

ago supposed to make me feel any better?

Answer:

There are several parallels between the fall of Jerusalem and the passing of a soul. By contemplating these, the mourners can find a profound message of hope.

You're not alone. Although the destruction of Jerusalem would have directly affected those who lived there the most, nevertheless it was a national tragedy. All Jews, including those who lived far from Jerusalem, were deeply pained at the loss of their holy city. It gave strength and courage to the Jerusalemites to know that the entire people was feeling their pain. So too, although it is the family that is mourning for their loss, the entire Jewish people share in their sorrow at the passing of one of our own. There is comfort in knowing that your sorrow is being shared by your people.

It isn't forever. After two millennia we still mourn for the loss of Jerusalem, but the Jewish people have never lost hope that Jerusalem will one day be rebuilt. In a similar way, we mourn the loss of our loved ones, but we have faith that we will one day be reunited with them, for our prophets have promised that the dead will come back to life in the messianic era. There is comfort in knowing that the separation, as painful as it is, is only temporary.

They're still with us. While the Romans were able to destroy the buildings of Jerusalem, its spirit and inner holiness were beyond their reach. No enemy can destroy the soul of Jerusalem, and even today it remains the Holy City. So too, death can only take away the physical persona, but the soul lives on. Even after their passing, our loved ones are with us in spirit. They strengthen us when we face challenges, and they smile with us when we celebrate. While we can no longer see them, we can sense their presence. There is comfort in knowing that we are never really apart.

None of this denies the pain and sorrow of death. But it may take the edge off that pain to know that, like Jerusalem, the soul has eternal powers that even death can't conquer. Your grandma was the pillar and backbone of your family. She will always be there when you need her.

Live & Laugh

John walked into work and saw his co-worker Chaim Yankel looking particularly sour. "Hey what's wrong buddy?" he asked. Chaim Yankel looked up with a forlorn expression on his face. "You remember last month how my great aunt passed on and left me \$2,000?"

"Yes," said John nodding his head.

"And you remember how the month before my great uncle passed on and left me \$5000?"

"Uh huh" said David again.

"Well this month is almost over," said Chaim Yankel with a wave of his hand, "and... NOTHING!"

Calendar

- ◆ Shacharis 8:30 am; Shtibl 8:45 am
- ◆ Shul Brocha in the Seeff Hall.
- ◆ **Halacha of the Week:** *Rabbi Yossy Goldman*
- ◆ Mincha: 5:00 pm
- ◆ Pirkei Avos: Chapter 2
- ◆ Shabbos ends: 6:12 pm
- ◆ Mincha from Sunday: 5:35 pm
- ◆ **Yom Hazikaron: Sun 30 Apr 6:30 pm @ Yeshiva College**
- ◆ **Yom HaAtzmaut: Mon 1 May from 5 pm @ Huddle Park**

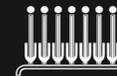
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- ◆ The **Scottish Leader Signature** whiskey at Shul is sponsored by **Distell** & available for purchase at **Norman Goodfellows**.
- ◆ **Nathan Fine** of I.deal Furnishers at Midway Mall, Bramley Gardens wishes all congregants a Good Shabbos. Call 011 887 5456/082 854 5706. **Furniture, Bedding & Appliances.**
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Good Shabbos SYDENHAM!



29 Apr 2017

Parshas Tazria-Metzora

3 Iyar 5777

The Survivor Holocaust Remembrance Day 2017 Address by: Rabbi Yossy Goldman

I address you today in honour of my late father of blessed memory, Reb Shimon Goldman *olov basbolom*, and in memory of his father Shmuel Zanvil, his mother Menucha Kraindel, his brothers Yaakov, Yosef, Tzvi Hirsch and Chaim, and his sisters Chana and Leah, all of whom perished at the hands of the Nazis.

I speak to you today not as a **Rabbi**, but as the **son** of a **survivor**. My father was not in a concentration camp, but he is the sole survivor of his entire, large family.

My mother bless her soul, was from the same shtetl as our community's beloved late Rabbi Aloy, *olov basbolom*, but my **father** was born in **Poland**. He came from a distinguished family who traced its lineage back to many great rabbis, including the famous Biblical commentator, **Rashi**.

