

CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF CHAUTAUQUA

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Jewish Psychology – Grief and Mourning - Week 3 – 2021

1. *And Sarah died... and Abraham came to eulogize Sarah and to bewail her. And Abraham arose from before his dead, and he spoke to the sons of Heth... (Genesis 23:2-3)*
2. *And Isaac brought her to the tent of Sarah his mother, and he took Rebecca, and she became his wife, and he loved her. And Isaac was comforted for [the loss of] his mother. (Ibid 24:67)*
3. *"Jacob tore his clothes, he put sackcloth on his loins and mourned his son for many days, All his sons and daughters arose to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted. He said: No, I will go down to my son in mourning, to the grave." (Genesis 37:34-35)*
4. *The whole congregation saw that Aaron had expired, and the entire house of Israel wept for Aaron for thirty days. (Numbers 20:26)*
5. *And the sons of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab for thirty days, and the days of weeping over the mourning for Moses came to an end. (Deuteronomy 34:8)*
6. ...do not comfort him while his dead still lies before him... (Ethics of our Fathers 4:18)
7. See how severe the mitzvah of mourning is! For the prohibition against ritual impurity is superseded so that a priest can tend to his relatives' burial and mourn for them, as Leviticus (21:2-3) states: *"Except to one's flesh, to whom he is close, to his mother... to her shall he become impure."* This is a Positive Mitzva; if he does not desire to become impure, we force him to become impure against his will. (Maimonides, Laws of Avel 2:6)
8. A mourner is obligated to rend his garments for his dead, as can be derived from Leviticus 10:6: *"Do not rend your garments lest you die."* Implied is that others must rend their garments. (ibid 8:1)
9. We teach a person that he should not recklessly destroy property and through it to oblivion. It is better to give it to the poor than to throw it to maggots and worms. Whoever casts many articles on a deceased person violates the commandment against destroying property. (ibid, 14:24)
10. One should not cry over the deceased for more than three days and one should not eulogize him for more than seven... We do not eulogize for more than twelve months, for we have no one of greater wisdom than our holy teacher, and he was eulogized for only twelve months...
11. A person should not become excessively broken hearted because of a person's death, as Jeremiah 22:10 states: *"Do not weep for a dead man and do not shake your head because of him."* That means not to weep excessively. For death is the pattern of the world. And a person who causes himself grief because of the pattern of the world is a fool.
12. What should one do? Weep for three days, eulogize for seven, and observe the restrictions on cutting one's hair and the other five matters for 30 days.
13. Whoever does not mourn over his dead in the manner which our Sages commanded is cruel. Instead, one should be fearful, worry, examine his deeds and repent.
14. If one member of a group dies, the entire group should worry. For the first three days, one should see himself as if a sword is drawn over his neck. From the third day until the seventh, he should consider it as if it is in the corner. From that time onward, as if it passing before him in the market place. All of this is so that a person should prepare himself and repent and awake from his sleep. Behold it is written Jeremiah 5:3: *"You have stricken them, but they have not trembled."* Implied is that one should awake and tremble. (ibid 13:10-12)
15. Those present at the time of death say the blessing: *Baruch Dayan Ha'emet* - "Blessed be the True Judge." **Forgiveness.** While lowering the body to the floor, forgiveness should be asked of the deceased.
16. There are **five stages** to the mourning process:
 - a. **Aninut**, pre-burial mourning. [*k'riah*- **rending of the garments** as a sign of grief, is performed.]

- b. **Shivah**, a seven day period following the burial; within the *Shivah*, the first three days are characterized by a more intense degree of mourning.
- c. Last four days of **Shivah**
- d. **Shloshim**, the 30-day mourning period.
- e. **The First Year** (observed only by the children of the deceased).

17. Condolence Meal: When the mourners arrive home from the cemetery following the burial, they are given a special meal of condolence --traditionally, bagels and hard-boiled eggs, whose round shape is symbolic of the cycle of life.

18. Consoling the Bereaved (making a "Shivah Call"):

Hamakom yenachem etchem b'toch she'ar aveilei tzion v'yerushalayim
 "May G-d comfort you, together with all mourners of Zion and Jerusalem."

- 19.** It is a positive commandment of Rabbinic origin to visit the sick, comfort mourners...they are included in the Scriptural commandment Leviticus 19:18: "Love your neighbor as yourself."...
- 20.** It appears to me that comforting mourners takes precedence over visiting the sick. For comforting mourners is an expression of kindness to the living and the dead. (Maimonides, *ibid* 14:1, 7)
- 21.** In all their trouble, He is troubled [with them], *and the angel of His presence saved them; with His love and with His pity He redeemed them, and He bore them, and He carried them all the days of old.* (Isaiah 63:9)
- 22.** *I am with him in distress; I shall rescue him...* (Psalms 91:15)
- 23.** *then, the L-rd, your G-d, will bring back your exiles, and He will have mercy upon you. He will once again gather you from all the nations, where the L-rd, your G-d, had dispersed you.* (Deuteronomy 30:3)
- a. **The L-rd, your G-d, will bring back your exiles:** Heb. וְהָשִׁיב ה' אֶת שְׁבוּתְךָ, lit., The L-rd, your G-d, will (Himself) return (with) your exiles. Now, since we understand the verse to mean: "The L-rd your G-d *will bring back* your exiles," Scripture should have written, וְהָשִׁיב ה' אֶת שְׁבוּתְךָ. But our Rabbis learned from here [which alludes to G-d Himself returning], that the Shechinah resides among Israel, as it were, in all the misery of their exile, and when the Jews are redeemed [from their exile], G-d writes [in Scripture an expression of] redemption for Himself [to allude to the fact that He has also been redeemed, as it were,] so that He Himself returns along with Israel's exiles (Talmud, Tractate Megilah 29a)
- 24.** *There is nothing as whole as a broken heart.* (Chassidic saying)
- 25.** *Depression is not a sin; but what depression does, no sin can do.* (Chassidic saying)
- 26.** "We must bless G-d when something good happens, and in the same way, we should bless G-d when something negative happens" (Talmud, Tractate Berachot 54a)

27. Tzidduk Ha'din

The Rock, his work is perfect, for all His ways are judgment:

A G-d of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and right is He...

...He ordereth death and restoreth to life: He bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up again.

The Rock, perfect in every deed, who can say unto Him, "What doest thou?" O Thou who speakest and doest, of Thy grace deal kindly with us, and for the sake of him who was bound like a lamb, O hearken and do.

Just in all Thy ways art thou, O perfect Rock, slow to anger and full of compassion.

Spare and have pity upon parents and children, for Thine, L-rd, is forgiveness and compassion.

Just art Thou, O L-rd, in ordering death and restoring to life, in whose hand is the charge of all spirits; far be it from Thee to blot out our remembrance. O let Thine eyes mercifully regard us; for Thine, L-rd, is compassion and forgiveness...

... Blessed be the true Judge, who ordereth death and restoreth to life.

Blessed be He, for His judgment is true, and His eye discerneth all things...

...We know, O L-rd, that Thy judgment is righteous: Thou art justified when Thou speakest, and pure when Thou judgest, and it is not for us to murmur at Thy method of judging. Just are Thou, O L-rd, and righteous are Thy judgments.

O true and righteous Judge! Blessed be the true Judge, all whose judgments are righteous and true...

...To declare that the L-rd is upright; He is my Rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.

The L-rd gave, and the L-rd hath taken away; blessed be the name of the L-rd. And He, being merciful, forgiveth iniquity and destroyeth not. Yea, many a time He turneth His anger away, and doth not stir up all His wrath.

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