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**TORAH TAVLIN
ON TISH'AV B'AV**

**LAST CHANCE
TO GET YOURS**

Stories, Sermon, Vort & Vidui on the *Parashat* *Parashat Tish'av* and *Parashat B'Av* and more of Rabbi David Hoffman's teachings with explanations from Harav Aryeh Leib Marmor's *Be'Choch* 1971

Rabbi David Hoffman

מעשה אבות סימן לבנים

עד אנה כביה בציון ומספד בירושלים תדרם ציון ותבנה חומות ירושלים וגו' (סדר קנות לתשעה באב)

In the years following the *Churban Bais HaMikdash*, many Jews continued to go up to Jerusalem to cry over its ruins. They gathered at the *Kosel* - testimony to the magnificence of the Holy Temple - and saturated it with their tears. The “Traveler from Bourdeaux,” the first Christian tourist to record impressions of his visit to the Holy Land, visited the country about 250 years after the *Churban*. He wrote that Jews come to Jerusalem once a year, on the ninth of Av. They cry and lament next to a stone that remains from the Temple. Close to one hundred years later, in 4993, a Persian tourist described thousands of Jews crying over the ruins of the desolate House during the holiday of *Sukkos*, in remembrance of *aliyah l’rege*l.

Jews would visit the holy site and tread carefully around the *Har Habayis*. They succeeded in preserving precise knowledge of the location - the boundaries and the markings of the *Heichal*, *Kodesh Hakodashim*, and even the site of the burning of the *Para Adumah* on *Har Hazeisim*. Only after the Muslims began erecting their mosques on the Temple Mount hundreds of years later, were all vestiges completely destroyed down to the foundation, in order to mask any signs of what is holy for Jews. Since we are *tamei meis* we cannot go onto the Mount, especially since the precise boundaries are not clear.

Sir Moses Montefiore ז”l acquired a place of honor among the faithful builders of the Holy City, thanks to the first houses that were built outside the walls at his initiative. He visited the Land of Israel seven times, and during each visit, left his imprint on the country. The neighborhoods of *Mishkenot Shananim* and *Nachalat Shivah*, which he established, were the first ones to be built outside the walls of the Old City. He even helped establish neighborhoods bearing his name in western Jerusalem.

Montefiore was born into a British-Sephardi family. There were a number of times that his opinion differed from that of the *rabbanim* of Jerusalem but ultimately his *yiras Shamayim* ensured that he defer to their view and accept their opinion. A specific incident which has a number of different versions, is quoted by **Rabbi Betzalel Landau ז”l** (*Hakodesh V’HaMikdash*). The most famous version is based on the *sefer Sha'arei Yerushalayim* by **Rabbi Moshe Reischer ז”l**.

The site of the *Bais HaMikdash* is very holy in the eyes of the Muslims, and they call it “Al Haharam” meaning, sacred place. Therefore, they will not allow entry to anyone of other faiths. Sir Moses Montefiore was the first Jew since the destruction of the Second *Bais HaMikdash* to enter the holy site. He spent a lot of money on this, after obtaining permission from the Sultan, and gave a large gift to the pasha of Jerusalem. The local Jews tried to explain to him that a *non-kohen* is prohibited from going up there, especially nowadays when everyone is *tamei meis*, and his entrance is against *halacha*. He responded that he would sit in a box that holds forty *se’ah* and he would be permitted to enter the site of the *Bais HaMikdash*, for it would separate between him and the *kedushah* of *Har Habayis*, just as such a box serves to block *tumah*. The *Rabbanim* of Jerusalem warned him that he is prohibited from entering even in this manner but, in his great yearning to see the holy Temple Mount, he did not heed their entreaties and together with his assistant, Dr. Eliezer Halevi, went up to *Har Habayis*.

When the *Rabbanim* heard that Sir Moses disobeyed them and acted contrary to *halacha*, they placed him and his companion in *cherem*. The people of Jerusalem distanced themselves four *amos* from them, as prescribed by *halacha*. While it was difficult to keep a *cherem* on a person who had done so much for *Eretz Yisroel* and *Klal Yisroel*, they couldn’t annul it either, and it was imperative that they find a way out. One *Rav*, **R’ Yeshayah Bardaki ז”l**, went to Montefiore to convince him to accept a formal rebuke as one who is deserving of *cherem*. Montefiore agreed to follow the *halacha*. It was agreed that he would receive a rebuke in the house of Reb Zev Wolfson, who was a close confidant to Montefiore. Sir Montefiore was indeed rebuked and even dragged on the ground four *amos* as prescribed in *halacha*, although Reb Zev arranged that he not be actually dragged on the ground; that it be done while seated on a chair as a special arrangement in honor of the great man.

According to another version, Montefiore tearfully justified himself before the *Rabbanim* that he didn’t know that it was a Biblical prohibition; he thought it was a prohibition imposed by the Arabs. His explanation was accepted by **R’ Shmuel Salant ז”l** and the *cherem* was lifted.

משל למה הדבר דומה

ישבו לארץ ידמו וקני בת ציון העלו עפר על ראשם חגרו שקים הורידו לארץ ראשן בתולת ירושלם וגו' (איכה ב-י)

משל: Back in the 1920’s and 1930’s, the concept of public transportation in Israel was relatively new, and the quality and conditions of the bus fleet left much to be desired.

One day, the famed *mashgiach* **R’ Eliyahu Roth ז”l**, a close personal aide and top disciple of the *Tzaddik*, **R’ Shloimke M’Zhvil ז”l**, was standing and waiting patiently at a bus stop. There were many people waiting with him and when the bus arrived, the mob of people clamored to alight and grab the few available seats on the bus.

R’ Eliyahu didn’t push and waited his turn to get on the bus. But by the time he did, there were no more seats left.

