

## She saw him, the boy, and behold! A youth was crying... and (she) said, “This is one of the Hebrew boys.” (2:6)

Pharaoh’s daughter looked at the infant in the basket and noticed something unusual about the manner in which the infant wept. This made her assume that it was a Jewish infant. What about the infant’s weeping spurred her to think that it was Jewish? The **Slonimer Rebbe, zl**, explains that, indeed, a marked difference exists between the cry of a Jew and the cry of one who is not. Rather than go right to the distinction, I would like to approach it from the vantage point of *Tishah B’Av*, our national day of mourning.

Every Festival has its *cheftzah d’mitzvah*, “object of *mitzvah*,” which is intrinsic to and personifies the Festival: *Pesach* has its *Matzah* and other *Pesach/Seder*-related foods; *Succos* has the *Succah*, and *Arba Minim*, Four Species; *Shavuos* is all about the Torah; *Rosh Hashanah*, the *Shofar*; *Chanukah*, the *Menorah*; *Purim* the *Megillah*. What about *Tishah B’Av*? What is its *cheftzah d’mitzvah*? I recently saw suggested that the object of *mitzvah* for *Tishah B’Av* is tears. Our weeping is our *avodah*, service, which we render on that day. By grieving for the loss of the *Bais Hamikdash*, we actually “celebrate” *Tishah B’Av*!

Interestingly, on this day reserved for grief and mourning, the *halachah* is clear that one does not recite *Tachanun*, which, translated literally, means supplication. On days of joy, such as *Shabbos* and Festivals, it is not proper to pray for specific needs or to recall sad thoughts. *Tachanun* is, therefore, omitted on days of celebration of joy and contentment. *Tishah B’Av* is referred to as a *moed*, which, although translated as an appointed meeting time, is a term used to refer to the *Moadim*, Festivals. Why should *Tishah B’Av* be included amongst these *Moadim*? What do they have in common?

**Horav Yaakov Meir Shechter, Shlita**, explains that *Tishah B’Av* is a day of hope for the Jewish People. Inarguably, the mere fact that we are enjoined to “celebrate” this day with profound weeping and mourning over the loss of our Temple is an indication that there is hope for salvation. Certainly, one does not cry over the past, which cannot be rectified. Why cry over spilled milk? Why would an intelligent person weep over something that is lost and gone forever? Since *Chazal* want us to weep, they must have had another idea in mind. They viewed *Tishah B’Av* from an altogether different vantage point. They saw hope; they perceived rebuilding amidst joy and return to Hashem as we had experienced in happier times. We are: crying out of hope; crying for salvation; crying for Revelation of the Divine Presence, as we had once experienced it. Intrinsic to the tears of pain is the hope that they engender. This is what the *Navi* means by *Kara Alai moed*, “He proclaimed a set time against Me” (*Eichah* 1:15). *Tishah B’Av* is a day on which we rendezvous with G-d, a day of challenge and hope. On *Tishah B’Av*, we see that we matter to G-d. He awaits our return. Indeed, *Chazal* say that *Moshiach* will be born on *Tishah B’Av*. Amidst our weeping, hope engenders salvation.

Returning to our opening question as to how Bisyah, daughter of Pharaoh, deduced the infant's pedigree from the manner in which he cried. She perceived that these were tears of hope – not resignation. Moshe cried like a Jew, and a Jew never gives up hope. From the tears, she saw that he was no ordinary child. He was *miyaldei ha'Ivrim*, from the Hebrew boys.