

The 17th of the 4th Month

 sightedmoon.com/the-17th-of-the-4th-month/

News Letter 5856-016

The 4th Year of the 4th Sabbatical Cycle

The 25th year of the 120th Jubilee Cycle

The 13th day of the 4th month 5856 years after the creation of Adam

The 4th Sabbatical Cycle after the 119th Jubilee Cycle

The Middle of the 70th Jubilee Since Yehovah told Moses To go Get His People

The Sabbatical Cycle of Sword, Famines, and Pestilence

June 6, 2020

Shabbat Shalom to the Royal Family of Yehovah,

You Knew All Hell Was

About To Break Loose – Did you tell anyone else?

Countdown Clock Hits “0”

This is just the beginning. What will you do before the end?

- Since 2005 I have been telling people about the Sabbatical and Jubilee years.
- Since 2007 we have been posting our findings online through our web site sightedmoon.com. Since then we have had about 2.6 million hits to our News Letters, videos and podcasts.
- We have spoken in person across the USA and Canada starting in 2008 with the Prophecy Club. We have spoken in Switzerland Africa and the Philippines.
- We have published ***The Prophecies of Abraham*** in 2010, ***Remembering the Sabbatical Year of 2016*** in 2013, ***The 2300 Days of Hell*** in 2014, ***The Blood Moons-The Elephant in the Room*** in 2014, ***It was a Riddle Not a Command*** in 2019, ***Scripture Lessons for the Kingdom*** in 2018 and ***More Scripture Lessons for the Kingdom*** in 2020. We also have these books in French, Dutch, German, Portuguese and an East Indian dialect.
- We now have associate ministries in Burundi and Kenya Africa. And they cover DR Congo, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Uganda. We also have a thriving relationship with many ministries in the Philippines.

- Since 2005 we have been telling you about the 70 Weeks of Daniel.
- Since 2005 we have been telling you about the middle of the 70th Jubilee Cycle and that that year was 2020.
- Since 2005 we have been telling you in every way possible that the 4th curse of Lev 26, of the sword, famine and plague was coming in this 4th Sabbatical cycle.
- We even put a countdown clock on our web site with 0 Days, 0 hours 0 minutes and 0 seconds expiring at sunset in Israel when Shavuot began and we said if these things did not start to happen we would remove the sightedmoon web site.

Confirmation of The Time of Judgement

1. Prior to the beginning of 2020, the USA signed a deal to end the Paris Agreement. All 193 nations of the world had agreed to this covenant. That exit from the Paris Accord takes place this coming November. The Paris Accord is the most recent name of the UNEP which was signed into existence in Stockholm Sweden, June 5-16, 1972. This was the covenant made with many spoken of in Daniel 9. One week or one Jubilee later brings you to June 2020.
2. The British also entered the European Common Market on January 31, 1973. This was still part of the preceding year if 1972, as the years start and end with Aviv. BREXIT is the final exit from the European common market and it has finally been ratified to be done by December 31, 2020. Again this too is a covenant made with many that the tribe of Joseph entered into and is now leaving, one week or one Jubilee Cycle later. Joseph is Ephraim and Manasseh. The British and the USA. They both entered into a covenant with the Great Whore of Revelation, The European Union and now one week later they are both coming out of those agreements. The whore is not going to be happy.
3. The USA has also been withdrawing funding from many UN agencies. The latest one in 2020 was the WHO over the pandemic crisis. The UN is today greatly influenced by The European Union against the State of Israel and the USA.
4. In 2020, the Barley was Aviv a month early and Aviv 1 was February 26, 2020. As it arrived we began the year with a Locust Plague being announced February 20, 2020. Swarms of desert locusts are plaguing several countries worldwide, including China, Jordan, Pakistan, Kenya and Sudan. East Africa is being hit particularly hard by the swarms, with the United Nations warning of an unprecedented threat to food security in the region, according to Bloomberg. The outbreak is being caused by an increased number of cyclones and could become worse if weather trends continue. This plague has not stopped as of this posting in June.
5. We kept Passover March 10th and 11th. WHO World Health Organization Declares COVID-19 a 'Pandemic.' on March 11.
6. Every nation around the world began to shut down and told their people to shelter at home for 3 months.
7. Transportation Food Chains struggled to keep supply chains open during COVID 19 and panic buying.
8. Stock Market tumbles as over 39 Million Americans are laid off from work due to the COVID 19 virus.

9. We have begun the Great Depression of 2020.
10. Nations print money 24/7 to help stave off financial bankruptcy of business after business as the Virus shut down deepens.
11. The week before we kept Shavuot May 3rd, 2020, David Beasley, director of the United Nations World Food Program, warned Tuesday, April 21, that the world is on "the brink of a hunger pandemic" as it grapples with the global coronavirus crisis. He said that without action, the world could face "multiple famines of biblical proportions within a short few months." Some 135 million people are acutely food-insecure and facing crisis levels of hunger or worse, according to a report published this week called the 2020 Global Report on Food Crisis. Now, the coronavirus could push an additional 130 million people "to the brink of starvation" by the end of the year, said Beasley. "In a worst-case scenario, we could be looking at famine in about three dozen countries, and in fact, in 10 of these countries we already have more than one million people per country who are on the verge of starvation," Beasley said. He said there's "a real danger that more people could potentially die from the economic impact of COVID-19 than from the virus itself."
12. Monday, April 27, Food Processing Plants began to shut down due to the COVID 19 Pandemic
13. Saturday, May 2, 2020, Wasted milk, euthanized livestock: Photos show how coronavirus has devastated US agriculture.
14. During May as the nice weather arrive people began to ignore social distancing rules and defy the Health Ministry to remain at home and for businesses to remain shut. May 25, 2020, Americans across the country appeared to abandon social distancing guidelines as they sunbathed on beaches and gathered for pool parties on Memorial Day weekend. The long weekend traditionally signals the start of the US summer, and despite the country's Covid-19 death toll approaching 100,000, many revellers dismissed any safety concerns to celebrate.
15. As our countdown clock wound down to "0" as Shavuot began in Israel, massive civil unrest swept across the USA in protest of white police officers killing an unarmed black man in Minnesota on Monday, May 27, 2020. Protests and riots took place in these American cities Saturday night as the second Shavuot began that evening. I have not verified the following list. The National Guard was brought out in many cities and even for the White House. THE WHITE HOUSE. Friday night, President Trump was taken to the underground bunker due to the danger of the protests in front of the White House.

Have they really gone that mad?

****PROTEST LOCATIONS NATIONWIDE:****
(Alphabetically arranged by state)

Phoenix, Arizona (CONFIRMED LOOTING/RIOTING)
Tucson, Arizona
Bakersfield, California

Monterey, California
Lancaster, California
Los Angeles, California (CONFIRMED LOOTING/RIOTING)
Oakland, California (CONFIRMED LOOTING/RIOTING)
Sacramento, California
San Francisco, California
San Jose, California (CONFIRMED LOOTING/RIOTING)
Denver, Colorado (CONFIRMED LOOTING/RIOTING)
Washington, DC
Wilmington, Delaware
Jacksonville, Florida
Lake Worth, Florida
Pensacola, Florida
Orlando, Florida
Gainesville, Florida
Tallahassee, Florida
Tampa, Florida
Atlanta, Georgia (CONFIRMED LOOTING/RIOTING)
Elkhart, Indiana
Fort Wayne, Indiana (CONFIRMED LOOTING/RIOTING)
Hammond, Indiana
Indianapolis, Indiana
South Bend, Indiana
Des Moines, Iowa
Topeka, Kansas
Bowling Green, Kentucky
Elizabeth Town, Kentucky
Louisville, Kentucky (CONFIRMED LOOTING/RIOTING)
Boston, Massachusetts (ESCALATING)
Detroit, Michigan
Rochester, Michigan
Mankato, Minnesota
Minneapolis, Minnesota (CONFIRMED LOOTING/RIOTING)
St. Cloud, Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota
Hattiesburg, Mississippi
Petal, Mississippi
Philadelphia, Mississippi
Kansas City, Missouri
St. Louis, Missouri
Paradise, Nevada
Las Vegas, Nevada
Manchester, New Hampshire
West Orange, New Jersey

Albany, New York
Brooklyn, New York
NYC, New York
Harlem, New York
West Harlem, New York
Charlotte, North Carolina
Fargo, North Dakota
Cincinnati, Ohio
Cleveland, Ohio (ESCALATING)
Columbus, Ohio
Dayton, Ohio (ESCALATING)
Toledo, Ohio
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Eugene, Oregon (CONFIRMED LOOTING/RIOTING)
Portland, Oregon (CONFIRMED LOOTING/RIOTING)
Salem, Oregon
Lancaster, Pennsylvania
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Providence, Rhode Island
Westerly, Rhode Island
Columbia, South Carolina ("" POTENTIALLY "" ESCALATING)
Greenville, South Carolina
Chattanooga, Tennessee
Knoxville, Tennessee
Memphis, Tennessee
Austin, Texas
Dallas, Texas
Houston, Texas (CONFIRMED LOOTING/RIOTING)
San Antonio, Texas
Texarkana, Texas
Salt Lake City, Utah (ESCALATING)
Fredericksburg, Virginia
Richmond, Virginia (CONFIRMED LOOTING/RIOTING)
Hampton, Virginia
Seattle, Washington State
Fairmont, West Virginia
Madison, Wisconsin
Milwaukee, Wisconsin (CONFIRMED LOOTING/RIOTING)

Could It Get Any Worse?

WASHINGTON — Inside the White House, the mood was bristling with tension. Hundreds of protesters were gathering outside the gates, shouting curses at President Trump and in some cases throwing bricks and bottles. Nervous for his safety, Secret Service agents abruptly rushed the president to the underground bunker used in the past during terrorist attacks.

The scene on Friday night, described by a person with firsthand knowledge, kicked off an uneasy weekend at the White House as demonstrations spread after the brutal death of a black man in police custody under a white officer's knee. While in the end officials said they were never really in danger, Mr. Trump and his family have been rattled by protests near the Executive Mansion that turned violent for a third night on Sunday.

After days in which the empathy he expressed for George Floyd, the man killed, was overshadowed by his combative threats to ramp up violence against looters and rioters, Mr. Trump spent Sunday out of sight, even as some of his campaign advisers were recommending that he deliver a nationally televised address before another night of violence. The building was even emptier than usual as some White House officials planning to work were told not to come in case of renewed unrest.

Thousands of protesters demonstrated peacefully near the White House during the day, but by nightfall, with hundreds still in the streets, the scene turned more volatile as crowds surged forward against lines of riot police with plastic shields as the two sides vied for control of Lafayette Square across from the White House. Protesters threw water bottles, set off fireworks and burned a pile of wood and at least one car.

By targeting antifa, however, Mr. Trump effectively paints all the protests with the brush of violent radicalism without addressing the underlying conditions that have driven many people to the streets. Demonstrations have broken out in at least 75 cities in recent days, with governors and mayors deploying the National Guard or imposing curfews on a scale not seen since the aftermath of the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968.

Sunday evening, May 31, 2020, there were 45 million Americans under curfew orders.

Wednesday, June 3, 2020, there were protests in over four hundred cities and towns in all fifty states across the USA. As of June 2, governors in 24 states and Washington, D.C. had called in the National Guard to respond to the protests. Over 17,000 troops have been activated. 45 Million Americans were under a curfew order.

Monday, June 1, 2020, the President made the following address to the Nation. Stating that he would deploy the US military to solve the problem of the riots. He would deploy

sufficient numbers of the National Guard to dominate the streets.



Watch Video At: <https://youtu.be/XjeSKXhXlcQ>

Can We Escape What Is Coming?

All these years we have been telling you that the 2300 Days of Daniel 8 would BEGIN, BEGIN in 2020. We originally believed that it was May 31, 2020, with Shavuot. But our Shavuot was moved to May 3rd. Is Yehovah using both dates? Maybe, just maybe. All of these events are just the beginning. For the next 6 1/4 years, disasters will follow disaster. Just as we have now seen how no sooner is one world disaster replaced by an even bigger one, so too will the fall of the USA and the UK be. We have now entered into the saddest times of Jacob's Troubles. Judgment has been decided. Punishment is now being implemented. There is no hope for our nations. **But each one of us can repent and return to the Torah and keep it. If we do then there is a chance we will not be swallowed up and destroyed by each of the curses of Lev 26.** We are currently receiving the 4th curse. We are only receiving parts one and two. The third part of this curse is yet to arrive.

