

Tisha Be'ab Reader

**Torah Readings,
The Book of Ekha,
Psalm 137 and Kinot**

with Laws and Commentaries

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Tisha Be'ab Reader

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Merkaz Moresheet Yisrael for 'Shabbat Hazon'
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Halakhot of Tisha Be'ab

I. Overview

The fast of the Ninth of Ab, referred to by the prophet Zechariah, was established as a national mourning day commemorating destruction of the Bet Hamiqdash, sacked on that day by the Babylonians in 586 B.C.E. The Mishnah (Ta'anit 4:6) relates that four other national calamities occurred in various years on this day: the Almighty's decree that the 'Generation of the Wilderness' be denied entry to the Land of Israel because of the transgression associated with the spies; destruction of the Second Temple (by the Romans in 70 C.E.); capture of the great city Bethar (the last stronghold of Bar Kokhba in the revolution he led, 7 miles southwest of Jerusalem, by the Romans in 135 C.E.); and Jerusalem was ploughed like a field (see Jer. 26:18).

The full degree of mourning is limited to Tisha B'ab day itself. Secondary rituals beginning prior to the fast day were established in the course of time which are increased in intensity as the day approaches.

The ultimate purpose of the fast days is to foster repentance and increase the national commitment to Torah and misvot. The giving of charity to the needy is essential on these days.

II. The Three Weeks

The three weeks beginning with the 17th of Tammuz through the 9th of Ab have often been times of adversity for the Jewish People. However, the sages did not establish formal restrictions until Rosh Hodesh Ab, as they did not wish to add to the nation's burden. We have been advised to be more cautious than usual with potentially dangerous situations during these days of dejection.

It is a Sephardic custom to refrain from eating ‘new’ fruit during the three weeks so as to avoid reciting ‘sheheheyanu.’ This berakha is a joyful thanksgiving expression and it is difficult to mention ‘lazeman hazeh’ with a happy heart during these days. We also desist from wearing new clothing during the three weeks. However, at a b’rit milah ‘sheheheyanu’ is recited. On Shabbat, it is permitted to partake of ‘new’ fruit and recite ‘sheheheyanu’ and wear new clothing.

Some Sephardic communities, as do all Ashkenazic communities, desist from having weddings and musical functions for the three weeks. Most Sephardic communities, following Shulhan Arukh, desist for nine days only, beginning Rosh Hodesh Ab. For many decades, however, the Brooklyn Syrian community has not held weddings during the three weeks.

III. The Nine Days

Beginning Rosh Hodesh Ab we refrain from optional festive occasions and reduce joyful pursuits. This includes purchases of luxuries, new clothing and wedding accoutrements. If a wedding is shortly after Tisha B’ab and time is of the essence, necessary shopping is permitted. We refrain from home decorating during these days.

We refrain from meat, including chicken, and wine during these days. Out of respect for Rosh Hodesh, the Syrian community begins these latter stringencies from the second of the month.

Meat and wine are permitted on Shabbat during the nine days as well as at a se’udat misvah, such as a b’rit milah or siyum masekhta (concluding study of a Talmudic tractate). Habdala wine is permitted.

One may have meat during these days if required for health purposes such as may be the case with an anemic person, a nursing or pregnant woman or one who gave birth within thirty days.

The Syrian community's custom has been to eat meat leftovers from Shabbat during the nine days providing that one did not purposely cook extra for this purpose. Most other Sephardic communities are strict on this. Many authorities hold that with the advent of efficient freezers it is now proper to be strict.

IV. The Week During Which Tisha B'ab Occurs

After the Shabbat before Tisha B'ab through Tisha B'ab itself is the 'Week of Tisha B'ab.' If Tisha B'ab falls on a Sunday or on Shabbat - in which case the fast is pushed to Sunday - there is no 'Week of.'

During the 'Week of,' the following are prohibited:

- a) Washing the whole body with hot or warm water. Showering or bathing in cold water is permitted. A little warm water may be mixed in to break the chill.
- b) Wearing fresh clothes. It is advisable to accumulate slightly worn garments from before the 'Week of' to change into. Something worn a half-hour is no longer 'fresh.'
- c) Washing clothing even to wear after Tisha B'ab. Washing garments of little children, who constantly soil them, is permitted.
- d) Haircuts and shaving. A man who normally shaves daily or every other day, and requires to shave for business reasons, may do so except on Tisha B'ab itself.

V. Se'udat Hamafseket

The last meal before the fast, when taking place on a weekday, should be plain, comprised of bread and water with, at most, one cooked dish. If the dish preparation

normally comprises more than one item, such as eggs and tomatoes, it is acceptable. Fish is too luxurious for this meal. Uncooked vegetables and tea or coffee are permitted to be added to this meal.

It is customary for this meal to choose an item that symbolizes mourning, such as a hard-boiled egg or lentils.

One sits alone on the floor for this meal. Even if three men are in the same room they do not recite zimun before birkat hamazon.

When the last meal occurs on Shabbat there are no restrictions; one may eat meat, drink wine and enjoy a most festive meal.

VI. Tisha B'ab Night and Day

Tisha B'ab prohibitions apply from the sunset beginning the day until "appearance of the stars" the following evening, in the New York area about 30 minutes after sunset. The following are prohibited: eating, drinking, washing the body, anointing, wearing leather shoes and marital relations.

Studying Torah, which gladdens the heart, is also prohibited, except for the study of sad subjects. The obligation to study Torah daily, however, applies to Tisha B'ab. It is customary to study Lamentations (Ekha), the Book of Job, the sad portions in Jeremiah and the Talmudic account of the destruction.

Pregnant and nursing women, although straightaway exempt from the other rabbinical fasts, if healthy, are required to fast on Tisha B'ab unless they are extremely weak. One who gave birth within thirty days before Tisha B'ab is also exempt. When Tisha B'ab falls on Shabbat and the fast is pushed to Sunday, which lessens its status,

pregnant and nursing women are exempt. One who is sick or would become sick upon fasting is exempt. When Tisha B'ab falls on Shabbat and the fast is pushed to Sunday, one who is permitted to eat must first make habdala.

Washing any part of the body, besides the fingers, whether in hot or cold water, is forbidden. Netilat Yadayim is up to the knuckles. One wipes away the sediment from the eyes in the morning with the dampness of the towel. After using the bathroom, or if one has touched a covered part of the body, washing is up to the knuckles. If somehow a part of the body became dirty or very sweaty, it is permitted to wash in a limited way, for the essential prohibition of washing is when done for pleasure.

Application of medication or deodorant is permitted. Those for whom brushing teeth is as a necessity, that they are extremely bothered when they do not brush, may do so. Of course, one must be careful not to swallow water when doing so.

Non-leather sneakers with non-structural leather ornamentation are permitted. Leather garments other than shoes are permitted.

It is customary to sit on the floor as a mourner at night and in the day until minha. Laughter and levity are prohibited all day. If greetings are extended it should be in a feeble manner.

In past centuries many communities established a custom not to work on Tisha B'ab. However, even in those communities it was permitted to work to prevent depreciation of capital or to take advantage of an unusual passing opportunity. The manner in which the modern economic system is structured, most businesses involve significant loss of capital when one closes as there are

numerous fixed expenses, including payroll, rent and utilities. Thus, in our days most businesses are permitted to be open and most people are permitted to work. The rabbis said that those that can be off work without causing significant loss, to more fully participate in the mourning, should do so.

When there is a milah on Tisha B'ab, the father, sandaq and mohel are not allowed to break their fast. However, when Tisha B'ab falls on Shabbat and the fast is pushed to Sunday, these three are permitted to curtail their fast and eat after an early minha.

All that is prohibited on Tisha B'ab is permitted immediately at the conclusion of the day except for eating meat and drinking wine. As a remembrance to the fire that continued burning in the Bet Hamiqdash through the next day, we refrain from these until the conclusion of the following day. When Tisha B'ab falls on Shabbat and is pushed to Sunday, we only refrain from these items the night immediately following the fast.

When the fast begins on Saturday night, the habdala on wine at the conclusion of Shabbat is recited Sunday night. Boreh Me'oreh Ha'esh, the blessing commemorating the creation of fire, however, is recited Saturday night.

VII. Prayers

On the afternoon preceding the fast most congregations pray minha early to allow partaking of a regular meal such that there would be a respectable interval between it and se'udat mafseket, which is eaten close to sunset.

Tahanun supplications (ana) is not recited in minha before Tisha B'ab or on Tisha B'ab day, as it is called mo'ed in Megillat Ekha. Although in peshat this usage refers to a date

for destruction, the midrash expounds it as eventually becoming positive and great cause for hope and redemption.

To create a suitable atmosphere, synagogue lights are dimmed during evening and morning services.

In most Aleppo-derived communities, Ha'azinu is recited before arbit and in shahrit in place of Az Yashir. It is generally chanted in unison by the congregation.

Ekha and various qinot (elegies) are recited both in the evening and morning services. In most Aleppo-derived communities Ekha is read before arbit; as Rabbi Matloub Abady a"h wrote, citing the 1525 Mahzor Aram Soba, this was a pre-Shulhan Arukh Aleppo custom. In virtually all other communities, following Shulhan Arukh, Ekha is read after arbit.

Anenu is recited in all three amidot of the day. Nahem is recited in the Boneh Yerushalayim berakha of the amida. Following Shulhan Arukh, many Sephardic communities recite Nahem in all three amidot. Some recite it only in minha. The amida is not repeated if one forgot to recite these. Since the establishment of the modern state of Israel, particularly since 1967, many recite a modified version of Nahem so that it should be in harmony with the reality of today.

Kaddish Titqabal is not recited in arbit. It is recited in the other prayers.

Sefer Torah is read in shahrit and minha. There is haftara reading in shahrit. Most Sephardic communities also read a haftara in minha. The Aleppo community, however, does not, based on HaRambam.

Following Shulhan Arukh, shahrit should not be prayed with talit and tefillin, emphasizing the mourning nature of the day. Talit and tefillin are donned for minha. Some don tefillin privately at home in the morning, recite shema, remove them, and come to synagogue for prayers. Some members of Aleppo-derived communities even pray individually at home until after the amida and come to synagogue for Sefer Torah, Ekha and kinot. In our days, when people from different communities and different customs congregate for prayers, it is most advisable to follow Shulhan Arukh and pray with a minyan in synagogue without talit and tefillin.

At the conclusion of minha selected comforting verses from Tanakh are recited.

תזכו בנחמת ציון

Parashat Debarim - Tisha Be'ab

Deuteronomy 1:1-3:22

The following was published for Shabbat Parashat Debarim in 2004 in Efrat, Israel by Rabbi Shlomo Riskin.

What is the real significance of our Tisha B'Av mourning?
What really caused the Temple's destruction?

The Haftarah selection for this week's portion Debarim, is the last of three Haftarahs preceding the fast day. Two of the Haftarahs are from Jeremiah, the prophet who actually lived through the cataclysmic loss. This week, the third, is from Isaiah, chosen by the sages to be read immediately before the ninth of Av, a reading which provides deep insight into why the Temple was destroyed. Indeed, this Sabbath is called Shabbat Hazon (the Sabbath of the Vision) after the first word of the Haftarah.

We read how Isaiah mercilessly berates the Jewish people:

“Hear the word of the Lord, rulers of Sodom, give ear to the Torah of our God, you people of Gomorrah. To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifice to me? I'm sated with the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of sated beasts; ... Bring no more vain offerings, incense of abomination they are to me. As for the New Moons, the Sabbaths and the Festivals, I cannot bear iniquity along with your solemn convocations. Your hands are full of blood ... Wash you, make yourselves clean; put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes; cease to do evil. Learn to do well; seek justice; relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow” [Isaiah 1:10-17].

I have quoted at length because these seven verses, although but a fragment of Isaiah's words, capture the essence of prophetic sensibility as well as alluding to the age-long tension between prophet and priest. Long before the checks and balances of a democratic government, Judaism had its own built-in system for maintaining a balance between the awesomely exact ritual requirements in the Holy Temple which was the domain of the priests and an ethical spirit of universalism, compassion and justice which was promoted – and insisted upon – by the prophet. The prophets stood alone as they raged against the sins of people, especially when the sins took on a veneer of religious respectability which only served to hide the rot within. The hypocrisy of the Israelite callousness towards the oppressed coupled with concern about punctilious religious performance made a mockery out of ritual and an abomination out of the Temple. If indeed the word Korban (sacrifice) is derived from Karov (to come near to G-d), then the sacrificial offerings ought to bring us closer to the G-d of “compassion and freely-given love, patience, loving-kindness and truth.” If the aftermath of the sacrifice is not a more sensitive human being, then the offering becomes a bribe and the offerer a hypocritical scoundrel attempting to manipulate G-d to serve his selfish and nefarious purposes. No wonder the Oriental (Sefardi) Prayer/books ordain the following introduction to synagogue prayer: “Behold I am now prepared and ready to perform the ritual of prayer, as it is written in the Bible, ‘you shall love your neighbor like yourself.’” The purpose of ritual is not merely to bring us closer to G-d; its purpose is rather to help us understand that our G-d is a G-d of love and compassion who wants us to act lovingly and compassionately towards every human being!

Of course, we need ritual in every aspect of our lives. The nuances of ritual are the grammatical rules of the language with which man communicates with God. Rituals give a

people its identity in the world, its colors and sounds and haunting melodies. Rituals give people an ethnic identity apart, emphasizing unique eating habits as well as unique celebrations and holy days. Indeed, without ritual, the Jews would blend into the overall landscape of humanity and disappear as an identifiable people. But the purpose of Jewish separate ethnic identity is not merely to be separate; it is rather to be a holy nation and a kingdom of priest-teachers who will communicate the will of a G-d of ethics and morality, love and peace, to the entire world.

And even ritual, in the eyes of classic Judaism, does not exist in a vacuum. The Sabbath itself, rich with ritualistic tapestries, opens itself to an original ethical view of all creations made by G-d, Who endows each of His creatures with right-to-life; indeed the Bible declares the very purpose of the Sabbath to be “in order that your male and female Gentile slaves may rest like you” (Deut. 5), and it is a holy day in which even beasts of burden must rest, even a mosquito may not be killed, even a blade of grass dare not be plucked from the ground. No wonder Martin Buber declared that anyone incapable of saying Shabbat Shalom to a dog or a tree does not understand the true purpose and meaning of the Sabbath!

When the question was raised whether to continue keeping fast days that were instituted after the destruction of the first Temple or abandoning them once the Second Temple had been rebuilt, we hear God’s answer in the words of the prophet: “...When you fasted and mourned, in the fifth month and the seventh, for these seventy years, was it for Me you fasted?” After all, when you ate and when you drank, it was you who did the eating and you who did the drinking... This is what the Lord G-d of Hosts declares: True judgements shall you judge, loving-kindness and compassion shall you do to your sibling humans. Do not

oppress the widow, the orphan, the stranger and the indigent...” (Zehariah 7: 5-10).

God doesn't need our fast days, nor does He need our sacrifices. Ritual is a means to the end of developing a more sensitive and compassionate human being. When the ritual – or Temple – didn't do its job – or, even worse, became an impediment to the goal, served as a cover-up for iniquity – then the Temple had to be destroyed.

Hence, what must be done to bring back the Holy Temple? Demonstrations, petitions, tanks? Isaiah makes no bones about it. The Haftorah ends with the verse: “Zion shall be redeemed with justice, and those that return to her with righteousness” (1:27). Yes, “The fast days ... will be turned into days of gladness and rejoicing, [but only] when you [learn] to love truth and peace.” (Zechariah 7).

Debarim - Counsel for the Defense

Dvar Torah by Sir Jonathan Sacks, Chief Rabbi of the United Kingdom, for Shabbat Perashat Debarim, July 21st, 2007.

There are times when, beneath the surface of an apparently simple interpretation, an intense drama is taking place. So it is with the opening verse of Debarim.

The text seems simple enough. “These are the words Moses spoke to all Israel in the desert east of the Jordan, in the Aravah, opposite Suph, between Paran and Tophel, Lavan, Hazeroth and Di Zahav.” The sages, however, ever sensitive to the slightest nuance, heard something strange and suggestive in these words. What is Di Zahav? Evidently the name of a place. But it has not been mentioned before. How then does it help us locate where the great last speeches of Moses took place, if we have no way of knowing where it was?

Besides which, the name itself is suggestive. Di Zahav means “enough gold.” Might there not be a subtle reference here to an episode which involved gold – namely, the golden calf, the worst sin of the previous generation? On this slender basis, the sages built one of their most daring interpretations:

Moses spoke audaciously [hiti’ach debarim] towards Heaven . . . The school of R. Jannai learned this from the words Di Zahav. What do these words mean? They said in the school of R. Jannai: Thus spoke Moses before the Holy One, blessed be He: “Sovereign of the Universe, the silver and gold [zahav] which you showered on Israel until they said, Enough [dai], was what caused them to make the calf . . . R. Hiyya bar

Abba said: It is like the case of a man who had a son. He bathed him and anointed him and gave him plenty to eat and drink and hung a purse around his neck and set him down at the door of a house of ill-repute. How could he help sinning?

Moses, in this dramatic re-reading, has been transformed into counsel for the defense. Yes, he says to G-d, the people committed a sin. But it was You who gave them the opportunity and the temptation. Without gold, they could not have made the calf. But it was You who told them to ask their neighbors for gold. This was not something they did of their own accord. Therefore you must not blame them. Please, instead, forgive them.

We hear, in this aggadic passage, one of the most striking and humane motifs in rabbinic thought. It is called being *melamed zekhut*, judging favorably, or arguing the case for the defense. It means placing a positive construction on events, pleading a cause, putting the case for mercy or at least mitigation of sentence. The sages sought to exonerate Israel. Yes, to be sure, judging by appearances, they may have been guilty of waywardness, backsliding and ingratitude. They may at times have failed to live up to the highest ideals of the Torah. Yet consider the difficulties they faced, the dangers they went through, the temptations that surrounded them. Even the making of the golden calf, their greatest sin, was in some measure excusable.

Limmud Zekhut has a rich history in aggadah and halakhah, Jewish thought and law. One of its classic expressions is to be found in Maimonides' Epistle on Martyrdom, written around 1165. Spain had been invaded by an extremist Muslim sect, the Almohads, who confronted Jews with the choice: convert or die. Maimonides' own family was forced to flee. Some Jews, however, stayed, publicly embracing

Islam while secretly remaining Jews – forerunners of the later marranos who converted to Christianity.

One of the forced converts wrote to a rabbi to ask whether he was right to continue to practice as many mitzvot as he could in secret. The rabbi wrote back a dismissive reply, saying that now that he had abandoned Judaism, every religious deed he performed was not a merit but a sin. Appalled by this reply, Maimonides wrote the Epistle, saying that indeed Jews should leave Spain and go somewhere they could practice their religion openly. But those who stayed and converted under fear of death should not be regarded as sinners. To the contrary, every mitzvah they do is still a good deed. Indeed, in one sense, it is a great deed since “the reward is much greater for a person who fulfils the Law and knows that if he is caught, he and all he has will perish.” In the course of the letter, Maimonides cites a host of examples in which the sages say that the greatest of the prophets were criticized by G-d when they criticized the Jewish people. His conclusion is that “It is not right to alienate, scorn and hate people who desecrate the Sabbath. It is our duty to befriend them and encourage them to fulfill the commandments.”

It is a note that sounds again during the Hassidic movement, most famously in many stories attributed to the great R. Levi Yitzhak of Berditchev. It is said that Levi Yitzhak once saw a Jew smoking in the street on Shabbat. He said, “My friend, surely you have forgotten that it is Shabbat today.” “No,” said the other, “I know what day it is.” “Then surely you have forgotten that smoking is forbidden on Shabbat.” “No, I know it is forbidden.” “Then surely, you must have been thinking about something else when you lit the cigarette.” “No,” the other replied, “I knew what I was doing.” At this, Levi Yitzhak turned his eyes upward to heaven and said, “Sovereign of the universe,

who is like Your people Israel? I give this man every chance, and still he cannot tell a lie!”

The great leaders of Israel were the great defenders of Israel, people who saw the good within the not-yet-good. Where did they learn it from? From the prophets themselves. Most notable in this regard is a figure not usually associated with good news, namely Jeremiah. His name is associated with a bringer of bad tidings, yet it is he who says in the name of G-d:

I remember the devotion of your youth,
How as a bride you loved Me
And followed Me through the desert,
Through a land not sown.

Again, it was Jeremiah who said of Ephraim (the northern kingdom, usually associated with idolatry):

Is not Ephraim my dear son,
The child in whom I delight?
Though I often speak against him,
I still remember him.
Therefore my heart yearns for him;
I have great compassion for him – declares the Lord.

There were the great prophecies of hope in the concluding chapters of Isaiah, from which all seven haftarot of “consolation” are taken, beginning next week. Indeed almost every prophet gave voice to hope. The prophets criticized Israel, but always, and only, out of love. Perhaps the most paradoxical of all such utterances came, in the name of G-d, from Amos: “You only have I chosen [yadati, which may also mean, ‘have I known’ or ‘have I loved’] of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your sins.” The very suffering of the Jewish people, implied Amos, was a sign of their chosenness, their preciousness in the eyes of G-d.

What then is going on in the sages' interpretation of the words *Di Zahav* in the first verse of *Debarim*? The *sedra* [*perasha*] of *Debarim* is always read on the *Shabbat* before *Tisha b'Av*, the most tragic date in the Jewish calendar, the day on which both the first and second temples were destroyed and on which many other catastrophes occurred, including the defeat of the *Bar Kochba* rebellion, *Hadrian's* rebuilding of *Jerusalem* as a pagan city, and the *Spanish expulsion*.

The *haftarah* (the famous "vision" of the first chapter of *Isaiah*, which gives its name to this day, *Shabbat Chazon*) is one of the most searing indictments in all literature of the corruption of a people. *Debarim* itself is harsh in its judgement of the *Israelites*. *Rashi*, in his comment to the first verse, writes that "These are words of rebuke, and [*Moses*] is listing the various places where [*the Israelites*] provoked G-d." The connection between *sedra* [*perasha*], *haftarah* and *Tisha b'Av* is driven home by the unmistakable three-fold occurrence of the word *Eichah*:

In the *sedra* [*perasha*]: "How [*eichah*] can I bear your problems, your burdens and your disputes alone?"

In the *haftarah*: "How [*eichah*] the faithful city has become a harlot! She once was full of justice; righteousness used to dwell in her; but now murderers!"

In the *megillah*: "How [*eichah*] deserted lies the city, once so full of people. How like a widow is she who once was great among the nations. She who was a queen among the provinces has now become a slave."

These are terrifying judgements, awesome in their cumulative weight. It is not too much to say that had this been all, the Jewish people might have concluded that the mission G-d had given them was impossible. However hard they tried, it seemed, they fell short. They were afflicted;

they suffered; twice they had seen their holiest site destroyed. The first time, when they were exiled to Babylon, consolation was at hand. The prophets told them – and they were right – that within seventy years they would return. This time, however, under Rome, no end was in sight. An extraordinary passage in the Talmud tells us how close Jews came to despair:

R. Ishmael ben Elisha said: Since the day that a government has come into power which issues cruel decrees against us and forbids us to enter into the ‘week of the son’ [i.e. brit milah, circumcision] we ought by rights to issue a ruling forbidding Jews to marry and have children, so that the seed of Abraham our father would come to an end of its own accord.

It was a moment of crisis. (So, incidentally, was the Spanish expulsion. Abarbanel, who lived through it, later wrote: “I used to say in those days [following the expulsion] all the prophets who prophesied about my redemption and salvation are false; Moses, may he rest in peace, was false in his utterances, Isaiah lied in his consolations . . . Let the people remember all the despairing things they used to say at the time of the exile.”)

What, at such times, is the role of a sage? The sages were not prophets, but they knew they carried the same responsibility (“From the day the Temple was destroyed, prophecy was taken from the prophets and given to the sages”). They knew that at times of comfort and ease, the task of the prophet is to warn of impending dangers, to detect the first signs of moral drift and decadence. But at times of trouble the role of the prophet is to bring hope.

That is what the sages did. Building on the prophets but going beyond them, they were *melamed zekhut* for the Jewish people. They became advocates for the defense.

They spoke the good news about Jews (“Even the emptiest of Israel is as full of good deeds as a pomegranate is of seeds”; “Let Israel alone: they may not be prophets, but they are the children of prophets”; “they are believers, the children of believers”; “A Jew who sins remains a Jew”). Throughout the rabbinic and post-rabbinic literature this note sounds time and again – a note of love, of generosity of spirit, even awe for this people who, though much afflicted, never gave up its faith.

And this is what they did on Shabbat Chazon. On this, the most painful Shabbat of the year, they introduced into the first verse of Debarim a note of defense. Yes -- Israel sinned, nowhere more so than when they made the golden calf, but even then there was a case to be argued in mitigation – and this, they said, is what Moses did. Don’t blame them, he said to G-d: they were not responsible for the gold, and without the gold there would have been no golden calf. Moses, counsel for the prosecution, becomes Moses, attorney for the defense. Thus the sages introduced a note of hope into what otherwise might have been the Shabbat of despair.

Where is that voice today? We know all too well our failings as a people. Yes, Jews in Israel are a fragmented and deeply divided society. Yes, Jews in the Diaspora are assimilating and disaffiliating. Those who seek to be critical will find no shortage of grounds on which to be so. But Jewish leadership as the sages understood it is about love, respect, even awe for the Jewish people – this extraordinary people who after the Holocaust and the angel of death collectively created the greatest single affirmation of life in the past two thousand years of our history: the State of Israel. This remarkable people who, despite the pressures of modernity and post-modernity, still identify as Jews, come to the aid of other Jews in need wherever they are, who carry beneath the surface of their lives a glowing

ember of identity which with the right touch may yet be fanned into flame. This people who, though they may live far from Israel, still carry Israel, the land and its people, in their heart, so that when it is attacked they come to its defense. We have no shortage of internal critics. What we need is the opposite. Who will be *melamed zekhut* for the Jewish people today?

Shabbat Hazon

by Rabbi Ralph Tawil

Value: Good behavior towards people is essential for a good relationship with God. Whenever you hear that a person “has become religious,” there is a tendency to think of that change in terms of his taking on ritual observances. Perhaps he prays longer, keeps the laws of Shabbat more stringently, or even dresses differently. What, unfortunately, does not come to mind is that the person has become kinder and more sensitive; or that he has decided to refrain from embarrassing others or gossiping. Would a person who had decided to be a better listener and be more considerate be described as becoming more religious? Or what about a person that decided that all his business practices must be on the highest ethical standards; reporting mistakes in his favor with as much diligence as he would mistakes that cost him money? I venture to guess that in today’s parlance that these changes would be described as proper, the “right thing to do.” They would probably not be described as “more religious.” The prophecy that we read as the haftarah prior to Tisha Be’ab disagrees.

Background: The haftarot which we read in the Shabbat services throughout the summer months are connected with the grievous commemoration of the temples’ destruction of the Ninth day of Ab (Tish’a Be’ab). The haftarot of the three weeks preceding Tish’a Be’ab contain prophecies that are very critical of Israel. The haftarot of the ten weeks following that day of fasting have prophecies of consolation and of a call to repentance. This Shabbat, the Shabbat before the fast day of Tish’a be’ab, the portion chosen criticizes Israel about their diligent observance of ritual laws (i.e. sacrifice, festivals, and even prayer), and their laxness regarding ethical laws. The prophet’s point is that the ritual observance is not only meaningless, it is

abhorrent, when not coupled with proper behavior towards other people. Let's listen to the words of the prophet.

