



**Our Mother Has Left the Home; Who Will Comfort Us?
(Zohar Hadash, Midrash HaNe'elam on Eikha)
Rabbi Roly Matalon**

שְׁלַחוּ לְהוֹ בְּנֵי בָבֶל לְבְנֵי אֶרֶץ קְדִישָׁא, לְן יְאוֹת לְמַבְּבִי, לְן יְאוֹת לְמַעְבַּד הַסְּפָדָא עַל חוֹרְבַן
בֵּית אֱלֹהֵנָא, עַל דְּאַתְבְּדִרְנָא בֵּינֵי עַמְמֵינָא, וְאִית לְן לְמִיפְתַּח הַסְּפִידָא, וּלְפָרְשָׁא אֶלְפִ"א
בֵּיתָא, דְּשִׁלַּח מְאִרֵי עֲלָמָא לְהַסְפִידָא דְּחוֹרְבַן בֵּיתֵיהּ

Those who lived in Babylon sent to those who lived of the Holy Land, "It is appropriate for us to cry, it is appropriate for us to mourn for the destruction of the House of our God, and for having been scattered amongst the nations, we should initiate the mourning and expound on the verses of the Book of Lamentations that the Master of the Universe sent us to mourn the destruction of His house.

שְׁלַחוּ לְהוֹ בְּנֵי אֶרֶץ קְדִישָׁא, יְאוֹת דְּאַתוֹן אַתְבְּדִרְתוֹן בֵּינֵי עַמְמֵינָא, וְאַתוֹן לְבַר מְאִרְעָא
קְדִישָׁא, וְיְאוֹת לְכוּ לְמַבְּבִי עֲלֵיכוּ וְעַל גְּרַמְיֵיכוּ, וְדַנְפַקְתוֹן מְנַהוּרָא לְחִשׁוּכָא, כְּעַבְדָּא דְּנַפִּיק
מִבֵּי מְאִרֵיהּ. אָבֵל אֲנִן אִית לְן לְמַבְּבִי וּלְמַעְבַּד הַסְּפִידָא, וְלֵן שְׂדֵר קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא סְפָרָא
דְּהַסְפִידָא, דְּאֲנִן בְּנֵהָא דְּמִטְרוֹנֵיתָא, וְאֲנִן מַבְּבֵי בֵּיתָהּ, וְיַדְעִין יְקָרָא דְּמְאִרֵי עֲלָמָא. וְלֵן יְאוֹת
לְמַבְּבִי, וּלְפָרְשָׁא אֵינוֹן אֶלְפִ"א בֵּיתֵינָן

Those who lived in the Holy Land sent back to those in Babylon:

It is certainly appropriate for you who are exiled among the nations outside the Holy Land to cry for yourselves. For you have gone from light to darkness, like a servant who has left the house of his master. But it is we who should cry, who should mourn for God has sent us the Book of Lamentations, for we are the children of the *Matronita*, we are the members of Her household who got to know the glory of the Master of the Universe. Therefore it is fitting for us to cry and to expound the Book of Lamentations.

וְאֲנִן יְתִמִּין בְּלֹא אָבָא וְאִמָּא, וּמְסַתְפְּלִין עֵינֵינוּ לְכוֹתְלֵי בֵּיתָא דְּאִימָנָא, וְהָא אַתְחַרְבַּ, וְלֹא
אַשְׁבַּחְנָא לָהּ. דְּהָוָה יִנְקָא לְן בְּכָל יוֹמָא, בְּיוֹמֵי קְדָמָאִין, מְשַׁפְּרוּ דִּילָהּ. וְהָוִית נְחִימַת לְן,
וּמְמַלְלַת עַל לְבָנָא, כְּאִמָּא לְבָרָהּ. כְּדָבַר אַחַר (ישעיהו ס"ו:י"ג) כְּאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר אָמוּ תִנְחַמְנוּ וְגו'

We are orphans without father and mother. Our eyes look towards the walls of our Mother's House and it is destroyed, and we can't find her. In earlier times, she would feed us every day with her beauty, and she would console us and speak to our hearts, like a mother to her child, as it is written, "*As a person whose mother consoles*" (Isaiah 66:13)

וְהִשְׁתָּא אֶסְתְּפְּלִין עֵינֵינוּ לְכָל סִטְרָא, וְאַתְרָא בֵּית מוֹתְבָא דְּאִימָנָא אַתְבְּלַבְּלָא, וְהָא אַתְחַרְבַּ. נְבִטְשָׁא
רִישָׁא לְכוֹתְלֵי בֵּיתָא וּמוֹתְבָהּ. מֵאֵן יִנְחַם לְן, וּמֵאֵן יִמְלַל עַל לְבָנָא, וְיִגִּין עֲלָנָא קַמֵּי מְלָכָא

And now our eyes look in every direction, and our mother's dwelling place is overturned and destroyed. We will hit our heads against the walls of her house and her dwelling place. Who will console us? Who will speak to our hearts and protect us before the King?