If You Care About Your Friends & Family Members Share...

Lev 26:23 And if you will not be reformed by Me by these things, but will still walk contrary to Me,

Lev 26:24 then I will walk contrary to you and will punish you seven times more for your sins.

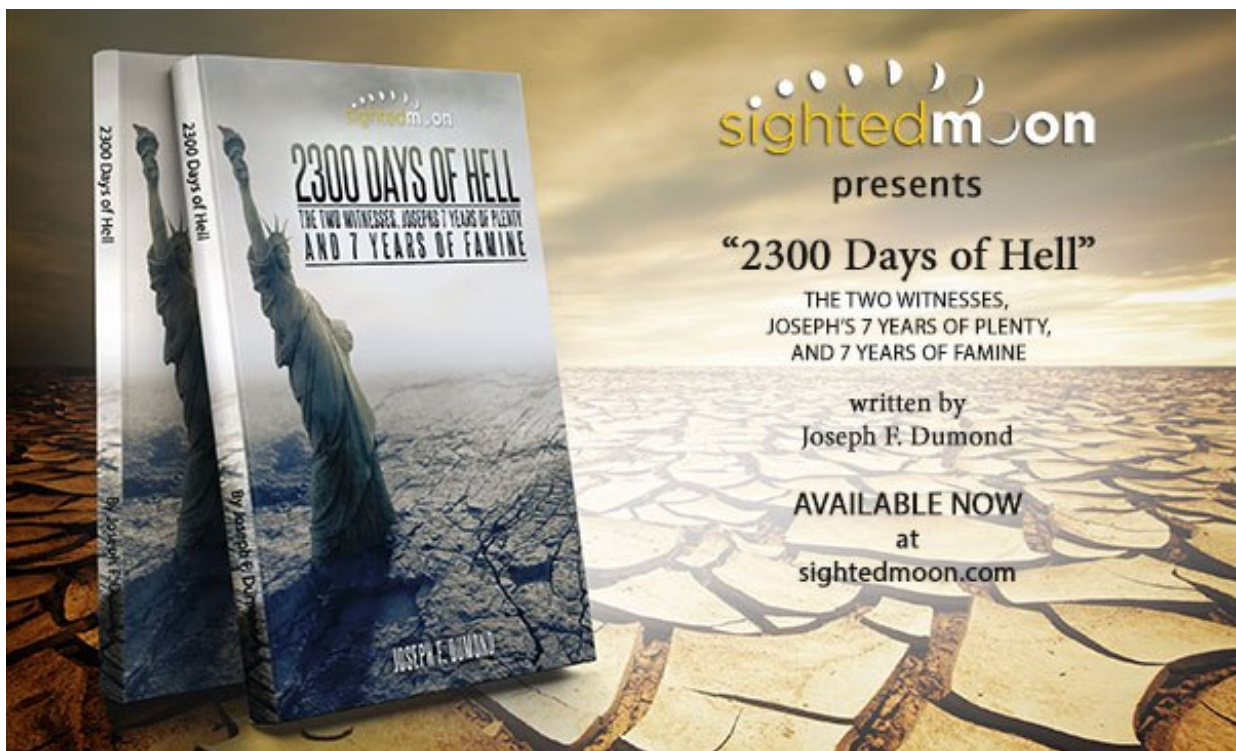
Lev 26:25 And I will bring **a sword** on you that shall execute the vengeance of the covenant. And when you are gathered inside your cities, I will send **the plague** among you. And you shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy.

Lev 26:26 When I have **broken the staff of your bread**, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall deliver you your bread again by weight. And you shall eat and **not be satisfied**.

Lev 26:27 And if you will not for all of this listen to Me, but will walk contrary to Me,

Lev 26:28 then I will walk contrary to you also in fury. And I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins.

Lev 26:29 And **you shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters you shall eat**.



You Have Powerful Witnesses of Things We Have Already Said...

Barely were the wildfires out in Australia in 2019 when we were hit by this virus. No sooner are we over one crisis than another one hit us full-on.

What is next? As we said in our last News Letter, people and businesses are soon going to fail on their mortgages and rent payments which were deferred for three months due to the virus. Many of those 39 million jobs that were lost are not coming back. As more and more people fail to pay their loan debts, the banks will have to seize those properties and will be left holding those huge debts. Even now they preparing for the loan failures. Then the bank themselves will fail and there will be a run on your money. And we are still looking for a war to break out which will end with the USA destroyed.

We have been warning you of these things since 2005 in an overall message. Using Yehovah's word we have not only been right in our warnings, but we have also been terrifyingly accurate. Where are all the other Ministries enquiring of us how we knew? Where are all the other voices who are now going to shout out this warning about the horrors that are still to come? Where are all those naysayers now who mocked and ridiculed us all these years? How many of you will copy what I have shared above and send it to each and every ministry, Christian Radio and TV host and every news outlet to let them know that there is a servant of Yehovah here who knows His timing because he understands the Jubilee cycles?

I Want To Share Some Comments...

Joseph,

Shalom!

Well, yesterday was the Jew's Pentecost, 2020....and war broke out...you called it by the wisdom and knowledge given to you by Yehovah! Thank you Joseph for being faithful for laying out all the information we should have been taught by all these false teachers. Those of us who know you well know you give glory to Yehovah. And live in fear of as well as love of Yehovah.

Lucinda Gibbs Robinson

Let me share some other people views from many years ago about the things we are teaching.

Watch Video At: <https://youtu.be/videoseries>



For Israel's Sake, DON'T Be Silent Anymore...

When will you stand behind this work at sightedmoon.com? When will you share our books with others? When will you begin to support this work? If there are others telling you these truths, then support them. But we are the only ones telling you about the Jubilee cycles which reveal end-time prophecy. When will you begin to support this work

with a monthly donation of \$10, \$20, \$50, \$100, \$250 or an annual donation of \$500 or \$1000? We have been doing this work by ourselves and then with just a few people supporting this work since 2005. Jehovah has vindicated us and has now shown all these things to you to prove to you that He is acting, that He is indeed going to end the evil in this world. Will you now help us continue to do this work as we move into the next phase?

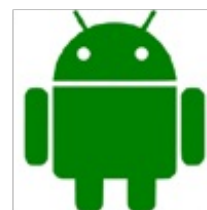
No one else has told you any of these things in advance. No other ministry has consistently warned you about these things as we have since 2005. But we have and we have done so with such accuracy that it is unbelievable. We need you to tell others and to support this work. We need you now.

It's Time To Show Our Faith By Our Works...

Yes, we must continue to do this work for those who will be at war and for those who will be imprisoned or enslaved. Will you help us to prepare the people during this coming very difficult time.

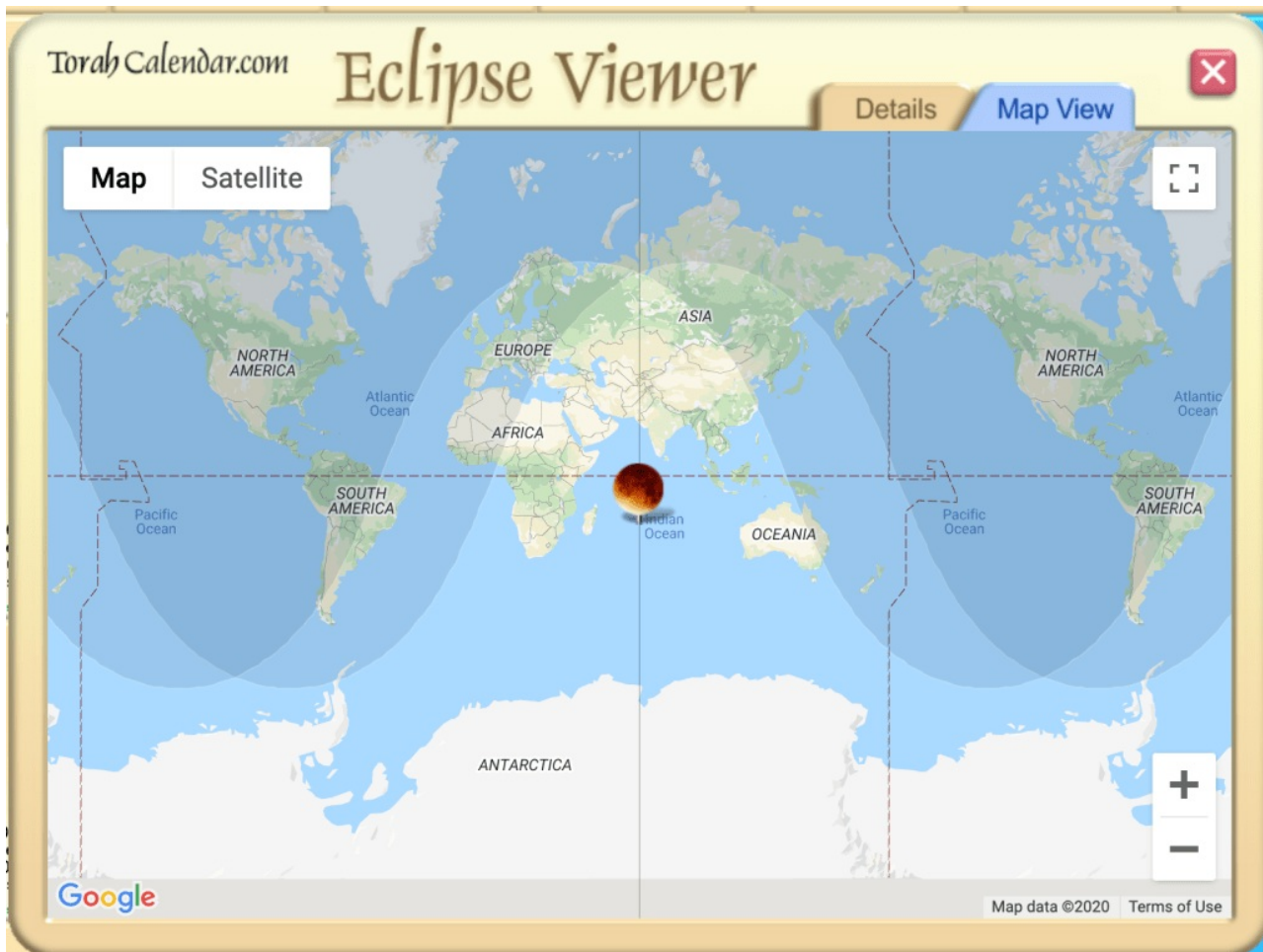
We Got an App for That

One of our brethren has been busy working on the Sabbatical and Jubilee Charts so that you can have them on your phone. Rob Navarro of the Philippines has developed this and has made it available for all of us to use. He has developed an app for androids so that you can now have access to the entire 5880 years all in one app. You can click on each year and see the notes for that year. The App for Iphones is still being tested and is not yet available. But the one for Android phones is ready. Click on this link sm.robn32.ne



Lunar Eclipse June 6, 2019

Tonight over India the Lunar Eclipse is taking place. As we shared with you last week we are at about the 50% level of what Cyrus Harding called the crazy cycle. And since last week the riots around the world over the killing of George Floyd, a Minnesota man who died in Minneapolis police custody.



Shabbat Zoom Meeting

From now on we are going to use this same meeting room id below for all our meetings each Shabbat. Keep it and save it. Should I forget to announce the meeting then the information will remain the same from week to week. The room will be open at 12:30 PM for chatting and socializing. The meeting will begin at 1:15 and then the room will remain open for chatting and discussions after the teaching.

Joseph Dumond is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Joseph Dumond's Personal Meeting Room

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3505855877>

Meeting ID: 350 585 5877

One tap mobile

+13017158592,,3505855877# US (Germantown)

+13126266799,,3505855877# US (Chicago)

Dial by your location

+1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

+1 929 436 2866 US (New York)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

Meeting ID: 350 585 5877

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8442111111>

Mayhem!

The 1st day of the 4th month was May 25, 2020. Cyrus Harding told us in our interview with him and in our News Letter last week, Phase III = May 23 – June 13. How much = 50%. He was telling us how the crazy cycle was increasing. Boy did he nail this one. We did that interview on May 25, 2020. Let me remind you of what he said.