Text: Isaiah 1:10-17, 27

Listen to Hashem's word, you chieftains of Sedom, pay attention to God's instruction leaders of 'Amorah. Why do I need all your sacrifices, Hashem says, I am fed up with burnt offering of rams, suet of fatlings, and blood of bulls; and I have no delight in lambs and he-goats. You come to appear before Me - who ever asked you to do this, to trample My courts? Don't bring Me your futile offerings, your incense is disgusting to Me, as are your New Moons and Sabbaths. I cannot stand holiday with injustice. I hate your New Moons and festivals, they are a burden to Me, I cannot endure them. When you lift up your hands I will turn My eyes away from you; Though you pray at length, I will not listen—your hands are stained with crime.

Wash yourself clean, put your evil doings away from My sight. Cease to do evil, learn to do good. Devote yourself to justice; Aid the wronged. Uphold the rights of the orphan, defend the cause of the widow.

...Siyon will be saved by justice, and her repentant ones by righteousness.

Analysis: Notice the vehemence of Isaiah's rebuke. *Yeshu'ya* referred to Israel's leaders as being from Sedom and 'Amorah, two places notorious for their unethical behavior. Bne Yisrael must have thought themselves very close to God, because they were offering all the sacrifices, praying and keeping Shabbat as they should. Yet the prophet says that all that is disgusting to God when it is accompanied by injustice and mistreatment of society's disadvantaged and powerless. You cannot be cruel or nasty and expect God to listen to your prayers. You cannot be

inconsiderate and close to God at the same time--no matter how much you pray and learn. Proper relationships with people are the prerequisite for a good relationship with God. As our Sages said, "Good manners precede Torah."

Discussion: What does "more religious" mean? (Closer to Hashem, keeping more of the Misvot.) Is it a misvah not to insult or embarrass people? (Most certainly). So if a person decides never to insult or embarrass someone he is becoming more religious.

What do you think Hashem wants more: to pray better, or to be an honest and fair person? (According to what the prophet Yesh'aya said, it is more important to be just and fair.) Emphasize that the best approach is to be honest and a good person, and to pray and observe the ritual commandments as we should. These things are not mutually exclusive.

How can we behave better towards other people? Treat people with respect and consideration. Ask for things by saying "please," and acknowledge someone's favor by saying "thank you." And don't just mouth the words—mean them.

Treat your friends with respect. Of course, this applies to relationships between teachers and students and counselors and campers, as well. Mutual respect and consideration are the building blocks of proper relationships. Teachers and camp counselors must model these behaviors in every contact with students or campers.

For older children:

Why do you think that people who want to become more religious usually understand that in terms of observing

more ritual commandments and not in terms of behaving better towards other people?

Perhaps, because behaving in a good way towards people is considerably harder than taking upon oneself an extra stringency regarding what you can eat. It is much more demanding to never gossip than it is to refrain from violating the Shabbat.

Why do you think that our Sages chose this prophecy to precede the day of fasting and repentance that is Tish'a Be'ab? (When we think about repenting, our focus should be on the more thoroughgoing repentance that is required for proper relationships between people.)

Psalm 137 - The Lament of Jerusalem

by Mr. Ronald Benun

Of the 150 psalms, Psalm 137 best fits the category of a lament. The psalmist describes the profound grieving of the Babylonian exiles over Jerusalem and their intense longing for it. In this paper we will demonstrate how the psalmist uses various literary devices to embed these themes in virtually every syllable of the psalm's 84 words. The net result reflects the all-encompassing despair and sorrow of the sensitive segment of the nation in exile.

Location of Psalm 137 in Tehillim

At first glance, Psalm 137 appears out of place with the psalms that precede it. Psalm 137 is placed towards the end of the fifth book of Psalms. Prior to Psalm 137 the general tone of book five is celebratory. The following is a brief outline of the celebratory psalms that precede Psalm 137 in book 5:

1. Book 5 opens with Psalm 107 in which the psalmist praises G-d for his kindness to Man. It opens with the statement - **הָדָו לַיהוָה כִּי טוֹב כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ**, followed by the repeated refrain of - **יִדְוֶה לַיהוָה חַסְדּוֹ** וְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו לְבָנֵי אָדָם. The psalm concludes with the phrase - **וְיִתְבֹּנְנוּ חַסְדֵי יְהוָה** - once more referring to the opening "**כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ**".
2. Psalms 113 -118, more commonly known as the **הַלֵּל**, is a running praise of G-d which also opens and closes its last psalm with the "**כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ**" statement. This **כִּי לְעוֹלָם חַסְדּוֹ** statement envelopes Psalms 107 - 118.
3. Psalm 119 is a celebratory acrostic that contains 8 verses for each letter of the alphabet.

4. Psalms 120 – 134, sometimes referred to as the Psalms of the return, consist of the 15 celebratory שירי המעלות.
5. Psalms 135-136 praise G-d for the great miracles he did for the nation during the exodus, culminating in 26 repetitions of “כי לעולם חסדו”. These final כי לעולם חסדו repetitions create an envelope around the Psalm 107-136 block, as 107 opened with “כי לעולם חסדו”.

Directly following this intense burst of praise, the psalmist turns to the concluding eight Psalms of Tehillim proper.¹ Psalm 137 is the first of these eight psalms, and instead of continuing the praise, he is forced to confront his current reality. He is in exile, the nation is in exile, and the days of rejoicing in Jerusalem have become a mere memory. Instead of celebrating, he grieves - lamenting the loss of Jerusalem and the victory of Israel's enemies.

Structure

Psalm 137 consists of 3 clearly delineated sections:

Section 1

- (א) על נהרות בבל שם ישבנו גם בכינו בְּזָכְרֵנוּ אֶת צִיּוֹן :
 (ב) על עַרְבִים בְּתוֹכָהּ תִּלְיֵנוּ כְּנְרוֹתֵינוּ :
 (ג) כִּי שָׁם שָׁאֲלוּנוּ שׁוֹבֵינוּ דַּבְּרֵי שִׁיר וְתוֹלְלֵינוּ שְׂמֵחָה שִׁירוּ לָנוּ מִשִּׁיר צִיּוֹן :
 (ד) אֵיךְ נָשִׁיר אֶת שִׁיר יְהוָה עַל אֲדָמַת נָכָר :

In this section, the psalmist describes the nation that has been exiled to Babylon; they sit by the river, weeping and remembering Zion. They discard their musical instruments

¹ Pss. 137-145 serve as the conclusion to the Book of Psalms, while the final five psalms (Pss. 146-150) function as the coda or grand finale to Tehillim.

as they can no longer play them; they can no longer be joyous without Jerusalem. Verse 3 continues with an account of the captors asking the exiled nation (possibly with intention to torment), to “sing to us one of the songs of Zion.” In verse 4 the nation responds with a rhetorical question, “How can we sing the song of YHVH on alien soil?” Throughout this section, the author is recalling events experienced by the nation and, accordingly, speaks in the plural form.

Section 2

(ה) אִם אֶשְׁכַּחְךָ יְרוּשָׁלַם תִּשְׁכַּח יְמִינִי :
 (ו) תִּדְבֹק לְשׁוֹנֵי לְחֻכֵי אִם לֹא אֶזְכְּרֶכֶּי אִם לֹא אֶעֱלֶה אֶת יְרוּשָׁלַם עַל
 רֹאשׁ שְׂמֹחֲתִי :

After recalling the exile in section one, the author shifts his mode of speech from first person plural (we) to first person singular (I), and personally addresses the city. In this section (vv. 5-6) he turns to Jerusalem itself and says “If I forget you O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget.” The use of the word “forget” in conjunction with his right hand poetically captures the imagery of someone who has become incapacitated and is unable to act, as the right hand represents Man carrying out action. He has such an intense connection to Jerusalem that if he were ever to forget the city he would be incapacitated; his hand would “forget”. Similarly, the use of the phrase *תִּדְבֹק לְשׁוֹנֵי לְחֻכֵי אִם* (v.5) poetically captures the imagery of someone who cannot speak without mentioning Jerusalem. If he does not use his mouth to recall Jerusalem (*אֶזְכְּרֶכֶּי*), he will not be able to speak. The author is so profoundly attached to Jerusalem that he cannot talk or move without remembering the city.

Section 3

(ז) זָכַר יְהוָה לְבָנֵי אֲדוֹם אֵת יוֹם יְרוּשָׁלַם הָאֲמָרִים עָרוּ עָרוּ עַד
הִיְסוּד בָּהּ :
(ח) בַּת בְּבֶל הַשְׂדֻדָּה אֲשֶׁרִי שִׁישַׁלְמָם לָךְ אֵת גְּמוּלָךְ שֶׁגַּמְלָתָ לָנוּ :
(ט) אֲשֶׁרִי שִׁיאַחֲזוּ וְנַפְצוּ אֵת עַלְלִיךָ אֶל הַסָּלַע :

In the third and final section of the psalm, the psalmist turns to G-d and prays for Him to remember the day of Jerusalem's destruction, how the nation of Edom cheered and encouraged the atrocities committed during that time; they cried "strip her, strip her to her very foundation!". The psalmist then turns to the nation's captor, Babylon, and pronounces a blessing upon he who makes them suffer the same carnage that they brought upon Israel.

One significant aspect of the structure of Psalm 137 is the placement of repeated key phrases and words. One such word in this psalm is the string of ע followed by ל forming the syllable על, which occurs at the end of each of the three sections delineated above. The first section ends with על אֲדַמְתָּ נֶכָר (v. 4), the second section ends with על רֵאשׁ שְׂמַחְתִּי יַעֲלֶיךָ (v. 6), and the third section ends with על עַלְלִיךָ אֶל הַסָּלַע (v. 9). In each of the section endings, the על string is placed at the beginning of a 3-word clause that closes the verse and the section. These two letters do not only differentiate sections, they also serve as literary markers at the beginning and end of the Psalm; the Psalm begins with the words על נְהָרוֹת בְּבֶל (v. 1) and ends in v. 9 with the word סָלַע, i.e. על in reverse, enveloping the Psalm in the ע and ל sequence. (We will elaborate on this point later in the paper.)

Another word that occurs at key locations is the repeated זָכַר root. In the opening verse of section 1 the psalmist uses the זָכַר root when mournfully remembering Jerusalem in the words בְּזָכְרֵנוּ אֵת צִיּוֹן (v. 1). In section 2 the זָכַר root occurs at the center of the section in v. 6 as אִם לֹא אֶזְכְּרֵכִי, also referring to the psalmist's resolve to remember the

city. In addition, the root שכח (forget), the antonym of זכר (remember), is used twice in the first verse of the 2nd section, referring to the individual psalmist's resolve to never forget Jerusalem. Section 3 opens on the words זָכַר הַיְהוָה לְבָנֵי אֱדוֹם (v. 7) as part of the psalmist's prayer for G-d to remember the nation of Edom in connection with Jerusalem. The repetition of the root זכר found at key locations throughout the three sections not only corresponds to the thematic division, but also further accentuates the theme of this psalm, i.e. the intense emotional longing for Jerusalem.

Psalm 137's Theme

As we have observed in our other studies on Psalms², the center word or verse of a psalm is particularly significant, often its focal point. Center points can be determined based on the word counts or the verse counts of the text. In this psalm, both do indeed, have thematic connotations. The center verse of Psalm 137 is v. 5 - אִם אֶשְׁכַּח יְרוּשָׁלַם תִּשְׁכַּח יְמִינִי. The psalmist is so emotionally attached to Jerusalem, the city that is referred to in Psalms as full of G-d's compassion, justice and righteousness (cf. Ps. 48, 122), that he can never forget it.³

The center words of the entire Psalm are לְשׁוֹנִי לְחֶפְזִי, "my tongue to my palate," which describe the psalmist's intense longing for the city. A closer look at these two metaphors reveals that they express the psalmist's message in a much

² Cf. Ronald Benun, "Psalm 22: From the Depths of Divine Abandonment to the Pinnacle of Hopeful Vision." *Purim Reader*. (New York: Tebah, March 2008), p. 31

³ This center verse is arranged in a chiasm where the center word יְרוּשָׁלַם is flanked with the שכח root immediately before and after it and with assonance at the opening and closing of the verse with אִם and יְמִינִי.

deeper manner than appears on the surface.⁴ When he states “תִּשְׁכַּח יְמִינִי” it appears that he means to say, “Jerusalem is so intrinsically ingrained in my writing of this composition that if I forget Jerusalem my right hand would forget its instructions and would not be able to write anything, since virtually every word contains a literary reference to Jerusalem,” as we will soon demonstrate.

Similarly, with the second metaphor, the psalmist seems to be saying, “If I am not conscious of Jerusalem when I speak, my tongue would be stuck to my palate and I wouldn’t be able to say anything, since every word I say contains a literal reference to Jerusalem. In addition, if Jerusalem is not foremost in my happy occasions my tongue would not be able to participate in the celebration because it’s impossible for me to sing of any joyous event without referring to Jerusalem.”⁵

The word Jerusalem occurs three times in the psalm (vv. 5, 6, and 7) and its synonym Zion occurs twice (vv. 1 and 3). Combined, Psalm 137 has a higher occurrence of Jerusalem/Zion than any other psalm. The word Jerusalem is found at key junctures throughout the Psalm. As noted above, it is the central word in the center verse. In addition, in v. 6 it directly precedes the closing words of the second section - יְרוּשָׁלַם עַל רֵאשׁ שְׂמֵחָתַי. The word Jerusalem occurs at the exact center of the 7th verse; notably, the seventh word of the 13-word verse.⁶ The word Zion is the closing

⁴ Another aspect of this metaphor, based on the preponderance of the ל, will be elaborated shortly.

⁵ It should be recalled that in verse 3 the captors asked the Israelites to sing of the songs of Zion in joyous occasions.

⁶ For the significance of this number see Rabbi Shamah’s article: *On Number Symbolism in the Torah From the Work of Rabbi Solomon D. Sassoon*. For the use of word counts see: Ronald Benun, “Evil and the Disruption of Order: A Structural Analysis of the Acrostics in the First Book of Psalms,” *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 6 Article 5 (2006).

word of the verse both times it is used. The repeated reference of Jerusalem and Zion at specific locations throughout, appears to be another literary device used to underscore the Psalm's focus on Jerusalem.

Upon close examination, the reader notices that the text is filled with alliteration that focuses around the letter *ש*. The Psalm contains the phrases *שָׁם יִשְׁבְּנוּ* (v.1), *שָׁם שְׁאֵלוּנוּ שׁוֹבְיָנוּ* (v.3), *שִׁירוּ לָנוּ מִשִּׁיר יְרוּשָׁלַם* (v.3), *אֶשְׁכַּחךְ יְרוּשָׁלַם תִּשְׁכַּח* (v.5), *עַל רֹאשׁ שְׂמֹחֲתֵי אֲשֶׁרֶי* (v.6), *הַשְּׂדוּדָה אֲשֶׁרֶי שְׁיִשְׁלַם* (v.8), and *שְׁיִאֲחֶזֶז* (v.9). The abundance of alliterative *ש*'s brings attention to the unusually high frequency of *ש* in this text. Of the 317 letters in Psalm 137, 26 of them are *ש*, comprising 8.2% of the letters. On average the letter *ש* makes up about 4% of the letters of Psalms. Thus, this Psalm contains double the amount of *ש*'s that the average psalm contains. Many scholars have commented on the abundance of alliterative *ש*'s in this Psalm, but most do not offer sufficient explanation as to why the letter *ש*, in particular, is alliterated so frequently. Another letter, *ל*, is also significantly alliterated in this Psalm in the phrases *עַל יְרוּשָׁלַם*, *יְרוּשָׁלַם*, *לֹא אֶעֱלֶה*, *לְשׁוֹנֵי לְחֵפִי*, *לְשׁוֹנֵי לְחֵפִי*, *לֹא אֶעֱלֶה*, *יְרוּשָׁלַם* (v.6), *שְׁיִשְׁלַם לְךָ*, *שְׁגַמְלֶתָ לָנוּ* (v.8) and *עַל הַסֵּלַע* (v.9), which all bring attention to the letter *ל*. The letters *ש* and *ל* may be significant in this Psalm because together with the letter *מ*, they make up the word *שלם*. Though the pronunciation of Jerusalem is “*yerushalayim*,” it is never written in its full form (*מלא*) and always appears without the *י* (yod) as *יְרוּשָׁלַם*. The city of Jerusalem is clearly referred to as *שלם* in Psalm 76:3 where it states *וַיְהִי בְּשָׁלַם סוֹכּוֹ וַיִּמְעוֹנְתּוּ בְּצִיּוֹן*.⁷ Scholars have pointed out that it is very likely that *שלם* was the original name of the city of Jerusalem.⁸

⁷ Note that in Psalm 76:3 there is ABBA parallelism where the words *סוֹכּוֹ* and *וַיִּמְעוֹנְתּוּ* are synonymous as are *שָׁלַם* and *צִיּוֹן*.

⁸ See *Olam HaTanakh*

Being that שלם is synonymous with Jerusalem, the placement of ש, ל, and מ in the text carries quite a bit of significance. As seen in table 1, one observes that these three letters occur in close proximity to one another several times in this text, and in some cases form the acronyms of word sequences. In verse 1, the word שלם can be found in the words שָׁמַל בְּבֵלְשָׁם; the ש, ל, and מ can be reorganized to spell שלם. In verse 3 שלם can be found in שָׁמַל שְׂאוֹנוֹ, וְתוֹלְדֵינוּ שְׂמִיחָה שִׁירֵינוּ מְשִׁיר. In fact the phrase שִׁירֵינוּ מְשִׁיר makes a glaring reference to Jerusalem in that it contains the letters י, ר, ו, and ש (ירוש), and is followed by a ל, and מ in the next two words, לְנוּ מְשִׁיר. The phrase שִׁיר מְשִׁיר in verse 4, and לְשׁוֹנֵי לְחֻכֵי אֵם in verse 5 similarly each contain these three letters in sequence. Verse 5 contains an explicit mention of Jerusalem, and it is also followed by the words עַל רֹאשׁ, resulting in the ending letters (ספי תבות) of “עַל רֹאשׁ” to be read backwards as שלם. Strikingly we find the actual word שלם in the word שְׁיִשְׁלֵם of verse 8⁹, shortly followed by the word שְׂגַמְלָתָהּ that contains another שלם reference! See Table 1:

⁹ Scholars have noted that the word שְׁיִשְׁלֵם in Ps. 137 may be alluding to Jerusalem (see e.g. Olam HaTanakh on Ps. 137).

Table 1

(1) על נהרות בבל שם שִׁבְנוּ גַם בְּכִינוּ
בְּזָכְרֵנוּ אֶת צִיּוֹן :

(2) על עֲרָבִים בְּתוֹכָהּ תָּלִינוּ כְּנָרוֹתֵינוּ :

(3) כִּי שָׁם שָׁאֲלוּנוּ שׁוֹבֵינוּ דְבָרֵי שִׁיר
וְתוֹלְלֵינוּ שְׂמִיחָה שִׁירוּ לָנוּ מִשִׁיר צִיּוֹן :

(4) אֵיךְ נָשִׁיר אֶת שִׁיר יְהוָה עַל אֲדָמַת נֶכֶר :

(5) אִם אֲשַׁכַּחַךְ יְרוּשָׁלַם תִּשְׁכַּח יְמִינִי :

(6) תִּדְבֹק לְשׁוֹנֵי לֶחֶפֶי אִם לֹא אֲזַכְּרֶכִי אִם
לֹא אַעֲלֶה אֶת יְרוּשָׁלַם עַל רֹאשׁ שְׂמִיחָתִי :

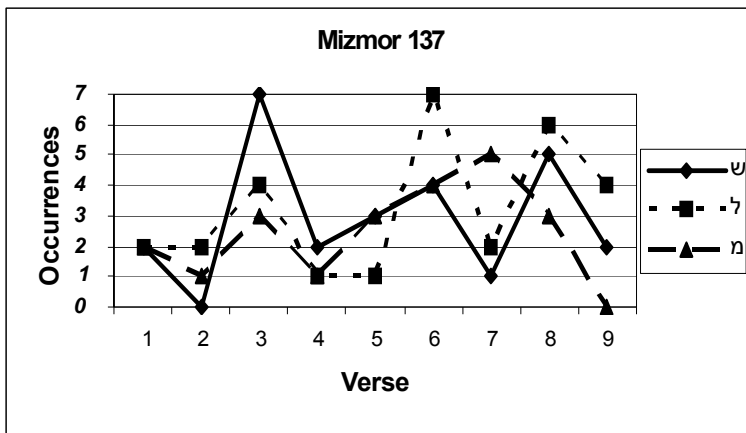
(7) זָכֹר יְהוָה לִבְנֵי אֲדוֹם אֶת יוֹם יְרוּשָׁלַם
הָאֲמָרִים עָרוּ עָרוּ עַד הִסּוֹד בָּהּ :

(8) בֵּית בָּבֶל הִשְׁדוּדָה אֲשֶׁרִי שִׁשְׁלַם לָךְ אֶת
גְּמוּלָךְ שְׂגַמְלַת לָנוּ :

(9) אֲשֶׁרִי שִׁיֵּאֲחִז וְנִפֹּץ אֶת עַלְלֶיךָ אֶל
הַסַּלַע :

The spelling out of Jerusalem throughout the psalm through meticulous placement of the letters ψ , ל , and מ is amazing in and of itself. However, this feature is even more astonishing when analyzing another aspect of the letter clustering throughout the Psalm. Not only has the psalmist incorporated the name of Jerusalem into the individual words, overall the letters ψ , ל , and מ are clustered in such a way that in the beginning of the Psalm there is a higher frequency of the letter ψ followed by a higher frequency of ל , followed finally by מ 's, with the effect that in a way the entire Psalm spells out the name of Jerusalem – שלם . In verse 3 the letter count of ψ 's in the Psalm reaches a high point with seven occurrences of the letter. In verse 6, the frequency of ל 's in the Psalm supersedes the ψ 's with seven occurrences. In verse 7 the letter מ occurs five times, the highest occurrence of the letter מ in a verse in Psalm 137, also superseding the ψ 's and ל 's in this verse. It is also noteworthy that in verse 7 the grand total occurrence of each individual letter ψ , ל , and מ in the Psalm is exactly 19 times up to this point. Verse 7 evens out each letter usage, returning back to verse one where each letter was used exactly twice (See Table 2).

Table 2



Furthermore, the psalmist appears to have integrated the name of Jerusalem into the letter counts of the verses. As noted above, the name יְרוּשָׁלַם is the central word in verse 7. This verse has a total of 47 letters. The letter ש, the only ש in the verse, occupies the 24th position – the exact center of the verse. The central placement of the ש in the word יְרוּשָׁלַם, i.e. the center word of the verse, perhaps was intentionally placed to allow the reader to distribute this solitary ש among the surrounding ל’s and מ’s to form the word שלם multiple times. Similarly, in verse 8, the phrase לְךָ שְׁיִשְׁלָם is at the center of the ten words. As noted, the word שְׁיִשְׁלָם contains the word שלם in its pure form. Verse 8 is comprised of 37 letters, and the letter ל of שְׁיִשְׁלָם occupies the 19th letter position, the center letter of the verse. Once more, the psalmist appears to have employed this same technique of placing the center letter ל in the word שלם (Jerusalem) allowing the surrounding ש ‘s and מ’s around the ל to form the word שלם many times. In the center verse of Psalm 137, we find an exceptionally incredible usage of this technique. As stated, at the center of this five-word verse we find the word Jerusalem. There is only one ל in this verse- the one found at the near-center of the verse within the word Jerusalem. There are three ש’s and three מ’s surrounding the ל, placed in a chiastic manner around the singular ל, once more spelling the name of Jerusalem numerous times. We find each of the letters used to make up the word שלם, the ש’s and the מ’s, are prominently found as the second letter in each word of the verse; or at the position to “the right” of the lead letter in each word. The striking aspect of this placement is that within the verse, the psalmist informs us that “if he forgets Jerusalem he will forget his right”; the psalmist never forgets Jerusalem and in a stunning play on these words he places the letters that make up Jerusalem’s name at the location to “the right” of each word in the verse.

אם אֶשְׁכַּחְךָ יְרוּשָׁלַם תִּשְׁכַּח יְמִינִי

Taken together, the letter placement throughout the entire Psalm appears to have the intent of spelling out Jerusalem's name, שלם, over the entire course of the Psalm. This astounding technique has the overall effect of having the word ירושלם emanate from every syllable of the Psalm!

It is quite remarkable that in a psalm that is focused on the message of never forgetting Jerusalem, the letters of the city's name recur so many times in the text in such a structured fashion. The letters ש, ל, and מ recur so often in this psalm that they make up about 24% of all of the letters in this psalm (77/317)¹⁰. Within the text itself, Jerusalem is never forgotten; it is referenced in many different ways. Zion is mentioned twice, יְרוּשָׁלַם is mentioned three times, and there are 9 references to שלם, adding up to at least 14 references to Jerusalem in this psalm. The memory of Jerusalem is so ingrained in the psalmist, that every fiber of his Psalm contains the name of the city. He so yearns for Jerusalem that he cannot even write the Psalm without making constant, yet subtle references to the city throughout the text. He cannot mention Babel, the place of his exile, without making subtle reference to his home, Jerusalem (בְּבָלָ שָׁם). Just as he cannot speak without remembering Jerusalem (לֹא אֶזְכְּרֶנּוּ), he cannot write without remembering Jerusalem in his writing either. Jerusalem is part of his essence; it is like his יְמִינִי. Additionally, when in v. 5 the psalmist states - אִם אֶשְׁכַּח אֶם אֶשְׁכַּח תִּשְׁכַּח יְמִינִי, he is simultaneously poetically alluding to the fact that he cannot forget Jerusalem, for if he did his right hand would stop functioning, i.e. he would stop writing. The psalmist, however, not only continues to write his lament on Jerusalem, as we have explained, Jerusalem

¹⁰ For the significance of the number 77 see: Ronald Benun, "Evil and the Disruption of Order: A Structural Analysis of the Acrostics in the First Book of Psalms," *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 6 Article 5 (2006).

is integrated into every syllable of Psalm 137 in every possible manner.