כד הוּינן חֲטָאן קָמִי אַבּוּנָא, וְסָלִיק רְצוּעָא לְאַלְקָאָה לָן, אִיִּהִי קִיִּימַת לְקָמֶן, וּמְקַבְּלַת מְלָקִיּוּתָא דְמַלְכָא, בְּגִין לְאַגְנָא עֲלָנָא. כְּדָבֵר אַחַר (שם נג) וְהוּא מְחַלְל מְפָשְׁעֵינוּ מְדַכָּא מְעוֹנוֹתֵינוּ כּו' וּבְחִבְרָתוֹ נִרְפָּא לָנוּ. וְהִשְׁתָּא אִימָא לִית לָן, וּוִי לָן, וּוִי לָנוּ. לָן יְאוּת לְמַבְכֵי, לָן יְאוּת לְמַסְפָּד, לָן יְאוּת לְפִתְרָא אֵינוּן מִיִּלִּין דְמָרִירוּ, לְאוּדְעָא לְהוּ, לְאֵינוּן דִּידְעִין לְמַבְכֵי מִלִּין דְהִסְפִּידָא

When we would sin against our Father, and he would lift the strap to punish us, She would stand in front of us and She would get the King's lashes in order to protect us. As it is written, "*He was wounded because of our sins, crushed because of our iniquities...by his bruises we were healed.*" (Isaiah 53:5) And now we have no Mother. Oy, Oy for us and oy for you! It is fitting for us to cry, it is fitting for us to lament, it is fitting for us to expound those bitter words in the Book of Lamentations, to make them known to those who know how to cry words of mourning.

נִקְרַב בְּכָל יוֹמָא לְגַבֵי עַרְסָא דְאִימָנָא, וְלֹא נִשְׁפַּח לָהּ תַמְנָן. נִשְׁאֵל עֲלָהּ, לִית מֵאֵן דִּישְׁגַח עֲלָן. נִשְׁאֵל לְעַרְסָא דִּילָהּ, אֲתַבְּלָבְלָא. נִשְׁאֵל לְכוּרְסֵיָא, נִפְלַת. נִשְׁאֵל לְהִיבְלִין דִּילָהּ

Each day we approach our Mother's bed but do not find Her there. We ask for Her, but no one even pays attention to us. We ask of Her bed, but it is turned over. We ask of Her Throne, but it has fallen. We ask of Her palaces, but they swear that they know nothing about her. We ask the dust, but her footprints are nowhere to be found.

נִשְׁאֵל לְאִיגְרָא, הָא אִיגְרָא אֲתִיב לָן, דְתַמְנָן יְתַבָּה מְבַבְּהָ וּמִיִּלְלַת עֲלָן וְאֲזַלַת מְבַבְּהָ, צוּחַת בְּקוֹל מְרִירוּ עֲלָן, מֵאִיגְרָא לְאִיגְרָא. כְּמָה דְאֵת אֲמֶרָה, (שם כב) מַה לָּךְ אֲפּוּא כִי עָלִית בְּלָךְ לַגְּגוֹת. נִשְׁאֵל לְאוּרְחִין וּשְׂבִילִין, בְּלָהּוּ אֲמַרִין דְשָׁמְעוּ קוֹל מְרִירוּ דְבַכְיָהּ, דְמְבַבְּהָ עַל בְּנֵהָא, וְלֹא יִדְעִין לְאֵן אֲסַתְלַקַת

We ask of the roof. The roof answers us that She stood there crying and wailing for us and that she left crying. She wept for us with a bitter voice, moving from rooftop to rooftop, as it says, "*What can have happened to you, that you have gone, all of you, up on the roofs.*" (Isaiah 22:1) We ask the roads and pathways, all of them say that they heard the sound of a bitter cry, that She cried for Her children. And they did not know where She went.

לָן יְאוּת לְמַבְכֵי, לָן יְאוּת לְמִסְפָּד. נִנְשַׁק עַפְרָא דְרַגְלָהּ, נִנְשַׁק אֲתַר בֵּי מוֹתְבָהּ, נִנְשַׁק בּוֹתְלֵי הִיבְלָא, וְנַבְכֵי בְּמָרִירוּ. אֲנָן נִפְתַּח בְּהִסְפִּידָא, דְחַמִּינָן בְּכָל יוֹמָא כָּל הָאִי. נַבְכֵי תְדִיר וְלֹא אִיתְנַשֵּׁי מְרִירוּ דְבַכְיָהּ מִינָן

It is fitting for us to cry, it is fitting for us to mourn. We will kiss the dust of Her feet, we will kiss the place where She once resided. We will kiss the walls of Her palaces, and we will cry bitterly. We will open with lamentation, every day we have seen all this. We will always weep, and the bitterness of our crying will not cease from us.