



TISHA B'AV 5783: AN ATTEMPT TO CONNECT AND CRY

Rabbi Avraham Wein

“There has been no greater, more shattering experience than the destruction of the Beit ha-Mikdash.”

(Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, *The Lord is Righteous in All His Ways*, 9)



ירמיהו ט'

כֹּה אָמַר יְקֹוֹק צְבָאוֹת הַתְּבוֹנָנִי וְקִרְאוּ לְמַקְוֹנָנוֹת וּתְבוֹאִינָה וְאֵלֵי הַחֲכָמוֹת שְׁלַחוּ וּתְבוֹאִינָה: וְתִמְהַרְנָה וְתִשְׁנָה עָלֵינוּ נְהִי וְתִרְדְּנָה עֵינֵינוּ דַמְעָה וְעַפְעַפִּינוּ יָזְלוּ מַיִם:

Thus said GOD of Hosts: Listen! Summon the dirge-singers, let them come... Let them quickly start a wailing for us, **That our eyes may run with tears**, Our pupils flow with water.

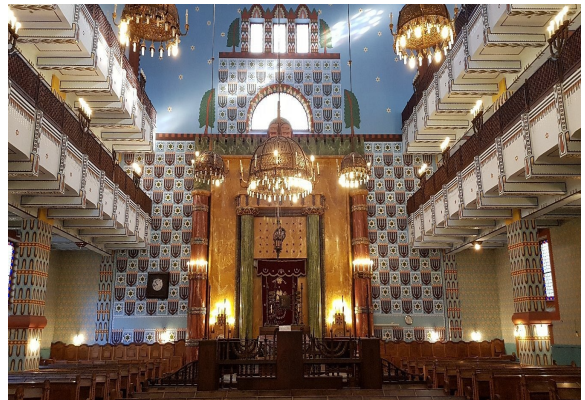
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Pre-Kinnot Introduction

Kazinczy Street Synagogue, Budapest (built 1912-1913)



2 Challenges on this Day

מדרש איכה פר' ב סי' ד רבה

רבי יוחנן הוה דרש שיתין אפין 'כבלע ה' ולא קמל'
ורבי הוה דריש עשרים וארבעה אפין ולא דרבי יוחנן
יתיר על רבי אלא רבי על ידי שהיה סמוך לחרפן הבית
היה נזכר והיה דורש ובוכה ומתנחם.

Rabbi Jacob J. Schacter, Introduction, The Lord is Righteous in All His Ways

Already the prophet Jeremiah hinted at the special assistance we require to help instill in us a sense of avelut yeshanah when he wrote in the passage chosen for the Haftarah of Tish'ah be-Av, "Consider and call for the professional mourners and let them come" (Jer. 9:16). Avelut yeshanah requires "professional mourners" (mekonenot) to help us feel an appropriate sense of grief and mourning. "Let them raise up a lament for us; let our eyes run with tears" (9:17). It is our eyes that must run with tears, our pupils that must flow with water. One experiencing avelut hadashah need not be instructed as to how to weep. An individual, personal mourner need not be taught how to cry nor be inspired to mourn; such a reaction is natural and instinctive. It is only because we are removed and distant that we need instruction in how to mourn and feel the loss.

And feel we must. This instruction is crucial, said the Rav. It is not enough for us simply to say the words, go through the motions and recite the formulae. Kinot recitation, said the Rav, is like prayer (tefillah) and like avelut in general; it is an avo dah she-be-lev, a "service of the heart" that requires an emotional, personal and experiential feeling. The recitation of words and the articulation of formulae need to effect an inner feeling, sensibility and sensitivity. Mere recital of prescribed words falls far short of the prescribed requirement.

What, then, is it? It is a result of *Kinot*. Work is forbidden on Tish'ah be-Av because it would interfere with *Kinot*. Tish'ah be-Av has a kind of *issur melakhah* too, but it is not like the *issur melakhah* of *Yom Tov* or of a regular mourner. It is rooted in the essence of the day. I cannot say rooted in its *kedushat ha-yom*, for there is no *kedushat ha-yom* on Tish'ah be-Av. But it is rooted in the *halot ha-yom*, the essence of the day. The purpose of the prohibition against doing work on Tish'ah be-Av is not for the sake of the prohibition per se, but in order to achieve intense concentration on the mourning and to avoid distractions (*heseh ha-da'at*). If one does work, there is no prohibition; one is not violating an *issur melakhah*. Rather, says the Ramban, it is the *heseh ha-da'at* that is affected. (For an additional context in which to see the *issur melakhah* on Tish'ah be-Av, see below.)

And I want you to understand that when I say *Kinot*, I do not mean simply saying the words. *Kinot*, like mourning in general, is basically a *kiyyum she-ba-lev*, an inner fulfillment. It is not just a mechanical reading; it is an experiencing of the great catastrophe, and an understanding of what the destruction of the *Beit ha-Mikdash* over nineteen hundred years ago has meant to us, to our history, ever since. Work and what the prophet calls "Summon the dirge singers, let them come" (Jer. 9:16) are mutually exclusive, contradictory. This explains the ruling (*Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim* 559:5) prohibiting us from doing anything during the recital of *Kinot* that will cause us to lose sight of the appropriate feeling of mourning. One should not talk, should not entertain anyone, and also should abstain from performing work. The *avelut yeshanah* aspect of Tish'ah be-Av includes the added dimension of its being a *yom kinah*.

