

A SAMPLE OF קִינּוֹת AND THEIR TRANSLATIONS FOR CONSECUTIVE READING ON תשעה באב

INTRODUCTION

The קִינּוֹת that we recite on תשעה באב are unlike any other prayers that we recite during the course of the year. The uniqueness of the קִינּוֹת becomes evident as soon as you read them in English. In what other prayers do we present such graphic descriptions of the cruelty that others have afflicted upon the Jewish People? In what other prayers do we ask G-d why he allows other people to harm the Jewish people? The קִינּוֹת highlight that on תשעה באב we can talk to G-d about subjects that we shy away from on other days of the year. We can even ask the question that originated with the theological debate surrounding the Holocaust: where was G-d at Auschwitz? why did the children and babies have to suffer?

I present you with a sample of six קִינּוֹת that I believe represent a cross-section of the type of קִינּוֹת that are recited on תשעה באב. I included their English translations to encourage a public reading of them, with one person reading a section in Hebrew and a second person reading its English translation. It is my hope that by hearing a sample of the קִינּוֹת in English some of you will be encouraged to read more of the קִינּוֹת with their English translations using either the Artscroll or Rosenfeld translations.

SUMMARIES OF THE SIX קִינּוֹת

שַׁבָּת, סוּרוֹ מִנֵּי שְׁמַעוֹנֵי עוֹכְרֵי

A קִינּוֹת by Rabbi Elazar Ha'Kalir. It is undoubtedly one of the more difficult קִינּוֹת to understand because of its complex wording. The complexity resulted from Ha'Kalir insistence on following a stylistic form in which he opens each line with words taken from מגלת איכה. The קִינּוֹת includes a general description of the despair that the Jewish People felt upon the destruction of the Beit Hamikdash; questions to G-d as to how He could allow people with such low moral values destroy G-d's house and a prayer that G-d take revenge on those who inflicted such pain on the Jewish people.

אִיכָה יִשְׁבָּה חֲבַצְלֵת הַשְּׂרוּן

A קִינּוֹת by Rabbi Elazar Ha'Kalir. The קִינּוֹת consists of 24 paragraphs corresponding to the 24 shifts (משמרות) of כהנים who worked each year in the Beis Hamikdash, each shift

for two weeks. On one hand, the קינה describes the calamities that came upon the כהנים and laments the loss of the practices that once took place in the Beis Hamikdash. On the other hand, Ha'Kalir does not hesitate to criticize the כהנים for their failure as the religious leaders of the Jewish People. If you pay close attention to the names of the משמרות, you will find that they represent derogatory descriptions of the כהנים.

אם תאכלנה נשים פרים

A קינה by Rabbi Elazar Ha'Kalir. This קינה contains the most graphic descriptions of the desperation that faced the Jewish people after the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash. The descriptions of cannibalism that may have occurred raises questions as to how Halacha views cannibalism. The קינה ends with a literary twist; Ha'Kalir includes a response by G-d to the lament of the Jewish People.

אריזי הלבנון אדירי התורה

A קינה by Rabbi Elazar Ha'Kalir. This קינה contains a description of the death of the עשרה הרוגי מלכות (but only eight (8) are included). This קינה and its twin, the פיוט אלה אזכרה that is recited in the מוסף on יום כיפור of חזרת הש"ץ raise several issues. The individuals mentioned in the poems did not live during the same time period. More importantly, the קינה arouses a significant theological issue; has G-d forgiven the Jewish people for מכירת יוסף and the חטא העגל or are we still suffering because of those sins? The poems do not provide any answers to this question. The traditional answer is that we mention the death of צדיקים in the hope that the suffering that the צדיקים endured will bring forgiveness from G-d and that G-d will bring about the ultimate גאולה.

שאלתי שרופה באש לשלום אבליך

A קינה by the Maharam M'Rottenberg. This קינה was composed in reaction the burning of the Talmud and other Jewish books in Paris in the year 1242. The significance of the book burning can easily be lost on someone living in the year 2008, a time when Jewish books are plentiful and easy to obtain. This קינה is a reminder that prior to the mid-1400's the printing press did not exist. The books that were burnt in Paris were handwritten manuscripts. How many copies of each of those manuscripts were available at that time? Undoubtedly many of the manuscripts that were burnt were the only copies that existed of those writings. As a result, those books were lost forever. Consider the fact that as of 1289 CE only one copy of the Jerusalem Talmud was available in the whole world. Yes, I did say only one copy. The Jerusalem Talmud was one book burning away from being lost forever. That thought should give anyone who has ever studied any part of the Jerusalem Talmud cause to shudder.

The beautiful literary style of this קינה should not be overlooked. The Maharam borrows

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heavily from Rabbi Yehudah Ha'Levi's famous קינה. ציון, הלא תשאלי. Just as Ha'Levi speaks directly to ציון so too the Maharam speaks directly to the ספר תורה. Compare the two opening lines: Ha'Levi:

ציון, הלא תשאלי לשלום אֶסְיִרְךָ. דוֹרְשֵׁי שְׁלוֹמְךָ, וְהֵם יִתְּרֵךְ עֲדָרְךָ:

The Maharam:

שְׁאֵלִי שְׂרוּפָה בְּאֵשׁ לְשָׁלוֹם אֲבַלְךָ.

Special attention should also be given to the following question found in this קינה:

וְאֶשְׁאֵל הַיֵּשׁ תּוֹרָה חֲדָשָׁה, בְּכֹן נִשְׂרְפוּ גְלִילְךָ:

Is G-d planning to give a new Torah; is that why they were permitted to burn your columns?

ציון, הלא תשאלי לשלום אֶסְיִרְךָ:

A קינה by Rabbi Yehudah Ha'Levi. This קינה is among the more poetic of the קינות. The love that Rabbi Yehudah Ha'Levi felt for the land of Israel flows freely from the words of this קינה. Here is one example:

מִי-יִתְּנֵנִי מְשׁוּטָט, בְּמִקְוֹמוֹת אֲשֶׁר נִגְלוּ אֶ-לֵהִים לְחֻזְיָךְ וְצִיִּרְךָ: מִי יַעֲשֶׂה-לִּי כְּנָפַיִם וְאַרְחִיק נְדוּד, אֲנִיד לְבַתְּרִי לְבָבִי בֵּין בְּתָרְךָ:

If only I could be a wanderer in the places where God revealed himself to your prophets and your seers! If only I could have wings so that I could fly freely. My broken heart could then wander around and about your borders.

SIX קינות AND THEIR ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

שְׁבַת, סוּרוּ מִנִּי

שְׁבַת, סוּרוּ מִנִּי שְׂמֵעוּנִי עוֹכְרִי. סָחִי וּמְאוּס הַשְּׂמוּנִי בְּעֲדָרֵי חֲבָרִי. סָפוּתָה מִשְׁכָּן מַסְכּוֹת דְּבוּרִי. סָפוּתָה וְהִבְלָגוּ גְבוּרִי. סָפְקוּ כֹף וּמְעַדוּ אֲבָרִי. כָּסֵלָה כָּל-אֲבָרִי:

The joy of my heart ceased when my enemies caused me to hear: "Depart from me, the Land of Israel!" They degraded me and made me feel like refuse among the peoples of the world. You placed a barrier above Your Dwelling-place so as not to hear my prayers. You have separated Yourself. My heroes were humbled; my enemies clapped their hands and caused my limbs to tremble. They destroyed my mighty men.

נָפְלָה עוֹדֵינוּ בְּצוֹל דְּכוּיָה. עֵינַי חִפְתָּה לְחִזּוֹן בֶּן בְּרָכְיָה. עַד פְּלֵאֵי גִלְגַּל חֲבוּיָה. עֵינַי מְעוֹלְלָת בְּיוֹנִית נְכוּיָה. עָשָׂה וְנָחַם וַיִּקְרָא לְבַכְיָה. וְנָם, עַל אֶלֶה אֲנִי בּוֹכְיָה:

Yerushalayim has fallen and remains defeated. My eyes yet await the fulfillment of the prophecy of Zecharia. The prophecy is concealed until the time of the Moschich when miracles like that of Gilgal will take place again; my eyes look ugly from the tears that I have shed and I look as if I

have fallen into a pile of Greek mud. G-d brought on the destruction and other afflictions and yet G-d repented and started weeping, saying: "For the destruction and other afflictions do I weep!"

