

International Day of Study

Notes on Music for Tisha b'Av

Track 1: *Eikhab* chapters 1:1-3 and 3:1-6

Eikhab (Lamentations) is chanted in its own special melody that is heard only on Tisha b'Av, and on other days when the lamentations are read, for example, certain sentences in *Megillat Esther* include lamentations. In addition, the entire chapter 3 is chanted with a special melody.

Track 2: *Eli Tzion*

As sung on *Tisha b'Av*, the setting is borrowed from Hazzan Louis Lewandowski (Berlin, mid-19th century) with a descant written by Misha Piatigorsky.

Eli Tzion ve'areha.	A song unto Zion
K'mo isha v'tzireha.	Who is like a woman in travail.
V'hiv'tulah khagurat sak	Like a maiden mourning
Al ba'al n'ureha.	The husband of her youth.

Track 3: *Como la Rosa en la Guerta* (traditional Ladino)

This is one of the most famous *enchadas* (tragic songs) that poignantly describes the emotion a parent experiences at the death of a daughter. The melody of this eastern Mediterranean song is also used during the commemoration of Tisha b'Av.

Como la rosa en la güerta	Like the rose in its garden
Y las flores sin avrir,	And flowers that haven't bloomed,
Ansi es una donzella	Is a beautiful young girl
A las horas del murir.	At the moment of her death.
Tristes horas en el día,	It was a sad time on that day,
Que hazina se cayó.	When she was taken sick.
Como la reina en su lecho,	Like a queen on her bed,
Ya cayó y se dezmayó.	She fell ill and fainted away.

Track 4: *Es Brennt*

Following a pogrom in the Polish town Przytyk in 1938, Mordecai Gebirtig (1877-1942) wrote this song. It was sung in the ghettos and is still one of the most often performed commemorative songs. Gebirtig was a popular Yiddish songwriter before the war who continued to write and compose songs in the Cracow ghetto. He was killed by the Germans on June 4, 1942. (The song is four verses in its entirety.)

S'brent! Briderlekh, s'brent!
Undzer orem shtetl nebekh brent!
Beyze vintn mit yirgozn
Raysn, brekhn un tseblozn
Shtarker nokh di vilde flamen,
Alts arum shoy n brent.
Un ir shteyt un kukt azoy zikh
Mit farleygte hent
Un ir shteyt un kukt azoy zikh
Undzer shtetl brent!

It burns! Brothers, it burns!
Our poor shtetl pitifully burns!
Angry wind with rage and curses
Tears and shatters and disperses,
Wild flames leap, they twist and turn,
Everything now burns!
And you stand there looking on
Hands folded, palms upturned,
And you stand there looking on
Our shtetl burns!

Track 5: *Ani Ma'amin* (Wishnietz/folk melody)

This song was sung by the transportees as they entered the Nazi gas chambers. The text is attributed to Maimonides.

Ani ma'amin be'emunah sh'ley mah
B'viat hamashiakh
V'af al pi sheyit mame'ah
Im kol ze ani ma'amin
Akhakeh lo b'chol yom shyavo

I believe with perfect faith
In the coming of the Messiah
And though he may be delayed in coming
Despite all that, I believe.
I will wait for him in all the days to come.

Track 6: *Al Naharot Bavel* (traditional)

This is one of the traditional laments sung on Tisha b'Av, taken from the opening of Psalm 137. The psalm is among the most famous Jewish expressions of grief over the exile from their homeland. Verse 5 contains another familiar line: "*If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither (im 'eshkabekh yerushalaim tishkah yemini).*"

Al naharot Bavel
Sham yashavnu gam bohinu
B'zohreinu et Tzion.

By the waters of Babylon
There we sat down and we wept
When we remembered Zion.

Hazzan Ayelet Piatigorsky holds a Masters in Sacred Music and Investiture from JTS, a Masters of Music from the Manhattan School of Music, and a Bachelor of Music from the University of Toronto, with a major in voice performance.

Misha Piatigorsky is an award winning jazz pianist, composer, and producer. He holds a Masters of Music from Manhattan School of Music, and a Bachelor of Music from Rutgers University. The CD was recorded in his studio, and he can be heard playing percussion.

Anatalya Piatigorsky is six years old and attends the Solomon Schechter School of Manhattan.