- Phase I = April 23 – May 1. How much (intensity) = 30%.
- Phase II = May 2 – May 22. How much = 40%.
- Phase III = May 23 – June 13. How much = 50%.
- Phase IV = June 14 – July 4. How much = 75%.
- Phase V = July 5 – July 25. How much = 50%.
- Phase VI = July 26 – August 18. How much = 30%.

As I write this on May 31, the USA has gone mad. They have been going around for years praising up the police and firemen for their heroic actions for 9/11 and now in New York, they are attacking the police and setting police cars on fire. But not just New York and not just in Minnesota where the death of George Floyd took place, but across the nation as I saw last Saturday night on the Geller report. Here in Toronto Canada, a black woman fell from an apartment building to her death when the police entered her apartment. Protests have broken out here also and around the world.

It would seem any excuse at all for mayhem to take over and the social fabric of our society is shredded apart. City after City has now called in the Nation Guard to put down this unrest in their native country. As of Wednesday, June 3, 2020, I think I saw on the news, 141 cities across the USA are rioting and 21 of them have called in the National Guard. There have also been 5 police officers shot during this time and I am not sure how many of them have died. It is becoming hard to keep up with the daily and ongoing events.

HOW THE LEFT DESTROYS THE NATION

CHICAGO 'PROTESTS': COPS ARE DRAGGED THROUGH THE STREETS

HOW THE LEFT DESTROYS THE NATION

TWO FEDERAL OFFICERS SHOT, ONE KILLED, GUARDING COURTHOUSE FROM PROTESTERS

LATEST NEWS

"EAT THE RICH!": PROTESTERS MARCH ON RODEO DRIVE, BEVERLY HILLS

LEFT-WING VIOLENCE

GRAPHIC VIDEO: DALLAS RIOTERS BRUTALLY BEAT MAN TO NEAR-DEATH OUTSIDE STORE

LATEST NEWS

RIOTERS SLASH POLICE OFFICER'S NECK IN JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA

HOW THE LEFT DESTROYS THE NATION

WATCH: NYC BURNS, NYPD VEHICLES SET ABLAZE, CRAZED PROTESTERS, VIOLENT RIOTS, MAYOR DE BLASIO SAYS "I SEE MY OWN PRIVILEGE AND UNDERSTAND SO MUCH"

LEFT-WING VIOLENCE

AS SEATTLE BURNS, MANDATORY CURFEW IMPOSED AMID VIOLENT RIOTS

HOW THE LEFT DESTROYS THE NATION

MIAMI IS BURNING

HOW THE LEFT DESTROYS THE NATION

NASHVILLE COURTHOUSE AND CITY HALL BUILDING SET ON FIRE AS PROTESTS TURN VIOLENT

Deu 28:63 And it shall be, as Jehovah rejoiced over you to do you good and to multiply you, so Jehovah will rejoice over you to destroy you and to bring you to nothing. And you shall be plucked from off the land where you go to possess it.

Sunday morning I woke up to the following report.

George Floyd riots spiral out of control: Chaos erupts in 25 major cities from NYC to LA as protesters torch cop cars, burn buildings and loot stores on fifth night of violence that has left three dead and dozens injured

Scenes of destruction continued to spread across America as the death of the black man at the hands of white cop Derek Chauvin ignited outrage over what many feel is a systemic problem with police brutality

11 states and the District of Columbia activated the National Guard while at least 25 cities put curfews in place

In Minneapolis, protesters fled after cops hurled tear gas while some responded by launching fireworks

The National Guard was activated to the White House as the Secret Service agents struggled to keep control

The Big Apple was ablaze as NYPD vehicles burned while shock footage showed cops violent to protesters

One person was shot dead and three injured when gunfire rung out during a protest in Indianapolis

In Atlanta a cop suffered 'significant injuries' when they were hit by an ATV

A man commandeered a police horse in Chicago and rode off on it

LA deployed the National Guard for the first since the 1992 Rodney King riots

A Dallas man was beaten up by a mob when he allegedly tried to defend a store from looters with a machete

A total of 11 states and the District of Columbia had activated the National Guard by the early hours of Sunday, as law enforcement buckled under the strain of the protests.

States calling for Guard assistance included California, Georgia, Minnesota, Missouri, Nevada, Ohio, Tennessee, Texas, Utah and Washington state.

Meanwhile at least 25 cities roll out emergency curfews to try to bring rioting and looting under control, including San Francisco, Atlanta, Louisville, Los Angeles, Portland, Columbia, South Carolina, Cincinnati, Cleveland and Seattle.

Jerusalem Will Be Destroyed

Eze 5:1 And you, son of man, take a sharp sword to yourself, take a barber's razor also, and cause it to pass on your head and on your beard. Then take scales to weigh, and divide the hair.

Eze 5:2 You shall burn a third part with fire in the middle of the city, when the days of the siege are fulfilled; and you shall take a third part and beat around it with a sword; and you shall scatter a third part in the wind, and I will draw out a sword after them.

Eze 5:3 Also you shall take a few of them in number, and tie them up in your skirts.

Eze 5:4 Then take of them again, and throw them into the middle of the fire, and burn them in the fire; for a fire shall come forth from them into all the house of Israel.

Eze 5:5 So says the Lord Jehovah: This is Jerusalem. I have set it in the middle of the nations, and all around her are the lands.

Eze 5:6 And she has changed My judgments into wickedness more than the nations, and defiled My Laws more than the countries that are all around her; for they have rejected My judgments and My Laws; they have not walked in them.

Eze 5:7 Therefore so says the Lord Jehovah: Because you multiplied more than the nations that are all around you, and have not walked in My Laws, neither have kept My judgments, nor have done according to the judgments of the nations all around you;

Eze 5:8 therefore so says the Lord Jehovah; Behold, I, even I, am against you, and will carry out judgments in your midst before the nations.

Eze 5:9 And I will do in you that which I have not done, and the like of which I will never do again, because of all your abominations.

Eze 5:10 So the fathers shall eat the sons in your midst, and the sons shall eat their fathers. And I will execute judgments in you, and I will scatter the whole remnant of you into all the winds.

Eze 5:11 Therefore, as I live, says the Lord Jehovah, surely, because you have defiled My sanctuary with all your detestable things, and with all your abominations, therefore I will also withdraw; nor shall My eye spare you, nor will I have any pity.

Eze 5:12 A third part of you shall die with the plague, and shall be consumed with the famine in your midst. And a third part shall fall by the sword all around you; and I will scatter a third part into all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after them.

Eze 5:13 So My anger shall be fulfilled, and I will cause My fury to rest on them, and I will be comforted. And they shall know that I Jehovah have spoken it in My zeal, when I have fulfilled My fury in them.

Eze 5:14 And I will make you a waste and a curse among the nations that are all around you, in the sight of all who pass by.

Eze 5:15 So it shall be a reproach and a taunt, a chastening and a horror to the nations which are all around you, when I shall execute judgments against you in anger and in fury and in rebukes among them. I Jehovah have spoken it.

Eze 5:16 When I shall send on them the evil arrows of famine, which shall be for their ruin, which I will send to destroy you; even I will increase the famine on you, and break your staff of bread;

Eze 5:17 yea, I will send on you famine and evil beasts, and you will be bereaved. And pestilence and blood shall pass among you; and I shall bring a sword on you. I Jehovah have spoken.

Isa 1:2 Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for Jehovah has spoken, I have nursed and brought up sons, and they have rebelled against Me.

Isa 1:3 The ox knows his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel does not know; My people do not understand.

Isa 1:4 Woe, sinful nation, a people heavy with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, sons who corrupt! They have forsaken Jehovah; they have provoked the Holy One of Israel to anger; they have gone away backward.

Isa 1:5 Why should you be stricken any more? You will revolt more and more; the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint.

Isa 1:6 From the sole of the foot even to the head there is no soundness in it; only a wound and a stripe and a fresh blow; they have not been closed, nor bound up, nor soothed with oil.

Isa 1:7 Your land is wasted, your cities burned with fire. Strangers devour your land right before your eyes, and it is wasted, as overthrown by strangers.

Isa 1:8 And the daughter of Zion is left a booth in a vineyard, like a hut in a garden of cucumbers, like a besieged city.

Isa 1:9 Except Jehovah of Hosts had left us a very small remnant, we would be as Sodom; we would be like Gomorrah.



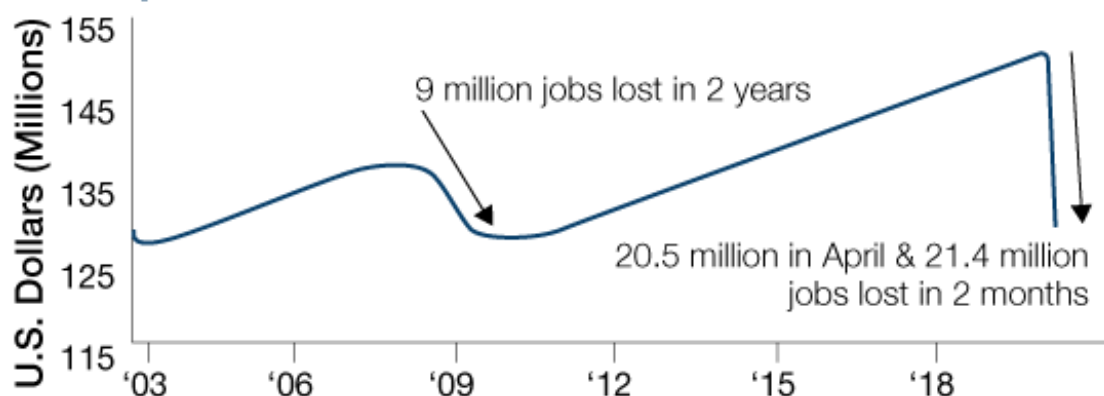
Watch Video At: <https://youtu.be/J6yvFOFwMpY>

A Picture of the Economy

The U.S. lost over 21 million jobs in March and April 2020. The May job losses (not shown on Chart 1) will add another 17 million to the unemployment rolls. In total, the U.S. has lost over 38 million jobs in just three months. Total employment is back to levels last seen in the 1990s. It's as if the economy had been on hold for three decades. **It took only three months to wipe out the job gains of the last 30 years.** (Friday, June 5, 2020, jobless added 2.5 million jobs)

This level of job losses defies description. It's easy to recite the statistics. It's impossible to gauge the human impact.

**Chart 1 – U.S. Employment Reports 2003–2020
With April 2020 Decline**



Source: Oxford Economics/Haver Analytics

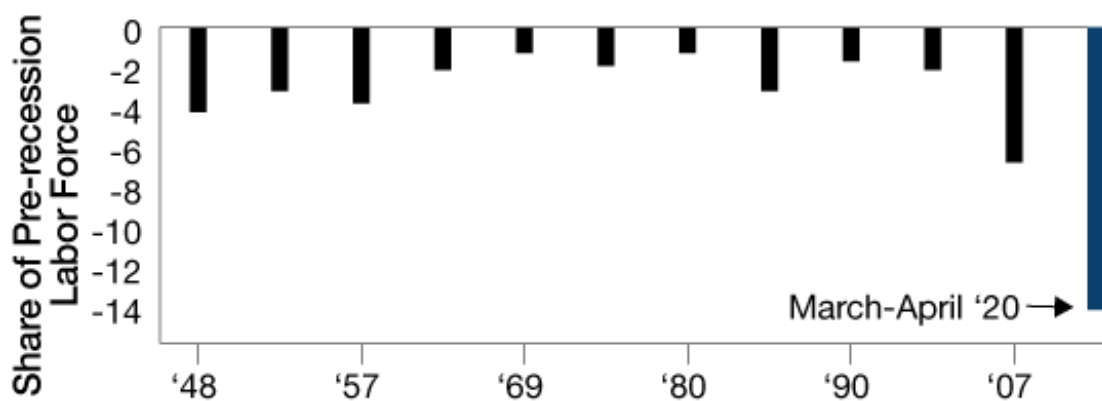
Every job loss is an individual trauma, throwing each worker into a highly stressful situation wondering whether they can feed their family, pay the mortgage or meet critical obligations for health care or school tuition.

