

Most Miraculous Miracle

We know that Tisha B'Av is called a Moed (Eicha 1:15). This is the one day we would not give this appellation to, so why is it titled so?

If a person wants to see a miracle nowadays, all he has to do is look at a Jew. A Jew living today is the greatest miracle a person will ever see. As the Aruch Hashulchan (Orach Chaim 1:10, see also Devarim 28:37, Rashi.) writes, "אין לך אמת ומופת גדול מזה", there is no wonder greater than this".

More than 3300 years ago, our ancestors were in Mitzrayim where 80% of our nation perished. Yet Hashem preserved our ancestors so that you can be here today. At the time of the destruction of the first Beis Hamikdash, the death toll was enormous but Hashem wanted you to be here today. Hashem made certain that we made it through the destruction of the first Beis Hamikdash. The number of people that died during the destruction of the second Beis Hamikdash was similarly staggering. Josephus writes that the number of people that died was 1.1 million. Then the Romans hunted down each Jew that they could find. But Hashem wanted you and so He saved your ancestors. It seems like many times throughout history, the pasuk (Amos 5:19) "כאשר ינס איש מפני הארי ויפגע הדב", when a man flees from before a lion and encounters a bear", was unfortunately fulfilled, as they met one brutal regime after the next.

Thousands of Jews were massacred during the crusades but Hashem wanted you. In the year 1391, 200,000 Jews were forcibly converted in Spain but Hashem invested in you. 300,000 Jews were expelled from Spain in 1492 and tens of thousands were killed. Hashem saved your ancestors from the Chmielnicki pogroms so that you can be here today. (Incidentally, there have been many nations and countries at the top at some point in history, yet have crumbled to its destruction. Such nations include Greece, Russia and Nazi Germany. This is what is meant in "קול ה' שבר ארזים", the voice of Hashem breaks the cedars" (Tehillim 29:5). We are a fraction of a fraction that has survived the selection of the Jewish people.

Hashem has been looking out for you for 3300 years. Your ancestor was rescued from the Holocaust so that you can be alive today. For a Jew to be here is not statistically unlikely or not highly improbable. It is IMPOSSIBLE! The greatest miracle!

Here are the astounding words of R' Yaakov Emden (Introduction to his Siddur Beis Yaakov). "How can the heretic in G-d's providence not be ashamed? Simply analyze our situation in this world. We are an exiled people, and despite all that has happened to us over thousands of years we are still here. I swear that when I marvel at this wonder, it is much greater to me than all the miracles that Hashem performed for our ancestors in Mitzrayim, the *midbar* and in Eretz Yisrael." This was written close to 300

years ago. What would he say today?

So the greatest miracle in the history of the world Hashem performed for you. And this is because He wants you, your tefillos, your Torah and mitzvos. **Throughout the history of the universe, there is nothing that Hashem has invested Himself in more than in the existence of each Jew!**

Many prominent non-Jews have marveled at Jewish survival. Here are the words of The Russian thinker Nikolai Alexandrovich Berdyaev (1874-1948) in 'The Meaning of History,' 1936:

"[The Jews'] survival is a mysterious and wonderful phenomenon, demonstrating that the life of this people is governed by a special predetermination, transcending the processes of adaptation expounded by the materialistic interpretation of history. The survival of the Jews, their resistance to destruction, their endurance under absolutely peculiar conditions, and the fateful role played by them in history: All these point to the particular and mysterious foundations of their destiny."

The following are the words of Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910), who put it this way in 'What Is the Jew?' (Printed in the periodical Jewish World, 1908):

"What is the Jew?...What kind of unique creature is this whom all the rulers and the nations have disgraced and crushed and expelled and destroyed; persecuted, burned, and drowned, and who, despite their anger and their fury, continues to live and to flourish? What is this Jew whom they have never succeeded in enticing with all the enticements in the world, whose oppressors and persecutors only suggested that he deny (and disown) his religion and cast aside the faithfulness of his ancestors?"

A Jew is a sacred being who procured an eternal fire from the heavens and with it illuminated the earth and those who live on it. *He is the spring and the source from which the rest of the nations drew their religions and beliefs.* He is the one who for so long had guarded the prophetic message and transmitted it to all mankind...

The nation which neither slaughter nor torture could exterminate, which neither fire nor sword of civilizations were able to erase from the face of the earth, the nation which first proclaimed the word of the Lord, the nation which preserved the prophecy for so long and passed it on to the rest of humanity, such a nation cannot vanish. A Jew is eternal; he is an embodiment of eternity."

In light of what we have said, we can explain why Tisha B'Av is called a Moed. Just like Pesach commemorates the miracles of the exodus from Mitzrayim and Succos commemorates the miracle of the Ananei Hakavod, Tisha B'Av commemorates the greatest miracle of all — the miracle of Jewish survival and eternity (Sefer Magid Ha'rakia, p. 232, Tisha B'Av).

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