



# Yom HaShoah

Show# 317 | April 10<sup>th</sup> 2021

## תלמוד בבלי מסכת ראש השנה דף יא עמוד א

בניסן נגאלו, בניסן עתידין ליגאל.

## רש"י פרשת וירא פרק יט פסוק ג

ומצות אפה - פסח היה:

## לקט יושר חלק א (אורח חיים) עמוד פו ענין א

ואמר שמת אברהם אבינו בליל פסח.

## רש"י פרשת תולדות פרק כז פסוק ט

שני גדיי עזים - וכי שני גדיי עזים היה מאכלו של יצחק, אלא האחד הקריב לפסחו והאחד עשה מטעמים. בפרקי דרבי אליעזר (פרק לב):

## תלמוד בבלי מסכת מגילה דף טו עמוד א

ויעבר מרדכי אמר רב: שהעביר יום ראשון של פסח בתענית.

## בכור שור מסכת פסחים דף כא עמוד א

מתני' ומאכיל לבהמה כו'. ראיתי להזכיר כאן מה שחידשו קצת סופרי זמנינו להתיר למכור לעכו"ם קודם הפסח בהמות שלו גם חמץ שדרכם לאכול כל ימות השנה כדרך מכירות חמץ הנזכר באו"ח סי' תמ"ח והבהמות אוכלים חמץ כל ימי הפסח ואחר הפסח חוזר ולוקח אותם מהגוי ומימי לא ראיתי כך ובפרט בעיר הזאת אשר רוב משא ומתן שלהם היה בעשיית חמץ י"ש ושכר ומהפסולת היו מפטמים בהמות מהם לחלב ומהם לשחיטה

ובהגיע ימי הפסח אף שכולם היו מוכרים חמץ שלהם לעכו"ם כנהוג מ"מ לא אשתמיט חד למכור גם הבהמות להאכילם חמץ והיו הבהמות מתקלקלים מאד עד איזה שבועות אחר הפסח שחזרו לאיתנם ואמרת אסורה נא ואראה המראה הגדול הזה וכי הראשונים לא ידעו לדמות מכירה זו למכירת חמץ ומה טעם יש בה ואחרי העיון קצת אמרתי דלא דמו להדדי כלל דהנה מעיקרא דדינא פירכא על מכירת חמץ הנהוג הלא מוכחא מילתא דהערמה טובא שזה הקונה לאו גברא דאורחיה מעולם לקנות כך וזה אין דרכו למכור כך ועל הרוב הקונה הוא עני וקונה בכמה מאות חמץ כנהוג עתה שאין מוכרים בדבר מועט ושאר הוכחות טובא אלא נ"ל כיון דהאיסור מדרבנן הוא דמדאורייתא בביטול בעלמא סגי וכל אחד מבטל חמצו בלב שלם כמ"ש הפוסקים דצריך ליתן כל ממונו ולא יעבור על לא תעשה וכ"ש איסור חמור כזה ולא נשאר כ"א איסור דרבנן שצריך לבערו מן העולם הם אמרו והם אמרו להתיר מכירה זו כמו שכתב בתוספתא הביאה הב"י סי' הנזכר ואף על גב דכתב שם הב"י בשם בה"ג שסיים התוספתא זו ובלבד שלא יערים והב"ח כתב שם שהוא לשון התוספתא גופה כבר התעורר הב"י על זה והקשה הא ודאי הערמה היא זו ותירץ שלא ימכור על תנאי פ"י שלא יאמר ביטול המכירה בפירוש וכעין זה פ"י גם הב"ח שלא יעשה באופן שישראל כח הפסח כח הישראל על החמץ ע"י חותם וכיוצא עיין שם, אמנם כל זה להפקיע איסור דרבנן ומחמת הדחק שיהיה הפסד גדול ורב כשיבערו כל חמצם והתירו למכור באופן הנ"ל ולא פלוג בין רב למעט אבל להפקיע איסור דאורייתא דהיינו להאכיל בהמות ישראל חמץ בפסח לא מהני מכירה שידוע שכוונתו רק להאכיל ולא להניח כך והכי מוכח מלשון רש"י ז"ל שפ"י בשבת דף קל"ט ע"ב אהא דאמרינן התם הערמה דרבנן היא וז"ל הך הערמה לאו באיסור דאורייתא היא אלא באסורא דרבנן וכו' עכ"ל אלמא דאי דאורייתא לא הוה שרינן הערמה כלל ואפ"י בדרבנן אמרינן התם היכא דמוכחא מילתא אין מערימין והא דאמרינן התם דמטילין שכר בחולו של מועד ע"י הערמה התם נמי לאו דאורייתא הוא דלא מסר הכתוב מלאכת חוה"מ אלא לחכמים וכן יש לתרץ ההיא דכל כתבי דף קי"ז (ע"ב) וכן בגיטין דף ס"ה (ע"א) גבי מערימין על מעשר שני דהתם נמי בדרבנן היא עיין שם.

## הגר"א על ספרא דצניעותא

### ביאר הגאון פרקא תליתאה היא דיל בנ

פ"ט. והטעם כי לקיחת הכרבות ממנו בערמה היה כמו שרימה הנחש נלדו ס"ד כן רימה יעקב לעשו וכלל לה דיליה טיעקב סופרים דהרס ב"ב נח"ל ועשו של הנחש כנו"ש בס דף קי"ח ע"א בהג"ס ס"ח מה כתוב ואתרי כן יל"ה לחזיו וידו ההוא כו' עד סוף כל הג"ס ט"ס ולכן רמה טעמו חוכו **ע"ס** **טק"ב** התפל - וטבו נעל בגדו של הדי"ר שנהפחה חתה הנח' ולקח הס"ס והוא עשו והוא בגדי החזודות ולכן נעל יעקב ממנו ולקח הכרבות - ח"ס (ח"ס ע"ב ח"ס ט"ס) ענינהם בבדיחה והוא עוב ורע כנ"ל והוא נכס הנ"ל :

דלעילא דהטעמיד בשמא שלי"ם) ר"ל ז"א אשתמיד בשמא שלי"ם כמש"ל ויטעו הלקי וילר כו' משתיכ טוקבא ולכן נאמר ויחמד חלקים : ואמר (כד אשתל"י דא אשתלים דא). ר"ל ז"א וטוקביה אשתלמו פלטיפיהם נהחה שמימיין פלטיפיהם כהחה וכן כל תקיני גופיהם נעשין כהחה כח"ס כה"ר שם חו אהפסט ה"י הפלרת ואתחקן מעווי דדכור"ה כו' ואתפסט רחמי דדכור"ה ואתעבר ונקיב לסטרא. חת"י והקון מיעווי דטוקבא כסטרא דד"עא ואתחקנו מטעה כו' . ואמר (אשתלים דו"י לאשתלמא כלה) - שט"י נתקן כלה כמש"ל

ויאמר אלקים נעשה אדם : האדם לא כתיב יאלא אדם סתם לאפקא דלעיל' דאתעבי בשמא שלי"ם. כד אשתלים דא אשתלים דכר וטוקבא לאישלמא כלא . הו"ה סטרא דדכר . אלקים סטרא דטוקבא :

## **רמב"ם הלכות תלמוד תורה פרק ג הלכה י**

כל המשים על לבו שיעסוק בתורה ולא יעשה מלאכה ויתפרנס מן הצדקה הרי זה חלל את השם ובזה את התורה וכבה מאור הדת וגרם רעה לעצמו ונטל חייו מן העולם הבא, לפי שאסור ליהנות מדברי תורה בעולם הזה, אמרו חכמים כל הנהנה מדברי תורה נטל חייו מן העולם, ועוד צוו ואמרו אל תעשם עטרה להתגדל בהן ולא קרדום לחפור בהן, ועוד צוו ואמרו אהוב את המלאכה ושנא את הרבנות וכל תורה שאין עמה מלאכה סופה בטילה וגוררת עון, וסוף אדם זה שיהא מלסטם את הבריות.

