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The Broken Luchos

Five tragedies happened on the 17th of *Tamuz*. The first of these tragedies was the breaking of the *Luchos*. On *Tisha B'Av*, there was "weeping at night", as it is written in *Eichah*. But the root of all the weeping and tragedies was that the *Luchos* were broken, on the 17th of *Tamuz*.

When a person cries, the tears fall onto his cheeks, which are called "*lechi*" - from the word "*Luchos*." This hints to us that that the broken *Luchos* are the root of all crying.

Tears Come From Being "Mixed"

The Gemara states that Moshe Rabbeinu wrote the last words of the Torah with tears. Tears, "*dema*", comes from the word "*medemah*", which means "mixture." This shows us that tears stem from the fact that the exile has caused us much "mixture." In other words, the exile has mixed us all up.

The saddest part of this whole exile we are in is that we are mixed with the non-Jewish nations of the world. Not only were we exiled from our home, Jerusalem, but we have been exiled to places that are not our home, and we are now mixed with them. *That* is the real meaning of exile.

Mixed Up With The World

The non-Jewish "language" has entered our society; although we state that "*we are exalted from all languages*" as we say in the *Shemoneh Esrei* of Yom Tov, still, exile has caused foreign languages and interests to enter us. The "beauty of Yefes" has entered the "tents of Shem", in the negative sense: the ways of the gentile world has entered us and affected us.

The Sages say that in Egypt, we didn't change their language, manner of dress, and our names. That was the greatness of that generation. Being so long in exile, however, has brought in the non-Jewish lifestyles into our society.

Being in exile means that we are connected to a place where we don't belong. The root of all exile was the sin of Adam, when he ate from the *Eitz HaDaas Tov V'Ra* (the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil) and subsequently exiled from Gan Eden. Ever since, mankind has been in exile, in a place where he doesn't belong.

We have been spread out among the nations, and good and evil has become mixed together in the world as a result from the first sin; we are amidst that mixture. Good and evil were initially supposed

to be separate, which was the state that existed before the sin. After the sin of Adam, good and evil became mixed together, and this paved the way for our dispersal among the nations, where we are mixed into the giant mixture of good and evil that fills the world.

When we received the Torah at Har Sinai, we were elevated to the level of before the sin. But soon after that, with the sin of the Golden Calf, we became connected again to evil. Moshe came down from the mountain and as soon as he saw what had happened, he broke the *Luchos*. Thus the sin with the Golden Calf caused about the breaking of the *Luchos*; thus the breaking of the *Luchos* has come to symbolize the root of all tragedies in our history.

So how do we leave the exile, and merit redemption?

Breakdown of Society: The Absence of 'Daas'

The body and soul are interconnected forces. Although the body and soul are opposites, Hashem made Creation this way, "*mafli laasos*" (a wonder), that the body and soul are able to live together in harmony. Yet, as amazing as this is, it is always the source of all ruination. The fact that the soul is connected to the body makes us able to connect to evil. When good and evil are interconnected, that causes all the problems.

A person only sins when he is missing his *daas* (real mind). The Sages state that "A person does not sin unless a spirit of folly enters him."^[1] As the End of Days draws closer - the perfected light of Moshiach, which will bring us to the ultimate closeness with Hashem - things are happening in our generation which really do not make any sense. All human decency has been broken! There is so much evil on this world, and people are connected to it, without even thinking that anything is wrong with this. People are missing their *daas*, and that is why they sin; as Chazal say, that a person only sins when a "spirit of folly" enters him. The sins that people do today really don't make sense; yet people are sinning anyway - because they have lost their *daas*.

Today, we are in the "exile of the *Erev Rav*" (Mixed Multitude).^[2] The evil force of the *Erev Rav* is essentially defined by the fact that they 'mix' evil into the Jewish people. One of the meanings of the word "*erev*" means "mixture." All of the evil in the world has been mixed up with all the good, and this is due to presence of "mixing" power of the *Erev Rav*.

We do not know when the end of the exile will be; it was never revealed to anyone. It is supposed to remain a secret. "*Liba l'pumei lo galya*", "matters of the heart are not revealed by the mouth." But we do know that there is a certain plan that must happen, and we know that there is a general way of how we can come out of the exile. Evil and good are mixed together, more than ever before - and we need to disconnect ourselves from this mixture, in order to leave the exile.

Without our ability of *daas*, we lose connection to the power of good, and we instead connect to evil. That is what happens when there is no *daas*: a person leaves the side of good and instead connects to the side of evil. Without *daas*, a "spirit of folly" enters a person and he sins; sins which don't even make sense.

In our generation, there is a great and terrible mixture that is rampant. In Eretz Yisrael, there is so much good; there are many people who keep the Torah and mitzvos, and with great dedication. Yet at the very same time, Eretz Yisrael has become a giant melting pot of countries from all over the world: Arabs, Africans, and many other nations, all here at once. Good and evil are very mixed together over here, and we are amidst this huge mixture, connected to all the evil.

How You Can Leave the Exile

Hashem is called the *makomo shel olam*, "Place", of the world.^[3] This world is His; it is His place. Hashem is our true "place" where we need to be connected to. We have no other "place" that we belong to.

We have to leave our connection to the giant mixture of good and evil in this world and instead connect ourselves to Hashem. If one is connected to Hashem wherever he is, he is considered to be out of this exile - for he is in his true 'place'.

If someone wants to leave the exile, he can do it even now. The time for the end of the exile hasn't come yet, but in our soul, we can leave the exile! We can leave the exile, right now, in our own soul - if we make sure to always be connected to Hashem, wherever we are.

These are not ideas; this is rather a great revelation to anyone who truly seeks to grow spiritually. This is how we can gain back the *daas* that we need to survive the mixture of good and evil we are amidst: by connecting ourselves to Hashem, wherever we are.

What To Cry About On Tisha B'Av

When we cry over the tragedies of the exile, we must realize why we are crying. We are crying over the great mixing up that this exile has caused - the great mixture of good and evil in the world. All of this exile, all its tragedy, is all because we are mixed up - we are mixed with good and evil at once.

If a person wants to know if he will merit *Mashiach*, he can ask himself if he always feels connected to Hashem wherever he is. If he is, then it can be said of him that he has the coming of '*Mashiach*' in his own soul - and he will also merit the coming of *Mashiach* that will come to the general masses.

May we merit to truly shed even one true tear over this exile: over the fact that we are mixed together with evil of the world. Through this, may we all merit the redemption.

^[1] Sotah 2a

^[2] See ***Tefillah #085 - Erev Rav Today***; and ***Chanukah #048 - Greek Influence Today***; and ***Derashos #086 - Exile Of Past and Present***

^[3] See *Nefesh HaChaim, Gate III*