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## A VORT FROM THE ROSH YESHIVA מורינו הרה"ג ר' אברהם גורביץ שליט"א

### פרשת דברים – בין המצרים

מקדש ראשון מפני מה חרב? מפני ג' דברים שהיו בו - ע"ז וגלוי עריות ושפיכות דמים וכו'. אבל מקדש שני שהיו עוסקין בתורה ובמצות וגמילות חסדים מפני מה חרב? מפני שהיתה בו שנאת חנם. ללמדך ששקולה שנאת חנם כנגד שלש עבירות - ע"ז גלוי עריות ושפיכות דמים. (גמ' יומא ט:)

*Why was the first Beis HaMikdash destroyed? Because of three sinful things that existed there – avodah zarah, immorality and bloodshed. But the second Beis Hamikdash – we know that the people occupied themselves with Torah, mitzvos and acts of kindness – why was it destroyed? Because of the baseless hatred that existed there. This teaches you that groundless hatred is tantamount to the three cardinal sins of avodah zarah, immorality and bloodshed put together. (Yoma 9b)*

The Gemara explains that while the first Beis HaMikdash was destroyed due to the three cardinal sins, the second Beis HaMikdash was destroyed due to *sinas chinam* – baseless hatred. The Gemara concludes from here that groundless hatred is equal to the three most severe sins.

The Rambam (*Hil. Teshuvah* 3:6) states that those who serve *avodah zarah* are included in the group barred from Olam HaBah. However, this punishment is not written concerning *sinas chinam*. So, how are we to view the terrible role that *sinas chinam* played in the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash, and from which we are still suffering today?

The Rosh Yeshiva *shlita* explains that *achdus* is crucial for Hashem to rest His Shechinah among us. When Klal Yisroel show baseless hatred and lack of unity, it causes Hashem to leave us and His dwelling place to be destroyed.

This concept is found in the Vilna Gaon (*Shir HaShirim* 1:17) who explains the *possuk* (*Shemos* 25:8), *וְעָשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְתוֹכָם*, *They shall make Me a Sanctuary – so that I may dwell among them*, as referring to Hashem dwelling in the hearts of Klal Yisroel. He explains that essentially, the abode for the Shechinah is in our hearts, but this is only possible when there is a unifying factor for all of Klal Yisroel. Hashem chose a single place, such as the Mishkan or the Beis HaMikdash, as a central focal point for all of Klal Yisroel, which would act as a common site to unite and merge everyone. When everyone comes together and wholeheartedly donates and contributes to the same sacred cause, it creates a powerful alliance and connection among all members of Klal Yisroel, causing the Shechinah to dwell amongst them.

We further find in the Gemara (*Berachos* 30a) how the Beis HaMikdash served as a unifying force bringing all of Klal Yisroel together. The *possuk* (*Shir HaShirim* 4:4) refers to the Beis HaMikdash as *בְּנוֹי לְתִלְפִיּוֹת*, and the Gemara interprets it as: the *תֵּל*, *elevation*, towards which all *פִּיּוֹת*, *mouths*, turn. From this *possuk*, Chazal derive the following *halachah*: One who is outside of Eretz Yisroel should turn toward Eretz Yisroel; one who is in Eretz Yisroel should turn toward Yerushalayim; one who is in Yerushalayim should turn toward the Beis HaMikdash; one who is in the Beis HaMikdash should turn toward the Kodosh HaKedoshim. In this way, all of Klal Yisroel will be directing their hearts toward one place.

The Rosh Yeshiva explains that with this, perhaps we can understand how the Churban was caused by *sinas chinam*, even though it is not as severe as the three major *aveiros*. As the Gaon explained, Hashem only rests His Shechinah in a place that was built through the unification of Klal Yisroel for a common purpose. If Klal Yisroel sinned in this way, the Shechinah needs to leave. This is not necessarily because of the severity of the sin, but rather because the Shechinah does not remain in a place without *achdus*.

One of the keys to promoting and maintaining peace and unity can be found in the *possuk* (*Tehillim* 119:165), וְאִין לְמוֹ מְכַשׁוּל, וְשָׁלוֹם רַב לְאַהֲבֵי תוֹרָתְךָ, *There is abundant peace for the lovers of Your Torah, and there is no stumbling block for them.* This *possuk* emphasises that those who love and value Torah and its teachings, experience abundant peace and are not easily swayed by obstacles. Feelings of jealousy often lead to discord, but for the genuine 'lover of Torah', such negative emotions are irrelevant. Someone who appreciates the supreme value of Torah and *mitzvos* realises that nothing else holds any comparable value. Therefore, there is no need to engage in conflict, as Torah and *mitzvos* are accessible to all. The achievement of one person in their *ruchniyus* journey does not affect or diminish the opportunities for others, as Torah and *mitzvos* are available to everyone. This concept is echoed in the famous teaching of Chazal (*Berachos* 64a) which states: תְּלַמְדֵי הַכְּתוּבִים מְרַבִּים שְׁלוֹם בְּעוֹלָם, *Torah scholars increase peace in the world.*

Let us make every effort during this time of the year to increase our *achdus*, which is a prerequisite for Hashem to return His Shechinah to be with us. Looking at the cause of the Churban, we see how important peace and unity are, and we need to work on improving this to be *zoche* to the *geulah*. We have also learned that a key method to overcome jealousy and discord is by focusing on the true values of life - serving Hashem through learning Torah and fulfilling *mitzvos* - which is something easily accessible to everyone. May we merit to enhance our conduct in this area, ultimately bringing about the arrival of Moshiach.

This Devar Torah is adapted from ספר וענפיה ארזי אל עה"ת and is presented by the Gateshead Yeshiva Alumni Association. To receive by email, please register your interest by sending an email to [parshasheet@gyalumni.org](mailto:parshasheet@gyalumni.org).