### **שו"ת אגרות משה יורה דעה חלק ב סימן קטז**

#### **בענין קבלת פרס לפרנסתם מהכוללים כדי שיוכלו להתגדל בתורה**

הנה בדבר ת"ח הרוצים להתעסק בתורה ולהחכים בה בידיעת התורה בכמותה ואיכותה ונהנים לפרנסתם ממה שנוטלים פרס בכוללים וכן הרבנים הנוטלים פרס והמלמדים עם תלמידים וראשי הישיבות הנוטלים פרס לפרנסתם אם שפיר עבדי או שיש מה להרהר אחר זה ויהיה מדת חסידות שלא להתפרנס מזה אלא ממעשה ידיו. הנה ודאי שפיר עבדי דכן איפסק ברמ"א יו"ד סימן רמ"ו סעיף כ"א שאפילו בריא מותר ומותר לחכם ולתלמידיו לקבל הספקות מן הנותנים כדי להחזיק ידי לומדי תורה שע"ז יכולין לעסוק בתורה בריוח. והש"ך סק"כ הביא אף מהכ"מ שפסק כן אפילו אם נימא שאין כן דעת הרמב"ם משום שכל חכמי ישראל קודם זמן רבנו ואחריו נוהגין ליטול שכרם מהצבור, ואף אם לדינא הלכה כרמב"ם הסכימו כן חכמי הדורות משום עת לעשות לה' הפרו תורתך שאילו לא היה פרנסת הלומדים והמלמדים מצויה לא היו יכולין לטרוח בתורה כראוי והיתה התורה משתכחת מישראל ובהיותה מצויה יוכלו לעסוק ויגדיל תורה ויאדיר והוא לשון הכ"מ בפ"ג מת"ת ה"י בסופו. וכן הביא ממהרש"ל שכתב ואמת שאם לא כן כבר היתה בטלה תורה מישראל כי א"א לכל אדם לעסוק בתורה ולהחכים בה וגם להתפרנס ממעשה ידיו, ומסיק יותר דעון הוא בידו אם לא יקבל מאחרים אפילו יודע חכמה ומלאכה שיוכל ליגע בה ולהרויח כדי לפרנס את ביתו בוז יבוז לו באהבת התורה ולומדיה כי א"א שיבטל מלמודו עיין שם, ולכן הוא דין ברור ופשוט שנתקבל בכל הדורות אם מדינא אם מתקנה דעת לעשות לה' הפרו תורתך שמותר לעסוק בתורה ולהתפרנס מקבלת פרס או ממה שהוא מלמד תורה לאחרים או שהוא רב ומורה הוראה, ואין להמנע מזה אפילו ממדת חסידות. ואני אומר כי אלו המתחסדים מצד שיטת הרמב"ם הוא בעצת היצה"ר כדי שיפסיק מללמוד ויעסוק במלאכה ובמסחר וכדומה עד שלבסוף הם שוכחים אף המקצת שכבר למדו ואינו מניחם אף לקבוע זמן קצר לת"ת, כי אם הראשונים כמלאכים אמרו שא"א לעסוק בתורה ולהחכים בה כשיעשה מלאכה להתפרנס ממעשה ידיו, כ"ש בדורנו דור יתמא דיתמי וגם אין לנו הנשים צדקניות שירצו לסבול עוני ודחקות כבדורותם, שודאי א"א לשום אדם להתגאות ולומר שהוא יכול לעשות מלאכה ולהחכים בתורה. לכן לא יעלה על מחשבתך עצת היצה"ר שיש בקבלת פרס דלומדים בכוללים ופרס דרבנים ומלמדים וראשי ישיבה איזה חטא וחסרון מדת חסידות, שהוא רק להסית לפרוש מן התורה. ומי יתן והיו נמצאים אנשים

מתנדבים לפרנס הרבה ת"ח היו מתרבים בני תורה גדולי ישראל ובעלי הוראה כרצון השי"ת שאין לו בעולמו אלא ד' אמות של הלכה. ידידו מברכו בכוח"ט, משה פיינשטיין.

מכתבי חפץ חיים

## טז דונמא מדרכי אבי זצ"ל

מא. זכורני לפני שלשים שנה בערך בהתישבי בפולין והחלותי למכור ספרי מר אבי ז"ל, עיקר פריוני היה פבתי מדרשות של החסידים, שרובי הכתות שבהם הם בני תורה, והיו להוטים מאד לספרי מר אבי. ביחוד לספרי משנה ברורה שכפי מבטא שלהם הוא נחויץ להם כמו לחם, וכמעט כל חסיד קנה ספרינו, אך לעומת זה, הייתי שבע רונן מהם כמה פעמים, פשוט, כמה מהם יצאו לריב עמדי בחירופים, ובבזיון, לכמה גדולי עולם שבנו, ואם כי עניתי על חלומותיהם, ונצחתי אותם תמיד, אבל כמובן, לא הוצאתי כל רוחי, ללמד אותם, ולהבינם בינה, כי אורח אנכי ביניהם, והם הרבים. ידע הקורא כי לא כימים האלה, ימי התקופה שלפני שלשים שנה, כי החסידות עמדה אז בתקפה, ורבו בה עוי נפש [לפי לשון החסידים הוא עזות דקדושה].

והליטאים זה מעט התאחוז בפולין, ולא קרבו עוד זה לזה וכמעט לא הבינו איש שפת אחיו, וקרה, כי מר אבי בא לווארשא ובשאלו לפרנסתי, סיפרתי לו כי פודה אנכי בעיה, ובעיקר בשמיבלאך של חסידים, אמנם הודעתי לו צערי כי אצא כמה פעמים מהם, ופני פני להבים. מפני היחורופים והגירופים והחשדות. בזכרוננו, כי אמר לי: ווער הייסט דיר זיין א חכם, אונר גיין אין די שמיבלעך, איך האנדעל גיט מיט זיין, אונר דער פורא העלפט מיר בייא עולמיסע יידען, איך האב פיינט צוא האפען זיינדיג. אמנם

אח"כ דיבר טוב עליהם, ואמר, במשל, לפי הדין אם אחד  
רודף אחר חבירו להרגו מצילים אותו בנפשו כלומר רודפין  
אחר הרודף, ולפי הדין אם בשעה שרודף אחרי הרוצח שיבר  
כליו ג"כ פטור, ועוד יותר שאפילו שיבר כלים של כל אדם  
ג"כ פטור, שאל"כ אין לך אדם שרודף, פי' כשהוא בהול  
א"א לו להשגיח ולהתבונן.

