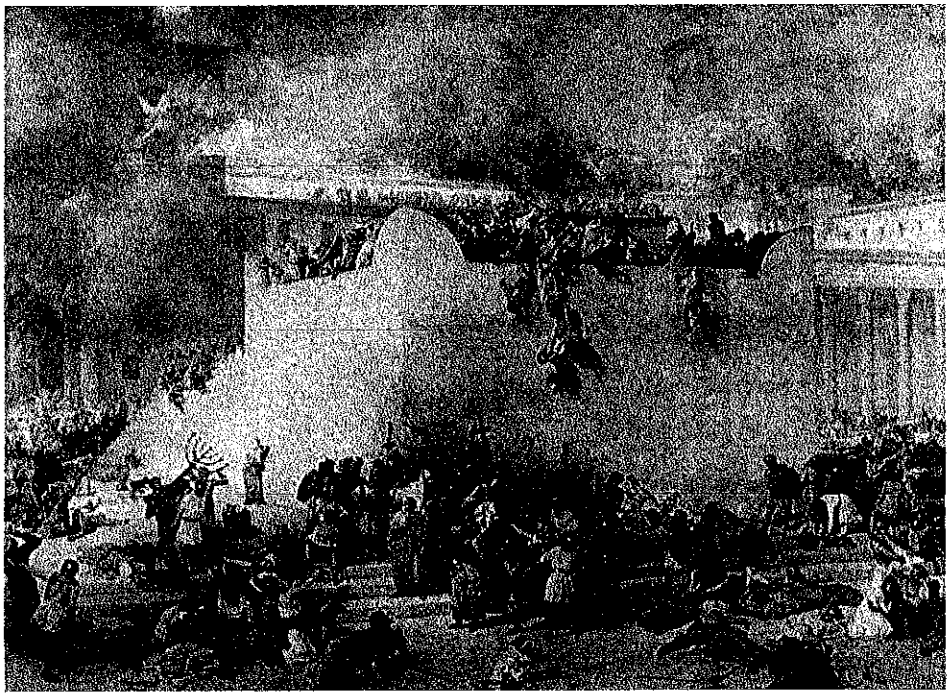
Tisha B'av Programme

5781 / 2021



ALEI TZION

Celebrating 150 Years

Kehillat Alei Tzion

Koren	Artscroll	Rosenfeld	Kinnah
195	152	91	1. שבת סורו מני
217	159	93	2. איכה אצת
361	226	111	3. זכור אשר עשה צר בפנים
375	232	120	4. אם תאכלנה נשים פרים
393	240	123	5. לך ה' הצדקה
415	248	125	6. ארזי הלבנון
515	304	144	7. אש תוקד בקרבי
555	328	152	8. ציון הלא תשאלי
		171	9. קינה על קדושי יורק
635		173	10.איכה תפארתנו
611	390	176	11. אלי ציון

THEMES

- **Hilchot Avelut – Leaving the house during shiva week.**
- **The meaning of Eicha and Jerusalem as a widow**
- **The Martyrdom of Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel**
- **R' Yehudah Halevi's Zionides**
- **The Hebron Massacre**
- **Saying Kaddish for yourself – In Auschwitz**

HILCHOT AVELUT

הלכות שמחות – איסור יציאה מפתח ביתו

Talmud Bavli – Massechet Moed Kattan 23b

וקורין שבעה ויוצאין רבי יהושע בן קרחה אומר לא שלכו ויטיילו בשוק אלא יושבין ודומין א ואין אומרים שמועה ואגדה בבית האבל אמרו עליו על ר' חנניה בן גמליאל שהיה אומר שמועה ואגדה בבית האבל (א) ת"ר ב אבל שבת ראשונה אינו יוצא מפתח ביתו שניה יוצא ואינו יושב במקומו (ב) שלישית יושב במקומו ואינו מדבר רביעית הרי הוא ככל אדם רבי יהודה אומר לא הוצרכו לומר שבת ראשונה לא יצא מפתח ביתו שהרי הכל נכנסין לביתו לנחמו אלא שניה אינו יוצא מפתח ביתו שלישית יוצא ואינו יושב במקומו (ג) רביעית יושב במקומו ואינו מדבר חמישית הרי הוא ככל אדם (ד) ת"ר ג כל שלשים יום

וקורין שבעה. בספר תורה דאין מתפללין יחד בבית הכנסת אלא כל אחד ואחד מתפלל בביתו: לא הולכתו לומר שבת ראשונה. שודאי לא יצא מפתח ביתו: כל שלשים יום לנישואין. עד שלשים יום לאחר אבלו אינו יכול לישא אשה: ואחר כלים ישנים יוצאין מתוך המכבס. פירוש שהן לחדשים: בגרדא דסרבלא. מלבוש לבן מגוהץ ישן: כרכי. דאמר לא אסרו לבן אלא חדש: כתימולאה. חלוק: רומיסא. שבא מרומי: כרכי אלעזר. דאמר לא אסרו אלא לבנים וזו אדומה היתה: אפסוקי

Resp. Iggrot Moshe YD 2:172

ולכן ברור שמה שבחכ"א כלל קס"ה סעיף י"א איתא שמותרין בלילה לילך לישן בבתיהם הוא לצורך דוקא, והצורך אפשר שהוא לפי האדם שיש בנ"א שאין יכולין לישן במקום אחר שלא הורגלו שגם זה אולי נחשב צורך, ועיין בתה"ד סימן ר"צ שמפורש דהמיקל מפני הצורך לא הפסיד הרי מפורש שדוקא מפני הצורך, ואף לצורך שמתיר כתב שם שילך רק אחר שכלתה רגל מן השוק ודוקא יחידי או עם אחד או שנים הולכים שאינו מתערב עם בנ"א עיי"ש ופשוט שזהו גם דין החכ"א.

ידידו אוהבו,

משה פיינשטיין

Resp. Maharam Schick YD 369

אבל באמת מה שכתבת שראית שאני עמדתי בשינוי קצת שינוי מקום שילוך רבים נגד מקומי זה אין לו ענין ושייכות לנדון הנ"ל וטעמי הי' משום שאני מסתפק אם הרב שבעירו שנוהגין בכל הקהלות שהקהל נותנין לו מקום מיוחד בראש ביהכ"נ והוא לכבוד הציבור והכבוד של הציבור הוא בביהכ"נ נראה לי דאין חייב לשנות דאינו רשאי למחול כבוד הציבור והיי דהפוס"ק לא יעמוד במזרחי של מקומו משום דעמי הארץ ילמדו מזה ויאמרו דא"צ לשנות וגם לא ידעו לחלק לכך עשיתי הסדר בכל דהו ובספרי שראיתי שהגאון הברכי' הביא בשם האריז"ל הקדוש שבשבת לא שינה מקומו ונמצא דדווקא בגברא דכוותי' הותר בזה מ"מ בשבת יש קולא הסי וראיתי ג"כ בש"ע וכו' זה הי' עמ"ש ולדינא נראה כמ"ש לעיל מיהו בוודאי אם מנהג דווקא לשנות

ג ה (ה) [יא] יב מי שלא קיים מצות פריה ורביה ושידך אשה (ה) ואחר שהכין צרכי חופה מת אחי המשודכת ו (ו) מותר (ו) לכנסה ולבא עליה אחר שבעה:

הגה וכן אם יש לו בנים קטנים ומתה לאמות אשתו (ו) ז (ז) מותר לכנסה ח כי היא מרחמת על בני אחותה יותר מאחרת (כ"כ בפירוש הרא"ש והגהות מיימוני ומרדכי):

שצג מתי האבל יכול לצאת מביתו. ובו ד' סעיפים:

א א אבל ג' ימים הראשונים אינו יוצא לבית האבל א (א) ולא לבית (א) הקברות מכאן ואילך אם מת לאחרים מת ב בשכונתו יוצא אחר המטה לבית הקברות ג ואינו יושב במקום המנחמים אלא במקום המתנחמים [א] ד ואם אין שם כדי מטה וקובריה ב יוצא אפילו ביום ראשון ואפילו בשכונה אחרת:

הגה [ב] ומקצת יום ג' הרי הוא ככולו (הגהות מיימוני פ"ז) ולא ראיתי נוהגין כן עכשיו כי אין אבל הולך לבית הקברות ולא לבית האבל כל שבעה ואפשר שלאו חיוב הוא אלא רשות ומאחר שעכשיו אין מתנחמים כמו בימיהם שב ואל תעשה עדיף:

ב ה אבל שבוע הראשון אינו יוצא מפתח ביתו ג ו אפילו לשמוע ברכות חופה או ברכות המילה:

הגה מיהו המיקל לצאת בלילה מפני הצורך לא הפסיד (ת"ה סימן ר"צ) [ג] והא דאסור לצאת חוץ לביתו היינו דוקא לטייל או למשא ומתן וכדומה. אבל אם שלא מושל אחריו (מרדכי ה"א) (ב) או שצריך לילך בדרך או לשאר דברים הצריכים לו הרבה כגון דבר האבד מותר לו לצאת (תוס' סוף מ"ק) וכן נוהגין ודין נעילת סנדליו ע"ל סימן שפ"ב:

[ד] ז שניה יוצא ואינו יושב במקומו ואינו מדבר שלישית יושב במקומו ואינו מדבר:

שפתי כהן

ג ז. מותר לכנסה כו'. כיון דאיכא הפסד בדבר אם לא יכנוס וגם לא קיים פריה ורביה וע"ל סי' שמ"ב: ז. מותר לכנסה. מיד ויבא עליה אחר שבעה כן כ' העט"ז והב"ח כתב דלא יבא עליה עד אחר שלשים ונראה דלא פליגי דהעט"ז מיירי בשלא קיים. מצות פריה ורביה והב"ח איירי כשקיים: ח. כי היא מרחמת כו'. ולכן מותר אפי' בלא הפסד:

שצג א א. ולא לבה"ק. אם מת לאחרים מת: ב. יוצא אפי' ביום ראשון. כנ"ל: ב ג. אפילו לשמוע כו'. אף על גב דאבל חייב בכל המצות היינו במצות עשה שבגופו כגון ציצית ותפילין או למול את בנו

הגה [ו] (ב) והוא הדין בשאר אבלות אפילו באבלות דאביו ואמו מותר לישא ולבא עליה אחר שבעה אם לא קיים פריה ורביה. וי"א דאף מי שהוא עשיר ויכולת בידו לשכור לו משרתים ומשרתות מכל מקום אם אין בתו או כלתו אצלו בביתו שתוכל לשמשו כחפיפת הראש או שאר דברים שמתביישׁ מאחרים מקרי אין לו מי שישמשנו וכל כיוצא בזה (פסקי מהרא"י סי"ג) ולכן נשתרבב המנהג שרבים (ג) מקילין בענין (ד) *) ונושאין נשים תוך שלש רגלים ובעל נפש יחוש לעצמו. מי שתפסו השר ואינו רוצה להניחו מתפיסתו עד שישא אשה תוך שלש רגלים אחר מיתת אשתו יש מתירין משום נער דידיה (ב"י) וכן נראה לי עיקר:

טורי זהב

אסור לקדש עד אחר ז' * ותימה על רמ"א שלא כ' כאן כלום: ג (ה) מי שלא קיים כו'. בטור איתא בלשון זה מעשה באחד ששידך ומת אחי המשודכת קרוב לחופה אחר שהזמין הקרואין והתיר ר"ת שתכנס לחופה תוך ל' משום פריה ורביה שלו כיון ששידך זאת ואם לא ישאנה לא ישא אחרת אבל אם לא שידך אע"פ שחפץ בזאת יותר מבאחרת אסור וכן הורה אדוני אבי הרא"ש הלכ' למעשה לאחד ששידך והכין כל צרכי החופה ומתה אחות המשודכת והוא לא קיים פריה ורביה והתיר לו לכנוס ולבעול אחר ז' ימים שיהיה לו הפסד בדבר אם לא יכנוס אבל בלא הפסד אמר שלא היה מתיר עכ"ל היתר זה הוא חידוש דאע"פ שהיא אבילה ואינה חייבת בפריה ורביה מ"מ התיר לה בשבילו שהוא יקיים פריה ורביה וזה לא מצינו בגמרא להיתר בהדיא אלא דמעשה שהיה כך היה סמוך לחופה והרא"ש לא סמך על ר"ת להתיר בזה אלא משום הפסד הסעודה שצריך לזה ומשום הכי במעשה דר"ת לא זכר כלום מהכנת צרכי החופה כמו שזכר בהוראת הרא"ש ובזה מתורץ מה שהקשה מו"ח ז"ל למה הצריך הטור לזכור שנית תורף המעשה בהוראת הרא"ש ולא כ' בקיצור וכן הורה אדוני אבי ז"ל למעשה משום הפסד דיש שינוי לשון בהוראת הרא"ש ובאבן עזר סי' י"ד כתב הטור סתם מי ששידך אשה ואירעה אבל כו' ולא זכר שם משום הפסד הסעודה והיינו לדינא הוא כן אבל למעשה אין היתר אלא משום הפסד סעודה. וכהרא"ש וכ"פ בש"ע כאן והא דכ' כאן מותר לכנסה ולבוא עליה אחר ז' הך לכנסה הוא נמי אחר ז' דוקא דאין לומר משום הפסד מותר לכנסה אפי' תוך ז' דהא כ' הרא"ש פרק אלו מגלחין בשם ר"ת אפי' במקום פקידה לא התירו לכנוס תוך ז' אף באין לו בנים דלא התירו אלא באביו של חתן ואמה של הכלה דוקא וכל שכן שהיא אבילה ואינה מחויבת בפריה ורביה אלא ודאי כמו שכתבתי ובפרישה האריך בזה ולא עיין בדברי ר"ת שכ' הרא"ש בשמו כמו שזכרתי: (ו) מותר לכנסה כי היא מרחמת. פי' כניסה לחופה דוקא התירו אבל לא לבעול עד אחר ל' יום בדין זה דהרי אין כאן מצות פריה ורביה:

חידושי רע"ק

דהוי אצלו קרובה דאסור לבעול מצד אבילות דידה. (סעיף ג' בהגה"ה) מותר לישא. ולענין היתר גילוח עמ"ש לעיל (סי' ש"צ): (שם) בחפיפת הראש. משמע דחפיפת הראש ע"י כלתו מותר ומ"מ לעיין בראשו ליטול כנים אסור וגם בחפיפה יש להחמיר ת' חב"י (סי' קל"ה): (סעיף ג' בהג"ה) לאחות אשתו. ובאם נתרצה לאשה אחרת בעי' שבכבר שדכה ויש הפסד כמו בלא קיים פו"ר: (סי' שצ"ג ס"א בהג"ה) ומקצת יום ג'. ע' בס' ת"א בקו' מצבת משה (אות ד'): (שם) לצאת וכן אמרו שם לענין שאילת שלום שאלו בשלומו כו' בשלישי כו' (ועיין לעיל סי' ש"פ ס"ק ו' בשם הרמב"ן) (ע"כ):

ביאור הגר"א

משמע בא"ד: אחר שבעה. דוקא מהא דכתובות ד' א' דע"כ שם בבחור וכמ"ש תוס' שם (ע"כ): [י] וה"ה כו'. שם ושם: ג [יא] מי שלא כו' וכן כו'. שם ושם מהא דמ"ק ואמר לאחותה כו' ע"ש:

שצג א [א] (ליקוט) ואם אין שם כו'. א"ר פ"ו בד"א כו' (ע"ב): [ב] ומקצת כו'. עתוס' שם ד"ה מכאן כו' דה"נ תניא כו' מיום ג' ואילך כו' ושם א' ד"ה משלישי כו': (ליקוט) ומקצת כו'. שם (כא"ר פ"ו) מת באותה כו' בשלישי יוצא כו' ב [ג] והא דאסור כו'. עתוס' כ"ז א' סד"ה אם כו': [ד] שניה כו' ואינו מדבר. טור רכ"ש הוא:

באר היטב

ג (ו) לכנסה. כתב הש"ך הטעם כיון דאיכא הפסד בדבר אם לא יכניס וגם לא קיים פריה ורביה וע"ל סי' שמ"ב. והט"ז כתב דהך לכנסה קאי אלאחר שבעה דבתוך ז' אפי' במקום הפסד אסור ע"ש: (ז) מותר לכנסה. מיד ולבא עליה אחר שבעה כ"כ הלבוש והב"ח כתב דלא יבא עליה עד אחר ל' ונראה דלא פליגי דהלבוש מיירי בשלא קיים פו"ר והב"ח איירי בדקיים עכ"ל הש"ך:

שצג א (א) הקברות. אם מת לאחרים מת. כ"כ הש"ך (אבל אם מת לו מת [illegible]

פתחי תשובה

לא ג' רגלים. לעת מותנו הגאון הנ"ל להתיר והוא ז"ל האריך בזה והסכים עמו כי יש הרבה גדלים להקל ע"ש וכתשו' הקודמת שם העלה להתיר לרב גדול א' שמתה אשתו ורוצה לישא אשה אחרי ב' רגלים יען כי אף שיש בביתו בתו וכלתו אך לא הורגלו לשמש ביתו לפי כבוד רב ומ"מ כמותו ולפי כבוד הנכנסים הנכבדים המשמשים לשמשו אבל הרבנית המדוברת לו הנהיגה בית בעלה הראשון בקפלה גדולה. ובצרוף כי האלמנה המדוברת היא בת מ"מ גדול והאלמנה ת"ח גדול וגלי יש עברו על לאשה כו' ומלוה רבה להרנין לב האלמנה להוציא ממסגר נפשה לכן פשוט להתיר לישא אותה אחר ב' רגלים עש"ב: (ב) וה"ה בשאר אבלות. [עי' בתשו' מ"ם סי' שמ"ח שהעלה למי שהתירו לו לישא בתוך שלשים ע"פ המבואר בש"ע פשוט דמותר

[illegible]

נקודות הכסף

דגול מרבבה

בית הלל

ברכי יוסף

שיורי ברכה

גליון מהרש"א

[illegible]

