

# Pursuit of Purpose

INSPIRING A LIFE OF MEANING AND CONNECTION

פרשת

האזינו

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## The Power of Looking Forward to Grow

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

In Parshas Vayelech (31:20-21) the Torah tells us that after Klal Yisrael will enter into Eretz Yisrael, they will drift and worship Avodah Zarah. The Pasuk (31:21) states, “Because I know their inclination that they have today, before I bring them into the land that I swore to them.” The Seforno says on this Pasuk, “They are not awaiting to enter into Eretz Yisrael to serve me, which was my intention in bringing them there. Rather, they are awaiting the opportunity to satiate their desires, and it followed from this all the bad that occurred, as it says, ‘And Yeshurun got fat, and kicked.’” The Seforno’s understanding of ‘Yeshurun got fat, and kicked’ is that - “Even those who were entrenched in the depth of Torah... acted like animals who kick the people that feed them. They turned to physical pleasures, and with this they were blocked from understanding the subtleties of wisdom... and therefore the masses abandoned Hashem.”

Reflecting on the picture of what is going on here reveals an important insight into the power of a person's original intention. The Torah tells us that bearers of the Torah will engage in physicality resulting in a deficiency in their learning, which will then result in the masses abandoning Hashem, and worshiping Avodah Zarah. On the surface it sounds like the cause of this catastrophic outcome of Klal Yisrael engaging in Avodah Zarah was all caused by their indulgence in physical pleasure. However, through

deeper analysis of the Seforno, he seems to identify the root cause not in their actual indulgence in pleasure, but in their original intention and anticipation to enter the land to indulge in pleasure. The catalyst was the intention, and everything followed from there. It seems that our intentions have the power to bring to fruition such negative results, even to those who are entrenched in the depths of Torah, and can even cause the masses to go after Avodah Zarah. It may be a step by step process but it all stems from our intentions and anticipation.

If inappropriate intentions can lead the way to such catastrophe, surely positive intentions and anticipation can lead to such amazing results of a person being able to accomplish his goals.

This thought can be extremely beneficial as we approach Yom Kippur, as Teshuva can be overwhelming. We are all looking for a Zechus to merit in Din, as well as a way to forge a path that will lead to real change. It seems that if we are able to develop within ourselves a real feeling of looking forward to growth and change, that will have an uncanny level of influence on causing real change. If one thinks, “I am looking forward to starting a new learning Seder this year,” or “I am excited to do more Chesed,” this intention and anticipation can carry us towards our goal. Gmar Chasima Tova.