זהנמשל הוא, כי מאת ד' היתה זאת להותיר לנו את  
החסידים בימינו אלה, מיר זיינען שלימעזאלניקעס, מיר  
באהאלטען זיך אין דיא לעכער און דיא חפשים שוכחי  
אלקים, טוען וואס זיי ווילען, דיא חסידים לאָזען זיך ניט,  
ובכמה מקומות ידם על העליונה און פארטרייבען דיא  
אפקורסים, מוזן כי מן השמים, נטעו בהם אמין רוח, וגם  
עזות ללחום מלחמת ד', אמת, מתוך רתחות לבם, פוגעין  
כמה פעמים באנשים ישרים, שאינם ניכרים להם, אבל מי  
גרע זאת מרודף ששיבר כלים של כל אדם, מחמת בהילותו  
שהוא פטור, וע"כ צריך לקבל, ולא לשטום אותם.

### רמב"ם הלכות חובל ומזיק פרק ח הלכה יד

מי שרדף אחר הרודף להושיע הנרדף ושבר את הכלים בין של רודף בין של כל אדם פטור, ולא מן הדין אלא  
תקנה היא שלא ימנע מלהציל או יתמהמה ויעיין בעת שירדוף.

### תלמוד בבלי מסכת חולין דף צא עמוד א

דאמר ר' יהושע ב"ל מלמד שהעלו אבק מרגלותם עד כסא הכבוד, כתיב הכא בהאבקו עמו, וכתיב התם וענן  
אבק רגליו.



## Riddles

### #1

#### תלמוד בבלי מסכת ברכות דף ב עמוד א

מאימתי קורין את שמע בערבין? - משעה שהכהנים נכנסים לאכול בתרומתן עד סוף האשמורה הראשונה, דברי רבי אליעזר. וחכמים אומרים: עד חצות. רבן גמליאל אומר: עד שיעלה עמוד השחר. מעשה ובאו בניו מבית המשתה, אמרו לו: לא קרינו את שמע. - אמר להם: אם לא עלה עמוד השחר חייבין אתם לקרות. ולא זו בלבד אמרו, אלא כל מה שאמרו חכמים עד חצות מצותן עד שיעלה עמוד השחר; הקטר חלבים ואברים מצותן עד שיעלה עמוד השחר, וכל הנאכלים ליום אחד מצותן עד שיעלה עמוד השחר, אם כן, למה אמרו חכמים עד חצות? כדי להרחיק אדם מן העבירה.

#### שולחן ערוך אורח חיים הלכות פסח סימן תפט סעיף א

ואם שכח לספור בתחלת הלילה סופר והולך כל הלילה.

### #2

#### שולחן ערוך אורח חיים הלכות פסח סימן תפט סעיף ב

והמדקדקים אינם סופרים עד צאת הכוכבים וכן ראוי לעשות.

## Rabbi Yaakov Feitman

[קינה כ"ה – 'מי יתן ראשי מים'] וכי אין להוסיף מועד שבר ותבערה.

פעם בא א' לפני מרן הגרי"ז זיע"א בהצעה לקבוע יום תענית וכדו' לדורות לזכר **השוואה**, וענהו מרן זיע"א שזה אסור, ופתח לו מרן זיע"א **קינות** לת"ב בקינה המתחלת 'מי יתן ראשי מים', [אחר הקינה על חורבן ביהמ"ק כי הורס] שבו מקונן המקונן על חורבן קהילות אשפירה, ורמזיא, ומגנצא, שאירע בחודשים אייר סיון כמבואר שם, ושם כתוב בזה"ל 'וכי אין להוסיף מועד שבר ותבערה, ואין להקדים זולתי לאחרה, תחת כן היום לויתי אעוררה וכו'', ופירוש הדברים שאל תשאל מה עניין חורבן קהילות לת"ב הרי זה אירע בזמן אחר, ולמה אקבע קינה לזה בתשעה באב ולא בזמן שקראו הצרות הנ"ל, ע"ז משיב המקונן שאין להוסיף מועד שבר ותבערה תחת כן היום לויתי אעוררה, [היינו] שאין לקבוע יום מיוחד לזה ולכן רק בדרך אגב הוא מזכירם בת"ב. הרי מפורש מפהם של ראשונים מתקני הקינה שאיסור יש בדבר<sup>2</sup>.  
(כתבי תלמידים)

### נפש הרב עמוד קצז

משנות **השוואה** ואילך העלו כמה פעמים את ההצעה לקבוע **יום** אבל מיוחד לחורבן אירופה, ותמיד היתה תשובת רבנו עפ"י מה שאנחנו אומרים בקינה לט"ב שנתחברה על קדושי אשפירה ורמזיא ומגנצא (המתחילה מי יתן ראשי מים), וכי אין להוסיף מועד שבר ותבערה, ואין להקדים זולתי לאחרה, תחת כן היום (בט"ב) לוייתי אעוררה, ואספדה ואילילה ואבכה בנפש מרה וכו'. כלומר, דהאבלות דט"ב כוללת בתוכה

לא רק האבלות על חורבן הבית, אלא על כל הפוגרומים ועל כל החורבנות של כל שנות הגלות כולה.

### משנה ברורה סימן תרצז ס"ק ב

מי שאירע לו נס באדר וקבל ע"ע לעשות תמיד יום משתה ושמחה אם אירע בשנה פשוטה עושה בראשון ואם אירע במעוברת בשני יעשה בשני. ואותה סעודה שעושין בשביל הנס היא סעודת מצוה דכל סעודה שעושין לזכר נפלאות ד' הוא סעודת מצוה:

**Hanoch Teller**

## **משנה ברורה סימן תרצז ס"ק ב**

מי שאירע לו נס באדר וקבל ע"ע לעשות תמיד יום משתה ושמחה אם אירע בשנה פשוטה עושה בראשון ואם אירע במעוברת בשני יעשה בשני. ואותה סעודה שעושין בשביל הנס היא סעודת מצוה דכל סעודה שעושין לזכר נפלאות ד' הוא סעודת מצוה:

Rabbi Yitzchak Hutner זצ"ל  
prepared for publication by  
Rabbi Chaim Feuerman and Rabbi Yaakov Feitman

## "Holocaust"

### A Rosh Yeshivah's Response

#### § The Questions

(1) Is the term שואה, *Shoah*, (lit. Holocaust) acceptable in describing the *Churban*, the destruction of European Jewry during World War II?

(2) Should the Holocaust be taught separately, as many schools are now doing or planning to do, or should it be incorporated into the regular Jewish History courses and taught as part of the studies on this particular time period?

(3) If the latter, where indeed does the Holocaust "fit in" with the rest of Jewish history?

#### § The Response

In order to determine the appropriateness of any term, one must first thoroughly understand what one is trying to define. Therefore, before we attempt to designate a name for the

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In response to a request for guidance in establishing criteria for a Holocaust curriculum in *yeshivos* and day schools, Rav Hutner delivered a *shiur* (discourse) to a gathering of approximately one hundred *menahelim* (principals and educational administrators). The *shiur* focused both on specific questions raised by the *menahelim* and on significant aspects of the *Churban* that were hitherto either little known or studiously avoided. When the above authorized English rendition of Rav Hutner's *shiur* first appeared in *The Jewish Observer* in October 1977, it inspired a large volume of letters, questioning and challenging, much in the manner of the traditional oral *shiur*. In January 1978, these were published, followed by a *chazarah* — an in-depth analysis and review of the original *shiur*, with some expanded clarifications, prepared by Rabbi Yaakov Feitman. Some excerpts of the *chazarah* are presented here in the form of numbered footnotes.

shattering events of 1939-1945, we must examine the significance of those events in their historical context. For our present purpose of identification only, we shall refer to the term "Holocaust" only when we discuss the Nazi destruction of European Jewry during World War II. As we shall see, this in no way signifies the acceptability of this term.