That the *avelut* of Tish'ah be-Av is expressed through the medium of *Kinot* points to a fundamental difference between *avelut hadashah* and the *avelut yeshanah* of that day. The word *kinah* is not found in *Hilkhot Avelut*. We have *avelut* but not *kinah*.

Kinah is a specific fulfillment of the *avelut* characteristic of Tish'ah be-Av. *Kinah* expresses itself in the fact that our emotional reaction is very important. *Kinah* simply is the sense of crying. When the famous letter was sent to Zechariah the prophet by the Benei ha-Golah asking whether they had to observe Tish'ah be-Av while the second *Beit ha-Mikdash* was being rebuilt, they formulated the question as, "Shall I cry in the fifth month [Av]?" (Zech. 7:3). They did not ask, "*Ha-et'abel*, shall I mourn?" but "*Ha-evkeh*, shall I cry?"

When it comes to *avelut hadashah*, God forbid, we mourn, but there is no halakhic obligation to cry. The *avelut* of a mourner is a natural *avelut*; it is spontaneous. True, we learn, as mentioned above, that three days are set aside for crying (*Mo'ed Katan* 27b). Of course the Gemara (*Shabbat* 105b) says that if we cry for the death of a great man, *Ha-Kadosh Barukh Hu* counts our teardrops and puts them away in His treasure house. Of course if a person is really depressed and sad because he feels that he has lost someone great, someone dear, someone whom no one else can replace, he will react emotionally to this awareness and mood, and he will cry. If a member of the family is taken away, everyone reacts emotionally, with crying. We do not have to instruct or teach the mourner how to mourn or how to weep. The natural reaction or response to disaster is to cry. But the *kiyyum avelut* in the case of *avelut hadashah* is a *kiyyum she-ba-lev*, an inner fulfillment. There is no mitzvah to express an emotional reaction to the disaster. True, the *kiyyum* of *avodah she-ba-lev* expresses itself through, and is translated into, *avodah she-be-ma'aseh*. Of course, a person must express this emotion of sadness and depression during the seven days of mourning by engaging in certain required activities and abstaining from certain others. *Shiv'ah* has its own laws, and *sheloshim* (the first thirty days of mourning), too, has its own laws. *Avelut hadashah* is *avelut she-ba-lev* combined with *perillot avelut*, certain activities that must be done. But you will not find a separate requirement that a mourner should cry,

weep, or wail, or should hire men and women who know how to cry, weep, or wail. A mourner does not have to say *Kinot*. There is no fulfillment of a mitzvah of crying in *avelut hadashah*, and that is why *kinah* is inappropriate in that context.

Contrast this to the *avelut yeshanah* of Tish'ah be-Av for *hurban Yerushalayim*. It is an old *avelut*; we mourn for something that happened more than nineteen hundred years ago. With *avelut yeshanah*, there is no spontaneous reaction. The reality of the lack of a *Beit ha-Mikdash* all these years has become normal for us. There is always an equation between reality and normality. Whatever is real is normal, and whatever is normal is real. People do not look upon reality as abnormal. And so, the *avelut* is much harder. There is more than a risk, there is a natural reality that, over time, people will forget. We are afraid that the Jew may forget that on Tish'ah be-Av not only was the *Beit ha-Mikdash* destroyed, but *Keneset Yisrael*, the Jewish people as a nation and a society, a party to the covenant, was on the verge of complete collapse and destruction. It is difficult to react emotionally, to cry, to be upset and to mourn for an event that happened so long ago.

Thus the mourning of Tish'ah be-Av has to be taught. One must understand it thoroughly and be sensitive to it. We must learn how to mourn, to wail and weep for the *hurban Beit ha-Mikdash*. This is exactly the mitzvah of *avelut yeshanah*—to respond by crying. *Avelut yeshanah* is superior to *avelut hadashah* in that it *requires* one to be emotionally upset, to be unable to control one's emotions, to break out in tears. Here there is a special requirement to "Summon the dirge singers, let them come" (Jer. 9:16), to call upon those who know how to weep. Indeed, all the prohibitions that we observe on Tish'ah be-Av are meant to arouse us to remember that it is the day of disaster. They were instituted to ensure that there will be no distraction from the tragedy. The idea of not wearing a pressed or ironed jacket during the week in which Tish'ah be-Av falls is not because one may not enjoy fresh laundry. There is no obligation

to afflict oneself during this time. We are not interested in making anyone's life unpleasant and unenjoyable. Rather, we want to make sure we remember the *hurban, kedei she-lo yafsik libo min ha-avelut*, and are not disconnected from the feeling of mourning. "Summon the dirge singers, let them come" means that we must not forget. The singers will remind us by their yelling, their crying, their deep despair. They will act in a manner that is not usual and so will remind us to remember.

And, in fact, through the mourning we observe on Tish'ah be-Av we *do* remember the *hurban Beit ha-Mikdash*. It is remarkable how we remember an event that occurred so many years ago. It is now more than nineteen hundred years and we still remember. And not only do we observe the laws of Tish'ah be-Av, we actually feel sadness. We are in despair. True, we are not hysterical; one cannot be hysterical over a disaster that occurred more than nineteen hundred years ago. It is an impossibility; it is very hard to mourn for such a long-gone event. But nonetheless we remember. We remember, and we feel the sadness, the loss.

