



DEAR TORAH TIDBITS FAMILY

RABBI AVI BERMAN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, OU ISRAEL
ABERMAN@OUISTRAEL.ORG

One Tisha B'Av morning several years ago, I was sitting with one of my sons on the floor of the *shul*. He was about nine or ten at the time, and I saw that he was flipping through the pages of his *kinot*. Something seemed to have caught his attention in particular. After a bit of this, he looked up and asked me an interesting question.

"Why are so many of these *kinot* written by Rabbi Elazar HaKalir?" he inquired. I began answering him by explaining the poetry and the importance of Rabbi Elazar HaKalir, the different opinions about when he lived, and so on, when he asked me another question. "Abba, if you could go back to any time in Jewish history, which era would you want to be born in?" This was difficult for me to answer, since every major time period in Jewish history is exciting in its own way. Ultimately, I told him that the most fascinating time for me would be the time of Shlomo HaMelech, when we had the *Beit HaMikdash* and the sovereign kingdom of

Israel, a powerhouse state in the entire region.

Then I turned to him. "Now it's your turn. Which era would *you* want to go back to?" He looked at me and immediately said, "Abba, it makes no difference to me, as long as it's before Rabbi Elazar HaKalir."

I have to admit that I started laughing, which was pretty awkward given that it was in *shul* on Tisha B'Av, but then I started to think about it on a deeper level. Clearly, my son felt disconnected from the *kinot*, as he was wishing for a time before they were written. If so, the problem is that he hasn't been given the tools to truly understand what he is reading, why they represent something so important, and what kind of story they tell. At that moment, I decided that I needed to do something new in order to make sure my children could really feel Tisha B'Av each year.

Tisha B'Av happens to be my Bubby's *yahrzeit* - Chana Ita bat Reb Moshe *a"h*. This Tisha B'Av will be exactly 20 years since she passed away. She was a true role model to me, and I miss her dearly. Because of this timing, Tisha B'Av has become a day where I try, on a personal level, to do as many meaningful things as possible in her memory and to work on helping to figure out what we are missing in order to build what we need as the Jewish people.

So when my son told me in this humorous way that he had a hard time connecting with the *kinot* (which many young people as well as adults struggle with), along with the fact that this is a time I generally think about how I can make more of an impact, the idea was

May the learning
from this issue of TT be לע"נ

Rose Edith Cohen ע"ה
איטה רייזל בת גנשא
ואריה לייב הכהן ע"ה

on her 17th *yahrzeit* - י"ג מנחם אב

Missed very much by her daughters

*Janice Weinreb, Barbara Yasgur
and Benay Devora Cohen Nesher
and families*

born to create OU Israel's annual Tisha B'Av video, to make sure that we have explanatory *kinot shiurim* every year, and to help provide learning programming for teenagers on the evening of Tisha B'Av.

One of the most impactful things to do on Tisha B'Av - certainly the most personally inspiring thing I do - is going to the Kotel together with the OU NCSY Summer programs during the last hour and a half of Tisha B'Av. Every year, though we pray that *Moshiach* comes way before the last hour and a half of Tisha B'Av, we stand with hundreds of teenagers from around North America and Israel together in a big OU circle at the Kotel Plaza. We sing songs that symbolize not only our relationship with *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*, but also the desire and the yearning we have for the *Beit HaMikdash* to be rebuilt hopefully very soon. I truly believe that there are very few moments in the year that I am able to have such a heightened kavana as during that moment, at the Kotel toward the end of Tisha B'Av, surrounded by thousands of others at such a holy place, yearning for something so much greater. If you've been there before, I'm sure you don't need my convincing to come again. If you haven't been there, then trust me that you want to be there.

It's not an easy time to come out to the Kotel. Everybody's tired, hungry, and weak, but if you do have the strength and you want to be inspired and connect with thousands of your brothers and sisters at the Kotel, then please join us. The Mayor of Yerushalayim, Moshe Leon, has joined us for many years and knows how important it is to many people in Yerushalayim, and thousands more have discovered that what NCSY Kollel and other NCSY programs have created over the past thirty years is unbelievably uplifting and inspiring.



Thousands upon thousands come every year to sing with tremendous *devekut*, with tremendous love and passion for God, asking Him, begging Him, to please bring us the *Beit HaMikdash*. It's so uplifting that I've wondered, perhaps a little tongue-in-cheek, whether maybe *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* really likes this davening so much that He might even delay the coming of the *Beit HaMikdash* for a few more minutes so that He can hear us sing. To that, I always say to God, "*HaKadosh Baruch*

לעילוי נשמת

PHILIP COOPER ז"ל

**יהודה פייוול בן
אברהם ניסן הלוי ז"ל**

On his 61st Yahrtzeit - 8 Av

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Hu, I promise you, after you bring us the *Beit HaMikdash*, we will make sure to get together and sing in the most beautiful way possible, thanking You for all of the incredible miracles that You have brought to the Jewish people this year, and that You continue bringing the Jewish people.”

The fact is, the difficulty of traversing Yerushalayim and finding parking is a sign in itself of the beginning of the redemption; the streets are filled with people because *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* has been gathering the exiles. The Ramban tells us that when he came to Yerushalayim, he found two Jewish painters, brothers who were allowed to stay and paint by permission of the ruler. Just two Jews out of so many who used to be there. So I constantly ask myself, how much would the Ramban be willing to pay in order to see the Yerushalayim of today where we have hundreds of thousands of Jews living in Yerushalayim, connecting to Yerushalayim, rebuilding Yerushalayim with more cranes than we could ever have imagined, with more Jews living in Yerushalayim than ever in the history of the world? I think he prayed for a Yerushalayim that began with what we see happening in this amazing and holy city.

But therein lies the problem. With such a rebuilt and revitalized Yerushalayim, it makes it much more challenging to even describe what the *Churban* was. It takes real planning and

hard work to figure out how to get this message through to ourselves and the younger generation. Several great organizations, including OU Israel, have put out videos and programs that explain to us what we had during the time of *Beit HaMikdash*, what we lost, and what we should look forward to seeing *be'ezrat Hashem* very soon. So I encourage you to watch the videos that we at OU Israel have created over the last three years on our YouTube channel: [youtube.com/@theouisrael](https://www.youtube.com/@theouisrael). This year's OU Israel video, which I did with Rav Shlomo Katz, is entitled **Building the Beit HaMikdash Now** and will premiere on our YouTube this *motzei Shabbat*. There is so much great online content, including the Shiurim from Torah Efrat, to ensure that we can connect to Tisha B'Av in a very meaningful way while ensuring that our younger generation is also not only connected, but is also part of this incredible experience that we are, *baruch Hashem*, remembering but also moving forward in.

Looking forward to seeing you all at the Beit HaMikdash very, very soon *bezrat Hashem*.

Wishing you all an uplifting and inspiring Shabbat,



Rabbi Avi Berman

Executive Director, OU Israel

aberman@ouisrael.org

In honor and in loving memory of

CHANA LERBA a”h

לעילוי נשמת

חנה לאה בת שלום מאיר וצביה ע”ה

On her 4th Yahrzeit

Tuesday, August 5th 6:00pm

Har Hamenuhot (שער יוסף)



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