

Eichah adapted by Rabbi Sue Mauer Morningstar July 2021 .

איבָהּ | יִשְׁבֶּה בְּדָד הָעִיר רַבָּתִי עִם הַיְתָה בְּאַלְמָנָה

Eicha: Alas, she sits abandoned. Earth's abundance, once green and flourishing, is slowly disappearing. (1:1)

We have come through trying times, the Great Pause of distancing and hermitting.

So many have lost lives, other suffer long term consequences.

Rushing, we shed our masks, in celebration of our freedom.

But "safety" is an illusion, when variants lurk, and our planet is suffering.

As we emerge from this curs-ed blessing, have we learned our crucial lessons?

16 months of quieted highways, pollution cleared, human and animal lives saved.

16 months of quieted skyways, airplane travel ceased, vistas no longer concealed.

Viewing the magnificence of the Himalayas, city skylines were suddenly revealed.

Now we have resumed our toxic flying, as United proudly announces hundreds of new planes buying.

Endlessly consuming, our fruits we plunder, while thousands of children die daily of hunger. (2:20, 4:4)

Fires threaten, earth's parched and dry, we pack our "go bags" and watch the sky. (5:10)

Oceans rising, temperatures climbing, rainforests shrinking, Shechinah crying.

We weep without consolation, there is no comfort to refresh our souls. (1:18)

What will it take to wake us up to the destruction and planetary crisis, what will it take??

Unbearable heatwaves burn our skin like in an oven, while our mother self-destructs. (5:10)

Our creeks and rivers have run dry, crops and fish wither and die. (4:9, 5:4)

Polarity, meanness and hatred are everywhere, racism, xenophobia and injustice prevail.

The joy in our hearts has ceased, our dancing has turned into mourning. (5:15)

Antisemitism on the rise from the left and the right,
all of our enemies have opened their mouths wide against us. (3:46)

Returning to our homeland after 2000 years, cousins still divided in fear.

On this day we remember the siege of our holy Jerusalem, and the destruction of our holy temples.

On this day we remember the start of the Crusades, the expulsions from England, France and Spain.

On this day we remember Kristallnacht and the Warsaw Ghetto, is it our terrible destiny for history to repeat itself?

Here in America, violence in our streets, 30 million adherents follow Q-anon.

We've lost our trust in our government, we've lost our trust in our journalists.

We've lost our trust in our judicial system, in our electoral process, and even in science.

Look and see, pain upon pain, Your sanctuary plundered, Your planet overrun. (1:12)

What will it take to wake us up, to choose healing and love, compassion and cooperation?

When will we heed this warning, when will we protect our future generations?

Your brokenness is as vast as the sea. Who can heal you? (2:13)

Let us sit alone in quiet reflection, and let our souls fill with God's compassion. (3:28, 32)

Hashivenu Yah elecha v'nashuva, hadesh yameinu kekedem.

Renew our days and return us to You, help us reach awareness in the midst of somnolence.
(5:21)



“I commend to you this new version of the traditional Megillat Eichah and urge you to share it as widely as possible. As we rush to return to “normal,” it will be all too easy to forget that the pre-covid normal was unsustainable and indeed helped to create the pandemic which is still in progress. This eichah asks us to bring the many crises of this moment together, to see how they are linked to each other, to pause and weep for the damage we have been causing and continue to cause, and to pledge a return, not to a pre-covid materially based way of living, but one imbued with a deeper humility, a willingness to sacrifice for the common good and for the future of our children and grandchildren.

In turn, that sacrifice will yield a satisfaction and joy greater than any material thing can provide, the satisfaction that comes from taking time to deepen our experiences of friendship and family, for the earth, and for our linkage to all of life which sustains us.” Rabbi Daniel Siegel, Hornby Island 7-1-21