

# Laments איכה

Translations of *Eikhah* for our world

<http://neohasid.org/resources/laments>



*Laments 4:1*, Margaret Adams Parker  
[www.margaretadamsparker.com](http://www.margaretadamsparker.com)  
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*This work is dedicated to all refugees*

Though this prayer is meant for any day, it can also be used as a kavanah and response to Hiroshima Day, which is August 6<sup>th</sup>. Other ideas specific to Hiroshima Day can be found at [thrivingspirit.org](http://thrivingspirit.org) (Rabbi Malkah Binah Klein) and at [voices-uri.org/so/77O83FRsh](http://voices-uri.org/so/77O83FRsh).

“Kaddish for Human Minyan” ~ a prayer to face this sacred reality

Mourners: May the Name that fills all names be blessed and strengthened in this created world. May the Breath of Life that fills all breaths fill us with Life, and may it guide and rule our actions and visions, in our lives and in our time, now in this world, and in every moment to come. And let us say: Amen.

Everyone: Amen. May that great Name be blessed within us and in all worlds, for all time.

Mourners: May Holiness stream forth from its Source, full of blessing and beauty. May the Name that weaves together all Life and all creatures be blessed and praised, made beautiful and resplendent, lifted up and exalted, to the highest and most majestic...

Everyone: Blessed be!

Mourners: ...beyond all the praises and blessings and songs and prayers that can ever be said in the whole world. And let us say: Amen. Everyone: Amen.

Mourners: May our prayers be received by the One who is our source, and may we be nourished and sustained along with everyone everywhere who seeks to embrace this Name and this holiness. May the Life and Love within us and between us be strengthened. May the Breath that fills all breaths fill all Creation with Peace, and may Peace and Life flow to us, to our community, to all peoples, and to all beings in this world. And let us say: Amen.

Everyone: Amen.

Mourners: The One who makes Peace in the furthest reaches of Creation will bring Peace to us and to all living beings. And let us say: Amen.

Everyone: Amen.

For the billions of animals  
living lives of torture to satisfy  
human gluttony,  
and for the pandemics and  
plagues that can spread from  
them to humanity  
*Al eleh anu bokhot*

For the untold losses and  
annihilations suffered by the  
creatures of the Earth,  
and for the ignorance that sees  
not, and the callous hearts not  
broken  
*Al eleh anu bokhim*

For the wicked who prosper  
from war, homelessness,  
poverty, and from the land's  
ruin,  
and for the horror they bring on  
all of us, while they shelter in  
their mansions  
– Alas, how long will they  
prosper?  
*Al eleh anu bokhot*

For the governments refusing  
to act,  
and for the leaders who thwart  
and reverse policies that would  
save species, habitats,  
ecosystems,  
*Al eleh anu bokhim*

Rabbi David Seidenberg,  
neohasid.org, 2020  
neohasid.org/docs/AIEleh.doc

For violent storms and the fires,  
and for the forest sanctuaries  
lost  
*Al eleh anu bokhot*

For a world suspended in the  
nothingness of space,  
and for the anxiety we live in,  
imagining this refuge lost  
*Al eleh anu bokhim*

For our own sore hearts, living  
in a world of wounds,  
and for our children and  
generations to come, for their  
fears and their hopes for a  
better world  
*Al eleh anu bokhot*

For the wounding of God's  
works, and for the wounding of  
God's image,  
*Al eleh anu bokhim*

For the Breath of Life,  
desecrated, destroyed, defiled!  
Can You hear us, can You save  
us from ourselves?  
*Al eleh anu bokhot*, for these  
we cry

Teach us to care, teach us to sit  
still, to understand, for the time  
is late.  
Impel us to act, participate,  
triumph, at least enough, lest  
there be no one left to

A prayer for democracy everywhere that we need today, with  
Ukraine and U.S. foremost in mind, that it may not fall or fail:

May You tear out autocracy, tyranny and despotism,  
ruin those who cheat and deceive,  
and upend those who oppress the vulnerable.  
Make the reign of the arrogant disappear from all lands.  
May the people attacking democracies everywhere  
stumble and fail, and may their plans be as nought.  
Stop them, humble them, bring on their downfall,  
soon, in our days.

May You give to all peoples of the world  
the strength and will to pursue righteousness  
and to seek peace as a unified force,  
so that violence be uprooted, and healing, good life  
and peace may flourish. (Amen.)

תַּעֲקֹר רֹדְנוֹת וְטִירוּנֵינָא וְעָרִיצוֹת  
וְתִשְׁבֵּר רַמָּאִים וְתַמְגַּר עֲשָׂקֵי גְדָפָאִים  
תַּעֲבִיר מְמִשְׁלֵת זְדוֹן מִן הָאָרֶץ  
תִּכְשִׁיל פּוֹגְעִים בְּדַמוֹקְרַטְיָה וְתִפְרֹחַ תְּחִבּוּלוֹתָם  
תִּכְלֹם וְתִשְׁפִּילֵם וְתִכְנִיעֵם בְּמַהֲרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ

תִּתֵּן לְכָל אַמּוֹת הָעוֹלָם הַפֶּתַח וְהַרְצוֹן  
לְרֹדֵף צְדָק וּלְבַקֵּשׁ שְׁלוֹם כְּאֲגַדָּה אֲסַחַת  
לְעֹקֵר הַמָּס וּלְהַצְמִיחַ רְפוּאָה וְסוּיִים טוֹבִים וְשְׁלוֹם  
(וְנֹאמַר אָמֵן)

[neohasid.org](http://neohasid.org): eco-Torah, Shmita year liturgy, old world *nigunim*  
and more. This prayer is based on [neohasid.org](http://neohasid.org)'s voting prayer.  
Add specific issues at the end of this prayer according to the  
moment.

What does it mean today to be *Aveilei Tziyon* אבלי ציון—one of the “mourners of Zion”—when Jerusalem is rebuilt, and when her development and rebuilding knows no bounds, to the point of eating up the countryside; when the state of Israel has one of the most powerful militaries; when that state also has the power to take what land it wants? What does it mean when the state that liberated the Jews from exile looks so different from the redemption envisioned by the Prophets? When justice for the foreigner and the poor, for the Christian or Muslim vs. the Jew, can be so unequal – especially in the territories of ancient Israel, now called the West Bank or Judea and Samaria? Is this the beginning of “our redemption”? Is it thwarting redemption? If our covenant is real, that covenant promises: a state that rules through and carries out injustice ultimately will be destroyed. If that is one condition of the promise of the land, do we preemptively anticipate that destruction? Or reject the thought of it? How should we stand up for the Jewish people, and also stand up for the other people in the land? Perhaps mourning gives us a model. Perhaps by mourning now—and by changing those ways—we can redeem the future. That at least is what the rabbis of old believed. That is one meaning of *Aveilei Tziyon* that we can embrace, while living in the complex miracle of a rebuilt Jerusalem. “Zion through justice will be redeemed.” (Isaiah 1:27)

*On the day that we cried out and no one answered us,  
We said: “It shall not be thus in our places.”  
“When the time comes,” we promised, “we will rise up at the head of the people.”  
And yet here is the day, and where is our reaction? where is our outcry?  
We mumble “God have mercy” and we just say another prayer:  
“And in truth, it is amazing that the world is still standing  
after so many cries for help such as these”  
Is this the fast that I would choose—a day in which people hunger for bread?  
Is this not the fast I would choose—a day on which we rise to righteousness.*

excerpt from R. Aryeh Cohen,  
[אוי ללב שאינה שבורה | Woe to the Heart that is not Broken](#)

### ***Al eleh anu bokhim, anu bokhim, For these we weep***

For the Amazon, the lungs of the world,  
and for the greed that goads people to burn the jungles  
*Al eleh anu bokhim*

For the ocean’s rising acidity,  
and for the heat that bleaches wondrous corals  
*Al eleh anu bokhot*

For Redwoods clearcut  
and for their multitudes of species that have lost their homes ~ *Al eleh anu bokhim*

For plastic found in deepest ocean and upon highest mountain,  
and for a throwaway culture that devalues everything in our lives  
*Al eleh anu bokhot*

For the murder of elephants, rhinos, pangolins,  
and for the retribution their extinction must deserve  
*Al eleh anu bokhim*

For the birds and insects gone silent,  
and for the starlight smothered by our lights  
*Al eleh anu bokhot*

For the generations whose home we are ruining,  
and for the generation that knows this but doesn’t change course  
*Al eleh anu bokhot*

For the Antarctica glaciers and the polar ice caps,  
and for the penguins and polar bears endangered  
*Al eleh anu bokhim*

For snowpack and glaciers everywhere,  
and for the billions whose cities will be drowned, and whose farms will have no water  
*Al eleh anu bokhim*

For drought drying forests and expanding deserts,  
and for desert habitats shrinking from before human development, and for the Saharah cheetah, the fringe-toed lizard, and the addax  
*Al eleh anu bokhot*

For the undiscovered species whose lives we will never know,  
and for the loss of wisdom, truth and beauty each one embodies on this planet  
*Al eleh anu bokhim*

*Eli Tsiyon, selected verses*

<i>Eli Tsiyon v'areha k'mo ishah v'tsireha v'khivtulach chagurat sak al ba'al n'ureha</i>	My God, Zion and her towns, like a woman in travail of labor, like a virgin wearing sackcloth for the husband of her youth
<i>Alei hegyon m'choleha asher damam b'areha V'al va'ad asher shamam uvitul sanhed'reha</i>	For her dancers' lyricism now silenced in her towns and for the mob that destroyed, and ended her high court of justice
<i>Alei galut m'shartei El n'imei shir z'mareha V'al kolot m'charpeha b'eit rabu f'gareha</i>	For the exile of God's servants sweet singers of her songs and for her scorners clamoring while the corpses piled up
<i>Alei pesha asher av'tah s'lol derekh ashureha V'al tsiv'ot k'haleha sh'zufeha sh'choreha</i>	For the perversion she twisted paving the path of the well-off and for her amassed community her field workers, her brown, her black people
<i>Alei shimkha asher chulal b'fi kamai m'tseireha V'al tachan y'tsavchu lakh Kashuv ush'ma amareha.</i>	For Your name desecrated in the mouth (of those) who stood over her oppressed, and for the plea they scream to You – focus and listen to her message

*Im eshkachekh Y'rushalayim tishkach y'mini.  
Tidbak l'shoni l'chiki im lo ezk'rekhi,d  
im lo a'aleh Y'rushalayim al rosh simchati.*

If I forget you Jerusalem, may my right hand forget.  
May my tongue stick to the roof of my mouth, if it fails to  
remember, if I don't lift up Jerusalem ahead of my joy.

