בס"ד

Toronto Torah

Yeshiva University Torah miTzion Beit Midrash Zichron Dov

Parshat Devarim-Shabbat Chazon | 6 Av 5773/July 13, 2013 | Vol.4 Num. 40

Has He Completely Rejected Us?

Rabbi Ezra Goldschmiedt

Hope is a dominant theme in our traditions and sources, particularly when it comes to the topic of the redemption and the rebuilding of the Beit HaMikdash. Striking then, is the hopeless despair expressed by our people on Tisha b'Av. More than simply mourning our loss, we give a voice to the ominous notion that, indeed, the Jewish people have no solutions to their problems. In Megillat Eichah, the prophet Yirmiyahu vacillates between crying out to G-d and wondering if he is being listened to at all. His last words are chilling: "Return us to You, G-d, and we shall be returned; renew our days like those of old, unless You have completely rejected us and are extremely angry with us." (5:21-22) Yirmiyahu leaves us with an implicit question, and we are not sure we want to hear the answer. As Tisha b'Av begins, we dramatically remove the passage, "May the prayers and pleas of all Israel be accepted by their Father in heaven" from the kaddish prayer – we are afraid to approach the notion that G-d is not listening.

Yet our tradition demands that we believe hope remains. Maimonides' final two principles of faith confidently declare as givens the coming of Mashiach and resurrection of the dead. Upon Eichah's completion on Tisha b'Av, we customarily repeat its penultimate verse, expressing our faith that G-d, indeed, will "renew our days like those of old." Many of our *kinot* end with a message of hope, and as midday arrives, the restored kaddish once again expresses our wish that G-d will listen to our prayers. That being the case, why do we give expression to such uncertainty at all? Why would Yirmiyahu intimate that we don't know whether G-d is listening or not?

Our parshah may help us answer this question. In his synopsis of the incident of the spies, Moshe tells us once more of its final chapter. (Devarim 1:41-46) Immediately experiencing pangs of regret for believing the spies' reports, a group among Klal Yisrael, known as *ma'apilim,* owned up to their guilt. Displaying denial of the spies' disheartening message, they defiantly charged toward the Land of Israel, only to fail miserably. G-d was not with them, and they were soundly defeated by the nations of Amalek and Canaan. Seemingly in protest, the Israelites cried out to G-d, and Moshe told them a difficult truth: "G-d will not accept your voice and will not listen to you." (1:45) There are times when G-d absolutely refuses to listen to us, and this episode of the *ma'apilim* may serve us well in understanding why.

To truly begin a process of recovery in a relationship, it is not enough to acknowledge mistakes. Apologies can express regret and even come from a sincere admission of guilt, but until they reflect an internalization of just how deeply wrong the error was, they will fall far short of the mark. It is not enough to know that we have wronged someone; we need to know how deeply we have done so as well. The *ma'apilim,* admitting their sin, were off to a good start in their teshuvah process, but G-d expected more. The Israelites' failure in the incident of the spies was egregious and infected their relationship with G-d at its very core. Thirty-eight more years in the desert and the shedding of an entire generation could lead to understanding this, but simply saying sorry and moving on could not. G-d's refusal to listen was not due to a lack of compassion, but a function of the depth of the Israelites' failing – they were not, despite claims otherwise, ready to complete their *teshuvah.*

On Tisha b'Av, particularly as we sit on the floor through the lengthy recitation of *kinot*, we can slip into the mistake of the *ma'apilim.* Facing *churban,* our instinct is to immediately put an end our despair; to get up from the floor and begin a nation-wide teshuvah process. The message of Yirmiyahu and the day of Tisha b'Av, however, is that we aren't yet ready for teshuvah, and that G-d does not want to see us try at this moment. As another year has passed by without redemption, we have shown that our failings are rooted in how deeply we feel our mistakes. We know that baseless hatred is destructive, but we haven't yet internalized just how toxic it is; until we do, we would be ill-advised to arrogantly suggest how it could be eradicated.