עַל פְּנֵי פְּרַת נְפֻצוּ חֲסִידֶיךָ. פִּלְגֵי סוּף זָכְרָה כְּעָרוֹ יְסוּדֶיךָ. פָּחַד חֲטָא שִׁילָה, תִּכְפֹּף סוּדֶיךָ. פָּצוּ
חֲזִירֵי יָעַר, אֵינָה חֲסִידֶיךָ. פָּצוּ מַעֲשֵׂה עֲרוֹה לְנֶדְיָה. פִּרְשָׂה צִיּוֹן בְּנֶדְיָה:

Along the banks of the Euphrates we were scattered; we remembered the splitting of the Sea as our enemies destroyed the Beit Hamikdash; we should have learned from the experience of the destruction of Shiloh; Our enemies called out: where are your righteous people; Zion wrung her hands in sorrow when our enemies exposed the Cherubim to those who were impure.

עַל הַר צִיּוֹן צָדוּ שְׂאוּנֵי מְדַנֵּי. צָפוּ עַל רֹאשֵׁי יְדוּנָי. צָמְתוּ בְּנֵב לְעַמּוּד יְדוּנָי. צוּד נְצַרְתָּ לְעוֹרֵר
מְדַנֵּי. צָעַק עַמִּי בְּיָמַי בֶּן-דִּינָי. צָדִיק הוּא י-י:

Upon Mount Zion the multitudes of my enemies laid in wait, my insolent foes engulfed me and my contemptors battled me at Nob; You allowed our enemies to surround Yerushalayim and to cause bitter debate to break out among us. My people cried out in the time of Ben-Dinai: G-d is right for causing me such grief over my sins.

אֶתָּה קָלִים הַכְּבֹדֶתָ, וַיַּמְעִדֵי עֲרֻמוֹנֵי. קָרַבְתָּ בּוֹא אֵלַי. וַיַּחְרִימוּנֵי. קוֹלֵי לְהַשְׁמִיעַ בְּעָרֵב הַגְּרִימוֹנֵי.
קָרַאתִי לַיּוֹשְׁבֵי גְבֻעוֹן, גַּם הֵם זָרְמוּנֵי. קוֹמֵי עֲבָרֵי, בְּהִתֵּל הַעֲרִימוֹנֵי, קָרַאתִי לְמֵאֲהַבֵי, הַמָּה
רְמוּנֵי:

You raised on high the lowly people, the Babylonians, while taking away all that made me beautiful You hastened the coming of our enemies and they utterly destroyed me; I called out to the people of Givon but even they swept me aside. I was forced to call out to the people of Arabia for help. They laughed at me and slyly told me that I could pass and they fed me food that killed me; I called out to my friends and they only wanted to take advantage of me.

לָמָּה רוּחַ אֶפְיֵנוּ לְטַבַּח שְׁמָרוּ. רְאִיתָהּ, כִּי כְתַנּוֹר עוֹרְנוּ כְּמָרוּ. רְאִיתָהּ, כִּי עָמַל וְכַעַס בְּאוּוּיָךְ
גְּמָרוּ. רַבְתָּ בְּיַד יַחְזָקָאֵל לְנִקּוּם, כְּמוֹ מָרוּ. רְאֵה, וְנִכְחִידֵם מְגוּי, אָמָרוּ. רְאֵה יֵי כִי-צַר-לִי, מֵעֵי
חַמְרָמָרוּ:

What was the basis of the plan that allowed King Josiah, who was a Tzaddik and represented our soul, the breath of our nostrils, to be killed? You looked on as the lack of food caused us to wither as if we had been baking in an oven for too long. You watched as our enemies did as they pleased in the Beit Hamikdash. Did you not tell us through Your prophet Yichezkeil that You would take revenge on and destroy our enemies? Instead this is what they say: Let us destroy Israel. Look at me G-d; because of my difficulties my insides have become ill.

הַשִּׁיבֵנוּ, שִׁישֵׁי שְׁמַע, לְגוֹי צָאֲנֵי. שְׁבַתְּם, רְמוֹס חֲצָרֵי, לְהַדְּכָאֲנֵי. שְׁפִתַי מְשׁוֹרְרֵי דְבִיר דְּמָמוּ,
לְהַדְּבִיאֲנֵי. שְׁמַעְתָּ, כִּי זְמוּרוֹת אָף, הִכִּין לְטֹאטְאֲנֵי. שְׁכָבוּ וְנָדוּ חֲצָץ לְהַבְרָאֲנֵי. שְׁמַעוּ כִּי נֶאֱנַחָה
אֲנֵי:

Please G-d, bring us back, and fulfill the prophesy that You will avenge our enemies. Did our enemies not settle in around the area of the Beit Hamikdash so that they could taunt and humiliate

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me. Have they not quieted the mouths of those who sang your praises in the Beit Hamikdash in order to degrade me. Have You not heard that my enemy has prepared branches with which to strike me. My enemy rests peacefully and they feed me mud to eat. They have heard that I have reached that low a level of despair.

כִּי תָם חִקְתָּ בְּכֶסֶס אוֹפְנִיךָ. תָּשִׁיב לָהֶם גְּמוּלָה, כְּאִזְ חַזוֹת פְּנִיךָ. תִּרְדְּדוּן לְצַלְמוֹן, יוֹעֲצֵי רַע עַל צְפוּנֶיךָ. תִּתֵּן לְהַבְהִיב נוֹתְצֵי פְּנִינֶיךָ. תִּקְרָא לְשֹׁפְרֵם כּוֹס, כְּמוֹס בְּפְנִיךָ. תָּבֵא כָּל-רָעָתְךָ לְפָנֶיךָ:

You engraved the image of Yaakov Aveinu on the seat on which You sit. In honor of Yaakov, take revenge on our enemies so that we can once again feel Your Presence. Drive into obscurity those that devise ill against Your treasured ones, deliver to Gehenom those who tore down the Beit Hamikdash. Summon the cup of punishment that is hidden in Your corner to intoxicate them, and let all their wickedness come before You.

תָּבֵא אֶל-צָר אֲשֶׁר כָּלְנוּ. לְמַבּוֹא חֲמַת בְּחַמָּה נִהְלָנוּ. עַד לַחֲלַח וְחָבוּר הִגְלָנוּ. זָקֵן וּבַחֹר וּבְתוֹלָה כְּבָלְנוּ. רָם, הִבֵּט-נָא, עִמָּךְ כָּלְנוּ. זְכֹר-יְיָ, מָה-הָיָה לָנוּ:

Come and take revenge on our enemies who destroyed us. Let punishment come to the adversary who has annihilated us, who in a fury led us captive to the entrance of Chamat. Old men, youth and virgin, he fettered us all, and drove us away as far as Chalah and Chabor; O Exalted One, look down, we beseech You, we are all Your people! Recall Lord, what has befallen us!

איכה ישבה חבצלת השרון

איכה ישבה חבצלת השרון. וְדָמָם רַן מִפִּי נוֹשְׂאֵי אָרוֹן. וְנָעוּ מִמִּשְׁמְרוֹתֵם כְּהַנִּים בְּנֵי אֶהָרָן. כְּנִמְסַר הַבַּיִת בְּמִסְרֵי מָרוֹן: (יהויריב)

How lonely sits Israel which is compared to the rose of Sharon! No longer is heard the Songs that were uttered by the lips of the Leviim, carriers of the Aron. And the Kohanim no longer serve their allotted times in the Beit Hamikdash since the Temple was delivered into the hands of the heretics. Let us remember the Mishmar of Yihoyariv.

בָּכוּ תַבְּכָה מִחֲמַשֶּׁת סִפְרִים. כְּנִהְרַג כְּהֵן וְנָבִיא בַיּוֹם הַכְּפָרִים. וְעַל דָּמוֹ נִשְׁחַטוּ פְּרָחִים כְּצִפְרִים. וְנָדוּ כְּצִפְרִים כְּהַנֵּי צְפוּרִים: (ידעיה)

The Torah, divided into five sections, cried bitterly when a priest and prophet, Zechariya, was slain on the Day of Atonement. Because his blood was shed many young Kohanim were slaughtered like young goats, and the priests of Tzippori were shooed away like birds. Let us remember the Mishmar of Yidaya which was based in the City of Tzippori.

גָּלְתָה מֵאֶרְצָה כְּלָה מְקֻשָּׁטָה. בְּעוֹן מַעֲשָׂוֹת וְשִׁמְטָה. וּבְאֶרְבַּעַת שְׁפָטִים הִשְׁפָּטָה. וּמַעֲדָיָה הִפְשָׁטָה מִשְׁמֶרֶת מִפְּשָׁטָה: (חרם)

The decorated bride, Klall Yisroel was exiled on account of the failure to properly observe tithes and the Shmitta year. She was sentenced to the four types of death. Her adornments, the Clothing of the Kohanim, was stripped away from her. Let us remember the Mishmar of Charim.

