

“These are the reckonings of the Mishkan, the Tabernacle of Testimony.” (38:21)

The word *Mishkan* is mentioned twice. Why? *Rashi* explains that the word *Mishkan* – which is spelled *mem, shin, kof, nun* – can also be read as *mashkone*, which means collateral. This alludes to the *Bais*

HaMikdash which was twice taken from us as collateral. The sins of *Klal Yisrael* should have brought about their destruction. Instead, Hashem took out His wrath on the wood and stones of the *Bais HaMikdash*. They were *Klal Yisrael's* collateral. A young student once asked *HoRav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, z.l.*, the following question, “If the destruction of the *Bais HaMikdash* parallels the taking of collateral for *Klal Yisrael's* sins, why does Hashem not return the pledge to us, especially since we yearn and long for it so much?”

Rav Yosef Chaim gave a penetrating response: “*Halachah* teaches us that the lender must return the security if the borrower is poor and in need of said object. For instance, if the collateral is a pillow or blanket, which the borrower needs in order to sleep, the lender must return it every night. If, however, the poor man has another pillow or blanket, it is not incumbent upon the lender to return the security.

“Do you want to know why Hashem has not returned the collateral?

Why, after all these years of suffering and exile, do we still wait for that security? It is because most Jews are perfectly content with the lifestyle they have adopted in exile. They are wealthy, dignified, and comfortable. They seem to lack nothing. They seem quite content with their “exile”; they do not manifest a sense of urgency, a feeling that something is missing from their lives. Thus, Hashem is not obligated to return the *Bais HaMikdash*. We are not poor. We do not seem to be lacking anything.”

A similar sentiment is expressed by the *Sh'lach Hakadosh* when he writes, “My heart aches within me, when I see that Jews build beautiful homes for themselves, like palaces of princes, making permanent, long-lasting dwellings for themselves. This gives the impression that they have a lack of appreciation and expectation for our Messianic redemption.”

One can imagine what the *Sh'lach* would say if he were alive today. If he wrote then that there was a “lack of appreciation and expectation,” today he might write, “They do not want *Moshiach* to come, because it would hamper their lifestyle.”