other person will receive his due honor.

Parashat Devarim is always read on Shabbat Chazon. In our effort to combat the baseless hatred that consumes us, we must first and foremost integrate this quintessential idea in our relationships. We all must heighten our awareness of how special each person is and treat everyone with the dignity that they deserve. As we hone our sensitivity and realize how hard it is to honor each person, we can increase our efforts to accord others even greater honor and respectability. In this way, we can do our part to rectify the hatred and negativity that led to the *churban*.

The Slonimer Rebbe finds a second lesson from Rashi's understanding that the names of the places mentioned indicated specific mussar that Moshe wanted to share. "Reishit chochma virat Hashem." (Tehillim 111:10) Everything begins with awe of Hashem - the ability to humbly recognize Hashem's Omnipresence. To receive the depth and breadth of Torah that Moshe was transmitting at this time, Am Yisrael needed to be prepared with feelings of humility and contrition. Similarly, the difficult galut experience engenders feelings of brokenness, the precursor to the future grand revelation of goodness. May all we have endured as a people coupled with deep sensitivity for each other, serve to bring the Ultimate Redemption speedily in our days.

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MISCHEL

Mashpiah, OU-NCSY Executive Director, Camp HASC Author of Baderech: Along the Path of Teshuva (Mosaica 2021)

# Chazon: If Only!

In the mid 1960's, renowned philosopher, author and educator Professor Abraham Joshua Heschel, z'l, was chairman of the rabbinic program admissions committee at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York. One day, while interviewing an applicant in the midst of the entrance exam, Professor Heschel asked the young man how he had traveled to the seminary that morning. The aspiring scholar replied that he had taken the train and because of the nice weather, got off at an earlier stop on Broadway and walked from West 70th Street up to the seminary on 120th.

Professor Heschel smiled at the applicant and asked, "Tell me then, on your way here, did you see the homeless woman on 96th Street? She was probably covered in a blanket and holding a hand painted cardboard sign...? The student said he had not.

Did you notice the army veteran on 118th street? The fellow with a scraggly gray beard and few teeth? He often wears a baseball cap...' Once again, the student shook his head and replied that he had not.

"What about the tall fellow with dreadlocks

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standing outside of Zabar's waving his hands wildly in the air in prayer? Heschel asked. The student said, meekly, "I guess I wasn't paying attention."

Looking the young applicant directly in the eye, Heschel's brow furrowed and wondered out loud, "How can you become a rabbi if you don't even see the human beings around you?"

Gemara Sanhedrin (98a) recounts an auspicious meeting between Rebbe Yehoshua ben Levi and Eliyahu haNavi at the entrance of Rebbe Shimon bar Yochai's cave. Rebbe Yehoshua seized the moment and asked Eliyahu haNavi when Moshiach will arrive and *Am Yisrael* will be redeemed. Eliyahu responded, "My friend, go and ask him yourself! You will find him sitting in tattered clothing among the poor and sick who are begging for *tzedakah* at the gate of Rome.

Rebbe Yehoshua made a mystical journey to the gates of Rome, and indeed he found Moshiach sitting in the dirt, surrounded by the destitute. Excitedly, he asked, לאימת אתי מר, "Master, when are you coming to redeem the world?"

*"Hayom*, Today...!" he replied, with a glint in his eye. Rebbe Yehoshua was overcome



with ecstasy; the long awaited breakthrough to *geulah* was about to occur! Full of energy, he returned to the Holy Land and waited.

The following day, Rebbe Yehoshua returned to Eliyahu HaNavi at the Cave of Rashbi with a complaint: שקורי קא שקר ביי, "He lied to me! Moshiach said he was coming 'today', but he didn't!"

Eliyahu HaNavi nodded and patiently explained, הכי אמר לך, "Actually, this is what he said to you: "*Hayom*, today — אם בקולו תשמעו *"if only* you will listen to His voice" (*Tehillim*, 95:7).

If only...

#### •••••

Shabbos Chazon the 'Shabbos of Vision' is named after the first word of the *haftarah* that we read on the Shabbos preceding the Fast of Tisha b'Av, the 9th of Av. The students of the Baal Shem Tov describe this Shabbos as a unique opportunity to glimpse a vision of what the world will look like after Redemption. Amazingly, this year Shabbos Chazon and Tisha b'Av are on the same day. Since the mitzvah of joy and *oneg* on Shabbos pushes off mourning, fasting and sadness, we will delay the fast until Sunday the 10th of Av, and we will eat and drink, rejoice and delight, and enjoy a vision of *geulah* on the 9th.