The way this message is sophisticatedly embedded into the fiber of the psalm, may also explain why the psalmist uses the letters ץ and ל in beginning and ending the Psalm and in marking off its 3 sections. As stated above, the central words of the entire psalm are לְשׁוֹנִי לְחִכֵּי, “my tongue to my palate.” The sound that is made by the letter ל is created by placing the tongue on the palate (or putting one’s “lashon” on his “hik”). Because the letter ץ is a vowel, the word על mimics the transition of an opened mouth (ע - a vowel) to a closed one (ל). Following the phrase - תִּדְבַּק לְשׁוֹנִי לְחִכֵּי in verse 6, there is a large concentration of ל (palatal letter), א (open mouth), and ע (open mouth). The consecutive alternating ל with א/ע in this verse makes the syllables here sound particularly disjointed, poetically relaying the focal message that the psalmist cannot open his mouth without remembering Jerusalem. Moreover, by beginning the Psalm and ending each of the 3 sections with the word על, the psalmist is creating the literary effect of fulfilling what he said in v.4 - his tongue is stuck to his palate. He is so deeply affected by his separation from Jerusalem that he cannot talk properly; he is inarticulate, and is what is commonly termed “tongue-tied.” There is not a single verse in this Psalm that does not contain the letter ל. Notice that the other letters that spell the name of Jerusalem, ש, ן, and ם, are each conspicuously omitted from a single verse. In v. 2 there are no ש’s, and in v.9 there are no ם’s. The blatant omission of these otherwise ubiquitous letters in Psalm 137, only further makes the ever-present ל eye-catching. The deliberate repetition of the letter ל seems to have the effect of the reader experiencing the psalmist’s difficulty in speech, with his tongue stuck to his palate, while reading and pronouncing the numerous ל’s found throughout the Psalm. As stated above, the last word in the

Psalm, **הַסִּלַע**, also has the two letters **ע** and **ל** but in opposite order, ending the Psalm with the tongue off the palate (opened mouth). To appreciate the significance of this dramatic change in the Psalm, we need to look no further than the words directly preceding **הַסִּלַע**. In the last verse the psalmist expresses his wish for his enemy to be destroyed - **אֲשָׁרֵי שְׂיֹאֲחֻ וְנִפָּץ אֶת עַלְלִיךְ**. Throughout the Psalm the repeated **ל** signified the deep emotional longing for Jerusalem, and the intense affliction caused by the actions of the nation's enemies. Only at the end of the Psalm, where the psalmist expresses vindication for the evils committed by the nation's enemies, is he able to take his tongue off his palate.

Ekha and Mizmor 137

The following are some of the many comparisons between Ekha and Mizmor 137. Although we will slightly digress from the main theme, it is noteworthy to mention them at this point¹¹:

The phrase **תִּדְבַק לְשׁוֹנֵי לְחֻכֵּי** echoes Ekha 4:4:

תהילים 6: 137 **תִּדְבַק לְשׁוֹנֵי לְחֻכֵּי** אִם לֹא אֲזַכְּרֶיךָ אִם לֹא אֲעֲלֶה אֶת
 ?רוּשְׁלָם עַל רֹאשׁ שְׂמֹחֲתִי :
 איכה 4: 4 **דְּבַק לְשׁוֹן יוֹנֵק אֶל חֶפֶן** בְּצָמָא עוֹלָלִים שְׂאֵלוּ לָחֵם פִּרְשׁ
 אֵין לָהֶם :

The word **לשון**, the **דבק** root, and the Hebrew word for palate (**חֶפֶן**) are used together only twice more in Tanakh-Ezekiel 3:26 and Job 29:10. As we have explained, in Psalm 137 the psalmist expresses his inability to speak (his tongue being stuck to his palate) by alliterating the letter **ל**. Usage of this phrase has a multi-faceted effect when understanding its backdrop. Ekha 4:4 describes the devastating famine that took place during the destruction of Jerusalem with the heartbreaking scene of babies dying of

¹¹ These comparisons are from a soon to be published article on Ekha.

thirst, causing their tongues to stick to their palates. There are many other similarities between Psalm 137 and Ekha. Although we will not discuss these similarities and their implications here at length, we will briefly mention some of these to give the reader a sense of the interplay between these two texts, both written as reactions to the destruction of Jerusalem and the ensuing exile.

1. The recollection of Edom's jeering of עָרוּ עָרוּ in Psalm 137:7 recalls the end of chapter 4 in Ekha where the word תַּתְעָרִי is used in conjunction with Edom:

איכה 4: 21 שִׁישִׁי וְשִׁמְחִי בֵּת אֲדוֹם יוֹשְׁבֹתַי { יוֹשְׁבֹת } בְּאֶרֶץ
עוֹץ גַּם עָלֶיךָ תִּעְבֶּר כּוֹס תִּשְׁכָּרִי וְתִתְעָרִי :

2. In Ekha 2:10, the elders lament Zion's destruction by placing dust on their head. Likewise, in Psalm 137, the psalmist states that even at the happiest hours, Jerusalem will remain in his memory, using the same word ראש as in Ekha.

תהילים 137: 6 תִּדְבֹק לְשׁוֹנֵי לֶחְמִי אִם לֹא אֲזַכְּרֶכִי אִם לֹא
אֲעֲלֶה אֶת יְרוּשָׁלַם עַל רֹאשׁ שְׂמֹחֹתִי :

איכה 2: 10 יֵשְׁבוּ לְאֶרֶץ יְדֻמוֹ זִקְנֵי בֵּת צִיּוֹן הֵעֲלוּ עֶפֶר עַל
רֹאשָׁם חִגְרוּ שִׁקִּים הוֹרִידוּ לְאֶרֶץ רֹאשָׁן בְּתוֹלֵת
יְרוּשָׁלַם :

3. As stated, Psalm 137 opens and closes with the letter ע, the text ending on the word סע. Notice that Ekha chapter 5 has an unusually high occurrence of the letter ע as well. Five verses begin with ע. This is a statistically high number of times for a verse to begin with ע. Less than 2% of verses in Tanakh begin with ע compared with 25% of verses in chapter 5.
4. Ekha 5 opens on the words - זָכַר יְהוָה מָה הָיָה לָנוּ - הַבֵּיט { הַבִּיטָה } וַיִּרְאֶה אֶת חֲרָפְתָנוּ. Recall that the root was repeatedly used in Psalm 137 at key locations, as in the opening verse where the

psalmist mournfully remembers Jerusalem in the words בְּזָכְרֵנוּ אֶת צִיּוֹן.

5. Note the verses that close chapters 1, 3 and 4 in Ekha and their similarity to the last 2 verse of Ps. 137.

תהילים 8:137 בַּת בְּבֵל הַשְּׂדוּדָה אֲשֶׁרִי שָׁיִשְׁלֶם לְךָ אֶת
גְּמוּלְךָ שְׂגַמְלֶתָ לָנוּ :

תהילים 9:137 אֲשֶׁרִי שְׂיֵאחֹז וְנִפְצָ אֶת עַלְלֶיךָ אֶל הַסָּלַע :

איכה 22:1 תָּבֵא כָּל רַעְתֶּם לְפָנֶיךָ וְעוֹלֵל לְמוֹ כְּאֲשֶׁר עוֹלָתָה
לִי עַל כָּל פְּשָׁעֶי כִּי רַבּוֹת אֲנַחְתִּי וְלִבִּי דָוִי :

A New Song

Psalm 137 laments one of the most painful moments in the nation's history, the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile of the nation. Throughout the Psalm the psalmist relays his message using poetic techniques that underscore his yearning for Jerusalem and his overwhelming grief. From the lament, however, the psalmist is still able to end on the prospects that justice will be served to his enemies. Although the general tone in Psalm 137 provides little more than a glimmer of hope for the nation, analysis of the eight-psalm conclusion of Tehillim illuminates the seeds of hope and inspiration the psalmist planted within Psalm 137.

One of the more painful images in Psalm 137 is the opening scene, in which the nation sits on the riverbanks of Babylon, no longer able to sing, hanging up their instruments, unable to sing the songs of Zion. As we stated, the nation asks in v. 4 “How can we sing the song of YHVH on alien soil?” There is no answer provided in Psalm 137 to this question, and so it is understood to be a rhetorical question; apparently the memory of Jerusalem is overwhelming. In fact, though, the psalmist does not leave this question unanswered, but provides the answer at the near-end of the conclusion in Psalm 144. At the precise

center of the 130-words in Psalm 144 are the words “שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ אֲשִׁירָה” “I will sing you a new song” (v.9). Furthermore, the psalmist states here that he will sing the new song with a “ten-stringed harp.” The image of the exiles putting away their lyres in despair, unable to sing at Psalm 137 (v.2), is transformed in Psalm 144; a new, magnificent song is sung on a ten-stringed instrument as the nation will renew their covenant with G-d, and G-d will therefore continue to protect them.

תהילים 4:137 אֵיךְ נִשְׁרַח אֶת שִׁיר יְהוָה עַל אֲדָמַת נֶכֶר :
 תהילים 2:137 עַל עַרְבִים בְּתוֹכָהּ תִּלְיֵנוּ בְּנֵי נֹרְתֵינוּ :
 תהילים 9:144 אֱלֹהִים שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ אֲשִׁירָה לְךָ בְּנֶבֶל עֶשׂוֹר אֲזַמְרָה
 לְךָ :

In Psalm 144 the psalmist expresses his utmost faith that G-d will save him from the oppressors calling them בְּנֵי נֶכֶר in verses 7 and 11, the same appellation of the exile land, אֲדָמַת נֶכֶר, in Psalm 137:4. Moreover, throughout Psalm 144 the psalmist uses the root פצה numerous times (vv. 7, 10, 11) asking G-d to save him from the oppressors, praying that G-d scatter them וַתִּפְצֵם (v.6). These words all are similar to the prayer at the conclusion of Psalm 137:9 - אֲשֶׁרִי שְׂיֵאֲחֻזוּ וְנִפְצָ אֶת עַלְלֵיךְ. In Psalm 144:8, the psalmist describes the enemy as people whose mouths speak lies, and whose “right” is false - אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר שָׁוְא וַיִּמְיֵנָם יָמִין - שֶׁקֶר.¹² This certainly is reminiscent of Psalm 137 where the psalmist states that if he forgets Jerusalem, his tongue will be stuck to his palate, i.e. he becomes inarticulate - תִּדְבֹק - לְשׁוֹנִי לְחִפִּי (v.6), and his right hand loses function - אִם - אֲשַׁכַּחךְ יְרוּשָׁלַם תִּשְׁכַּח יְמִינִי (v. 5). At the conclusion of Psalm 144, the psalmist praises the nation as G-d protects them, using the word אֲשֶׁרִי twice. Recall that Psalm 137 also used the word אֲשֶׁרִי twice, once in v. 8 praying that Babylon will be punished, and then in the concluding statement which opens on the word אֲשֶׁרִי.

¹² Similarly, see Psalm 144:11.

The inspirational message of hope is seen to an even greater degree at the end of the coda in Tehillim. No longer is the nation unable to sing the songs of Zion. The penultimate psalm of Tehillim opens on the heightened command to “sing to the Lord a new song.”

תהילים 1:149 הַלְלוּהָ שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה שִׁיר חֲדָשׁ תְּהַלְתּוּ בְּקוֹל
חֲסִידִים :

Psalm 150 is the grand finale of the Tehillim. It is composed entirely of song and praise of G-d. The psalmist repeats the root הלל thirteen times, alluding to the covenant. This praise is accompanied with the magnificent call for the wind instruments to play - בְּתִקְעַ שׁוֹפָר - followed by the string instruments - בְּנִבְל וְכִנּוֹר (v. 3), and the percussions - בְּתוֹף וּמַחוּל (v. 4). The Psalter has reached its climax. G-d's songs and praises are not only sung with a “ten-stringed harp” (Ps. 144:9), the entire orchestra is playing in unison. Not only has the nation renewed its song, all mankind is now singing and praising G-d - כָּל הַנְּשָׂמָה תְּהַלֵּל יְהוָה הַלְלוּהָ - (v.6).

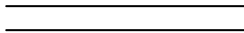
Conclusion

Psalm 137 is read on Tisha B'Ab in commemoration of the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile of the nation. The memory of Jerusalem is imprinted throughout the Psalm, making it clear that the events of Tisha B'Ab and the ensuing exile devastated the nation. However, along with expressing the grief of exile in a most moving manner, the psalmist is able to instill the powerful message of hope that the nation will put their faith in G-d, renew the covenant, and become even greater than before. Perhaps, one present day example of such hope is seen in a recent change in the interpretation of one phrase in Psalm 137. When the psalmist prays for the nation of Edom to be held accountable, he refers to the destruction of Jerusalem as יוֹם יְרוּשָׁלַם (v.7), calling it the “day of Jerusalem,” instead of

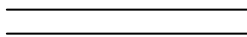
the “day of destruction” as even uttering those words are overwhelmingly unbearable. After over 2000 years the name יום הַרוּשָׁלַם has lost its negative connotation, and instead has become associated with the modern-day Israeli holiday celebrating the day that Jerusalem was reunified in 1967, the 28th of Iyar, יום הַרוּשָׁלַם.¹³

¹³ Indeed the present generation almost in its entirety never associates the name יום הַרוּשָׁלַם with the destruction of the temple, but rather the day Jerusalem was reunified. I realized this recently when teaching Psalm 137 to a group of young men and one student remarked “I know יום הַרוּשָׁלַם, it is כ״ח אייר!”

Strengthen the hands that are slack; Make firm the tottering knees! Say to them that are of a fearful heart: 'Be strong, fear not'; behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God He will come and save you. For you shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. To proclaim a year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn. Saying to the prisoners: 'Go forth'; to them that are in darkness: 'Show yourselves'; they shall feed in the ways, and in all high hills shall be their pasture; To provide for the mourners in Zion—to give them a turban instead of ashes, the festive ointment instead of mourning, a garment of splendor instead of a drooping spirit. They shall be called terebinths of victory, planted by the Lord for His glory. Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and those that return to her with righteousness. As for me, may my prayer come to You, O Lord, at a favorable moment; O God, in Your abundant faithfulness, answer me with Your sure deliverance. And my soul shall be joyful in the LORD; it shall rejoice in His salvation. But I have trusted in thy mercy; my heart shall rejoice in thy salvation. I will sing to the Lord, because he has dealt bountifully with me. O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen, and act without delay for Your own sake, O my God; for Your name is attached to Your city and Your people!" Take us back, O Lord, to Yourself, and let us come back; renew our days as of old!



חזקו יְדֵימ רְפוּת, וּבְרָכִים כְּשִׁלוֹת אֲמָצוֹ: אָמְרוּ
לְנַמְחֵרֵי־לֵב, חֲזִקוּ אֵל תִּירָאוּ, הִנֵּה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם נָקָם יְבוֹא,
נְמוּל אֱלֹהִים, הוּא יְבוֹא וַיִּשְׁעֶכֶם: כִּי־בְשִׁמְחָה תִצְאוּ,
וּבְשִׁלוֹם תּוּבְלוּן, הִקְרִים וְהִגְבְּעוֹת יִפְצְחוּ לְפָנֵיכֶם רִנָּה,
וְכָל־עֲצֵי הַשָּׂדֶה יִמְחֵאוּ־כָף: לְקִרְא שְׁנַת רְצוֹן לִיהוָה,
וַיּוֹם נָקָם לְאֱלֹהֵינוּ, לְנַחֵם כָּל־אֲבֵלִים: לֵאמֹר לְאֲסוּרִים
צֵאוּ, לְאַשֶׁר בַּחֲשֵׁךְ הִגְלוּ, עַל־דְּרָכִים יָרְעוּ,
וּבְכָל־שְׁפִימִים מִרְעִיתֶם: לְשׁוּם לְאֲבֵלֵי צִיּוֹן, לְתֵת לָהֶם
פָּאֵר תַּחַת אָפֶר, שְׁמֹן שֶׁשׁוֹן תַּחַת אֲבָל, מַעֲטָה תַהֲלֶה
תַּחַת רֵיחַ כְּהָה, וְקִרְא לָהֶם אֵילֵי הַצֹּדֵק, מִטַּע יְהוָה
לְהַתְּפָאֵר: צִיּוֹן בְּמִשְׁפַּט תִּפְדֶּה, וְשִׁבְיָהּ בְּצִדְקָה: וְאָנֹכִי,
תַּפְלֵתִי־לָךְ יְהוָה עַת רְצוֹן, אֱלֹהִים בְּרַב־חֲסִדָּךְ, עֲנֵנִי
בְּאַמֶּת יִשְׁעֶךָ: וְנִפְשֵׁי תִגִּיל בִּיהוָה, תְּשִׁישׁ בִּישׁוּעָתוֹ:
וְאָנֹכִי בְּחֲסִדָּךְ בְּטַחְתִּי, יִגַּל לִבִּי בִישׁוּעַתְךָ, אֲשִׁירָה לִיהוָה
כִּי גָמַל עָלַי: אֲדַנִּי שְׁמֵעָה, אֲדַנִּי סִלְחָה, אֲדַנִּי
תְּקַשִּׁיבָה, וַעֲשֵׂה אֵל תֵּאֱחָר, לְמַעַן אֱלֹהֵי, כִּי שָׁמַךְ
נִקְרָא עַל עִירְךָ וְעַל עַמֶּךָ: הִשִּׁיבֵנו יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיךָ
וְנִשׁוּבָה, חֲדַשׁ יְמֵינוּ כְּקֶדֶם:



Comfort, oh comfort My people, Says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and declare to her that her term of service is over, that her sin is pardoned; for she has received at the hand of the Lord double for all her sins. I, even I, am He that comforts you: what is with you, that you should be afraid of man who must die, mortals who fare like grass. For the Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her ruins; and he will make her wilderness like 'Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall abide there, thanksgiving, and the sound of music. Sing, O heavens; and rejoice, O earth; and break forth into singing, O hills: for the Lord has comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted. Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad for her, all you who love her! Join in her jubilation, all you who mourned over her— That you may suck, and be satisfied with the bosom of her consolations; that you may drink deeply, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. As a mother comforts her son so shall I comfort you; you shall find comfort in Jerusalem. Hark! Your watchmen raise their voices, as one they shout for joy; for every eye shall behold the LORD's return to Zion. Break forth in singing, O ruins of Jerusalem! For the LORD has comforted His people, will redeem Jerusalem. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Your sun shall set no more, your moon no more withdraw; for the Lord shall be a light to you forever, and your days of mourning shall be ended. For you will not depart in haste, nor will you leave in flight; for the Lord is marching before you, the God of Israel is your rear guard. And your people, all of them righteous, shall possess the land for all time; they are the shoot that I planted, my handiwork in which I glory. The smallest shall become a clan; the least, a mighty nation. I the LORD will speed it in due time. And those who remain in Zion and are left in Jerusalem shall be called holy—all who are inscribed for life in Jerusalem.

הקהל אומר עם החזן פסוקי נחמה אלה:

The congregation says the following comforting verses along with the Hazzan

נַחֲמוּ נַחֲמוּ, עַמִּי, יֹאמֶר אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: דְּבַרוּ עַל־לֵב יְרוּשָׁלַם
וְקִרְאוּ אֵלֶיהָ, כִּי מָלְאָה צָבָאָהּ, כִּי נִרְצָה עֲוֹנָהּ, כִּי
לָקַחָהּ מִיַּד יְהוָה, כַּפְּלִים בְּכָל־חַטָּאתֶיהָ: אֲנֹכִי אֲנֹכִי
הוּא מְנַחֲמֶכֶם, מִי־אֶתְּ וּתִירָאִי מֵאֲנֹשׁ יָמוּת, וּמִבֶּן־אָדָם
חֲצִיר יִנְתֵּן: כִּי־נַחֵם יְהוָה צִיּוֹן, נַחֵם כָּל־חֲרֻבְתֶיהָ, וַיִּשֶׂם
מִדְּבָרָהּ כַּעֲדָן, וְעִרְבְתָהּ כַּגֶּן־יְהוָה, שְׁשׁוֹן וְשִׁמְחָה יִמְצֵא
בָּהּ, תּוֹדָה וְקוֹל זְמֶרָה: רְנוּ שָׁמַיִם וְגִילִי אֲרֶץ, וּפְצְחוּ
הָרִים רִנָּה, כִּי־נַחֵם יְהוָה עַמּוֹ, וְעֲנִיּוֹ יִרְחֵם: שִׁמְחוּ
אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַם וְגִילּוּ בָּהּ כָּל־אֲהֻבֶיהָ, שִׁישׁוּ אֶתְּהָ מְשׁוֹשׁ,
כָּל־הַמְתַּאבְּלִים עֲלֶיהָ: לִמְעַן תִּינָקוּ וּשְׁבַעְתֶּם, מִשֹּׁד
תִּנְחַמֶיהָ, לִמְעַן תִּמְצְאוּ וְהִתְעַנְּנֶתֶם, מִזִּזוּ כְּבוֹדָהּ: כָּאִישׁ
אֲשֶׁר אָמוּ תִנְחַמְנוּ, כֵּן אֲנֹכִי אֲנַחֲמֶכֶם, וּבִירֹשָׁלַם תִּנְחַמוּ:
קוֹל צְפִינָךְ נִשְׁאֹו קוֹל, יַחֲדוּ יִרְנְנוּ, כִּי עֵין בְּעֵין יִרְאוּ,
בְּשׁוֹב יְהוָה צִיּוֹן: פְּצְחוּ רִנְנוּ יַחֲדוּ, חֲרֻבוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם, כִּי
נַחֵם יְהוָה עַמּוֹ, גָּאֹל יְרוּשָׁלַם: וּפְדוּנֵי יְהוָה יִשְׁבֹּן, וּבְאוֹ
צִיּוֹן בְּרִנָּה, וְשִׁמְחַת עוֹלָם עַל־רֹאשֶׁם, שְׁשׁוֹן וְשִׁמְחָה
יִשְׂיִגוּ, וְנָסוּ יָגוֹן וְאֲנָחָה: לֹא־יָבוֹא עוֹד שִׁמְשֵׁךְ, וְיִרְחֹךְ
לֹא יֵאָסֶף, כִּי יְהוָה יִהְיֶה־לְךָ לְאוֹר עוֹלָם, וְשָׁלְמוּ יָמֵי
אֲבָלְךָ: כִּי לֹא בַחֲפוּזִין תִּצְאוּ, וּבְמִנוּסָה לֹא תִלְכּוּן,
כִּי־הִלְךְ לְפָנֶיכֶם יְהוָה, וּמֵאֲסַפְכֶם אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: וְעַמּוֹךְ
כָּלָם צְדִיקִים, לְעוֹלָם יִרְשׁוּ אֲרֶץ, נִצָּר מִטְעֵי מַעֲשֵׂה
יְדֵי לְהַתְּפָאֵר: הַקָּטָן יִהְיֶה לְאֵלֶךָ, וְהַצָּעִיר לְגוֹי עָצוּם,
אֲנִי יְהוָה בַּעֲתָהּ אֲחִישְׁנָה: וְהָיָה הַנִּשְׁפָּר בְּצִיּוֹן וְהַנּוֹתֵר
בִּירֹשָׁלַם, קָדוֹשׁ יֹאמֶר לוֹ, כָּל־הַכְּתוּב לַחַיִּים בִּירֹשָׁלַם:

Comfort, oh comfort My people, says the Lord.

It is written in the book to comfort all those who are here

To provide for the mourners of Zion

A glorious crown instead of ashes.

I will raise an a flag to the nations, to those who inhabit the
entire earth,

To bring back to Mount Zion those who are called My own
allotment,

To pour the oil of joy on their head instead of mourning,

I will gather them from Midian and from every other place,

To provide for the mourners of Zion

A glorious crown instead of ashes.

I will bring them back to their holy dwelling, fainting in their
multitude.

They shall sing and dance, for I will comfort them from
their mourning,

And I will turn their mourning into joy, and cheer them
in their grief.

Then shall adversaries and oppressors be clothed in contempt
and shame.

To provide for the mourners of Zion

A glorious crown instead of ashes.

I will build Jerusalem, and I will be a wall of fire all around her,
And a glory in her dwellings.

Then shall they say among the nations, when she abounds in
prosperity:

The Lord has comforted Zion, comforted all her ruins.

And You will forever restore those who inherit Your goodly
words:

To provide for the mourners of Zion

A glorious crown instead of ashes.

נחמו נחמו עמי, יאמר אשכל כפר.
 לנחם כל-הנמצא כתוב בספר.
 לשום לאבלי ציון פאר תחת אפר:

אשא נס לגוים, לשוכנים בכל-תבל,
 לשוב אל הר ציון, קרואה נחלת חבל.
 לשום שמן ששון, בראשה תחת אכל.
 אקבצם מכל עבר ומעיפה ועפר:
 לשום לאבלי ציון פאר תחת אפר:

אשיבם אל נוה קדשם, מתעלפים בהמונם.
 ירנו במחולות, כי אנחמם מאונם.
 ואחפד אכלם לששון, ושחחתיים מיגונם.
 ואז כל שוטנם ומונם, יעטו בוז וקפר:
 לשום לאבלי ציון פאר תחת אפר:

ירושלם אבנה, ואהיה סביבותיה
 לחימת אש, ולכבוד בבתי מושבותיה.
 ואז יאמרו בעמים, ברבות טובותיה:
 נחם יי ציון, נחם כל חרבותיה:
 ותשיב בתוכה לעד נחלי אמרי שפר:
 לשום לאבלי ציון פאר תחת אפר:

Piyyutim and Verses of Comfort for Minha

Comfort, oh comfort My people, says the Lord.¹⁸

It is written in the book¹⁹ to comfort all those who are here,
 To provide for the mourners of Zion
 A glorious crown instead of ashes.

For the slain of my people, My heart moans within me,
 And for the destruction of My hall, and for the desolation of
 My Temple.

The place which was called by My name, and which I called
 My footstool,
 Was turned into ruins by the sons of the Midianites.
 To provide for the mourners of Zion
 A glorious crown instead of ashes.

Speak tenderly to Zion, and call upon her
 To discard her captive's garb,
 For on her return, no more shall a strange nation defile her
 Temples,

Nor will they have dominion over the beautiful and
 lovely inheritance.
 To provide for the mourners of Zion
 A glorious crown instead of ashes.

Comfort the people who mourn, and grant conciliation for
 their trespasses,
 And ease the burden of their yoke, and remove their shame,
 And send an angel of mercy to destroy their terror,
 And deliver Your people from the pit, and declare: I have
 obtained their ransom.

To provide for the mourners of Zion
 A glorious crown instead of ashes.

¹⁸ Literally: a spray of henna blooms (*The Song of Songs* 1:14)

¹⁹ The book of *Isaiah* (40:1).

פיוטים ופסוקי נחמה למנחה

בזמון

נחמו נחמו עמי,
 לנחם את כל הנמצא
 לשום לאבלי ציון פאר תחת אפר:
 יאמר אשכל כפר.
 כתוב בספר.

על חללי בת-עמי
 ועל חרבן אולמי,
 מקום הנקרא בשמי,
 שמו אותו לעיים
 לשום לאבלי ציון פאר תחת אפר:
 לבי הומה-עלי.
 ועל שממות היכלי.
 וקראתיו הדם רגלי.
 בני עיפה ועפר:

ידברו על לב ציון,
 וחסירה את-שמלת
 כי בשובה, לא יוסף
 ואל ימשל עם נכרי
 לשום לאבלי ציון פאר תחת אפר:
 וקראו אליה.
 שביה מעליה.
 לטמא היכליה.
 בצבי נחלת שפר:

נחם עם מאבלו,
 והקל את-על סבלו,
 ושלח מלאך רחמים,
 ופדה עמו משחת,
 לשום לאבלי ציון פאר תחת אפר:
 וכפר על אשמתו.
 והעבר את כלמתו.
 לרפא את מגורתו.
 לאמר מצאתי כפר:

O God, destroy and ruin Your enemies —
Speedily and soon.

To Him alone I call in my plaint,
For in my distress He is called to be my help.
And to all my adversaries, rage, anger and wrath
Shall come, and their sun shall set —
Speedily and soon.