As strange as these words may sound, may this Tisha b'Av be one in which we feel hopeless and ignored by G-d. Only then might we have a chance to understand how far we have strayed, and only then can we begin a truly transformative process of teshuvah. Rest assured, G-d will be ready to listen when that time comes.

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Haftorah: Yeshayah 1:1-27 — Rabbi Baruch Weintraub

Who is the prophet of our haftorah?
Yeshayah (Isaiah) was a prophet in the period leading up to the exile of the ten northern tribes of Yisrael by the Assyrians. He lived in the southern kingdom of Yehudah, and he prophesied during the reigns of Kings Uziahu, Yotam, Achaz and Chizkiyahu. Per the Talmud (Sotah 10a), he descended from Yehudah and Tamar.

As the Talmud (Bava Batra 15a) informs us, the book of Yeshayah was compiled by King Chizkiyahu and associates of his. The prophecies of Yeshayah may be classified in two categories, Rebuke and Redemption; the former dominates the early chapters of the book, while the latter occupies the latter portion. The split is not clean, though; portions of the former include redemption, and portions of the latter include rebuke.

What is the message of our haftorah?
Our haftorah, which begins Yeshayah's book, is a harsh rebuke to the Jewish nation. Yeshayah rebukes the people for their misdeeds, and threatens that suffering will befall them should they fail to correct their ways. Surprisingly, many commentaries (Malbim, Radak, Daat Mikra) locate this prophecy in the time of one of the most righteous kings: Chizkyahu. They base this mostly upon Yeshayah's description of Yerushalayim as the only city remaining of Judea (Yeshayah 1:5-9), and because of the similarity of this prophecy to Michah's prophecy (Michah 3), which we know was delivered at the time of King Chizkyahu. [See Yirmiyahu 26:18.] Why is Yeshayah harsh to a righteous king?

It seems that Yeshayah concentrates his attack not on idolatry, as Yirmiyahu did last week, but rather on the nation's internal relationships. Yehudah is compared to S'dom. (1:10) Furthermore, Yeshayah emphasizes that G-d is not interested in the offerings of bloody hands. (1:11-15) He orders Judea to practice goodness, seek justice, and fight for the orphan and widow. (1:17) The leadership is characterized as rebels and thieves, loving bribes and pursuing payments. (1:23)

The haftorah concludes with Hashem's promise that the judges will return, bringing back righteousness and faithfulness. Zion shall be redeemed through justice, and her penitents through righteousness. (1:24-27)

What is the link to Tisha b'Av?
Yeshayah's prophecy is a telling testimony of a people who bring their offerings and behave well between man and G-d, and yet disastrously fail between man and his fellow. The weak are suppressed and stepped upon, and the leadership is corrupt. This situation cannot but remind us of the oft-cited Talmudic statement (Yoma 9b), "Why was the Second Temple, in which they were engaged in Torah, mitzvot and kindness, destroyed? For baseless hatred existed there."

Destruction of society's fabric, which expresses itself in hate for those different from one's self, is an ever-existing danger. Even worse, it is a fate looming over every society, unless steps are taken to prevent it. Empathy towards a neighbour who is different is not a natural human trait, and it must be developed.

Our haftorah has a happy ending. Chizkiyahu repaired the situation, making himself worthy of the miraculous salvation he experienced later. In the case of Tisha b'Av, though, we still await the needed correction.

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613 Mitzvot: #291 Neutering
Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner

The Torah explicitly prohibits permanently neutering any bird, animal or human being, saying, "You shall not perform this in your land." (Vayikra 22:24) There is some dispute in rabbinic literature regarding the application of this law for women; the Vilna Gaon (Biur HaGra Even haEzer 5:25) says it is biblically prohibited, the Taz (Even haEzer 5:6) felt it is prohibited under a separate prohibition against causing pain, and the Beit Yehudah (2:47) ruled that it is rabbinically prohibited. Rav Moshe Feinstein (Igrot Moshe Even haEzer 3:13 and 4:32-36) followed the view of the Vilna Gaon, preferring certain forms of contraception over such a surgery.

