

Pursuit of Purpose

INSPIRING A LIFE OF MEANING AND CONNECTION

Growth Through Tefillah

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

If one were to ask, which one of the following scenarios would cause one to develop a closer relationship with Hashem: Hashem not answering one's Tefillos and leaving him needy, or Hashem answering one's Tefillos? The answer would seemingly be obvious. Most of us would assume that Hashem answering our Tefillos would create more Dveikus. However, it seems that the opposite is true.

The Medrash says, "Why were the matriarchs barren? Because Hashem craves the Tefillah of Tzadikim." Clearly Hashem wanted Sarah to daven continuously until she was ninety years old to reach higher levels of Dveikus with Hashem. This seems somewhat perplexing, as the alternative would have also helped Sarah achieve Dveikus. If she would have had a baby earlier she would have surely said Hallel, and had a greater appreciation for Hashem's Chesed! We see from here that higher levels of Dveikus are reached through a person feeling that they're lacking, and then receiving kindness from Hashem. When a person is missing something

he will constantly ask Hashem to fulfill his requests. This asking for one's needs has the ability to catapult a person to levels of Dveikus beyond the feeling of appreciation of actually receiving the good.

There is another insight that can be derived from this Medrash, into how much Hashem values every step of growth that we take. At eighty nine years old, Hashem still had not given Sarah a baby because He craved her Tefillah. If we think about this, it is quite enigmatic. Sarah had already reached high levels of Dveikus. At this point, the amount of growth she could have attained between eighty nine and ninety, is already within the highest level of Dveikus. Therefore one would think that when talking about her growth at this stage, you wouldn't say Hashem craves her Tefillah, as she has already achieved so much. Yet, we see this is not so, and to Hashem every single increased level of closeness to Hashem is viewed as so significant that it is referred to by Chazal, in human terms, as Hashem's "craving".



Shir HaShirim Insights

In loving memory of Mr. Marvin Halpern

We have explained, based upon the Medrash on the Pasuk in Shir HaShirim (4:9): ***“You have captivated My heart My sister, [My] bride; you have captivated My heart with one of your eyes, with one link of your necklaces,”*** that every person has two “hearts”. Even when one rebels against Hashem in the worst of ways, this is only an expression of one of his two hearts, that is, the Yetzer Harah. However, he continues to have a completely different heart, the Yetzer Tov, which remains with an unfathomable craving and total dedication to Hashem, regarding which Hashem says: You have captivated My heart... with one of your eyes...

Based upon the above we can understand the Targum on this very Pasuk:

You have captivated My heart—it is established upon the walls of my heart my love for you—***My sister, [My] bride***—the congregation of Israel whom are compared to a modest bride—***with one of your eyes***—it is established upon the walls of my heart my love for the smallest among you who is righteous as one of the heads of the Sanhedrin—***with one link of your necklaces***—and like one of the kings of the house of Yehuda upon whom the royal crown was placed upon his neck.

How can the smallest Jew be considered as righteous as one of the heads of the Sanhedrin or as one of the kings of the house of Yehuda?

Because although he may sin greatly, he does so with only one heart, however, his other heart, reflecting his true inner self, remains completely dedicated and yearning for Hashem!



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Look! Answer me! Hashem, my G-D. Enlighten my eyes lest I sleep in death, lest my enemies say, “We triumphed over him,” my tormentors will rejoice that I have fallen. And I, in Your kindness have placed my trust, my heart rejoices in Your salvation. I will sing to Hashem when He has saved me. (Tehillim 13:4-6)

The Medrash Socher Tov on the above pesukim points out that Dovid HaMelech does not say, “My heart rejoices in our salvation,” rather he says, “My heart rejoices in Your salvation.” The Medrash explains that in truth when we are saved from calamity it is as if Hashem Himself is being saved. Rav Chaim Voloziner explains, this is because whenever a Jew suffers Hashem suffers with him, as the Mishna (*Sanhedrin* 6:5, regarding a rasha suffering his due punishment) states: “When a person suffers, Hashem says: My head hurts, My arm hurts. If this is how much Hashem is pained over the blood of Reshaim that is spilled, how much more so over the blood of Tzaddikim!”

Whatever predicament one may be in he should think how much harder it would be for him if his beloved little child would be in that predicament. How much harder would it be for him to handle it?

When we daven for Hashem’s salvation we must always remember, at this exact moment Hashem is feeling more pain and wants to relieve us from our pain more than we feel and want ourselves.

This helps us feel that He will truly not let us down!