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Rabbi Shmuel Brazil



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תשפ"ד RAV BRAZIL PARSHAS BECHUKOSAI

WHAT TO DO WHEN THE HOLY SHEEP GETS LOST

The *passuk* says **וַיִּכְרַחְךָ בְּגוֹיִם** Vayikrah 26,38 you will become lost among the nations. At the end of Meseches Makkos 24 the *gemarah* relates that Rav said that when he reads this *passuk* he becomes frightened. Lost is a very strong and threatening word! It was then that Rav Papa commented maybe the word **אֲבֵדָתָם** means like a lost article that seeks to be found. For instance one can lose a wallet or a sheep. With the wallet the owner must seek to find its whereabouts. The wallet is lifeless and is unable to scream out "Find me I am over here". In contrast is a lost lamb who is not only sought after by the owner, but the lamb is making noises in order to be found and returned to the flock.

This is what Dovid Hamelech writes in Tehillim 119,176 **אֲבֵדָה כִּשְׂאֵי לְאֵי** I am lost like a lamb and I am therefore crying in order that my owner will find me and bring me home. There is a greater possibility of finding the lamb than the wallet because the wallet can't get the owner's attention and interest.

The Mishnas Sachir brings a proof to Rav Papa from the Medrash Bereishis 85:

וַיְהִי בַעַת הַהִיא רַבִּי שְׁמוּאֵל בַּר נַחֲמָן פָּתַח (יִרְמִיָּה כ"ט) כִּי אֲנִי יָדַעְתִּי אֶת הַמַּחְשָׁבוֹת שֶׁבַטִים הָיוּ עֹסְקִין בְּמִכִּירְתּוֹ שֶׁל יוֹסֵף וְיוֹסֵף הָיָה עֹסֵק בְּשִׂקוֹ וּבַתְעֵנִיתוֹ רְאוּבֵן הָיָה עֹסֵק בְּשִׂקוֹ וּבַתְעֵנִיתוֹ וַיַּעֲקֵב הָיָה עֹסֵק בְּשִׂקוֹ וּבַתְעֵנִיתוֹ וַיְהוּדָה הָיָה עֹסֵק לִיקַח לוֹ אִשָּׁה וְהַקֶּב"ה הָיָה עֹסֵק בּוֹרָא אֹרֹר שֶׁל מֶלֶךְ הַמְּשִׁיחַ וַיְהִי בַעַת הַהִיא וַיִּרַד יְהוּדָה (יִשְׁעִיָּה סו') בְּטָרֵם תַּחֲלִיל יִלְדָה קוֹדֵם שֶׁלֹּא נוֹלַד מִשְׁעַבְדֵי הָרָאשׁוֹן נוֹלַד גּוֹאֵל הָאֲחֵרוֹן

After Yosef was sold down to *Mitzrayim* all of Yisrael were preoccupied with their own problems. Yosef was mourning over the treacherous actions of his brothers, Reuven was mourning over his changing of Yaakov's bed to Leah's tent, Yaakov was mourning over the loss of Yosef, Yehudah was occupied to get a new wife and Hashem was busy with the bringing of the light of *Moshiach* and the *geulah*. Even before the first *galus* actualized, the redeemer of the **last galus** was already born.

Rav Papa was assuring Rav that this punishment in the **Tochacha** is not that we will be lost to total assimilation in *galus* and never return as Hashem's nation. But it does send the message that *Am Yisrael* must *daven* and cry out to Hashem to be found and returned to our homeland and *Beis Hamikdash*.

The *gematriah* of **אֲבֵדָתָם בְּגוֹיִם** is one less than **תְּפִלָּה**. This indicates that the lack of our serious *davening* played a catalyst role in the *Churban Beis Hamikdash*. Just the mere chatter that takes place in shul is enough to cause a *kitrug* on *Klal Yisrael*. Rav Yonasan Eibshitz alluded to this problem in the *passuk* of *Kerias Yam Suf*; **ה' יִלַחֵם לָכֶם וְאַתֶּם תַּחְרִישׁוּן**; that Hashem will fight your battles with the Satan except for one. That is your talking in shul during *tefillah* and *laining*. For during the prayers of **goyim** you can hear a pin drop. Hashem says how can I answer their prosecution against you? Therefore the only alternative to save you from *tzaros* is that I beg from you **וְאַתֶּם תַּחְרִישׁוּן** be silent in shul and stop the chatter which empowers the Satan and his cohorts. It can very well be that this concept is actually what this *passuk* is referring to. That the *galus* of **אֲבֵדָתָם** of becoming lost is because of the comparison between you and them.

A lot of people just don't understand the purpose of *tefillah* and that is why they talk so much uncontrollably. They erroneously think *davening* is for the purpose to request from Hashem to help you solve your problems and fill your lacking. So if by chance **you** are making a great living, and everyone is healthy and do exercises, then you don't need to spend all that time *davening* to Hashem. You would rather talk about new business

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ideas, vacations, fantastic deals, politics etc, The problem here is twofold. You forgot that Hashem who creates the universe every mini second is the one who gives you all the successes and the security that goes with it. Secondly, that is not the end goal of *davening*. The main purpose of *tefillah* is to use this opportunity to bond and connect with Hashem the Infinite, to get an infusion of spirituality in a world of depraved physicality, to acquire sanity in an atmosphere of deep confusion, and to strengthen your meaning and purpose of living in a society and culture of moral decay, chaos and narcissism. Without the few spurts of consciousness of Hashem and His intervention in one's life one would be sucked into the Black Hole of conformity leading to the abyss of emptiness and void.

Even if one's *teffillos* don't seem to be answered, your experience of the short time that one had facing Hashem, still benefited you in a big way as you were elevated, and with new clarity you moved that much closer to the source of life with which Hashem wants to share with you for eternity.

The *gematriah* of **שה אובד** is **שיח** a word that symbolizes *tefillah* as found by Yitzchak Avinu (Berachos 26b). If one really wants to be extricated from the *galus* and *hester panim* then he must act like a sheep and cry for return of Hashem's presence to reside amongst us. The sign that indicates that we are still connected to our roots is through our *teffillos*. The word **שיח** is one number higher than the word **יאוש** which means forsaken and hopeless. If we are heartfully davening, then we are still bonded with Hashem and the Beis Hamikdash.

In once told my Rebbi Rav Shlomo ztl that I saw in the Mihnagim of Belz that during *Hoshanos* when they said the words **צאן קדשים** holy sheep they would all make the sound of sheep BAH BAHHHHHH. The Rebbo was so excited about the idea that he insisted that during the *Hakafos* of *Simchas* Torah I should scream out **צאן קדשים** and the *olam* should make the sound of sheep together. That year we tried it out. I must admit it wasn't a total success. However, the inner circle got a great *geshmak* and inspiration from it. Listen, we are really supposed to **daven** every day like lost sheep calling their shepherd to find them and take them home. If we cannot make our *davening* good enough to the level of **כשה אובד** then at least a two second BAAHH would also let Hashem know that we truly want the *geulah*. If you want you can try it out at *Mizmor Leshodah* **ואנחנו עמו וצאן מרעיתו**. just make sure it is not too loud.

Gut Shabbos,

Rav Brazil