Holy and Awesome One who works wonders,
Deliver Your congregation from a dungeon
Filled with mire and mud.
Destroy and annihilate those who rob my people —
Speedily and soon.

Magnified be Your name, God Most High,
And have compassion for a poor and destitute people,
And bring them up to Mount Zion
From among people of strange language, who have scorched
their face —
Speedily and soon

אֶת אוֹיְבֵיךָ אֵל
 תְּשַׁמֵּד וְתַחַרֵּיב,
 בַּעֲגֹלָא וּבְזַמַּן קָרִיב.

לֹא לְבַדּוֹ בְּשִׂיחֵי אֶקְרָא, כִּי בְּצָרוֹתַי נִקְרָא לִי עֲזָרָה,
 וְלִכְלֵל שׁוֹטְנֵי, חֲרוֹן אַף וְעִבְרָה יָבֵא עָלֵיהֶם, וְשִׁמְשֵׁם יַעֲרִיב,
 בַּעֲגֹלָא וּבְזַמַּן קָרִיב.

קָדוֹשׁ וְנוֹרָא עֲשֵׂה פִּלְא, הוֹצֵא עֲדָתְךָ מִבֵּית-כְּלָא,
 אֲשֶׁר בְּרַפֵּשׁ וְטִיט מְלֵא, וּלְגוֹזְלֵי עַמִּי תְּשַׁמֵּד וְתַחַרֵּיב,
 בַּעֲגֹלָא וּבְזַמַּן קָרִיב.

יִתְגַּדֵּל שְׁמֶךָ אֵל עֲלִיוֹן, וְתִרְחַם עִם עַנְי וְאֶבְיוֹן,
 וְתַעֲלֶהוּ אֵל הַר צִיּוֹן, מִעַם לוֹעֵז וּפְנֵי הַצָּרִיב,
 בַּעֲגֹלָא וּבְזַמַּן קָרִיב.

The table and candlestick, and whole burnt-offering and incense—
 When I went forth from Egypt;
 But idols and abominations, and carved images and stone pillars—
 When I went forth from Jerusalem.

The Torah and testimony, and the order of the Temple service —
 When I went forth from Egypt;
 But the lack of learning, and the cessation of the daily sacrifice —
 When I went forth from Jerusalem.

The Lord God of Hosts will show us wondrous deeds,
 As at the time of my departure from Egypt;
 And will bring His Shekhinah back to Zion,
 And His service to Jerusalem.

Zion said: My iniquities have caught up with me,
 My children have gone forth from me to another land,
 And even if my transgressions are numerous and my willful
 misdeeds are abundant,
 Where are Your former acts of kindness, my Lord?

The Lord said: Zion, my resting place,
 I called you “treasure of all people.”
 You refused to heed My rebuke. For this I poured out My fury,
 That you forsook My Torah.

Zion said: Woe is me because of my iniquity,
 For my fortresses were destroyed truly and justly.
 But even if I have transgressed, and my iniquities are numerous,
 Will the Lord reject [me] forever?

The Lord said: Be comforted in your exile,
 And even if, because of your sins, I have turned your abode into
 ruins,
 I think of you for good, and I will restore you from captivity,
 And there is hope for your future.

שֶׁלֶחַן וּמִנּוּרָה, וְכִלְיֵי וּקְטוּרָה, בְּצֵאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם:
וְאֵלֵי וְתוֹעֵבָה, וּפְסָל וּמִצְבֵּה, בְּצֵאתִי מִירוּשָׁלַם:

תּוֹרָה וְתַעֲוִיָּה, וְסִדְרֵי הַעֲבוּדָה, בְּצֵאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם:
וְחֶסֶד וְחַסְדֵי הַתְּלִמִיד, וּבְטוֹל הַתְּמִיד, בְּצֵאתִי מִירוּשָׁלַם:

אֵל אֱלֹהֵי הַצְּבָאוֹת נִרְאֵנוּ נִפְלְאוֹת
בְּצֵאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם:
וְיָשִׁיב שְׂכִינְתּוֹ אֵל צִיּוֹן, וְעַבְדוֹתוֹ
אֵל תּוֹדֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם:

אָמְרָה צִיּוֹן: מִצְאוּנֵי עוֹנֵי, לְאֶרֶץ אַחֲרַת יְצֵאוּנֵי בְנֵי. וְאִם
נִגְרָוּ פִּשְׁעֵי, וְהִרְבִּיתִי זְדוּנֵי, אֵיךְ חִסְדֵיךָ הִרְאֵשׁוּנֵי
אֲדָנִי:

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה: צִיּוֹן בֵּית מְנוּחָתִי, סִגְלַת עַמִּים אוֹתְךָ
קָרָאתִי. לֹא אָבִית לְתוֹכְחָתִי. לְזֹאת חָמַתִּי שְׁפַכְתִּי, עַל
עֹזְבֵךְ אֶת־תּוֹרָתִי:

אָמְרָה צִיּוֹן: אֲזִיח־לִי עַל עוֹנֵי, כִּי בָאֵמֶת וְצָדֵק חָרְבוּ
אֲרְמוֹנֵי, אֵךְ אִם פִּשְׁעָתִי, וְרַבּוּ עוֹנֵי, הִלְעוּלְמִים יִזְנַח
אֲדָנִי:

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה: הִתְנַחֲמִי בְּגִלוּתְךָ, וְאִם בְּחַטָּאתְךָ הִחֲרַבְתִּי
נִוְתְךָ, לְטוֹבָה אֲזַכְּרֶכִי וְשִׁבְתִּי אֶת שְׁבוּתְךָ, וְיִשְׁתַּקְּנָה
לְאַחֲרֵיתְךָ:

We prepared for battle, and the Lord was there,
 When I went forth from Egypt;
 He distanced himself from us, and behold, He was not there,
 When I went forth from Jerusalem.

The secret place behind the veil,¹⁶ and the order of shewbread —
 When I went forth from Egypt;
 But fury poured out, and covered me,
 When I went forth from Jerusalem.

Burnt offerings and sacrifices, and fire offerings of pleasant odor —
 When I went forth from Egypt;
 Pierced by the sword were the precious children of Zion,
 When I went forth from Jerusalem.

Headdresses of fine linen, meant to be worn in glory,
 When I went forth from Egypt;
 Hisses and shouts, for shame and horrors —
 When I went forth from Jerusalem.

The gold frontlet,¹⁷ and dominion and glory —
 When I went forth from Egypt;
 Support vanished and the crown was thrown down,
 When I went forth from Jerusalem.

Sanctity and prophecy, and the awesome Shekhinah —
 When I went forth from Egypt;
 Filth and pollution, and the unclean spirit —
 When I went forth from Jerusalem.

Rejoicing and salvation, and trumpets sounding —
 When I went forth from Egypt;
 But the cries of infants, and the groans of the slain —
 When I went forth from Jerusalem.

¹⁶ Holy of Holies

¹⁷ Worn by the High Priest.

נַעֲרֹךְ מִלְחָמָה, וַיְהוּזָה שְׁמָה, בְּצִאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם:
 רַחֵק מִמֶּנּוּ, וְהִנֵּה אֵינָנוּ, בְּצִאתִי מִירוּשָׁלַם:

סִתְרֵי פָרְכָת, וְסִדְרֵי מַעֲרֶכֶת, בְּצִאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם:
 וַחֲמָה נִתְּקַת עָלַי סוּכְכָת, בְּצִאתִי מִירוּשָׁלַם:

עוֹלוֹת וּזְבָחִים, וְאַשֵׁי נִיחוּחִים, בְּצִאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם:
 בַּחֲרֵב מִדְּקָרִים, בְּנֵי צִיּוֹן הִיָּקְרִים, בְּצִאתִי מִירוּשָׁלַם:

פְּאָרֵי מִגְבְּעוֹת, לְכַבוֹד נִקְבְּעוֹת, בְּצִאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם:
 שְׂרִיקוֹת וַתְּרוּעוֹת לְקִלּוֹן וּזְנוּעוֹת, בְּצִאתִי מִירוּשָׁלַם:

צִיצֵת הַזֹּהָב, וְהַמְּשָׁל וְרַהֵב, בְּצִאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם:
 אֶפֶס הַעֲזָר, וְהַשְּׁלֵף הַנֶּזֶר, בְּצִאתִי מִירוּשָׁלַם:

קַדְשָׁה וּנְבוּאָה, וּשְׂכִינָה נוֹרָאָה, בְּצִאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם:
 נְנָאֵלָה וּמִרְאָה, וְרוּחַ הַטְּמֵאָה, בְּצִאתִי מִירוּשָׁלַם:

רִנָּה וַיְשׁוּעָה, וַחֲצוּצְרוֹת תְּרוּעָה, בְּצִאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם:
 וְזַעֲקַת עוֹלָל, עִם נְאֻקַּת חָלָל, בְּצִאתִי מִירוּשָׁלַם:

The sight of the glory of the Lord as a consuming fire before me
 When I went forth from Egypt;
 But a sharpened sword drawn for slaughter —
 When I went forth from Jerusalem.

Sacrifice and offering, and anointing oil —
 When I went forth from Egypt;
 God's treasured people taken like sheep to the slaughter —
 When I went forth from Jerusalem.

Festivals and Sabbaths, and miracles and signs —
 When I went forth from Egypt;
 Fasting and mourning, and the pursuit of vanity —
 When I went forth from Jerusalem.

Fair were the tents of the four banners,¹⁵
 When I went forth from Egypt;
 The tents of Ishmaelites and the camps of the uncircumcised —
 When I went forth from Jerusalem.

The Jubilee and the year of remission, and a tranquil land —
 When I went forth from Egypt;
 Sold beyond reclaim and cut off with severity —
 When I went forth from Jerusalem.

The ark-cover and ark, and the memorial stones —
 When I went forth from Egypt;
 But slingstones and implements of destruction —
 When I went forth from Jerusalem.

Levites and Kohanim, and the seventy elders —
 When I went forth from Egypt;
 Task masters, oppressors, and slave dealers —
 When I went forth from Jerusalem.

Moses was my Shepherd, and Aaron led me,
 When I went forth from Egypt;
 But Nebuchadnezzar and the Emperor Hadrian [oppressed me],
 When I went forth from Jerusalem.

¹⁵ The four divisions of the tribes (Numbers Chapter 2).

וּמְרָאָה כְּבוֹד יְהוָה כָּאֵשׁ אֶכְלֶת לְפָנַי, בְּצִאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם:
 וַחֲרַב לְטוֹשָׁה, לְטֹבַח נְטוֹשָׁה, בְּצִאתִי מִירוּשָׁלַם:

זָבַח וּמִנְחָה, וְשֶׁמֶן הַמִּשְׁחָה, בְּצִאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם:
 סִגְלָה לְקוֹחָה כְּצֹאֵן לְטֹבְחָה, בְּצִאתִי מִירוּשָׁלַם:

חֲנִיּוֹם וְשִׁבְתוֹת, וּמוֹפְתִים וְאוֹתוֹת, בְּצִאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם:
 תַּעֲנִית וְאַבָּל, וּרְדֵף הַהֶבֶל, בְּצִאתִי מִירוּשָׁלַם:

טָבוּ אֲהָלִים לְאַרְבָּעָה דְגָלִים, בְּצִאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם:
 אֲהָלֵי יִשְׁמַעֲאֵלִים, וּמַחֲנֹת הַזָּרִים, בְּצִאתִי מִירוּשָׁלַם:

יֹבֵל וְשִׁמְטָה, וְאַרְיֵץ שׁוֹקֵטָה, בְּצִאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם:
 מְכוֹר לְצִמִּיתוֹת, וְכָרוֹת לְכָרִיתוֹת, בְּצִאתִי מִירוּשָׁלַם:

כְּפָרֶת וְאַרוֹן, וְאַבְנֵי זָכָרוֹן, בְּצִאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם:
 וְאַבְנֵי-הַקֶּלֶעַ, וְכָלֵי הַבַּלַּע, בְּצִאתִי מִירוּשָׁלַם:

לְוִיִּם וְכֹהֲנִים, וְשִׁבְעִים זְקֵנִים, בְּצִאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם:
 נֹגְשִׁים וּמוֹנִים, וּמוֹכָרִים וְקוֹנִים, בְּצִאתִי מִירוּשָׁלַם:

מֹשֶׁה יַרְעֵנִי, אֶהְרֹן יִנְחֵנִי, בְּצִאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם:
 וְנָבוֹכַדְנֶצַּר, וְאַדְרִיאָנוֹס קִיסָר, בְּצִאתִי מִירוּשָׁלַם:

A congregation that was knit together like the stars in the Pleiades,
 How was it scattered like potsherds of earth,
 They went out to exile, to the east and west,
 After the sword of vengeance passed through them.
 How was their vine laid waste,
 And its branches turned white?
 My heart is in anguish for their dead,
 My inner being is in pain for their slain.

A fire [of joy] is kindled within me when I reflect upon the time
 When I went forth from Egypt;
 But I will raise lamentations as I recall the time
 When I went forth from Jerusalem.

Then Moses sang a song never to be forgotten,
 When I went forth from Egypt;
 But Jeremiah lamented, and uttered a bitter dirge,
 When I went forth from Jerusalem.

My house was established, and the cloud came to rest on it,
 When I went forth from Egypt;
 But the wrath of God rested upon me like a cloud,
 When I went forth from Jerusalem.

The waves of the sea roared and piled up like a wall,
 When I went forth from Egypt;
 [But] water inundated me and flowed over my head,
 When I went forth from Jerusalem.

Food [fell] from heaven, and the rock issued forth water,
 When I went forth from Egypt;
 [But there were] wormwood and gall, and bitter waters,
 When I went forth from Jerusalem.

Morning and evening around Mount Horeb —
 When I went forth from Egypt;
 [But I was] called to mourn at the rivers of Babylon,
 When I went forth from Jerusalem.

קָהַל חֶבֶר פְּכוּכָבֵי כִימָה, אֵיכָה נִפְזָר פְּחַרְשֵׁי אֲדָמָה.
 יֵצְאוּ בַגּוֹלָה קַדְמָה וַיָּמָה, אַחֲרַי עֵבֶר בָּם חֶרֶב וְקָמָה.
 אֵיךְ הוֹשַׁמָּה גַּבְנָם לְשִׁמָּה, וְהִלְבִּינוּ שְׂרִיגֵיהֶם.
 לִבִּי לִבִּי עַל חִלְלֵיהֶם, מַעֵי מַעֵי עַל הַרוּגֵיהֶם:

אֵשׁ הַיּוֹקֵד בְּקַרְבִּי, בְּהַעֲלוֹתִי עַל לִבִּי,
 בְּצִאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם:
 וְקִינֹת אֶעֱיֶרָה, יַעַן כִּי אֲזַכִּירָה,
 בְּצִאתִי מִירוּשָׁלַם:

אֲזִי יִשִׁיר־מֹשֶׁה שִׁיר לֹא יִנָּשֶׂה בְּצִאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם:
 וַיִּקְוֶינָה יְרֵמְיָה, וַנְּהַח נְהִי נְהִיָּה בְּצִאתִי מִירוּשָׁלַם:

בֵּיתִי הִתְכַּוְּנָה, וְשָׁכַן הָעָנָן, בְּצִאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם:
 וְחַמַּת אֵל שָׁכְנָה עָלַי כַּעֲנָנָה, בְּצִאתִי מִירוּשָׁלַם:

גַּלְיָה יָם הַמּוֹ, וְכַחֲזוּמָה קָמוּ, בְּצִאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם:
 מֵיִם שָׁטְפוּ, עָלַי רֵאשֵׁי צָפוֹ, בְּצִאתִי מִירוּשָׁלַם:

דָּגָן מִשְׁמֹמֶם, וְצוּר יְזוּב מֵיִם, בְּצִאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם:
 לַעֲנָה וְתַמְרוּרִים, וּמֵיִם הַמָּרִים, בְּצִאתִי מִירוּשָׁלַם:

הַשֶּׁפֶם וְתַעֲרַב סְבִיבוֹת הַר חוֹרֵב, בְּצִאתִי מִמִּצְרַיִם:
 קָרָא אֶל־אֶבֶל עַל־נְהָרוֹת בְּבֵל, בְּצִאתִי מִירוּשָׁלַם:

Chased out from their pleasant home,
My soul faints before their killers.
My heart is in anguish for their dead,
My inner being is in pain for their slain.

The day that maidens were driven out of their palaces,
and mothers were bereaved of their children,
Stripped naked, chained by their plunderers,
The day wailing overcame them,
The day they bore a yoke in place of their jewels,
and were captives of war at the hands of their captors.
My heart is in anguish for their dead,
My inner being is in pain for their slain.

Ears shall tingle from the groans of those who were struck down,
from the screams of sucklings and the weeping of infants,
The day that their blood was spilled like dung,
and the House of prayer was desecrated to the ground,
And Torah scrolls lay drenched in blood,
and the faces of those who study them were devastated,
My heart is in anguish for their dead,
My inner being is in pain for their slain.

The day that my infants were dashed against the rock, and the
survivors of my people were scattered and were not gathered,
And a nation who reviled the name of my god,
profaned my glory and defiled my Sanctuary.
The day that young lions raced after me,
and my heart melted at the sound of their roaring,
My heart is in anguish for their dead,
My inner being is in pain for their slain.

Children who were brought up in scarlet,
Clad in crimson and all sorts of finery,
How were they pushed about between sellers and buyers
By merciless masters,
The day that multitudes upon multitudes came upon them,
And swifter than eagles were those who overtook them,
My heart is in anguish for their dead,
My inner being is in pain for their slain.

גְּרוּשִׁים מִבֵּית תַּעֲנוּגֵיהֶם, עֵינָה נִפְשֵׁי מוֹל הוֹרְגֵיהֶם.
 לְבִי לְבִי עַל חֲלֵיהֶם, מְעִי מְעִי עַל הַרוּגֵיהֶם:

יּוֹם צֵאת בְּתוּלוֹת מַהֲיֻכְלֵיהֶן, וְאַמּוֹת שְׁכוּלוֹת מְעוֹלְלֵיהֶן.
 עֲרוּמוֹת שְׁלוּלוֹת בְּיַד שׁוֹלְלֵיהֶן, יוֹם הַצְּנוּחַה רַבָּה עֲלֵיהֶן.
 יוֹם עַל גִּישָׁאוֹ בְּמִקּוֹם חֲלֵיהֶן, שְׁבוּיוֹת חָרַב בְּיַד נוֹהֲגֵיהֶן.
 לְבִי לְבִי עַל חֲלֵיהֶם, מְעִי מְעִי עַל הַרוּגֵיהֶם:

אֲזַן תִּצַּל לְנֶאֱמַת חֲלָל, וְצַעֲקַת יוֹנֵק וּבְכִיַת עוֹלָל.
 יוֹם אֲשֶׁר שִׁפְדָּ דָמָם כַּגֹּלֶל, וּבֵית הַתְּפִלָּה לְאַרְצָן חֲלָל.
 וְסִפֵּר תוֹרָה בְּדָם הַתְּנוּלָל, וְחָיו לְשִׁמְחָה פָּנֵי לוֹהֲגֵיהֶם.
 לְבִי לְבִי עַל חֲלֵיהֶם, מְעִי מְעִי עַל הַרוּגֵיהֶם:

יוֹם עוֹלָלֵי לְסֹלַע גִּפְצוֹ, וְנִפְזָרוֹ שְׁרִידֵי וְלֹא נִתְקַבְּצוּ.
 וְעַם אֲשֶׁר שֵׁם אֱלֹהֵי גֵאֲצוֹ, הִדְרֵי חֲלָלוֹ וְקִדְשֵׁי שְׁקִצּוֹ.
 יוֹם אֲשֶׁר כְּפִירִים אַחֲרֵי רוּצְצוֹ, וְנָמַס לְבִי לְקוֹל שׁוֹאֲגֵיהֶם.
 לְבִי לְבִי עַל חֲלֵיהֶם, מְעִי מְעִי עַל הַרוּגֵיהֶם:

יְלָדִים אֲשֶׁר עָלִי תוֹלַע אֲמָנִים, לְבוּשֵׁי שָׁנִים עִם כָּל עֲדָנִים.
 אֵיךְ נִדְחָפוּ בֵּין מוֹכְרִים וְקוֹנִים, בְּיַדֵּי אֲדוֹנִים לֹא רַחֲמָנִים.
 יוֹם בֹּא עֲלֵיהֶם הַמוֹנִים הַמוֹנִים, וְקָלוּ כַּנֶּשֶׁר מִשִּׁיגֵיהֶם.
 לְבִי לְבִי עַל חֲלֵיהֶם, מְעִי מְעִי עַל הַרוּגֵיהֶם:

And said: Alas, and the Lord responded: Why is my beloved
bitter?¹²

My beloved fled...

All the way to distant places and to the heavens, the flames
were seen,

And the Kohanim, weeping bitterly, went up to the roof.
They did not flee, but jumped into the fire and were burned,
The eighty thousand Kohanim who were my initiates.

My beloved fled...

And on this day the hand of Edom wielded its sword against me,
He came to the Bethar and there he slew four hundred thousand.
And the voice of a perfect man¹³ was blocked by a cloud
from coming into the presence of God.

They struck me, bruised me, and also stripped me of my veil.

My beloved fled...

And on the day of battle, eighty thousand young Kohanim fled
to Arabia.

They thirsted for drinking water, and were fed salty things,
They hoped for water, but were given empty waterskins,
And there was none to comfort, or show compassion,
and none to gather in my dispersed.

My beloved fled...

Remember, O Lord, all those who tormented me,
and pay them according to their deeds.

And hasten salvation to the people that are to be saved,
And break the bars of their yoke.

And he who mourns shall sing for joy, as in times past,
And then we will sing this verse:¹⁴

Such is my friend, such is my beloved. Such is my friend...

¹² According to the Midrash (Gittin 56), God said to Abraham after the destruction of the first temple: "Why should my beloved be in My house?" (Jeremiah 11:15).

¹³ Jacob

¹⁴ Literally "the house of song," which also refers to the Temple, where the Levites used to sing.

וְאָמַר אֲהָהָ, וְעָנָה יְהוָה: בְּמָרָר מָה לְיַדְיָי: ברח

לְמַרְחָקִים וְעַד שְׁחָקִים נִרְאָתָה הַשְּׁלֵהֲבֵת.
 וְכַת מִשְׁמֵר מֵר לָה מָר, וְעִלְתָּה רוּם מֵעֲזֹבֵת.
 וְלֹא נָסוּ, לְאִשׁ קַפְצוּ, וְנִצְרְבוּ בָהּ צָרְבֵת,
 מִתִּי כַהֲנִים, וְהֵם שְׂמוֹנִים אֶלְף, מִתִּי סוּדִי: ברח

וְבִי הָעִיר יַד שְׁעִיר בְּיוֹם זֶה עָלִי חֲרָבוֹ,
 וְכָא בֵיתָר וְשֵׁם בְּתָר אֲרַבַּע מְאוֹת רַבּוּא,
 וְקוֹל אִישׁ תָּם בְּעֵב נִסְתָּם לְפָנַי אֵל מְלֹבָא.
 הַכּוֹנֵי, בְּצַעֲוֵנִי, וְגַם נִשְׂאוּ אֶת רִדְיָי: ברח

וּבְיוֹם קָרַב נָסוּ לְעֶרְבַּ שְׂמוֹנִים אֶלְף פְּרָחִים,
 שְׂוֹקְקִים לְמִי מִשְׁקִים, וְהֶאֱכִילוּם מְלוּחִים.
 תָּלוּ עֵינַי אֵלַי מִיֹּם וְהִקְמָה נֹאדוֹת נְפוּחִים,
 וְאִין מְנַחֵם, וְאִין מְרַחֵם, וְאִין מְקַבֵּץ לְנִדְוִי: ברח

זְכוֹר יְהוָה לְכֹל מַעֲנֵי, וְהִשָּׁב לָהֶם גְּמוּלָם,
 וְחִישׁ יִשַׁע לְעַם נוֹשָׁע, וְשִׁבּוֹר מוֹטוֹת עֲלֵם,
 וְהַמְקוֹנֵן יִתְרוֹנֵן הַשִּׁיר כִּימֵי עוֹלָם,
 וְאָז נִשְׁרַח בְּבֵית הַשִּׁיר: זֶה רַעֲי וְזֶה הוֹדִי: ואז

How long will I be dumbfounded by a two-time destruction?
 How long will You withhold mercy from Jerusalem?
 How long will the remnant of the flock of Your pastor moan
 in distress:

“O God, foreign nations have entered your domain.”

Take up a lament in anguish, daughter of Zion, and mourn.
 Sit silently, for my Temple, my House of glory, became desolate,
 And because the middle gate and the northern gate were
 sentenced and sank.

My beloved fled, and my spoiler came, and my glory departed.

A bitter lamentation I will utter
 on the day that the Almighty made my lot bitter,
 And I will wrap myself in a sackcloth on the day
 that a spark of fire touched the House of prayer.
 As the name that had been praised was profaned,
 and so was the Temple’s chamber,
 And my place of strength was made desolate,
 and the foundation of my House was uncovered.

My beloved fled...

And undesired fire blazed down below instead of consuming fire,¹⁰
 And the hearth burned as well as the stone of Zoheleth,
 And God sent the angel Gabriel, who scattered fiery coals there,
 The fire of adversaries, who raised their voices
 in the House of my solemn feasts.

My beloved fled...

