



## What We Are Missing

Last week marked the fast of the 17<sup>th</sup> of Tammuz, the beginning of a three-week period of mourning over the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash. We know that we are supposed to feel a loss at this time. However, it may be difficult. We never saw the Beis HaMikdash, its glory, pageantry, the open miracles, and the *Shechina* (Divine Presence) that rested there. How then, can we mourn? The more that we know about the Beis HaMikdash, the more acutely we can feel its loss.

“One lamb you shall do (offer up) in the morning . . .” (Bamidbar 28:4). This was the first of two *Korbonos Tomid* (Perpetual Offerings), offered up every day in the Beis HaMikdash. The Medrash relates that there was never a man in Jerusalem with a sin in his hand. Why? The morning *tomid* would atone for sins of the night, and the afternoon *tomid* would atone for sins of the day. Can you imagine that? A person would be forgiven for his sins every day! A nation without sins has protection from its enemies. A nation without sins has untold blessings. As Rabbeinu Bechaye relates, The world was upheld and sustained by the *Korbon Tomid*, and its food supply was blessed. The blessing began from the Holy of Holies and spread to the whole world. The Medrash continues, “In this world you offer *Lechem HaPanim* (Show Bread) and *korbonos*. In the next world, I will set before you a magnificent table. The idol worshippers will see it and be embarrassed.”

*Kinderlach . . .*  
Now we have some concept of what we are missing. Blessings, security, forgiveness, these all were a part of the life that centered on the Beis HaMikdash. Don't just observe the customs of mourning these three weeks without any feeling. “*Rachmana lieba boy*” (The Torah requires heart). Put your heart into it. Feel the sadness of two thousand years without the *shechina*. Feel the loss of the blessings. And look forward to its rebuilding speedily in our days. Amen.

## Fences

“Woof, woof.”

The shepherd's eyes slowly opened to the sound of the barking dog. Morning had arrived and it was time to check the sheep. He slowly walked over to the pen. Last night there were 40 sheep. The shepherd's eyes opened wide. Where were the sheep? All of them had vanished. He slowly walked around the pen. One of the bars was slightly open. It was not a big opening. Only one sheep could squeeze through at a time. That was all it took, however. One by one, they all escaped. Because of one small hole in the fence, he

was left nothing.

“Torment the Midianim and smite them” (Bamidbar 25:17). This was Hashem's command to Moshe Rabbeinu. What did the Midianim do to the Jewish people to deserve such a fate? The caused us to commit the worst sin – *avodah zara* (idol worship). Their idol was called *Baal Peor*. There were many ways to worship idols in those days. How was *Baal Peor* worshipped? Any way that you like. All forms of worship were permitted, the more revolting the better. This seems strange to us, but the message is clear. Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz zt”l says that *Baal Peor* represents “everything goes”. You can do whatever you like because everything is permitted. Midian was a society with no morals. How does it begin? With a small hole in the fence. Just like the sheep in the pen. One small hole is all it takes, and everything goes.

*Kinderlach . . .*  
Who knows the first Mishna in Pirkei Avos? “Make a fence around the Torah.” Why are fences so important? We need them to protect the Torah. We want to stay far away from violating any Torah mitzvos. We may think that we are safe. How could we ever transgress a mitzvah? All it takes is one small hole in the fence. Then everything goes. *Kinderlach*, keep your fences strong and free of holes.



## Act with Bitachon

The daughters of Tslofchod, son of Hopher, son of Gilead, son of Machir, son of Menashe, son of Yosef drew near – and these are the names of his daughters; Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah” (Bamidbar 27:1). The time had come to teach the laws of dividing the Land of Israel; giving each family its inheritance. This would be followed by the actual division of the Land. Who would receive a homestead? One who qualified as an “inheritor”; namely the sons and not the daughters. Tslofchod had five daughters and no sons. They saw that their father's offspring were not going to receive a portion in Eretz Yisrael.

The Sifrei details the steps that the daughters took to apply for a homestead. They gathered to seek advice. They said, “Hashem's *rachmonus* (mercy) is not like that of flesh and blood. People have more compassion for the sons than the

daughters. However, the One Who spoke and created the world has *rachmonus* on both. As the verse states, “And His mercy is upon all of His creations” (Tehillim 145:9). The Targum Yonason states that Tslofchod's daughters prayed to Hashem, asking for *rachmonus*. They then approached Moshe and Elazar HaKohen and presented their case.

Rav Shmuel Hominer, in his sefer *Eved HaMelech* learns a penetrating lesson from the behavior of these *tsidkonios*. Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah acted with *bitachon* (trust in Hashem). They first trusted that the Creator, with His abundant mercy, would give them a portion in the Holy Land. They then prayed to Hashem; beseeching Him to have *rachmonus* on their father and give his daughters an inheritance in the Land. When they saw that the matter needed to be presented before Moshe and Elazar, they did not hesitate to speak with the leaders of Klal Yisrael. Rav Hominer entreats us to understand this very well, as it is a fundamental point in the mitzvah of *bitachon*. A person should conduct himself in this manner with all of his affairs. Firstly, he should trust that Hashem will give him what is good for him. Then he should pray to the Almighty, beseeching Him for *rachmonus*. Lastly, if some other *hishtadlus* (preparatory action) is required, he should not hesitate to do what is needed. However, he must always realize that the outcome is in the hands of the Merciful One. One who conducts himself in this manner will grow closer and closer to his Creator with each and every challenge in life.

*Kinderlach . . .*  
Hashem loves us! He sends us challenges in life for a reason – He wants us to come closer to Him. Rav Hominer shows us that the example of the daughters of Tslofchod teaches us how to trust in Hashem and grow close to Him in trying times. Firstly, we trust that He will do what is best for us. Then, we pray to Him, asking for *rachmonus*. Finally, we calmly and deliberately do any additional *hishtadlus* that is necessary, knowing that the outcome is from the Almighty, and not from his earthly agents. We may add, that when the result comes, we thank Hashem directly and sincerely for His great kindness. In this way, *kinderlach*, we are constantly in touch with the Creator, trusting Him, asking Him for our needs, and thanking Him for all of His kindness. What a wonderful life! Grow close to Hashem! Act with *bitachon*!

### Parasha Questions:

- Why does the verse repeat the name Menashe twice? (Rashi 27:1)
- What sin brought about the death of Tslofchod? (Rashi 27:3)
- The daughters of Tslofchod speak properly. Were their words praiseworthy? (Rashi 27:7)