To imagine what happened to Jerusalem and Eretz Yisrael, picture Kyiv and Ukraine. The cruel targeting of civilians, the destruction of everything that supports normal life, the images of senseless death. We can vividly picture how "death has come up through our windows" (Jer. 9:5). But in the Jewish people's timeline, the invader also took Jerusalem, God help us.

*Tisha B'Av* was never primarily about the Temple and sacrifices. It's an opportunity to empathize with the refugee and the persecuted. And it's a call to become aware of the ways we may abuse the power and privilege we have, whether in the United States, Israel and Palestine, or anywhere we gather, and to stop and do *t'shuvah* before cataclysm strikes. This includes understanding how our species is willfully disrupting the climate, extinguishing the Life we are commanded to choose, turning vulnerable people and species into refugees.

In the third year of the pandemic, we continue to struggle, though in many ways things have improved. As the world struggles to face so many plagues, including racism and global climate disruption, Jews also face growing anti-Semitism, along with strong pressure to say that anti-Semitism isn't as real because Jews are privileged and so many Jews present as white. All the while, climate cataclysm edges ever closer. *Oy meh hayah lanu!* (July 2022)

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Use the Omer Counter app to count the seven weeks and the Sefirot between *Tisha B'Av* and Rosh Hashanah. For info go to:  
[neohasid.org/omer/apps/](http://neohasid.org/omer/apps/)

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The hotspot in the struggle for justice in East Jerusalem and the West Bank is now Masafer Yatta, where 1300 Palestinian stand to lose their homes. Isaiah 1:27 says there is no Zion, no viable state of Israel, without justice. Let us fight for justice now rather than mourn later. Read more:

[facebook.com/BreakingTheSilenceIsrael/videos/1138797826880167/](https://facebook.com/BreakingTheSilenceIsrael/videos/1138797826880167/)  
[afcfp.org/preventing-demolition-and-expulsion/](http://afcfp.org/preventing-demolition-and-expulsion/)  
[neohasid.org/Sumarin/](http://neohasid.org/Sumarin/)

# Laments איכה

Translations of *Eikhah* for our world

This translation of *Laments*, the book of mourning poems read on *Tish'a B'Av*, uses principles of the Buber-Rosenzweig Bible. It strives to be “concordant”, translating related Hebrew words with related English words and following the order and syntax of the Hebrew where possible. It also focuses on the more physical, earthy meaning of words, in order to draw the modern reader towards more ancient ways of seeing and feeling. Sometimes alternate translations are given, indicated by a slash. (When reading aloud, simply pick one of the translations. For *YHVH*, you can read *Adonai* or *Hashem* or “the Eternal”.) James Moffat’s 1922 translation was consulted. As a somewhat literal translation, *Laments* uses “He” and “His” as pronouns for God, though Torah and common sense command us not to make an exclusively male or female image of God. If you are using *Laments* liturgically, please feel encouraged to change the pronouns. For brief essays on the theology of *Eikhah*, refugees, the Earth, and more, see the end of this booklet.



*Laments 4:1*, Margaret Adams Parker  
[www.margaretadamsparker.com](http://www.margaretadamsparker.com)  
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Read sections from Rabbi Seidenberg’s groundbreaking book, now in paperback, *Kabbalah and Ecology: God’s Image in the More-Than-Human World* (Cambridge U., 2015) at [kabbalahandecology.com](http://kabbalahandecology.com).

Find more *Tisha B'Av* resources, songs, and teachings online at: [theshalomcenter.org/node/1733](http://theshalomcenter.org/node/1733) and [neohasid.org/zman/tisha\\_bav/](http://neohasid.org/zman/tisha_bav/).

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8. What does this mean? The Torah portrays the land as a subject with rights and interests that take priority over our needs. Especially in the flood story and the laws of Jubilee and sabbatical years (Lev. 25)—and in the consequences that are supposed to befall the people if they do not observe these laws (Lev. 26)—the Torah teaches that God will take the side of the land against the people if forced to. The land will “enjoy her Sabbaths” (Lev. 26:34,43) – even if that means the people are exiled or wiped out. From the divine perspective, the land can sue for justice. What has intrinsic value is not humanity but justice, which is humanity’s potential. See: [neohasid.org/torah/genesis-shmitah](http://neohasid.org/torah/genesis-shmitah)

9. The Torah outlines six curses for not observing the sabbatical year that describe an unraveling relationship between people and land. Two curses involve children being eaten – by wild animals (v.22), then by their parents (v.29). That image is repeated in *Eikhah* (2:20, 4:10), and it is the main connection between *Eikhah* and Leviticus. The final curse in Leviticus is that “you will be lost in the nations and the land of your enemies will eat you” (v.38). The last curse does not sound like the worst. But if the land eats us, this represents a complete reversal of the right relationship between the people and the land.

10. In ancient times, people believed that the Temple existed to promote fertility and abundance. Temple rituals were performed for the sake of the land and for all life, not just for the Jews or even for all humanity. The Temple’s purpose had already been destroyed by the way people treated the land.

11. The idea that destruction came because of how the Jewish people treated the land is not found in *Eikhah*, where identification of the land with the people is total. Instead, Jerusalem’s downfall results from the moral downfall in relationships between human beings. In Jeremiah too, the fate of Jerusalem is sealed only after the rich, who briefly set their slaves free, re-enslave them when it looks like the danger has passed. (Jer. 34) How we treat the stranger, the poor, the refugee, is what determines if we have the right to be in the land.

12. Creation is compared to a sacred Temple (*Tanchuma Pekudei, P’ri Eitz Hadar*). In an age when our ecological “sins” are coming home to roost, the connection between natural disaster and divine retribution is not farfetched. However, when the Jerusalem Temple was destroyed, there were other lands to flee to. If we destroy the Temple that is this Earth, there will be no place to flee. (Cantor Richard Kaplan’s *Kinah L’churban Gan Eden*, on [neohasid.org](http://neohasid.org), can help you focus on this theme.)

13. We can expect more wars over resources, as well as people fleeing areas that have flooded or become deserts, as climate change puts more pressure on our ecosystems and our social systems. We need all the spiritual resources we can muster to stay open to the humanity of the refugee and the stranger while also taking care of each other. *Eikhah* is an invitation to move towards justice for all people, for all species, and for the land herself.

Rabbi David Mevorach Seidenberg  
2018/5778. Some of this material is taken from *Kabbalah and Ecology*.

Some notes on the theology of *Eikhah*:

1. *Tish'a B'Av* could not be more relevant than it is today, when the crisis of war refugees and fear of terrorism have overwhelmed the political process in so many countries. We think of *Tish'a B'Av* as a time of mourning, but it is more importantly a call to identify with the experience of refugees who are forced to risk their lives and even their children's lives in order to escape violence, hunger, devastation. That's what the Jewish people went through when the Temple, and the nation and society it stood for, were destroyed, when they became "like deer, not finding a place to graze, walking without strength before a pursuer." (1:6)

2. The idea that tragedy and disaster are punishment for sins seems alien to many modern Jews. This is also why it can be hard to connect the Holocaust with *Tish'a B'Av*. But this theology can also be consoling, because it allows people to find meaning in tragedy.

3. The author(s) of *Eikhah* (traditionally Jeremiah) believed that what happened to Jerusalem expressed divine judgment. For our ancestors, the choice was to believe either that the destruction was God's punishment, or that God no longer cared about what happened to them. It is easy to imagine people choosing a punishing God over an uncaring God (though the latter possibility is also suggested in the last verse of *Eikhah*). Even though *Eikhah* sounds like it's about God punishing us, it's not really a theodicy, a justification of God. Rather, it expresses the hope that tragedy proves that God cares about us, instead of proving the opposite.

4. That doesn't mean we need to accept that theology – even in *Eikhah* itself, this idea is questioned. Only in chapter three is Zion's destruction consistently seen as fair and just punishment. In all the other chapters, the degree of divine punishment is described as excessive and abusive. In every chapter, the poet begs God to pay attention: "See, *YHVH*, and look: to whom did You deal thus? If women will eat their fruit, coddled babes – !"(2:20; also 1:9, 1:11, 1:20, 3:63, 4:16, 5:1). It's as if other people could see and understand the tragedy that unfolded (1:12), but God could not.