דְּרָכֵי הַיָּכָל דָּמְמוּ, כְּנִפְרָץ כְּתֵלוּ. וְהַמְעִיל כְּנִקְרַע פְּתִילוּ. וְהַתֵּדָה וְהַשְּׁפָל מִתְּלוּ. וְנַע מִשְׁתִּילוּ, כִּהְיוּ
עֵינֵיהֶם לֹא: (שְׁעָרִים)

The roads of the Temple became desolate when the walls of Yerushalayim were breached. The Kohain's coat, the Miel, whose bells were heard as he walked about, has been ripped and torn and rings out no more. The Beit Hamikdash has lost its honorable place and the Kohanim from Mishmar Aiysha have lost their place. Let us remember the Mishmar of Si'Orim.

הָיוּ מַלְעִיבִים בְּלוֹחֲמֵי לֶחֶם. כְּבִטְלוּ, הֲלוֹא פָּרַס לְרָעֵב לֶחֶם. וְרָעֵבוּ וְצָמְאוּ מִמַּיִם וּמִלֶּחֶם.
כְּבִטְלוּ שְׂתֵי הַלֶּחֶם מִבֵּית לֶחֶם: (מִלְכִּיָּהוּ)

Our enemies mocked the sages who fought for the sake of the Torah. The people disregarded the plea of the poor and failed to share bread with the hungry. Those same people became hungry and thirsty from lack of bread and water when the Mitzvah of two loaves was no longer performed because of the destruction of the Temple.' Let us remember the Mishmar of Malchiya.

וַיֵּצֵא הַדָּר אִם, בַּכֶּסֶף נִחְפָּת. וַתִּמְוֹרוּ אֶפְרַיִם רֵאשֵׁה חֲפָת. וְנִירוֹת נִכְבּוּ וּמִנּוֹרָה נִכְפָּת. בְּפִשְׁעוֹ
בְּלֶחֶם וּפִת, נִלְכְּדָה יוֹדֵפָת: (מִמִּינִין)

Gone is the splendour of the people that came from having the Beit Hamikdash. Instead ashes cover their heads. The lights of the Menorah in the Beit Hamikdash have been extinguished, and the candelabrum has become warped because the people did not share bread with the poor and so Yodpat, home of the Mishmar of Maymon, was captured. Let us remember the Mishmar of Maymon.

זָכְרָה זָמֵן, אֲשֶׁר נַעֲשָׂה וְנִשְׁמַע הַשִּׁיבוּ. וְעֵתָה עֲנוֹת אָמֵן, לֹא אָבוּ. לַעֲנָה וְרוּשׁ שִׁבְעוּ וְרוּוּ. וְהַקְצוּ
וְהִלְעָבוּ, כִּהְיִי עֵילְבוּ: (הַקּוֹץ)

Recall the time when Israel responded "We will do and we will obey!" And now, when the prophets rebuke them they do not even want to respond with "Amen!" They now must eat bitter grasses and suffer greatly. Now the Kohanim from the City of Aiyboo, the Mishmar of Ha'Kotz are loathed and mocked. Let us remember the Mishmar of Ha'Kotz.

חֲטָא חֲטָאָה, וְאָמְרָה לְאֵלִיל זֶה אֵל. וְהִלְעָה וְתַעֲתָעָה בְּחוּזֵי אֵ-ל. עֲבוּר כֵּן הִרְגָזָה בְּמִרְגִּיזֵי
אֵ-ל. וַיֵּצֵא מִמְעוֹן אֵ-ל, כְּפָר עֲזִיאֵל: (אֲבִיָּה)

Grievously did Israel sin when she said to the idol: "This is God!" She derided and scoffed G-d's rightful seers. Because of that sin Israel was made to quake by those who despise our G-d and the priests from the village of Uziel were taken from God's own Home. Let us remember the Mishmar of Aviyah.

טְמֵאתָה הַחֲנִיפָה תִבֵּל. וְנַעֲלָה רַב הַחִיבֵל. וְעָנָן אֲבָק רִגְלֵיו כְּאָבֵל. וְאִין מִתְפַּרְבֵּל, בְּכִהְנִי אֲרֵבֵל:

להבין את התפלה

(ישוע)

Her defilement has polluted the whole land. As a result, G-d, the Divine Helmsman, left the Beit Hamikdash. Our feet are now dirty from walking and they look like the feet of a mourner. There is none at Arbela to robe in the priestly garments. Let us remember the Mishmar of Yashua.

ידו פָּרַשׁ צָר בְּבֵית זְבוּל. כִּי כָלָה חֲנִיבְתֵי פְדוּר הַמְּבוּל. כִּסְאוֹ הַשֵּׁית לְחַבּוּל וְנָבוּל. וְיָצָא בְּכַבֵּל
כָּבוּל, כִּהֵן כָּבוּל: (שְׁכֵנְיָהוּ)

The oppressor has laid his hand on the Temple because the time for our punishment arrived as it did for the sinful generation of the flood. G-d has allowed His home, the Beit Hamikdash to be subject to disfigurement and destruction and the priests of Cabul departed chained in fetters. Let us remember the Mishmar of Scheniya.

כָּל עַמָּה קוֹזְנְנוּ קִינָה. כִּי הִכְעִיסוּ אֶת אֱ-ל קָנָא, בְּגוֹי נָבֵל אוֹתָם קָנָא. וְנִדְדָה מִקְנָה, מִשְׁמֶרֶת
אֶלְקָנָה: (אֶלְיָשִׁיב)

All the people broke out in lamentation because they provoked G-d's anger. The humbled nation angered G-d. G-d inflicted His anger upon the ignoble nation and the Mishmar of Elkana was exiled from its home. Let us remember the Mishmar of Elyashiv.

לֹא לְמָרוֹם עֵינָי צָפֹת. וְכִסְף עַל חַרְשׁ חֶפֶת. וּבְחַזִּיק מוֹסֵר הַרְפָּת. וְנִהְרַס וְנִלְפַת כִּהֵן צָפֹת: (יִקִּים
אוּ פִּשְׁחֹר)

Their eyes were not directed towards heaven. They appeared to be righteous on the outside when in fact they were evil in the inside. They became lax in the upholding of the Torah. As a result, the priests of Tzfat were slaughtered and disgraced. Let us remember the Mishmar of Pashchor.

מִמָּרוֹם הַשָּׁמַיִם נִלְאִיתִי טְעוֹן. וְהִכְנִי בְּעֵרְוֹן וּבְשִׁגְעוֹן. וּפָקַד עָלַי עוֹן נָב וְגִבוֹן. וְנָעָה מִמְּעוֹן,
מִשְׁמֶרֶת בֵּית מְעוֹן: (חֲפָה)

G-d announced from on high: "I am weary of carrying your sins." G-d then proceeded to strike me with blindness and madness. In doing so He avenged the sins of Nob and Givon and the priestly Mishmar of Chupas from Bet-Ma-own was forced to move a distance away from the Beit Hamikdash. Let us remember the Mishmar of Chupa.

נִשְׁקַד עַל עוֹן וְנִכְאָב. כִּהֵוֵשְׁבְתֵי אֲגוֹנָה מִבְּלֵי אָב. וְדוֹמְמֵתִי מִלְצַפְצַף בְּמַנִּים וְעֵגֵב. וְנִשְׁאַה עָלַי
קִינָה מִשְׁמֶרֶת יֵשֵׁבָאב: (שִׁיחִין)

The burden of my sins was recorded and sealed in the hands of G-d. He caused me to dwell in mourning like an orphan who has no father. I was stopped from singing and playing music in the Beit Hamikdash. Instead, the Mishmar of Yeshv'Av was forced to compose lamentations for me. Let us remember the Mishmar of Sichin.

סָלָה כָּל-אֲבִירִי, מוֹרֵי הוֹרָה. וְלֹא נִזְכַּר לִי עֲקֵדַת מוֹרָה. מֵרַב מָרַד וּמְרִיָה. הַצָּגָה עָרוֹם וְעָרְיָה,
מִשְׁמֶרֶת מַעֲדָה (בִּלְגָה)

G-d has knocked down all my mighty teachers of the Law. Because of the depth of my rebellion and my revolt G-d no longer remembers the Akeidah of Yitzchak that took place on Mount Moriah. The Mishmar of Maadiyah is laid bare in utter shame. Let us remember the Mishmar of Bilgah.

עַל גְּבִי חָרְשׁוּ חֲרָשִׁים, וְהֶאָרִיכוּ מַעֲנִית. וְהִרְקִיפוּ עָלַי חָרֵב וְחַנִּית. וְהִרְבִּיתִי צוּמוֹת וְתַעֲנִית.
וּמִצּוֹרֵת תִּכְנִית יִצְאָה יְנִית: (אִמֵּר)

Upon my back have the ploughmen driven long their furrow and placed burdens upon me. They have unsheathed against me both sword and spear. I increased my fasting and self-affliction and yet the watch of Immer was still exiled from the Beit Hamikdash by the Greeks. Let us remember the Mishmar of Immer.