The secret lies in the law of "In every generation each person is obligated to regard himself as if he personally came out of Egypt" (*Pesahim* 116b). On Pesah night we do not celebrate a redemption that lies in the very distant mysterious past, so many thousands of years ago, but we celebrate and rejoice in an event that has just happened. The Rambam (*Hilkhoh Hametz u-Matzah* 7:6) says that one must feel "as if he himself has now left the slavery of Egypt." It happened just a little while ago! And this rule applies not only to Pesah, to expressing praise and gratitude for happy events, but it must also apply to Tish'ah be-Av, to *kinot* and to *avelut* vis-à-vis catastrophic events. On Tish'ah be-Av we mourn for the *Beit ha-Mikdash* that was *just burned*, not for the *Beit ha-Mikdash* that was destroyed and burned over nineteen hundred years ago. Oh, no! The *Beit ha-Mikdash* that was burned just recently, and is still burning, is very real for us. Hazal say that the *Beit ha-Mikdash* is

Attempt #1



https://aish.com/the_heart_rending_cry/

Keren Gottlieb

The *megillah* reading began, and I started reading the first two verses.

"Alas, she sits in solitude...like a widow...She weeps bitterly in the night and her tear is on her cheek. She has no comforter from all her paramours; all her friends have betrayed her, they have become her enemies."

Suddenly that first day of Nissan began replaying in my mind. The angry looks of those children. The parents' screams. The mothers' crying. The men's pitiful silence. The shock they were overcome with as they received the terrible news as if I had just told them about the death of a loved one.

At that moment, I understood.

I understood that this was exactly how we are supposed to mourn the Temple on Tisha B'Av. We are supposed to cry over the loss of the unity and peace throughout the entire world. We are supposed to lament the disappearance of the Divine Presence and holiness from our lives in Israel. We are supposed to be pained by the destruction of our spiritual center, which served to unify the entire Jewish nation.

We're supposed to feel as if something very precious has been taken away from us forever. We are meant to cry, to be shocked and angry, to break down. We are supposed to mourn over the destruction of the Temple, to cry over a magnificent era that has been uprooted from the face of the earth. The incredible closeness that we had with God – that feeling that He is truly within us – has evaporated and disappeared into thin air.



Ruth Gruber, Rescue, 1987

RESCUE

At the start of the rains, Yona and his brothers harnessed the oxen to the plow they had made from a piece of eucalyptus wood, prepared the ground, and then seeded it with barley and wheat and *teff*. When the rains ended, they harnessed the oxen again and harvested the crop.

There was no school in Weleka. Only the *Kes*, the Jewish priest, and a few men could read Ge'ez, the ancient religious and literary language of Ethiopia. Most parents and children were illiterate. Yona too was illiterate.

Then in 1920, a visitor came to Weleka. He was Professor Jacques Faitlovitch, a French scholar, who was to change Yona's life and the lives of the Ethiopian Jews forever.

YONA HAD NEVER heard of Faitlovitch nor had he heard of Faitlovitch's teacher, Professor Joseph Halévy, who had visited Ethiopia in the 1860s.

The Falashas were once again being "discovered" by overzealous missionaries from Europe who were scouting Africa to win Jews and pagans to Christianity. Most of the missionaries were Anglicans, who, on their return to their homes, published triumphant reports of how they were converting exotic black Jews.

The stories alarmed the Jewish establishment in France and England. Professor Halévy, a French-Jewish linguist and poet fluent in Ethiopian languages, decided to travel to Abyssinia, as Ethiopia was then called, to investigate.

"Here I am," he appealed through the press. "Send me."

He was selected, his journey sponsored and financed by the Alliance Israélite Universelle.

The Alliance was an early Jewish self-help agency, a forerunner of today's antidiscrimination leagues. Its aim was to emancipate Jews in lands where they were slaves, and open a network of schools in countries where illiteracy was the norm. On both counts, slavery and illiteracy, Abyssinia was a natural for the Alliance.

The Way It Began

It was 1868 when Halévy reached Massawa, the coastal port on the Red Sea. Travel was dangerous. So Halévy, with a patrician face and flowing white mustache, passed himself off as a rhinoceros dealer. He traveled on a camel.

As soon as he reached the first Jewish village, he dropped his disguise.

"I am a Jew," he told the people.

"What! You are a Falasha! A *white* Falasha! You are laughing at us! Are there any white Falashas?"

He finally convinced the villagers that he too was a circumcised Jew.

"I assured them"—he described that first encounter in his book *Travels in Abyssinia*—"that all the Falashas of Jerusalem . . . were white. . . . The name of Jerusalem, which I had accidentally mentioned, changed as if by magic the attitude of the most incredulous."

"Oh, do you come from Jerusalem, the Blessed City?" they queried him. "Have you beheld with your own eyes Mount Zion, and the House of the Lord of Israel, the Holy Temple?"

"I must confess," he wrote, "I was deeply moved on seeing those black faces light up at the memory of our glorious history."

Halévy told them that there were indeed Jews living in the Holy Land. But then he told them something even more incredible. There were Jews living in other countries as well.

