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INTERNET PARSHA SHEET ON DEVARIM – TISHAH B'AV - 5785

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from: **Rabbi Yaakov Bernstein** <yaakovb@torah.org> to:
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date: Jul 31, 2025, 10:02 PM
subject: **Haaros - Yiras Shomayim and the Churban**
Yirei Shomayim in Halacha

Rav Rosenberg raises the question (2), "Why does the Shulchan Aruch (O.C. 1:3) say that it's fit for a yirei shomayim (one who fears heaven) to be distressed over the Churban? Shouldn't this apply even if one is not a yirei shomayim?" He refers us to the Chidushei Harim in Sefer Haz'chus (daf beis in the current edition):

"It's fit to be worried about this alone — that he's not truly distressed over the Churban. It's a sign that he's 'outside' until Hashem has mercy on him to bring him in to Klal Yisrael — to feel their lacking and rejoice over their simcha."

The Sefer Ohel Moshe (3) explains further. The yirei shomayim are concerned throughout the year about the Churban. We have halachos during the three weeks, but if a person only keeps these laws, this is on the outside, only external. The yirei shomayim are deeply, internally concerned about Kavod Shomayim.

Let's pay attention not only to our personal losses, but to the loss for Hashem — the Galus of the Shechina. Rav Wolbe writes, "The Churban of the Beis Hamikdash is the Churban of the world. There is no corner of purity, no place of Kedusha for Hashem's Presence to reside... someone lacking Yiras Shomayim doesn't even know what to mourn for..." (4)

See further (5), "One who senses the Galus of the Shechina within himself, is pained that he cannot cleave to Hashem properly and feels the Churban Hamikdash in his heart... this is already solving the Galus of the Shechina in his heart..."

1. Avodas Yemei Bein Hamitzarim, p. 45. 2. Ibid., p. 34, in the name of the Chidushei Harim. 3. Inyanei Hamikdash V'hagalu, pp. 54-55.

4. Alei Shor, quoted in Avodas Yemei Bein Hamitzarim, p. 34.

5. Rav Dessler, Ibid. p. 37

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from: Ira Zlotowitz <Iraz@klalgovoaah.org>

date: Jul 31, 2025, 7:01 PM

subject: Tidbits • Parashas Devarim - Chazon & Tishah B'Av 5785 in Memory of Rav Meir Zlotowitz ZTL

Parashas Devarim - Chazon • August 3rd • 8 Av 5785

A Shalom Zachor, Aufruf or Kiddush may be held. After chatzos on Shabbos some are stringent to study only Tishah B'Av related topics, however, one may be lenient. Some say one should not take a stroll for pleasure after chatzos on Shabbos.

There is no Seudah Hamafsekes. Rather, a regular Seudah Shelishis is eaten in a non-festive manner. Extra guests should not be invited and many Shuls do not host the usual communal Seudah Shelishis. One should not verbalize that he is eating in preparation for the fast. Time release capsules (e.g. Kalei Tzom) may be taken on Shabbos.

Eating, drinking, anointing oneself, washing and marital relations are prohibited from shekiya onward, even though it is still Shabbos. Other restrictions, including sitting on a low chair, wearing non-leather shoes and removing Shabbos clothing, are delayed until tzeis hakochavim, as they are obvious displays of mourning. Bircas Hamazon may be recited after shekiya, although mayim acharonim should preferably be washed prior to shekiya. Baruch hamavdil is recited immediately after tzeis hakochavim. After baruch hamavdil, the common practice is to then change out of Shabbos clothes, and put on non-leather shoes before heading to shul (although some change their shoes in shul at the beginning of Maariv immediately following Borchu). The berachah of borei me'orei ha'eish is recited before Kinnos, while the remainder of Havdalah is recited on Motzaei Tishah B'Av. It is preferable for a woman to hear the berachah of borei me'orei ha'eish from a man; therefore, many make this blessing (after tzeis hakochavim) for women who are remaining at home, before heading out to shul. One who needs to eat on Tishah B'Av must recite Havdalah before eating; consult your Rav. The minhag is that a minor need not hear Havdalah prior to eating. One should not clean up after Shabbos until chatzos of the following day, unless one finds the mess unsettling. See Tidbits for Tishah B'Av 5785 for further information.

There is a dispute among the Poskim if one may take a regular hot shower this Friday, August 2nd, Erev Shabbos Chazon. Regardless, the shower should be taken as quickly as possible.

As meat may not be consumed during the Nine Days, one may not taste meat foods on Erev Shabbos. In the context of food preparation, one may taste the food but not swallow it (no berachah is recited in this case).

The haftarah of Chazon Yeshayahu is leined. It describes the nation's sins and the resulting tragic Churban and subsequent Galus. Many read it to the tune of Eichah. The Sefer Eretz Tzvi explains that this Shabbos is called Shabbos Chazon, Shabbos of Vision, as Hashem always keeps us in His line of vision. Although suffering may be meted out, we are never abandoned. Rather, divine retribution will ultimately be followed by our redemption. There is no Pirkei Avos this week due to Shabbos being Erev Tishah B'Av.

Tzidkas'cha is omitted at Mincha on Shabbos.

The prevalent minhag is to wait until Motza'ei Tishah B'Av to recite Kiddush Levana. The final opportunity is at 10:43 PM on Friday night, August 8th.

Daf Yomi - Shabbos: Bavli: Avodah Zara 45 • Yerushalmi: Pesachim 65 • Mishnah Yomis: Zevachim 6:5-6 • Oraysa (coming week): Moed Katan 13b-15b • Kitzur Shulchan Aruch: 124:21-125:End

Devarim: Moshe Rabbeinu begins his final days speaking to the Bnei Yisrael • Moshe reviews - in the manner of a veiled rebuke - the events of the past forty years, including: Klal Yisrael leaves Sinai • Judges were appointed to assist Moshe • Klal Yisrael reaches Kadesh Barnea • The incident of the Meraglim • The decree that this generation, including Moshe, would not enter the land • Klal Yisrael travels for 40 years • The history of the lands of Ammon and Moav • Sichon and Og are defeated • Reuven and Gad receive their portion East of the Yarden • Moshe encourages Yehoshua

Haftarah: The haftarah of Chazon Yeshayahu is leined (Yeshayah 1:1-27); this is the third and final haftarah of the series of the shalosh d'puranusa. The Navi bemoans the sins and the resulting downfall of the Jewish nation that led to the tragic destruction, all of which occurred primarily during The Three Weeks. The haftarah ends with the promise that we will be redeemed through righteous acts.

Parashas Devarim: 105 Pesukim • 2 Prohibitions

1. Do not appoint a judge who is unqualified. 2) Do not deviate from delivering true justice.

Mitzvah Highlight: A judge may not refrain from serving justice even if he fears for his safety. Additionally, one who has relevant information must share it with the judge and not be fearful of an angered litigant.

"וְהִקְרִבֹן אֵלַי כָּלֶכֶם" (Devarim 1:22)

Rashi quotes the Midrash that relates that Moshe in his rebuke noted that it was in a disorganized manner that Klal Yisrael approached Moshe with the idea of sending the Meraglim to spy out the land, with the youth pushing the elders and the elders shoving the leaders. As the magnitude of the sin of the Meraglim was exceptionally great, why was it important to note this small detail regarding the lack of derech eretz?

Rav Yitzchok M'Volozhin zt"l explains that Moshe was adjuring Klal Yisrael not to excuse themselves by saying that their original motivation for sending the Meraglim was noble and virtuous, and only went sour at a later stage. The lack of derech eretz from the onset proves that their intentions were less than virtuous from the very beginning. At times it can be difficult to discern the nobility of an action or cause. Often the proof lies in the minor details of how the initiative is being carried out. Similarly, the Baalei Mussar advise that one can confirm that he is being motivated by his yetzer hara if he finds himself acting impulsively and immediately without proper consideration. The lack of decorum should have signaled to the nation to reassess the true lowly motivation behind their actions.

from: YUTorah <yutorah@comms.yu.edu>

date: Jul 31, 2025, 6:03 PM

subject: **Devarim and a Vision for Tisha B'av**

An Ancient Hatred and a Modern Mask: Anti-Zionism & Antisemitism
Rabbi Moshe Taragin

There are two sections of tochacha in the Torah— one in Parshat Bechukotai and one in Parshat Ki Tavo. Each details the punishments we face when we abandon Hashem's commandments and violate the covenant of Torah. Most of the bleak imagery depicts divine retribution. These punishments come from above— sometimes through natural forces like famine and plague, other times through human agents, such as invading armies.

One of the punishments described in the tochacha in Parshat Ki Tavo is antisemitism:

Vihayisa Lishama Limashal uLishnina Bechol Ha'amim Asher Yenahegcha Ha-shem Shama - "You shall become an object of astonishment, a parable, and a byword among all the nations where Hashem will lead you." (Devarim 28:37)

The oldest hatred in human history—the odious and irrational hatred of the Jew—is, in part, a divine response to our national disobedience. Had we never turned from Hashem's will, this ancient hatred may never have been born.

Yet, Chazal offer a slightly different perspective on antisemitism. The Gemara in Shabbat (88a) questions why the mountain was named Har Sinai. Of all the names associated with that mountain—such as Chorev or Har HaElokim—why has Sinai become the one enshrined in Jewish memory and culture?

Playing on the phonetics of the word Sinai, Chazal teach that hatred of the Jewish people—sin'ah—was born at the moment of Matan Torah. This approach doesn't trace antisemitism to our sins, moral failings, or religious decline. Instead, it sees this hatred as embedded in the fabric of Jewish history—a hatred that would have existed even had we remained faithful to Hashem's will and preserved our sovereignty in our own land.

Which is it? Is antisemitism a deep-rooted hatred woven into human history, or a divine punishment for our betrayals? Did it start at Sinai, or with the tragedies of Tisha B'Av? The truth is—both.

Chosen and Challenged

After two centuries of spiritual turmoil and moral chaos among the nations, Hashem chose our forefather. Through him—and through us—He tasked the building of a model nation to restore clear values lost to history. Our nation was meant to embody the twin principles of monotheism and morality. We are assigned to call a disoriented world to higher religious ground. Avraham was designated Av Hamon Goyim—not because he was the biological father of humanity, but because he was meant to be its spiritual guide. We, in turn, were chosen to be a mamlechet kohanim—a kingdom of priests—charged with embodying the nobility of a life of covenant and commitment. We were meant to live the dignity of 613, so that the world might better appreciate the nobility of 7.

Our mission carries within it an inevitable truth: we would face rejection—if not outright disdain. No one welcomes a voice that challenges their lifestyle. No one embraces a nation that calls for moral introspection. We are the whistleblowers of history, and the easiest way to silence a message is to discredit the messenger. As bearers of a divine mandate to elevate humanity, we were fated to be resisted—if not reviled.

Hashem programmed this struggle into His historical pact with Avraham Avinu. When Avraham was told, Ki Yagur Zaracha BiEretz Lo Lahem Vavadum Vi'inu Osam Arba Meos Shana - Hashem wasn't only referring to geographic exile in Egypt, but to the broader, ongoing condition of the Jewish people—called to live a godly life and tasked with educating humanity. We would always be the ger—the outsider, the different one. And as a people who stood for something different, we would always face inu'i—pain, affliction, and alienation.

Our Avot were aware of this built-in pattern of Jewish history. They embraced the nobility of the mission, while fully recognizing its fearsome cost. Even had we remained securely in our homeland, we still would have faced hostility and rejection. It is not merely the price of exile; it is the price of being chosen. This struggle was built into Sefer Bereishit, built into the Brit—and it began at Har Sinai.

The New Reality of Antisemitism

However, on Tisha B'Av, the complexion and intensity of antisemitism radically changed. Our mission—to live a distinct life and to advance humanity—did not end with Tisha B'Av. We were cast out of Israel, condemned to roam the earth—from land to land, continent to continent. Yet our mission continued. The terms of engagement, however, shifted. We would now pursue our calling as guests in foreign lands. From that point on, the hostility toward us grew fiercer. This was a divine punishment, born from a toxic blend of factors.

Typically, when a foreign nation settles among an indigenous people, one of two paths unfolds. At times, the newcomers fully integrate—adopting the language and culture of the host land, marrying into the local population, and eventually blending entirely into the surrounding society.

Other times, ethnic groups choose to preserve their distinct identity by resisting integration. To protect their heritage and traditions, they live separately from the dominant culture, often withdrawing from modern society to maintain their way of life. The Amish in North America, the Aborigines in Australia, and the tribes of the Amazon jungle are all examples of communities that have chosen extreme cultural isolation over assimilation. They preserve their culture by living apart, maintaining a complete separation from the broader society to safeguard their unique way of life.

Living Apart, Leading Forward

The Jewish people don't fit neatly into either of these models. We are tenaciously different. Halacha sets us apart—in marriage and in food, in our weekly rhythm and yearly calendar. We mark time differently. Even when halacha doesn't mandate separation, an inner sense of cultural distinctiveness drives us to protect and preserve our unique Jewish identity. Bilam's prophecy, Hein Am Livadad Yishkon Behold, a nation that dwells apart, has echoed throughout the centuries. An essential part of Jewish identity is

the awareness that our distinct heritage must be preserved—and that we must not dissolve into the culture around us.

Yet, despite our extreme cultural insularity, we have always been active participants in the societies around us. For much of our exile, we were denied equal status—barred from owning land, attending universities, or rising to classic positions of socio-political prominence. Yet even when pushed to the margins, we profoundly influenced the cultures surrounding us. Our way of life made us indispensable. We built strong families and cultivated powerful networks of trust among Jewish communities across the world. Through the discipline of Talmud Torah, we maintained high levels of literacy in a world where literacy rarely surpassed ten percent. Even while being discriminated against, we were uniquely positioned to energize local economies and drive intellectual advancement.

Over the past 250 years, since we were invited back into broader society, our influence on the human condition has grown exponentially. The Jewish mind has played a pioneering role in advancing science, politics, culture, and philosophy. If you are part of us, join us; if you choose to remain apart, do not expect to influence the course of human events. The Jewish experience defies simple classification—we insist on being distinct, yet refuse to isolate ourselves from the flow of history and the shared human journey. This tension, both our burden and our strength, continues to shape our destiny. When we betrayed Hashem, were evicted from our land and sent into exile, our national mission continued—but under conditions that naturally invited hostility. This, too, was part of the divine punishment for our failure.

Do Not Acquit

Antisemitism is woven into Jewish history and the sentence of galut. But this does not excuse the crime or lessen the guilt of those who commit it. Every individual chooses whether to hate, attack, or surrender to darkness. The fact that antisemitism is woven into the fabric of history does not absolve anyone of responsibility or moral culpability.

