

Pursuit of Purpose

INSPIRING A LIFE OF MEANING AND CONNECTION

The Message Of The Mishkan

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 | לרפואה שלמה יוסף בן מלכה מטל

In Parshas Pekudei, the Pasuk (38:21) references “The Mishkan of Testimony.” The Medrash Rabbah (51:4) explains why the Mishkan is called Testimony. “Rebbi Shimon Ben Rebbi Yishmael says it is a testimony for the whole world that Klal Yisrael was forgiven (for the sin of the golden calf). Rebbi Yitzchak says, to what is this compared? To a king who took a wife and loved her too much. He got angry at her (for doing something wrong) and left her. Her neighbors said that he will never come back. After some time, he sent her a message to get the palace ready because on this day I am returning to you. Once that day came, the king came to her and reunited with her. He ate and drank with her and the neighbors did not believe it. However, when they smelled the fragrant aromas at that moment they knew the king was appeased to her. So too, Hashem loved Klal Yisrael, He brought them to Har Sinai, gave them the Torah, and called them a ‘nation of priests’... After forty days they sinned. At that moment the nations of the world said Hashem no longer wants Klal Yisrael...Then Moshe went to beg for mercy and they were immediately forgiven... Moshe said, ‘Master of the Universe, I am happy that you forgave Klal Yisrael, however, make this known to all the nations.’ Hashem responded, ‘I will rest my Shechinah among them... and through this they will recognize that I forgave them.’ Therefore, the Mishkan is called testimony, as it is testimony that Hashem forgave Klal Yisrael.”

Two insights can be derived from the above Medrash. Firstly, in the Mashal the love expressed by the king is described as a love that was beyond what was deserved. If we apply that to the love in the Nimshal, that would mean that Hashem giving Klal Yisrael the Torah was an expression of love that was beyond what was deserved. If we reflect on this, in the context of what we say everyday in רבה, אהבה רבה, we can gain a greater appreciation for the gift of the Torah. We say that

חנוכה גדולה ויתרה חמלה עלינו was shown to us. The Meforshim explain that this refers to the compassion that we were shown because of the extreme suffering we endured in Egypt. Then we say *בעבור אבותינו שבטחו בך*, because our forefathers that trusted in You we received the Torah. The Meforshim explain that this refers either to Klal Yisrael’s trust of following Hashem into the desert, or their saying *נעשה ונשמע*. Based on this, why is Hashem’s giving us the Torah an expression of love beyond what was deserved? We suffered so much in Egypt, and in addition, we have the merit of trusting in Hashem. It would seem that the love is appropriate! We can derive from here that it must be that the value of Torah is a gift that goes beyond any merit or compassion, due to its greatness.

A second insight in regards to leadership can be extrapolated from the above Medrash. Hashem left Klal Yisrael, but Moshe, through begging for mercy, reinstated that relationship. However, Moshe was not satisfied with this, as he asked Hashem to make this known to all the nations. Why did Moshe feel the need to go so far? This question can also be asked in the Mashal. If the king comes back and he is in my house, who cares if the neighbors know!? We see from here that even though a leader’s accomplishments go so far as to reinstating the relationship between Hashem and Klal Yisrael, a leader has to still be concerned for any embarrassment that Klal Yisrael may feel. This is despite the fact that this embarrassment is so insignificant compared to all that was accomplished. We can learn from here that anyone in a leadership position has to be concerned for every detail of his constituents. A leader has to know that no matter how much he accomplished, he still needs to be attentive to every detail no matter how small and seemingly insignificant it may be.



Shir HaShirim Insights

In loving memory of Mr. Marvin Halpern

Ah, you are fair, my darling, ah, you are fair, your eyes are like doves. Your hues, appearance and characteristics are like those of a dove, which cleaves to its mate, and when they slaughter it, it does not struggle but stretches forth its neck; so have you given your shoulder to bear My yoke and My fear. (Shir HaShirim 4:1 with Rashi)

On one occasion, the wicked empire of Rome issued a decree against the Jewish people that, as punishment, they would pierce the brain of anyone who dons tefillin on his head. Nevertheless, Elisha would don them and defiantly go out to the marketplace. One day, an official saw him. Elisha ran away from him, and the official ran after him. When the official reached him, Elisha removed the tefillin from his head and held them in his hand. The officer asked him: What is in your hand? Elisha said to him: It is merely a dove's wings. A miracle took place: He opened his hand, and, indeed, it was found to be a dove's wings. Therefore, they would call him Elisha, Man of Wings.

The Gemara asks: And what is different about a dove's wings, that Elisha specifically told him that he was holding the wings of a dove and he did not tell him he was holding the wings of other birds? The Gemara answers: Because the congregation of Israel is likened to a dove, as it is stated: "You shall shine as the wings of a dove covered with silver and her pinions with yellow gold." (Psalms 68:14). Just as a dove has only its wings to protect it, so too, the Jewish people have only Mitzvos to protect them. (Shabbos 130a)

Klal Yisroel is compared to many different things throughout the Torah. Perhaps a deeper understanding of why Elisha picked Klal Yisroel's comparison to a dove over any other is alluded to in the following words of the Maharam Shif on this Gemarah: *The Gemara explained that Elisha referred to a dove because that is what Klal Yisroel is called in the Torah, and the reason why they are called such is explained in the Medrash, "Just like a dove stretches out its neck to be slaughtered etc."*

It seems that in this reason of the Medrash lies the answer to why Elisha referenced specifically this comparison of Klal Yisroel to a dove as opposed to others, being that he had just risked his life to fulfill the mitzvah of tefillin.



ELIEZER INSTITUTE Emunah Highlights

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How does Bitachon work? Is it through the merit of the Mitzvah of Bitachon or simply out of Hashem's mercy?

The classical understanding of Bitachon is that it works through Hashem's mercy, however, we find in the following Chazal (Medrash Tehillim 40:1) that Bitachon works through its own merit as well: *And they will say on that day: Behold this is our G-d who we have awaited for, we awaited Him and He saved us! Even if Klal Yisroel only have the merit of awaiting Hashem's salvation they are worthy to be redeemed in the merit of awaiting.* (This does not mean we trust in our merits, rather, we trust in Hashem's kindness and the merit of that is enough to cause Hashem to grant us our request.)

However, we find a third way Bitachon works in the words of the *Sefer Ha'ikarim* (4:46):

Why do You hide Your face, forget - even if You forget - our affliction and distress? Our soul is bowed down to the dust, and our belly cleaves unto the earth, - when we are in the lowest stage of poverty and lowliness - Arise and help us, - not for our own sake but, - for Your kindness's sake - for kindness extends to those who trust in Hashem, as the Torah says: "But he that trusts in Hashem, kindness surrounds him." Even if he is not worthy for his own sake, trust has the effect of extending kindness to those who trust in Hashem. (Tehillim 44:25-27 with commentary of Sefer Ha'ikarim) From these words, "Even if Hashem forgets our affliction and distress ... Arise and help us for kindness extends to those who trust in Hashem," we see that even not through Hashem's mercy and love for us Bitachon has the automatic effect of extending Hashem's kindness to he who trusts in Him!