

RECTIFYING THE SIN OF BASELESS HATRED WILL LEAD TO THE REBUILDING OF THE TEMPLE (BY RABBI DAVID HANANIA PINTO SHLITA)

The Sages say, “The former ones, whose iniquity was revealed, had their end revealed. The latter ones, whose iniquity was not revealed, have their end still unrevealed” (Yoma 9b). This means that we know why the first Temple was destroyed, and we also know when the decree ended, meaning how long it remained in ruins before being rebuilt. However we do not know why the Second Temple was destroyed, nor do we know when this decree will end. That is, we do not know when the Third Temple will be built. This statement raises some difficulties. We know that the Second Temple was destroyed because of baseless hatred, as our Sages have said (ibid.). Furthermore, the prophet Jeremiah said: “For what reason did the land perish.... Because they have forsaken My Torah” (Jeremiah 9:11-12). Therefore we know what caused the destruction of the Second Temple! That being the case, how can the Sages say that their iniquity “was not revealed”?

Let us attempt to explain. When we look into the destruction of the Second Temple, we see that it was indeed caused by the baseless hatred that existed among Jews. True, there were great Torah scholars living at the time, but they did not actually observe and perform what was written in it. The essential component in Torah study must be humility and self-effacement, as we see among the Children of Israel when they received the Torah on Mount Sinai.

At the giving of the Torah, the Children of Israel stood beneath the mountain. Furthermore, Mount Sinai merited having the Torah given upon it because it was humble (Sotah 5a). The Sages say, “Moses received the Torah from Sinai” (Perkei Avoth 1:1), meaning that Moses received humility from Mount Sinai. In this way the Children of Israel were able to obtain the 48 qualities by which the Torah is acquired (ibid. 6:6).

As for the time of the Second Temple, the Jewish people were engaged in studying Torah, but without humility or self-effacement. Each person considered himself more important than the other, and instead of Torah scholars bringing peace to the world, they brought dissension, conflict, and baseless hatred to it. Instead of fulfilling the verse, “All banayich [your children] will be students of the L-RD” (Isaiah 54:13) – on which the Sages have said, “Do not read banayich [your children] but bonayich [your builders]” (Berachot 64a) – instead of building the world, they brought destruction to it.

Why did this happen? It was because people acted out of line. Each person only saw his own greatness, not that of his fellowman. Everyone sought the humiliation of the other, not his honor, and therefore nobody knew who was right anymore. This led to such baseless hatred that even the tzaddik Rabban Yochanan ben Zakai was no longer respected at the time.

The Gemara recounts that Rabban Yochanan ben Zakai was carried out of Jerusalem in a bier in order for the Romans to believe that he had died. Some scoundrels wanted to put a lance through the bier and push it so the Romans would say, “They pierced their Master...they pushed their Master” (Gittin 56a). Actually, among the wicked who guarded the gates of Jerusalem, there were certainly spies who told the Romans what was happening in the city. They would have certainly related even small things to the Romans, such as the fact that Rabban Yochanan’s

bier had been treated with scorn. All this stemmed from their great hatred for Torah scholars.

The Sages’ statement, “The latter ones, whose iniquity was not revealed, have their end still unrevealed” means that the baseless hatred that existed among Jews at the time of the Second Temple was concealed. Nobody openly showed it, and none of their disagreements were for the sake of Heaven. Their hatred was covered up so that nobody really knew what was happening. In this way they concealed their wicked sentiments while pretending to act for the sake of Heaven.

This attitude led to such massive destruction that the Holy One, blessed be He, even hid the time of their exile and deliverance, until such time as all the sins between man and his fellowman have been rectified. Their iniquity was not revealed, for they themselves did not reveal what they were doing. On the outside they pretended to love one another, while on the inside they felt a tremendous degree of baseless hatred for others.

The essence of Torah is humility, for it can only be acquired through humility and self-annulment (Ta’anith 7a). However at the time of the Second Temple, the Jewish people were using the Torah to further their pride, not their humility. That is what is the prophet Jeremiah meant by saying, “They have forsaken My Torah” (Jeremiah 9:12). They forsook humility and conducted themselves exclusively with pride. The iniquity of the people during the time of the Second Temple lay in baseless hatred and Lashon Harah. While they demonstrated love for one another on the outside, they detesting each other on the inside, and none of their deeds were for the sake of Heaven. Thus because their sin was concealed, so too was its end.

