

BILVAVI

REASON TO MOURN

TISHA B'AV

לעילוי נשמת התינוק מאיר בן אריה לייב

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REASON TO MOURN

It says in *Eichah*, על זה דוה לבנו... על הר ציון ששם, “On this, our hearts are sick... on the mount of Zion which has become desolate...” The destruction of the *Beis HaMikdash* causes us to mourn, the same old mourning that has accompanied us throughout the generations, ever since the time when it was first destroyed. But in addition to what we always have mourned, with the further we are from that period of history when we had a *Beis HaMikdash*, the further we are from the special *ohr*, the unique *ruchniyus* that the *Beis HaMikdash* gave us. With every passing year in which it hasn't been rebuilt, we become even further from the great spiritual benefits that the *Beis HaMikdash* provided, and this creates new reason each year to mourn.

The *Beis HaMikdash* was destroyed at the time in history when it was destroyed, but at least that generation was close to the time when it stood, so they were able to still have some access to its *ohr*. But as the generations continue, we are further from that light, and it becomes more concealed from us. Chazal said, “Any generation in which the *Beis HaMikdash* wasn't built in, is considered to be a generation in which it was destroyed”. The concept of “destruction” essentially means that the *ohr* the *Beis HaMikdash* is concealed from us. In every generation where it wasn't rebuilt, the *ohr* of the *Beis HaMikdash* became further from us, and it continues to become more concealed with every passing year. Additionally, Chazal said that with each passing day (and especially as we are drawn closer to the end), “Each day is more cursed than the day before it”, and this is because we keep getting further away from the *ohr* that existed by the *Beis HaMikdash*.

Thus, there are two parts to recognizing the ramifications of the destruction. One part of it is to realize what it means that we don't have the *Beis HaMikdash*. This part is hard for us to relate to, however, because we did not actually see the *Beis HaMikdash*. The second part is, to realize what is meant by the words “Every day is more cursed than the day before it” - the troubles continue to increase, not only in the physical areas of our life, but mainly in our spiritual areas. The situation of the Jewish people continues to descend further into a state of oblivion. As long as the state of the destruction of the *Beis HaMikdash* continues to remain, there is a “burning of *neshamos*”, souls of the Jewish people are going lost.

There are individual and private troubles that each of us faces, as well as broader issues that affect our communities as a whole, and then the more collective issues that *Klal Yisrael* faces as a whole. Anyone who has even a little bit of an opened heart can feel what others are going through, and he can feel pained, at the problems that exist today. His heart can cry inside for others. There are *neshamos* today who have become so confused and bewildered, from all of the suffering that is increasing. If someone today just opens his eyes to see what is taking place and he has even a little bit of a pure heart, it's impossible for him not to feel the destruction that has taken place, since last year and until now. The *Tisha B'Av* of this year (5776) is not the same *Tisha B'Av* of last year, it is not the same world anymore. In *Eichah* it says, על אלה אני בוכיה, “On these I weep, my eyes, my eyes, flow with water.” The *Navi* is saying that our eyes can cry over the destruction of the *Beis HaMikdash*, which happened long ago, and which is far from our perception. But it is easier for us to cry over the current destruction that takes place before our eyes. Anyone can identify it as long as he is not entirely self-absorbed in his private life. Anyone who searches even a little for the truth, whose heart is even minimally alive to the spiritual, can feel the dire situation of the Jewish people today. How many Jewish

families since last year have left a Torah life since last year?? How many souls have gone lost in just this year alone? How many people have gone lost, both from This World and from the Next World, all at once? There is no generation that is going lost as much as today. Not only are there physical tragedies and suffering, but mainly in *ruchniyus*, people are going lost. Even people who last year were “sheltered” from foreign influences, by now, they have “gone out into the world”, leaving behind their once sheltered situation and becoming more “worldly”, more involved with the world that they have gone out into. When we deeply reflect on the situation taking place today, we can feel great pain over it. It can make us truly cry, from a deep place in our souls, when we realize the situation in front of us today. When the pain gets so strong, it spills over from our heart, which can no longer contain it, and then our eyes flow with tears: עיני עיני ירדה מים “*My eyes, my eyes, flow with water.*”

Anyone who can feel a little bit of this pain has both a fear for our future, as well as pain over what has happened in the past. There is pain that fills one’s entire heart, as long as one is a bit sensitive to the situation that’s taking place today. Who can live in a place such as today’s world, where everything is deemed acceptable and “kosher”, *Rachmana litzlan?*

When you walk in the streets today, you can see flocks of people who have thrown off the yoke of Torah, who, just a few days ago, were regular. They have such an empty look on their faces. How much pain their fathers have over them! How much pain their mothers have for them! How much pain their families have over them! Who is able to endure the depth of all of this awesome pain? Who can endure the pain this generation has? It is immeasurable, it doesn’t end!¹

It is illogical for any person today who takes a look around him, and not to feel pained. This pain is a simple feeling for *ruchniyus*. It is not only a feeling for *ruchniyus*, but a simple feeling of pain that comes from the heart which can bother a person. It is to feel the pain of what others are going through today. Maybe there are a few people today who truly can’t feel the pain of others, and that’s because they are so absorbed in the pain they have from their own lives, which fills their minds. But anyone who is able to come out of himself just a little bit can feel pain for others, to feel a bit of the enormous pain that exists today in *Klal Yisrael*.

