

Behar: Shiur HaRav Soloveitchik Zt"l

- The Rav.

The special nature of the walled city, added protection for its inhabitants. What happens when the wall falls? It is still considered like a walled city for the inhabitants must look for a sense of security to Hashem. LO with an aleph and LO with a vav, in the verse *asher lo choma*, and its two possible meanings. The land is consecrated forever. Practical applications, the land is consecrated forever. Second, *kedushat mehitzot*, it is consecrated forever. For the religious Jew retains the wall of his *bitachon* in Hashem even when the actual wall is gone.

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"If a man shall sell a residence house in a walled city, its redemption can take place until the end of the year of its sale; its period of redemption shall be a year. But if it is not redeemed until its full year has elapsed, then the home that is in a city that has a wall (written "Lo" with an Aleph) shall pass in perpetuity to the one who purchased it, for his generations, it shall not go out in the Jubilee Year" (Vayikra 25:29-30).

The Gemara (Erchin 32b) says that even though the word *Lo* is written (*Kesiv*) with an Aleph (that it has no wall), there is a tradition that it is read as *Lo* with a Vav (to him) (*Keree*). The Gemara applies the concept of *Kidsha Leasid Lavo*, the land is consecrated forever.

The Rav explained that there are two practical aspects to this eternal *Kedusha*. The first is, that as far as the land itself is concerned, *Kidsha Leasid Lavo* has an impact on the obligation to separate *Terumos* and *Maasros* and *Shemita* in modern times. The second aspect is the concept of *Kedushas Mechitzos*. Does *Yerushalayim* retain its same *Kedusha* as a city that was once surrounded by walls? Does the concept of *Batay Aray Choma* (homes in a walled city that are sold) apply nowadays as well?

The Rambam (*Shemita Vyovel* 12:15) is of the opinion that we apply the concept of *Kidsha Leasid Lavo* with regards to *Kedushas Mechitzos*. Once a city was surrounded by a wall, even though the wall was subsequently destroyed, that city still retains *Kedushas Mechitzos*. The Gemara in *Erchin* derives it from the verse quoted above, based on the *Keree* and *Kesiv* of the word *Lo*.

Yerushalayim is sanctified because it was part of the greater *Mikdash*. There were 3 *Machanos*, camps surrounding the *Beis Hamikdash*. The first was *Machane Shechina* which extended from the Sanctuary inward. The second was the temple mount area itself, which was the *Machane Leviim*. The third was all *Machane Yisrael* which included the rest of the city of *Yerushalayim*. For example, the sacrifices could be eaten in the city, as the city itself was sanctified. We understand that *Yerushalayim* with its subdivisions of *Kedusha*, both within and without, was a city of *Mechitzos*, both physical and spiritual. How does *Kedushas Mechitzos* apply to other walled cities?

The Rav explained that the purpose of a wall that surrounds a city is to provide some extra

degree of protection to the inhabitants of the city. For example, the Jews that lived in walled cities in the time of Purim celebrated Purim on a different day because the walls around their city provided them with extra security above and beyond those in unprotected cities (Ramban). The extra sense of security attributed to the wall that the Jew feels translates into a degree of Kedusha. For if the Jew is secure from constant fear of harm, he is able to serve HaShem with greater freedom and tranquility.

What is the scope of this extra security? What happens if the wall around the city is destroyed? Does this now expose the people to added danger, and does the loss of security translate into a loss of Kedusha? By employing the Keree and Kesiv on the word Lo, the Torah tells us that it does not. The sense of security that the Jew must feel cannot and must not be broken, just like the sanctification cannot be rescinded because Kidsha Leasid Lavo.

The Rav mentioned that Jews feel apprehensive and insecure about the ability of Eretz Yisrael to defend itself against numerically superior armies and enemies with far greater influence around the world. Yet the Rav was always impressed by the sense of security that the religious Jew shows in the face of such adversity. The religious Jew feels that he lives in a walled city, Asher Lo (with a Vav) Choma, full of protective Kedusha, even though there is no physical wall to shield Eretz Yisrael, Asher Lo (with an Aleph) Choma. This mystical and spiritual wall protects the Jew from the surrounding hostile nations that wish to destroy him. The Kedushas Eretz Yisrael and Kedushas Am Yisrael share the common theme of Kidsha Leasid Lavo. Both are sanctified and chosen by HaShem forever.

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