אבל לילך לחופה או למילה לשמוע הברכות בשביל גמילות חסד אין לו לצאת מפתח ביתו. תשובת הרא"ש : ג ד. או בעל ברית. פי' סנדק ולכן תוך שלשה לא יצא אבל אבי הבן פשיטא דאפילו תוך שלשה ימים יצא לכולי עלמא : ה. אא"כ אין מוהל אחר בעיר. ואז מותר אפילו ביום ראשון : ו ויש מקילין כו'. הוא הב"י וק"ק דהא בית יוסף כ' דלפי מנהגו שהאבל יוצא לב"ה להתפלל בכל יום קריאת התורה כ"ש שיצא כדי למול אפילו תוך שלשה ימים הראשונים ואפילו יש מוהל אחר בעיר עכ"ל ואח"כ מאחר שכ' הרב דאנו נוהגין שאינו יוצא אלא בשבת למה כ' סברת היש מקילין כאן :

ד ז. וי"א שגם בשבת כו'. דס"ל שאין זה דבר של פרהסיא שאין אבילות ניכר בזה כל כך שהרבה פעמים אדם מחליף מקומו אפילו אינו אבל עכ"ל עט"ז מהכ"י ולמ"ש לקמן ר"ס ת' דאבלות הנוהג כל שלשים נוהג אפילו בשבת בלאו הכי ניחא :

שצד ב א. אין מספידין אותו. אפילו ביום שמועה :

ג ב. ופוקדים על המתים כו'. כתב הפרישה זה היה דוקא בימיהם שהיו מניחין את המת בכוכין והיה אפשר לגלות את המת ולראותו (*) וכתב עוד הדרישה בשם מהרש"ל אדם שמת לו מת ובתוך שלשים נולד לו בן אין עושין שמחה ומשתה ביום המילה רוקח עכ"ל וכמדומה שאין נוהגין כן :

שצה א (א) כיון שעמדו כו'. עיין מה שכתבתי בטעם דין זה בסי' ת"ב ושם בו נפקא מינה

ה רביעית הרי הוא כשאר כל אדם ט אפילו לא שלמו שלשה שבועות כגון שמת באמצע שבוע מיד כשכלה אותו שבוע ושנים שאחריו חשיב שבוע הבא רביעי :

ג [ו] י האבל אינו יוצא בחול (ב) לבית הכנסת אבל בשבת יוצא (°) וכן לבית המדרש (ב"י) ואנו נוהגים שבכל יום קריאת התורה יוצא לב"ה :

הגה ובמדינות אלו נוהגין שאין יוצא אלא בשבת [ז] ואם האבל מוהל ד או (ג) בעל (°) ברית לאמר שלשה מתפלל בביתו. וכשמביאין התינוק למול הולך האבל לבית הכנסת (הגהות אשירי) אבל תוך שלשה לא יצא ה [ח] אא"כ אין מוהל אחר (ג) בעיר (א"ז) ו [ט] ויש (ד) מקילין אפי' תוך ג' אפי' אם יש מוהל אחר בעיר (ב"י) ומותר לו לתקן הנספרים (ד) (°) ונגלה לנוהגי המילה אבל אם יש מוהל אחר אסור (סברת הרב ודלא כא"ז דמתיר סתם) וכן כל דבר מצוה שא"א לעשות בלא האבל מותר לו לצאת לקיים את המצוה (סברת הרב וב"י) :

הגה [ה] וחם רוצה שלא לישב במקומו בשבוע שלישית ולדבר הרשות בידו (הגמ"יי) ועכשיו נוהגין שאין יושבין במקומם כל שלשים ועל אביו ואמו כל י"ב חדש ואין למנהג זה עיקר מכל מקום אין לשנות מן המנהג כי כל מקום לפי מנהגו :

ד [י] יא הנוהגים כשהם אבלים שלא לשנות מקומם בבית הכנסת בשבת (ה) יפה הם עושים :

הגה ז [יא] ויש אומרים שגם (ו) בשבת (ז) ישנה מקומו (ג"י ס"פ המוכר פירות) וכן המנהג פשוט ואין לשנות המנהג :

שצד שלא להתקשות על המת יותר מדאי. ובו ו' סעיפים:

א א אין מתקשין על המת (א) יותר מדאי וכל המתקשה עליו יותר מדאי על מת אחר הוא בוכה ב אלא שלשה ימים לבכי שבעה להספד שלשים לתספורת ולגיהוץ :

ב [א] ג במה דברים אמורים בשאר העם אבל תלמידי חכמים הכל לפי חכמתם ד ואין בוכים עליהם יותר מל' יום ה ואין מספידין עליהם יותר מי"ב חדש ו וכן חכם שבא שמועתו לאחר י"ב חדש א אין מספידין אותו :

ג ז יוצאין לבית הקברות ב (ה) (ב) ופוקדים על המתים שלשה ימים שמא עדיין הוא חי :

ד [ב] ח כל שלשה ימים יראה האבל כאלו חרב מונחת לו בין כתפיו משלשה ועד שבעה כאלו זקוף כנגדו בקרן זוית משבעה ועד שלשים כאלו עוברת לפניו בשוק [ג] וכל אותה השנה הדין מתוחה כנגד אותה משפחה ט ואם נולד בן זכר באותה משפחה נתרפאת כל המשפחה :

ה י אחד מהחבורה שמת תדאג כל החבורה :

ו (ג) יא כל מי שאינו מתאבל כמו שצוו חכמים ה"ז אכזרי [ד] אלא יפחד וידאג ויפשפש במעשיו ויחזור בתשובה :

שצה מקצת יום השבעה והשלשים ככולו. ובו ג' סעיפים:

א (א) [א] א כיון שעמדו מנחמים מאצל האבל ביום שביעי מותר בכל דברים שאסור בהם תוך שבעה (א) דמקצת

(*) תולי' טייך זה בסימן זה סעיף ד' עמ"ש ואם נולד בן זכר כו'. מרלה כהן.

באר הגולה

ח שם בברייתא : ט טור ובסי' אל"ע כתבו בשם ה"ר שמעון : י שם ובשם אביו הרא"ש : (°) והמנהג שנהגו שאבל לבית הכנסת קודם תפלת ערבית והוקים עומדים עליו בפתח ב"ה והאבלים בשתי שורות לנחמו ע"ש אגדה דפרקי ר"א בפרק (ע"ו) [י"ז] והביאו הטור ולאותי פה לק"ק ספרדיים מנהגים אחרים בענין התפלה והשכבה ומנהג המנחמים ואומרים שם בערב (לפני תפלת ערבית) ובבוקר אחר התפלה מזמור מ"ע בתהלים ולדוק הדין (אחר כל תפלה ותפלה) גם המה מנהגים עתיקין ומיקין : (°) בד"מ השמיט מיבת ונגלה והוא הנכון לפענ"ד דמה צורך מילה שייך לגלוח ומ"מ לא רציתי למחקו דאולי אפרדרי' קאי אלא שהלשון אינו מדויק ועוד דא"כ צ"ל ולגלחם ודוק :

יא בית יוסף וכלעתו :

א מימרא דרב יהודה אמר רב מ"ק דף כ"ז ע"ב : ב שם בגמ' : ג טור בשם הרמב"ן : ד שם מלוואות רבי הושיעו ישיבה לאחר ל' יום דלא עדיפנא ממרע"ה וכו' כתובות דף ק"ג ע"ב : ה ג"ז משם דספדי תניסר ירחי שתא : ו מדאמר דוד שמואל נספד לתו י"ב ירחא שתא ולא דרכי' למספדיה יכמי' דף ע"ע ע"א וכ"כ הרמב"ן בשם גאון : ז בברייתא דאבל רבתי ס"ח : ח ירושלמי [illegible]

דגול מרבבה

לאוס במוה"מ ובט' כאב משוי שמא יקדמנו הכי נמי מותר אפילו לישא תוך שלש רגלים כיון שבמדינותינו אין מארסין רק בשעת נישואין ואף שבשביל זה לא נתיר לישא בחוה"מ או

בית לחם יהודה

(סימן שצ"ג סעיף ד' בהג"ה) וי"א שגם בשבת ישנה מקומו. (עי' פ"מ סק"ו מ"ש בשם ט"י צא' שמחה ט אמותו ונהג ז' כו' ובל"י כי וז"ל) נראה

ברכי יוסף

לקדש הלבנה אף לצאת מפתח ביתו. הרב שער אפרים סימן ל"ה. ועל עיקר ברכת הלבנה דבר פשוט הוא אך להמחמירים שלא לצאת מפתח הבית יש לספקפק קצת דהא ברכת הלבנה אין טוב לאמרה בבכור ובלמוכה מהש"ס פרק היו כודקין וכמ"ש האחרונים. ואם זה נפשו חושק להחמיר ולא לסקל לצאת בלילה יכול לברך ברכת הלבנה בימיו אם יש מקום על גג ביתו וכיוצא. אך אם הוא מיקל לצאת בלילה לאיזה צורך גם לברך ברכת הלבנה בעשרה יצא. ורלאיתי לבלי הרב שבות יעקב ח"ב דעלה במחשבי' לפניו שלא יברך בימי אבלו שאינו בשמחה ושוב דחאו אך מ"ש שם דהיינו טעמא דאין האשה מברכת משום דעטופה כאבילה ולא היה ק"ד שימתו במיכל שהניחה תפילין וגלעה נתאבל וכו' ע"ש בתורך הם דברים ויש בעיני ואין להאריך : (סעיף ד' שו"ע) יפה הם עושים. [illegible]

ביאור הגר"א

[ה] ואם רוצה כו' ועכשיו כו' כל שלשים. עתוס' שם ד"ה ר' יהודה כו' (והמנהג הוא ע"פ הירושלמי והלכה כר"י שבשבוע ד' יושב במקומו ואינו מדבר. לכן נהגו שלא לישב במקומו כדי שיוכל לדבר ועיין דרכי משה) : ג [ו] האבל כו' וכן לב"ה כו'. במ"ש והביאו הרא"ש שם אלא דאוסר בכה"ש אף בשבת רק בבית הר"ש גאון כתב דהכל לפי המנהג ע"ש בהא"ש : [ז] ואם האבל כו'. כמו לבמ"ק רס"א וב"כ נ"י מכאן ואילך הולך כו' וכן בכל דבר מצוה כו' : [ח] אא"כ אין כו' וכן כ"ד כו'. כנ"ל ס"א ואם אין שם כדי כו' : [ט] ויש מקילין כו'. כ"כ ב"י לפי מנהגם שיוצא בכל קריאת התורה לבה"כ כנ"ל : ד [י] הנוהגים כו'. משום שהוא דבר שבפרהסיא : [יא] וי"א כו'. והביא ראיה ממ"ש בכ"ב ק' ב' א"ל א"ל אף בשבת כו' וב"י דחה דבריו ואין דבריו מוכרחין ועוד נ"ל ראיה מפרקי ר"א. והביא הרא"ש בסי' מ"ו והיו ישראל הולכין בשבת כו' הנכנס כו' דע"ל ר"ס ת' ומ"ש (בס"ק ע"ז) :

שצד ב [א] בר"א כו'. וראיה מרבי וכמש"ר וכן במשה ואהרן : ד [ב] כל שלשה כו'. גמ' כ"ד ב' : [ג] וכל אותה כו' ואם נולד כו' ירושלמי שם :

שצה א [א] כיון כו' י"ט כ' כמאן אזלא כו' (ליקוט) כיון כו' עתוס' ב"א ב' ד"ה אפילו כו' וכתב דאפילו מקצת הלילה עולה ומ"ש (י"ט כ') כיון שעמדו המנחמין לפי שאם רצה לישב כל הלילה בעי שינחמו אותו ומ"ש ראיה ממ"ש כ"ז א' ולמוצאי שבת אע"פ כו' משם ראיה להיפך דאי ס"ד דכל הלילה עולה ס"ד דסגי בדבה אחד בחליצת מנעל קמ"ל דבעי כל דיני שבעה אף בכפיית המטה אף לשעה אחת גמרינן מזבה דטבילתן ביום ואדרבה משום ראיה להיפך (ערש"י) בפסחים פ"א א' ד"ה א"נ ברואה כולו וסותרת אפילו ראתה בסוף היום והוא מזמי הזבה עדיין משא"כ לר"י אבל תוס' שם ד"ה א"נ פי' [illegible]

חידושי רע"ק

[illegible]

פתחי תשובה

(ב) לבה"כ [illegible]

באר היטב

יוצא אפילו ביום כנ"ל) : ג (ג) ברית. פי' סנדק ולכן תוך שלשה ימים לא יוצא אבל אבי הבן פשיטא דאפי' תוך ג' ימים יוצא לכ"ע. ט"ז : (ג) בעיר. ואז מותר אפילו ביום ראשון. ט"ז : (ד) מקילין. כתב הט"ז וקשה להב"י כ"כ לפי מנהגו שהאבל יוצא לבהכ"נ להתפלל בכל יום קריאת התורה כ"ש שיוצא כדי למול אפילו תוך ג' ימים לאשונים ואפילו יש מוהל אחר בעיר וא"כ מאחר שכתב הרב דאנו נוהגים שאינו יוצא אלא בשבת למה כתב סברת היש מקילין כאן עכ"ל :

שצד ג (ב) ופוקדים. כתב הפרישה זה היה דוקא בימיהם שהיו מניחין את [illegible]

גליון מהרש"א

[illegible]

RAV SOLOVEITCHIK

ceived by Jeremiah from God to the questions posed in the first two chapters. The answer is *tzidduk hadin*, the acknowledgment of the justness of God's ways, and the fact that human beings are endowed with free will. With the beginning of this third chapter, the permission to ask *eikha* has been revoked. According to our sages (*Eikha Raba, Petihta* 28 and 3:1), the book of Lamentations originally consisted of only the first two chapters, both of which pose questions. When the book was destroyed and rewritten (Jeremiah, ch. 36), God ordained that it be extended to include the additional chapters, as well.

The last section of Lamentations consists of chapters 4 and 5, which commence with the eulogy that Jeremiah delivered in honor of King Josiah, the subject of an entire *kina*, "וַיְקוֹנֵן יִרְמְיָהוּ עַל־יֹאשִׁיָּהוּ."

לְאַבֵּד בְּיַד אֲדוֹמִים אֱמוּנֶיךָ *Ruining Your loyal people at the hand of Rome.* The simple interpretation is that *Adomim* refers to the Romans, who were responsible for the destruction of the Second Temple. Rome is identified with Edom in the Torah's recounting of the lineage of Esau, who is referred to as Edom, "The chief of Magdiel, the chief of Iram, these are the chiefs of Edom" (Genesis 36:43), and Rashi comments (ad loc.) that Magdiel is Rome.

The reference to Rome, however, should not be taken literally, but should be seen as a symbol for the most powerful of the nations of the world. Historically, the nation that opposed the Jews was always the most powerful nation of its time. In the days of Jeremiah, the Babylonian Empire was the most powerful nation. Five hundred years later, at the time of the Second Temple, this position was occupied by the Roman Empire.

Edom also refers to Amalek, the grandson of Esau (Genesis 36:12). Amalek is not a racial or ethnic concept. Rather, it is the enemy, regardless of race or historical era, that seeks to destroy the Jews, that seeks to destroy the uniqueness and the individual identity and spiritual personality of the Jew. The final *galut*, the final exile, which will be terminated by the arrival of the Messiah, is the *galut* caused by Amalek, as Rashi says, "God's name and His throne will not be complete until the name of Amalek is erased" (Rashi, Exodus 17:16, s.v. *ki yad*).

וְלֹא זָכַרְתָּ בְּרִית בֵּין בְּתָרִים *And not remember Your covenant with Abraham.* The *kina* mentions all of the covenants with God, from Abraham to the time of

COMMENTARY ON KINA 7

This *kina* is the first in a series of *kinot* by Rabbi Elazar HaKalir, each beginning with the word *eikha*. The word *eikha* is the main motif of Tisha B'Av and the quintessential question presented by Tisha B'Av: "How is it possible? I do not understand."

אֵיכָה אֲצַתָּ בְּאַפֶּךָ *How could You rush Your wrath.* One could ask what right we have to pose such a question to the Almighty. Normally, the halakha does not permit us to ask this type of question; rather it prescribes that we unquestioningly accept the judgment of God. We are guided by the concept that a person is required to bless God for bad times, for tragedy and misfortune, just as he blesses God for good times (*Berakhot* 54a). When confronted with tragedy, we do not argue with God; rather we say, "Blessed is the true Judge." We do not understand misfortune because we have no right to expect that we will understand.

The case of *kinot* on Tisha B'Av, however, is an exception to the general rule. We are permitted to ask *eikha*, because we are following the precedent of Jeremiah the Prophet who posed the question *eikha* in the book of Lamentations. And Jeremiah posed this question only because he was given a *heter*, special permission, by God Himself, who instructed him to write "*Eikha yashva vadad*," the first sentence of the book of Lamentations. In effect, God granted a unique privilege to Jeremiah to address himself to God with these otherwise impermissible questions and to write *kinot*, lamentations, in the form of the book of Lamentations. The reason that God granted permission to express these otherwise inappropriate questions is that Jeremiah was expressing mourning for the destruction of the Temple, and this tragedy was so overwhelming that the prophet, and anyone else, was granted unlimited freedom to pose questions that would have been inappropriate under any other circumstance. Thus, Rabbi Elazar HaKalir is permitted to address the question *eikha* to God, only because that question was already posed to God by Jeremiah in Lamentations.

The book of Lamentations consists of three sections. The first section is comprised of Chapters 1 and 2 which essentially are *kinot* in which the prophet asks the question *eikha*. Thus, in these two chapters, Lamentations

איכה ישבה בדד

LAMENTATIONS:
Faith in a Turbulent World

Dr Yael Ziegler

The plaintive cry *"Eikha!"* – an elongated form of the interrogatory *eikh* ("How?") – opens chapters 1, 2, and 4. This word marks the chapters as lamentations, which open with a rhetorical question expressing incredulity, pain, and outrage.[1]

Isaiah employs the word *eikha* in his censure of Jerusalem, linking these biblical passages:[2]

> How (*eikha*) has she become a harlot, this faithful city? I filled her with justice, and righteousness dwelled there, and now [there dwell] murderers! (Is. 1:21)

Functioning as rebuke as well as lament, the word *eikha* may always contain elements of both. Isaiah laments Jerusalem's fallen state, even as he castigates her betrayal of God. Eikha's lament over Jerusalem contains a strain of rebuke, suggesting that Jerusalem maintains some responsibility for her calamity. The following midrash, commenting on Eikha 1:1, notes this:

> R. Yehuda said: "*Eikha*" is a phrase of reproach, as it says, "How (*eikha*) has she become a harlot!" (Is. 1:21). (Eikha Zuta [Buber] 1:1)

Another midrash cites R. Yehuda's position as part of a debate regarding the nature of the word *eikha* in Tanakh:

> R. Yehuda said: "*Eikha*" is a phrase of reproach, as it says, "How (*eikha*) can you say, 'We are wise and the Lord's instructions are with us?'" (Jer. 8:8). R. Nechemia said: "*Eikha*" is a phrase of lament, as it says, "And the Lord God called to Adam and he said to him, 'Where are you (*ayeka*)?'" (Gen. 3:9), [meaning,] "Woe to you (*oy lekha*)!" (Eikha Rabba 1:1)

Although R. Yehuda offers a different proof text in this midrash, he again observes that the word *eikha* recalls prophetic rebukes. Perhaps R. Yehuda means to suggest that God punishes in order to reproach, offering an educational response to wayward behavior.

