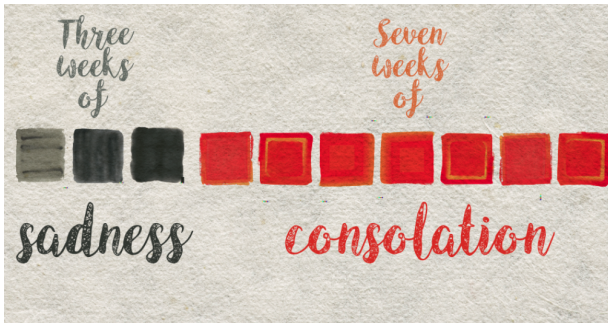




D'var Torah:

Shabbat Nachamu

Three weeks of sadness require seven weeks of consolation!



Video transcript: Three weeks of sadness requires seven weeks of consolation. That's the period of the calendar that we are in right now.

Between the fast days of Shiva Asar b'Tammuz and Tisha b'Av we have three weeks in which we contemplate so many tragedies that we experienced in our past, then for the seven weeks between Tisha B'Av and Rosh Hashana we have the 'shiva denechamta' - the seven weeks of consolation. These commence with that great haftarah for Shabbat Nachamu which is the shabbat of Parshat Vaetchanan, starting with the words of the prophet Yeshayahu,

"Nachamu, nachamu ami," - "Comfort, comfort my people."

Rabbi Berel Wein explains that the reason for the double 'nachamu' is that, having experienced tragedy, we need far more time in order to derive consolation.

That's the reason, he explains, why for three weeks of pain and grief, we require more than double that period, seven weeks, of consolation.

Sometimes we can be fortunate and, even following deep grief and anguish, it is possible with Hashem's help and with a positive attitude, for us to restore our regular rhythm of life and to be consoled, but often that is simply just not the case. Just as one can knock down a building in a matter of hours but it takes months, if not years, to rebuild it, in the same way following tragedy it can take an extremely long time for us to be consoled. As a nation we continue to grieve to this day after the shoah, and following the recent pandemic we can see how our society will take a long time to pick up the pieces.

So our prayer on this Shabbat Nachamu is please Hashem, 'nachamu nachamu', give us lots of comfort, enable us where appropriate and necessary, to rebuild our lives in a satisfactory and healthy manner because we realise that even after a long period of suffering, ultimately comfort and consolation will be there.

Shabbat shalom.

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