

# The Jewish Weekly

## The Fatal Crash

By Zev Roth

Larry Taylor stood on the platform and spoke loudly to the auction crowd. It had been his own idea to auction off goods and services, and it was going well. He was making lots of money for the synagogue's building fund.

"Oh, here's one that's really special. A 45-minute airplane tour in a small plane. See your house from the sky. I'll start the bidding with 100 dollars. Do I hear 150?" Larry saw a hand in the audience go up. "I have 150. Do I hear 200? Two hundred!" The bidding increased steadily until it reached 300 dollars.

Larry was surprised when he suddenly heard a familiar voice that until now had not entered a bid. "Three-fifty!" Nobody else bid higher, so Larry called out. "Going once? Going twice? Sold to my son Jason for 350 dollars!"

After the auction, Larry said to his son, "I never knew you wanted the airplane prize." He chuckled. "If I did, I would have made the bidding even higher!"

"Actually, Dad, it's your birthday present. I figured that you, me, Mom and Charice can go."

Larry was surprised, then smiled with pleasure. He had a good son, all right. "You know, I always wanted to see our house from the air. Elaine will be so thrilled."

Larry came home with the same broad smile still on his face. He walked into the kitchen and told his wife, "Guess what, dear? Jay bought the airplane tour for the four of us."

"Oh, that's wonderful! When will it be?"

"Let's see... Sunday, August 6."

Elaine opened the kitchen cabinet and checked her calendar. "Did you say the sixth? Oh, I can't make it that day. I'll be at a meeting; we're planning a tour to Israel."

Larry squinted at the calendar. "Can't you change something? Maybe postpone the meeting?"

"I don't know, it's so hard to get everyone to agree on a date. I just don't see how I could change it. I really have to get moving to get this tour together in time for Batsheva's due date."

Larry tilted his head slightly and sighed. "What a pity. We'll just have to go without you."

The night before the plane tour, Larry's heart was beating so hard with anticipation that he had trouble concentrating on the movie the TV was showing.

Exactly that same moment, 5,000 miles away, his son Baruch joined the crowd slowly getting off the bus at the Western Wall. On Tisha B'Av, when most restaurants and bars are closed, the Kotel plaza was jammed.

Baruch took one look at the Wall as he walked up the steps to the Jewish Quarter. The people near the Western Wall were sitting on the floor reading from the book of Lamentations, but many other teenagers at the back of the plaza were socializing as if they were at a cocktail party. Well, he

thought, at least they came to the Kotel on Tisha B'Av, even if they weren't showing proper respect. "And anyway," he thought, "do I know any better than they do what today is all about? I barely understand the Kinot; I don't really know what the Temple meant to our people. I sure don't feel much bereavement."

The custom at the yeshiva was for each student to give an introduction to one of the Kinot. Baruch prepared Kinah number six. When his turn came, he got up and said what he'd been thinking. "One of the problems we all have on a day like Tisha B'Av is that it's so hard to internalize what went on during the destruction of the Temples. It occurred to me that to get a taste of what it was like, while we're saying the Kinot each one of us could think about a tragic thing that happened in his own life. It would only be a tiny taste, but it would be something."

Late on Tisha B'Av afternoon, while Baruch was at the Western Wall, his father Larry, his brother Jason and his sister-in-law Charice drove out to tiny Bi-State Parks Airport. Larry felt like a millionaire going to his own private jet.

But then, seeing the sorry excuse for Air Force One that awaited him, his dreams shattered. The single-propeller plane was not much larger than his car. The door opened to reveal the stairs, and the three climbed in and took their seats.

"Hello," announced the pilot, "my name is Yarom and I am your pilot today. Our tour will be about 45 minutes and will be sure to fly over your neighborhood."

"Yarom?" asked Larry. "What kind of name is that?"

"It's a common Israeli name. I was a pilot in the Israeli air force before moving here six years ago."

"Is that so? My son Barry lives in Israel. Now he goes by the name of Baruch."

Jay insisted that Larry sit up front next to the pilot. Yarom started the engine and explained some of the instruments on the control panel, but with the noise from the propellers it was difficult to hear. The plane quickly picked up speed on the runway and took off. We can only surmise what happened in the cockpit. The passengers were surprised how bumpy this ride was compared to the jumbo jets they were used to. It was hard even to pay attention to the landscape under them.

