

ment I got all day!"

Think twice about reporting a missing husband in SA.

A lady phones her local Police Station and says: "My husband went to buy potatoes 5 days ago, and he hasn't come back yet."

The Police Officer pauses and says: "Eishhhhhhh... so why don't you cook something else?"

Calendar

Shabbos Chazon

- ◆ Shacharis 8:30 am; Shtibl 8:45 am
- ◆ Shul Brocha in the Seeff Hall.
- ◆ Mincha: 5:00 pm
- ◆ Pirkei Avos: Chapter 3
- ◆ Shabbos ends: 6:13 pm
- ◆ **Tisha B'Av:** Fast begins Mon night 31 July 5:38 pm and Fast ends Tues 1 Aug 6:05 pm
- ◆ Monday after Maariv, a screening of **The Final Victory: the Story of Dr Felix Zandman.**
- ◆ Mincha next week 5:30 pm

Siyum Sefer Torah: The Completion & Dedication Ceremony
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Sunday 6 August
 *11 am Siyum *1 pm Parade
 *2 pm Dancing *3 pm Festive Meal
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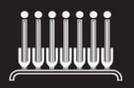
WEDNESDAY 9 AUGUST
COCKTAILS 6:30 PM
 Sydenham Community Centre

R160 per person
 RSVP ESSENTIAL. www.sydshul.co.za or at Sydenham Shul



Good Shabbos SYDENHAM!

Published by the Sydenham Highlands North Hebrew Congregation Johannesburg, South Africa



29 Jul 2017 Parshas Devarim 6 Menachem Av 5777

Tisha B'Av and Terror Are We Really Independent?

by: Rabbi Yossy Goldman

Tens of thousands of Jews will converge on Jerusalem's Western Wall this week as our people mark Tisha B'Av, our National Day of Mourning. On this day in history, both our Holy Temples were destroyed and a host of other calamities occurred throughout the centuries.

Some may wonder, why do we still mourn? Don't we have a sovereign state of Israel? Isn't Jerusalem united under Jewish rule today? Why are we still mourning?

The fact is that no Israeli Rabbis have ever suggested that Tisha B'Av be deleted from our calendars. Nor have the staunchest, most zealous Zionists ever proposed doing away with the custom of breaking a glass under the Chupah. This tradition has always reminded us that our personal joy is incomplete until our nation's joy is re-established. And that requires the total restoration of our national life, including Jerusalem rebuilt.

Thank G-d, since 1967; we are again able to visit the Western Wall. But as I write these lines the Arab world is yet again in rage that Israel had the temerity to install metal detectors at the Temple Mount even though it was a response to the horrid murder of Israeli policemen on guard there by an Arab terrorist! And now Israel has seemingly backed down and removed the metal detectors and is putting in security cameras instead.

In general, as important as our sacred shrine may be, it is only a pitiful remnant of a glori-

ous Temple that once stood inside those walls. In fact, according to *halacha*, when we visit the Wall we should rend our garments like a mourner because we are witnessing the site of the *churban*, the destruction of our holy temple.

So the reality is that although we have a Jewish state operating in our eternal homeland, the national state of exile is more than just geographical. Exile, *galut*, is a state of being and not a place on the map. It does not mean 'the Diaspora,' as if to suggest that only Jews living outside the borders of Israel are in exile. Whether we live in Jerusalem or Johannesburg, we are all in exile. Until the era of Redemption arrives and the Temple is rebuilt the exile isn't over. You might live in an apartment in the old city of Jerusalem overlooking the Western Wall but you, too, are in exile because the entire Jewish People is still in a state of exile.

It is not only a question of place; it is a question of time. At this time in our history, the redemption has not yet arrived. We still pray three times a day that the Temple be rebuilt speedily in our time. And until those prayers are answered, I'm afraid we are all still in *galut*.

Sure, it would have been wonderful if David Ben Gurion's announcement in 1948 spelled out not only a Declaration of Independence but also real, practical and total independence. The truth, however, is that we are far from independent.

We are certainly not yet independent of the Palestinians, Hezbollah, Hamas, or Iran, or BDS and other supporters around the world who threaten our very existence today.

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When our neighbors still dream of driving us into the sea, when they still deny us our basic legitimacy, and when the international media challenges our most basic right to defend our citizens, can we claim that we are really and truly independent?

Thank G-d we have an army, navy and air force. Thank G-d; they are fighting valiantly to thwart our mortal enemies' murderous machinations. G-d bless the IDF! But true independence means that our national security is no longer threatened and that a genuine and lasting peace has been achieved. No wonder *Moshiach* is called the Messenger of Peace. Who else can we turn to for that long-awaited dream? The UN, the EU, or the USA, certainly do not seem to hold any promise, Donald Trump notwithstanding.

So we will still observe Tisha B'Av. And unless Moshiach comes before Monday night we will fast and sit on low chairs in the manner of mourners. We will mourn the destruction of our Temple and the state of exile it created. And we will pray for the full return to Jewish sovereignty and total independence. A time when our cities and towns will be free of enemy rockets, terror, and our children will feel safe and secure. May that time be now. Amen!

