

# KOLLEL AGUDATH ACHIM

Rosh Kollel

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רחוב דסקין 5

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**My father in law is currently recuperating at home. Please daven for Aharon ben Yita to have a complete recovery..**

**Moshe Teller**

**PARASHAT KI- TOVA 2023**

**פרשת כי תבוא 5783 -**

## “APPRECIATE WHAT HASHEM GIVES YOU”

This parasha contains 6 Mitzvot, 3 positive and 3 negative. It is noted primarily for the “Tochacha”, the admonition against disobedience of Torah and the pain [one should have] of living in Galut. According to Gemara Megillah [31b] this parasha should always be read close to the Yamim Nora'im, to put us in the proper mood and frame of mind before we approach Rosh HaShanah.

HaShem tells us that the root cause of all the horrific curses which will befall our people is *“Because you did not serve HaShem Your G-d with happiness and goodness of heart, when you had everything in abundance”* [28:47]. This passuk certainly requires an interpretation because it cannot be that all our historic suffering, the churban HaBayit and our long exile was caused because we did not serve G-d with “happiness and goodness”. Furthermore, the Gemara Yoma [9b] states that during time of Bayit Sheni [period of second Temple] when there was a great deal of Torah learning taking place and Gemilut Chesed [charitable deeds and kindness] was abundant in the community, the Bet HaMikdash was destroyed because of “Sinat Chinam”, baseless hatred of one Jew towards another Jew. Why does the Gemara not mention the reason in our passuk as a cause for this vast destruction?

I once heard an explanation to this question from Rabbi Y, Zweig. The Torah is delving into the root causes of hatred while analyzing the deeper meaning of happiness. The Torah is describing a period in which we were unhappy, even though we had everything. This is mirrored by our contemporary phenomena which find a high percentage of wealthy people and celebrities suffering from depression and disenchantment. Why do people who enjoy success and high social standings, people who have everything that life has to offer still exhibit a lack of happiness?

A person can only be truly happy if he appreciates what HaShem has given him. However, if a person considers himself deserving of all that he has, he will never be content by that which he already has. Rather, he will be focused on those things which are not yet his, but to which he feels entitled to having. He will be constantly miserable and never satisfied with what he has. Since he is convinced that he is entitled to everything that he desires, if another person has that what he is coveting then that other person becomes an immediate threat to him. He begins loathing that person for no reason other than the perception he maintains that the person is withholding an object that should rightfully be his. It is this type of loathing that the Gemara defines as “Sinat Chinam”.

Thus, Sinat Chinam can be traced back at its inception to our lack of appreciation for what HaShem has done and continues to do for us. We see that Sinat Chinam of the Gemara is not a different reason than what is offered by the Torah in our parasha; of being unhappy when serving HaShem.

To some degree this applies to every one of us. If we think about all the hours, days, weeks and months of this past year that we were unhappy and depressed we might come to the realization that perhaps we were unappreciative of what HaShem did give us. We are alive, we can see and hear, we can smell, taste and

walk- not because we are entitled but because of HaShem's kindness and graciousness. Something to contemplate before Rosh HaShanah.

Shabbat Shalom from Yerushalayim  
Rabbi Aharon and Libby Ziegler