

yei'ush, out of despair — we are crying out of hope. And that is why our pain is part of the same pain as the Churban of the Beis HaMikdash. It is one cry. Cry out of hope to Hashem for complete salvation.

And this is our avodah. When we daven to Hashem, if the davening comes out of hope and not out of despair, then we do not have to work so hard

to redirect our thoughts at all. Because when we are hoping that Hashem will surely help — we are bringing Hashem into our heart, and Hashem will surely reconnect Himself to us, and therefore the whole tefillah becomes a completely different tefillah. That is how we cry for the Churban: not as people who gave up, but as a *na'ar* who is still crying because he knows he is coming home.

MEKOROS

1. Bamidbar 14:34 2. Shemos 2:6

קונטרס

The Ways of My Heart

נתיבות לבי

Adapted from the shiurim of
R' Dovid Steiman shlit"א

How Do We Cry for the Churban?

The Churban · Tisha B'Av

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THE WAYS OF MY HEART · WEEKLY SERIES

נתיבות לבי — The Ways of My Heart

A WEEKLY MAAMAR · ADAPTED FROM THE SHIURIM OF R' DOVID
STEIMAN SHLIT" A

ABOUT THE PUBLICATION

Nesivos Libi — *The Ways of My Heart* is a weekly maamar on emunah, bitachon, and avodas Hashem, adapted from the shiurim of R' Dovid Steiman shlit" a in the derech of the *Nesivos Shalom*.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

R' Dovid Steiman shlit" a teaches emunah, bitachon, and avodas Hashem in the derech of the *Nesivos Shalom*, and for nearly two decades has shared his Torah — in English and Russian — with talmidim and readers around the world. He taught at Ohr Somayach and today teaches at Yeshiva Toras Dovid, both in Monsey, New York. He is the author of the sefer *The Ways of My Heart* / נתיבות לבי.

DEDICATION

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pain? Not being able to hold our heart with Hashem in the tefillah!

That pain *is* the Churban. It is not a separate pain. We think we have our pain over here and Hashem has His pain over there — no. The reason we cannot

bring our heart back to the place of tefillah is because this itself is part of the same Churban. Our pain and His pain are one pain. The moment you feel how hard it is to keep your heart with Hashem, you are already touching the main Churban itself.

..... The cry of a Yid

There is an explanation in the *Nesivos Shalom*. When Bas Paroh opened the little ark on the water, the pasuk says וַהֲנִיחָהּ נָעַר בִּכְהָ — and behold, a *na'ar* was crying. But *na'ar* is a grown boy, and Moshe was an infant, a few months old. She looked at a baby in a little ark and heard the cry of a grown boy — strange. And from that she understood:

this child is surely a Yid. Why? Because of the cry. His was not the cry of someone who has given up. It was the cry of someone who still has hope that what was lost will come back. That, Bas Paroh understood, is a Jewish cry — and that is the real cry of a Yid.

Our crying is the same. We are not crying out of

doing this? He sang as if nothing had happened.

And then he began to speak. *Yidden — I lost my children, my own children. I lost a wife. I saw so many korbanos, I saw the Churban of Yiddishkeit. Yidden — and we are still here. Do you understand? We are still here. They are not here anymore, but we are still here. We survived. And who helped us sur-*

vive it? They stood there, lost — on one side he looked completely off, and on the other he was speaking the plain truth. The *emunah* had not gone anywhere. He said it again and again, until the people began to cry, and they tore strips from the paper tablecloths just to cover their heads — because they had nothing else to cover them with.

..... One pain, not two

That is exactly the redirection we cannot find. We sit and cry over a Churban from the time of the Beis HaMikdash, and we don't know how to connect to it. But here is the point. This is one of the greatest avodos of our gen-

eration: *davening*, tefillah — to concentrate completely on Hashem, to pull our thoughts off everything else and put them on Him alone. And where do we feel that we cannot handle our pain? Where is the source of this great

How Do We Cry for the Churban?

Our own pain and the pain of the Churban are one — and the cry of a Yid is a cry of hope

The hardest avodah of Tisha B'Av is this: how do we take the pain we already carry and redirect it towards the Shechina's pain? Every person has his own pain, each one in a different way — a person, a family, so many people carrying so much, each situation its own. And the whole work of this day is to take your pain and redirect it and feel it with the pain of Hashem — the pain that there is no Beis

HaMikdash, that the closeness we once had is gone, that we sit in *bester panim*. How do you redirect a pain like that? We are sitting here crying over a Churban from the time of the Beis HaMikdash — and honestly, we have no idea what we lost. We don't even understand what it means to be close to Hashem on the level of the Beis HaMikdash: to bring korbanos, to see real nevi'im, people who were

truly connected to Him.
We have no idea what we

are crying about.

..... "You removed your heart from Me"

If we will look for a source of Tisha B'Av in the Torah, we can find the very ingredient of the day. The pasuk in Parshas Shelach says: במספר הימים אשר תרתם את הארץ ארבעים יום לשנה יום לשנה תשאו את עונותיכם וידעתם — ¹אֵת תְּנוּאֹתַי — according to the number of days you toured the land, forty days, a day for a year and a day for a year, you shall bear your *avonos* forty years, *v'yidatem es tnuasi* — and you shall know My estrangement. The Seforno there points to the Gemara in Taanis: that *yom lashanah* — the one day a year — is Tisha B'Av. For that was

the day, all through the years in the midbar, when the generation would dig their graves and lie down in them to wait for death; and the cheit that brought it all was on Tisha B'Av.

So what is the whole point? *V'yidatem es tnuasi*. Rashi tells us what *tnuasi* means: שהניאותם את לבבכם מאחרי — that you removed your heart from Me; *tnuah* is a *lashon* of *hasarah*, of taking away. And the Sifsei Chachomim finishes the thought: because you removed your heart from Hashem, therefore Hashem was removed

from you. There it is. The main ingredient of the Churban, if we can say it in one pasuk, is a heart taken

away from Hashem. And our avodah, then, is the reverse: not to remove our heart from Him.

..... The Klausenberger Rov's first tish

I read an unbelievable story about the Klausenberger Rov — perhaps you've heard it. Right after the war — this great tzadik who had lost eleven children. He lost his wife in the war. He was in a labor camp, he was on a death march, and he survived. And after all of that, he put himself back into the shoes of a Rebbe and began gathering the Yidden who had come out of the camps, to be *mechazek* them however he could. He made his first tish, a chassidishe tish. Some of

the people there had known him from before, from Klausenberg, and some were new.

And the people looked at him as if he had lost his mind. Completely. *We are in hell here. No one survived. Everyone died. Where is Hashem? Where is He? What are you singing? Zemiros about inviting Hashem to the seudah — what is wrong with you?* And they all knew he had lost every one of his children and his wife. How is he standing there and