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To: Parsha@YahooGroups.com
From: crshulman@aol.com

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From: Josh Rapps [SMTP:jr@caldera.com]
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To: mj-ravtorah@shamash.org
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kinos 76_1

Explanation/Commentary on Kinot by HaRav Soloveichik ZTL
[Tisha B'Av, 1976]

Kaddish is usually recited after Krias HaTorah. On Tisha B'Av, we don't say Kaddish till after the kinot. On Shabbos to Mussaf though we say Kaddish before the Tefilah but it is still associated with the Krias HaTorah. On Monday and Thursday mornings we say Kaddish immediately after Krias HaTorah. In short, Krias HaTorah requires Kaddish. To Mincha on a Tannis Tzibbur we don't say Kaddish before the Haftarah. We rely on the Kaddish that is recited after returning the Sefer Torah to the Haychol. Tisha B'Av morning is unique in this regard, in that we do not recite Kaddish till after Uva L'Tzion after Kinot. Why?

The Rav said that the Haftarah of Yirmiyahu is one of Tzidduk Hadin and rebuke. It also introduces a new concept unknown without the Haftarah. This concept redefined the concept of Tisha B'Av. According to the Talmud, Tisha B'Av is a Tannis Tzibbur. But there were many Tannis Tzibbur in Eretz Yisrael, though not in Bavel. Tisha B'Av was THE Tannis Tzibbur in Bavel. For instance we begin the fast the night before, Laylo Kyomo. We start a little before Shkiah. Tisha B'Av also has the 5 Inuyim. There is a third trait of Tannis Tzibbur: Tefilas Neilah. People make mistakenly think that Neilah applies only to Yom Kippur. However Neilah is associated with Tannis Tzibbur. The Ramban apparently says in Toras Haadam that we should pray Neilah on Tisha B'Av. However our custom is not to say Neilah. Why not? Neilah goes hand in hand with Techina, supplication. The Gemara (Rosh HaShonah 17a) says that Hashem told Moshe the secret of the 13 midos. On a fast day we say Selichos and we recite the 13 midos since supplication applies and Selichos is the medium. However on Tisha B'Av we don't offer any supplication. We even omit the daily Tachanun.

Tisha B'Av is called Moed. Moed does not mean Yom Tov, but rather a set day of Avaylus. The characteristic of Tisha B'Av is different that all other Tannis Tzibbur. On all other public fast days the focal point of our prayers is Techina, 13 Midos. But Tisha B'Av is a day of Avaylus. The verse Sasam Tefilasi applies. Hence we don't even say Tiskabel in Kaddish. We suspended saying it the night of Tisha B'Av till Mincha on the day of Tisha B'Av. We would not say a Mi Sheberach for a sick person because of Sasam Tefilasi. We recite only what we say daily, Siduro Shel Yom, but we don't add any additional supplication because Tisha B'Av is removed from supplication. On Tisha B'Av the Mitzvaso Shel Yom is recital of Kinot. On Yom Kippur, a day of Tachanun and Teshuva the Mitzvaso Shel Yom is recitation of Selichos. It is a day of Tachanun, K'hodata Le'anav Mikedem. Even though Tisha B'Av has no Kedushas Hayom, it still has a Mitzvas Hayom of reciting Kinot.

Ko Amar Hashem Kiru Lamkonenos etc. The Haftarah on Tisha B'Av is a Kiyum Kinot, it is one long Kinah. We recite Kinot at night in the form of Eicha. In the Mesorah, Eichah is called Kinot. We sit on the ground on Tisha B'Av not because of Avaylus. (If Avaylus was the

obligation to sit on the ground, we would have to do so all day.) Tisha B'Av is Yom Kinah as well as Yom Avaylus. For instance one should not do work on Tisha B'Av. After Chatzos one may do work. The Issur Melacha of Avaylus is very different than the prohibition against working on Tisha B'Av. The Issur on the mourner is dependent on the day of Avaylus and is a straight Issur Melacha. On Tisha B'Av, the crux of the prohibition is against any work that takes time, [that takes one away from focusing on the Kinot and destruction]. The mourner is enjoined from all types of work, complex or simple. The obligation to recite Kinot is the mechayev against work, not avaylus. Both are Kiyum Blev, fulfilled via the intent and state of heart/mind.