R. Nechemia disagrees with R. Yehuda, maintaining that the word *eikha* signifies lament. Oddly, however, R. Nechemia chooses a proof text from God's probing question to Adam following his sin. In fact, God's reproachful query to Adam seems to constitute better evidence for R. Yehuda's position. This verse is moreover an odd choice, given that God's question to Adam is not *eikha* (how?), but *ayeka* (where are you?). Orthographically, the consonants are identical, but the vowels render these words significantly different. R. Nechemia's attempt to parse the word *ayeka* into two words that express grief ("*oy lekha*!", "woe to you!") is creative, but far from the simple meaning of the word. These implausible proofs indicate that R. Nechemia is willing to sacrifice the simple meaning in order to communicate a crucial idea. His reading suggests that even when God reprimands, He is actually expressing a lament. God's love for His people (and for Adam) is so pervasive that all His rebukes are laced with sorrow.

R. Nechemia's reference to Adam's sin also hints to a broader parallel between the story of Adam in the Garden of Eden (closeness to God, followed by sin and expulsion) and the story of the nation of Israel in its land (closeness to God, followed by sin and expulsion). I will explore this idea in Eikha 2:6.

1. Other laments use the shortened version of the interrogatory *eikh* to ask their rhetorical questions. David laments the deaths of Saul and Jonathan in II Samuel 1 by repeating three times, "How (*eikh*) have the mighty fallen!"

   The word *eikh* also appears in laments over cities. For example, Ezekiel 26:17 cites the eulogy that will be uttered after the destruction of Tyre: "How (*eikh*) you have been destroyed... this oft-praised city?" Zephaniah 2:15 cries over an unspecified city, "How (*eikh*) has [the city] become desolate?" Jeremiah 48:17 cites the lament of Moab's associates over her destruction: "How (*eikha*) has the strong staff been broken, the glorious rod?"

2. The association between these passages finds expression in liturgical practices. For example, the *haftara* read in most communities on the Shabbat preceding the fast of Tisha Be'Av (when Eikha is read) includes Isaiah 1:21. Megilla 31b suggests that the *haftara* read on Tisha Be'Av itself should open with Isaiah 1:21 (although most communities follow the second suggestion of the gemara, reading a passage that opens with Jeremiah 8:13).

How[1] has the city sat alone?
The city that was once so full of people
Has become like a widow

Great among nations
The princess of countries
Has become a tributary

The construction of this verse sets it apart, marking it as the opening of the chapter. While most verses in chapter 1 contain three binary (two-part) sentences, this verse contains two ternary (three-part) sentences. The final line of each stanza begins with the word *hayeta* ("has become"), signifying the change in fortune of the city. A city once teeming with people is now alone like a widow, and a city that was once regal is now subordinate to others.

Jerusalem's Isolation

The book of Eikha does not open with Jerusalem's destruction. Instead of describing the roar of the enemies or the crash of demolition, Eikha opens with the quiet sounds of devastation, the eerie echoes of an emptied city.

Loneliness dominates the opening chords of the book, illustrated poignantly by the metaphor of the widowed city, the *almana*, and acknowledged explicitly by the use of the word *badad* (lonely). Elsewhere in Tanakh, the word *badad* describes a destroyed city (Is. 27:10), a social outcast (Jer. 15:17), and a leper (Lev. 13:46). The image of Jerusalem sitting alone (*badad*) evokes these usages, focusing attention on the pain of her desolation, the abandonment of her loved ones, and her pariah status within the world. The phrase *yasheva badad* (used also about a leper in Leviticus 13:46) may allude to Jerusalem's culpability and sin, as noted by the *Targum*:

> The Attribute of Justice replied and said: "Because of the greatness of the rebellion and sin that was within her, she will dwell alone, as a person plagued with leprosy upon his skin, who sits alone." (*Targum Eikha* 1:1)

While the word *badad* primarily conveys the city's dreadful loneliness, a positive biblical usage of the word refers to Israel's singularity. Balaam prophetically proclaims that Israel is a "people that dwells alone (*am levadad yishkon*) and is not reckoned among the nations" (Num. 23:9), emphasizing Israel's uniqueness. Other verses using this term illustrate the way isolation can be positive, guaranteeing Israel's safety (Deut. 33:28; Ps. 4:9).[4]

This word may simultaneously point us to the cause of Israel's loneliness and to its solution. If only Israel had appreciated its singularity among the family of nations! Israel's desire to blend into the community of nations, her refusal to maintain her divinely mandated uniqueness, has turned a blessing of singularity (*am levadad yishkon*) into a curse of isolation (*yasheva badad*).[5] The experience of loneliness may be the very thing that can facilitate Israel's return to the ideal. Sitting alone can be a constructive experience for the battered city, reminding her that her isolated position is God's design and can facilitate Israel's destiny among the nations.

Metaphor: Widowed Jerusalem

A city's personification as a woman is a common biblical trope, one that emerges as a general theme of our chapter.[6] In Eikha, Jerusalem manifests her female persona both as a mother and as a wife, constructing a multifaceted portrait of the city's tragedy.[7] As a bereaved mother, Jerusalem's grief is incalculable. The loss of her inhabitants/children is the loss of Jerusalem's future, her hope, her destiny. It is also unnatural, a poignant portrayal of a topsy-turvy world in which a child predeceases a parent. The sorrow of a widow denotes a different kind of loss, one that exists more in the present than in the future, emphasizing her aloneness and vulnerability.[8]

The personification of Jerusalem, coupled with her human-like actions (such as sitting alone, crying and mourning), arouses empathy.[9] Her widowhood evokes physical and economic helplessness; the Bible often specifies the widow as one who deserves particular attention and care.[10] Strikingly, the city remains unnamed for the first three verses of the chapter.[11] Her anonymity mirrors her widowed state, suggesting that the loss of her husband signifies her loss of identity.[12]

While her departed children are easily identifiable as Jerusalem's inhabitants, the identity of her deceased husband is less clear. Perhaps Jerusalem's husband, too, refers to her inhabitants, whose departure to exile has left her like a widow. Alternatively, God can be identified as the "deceased" husband of Jerusalem (in this case, representing the nation). After all, Israel's relationship with God is often described within a matrimonial context.[13] More significantly, following the exile and as part of the redemption, Isaiah 54:4–5 promises that the city shall not know the shame of widowhood any longer, for God will espouse her. The metaphor of Jerusalem widowed from her marriage to God raises some difficult questions. First, this metaphor seems odd. Would it not make more sense to describe Jerusalem as a divorcee, a city whose God has rejected her? Moreover, from a theological angle, how can one suggest that God is deceased?

The widow metaphor may be more useful than the divorcee metaphor because it evokes the city's sorrow, loneliness, and vulnerability, without placing blame.[14] Our initial encounter with the grieving city does not involve judgment or allude to her culpability, but relates only to her pain.[15] Slowly, as the chapter unfolds, we will have recourse to assign blame for the events, but for the moment, we simply note the city's loss.

To answer the theological question posed above, we rely upon the *kaf hadimayon*, the preposition that precedes the word widow, indicating that Jerusalem is "*like* a widow." This simile establishes a measure of equivalence between Jerusalem and a widow, but that does not mean that she is a widow in all aspects.

Nevertheless, the meaning underlying the image of Jerusalem's widowhood remains problematic. Is it possible that Jerusalem's metaphoric husband (whether God or nation) is like a deceased husband, never to return? Is Jerusalem's devastation hopelessly unalterable? The simile may reflect Jerusalem's state of mind in this chapter, her despair and her bleak outlook on the future. This is like other laments in this chapter: "The Lord has placed me in the hands [of those before whom] I cannot rise" (Eikha 1:14).

Even if the simile of the widow accurately reflects Jerusalem's despondency, is this a theologically tenable description? Jeremiah rejects this idea in a verse that seems to contravene Eikha 1:1:

> For Israel is not a widow, [nor is] Judah from his God, from the Lord of hosts. (Jer. 51:5)

Radak's explanation of the verse in Jeremiah is unambiguous:

> "For Israel is not a widow" – [S]he is not like a widow whose husband died and she is abandoned by him forever. Not so Israel! For her husband lives and exists, and if He left her in exile, He shall yet remember her and return to her and punish the enemies. (Radak, Jer. 51:5)

Rashi similarly refuses to accept that Eikha 1:1 actually likens Jerusalem to a widow. He stresses the significance of the *kaf hadimayon*, rejecting any substantive similarity. Instead, Rashi compares Jerusalem's lonely widow-like state to a different situation altogether:

> Not an actual widow, but like a woman whose husband went to a faraway land and his intention is to return to her. (Rashi, Eikha 1:1)

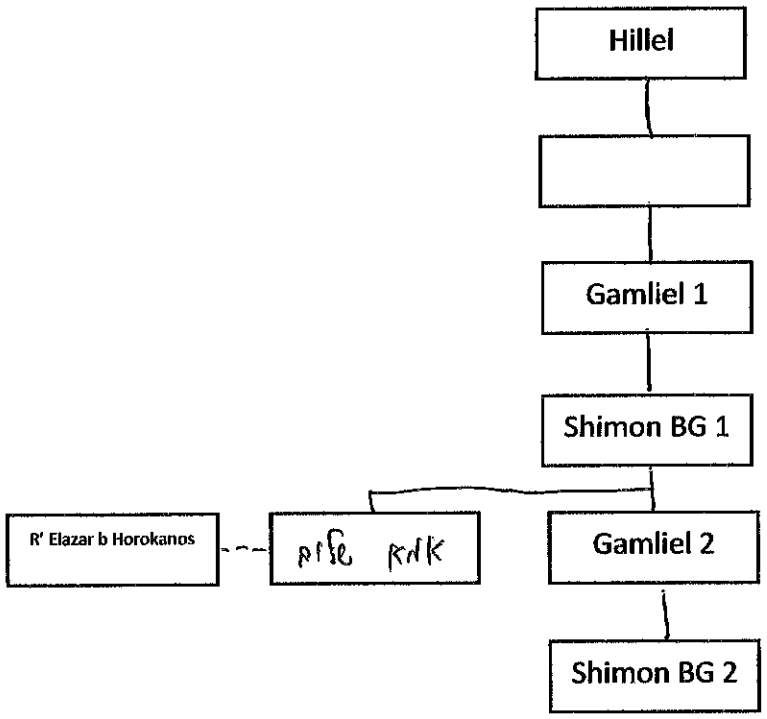
This creative reading is typical of Rashi's commentary, designed not necessarily to explicate the text (in this case, he seems to

עשרה הרוגי מלכות

The Ten Martyred Rabbis – Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel

SIMEON BEN GAMALIEL I (first century C.E.), *nasi* of the Sanhedrin in the generation of the destruction of the Temple. Josephus (Life, 191 f.), of whom Simeon was a bitter opponent, praises Simeon as: "A man highly gifted with intelligence and judgment; he could by sheer genius retrieve an unfortunate situation in affairs of state." Simeon's words in *Avot* (1:17), "All my days I have grown up among the wise, and I have found nothing of better service than silence; not learning but doing is the chief thing; and he who is profuse of words causes sin," probably reflect the attitude he adopted during the stormy period of the conflict of opinions and sects, against the background of the dangers inherent in the revolt and the war. Some assert that Simeon was killed by the extremists who were opposed to his moderate leadership, but the view in the sources (Sem. 8; et al.) that he met a martyr's death at the hands of the Romans seems more probable, and he is thus traditionally included among the *Ten Martyrs. The Simeon b. Gamaliel mentioned without qualification in the Mishnah and in *beraitot* is usually Simeon b. Gamaliel II. However, the practical *halakhot* and *takkanot connected with the Temple, such as the energetic action to keep down the price of birds for women to sacrifice after childbirth (Ker. 1:7), must apply to Simeon b. Gamaliel I. Especially striking is the description of him at the time of the Simḥat Bet ha-Sho'evah ("Festival of *Water-drawing"): "He used to juggle with eight burning torches and not one of them fell to the ground, and when he prostrated himself he placed his finger upon the pavement, bowed, kissed the ground, and immediately stood upright" (Suk. 53a). One halakhic ruling by him is quoted in *Eruvin* (6:2).

BIBLIOGRAPHY: Hyman, Toledot, s.v.



לֵב קְדוֹשִׁים מֻתוּ בְּמִיתָה חֲמוּרָה: יָדוּ גוֹרָל מִי רִאשׁוֹן לַחֶרֶב בְּרוּרָה.
כְּנָפוֹל גוֹרָל עַל רַבָּן שִׁמְעוֹן, פָּשַׁט צַוָּארוֹ וּבָכָה כְּנִגְזָרָה גְּזֵרָה.
לְרַבָּן שִׁמְעוֹן חָזַר הַשַּׂר לְהָרְגוֹ, בְּנֶפֶשׁ וְצוּרָה: מִזֶּרַע אַהֲרֹן שָׁאַל
בְּבַקָּשָׁה לִבְכּוֹת, עַל בֶּן הַגְּבִירָה. נָטַל רֹאשׁוֹ וּתְנָנוֹ עַל אַרְכֻּבוֹתָיו,
מְנוֹרָה הַטְּהוֹרָה: שָׂם עֵינָיו עַל עֵינָיו, וּפִיו עַל פִּיו בְּאַהֲבָה וְמוּרָה.
עָנָה וְאָמַר, פֶּה הַמִּתְגַּבֵּר בַּתּוֹרָה; פִּתְאוֹם נִקְנְסָה עָלָיו מִיתָה
מְשֻׁנָּה וַחֲמוּרָה. צִוָּה לְהַפְשִׁיט אֶת רֹאשׁוֹ בְּתַעַר הַשְּׂכִירָה: קַיֵּם

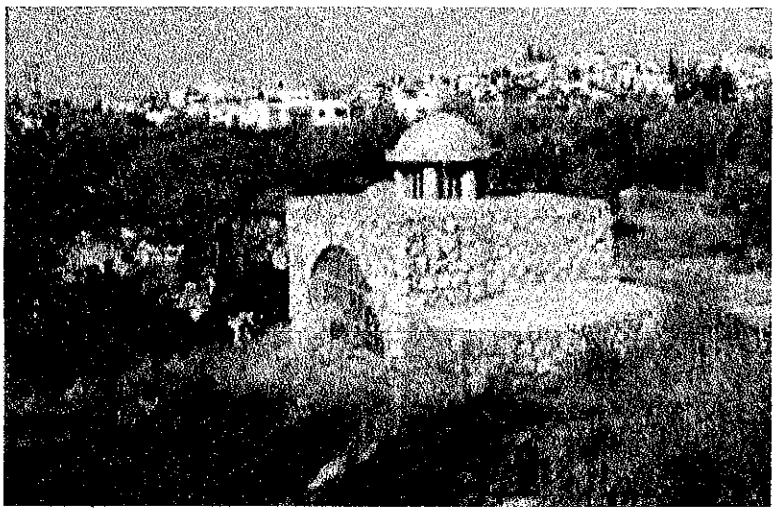
pure in heart and holy, they died a dreadful death. They threw lots (to see) who should be chosen first for the sword, and when the lot fell on Rabbi Simeon (Ben Gamaliel II), he bared his neck and wept when the decree was issued. When the general returned to Rabbi Simeon to kill him[5] with crafty design,[6] (Rabbi Yishmael, the High Priest, a descendant) of the seed of Aaron,[7] craved leave to weep over the son of the princes;[8] he took his[9] head and laid it on his knees (and cried): "O pure lamp!"[10] He put his eyes upon his eyes, his mouth upon his mouth in perfect love, he spoke and said: "O mouth, that grew strong in the Torah! A terrible and harsh death was suddenly decreed against you!"[11] He[12] ordered them to flay his head with a hired (blade).[13] In (the flaying) of his skin (the

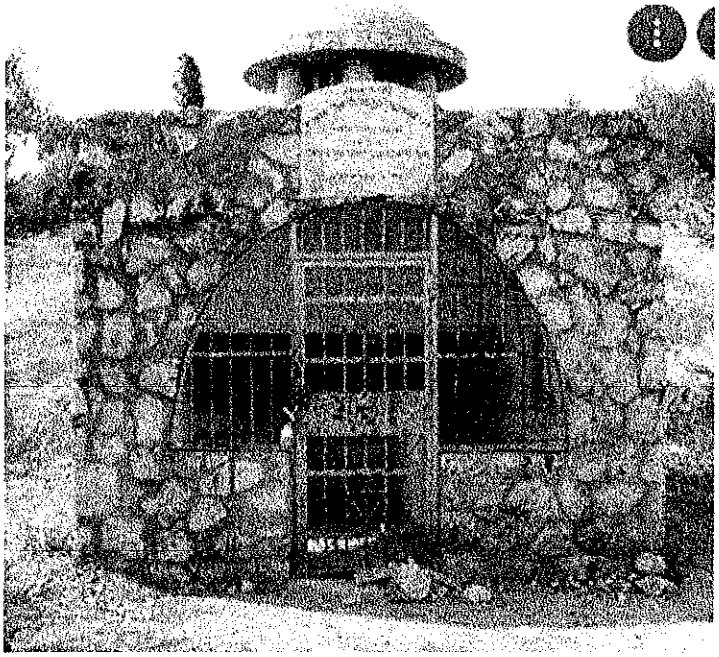
Avot D'Rabbi Natan 38

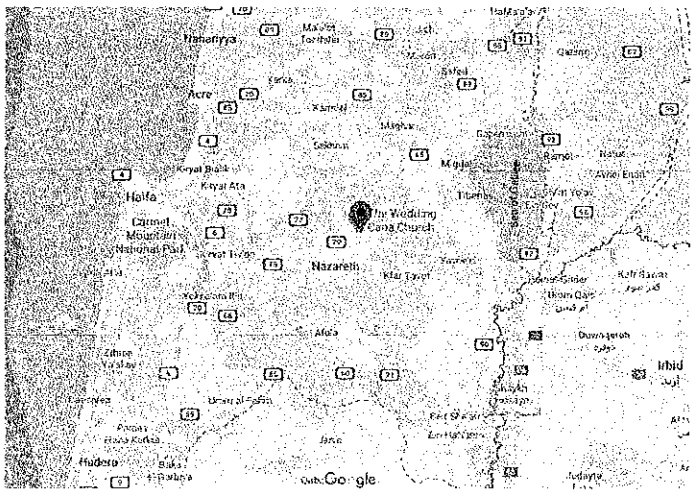
חרב בא לעולם על עינוי הדין ועל עיוות הדין ומפני המורין בתורה שלא כהלכה: וכשתפשו את רשב"ג ואת רבי ישמעאל ליהרג היה רשב"ג יושב ותוהה בדעתו ואומר אוי לנו שאנו נהרגין כמחללי שבתות וכעובדי ע"א וכמגלי עריות וכשופכי דמים. אמר לו רבי ישמעאל בן אלישע רצונך שאומר לפניך דבר אחד. א"ל אמור. א"ל שמא כשהיית מסיב בסעודה באו עניים ועמדו על פתחך ולא הנחתם שיכנסו ויאכלו. אמר לו השמים אם עשיתי כן אלא שומרים היו לי יושבין על הפתח כשהיו העניים באים היו מכניסין אותן אצלי ואוכלין ושותין אצלי ומברכין לשם שמים. א"ל שמא כשהיית יושב ודורש בהר הבית והיו כל אוכלוסי ישראל יושבין לפניך זחה דעתך עליך. אמר לו ישמעאל אחי מוכן אדם שיקבל את פגעו. והיו מתחננין לאספקלטור זה אמר [לו] אני כהן בן כהן גדול הרגני תחלה ואל אראה במיתת חבירי. וזה אמר לו אני נשיא בן נשיא הרגני תחלה ואל אראה במיתת חבירי. אמר להם הפילו גורלות. והפילו ונפל הפור על רשב"ג. מיד נטל החרב וחתך את ראשו. נטלו ר"י בן אלישע והניחו בחיקו והיה בוכה וצועק פה קדוש פה נאמן פה קדוש פה נאמן פה שמוציא סנדלפונין טובות ואבנים טובות ומרגליות מי הטמינך בעפר ומי מילא לשונך עפר ואפר עליך הכתוב אומר חרב עורי על רעי ועל גבר עמיתי (זכריה י"ג ז').

