**Tu B’Av, Building Love Above Hatred**

*“There were no good days for Israel like Tu b’Av, a day when the tribes were permitted to mingle with each other and where each and every person bestowed their goodness upon their fellow man.” (Tiferet Shlomo)*

Tu B’Av is a special holiday that symbolizes love, relationships built above hatred, above the destruction of the Temple, which crumbled because of hatred between us. We correct the hatred when we rise above it and thus attain the great love, “And you shall love your friend as yourself” (Leviticus 19:18).

It is written in the Mishnah that Tu B’Av  is the greatest day when, according to tradition, the young women of Jerusalem would go out dressed in white to the orchards and vineyards to sing. The young men would join them to choose their bride. These are the images characterizing the holiday of Tu B’Av.

However, it is not the earthy love of young men and women in the vineyards that we speak of, but a totally different kind of love: one built atop the egoism (self-interest instead of concern for others’ wellbeing) that destroyed the First and Second Temples during the period between the 17th of Tammuz and the 9th of Av, which we have just finished commemorating. These dark days remind the Jewish people about the destruction of the two Temples, as well as other problems and afflictions that we have undergone. And just days later, when all is gone and corrected, a new period begins.

The festival of Tu B’Av symbolizes the time in which we build a new Temple, one in our hearts, in the positive connection between hearts. We look for a spiritual partner to help us accomplish this, and the spiritual partner for both men and women is the higher force of love and bestowal, which we call “the Creator.” We connect with Him and together receive absolute fulfillment, pleasure and enlightenment—the revelation of the real world—existing in that sublime and whole reality and not only in a tiny fragment of reality that we know as our world. The whole process of the Tu B’Av unification symbolizes our ultimate correction, the rebuilding of the Temple, and our transition from hatred to love.

**What Is Love?**

True love, not on the corporeal level as we usually think of it, is a special feeling of connection between us which elevates us to the heights of eternity, wholeness, and an infinite expansion of our feelings and thoughts. We begin to sense that we exist eternally, totally fulfilled, when we relate to each other with this love. Imagine the feeling when everyone loves you; everyone relates to you as if you were their own little child. We need to give each one of us this kind of feeling.

However, there is one special condition required to achieve true love. True love unfolds only by connecting two opposing forces, two contradictory attributes, into one; the new force—a new consciousness, understanding and feeling—develops atop this connection, elevating us to the higher level of the perfect, spiritual reality.

This is why Tu B’Av (the 15th of Av), the day of love, happens right after Tisha B’Av (the 9th of Av), the day of destruction. Only after the enormous, horrible crisis where we reveal the evil, the hatred between us, are we able to correct ourselves and reach true love. Then a new period begins. But in order to attain true love, we must first recognize that our state is completely opposite to it.

**How to Build the Third Temple**

It may not be obvious to us, but the entirety of nature works through contrasts. Evolution displays a dynamic interplay of two opposite forces. These forces manifest as plus and minus, hot and cold, ebb and flow, or male and female, they create deeper levels of conflict and self-interest, and thereafter, greater levels of reciprocity and connection. This is why the indispensable first step is to reveal a state of fragmentation—humanity’s current state—and then collect all the pieces and rebuild a perfect whole. This is what we need to reconstruct together through our relations of mutual concern and reciprocity.

It says in *The Book of Psalms* that the Third Temple will be called “a house of prayer for all nations.” Symbolically, Tu B’Av indicates that this is a holiday of love for the whole world. It’s as if the 15th of Av is a kind of Valentine’s Day for humanity.

What else could we mean by building the Third Temple? It speaks of a state in which we connect into one single system called *Adam* (human), which stems from the Hebrew root “*Domeh*” (“similar”), as in “similar to the upper one” (“*Domeh le Elyon*”). When this system is connected by the positive force, when humanity is connected positively, the state will be called the Third Temple. The Creator will be revealed in the system of positive human connection as the upper force of the world. Thus, we will live in a feeling of eternity and wholeness, in a totally different world, and this is what we call “the Third Temple.” It will be the real day of love that is written about in the words, “love will cover all our transgressions,” and “love your friend as yourself,” which means that this is humanity’s ultimate state.

This is what Tu B’Avtrulysymbolizes, love built specifically above the hatred among us that we discover in every moment of our lives. Let us hasten in our identification of the bad so that we can start building mutual love and understanding above it and spread this warm blanket of love over the whole world.