

# Pursuit of Purpose

INSPIRING A LIFE OF MEANING AND CONNECTION

## Addressing the Questions That Are on Everyone's Minds

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 light of the current Matzav in Eretz Yisrael the common question everyone is asking is what can I do? How can I help? How can I increase Zechusim for Klal Yisrael?

In this week's Parsha the Torah says **“יום הששי”**, the Gemara in Shabbos explains what the extra **“ה”** is teaching us; “This teaches us that Hashem made a condition with creation, that if the Klal Yisrael fulfills the Torah that was given on the 6th of Sivan, the world will continue to exist, and if not I will return you to emptiness.” This Gemara really encapsulates the centrality of the Torah. The world is interwoven with the fabric of the Torah and without its acceptance and fulfillment it cannot continue to exist.

This idea is illustrated even further in the following Medrash, “Rebbi Shimon Ben Elazar says, the Pasuk says and behold it was very good. This is referring to sleep. The Medrash asks, is sleep very good! We learned wine and sleep are for the wicked, they are bad for them and the world. Rather, through a person sleeping a little bit he is able to get up and toil a lot in Torah.”

We see from this Medrash that Torah is such a prime force in creation, that the creation of sleep which leads to Limud Hatorah, causes Hashem to look at everything he created and say the greatest thing that I created is that which leads to Limud Hatorah. Sleep jumps out from all of creation as “very good” because it leads to toiling in Torah. Based on this we clearly see how powerful our learning truly is. Surely an increased commitment to learning with effort and depth is the answer to the question of what can I do.

Besides the question of what can I do, many are finding it difficult to cope with the suffering, finding themselves overwhelmed and scared. It is therefore critical that we also find ways to cope in the present Matzav. The Medrash says, “Rav Huna says, behold very good is the good Middah, and the extra Vav points to the Middah of suffering. The Medrash asks, is the Middah of suffering very good! Rather, through suffering, people go to the next world.”

We know that suffering has many benefits, through it a person comes to Teshuva. However it seems that the factor that identifies it as “very good”, is that it leads to the next world. It seems that in order for a person to cope, and appreciate suffering he needs to be able to view it as the key to Olam Haba. The Marzu gives a deeper explanation of this Medrash and says, “Even if a person learns Torah and fulfills Mitzvos, he will only merit the eternity of the next world through suffering. Suffering will humble his heart and allow the Torah to penetrate his heart.

We find a similar idea expressed by Rebbi Akiva at the funeral of his son Rebbi Shimon. Upon seeing the crowds of people he said the following, “I am comforted, and if I buried seven sons, not that a person wants to bury seven sons, however I know that he is in Olam Habah.” Rebbi Akiva is saying the pain is too difficult and I can't cope, however knowing that my son is in the next world, gives me the ability to cope.

Klal Yisrael is suffering tremendously, and hopefully the above ideas can offer us some guidance in how to approach the present Matzav.



## Shir HaShirim Insights

In loving memory of Mr. Marvin Halpern

In the Haftorah of Parshas Bereishis, Hashem demonstrates His profound love for Klal Yisroel with these words: "You belong to Me! When you encounter waters, I'll stand by your side, and the streams won't engulf you. As you tread through fire, you won't be scorched; the flames won't consume you. I am Hashem, your God, the Holy One of Yisroel, your Savior."

Nevertheless, one might wonder about the spiritual condition of Klal Yisroel when Hashem expresses such love. Are these words only relevant when they're on the elevated spiritual path expected of them, with no connection to our troubled spiritual state that we may find ourselves in today?

To understand the context, we can look at the state of Klal Yisroel at the time when Hashem spoke these words of solace. It's evident from the Pesukim just before the ones mentioned above: "Who allowed Yaakov to be despoiled and Yisroel to be plundered? It was indeed Hashem, against whom they transgressed, deviating from His ways and disregarding His teachings. Consequently, He poured out His wrath, anger, and the fury of war upon them. It raged all around them, yet they paid no heed. It burned among them, but they remained indifferent. But now, Hashem declares—He Who created you, O Yaakov, who formed you, O Yisroel: Fear not, for I will redeem you; I have chosen you by name. You belong to Me! When you encounter water, I will be with you..."

In light of this, we must acknowledge that regardless of our spiritual state or the trials we face, we are forever endeared to Him!



## ELIEZER INSTITUTE Emunah Highlights

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*"Though Reb Yaakov was quite busy preparing for his son's Pidyon HaBen which would take place later that day, the site of the anonymous guest (who was the Vilna Gaon disguised as a simple wanderer) who no one had seen lifting his head from his Seforim since he came into town, intrigued him. Seeing his eyes closed in deep concentration, Reb Yaakov took the opportunity to peek into his writings. 'The entire universe and all that will ever happen is hinted to in the Tanach,' he began to read, 'All of Tanach is hinted to in the Torah, all of the Torah is hinted to in Sefer Bereshis, all of Sefer Bereshis is hinted to in Parshas Bereshis, and all of Parshas Bereshis is hinted to in the first word of the Parsha: Bereshis.' Upon seeing this Reb Yaakov asked the Gaon, 'Where is the mitzvah of Pidyon HaBen hinted to in the word Bereshis?' The Gaon immediately responded, 'Binchah Rishon Achar Shloshim Yom Sifdeh.' (Your firstborn after thirty days redeem.)"*

Each week, we dwell upon two topics that we feel are of the utmost importance in our Avodas Hashem: Bitachon and Shir HaShirim. Being that this week's Parsha is Bereshis, if indeed we are correct about the centrality of Bitachon and Shir HaShirim one may ask: Where are these topics alluded to in our parshah?

The answer can be found in the words of the Vilna Gaon himself: "The word "Bereshis" hints to six central precepts of Avodas Hashem. "Beis" stands for Bitachon...("Reish" stands for Ratzon Hashem, "Aleph" stands for Ahavah, "Shin" stands for Shtikah, "Yud" stands for Yirah, and "Taf" stands for Torah) and "Bereshis" is also the acronym of the Pasuk (Shir HaShirim 5:2), "Let me in, My sister, My darling, My faultless dove! For my head is drenched with dew, My locks with the damp of night." (Aderes Eliyahu)