5. This suggests one way to confront the images of sexual abuse in *Eikhah*: "All who honor her despise her, for they saw her nakedness." (1:8; also 1:10, 4:21, 5:11) In the prophets, such abuse is a metaphor for the "just" punishment that follows Israel's "adulterous" pursuit of other gods. But in *Eikhah*, the metaphor is used to hold up a mirror to God, to show that the punishment was intolerably abusive.

6. The real theology of *Eikhah* is summed up in the verse, "What can I compare to you, daughter Jerusalem, that I may comfort you?" (2:13) What images, what words, can help people bear the memory of tragedy? The poet is willing to say whatever is needed to enable the people to find meaning.

7. There is another way to understand the destruction of Jerusalem. According to Jeremiah, the reason for the exile was that Israel did not let the land rest every seven years after they entered the land. (2 Chron. 36:21) Since 490 years had passed without a sabbatical year, Israel had to go into exile for 70 years.

## CHAPTER 1

- אֵיכָה |  
יְשְׁבָה בְּדָד  
הָעִיר רַבְּתֵי עָם  
הִיְתָה כְּאַלְמָנָה  
רַבְּתֵי בְּגוֹיִם  
שָׁרְתִי בְּמַדִּינֹת  
הִיְתָה לְמָס:  
בְּכֹו תִבְכֶּה בַּלַּיְלָה  
וְדַמְעָתָה עַל לַחְיָהּ  
אֵין-לָהּ מְנַחֵם  
מִכָּל-אֲהָבֶיהָ  
כָּל-רֵעֶיהָ  
בְּגָדוּ בָּהּ  
הָיוּ לָהּ לְאֹיְבִים:  
גַּלְתָּה יְהוּדָה  
מֵעֲנִי וּמְרַב עֲבֹדָה  
הִיא יְשְׁבָה בְּגוֹיִם  
לֹא מְצָאָה מְנוּחַ  
כָּל-רֹדְפֶיהָ הַשִּׁיגוּהָ  
בֵּין הַמְצָרִים:  
דְּרֹכֵי צִיּוֹן אֲבֵלוֹת  
מִבְּלִי בְּאֵי מוֹעֵד  
כָּל-שַׁעְרֶיהָ שׁוּמְמִין
- 1 *Eikhah!* How can it be –  
she sat alone,  
the city so great / so swelled with people?  
She was like a widow.  
The one great among the nations,  
ministering among the states,  
became a slave caste.  
2 Crying, she will cry in the night,  
her tear upon her cheek  
There is none for her, no comforter,  
from all her lovers.  
All her companions  
played traitor with her.  
They became for her enemies.  
3 She, Judah, was exiled,  
by poverty, and by (so) much hard labor  
She sat among the nations,  
not finding any rest;  
All her pursuers caught up with her  
between the confined places.  
4 Zion's roads are mourning  
from being without festival-goers,  
all her gates desolated;

כְּהַנִּיחַ נֶאֱנָחִים  
 בְּתוֹלְתֶיהָ נוֹגְוֹת  
 וְהִיא מֵרָלָה:  
 הָיָו צָרֶיהָ לְרֹאשׁ  
 אֵיבֵיהָ שָׁלוֹ  
 כִּי־הִוָּה הַזֶּה  
 עַל רַב־פְּשָׁעֶיהָ  
 עוֹלָלֶיהָ הִלְכוּ שְׁבִי  
 לְפָנֵי־צָר:  
 וַיֵּצֵא מִן־בֵּית־צִיּוֹן  
 כָּל־הַדָּרָה  
 הָיָו שָׂרֶיהָ כְּאֵילִים  
 לֹא־מָצְאוּ מְרֻעָה  
 וַיִּלְכוּ בְּלֹא־כֹחַ  
 לְפָנֵי רוֹדֵף:  
 זָכְרָה יְרוּשָׁלַם  
 יְמֵי עֲנִיָּה  
 וּמְרוֹדֶיהָ  
 כֹּל מִחֲמֻדֶיהָ  
 אֲשֶׁר הָיוּ מִיְמֵי קָדֶם  
 בְּנִפְלַע עַמָּהּ בְּיַד־צָר  
 וְאֵין עֹזֵר לָהּ  
 רָאוּהָ צָרִים  
 שֹׁחֲקוּ עַל מִשְׁבַּתָּהּ:  
 חָטְאָה חָטְאָה יְרוּשָׁלַם

Her priests are moaning,  
 her girls grieving;  
 And she – it is bitterness for her.  
 5 Her tormentors were at the head,  
 her enemies had ease  
 For YHVH / the Eternal aggrieved her  
 for the greatness of her sins.  
 Her babes walked captive  
 before foe;  
 6 and all her splendor went out from  
 daughter Zion!  
 Her ministers were like deer,  
 not finding a place to graze;  
 and (so) they walked, without strength,  
 before a pursuer.  
 7 Jerusalem remembered  
 the days of her poverty / affliction  
 and her downsliding,  
 all her precious things  
 which were from days long ago,  
 while her people fell into a foe's hand;  
 and there is no help for her.  
 They saw her, her tormentors,  
 laughing over her becoming stilled.  
 8 Sinning she sinned, Jerusalem.

Hashiveinu הַשִּׁיבֵנוּ  
 Adonai elekha יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ  
 v'nashuvah וְנָשׁוּבָה  
 Chadash yamenu חֲדָשׁ יָמֵינוּ  
 k'kedem כְּקֶדֶם:

Some more songs:

Shifkhi kamayim libeikh  
 nokhach p'nei Hashem

Pour out your heart like water  
 right before Hashem

Yehudah l'olam teishev,  
 Yerushalayim l'dor vador

Judah will dwell for all time,  
 Jerusalem for generations

By the waters of Babylon we sat  
 down and wept for thee Zion  
 We remember thee Zion

Nachamu 'ami.  
 Anokhi hu m'nachemchem

Take comfort my people  
 I am the one who comforts you

Eli Tsiyon v'areha  
 k'mo ishah v'tsireha  
 v'khivtulah chagurat sak  
 al ba'al n'ureha

My God, Zion and her towns, like  
 a woman in travail, like a virgin  
 wearing sackcloth for the  
 husband of her youth

Turn us,  
 YHVH, toward you,  
 and we will turn.  
 Make our days new again,  
 like dawn / long ago.

*The observances of Tish'a B'Av*

The observances of *Tish'a B'Av*—not wearing fresh clothes, not washing, fasting from eating and drinking and sexual contact, not greeting each other, not sitting anywhere except on the ground—are closer to the experience of being a refugee than to being a mourner. The destruction of the Temple stands not just for the destruction of Jerusalem, but for the city being turned into a war zone, and the people becoming prey to hunger, violence, and death. *Tish'a B'Av* is not primarily about the Temple – *Chaza"l*, the rabbis, figured out how to live without the Temple long ago. Rather, *Tish'a B'Av* is about homelessness, fleeing from war into famine, being thrown into a hostile world without shelter or protection – things all too present in our world. It's an opportunity empathize, to confront the ways we abuse our power, as individuals, as a society, as a people, and as a species, turning other people and other species into refugees.



*City Shelter*, Kathe Kollwitz, 1926, public domain

12 Ministers by their hand were hung.  
 Elders' faces shown no majesty / respect.  
 13 Boys would carry a millstone,  
 and youths, stumbling with wood.  
 14 Elders ceased from gate,  
 boys from their play.  
 15 Our heart ceased / stopped any joy,  
 our dance overturned into mourning.  
 16 The crown on our head is fallen;  
*Oy* for us! For we sinned.  
 17 For this our heart was sickened.  
 For these our eyes darkened.  
 18 For Mount Zion, that was desolated,  
 foxes went through her.  
 19 You, *YHVH*  
 will sit for all world-time,  
 Your throne (lasts) for generations.  
 20 Why would you forget us forever?  
 Abandon us for the span of time's days?  
 21 Turn us, *YHVH*, toward you,  
 and we will turn.  
 Renew our days, like long before,  
 22 for (what) if rejecting you did reject  
 us / loath us, were enraged over us,  
 so very much—!