פָּרְשָׁה וְאִין יָד שׁוֹלַח. כִּי לֹא הֶאֱמִינָה בְּהַשְׁכֵּם וְשָׁלוֹחַ. וְהִשְׁבַּתָּה בְּרִית מְלַח. וְאִין שָׁמֹן מִמֶּלֶךְ
בְּרֹאשׁ מִמֶּלֶךְ: (חַזִּיר)

Israel stretched out her hands in prayer, but G-d did not extend a hand back to accept the prayers, for Israel did not listen to the prophets that G-d sent day after day. Israel broke the covenant of salt, and so the sacrifices ceased. No longer is there the special oil that was used for anointing the High Priest's head. Let us remember the Mishmar of Chaizir.

צְדִיק הוּא י-י כִּי פִּיהוּ מָרַת. וְעָרוּ עָרוּ, עַד הִיסוּד בָּהֶּ הָעֵרַת. תִּמּוֹר עָזִי וְזִמְרַת, קִינִים עָלַיָּה
נִחֵרַת. וּבִקְצוֹי אֶרֶץ, נִזְרַת מִשְׁמֶרֶת נִצְרַת: (הַפִּצָּץ)

It is the Lord who is righteous, for Israel has rebelled against His word. The Beit Hamikdash was damaged so badly that the deepest part of its foundation was revealed. Instead of Israel singing songs of victory, lamentations are being recited for her. To all corners of the earth, the Kohanim of Nitzas were dispersed. Let us remember the Mishmar of Ha'Pitzatz.

קָרָאתִי לְצוּרִי, וְקוֹלִי לֹא עָרַב. וְקוֹנֵנְתִי בִיעַר בְּעָרַב. וְכָבֵה נֵר הַדּוֹלֵק בְּמַעְרָב. וְרִיחַ לֹא עָרַב,
מֵאֲכֵלָה עָרַב: (פְּתִיחָה)

I called to my Creator, but He did not listen to my voice. I sang sad songs in the evening in the forest of Arabia. The light that formerly shone in the western part of the Beit Hamikdash has been extinguished, and the odor of the Kitoret that was produced by the Kohanim from Achalah Arav is no longer smelled. Let us remember the Mishmar of Pitachiya.

רָאָה כִּי הִסְעַרְתִּי כְּאֵנִיָּה. בְּתֵאֵנִיָּה וְאֵנִיָּה. וְעַדְתִּי כְּצֹאן לְטִבַּח מְנוּיָה. וְנָעָה מִחֲנוּיָה מְגֹדֵל נוּנִיָּה:
(יְחִזְקֵאל)

See, I am being tossed around like a ship in a storm amid moaning and groaning. The people of Israel are being lined up like sheep being prepared for slaughter. The Kohanim of Migdal Nuniya are being exiled from Chanuya. Let us remember the Mishmar of Yichezkel.

שָׁמְעוּ כִּי נִזְהַמְתִּי בְּצַחְנָה. וְסִתְּם מִנִּי תַחְנָה. וְלֹא נָתַן לִי רַחֲמִים וְחַנּוּנָה. וּמִקְרִית חֲנָה, נָעָה כְּפָר

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יוֹחַנָּה: (יִכּוֹן)

They heard that I have become defiled because of my sins and that G-d no longer accepts my supplications and grants me no mercy nor favour. From the village of Kiryat Chana were sent wandering the people of the City of Yo'Chanah. Let us remember the Mishmar of Yachin.

שָׁמְעוּ כִּי יִצְאָתִי בְּשִׁבְיָהּ. וְנִשְׂרָפָה דָּת מְרוֹם שְׁבִיָּהּ. וְהוֹשַׁתִּי לְשִׁמָּה וְעָרְבוּבָיָהּ. וּמִהַסְתֵּר חֲבוּיָהּ,
גְּלַתָּה בֵּית חוּבְיָהּ: (גַּמּוּל)

The Nations have heard that I have been taken into exile and into bondage and that the Torah was burned like a captive. I was placed in desolation that has me to go insane. From the Beit Hamikdash was taken the Mishmar of Kohanim from Beit Chavuya. Let us remember the Mishmar of Gamool.

תָּבֹא רַעַת שְׁמוֹנֵי הַדְּמִיוֹ. וְנִשְׁתּוֹ שְׁעָרֵי שׁוּמְמִין. וְהִשִּׁיב אַחֹר יָמָיו. וּבַעֲזוֹן צְלָמִין, נָעָה (גִּנְתוֹן)
צְלָמִין: (דִּלְיָהוּ)

May You judge those who tore me from limb to limb and laid waste to my city gates. Indeed, G-d withdrew his helping hand. Because of the sin of idolatry, the Kohanim of Ginton Tsalmon were exiled. Let us remember the Mishmar of Dilayahu.

תָּבֹא תַמְרֵיחַ. וְחִשְׁכֵי תַזְרִיחַ. וּכְדֹשָׁא עֲצֻמוֹתֵינוּ תַפְרִיחַ. וְרִיחַ מִנְחוֹתֵינוּ כְּקֹדֶם תַּרְיִחַ. וּמִשְׁלַחְנָךְ
תַּאֲרִיחַ, שׁוּלֵי חֲמַת אֲרִיחַ: (מַעֲזִיָּהוּ)

Please G-d, come salve our wounds with ointment and remove the darkness of exile. Make our bones strong again like freshly grown grass. Cause the sweet odors of our sacrifices of old to be available to You to smell. Allow the Kohanim of Chamas Ari'Ach to once again eat from Your altar. Let us remember the Mishmar of Ma'Azিয়া.

אִם תֹּאכְלֶנָּה נְשִׁים פְּרִיָם

אִם תֹּאכְלֶנָּה נְשִׁים פְּרִיָם, עַלְלֵי טַפְחִים. אֱלֵלֵי לִי:

When I think that women could devour their own offspring, the children of their tender care- Oy V'Avoi Li.

אִם תִּבְשְׁלֶנָּה נְשִׁים רַחֲמָנִיּוֹת יִלְדֵיהֶן, הַמְדוּדִים טַפְחִים טַפְחִים. אֱלֵלֵי לִי:

When I think that compassionate women could boil their own children; the same children who used to be measured each day so that a donation could be made to the Beit Hamikdah based on their size, Oy V'Avoi Li.

אִם תִּגְזְזֶנָּה פְּאֵת רֵאשִׁים, וְתִקְשְׁרֶנָּה לְסוּסִים פּוֹרְחִים. אֱלֵלֵי לִי:

When I think that the tresses of their heads could be cut off and tied as an adornment upon the enemy's fleet horses, Oy V'Avoi Li.

אם תִּדְבֶק לְשׁוֹן יוֹנֵק לְחֹךְ, בְּצִמְאוֹן צְחִיחִים. אֱלֹלֵי לִי:

When I think that the tongue of a suckling could cleave to his palate because of parching due to thirst, Oy V'Avoi Li.

אם תִּהְמָנָה זוֹ לְעַמַּת זוֹ, בּוֹאֵי וּנְבַשׁל אֶת בְּנֵינוּ צוֹרְחִים. אֱלֹלֵי לִי:

When I think that one woman could moan to another: "Come let us boil our shrieking children," Oy V'Avoi Li.

אם תִּנְעָדְנָה זוֹ לְאוֹ, תִּנְי בְּנֵי, וְהוּא חָבוּי מְנַתַּח נְתָחִים. אֱלֹלֵי לִי:

When I think that one woman would ask another: "Give me your son for food," when he was hidden away already cut into pieces, Oy V'Avoi Li.

אם תִּזְמִין בְּשָׂר אָבוֹת לְבָנִים, בְּמַעְרוֹת וְשִׁיחִים. אֱלֹלֵי לִי:

When I think that the flesh of fathers was prepared as food for their children in caves and ditches, Oy V'Avoi Li.

אם תִּחְיַבְנָה הַבָּנוֹת, אֶל חֵיק אִמּוֹתָם נִתְפָּחִים. אֱלֹלֵי לִי:

When I think that daughters were clasped swollen from starvation in their mother's lap, Oy V'Avoi Li.

אם תִּטְסֶנָּה רוּחוֹת עוֹלָלִים בְּרַחְבוֹת קִרְיָה תִּפּוּחִים. אֱלֹלֵי לִי:

When I think that the spirit of dead infants hovered over their swollen corpses that lay about the streets of Yerushalayim, Oy V'Avoi Li.

