Bnos Tween Light Chodesh Newsletter

CHODESH AV

DVAR TORAH

Q: Why are the verses of the Book of Eichah written in alphabetical order?

A: Rabbi Eliezer answered: They are written in the order of the aleph bais to show that the Jews had disregarded the Torah, which is written with the letters of the aleph bais.

It was learned in the name of Rav Shmuel Bar Ami: When are the enemies successful in persecuting the Jews? When the Jews reject the Torah.

Q: Why do we break a plate at every engagement party? Why does the Chosson place ashes on his head at his wedding? Why does the Chosson break a glass under the chuppah?

A: All these acts are done in order to remind us of the destruction of the, Bais Hamikdosh And to remind us in our times of great joy what we are missing.

QUESTION OF THE CHODESH

INSIGHT

The Rebbe Reb Bunim told the following moshol: A king noticed the sins of his only son, and he hid his most precious valuables in an inner chamber of the palace. The king thought to himself that when his son repents he would show him the treasures. The palace was destroyed by fire, and nothing was saved. Everyone cried over the loss, but the king cried most, for he alone knew how great the loss was. When the Bais Hamikdosh was destroyed, everyone wept over the loss of noticeable possessions, but Hashem wailed most, for He alone knew the great spiritual treasures hidden there; as it is written, “My soul shall weep in secret for your pride.” (Yirmiyahu 13-17)

Story of the chodesh

The heavenly decree came into force: "The Bais Hamikdosh should be destroyed, and the Jews should be driven out of their land!" Then Hashem said; "But the Western Wall should not be destroyed, so that there should always be a reminder that Hashem's Glory resided there!"

Titus, the cruel Roman general, went on with his work of destruction. When he took Yerushalayim and surrounded the Holy Temple, he divided the four walls between his four generals, and he ordered each one to destroy his wall. Three of them destroyed their walls, but the fourth, whose job it was to destroy the Western Wall, did not destroy it.

Titus ordered his guards to bring that general before him. "Why did you not carry out my orders?" Titus asked. "I swear by the Emperor's life," The general replied, "that I did it for the honor of Rome. Had I destroyed even the last wall, people would not know how great a sanctuary you had destroyed. Now all who will see the remaining wall of the majestic Temple will exclaim: 'What a hero Titus is! Look what a great sanctuary he had destroyed!'"

"You are right, and you acted wisely," Titus answered him, "but because you did not obey my command, climb up onto the roof and throw yourself off. If you will remain alive, I will grant you your life."

The general obeyed, but he remained dead on the ground. About the Western Wall, the following story is told:

The Jews could not and would not forget their Bais Hamikdosh. Every year on Tisha B'Av the Jews assembled at the Western Wall to pour out their hearts about the destruction and beseech Hashem to rebuild the Bais Hamikdosh and to bring back all Jews from the four corners of the earth to the Holy Land.

The Romans could not bear to see how resolutely the Jews kept to their religion, and how holy they regarded the Western Wall.

The Roman rulers, therefore, issued an order to burn and destroy the Wall. It was of no avail; the fire did not burn the huge stones and the Wall remained complete.

The Romans thought and thought until they hit upon a plan. They issued an order that all gentiles who live in Yerushalayim must dump their garbage daily near the Western Wall. They hoped that in time the Wall would be entirely covered with garbage and it would disappear from view.

Day in, day out, the heap of garbage grew near the Western Wall. Bit by bit the whole Wall was covered. The gentiles rejoiced and the Jews mourned.

Many years went by. A Jew from exile came to Yerushalayim to pour out his heart to Hashem over the destruction. He was a great Tzaddik. He walked through the streets of Yerushalayim, seeking the Western Wall, but he could not find it. He asked the inhabitants: "Where is the Western Wall?" They shrugged their shoulders, saying that they had never in their lives seen the Western Wall. The Jew, however, did not give up hope. Day and night he went through the streets looking for the Western Wall. Once he came upon a huge hill of ashes and garbage, and he wondered how there came to be such a huge accumulation of garbage at this point. Meanwhile, he noticed a very old gentile woman carrying a heavy sack on her back. Every few steps she stopped for a rest, and then proceeded further. The Jew went over to help her.

"Where do you come from, old woman, and what

are you carrying?" the Jew asked her.

"I come from a village nearby, and I am carrying a sack of garbage to throw on the hill."

The Jew inquired in wonderment: "Do you have no room in your village for garbage, that you are forced to bring it here?"

"You are a stranger here, it seems," the old lady answered. "It is an old custom for us to bring the garbage here to throw away. There once stood here a stone wall that the Jews regarded as being holy, so we were ordered to cover the Wall. We used to receive payment for doing this, but nowadays we don't receive a penny for it," the old woman croaked. She emptied her bundle and returned to the village.

The Jew remained standing as if frozen. Tears poured from his eyes. "I will not move from here until I find a plan to remove the dirt from here and reveal the Western Wall once more.

