

Tikkun Leil Chatzot

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יאורח חיים א'ג

ראוי לכל ירא שמים שיהא מיצר ודואג על חורבן בית המקדש

Shulchan Arukh, Orach Chayim 1:3

It is fitting for every person who is afraid of Heaven to be anguished and concerned regarding the destruction of the Temple.

Questions to Consider:

- *What is it specifically about the churban (destruction) that requires us to be regularly pained by its absence in our life?*
- *How would having the Beis Hamikdash today change the Jewish community?*
- *How would having a rebuilt Yerushalayim change your personal relationship with the Almighty?*

ברכות ג' א' י"א

אמר רב יצחק בר שמואל משמיה דרב שלש משמרות הוי הלילה ועל כל משמר ומשמר יושב הקדוש ברוך הוא ושואג כארי ואומר אוי לי שבעונותיהם החרבתי את ביתי ושרפתי את היכלי והגליתים לבין אומות העולם

Berakhot 3a:11

Rav Yitzhak bar Shmuel said in the name of Rav: The night consists of three watches, and over each and every watch the Holy One, Blessed be He sits and roars like a lion, because the Temple service was connected to the changing of these watches (Tosefot HaRosh), and says: "Woe to Me, that due to their sins I destroyed My house, burned My Temple and exiled them among the nations of the world."

Questions to Consider

- *Why are there certain parts of the night that lend itself to unique prayer?*
- *Why did Hashem destroy "My house" if it would have such a negative impact on the chosen people?*
- *Which aspects of assimilation today motivate us the most to recite prayers of mourning or "tikkun chatzot" as it relates to consideration of Hashem saying "oy li" regarding the current state of the Jewish people?*

רא"ש סימן ב

וראוי לכל ירא שמים שיהא מיצר ודואג באותה שעה ולשפוך תחנונים על חורבן בית המקדש כמו שנאמר קומי רוני ... "בלילה לראש אשמורות

Rosh, Siman 2

And it's appropriate for all G-d fearing individuals to be pained and worried at the same moment (described by Rav above) and to pour out their supplications regarding the

destruction of the Beis Hamikdash (Jerusalem Temple) as it states (in Eicha)"Arise, cry out in the night At the beginning of the watches"

Questions to Consider

- *Why would Rabbeinu Asher elucidate our gemara as practical Halacha, when perhaps it should be looked at as merely agaddata that informs our perspective and informs on the primacy of the Beis Hamikdash within Torah tradition?*
- *In your opinion, why can't the State of Israel exist in its most ideal state without a Beis Hamikdash?*

ביאור הגר"א על שולחן ערוך אורח חיים א'ג:א:
 סעי' ג ראוי כו'. כמ"ש בב"ב ס' ע"ב מכאן אמרו כל המתאבל כו' כמ"ש אם אשכחך ירושלים כו' וע' ספ"ג דב"ב

Beur HaGra on Shulchan Arukh, Orach Chayim 1:3:1

As is written in Tractate Bava Basra 60b from where we learn, "that all who mourn the destruction of Jerusalem will be able see its joy." And as it states, "if I forget thee Jerusalem, let my right-hand wither"

Questions to Consider

- *Why can't people celebrate what they missed? Would one be able to adequately join in with the inauguration of a rebuilt Beis Hamikdash when it happens regardless of whether the individual ponders it's meaning or it's loss?*
- *Is the gemara quoted by the Vilna Gaon an ultimatum or a threat for how we have to conduct ourselves to achieve redemption?*
- *Why should the right hand be at risk of losing function if we mentally block out Yerushalayim? What is the metaphor?*

