בי"ה

Four Responses to the Destruction of the Temple in Talmudic *Aggadah* and their Implications for Confronting Loss in Jewish Pastoral Care

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Summary

The destruction of the Temple was, without a doubt, one of the paradigmatic physical and psycho-spiritual catastrophes in Jewish history and Jewish collective memory. Despite this traumatic experience, the rabbis transformed Judaism into a religion and civilization that not only survived, but triumphed in the wake of destruction. Rabbinic literature, which records various responses to this liminal moment in Jewish history is, among other things, a literature of survival in the face of personal and national loss. This thesis will explore Talmudic *aggadah* which explicitly or implicitly documents reactions to the destruction of the Temple. I will examine four rabbinic paradigms for responding to the destruction of the Temple that emerge from Talmudic *aggadah*: (1) expressions of sadness, tears and mourning; (2) sin and repentance; (3) substitutional/behavioral responses including: Torah study, prayer, and acts of lovingkindness; and (4) faith. I then go on to glean some of the psycho-spiritual insights from the Talmud and place them in the context of contemporary Jewish pastoral care thought and practice by drawing on therapeutic literature focusing on grief and loss. If the actions of our ancestors are signposts for their descendents, how do their responses to loss inform the way we confront loss in *our* lives? This thesis aims to connect the ways in which Talmudic *aggadah* and contemporary Jewish pastoral care help us create meaning in difficult times.

Contents

Acknowledgments

תנו רבנן: רבו שאמרו - רבו שלמדו חכמה, ולא רבו שלמדו מקרא ומשנה, דברי רבי מאיר. רבי יהודה אומר: כל שרוב חכמתו הימנו. רבי יוסי אומר: אפילו לא האיר עיניו אלא במשנה אחת - זה הוא רבו.

Our Rabbis have taught: A person's Rebbe is defined as one who teaches him wisdom, and not one who taught him the Written and the Oral Torah. This is Rabbi Meir's opinion. Rabbi Yehudah says: Whoever has taught him most of his wisdom. Rabbi Yossi says: Even if he did no more than make his eyes light up from an explanation of a single selection from the Oral Torah, he is still considered to be his Rebbe.
(*Bava Metzia* 33a)

I have been blessed with the opportunity to learn from a number of teachers who I consider to be my *Rebbes*. Rabbi Sheldon Zimmerman, my first rabbi, inspired me as a child to explore the rabbinate as my life's work. He mentored me and nurtured my love for Torah, prayer, and acts of lovingkindness. Ruti Adler ben-Yehudah, professor at Brown University, taught me to read, write, and love the Hebrew language. Danny Siegel introduced me to the joy of text study and truly made my eyes sparkle with the light of Torah. These teachers made it possible for me to enter rabbinical school at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, and I am forever grateful for the torah they bestowed upon me.

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My parents, Bernice and Marty Sherling, are the givers of life that have taught me the torah of love. Their lives have inspired me from the day I was born and everything I do is rooted in the torah they embody. Their passion and compassion continue to guide me along my path and I am forever grateful for their love and support.

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blessings in my life, and in appreciation of those blessings, I pray that I might have the privilege of spending the rest of my days as God's servant and partner in repairing the world.

Introduction

The Second Temple in Jerusalem served as the physical, spiritual, social, religious, economic, and political center of the ancient Jewish world. The ideological complex historian Seth Schwartz calls "God-Temple-Torah" was at the center of what it meant to be a Jew during the Second Temple period (539 B.C.E.-70 C.E.) in Palestine.[1] The Temple physically and symbolically embodied the sacred covenant between God and the Jewish People. The destruction of that physical structure and the cult that supported it dealt a devastating blow to a people whose orientation in the world was dependent upon its existence. The *Hurban* was, without a doubt, one of the paradigmatic physical and psycho-spiritual catastrophes in Jewish history and Jewish collective memory. Despite this traumatic experience, the rabbis transformed Judaism into a religion and civilization that not only survived, but triumphed in the wake of destruction. Rabbinic literature, which records various responses to this liminal moment in Jewish history is, among other things, a literature of survival in the face of personal and national loss. Even more, this corpus of literature embodies the creation and development of a new Judaism.

The Talmud and the Nature of *Aggadah*

Rabbinic literature is a body of writing produced in the first seven centuries C.E. by sages in the great rabbinic circles of *Eretz Yisrael* and Babylonia who claimed to stand in the chain of tradition from Sinai. The Babylonian Talmud, a compilation of legal and

[1] Seth Schwartz, Imperialism and Jewish Society. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), p. 49.

non-legal sources, is one of the last bodies of work to be completed during this period and can be dated as late as the seventh century C.E. It is organized around the structure of the Mishnah (200 C.E.) and is systematized as a sustained exegesis of this seminal work. This exegesis integrates discussions of law (*halakhah*) with non-legal material (*aggadah*) including ancient lore and interpretations of Scripture. The Talmud draws upon the discussions and traditions of the *tanaim* (the rabbinic sages who lived from 70 C.E.- 220 C.E.) and the *amoraim* (the rabbinic sages who lived from 220 C.E.- 500 C.E.) and is characterized as the repository of oral law. Adin Steinsaltz describes it as

> a conglomerate of law, legend, and philosophy, a blend of unique logic and shrewd pragmatism, of history and science, anecdotes and humor. It is a collection of paradoxes: its framework is orderly and logical, every word and term subjected to meticulous editing, completed centuries after the actual composition came to an end; yet it is still based on free association, on a harnessing together of diverse ideas reminiscent of the modern stream-of-consciousness novel. Although its main objective is to interpret and comment on a book of law, it is, simultaneously, a work of art that goes beyond legislation and its practical application.[2]

In the words of Strack and Stemberger, the "Babylonian Talmud is less a thematically closed book than a national library of Babylonian Judaism whose structure emulates the Mishnah."[3]

This thesis will explore Talmudic *aggadah* which explicitly or implicitly documents reactions to the destruction of the Temple. The *aggadah* included within the Talmud is both tanaitic and amoraic in origin. At times, the purpose of the *aggadah* is to offer support for a halakhic decision.[4] At other times, the *aggadah* does not function as

[2] Adin Steinsaltz, The Essential Talmud. (New York: Bantam Books, 1976), p. 4.

[3] H L Strack and G Stemberger, Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash. (Scotland: T and T Clark, 1991), p. 210.

[4] For example, in *Pesahim* 56a, an *aggadah* describing Jacob's last words to his

an exegesis of the law, but rather as an interpretation of Scripture that serves as a discipline on its own terms.[5] *Aggadah* is a descriptive category for homiletic material which is not limited to a single definition. For the purposes of this thesis, Talmudic *aggadah* will include: legends attributed to tanaitic and amoraic sages, rabbinic anecdotes, fables and myths, stories of moral and ethical instruction, stories which expand upon and interpret biblical verses, historical and biographical accounts, and legends which articulate theological and philosophical ideas. Judah Goldin, a scholar of *midrash* and *aggadah*, writes that *aggadah* is "still best defined as non-halakhic discourse and instruction."[6] Avraham Yaakov Finkel, a commentator and translator of the *Ein Yaakov* (a compendium of talmudic *aggadah* collected in the sixteenth century by Yaakov Ibn Chabiv), divides the vast mosaic of *aggadah* into three major categories: (1) homiletical interpretations of Scriptural verses; (2) ethical teachings and descriptions of historical events; and (3) *aggadot* dealing with metaphysical and mystical concepts.[7]

Unlike legal material which is unlikely to comment directly upon "loss," folklore and legends are more apt to investigate the full range of human emotions. *Aggadah* is an infinitely rich source for exploring the emotional, theological, and conceptual reactions to

sons on his death bed is used to support the halakhic requirement for reciting: "Blessed be the name of His glorious Kingdom for ever and ever" upon completing the recitation of the *Sh'ma*.

[5] Ibid., p. 217.

[6] Judah Goldin, "The Freedom and Restraint of *Haggadah*." In *Midrash and Literature*, edited by G. Hartman, and S. Budick, 57-76. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), p. 58. This definition is based on that of Rabbi Samuel ha-Naggid, who lived in Spain in the first half of the 11th century. He wrote, in the *Introduction to the Talmud*, that *aggadah* is "Every interpretation brought in the Talmud, on any topic which is not a commandment." See Hananel Mack, The Aggadic Midrash Literature. (Tel Aviv: MOD Books, 1989), p. 10.

[7] Avraham Yaakov Finkel, *Ein Yaakov*. (New Jersey: Jason Aronson Inc., 1999), p. xxvii.

the *Hurban* because it is less limited in style and content than its halakhic counterpart. For this reason, *aggadah* is tremendously insightful in examining different responses to the universal experience of loss.

Four Responses to the Destruction of the Temple

This thesis will examine four rabbinic paradigms for responding to the destruction of the Temple that emerge from Talmudic *aggadah*: (1) expressions of sadness, tears and mourning; (2) sin and repentance; (3) substitutional/behavioral responses including: Torah study, prayer, and acts of lovingkindness; and (4) faith.

Method

The *aggadah* included in this thesis is hardly exhaustive. Rather, this thesis offers a collection of homiletical material from the Babylonian Talmud which offers us insights into several paradigmatic responses to the destruction. I draw conclusions based on an interpretive reading of this literature by paying close attention to both the "text" and the "subtext" which emerge from the *aggadot* as I uncover the various ways in which our Sages confronted this personal and national tragedy.

I then go on to glean some of the psycho-spiritual insights from the various rabbinic responses and place them in the context of contemporary Jewish pastoral care thought and practice. This thesis is based upon the premise that loss and suffering are part of the human condition, and that they are the engines of human development that awaken us to life. Loss also has the potential to offer unique gifts, wisdom, and insight that would not have been gained without the difficulty. This thesis makes the point that

even trauma can be coverted into hope and meaning. Using the alchemical metaphor of Carl Jung, "lead can be transformed into gold" in adult development.[8] Sometimes this transformation and wellspring of resilience is found on one's own; other times, teachers, religious leaders, pastoral caregivers, and psychotherapists help make that conversion.

Ma'asei avot siman l'banim. If the actions of our ancestors are signposts for their descendents, how do their responses to loss inform the way we confront loss in *our* lives? Throughout this thesis I asked: How do we create meaning in difficult times? What happens when loss is met by faith? What are the ritualized systems with which we confront loss? In what ways does brokenness lead us to wisdom, insight and growth? How do we find within our tradition the courage to not only survive loss, but make it meaningful?

The gleanings from the analysis of the various *aggadot* in this thesis often align themselves with the therapeutic models I present. Nevertheless, there is not always perfect alignment or even overlap of ideas and concepts. Most often the therapeutic and pastoral care literature builds upon a certain theme drawn out from an *aggadah.* There are times, however, when the pastoral care model contradicts the *aggadah* in some way. The goal of this paper is not to present the ways in which rabbinic paradigms for confronting loss are totally consistent or inconsistent with contemporary therapeutic and pastoral care models. Rather, this thesis aims to draw out some of the most prominent paradigms in each area and comment upon the way in which they might be integrated and insightful for Jews today.

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[8] Polly Young-Eisendrath, The Resilient Spirit. (Cambridge: Perseus Books, 1996), p. 19.

Trauma and Loss

Research around the psychological suffering that ensues from traumatic events has only formalized over the last twenty-five years. The American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual*, third edition (DSM-III) only legitimized the diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder in 1980.[9] The exploration of this field was inspired by both the women's movement's recognition of the suffering of sexual abuse victims and Vietnam veterans' expression of the trauma they experienced in combat.[10] In thinking about what constitutes a trauma, Rabbi Nancy Fuchs-Kreimer and Paula Goldstein write that "a traumatic event, referred to as a 'critical incident' when it affects a group, is an extremely stressful life occurrence that happens 'outside the range of usual human experience'... and almost always involve[s] a threat to perceived or actual safety." It is also important to note that the definition of "critical incident" is always culturally relative.[11] Traumatologist Ronnie Janoff-Bulman explains that the expectations of predictability that generally guide people are shattered in the case of a traumatic experience.[12] According to the Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry, the common denominators of psychological trauma are a feeling of "intense fear, helplessness, loss of control, and threat of annihilation."[13] While some reactions to trauma are similar to those

[9] Nancy Fuchs-Kreimer and Paula Goldstein, "Trauma: A Jewish Pastoral Response." In Jewish Pastoral Care. Ed. Rabbi Dayle Friedman. (Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2001), p. 375.

[10] Dr. Judith Lewis Herman, Trauma and Recovery. (New York: Basic Books, 1992), pp. 7-32.

[11] Nancy Fuchs-Kreimer and Paula Goldstein, "Trauma: A Jewish Pastoral Response." In Jewish Pastoral Care. Ed. Rabbi Dayle Friedman. (Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2001), p. 376.

[12] Ronnie Janoff-Bulman, Shattered Assumptions: Toward a New Psychology of Trauma. (New York: Free Press, 1992), pp. 4-12.

[13] N.C. Andreasen, "Posttraumatic Stres Disorder," in Comprehensive

of sorrow, suffering, and general loss, some aspects of trauma are more akin to responses to death. Nevertheless, Fuchs-Kreimer and Goldstein add, "we need to recall that the qualitatively different features of trauma coexist with features that are similar to those of all loss."[14] This thesis will deal primarily with the universal experience of loss. Additionally, the more specific category of trauma, relevant to the destruction of the Temple, will also be addressed.

In crisis work "the fundamental stages of recovery," according to Dr. Judith Herman, "are establishing safety, reconstructing the trauma story, and restoring the connection between survivors and their community." [15] The loss of the Temple and its cult was a traumatic moment in Jewish history. This event forced the Jewish people to reinvent themselves and their faith. Fuchs-Kreimer and Goldstein call this the "cognitive work of trauma recovery." The foundations stones of Jewish peoplehood, Jewish law, and Jewish life served as healing forces in this process. One expert in trauma writes that "trauma can lead to extremes of retention and forgetting."[16] Part of recovery, therefore, is "restoring the delicate balance between forgetting and remembering."[17] One common response to catastrophe, therefore, is recording the events. This communal method of

Textbook of Psychiatry, 4th edition, ed. H.I. Kaplan and B.J. Sadock (Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins, 1985), pp. 918-924.

[14] Nancy Fuchs-Kreimer and Paula Goldstein, "Trauma: A Jewish Pastoral Response." In Jewish Pastoral Care. Ed. Rabbi Dayle Friedman. (Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2001), p. 377.

[15] Dr. Judith Lewis Herman, Trauma and Recovery. (New York: Basic Books, 1992), p. 3.

[16] Bessel van der Kolk, "*Trauma and Memory*," in Traumatic Stress, eds. Bessel van der Kolk, Alexander C. McFArlane, and Lars Wisaeth (New York: Guildford), 1996, p. 282. See also: Dr. Judith Lewis Herman, Trauma and Recovery. (New York: Basic Books, 1992), p. 7.

[17] Nancy Fuchs-Kreimer and Paula Goldstein, "Trauma: A Jewish Pastoral Response." In Jewish Pastoral Care. Ed. Rabbi Dayle Friedman. (Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2001), p. 388.

coping serves as a form of a communication with God in order to combat the sense of isolation and hopelessness that trauma brings about. Even more, recording events creates some semblance of normal life and enables people to reaffirm their commitment to a particular set of ideals.[18] Eventually, there is an attempt to understand the reason for the catastrophe. In the case of the rabbis, there was a distinct need to justify God in order to avoid the temptation of repudiating God and Jewish law. Mortimer Ostow, who engaged a group of inter-disciplinary scholars in the subject of Jewish Responses to Crisis, explains that when one is "confronted with an intolerable and unyielding reality, he resorts to defensive maneuvers which do not change the reality, or prepare him to deal with it, but which spare him pain"-- namely, denial (in the context of an acute crisis) or transcendentalism (in the process of recovery).[19] Dr. Herman asserts that "the conflict between the will to deny horrible events and the will to proclaim them aloud is the central dialectic of psychological trauma."[20] But healing can only come from understanding the past and so recovery must begin with rediscovering history.[21]

An Overview of Second Temple and Rabbinic Periods in Jewish History

The destruction of the Second Temple by the Romans was, as noted, traumatic. Attention to the historical circumstances which led up to the destruction in 70 C.E. are critical if we are to understand the rabbinic literature which emerged from it. Herod

[18] Mortimer Ostow, "The Jewish Response to Crisis," in Conservative Judaism, Vol. XXXIII, Number 4, Summer 1980. (New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1980), pp. 9-10.

[19] Ibid., pp. 12-13.

[20] Dr. Judith Lewis Herman, Trauma and Recovery. (New York: Basic Books, 1992), p. 1.

[21] Ibid., 2.

came to power, ruling over Jews and non-Jews, in the first century C.E. He built both pagan and Jewish cities and temples. While there was considerable symbiosis among Jews and Romans during this period, there was also great ethinic strife.[22] Additionally, tensions ran high in the Jewish community. These tensions led to social unrest in the Jewish polity coinciding with a severe economic crisis. Martin Goodman argues that internal economic tensions within first century Judaean society were at least partly responsible for provoking political unrest, and ultimately Judaean society rotted from within because of the social imbalance caused by excessive wealth in Jerusalem.[23] Richard Horsley claims that Jewish banditry had reached new heights and flared into epidemic proportions. He asserts that it was Jewish banditry, a peasant rebellion, that led to the first revolt against Rome.[24] What seems most evident is that all of these tensions and crises contributed in some way to a war against the Romans in 66 C.E., known as the First Revolt. The Romans suffered in this first revolt, but only one year later under the leadership of Vespasian, the Romans marched from Syria into the Galilee and began the re-conquest of the land of Israel. By 68 C.E., the entire country (except for Jerusalem) had been defeated and Jews engaged in their own civil war as a famine ravaged the land. Vespasian soon became the emperor and entrusted the war to his son, Titus.[25]

In the summer of 70 C.E., Jerusalem was re-taken and the Temple destroyed,

[22] Shaye Cohen, From the Macabees to the Mishnah. (Philadelphia: The West Minister Press, 1987), p. 16.

[23] Martin Goodman, "The First Jewish Revolt: Social Conflict and the Problem of Debt" in Revolutionary Class of Judaea. (1982), pp. 417, 426.

[24] Richard A. Horsley, "Ancient Jewish Banditry and the Revolt against Rome, A.D. 66-70," in The Catholic Biblical Quarterly. Volume 43, 1981, pp. 426-427.

[25] Shaye Cohen, From the Macabees to the Mishnah. (Philadelphia: The West Minister Press, 1987), p. 16.

marking the end of what is considered "The Second Temple Period" (539 B.C.E.-70 C.E.). This period, however filled with strife, was an incredibly rich time in Jewish history. It was the age of sects and sectarian literature, new ideas about God's role in the human world, the proliferation of the synagogue, liturgical prayer and Scriptural study, and the golden age of diaspora Judaism (especially in Egypt).[26]

The second century B.C.E. through the second century C.E witnessed the growth of political and literary hostility toward Judaism among non-Jews along with admiration and veneration of many Jewish rituals and ideas. Shaye Cohen calls this a period of both philo-Judaism and anti-Judaism.[27] Throughout this period and beyond, Jews stood in an uneasy relationship with their environment, but they learned to live under foreign political rule and to find a theological justification for their position in life. While some Jews pursued the creation of an independent state and the purification of the land from all foreign powers and influences (i.e. the revolutionaries of 66-70 C.E.), other Jews were more committed to the perpetuation of Judaism-- even if it meant re-imagining their laws and their faith.[28] One of the most significant developments during the Second Temple and rabbinic periods is the democratization of religion. This marked a shift from individual to community piety, from Temple sacrifices to the synagogue and prayer, and from priests to rabbis. The Temple had been the focal point for Jews in the land of Israel and the diaspora and represented monism, exclusivity, the home of God on earth, and a theocracy in which priests ruled. It gave way to totally new communal institutions inspired and shaped by the rabbinic agenda. Cohen writes that "what happened to [the

[26] Ibid., 17.

[27] Ibid., p. 49.

[28] Ibid., pp. 59-60.

sects] in the Hellenistic period is not known. The high priests of Jerusalem were still very much in control, but the democratization of religion proceeded apace. Prayer, Torah study, the daily performance of the commandments, the promise of individual reward in the hereafter-- all these became the distinguishing characteristics of Judaism, and all of these minimize, or at least reduce the centrality of the Temple and the priesthood."[29]

This shift in Jewish history, religion, and politics took hold of Jewish society at the hand of the rabbis. The rabbis were an exclusive group of teachers who produced the Mishnah and both the Palestinian and Babylonian Talmuds. Their rise to power was slow, deliberate, and not always so smooth, with their "triumph" (that is to say, the "rabbinization" of the Jewish people) coming no earlier than the sixth or seventh centuries C.E. Our knowledge of Jewish history after 70 C.E. comes almost entirely from rabbinic texts. Cohen asserts, "The rabbis, following the precedent that had been established in Second Temple times, took the Scriptural regulations and expanded them, added to them, and changed them. They accepted many of the theological, legal, and institutional innovations of the Second Temple period. But like their ancestors and their descendants, the rabbis saw themselves not as the creators of something new, but as the bearers of something old. They were Israel, heirs to the eternal promise that God had sworn to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."[30]

Pastoral Care and Spiritual Guidance

At its core, pastoral care is the spiritual act and art of accompanying people through the journey of life. Rabbi Dayle Friedman calls it "*hitlavut ruhanit*"-- "spiritual

[29] Ibid., p. 160.

[30] Ibid., p. 231.

accompanying." This field and aspect of rabbinic work is rooted in the traditions of *gemillut hasadim* and *bikur holim*, but even more, it is an expression of *imitateo dei*-- "walking in God's ways."[31] In order to walk in God's ways, we must walk along side others-- through their suffering, illness, life transitions, and joy. At times, the pastoral caregiver is charged with guiding a person *through* the journey. At other moments, the pastoral caregiver is simply there to witness another's pain, strength, joy, sorrow, or resiliency. Rabbi Friedman reminds us that in this holy work, pastoral caregivers meet others "*ba'asher hu sham*," (where he or she is), in whatever they are experiencing, wherever they are.[32] Through active and empathic listening, "we offer a connection to God, Torah, and Israel; to our shared tradition; to community; and to their own spiritual resources."[33] Pastoral care is about creating a holy and compassionate relationship with another person. Rabbis bring their own spiritual journeys, their ability to listen insightfully, their tools in prayer, Torah, and ritual, and most of all their presence. Pastoral care is founded upon the notion that this relationship can be healing and transformative.

The term and field of "pastoral care" was developed by the Christian clergy and community. It describes the pastor as a shepherd who is in charge, gives direction, and knows best in how to guide and tend the flock. This notion, however, differs from the Jewish spiritual care model. The model of "*hitlavut ruhanit*" symbolizes an egalitarian relationship in which the spiritual caregiver helps the other seek their own path of healing

[31] *Sotah* 14a.

[32] Based on Genesis 21:17, in which God is described as hearing the voice of Ishmael *ba'asher hu sham*, exactly where he is, in all that he faces.

[33] Dayle Friedman, Jewish Pastoral Care. Ed. Rabbi Dayle Friedman. (Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishing), 2001, p. xi.

and spiritual discovery.[34] One might more accurately use the metaphor of a midwife who assists another person in giving birth to what is already there-- a creation of the seeker; not the caregiver.

Rabbi Dayle Friedman created a four-tiered approach to pastoral care based on the textual interpretation model of PaRDeS.[35] Friedman creatively applies this textual hermeneutical device to the human text."[36] The PaRDeS model allows caregivers to discern four different planes of pastoral connection: fact, emotion, meaning, and soul, and it is "a succession of ever-deeper means of comprehending and connecting to the human text, the person before us."[37] The *Peshat*, or fact level, guides the caregiver in gathering the information of "who, what, where, when" that is relevant in each person's situation. Having a clear sense of the person is critical in engaging in this type of relationship. The *Remez*, or emotional level, demands that the caregiver focus on listening and responding to *feelings*-- both verbal and non-verbal. The *Derash* level of interpretation endeavors to dig out the meanings buried in the text, and demands that we explore questions of meaning. Finally, the *Sod*, or soul level, is the level at which the caregiver connects on the deepest level to the other person. Friedman calls this sort of presence and connection the gift of true *hesed* (lovingkindness) which emanates from the Holy One of Blessing. In this sense, *Sod* is also about experiencing God's presence through the relationship

[34] Ibid., pp. xii-xiii.

[35] This term is an acronym for: *Peshat*, *Remez*, *Drash*, and *Sod* and forms the word פרדס which also means an "orchard" or "paradise."

[36] Anton Boisen, a pastoral care educator , teaches about pastoral interaction as an encounter with the "human document"-- complex, multilayered, rich, opaque, and in need of explication as any sacred text. See Dayle Friedman, Jewish Pastoral Care. Ed. Rabbi Dayle Friedman. (Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishing), 2001, p. 60.

[37] Ibid., p. 62.

between caregiver and care-seeker.[38] Friedman warns, "We can't will *Sod*, but we can practice spiritual reflection and strengthen our faculties of discernment and openness to the Divine."[39]

There are also perils of the PaRDeS. They include: making assumptions or jumping to conclusions, finding that the suffering and pain becomes overwhelming for the pastoral caregiver, and experiencing the intensity of the relationship/connection as overwhelming. All of these risks to the pastoral caregiver can be addressed through self-awareness, emotional support, and spiritual nurture.[40] Pastoral caregivers can serve others best when they have the skills and support systems necessary to care for themselves. This enables the caregiver to best serve both the other person and the Holy One of Blessing as they navigate the journey through the PaRDeS together.

The term "Spiritual Guidance," coined by Dr. Carol Ochs and Rabbi Kerry Olitzky, focuses even more particularly on deepening the seeker's relationship with God. The authors write: "Spiritual guidance is the process that helps us recognize God's direction, which is there for us if only we can be open to it."[41] Ochs and Olitzky articulate four points in ascertaining compatibility between guide and seeker: (1) You must always fee safe and comfortable in your guide's presence; (2) The only agenda for discussion should be your relationship with God; (3) You should be discovering your relationship with God; (4) Your relationship with the guide must be one of equals.[42] In

[38] Ibid., pp. 62-68.

[39] Ibid., p. 68.

[40] Ibid., pp. 68-72.

[41] Carol Ochs and Kerry M. Olitzky, Jewish Spiritual Guidance. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1997), p. 11.

[42] Ibid., p. 3.

this model of guidance, like Rabbi Friedman's PaRDeS model, the guide is a companion who accompanies, but does not direct the seeker.[43] The presence that the guide offers is founded upon the guide's own spiritual search and ever-deepening relationship with God. Spiritual guides help seekers discern God's voice and God's presence for themselves by exploring God language, images of God, sacred text, prayer, ritual, and observance of the commandments (holy action). The spiritual guide always attunes the seeker to the key question: "Where is God in this?" Discovering and struggling with God's presence in our lives is an ongoing journey that ultimately grants seekers a sense of hope, trust, strength, and inner-peace. Ochs and Olitzky exhort all spiritual guides to seek their own guidance as well. It is this supervision that grants guides the self-awareness, insight, and strength to guide others.

For the purpose of this thesis, I will integrate my references to "Pastoral Care" and "Spiritual Guidance." It is important to note, however, that while they share many goals and structural elements, they have their own distinct character and emphases.

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[43] Ibid., p. 11.

Chapter One: Sadness, Tears, and Mourning

Sadness, tears, and lament are the most elemental and paradigmatic responses to loss. Tears, perhaps most honestly, express the feeling of sorrow for they give voice to the anguish within our hearts. When a loss takes place, tears often give expression to the pain of that loss in a way that words cannot. Mourning is the process of adapting to the losses of life. Abraham Joshua Heschel claims that the first way to mourn is to weep. He explains, "even if our tears are for ourselves, for our ache of loneliness, for our pain of loss, they are still sacred, for they are the tears of love. But we may weep only if we do not indulge ourselves in the luxury of grief until it deprives us of courage and even the wish for recovery."[44] This is as true for the rabbis of the Talmud as it is for us today. There are countless references to lamenting,.wailing, weeping, and mourning as a response to the Destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem recorded in Talmudic *aggadah*. These texts give voice to the enormity of the loss that had occurred. The *aggadot* below represent only a fraction of the stories which evoke expressions of sorrow in the Talmud. Jewish history has encountered tragedy time and time again, and with each catastrophe, the profound tradition of mourning is brought alive once again.

This chapter will present several profound and powerful *aggadot* which articulate the rabbis' need for expressions of sadness as part of the grief and recovery process. After analying the *aggadot*, the chapter will conclude with an overview of some of the therapeutic literature on grief in the context of pastoral care and spiritual guidance. In particular, I will look at the "Pastoral Bereavement Counseling" program established by

[44] Abraham Joshua Heschel as quoted in Simcha Rafael, "Grief and Beareavement," in Jewish Pastoral Care, Ed. Rabbi Dayle Friedman. (Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2001), pp. 369-370.

Rabbi Jacob Goldberg and Dr. Simcha Paull Raphael's "Fourfold Model of the Grief Journey." Both of these theoretical and practical frameworks offer great insight into the psychodynamic journey of grief and bereavement and place them in a particularly Jewish pastoral care context.

> *Gittin* 57b
> Rabbi Yehudah said in the name of Rav, 'What is meant by the verse, *By the river of Babylon, there we sat, sat and wept, as we remembered Zion* (Psalms 137:1)?" This indicates that the Holy One, blessed be He, showed David the destruction of both the First Temple and the Second Temple. Of the First Temple it is written *By the rivers, there we sat, sat and wept*; of the Second Temple, it is written, *Remember, O Lord, against the Edomites the day of Jerusalem's fall; how they cried, 'Strip her strip her to her very foundations.*" (Psalms 137:7)

Psalm 137 is perhaps the most famous psalm of lament. This *aggadah* attempts to understand how David, traditionally held to be the author of the book of Psalms, could have known of the Temples' destructions centuries earlier when he composed his psalms. The explicit reference to Babylon connects the first verse of Psalm 137 to the destruction of the First Temple at the hands of the Babylonians. Remembering Zion alludes to the Second Temple, to which Rabbi Yehudah links a second verse from Psalm 137 by way of the word "*Edomites*." The reference to the Edomites in this verse is traditionally symbolic of the Romans to whom the destruction of the Second Temple was attributed.[45] This *aggada* reminds us of the power of both tears and memory in the mourning process. The weeping that comes with initial shock from loss becomes a vehicle for memory and

[45] Encyclopedia Judaica. Vol. 6, (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House Ltd., 1972), pp. 378-9. In the Bible, Edom is described as the eternal enemy of Israel (and Judah, Amos 1:11, Ezekiel 35:5), who historically oppressed Israel and took advantage of Israel at the time of the Destruction of the First Temple (Ezekiel 25:12, 35:5, 10, 2, Obadiah 11-16). The identification of Edom with Rome became widespread only at the end of the Tannaitic period and still more in the Amoraic (by way of the Midrashim and the Talmuds as well as the Targums of the Torah, Lamentations, and Esther).

was ritualized in its incorporation into the Grace After Meals.