On the day of wrath, God called for a lamentation in heaven,
 And angels wept bitterly, covering themselves with their wings.
 And the father of multitudes¹¹ came to the Palace
 House with his hands on his loins,

¹⁰ The fire that burned the offerings

¹¹ Abraham

עֲדֹמָתִי אֲשֶׁתֹּמָם, עַל הָרָבֶן פְּעָמִים.
עֲדֹמָתִי לֹא־תִרְחַם אֶת יְרוּשָׁלַם:

עֲדֹמָתִי יִהְיֶה בָצָר, שָׁאָר צֵאֵן מְרַעֲיָתָךְ.
אֱלֹהִים בָּאוּ גֹזִים בְּנַחֲלָתְךָ:

שְׁאֵי קִינָה	בְּמַגְנָה	בַּת צִיּוֹן, וְנוֹדִי.
שְׁבִי דוּמָם,	כִּי נִשְׁמַם	בֵּית קְדוֹשֵׁי וְהוֹדִי.
וְכִי נִפְלַל,	וְגַם צָלַל	הָאֵיתוֹן וְטוֹדִי.
בְּרַח דוֹדִי,	וּבָא שׁוֹדְדֵי	וְגַם גָּלָה כְּבוֹדִי:
מִסֶּפֶד מֵר	בְּיוֹם הַמֵּר	שְׂדֵי לִי אֲנֻדִּילָהּ.
וְאֶחָזֵר שָׁק,	בְּיוֹם נִשְׁק	שְׁבִיב אֵשׁ בְּבֵית הַתְּפִלָּה.
וְכִי חָלַל	שֵׁם הַלֵּל,	וְגַם לַשְּׂפַת הַנּוֹזֶלָה.
וְחָרַב מְחֹז	הַמְּעוֹז,	וְנִגְלָה בֵּית יְסוֹדִי: בְּרַח
וְאֵשׁ מָטָה	לִי לְהִטָּה	בְּמִקּוֹם אֵשׁ אוֹכְלָת.
וַיִּזְקַד	בֵּית הַמּוֹקֵד,	וְגַם אָכַן הַזּוֹחֶלֶת.
וְשָׁלַח אֵל	לְנִבְרִיאַל,	וְזָרָה שֵׁם גִּחְלָת.
אֵשׁ עַמִּים	הַזָּרִים	קוֹל נִתְּנוּ בְּבֵית מוֹעֲדִי: בְּרַח
אֵל קָרָא	בְּיוֹם עֶבְרָה	לְמִסְפַּד בְּשָׂמִים,
וּמְלֹאכִים	בְּמֵר בּוֹכִים,	מְחֹזְפִים בְּכִנְפִים.
וּבָא אֲבֵהֶמוֹן	לְבֵית אֶרְמוֹן,	וַיְדִיּוּ עַל חֲלָצִים,

Psalm 79

¹A psalm of Asaph: O God, heathens have entered Your domain, defiled Your holy temple, and turned Jerusalem into ruins. ²They have left Your servants' corpses as food for the fowl of heaven, and the flesh of Your faithful for the wild beasts. ³Their blood was shed like water around Jerusalem, with none to bury them. ⁴We have become the butt of our neighbors, the scorn and derision of those around us. ⁵How long, O LORD, will You be angry forever, will Your indignation blaze like fire? ⁶Pour out Your fury on the nations that do not know You, upon the kingdoms that do not invoke Your name, ⁷for they have devoured Jacob and desolated his home. ⁸Do not hold our former iniquities against us; let Your compassion come swiftly toward us, for we have sunk very low. ⁹Help us, O God, our deliverer, for the sake of the glory of Your name. Save us and forgive our sin, for the sake of Your name. ¹⁰Let the nations not say, "Where is their God?" Before our eyes let it be known among the nations that You avenge the spilled blood of Your servants. ¹¹Let the groans of the prisoners reach You; reprieve those condemned to death, as befits Your great strength. ¹²Pay back our neighbors sevenfold for the abuse they have flung at You, O LORD. ¹³Then we, Your people, the flock You shepherd, shall glorify You forever; for all time we shall tell Your praises.

How long, O Lord, on this day, before You,
 Will Your congregation wail bitterly for Your house of prayer,
 Which Your enemies, who killed the children of Your
 covenant, have burnt?

“O God, foreign nations have entered Your domain.”

How long, O Lord, will I lie amidst the flames,
 And between oven and stove my eyes will grow dim?
 Flames blaze upon me evening, morning, and noon.

תהלים ע"ט

א מזמור לְאֶסְף אֱלֹהִים בָּאוּ גוֹיִם | בַּנְּחֻלָּתְךָ טָמְאוּ
 אֶת־הַיִּכָּל קִדְשְׁךָ שָׁמוּ אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַם לְעַיִים: ב נִתְּנוּ
 אֶת־נִבְלֹת עַבְדֶיךָ מֵאֲכָל לְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם בְּשֵׁר חֲסִידֶיךָ
 לְחַיְתוֹ־אֲרָץ: ג שָׁכְנוּ דָמָם | כְּפַיִם סְבִיבוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם וְאִין
 קוֹבֵר: ד הִינֵנו חֲרָפָה לְשֹׁכְנֵינוּ לַעֲג וְקָלַם לְסְבִיבוֹתֵינוּ:
 ה עַד־מָה יִהְיֶה תִּאֲנָף לְנֹצַח תִּבְעֵר כְּמוֹ־אֵשׁ קִנְאֲתְךָ:
 ו שָׁפַךְ חַמַּתְךָ אֶל־הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִדְעוּךָ וְעַל מַמְלְכוֹת
 אֲשֶׁר בְּשִׁמְךָ לֹא קָרְאוּ: ז כִּי אָכַל אֶת־יַעֲקֹב וְאֶת־נַגְחוֹ
 הִשְׁמוּ: ח אֶל־תִּזְכֹּר־לָנוּ עֲוֹנוֹת רַאשֵׁינִים מִהַר יִקְדְּמוּנוּ
 רַחֲמֶיךָ כִּי דָלוּנוּ מְאֹד: ט עֲזַרְנוּ | אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׁעֵנוּ עַל־דְּבַר
 כְּבוֹד־שִׁמְךָ וְהַצִּילְנוּ וּכְפַר עַל־חַטֹּאתֵינוּ לְמַעַן שִׁמְךָ:
 י לָמָּה | יֵאמְרוּ הַגּוֹיִם אֵיךָ אֱלֹהֵיהֶם יוֹדֵעַ בְּנִיִּים לְעֵינֵינוּ
 נִקְמַת דָּם־עַבְדֶיךָ הַשְּׁפוּךְ: יא תִּבּוֹא לְפָנֶיךָ אֲנֻקַת אֲסִיר
 כְּגֹדֶל זְרוּעֶךָ הֵחֵתַר בְּנֵי תְמוֹתָהּ: יב וְהִשָּׁב לְשֹׁכְנֵינוּ
 שְׂבָעִתִּים אֶל־חִיגָם חֲרָפְתָם אֲשֶׁר חֲרַפּוּךָ אֲדָנִי:
 יג וְאֲנַחְנוּ עִמָּךָ | וְצֹאן מִרְעִיתְךָ נֹדֵדָה לָךְ לְעוֹלָם לְדוֹר
 וָדָר וְסִפֵּר תִּהְלֹתְךָ:

עד־מָתִי יִהְיֶה, יום זֶה לְעַמֻּתְךָ.
 בְּמַר תִּיִלֵּל עֲדָתְךָ, עַל בֵּית תְּפִלָּתְךָ.
 אֲשֶׁר שָׁרְפוּ צָרֶיךָ, וְחָרְגוּ בְנֵי בְרִיתְךָ:
 אֱלֹהִים בָּאוּ גוֹיִם בַּנְּחֻלָּתְךָ:

עד־מָתִי יִהְיֶה, אֲשַׁכְּחָה בֵּין שְׂפָתַי.
 וּבֵין תַּנּוּר וּבִירִים, יִכְהוּ לִי עֵינָי.
 לוֹחֲטִים לִי יִשְׁאַפוּ, עָרֵב וּבָקָר וְצֹהֲרִים.

The heaven trembled, and a cloud dwelled upon me,
 And all the shining lights, the sun and the moon, were darkened
 On the day that the city, once great among nations, became
 like a widow.

And the faithful were crushed to the ground, and languished.
 Therefore I lament bitterly every year:
 How has the city, once full of judgment, become like a harlot?

The fairest of sites,⁸ joy of all the Earth, the city where the
 people of Israel dwelled,
 Has become a waste and a desolation, a symbol and a mockery.
 All her inhabitants sigh. They found no mercy.

Her warriors were stunned because of the oppressing sword.
 The Temple's pillars were uprooted from the threshing floor
 of Aravanah.⁹
 Strangers trampled and roared in the place of the Shekhinah.

I heard the daughter Zion speaking bitterly:
 "Alas, for I have drunk the cup and drained to the dregs."
 Lament, O pampered one, for the Shekhinah, whose lights are
 darkened,
 Like a maiden girl with sackcloth for the husband of
 her youth.

All this time she is waiting for a day of favor from you, O Rock,
 Tied like a bird in the hand of a foe.
 Arise, before the gleanings of the vintage are consumed,
 And take note of the vineyard which you have
 forsaken, and whose hedges You have removed.

⁸ Or: the fairest of branches.

⁹ The place of King David's altar.

דִּקּוֹ וְחֹג רַעְשׁוֹ, וְתִשְׁכַּח־עָלַי עֲנִיָּה,
 וְכָל מְאֹרֵי אֹזֶר קִדְרוֹ, וְחִמָּה וּלְבָנָה.
 יוֹם רַבָּתִי בַגּוֹיִם הִיָּתָה פְּאֵלְמָנָה:

וְדָבְאוּ לְאָרְזִי, וְאִמְלְלוּ אֲנִשֵּׁי הָאָמוּנָה.
 לְכֵן אֶקְוֶה בְּמַרְהָ, בְּכָל־שָׁנָה וְשָׁנָה.
 מִלְּאֲתֵי מִשְׁפָּט — אֵיכָה הִיָּתָה לְזוֹנָה!

יִפָּה נוֹרָה, מִשׁוֹשׁ כָּל־הָאָרְזִי, עִם קִרְיַת חָנָה:
 הִיָּתָה לְשִׁמְחָה וְלִשְׂאִיָּה, וְלִמְשָׁל וְלִשְׁנִינָה.
 כָּל־עַמָּה נֶאֱנָחִים, לֹא מִצְאוּ חֲנִינָה:

דִּהְמוּ גְבוּרֵיהָ מִפְּנֵי חֲרֵב הַיּוֹנָה.
 יִכִּין וּבְעֵז נַעֲקְרוּ מִגֶּרֶן אֲרֻנָּה.
 רָמְסוּ זָרִים, וְשָׂאֲנוּ בַמְּקוֹם הַשְּׂכִינָה:

בַּת צִיּוֹן שָׁמַעְתִּי מִמְּרַרְתֵּי אֲמַרְיָה. אָהָה, כִּי כּוֹס שְׁתִּיתִי,
 וּמִצִּיתִי שָׁמַרְיָה. אֵלַי עֲדִינָה לְשִׂכִּינָה, אֲשֶׁר חָשְׁכוּ
 מְאֹרֵיהָ: כִּבְתוּלָה חֲגַרְת־שֵׁק עַל־כַּעַל נְעוּרֵיהָ.

זֶה כַּמָּה מִיַּחְלַת יוֹם רָצוֹן מִמֶּדֶד צוּר. קִשְׁוֶרָה כְּצַפּוֹר
 בְּיַד צָר, וְאָפַס עָזוֹב וְעַצוֹר. קוֹם בְּטָרָם יִתְמוּ עוֹלְלוֹת
 כָּרָם בְּצוּר, וּפְקֹד כַּנָּה נִטְשָׁטָה, וּפְרָצָת גְּדַרְיָה: וּפְקֹד
 כַּנָּה נִטְשָׁטָה, וּפְרָצָת גְּדַרְיָה:

Kinot for Shahrit of Tisha Be'ab

My pride is lowered to the Earth, and my glory is debased.
 My soul lies prostrate in the dust, and my arm is too short.
 When I remember my sorrows, I sigh for as long as I am alive.
 The waves of my soul roar, and the sparks of my fire flare.
 Will my shadow⁶ forever be uncovered, and my steps
 narrowed?

And You, Oh Lord, are a shield **around me**.

Around me, the enemy increased his army and launched war.
 He profaned, crushed and threshed the splendor of my glory.
 Therefore on this day I call a fast, and proclaim a solemn
 assembly.

On the ninth day **of the fifth month**.

In the fifth month, the gates of my abode lamented and
 mourned,

On the ninth day of the month, my eyes were darkened and
 dimmed.

At that time, the lion⁷ roared and my ears tingled,

On the day that the lion called out upon the watch-tower
 of **my Lord**.

My Lord, be not excessively angry to humble me,

And do not remember sin forever to condemn me.

Listen from Your lofty abode to the sound of my cry,

You, who are my shield and mighty rescuer.

⁶ Protection

⁷ Nebuchadnezzar

קינות לשחרית תשעה באב

וְאָרֶץ שָׁפַל רוּמִי, וְנִקְלָה כְּבוֹדִי.
 לְעֶפֶר שָׁחָה נַפְשִׁי, וְקִצְרָה יָדַי.
 מִדֵּי זְכָרִי יְגוּנִי, אֲאָנַח בְּעוֹדִי.
 הוֹמִים גַּלִּי נַפְשִׁי, וְקוֹדְחִים שְׁבִיבֵי יְקוּדִי.
 הֲלָעַד יִחְשַׁף צְלִי, וַיִּצַר צַעְדִּי?
 וְאַתָּה יְהוָה מִגֵּן בְּעַדִּי.

בְּעַדִּי רַבָּה צָר צָבָא וּמְלַחְמָה קִדְשׁ.
 יַפְעַת הוֹדִי חֲלָל, פִּתַּת וְהִדְשׁ.
 הֲלֹא בְיוֹם זֶה אֶקְרָא צוּם, וְנַעֲצְרָה אֶקְדֹּשׁ
 בַּחֲדָשׁ הַחֲמִישִׁי בַתְּשַׁעָה לַחֲדָשׁ.

בַּחֲדָשׁ הַחֲמִישִׁי אָנוּ וְאֶבְלוּ פִתְחֵי מְעוֹנֵי.
 בַתְּשַׁעָה לַחֲדָשׁ אֶפְלוּ וְכָהוּ עֵינֵי.
 בְּמִזַּל אַרְיָה אָרִי נָהַם, וְצָלְלוּ אֲזוּנֵי,
 יוֹם וַיִּקְרָא אַרְיָה עַל־מִצְפֵּה אֲדוּנֵי:

אֲדוּנֵי אֵל תִּקְצַף עַד מָאֵד לְהַכְנִיעֵי,
 וְאֵל לָעַד תִּזְכֹּר עֲוֹן לְהַרְשִׁיעֵי.
 אֲזוּן נָא מִזְבוּלְךָ לְקוֹל שׁוֹעֵי,
 מִגֵּנִי וְקַרְנִי יִשְׁעֵי.

Please awaken and bare Your arm,
 And reveal Your final salvation.
 And let it be said to the mute lamb:
 O you unhappy, storm-tossed one, be comforted.

Please awaken Your right arm, Most High,
 And rebuild in mercy the city of Zion.
 And let it be said to a poor and needy people
 That the Lord has comforted Zion.

Please awaken Your right arm, O God,
 And redeem Israel in mercy.
 And let it be said to the poor people who supplicate:
 A redeemer has come to Zion.

O God, destroy and ruin Your enemies —
 Speedily and soon.

To Him alone I call in my plaint,
 For in my distress He is called to be my help.
 And to all my adversaries, rage, anger and wrath
 Shall come, and their sun shall set —
 Speedily and soon.

Holy and Awesome One who works wonders,
 Deliver Your congregation from a dungeon
 Filled with mire and mud.
 Destroy and annihilate those who rob my people —
 Speedily and soon.

Magnified be Your name, God Most High,
 And have compassion for a poor and destitute people,
 And bring them up to Mount Zion
 From among people of strange language, who have scorched
 their face —
 Speedily and soon.

עֹרָה נָא

חֲשׂוֹף זְרוּעָךְ, וְגִלְהָה נָא קַיִן יִשְׁעֶךָ,
וַיֹּאמֶר לְשָׂה נֶאֱלָמָה, עֲנִיָּה סֵעֶרָה נַחֲמָה:

עֹרָה נָא

יְמִינְךָ עֲלִיּוֹן, וּבִנְיָה בְּרַחֲמִים עִיר צִיּוֹן,
וַיֹּאמֶר לְעַם דָּל וְאֶבְיוֹן, כִּי נַחֵם יִהְיֶה צִיּוֹן:

עֹרָה נָא

יְמִינְךָ הָאֵל, וּפְדֵה בְּרַחֲמִים יִשְׂרָאֵל,
וַיֹּאמֶר לְעַם דָּל הַשּׂוֹאֵל, וּבֹא לְצִיּוֹן גּוֹאֵל.

אֵת אוֹיְבֶיךָ אֵל

תִּשְׁמֵד וְתִחַרֵּב,

בַּעֲגָלָא וּבְזִמְן קָרִיב.

לוֹ לְבַדּוֹ בְּשִׂיחֵי אֶקְרָא, כִּי בְּצָרוֹתַי נִקְרָא לִי עֲזָרָה,
וְלִכְלֹל שׁוֹטְנֵי, חֲרוֹן אַף וְעִבְרָה יָבֹא עֲלֵיהֶם, וְשִׁמְשֵׁם יַעֲרִיב,
בַּעֲגָלָא וּבְזִמְן קָרִיב.

קְדוֹשׁ וְנוֹרָא עֲשֵׂה כְּלָא, הוֹצֵא עֲדַתְךָ מִבֵּית-כְּלָא,
אֲשֶׁר בְּרַפְּשׁ וְטִיט מְלֵא, וּלְגוֹזְלֵי עַמִּי תִשְׁמֵד וְתִחַרֵּב,
בַּעֲגָלָא וּבְזִמְן קָרִיב.

יִתְגַּדֵּל שְׁמֶךָ אֵל עֲלִיּוֹן, וְתִרְחַם עִם עַנִּי וְאֶבְיוֹן,
וְתַעֲלֶהוּ אֵל הַר צִיּוֹן, מִעַם לוֹעֵז וּפְנֵי הַצָּרִיב,
בַּעֲגָלָא וּבְזִמְן קָרִיב.

לה

סדר קינות לערבית תשעה באב

O Lord, when You abandoned her in the hands of the predator,
He devoured her neck from the front,
and wrung it off from behind.
The years have passed. Both summer and winter
I bear my enemy's yoke.

If only she had wings like an eagle's,
To fly over the hills, and leap over the mountains,
To come with her beloved into the chambers,
Then I would forget my sorrow.

They devise a plan against her, till she is mortally wounded.
Cruel enemies⁵ have weakened her
With heavy yoke, with reproach and disgrace.
My suffering is great.

Comfort her heart, O God who dwells on high,
Say comforting words to the heart of the grieving.
Gather the exiles, who are scattered among the nations,
And bring the redeemer.

How much longer shall there be weeping in Zion,
And mourning in Jerusalem?
Show Zion mercy once again,
Rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

Please awaken Your lofty right arm
And call her who was the subject of wrath, "the comforted one."
And let it be said to the poor and grieved one:
Be comforted, O you distressed and storm-tossed one.

⁵ Literally: strangers.

יְהִי, יַעַת עֲזֹבֶתָ
 אֶכְלֵל הַצֹּאֵר,
 עֲבְרוּ הַשָּׁנִים,
 אֶשָּׂא עַל אוֹיְבֵי.
 אוֹתָהּ בְּיַד טוֹרֵף,
 וּמִלֵּק הָעֵרֶף.
 גַּם קִיַּץ גַּם חֶרֶף,
 אֶשָּׂא עַל אוֹיְבֵי.

מִי יִתֵּן אֵלֶיךָ
 לְעוֹף בְּנֹבְעוֹת,
 לְבוֹא עִם הַדּוֹדָה
 אֲזוֹ, אֶשְׁפַּח עֲצָבִי.
 אֶבֶר פְּנוֹשִׁים,
 וּלְדַלֵּג בְּהָרִים,
 אֶל תוֹף הַחֲדָרִים,
 אֶזוֹ, אֶשְׁפַּח עֲצָבִי.

יוֹעֲצִים עָלֶיךָ
 זָרִים אֶכְזָרִים
 בְּעַל כָּבֵד
 גָּדוֹל מִכְּאוֹבִי.
 עֲצוֹת, הִיא אֲנוּשָׁה,
 שְׂמוּנָה חֲלוּשָׁה,
 בְּחֶרֶף וּבוֹשָׁה,
 גָּדוֹל מִכְּאוֹבִי.

נַחֵם עַל לְבָבָהּ,
 וַדְּבַר נְחֻמָּה
 קִבֵּץ נְדָחִים
 וְגוֹאֵל תְּבִיא.
 אֵל שׁוֹכֵן בְּמַרוֹמִים,
 עַל לֵב הַעֲגוּמִים,
 פְּזוּרִים בְּעַמִּים,
 וְגוֹאֵל תְּבִיא.

עַד-אֵנָה בִּכְיָה בְּצִיּוֹן,
 תָּשׁוּב תִּרְחַם צִיּוֹן,
 וּמִסְפֵּד בִּירוּשָׁלַם,
 תִּבְנֶה חוֹמוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם.

עוֹרָה נָא

יְמִינֶךָ רַחֵם,
 וַיֹּאמֶר לְדָלָה וַעֲגוּמָה,
 וּלְזַעוּמָה קְרָא נְחֻמָּה,
 עֲנִיָּה סֶעְרָה נְחֻמָּה:

No precious portion is left to Reuben,
 Simeon [is hit] by sling stones,
 Tell that to the sons of Issachar.
 Zebulun does not open his mouth,
 He flees from mountain to hill.

How is it that Judah is buried in mire,
 Levi and Benjamin have been forsaken,
 And in the Holy Sanctuary, a sun image was placed.
 This is the fruit of the sins of my youth,
 Until my soul shall pay its debt.

How is it that Joseph and Gad were driven out,
 Asher and the Naphtali have departed,
 How are the camps of Dan ensnared.
 There is none to stretch out their tents,
 And fate rejoices at their misfortune.

Most pleasant of all daughters,
 Gather her [dispersed] and send them gifts,
 Declare the true prophecies.
 Show all the nations her beauty,
 For the Lord has chosen Jacob for Himself.

O Creator, how long will Your dove be ensnared
 In the fowler's trap, distressed and miserable,
 And, without her children, sitting solitary,
 Crying out: "My father!"

Ceaselessly the dove wanders away from her nest,
 camping by day and by night through frost and
 scorching heat,
 Terrified of the oppressing sword,
 Of the lion's teeth.

חֲלַקְתָּ יְקָר אֵין לְרֵאוּבוּן, שְׁמַעוֹן בְּמִרְגַּמַת אֶבֶן,
 אָמְרוּ לְיִשְׁשָׁכָר הַבֵּן,
 אֵין פֶּה זְבוּלוֹן פּוֹתַח, מֵהָר לְנִבְעָה בּוֹרַח.

בְּטוֹט יְהוּדָה אֵיךְ נִטְמָן, לְוִי וּבְנֵימִין אֶלְמָן,
 וּבְבֵית דְּבִיר הוֹשֵׁם חָמָן,
 חֲטָאֵת נְעוּרֵי זֶה פְּרִיָה, עַד שְׁלֵמָה נִפְשֵׁי נִשְׁפָּיָה.

יּוֹסֵף וְגַד אֵיךְ גָּרְשׁוּ, אֲשֶׁר וְנִפְתָּלִי מָשׁוּ,
 אֵיךְ מִחֲנוֹת דָּן נִקְשׁוּ,
 אֵין אֶהְלִיחֵם מוֹתַח, וְזִמָּן לְאֵיִדָם שְׁמַח.

בַּת נַעֲמָה מְכַל־בָּנוֹת, אֶסֶף וְשַׁלַּח לָהּ מָנוֹת,
 אָמְרוּ נְבוֹאוֹת נְאֻמָּנוֹת,
 חֲרָאָה לְכָל הָעַמִּים יִפְיָה, כִּי־עֵקֶב בָּחַר לוֹ יָהּ.

יּוֹנָתָן בְּמִצְוֹדָה,
 עֲנִיָה וּמְרוֹדָה,
 יוֹשֻׁבֵת גְּלִמְוֹדָה,

בוֹרָא, עַד־אָנָה
 תּוֹךְ פֶּחַח הַמוֹקֵשׁ
 וּבְלִי בְנִיָה

צוֹעֲקָת: אָבִי.

מִקְנָה תִּיּוֹנָה,
 יוֹם וְלַיְלָה חוֹנָה,
 מִחֲרַב תִּיּוֹנָה,

נְעָה גַם נָדָה
 וְלִקְרַח וְחָרַב
 הִיא מִתְחַרְדֵּת

מִשְׁנֵי לְבִיא.

Till when, O God, will the foe blaspheme, will the enemy forever revile Your name?

O God, heathens have entered Your domain, defiled Your holy temple, and turned Jerusalem into ruins. They have left Your servants' corpses as food for the fowl of heaven, and the flesh of Your faithful for the wild beasts. Their blood was shed like water around Jerusalem, with none to bury them. We have become the butt of our neighbors, the scorn and derision of those around us.

You make us a byword among the nations, a laughingstock among the peoples. I am always aware of my disgrace; I am wholly covered with shame at the sound of taunting revilers in the presence of the vengeful foe. All this has come upon us, yet we have not forgotten You, or been false to Your covenant.

Because my people is shattered I am shattered; I am dejected, seized by desolation. Is there no balm in Gilead? Can no physician be found? Why has healing not yet come to my poor people?

My poor people, put on sackcloth and strew dust on yourselves! Mourn, as for an only child; wail bitterly, for suddenly the destroyer is coming upon us.

Our holy Temple, our pride, where our fathers praised You, has been consumed by fire: and all that was dear to us is ruined.

Why have You forgotten us utterly, forsaken us for all time? Take us back, O LORD, to Yourself, and let us come back; renew our days as of old! For truly, You have rejected us, bitterly raged against us. Take us back, O LORD, to Yourself, and let us come back; renew our days as of old!

The voice of Samaria cries out,

A voice from captivity shrieks bitterly;

The voice of Jerusalem from her captivity,

The sound of her weeping tore my heart.

עֲדֹמֹתַי אֱלֹהִים יַחַרְףָּ צָר, וְנֹאֵץ אוֹיֵב שְׂמֹךְ לְנֹצַח:
 אֱלֹהִים בָּאוּ גוֹיִם בְּנַחֲלֹתֶךָ, טָמְאוּ אֶת הַיְכָל קִדְשֶׁךָ, שָׁמוּ
 אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַם לְעֵינַיִם: נָתַנוּ אֶת־נִבְלֹת עֲבָדֶיךָ מֵאֶכָּל לְעוֹף
 הַשָּׁמַיִם, בָּשָׂר חֲסִידֶיךָ לְחִיתוֹ־אָרֶץ: שָׁפְכוּ דָמָם פְּמִיָם,
 סְבִיבוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם וְאִין קוֹבֵר. הִיָּינוּ חֲרָפָה לְשַׁכְנֵינוּ, לְעַג
 וְקָלָם לְסְבִיבוֹתֵינוּ:

תְּשִׁימוּנוּ מִשָּׁל בְּגוֹיִם, מִנְּדוֹד־רֹאשׁ בְּלְאֻמִּים: כָּל־הַיּוֹם
 כְּלֹמֹתַי נִגְדִי, וּבְשֵׁת פְּנֵי כְּסֻתֵּנִי: מִקּוֹל מְחַרְףָּ וּמְגִידָה,
 מִפְּנֵי אוֹיֵב וּמִתְנַקֵּם: כָּל־זֹאת בְּאֶתְנוּ וְלֹא שְׁכַחְנוּךָ,
 וְלֹא־שָׁקְרוּנוּ בְּבְרִיתֶךָ:

עַל־שֹׁבֵר בַּת־עַמִּי הַשְּׁבֵרֹתִי, קְדַרְתִּי, שְׂמָחַ הַחֲזֻקְתֵּנִי:
 הַצָּרִי אִין בְּגִלְעָד, אִם־רַפָּא אִין שָׁם. כִּי מְדוּעַ לֹא
 עָלְתָה אֲרֻכַת בַּת־עַמִּי:

בַּת־עַמִּי חֲגִר־שָׁק וְהַתְּפִלְשִׁי בְּאֶפְרַי, אֲכַל יַחִיד עָשִׂי
 לָךְ, מִסְּפַד תְּמִרוּרִים, כִּי פִתְאֵם יָבֵא הַשִּׁדְד עָלֵינוּ:
 בֵּית קְדֻשָׁנוּ וְתַפְאֲרֹתֵנוּ, אֲשֶׁר הִלְלוּךָ אֲבֹתֵינוּ, הָיָה
 לְשֹׁרֶפֶת אֵשׁ, וְכָל־מְחַמְדֵּינוּ הָיָה לְחֲרָפָה: הַעַל־אֲלֵהָ
 תְּתַאֲפֵק יְהוָה, תַּחֲשָׁה וְתַעֲנֵנוּ עַד־מָאֵד:

לָמָּה לְנֹצַח תִּשְׁכַּחְנוּ, תַּעֲזֹבְנוּ לְאֶרֶץ יָמִים: הֲשִׁיבְנוּ יְהוָה
 אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְנִשְׁוֹבָה, חֲדָשׁ יָמֵינוּ כְּקֶדֶם: כִּי אִם־מָאֵס מְאֹסְתָנוּ,
 קַצְּפֹת עָלֵינוּ עַד־מָאֵד: הֲשִׁיבְנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְנִשְׁוֹבָה,
 חֲדָשׁ יָמֵינוּ כְּקֶדֶם:

קוֹל אֲהֵלָה תִתְנַפֵּחַ, קוֹל מוֹשְׁבֵי מֵר צוֹרַח:
 קוֹל אֲהֵלִיבָה מוֹשְׁבֵיהָ, קִרְע לְבָבִי קוֹל בְּכִיָּה:

For my treasured people, who went into exile	I wail
For the crown of our head, which has fallen	I wail
For the young Kohanim, eighty thousand of whom were slaughtered	I wail
For the righteous, who are under a curse	I wail
For the sacrifices, which were annuled	I wail
For the great among nations, the princess among states	I wail
For the Shekhinah, that ascended to the heavens above	I wail
For the perfect Torah of the Lord, which was burned by consuming fire	I wail

Therefore, men of understanding, listen to me; wickedness be far from God, wrongdoing, from Shaddai!