Popular thought approves of neutering animals rather than allowing them to breed beyond their means, but this is also included in the Torah's prohibition. For more on this, see an article by Rabbi Howard Jachter at http://www.daat.ac.il/daat/english/halacha/jachter_1.htm.

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TORAH FOR YOUR TABLE
Loss of the Temple
Rabbi Yair Manas

The period between Shivah Asar b'Tammuz and Tisha b'Av is a time that we devote to remembering and commemorating the destruction of both Temples. But how many of us *feel* this loss? How do we feel the loss of something that was destroyed almost 2000 years ago?

In a popular essay published in the book *Out of the Whirlwind*, Rabbi Soloveitchik explains that there are two types of mourning: *aveilut chadashah* and *aveilut yeshanah*. Aveilut chadashah, caused by a death in the family, is an "instinctual, spontaneous response ... to the traumatic confrontation with death, to the impact of catastrophe and disaster. It is an existential response, not one that evolves by the application of artificial stimuli." Here, the feelings of loss are naturally present. In contrast, aveilut yeshanah is not a spontaneous reaction. This type of mourning, "a result of recollection of events", is generated by artificial stimuli.

Thus Rabbi Soloveitchik explains: mourning over death "commences with the most intense, most poignant and highest state of grief - aninut - and slowly recedes into shivah, sheloshim and yod-bet hodesh, until it fades into a lingering melancholy." But aveilut yeshanah "transpires gradually", and we slowly build up our feelings until we can acutely feel the loss of the Temples.

In abstract, Rabbi Soloveitchik explains that feelings come from one of two places: Feelings can be natural, or feelings can be stimulated by external stimuli. In other words, our feelings may develop as a result of our actions. By starting with not cutting our hair during the Three Weeks, continuing to not eating meat or drinking wine during the Nine Days, and continuing to not studying Torah or greeting others on Tisha b'Av, we gradually awaken in ourselves a sense of mourning, which leads us to feel the pain of the loss of both Temples.

Our sages teach that whoever mourns for Jerusalem will merit to see it in its joyful state. (Taanit 20b) By taking on the customs of mourning, we will truly inspire feelings of loss within each of us, and we will ultimately merit to see the Third Temple in all of its glory.

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Biography: Rabbi Yonatan Eibeschutz

Adam Frieberg

Torah in Translation
Generous and Hateful
Rabbi Yonatan Eibeschutz
Yaarot Dvash, Drush 10
Translated by Adam Frieberg

See how great is the sin of *sinat chinam* [senseless hatred], and how much good is withheld from us on its account. Due to our great sins, this *tzaraat* has become widespread among our people.

This is not to say, Heaven forbid, that each Jew doesn't love his friend's physical person. If harm were to befall him, or if the government would falsely charge a Jew, all of Israel would be quick to help him, with their lives and resources. We don't even need to mention saving a life, he will surely redeem his brother. They would completely affix themselves, with their lives and with their resources, day and night, and would not quit. And if one would become sick, all would pray and visit, and any possible help they would not withhold, they would even race three miles through sand. If a woman would have difficulty giving birth and suffer pain, would not all of the wealthy, complacent women rise in the darkness of the night, and go to be with her to help! Can there be greater love, brotherhood and friendship than this?! Your portion is meritorious, holy nation, before the holy King! This is our glory among all the nations, who speak of how we love our fellow Jew. However, all of this is only love of the body.

When it comes to love of the soul, which is the primary love, a love which is eternal and which will remain forever, due to our great sins, this is minimal among our people. For when a Jew sees his friend following a wayward path, he doesn't reproach him or tell him, "No, my brother, this action is not good, and this is not the way of life, which will be called the holy way." On the contrary, his heart will almost be happy that his friend develops a bad reputation. And when he sees his friend talking in the synagogue during a place in the prayers where it is forbidden to talk, he doesn't correct him….

