

Pursuit of Purpose

INSPIRING A LIFE OF MEANING AND CONNECTION

Transforming Tefillah into a Real Conversation with Hashem

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

לעילוי נשמת גיטל בת הרב אליעזר מנוח | 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, the Pasuk states that Hashem told Moshe and Aharon to command Klal Yisrael regarding Parshas HaChodesh. The Medrash Tanchuma says, "Why was Aharon included here? Hashem wanted to give this Parsha just to Moshe. Rabbi Yitzchak explains how this came about, the defender entered in front of Hashem and said, 'Master of the universe, Moshe and Aharon did all the miracles together, and You want to only give this Parsha to Moshe?' Hashem answered him, 'You said well and I will give this Parsha through both of them.'"

Upon initial analysis Hashem's acquiescing to the angel's defense seems perplexing. The angel was not telling Hashem anything He didn't know, and it is definitely irrational to propose that the angel was merely refocusing Hashem on something which He was not focused on.

We can glean from this Medrash a fascinating insight into how Hashem responds to requests that we can apply to our relationship with Hashem, specifically in Tefillah. It seems that although the defense angel did not share anything with Hashem that He didn't already know, it was the offering of the counter argument itself that was able to change the way Hashem dealt with it. Hashem is sharing with us that if you want to evoke a response from Him, it is the feeling that

you're experiencing that it is unfair and the request that you make that generates a response. This is despite the fact that the accusation is baseless and was already rejected as a reason to include Aharon.

This idea can be extrapolated to Tefillah as another way in which we can use to get our Tefillos answered. The Gemara says that Tefillah needs constant Chizuk and by viewing the process of Tefillah as a time to present the other side, and share our true feelings that we think something is unfair or too much, can help us improve our Kavanah and the effectiveness of our Tefillos. It will also enhance our relationship with Hashem through viewing Tefillah as a real conversation with Hashem. Knowing that it is our request itself that is cared about can make all the difference in our Tefillos.

This idea is similar to the approach that Yaakov took when he said - Hashem Who said "enough" to the world expanding should say "enough" to my suffering. It is also similar to our request for Moshiach in Shemonei Esrei where we say, "Because we wait for your salvation all day." In both of these examples we are not coming to Hashem saying we deserve anything, rather we are expressing our true feelings to Hashem, as we would to any good friend.



Shir HaShirim Insights

In loving memory of Mr. Marvin Halpern

A depiction of a slave nation being lifted from the depths of despair through boundless kindness unfolds in this week's Parsha. The contrasting perspective of Hashem on this scene is evident in the words of Yirmiyahu (2:2): "Go and call out in the ears of Jerusalem, saying: so said Hashem: 'I remember to you the lovingkindness of your youth, the love of your nuptials, your following Me in the desert, in a land not sown.'"

The Chid"ra (Chomas Anach), citing Mahar"i Kohen z"l, elucidates this further:

"According to halacha, a husband cannot compel his wife to go with him to a place of danger or where there is no food. Remarkably, Hashem, in His humility, considers Klal Yisroel's willingness to follow Him to a dangerous and barren place, such as the desert, as a credit and even refers to it as an act of kindness."

Despite Hashem liberating Klal Yisroel from Mitzrayim, where they were subject to constant torture and murder at the whim of every Egyptian, and leading them with the Ananei HaKavod, ensuring their every need day and night, He regards it as if they did Him a favor by following Him. He doesn't see them merely as freed slaves but as His beloved wife, who, according to halacha, is not obligated to follow Him into a place of danger. The sweetness of His perspective is unparalleled!



ELIEZER INSTITUTE Emunah Highlights

A Westwood Realty Initiative

"Why do I need to continually delve into the concept of bitachon when I already wholeheartedly believe that Hashem exclusively runs everything?"

The essence of Emunah, rooted in the word "uman" (professional), involves self-training, as stated in Tanya 1:42 where one "meamein" (trains) oneself. Merely witnessing extraordinary miracles isn't sufficient without consistent habituation to the principles of bitachon. This understanding is emphasized by Rabbeinu Bachaya's words in Shemos 13:17.

"Know that all that happened to Klal Yisroel in the desert was so that they be raised gradually to a level of trust and faith in G-d so that they would be ready to receive the Torah. This is why G-d parted the waters of the Yam Suf only a little at a time. This is why even at Marah where G-d had showed Moses how to make sweet water which had become bitter sweet again, G-d went to the trouble of first miraculously making that water bitter and then performing a second miracle all in order to teach the Israelites a lesson in faith. G-d followed the same principle when making a daily miracle in raining down manna from the heaven instead of a portion that would last for many days."

It becomes evident that singular miraculous events, such as the splitting of the sea or the monthly arrival of manna, would not be enough. Hashem chose to perform them in a manner that would daily train us in the Middah of bitachon.

Merely acknowledging the truth is insufficient; it requires constant reinforcement by incorporating it into our focus throughout each day of our lives.