It is fascinating that precisely at the moment when Jews traditionally recognize God's role in sustaining human life with the gift of food by expressing our gratitude through a blessing for the bounty we have received, one begins by reciting Psalm 137-- a song of lament. This psalm was chosen as the introductory psalm for the *Birkat Hamazon*, or Grace After Meals, when it is recited during the week (not on Shabbat or Festivals). This sorrowful psalm, containing the traditional oath of allegiance to Jerusalem, serves as an ongoing memorial to the destruction of the Temple which is to be remembered at the conclusion of every meal. The link between the Temple and the dining table in each person's home is established clearly in theTalmud. We read: "Both Rabbi Yohanan and Rabbi Eleazar said. 'As long as the Temple was in existence, its altar was the means of atonement for Israel, but now each person's table is the means of atonement.'"[46] The message of this psalm and its inclusion into this frequently recited blessing is: We will not forget. We will not forget the destructions that befell our people and our emergence into life once again by the grace of God. At this moment of gratitude and satisfaction after completing a full meal, the tragedies which have befallen the Jewish people will be remembered. Additionally, it is a reminder that sadness is indeed a dramatic process which plays itself out in both individual and communal spheres. It is a process of letting go that becomes an ongoing, and even mundane part of the human condition.

> *Hagigah* 5b
> But is there any weeping in the presence of the Holy One, blessed be He? For behold Rav Papa said: There is no grief in the presence (before or on the part of) of the Holy One blessed be He; for it is said: *Glory and*

[46] *Berakhot* 55a.

majesty are before Him; Strength and splendor are in His temple! (Psalm 96:6) — There is no contradiction; the one case [refers to] the inner chambers, [the "secret" place where there is weeping] the other case [refers to] the outer chambers [where there is no sign of grief, only strength and splendor, etc.]. But behold, with regard to the outer chambers it is written: *My Lord God of Hosts summoned*[47] *on that day to weeping and lamenting, to tonsuring and girding with sackcloth*! (Isaiah 22:12) — The destruction of the Temple is different, for even the angels of peace wept [over it]; for it is said: *Hark! The Arielites*[48] *cry aloud; Shalom's messengers weep bitterly*. (Isaiah 33:7) *My eye must stream and flow with copious tears, because the flock of the Lord is taken captive*. (Jeremiah 13:17)

This *aggada* raises the questions: Where and how is it appropriate to grieve? Grief is both a deeply personal and communal process. This *aggada* explores the appropriateness of private and public displays of grief. The first proposition is that lament is reserved for private expression. God's glory demands a public show of strength and stoicism. It can also be read as God weeping inwardly but behaving stoical outwardly. But this view is quickly challenged. We are presented with a verse in the name of Rav Papa which implies the call for public weeping, lamenting, and mourning. He adds to his claim a Scriptural verse that places the *Hurban* in its own unique category. For a catastrophe or tragedy of this magnitude, public and private is not only permitted—it is encouraged, for even the angels wept for this loss. Stoic expressions of grief are not dismissed; rather, they are simply deemed inadequate. The last verse, taken from the

[47] The "summoning" (ויקרא) that occurs in the verse from chapter 22 in Isaiah denotes a public calling. It reads: "My Lord God of Hosts summoned on that day to weeping and lamenting, to tonsuring and girding with sackcloth." Therefore, this verse comes to override the previous harmonization of the seeming contradiction regarding the expression of strength and lament before the Holy One of Blessing. Moreover, we learn that grief is indeed to be found in the "outer chambers."

[48] Ariel refers to the name given to Jerusalem in Isaiah 29:1-2, where God will bring distress upon Ariel. In this Midrash, the "Arielites" (or Jerusalemites) function as a parallel to the "angels of peace."

book of Jeremiah which calls witness to the destruction of the First Temple, implies that there are times when we cannot stop tears from pouring forth. It is a reaction so primal and so fierce, that to stop them would be an act against the human nature that God implanted within them. There are times when there are no words that can be said; the only appropriate response is the flowing forth of copious tears.[49]

> *Berakhot* 32b
> Rabbi Eleazar said: From the day the Temple was destroyed the gates of prayer were closed, as it is said, *And when I cry and plead, He shuts out my prayer* (Lamentations 3:8). But although the gates of prayer were closed, the gates of tears were not closed as it is said, *Hear my prayer, O Lord; give ear to my cry; do not disregard my tears* (Psalms 39:13). Rava did not decree a fast on a cloudy day because it says, *You have screened yourself off with a cloud that no prayer may pass through* (Lamentations 3:44). And Rabbi Eleazar said: And from the day the Temple was destroyed a wall of iron has intervened between Israel and their Father in Heaven, as it is said, *then take an iron plate and place it as an iron wall between yourself and the city* (Ezekiel 4:3).

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[49] See also *Hagigah* 5b
> The prophet Jeremiah prophesied, *My eye must stream and flow with copious tears, because the flock of the Lord is taken captive* (Jeremiah 13:17). Rabbi Eleazar asked, Why does the verse speak of tears three times? Once for the First Temple, once for the Second Temple, and once because Israel has been exiled from its land." Others say [that the third time was] because of the nullification of the study of Torah.

This *aggada* begins with the verse with which the prior *aggada* concludes. In this powerful and dramatic verse, the root word יבך meaning "to shed tears" appears three times in both the noun and verb forms. Rabbi Eleazar explains the threefold reference to tears in terms of the destruction of the First and Second Temples and the exile of Israel from its land. There is another tradition, however, that claims the third reference to tears points to the banning of Torah study during the Hadrianic persecutions. It was during this time, most likely after the Bar Kokhba War (132-135 CE), that decrees were promulgated imposing the most rigorous penalties on the observers of Jewish law, and especially upon those who occupied themselves with the study and teaching of Torah. Or, perhaps this is in reference to the nullification that resulted from the dislocation of exile. Whether the third reference to tears draws our memory and attention to the exile of Jews from their Land or the persecution which prevented them from Torah study and the teaching of Torah Law, the message is clear. There is reason to cry in Jewish tradition. Tears serve an ongoing function in preserving our collective memory and mourning the losses of our lives-- both individual and corporate in nature.

The image of gates is a common trope in the Talmud as well as rabbinic literature more generally.[50] Perhaps the most famous gates are the gates of prayer which open during the fall penitential season and close at the conclusion of the *Neila* service of *Yom Kippur*. The image of the open,[51] or in this case, closed gates give us a visual image of the rabbinic imagination. In using this spatial metaphor for prayer, the rabbis also keep the Temple imagery alive. In the case of this *aggadah*, there is the distinct sense that since the Temple was destroyed (and with it, the normative functions of religious life and ritual), the verbal communication between God and His people has been cut off. It seems that no matter how loudly and fiercely the rabbis prayed, they had the feeling that God could not, or would not, hear their prayers. Desperately seeking a pathway of connection to God given the Temple's destruction, Rabbi Elazar makes the claim that while the gates of prayer are closed, the gates of tears remain open.[52] Once again, this statement underlines the value of tears above and beyond the formal composition of prayer. Tears possess a certain emotional honesty that have the power to reach God even when the Temple is no longer standing and formal prayer falls upon deaf ears. Tears are a

[50] *Bava Metzia* 59a (Gates of prayer), *Bava Metzia* 59a (Gates of wounded feelings), *Shabbat* 119b (Gates of Paradise), *Rosh Hashanah* 21b (Gates of understanding), *Shabbat* 24b, 30a, *Pesahim* 85b, *Rosh Hashanah* 27a, *Yoma* 18a, 19a (all referring to the Gates of the Temple).

[51] *Deuteronomy Rabbah* 2:12: Rav Anan said, "The gates of prayer are never barred, as it is written (Deuteronomy 4:7) *For what great nation has a god so near to it as the Lord our God is to us, whenever we call upon Him?* And what is calling upon Him, if not prayer, as it is said (Isaiah 65:24): *Before they call, I will reply; while they are yet speakng, I will have heard.*"

[52] A similar sentiment is expressed in an *aggadah* found in *Bava Metzia* 59b in which Rabbi Eliezer's wife states: "I have a tradition from the house of my ancestor [King David]: All [heavenly] gates are closed, except for the gates of prayer of those who cry because of wounded feelings." The implication being that wounded feelings make a person weak and Rashi explains that the gates of tears are never closed (*Bava Metzia* 59a-- a parallel source to the aforementioned *aggadah* from *Berakhot* 32b).

powerful tool in reaching out to God in the face of loss and tragedy.

Rava also struggles with the way in which prayer reaches God and God's presence/ability to hear prayer in a broken world; so much so that he declares a cloudy day unworthy of penitential prayer and fasting. He seems to believe that the clouds represent a separation between the prayerful voice of the pious and the Holy One of Blessing. Rabbi Elazar adds to this by asserting that since the Temple has been destroyed, there has indeed been a block in the passage way of prayer that connects Jews and their Father in Heaven.[53]

In the following *aggadot*, the rabbis daringly construct a new theology in which God, the Biblical director of world events and the King of judgment and justice, now responds to the losses of His people by crying and suffering along with them. Like human beings, God, *kivyahol* (as it were), laments, mourns, and experiences sorrow. In this way, the rabbis attempt to understand where God is in the midst of their pain and suffering and identify God's role in and reaction to the broken world in which they live. Jacob Neusner explains that, "What lies at the center of divine pathos is the alienation of God from the world, matching the separation of humanity from God. Transcending wrath, regret, and despair, feelings imputed to God on the occasion of the Flood, the affection of alienation responds to the supernatural and cosmic calamity caused (in the sages' language) or symbolized (in ours) by the destruction of the Temple."[54]

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[53] Rashi describes the iron wall as a symbol of an iron barrier which separates a father and his children. In this case the verse is being used to institute a separation between the Heavenly Father and the People of Israel.

[54] Jacob Neusner, Vanquished Nation, Broken Spirit: The Virtues of the Heart in Formative Judaism. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 126.

Berakhot 3a
For as it was taught [in a *baraita*]: Rabbi Eliezer says that the night has three watches and on each watch the Holy One, blessed be He, sits and roars like a lion, as it is said, *The Lord roars from on high, He makes His voice heard from His holy dwelling* (Jeremiah 25:30), and He roars a mighty roar concerning His beautiful place [His Temple that was destroyed].

We find this statement amidst the Gemara's discussion of the previous *mishnah* which expresses opinions about the time up until which the evening *Shema* can be recited. Rabbi Eliezer's opinion is that it is permissible to recite the evening *Shema* until the end of the first "watch" (which is until either a fourth or a third of the night has passed). But Rabbi Eliezer, and the Gemara more generally, is making an important statement in choosing to investigate the spiritual and legal qualities of nighttime throughout the first pages of the Babylonian Talmud. A value is set forth here and on subsequent pages of the Gemara that nighttime is prime time for Torah study and spiritual inspiration. This observation forces us to ask the questions, what is it about the night that so interested and captured the imagination of the rabbis, and what is the connection between night and the Destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem?

Night, in this case, may symbolize the exile of the Jewish people. In this text perhaps God can do nothing but roar until the people repent at which time, they will be reborn. Or alternatively, God is simply and utterly angry, frustrated, depressed and sorrowful. Night may also be a description of this world, as is implied in another aggadic interpretation of a Scriptural verse in the Talmud which states: "there are some who say: Resh Lakish said: One who occupies himself with the study of Torah in this world, which is like the night, The Holy One, blessed be He, draws over him a chord of loving kindness in the world to come, which is like the day" (*Hagigah* 12b). We learn from Resh Lakish, who equates this world with night, that for him, the world was a dark

and scary place. In a world of financial ruin, fierce enemies, and the destruction of the Temple and the beloved city of Jerusalem, one can easily imagine why this fixation with night was so apparent for the early rabbis. This *aggadah* teaches us that throughout the night, with all its symbolic meanings, God, like the Jewish people cries out in pain and sorrow over His loss. We are not alone in our sadness. God cries and suffers along with us.[55]

> *Avoda Zara* 3b
> Rav Aha said to Rav Nahman bar Yitzhak: Since the Temple was destroyed God does not laugh anymore. And from which Scriptural verse do we derive that God no longer laughs? For here it is written, *My Lord God of Hosts summoned on that day to weeping and lamenting, to tonsuring and girding with sackcloth.* (Isaiah 22: 12) Perhaps it was only that day [that God's laughter ceased] and no longer? No, for it is written, *If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither; let my tongue stick to my palate if I cease to think of you, if I do not keep Jerusalem in memory even at my happiest hour.* (Psalms 137:5-6) Perhaps God did not forget [Jerusalem]? So that is not the proper verse to derive it from. Rather, learn it from here: *I have kept silent far too long, kept still, and restrained Myself* (Isaiah 42:14).

Just as God cries over the destruction of the Temple, this *aggadah* understands

[55] See also *Sanhedrin* 104b: *She weeps, yes, she weeps in the night* (Lamentations 1:2): Why these two acts of weeping? Said Rabbah said Rabbi Yohanan, "One is for the First Temple and the other is for the Second Temple." "At night": On account of things done in the night, as it is said, *And all the congregation lifted up their voice and cried, and the people wept that night [at the spies' false report]* (Numbers 14:1). Said Rabbah said Rabbi Yohanan, "That was the ninth of Av." Said the Holy One, blessed be he, to Israel, "You have wept tears for nothing. I now shall set up for you weeping for generations to come." Another interpretation of "At night": Whoever cries at night will find that his voice is heard. Another interpretation of "At night": Whoever cries at night finds that the stars and planets will cry with him. Another interpretation of "At night": Whoever cries at night finds that whoever hears his voice will cry along with him. That was the case of a woman in the neighborhood of Rabban Gamaliel, whose child died. She was weeping by night on account of the child. Rabban Gamaliel heard her voice and cried with her, until his eyelashes fell out. The next day, his disciples recognized what had happened and removed the woman from his neighborhood.

that God has also stopped laughing. Rabbi Aha first ventures to suggest that perhaps God's cessation of joy and laughter was only temporary. But the *aggadah* once again quotes Psalm 137, reminding us that sorrow is to be felt even on the happiest of occasions. The rabbis, however, are dissatisfied with imagining a God that would forget and forsake them, so they arrive at an alternative Scriptural verse which offers them a different solution to their theological quandary. Instead, they imagine a God that has not forgotten them; rather, God has been silent, still, and restrained in the face of their sadness. God, like the people who have experienced a tremendous loss, is no longer able to laugh. God is imagined to be silent, pained, and even limited in God's ability to act and repair the broken shards of the world.[56] The rabbis are, in effect, re-imagining a God that looks like them, feels like them, and responds emotionally like them. God's cessation of laughter is a radical reflection of God's own bemoaning the loss and suffering that have been inflicted upon His people.

> *Berakhot 3a*
> It has been taught: Rabbi Yossi says, I was once traveling on the road, and I entered into one of the ruins of Jerusalem in order to pray. Elijah of blessed memory appeared and guarded me at the door and waited until I finished my prayer (the *tefillah*). After I finished my prayer, he said to me: "Peace be with you, my master!" And I replied: "Peace be with you, my master and teacher!" And he said to me: "My son, why did you enter into this ruin?" I replied: "To pray." He said to me: "You ought to have prayed on the road." I replied: "I was afraid lest passersby might interrupt me." He said to me: "You ought to have said an abbreviated prayer." At that same moment I learned from him three things: One must not enter into a ruin; one may say the prayer on the road; and if one does say his prayer on the road, he recites an abbreviated prayer. He further said to me:

[56] Ironically, this verse is found in the context of a narrative in which "God goes forth like a warrior, like a fighter He whips up His rage. He yells, He roars aloud, He charges upon His enemies. 'I have kept silent far too long, kept still and restrained Myself; Now I will scream like a woman in labor, I will pant and I will gasp.'"

> "My son, what sound did you hear in this ruin?" I replied: "I heard a divine voice, cooing like a dove, and saying: 'Woe to the children, on account of whose sins I destroyed My house and burnt My temple and exiled them among the nations of the world!'" And he said to me: "By your life and by your head! Not in this moment alone does it so exclaim, but three times each day does it exclaim thus! And more than that, whenever the Israelites go into the synagogues and study houses and respond: 'May His great name be blessed!' The Holy One, blessed be He, shakes His head and says: 'Happy is the king who is thus praised in this house! Woe to the father who had to banish his children, and woe to the children who had to be banished from the table of their father!'"

The divine voice that cries out in the aforementioned *aggadah* in which God roars like a lion is connected to the lament featured in this story of Rabbi Yossi. Here again, God cries out in pain, sorrow, distress, and perhaps even regret, as it were, for having been forced to destroy the Temple as a result of Israel's sin. This *aggadah* imagines that each time a Jew prays or enters a house of study, God shakes His head in despair out of sadness for having had to banish His beloved children. Once again, we see the image of God who suffers alongside the suffering of His people. Just as the rabbis engraved memory into people's hearts by way of tears and lament, so too God's memory is stirred by a mournful voice each time Jews pray. Robert Goldenberg points out that, "Here, the element of punishment is once again absent; God, taking full responsibility for the Destruction, simply bewails it. In place of the question of sin and punishment, the loss of Jerusalem and its Temple becomes the subject for homiletical consolation: even God finds in that occurrence only cause for mourning, not anger, not righteousness, not a call to repentance."[57]

The rabbis spoke openly of the pathos of God, and this intensification of pathos provided some form of consolation. Interestingly we find that alongside the rabbinic

[57] Robert Goldenberg, "Early Explanations of the Destruction of Jerusalem," Journal of Jewish Studies 33 (1982), p. 522.

tradition of imitating our Creator by walking in God's paths we see the rabbinic imagination working to envision a God who acts in very human ways.[58] This approach to Jewish theology presents us with a God who deeply cares about human beings. This care becomes most acute at moments of crisis when people are thoroughly vulnerable, including times of illness, loss, and death. In this case, the moment of vulnerability is encapsulated in the destruction of God's beloved Temple. It is precisely at these junctures and in the wake of these times that people truly need to be assured of God's love and presence. This *aggadah* makes us aware of precisely this fact by assuring us that God has not abandoned nor will abandon His people; for God suffers when God's people suffer.[59] Even amidst the ruins of Jerusalem, God makes His presence felt and heard by Rabbi Yossi by way of His lament, assuring him of His loving care. These last three *aggadot* help elucidate what David Nelson describes as a new symbiosis between God and God's people such that God's "life" and "fate" are inextricably bound up with the life and fate of the people.[60] Understanding God as the co-victim dramatically alters the nature of the relationship between God and His people.

In the following *aggadah*, the rabbis demonstrate a desire to understand what has changed as result of the destruction. This *aggadah* demonstrates an attempt to create meaning in the face of loss.

> *Bava Batra* 12a-b
> Rav Avdimi from Haifa said:From the day the Temple was destroyed the gift of prophecy was taken away from the prophets but not from the wise.

[58] *Sotah* 14a; also Midrash Genesis Rabbah 8.

[59] Shaye Cohen, "The Destruction: From Scripture to *Midrash*," Prooftexts 2 (1982), p. 33.

[60] David William Nelson, Responses to the Destruction of the Second Temple in the Tannaitic Midrashim. (Michigan: University Microfilms International, 1991), p. 334.

> But Rabbi Yoḥanan said that from the day the Temple was destroyed the gift of prophecy was taken from the prophets and given to fools and children.

These are curious claims. Interestingly, it is not immediately clear which Temple is being referred to. The ambiguity is artful. This literary equivocality creates the sense that the historicity of the claim is less important than the theological notion which emerges from it.

Whether one accepts the first or second opinions cited, this *aggada* states that the destruction of the Temple changed the world forever. After experiencing such a traumatic loss, the relationship between God and the people is forever altered. Again, we see a theme in which the communication channel between God and the people is compromised as the result of the Destruction of the Temple. In the first opinion, the gift of prophecy or the ability to convey God's word to the people is given to the sages. It makes sense that the sages who composed and transmitted this *aggada* might attribute to themselves the legacy of the prophets and claim for themselves the power to be in direct communication with God. Rabbi Yoḥanan, however, is unsatisfied with this response. Rather, he proposes that the gift of prophecy was given to fools and children.

The association of prophecy with fools and children is a daring proposition. Rashi's interpretation of the plain reading of the text (based on reasons later provided in the Gemara) advances the notion that fools and children will follow the Law received by Moses at Sinai with a simple faith and commit themselves to careful observance. As a reward for the meticulous and unquestioning observance of God's Law, they would, in turn, merit the gift of prophecy. Another interpretation is that the Destruction of the Temple was a loss of such magnitude that it reversed the order of the world as it had previously been constructed. For the rabbis, it felt as if the world had been turned upside

down. Perhaps the result of such a tremendous loss caused the rabbis to take a serious look at the world around them and make structural changes to reconstitute a healthier society. In the same vein, it may have reflected the emotional sense of the world feeling "inside out" or "topsy turvy." In the initial stages of loss, it is common for one to have a difficult time performing the most basic tasks for precisely this reason. The world as they knew it simply was no longer. There is a sadness which emerges from such radical changes in the way one views the world, but it is not void of meaning. Loss changes humans in profound ways. It changed the world the rabbis lived in and this *aggada* demonstrates for us the power in articulating and expressing those changes, however painful they may be.

> *Bava Batra* 60b (and parallel text can also be found in *Ta'anit* 30b)
> It is taught in a Baraita: When the Second Temple was destroyed the number of people increased who would not eat meat nor drink wine. Rabbi Joshua approached them and asked, "My children, why do you not eat meat and drink wine? They replied, "shall we eat meat of which offerings were brought on the altar, which is no more, and shall we drink wine of which libations were poured at the altar, which is no more?" He said to them, "If so, let us not eat bread since the meal offering is no more." They said, "We can eat fruit." He said, "We should not eat fruit since the offering of the first fruits is no more." They said, "We can eat other fruits that were not brought as an offering." He said, "We should not drink water for the ceremony of libation of water is no more." They fell silent. He then said to them, "My children, not to mourn at all is impossible for the decree has gone forth, but too mourn too much is also not permitted for a decree is not issued unless a majority of the public can endure it." As it is written: *You are suffering under a curse, yet you go on defrauding Me-- the whole nation of you.* (Malachi 3:9) Therefore the sages said that when a person paints his house he should leave a small area unpainted. How much? Rav Yosef said: approximate a cubit square. And Rav Hisda said: it should be opposite the entrance. A person may prepare an entire meal but leave out one item. What might this be? Rav Pappa said: a pie of fish-hash and flour. A woman may put on all her adornments but omit one small thing. What might this be? Rav said: a

forehead adornment.[61] For it is said, *If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither; let my tongue stick to my palate if I cease to think of you, if I do not keep Jerusalem in memory even at my happiest hour* (Psalms 137:5-6). What is meant by "my happiest hour?" Rabbi Yitzhak said, "This refers to the ashes placed on the forehead of bridegrooms." Rav Pappa said to Abaye: Where should they be placed? In the place where the tefillin are worn. As it is said: *To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give then a garland [pe'er] for ashes [epher].* And whoever mourns for Jerusalem will merit to witness her joy, as it is said, *Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad for her, all you love her! Join in her jubilation, all you who mourned over her* (Isaiah 66:10).[62] It was taught in a *baraita* that Rabbi Ishmael ben Elisha said, "From the day the Temple was destroyed it would have been right to decree upon ourselves not to eat meat nor to drink wine but a decree must not be issued unless the majority of the public can endure it. And from the day the evil sovereign government (Romans) extended its sovereignty and decreed wicked and harsh edicts against us, suspending the study of Torah, the practice of the commandments, and does not allow us to enter into the "week of the son" (according to another version, "the salvation of the son"), [63]it would have been right that we decree against ourselves not to marry nor to have children and the result would have been that Abraham's descendants would have ended their history.

[61] In *Gittin* 7a and *Sotah* 9:14, we see a similar restriction expressed saying "At the time of the invasion by Vespasian the rabbis decreed against the wearing of garlands by bridegrooms and the beating of drums at weddings." This is in keeping with the general restriction articulated in *Ta'anit* 4:6 regarding the fact that in a time of mourning (the month of Av) "gladness must be limited." Note, however, that limiting their intensive mourning to the month of Av was yet another way of the keeping their mourning in check and preventing people from mourning excessively throughout the year.

[62] The same Scriptural verse and theological sentiment are expressed in *Ta'anit* 30a where it is written: The one who mourns for Jerusalem will merit seeing it rejoice once more, and he who does not mourn for Jerusalem will note see the city rejoice again, as it is said, *Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad for her all you who love her! Join in her jubilation, all you who mourned over her* (Isaiah 66:10).

[63] The "week of the son" or "salvation of son" are references to the persecution instituted by the Emperor Hadrian after the Bar Kokhba War in 135 CE. The "salvation of the son" is thought to be an alternative term for the rite of circumcision. [So Rashi, Sanhedrin 32b.] This term is said to have been adopted by the Jews as a disguise during the Hadrianic persecutions when the rite was prohibited in order to remove any suspicion that they were engaged in a religious observance. Others explain the term as denoting the seven days festivities that followed the birth of a child.

This *aggada* sends a strong warning about extreme expressions of lament that are potentially harmful, to both the individual and the well-being (and even survival) of the community at large. The overall message of the text is to follow the *sh'vil ha'zahav*, or the "Golden Mean." The challenge the text presents is how to balance the individual and communal obligation (and deep psychological need) to mourn with the equally important claim to continue to live fully and even celebrate life. The text also warns that excessive mourning may, in fact, not achieve the purposes it aims to realize. The verse from Malachi implies that despite the fact that the community may suffer with self-imposed and supererogatory restrictions on joy (behavior which might on the surface appear to be particularly pious), their behavior may nevertheless fail to enable them to live faithfully with God (thereby defeating the purpose).

To combat the urge to mourn excessively, the sages developed a compromise position that aimed to both preserve the memory of the loss as well as enable the individual and community to move on with the business of living. This balance is achieved by way of leaving possessions and physical appearances slightly incomplete or imperfect. Leaving a small area of one's house unpainted or leaving out one piece in a set of jewelry serve as beautiful examples of this philosophical position.[64] This text also reminds us that there is a connection between the ability to grieve and to celebrate. In fact, the Gemara explicitly states: The one who mourns for Jerusalem will merit seeing it rejoice once more, and he who does not mourn for Jerusalem will note see the city rejoice again, as it is said, *Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad for her all you who love her! Join in her jubilation, all you who mourned over her* (Isaiah 66:10) (*Ta'anit* 30a). It is

[64] Another example of this philosophical position is found in *Gittin* 7a where it is written: At the time of the invasion by Vespasian the rabbis decreed against the wearing of garlands by bridegrooms and the beating of drums at weddings.

imperative that one mourns the destruction of Jerusalem, but only to the extent that the public can endure it and life can go on.

When faced with the choice of choosing life or death, Jewish tradition begs us to choose life. This point is made most powerfully by the last lines of the *aggada* which remind us that if the Jewish people had accepted upon themselves the tradition of excessive mourning, they would not have survived. Brides and grooms would not have united under the *huppah*, and children would not have been born to continue the line of Abraham. In their study of trauma, Rabbi Fuchs-Kreimer and Paula Goldstein explain that "trauma can lead to extremes of retention and forgetting; thus one aspect of trauma recovery is restoring the delicate balance between forgetting and remembering."[65] This *aggadah* draws our attention to this delicate balance of memory and moving forward which must accompany any process of grief and bereavement.

The devastating fate of Jerusalem and its holy Temple inflicted extreme anguish, distress, and sadness upon the Jewish people. The rabbis lamented this traumatic loss by memorializing their tears in *aggadah*. Our sages teach us that the expression of loss and pain by way of lament and mourning actually eases our suffering. Dr. Rachel Naomi Remen claims that "the way we deal with loss helps our capacity to be present to life more than anything else."[66] The process of grieving enables us, with sufficient time, to empty our hearts of loss so that there is still room to care. The process of grief and bereavement in repose to any loss, and traumatic loss in particular, is critical to maintaining a living connection to God, community, and one's own soul.

[65] Rabbi Fuchs-Kreimer and Paula Goldstein, "Trauma: A Jewish Pastoral Response" in Jewish Pastoral Care. ed. Rabbi Dayle Friedman. (Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2001), p. 388.

[66] Rachel Naomi. Remen, Kitchen Table Wisdom. (New York: Riverhead Books, 1996), p. 52.

Rabbi Naomi Levy reminds us that tears help to remove the callousness from our hearts, giving us the capacity to forgive, to feel, to love, and to be affectionate once more. For too many adults, tears are expressions of weakness and childishness. They are a source of embarrassment. Alternatively, these *aggadot* teach us that tears convey power, memory, and courage. Rabbi Levy explains that deep expressions of sadness "enable us to express primal emotions that we have no way of putting into words-- hurt, pain, sadness, loneliness, and frustration."[67] When crying and lament are repressed, they turn to anger, resentment, and increased suffering. This internalized pain, in effect, turns our hearts to stone. It is only the honest expression of these feelings that enable us to confront the loss, make meaning of it, and move forward with our lives. Additionally, mourning within community enables to resist the temptation to isolate ourselves. Allowing others to share in our world of sorrow connects us to faith and healing that solitary mourning cannot. The rabbis remind us to wear our tears with courage, faithfully acknowledging the healing and peace that come from the honest expression of sorrow.

The role of clergy in pastoral bereavement counseling is critical. Helping mourners and those who have experienced a loss of any kind navigate the universe of pain and emotional distress is one of the greatest acts of service rabbis can perform. Facilitating their passage through this dark, and lonely region is a journey which can be deeply enhanced with spiritual guidance and leadership. Dr. Carol Ochs writes, "Our tradition teaches that we have no right to judge another's pain. The only thing we can do is reach out and share it... The *moreh/morah derekh* is not the healer but simply the one who helps seekers discover-- discover, not create-- the pattern in their lives."[68]

[67] Naomi Levy, To Begin Again. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999), pp. 80-81.