Midrash Eleh Ezkarah

נכנס הקיסר וכל גדולי רומי אחריו. אמר להם מי יהרג תחלה. ענה רבן שמעון בן גמליאל אבי נשיא בן נשיא מזרעו של דוד מלך ישראל עליו השלום, אני אהרג תחלה, ענה ר"ש כ"ג ואמר אני כ"ג בן כ"ג מזרעו של אהרן הכהן אני אהרג תחלה ואל אראה במיתת חברי. אמר הקיסר זה אמר אני אהרג תחלה וזה אמר אני אהרג תחלה אם כן הפילו גורלות ביניכם. ויפול הגורל על רשב"ג וצוה הקיסר לחתוך את ראשו תחלה וחתכוהו. ונטלו אח"כ את רבי ישמעאל כה"ג בין ירכיו וצרח עליו במר נפש ואמר אי תורה ואי שכרה, הלשון שהייתה מבארת התורה בשבעים לשונות איך עתה לוחכת את העפר. והיה מתאונן ובוכה על רשב"ג. א"ל הקיסר מה זה ומה זה אתה זקן שאתה בוכה על חברך היה לך לבכות על עצמך. א"ל רבי ישמעאל אני בוכה על עצמי שחברי גדול ממני בתורה ובחכמה ועל שקדמני בישיבה של מעלה אני בוכה:

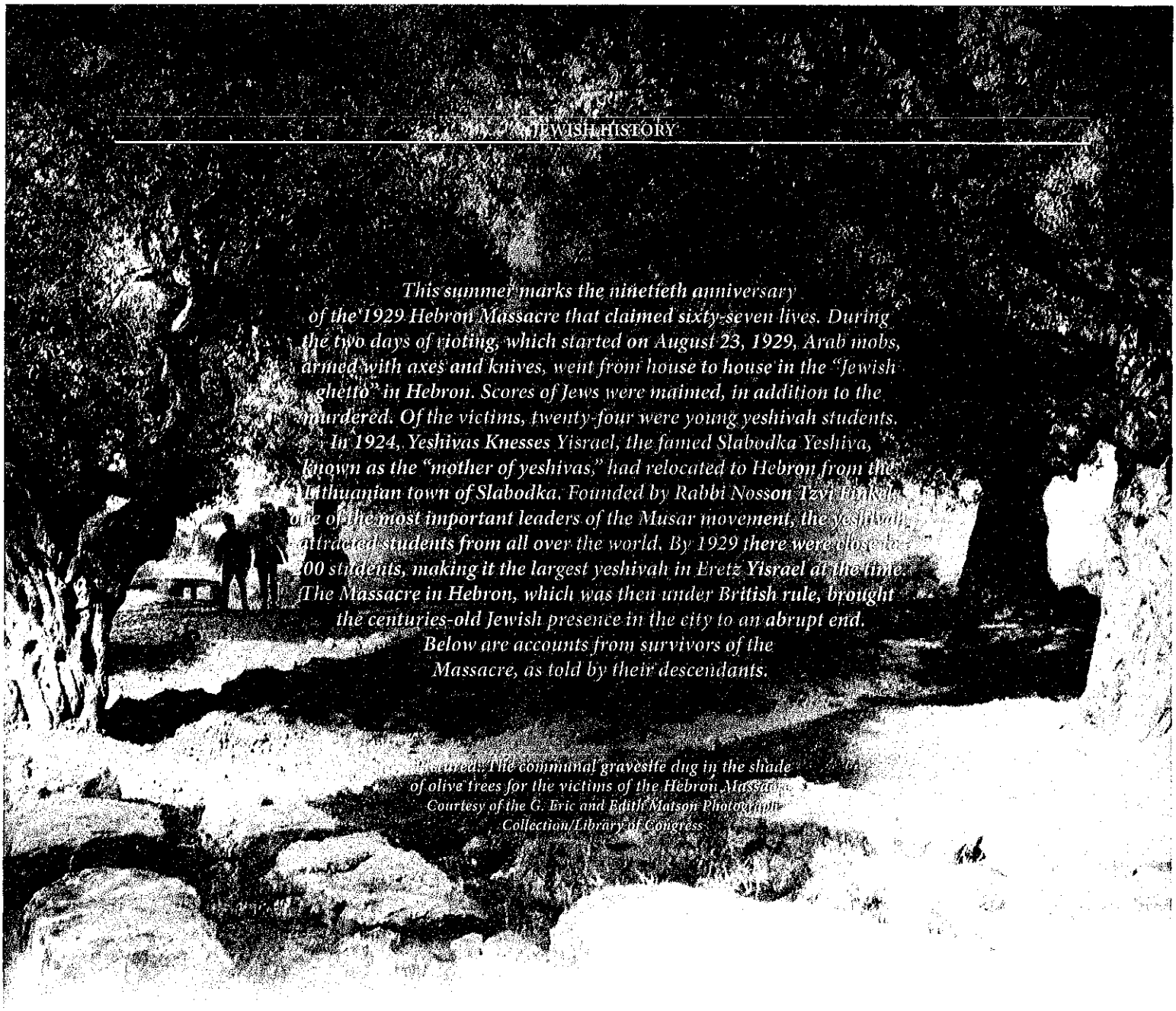





Nahariyya
Acre
Haifa
Carmel Mountain National Park
The Wedding Cana Church
Nazareth
Afula
Ibbid
Hudero
Google

Remembering the 1929 Hebron Massacre

The eastern road to Hebron, called Mar Saba, circa 1920s.
Courtesy of the G. Eric and Edith Matson
Photograph Collection, Library of Congress



This summer marks the ninetieth anniversary of the 1929 Hebron Massacre that claimed sixty-seven lives. During the two days of rioting, which started on August 23, 1929, Arab mobs, armed with axes and knives, went from house to house in the "Jewish ghetto" in Hebron. Scores of Jews were maimed, in addition to the murdered. Of the victims, twenty-four were young yeshivah students. In 1924, Yeshivas Knesses Yisrael, the famed Slabodka Yeshiva, known as the "mother of yeshivas," had relocated to Hebron from the Lithuanian town of Slabodka. Founded by Rabbi Nosson Tzvi Finkel, one of the most important leaders of the Musar movement, the yeshivah attracted students from all over the world. By 1929 there were close to 300 students, making it the largest yeshivah in Eretz Yisrael at the time. The Massacre in Hebron, which was then under British rule, brought the centuries-old Jewish presence in the city to an abrupt end. Below are accounts from survivors of the Massacre, as told by their descendants.

Featured: The communal gravesite dug in the shade of olive trees for the victims of the Hebron Massacre.
Courtesy of the G. Eric and Edith Matson Photograph Collection/Library of Congress

Rabbi Moshe Gold
Courtesy of Rabbi Chaim Gold

Rabbi Moshe Gold
(1912-1956)

By Bayla Sheva Brenner

Descended from a long line of *talmidei chachamim*, Rabbi Moshe Gold, a survivor of the Hebron Massacre, was one of the early students of Yeshiva Torah Vodaath. His father, Rabbi Zev, served as the *rav* of a shul in Williamsburg, New York, where Rabbi Binyamin Wilhelm (Rabbi Yisroel Belsky's grandfather), the founder of Yeshiva Torah Vodaath, was a congregant. In those days, most of the Jewish immigrants in America were reticent about sending their children to yeshivah; it was considered "un-American." Rabbi Zev had other ideas. He took his young son Moshe, then six years old, to visit all the Jewish homes in the neighborhood and announced, "My son is going to yeshivah. Your son is coming with him." Along with Moshe, these students formed the original nucleus of Yeshiva Torah Vodaath.

In 1921, when Moshe turned nine, the family moved to Eretz Yisrael. When he was a teenager, a conversation with a group of *bachurim* who were

-13-

Rabbi Menachem Krakowski on the Massacre

The maggid meisharim *and* moreh tzedek *of Vilna, Rabbi Menachem Krakowski, delivered this sermon in the Great Synagogue of Vilna on the 23rd of Av, 1929, five days after the Massacre in Hebron* (Arzei HaLevanon *[Vilna, 1936], 117-118).*

Translation by Rabbi Eliyahu Krakowski, great-grandson of the author

We are gathered within the ancient and holy walls of this synagogue, which remember the persecutions of the Jewish people, which remember too the years of *Tach v'Tat* [the Chmielnicki Massacres of 1648-1649]. We will restate what is stated in our Torah: "O nations, acclaim His people! For He will avenge the blood of His servants, wreak vengeance on His foes, and cleanse the land of His people" (Deut. 32:43) . . .

To speak of our new *kedoshim* [martyrs] . . . it would be impetuous on my part to claim to be able to understand their value; these are souls whose value cannot be understood so quickly.

Rather, this is what I must say to you: We read in this week's Torah portion, "For you are a holy people unto the Lord your God." We have had many *kedoshim* in our history, martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the sanctification of God's name, for the covenant between Israel and our Father in Heaven . . . There have also been martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the sake of the Torah, for its study and for its honor, so that it should not be desecrated by those who have risen to desecrate it and those who carry its banner. Such martyrs we have had throughout our history, but *kedoshim* who sacrificed their lives for the sanctity of our Land, for the honor of our Land and for the sanctity of the Temple—such *kedoshim* we have not had for two thousand years, since the time that the oppressor robbed us of our Land and desecrated our Temple.

Our sages have taught us: "He who did not mention the Land [of Israel], the covenant, and the Torah did not fulfill his obligation" . . . We have had *kedoshim* for the sake of the covenant and for the Torah, but we were missing *kedoshim* for the Land. Now these youths have completed it. They gave their lives for the sanctity of the Western Wall, the remnant of our most precious place, and for the sanctity of the Land and its honor. After two thousand years, we have before us reincarnations of the heroes of yesteryear who fought till their last drop of blood on behalf of their Land.

attending the Hebron Yeshiva made a profound impression on him. He came home and told his father, "I want to go learn in Hebron."

What follows are the words of Rabbi Chaim Gold, seventy-seven, a former rebbe at Manhattan Day School for over fifty years and the son of Rabbi Moshe Gold—as told to Bayla Sheva Brenner

On *erev Shabbos*, August 24, 1929, the *talmidim* in the Hebron Yeshiva knew that something was going on. Tensions were brewing; they heard the talk among the Arabs in the street. But no one could have envisioned how catastrophic it would be. Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Haj Amin al-Husseini had spread rumors that the Jews intended to conquer the Temple Mount and to desecrate or destroy the Al-Aqsa Mosque. The Arab population was riled up. Around the time of *Kabbalas Shabbos*, a pogrom began.

All night long, bloodthirsty Arabs ran through the streets in search of Jewish victims. My father and his roommates barricaded the doors and windows of the home in which they lived. At dawn things seemed to quiet down. My father wanted very much to check on his *rebbe*, Rabbi Moshe Mordechai Epstein[1] and *daven* with him. (Whenever my father spoke about the years during which he was privileged to learn in Hebron, he talked of how he revered Rabbi Epstein, from whom he had received *semichah* at the tender age of seventeen; Rabbi Epstein didn't give *semichah* easily. When Rabbi Epstein passed away, my father tore *keriah*.) Although the *bachurim* didn't hear anything going on in the streets, they were afraid that this was a ploy and they warned my father not to go outside. My father, however, insisted on checking on his *rebbe* and left the house.

As it turned out, all the boys in the house where my father had been hiding were slaughtered. When an Arab attacked a *rebbe*, a young *bachur* threw himself onto his *rebbe*, crying out, "You gave me life!" The young man was killed while saving his *rebbe's* life.

My father reached the *rosh yeshivah's* house. The Arabs pounded the door of Rabbi Epstein's home with a battering ram. When the the battering ram broke through the door, it hit him in the face and knocked out one of his teeth. As this was happening, the British chief of police of Hebron rode past them, down the block. The rioters quickly dispersed. The yeshivah boys had pleaded with him on Friday afternoon to prevent the probable violence—however, he did nothing to stop it. The police chief's wife even knew Rebbetzin Epstein. Prior to the

-14-

Massacre, the Jews had very good relations with the Arabs in the area, and the yeshivah made sure everyone got along. [Eliezer Dan Slonim, one of the leaders of the Hebron Jewish community, was close friends with the local Arabs. Nevertheless, the Arabs slaughtered his entire family. Only his toddler son Shlomo survived.]

At some point, my father was wounded. His body was thrown together with a pile of corpses. Later, a reporter, trying to identify the murdered boys, searched their pockets for identification. He came across my father's name and recorded it on a list of the murdered. My grandfather, who was traveling in Europe at the time, noticed someone reading a newspaper with a headline publicizing the terrible pogrom. He grabbed the newspaper and saw my father's name listed among the murdered. It was then that my grandfather suffered his first heart attack—ultimately, he learned that my father had survived.

Tensions were brewing; they heard the talk among the Arabs in the street. But no one could have envisioned how catastrophic it would be.

As bizarre as it sounds, the British actually detained and imprisoned the Hebron survivors. My great-uncle, my grandfather's younger brother (Rabbi Dr. Henry Raphael Gold, who subsequently became the first *frum* psychiatrist in the US) was in Eretz Yisrael at the time. After Shabbos, when he heard what had transpired, he went to the American Consulate and prevailed upon the American officials to intervene and free his nephew. The Americans contacted the British officials in Hebron, who said they would try to release my father.

A short while later, they called to report a glitch: "The young man won't leave unless all of the boys are let go, and we're not going to do that." My great-uncle then told the consulate, "Listen, that's the American way. You stick up for your friends; you don't abandon them! Are you going to penalize them for doing the American thing?!" The consulate got back on the phone insisting that the British release them all.

Years later I showed a documentary film of the Hebron Massacre at Manhattan Day School, where I was teaching. The footage included a convoy of cars leaving Hebron to Yerushalayim with all of the survivors. I paused the film and told my students

that it was because of my father that the convoy left for Yerushalayim.

The British governor of Palestine was a *"menuval,"* a disgrace. Later, after the Massacre, there was a meeting of certain dignitaries including the British governor. He was introduced to Rav Avraham Yitzchak HaCohen Kook and extended his hand. Rav Kook refused to shake his hand, saying, "They are hands covered with blood [of those murdered in Hebron]."

When I was learning in Eretz Yisrael many decades later, my father came to visit me. I had found the *Sefer Zikaron* that the Hebron Yeshiva had published for the first *yahrtzeit* in one of the bookcases in my grandfather's house. It included a brief biography and photo of each boy who was murdered. I showed it to my father. As he went through page by page, he cried bitterly. He was almost speaking to the faces. He saw his *chavrusa* and his two roommates, all of them brutally murdered. That entire day he cried, reliving the experience.

After the Massacre, my father could no longer remain in Eretz Yisrael. He wanted to go learn in the Mirrer Yeshivah in Poland, even though my grandfather preferred that he return to America [the family had temporarily moved back to the US]. Dov Katz [later the author of a series of books on the Musar movement], who was a student of the Hebron Yeshiva, was engaged to my father's sister. He survived because he was away visiting his *kallah* on the Shabbos of the pogrom. My father told Dov, "Don't let my father know I went to Mir until I send a telegram that I'm settled in the yeshivah and I'm okay." My father notified his future brother-in-law that he had arrived, but my grandfather was worried about him and traveled to Poland—a journey via ship that took several weeks.

When my grandfather arrived in Mir, he asked the *mashgiach*, Rabbi Yeruchem Levovitz, who was zealous about not letting the boys leave the yeshivah, for permission to take my father to the Chofetz Chaim for a *berachah*. Reb Yeruchem granted permission because of the trauma my father had experienced and the privilege of being blessed by that *tzaddik*. When the two of them arrived at the home of the great *gadol* in Radin, the *gabbai* told them that the Chofetz Chaim wasn't feeling well and might not be up to seeing visitors. My grandfather told the *gabbai* that the young *bachur* with him was a survivor of the pogrom in Hebron. When the Chofetz Chaim heard that, he came out and grabbed hold of my father, hugging him and tearfully reciting a verse from Yeshayah HaNavi, "A feather plucked from the fire!" He then gave the young *bachur* a *berachah*. My father never forgot that meeting.