על-כן לנידה היתה  
 כל-מכבדיה הזיליה  
 כיראו ערותה  
 גם-היא נאנחה  
 ותשב אחור:  
 ט טמאתה בשויליה  
 לא זכרה אחרייה  
 ותרד פלאים  
 אין מנחם לה  
 ראה יהוה את-ענני  
 כי הגדיל אויב:  
 ו ידו פרש צר  
 על כל-מחמדיה  
 כיראתה גוים  
 באו מקדשה  
 אשר צויתה  
 לא-יבאו  
 בקהל לך:  
 יא כל-עמה נאנחים  
 מבקשים לחם  
 נתנו מחמודיהם  
 באכל להשיב נפש  
 ראה יהוה  
 והביטה כי הייתי זוללה:  
 יב לוא אליכם  
 For this an outcast / *nidah* she became.  
 All who honor her despise her,  
 for they saw her nakedness.  
 Also her, she is moaning,  
 and turned around backward.  
 9 Her blood / *tum'ah* in her skirts,  
 she didn't remember her end after,  
 she descended wondrously.  
 There is no comforter for her.  
*YHVH*, see my poverty / my humiliation,  
 for an enemy became great.  
 10 A foe / Trauma spread out his hand  
 over all her precious things;  
 She saw other nations  
 come within her holy place,  
 which You commanded her:  
 "They won't come in  
 with the community to you."  
 11 All her people are moaning  
 seeking bread;  
 They gave up their precious things  
 for food to restore life.  
 See, *YHVH*,  
 and look (at how) I was despised.  
 12 Never to you,

כָּל־עֹבְרֵי דֶרֶךְ  
הִבִּיטוּ וּרְאוּ  
אִם־יֵשׁ מִכְּאוֹב כְּמִכְּאוֹבִי  
אֲשֶׁר עוֹלַל לִי  
אֲשֶׁר הוֹגְהָ יְהוָה  
בְּיוֹם חֲרוֹן אַפָּוֹ:  
יג מִמְּרוֹם שָׁלַח־אַשׁ  
בְּעֲצַמְתִּי וַיִּרְדְּנָה  
פָּרַשׁ רְשֵׁת לַרְגְלִי  
הִשְׁיבֵנִי אֲחֹזֵר  
נִתְּנִי שִׁמְמָה  
כָּל־הַיּוֹם דָּוָה:  
יד נֶשְׁקַד עַל פִּשְׁעֵי  
בְּיָדוֹ יִשְׁתַּרְגְּנוּ  
עָלוּ עַל־צַוְאַרְי  
הַכֶּשֶׁל כַּחֲוִי  
נִתְּנִי אֲדֹנָי בְּיָדִי  
לֹא־אוּכַל קוּם:  
טו סִלָּה  
כָּל־אֲפִירֵי | אֲדֹנָי בְּקֶרְבִי  
קָרָא עָלַי מוֹעֵד  
לְשֹׁבֵר בַּחוּרֵי  
גַת דֶּרֶךְ אֲדֹנָי  
לְבַת־וִילַת בַּת־יְהוּדָה:  
טז עַל־אַלְהָה | אֲנִי בּוֹכֶיָה

all who pass on the way.  
(All of you) look, and see –  
could there be pain like my pain  
which was doled out to me,  
which *YHVH* caused to grieve  
in the day of His furious anger?  
13 From a height He sent fire  
in my bones and overwhelmed them.  
He spread out a net for my feet;  
He turned me / repelled me backward;  
He made me desolate,  
all day – sickness.  
14 The harness of my sins lashed on,  
they were tied down by His hand,  
brought up onto my neck,  
making my strength fail.  
*Adonai* gave me over into (such) hands  
that I am unable to stand up.  
15 *Adonai* spurned  
all my mighty warriors within me,  
He called out over me a feast  
for breaking my boys;  
a winepress—*Adonai* stomped—  
for daughter Judah’s girl.  
16 Over these, I am crying;

א זְכוֹר יְהוָה מַה־הָיָה לָנוּ  
הִבִּיטָה וּרְאָה  
אֶת־חֲרָפְתָנוּ:  
ב נִחַלְתָנוּ נְהַפְכָה לְזָרִים  
בְּתֵינוּ לְנֹכְרִים:  
ג יְתוּמִים הָיִינוּ וְאִין אָב  
אִמֹתֵינוּ כְּאִלְמָנוֹת:  
ד מִיַּמֵּינוּ בְּכֶסֶף שָׁתִינוּ  
עֵצֵינוּ בְּמַחִיר יָבֵאוּ:  
ה עַל צַוְאַרְנוּ נִרְדְּפָנוּ  
יִגְעֵנוּ וְלֹא הוֹנַח־לָנוּ:  
ו מִצְרַיִם נִתְּנוּ לְיָד  
אֲשׁוּר לְשִׁבְעַ לָחֶם:  
ז אֲבֹתֵינוּ חָטְאוּ וְאִינָם  
וְאִנְחָנוּ עוֹנֵתֵיהֶם סָבְלוּנוּ:  
ח עֲבָדִים מִשְׁלוּ כָּנוּ  
פָּרַק אִין מִיָּדָם:  
ט בְּנַפְשֵׁנוּ נָבִיא לַחַיִּנוּ  
מִפְּנֵי חֶרֶב הַמִּדְבָּר:  
י עוֹרֵנוּ כְּתַנּוּר נִכְמְרוּ  
מִפְּנֵי זַלְעָפוֹת רָעֵב:  
יא נְשִׁים בְּצִיּוֹן עָנוּ  
בְּתַלְתַּת בְּעָרֵי יְהוּדָה:

1 *YHVH*, remember what was ours.  
Look, and see  
our abuse / our shame!  
2 Our inheritance overturned to strangers,  
our houses to foreigners.  
3 We were orphans, there is no father,  
our mothers like widows.  
4 Our water we drank for money;  
our wood came (only) with a price.  
5 On our neck were we pursued,  
weary, and none would let us (rest).  
6 Egypt, we stretched a hand,  
Assyria, to satisfy bread.  
7 Our fathers sinned and are not,  
and we shouldered their iniquities.  
8 Slaves ruled us.  
None can break us out from their hand.  
9 For our lives we bring our bread,  
from before the wilderness’s sword.  
10 Our skin like a furnace, glowing,  
from before the delirium of hunger.  
11 Women in Zion were victimized,  
girls, in Judah’s towns.

בְּצַפִּיתֵנוּ צְפִינוּ אֶל־גּוֹי  
לֹא יוֹשֵׁעַ:  
יַח צְדוֹ צְעָדֵינוּ  
מִלְכַת בְּרַחֲבֵינוּ  
קָרַב קִצֵּינוּ מִלְאוֹ יְמֵינוּ  
כִּי־בָא קִצֵּינוּ:  
יֵט קָלִים הָיוּ רֹדְפֵינוּ  
מִנְּשָׂרַי שָׁמַיִם  
עַל־הַהַרִים דָּלְקָנוּ  
בַּמִּדְבָּר אָרְבוּ לָנוּ:  
כְּרוּחַ אֶפְיֵנוּ מְשִׁיחַ יְהוָה  
נִלְכַד בְּשַׁחֲתוֹתָם  
אֲשֶׁר אָמַרְנוּ בְּצִלּוֹ  
נִחְיֶה בְּגוֹיִם:  
כָּאֵשׁ שִׁישִׁי וְשִׁמְחִי בַת־אֲדוֹם  
יּוֹשֶׁבֶת בְּאֶרֶץ עוֹץ  
גַּם־עֲלֶיךָ תִּעְבֶּר־כּוֹס  
תִּשְׁכַּרְי וְתִתְעַרִי:  
כָּב תִּמְצֹנֶךָ  
בַת־צִיּוֹן  
לֹא יוֹסִיף לְהִגְלוֹתְךָ  
פָּקַד עוֹנֶיךָ  
בַת־אֲדוֹם  
גָּלָה עַל־חַטָּאתֶיךָ:

In our seeking, we sought / we peered  
toward a nation not (able to) save.  
18 They hunted / tracked our steps,  
(driven) from going in our squares.  
Our end draws close, our days filled,  
for our end has come.  
19 Swift were they, our pursuers,  
more than eagles of the heavens.  
Over the mountains they chased us,  
in the wilderness they laid ambush for us.  
20 Breath of our nose, *YHVH*'s anointed,  
he was trapped by their destructions,  
(the one) whom we said, "In his shade  
we will live with the nations."  
21 Rejoice and be happy, daughter Edom,  
dwelling in the land of Utz –  
a cup will also pass over (to) you,  
you will drink and strip yourself naked.  
22 Complete be your iniquity,  
daughter Zion,  
no more to be exiled / exposed.  
He has charged your iniquity,  
daughter Edom,  
exposed (you) for your sins.

עֵינַי | עֵינַי יִרְדָּה מַיִם  
כִּי־רַחֵק מִמֶּנִּי מְנַחֵם  
מִשְׁעִיב נַפְשִׁי  
הָיוּ בְנֵי שׁוֹמְמִים  
כִּי גִבַר אוֹיֵב:  
יֵז פָּרְשָׁה צִיּוֹן בְּיָדֶיהָ  
אֵין מְנַחֵם לָהּ  
צִוָּה יְהוָה לְיַעֲקֹב  
סָבִיבֵי צָרָיו  
הִיִּתְהָ יְרוּשָׁלַם  
לְנִדָּה בֵּינֵיהֶם:  
יַח צַדִּיק הוּא יְהוָה  
כִּי פִיהוּ מְרִיתִי  
שָׁמְעוּ־נָא כָּל־הָעַמִּים  
וְרֵאוּ מַכְאֲבֵי  
בְּתוֹלְתֵי וּבַחוּרֵי  
הֶלְכוּ בַשִּׁבִי:  
יֵט קָרָאתִי לְמֵאֲהָבֵי  
הִמָּה רְמוּנֵי  
כְּהֵנִי וְזִקְנֵי  
בְּעִיר גּוֹעוּ  
כִּי־בִקְשׁוּ אֶכְלִי לָמוֹ  
וַיִּשְׁיבוּ אֶת־נַפְשָׁם:  
כְּרָאָה יְהוָה כִּי־צָר־לִי  
יַמְעִי חֲמַרְמָרוּ

my eye, my eye, she drops water.  
For so far from me is any comforter,  
a restorer for my life.  
My children were decimated,  
for an enemy overwhelmed / triumphed.  
17 Zion spread out with her hands,  
there is no comforter for her.  
*YHVH* commanded for Jacob,  
surrounding him, his tormentors.  
Jerusalem became  
outcast / *nidah* between them.  
18 Righteous is *YHVH*,  
for His mouth I rebelled (against).  
Listen, please—all peoples—  
and see my pain!  
My girls and my boys  
walked captive / into captivity.  
19 I called to my lovers.  
Those deceived me.  
My priests, and my elders,  
they wasted away in the city,  
while they sought food for themselves  
(that) would bring back their life / soul.  
20 See *YHVH* – for mine is torment,  
my guts were churning,