Additionally, it doesn't absolve us from the responsibility to confront antisemitism and work to contain it. Even if this powerful force is embedded in Jewish history and has flared throughout exile, we are still obligated to push back, to defend ourselves, and to limit its reach whenever and however we can.

There are two distinct models of antisemitism tied to the Jewish mission. The first exists independently of exile—rooted in the fact that we are disliked precisely because of our role challenging humanity's values. The second emerges during exile, where the unique pressures of living among other nations intensify the inherent tensions woven into Jewish history.

Return and Resistance

There is also a third model of antisemitism connected to the Jewish mission. When the people of Hashem return to the land of Hashem, history shifts and quickens its pace. The trajectory of this story moves toward a world illuminated by the presence of Malchut Shamayim.

Those who oppose Hashem—whether consciously or unconsciously—oppose our return to Israel. In coming home to the land of Hashem, we have stirred a new form of antisemitism—one cloaked as anti-Zionism but rooted in the same ancient rejection of Jewish destiny. This perspective on modern antisemitism centered on the State of Israel brings us to a crucial question: is anti-Zionism merely political dissent, or does it fundamentally embody antisemitism itself?

Three Reasons That Anti-Zionism=Antisemitism Many claim that anti-Zionism and antisemitism are distinct. Theoretically antisemitism is hatred of Jews, whereas anti-Zionism is opposition to a Jewish state. There are three responses to this crucial question.

Firstly, history has taught us a painful truth—humanity cannot be trusted not to persecute Jews. Time and again, it has regressed into hatred and violence. Without a Jewish state as a haven and refuge, Jewish survival is always at risk. So while anti-Zionism may not be antisemitism in theory, in practice, it often is. Denying the right of the Jewish state to exist is effectively denying the sustainability of the Jewish people.

Secondly, when anti-Zionism becomes obsessive—when opposition to a Jewish state is wildly disproportionate—it begins to cross the line. When the

same classic antisemitic tropes are recycled and weaponized against Israel, anti-Zionism becomes indistinguishable from antisemitism.

Thirdly, as stated above—at a metaphysical level—anti-Zionism resists the Jewish return to the land that Hashem promised us. Our return fulfills our historical mission and advances a better destiny for all humanity. Those who oppose our return to Zion are, consciously or not, opposing our historical mission of bringing Hashem to our world.

At its core, opposition to our presence in Israel stems from the same root as antisemitism: a refusal to accept the presence of Hashem in this world, as reflected through our people and our way of life.

Antisemitism did not begin on Tisha B'Av; it intensified as we entered exile. Now, as we return from exile and herald the unfolding of history's final chapter, it has not vanished—it has merely reemerged under a new mask..

From: **Alan Fisher** <afisherads@yahoo.com> Thu, Jul 31, 2025 at 10:42 PM
Potomac Torah Study Center Vol. 12 #41, August 1-2, 2025; 8 Av 5785;
Devarim 5785; Shabbat Chazon

Tisha B'Av starts immediately after Shabbat; next Shabbat is Nachamu & Tu B'Av.

Immediately after Shabbat this week, we go directly into Tisha B'Av, the day of an incredible amount of evil in Jewish history. Chabad has provided a list of seven tragic events on Tisha B'Av in history. The Meraglim return from touring Canaan on 9 Av 1313 BCE. Ten of the Meraglim give an evil report and say that B'Nai Yisrael could not defeat the people in the land. Only Yehoshua and Calev argue that with the help of Hashem, we could defeat the people and take over the land immediately. Almost all the adults accept the majority (evil) report and cry all night, refusing to enter the land and looking for someone to take them back to Egypt. Hashem is furious that the people reject His special gift to B'Nai Yisrael, vows that He will give the people reasons to cry for real, and rules that all the adults except Calev and Yehoshua will die in the desert over the next forty years – but that their children will enter the land at that time.

Tisha B'Av becomes a date of disasters. Enemies of the Jews destroy both holy temples in Jerusalem on Tisha B'Av: in 423 BEC and 69 CE. The Romans defeat the rebellion of Bar Kochba in 133 CE. At the final battle at Betar, the Romans brutally butcher the Jewish rebels. A year later, the Romans plow over the Temple Mount. England expels the Jews on Tisha B'Av in 1290. Queen Isabella and her husband Ferdinand expel the Jews from Spain on Tisha B'Av in 1492. Germany declares war on Tisha B'Av in 1914, an event that energizes the mass killings of millions of soldiers and civilians during World War I.

As Sefer Devarim opens, Moshe soon wails "Eicha," – how can I carry your disputes, burdens, and quarrels alone (1:12)? We always read this parsha and Isaiah's wail of affliction (1:1-27) on Shabbat Devarim, the final Shabbat before Tisha B'Av. Rabbi Dr. Katriel (Kenneth) Brander relates Eicha to a natural feeling during recent times. Israel has endured a very long war against Hamas, with opportunistic additional struggles in Lebanon, Syria, Iran, and Yemen. These struggles have already continued for an amazing and depressing 22 months.

Along with the wars in the Middle East, Jews face an explosion of anti-Semitism all over the world. Several "friendly" countries now blame Israel and Jews everywhere for the greatly exaggerated "suffering" of the people of Gaza. Even the Wall Street Journal shows periodic photos of obviously ill children in Gaza – but Israeli journalists have demonstrated that the children in these photos are actually victims of cystic fibrosis and other long term immune suppressed illnesses, not victims of anything that the IDF has caused. When the photos of the "poor starving" children contain adults, all the adults in the photos appear healthy and well fed. Media in many countries blame Israel for blocking distribution of donated food through the UN. However, the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (which Israel and the United States support) has been trying to convince the United Nations to distribute food and other aid, even offering the UN five different routes to deliver the aid. The UN has not accepted any of these offers and even rejects the Foundations' offer to distribute the food for no cost.

Eicha – how can a Jew understand England, France, Belgium, and Canada accepting the lies from Gaza and vowing to recognize “Palestine” as a legitimate country. Where is Palestine? Such a country does not exist and has no land. None of the Arab countries since 1948 have offered land to “Palestinians.” The official position of the Arab countries is that these people belong in Israel, and that Israel should be renamed “Palestine.” Eicha, how could we Jews accept such a political solution – it would mean no more Israel, and it would take us back to the situation in the 1930s and 1940s, when no country in the world would accept displaced Jews.

God promised us that He would give us a wonderful land and that our enemies would swarm up to our gates. Should we not obey Hashem’s mitzvot, our enemies would be ready to take over our land and kill us. Most non-Jews in the world believe the lies of our enemies. Eicha, how can we survive if our own people do not support us? We must increase our levels of mitzvot and do more to help the widows, orphans, poor, and displaced Jews in the world. We must educate our people to the truth and ask them to reject the lies of our enemies. We must educate the non-Jews who do support us – small in percentage but large in total number. May the time come when our enemies will be quiet and we can move forward in a more peaceful world, one more accepting of what the Jews can offer.

In Sefer Devarim, Moshe reminds us often that Hashem is always here, waiting for each of us to increase our mitzvot and maintain a personal relationship with Him. We must learn to see God’s hand in unexpected blessings that come to us. I became an economist when I could not enroll in a different senior social studies class in my last semester of high school. An advisor suggested that I try economics, with a new teacher from UCLA. That class convinced me to become an economist. I had accepted a job with the Labor Department when I moved to Washington, DC. A sudden hiring freeze meant that the job disappeared. Since I had also interviewed with the FTC and found it appealing, I switched to antitrust and have counted my blessings for that unexpected change for the rest of my career. I have several other examples how unexpected “taps on the shoulder” (Rabbi David Fohrman’s term for messages from Hashem) guided me to better opportunities than I would ever have expected. Despite bad times when our enemies cause problems in the world, God finds a way to help us find the best possible paths forward – if we only listen to His messages. My beloved Rebbe over fifty years of our lives, Rabbi Leonard Cahan, z”l, helped teach me that God is in this world – we only need to learn how to find Him. I hope that my children and grandchildren will all learn this lesson too.

Shabbat Shalom,
Hannah and Alan

Much of the inspiration for my weekly Dvar Torah message comes from the insights of Rabbi David Fohrman and his team of scholars at www.alephbeta.org. Please join me in supporting this wonderful organization, which has increased its scholarly work during and since the pandemic, despite many of its supporters having to cut back on their donations.

from: **Rabbi YY Jacobson** <rabbiiyy@theyeshiva.net> info@theyeshiva.net
date: Jul 31, 2025, 10:42 PM subject: The Tragic Story of Yeshu and Shabsi Tzvi - Essay by Rabbi YY

When the Cracks Appear In Your Life, Surrender to the New Light
As One Home Was Being Destroyed, Another One Was Being Built
Rabbi YY Jacobson

Dedicated by Steven, Taryn, Estelle and Dad Grunstein in honor of their long Grandma and Nanny, Joan Hardoon - Happy Birthday, we love you!
The Jewish Contractor A building contractor wants some quotes to build two 20' x 20' sheds. The Irishman builder quotes \$500,000. "How did you arrive at that figure?" asked the contractor. "Easy," he says. "\$200,000 for labor, and \$300,000 for materials." The Scottish builder quotes \$600,000. "\$300,000 for labor and \$300,000 for materials." The Jewish builder quotes \$1 million. The contractor says, "how did arrive at that figure?" "Easy." says the Jewish builder: "\$250,000 for you, \$250,000 for me, and we will get the Irishman to do the job.

Confronting the Cracks in My Life Engagement. Marriage. Honeymoon. The first years. All is bliss. Suddenly your marriage experiences cracks. Frustration and disengagement replace the romantic bliss. The marriage is crumbling, the future is uncertain.

How do you deal with the cracks? You have a good job and it pays well; your career has a promising future. Suddenly, you realize that your boss has taken a liking to someone else. You have no future in the company. How do you deal with it? You thought you were a happy person. Two years in therapy did the trick. You are calm, collected, focused. Suddenly, your psyche hits a dam. You feel unhappy yet once again. You are back at square one. How do you deal with it? You thought you were a great and loving father. But now your children are older, and they want nothing to do with you. How do you deal with it?

The answer may lay in the story of Tisha B'Av.

Contradicting Mainstream Judaism? Ask a Jew who professes basic Jewish knowledge, why is this Shabbos called “Shabbos Chazon”? He will tell you it is because of the opening of the Haftarah with the words “Chazon Yeshayahu,” the vision of Isaiah, predicting the destruction of Jerusalem. This Haftarah and vision are perhaps the harshest Haftarah we read throughout the year, where Isaiah, for the very first time, prophesizes the destruction of Jerusalem and the entire country following the moral degeneration of Israel: “An ox knows his owner and a donkey his master's trough; only Israel does not know Me [1]... Your land is desolate; your cities burnt with fire [2]... Alas! How has the faithful city [Jerusalem] become a harlot?; once full of justice, in which righteousness would lodge, but now filled with murderers![3]...” Now, ask the same question to a Chassidic Jew. Why is this Shabbos called the Shabbos of Vision? He will give you a very different answer, presented by Rabbi Le Yitzchak of Berditchev (Ukraine, 1740-1809), one of the most inspiring and beloved of the early Chassidic Masters. He taught: It is on this Shabbos that every single Jew is shown a vision, a mini-prophecy if you will, of the third and future Temple to be rebuilt in Jerusalem.

Hardly can you find two interpretations more contradictory. Which one is it? A vision of destruction or a vision of rebuilding? Have the Chassidim altered Judaism yet “again?” How can the Rebbe of Barditchev interpret the very same name for the same Shabbos in complete contradiction to the actual reason the Shabbos was named? Is this a Shabbos of Isaiah’s vision of destruction, or the Barditchev’s vision of hope? Are we commemorating the tragic end of the First (and Second) Temple, or are we imagining the Third one? How can the Chassidic Rebbe come along and present an idea that although romantic, contradicts and distorts the actual facts?

The Grunt of a Cow There is a strange Talmudic tale:[4] On the day that the Holy Temple was destroyed, a Jew was plowing his field when his cow suddenly mooed loudly. An Arab was passing by and heard the mooing of the cow. This Arab understood the language of animals. The Arab said to the Jew: "Son of Judah! Unyoke your cow, free the stake of your plow, for your Holy Temple has now been destroyed!"

The cow then lowed a second time. Said the Arab to the Jew: "Son of Judah! Yoke your cow, reset the stake of your plow, for the Redeemer has now been born...." What does this mean? If Moshiach was born when the Temple was destroyed in the year 70 CE, where is he? [5] Where has he been hiding all these years? How old is he today?[6]

The Legalities of Destruction We will understand this by raising another question. It is a well-known dictum in Judaism, that G-d is, so to speak, “bound” by Jewish law. (This is derived in the Midrash[7] from the verse in Psalms, “He shares His words with Jacob, His laws and statutes with Israel.”[8] These are also His laws which oblige Him.) This raises a major question: It is a biblical prohibition to destroy the Holy Temple or any part of it. In the words of the great legal codifier of Judaism, Maimonides: "It is forbidden to smash a single stone of the Altar or the Temple or the Temple courtyard in a destructive manner ... as it says, '...You shall not do so to the Lord your G-d.'"[9] It is similarly forbidden to destroy any synagogue, which is a home of G-d.

[Even during the tragic expulsion of Gush Katif in the summer of 2005, notwithstanding the cruelty of banishing people from the homes and businesses they built with sweat, blood, and tears, only allowing Gaza to become Hamastan, still the Israeli Government did not have the audacity to destroy the synagogues there, and many of will remember the horrific images of the Arabs desecrating and burning them afterward.] How, then, could G-d destroy the Holy Temple—a clear violation of Jewish law?

To be sure, the actual burning of the First Temple was done by the armies of Babylonian emperor Nebuchadnezzar, and the Second Temple by the Roman legions of Vespasian. Yet G-d does take full responsibility for the deed. In the words of the prophet Jeremiah: "Behold, I shall dispatch the nations of the north ... and Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylonia, My servant, and I shall bring them upon this land and its inhabitants... I shall deliver this city in the hands of the king of Babylonia...."[10]. Despite their pious intentions, G-d has used them as His instruments to destroy the Temple, an act seemingly forbidden by Jewish law.

If the Jews were undesiring of this unique structure, the spiritual epicenter of the universe, the Temple could have been dismantled and hidden (similar to Moses' Sanctuary), or the Jews simply expelled from it.

