

Tisha B'av

It is strange that the saddest day of the Jewish year upon which so many tragedies occurred in Jewish History, the destruction of the first & second Temples, the destruction of Betar the last fortress of the Bar Kochva rebellion, the expulsion of the Jews from Spain and the start of many of the Nazi Aktions against our people should be labeled a Moed or holiday. And because it's a Moed we don't say certain sad prayers. We even learn that in Messianic days Tisha B'av will be such a big holiday that we will say Hallel on it. Perhaps we can understand this if we review the basic Jewish idea that we human beings can never thwart G-d's will. He will lead the world to the place it should go whether or not the world follows his moral commandments or not. If we follow his commandments we will not suffer: if not the world will still get to the place it is suppose to be but we will suffer, many times greatly. This is like the scientific theory of Chaos. There are many paths to get to the same place. The scientific laws demand that certain forces get to a certain places so the laws of the universe will work. But there are many paths to it. This is the story of Joseph & his brothers. They did evil by selling their brother as a slave. G-d though turned this evil into something positive. He used it to save Jacob & his family from starvation. Czar Nicholas II of Russia started the pogroms in Russia to harm our people. But G-d turned it into something positive by causing millions of Jews to go to America & other places so they could be saved from Hitler a generation later. The evils of the thirty years war in Europe (1618-1648) is what caused religious liberty to be so prized in the United States. This war between Catholics and Protestants killed almost all men of arms bearing age in Germany. The reason we call Tisha B'av a Moed is because G-d told us that the Temple will be rebuilt, that we Jews will have an independent State in Israel and that no force can ultimately thwart His will. The same is true in our private lives too. In spite of everything we can make something of ourselves no matter what the challenges. G-d though in our private lives give us the opportunity to thwart His will by giving us free will as long as we're alive. If we choose the right path He will always help us so we will be able to overcome.