"And all white! Impossible!"

The incredulity of the black Jews was a mirror image of the incredulity of academicians and rabbis in Europe. How could these black Ethiopians really be Jews? Maybe they were converts; maybe they were members of a black sect.

Halévy came away in the spring in 1868 convinced that the skeptics in France were wrong.

He estimated that there were between 150,000 and 200,000 Ethiopian Jews, and found them more rigid in obeying the laws of the Books of Moses than most traditionally Orthodox Jews in Europe or America.

As proof of their Jewishness, he brought back from Ethiopia

Asher Naim, ^{Introduction} *Saving The Lost Tribe*, 2003

Judaism. Tribal members observed Sabbath, maintained strict dietary laws, and performed rituals exactly as they were described in the Hebrew Bible. They even had separate huts, or "red tents," at the edge of their villages for menstruating women and new mothers.

After the missionaries returned to Europe with reports of these black Jews, a Judaic scholar named Joseph Halevy set out to meet them in person. Was it possible these Ethiopians were one of the long-lost tribes of Israel, driven out during the First or Second Temple? With a Muslim guide and a pack of mules, he made the treacherous journey across Ethiopia in the winter of 1867, crossing valleys and rivers and scaling mountains until finally he came across villages of thatched huts.

When Halevy approached, villagers surrounded him. Dressed in pristine white tunics, their children naked and hiding behind them, they were curious but cautious. They had seen a white man only once before when the missionaries came. Halevy greeted them in Amharic, their native tongue, and the tribe buzzed with excitement. He could speak their language! Then the leader of the tribe approached, carrying a bowl of water, possibly for purification purposes; he examined the white man from head to toe.

"Sir," he said, "perhaps you require a knife or sword? You should buy them in a large town. The instruments we make are too rough in workmanship to suit a European. We have nothing here for you, and we don't want to hear about your religion."

"My brethren," Halevy replied. "I don't need a sword. And I'm not here to convert you. I am a European, but like you I am also an Israelite. I worship no god but Adonai, and I acknowledge no other law than the law of Sinai!"

The Ethiopians stared in disbelief. Then slowly laughter rippled through the crowd. Even the leader wore a forgiving smile

on his face. "Sir, you a Jew? How can you be a Jew? *You are white!*"

During his first encounter with the Falashas, Halevy had difficulty convincing them he was Jewish. But when he mentioned Jerusalem, as Halevy recounted in his travel journal, the tribe's attitude suddenly "changed as if by magic."

A burning curiosity seemed all at once to have seized the whole company. "Oh, do you come from Jerusalem, the blessed city? Have you beheld with your own eyes Mount Zion, and the House of the Lord of Israel, the Holy Temple? Are you acquainted with the burial place of our mother Rachel?" They eagerly listened to my replies.

The Falashas had been removed from other Jews for thousands of years. None of them had traveled more than a few miles from their village. Yet they had held on to the prospect of one day returning to Jerusalem; it was an idea that burned in their hearts and had been passed down from generation to generation.

More than a century later, I was privileged to play a central part in their redemption, and *Saving the Lost Tribe* is the story of Israel's and America's struggle to reunite the Falashas with the rest of Judaism and deliver them to the Holy Land.

I use the word *redemption* in its ancient sense—a literal "buying back" of the freedom of another person. After the Babylonian exile in 586 BCE, it was considered the responsibility of the tribe to make every effort to buy the freedom of Jewish slaves. This act of redemption, or *lifdod*, was carried out during the Roman Empire and has been made popular today through the heroics of Oskar Schindler, as he is portrayed in *Schindler's List*. No matter what the price, no matter what the risk, it was imperative that every effort was made to redeem the life of another Jew.

We did not know: How Ethiopian Jews discovered the Second Temple was gone

 blogs.timesofisrael.com/we-did-not-know-how-ethiopian-jews-discovered-the-second-temple-was-gone/

We Ethiopian Jews simply had no idea that God's holy site on earth was gone -- and we are bereft

Up until the age of 9, I lived in a world where the Beit HaMikdash — the Holy Temple in Jerusalem — actually existed. Like my parents and teachers, I believed that the Second Temple stood in its place in Jerusalem and was literally made of pure gold. I grew up hearing about the Kohanim — holy priests — and how they worked in the Temple. I fell asleep listening to stories about the halo hovering over Jerusalem, and about Jews who merited to dwell in the Holy City cloaked in white garments — people blessed with pure hearts, clean thoughts, and devoid of sin. Overhead, I would imagine the Shechina — the Divine Presence — as angels.

Deep within Ethiopia, my family and I, along with our neighbors from the Beta Israel community, hoped to merit to return to Jerusalem one day. We prayed, and performed customs that expressed our yearning for Zion. When we slaughtered livestock, we would turn the animals' heads towards Jerusalem, and whenever we noticed a flock of storks above our fields, we would chant a song in which we requested that the birds deliver our prayers — the hope to return to our homeland.

We knew that the First Temple had been destroyed. During the first 17 days of the month of Av, we would fast during the daytime. We chanted special lamentations in Amharic, and practiced other customs of mourning prevalent among many Jewish communities. We even continued ritual sacrifices as a distant memory of the Temple times.

How strong was our belief in the sanctity of Jerusalem in our homes in Ethiopia!

