

The Tisha B'Av Kinot and October 7

Rabbi Dr. Jacob J. Schacter

There is a long history of liturgical poems that were written to be recited on Tisha B'Av to commemorate tragic events that occurred during ancient and medieval times. For example, the Ashkenazi rite on Tisha B'Av includes *kinot* mourning for the “Ten Martyrs” killed in the second century; for the communities of Speyer, Worms, and Mainz that were attacked during the First Crusades at the end of the eleventh century; and for the burning of two dozen wagon loads of *sifrei kodesh* in Paris in the middle of the thirteenth century.¹ Liturgical poems were also written to remember the murder of more than thirty Jews in the French town of Blois towards the end of the twelfth century.² Such liturgical works were also written in the wake of the Chmielnicki Massacres in Eastern Europe in the middle of the seventeenth century. They were not included in the Tisha B'Av rite because a separate fast day was established on which they would be recited, the twentieth of the month of Sivan.³

This practice continued during and after the *Shoah* when *kinot* were composed to mourn for the destruction of European Jewry. Already during the war, in the summer of 1944, a *kinah* was composed entitled, “If Only My Head Would be Water,” patterned after a *kinah* by that title recited on Tisha B'Av commemorating the destruction of Ashkenazi communities during the First Crusades.⁴ After the war, in 1945, Yehudah Leib Bialer composed a *kinah* entitled “Eli Eli,” one that achieved almost canonical status in the following years.⁵ In 1965, Rev. Abraham Rosenfeld printed a *kinah* he composed for the Holocaust.⁶

On Tisha B'Av 1971 Rabbi Menachem Mendel Kasher told an acquaintance

that it is impossible for him to mourn for the destruction of the Ashkenazi Jewish communities of Speyer, Worms and Mainz while paying no attention to the cries of the Jews murdered in Auschwitz, Majdanek and Treblinka. “They do not speak to me after the horrific *Shoah* in Europe.” He also argued that composing and disseminating a *kinah* for the victims of the Holocaust, a destruction the likes of which has not occurred since the creation of the world, was particularly necessary since it was beginning to be forgotten even in the Jewish community. As precedents for his efforts, Rabbi Kasher noted that new fast days were established to commemorate a number of medieval Jewish tragedies (the Blois Massacre of 1171, the burning of wagon loads of Hebrew manuscripts in Paris in 1242, and the Chmielnicki Massacres of 1648–1649). Even if he considered such a more extreme step not to be appropriate in the case of the Holocaust, composing a new *kinah* to be recited on Tisha B'Av certainly would be. In the end, however, Rabbi Kasher abandoned his efforts when he realized that he was not getting the support he needed in the *Chassidic* and *yeshiva* communities that he felt was indispensable for his effort to be successful.⁷

But efforts continued. In the 1970s Rabbi Chaim Uri Lifschitz reached out to a number of *Chassidic rebbes*, and to Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, stressing the importance of authoring an “official” *kinah* for the Holocaust that would be universally accepted.⁸ On January 19, 1976, Rabbi Lifschitz wrote Rabbi Feinstein that it is disingenuous to cry on Tisha B'Av for the destruction of Jewish communities during the Crusades, or for the burning of the Talmud in Paris, or for other tragedies while making no mention of

the hundreds, and thousands, of Jewish communities destroyed in Europe.⁹ But all these efforts were for naught until the mid 1980s when efforts made by Mr. Pinchas Herzke from New York City finally bore fruit.¹⁰ The Tisha B'Av book of *kinot* first published by the Mesorah Heritage Foundation in 1991 included compositions for the Holocaust authored by Rabbi Shlomo Halberstam, the Bobover Rebbe, and by Rabbi Shimon Schwab and in that way, the efforts of Mr. Herzke gained the imprimatur of respectability and acceptance.¹¹ Rabbi Yosef Shalom Elyashiv recited the *kinah* authored by the Bobover Rebbe on Tisha B'Av¹² and Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach recited one authored by Rabbi Michael Dov Weissmandel.¹³ In fact, a number of *kinot* for the Holocaust were composed over the years, and recited in both the Religious Zionist and *Charedi* communities.¹⁴

Following this precedent, *kinot* continued to be written in the Religious Zionist community to commemorate events deemed tragic enough to warrant liturgical compositions. Then Sephardi Chief Rabbi of Israel, Rabbi Ben-Zion Meir Hai Uziel, wrote a *kinah* mourning the destruction of the Old City of Jerusalem on June 26, 1948 (19 Sivan 5708)¹⁵ and a *kinah* was also penned in the wake of the disengagement from Gaza in 2005.¹⁶

The war with Hamas that began on Simchat Torah 5784 has also inspired a number of *kinot*.¹⁷ *HaMizrachi* is honored to print here a new *kinah* (see pages 28-29) authored by Rabbi Yosef Zvi Rimon commemorating this event that, regrettably, is still very much uppermost in our minds.