There are certain restrictions and abstentions that apply to Tisha B'Av that are beyond regular Avaylus. There is no pause between the reading of Eicha and reciting of Kinot at night and the same applies by day. Rabbi Eliezer Hakalir usually begins his Kinot with the word Eicha. Eicha is the characteristic word of Kinot. The word Eicha appears sparingly in Tanach. And typically is accompanied by the tune of lamentations. One is normally enjoined from asking questions like Eicha, how did this terribly calamity befall us. After all, one is obligated to praise Hashem in bad times just like he is obligated to in good times. The Jew does not ask why or complain. The Gemara tells the story of the tragic death of Rabbi Chanina Ben Tradyon and how Chazal and his family accepted the story of his death and said HaTzur Tamim Paalo. They had no right to ask why. But on Tisha B'Av we have special permission to ask why, Eicha. Job was punished for raising questions. Yet we have a special license on Tisha B'Av granted us by Yirmiyahu's writing of Eicha. He was preceded by Moshe, who used the word Eicha in Parshas Devarim.

The story of Moshe and the spies is directly connected to the destruction of the temple. Had the people been more respectful and willing to listen to Moshe, there would not have been an incident with the spies and Jewish History would have unfolded much differently. The Mitzvah of Kinot is to ask questions. "Why has this happened to us?". Kinot are an extension of the readings from Tanach: Eicha at night and the Haftarah in the morning.

Megilas Esther is read at night and day, but the reading by day, according to Kabbalah, is the more important one. Ruth and Shir Hashirim and Koheles are read only by day. Why is Eicha only read at night (although some have a tradition to read it by day as well)? Because in the morning I don't need Eicha to introduce Kinot, I have another introduction to Kinot, the Haftarah. Eicha is the introduction to the Kinot recited at night. In the morning, we immediately start Kinot after we conclude the blessings for the Haftarah.

Th Gemara (Megila 31a) tells us that in the time of the Tanaim and Beis Hamikdash, they used to read the story of the spies from Shlach on Tisha B'Av. Now the tradition is to read Ki Tolid Banim. What is the connection between Ki Tolid and Tisha B'Av? I could well understand the connection to Shlach, but what is the connection for Ki Tolid?

Ki Tolid talks about 3 things: 1) exile and destruction. The Torah expresses its intolerance on the part of Eretz Yisrael to sin and sinners. 2) Teshuva, repentance. And you shall seek Hashem with all your hearts and you will find Him. No matter how far removed we may feel from Hashem, the road back to Hashem is always open. We don't mention Teshuva much in Kinot, but it is an important theme. The Torah foretells that the Jew will do Teshuva, but he will be driven by some mysterious force to do Teshuva. The Rambam says that the Torah promised that at the end of exile, all Jews will do Teshuva, spontaneously and be driven back to Hashem. 3) The Torah promises that we will return to Hashem forever. The first time the Jews entered Eretz Yisrael it was for a limited time. The same was true of the second commonwealth. But the Torah promises that eventually there will come a time when our association with the land will be permanent.

The content and theme of the Haftorah is pure Kinos and destruction. It expresses the utter despair without mention of consolation. While we normally end a Haftorah of rebuke with a positive statement, we don't on Tisha B'Av morning. The concluding verses are rebuke, not consolation. Tisha B'Av is the exception to the rule. Kinos means utter despair, there is no room for consolation within them or the Haftorah that introduces them. The Krias Hatorah tells us to continue to hope, that ultimately Hashem will return us to our rightful station. So Tisha B'Av is both a day of despair and churban for the Jewish nation as told in Haftorah and Kinos, but we also have faith in the ultimate redemption of the Jewish nation, as told in the Krias Hatorah.

Shavas Suru implies an abrupt unexpected stop. Hakalir wants to express that the people were forewarned that the churban would come and all would be destroyed. The Navi tells us of the story of Yirmiyahu, the prophet of the Churban, who went to purchase land from his uncle to symbolize that they would return to the land. Chazal say that people would be able to see the smoke of the Mizbeach rising from a distance. When he returned he lifted his eyes to see the smoke rising from the Mizbeach. One of the miracles in the Bays Hamikdash was that the wind never dispersed the rising smoke from the altar. He saw that the winds were now dispersing the smoke. He understood that the destruction was inevitable and fast approaching. He warned the people, told them about the imminent destruction, yet it suddenly was upon him and them. This is implied by Shavas.

What are the main motifs of Zchor Hashem Meh Hayah Lanu? What is Galus to Chachmay Hakaballah? It is Schi Umaos, being treated like refuse and scum by the other nations. This suggests that there was Chilul Shem Shamayim. Hashem's great name was desecrated because there was Chilul Shem Yisrael. Hashem is Kvyachol, in Galus when the Jews are in exile. If they are treated with contempt, then Kvyachol, then so is Hashem. The Midrash comments on the verse Kumah Hashem Vyafutzu Oyvecha: does Hashem have enemies? This refers to the enemies of the Jewish people, Hashem's chosen nation. For anyone who attacks the Jewish People also attacks Hashem. An enemy of the Jewish People is an enemy of G-d.

