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A Shabbat Message from Rabbi Arthur Weiner

Friday July 28, 2023 ~ Parsha: Vaetchanan
Shabbat Nachamu

Be Comforted My People

Dear JCCP/CBT family,

The Shabbat, the Shabbat that follows the observance of *Tisha B'Av* is called *Shabbat Nachamu*. It's named after the first words of the *haftarah* for this week: ***Nachamu Nachamu Ami – Be Comforted My People.***

For the previous three weeks, the *Haftarot* warned of impending doom, destruction and violence. The destruction of the First and Second temples, as well as so many other tragedies were remembered on Tisha B'Av. Yet now, the mood of the Jewish people is different. How are we to be comforted after the destruction of our Holy Temples and our exile? This week's Torah reading, *Parshat Vaetchanan*, points the way. This Shabbat we read the words of the [Ten Commandments](#), and the [Sh'ma](#). These words are a wakeup call and a vote of confidence in our future. God is saying, "Let me remind you who you are, and who you will be again!"

Shabbat Nachamu is also a reminder us that High Holidays are rapidly approaching. The *Haftarah* for this Shabbat is the first of what we call the *Shivtah D'nechamta*, the seven *Haftarot* of consolation that speak of the eternal relationship between God and Israel. They remind us that we have seven weeks to put ourselves in order and to fix what is broken. This is the season to look at ourselves and ask whether we are living our lives by the values we claim to cherish. To think of any changes of direction that might bring more joy, improved relationships, and a greater appreciation for our Jewish heritage, and then make those changes. And this week's *haftarah* encourages us, and lifts us when the burden of change seems heavy.

Nachamu Nachamu Ami – Be comforted my people.

Shabbat Shalom,

Rabbi Arthur Weiner