In this way, as we are feasting on Tisha

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 Wednesday, August 3 - Rabbi Kimche's shiur was sponsored in loving memory of Asna bat Reb Shneur z'l.
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 Tuesday, August 9 - Rabbi Yossie Goldin's Shiur is sponsored by Simone Pierce in loving memory of her Mother,
 Semcha Andree (Zeitoun) bat Jules & Irene a"h on the 18th

yahrzeit. She had a difficult life but never lost faith and kept the mitzvot. Her Mother taught "Do it for the Mitzvot" b'Av, we will not merely 'visualize' but we will have a palpable taste of the fulfillment of prophecy at the of end of days:

כּה־אָמַר ה' צְבָא-וֹת צוֹם הָרְבִיעִי וְצוֹם הַחֲמִישִׁי... ה' לְבֵית־ יְהוּדֶה לְשָׁשוֹן וּלְשְׁמְחָה וּלְמַעֲדִים טוֹבִים..."

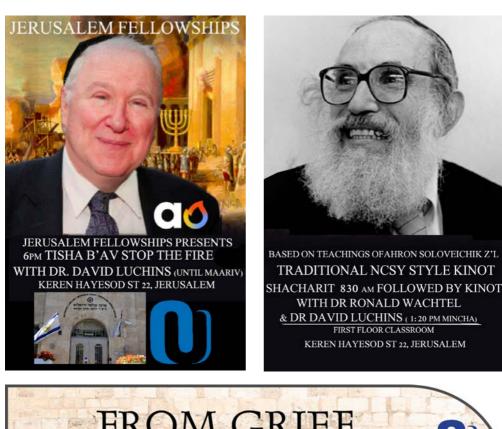
"So said the Lord of Hosts: The fast of the fourth month (Tamuz) and the fast of the fifth month (Av)... shall be for the House of Judah joy and happiness and happy festivals..." (*Zecharya*, 8:19)

This Shabbos is an *eis ratzon*, opportune time to feel and internalize the lesson we learn from Rebbe Yehoshua's encounter with Eliyahu haNavi. We speak so much of 'waiting for Moshiach'. In reality, Moshiach is waiting for us. Moshiach is ready at the gates, just waiting to be noticed, and just hoping to get the go-ahead: 'If only my people will listen to the Voice of the Divine — in the Torah, in their every experience, and in the needy characters on their city streets.

This Shabbos Chazon, may our hearts, eyes, ears and attention be open. And may it really be *today*.

קול צפַירְ נָשָאו קול יַחְדָו יְרַנֵּנו כִּי עַיָון בְּעָין יִרְאו בְּשׁוּב ה' צִיוֹן: Your watchmen raise their voices As one, together they shout for joy For every eye shall behold Hashem's return to Zion. (*Yeshayahu*, 52:8)





# FROM GRIEF TO GEULA

SUN AUG 7, SHACHARIT 8:30 AM

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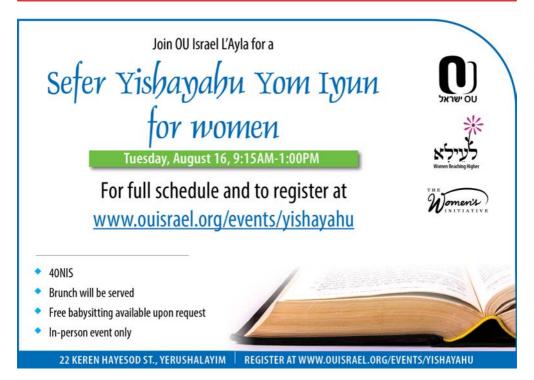


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#### SUN, AUG 7

## TISHA B'AV Observed

SPECIAL EVENTS: Tisha B'Av Kinot and Insights with Rabbi Azarya Berzon

SHACHARIT 8:30AM Kinot Begin at 9:30AM Mincha 1:20PM

6:00PM Tisha B'Av afternoon Program with Dr. David Luchins followed by Maariv



#### MON, AUG 8

9:15 AM Rebbetzin Pearl Borow Divrei HaYamim (L'Ayla)

10:30 AM Reconciling the Two Meraglim Stories Rabbi Avi Herzog Rabbi Goldscheider resumes Aug 22

11:45 AM Halacha and Agada in Contemporary Society Rabbi Shmuel Herschler

8:30 PM Semichat Chaver Program Rabbi Elyada Goldwicht (The Bais) (Resumes Aug 29)

> SPECIAL EVENT 4:00PM Hebrew on the Go for Young Olim Families-Visit to Museum of Jewish Music

#### TUE, AUG 9

9:15 AM Rebbetzin Smiles Torah Tapestries (L'Ayla) (Resumes Sept 6)

9:30AM Minchat Chinuch-Meaning in Mitzvot Rabbi Yitzchak Breitowitz

10:30AM Parshat HaShavua Rabbi Yossi Goldin

2:00 pm Men's Talmud-Sanhedrin Perek 4 **Rabbi Jeff Bienenfeld** 

7:30 PM Safrut Course (The Bais) Rabbi Tzvi Mauner

8:00pm Sefer Shmuel Rabbi Mordechai Machlis

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#### WED, AUG 10

9:00 AM Medina and Halacha Rabbi Shimshon Nadel (Resumes Aug 17)