Awakening the Inner Entrepreneur You have a good job and it pays well; your career has a promising future. Suddenly, you realize that your boss has taken a liking to someone else. You have no future in the company. How do you deal with it? You can see it as a horrible destruction of your career. But you can also see it differently: The very demolition of your perceived financial future may contain within itself the opportunity of a new and much greater future. Maybe it's time to go independent. Maybe it is time to confront certain issues you were scared to confront. If not for this crisis, you could have deceived yourself much longer. Maybe it's time to allow yourself to dream far bigger and allowing your true Dine potential to emerge in all its might. The breakdown, then, is the birth of a new grand idea.

Failure as a Solution A young chemist had been working for some time at developing a new bonding agent, a glue. After years of hardship, the work was complete. He tried it out. It did not stick. What is the use of glue that does not stick? Most people would have called this a failure, a disappointment. Time wasted. Effort spent in vain. The young chemist thought otherwise. Instead of deciding that his work was a failure, he asked, "What if it is a success? What if I have discovered a solution? The only thing left to do is to find the problem." He refused to give up. He kept asking himself, "What is the use of an underachieving adhesive?" Eventually, he found it. It became a huge commercial success. They're little and they stick — but not too hard. That is how the "Post-It" Notes were invented! When something bad happens we can see it as a failure or, as the chemist, we can make it a success. Whatever our fate, we always have a choice between seeing it as a crushing tragedy devoid of meaning, or as a tragedy which contains the seeds of something profoundly positive. All rebuilding is painful. To demolish a house is never fun. Lots of work, rubble, and headaches. But it is crucial if you want a new, big, and beautiful abode.

Happiness Another example is happiness. You thought you were a happy person. Two years in therapy did the trick. You are calm, collective, focused. Suddenly, your psyche hits a dam. You feel unhappy yet once again. You are back at square one. How do you deal with it?

You may become overtaken by despair. But there is another perspective: These cracks in your sense of "self" will allow you to rebuild your inner core. Till now your confidence came from external accolades and approval, hence it was vulnerable and weak, now it must come from your true core identity. The same is true with every breakdown in life. When one door closes, another one opens. We only need the courage to notice the new opening and enter it.

What Do You See? Now we will understand the Talmudic story about the double mooing of the cow, the first one expressing the destruction of the Holy Temple, and the second one expressing the birth of Moshiach. These were not two detached occurrences: one, the burning of the Temple, and the other—the birth of Moshiach. Rather, the two events were essentially one

and the same. The very destruction of the Temple was also the birth of redemption.

The demolition of the Holy Temple could be seen in two ways, and they are both true: The Temple was going up in flames, and the house of G-d was disappearing. Yet within this very painful and horrific reality of destruction, one can see another drama unfolding: The Third Temple was beginning to be built! The destruction of the "human structure" was opening the space for a "Dine structure."

These two perspectives on the very same reality gave rise to two sentiments within Jewish consciousness: a sense of profound pain and grief, articulated in the institution of a collective day of mourning, the 9 of Av; and an unwavering hope and faith in the future redemption. So the interpretation of Rabbi Levi Yitzchok of Berditchov that on Shabbos Chazon we see the third Temple was not contradictory to its simple meaning that on this Shabbos we study Isaiah's vision of the destruction of the Temple. In gazing at the very destruction, we can see the beginning of the renovation of the third Temple. It is this perspective that captures the underlying "plot" behind Jewish history. It was this vision that allowed our people to emerge from every crisis stronger. They refused to give up their belief that darkness was heralding a new dawn, and that the cracks were an intimation for a new light to come in.[14]

[1] Isaiah 1:1 [2] Verse 7 [3] Verse 21 [4] Jerusalem Talmud, Berachot 2:4 [5] Interestingly, this piece of Talmud was presented by the Christians in Spain in 1263 in the public disputation they imposed on the Jews. The debate was initiated in Barcelona by an apostate Jew, Pablo Christiani, and the famed Spanish Jewish sage Nachmanides (Ramban, Rabbi Moshe ben Nachman), himself an elderly man, was forced to participate. This story was brought as 'proof' that the Messiah had already come as the Christians believe, and the Ramban discussed it at length. He easily refuted this proof by showing that either way their Messiah was long dead by the year 70, and was also born around the year 0, 70 years earlier! [6] Furthermore, this Talmudic story is brought down in Halacha, Jewish law, as the reason why in the afternoon of Tisha B'av the mourning becomes less intense, since Moshiach was born on the day of the destruction. But was Moshiach really born then? What does this mean? [7] Shemos Rabah 30:9. [8] 147:19. [9] Rambam, Mishneh Torah, Laws of the Holy Temple 1:17 [10] Jeremiah 25:9, 32:3 and 7:14 [11] See all the references in Likkutei Sichos vol. 29 pp. 12-13. [12] Zohar vol. 3 221a. Cf. Zohar vol. 1 28a. [13] Although G-d came to dwell in the work of man, nonetheless, the work of man can be corrupted by the deeds of man, which eventually drove the Dine presence from its earthly abode. [14] This essay is based on a talk delivered by the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Shabbos Parshas Devarim, 5740, July 19, 1980. Published in Likkutei Sichos, vol. 29, pp. 9-1

TISHA B'AV

<https://jewishaction.com/religion/shabbat-holidays/tisha-bav/the-rav-s-commentary-on-kinot>

Jewish Action

The Rav - **Tishah B'Av: Endless Sorrow, Eternal Hope**

Rabbi Joseph Ber Soloveitchik

The Rav on **Kinot**

The excerpt below from Kinah 10 in The Koren Mesorat HaRav Kinot (OU Press, 2010) expresses Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik's inspiring and creative view of the fundamental nature of Tishah B'Av as a day not just of mourning, but of hope as well. And, characteristic of the Rav, he demonstrates how the specifics of halachah support his philosophical view. "Ki chelayah chuyavti kedor hamabul—For we deserved extinction no less than the generation of the Flood." This passage sounds the recurring theme found in the kinot that the Beit HaMikdash served as a substitute, as collateral, for the Jewish people, and the physical structure of the Beit HaMikdash suffered the destruction that rightfully should have been visited upon the entire nation. The kina says that the Jewish people are responsible and are deserving of punishment; we are guilty, and we should have been

destroyed as was the generation of the Flood. G-d, however, in His mercy and grace, subjected His throne, the Beit HaMikdash, rather than the Jewish people, to disgrace, abuse and destruction. It is for this reason that Tisha B'Av contains an element of mo'ed, a festival—G-d rendered His decision on Tisha B'Av that Knesset Yisrael is an eternal people and will continue to exist. The Beit HaMikdash was humiliated, profaned and destroyed in order to save the people.

This concept is expressed halakhically in the character of Tisha B'Av afternoon. The second half of the day has a contradictory nature in halakha. On the one hand, the avelut, the mourning, is intensified because the actual burning of the Beit HaMikdash commenced in the late afternoon of the ninth day of Av, and the flames continued throughout the tenth (Ta'anit 29a). On the other hand, Nachem, the prayer of consolation, is recited in the Amida for Mincha in the afternoon, and not in Shacharit of Tisha B'Av morning or Ma'ariv of the preceding evening (Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayyim, Rama 557:1). Similarly, tefillin are put on in the afternoon, not the morning (Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayyim 555:1), and sitting on chairs rather than on the ground is permitted in the afternoon, not the morning (Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chayyim 559:3). In Mincha, one re-inserts in Kaddish the phrase “titkabal tzelot'hon uva'ut'hon—accept our prayers and entreaties” (see Beit Yosef, Tur Orach Chayyim 559 s.v. ve'omer kaddish belo titkabal, with respect to the recitation of Titkabal in Shacharit). This phrase is removed from Kaddish earlier on Tisha B'Av because the assertion that “satam tefillati—my prayer is rejected” (Lamentations 3:8) which prevails on Tisha B'Av, comes to an end at midday. Paradoxically, the moment the Beit HaMikdash was set ablaze was a moment of relief. At that moment, it became clear that G-d decided to take the collateral, the Beit HaMikdash, instead of pursuing the real debtor, the Jewish people. Paradoxically, once He took away the Beit HaMikdash in the afternoon of Tisha B'Av, the nechama, the consolation, could begin. Tisha B'Av is a day of limitless despair and boundless hope and faith.

<https://jewishaction.com/from-our-archives/kamtza-and-bar-kamtza-revisited>

Kamtza and Bar Kamtza Revisited

Rabbi Yochanan Zweig and Joseph Rackman

Every month of Av, many Jews study the story of Kamtza and Bar Kamtza because the Talmud states that Jerusalem was destroyed because of the actions of those two men (Gittin 55b–56a). This episode is not merely a tale, but requires some analysis, since the rabbis were obviously not interested in entertaining us, but in transmitting insights.

The well-known story may be recapitulated as follows:

There was a man whose best friend was named Kamtza and whose arch enemy was named Bar Kamtza. This man decided to host a party and among those invited was his best friend, Kamtza. The host had his servant deliver the invitations, but by mistake, the servant delivered an invitation not to Kamtza, but to the host's enemy, Bar Kamtza.

When Bar Kamtza came to the party, and the host saw his worst enemy there, he asked, “What are you doing here?” Bar Kamtza replied, “I realize this must be a mistake. Your servant must have invited me by accident. But I beg you not to humiliate me. Please let me stay and I'll pay for half of your entire party.”

The host nevertheless insisted that Bar Kamtza get out. Bar Kamtza then offered to pay the entire expense of the party. The host would not be moved, and he evicted Bar Kamtza. The leading rabbis of Jerusalem were present during this confrontation but did not intervene.

Bar Kamtza resolved to avenge himself on the rabbis, and he went to the Roman Emperor and said, “The Jews are rebelling.” The Emperor was skeptical, but Bar Kamtza replied, “Why not test them?” So the Emperor sent a sacrifice for the Jews to bring in the Temple on his behalf. It was a beautiful animal, but Bar Kamtza made a blemish in the lips (or eyes) of the animal. This was not a disqualifying blemish for Roman sacrificial purposes, but it was under Jewish law. The Jews refused to sacrifice the animal, and the Emperor, incensed, sent his general against Jerusalem.

Thus, the Talmud records, Jerusalem was destroyed because of Kamtza and Bar Kamtza.

The problems with this tale are many. First, the host had the opportunity to exploit his arch enemy, Bar Kamtza, who had offered to pay the entire expense of the host's party. Why did the host refuse this opportunity? All Bar Kamtza had wanted was to be left alone; a small price to pay in return for the entire expense of an elaborate function.

Second, why did the rabbis fail to intervene when they saw this act of public humiliation? A subsidiary question to this is why the blame for the destruction of Jerusalem is laid only at the feet of Kamtza and Bar Kamtza, with no criticism of the rabbis?

Third, we can understand why Bar Kamtza is blamed for the destruction of Jerusalem. But Kamtza was not even at the party. How can he be held responsible for the destruction of the Temple? And yet the Talmud clearly records that Kamtza is regarded as one of the two guilty parties.

Fourth, who is the biggest villain in this story? Presumably, the host who humiliated Bar Kamtza. And yet, the name of the host never once appears in the tale.

Fifth, Bar Kamtza fails to make any effort to save himself or his family.

Contrast this, for example, with the actions of Rachav who hung a red thread outside the window of her apartment so that she could be saved when Joshua conquered the city of Jericho. This act of self-preservation has no parallel in the story of Bar Kamtza. He has his revenge, but it seems not to occur to him to look out for his own safety. Why?

Rambam teaches us that a successful reprimand occurs only by a friend coming to a friend.

The final question can only be seen from an actual examination of the text of the Talmud itself. The Talmud records that the host finds Bar Kamtza at his party and says, “That man is the arch enemy of that man. What are you doing here?” This is strange. It should have simply said, “What are you doing here? You know that I can't stand you.” Instead, the host spoke about both himself and Bar Kamtza in the third person. The rabbis' decision to record the awkward language was deliberate. Therefore it must hold a lesson for us. What is that lesson?

The starting point for our answers comes from the Talmud (Yoma 9b); there it is stated that the First Temple was destroyed because of three cardinal sins: idolatry, adultery and murder; the Second Temple was destroyed because of sinas chinam, hatred for no reason. The problem is that this phrase is a misnomer. Hatred always has a reason. One may be overreacting, but there is an underlying reason for the hate. Therefore, we must define sinas chinam as something else—namely, hating somebody in a senseless manner. Sinas chinam describes a situation where one takes out his vengeance on someone not for personal gain or self-aggrandizement, but in such an extreme manner that the act of vengeance is destructive not only for the recipient of the anger but for the actor himself.¹

This is the key to the story of Kamtza and Bar Kamtza. The host is not willing to let Bar Kamtza stay even though Bar Kamtza is willing to pay for the entire party. The host would rather hurt his enemy even though he also hurts himself. This is sinas chinam. What brings a person to this level of senseless hatred? Another way to ask this question is to inquire: who does the person really hate?

A person who is willing to hurt someone even though he will hurt himself more, must truly hate himself. Examples of this are, unfortunately, not that rare. How often do people persist in behavior that is clearly unhealthy for them: the chain smoker or the diabetic person who ignores medical advice? Certain people do not mind hurting themselves because they are alienated from themselves. And to recognize this, one must listen to how one talks about oneself. Remember, the host spoke to Bar Kamtza in the third person: “That man hates that man.” This is a person who is alienated from himself. The first “that man” is the host himself, the speaker of the sentence. This evidences a separation between the host and himself. The rabbis deliberately recorded this language because it shows the host's state of mind—his alienation from and hatred of himself.²

Thus far we have answered two of the questions concerning the story of Kamtza and Bar Kamtza. We understand why the host refused the offer of Bar Kamtza to pay for the entire party and the reason for the awkward language in the third person. The next question to answer is why the rabbis did not react.

The Bible explicitly instructs us to reprimand and correct errant behavior. “Hocheach tochiach et amitecha” (Leviticus 19:17). The word hocheach does not mean to criticize, but to show the truth, the correct way. Rambam tells us how to do this.³ You have to go in a calm and soft manner. The reprimander takes the posture of a friend. We must understand that G-d has not appointed us as His prosecutors. One must instruct out of friendship and not out of self-righteousness.

The problem is how to criticize a person who is totally alienated from himself. Rambam teaches us that a successful reprimand occurs only by a friend coming to a friend. To say to a friend that I care about you and that your actions only hurt yourself can only work with a person who cares about himself. This explains why the rabbis did not react to the host’s actions. They knew that the host was totally alienated from himself and was virtually seeking his own destruction. Therefore, the rabbis’ not criticizing the host was understandable and even correct since it would have had no effect whatsoever.⁴

Now we can understand the omission of the name of the host from the story of Kamtza and Bar Kamtza. The Bible uses names to signify the essence of persons. Often, G-d intervenes and changes the names of people to more clearly demonstrate their essence or, more correctly, the change in their essence and the elevation of the person’s essence to a higher level.