With a smile on his face, R’ Eliyahu made his way onto the rickety bus and although a few people recognized him and immediately offered to stand up and give him their seats, he vehemently refused to accept anyone’s offer. Instead, he walked toward the steps leading down to the back door of the bus, and he seated himself neatly on the floor of the top step.

Now, quite a few people asked him to take their seats, and even the bus driver told the *Tzaddik* that it was beneath him to sit on the floor this way. But R’ Eliyahu continued to refuse their entreaties. With a humble smile, he told them, “*Mein Tayera Yidden*, I’m on the ground! From here, I cannot fall!”

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לא תכירו פנים במשפט בקמן בגדל תשמעון לא תגורו מפני איש כי המשפט לא יאקום הוא (ד-א)

Moshe Rabbeinu recounts how he warned newly appointed judges not to show any favoritism that might corrupt the results of cases over which they were presiding. The *Gemara* (כתובות קה-) teaches that bribes don’t necessarily come in the form of money. Even saying complimentary things to a judge may be a form of bribery that could cloud his judgment. The *Gemara* goes on to list several *Amoraim* who excused themselves from cases after accepting “favors” that we would hardly count as bribery. **R’ Avraham Pam ז”l** wonders: Were these *Amoraim* so fickle that the slightest favor would influence their judgment?

My *machshava* here is that this *Gemara* is not so much about bribes, but about the extent of *Hakaras Hatov* we should have to those who do us favors. Not every person shows his gratitude the same way. These *Amoraim* like *Shmuel*, *Amaymar* and *Mar Ukva* weren’t fickle, but they took peoples’ favors, no matter how small, more seriously than others, and by appreciating what others do for them, they considered these favors worthy of so much gratitude that it might indeed affect their judgment.

Many problems in society today stem from a lack of *Hakaras Hatov*. Husbands may take the daily small favors that their wives do for them for granted, and vice versa. They look at the other party as not doing favors but rather as fulfilling obligations. If each spouse would look at the small favors the way these *Amoraim* did, there would be more stable marriages in which each spouse would feel appreciated for all they do. The **Chofetz Chaim ז”l** was a *Kohen* who could not attend funerals, but when a woman who once donated a window to his *yeshivah* in Radin passed away, he followed the *Aron* all the way to the cemetery and waited outside in appreciation for her donation. Let’s try to take notice of all the favors done for us on a daily basis - big or small - and in that way we will be able to show our gratitude appropriately. By having *Hakaras Hatov* we will then awaken the desire of *Hashem* to redeem us from this long and bitter *golus* by sending us משיח צדקנו במהרה בימינו אמן

DRUSH V’CHIDDUSH

ותקרבון אלי כלכם ותאמרו נשלחה אנשים לפנינו ויחפרו לנו (א-בב)

Moshe Rabbeinu was chastising *Bnei Yisroel* for the many times that they hadn’t faithfully followed *Hashem*, including the sin of the *Meraglim* (spies). **Rashi** denotes the root cause of the sin: “*You approached me all of you, in a state of disorder, the young pushing aside their elders, the elders pushing aside their heads.*” This lack of control, was a major part of the sin, for when the people were unable to focus on what was right and what was wrong, it caused them to become discombobulated, losing their heads and losing their minds. At this point, it was no wonder that they fell into sin.

A man once came to the **Tchebiner Rav, R’ Dov Beirish Weidenfeld ז”l** with a problem. He related with tearful sobs how a friend of his did something to make him angry and as a result, he grabbed a heavy object and threw it at his friend.

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS ON THE MIDDAH OF אצלנות

דרגה יתירה

את צמח דוד עברך מהרה תצמיח ... (שם”ץ)

FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF R’ GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO

The day of *Tisha B’av* is extremely powerful and paradoxical. On the one hand it is the saddest day of the year, a day that we mourn the terrible loss of connection with *Hashem*, and on the other hand, *Tisha B’av* is called a “*Moed*,” a meeting point with *Hashem*. On *Tisha B’av* we sit on the floor and cry in pain for all Jewish suffering over the past 2000 years, and on *Tisha B’av* at noon, at the peak of our mourning, when the *Bais HaMikdash* was actually burning, we get up from the floor and begin preparing for after the fast! In fact, on this terrible day when we lost everything we hold dear, *Moshiach* is born!

The **Nesivos Shalom** explains that at the height of our mourning - this is the time that the light of *Rosh Hashana*, *Malchus Hashem*, begins to descend! We’ve reached rock bottom in our sadness and pain - and from there we begin to grow. The roots of *Moshiach* - "צמח דוד" - can only sprout from the seed of *Am Yisroel* as it disintegrates in the ground. When we feel there is nothing left, that is when something begins to grow. If we do not feel pain, sorrow and loss on this *Tisha B’av*, then there are no roots from which *Moshiach* can sprout. The greatest joy will only come from the deepest sadness over what we have lost.

Tisha B’av can be read as “*Teshua B’av*” - salvation from our Father. If we show Him just how pained we are that there is no *Bais HaMikdash*, then He will bring us the salvation we so desperately yearn for and bring an end to our *Golus*. Yes, we have so much stuff, great summer plans, beautiful homes, and we are really looking forward to our vacation during *Bein Hazmanim*, so OF COURSE we want *Moshiach* to come - but maybe not right NOW! Boy have we missed the boat, in fact we have missed the cruise of our lives! We MUST stop and recalculate! What are we living for? Our stuff? How sad! If we didn’t feel that we had a reason to cry on *Tisha B’av* before, well now we do! Let us CRY over the fact that we are so far from real happiness, real closeness with *Hashem*. Let us feel so sad, so bereft, so totally disintegrated spiritually that we merit the true joy of *Geulah*.