A few minutes later, without warning, the plane began a downward spiral toward the ground. At first, Larry thought Yarom was showing off, but the look of terror on Yarom's face told Larry to fear the worst. All he could do was hold on and await the impact. The crash occurred not far from the spot they had taken off from seven minutes earlier.

Baruch was breaking his fast when the phone rang. Who would call so soon after Tisha B'Av had ended? He reached across the kitchen table and answered the phone on the second ring. "Hello."

There was a long delay. He wondered if anyone was there.

"Hello?" he said a second time.

Finally he heard a faint voice, so soft that he barely recognized it. "Barry?" His mother's voice was shaky, barely audible. Obviously something wasn't right.

"Mom? What is it? I can barely hear you."

"So terrible," she said in a whisper.

## It Once Happened...

"What's terrible? What happened?" Baruch said, trying to hide the panic in his voice.

"Your father... brother... sister-in-law... in a plane crash."

"Hello? Mom? Are you there?!" Suddenly all Baruch heard was a dial tone. He dropped the phone and stared at the table for many long seconds. He felt his whole world crash; it was Tisha B'Av all over again.

His wife sat staring silently at him. Finally, when she thought he could hear her again, she simply asked, "What happened?"

Baruch drew a sobbing breath. "My mom just said that my father, brother, and sister-in-law were in a plane crash," he said as he looked at the floor, dazed.

What had his mother just said? Were they dead? How could that be?

His thoughts were interrupted when the phone rang again. "Mom?" Baruch said without even a Hello. The voice was slightly more audible this time. "They took a flight in a small plane, and it crashed. Nobody survived."

"They flew today? On Tisha B'Av?"

"Yes. It happened today. Barry, please come back to St. Louis right away."

Baruch managed somehow to get a seat on the very next flight. He arrived in time to help with the funeral arrangements.

One day after davening at the shiva house, Baruch asked Rabbi Pressman how to make sense of this tragedy.


Rabbi Pressman thought a moment and answered, "I can't tell you how to make sense of this. The tragedy is beyond words. But I can tell you that this is a taste of what Tisha B'Av is all about. You've had your own personal destruction, and you know how mourning feels. Perhaps you, with your heartfelt mourning, will be the one to bring the rebuilding of the Temple and the Jewish nation nearer."

Baruch was speechless. He remembered only too well what he himself had said at the yeshiva, just a few days ago. Now he would have to live up to his own words.


The next year, on Tisha B'Av morning, Baruch once again spoke about Kinah number six at his yeshiva. This time, however, he didn't need much preparation.

"Last year I suggested a way that everyone can internalize some of the meaning of Tisha B'Av. Well, for the rest of my life I have that lesson internalized. Tisha B'Av is my father's and my brother's yahrtzeit."

*Reprinted from an email of Aish.com.*



**Shabbat Times – Parshat Devarim**

	Candle Lighting	Motzei Shabbat	Motzei Shabbat ר"ת
 Jerusalem	7:08	8:24	9:00
Tel Aviv	7:23	8:26	8:57
Haifa	7:16	8:27	9:01
Be'er Sheva	7:24	8:25	8:59



## Stages of Printing By Tzvi Jacobs

It was 1999 and internet commerce was in its infancy. Six years earlier, I had received a blessing from the Lubavitcher Rebbe to publish a collection of my stories, which I titled "From the Heavens to the Heart". I decided it was worth it for me to try to find a printer for my book online. I filled out a form and listed the specifications. During the next four weeks, I received quotes from six printing houses in the United States and one in Canada. The best price came from Canada.

I called the Canadian print house. The cover thickness, the paper, the binding, everything sounded top quality - and the American dollar could buy more in Canada. Canada was the place to print. "What do I do next?"

"There's also shipping," the man said with a flat voice. "That's another \$1400."

"\$1400! You're kidding, aren't you?" I asked.

"We're in Winnipeg. It's 1260 miles from here to your door in Morristown, New Jersey."

