

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

Simply, the *Mishkan* was the abode of the *Aron HaKodesh* which contained within it the *Luchos HaEidus*, Tablets of Testimony. Noticeably, the word *Mishkan* is repeated, alluding to the two *Mishkanos*. *Chazal* teach that this refers to the two *Batei Mikdash* which were taken from us. *Mishkan* is a resting place. It can also be transformed (changing the vowels) to *mashkon*, collateral. Thus, the dual *Mishkan* in our *pasuk* alludes to the two *mashkanos*, collaterals (*Batei Mikdash*), that were taken from us, to be returned only when the collective nation repents and, consequently, is restored to its original glory.

We can glean a powerful and profound message from the idea that we have two outstanding *mashkanos*, collaterals. *Baruch Hashem*, we collectively live on varied comfort levels. Obviously, there are different levels, but, for the most part, we are not victims of persecution; we are not slaves. Often, in our current state, we forget (or tend to ignore) the fact that we are in serious debt, and, while we are enjoying all the fruits, our collateral has not yet been returned to us. We are living in a house that is mortgaged to the hilt to the Heavenly bank. Thus, what we have become accustomed to as “comfortable” or “normal” is actually living in debt.

Our normal life is basically a distraction from the reality of debt. We convince ourselves that, as long as we are earning a living, our children are in school/camp, and we can take vacations, that all is well. It is not. The *Chafetz Chaim* observes that the worst aspect of *galus*, exile, is not the suffering, but the forgetting. The *Baal Shem Tov* teaches that forgetfulness leads to exile; conversely, remembrance is the beginning of redemption.

We scream, “We want *Moshiach*,” as if the only impediment to *Moshiach*’s arrival is Heaven’s approval. This is sadly not the case. We live with comforts that feel like permanence, while, in reality, our *Bais HaMikdash* is being held as collateral. The impediment is not Heaven – we are holding back *Moshiach*. If we would think about what we are missing and reflect on what it takes to get it back – *Moshiach* would be here. Once we pay the loan, the collateral will be returned – always.