

Pursuit of Purpose

INSPIRING A LIFE OF MEANING AND CONNECTION

Mind Over Matter

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 (11:43-45), "Do not make your soul disgusting..because I am Hashem who elevated you from the land of Egypt...and you should be holy because I am holy." The Ralbag derives the following lesson from this Pasuk, "The 13th benefit is to inform us of the reason the Torah prevented us from eating these things. These things spoil our intellectual spirit and remove its light in a manner that we won't be able to strengthen ourselves to understand the intellectual realm, which is how we achieve Shleimus. The block is due to the thickness that is created from these things to our physicality. This is why the Torah warns us, 'Do not make your soul disgusting with any creepy crawler.' We learn from here that this is a cause for us not being able to understand Hashem in a manner that He will be our G-d..."

This idea presented by the Ralbag is perplexing. Klal Yisrael has access through the Torah to the greatest Chochmah and depth, they have access through the Mesorah to the greatest minds and Daas Torah. In addition they have a Nefesh that is so lofty, that it is capable of understanding the most delicate and lofty concepts, as well as overcoming the barrier of man's physical side. With all this, why would I be incapable of understanding these concepts?

We can glean from here a fascinating insight into our nature, it seems that these insects can create such an increase in physicality, that we will now be incapable of utilizing our intellects to understand Hashem. This is despite the fact that our Nefesh is so primed and ready to understand these concepts and that we have full access to its depth through the Torah. However, the expansion of our physical side makes accessing these Kochos impossible. In addition, we won't be able to have Hashem be our G-d, as this also requires understanding that is now lacking due to the blockage created from eating insects.

This idea can be extended to other areas that cause an increase in physicality, as we can assume that it will have somewhat of the same effect. We therefore need to be so careful to protect ourselves from the exposure offered to us by the internet and other sources, as the constant engagement surely increases our physicality, thereby tampering with our intellect. This will ultimately prevent us on some level from understanding Hashem, to the extent that we will damage our ability to recognize that Hashem is Elokim.



Shir HaShirim Insights

In loving memory of Mr. Marvin Halpern

Rashi explains that the beginning of the 3rd Perek of Shir HaShirim is referring to the situation of Klal Yisrael wandering in the desert for 40 years, before entering the Eretz Yisrael. He explains that Klal Yisrael is searching for Hashem, but cannot seem to find Him. This seems very strange. That generation saw the most blatant miracles while wandering in the desert. Their daily portion of food came miraculously to their doorsteps every day, with a double portion on Friday. They were miraculously protected by the Ananei Hakavod from the heat of the day and the cold of the desert night by the Amud Aish. Their clothing never soiled over the course of the 40 years and there were so many more miracles, clearly indicating that Hashem was with them. Yet, they felt that they couldn't find Him?!

It seems, that we so crave our relationship and closeness to our Creator that no matter how close we get to Him, if we find anything lacking, it seems to us that we can't find Hashem at all. The nature of our desire for a relationship with Hashem is such that the desire is endless and we always crave to become closer and closer. When there are obstacles in that relationship, such as misdeeds, we feel that we have lost the connection completely.



ELIEZER INSTITUTE Emunah Highlights

A Westwood Realty Initiative

There Is No Quick Fix For Emunah

As Pesach approaches and we aim to deepen our Emunah, it is worthwhile to pay attention to the following Ralbag. The Pasuk states, "This is the law of the Korban Pesach, any non jew cannot eat from it." The Ralbag learns out from here, "The Korban Pesach was commanded to us for the purpose of achieving complete Emunah, and for someone who is not positioned for Shleimus, it is not appropriate for him to eat from it. It is for this reason that a Toshav and a Sachir are commanded not to eat from it because they did not enter into our Emunah."

Often when we think about the Pesach experience, all the Mitzvos intended to build Emunah, the expectation to actually view ourselves as if we left Mitzrayim, we think that this night alone has the Koach to help us build our Emunah. However we see from here that to reach Emunah Shleimah through Pesach there needs to be preparation before Pesach. We need to enter in with Emunah. Only through building our Emunah before Pesach, can we fully take advantage of everything Pesach has to offer. As we approach Pesach we should keep this thought in mind, and learn and internalize Sefarim that will strengthen our Emunah, as this will allow us to access the full benefit of the Pesach Seder.