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Our First Home was Gan Eden

When Adam sinned, he was banished from Gan Eden. The first home that man had was Gan Eden; we were banished from our first house, and ever since then we have had to look for a new house.

We must understand that the house which we live in really isn't where we belong. We really belong in Gan Eden – that was our desired state, had Adam not sinned.

When people look for a house, which kind of a place should a person look for? People first wonder where they will live before they decide which house to have. Now that we are not in our real home, Gan Eden, where should we live?

House Vs. Inn

When a person is traveling and he needs a place to sleep over, he finds an inn to stay in. An inn is called a *malon*, from the word *lan* – a place to sleep. But can we call a house by a *malon*, a place to sleep? A house is a house, and an inn is an inn. A house is supposed to be more than just a place to sleep.

Sometimes during the year we live outside our home. On Sukkos, we sleep in our Sukkah; it is written, "Settle there as you live." This shows us that our house is a place to live, not just a place to sleep; in the Sukkah we have to live there, not just sleep there. This is because the way we live in our Sukkah resembles how we use our house, which is a place to live – not just a place to sleep.

A wife is called one's *bayis*, his "home". Why? It is because a person lives with his wife. A home is where you live, not where you just sleep.

There is one home which doesn't have any sleep in it – the *Beis HaMikdash*. When everyone went there for the *Simchas Beis HaShoeivah*, the Sages say that no one fell asleep. This is the truest home in the world we ever had; a home in which there was no sleep, but *Shechinah*.

The main function of our home is for nighttime, when we can rest up there and then have energy to get up in the morning. Our homes today aren't really a home – they are just a place to sleep. In our true home, Gan Eden, we had a home to live in even during the day. Yet, even in today's times, we are able to have a home that resembles Gan Eden. How?

Where a person runs to when he's scared

When a person is scared, what does he do? People run to their house. A scared child runs to his mother when he is scared. Why? It is because he is running to his source. So if a person runs to his house when he's scared, he's running to what he considers his source of life. If his source of life is a place of sleep – then he is running to a place of death (sleep is a sixtieth of death).

We must realize that our home isn't really our home, but just a place to sleep. If a person considers his home to be his source of life on this world, this is a problem.

A house can either be a *beis malon* – an inn – or it can be a *Beis HaMikdash*. A house which is merely a place to sleep is a house that has no life in it; when we run to it when we're scared, we're saying that it's our source of life. But if our home has more life to it, it can be to us like a *Beis HaMikdash*.

Really, there is a more inner way to escape our fears.

Yaakov ran away from Lavan, and this is how our nation came about. Why? Because he ran away to his source of life – to Hashem. We all run away from our fears, but we have to know where the right place to run to.

All of us go through hardships; we all go through fearful experiences. Where do we run to? Wherever we run to shows where we get our life from. If a person derives his vitality in life from spirituality and from *pnimiyus*, he runs to Hashem when he's afraid. But if a person runs away to his house, or to people – that shows that he gets his vitality from his house, or from people. The place where we run to when we're afraid shows where we derive our vitality from.

How our house can become a house of life

A true house is a house which has life to it. We are no longer in Gan Eden, so there is no home which has life in it. But if a person runs to Hashem when he's afraid, his house can become transformed into a house full of life. It is only when a person doesn't derive vitality from Hashem that his house lacks life to it and it's a place of death; when he runs to it when he's afraid and he has problems, his house doesn't solve the problem, because it's a place of death. It has no life to it.

When the *Shechinah* is in one's home, such a house is a house that has life to it. When a person has a problem, he can then run to his house, because the *Shechinah* is there. But that is only when one has the *Shechinah* in his home – when he doesn't have his house for himself, but for Hashem, like a mini *Beis HaMikdash*.

Our problems and fears can actually bring us closer to Hashem. When we feel scared, we can run to Hashem – which will solve our problems. When a person was scared in the times of the *Beis HaMikdash*, where did he run to? He ran to the *Beis HaMikdash* to go daven, which was a place of Tefillah. He didn't just run there because it was a place of Tefillah, but because that's where he derived his life from. When we're scared, we shouldn't just run to daven; the point is that we are running to where we feel we derive our vitality from.

Every person, no matter what kind of problem is, should get used to running away to Hashem from his fears. If a person always runs to Hashem when he's afraid, his fears serve as a catalyst to become close to Hashem.

May we be *zoche* to have the *Shechinah* in our homes.

Source: <https://bilvavi.net/english/droshos-house-or-hotel>