When that trauma is multiplied by perhaps 70 million (taking into account not just the unemployed worker but her family members), you begin to get some sense of the magnitude of the collective trauma that has just struck America.

Chart 2 (below) helps to put the U.S. job-loss trauma in historical perspective. This chart compares the job losses in the current depression with job losses in all U.S. recessions since 1948. This comparison includes severe recessions in 1973–75, 1981–82 and the global financial crisis of 2007–09.

Each of those three recessions was cited as the “worst since the Great Depression” at the time they occurred. That was true at the time, but that truth was superseded by the later recessions, which got worse.

Chart 2 – Job Losses From Wuhan virus Compared With Recessions Since 1948



Source: Oxford Economics/Haver Analytics

While those record recessions stand out on this chart (along with severe recessions in 1949 and 1958) none of them bears any comparison to the Great Depression of 2020. Job losses today (including May, not shown on the chart) are larger than those from the last four recessions *combined*.

This job loss gap between the Great Depression of 2020 and the post-World War II recessions will grow even larger in the months ahead. The rate of job losses may slow down, but the curve will not show job gains for months to come at the earliest.

Even when job gains do emerge (probably later this year) they will be minuscule compared with gains projected by the happy-talk crew at the White House and the TV talking heads.

Worse Than The Great Depression of the 1930s...

The difference between a depression and a recession is not measured in consecutive quarters of declining GDP. That's an important measure, but it's not the whole story.

Recessions involve consecutive quarters of declining GDP. They are generally short in duration (no recession since the Great Depression has lasted more than 18 months; most lasted less than 12 months, although the Great Recession of 2007–09 lasted 18 months).

Depressions are different. The first Great Depression (1929–1940) lasted 12 years. But it was not a period of continuous declining growth. There were two technical recessions within the Great Depression (1929–1933 and 1937–38). The period from 1933–37 was one of strong growth.

The problem was that the 1929–1933 collapse was so severe and unemployment was so high that even a period of strong growth did not get the economy back to where it was. You could tell someone in 1934 that growth was strong and the stock market was up (both true), but that didn't matter if their business had gone bankrupt or they were still unemployed.

In fact, the stock market did not reach its 1929 level again until 1954. If you were waiting to “make your money back” after 1929, you had to wait 25 years. That's a depression.

Now we are in the Great Depression of 2020. Some of the initial data are as bad as the first Great Depression. Unemployment in 2020 is set to exceed the 24.9% level reached in 1933.

Between 1929 and 1932 the stock market fell 89.2%.

So far in this depression, U.S. stocks fell 27% between Feb. 12 and March 23, but staged a comeback and are now down just 17% from the Feb. 12 peak.

That's not unusual. The stock decline from 1929–1932 was punctuated with numerous “bear market rallies.”

It did not go down in a straight line. But it did go down, despite the rallies.

The Great Depression of 2020 has just started. The big-name bankruptcies are popping up almost daily. There's every reason to believe stocks will end up much lower before all is said and done.

Above all, there is uncertainty. Our expectation is that economic growth will grind lower before turning around. When it does turn around the recovery will be slow and uneven. We may not reach 2019 levels of output again until 2022 or later.

Stocks have not hit bottom. We may see the S&P 500 fall to 1,700 before the market turns around. That would be an almost 50% decline from the mid-February peak. Not as bad as the first Great Depression, but still one of the worst stock market drawdowns since the 1930s.

The Fast of the Fourth

We are now approaching the 17th day of the 4th Month. Just 4 days away from this Sabbath we are now keeping. We talked about this last week as we shared with you the many things that are coming into conjunction this month and next and how they are all aligning with the start of the 2300 Day count we have been telling you about since 2005. Back then we were off by about a couple of months.

This week I want to pull a few things together and put them all in one place so that you can understand.

The 17th of the 4th month is 40 days after Shavuot when Moses went back up the Mountain to learn everything from Yehovah. Twice in our history, the Walls of Jerusalem were breached on this date leading to the destruction of the Temple 3 weeks later. On this date;

The fast of Tammuz, according to Rabbi Akiva's interpretation, is the fast mentioned in the Book of Zechariah as “the fast of the fourth [month]” (Zechariah 8:19). This refers to Tammuz, which is the fourth month of the Hebrew calendar.

According to the Mishnah,[2] five calamities befell the Jewish people on this day:

Moses broke the two tablets of stone on Mount Sinai[5];

The daily tamid offering ceased to be brought;

During the Roman siege of Jerusalem, the city walls were breached (proceeding to the destruction of the Second Temple);

Prior to Bar Kokhba's revolt, Roman military leader Apostomus burned a Torah scroll;

An idol was erected in the Temple.

The Babylonian Talmud places the second and fifth tragedies in the First Temple period.[6]

The Book of Jeremiah (39.2, 52.6–7) states that the walls of Jerusalem during the First Temple were breached on the 9th of Tammuz. Accordingly, the Babylonian Talmud dates the third tragedy (breach of Jerusalem's walls) to the Second Temple period.[6] However, the Jerusalem Talmud (Taanit IV, 5) states that in both eras the walls were breached on 17th Tammuz, and that the text in Jeremiah 39 is explained by stating that the Biblical record was “distorted”, apparently due to the troubled times.[7]

The Seventeenth of Tammuz occurs forty days after the Jewish holiday of Shavuot. Moses ascended Mount Sinai on Shavuot and remained there for forty days. The Children of Israel made the Golden Calf on the afternoon of the sixteenth of Tammuz when it seemed that Moses was not coming down when promised. Moses descended the next day (forty days by his count), saw that the Israelites were violating many of the laws he had received from God, and smashed the tablets.[8]

Not only did the sieges of Jerusalem during the First and Second Temple periods occur on, or near, this date, but the breach of the walls of Jerusalem during the First Crusade occurred on the 17th of Tammuz.[9]

On the 9th of the 4th month according to Jeremiah, (39.2, 52.6–7), this year was Tuesday, June 9, 2020. On this day,

The head of a prominent New York City police union told “The Ingraham Angle” Tuesday that President Trump should consider sending federal personnel to prevent more rioting and looting in America’s biggest city.

“NYPD is losing the city of New York and we have no leadership in the city of New York right now, from City Hall to the brass of the NYPD,” New York Sergeants Benevolent Association President Ed Mullins told Laura Ingraham. “The men and women are being pelted with rocks, bricks, cars [are] lit on fire. And this is continuous. We have a curfew that’s been implemented tonight at eight o’clock and everyone is still out rioting in the streets in New York.”

New York City is the Gateway to the USA. I stress this because when Jerusalem fell the gates of the City were the first things to fall.

Jer 39:2 In the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, the ninth of the month, the city was broken up.

Jer 39:3 And all the rulers of the king of Babylon came in and sat in the middle gate: Nergal-sharezer, Samgar-nebo, Sarsechim, chief of the eunuchs, Nergal-sharezer, chief soothsayer, and all the rest of the rulers of the king of Babylon.

Jer 39:4 And it happened when Zedekiah, the king of Judah and all the men of war saw them, then they fled, and went out from the city by night, by the way of the king’s garden, by the gate between the two walls. And he went out the way of the plain.

Let us now read the historical events of this day and learn some things. I was asked if we should fast on this day and I have said it is not found in Lev 23 then you do not have to fast. I am going to change my position and recommend we do fast on this day based on what has happened in the past and what is going to happen in the near future. The fast of the 4th month and the fast of the 5th month. We should keep them and remember what happened and why so that we do not repeat the same mistakes. So this coming Wednesday, June 10 is the Fast day of the 4th month.

Exo 24:13 And Moses rose up, and his attendant Joshua. And Moses went up into the mountain of God.

Exo 24:14 And he said to the elders, You stay here for us until we come again to you. And behold, Aaron and Hur are with you. If any man has any matters to do, let him come to them.

Exo 24:15 And Moses went up into the mountain, and a cloud covered the mountain.

Exo 24:16 And the glory of Jehovah abode upon Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days. And the seventh day He called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud.

Exo 24:17 And the sight of the glory of Jehovah was like devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the eyes of the sons of Israel.

Exo 24:18 And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and went up into the mountain. And Moses was in the mountain forty days and forty nights.

The Golden Calf

Exo 32:1 And the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, and the people gathered themselves to Aaron. And they said to him, Up! Make us gods who shall go before us. For this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.

Exo 32:2 And Aaron said to them, Break off the golden earrings which are in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring them to me.

Exo 32:3 And all the people broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them to Aaron.

Exo 32:4 And he took them from their hand, and fashioned it with an engraving tool. And he made it a molten calf. And they said, These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.

Exo 32:5 And when Aaron saw, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made proclamation and said, Tomorrow is a feast to Jehovah.

Exo 32:6 And they rose up early on the next day and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings. And the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.

Exo 32:7 And Jehovah said to Moses, Go! Get down, for your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt, are corrupted.

Exo 32:8 They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them. They have made them a molten calf, and have worshiped it, and have sacrificed to it, and said, These are your gods, O Israel, who have brought you up out of the land of Egypt.

Exo 32:9 And Jehovah said to Moses, I have seen this people, and behold, it is a stiff-necked people.

Exo 32:10 And now leave Me alone, so that My wrath may become hot against them and so that I may consume them. And I will make of you a great nation.

Exo 32:11 And Moses prayed to Jehovah his God, and said, Jehovah, why does Your wrath become hot against Your people whom You have brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand?

Exo 32:12 Why should the Egyptians speak and say, He brought them out for harm, to kill them in the mountains and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from Your fierce wrath, and be moved to pity as to this evil against Your people.

Exo 32:13 Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants, to whom You swore by Your own self, and said to them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give to your seed, and they shall inherit it forever.

Exo 32:14 And Jehovah repented as to the evil which He spoke of doing to His people.

Exo 32:15 And Moses turned, and went down from the mountain, and the two tablets of the testimony were in his hand. The tablets were written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other.

Exo 32:16 And the tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God. It was engraved on the tablets.

Exo 32:17 And Joshua heard the voice of the people in their shouting. And he said to Moses, A sound of war in the camp!

Exo 32:18 And he said, It is not a sound of a cry of victory, nor a sound of the cry of defeat. I am hearing the sound of singing.

Exo 32:19 And it happened, as he came near to the camp and saw the calf and dances, the anger of Moses became hot, and he threw the tablets out of his hands, and broke them at the bottom of the mountain.

Exo 32:20 And he took the calf which they had made and burned it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and dropped it upon the water, and made the sons of Israel drink of it.

Exo 32:21 And Moses said to Aaron, What did this people do to you, that you have brought so great a sin upon them?

Exo 32:22 And Aaron said, Let not the anger of my lord become hot. You know the people, that they are set on mischief.

Exo 32:23 For they said to me, Make us gods who shall go before us. For this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.

Exo 32:24 And I said to them, Whoever has any gold, let them break it off. And they gave it to me, and I threw it into the fire, and there came out this calf.

Exo 32:25 And when Moses saw that the people were naked, (for Aaron had made them naked to their shame among their enemies,)

Exo 32:26 then Moses stood in the gate of the camp and said, Who is on Jehovah's side? Come to me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves to him.

Exo 32:27 And he said to them, Thus says Jehovah, the God of Israel: Each man put his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and kill each one his brother, and each one his neighbor, and each one his kindred.

Exo 32:28 And the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And there fell of the people that day about three thousand men.

Exo 32:29 For Moses had said, Consecrate yourselves today to Jehovah, since each one has been against his son, and against his brother, and in order to give you a blessing today.

Exo 32:30 And it happened on the next day, Moses said to the people, You have sinned a great sin. And now I will go up to Jehovah. Perhaps I shall make an atonement for your sin.

Exo 32:31 And Moses returned to Jehovah, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made themselves gods of gold.

Exo 32:32 And now will You forgive their sin! And if not, I pray You, blot me out of Your book which You have written.

Exo 32:33 And Jehovah said to Moses, Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book.

Exo 32:34 And now go, lead the people to the place of which I have spoken to you. Behold, My Angel shall go before you. And in the day of My visitation I will visit their sin upon them.

Exo 32:35 And Jehovah plagued the people because they made the calf, which Aaron made.

May 3rd, 2020, was Shavuot. When we count 40 days from this date this year it lands on June 12.

If we count 40 days from May 31, 2020, we arrive at July 10 as the 40th day.