The word “Kamtza” means a fist. And, as in English, when we speak of a tight-fisted person, we mean a person who is not charitable. Thus, “Kamtza” means miserly.

A poor person is not a miser. To be a miser, one must have money but be unable to spend it. A miser does not spend money on himself because he is alienated from himself. He does not feel entitled to spend money on himself. Knowing this, we can see that the name of the host is really in the story. A person whose best friend is Kamtza is himself a miser and alienated from himself. By contrast, Bar Kamtza is a person who loves himself. He is a person who feels that nothing is too good for himself and is willing to spend on himself. This explains why Bar Kamtza is willing to be extravagant and was willing to pay for the entire party in order to avert his public humiliation. But after the public humiliation, with none reacting to it, he feels worthless in spirit. Only then does he experience *sinas chinam*, and he brings the might of the Roman Empire against Jerusalem, without any attempt to save himself or his family. Bar Kamtza has become Kamtza. G-d finally was determined to destroy the nation because there was no chance to rehabilitate the nation. G-d chastises us when we can rehabilitate ourselves. But once we do not care about ourselves, there is no chance for rehabilitation. Then comes the total destruction. The only choice left is to save a remnant and to rebuild from that.

Notes

1. One example occurred when Hitler had invaded Russia and was trying to conquer Stalingrad. He was unable to get sufficient supplies to his troops because he was using precious trains to exterminate Jews. His hatred was so great, that even though it jeopardized the war effort, he was willing to give priority to the destruction of Jews.

2. Love, by contrast, is the feeling of being at one with someone else. In love, there is no difference between the lover and the object of the love; they are one. Indeed, the numerical equivalent of the word for love, “ahava,” is “echad,” one.

3. *Mishneh Torah*, Book of Knowledge (Madda)—Laws of Ethical Behavior (*Hilchot De’ot*)—Chapter 6, Law 7.

4. Another question is why the rabbis did not publicly side with Bar Kamtza, who was being thrown out of the party? The host was wrong to throw out Bar Kamtza and, arguably, the rabbis should have openly taken the side of Bar Kamtza. To do so, however, would have embarrassed the host publicly—an act equivalent to murder (*Talmud Bava Metzia* 58b). Of course,

Bar Kamtza was being publicly embarrassed, but as between equivalent acts of murder, the rabbis chose to be passive and not interfere. This comports with the dictum of passivity when one is asked to murder or to be murdered—the rule is do nothing, *shev v’al taaseh*. See *Pesachim* 25b, the *Tosafot* on “Al Na’arah.”

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subject: **Rabbi Mayer Twersky - Mourning the Mikdash**

The question de jour for many of us, how can we mourn for the Beis Hamikdash? How can we mourn for what we never experienced? How do we feel an aching void for something that was never a part of our lives? What follows is one of many complimentary approaches that b’siyata d’Shamaya will allow those of us who struggle with being misabeil al Yerushalayim to begin the process of mourning.

Actually, we know of examples of people feeling bereft of what they never experienced, and longing for something they never had. An orphan whose father died prior to his birth feels bereft. When he sees the fullness of his friends’ two-parent homes and the loving, nurturing, enriching role their fathers play, he grieves for the father he never knew. A child growing up in a forsaken place with no formal education and no access to books may happen upon a book and, upon reading it, realize how much there is to learn and how much he does not know. And he may desperately long for the education he has never had.

The common denominator of these two examples (and others) is that a person can develop a sense of appreciation for what he has never experienced, and be given a tantalizing taste of what he never had. And, when this happens, he will grieve for what he has never experienced and long for a different reality.

The lesson is clear. In order to mourn the Beis Hamikdash we need to identify and develop an appreciation for that which is missing from our lives due to its destruction. We need to experience, albeit in the very limited fashion possible, that which the Beis Hamikdash provided in abundance. The Mishnaic section of *Pirkei Avos* concludes with the tefillah, “y’he ratzon milfanecha Hashem Elokeinu shetivne ircha b’m’heira b’yameinu v’sein chelkeinu b’Torahsecha.” The Gaon of Vilna beautifully explains the symmetry of the tractate and its concluding prayer. *Pirkei Avos* begins describing the revelation of Torah (“Moshe kibeil Torah miSinai”) and concludes with a tefillah for its full and flowering restoration. This prayer is predicated upon the rebuilding of the Mikdash because, “ein Torah b’lo Beis Hamikdash k’mo shekasuv, ‘malka v’sa’reiha bagoyim ein Torah’ ... k’mo shekasuv, ‘u’mal’ah ha’aretz de’ah es Hashem’”. Without the metaphysical influence of the Beis Hamikdash, Torah is significantly diminished.

Hence, after the churban, Yirmiyahu Hanavi laments, “ein Torah”. And with the rebuilding of the Mikdash, Torah will be fully restored and once again flourish. Hence, Yeshayahu Hanavi, in speaking of the Messianic era, prophesies, “u’mal’ah ha’aretz de’ah es Hashem”.

The Beis Hamikdash not only sustained Torah; the experience of coming to the Mikdash also fostered yiras Shomayim. In presenting the mitzvah of eating ma’aser sheini within Yerushalayim [the outermost precinct of Mikdash], the Torah explains, “l’ma’an tilmad l’yirah es Hashem Elokecha kol hayomim”. Experiencing kedushas Mikdash in this context was a transformative, enduring experience which inspired abiding yiras Shomayim. The seminal influence of the Mikdash was not limited to the realms of Torah and yiras Shomayim. For instance, the Beis Hamikdash also facilitated atonement for our sins and served as the wellspring from which Jews drew ruach Hakodesh. In our attempt to gain an appreciation for the Beis Hamikdash, we are focusing on Torah and yiras Shomayim as powerful, representative examples.

In our reality Torah and yiras Shomayim, although significantly diminished, are b'chasdei Hashem accessible. We can devote ourselves to talmud Torah. We can taste mesikus haTorah; we can cultivate ahavas haTorah. Similarly, we can cultivate yiras Shomayim and, however incompletely, experience its joyous trepidation.

If we indeed focus upon cultivating deep, genuine ahavas Torah v'yiras Shomayim, much like the orphan and uneducated child, we will feel bereft of Torah in its fullest depth and splendor and yiras Shomayim in its existential profundity which we have never experienced but for which we will desperately long. In so doing, we will be misabeil al Yerushalayim and, b'siyata d'Shamaya, be zocheh v'ro'eh b'binyana.

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The Nation Weeps

By Rabbi Moshe Hauer

Where do the tears of Tisha B'Av fit within the flood of tears recently engulfing our people?

The war that began on Simchat Torah of 2023 has completely upended the dynamic of the region in Israel's favor, hobbling Iran and its proxies, but along with that battlefield victory has come – per Hamas' intention and design – an epic human tragedy in Gaza and a precipitous loss of respect for Israel's morality. It is heartbreaking to consider the devastating impact on innocents, and we admire Israel's concerted efforts to mitigate that impact. And it is astounding to hear pundits and politicians, some ignorantly, some piously, and too many maliciously, ascribe to Israel the worst intentions and all responsibility while ignoring the simple fact that Hamas initiated this war and its suffering and could end it tomorrow – but chooses not to.

We categorically reject the accusations of genocide and deliberate starvation leveled at the only force in the region that strives to abide by internationally accepted laws of war on a battlefield never faced by another modern army and to live up to its own self-imposed higher standard of tohar ha'neshek, purity of arms. Even as Israel expands its efforts to address food insecurity in Gaza, it must be recognized that the IDF has already delivered more humanitarian aid to Gaza than any military in history has provided to an enemy population during wartime.

But the truth hardly matters. Instead of achieving the prophetic vision of Jerusalem's peace and justice radiating beyond its natural boundaries, it is the United Nations and its obsessive demonization and delegitimization of Israel that has conquered the minds and hearts of the world, darkening the light unto the nations. That is deeply painful and consequential. "Chillul Hashem is the same whether inadvertent or deliberate" (Avot 4:5). Battlefield and strategic errors committed during an incredibly complex and overwhelmingly successful military campaign can nevertheless result in the inestimable loss of moral high ground, a loss worthy of Tisha B'Av grief. It is on Tisha B'Av that we commemorate the tragic losses of blood and treasure sustained by the Jewish people from biblical times to the Crusades to the Holocaust and now, to October 7, but the day's primary focus is on the destruction of the Temples in Jerusalem, the ultimate Chillul Hashem. That loss steeply downgraded our religious and ethical role and jeopardized the Jewish and Abrahamic mission to bring the G-d of the heavens down to earth and uplift the world's faith and morality. The light unto the nations was dimmed.

What contributed to this downgrade of our religious and ethical standing? Our tradition blames it on the libelous claims leveled against G-d and the land of Israel on the original night of Tisha B'Av, when we wept in despair after hearing from the spies sent to explore the land of Israel. "You wept over nothing; I will give you cause for weeping for generations to come." In a complete inversion of reality, we cast G-d as hateful and the land of Israel as forbidding. G-d in His ultimate kindness had rescued us from bondage and miraculously set us on the road to the promised land flowing with milk and honey, but we chose to view Him as hostile and disdained His gift of Israel, portraying the attractive, good, and generous land of Israel, the eretz chemda

tova u'rchava, as overwhelming and unhospitable, consuming its inhabitants rather than nurturing their growth. We were the original CNN and New York Times, creating a false narrative of Chillul Hashem in which we told the world and each other that the hero was the villain, and the source of the world's blessing was a fount of evil. Our assault on the good name of G-d and of the land of Israel ultimately cost us our own good name when G-d's visible association with us was severed with the destruction of the Beit HaMikdash.

The Jewish people are comprised of many camps and tribes, each with its passions and priorities directing its role within our nation and holy land. Especially during the past few years, those passions and priorities have collided in profound and deeply painful ways leading us to scream out against one another and cast the other as villain, unworthy of a good name. And now we are left having lost our collective good name; the world fails to see G-d either dwelling in our midst or reflected in our values. Over this we weep; but we can also try to fix. We may justifiably scream and accuse, but perhaps on Tisha B'Av we can pause to see the value of each other and the presence of Hashem that remains within each and every one of us. In the words of the Rebbe Rav Elimelech of Lizhensk, we can pray that G-d place in our hearts the ability to see not the faults but the positive qualities of each other, "for who is like You people Israel, a unique nation on earth?" And we can build towards a near future where Klal Yisrael as a whole and every one of us individually will be a source of strength and comfort for each other and of Kiddush Hashem, deserving of the admiration and appreciation of G-d and man, "Yisrael asher b'cha etpa'eir." <https://jewishaction.com/religion/shabbat-holidays/churban/a-tishah-bav-lament-for-october/>

Churban A Tishah B'Av Lament for October 7

Rabbi Moshe Hauer

Tishah B'Av is a day when we mourn the range of tragedies that have marked Jewish history, beginning with the destruction of both Batei Mikdash. Many of these calamities from throughout the ages are represented in the book of Tishah B'Av kinot that we read in our shuls. While we are generally extremely cautious about adding contemporary prayers, the kinot are an exception, such that most shuls include a kinah commemorating the Holocaust. In this spirit, there have been efforts to write kinot for Tishah B'Av that reflect on the profound tragedy of October 7 and its aftermath. Of special note is the rich, poetic and deeply meaningful kinah composed by Rav Yosef Tzvi Rimon. While all of us will have these events on our mind during Tishah B'Av, some shuls and individuals will seek to express those thoughts in the words of a kinah. The kinah below, authored by Rabbi Moshe Hauer, executive vice president of the Orthodox Union, was composed in response to a request from those less familiar with the nuances of Jewish thought and practice. It is an adaptation of one of the existing kinot, Kinah 25, Mi Yiten Roshi Mayim, written in the 11th century. The closing stanza draws from Kinah 37. This is shared here for those who may find it appropriate, relevant and useful. A TISHA B'AV LAMENT FOR THE WAR OF OCTOBER 7TH Would my head be filled with water and my eyes a fountain of tears / I would cry all my days and nights / for the corpses of my babes and infants and the aged of our people / I ask you to respond and join me in weeping, much weeping. For the house of Israel and the people of the LORD who have fallen by the sword. https://res.cloudinary.com/ouwp/images/v1753292097/Jewishaction/Orthodox-Union_October-7th-Kinnah_2025-FINAL/

https://jewishaction.com/books/do_not_harm_the_child_excepts_from_rabbi_laus_newly_translated_memoirs

Out of the Depths: The Story of Israel's Former Chief Rabbi Israel Meir Lau, a Child of Buchenwald

Rabbi Israel Meir Lau, Translated by Shira Leibowitz Schmidt and Jessica Setbon

In his remarkable autobiography, Rabbi Israel Meir Lau tells his story of rising from the ashes of the Holocaust to become the chief rabbi of Israel. As a young boy nicknamed Lulek, he is saved from the Nazi inferno by his older brother Naphtali, who fulfills their father's dying wish to ensure the continuation of the

family rabbinic dynasty. At age eight, Lulek, the youngest survivor of Buchenwald, sails to Israel, where he begins his life anew. Encouraged in his studies by such rabbinic giants as the Rebbe of Gur and Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, young Israel Meir enters the yeshivah world and is eventually appointed Ashkenazi chief rabbi of Israel. In his book, he recounts fascinating vignettes from his career that reveal his life-long mission of commemorating the Holocaust from the standpoint of deep faith. The excerpts below offer the reader a taste of Rabbi Lau's translated memoir.

First Memories: Devastation, Autumn 1942

At the beginning of the book, Rabbi Lau discusses his experiences when the Nazis invaded Poland. He speaks of the deep impression made upon him by his father, Rabbi Moshe Chaim, chief rabbi of the Polish town of Piotrkow. In this scene, the esteemed community leader maintains his dignity in the face of humiliation by the Gestapo.

The nightmare had begun to affect us in Piotrkow as well.

It is the autumn of 1942. I, Lulek, am a boy of five years and four months, short in stature, terrified. I stretch my neck as far as it will go in order to catch a glimpse of my father. He is standing in the Umschlagplatz, the assembly point for deportation, which is next to the Great Synagogue of our town, Piotrkow, Poland. Father, with his impressive beard and black rabbi's suit, stands in the center, surrounded by Jews.

