

The Essence of Tisha B'Av

The whole purpose of Tisha B' Av is to realize the quality of the Exile a person finds themselves in. A person's present life style lends itself to distractions and to other frivolous eccentricities. In the realm of materialism, there is a hyper focus on the excessive pursuit of worldly pleasures such as titles, exterior dress, empty values, and last names. This is in difference to working on one's character traits honesty before G-d. He has protected His people in an environment hostile to Torah. Even in friendly America, which provides much aid to its people, shrouds itself in hate and trickery. A Jew living in America must pay back G-d for His Divine kindness. Once a person becomes cognitive of the palpable kindness of G-d, he is totally indebted to Him.

The prophets tell us that a person should honor the Almighty, at least in the way he would respect a high ranking official. This should be the case, regardless if there is no guarantee of human benevolence. A person should bestow its government with the proper respect, since G-d gave that government and its leader the power. Each person knows his wrongs and rights in relationship to others. This is where the appropriate fixing is required to aid the existence of the Jews. In spite of all the excuses not to pursue a Torah-oriented life, G-d, in his great wisdom has aided the Jews in living a Torah life. A Torah Jew has many expenses such as incessant amount of tuition payments, children of marriageable age, and ever increasing real estate prices. G-d provided Jews with programs such as Hud and food stamps. G-d forced America to historically give money to the Torah community and its scholars. There is no such situation in America that helps non-Jews the same way it helps the Jews. If Jewish businessmen give altruistically to Torah scholars, then a person can safely say that they supported Torah. If a person truly wants to remain in learning, G-d will help him.

For those in learning, especially those who come from exceptionally scholarly backgrounds, they should not learn in order to attain their father's level of Torah. They should rather learn because G-d wants him to know the absolute truth. What G-d says through our sages, one should teach to others. A person should not hold the truth back from anyone. Obviously, it is important for a person to learn, however, they must take care of their body as well and not overstress their minds. The Evil Inclination knows how to destroy minds by way of indirect depression, striving for unreasonable perfection, lack of sleep and the guilt trip whenever a short hiatus is taken. These are all weapons. A person must realize that there is a time for everything.