The Golden Calf was a Mask to replace or put in place of or instead of Yehovah.

They just experienced the real God speaking to them at Mount Sinai! They witnessed the ten plagues and the splitting of the sea! Now they're replacing God with a statue, and saying that this inanimate cow brought them out of Egypt? It just doesn't make sense.

And if we go a bit further back, the cow's not the only thing they're confused about. When they don't know what happened to Moshe, they say that they need אֱלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר יֵלְכוּ לְפָנֵינוּ – a god to walk before them. But if Moshe is missing, why do they want a god? Why don't they just turn to Aharon or Miriam and ask one of them to take charge? Instead, they ask for a god to take Moshe's place.

Then, they call Moshe: מֹשֶׁה הָאִישׁ – this man, Moshe – אֲשֶׁר הֵעֵלֵנוּ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם – who took us out of Egypt... All of a sudden, it's Moshe, the man – a human being – who took them out of Egypt; not God! It's as if God Himself, capital G-O-D, has completely disappeared from the picture, and He's been replaced by Moshe, the man...

But how could this be? How could the people confuse Moshe for God? They're standing at Mount Sinai. God's cloud is hovering on top of the mountain.

It seems really strange, but ask yourself, is this the first time the people tried replacing God with Moshe? Was there another time they wanted Moshe to take on God's role, to stand in His place?

It happened right here at Mount Sinai, just 40 days earlier. When God revealed the Ten Commandments to the nation and spoke to them directly, they went into a panic. It was so overwhelming for them, they thought they were about to die. They turned to Moshe and begged him (Exodus 20:16) דַּבֵּר־אֵתָהּ עִמָּנוּ – please, Moshe, you speak with us – וְאַל־יְדַבֵּר עִמָּנוּ אֱלֹהִים – don't let God talk to us anymore – פֶּן־נָמוּת – lest we die. They couldn't handle this direct contact with God. They wanted Moshe to be their intermediary and speak in God's place.

The Torah calls the golden calf (Exodus 32:4) עֵגֶל מִסֵּכָה. The plain meaning is a molten calf. But interestingly, in modern Hebrew, the word masecha also means "mask." In a sense, the people used the calf as a mask for God. They created it to take God's place, and to distance themselves from Him, so that they wouldn't have face God directly.

The people wanted someone or something to go between them and Yehovah. So they would not have to face and hear Yehovah themselves. Many do this today. They do not want to deal with the Torah directly. So they place the Rabbis in front of them and say if they are wrong then it is their fault. Some, place their teachers in front of them and say

the same thing. So and so said it was this way. Others hide behind false teachings so they do not have to face up to Yehovah. They put a mask over Him or in front of Him to hide the truth that they were supposed to deal with.

Yehovah wants a one on one relationship with you. But you have to get into His word to know Him.

Read what Jeremiah says

Jer 2:8 The priests did not say, Where is Jehovah? And they who handle the Law did not know Me; the shepherds also rebelled against Me, and the prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after things not profitable.

Jer 2:9 Therefore I will contend with you, says Jehovah, and with your son's sons I will enter into judgment.

What were those priests doing who handled the law and yet did not know Yehovah? They taught the things of Baal. They taught everything about vaccines and everything about Bill Gates they knew all about the giants and how the Nephilim were coming back today to have sex with the women. They knew all the secrets of Jesuits and of the Masons and all the secret codes, but they did not know Yehovah.

Then Yehovah said He would contend with Israel. That is He would be our adversary.

We said this in the first section of this News Letter about the riots taking place right now.

Deu 28:63 And it shall be, as Jehovah rejoiced over you to do you good and to multiply you, so Jehovah will rejoice over you to destroy you and to bring you to nothing. And you shall be plucked from off the land where you go to possess it.

Yehovah is going to be our enemy. Think about that statement. What a terrifying thing to have Yehovah as your enemy.

1 Samuel 2:12 Now the sons of Eli were wicked men; they had no regard for the LORD

Jeremiah 4:22 “For My people are fools; they have not known Me. They are foolish children, without understanding. They are skilled in doing evil, but they do not know how to do good.”

Jeremiah 9:14 Instead, they have followed the stubbornness of their hearts and gone after the Baals, as their fathers taught them.”

Jeremiah 10:21 For the shepherds have become senseless and do not seek the LORD. Therefore they have not prospered, and all their flock is scattered.

Jeremiah 16:19 O LORD, my strength and my fortress, my refuge in the day of distress, the nations will come to You from the ends of the earth, and they will say, “Our fathers inherited nothing but lies, worthless idols of no benefit at all.”

Jeremiah 18:18 Then some said, “Come, let us make plans against Jeremiah, for the law will never be lost to the priest, or counsel to the wise, or an oracle to the prophet. Come, let us denounce him and pay no heed to any of his words.”

Jeremiah 23:13 “Among the prophets of Samaria I saw an offensive thing: They prophesied by Baal and led My people Israel astray.

Ezekiel 22:26 Her priests do violence to My law and profane My holy things. They make no distinction between the holy and the common, and they fail to distinguish between the clean and the unclean. They disregard My Sabbaths, so that I am profaned among them.

Ezekiel 34:2 “Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel. Prophesy and tell them that this is what the Lord GOD says: ‘Woe to the shepherds of Israel, who only feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed their flock?’

Habakkuk 2:18 What use is an idol, that a craftsman should carve it—or an image, a teacher of lies? For its maker trusts in his own creation; he makes idols that cannot speak.

Malachi 2:7 For the lips of a priest should preserve knowledge, and people should seek instruction from his mouth, because he is the messenger of the LORD of Hosts.”

Malachi 2:8 “But you have departed from the way, and your instruction has caused many to stumble. You have violated the covenant of Levi,” says the LORD of Hosts.

Do not forget the sad announcement to the five foolish virgins. I never knew you, you workers of lawlessness.

The Unfaithful Wife

In everything that we have been talking about this week and the past few weeks, this law of the Sotah woman, found in Numbers has not left my mind. It is such an obscure law and to my knowledge, it was never implemented as far as we know.

The bitter waters takes me back to the teaching we just did titled I NEVER KNEW YOU – REFA'EINU – MARAH.

Right after Israel had accepted the ketubah, the covenant of Mount Sinai, not 40 days later they had committed idolatry with the golden calf. And what does Moses do? You just read it.

Exo 32:20 And he took the calf which they had made and burned it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and dropped it upon the water, and made the sons of Israel drink of it.

Now I want you to keep in mind what we just shared with you above about New York being a Gateway City.

Exo 32:26 then Moses stood in the gate of the camp and said, Who is on Jehovah's side? Come to me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves to him.

Exo 32:27 And he said to them, Thus says Jehovah, the God of Israel: Each man put his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and kill each one his brother, and each one his neighbor, and each one his kindred.

Exo 32:28 And the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And there fell of the people that day about three thousand men.

This is the 17th of the 4th month. This is not the 9th of the 5th month we are talking about.

The fast of Tammuz, according to Rabbi Akiva's interpretation, is the fast mentioned in the Book of Zechariah as "the fast of the fourth [month]" (Zechariah 8:19). This refers to Tammuz, which is the fourth month of the Hebrew calendar.

According to the Mishnah,[2] five calamities befell the Jewish people on this day:

- Moses broke the two tablets of stone on Mount Sinai[5];
 - The daily tamid offering ceased to be brought;
 - During the Roman siege of Jerusalem, the city walls were breached (proceeding to the destruction of the Second Temple);
 - Prior to Bar Kokhba's revolt, Roman military leader Apostomus burned a Torah scroll;
 - An idol was erected in the Temple.
- The Babylonian Talmud places the second and fifth tragedies in the First Temple period.[6]

Are we about to watch another disaster befall Israel, the USA? Watch. This past week the Stock Market has rallied up and again so on Friday as I go to post this News Letter. But the crazy cycle is about to get worse. June 12, 2020, is the 40th day from Shavuot May 3, 2020.

Phase IV = June 14 – July 4. How much = 75%.

The ordeal of the bitter water was a trial by ordeal administered to the wife whose husband suspected her of adultery but who had no witnesses to make a formal case (Numbers 5:11-31). The ordeal is further explained in the Talmud, in the eponymous seventh tractate of Nashim.

A sotah (Hebrew: שוטה [1] / סוטה) is a woman suspected of adultery who undergoes the ordeal of bitter water or ordeal of jealousy as described and prescribed in the Priestly Code, in the Book of Numbers, the fourth book of the Hebrew Bible. The term "sotah" itself is not found in the Hebrew Bible but is Mishnaic Hebrew based on the verse "if she has strayed" (verb: שטה satah) in Numbers 5:12.[2][3]

Hebrew Bible

The account of the ordeal of bitter water given in the Book of Numbers is as follows:

19 And the priest shall cause her to swear, and shall say unto the woman: 'If no man have lain with thee, and if thou hast not gone aside to uncleanness, being under thy husband, be thou free from this water of bitterness that causeth the curse;

20 but if thou hast gone aside, being under thy husband, and if thou be defiled,

and some man have lain with thee besides thy husband—

21 then the priest shall cause the woman to swear with the oath of cursing, and the priest shall say unto the woman—the LORD make thee a curse and an oath among thy people, when the LORD doth make thy thigh to fall away, and thy belly to swell;

22 and this water that causeth the curse shall go into thy bowels, and make thy belly to swell, and thy thigh to fall away'; and the woman shall say: 'Amen, Amen.'

23 And the priest shall write these curses in a scroll, and he shall blot them out into the water of bitterness. 24 And he shall make the woman drink the water of bitterness that causeth the curse; and the water that causeth the curse shall enter into her and become bitter.

— Numbers 5, JPS 1917.

Jewish tradition

Mishnah and Talmud

According to the Mishnah, it was the practice for the woman to first be brought to the Sanhedrin, before being subjected to the ordeal. Repeated attempts would be made to persuade the woman to confess, including multiple suggestions to her of possible mitigating factors; if she confessed, the ordeal was not required.[4][5]

The regulations require that the ordeal take place when the woman is brought to an Israelite priest,[6] or when she is brought before God.[7] The Mishnah reports that, in the time of the Second Temple, she was taken to the East Gate of the Temple, in front of the Nikanor gate.[4][5]

The woman is required by the biblical passage to have loosened hair during the ritual;[8] this is often taken to be a symbol of the woman's supposed shame, [9] but according to Josephus, it was merely the standard behaviour for anyone accused of any crime, when they appeared before the Sanhedrin.[10] The Mishnah also states that the garment she was wearing was ripped to expose her heart. A rope was tied above her breasts so that her clothes did not completely fall off. The Mishnah, however, argues that the clothing on the woman's upper body was also stripped away, leaving her bare-breasted.[4]

Trial

The ordeal

This trial consisted of the wife having to drink a specific potion administered by the priest. The text does not specify the amount of time needed for the potion to take effect; 19th century scholars[who?] suspected it was probably intended to have a fairly immediate effect.[9] The Mishnah mentions there could also be a suspension of the ordeal for one, two or three years, if she has an acquittal.