To me, it was quite an amazing act of **Divine Providence** that compelled him to run away from his hometown, **Shedlitz**, at **age 14**. He wasn't a **rebellious** boy or even an **adventurer**. Yet he ran away from home and that **saved his life!** His parents though it would all blow over but he had an encounter with German soldiers and decided to leave with other families who were going. He fled to **Vilna**. There, he managed to obtain a precious Transit Visa from the legendary Japanese diplomat in Kovno, Chiune **Sugihara**. From there, he and his fellow yeshiva students travelled to **Moscow**, across Russia by

train to **Vlodivostok**, then by boat to **Kobe Japan**, where they spent a year. When Japan joined the war, they had to move to Shanghai which was an open port. They were in **Shanghai** until the war ended, finally coming to **New York** when the central Lubavitch Yeshiva there was able to send them visas for the **United States**.

He's not even certain whether his family's last days were spent in a place called **Treblinka** or **Majdanek**. They have no graves, no tombstones, there aren't even any photographs. Oh yes, there is one solitary photograph of my father's sister, **Chana**, and her fiancé, their yellow armbands clearly visible, in the **Warsaw Ghetto**. I have that original photo hanging on my dining room wall here in Johannesburg. My paternal grandparents? I don't even know what they looked like.

Every year, my father would observe one day in the year, the **12th of Elul**, as **yahrtzeit** for his entire family. He lit one single **yahrtzeit** memorial candle for his **father, mother, brothers and sisters**. A large family – they were all remembered on **one day, with one candle**.

He hardly ever spoke about these things over the years when we were growing up. It was only in **1990** at our son **Mendel's Bar Mitzvah** that I asked him to let me interview him for my **Jewish Sound** radio show that he agreed and finally opened up. Thank G-d, we were able to help him publish a book with his story. Now his grandchildren know the heroic tale of his voyage of survival.

I once asked my father, how it was that he **never lost his faith**. After all, so many survivors did, and

who are we to question them after the **Hell** that they went through. But my father never lost his faith. He answered my question by saying that, somehow, he always felt the **protective hand of G-d** plucking him out of one **danger** to the next, from one **country** to the next, from one **continent** to the next, throughout his long, sad but inspirational, escape from Europe.

There were a few Yeshivahs with refugee students in Shanghai. The largest one was the **Mir**. My father was in the **Lubavitch** yeshivah there. During the day, the students sat and learned Torah, as in all yeshivahs. It was only once they went to bed, in the stillness of the night, that one could hear the sobbing of these teenage boys who had come to the sad realization that their families had perished and that they were now all alone in the world. Can you imagine what they were going through? It is a miracle they never lost their **minds**, never mind their **faith!**

Ladies and gentlemen, by the amazing curiosities of the Almighty's vast eternal plan, **yesterday, was exactly 30 years ago**, since the **Bar Mitzvah** of our eldest son, **Yocho-non**, who is today a Rabbi in Philadelphia. My father, who had come to Johannesburg for the occasion, at the **Sydenham Shul Brocha**, asked if he could say a few words. And he made a little **speech**. The large hall, packed with people was hushed as my father told his story. He took us back to **1939**, to his Polish shtetl, Shedlitz, when he was 14 years old. He was walking down the street with his father when the **German Stukka dive-bombers** suddenly came out of the sky and began shooting anyone in sight. His father grabbed him and threw him down, face first, together with him, into a **cabbage patch**. He said the planes were so low that they could hear the **Nazi pilots** laughing as they shot up the town. His father said what every Jew is meant to say before he dies, the **Shma**, and **Viduy**, a prayer of confession. They fully expected these to be their last moments on earth.

“And today,” said my father back in April 1987, “that boy in the cabbage patch is celebrating the Bar Mitzvah of his eldest

grandson, here in South Africa, in Sydenham Shul!”

South Africa did not have any Jewish immigration after the war to speak of. We don't know too many survivors here in this country. My friend **Don Krausz** is a notable exception. He is one of a **small band of holy heroes** who we pay tribute to today.

I've been in South Africa for over **40 years**. But I grew up in **New York** and in the little Shul where I *davened* every morning in **Brooklyn**, there were quite a few survivors from the camps. In spite of all their sufferings, they never lost their faith either, and they came to Shul every morning. And each time they would roll up their shirtsleeves to put on their **Tefillin**, they revealed the **blue tattooed numbers** on their arms. The **mark of Mengele**. There were so many of them, that to me it became commonplace. To me, those **blue numbers** were a **badge of courage, heroism, sacrifice and remarkable faith**.