[68] Carol Ochs and Kerry M. Olitzky, Jewish Spiritual Guidance. (San

Sadness is one of the principle stages of the bereavement process. Rabbi Jacob Goldberg, who designed a structured program to help mourners, teaches us that the application of counseling skills and technique must "flow from a deep sensitivity, from a pervasive 'feeling with,' from an ever-present commitment to offer 'heart and mind' for the healing of the mourner."[69] Empathy is at the core of his approach to counseling those who have experienced loss. This reflects the traditionally Jewish belief that humans imitate God through empathy. Rabbi Ozarowski further explains that when pastoral caregivers use their minds, hearts, and imagination to share the pain of the sufferer, even though they do not necessarily feel the exact same pain, the caregiver's understanding helps to alleviate the suffers sense of aloneness and may even lessen the pain.[70] The technique of responding to sadness and other core emotions that emerge from the grief process include: addressing the mourner's feelings and the pattern of progression of these feelings, exploring the dynamic explanation for these apparently natural and universal feelings and for the sequence they appear to follow, and developing a therapeutic response to address the feelings.[71] Rabbi Goldberg explains that it is quite normal and healthy for one who has experienced a loss to "feel lost, alone and afraid, cut off and adrift."[72] It is natural to want to cry (and/or fear the inability to stop crying), to feel submerged by an overwhelming sadness, to feel that life has lost its flavor or beauty, to

Francisco: Josey Bass, Inc., 1997), p. 43, p. 18.

[69] Rabbi Jacob Goldberg, Pastoral Bereavement Counseling. (New York: Human Sciences Press, Inc., 1989), p. 97.

[70] Joseph S. Ozarowski. "*Bikur Cholim*: A Paradigm for Pastoral Caring," in Jewish Pastoral Care. Ed. Rabbi Dayle Friedman. (Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2001), p. 24.

[71] Ibid., 98.

[72] Ibid., 99.

cease from laughing, to find nights dreadful and lonely, and to exist primarily on the level of survival.[73] The intensity, pattern, and length of time that one passes through these emotions is entirely individual. But the need to successfully progress through the difficult emotions of sadness is critical to the grief process. The pastoral care giver should aim to encourage the recognition of these feelings, legitimize the awareness of them, explore their depth, aid the mourner in "staying with" and "working through" those feelings, recognize and commend movement and progress, and implant hope that continuing this journey, the mourner will, in time, be able to heal.[74]

First and foremost, we learn that a loving silence is more powerful than any words of insight and understanding. The ability to "just listen" is profound and healing in and of itself. Experienced cancer therapist Dr. Remen writes: "I have learned to respond to someone crying by just listening. In the old days I used to reach for the tissues, until I realized that passing a person a tissue may be just another way to shut them down, to take them out of their experience of sadness and grief. Now I just listen. When they have cried all they need to cry, they find me there with them."[75] Listening is the most critical skill in counseling someone who has experienced loss. Allowing people to tell their stories is perhaps the most therapeutic and healing component in confronting loss.

Dr. Simcha Paull Raphael, a psychologist and rabbi had developed a "Fourfold Model of the Grief Journey" based on the works of William Worden,[76] Michelle

[73] Ibid., 99-100.

[74] Ibid., 134.

[75] Rachel Naomi. Remen, Kitchen Table Wisdom. (New York: Riverhead Books, 1996), p. 144.

[76] J. William Worden, Grief Counseling and Grief Therapy: A Handbook for the Mental Health Practitioner, 2nd ed. (New York: Springer, 1991), pp. 10-18.

Goodman,[77] and Howard Clinebell.[78] This model helps to describe the grief experience, explain how grief changes over time, and understand the psychodynamics of this process so that the appropriate pastoral response can be realized. Dr. Raphael's four phases include: The Initial Shock and Denial, Facing the Painful Truth, Putting the Pieces Together, Affirming Life and Legacy.[79] Each of these phases corresponds to both Jewish mourning rituals as well as psychodynamic characteristics which individuals and groups encountering grief frequently experience.

In the first phase of Dr. Raphael's model of the grief journey, mourners are often numb and in an utter state of shock. The world as they knew it is no longer and life feels shattered and uprooted. It is not uncommon for someone to emerge from a funeral or *shiva* still unable to realize the depth and reality of their loss. This phase incorporates *aninut*, a period dedicated to accepting the reality of the loss. Pastoral caregivers should note that mourners are often coping at a high level during this period of shock and acute grief. The response should be one of honest, gentle and compassionate caring in an effort to bring to consciousness the reality of the loss. It is not the time to console, but rather to listen and affirm. *Keriah*,[80] shoveling earth on a coffin at a funeral, and *shiva*[81] ritually

[77] Michelle B. Goodman, *Nichum Avelim:* Comforting the Mourners. (Toronto: Benjamin Family Foundation, 1987), pamphlet 27.

[78] Howard Clinebell, Basic Types of Pastoral Care and Counseling:Resources for the MInishtry of Healing and Growth. (Nashville: Abington Press, 1984), pp. 218-42.

[79] Simcha Paull Rafael, "Grief and Beareavement," in Jewish Pastoral Care. Ed. Rabbi Dayle Friedman. (Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2001), p. 345.

[80] *Keriah* is the traditional rending of garments by mourners prior to the funeral. This custom, with roots in the Biblical tradtion, is an opportunity for the physical expression of pain, anguish, and loss.

[81] *Shiva* is the period of seven days following the burial . During this time, mourners weep, lament, and eventually emerge from th estate of intense grief to a state of mind in which they may at least find comfort in the loving presence of friends and family and find opportunities to talk about their loss. Mourners typically remain in the house, sit

and communally contribute to helping the mourner feel the impact of the loss. Dr. Raphael explains that the most important role of the pastoral caregiver is that of listener. Mourners have a tremendous need to tell their story and speak of their loss in very personal terms. This is a critical period of sharing which can have a tremendous impact on the long term grief process.[82]

"Facing the Painful Truth," Raphael's second phase of grief is dedicated to experiencing fully the difficult emotions that come with loss: intense sadness, anguish, and even despair. These feelings often result in other feelings and expressions including anger, guilt, tears, and exhaustion. This phase which begins very early in the process of grief can take days, weeks, and even months. The goal is to truly experience the intensification of these various emotions in an effort to integrate the loss into one's reality and consciousness.[83] Raphael writes that, "The *American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, fourth edition (DSM-IV), has created a mental health classification called Bereavement Reaction (understood to refer to normal bereavement), which suggests that, given the emotional challenges of grief, the seemingly abnormal reactions one experiences in bereavement are quite normal."[84] Pastoral caregivers should aim to normalize and validate the grief and bereavement process by identifying feelings and allowing mourners to tell their stories time and time again. The process of telling and re-telling is a critical tool in coming to terms with the reality of the loss.

on low stools, refrain from shaving, grooming, and bathing, and recite the *Kaddish* prayer daily.

[82] Ibid., pp. 346-349.

[83] Ibid., p. 353.

[84] Ibid., p. 355.

The third phase, "Putting the Pieces Together," is a period of adjustment that allows the mourner to integrate the loss into his/her life, and in doing so, affirm that life goes on. Raphael describes this period as a time in which the bereaved begin to functionally and emotionally restructure their lives. This phase may still include intermittent periods of grief, however the ongoing intensive grieving that characterized the second phase, should wane. This is a time for the mourner to begin integrating what they have learned from the person, home, dream, part of self, or love that has been lost--to extract the gifts from that person, place, or thing as well as the letting go of the attributes which may have been less than wholesome and healthy. A pastoral caregiver's primary role in this stage is the negotiation of that process. In contrast to the first and second phases, this phase can be characterized as a time of contemplation in which mourners take a magnifying glass to their lives and reflect seriously on the God's role in their suffering and the meaning of life and death, love and loss.[85] The spiritual guide assists the mourner by asking where God is in this experience and exploring the impact of the loss in that person's life.

The final phase in Raphael's fourfold model, "Affirming Life and Legacy," is the time in which the mourner begins "to claim a new life and to reinvest energy in new relationships and activities."[86] This is a courageous process of meaning making. It is important for the pastoral caregiver to remember that grief may emerge even in this stage, but the primary energy is devoted toward discovering new purpose and memorialization. This is the ultimate stage of growth in the process of bereavement. Rabbi David Wolpe, reflects on this notion writing:

[85] Ibid., p. 360-363.

[86] Ibid., p. 365.

> My deepest prayer to God used to be to spare me from the pains of life that I so dreaded. Now I see that that is the prayer of a child. As a man I do not pray for a life without pain. Instead I pray: "Dear God, I know that there will be pain in my life, and sadness, and loss. Please give me the strength to create a life, together with those whom I love, where loss will not be empty, where pain will not be purposeless. Help me find the faith to make loss matter. Amen."

A great Hasidic rabbi once taught: "Let me not die while I am still alive." This is the prayer of all those who confront loss and who struggle to put the pieces back together and return to life. "Death is a great tragedy," Rabbi Levy teaches us, "but to die while we are still living, that is greatest tragedy of all."[87] After experiencing a loss, tears and sadness keep us alive by enabling us to resurrect the pieces of our lives that can be revived. Dr. Remen explains, "becoming numb to suffering will not make us happy. The part in us that feels suffering is the same as the part that feels joy."[88] It is only through a deep and honest expression of sadness that tears of sorrow can be transformed into seeds of hope. The meaning that often emerges from a process of grief offers us a strength and power that never comes through the denial of loss or pain. These sacred texts help us to see that while tears may not always be wiped away, they can be made holy.

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[87] Naomi Levy, *To Begin Again*. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999), p. 27.

[88] Rachel Naomi. Remen. Kitchen Table Wisdom. (New York: Riverhead Books, 1996), p. 148.

Chapter Two: Sin and Repentance

Within the maze of grief and bereavement that follows loss, it is not uncommon to experience feelings of guilt.[89] The notion of "retributive suffering" is, in fact, at the core of the rabbinic theology expressed in classical Jewish texts.[90] In the wake of the destruction of the Second Temple the rabbis did not say: "Their god is stronger than ours; we must abandon our faith and adopt their ways." There is even a rabbinic statement that one should bless God for bad things as one does for good things.[91] Instead of disparaging God and losing faith in the religious system that organized their lives, they looked inward and began to reexamine their own role in the destruction they suffered. In becoming acutely aware of their failures-- real or imagined, they began a process of *heshbon nefesh*, an accounting of their souls, that aimed to inspire *teshuvah*, a turning and transformation of their society and their community's relationship with God. Engaging in this process of repentance represents both a sustained hope and faith in their religious system as well as the seizing of an opportunity to grow and make meaning from their loss.

Psychodynamically, guilt actually serves an important function in response to loss. Judith Viorst writes in Necessary Losses, that "while guilt deprives us of numerous gratifications, we and our world would be monstrous minus guilt. For the freedoms we

[89] Rabbi Earl Grollman, Living with Loss, Healing with Hope. (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000), p. 16.

[90] The terminology "retributive suffering" is David Kraemer's way of expressing the dynamic of suffering which underlies the Torah's narrative drama. In other words, transgression of the Divine Will finds its direct response in Divine Retribution. David Kraemer, Responses to Jewish Suffering in Classical Rabbinic Literature, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 18.

[91] *Berakhot* 54a.

lose, our constraints and taboos, are necessary losses-- part of the price we pay for civilization."[92] Without question, there is good guilt and bad guilt, appropriate guilt and inappropriate guilt. There is also indiscriminate guilt in which there is a failure to distinguish between forbidden thoughts and forbidden deeds, potentially leading to excessive guilt which is both disproportionate and psychologically unhealthy. However, healthy guilt has the potential to evoke an appropriate sense of remorse and lead to changed behavior. This process can be a critical stage in responding to the awareness of mortality which is awakened in a time of loss.[93] Understanding and respecting this notion, Martin Buber wrote that "there exists real guilt," that there is value in the "paining and admonishing heart" and that reparation, reconciliation, renewal require a conscience "that does not shy away from the glance into the depths and that already in admonishing envisages the way that leads across it... Man is the being who is capable of becoming guilty and is capable of illuminating his guilt."[94] The Talmudic *aggadot* examined in this chapter respond to the destruction of the Temple and give us the opportunity explore the way in which guilt and the theology of sin and repentance can provide meaning in the context of loss.

This chapter will briefly trace the evolution of rabbinic theology regarding suffering, sin and repentance, and explore how this theodicy is reflected in the rabbinic response to the destruction of the Temple.[95] This survey is not exhaustive. After

[92] Judith Viorst, Necessary Losses. (New York: Ballantine Books, 1986), pp. 139-140.

[93] Ibid., pp. 141-150.

[94] Buber, Martin. May 1957. "Guilt and Guilt Feelings," *Psychiatry*, Vol. 20, No. 2, p. 119, p. 118, p. 121, p. 128 as quoted in Judith Viorst's Necessary Losses, (New York: Ballantine Books, 1986), p. 150.

[95] This survey of the evolution of rabbinic theology regarding suffering is not

analyzing several key Talmudic *aggadot*, the chapter will conclude with a presentation of how this response to loss is understood in the field of pastoral care and counseling. The clinical models of Rabbi Kerry Olitzky and Dr. Carol Ochs and Rabbi Israel Kestenbaum serve as new paradigms for understanding this elemental stage of the grief process. Rabbi Kerry Olitzky and Dr. Carol Ochs examine the role of *teshuvah* (repentance) in spiritual guidance. Rabbi Kestenbaum interprets the rabbinic concept of "*ben gil*" as way in which pastoral caregivers might address the sense of estrangement and exile that results from sin in the context of suffering and loss.

After the Destruction of the Temple in the year 70 CE, Jews were once again faced with the question, "Where is God and how will we atone for our sins?" Left without the classical means of atonement and a priestly code which was rendered irrelevant, the rabbis confronted the challenge of re-envisioning Jewish law and Jewish life. Deeply connected to the collective memory of the destruction of First Temple, the rabbis looked back to the Bible for comfort, strength, and guidance. The dominant Biblical readings advance the notion that repentance leads to restoration.[96] One need only look back to the foundational stories of Genesis to see that suffering is interpreted as a direct punishment from God-- and expression of Divine Retribution. The classical prophets also explain suffering by means of this cause and effect relationship (see, for example, Jeremiah 25:11-12, Isaiah 3:16-26, 5:24-29, Ezekiel 3:17-21, and 39:23). Isaiah wrote: "Tell the righteous it shall be well with them, for they shall eat the fruit of their deeds. Woe to the wicked, it shall be ill with them, for what their hands have done shall be done to them" (Isaiah 3:10-11). The prophetic tradition asserted a direct link

exhaustive, but it offers a general understanding of the progression of rabbinic thinking on this complicated theological issue.

[96] David Kraemer, Responses to Jewish Suffering in Classical Rabbinic

between disaster and guilt. For the prophets, the sin in question was most often national (as opposed to individual in nature), in the sense that either the nation acted wrongly or evil behavior was so widespread that it was characteristic of the nation as a whole. The prophets also presumed a sense of proportion with regard to the severity of the sin and the requisite punishment.[97] In Ezekiel 33:32, we see that it is only by means of repentance that the House of Israel will be assured of life.[98] This theology helped to de-mystify both the cause of the destruction and the path of recovery and is further advanced in much of the Writings as well. It is clear that while retributive suffering is not the only response to loss in the Bible,[99] it is certainly central to Biblical ideology.

Dr. Michael Stone discusses the way in which theodicy became a central issue for writers in the Second Temple period. The documents he cites reflect the basic assumptions that "Israel's suffering was thought to be the result of sin; a punishment inflicted by God who established a covenant with the nation. Israel's fate was seen as bound to Israel's action and God's justice."[100] For example, Stone cites "Achior the Ammonite who suggests to Holofernes, the enemy general contemplating an attack on Jerusalem, that he examine the deeds of Israel. Only if they had sinned against God could they be vanquished (Judith 5:17-18)." [101] Also from the Second Temple age, Stone cites the "Psalms of Solomon" in which a conclusion is reached that Pompey's desecration of

Literature, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 51-52.

[97] Robert Goldenberg "Early Explanations of the Destruction of Jerusalem," Journal of Jewish Studies 33 (1982), p. 519.

[98] David Kraemer, Responses to Jewish Suffering in Classical Rabbinic Literature, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 21.

[99] See Job and Ecclesiastes.

[100] M.E. Stone, "Reactions to Destruction of the Second Temple." Journal for the Study of Judaism 12 (1981), p. 196.

[101] Ibid., p. 197.

the Temple mount was the result of Israel's sin (see, e.g., 2:1-3, 16).[102] These two examples are characteristic, Stone claims, of the theodicy expressed in other documents of the time and are carried forward into the thinking and writing of future generations.

Well versed in the biblical tradition laid forth by earlier generations and perhaps the contemporaneous writings of the Second Temple Period as well, the rabbis drew upon these foundational ideas in attempting to understand and come to terms with the catastrophe they faced in their time. The Mishnah, explains Dr. David Kraemer, upholds this approach and insists that suffering, pain, and loss are "believed to be punishment for sin, on the level of both the individual and the community."[103] For example we see in *Mishnah Shabbat* 2:6 that "For three sins women die in childbirth: because they are not cautious in [their observance of] *niddah* [= the requirement for separation during their menstruation (Leviticus 15:19-24)], and in *hallah* [= the separation of the required priestly portion from dough (Numbers 15:17-21)], and in the lighting of the [Sabbath] candle." In another mishnah attributed to Rabbi Meir in *Kiddushin* 4:14 we read, "Rabbi Meir says: A man should never teach his son a clean and easy profession and pray to the One who is master of wealth and possessions. For there is no profession in which there is not poverty and wealth; for neither is poverty from the profession nor is wealth from the profession, rather everything is according to his merit."[104] Unambiguously, we see an underlying value in the Mishnah that reward and punishment are operative in this world. Dr. Kraemer points us to a most poignant expression of this theology articulated in *Mishnah Ta'anit* (4:4) which describes the requirement of fasting and other restrictions

[102] Ibid.

[103] David Kraemer, Responses to Jewish Suffering in Classical Rabbinic Literature, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 55.

[104] Ibid., p. 56.

in response to the anniversary of the destruction of the first and second Temples. Kraemer remarks that the restrictions imposed are *not* mourning customs; rather, they are ritual restrictions associated with *Yom Kippur* and the process of atonement. "By analogy," Kraemer reasons, "we may say that the present response to the destruction is to seek atonement. Thus the destruction must be viewed as evidence of and punishment for sin (otherwise there would be no need for atonement)." [105] While God's mercy is also extended at times in both the biblical and rabbinic sources, the biblical notion of perfect justice is alive and well in the theology of the Mishnah.

The Tosefta remains closely tied to the Mishnaic archaic precedent. We witness only a slight shift as the Tosefta introduces comments on the destruction and offers hope for its restoration. In Dr. Kraemer's estimation, the rabbinic sensibility with regard to retributive suffering only begins to shift with the *halakhic midrashim*.[106] While the Jerusalem Talmud's response to suffering is rather strict and uncompromising,[106] it is the Babylonian Talmud which boldly charters new terrain, expressing more radical views and echoing conventional ones as well. Kraemer likens the Babylonian Talmud's range to "that of the biblical canon itself, where Deuteronomy, Ezekiel, Job, and Ecclesiastes are all offered as authoritative (= divine) alternatives."[107] The Babylonian *aggadot* featured in this chapter represent the dominant theology of Divine justice most characteristic of the Talmud as a whole. As Dr. David Roskies asserts regarding rabbinic theodicy in Midrash, "History was personalized. Abstract concepts of guilt-retribution-restoration

[105] Ibid., p. 60.

[106] Ibid., 211-212.

[107] Ibid., p. 213.

were translated into dramatic vignettes."[108]

> *Shabbat* 119b-120a
> Why was Jerusalem destroyed? Abaye said because its people profaned the Sabbath. As it is said, *and they have closed their eyes to My Sabbaths, therefore I am profaned in their midst.* (Ezekiel 22:26).[109] Rabbi Abbahu said it was because they neglected their prayers, to recite the Shema mornings and evenings. For it is said, *Ah, Those who chase liquor from early in the morning, and till late in the evening are inflamed by wine! Who, at their banquets, have lyre and lute, timbrel, flute, and wine; but who never give a thought to the plan of the Lord, and take no note of what He is designing. Assuredly, My people will suffer exile for not giving heed, its multitudes victims of hunger and its masses parched with thirst.* (Isaiah 5:11-13) Rabbi Hamnuna said because they stopped teaching Torah to their children. For it is said, *Pour it* (your wrath) *on the infant on the street* (Jeremiah 6:11) Why pour it out? Because the infant is on the street (instead of having schools provide it for him). Ulla said it was because they did not have an appropriate sense of boundaries with one another. For it is written, *They have acted shamefully; They have done abhorrent things--yet they do not feel shame, and they cannot be made to blush. Assuredly, they will fall among the falling, they will stumble a the time when I punish them-- said the Lord.* (Jeremiah 6:15) Rabbi Yitzhak said because the small and the great were made equal. For it is said, *Layman and priest shall fare alike*; which is followed by, *The earth shall be utterly bare. It shall be utterly plundered.* (Isaiah 24:2-3)[110] Rabbi Amram, quoting his father, Rabbi Simon ben Abba, who had quoted Rabbi

[108] David G. Roskies, ed. The Literature of Destruction: Jewish Responses to Catastrophe. (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), p. 49.

[109] Note that this verse is directly connected to priestly corruption (a perceived cause of the destruction of the Temple) and is full of cultic and Temple imagery. The whole verse reads:"Her priests have violated My Teaching: they have profaned what is sacred to Me, they have not distinguished between the sacred and the profane, they have not taught the difference between the unclean and the clean, and they have closed their eyes to My sabbaths. I am profaned in their midst."
כֹּהֲנֶיהָ חָמְסוּ תוֹרָתִי וַיְחַלְּלוּ קָדָשַׁי בֵּין-קֹדֶשׁ לְחֹל לֹא הִבְדִּילוּ וּבֵין-הַטָּמֵא לְטָהוֹר לֹא הוֹדִיעוּ וּמִשַּׁבְּתוֹתַי הָעְלִימוּ עֵינֵיהֶם וְאֶחַל בְּתוֹכָם׃

[110] "People," here, is understood as a synonym for the humble masses; "priest" symbolizes the great. Like the aforementioned verse from Ezekiel, this verse draws attention to the context of the Temple cult. The rabbinic statement implies that the Temple is destroyed precisely because the hierarchical structure which sustained it was neglected.

> Hanina, said it was because they did not rebuke each other. For it is said, *Her leaders were like stags that found no pasture*: (Lamentations 1:6) Just as the leader, the head of one is at the side of the others's tail, so Israel of that generation hid their faces in the earth,[111] and did not rebuke each other... Rav Yehudah said Jerusalem was destroyed because they held the wise sages in contempt. For it is said, *But they mocked the messengers of God and disdained His words and taunted His prophets until the wrath of the Lord against His people grew beyond remedy.* (II Chronicles 36:16) Rava said it was because there were no more trustworthy people in the city. For it is said, *Roam the streets of Jerusalem, search its squares, look about and take note: You will not find a man, there is none who acts justly, who seeks integrity that I should pardon her.* (Jeremiah 5:1) Is that so?! Didn't Rabbi Ketina say that even at its worst Jerusalem always had some trustworthy people. As it is said, *For should a man seize his brother, in whose father's house there is clothing: "Come, be a chief over us"*-- things that people cover themselves over with are in Your hand, (Isaiah 3:6),[112] *"and let this ruin be under your care"* -- things of which people do not stand by unless they [first] stumble over them are in Your hands. (They must first make mistakes before they arrive at certainty.); [therefore] *be our chief.*

Immediately we are struck in this *aggadah* with the profound need to determine a reason for the Temple's destruction. The rhetorical phrase, לא חרבה ירושלים אלא בשביל ...ש (meaning "It could have only been destroyed because of...") gives us the sense that the rabbis are desperately seeking a reason for the calamity that befell them.[113] Their sense of God's justice in this world is evident with the listing of each of the seven reasons and their scriptural proofs. Like the Biblical prophets cited in the *aggadah*, the rabbis are insistent here on the connection between wickedness and disaster. In violating the covenantal obligations set forth in the Torah, Israel could expect only catastrophe in

[111] A metaphor for deliberately shutting their eyes to evil.

[112] Rashi explains that when questioned on learning they hide themselves, pretending not to hear, because they cannot answer.

[113] See also *Midrash Aggadah* 21:1 and a parallel source in *Midrash Tehillim* 82:1: "Jerusalem was destroyed only because justice was perverted, as it is said, *Your rulers are rogues and cronies of thieves, everyone avid for presents and greedy for gifts* (Isaiah 1:23)."

return. The reasons for the Temple's destruction include: profaning the Sabbath, neglecting to say the prescribed prayers at the proper times, neglecting to teach children Torah, the inability to feel a sense of shame and remorse, the inability to distinguish between the priestly and non-priestly class, the cessation of personal rebuke/social critique, the lack of respect for the learned elders of the community, and the lack of trustworthy people. Each of these reasons implies both a legal and moral transgression. As Dr. Roskies writes, "The rabbis cut history down to manageable size by disassembling the Great Destruction into archetypes and moral lessons."[114] Rabbi Ketina's final statement reminds us, however, that there are some things that human beings cannot learn or perform appropriately until they fail by them. It is only through sin, or wrong action, that humans face their potential for change and right action, enabling them to return to God.

This *aggadah* is not only a confessional intended for communal self-flagellation and shame. Rather it is a demonstration of the rabbis' courage to look critically at themselves to identify what it may have been that either directly or indirectly led to Jerusalem's destruction. Using the dominant rabbinic theodicy, this *aggadah* outlines what was broken in their world, by virtue of their *own* sins. By calling attention to the brokenness, they hoped to send out an exhortation of repair. The rabbis were highly attuned to the notion that *teshuvah* would help them mitigate the sense of estrangement they felt in relationship to God, the community, and themselves as individuals in the wake of this trauma. It was the process of looking inward, not pointing the finger outwards towards the oppressors, that would ultimately help them heal the broken society with which they were left. These rabbis saw the destruction as an opportunity not only to make sense of their loss, but to awaken their commitment to live just lives, create a holy

community, and renew their covenant with God.

> *Yoma* 9b
> The first Temple,why was it destroyed? Because of three things that were in it: idol worship and prohibited sexual relations, and bloodshed. Idol worship, as it is written: *For the couch is too short for stretching out* (Isaiah 28:20). What is the meaning of the this verse? Rabbi Yonatan said: "The couch [meaning the Temple] is too short to have two rulers [implying God and false idols]. *And the cover too narrow for curling up* (Ibid.)! Rabbi Shmuel bar Nahamani said: Every time Rabbi Yonatan would get to this verse he would weep. He would say: He [God] of Whom it is written: *He heaps up the ocean waters like a mound* (Psalm 33:7), has an idol become God's rival? Prohibited sexual relations, as it is written: *The Lord said: Because the daughters of Zion are so vain and walk*-- this means that a tall woman would walk next to a short woman [to make herself appear taller than she actually was and therefore more attractive], *with heads thrown back*-- this means with erect posture, *and with roving eyes*-- this means that they would wear eye makeup, *and with mincing gaits*-- this means they pranced, *making a tinkling with their feet* (Isaiah 3:16)-- Rabbi Yitzhak said this means they wore perfume and sprayed it in their shoes whenever they were around young unmarried men driving the evil inclination into them like the venom of an angry [snake]. Bloodshed, as it is written: *Menashe put so many innocent persons to death that he filled Jerusalem [with blood] from end to end* (II Kings 21:16). But the second Temple,where they were engaged in the study of Torah, and [the performance of] *mitzvot* and deeds of loving kindness, why was it destroyed? Because there was in it baseless hatred. [This is] to teach you that baseless hatred is equivalent to three [grave] transgressions: idol worship and prohibited sexual relations and bloodshed.[114]

As with the *aggadah* from *Shabbat* described above, this *aggadah* makes the powerful point that wrongdoing is at the root of catastrophe. The destruction was unmistakably punishment for their sins. There is an initial parity set up between the destruction of the First and Second Temples, but it eventually breaks down. Even worse

[114] This translation is adapted from the translation in David Kraemer's Responses to Jewish Suffering in Classical Rabbinic Literature, pp. 176-177 (which is based on the Vilna edition and the Munich manuscript). This text is is all Tosefta *Menahot* 13:22 with some slight differences.

than the sins of idol worship, prohibited sexual relations, and bloodshed, the people of the Second Temple period, while occupying themselves with *mitzvot*, were also engaged in baseless hatred. Because of the gravity of this moral sin above and beyond the rest, the *aggadah* make the point that ongoing punishment was necessary-- namely the lack of restoration after the destruction of the Second Temple. The *gemara* continues its search for guilt.[115] The following aggadic fragment from *Kallah Rabbati*[116] offers a variation of this *aggadah*.

> *Kallah Rabbati* 54b
> According to Rabbi Yohanan, what was the cause of the destruction of the First Temple? Idolatry. And of the Second Temple? Baseless hatred. And baseless hatred is worse than idolatry. From where do we know this? For it is written, *Ephraim is addicted to images--let him be* (Hosea 4:17). As long as they are joined together-- even to worship their idols, let them alone. And it is also written, *Their hearts are divided; now they will bear their guilt* (Hosea 10:2).

While the *aggadah* from *Yoma* 9b implied that the sin of baseless hatred is worse than idolatry, here, it is explicit.[117] This *aggadah* makes the point that sinning against God by harboring senseless hatred of another person is the gravest of sins, and it is precisely this kind of communal sin which brought catastrophe upon the entire people of Israel.

> *Gittin* 55b-56a
> Rabbi Yohanan said, "What [is meant] by the Scripture, *Happy is the man*

[115] Ibid., p. 178-179.

[116] *Kallah Rabbati* is one of the minor tractates appended to the end of *Nezikin* in the Babylonian Talmud. There are two versions of this tractate, a shorter version consisting of one chapter and a longer one containing ten chapters. The longer version, from which this *aggadah* is taken, resembles the format of the Talmud, consisting of *beraitot* and *Gemara*. There is disagreement over its authorship and dating. Some date it to the 8th century and others attribute it to much earlier generations. (Encyclopedia Judaica. *Kallah*, pp. 709-710.)