"He remained standing a while and suddenly his eyes lit up...

The Jew started back to town and whomever he met he whispered into his ear: "They say that a big treasure is buried beneath the hill of dirt over there ..."

He took a shovel and a bucket and he started digging in the hill of dirt, filling a bucket and emptying it in a ravine on the side.

A short while later many more people arrived with shovels, buckets, etc. The whole city of Yerushalayim was aroused at the announcement of a large treasure lying beneath the hill. The whole population quickly settled down to work, digging and cleaning away the dirt.

They dug for a whole day till the upper stones of the Holy Temple came into view. The sun set and the people went home to rest from their days hard labor. Only one person remained on the hill - the Jew from exile. He embraced the stones of the Wall and with tears in his eyes kissed them. He then took out some golden coins, covered them with dirt and left.

The sun had hardly shown its face on the horizon, and the hill where the Western Wall stood was crowded with people.

Suddenly there was an uproar. Someone had found a golden coin, and so did a second, and a third. The people started to dig with even more enthusiasm.

Every day the people assembled and they dug deeper and deeper. The dirt that they dug they carried far away and went on digging. Every day a few golden coins were found but they all said that the real treasure lies at the bottom, at the very base of the Wall.

As for the Jew, he dug and dragged the dirt the same' as everyone, and he spent his entire fortune on his holy mission to uncover the Western Wall.

For forty days the inhabitants of Yerushalayim dug around the Western Wall and sought the "treasure" and finally the whole Western Wall was cleared of garbage. They did not find the treasure, but in front of their eyes a big stone wall appeared.

Suddenly a great storm broke out and a torrent of rain came down. It rained for three days and nights, washing the Western Wall clean from any traces of dirt, and when the people came out to see what they had unearthed, they saw before them a handsome wall with huge stones, some of them as much as ten feet high.

From then on the Jews used to assemble by the Western Wall every Tisha B'Av to pour out their hearts to their Father in Heaven, praying for the complete redemption that He promised His people through our holy Prophets. Tens of thousands of Jews come to the Western Wall every Tisha B'Av, taking off their shoes beforehand, because the place is holy.

On the spot where Avraham brought Yitzchok to the Akeidah, where stood the first Bais Hamikdosh, built by Shlomo Hamelech, and the second Bais Hamidkosh built by Ezra and Nechemiah, on this very spot the third and final Bais Hamikdosh will be built when the Moshiach will come speedily, we pray. The new Bais Hamikdosh will far surpass in beauty and majesty even the first two, and once more the Kohanim will perform the holy Avodah, and the Leviim will sing their songs, and all nations will recognize the One Hashem. Then there will be a beautiful, radiant world. No longer will the Western Wall be called the "Wall of Wailing" for the sound of joy and happiness will ring through the streets of Yerushalayim.

DAY IN THE MONTH
Tisha B'av

STARVATION

Titus decided to starve the city into submission. He sealed all the exits and made sure no food could be brought into the city. Jews caught smuggling food into Yerushalayim were nailed to a large cross and left to die in full view of the Jews on the inside. There was a terrible hunger in the city and many people starved to death, but still the defenders would not give up. At the end of Sivan, Titus began an assault against the Antonia Fortress, and on 5 Tammuz it was conquered. From the Antonia he could press his attack in two ways, across the top of the Temple wall and through hallways that went from the Antonia through the wall and into the Temple Mount. Then the Romans attacked the Temple Mount, but in ten days of bitter Fighting, the outnumbered, starving Jews beat them back. Fearing that the Jews might recapture the Antonia, Titus ordered that it be torn to the ground.

THE THREE WEEKS - THE BREAKTHROUGH

Titus' forces continued their attack against the Temple Mount and - on 17 Tammuz - they finally broke through the wall The end was now near!

Although Roman stones and arrows had been hurled into the Bais Hamikdosh courtyard for many weeks, the brave kohanim continued to serve Hashem. The daily offerings were brought despite the danger - un-til the I7th of Tammuz. On that sad and painful day, no lambs were left for the Tomid sacrifice (continuous daily offering), and the holy mizbe'ach was idle.

For three weeks fierce battles went on around the Bais Hamikdosh. People were dying firm starvation and battle wounds, but nothing stopped the Jewish defenders. They fought bravely and well, and the Romans paid dearly for every foot they advanced. The Romans tried to sneak into the Bais Hamikdosh through hallways that led from the razed Antonia to the Temple, but the Jews set the passageways on fire, trapping many Romans inside. On 8 Av, the Romans were ready for a final assault. They had built ramps and towers next to the wall. Their battering rams smashed against the wall; they dug under one of the gates, trying to remove its foundation stones - but the wall and gate stood firm. They put ladders against the wall, and streams of soldiers rushed up, but as soon as they reached the top, the Jewish defenders pushed the ladders back, toppling the invaders to their death

TISHA B'AV - THE END

But Hashem was not with the defenders. On the afternoon of Tisha B'Av, the Ninth of Av, a Roman soldier was hoisted up to a window through which he threw a torch into the Bais Hamikdosh. The fire spread despite all attempts to put it out. It seemed as though it was a Heavenly fire sent by Hashem to destroy the Bais Hamikdosh. The rest of that day and all of the tenth of Av, the flames spread and rose. They seemed to climb all the way up to heaven, their crackle accompanied by the heartbreaking cries of the Jews watching the destruction of the Bais Hamikdosh.