ימשנה ברורה א'ט:
 ט) ראוי לכל וכו' – והמקובלים האריכו מאוד בגודל מעלת קימת חצות כי רבה היא. וכבר נדפס בסידורים סדר (ההנהגה על פי כתבי האר"י ז"ל. וזמן חצות הוא תמיד באמצעות הלילה ממש בכל מקום, ואפילו בלילות הארוכות או הקצרות. והיא י"ב שעות אחר חצי היום. והעת להתאונן על החורבן נכון יותר שיהיה קודם חצות מעט, ומחצות ואילך יעסוק בתורה, ובסוף הלילה יבקש צרכיו... הבורה שנתחברו יחד לומר תיקון חצות בציבור, אין למונעם, ואדרבה, ברוב עם הדרת מלך. וטוב יותר שיאמרו את התיקון בבית הכנסת משיאמרוהו בחדר הסמוך לו, דבית הכנסת קדיש טפי, וגם שיהיו מעשרה הראשונים. וצריך ביחוד להזהר מאוד מאוד משיחת חולין בניעורם בלילה. ומי שאינו יכול להשכים קודם אור הבוקר, מחמת שהוא חלש בטבעו, או שהוא יודע בעצמו שאם יקום באשמורת יישן בעת התפילה, מוטב לישן כל הצורך. ומכל מקום יהיה זהיר מאוד לקום שעה, ולפחות חצי שעה, קודם קריאת השמש לבית הכנסת, כדי שיהיה יוכל להכין עצמו להתפלל בציבור ובנקיות

Mishnah Berurah 1:9

And the mystics elaborated greatly on the significance of rising at midnight. It was already written down in the siddurim that had been based on the writings of the Arizal. And the time of midnight is always the midpoint of darkness, even for long nights and short nights.

This is 12 hours post midday. And the time to mourn the destruction is most appropriate slightly before midnight. And from midnight onward, one should be involved with learning and at the end of the night he should request his needs (pray)...A group gathered together should say tikkun chatzot communally, do not protest this, and on the contrary, rather it is a fulfillment of "the more people then then the more praise for the King." And it's best to say it inside a shul rather than a private room because a shul is more holy, and also (it's good to be) of the first ten present (for shachris minyan). If saying it privately, be very very careful to refrain from mundane speech while awake (in the middle of) the night. And whoever is not able to rise so early before the light of the day because of his physical weakness, or if he knows that if he rises for chatzos he'll be asleep at the time of davening, then it's better for him to sleep as much as he needs. And in any event, one should be very careful to get up an hour or at least a half hour, before the call of the shamash (to attend) shul, in order that he should be able to prepare himself to daven with the congregation cleanly.

Questions to Consider

- If the "mystics" stressed the practice of actively engaging in prayers and tehillim recitation for the churban, then what is a practical way for us today to follow through on this tradition being relayed to us by the chofetz chayim?
- Even if a person decides not to take part in tikkun chatzot, what can they do to follow through on the spirit of the law? (Hint: one idea is presented at the end of the paragraph)
- What kind of groups might be able to gather together regularly to have a more robust communal experience for *tikkun chatzot*.

Concluding Thoughts:

Hopefully, we can be better informed about *Tikkun Chatzos* as codified by Rav Yosef Karo. The *Mishna Berura* understands that many sources lead one to conclude that the Shulchan Aruch is authorizing *Tikkun Chatzos*. *Tikkun Chatzos*, as alluded to by the *Mishna Berura*, is a series of passages meant to evoke great emotion as we consider the tragedy that continues to be the *churban*. Interestingly, the *Mishna Berura* continues his commentary by telling us that Torah study and davening should be done with great joy following recitation of *Tikkun Chatzos*. In contrast, *Tikkun Chatzos* is done with levels of sadness so that the Almighty sees our desire to return to a rebuilt Yerushalayim. The *Mishna Berura* continues by quoting the *Shelah* that we ought to recite "*On the Rivers of Babylon*" during the weekdays and "*A Song of Ascents*" on *Shabbos* and days without *tachanun*. This *halachah* underscores that our hearts should comprehend and contemplate that we say these preliminary paragraphs to be in fulfillment of the *Shulchan Aruch's* standard of being agonized by the *churban*. By focusing and appreciating the loss, we'll be a part of the *tikkun* of fixing the errors of *Am Yisrael's* past.