

PRAYING WITH TEARS

A person's prayers, can reach the pinnacle of the heavens," but may not penetrate the locked Gates of Prayer until he weeps with emotion during prayer. At that moment, the Gates of Tears open.

In apparent contradiction to the above, there are sources that seem to discourage tearful prayers. They say that one should pray the Amidah or Shemoneh Esrei from the simchah, joy, of performing a mitzvah. Rabbinic writings seem to imply that praying with tears is not proper, and yet, crying to the Almighty has been the way of the Jewish people from the beginning.

But there is a solution. Every state of mind that presents an obstruction to one's connection to the Almighty. The sorrow that is mentioned is therefore more akin to hopelessness, which is the antithesis of coming to the Almighty for help. When praying with tears to one's Father in Heaven, from a heart that is yearning to feel the Almighty's closeness and is filled with hope and belief in the Almighty's compassion, those are precisely the tears that Heaven's Gates swing wide to admit.

POINTS TO PONDER

Prayers said with tears have a special power to penetrate the Gates of Heaven.

Even though one may not cry tears of sadness on Shabbat or Yom Tov, tears that spring from heart-felt devotion are treasured Above.

Crying to the Almighty from distress is a powerful means to pray when the underlying emotion is hope for the Almighty's help and comfort, rather than hopelessness or despair.

Psalm 18:7 In my distress I called on the LORD, cried out to my God; in His Temple, He heard my voice; my cry to Him reached His ears. (TNK)