The most powerful educational concept that resonated within children and adults alike in Ethiopia, passed down from generation to generation, was awareness of the need for us to safeguard the purity of our hearts and deeds in order that we would one day be worthy of entering Jerusalem — Heaven on earth.

The ideal of Jerusalem was the force that provided us with the stamina to persevere during the arduous trek through the desert. It was the dream that kept us going. We wanted to reach it, achieve it. We buried our beloved family members, left possessions behind willingly, and lost them to vicious thieves. We struggled to keep going despite the terrible conditions and the hunger, only because of our goal to reach Jerusalem of Gold, and after so many generations, stand at the gates of the Holy Temple.

Then we arrived and discovered that the Temple had been destroyed.

Jerusalem did not appear as the place I had so badly yearned to reach. Learning about the destruction of the Temple only as I reached the gates of the Old City was an earth-shattering disappointment, and it left a great void in me that I have been unable to fill. My father, who never ceased to dream for even one moment about Jerusalem and the Temple, saw Jews travelling on Shabbat and witnessed immoral behavior desecrating the sanctity of the city. I could hear his heart breaking anew each time he experienced it.

With the passing of the years, I attempted to fill the void within caused by the absence of the Temple by dedicating myself to my work and to fulfilling personal dreams.

Only upon maturing, and having overcome the struggles of integration into Israeli society, did I begin to understand how fortunate I was to have grown up believing that the Temple existed. I succeeded at forging my personality with the goal of being worthy of visiting the Temple! The angels that I had imagined inhabiting Jerusalem, in some way, were my parents, who lived their lives striving to be pure enough to merit Jerusalem. Only after many years in Israel, having gained a familiarity with the country and its people, did this void become a strength, an asset.

This cognizance of how, as a result of the journey we made, I was fortunate to have had time stand still and experience this deep connection to a Temple that in our minds and hearts still existed, resonated within me for many years.

About the Author

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THE JOURNEY TO YARUSALEM

etzion.org.il/en/holidays/yom-yerushalayim/journey-yarusalem

Rav Mabrahtu Solomon

From my youth in Ethiopia, I was raised on “Yarusalem.” This was a word I heard constantly at home, in all types of situations – from the everyday conversations of my parents, to prayers, to every time of crisis. It was a magical word, illuminating and enlightening everyone, filling us with hope that one day this great dream would be realized. This word was a spiritual, heavenly, omnipotent word. It was akin to what the Talmud tells us of R. Akiva’s expression of encouragement to his wife in their own time of distress:

“If only I could afford it,” said he to her, “I would present you with [the finest jewelry:] a Jerusalem of Gold.” (*Nedarim* 50a)

As I reached my teenage years, I heard Yarusalem coming tantalizingly closer. My parents told me, “We are travelling to Yarusalem.” They began to make preparations, but they warned us not to tell anyone — neither our non-Jewish neighbors, nor even the Jews who lived together with us. Everything had to be kept secret until the moment of departure.

At long last, our holiday arrived – the day of our departure for Jerusalem. Under cover of night, in silence, without anyone noticing, we covertly left for Jerusalem. As a child, I felt and thought that we would definitely reach Yarusalem very quickly, within a week, two weeks at most.

We set out on foot. Walking was not particular difficult, but the constant fear of being apprehended by the authorities (who, in those years, would not allow Jews to leave Ethiopia) was terrible and unrelenting. The adults ordered us to walk quietly, to stop, not to go, to go — but always to be silent. There were times at which we would stay a whole day or night in one place, without moving, lest we be discovered.

I remember this journey as the path to realizing the greatest dream of all. Our steps were full of energy, as the name “Yarusalem” propelled us from within. With the anticipation of seeing the love of your life, you are filled with hope and physical strength that is never exhausted.

Nevertheless, from another point of view, this was an extremely difficult journey, physically, and mentally. Our anxieties and fears of never fulfilling our dream were real. There are scars that remain in your memory: the images of loved ones who can go no further, who stay there after a brief “ceremony” of parting, whom you know you will never see again — because they will be swallowed by the accursed ground or else they will sate the hunger of those predators in the desert. It is a feeling that is very difficult to bear.

Bit by bit, I matured on our way to Yarusalem. The thoughts I once had about reaching it in short order soon changed. We walk and we walk and we walk, but the journey never ends. It takes us more than three weeks until we arrive — not in Yarusalem, but in Sudan.

What I and my family experienced over the next three years in Sudan is difficult to describe briefly: the suffering, the hopelessness I felt there. Indeed, to describe it at length is also quite difficult! It was a foreign land, with a language, a culture and a religion that were unlike what we knew and understood. We focused on our desire to leave as quickly as possible, and we made no attempt to learn the local customs or to become acclimated; our faces were turned towards Yarusalem. This mental position made life even more difficult in this strange land, though our experience would have been challenging in any case.

Many – too many from our community – did not survive this journey. They never merited to see the Yarusalem we dreamed of, which we were raised on, for which we set out in the first place. However, the community itself, praised be the Creator, is now in Yarusalem, and several decades have passed.

Yarusalem!

How many yearnings and longings I soaked up from my parents for you

How many living stories I heard about you; that you are beautiful, holy, pure.

That there is no poverty, hunger, or evil in you, but only good, wealth, joy and love.