Rectifying the sin of baseless hatred requires baseless love, and not only in secret, but openly. When that happens, the end will be revealed.

From here we learn that the sin of baseless hatred stems primarily from pride, when people feel superior to one another. This is the meaning of, “For what reason did the land perish.... Because they have forsaken My Torah” as well as, “If only they would forsake Me, but keep My Torah” (Yerushalmi, Chagigah 1:7). This is because their primary sin was not to have acted with humility. It is not without reason that we have been in exile for close to 2,000 years. We are not engaged in the work of construction begun by Rabban Yochanan ben Zakai, and our dealings with others are not governed by love. The Sages have said, “Every generation in which the Holy Temple is not rebuilt is regarded as the generation in which it was destroyed” (Yerushalmi, Yoma 1:1; see also Midrash Tehillim 17), for it indicates that the cause of its destruction has still not been rectified. This demand is made of every Jew, for all Jews are responsible for one another (Sanhedrin 27b; Shevuot 39a). This is the reason why Mashiach has not yet come. However when we correct this, Mashiach will quickly come and deliver us. Amen, may it be so.



The Path To Follow

DEVARIM

194

July 21st 07

6 AV 5767

Publication

HEVRAT PINTO

Under Aegis of

RABBI DAVID HANANIA

PINTO CHLITA

11, rue du plateau

75019 PARIS

Tel: +331 42 08 25 40

Fax +331 42 08 50 85

www.hevratpinto.org

Responsible of publication

Hanania Soussan

GUARD YOUR TONGUE!

Take Advantage of Your Time

Although nobody wants to shorten his life, there are many people who still waste their time in shallow and pointless conversations.

If we were to calculate how many hours are wasted by such frivolous pursuits, we would realize the enormity of the loss. A single hour wasted each day in speaking Lashon Harah comes to 365 lost hours a year! As a wise man once said, “There is nothing more wasted than wasted time.” This is so true, for we can find money that was lost, but not time. Once lost, time is gone forever. A person who avoids speaking Lashon Harah generally avoids saying frivolous things. He therefore has more free time to study Torah and perform mitzvot.

MUSSAR FROM THE PARSHA

The Safest Place Possible

It is written, "Then I said to you, 'Do not be broken and do not fear them! The L-RD your G-d, Who goes before you...bore you as a man bears his son' " (Deuteronomy 1:29-31).

Moses reprimanded the Children of Israel for their lack of faith during the incident involving the spies. He knew that the inhabitants of the land were a large and powerful people, the descendants of giants, and that their cities were vast and fortified. Although this was true, there was still nothing to fear, as he told them: "Do not be broken and do not fear them!" In other words: Do not forget that you are not acquiring the land of Israel by force, but as a gift from Hashem – "Not by might, nor by power, but by My spirit, says the L-RD of hosts" (Zechariah 4:6). Therefore Hashem your G-d walks before you and will fight for you as He did in Egypt before your very eyes. He will fight for you and you will inherit the land. Have faith in His greatness and the power of His hand. Remember the great miracles that you saw in Egypt, and how "He bore you as a man bears his son." You crossed the desert, the abode of serpents, scorpions, and all kinds of danger, yet Hashem protected you from all harm. You must conclude that Hashem is with you in all areas of life. You must realize that He provides, and will continue to provide you with all you need. You must trust in Hashem like a son trusts in his father, for a son knows that his father will protect him, and that under his protection nothing bad will happen. How much more is this true when it comes to Your Father in Heaven, Who is all powerful and Whose love for you is real! You are the children of Hashem your G-d!

Like the Children of Israel, we too must strengthen our faith in Hashem.

Before a father takes his son into a vast jungle that is swarming with danger, where wild animals roam and snakes and scorpions lurk, he will warn him: "This place is very dangerous, so don't wander off. Stay close to me." After they enter, the charming sight of a butterfly or the beautiful sounds of a bird make the boy forget his father's warning. He then goes after them and loses his way in the jungle. As the sun goes down and night begins to descend, darkness covers the earth and lions roar from hunger. Although the boy wandered from his father by mistake, that does not change the situation, for he is now exposed to all kinds of dangers. He begins to panic and cry, and from the bottom of his heart he screams, "Father!" Suddenly he feels an intense pain on his face, but he doesn't know why. In that brief instant he imagines all kinds of things, and he is frightened to even turn around and see what awaits him. Nevertheless, he strengthens himself and turns around, and who should he see but his father! Although he is now scolding the boy for having wandered off, it is all worth it because he is now safe at his father's side. Staying close to his father, the boy begins to cry once again, but this time out of joy, for his father has found him!