It should be made clear at the outset that we shall not merely discuss history this evening. Our orientation toward Jewish history must reflect an attitude toward *kedushah* — approaching that which is most holy and sacred. This sanctity stems from the fact that "יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאוֹרְיֵיתָא חֵד הוּא" — *the Jewish people and the Torah are one*" (Zohar, Acharei Mos 73), thus intimately relating the proper study of Jewish history with the study of Torah. Yet, unfortunately, just as in the study of Torah itself we are familiar with the phenomenon of "מְגַלְה פְּנִים בְּתוֹרָה שְׁלֵא בְּהִלְכָה" — *those who distort and misinterpret the meaning of the Torah*" (see Avos 3:11), so is there an even more subtle danger from those who distort the meaning of Jewish history. It will be our task this evening to untangle the web of distortions about recent Jewish history, which has already been woven, and uncover the Torah perspective which has been hidden from us.

To be sure, it will not be easy to regain this perspective. The thoughts that we will explore this evening will be difficult to digest because of our long subsistence upon the forced diet of public opinion. The creators of the powerful force of public opinion are beyond the realm of our control and the mind-numbing results of their influence are largely out of our hands. In order to achieve any hold upon the truth, we will first have to free ourselves from the ironclad grip of their puissance and open our minds and hearts to the sometimes bitter pill of truth.

## § The Origins of the Term

As in all quests for the truth, we must return to origins. The term *Shoah* was coined by the founders of *Yad Vashem* in Jerusalem, since they were convinced that the tragedy of European Jewry was so unique in its proportions and dimensions that no previous phrase could encompass its meaning. Undoubtedly, to a certain degree they were correct, for indeed the destruction of hundreds of thousands of Jewish communities was unique in its proportions and dimensions. Yet, by singling out the quantitative differences of this particular *Churban*, those who sought a new terminology for these events missed the essence of

their uniqueness. It is not just the proportions and dimensions of the Holocaust which define its quintessence, but its establishment of a new and significant pattern in Jewish history. At the same time it must be stressed that this pattern, far from coincidental, is intricately related to the basic pattern of Jewish history itself and profoundly affects our entire vision of recent history and indeed current events.<sup>1</sup>

By placing the Holocaust in its historical perspective, we shall uncover two new directions in recent Jewish history with reference to the gentile persecution of Jews. Whereas our entire history has been replete with various instances of persecution by different civilizations, empires and nations — varying only in intensity, means and ferocity — recent history has shifted dramatically in two new areas.

### § The Era of Disappointment

The first of these epochal changes involves the shift from generations of gentile mistreatment of Jews, which, if unwelcome, was nevertheless expected and indeed announced by our oppressors, to an era where promises of equality were made and then broken, rights were granted and then revoked, benevolence was anticipated, only to be crushed by cruel malevolence.

This change in our historical pattern, although it has hitherto gone largely unnoticed, is nevertheless a seminal movement in our progress toward *Acharis HaYomim* (the End of Days), the

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1. To place something into a larger context is not to remove its uniqueness. Every major historical event has a character of its own, yet, as the article explains, it must belong to the pattern as well. Many note that the *Churban* Europe was singular in that it was the only time a complete apparatus was designed and put into motion whose sole purpose was a Haman-like: לְהָרוֹג וּלְאַבֵּד — total destruction of a nation from young to old; men, women, and children. Surely this is the determining factor in assigning a "character" to the events of World War II. Where else had centuries-old communities been so totally decimated that they could never be rebuilt again!

At the same time, a careful reading shows that the *Rosh Yeshivah* has dealt with this aspect of *Churban* Europe, carefully placing it in its *tochachah* context. Only here does the Torah mention the terrifying punishment of becoming consumed by our enemies. This reference is to the words וְהָיָה לְאֹכֶל — "and they will become consumed" — which is the direct follow-up to "fall prey to the lure of strange nations and trust in them." Such a dire prediction, as we must realize today, exactly corresponds to *Churban* Europe down to the most literal meaning of those awesome words וְהָיָה לְאֹכֶל, as survivors have painfully attested. Thus, in its execution, this *Churban* was unique because of the extent and mechanics of its destruction. However, to dwell on this point, in seeking to plumb the depths of the *Churban*'s meaning for us, is to settle for a shallow exploration when there are miles of unfathomed churning waters to probe.

inevitable culmination of history in absolute redemption.

The recent examples of these disappointments may be readily brought to mind, and indeed some are yet fresh with the pain of unfulfilled anticipation:

— The French Revolution, in that first eighteenth-century burst of dedication to equality and freedom, had granted equal rights to Jews *as citizens*, although nothing to Jews *as Jews*. The Treaty of Versailles had gone even further and granted rights to minorities *as minorities*, including Jews *as Jews*. Of course, these promises were later nullified or retracted, and heard from no more.

— In Russia, too, Lenin signed in 1917 the Soviet Minority Rights Law, granting a kind of Jewish self-government in the form of a Jewish soviet. This, too, was soon abolished in the 1920's by Stalin, dashing those bright hopes that had been kindled.

— England, too, entered the twentieth century by granting and then revoking a promise made to Jews in the form of the Balfour Declaration. In November 1917, Jews danced in the streets because Britain had declared that "His Majesty's Government views with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people." The declaration was accepted at the Conference of San Remo in 1920; yet, by June 1922, Winston Churchill, the British Colonial secretary, was qualifying that the declaration did not mean the "imposition of a Jewish nationality upon the inhabitants as a whole, but the further development of the existing Jewish community." Of course, a long and bitter period followed where a British hand held the gun of the age-old oppressor of Israel.

Thus it becomes clear that the trend of anti-Jewish phenomena of the first half of the twentieth century was characterized, not so much by persecutions and pogroms as in the past, but by the legalized retraction of existing laws granting sundry privileges. Although these reversals are dramatic and telling enough of themselves, they pale in the face of the retractions and total turnabouts made by the Germans in the 1920's and 30's.

— On March 11, 1812, Prince Karl August von Hardenberg had issued his famous edict emancipating Prussian Jews, but a century later, in 1919, as a supplement to the German translation of the so-called *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, Gottfried Zur Beek (Ludwig Miller) used Hardenberg's definition of a Jew in

drafting proposals for anti-Jewish legislation. These proposals culminated in 1935 in the so-called "Nuremberg Laws" which legitimized anti-Semitism and legalized anti-Jewish bigotry. These *Rassengesetze*, which forbade marriage between Germans and Jews and disenfranchised non-Aryans, exactly paralleled earlier rights and privileges legally granted to Jews. Thus the cycle was diabolically complete. What had been given legally was equally as legally taken away, leaving the Jewish people with a growing and ultimately inexorable disillusionment with the promises and even legal enactments of the gentile world.\*

Let us restate clearly the pattern we have discovered in recent Jewish history: Jews have always been beaten by gentiles; only the means and instruments of torment have varied. The innovation of recent times has been that for long periods Jews were deluded into trust in the gentiles by a series of laws and regulations in their behalf, only to have that trust shattered by the rescission of those very laws. This historical period culminated in the Holocaust, the largest-scale annihilation of a people in history, yet resulting not from lawless hordes but flowing directly from legalized and formal governmental edicts. The end result of this period for the Jewish psyche was a significant — indeed, crucial — one. From trust in the gentile world, the Jewish nation was cruelly brought to a repudiation of that trust. In a relatively short historical period, disappointment in the non-Jewish world was deeply imprinted upon the Jewish soul.<sup>2</sup>

\* Of course many works have been devoted solely to the German anti-Jewish legislation which preceded and legalized the murder that was to follow. An idea of the vastness of the literature may be gotten from the fact that *Die Gesetzgebung Adolf Hitlers* (Hitler's Legislation) takes up thirty-three volumes (ed. Werner Hoche, 1933-39). As early as May 27, 1924, the Nazis introduced a motion to "place all members of the Jewish race under special legislation (*sonderrecht*)." And from then on, every bit of terror perpetrated against the Jews was, with German thoroughness, preceded by meticulously worded legislation. It is perhaps significant that where anti-Jewish violence broke out in German streets before laws had been enacted to that effect, Wilhelm Frick, Minister of the Interior, and Reichsbank President Hjalmar Schacht condemned and ordered a stop to the "illegal actions" (see Lucy S. Dawidowicz's *The War Against the Jews*, New York: Bantam Books edition, 1976, p. 83).