10:15 AM Contemporary Issues in Halacha and Hashkafa Rabbi Anthony Manning

11:30 AM Great Jewish Thinkers Rabbi Alan Kimche

12:30 PM- Trailblazing the Text of Tanach- Lunch and Learn Rabbi Neil Winkler

8:30 PM Halachic Controversies Rabbi Aschi Dick (The Bais)

#### THURS, AUG 11

9:00 AM Parshat HaShavua Rabbi Ari Kahn

10:15 am Parshat HaShavua Rabbi Baruch Taub

11:30 AM Unlocking the Messages of Chazal Rabbi Shai Finkelstein

2:00 PM Men's Talmud-Sanhedrin Perek 4 Rabbi Jeff Bienenfeld VIRTUAL SCHEDULE (Zoom Only Classes): https://us02web.zoom. us/j/88363420460 Password: OU Israel

Rabbi Taub Parsha, 7:00PM MonHalacha, 7:00PM Wed

Rebbetzin Shatz (L'Ayla)-Insights of Chazal- Tues, 5:00PM

Rabbi Goldwicht Parshat HaShavua Wed. 8:30PM https://us02web.zoom. us/j/2244321902 Password 18

Rabbi Ahron Ziegler 30 Minutes of Halacha Tues. @ 3:00pm Conference Call 051-650-3788 Access Code 491247

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BY RABBI SAM SHOR Program Director, OU Israel Center

his Shabbat coincides with Tisha B'Av. As we are well aware, when *T*isha B'Av coincides with Shabbat, the many aspects of mourning that Halacha manadates for the day of Tisha B'Av are suspended, and postponed until the following day.

Indeed our *Chazal* in the *Gemara*, *Masechet Taanit*, stated:

תשעה באב שחל להיות בשבת וכן ערב תשעה באב שחל להיות בשבת אוכל ושותה כל צרכו ומעלה על שולחנו אפילו כסעודת שלמה בשעתו

Tisha B'Av that occurs on Shabbat, and so too, on Erev Tisha B' Av that occurs on Shabbat, one need not reduce the amount of food he eats; rather, he may eat and drink as much as he requires and put on his table a meal even like that of Shlomo Hamelech in his time.

How are we to fully understand this teaching? Why are the many restrictions associated with *Tisha B'Av* suspended when it coincides with *Shabbat*?

In the *zemer* sung each *Shabbat* evening, *Kol Mekadesh Shevii* - we see a reference to the Temple's future reconstruction.

The stanza reads: "Samcheim bevinyan shalem" Rejoice in the complete building. What exactly is the connection between Shabbat and the building of the Beit Hamikdash?

The **Darchei Noam**, the **Rebbe of Slonim**, explains the meaning of the stanza in our *Shabbat zemer*, *Samcheim B'vinyan*  Shaleim as follows.

Each Shabbat we rejoice in the knowledge that the very essence of Shabbat is building, not in physically laying the stones of the Temple, but in spiritually building the bridges between each member of the Jewish people, building that unified sense of purpose, that shared awareness, not only of where we come from, but where we are in the here and now. Only then, when we once again achieve that understanding and genuine love and respect for one another, can we also, together, begin to truly build for the future. In the sacred hours and moments of Shabbat, there is no Churban, the Beit HaMikdash still stands! On Shabbat there is only unity, harmony and tranquility, not pain and destruction...

Building the Temple begins with healing the wounds that divide us as Jews; building the Temple of the future begins with building the bridges of today. The *Slonimer Rebbe* teaches us that this is the essence of each and every *Shabbat*, and especially this *Shabbat* which coincides with *Tisha B'Av*. The experience of *Shabbat Kodesh* provides us with the opportunity to do our small part in building the *Beit Hamikdash*.

*Yehi Ratzon*, may this *Shabbat Kodesh* inspire each of us to strive for *achdut* and that shared sense of purpose, so that indeed we may witness the *Binyan Beit HaMikdash*, that we have waited, davened and longed for.



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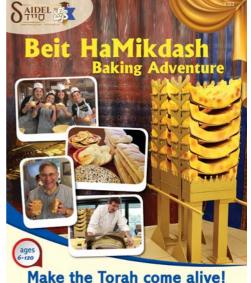
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### **GEULAS YISRAEL**

BY RABBI MOSHE TARAGIN Ram, Yeshivat Har Etzion

# The *Fourth* Eichah

Yirmiyahu was tasked with the impossible mission of denouncing the fallen religious first Temple era, and predicting its downfall. His unpopular message landed him in jail, fearing for his life. No one likes a whistle-blower. It took great courage to oppose squads of false prophets who falsely reassured a sinful nation that their rollicking party would last forever. Sadly, Yirmiyahu wasn't just a *prophet* of doom. He personally witnessed the obliteration of Yerushalayim, documented the horror and authored five chapters of lamentations and dirges. Sefer Eichah oozes with pain, abandonment and the swirling darkness of a world beyond hope.