The first aspect of the destruction of the *Beis HaMikdash*, being in pain over the fact that we are missing the *Beis HaMikdash*, is very far from us, and people have a hard time feeling, but it is indeed possible to feel it, if we work hard to feel it. But as for the second aspect of the destruction [feeling the painful situation of the generation today] - if a person doesn’t see it, he is like a person who is stumbling in the dark. If someone can’t feel the pain of the generation today, it means that his heart is blocked from him. The first part of our *avodah* is to feel the pain of the situation today. One should reflect a little with his thoughts into the situation today, and then reflect a little more, and then some more, until he awakens his feelings. As for one whose heart is already open to feeling the pain in the generation today, there is no need for him to reflect deeply, because he is already aware.

The second part of our *avodah* on *Tisha B’Av*, after awakening yourself to feel the pain of the generation today, and after moving yourself to earnest tears over it, from that point onward, you can turn to Hashem and

¹ At these words in the *derashah*, the Rav broke out in emotional sobs.

say a *tefillah*, from this new depth in your heart that you have reached, and *daven* to Hashem to rebuild the true *Yerushalayim Ir HaKodesh*. We ask Hashem to return us Yerushalayim specifically with *rachamim* – why? It will definitely return to us, but we are *davening* that it should return with Hashem’s *rachamim*, because who will be left by then?? Who will be able to go through all of the suffering until then?? Woe to us if we have to go through another year in This World as it is! The pain today that we can feel over the situation of *Klal Yisrael* is like a terrible illness, and *chas v’shalom* if it continues on and on, we cannot handle it! It only gets worse, it doesn’t get better with time. Hashem is running the world according to His plan, and not according to our thinking, but we have a limited, human perspective, and by our own natural means, our souls really cannot handle another year of continuing pain.

We *daven* in *Shemoneh Esrei* that *Yerushalayim* be rebuilt and that Hashem’s Presence be returned to it. The greater one’s pain, the stronger and more truthful it is and it comes from the purity of the *neshamah*, from the simple truth, the *tefillah* for Hashem to rebuild *Yerushalayim* then comes naturally to a person, for the truth demands it. If one wants to put an end to all of the pain today - both the physical suffering and even more so, the suffering in our *ruchniyus* – then as long as he is becoming more internally purified, he is able to feel Hashem’s pain (so to speak). The *Shechinah* says: “Woe to the children who have become exiled from the table of their Father.” There is awesome pain that Hashem has (as it were, and not that we can understand this) over the situation of His children.

That is the second part of our *avodah* on *Tisha B’Av* [praying to Hashem to rebuild Jerusalem, earnestly and truthfully, from the depths of the heart], which is a result of the first part of the *avodah*. After working on the first part – feeling the pain of the situation today and really letting it bother you – you will have an easier time with the second part, and be able to *daven* earnestly to Hashem, from the depths of the heart, from a truthful and pure place in yourself.

קָרוֹב ה' לְכָל קוֹרְאָיו לְכָל אֲשֶׁר יִקְרְאוּהוּ בְאֵמֶת “*Hashem is close to all who call out to Him, to those who call out to Him in truth.*” One needs to *truly, truly* call out to Him. One should *daven* to Hashem to end the suffering of the Jewish people, both their physical suffering as well as their spiritual suffering, and to also be pained over the fact that Hashem, so to speak, is also in pain over our entire situation. If one *davens* earnestly and truthfully to Hashem to end all of the pain, he will be *zocheh* to the words “*Hashem is close to all who call out to Him*”, Hashem will be close with him, for he has called out to Him “in truth”.

When we *daven* to Hashem for this, it needs to stem from this truthful place in our soul. “*From the narrow straits, I called out to Hashem.*” The more your feel trapped by the narrow confines, the more you *daven* to come out of it. The more that person grasps the simple reality today (not the unknown hidden dimension of reality which is only grasped by a few individuals, but the simple reality in front of us which we can all see), the more his heart can bleed over the situation of the Jewish people today in this world. It has been explained here two parts to our *avodah* on *Tisha B’Av* – pain which can awaken us to crying, and to then pray to Hashem from the depths of the heart, earnestly, and truthfully.