I waited but no other bids came in from Canada. Maybe there was a printer in Canada a bit closer, like around Montreal, I wondered. I knew one person in Montreal, Rabbi Ronnie Fine, the Rebbe's emissary in Queen Mary, Montreal.

"Do you know anyone who owns a printing house?" I asked.

"Sorry, I can't help you there," Rabbi Fine said. "Actually, there's a printing agent. He handles some of our printing jobs. His name is also Jacobs, Lorne Jacobs. Maybe you're related."

"I doubt it. Our name was originally Karesh. Is Lorne Jacobs involved in your Chabad House?"

"No. He politely keeps saying that he's not interested. But he makes sure the jobs are high quality and he gets us good prices. I'll give you his number."

Even though it was a Sunday morning, I left a brief message on Mr. Jacobs answering machine. That afternoon I received a call from a man with a distinctive Canadian English accent. "I understand that you want to print a 200-page hardcover book with library binding and a four-color book jacket, and..."

I was confused. I hadn't left those details on his answering machine this morning.

"I haven't checked today's messages yet," said Mr. Jacobs.

Now I was really confused. "So how do you know all those details?" I asked.

"I picked up this information from the internet a few weeks ago and then misplaced it. A few minutes ago I opened a folder and there it was. Hold on, I'll play the message for you."

"This is too uncanny!" he marveled. "And we share the same last name too. Quite a coincidence."

"Right. But know that nothing happens by accident, it's all orchestrated to the most minute detail by The One Above! In fact, that's the theme of every story in my book."

I emailed the file of the book to Lorne. He called back two days later. "You know, it's your fault that I overslept this morning and missed an appointment," Lorne said with the voice of a teacher scolding a student. (He later informed me that he was a retired college chemistry teacher.)

"Because of me?"

"Yes, I started reading your stories last night and soon Rhona, my wife, heard me laughing and crying. So she read the next story out loud and I read out the one after. We couldn't go to sleep until we finished the book. I've read a lot of books - you're an excellent story teller."

"Thank you, but believe me, you should see my first drafts. My wife tears them up. Speaking of which, she wants to know when can we go to print?"

"Hold on. I see that you have never printed a book. Do you have an ISBN number? Plus, you need a barcode. And what's going to go on the inside flaps of your back jacket? And on the book cover itself...."

Lorne and I spoke almost every evening. He re-read the stories, which led to him starting to ask many of the fundamental questions: about Divine Providence; do you really believe that G-d wrote the Bible; that the world was created in six days? Don't you believe in evolution? If G-d is in charge why the Holocaust? Are Jews really better than Gentiles?... The questions didn't end.

"If you're going to put so much effort and money into this book," Lorne said, "it has to look first class. I know you have no money to hire a professional typesetter. Let me see what I can do."

Day after day, story after story, Lorne tweaked nearly every line of the book. It became a labor of love and a journey to discover his own Jewish roots. Adding one mitzvah (commandment) at a time, Lorne and Rhona made their kitchen kosher, lit Shabbat candles and said the Kiddush prayer over a glass of wine, and studied Torah and Chasidic teachings, until they blossomed into fully-observant Jews.

Lorne oversaw every step of the publishing and printing of the hardcover edition of "From the Heavens to the Heart." He found even a better price than the Winnipeg printer and shipping was two-thirds less. And when the inside flaps of the full color book jacket didn't fold exactly right, Lorne made sure all 3000 copies were reprinted.

"A book with the Rebbe's blessing must be perfect," Lorne said.

After publication (finally!), if you were to visit Chabad Queen Mary in Montreal on Shabbat, you would have heard a voice that resonates with authority: "Please turn to page 200 and rise for Aleinu (the concluding prayer)." That man with the smile - that's Shimon-Leib (Lorne) Jacobs, Rabbi Fine's right hand man.

*Reprinted from an email from chabad.org.*

תחזינה עינינו בשובך לציון ברחמים...  
TISHA B'AV 2023  
1955 years since the destruction of the Beit Hamikdash  
ט' באב התשפ"ג  
1955 שנים לחורבן בית המקדש  
צום קל ומועיל!  
Have an easy and meaningful fast!  
שיבנה בית המקדש במהרה בימינו  
The Jewish Weekly

In Parshat Devarim, Moshe brings the words of Hashem to the Bnei Yisrael, then at Chorev, which is Mount Sinai. Hashem said to them, "רב לכם שבת בהר הזה" - You have been dwelling alongside this mountain for a long time. "פנו וסעו לכם" - Now turn and move on to new destinations."