[117] Note, however, that scholars are not certain that *Kallah Rabbati* reflects the perspective of the Babylonian Talmud on the whole.

who is cautious always, but the one who hardens his heart falls into misfortune (Proverbs 28:14)?" Jerusalem was destroyed because of Qamza and Bar Qamza. Tur Malka was destroyed because of a cock and a hen. Beitar was destroyed because of a the shaft of a litter. Jerusalem was destroyed because of Qamza and Bar Qamza. A certain man whose friend was named Qamza and whose enemy was named Bar Qamza held a banquet. He said to his servant, "Go and bring me Qamza." He went and brought Bar Qamza. He (the host) came and found him sitting [at the banquet]. He said, "Since that one (you) are the enemy of that man (me), what are you doing here? Get up and leave." He said to him, "Since I am here, let me be, and I will pay for what I eat and drink." He said to him, "No." [He said,] "I will pay for half the banquet." He said to him, "No." [He said,] "I will pay for the whole banquet." He said to him, "No." He grabbed him, forced him up and threw him out. He (Bar Qamza) said, "Since the rabbis were sitting and did not intervene, I will go and inform against them at the King's palace." He said to the Emperor, "The Jews are rebelling against you." He said, "Who says?" He said to him, "Send a sacrifice and see if they offer it." He (the Emperor) sent a fine calf with him (Bar Qamza). While he was traveling he made a blemish in it, in the upper lip, and some say in the withered spots of its eye, a place which we (Jews) consider a blemish, but they (Romans) do not consider a blemish. The rabbis considered offering it for the sake of maintaining peace with the [ruling] kingdom. Rabbi Zecharia ben Avqulos said to them, "Should they say that blemished animals may be offered on the altar?" The rabbis considered killing him (Bar Qamza) in case he should go and tell him (the Emperor). Rabbi Zecharia ben Avqulos said to them, "Should they say that one who causes a blemish [to sacrifices] is killed?" Rabbi Yohanan said, "The meekness of Zecharia ben Avqulos destroyed our temple and burned our sanctuary and exiled us from our land." He (the Emperor) went and sent Nero the Emperor against them. When he arrived, he shot an arrow to the East. It went and fell in Jerusalem. To the West. It went and fell in Jerusalem. To all four directions. It went and fell in Jerusalem. He said to a child, "Recite your study-verse to me." He said to him, "*I will wreak my vengeance on Edom through My people Israel and they shall take action against Edom in accordance with My blazing anger; and they shall know my vengeance-- declares the Lord God* (Ezekiel 25:14)." he said, "The Holy One, Blessed be He, wants to destroy his house and He wants to wipe clean his hands with that man (=me)!" He fled and converted, and Rabbi Meir descended from him. He (the Emperor) sent Vespasian the Emperor against them. He came and

besieged it for three years.[118]

This *aggadah*, which focuses exclusively on the second destruction, is taken from a much longer composite narrative at Gittin 55b-58a, known as the "*aggadot* of destruction."[119] Upon citing the scriptural verse from which the *drash* will emerge, the *sugya* begins with an announcement: "Jerusalem was destroyed because of Qamza and Bar Qamza. Tur Malka was destroyed because of a cock and a hen. Beitar was destroyed because of a the shaft of a litter." While this analysis will focus only on the destruction of Jerusalem and the story of Qamza and Bar Qamza, each of the three suggestions is explored in the *sugya*. This is a profound story about the power of shame and arrogance to wreak destruction upon a community and God's beloved city and Temple.

In this story, a certain man, a friend of Qamza and an enemy of Bar Qamza gives a feast and requests that his servant invite Qamza. Instead, the servant mistakenly brings Bar Qamza. The host publicly and shamelessly orders that Bar Qamza leave the premises, despite Bar Qamza's multiples pleas to allow him to stay and spare him his dignity. But Bar Qamza is eventually ejected, and to make matters worse, the rabbis in attendance do nothing to protest the action of the host. As a result, Bar Qamza decides to take revenge by falsely reporting to the Roman emperor that the Jews were rebelling against him. In order to prove this claim, Bar Qamza suggests that the emperor send a sacrifice to be offered on his behalf at the Temple. The emperor agrees and Bar Qamza promises to take the animal to the Jews. On the way, however, Bar Qamza causes a

[118] This translation (based on his translation of Manuscript Arras 969) is taken from Jeffrey Rubenstein, Talmudic Stories, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), pp. 140-141.

[119] Jeffrey Rubenstein, Talmudic Stories, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), p. 140.

blemish to the animal effectively disqualifying it from being offered for sacrificial purposes in the Temple. In strict accordance with the law, Zecharia ben Avqulos insists that the laws regarding blemished sacrifices be obeyed regardless of the consequences. The refusal to offer the animal (because of the blemish) offers proof to the emperor of the Jew's rebellion and so the emperor sends Nero to destroy the city. After learning that God would punish the one who destroyed the Temple, however, Nero decides to send Vespasian in his place, and from there follows the destruction of Jerusalem and the holy Temple.

Jeffrey Rubenstein argues in his structural analysis of this aggadah, that the "lack of structure other than the linear progression coheres with one message of the story : that in the absence of decisive action events tend to snowball until calamity results."[120] Rubenstein argues that form contributes to the message; in this case, the sin of silence perpetrated by the rabbis who stand by in the face of injustice at the feast, bring about the destruction of Jerusalem. He also argues in his literary analysis that the prolepsis form (whereby a short summary statement of the culmination is provided at the outset), in which the mention of the destruction of Jerusalem is a flash forward to the end of the story, shifts the focus of the story from "*what* will happen (since this is known) to *how* and *why* it happened."[121] This literary technique enables the reader to identify the primary narrative tension in the story as the meekness and moral failure of the rabbis. And it is this point that connects us to the scriptural verse cited at the outset.

While the first half of the verse "Happy is the man who is cautious always, but the one who hardens his heart falls into misfortune" (Proverbs 28:14) celebrates the cautious

[120] Ibid., p. 147.

[121] Ibid.

and God-fearing man, the second half of the verse conditions the promise of happiness upon the ability to act, re-act, and remain sensitive to the world around him. As Rubenstein explains, "The same fear of God that instills a sense of meekness, taken too far and applied in the wrong setting, results in paralysis and misfortune, in the destruction of Jerusalem."[122] Rubenstein's final thesis is that this story is ultimately about the failures of rabbinic leadership. Unwilling to compromise, make difficult decisions, and take legal risks, the rabbis bring pain and suffering on their community.[123]

Dr. David Kraemer's analysis of this *aggadah* seems to agree with Rubenstein's final assertion. At the end of this *aggadah*, God is described as supporting Bar Qamza by destroying the Temple. Kraemer suggests that this line would be better translated as "allowing" the Temple to be destroyed based on the fact that earlier in the *aggadah*, God is praised for remaining silent in the face of Titus's abominations. Kraemer writes, "The God of the destruction is a God of silence, of self-removal, but not of intervention... we would do better to understand God's position as one of passive cooperation. The destruction itself is the mechanical result of human frailties and failures."[124] The dominant rabbinic model is clear: accounting for suffering and healing from loss demands that humans also take responsibility for their actions and atone for their sins. This process of *teshuvah* is intimately connected to the restoration or redemption that awaits.

Berakhot 55a
Both Rabbi Yohanan and Rabbi Eleazar said, "As long as the Temple was

[122] Ibid., p. 151.

[123] Ibid., pp. 159-160.

[124] David Kraemer, Responses to Jewish Suffering in Classical Rabbinic Literature, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 181-182.

in existence, its altar was the means of atonement for Israel, but now each person's table is the means of atonement."

Among its many functions, the Temple and its cult were the means for atonement for both individuals and the community in the House of Israel. The rabbis struggled with how the community would effectively repent in their new religious world order. In this text, we see the dramatic shift that took place from the centralized place of atonement (primarily in the hands of the priestly class) to the individual homes of each and every member of the people of Israel. This signals a radical change in the democratization and decentralization of Jewish life. As Jacob Neusner writes, "The Pharisees thus arrogated to themselves-- and to all Jews equally-- the status of the Temple priests and did the things which priests must do on account of that status. The table of every Jew in his home was seen to be like the table of the Lord in the Jerusalem Temple."[125]

It is important to note that the rabbis did not eliminate the system of identifying sin and offering the proper atonement; rather, they ingeniously recreated an innovative and substitutional system that would enable the community and individuals to carry on the values and legal principles of Judaism. In effect, this text assumes that eating a meal at one's dining table, like sacrificing at the altar in the Temple, brings one closer to God and facilitates atonement. Unlike other aspects of Temple life which fell into desuetude, this short aggadic statement reminds us that repentance was a pillar of Jewish faith and Jewish living that the rabbis were intent on preserving it-- with or without the Temple.

This physical and symbolic substitution of sacrifices for confession, contrition, and atonement is featured in another aggadic source attributed to Yehoshua ben Levi.

[125] Jacob Neusner, "Judaism in a Time of Crisis: Four Responses to the Destruction of the Second Temple," in Early Rabbinic Judaism. (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1975), p. 44.

Sanhedrin 43b
Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: One who sacrifices his evil inclination and confesses over it, the verse regards him as if he honored God in tow worlds, this one and the world to come, for it is written, *Whoever sacrifices a thanksgiving offering honors Me"* (Psalm 50:23). And Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: When the Temple stood [if] a person offered an *olah* [= expiation sacrifice], he receives credit for an *olah*, a *minhah* [= a tribute sacrifice], he receives credit for a *minhah*, but one who is humble, the verse regards him as if he offered all the sacrifices, as it is said, *A sacrifice to God is a contrite spirit [; God, You will not despise a contrite and crushed heart]* (Psalm 51:19). Moreover, his prayer is not despised as it is said, *God, You will not despise a contrite and crushed heart.*[126]

In this *aggadah*, we see the rabbis adding a dimension of morality to the sacrificial atonement process. Baruch Bokser writes: "This verse [taken from Psalm 51] describes David beseeching God to forgive him for his sins with Bathsheba. Since he knows that sacrifices will not appease God (verse 18), perhaps because he willfully sinned while sacrifices atone only for inadvertent acts, David appeals to Him in confession and prayer and asks the Lord to make him a model for all sinners that they too can repent (verse 15)."[127] David, like the rabbis, identifies a connection between his transgressions and the suffering that has come upon him. The only way to emerge from this impure state is through God's mercy and sincere repentance. In a sense, by democratizing the atonement process, as exemplified in the two aforementioned *aggadot*, the rabbis expressed a desire and need for *all* Jews to do *heshbon nefesh* and repent, and as a result, to establish greater closeness to God in the face of their suffering and loss.

The aforementioned rabbinic texts were created and passed on to explore the question of the destruction of the Temple but are used today as we face loss in our own

[126] Translation based upon that of Baruch M. Bokser, in "Rabbinic Responses to Catastrophe: From Continuity to Discontinuity," Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research 50 (1983), p. 51.

[127] Ibid.

lives. While there is much we can learn from these *aggadot*, it is important to note that destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem is not necessarily relatable to the experiences of loss and destruction we face today. These *aggadot* are particularly poignant, however, in examining the way we construct "causality" in our lives and the world around us as well as the distinctive response of repentance which the rabbis so powerfully advanced. While it is possible that the rabbis deliberately crafted their "guilty" responses in order to present rabbinic Judaism as a response (or solution), "guilt," in a clinical sense, is an extremely primal response to loss. This powerful emotion expresses the anger that one feels for being forced to suffer which is so painful and continuous that it is eventually turned inward.[128] One can, in fact, easily be driven into an irrational state of breast-beating and self-flagellation in order to satisfy an insatiable urge to punish oneself. While a pastoral caregiver may help the mourner put the mistakes or misjudgments in the proper perspective and suggest why the mourner could not possibly have known what the implications of those decisions would be, the emotion is not rooted in reason. Instead, it is often a *healthy* part of the nature of bereavement itself.

Rabbi Jacob Goldberg explains the sources from which the emotion of guilt emerges. One of the sources of guilt is what is known as "survivor's guilt"-- a tension between limitless love and extreme selfishness. He writes, "On the one hand, there is a genuine sadness at the cutoff of the life of the beloved; on the other, there is a surprising covert exultation at being alive." [129] This is not to say that the mourner can necessarily identify this emotional paradox. The counselor, however, needs to appreciate the vague, complex, and even irrational response of guilt. The second source of guilt Rabbi

[128] Rabbi Jacob Goldberg, Pastoral Bereavement Counseling. (New York: Human Sciences Press, Inc., 1989), p. 126.

[129] Ibid., p. 128.

Goldberg points to is the mourner's own unconscious nee "to reassert a sense of control over his own destiny." He goes on to say that, "This too leads to conflicting feelings. One part of his being perceives that he is forced to accept the reality of loss of control while another part is squirming and rebelling against it."[130] Loss leaves people feeling utterly helpless. In time, *healthy* guilt and repentance may offer mourners a way of rehabilitating their sense of control and order in the world. The objective of the pastoral caregiver is not to analyze or rationalize the emotion of guilt; rather, he or she is charged with identifying it, listening to it, and compassionately guiding the mourner toward recognizing it, working through it, and using it toward a productive and healing end.

The Hebrew word for sin, *heit*, can be understand in several different ways including: the arrow that misses the mark, a transgression of a God-given commandment, or a disregard for the standards of behavior established by the rabbis.[131] Early on in the Torah we read, "Why are you distressed and why is your face fallen? Surely, if you do right, there is inspiration. But if you do not do right sin crouches at the door; It's urge is toward you, yet you can be its master" (Genesis 4:6-7). Dr. Ochs and Rabbi Olitzky explain that we are taught two things in this powerful verse. They write, "First, our distress and our feeling of being downcast mark our vulnerability to temptation. But second, we can master the urge to sin, we can be uplifted to overcome it."[132] They go on to describe the role of the spiritual guide as one who helps seekers see this truth and encourage them along their way-- all the while, nurturing the seekers' relationship with God. Ochs and Olitzky claim that the focus should remain on the motivation of the sin,

[130] Ibid., p. 129.

[131] Carol Ochs and Kerry M. Olitzky, Jewish Spiritual Guidance. (San Francisco: Josey Bass, Inc., 1997), p. 135.

[132] Ibid.

not the specific behavior itself, because it is a direct reflection of the state of one's relationship with God.[133] Interestingly, the cure for the sin is returning to God (*teshuvah*), not distancing oneself from God. These authors poignantly write,

> If sin implies that we have ceased to follow the pillar of cloud, *teshuvah* is a decision to look beyond the effect of the error and to seek the cloud again. If sin is regarded as falling asleep, *teshuvah* is waking up. If sin is failure to see and esteem the sacred text of the other, *teshuvah* is a heightened sense of the other. If sin is weariness, *teshuvah* is a shaking off of weariness. *Teshuvah* is renewal of our covenant with God.[134]

The role of the spiritual guide is to alert the seeker to the wake-up call for *teshuvah*, help the seeker discern God's presence in all that happens, keep the seeker's relationship with God changing and growing, foster openness and attentiveness in the seeker to the gift of God's guidance, and ultimately, to help the seeker find the strength to "endure the spiritual desert."[135]

Hosea exhorts the people to "Return O Israel, to the Lord your God" (Hosea 14:2). He asks them to go back to God and continue searching for God even when God feels absent. Feeling and experiencing God in the darkness, or the "desert," is one of the deepest spiritual challenges. But instead of escaping from God in the face of loss, it is the role of the pastoral care giver to help those who have experienced loss to choose to look for God again. It is not only about returning to God; rather, it is about returning *God* to this world. For it is in this spirit that God says, "I will heal their affliction generously and I will take them back in love" (Hosea 14:5).

Despite this mandate to return to God and return God to the world, the question of

[133] Ibid., pp. 135-136.

[134] Ibid., 150.

[135] Ibid., pp. 150-154.

"Why?" or "Why me?" inevitably arises in the context of loss and suffering. This question has no truly satisfying answer.[136] However, even if an answer offers no comfort or relief, it is a real and nagging human urge to ask such questions. As Rabbi Kerry Olitzky writes, "We may never discover a reason for our suffering, but we have to be unafraid to search for it, even outside traditional parameters."[137] Pastoral care givers may address such questions in a myriad of ways. One approach is to examine the feelings that accompany these existential questions including: anger, loneliness, and helplessness. Validating and affirming the feelings that come with loss may, in effect, satisfy the need for a concrete answer or explanation for our suffering. Asking the "why" question, may in fact give rise to healing-- both in the way we respond to and make meaning from our loss.

Healing comes from the process of reaching for and engaging in a relationship with God. These underlying existential questions which are addressed in the aforementioned *aggadot* have the potential to both lead us toward a deeper, more nuanced relationship with the Divine *and* to teach us how we might change our ways and live holier lives. Recognizing that sin is a part of every person and every community's life, Rabbi Joseph Dov Soloveitchik offers a complex and rich interpretation of repentance. He suggests:

> There is another way-- not by annihilating evil but by rectifying and

[136] Following the *aggadah* from *Yoma* 9b (with a parallel at *yYoma* 1:1 38cd), the following statement is recorded: "Rabbi Yohanan and Rabbi Eleazar-- both of them said: the earlier generation, whose sin was revealed-- their endtime was [also] revealed. the later generation, whose sin was not revealed-- their endtime was [also] not revealed." This statement reminds us that these rabbis did not know why the Temple was destroyed and when it would be rebuilt. Despite the search, no sin could provide a satisfying answer. (See Robert Goldenberg. "Destruction of Jerusalem," p. 524.)

[137] Kerry Olitzky, Jewish Paths toward Healing and Wholeness. (Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2000), p. 6.

> elevating it. This repentance does not entail making a clean break with the past or obliterating memories. It allows man, at one and the same time, to continue to identify with the past and still return to God in repentance...[this type of repentance] infuses him with a burning desire to come as near as he can to the Creator of the Universe and attain spiritual heights undreamed of before he sinned. Man then becomes infused with strength and power he did not have previously... It is the memory of sin that releases the power within the inner depths of the soul of the penitent to do greater things than ever before. The energy of sin can be used to bring one to new heights.[138]

In other words, like the rabbis, Soloveitchik argues there is value in remembering and even memorializing the ways in which we have erred. In stead of denying or disconnecting from sin, there is a way of elevating and repairing it so as never to do it again. This process is in itself empowering and healing. Repentance is not a one time occurence; rather, it is an ongoing process. Rabbi Olitzky reminds us of the rabbis' advice:"Repent a day before your death" (*Pirke Avot* 2:10), which, of course, means every day.[139]

The *U'netaneh Tokef*, a central prayer in the liturgy of the Days of Awe, offers us a compelling response to the uncertain nature of life and our existence in the face of loss as well as an additional angle pastoral care givers might address with those who are suffering from loss. The prayer says: "On Rosh Hashanah it is written, and on Yom Kippur it is sealed... Who shall live, and who shall die... But repentance, prayer, and deeds of loving kindness can lessen the severity of the decree." In other words, human beings may not control their ultimate fate, but they can choose the way in which they respond to their loss and suffering. Repentance is the first of the three foundational

[138] Rabbi Joseph Dov Soloveitchik, On Repentance, translated and edited by Pinchas Peli. (New Jersey: Jason Aronson Inc., 1996), p. 254.

[139] Ibid., p. 91.

responses to suffering cited in this medieval prayer and echoed in classical Jewish sources. Rabbi Myriam Klotz, the Rabbinic Director of the Kimmel-Spiller Jewish Healing Center in Delaware and the spiritual director at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College writes that "Suffering often challenges us to reconsider our long-held self-image and to consider carefully how we have been living. Suffering can prompt self-examination, calling us to learn from our mistakes and to move on. One can respond to suffering by doing *teshuvah*-- seizing the opportunity to make a fresh start." [140] Repentance can be constructive, and even redemptive. In the words of the Gerer Rebbe, "As the seed contains the fruit, so exile contains the essence of redemption within itself."[141]

The notion of estrangement or exile is, in fact, closely related to the experience of suffering and loss in the field of pastoral care. When we sin, we enter a sort of spiritual exile. Distance from ourselves, from others, and from God. Dorothy Soell, in her classic book, Suffering, describes suffering as an experience of estrangement that can be discerned on three levels: community, family, and self.[142] We see this manifested in the way people who have experienced pain, illness, or loss feel disconnected and alone even when there are others around them. We also see this in the way people feel separated from themselves, or the people that they knew themselves as before they experienced loss. The relationship to community, family, and self must be renegociated and refashioned to meet the new reality of those who grieve.

[140] Rabbi Myriam Klotz, "Wresting Blessings: A Pastoral Response to Suffering," in Jewish Pastoral Care. Ed. Rabbi Dayle Friedman. (Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2001), p. 49.

[141] David Wolpe, Making Loss Matter. (New York: Riverhead Books, 1999), p. 45.

[142] Dorothy Soelle, Suffering. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975).

Rabbi Israel Kestenbaum writes extensively on the notion of "*ben gil*" as it pertains to the way pastoral care givers might respond to the sense of estrangement of those who suffer and grieve. The Talmud teaches that "anyone who visits the sick takes away one-sixtieth of his or her suffering,"[143] but adds that the statement is only true of the visitor is "*ben gilo*." Commentators argue over the precise meaning of this phrase. Some suggest the visitor should be the same age as the one visited,[144] while other interpret it to mean that the visitor must be of the same astrological sign.[145] Rabbi Kestenbaum comments that in either case, whether of similar age or temperament, such a person has "a greater capacity to create an empathic bond and hence, a healing relationship."[146] Empathy is the cornerstone of pastoral care and the gift of a healing relationship. In order to create this empathic bond, however, the care giver must be able to identify the sense of estrangement within him or herself. Rabbi Kestenbaum writes that this means having access to our own stories and our sense of vulnerability.[147] This does not imply that there will ever be complete understanding or identification with the other, but it does mean that by exploring feelings of estrangement within oneself, the pastoral care giver is better equipped to help others grow and heal from their experiences of loss.

[143] Babylonian Talmud *Nedarim* 39a. Various versions of the text differ as to whether the visitor alleviates one-sisteieth of the "suffering" of the sick or of the "illness" itself according to Rabbi Israel Kestenbaum, "The Gift of Healing Relationship," in Jewish Pastoral Care Ed. Rabbi Dayle Friedman. (Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2001), p. 14.

[144] "Either young like him or an elderly visitor for the elderly, " Rashi, *Nedarim* 39a.

[145] Rabbenu Nisim, *Nedarim* 39a.

[146] Rabbi Israel Kestenbaum, "The Gift of Healing Relationship," in Jewish Pastoral Care Ed. Rabbi Dayle Friedman. (Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2001), p. 7.

[147] Ibid., pp. 9, 13.

We read in the Talmud, "when a person sees suffering come upon him, he should examine his ways."[148] Like Rabbi Kerry Olitzky, I do not interpret this to mean that those who suffer necessarily *deserve* the pain and anguish they experience; However, it is possible and potentially beneficial to imagine the ways in which they may have contributed to its emergence. And it is precisely this process of scrutinizing our actions and establishing new priorities that may best promote the healing that is so desperately needed. In examining past behaviors and linking them to the present experience of suffering, change can emerge, enabling people to build a foundation for the future.[149] Pastoral care givers are charged with helping navigate the difficult, yet rewarding path of repentance and forgiveness. Rabbi David Wolpe writes so eloquently, "To be cast out is to lose trust, but to build a home inside is to regain that trust in ourselves and in other people... Leaving can be an opportunity."[150]

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[148] Babylonian Talmud, *Berakhot* 5a.

[149] Kerry Olitzky, Jewish Paths toward Healing and Wholeness. (Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2000), p. xxx.

[150] David Wolpe, Making Loss Matter. (New York: Riverhead Books, 1999), p. 47.

Chapter Three: Substitutional and Behavioral Responses

The destruction of the Temple left the rabbis ever more devoted to the preservation and creation of a living, authentic, and relevant Judaism. In order to preserve continuity and guard against discontinuity with the past, the rabbis progressively, creatively, and painstakingly re-created a religious order built upon the foundation stones of the Judaism they knew while making significant paradigmatic changes in light of the Temple's destruction. Dr. Baruch Bokser writes, "It is a commonplace that rabbinic Judaism heightened the importance of extra-Temple practices ... as part of a response to the destruction of the Second Temple and the end of the sacrificial system."[151] Torah study, prayer, and acts of lovingkindness became the three pillars of Jewish life after the destruction of the Temple.[152] Each of these pillars was explored, expanded, and made relevant to Jews as a way of both responding to the crisis they faced and re-envisioning a new, and even improved way, of religious observance. Bokser calls this process the "selection and reworking of the biblical heritage to fill the gulf created by the Temple's loss."[153] No longer a people of the Temple or the land, the rabbis devised a new way of being in which Jews truly became "the people of the book." In the words of the contemporary author and essayist, Jonathan Rosen, "It wasn't a calcified culture but a flexible one, that helped prepare those Jews to endure the chaos of

[151] Baruch Bokser, "Rabbinic Responses to Catastrophe: From Continuity to Discontinuity." Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research 50 (1983), p. 37.

[152] This is based on the "The Three Pillars of Simeon the Righteous" recorded in the fourth chapter of Avot D'Rabbi Natan.

[153] Baruch Bokser, "Rabbinic Responses to Catastrophe: From Continuity to Discontinuity." Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research 50 (1983), p. 37.

a shifting world."[154]

This chapter will begin by briefly outlining the development of substitutional responses to the destruction in rabbinic literature and as well as sketch the psychodynamic issues which undergird this process. The chapter will then analyze particular Talmudic *aggadot* that are representative of the process of sanctifying and institutionalizing rabbinic Judaism in place of the Temple rites which could no longer be practiced after the destruction. Finally, this chapter will explore some therapeutic and pastoral care literature which connect this rabbinic process to the psychological and spiritual process of re-organizing, re-prioritizing, and re-envisioning life that occurs after experiencing a traumatic loss. In particular, I will examine the works of Rabbi Goldberg, who focuses on the context of pastoral bereavement counseling, Judith Viorst, who investigates the psychology of transition and integration, and Dr. Judith Lewish Herman who explores this stage of recovery in response to trauma. Additionally, I will comment upon the role of Torah, prayer, and acts of lovingkindess in pastoral care with those facing loss.

The Mishnah, our earliest example of the rabbinic treatment of the Temple's loss, deals with this reality in various ways. One approach is to write[155] as if the Temple remains operative while simultaneously describing "extra-Temple rites."[156] Bokser

[154] Jonathan Rosen, The Talmud and the Internet. (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2000), p. 83.

[155] Note that there are conflicting ideas on the oral or written nature of the Mishnah's transmission. See Martin Jaffee, Torah in the Mouth: Writing and Oral Tradition in Palestinian Judaism. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

[156] The distinction "extra-Temple," is used by Baruch Bokser (See "Rabbinic Responses to Catastrophe: From Continuity to Discontinuity" and "*Ma'al* and Blessings Over Food: Rabbinic Transformation of Cultic Terminology and Alternative Modes of Piety"). I will use this phrase in order to describe religious practices that were innovated in response to the loss of sacrificial rites or religious practices which may have been in

explains that,"In contrast to biblical and Second Temple sources which characterize the latter practices as secondary, contingent on the official cult, or mere private means of piety designed to supplement the public ones, the Mishnah gives them an independent and heightened role."[157] In this way, the Mishnah succeeds in innovating "by restructuring the old patters without necessarily openly introducing new ideas or rituals."[158] In a similar fashion, the Tosefta notes how the extra-Temple rites may serve to fulfill the religious needs which were previously performed only through the Temple, however, these substitutes are never deemed "replacements."[159] So while the Tosefta is not explicit in acknowledging the loss of the Temple, it attempts to fill the gulf created by its destruction. It is only later amoraic sources which establish a formulation in which the substitutional response might actually serve as replacements and even superior alternatives to the earlier Temple rites. We also know that by the year 70 CE, the Temple had already lost some influence because of the invention of the synagogue which was proliferating in the Land of Israel and beyond.[160] One scholar suggests that

effect (i.e. the study of Torah), but took on heightened significance (in place of the sacrifices) in the wake of the Temple's destruction.

[157] Ibid., p. 41.

[158] Ibid. See also Mishnah Pe'ah 1:1 in which we read: "These are the things tha have no measure: corners of the field [left for the poor], and the first fruits [to be taken to Jerusalem], and appearing [at the Temple on the three pilgrimage festivals], and acts of loving kindness, and study of Torah. And these are the things that a person benefits from their fruit in this world and the capital is laid up for him in the world to come: honoring [one's] father and mother, and acts of loving kindness, and bringing peace between a person and his fellow, and the study of Torah is equal to them all."

[159] Ibid., p. 44. See also Tosefta Pe'ah 4:19, 21 in which we read: "Charity and acts of loving kindness are equal to (*shkulin k'neged*) all the commandments in the Torah."

[160] David William Nelson, Responses to the Destruction of the Second Temple in the Tannaitic Midrashim. (Michigan: University Microfilms International, 1991), p. 4. Also note, however, that the Temple and the synagogue served different functions that are not necessarily mutually exclusive. There may *not* be a causal relationship between the diminishing of the Temple's significance and the proliferation of synagogue life.

> The synagogue universalized official Jewish ritual practice while democratizing worship by taking it out of priestly hands... Moreover, the synagogue radically changed the content of this ritual, shifting the focus from sacrifice and libation to Torah study and prayer. Finally, the synagogue welcomed within its confines the congregation as a whole, unlike the Temple where people were kept at a distance, often far removed from the scene of the ritual.[161]

We understand, therefore, that the emergence of rabbinic Judaism was the result of the catastrophic destruction of the Temple in addition to other historical, religious, cultural, social, political, and economic forces that were already at play.[162]

The amoraic approach to the destruction openly acknowledges that substitutional, extra-Temple practices may replace or serve as superior alternatives to the Temple rites. Bokser cites several texts, including *Sukkah* 49b and *Berakhot* 32b which are designed to emphasize this new way of thinking. In these texts, the superiority of acts of lovingkindness, charity, and prayer are contrasted with the inferiority of the animal offerings. This also reflects the likely reality in which people felt sufficiently distant from the sacrificial system on a physical, emotional, and psychological level.[163] The Babylonian amoraic sources have parallel statements in the post-mishnaic Palestinian texts as well. We read, for example, in *Yerushalmi Berakhot* 2:1, 4b that God prefers charity and justice over sacrifices, and that prayer in a synagogue is equivalent to offering

[161] LI Levine, "The Second Temple Synagogue: The Formative Years," In The Synagogue in Late Antiquity (Philadelphia: JTSA/ASOR 1987), p. 7 (as quoted in David William Nelson, Responses to the Destruction of the Second Temple in the Tannaitic Midrashim. (Michigan: University Microfilms International, 1991), p. 5.)

[162] See also Jacob Neusner's "Emergent Rabbinic Judaism in a Time of Crisis," in Early Rabbinic Judaism. (Leiden: EJ Brill, 1975) in which he discusses the proliferation and popularity of synagogue life long before the Temple was destroyed.

[163] Ibid., pp. 47-50.

a pure tribute offering (*minhah*).[164]

Bokser concludes that the patterns he witnessed from his literary observations may also reflect a certain historical reality. In other words, the different trends in thinking may correspond to different chronological stages. He claims that "people's thinking might reflect the degree of social significance that they attached to the Temple cult. The more they accepted the Temple's loss, the greater on a practical level did they openly speak of superseding it." It makes sense, therefore, that Talmudic sources nostalgically glorified the Temple while at the same time used their creativity and distance from the actual destruction to re-imagine Jewish law and Jewish life. This pattern has strong resonances in the psychodynamic response to trauma and loss as well.