We felt enormous tension that day as we stood in the assembly square in front of the synagogue. A threatening silence surrounded us. The captain of the Piotrkow Gestapo approached my father, a deadly look in his eye. He stopped, and pulling out his maikhe—a rubber club about three feet long—he began to beat my father on the back with all his might. When the first blow struck my father from behind, the force of it made him stagger forward. His body bent over as if about to fall. And then, in a fraction of a second, he straightened up to his full height, stepped back and returned to where he had been standing. There he stood erect, making a supreme effort to hide the physical pain as well as the intense humiliation. I could see Father mustering all his strength to keep his balance and avoid falling at the German officer's feet. Father knew that if he fell, the spirit of the Jews in our town would break, and he was trying desperately to prevent that.

Everyone there knew why the German had beaten him. When the Nazis had ordered the Jews to shave off their beards, many of the Jews of Piotrkow had come to ask Father whether they should follow the order. His answer was firm: do it in order to save yourselves from punishment. But he was stricter with himself; he kept his beard and sidelocks, his peyot, not only to safeguard ancient tradition but also to preserve the honor of the town rabbinate. His defiance of this order resulted in the maikhe on his back.

But the beating was for other reasons as well. The captain had singled out my father for abuse because he was the chief rabbi of the town. Father was the representative of the Jews to the Germans. Furthermore, much of the Gestapo's contact with the Jews of Piotrkow took place through him because he was fluent in German. He was a highly respected figure in the Jewish community. Beating him, and especially humiliating him, meant more to the Germans than beating just another Jew; it was an act of enormous symbolic meaning, one that had a powerful effect on morale.

Many years later, I heard the following from Dr. Abraham Greenberg, who had been standing next to my father in the synagogue square. He heard Father remark to the Jews next to him, "I don't know why we're standing here with our arms crossed. Even if we don't have weapons, we should attack them with our fingernails. I don't think standing around can save any of us. We have nothing to lose by trying to fight them." He had just finished his sentence when the maikhe of the Gestapo captain struck him on his back. As a child, I did not understand the issue of the beard so well or the significance of the order to shave it, but I did understand that they were beating my father.

I knew my father was the town's chief rabbi, and was admired and loved by all. I could not bear to see the beating or the degradation. Today, looking back on the six years of that war, I realize that the worst thing I endured in the Holocaust was not the hunger, the cold or the beatings. It was the humiliation. It is almost impossible to bear the helplessness. Throughout the war years, a Polish word went through my head—lachago, meaning "why?" What did we do to you to make you stomp on our souls in this way? How great was our crime that this is our punishment? There was no answer. Only this: we were Jews, and they, the Nazis, saw us as the source of all evil in the world.

When a child sees his father being kicked with a Nazi's boot, publicly humiliated, he carries that terrible picture with him for the rest of his life. Yet, on the other

hand, I carry in my mind another memory as well—that instant in which Father, with astonishing spiritual strength, braced himself from falling and, refusing to beg for his life, stood tall once again before the Gestapo captain. For me, that image of his inner spiritual strength completely eradicates the helplessness that accompanied the humiliation.

Herded into the Synagogue

Soon after the incident with Lulek's father, the Nazis rounded up the Jews of Piotrkow and packed them into the town's main synagogue. There they called out the names of those who were allowed to leave; those remaining inside were to be deported, destined for death. Through his mother's resourcefulness, young Lulek's life is saved, but his thirteen-year-old brother, Shmuel, is condemned to a bitter fate.

As order and discipline were second nature to the Germans, one of them shouted, "One of the people whose names I called did not go out!" Then they made an exact count of all those who had left, and checked them against their lists. One person had not left: my mother. Her maternal instinct aroused, she scrutinized the narrow passage between the two guards at the door. She planned our moves quickly and precisely. She grabbed me with one hand, and Shmuel with the other. "Come here," she ordered. We jumped to her. We didn't need to be told that we must remain completely silent, and more importantly, keep as close as possible to Mother. The three of us had to meld together as one. She planned to smuggle us both out under the cover of darkness, as if we were part of her body. To keep the Germans from closing the door, she shouted while moving toward the exit, "I'm coming, I'm coming." Walking sideways as one body, we shuffled out the door. But a group of three could not possibly pass through the narrow opening the Germans had left. I went out first, with Mother close behind me, and Shmuel behind her. But one German noticed that there was a bit more movement than there should be. Facing us, he raised both his arms together, and swung them down with all his might, one to the left and one to the right. Shmuel, who was on the left side, fell to the synagogue floor and had to go back inside. On the right side were my mother and I. The force of the blow hurled us into a puddle in front of the synagogue.

The two of us were saved, but we were separated from Shmuel, and we never saw him again. Later we learned that he was sent to Treblinka that same day.

Into Hiding: 1942

Lulek's childhood becomes a nightmare of hiding and fear, leaving an indelible mark on his memory and shaping his consciousness. As an adult, Rabbi Lau recalls the taste of the honey cookies mentioned here as symbolic of his Holocaust experience.

Father was not with Mother and me when the two of us hid at 12 Jerozolimska Street, a building near our house, where he had arranged a hiding place for us. This large building had been filled with Jewish residents, who then abandoned it for reasons unknown to me. The floor of one room in the top story was littered with wooden boards; the entry to the attic was through this room. Mother and I crowded into the attic along with about ten other Jews. They were constantly darting frightened looks at me, as if threatening me to keep silent, and at my mother, as if blaming her for bringing me to the hiding place and possibly endangering their lives. At least that is how it seemed to me. I was barely five-and-a-half, and they feared I would cry noisily, or else call out "Mameh, Mameh," giving them all away to certain death. They were busy thinking of ways to make the child keep silent, but the child never even made a peep. Before leaving our house, my mother had foreseen what was ahead of us, and baked my favorite honey cookies. She knew that when I ate them they would distract me. More importantly, they would fill up my mouth so I would be unable to make a sound.

Even today, many long years after those days of horror, when I close my eyes and yearn for those honey cookies, I can remember their wonderful taste. During trying times, this memory is my consolation; it is the drop of honey with which I sweeten bitter days.

At the same time, I remember clearly that I would look at my mother, my mouth full of cookies, with a penetrating glance that seemed to say, "Mother, this whole business of using the cookies to silence me is unnecessary. I know I mustn't say a word, and therefore I intend to keep quiet. We have already been through all kinds of 'selections' and although I am a child, I understand exactly what's going on." Like an animal with an acute survival instinct, I understood that I had to keep quiet until the fury subsided, and I had no intention of behaving like a small child in our hideout.

Buchenwald: January 1945

When Lulek and his nineteen-year-old brother, Naphtali, arrived in Buchenwald, Naphtali feared that he would not be able to save Lulek's life as he had succeeded in doing so far.

The rules of the camp were ironclad, and chances were slim that they would allow a child of seven to stay with the men. But as usual, Naphtali did not give up. With the help of two friends, he wrapped me up in the feather quilt that Mother had supplied us with, and put me inside the sack he had carried with him ever since we had parted from her. As I was already used to transitions, to entering and exiting labor camps, he had no need to warn me to keep my mouth shut until it was safe to leave the sack. Despite my being so young, the procedure was clear to me. Like a rabbit, I jumped into the sack, curling up as small as possible, and that is how I entered Buchenwald with my brother. The Germans made the newly-arrived Jews stand in formation, arranging them in threes. From inside the sack, I heard the familiar commotion: the shouts of schnell, schnell—hurry, hurry—the maikhe club beatings and the barking of the dogs. I hunched on top of Naphtali's back, motionless as a block of ice. Then I felt Naphtali removing the sack from his back and putting it down at his feet. A strange, sharp smell reached my nose, one that I did not recognize. Later I learned that this was chlorine, which the Nazis used as a disinfectant.

The Germans placed us all into a large hall, where they began separating the inmates into groups. Controlling his growing fear, Naphtali studied what was going on around us. Very quickly he deciphered the method used in categorizing the inmates. The Nazis ordered the Jews to strip. Medical personnel inspected them and administered various inoculations. And then, to his horror, he discovered that the Germans threw all the Jews' possessions—including the clothes they had removed—into the oven, where they were incinerated. In this manner, the Germans thought, they would prevent contamination by the Jews. Naphtali would also have to dispose of his sack of belongings. I'll never forget his cry: "Lulek, hutch totai! Lulek, come here!" I peeked out in disbelief, suspecting I had not heard correctly. From the sack at my brother's feet, I raised my head carefully and looked around. Previously, I had heard the voices and smelled the odors. But now I also saw the sights from which I had been spared. The Germans waved the maikhe threateningly, their ferocious dogs barking and biting. Veteran Jewish prisoners shaved the new arrivals and disinfected them in a filthy chlorine bath. When I got out of the sack, one of the guards, also apparently a prisoner, noticed me. He approached Naphtali and asked him what a boy like me was doing in this place, which was meant for adult men. Naphtali looked into his eyes and explained that the child had neither a father nor a mother. "What was I to do?" he asked. "Leave him outside in the snow, by himself?"

That guard gave us the first authorized proof of the methods of killing in the camp. In this place, he explained to Naphtali, there are no gas chambers, but there is a crematorium. "From that furnace," he said, glancing toward it, "smoke billows twenty-four hours a day. All the muselmen, those walking, robot-like skeletons, die there. Everyone who comes to this camp becomes a muselman," he said. "It doesn't matter if he's five or fifteen, seven or thirteen. But," added the prisoner-guard, "you should know that if this child can get to block number eight, he will be okay." When he finished what he had to say, he turned his back on us, as if he had not seen a thing.

As he walked away, a German guard caught sight of me. Naphtali was terrified when he saw the German focus on me, and even more so when he asked, as the other guard did, what I was doing there. Accustomed by now to being in mortal danger, Naphtali took off his shoe and folded it in half, removing Father's gold watch from the sole. It was the last remaining item from the treasures Mother had given us for emergencies. Naphtali threw the expensive watch at the guard, who bent down as if to tie his shoelace, and picked up the watch. Then he continued his patrol, ignoring the two of us.

Other guards took me along with the entire group to block fifty-two. The sight before our eyes was horrifying. Thousands of people inhabited that crowded place, most of them muselmen, suffering from hunger and disease. People relieved themselves inside the block, and the stench was insufferable. Each morning the guards removed about forty corpses, the bodies of those who did not awaken.

Liberation: April 1945

Thanks to Naphtali and to a Russian inmate protector, Lulek survives the horrors of Buchenwald. When Buchenwald is liberated by American army forces, Lulek is discovered by Army Chaplain Rabbi Herschel Schacter.

In full army uniform, Rabbi Schacter got down from his jeep and stood before the pile of bodies. Many of them were still bleeding. Suddenly he thought he saw a pair of eyes, wide open and alive. He panicked, and with a soldier's instinct, he drew his pistol. Slowly, carefully, he began to circle the pile of bodies. Then—and this I recall clearly—he bumped into me, a little boy, staring at him from behind the mound of corpses, wide-eyed. His face revealed his astonishment: in the midst of the killing fields, from within that sea of blood—suddenly, a child appears! I did not move. But he knew that no child in this place could be anything but Jewish. He holstered his pistol, then grabbed me with both hands and caught me in a fatherly embrace, lifting me in his arms. In Yiddish, with a heavy American accent, he asked me: "Wie alt bist du, mein kind? How old are you, my boy?"

I saw tears dripping from his eyes. Still, through force of habit, I answered cautiously, like someone perpetually on guard: "What difference does it make? At any rate, I'm older than you." He smiled at me from behind his tears, and asked, "Why do you think that you're older than I am?" Without hesitating, I replied, "Because you laugh and cry like a child, and I haven't laughed for a long time. I can't even cry anymore. So which one of us is older?"

Then he introduced himself to me, and the tension subsided. Rabbi Schacter asked who I was. "Lulek from Piotrkow," I replied.

"And who is your family?" he inquired.

"My father was the rabbi of Piotrkow."

"And you're here all alone, without your father?"

"Without my father, without my mother. But I have a brother. He collapsed and is lying sick, here in the camp."

Rabbi Schacter gained my full trust when he told me he had heard of my father. He had also heard of Father's cousin, Rabbi Meir Shapira, the rabbi of Lublin, who had initiated the Daf Hayomi daily page program of Talmud study. I was thrilled.

Then the American rabbi took me by the hand, and together, we made the rounds of the bunkers, announcing the liberation. I remember the people lying inside the bunkers, with blank stares. They did not even have the strength to get up from their beds. "Jews, you are liberated!" called out the American rabbi in Yiddish. The inmates gazed at him, incredulous, as if to ask, "Who is this crazy meshiggenger standing here in uniform, screaming in Yiddish?"

Our Response to the Holocaust

Rabbi Lau often emphasizes that the "revenge" for the Holocaust is in the rebuilding of Jewish families and Jewish life. He himself sets an example. My oldest son, Moshe Chaim, became a Bar Mitzvah on the Shabbat when we read the Biblical account of the Israelites' battle with Amalek. I spoke about the last verse in the chapter: "The Lord maintains a war against Amalek, from generation to generation" (Exodus 17:16). We cannot fight the enemy Amalek, the nation or the phenomenon, with weapons or with ammunition. Rather, we are obligated to fight this battle in every generation, each generation passing on our heritage to the next. The struggle for the continuity of generations is the true battle and the great spiritual-Divine victory of Israel against the adversary Amalek. Our victory in the war against Amalek is that my son, Moshe Chaim Lau, is continuing the heritage of his grandfather, my father, Rabbi Moshe Chaim Lau, who went up to Heaven in a tempest.

Our son Moshe Chaim is the first candle in the private Chanukah menorah I have been privileged to create. My wife is the base of that menorah, from which the candles, our eight children, went out into the world. And I am the shamash, whose role is to help light those candles so that they will spread their light and proclaim, each in a special way, the miracle of the victory of eternal Israel.

Note

1. The story of the boys' survival is told from Naphtali's point of view in his book, Balaam's Prophecy: Eyewitness to History, 1939–1989 (New Jersey, 1998).

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Tidbits for Tishah B'av 5785 in memory of Rav Meir Zlotowitz zt'l
Ira Zlotowitz <iraz@klalgovaoh.org>

Thu, Jul 31, 6:55 PM (6 hours ago)

Tishah B'av 5785

1. Hashem decreed that the generation that left Egypt would wander in the desert for 40 years, during which time nearly all men would perish. 2. The First Beis Hamikdash was destroyed. 3. The Second Beis Hamikdash was destroyed. 4. The city of Beitar was captured, and thousands were killed. 5.

The wicked Turnus Rufus plowed over the site of the Second Beis Hamikdash.