That your streets are filled with:

Instead of dirt, gold.

Instead of defilement, purity.

Instead of hate, love.

Instead of evil, good.

Instead of worry, tranquility.

How much did I long for you, Eyarusalem?

I say a prayer for you, that you may be built speedily in our days.

Eyarusalem!

Oh, that I might merit to see you realize everything I soaked up from my parents for you.

Rav Mabrahtu Solomon is the Coordinator for the Leadership Training Program for Ethiopian Immigrants at Herzog Academic College. For more information about Rav

Attempt #2



Ariel Sharon- “Netzarim is no different from Tel Aviv,” & “the fate of Netzarim is the same as the fate of Tel Aviv”.



”תפילת הבנות”





Neve Dekalim yeshiva/synagogue and settlement



Across: Row of destroyed homes in Rafiah Yam

Opposite page: Orange ribbon outside of a destroyed home in Rafiah Yam



Pesukim

1. כִּי לֹא-יִטַּשׁ יְקִוּק עַמּוֹ וְיִנְחַלְתּוֹ לֹא יַעֲזֹב: (תהלים פרק צד פסוק יד)
14 For the Lord will not forsake His people, nor will He desert His inheritance.

2. איכה ה:ב
נִחַלְתֵּנוּ גֵּהֶפְכָּה לְזָרִים בְּתֵינוּ לְנֹכְרִים:
Our heritage has passed to aliens, Our homes to strangers.

3. סליחה אשמנו מכל עם
יְפִי אֲדַמְתֵּנוּ לְזָרִים. כִּחֲנוּ לְנֹכְרִים:
the beauty of our land is in the hands of nochrims

4. Yair Sheleg, Innocence Lost: The Impact of the Disengagement on Religious Zionism

On the eve of the disengagement, former Chief Rabbi Mordechai Eliyahu visited Gush Katif. In order to encourage the settlers, he proclaimed three times: "It [the disengagement] shall not be [take place]." The rabbi, regarded as a Kabbalist, caused some to take his statement literally and they were certain that that the disengagement would not take place.

5. Caroline Glick, The ghosts of a Gaza return ... again and again, 2023, The Jewish Star

In a jaw-dropping display of irony, the Neve Dekalim Girl's High School was forced to cancel a scheduled celebration to mark its 40th birthday. Since 2005, the school has been located in Nitzan, around 30 kilometers outside Gaza. For its first 22 years, it was located in Neve Dekalim, the capital of the Gush Katif settlement bloc in southern Gaza. The school moved to Nitzan when the Sharon government ordered the IDF to expel all Jews from Gaza, destroy their communities and withdraw IDF forces to the 1949 armistice lines. Last Wednesday, Nitzan, like all the other communities in the western Negev, came under missile assault from the ruins of Neve Dekalim and the ruins of the other destroyed communities of Gaza. After Israel withdrew 18 years ago, Hamas and its fellow terror groups transformed what had been flourishing communities into terror bases and rocket launching sites.

6. Steven Baum, Dragged out of Gush Katif, 93

It was over. The whole saga seemed so bizarre. Living on Gush Katif's shores one day and waking up in a Jerusalem bed the next.

The Expulsion from Gush Katif and the Situation Today

By Naomi Grossman

In August 2005, the Jews of the Gaza Strip were expelled from their homes and communities as a result of then-Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's Disengagement Plan. This was the fourth expulsion of Jews from the area since 1920, but the only time that such a banishment was ever carried out by Jews. Despite many protests, prayer gatherings, and petitions both in Israel and abroad to halt the plan, Sharon was determined to expel the Jewish residents from the Gaza Strip.

On August 17th, 2005, just three days after the fast of Tisha B'Av (9th Av), which commemorates the destruction of both Temples in Jerusalem and the descent of the Jewish nation into exile, IDF soldiers and policemen began evicting the residents of the 25 communities of Gush Katif from their homes. Not a single household, synagogue, study hall, school, or business was allowed to remain. Even the dead were removed from their graves and reburied in other cemeteries around Israel, despite the wishes of many of the families of the deceased.

It took only several weeks to dismantle and raze what had been flourishing Torah and agricultural communities that had grown up over a period of 35 years. The 1,667 families that gave them life were forcibly removed, first to hotels and then to temporary "caravilla" sites. It was a very long time before many of them received any of the compensation or temporary housing originally promised by the Disen-

GUSH KATIF AND THE SITUATION TODAY

agement Administration (SELA) and its head, Yonatan Bassi. As of April 1st, 2007, 405 of these families are still living together in 26 temporary sites. Not one permanent home has begun to be built, despite government promises (Hillel Fendel, Arutz Sheva, "The Displaced Jews of Gush Katif: 20 Months Without a Home").

The full effects of the expulsion from Gush Katif, both on those who were removed from their homes and on the young soldiers who had to carry out this unpleasant mission, still remain to be seen. Before the Disengagement, the Gush Katif towns were pleasant places to live, with thriving local industries and educational institutions. A report by the Gush Katif Residents' Committee, published in April 2007, now tells a sadly different story:

Unemployment was almost unknown in Gush Katif, yet 20 months after the expulsion, joblessness stands at 37 percent.

The displaced families face hardships and psychological pressures caused by financial difficulties, forced unemployment, an uncertain future, loss of their community and friends, tight living quarters, bureaucracy, and the like.