Chazal tell us that when the first Bays Hamikdash was destroyed, all the nations entered the Mikdash to loot it. Amon and Moav didn't want any of the gold or valuables, rather they wanted to vilify the Jewish people as liars for preaching against idolatry while they worshipped the 2 cherubim in their Holy of Holies. This was the ultimate desecration of the Jewish People and the name of Hashem. Our enemies were not content to destroy the people. They also wanted to contradict and deny the notion that the Jewish People are chosen by G-d. No matter how accepted the Jew may be in corporate and social circles, there is always a distrust of the Jew. Basically the nations of the world dislike us. Our presence irritates them. There is a certain gap and tension between Jew and Umos Haolam that keeps us separate. The motif of Tisha B'Av is the tension between Jew and non Jew.

Karasi Lmahavay Hayma Rimuni, I called to my friends and they deceived me. We are also interested in Kiddush Shem Shamayim and Chilul Shem Shamayim. As the scope of the holocaust unfolded, the tragedy of the 6 million was amplified by the desecration of the name of Hashem and the Jewish people. Non-Jewish missionaries would exult in their arguments that G-d has rejected the Jewish People. Medinas Yisrael was the major answer to the missionaries who said that the Jews will be completely destroyed. They can't abide by the rejuvenation of the Jews in Israel and Jerusalem. The approach of the church to Israel and Jewish control of Jerusalem has been very negative because it contradicts their viewpoint that the Jews have been deserted. Such statements against the Jews was and is one of the most visible forms of desecration of G-d's name. Churban is so tragic because it slowed the

realization of the great eschatological promise and ultimately led to the desecration of the name of Hashem.

Chazal tell us that 5 tragedies occurred on Tisha B'Av: the spies returned from surveying the land and caused the people to instigate against entering Eretz Yisrael, both temples were destroyed, the fall of Beitar, the death of Bar Kochba and Jerusalem was plowed under in an attempt to blot out the memory of the existence of the temple. When Hakalir talks about Churban, he mentions both temples as well as the loss of the 10 tribes. Chazal tell the story of the exiles who passed by the children of Ishmael who fed them salty foods and gave them empty pitchers that led to their deaths. We don't know which temple is referred to here. It could be that this pattern occurred in both destructions. Chazal are interested in mentioning ALL the Churbanos because all their tragedies identify with this date.

The last motif is the recognition of the death of Yoshiahu Hamelech. Why was so much of Eicha (nearly 25%, the chapter of Eicha Yuam Zahav) devoted to the death of Yoshiahu? Because Chazal were telling us that not only must we cry for the collective death and holocaust, but we must also take note of the death of great individuals. It is as deservng of lamentation as the destruction of the larger community.

In the Kinah of Aadeh Ad Chyg Shamayim, we have the phrase Adveh Bchal Leiv Lhamtzayhu. This is reminiscent of Selichos and the chapter of Zchor Lanu Bris Avos that concludes with Himatzay Lanu Bbakahshasaynu. We say this every time we recite Selichos, but what do these 3 words mean? The simple translation is: make Your divine presence be known to us. The Chasam Sofer says on the verse Vraisa Es Achoray Ufany Lo Yayrau that many times we don't recognize Hashem's presence when a tragic incident occurs. On the contrary we ask questions. Why did this happen to us? Why must we suffer for so long? We don't understand at the time of the incident. But in retrospect, sometimes many years later, we see the hand of Hashem was there all along.

Hashem told Moshe that He will place him the crevice of the stone. Man's vision is obscured at the time of an incident by the inflexible rock. Only in retrospect, Achoray, can we recognize the presence of Hashem. Himatzay Lanu means whenever we search for You, and we search for You so frequently, make Your presence known immediately. I don't want to wait till later. Hashem, You have promised that to us (in the Krias Hatorah that we have just read on this day of Tisha B'Av), the Torah promises that at the end of exile, Batzar Lcha, Hashem will return to the Jew immediately when the Jew starts to look for Hashem. Bchal Leiv Lhamtzayhu means I am lonely for Him. I want to announce His presence to other people. We can't wait even a day because one day in the eyes of Hashem is 1000 years in physical/human time.

The Torah tells us that there is one stipulation: we must search for Hashem with all our heart and soul. The Kinah describes how I am lovesick for Hashem. I can't be alone and separate from Hashem. Sin is the cause for the separation between Hashem and man. Had Adam not sinned, the Shechina would have dwelled among us, we would be able to point to the Shechina. Adam lost Hashem and then the Jewish people lost Him again with the sin of the golden calf. If not for that sin our history would have been very different.

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