Woe to us, is there a greater enemy than this? He sees his friend drowning in the river and he doesn't protest?! This is the *sinat chinam* [baseless hatred] without protest which existed during the Second Temple period, for there were many sinners, and they didn't protest…

Born in Krakow in 1690 to a rabbinic family, Rabbi Yonatan Eibeschutz displayed proficiency in Talmud at an extremely young age. After his father's passing, he entered yeshivah in Prossnitz, and then Holleschau. He married Elkele Spira, and after living with her grandfather in Hamburg for two years, they settled in Prague in 1715. There he became Rosh Yeshiva and delivered many sermons; he was held in high esteem, second only to Dayan David Oppenheim, the Chief Rabbi of Prague. In 1741 Rabbi Eibeschutz became Rabbi of Metz, and in 1750 he was elected as the rabbi of the "Three Communites"- Altona, Hamburg and Wandsbek. He died in Altona in 1764.

A man of many talents, Rabbi Eibeschutz mastered and wrote on a variety of Torah subjects. He wrote more than thirty books of Jewish law; *Urim v'Tumim* on business law and *Kreiti u'Pleiti* on the laws of Yoreh Deah are perhaps his most famous. Rabbi Eibeschutz's *Yaarot Dvash* [see accompanying translation] is a collection of many of the sermons he gave; Rabbi Eibeschutz was known for his likeable personality, and these sermons were very well received. He also wrote a few books on Tanach. However, the great majority of his works were published only after his passing.

In addition to his other areas of expertise, Rabbi Eibeschutz was a great Kabbalist; this area of his life caused great controversy. Living and practicing mysticism as he did in the decades following the demise of the false messiah Shabbtai Tzvi (1626-1676), rumours began spreading that Rabbi Eibeschutz was a secret believer in Shabbtai Tzvi as the Messiah. The source of these Sabbatian claims were amulets (*k'mei'ot*) which Rabbi Eibeschutz wrote and distributed. The greatest proponent of these claims was Rabbi Yaakov Emden, who claimed to have found connections between the kabbalistic writings of Rabbi Eibeschutz and the teachings of Yehuda Leib Prossnitz, a known Sabbatean.

The Emden-Eibeschutz controversy was a major event of that era. Although most of his rabbinic contemporaries supported Rabbi Eibeschutz, and although he had even signed a decree excommunicating Sabbateans, the disagreement about Rabbi Eibeschutz's true beliefs continues among historians to this very day.

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This Week in Israeli History
8 Av 1929
The Jewish Agency
Hillel Horovitz

8 Av is Monday

Chaim Weizmann, a member of the *yishuv* leadership in the early 20th century, believed that Jews of means could help him raise needed funds for Zionist activities. He reached out to Louis Marshall, head of the American Jewish Committee, and on January 2, 1927, the two men signed the Weizmann-Marshall Accord creating the Jewish Agency. As a result of this agreement, the Agency Commission and Expert Commission arrived in Palestine to gather information and draw conclusions. On August 11, 1929, representatives from 26 countries gathered in Zurich to declare the formation of the Jewish Agency for Israel.

Over time, the Jewish Agency came to represent the World Zionist Organization to the *yishuv* in Israel, and it became a driving force in administration of the *yishuv*. On the path to a Jewish State, communities throughout the land were established under the aegis of the Jewish Agency, as were organizations for financial and cultural development, El Al, Mekorot, Bank Leumi l'Yisrael, the HaBimah theatre, museums and more. From the time of the establishment of the State, the Jewish Agency's central tasks became aliyah and absorption, Zionist education in the Diaspora, and strengthening of Israeli society.

In the realm of Zionist education, tens of thousands of young Jews arrive in Israel from around the world each year, through the Masa and Taglit-Birthright projects. Masa offers a range of opportunities for semester-long or year-long education and volunteer programs. Taglit-Birthright offers ten-day educational experiences, free of charge. Also, thousands of young Israelis are sent on education *shlichut* programs to distant communities, where they impact upon hundreds of thousands of Jewish children. In Toronto, too, the *shlichim* of Torah MiTzion and in various schools, as well as *shlichei aliyah*, arrive via the Jewish Agency.