Notes

1. One of the leading *talmidei chachamim* of the twentieth century, Rabbi Moshe Mordechai Epstein (1866-1933) served as *rosh yeshivah* of Yeshivas Knesses Yisrael in Slabodka and in Hebron.

Bayla Sheva Brenner is an award-winning freelance writer and a regular contributor to Jewish Action.

Rabbi Dov Cohen
Courtesy of the Cohen family

Rabbi Dov Cohen
(1911-2005)

By Bayla Sheva Brenner

Rabbi Dov Cohen, who passed away at the age of ninety-four, was one of the Hebron Yeshiva students who survived the Massacre. His story is told in *Vayelchu Shneihem Yachdav* (in Hebrew, recently translated into English and titled *To Rise Above–The Amazing Life of HaRav Dov Cohen zt"l: A Journey to Greatness Against All Odds* [2017]).

In the winter of 1903, Zahava Golda Leah Cohen, a young mother of three, left her home in Lithuania with her children and boarded a steamship to America. Her husband, Reb Yehuda, had made the trip nearly three years before. His plan was to find work, save up enough money to support his family, and head back home. The long separation proved too much for his wife. The plans changed.

The family eventually settled in Seattle, Washington, where Reb Yehuda worked in a clothing store, rising from salesman to manager, and then opening his own successful establishment. Unfortunately, the "Land of Opportunity" offered little in the way of Jewish community or education. Most of their fellow Jewish immigrants opted for assimilation over Torah observance. Only a small number of Jewish immigrants clung to *Yiddishkeit*, and many of their offspring abandoned it altogether.

Mrs. Cohen lost many nights' sleep watching her children embrace the secular life of the society around them. Descended from a line of erudite Torah scholars, she was not willing to leave to chance her dreams of her youngest son Dov becoming a *ben Torah*. In the summer of 1925, when Dov, known as "Benny," was just thirteen years old, his mother took him on a long journey eastward across the United States, then across the Atlantic Ocean through the Strait of Gibraltar to Eretz Yisrael, the Holy Land.

At first Benny attended a religious high school in Tel Aviv, where he learned both secular and religious studies. But his Gemara teacher, Rav Yosef Ze'ev Lipowitz, suggested to his mother that they consider a fledgling yeshivah in Hebron, Yeshivas Knesses Yisrael, launched in 1924 by Rav Nosson Tzvi Finkel, the Alter of Slabodka. The yeshivah catered to advanced Torah scholars.

Benny stepped into the yeshivah's main room, which was filled with 200 *bachurim* learning *musar*. He picked up a *sefer* and watched. The

musar seder ended, and Maariv began. He joined the chorus of voices.

He later wrote in his journal: "Suddenly, there was a moment's silence; you could hear a pin drop . . . I literally jumped out of my seat from the thunderous noise. *'Shema Yisrael, Hashem Elokeinu, Hashem Echad!'* The walls were trembling . . . I knew there would be no turning back . . . my decision was final. I was staying right here."

And there, the boy from Seattle, one of the youngest *bachurim* in the yeshivah, exulted in the intensive learning and warm camaraderie—until the horrific tragedy that blew his world apart.

Benny was seventeen at the time of the Massacre—most of the *talmidim* were in their twenties. Since there were no dormitory facilities, he rented a room from an Arab. During the height of the Massacre, when the mob came to his home, the Arab landlord told the rioters that there were no Jews in his home. [There were courageous Arabs who saved Jews during the pogrom, as some of these stories attest.] He advised his young Jewish tenant to hide. And Benny's life was spared.

Excerpt below from *To Rise Above–The Amazing Life of HaRav Dov Cohen* zt"l: *A Journey to Greatness Against All Odds* (Feldheim, 2017): 282-294

That Shabbos morning, I walked from my lodgings to the Lazarovsky home . . . Looking out my window, I watched as carloads of Arab sheikhs traveled toward Me'aras Hamachpelah, heading for the large mosque there. We davened Shacharis in the Lazarovsky home, too frightened to step outside. We read the Torah portion from a Chumash, as we did not have a Sefer Torah *with us. By the time we reached Mussaf, everyone was terrified. We had a gut feeling that something terrible was about to take place.*

I could see the hill across the valley . . . Hordes of Arab peasants were trekking down the hill, heading straight for Hebron. There must have been hundreds of them, maybe even thousands. They spilled into the streets, singing war songs.

Rav Kook refused to shake [the British governor's] hand, saying, "They are hands covered with blood [of those murdered in Hebron]."

Rabbi Dov and his friends near the tree known as Eshel Avraham (the Tree of Avraham Avinu) in Hebron. Aside from Rabbi Dov, all the bachurim *in the picture were murdered in the 1929 riots,* Hy"d. *Standing on the wall: Alter Sher. Sitting on the wall: Moshe Aharon Rifs (right) and Rabbi Dov (left). Standing on the ground, right to left: Yisrael Mordechai HaCohen Kaplan, Shlomo Yagel (son of Rabbi Shabsai Yagel,* rosh yeshivah *of Slonim) and Elchanan Zelig Ruch. Courtesy of the Cohen family*

One-and-a-half-year-old Shlomo Slonim, the son of Eliezer Dan Slonim and sole survivor of his immediate family, photographed with his aunt. Photo: The Central Zionist Archives

Mrs. Lazarovsky enjoined us to sit down and eat the Shabbos meal. But before she had even finished her sentence, bloodcurdling shouts pierced the air. Thousands of bloodthirsty Arabs began stampeding toward the Jewish homes.

We heard banging and more screaming . . . residents . . . ran outside, hoping to find shelter in the municipality's nearby health clinic. Unfortunately, once outside they met up with the raged masses. . . As they ran back to the house, they tried catching the attention of the policemen who stood nearby, but the policemen didn't move a muscle . . . Meanwhile, the rioters had filled the house. They pounced on the head of the family and killed him with their knives.

From our post on the top floor, we heard loud banging on the front gate . . . Had our turn come? The fear was tangible. Every person in the house shook uncontrollably . . . With superhuman strength . . . I hoisted a long, heavy bed on my back and placed it on the space between the front door and the inner steps leading up to the second floor, where we were all hiding . . . the Arab rioters refused to give up. They headed to the house next door; the Arab landlord lived in that house. They wanted to go up to his roof, jump onto our roof, and break into the house that way.

Without losing a moment, I jumped from our roof to the Arab landlord's roof and began speaking convincingly, begging him not to acquiesce to their request. Using the little Arabic that I knew, I managed to communicate with him . . . He agreed not to let the mob into his house . . . His children, however, did not follow their father's example. They screamed out to the mob, "There's a Yahud here; there's a Yahud here!"

I stood near the Arab's window, trying to figure out what to do. The Arab mob noticed me and brought their hatchets down on the door ...the Arab (landlord) assured me ..."You've nothing to worry about."

The argument between "my" Arab and the mob intensified . . . the landlord told me to find a hiding place. I looked around . . . One of the pits used for household needs in his home seemed to be an excellent hiding place. The opening led to a place that was something like a cellar. I moved aside the boards that covered the opening and crawled inside, replacing the boards after me.

One of my friends had somehow managed to enter the Arab's house as well. When he couldn't find me, he began to worry. I removed some boards and told him to join me. Then another escapee arrived, and another. There were now four or five of us hiding in the pit.

The pit was a long, underground passage that ran under the street. We continued walking, the sounds of the crazed mob . . . right on top of us . . . We also heard ear-splitting shrieks and cries . . .

After waiting in the pit for a few hours, we realized that the storm had abated . . . We decided to leave our hiding place and return to the Lazarovskys' home. There was not a living soul on the street.

The Shabbos table was still set...

Mrs. Lazarovsky's two sons had been murdered . . . one of their young daughters, Devorah, and his father in law, Reb Aryeh Leib Guttelevsky, were also murdered—three generations at once.

By Rabbi Dov Cohen's son, Rabbi Tzvi Cohen, seventy-four, who lives in Bnei Brak—as told to Bayla Sheva Brenner

My father lived with Hebron constantly. In every aspect, he conducted every moment of his life according to the *musar* teachings of Hebron and Slabodka. It was as if he never left the Yeshiva. [He studied in the Yeshiva for three years before the pogrom and seven years afterward until he married.]

My father constantly lived with the miracle that saved his life. He wasn't always eager to talk about surviving the Massacre, but if people (including his grandchildren) approached him wanting to hear the story so that they could pass it on to future generations, he would agree to tell it. At every family gathering, he would publicly thank Hakadosh Baruch Hu for saving him. He felt that Hashem was with him, as if he had seen the Shechinah. When he told the story of the pogrom, you felt you were there.

When the British evacuated the residents of the area after the pogrom, my father, because he spoke English, served as the translator between the British authorities and the Jewish community. Whatever wasn't stolen or destroyed was collected and held by the British. The Hebron survivors worked together to contact the families of the victims and return their loved ones' belongings.

While still a *bachur* at the yeshivah, my father was like a *mashgiach*. When the surviving *bachurim* came to the relocated yeshivah in Yerushalayim, he officially became an assistant to Rabbi

Los Angeles Times

ARABS KILL AMERICANS

Twelve Victims in Holy Land

Bloody Riots Continue and British Rush Troops to Halt Bloodshed

Hebrew Battle Described; Jaffa Crisis Feared; Fascists Censured

"Twelve Victims in Holy Land" cries a front page headline of the Los Angeles Times *on August 26, 1929. Copyright © 1929.* Los Angeles Times. *Used with permission*

-18-

Yehuda Leib Chasman, the *mashgiach*, spiritual mentor, of the Hebron Yeshiva. When Rav Chasman passed away, my father became the *mashgiach*.

Over the years, my father kept in touch with the other survivors. Whenever they met one another, it was like a meeting of brothers. When my father took ill and needed a blood transfusion drawn directly from the body of a donor into his, one of his fellow Hebron survivors volunteered to do it. This *achdus* was part of the *chinuch* that had been ingrained in them with the Slabodka teachings, that every *talmid* was to be regarded as a brother, and to always seek to care for and help one another.

This was the primary message my father transmitted to our family: that we must work for the betterment of the Jewish people. Each of my siblings, in his or her own way, is involved in *klal* work—giving *shiurim*, writing *sefarim*, heading a *beis din*, providing premarital guidance.

Over the years, my father would take us to the site of the Massacre. Other Hebron survivors would accompany us. They would recount the history of each of the buildings and what happened during the attack in each place. We would visit the mass grave in Hebron.

I have in my possession the Shas my father used in the Hebron Yeshiva.

My father's descendants wrote *To Rise Above: A Journey to Greatness Against All Odds*. More than a history book, it's a book of *musar*, the story of how a young man so far away from home was able to rebuild after such a horrific tragedy. Before the State of Israel was founded, my father initiated an organization to launch *shiurim* in multiple neighborhoods. In the State's early years, he served as *rav* of a shul in Yerushalayim. He went on to write *sefarim* and was appointed the first rabbi of the Israeli Air Force.

He used to cry for his *rebbeim* and comrades who were brutally murdered. He understood that the ways of Hashem are hidden. He surmised that Hashem saved him for a reason and made a commitment to dedicate the rest of his life to serving Klal Yisrael, learning Torah and performing *mitzvos*.

He felt he was saved by God for a reason, that Hashem had put him on a mission to give, so he did boundless *chesed* for the rest of his life.

Rabbi David Winchester
Courtesy of the Hebrew Theological College

Rabbi David Winchester
(1898-1976)

By his grandson, Moshe Kaganoff, as told to Toby Klein Greenwald

Moshe Kaganoff was a young child when his grandfather died, but as the oldest grandchild he has special memories of his grandfather. His family and friends have filled in details over the years.

In 1929, when the Massacre took place, my grandfather, Rabbi David Winchester, was learning in the Hebron Yeshiva. He survived the Massacre and married in the late 1930s. He was relatively older by the time he and my grandmother had children—my uncle was born in 1939 and my mother in 1944.

He was a wonderful grandfather. He took me to many places, bought us gifts, and was very loving. Even though he died forty-three years ago, to this day there are many people who still remember him, including his former students.

My grandfather came to the Hebron Yeshiva as an older *bachur*. He was already a *talmid chacham* in *nigleh* and *nistar* [revealed and hidden aspects of the Torah], had *semichah* and was a *rav* in Springfield, Illinois. He was a very spiritual person who applied whatever he learned to himself. One year, while learning about the *Churban* and *kedushat* Eretz Yisrael, he was inspired to travel to Eretz Yisrael and learn in Hebron.

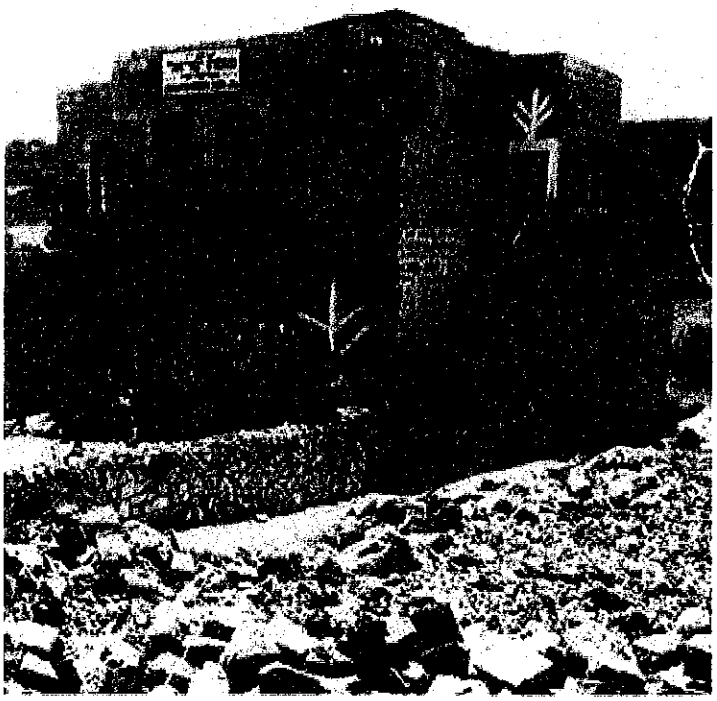
At one point, there was a very contagious typhus outbreak in the Yeshiva. It was decided to place the ill *bachurim* in quarantine; they were placed on the roof because the belief was that fresh air would be good for them. When the *rosh yeshivah*, Rabbi Moshe Mordechai Epstein, heard about this, he asked, "How do these *bachurim* eat?" The students told him, "Food is prepared for them, we knock on the door and leave the food there and the sick *bachurim* open the door and eat." The *rosh yeshivah* replied, "That's good for the *bachurim* who are well enough to get up, but what about those who can't get out of bed?" No one had an answer. The *rosh yeshivah* went up to the roof to assess the situation and he discovered my grandfather there, feeding the boys who couldn't get out of bed, despite the danger to himself. The next time my grandfather came to *shiur*, the *rosh yeshivah* stood up for him for the incredible *chesed* he was doing.

The Massacre in Hebron happened shortly after my grandfather arrived, perhaps within his first year there. I heard from Rabbi Yitzchak Sender of Chicago that during the pogrom, while the Arabs were stabbing Jews, my grandfather tried to save people. For his efforts, he was stabbed multiple times and left bleeding; he had many scars.

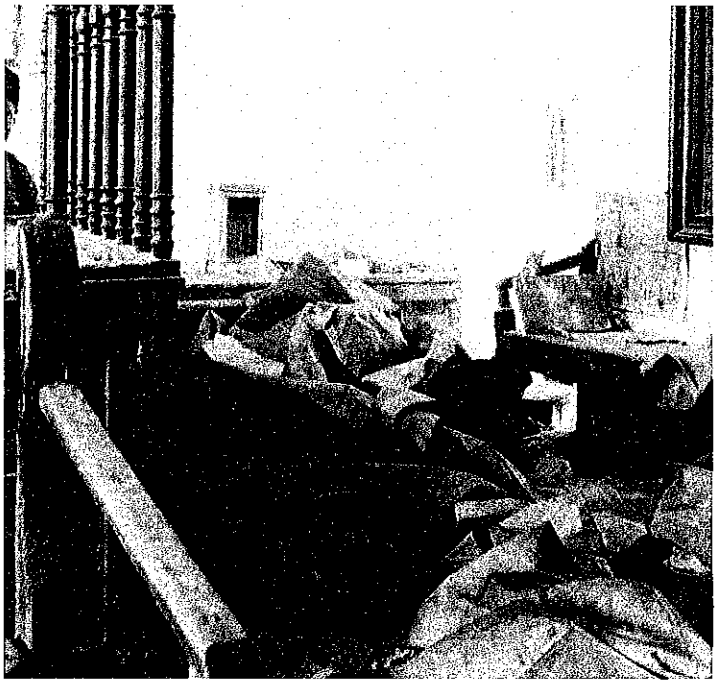
Even a few Arab children participated in the Massacre. My grandfather told us that when he was on the roof after he was stabbed, he

*Excerpt from an article by Rabbi Yitzchok Hutner, later to become the rosh yeshivah of Yeshiva Rabbi Chaim Berlin, in memory of those who perished in the Massacre. In it, he notes the especially heavy casualties suffered by the American students, presumably because the attack took place after the yeshivah term had ended when most other students had returned home (*Pachad Yitzchak: Iggerot uMichtavim, *pp. 257-259). Rabbi Hutner studied in Yeshivas Knesses Yisrael both when it was located in Slabodka and after it moved to Hebron. His life was spared as he was away for the weekend. He was selected to edit the* Sefer Zikaron *for the martyrs of the yeshivah. Translation by Rabbi Eliyahu Krakowski*

. . . A special place is occupied by the American contingent, who received a double portion of the cup of tragedy from which we drank at the end of 5629 [1929]. From the land of gold and silver they came to the City of the Patriarchs, in order to dedicate their best years to the formation of their characters. "What report did they hear so that they came?" A combination of two words: Slabodka-Hebron . . . They heard and they came, and they dedicated themselves with all their ability to the great task of improvement [*aliyah*], in order to return to their native land suffused with Torah and *yirah*, to bring light and warmth to their surroundings, to awaken the hearts of the young to follow in their path, with great dignity and great strength. More than once did it seem that with the smiles on their faces they must have recognized the bliss that would be their future life. So did they grow and flourish, blossom and bear fruit, on the fountains of Torah and *yirah*, flowers of grace, nobles of Israel in whom is our glory and our pride . . . And suddenly, in the middle of the sunshine of the day, the axe was waved, the feller had come up . . . There is no word in the mouth and no utterance on the tongue. "But, lo, O Lord, You know it altogether" (Psalms 139:4).



