

## **Tisha B'Av 5778**

It is almost impossible not to feel unbearably overwhelmed, powerless, disheartened, angry, confused, and/or numb in the face of ongoing detentions, deportations, family separations, and cruelty towards immigrants in countless painful forms in the United States today. This cruelty is not new - it is taking on a newly vicious, hateful form and is rightfully garnering immense public outcry.

We at the Jewish Council on Urban Affairs see this time of heightened awareness around the harm done by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), particularly in the ways ICE interacts with local law enforcement and the mass incarcerations state, as a time to redouble our efforts to make Chicago a truly Welcoming City.

In 2012, Mayor Rahm Emanuel passed Chicago's Welcoming City Ordinance, declaring that he was committed to Chicago being the most welcoming city for immigrants in the nation. Today, we are falling sadly behind on that commitment. Our city's Welcoming City Ordinance has a loophole that carves four vulnerable populations out from the full protections of the ordinance. This means that these excluded populations face a direct path from interactions with the police to deportation, without recourse or protection. For years, grassroots, community organizations have been fighting to amend the Welcoming City Ordinance to include those who are currently excluded. The cries of these communities have fallen on deaf ears, leaving Chicagoans across the city vulnerable to deportation and harassment.

If we claim to call ourselves a Welcoming City, we **MUST** commit to be a welcoming city for **ALL** Chicagoans. We offer this text as a tool for drawing connections between the national crisis of family separation and deportations, the local reality of families separated every day through detention and incarceration, and the Jewish community's mandate to act.

### **USING THIS TEXT**

We hope you can use this text as a tool in your congregation, chavurah, or spiritual community, or as part of actions, vigils, rallies, or protests that draw connections between Tisha B'Av and the current and ongoing immigration crisis. The text is a collection of headlines and quotes from media articles from the past two months (dated), as well as references to commonly quoted texts.

You will see a copy of the plain text, as well as a copy of the text marked with trope markers. We have also included several examples of individuals reading the text, both using and not using the formal trope. Feel free to chant the text using the formal trope, using the general cadence of the chanting of Eicha, or simply reading it (we suggest a call and response of sorts if you are reading it without chanting it).

This text can be used as a conversation starter for what it means to act as a Jewish community around this current crisis. It can also be used as a call to action, to encourage your congregation or community to contact your alderperson and urge them to support comprehensive amendments to Chicago's Welcoming City Ordinance. And it can be used as an opportunity to deeply feel and grieve the pain our fellow residents are experience every day at the hand of our state.

If you use the text over this Tisha B'Av, please audio or video record its use and post it online using the hashtags #tishabav #immigrationeicha. You can tag the Jewish Council on Urban Affairs at @JCUA\_news (Twitter) or @jcua\_chicago (Instagram).

Thank you to Rabbi Suzanne Griffel, Rabbi Mónica Gomery, and Avra Shapiro for creating the text. Thank you to Naomi Weiss for bringing the text to life through trope, and to Monica, Avra, and Naomi for chanting the text.

## **Grieving Our Country: An Immigration Lament**

First They Came for the Migrants. June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Children wait in cages at south Texas warehouse. June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Are Children Being Kept in 'Cages' at the Border? June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Mom, why did they put the kids in cages? Adults will have to explain the shame. June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Separated at the Border From Their Parents: 1,995 Children In Six Weeks. June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Honduran Man Kills Himself After Being Separated From Family at U.S. Border. June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018

'I Can't Go Without My Son,' a Mother Pleaded as She Was Deported. June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018

U.S. officials separated him from his daughter. Then he was deported to El Salvador. June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2018

Nearly 3,000 Migrant Children Remain Separated From Parents; 100 Are Under Age 5. July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018

As the hours passed, it dawned on the mothers the kids were not coming back. June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

As they were leaving, his daughter asked where she was going. What can a father possibly tell his daughter in that situation? So he made up a story – she was going to camp. July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018

The parents ask when they're going to see their children again. I try to calm them and tell them I'll do my best to make sure it happens soon. The truth is I don't have an answer. July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Mommy says I'll go with my aunt and that she'll come to pick me up as quickly as possible. July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

First they came for the Communists, and I did not speak out—

Because I was not a Communist.

Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out—

Because I was not a Trade Unionist.

Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—

Because I was not a Jew.

Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me. Germany, 1946.

Children separated from families at the border being cared for in Chicago. June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2018

About 70 separated immigrant children sheltered in Chicago. June 22, 2018

'They treated us as though we were animals': Letters from inside an immigration detention center. July 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018

When children and families are put in cages and in camps, our history requires—

requires—that we show up and and say, 'when we said never again, we meant never again.'

July 5, 2018.

We Will Not Be Silenced by ICE. July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018

If I'm Only For Myself, Who Am I?

When we said never again, we meant never again.

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*Chant this section the way you would chant Chapter 3 of Eich:*

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Because I was not a Communist.

Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out—

Because I was not a Trade Unionist.

Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—

Because I was not a Jew.

Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me, Germany, 1946.

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When children and families are put in cages and in camps, our history requires—requires—that we show up and say, 'when we said never again, we meant never again.' July 5, 2018. ♦

We Will Not Be Silenced by ICE. July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018 ♦

If I'm Only For Myself, Who Am I? ♦

When we said never again, we meant never again. ♦