1. See Abraham Rosenfeld, *The Authorised Kinot for the Ninth of Av* (London, 1965), 125–28, 132–34, 161–62.

Kinah for the Events of “Swords of Iron”

Rabbi Yosef Zvi Rimon

(Suggestion: To chant to the tune of “Eli Tzion VeAreha”)

Simchat Torah – Shemini Atzeret,
Our dancing was turned into despondent grief;
On this day the fences were breached,
[In] the towns of the [Gaza] envelope, Ofakim and Sderot.

How was our land humiliated,
The land was filled with Hamas,
From the Gaza Strip, the source of the evil,
From the root of Hamas came poison.

How in place of seven *hakafot*,
They fled for their lives for fear of kidnapping,
A cruel enemy ignited fires,
Murdered, degraded, without letting up.

How in place of the Prayer for Rain,
My beloved went down to the scented flower beds,
Roses were murdered, a desecration of G-d’s name,
Do not give a memorial and remembrance to the murderers.

How, in the 76th year,
There were pillars of smoke, blood and fire,
A Jew in hiding, whispering in fear,
Instead of the joy of the holy Shabbat.

How did the precious children of Zion,
Fall into the hands of accursed rapists,
The plucked of cheek were given over to the attackers,
Our brothers were taken captive by the violent ones.

On the day Your name was defiled,
Soldiers fought to advance Your great name,
Look and see – who is like Your people Israel?
Strengthen us and give us courage, and may the redeemer come to Zion.

They fought like iron, the beloved brave ones,
The gentle souls, guarding from the oppressor,
Due to their courage, we have witnessed salvation of worlds,
Our stature was straightened, in a generation of redemption.

On the day our inheritance was defiled,
The bravery of our people was released for publication,
Our courageous ones give up their souls in their palms,
Our Father, Our King, avenge the vengeance of our brothers.

By Your Great Name we are called,
The One Who remembers and mentions the covenant of our forefathers,
From north and south they rise up to destroy us,
But Your covenant remains steadfast for us in our land.

The dictators of Persia initiated plots,
They sent barrages against those who raised a prayer,
They sat in shelters, their eyes hoping,
They saw Your miracles, the Awesome One of praise.

The wings of spirit, the wings of eagles,
We have seen soldiers’ wives,
Parents and children bury their loved ones,
Strengthen and fortify them, the congregation of heroes.

Waves of hate engulf Your world,
Oppressors swarm over those who sanctify Your name,
They chase Your messengers, those who carry Your flag,
May You skip over us with love.

Return the hostages, call for freedom for those in captivity,
Plant those who have been uprooted with everlasting love,
Rehabilitate the wounded, raise up the depressed,
Lead Your congregation with kindness and mercy.

We give thanks to You for our State,
And for our redemption and the salvation of our soul,
United lead us upright in our land,
Hasten the son of David, our righteous *Mashiach*.

קינה על מאורעות חרבות ברזל

הרב יוסף צבי רימון

[הצעה: לומר בניגון של "אלי ציון ועריה"]

עריצי פֶּרַס יִזְמוּ עֲלֵינוּ,
מִטְחִים שְׁלַחוּ לְנוֹשְׂאֵי תַפְלוּת,
סְפוּנִים יֵשְׁבוּ וְעֵינֵיהֶם מִיַּחְלוּת,
אֵת נִסְיָה רָאוּ - נוֹרָא תַהֲלוּת.

אֵיכָה בְּנֵי צִיּוֹן הִקְרִים,
נִפְלוּ בְיַדֵּי אֲנָסִים אֲרוּרִים,
מְרוּטֵי לַחֵי נִתּוּנִים לְמַכִּים,
אֲחִים חֲטוּפִים בְּיַדֵּי חֲמָסִים.

שִׁמְחַת תּוֹרָה - שְׁמִינֵי עֲצָרַת,
נִהְפֶּךָ מְחוּלְנוּ לְתוֹגָה קוֹדֶרֶת;
בְּיוֹם זֶה נִפְרָצוּ הַגְּדָרוֹת,
יְשׁוּבֵי הָעוֹטֵף, אֲפָקִים וְשִׁדְרוֹת.

כְּנָפֵי רוּחַ, כְּנָפֵי נְשָׂרִים,
רָאוּ רְאִינוּ בְּרַעֲיוֹת חַיִּים,
הוֹרִים וְיֻלְדִים אֵת יִמְרֵיהֶם מִקְבָּרִים,
חֲזָקִים וְאֲמָצִים עֲדַת אֲבִירִים.