For halachos of Erev Tishah B'Av see Tidbits for Parashas Devarim - Shabbos Chazon 5785

Fasting. Adults who find it difficult to fast must consult a Halachic authority, and not be unduly lenient with their health or with Tishah B'Av. The minhag is that children who understand the meaning of Tishah B'Av should fast for part of the day, and minimize eating treats, such as candy and desserts. An adult who needs to break their fast must hear Havdalah before eating or drinking (with the exception of water). The berachos on besamim and aish are omitted. It is most ideal for Havdalah to be recited by a man and have a katan (a minor age 6+, preferably a boy) drink the wine or grape juice (in this case the man will not need to hear Havdalah again after the fast). Otherwise a woman may recite it and/or drink it herself. Some say beer or coffee should be used in place of wine/grape juice if an adult is drinking it.

Washing the Body. One may not wash their hands, face, or body. One should wash netilas yadayim up to the knuckles upon rising; there is no need to be overly careful with this measurement. After relieving oneself, one should wash until the knuckles prior to reciting asher yatzar. One may wash a part of the body that has become dirty. Those who are not fasting and are washing for bread wash their hands in the usual manner.

Creams and Lotions. One may not apply creams or lotions to the skin. Hair products and cosmetics are also prohibited. Ointments that serve an important need, such as antibiotic creams, are permitted. Deodorants are a subject of debate; consult your rav.

Leather Shoes. One may not wear leather shoes (including shoes that are partially leather). The custom is for young children to refrain from wearing leather shoes as well.

Marital Relations. Marital relations are prohibited.

Study of Torah. Studying Torah brings joy and is therefore prohibited on this day of mourning. As the basic purpose of the fast is to bring oneself to repentance, studying Mussar is allowed. Other permissible subjects include Megillas Eichah, Sefer Iyov, selected verses related to the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash in Sefer Yirmiyah, Gemara Gittin 55b-58a, the 3rd perek of Moed Katan and Hilchos Tishah B'Av.

Greeting People. Greeting people is prohibited. If one is greeted by someone, he may respond - albeit in a subdued manner - to avoid embarrassing the person. Wishing someone mazal tov is not considered a form of greeting, but rather a blessing, and is therefore permitted.

Work and Melachah. Brief acts of "melachah" (e.g., turning on a light, driving short distances) are permitted. One should not engage in business or chores that take a long time (e.g. mowing the lawn) before chatzos (1:02 PM in NYC). Ideally, cooking and cleaning should be postponed until after chatzos as well. Some are particular to not work for the entire day. One who must work should ideally pause and reflect every so often on the nature of the day.

Chairs and Beds. Until chatzos, one may only sit on a chair that is lower than three tefachim (approximately 12"), or, according to some, on the floor.

Many have the minhag to sleep in a less comfortable position (e.g., fewer pillows, lying on the floor, etc.) on the night of Tishah B'Av.

Tishah B'Av Night. The lights are dimmed in Shul and the paroches is removed from the Aron Kodesh. Atah Chonantanu is added in Shemoneh Esrei. Eichah is leined, followed by several Kinnos. V'ata Kadosh is recited; Vihi Noam and V'yitein L'cha are omitted. Tiskabel is omitted from Kaddish Shaleim.

Shacharis. Tallis and tefillin are not worn; the tallis katan is donned, albeit, according to most, without a berachah. Candles are not lit at the amud. The sheliach tzibbur says Aneinu in Chazaras HaShatz; Bircas Kohanim is omitted. Avinu Malkeinu and Tachanun are omitted. Following Kerias HaTorah and the Haftarah, Kinnos are recited. Kinnos should be recited with sincerity. There is no need to keep up with the pace of the sheliach tzibbur and one may end along with the congregation without reciting the complete Kinnos. After Kinnos, Shacharis resumes. Lam'natzeach is omitted, and in

Uva L'tzion the verse of VaAni Zos Berisi is omitted. Tiskabel is omitted from Kaddish Shaleim. The Shir Shel Yom is not said until Minchah.

Minchah. In most Shuls, the Paroches is returned to the Aron. Tallis and tefillin are worn. The Shir shel Yom is recited (as well as Ein Keilokeinu - for Nusach Sefard). Kerias Hatorah with Haftarah. Nacheim is inserted in Shemoneh Esrei, and - for those fasting - Aneinu as well. Bircas Kohanim is recited in Chazaras HaShatz, and Sim Shalom is said in place of Shalom Rav (Nusach Ashkenaz). Tachanun and Avinu Malkeinu are not said. Kiddush Levanah is recited (some have the custom to change into leather shoes before doing so).

As Havdalah was not recited on Motzaei Shabbos, it must be recited now before eating or drinking (with the exception of water). Just the berachos of Hagafen and Hamavdil are recited. One may drink the wine himself (with no need to give it to a child).

As the Beis Hamikdash continued to burn through the 10th of Av, the restrictions of the Nine Days remain mostly in effect until chatzos on Monday, August 4th. This includes the prohibitions against haircuts, meat, wine, laundry, and music. A warm shower for part of the body or a regular cool shower may be taken if necessary. It is recommended to abstain from marital relations, other than leil tevillah (or any other extenuating circumstances).

The following are some of the most commonly recited kinnos:

6. "שבת סורר מני" - A kinnah based on the verses of Eichah 9. "איכה תפארת" - ייקונן 11. "מראשתי" - The frightful fulfillment of the curses of the Tochachah 11. "זכור אשר עשה" - Yirmiyahu's kinnah upon the death of Yoshiyahu 16. "צד" - The wickedness of Titus 17. "אם תאכלנה נשים פרים" - Gruesome details of the Temple destruction 21. "ארזי הלבנון" - The Asara Harugei Malchus who were executed Al Kiddush Hashem 23. "ויאת נוי חטאתי" - Story of the son and daughter of R' Yishmael Kohen Gadol 25. "מי יתן ראשי מים" - Since Tishah B'Av is considered by Chazal to be the source of all major calamities that befell Klal Yisroel, we discuss in this kinnah the tragic era of the Crusades. 26. "אז בהלוך ירמיהו" - The pain of the Shechinah, and the pleas of the Avos and Imahos at the time of the churban 28. "איך תנחמוני" - The seeming impossibility of consolation from such enormous tragedies 31. "אש" - The contrast between our triumphant exodus from Egypt, and our tragic exile from Jerusalem *. Kinnah pertaining to the Holocaust 36. "ציון, הלא תשאל" - Expresses the yearning to leave galus and reach the land of Eretz Yisrael. 41. "שאלי שרופה באש" - Describes the tragic incident of the burning of the wagon loads of Talmud in the public square in Paris in 1242. 45. "אלי ציון" - Expressing our sorrow while noting that through the pain the ultimate redemption will emerge

It is said, "It is better to say fewer passages with concentration, than to say many with little concentration" (Tur O.C. 1). One should concentrate on mourning the tragic past and inspire oneself to teshuva and a better future.

כל המתאבל על ירושלים זוכה ורואה בשמחתה (Taanis 30b)

Those who properly mourn the loss of Yerushalayim merit to see her joy.

Wishing you a meaningful Tisha B'av.

from: **Rabbi Chanan Morrison** <chanan@ravkooktorah.org>

date: Jul 31, 2025, 2:53 AM

subject: **Rav Kook on Tisha Be'Av and Anticipating Redemption**

There are six measures, the Sages taught, by which we are judged:

"When brought for heavenly judgment, one is questioned: 'Were your business dealings honest? Did you set fixed hours for Torah study? Did you engage in procreation? Did you anticipate redemption? Did you discuss wisdom? Did you discern new insights?'" (Shabbat 31a)

Most of these questions indeed are the cornerstones of a life well-lived. But the fourth one — צִפִּית לְיִשׁוּעָה — "Did you anticipate redemption?" - why is that so important? Don't we all hope for the best? What does this trait reveal about how one has lived one's life?

We are Part of the Nation

It is important to understand that this anticipation is not simply hoping that our personal difficulties will quickly be resolved. Rather, it means that we should anticipate the redemption of Israel and all of humanity. As Rashi

explains, one should look forward to the fulfillment of the visions of the prophets.

This demand is not a trivial one. As individuals we are easily caught up with our own personal problems and issues. In truth, we should feel that we are like a limb of a great organism. We should recognize that we are part of a nation, which, in turn, is part of all humanity. The betterment of each individual contributes to the life of the larger community, thus advancing the redemption of the nation and the universe.

The question *לִישׁוּעָה לְצִיּוֹן*? is an important measure of one's life. It is the yardstick that determines whether our lives have acquired a selfless, universal quality. By anticipating the redemption of the greater community, we demonstrate that we were able to raise ourselves above the narrow concerns of our private lives. We strive not just for personal ambitions, but also for the ultimate elevation of the nation and the entire world. We are part of the nation; its joys are our joys and its redemption is our redemption.

The Sentry

It is instructive to note that the heavenly tribunal does not ask about our hopes (*tikvah*) for redemption, but rather our anticipation (*tziyiah*) of redemption. The word *tziyiah* indicates a constant watchfulness, like a soldier posted to the lookout (*tatzpit*), serving at his observation post for days and even years. The sentry may not abandon his watch, even though he observes no changes.

We, too, are on the lookout. We should examine every incident that occurs in the world. With each new development, we should consider whether this is perhaps something that will advance the redemption of Israel and the entire world.

However, *tziyiah* *leyeshu'ah* is not merely passive observation. Woe to the army whose sentries perceive a threat but fail to take action. The moment there is some development in the field, the soldiers must respond swiftly, to defend or retreat. Our *tziyiah* also includes the readiness to act promptly. While these two traits — constant watchfulness and rapid response — may appear contradictory, they are both included in the obligation of *tziyiah* *leyeshu'ah*.

(Silver from the Land of Israel. Adapted from *Olat Re'iyah* vol. I, pp. 279-280; *Ein Eyah* vol. III on Shabbat 31a (2:164).)

DAF YOMI

Daf Yomi Avoda Zara 43

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Drawing or Sculpting Forbidden Images

Items Related to Idolatry

Constructing and Keeping Idols 1. In addition to the prohibition of worshipping an idol, the Torah prohibits one from even constructing an idol[1] even if one will not worship it himself[2] as a means of distancing us from performing idolatry.[3] Whether one receives Malkot for doing so is subject to debate.[4] 2. It is similarly prohibited to construct an idol for someone else, whether it be a Jew or non-Jew who's instructing it be made.[5] 3. One may not even instruct another person to construct an idol for, and it even entails a punishment of Malkot.[6] 4. Therefore, one who constructs an idol for himself receives twice Malkot.[7] 5. All of these Issurim apply to all human beings, Jews and Non-Jews, regardless of gender.[8] 6. If one finds an object that might be an idol (a "Tzelem," which might be a "Pesel" / Avodah Zarah), if it is commonly worshipped in that area, he may not keep it. The status of the cross is debated in this context.[9]

Symbols of Other Religions 1. It is permitted to use and look at a stamp with a cross on it.[10] 2. According to many poskim if a person is given a medallion with a cross on it as an honor it is permitted to wear it when visiting a government or Church official.[11] 3. It is permitted to have and use a chess set even though the king piece has a cross on it.[12] 4. It is discouraged and most probably assur to manufacture miniature crucifixes, crosses, and other items used *lichvod* Avodah Zarah.[13]

Non Idolatrous Images 1. Lo Taasun Itti:[14] The Torah prohibits constructing objects that replicate Hashem's "servants" even if it is not for idolatry but rather for décor. 2. "Servants" includes: a. Inhabitants of the upper abode (Mador

HaElyon) - Malachei HaSharet, Ofanim, Serafim, and Chayot HaKodesh (the four faces - a human, eagle, bull, and lion), b. Inhabitants of the lower abode (Mador HaTachton) - sun, moon, and mazalot c. Humans[15] d. The Beit HaMikdash and its vessels 3. The Gemara presents three limits to this prohibition, which enable one to possess such an object if not make it as well: when it's made by somebody else (a Non-Jew), when it's made of many parts,[16] and when it's made for instructional purposes. Some accept all three answers,[17] while others only accept the final answer.[18] 4. Even if the item was made by someone else, if it protrudes, there is often an addition prohibiting component known as "Chashad" - that one is suspect of worshipping the image. Chashad applies to all images, not only those prohibited by function of Lo Ta'asun Itti.[19] Although the Gemara states that a public setting ("Rabbim") removes the concern of Chashad, the Poskim write how employing that leniency is frowned upon.[20] 5. An image that physically protrudes is known as "Boletet," and one that is etched into a surface is known as "Shoka'at." Some consider painted images, images drawn with ink, and embroidered images to be protruding[21], but many disagree.[22] Some argue photography is neither Boletet nor Shoka'at, because it's completely flat.[23] 6. Drawing an image of the sun to demonstrate what happens in Maaseh Bereshit to explain pesukim in the Torah is an example of instructional purposes.[24] but sculpting a sculpture in a course to learn how is not.[25]

Angels and Other Heavenly Entities 1. The Torah prohibits constructing replicas of angelic beings such as Malachei HaSharet, Ofanim, Serafim, and Chayot HaKodesh (the four faces - a human, eagle, bull, and lion).[26] 2. Some argue that the prohibition not only includes constructing these entities, but possessing them, as well,[27], but others disagree.[28] 3. The Ramban and others hold that it is prohibited to construct replicas of upper heavenly entities even if they are two-dimensional,[29] but many disagree.[30] Nevertheless, one should be strict on the matter.[31] 4. If one finds such an object, he may benefit from it but not keep it.[32]

Sun, Moon, and Stars 1. It is forbidden to draw a sun, moon, or stars whether the image is a two dimensional or a three dimensional protruding image. This is because numerous Rishonim argue that the limits of the prohibition are informed by our human perception of the object that one is attempting to replicate. Since we see humans in three dimensions, producing a three dimensional human is prohibited, but a two dimensional one is not. In contrast, as we perceive celestial bodies as two dimensional, drawing even two dimensional images of the sun and moon is prohibited.[33] Some disagree,[34] but the Halacha follows the former.[35] 2. The Rambam holds that images of the sun and moon themselves are not prohibited, but, rather, the Torah prohibits drawing images of solar and lunar deities, idolatrous symbols of the sun and moon, such as "Ra," the Egyptian sun god. The Halacha does not follow the Rambam, at least to be lenient.[36] 3. Although in general a partial/incomplete image is permitted to create or own,[37] since we as humans observe the moon in its various stages, images of all of its stages are prohibited to create according to some Poskim.[38] Some think that stringency does not apply to the sun, even though we observe a "partial" sun when it rises and sets at the horizon.[39] while others prohibit it in all stages.[40] 4. Therefore, one shouldn't teach children to draw the sun, moon, or stars in their complete form, because when they get older it will be prohibited for them, anyway.[41] 5. Some say that it is forbidden to create a temporary image of a sun, moon, or stars.[42] 6. One should not bake cookies in the shape of a moon.[43] 7. Stained glass windows in shul with the sun in the middle are a violation of both this prohibition as well as Chukot Akum.[44] 8. Taking a photo of the sun, moon, or stars and developing the negative may not be prohibited but printing it most probably is. Keeping it certainly is.[45]