Like madmen, the Romans rushed into the burning Bais Hamikdosh; stealing whatever they could and destroying everything else. Every Jew they saw, young and old, they killer without mercy until the ground was covered with bodies. Titus and his officers rushed into the Holy of Holies before the flames reached it. There, they did the most disgusting and horrible things to show their hatred for Hashem, His Temple, and His people. They stole the golden vessels and let the fire do the rest.

When the destruction was over, only the Kosel HaMaaravi remained - from there Hashem's Presence never went away.

TRIVIA QUESTIONS
- FILL IN THE BLANK

THE THREE WEEKS

The Rabbis established the 3 Weeks between שִׁבְעָה עָשָׂר בְּתַמּוּז and תִּשְׁעָה בְּאָב as weeks of _____. The days between the ____ of Tammuz and the ___ of Av are known as the Three Weeks. Many awful things happened to _____ _____during this time, and both the first and the second _____ _____ were destroyed.

WHAT HAPPENED ON SHIVA ASSAR B'TAMMUZ?

1. Moshe broke the 2 _____
2. The _____ was stopped in the first בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ
3. The city walls of _____ were breached by Titus
4. _____burned a Sefer Torah
5. An idol was placed in the _____ _____

CUSTOMS

1. During the 3 weeks we display signs of _____. We do not:
2. listen to _____ _____, but you can sing
3. play musical _____
4. Get haircuts or _____.
5. Do things which require one to recite the Bracha of _____, like:

   wearing new_____ or

   Eating new_____.

   If you don't need to say _____ (e.g. socks underwear etc) then this can be purchased and worn until _____ _____

WORDBOX

Yerushalyim	Luchos	Karbanos	Bais Hamikdash	Apostamus	Fruit	Bnei Yisroel
	Mourning	17th	9th	Shecheyanu	Clothes	
Shecheyanu	Live music	Shave	Rosh Chodesh	Instruments	Mourning	Bais Hamikdash

Fun Page!

A	R	B	Y	N	A	X	P	U	F	Q	N	C	V	Q
L	H	V	E	E	P	W	N	L	S	J	S	R	B	I
O	P	A	U	I	R	Z	E	F	A	S	T	I	N	G
S	H	U	V	X	S	U	I	I	Y	B	X	B	S	M
S	U	M	T	A	T	H	S	K	C	F	Y	O	P	O
E	F	U	A	H	S	H	A	H	O	H	X	G	K	U
M	H	I	A	S	R	Y	R	M	A	S	A	U	I	R
T	U	Y	C	R	H	E	I	E	I	L	E	J	N	N
I	E	E	A	V	F	I	E	S	E	K	A	L	O	I
S	T	A	N	V	K	M	A	W	R	W	D	Y	S	N
P	I	J	R	I	N	X	S	C	E	O	E	O	I	G
S	T	W	P	S	N	E	U	N	H	E	E	E	S	M
P	U	E	P	F	C	E	P	K	Q	K	K	L	K	H
I	S	E	O	J	A	V	K	L	L	M	V	S	R	S
U	I	V	B	G	M	I	C	Y	S	P	W	W	E	U

Beis Hamikdosh
Three Weeks
Fasting
Eicha
Kinos
Ahavas Yisroel
Three Weeks
Kosel
Yavne
Yerushalayim
Mashiach
Tears
Mourning
Nine
Titus
Loss

TRIVIA ANSWERS:

The Rabbis established the 3 Weeks between תמוז ט"ז תמוז and תשעה באב ט' of Av are known as the Three Weeks. Many awful things happened to **Bnei Yisroel** During this time, and both the first and the second **Bais Hamikdash** were destroyed.
Moshe broke the 2 **Luchos**
The **Karbanos** was stopped in the first Bais Hamikdash
The city walls of **Yerushalayim** were breached by Titus
Apostamus burned a Sefer Torah
An idol was placed in the **Bais Hamikdash**
During the 3 weeks we display signs of **Mourning** We do not:
listen to **Live Music**, but you can sing
play musical **Instruments**
Get haircuts or **shave**.
Do things which require one to recite the Bracha of **shecheyanu** like:
wearing new **Clothes** or Eating new **Food** . If you don't need to say **shecheyanu** (e.g. socks, underwear, etc.) then this can be purchased and worn until **Rosh Chodesh**.