This parable depicts life. We and our Heavenly Father have entered a very dangerous place, one with all kinds of obstacles. We must never wander from our Father, for only next to Him are we safe. Even if we do get lost – by running after things that look appealing, or things that seem good to eat – let us strengthen ourselves and cry from the bottom of our hearts, "Father!" Even if returning is sometimes a little painful, it is better to place ourselves under His protection and stay close to Him. We have someone we can rely on: Our Father in Heaven.

A Pearl From the Rav

It is written, "These are the words that Moses spoke to all Israel" (Deuteronomy 1:1).

Rashi cites the Sages in explaining that all the names mentioned in this verse were places where the Children of Israel angered Hashem. For their sake, however, the Torah only hints at that fact.

In his book *Pahad David*, Rabbi David Pinto Shlita states: All these words

are reprimands, and we know that rebuke leads a person to repent of all his sins. This is why Moses spoke to all Israel – to all the souls among the Jewish people – so that everyone would repent. When someone wants to repent, let him pay attention to the reprimands issued by Moses, and let him be wary of the evil inclination, against desires and vain pursuits. A person should especially not seek out *Di-zahav*, materiality, but instead his goal should be spirituality.

Above all, a person must protect his eyes from seeing evil. We must realize that when a person looks at holy things, he can elevate himself to great spiritual heights. We may add that the expression, "These are the words that Moses spoke to all Israel" has the same numerical value as, "Keep your eyes in holiness and purity throughout your entire life."

You Commanded Me, Not Them

It is written, "And Hazeroth and Di-zahav" (Deuteronomy 1:1).

Rashi comments: "And Hazeroth. This refers to the rebellion of Korach... And Di-zahav. He rebuked them for the calf they made." This seems difficult to understand, for the sin of the golden calf occurred long before Korach's rebellion. Therefore why is it mentioned afterwards?

In the Midrash we find that after the sin of the golden calf, Moses interceded for Israel by claiming that Hashem's commandments had been addressed to him alone, not to Israel: "You did not say, 'I am the L-RD your [plural] G-d,' but 'I am the L-RD thy [singular] G-d'" (Devarim Rabba 3:11). However Korach came along and said, "The entire assembly, all of them, are holy" (Numbers 16:3), meaning that everyone heard Hashem saying on Mount Sinai, "I am the L-RD thy G-d." He thereby annulled Moses' argument, and so sin of the golden calf was again in force. Thus by Hazeroth the sin of Di-zahav resurfaced.

– Ma'ayana Shel Torah

Thoughts and Deeds

It is written, "After he had smitten Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelled in Heshbon, and Og king of Bashan, who dwelled...in Edrei" (Deuteronomy 1:4).

Moses' words were unable to penetrate the hearts of the Children of Israel for as long as Sihon and Og, two powerful forces of evil, were alive. Sihon, "who dwelled in Heshbon," rendered their thoughts impure (*heshbon* means "account" or "thought"), and Og, "who dwelled in...Edrei," rendered their deeds impure (*edra* in Aramaic means "arm," symbolic of action). For example, the Children of Israel were liable to think, "My strength and the might of my hand have made me this wealth" (Deuteronomy 8:17). Hence it was only after eliminating these two forces of evil that Moses' words were able to reach the deepest recesses of their hearts and influence them.

– Chiddushei HaRim

May They Always Say the Same

It is written, "I said to you at that time, saying: 'I cannot carry you alone'" (Deuteronomy 1:9).

Imagine someone to whom Hashem has given great material blessings (i.e., wealth and children), and who must do a great deal of work in order to maintain his home. Although he will tell his children, "I'm overburdened with work because of you," he will add: "May it be Hashem's will to do the same for your children and grandchildren. May they always be tired in this way, and may such weariness never end!" Thus Moses, Israel's faithful shepherd, said to them: "The L-RD your G-d has multiplied you, and behold, you are today like the stars of heaven" (Deuteronomy 1:10), both in quantity and quality. Moses said that this is what all the shepherds of Israel, their leaders and prophets, should say; they should always have such complaints! This is the meaning of "I said to you at that time, saying." In other words: This is what the shepherds of Israel, men such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, and others, should always say about you.