אם תִּיקָרְנָה בְּשִׂכּוּל רַחַם וְצִמוּק שְׂדֵיִם, וְאִם עַל בָּנִים שָׁחִים. אֱלֹלֵי לִי:

When I think that women were burdened with miscarrying wombs and dried-up breasts, and each mother was weeping over her children who were slowly sinking into death, Oy V'Avoi Li.

אם תִּכְשַׁלְנָה שְׂמוֹנֶה מֵאוֹת מְגִנִּים, בְּעָרַב אֱלוּחִים. אֱלֹלֵי לִי:

When I think that eight-hundred Kohanim were killed in the heat of Arabia, Oy V'Avoi Li.

אם תִּלְהַטְנָה רוּחָם, בְּמֵינֵי מְלוּחִים וְנוֹדוֹת נְפוּחִים אֱלֹלֵי לִי:

When I think that their breath became aflame through eating salty food and being given to drink

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from empty distended skin bottles given to them by the Arabs, Oy V'Avoi Li.

אם תמַעֲטֶנָה מֵאַלְף מֵאָה, וּמֵמֵאָה עֶשְׂרֵה, עַד אֶחָד לַמִּפְחִים. אֲלֵלֵי לִי:

When I think that in exhaustion, a thousand diminished to a hundred, a hundred to ten, and ten to one, Oy V'Avoi Li.

אם תִּנְסֶנָה לְמִסַּדְּ הַיְכָל, שְׂמוֹנִים אֲלָף כֹּהֲנִים פָּרְחִים. אֲלֵלֵי לִי:

When I think that eighty thousand young priests fled to the Temple's protective veil for shelter, Oy V'Avoi Li.

אם תִּשְׂרַפְנָה שָׁם כָּל-אוֹתָם הַנִּפְשׁוֹת, פְּקוּצִים כְּסוּחִים. אֲלֵלֵי לִי:

When I think that all those souls who fled for protection to the Beis Hamikdash were burnt like dry thorn bushes, Oy V'Avoi Li.

אם תִּעֲרַפְנָה עַל דָּם נָקִי, שְׂמוֹנִים אֲלָף כֹּהֲנִים מְשׁוּחִים. אֲלֵלֵי לִי:

When I think that the necks of eighty thousand anointed young priests were broken, in order to drown out the sound that was caused by the shedding of Zachariah's innocent blood, Oy V'Avoi Li.

אם תִּפְחָנָה נְפֹשׁוֹת מְדַקְרִים, מְרִיחַ תְּנוּבוֹת שִׁיחִים. אֲלֵלֵי לִי:

When I think of those who died when their stomachs ruptured smelling the fruits of the fields that were not available to them to eat, Oy V'Avoi Li.

אם תִּצְבְּרָנָה עַל אֶבֶן אַחַת, תִּשְׁעָה קַבִּין מוֹחֵי יְלָדִים מִנְחִים. אֲלֵלֵי לִי:

When I think that they would split open the heads of nine dead children on one stone, Oy V'Avoi Li.

אם תִּקְעֶנָה שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת יוֹנְקִים, עַל שׂוֹכָה אַחַת מִתּוֹחִים. אֲלֵלֵי לִי:

When I think that three hundred sucklings were impaled stretched out on a single branch, Oy V'Avoi Li.

אם תִּרְאֶינָה רַפּוֹת וְעֵגְלוֹת, כְּבוֹלוֹת עַל יַד רַב הַטְּבָחִים. אֲלֵלֵי לִי:

When I think that tender and delicate women were seen walking in fetters at the hand of the chief executioner, Oy V'Avoi Li.

אם תִּשְׁכַּבְנָה בֵּין שְׂפֵתַיִם, בָּנוֹת מְלָכִים מְשֻׁבָּחִים. אֲלֵלֵי לִי:

When I think that the daughters of noblemen were lying out in the garbage in the streets, Oy V'Avoi Li.

אם תִּתְעַלְפְנָה הַבְּתוּלוֹת וְהַבְּחוּרִים, בְּצִמְאוֹן צָחִיחִים. אֲלֵלֵי לִי:

When I think that young men and maidens fainted because of parching thirst, Oy V'Avoi Li.

וְרוּחַ הַקֹּדֶשׁ לְמוֹלָם מְרַעִים. הוּי עַל כָּל שְׂכַנְי הָרָעִים. מֵה שֶׁהִקְרָאָם מוֹדִיעִים. וְאֵת אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ
 לֹא מוֹדִיעִים. אִם תֹּאכְלֶנָּה נָשִׁים פְּרִים, מְשֻׁמֵּיעִים. אִם יִהְרַג בְּמִקְדָּשׁ אֲדֹנָי, כֹּהֵן וְנָבִיא, לֹא
 מְשֻׁמֵּיעִים:

The Holy One stands beside them and calls out in a thunderous voice out of anger against Israel and He exclaims: "Woe to all bad neighbours." Israel acknowledges the terrible events that befell them but they are not willing to acknowledge what caused those terrible events to befall them. That women were forced into eating their own offspring, they proclaim as scandalous, but when they themselves killed a priest and a prophet in the Sanctuary of the Lord, that they did not proclaim.

אַרְזֵי הַלְּבָנוֹן אֲדִירֵי הַתּוֹרָה.

אַרְזֵי הַלְּבָנוֹן אֲדִירֵי הַתּוֹרָה. בְּעַלֵי תַרְיָסִין בְּמִשְׁנָה וּבְגִמְרָא. גְּבוּרֵי כַח עֲמַלְיָה בְּטַהֲרָה: דָּמָם
 נִשְׁפָּדוּ וְנִשְׁתָּה גְבוּרָה.

The righteous ones who stood over the Jewish People like the cedar trees of Lebanon, mighty teachers of Torah, great champions in Mishnah and in Talmud, mighty in strength who toiled at their study in purity. Their blood has been shed and the glory of Torah that they produced has been erased.

הֵנָּם קְדוּשֵׁי הַרוּגֵי מַלְכוּת עֲשָׂרָה. וְעַל אֵלֶּה אֲנִי בּוֹכֶיָה וְעֵינַי נִגְרָה: זֹאת בְּזָכְרֵי אֲזַעַק בְּמַרְה.
 חֲמַדַּת יִשְׂרָאֵל כְּלֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ נָזַר וְעֻטָּרָה.

Behold the Ten Martyrs who were massacred by the dominion of Rome; For these do I weep, and my eye gushes forth in tears. When I remember this event, I cry out bitterly for these people who represented the flower of Israel, the holy vessels, the crown, and diadem.

טְהוּרֵי לֵב קְדוּשִׁים מָתוּ בְּמִיתָה חֲמוּרָה: יָדוּ גוֹרֵל מִי רֵאשׁוֹן לַחֲרָב בְּרוּרָה. כְּנִפּוֹל גּוֹרֵל עַל רֶבֶן
 שְׁמַעוֹן, פָּשֵׁט צְוָארוֹ וּבָכָה כְּנִגְזָרָה גְזָרָה.

Pure in heart and holy, they died a dreadful death. They drew lots to determine who would be chosen first for the sword. When the lot fell on Rabbi Sirneon Ben Gamaliel II, he bared his neck and wept when the decree was issued.

לְרֶבֶן שְׁמַעוֹן חִזַּר הַשֵּׁר לְהַרְגוֹ, בְּנִפְשׁ נְצוּרָה: מֵזַרַע אֶהְרֹן שָׁאֵל בְּבִקְשָׁה לְבָכוֹת, עַל בֶּן הַגְּבִירָה.
 נָטַל רֵאשׁוֹ וְנִתְּנוּ עַל אַרְבַּבּוֹתָיו, מְנוּרָה הַטְּהוּרָה: שָׁם עֵינָיו עַל עֵינָיו, וּפִיו עַל פִּי בְּאֶהְבָּה
 גְּמוּרָה. עָנָה וְאָמַר, פֶּה הַמִּתְגַּבֵּר בְּתוֹרָה: פְּתָאוֹם נִקְנְסָה עָלָיו מִיתָה מְשֻׁנָּה וְחֲמוּרָה.

The Roman general then turned with evil in his heart to slay Rabbi Yishmael, the High Priest, a descendant of the seed of Aaron. Rabbi Yishmael wished for the opportunity to weep over the death of Rabban Shimon, son of princes. Rabbi Yishmael took Rabban Shimon's head that was as pure as the menorah in the Beis Hamikdash and laid it on his knees and wept. Rabbi Yishmael put his eyes upon Rabban Shimon's eyes, his mouth upon his mouth. In wholehearted love, he spoke and said: "O mouth, that gushed with words Torah! How could such a terrible and harsh death suddenly be decreed against you !