The financial compensation provided by the government for new housing is being used by some of the displaced families for day-to-day living. Only 30 percent of the families have received the full amount, but almost all have been given partial compensation.

However, the indomitable community spirit of the Gush Katif residents lives on. As stated in the actual report, "The communities of Gush Katif are a paradigm of mutual responsibility and concern for the collective. Most of the expellees have remained in

of joy, and give thanks for all the good we have received.”

The man to close the ark after the returning of the Torah is Zalman Deutsch of Alon Shvut, the architect who built this shul more than 20 years ago. He pulls the curtain closed and leans forward to kiss it gently. During the repeat of the Musaf Amidah prayer, the *kobanim* [priests] ascend the steps at the front, turn, and bless the congregation. I have a son-in-law up there and I watch him and his brother and father as they face the Ark, after the blessing. The *kobanim* remain up there for longer than usual, unable to part, knowing this may have been the last time they bless their friends and neighbors.

A grand *Kiddush* follows, the cakes and kugels provided by supporters throughout Israel who have sent their love and food to Gush Katif. A man announces that the *Kiddush* next Shabbat will be on the lawn of one of the residents. People cheer, knowing that there may not be another Shabbat here in Ganei Tal. There are tears and laughter throughout the day.

There are two concepts that keep guiding me and that I think we have to keep in our minds. One is our own *hishtadlut*, doing whatever we can to avert the decree of expulsion. The other is that God has His plan.

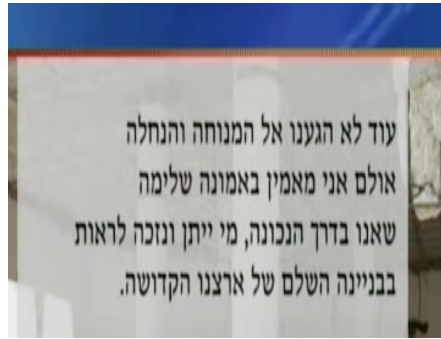
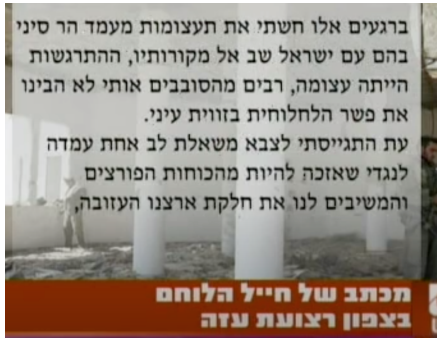
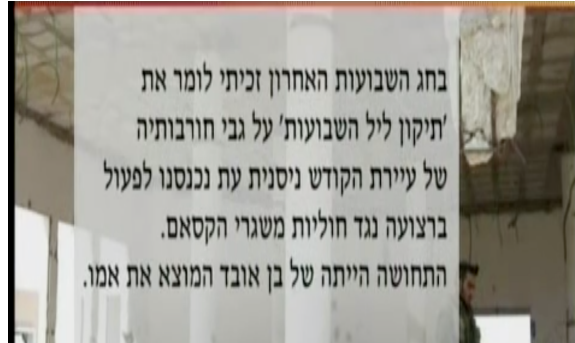
These two concepts are not contradictory. The Holy One can do anything.

Saturday night, Tisha B'Av begins and we listen to the reading of *Lamentations*, which describes the destruction of both Holy Temples. The symbolism is overwhelming. Again, the plaza is filled with young people and old, mothers under trees with babies, like in days of old. Everyone is struck by the words in

Chapter 5: “Our inheritance has been turned over to strangers, our homes to aliens.”

would go quietly, block the entrance to the moshav. The army actually has to turn around and decides to give the expulsion notices later. An officer from the Golani brigade, now a civilian and staying in Morag, meets his former commander who has come to give expulsion notices. He bursts into tears and asks, “How can you do this? Our enemy is over there (pointing to Khan Yunis). We fought shoulder to shoulder. They have been killing us. How can you throw us out? We love you!” The senior officer embraces him and tries to hold back his own tears.

In Netzarim, a strongly religious settlement, it is business as usual. People continue to build several new houses and to plant trees. There is a joke going around that, when the miracle happens and a feast of thanksgiving takes place, the people from Netzarim won't understand what it's all about because they never acknowledged the Disengagement to begin with.



#6

מלכים פרק ה

וַיְבֹאוּ מְקַלְ-הָעַמִּים לִשְׁמֹעַ אֶת חֻמַּת שְׁלֹמֹה מֵאֵת כָּל-מַלְכֵי הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר שָׁמְעוּ אֶת-חֻמַּתוֹ: 1. ויקרא רבה לא:ז

א"ר חנינא חלונות היו לבית המקדש ומהם היתה אורה יוצא לעולם שנאמר (מ"א.ו.ד): "ויעש לבית חלוני שקופים אטומים" שקופות אטומות היו מקטינות מבפנים ומרחיבות מבחוץ כדי להוציא אורה לעולם וגם אל-הנכרי אשר לא-מעמך ישראל הוא ובא מארץ רחוקה למען שמך:

"Or if a foreigner who is not of Your people Israel comes from a distant land for the sake of Your name—