Praising a Friend and Blessing Him

It is written, “The L-RD your G-d has multiplied you, and behold, you are today like the stars of heaven in abundance” (Deuteronomy 1:10).

The Zohar (Bamidbar 117b) states that one who wants to “count the praises” of his friend is obligated to bless him. We see this with Moses, who first praised Israel by saying, “The L-RD your G-d has multiplied you, and behold, you are today like the stars of heaven in abundance.” He then blessed them: “May the L-RD, the G-d of your fathers, add to you a thousand times yourselves and bless you as He has spoken of you” (Deuteronomy 1:11).

When a person praises his friend, Heaven verifies that the latter’s deeds are worthy of receiving such praise. That being the case, a person must also bless his friend. If he fails to do so, it is considered as if he has brought his friend before the Heavenly tribunal, in which case he himself will be punished first. Conversely, if he blesses his friend, he himself will be blessed by Heaven. The Zohar continues: “Since, when one blesses his friend, Hashem wants him to bless with a good eye and a good heart, then when he blesses Hashem, it must certainly be with a good eye, and with a good and loving heart.”

I Have Labored and Found

It is written, “Any matter that is too difficult mikem, you shall bring to me and I shall hear it” (Deuteronomy 1:17).

It seems that the verse should have used the term lachem (“for you”), not mikem (“from you”).

We must say that the verse is alluding to the fact that a person’s inability to completely understand something stems mikem – from you. This means that when a person works as hard as he can, it is certain that he will understand. As the Sages say, “If he says, ‘I have labored and found,’ you can believe him” (Megillah 6b).

– Torat HaParasha

Without Bias

It is written, “Any matter that is too difficult for you, you shall bring to me” (Deuteronomy 1:17).

The Ramban states that when a person has a doubt as to whether something is permitted or not, he must first eliminate all his biases, treating the matter as if it did not concern him in the least. Only then will he be able see clearly enough to determine Hashem’s will on the matter.

This is the direct sense of the expression, “that is too difficult for you.” In other words, if it is difficult for you to make a decision, then “you shall bring to me” – you must look at it solely from the vantage point of Hashem’s will, without any personal bias, for only then can you arrive at the truth.

– Sefat Emet

Both Sides of the Argument

It is written, “Listen among your brothers and judge righteously” (Deuteronomy 1:16).

When Rabbi Yonatan Eibeshutz celebrated his Bar Mitzvah, one of his family members said to him, “Today you are 13 years old. Up to now you did not possess a good inclination, but only an evil inclination. What did you do whenever the evil inclination tried to entice you? How did you reject it?”

The boy said that whenever the evil inclination tried to entice him, he replied with the verse, “Listen among your brothers and judge righteously.” The Sages deduced that this is a warning to the Beit Din not to listen to a litigant in the absence of his opponent, and a warning to the litigant not to present his case to the judge before his opponent appears (Sanhedrin 7b). The boy then enthusiastically said, as if he had already won his case: “I rejected the evil inclination by telling it, ‘Be quiet and stop your incitement, for according to the Halachah it’s forbidden for you to speak. It’s also forbidden for me to hear your arguments before the appearance of the other litigant, the good inclination. When it appears, you can make yourself heard and I’ll decide who is right.’”

REASONS FOR THE MITZVOT

Judging on the Facts

It is written, “I instructed your judges at that time, saying: ‘Listen among your brothers and judge righteously between a man and his brother or his litigant’” (Deuteronomy 1:16).

Since Moses told the Children of Israel, “I instructed your judges at that time,” why did he need to state, “Listen among your brothers”? Moses was saying: When a case comes before you, be cautious and listen carefully to your brothers in order to understand their words. Even if the case before you is similar to others you have heard, do not base yourself on that. Instead, listen carefully and weigh their words, for in doing so you will be judging “righteously between a man and his brother.” Your judgment will be fair and true, and all the litigants will recognize this and accept your decision. Harmony will reign among you because your decisions are upright.

Why did Moses need to tell the Children of Israel all this while reprimanding them? Since these laws only seem to concern judges, why did he involve the entire community?

We may say that Moses wanted to convey the following lesson to the Children of Israel: When you see your brothers acting in a way that does not seem right, you must refrain from immediately passing judgment on them. First listen to all the details, and even if you have already presided over a similar case (even one involving the same person, and thus supporting your initial view), be very cautious. Listen to every side, weigh everything well, and only then render a decision. In this way peace and harmony will reign among you.