להבין את התפלה

צוה להפשיט את ראשו בתער השכירה: קים בעורו אמרו לנפשך שחי ונעברה. רשע הפושט, ית הגיע למקום תפלין מצות ברה. צעק צעקה, ונדעזעה עולם וארץ התפוררה:

The Roman general ordered his soldiers to flay Rabbi Yishmael's head with a sharp blade.' The act of flaying Rabbi Yishmael's skin was the fulfillment of the prophecy that the Gentiles would say: "bow down, that we may pass over!" When the wicked one who flayed Rabbi Yishmael reached the place where the Tefilin was resting on Rabbi Yishmael's head, Rabbi Yishmael issued such a sorrowful groan, that he made the earth quake, and the world almost crumbled into little pieces.

מאתרו הביאו את רבי עקיבא. עוקר הרים וטוחנו זו בזו בסברה. וסרקו את בשרו, במסרק ברזל להשתברה. יצתה נשמתו באחד, ובת קול אמרה. אשריך רבי עקיבא. גופך טהור בכל מיני טהרה:

After him they brought Rabbi Akiva, who was unsurpassed in logical deduction of the Law. They flayed his flesh with an iron comb to shatter his faith in G-d. Rabbi Akiva's soul expired as he was reciting Kriyas Shema and he died as he said the word Echad (ONE). A heavenly voice proclaimed: "Happy you should be Rabbi Akiva ! Your body was pure with every kind of purity!"

בן בבא רבי יהודה אתרו הביאו, בשברון לב ואזרה. נהרג בן שבעים שנה בידי ארורה. יושב בתענית הנה, נקי וחסיד במלאכתו למהרה:

After him they brought in, Rabbi Judah, the son of Baba. They tried to break his spirit by urging him not to follow the other sages. He was seventy years old when he was killed by the accursed hand of the Romans. He was yet fasting that day. He was innocent, pious and zealous in his work.

רבי חנניא בן תרדיון אתרו, מקהיל קהילות בציון שערה. יושב ודורש וספר תורה עמו, והקיפוהו בחבילי זמורה. את האור הציתו בהם, וכרְּהו בספר תורה. ספוגין של צמר הניחו על לבו, שלא ימות מהרה:

Next came Rabbi Chananiah, the son of Teradion, for whom crowds would gather to hear him speak words of Torah. While sitting with a Torah Scroll expounding the words of the Torah they wrapped him up in the Scroll, placed bundles of vine tendrils around him, and set them on fire. They then placed tufts of damp wool on his heart so that he would not die quickly.

חסיד רבי ישבב הסופר, הרגוהו עם זמורה. זרקוהו והשליכוהו לכלבים, ולא הקבר בקבורה. יצתה בת קול עליו, שלא הניח כלום מתורת משה לשמרה:

The wicked people then killed Rabbi Yeshevav, the pious Scribe. They threw him to the dogs, and did not afford him a burial, whereupon a heavenly voice came forth and proclaimed that Rabbi Yeshevav, had not left a single point of the Law of Moses unfulfilled.

ואתרו רבי חוצפית ביום עברה. עוף הפורח נשרף בהבל פיו, כבמדונה:

After him, on the same day of G-d's anger wrath, they slew Rabbi Chutspit. When he expounded the Law, the breath of his mouth was so fiery from his learning that it could singe a passing bird.

צָדִיק רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן שָׁמוּעַ בְּאַחֲרוֹנָה, נִהָרַג בְּמִדְקָרָה. יוֹם עָרַב שַׁבַּת הָיָה, זָמַן קִדּוּשׁ וַיִּקְדַּשׁ וַיִּקְרָא. חָרַב שְׁלֵפוֹ עָלָיו, וְלֹא הִנִּיחוּהוּ בַחַיִּים לְגַמְרָהּ. יָצְתָה נַשְׁמָתוֹ בְּבָרָא אֱ-לֹהִים, יוֹצֵר וְצוֹר צוּרָה:

The last martyr, Rabbi Elazar the son of Shamua, was murdered by the piercing of the sword. It was the eve of Shabbat, the time for reciting Kiddush. As he began to recite the Kiddush, they drew a sword upon him and did not allow him to finish the Kiddush alive. His soul expired when he came to the word “which God created” who fashioned and varied the forms of his creatures.

כָּהֲנָה וְכַהֲנָה הוֹסִיפוּ בְּנֵי עוֹלָה לְעֹנוֹת בְּגַעְרָה. בְּסַקִּילָה, שְׂרָפָה, הֶרַג וְחֲנָק, מִי יוֹכֵל לְשַׁעְרָה. נוֹתְרֵת מִמֶּנָּה, יֹאכְלוּ אַרְיֹת שֶׁהֶ פְּזוּרָה. חֲזָה הַתְּנוּפָה וְשׁוֹק הַתְּרוּמָה. טָרְפוּ אַרְיָה וְהַכְּפִירָה:

These evil people continued time and again to afflict the Jewish People in their anger. Their methods included stoning, burning, beheading and strangling. Who can have dreamed of such horrors? Those who remained of the dispersed flock were easy prey for the nations who like lions devoured the stray ones. Those who were compared to sacrifices in the Beis Hamikdash were torn apart by these animals.

יֵיטִיב י-ג, וְלֹא יוֹסִיף עוֹד לְיִסְרָהּ. אֲמִץ בְּרַכִּים כּוֹשְׁלוֹת, חֲלֶק יַעֲקֹב וּמוֹשִׁיעַ בְּעֵת צָרָה: לְצַדִּק מְלֶכְךָ-מְלֶכְךָ. יֹאמֵר שְׁלֹמוֹ יָמֵי אֲבָלְךָ. לְאוּרוֹ נִסֵּעַ וְנִגְלֶךָ:

May the Lord deal well with us and chastise us no more! Strengthen our weak knees, You who are a part of Jacob, and Our Saviour in times of trouble! May the King reign in righteousness. May he say: “The days of your mourning have ended!” Then shall we set forth and walk in His light!

צִיּוֹן, הֲלֹא תִשְׁאַלֵּי

צִיּוֹן, הֲלֹא תִשְׁאַלֵּי לְשָׁלוֹם אֲסִירֶיךָ. דּוֹרְשֵׁי שְׁלוֹמֶךָ, וְהֵם יִתְּנֵךָ עֲדָרֶיךָ:

Tzion, will you not ask after the well-being of your captive sons? For they, the remainder of your flock constantly enquire after your welfare.

מֵיָם וּמִזָּרַח וּמִצָּפוֹן וְיָמִין, שְׁלוֹם רְחוֹק וְקָרוֹב, שְׂאֵי מִכָּל-עַבְרֶיךָ: וְשָׁלוֹם אֲסִיר תִּקְוָה נוֹתֵן דְּמַעְיוֹ כְּטַל-חֶרְמוֹן, וְנִכְסָף לְרִדְתָם עַל-הַרְרֶיךָ:

From every direction, from west, east, north and south, you receive messages of peace. You also receive greetings from those who are full of hope for you, who shed tears that flow like the dew on Mount Hermon, and who yearn to shed tears on your hills.

לְבַבּוֹת עֲנוּתֶיךָ אֲנִי תַנִּים, וְעַת אֶחְלוֹם שְׂבוּתֶיךָ, אֲנִי כְנוֹר לְשִׁירֶיךָ: לְבֵי לְבֵית-אֵל, וּלְפָנֵי אֵל מֵאֵד יִהְיֶה וּלְמַחְנֵים (ג"א וּלְפָנֵי א-ל מֵאֵד יִהְיֶה וּלְמַחְנֵיךָ), וְכָל-פְּגִיעֵי טְהוֹרֶיךָ:

My tears for your plight are so many that it appears that I am a giant animal. But when I dream of the return of your captives then I am like a harp playing your songs. My heart longs greatly for the Temple at Beth-el, for Peniel and for Mahanaim and all the places where your pure ones used to meet.

להבין את התפלה

שם השכינה שכנה לך, והיוצרך פתח למול שערי-שחק, שעריך: וכבוד י-י לבד היה מאורך,
ואין שמש וסהר וכוכבים מאירך:

There the Divine Presence dwells in your midst, and your Creator once opened your gates so that your gates could face the gates of heaven. Indeed, the glory of the Lord was your only light, and no sun nor moon nor stars were needed as your luminaries.

אבחר לנפשי להשתפך, במקום אשר רוח א-להים שפוכה, על בחירך: את בית מלוכה, ואת
כסא י-י. ואיך ישבו עבדים עלי כסאות גבירך:

I will choose a place to pour out my heart in prayer; in a place where the spirit of G-d poured out upon your chosen ones! You are the House of Royalty, and you are the throne of the Lord; how could it be that slaves were permitted to sit upon the thrones of your noble ones.