2. It has been pointed out that there have been periods of disappointment in erstwhile benevolent gentiles, long before the *Churban* Europe epoch. Pharaoh, Cyrus and others have been mentioned. However, as in many aspects of Jewish history, a distinction must be made between Biblical and post-Biblical times.

From the time of the close of Scriptures until the 1930's, no such comprehensive retraction of previously granted rights had ever taken place. Of course, individual monarchs had, for their own personal gain, temporarily

As we delve more deeply into the Torah view of these awesome events, we shall find that they certainly are not coincidental, but reflect the greater cosmic plan of the Creator of the universe. If we find in world history an era where Jews move from the expectation of persecution by gentiles to a period of disappointment in those very people, this change must be reflected in the Torah. As we said earlier, since the Jewish people and the Torah are one, what happens in one must have a counterpart in the other. Therefore, let us study together the passage where this monumental turn of events is reflected:

וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה, הֲנֹךְ שָׁכַב עִם אֲבֹתֶיךָ, וְקָם הָעָם הַזֶּה וְזָנָה אַחֲרֵי אֱלֹהֵי גֹבַר הָאָרֶץ ... וְהִסְתַּרְתִּי פְנֵי מֵהֶם, וְהָיָה לָאֵכָל, וּמִצָּאָהוּ רָעוֹת רַבּוֹת וְצָרוֹת; וְאָמַר בְּיוֹם הַהוּא, הֲלֹא עַל כִּי אֵין אֱלֹהֵי בְּקִרְבִּי מִצָּאוֹנֵי הָרָעוֹת הָאֵלֶּה.

*And Hashem said to Moshe: "Behold you will soon pass on and this nation will arise and fall prey to the lure of strange nations and trust in them ... And I will hide My face from them, and they will become as food [for their enemies], and great evils and troubles will come upon them; then shall they declare: 'It is because my G-d has not been in my midst that these evils have befallen me'" (Devarim 31:16-17).*

We must first establish what is meant by the phrase אֱלֹהֵי גֹבַר הָאָרֶץ. It should be noted that we translated it as "the lure of strange nations and trust in them," and not as the "worship of strange gods." This interpretation follows Onkelos, who translates אֲרֵעָא אֲרֵעָא, literally "the temptation of the nations." This translation, rather than the more obvious one of "idol worship," reflects the sense of the passage, for we know (Yoma 69b) that the *yeitzer hara* for idolatry has long been eliminated by the *Anshei Knesses Hagedolah* (the Men of the Great Assembly). We can only appreciate the gravity of the sin of straying after "the lure of strange nations" when we realize that only here does the Torah mention the terrifying punishment of becoming consumed by our enemies. Even the *tochachos* – the

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granted certain privileges to Jews and later revoked them. But the total pattern of official, legislated rights being eradicated by formal legislation, as discussed in detail in the article, is a phenomenon uniquely epitomized by Nazi Germany.

portions of the Torah where G-d rebukes His nation for its sins and warns of the terrible consequences of evil — do not allude to such a dire punishment. The “great evils and troubles” which are the direct result of trusting and relying upon the gentile world signify the impetus for the next immediate stage in Jewish history, a unique point in the *teshuvah*-repentance process: *Then shall they declare: it is because my G-d has not been in my midst that these evils have befallen me.*<sup>3</sup>

## ☞ The First Steps Toward Teshuvah

When we now carefully study the Torah passages quoted, we will be struck by the Jews’ response to the “great evils and troubles” which befell them. We know that the *viduy* — enumeration of sins — associated with true repentance necessitates the declaration that “I have sinned” in addition to the specifics of the transgression. Here, there seems to be *teshuvah* (repentance); yet, no real admission of wrongdoing has been made. In effect, what we encounter in this passage, unique in the Torah, is a kind of *teshuvah*/non-*teshuvah*, a leaning toward *teshuvah*, yet not quite reaching the point of *teshuvah gemurah*, the complete penitence required by the Torah.

The *Ramban*, in his explication of this passage, grants us the key to this paradox. He explains that it reflects the very first stirrings of *teshuvah* in its nascency. The lowest rung of evil is the disavowal of wrongdoing. Thus, as *Ramban* quotes, “Behold I do judgment with you for saying ‘I have not sinned’ ” (*Yirmiyahu* 2:35), because this is the total rejection of guilt. We know that the essence of *teshuvah* is *viduy*, admission of wrongdoing and enumeration of sins. Yet, the prophet proclaims that punishment

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3. There are two forms of idolatry: following the gods of strange nations and falling prey to the lure of those nations themselves. We learn from the *Targum* upon the words *וְנָבַר הָאֱלֹהִים* which is: *טַעֲוֹת עַמִּי אֲרַעָא*, that in *Chumash*, what might be taken to be pure idol worship *וְנָבַר הָאֱלֹהִים* — in truth refers to the temptation to follow the ways of the nation itself.

Not elaborated upon in the article is the fact that this *Targum* translation is not limited to this passage in *Vayeilech*. The *Targum* in general, except for the phrase *וְנָבַר הָאֱלֹהִים* in the Ten Commandments, is *טַעֲוֹת עַמִּי אֲרַעָא*. Thus, the significance of the *Targum* and the *Rosh Yeshivah’s* interpretation hold true throughout. The phrase in the article, “reflects the sense of the passage,” was used only because the wider ramifications of this *Targum* were not under discussion.

Why indeed is the *Targum* different in the Ten Commandments? The *Rosh Yeshivah* discussed this publicly on another occasion (one evening in the *succah*). The essence of his talk at that time was that since the terrible decree of *galus* was not given until after the occurrence of the *Meraglim* — the spies who

will not come because one has not said, "I have sinned," but because — infinitely worse — one has declared, "I have not sinned." Once the repudiation of innocence has been accomplished, the *teshuvah* process has begun. Even if one has not yet arrived at the positive point of *viduy*, the implicit significance of no longer claiming innocence is that the road to repentance has been cleared and one is ready for formal acceptance of guilt and positive commitment of the future. This, then, is a stage of *teshuvah*, a kind of *teshuvah*-readiness that *Knesses Yisrael* will reach in future days before it achieves total repentance.

This stage of *teshuvah* will come about as a direct result of the "great evils and troubles" which — as we interpreted according to *Onkelos* — come upon them because of their trust in the nations. The effect of the great calamities of those days, far from merely being a punishment for wrongdoing, will be to correct the previously misplaced trust and prepare the way for true *teshuvah*. As we have seen, the "great evils and troubles" did indeed come upon us from those very gentile nations who had gained our confidence and trust.