Yirmiyahu begins his sorrowful chants with the word "איכה", which loosely translates as "how". Typically, sections of Tanach begin in a more *descriptive* fashion. For example, the book of Esther commences by providing the timeline of the Shushan narrative. The book of Kohelet is launched by attributing moral wisdoms to Shlomo, whose nickname happens to be Kohelet. Other times, a book of Tanach starts with the biography and genealogy of the prophet. The book of Eichah however, begins enigmatically, with a bizarre and interrogative word, asking "how"! The Three "Eichahs"

Evidently, this iconic word "eichah" possesses deeper meaning. In addition to Yirmiyahu, two other prophets – Moshe and Yeshayahu - prefaced their own declarations with the term "eichah". Observing rapid Jewish population growth, coupled with ever-increasing national needs, Moshe exclaims "eichah"- how can I bear the mushrooming demands of a booming nation? Likewise, Yeshayahu witnessed the moral breakdown of Yerushalavim and reprimanded the Jews with the term of "eichah"- how could a city of justice have degenerated into a den of prostitution and of murder? Juxtaposing this series of three, we read Moshe and Yeshayahu's "eichahs" on Shabbat Chazon, immediately prior to Yirmiyahu's eichah on Tisha b'av proper. If three different prophets all employed the same iconic term, it obviously evokes larger historical resonance.

### A Term of Bafflement

Decoding the symbolism of eichah demands a better understanding of its meaning. The term "how" is typically employed as an inquisitive request seeking information. For example, a person would solicit travel instructions with the word "how". However, the term "how" may also be spoken rhetorically, when witnessing something baffling. When we face the incomprehensible, and are overwhelmed with bewilderment, we often 'gasp' for air and utter a "how" of disbelief. We don't expect a response to our query, but are merely trying to process the unimaginable.

Jewish history is puzzling and mystifying. We are an atypical nation, ungoverned by the historical patterns and national trends which shape every other nation. Our history is perplexing, and our national arc is irrational. The irrationality of Jewish history is apparent both in moments of triumph and in grim moments of national tragedy.

Each of the three prophets observed a different stage of our trajectory, but each walked away with the same conclusion: "eichah"- how can human logic capture the story of the Jews. It lies beyond human computation. All these three wise prophets can do is wonder at the mystery of it all.

Moshe, the first to employ "eichah", witnessed our triumphant growth. A few weeks after departing Egypt, he couldn't help but marvel at the meteoric growth of his nation of former slaves. Two centuries of horrific persecution had crushed our national spirit, yet, despite this trauma we were prepared to embrace the divine command and introduce the world to monotheism. We barely survived Egyptian bigotry and yet, we were busily constructing a desert



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society of ethics and compassion, looking to Moshe for moral guidance. This rapid turnaround mystified Moshe, who could only *exhale* with admiration and wonder at our accelerated development. "How" could these slaves transform into children of Hashem so quickly? Eichah.

Centuries later, Yeshayahu stood among the moral debris of Yerushalayim and wondered how a nation gifted with supernaturalism and direct prophecy, could sink into sexual decadence and ruthless murder. Our national intransigence and delusional detachment from reality was stunning. Surely, he reasoned, a nation blessed with prophecy and with a divine Mikdash would avoid a moral freefall. Yet, we Jews are different and, when we unravel, we spiral uncontrollably, and when we fall, we fall precipitously. Yeshayahu could only stand and wonder about the grotesque carnival unfolding in Yerushalayim and how disproportionate Jewish experience was compared to other nations. "How" could they be so foolhardy and so debauched? Eichah.

Finally, Yirmiyahu witnesses the nightmarish ransacking of Yerushalayim, and he too can only shriek "Eichah". Standing amidst the smoldering ruins of the First Temple, he also casts his vision toward future Jewish suffering, and is aghast by the nightmarish scenes he beholds. He is shaken by how disproportionately Jews will suffer over the ensuing 2500 years, beginning with the Roman conquest of Yerushalayim. Rome conquered many cultures, but they displayed unparalleled mercilessness in hunting our sages and butchering them in public. Throughout history, many religious minorities were

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discriminated against, but the hostility and consistency of anti-Semitism has been singular and lopsided. Acknowledging the disproportionate suffering of Jews throughout history, Yirmiyahu screeches "How can this people be subjected to such disproportionate persecution"? Eichah.

The term eichah is the password to Jewish history and the keyword of Tisha Bav. On this day we lament the heartbreaking "detour" of Jewish history, remembering that, before we ruined our relationship with Hashem we stood at Sinai, eleven days away from utopia. Had we boldly marched into Israel we would have 'ended' history and ushered in a Messianic era of universal welfare. Instead, we flinched, and history never forgave us. We were condemned to wander for thousands of years across millions of miles. No nation has ever suffered as we did. Eichah.

