

Just another day

By Phyllis Chesler

I've been mourning every single day since Oct. 7, 2023. God forgive me for saying so, but this upcoming Tisha B'Av is just another day.

The Jews have been keening and wailing for almost the last two years.

I cried out when each young Israeli soldier was killed in battle in a war they did not start but one in which they must now finish in the Strip Gaza. If they can do so by this coming Tisha B'Av, which starts on the evening of Saturday and lasts through Sunday, so much the better. What a miraculous reversal of our collective misfortunes that would be.

By Oct. 8, 2023, I was crying out in anguish for those young Israelis at the Supernova festival in southern Israel, so committed to "peace and love," to music and dancing, who were barbarically attacked by Islamists.



Bereaved families, friends and Israeli soldiers visit and pray at the site of the Nova music festival massacre in Re'im, near the border with Gaza, during Yom Hazikaron, Israel's Memorial Day, which commemorates fallen Israeli soldiers and victims of terror, April 30, 2025. Photo by Yossi Aloni/Flash90.

I keened over the menacing silence of the entire world, the denial that Oct. 7 had happened, or who believed that Israel deserved such attacks because they allegedly “occupied” the land that belonged to the Arab Muslims who called themselves “Palestinians.”

Really? Just read Doron Spielman’s extraordinary new book about the archeological excavation of the City of David, *When the Stones Speak: The Remarkable Discovery of the City of David and What Israel’s Enemies Don’t Want You to Know*. Only one conclusion is possible: The Jews are the indigenous people in Jerusalem and the entirety of the Holy Land.

I cried out over the world’s refusal to understand what Oct. 7 was and what it portended. The feminist silence especially challenged both my patience and my perspective.

I wailed over all those Israelis (and others of many nationalities just living and working in Israel), who were

taken hostage by Hamas's fiends; they were never far from my mind. Nor were those hostages who were starved, beaten and raped, who died in airless tunnels, far below the earth; and for those who are still there now. And for their families.

I even sorrowed over those Israelis protesting the policies of the Netanyahu government as opposed to those of Iran, Qatar and Hamas.

Daily, I mourned the death of reason in the West and the re-emergence of Jew-hatred on a level starting to challenge the German Nazi era.

I mourned all those Israeli civilians who were killed and sorrowed over all those who were wounded, maimed and traumatized, and although resilient and well attended to, were nevertheless living in hell. They were also always on my mind. Every single day.

Never far from my mind were all those Israelis who had to flee their communities, fields and homes, and rushed to shelters, their lives upended, their peril utterly invisible to the world.

Every day, I cried out against the defamation of Jewish Israel, both by Islamists and by educated leftists, the "woke" progressives. The same blood-stained Europe that collaborated in the murder of 6 million Jews has continued its collaboration, this time as part of a red-green Alliance. After blaming the State of Israel for this war, they are now getting ready to unilaterally recognize a "Palestinian state" on Israel's border.

And no, I do not agree that the Jews and Israel are being treated as a scapegoat for the crimes and sins committed by their persecutors. I do not believe that such hatred is due to envy or even to anger over the high moral standards our Torah teaches. I believe that Jew-hatred is entirely due to brainwashing, pure and simple.

But as the prophet tells us: *Nachamu, nachamu ami*. “Be comforted, my people.” The support of most Israelis for each other is nothing less than inspiring, even spectacular. Israel’s trauma-related and wound-related treatment is in a class of its own. The support that Jews and Christians in the West have extended, as well as that from a handful of Muslims and ex-Muslims, is a major comfort.

The large number of Israelis who attend the ongoing funerals of soldiers, especially lone soldiers, inspires me, even as I weep.

Yes, Jews are supposed to mourn the loss of both ancient Temples at the hands of Babylon and then of Rome; the expulsion of the Jews from England and then from Spain—events said to have happened on Tisha B’Av, the Ninth of Av.

This year, I will again listen to Eicha (Lamentations) being chanted. I will remember these earlier tragedies that befell the Jewish people on this day in the backdrop of another particularly grueling and perhaps apocalyptic time.

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