נְהַפְּךָ לְבִי בְּקִרְבִּי  
 כִּי מָרוּ מְרִיתִי  
 מִחוּץ שִׁבְלֵה־חָרֶב  
 בְּבַיִת כַּמּוֹת:  
 כֹּא שָׁמְעוּ כִּי נִאֲנַחֵה אָנֹכִי  
 אֵין מְנַחֵם לִי  
 כָּל־אֵיבֵי שָׁמְעוּ  
 רַעְתִּי  
 לָשׁוּ כִּי אַתָּה עָשִׂיתָ  
 הַבֵּאתָ יוֹם־קִרְיָאתָ  
 וַיְהִיו כְּמוֹנֵי:  
 כֹּב תָּבֵא כָּל־רַעְתֶּם לְפָנָי  
 וְעוֹלֵל לָמוּ כַּאֲשֶׁר  
 עוֹלָלָתָ לִי עַל כָּל־פְּשָׁעַי  
 כִּי־רַבּוֹת אַנְחָתִי  
 וְלִבִּי רָוֵי:

my heart overturned within me,  
 for rebelling I rebelled.  
 From outside sword bereaving;  
 In the house, like death itself.  
 21 They listened – for I am moaning,  
 there is no comforter for me.  
 All my enemies listened  
 for my evil (doom).  
 They rejoiced, for You did it,  
 You brought the day You called for –  
 and let them be(come) like me.  
 22 May all their evil come before You,  
 and deal to them as  
 You dealt to me for all my sins.  
 For so much are my sighs,  
 and my heart is sickened.

CHAPTER 2

אַיִכָּה  
 יַעֲיֵב בְּאַפּוֹ |  
 אֲדַנִּי אֶת־בֵּת־צִיּוֹן  
 הַשְׁלִיךְ מִשָּׁמַיִם אֶרֶץ  
 תְּפֹאֲרַת יִשְׂרָאֵל

1 *Eikhah!* How can it be –  
 in His anger *Adonai* / the Lord  
 clouded over daughter Zion.  
 He cast down, from skies (to) earth,  
 Israel's glory,

מַלְכֵי־אֲרָץ  
 כָּל יֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֶל  
 כִּי יבֹא צָר וְאוֹיֵב  
 בְּשַׁעְרֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם:  
 יַג מִחַטָּאת נְבִיאֶיהָ  
 עוֹנוֹת כְּהֻנָּה  
 הַשֹּׁפְכִים בְּקִרְבָּה  
 דָּם צְדִיקִים:  
 יָד נָעוּ עוֹרִים  
 בַּחוּצוֹת נִגְאָלוּ בְּדָם  
 בְּלֹא יוֹכְלוּ  
 יִגְעוּ בְּלִבְשֵׁיהֶם:  
 טו סוּרוּ טִמְאָה  
 קְרֹאוּ לָמוּ  
 סוּרוּ סוּרוּ אֶל־תִּגְעוּ  
 כִּי נָצוּ גַם־נָעוּ  
 אָמְרוּ בְּגוֹיִם  
 לֹא יוֹסִיפוּ לְגוֹר:  
 טז פָּנֵי יְהוָה  
 חִלְקָם לֹא יוֹסִיף  
 לְהִבִּיטֵם  
 פָּנֵי כְּהֹנִים לֹא נִשְׂאוּ  
 וַיִּזְקְנוּ לֹא חֲנָנוּ:  
 יז עוֹלֵינוּ תִכְלֵנָה עֵינֵינוּ  
 אֶל־עֲזָרָתְנוּ הֶבֶל

kings of the earth  
 all the inhabitants of the world,  
 that tormentor and enemy would come  
 into the gates of Jerusalem –  
 13 because of her prophets' sins,  
 her priests' wrongs / iniquities,  
 the ones who poured out inside her  
 the blood of righteous people.  
 14 They were shaking / staggering, blind  
 in the streets, defiled with the blood,  
 with none able / none willing (to)  
 come in contact with their clothes.  
 15 “Get out! Contaminated! / *Tamei!*”  
 they would call to them,  
 “Get out! Get out! Don't touch!”  
 For they fled, even staggered.  
 They said in the nations,  
 they will no more (be allowed) to dwell.  
 16 *YHVH's* presence / face  
 divided them, He would no more  
 look at them / notice them –  
 (for) priest's faces they did not lift up,  
 and (to) elders they did not show grace.  
 17 Still will our eyes be used up / failing,  
 toward our help, (which is) emptiness.

מִחַטְאַת סֹדֶם  
 הִתְפּוּכָה כְּמוֹ-רִגַע  
 וְלֹא-תָלוּ בָּהּ יָדַיִם:  
 ז וְכֹו נְזִירֵיהָ מִשְׁלֵג  
 צָחֹו מִחֶלֶב  
 אֲדָמוֹ לְעֵצִים מִפְּנִינִים  
 סַפִּיר גִּזְרָתָם:  
 ח חֲשֹׁךְ מִשְׁחֹור  
 תִּאֲרָם  
 לֹא נִכְרוּ בַּחוּצוֹת  
 צַפֵּד עוֹרֶם עַל-עֲצָמָם  
 יָבֵשׁ הָיָה כַּעֵץ:  
 ט טוֹבִים הָיוּ חֲלֵי-חֶרֶב  
 מִחֲלֵי רָעֵב  
 שָׁהֶם יָזוּבוּ מִדְּקָרִים  
 מִתְּנוּבַת שְׂדֵי:  
 י יָדַי נְשִׁים רַחֲמָנִיּוֹת  
 בְּשָׁלוֹ יִלְדֵיהֶן  
 הָיוּ לְבָרוֹת לָמוֹ  
 בְּשִׁבְרַת בַּת-עַמִּי:  
 יא כָּלָה יְהוָה אֶת-חֲמָתוֹ  
 שָׁפַךְ חֲרוֹן אַפּוֹ  
 וַיִּצְתֶּ-אֵשׁ בְּצִיּוֹן  
 וַתֹּאכַל יְסוּדוֹתֶיהָ:  
 יב לֹא הֵאֱמִינוּ

grew great, beyond the sin of Sodom,  
 the one overthrown, as (in) a moment,  
 and no hands were laid on her.  
 7 Her Nazirites were pure beyond snow,  
 clearer than milk,  
 red of bone, more than rubies,  
 their cut shape sapphire crystal.  
 8 (Now) darkened beyond black soot  
 is their form,  
 they are not recognized in the streets,  
 their skin stretched taut over their bone,  
 it was dried out like a stick.  
 9 Better were the sword-slain  
 than the famine-slain,  
 for those drain away, stabbed through  
 from (want of) produce of the field.  
 10 Merciful hands of merciful women  
 stewed their children –  
 they became provision for them  
 in the shattering of my daughter people.  
 11 YHWH used up His fury,  
 poured out His burning anger,  
 and He kindled a fire in Zion,  
 and she consumed her foundations.  
 12 They would not have believed,

וְלֹא-זָכַר  
 הַדָּם-רַגְלָיו  
 בְּיוֹם אַפּוֹ:  
 ב בִּלְעַ אֲדֹנָי לֹא חָמַל  
 אֶת כָּל-נְאוֹת יַעֲקֹב  
 הָרֵס בְּעִבְרָתוֹ  
 מִבְּצִרֵי בַת-יְהוּדָה  
 הִגִּיעַ לְאָרֶץ  
 חָלַל מַמְלָכָה וְשָׂרֵיהָ:  
 ג גִּבַּע בְּחַר־אֵף  
 כָּל קַרְוֹן יִשְׂרָאֵל  
 הִשִּׁיב אַחֲרוֹ יְמִינוֹ  
 מִפְּנֵי אוֹיֵב  
 וַיִּבְעַר בְּיַעֲקֹב כְּאֵשׁ  
 לְהִבָּה אֲכָלָה סָבִיב:  
 ד דָּרַךְ קַשְׁתוֹ כְּאוֹיֵב  
 נִצָּב יְמִינוֹ  
 כְּצָר  
 וַיַּהַרֵג כָּל  
 מִחֲמַדֵי-עֵינַיִן  
 בְּאֹהֶל בַּת-צִיּוֹן  
 שָׁפַךְ כְּאֵשׁ חֲמָתוֹ:  
 ה הָיָה אֲדֹנָי | כְּאוֹיֵב  
 בִּלְעַ יִשְׂרָאֵל  
 בִּלְעַ כָּל-אַרְמְנוֹתֶיהָ

and didn't remember  
 His foot's resting place  
 in His day of anger.  
 2 Adonai devoured—He had no pity—  
 all of Jacob's pastures.  
 He tore down with His burning  
 daughter Judah's fortifications;  
 He reached to the very ground.  
 He violated kingdom and her ministers.  
 3 With ferocious anger He hacked off  
 all of Israel's horn.  
 He turned His right hand backward  
 before the enemy.  
 Burning into Jacob, like fire  
 flaming, consuming (all) around.  
 4 He worked His bow like an enemy,  
 He stood firm His right hand  
 as a foe / a tormentor  
 and He murdered everything  
 precious to the eye;  
 In daughter Zion's tent  
 He poured out His wrath like the fire.  
 5 Adonai was like an enemy;  
 He devoured / swallowed Israel.  
 He devoured all her citadels,