מי-יתנני משוטט, במקומות אשר נגלו א-להים לחוזיך וצירך: מי יעשה-לי כנפים וארחיק
נדוד, אניד לבתרי לבבי בין בתריך:

If only I could be a wanderer in the places where G-d revealed himself to your prophets and your seers! If only I could sprout wings so that I could fly freely. My broken heart could then wander around and about your borders.

אפול לאפי עלי ארצך, וארצה אבניך מאוד, ואחונן את-עפרך: אף כי-בעמדי עלי קברות
אבותי, ואשתומם בחברון עלי מבחר קברך:

I would fall upon my face to the ground, hug your stones and show love to your very dust particularly when I would stand at the graves of my ancestors. I would then behold in amazement your choicest burial places in Hebron.

הר העברים והר החר, אשר-שם שני אורים גדולים, מאירך ומוריך: חיי נשמות אגיר ארצך,
וממר-דרור אבקת עפרך, ונפת צוף נהרך: ינעם לנפשי, הלך ערם ויחף, עלי חרבות שממה.
אשר היו דבירך:

The burial place of Moshe Rabbenu on the mount of Avarim and the burial place of Aharon Ha'Kohain on Mount Hor, where the two great luminaries who were your light and guide are interred. Your air brings life to our souls. The dust of your earth is like the choicest spices, and your rivers are sweet like the drops of honeycomb. How pleasant it would be just to be able to walk naked and barefoot in your desolate places where once stood the Beis Hamikdash.

במקום ארוך אשר נגנו, ובמקום פרוכך. אשר שכנו חדרי חדריך: אגז ואשליך פאר נזרי,
ואקב זמן, חלל בארץ טמאה. את-נזירך:

In the your innermost chambers where your Ark and your Cherubim lie hidden. I would cut off and cast away the glory of my Nazarite's hair, and would curse the hour that dishonoured your consecrated ones in the unclean lands.

איך יֵעָרֵב לִי אֶכְלֹ וּשְׂתוֹת. בְּעֵת אֲחֻזָּה, כִּי יִסְחָבוּ הַכְּלָבִים אֶת-כַּפְיִיךָ: אוֹ אֵיךְ מֵאוֹר יוֹם, יִהְיֶה מִתּוֹק לְעֵינַי. בְּעוֹד אֲרָאָה בְּפִי עוֹרְבִים, פִּגְרֵי נְשָׂרָיךָ:

How can food and drink be sweet to me when I must look on while dogs drag your young lions?
Or how can the light of day be pleasing for my eyes when I must see corpses of your eagles in the mouths of ravens?

כּוֹס הַיְגוֹנִים, לֵאט הֲרַפִּי מְעַט. כִּי כָּבֵד מְלֵאוֹ כֶּסֶלִי וְנַפְשִׁי, מִמְרוֹרֶיךָ: עֵת אֲזַכְּרָה אֶהְלָה, אֲשֶׁתָּה חֲמָרְךָ (ג"א חֲמָתְךָ), וְאֲזַכֵּר אֶהְלִיכָה. וְאֲמַצָּה אֶת-שְׂמֶרְךָ:

O cup of sorrow! Desist a little, and go gently. My body and soul are already full of bitterness. When I recall the exile of the Ten Tribes, I drink your foaming wine of grief. When I remember the exile of the other tribes, I drink it to the bitter end.

צִיּוֹן כְּלִילַת יָפִי, אֶהְבֶּה וְחוֹ תִקְשְׁרֵי מֵאֵז. וּבָךְ נִקְשְׁרוּ נַפְשוֹת חֲבֵרֶיךָ: הֵם הַשְּׂמֵחִים לְשִׁלוֹתְךָ, וְהַכּוֹאֲבִים עַל-שְׂמֵמוֹתֶיךָ, וּבוֹכִים עַל-שְׂבָרֶיךָ:

Tzion, a collection of beauty, you have always attracted love and affection. With you, the souls of your companions are forever tied. They rejoice when you are peace and are enjoying prosperity and they feel your pain over your desolation and weep over your ruins.

מִבּוֹר שְׁבִי שׁוֹאֲפִים נִגְדָּךְ, וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוִים אִישׁ מִמְקוֹמוֹ אֶל־יְנִיחַ שְׁעָרֶיךָ (ג"א לְמוֹל נֹכַח): עֲדָרֵי הַמּוֹנֵךְ, אֲשֶׁר גָּלוּ וְהִתְפָּזְרוּ מֵהָר לְגִבְעָה, וְלֹא שָׁכְחוּ גְדָרֶיךָ:

From the depth of the exile they sigh out of concern for you. Each one from his place bows towards your gates. The flock of your multitudes who were exiled and who were scattered abroad from mountain to valley, have never forgotten your walls.

הַמַּחֲזִיקִים בְּשׁוֹלְיֶיךָ, וּמִתְאַמְצִים לַעֲלוֹת וּלְאַחוֹז בְּסִנְסֵי תַמְרֶיךָ: שְׁנַעַר וּפְתָרוֹס הַיַּעֲרֹכוֹךָ בְּגִדְלָם, וְאִם הֶבְלַם יְדָמוּ לְתַמְרֶיךָ וְאוּרִיךָ:

They grab at your coattails and strive to ascend and grasp the branches of your palm tree. For all their greatness, how can Babylonia and Egypt compare with you. How can what they offer compare to your Urim and Tummim?

אֶל-מִי יְדָמוּ מְשִׁיחֶיךָ, וְאֶל-מִי נְבִיאֶיךָ, וְאֶל -מִי לְוִיִּךְ וְשָׂרֶיךָ: יִשְׁנֶה וְיִחַלֵּף כְּלִיל, כָּל-מַמְלָכוֹת הָאֱלִילִל, חֲסִנְךָ לְעוֹלָם. לְדוֹר וָדוֹר נִזְרָךְ:

To whom can your Kings and Kohanim be compared, to whom can your prophets, and to whom can your Levites and officers be likened? May all the kingdoms of idolatry be changed, and utterly pass away, but your power, Tzion, will be forever; your crown shall endure throughout the generations.

אִוֶּךְ לְמוֹשֵׁב אֶ-לְהֶיךָ. וְאֲשֶׁרִי אָנוֹשׁ, יִבְחַר וְיִקְרַב וְיִשְׁכּוֹן בְּחֻצְרֶיךָ: אֲשֶׁרִי מִחֻפָּה, וְיִגִּיעַ וְיִרְאָה עֲלוֹת אוֹרְךָ, וְיִבְקְעוּ עָלָיו שְׂחָרְךָ:

Your G-d desired you as His dwelling-place. Happy is the man who makes his choice and comes

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near to dwell in your court. Happy is he who waits and succeeds in witnessing the rising of your light, when over him your dawn will break forth.

לראות בטובת בחיריך ולעלו בשמחתך, (ג"א ולעלות בשמחתך) בשובך אלי קדמת נעורך:
Then he will behold the favor that will shown to your righteous ones and will exult in your rejoicing when you return to your youthfulness as it once was.

שְׁאֵלֵי שְׂרוּפָה בְּאֵשׁ

שְׁאֵלֵי שְׂרוּפָה בְּאֵשׁ לְשָׁלוֹם אֲבֵלְךָ. הַמִּתְאַוִּים שָׁכֵן בַּחֲצַר זְבוּלְךָ: הַשֹּׁאֲפִים בְּעֶפְר אָרֶץ, וְהַכְּאֲבִים הַמְּשִׁתּוֹמְמִים עָלֶי מוֹקֵד גּוֹיְלְךָ:

Torah Scroll that was consumed by fire, ask about the welfare of those who mourn for you, of those who yearn to dwell in the court of your habitation, who gasp as they lie in the dust of the earth, who grieve and are bewildered over the burning of your parchment.

הוֹלְכִים חֲשֻׁכִים וְאִין נֶגֶה. וְקוֹיִם לְאוֹר יוֹמָם. עֲלֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר יִזְרַח וְעֵלְךָ: וְשָׁלוֹם אֲנוֹשׁ נֶאֱנַח, בּוֹכָה בְּלֵב נִשְׁבָּר. תִּמְיֵד מְקוֹנֵן עָלֶי צִירֵי חֲבָלְךָ:

They grope in the dark, bereft of light. Indeed, they wait in longing for the light of redemption to shine upon them and upon you. Ask about the welfare of the ones who sigh and weep with a broken heart; who bewail increasingly the pangs of your agony.

וַיִּתְאוּנוּ כְּתִנִּים וּבְנוֹת יַעֲנָה, וַיִּקְרָא מִסִּפֵּד מֵר בְּגִלְלֵךָ: אֵיכָה נִתּוּנָה בְּאֵשׁ אוֹכְלָה, תִּאֲכַל בְּאֵשׁ בָּשָׂר, וְלֹא נָכוּוּ זָרִים בְּגַחְלֵךָ:

Who howl like jackals and ostriches, and cry out bitter lamentations for your sake. How was it that you, the Torah that was given by G-d from within consuming fire, could be capable of being consumed by the fire of mere mortals, and that the heathens were not singed from your burning coals?

