



The *cheruvim* in the *Beis Hamikdash* were shaped in the form of a boy and a girl facing each other symbolizing Hashem's loving relationship with *Klal Yisroel* which is compared to the relationship of a husband and wife. The *Gemara* (*Bava Basra* 99a) tells us that, when the *Beis Hamikdash* still stood, when *Klal Yisroel* would do the will of Hashem, the *cheruvim* would face each other and when they did not, the *cheruvim* turned their backs to each other.

The *Rishonim* ask: If when *Klal Yisroel* wasn't fulfilling the will of Hashem the *cheruvim* would turn away from each other then why, at the time of the destruction of the *Beis Hamikdash*, does the *Gemara* (*Yoma* 55a) state: *When the gentiles entered the Sanctuary they saw the cheruvim clinging to one another.*”?

Perhaps we can suggest an explanation based upon an understanding of why Hashem would make the *cheruvim* turn away from each other when *Klal Yisroel* weren't doing His will. The simple understanding of this phenomenon is that at such times Hashem's love for us is compromised. However, we know that Hashem's infinite love for *Klal Yisroel* remains intact despite our sins. Perhaps we can suggest another explanation.

The *pasuk* (*Shir HaShirim* 6:5) says: **“Turn your eyes away from me for they have made me haughty.”** *Rashi* explains: “Like a young man whose betrothed is dear and pleasing to him, and her eyes are comely, and he says to her, ‘Turn away your eyes from me, for when I see you, my heart becomes haughty and proud, and my spirit becomes arrogant, and I cannot resist.’ The Holy One, Blessed Is He, said, ‘In this *Beis Hamikdash*, it is impossible to restore to you the Ark, the Ark cover, and the *cheruvim*, which excessively endeared you to Me in the first *Beis Hamikdash*, to show you great affection, until you betrayed Me.’”

If the *cheruvim* indeed cause excessive endearment of *Klal Yisroel* to Hashem that can lead to our betrayal of Him, perhaps Hashem would turn the *cheruvim* away from each other in order to lessen the danger of His excessive endearment leading to our rebellion against Him. If this is indeed the case, it is understood why once we had rebelled and the *Beis Hamikdash* was destroyed there was no longer any reason for the *cheruvim* to be turned away from each other. For although we had sinned gravely His love for us was of course, still in its infinite intensity.