Thus, there is revealed to us both the chronology and the impetus for the *teshuvah* of *Acharis HaYamim* (the End of Days). The very first step will be reached by *Klal Yisrael* through their very repudiation of their earlier infatuations with gentile ways. In our terms, this is when the Jewish people move toward repentance because of disappointment in the gentiles. This can only come about through promises rescinded, rights revoked, and anticipations aborted. The pain and anguish at the time of these shattered illusions is all too real and tragic; yet the events themselves serve to bring us to the recognition that "it is because

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misled *Klal Yisrael* concerning the Land of Israel — which was a direct outgrowth of the shattering of the *Luchos* (Tablets of Law), we must distinguish between two completely separate times in Jewish history. At the moment of the giving of the *Luchos*, there was not yet a decree of exile upon the Jewish people. When the Jews heard the first two of the Ten Commandments, they were not yet destined for *galus*. Therefore, the *Targum* on אַחֲרֵי כֵּן אֱלֹהִים אָמְרִים could not refer to the *galus* phenomena and was an exhortation against paganism itself. Only later with the pronouncement that the Jewish people would be "strewn among the nations" (see *Tehillim* 106:23-27, that the decree of Exile came directly from the sin of the *Meraglim*) did the danger of "following the lure of the nations" become an actual threat. Therefore, only in translating the Ten Commandments themselves does the *Targum* refer to literal idol worship. From the moment those first unique *Luchos* lay shattered, our history took a different turn and our concerns became involved with assimilation among people rather than the trepidation of falling into idol worship.

my G-d has not been in my midst that these evils have befallen me." This the Ramban sees as the necessary prerequisite to the final step of *teshuvah* when "they will add to their earlier regret the complete confession and total penitence."

### ☞ Children of the Violators

Our new understanding of the essence of our era allows us some comprehension of the phenomenon of our "age of *baalei teshuvah* (returnees to Judaism)." It has oft been noted that *teshuvah* seems to "be in the air," and indeed the many movements currently succeeding to an unprecedented degree in bringing Jews closer to Judaism are but a reflection of the fact that the very climate is permeated with a kind of *teshuvah*-readiness. This climate is the result of the disappointment in gentiles, which demolished the first stumbling-block to *teshuvah*, and forced the recognition that "it is because my G-d has not been in my midst" that the awesome events of recent times have occurred. Of course, this is not to say that each individual *baal teshuvah* has experienced a personal disappointment in gentiles. There are characteristics and trends common to an entire epoch that eventually affect each individual in his own way.

I had occasion to elaborate on this point when by a combination of circumstances I found myself in Eretz Yisrael, in the company of a group of extreme leftists on Ben-Gurion's *yahrzeit*. I was asked to say a few words in honor of the day and felt it worthwhile to relate the following to them:

*Ben-Gurion often used to tell people that now was not the proper time to resolve the controversy between the religious and the anti-religious. When opportunities arose for resolving such issues, he made sure they were tabled until a future time. Undoubtedly, his reasoning — conscious or subconscious — was that time was on the side of the secularists. The experience of Ben-Gurion's generation was that the number of observant Jews was steadily decreasing, and a Judaism empty of Torah seemed on the ascent.*

*In so calculating, Ben-Gurion made a grave error. In that group of leftists, there were representatives of many prewar cities from various types of Jewish communities all over Europe. I asked each of the assembled in turn, "Do you recall a *mechalal Shabbos* — a non-observant Jew — in your city who had a son who became *Shomer Shabbos*?" Each of them answered with the same emphatic "No." Yet, I pointed*

out to them, today there are thousands of baalei teshuvah whose parents knew virtually nothing of their faith. Ben-Gurion in his time seemed to be correct, but he could only calculate chronological time and knew nothing of the eschatological movement of generations. The era of disappointment tore a generation from the clutches of the way for an era of true teshuvah. (אַלְהֵי נִבְרַר הָאָרֶץ) (Targum for טָעוֹת עַמִּי אֲרָעָא)

So much for the first new direction in Jewish history in relation to gentile persecutions.

## § Public Opinion vs. Truth

Before we explore the second of the new directions in detail, it is important to establish a clear distinction between any common approach to world events and *daas Torah*, a Torah view of the world. "Public opinion" and any but the Torah approach is by definition colored by outside forces, subjective considerations and the falsehood of secular perspective.

An example of how public opinion can be molded — indeed, warped — at the whim of powerful individuals can be taken from a study of Russian history textbooks published during the respective reigns of Lenin, Stalin and Khrushchev. During each period, the textbooks hail the then-current leader to the exclusion of all his predecessors as the savior of Russia and hero of his people. Undoubtedly, "public opinion" during each period, once children's minds had been suitably molded, reflected the thinking and wishes of the state. While more subtle in form, this ability to direct public opinion exists in democratic countries as well. Thus, we already pointed out at the beginning that we must make every effort to free ourselves from the powerful grip of public opinion, and must be ever on our guard that our opinions of the true nature of world events be shaped only by Torah views seen through Torah eyes.

Sadly, even in our own circles, the model for shaping public opinion lies in the hands of the State of Israel. An appropriate example of this dangerous process of selectively "rewriting" history may be found in the extraordinary purging from the public record of all evidence of the culpability of the forerunners of the State in the tragedy of European Jewry, and the substitution in its place of factors inconsequential to the calamity which ultimately occurred.

To cover its own contribution to the final catastrophic

events, those of the State in a position to influence public opinion circulated the notorious canard that *Gedolei Yisrael* were responsible for the destruction of many communities because they did not urge emigration. This charge is, of course, a gross distortion of the truth, and need not be granted more dignity than it deserves by issuing a formal refutation. However, at the same time as the State made certain to include this charge as historical fact in every account of the war years, it successfully sought to omit any mention of its own contribution to the then-impending tragedy. What the State omitted in its own version of history is the second of the above-mentioned new directions in recent Jewish history. It is that phenomenon which we must now examine.

### § East and West Meet

For centuries, indeed millennia, gentile persecution of Jews took one of two forms, but the two never worked simultaneously. Either Jewry had to contend with the *Yishmael* nations of the East or was persecuted and expelled by the nations of the West. Never in our history did the nations of the Occident join forces with those of the East for the purpose of destroying Jews.

With World War II, this long epoch was brought to a crude and malevolent close. In 1923 Hitler wrote *Mein Kampf* spelling out his belief that the Jewish people should be wiped out. This was read by Haj Amin el-Husseinu, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, who joined with Hitler to found one of the most significant alliances of modern times. There is ample documentation that not only did the Mufti visit Hitler and his top aides on a number of occasions, but indeed with Adolph Eichmann he visited the Auschwitz gas chamber incognito to check on its efficiency.\*

The extent of the Mufti's influence upon the Nazi forces may be seen in a crucial decision made by Hitler at the height of the war. Railroad trains were much in demand by the Axis, and Hitler's troops badly needed reinforcements in Russia. Yet, soon after he landed in Berlin in November 1941, the Mufti demanded that all available resources be used to annihilate Jews. The choice:

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\* Detailed documentation of the Mufti's activities may be found in Simon Wiesenthal's *Grand Mufti — Agent Extraordinary of the Axis* (who relates that Haj Amin also visited Majdanek); Maurice Pearlman's *Mufti of Jerusalem*; and, most recently (1965), Joseph B. Schechtman's *The Mufti and the Fuehrer* (translator's note, Y.F.).