Human Images Another facet of Lo Taasun Itti prohibits producing images of humans for even decorative purposes if they protrude.[46] as the word Itti is darshened to be read Oti - "Do not create Me." [47] 1. The prohibitions of construction and possession only apply to whole images of humans, also known as a "Partzuf", not partial ones.[48] That said, the Poskim debate the definition of partial. Most argue that "Partzuf" means the whole body[49] and further debate that even omitting or removing a finger or limb suffices,[50] while others argue that half the body must be removed, not just a minor appendage.[51] Others argue that "Partzuf means" any figure that has a fully etched out face.[52] This has relevance to coins with faces minted on them.[53] However, if the image is only of one full side of a human (known by some as "profile"), it is permissible according to all opinions.[54] 2. Dolls and toys that are full images of humans may be purchased even if they protrude, because some say the chashad (concern

people will suspect one) of worshipping human images no longer applies, plus everybody knows that dolls are not worshipped in general, they are not made in a permanent way, and they are "mevuzim" since they are thrown around and get dirty with play. The same goes for selling them.[55] However, some recommend ruining a limb or part of the face, such as the nose.[56] Some even permit manufacturing them, as well.[57] 3. This prohibition applies to oragami, as well.[58] 4. It is permitted to draw a two dimensional drawing of a person, therefore, it is permitted to take a picture of a person.[59] 5. Due to the Halachic debate as well as Kabbalistic concerns, when photography first became widespread, many Jews took a strict stance except when necessary or if it was a partial image.[60] but over time that stringency has faded away with only some especially righteous individuals not allowing their picture to be taken. Nowadays, the universal practice is to allow one's picture to be taken and to take pictures of others, especially if the images are not of the whole front or back of the body.[61] 6. It is prohibited to construct a wax figure in the image of a human, but one may visit a wax museum provided the figures were produced by non-Jews. If they were made by Jews, though, some Poskim forbid it due to the Chillul Hashem of religious people coming to see items created in sin.[62] 7. One could justify possessing such a human image if it is placed in a public venue, such as a synagogue or cemetery. Although relying on that leniency is discouraged by many,[63] poskim cite it to permit on to display a manikin in a store window,[64] but many disagree and only allow a bust but not a full manikin.[65] 8. Some say one would have to give up his life (Kiddush Hashem) rather than violate this prohibition.[66]

Animals and Plants 1. It is permitted to construct an image of animals, vegetation, or scenery, either etched or protruding.[67] 2. Nevertheless, tradition and a sizeable group of Rishonim and Acharonim take serious issue with images of animals in synagogues, especially if they are on the Aron Kodesh, Parochet, or windows.[68]

Replications of the Vessels of the Temple 1. The Torah prohibits one from constructing exact replicas of the Mishkan, Beit HaMikdash, and their vessels, such as the Menorah, Shulchan, and Mizbeach.[69] 2. According to some Rishonim, even possessing any such object is Assur Min HaTorah[70], while some Poskim disagree.[71] 3. The Rambam placed these Halachot in Hilchot Beit HaBechirah (7:10), not in Hilchot Avodah Zara, potentially because he saw the issur to be a function of Mora Mikdash.[72] Others suggest that it's because he includes building the vessels of the Beit HaMikdash in the grander Mitzvah of building the Beit HaMikdash itself,[73] unlike the Ramban who thinks they are separate.[74]

Drawings 1. Drawings of these are permitted, as well.[75]

For Education Purposes 1. Making a model to demonstrate what the Torah is referring to (i.e. educational purposes) is permissible.[76]

Vessels of the Bet Hamikdash 1. Ultimately, any deviation that would render a vessel invalid for Mikdash purposes renders it permissible to be construct outside of the Mikdash.[77]

Making a Seven Branch Menorah 1. It's forbidden to make a menorah of seven branches even of other metals besides gold, even if it's not 18 Tefachim tall, and even without the appropriate designs such as the flowers and bolts of the menorah.[78] However, it's permissible to make it out of wood or non-metals.[79] Having curved as opposed to straight branches does not make it permissible.[80] 2. If one ends up in possession of a seven branch menorah, he should remove or add a branch.[81] If there is no trunk and just seven branches coming out of a flat base, the prohibition does not apply, especially if they're not all in a straight row.[82] 3. Many poskim permit a seven branch electrical menorah, because the variation of electric bulbs as opposed to cup of oil with wicks is significant enough to avoid the issur. On this basis, a shul is allowed to keep such a Menorah if they end up in possession of it.[83]

Replicating the Bet Hamikdash 1. It is only forbidden to make the a house the dimensions of the Hiechal, a porch the dimensions of the Ulam, and a courtyard the dimensions of the Azara of the Bet Hamikdash.[84] The dimensions of the Heichal in the second Bet Hamikdash were 60 amot by 20 amot by 40 amot tall.[85] In the first Bet Hamikdash it was 30 amot tall[86] and it is forbidden to replicate the dimensions of the first Bet Hamikdash as well.[87] The Ulam was 90 amot by 11 amot by 40 amot.[88] The Azara was 135 amot by 187 amot.[89] If one alters the dimensions even slightly it is permitted.[90] 2. The prohibition applies whether or not one makes rooms or attaches it to another house.[91]

Making a structure that mimics the Ulam is forbidden whether it has 3 or 4 walls.[92] 3. There is no prohibition to make a courtyard mimicking the

dimensions of Har Habayit.[93] 4. If a non-Jew made a courtyard or house according to these dimensions that replicate the Bet Hamikdash, some say that one can nonetheless live in it, while others forbid.[94]

Further Reading 1. Chut Shani, Pesach, pp. 223-241, by Rav Nissim Karelitz, Kuntress be'Assiyat Tzurot 2. The Laws of Forbidden Images, by Rabbi Michael Zylberman 3. Halachically Speaking, Halachos of Forbidden Images 4. Halachic Aspects of Taking Photos, Din Online 5. Shiurim on Perek Kol HaTzlamim related to these Halachot Sources 1. Shemot 20:4 2. Rambam Sefer HaMitzvot (Lo Taaseh 2), Mishneh Torah Hilchot Avodah Zarah 3:9. Note the different versions of translations in the former. 3. Chinuch 27 4. The Rambam ibid writes that one does get Malkot, but the Raavad argues it's a lav shebechlatot. 5. Rambam Sefer HaMitzvot (Lo Taaseh 3), Mishneh Torah Hilchot Avodah Zarah 3:10 6. Rambam Sefer HaMitzvot (Lo Taaseh 2), Mishneh Torah (Hilchot Avodah Zarah 3:9). The Chinuch 27 is stunned that the Rambam considers asking someone else to construct an idol to be subject to Malkot, as it's seemingly a Lav She'ein Bo Maaseh and Ein Shaliach leDvar Averah. The Lechem Mishneh (ad loc.) writes that since a Maaseh is being done on his behalf, this is considered like Shelichut, but the Minchat Chinuch (ad loc.) rejects that interpretation in favor of deeming this a Gezerat HaKatuv, not actual Shelichut. Both Rav Moshe Feinstein (Iggerot Moshe Yoreh Deah 2:55) and Rav Shlomo Wahrman (She'erot Yosef vol. 3 pg. 385) dismiss the above answers in favor of a closer read of the Rambam. To them, the Rambam is saying that there are two issurim, constructing an idol, and keeping and idol. The act of placing the idol in one's domain is the Maaseh required to violate the Averah and be liable for Malkot. 7. Rambam ibid, Chinuch 214 8. Chinuch 27, Minchat Chinuch 27:7 and 39:12 9. Avodah Zarah 40b, Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 141:1), Shach (Yoreh Deah 141:4) 10. Igrot Moshe YD 1:69 writes that it isn't considered a violation of Al Tifu El Haelim to use a stamp with a cross on it. His reasons are: 1) Since the images are just used for decorations and not actually for religious purposes it is permitted to look at them (Tosfot Shabbat 149). 2) Since it is used all the time a person is used to that symbol (Tosfot Avoda Zara 50). 3) It isn't an deity it is just a symbol to remind them of their deity. 4) Since the stamps are disgraced by being marked up and also being thrown out that isn't considered something a person would worship. 11. Rav Ovadia in Yechava Daat 3:65 permits wearing a medallion with a cross on it that was given to a person as an honor. He begins with the Rama YD 141:1 who writes that crosses are permitted in benefit since they're not avoda zara themselves. Although the Shach limits this to a case where you knew it wasn't worshiped but in general you have to assume that they were worshiped Rav Ovadia says that the Shach's concern doesn't apply to medallions. He also cites the Zera Emet 2:45 and Rav Chaim Palagi in Lev Chaim 3:100 who say that a jewelry with a cross isn't usually worshiped and can be worn if necessary. 12. Rav Asher Bush in Shoel Bshlomo 1:60:2. His proofs are: 1. Tosfot A"z 50 and Shabbat 149 by using coins with religious symbols on them say that they are muter since they are for decorative purposes and they are used all the time. Igrot Moshe YD 1:69 cites these Tosfot. 2. He also cites Rav Ovadia in Yechava Daat 3:65 who permits wearing a medallion with a cross on it for the same reasons. He has many proofs but for one the Rama YD 141:1 who says crosses are muter bhanah if they weren't worshiped since they're not a'z themselves. Although the Shach 141:6 says you have to assume that they were worshiped but Rav Ovadia quotes the Zera Emet 2:45 who says that doesn't apply to medallions. 3. He lastly cites Ritva A"z 42b that crosses on cups are for decorative purposes and are permitted. 13. See Ben Ish Chai (Shanah II, Masei 7), the exchange between Rav Ezra Hedaya and Rav Ben Tzion Meir Chai Uziel recorded in Nachalat Ezra (vol. 1 Yoreh Deah 2) and Mishpetei Uziel 2:17), Binyan Av 1:37, and Kovetz Teshuvot 3:120 14. Shemot 20:20, Avodah Zarah 43ab, Rosh HaShanah 24b, Rambam (Sefer HaMitzvot, Lo Taaseh 4), Sefer HaChinuch 39, Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah 15. The Sefer HaChinuch 39 explains that this is because only Hashem can create Man and instill intellect into him. 16. The Ritva (Avodah Zarah 43b) surmises that one can even make it himself if it's in many parts, but he concludes stringently. Minchat Chinuch 39:2 opines that this is a standalone answer and it's permissible for one to even put the pieces together himself, most probably because they don't fit together so tightly. 17. Rosh, Ran (Avodah Zarah 43b), Rama (Yoreh Deah 141:4) 18. The Rif only quotes the final answer of Lehitlamed/Lehavin ul'horot (instructional purposes). Although the Rambam (Hilchot Avodah Zarah 3:11) omits all three of them, which leave the Kesef Mishneh confused. The Ran understands that he accepts the final one, but the Minchat Chinuch 39:2 thinks it's obvious that the Rambam accepts all three. Ultimately, Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 141:4) rules only like the lehitlamed answer, but the Rama fills the other two back in. 19. Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 141:5) 20. Rabbeinu Yerucham quoted in Bedek HaBayit (Yoreh Deah 141:4), Shach (Yoreh Deah 141:27) 21. Ritva (Avodah Zarah 43b), Pitchei Teshuvah (Yoreh Deah 141:6) 22. See Taz (Yoreh Deah 141:13) and Nekudot HaKesef ad loc. and Avnei Derech 5:11 23. Yabia Omer (vol. 4 Yoreh Deah 22:3, vol. 11 Orach Chaim 53), Yechave Da'at 3:63, Halichot Olam (vol. 7 pg 282, Masei 4) 24. Shevet HaLevi 7:134:8, Iggerot Moshe yd 3:33, Halichot Olam (vol. 7 page 288) 25. Chatam Sofer Yoreh Deah 128, Pitchei Teshuvah (Yoreh Deah 141:8*). That's learning to make (Lilmod Laasot). Although, leaving the last few parts for someone else to finish might be permissible 26. See Tosafot 43b the other Rishonim ad loc, Minchat Chinuch 39:3, and Iggerot Moshe (Yoreh Deah 2:55) at length regarding the overlap between Chayot and humans. 27. Ran (Avodah Zarah 43b) 28. Tur (Yoreh Deah 141) as explained by Beit Yosef 29. Ramban, Rashba, Ritva (Avodah Zarah 43b and Rosh HaShanah 24b) 30. Tosafot, Tur, Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 141:4) 31. Taz (Yoreh Deah 141:12), Nehar Mitzrayim (Avodah Zarah 5) 32. Rama (Yoreh Deah 141:4), Shach (Yoreh Deah 141:24) 33. Rabbeinu Tam, Ri, and Riva quoted by Tosafot (Rosh HaShanah 24b, Avodah Zarah 43b), Rosh (Avodah Zarah 3:5), Mordechai (Avodah Zarah 839), Ritva (Rosh Hashanah 24b), Rambam (Hilchot Avodah Zarah 3:11) 34. Ramban, Raavad (Hilchot Avodah Zarah 3:11), Rashba (Rosh Hashanah 24b), Ran (Avodah Zarah) 35. Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 141:4) 36. Rambam (Perush HaMishnah Avodah Zarah 3:3, quoted by Rama (Yoreh Deah 141:4) lehalacha, but the Shach (Yoreh Deah 141:8) and GRA (Yoreh Deah 141:7) take up arms that the Rambam's shita is quite difficult in light of the sugya. 37. Shach Yoreh Deah 141:25 writes that any of the pictures that are forbidden to draw are only forbidden if they are done completely but not if you only draw a part of it. 38. Minchat Chinuch 39:9. Darkei Teshuva 141:38 cites a dispute between the Alsheich (teshuva 77) and Maharit YD 35 whether drawing a part of the moon is permitted, the Alsheich is lenient while the Maharit is strict. Finally he added the Shoel Umeishiv 3:71 and Amudei Esh 16:2 who are strict. See Halichot Olam (vol. 7 pg 286) who quote some who said the Alsheich said the opposite. 39. Shevet HaLevi (vo. 7 Siman 134:7 40. Minchat Yitzchak 10:72, Yabia Omer (vol. 10 Yoreh Deah 58:6, pg 372), Halichot Olam (vol. 7 pg 286) As an interesting application of these principles, Rav Chaim Palagi in Ruach Chaim YD 141:2 asks how were they allowed to have a picture of the sun on the tombstone of Yehoshua like Rashi Yehoshua 24:30 writes? Tzitz Eliezer 9:44 answers: 1) It wasn't protruding, so according to the Rishonim who permit an etched in sun, it was ok. 2) Others made it and this in public 3) The effect of causing agony of the loss of such a special person is limmod, just like Rav Chaim Palagi writes about image of Avraham Avinu as a symbol of monotheism - they were lax in Yehoshua's hesped, so this was a teshuvah. 4) The Rambam writes that only the symbolism of the sun is prohibited, not a circle. 5) There were no solar rays included. 6) It was a piece of pottery (he was buried in Timnat Cheres, where the sun (symbolized by pottery/cheres) was worshipped), not an actual sun. See Yabia Omer ibid for some discussion of his answers. 41. Igrot Moshe OC 5:9:6 writes that once a child reached the age of chinuch they should be taught not to draw a picture of a sun, moon, or star. If their drawing is so inaccurate that most adults couldn't tell what it was then it is permitted but still an adult shouldn't teach children to draw that because they will grow up thinking that it is permitted and do so when their drawing skills improve. Star-K writes that perhaps making a cake in the shape of a sun (circle with cookie sticks as rays) is permitted since it isn't an accurate representation. 42. Minchat Yitzchak 10:72 writes that it is forbidden to temporarily create the image of a sun or moon since it is considered an aytsa (creation). See however Darkei Teshuva 141:27. 43. Shevet HaLevi 7:134:10, Avnei Derech 9:106 44. Chatam Sofer (Yoreh Deah 129), Pitchei Teshuvah (Yoreh Deah 141:3) 45. Shevet Halevi 7:134:6. See Minchat Yitzchak 10:72 46. Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 141:7) 47. The Sefer Chinchun 39 explains that we are all created with Tzelem Elokim - not that we have Hashem's body literally, but that our intellect stems from him. Rabbeinu Bechayeh (Shemot 19:20) quotes the Rambam in Moreh Nevuchim 1:1 who says similarly, and the Ritva (Rosh Hashanah 24a) explains that Oti is a reference to the vision of Hashem that Moshe Rabbeinu saw in his Nevuah. The Shach (Yoreh Deah 141:21) notes this, as well. Some (see Rabbeinu Yehonatan and Nimukei Yosef cited in the footnotes to Sefer HaChinuch ibid) write that Oti is a reference to Moshe Rabbeinu. 48. Shulchan Aruch and Rama (Yoreh Deah 141:7). See Mabiz (vol. 2 Yoreh Deah 35) and Shach (Yoreh Deah 141:32) who read Tosafot as disagreeing with this principle. 49. Rosh (Avodah Zarah 3:5), Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 141:7) 50. Beit David