בְּיוֹם בּוֹ שָׁמָּה הִתְחַלַּל,
לוֹחֲמִים נֶאֱבָקוּ אֵת שָׁמָּה לְגַדֵּל,
הִבֵּט וּרְאָה - מִי כְּעָמָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל,
חֲזָקָנוּ וְאֲמָצָנוּ, וּבָא לְצִיּוֹן גּוֹאֵל.

אֵיכָה אֲרָצָנוּ הִיָּתָה לְמַרְמָס,
וְתַמְלָא הָאֲרָץ חֲמָאס,
מְרַצֵּעַת עֲזָה מְקוֹר הַרְשָׁע,
מִשְׁרָשׁ חֲמָאס יִצָּא צָפֵע.

גְּלֵי שִׁנְאָה שׁוֹטְפִים עוֹלָמָךְ,
שׁוֹצְפִים צוֹרְרִים עַל מְקַדְיָשֵׁי שְׁמָךְ,
רוֹדְפִים אֵת שְׁלוּחֵיךָ נוֹשְׂאֵי דְגָלֶיךָ,
בְּאֵהָבָה יְהִי נָא עֲלֵינוּ דְלוּגֵיךָ.

כְּבָרְזַל לְחֲמוֹ אֲמִיצוֹת וְאֲמִיצִים אֱהוּבִים,
עַדִּינֵי נֶפֶשׁ מִיֵּד צָר מְגַנְגִים,
בְּגִבּוֹרֶתְךָ רְאִינוּ תְשׁוּעַת עוֹלָמִים,
נִזְקָפָה קוֹמְתָנוּ דוֹר גְּאוּלִּים.

אֵיכָה בְּמִקּוֹם שְׁבַע הַקְּפוֹת,
נָסוּ עַל נֶפֶשָׁם מֵאִמַּת חֲטִיפוֹת,
אוֹיֵב אֲכָזַר מִצִּית שׁוֹרְפוֹת,
רוֹצֵחַ, מִשְׁפִּיל, בְּלֵי לְהַרְפוֹת.

הַשֵּׁב חֲטוּפִים, קְרָא דְרוֹר לְשָׁבוּיִים,
נָטַע עֲקוּרִים בְּאֵהָבַת נְצָחִים,
שָׁקַם פְּצוּעִים רוּמִים נְדָפָאִים,
נִהַל עֲדַתְךָ בְּחֶסֶד וּבְרַחֲמִים.

בְּיוֹם בּוֹ נִטְמָאָה נִחְלַתְנוּ,
הִתְרָה לְפָרְסוֹם גְּבוּרַת עַמּוֹנוּ,
נֶפֶשָׁם בְּכַפֶּם מוֹסְרִים גְּבוּרֵינוּ,
אֲבִינוּ מִלְכָּנוּ נִקָּם נִקְמַת אַחֵינוּ!

אֵיכָה בְּמִקּוֹם תַּפְלוּת הַגָּשָׁם,
יָרַד דוֹדֵי לְעֵרוּגוֹת הַבֶּשֶׂם,
שׁוֹשְׁנִים נִטְבָּחִים, חֲלוּל הַשֵּׁם,
לְמַרְצָחִים אֵל תַּתֵּן יָד וְשֵׁם.

מוֹדִים אֲנַחְנוּ לָךְ עַל מְדִינַתְנוּ,
עַל גְּאֻלְתָּנוּ וְעַל פְּדוּת נַפְשָׁנוּ,
מֵאֲחָדִים תּוֹלֵכָנוּ קוֹמְמִיּוֹת בְּאֲרָצָנוּ,
הַחֵשׁ בּוֹ דוֹד מְשִׁיחַ צְדָקָנוּ.

עַל שְׁמָךְ הַגְּדוֹל נִקְרָא שְׁמָנוּ,
זוֹכֵר וּמְזַכֵּיר בְּרִית אֲבוֹתֵינוּ,
מְצַפּוֹן וּמְדָרוֹם עוֹמְדִים לְכֻלּוֹתְנוּ,
וּבְרִיתְךָ עוֹמְדַת לָנוּ בְּאֲרָצָנוּ.

אֵיכָה בְּשָׁנַת שְׁבַעִים וְשֵׁשׁ,
תְּמָרוֹת עֲשׂוֹן דָּם וְאֵשׁ,
יְהוּדֵי בְּמַחְבּוּא נִחְרַד וְלוֹחֵשׁ,
תַּחַת עֵגֶב שְׁבַת קִדְשׁ.



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