

Finding Hope From the Holocaust

The Kinot that we recite on Tisha B'Av are unlike any other prayers that we recite during the course of the year. The uniqueness of the Kinot becomes evident as soon as you read them, In what other prayers do we present such graphic descriptions of the cruelty that others have afflicted upon the Jewish People? In what other prayers do we ask G-d why he allows other people to harm the Jewish people? The Kinot highlight that on Tisha B'Av we can talk to G-d about subjects that we shy away from on other days of the year.

In the last several decades there have been additions to the Tisha B'Av liturgy. The new Kinot are poems of mourning over the Holocaust written by such rabbinic luminaries as Rav Shimon Schwab and the Bobover Rebbe. To the contemporary Jew this only highlights the question that embodies Tisha B'Av — why would G-d allow innocent men, women, and children to die painful and tragic deaths? For many people this question is so powerful as to demand a denial of G-d's existence. Is Tisha B'Av, then, the holiday of atheism?

Elie Wiesel

“Where was God in all this? It seemed as impossible to conceive of Auschwitz with God as to conceive of Auschwitz without God”

“For me, hope without memory is like memory without hope.”

“If dreams reflect the past, hope summons the future.”

Anne Frank

Where there's hope, there's life. It fills us with fresh courage and makes us strong again.”

“In spite of everything, I still believe that people are really good at heart.”

Viktor Frankl

“We who lived in concentration camps can remember the men who walked through the huts comforting others, giving away their last piece of bread. They may have been few in number, but they offer sufficient proof that everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms -- to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way.”

“Life is never made unbearable by circumstances, but only by lack of meaning and purpose.”

Quotable Quotes

“Never give up hope, no matter how dark things seem”

“Hope is the only thing stronger than fear.”