

Tractate Brachos

[We will now look into the roaring of Hashem, and what it actually means, that Hashem roars at these watches.]

Rav Yitzvak bar Shmuel said in the name of Rav, The night consists of three watches, and at each and every watch the Holy One, Blessed be He, sits and roars like a lion, and says, Woe to the children because of whose sins I destroyed My Temple, and burned My Sanctuary, and exiled them among the nations of the world.

[It is interesting to note, there is another Gamorah, Sanhedrin, which discusses this issue. It mentions the fact that destroyed, and burned, are basically the same thing, and it asks why there is a double explanation, in our verse, to the fall of the Temple. It implies that the term destroyed means the departure of the Shechinah, whereas burned refers to the actual destruction. There is also an illusion to the Temple on high, and the earthly Temple, for if one is destroyed, the other has no resting place. Now the Gamorah will side-bar into an aggadah. An aggadah does not deal with direct halacha, but it is more of an esoteric nature. Much lighter to deal with, and it allows the brain to breath a bit.]

It was taught in a baraita, R' Yose said, I was once traveling on the road and I entered one of the ruins of Jerusalem to pray. Elijah, who is remembered for good, came and waited (or guarded) for me at the entrance until I finished my prayer. [It is common to see that Elijah the prophet visits with, and learns with many of the Sages.] **After I finished my prayer, he said to me, "peace unto you, my teacher," and I answered to him, "peace unto you, my teacher and master..."** [It is common and proper to always answer a person with a little more than he greeted you with. For example... "Shabbat Shalom" and reply, "Shabbat Shalom U'varach (and blessings)" or the likes. Hence the additional "and master." But also, he wished to pay abundant respect to the prophet. Understandably so.] **And he said to me, "my son, for what did you enter this ruin?"** [He asked this because by entering into a ruin, he placed his life in danger of a number of things, which you will see further on.] **I said to him, "to pray,"** [In other words, he was relying on his kavanah (contemplation and devotion during prayer), that it would surely protect him. **And he said to me, "You should have prayed on the road."**

[In other words, you should not rely on the merit of a mitzvah to protect you. The purpose of the mitzvah is because Hashem commanded it. Nothing more. This does not mean that the mitzvah will not protect you, it only means that you should always do the utmost to avoid danger (on your part), and if there is another option, like praying outside, rather than in a ruin, he should have done this. Much like not wearing a seat belt because you assume to be so holy that the Malach Hamavet (angel of death) will not be able to take you. We do not tempt him. The Angel of death kills indiscriminately. For this reason, when the Jews were in Egypt, they had to remain within their homes, marked by the Passover blood, as death passed through Egypt, killing all first born.]

And I said to him, "I was afraid that passersby might interrupt me." And he said to me, "you should have prayed the shortened prayer." [Since he was afraid, he should have prayed a shorter version. Rashi points out that this shortened prayer is the "vahavineinu," which is a shorter version of the Amida (Shemoneh Esrei). **At that time I learned from him three things. I learned that one should not enter a ruin [because of danger], and I learned that one may pray on the road [as a last resort], and I learned that when one prays while on the road, one should pray the shorter version.**

[There is an esoteric understanding of this dialogue, as if it is not esoteric enough! The Rishonim comment on it as follows... R' Yose wished to understand the purpose of the exile, and Hashem's ways, why He brought the Temple into ruins, and when will Moshiach arrive to rebuild it [this event took place some 60-65 years after the destruction of the second Temple]. He delved so deeply on the subject that Elijah appeared to him and asked him, "why do you delve so deeply on this issue, do you question the ways of Hashem? To which R' Yose answered, "NO, I only wish for a quick end to the exile." Elijah answered him, "You should have prayed on the road - you should have prayed in the exile, for the Jews in exile - this is where your

energy is needed.” R’ Yose answered, “I was afraid of the passersby, that they would interrupt me - I am afraid for the other nations of the world, they constantly persecute us and make our journeys through the exile unbearable.” Elijah answered him, “You should have prayed the short prayer -being in the exile does not call for deep contemplation all day, but rather it calls for labour, and other tasks. You should therefore keep prayer short but with much kavanah, and action abundant.”]

And Elijah said to me, “My son, what sound did you hear in the ruin?” And I said to him, “I heard a heavenly voice that was cooing like a dove.” [This voice is referred to in Scripture as a Bas Kol, lit. a daughter of a voice. It does not represent an actual voice, but rather a gentle echo. It is a state of prophecy, and deep contemplation. The term bas kol is elaborated upon in the Zohar. It is, in short, the sweet cooing of the birth of Israel. We will not go into it more, due to it’s complexity and depth.] [The Bas Kol] **said, “woe to the sons because of whose sins I have destroyed My house, and burned My temple, and exiled them among the nations.” And Elijah said to me, “By your life and the life of your head it is not only at this moment that it says this, but on each and every day it says this three times, and not only this, but at the time that Israel enter the houses of prayer and of study and respond [to the Kaddish prayer] “May His great Name be blessed.” The Holy One, Blessed is He, shakes His head and says, “Fortunate is the King who is praised this way in His house, What is there for a Father who has exiled His sons, and woe to the sons who have been exiled from their Father’s table.”** [Hashem is in anguish, so to speak, at the fact that He has to pay measure for measure to the children of Israel. Their acts brought down upon the world the destruction of the Temple, and their teshuvah is greatly awaited.]