This is the meaning of, “Judge righteously between a man and his brother or his litigant.” We often see how disputes can lead to regrettable remarks being said on account of impatience. How many brothers have been separated because of this? How much damage has resulted from the fire of strife ignited by a hasty word? Nevertheless, once you have verified all the facts, you must consider the mitzvah, “With righteousness shall you judge your neighbor” (Leviticus 19:15). You must judge your fellowman by giving him the benefit of the doubt. By doing this, you will be fulfilling the mitzvah, “You shall love your fellow as yourself” (v.18). To the degree that you find reasons to justify the actions of your fellowman, Hashem will do the same for you. He will find the good in you and bless you.

The same applies to all the decisions we make. We must carefully weigh everything we do and say, for a word once spoken cannot be taken back. In this way we will train ourselves in the service of Hashem to never say, regardless of the situation, “I already know this,” or “I already know what I have to do.” On the contrary, “Listen among your brothers” – heed the advice of your friends, those who do not share your biases. In this way you will gain a new perspective, one that you did not have before. Be cautious in judgment, for by doing so your judgments will be fair and true.

EISHET CHAYIL

Solely by Devotion

The Midrash states that during the time of Eli the High Priest, a voice from Heaven proclaimed: “A child will be born who shall become a prophet and leader in Israel, and he shall be called Samuel.” At that point every woman who gave birth to a boy named him Samuel. Hannah too, when she gave birth to a boy, named him Samuel. However she merited for her son to become the prophet and leader that Heaven had proclaimed. Why Hannah, and how was she different from all the other women? The answer is that when she prayed to Hashem for a child, she made a special vow. She said, “I shall give him to the L-RD all the days of his life” (I Samuel 1:11). Thus when the Holy One, blessed be He, gave Hannah a son, she brought him to the Temple at the age of two. The righteous Hannah announced, “When the child is weaned, I will bring him, and he shall appear before the L-RD and abide there forever” (v.22). She forsook her desire to be with her son, and even though she gave birth to him after numerous years of anticipation, she immediately sent him to the Temple so he could live there for good. In other words, he was never going to live at home again. Because Hannah devoted herself for her beloved son – because she gave him to Heaven – she merited for her Samuel to become a prophet.

A TRUE STORY

No Honor Bestowed in Court

It is written, “You shall not respect persons in judgment” (Deuteronomy 1:17).

During the time of the gaon Rabbi Moshe Zeev, the Rav of Bialystok, a dispute erupted between two well-known and wealthy individuals, Zimel Epstein and Kopel Halperin. They eventually agreed to travel to Bialystok in order for Rav Moshe Zeev to decide their case.

When the Rav heard from his assistant that these men were ready to come before him, he covered his eyes with his tallit (he wore his tefilin and tallit whenever presiding over a case) and called them in. Rav Moshe did not even greet them or say hello, but went directly to the facts of the case.

These wealthy men were upset at the Rav’s “greeting,” especially since he did not address them with any honorary titles.

Each man presented his argument, and after some clarifications they were asked to wait outside. When the Rav called them back in, he issued his verdict and asked if they accepted it. When they replied that they did, Rabbi Moshe Zeev removed the tallit covering his eyes, extended his hand to them, and welcomed them with great respect, even addressing them with honorary titles. In their utter amazement, the litigants could not help but ask why he had covered his eyes and treated them as he did. Rav Moshe replied, “Our Sages have said in a Mishnah of Avoth: ‘When the litigants stand before you, regard them both as guilty’ [Perkei Avoth 1:8]. This is why I acted as I did at first. When you accepted my verdict, however, I followed the Mishnah’s teaching: ‘When they leave, having accepted the verdict, regard them both as guiltless’ [ibid.]. I therefore honored you in an appropriate way.”