[11] Maimonides records the traditional Rabbinical view: “Her belly swells first and then her thigh ruptures and she dies”. [12] Others maintain that since the word “thigh” is often used in the Bible as a euphemism for various reproductive organs, in this case it may mean the uterus, the placenta or an embryo, and the woman would survive. [13][14][15]

Nachmanides points out that of all the 613 commandments, it is only the sotah law that requires God’s specific co-operation to make it work. The bitter waters can only be effective miraculously. [16]

The text specifies that the potion should be made from water and dust; [17] in the masoretic text, the water used for the potion must be holy water, and the Targum interprets it as water from the Molten Sea, but the Septuagint instead requires running water. [9] The passage argues that the curse was washed into the water; [18] it is thought that this idea derives from a belief that the words of a curse exist in their own right. [9] Others argue that the curse is a euphemism for a miscarriage or infertility. [13]

The potion also had to be mixed in an earthenware vessel; [17] this may have been because the potion was regarded as a taboo which could be spread by contact, and therefore also made the vessel taboo, necessitating its subsequent destruction (as do the biblical rules concerning taboo animals, for any earthenware vessels into which such animals fall [19]). [9] However, the Talmud [20] and Rashi explain that this vessel is chosen to contrast the woman’s predicament with her behavior. She gave the adulterer to drink choice wine in valuable goblets; therefore, let her drink bitter water in a worthless clay vessel. [21][22]

Maimonides further writes: “When she dies, the adulterer because of whom she was compelled to drink will also die, wherever he is located. The same phenomena, the swelling of the belly and the rupture of the thigh, will also occur to him. All the above applies provided her husband never engaged in forbidden sexual relations in his life. If, however, her husband ever engaged in forbidden relations, the [bitter] waters do not check [the fidelity of] his wife.” [12]

The Offering

The husband was required to make a sacrifice to God, as part of the ritual, probably due to a general principle that no one should seek answers from God without giving something in return. [9] This offering is required to be placed in the wife’s hands, [8] and is literally described as her offering for her; [6] scholars think that it is the man’s offering, in relation to the ordeal of his wife, and that her holding of it is merely symbolic of this. [9]

The offering specified is one tenth of an ephah of barley meal, unaccompanied by oil or frankincense;[6] this is the cheaper type of flour, unlike the flour specified for all other biblical sacrifices.[9] The specification is now thought to be a rare survival of an earlier period, in which there was no restriction on the types of flour which could be used for sacrifices,[9] although the Mishnah argues that it was a reference to the bestial nature of adultery, coarse flour being the food of beasts.
[23]

Israel, who are today known as the USA and the UK nations and her daughter nations are the sons of Joseph who were given the name of Israel. Judah today is the State of Israel and are part of the 12 tribes of Israel. These nations are betrothed to Yehovah and He is the Jealous husband. We are now drinking this bitter water. Water is depicted as the Holy Spirit so bitter water to me means Satan Spirit.

If we are guilty of adultery then our insides are about to burst open and we will die. If on the other hand, we are true to Yehovah and not committing adultery or idolatry then we will as it has been said give birth to a son. After we go through this time of childbirth that we are in right now, at the end of the Great Tribulation we will give birth to the nation of Israel. A righteous nation that follows King David who Follows Yehovah.

Lamentations

During this time of year from the 17th of the 4th until and especially the 9th of the 5th, Lamentations is read. Please take the time to read over this as we enter this coming period of time.

How Lonely Sits the City

Lam 1:1 How alone sits the city that was full of people! She has become like a widow, once great among the nations, a noblewoman among the nations, but now has become a tribute-payer.

Lam 1:2 She bitterly weeps in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks; among all her lovers, she has none to comfort her. All her friends have dealt deceitfully with her; they became her enemies.

Lam 1:3 Judah went into captivity because of affliction, and from great slavery. She dwells among the nations; she finds no rest; all her pursuers have overtaken her between the narrows.

Lam 1:4 The roads of Zion mourn without any going to the appointed feasts. All her gates are deserted; her priests sigh; her virgins are afflicted, and she is in bitterness.

Lam 1:5 Her enemies have become as chief; her haters are at ease; for Jehovah has afflicted her for the multitude of her sins. Her children have gone, captive before the enemy.

Lam 1:6 And from the daughter of Zion all her beauty has departed. Her rulers have become like bucks: they find no pasture, and they have gone without strength before the pursuer.

Lam 1:7 In the days of her affliction and her wandering Jerusalem remembered all her desirable things from previous days; when her people fell into the hand of the foe; and there is no ally for her. The foes saw her; they laughed at her annihilation.

Lam 1:8 Jerusalem has grievously sinned, therefore she has been removed. All knowing her despise her because they saw her nakedness; yea, she sighs and turns backward.

Lam 1:9 Her uncleanness is in her skirts; she did not remember her end, and has gone down astoundingly. There is no comforter for her. O Jehovah, behold my affliction, for the enemy has magnified himself.

Lam 1:10 The enemy has spread out his hand upon all her desirable things; for she has seen the nations enter her holy place, whom You commanded that they should not enter into Your congregation.

Lam 1:11 All her people sigh; they seek bread. They have given their desirable things for food to relieve the soul. See, O Jehovah, and look on me, for I have become vile.

Lam 1:12 Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? Behold and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow which is done to me, with which Jehovah has afflicted me in the day of His fierce anger.

Lam 1:13 From above He has sent fire into my bones and it has laid them low. He has spread a net for my feet; He has turned me back; He has made me amazed and faint all the day.

Lam 1:14 The yoke of my transgressions is bound by His hand; they intertwine; they rise on my neck. He has made my strength to falter; Jehovah has delivered me into their hands. I am not able to rise up.

Lam 1:15 Jehovah has trampled all my mighty ones in my midst; He has called a gathering against me to crush my young men. Jehovah has trod the virgin daughter of Judah, as in a winepress.

Lam 1:16 For these I weep; my eye, my eye runs down with water, because the comforter who could refresh my soul is far from me. My sons are desolated because the enemy prevails.

Lam 1:17 Zion spreads forth her hands; none is comforting to me; Jehovah has commanded concerning Jacob that his enemies should be all around him; Jerusalem has become as an impure thing among them.

Lam 1:18 Jehovah is righteous, for I have rebelled against His command. I beseech you, all peoples, hear and behold my sorrow. My virgins and my young men went into exile.

Lam 1:19 I called for my lovers, but they deceived me; my priests and my elders expired in the city while they sought food for them to bring back their life.

Lam 1:20 Behold, O Jehovah, for I am in trouble; my inward parts ferment; my heart is turned within me, for I have grievously rebelled. On the outside the sword bereaves; in the house it is as death.

Lam 1:21 They hear that I sigh; there is none to comfort me. All my enemies have heard my evil; they are glad that You have done it. You will bring the day that You have called, and they shall be like me.

Lam 1:22 Let all their wickedness come before You; and do to them as You have done to me for all my transgressions. For my sighs are many, and my heart is faint.

The Lord Has Destroyed Without Pity

Lam 2:1 How the Lord has covered the daughter of Zion with a cloud in His anger! He cast down the beauty of Israel from the heavens to the earth and remembered not His footstool in the day of His anger.

Lam 2:2 The Lord swallowed up all the dwelling-places of Jacob and has not pitied. In His wrath He has thrown down the strongholds of the daughter of Judah; He has brought them down to the ground. He has defiled the kingdom and its rulers.

Lam 2:3 He has cut off all the horn of Israel in His fierce anger; He has drawn back His right hand from before the enemy, and He burned against Jacob like flaming fire which devours all around.

Lam 2:4 He has bent His bow like an enemy; He stood with His right hand like an adversary, and killed all who were desirable to the eye in the tabernacle of the daughter of Zion. He poured out His fury like fire.

Lam 2:5 Jehovah was like an enemy; He swallowed up Israel; He has swallowed up all her palaces, and destroyed His strongholds. And He has increased mourning and weeping in the daughter of Judah.

Lam 2:6 And He violated His booth like a garden, and destroyed His meeting places. Jehovah caused the meeting places and sabbaths to be forgotten in Zion, and He despised the king and the priest in the fury of His anger.

Lam 2:7 Jehovah has cast off His altar; He rejected His sanctuary; He has given up the walls of her palaces into the hater's hand. They gave a noise in the house of Jehovah, as a day of meeting.

Lam 2:8 Jehovah purposed to destroy the wall of the daughter of Zion; He has stretched out a line; He has not withdrawn His hand from swallowing, and He made rampart and wall lament; they languish together.

Lam 2:9 Her gates have sunk in the ground; He has destroyed and broken her bars. Her kings and her rulers are among the nations. The Law is no more; also her prophets also find no vision from Jehovah.

Lam 2:10 The elders of the daughter of Zion sit upon the ground and are silent; they send up dust on their heads; they gird on sackcloth. The virgins of Jerusalem hang down their heads to the ground.

Lam 2:11 My eyes fail with tears; my inward parts ferment; my liver is poured on the ground for the ruin of the daughter of my people, in that the children and the babies faint in the streets of the city.

Lam 2:12 They say to their mothers, Where are grain and wine? In their fainting they are like the wounded in the streets of the city, in their pouring out their lives to their mothers' bosom.

Lam 2:13 What can I testify for you? What thing shall I compare to you, O daughter of Jerusalem? What shall I equal to you, so that I may comfort you, O virgin daughter of Zion? For your break is great like the sea! Who can heal you?

Lam 2:14 Your prophets have seen false and foolish things for you, and they have not uncovered your iniquity, to turn away your captivity; but they have seen false oracles and seductions for you.

Lam 2:15 All who pass by clap their hands at you; they hiss and wag their head at the daughter of Jerusalem, saying, Is this the city which they called the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole earth?

Lam 2:16 All your enemies have opened their mouth against you; they hiss and gnash the teeth; they say, We have swallowed her up. Certainly this is the day that we looked for; we have found, we have seen.

Lam 2:17 Jehovah has done what He has purposed; He has fulfilled His Word which He commanded from the days of old. He has thrown down and not pitied. And He caused your hater to rejoice over you; He has set up the horn of your foes.

Lam 2:18 Their heart cried to Jehovah. O wall of the daughter of Zion, let tears run down like a torrent day and night; give yourself no rest. Let not the daughter of your eye cease.

Lam 2:19 Arise, cry out in the night. At the beginning of the watches, pour out your heart like water before the face of Jehovah. Lift up your hands toward Him for the life of your children who are faint for hunger in the head of every street.

Lam 2:20 Behold, O Jehovah, and consider to whom You have done this. Shall the women eat their fruit, children of tender care? Shall the priest and the prophet be killed in the holy place of the Lord?

Lam 2:21 Young and old lie on the ground in the streets; my virgins and my young men have fallen by the sword. You have killed them in the day of Your anger; You have killed and not pitied.

Lam 2:22 You have called as in a solemn day my terrors all around, and there was not an escaped one or a survivor in the day of Jehovah's anger. Those whom I have nursed and multiplied, my enemy has consumed.

Great Is Your Faithfulness

Lam 3:1 I the man have seen affliction by the rod of His wrath.

Lam 3:2 He has led me and made me go in darkness and not into light.

Lam 3:3 Surely He turned against me; He turns His hand all the day.

Lam 3:4 He has wasted my flesh and my skin; He has broken my bones.

Lam 3:5 He built against me and has circled me with bitterness and hardship.

Lam 3:6 He has made me live in dark places, like the dead of old.

Lam 3:7 He has set a fence around me and I cannot go out; He has made my bronze chain heavy.

Lam 3:8 Also when I cry and shout, He shuts out my prayer.

Lam 3:9 He walled up my ways with cut stone; my paths are crooked.

Lam 3:10 He was a bear lying in wait for me, a lion in secret places.

Lam 3:11 He has turned my ways aside and torn me in pieces. He made me desolate.

Lam 3:12 He has bent His bow and set me as a mark for the arrow.

Lam 3:13 He has caused the arrows of His quiver to enter into my inward parts.

Lam 3:14 I was a mockery to all my people, their song all the day.

Lam 3:15 He has filled me with bitterness and made me drunk with wormwood.

Lam 3:16 He also broke my teeth with gravel; He has covered me in the ashes.

Lam 3:17 And You cast off my soul from peace; I have forgotten blessedness.

Lam 3:18 And I said, My strength and my hope from Jehovah are gone.

Lam 3:19 Remember my affliction and my wandering, as wormwood and bitterness.

Lam 3:20 My soul vividly remembers and bows down on me.

Lam 3:21 I recall this to my mind; therefore I hope.

Lam 3:22 It is by Jehovah's kindnesses that we are not destroyed, because His mercies never fail.

Lam 3:23 They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.

Lam 3:24 Jehovah is my portion, says my soul; therefore I will hope in Him.

Lam 3:25 Jehovah is good to those who wait for Him, to the soul who seeks Him.

Lam 3:26 It is good that one should hope for the salvation of Jehovah, even in silence.

Lam 3:27 It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.

Lam 3:28 He sits alone and keeps silence because He laid it on him.

Lam 3:29 He puts his mouth in the dust, if perhaps there may be hope.

Lam 3:30 He gives his cheek to Him who strikes him; he is filled with reproach.

Lam 3:31 For the Lord will not cast off forever;

Lam 3:32 for though He causes grief, yet He will have pity according to the multitude of His kindnesses.

Lam 3:33 For He does not afflict from His heart, nor does He grieve the sons of men;

Lam 3:34 to crush all the prisoners of the earth under His feet;

Lam 3:35 to turn aside the right of a man before the face of the Most High;

Lam 3:36 to pervert a man in his cause. This, Jehovah does not see.

