

## צפי דינים במהות של תשעה באב

We have grown up on the premise that תשעה באב is the saddest day of the year. We fast for the many tragedies that took place on this day,<sup>1</sup> as this day has become "מוקן לפורענות"<sup>2</sup>, designated for tragedy. This designation originated from the חטא המרגלים, when we cried for no reason (a "בכיה של חנם"). As punishment for this בכיה, this day became a day of בכיה לדורות<sup>3</sup>, and unfortunately we are still crying to this very day because of that original בכיה in the מדבר. It is interesting to note that while we fast on י"ז תמוז for the breach of the חומות ירושלים in the times of בני שני, the breach of the Babylonians by בית ראשון actually took place a bit earlier, on ט' תמוז. Yet, when it comes to the חורבן הבית, they *both* took place on תשעה באב, as the משנה in תענית stated. The גמרא proves from a ברייתא that the חורבן בית שני was indeed on תשעה באב. As the גמרא says there: "מגלגלין זכות ליום זכאי וחובה ליום חייב". In essence, the "הקב"ה was "piling on tragedies". Once the tragedies of the מרגלים and חורבן בית ראשון happened on תשעה באב, it was decreed that חורבן בית שני should be on תשעה באב as well. If one looks carefully, a bit of solace can be found in this. As we pointed out before, the siege of ירושלים by בית ראשון started on ט' תמוז, and it was י"ז תמוז at בני שני. Really, מעיקר הדין, we should be fasting on both the 9th and the 17th. However, because it'd be too taxing on the ציבור, the רבנן said we should commemorate the siege by בית ראשון on י"ז תמוז as well.<sup>4</sup> This small act of coupling the חורבנות together so we have less days of fasting and אבילות can be viewed as a tremendous act of חסד done by the "הקב"ה for the Jews.

This תשעה באב ענין gives us a glimpse into another perspective on תשעה באב. We are mourning the loss of the מקדש, yes, but maybe there is something beyond the surface we fail to realize. The אור החיים<sup>5</sup> quotes the גמרא<sup>6</sup> that had משה brought us into א"י and built the מ"ק, it would not have been able to be destroyed. We can't understand exactly what this means. However, the מדרש<sup>7</sup> points out that if this is so, the "הקב"ה would have had no choice but to destroy US for our sins. We should be thankful

<sup>1</sup> שו"ע או"ח תקמט.א ועיין משנה תענית כו.-כו:

<sup>2</sup> משנה ברורה תקמט.ב.

<sup>3</sup> תענית כט.

<sup>4</sup> The reason they delayed the commemoration of the siege of בית ראשון, instead of pre-empting the commemoration of the siege of בני שני (by moving it up to ט' תמוז and fasting for both), is because we don't preempt tragedy. Perhaps another reason we can suggest is because there were already other tragedies on י"ז תמוז (the שבירת הלוחות), so we apply the same principle of "piling on tragedies".

<sup>5</sup> אור החיים דברים א.לז

<sup>6</sup> סוטה ט.

<sup>7</sup> מדרש תהילים עט

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that He took His wrath out on mere sticks and stones!<sup>8</sup> This expression of at least a bit of שמחה is manifested in the הלכות of the day as well. While there is a general איסור of תורה, aside from learning the relevant הלכות, one can learn איוב and the parts of ספר ירמיה that describe tragedy (as well as other אבילות<sup>9</sup>). This is a possible manifestation of the יסוד of the אור החיים. We say about תורה every night that it is חיינו וארך ימינו. Just as we weren't destroyed on תשעה באב, we can't possibly be destroyed. Our life force needs to still be intact. There has to be some תורה that we can learn, or we would ח"ו be gone. Additionally, it's interesting to note that we don't say תחנון on תשעה באב. The same דין applies in a בית אבל. The reason we don't say תחנון in a בית אבל is because תחנון is a תפילה in which we request that although we have sinned, that we shouldn't get the צדוק הדין we deserve. However, מיתה is the ultimate צדוק הדין, so it'd be inappropriate to mention it in a בית אבל. By תשעה באב, the שו"ע<sup>10</sup> gives a different reason. We don't say תחנון because תשעה באב is called a מועד.<sup>11</sup> While the literal translation of מועד is an "appointed time", we have colloquially translated it to mean a יום טוב. We know that תשעה באב is the day that משיח was/will be born, and when we are sitting on the floor crying and mourning over what we don't have, we remember that there will be a שמחה of תשעה באב. To end off with the famous words of the נביא<sup>12</sup>, it will be that צום הרביעי וצום החמישי וצום השביעי וצום העשירי יהיה לבית יהודה לששון ולשמחה". The same wording of מועד is found in איכה, when תשעה באב is a day of אבילות, and in זכריה, where תשעה באב will one day be a יום טוב. We hope and pray that this תשעה באב will be a day of ששון and שמחה, and we shouldn't have to mourn.

<sup>8</sup> Just as an interesting aside, the גמרא in ע"ב חז"ל points out that when אבהו was asked by his father to give him to drink, and the father fell asleep, אבימי stood there the whole time ready to serve his father. Because of this, he merited דשמיא in understanding this exact point, why the פרק of תהילים that talks about the destruction (פרק עט) is called a מזמור, and not a קינה. That's the point the אור החיים is emphasizing.

<sup>9</sup> שו"ע או"ח תקנד. א.

<sup>10</sup> שם ד.

<sup>11</sup> איכה א.טו.

<sup>12</sup> זכריה ח.יט.