### The Fourth Eichah

Eighty years ago, our nation suffered the greatest horror since the destruction of the First Mikdash. At the tail end of history, we were victimized by a brutal genocidal assault, the likes of which no nation had ever faced. Spectacularly, we have arisen from that horror to rebuild our people, resettle our land and restore our international relevancy. We are witnessing the "sequel" to eichah and the sequel to the script which the three prophets wrote. Once again, we are left breathless at the irrationality of Jewish history and once again the word "eichah" lingers on our lips. How spectacular is Jewish history! How quickly have we reconstituted our people and how defiantly have we rebuilt our Homeland, How? Eichah.

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FROM THE VIRTUAL DESK OF THE OUVEBBE REBBE



# Leather Arch Supports on *Tisha B'av*

**Question:** May I wear leather arch supports in my non-leather shoes on *Tisha B'av*?

Answer: Most of the sources on the prohibition of wearing shoes relate to Yom Kippur, but the *halachot* are mainly the same for Tisha B'av (see Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayim 550:16). The simple answer to your question is that arch supports are forbidden because one may not wear a nonleather shoe with leather lining (ibid.). Yet, we shall explore two avenues for leniency.

The first is to distinguish between a shoe's lining and an arch support. The Chelkat Yaakov (OC 217) suggests that since the arch supports are inserted and removed often, they might not be considered part of the shoe, but independent entities. If so, since standing on a leather surface is permitted and stringency is only mildly encouraged (see language of Rama, OC 614:2), perhaps leniency is appropriate in such a case of need.

The problem is that this view of arch supports, brought without precedent from earlier sources, is unlikely to be cogent. It is not as if one stands on arch supports that just happen to be in the shoes now. An arch support user stands on them only when they are in shoes and almost never uses the shoe without arch supports. The fact that one with fewer arch supports than shoes moves them from one shoe to another should not make them foreign to the shoes they are in.

The more likely grounds for leniency is need-based. Chazal and/or the classical poskim (see Shulchan Aruch and Rama, OC 614:3-4) permit the following people to wear shoes on Yom Kippur: a woman who recently gave birth, a sick person; one with wounds on his feet; one walking in a muddy area (see details in commentaries ad loc.). The Chelkat Yaakov (ibid.) viewed the arch support user as one who suffers, albeit more than the average person, from not having good shoes. According to this view, it is difficult to compare him to someone with wounds. However, we view most people who are prescribed arch supports as having a specific problem that the average person who does not like being barefoot does not and therefore see this is as a better leniency than the former one.

However, it is not proper to allow arch supports on a broad basis for two reasons. First, for many people, going one day without arch supports is unlikely to cause any damage or significant pain (on a practical level, Tisha B'av is a day with a lot of sitting).

Second, there are many options to

The Orthodox Union - via its website - fields questions of all types in areas of kashrut, Jewish law and values. Some of them are answered by Eretz Hemdah, the Institute for Advanced Jewish Studies, Jerusalem, headed by Rav Yosef Carmel and Rav Moshe Ehrenreich, founded by HaRav Shaul Yisraeli zt"l, to prepare rabbanim and dayanim to serve the National Religious community in Israel and abroad. Ask the Rabbi is a joint venture of the OU, Yerushalayim Network, Eretz Hemdah... and OU Israel's Torah Tidbits.



leather arch supports. Some non-leather footwear gives reasonable support to the arch. Furthermore, a high percentage of effective arch supports contain no leather. Therefore, if one knows he cannot manage without arch supports, he can obtain ones without leather (or get a cheap spare pair).

It is an excellent question whether one is required to make such preparations in advance, as one can understand the sources above in different ways. It is possible that in a case of a special reason for shoes, the prohibition does not exist, but it is possible that it is an act of prohibition, just that the need overcomes it (see Shemirat Shabbat K'hilchata 39:(113)). Several poskim posit (S'dei Chemed vol. IX, p. 157) or at least consider likely (Minchat Shlomo I,7; Torat Hamoadim, Yom Kippur 13:(11)) that even, for example, a woman after birth, may not wear leather shoes when easy alternatives exist. That is after all what the rest of us do when walking in places where we need reasonable footwear. Admittedly, arch supports need to be just right and are relatively expensive, so one could possibly argue that the alternatives are less feasible than usual.

In conclusion, the rule is that most people should not insert leather arch supports into their shoes on Yom Kippur or Tisha B'av. If they did not succeed in arranging a good alternative and expect significant pain, they may be lenient (Chelkat Yaakov ibid.). Leniency is easier on Tisha B'av, since its entire observance is not a Torah law, whereas Yom Kippur is a severe Torah prohibition and according to some even its prohibition of shoes is Torah law (see Mishna Berura 614:26).

