



# Toras Avigdor Junior

Adapted from the teachings of Rav Avigdor Miller zt"l

Sefer Devarim sponsored by:



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תשעה באב

## Sadness with a Purpose

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## Sadness with a Purpose

"When is Tisha B'av over?" asked Yitzy, as Totty pulled the car into a parking spot in front of the butcher shop.

"What do you mean, when is it over?" replied Totty. "Tisha B'av isn't until Motzei Shabbos, and you already want to know when it's over?"

"Well yeah," said Shimmy. "We can't wait until we can go back to listening to music and swimming and everything. It's not like Tisha B'av is something to look forward to."

"Boys," Totty said, getting out of the car. "This is an important topic, but let me just run into the butcher shop to place our Shabbos order and I'll explain it to you. If you want you can wait here on the sidewalk - it should only be a minute."

"I bet you can't hop on one foot while clapping your hands," said Yitzy, as Totty went into the store.

"That's easy," Shimmy replied as he hopped and clapped.

"Okay, but now take this ball, and each time you hop, toss it in the air, clap your hands three times, and catch it."

Shimmy tried. "That is hard," he agreed, handing Yitzy the ball. "My turn. I bet you can't run from that fire hydrant to where I'm standing while tossing the ball and clapping in under ten seconds."

"Yes I could," boasted Yitzy. "And I'll even click my heels together every three steps."

Shimmy watched as Yitzy jogged to the fire hydrant and started running as fast as he could, while tossing the ball in the air and clicking his heels, as Shimmy counted.

"6... 7... 8...", Yitzy ran as fast as he could. Right as he approached Shimmy, he tried to click his heels but instead ended up tripping himself and he fell down, scraping his knee on the sidewalk.

"Owwww!" cried Yitzy, as Totty ran out of the store to help him.



"It's okay," Totty said. "It's just a scrape. Here let me get the first aid kit out of the car and disinfect it."

"Owwwww!" cried Yitzy again, as Totty applied some disinfectant to the scrape. "That hurts as much as when I fell."

Yitzy looked sad.

"Yitzy," said Totty. "The pain will go away within a few minutes. Why are you so sad?"

"Because I shouldn't have been running while tossing a ball and clicking my heels. I wish I didn't do something silly like that. And now my favorite pants are ripped too."

"Interesting," Totty said. "And how does being sad about it help you?"

Yitzy thought about that. "Well I guess if a mistake like that makes me sad, I will be more careful in the future not to repeat my mistake."

"Ah!" Totty said with a smile. "And that's what Tisha B'av is about."

"Huh?" Yitzy asked.

"Think about it, Yitzy. We're not sad on Tisha B'av simply because something happened which we don't like. We are sad on Tisha B'av because



the pain of losing the Beis Hamikdash - and more importantly - that special closeness to Hashem should cause us to think about what caused us to go into galus - and what we can do to prevent the galus from continuing.”

“Yeah, but who wants to be sad all day?”

“We all should want to be sad all day once a year!” Totty said. “Sitting on the floor, thinking about what we lost, why we lost it, and what we can do to fix it is productive! It’s the first step towards building a new reality for ourselves. Tisha B’av is not a day of destruction - it is a day of construction! Chazal say “כָּל הַמֵּתְאַבֵּל עַל יְרוּשָׁלַיִם זֹכֶה וְרוֹאֶה בְּשִׂמְחָתָהּ - anyone who [properly] mourns over Yerushalayim will be zoche to see her happiness”. The act of aveilus on Tisha B’av is actually an act of building up our past glory once again.

“So when you sit on the floor, saying kinos on Tisha B’av, don’t just look at the clock, waiting for it to end. No, imagine all of Klal Yisroel living in Eretz Yisroel, under the leadership of daas Torah. Think about thousands of Yidden walking with animals to the Har Habayis to bring korbanos to Hashem. Think about the fact that merely visiting the Beis Hamikdash brought a person closer to Hakadosh Boruch Hu. And think about how sad it is that we no longer have it. Think about the fact that working on ourselves, on our service to Hashem and how we treat and act towards others actively brings us closer to living those glorious times once more.”

Yitzy thought about this. “So Totty, you’re saying Tisha B’av is actually a day to look forward to...”

“Exactly,” Totty said. “It’s a day of tremendous opportunity. It’s our choice whether to squander that opportunity by mumbling kinos at breakneck speed while glancing at the clock or looking to see how many pages are left or spending time, thinking about what we’re saying and putting it to good use.”

**Have a wonderful Shabbos and a meaningful Tisha B’av**

### **let’s review:**

- When is sadness productive?
- Why should Tisha B’av be a day to look forward to?

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