Yeshivas Knesses Yisrael in Hebron. Though many mistakenly think that the yeshivah building is the tall building bearing a sign with its name, in fact, the shorter, one-story building on the left is the yeshivah. The ground floor of the taller building served as the Beis HaMusar, a room designated for musar *study, while the top floor was the Alter of Slabodka's home.*
Courtesy of the Cohen family



A large Torah scroll lies in a jumbled heap on the floor of a shul in Hebron desecrated by Arab rioters.
Courtesy of the G. Eric and Edith Matson Photograph Collection/Library of Congress

-20-

pushed his body against the floor in order to stop the bleeding, and he pretended he was dead so they would leave him alone. A little Arab child called out in Arabic, "The *Yid* is alive!" and they went back up to stab him again.

After nearly bleeding to death, he remained in Bikur Cholim Hospital for six months recuperating. He felt he was saved by God for a reason, that Hashem had put him on a mission to give, so he did boundless *chesed* for the rest of his life. He would give his coat away to someone who needed it. Everything he had he gave away. Chicago's Hebrew Theological College, where he taught Gemara, began giving his paycheck directly to his wife so there would be food in the house. My grandfather lived just to give to others.

I remember one Pesach at home in the 1970s that was scary. At the Seder, my grandfather went into a trance and began describing the Massacre. He kept repeating the Arabic chant the attackers were yelling as they went from house to house looking for Jews. He was reliving it.

My grandfather was very *frum*. But he was a *nistar*. He didn't have a beard, he dressed modern, didn't wear his *tzitzit* out . . . He fasted every Monday and Thursday. He wanted to be known only as "Mr. Winchester," not "Rabbi." He was close to the Satmar Rebbe, Rabbi Yoel Teitelbaum, and when my grandfather passed away [the Satmar Rav said] he was one of the *lamed vav tzaddikim*. He was also close to the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson.

In the 1930s my grandfather was very upset about the fact that there was a lack of observance of *chalav Yisrael* in America. He used to go to a farm to supervise the milking and bring home *chalav Yisrael* milk, which my grandmother would boil in order to pasteurize it. He would go to the prisons to make sure that prisoners had kosher food.

There were homeless people in my grandfather's house; every *"nebbech"* in society was welcome. Our next-door neighbor [here in Israel] remembers that her father used to go to America to collect money and he would go to my grandfather. All my grandfather's money went to others; he gave it all away and had tremendous debts. It is well known that he would secretly drop off money and Shabbos and *yom tov* food packages at people's doorsteps and run away. Well before the existence of popular *chesed* organizations, he was a one-man *chesed* operation. In terms of his own behavior he was very *frum*, but he never imposed anything on anyone else. He treated other people only with *chesed*.

Toby Klein Greenwald, a regular contributor to Jewish Action, *is a journalist, playwright, poet, teacher, and the artistic director of a number of theater companies. She is the recent recipient of the Lifetime Achievement award from Atara-The Association for Torah and the Arts for her "dedication and contributions in creative education, journalism, theatre and the performing arts worldwide."*

Ant., 17:289ff.). Together with *Zadok the Pharisee, he was one of the founders of the "fourth philosophy," i.e., the Sicarii (Ant., 18:23–5). When Sulpicius *Quirinius, the governor of Syria, arrived in Judea in 6 C.E. to take a census, as the first step toward converting the country into a Roman province, Judah and Zadok urged the people to resist, maintaining that submitting to a census in Judea was a religious sin, the Jewish people being forbidden to acknowledge any other master but God (Jos., Wars, 2:118, 433). Judah's doctrine struck root among the embittered people, especially among the youth, and its consequences were visible in the period of the procurators, particularly in the last years before the Roman War and during the war itself.

Of his three sons, Jacob and Simeon both continued the zealot tradition and headed the rebels. Both brothers were arrested and crucified during the procuratorship of Tiberius Alexander (46–48 C.E.; Jos., Ant., 20:102). Their brother Menahem was one of the Jewish leaders in the Roman War. For the "fourth philosophy" founded by Judah the Galilean, see *Zealots and *Sicarii.

Bibliography: Schuerer, Hist, index, s.v. *Judas of Galilee* and p. 226 (for his sons); Klausner, Bayit Sheni, index, s.v. *Yehudah ha-Galili;* A. H. M. Jones, *The Herods of Judaea* (1938), 163, 225, 243.

[A.SCH./ED.]

JUDAH HALEVI (before 1075–1141), Hebrew poet and philosopher. Judah Halevi's own work constitutes his most important biographical source: his poems tell of his journeys in Spain and in other countries, of his relations with his contemporaries, of his position in society, and of his spiritual development. Many biographical particulars are also contained in his extant letters and in poems of his contemporaries, as well as in later writers (e.g., Ibn Ezra's commentary to the Pentateuch, and *Maḥberet he-Arukh* of Solomon Farḥon (1881)). Publications of letters from the Cairo *Genizah* have clarified uncertain aspects of the last period of Judah Halevi's life.

Biography. EARLY LIFE. The question of Judah Halevi's birthplace is still unsolved. Schirmann (*Tarbiz*, 10 (1939), 237–9) argued in favor of Tudela, rather than Toledo, as a birthplace of both Halevi and Abraham *ibn Ezra. The evidence relating to Halevi is supported mainly by an unclear reading in a Bodleian Ms. (Baron, Social, 4, 248 n. 34). Under Muslim rule, Judah Halevi, apparently from a wealthy and learned family, received a comprehensive education in both Hebrew and Arabic. His childhood years were spent during a peaceful period for the Jews of the region. At an early age he traveled to Andalusia with the intention of proceeding to the large Jewish center in Granada. Among the various communities he passed through on his way was Córdoba where he participated in a poetry writing contest (styled after those of the Arabs). He won the competition for imitating a complicated poem by Moses ibn Ezra, who invited Judah Halevi to his home. The two developed a close friendship and Judah Halevi spent some time with him in Granada, in an atmosphere of wealth and culture. There he also wrote his first important poems—primarily eulogies and poetical letters—and apparently some of his wine and love poems, which reflect his easy-going, hedonistic life during those years. Judah Halevi also became friendly with Ibn Ezra's brother, and was in contact with other great poets in Granada, Seville, and Saragossa.

With the coming of the Almoravides from Africa and their conquest of Muslim Spain (after 1090), the position of the Jews in Andalusia deteriorated, and Judah Halevi left Granada. For the following 20 years he traveled through numerous communities. In various places he was in contact

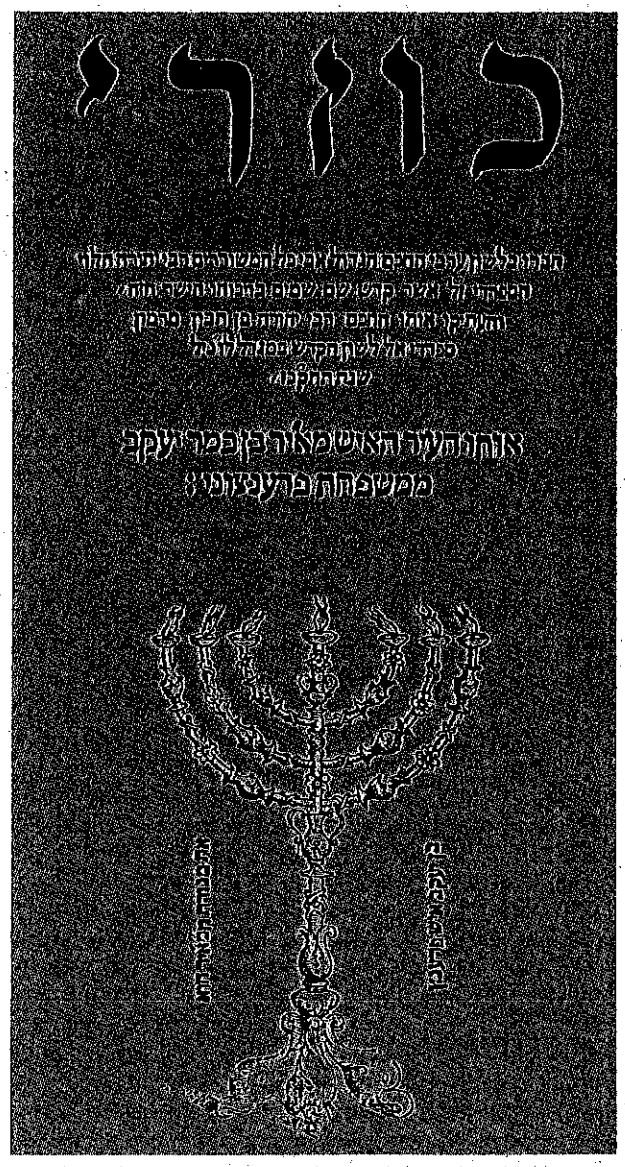


Figure 1. Title page of the *Kuzari* by Judah Halevi, 12th-century Hebrew poet and religious philosopher. The *menorah* is the printer's mark of Meir Parenzo, Venice, 1547. Jerusalem, J.N.U.L.

with Jewish and non-Jewish nobles and dignitaries (e.g., Joseph ibn Migash in Lucena and the vizier Meir ibn Kamniel in Seville). In Toledo he practiced medicine, apparently in the service of the king and his nobles. Like many of his fellow Jews at that time, he trusted that the status and influence of the Jewish nobles and community leaders who were close to the royal house would ensure security and peace for the Jews in the Christian lands. While in Toledo, however, he was disillusioned by the murder in 1108 of his patron and benefactor, the nobleman Solomon ibn Ferrizuel, who had achieved a high rank in the service of Alfonso VI. Judah left Toledo apparently before the death of Alfonso VI (1109) and again began to travel. His fame continued to spread, and the circle of his friends and admirers, to whom he wrote many poems, broadened greatly. Judah Halevi also had contact with the Jewish communities in North Africa, Egypt, and Narbonne.

His financial situation was generally sound; it seems that he was only rarely dependent on gifts. Aside from his profession as a physician, he also engaged in trade, apparently with Jewish merchants in Egypt, and, in particular, with the great Jewish merchant, Abu Saʿīd Halfon ha-Levi of Damietta, who on one of his many travels came to Spain. Active in community affairs, too, he helped to collect money for the ransom of captives.

-22-

FRIENDSHIP WITH ABRAHAM IBN EZRA. Of all his ties with various people, Judah Halevi's friendship with Abraham ibn Ezra was especially close and long-lasting. Both wandered through the various cities of Muslim Spain, and at least once traveled to North Africa together. In his biblical commentaries, Abraham ibn Ezra quotes Judah Halevi numerous times in matters of grammar, exegesis, and philosophy (e.g., Ex. 9:1; 20:1; Dan. 9:2). Various traditions maintain that the two were related by blood or by marriage. According to a later tradition (*Sefer ha-Yuḥasin* of Abraham Zacuto, ed. by A. Freimann, 1925) they were cousins, while another—no doubt legendary—mentioned in Abrabanel's commentary on the Torah and in the *Shalshelet ha-Kabbalah* of Gedaliah ibn Yahya (Cracow, 1596), asserts that Judah Halevi gave his daughter in marriage to Abraham ibn Ezra, despite the latter's poverty. On the basis of letters from the Cairo *Genizah*, however, it may be surmised that his son-in-law was Isaac, the son of Abraham ibn Ezra.

DECISION TO EMIGRATE TO EREẒ ISRAEL. Judah Halevi's decision to emigrate to Erez Israel, a gradual one, reflected the highest aspiration of his life. It resulted from a complex of circumstances: intense and realistic political thought; disillusionment with the possibility of secure Jewish existence in the Diaspora; intense longing for a positive, redeeming act; and the prevalent messianic climate, which so affected him that he once dreamt that the redemption would come in the year 4890 (1130 C.E.).

The decision was strengthened by his religious philosophy, developed at length in his book the *Kuzari* and in many of his poems. This philosophy maintained the unity which ensues from the relationship between the God of Israel, the people of Israel—to whom He chose to reveal His truth through His prophets—, Erez Israel—the "Gate of Heaven," the only place where prophecy is possible—, and Hebrew—the language of Israel. From this it clearly followed that the ideal existence for the Jews was attainable only in their own land. Throughout the philosophical and poetic work of Judah Halevi, as in his life, one can sense the intellectual effort to make other Jews conscious of this. In his philosophical work as well as in his poetry, Judah Halevi spoke out harshly against those who deceived themselves by speaking of Zion and by praying for its redemption while their hearts were closed to it and their actions far removed from it. Judah, however, understood the problems which emigration to Erez Israel posed for many people; he decided to realize his own *aliyah*—the educational act of an individual who also seeks personal redemption.

Great difficulties lay before him. The long journey by both sea and desert was perilous. He knew that he would encounter very difficult living conditions in Erez Israel, which was under Crusader rule at that time. Moreover, Judah Halevi had to counter the arguments of his friends who tried to deter him; he had to overcome his attachment to his only daughter and son-in-law, to his students, his many friends and admirers; and he had to give up his high social status and the honor which he had attained in his native land. He struggled deeply with his intimate attachment to Spain, the land of "his fathers' graves": at one time he had even looked upon Spain with pride and thankfulness, as a homeland for the Jews. These indecisions, which occupied him in the last period of his life, find expression in his "Poems of Zion," in the *Kuzari* (mainly in the fifth and final part), and in the *Genizah* letters which date from the same period. On the other hand, Judah Halevi was encouraged to make the journey by his friend Ḥalfon ha-Levi, whom he met in Spain in 1139. On the 24th of Elul (Sept. 8, 1140) Judah Halevi, accompanied by Isaac, the son of Abraham ibn Ezra, among others, arrived in Alexandria. Several months later he went to Cairo where he stayed with Ḥalfon ha-Levi. The scenery, pleasures, the admiration and honor generally accorded him everywhere, and the friendships he enjoyed all served to prolong his stopover in Egypt so that he began to fear that he would die before reaching his destination. His friends tried to convince him to remain in Egypt, claiming that Egypt was as important as Erez Israel, since the first prophecy as well as great miracles took place there. Finally, however, Judah Halevi boarded a ship at Alexandria, bound for Erez Israel, but its departure was delayed by inclement weather. From the elegies written in Egypt and from the *Genizah* letters which mention his death, it could be concluded that he died about six months after reaching Egypt and that he was also buried there. What was denied him in life, however, the famous legend, first mentioned in *Shalshelet ha-Kabbalah*, and later by Heinrich Heine in his *Hebraeische Melodien*, has supplied. It relates that he managed to reach the city of Jerusalem, but, as he kissed its stones, a passing Arab horseman (Jerusalem, in fact, was then under the Crusaders) trampled on him just as he was reciting his elegy, *"Ẓiyyon ha-lo tishali."*

Poetry. About 800 poems written by Judah Halevi are known, covering all the subjects commonly found in Spanish Hebrew poetry as well as the forms and artistic patterns of secular and religious poetry.

LOVE POEMS. His love poems, which number about 80, are addressed to a deer or gazelle, or—as marriage poems—to the two together. His short poems with internal rhyme, and his girdle poems as well as those of the *zajal* type, in which plays on sound and rhyme sometimes add a musical grace, attained great artistic perfection *("Ḥammah be-ad reki'a zammah," "Bi bi ha-ẓevi, bi adoni")*. Their content and form are those generally found in Arabic-Hebrew love poetry, such as the yearnings and travails of the lover, the cruelty of the beloved who delights in mocking her victims, her countenance shining from the darkness of a stormy night, and her "lethal" glances. Sometimes there is a particularly original description of feminine beauty, such as the one comparing the face surrounded by a red fall of hair to the setting of the sun which reddens the clouds of the horizon *("Leil gilleta elai")*; sometimes the light playful spirit unites with a surprisingly graphic description. A popular vein is discernible in the clear and simple style of the epithalamia. Interpretations of Judah Halevi's love poems vary: some assert that they reflect his personal experiences, while others maintain that they are simply artistic compositions, with accepted literary themes and descriptions. Following contemporary trends Judah Halevi also composed poems in praise of wine and its pleasures. A playfulness can also be felt in his entertaining riddles and in his various epigrams, which in the main are witty *("Lo nikreti")*.

POEMS OF EULOGY AND LAMENT. The largest number of Judah Halevi's secular poems deal with eulogy and friendship. A small portion of the approximately 180 were written for unnamed individuals but the majority for his famous contemporaries—poets, philosophers, religious scholars (e.g., Moses ibn Ezra, Judah ibn Ghayyat, Joseph ibn Ẓaddik, Joseph ibn Migash), nobles, and philanthropists. Their form is the *qaṣīda* and their language, rich and brilliant, with much embellishment. Splendid poetic descriptions, such as that of the night in the poetic eulogy composed for Solomon ibn Ghayyat *("Ayin nedivah asher tashut ke-soḥeret")*, or that of the garden, the wine, and the party of friends in a poem in honor of Isaac ibn al-Yatom *("Erez ke-yaldah ḥayetah yoneket")*, are attained. The opening is generally the most artistic part of the poem,

whereas the eulogy itself—which for the most part comprises the content—is usually pedestrian, lacking any mark of individuality, and tending to extreme exaggeration. The frank and sensitive poems within this type were written for those people, like the Ibn Ezra family, toward whom Judah Halevi felt deep affection and admiration.

The *qaṣīda* is also the form of most of the laments (approximately 45) on the deaths of many of his friends and acquaintances. His grief is combined with pessimistic meditation on omnipotent death, and on fate which strikes arbitrarily, and with exaggerated eulogies of the deceased—all in the contemporary style. The death of close friends, however, evoked a strong personal feeling which succeeded in investing the usual motifs with originality (*"Alei zot tivkeinah"* on the death of Moses ibn Ezra and his brother Joseph). As was common in this period, Judah Halevi combined a conscious intellectual structuring of the whole poem with an expression of genuine emotion, as exemplified in particular by the lament on the murder of Solomon ibn Ferrizuel at the hands of Christian mercenaries. Here the tragedy of the individual unites with the catastrophe of the people, and perplexity with rage against Christendom, which is cursed in this poem. Stylistically the openings of the laments are unique. The poems themselves, adapted to different mourning situations, are written in strophic forms free from the stylized contents and the representations of the classic laments. The influence of folk songs is clearly discernible in them; the ballad verse form is sometimes used, especially in dialogue between the living who stand by the grave and the deceased.