# Having a dispute?



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# RABBI AARON GOLDSCHEIDER

As we usher in the profound Shabbat experience of Chazon and the intense observance of Tisha b'Av we are meant to utilize this time to introspect and set our thoughts on working towards achieving greater unity among Am Yisrael. We are fortunate to have had in our midst Gedolim who modeled behavior that we must continue to emulate, especially at this time of year.

Let us contemplate the following inspirational stories and consider their relevance for our own lives.

# *Tikunim* and Ascent

The eminent *Admor of Talne*, Rebbe Yochanan Twersky (1906-1981) during his young adult years lived in Israel and merited

to forge a close bond with Rav Kook. Sadly, he often witnessed first-hand staunch opposition and, at times, vicious attacks on Rav Kook. He once said, "What impacted me most about his personality was his ability to be *maavir al midotav*, not to hold a grudge and to be entirely forgiving. I saw many great Rabbis and *Admorim* in my day but none possessed the heightened degree of compassion and forgiveness that Rav Kook embodied. This is an attribute we strive to emulate."

The Talne Rebbe added this note: "It is well known that the Kabbalisic tradition teaches that one can attain highest states of spiritual ascent (*tikunim*) through fasting and self affliction (*sigufim*). But in my mind, all of these methods do not compare to the power of a single time that one sincerely forgives one who has caused pain and has been hurtful. This is the greatest *tikun* of them all. Rav Kook was such a person who excelled in this area (*Heichal Haahava*, p.241).

In a similar vein, consider the following episode related by Rav Kook's beloved *chaver* and colleague, Rav Aryeh Levin, 'The Tzadik of Yerushalayim':

There were many times that Rav Kook was relentlessly harassed and vilified by certain ultra-Orthodox groups. They were intent on embittering his life. They stalked him,

> mocked him and would post defamatory notices all over Jerusalem. Rav Aryeh Levin's daughter was once standing on a balcony in *Meah Shearim* and saw Rav Kook pass below on his way to deliver a shiur in the synagogue nearby. She was horrified to see and hear a group of zealots jeering and even went so far as to close him in and knock his fur hat onto the ground. "The site of



this," said Reb Aryeh Levin, "tormented her for days afterwards and she could not help recalling this painful event."

"I said to myself: I must go and see Rav Kook and give him encouragement in the midst of this difficult and tense time. Knowing that Rav Kook was occupied every second of the day, I thought it would be best to visit him late at night. I entered the *beit midrash* of Yeshivat Mercaz HaRav, where I found him immersed in study, utterly oblivious to my presence. I sat on a bench and began learning while I waited. There was no one there apart from Rav Kook and myself.

Rav Kook suddenly looked up and noticed me. He knew why I had come. 'Believe me,' he said, 'it is especially during trying times that I merit a surge of Divine help in my studies and *Chidushei Torah* [new interpretations of the Law]. I see the words of *Kohelet* spring forth to life: "God seeks those who are persecuted (*Kohelet* 3:15).""

Evidently, along with Rav Kook's ability to withstand the torment of others, he used such times to seek God's closeness. He was able to transform such times of turmoil into inspirational experiences that served to enhance his abstract perceptions and spiritual ascendance. ('A Tzaddik For Eternity,' Raz, pp. 259-261)





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# One Egg, One Child?

Last time we discussed the relatively new technology of egg freezing, which appears to be an excellent option for unmarried women who want to extend their fertility as they get older.

But the reality is more complex than it initially seems, since there is no guarantee of success attached to this procedure. While some may think that freezing one egg will result in the birth of one child, the reality is far from this simple equation. In fact, most women will need to freeze numerous eggs in order to achieve a pregnancy.

And so the golden question is how many eggs are needed for one child? There is no clear answer to this question, and it depends on many factors. For example, the age of the woman is extremely significant, since the quality of the eggs decreases as the woman's age increases. Another important factor is previous medical history, and the general medical status of the woman freezing the eggs.

In addition to the quality of the eggs, it must be stressed that these eggs can only be used in an in-vitro fertilization (IVF). The woman who froze the eggs and subsequently gets married, can thaw the eggs at a later stage and then fertilize them in the laboratory. As in any other IVF, the fertilized eggs then develop in the lab under observation. Some of the eggs will not fertilize, and those that do will not all develop and divide as expected. Some of the fertilized eggs will not make it to the stage of a more developed egg, called a blastocyst, which is really a rapidly growing ball of cells, but others will not. Of those fertilized eggs that do develop in a proper manner, one or two of the best fertilized eggs will be transferred to the woman's body, but not all of these will continue to develop in the uterus and become a fetus that will eventually develop into a human being.

From this brief description of the process of IVF, it becomes apparent that the success of IVF is not extremely high. In fact, even in ideal conditions the chances of having a child with IVF are about 20-30%. In other words, in over 70% of the cases the IVF will not be successful. When dealing with older eggs the success rates decrease. And so, it should be clear that freezing one egg will not necessarily result in having a child.