*Juden nach Auschwitz* or *Soldaten nach Stalingrad* was to be resolved his way ... Two months later (January 20, 1942) at the Wannsee Conference, the formal decision was made to annihilate all Jews who had survived the ghettos, forced labor, starvation, and disease.<sup>4</sup>

Of course, the Mufti was serving his own perverted fears, which were the influx of millions of Jews into Palestine and the destruction of the Mufti's personal empire. Yet, there can be no doubt that through their symbiotic relationship, Hitler and the Mufti each helped the other accomplish his own evil goal. Eichmann simply wanted to kill Jews; the Mufti wanted to make sure they never reached Palestine. In the end, the "Final Solution" was the same ... At one point, Eichmann even seemed to blame the Mufti for the entire extermination plan, when he declared, "I am a personal friend of the Grand Mufti. We have promised that no European Jew would enter Palestine any more."\*

### ☞ The Mufti's First Step

The Mufti's trip to Berlin was the first ominous step in the joining of the anti-Jews of the East with those of the West to accomplish their diabolic design. This second of the new directions in Jewish history reached a climax of sorts in 1975 when Yassir Arafat, avowed destroyer of the State of Israel, stood before the United Nations, and received a standing ovation by nations of East and West alike.

From the purely secular historical standpoint, there is no connection between the two directions we have discussed. The Moslem world never granted privileges that it later retracted, and

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\* Quoted by Pearlman, pp. 71-72 and Schechtman, p. 158.

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4. Questions have been raised concerning the Mufti's actual influence upon the Nazis and the degree of his power even among the Arabs. First of all, the article in no way exonerates, by one iota, the culpability of the Germans themselves. The Nazis surely needed no instructions in anti-Semitism nor outside motivation for their evil plans.

Even had the "Final Solution" been implemented without the Mufti's urging, however, there can be no question that in a war which was being inexorably won by the Allies, precious time was lost by the Mufti's machinations behind the scenes to speed up the murderous process. As to the Mufti's influence among the Arabs in the 1930's and early 1940's, a glance at almost any page of Schechtman's or Pearlman's books will be eye opening. As to his prestige among the British, it is enough to quote the British Secretary for the Colonies, who announced at the St. James Conference of February 7, 1939, concerning a thorny issue, "I shall have to consult my Mufti — the Prime Minister" (Schechtman, p. 89).

thus never disappointed the Jews in its midst. What, then, joins the two trends which seem to have coincided so significantly in our generation? A passage from the Torah can give us the answer:

וַיֵּלֶךְ עֵשָׂו אֶל יִשְׁמָעֵאל, וַיִּקַּח אֶת מַחֲלַת בַּת יִשְׁמָעֵאל בֶּן אַבְרָהָם  
אָחוֹת נְבִיּוֹת עַל נָשָׂיו לֹא לְאִשָּׁה.

*And Eisav went unto Yishmael and took Machlas the daughter of Yishmael, Avraham's son, the sister of Nevayos, in addition to his other wives, for a wife (Bereishis 28:9).*

Since the actions of the Patriarchs are a sign of what would happen later to the children and every action in *Chumash* is eternally significant, we may learn from this passage that it was inevitable for the forces of Eisav and Yishmael to combine. We are now living in the midst of that pivotal moment in Jewish history.

It should be manifest, however, that until the great public pressures for the establishment of a Jewish State, the Mufti had no interest in the Jews of Warsaw, Budapest, or Vilna. Once the Jews of Europe became a threat to the Mufti because of their imminent influx into the Holy Land, the Mufti in turn became for them the *מְלַאךְ הַמָּוֶת*, the incarnation of the Angel of Death. Years ago, it was still easy to find old residents of Yerushalayim who remembered the cordial relations they had maintained with the Mufti in the years before the impending creation of a Jewish State. Once the looming reality of the State of Israel was before him, the Mufti spared no effort at influencing Hitler to murder as many Jews as possible in the shortest amount of time. This shameful episode, where the founders and early leaders of the State were clearly a factor in the destruction of many Jews, has been completely suppressed and expunged from the record. Thus it is that our children who study the history of that turbulent era are taught the fabrication that *Gedolei Yisrael* share responsibility for the destruction of European Jewry and learn nothing of the guilt of others who are now enshrined as heroes.<sup>5</sup>

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5. It is painful to be confronted by the accusation of Zionist leaders that our Rabbinical leaders of the previous generation were contributing factors in trapping European Jewry in the Hitler-purgatory in which they perished. They claim that these Torah giants, the selfless leaders of *Klal Yisrael*, counseled their followers not to abandon their homes and traditional surroundings.

Rabbi Hutner has pointed out that, unpleasant as it may be, this is merely an illustration of the pernicious molding of public opinion by those upon whose

We may now return to the original questions. "Is the term *Shoah* acceptable?" The answer is CLEARLY NOT. The word *Shoah* in Hebrew, like "Holocaust" in English, implies an isolated catastrophe, unrelated to anything before or after it, such as an earthquake or tidal wave. As we have seen, this approach is far from the Torah view of Jewish history. The *Churban* of European Jewry is an integral part of our history and we dare not isolate and deprive it of the monumental significance it has for us.

In truth, the isolation of one part of Jewish history from another, the separation of one part of Torah from another, has caused much of the inability to deal with events such as *Churban* Europe. Much of our education has been permeated with the "sunny side of Judaism," resulting from cowardice and failure of will to deal with the misfortunes of *Klal Yisrael*. Yet, here is one of the sources of our uniqueness. We are happy to teach our children of our "chosenness" in *mitzvos* and our closeness to G-d. Yet, at our peril, we ignore the fact that there are three different portions of *tochachah*, rebuke and promise of punishment in the Torah (*Bechukosai*, *Ki Savo*, and *Nitzavim-Vayeilech*). We must learn these parts of the Torah with our children as well as the "sunnier" portions. These portions must become as much a part of the Jewish psyche as the *mitzvos* we strain so hard to imbue. Thus, when a Jewish child — or indeed, adult — hears for the first time of *Yiddishe tzaros* (the suffering of the Jewish People), he will not be shocked by a contradiction to what he has learned, but will see the living proof of the Torah he has absorbed.

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shoulders a causal relationship to the Hitler-cataclysm has recently been documented, who then found themselves in a position to poison Jewish minds and hearts by indicting our great Rabbinical figures.

Should one ask why we suddenly seem so preoccupied with the causes of this latest catastrophe in Jewish history, and concerning earlier ones (such as Chmelnitzky's pogroms of *Tach V'Tat* — 1648) we offer no such causal relationships, the answer is simple. The *Rosh Yeshivah's* discourse was in no way an exercise in seeking to place blame, but to remove it from those who deserve better from us. Concerning the terrible events of *Tach V'Tat*, it has never dawned upon a single Jewish mind and is unthinkable to place blame at the doorstep of the *Shach*, the *Taz*, or other *gedolim* of that period. Suddenly, in the twentieth century, it has become fashionable to blame the true Torah *manhigim* (leaders) of the age. This is unprecedented in Jewish history. Never before was the Jewish mind poisoned with distrust of his *gedolim*, thus undermining the entire time-honored edifice of "ask your elders and they will tell you."