PIYYUTIM. Outstanding among the 350 *piyyutim* which Judah Halevi composed for all of the Jewish festivals is a large group, which may be entitled *"Shirei ha-Galut"* ("Poems of the Diaspora"). The realism of these poems clearly reflects the tragic events suffered by the Jewish people. Their main value, however, is to be found in the lyric fashioning of his own world by the poet, who identified deeply with the fate of his people and whose poetry afforded true expression to many others. The combination of stylistic aspects of Spanish-Hebrew poetry with the various characteristics of the ancient Hebrew style results in rare achievements of perfection and beauty. Job's lament, the cries of Lamentations and of the psalmist, and the bitter complaints of Jeremiah resound in these poems, together with the joy of the prophetic visions of redemption. By relating his personal experience, the poet particularizes the idea of suffering—heightened by imagery and descriptions drawn from ancient sources. In their rich language and imagery, in the force of their varied style, and in the magic effect of their sound patterns, these poems rank among the most outstanding Hebrew poetry of all time (e.g., *"Yonah nesatah al kanfei nesharim"*).

In discussing the problem of the "end of days," Judah Halevi uses the obscure eschatology of the Book of Daniel. He sometimes expresses depression arising from his fear at the delay of the redemption and of the danger of destruction of his people. In these *piyyutim* Judah Halevi expresses his yearning for redemption in an urgent demand for its realization and in rejoicing over its expected realization. Following an ancient midrashic motif, he allegorically expressed the pain of God's chosen and faithful people, whom He had seemingly forsaken to idolators, in terms of the anguish of a prince whose servants have captured him and whose father delays in rescuing him; in contrast God, the lover, promises to keep His covenant and assures His people of His love and the future redemption. In this section the poetry is replete with descriptions of love and spring taken from the Song of Songs. In these poems Judah Halevi takes a polemical stand against false belief; against the enticements of monks and apostates, the beloved, wounded and insulted, vows unconditional faithfulness to her lover (*"Yode'ei yegoni"*), proclaiming happiness in her pains which are but wounds of a lover (*"Me-az me'on ha-ahavah"*). He emphasizes the superiority of the Jewish religion, which alone is divinely revealed (*"Ya'alat ḥen mi-me'onah raḥakah," "Yekar im ha-shabbat tagdil"*). The poems are imbued with sometimes strongly contrasting emotions: loneliness and suffering; rejoicing in the light of the past and sufferings in the darkness of the present; despair and security; lust for revenge and yearning for redemption. The strong tensions between these opposites find imagistic expression in such figures as a dove escaping the hunter (the Jewish people carried, in the past, on the wings of eagles); the degradation of the slave (the lost kingdom); the loneliness of the exiled son (the essential chosenness of the people).

PERSONAL LYRIC POETRY. Along with *piyyutim* of a national nature on such biblical and historic themes as the description of the miracles in Egypt in the poems for Passover, the miracle of Purim, the *Avodah* for the Day of Atonement, are found lyric poems expressing personal religious experiences: *yozerot, kerovot, reshuyyot,* and mainly *seliḥot,* which are among the greatest in Jewish religious poetry after the Psalms. Judah Halevi expresses man's reverence for God, his dread of sin, and the desperate struggle against his carnal nature. He repeatedly admonishes the soul with harsh words, instills in it the fear of judgment and death, entices it with the idea of the reward of paradise, and deters it with the threat of the fire of hell. In this conflict God, a harsh judge, is too lofty to be approached and known. On the other hand, he writes of his happiness with God, which pervades his entire being; his powerful love of and devotion to God increase the light in his soul, mitigate its fear, and protect it from the power of evil. At that time, God is revealed to the heart. Traces of contemporary philosophical views can be discerned in these poems as well as influences of similar motifs in earlier Hebrew poetry. Exalted style is only rarely used (*"Yeḥav lashon ḥazot ishon," "Elohim el mi amshilkha"*); generally the poetic tone is gentle, humble, and quiet. Some poems confront the great paradoxes of religious experience; some combine deep meditation with emotional feeling (*"Yah, anah emza'akha"*); others occasionally border on the mystical as the poet ventures into areas of the ancient revelation in quest of his "lover," his God, "and no one answers."

SONGS OF ZION. The most famous of the poetic works of Judah Halevi are the *"Shirei Ziyyon"* ("Poems of Zion," or Zionides), approximately 35 in number. Their originality is evident in the very topic, which was at that period an uncommon one, but even more so in their varied and beautiful artistry. Several categories of these poems can be differentiated, although they were written over several decades, and contain recurring motifs and similar tones.

(1) The poems of longing for Erez Israel express the inner tension between love and pain, between the dream and the reality, and the effort required to bridge the West and East (*"Libbi be-mizraḥ," "Yefeh nof," "Elohai, mishkenotekha yedidot"*).

(2) The poetic disputations exhibit a strong intellectual base, overpowered by personal emotion. At times the controversy is an expression of the poet's own inner uncertainties. To Judah Halevi it seemed that for many life in Spain was a kind of slavery, a pursuit of worthless enticements, and a betrayal of God. He found true freedom in servitude to God and in subservience to His will, realized by his emigration to Erez Israel. Prior to his voyage, Judah Halevi lived it in his imagination and poetry, overcoming

deep fears in this way; he even taught himself to anticipate happily and excitedly the dangers of the future (*"Ha-tirdof ne'arut," "Ha-yukhlu pegarim"*). It was in his poems of dispute with others—in which Judah Halevi appears a vigorous opponent—that his doctrine on Erez Israel was developed and the national consciousness elevated to a hitherto unknown level. In the 12th century he was able, as a result of reasoning and clear political understanding, to argue that there is no secure place for the Jewish people except Erez Israel. As for its being desolate, it was also given that way to the forefathers.

(3) Some of the poems of the voyage were actually written aboard ship; others are imaginary descriptions composed before the journey, while still others were written after it. Important descriptive poems are structurally influenced by ancient biblical poetical forms (e.g., Ps. 107:23–32). They begin with a description of the world, but the subsequent descriptions diminish in perspective: the stormy Mediterranean Sea, the weak ship at its mercy, and finally the poet himself in prayer. Following that comes the final calm after the storm. The roaring of the waves dominate the rhythm and sound patterns. His prayer is identified with Jonah's and the roaring of the sea is consciously identified with the moaning of his heart. The best of his *"Shirei Ziyyon"* is *"Ziyyon ha-lo tishali"* ("Zion, will thou not ask the welfare of thine prisoners?").

> How shall it be sweet to me to eat and drink while I behold
> Dogs tearing at thy lion's whelps?
> Or how can light of day be joyous to mine eyes while yet
> I see in ravens' beaks torn bodies of thine eagles.

Numerous imitations and translations of this poem have appeared. By virtue of its inclusion (according to the Ashkenazi rite) in the *kinot* for the Ninth of Av, many generations have lamented the destruction of the Temple and dreamt their dream of redemption in the words of this poem. All aspects of the poem focus on Zion. The single rhyme of all the stanzas is יָּךְ, which produces a trance-like effect. Deep attachment to Erez Israel alone permeates the meaning of everything in the poem. The holy qualities of the land are specified at length with a lyric feeling which imaginatively transplants the poet to places of former revelation, prophecy, monarchy, and to the graves of the forefathers. In a unique poetic outcry, he expresses his grief at its destruction and his humiliation in subjugation:

> As the deep groans and roars beneath me
> Learning from my inmost fears,

He expresses the happiness of his hope in the quiet lines which end the poem. With these lines he blesses those who will be fortunate enough to see the real redemption in the dawn.

Judah Halevi's poems were widespread in manuscript from an early period. During his lifetime already they were known outside of Spain. From the beginning of printing many were included in *maḥzorim* and in collections of *piyyutim, seliḥot,* and *kinot*. From the 19th century scholars began to publish his poems from manuscripts in literary journals and periodicals, e.g., A. Geiger, in *Melo Hofnayim* (1840); S. H. Edelman in *Ginzei Oxford* (1850); J. L. Dukes in *Oẓar Neḥmad* (1857); S. D. Luzzatto in *Tal Orot* (1881) and in *Iggeret Shadal* (1882–84). In the various anthologies of Hebrew poetry much space was devoted to Judah Halevi's poems, e.g., H. Brody-K. Albrecht, *Sha'ar ha-Shir* (1905); H. Brody-M. Wiener, *Miḥar ha-Shirah ha-Ivrit* (1922, 1946², ed. A. M. Habermann); H. Schirmann, *Ha-Shirah ha-Ivrit be-Sefarad u-ve-Provence*, vol. I (1959).

The first scholar to publish collections of Judah Halevi's poems as individual books and to publish his complete diwan was S. D. Luzzatto. He received from Oxford a copy of the manuscript of the diwan made by Joshua Elijah bar-Levi (14th century) and published the poems in it in *Betulat Bat Yehudah* (Prague, 1864). He also began to publish the entire diwan but he only managed to publish the first section of it (Lyck, 1864). Afterward many collections of Judah Halevi's poems were published, completely or in part. The following may be mentioned: A. A. Harkavy, *Rabbi Yehudah Halevi, Kovez Shirav u-Melizotav*, 2 vols. (Warsaw, 1893–94); H. Brody, *Diwan Jehudah ha-Levi*, 4 vols., of which two are annotated (Berlin, 1894–1930); S. Bernstein, *Shirei Rabbi Yehudah Halevi* popular edition (with notes and an explanation; New York, 1945); Y. Zmora, *Kol Shirei Rabbi Yehudah Halevi*, 3

Figure 2. Title page of *Mī Khamokha* by Judah Halevi, containing the *piyyut "Adon Ḥasdekha,"* which is customarily said on the Sabbath before Purim. Venice, 1586. Cecil Roth Collection.

vols. (Tel Aviv, 1955). A commentary on the first section of Judah Halevi's diwan was published by Abdallah Saul Joseph, *Givat Sha'ul* (Vienna, 1923), edited by S. Krauss. Part of Judah Halevi's poetry has been translated and published either alongside the Hebrew original or by itself, e.g., by J. M. Sachs (in *Die religoese Poesie der Juden in Spanien*, 1845); by A. Geiger (*Divan des Castiliers Abu'l-Hassan Juda ha-Levi*, 1851); by Franz Rosenzweig (*Zionslieder*, 1933); N. Salaman (*Selected Poems of Jehudah Halevi*, 1924); into Dutch by S. Pinkhof (1929); Spanish by R. M. Alpersohn (1932); Italian by S. de Benedetti (1871); Hungarian by J. Patai (1910). [EH]

His Philosophy. Halevi's philosophy is contained in a single volume entitled *Kitāb al-Ḥujja waal-Dalīl fī Naṣr al-Dīn al-Dhalīl* ("The Book of Argument and Proof in Defense of the Despised Faith"). It was translated from Arabic into Hebrew in the middle of the 12th century by

-25-

ר' יהודה הלוי

ריא

לִבִּי בְמִזְרָח

לִבִּי בְמִזְרָח וְאָנכִי בְּסוֹף מַעֲרָב–
אֵיךְ אֶטְעַמָה אֶת אֲשֶׁר אֹכַל וְאֵיךְ יַעֲרָב?
אֵיכָה אֲשַׁלֵּם נִדְרִי וֶאֱסָרִי, בְּעוֹד
צִיּוֹן בְּחֶבֶל אֱדוֹם וַאֲנִי בֶּכֶבֶל עֲרָב?
יֵקַל בְּעֵינַי עָזֹב כָּל־טוּב סְפָרַד, כְּמוֹ
יֵקַר בְּעֵינַי רְאוֹת עַפְרוֹת דְּבִיר נֶחֱרָב!

My heart is in the East-
and I am at the edge of the West.
How can I possibly taste what I eat?
how could it please me?
How can I keep my promise
or ever fulfill my vow,
When Zion is held by Edom
and I am bound by Arabia's chains?
I'd gladly leave behind me
all the pleasures of Spain-
If only I might see
the dust and ruins of your Shrine.

My heart is in the east, and the rest of me at the edge of the west.
How can I taste the food I eat? How can it give me pleasure?
How can I keep my promise now, or fulfill the vows I've made
While Zion remains in the Cross's reign1, and I in Arab chains?
With pleasure I would leave behind all the good things of Spain,
If only I could gaze on the dust of our ruined Holy Place.

My heart is in the East, and I am at the ends of the West;
How can I taste what I eat and how could it be pleasing to me?
How shall I render my vows and my bonds, while yet
Zion lies beneath the fetter of Edom, and I am in the chains of Arabia?
It would be easy for me to leave all the bounty of Spain --
As it is precious for me to behold the dust of the desolate sanctuary.

Reader or Narrator: O Zion, will you not ask after the well-being of your captive[1] (sons)? For they the remainder of your flock (constantly) enquire after your welfare. Receive peace from every side, from west, east, north and south, from far and near. (Receive) also the greetings from the prisoners of hope,[2] who shed tears[3] like (mount) Hermon's dew, and yearn to shed them on your hills. When I bewail your humiliations I am (like) a Jackal, but when I dream of the return of your captivity then I am (like) a harp for your songs. My heart longs greatly for Beth-el, (the Temple), for Peniel and for Mahanaim[4] and all the Meeting-places of your pure ones. It is there[5] that the Divine Presence dwells in your midst, and your Creator has opened your gates to face[6] the gates of heaven. Indeed, naught but the glory of the Lord was your light, and no sun nor moon nor stars were (needed as) your luminaries. I would chose for my soul to be poured out (in prayer) on the very place where the spirit of God was poured out upon your chosen ones! You are the Royal House, and you are the throne of the Lord; how then come slaves to sit upon the thrones of your noble ones?[7] O that I might be a mere wanderer in the places where (the glory of) God was revealed to your prophets and your envoys! O who will make me wings that I could wend my way afar? I will make my own broken heart find its way amidst your broken ruins. I will fall upon my face to the ground, (for) I take much delight in your stones and show favour to your very dust.[8] Even when I stand at the graves of my ancestors, I behold in astonishment your choicest sepulchres in Hebron; [I would go through your woods and cultivated land, indeed I would stand on your rocky mountains and wonder at your Mount beyond (the Jordan).] (Or at) the mount of Abarim[9] and mount Hor,[10] where the two great luminaries that were your light and guide (are interred). The air of your land is the very life of your souls, and the dust of your earth is as flowing myrrh, and your river is

1) *i.e.* Israel, imprisoned in exile. 2) The captives who hope to be delivered, v. Targum on Zech. 9, 12. 3) Lit. *he sheds his tears.* 4) They were all Houses of God, as named by Jacob, v. Gen. 31, 13. 32, 3, a. 31. 5) *i.e.* in Zion. 6) So that prayers should ascend to heaven, *cf.* Jacob the Patriarch's statement (v. Gen.

לח) ע"י [יהודה בר שמואל הלוי] By Judah HaLevi (c. 1080–1145)

Reader or Narrator:

(1) צִיּוֹן, הֲלֹא תִשְׁאֲלִי לִשְׁלוֹם אֲסִירָיִךְ. דּוֹרְשֵׁי שְׁלוֹמֵךְ, וְהֵם יֶתֶר
עֲדָרָיִךְ: מִיָּם וּמִזְרָח וּמִצָּפוֹן וְתֵימָן, שְׁלוֹם רָחוֹק וְקָרוֹב, שְׁאִי
מִכָּל־עֲבָרָיִךְ: וּשְׁלוֹם אֲסִיר יִתְּקָוָה, נוֹתֵן דִּמְעָיו כְּטַל־חֶרְמוֹן,
וְנִכְסָף לְרַדְתָּם עַל־הָרָרָיִךְ: לִבְכּוֹת עֲנוּתֵךְ אֲנִי תַנִּים, וְעֵת אָחֳלוֹם
(2) שִׁבַת שְׁבוּתֵךְ, אֲנִי כִנּוֹר לְשִׁירָיִךְ: לִבִּי לְבֵית־אֵל, וְלִפְנִיאֵל מְאֹד
(3) יֶהֱמָה וּלְמַחֲנַיִם, וְכָל־פִּנְעֵי טְהוֹרָיִךְ: שָׁם הַשְּׁכִינָה שְׁכֻנָה לָךְ,
וְהַיְצִרְךְ פָּתַח לְמוּל שַׁעֲרֵי־שַׁחַק, שְׁעָרָיִךְ: וּכְבוֹד יְיָ לְבַד הָיָה
מְאוֹרֵךְ, וְאֵין שֶׁמֶשׁ וְסַהַר וְכוֹכָבִים מְאִירָיִךְ: אֶבְחַר לְנַפְשִׁי
(4) לְהִשְׁתַּפֵּךְ, בְּמָקוֹם אֲשֶׁר רִוַּח אֱלֹהִים שְׁפוּכָה, עַל בְּחִירָיִךְ: אַתְּ
בֵּית מְלוּכָה, וְאַתְּ כִּסֵּא יְיָ, וְאֵיךְ יֵשְׁבוּ עֲבָדִים עַלֵי כִסְאוֹת גְּבִירָיִךְ:
מִי־יִתְּנֵנִי מְשׁוֹטֵט, בַּמְּקוֹמוֹת אֲשֶׁר נִגְלוּ אֱלֹהִים לְחוֹזָיִךְ וְצִירָיִךְ:
מִי יַעֲשֶׂה־לִּי כְנָפַיִם וְאָרְחִיק נְדוֹד, אָנִיד לִבְתֵרַי לִבִּי בֵּין בְּתָרָיִךְ:
אֶפּוֹל לְאַפַּי עֲלֵי אַרְצֵךְ, וְאָרְצָה אֲבָנֶיךְ מְאוֹד, וַאֲחוֹנֵן אֶת־
עֲפָרָיִךְ: אַף כִּי־בְעָמְדִי עֲלֵי קִבְרוֹת אֲבוֹתַי, וְאֶשְׁתּוֹמֵם בְּחֶבְרוֹן
עֲלֵי מִבְחַר קְבָרָיִךְ: וְאֶעְבּוֹר בְּיַעְרֵךְ וְכַרְמְלֵךְ, וְאֶעְמוֹד בְּגִלְעָדֵךְ,
וְאֶשְׁתּוֹמֵמָה עַל־הַר עֵבָרָיִךְ: הַר הָעֲבָרִים וְהֹר הָהָר, אֲשֶׁר־שָׁם
(5) שְׁנֵי אוֹרִים גְּדוֹלִים, מְאִירָיִךְ וּמוֹרָיִךְ: חַיֵּי נְשָׁמוֹת אֲוִיר אַרְצֵךְ,
וּמְמַר־דְּרוֹר אַבְקַת עֲפָרֵךְ, וְנָפֹת צוּף נְהָרָיִךְ: יְנֹעַם לְנַפְשִׁי, הֲלֹךְ

(like) the drops of honeycomb. A rare delight were it for my soul to walk about naked and barefoot in the utterly desolate places where (once stood) your Mercy-seat. In the place where your Ark and your Cherubim[1] lie hidden, where your innermost chambers were established—I will cut off and cast away the glory of my Nazarite's hair,[2] and will curse the hour[3] that dishonoured your consecrated ones in an unclean land. How can food and drink be sweet to me when I must look on while dogs drag your young lions?[4] Or how can the light of day be pleasing for my eyes when I must see corpses of your eagles[5] in the mouth of ravens? Desist a little, (and go) gently, O cup of sorrow! For my body and soul are already full of your bitterness. When I recall Oholah,[6] I drink your foaming wine (of grief), and when I remember Oholibah,[6] I drain it to the very dregs.[7] O Zion, perfection of beauty, you acquired love and affection from of old,[8] and the souls of your companions are (still) with you. They (who) rejoice at your prosperity, are (now) in pain over your desolation, and weep over your ruins. From the pit of captivity they sigh (and gasp) towards you, and each one from his place makes obeisance towards your gates. The flock of your multitudes who were exiled and scattered abroad from mount to hill, have never yet forgotten your folds. They yet strive to ascend and grasp the branches of your palm tree, as they cling fast to your skirt. Can Shinar[9] and Pathros[10] compare with you for all their greatness, and can their vanity be compared to your Urim and Tummim?[11] To whom are your anointed ones to be compared, to whom your prophets, and to whom shall your Levites and choristers (be likened)? May all the kingdoms of idolatry be changed, and utterly pass away, but your power. (O Zion,) be for ever; your crown shall endure throughout the generations. Your God desired you for a dwelling-place, and happy is the man who makes his choice and comes near to dwell in your court. Happy is he that waits,[12] (and happy is he) that will succeed in witnessing the rising of your light, when over him shall break forth your dawn. Then shall he behold the welfare of your chosen ones, and he will exult in your rejoicing when you shall return to your youthfulness as of old.

