

# PARSHA CORNER



## PARSHAS PINCHOS - THE 3 WEEKS

It was Monday, March 16, 2020 — just a few days after Shushan Purim.

Rumors about COVID-19 had begun to swirl, and uncertainty crept into our community in Queens. Some bochurim, out of caution, chose to stay home. I, still skeptical and uninformed, continued going to Yeshivah as usual.

Then came the first sign:

“If you’re feeling unwell or have the sniffles, please stay home.”

It felt serious, but still manageable.

Then, as I sat learning in the Beis Medrash with my friend R’ Kalman Mandel, someone rushed in and told us, “They just posted a sign — the Yeshivah is closing until further notice.”

My heart dropped.

The Yeshivah is closing?

What now? Where will we daven, where will we learn, how will we grow?

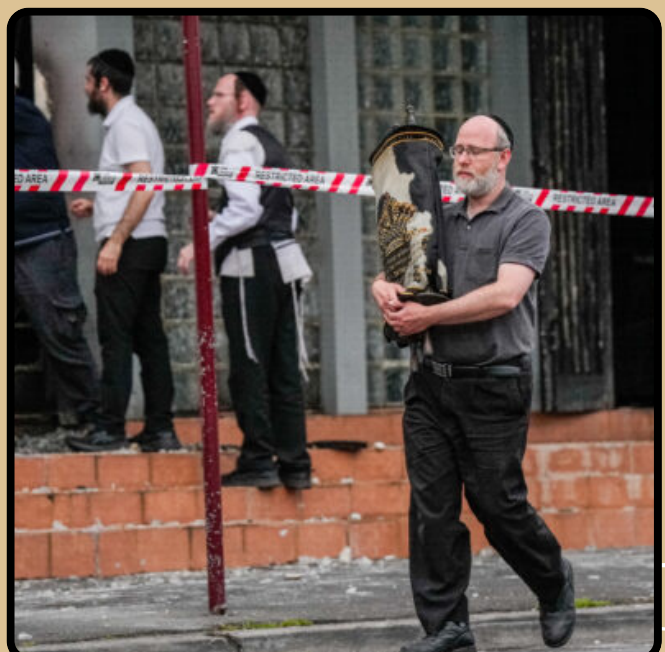
It was shocking, painful, and surreal. In that moment, it felt like a part of our connection to Hashem had been cut off.

Looking back, I realize that experience gave me a small glimpse into what it must have felt like when the Korban Tamid was stopped — the first national sign of the Beis HaMikdash’s destruction. The daily service that represented our constant relationship with Hashem had ceased. That feeling of spiritual disruption, of distance, of uncertainty — I had tasted it.

And truthfully, it’s hard for us to fully imagine the devastation of the Churban. But we can begin to tap into it through moments like this — when avenues to connect with Hashem are suddenly blocked. The passing of a tzaddik, a fire in a shul, efforts to ban bris milah in places like Belgium, or Jews feeling the need to hide their identity — these are all closures of spiritual pathways. They shake us. And when they do, we can stop and think: “If this hurts so much, how much more devastating was it to lose the Beis HaMikdash — the place where Hashem’s Presence rested?” Through these comparisons and moments of reflection, we begin to feel what we’re truly mourning during the Three Weeks — not just the loss of a building, but the loss of daily, open connection with Hashem.

Have a wonderful Shabbos!

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**REMOVING THE SEFER TORAH FROM THE RECENT ARSON  
ATTACK IN THE MELBOURNE SHUL**