Gird yourselves and lament, O priests, wail, O ministers of the altar; come, spend the night in sackcloth, O ministers of my God. For offering and libation are withheld from the House of your God. Solemnize a fast, proclaim an assembly; gather the elders—all the inhabitants of the land— in the House of the LORD your God, and cry out to the LORD.

Between the portico and the altar, let the priests, the LORD's ministers, weep and say: "Oh, spare Your people, LORD! Let not Your possession become a mockery, to be taunted by nations! Let not the peoples say, 'Where is their God?'"

Look down from heaven and see, from Your holy and glorious height! Where is Your zeal, Your power? Your yearning and Your love are being withheld from us!

It is for Your sake that we are slain all day long, that we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered. Rouse Yourself; why do You sleep, O Lord? Awaken, do not reject us forever! Why do You hide Your face, ignoring our affliction and distress.

Will the Lord reject forever and never again show favor? Has His faithfulness disappeared forever? Will His promise be unfulfilled for all time? Has God forgotten how to pity? Has He in anger stifled His compassion?" Selah.

על סגלתי, שְהִלְכָה בְגוֹלָה
 אֵילִילָה:
 על עֲטָרַת רֹאשֵׁנוּ, כִּי נִפְלָה
 אֵילִילָה:
 על פְּרָחַי כַּהֲנָה הַנְּשַׁחֲטִים שְׂמוֹנִים אֶלֶף
 אֵילִילָה:
 על צַדִּיקִים, הַנּוֹתוּנִים בְּקִלְלָה
 אֵילִילָה:
 על קַרְבָּנוֹת כִּי בָטְלוּ
 אֵילִילָה:
 על רַבְתֵּי בְּגוֹזִים, שְׁרַתִּי בַּמְּדִינוֹת
 אֵילִילָה:
 על שְׂכִינָתִי, כִּי עָלְתָה לְשָׁמַי מַעְלָה
 אֵילִילָה:
 על תּוֹרַת יְהוָה הַתְּמִימָה כִּי נִשְׁרָפָה בְּאֵשׁ אוֹכְלָה אֵילִילָה:

לְכֵן אֲנֹשִׁי יִלָּבב שְׂמֵעוּ-לִי, חָלְלָה לְאֵל מִרְשַׁע וְשׂוֹדֵי
 מַעְוָל:

חֲגְרוּ וּסְפְדוּ הַכְּהֻנִּים, הִילִילוּ מִשְׁרַתִּי מִזִּבְחַם בָּאוּ לִינוּ
 בַּשָּׁקִים, מִשְׁרַתִּי אֱלֹהֵי, כִּי נִמְנַע מִבֵּית אֱלֹהֵיכֶם מִנְחָה
 וְנִסְוָה: קִדְשֵׁי-צוּם, קָרְאוּ עֲצָרָה, אִסְפוּ זְקֵנִים כָּל יוֹשְׁבֵי
 הָאָרֶץ, בֵּית יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם, וַיַּעֲקוּ אֶל-יְהוָה:

בֵּין הָאוֹלָם וְלַמִּזְבֵּחַ יִכְפוּ הַכְּהֻנִּים מִשְׁרַתִּי יְהוָה, וַיֹּאמְרוּ
 חוֹסֵה יְהוָה עַל-עַמֶּךָ, וְאַל-תִּתֵּן נַחֲלַתְךָ לְחַרְפָּה
 לְמִשְׁלַבֵּם גּוֹיִם, לָמָּה יֹאמְרוּ בְּעַמִּים, אֵיחָה אֱלֹהֵיהֶם:

חֲבֹט מִשְׁמֹם וּרְאֵה, מִזְבֵּל קִדְשֶׁךָ וְתִפְאַרְתְּךָ, אֵיחָה
 קִנְיַתְךָ וּגְבוּרַתִּיךָ, הַמּוֹן מֵעֵיךָ וְרַחֲמֶיךָ אֵלַי הַתְּאֲפִקוּ:

כִּי-עָלִיךָ הֲרַגְנוּ כָּל-הַיּוֹם, נַחֲשָׁבְנוּ כְּצֹאן טְבָחָה. עוֹרָה
 לָמָּה תִישֵׁן אֲדוֹנָי, הַקִּיצָה אֶל-תִּזְנַח לְנִצָּח: לָמָּה-פָּגַיְךָ
 תִּסְתִּיר, תִּשְׁכַּח עֲגֻנָנוּ וְלַחְצָנוּ:

הִלְעוּלָמִים, יִזְנַח אֲדוֹנָי, וְלֹא-יִסִּיף לְרִצּוֹת עוֹד: הָאָפֶס
 לְנִצָּח חֲסִדוֹ, גָּמַר אָמַר לְדָר וְדָר: הַשְׁכַּח חַנוּת אֵל,
 אִם-קָפַץ בְּאֶף רַחֲמָיו סָלָה:

Kinot for Arbit of Tisha Be'ab

Our brothers, the house of Israel, hear this:

Due to our our sins and the sins of our forefathers, our Temple was destroyed. On this day, one thousand nine hundred and thirty eight years ago, our Temple, our house of glory, was destroyed. The crown of our head has fallen, Woe to us who have sinned.

Elegy on the Destruction of the Temple

For this I will lament and wail:

For my guilt which has become great	I wail
For my House which lies desolate, my inner being writhes in pain	and I wail
For the exile of the treasured people	I wail
For my Holy Sanctuary, which is deprived of song and praise	I wail
For my Temple, which is burned by consuming fire	I wail
For my meeting place with the Shekhinah, now full of darkness	I wail
For the sages, who are cast out like corpses	I wail
For the faithful, who are slain without pity	I wail
For my place of purity, desecrated with impurity	I wail
For Jerusalem, which is destroyed, and Zion, which is desolate	I wail
For the Kohanim, slain in the Temple courtyard, and there is none to sacrifice the burnt offering	I wail
For the Levites who were slain, and there is none to sing and praise	I wail
For the kings of Israel who were exiled to Babylon	I wail
For my crown, which fell down from the heavens above	I wail

סדר קינות לערבית תשעה באב

בראש נטוי ובבכי אומרים:

אחינו בית ישראל שמעו:

בעונותינו ובעונות אבותינו, חרב בית מקדשנו. היום
אלף תשע מאות ושלשים ושמונה שנים⁴, מיום שנחרב
בית מקדשנו ותפארתנו. נפלה עטרת ראשנו, אוי לנו
כי חטאנו.

קינה על חרבן בית המקדש:

על זאת אספדה ואיללה:

על אשמתי כי גדלה	איללה:
על ביתי כי הושם, מעי מעי אוחילה	ואיללה:
על גלות עם סגלה	איללה:
על דבירי, השמם משיר ותהלה	איללה:
על היכלי, הנשרף באש אוקלה	איללה:
על געד שכונתי, כי נתמלאה אפלה	איללה:
על זקנים, המשלכים פגבלה	איללה:
על חסידים, הנחרגים באין חמלה	איללה:
על טהרתו, כי בטומאה חללה	איללה:
על ירושלים החרבה, וציון השוממה	איללה:
על פהנים הנחרגים בעזרה, ואין מקריב עולה	איללה:
על לווים הנחרגים, ואין משמיע שיר ותהלה	איללה:
על מלכי ישראל, שגלו בקלה	איללה:
על נזרי, כי נפל משמי מעלה	איללה:

⁴ This was the number of years in the year 2008 – התשס"ח

that people wormwood and make them drink a bitter draft. ¹⁵I will scatter them among nations which they and their fathers never knew; and I will dispatch the sword after them until I have consumed them. ¹⁶Thus said the LORD of Hosts: listen! Summon the dirge-singers, let them come; ¹⁷Send for the skilled women, let them come, let them quickly start a wailing for us, that our eyes may run with tears, our pupils flow with water. ¹⁸For the sound of wailing is heard from Zion: how we are despoiled! How greatly we are shamed! Ah, we must leave our land, abandon our dwellings! ¹⁹Hear, O women, the word of the LORD, let your ears receive the word of His mouth, and teach your daughters wailing, and one another lamentation. ²⁰For death has climbed through our windows, has entered our fortresses, to cut off babes from the streets, young men from the squares. ²¹Speak thus—says the LORD: the carcasses of men shall lie like dung upon the fields, like sheaves behind the reaper, with none to pick them up. ²²Thus said the LORD: let not the wise man glory in his wisdom; let not the strong man glory in his strength; let not the rich man glory in his riches. ²³But only in this should one glory: in his earnest devotion to Me, for I the LORD act with kindness, justice, and equity in the world; for in these I delight—declares the LORD.

אֶת־הָעַם הַזֶּה לְעֵנָה וְהַשְׁקִיתִים מִי־רֹאשׁ׃ טו וְהַפְּצוּתִים
 בְּגוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר לֹא יָדְעוּ הַמָּה וְאַבּוֹתָם וְשַׁלַּחְתִּי אַחֲרֵיהֶם
 אֶת־הַחֶרֶב עַד פְּלוּתִי אוֹתָם׃ טז כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת
 הַתְּבוּנָנוּ וְקִרְאוּ לַמְּקוֹנְנוֹת וּתְבוּאֵינָה וְאַל־תַּחֲכַמּוֹת שְׁלַחוּ
 וּתְבוּאֵנָה׃ יז וּתְמַהֲרֵנָה וּתְשַׁנְּנָה עָלֵינוּ נְהִי וּתְרַדְּנָה עֵינֵינוּ
 דְּמַעֵה וְעַפְעֵפֵינוּ יִזְלוּ־מּוֹם׃ יח כִּי קוֹל נְהִי נִשְׁמַע מִצִּיּוֹן
 אֵיךְ שִׁדְּדָנוּ בְּשָׁנוּ מְאֹד כִּי־עֲזַבְנוּ אֶרֶץ כִּי הַשְׁלִיכוּ
 מִשְׁכְּנוֹתֵינוּ׃ יט כִּי־שָׁמְעָנָה נָשִׁים דְּבַר־יְהוָה וּתְקַח אֲזַנְכֶם
 דְּבַר־פִּיו וּלְמַדְּנָה בְּנוֹתֵיכֶם נְהִי וְאַשָּׁה רְעוּתָה קִינָה׃
 כ כִּי־עָלָה מְוֹת בְּחַלּוּנֵינוּ בָּא בְּאַרְמְנוֹתֵינוּ לְהַכְרִית עוֹלָל
 מִחוּץ בְּחוּרִים מִרְחֻבוֹת׃ כא וַדְּבַר כֹּה נֹאֵם־יְהוָה וְנִפְלְאָה
 נִבְלַת הָאָדָם כְּדָמֵן עַל־פְּנֵי הַשָּׁדָה וּכְעַמִּיר מֵאַחֲרֵי
 הַקֶּצֶר וְאֵין מְאֹסֶף׃ כב כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה אֶל־יְתֹהֵלֵל חֶכֶם
 בְּחֻכְמָתוֹ וְאַל־יְתֹהֵלֵל הַגְּבוּר בַּגְּבוּרָתוֹ אֶל־יְתֹהֵלֵל עֲשִׂיר
 בְּעֲשָׂרוֹ׃ כג כִּי אִם־בָּזְאֵת יְתֹהֵלֵל הַמֵּתֹהֵלֵל הַשֶּׁפֶל וַיִּדְעַ
 אוֹתִי כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה עֹשֶׂה חֹסֵד מְשַׁפֵּט וְצַדִּיקָה בְּאֶרֶץ
 כִּי־בִאֵלָה חִפְצֵתִי נֹאֵם־יְהוָה׃

I am shattered; I am dejected, seized by desolation. ²²Is there no balm in Gilead? Can no physician be found? Why has healing not yet come to my poor people? ²³Oh, that my head were water, my eyes a fount of tears! Then would I weep day and night for the slain of my poor people.

9 Oh, to be in the desert, at an encampment for wayfarers! Oh, to leave my people, to go away from them— for they are all adulterers, a band of rogues. ²They bend their tongues like bows; they are valorous in the land for treachery, not for honesty; they advance from evil to evil. And they do not heed Me —declares the LORD. ³Beware, every man of his friend! Trust not even a brother! For every brother takes advantage, every friend is base in his dealings. ⁴One man cheats the other, they will not speak truth; they have trained their tongues to speak falsely; they wear themselves out working iniquity. ⁵You dwell in the midst of deceit. In their deceit, they refuse to heed Me —declares the LORD. ⁶Assuredly, thus said the LORD of Hosts: lo, I shall smelt and assay them—for what else can I do because of My poor people? ⁷Their tongue is a sharpened arrow, they use their mouths to deceive. One speaks to his fellow in friendship, but lays an ambush for him in his heart. ⁸Shall I not punish them for such deeds? Says the LORD— shall I not bring retribution on such a nation as this? ⁹For the mountains I take up weeping and wailing, for the pastures in the wilderness, a dirge. They are laid waste; no man passes through, and no sound of cattle is heard. Birds of the sky and beasts as well have fled and are gone. ¹⁰I will turn Jerusalem into rubble, into dens for jackals; and I will make the towns of Judah a desolation without inhabitants. ¹¹What man is so wise that he understands this? To whom has the LORD's mouth spoken, so that he can explain it: why is the land in ruins, laid waste like a wilderness, with none passing through? ¹²The LORD replied: because they forsook the teaching I had set before them. They did not obey Me and they did not follow it, ¹³but followed their own willful heart and followed the Baalim, as their fathers had taught them. ¹⁴Assuredly, thus said the LORD of Hosts, the God of Israel: I am going to feed

הַשְּׁבֵרְתִי קִדְרֹתַי שְׁמָה הַחֲזַקְתֵּנִי: כב הַצָּרִי אֵין בְּגִלְעָד
 אִם־רַפָּא אֵין שָׁם כִּי מִדֹּעַל לֹא עָלְתָה אַרְכַּת בַּת־עַמִּי:
 כג מִי־יִתֵּן רֹאשִׁי לְמַיִם וְעֵינַי מִקְּוֹר דְּמַעְיָה וְאַבְכָּה יוֹמָם
 וְלַיְלָה אֶת קַלְלִי בַת־עַמִּי:

פרק ט א מִי־יִתְּנֵנִי בַּמִּדְבָּר מְלוֹן אֲרָחִים וְאַעֲזֹבָה אֶת־עַמִּי
 וְאַלְכָה מֵאַתָּם כִּי כָלֶם מִנְּאַפִּים עֲצַרְתָּ בְּגֵדִים: ב וַיִּדְרֹכוּ
 אֶת־לְשׁוֹנָם כִּשְׁתֵּם שֶׁקֶר וְלֹא לְאַמוּנָה גָּבְרוּ בְּאַרְץ כִּי
 מִרְעָה אֶל־רַעָה ו יֵצְאוּ וְאֵתִי לֹא־יִדְעוּ נֹאֵם־יְהוָה: ג אִישׁ
 מִרְעָהוּ הַשְּׁמֵרוֹ וְעַל־כָּל־אֶחָ אֶל־תִּבְטְחוּ כִּי כָל־אֶחָ עֲקוּב
 יַעֲקֹב וְכָל־רַע רִכִּיל יִהְלֹךְ: ד וְאִישׁ בְּרֵעָהוּ יִתְּלֹו וְאַמַּת
 לֹא יִדְבְּרוּ לְמִדּוֹ לְשׁוֹנָם דְּבַר־שֶׁקֶר תַּעֲנֶה גְלוֹאוֹ:
 ה שְׁבַתְךָ בְּתוֹךְ מְרֻמָּה בְּמְרֻמָּה מֵאַנּוּי דַּעֲתֵדְאוּתִי
 נֹאֵם־יְהוָה: ו לָכֵן כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת הַנְּנִי צוֹרֶפֶס
 וּבַחֲנֻתִים כִּי־אֵיךְ אֶעֱשֶׂה מִפְּנֵי בַת־עַמִּי: ז תִּיץ שׁוֹט שְׁחוּט
 לְשׁוֹנָם מְרֻמָּה דְּבַר בְּפוֹי שְׁלוֹם אֶת־רֵעָהוּ יִדְבֵר וּבִקְרָבוֹ
 יִשִּׁים אֲרָבוֹ: ח תַּעֲלֵ־אֵלֶּה לֹא־אֶפְקֹד־כֶּם נֹאֵם־יְהוָה אִם
 בְּנוֹי אֲשֶׁר־כָּזְּוָה לֹא תִתְּנֶכֶם נַפְשֵׁי: ט עַל־הַהָרִים אֲשֶׁא
 בְּכִי וְנָחִי וְעַל־נְאוֹת מִדְּבַר קִינָה כִּי נִצַּתוּ מִבְּלִי־אִישׁ
 עֹבֵר וְלֹא שָׁמְעוּ קוֹל מִקְּנִיָה מֵעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וְעַד־בְּהֵמָה
 גִּדְּדוּ הִלְכוּ: י וְנִתְּתִי אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַם לְגֵלִים מֵעוֹן תַּנְּגִים
 וְאַתְדַּעְרִי יְהוּדָה אֶתֵּן שְׁמֹמָה מִבְּלִי יוֹשֵׁב: יא מִי־הָאִישׁ
 הַחֲכָם וַיִּבֶן אֶת־זֹאת וְאֲשֶׁר דְּבַר כִּי־יְהוָה אֱלֹוֹ וַיִּגְדֶּה
 עַל־מָה אֲבָדָה הָאָרֶץ נִצַּתָה כַּמִּדְבָּר מִבְּלִי עֹבֵר:
 יב וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה עַל־עֲזוֹכֶם אֶת־תּוֹרָתִי אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לְפָנֵיכֶם
 וְלֹא־שָׁמְעוּ בְּקוֹלִי וְלֹא־הִלְכוּ בְּהִ: יג וַיִּגְלְכוּ אַחֲרַי שְׁרָרוֹת
 לְכֶם וְאַחֲרַי הִבְעֵלִים אֲשֶׁר לְמִדּוֹם אַבוֹתֶם: יד לָכֵן
 כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הַנְּנִי מֵאַכִּילֶם

He let you hear His voice to discipline you; on earth He let you see His great fire; and from amidst that fire you heard His words. ³⁷And because He loved your fathers, He chose their heirs after them; He Himself,³ in His great might, led you out of Egypt, ³⁸to drive from your path nations greater and more populous than you, to take you into their land and assign it to you as a heritage, as is still the case. ³⁹Know therefore this day and keep in mind that the LORD alone is God in heaven above and on earth below; there is no other. ⁴⁰Observe His laws and commandments, which I enjoin upon you this day, that it may go well with you and your children after you, and that you may long remain in the land that the LORD your God is assigning to you for all time.

Haftarah for Shharit of Tisha Be'ab

Jeremiah 8:13 – 9:23

8¹³I will make an end of them—declares the LORD: no grapes left on the vine, no figs on the fig tree, the leaves all withered; Whatever I have given them is gone. ¹⁴Why are we sitting by? Let us gather into the fortified cities and meet our doom there. For the LORD our God has doomed us, He has made us drink a bitter draft, because we sinned against the LORD. ¹⁵We hoped for good fortune, but no happiness came; for a time of relief—instead there is terror! ¹⁶The snorting of their horses was heard from Dan; at the loud neighing of their steeds the whole land quaked. They came and devoured the land and what was in it, the towns and those who dwelt in them. ¹⁷Lo, I will send serpents against you, adders that cannot be charmed, and they shall bite you—declares the LORD. ¹⁸When in grief I would seek comfort, My heart is sick within me. ¹⁹“Is not the LORD in Zion? Is not her King within her? Why then did they anger Me with their images, with alien futilities?” Hark! The outcry of my poor people from the land far and wide: ²⁰“Harvest is past, summer is gone, but we have not been saved.” ²¹Because my people is shattered

³ Lit. “With His face (or Presence)”; cf. note at Exod. 33.14

השְׁמִיעֵנָה אֶת־קִלּוֹ לַיִסְרֵךְ וְעַל־הָאָרֶץ הִרְאֵךְ אֶת־אֲשׁוּ
 הַגְּדוּלָּה וּדְבַרְיוֹ שָׁמַעְתָּ מִתּוֹךְ הָאָשׁ׃ לו וְתַחַת כִּי אָהַב
 אֶת־אֲבֹתֶיךָ וַיִּבְחַר בְּזֶרְעוֹ אַחֲרָיו וַיּוֹצֵאֲךָ בְּכַחוֹ
 הַגְּדוֹל מִמִּצְרַיִם׃ לח לְהוֹרִישׁ גּוֹיִם גְּדוֹלִים וְעַצְמִים מִמֶּךָ
 מִפְּנֵיךָ לְהַבְיֵאֲךָ לְתַת־לֶךָ אֶת־אֲרָצָם נְחֻלָּה כַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה׃
 לט וַיַּדְעֵתָ הַיּוֹם וְהַשַּׁבָּת׃ אֶל־לְבָבְךָ כִּי יִהְיֶה הוּא
 הָאֱלֹהִים בַּשָּׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל וְעַל־הָאָרֶץ מִתַּחַת אֵין עוֹד׃
 מ וְשִׁמְרָתָ אֶת־חֻקָּיו וְאֶת־מִצְוֹתָיו אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוֶּךָ הַיּוֹם
 אֲשֶׁר יִיטָב לָךְ וּלְבָנֶיךָ אַחֲרָיִךְ וּלְמַעַן תִּאָּרִיךְ יָמִים
 עַל־הָאָדָמָה אֲשֶׁר יִהְיֶה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נִתֵּן לָךְ כָּל־תְּיָמָיִם׃

הפטרה לשחרית של תשעה באב

ירמיה ח: יג – ט: כג

יג אֶסְרָ אֶסִּיפָם נְאֻם־יְהוָה אֵין עֲנָבִים בְּנֶפֶן וְאֵין תְּאֵנִים
 בַּתְּאֵנָה וְהָעֵלֶה נָבֵל וְאֶתֵּן לָהֶם יַעֲבְרוּם׃ יד עַל־מָה
 אֲנַחֲנוּ יוֹשְׁבֵי הָאָסּוֹפּוֹ וְנִבְּוֵא אֶל־עָרֵי הַמִּבְצָר וְנִדְּמָה־שָׁמַיִם
 כִּי יִהְיֶה אֱלֹהֵינוּ הַדְּמֹנוּ וַיִּשְׁקֶנוּ מִי־רֹאשׁ כִּי חֲטֵאֵנוּ
 לִיְהוָה׃ טו קִנְיָה לְשָׁלוֹם וְאֵין טוֹב לָעֵת מִרְפָּח וְהִנֵּה
 בְּעַתָּה׃ טז מִדָּן נִשְׁמַע נַחֲרַת סוּסָיו מִקּוֹל מִצְחָלוֹת
 אֲבִירָיו רָעָשָׁה כָּל־הָאָרֶץ וַיִּבְּאוּ וַיִּיאָכְלוּ אֶרֶץ וּמְלוֹאָהָ
 עִיר וַיִּשְׁבִּי בָּהּ׃ יז כִּי הִנְנִי מְשַׁלַּח בְּכֶם נַחֲשִׁים צַפְעָנִים
 אֲשֶׁר אֵין־לָהֶם לַחַשׁ וְנִשְׁכּוּ אֶתְכֶם נְאֻם־יְהוָה׃
 יח מִבְּלִיגִיתִי עָלַי וְגִזּוֹן עָלַי לְבִי דָגִי׃ יט הִנֵּה־קוֹל שׁוֹעֵת
 בַּת־עַמִּי מֵאָרֶץ מִרְחֻקִים תִּיהְיֶה אֵין בְּצִיּוֹן אִם־מִלְכָּה
 אֵין בָּהּ מִדּוּעַ הַכְּעִסוֹנִי בַּפְּסִלִיָּהם בַּחֲבִלֵי נֶכֶר׃ כ עָבַר
 קֶצֶיר כָּלָה גִּזּוֹן וְאֲנַחֲנוּ לֹא נוֹשְׁעָנוּ׃ כא עַל־שֶׁבַר בַּת־עַמִּי

Torah Reading for Shahrit Tisha Be'ab

Deuteronomy 4:25-40

²⁵When you have begotten children and children's children and are long established in the land, should you act wickedly and make for yourselves a sculptured image in any likeness, causing the LORD your God displeasure and vexation, ²⁶I call heaven and earth this day to witness against you that you shall soon perish from the land that you are crossing the Jordan to possess; you shall not long endure in it, but shall be utterly wiped out. ²⁷The LORD will scatter you among the peoples, and only a scant few of you shall be left among the nations to which the LORD will drive you. ²⁸There you will serve man-made gods of wood and stone, that cannot see or hear or eat or smell.

²⁹But if you search there for the LORD your God, you will find Him, if only you seek Him with all your heart and soul—³⁰when you are in distress because all these things have befallen you and, in the end, return to the LORD your God and obey Him. ³¹For the LORD your God is a compassionate God: He will not fail you nor will He let you perish; He will not forget the covenant which He made on oath with your fathers.