Dr. Mortimer Ostow's psychoanalytical study in Jewish responses to crisis describes this process as "working through." He writes that this "is a process of accommodating to the traumatic disruption of the group's life by taking proper cognizance of the facts, remoralizing the group, and making appropriate plans for the future."[165] By virtue of this process, the rabbis devised a new basis for the functioning of Jewish life over the course of several centuries. Ostow includes in this process activities such as:

> Recollecting the traumatic events in detail so as to overcome the denial which was the initial response to overwhelming trauma; examining the implications of these events for the present and the future; recollecting similar events from the past and taking courage from the fact that they were overcome; reconstructing personal and group myths which provide a sense of origin, continuity, identity and destiny; [and] making practical

[164] Baruch Bokser, "Rabbinic Responses to Catastrophe: From Continuity to Discontinuity." Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research 50 (1983), p. 52.

[165] Mortimer Ostow, "The Jewish Response to Crisis." Conservative Judaism 33 (Summer 1980), p. 25.

> plans for the future that will compensate for the losses of the trauma and that will promise a reasonable prospect of protection against similar trauma in the future.[166]

The implications of "working through" trauma may include a renewed sense of purpose, identity, moralization, and rebirth.

Robert Goldenberg, another scholar who writes on this topic, explains that the rabbis reacted in two ways. One approach was to substitute activities linked to the Temple cult. Another approach was centered on defining the substitutes as temporary until the cult was restored in some future time. Substituting activities linked to the Temple cult, Goldenberg claims, forces people to come to terms with tragedy from a psychological perspective by adjusting to the lost and moving beyond it. This reaction is perhaps the most difficult, but is deemed the healthiest in the long term. The second reaction is initially much less psychologically painful, but is not as healthy in the long term because it avoids a final process of "working through" the loss and coping with the grief. Goldenberg asserts that the rabbinic response hovers somewhere between those two poles by preserving ancient religious forms while completely revising their content.[167]

The following *aggadot* represent a sampling of rabbinic material which express the value of substitutional responses in the wake of the destruction of the Temple. The rabbis, over the course of hundreds of years, confronted their loss through study and observance of *mitzvot*. The primary substitutional responses include: the study of Torah,

[166] Ibid., pp. 15-16.

[167] See Robert Goldenberg, "The Broken Axis: Rabbinic Judaism and the Fall of Jerusalem," Journal of the American Academy of Religion 45 Supplement (1977): 869-882 and Robert Goldenberg "Early Explanations of the Destruction of Jerusalem," Journal of Jewish Studies 33 (1982): 518-525.

prayer, and acts of lovingkindness.

> *Shabbat* 30a
> Said He [God to King David], *For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand* [anywhere else] (Psalms 84:11): Better is to Me the one day that one sits and engages in learning Torah than one thousand burnt-offerings which your son Solomon is destined to sacrifice before Me on the altar.

In this short *aggadah* in which David inquires of God about his death, the principle is clearly presented: Study itself is regarded in rabbinic Judaism as an act of sacrificial worship. In fact, the study of Torah is, in this case, *superior* to the offering of sacrifices.[168] It is also worth noting that this passage is attributed to Rav Yehudah and Rav, both of whom are considered to be early amoraim. The fact that they were amoraim, albeit at the beginning of that period, may account for their attitude regarding extra-Temple rites-- namely, their willingness to declare the superiority of extra-Temple rites as opposed to earlier sources which were more reluctant to do so. This new relationship between Torah study and Temple worship is exhibited once again in the following *aggadah*.

[168] We see a similar sentiment expressed in *Sanhedrin* 44b: "Rav Shmuel bar Unia said in the name of Rav: The study of the Torah is more important than the offering of the *Tamid* [sacrifice], since it is written, *I have now come* (Joshua 5:14) [to reprimand you, Joshua-- not on account of your failure to offer the *Tamid* sacrifice, but for the present offence-- neglecting the study of the law]." This Talmudic statement follows a *mishnah* which discusses the appropriate forms of confession for the guilty person who stands ten cubits from the place of his imminent stoning. The person facing the death penalty is instructed to confess in order to preserve a portion for himself in the world to come. The ultimate message of this *aggadah* is that it is more serious an offense to waste time that could be spent studying Torah (*bittul Torah*) than to miss offering a sacrifice. See also *Megillah* 16b in which we read:"Rav-- or some say Rav Shmuel bar Marta-- said: The study of the Torah is superior to the building of the Temple, for as long as Barukh ben Neriah was alive, Ezra would not leave him to go up [to the land of Israel]." In this case, we learn that the study of Torah is so important that it supersedes the religious obligation to go to the land of Israel. The pilgrimage to Jerusalem required in order to participate in the re-building of the Temple and its requisite sacrifices, considered one of the holiest and most critical *mitzvot* before the destruction, is now deemed inferior to the study of Torah.

Menahot 110a

A song of Ascents. Now bless the Lord, all you servants of the Lord, who stand nightly in the house of the Lord. (Psalm 134:1) What is the meaning of "nightly?" — Rabbi Yohanan said, This refers to the wise sages who engage in the study of the Torah at night: Scripture accounts it to them as though they were engaged in the Temple service. *This is Israel's eternal duty.* (II Chronicles 2:3)[169] Rav Giddal said in the name of Rav, This refers to the altar built [in heaven], where Michael, the great Prince,[170] stands and offers up an offering. Rabbi Yohanan said, It refers to the scholars who are occupied with the laws of Temple service: Scripture accounts it to them as though the Temple were built in their days. Resh Lakish said, What is the significance of the verse, *Such are the rituals of the burnt offering, the meal offering, the sin offering, the guilt offering, the offering of ordination, and the sacrifice of well-being.* (Leviticus 7:37) [It teaches that] one who engages in the study of Torah is as though he were offering a burnt-offering, a meal-offering a sin-offering, and a guilt-offering. Rava asked, Why then does the verse say, ***For** the burnt-offering, **for** the meal-offering*?[171] It should have said, ***a** burnt-offering, **a** meal-offering*! Rather, said Rava, it means that one who engages in the study of Torah needs neither burnt-offering, nor meal-offering, nor sin-offering, nor guilt offering. Rabbi Yitzhak said: Why is it written, *This is the law of **the** sin-offering* (Leviticus 6:18); and *This is the law of **the** guilt-offering* (Leviticus 7:1)?

Again, we see the rabbinic agenda of creating new alternatives and possibilities for Jewish life and worship in their post-destruction world. This *aggadah* concludes tractate *Menahot* which is dedicated primarily to the laws of sacrifices. The rabbis are

[169] II Chronicles 2:3 implies that the altar-offerings will never cease. The whole verse reads: "*See, I intend to build a House for the name of the Lord my God; I will dedic ate it to Him for making incense offering of sweet spices in His honor, for the regular rows of bread, and for the morning and evening burnt offerings on sabbaths, new moons, and festivals, as is Israel's eternal duty.*"

[170] Israel's guardian angel, See Daniel 12:1 .

[171] According to the verse in the Torah, each of the sacrifices includes the pre-fix "ל." The verse reads:

ויקרא ז') ואת התורה לעולה למנחה ולחטאת ולאשם) This *aggadah* is questioning the need for the pre-fix "ל." In addition to the answer proposed by the *aggadah*, another interpretation might be that לעולה stands for לא עולה (no need for a burnt-offering).

making a powerful statement by ending this tractate with the idea that the study of the Torah makes atonement like the offering of sacrifices. Even more, the final message of this *aggadah* implies that one who studies the Torah no longer has a need for the various sacrificial offerings.[172]

> *Berakhot* 8a
> Thus said Rav Hisda: This is the meaning of the passage. *The Lord loves the gates of Zion, His foundation on the holy mountains, more than all the dwellings of Jacob* (Psalms 87:2), that is, the Lord loves the gates marked for study of the *Halakha* more than the houses of prayer or the houses of study. And this conforms with the following saying of Rabbi Hiyya bar Ammi in the name of Ulla: Since the day that the Temple was destroyed, the Holy One, blessed be He, has nothing in this world but the four cubits of *Halakha* alone. Abaye said: At first I used to study in my house and pray in the synagogue. Since I heard the saying of Rabbi Hiyya bar Ammi in the name of Ulla: "Since the day that the Temple was destroyed, the Holy One, blessed be He, has nothing in His world but the four cubits of *Halakha* alone," I pray only in the place where I study. Rav Ammi and Rav Assi, though they had thirteen synagogues in Tiberias, prayed only between the pillars where they used to study [in the *Beit ha'Midrash*].

This *aggadah* advances the importance of Torah and the study of Jewish law. While there is no explicit mention of the Temple's destruction here, it is impossible to ignore that this is the context in which this *aggadah* emerges. The argument presented in this *aggadah* is that the place where *halakhah* is studied has the highest priority. The

[172] See also *Avot d'Rabbi Natan* (Chapter 4): "Shimon the Righteous was among the last of the men of the Great Assembly. He used to say: On three things the world stands-- on the Torah, on the Temple Service, and on Acts of Loving Kindness. On the Torah: How so? Behold, it says, *For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings* (Hosea 6:6). Therefore we see that the burnt offering is the most beloved of sacrifices, for the burnt offering is entirely consumed by the flames, as it is said, *And the priest shall turn the whole into smoke on the altar* (Leviticus 1:9), and elsewhere it says, *And Samuel took a suckling lamb, and sacrificed it as a whole burnt offering to the Lord* (I Samuel 7:9). But the study of Torah is more beloved by God than burnt offerings. For if a man studies Torah he comes to know the will of God as it is said, *Then will you understand the fear of the Lord and find the will of God* (Proverbs 2:5). Therefore, when a sage sits and expounds to the congregation, Scripture accounts it to him as though he had offered up fat and blood on the altar."

Hebrew words for "Zion" (*Tziyon*) and "study/expounding upon" (*m'tzuyanim*) are spelled alike in Hebrew (appearing as if from the same etymological root), hence the homiletical interpretation of the verse. The statement regarding God's dwelling place on earth since the destruction of the Temple is appropriate given the traditional notion that God dwelled in the Temple.[173] After the destruction of the Temple, the rabbis attempt to understand where it is God continues to dwell and where God's presence can be felt. The answer is none other than the House of Study-- the places in which people gather to study Torah.

> *Ta'anit* 27b
> Mishnah: And the Israelites of the *mishmar*[174] assembled in their cities and read [from the Torah] the story of creation, Gemara: On what is this based? — Rabbi Ya'akov bar Aha said in the name of Rav Assi: Were it not for the *Ma'amadot*[175] heaven and earth could not exist, as it is said, *And he said: "O Lord God, how shall I know that I am to possess it"* (Genesis 15:8)? Abraham said: "Sovereign of the Universe, should Israel sin before You will You do to them [as You did] to the generation of the Flood[176] and to the generation of the Dispersion?[177] [God] said to him:

[173] See Psalms 18:7, Daniel 5:3, and Nehemiah 6:10

[174] Sacrifices at the Temple were offered by twety-four groups of priests knowsn as *mishmarot*, or "watches." Each group was responsible for offering the sacrifices for a week and were called upon to perform this duty approximately twice a year. See Adin Steinsaltz, The Talmud: The Steinsaltz Edition - A Reference Guide. (New York: Random House, 1989), p. 221.

[175] A *ma'amad*, literally meaning a "post" or "division," is a term used to describe the group of non-priests which corresponded to each of the *mishmarot*. The entire Jewish people living in the Land of Israel was divided into twenty-four *ma'amadot*. Each time, a *mishmar* went up to the Temple to offer sacrifices, part of the corresponding *ma'amad* would go as well. The remainder of the *ma'amad* would reamain home and would fast each day of that week (Monday-Thursday) and read special portions from the Torah along with special prayers. See Adin Steinsaltz, The Talmud: The Steinsaltz Edition - A Reference Guide. (New York: Random House, 1989), p. 221.

[176] Genesis 6, 9ff.

[177] Genesis 11:1-9.

> "No." Abraham then said to him: "Sovereign of the Universe, Let me know how *I am to possess it*." [God] said to him: "*Bring me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old she-goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young bird.*" (Genesis 15:9).[178] [Abraham then] said before Him: "Sovereign of the Universe! This holds while the Temple remains standing, but when the Temple no longer exists, what will become of them?" [God] said: I have already long ago established for them in the Torah the order of sacrifices, and whenever they *read it* I will account it to them as if they had sacrificed them before me and I will grant them pardon for all their iniquities.

The mishnah excerpted in this *aggadah* is taken from a much longer mishnah in which the rabbis discuss the function and purpose of the *ma'amadot* in which selected groups of Israelites would travel to Jerusalem to represent the entire people at the Temple when the sacrificial service was performed.[178] Additionally, the rabbis discuss the appropriate scriptural sections which are to be read on the occasion of the *ma'amadot*. In this case, it is determined that the story of creation be read. What is most fascinating is that this mishnah and gemara put forth a radical concept-- namely, God forsaw the need to replace the offering of the sacrifices. Bokser explains that we can logically deduce, "If the Temple rites are inferior to or replaced by extra-Temple or extra-sacrificial rites, such as prayer or study of Torah, and if God is all knowing, from the beginning He must have taken account of this development... Temple rites were thus not designed to be permanent, these sources imply that the Temple cult lacked an inherent transcendent importance."[179]

In the same way that Torah study grew in importance and centrality to Jewish life after the destruction, prayer took on additional religious significance, liturgical

[178] Indicating that Israel would obtain forgiveness through the sacrifices.

[179] Baruch Bokser, "Rabbinic Responses to Catastrophe: From Continuity to Discontinuity." Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research 50 (1983), p. 53.

complexity, and legal development. Moreover, we acquire the notion that prayer may serve as a sacrifice of the lips or "*avodah sh'ba'lev*" (sacrificial worship of the heart). This concept emerges right alongside the heightened importance of Torah study.

> *Berakhot* 26b
> It has been stated: Rabbi Yossi in the name of Rabbi Hanina said: The prayers (the formal standing prayers known as the *Tefillot*) were instituted by the Patriarchs. Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi says: The prayers (*Tefillot*) were instituted [by the *Anshei Knesset ha'Gedolah*] to replace the daily sacrifices. It has been taught in a *baraita* in accordance with Rabbi Yossi in the name of Rabbi Hanina, and it has been taught in accordance with Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi. It has been taught in a *Baraita* in accordance with Rabbi Yossi in the name of Rabbi Hanina: Abraham instituted the morning *Tefillah*, as it says, *Next morning, Abraham hurried to the place where he had stood before the Lord*, (Genesis 19:27) and "standing" means only prayer, as it says, *Then stood up Phineas and prayed.* (Psalm 106:30) Isaac instituted the afternoon *Tefillah*, as it says, *And Isaac went out to meditate in the field toward evening*, (Genesis 24:63) and "meditation" means only prayer, as it says, *A prayer of the lowly man when he is faint and ours forth his plea before the Lord.* (Psalm 102:1) Jacob instituted the evening *Tefillah*, as it says, *He came upon [va-yifga] a certain place*, (Genesis 28:11) and "*pegi'ah*" means only prayer, as it says, *As for you, do not pray for this people, do not raise a cry of prayer on their behalf, do not plead with [tifga] with Me.* (Jeremiah 7:16) It has also been taught in a *Baraita* in accordance with Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi: Why did they say that the morning *Tefillah* [could be said] up until midday? Because the regular morning sacrifice (morning *Tamid*) could be brought up to midday. Rabbi Yehudah, however, says that [it may be said] up to the fourth hour because the regular morning sacrifice may be brought up to the fourth hour. And why did they say that the afternoon *Tefillah* can be said up to the evening? Because the regular afternoon sacrifice (afternoon *Tamid*) could be brought up to the evening, ... [He must hold therefore that] the Patriarchs instituted the *Tefillot* and the Rabbis found a basis for them in the sacrifices.

In filling the gulf that was created after the destruction, the rabbis engaged in a complex and creative process of re-working the biblical heritage. By virtue of this process, the dramatic changes that took place within the agenda of rabbinic Judaism were

deeply rooted in biblical tradition. This *aggadah* serves as a prime example. In this case, the central obligatory prayer, the *Sh'moneh Esreh*, which is recited thrice daily is seen as a direct substitute for the appropriate sacrifices which would have been offered in the Temple at the same times throughout the day. In order to support this radical change and construct a theological bridge of continuity, the rabbis linked each of these "offerings" to verses in Genesis which the rabbis interpret as references to the forefathers' daily prayers. The rabbis are clearly projecting their agenda back onto the text, but the message is powerful indeed. Not only does prayer serve as an effective substitute for the Temple sacrifices which can no longer be offered, but it also carries the piety, honor, and merit of the earliest forefathers of the Jewish people. Moreover, prayer is chronologically prior to the Temple offerings, and is therefore even more fundamental to Jewish life.

The history and liturgical development of the *tefillah* is fascinating in and of itself. One Talmudic tradition is that the *Anshei Knesset ha'Gedolah* (the Great Assembly) instituted it in the generation of Ezra (5th century BCE) and transmitted it to the Pharisees centuries later.[180] While there is no evidence that such an assembly ever existed, the rabbis are clearly invoking the authority of this ancient (and perhaps mythic) legal body in order to understand the passing of tradition. In other words, this "new" set of formal prayers that were being instituted had roots reaching back to time of the First Temple. Additionally, the *tefillah* itself most fully expresses the theology and religious-political agenda of the rabbis. Therefore, it is no coincidence that this liturgical piece took on such importance by virtue of the rabbis' ability to frame it within the context of the sacrificial system.

[180] See *Megilah* 17b-18a. Note that the "Great Assembly" is commonly referred to here as "one hundred and twenty Elders."

Berakhot 32b

Rabbi Eleazar said: prayer is more efficacious than sacrifices, as it says, *What need have I of all your sacrifices?*, (Isaiah 1:11) and this is followed by, *And when you lift up your hands.* (Isaiah 1:15) [Since spreading of hands is mentioned after sacrifice, it must be regarded as more efficacious.] Rabbi Yohanan said: Any priest who has committed manslaughter should not lift up his hands [to say the priestly benediction], since it says [in this context], '*Your hands are stained with blood*'. (Isaiah 1:15) Rabbi Eleazar also said: From the day on which the Temple was destroyed the gates of prayer have been closed, as it says, *And when I cry and plead, He shuts out my prayer.* (Lamentations 3:8) But though the gates of prayer are closed, the gates of weeping are not closed, as it says, *Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear to my cry; do not disregard my tears.* (Psalms 39:13) Rava did not decree a fast on a cloudy day because it says, *You have screened Yourself off with a cloud, that no prayer may pass through.* (Lamentations 3:44) Rabbi Eleazar also said: Since the day that the Temple was destroyed, a wall of iron has intervened between Israel and their Father in Heaven, as it says, *Then take an iron plate and place it as an iron wall between yourself and the city, and set your face against it.* (Ezekiel 4:3) [This wall was the symbolic wall separating Israel from God.] Rabbi Hanin said in the name of Rabbi Hanina: One who lengthens his prayer does not pass unheeded. How do we know this? From *Moshe Rabeinu*; for it says, *And I prayed to the Lord,* (Deuteronomy 9:26) and it is written afterwards, *And that time too, the Lord gave heed to me.* (Deuteronomy 9:19) But is that so? Has not Rabbi Hiyya bar Abba said in the name of Rabbi Yohanan: If one lengthens his prayer and looks for the fulfillment of his prayer, in the end he will have pain in the heart, as it says, *Hope deferred sickens the heart*? (Proverbs 13:12) What is his remedy? Let him occupy himself with Torah, as it says, *But desire realized is a tree of life*; (Proverbs 13:12) and the tree of life is the Torah alone, as it says, *She is a tree of life to those who grasp her*! (Proverbs 3:18) — There is no contradiction here: [For one statement speaks of] one who lengthens one's prayer and looks for the fulfillment of his prayer, [and the other speaks of] one who lengthens one's prayer without looking for the fulfillment of his prayer. Rabbi Hama son of Rabbi Hanina said: If a man sees that he lengthens his prayer and [his prayer] is not answered, he should pray again, as it says, *Look to the Lord; be strong and of good courage!; O look to the Lord*! (Psalms 27:14)

This aggadah is composed of three parts. First, it presents us with an example of the articulation of the superiority of extra-Temple rites. In this case, prayer is seen as a

perfectly appropriate and efficacious substitute for the sacrifices. The proof lies in the scriptural verse describing the lifting of hands which the rabbis interpret to mean the offering of the priestly benediction (a prayer). This passage in Isaiah is an ideal biblical text for the rabbis to draw upon.[8] First, it details as part of Isaiah's opening prophecy, the disgust and disdain God has for the improper motives that accompanied the offering of the sacrifices. The sacrifices are deemed "futile" and even "offensive" in the eyes of God. Though the people will "lift up [their] hands" and "pray at length," God will not listen, for God has condemned their evil ways and their immorality. The only solution, prophesies Isaiah, is to "Wash yourselves clean, put your evil doings away from My [God's] sight. Cease to do evil; learn to do good. Devote yourselves to justice; aid the wronged, uphold the rights of the orphan, and defend the cause of the widow." (Isaiah 1:16-17).

The second part of this *aggadah* begins with Rabbi Eleazar's second comment regarding the closing of the "gates of prayer" since the destruction of the Temple. After this time, only weeping and tears can penetrate the separation that had been created between God and Israel. This imagery acknowledges the depth of pain, sadness, and emotional distance felt by the rabbis, who are at the same time attempting to create a new vision of Jewish worship. (See Chapter One for a fuller analysis of this portion of the

[8] See Isaiah 1:11-17: "What need have I for all your sacrifices? said the Lord; I am sated with burnt offerings of rams, and suet of fatlings, and blood of bulls; And I have no delight in lambs or he-goats. That you come to appear before Me, who that of you? Trample my courts no more. Bringing oblations is futile; incense is offensive to Me; new moons and sabbath, proclaiming of solemnities, assemblies with iniquity, I cannot abide. Your new moons and fixed seasons fill Me with loathing; they are a burden to Me; I cannot endure them And when you lift up your hands, I will turn My eyes away from you; though you pray at length, I will not listen; your hands are stained with crime. Wash yourselves clean; put your evil doings away from My sight; cease to do evil; Learn to do good; devote yourselves to justice; aid the wronged, uphold the rights of the orphan, defend the cause of the widow."

aggadah.)

In the third section of this *aggadah*, Rabbi Hanin proposes the idea that the lengthening, or intentionality of prayer is key to reaching God. Rabbi Hiyya bar Abba challenged this idea by claiming that if one prays and focuses on the fulfillment of that prayer, this will only lead to greater emotional pain. Torah study, he purports, is the only healing remedy for such a case. The contradiction is resolved, however, and it is established that one should lengthen one's prayers without focusing solely on the fulfillment of those wishes. If the prayer is not fulfilled, one is encouraged to keep praying with strength, fervor, and conviction. The message of the *aggadah* is clear: prayer is the answer.

> *Avot d'Rabbi Natan*, Chapter 4
> [On three things the world stands-- on the Torah, on the Temple Service, and on Acts of Loving Kindness.] On Acts of Loving Kindness: How so? Behold, it says, *For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings* (Hosea 6:6). From the very first the world was created only with mercy, as it is said, *For I have said, The world is built with mercy: there in the heavens You establish Your faithfulness* (Psalms 89:3). Once as Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai was coming forth from Jerusalem, Rabbi Yehoshua followed after him and beheld the Temple in ruins. "Woe unto us," Rabbi Yehoshua cried, "that this, the place where the iniquities of Israel were atoned for, is in ruins!" "My son," Rabban Yohanan said to him, "be not grieved." We have another atonement that is like it. And what is it? It is acts of loving kindness, as it is said, *For I desire goodness, not sacrifice* (Hosea 6:6). For thus we find concerning Daniel, that greatly beloved man, that he was engaged in acts of loving kindness. Now, what were the acts of loving kindness in which Daniel was engaged? Can you say that he offered burnt offerings and sacrifices in Babylon? Truthfully it had been said, *Take care not to sacrifice your burnt offerings in every place that you like; but only in the place that the Lord will choose in one of your tribal territories, there you will sacrifice your burnt offerings* (Deuteronomy 12:13-14). What then were the acts of loving kindness in which he engaged? He used to outfit the bride and make her rejoice, accompany the dead, give a

> *perutah* to the poor, and pray three times a day-- and his prayer was received with favor: as it is said, *And when Daniel learned that it had been put in writing, he went into his house--in whose upper chamber he had windows made facing Jerusalem-- and he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and made confession to his God, as he had always done.* (Daniel 6:11).

For Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakkai, the destruction of the Temple was not the end of Jewish atonement and piety. Rather, there were other means of reconciliation and expressions of religious life -- in this case, acts of lovingkindness. It is clear from this *aggadah* that Jews were now responsible to work toward rebuilding and reinstituting holiness by way of sacred community. Neusner writes, that "the holy altar must be the streets and marketplaces of the world, as, formerly, the purity of the Temple had to be observed in the streets and marketplaces of Jerusalem. In a sense, therefore, by making the laws of ritual purity incumbent upon the ordinary Jew, the Pharisees already had effectively limited the importance of the Temple and its cult."[182] These acts of compassion and righteousness were actually considered to be an equivalent offering to the sacrifices. Bokser claims that while this principle is not new (see Hosea 14:3, and apocryphal sources in Ben Sira 3:30 and Tobit 12:9), this formulation articulated in *Avot d'Rabbi Natan* (which some scholars date as late as the seventh or eight century)[183], is more likely to have been influenced by later conceptions.[184] Moreover, we see that the process of developing and institutionalizing substitutional responses was a process that

[182] Jacob Neusner, "Emergent Rabbinic Judaism in a Time of Crisis," reprinted in Early Rabbinic Judaism. (Leiden: EJ Brill, 1975), p. 47.

[183] H.L. Strack and G. Stemberger, Introduction to the Talmud and Midrash. (Scotland: T & T Clark, 1991), p. 247.

[184] Baruch Bokser, "Rabbinic Responses to Catastrophe: From Continuity to Discontinuity." Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research 50 (1983), pp. 38-39.

took place over the course of several centuries.

We also witness the rabbis constructing Daniel as an ideal rabbinic figure in this *aggadah*. According to the rabbis, Daniel (a pre-rabbinic figure) prays three times a day, rejoices with bride and groom, accompanies the dead, and gives tzedakah -- all rabbinically ordained *mitzvot*. The sages fashion Daniel in their own image in order to achieve their didactic and polemical needs.[185] Rabbinic scriptural commentary is inextricably linked to the rabbis' own agenda. In this case, the rabbinic curriculum is institutionalizing acts of lovingkindness, along with prayer and Torah study, as central theological and practical components of post-Temple Judaism.

> *Berakhot* 55a[186]
> Rabbi Yohanan and Rabbi Eleazar both explain that as long as the Temple stood, the altar atoned for Israel, but now a man's table atones for him [if he uses his table properly, by saying blessings over the food and sharing his meals with the needy.][187]

In this text, the eating of a meal at one's home dining table is likened to offering a sacrifice at the Temple altar, producing the same effect of bringing one closer to God. This is a yet another example of the amoraic sense that there were acceptable and even superior alternatives to the sacrificial system. In this case, Bokser comments, "Amoraim not only delineate physical replacements for the cult but find symbolic substitutes for it as well. They extensively moralize the sacrifices, interpreting the animal offerings as symbols of different human attitudes and actions."[188] The bracketed comment supplied

[185] The rabbis do this with other biblical figures as well. See Richard Kalmin, The Sage in Jewish Society of Late Antiquity. (New York: Routeledge, 1999).

[186] One can see variations/parallels of this text in *Menahot* 97a and *Hagigah* 27.

[187] This bracketed comment (see the *Ein Yaakov*, p. 51) most likely reflects the fact that the *Ein Yaakov* often worked with a different textual tradition.

[188] Baruch Bokser, "Rabbinic Responses to Catastrophe: From Continuity to Discontinuity." Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research 50 (1983),

by the *Ein Yaakov* further reinforces Bokser's assertion. By offering the appropriate prayers of gratitude and sharing one's food with those who are hungry, one effectively offers the requisite sacrifice, and in doing so reaches a higher state of holiness and connection with God. In this way, the Pharisees succeeded in translating the complicated and inconvenient ritual purity laws into a way of life that every Jew could replicate in his or her home.

> *Berakhot* 5a-b
> A *Tanna* recited before Rabbi Yohanan[189] the following: Anyone who busies himself with the study of Torah and acts of loving kindness and [nonetheless] buries his children, all his sins are forgiven. Rabbi Yohanan said to him: I grant you Torah and acts of loving kindness, as it is written: *Iniquity is expiated by loving kindness and truth.* (Proverbs 16:6) "Loving Kindness" is acts of loving kindness, for it is said: *He who strives to do good and kind deeds attains life, success, and honor.* (Proverbs 21:21) "Truth" is Torah, for it is said: *Buy truth and never sell it.* (Proverbs 23:23) But how do you derive [what you say about] the one who buries his children? — A certain Elder recited to him in the name of Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai: It is concluded [from a *gezeirah shavah* in the use of the word] "iniquity."[190] Here it is written: *Iniquity is expiated by loving kindness and truth.* (Proverbs 16:6). And elsewhere it is written: *But You visit the guilt of the fathers upon their children after them.* (Jeremiah

p. 50.

[189] It is worthy of noting that the idea of burying children despite the study of Torah and the performance of Mitzvot is an allusion to Rabbi Yohanan himself, who was a great scholar and a charitable man, and was bereft of his children.

[190] A *gezeirah shavah* is a Talmudic and Midrashic hermeneutic device which enables the rabbi to derive meaning from a word by contextualizing it within two different scriptural verses containing the same word.

The two verses which are being linked together by the word "עון" are:

(משלי טז:ו) בְּחֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת יְכֻפַּר עָוֹן וּבְיִרְאַת יְהוָה סוּר מֵרָע׃

(ירמיהו לב:יח) עֹשֶׂה חֶסֶד לָאֲלָפִים וּמְשַׁלֵּם עֲוֹן אָבוֹת אֶל-חֵיק בְּנֵיהֶם אַחֲרֵיהֶם הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת שְׁמוֹ׃

Again, note the language of iniquity and expiation which is directly linked to the terminology of the Temple service.

32:18)[191]

Once again, the rabbis are effectively replacing sacrifices as the means for atonement, with acts of lovingkindness and Torah study. The word for iniquity, עָוֹן, is the same terminology previously used in the context of cultic worship in the Temple.[192] The scriptural verses from the book of Proverbs, a central text in "wisdom literature" and a key text for the rabbis, help support the rabbinic agenda that *mitzvot*-- in this case, acts of lovingkindness and Torah study-- are efficacious in atoning for sin. Therefore, the fear that the people would no longer be able to expiate their sins after the destruction of the Temple is replaced with the confidence that if *mitzvot* are properly observed, Israel can continue to atone for their sins and find favor in God's eyes. This *aggadah* is representative of the rabbinic desire to interpret earlier sources (in this case the Bible) in order to teach a moral and theological lesson.