Here, Rashi gives two different commentaries. The first is, "כפשוטו" meaning, "according to its plain, simple meaning." That is to say, Hashem was saying to the people, "You've been here for a long time. Now go on to some other places."

Rashi then gives a second commentary. Here the term 'רב' is linked to the word 'רבה' which means 'much' and what Hashem was saying to the people was: "רב לכם שבת" - While dwelling alongside this mountain you have achieved much."

Rashi gives examples: It was here that we received the Torah. It was here that we built a Mishkan. It was here that we established a Sanhedrin and much more, as a result of which: "פנו וסעו לכם" - Now turn aside and go on to future destinations inspired and motivated by your experiences here."

There is a principle in the commentary of Rashi that whenever he gives more than one commentary, his own preference is for the last one that he mentions. So I believe that here, there is an analogy to Jewish education. It would be easy to say, once a child has been in a Jewish primary school or has learnt until the age of Bar or Bat Mitzvah, "רב לכם", it's enough. They've been there, they've done it. Now they can go on to pursue different educational interests throughout the rest of their lives.

But there is a different approach and that is to say, once one has had an immersive, wonderful Jewish education, one can derive inspiration from what one has experienced, in order to go from Elementary school to High school and from High school on to yeshiva or seminary and thereafter, to continue with a commitment to Jewish learning so that for the rest of one's life one can exclaim: "כי הם חיינו ואורכי ימינו" - The words of Torah are our life and the length of our days, "ויהם נהגה" - And we will always meditate on them day and night, "מחל אל" - Because when learning is part of our existence we can only go from strength to greater strength.

The experiences of our nation at Mount Sinai are with us to guide and inspire us to this very day. So too, let us guarantee that every moment of Jewish education that we have had will only lead to further educational experiences on our Jewish journey and that as a result, we will be blessed with much meaning and joy always.

My dear friends, let us take a look back at what we have gone through over the last year, we have lost so many people, there have been too many accidents, we have suffered, Oh!!!! we have suffered. How much more can we suffer??? These nine days feel like months, when we sit and say Eicha, how can we not remember our trials and tribulations? How can we not remember all those who were just pulled away from us, all those who perished from terror attacks this last year? How much more must we suffer??? As we end these Nine Days, days when we are supposed to feel the lack of a home, and the ones occupying the Har Habayit, our ultimate home, are doing a great job at showing us that we are not home just yet.

So let us cry together "השיבו ה' אליך ונשובה חדש ימינו כקדם". Bring us home Hashem, and let us merit to see Moshiach speedily in our times and let's pray with all our hearts, for all those suffering, as well as for the recovery of all the sick, our soldiers and healthcare professionals, and Chevra Kadisha members worldwide, for peace and for those who need healing, shidduchim, children and parnassah and may we be blessed to have the most awesome, gorgeous, beautiful, peaceful, healthy, amazing, relaxed, spiritual, sweet Shabbat and an easy fast.

The Jewish Weekly's  
PARSHA FACTS  
Yossi  
NUMBER OF MITZVOT: 2  
MITZVOT ASEH: 0  
MITZVOT LO TAASEH: 2  
NUMBER OF PESUKIM: 105  
NUMBER OF WORDS: 1548  
NUMBER OF LETTERS: 5972  
HAFTORA:  
Yeshayahu 1:1 - 27 (Some read it to the special melody of Eicha)  
This Shabbat before the fast of Tisha B'Av, (Wednesday, July 29), is called Shabbat Chazon - the 'Shabbat of Vision,' because of the Haftora which is read from the first chapter of the Book of Yeshayahu, which begins "Chazon Yeshayahu - (the vision of Yeshayahu...)" In it, he prophesies about the destruction of Jerusalem and the Beit Hamikdash.  
(The three Haftorot of the three weeks preceding the Ninth of Av, are called the - שלש דפרעותא - the "Three (Haftorot) of Punishment".)  
This week we study Chapter 3 of Pirkei Avot

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