

## Achieving New Levels of Effort

*Based on the weekly Shmuess given by HaRav Shaya Cohen, Rosh HaYeshiva, Yeshiva Zichron Aryeh*

לעילוי נשמת גיטל בת הרב אליעזר מנח | הרב יוסף חיים בן מאיר | רפאל חיים דוב בן בן-ציון שלום | ר' ברוך בן ר' יהודה | שרה בת ר' יחזקאל | ראובן יוסף בן יהושע | דב בעריש בן פסח צבי  
לרפואה שלמה יוסף בן מלכה מטל | יעקב אליעזר בן חנה נשא

In this week's Parsha, Yaakov requests that Yosef not bury him in Mitzrayim. He should rather bury him in Eretz Canaan. The Ralbag derives from here: "The first benefit is in Middos. It is appropriate for a person to act fast to pursue that which he needs before he needs it. For if he delays until he needs it, he may not find it then, or he may only be able to address his needs in a deficient manner. It is for this reason that Yaakov dealt with his burial before he was sick."

The Ralbag is imparting to us an important insight into the Middah of Zerizus. In the above situation, Yaakov was not sick, and there was at that time no need. However, if he would have waited to speak to Yosef until he got sick, there would have been a deficiency in the Middah of Zerizus. By not acting right away, it's possible he would've lost the opportunity altogether, or he may not have been able to meet his needs in the best way possible. Therefore, the Middah of Zerizus dictates that a person must plan ahead of time and prepare to meet his future needs before they actually arise.

The Ralbag teaches an additional insight into Middos from Yaakov's interaction with his children at the end of his life. Yaakov summons his children and tells them what will happen at the end of days. The Ralbag says, "We learn from here a benefit in Middos. It is appropriate for a person to benefit his children as much as possible before

he dies. This is why we find that when Yaakov realized he was dying he informed his children what would happen at the end of days. This was so that they would receive the benefit of being able to put in effort to prevent the bad from happening, and to bring the good in the best way."

It seems from the Ralbag that merely giving his children direction in how to live their lives, and giving them the knowledge of good and bad was not enough. They needed to see the end result, and where all their actions were leading. Only through seeing the end goal could they fully maximize the formula to get there.

This idea is similar to a lesson that Rav Henoch Lebowitz, ZT"l derived from the Mesillas Yesharim. The Mesillas Yesharim provides us with a step by step process on how to achieve Shleimus. However, the Sefer begins with discussing the end goal, that of deriving the ultimate pleasure from Hashem. Rav Lebowitz asked, "Shouldn't this chapter be at the end not in the beginning?" He answered similarly to what we stated above, that without knowing the end goal one cannot properly follow the formula.

These two ideas will allow us to achieve new levels of success, through refining our Middah of Zerizus, of planning ahead so we don't lose any opportunity, and of knowing the end goal which will enable us to put in the proper effort in everything that we do.



## Shir HaShirim Insights

*In loving memory of Mr. Marvin Halpern*

*“Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth, for your love is better to me more than any wine banquet and more than any pleasure and joy.” This figure of speech was used because He gave them His Torah and spoke to them face to face, and that love is still more pleasant to them than any pleasure, and they are assured by Him that He will appear to them to explain to them the secret of its reasons and its hidden mysteries, and they entreat Him to fulfill His word, and this is the meaning of “Let Him kiss me with the kisses of His mouth.” (Shir HaShirim 1:2 with Rashi)*

I thought it would be appropriate to excerpt a piece I came across from an essay by non-religious writer, Elad Nehorai, titled: *I’ve Never Met A Happy Jew*:

*“...I’ve been trying to figure out exactly why it is that I’m convinced that I wouldn’t be happy in Vermont, or anywhere, or any time.*

*And I think I finally figured it out: it’s because I’m a Jew.*

*Why do I think this?*

*Simple: every other Jew I’ve met is the same.*

*When I was growing up in secular Highland Park, Illinois, that’s something like 120% Jewish, no one was happy. I mean, they had happy moments. But they were all trying to achieve something. Or fix something. The high school kids were dying to get into good schools. And I don’t mean in the normal way, but in some sort of pathologically insane way, a way that made the entire school’s energy be focused on that goal.*

*The adults, they were always trying to reach higher, you could see it. It was one of those upper-middle-class Jewish places. Everyone was trying to reach the “top”. I’m sure they all still are, G-d bless ‘em...*

*...Perhaps the reason orthodox Jews are less depressed is because they wouldn’t touch a psychologist with a ten-foot pole, but perhaps it’s also because the structure of religion makes it slightly easier for them to find the meaning that every Jew is dying within to experience and live out...”*

He wonders... but to us it’s clear that he will never find anything in his mundane world that can compare with the infinite pleasure he “got used to” at Sinai!



## ELIEZER INSTITUTE Emunah Highlights

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*I am Hashem your G-d who brought you up from Egypt, open wide your mouth - to ask of Me all your heart’s desires, and I will fill it - as much as you ask, I will fulfill.  
(Tehillim 81 with Rashi)*

This begs the question: Why do we not always see Hashem fulfilling our tefillos?

Perhaps a second look at the pasuk provides us an answer. Hashem compares our asking of Him and His commitment to fulfill our requests as our opening our mouth wide and his filling it. When one gets ready to eat, he doesn't open his mouth wide until he is actually holding the food in front of him ready to eat. If we ask of Hashem in the same fashion, as if we see the fulfillment of our request as much an immediate certainty as eating the food before us as we open our mouth to fill it, then we can truly be assured that He won't let us down.

But how do we develop such a feeling of trust in Hashem's salvation?

This is explained in the first half of our Pasuk: ***I am Hashem your G-d who took you out from Mitzrayim.*** The Medrash Agadah in the beginning of this week’s Parsha quotes our opening Pasuk interpreting it as follows: ***Just as I saved you from Mitzrayim, so to I will save you from every calamity that may befall you.***

Hashem is telling us: You’re worried how you’re going to get a business deal through, remember who you have on your side worrying about you, your Father, who took you and millions of others from Mitzrayim, with all the accompanying miracles showing my complete control over the laws of nature. Just as I saved you from Mitzrayim, I will save you now. However, Chazal say that Klal Yisroel merited redemption in the merit of the righteous women who, even while in slavery, prepared musical instruments to celebrate their redemption displaying their undying bitachon in Hashem's ultimate salvation. “If you trust in me as they did, you too will be saved!”