שֶׁחַת מִבְּצָרָיו  
 וַיִּרְבֵּל בְּבֵת יְהוּדָה  
 תִּיאֲנִיָּה וְאֲנִיָּה:  
 וַיִּחַמַּס כַּגֹּן שֹׁכֵי  
 שֶׁחַת מוֹעֲדוֹ  
 שָׁפַח יְהוָה | בְּצִיּוֹן  
 מוֹעֵד וְשֹׁבֵת  
 וַיִּנְאַץ בְּזַעַם-אָפוֹ  
 מֶלֶךְ וְכֹהֵן:  
 זַ וַיִּחַ אֲדוֹנָי | מִזִּבְחֹו  
 נֶאֱדָר מִקִּדְשׁוֹ  
 הִסְגִּיר בְּיַד-אוֹיֵב  
 חוֹמַת אֲרָמְנוֹתֶיהָ  
 קוֹל נְתָנוּ בְּבֵית-יְהוָה  
 כַּיּוֹם מוֹעֵד:  
 ח חָשַׁב יְהוָה | לְהַשְׁחִית  
 חוֹמַת בֵּת-צִיּוֹן נְטָה לָּו  
 לֹא-הָשִׁיב יָדוֹ  
 מִבִּלְעַד  
 וַיִּאֲבֹל-חֵל וְחוֹמָה  
 יַחְדָּו אִמְלָלוּ:  
 ט טָבְעוּ בָאָרֶץ שְׁעָרֶיהָ  
 אֶבֶד וְשִׁבַר בְּרִיחֶיהָ  
 מִלְּפָה וְשָׂרֶיהָ בְּגוֹיִם  
 אֵין תּוֹרָה

undermined His fortifications;  
 And He multiplied in daughter Zion  
 grief and groaning.  
 6 Like a garden, He tore apart His sukkah,  
 destroyed His feast.  
*YHVH* caused Shabbat and festival  
 to be forgotten in Zion,  
 by the rage of His anger  
 king and priest.  
 7 *Adonai* abhorred His altar,  
 disdained His holy place.  
 He made shut with an enemy's hand  
 the walls of her citadels.  
 They gave a shout in *YHVH's* house  
 like a festival day.  
 8 *YHVH* plotted to ruin  
 daughter Zion's wall, stretched a line,  
 didn't turn back His hand  
 from swallowing up,  
 and He made rampart and wall mourn,  
 together made wretched.  
 9 They drowned in the earth, her gates.  
 He smashed and broke her bars.  
 Her king and her ministers in the nations,  
 there is no Torah / no teaching.

אַ אֵיכָה  
 יוֹעַם זָהָב  
 יִשְׁנָא הַכֶּתֶם הַטּוֹב  
 תִּשְׁתַּפְּכֶנָּה אֲבָנֵי-קֹדֶשׁ  
 בְּרֹאשׁ כָּל-חוֹצוֹת:  
 ב בְּנֵי צִיּוֹן הַיְקָרִים  
 הַמְּסֻלָּאִים בַּפֹּז  
 אֵיכָה נִחְשְׁבוּ  
 לְנִבְלֵי-חָרָשׁ  
 מַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵי יוֹצֵר:  
 ג גַּם-תַּנִּים חָלְצוּ שָׂדֶה  
 הַיְנִיקוּ גּוֹרֵיהֶן  
 בֵּת-עַמִּי לְאֶכְזָר  
 כִּי־עֲנִים בַּמֶּדְבָּר:  
 ד דִּבֶּק לְשׁוֹן יוֹנֵק  
 אֶל-חִכּוֹ בְּצַמָּא  
 עוֹלָלִים שָׂאָלוּ לָחֶם  
 פָּרַשׁ אֵין לָהֶם:  
 ה הָאֶכְלִים לְמַעַדְנָיִם  
 נִשְׁמָו בַּחוֹצוֹת  
 הָאֲמָנִים עָלֵי תוֹלַע  
 חִבְּקוּ אֲשֵׁפֶתוֹת:  
 ו וַיִּגְדַּל עֵינֹן בֵּת-עַמִּי

1 *Eikhhah!* How can it be –  
 gold becomes dull,  
 the best gold transmuted,  
 stones of the holy poured / dumped out  
 at every street head;  
 2 Zion's children, precious ones,  
 weighed against the purest gold –  
 how can it be that they are counted  
 as clay jars,  
 work of a maker's hands?  
 3 Even jackals draw out a breast,  
 would give suck to their cubs.  
 (But) my daughter people – so cruel,  
 like ostriches in the wilderness.  
 4 A suckling's tongue, stuck  
 to its palate with such thirst;  
 babes sought bread –  
 none break it off for them.  
 5 The ones who eat for delicacies  
 were wasted in the streets,  
 the ones nursed on scarlet  
 were hugging trash heaps.  
 6 And my daughter people's iniquity

אל־תַּעֲלֶם אָזְנוֹךָ  
 לְרוֹחֲתִי לְשׁוֹעֲתִי:  
 נָזַקְרַבְתָּ בַּיּוֹם אֶקְרָאָךָ  
 אֲמַרְתָּ אֶל־תִּירָא:

נַח רַבַּת אֲדֹנָי  
 רִיבֵי נַפְשִׁי גָאֲלַת חַיִּי:  
 נָטָה רְאִיתָה יְהוָה עֲוֹתַי  
 שִׁפְטָה מִשְׁפָּטִי:  
 סָ רְאִיתָה כָּל־נִקְמָתָם  
 כָּל־מַחְשְׁבֹתַם לִי:

סָא שָׁמַעַתָּ חֲרָפְתָם יְהוָה  
 כָּל־מַחְשְׁבֹתָם עָלַי:  
 סָב שִׁפְתַי קָמִי  
 וְהִגִּידוּנָם עָלַי כָּל־הַיּוֹם:  
 סָג שִׁבְתָם וְקִימָתָם  
 הִבִּיטָה אֲנִי מִנְּגִינָתָם

סָד תִּשְׁיב לָהֶם גְּמוּלָה  
 יְהוָה כַּמַּעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיהֶם:  
 סָה תִתֵּן לָהֶם מְגִנַת־לֵב  
 תִּאֲלָתֶךָ לָהֶם:  
 סָו תִּרְדֹּף בְּאַף וְתִשְׁמִידֵם  
 מִתַּחַת שָׁמַיִם יְהוָה:

Don't hide / conceal your ear  
 to my (plea for) relief, to my cry.  
 57 You were near the day I would call,  
 You said, "Don't fear."  
 58 Adonai, You struggled (in) my  
 soul's struggles; You saved my life.  
 59 You saw my twisting;  
 (now) judge my judgment!  
 60 You saw all their vengeance  
 all their designs for me.  
 61 You heard their shaming, YHVH,  
 all their designs against me,  
 62 the speech of those rising at me,  
 their obsession over me every day,  
 63 (whether) sitting or rising up –  
 Look! I am their singsong!  
 64 You will pay them back, YHVH,  
 according to the work of their hands;  
 65 You will make theirs a heart walled  
 up – let Your curse be for them!  
 66 Pursue in anger and destroy them  
 from under YHVH's heavens.

גַּם־נְבִיאֶיהָ  
 לֹא־מָצְאוּ חֲזוֹן מִיְהוָה:  
 יֹשְׁבוּ לָאָרֶץ  
 יָדְמוּ וְזָקְנֵי בֵת־צִיּוֹן  
 הֵעִלוּ עָפָר עַל־רֹאשָׁם  
 חָגְרוּ שַׁקִּים  
 הוֹרִידוּ לָאָרֶץ רֹאשָׁן  
 בְּתוֹלַת יְרוּשָׁלַם:  
 יֵאָכְלוּ כָּל־בְּדַמְעוֹת עֵינָי  
 חֲמָרְמוֹ מֵעֵי  
 נִשְׁפָּךְ לָאָרֶץ כְּבֹדִי  
 עַל־שֹׁבֵר  
 בֵּת־עַמִּי  
 בַּעֲטָף עוֹלֵל וְיוֹזֵק  
 בְּרַחֲבוֹת קִרְיָה:  
 יִבְרָא אֲמַתָּם יְאִמְרוּ  
 אֵיךְ דָּגַן וְיַיִן  
 בָּהֶתְעַטְפָם  
 כַּחֲלָלִי בְּרַחֲבוֹת עִיר  
 בְּהַשְׁתַּפֵּךְ נַפְשָׁם  
 אֶל־חֵיק אֲמַתָּם:  
 יִגְמָה־אֲעִידֶךָ  
 מָה אֲדַמֶּה־לָּךְ  
 הַבַּת יְרוּשָׁלַם  
 מָה אֲשׁוּהָ־לָּךְ