Parsha Pointers

*Devarim: Artscroll Chumash pg 938;
Living Torah pg 867*

On the 1st of Shevat (37 days before his passing), Moses begins his repetition of the Torah to the assembled Children of Israel, reviewing the events that occurred and the laws that were given in the course of their 40-year journey from Egypt to Sinai to the Promised Land, rebuking the people for their failings and iniquities, and enjoining them to keep the Torah and observe its commandments in the land that G-d is giving them as an eternal heritage, into which they shall cross after his death.

Moses recalls his appointment of judges and magistrates to ease his burden of meting out justice to the people and teaching them the word of G-d; the journey from Sinai

through the great and fearsome desert; the sending of the Spies and the people's subsequent spurning of the Promised Land, so that G-d decreed that the entire generation of the Exodus shall die out in the desert. "Also against me," says Moses, "was G-d angry for your sakes, saying: You, too, shall not go in there."

Moses also recounts some more recent events: the refusal of the nations of Moab and Ammon to allow the Israelites to pass through their countries; the wars against the Emorite kings Sichon and Og, and the settlement of their lands by the tribes of Reuben and Gad and part of the tribe of Menasseh; and Moses' message to his successor, Joshua, who will take the people into the Land and lead them in the battles for its conquest: "Fear them not, for the L-rd your G-d, He shall fight for you."

Last Will and Testament

By Rabbi Elisha Greenbaum

If you had a chance to prepare in advance the last words you'd ever get to say, what would they be?

Would you waffle? Would you prevaricate? Would you suffice with the usual growl at your spouse as you stomped out of the house, or would you take the time to come up with something meaningful?

And would you say it more than once?

Moses was about to die. G-d informed him in advance so he could prepare the people for a smooth transmission of executive powers and so that he could carefully weigh up his final message to his nation. Every single Jew was present as he stepped up to speak...

He spoke.

Then said it all over again in another language.

He then repeated it in a third language.

He didn't stop till he had done the whole talk in each of the seventy root languages into which linguists divide human speech.

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Why?

For what earthly reason could he possibly have needed to translate these words, crucial as they may have been, into every language known to man? Those Jews standing around him all understood Hebrew, and I seriously doubt that any one of them would have been comforted or impressed to hear it over again in Outer Mongolian or Swahili.

For All People, For All Times

It is sometimes a struggle to reassert the Torah's right to influence the lives and times of contemporary Jews. In our fast-paced and even faster changing society it is tempting to believe that any similarities between those nomadic desert wanderers and ourselves must be purely accidental. Why should I let the Mosaic code, with its apparent superstitions and dietary hang-ups affect my reality?

Moses was speaking to us. He took the time and effort to speak the words of Torah in tongues and languages that his direct audience could not appreciate, to demonstrate that the instructions and lessons he was imparting were relevant to all people, in all countries, at all times.

Whatever I do for a living, no matter the jargon of my job, or the talk of the street, I can and will bring my Torah with me; for after all, Moses was speaking my language.

Where is G-d?

By Chaya Sarah Silberberg

Question:

I have difficulty understanding G-d's presence in the world. First, I heard that there is a specific place there where the spiritual is connected to the physical in a way that does not happen anywhere else in the world: Jerusalem. I then read that every time someone does a good deed G-d's presence in the world is somehow more clear. And lastly I heard that G-d is *everywhere*; meaning that He is in the synagogue, in the Yeshiva, in the kitchen, in the street, etc.

I don't understand how these three concepts work together; they seem to contradict each other. Can you help me, please?

Answer:

Maybe I can help with this little analogy: When a radio station broadcasts, it sends radio waves

through the air. Some stations send out stronger signals, some send out weaker signals. We are always surrounded and bombarded with radio waves. So why aren't we deaf from all the noise? Because we can't hear the sounds unless we have a radio which is tuned to the proper frequency.

G-d's presence is not only everywhere but within everything. G-d's name – Y-H-V-H – is a contraction of the Hebrew words for "was," "is," and "will be," because He is the G-d of creation, and G-d's constant presence is what perpetually keeps all of creation in existence.

However, just like our ears don't hear radio waves, we generally do not sense G-d's presence in this world. But when a mitzvah is done, this "strengthens" the signal of G-d's presence and fine tunes our receptors, making us more aware of it. In a place where many mitzvot are done—for instance, in a synagogue or a yeshiva, it is much easier to sense G-d's presence in the world. Similarly, when a home has a *mezuzah* on the door, Jewish books throughout the house, a kosher kitchen, etc.—we are more aware of G-d's presence there.

Jerusalem is the holiest city in the world. The site of the Holy Temple for so many years, it is consecrated by so many acts of service, so many mitzvahs that have been, and continue to be, performed there. G-d's presence is so much clearer there, and it is easier to connect to Him.

If, G-d forbid, someone does a negative deed, thereby implicitly proclaiming that there is no G-d, then the signal of G-d's presence becomes more faint and harder for us to pick up...

Live & Laugh

Jim was in a bad mood, and anyone who got in his way was going to regret it. Jim walked into his favorite restaurant and plopped himself down on a chair. "Get me a steak well done with mashed potatoes."

Three minutes later when his order came, Jim screamed "DIDN'T YOU HEAR ME SAY WELL DONE?!" "Why thank you sir" the waitress smiled, "that was the first compli-