So how many eggs are needed in order to have a child?

More on this next time.





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# THE LAWS OF TISHA B'AV THAT FALLS ON MOTZEI SHABBAT

### Bathing/Showering on Erev Shabbat:

It is permitted to bathe/shower on the eve of Shabbat Hazon, even for those who are stringent and do not bathe/shower during the days preceding Tisha b'Av. Sephardi custom permits bathing/ showering as usual; Ashkenazi custom permits bathing/ showering in a manner in which one does not derive pleasure but one need not suffer.

### Shabbat Meals and Learning Torah:

The halachic principle that there is no mourning on Shabbat, applies even when Tisha b'Av falls on Shabbat (and the fast is postponed to Sunday) and, therefore, on Shabbat one may eat meat and drink wine, even to the degree of a feast of King Solomon. Similarly, it is permitted to sing zmirot on Shabbat as there is no mourning on Shabbat. Learning Torah on Shabbat is permitted as usual.

### Seudah Shlishit:

One may eat Seudah Shlishit as on every Shabbat, however, there is a disagreement among the poskim regarding whether one may eat meat and drink wine or even whether one must eat meat and drink wine. The Mishna Berura ruled (552, 23) that one may eat Seudah Shlishit as usual and may not specifically refrain from eating meat because then it will appear like an observance of mourning on Shabbat. In Igrot Moshe (O"C section 4, subsection 112) the ruling is that even one who does not generally eat meat and drink wine at Seudah Shlishit throughout the year may eat meat and drink wine at this particular Seudah Shlishit. One must, however, stop eating before sunset (shki'ah) and this does not represent a contradiction to the status of Shabbat as there is no essential Shabbat requirement to continue to eat after sunset. Similarly, one should refrain from singing joyous songs after sunset.

### Twilight - From Sunset until Dark (Emergence of the Stars – Tzait HaKochavim):

The twilight period is deemed an intermediate period in that on the one hand it is still considered Shabbat yet on the other hand the obligations of Tisha b'Av have already commenced. From a halachic perspective, we are in doubt whether this period is considered day or night (bein hashmashot). There is a mitzvah of adding to Shabbat (Tosefet Shabbat) at the onset of Shabbat as well as at the conclusion of Shabbat. Consequently, the minutes immediately after tzait hakochavim constitute a period during which both Shabbat and the prohibitions of the fast coexist. Accordingly, during this period, one does not yet commence the overt mourning customs of Tisha b'Av, but does refrain from activities whose absence would not necessarily be perceived as indicating mourning, including: eating, drinking, washing, and anointing. Nevertheless, one who uses the restroom during the bein hashmashot period washes hands as usual as refraining from washing hands



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would constitute observing a mourning practice on Shabbat.

Only after the emergence of three medium-sized stars (tzait hakochavim) plus an additional few minutes of Tosefet Shabbat does one recite "Hamavdil Bein Kodesh l'Chol ("He who distinguishes between Holy and mundane") and then change from Shabbat clothes to everyday clothes (one should change into clothes that were worn during the preceding week as we refrain from wearing freshly-laundered clothes) and change from leather to non-leather shoes. Some have the custom to remove their leather shoes immediately after shki'ah because they assert that doing so does not affect the honor of Shabbat as there is no requirement to wear shoes on Shabbat altogether, however, if the shoe removal would be perceived as a mourning custom it should not be done. The prevailing custom is to not remove/change shoes until after the Shabbat has concluded.

### Maariv and Havdala:

It is customary to delay maariv in order to allow time for the necessary preparations for Tisha b'Av.

In Shemoneh Esrei one inserts the usual havdala of "Ata Chonatanu" and some opinions suggest that women should also be sure to daven maariv in order to say havdala. A woman who does not daven maariv fulfills the obligation of havdala by saying "Baruch hamavdil".

On motzaei Shabbat we say the bracha on the havdala candle as it is an acknowledgement of the creation of fire on motzaei Shabbat and is not dependent on making a bracha on wine. The custom is to make the bracha on the candle at the end of maariv before the reading of Eicha.

No bracha is recited on b'samim because the smelling of b'samim is intended to ease the pain of the neshama yeteira as it departs on motzaei Shabbat and on Tisha b'Av it is not appropriate to mitigate pain.

One who is ill and must eat on Tisha b'Av must make havdala before eating, and it is best if the havdala is made on a beverage that is considered "mashkeh medinah" (preferably an alcoholic beverage such as beer) or coffee or grape juice which is not considered a joyous beverage. If there is a minor present it is best that the minor drink the havdala beverage rather than the person who is ill. However, a minor who eats on Tisha b'Av need not make or hear havdala.

### Conclusion of the Fast:

Before eating or drinking, havdala must be recited over a cup of wine (or other qualifying beverage), including the bracha on the wine and the bracha of hamavdil (the preliminary verses are not recited).