> *Sukkah* 49b (containing a version of *Tosefta Pe'ah* 4:19B)
> Said Rabbi Eleazar, The one who gives *tzedakah* is greater than [one who offers] all the sacrifices, as it is said, *To do righteousness(tzedakah) is more pleasing to God than sacrifices*. (Proverbs 21:3) Said Rabbi Eleazar, acts of lovingkindness are greater than *tzedakah*, as it is said, *Sow righteousness (tzedakah) for yourselves, reap the fruits of lovingkindness* (Hosea 10:12). If a person seeds, perhaps he eats, perhaps he does not eat. If a person reaps, he certainly eats. [As a reaped crop can no longer be ruined by the elements, so the direct acts of lovingkindness bring sure results.]

In this final *aggadah*, the rabbis teach (as they have for the study of Torah and the act of prayer), that acts of lovingkindness are actually superior expressions of righteousness, piety, and devotion to God than the sacrifices. Rabbi Eleazar uses the

[191] The entire verse reads: "You show kindness to the thousandth generation, but visit the guilt of the fathers upon their children after them."

[192] See Leviticus 22:16, 26:40, and Numbers 5:14.

metaphor of reaping and sowing, an agricultural image with complex pre and post-Temple legal implications, to advance a distinctly moral message. And, like Torah study and prayer, acts of lovingkindness are sure to bring meaningful and lasting results (see all of the aforementioned *aggadot*).

The *aggadot* presented in this chapter broadly represent a rabbinic agenda which sought to re-imagine Judaism in order that it survive and even thrive in a world without the Temple. The substitutional responses of Torah, prayer, and acts of lovingkindness signify a will to embrace life and find healing and recovery in the aftermath of a tragic loss. The rabbis aimed to strike a balance between the past that they vowed to remember and a the future that needed to be created. This creative process is marked by acceptance, adaption, and re-definition. It is precisely this process which underlies the psychological process of confronting loss. This stage of the process, whereby individuals and groups re-fashion and re-order their lives, might be understood as turning the corner in the grief process.

David Nelson suggests that the post-destruction psychological adjustment mechanism for the anti-Temple rhetoric can be explained by the "cognitive dissonance theory" which states:

> Cognitive dissonance exists when a person possesses two cognitions one of which is contradictory to the other... The term cognitions refers to thoughts, attitudes, beliefs, and also behaviors of which the person is cognitively aware... In saying that one cognition contradicts the other, Festinger means that if cognition A implies the presence of cognition B, then it is dissonant to hold cognition A and the opposite of cognition B at the same time... A basic assumption of the theory is that a state of dissonance motivates the person to reduce or eliminate the dissonance... How is dissonance reduced? One method is to decrease the number or imporatance of the dissonant elements... Another is to increase the number or importance of the consonant cognitions... A third way of reducing dissonance, is, of course, to change one of the dissonant elements

so it is no longer inconsistent with the other cognitions.[193]

Nelson explains that the overall effect of this cognitive theory on the rabbinic agenda was to reduce (retroactively) Judaism' s dependence on systems and institutions that had been destroyed in order to both diminish the trauma of the destruction and to facilitate the rebuilding of Jewish life without the destroyed "necessities." This behavioral response included disrupting and even shattering particular practices of Jewish life while at the same time proposing substitutes for Temple rites in the post-destruction era.[194]

Rabbi Jacob Goldberg calls the bereavement stage in which substitutional responses might emerge the stage of "working through" loss. In this stage, emotions can be broken down and a new psychological context can materialize. The mourner is less obsessed with past loss, feels more comfortable with the present, and is hopeful in thinking about the future. Goldberg calls this the "turning of the corner" in the journey through grief.[195] This is the point in which mourners move from the overriding feelings of sorrow, anger, and guilt, to imagine a new way of living in the world. Pastoral bereavement counselors serve an important role in this stage of confronting loss "by [their] evident personal faith in and professional acceptance of the validity of the process; by [their] application of counseling technique to encourage the mourner to enter the process; and by planning strategy to give the 'working through' process time to take

[193] D. Krech, R. Crutchfield, and E. Ballachey, Individual in Society: A Textbook of Social Psychology (New York: McGaw-Hill, 1962), p. 269; R. Brown, Social Psychology (New York: The Free Press, 1965), pp. 584; L. Wrightsman, Social Psychology (Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing, Co., 1977), p. 366.

[194] David William Nelson, Responses to the Destruction of the Second Temple in the Tannaitic Midrashim. (Michigan: University Microfilms International, 1991), p. 346.

[195] Rabbi Jacob Goldberg, Pastoral Bereavement Counseling. (New York: Human Sciences Press, 1989), p. 158.

hold."[196] The pastoral care giver is also a witness to the mourner's process and progress--enabling that person to better understand his or her growth. Dr. Ochs and Rabbi Olitzky remind us that "The seeker's journey is not a single brave effort; rather, it is the ongoing reality of the routine tasks and challenges of daily living. Whatever we build, we will have to continue to build." But the job of the spiritual guide is to assure the seeker that "the journey *is* the goal."[197] Spiritual guidance through this process requires one to witness another's transformation of him/herself and the world around them.

In Necessary Losses, Judith Viorst explains that the process of re-structuring one's reality and adapting to living in the world in a new way marks the "completion of mourning." While there will still be moments of sorrow and guilt, recovery has taken hold. Remarkably, this last stage of mourning leads to creative change.[198] This creativity is not, however, independent from the grief process which procedes it. Rather it is the "internalization" of that process that allows for the completion of mourning as well as new creative possiblities. Psychoanalyst Karl Abraham writes, "The loved object is not gone, for now I carry it within myself."[199] The *aggadot* surveyed in this chapter bear witness to the rabbis' redefinition of themselves and their concept of religious life. This can only come through a process of loss and mourning that allows one to relinquish the old and adopt the new. The rabbis' process is mirrored in the individual's psychological process as well. Research psychologist Daniel Levinson writes:

[196] Ibid., p. 159.

[197] Carol Ochs and Kerry M. Olitzky. Jewish Spiritual Guidance. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1997), p. 135.

[198] Judith Viorst. Necessary Losses. (New York: Ballantine Books, 1986), p. 275.

[199] Karl Abraham, *Selected Paper*, "A Short Study of Development of Libido, Viewed in the Light of Mental Disorders," p. 437.

> The task of developmental transition is to terminate a time in one's life; to accept the losses the termination entails; to review and evaluate the past: to decide which aspects of the past to keep and which to reject; and to consider one's wishes and possibilities for the future. One is suspended between past and future, and struggling to overcome the gap that separates them. Much from the past must be given up-- separated from, cut out of ones' life, rejected in anger, renounced in sadness or grief. And there is much that can be used as a basis for the future. Changes must be attempted in both self and world.[200]

These changes and creative responses to living in the world having experienced loss bring us to a stage of understanding and creating meaning that makes for growth.

Dr. Judith Herman calls this stage "reconnection." She writes, "Having come to terms with the traumatic past, the survivor faces the task of creating a future."[201] In developing a new perception of self, new relationships, and a new faith, survivors move towards reclaiming their world. In this stage of recovery and empowerment, Herman finds that survivors re-engage with the world, establishing new agendas and discovering new ambitions while still encorporating lessons of the traumatic experience that occurred.[202] Herman writes:

> The survivor no longer feels possessed by her traumatic past; she is in possession of herself. she has some understanding of the person she used to be and of the damage done to that person by the traumatic event. Her task now is to become the person she wants to be. In the process she draws upon those aspects of herself that she most values from the time before the trauma, from the experience of the trauma itself, and from the period of recovery. Integrating all of these elements, she creates a new

[200] Daniel Levinson, The Seasons of a Man's Life. (New York: Ballantine Books, 1978), p. 68.

[201] Dr. Judith Lewis Herman. Trauma and Recovery. (New York: Basic Books, 1992), p. 196.

[202] Ibid., pp. 196-197.

self, both ideally and in actuality.[203]

I would argue that the rabbis engaged is this very process of reconnection and integration in coming to terms with the destruction of the Temple and the re-building of Jewish law and life. Through this process, the rabbis of the Talmud and individuals in modern society reconstruct(ed) "a coherent system of meaning and belief" that encompasses the story of the trauma. Herman reminds us, however, that recovery is not a linear path. All of the various stages of recovery are interconnected. "The course of recovery," she explains, "often detours and doubles back, reviewing issues that have already been addressed many times in order to deepen and expand the survivor's integration of the meaning of her experience."[204]

The rabbinic agenda aimed to establish Torah study, prayer, and acts of lovingkindess as the primary guiding principles upon which they integrated their experience of trauma and re-ordered their worldview. These three values and paths of living in the world continue to guide Jewish life today. They are also spiritual paths which I would argue are as important to the process of confronting loss for Jews today as they were two thousand years ago for the rabbis. The Torah, our most sacred and central text, helps seekers grow in their relationship with God. It helps provide a context in which seekers can better understand their own journeys, and spiritual, emotional, and psychological struggles. One of the goals of spiritual guidance is to help the seeker embrace the commandment to study the Torah, to provide texts which will help seekers negociate and express their spiritual lives, and to enable them to engage the texts in spite of their fears. Dr. Ochs and Rabbi Olitzky describe this process as an integration of

[203] Ibid., p. 202.

[204] Ibid., p. 213.

"sacred text and the text of our experience."[205] They write, "We use our own experience as a prism to understand what the Bible is teaching us. At the same time, we use the Bible to illuminate our experiences."[206] In developing a relationship with the text, a certain creativity and freedom of expression often emerges and life is increasingly viewed through the lens of Torah.

Torah study is also about discipline. In the midst of loss, the routine and sense of obligation that comes with sacred study can be a healing and life-giving exercise. In fact, I would argue that creativity most often emerges within the context of a disciplined. practice. It is only when there is mastery, coming from regular and devoted engagment, that one has the necessary tools to innovate. There are many stages involved in developing a sacred routine of engagement and discovery with sacred text. It is both an intellectual and emotional exercise. With serious and regular attention, Ochs and Olitzky write, "A sense develops that we are not engaged in a mere monologue with the text, that is, projecting our self onto it, but that we are in dialogue with it. Finally, once we are fully engaged with the text, open to what it may teach us, our heart is touched, and we are moved to respond. We feel a silent resting in God's presence."[207] This sense of dynamic connection, however, does not happen automatically. We read the same Torah texts every year. But each year we are different people with new life experiences and perspectives. And so, with each passing day we see the text in a new light. Additionally, reading and studying Torah in community helps to guide and root us in the rich tradition of interpretation that precedes us.

[205] Carol Ochs and Kerry M. Olitzky. Jewish Spiritual Guidance. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1997), pp. 119-120.

[206] Ibid., p. 121.

[207] Ibid., pp. 130-131.

In confronting loss and making meaning in difficult times, however, Torah study does not necessarily provide answers to life's most profound questions. Instead, "we study for the purpose of an encounter... sacred study has an *instrinsic* value, because we study what we love."[208] We encounter God as we encouter the text and use its language, metaphor, and narrative to give voice to our own experiences. Rabbenu Nissim wrote, "Every person is obligated to study constantly, day and night, in accordance with his ability" (commenting on the Babylonian Talmud, *Nedarim* 8a.) Torah study offers us a way of responding not only to life's most difficult journeys, but to all the twists and turns that we experience in our lives. By engaging our hearts and minds in a discipline that has guided hundreds of generations before us, we immerse ourselves in a never-ending process of growth and learning that can offer us strength and meaning.

Prayer is another such spiritual displine that enables us to respond to loss and life. *Avodah*, or prayer, is the active search for and communication with God. Rabbi David Wolpe writes, "Through recalling ancient altars upon which sacrifices were given to God, we seek to reopen our souls. The modern day altar is the human soul, where we offer up our gratitude and sadness. Prayer is the moment when we agree not to hide." [209] It is an exercise in wonder and a prelude for action. And, as we search for God, we also search for our own souls. Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel wrote,

> Prayer is like the light from a burning glass in which all the rays that emanate from the soul are gathered to a focus. There are hours when we are resplendent with the glowing awareness of our share in His secret interests on earth. We pray. We are carried forward to Him who is coming close to us. We endeavor to divine His will, not merely His command. Prayer is an answer to God: "Here am I. And this is the record

[208] Ibid., p. 133.

[209] David Wolpe, Making Loss Matter. (New York: Riverhead Books, 1999), p. 177.

of my days. Look into my heart, into my hopes and my regrets."[210]

In this experiential way, we attempt to communicate with God (as individuals and as a community) in an effort to remember that we do not control life; we belong to it. Prayer can offer us the healing gifts of humility and grace.

Prayer plays a special role in pastoral care. According to Jewish law, prayer is essential to any pastoral care visit.[211] Psychotherapist and author, Anne Brener, writes

> Whether in the words of traditional liturgy, through spontaneous outbursts of emotion, or in silence, prayer can be used to harness pained voices, to clarify direction, to affirm values, and to enable connection with the Holy. Despite obstacles, prayer can be a primary source of comfort to those who suffer. Through prayer, they can find the strength to make peace with a universe in which *hatov* (the good) and *hara* (the bad) often seem meted out in an arbitrary manner.[212]

The book of Psalms, the *Misheberakh*, the *Shema*, the *Amidah*, the *Viddui* are all traditional liturgical compositions which can help those confronting loss give expression to their spiritual aspirations, yearnings, and struggles, connecting them with God and the generations of people who came before them who uttered these very words. These prayers can open a door for communication with God as well as an invitation for God to intervene in our lives. Spontaneous blessings are another important tool for pastoral caregivers both as a holy interaction with the other and a way of modeling prayer for the other. This sort of prayer offers the pastoral caregiver an opportunity to reflect back what has been learned in their time together as well as the chance to reframe issues, share

[210] Abraham Joshua Heschel, Man's Quest for God. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1954), p. 10.

[211] "One who visits a suffering person and does not prayer for that person has not fulfilled the obligation of visiting the sick." Isserles on *Shulhan Arukh Yoreh De'ah* 335:4.

[212] Anne Brener, "Prayer and Presence" in Jewish Pastoral Care. Ed. Rabbi Dayle Friedman. (Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2001), p. 126.

insights, and give direction, while affirming the spiritual dimensions of healing.[213]

Rabbi Simkha Weintraub, Rabbinic Director of the New York and National Jewish Healing Centers, explores the use of Psalms, in particular, as a spiritual resource in pastoral care. He asserts that "Illness, suffering, and loss mute us-- they leave us without words. In the face of [this challenge], those who are in pain, as well as those who care for them, may need new ways of communicating, new tools for talking, and new modes of relating."[214] For centuries, Jews and others have used this book for guidance, healing, and renewal in the face of loss. Weintraub discusses how pastoral care givers might use psalms in a contemporary setting for recovery and healing including ritually, through prayer, song, study, meditation, community, and conversation. Integrating psalms in spiritual support and pastoral care can serve many functions such as: "Joining with people; normalizing problems or issues, Naming or articulating challenges, Triggering questions; challenging people; facilitating movment, Reframing problems, Encapsulating or hightlighting a dispute, Offering guidance, Offering new perspectives on old troubles; making new connections, and Encouraging; supporting; giving hope."[215] Psalms can give voice to our fears and hopes, our deepest prayers and insights.

Dr. Ochs and Rabbi Olitzky expand upon the importance of prayer in spiritual life and spiritual care. They write, "The central event in the spiritual life is prayer... Spiritual guides try to expand people's concept of prayer so that it opens up to a relationship with

[213] Ibid., p. 143.

[214] Rabbi Simkha Y. Weintraub, "From the Depths: The Use of Psalms" in Jewish Pastoral Care. Ed. Rabbi Dayle Friedman. (Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2001), p. 151.

[215] Ibid., pp. 168-169.

God."[216] These teachers, scholars, and spiritual guides discuss prayer as a relationship with God. In this relationship, prayer can be a means of focusing, paying attention, intentionality, consciousness, and changing perspective. Spiritual guides help seekers understand what happens to them through the experience of prayer and how that impacts on their relationship with God. There are a myriad of forms of prayer. Ochs and Olitzky specifically explore petition, thanksgiving, confession, silence, communal prayer, resistance, and complaint or outrage.[217] The rabbis in their wisdom understood the invaluable and profound power of prayer in sanctifying time and consecrating liminal moments in people's lives.[218] Spiritual guides are engaged in helping seekers access their own pathway to prayer in a way that is wholly authentic and honest for each individual--encouraging them along their way when the channel to God feels closed or broken. Finally, spiritual mentors assist seekers in hearing God's voice and using that voice to transform their way of living in the world.

Acts of lovingkindess, for both the rabbis and modern pastoral care models, are a powerful way of confronting and recovering from loss. In reaching outside of oneself to strengthen others, one inevitably heals oneself and serves the Holy One of Blessing. Serving others helps people to see the value and worth of their own lives. But this is no easy task. Rachel Naomi Remen, doctor and counselor to individuals with chronic and terminal illness, teaches us that "[Acts of goodness] require an everyday attention, an awareness of all that diminishes us, distracts us, and causes to forget who we are. But

[216] Carol Ochs and Kerry M. Olitzky. Jewish Spiritual Guidance. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1997), p. 31.

[217] Ibid., pp. 39-49.

[218] Consider, for example, the *Mi Sh'berakh* for healing, the *Birkat ha'Gomel* for having survived a difficult journey or life experience, and the *Sheva Berakhot* which are recited under the wedding canopy.

every act of service bears witness to the possibility of freedom for us all. And every time anyone becomes more transparent to the light in them, they will restore the light in the world."[219]

Judith Herman documents the truth of this concept in her work with trauma survivors. She calls it "finding a survivor mission." She writes,

> While there is no way to compensate for an atrocity, there is a way to transcend it, by making it a gift to others. The trauma is redeemed only when it becomes the source of a survivor mission. Social action offers the survivor a source of power that draws upon her own initiative, energy, and resourcefulness but that magnifies these qualities far beyond her own capacities. It offers her an alliance with others based on cooperation and shared purpose. Participation in organized, demanding social efforts calls upon the survivor's most mature and adaptive coping strategies of patience, anticipation. altruism, and humor.[220]

Social action and acts of lovingkindness can take many forms including helping others who have faced similar losses, educational, legal, and political action to prevent further suffering in the world, attempts to bring offenders of trauma to justice, the pursuit of justice of any kind, as well as the simple acts of kindness that one performs in his or her personal life. While serving others is the essence of the "survivor mission, those who practice it recognize that they do so for their own healing. In taking care of others, survivors feel recognized, loved. and cared for themselves." [221] I would also argue, like the rabbis, that those who serve others with acts of lovingkindness are acting in the sacred service of God.

Dr. Ochs and Rabbi Olitzky also echo the importance of giving to community in

[219] Rachel Naomi Remen. My Grandfather's Blessings. (New York: Penguin Putnam Inc., 2000), p. 328.

[220] Dr. Judith Lewis Herman. Trauma and Recovery. (New York: Basic Books, 1992), p. 207.

[221] Ibid., p. 209.

their exploration of spiritual guidance. We read in book of Micah, "Do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8). Ochs and Olitzky remind us that action is required. "Spirituality is not static. It doesn't just happen. We must *do* things that are just. We must *love* mercy. And we must *walk* in humility-- in a relationship with the Almighty."[222] As Jews, we have a covenantal obligation to serve others. We are awakened to the fact that we do this not only in service to God, but also in service of past, present, and future generations. We are commanded to perform acts of lovingkindness that begin in our own homes, but extend outwards towards the communities we live in and the world at large. Spiritual guides can help seekers live up to their part of the covenant by encouraging acts of lovingkindness as a core part of any spiritual path. Acts of lovingkindness also ensure that one who faces loss or any other stage of life will not be disconnected from community. This notion of community is inextricably connected to the concept of "*mitzvah*" in Judaism. Ochs and Olitzky explain, "Community is what has given our people structure and strength throughout the vagaries of history."[223] Community service through acts of lovingkindness is the key to the community's survival as well as strengthening ourselves in healing from profound loss.

Rabbi Naomi Levy writes, "No matter what we have lost in our lives, there is always something that survives to start over with." [224] The prophet Jeremiah instructed his people at a time of great tragedy and destruction in Jewish history, that amidst their mourning, suffering, and sorrow, they were to cling to life and to rebuild their world.[225]

[222] Carol Ochs and Kerry M. Olitzky. Jewish Spiritual Guidance. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1997), p. 169.

[223] Ibid., 180.

[224] Naomi Levy, To Begin Again. (New York: Alread A. Knopf, 1999), p. 110.

[225] Jeremiah delivered the following message: "Build houses and live in them,

Despite the crisis of destruction and exile that Jeremiah's people faced, they held on to the commandment to choose life.[226] The destruction of the Temple posed a crisis out of which rabbinic Judaism emerged. The meaning of this crisis changed over time as Jews developed and actualized new forms of religious life. In the face of loss, the rabbis responded with substitutes that eventually formed the foundation of a new Judaism while simultaneously retaining its roots in the past. Eventually the masses adopted this new way of Jewish life and accepted the discontinuity that resulted from traumatic loss. The same is true for us today. At a certain point in the journey of grief, we understand that our lives are comprised of both continuity and change. Confronting loss is part of both our outer and inner reality, for it is about what happens to us in the world as well as how we interpret those events within ourselves.[227] Torah, prayer, and acts of lovingkindess can serve as the offerings that connect us to God and the world around us we heal. The rabbis teach us that loss can be an opportunity. In the words of Rabbi David Wolpe, "Losing our homes in the world is creative. Making them inside ourselves is healing."[228]

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plant gardens and eat their fruit. Take wives and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters" (Isaiah 29:5-6).

[226] Deuteronomy 30:19.

[227] Judith Viorst, Necessary Losses. (New York: Ballantine Books, 1986), p. 367.

[228] David Wolpe, Making Loss Matter. (New York: Riverhead Books, 1999), p. 47.

Chapter Four: Faith

Faith is the power to dream despite loss, to persevere in the face of fear, and to move forward without relinquishing the past. The fourth response this paper will examine among the various rabbinic responses to the destruction of the Temple is that of faith. Faith afforded the rabbis and their students the consolation and hope they needed to lament the past, make meaning of their loss in the present, and establish confidence for the future. Despite the tragic destruction they witnessed and the traumatic memory they inherited, the rabbis had faith that the bond between God and Israel remained intact and that a time would come when Israel would triumph once again. This perpetual optimism has carried the Jewish people throughout its history. We read in *Berakhot* 58b:

> Thus said Rabbi Yohanan: From the day the Temple was destroyed a decree was issued against the houses of the righteous that they be destroyed, as it is said, *Surely, great houses shall lie forlorn; spacious and splendid ones, without occupants* (Isaiah 5:9). For a servant should not be better off than his master. And in the future the Holy One, blessed be He, will again cause them to be inhabited, as it is said, *Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion that cannot be moved, enduring forever* (Psalm125:1). Just as the Holy One, blessed be He, will cause Mount Zion again to be populated, so will He cause the houses of the righteous to be inhabited once again.

This *aggadah* incorporates three guiding themes when considering faith development in the context of loss: mystery, memory, and group identity. This chapter will explore the issue of faith through the lens of several talmudic *aggadot* as well as contemporary literature on spiritual guidance, pastoral care, and psychoanalysis.

The rabbis put their faith in the future restoration when God's actions would be justified and His faithfulness established.[229] Michael Stone comments on the

[229] Michael Stone, "Reactions to the Destruction of the Second Temple." Journal

development of meta-historical eschatology and the heightened cosmic role of the Temple.[230] The pursuit of a meta-historical eschatology enabled people to deal with the problem of theodicy. Many found comfort in the idea that the was a predetermined pattern to history and that evil would run its course until some future time when God's righteousness would be vindicated. Additionally, there was a growth of speculation regarding the cosmic role of the heavenly Temple. Unlike the earthly Temple which had been destroyed, the heavenly Temple would replace its earthly counterpart at the end of days, revealing God's glory and revelation for eternity. These developments allowed the rabbis to mourn the loss of the Temple without questioning God's ultimate justice. The hope of a better world gave the rabbis a new perception which relieved some of their anguish. There are no truly satisfying answers for the destruction; the only resolution is to have faith in the divine intention for change and the promise of tomorrow.

> *Yevamot* 102b
> A certain *min*[231] once said to Rabban Gamliel:[232] You are a people with whom its God has performed *halitzah*[233], for it is said in Scripture, *Then they will go with their sheep and cattle to seek the Lord, but they will not*

for the Study of Judaism, Volume XII, No. 2, 1981, pp. 199-200.

[230] See 4 Ezra 7:26, Baruch 32:2-4, and 2 Apoc. Baruch 4:2-6.

[231] A *min* might be translated as an infidel, sectarian, a gentile that has rejected the gods of his people, or a "Jew Christian." See Richard Kalmin, "Christians and Heretics in Rabbinic Literature of Late Antiquity," Harvard Theological Review, 87, #2, 1994, pp. 156-61.

[4] Rabban Gamliel lived in Yavneh after the destruction of the Second Temple.

[5] חליצה, or levirate marriage, is "the ceremony that frees the widow of a man who died without children from the obligation to marry one of her deceased husband's brothers and allows her to remarry (see Deuteronomy 25:7-10). The name חליצה is derived from the central element of this ceremony, which involves the removal by the widow of a special sandal from the foot of one o fher deceased husband's brothers. חליצה must be performed before a Rabbinical Court. The laws governing this ceremony are discussed in detail in tractate *Yevamot*." (Steinsaltz, Adin. The Talmud: The Steinsaltz Edition - A Reference Guide. (New York: Random House), 1989, p. 192.)

> *find him. He has cast them off (halatz mei'hem)*. (Hosea 5:6)[234] The other [Rabban Gamliel] replied: Fool! Is it written: *He has drawn off [the shoe] for them*? [meaning there has been a valid *halitzah*]. [No; rather] it is written, "*He has drawn off [the shoe] from them*"; now in the case of a sister-in-law from whom the brother drew off [the shoe] could there be any validity in the act?

In this *aggadah*, God appears to have done *halitzah* but His action, according to Rabban Gamliel, is invalid. Therefore the answer to the final question raised by the *aggadah* regarding the validity of the *halitzah* of Israel is "certainly not." The legal requirement of *halitzah* is that it is the *sister-in-law* that performs the *halitzah* while the brother-in-law only *submits* to it. In this text God stands towards Israel in the relationship of a Levir to his sister-in-law. Therefore, *He* cannot perform the *halitzah*, and his action is, so to speak, invalid. Moreover, the bond between God and the people remains in force as they continue to seek Him. For the *min*, God has broken the link in the chain that binds God and Israel together. For Rabban Gamliel, however, God may be distant, hidden, or silent, but the faithful connection between God and the people of Israel endures.

This conversation with a *min* invites speculation as to whom exactly Rabban Gamliel found himself arguing against. It is possible that the *min*, in this case, is a Jewish Christian who expresses the Christian theology of supersession in his statement. This *aggadah* may, in fact, have been offered as a polemic against those Jews or Jewish Christians that questioned God's faithfulness in the midst of the destruction and considered leaving the fold (or in fact left it) as a result. It is impossible to be certain of

[6] The Hebrew verse reads:

בְּצֹאנָם וּבִבְקָרָם יֵלְכוּ לְבַקֵּשׁ אֶת-יְהוָה וְלֹא יִמְצָאוּ חָלַץ מֵהֶם׃

This verse comes in the context of Hosea's critique of the priests of the House of Israel who have ignored God and disobeyed God's word. Hosea prophesies that Israel's pride will be humbled before his own eyes and Israel, Ephraim, and Judah will fall because of their sins.

the *min's* identity, but the meaning of the *aggadah* is not obfuscated by this ambiguity. Rabban Gamliel clearly conveys the message that God is still with the Jewish people and that despite their loss and suffering, there is yet a reason to hope and have faith in a future redemption.

This message of hope and faith rings of Isaiah who reminded his people, who felt abandoned and utterly alone, that God would be there to comfort them,[235] and of Genesis in which God speaks to Abraham and Jacob saying, "I am with you."[236] There is an implicit reminder, as Rabbi Naomi Levy writes, that "to live in this world is to embrace life it all its disarray... a relationship with God means being able to accept God in all of God's mystery. We constantly hope that God will accept us in all our frailty, in all our contradictions, in all our idiosyncrasies. Can we not learn to see that God too is filled with contradictions and paradoxes and mysteries?"[237] Trusting in God's mystery offers us the gift of hope. A deep sense of appreciation emerges when one surrenders to the idea that there is a larger pattern that the human heart and mind cannot comprehend, but that God is there with us-- if not preventing loss, helping us to make it meaningful.

> *Megillah* 11a
> *It happened [va-yehi] in the days of Ahasuerus.* (Esther 1:1) Rav said, [The word *va-yehi* is equivalent to] '*vai* and *hi*' [woe and mourning]. With reference to this it is written, and *there you shall offer yourselves for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but none will buy [you].* (Deuteronomy 28:68).[238] Shmuel quoted: "*I will not reject them, or spurn*

[235] Isaiah 51:3 and 66:13.

[236] Genesis 26:24 and Genesis 28:15.

[237] Naomi Levy, To Begin Again. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999), pp. 121-122.

[238] This verse comes from the section of curses with which Moses warns the Israelites in the scriptural passage known as the ברכות וקללות. The use of this verse may reflect a sense that the rabbis had that the Deuteronomic theology was indeed coming to fruition. It may have seemed to some people that the curses articulated in the Torah were

them so as to destroy them." (Leviticus 26:44) "*I will not reject them*" in the days of the Greeks; "*or spurn them*" — in the days of Vespasian: "*so as to destroy them*" — in the days of Haman; "*annulling My covenant with them*" — in the days of the Romans; "*For I am the Lord their God*" — in the days of Gog and Magog.[239] In a *baraita* it was taught: "*I will not reject them*"— in the days of the Chaldeans, when I raised up for them Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; "*or spurn them*" — in the days of the Greeks, when I raised up for them Simeon the Righteous, Hasmonai and his sons, and Mattathias the High Priest; "*so as to destroy them*" — in the days of Haman, when I raised up for them Mordecai and Esther; "*annulling My covenant with them*"— in the days of the Persians, when I raised up for them the members of the house of Rabbi and the Sages of the various generations. "*For I am the Lord their God*"'— in the time to come, when no nation or people[240] will be able to rule over them.[241]

Once again, we are presented with a powerful *aggadah* that emphasizes the belief that God will not abandon or destroy His people Israel. The presentation of this message, however, is quite different than the *aggadah* above. Here, the stress is not on the mystery of God's ways but rather on the power of memory. And even beyond memory, we notice in the *baraita* that the rabbis add themselves to the list of survivors. In doing so, they both actively identify themselves as survivors and memorialize the legacy of survival which preceded them. By closely reading the verse from Leviticus in terms of the various historical and literary oppressors (including all of the ancient world super powers), this text reminds the reader that the Jewish people has a long history of hardship and persecution and still, God is with them. There are hints to redemption in both the mention of Gog and Magog and the last line which refers to the "time to come" when indeed being carried out upon the people of Israel. The rabbis, however, refute this interpretation. Instead they re-interpret the loss they (and those who came before them) experienced in order to offer themselves and their followers faith in the face of despair.