I once heard my saintly teacher, the **Lubavitcher Rebbe**, of sainted memory, say that since the Nazi plan was that there should be no Jew left alive, therefore every one of us here today is a **survivor!** A baby born in Johannesburg **TODAY**, in **2017**, whose **parents** were born here, is **also** a survivor!

And survivors have a responsibility - not only to tell the story but to rebuild our world. Every Jew must raise a **family** and we Jews should have **bigger** families of knowledgeable, committed, **proud and practicing Jews**. We should not be under any burden to adhere to **Zero Population Growth**. We are still **minus Zero!** We have yet to properly replace our numbers from before World War 2!

And please don't leave it to the Rabbis and Rebbetzins! G-d bless them, they are trying hard, but they cannot do it alone!

I once heard about a fellow who had a large family and every time his wife gave birth to another child people would ask, “So when are you going to **stop already?**” He got so tired of this question that he developed the definitive response. The next time his wife gave birth and someone asked him, “So when are you going to stop already?” you know what he answered? **“When I hit Six Million!”** End of discussion. No more questions.

If it was our destiny to go through the death camps of **Auschwitz** and **Ravensbruck**, it was **not** our destiny to **die**. Our divine destiny is not only to **survive**, but to **live**, and to **flourish** as Jews, wherever we may be.

And in so doing, we bring the **world** to its **destiny**, to the ultimate age of global peace and harmony, with an end to all wars and bloodshed, an **end to terror and tyranny**, to the great day of the final liberation of all of humankind when G-d will finally “wipe away the tears from all faces,” the day of our redemption, the time of our righteous redeemer. May it be speedily in our day.

Dear friends, my father was a qualified Rabbi and Shochet. He chose to make his living in the Kosher meat business. He was a respected communal worker who, together with my late mom, ran a Gemilus Chesed Free Loan Fund, and he was on the Board of the Beth Rivkah Girls School which he served with tremendous dedication. And more. Their home was always an open home and so many South Africans enjoyed their warm and gracious hospitality over many years. But my **father's proudest achievement** was the **family** he rebuilt from scratch.

My father passed away nearly six months ago on 29 Tishrei / 31st October at age 91. On his tombstone in the Moses Montefiore Cemetery in New York the very first words are a phrase from the **Prophet Zechariah, Ud Mutzal Me'eish – an ember rescued from the flames**. Thank G-d, he managed to rebuild his family and more. Every time a child was born in the family, for him it wasn't only a *simcha*, it was another powerful act of Jewish defiance, reminding the world that **Hitler (yemach shemo)** did **not** win!

Thank G-d, at the time of his passing, my father left a family and a legacy of over **100 blood descendants, including over 80 great grandchildren!**

May his memory be blessed.

Am Yisrael Chai!

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Parsha Pointers

**Tazria-Metzora: Artscroll pg 608;
Living Torah pg 537**

The Parshahs of Tazria and Metzora continue the discussion of the laws of *tumah v'taharah*, ritual impurity and purity.

A woman giving birth should undergo a process of purification, which includes immersing in a *mikvah* (a naturally gathered pool of water) and bringing offerings to the Holy Temple. All male infants are to be circumcised on the eighth day of life.

Tzaraat (often mistranslated as “leprosy”) is a supra-natural plague, which can afflict people as well as garments or homes. If white or pink patches appear on a person's skin (dark pink or dark green in garments or homes), a *kohen* is summoned. Judging by various signs, such as an increase in size of the afflicted area after a seven-day quarantine, the *Kohen* pronounces it *tamei* (impure) or *tahor* (pure).

A person afflicted with *tzaraat* must dwell alone outside of the camp (or city) until he is healed. The afflicted area in a garment or home must be removed; if the *tzaraat* recurs, the entire garment or home must be destroyed.

When the *metzora* (“leper”) heals, he or she is purified by the *kohen* with a special procedure involving two birds, spring water in an earthen vessel, a piece of cedar wood, a scarlet thread and a bundle of hyssop.

Ritual impurity is also engendered through a seminal or other discharge in a man, and menstruation or other discharge of blood in a woman, necessitating purification through immersion in a *mikvah*.

Who Are “The Mourners Of Zion and Jerusalem?”

By Rabbi Aron Moss

Question:

I was wondering about the traditional words of consolation said to mourners: “May the Almighty comfort you amongst the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.” What exactly is the consolation in those words? How is comparing the loss of a loved one to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans two thousand years