עַד אֵן עֲדִינָה, תְּהִי שִׁכְנָה בְּרַב הַשִּׁקֵּט. וּפְנֵי פָרְחֵי הָלֵא כָּסוּ חֲרָלְךָ: תִּשְׁבִּי בְּרַב גְּאוּהָ, לְשִׁפּוֹט בְּנֵי אֵ-ל בְּכָל-הַמְּשַׁפְּטִים, וְתִבֵּיא בְּפִלְלֵךָ: עוֹד תִּגְזְרֵי, לְשִׁרוֹף דָּת-אֵשׁ וְחֻקִּים. וְלָכוּן אֲשֶׁרֵי שִׁישָׁלָם - לָךְ גְּמוּלְךָ:

How long will our enemies be allowed to rest in profound tranquillity, while the faces of my young ones are inflicted by thorns? How long will my enemies be allowed to sit in arrogant judgment over the sons of G-d in every cause, and inflict judgment upon them. How long will my enemies be allowed to burn the laws and statutes which were given with fire. Blessed be he, who will avenge the damage that was caused by you, my enemies.

צוּרֵי בְּלִפְיֵד וְאֵשׁ, הִלְבַּעְבוּר זֶה נִתְּנָךְ. כִּי בְּאַחֲרִית תִּלְהֵט אֵשׁ בְּשׁוּלְךָ: סִנִּי הִלְכֵן בְּךָ בְּחֹר אֱלֹהִים, וּמֵאֵס בְּגִדוּלִים וְזָרַח בְּגִבּוּלְךָ:

Was it for this purpose that my Creator delivered you with lightning and fire, that in the end fire

should burn your corners? Mount Sinai, was it for this purpose that G-d, rejecting the loftier peaks chose you and G-d's glory shone in your confines?

להיות למופת , לדת כי-תתמעט ותרד מכבודה, והו אמשל משלך: משל למלך אשר בכה למשתה בנו, צפה אשר יגוע, כן את במלךך:

Was your height a sign that the Torah given upon you would one day be humiliated and descend from its height? Let me tell you a parable. The parable is of a king who wept at his son's wedding feast, for he foresaw that he would die; such was your fate, foretold in your own words.'

תחת מעיל, ותתבס סיני לבושך בשק, תעטה לבוש אלמנות, תחליף שמלךך: אוריד דמעות עדי יהיו כנחל, ויגעו לקברות שני שרי אצילךך:

Mount Sinai, instead of putting on a noble mantle, you now cover yourself with a sackcloth. Change your garments and don widow's clothes! I will shed tears until they swell as a stream and reach the graves of your two noble chiefs:

משה ואהרן בהר החר. ואשאל היש תורה חדשה, בכך נשרפו גלילךך: חדש שלישי, והקשר הרביעי להשחית חמדתך, וכל-יפי כלילךך: גדע ללוחות, ועוד שנה באולתו, לשרוף באש דת. הזה תשלום כפלךך:

Moshe and Aharon, who are buried on Mount Hor: I will ask them: "Is G-d planning to give a new Torah; is that why our enemies were permitted to burn your columns?" In the third month the Torah was given and Israel rejoiced but the adjoining month, the fourth month, turned into a conspirator to destroy your objects of delight, and the perfection of your beauty. Moshe Rabbeinu destroyed the Tablets of stone and now the Torah scrolls were burned. Were those acts not the fulfillment of the prophecy that G-d would harm you twice as much as you harmed Him.

אתמה לנפשי. ואיך יערב לחכי אכל, אחרי ראותי אשר אספו שללךך: אל תוד רחובה כנדחת, ושרפו שלל עליון, אשר תמאס לבוא קהלךך:

My soul is amazed—How can food ever again taste sweet to my palate after my beholding what your plunderers have gathered? Into the middle of the street, just like the punishment that is meted out to a rebellious city, men whose status would never allow them to enter Your assembly burned the spoil of the Most High.

לא-אדעה למצוא דרך סלולךך, היו אבלות נתיב ישר מסלךך: ימתק בפי מדבש, למסודך במשקה דמעות. ולרגלי היות כבול כבלךך:

I will no longer be able to understand the words of the Torah. My pain from witnessing the burning of the Torah prevents me from making proper decisions concerning its teachings. The tears that mingle with my drink shall taste sweeter than honey. My legs feel shackled in the same manner as the Torah Scrolls have been shackled.

יערב לעיני, שאוב מימי דמעי. עדי כלו, לכל מחזיק בכנף מעילךך: אד יחרבו ברדתם על לחיי, עבור כי נכמרו רחמי, לנדוד בעלךך:

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It is pleasant for my eyes to cry until I can no longer cry tears. The wise men who once clung fast to your apron strings can no longer do so. My tears evaporate as soon as they run down my cheeks, because my cheeks are burning from the pity I feel over the wanderings of Your Divine Master.'

לָקַח צְרוּר כֶּסֶפּוֹ, הֵלֵךְ בְּדֶרֶךְ לְמַרְחוֹק וְעָמוּ. הֲלֹא נָסוּ צְלָלָיִךְ; וְאֲנִי כְּשָׂכִיל וְגִלְמוּד, נִשְׁאַרְתִּי לְבַד מֵהֶם, כְּתֵרֶן בְּרֹאשׁ הַר מִגְדָּלָיִךְ:

He took his treasure with him. When He went far away, He took with Him our religious leaders. And as for me, I remain alone, without your great ones. I remain bereaved and forlorn, like a sole beacon on top of the mountain.

לֹא אֲשָׁמַע עוֹד לְקוֹל שָׂרִים וְשָׂרוֹת, עָלַי כִּי נִתְקוּ מִיְתָרֵי תִפְי חֲלִילָיִךְ; אֶלְבָּשׁ וְאֶתְכַסּ בְּשֵׂק, כִּי לִי מֵאֵד יִקְרוּ. עֲצָמוֹ כְּחוֹל יִרְבִּיּוֹן נַפְשׁוֹת, חֲלָלָיִךְ:

No longer will I hear the voices of singing men and singing women, for the strings of your wind instruments have snapped.' I will clothe and cover myself with sackcloth, for your slain ones, whose lives were so very dear to me, have multiplied more numerous than the sand.'

אֶתְמַה מֵאֵד עַל-מְאוּר הַיּוֹם, אֲשֶׁר יִזְרַח אֶל-כָּל. אֶבֶל יַחֲשִׁיךְ אֵלַי וְאֵלָיִךְ; זַעֲקֵי בְּקוֹל מֵר לְצוּר, עַל שְׁבְרוֹנֶיךָ וְעַל חֲלָלָיִךְ. וְלוֹ יִזְכּוֹר אֶהְבֵּת כְּלוּלָיִךְ:

I am indeed astonished that the sun shines bright in all directions, because for me and for everything appears dark. Cry out to G-d in a bitter voice, for your catastrophe and your anguish; Perhaps then G-d will remember the love of your betrothal-day that He felt when He gave the Jewish People the Torah.

חֲגִרִי לְבוּשׁ שֵׂק, עָלַי הַהִבְעָרָה אֲשֶׁר יָצְאָה לְחֶלֶק, וְסִפְתָּה אֶת-תְּלוּלָיִךְ; כִּימוֹת עֲנוּתֶיךָ יִנְחַמֶיךָ צוּר. וְיָשִׁיב שְׁבוֹת שְׁבֻטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְיָרִים אֶת-שִׁפְלָיִךְ:

Gird on garments of sackcloth to mark the burning that devoured your portions and destroyed libraries full of books. May the Creator spend as much time comforting you as the number of days that your enemies afflicted you. May He rescue the tribes of Yeshurun that are in captivity and lift up your downtrodden.

עוֹד תִּעְדִּי בְּעַדֵי שָׁנִי. וְתִף תִּקְחִי, תִּלְכִּי בְּמַחוּל וְצִהְלִי בְּמַחוּלָיִךְ; יָרוּם לְבָבִי, בְּעֵת יָאִיר לְךָ צוּר(ג"א בְּעֵת צוּרֵי לְאוּר לְךָ), וְיִגְיֶה לְחֻשְׁפֶּךָ וְיִאִירוּ אִפְלָיִךְ:

You will once again be adorned with ornaments of scarlet. You will again take up timbrel and lead the circling dance and rejoice in your revels. My heart will be uplifted at that time when your Creator affords you light, will brighten the darkness of exile and dipatch your gloom.

Note: The translations represent a combination of the Rosenfeld English translation and the Weingarten Hebrew commentary.