[239] The days of Gog and Magog refer to the days of the Messiah. See Ezekiel, chapters 38 and 39.

[240] The word "people" is לשון, literally meaning "language" or "tongue."

[241] The order followed here differs from that in the parallel passage in the *Yalkut* which is the more chronological. (Maharsha).

Israel will gain sovereignty over itself. It is noteworthy that this *aggadah* of faith, hope, and consolation ties together the themes of loss, memory , and redemption. The Ba'al Shem Tov,the 18th century charismatic founder and leader of Hasidism in Eastern Europe, aptly stated, "Redemption lies in remembering."[242] Memory is our "defense against meaninglessness."[243] Healing begins when memory supplants grief and becomes the greatest teacher.

This concept is not new to rabbinic Judaism. We read in the Talmud that "The broken tablets were put with the new ones into the ark."[244] With this short and poignant line, we are taught that the Israelites deposited the broken tablets in the ark along with the second set of whole tablets which Moses brought down from Mount Sinai. According to this text, God demands that we embrace the brokenness in ourselves and our world. Only then can we move forward through the deserts of our lives. Holding on to the broken tablets enables us to make meaning of and learn from the past. The broken pieces also teach us about compassion, wisdom, devotion, and insight because they provide lessons from our failings and symbolize the vulnerability that is gained when one errs. We must not forget that there is both constructive and destructive memory. Certainly, there are times when an inability to move on from the past can be paralyzing and destructive. Remembering loss and carrying it with us, however, has the potential to offer us strength and faith in the darkest of times. It is this sentiment, I believe, that undergirds the *aggadah* from *Megillah*. Telling the truth about the past and our stumblings affords us the freedom to be humble and vulnerable enough to be in relationship with God.

[242] This quotation is inscribed on the entrance to *Yad Vashem*, the Holocaust Memorial Museum, in Jerusalem.

[243] David Wolpe, Making Loss Matter. (New York: Riverhead Books, 1999), p. 209.

[244] *Menahot* 99a.

Makkot 24a-b

Long ago, Rabban Gamliel, Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah, Rabbi Yehoshua and Rabbi Akiba were walking along the road when they heard the noise of the Roman crowds from a great distance away. All of them began to weep, but Rabbi Akiba laughed. They said to him, "Why are you laughing?" He said to them, "Why are you weeping?" They said to him: "These heathens who bow down to idols and offer incense to them live in security and quiet , whereas our Temple, God's 'footstool'[245] burned down by fire-- shall we not cry?" He said to them, "For the same reason I laugh. If it is so for those who transgress His will, how much more will it be for those who do His will!"

On another occasion they were going up again to Jerusalem. When they reached Mount Scopus they rent their garments. When they reached the Temple Mount they saw a fox coming out from the ruins where the Holy of Holies once stood. They began weeping, but Rabbi Akiba laughed. They asked him, "Why are you laughing?" He asked them, "Why are you weeping?" They replied, "Of this place it has been written, *'And any outsider who encroached was to be put to death.'* (Numbers 3:38)[246] Now foxes are going through it, and shall we not cry?" He said to them, "For the very same reason, I am laughing, for it is said, *'And call reliable witnesses, the priest Uriah and Zechariah son of Jeberechiah, to witness for Me'* (Isaiah 8:2). What does Uriah have in common with Zechariah? Uriah lived during the time of the First Temple and Zechariah during the days of the Second Temple! But the explanation must be that Torah makes Zechariah's prophecy depend on Uriah's. Concerning the prophecy of Uriah, it was written, *"Assuredly, because of you Zion shall be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps of ruins and the Temple Mount a shrine in the woods"* (Micah 3:12, Jeremiah 26:18-20). About Zechariah's prophecy it was written, *"There shall yet be old men and women in the squares of Jerusalem"* (Zechariah 8:4). Had Uriah's prophecy not been fulfilled I would have been concerned that Zechariah's would not have been. Now that the prophecy of Uriah has been fulfilled, certainly the prophecy of Zechariah will be fulfilled." Then they said to him, "Akiba, you have comforted us, Akiba, you have comforted us."

[245] Regarding "God's footstool," see Psalms 99:5 and 132:7 as well as Lamentations 2:1.

[246] This verse from Numbers explains that Moses and Aaron were instructed to camp before the Tabernacle to the east so they could attend to the duties of the sanctuary, but anybody else who camped there would be put to death because of the level of sanctity of the area.

In this *aggadah*, Rabban Gamliel, Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah, and Rabbi Yehoshua cry out in anguish and despair at their fate. How could it be that those idol worshippers who destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple could live in such comfort while the Jews suffer disgrace and humiliation? But Rabbi Akiba takes a different approach and argues for faith and hope. Even more astonishing, Rabbi Akiba does it with laughter. In this exaggerated response, Akiba teaches his peers several things about his faith. First, a certain amount of denial or incredulity may occur in order to live through devastating and inconceivable loss. Perhaps if Rabbi Akiba had given himself entirely over to his loss, he would have been emotionally and spiritually paralyzed and unable to garner the strength he needed to move on and lead others in their renewal of Jewish life. Second, his laughter advocates for a certain degree of moderation in mourning. Even in a time of great sadness, there can be moments laughter in which the depth of pain is mitigated and lessened if only for a moment's time. Third, Rabbi Akiba models for his peers a type of faith that offers a radical response to the communal norm. Unlike the other rabbis to cry at the sight of destruction. Rabbi Akiba is willingness to look beyond the reality and see what is not there but might yet be.

Finally, Rabbi Akiba makes it clear in this *aggadah* that even the minute details of Micah and Jeremiah's prophecy have been fulfilled. Shaye Cohen writes, "and if the paradigm of suffering has been fulfilled, we may be sure that the paradigm of redemption will be fulfilled as well."[247] We see in this *aggadah* that God is held accountable to the

[247] Shaye Cohen, "The Destruction: From Scripture to *Midrash*," Prooftexts 2 (1982), p. 35. Cohen adds a footnote to his statement explaining tht the power of this theory can be gauged by its appeal to Samuel Usque in the sixteenth century. See *Samuel Usque's Consolation for the Tribulations of Israel*, ed. Martin A. Cohen (Philadelphia, 1964), p. 21. Additionally, Cohen is certain that Usque knew this *aggadah*.

fullness of His revelation. His message of destruction-- even of His own beloved abode-- is as powerful and authoritative as his message of redemption for the Jewish people. Akiba's argument is accepted by his peers, and he succeeds in offering them comfort.

The message of comfort that Rabbi Akiba offers in this *aggadah* is supported by the understanding that the rabbis are all a part of something larger. Rabbi Akiba assures them that they are not alone in their suffering and that this period of destruction, sadness, and loss they have experienced is part of a greater plan. Their ultimate fate is dependent upon more than this single moment in time. Part of making peace with their loss is turning towards the future with courage and resolve. The rabbis find strength in one another and in God's promises articulated in Scripture. They are powerfully connected through community in addition to inheriting a tradition of prophecy and sacred literature. Rabbi Akiba helps them understand that real faith can indeed be built upon loss.

There is tremendous potential for growth and development in the realm of faith when facing loss. Finding a path back to life after loss, however, requires us to first face the darkness. Only then, can we truly find our strength and our faith. Healing takes time, but when we realize that there is indeed an end to the pain, we can even come to appreciate the darkness and invaluable lessons that loss has instilled in us.[348] While Judaism presents us with many responses to loss, there is no single answer. Faith is only one of many possible responses.

When we examine the enormity of the impact of the destruction of the Temple, and the losses so many people have survived to this day, we find ourselves able to say that resurrection is indeed possible. "Blessed is the One who gives life to the dead." This sense of faith in God, the resilience of the human spirit, and the promise of

[348] Naomi Levy, To Begin Again. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999), p. 33.

redemption is present in rabbinic *aggadah* as it is in contemporary literature on responding to loss.

In their study of faith development as a part of a Jewish pastoral response to trauma, Rabbi Nancy Fuchs-Kreimer and Paula Goldstein look to Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget who "showed the world that as we grow, we learn not only more facts but also new and more sophisticated ways of processing facts," and James Fowler, a theologian who documented that "one can also chart the way people think about faith, noting stages that build upon each other in ever more sophisticated ways."[249] They cite these thinkers in order to show that "the precipitating factor for growth in all three theories is crisis, defined as the failure of the current stage to explain and process new information adequately." [250] The existence of "crisis" forces one to reformulate his or her thinking at a higher stage. Pastoral care givers and community, in general, can help guide people to formulate new, more sophisticated understandings of faith that are consistent with and informed by their experience of loss.

Dr. Carol Ochs and Rabbi Kerry Olitzky set this process in the language of "enduring the desert." In their understanding, spiritual guides are there to help seekers embrace the journey. They are also charged with encouraging people to get up once again after falling. Ochs and Olitzky remind us that the desert is, in fact, our spiritual home. That is the landscape of faith development. Spiritual guides can assist seekers most of all by affirming their experiences of the holy and encouraging them to hearken to

[249] Jean Piaget, The Child and Reality. (New York: Penguin, 1976) and Lawrence Kohlberg, The Philosophy of Moral Development. (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1981).

[250] Nancy Fuchs-Kreimer and Paula Goldstein, "Trauma: A Jewish Pastoral Response." In Jewish Pastoral Care. Ed. Rabbi Dayle Friedman. (Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2001), p. 384.

God's voice.[251] Finally, a sense of mystery (or awe), memory, and group identity are all part of the faith that pastoral caregivers use in helping people to re-engage in the business of living, knowing all the while that life will never be the same.

Spiritual leader Rabbi Myriam Klotz explains that "Jewish thought and practice offer a paradoxical tension between certainty in the revealed presence of God in and through this world, and submission to a mysteriously elusive force that is utterly beyond human comprehension and knowing."[252] In this paradox, God and God's role in this world are both knowable and completely unknowable. The pastoral care giver has a role in this mysterious paradox. She writes,

> In confronting God's mystery and perhaps God's eclipse, pastoral caregivers stand as human representatives of God's presence and care. They strive to remain compassionately present to the sufferer at all times, even when she or he responds to the suffering with anger, mistrust, or disbelief in God ... Pastoral caregivers walk in the ways of God by helping the sufferer craft out of the mysterious distance some sense of graspable perspective, relevance, and perhaps, redemption.[253]

In Dr. Rachel Remen's experience counseling cancer and terminally ill patients she comments,

> But as I listened to more and more people with life-threatening illness tell their stories, not knowing simply became a matter of integrity... Mystery seems to have the power to comfort, to offer hope, and to lend meaning in times of loss and pain. In surprising ways it is the mysterious that strengthens us at such times. I used to try to offer people certainty in times which were not at all certain and could not be made certain. I now just offer my companionship and share my sense of mystery, of the

[251] Carol Ochs and Kerry M. Olitzky, Jewish Spiritual Guidance. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1997).

[252] Myriam Klotz. "Wresting Blessings: A Pastoral Response to Suffering." In Jewish Pastoral Care. Ed. Rabbi Dayle Friedman. (Vermont: Jewish Lights Publishing, 2001), p. 38.

[253] Ibid., pp. 38-39.

possible, of wonder.[254]

Both of these clinicians and spiritual guides confirm for us the lesson of Rabbi Akiba: Faith, even in the midst of the greatest mysteries, has the power to comfort. For faith is about believing that what we see is not all that there is. It is about having certainty in something greater than oneself, even when it is beyond human understanding. Faith is not easy. It does not take away the perplexity we observe or the pain we experience. It does, however, offer us hope, consolation, and meaning in difficult times. Where these clinicians and Rabbi Akiba differ, however, is in their willingness or ability to offer certainty in uncertain times. Rabbi Akiba's faith allows him to express his certainty based on the authority of Scripture. Dr. Remen can offer only her sense of wonder at the mystery of life. In her experience, assurances cannot be guaranteed and are of little comfort. "Presence" and compassion, however, have the power to convey a sense of connection and security that can inspire faith in others. Pastoral care givers have the responsibility and privilege of helping others find their own sense of faith in the midst of the mystery. Even more, it is about helping other believe that the search for faith is not futile and to encourage them in the dance of discovery and yearning for faith even when confronting loss.

Memory is another key element in faith development when facing loss. Forgetting, repressing,and denying the past is actually painful. Keeping memory alive offers the greatest comfort because it is the closest thing one has to what was lost.[255] Pastoral caregivers can help those who mourn by listening and encouraging them to keep

[254] Rachel Naomi Remen. Kitchen Table Wisdom. (New York: Riverhead Books, 1996), pp. 292-293.

[255] Naomi Levy, To Begin Again. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999), pp. 100-103.

their memories alive. Memory can be another way in which faith is redemptive.

Finally, the cultivation of commonality or group identity is critical in faith development in the context of loss. "Deep inside the fear of loss," writes Rabbi Wolpe, "is the fear of aloneness... Being alone is the first fear. The heart of faith is believing one is never alone."[256] Connection to others who have faced loss is intimately connected to one's ability to hope and successfully return to life. Dr. Judith Herman looks closely at this particular response to loss in her experience with trauma survivors. In the latter stages of recovery, she explains, identity and intimacy are the focal issues. Herman writes,

> Traumatic events destroy the sustaining bonds between individual and community. Those who have survived learn that their sense of self, of worth, of humanity, depends upon a feeling of connection to others. The solidarity of a group provides the strongest protection against terror and despair, and the strongest antidote to traumatic experience. Trauma isolates; the group re-creates a sense of belonging. Trauma shames and stigmatizes; the group bears witness and affirms. Trauma degrades the victim; the group exalts her. Trauma dehumanizes the victim; the group restores her humanity."[257]

The search for commonality and the restoration of social bonds is vitally important as one navigates the journey of loss. Irvin Yalom, an authority on group psychotherapy, calls this the experience of "universality," which is particularly important in helping those who feel isolated due to the traumatic loss they have experienced.[258] Being part of a group offers individuals a sense of faith because of the collective empowerment that is gained. Each individual's capacity to integrate their experience of loss is enhanced by the group's

[256] David Wolpe, Making Loss Matter. (New York: Riverhead Books), 1999, p. 160.

[257] Dr. Judith Lewis Herman, Trauma and Recovery. (New York: Basic Books, 1992), p. 214.

[258] I.D. Yalom, The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy, 3rd ed. (New York: Basic Books, 1985).

capacity, and each person can draw hope and strength from the shared resources of the group. Pastoral care givers and clinical psychotherapists play a critical role in the success of a group experience. As a result, this leadership role requires a tremendous degree of self-awareness, understanding of group dynamics, clinical supervision, and experience.[259]

One of the most famous expressions of faith comes from the prayer, "*Adon Olam*"-- "Master of the Universe." The concluding lines are:

Into God's hands I entrust my soul,
When I sleep and when I wake.
And with my soul, my body, too;
God is with me, I will not fear.

In moments of confusion and loss, this prayer reminds us that God is there with us-- as close as our own breath. No matter what trials and tribulations life may bring, this prayer reminds us to live by faith rather than fear. As Rabbi David Wolpe writes, "There is no magic answer to loss. Nothing, not even time, will make the pain completely disappear. But loss is transformative if it is met with faith. Faith is our chance to make sense of loss, to cope with the stone that rolls around in the hollow of our stomach when something we loved, something we thought was forever, is suddenly gone."[260]

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[259] Dr. Judith Lewis Herman, Trauma and Recovery. (New York: Basic Books, 1992), pp. 216-217.

[260] David Wolpe, Making Loss Matter. (New York: Riverhead Books), 1999, p. 6.

Conclusion

The fall of the Temple represents a profound moment of loss in Jewish history and collective memory. It was, however, a beginning and not merely an end, for there are no endings without new beginnings. There was no longer a Temple, no sacrifice, no fixed home. Certainly, there was loss. But with loss, there was also freedom.[261] Judaism survived because the rabbis were courageous enough to re-envision their lives and their faith. In making Judaism portable and personal, Jews could be scattered and still be at home, banished and still at the center of things. Negotiating the experience of loss, however, did not happen overnight.

Almost as surprising as the survival of Judaism after the destruction is the apparent near silence in rabbinic literature of that trauma and survival, especially in the tannaitic literature (reflecting the activity of the sages in the Land of Israel through the end of the second century).[262] Most of the rabbis that are cited are *amoraim*. Robert Goldenberg comments, "How strange that these documents [the Palestinian and Babylonian Talmuds], composed no less than 325 or 525 years (respectively) after the event should be considered 'early!'" It is difficult to imagine that the Temple's destruction was, in fact, not traumatic. In fact, the apocalyptic words of II Baruch and IV Ezra (both composed in the last decades of the first century C.E.) attest to its devastating impact on the Jewish world.

In light of this assumption of the Temple's centrality and the traumatic nature of

[261] Jonathan Rosen, The Talmud and the Internet. (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2000), p. 83.

[262] David William Nelson, Responses to the Destruction of the Second Temple in the Tannaitic Midrashim. (Michigan: University Microfilms International, 1991), p. 2.

its destruction, Shaye Cohen offers two possible explanations for the tannaitic silence regarding the destruction: "Was it silence engendered by shock and despair? Not knowing what to say in the face of catastrophe, the rabbis said nothing. Or was it silence engendered by determination? Ignoring the harsh political realities, the rabbis devoted their energies to creating a religious system which would ensure the survival of Judaism."[263] The first suggestion is one of emotional paralysis and the second is one of denial for the sake of survival. Jacob Neusner appears to favor the second understanding based on his research that finds that the Mishnah hardly makes any explicit mention of the destruction, but rather portrays the sacrificial cult and the Temple as if the entire system were still functioning. [264] David Nelson takes issue, however, with both of the proposed interpretations of the apparent silence described above. First, in response to Cohen, Nelson explains that a lack of open or explicit response to loss does not necessarily mean a lack of response altogether. Instead, the response may be more subtle, covert, or even subconscious. In response to Neusner, Nelson asserts that he "has mistaken the tightly controlled and deliberate response of the Mishnah for the whole response." In other words, by limiting himself to an examination of *halakhah* and halakhic texts, Neusner misses the wellspring of information available in aggadic texts, exemplified in the medieval adage, "*en somekhin al divrei aggadah*,"[265] translated as "one

[263] Shaye Cohen,"The Destruction: From Scripture to *Midrash*." Prooftexts 2 (1982), pp. 18-19.

[264] David William Nelson, Responses to the Destruction of the Second Temple in the Tannaitic Midrashim. (Michigan: University Microfilms International, 1991), p. 8. See also Jacob Neusner, Judaism: The Evidence of the Mishnah. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).

[265] This term originally refers to legal decision-making but eventually comes to be taken much more generally. David William Nelson, Responses to the Destruction of the Second Temple in the Tannaitic Midrashim. (Michigan: University Microfilms International, 1991), p. 11.

does not/should not rely upon words of *aggadah*."[266] *Aggadah*, however, is perhaps the richest source for discovering both the subtle and more pronounced rabbinic responses to the destruction of the Temple.

While most of the rabbis cited in the *aggadot* presented in this thesis are *amoraim*, this study in and of itself is not broad or deep enough to make a more general statement about all of Talmudic *aggadot* which explicitly or implicitly address this topic. What is clear from this limited study is that rabbis, both *tanaim* and *amoraim*, used *aggadah* as a vehicle for articulating the impact of the Temple's destruction on their lives and their faith. Additionally, we see in the *aggadot* examined in this thesis that the rabbis drew on a quasi-canon of Scripture in order to flesh out some of their religious beliefs and struggles. These works include: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Psalms, Proverbs, and Lamentations. Certainly, the rabbis drew upon all of the books in the Hebrew Bible, but it is noteworthy that specific texts are relied upon more heavily in this particular context.[267] The book of Psalms, for example, expresses the deep theological and emotional struggles of humankind. It makes sense, therefore, why the rabbis might make us of this book so frequently in the context of the destruction of the Temple. The prophetic books listed above are all dated to time of exile after the destruction of the first Temple. These prophets and their disciples explored precisely what it meant to live in a world without the Temple. Even more, these prophetic books are themselves a *midrash* on why they were forced to live in exile and how they made sense of their loss. Finally, the book of Proverbs is a favorite text of the rabbis and is drawn upon heavily throughout

[266] Ibid., pp. 9-11.

[267] For example, seventeen of the verses cited in the *aggadot* presented in this thesis are from the book of Psalms. Four of those references are from Psalm 137. Sixteen of the verses cited in the *aggadot* presented in this thesis are from the book of Isaiah, and chapters 1, 3, 5, 22, and 66 are drawn from on more than one occasion.

Talmudic *aggadah* in order to anchor the centrality of Torah, establish particular behavioral norms, and promote a distinctive set of values.

We move now to an analysis of the precise nature of the responses and their implications for dealing with loss in contemporary personal and communal settings. In Chapter One, I investigated the value of expressing "Sadness, Tears, and Mourning" in confronting loss. The *aggadot* I presented expressed the anguish and despair that is natural in the acute stages of loss.[268] This response is critical in acknowledging, grappling with, and ultimately finding meaning in loss. There is also the remarkable new focus on divine empathy for Israel's suffering.[269] Unable to make sense of God's role in their loss, the rabbis conceive of a God of pathos who suffers alongside of them. This innovation has enormous therapeutic value as it changes the quality of the human response to God. Instead of being purely angry at or disappointed in God, this theological concept enables a person to see oneself as a co-victim with God. Even more, if God cries out in sadness over the loss of the Temple, it is most appropriate and healthy that God's people do the same. Mourning can, however, be excessive and unhealthy. The rabbis warn us to moderate our sadness while still preserving the memory of loss.[270] We see that giving people permission to mourn and reflecting their feelings back to them is at the core of pastoral care. The rabbis were not psychologists nor did they need psychological training to understand the value of expressing grief in times of loss. Both the rabbis and modern pastoral caregivers teach us that the journey of loss cannot proceed without the full expression of sadness.

[268] *Gittin* 57b and *Hagigah* 5b.

[269] *Berakhot* 3a and *Avoda Zara* 3b.

[270] *Bava Batra* 60b.

The second response to loss surveyed in this thesis is the notion of "Sin and Repentance." At its core, this response arises out of a deep human need to understand why the destruction occurred. We witnessed in the various *aggadot* that one possibility is to view the destruction as punishment for general and wide-spread disloyalty to the covenant with God and immoral behavior.[271] Another possibility is that the destruction served as retribution for violations of the rules of the Temple cult.[272] In either case, we see that the dominant rabbinic theology demands that we examine our own behavior in the face of loss. While insisting that all loss is a direct punishment from God for our human failings is inconsistent with my theology, the idea of turning inwards and using loss as an opportunity for repentance and renewal is particularly powerful. This process of self-examination and *teshuvah* can also open up new pathways in one's relationship with God. Pastoral caregivers and spiritual guides can assist in this process and help in preventing the sense of estrangement and guilt which so often accompanies loss. Loss may afford us the opportunity to re-prioritize our lives and live more intentionally in light of it.

In the third chapter, "Substitutional and Behavioral Responses," I examined the way in which the rabbis re-envisioned and re-constructed Judaism after the destruction of the Temple. Instead of abandoning the covenant or working towards the re-establishment of the Temple and its cult, the rabbis created a Judaism that possessed both continuity and discontinuity with the Judaism that preceded it. In proposing various substitutes for Temple practices in a post-destruction era (including Torah study, prayer, and acts of lovingkindness), the rabbis made both a subtle and radical shift which enabled Judaism to

[271] *Shabbat* 119b-120a and *Gittin* 55b-56a.

[272] *Yoma* 9b and *Kallah Rabbati* 54b.

survive and flourish even after the Temple no longer stood.[273] This response is part of the process of "working through" any loss. Substitutional and behavioral responses have the benefit of allowing people to feel more in control of what happens to them. Even if this notion is illusory at times, the sense of controlling one's destiny at a time of great suffering, vulnerability, and helplessness is of great value.[274] Additionally, these responses enable us to re-imagine and re-build our lives anew. In coming to terms with the past, one can re-establish a covenant with the present and dream of a new future. Torah study, prayer, and acts of lovingkindness are three spiritual responses which are as therapeutically appropriate to the rabbis as they are for us today.

Finally, I looked at "Faith" as the fourth response to loss. The rabbis, deeply motivated by their own agenda and vision for a renewal of Jewish life, drew upon their faith and hope for redemption as a response to the destruction around them.[275] They attempted to mitigate the inevitable sense of abandonment they felt from God as well as their distress over God's apparent passivity by connecting themselves more strongly to God's transcendence,[276] the memory of loss,[277] and their connection to one another.[278] Faith development is a critical piece of confronting loss. It is, perhaps, the primary way in which rabbis and pastoral caregivers can guide other Jews as they travel the long and

[273] *Shabbat* 30a, *Menahot* 110a, *Berakhot* 8a, *Ta'anit* 27b, *Berakhot* 26b, *Berakhot* 32b, *Avot d'Rabbi Natan*, Chapter 4, *Berakhot* 55a, *Berakhot* 5a-b, and *Sukkah* 49b.

[274] David William Nelson, Responses to the Destruction of the Second Temple in the Tannaitic Midrashim. (Michigan: University Microfilms International, 1991), p. 329.

[275] *Berakhot* 58b.

[276] *Yevamot* 102b.

[277] *Megillah* 11a.

[278] *Makkot* 24a-b.

arduous journey of grief. Each person has to discover this path for his or herself. The rabbis model the capacity for hope and consolation even in the darkest of times. Inspired by this notion, our contemporary rabbis and pastoral caregivers teach us that loss can indeed be transformative and meaningful when met with faith.

In the face of destruction and loss, the rabbis saw emergent possibilities for affecting the way people think, act, and relate to God. From their work and their stories emanated order and the re-constitution of Jewish identity. In decentralizing holiness from the Temple in Jerusalem, they teach us that holiness can be found everywhere--even in the midst of loss. The behavioral and attitudinal responses of the rabbis recorded in Talmudic *aggadah* offer us profound insight into how we as modern Jews, rabbis, and pastoral caregivers might confront loss. Growth and meaning may not result when we are in the coils of loss, but with time, community support, spiritual seeking, and spiritual guidance, they may take us to places we never imagined we could go. As Jews, we search for meaning and sanctity in *this* life for which loss is an inevitable and invaluable pathway. I am reminded of the orchestras in Auschwitz. The musicians knew death intimately-- the stench of death surrounded them. Still they created beauty amid destruction because they knew that to believe in the possibility of wonder, of music, of radiance, was what kept them human.[279] We cannot live without loss, but we also cannot live without the possibility of making loss meaningful.

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[279] David Wolpe, Making Loss Matter. (New York: Riverhead Books, 1999), p. 214.

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Appendix:
Catalog of Hebrew Sources Principally Discussed

Chapter One
Gittin 57b
Hagigah 5b
Berakhot 32b
Berakhot 3a
Avoda Zara 3b
Berakhot 3a
Bava Batra 12a-b
Bava Batra 60b

Chapter Two
Shabbat 119b-120a
Yoma 9b
Kallah Rabbati 54b
Gittin 55b-56a
Berakhot 55a
Sanhedrin 43b

Chapter Three
Shabbat 30a
Menahot 110a
Berakhot 8a
Ta'anit 27b
Berakhot 26b
Berakhot 32b
Avot d'Rabbi Natan, Chapter 4
Berakhot 55a
Berakhot 5a-b
Sukkah 49b

Chapter Four
Berakhot 58b
Yevamot 102b
Megillah 11a
Makkot 24a-b

Gittin 57b

אמר רב יהודה אמר רב, מאי דכתיב: (תהלים קל"ז) על נהרות בבל שם ישבנו גם בכינו בזכרנו את ציון? מלמד, שהראהו הקב"ה לדוד חורבן בית ראשון וחורבן בית שניש חורבן בית ראשון, שנאמר: על נהרות בבל שם ישבנו גם בבינוש בית שני, דכתיב: (תהלים קל"ז) זכור ה' לבני אדום את יום ירושלים האומרים ערו ערו עד היסוד בה.

Hagigah 5b

ומי איכא בביה קמיה הקדוש ברוך הוא? והאמר רב פפא: אין עציבות לפני הקדוש ברוך הוא, שנאמר (דברי הימים א' ט"ז) הוד והדר לפניו עז וחדוה במקמו! - לא קשיא: הא - בבתי גואי, הא - בבתי בראי. - ובבתי בראי לא? והא כתיב (ישעיהו כ"ב) ויקרא אדני ה' צבאות ביום ההוא לבכי ולמספד ולקרחה ולחגר שק! - שאני חרבן בית המקדש, דאפילו מלאכי שלום בכו, שנאמר (ישעיהו ל"ג) הן אראלם צעקו חוצה מלאכי שלום מר יבכיון. (ירמיהו י"ג) ודמע תדמע ותרד עיני דמעה כי נשבה עדר ה'.

Berakhot 32b

ואמר רבי אלעזר: מיום שחרב בית המקדש ננעלו שערי תפלה, שנאמר: (איכה ג') גם כי אועק ואשוע שתם תפלתי, ואף על פי ששערי תפלה ננעלו שערי דמעה לא ננעלו, שנאמר (תהלים ל"ט) שמעה תפלתי ה' ושועתי האזינה אל דמעתי אל תחרש. רבא לא גזר תעניתא ביומא דעיבא משום שנאמר (איכה ג') סכתה בענן לך מעבור תפלה. ואמר רבי אלעזר: מיום שחרב בית המקדש נפסקה חומת ברזל בין ישראל לאביהם שבשמים, שנאמר (יחזקאל ד') ואתה קח לך מחבת ברזל ונתתה אותה קיר ברזל בינך ובין העיר.

Berakhot 3a

דתניא: רבי אליעזר אומר: שלש משמרות הוי הלילה ועל כל משמר ומשמר יושב הקדוש ברוך הוא ושואג כארי, שנאמר: (ירמיהו כ"ה) ה' ממרום ישאג וממעון קדשו יתן קולו שאוג ישאג על נוהו.

Avoda Zara 3b

א"ל רב אחא לרב נחמן בר יצחק: מיום שחרב בית המקדש אין שחוק להקב"ה. ומנלן דליכא שחוק? (אילימא מדכתיב: (ישעיהו כב) ויקרא ה' אלהים צבאות ביום ההוא לבכי ולמספד ולקרחה וגו', דלמא ההוא יומא ותו לא! אלא דכתיב: (תהלים קלז) אם אשכחך ירושלם תשכח ימיני, תדבק לשוני לחכי אם לא אזכרכי, דלמא שכחה הוא דליכא, אבל שחוק מיהא איכא!) אלא מהא: (ישעיהו מב) החשיתי מעולם אהריש אתאפק וגו'.

