

Pursuit of Purpose

INSPIRING A LIFE OF MEANING AND CONNECTION

פרשת

בא

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מצדיק הדין The Power of Being

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 | לרפואה שלמה יוסף בן מלכה מטל

In this week's Parsha, the Pasuk says (10:1), "And Hashem said to Moshe, go to Pharaoh because I have hardened his heart and the heart of his servants." The Chizkuni comments, "Of all the Makkos, we only find this language over here. This is because Pharaoh said, 'Hashem is righteous, and I and my nation are wicked,' and afterwards it is written, 'And he and his servants continued to sin.' It was therefore necessary to write that Hashem hardened the heart of him and his servants, so we would not be confused how it is possible for them to continue to sin after he declared Hashem is righteous."

Upon initial analysis, Chizkuni's explanation is difficult to understand. Often people have moments where they come to certain realizations, only to later retract or ignore their previous perspectives. Just because Pharaoh sincerely admitted that "Hashem is righteous and I and my nation are wicked," does not mean that this thought is permanent and can never be abandoned. Therefore, it is difficult to understand why we would be puzzled if Pharaoh and his nation continued to sin.

The answer must be that it was understood by the Chizkuni, that if a person, through his experiences and suffering, comes to the full realization that Hashem is righteous and he and his nation are wrong, then this realization is firm and concrete, and is not easily changed. This realization penetrates deeply and a person would not sin with the same type of sin. Therefore, a person who would then see them

sinning would be bewildered by their behavior. Often people endure suffering and have complaints on Hashem. If a person can come to the realization that Hashem is righteous it will serve him well in combating similar sins.

However, the Chizkuni still needs further explanation, as only Pharaoh said Hashem is righteous. We don't find his nation saying this and coming to this realization. Yet the Chizkuni implies that Pharaoh's declaration alone would cause us to be confused how the nation can continue to sin. Why would this bother us?

A powerful insight can be derived from here regarding the influence of a leader on his people. When a leader comes to the conclusion that all the suffering and challenges that he and his nation are enduring are just and fair, and he shares this with his people, that will impact his people as well. This realization will not merely be a superficial realization on the part of the people, but it will penetrate deeply, to the extent that one would be puzzled if they continued to sin!

We can glean from the above an important lesson that is very relevant to our daily lives. Everyone goes through difficulties and challenges and if a person can sincerely be מצדיק הדין, even after first questioning its fairness, he can elevate himself to a state in which he is now secure from sinning in an area which he was previously vulnerable. Additionally, a person who is מצדיק הדין can have a tremendous influence on others, especially if they are in a leadership position.



Shir HaShirim Insights

In loving memory of Mr. Marvin Halpern

“I understand from the study of Shir HaShirim that our closeness to Hashem is what Yiddishkeit is all about. This being so, why do we not see this theme play out more prominently in Halachos we observe throughout the day?”

The problem here is that we don’t fully appreciate what Chazal teach us is the meaning behind the Halachos we observe. A great example is the Mitzvah of Tefillin. Every morning we don them before davening as an action that must be taken care of before beginning to daven, but, if we would understand what we are doing our davening would be very different.

Rabbeinu Bachaya (*Kad HaKemach, Tefillin 1*) writes that the purpose of Tefillin is to etch into our hearts and minds that Hashem clings lovingly to Klal Yisroel as we see from the miracles of Yitzias Mitzrayim in the Parshiyos inside the Tefillin. He continues: *And therefore, Tefillin are called Totafos which is an expression of splendor and jewelry... like the jewelry a woman wears to beautify and glorify herself, and this is to show that we, the nation who accepted the Torah pride ourselves in Hashem, our glory. As the Pasuk (Tehillim 89:18) states: “For You are their strength in which they glory...!”*

If we would think each day before davening that our putting on Tefillin is the affirmation of how Hashem clings so lovingly to us, wouldn’t our davening in them be different?



ELIEZER INSTITUTE Emunah Highlights

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“Why must I constantly learn about Bitachon when I already believe one hundred percent that Hashem alone runs everything?”

The root of the word Emunah is training, as an “Uman” (professional) is “Meamein” (trains) himself. (*Tanya 1:42*) Even witnessing the greatest miracles in the universe will not do the trick without constant habit training in the foundations of Bitachon. We see how far this concept goes from the words of Rabbeinu Bachaya (*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 Moshe how to make sweet water which had become bittersweet 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 Jewish people 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.

We see that even the miracle of the sea splitting at one time, or Manna coming from the sky each month, would have been insufficient, instead, Hashem had to perform them in a way that would train them daily in the Middah of Bitachon.