(Yoreh Deah 74), Chatam Sofer (Yoreh Deah 6:6), Yechave Da'at 3:64, Yabia Omer (vol. 10 Yoreh Deah 58:6) 51. Kisseh Eliyahu (Yoreh Deah 141:7), Rav Pe'alim (vol. 4 Yoreh Deah 10), Rav Ovadia (Yabia Omer vol. 10 Yoreh Deah 58:6) argues that their read of Shulchan Aruch is not correct and the Halacha follows the Beit David. 52. Ritva (Avodah Zarah 42b), Samag (Lavin 22) quoted by Maharshah, Perishah (Yoreh Deah 141:37), Taz (Yoreh Deah 141:15), Shach (Yoreh Deah 141:32) says that one is stringent is praiseworthy. The Maharit YD 35 argues that we should follow the Samag and brings a proof from Tosfot Yoma 54b. 53. Pitchei Teshuvah (Yoreh Deah 141:10) quotes She'elat Yaavetz 170 is who is very strict based on his readings of the aforementioned Rosh, Avnei Yashfeh 1:151 54. Ben Ish Chai (Shanah II, Masei 10), Halichot Olam vol. 7 pg 285, Masei 4-5, Yalkut Yosef (Kitzur Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah 141:2, 7) 55. Yabia Omer (vol. 3 Yoreh Deah 8, vol. 10 Yoreh Deah 58:6 page 372), Yechaveh Da'at 3:64, Halichot Olam (vol. 7 pg 281, Masei 3), Mekor Chaim 265:7, Binyan Av 1:37 based on Nachal Eshkol 3:50, Maharit YD 35, Pri Hasadeh 3:38, and Netsiv (Emek Shaylah 57:3). 56. Shiurei Beracha (Yoreh Deah 141:2), Nehar Mitzrayim (Hilchot Avodah Zarah 2), Teshuvot veHanhagot 1:804, Shevet Halevi 7:134:1, Avnei Derech 6:112 57. Rav Ovadia (Yabia Omer (vol. 3 Yoreh Deah 8) originally prohibited manufacturing them, but then seems to have retracted and permitted manufacture as well (Halichot Olam vol. 7 pg 281, Masei 3). See also , Binyan Av 1:37. 58. Avnei Derech 6:113 59. The Rambam Avoda Zara 43b s.v. dakshinan holds that it is forbidden to draw a two dimensional image of a person. However, the Rambam Avoda Zara 3:11 holds that it is only forbidden if it is three dimensional. That is also the opinion of the Rosh Avoda Zara 3:5. Shulchan Aruch 141:5 codifies the opinion of the Rambam. 60. See Darkei Teshuvah (Yoreh Deah 141:35) who writes that both Rav Yaakov Emden and Rav Yonatan Eibeshitz were machmir not to allow people to draw their images even though people would benefit from seeing their face, photographs of even gedolim pictures are terrible, and that one should stay away. This is especially prohibited given the view of the Rambam and Ritva that even flat images are prohibited. The Mahari Ahsod famously did not allow anyone to take his picture. This feeling is echoed by Rav Ovadia Hedaya (Yaskil Avdi (vol. 2 Kuntress Acharon, Yoreh Deah 11) who instructed a community in Poland whose leader wanted to have all of the kollel member's pictures taken to ensure only those who are identifiable and attending receive their stipends. He agreed that those who do not wish to have their picture taken should not be forced to forgo their stringent custom. The Ben Ish Chai (Shanah II, Masei 9 and Rav Berachot (Maarechet Tzadi, page 130b)) writes similarly that it is permitted according to the letter of the law, but for Kabbalistic reasons one should not be meikel. 61. Nehar Mitzrayim (Hilchot Avodah Zarah 3). Yabia Omer (vol. 4 Yoreh Deah 22:3, vol. 11 Orach Chaim 53), Yechave Da'at 3:63, Halichot Olam (vol. 7 pg 282, Masei 4), Yalkut Yosef (Kitzur Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah 141:6), Teshuvot veHanhagot 3:263. Rav Ovadia argues that the Ritva was discussing dyed/painted images, because they protrude slightly, but even the Ritva would permit photos, as they are completely flat. He also testifies that the Rabbanim in Yeshivat Porat Yosef were lenient, except apparently Rav Ovadia Hedaya who was missing from a certain group picture. See Shevet HaLevi 7:134:5 who is unsure if a photo is the same as adam that's not protruding, because it happens on its own and Minchat Yitzchak 10:72 who thinks it's obviously prohibited to photograph the sun. 62. Teshuvot veHanhagot 3:263, Avnei Yashfeh 1:151 explaining a ruling of Rav Elyashiv 63. Chatam Sofer (Yoreh Deah 6:4) see also ibid 6:6. See Beit David Yoreh Deah 75. 64. Az Nidberu 8:59 relying on the Chochmat Adam that there is no chashad of Adam nowadays 65. Halichot Olam (vol. 7 page 285, Masei 4-5), Yalkut Yosef (Yoreh Deah 141:2, 7). Nevertheless, since we're discussing matters of Issurei Deoraita, the Ben Ish Chai (Shanah II, Masei 10) recommends being Machmir. 66. Kol Mevasser 1:14 writes that creating a protruding image of a human is a biblical prohibition of Lo Tasun Iti which is a detail of Avoda Zara. Therefore, he writes that one should give up one's life to avoid violating that prohibition. He cites the Minchat Chinuch 39. He also cites a story in Josephus (Antiques of the Jew v. 18 ch. 3 n. 1) about a town that opposed the Cesar's decree to put up flags with his image on them and were killed because of that. 67. Rambam (Sefer HaMitzvot, Lo Taaseh 4; Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Avodah Zarah 3:11), Tosafot Yoma 54a, Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 141:6) 68. Mordechai Avodah Zarah 840 quotes a Machloket Rabbeinu Ephraim and Rabbeinu Elyakim who seemingly disagree on whether or not one may install images of animals in synagogues. Rabbeinu Ephraim argues that animals are not included in Lo Taasun Iti, so they may be constructed, and they're not worshipped, so there's no chashad issue. Rabbeinu Elyakim rereads the sugya to prohibit owning images of animals, as well, so he had them remove the images of lions from the shul in Cologne. The Mordechai adds how the Rambam is lenient, and Maharam (Tosafot Yoma 54a) says how they may be distracting, but they're not assur. Plus, there's no chashad when they're flat, and even a Jew can make them, as we see from many instances in Shas. See Ohr Zarua (Avodah Zarah 203-204) and Hagahot Asheri ad loc, as well. The Beit Yosef (Yoreh Deah 141:6) paskens like R' Ephraim and resolves many of the objections R' Elyakim raises, and that is what he seems to pasken in Shulchan Aruch. However, in Avkat Rochel Siman 63, he adamantly argues that the Halacha follows R' Elyakim completely and arguing based on Teshuvot of the Rambam and the Rosh that anything distracting is forbidden to introduce into a shul setting, contradicting himself in Beit Yosef. Even more puzzling is that in Avkat Rochel Siman 66, he writes to be lenient like R' Ephraim! Many Acharonim attempt to resolve the blatant double contradiction, with a variety of resolutions and suggestions. At the end of the day, they all urge one to keep the images out of shul, especially if they protrude. Sephardic authorities report how they did not have this issue as much in their home countries. See Yaskil Avdi (vol. 1 Yoreh Deah 5, vol. 2 Yoreh Deah 9, and vol. 7 Siman 17), Tzitz Eliezer 3:24, Mishpetei Uziel 9:21-22, Nehar Mitzrayim (Hilchot Avodah zarah 1-6), Mikveh HaMayim (vol. 3 Yoreh Deah Siman 19), Yechaveh Daat 3:62, Yalkut Yosef (Yoreh Deah 141:9, 11; Orach Chaim 90:45), Emek Yehoshua (vol. 1 Yoreh Deah 20-21, vol. 2 Yoreh 19, vol. 6 Orach Chaim 30), Magen Avot (Lebhar, Yoreh Deah 141), Heichal Yitzchak (Orach Chaim 11), Iggerot Moshe YD 2:55, Rav Joseph B. Soloveitchik in Community, Covenant, and Commitment page 3, and Tefillatam Shel Yehudim, in Maayanot 8 pp 9-11 (reprinted in Mipninei HaRav page 34) 69. Shemot 22:19, Avodah Zarah 43a, Rosh Hashana 24a, Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 141:8). Rav Moshe Feinstein (Iggerot Moshe Yoreh Deah 3:33) notes how the measurements of all versions of the Mishkan and Beit HaMikdash are included. Halichot Olam vol. 7 pg 288 70. Rashba as quoted by the Ritva (Rosh HaShanah 24b and Avodah Zarah 43b) and Ran (Avodah Zarah 43b). 71. Pitchei Teshuvah (Yoreh Deah 141:12) 72. Minchat Chinuch 39:1 73. Rambam Sefer HaMitzvot (Aseh 20), Shevet HaLevi 3:106 74. Hasagot leSefer HaMitzvot Shoresht 12, Aseh 33. See Beis Yitzchok 29 pg. 454. 75. Ritva Avodah Zarah 43 and Rosh Hashanah 24a 76. Iggerot Moshe (Yoreh Deah 3:33), Halichot Olam vol. 7 pg 288 77. Ritva Avodah Zarah 43 and Rosh Hashanah 24a 78. Avodah Zarah 43a, Rosh HaShanah 24a, Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah 141:8) 79. Shach (Yoreh Deah 141:35 80. Bechor Shor quoted in Pitchei Teshuvah (Yoreh Deah 141:14) 81. Shiurei Beracha (Yoreh Deah 141:8) 82. Mishpetei Uziel 2:18, Shevet HaLevi 10:129 83. Rav Ben Tzion Meir Chai Uziel (Mishpetei Uziel 2:18) and Rav Ovadia Yosef (Yabia Omer vol. 2 Orach Chaim 12, Yechaveh Daat 3:61 and 7:142, Halichot Olam vol. 7 pg 288) were lenient because it's significantly different from the Menorah in the Mikdash, plus it's made by other people, even though the Shoel Meshiv thinks that a shinui in nerot isn't me'akev to be posel. Also, when used as a decoration in shul, the good intentions of wanting to adorn the miniature House of Hashem and the lack of intention to copy the Mikdash are additional reasons to be lenient. Yaskil Avdi (vol. 7 Yoreh Deah 16) quotes Rav Herzog who thought that the lack of beit kibbul is enough to be mattir, but he recommends one be strict since it's a Torah level prohibition. Yesodei Yeshurun R' Gedalia Felder vol. 1 page 47 (Maarechet Beit HaKnesset #31) quotes the Machloket. Rav Schachter (oral communication) recommends staying away. See also Rabbi Eli Mansour's Daily Halacha on iTorah 84. Rosh Hashana 24a, Avoda Zara 43a, Shulchan Aruch Y.D. 141:8 85. Mishna Middot 4:7, Rambam Bet Habechira 4:3. See there for the thicknesses of the walls. 86. Melachim 1:6:2, Bava Batra 3a 87. Pitchei Teshuva YD 141:13 citing Bet Efraim OC 10, Mikdash Dovid Kodshim 1:3 88. Mishna Middot 4:7, Rambam Bet Habechira 4:4. See there for the thicknesses of the walls. 89. Mishna Middot 5:1, Yoma 16b, Rambam Bet Habechira 5:4 90. Rashi Avoda Zara 43a, Shach 141:33 91. Darkei Teshuva 141:54 citing the Torat Moshe 92. Shach 141:34 based on Tosfot 93. Mikdash Dovid Kodshim 1:3 94. Pitchei Teshuva YD 141:12 citing the Tiferet Lmoshe is lenient, while the Darkei Teshuva 141:52 is strict. Darkei Teshuva quotes the Maharam Rotenberg cited by Bet Yosef s.v. vhashta, Pri Haadama v. 3 a"z ch. 3, Gra 141:21, and Shiurei Bracha 141:8 are strict. He does quote the Dvar Moshe 1:122 and Mekor Mayim Chaim who are lenient.