Berakhot 3a

תניא, אמר רבי יוסי: פעם אחת הייתי מהלך בדרך, ונכנסתי לחורבה אחת מחורבות ירושלים להתפלל. בא אליהו זכור לטוב ושמר לי על הפתח (והמתין לי) עד שסיימתי תפלתי. לאחר שסיימתי תפלתי אמר לי: שלום עליך, רבי! ואמרתי לו: שלום עליך, רבי ומורי! ואמר לי: בני, מפני מה נכנסת לחורבה זו? אמרתי לו: להתפלל. ואמר לי: היה לך להתפלל בדרך! ואמרתי לו: מתירא הייתי שמא יפסיקו בי עוברי דרכים. ואמר לי: היה לך להתפלל תפלה קצרה. באותה שעה למדתי ממנו שלשה דברים: למדתי שאין נכנסין לחורבה, ולמדתי שמתפללין בדרך, ולמדתי שהמתפלל בדרך - מתפלל תפלה קצרה. ואמר לי: בני, מה קול שמעת בחורבה זו? ואמרתי לו: שמעתי בת קול שמנהמת כיונה ואומרת: אוי לבנים שבעונותיהם החרבתי את ביתי ושרפתי את היכלי והגליתים לבין האומות. ואמר לי: חייך וחיי ראשך, לא שעה לא בלבד אומרת כך, אלא בכל יום ויום שלש פעמים אומרת כך ולא זו בלבד, אלא בשעה שישראל נכנסין לבתי כנסיות ולבתי מדרשות ועונין יהא שמיה הגדול מבורך

הקדוש ברוך הוא מנענע ראשו ואומר: אשרי המלך שמקלסין אותו בביתו כך, מה לו לאב שהגלה את בניו, ואוי להם לבנים שגלו מעל שולחן אבידם.

Bava Batra 12a-b

אמר רבי אבדימי דמן חיפה: מיום שחרב בית המקדש, ניטלה נבואה מן הנביאים וניתנה לחכמים. . . . א"ר יוחנן: מיום שחרב בית המקדש, ניטלה נבואה מן הנביאים וניתנה לשוטים ולתינוקות.

Bava Batra 60b and (also a parallel text in *Ta'anit* 30b)

ת"ר: כשחרב הבית בשניה, רבו פרושין בישראל שלא לאכול בשר ושלא לשתות יין. נטפל להן ר' יהושע, אמר להן: בני, מפני מה אי אתם אוכלין בשר ואין אתם שותין יין? אמרו לו: נאכל בשר שממנו מקריבין על גבי מזבח, ועכשיו בטל? נשתה יין שמנסכין על גבי המזבח, ועכשיו בטל? אמר להם: א"כ, לחם לא נאכל, שכבר בטלו מנחות! אפשר בפירות. פירות לא נאכל, שכבר בטלו בכורים! אפשר בפירות אחרים. מים לא נשתה, שכבר בטל ניסוך המים! שתקו. אמר להן: בני, בואו ואומר לכם: שלא להתאבל כל עיקר אי אפשר - שכבר נגזרה גזרה, ולהתאבל יותר מדאי אי אפשר - שאין גוזרין גזירה על הצבור אא"כ רוב צבור יכולין לעמוד בה, דכתיב: (מלאכי י') במארה אתם נארים ואותי אתם קובעים הגוי כולו, אלא כך אמרו חכמים: סד אדם את ביתו בסיד, ומשייר בו דבר מועט. וכמה? אמר רב יוסף: אמה על אמה. אמר רב חסדא: כנגד הפותח. עושה אדם כל צרכי סעודה, ומשייר דבר מועט. מאי היא? אמר רב פפא: כסא דהרסנא. עושה אשה כל תכשיטיה, ומשיירת דבר מועט. מאי היא? אמר רב: בת צדעא, שנאמר: (תהלים קלז) אם אשכחך ירושלים תשכח ימיני תדבק לשוני לחכי וגו'. מאי על ראש שמחתי? אמר רב יצחק: זה אפר מקלה שבראש חתנים. א"ל רב פפא לאביי: היבא מגח לה? במקום תפילין, שנאמר: (ישעיהו ס"א) לשום לאבלי ציון לתת להם פאר תחת אפר. וכל המתאבל על ירושלים - זוכה ורואה בשמחתה, שנאמר: (ישעיהו סו) שמחו את ירושלים וגו'. תניא, אמר ר' ישמעאל בן אלישע: מיום שחרב בית המקדש, דין הוא שנגזור על עצמנו שלא לאכול בשר ולא לשתות יין, אלא אין גוזרין גזירה על הצבור אא"כ רוב צבור יכולין לעמוד בהש ומיום שפשטה מלבות

הרשעה, שגוזרת עלינו גזירות רעות וקשות, ומבטלת ממנו תורה ומצות, ואין מנחת אותנו ליכנס לשבוע הבן, ואמרי לה: לישוע הבן, דין הוא שנגזור על עצמנו שלא לישא אשה ולהוליד בנים, ונמצא זרעו של אברהם אבינו כלה מאליו.

Shabbat 119b-120a

אמר אביי: לא חרבה ירושלים אלא בשביל שחללו בה את השבת, שנאמר (יחזקאל כב) ומשבתותי העלימו עיניהם ואחל בתוכם. אמר רבי אבהו: לא חרבה ירושלים אלא בשביל שביטלו קריאת שמע שחרית וערבית, שנאמר (ישעיהו ה) הוי משכימי בבקר שכר ירדפו וגו' ובתיב (ישעיהו ה) והיה כנור ונבל תף וחליל ויין משתיהם ואת פעל ה' לא יביטו ומעשה ידיו לא ראו לכן גלה עמי מבלי דעת. אמר רב המנונא: לא חרבה ירושלים אלא בשביל שביטלו בה תינוקות של בית רבן, שנאמר: (ירמיהו ו) שפך על עולל בחוץ וגו' מה טעם שפך - משום דעולל בחוץ. אמר עולא: לא חרבה ירושלים אלא מפני שלא היה לחם בושת פנים זה מזה, שנאמר (ירמיהו ו) הובישו כי תועבה עשו גם בוש לא יבושו וגו'. אמר רבי יצחק: לא חרבה ירושלים אלא בשביל שהושוו קטן וגדול, שנאמר (ישעיהו כד) והיה כעם ככהן וכתיב בתריה הבוק תבוק הארץ. אמר רב עמרם בריה דרבי שמעון בר אבא אמר רבי שמעון בר אבא אמר רבי חנינא: לא חרבה ירושלים אלא בשביל שלא הוכיחו זה את זה, שנאמר (איכה א) היו שריה כאילים לא מצאו מרעה. מה איל זה ראשו של זה בצד זנבו של זה - אף ישראל שבאותו הדור, כבשו פניהם בקרקע ולא הוכיחו זה את זה. אמר רבי יהודה: לא חרבה ירושלים אלא בשביל שביזו בה תלמידי חכמים, שנאמר (דברי הימים ב לו) ויהיו מלעבים במלאכי האלהים ובוזים דבריו ומתעתעים בנביאיו עד עלות חמת ה' בעמו עד (אין) [לאין] מרפא. ... ואמר רבא: לא חרבה ירושלים אלא בשביל שפסקו ממנה אנשי אמנה, שנאמר (ירמיהו ה) שוטטו בחוצות ירושלים וראו נא [ודעו ובקשו ברחובותיה אם תמצאו איש] (אם יש איש) עושה משפט מבקש אמונה ואסלח לה. איני? והאמר רב קטינא: אפילו בשעת כשלונה של ירושלים לא פסקו ממנה אנשי אמנה, שנאמר (ישעיהו ג) כי יתפש איש באחיו בית אביו (לאמר) שמלה לכה קצין תהיה לנו - דברים שבני אדם מתכסין בהן כשמלה ישנן בידיך, והמכשלה הזאת תחת ידך

הרשעה, שגוזרת עלינו גזירות רעות וקשות, ומבטלת ממנו תורה ומצות, ואין מנחת אותנו ליכנס לשבוע הבן, ואמרי לה: לישוע הבן, דין הוא שנגזור על עצמנו שלא לישא אשה ולהוליד בנים, ונמצא זרעו של אברהם אבינו כלה מאליו.

Shabbat 119b-120a

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(שבת דף קכ.א)

דברים שאין בני אדם עומדין עליהם אלא אם כן נכשלים בהן ישנן תחת ידיך קצין תהיה לנו.

Yoma 9b

מקדש ראשון מפני מה חרב? מפני שלשה דברים שהיו בו: עבודה זרה, וגלוי עריות, ושפיכות דמים. עבודה זרה . אבל מקדש שני, שהיו עוסקין בתורה ובמצות וגמילות חסדים מפני מה חרב? מפני שהיתה בו שנאת חנם. ללמדך ששקולה שנאת חנם כנגד שלש עבירות: עבודה זרה, גלוי עריות, ושפיכות דמים.

Kallah Rabbati 54b

למילי דר' יוחנן מפני מה חרבה ירושלים בראשונה. מפני ע"ז. ובאחרונה מפני שנאת חנם. הא לית בה תרתי (אמר לך ר' יוחנן דאי הקב"ה הוא דקאמר הכי אותי עזבו מה טעם דתורתי לא שמרו הא אילו תורתי שמרו אותי לא עזבו) ואי משום דקא מקשית בית שני שאני שנאת חנם דחמיר טפי מע"ז. ומנא לך- . דכתיב חבור עצבים אפרים הנח לו. בזמן שהם מתחברין ואפי' לעצביהם הנח להם. חלק לבם עתה יאשמו.

היכלי והגליתים לבין האומות. ואמר לי: חייך וחיי ראשך, לא שעה לא בלבד אומרת כך, אלא בכל יום ויום שלש פעמים אומרת כרש ולא זו בלבד, אלא בשעה שישראל נכנסין לבתי כנסיות ולבתי מדרשות ועונין יהא שמיה הגדול מבורך הקדוש ברוך הוא מנענע ראשו ואומר: אשרי המלך שמקלסין אותו בביתו כך, מה לו לאב שהגלה את בניו, ואוי להם לבנים שגלו מעל שולחן אביהם.

Gittin 55b-56a

אמר רבי יוחנן, מאי דכתיב: (משלי כ"ח) אשרי אדם מפחד תמיד ומקשה לבו יפול ברעה? אקמצא ובר קמצא חרוב ירושלים, אתרנגולא ותרנגולתא חרוב טור מלכא, אשקא דריספק חרוב ביתר. אקמצא ובר קמצא חרוב ירושלים, דההוא גברא דרחמיה קמצא ובעל דבביה בר קמצא, עבד סעודתא, אמר

ליה לשמעיה: זיל אייתי לי קמצא. אזל אייתי ליה בר קמצא. אתא אשכחיה דהוה יתיב. אמר ליה: מכדי ההוא גברא בעל דבבא דההוא גברא הוא. מאי בעית הכא? קום פוק! אמר ליה: הואיל ואתאי שבקן, ויהיבנא לך דמי מה דאכילנא ושתינא. אמר ליה: לא. אמר ליה: יהיבנא לך דמי פלגא דסעודתיך! אמר ליה: לא. אמר ליה: יהיבנא לך דמי כולה סעודתיך! א"ל: לא. נקטיה בידיה ואוקמיה ואפקיה. אמר: הואיל והוו יתבי רבנן ולא מחו ביה, ש"מ קא ניחא להו, איזיל איכול בהו קורצא בי מלכא. אזל אמר ליה לקיסר: מרדו בך יהודאי! א"ל: מי יימר? א"ל: שדר להו קורבנא, חזית אי מקרבין ליה. אזל שדר בידיה עגלא תלתא. בהדי דקאתי שדא ביה מומא בגיב שפתים, ואמרי לה - בדוקין שבעין, דוכתא דלדידן הוה מומא ולדידהו לאו מומא הוא. סבור רבנן לקרוביה משום שלום מלכות. אמר להו רבי זכריה בן אבקולס, יאמרו: בעלי מומין קריבין לגבי מזבח! סבור למיקטליה, דלא ליזיל ולימא. אמר להו רבי זכריה, יאמרו: מטיל מום בקדשים יהרג! אמר רבי יוחנן: ענוותנותו של רבי זכריה בן אבקולס, החריבה את ביתנו, ושרפה את היבלנו, והגליתנו מארצנו. שדר עלוייהו לנירון קיסר. בי קאתי, שדא גירא למזרח אתא נפל בירושלים, למערב אתא נפל בירושלים, לארבע רוחות השמים - אתא נפל בירושלים. א"ל לינוקא: פסוק לי פסוקיך, אמר ליה: (יחזקאל כה) ונתתי את נקמתי באדום ביד עמי ישראל וגו', אמר: קודשא בריך הוא בעי לחרובי ביתיה, ובעי לכפורי ידיה בההוא גבראו ערק ואזל ואיגייר, ונפק מיניה ר"מ. שדריה עילוייהו לאספסיינוס קיסר. אתא, צר עלה תלת שני.

Berakhot 55a

רבי יוחנן ורבי אלעזר דאמרי תרוייהו: כל זמן שבית המקדש קיים - מזבח מכפר על ישראל, ועכשיו - שלחנו של אדם מכפר עליו.

Sanhedrin 43b

אמר רבי יהושע בן לוי: כל הזובח את יצרו ומתודה עליו, מעלה עליו הכתוב כאילו כיבדו להקדוש ברוך הוא בשני עולמים, העולם הזה והעולם הבא, דכתיב (תהלים נ') זבח תודה יכבדנני. ואמר רבי יהושע בן לוי: בזמן שבית המקדש קיים, אדם מקריב

עולה - שכר עולה בידו, מנחה - שכר מנחה בידו. אבל מי שדעתו שפלה - מעלה עליו הכתוב כאילו הקריב כל הקרבנות כולן, שנאמר (תהלים נ"א) זבחי אלהים רוח נשברה, ולא עוד אלא שאין תפלתו נמאסת, שנאמר (תהלים נ"א) לב נשבר ונדכה אלהים לא תבזה.

Shabbat 30a

אמר לו: (תהלים פד) כי טוב יום בחצריך מאלף. טוב לי יום אחד שאתה יושב ועוסק בתורה מאלף עולות שעתיד שלמה בנך להקריב לפני על גבי המזבח.

Menahot 110a

(תהלים קל"ד) שיר המעלות הנה ברכו את ה' כל עבדי ה' העומדים בבית ה' בלילות - מאי בלילות? א"ר יוחנן: אלו ת"ח העוסקים בתורה בלילה. מעלה עליהן הכתוב כאילו עסוקים בעבודה. (דברי הימים ב' ב') לעולם זאת על ישראל - א"ר גידל אמר רב: זה מזבח בנוי ומיכאל שר הגדול עומד ומקריב עליו קרבנש ורבי יוחנן אמר: אלו תלמידי חכמים העסוקין בהלכות עבודה, מעלה עליהם הכתוב כאילו נבנה מקרש בימיהם. אמר ריש לקיש, מאי דכתיב: (ויקרא ו') זאת התורה לעולה למנחה ולחטאת ולאשם? כל העוסק בתורה, כאילו הקריב עולה מנחה חטאת ואשם. אמר רבא: האי לעולה למנחה, עולה ומנחה מיבעי ליה? אלא אמר רבא: כל העוסק בתורה, אינו צריך לא עולה (ולא חטאת) ולא מנחה ולא אשם. אמר רבי יצחק, מאי דכתיב: (ויקרא ו') זאת תורת החטאת וזאת תורת האשם? כל העוסק בתורת חטאת כאילו הקריב חטאת, וכל העוסק בתורת אשם כאילו הקריב אשם.

Berakhot 8a

הכי אמר רב חסדא: מאי דכתיב (תהלים פ"ז) אהב ה' שערי ציון מכל משכנות יעקב - אוהב ה' שערים המצויינים בחלכה יותר מבתי בנסיות ומבתי מדרשות. והיינו דאמר רבי חייא בר אמי משמיה דעולא: מיום שחרב בית המקדש אין לו להקדוש ברוך הוא בעולמו אלא ארבע אמות של הלכה

בלבד. ואמר אביי: מריש הוה גריסנא בגו ביתא ומצלינא בבי כנישתא, כיון דשמענא להא דאמר רבי חייא בר אמי משמיה דעולא: מיום שחרב בית המקדש אין לו להקדוש ברוך הוא בעולמו אלא ארבע אמות של הלכה בלבד - לא הוה מצלינא אלא היכא דגריסנא. רבי אמי ורבי אסי אף על גב דהוו להו תליסר בי כנישתא בטבריא לא מצלו אלא ביני עמודי, היכא דהוו גרסי.

Ta'anit 27b

וישראל שבאותו משמר מתבנסין בעריתן וקורין במעשה בראשית. מנהני מילי? אמר רבי יעקב בר אחא אמר רב אסי: אלמלא מעמדות לא נתקיימו שמים וארץ, שנאמר (בראשית ט"ו) ויאמר ה' אלהים במה אדע כי אירשנה, אמר אברהם: רבונו של עולם! שמא ישראל חוטאין לפניך אתה עושה להם כדור המבול וכדור הפלגה? אמר ליה: לאו. אמר לפניו: רבונו של עולם, הודיעני, במה אירשנה? אמר ליה: (בראשית ט"ו) קחה לי עגלה משלשת ועז משלשת וגו'. אמר לפניו: רבונו של עולם, תינח בזמן שבית המקדש קיים, בזמן שאין בית המקדש קיים מה תהא עליהם? - אמר לו: כבר תקנתי להם סדר קרבנות, בזמן שקוראין בהן לפני - מעלה אני עליהם כאילו הקריבום לפני, ואני מוחל להם על כל עונותיהם.

Berakhot 26b

איתמר, רבי יוסי ברבי חנינא אמר: תפלות אבות תקנום רבי יהושע בן לוי אמר: תפלות כנגד תמידין תקנום. תניא כוותיה דרבי יוסי ברבי חנינא, ותניא כוותיה דרבי יהושע בן לוי. תניא כוותיה דרבי יוסי ברבי חנינא: אברהם תקן תפלת שחרית - שנאמר (בראשית י"ט) וישכם אברהם בבקר אל המקום אשר עמד שם, ואין עמידה אלא תפלה, שנאמר (תהלים ק"ו) ויעמד פינחס ויפללש יצחק תקן תפלת מנחה - שנאמר (בראשית כ"ד) ויצא יצחק לשוח בשדה לפנות ערב, ואין שיחה אלא תפלה, - שנאמר (תהלים ק"ב) תפלה לעני כי-יעטף ולפני ה' ישפך שיחו, יעקב תקן תפלת ערבית - שנאמר (בראשית כ"ח) ויפגע במקום וילן שם, ואין פגיעה אלא תפלה, שנאמר (ירמיהו ז') ואתה אל תתפלל בעד העם הזה ואל תשא בעדם רנה ותפלה ואל תפגע - בי. ותניא כוותיה דרבי יהושע בן לוי: מפני מה אמרו

תפלת השחר עד חצות - שהרי תמיד של שחר קרב והולך עד חצותש ורבי יהודה אומר: עד ארבע שעות, שהרי תמיד של שחר קרב והולך עד ארבע שעות. ומפני מה אמרו תפלת המנחה עד הערב - שהרי תמיד של בין הערבים קרב והולך עד הערבש תפלות אבות תקנום, ואסמבינהו רבנן אקרבנות.

Berakhot 32b

ואמר רבי אלעזר: גדולה תפלה יותר מן הקרבנות שנאמר (ישעיהו א') למה לי רב זבחיכם, וכתיב, ובפרשכם כפיכם. אמר רבי יוחנן: כל כהן שהרג את הנפש לא ישא את כפיו, שנאמר (ישעיהו א') ידיכם דמים מלאו. ואמר רבי אלעזר: מיום שחרב בית המקדש ננעלו שערי תפלה, שנאמר: (איכה ג') גם כי אזעק ואשוע שתם תפלתי, ואף על פי ששערי תפלה ננעלו שערי דמעה לא ננעלו, שנאמר (תהלים ל"ט) שמעה תפלתי ה' ושועתי האזינה אל דמעתי אל תחרש. רבא לא גזר תעניתא ביומא דעיבא משום שנאמר (איכה ג') סכתה בענן לך מעבור תפלה. ואמר רבי אלעזר: מיום שחרב בית המקדש נפסקה חומת ברזל בין ישראל לאביהם שבשמים, שנאמר (יחזקאל ד') ואתה קח לך מחבת ברזל ונתתה אותה קיר ברזל בינך ובין העיר. אמר רבי חנין אמר רבי חנינא: כל המאריך בתפלתו אין תפלתו חוזרת ריקם. מנא לן - ממשה רבינו שנאמר: (דברים ט') ואתפלל אל ה', וכתיב בתריה וישמע ה' אלי גם בפעם ההיא. אינו? והא אמר רבי חייא בר אבא אמר רבי יוחנן: כל המאריך בתפלתו ומעיין בה - סוף בא לידי כאב לב, שנאמר: (משלי י"ג) תוחלת ממשכה מחלה לב. מאי תקנתיה - יעסוק בתורה, שנאמר (משלי י"ג) ועץ חיים תאוה באה, ואין עץ חיים אלא תורה, שנאמר (משלי ג') עץ חיים היא למחזיקים בה! - לא קשיא, הא - דמאריך ומעיין בה, הא - דמאריך ולא מעיין בה. אמר רבי חמא ברבי חנינא: אם ראה אדם שהתפלל ולא נענה יחזור ויתפלל שנאמר (תהלים כ"ז) קוה אל ה' חזק ויאמץ לבך וקוה אל ה'.

Avot d'Rabbi Natan, Chapter 4

א שמעון הצדיק היה משיירי כנסת הגדולה הוא היה אומר על שלשה דברים העולם עומד על התורה ועל העבודה ועל גמילות חסדים. על התורה כיצד הרי הוא אומר (הושע ו) חסד חפצתי ולא זבח

ודעת אלהים מעולות מכאן לעולה שהיא חביבה מזבחים מפני שהעולה כולה כליל לאישים שנאמר (ויקרא א) והקטיר הכהן את הכל המזבחה ובמקום אחר הוא אומר (ש"א ז) ויקח שמואל טלה חלב אחר ויעלה עולה כליל לה' ותלמוד תורה חביבה לפני המקום מעולות לפי שאם אדם למד תורה יודע דעתו של מקום שנאמר (משלי ב) אז תבין יראת ה' ודעת אלהים תמצא. מכאן לחכם שיושב ודורש בקהל שמעלה עליו הכתוב כאילו הקריב חלב ודם לגבי מזבח שני ת"ח שיושבים ועוסקים בתורה ועברה לפניהם כלה או מטה של מת אם בידן כדי צרכן אל יבטלו ממשנתן ואם לאו יעמדו וישנו ויקלסו לכלה וילוו למת. על גמ"ח כיצד הרי הוא אומר (הושע ו) כי חסד חפצתי ולא זבח. העולם מתחלת לא נברא אלא בחסד שנאמר (תהלים פט) כי אמרתי עולם חסד יבנה שמים תכין אמונתך בהם. פעם אחת היה רבן יוחנן בן זכאי יוצא מירושלים והיה רבייהושע הולך אחריו וראה בית המקדש חרב [אר"י אוי לנו על זה שהוא חרב] מקום שמכפרים בו עונותיהם של ישראל. א"ל בני אל ירע לך יש לנו כפרה אחת שהיא כמותה ואיזה זה גמ"ח שנאמר כי חסד חפצתי ולא זבח שכן מצינו בדניאל איש חמודות שהיה מתעסק בגמ"ח ומה חן גמ"ח שהיה דניאל מתעסק בהם אם תאמר עולות וזבחים מקריב בבבל והלא כבר נאמר (דברים יב) השמר לך פן תעלה עולותיך בכל מקום אשר תראה כי אם במקום אשר יבחר ה' באחד שבטיך שם תעלה עולותיך. אלא מה הן גמ"ח שהיה מתעסק בהן היה מתקן את הכלה ומשמחה ומלווה את חמת ונותן פרוטה לעני ומתפלל ג' פעמים בכל יום ותפלתו מתקבלת ברצון שנאמר (דניאל ו) ודניאל כדי ידע די רשים כתבא על לביתיה ובוין פתיחן ליה בעיליתה נגד ירושלם וזימנין תלתה ביומא הוא ברך על ברכוהי ומצלא ומודא קדם אלהה כל קבל די הוא עבד מן קדמת דנה.

Berakhot 55a

רבי יוחנן ורבי אלעזר דאמרי תרוייהו: כל זמן שבית המקדש קיים - מזבח מכפר על ישראל, ועבשיו - שלחנו של אדם מכפר עליו.

Berakhot 5a-b

תני תנא קמיה דרבי יוחנן: כל העוסק בתורה ובגמילות חסדים וקובר את בניו - מוחלין לו על כל עונותיו. אמר ליה רבי יוחנן: בשלמא תורה וגמילות חסדים - דכתיב (משלי ט"ז) בחסד ואמת יכפר עוון חסד - זו גמילות חסדים, שנאמר (משלי כ"א) רודף צדקה וחסד ימצא חיים צדקה וכבוד, אמת - זו תורה, שנאמר: (משלי כ"ג) אמת קנה ואל תמכרש אלא קובר את בניו - מנין? תנא ליה ההוא סבא משום רבי שמעון בן יוחאי: אתיא עון, עון, כתיב הכא: בחסד ואמת יכפר עון, וכתיב התם: (ירמיהו ל"ב) ומשלם עון אבות אל חיק בניהם. אמר רבי יוחנן: נגעים ובנים אינן יסורין של אהבה. ונגעים לא? והתניא: כל מי שיש בו אחד מארבעה מראות נגעים הללו - אינן אלא מזבח כפרה! - מזבח כפרה הוו, יסורין של אהבה לא הוו.

Sukkah 49b (containing a version of *Tosefta Pe'ah* 4:19B)

אמר רבי אלעזר: גדול העושה צדקה יותר מכל הקרבנות, שנאמר (משלי כא) עשה צדקה ומשפט נבחר לה' מזבח. ואמר רבי אלעזר: גדולה גמילות חסדים יותר מן הצדקה, שנאמר (הושע י) זרעו לכם לצדקה וקצרו לפי חסד. אם אדם זורע - ספק אוכל ספק אינו אוכל, אדם קוצר - ודאי אוכל.

Berakhot 58b

חבי אמר רבי יוחנן: מיום שחרב בית המקדש נגזרה גזירה על בתיהן של צדיקים שיהרבו, שנאמר (ישעיהו ה') באזני ה' צבאות אם לא - בתים רבים לשמה יהיו גדלים וטובים מאין יושב. ואמר רבי יוחנן: עתיד הקדוש ברוך הוא להחזירן לישובן, שנאמר (תהלים קכ"ה) שיר המעלות לדוד הבטחים בה' כהר ציון, מה הר ציון עתיד הקדוש ברוך הוא להחזירו לישובו, אף בתיהן של צדיקים עתיד הקדוש ברוך הוא להחזירן לישובן.

Yevamot 102b

אמר ליה ההוא מינא לר"ג: עמא דחלץ ליה מריה מיניה, דכתיב: (הושע ה') בצאנם ובבקרם ילכו

לבקש את ה' ולא ימצאו חלץ מהם! אמר ליה: שוטה, מי כתיב חלץ להם? חלץ מהם כתיב, ואילו יבמה דחלצו לה אחין, מידי משאא אית ביה?

Megillah 11a

ויהי בימי אחשורוש. אמר רב: ויי והי. הדא דכתיב (דברים כ"ח) והתמכרתם שם לאויבך לעבדים ולשפחות וגו'. ושמואל אמר (ויקרא כ"ו): לא מאסתים ולא געלתים לכלתם לא מאסתים - בימי יוונים, ולא געלתים - בימי אספסיינוס, לכלתם - בימי המן, להפר בריתי אתם - בימי רומיים, כי אני ה' אלהיהם - בימי גוג ומגוג. במתניתא תנא: לא מאסתים - בימי כשדים, שהעמדתי להם דניאל חנניה מישאל ועוריה, ולא געלתים - בימי יוונים, שהעמדתי להם שמעון הצדיק, וחשמונאי ובניו, ומתתיה כהן גדול, לכלתם - בימי המן, שהעמדתי להם מרדכי ואסתר, להפר בריתי אתם, - בימי פרסיים, שהעמדתי להם של בית רבי וחכמי דורות, כי אני ה' אלהיהם - לעתיד לבוא, שאין כל אומה ולשון יכולה לשלוט בהם.

Makkot 24a-b

וכבר היה ר"ג וריבי אלעזר בן עזריה ורבי יהושע ורבי עקיבא מהלכין בדרך, ושמעו קול המונה של רומי מפלטה [ברחוק] מאה ועשרים מיל, והתחילו בוכין, ורבי עקיבא משחק. אמרו לו: מפני מה אתה משחק? אמר להם: ואתם מפני מה אתם בוכים? אמרו לו: הללו בושיים שמשתחוים לעצבים ומקטרים לעבודת כוכבים יושבין בטח והשקט, ואנו בית הדום רגלי אלהינו שרוף. באש ולא נבכה? אמר להן: לכך אני מצחק, ומה לעוברי רצונו כך, לעושי רצונו על אחת כמה וכמה. שוב פעם אחת היו עולין לירושלים, כיון שהגיעו להר הצופים קרעו בגדיהם. כיון שהגיעו להר הבית, ראו שועל שיצא מבית קדשי הקדשים, התחילו הן בוכין ור"ע מצחק. אמרו לו: מפני מה אתה מצחק? אמר להם: מפני מה אתם בוכים? אמרו לו, מקום שכתוב בו: (במדבר א') והזר הקרב יומת ועכשיו שועלים הלכו בו ולא נבכה? אמר להן: לכך אני מצחק, דכתיב: (ישעיהו ח') ואעידה לי עדים נאמנים את אוריה הכהן ואת זכריה בן יברכיהו, וכי מה ענין אוריה אצל זכריה? אוריה במקדש ראשון וזכריה במקדש שני! אלא,

תלה הכתוב נבואתו של זכריה בנבואתו של אוריה, באוריה כתיב: (מיכה ג') לכן בגללכם ציון שדה תחרש [וגו',] בזכריה כתיב: (זכריחז') עוד ישבו זקנים וזקנות ברחובות ירושלם, עד שלא נתקיימה נבואתו של אוריה - הייתי מתייירא שלא תתקיים נבואתו של זכריה, עכשיו שנתקיימה נבואתו של אוריה - בידוע שנבואתו של זכריה מתקיימת. בלשון הזה אמרו לו: עקיבא, ניחמתנו עקיבא, ניחמתנו.