כִּי יִשְׁמְעוּן אֶת-שִׁמְךָ הַגָּדוֹל וְאֶת-יָדְךָ הַחֲזָקָה וְזִרְעֶךָ הַנְּטוּיָה וּבֹא וְהִתְפַּלֵּל אֶל-הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה: for they shall hear about Your great name and Your mighty hand and Your outstretched arm—and thus comes to pray toward this House,

אֲתָה תִשְׁמַע הַשָּׁמַיִם מִכּוֹן שְׁבַתְךָ וְעִשִׂית כֹּל אֲשֶׁר-יִקְרָא אֵלֶיךָ הַנֹּכְרִי לְמַעַן יִדְעוּן כָּל-עַמֵּי הָאָרֶץ אֶת-שִׁמְךָ לִירְאָה אֶתְךָ כְּעַמְךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלִדְעוֹת כִּי-שִׁמְךָ נִקְרָא עַל-הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר בִּנִיתִי:

oh, hear in Your heavenly abode and grant all that the foreigner asks You for. Thus all the peoples of the earth will know Your name and revere You, as does Your people Israel; and they will recognize that Your name is attached to this House that I have built.

#8

1. ר' יוסף בכור שור שמות כ"ה:ב'

וזאת הפרשה נאמרה בתוך ארבעים יום האחרונים, שהיה משה ממתין את הלוחות, וצוה לו הקב"ה להיכן יניחם, שיעשו משכן ובית קדשי הקדשים, ובתוכו הארון, ובתוך הארון הלוחות, ושם תשכון שכינה

עם התורה. וישראל סביב כמו מלאכים סביב כסא הכבוד, והשכינה ביניהם, כמו שכתוב: ושכנת
בתוכם, כמו בין המלאכים....להיות שכינה ביניכם...

2. Rav Soloveitchik, The Lord Is Righteous in All His Ways, 18, 112-113, 196

“All we asks of Ha-Kadosh Barukh Hu is the unity between Him and Keneset Yisrael. That is our cry to Heaven. We are on one side of the clouds and *Ha-Kadosh Barukh Hu* is on the other side. Let the cloud disappear, we pray, and let the sun shine. Let there be a bright day. Let us see the beauty of *Ha-Kadosh Barukh Hu*. The purpose of the *Beit ha-Mikdash* was to unite *Kelal Yisrael* with *Ha-Kadosh Barukh Hu*; that is all. *Ha-Kadosh Barukh Hu* does not need sacrifices, but He does need one thing very much, the union between Him and *Keneset Yisrael*.

“The purpose of the *Beit Ha-Mikdash* is to bring *Ha-Kadosh Barukh Hu* back into our midst, so that He will be close to us rather than transcendent, so that He will be immanent in this world... If he is present here, everyone will be able to recognize Him and identify Him. Everyone will feel close to Him, and there will be no alienation and no estrangement from Him. This is the ideal for *Yahadut*... *Ribbono Shel Olam*, please come back.”

“The *Beit ha-Mikdash*, a space that reflects the intimacy between *Ha-Kadosh Barukh Hu* and Yisrael. It is more than just a *bayit*. When a Jew enters the *Beit ha-Mikdash*, he feels intimate with *Ha-Kadosh Barukh Hu*, as if *Ha-Kadosh Barukh Hu* were his father, his brother, his sister, his mother, and he says things that he would not say in public.”

RABBI GOREN SENT his assistant, Rabbi Menachem Hacohen, to relieve Rabbi Zvi Yehudah and Goren's father-in-law, the *nazir*, the ascetic. The first civilians at the liberated wall, Goren insisted, must be the rabbis of Mercaz.

Hacohen borrowed a jeep mounted with a cannon and drove to the house of the *nazir*. The elderly man in long white hair and beard wasn't speaking; he had recently taken a vow of silence. Hacohen told him, "I've come to bring you to the Wall." Overwhelmed, the *nazir* followed him out the front door wearing only socks; his wife ran after him with shoes.

Next stop: Rabbi Zvi Yehudah. Hacohen found the rabbi in prayer. "I've come to take you to the Wall," Hacohen said. Rabbi Zvi Yehudah seemed stunned, uncomprehending. Hacohen removed the elderly man's prayer shawl and phylacteries, lifted him into his arms, and carried him to the jeep.

awesome. Rabbi Zvi Yehudah and the *nazir*, surrounded by paratroopers, Rabbi Zvi Yehudah stood, erect, as if emulating the uprightness of the young men around him. Eyes closed, hands clasped together, steadying himself.

The rabbi embraced Shtiglitz. Then they stood together, stroking each other's shoulder in silence.

Jewish history's most sealed gate had opened. Anything could happen now.

OTTA AND ARIK came down to the Western Wall. Arik was unmoved. What did he have to do with this outbreak of piety among the paratroopers, of all people? Arik heard some of the soldiers speaking about a "miracle" and felt uneasy. What miracle? The Jews had won because they stopped waiting for miracles and learned to protect themselves.

Motta watched the *nazir*. The old man in long brown jacket and fedora as standing before the Wall, rigid with awe. Not even his lips moved in prayer. He seemed to merge with the stones, thought Motta, an implacable presence, just like the Jews. Motta didn't approach the Wall, didn't know the gestures of devotion. But watching the *nazir*, he felt himself touching