

אני לדודי ודודי לי

הַשְּׁבַעְתִּי אֶתְכֶם בְּנוֹת יְרוּשָׁלַם אִם-תִּמְצְאוּ אֶת-דּוֹדֵי מֵהַתְּגִידוּ לִי שְׁחֹלַת אֶהְבֵּה אֲנִי:

(שיר השירים ה:ח)

***I adjure you O daughters of Jerusalem**—[You] heathens, Nebuchadnezzar’s men, who saw Chananiah, Mishael and Azariah submitting themselves to the fiery furnace, and Daniel to the lions’ den because of prayer, and Mordechai’s generation in the days of Haman—**if you find my beloved**—in the future, on judgment day, for He will request you to testify about me, as it is stated (Yeshaya 43:9): Let them present their witnesses, that they may be deemed just, **what will you tell him**—you will testify on my behalf—**that I am lovesick**—that because of love for Him, I suffered harsh tortures among you. Let Nebuchadnezzar come and testify... let Eliphaz and Zophar and all the prophets of the heathens [come] and testify about me that I fulfilled the Torah. (Shir HaShirim 5:8)*

Why is it fitting for the heathens to testify as to the reason we suffered from them? Additionally, how would they know if the mitzvos we did that led to their persecutions was out of love for Hashem, perhaps it was out of fear of Him?

Perhaps we can suggest that what we ask the heathens to testify to is not the reason we observed the mitzvos despite their decrees against them which led to our suffering. Rather, it is to testify what they saw in us, which was the real reason behind their persecutions. The Gemara says that the reason Har Sinai is called “Sinai” is because it was there that hate descended to the world. Some commentators (see *Iyun Yakov*) explain this as referring to the hate the heathens have for the Jews due to their jealousy of us for receiving the Torah. The heathens will testify that what had caused them to persecute us throughout the generations, those generations that fall short in their observance of mitzvos, was their jealousy of the infinite love held between us and our Father in heaven. That love that can never be fully hidden—even when it looks depleted—is so enviable as to cause the greatest hatred known to mankind—the eternal hatred of the Jew.

