

PHILOTORAH

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלהינו ואליהי אבותינו שתשלח מהרה רפואה שלמה מן השמים, רפואת הנפש ורפואת הגוף לפצועי המלחמה, ולנפגעי מעשי טרור ואנטישמיות בישראל ובכל מקום שהם - עם שאר חולי ישראל. אמן.

May HaShem protect our soldiers; may He send Refu'ah Sh'leima to the many injured; may He console the bereaved families and all of Israel; may He end these wars with total success and peace for Medinat Yisrael and Klal Yisrael wherever we are.

YERUSHALAYIM

in/out times for

SH'LACH

כ"א סיון ה'תשפ"ו

June 5-6, '26

 7:07 PM

Plag 6:14 PM

 8:25 PM

R' Tam 8:54 PM

Use the Z'MANIM link
for other locales



B'ha-alo-t'cha in Chutz LaAretz

20 Sivan

This coming Friday is the Twentieth of Sivan. It was established in Ashkenazi communities as a day of fasting and teshuva to remember two major tragedies of Jewish history.

The earlier catastrophe, which occurred in the 12th century, was recorded in a contemporary chronicle entitled Emek HaBacha, and also in a s'lichah entitled Emunei Sh'lumei Yisrael.

One night in the city of Blois, in central France, a Jew watering his horse happened upon a murder scene in which a gentile adult had drowned a gentile child. The murderer, not wanting to be executed for his crime, fled to the local ruler, telling him that he had just caught a Jew murdering a child!

The tyrant arrested 31 Jewish leaders, men and women, including some of the baalei Tosafot who were disciples of the Rashbam, Rashi's grandson. The tyrant accused his prisoners, several of whom are mentioned by name in Emunei Sh'lumei Yisrael, of killing the gentile child to obtain blood for producing matza.

After locking his captives in a tower, the despot insisted that they be baptized. He told them that if they accept baptism, he would forgive them, but if they refused, he would execute them in a painful way. None of them considered turning traitor to Hashem's Torah. On the 20th of Sivan 4931 (1171), they were tied up and placed on a pyre to be burned alive. At the fateful moment, the Jews sang in unison: ALEINU L'SHA- BEI'ACH LA'ADON HAKOL, "it is incumbent upon us to praise the Lord of all."

The fires did not consume them! The undeterred tyrant commanded his troops to beat them to death and then burn their bodies. However, the fires were still unable to consume their bodies, which remained intact!

This libel was a major factor in the banishing of Jews from France that occurred ten years later.

As a commemoration of the sacrifice of these great Jews and as a day of teshuva, Rabbeinu Tam and the other gedolei Baalei Tosafot of France declared the 20th of Sivan a fast day. Special selichot and piyutim were composed to memorialize the incident...

Since this tragedy took place during the general period of the Crusades, the 20th of Sivan was often viewed as the mourning day for the murders and other excesses that were committed

during that era, since each of the early Crusades resulted in the horrible destruction of hundreds of communities in central and western Europe and the killing of thousands of Jews.

The fast of the 20th of Sivan memorializes an additional Jewish calamity. Almost five hundred years later, most of the Jewish communities of eastern Europe suffered the unspeakable massacres that are referred to as the G'zeirot Tach v'Tat, which refer to the years of 5408 (Tach) and 5409 (Tat), corresponding to the secular years 1648 and 1649. Although this title implies that these excesses lasted for at most two years, the calamities of this period actually raged on, sporadically, for the next twelve years.

The Cossack hordes swarmed throughout Ukraine, Poland and Lithuania, wreaking havoc in their path and putting entire Jewish communities to the sword. Hundreds of Jewish communities in Poland and Ukraine were destroyed by the massacres. The Cossacks murdered unknown thousands of Jews, including instances in which they buried people alive, cut them to pieces and perpetrated far more horrible cruelties. In sheer cruelty, many of their heinous deeds surpassed even those performed later by the Nazis.

After this tragic period passed and

the Jewish communities began the tremendous work of rebuilding, the Vaad Arba Ha'aratzot, which at the time was the halachic and legislative body of all Polish and Lithuanian Jewry... declared that the 20th of Sivan should be established forever as a fast day (Shaarei T'shuva 580:9). The fast was declared binding on all males over the age of 18 and females over the age of 15.

Why don't we observe this? "It is customary in the entire Kingdom of Poland to fast on the 20th of Sivan." These are the words of the Magen Avraham (580:9). I do not know when the custom to observe this fast ended, but the Mishna Berura quotes it as common practice in his day in Poland (580:16). Perhaps it was assumed that the custom was only required as long as there were communities in Poland, but that their descendants who moved elsewhere were not required to observe it.

In our time, the most costly battle of the Lebanon War ('82), - Sultan Yakub, took place on 20 Sivan. 30 deaths HY"D and famous, long-term MIAs.

Excerpted from an article on yeshiva.co