YOUR EYES SHALL BEHOLD YOUR TEACHER

Rabbi Ben-Zion Halberstam – The Bobover Rebbe

Rabbi Ben-Zion Halberstam was among the greatest Rebbes of his generation. He was the son of Rabbi Shlomo Halberstam, the Bobover Rebbe, and the grandson of Rabbi Chaim Halberstam of Sanz, the Rebbe and founder of the Bobov dynasty. Rabbi Ben-Zion’s noble ancestry could be seen in everything he did, and he made a name for himself throughout Galicia. From all corners of the land, brilliant avrechim came to see him. Bnei Torah avidly drank in his words, and he guided them in Torah and the service of Hashem. From his youth he was known as a teacher and leader of thousands, and he was also a Rav and Av Beit Din to whom questions were addressed concerning all areas of Torah. He immediately addressed every issue, even on the most difficult areas of Shulchan Aruch. Besides his greatness in Torah and Chassidut, Rabbi Ben-Zion was also known as a musician. Indeed, his niggunim were famous and many came to his Beit Midrash just to enjoy his melodies, which could lead those who were far from Torah to teshuvah.

When the Second World War broke out, Rabbi Ben-Zion fled his city of Bobov and eventually made it to Lvov, which was then controlled by Russian forces. The Germans later conquered the city, and the Rebbe was discovered and executed on Av 4, 5701 (may Hashem avenge his blood). His son, Rabbi Shlomo, succeeded him as Rebbe and established a community in Brooklyn. He passed away on Av 1, 5760. May his merit protect us all.

THE DEEDS OF THE GREAT

The Merit of Shabbat

Rabbi Chiya bar Abba was once invited to the home of a man in Laodicea. When he arrived, a golden table was brought before him, one that had to be carried by sixteen men. Sixteen silver chains were fixed in it, and plates, goblets, pitchers, and flasks were set upon it. On the table were all kinds of food, dainties, and spices. When they set it down they recited, “The earth and its fullness is the L-RD’s” (Psalms 24:1). [The Talmud in Berachot requires this, since before saying a blessing we must recognize that everything belongs to Hashem.] When they removed it they recited, “As for the heavens, the heavens are the L-RD’s, but the earth He has given to man” (ibid. 115:16). [By his blessing, a person receives permission from Hashem to eat what belongs to Him, hence “the earth He has given to man.”] Rabbi Chiya bar Abba said to him, “My son! How have you merited all this?” He replied, “I was a butcher, and with every fine animal I used to say, ‘This will be for Shabbat.’” Rabbi Chiya bar Abba replied, “Happy are you that you have merited this, and praised be the Omnipresent, Who has allowed you to enjoy all this.”

Another story is told concerning the Roman Emperor and Rabbi Yehoshua ben Chanania. The emperor said to him, “Why does the Sabbath meal smell so good?” He answered, “We have a certain seasoning called Shabbat. We add it to our food to give it a fragrant smell.” The emperor asked, “Give us some of it.” Rabbi Yehoshua replied, “To one who keeps Shabbat, it is effective. But to one who does not keep Shabbat, it is useless.”

– Ma’assei HaGedolim, citing Shabbat 119a

IN THE LIGHT OF THE HAFTORAH

As White As Snow

It is written, “If your sins are like scarlet, they will become white as snow. If they have become red as crimson, they will become as wool” (Isaiah 1:18).

The Talmud states that during the era of the First Temple, the crimson thread (a piece of wool that was attached to the scapegoat on Yom Kippur) turned a brilliant white, as white as snow, when the scapegoat was thrown from a cliff. During the era of the Second Temple, however, the thread became only as white as wool. The Meshech Chochma explains that during the era of the First Temple, the sins of Israel were like crimson, wool that is simply dyed red and whose interior remains white. This means that their sins were superficial, for their hearts were filled with a love of Torah and Israel. For example, there were no informers during the time of King Achav, and by this merit they were victorious in battle. Similarly, Achav surrendered his wives, silver, and gold to the king of Aram, but he refused to surrender “what is pleasant in [his] eyes” (I Kings 20:6). The Sages have identified this as “something that is more desirable than anything else – the Torah” (Shemot Rabba 3:8). In other words, he was ready to sacrifice everything for the Torah, which is why the crimson thread turned as white as snow during that era.

As for the era of the Second Temple, the sins of the people were red like scarlet, like the worm whose blood is red. Similarly, the people concealed their treachery and baseless hatred for others on the inside, which is why the thread only became as white as wool – not snow – during that era. Every generation in which the Temple is not rebuilt is like the generation in which it was destroyed, for the sins that caused its destruction have not yet been corrected. Hence we must not only rectify our external actions, but also transform our hearts so as to become pure, white, and clean. With G-d’s help, we will then merit the rebuilding of the Temple and the arrival of Mashiach. Amen.