Lam 3:37 Who is this who speaks, and it occurs, when the Lord does not command it?

Lam 3:38 From the mouth of the Most High does not go out the evil and the good.

Lam 3:39 What? Should mankind complain, a living man, because of his sins?

Lam 3:40 Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to Jehovah.

Lam 3:41 Let us lift up our heart and hands to God in Heaven.

Lam 3:42 We have sinned and have rebelled; You have not forgiven.

Lam 3:43 You have wrapped Yourself with anger and pursued us; You have slain; You have not pitied.

Lam 3:44 You have wrapped Yourself with a cloud from any prayer passing through.

Lam 3:45 You have made us as the sweepings and garbage in the midst of the peoples.

Lam 3:46 All our enemies have opened their mouths against us.

Lam 3:47 Fear and a pit have come to us, shame and ruin.

Lam 3:48 Streams of water run down my eye for the ruin of the daughter of my people.

Lam 3:49 My eye flows out and does not cease, from there being no intermission,

Lam 3:50 until Jehovah shall look down and behold from Heaven.

Lam 3:51 My eye pains my soul because of all the daughters of my city.

Lam 3:52 My haters have hunted me, like a bird, without cause.

Lam 3:53 They have cut off my life in the pit, and cast a stone at me.

Lam 3:54 Waters flowed over my head; then I said, I am cut off.

Lam 3:55 I called on Your name, O Jehovah, out of the lowest pit.

Lam 3:56 You have heard my voice; do not hide Your ear at my relief, at my cry for help.

Lam 3:57 You drew near in the day that I called on You; You said, Fear not.

Lam 3:58 O Lord, You strove for the causes of my soul; You redeemed my life.

Lam 3:59 O Jehovah, You have seen my wrong; judge my cause.

Lam 3:60 You have seen all their vengeance, all their plots against me.

Lam 3:61 You have heard their reproach, O Jehovah, all their plots against me;

Lam 3:62 the lips of those who rose up against me, and their scheming against me all the day.

Lam 3:63 Behold their sitting down and their rising up; I am their song.

Lam 3:64 You will return to them a recompense, O Jehovah, according to the work of their hands.

Lam 3:65 You will give them dullness of heart, Your curse on them.

Lam 3:66 Pursue and destroy them in anger from under the heavens of Jehovah.

The Holy Stones Lie Scattered

Lam 4:1 How the gold has become dim; the fine gold has changed! The stones of the sanctuary are poured out at the head of every street.

Lam 4:2 The precious sons of Zion are weighed against pure gold; how they are counted as earthen vessels, the work of a potter's hand!

Lam 4:3 Even the jackals draw out the breast; they suckle their young ones. The daughter of my people is cruel, like the ostriches in the wilderness.

Lam 4:4 The suckling's tongue cleaves to his palate in thirst; the young children ask bread; there is no breaking to them.

Lam 4:5 Those who ate delicacies are desolate in the streets; those reared in scarlet embrace dunghills.

Lam 4:6 And the iniquity of the daughter of my people is heaped more than the sin of Sodom, overthrown as in a moment, and no hands spun on her.

Lam 4:7 Her Nazarites were purer than snow, whiter than milk; they were redder of bone than corals; their cuttings as lapis lazuli, azure blue.

Lam 4:8 Their appearance is blacker than soot; they are not recognized in the streets; their skin has shriveled on their bones; it is dried up; it has become like wood.

Lam 4:9 Better are the ones slain by the sword than the ones slain by hunger; those who pine away, pierced because the fruits of my fields failed.

Lam 4:10 The hands of the pitying women have boiled their own children; they became their food in the ruin of the daughter of my people.

Lam 4:11 Jehovah has fulfilled His fury; He has poured out His fierce anger, and has kindled a fire in Zion, and it has devoured its foundations.

Lam 4:12 The kings of the earth, and all the people of the world, would not have believed that the foe and the hater would go into Jerusalem's gates.

Lam 4:13 For the sins of her prophets and the iniquities of her priests, shedding the blood of the just in her midst,

Lam 4:14 they reeled blind in the streets; they are defiled with blood, so that not any can touch their clothes.

Lam 4:15 They cried to them, Depart! Unclean! Depart, depart! Touch not! Indeed they fled and reeled; they said among the nations, They will not continue to live there.

Lam 4:16 The face of Jehovah has shared them out; He will no longer look on them; they did not respect the persons of the priests; they did not favor the elders.

Lam 4:17 While we are, our eyes fail, for our help is vain; in our watching we have watched for a nation; it does not save.

Lam 4:18 They hunted our steps from going in our streets; our end was near, our days were fulfilled, for our end has come.

Lam 4:19 Our pursuers were swifter than the eagles of the heavens; they pursued us on the mountains, they lay in wait for us in the wilderness.

Lam 4:20 The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of Jehovah, was taken in their pits; of whom we said, In His shadow we shall live among the nations.

Lam 4:21 Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, who lives in the land of Uz. The cup also shall pass through unto you; you shall be drunken and stripped naked.

Lam 4:22 The punishment of your iniquity is fulfilled, O daughter of Zion; He will exile you no more. He will visit your iniquity, O daughter of Edom; He will expose your sins.

Restore Us to Yourself, O Lord

Lam 5:1 Remember, O Jehovah, what has been to us; look down and see our shame.

Lam 5:2 Our inheritance has turned to aliens, our houses to foreigners.

Lam 5:3 We are orphans and fatherless; our mothers are as widows.

Lam 5:4 We have drunk our water for silver; our wood comes for a price.

Lam 5:5 We are pursued on our necks; we grow weary; rest is not given to us.

Lam 5:6 We have given the hand to Egypt, to Assyria, to be satisfied with bread.

Lam 5:7 Our fathers have sinned and are not; we have borne their iniquities.

Lam 5:8 Servants rule over us; there is no rescuer out of their hand.

Lam 5:9 We bring in our bread with our souls, because of the sword of the wilderness.

Lam 5:10 Our skin is hot like an oven because of the fever heat of famine.

Lam 5:11 They raped the women in Zion, virgins in the cities of Judah.

Lam 5:12 Rulers were hanged by the hand; the faces of elders were not honored.

Lam 5:13 They took the young men to grind, and the youths stumbled at the wood.

Lam 5:14 The elders have ceased from the gate, the young men from their music.

Lam 5:15 The joy of our heart has ceased; our dance has turned into mourning.

Lam 5:16 The crown has fallen from our head. Woe now to us! For we have sinned.

Lam 5:17 Our heart is faint for this; our eyes are dim for these things.

Lam 5:18 On the mountain of Zion is laid waste, the foxes walk on it.

Lam 5:19 You, O Jehovah, remain forever; Your throne to generation and generation.

Lam 5:20 Why do You forget us forever and forsake us the length of days?

Lam 5:21 Return us to You, O Jehovah, and we will turn; renew our days as of old,

Lam 5:22 unless You have utterly rejected us; You are very angry against us.

MEGILLAT EICHA

The Text of Lamentations

with an Interpretive Reflection

By Rabbi David Forhman

Years ago, I went to see an exhibition of photographs that had won the Pulitzer Prize for best news reporting. I was struck by how, one after another, the photos were all suffused with the same themes: Visceral loss and suffering. A particular photo caught my eye. It was of a Cambodian refugee, a woman, clutching a child, forging her way through a rushing river. She was surrounded by a torrent of water

that was nearly neck high. With what seemed like every ounce of strength, she struggled, with one arm, to keep her daughter's head above the murderous waves. Her arm was wrapped around her child, and the limb of a tree, hanging over the river from the embankment. With the other arm, she reached out, desperately, in the direction of the camera.

I stood there in the museum, and here was this woman, gazing at me – through the lens of this camera, across the stretch of time. When you looked at the photo, it almost felt as if you could reach out with your own hand and grab her arm, and pull her and her child to safety.

As I stood there, looking at the desperate mother and child – a sudden sense of shock and outrage shook me out of my reverie. It suddenly occurred to me: What was this photographer doing taking this picture? Why didn't he throw his camera aside and instead reach out to pull this woman to shore?

Reporters are there as third-party narrators of the news. But they are also human beings. So the choice to be a third-party observer, is, on some level, an arbitrary one. When you are witnessing great suffering, history may laud you for reporting the suffering – but as a human being, what integrity do you really have left if you choose to stand apart from it? The third-person offers the benefit of dispassionate reporting; but sometimes, you can't afford to be the 'third person'. Sometimes, you are part of the story, whether you like it or not.

Eicha and the Mystery of Chapter Three

I just returned from a Tisha B'Av-night reading of the Book of Eicha, Jeremiah's book of lament for the destruction of Jerusalem. I went to a reading in a small shul, and, as I entered the room, was asked by the organizer of the minyan if I would consent to be one of the readers. He asked if I would chant the third chapter of Eicha aloud for the group.

I was uncomfortable with doing it. I'm not really an active ba'al korei, and wasn't all that familiar with the unique melody of the Eicha trop, so I politely declined. But the fellow at the door wasn't taking no for an answer. Ten minutes later, I found myself singing aloud the mournful words of Chapter 3 after all.

In the end, I am glad he pushed me to do it. Being forced to read that text out loud, and not just to listen to it read by others, sensitized me to a few things that I don't think I ever would've noticed otherwise. Let me share with you what it was like to read the chapter.

Staccato

As I started reading, the strangest thing happened. Every sentence I chanted seemed to come out wrong. It felt silly, embarrassing. I would stop myself midsentence and try to correct my voice – but try as I might, I just couldn't seem to get the tune right. As this happened again and again I soon figured out that the problem wasn't me. It wasn't that I was rusty or couldn't read the notes. The problem, somehow, was the text itself.

After finishing my reading, I glanced over at the other chapters just to make sure I wasn't crazy. Nope, they were a cinch to sing. It was Chapter 3 that was the problem. It was written differently, profoundly differently, than all the rest.

You can see it yourself if you open up a copy of Eicha. All you really have to do is scan the book, and as you do, pay attention to the right hand margin. There, in most editions of the Bible, you'll see the verse numbers. Watch those numbers and compare the chapters. For all the other chapters, there's a nice healthy space between the verse numbers. But not in chapter 3. There are two or three verses in every line. Verse tumbles upon verse. Chapter 3 is an experience in verbal claustrophobia.

I went back to look at this phenomenon more carefully. None of the verses in the chapter I had just read were longer than seven words. Some were as short as five.

So Chapter 3 was strange, in some way. But that only began to explain its strangeness. There was more. The difficulty I had vocalizing the notes came from one more fact as well: There weren't any natural pauses in any of the sentences.

If you know anything about trop, the system of musical notation that traditionally accompanies the Torah's text – you know that any given verse is likely to contain a variety of notes, but there is one note it almost certainly contains: An etnachta.

The etnachta is probably the most ubiquitous note in all of Biblical text. Go through the entire Five Books of Moses and you'll be hard pressed to find a single verse without one. The etnachta signifies a pause. It is the natural break between two parts of a verse, basically the Biblical equivalent of a semicolon.

So there I am, reading chapter 3, and it dawns on me: There is not a single etnachta to be found in this entire chapter. That's what was making it so hard to sing. The structure of each sentence was convoluted by the forced absence of the etnachta. Trop just wasn't constructed to be sung this way. Each and every verse in Eicha chapter 3 had a convoluted musical feel to it. Once you started a verse, there was absolutely no pause: Just a breathless race to the finish line.

Mourning in Triplicate

Finally, one last thing struck me about chapter 3. Each of the first four chapters of Eicha are arranged in the form of an alphabetical acrostic. But chapter 3 is different, here too. In the third chapter, each letter of the alphabet gets not just one, but three consecutive verses assigned to it. Three verses start with aleph, followed by three that start with beit, and so on, until the end of the alphabet.

So not only are the verses short, and shorn of pauses. There are a lot of them. The verses just keep tumbling out; a torrent of Hebrew that is relentless and unyielding.

And so, I wondered to myself: Why did Jeremiah do things this way? What accounts for chapter 3's unique structure within Eicha? Clearly, this chapter is built differently than the other chapters. But why is it built differently?

This Time, its Personal

Here's the theory I want to propose to you: Chapter 3 is Jeremiah's moment standing by that river in Cambodia. Chapter 3 is where Eicha stops telling a story and starts getting personal.

