

Laments איכה

Translations of *Eikhah* for our world

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



Laments 4:1, Margaret Adams Parker
www.margaretadamparker.com
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This work is dedicated to all refugees

Kaddish for Human Minyan, facing this sacred reality and its destruction, neohasid.org/resources/humankaddish/

Tisha B'Av is about the destruction of the Temple and becoming refugees, but the Temple itself is about sustaining Creation and is modeled on Creation. The greatest sacred Temple is the Earth itself. When we destroy ecosystems, when we turn species into refugees, we bring extinction. When our actions disrupt the climate, we turn vast numbers of people into refugees. It is imperative that we learn to pay attention to what we are doing to our sacred planet, and that also means learning to grieve what is being lost.

Mourners/Leaders: 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 cry

A prayer for democracy everywhere, that it may not fall or fail, with Israel,
Ukraine and U.S. foremost in mind. May we gain inspiration and power
from the mass movement to protect Israeli democracy and an independent
judiciary, and may all Israel realize that occupation is inimical to
democracy:

May You tear out autocracy, tyranny and despotism,
rend the power of 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, for You humble the arrogant.

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

תַּעֲקֹר רוֹדְנוֹת וְטִירוֹנִיָּא וְעֲרִיצוֹת
וְתִשְׁבֵּר רַמָּאִים וְתַמְגֵּר עֲשָׁקִי נִדְכָּאִים
תַּעֲבִיר מְמִשְׁלֵת זְדוֹן מִן הָאָרֶץ
תִּכְשִׁיל פּוֹגְעִים בְּדִמּוּקְרַטְיָה וְתִפְרֹתָם תַּחֲבִילוֹתָם
תַּכְלֵם וְתִשְׁפִּילֵם וְתִכְנִיעֵם בְּמַהֲרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ
כִּי מִכְנִיעַ יָדַיִם אַתָּה

וְכֵן תִּתֵּן לְכָל אַמּוֹת הָעוֹלָם הַכֹּחַ וְהַרְצוֹן לְרֹדֵף צָדֵק
לְכוֹנֵן מִשְׁפָּט וּלְבַקֵּשׁ שְׁלוֹם כְּאַגְדָּה אַחַת
לַעֲקֹר חֲמָס וּלְהַצְמִיחַ רְפוּאָה וְחַיִּים טוֹבִים וְשְׁלוֹם
כִּי אַתָּה הוּא מְלֶכֶד אֱהָב צָדִיקָה וּמִשְׁפָּט
(וְנֹאמַר אָמֵן)

This prayer is based on neohasid.org's voting prayer. Add specific issues at
the end of this prayer according to the moment.

“Zion through justice will be redeemed.” (Isaiah 1:27)

What does it mean today to be *Aveilei Tziyon* אבלי ציון—one among the “mourners of Zion”—when Jerusalem is rebuilt, 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 in the world, but uses its 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 social reality for the foreigner and the poor, for the Christian or Muslim vs. the Jew, can look so different than justice—especially in the territories of ancient Israel, now called the West Bank or Judea and Samaria? When the government threatens to neuter the courts? When the settlers most passionate about “redemption” lead pogroms against Palestinians in places like Turmus Ayya. Is this the beginning of “our redemption”? Or a thwarting of redemption? If our covenant is real, that covenant promises: a state that rules through injustice and carries out such injustice cannot stand.

If the conditional promise of the land is that any state founded on violent injustice would be destroyed, should we pre-emptively anticipate that destruction? Or reject the thought of it? Perhaps by mourning now—and by using what insights come to unknot injustice—we can avert such destruction. That is what the rabbis and prophets of old believed. That is something all lovers of justice can get behind, whether or not we call ourselves Zionist, or emphasize *doikeit*, the power of living in diaspora. That is a meaning of *Aveilei Tziyon* we can all embrace, facing a Jerusalem built on injustice.

*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”, <https://opensiddur.org/?p=29657>

If you are an *Aveil leTziyon*, a mourner for Zion, join us on fb:
Aveilei Zion ([fb.com/groups/991520568829574](https://www.facebook.com/groups/991520568829574)).

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'khivtulah 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 scorers 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,
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 Russia's war against 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 Roman invader took over Jerusalem, wreaking destruction, murder and enslavement.

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 all the ways the human species is willfully disrupting the climate, extinguishing the Life we are commanded to choose, turning vulnerable people and species into refugees.

As the world also struggles to face so many plagues, including racism and global climate disruption, Jews also face growing anti-Semitism, along with pressure to say that anti-Semitism isn't real because Jews are privileged and so many Jews present as white. And as the storms and fires of this summer remind us, climate cataclysm edges ever closer. *Oy meh hayah lanu!* (July 2023)

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Use the Omer Counter app to count the seven weeks between Tisha B'Av and Rosh Hashanah. Go to: [neohasid.org/omer/apps/](https://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 Palestinians 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. Learn more:

facebook.com/BreakingTheSilenceIsrael/videos/1138797826880167/