

Kindly take a moment to study MISHNAS CHAYIM in the merit of  
Fraida *bas* Avrohom A”H  
a fellow Jew who passed away with no relatives to arrange Torah study on behalf of her *neshamah*.

## Rebuilding the Beis HaMikdash

The bad news is that the world is in a much worse state than people realize. The good news is that there is something practical that can be done about it. Right now.

The Mishnah in Avos (1:2) tells us about the world’s foundation.

“The world rests on three pillars: Torah, Temple service, and acts of kindness.”

Of course, following the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash, and the absence of sacrificial offerings, the pillar of Temple service no longer exists. That would seem to leave us with the two pillars: Torah and kindness.

The Vilna Gaon, however, tells us otherwise. The scope of the *churban* was much more far-reaching than we may have assumed. Commenting on the state of affairs of the *churban* and its aftermath, the prophet Yirmiyahu proclaims (*Eichah* 2:9): “Her king and officers are scattered amongst the nations; Torah is no longer”. Of course, the Torah is eternal, and continues to exist, as does our obligation to its study and fulfillment; that did not change with the *churban*. However, our ability to connect with and understand the Torah was affected. We have become so distanced from the Torah that the situation is considered to be one wherein ‘there is no Torah’. (The many unresolved questions and issues we have today is but one small manifestation of this arrangement.)

And so, in reality, the world is left standing on only one leg. Understanding the precise spiritual ramifications of this state of affairs is well beyond our limited grasp. One thing is clear, however: it is not good.

Yet here, there is something that we — even individually — can do about it. Certain fundamental principles hold the key to rectifying the situation. Let us examine them.

### Why You Were Born

Although it is incumbent on everyone to learn the entire Torah, there is also a real individualized element regarding Torah study. That is, Hashem has granted each and every *Yid* his own *cheilek* (portion) in Torah, one that is inextricably bound up with his individual soul. This portion in Torah is something that only he can uncover and attain.

Achieving one’s *cheilek* in Torah is no insignificant mission. The Chofetz Chaim explains that this is the main reason an individual is dispatched to this earth: to discover, through life-long efforts of toiling in Torah-study, one’s personal *cheilek* in Torah. (*Derech Eitz Chaim*, p. 556) The very length of a person’s life is determined on this

basis. Hashem provides each individual with the exact amount of days he will need to uncover and fully acquire ‘his’ *cheilek* in Torah. (*Chomas Hadas, ch. 17*)

There is yet another area, wherein a great spiritual gift, granted to the Jewish people as a whole, also contains an element of individualized portions: namely, the Beis HaMikdash itself. In a very revealing discourse, the *B’nei Yissoschor (Chodesh Tammuz-Av, 3:12)* states that every person has a personal *cheilek* in the Beis HaMikdash.

This idea is borne out by an intriguing Yerushalmi (*Yoma 1:1*), which makes a sobering declaration: “If the Beis HaMikdash is not rebuilt within a person’s lifetime, it is considered to have been *destroyed* in his lifetime.” This statement seems somewhat puzzling. There have been many great *tzaddikim* over the centuries, who did not merit to witness the rebuilding of the Beis HaMikdash. Yet, according to the simple meaning of the Yerushalmi, it appears that they were ‘guilty’, enough so to warrant a *churban* in their days.

Of course, it can not be that Rashi or the Vilna Gaon or the Chofetz Chaim were ‘sinful’ to the extent of causing a *churban* (Heaven forefend). This is really no contradiction to the Yerushalmi; in actuality, there *was* a rebuilding of the Beis HaMikdash in their days, just as there is during the lifetime of anyone who is worthy. True, the *entire* Beis HaMikdash has not yet been completed, and we await its eventual completion and descent from on High. What these *tzaddikim* did accomplish, however, was the rebuilding of *their personal shares* in the Beis HaMikdash. They are therefore not subject to the Yerushalmi’s reprimand, which referred to people who did not build even their own personal portions.

### **The Torah/Beis HaMikdash Connection**

The *B’nei Yissoschor* explains further that these two *chalakim* are intertwined. As we saw previously from the Vilna Gaon, the complete ‘emanation’ of Torah is only possible when the Beis HaMikdash is present; without the Beis HaMikdash, the ‘pillar’ of Torah is removed. This phenomenon holds true regarding an individual’s personal *cheilek* in Torah as well. And so the *B’nei Yissoschor* goes on to make a most remarkable statement regarding a familiar, daily occurrence, shared by accomplished Talmud scholar and beginner-level student alike:

Often, when a person engages in Torah study, he will come across a point that he has trouble understanding or resolving. *This occurrence is a direct result of the fact that his personal ‘Beis HaMikdash-cheilek’ has not yet been fashioned.* For had it been, he would be capable of attaining his ‘Torah-portion’.

Through repentance, feeling anguish over the *churban*, and praying for the redemption, a person makes amends for the *churban*. And by doing so, he actually rebuilds the Beis HaMikdash. Although he may not see the finished structure — for, as stated before, the entire Beis HaMikdash has yet to be rebuilt — he can at least prepare his share. And with his portion rebuilt, he can reconnect with his *cheilek* in Torah.

This idea actually forms the essence of the concluding prayer of the *Shemoneh Esrei* (referred to earlier). In the full text, we precede our request for the granting of our *cheilek* in Torah with a plea for the rebuilding of the Beis HaMikdash. It is here that the Gaon (in his commentary on the *siddur*) explains the connection between Mikdash and Torah, which has been the focus of our discussion.

And so we hope and pray that the various *chalakim* of the Beis HaMikdash will all be rebuilt, until they coalesce in a single, completed entity. At that point, the Beis HaMikdash will be fully restored, and the world's three pillars will be standing tall once again.