Also her prophets,  
 They found no vision from YHVH.  
 10 They sat down to the earth, they  
 stayed silent, daughter Zion's elders,  
 they lifted dust over their head,  
 tied on sackcloth.  
 They let their head down to the earth,  
 Jerusalem's girls.  
 11 My eyes were used up by the tears,  
 my guts churned up,  
 my liver poured out to the ground  
 over the shattering of  
 my daughter people,  
 with exhaustion of babe and suckling  
 in the town's squares.  
 12 To their mothers they would say,  
 "Where is grain and wine?",  
 stretching themselves out,  
 like a corpse, in city streets,  
 with their life-force pouring itself out  
 onto their mothers' chest.  
 13 What can I make testify?  
 What will I liken to you?  
 O daughter Jerusalem!  
 What can I compare to you

וַאֲנַחֲמֶךָ  
בְּתוֹלַת בֵּת צִיּוֹן  
כִּי־גָדוֹל כַּיָּם שִׁבְרֶךָ  
מִי יִרְפָּא־לְךָ:  
יָד נְבִיאֶיךָ חָזוּ לְךָ  
שׂוֹא וְתַפֵּל  
וְלֹא־גָלוּ עַל־עוֹנֶךָ  
לְהָשִׁיב שְׁבוּתֶךָ  
וַיַּחֲזוּ לְךָ  
מִשְׂאוֹת שׂוֹא וּמַדּוּחִים:  
טו סָפְקוּ עַלְיָךְ כַּפַּיִם  
כָּל־עַבְרֵי דָרֶךְ  
שָׁרְקוּ וַיִּנְעוּ רֵאשִׁים  
עַל־בֵּת יְרוּשָׁלַם  
הֲזֹאת הָעִיר שֶׁיֵּאמְרוּ  
כְּלִילַת יָפִי  
מִשׁוֹשׁ לְכָל־הָאָרֶץ:  
טז פָּצוּ עַלְיָךְ פִּיהֶם  
כָּל־אוֹיְבֶיךָ  
שָׁרְקוּ וַיִּחְרְקוּ־שִׁן  
אָמְרוּ בְלָעֵנוּ  
אָךְ זֶה הַיּוֹם שֶׁקִּוִּינָהוּ  
מִצָּאֵנוּ רָאִינוּ:  
יז עָשָׂה יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר זָמַם  
בְּצַע אָמְרָתוֹ

(that) I may comfort you,  
daughter Zion's girl?  
For great, like the sea, is your shattering  
– who will bring healing to you?  
14 For you did your prophets envision  
deception, and irrelevance,  
revealing nothing for your wrong  
to turn back your destiny / your captivity,  
and they envisioned for you  
a burden of deceit and dejections.  
15 They struck their hands over you,  
all who passed on the road,  
they hissed and they shook their head  
over daughter Jerusalem:  
“Is this it? The city they said (was)  
beauty's completion,  
joy's source for all the earth?”  
16 They crack open their mouth over you,  
all your enemies.  
They hissed, and they grit teeth.  
They said: We swallowed;  
*Akh!* This day that we hoped for,  
we found, we saw!  
17 *YHVH* did what He conspired;  
He pushed through His saying

מו פָּצוּ עַלְיָנוּ פִּיהֶם  
כָּל־אֹיְבֵינוּ:  
מז פָּחַד וּפְחַת הָיָה לָנוּ  
הַשָּׂאת וְהַשְׁבֵּר:  
מח פָּלְגֵי־מַיִם תִּרְדַּ עֵינַי  
עַל־שִׁבְר בֵּת־עַמִּי:  
מט עֵינַי נִגְרָה  
וְלֹא תִדְמָה  
מֵאִין הַפְּגוֹת:  
נ עַד־יִשְׁקִיף  
וַיֵּרָא יְהוָה מִשָּׁמַיִם:  
נא עֵינַי עוֹלְלָה לְנַפְשִׁי  
מִכָּל בָּנוֹת עִירִי:  
נב צוֹד צָדוֹנִי כַצֶּפֶר  
אֵיבֵי חַנָּם:  
נג צָמְתוּ בַבּוֹר חַיִּי  
וַיִּדּוּ־אֶבֶן בִּי:  
נד צָפוּ־מַיִם עַל־רֵאשִׁי  
אָמַרְתִּי נִגְזַרְתִּי:  
נה קָרָאתִי שְׁמֶךָ יְהוָה  
מִבּוֹר תַּחְתָּיוֹת:  
נו קוֹלִי שָׁמַעַתְ

46 All our enemies crack open  
their mouth against us;  
47 Trepidation and trap were ours,  
the ruination and the shattering.  
48 My eye drops floods of water  
for my daughter people's shattering;  
49 My eye streams  
and won't silence herself,  
(she cries) with no breaks / no stutters,  
50 until *YHVH* would look down  
and see from heaven.  
51 My eye doles sorrow to my soul  
over all my city's daughters.  
52 Hunting, they hunted me, like a bird,  
(becoming) my enemies for no reason;  
53 they sealed off my life in the pit,  
and cast stone against me;  
54 waters flowed over my head,  
“I am cut off,” I said.  
55 I called Your name, *YHVH*,  
from a pit far underground.  
56 You heard my voice:

אֲדֹנָי לֹא רָאָה:	struggle – wouldn't <i>Adonai</i> see (that)?	אֲשֶׁר צָנָה מִימֵי-קֶדֶם הָרַס וְלֹא חָמַל וַיִּשְׂמַח עָלֶיךָ אוֹיֵב הָרִים קָרוֹן צָרִיךְ:	which He commanded from early days. He tore down and showed no pity. He made an enemy rejoice over you; your tormentors' horn was exalted.
לֹא מִי זֶה אָמַר וַתְּהִי אֲדֹנָי לֹא צָוָה: לֹחַ מִפִּי עָלְיוֹן לֹא תֵצֵא הָרָעוֹת וְהַטּוֹב: לֹט מֵהַיִּתְאוּנוֹ אַדָּם חַי גָּבַר עַל-חַטָּאוֹ:	37 Who is this who spoke and it was – didn't <i>Adonai</i> so command? 38 From the mouth of the Highest don't the evils and the good come out? 39 How could a living person complain, a man, (if punished) for his sins?	יִחַ צָעַק לְבָם אֶל-אֲדֹנָי חֹמַת בַּת-צִיּוֹן הוֹרִידִי כַנַּחַל דְּמָעָה יוֹמָם וְלַיְלָה אֶל-תַּתְּנִי פּוּגַת לֶךְ אֶל-תָּדַם בַּת-עֵינֶיךָ: יִט קוֹמִי   רְנִי בַלַּיְלָה לְרֹאשׁ אֲשִׁמְרוֹת שִׁפְכִי כַמַּיִם לַבַּיִת נִכַח פָּנַי אֲדֹנָי שָׂאֵי אֵלָיו כַּפְּיךְ עַל-נֶפֶשׁ עוֹלְלֶיךָ הָעֲטוּפִים בְּרָעַב בְּרֹאשׁ כָּל-חוֹצוֹת: כִּי רָאָה יְהוָה וְהִבִּיטָה לְמִי עוֹלְלֹת כָּה אִם-תֹּאכְלֶנָה נְשִׂים פְּרִיָם עַל־לֵי טַפְּחִים אִם-יִהְרַג בְּמִקְדָּשׁ אֲדֹנָי כִּהְזָן וְנִבְיָא:	18 Their heart screamed out to <i>Adonai</i> . Wall of daughter Zion, let down a tear like a torrent, day and night. Don't give yourself any break; Don't let your daughter eye fall silent.
מִנְחַפְשָׁה דְרָכֵינוּ וְנִחְקְרָה וְנָשׁוּבָה עַד-יְהוָה: מֵאָה נִשְׂא לְבַבֵּנוּ אֶל-כַּפָּיִם אֶל-אֵל בְּשָׁמַיִם: מִבְּנַחְנוּ פָשַׁעְנוּ וּמְרִינוּ אַתָּה לֹא סָלַחְתָּ:	40 Let us search our ways and dig deep, and let us return until <i>YHVH</i> , 41 Let us lift our hearts up to our hands (stretching them) toward God in the heavens. 42 Us, we sinned and rebelled. You – You did not pardon.	יִט קוֹמִי   רְנִי בַלַּיְלָה לְרֹאשׁ אֲשִׁמְרוֹת שִׁפְכִי כַמַּיִם לַבַּיִת נִכַח פָּנַי אֲדֹנָי שָׂאֵי אֵלָיו כַּפְּיךְ עַל-נֶפֶשׁ עוֹלְלֶיךָ הָעֲטוּפִים בְּרָעַב בְּרֹאשׁ כָּל-חוֹצוֹת: כִּי רָאָה יְהוָה וְהִבִּיטָה לְמִי עוֹלְלֹת כָּה אִם-תֹּאכְלֶנָה נְשִׂים פְּרִיָם עַל־לֵי טַפְּחִים אִם-יִהְרַג בְּמִקְדָּשׁ אֲדֹנָי כִּהְזָן וְנִבְיָא:	19 Get up! Sing out in the night to the first of the nightwatches: Pour out your heart like water right before <i>Adonai</i> ! Lift your palms toward Him – for the life of your babies stretched out by famine at every street head!
מִגַּ סִבַּתָּה בָּאָף וַתִּרְדְּפֵנוּ הָרַגְתָּ לֹא חֲמַלְתָּ: מִד סִבּוֹתָה בְּעָנֹן לֶךְ מִעֲבוֹר תְּפִלָּה: מִדָּה סְחִי וּמָאוֹס תִּשְׁיִמְנוּ בְּקֶרֶב הָעַמִּים:	43 You took shelter in such anger, and You would pursue us, You murdered without pitying; 44 You sheltered Yourself within a cloud, far beyond prayer; 45 Scum and refuse You would make us in the midst of the peoples.	כִּי רָאָה יְהוָה וְהִבִּיטָה לְמִי עוֹלְלֹת כָּה אִם-תֹּאכְלֶנָה נְשִׂים פְּרִיָם עַל־לֵי טַפְּחִים אִם-יִהְרַג בְּמִקְדָּשׁ אֲדֹנָי כִּהְזָן וְנִבְיָא:	20 See, <i>YHVH</i> , and look: to whom did You deal thus? If women will eat their fruit, coddled babies—! If priest and prophet are murdered in <i>Adonai</i> 's holy place—!

