

You slandered in your tents and said, " Because of Hashem's hatred for us did he take us out of Egypt...to destroy us. (1:27)

Moshe *Rabbeinu* recounted the events surrounding the spies' ill-fated mission to *Eretz Yisrael*. He attempted to refresh their minds concerning their prior mistakes, so that hopefully they would not repeat the same errors. He admonished them to remember their murmurings and rebellions, the slander that demoralized a nation, the ingratitude that catalyzed a rebellion for which we still suffer today. What did they do that night that still haunts us to this very day? They cried! Does crying deserve such a severe punishment? It depends what type of crying and for what reason. *Chazal* tell us that the people shed unnecessary tears. That night happened to be *Tisha B'Av*. Hashem said, "You have wept without cause, the time will come when later generations will weep with good cause." They cried - for nothing. "*Bechiah shel chinam*," weeping for no reason, resulted in a "*bechiah l'doros*," a weeping for generations. The lesson seems simple, if you cry for nothing, Hashem will one day give you a reason to cry.

So many of us become depressed when confronted with challenges, when overcome with problems. Is that a sufficient reason to cry? We must conjure up our faith in the Almighty and place our trust in Him, so that we do not submit to undue expressions of grief. Yet, we ask whether unnecessary weeping deserves such grave punishment. Should we still be paying for the people's behavior that night? Because some individual yields to depression and fear, others need not suffer for generations.

We suggest that the sin was not merely their unwarranted weeping. Rather, their sin was the issues about which they did not cry. When one cries unnecessarily, he shows that he is preoccupied with concerns that are unrealistic, while he allows great issues to remain unnoticed. When one cries about foolish, petty or self-defined concerns, he demonstrates his priorities. He shows where his concerns really are. *Bnei Yisrael* wept unnecessarily that night - because they were selfish. Their fear and grief covered up their real character. They were ungrateful to Hashem. They did not weep when Hashem's Name was slandered and desecrated. They showed no concern when the leaders He chose were disparaged and abused. They wept when they thought they were in danger. It was not what they cried about that was the problem; the issue was the matters about which they did not cry.