It is customary to say *kiddush l'vana* after maariv at the end of the fast.

Special thanks to Rabbi Shai Finkelstein, Rav Kehillat Nitzanim for sharing his Tisha B'Av guidelines with Torah Tidbits and our readership.

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Last year on Tisha B'av afternoon a 15 year-old girl was fasting in her home in Beitar Illit when she began to feel dizzy. Her parents encouraged her to lie down and rest. The girl was heading towards the couch when she suddenly paled and collapsed unconscious onto the floor. Her alarmed parents rushed to her side and frantically called emergency services.

Moshe. a volunteer EMT with United Hatzalah. was at his home when he received the alert. He sprinted to his ambucar and raced to the address arriving in less than three minutes together with other United Hatzalah volunteers at the scene. Moshe together with the other volunteers found the girl lying on the floor, she wasn't breathing and had no pulse. The EMTs worked feverishly performing CPR, administering chest compressions interspersed with ventilations. The team continued resuscitation efforts for more than 30 minutes until they were rewarded with a stable pulse. With no time to lose, the young patient was whisked into the intensive care ambulance that had arrived in the interim and was evacuated for emergency transport to the hospital.

"This girl had no medical history and this came as a huge shock to the family," relayed Moshe. "Apparently, she had an undetected medical condition that caused her sudden collapse. I shudder to think what would have happened had we not been there so quickly and began CPR. Thankfully we arrived quickly and the girl survived. It was a small miracle on such a sad day."





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### Meron Nemirov Jerusalem Chapter Director Based Baseless Hatred

You've been invited! While it might be surprising that you've been invited to a party by your enemy, you're thrilled. Maybe he's extending an olive branch? Maybe he's trying to just include everyone in the neighborhood. You walk into the party and suddenly your called. Not in excitement or invitation but rather in anger. "Get out!" you're told. How do you feel? You got all dressed up and now you're being embarrassed in public! It's an awful feeling. So you try and do your best to resolve the situation. Can I stay if I pay for my plate? For half the party? For everyone? The only response you get is NO! What do you feel? What do you do after that?

This is the story of Kamtza and Bar Kamtza, usually used as the example for the *Sinat Chinam, Baseless Hatred*, that brought about the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash and the expulsion of the Jewish People. Ask yourself this, were the feelings of Bar Kamtzah justified? I too would have been furious at how I was treated! Now switch roles; you're the host making a simcha, and your enemy walks through the door to ruin my day, shouldn't you be upset?

Rabbi David Fohrman suggests that maybe our "Baseless hatred" is when we let anger

go unchecked. The host could have considered the possibility that his servant messed up.. Bar Kamtzah rightfully got angry, yet he also let his anger stray and grow against the community and its leaders. How is it reasonable to bring destruction against the whole Jewish community because one person embarrassed you?

Maybe the way to return from our exile spurred on by disproportionate hatred is to treat each other with love and kindness of an equally disproportionate response. May we merit to see it speedily in our days.



### Ometz Shmidman 10th Grade, Alon Shvut Eating During a Fast

How can we eat and celebrate during the day that the Temple was destroyed? Just because the ninth o Av falls out on a day of rest this year, we should ignore everything else? Are we that selfish?

Yom tov rishon of Passover is the same day of the week as Tisha b'av. The day we were released from imprisonment and the day that we received freedom is



the same day of the week as the day were enslaved and imprisoned - coincidence? I think not! During the holocaust Rabbi Avraham Yosef started saying ברכות השחר, when he got to the bracha "שלא עשני עבד" he screams to G-D, "how can we say such a thing? We're currently enslaved!" In the sefar called Shut Maamakin (ח"ג, סימן ו) the question is answered. It says that the bracha isn't talking about the physical body but our nefesh! People will never be able to enslave our nefesh and we will forever stay בני חורין even in our darkest days. If G-D didn't release us from the Egyptians, our nefesh would still be enslaved. Being set free isn't just getting away from slavery but advancing to a higher level with our nefesh. Therefore while we cry for the destruction of our Temple we are still free. Shabbat is our day of rest, our day where we truly feel free. No need to worry about social media or work, a day of rest where we are kings. We're on such a high level on that day that yes, it even lets us overlook everything else that happens on that day.

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# August 7, 2022 תשעה באב תשפ״ב WEBCAST OF THE TISHA B'AV KINOT

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**RABBI MOSHE HAUER** 

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RABBI DR. TZVI HERSH WEINREB Executive Vice President, Emeritus, OU The Death of the Righteous... AVAILABLE ALL DAY ON DEMAND



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RABBI AZARYA BERZON Faculty, OU Israel From Grief to Geula Begins at 9:30 am Israel time



This program is presented by Richard and Debra Parkoff in memory of Richard's parents Avraham ben Yitzchak Hakohen, A'H, and Rochel Blume bat Yehoshua, A'H