כַּאֲשֶׁר שָׁכְבוּ לְאֶרֶץ חוּצוֹת  
 נָעַר וְזָקֵן בְּתוֹלְתַי וּבְחוּרַי  
 נָפְלוּ בַחֶרֶב  
 הִרְגִּיתָ בַּיּוֹם אַפְּךָ  
 טַבַּחְתָּ לֹא חֲמִלְתָּ:  
 כִּי תִקְרָא כַּיּוֹם מוֹעֵד  
 מִגּוֹרֵי מְסָבִיב  
 וְלֹא הָיָה בַּיּוֹם אֶף-יְהוָה  
 פָּלִיט וְשָׁרִיד  
 אֲשֶׁר-טַפַּחְתִּי וְרַבִּיתִי  
 אִיבֵי כֶלֶם:

21 Laid down to the earth (in the) streets,  
 young and old, my girls and my boys,  
 they fell by sword;  
 You murdered in the day of Your anger.  
 You slaughtered, You had no pity.  
 22 You would call, like a festival day,  
 (for) my neighbors from all around;  
 and (so) in *YHVH's* day of anger  
 there weren't any escaped or remaining  
 which I had nursed and raised –  
 my enemy finished them all.

CHAPTER 3

אֲנִי הַגִּבֹּר רָאָה עֲנִי  
 בְּשֵׁבֶט עֲבָרְתוֹ:  
 בְּאוֹתֵי נְהַג וּלְלוֹ  
 חֹשֶׁךְ וְלֹא-אוֹר:  
 גַּם אֶף בִּי יָשֵׁב  
 יִהְיֶה יָדוֹ כָּל-הַיּוֹם:  
 דָּ בִלְהָ בְשָׂרִי וְעוֹרִי  
 שִׁבַּר עֲצָמוֹתַי:  
 הָ בָנָה עָלַי וַיִּקְוָה  
 רֹאשׁ וּתְלָאָה:

1 I am the man who saw affliction  
 through the rod of His burning anger.  
 2 Me did He drive and He led –  
 darkness and no light;  
 3 *Akh* – Even against me He turned  
 upending His hand, all the day.  
 4 He wore away my flesh and my skin,  
 He broke my bones;  
 5 He built against me and surrounded  
 – gall and wormwood.

לְנַפְשׁ תִּדְרָשְׁנוּ:  
 כִּי טוֹב וַיְחַיֵּל וְדוּמָם  
 לְתַשׁוּעַת יְהוָה:  
 כִּי טוֹב לְגֹבֵר  
 כִּי-יִשָּׂא עַל בְּנֵעוּרָיו:

to a soul / person that would seek Him.  
 26 Good – and he should wait and  
 be silent, wait for *YHVH's* salvation.  
 27 Good it is for a man  
 that he carry a yoke in his youth.

כִּי יֵשֵׁב בְּדָד וַיִּדָּם  
 כִּי נָטַל עָלָיו:  
 כִּי יִתֵּן בְּעַפְרֹת פִּיהוּ  
 אוֹלֵי יֵשׁ תִּקְוָה:  
 לִי יִתֵּן לְמַכְהוֹ לְחֵי  
 יִשְׂבַּע בַּחֶרֶף:

28 Let him sit alone and be silent,  
 since He laid (it) on him;  
 29 he should put his mouth in the dust –  
 maybe there is hope;  
 30 Put out his cheek for the one who  
 strikes, be satiated with shame.

לֹא כִּי לֹא יִזְנַח  
 לְעוֹלָם אֲדָנִי:  
 לִבִּי כִּי אִם-הוֹלָה וְרַחֵם  
 כְּרַב חֶסְדָּיו:  
 לֹא כִּי לֹא עָנָה מִלְּבוֹ  
 וַיִּגָּה בְּנִי-אִישׁ:

31 For *Adonai* would not  
 spurn forever;  
 32 for if He aggrieved and showed mercy,  
 it is according to His love's abundance;  
 33 for He did not afflict from His heart  
 and aggrieve human beings.

לֹד לְדַכָּא תַחַת רַגְלָיו  
 כָּל אֲסִירֵי אֶרֶץ:  
 לֹא לְהַטּוֹת מִשְׁפַּט-גֹּבֵר  
 נֶגַד פָּנָי עֲלִיוֹן:  
 לֹא לְעוֹת אָדָם בְּרִיבּוֹ

34 To crush under His feet  
 all imprisoned of the land,  
 35 to make bent a man's judgment,  
 right to the face of the Highest,  
 36 to twist / wrong a person in his

טז וַיִּגְרַם בְּחֶצֶץ שֹׁנֵי הַכֶּפֶלֶשׁ שְׁנֵי בְּאַפֶּר: יז וַתִּזְנַח מִשְׁלוֹם נַפְשִׁי נִשְׁיִיתִי טוֹבָה: יח וָאָמַר אֶבְרָד נִצְחִי וַתּוֹחַלְתִּי מִיְהוָה:	16 He broke my teeth with gravel, and pressed me into the ashes. 17 My soul was spurned from peace; I forgot goodness, 18 and I said, “I have lost from <i>YHVH</i> my endurance and my hope!”	ו בְּמַחְשָׁכִים הוֹשִׁיבָנִי כְּמַתֵּי עוֹלָם: ז גָּדַר בְּעַדֵּי וְלֹא אֵצֵא הַכְּבִיד נִחַשְׁתִּי: ח גַּם כִּי אֲזַעַק וְאֲשׁוּעַ שְׁתֵּם תִּפְלְתִי: ט גָּדַר דְּרָכֵי בְּגִזִּית נְתִיבֹתַי עֲוֹה:	6 In darkening-nights He made me dwell like those ever dead; 7 He barricaded against me, and I cannot go out / get away, He weighed down my bronze (shackle). 8 Even when I would cry and plea, He stopped up my prayer; 9 He barricaded my ways with stone blocks; my paths He twisted.
יט זְכַר-עֲנָנֵי וּמְרוֹדֵי לַעֲנָנָה וְרֹאשׁ: כ זְכוֹר תִּזְכּוֹר וַתִּשְׁוַח עָלַי נַפְשִׁי: כא זֹאת אֲשִׁיב אֶל-לִבִּי עַל-כֵּן אוֹחִיל:	19 Remember my affliction and my scattering – wormwood and gall; 20 Remembering, she will remember, my soul, and will sink down upon me. 21 (Still) this will I turn toward my heart, for so will I hope:	י יָדַב אֲרֵב הוּא לִּי אֲרִי בְּמַסְתָּרִים: יא דְּרָכֵי סוּרָר וַיִּפְשַׁחֲנִי שָׁמְנֵי שָׁמִם: יב דִּבְרֵי קִשְׁתּוֹ וַיִּצְיִבָנִי כַּמִּטְרָא לַחֲזָץ:	10 For me He was a bear ambushing, a lion in hiding places / stalking; 11 My ways He diverts and He would tear me up; He made me desolate. 12 He worked His bow and made me stand as the target for the arrow;
כב חֲסִדֵי יְהוָה כִּי לֹא-תִמְנוּ כִּי לֹא-כָלוּ רַחֲמָיו: כג חֲדָשִׁים לְבִקְרִים רַבָּה אֱמוּנָתְךָ: כד חֲלָמֵי יְהוָה אָמְרָה נַפְשִׁי עַל-כֵּן אוֹחִיל לּוֹ:	22 <i>YHVH</i> 's love / kindnesses – they are never done, for His mercies were not used up. 23 They are new by every morning; great is Your trust / faithfulness! 24 My portion is <i>YHVH</i> —said my soul— therefore so will I hope for Him.	יג הִבִּיא בְּכִלְיוֹתַי בְּנֵי אֲשַׁפְתּוֹ: יד הִיִּיתִי שְׁחֹק לְכָל-עַמִּי נְגִינָתֵם כָּל-הַיּוֹם: טו הִשְׁבִּיעַנִי בְּמְרוֹרִים הַרוֹנֵי לַעֲנָה:	13 He guided into my kidneys what came from His quiver, 14 I was a laughingstock for all my people, their song all the day. 15 He sated me with bitter herbs, and overfilled me with wormwood;
כה טוֹב יְהוָה לְקוֹ?	25 Good is <i>YHVH</i> to those waiting for Him,		