³²You have but to inquire about bygone ages that came before you, ever since God created man on earth, from one end of heaven to the other: has anything as grand as this ever happened, or has its like ever been known? ³³Has any people heard the voice of a god speaking out of a fire, as you have, and survived? ³⁴Or has any god ventured to go and take for himself one nation from the midst of another by prodigious acts, by signs and portents, by war, by a mighty and an outstretched arm and awesome power, as the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your very eyes? ³⁵⁻²It has been clearly demonstrated to you² that the LORD alone is God; there is none beside Him. ³⁶From the heavens

²⁻² Lit. "You have been shown to know"

קריאת התורה לשחרית תשעה באב

דברים ד, כה-מ

כה כִּי-תוֹלִיד בָּנִים וּבָנֵי בָנִים וְנוֹשְׁנֹתֶם בְּאֶרֶץ וְהִשְׁחַתֶּם
 וְעַשִּׂיתֶם פֶּסֶל תְּמוּנַת כָּל וְעַשִּׂיתֶם חָרֵעַ בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה-
 אֱלֹהֵיךָ לְהַכְעִיֶסוּ: כו הַעִידֹתִי בְכֶם הַיּוֹם אֶת-הַשָּׁמַיִם
 וְאֶת-הָאָרֶץ כִּי-אֲבֹד תֵּאבְדוּן מִהָרַ מֵעַל הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר
 אִתֶּם עֲבָרִים אֶת-הַיַּרְדֵּן שָׁמָּה לְרַשְׁתָּהּ לֹא-תֵאָרֶכְן יָמִים
 עָלֶיךָ כִּי הַשָּׁמַד תִּשְׁמְדוּן: כז וְהִפְיִץ יְהוָה אֶתְכֶם בְּעַמִּים
 וְנִשְׁאַרְתֶּם מְתֵי מִסְפָּר בְּגוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר יִנְהַג יְהוָה אֶתְכֶם
 שָׁמָּה: כח וְעַבְדֹתֶם-שָׁם אֱלֹהִים מַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵי אָדָם עֵץ וְאֶבֶן
 אֲשֶׁר לֹא-יִרְאוּן וְלֹא יִשְׁמְעוּן וְלֹא יֵאָכְלוּן וְלֹא יִרְיֹחוּ:
 כט וּבִקְשֹׁתֶם מִשָּׁם אֶת-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיךָ וּמִצָּאתָ כִּי תִדְרָשְׁנוּ
 בְּכָל-לְבָבְךָ וּבְכָל-נַפְשְׁךָ: (לוי) ל בַּצָּר לָךְ וּמִצָּאוֹךָ כָּל
 הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים וְשִׁבְתָּ עַד-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיךָ
 וְשָׁמַעְתָּ בְּקוֹלוֹ: לא כִּי אֵל רַחוּם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיךָ לֹא יִרְפֶּךָ
 וְלֹא יִשְׁחִיתֶךָ וְלֹא יִשְׁפַח אֶת-בְּרִית אֲבֹתֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע
 לָהֶם: לב כִּי שָׁאֵל-נָא לְיָמִים רֵאשִׁנִּים אֲשֶׁר-הָיוּ לְפָנֶיךָ
 לְמִן-הַיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים | אָדָם עַל-הָאָרֶץ וּלְמִקְצֵה
 הַשָּׁמַיִם וְעַד-קִצָּה הַשָּׁמַיִם הִנֵּהיָה כַּדָּבָר הַגְּדוֹל הַזֶּה או
 הַנִּשְׁמָע כַּמֵּהוּ: לג הִשְׁמַע עָם קוֹל אֱלֹהִים מִדְּבַר
 מִתּוֹךְ-הָאֵשׁ כַּאֲשֶׁר-שָׁמַעְתָּ אֵתָה וַיָּחִי: לד או | הַנִּסְתָּה
 אֱלֹהִים לָבוֹא לְקַחַת לּוֹ גוֹי מִקְרֵב גוֹי בְּמִסְפַּת בְּאֵתָת
 וּבְמוֹפְתִים וּבְמִלְחָמָה וּבְיַד חֲזָקָה וּבְזִרְעֵ נְטוּיָה
 וּבְמוֹרָאִים גְּדֹלִים כָּכֵל אֲשֶׁר-עָשָׂה לָכֶם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם
 בְּמִצְרַיִם לְעֵינֶיךָ: לה אֵתָה הָרֵאָתָה לְדַעַת כִּי יְהוָה הוּא
 הָאֱלֹהִים אֲיוֹן עוֹד מִלְּבָדוֹ: (ישראל) לו מִן-הַשָּׁמַיִם

Woe to us that we have sinned! ¹⁷Because of this our hearts are sick, because of these our eyes are dimmed: ¹⁸Because of Mount Zion, which lies desolate; jackals prowl over it. ¹⁹But You, O LORD, are enthroned forever, Your throne endures through the ages. ²⁰Why have You forgotten us utterly, forsaken us for all time? ²¹Take us back, O LORD, to Yourself, and let us come back; renew our days as of old! ²²For truly, You have rejected us, bitterly raged against us.

And repeat the verse: Take us back, O LORD, to Yourself, and let us come back; renew our days as of old!

Psalm 137

137 By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat, sat and wept, as we thought of Zion. ²There on the poplars we hung up our lyres, ³for our captors asked us there for songs, our tormentors, for amusement, “Sing us one of the songs of Zion.” ⁴How can we sing a song of the LORD on alien soil? ⁵If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither; ⁶let my tongue stick to my palate if I cease to think of you, if I do not keep Jerusalem in memory even at my happiest hour. ⁷Remember, O LORD, against the Edomites the day of Jerusalem’s fall; how they cried, “Strip her, strip her to her very foundations!” ⁸Fair Babylon, you predator, a blessing on him who repays you in kind what you have inflicted on us; ⁹a blessing on him who seizes your babies and dashes them against the rocks!

אֲוִינָא לָנוּ כִּי חָטְאֵנוּ: יז עַל־זֶה הָיָה דְרוֹחַ לְבָנוּ עַל־אַלֶּה
 חָשְׁכוּ עֵינֵינוּ: יח עַל הַר־צִיּוֹן שְׁשָׁמִים שְׁוַעְלִים הִלְכוּ־בוֹ:
 יט אַתָּה יְהוָה לְעוֹלָם תֵּשֵׁב כְּסֹאֲךָ לְדוֹר וָדוֹר: כ לָמָּה
 לְנֹצַח תִּשְׁכַּחֲנוּ תַעֲזֹבֵנוּ לְאַרְךָ יָמִים: כא הַשִּׁיבֵנוּ יְהוָה |
 אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְנִשׁוּבָה חֲדָשׁ יְמֵינוּ כְּקֶדֶם: כב כִּי אִם־מָאֵס
 מֵאִסְתָּנוּ קָצַפְתָּ עָלֵינוּ עַד־מְאֹד:

וחזורים על הפסוק: הַשִּׁיבֵנוּ יְהוָה | אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְנִשׁוּבָה חֲדָשׁ יְמֵינוּ
 כְּקֶדֶם:

תהלים קל"ז¹

א עַל נְהָרוֹת | בְּכָל שָׁם יִשְׁבְּנוּ גַם־בְּכֵינוּ בְּזִכְרֵנוּ
 אֶת־צִיּוֹן: ב על־עַרְבִים בְּתוֹכָהּ תִּלְיֵנוּ כְּנֵרוֹתֵינוּ: ג כִּי שָׁם
 שְׁאַלֵנוּ שׁוֹבֵינוּ דְבַר־יִשִׁיר וְתוֹלְלֵינוּ שְׁמַחָה שִׁירוֹ לָנוּ
 מִשִׁיר צִיּוֹן: ד אֵיךְ נָשִׁיר אֶת־שִׁיר־יְהוָה עַל אֲדָמַת נֶכֶר:
 ה אִם־אֲשַׁכַּח יְרוּשָׁלַם תִּשְׁכַּח יְמֵינִי: ו תִּדְבַּק־לְשׁוֹנִי |
 לְחֶכְמִי אִם־לֹא אֶזְכְּרֶכִי אִם־לֹא אֶעֱלֶה אֶת־יְרוּשָׁלַם עַל
 רֹאשׁ שְׂמֹחָתִי: ז זָכַר יְהוָה | לְבָנֵי אֲדוֹם אֵת יוֹם יְרוּשָׁלַם
 הַנְּאֻמְרִים עָרוּ | עָרוּ עַד הִיסוּד בָּהּ: ח בַּת־בְּבֹל הַשְּׂדוּדָה
 אֲשֶׁרִי שִׁישָׁלֶם־לָךְ אֶת־גְּמוּלָךְ שְׁנַמְלֶתָ לָנוּ: ט אֲשֶׁרִי |
 שִׂיאֲחֹז וּנְפִיץ אֶת־עַלְלֶיךָ אֶל־הַסִּלְעַ:

¹ A commentary on Psalm 137 is found on page 25

blindly through the streets, defiled with blood, so that no one was able to touch their garments. ¹⁵“Away! Unclean!” people shouted at them, “Away! Away! Touch not!” so they wandered and wandered again; for the nations had resolved: “they shall stay here no longer.” ¹⁶The LORD’s countenance has turned away from them, He will look on them no more. They showed no regard for priests, no favor to elders. ¹⁷Even now our eyes pine away in vain for deliverance. As we waited, still we wait for a nation that cannot help. ¹⁸Our steps were checked, we could not walk in our squares. our doom is near, our days are done—alas, our doom has come! ¹⁹Our pursuers were swifter than the eagles in the sky; they chased us in the mountains, lay in wait for us in the wilderness. ²⁰The breath of our life, the LORD’s anointed, was captured in their traps—He in whose shade we had thought to live among the nations. ²¹Rejoice and exult, Fair Edom, who dwell in the land of Uz! To you, too, the cup shall pass, you shall get drunk and expose your nakedness. ²²Your iniquity, Fair Zion, is expiated; He will exile you no longer. Your iniquity, Fair Edom, He will note; He will uncover your sins.

5 Remember, O LORD, what has befallen us; behold, and see our disgrace! ²Our heritage has passed to aliens, our homes to strangers. ³We have become orphans, fatherless; our mothers are like widows. ⁴We must pay to drink our own water, obtain our own kindling at a price. ⁵We are hotly pursued; exhausted, we are given no rest. ⁶We hold out a hand to Egypt; to Assyria, for our fill of bread. ⁷Our fathers sinned and are no more; and we must bear their guilt. ⁸Slaves are ruling over us, with none to rescue us from them. ⁹We get our bread at the peril of our lives, because of the sword of the wilderness. ¹⁰Our skin glows like an oven, with the fever of famine. ¹¹They have ravished women in Zion, maidens in the towns of Judah. ¹²Princes have been hanged by them; no respect has been shown to elders. ¹³Young men must carry millstones, and youths stagger under loads of wood. ¹⁴The old men are gone from the gate, the young men from their music. ¹⁵Gone is the joy of our hearts; our dancing is turned into mourning. ¹⁶The crown has fallen from our head;

עוֹרִים בְּחוּצוֹת נִנְאָלוּ בַדָּם בָּלֵא יוֹכְלוּ יִגְעוּ בְלִבְשֵׁיהֶם:
 טו סוֹרוּ טָמֵא קָרְאוּ לָמוּ סוֹרוּ סוֹרוּ אֶל־תִּגְעוּ כִּי נָצוּ
 גַם־גְּעוּ אָמְרוּ בַגּוֹזִים לֹא יוֹסְפוּ לָגוֹר: טז פָּנֵי יְהוָה חִלְקָם
 לֹא יוֹסִיף לְהַבִּיטֵם פָּנֵי כַהֲנִים לֹא נָשְׂאוּ וּזְקֵנִים לֹא חֲנָנוּ:
 יז עוֹדִינוּ תִּכְלִינָה עֵינֵינוּ אֶל־עֲזָרְתָנוּ הַכֹּל בְּצַפִּיתָנוּ
 צָפִינוּ אֶל־גּוֹי לֹא יוֹשֵׁעַ: יח צָרוּ צָעֲדֵינוּ מִלְּקַת בְּרַחֲבֵתֵינוּ
 קָרַב קִצְנוּ מִלְּאוּ יָמֵינוּ כִּי־בֹא קִצְנוּ: יט קָלִים הָיוּ
 רַדְפֵינוּ מִנְּשָׂרֵי שָׁמַיִם עַל־הַהָרִים דִּלְקָנוּ בַּמִּדְבָּר אָרְבוּ
 לָנוּ: כ רוח אֶפְיֵנוּ מְשִׁיחַ יְהוָה נִלְכַּד בַּשְּׁחִיתוֹתֶם אֲשֶׁר
 אָמְרָנוּ בְּצִלּוֹ נַחֲנָה בַגּוֹזִים: כא שִׁישִׁי וּשְׂמֹחִי בַת־אֱדוֹם
 יוֹשֶׁבֶת בְּאַרְץ עֹזֵן גַּם־עָלֶיךָ תַעֲבֹר־פּוֹס תִּשְׁכַּרִי
 וְתִתְעַרְרִי: כב תַּם־עוֹנֶךָ בַת־צִיּוֹן לֹא יוֹסִיף לְהַגְלוֹתְךָ פֶּקֶד
 עוֹנֶךָ בַת־אֱדוֹם גְּלָה עַל־חַטֹּאתֶיךָ:

פרק ה

א זָכַר יְהוָה מַחֲתֶינָה לָנוּ הַבִּיטָה וּרְאָה אֶת־חַרְפֵּתָנוּ:
 ב נִחַלְתָנוּ נִחַפְכָה לְזָרִים בַּתֵּינוּ לְנֹכָרִים: ג יְתוּמִים הָיִינוּ
 וְאֵין אָב אִמֹתֵינוּ כְּאִלְמָנוֹת: ד מִיָּמֵינוּ בְּכֶסֶף שְׁתֵּינוּ עֲצִינוּ
 בַּמַּחִיר יָבֵאוּ: ה עַל צוֹאֲרֵנוּ נִרְדְּפָנוּ יִגְעָנוּ וְלֹא הוֹנַח־לָנוּ:
 ו מַצְרִים נִתְּנוּ יָד אֲשׁוּר לְשַׁבַּע לָחֶם: ז אֲבַתֵּינוּ חָטְאוּ
 וְאִינָם וְאִנְחָנוּ עוֹנֵתֵיהֶם סִבְּלָנוּ: ח עֲבָדִים מְשָׁלוּ בָנוּ פֶרֶק
 אֵין מִיָּדָם: ט בְּנַפְשֵׁנוּ נִבְיָא לְחַמְנוּ מִפָּנֵי חֶרֶב הַמִּדְבָּר:
 י עוֹרְנוּ כַתְנוּר נִכְמְרוּ מִפָּנֵי זַלְעָפוֹת רָעֵב: יא נָשִׁים
 בְּצִיּוֹן עָנּוּ בַת־לֵת בְּעָרֵי יְהוּדָה: יב שָׂרִים בְּיָדָם נָתְלוּ פָנֵי
 זְקֵנִים לֹא נִתְהַדְּרוּ: יג בְּחוּרִים טָחוּן נָשְׂאוּ וּנְעָרִים בְּעֵץ
 כְּשָׁלוּ: יד זְקֵנִים מְשַׁעַר שְׁבָתוֹ בְּחוּרִים מוֹנִינֵתָם: טו שְׁבַת
 מְשׁוּשׁ לִפְנוּ נִחַפְדָּ לְאֶבֶל מַחֲלָנוּ: טז נִפְלָה עֲטָרַת רֹאשֵׁנוּ

O LORD, the wrong done me; oh, vindicate my right! ⁶⁰You have seen all their malice, all their designs against me; ⁶¹You have heard, O LORD, their taunts, all their designs against me, ⁶²The mouthings and pratings of my adversaries against me all day long. ⁶³See how, at their ease or at work, I am the butt of their gibes. ⁶⁴Give them, O LORD, their deserts according to their deeds. ⁶⁵Give them anguish of heart; Your curse be upon them! ⁶⁶Oh, pursue them in wrath and destroy them from under the heavens of the LORD!

4 Alas! The gold is dulled, debased the finest gold! The sacred gems are spilled at every street corner. ²The precious children of Zion; once valued as gold—alas, they are accounted as earthen pots, work of a potter's hands! ³Even jackals offer the breast and suckle their young; but my poor people has turned cruel, like ostriches of the desert. ⁴The tongue of the suckling cleaves to its palate for thirst. Little children beg for bread; none gives them a morsel. ⁵Those who feasted on dainties lie famished in the streets; those who were reared in purple have embraced refuse heaps. ⁶The guilt of my poor people exceeded the iniquity of Sodom, which was overthrown in a moment, without a hand striking it. ⁷Her elect were purer than snow, whiter than milk; their limbs were ruddier than coral, their bodies were like sapphire. ⁸Now their faces are blacker than soot, they are not recognized in the streets; their skin has shriveled on their bones, it has become dry as wood. ⁹Better off were the slain of the sword than those slain by famine, who pined away, [as though] wounded, for lack of the fruits of the field. ¹⁰With their own hands, tenderhearted women have cooked their children; such became their fare, in the disaster of my poor people.

¹¹The LORD vented all His fury, poured out His blazing wrath; He kindled a fire in Zion which consumed its foundations. ¹²The kings of the earth did not believe, nor any of the inhabitants of the world, that foe or adversary could enter the gates of Jerusalem. ¹³It was for the sins of her prophets, the iniquities of her priests, who had shed in her midst the blood of the just. ¹⁴They wandered

יְהוָה עֲנֹתָתִי שְׁפֹטָה מִשְׁפָּטִי: ^ס רְאִיתָהּ כָּל־נִקְמָתָם
 כָּל־מִחְשָׁבֹתָם לִי: ^{סא} שָׁמַעְתָּ חֲרָפְתָם יְהוָה כָּל־מִחְשָׁבֹתָם
 עָלַי: ^{סב} שִׁפְתֵי קָמוּ וְהִגִּיזוּם עָלַי כָּל־הַיּוֹם: ^{סג} שִׁבְתָם
 וְקִימָתָם הִבִּיטָה אֲנִי מִגְּנִינֹתָם: ^{סד} תָּשִׁיב לָהֶם גְּמוּלָה יְהוָה
 כְּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיהֶם: ^{סה} תִּתֵּן לָהֶם מִגְּנֹת־לֵב תִּאֲלָתֶיךָ לָהֶם:
^{סו} תִּרְדָּף בְּאֶרֶץ וְתִשְׁמַדֵּם מִתַּחַת שָׁמַיִם יְהוָה:

פרק ד

א אֵיכָה יוּעַם זָהָב יִשְׁנֹא הַכֶּתֶם הַטּוֹב תִּשְׁתַּפְּכֶנָּה
 אֲבֵי־קָדֶשׁ בְּרֹאשׁ כָּל־חֻצּוֹת: ^ב בְּנֵי צִיּוֹן הִיקָרִים
 הַמְּסֻלָּאִים בַּפּוֹ אֵיכָה נִחְשְׁבוּ לְנִבְלֵי־חָרָשׁ מַעֲשֵׂה יָדֵי
 יוֹצֵר: ^ג גַּם־תַּנִּים חֲלָצוּ שָׂדֵי הַיַּיִקוּ גּוּרֵיהֶן בַּת־עַמִּי
 לְאֶכְזָר כְּעֵגִים בַּמִּדְבָּר: ^ד דָּבַק לְשׁוֹן יוֹנֵק אֶל־חִפּוֹ
 בַּצֹּמָא עוֹלָלִים שָׁאֲלוּ לָחֶם פָּרֵשׁ אֵין לָהֶם: ^ה הֶאֱכָלִים
 לְמַעַדְנִים נִשְׁמוּ בְּחֻצּוֹת הָאֱמָנִים עָלַי תוֹלַע חֲבָקוּ
 אֲשַׁפְּתוֹת: ^ו וַיִּגְדְּלוּ עֵינֵן בַּת־עַמִּי מִחֲטָאת סֶדֶם הַהַפּוּכָה
 כְּמוֹ־רִנֶּע וְלֹא־חֲלוּ בָּהּ יָדַיִם: ^ז זָכּוּ נְזִירֶיהָ מִשְׁלַג צַחוֹ
 מִחֶלֶב אֲדָמוּ עֵצִים מִפְּנִינִים סִפִּיר גִּזְרָתָם: ^ח חֲשֵׁךְ מִשְׁחֹר
 תֵּאֲלֶם לֹא נִכְרוּ בְּחֻצּוֹת צָפַד עוֹרֶם עַל־עַצְמָם יָבֵשׁ
 הִנֵּה כְּעֵץ: ^ט טוֹבִים הָיוּ חֲלָלֵי־חָרָב מִחֲלָלֵי רַעֲב שֶׁהֵם
 יָזְבוּ מִדְּקָרִים מִתְנוּבֹת שְׂדֵי: ^י יָדֵי נָשִׁים רַחֲמַנִּיּוֹת בִּשְׁלוּ
 וַלְדֵיהֶן הָיוּ לְבָרוֹת לָמוּ בְּשֹׁבֵר בַּת־עַמִּי: ^{יא} כָּלָה יְהוָה
 אֶת־חֲמָתוֹ שִׁפְךָ חֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ וַיִּצְתָּאֵשׁ בְּצִיּוֹן וַתֹּאכַל
 יְסֻדְתֶּיהָ: ^{יב} יֵב לֹא הָאֱמִינוּ מַלְכֵי־אַרְץ כָּל יִשְׁבֵי תִבְלַת
 כִּי יָבֹא צָר וְאוֹיֵב בְּשַׁעְרֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם: ^{יג} מִחֲטָאת נְבִיאֶיהָ
 עֲוֹת כְּחַגִּיחַ הַשִּׁפְכִים בְּקַרְבָּה בָּם צִדִיקִים: ^{יד} נָעוּ

²¹But this do I call to mind, therefore I have hope: ²²The kindness of the LORD has not ended, His mercies are not spent. ²³They are renewed every morning—ample is Your grace! ²⁴“The LORD is my portion,” I say with full heart; therefore will I hope in Him. ²⁵The LORD is good to those who trust in Him, to the one who seeks Him; ²⁶It is good to wait patiently till rescue comes from the LORD. ²⁷It is good for a man, when young, to bear a yoke; ²⁸Let him sit alone and be patient, when He has laid it upon him. ²⁹Let him put his mouth to the dust—there may yet be hope. ³⁰Let him offer his cheek to the smiter; let him be surfeited with mockery. ³¹For the Lord does not reject forever, ³²But first afflicts, then pardons in His abundant kindness. ³³For He does not willfully bring grief or affliction to man, ³⁴Crushing under His feet all the prisoners of the earth. ³⁵To deny a man his rights in the presence of the Most High, ³⁶To wrong a man in his cause—this the Lord does not choose. ³⁷Whose decree was ever fulfilled, unless the Lord willed it? ³⁸Is it not at the word of the Most High, that weal and woe befall? ³⁹Of what shall a living man complain? Each one of his own sins!

⁴⁰Let us search and examine our ways, and turn back to the LORD; ⁴¹Let us lift up our hearts with our hands to God in heaven: ⁴²We have transgressed and rebelled, and You have not forgiven. ⁴³You have clothed Yourself in anger and pursued us, You have slain without pity. ⁴⁴You have screened Yourself off with a cloud, that no prayer may pass through. ⁴⁵You have made us filth and refuse in the midst of the peoples. ⁴⁶All our enemies loudly rail against us. ⁴⁷Panic and pitfall are our lot, death and destruction. ⁴⁸My eyes shed streams of water over the ruin of my poor people.

⁴⁹My eyes shall flow without cease, without respite, ⁵⁰Until the LORD looks down and beholds from heaven. ⁵¹My eyes have brought me grief over all the maidens of my city. ⁵²My foes have snared me like a bird, without any cause. ⁵³They have ended my life in a pit and cast stones at me. ⁵⁴Waters flowed over my head; I said: I am lost!

⁵⁵I have called on Your name, O LORD, from the depths of the Pit. ⁵⁶Hear my plea; do not shut Your ear to my groan, to my cry! ⁵⁷You have ever drawn nigh when I called You; You have said, “Do not fear!” ⁵⁸You championed my cause, O Lord, You have redeemed my life. ⁵⁹You have seen,

כא זאת אָשִׁיב אֶל־לִבִּי עַל־כֵּן אוֹחִיל: כב חֲסָדֵי יְהוָה כִּי
 לֹא־תִמְנּוּ כִּי לֹא־כָלוּ רַחֲמָיו: כג חֲדָשִׁים לְבַקְרִים רַבָּה
 אֲמוֹנַתְךָ: כד חֲלָקִי יְהוָה אֲמַרְהָ נַפְשִׁי עַל־כֵּן אוֹחִיל לֹו:
 כה טוֹב יְהוָה לִקְנוֹ לְנַפְשׁ תְּדַרְשָׁנּוּ: כו טוֹב וַיְחִיל וְדוֹמָם
 לְתַשׁוּעַת יְהוָה: כז טוֹב לְגֹבֵר כִּי־יִשָּׂא עַל בְּנֵעוּרָיו:
 כח יֵשֵׁב בְּדָד וַיִּדָּם כִּי נָטַל עָלָיו: כט יִתֵּן בַּעֲפָר פִּיהוּ
 אוֹלֵי יֵשׁ תִּקְנֶה: ל יִתֵּן לְמִכְחוֹ לְחֵי יִשָּׁבַע בְּחַרְפָּה: לא כִּי
 לֹא יִזְנַח לְעוֹלָם אֲדֹנָי: לב כִּי אִם־הוֹנָה וְרַחֵם כָּרַב
 חֲסָדָיו: לג כִּי לֹא עָנָה מִלִּבּוֹ וַיִּנְחָה בְּיַד־אִישׁ: לד לְדַכֵּא
 תַּחַת רַגְלָיו כֹּל אֲסִירֵי אֶרֶץ: לה לְהַטּוֹת מִשְׁפַּט־גֹּבֵר נֹגֵד
 פָּנָיו עָלְיוֹן: לו לְעֵגוֹת אָדָם בְּרִיבּוֹ אֲדֹנָי לֹא רָאָה: לז מִי
 זֶה אָמַר וַתְּהִי אֲדֹנָי לֹא צָנָה: לח מִפִּי עָלְיוֹן לֹא תִצָּא
 הַרְעוֹת וְהַטּוֹב: לט מִה־יִתְאוּנֵן אָדָם חָי גֹבֵר עַל־חַטָּאוֹ:
 מ נַחֲפָשָׁה דָרְכֵינוּ וַנַּחֲלָקְהָ וַנִּשְׁוֹבָה עַד־יְהוָה: מא נִשָּׂא
 לְבַבְנוּ אֶל־כַּפָּיִם אֶל־אֵל בְּשָׁמַיִם: מב נַחֲנוּ פִשְׁעֵנוּ וּמְרִינוּ
 אַתָּה לֹא סָלַחְתָּ: מג סִפּוֹתָהּ בָּאֶרֶץ וַתִּרְדְּפֵנוּ תִרְגַּף לֹא
 חָמְלָתָּ: מד סִפּוֹתָהּ בָּעָנָן לֵךְ מִעֲבוֹר תִּפְלָה: מה סִחֵי
 וּמְאוֹס תְּשִׁימוּנוּ בְּקִרְבַּ הַעַמִּים: מו פָּצוּ עָלֵינוּ פִּיָּהֶם
 כָּל־אֵיבֵינוּ: מז פָּחַד וּפַחַת תָּהָה לָנוּ חַשְׁאֵת וַחֲשָׁבָר:
 מח פִּלְגֵי־מִיִּם תִּרְדַּ עֵינָי עַל־שָׁבָר בַּת־עַמִּי: מט עֵינָי נִגְרָה
 וְלֹא תִדְמָה מֵאֵין הַפְּגוֹת: נ עד־יִשְׁקוֹף וְיֵרָא יְהוָה
 מִשָּׁמַיִם: נא עֵינָי עוֹלָלָה לְנַפְשִׁי מִכָּל בְּנוֹת עִירֵי: נב צוֹד
 צְרוּנֵי פִצְפוֹר אֵיבֵי חַנּוּם: נג צָמְתוּ בְבוֹר חֲלֵי וַיִּדּוּ־אֶבֶן
 בֵּי: נד צָפוּ־מַיִם עַל־רֹאשֵׁי אֲמַרְתִּי נִגְרַתִּי: נה קָרָאתִי
 שְׁמוֹךְ יְהוָה מִבוֹר תַּחֲתִיּוֹת: נו קוֹלִי שָׁמַעְתָּ אֶל־תַּעֲלֵם
 אֲזַנְךָ לְרוֹחַתִּי לְשׁוּעָתִי: נז קָרַבְתָּ בָּנוּם אֲקַרְאֲךָ אֲמַרְתָּ
 אֶל־תִּירָא: נח רַבַּת אֲדֹנָי רִיבֵי נַפְשִׁי גָאַלְתָּ חַיִּי: נט רְאִיתָה

you, has exalted the might of your enemies. ¹⁸Their heart cried out to the Lord. O wall of Fair Zion, shed tears like a torrent day and night! Give yourself no respite, your eyes no rest. ¹⁹Arise, cry out in the night at the beginning of the watches, pour out your heart like water in the presence of the Lord! Lift up your hands to Him for the life of your infants, who faint for hunger at every street corner.

