

## Yehoshua heard the sound of the people in its shouting. (32:17)

*Targum Yonasan ben Uziel* comments on this *pasuk*: *Kad meyabvin b'chedvah kami egla*, “as (the people) they cried with joy before the Calf.” Crying generally is an expression of sorrow – not joy. Why does *Targum Yonasan* describe the joy of the people as being expressed through tears? Joy and crying are not synonymous expressions. When one is sad – he cries. We see this in the Torah’s description of a *Kol anos*, a distressing sound (32:18). On the other hand, the people exhibited joy by dancing (32:19) and “shouting” (see *Rashi* 32:17). How do we reconcile this joy, if in fact they cried? I saw quoted in the name of **Horav Yeruchem Levovitz, zl**, that this refers to one who is a *shanah u'pireish*, learned as well as observant, and then changed his attitude with regard to Torah and *mitzvah* observance. He is no longer interested, nor is he in the mood of maintaining his responsibility to serve Hashem. Such a person commits transgressions, overtly desecrating the Torah, etc. yet, despite his mutinous behavior, he knows deep down that he is wrong. He continues to sin, but the *geshmak*, pleasant nature/satisfaction of sin is missing. He does not enjoy the transgression as much as one who had never learned, as one who had never adhered to *mitzvos*. The *shanah u'pireish* is like a rebellious child, who, if he has any emotion, feels bad that he is turning against his parents who raised him.

*Klal Yisrael* were under the evil influence of the *erev rav*, mixed multitude, who joined with them when they left Egypt. They had never been committed, and when ambiguity reigned in the camp, they took over and led the people to iniquity. The Jew who was following them to worship the Golden Calf was torn. On the one hand, he was having fun; on the other hand, something was tugging at his heart. It bothered him to turn against Hashem, Who had taken him out of Egypt. So, he cried amidst the joy. The Jews danced, and reveled around the Golden Calf, but it was with a *yevavah*, a heavy heart. Perhaps they manifested joy, but deep within the recesses of their hearts, they were crying. They knew that this was wrong.

And so it has been throughout the ages. We observe Jews who have fallen prey to the blandishments of the society in which they live. They revoke the yoke of Torah and *mitzvos*, and, for all intents and purposes, seem to be enjoying their new lifestyle. Is it real? Are they really having fun? If they were once *frum*, observant, the fun is quite bittersweet. If they really have no regrets, then I guess they were never truly observant. All they are doing now is removing the sham of their earlier “observance.”