

תשעה באב

Tisha B'Av

On Tisha B'Av, we mourn the loss of our sacred space, the Temple in Jerusalem, a loss born out of baseless hatred and senseless destruction. We remember and lament all the tragedies that occurred on this fateful day throughout Jewish history. We collapse time by grieving for old wounds as if they were only just inflicted, and reaching our hands to those who suffered long ago as if they were beside us.

As we are reminded by our reading of the *Book of Eichah*, we must grieve with our fellow human beings not only of time past, but also of the present. Let us expand our grief to include those around the world today who continue to lose that which is sacred to them to forces of violence, destruction and oppression.

They cry out to us from across space:

Do not shut your ear to my groan, to my cry.

Eichah 3:56

As we open our ears to sounds of their weeping, we respond:

My eyes shed streams of water over the ruin of my poor people.

Eichah 3:49

As we widen the source of our grief to include the destruction that continues to take place today, we declare:

Let us search and examine our ways and turn back to the Lord. Let us lift up our hearts with our hands to God in heaven.

Eichah 3:40

And as we open our hearts to others and remind ourselves that we must not only bemoan their suffering but also act to prevent it, we command ourselves:

Arise! Cry out in the night at the beginning of the watches. Pour out your heart like water in the presence of the Lord.

Eichah 2:19

As we mourn for the loss of all that is sacred, may our grief compel us to respond to the suffering of others. May we arise and reach our hands outward. And may we cry out—not only in mourning, but also in an ongoing effort to alleviate pain and destruction across the world.

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