

Pursuit of Purpose

INSPIRING A LIFE OF MEANING AND CONNECTION

Trust: The Key To All Of Our Needs

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 | לרפואה שלמה יוסף בן מלכה מטל

In this week's Parsha, the Pasuk says (28:20), "Yaakov then made a promise saying, If Hashem will be with me and protect me on this journey that I am going, and gives me bread to eat and clothing to wear." The Rabbeinu Bachya comments on Yaakov's request for his basic needs as follows, "You should know, if not for the Yetzer Hara in a person that is bad from his youth, and causes a person to long for wealth and honor in this world excessively, it would not be worth it to be concerned over the lack of acquisition of luxuries, rather one should just seek his basic needs. This is because that which he needs Hashem prepares everyday, as it is written by the Manna, 'And they gathered it everyday.' The Manna was unable to be stored for a later date, and it could not even be stored for the next day. It was due to their trust in Hashem that He provided for them everyday. Our Sages already expounded that in regards to Hashem, He sustains the largest to the smallest creature, as the Pasuk says, 'He is merciful to all his creations.' It is already seen through observation that the world is run with great wisdom. Things that are more needed are more commonly found and those things less needed are not as easily found. Pearls and precious stones are less available as due to people being able to live without them. However, food which is needed is more commonly found, water which is even more needed exists in even greater quantities.....and air which a person can't live without is everywhere. We can derive from this observation that Hashem set up the world as follows: Those things that are needed more are readily found, as Hashem prepared them for his creations. Therefore, Yaakov asked for bread and clothing as they are necessities.``

Initially, it seems that the Rabbeinu Bachya is difficult to understand. Firstly, he seems to imply that the reason a person should only ask for necessities and not luxuries, is because his basic needs are more readily available. We would have expected him to say that a person should only ask for his basic needs, and not pursue luxuries because they distract a person from serving Hashem. Secondly, Rabbeinu Bachya seems to compare what Hashem did with the Manna to how he provides our basic needs. However, he then goes on to explain the system of how our needs are provided for. The greater the need the more readily it is available. What is the comparison to the Manna? By the Manna Hashem didn't provide our basic needs in abundance, so that we would rely

on Him daily, however, our basic needs were provided in excess! In addition, how does providing our needs in abundance connect to the idea of trusting in Hashem, which was mentioned by the Manna?

We can understand it as follows: Hashem wants to provide us with all our needs. However, in order to get what He wants to give us, we need trust in Him. Therefore, by the Manna He didn't let us store it, so that we would trust in Him, and through that trust we would continue to get it.

This idea is further echoed by the Chovos Halevovos in Shaar Habitachon, where he says, "If a person does not trust in Hashem, Hashem's supervision is removed from him, and he is left in the hands of the one he is trusting in." The Chovos Halevos clearly implies there that if one does not trust in Hashem he will not get it. However, not every generation is capable of trusting in Hashem when they have nothing, like the Dor Deah. As the Beis Halevi famously says, sometimes it is actually one's efforts that cause him to be able to trust. Therefore, Hashem in His great wisdom set up the world in a manner that would always allow us to trust in Him. Thus He made a world where all our basic needs are more readily available, this way it would be easy to trust in Hashem that He will provide us with these needs.

This answers both of the above questions. Since the only way we can get anything from Hashem is through trust and reliance, it is not worth it to pursue luxuries, as it is difficult to trust that Hashem will provide one with luxuries, as they are not as commonly found. Hashem's purpose in providing our needs in abundance was so that we would be able to trust in Him. This parallels the idea mentioned by the Manna, that Hashem set up a system for the Dor Deah to trust in Him to get their basic needs. Granted the system was different, however the goal was the same.

We can extrapolate from the above mentioned idea a tremendous insight that should change our world view. Everything we get in life is solely based on our Bitachon in Hashem. Even the air we breathe requires our Bitachon. Through constantly trusting in Hashem for our basic needs we will merit to even be able to have Bitachon in Hashem for luxuries. (As Rebbi Yisrael Salanter says one is able to do.)



Shir HaShirim Insights

In loving memory of Mr. Marvin Halpern

"Like a rose amongst thorns, so is my darling amongst the maidens."

(Shir HaShirim 2:2)

In the Hagadah Shel Pesach we recite: "And it is this that has stood for our ancestors and for us; that not only one has stood against us to destroy us, but rather in each generation, they stand against us to destroy us, but the Holy One, blessed be He, rescues us from their hand."

The question is asked: Where in the above paragraph do we explain what it is that has "has stood for our ancestors and for us?"

The Chofetz Chaim explains: What "has stood for our ancestors and for us," is the very fact we mention immediately after, "not only one has stood against us to destroy us, but rather in each generation, they stand against us to destroy us," for the constant persecution of the gentiles around us prevents us from joining them and thereby forsaking our religion.

Based on this we can understand the comparison of Klal Yisroel in exile as "a rose amongst thorns." For just as the thorns surrounding a rose assure its survival, by protecting it from animals, so too the persecution of the gentiles assures Klal Yisroel's survival.



ELIEZER INSTITUTE **Emunah Highlights**

A Westwood Realty Initiative

In this week's Parsha, Hashem promises Yaakov: "I am with you: I will protect you wherever you go and will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." Yaakov follows this promise by vowing: "If G-d remains with me, if He protects me on this journey that I am making, and gives me bread to eat and clothing to wear, and if I return safely to my father's house and Hashem shall be my G-d. And this stone, which I have set up as a pillar, shall be G-d's abode; and of all that You give me, I will set aside a tithe for You." (Bereishis 28:15-22)

How can Yaakov say, "If G-d remains with me, if He protects me on this journey that I am making, and gives me bread to eat and clothing to wear..." when Hashem just promised him He would do just that?

Upon Yaakov's return home the Pasuk relates, "Yaakov was greatly frightened..." The Gemara (Berachos 4a) explains that although Hashem had promised to protect him, he was worried that perhaps his sins would prevent this promise from being fulfilled. (The commentaries explain that although through bitachon he definitely would have been saved he did not want to be saved through Hashem's attribute of mercy, rather, he only wanted to be saved through Hashem's attribute of judgment, and when Hashem promises something to an individual, as opposed to a prophesy for the public, it's fulfillment can be dependent upon one's merits.)

According to the above Gemara, we understand why Hashem's promise was still not a surety, however, it is still hard to understand Yaakov's words, for if Hashem's protection was solely dependent upon his refraining from sin, what was the point of vowing that if Hashem would protect him he would set aside a tithe for Him?

The interpretation of the Targum Yonasan answers our question. "If the Word of Hashem will be my Helper, and will keep me from shedding innocent blood, and from strange worship, and from impure converse, in this way that I am going; and will give me bread..."

Indeed, Yaakov had no need to request of Hashem to protect him physically as He had promised to protect him as long as he refrained from sin, rather, Yaakov was solely asking for the spiritual protection needed to earn Hashem's physical protection.