

Pursuit of Purpose

INSPIRING A LIFE OF MEANING AND CONNECTION

פרשת
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Say Goodbye To Stress and Hello To Serenity and Peace

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

לעילוי נשמת גיטל בת הרב אליעזר מנחם | 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

As we continue to read the Parshios that discuss Yetzias Mitzrayim, encountering miracles that demonstrate Hashem's complete control over His creation, our Emunah begins to expand and deepen. As the Ramban (Shemos 13:16) says, "From the revealed miracles experienced in Mitzrayim a person will admit to the hidden miracles, which are the foundation of the whole Torah. For a person does not have a portion in the Torah of Moshe Rabbeinu until he believes everything that happens is all miracles, and there is no nature and way of the world." Besides this deepening of Emunah, based on an insight from the Chovos Halevavos, we can use our encounter with Yetzias Mitzrayim to deepen our Bitachon as well.

The Chovos Halevavos writes (Shaar Habitachon, Chapter 1), "The essence of Bitachon is the tranquility of the one who is trusting, and that he is relying on the One he is trusting, in that He will do what is good and proper for him in that matter that he is trusting in Him, according to His ability and knowledge of how to take care of the good." The Chovos Halevavos writes further, in Chapter 2, "When a person knows that his friend is compassionate and caring to him he will trust in him and feel at peace in getting anything he troubles him with."

Through a careful read of the Chovos Halevavos, it seems that there is a stage of tranquility and peace experienced by the one who is trusting even without being confident that

he will get what he wants. As the Chovos Halevavos writes, "The essence of Bitachon is the tranquility of the one who is trusting," and only then does he write that his heart is relying on the one he is trusting on that he will do what is best for him. We would have thought that the opposite is true, that the feeling of peace is a result of being confident that Hashem will help me, as the Chovos Halevavos writes clearly in Chapter 2.

We can learn from here a powerful insight into trust. It seems that just knowing that the one who is taking care of me, and I am trusting in, is all-powerful, loving and kind, even without any feeling that he will fulfill my personal wishes, has the ability to cause peace of mind. Granted there is a higher level of peace created when one has confidence that his wishes will be fulfilled as we see in Chapter 2, however, this first lower level exists.

We live in a society plagued by stress and anxiety. These emotions can have devastating ramifications on our mental and physical state. Bitachon is the antidote to this malady, and even if one cannot muster the strength to reach a level of confidence in Hashem that his request will be fulfilled, he can still experience emotional peace. By focusing on the Chesed Hashem clearly seen through Yetzias Mitzrayim, and Hashem's Hashgacha Pratis, this mere knowledge alone can be the calm in the storm of life.



Shir HaShirim Insights

In loving memory of Mr. Marvin Halpern

My beloved is mine, He demanded all His needs from me; He commanded only me: Make a Passover sacrifice, sanctify the firstborn, make a Mikdash, sacrifice burnt offerings, and He did not demand these things of any other nation. **And I am His, (Shir HaShirim 2:16 with Rashi)**

I never saw a couple as close to each other as my Grandma and Grandpa. Their many years together, through tragedy as well as happy times, had seemingly fused them into one being. They lived for each other. Each knew no greater joy than the other's happiness and felt no greater sorrow than the other's sadness. I had come that day just for a visit and found Grandpa in bed under the weather. We had been talking for some time when he suddenly called out, "Rachel! I could really use a drink of cold water if you don't mind." Grandma was shortly at his side, breathing heavily from climbing the stairs, with two cups of cold water and a warm smile on her face. When she left I asked Grandpa, "Why didn't you just ask me to get the water?" Grandpa turned to me with a smile, "How can I do that to Grandma, she lives to take care of me, just as I live for her. I would never take that away from her, never!"

"I am to my Beloved," I live to serve him, it is my one and only wish, therefore, **"All His needs He only asks of me and of no other."** **"And my Beloved is to me,"** I dare not deny Him the pleasure of bestowing His kindness upon me for that is in fact the very reason He created the entire Universe!

Hashem's greatest desire is to benefit us, however, there are times when for our own good, to His great sorrow, He must withhold His kindness until we sincerely ask for it. We may think we're the ones who desire His salvation but in truth our salvation is His. Chazal (*Medresh Tehillim*) explain the Pasuk in Tehillim (9:15) "I will rejoice in your salvation" - that our salvation is Hashem's own salvation for when we hurt so does He. By focusing on this whenever we daven our tefillos take on a whole new meaning and bring us that much closer to true Bitachon in Hashem's salvation.



ELIEZER INSTITUTE Emunah Highlights

A Westwood Realty Initiative

I know Hashem revealed Himself three thousand years ago in front of millions of people, my own ancestors. I understand that all of Klal Yisroel bore witness to this claim, by the very life they led and gave up for this belief. Such an event cannot be falsely claimed, and this is the only possible reason why the claim has not been replicated despite the desire of thousands of religions who sought to use the greatest possible claim they could find. But how do I feel it when it happened so long ago?

A look at the following Ramban reveals to us the false premise of this question.

*Moshe asked Hashem: **When Klal Yisroel ask me what is His name** - this means when they will ask for proof of His existence and His hashgacha - **what should I tell them?** Hashem responded: **Why should they ask for this, they have no need for any other proof for I will be with them in all their troubles; they will call out to me, and I will answer them.** This is the greatest proof that there is a G-d amongst Klal Yisroel, close to us whenever we call out to him... (Ramban, Shemos 3:12)*

The *greatest proof*, in the words of the Ramban, did not occur thousands of years ago, it occurs today and every day of our lives. Why is this greater than any other proof Hashem would give Klal Yisroel? Because most decisions we make in the heart, not just the mind. In fact, the prohibition of not straying from our belief in Hashem is - You shall not go astray after your heart. Our brains can behold the greatest miracles in the world but if we do not involve our heart their effect will not last. However, when we develop a relationship with Hashem, feeling his involvement in our everyday lives, His existence is internalized in our hearts more powerfully than any miracle in the world. We just have to learn to use this gift. To sincerely call out to our Father-in-heaven and to behold and truly **feel** His loving intervention in every facet of our lives. Then our hearts will feel His revelation, as powerful as the revelation of Har Sinai, each and every day.