1) v. p. 91, note 15. 2) A description of ancient mourning practice, *cf.* Jer. 7, 92, Mic. 1, 16, a. Job 1, 20. 3) Lit. *time*. 4) *i.e.* Israel. 5) The eagle is a figure of renovation of youth, *cf.* Ps. 103, 5. 6) v.p. 37, notes 5–6. 7) *i.e.* the cup in which is wine of a heady mixture, making those who drink it mentally and physically helpless, *cf.* M.D. on Ps. 75, 9. 8) *cf.* Pesik. Beshalach, 80a. 9) *i.e.* Babylon 10) *i.e.* Egypt. 11) *i.e.* the ornaments (Oracles) worn by the High Priest on his breast-plate, v. p. 147, note 4, a. A.S., p. 229, note 2. 12) *i.e.* those who wait for the Messiah, viz. those who are firm in their faith, despite their bitter trials, *cf* Sonc. P. Ed. on Dan. 12, 12.

(6) עָרֹם וְיָחֵף, עֲלֵי חָרְבוֹת שְׁמָמָה. אֲשֶׁר הָיוּ דְבִירֵיךְ: בְּמָקוֹם אֲרוֹנֵךְ
אֲשֶׁר נִגְנַז, וּבְמָקוֹם כְּרוּבֵיךְ. אֲשֶׁר שָׁכְנוּ חַדְרֵי חֲדָרֵיךְ: אָגוֹז
וַאֲשַׁלִּיךְ פְּאֵר נִזְרִי, וְאָקֹב זְמַן, חִלֵּל בְּאֶרֶץ טְמֵאָה. אֶת־נִזְרֵךְ:
אֵיךְ יֶעֱרַב לִי אֲכֹל וּשְׁתוֹת. בְּעֵת אֶחֱזֶה, כִּי יִסְחֲבוּ הַכְּלָבִים אֶת־
כְּפִירֵיךְ: אוֹ אֵיךְ מְאוֹר יוֹם, יְהִי מָתוֹק לְעֵינַי. בְּעוֹד אֶרְאֶה בְּפִי
עוֹרְבִים, פִּגְרֵי נְשָׁרֵיךְ: כּוֹס הַיְגוֹנִים, לְאַט הַרְפִּי מְעַט. כִּי כְבָר
מָלְאוּ כְסָלַי וְנַפְשִׁי, מִמְּרוֹרֵיךְ: עֵת אֶזְכְּרָה אָהֳלָה, אֶשְׁתֶּה [1]חֲמָרֵךְ,
(7) וְאֶזְכֹּר אָהֳלִיבָה. וְאֶמְצֶה אֶת־שִׁמָּרֵיךְ: צִיּוֹן כְּלִילַת יְפִי, אַהֲבָה
וָחֶסֶד תִּקְשָׁרִי מֵאָז. וּבָךְ נִקְשְׁרוּ נַפְשׁוֹת חֲבֵרֵיךְ: הֵם הַשְּׂמֵחִים
לְשַׁלְוָתֵךְ, וְהַכּוֹאֲבִים עַל־שַׁמָּמוּתֵךְ, וּבוֹכִים עַל־שִׁבָרֵיךְ: מִבּוֹר
שְׁבִי שׁוֹאֲפִים נֶגְדֵּךְ, וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוִים אִישׁ מִמְּקוֹמוֹ [2]אֶלֵי־נוֹכַח שְׁעָרֵיךְ:
עֲדָרֵי הֲמוֹנֵךְ, אֲשֶׁר גָּלוּ [3]וְהִתְפַּזְּרוּ מֵהַר לְגִבְעָה, וְלֹא שָׁכְחוּ גְדֵרֵיךְ:
הַמַּחֲזִיקִים בְּשׁוּלַיִךְ, וּמִתְאַמְּצִים לַעֲלוֹת וְלֶאֱחוֹז בְּסַנְסִנֵּי תְמָרֵיךְ:
שִׁנְעָר וּפַתְרוֹס הַיַּעַרְכוּךְ בְּגָדְלָם, וְאִם הֶבֶל יְדֻמוּ לְתַמֵּיךְ וְאוּרֵיךְ:
אֶל־מִי יְדֻמוּ מְשִׁיחַיִךְ, וְאֶל־מִי נְבִיאַיִךְ, וְאֶל־מִי לְוִיֵּיךְ וְשָׁרֵיךְ:
(8) יִשְׁנֶה וְיֶחֱלַף כְּלִיל, כָּל־מַמְלְכוֹת הָאֱלִיל, חָסְנֵךְ לְעוֹלָם. לְדוֹר
(9) דָּוֹר נְוָרֵיךְ: אוּךְ לְמוֹשָׁב אֱלֹהַיִךְ. וְאַשְׁרֵי אֱנוֹשׁ, יִבְחַר וְיִקְרַב
וְיִשְׁכֹּן בַּחֲצָרֵיךְ: אַשְׁרֵי מְחַכֶּה, וַיַּגִּיעַ וְיִרְאֶה עֲלוֹת אוֹרֵךְ, וְיִבָּקְעוּ
עָלָיו שְׁחָרֵיךְ: לִרְאוֹת בְּטוּבַת בְּחִירָיִךְ [4]וְלַעְלוֹ בְּשִׂמְחָתֵךְ, בְּשׁוּבֵךְ
אֵלִי קַדְמַת נְעוּרֵיךְ:

1) o.v. "חֲמָתֵךְ". 2) o.v. "לְמוּל נֹכַח". 3) o.v. "וְהִתְהַלְּכוּ". 4) o.v. "וְלַעֲלוֹת בְּשִׂמְחָתֵךְ".

Elie Wiesel - NIGHT

The cherished objects we had brought with us thus far were left behind in the train, and with them, at last, our illusions.

Every two yards or so an SS man held his tommy gun trained on us. Hand in hand we followed the crowd.

An SS noncommissioned officer came to meet us, a truncheon in his hand. He gave the order:

"Men to the left! Women to the right!"

Eight words spoken quietly, indifferently, without emotion. Eight short, simple words. Yet that was the moment when I parted from my mother. I had not had time to think, but already I felt the pressure of my father's hand: we were alone. For a part of a second I glimpsed my mother and my sisters moving away to the right. Tzipora held Mother's hand. I saw them disappear into the distance; my mother was stroking my sister's fair hair, as though to protect her, while I walked on with my father and the other men. And I did not know that in that place, at that moment, I was

parting from my mother and Tzipora forever. I went on walking. My father held onto my hand.

Behind me, an old man fell to the ground. Near him was an SS man, putting his revolver back in its holster.

My hand shifted on my father's arm. I had one thought —not to lose him. Not to be left alone.

The SS officers gave the order:

"Form fives!"

Commotion. At all costs we must keep together.

"Here, kid, how old are you?"

It was one of the prisoners who asked me this. I could not see his face, but his voice was tense and weary.

"I'm not quite fifteen yet."

"No. Eighteen."

"But I'm not," I said. "Fifteen."

"Fool. Listen to what *I* say."

Then he questioned my father, who replied:

"Fifty."

The other grew more furious than ever.

"No, not fifty. Forty. Do you understand? Eighteen and forty."

He disappeared into the night shadows. A second man came up, spitting oaths at us.

"What have you come here for, you sons of bitches? What are you doing here, eh?"

Someone dared to answer him.

"What do you think? Do you suppose we've come here for our own pleasure? Do you think we asked to come?"

A little more, and the man would have killed him.

"You shut your trap, you filthy swine, or I'll squash you right now! You'd have done better to have hanged yourselves where you were than to come here. Didn't you know what was in store for you at Auschwitz? Haven't you heard about it? In 1944?"

No, we had not heard. No one had told us. He could not believe his ears. His tone of voice became increasingly brutal.

"Do you see that chimney over there? See it? Do you see those flames? (Yes, we did see the flames.) Over there —that's where you're going to be taken. That's your grave, over there. Haven't you realized it yet? You dumb bastards, don't you understand anything? You're going to be burned. Frizzled away. Turned into ashes."

He was growing hysterical in his fury. We stayed motionless, petrified. Surely it was all a nightmare? An unimaginable nightmare?

I heard murmurs around me.

"We've got to do something. We can't let ourselves be killed. We can't go like beasts to the slaughter. We've got to revolt."

There were a few sturdy young fellows among us. They had knives on them, and they tried to incite the others to throw themselves on the armed guards.

One of the young men cried:

"Let the world learn of the existence of Auschwitz. Let everybody hear about it, while they can still escape. . . ."

But the older ones begged their children not to do anything foolish:

"You must never lose faith, even when the sword hangs over your head. That's the teaching of our sages. . . ."

The wind of revolt died down. We continued our march toward the square. In the middle stood the notorious Dr. Mengele (a typical SS officer: a cruel face, but not devoid of intelligence, and wearing a monocle); a conductor's baton in his hand, he was standing among the other officers. The baton moved unremittingly, sometimes to the right, sometimes to the left.

I was already in front of him:

"How old are you?" he asked, in an attempt at a paternal tone of voice.

"Eighteen." My voice was shaking.

"Are you in good health?"

"Yes."

"What's your occupation?"

Should I say that I was a student?

"Farmer," I heard myself say.

This conversation cannot have lasted more than a few seconds. It had seemed like an eternity to me.

The baton moved to the left. I took half a step forward. I wanted to see first where they were sending my father. If he went to the right, I would go after him.

The baton once again pointed to the left for him too. A weight was lifted from my heart.

We did not yet know which was the better side, right or left; which road led to prison and which to the crematory. But for the moment I was happy; I was near my father. Our procession continued to move slowly forward.

Another prisoner came up to us:

"Satisfied?"

"Yes," someone replied.

"Poor devils, you're going to the crematory."

He seemed to be telling the truth. Not far from us, flames were leaping up from a ditch, gigantic flames. They were burning something. A lorry drew up at the pit and delivered its load—little children. Babies! Yes, I saw it—saw it with my own eyes . . . those children in the flames. (Is it surprising that I could not sleep after that? Sleep had fled from my eyes.)

So this was where we were going. A little farther on was another and larger ditch for adults.

I pinched my face. Was I still alive? Was I awake? I could not believe it. How could it be possible for them to burn people, children, and for the world to keep silent? No, none of this could be true. It was a nightmare. . . . Soon I should wake with a start, my heart pounding, and find myself back in the bedroom of my childhood, among my books. . . .

My father's voice drew me from my thoughts:

"It's a shame . . . a shame that you couldn't have gone with your mother. . . . I saw several boys of your age going with their mothers. . . ."

His voice was terribly sad. I realized that he did not want to see what they were going to do to me. He did not want to see the burning of his only son.

My forehead was bathed in cold sweat. But I told him that I did not believe that they could burn people in our age, that humanity would never tolerate it. . . .

"Humanity? Humanity is not concerned with us. Today anything is allowed. Anything is possible, even these crematories. . . ."

His voice was choking.

"Father," I said, "if that is so, I don't want to wait here. I'm going to run to the electric wire. That would be better than slow agony in the flames."

He did not answer. He was weeping. His body was shaken convulsively. Around us, everyone was weeping. Someone began to recite the Kaddish, the prayer for the dead. I do not know if it has ever happened before, in the long history of the Jews, that people have ever recited the prayer for the dead for themselves.

"*Yitgadal veyitkadach shmé raba.* . . . May His Name be blessed and magnified. . . ." whispered my father.

For the first time, I felt revolt rise up in me. Why should I bless His name? The Eternal, Lord of the Universe, the All-Powerful and Terrible, was silent. What had I to thank Him for?

We continued our march. We were gradually drawing closer to the ditch, from which an infernal heat was rising. Still twenty steps to go. If I wanted to bring about my own death, this was the moment. Our line had now only fifteen paces to cover. I bit my lips so that my father would not hear my teeth chattering. Ten steps still. Eight. Seven. We marched slowly on, as though following a hearse at our own funeral. Four steps more. Three steps. There it was now, right in front of us, the pit and its flames. I gathered all that was left of my strength, so that I could break from the ranks and throw myself upon the barbed wire. In the depths of

my heart, I bade farewell to my father, to the whole universe; and, in spite of myself, the words formed themselves and issued in a whisper from my lips: *Yitgadal veyitkadach shmé raba.* . . . May His name be blessed and magnified. . . . My heart was bursting. The moment had come. I was face to face with the Angel of Death. . . .

No. Two steps from the pit we were ordered to turn to the left and made to go into a barracks.

I pressed my father's hand. He said:

"Do you remember Madame Schächter, in the train?"

Never shall I forget that night, the first night in camp, which has turned my life into one long night, seven times cursed and seven times sealed. Never shall I forget that smoke. Never shall I forget the little faces of the children, whose bodies I saw turned into wreaths of smoke beneath a silent blue sky.

Never shall I forget those flames which consumed my faith forever.

Never shall I forget that nocturnal silence which deprived me, for all eternity, of the desire to live. Never shall I forget those moments which murdered my God and my soul and turned my dreams to dust. Never shall I forget these things, even if I am condemned to live as long as God Himself. Never.

The barracks we had been made to go into was very long. In the roof were some blue-tinged skylights. The antechamber of Hell must look like this. So many crazed men, so many cries, so much bestial brutality!

There were dozens of prisoners to receive us, truncheons in their hands, striking out anywhere, at anyone, without reason. Orders:

"Strip! Fast! *Los!* Keep only your belts and shoes in your hands. . . ."

We had to throw our clothes at one end of the barracks.

troubles, he has to remember those Jews who lived through the inferno and persevered with perfect, pure faith; people who, in the midst of the hideous events which they experienced, continued to believe and persisted in their scrupulous observance of *mitzvot*. A person has to remember that each one of us is capable of being an Avraham *Avinu*—someone who believes, even if he is alone in his belief. Emil Fackenheim once said that to be a believing Jew means to be the last Jew on earth, and still to believe. Dr. Zerach Warhaftig recounted how, when he discovered Rav Yechiel Ya'akov Weinberg (author of *Seridei Eish*) at the end of the war, the latter asked him, "Are there any other Jews left in the world?" He had believed that he was the last, but nevertheless remained a Torah giant, firm in his faith.

Finally, we must be animated by a sense of mission, a feeling of duty towards God as well as towards those who sacrificed their lives. Those of us who remain on the battlefield after the great decimation of God's forces have to gird ourselves, take up their vision and carry it forward. The same responsibility they carried is now the lot of a much smaller community, and we therefore have to make much more of an effort. In the past, a person who built himself up was free to consider only himself and his own personal interests. In our generation, we have to see ourselves as part of *Kenesset Yisrael*, the Congregation of Israel, continuing in the path laid down by our fathers, lifting the baton that was struck from their hands. We are all, in a sense, survivors. We must always keep the interests of the community in mind and do our best to serve it. Moreover, our people's great and inspiring vision has in no way dimmed, and we must rededicate ourselves to pursuing its realization.

A survivor was once asked, "After the Holocaust you're still a Jew?" He immediately replied, "What else? Should I then become a gentile?" Let us not become entangled in meaningless questions of how they allowed themselves to be led like sheep to the slaughter, etc. What supreme heroism was demonstrated there! Jews sang on the way to the crematoria, "Joyful are we; how good is our portion, how pleasing our lot!" And it was not only the pious and righteous who proclaimed this.

In addition to devoting rededicated efforts to *Kenesset Yisrael* and the Torah of Israel, let us also take up the task they never had the opportunity to accomplish: building and developing the Land of Israel. Anyone who emerges from Yad Vashem experiences profound depression—and quite understandably so. But when you emerge and see the hills of Judea and Jerusalem rebuilt, you can take some comfort. We should not attempt to do an "accounting" and say that this is God's compensation to us for the Holocaust. The State of Israel is not the solution to that problem but rather an opportunity for us to fulfill our mission. It is not an answer but rather a challenge and a destiny, and our responsibility is to work towards its realization!

Translated by Kaeren Fish

RAV AHARON LICHTENSTEIN