



Tisha B'Av: Mourning Jerusalem

Tisha B'Av, the day of the destruction of the holy Temple in Jerusalem 2,000 years ago, is the saddest day on the Jewish calendar and is observed as a communal fast day.

Many wonder why in the world we still hold onto this observance today. Have you been to Jerusalem lately? Jerusalem is a huge thriving city of close to one million people, pulsating with energy and constantly expanding. The apartments' prices there are comparable to those in Manhattan buildings. Isn't it time, then, that we acknowledged all this and discontinued the Tisha B'Av observance?

To put the answer into perspective, I will use an analogy from far out in left field.

Though we all may have heard of it, I doubt that any of us has ever actually attended an Irish wake. Allow me to describe it. The casket, containing the carefully-coifed and impeccably-dressed body, is situated in the living room, and as the invited guests enter they are escorted to view the deceased and make some perfunctory comments. Then they continue to the dining room for sumptuous food and drinks and to reminisce about the life of the deceased with members of the family and friends with much crying and laughter. True or not, it is reputed that the comments made upon viewing the deceased often include "he looks great", "he never looked better", and so forth. Indeed, these remarks are probably quite true. In the non-Jewish world the undertakers are able to use remarkable techniques to make a deceased person look really good. My question is, if that is the case, why do the relatives cry during the wake? He never looked so good! The answer, of course, is that he may look great, but that doesn't change the fact that he is dead, and this is what really matters.

What is the real significance of the city of Jerusalem? In the Book of Exodus G-d commands us, "Build for Me a sanctuary and I will dwell in them." In Deuteronomy the Torah states, "And the place that G-d your L-rd will choose to rest His presence there, there you shall bring all that I have commanded you." When the Temple stood in all its glory in Jerusalem, it was the place where one directly experienced the actual presence of the Almighty. This was no less vivid than experiencing the contrast between a living person and one who is deceased. Can you imagine what a difference it would make in your life if you were to actually experience G-d in such a way? There would be no more doubts, questions, or struggles (internal or external, posed by the nations of the world) – just the overwhelming and inspiring presence of the Almighty Himself.

The size and vitality of the city of Jerusalem and its huge diverse population are wonderful gifts that our generation has been given, but they cannot compare to experiencing the presence of G-d and all that flows from it.

This is the loss we mourn. And we will continue to mourn it until such time as G-d in His abundant mercy chooses to bring His righteous redeemer, Moshiach.

(by Rabbi Shmuel Kaplan)

Enough is Enough

Sefer Devorim begins with Moshe rebuking the Jews for their shortcomings during their 40-year trek through the desert. **In an effort to preserve the honor of the Jews, Moshe Rabbeinu hints to some of their past sins by mentioning only the location of the place where they sinned,** "The Red Sea, between Paran and Tofel and Lavan and Hazereth." These words refer to places where the Jews sinned in the desert. **But then Moshe adds one more place, "Di Zahav."**

Rashi explains that this is a reference to the sin of the Golden Calf, and "Di Zahav" means "Enough gold." The Gemara in Brachos tells us that Moshe, in an effort to defend the Jews, told Hashem that the Jews were not completely at fault for the sin of the Golden Calf because "You gave them so much gold, until they said 'enough.'" The abundance of gold caused them to sin.

There is still a troubling detail. We know the famous adage of the sages, "One does not die with even half of his desires fulfilled," and "One who has one hundred desires two hundred." **How is it that the Jews in the desert were satisfied with the gold they received?** Why did they say, "Enough"?

(continued on the other side)

A grandson of Rav Michel Yehuda Lefkowitz zt"l, a Rosh Yeshiva of Ponovezh in Bnei Brak, bought a gift for his grandparents – a beautiful mirror nameplate for their front door, completely customized with the Hebrew name “Lefkowitz” engraved – a standard household ornament in Israel. However, a few weeks went by and the front door remained bare. Rav Lefkowitz did not put up the nameplate.

He finally approached his grandfather and asked him why he is not using the nameplate. Rav Lefkowitz hesitated before finally admitting the truth. “Our apartment is old,” he began, “And the front door has seen better days. If I put up the nameplate, it is only a matter of time before someone will suggest that I replace the door. After all, the nameplate must match the décor of the apartment. Once the door is replaced, someone will suggest that the interior walls need to be repainted. One thing will lead to another, and before long, I will be living in a completely redecorated apartment! I’d rather live a much simpler life with the least amount of distractions, and serve Hashem with all my abilities.”

My grandfather, Rav Binyamin Kamenetzky, zt"l offers the following explanation. **Before the evil inclination, yetzer horah, became a part of man’s inner being, man was pure.** He was able to withstand the pressure and desires for physical pleasure and possessions. But after Adam sinned by eating from the Tree of Knowledge, the evil inclination became part of him, and the infamous daily struggle of man began.

When the Jews received the Torah at Mount Sinai, and Hashem revealed Himself with all his glory, they reached such a lofty spiritual level, that their impurity ceased (“paska zuhamasan”). The evil inclination left their bodies, and only affected them externally. **When they took the Egyptians’ gold and riches from the shores of the Sea of Reeds, they were able to control controlled themselves.** They took what they needed and then said, “Enough!”

During the time when we mourn the two Batei Mikdash – both destroyed on Tisha B’av, we too can look around at the world we live in, and see how fortunate we are to have what we need. At this point in history, when Hashem is not dwelling in His Beis Hamikdash, do we really need one more golden nugget? We can also sacrifice for Hashem, and say, “Enough”

(by Rabbi Shmuel Kamenetzky from Project Genesis at www.torah.org)

Dr. Shimon and Mrs. Chaya Deutsch are sponsoring Kiddush this Shabbat in memory of Shimon's mother, **Rivkah bas Meyer**, whose yahrzeit is the 6th of Av – Sunday night and Monday.



Yahrzeits This Week:

Binyomin Gutman	6 Av - Sunday night / Monday	for mother	Ahuva bas Mordechai HaLevi
Steven Deutsch	6 Av - Sunday night / Monday	for mother	Rivkah bas Meyer
Joseph Zakar	10 Av - Thursday night / Friday	for mother	Chaya Rivka bas Yaakov

DAVENING AND SHIURIM SCHEDULE

Friday, 7/17 — 3 Av

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.

Shabbat, 7/18 — 4 Av

Shacharit 9:00 a.m.
Sof Z'man Kriat Shema — 9:31 a.m.
Minchah — 8:00 p.m.
Shiur — after Minchah
Shkiah — 8:31 p.m.
Ma'ariv — 9:18 p.m.

Sunday, 7/19 — 5 Av

Shacharit — 8:00 a.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.

Monday, 7/20 — 6 Av

Shacharit — 6:50 a.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.

Tuesday, 7/21 - 7 Av

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 8:15 p.m.

Wednesday— Erev Tisha B'Av, 7/22 — 8 Av

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
Minchah — 5:30 p.m.
Fast Begins — 8:28 p.m.
Ma'ariv and Eichah — 9:00 p.m.

Thursday — Tisha B'Av, 7/23 — 9 Av

Shacharit — 9:00 a.m.
Kinos — Until 12:00 noon
Chatzos — 1:12 p.m.
Early Mincha — 2:00 p.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:55 p.m.
Fat Ends — 8:58 p.m.

Friday, 7/24 — 10 Av

Shacharit — 7:00 a.m.
Shabbat Candles — 8:07 p.m.
Minchah / Ma'ariv — 7:00 p.m.