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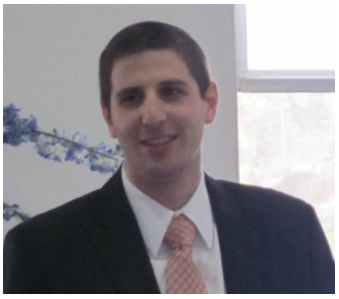
We are grateful to our partner institutions for all of the opportunities you gave us this year

The Associated Hebrew Schools * Ayin l'Tzion * BAYT * Bnai Akiva Bnai Brith * Bnai Torah * TanenbaumCHAT * Clanton Park Synagogue DANI * Emunah * Forest Hill Jewish Centre * JLIC-Hillel Kehillat Shaarei Torah * Magen Dovid Congregation * Marlee Shul Mekorot * The Melton Institute * The Miles Nadal JCC Mizrachi Canada * Mizrachi Bayit * Netivot haTorah The Or Chaim Minyan * Shaarei Shomayim * Shaarei Tefillah Shomrai Shabbos CM * Thornhill Community Shul / Aish Thornhill The Thornhill Woods Shul * Torah High * Ulpanat Orot The Village Shul * Yeshivat Or Chaim * Zichron Yisroel of the AHS

We look forward to more next year!

Joining our Beit Midrash next year: Josh Gutenberg



Josh Gutenberg grew up in Thornhill. After graduating from Or Chaim, he attended Yeshivat Har Etzion (Gush) for two years before beginning undergraduate studies at Yeshiva University. Josh spent three years learning in the shiur of Rabbi Michael Rosensweig, and graduated in 2011 with a BA in mathematics. After graduation, he began full-time study at RIETS and spent 2012-2013 in Israel as part of Yeshiva University's Gruss Kollel. Josh will serve as the Rabbinic Assistant at BAYT.

Josh is married to Sara (Bordan), who holds a BA in Jewish Studies from Stern College and an MA in Bible from Bernard Revel Graduate School. She will study law at University of Toronto this upcoming year. Their son, Menachem Netanel, was born in Israel in November 2012.

The Gutenbergs are excited about returning/coming to Toronto and look forward to meeting you.

Highlights for July 13 – July 19 / 6 Av - 12 Av

Most of our shiurim are on summer hiatus, but opportunities remain!

Shabbat, July 13
7:45 AM R' Baruch Weintraub, Reasons for Mitzvot, Or Chaim **not this week**
10:20 AM R' Baruch Weintraub, Parshah, Clanton Park
Derashah Adam Frieberg, Shaarei Tefillah
6:00 PM Adam Frieberg, Divine Providence, 24 Stadacona Apt #3
7:20 PM R' Mordechai Torczyner, Daf Yomi, BAYT
After minchah R' Mordechai Torczyner, Gemara Avodah Zarah: Wine Barrels, BAYT

Sunday, July 14
9:15 AM Hillel Horovitz, Parshah, Zichron Yisroel, Hebrew (Shacharit 8:30 AM)
6:30 PM R' Baruch Weintraub, Contemporary Halachah in Israel, **Hebrew**, 4 Tillingham Keep, ***mixed***
40 min. pre-minchah R' Baruch Weintraub, Contemporary Halachah in Israel, **Hebrew**, Clanton Park, ***men***

Tuesday July 16 Tisha b'Av
7:10 PM Rabbi Mordechai Scheiner and Rabbi Mordechai Torczyner, Tisha b'Av, Clanton Park

Wednesday, July 17
10 AM R' Mordechai Torczyner, Women of Tanach 3: Jezebel, Yeshivat Or Chaim
After Maariv Chabura Night at Shaarei Shomayim

Thursday, July 18
9:30 AM R' Mordechai Torczyner, Journey of the Soul 3, TCS, *women* - register at machonmaor.com
8:00 PM R' Baruch Weintraub, Sotah, Clanton Park

We would like to thank koshertube.com for filming our shiurim!