Some have commented that there seems to be a lack of *ahavas Yisrael* (love for

Thus we have exposed graphically the mistake of the founders of *Yad Vashem* who felt compelled to find a new term for the destruction of European Jewry because of its proportions and dimensions. Ironically, the artificially contrived term they finally applied empties the *Churban* of its profound meaning and significance. In appropriating a term that signifies isolation and detachment from history, they did not realize that the significance of the Holocaust is precisely in its intricate relationship with what will come after. The pattern of Jewish history throughout the ages is גְּלוּת וְאִוֶּלָה, *Destruction, Exile, Redemption*, and no event requires new categories or definition.<sup>6</sup> The answers to questions 2 and 3 are therefore obvious and need no further elaboration.

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the Jewish people) displayed in the article. To be sure, they are correct. For those for whom *ahavas Yisrael* is identified with equanimity towards the undercutting of *kavod gedolim* (honor of great men), the criticism is quite fitting. However, they should be aware that the discourse was not meant for them in the first place.

It should be added that nowhere is there mention of terms such as "punishment" or "guilt" in discussing the trend of trusting in the gentile world until that trust was forever shattered. Of course, there does exist a causal relationship here but not one of sin-retribution. A simple example may be taken from the beginning of the Book of *Shemos*. The Jewish people multiply and fruitfully bear many children, and Pharaoh responds by torturing them with even more arduous labors. A number of levels may be seen to be operating simultaneously. The fact that the Jews are fulfilling the *mitzvah* of "be fruitful and multiply" is a direct cause of Pharaoh's treacherous new work orders. Although there is an obvious cause-and-effect at work here, surely the enslavement is not a punishment for the immediate cause, the fruitfulness ... Cause and effect, yes; sin and punishment, no.

6. Like human beings, words have a *יהוס ברין* — a history, a source, and indeed a genealogy. As stated, the word to be substituted for *Churban* — be it "Holocaust," "*Shoah*" or whatever else — is less important than the fact that the secular establishment (through the agency of *Yad Vashem*) sought a substitute at all. For millennia, Jewish children have grown up knowing of the *Churban Beis Hamikdash*, *Churban Yerusholayim*, *Churban Betar*, among others. Imbued with the concept of *Churban* as an integral part of Jewish history, they were not shaken in their *emunah* — their faith — if they learned of a new *Churban*.

However, the term *Shoah*, which was not coined in the time-forged mint of Torah experience, confronted a new generation with a psychologically devastating quandary. Not only were post-World War II Jews faced with an overwhelming tragedy and destruction; those who interpret events by re-defining them denied the survivors the consolation of being part of a historical continuum by removing these links from the eternal chain, banishing them to the purgatory of free fall. Symptomatic of this attitude is the convening of a special day<sup>7</sup> as *Yom Hashoah* rather than marking the tragic era along with other national tragedies on *Tishah B'Av*.

Indeed, once the historical pattern was broken, the ground was ready for the insidious seeds of unbelief, blasphemy and "alternatives" to the Torah view. By contrast, "*Churban*" is rooted in that holy terrain where suffering and tragedy lead to *geulah*, redemption.

It should be needless to say at this point that since the *Churban* of European Jewry was a *tochachah* phenomenon, an enactment of the admonishment and rebuke which *Klal Yisrael* carries upon its shoulders as an integral part of being the *Am Hanivchar*, G-d's chosen ones, we have no right to interpret these events as any kind of *specific punishment for specific sins*. The *tochachah* is a built-in aspect of the character of *Klal Yisrael* until *Moshiach* comes and it is visited upon *Klal Yisrael* at the Creator's will and for reasons known and comprehensible *only to Him*. One would have to be a prophet or a Talmudic sage to claim knowledge of the specific reasons for what befell us; anyone on a lesser plane claiming to do so tramples in vain upon the bodies of the *kedoshim* who died *al Kiddush Hashem* and misuses the power to interpret and understand Jewish history.<sup>7</sup>

For other reasons, too, one must be careful of sudden and popular "awakenings" to different aspects of Jewish history, such as "Holocaust Studies." Nachum Goldmann, head of the only international secular Jewish organization not directly

7. Perhaps the most basic question in the post-*Churban* Europe era is "What does it mean for us?" From those whose *emunah* is less than totally secure, we receive answers from the extreme of radicals who have created a post-Auschwitz theology — that belief in G-d is no longer possible — to those who claim to have grappled courageously with the "problem" and concluded that it is meaningless to us. From yet others, whose *emunah* is such that they can leave no event untouched by detailed interpretation, we receive specific, painful correlations between sin and punishment: this for that, tit for tat.

As the *Rosh Yeshivah* states, not only is the former unacceptable, so is the latter. While every individual is permitted, even required, to search his personal actions in time of trouble *וּפְשַׁע בְּמַעֲשָׂיו יִפְשַׁע עָלָיו וַיִּסְוֶה בְּאֵין עֲלָיו* *If one experiences travail, he should search his deeds (Berachos 5)* to ascertain the cause of the Divine displeasure, this concerns each person's relationship with his own soul and his Creator. No mandate has been given any human being in today's times (the era of prophecy and Talmudic sages being over) to recognize, interpret and draw matching lines between sin and punishment.

The ways of Divine retribution are mysterious and operate across gulfs of time and space. To claim to have the keys to such esoteric knowledge is to assert an omniscience which no one can claim today. An example of the inscrutable paths of sin and its consequences is the tragedy of the *asarah harugei malchus* — the Ten Great Sages who perished horrendous martyrs' deaths at the hands of the Roman government (see *Eichah Rabbah* 2:2 and *Sotah* 48b). Our Sages (*Tanchuma Yashan*, *Vayeishev* 2; *Yalkut Mishlei* 929) reveal to us that the death of the Ten was an atonement for the ten sons of Yaakov who participated in the sale of Yoseif. Imagine the possible perversions in understanding the Divine Will if anyone attempted to attribute the deaths of Rabbi Akiva, Rabbi Chanina ben Tradyon and their holy colleagues to specific sins and transgressions, when in reality the Ten Martyrs were deemed by G-d as being *worthy enough* to atone

subservient to the Jewish State, has stated that the weakening of sympathy for the State was the result of a lengthy period of time after the Holocaust having passed and the resultant forgetting by the world at large. Undoubtedly, the State, taking advantage of the arbitrary figure of thirty years, seeks to reawaken interest in what it now termed the *Shoah* to regain some of that lost sympathy of the late 40's and 50's.

This aspect of the current widespread interest in the World War II years should only serve to alert us once more to the often duplicitous sources of public opinion. Of course, this in no way impugns the motives of those who have genuinely dedicated themselves to the study of that epochal time, especially the *she'eiris hapleitah* who feel the scars on their own bodies and who cry out in pain to the world not to forget. It does, however, give us an idea of the tremendous pitfalls on the road to a clear understanding of the true patterns of Jewish history. Only through a rededication to sole use of the Torah as guide through the byways of history will we be sure to arrive at the truth we all seek.

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for those giants of *kedushah*, the שבטי קה, the sons of Yaakov! We, too, dare not set ourselves up as arbiters of the Creator's mysterious ways in dealing with His creatures.

Jewry's status as a special child to our Creator exists across the barriers of time and space, as does his Father, who conducts His affairs with the infinite wisdom which only He possesses. Thus, for *ourselves*, each of us can seize the moment and awaken his own motivation for repentance and self-improvement. For *them* — who, like the Ten Martyrs, died the deaths of holy sacrifices — we can say nothing but *Kaddish* and *Yizkor*. About them, we dare say no more than: "May their memories be a blessing."