The first two chapters of Eicha lament the destruction of Jerusalem, but more or less from the outside. Jeremiah speaks as an onlooker, describing tragedy as it befalls someone else. The city of Jerusalem is anthropomorphized as a young maiden, making the tragedy of the city's downfall more poignant than the mere destruction of bricks and stone – but it is still a tragedy that is happening to someone over there. In chapter three, all that changes. The perspective shifts to first-person. Jeremiah begins to describe his own experience.

The shift is brought home, jarringly, with the chapter's very first words:

אָנִי הִגַּדְתִּי בְרָאָה עֲנִי, בָּשׁוּבְטָעַבְרָתוֹ.

I am the man who has seen affliction, with the rod of His wrath.

All of a sudden, it's personal.

Jeremiah speaks, for the first time, from his own perspective. This is no longer a lament for someone else's pain, however empathetically felt; this is the raw voice of someone living the suffering of which he tells. The voice we hear is short and breathless, like someone panting. Gone is the pretense of elegantly crafted lament, or even basic dignity. All that remains is the disjointed, stumbling, first-person account of anguish and horror.

From Judge to Enemy

But Chapter 3 is different in another way as well. It is not just that Jeremiah's involvement in the story, his own point of view, has become more direct and personal; his perception of God's involvement in the story is becoming more direct and personal, too.

Chapter One begins with Jeremiah lamenting the fall of Jerusalem. He observes the solitude of the city, its desolation; how no one is available to comfort it. The focus is on Jerusalem, on how the enemy callously debased her. But God remains safely out of the frame of the camera.

Gradually, towards the middle of the chapter, this changes. Jeremiah's focus moves away from the victim, Jerusalem, and towards the perpetrator. Who did all this? The obvious answer is Babylonia. But Jeremiah looks beyond this. He looks to God:

מִמַּרְוֹם שָׁלַח-אֵשׁ בְּעַצְמוֹתַי

From on high, He sends fire in my bones...

פָּרַשׂ רֶשֶׁת לְרַגְלֵי

He spreads a net for my legs...

For the first time, Jeremiah brings God into the frame. He identifies the Almighty as the source from which all this pain derives. God has allowed this to happen, and therefore — if I am feeling fire in my bones, it is God who has done that; if I am feeling trapped as if in a net, it is God who has done that, too.

So where does that leave Jeremiah in his relationship with God? A few verses later, Jeremiah considers whether God is to be condemned for His role in all this, and he gives this answer:

צַדִּיק הוּא יְקוּק, כִּי פִי הוּא מְרִיתִי

The Lord is righteous, for I have rebelled against Him.

The mere fact that God stands behind the curtain as architect, in some way, of the destruction, does not imply that an injustice has been done. God, Jeremiah tells us, is not to be condemned: Humans rebelled against God, and God is to be seen as just. What has happened is harsh, yes — but not wrong.

Several verses later, though, Jeremiah returns to the theme of God's role in the calamity, and this time, his view of things is more complicated. God is once again

the source of misfortune, but gone is Jeremiah's earlier protestation that the Almighty is nothing but the recalcitrant dispatcher of justice. Here is what Jeremiah tells us towards the beginning of Chapter Two:

קָשָׁתוֹ כְּאוֹיֵב בְּדָרָךְ

He has bent his bow like an enemy...

נִצָּב בְּיָמֵינוּ כְּצָר

He has established His right hand as an adversary.

הִיָּה ה' כְּאוֹיֵב, בָּלַע יִשְׂרָאֵל

The Lord has become like an enemy, swallowing up Israel...

This is new, and darker, territory for Jeremiah. God is no longer portrayed as judge of Israel. Now, he is seen as acting 'like an enemy'. A judge is dispassionate, objective. An enemy is decidedly not. A judge dispatches justice; an enemy, revenge. To be clear, in these verses, Jeremiah does not go so far as to recant his earlier declaration that God is just. But he certainly edges closer to that theological cliff.

Truth to be told, the space between Jeremiah and the edge of that cliff, is no larger than the breadth of a single Hebrew letter, a kaf. If you peruse the above verses carefully, you'll find that God is portrayed as 'like' an enemy – in Hebrew, k'oyev (there's the kaf). There's at least a wee bit of difference between being 'like' an enemy and actually being an enemy. The kaf leaves room for doubt, for a comforting, if uneasy, dose of ambiguity: It sure feels as if God is taking revenge against us, but maybe our feelings aren't a good arbiter of reality. Maybe all this really is Divine justice after all...

But then, just a few short verses later, Jeremiah takes us yet one more step closer to the cliff. In achieving the destruction of Jerusalem, He speaks of God having "done what he plotted to do". But ask yourself: Where else in the Bible have we heard these words before? Jeremiah didn't make that expression up; he took it from somewhere.

Take a look at the Hebrew, it may well jog your memory:

עָשָׂה יְיָ כְּמַדְבַּר יְהוָה

God has done what he plotted to do...

Yes, you guessed it; it is the language of eidim zommemim — ‘treacherous witnesses’ — lifted straight out of Deuteronomy 19:19.

וְעָשׂוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה מִלְּפָנֵי לַאֲחֵיו

You shall do to him, as he plotted to do to his brother...

What are witnesses? Witnesses are meant to be objective, a tool of an impartial and fair justice system. But sometimes, witnesses are corrupt; sometimes, they have a hidden personal stake in the matter they are testifying about; sometimes, they are tools not of justice — but of revenge. If God ‘did what he plotted to do’, whose side is he on? Is he a witness or judge – truly impartial – or does God Himself have some kind of horse in this race?

Lest the reader miss the point, keep reading the very next words in Eicha. Just after speaking of God having “done what he plotted to do”, Jeremiah states Eicha:

וְעָשׂוּ ה' הוֹהֵא שְׂרָזְמָם, בְּצִ'עָא מְרֵתוֹ אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה מִימֵי-יְקַדְּ-מֶהֱרָסוּ, לֹא הָמַל

God has carried out that which he ordained long ago; he has destroyed, and left behind compassion. (Eicha2:17)

The Hebrew word for ‘carried out’ – batza – evokes the darkest of antecedents. The only time that word is ever used in the Five Books of Moses, it is used to characterize perhaps the greatest act of treachery of all: the Sale of Joseph. Judah, speaking to his brothers, convinces them to sell Joseph as a slave rather than kill him – and in so doing, states: mah betza ki na’harog et achinu vechisinu et damo; or, ‘what do we gain by killing our brother and covering his blood?’.

The Sale of Joseph may have seemed like a bitter but necessary act of justice to the brothers who carried it out. But was it really as ‘just’ as it seemed to them, or was their perspective tainted by the fact that Joseph had sinned against them? The Jews had sinned against God, too. Jeremiah seems to be inching closer to lodging a veiled grievance against the God who wrought all this devastation: God, are you apart from this story or are you part of it? If you were the target of Israel’s sin, how can you also be the judge of it?

When It’s Personal For You, It Feels Like It’s Personal for God, Too

All of this brings us to the doorstep of Eicha, Chapter 3. In Chapter 3, all pretense of staying on this side of the cliff dissipates. Again, we hear of God as enemy – but this time, gone is the dissimulating kaf:

דַּבְּ אֲרֵב הוֹאֵלִי, אֲרִיָּה (בְּמַסְתְּרִים)

He is for me a bear lying in wait, a lion in secret places....

קָשָׁתוֹ יִצַּיֵּב נִיכְמָטְרָא לְחַצְדָּרָר

He has bent His bow, and set me as a target for the arrow.

In these verses, God is unambiguously the adversary. There is no judge here; only a foe.

Standing back and looking at the progression of these three chapters, we might ask: What changed? The journey Jeremiah makes here, from Chapter 1 to Chapter 3 – does it represent a change in Jeremiah’s philosophical attitude towards the legitimacy of Divine actions? Have Jeremiah’s ideas about God’s culpability in the destruction of Jerusalem undergone some sort of logical restructuring?

My suspicion is that this is not the case. The logic of the situation is not what changed; Jeremiah’s point of view is what changed.

As we discussed before, Jeremiah began Eicha having assumed a third-person point of view. When you recount the destruction of something else, no matter how empathetic you are, you do so as a reporter. A reporter can pretend to some level of objectivity. And when you are objective, well, it is easier, then, to see God as being objective, too. God’s actions can be ascribed to a hard and painful justice.

But as Jeremiah continues his lament, he is drawn into Jerusalem’s suffering. He can’t just be a reporter. He is part of the people. The third-person viewpoint crumbles. Suddenly, it is all personal and breathless. Elegant prose is brushed aside. The pain is raw and it is visceral and it is happening to us and this is what it feels like. From this perspective, the ultimate subjective perspective — God seems “subjective”, too. It doesn’t feel like He is the dispassionate dispenser of justice anymore. It feels like He hates us. The suffering of which Jeremiah tells, now has the acrid aftertaste of revenge.

It is interesting that Chapter Three — the breathless first-person account of suffering — is anything but sure of itself as to the meaning of this suffering. Yes, it suggests the possibility of God as enemy – but just a few short verses later, it suggests the opposite possibility, too. It expresses the fleeting sense of hope that somewhere in the ashes of Jerusalem, God’s kindness is out there, just waiting to be discovered:

חַסְדֵי יְקוֹק כִּי לֹא-תָמוּ, כִּי לֹא-כָלוּ רַחֲמָיו

Surely, God's kindness is not consumed; surely, His mercy is not exhausted.

From there, Jeremiah goes on to speak of why, after all this, he still trusts in God. The victim of an enemy's ruthless revenge would be unlikely to profess faith or trust in that very enemy's kindness. But when one's perceived adversary is God, things are more complicated. And when Jeremiah changes point of view; when he leaves the relative comfort of the reporter's microphone and stands, vulnerable and alone, at one with his devastated city and its exiled inhabitants – well, contradictions in how you see things are just the order of the day.

Do I contradict myself? Very well, then; I contradict myself... A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds. — Walt Whitman

The Twinned Ending of Eicha: Bitterness and Hope

Two chapters later, the contradictions expressed in Chapter 3 come back to form a kind of twinned end to Eicha. A long time ago, I remember reading *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens. It had a poignant but terribly bitter ending, and I recall finding out later that Dickens, hounded by disenchanting readers, had finally assented to compose an alternative ending. It was sweeter, and professed a sense of hope for the future – a hope that was entirely absent from the first ending. Some publishers chose to print both endings. The reader, in effect, was left to choose: Which ending is more genuine? Or: Do I even care which is more genuine? I remember reading the second, newer ending, and leaping, emotionally to accept it – despite whatever misgivings I had about its provenance. Sometimes, an authors' truest feelings are just too bitter to swallow.

In Eicha, too, we have a twinned ending. One verse expresses a hope and a prayer for the future:

'Bring us back, O Lord, and we will return; renew our days as of old'.

The other verse looks to the past, and pronounces its harsh conclusion:

'Even if You have utterly discarded us, your anger against us was very great.'

The Hebrew, as we might expect, leaves room to wonder. My translation, above, is perhaps too charitable. The words for 'utterly discarded us', in the original, are 'ma'os m'astanu', which could probably just as easily be translated as: 'Even if you are thoroughly disgusted with us'. As for the last part of the verse, 'your anger against us was very great' — the Hebrew there is 'katzafta aleinu ad me'od'.

Does that mean 'your anger was very great' or 'your anger was too much'? What, in the end, was Jeremiah really saying here?

The reader is left to piece it together for himself. Hope on the one hand. But on the other hand, a shattering truth-telling, if not of the way things really are, then at least of the way things seem when you are part of the terrible destruction of which you tell: Even if you were thoroughly disgusted with us, still, look at all this pain; God, what are we to make of this? Don't you think that perhaps you might have overdone it?

Jeremiah started his book as an observer, but ends it as a participant. As participant, he closes it with both hope for a brighter tomorrow and with bitterness at what he's witnessed today. These, after all, are the twin stepchildren of overwhelming suffering: suffering that is not merely dispassionately reported, but experienced first-hand, in all its terror and ambiguity. We, seventy years after the Holocaust, are no strangers to these feelings. Yes, they contradict one another. But perhaps Jeremiah teaches us that we are not meant to reconcile them.