²⁰See, O LORD, and behold, to whom You have done this! Alas, women eat their own fruit, their new-born babes! Alas, priest and prophet are slain in the Sanctuary of the Lord! ²¹Prostrate in the streets lie both young and old. My maidens and youths are fallen by the sword; You slew them on Your day of wrath, You slaughtered without pity. ²²You summoned, as on a festival, my neighbors from roundabout. On the day of the wrath of the LORD, none survived or escaped; those whom I bore and reared my foe has consumed.

3 I am the man who has known affliction under the rod of His wrath; ²Me He drove on and on in unrelieved darkness; ³On none but me He brings down His hand again and again, without cease. ⁴He has worn away my flesh and skin; He has shattered my bones. ⁵All around me He has built misery and hardship; ⁶He has made me dwell in darkness, like those long dead. ⁷He has walled me in and I cannot break out; He has weighed me down with chains. ⁸And when I cry and plead, He shuts out my prayer; ⁹He has walled in my ways with hewn blocks, He has made my paths a maze.

¹⁰He is a lurking bear to me, a lion in hiding; ¹¹He has forced me off my way and mangled me, He has left me numb. ¹²He has bent His bow and made me the target of His arrows: ¹³He has shot into my vitals the shafts of His quiver. ¹⁴I have become a laughingstock to all people, the butt of their gibes all day long. ¹⁵He has filled me with bitterness, sated me with wormwood.

¹⁶He has broken my teeth on gravel, has ground me into the dust. ¹⁷My life was bereft of peace, I forgot what happiness was. ¹⁸I thought my strength and hope had perished before the LORD. ¹⁹To recall my distress and my misery was wormwood and poison; ²⁰Whenever I thought of them, I was bowed low.

עֲלִיךָ אוֹיֵב הַרִים קָרַן צָרִיךְ: י' צָעַק לָבָם אֶל־אֲדֹנָי
 חוֹמַת בַּת־צִיּוֹן הוֹרִידִי כַגְחַל דְּמַעַח יוֹמָם וְלַיְלָה
 אֶל־תִּתְּנִי פוֹגַת לֶךְ אֶל־תִּתְּנִים בַּת־עֵינֶיךָ: י"ט קוֹמִי וְרִנִּי
 בְּלִילָה לְרֹאשׁ אֲשֶׁמְרוֹת שָׁכְנֵי כַמּוֹם לְבֶךְ נֹכַח פְּנֵי אֲדֹנָי
 שָׂאִי אֲלֵיו כַּפְיֶךָ עַל־נַפְשׁ עוֹלְלֶיךָ הַעֲטוּפִים בְּרָעַב
 בְּרֹאשׁ כָּל־חוּצוֹת: כ' רֹאֵה יְהוָה וְחַבֵּיטָה לְמִי עוֹלְלָתָ כֹּה
 אִם־תֹּאכְלֶנָּה נַשִּׁים פְּרִים עֲלֵלֵי טַפְחִים אִם־יִהְרַג בְּמַקְדָּשׁ
 אֲדֹנָי כִּתְּן וְנָבִיא: כא' שָׁכְבוּ לְאֶרֶץ חוּצוֹת גַּעַר וְזִמְן
 בְּתוֹלְתֵי וּבְחוּרֵי נָפְלוּ בְּחָרֵב הַרְגֵתָ בְּיוֹם אַפְךָ טַבַּחְתָּ לֹא
 חֲמַלְתָּ: כב' תִּקְרָא כְיוֹם מוֹעֵד מְגוּרֵי מִסְבִּיב וְלֹא הָיָה
 בְּיוֹם אַף־יְהוָה פָּלִיט וְשָׁרִיד אֲשֶׁר־טַבַּחְתִּי וְרַבִּיתִי אֵיבִי
 כָּלָם:

פרק נ

א' אָנִי הַגִּבֹּר רֹאֵה עֵנִי בְּשֹׁבֵט עֲבָרְתוֹ: ב' אוֹתִי נָתַג וַיִּלְךְ
 חֲשֵׁךְ וְלֹא־אוֹר: ג' אָךְ בִּי יָשַׁב נְהַפֵּךְ יָדוֹ כָּל־הַיּוֹם: ד' בָּלָה
 בְּשָׂרִי וְעוֹרֵי שֹׁפֵר עֲצֻמוֹתַי: ה' בָּנָה עָלַי וַיִּקַּף רֹאשׁ
 וַתִּלְאַחַה: ו' בְּמַחְשָׁפִים הוֹשִׁיבֵנִי כַמַּתִּי עוֹלָם: ז' גָּדַר בְּעַדִּי
 וְלֹא אֵצִא הַכְּבִיד נִחְשָׁתִי: ח' גַּם כִּי אֲזַעֵק וְאֲשׁוּעַ שְׂתָם
 תִּפְלְתִי: ט' גָּדַר דְּרָכֵי בְּנֵי־נְתִיבֹתַי עוֹהָ: י' דָּב אֲרַב הוּא
 לִי אָרִי בְּמִסְתָּרִים: יא' דְּרָכֵי סוּרָר וַיִּפְשַׁחֲנִי שְׁמֵנִי שָׁמֵם:
 יב' דִּרְךָ קִשְׁתוֹ וַיִּצִיבֵנִי כַמַּטְרָא לַחֲמִץ: יג' הֵבִיא בְּכַלְיֹתַי
 בְּנֵי אֲשַׁפְתּוֹ: יד' הִגִּיתִי שְׁחָק לְכָל־עַמִּי נִגְיַנְתֶּם כָּל־הַיּוֹם:
 טו' הַשְׁבִּיעֵנִי בְּמִרוּרִים הַרְנֵנִי לַעֲנָה: טז' וַיִּגְרַס בְּחֻצָּן שְׁנֵי
 הַכְּפִישֵׁנִי בְּאֶפֶר: יז' וַתִּזְנַח מִשְׁלוֹם נַפְשִׁי נִשִּׁיתִי טוֹבָה:
 יח' וְאָמַר אֶבֶד נֶחְלִי וְתוֹחַלְתִּי מִיְהוָה: יט' זָכַר־עֵנִי
 וּמְרוּדִי לַעֲנָה וְרֹאשׁ: כ' זָכוֹר תִּזְכֹּר וְתִשׁוּחַ עָלַי נַפְשִׁי:

on all sides. ⁴He bent His bow like an enemy, poised His right hand like a foe; He slew all who delighted the eye. He poured out His wrath like fire in the Tent of Fair Zion. ⁵The Lord has acted like a foe, He has laid waste Israel, laid waste all her citadels, destroyed her strongholds. He has increased within Fair Judah mourning and moaning. ⁶He has stripped His Booth like a garden, He has destroyed His Tabernacle; the LORD has ended in Zion festival and sabbath; in His raging anger He has spurned king and priest. ⁷The Lord has rejected His altar, disdained His Sanctuary. He has handed over to the foe the walls of its citadels; they raised a shout in the House of the LORD as on a festival day. ⁸The LORD resolved to destroy the wall of Fair Zion; He measured with a line, refrained not from bringing destruction. He has made wall and rampart to mourn, together they languish. ⁹Her gates have sunk into the ground, He has smashed her bars to bits; her king and her leaders are in exile, instruction is no more; her prophets, too, receive no vision from the LORD. ¹⁰Silent sit on the ground the elders of Fair Zion; they have strewn dust on their heads and girded themselves with sackcloth; the maidens of Jerusalem have bowed their heads to the ground. ¹¹My eyes are spent with tears, my heart is in tumult, my being melts away over the ruin of my poor people, as babes and sucklings languish in the squares of the city. ¹²They keep asking their mothers, “where is bread and wine?” as they languish like battle-wounded in the squares of the town, as their life runs out in their mothers’ bosoms. ¹³What can I take as witness or liken to you, O Fair Jerusalem? What can I match with you to console you, O Fair Maiden Zion? For your ruin is vast as the sea: who can heal you? ¹⁴Your seers prophesied to you delusion and folly. They did not expose your iniquity so as to restore your fortunes, but prophesied to you oracles of delusion and deception. ¹⁵All who pass your way clap their hands at you; they hiss and wag their head at Fair Jerusalem: “is this the city that was called perfect in Beauty, joy of All the Earth?” ¹⁶All your enemies jeer at you; they hiss and gnash their teeth, and cry: “We’ve ruined her! Ah, this is the day we hoped for; we have lived to see it!”

¹⁷The LORD has done what He purposed, has carried out the decree that He ordained long ago; He has torn down without pity. He has let the foe rejoice over

סָבִיב: ה' דָּרַךְ קִשְׁתּוֹ כְּאֹיֵב נֶצַב יְמִינוֹ כְּצֹר וַיִּהְיֶה כָּל
 מַחְמַדֵּי־עַיִן בְּאֶחָל בַּת־צִיּוֹן שָׁפַךְ כָּאֵשׁ חַמָּתוֹ: ה' הָיָה
 אֲדֹנָי וּ כְּאֹיֵב בִּלְעַיִשְׂרָאֵל בִּלְעַיִשׁ כָּל־אֲרָמְנוֹתֶיהָ שַׁחַת
 מִבְּצֻרָיו וַיִּרְבַּב בְּבֵת־יְהוּדָה תִּאֲנִיחַ וַאֲנִיחָהּ: ו' וַיַּחֲמַס כַּנָּן
 שָׁכּוֹ שַׁחַת מִעֲדָרוֹ שִׁפַּח יְהוָה וּ בְצִיּוֹן מוֹעֵד וְשֹׁפֵת וַיִּנְאֹץ
 בְּזַעַם־אָפוֹ מִלֶּךְ וְכַחֵן: ז' וַנַּח אֲדֹנָי וּ מִזְבְּחוֹ נֶאֱרַר מִקִּדְשׁוֹ
 הַסִּגִּיר בְּיַד־אֹיֵב חוֹמַת אֲרָמְנוֹתֶיהָ קוֹל נִתְנוּ בְּבֵית־יְהוָה
 כְּזֶם מוֹעֵד: ח' חָשַׁב יְהוָה וּ לְהַשְׁחִית חוֹמַת בַּת־צִיּוֹן נָטָה
 קֶוֹ לֹא־הִשִּׁיב יָדוֹ מִבִּלְעַיִשׁ וַיִּאֲבֹל־חַל וְחוֹמָה יַחֲדוּ אִמְלָלוּ:
 ט' טָבְעוּ בָאָרֶץ שְׁעָרֶיהָ אֶבֶד וְשֹׁבֵר בְּרִיחֶיהָ מִלֶּכָּה
 וְשָׂרִיָּה בְנוֹיִם אֵין תּוֹרָה גַּם־נְבִיאֶיהָ לֹא־מָצְאוּ חֲזוֹן
 מִיְהוָה: י' יָשְׁבוּ לָאָרֶץ וַדְּמוּ זִקְנֵי בַת־צִיּוֹן הִעֲלִיו עֵפֶר
 עַל־רֹאשָׁם חֲגָרוּ שַׁקִּים הוֹרִידוּ לָאָרֶץ רֹאשֶׁן בְּתוֹלַת
 יְרוּשָׁלַם: יא' כָּלוּ בַדְּמָעוֹת עֵינַי חֲמַרְמָרוּ מַעֲיֵי נִשְׁפָּךְ
 לָאָרֶץ כְּבָדִי עַל־שֹׁבֵר בַּת־עַמִּי בַעֲטָף עוֹלָל וַיּוֹנֵק
 בְּרַחֲבוֹת קִרְיָה: יב' לְאִמְתָּם יֹאמְרוּ אֵיךְ דָּגַן וַיִּגֹּן
 בְּהַתְּעַטָּפָם כְּחֹלֵל בְּרַחֲבוֹת לֵעִיר בְּהַשְׁתַּפָּךְ נִפְשָׁם
 אֶל־חֵיק אִמְתָּם: יג' מָה־אֶעֱיֹד מָה אֲדַמְּה־לֶּךָ הַבַּת
 יְרוּשָׁלַם מָה אֲשׁוּה־לֶּךָ וַאֲנַחֲמֶךָ בְּתוֹלַת בַּת־צִיּוֹן כִּי־גִדּוֹל
 כְּפִים שֹׁבֵר מִי יִרְפָּא־לֶךָ: יד' נְבִיאֶיךָ חֲזוּ לֶךָ שָׁוָא וְתִפֹּל
 וְלֹא־גִלוּ עַל־עוֹנֶךָ לְהַשִּׁיב שְׁבוּתֶךָ וַיִּחְזוּ לֶךָ מִשְׁאוֹת שָׁוָא
 וּמַדּוּחִים: טו' סָפְקוּ עַלֶיךָ כְּפִים כָּל־עַבְרֵי דָרֶךְ שָׁרְקוּ
 וַיִּנְעוּ רֹאשָׁם עַל־בֵּית יְרוּשָׁלַם הַזֹּאת הָעִיר שְׁיֹאמְרוּ
 כְּלִילַת יָפִי מִשׁוֹשׁ לְכָל־הָאָרֶץ: טז' פָּצוּ עַלֶיךָ פִּיהֶם
 כָּל־אֹיְבֶיךָ שָׁרְקוּ וַיַּחֲרִקוּ־שֵׁן אָמְרוּ בִלְעָנֵנוּ אָךְ זֶה הַיּוֹם
 שְׁקוּיִנְהוּ מִצְּאֵנוּ רְאִינוּ: יז' עָשָׂה יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר זָמַם בַּצֵּעַ
 אָמְרָתוֹ אֲשֶׁר צָוָה מִימֵי־קֶדֶם הָרַס וְלֹא חָמַל וַיִּשְׁמַח

¹³From above He sent a fire down into my bones. He spread a net for my feet, He hurled me backward; He has left me forlorn, in constant misery. ⁴The yoke of my offenses is bound fast, lashed tight by His hand; imposed upon my neck, it saps my strength; the Lord has delivered me into the hands of those I cannot withstand. ¹⁵The Lord in my midst has rejected all my heroes; He has proclaimed a set time against me to crush my young men. As in a press the Lord has trodden Fair Maiden Judah. ¹⁶For these things do I weep, my eyes flow with tears: far from me is any comforter who might revive my spirit; my children are forlorn, for the foe has prevailed. ¹⁷Zion spreads out her hands, she has no one to comfort her; the LORD has summoned against Jacob His enemies all about him; Jerusalem has become among them a thing unclean.

¹⁸The LORD is in the right, For I have disobeyed Him. Hear, all you peoples, and behold my agony: my maidens and my youths have gone into captivity! ¹⁹I cried out to my friends, but they played me false. My priests and my elders have perished in the city as they searched for food to keep themselves alive. ²⁰See, O LORD, the distress I am in! My heart is in anguish, I know how wrong I was to disobey. Outside the sword deals death; indoors, the plague. ²¹When they heard how I was sighing, there was none to comfort me; all my foes heard of my plight and exulted. For it is Your doing: You have brought on the day that You threatened. Oh, let them become like me! ²²Let all their wrongdoing come before You, and deal with them as You have dealt with me for all my transgressions. For my sighs are many, and my heart is sick.

2 Alas! The Lord in His wrath has shamed Fair Zion, has cast down from heaven to earth the majesty of Israel. He did not remember His Footstool on His day of wrath. ²The Lord has laid waste without pity all the habitations of Jacob; He has razed in His anger fair Judah's strongholds. He has brought low in dishonor the kingdom and its leaders. ³In blazing anger He has cut down all the might of Israel; He has withdrawn His right hand in the presence of the foe; He has ravaged Jacob like flaming fire, consuming

יג מַמְרוֹם שְׁלַח־אֵשׁ בְּעֶצְמֹתַי וַיִּרְדְּנָה פָּרֶשׁ רֶשֶׁת לְרַגְלִי
הַשִּׁיבֵנִי אַחֲזֹר נִתְּנִי שְׁמִמָּה כָּל־הַיּוֹם דָּוָה: יד נִשְׁקַדְּ עַל
פְּשָׁעֵי בְּיָדוֹ וַיִּשְׁתַּרְגְּוּ עָלָיו עַל־צוּאָרָי הַכְּשִׁיל כַּחֲזִי נִתְּנִי
אֲדָנָי בְּיָדִי לֹא־אוּכַל קוֹם: טו סִלָּה כָּל־אֲבִירָי | אֲדָנָי
בְּקַרְבִּי קָרָא עָלַי מוֹעֵד לְשֹׁבֵר בַּחוּרֵי גֵת דְּבַרְךָ אֲדָנָי
לְבַתּוּלֹת בַּת־יְהוּדָה: טז עַל־אֵלֶּה | אָנֹכִי בּוֹכִיָּה עֵינָי | עֵינֵי
לְרָדָה לַיּוֹם כִּי־רָתַק מִמֶּנִּי מְנַחֵם מְשִׁיב נַפְשִׁי הָיוּ בְּנֵי
שׁוֹמְמִים כִּי גָבַר אוֹיֵב: יז פִּרְשָׁה צִיּוֹן בְּיָדֶיהָ אֵין מְנַחֵם
לָּהּ צוּנָה יְהוָה לִיעֲקֹב סִבִּיבָיו צָרְיוּ הֵיטָה יְרוּשָׁלַם לְנִדְּחָה
בְּיַנְיָהֶם: יח צָדִיק הוּא יְהוָה כִּי פִּיהוּ מְרִיתִי שְׁמַעוּ־נָא
כָּל־הָעַמִּים וְרֹאוּ מְכַאֲבֵי בְּתוּלָתִי וּבַחוּרֵי הִלְכוּ בַשָּׁבִי:
יט קָרָאתִי לַמַּאֲהָבִי תַמָּה רַמּוֹנֵי כַּהֲנֵי וַיִּזְכְּנֵי בַעִיר גּוֹנְעוּ
כִּי־בִקְשׁוּ אֲכַל לָמוֹ וַיִּשְׁיבוּ אֶת־נַפְשָׁם: כ רֹאֵה יְהוָה
כִּי־צָר־לִי מַעַי חֲמַרְמָרוּ נַחֲפָד לְבִי בְּקַרְבִּי כִּי מָרוּ
מְרִיתִי מִחוּץ שְׁכָל־הַחֲרָב בַּבַּיִת כַּמּוֹת: כא שְׁמַעוּ כִּי
נִאֲנַחָה אָנֹכִי אֵין מְנַחֵם לִי כָּל־אֲיֵבֵי שְׁמַעוּ רַעַתִּי שִׁשׁוּ כִּי
אִתָּה עָשִׂיתָ הַבֵּאתָ יוֹם־קָרָאתָ וַיִּחַיו כַּמּוֹנֵי: כב תָּבֹא
כָּל־רַעַתָּם לְפָנֶיךָ וְעוֹלָל לָמוֹ כַּאֲשֶׁר עוֹלָלָתָ לִי עַל
כָּל־פְּשָׁעַי כִּי־רַבּוֹת אֲנַחְתִּי וּלְבִי דוּוּ:

פרק ב

א איכה יְעִיב בְּאִפּוֹ | אֲדָנָי אֶת־בַּת־צִיּוֹן הַשְּׁלִיךְ מִשָּׁמַיִם
אֶרֶץ תַּפְאָרֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל וּלְאִזְכֹּר הַדָּם־רַגְלָיו בְּיוֹם אִפּוֹ:
ב בָּלַע אֲדָנָי וְלֹא חָמַל אֶת כָּל־נַאֲוֹת יַעֲקֹב הָרַס
בְּעִבְרָתוֹ מִבְּצָרֵי בַת־יְהוּדָה הִגִּיעַ לְאֶרֶץ חָלָל מִמְּלָכָה
וְשָׂרִיָּה: ג גָּדַע בַּחֲרִי־אֶף כָּל גִּרְוֹן יִשְׂרָאֵל הַשִּׁיב אַחֲזֹר
יְמִינוֹ מִפְּנֵי אוֹיֵב וַיִּבְעַר בַּיַּעֲקֹב כָּאֵשׁ לְהִבָּה אֲכָלָה

Lamentations

1 ^aAlas! Lonely sits the city once great with people! She that was great among nations is become like a widow; the princess among states is become a thrall. ²Bitterly she weeps in the night, her cheek wet with tears. There is none to comfort her of all her friends. All her allies have betrayed her; they have become her foes. ³Judah has gone into exile because of misery and harsh oppression; when she settled among the nations, she found no rest; all her pursuers overtook her in the narrow places. ⁴Zion's roads are in mourning, empty of festival pilgrims; all her gates are deserted. Her priests sigh, her maidens are unhappy—she is utterly disconsolate! ⁵Her enemies are now the masters, her foes are at ease because the LORD has afflicted her for her many transgressions; her infants have gone into captivity before the enemy. ⁶Gone from Fair Zion are all that were her glory; her leaders were like stags that found no pasture; they could only walk feebly before the pursuer.

⁷All the precious things she had in the days of old Jerusalem recalled in her days of woe and sorrow, when her people fell by enemy hands with none to help her; when enemies looked on and gloated over her downfall. ⁸Jerusalem has greatly sinned, therefore she is become a mockery. All who admired her despise her, for they have seen her disgraced; and she can only sigh and shrink back. ⁹Her uncleanness clings to her skirts. She gave no thought to her future; she has sunk appallingly, with none to comfort her.—See, O LORD, my misery; how the enemy jeers! ¹⁰The foe has laid hands on everything dear to her. She has seen her Sanctuary invaded by nations which You have denied admission into Your community. ¹¹All her inhabitants sigh as they search for bread; they have bartered their treasures for food, to keep themselves alive.—See, O LORD, and behold, how abject I have become!

¹²May it never befall you, all who pass along the road—look about and see: is there any agony like mine, which was dealt out to me when the LORD afflicted me on His day of wrath?

^a *Chaps. 1–4 are alphabetical acrostics, i.e., the verses begin with the successive letters of the Heb. alphabet. Chap. 3 is a triple acrostic. In chaps. 2–4 the letter **pe** precedes the 'ayin.*

איכה

פרק א

א איכה | ישבה בְּדֹד הָעִיר רַבְּתֵי עָם הֵיטָה פְּאַלְמָנָה
 רַבְּתֵי בְּגוֹזִים שְׁרֵתִי בַּמְדִּינוֹת הֵיטָה לְמַס: ב בָּכוּ תִבְכֶּה
 בְּלַיְלָה וּדְמָעָתָה עַל לַחֲיָה אֵין־לָהּ מִנְחָם מִכָּל־אֶהְבִּיָּהּ
 כָּל־רַעֲיָהּ בְּגָדוּ בָּהּ הָיוּ לָהּ לְאֵיבִים: ג גָּלְתָה יְהוּדָה
 מֵעִנִי וּמִרַב עֲבָדָה הִיא יִשְׁבָּה בְּגוֹזִים לֹא מִצָּאָה מְנוּחַ
 ד כָּל־רֹדְפֶיהָ הִשְׁיגוּהָ בֵּין הַמְּצָרִים: ד וְדַרְכֵי צִיּוֹן אֲבֵלוֹת
 מִבְּלִי בָּאֵי מוֹעֵד כָּל־שְׁעָרֶיהָ שׁוּמְמִין כְּהִנְיָה נֶאֱנַחִים
 ה בְּתוֹלְתֶיהָ נֹגְוֹת וְהִיא מֵר־לָהּ: ה הָיוּ צָרֶיהָ לְרֹאשׁ אֵיבֵיהָ
 וְשָׁלוּ כִּי־יִהְיֶה הַגָּנָה עַל רַב־פְּשָׁעֶיהָ עוֹלְלֶיהָ הִלְכוּ שְׁבִי
 וּלְפָנֶי־צָר: ו וַיֵּצֵא מִבֵּית־צִיּוֹן כָּל־הַדְּרָגָה הָיוּ שְׁרֵיהָ
 ז פְּאִילִים לֹא־מִצָּאוּ מִרְעָה וַיִּלְכוּ בְּלֹא־כֹחַ לְפָנֶי רוּדְף: ז
 ח זָכְרָה יְרוּשָׁלַם יָמֵי עֲנִיָה וּמְרוּדֶיהָ כָּל מַחְמֹדֶיהָ אֲשֶׁר
 הָיוּ מִיָּמֵי קְדָם בְּנִפְלַעַת עַמָּהּ בְּיַד־צָר וְאֵין עוֹזֵר לָהּ רְאוּהָ
 ט צְרִים שָׁחֲקוּ עַל מִשְׁבַּתָּהּ: ח חֲטָא חֲטָאָה יְרוּשָׁלַם עַל־כֵּן
 י לְנִידָה הֵיטָה כָּל־מִכְבָּדֶיהָ הִזְלִוּהָ כִּי־רָאוּ עֲרוֹתָהּ
 יא גַּם־הִיא נֶאֱנַחָה וַתָּשָׁב אַחֹר: יא טַמְאָתָה בְּשׁוֹלֶיהָ לֹא
 יב זָכְרָה אַחֲרִיתָהּ וַתִּרְדּ פְּלָאִים אֵין מִנְחָם לָהּ רְאָה יְהוָה
 יג אֶת־עֲנָנֵי כִּי הִגְדִּיל אוֹיֵב: יג יְדוּ פִּרְשׁ צָר
 יד עַל כָּל־מַחְמֹדֶיהָ כִּי־רָאָתָה גוֹזִים בָּאוּ מִקְדָּשָׁהּ
 יו אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתָהּ לֹא־יָבֹאוּ בִקְהָל לָךְ: יו כָּל־עַמָּה נֶאֱנַחִים
 יז מִבְּקָשִׁים לָחֵם נָתַנוּ מַחְמֹדֶיהֶם בְּאֶכָל לְהַשִּׁיב נַפְשׁ
 יח רְאָה יְהוָה וַתִּבְיֹשָׁה כִּי הִנִּיתִי זוֹלְלָהּ: יח לֹא אֲלִיכֶם
 יט כָּל־עֲבָרֵי דָרְדָךְ תִּבְיֹשׁוּ וְרָאוּ אִם־יֵשׁ מִכְּאוֹב כְּמִכְּאוֹבִי
 כ אֲשֶׁר עוֹלַל לִי אֲשֶׁר הוֹגָה יְהוָה בְּיוֹם חֲרוֹן אַפָּי:

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Scriptural Readings and Kinot
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