

## How Does a Mi Shepara Work as a Deterrent?

### **Rav Eliezer Cohen**

**Question:** It seems interesting that Chazal voided cash as a *kinyan* but created a special curse to discourage someone from backing out of the deal. What is the rationale behind the efficacy of this curse and why does it mention the *dor hamabul* specifically?

**Answer:** The connection between not keeping one's word in a business transaction and the *dor hamabul* does seem strange and warrants an explanation.

The Aruch Hashulchan explains that people who back out of their commitments and break their promises are dishonest people. The only thing that would motivate such people to keep their word would be a threat of losing money. Thus, Chazal placed a curse on them that guarantees that, just like the *dor hamabul* was punished in this world, so too, this will affect their business dealings in this world.

Since this type of person is motivated by the desire to make money at all costs, Chazal instituted a curse that affirms that one who doesn't stick to his word after making such a firm commitment will not benefit at all from it; rather, he will only stand to lose in every way. A businessman who hears this curse will understand that it is not worth it for him to break his word. Even if he is motivated by greed, his desire to succeed will lead him to avoid such behavior.