

Insight Into Chanukah & The Promise of The Torah's Survival

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

The Ramban in Parshas Vayechi (49:10) discusses the Chashmonaim. He says, "If not for them, Torah and Mitzvos would have been forgotten from Klal Yisrael." This statement is difficult to understand as we know there is a promise from Hashem that the Torah will not be forgotten. This is stated in Parshas Vayelech (31:21), "It will not be forgotten from your children." Based on this promise even without the Chashmonaim the Torah would not have been forgotten. How can we explain this Ramban?

It must be that even though the Torah would have survived due to Hashem's intervention, since based on the natural course of things it would not have survived, the Chashmonaim are being given the credit for its survival. Their efforts for the Torah's survival are being considered both in reality and in merit as if they caused the Torah to survive. This idea is profound, as it illustrates that the Zechus that a person gets for influencing others is truly beyond our comprehension. A Rebbi, from the perspective of Hashem, may not just be credited with the merit of teaching Torah, but he may be credited with ensuring the survival of Torah.

The Rabbeinu Bachya in his commentary on the Pasuk in Vayelech explains the need for this promise. He says, "The Pasuk promises that the Torah will not be forgotten because He knows your nature, meaning Hashem knows that you will worship idols. Therefore, when you are faced with suffering this song will testify before you that the Torah will never be forgotten, and it will be a testimony forever." The Rabbeinu Bachya implies that the promise that the Torah will never be forgotten is needed to stop a person from doing Avodah Zarah. Why would this be

necessary if a person is suffering and he knows the severity of the sin? Shouldn't this be enough?

We see from here that when we engage in inappropriate behavior, and pursue a new way of life, a critical ingredient in stopping our behaviors is the knowledge that the Torah will never be forgotten. This knowledge that we can't escape it and it will always be there allows us to return to the Torah.

The Rabbeinu Bachya writes further, "It appears to me from the language of the Pasuk a hint that there will come a time that the Torah will be forgotten. This is when the Yetzer Hara will be nullified by Techias Hamesim. At that time Torah will cease." It is clear from the Rabbeinu Bachya that the entire purpose of Torah is to combat the Yetzer Harah, however once the Yetzer is gone, there will be no need for the Torah. This is mind boggling, the Torah refines a person Middos to become like Hashem, the ideas and concepts of the Torah broaden a person's mind to think like Hashem, ultimately leading to an unimaginable utopian Dveikus with Hashem. Why would the Torah be unnecessary without the Yetzer Harah?

It must be that a person really has all these Kochos and Yedios as part of his very make up. He on his own can reach unimaginable heights. However, the Yetzer Hara stifles his true self and therefore he needs the Torah to arm himself to wage war against the Yetzer Hara. We can derive two insights from here. Firstly, we see how powerful the Yetzer Hara is that the entire Torah was created to wage war against it. Secondly, we see the need to be Mechazek our Limud Hatorah as it is our only hope to face this battle which has become significantly harder in our generation.



Shir HaShirim Insights

In loving memory of Mr. Marvin Halpern

King Shlomo [throughout Shir HaShirim, this is a reference to Hashem] **made himself a canopy:** This refers to the Tent of Meeting, which was established in the Mishkan at Shiloh. He made Himself a crowning canopy for glory...

(Shir HaShirim 3:9)

Why did Hashem feel the need to make Himself a crowning canopy for glory? Why is this written in the song of songs describing the infinite love between Him and His children?

Similarly, in Shemoneh Esrei we say: And He will bring the Redeemer to their children's children for the sake of His name, with love. Can it be that our Father in Heaven Who is constantly overflowing with infinite love for us will finally send Mashiach, our redeemer, not for the sake of His 2,000 year long suffering children, but rather, for the sake of His name?

The answer lies in the end of the above sentence, for the sake of His name, with love. Hashem is perfection without the slightest need. However, He worries about His glory and the honor of His name out of love for us for the surest way to bring us to love Him, thereby meriting eternal paradise, is through the revelation of His glory. As we quoted from the Rambam:

What is the path [to attain] love and fear of Him? When a person contemplates His wondrous and great deeds and creations and appreciates His infinite wisdom that surpasses all comparison, he will immediately love, praise, and glorify [Him], yearning with tremendous desire to know [G-d's] great name, as Dovid stated: "My soul thirsts for the Lord, for the living G-d" [Tehillim 42:3]. When he [continues] to reflect on these same matters, he will immediately recoil in awe and fear, appreciating how he is a tiny, lowly, and dark creature, standing with his flimsy, limited, wisdom before He who is of perfect knowledge, as David stated: "When I see Your heavens, the work of Your fingers... [I wonder] what is man that You should recall Him" [Tehillim 8:4-5]. (Rambam, Yesodei HaTorah Chap. 2)



ELIEZER INSTITUTE Emunah Highlights

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Why were two years added to Yosef's prison sentence? So that Pharaoh would dream and Yosef would become ennobled through a dream.

(Medrash Rabah, Mekeitz)

Why did Yosef have to suffer an extra two years in prison? Why couldn't Pharaoh just have had his dream two years prior? Additionally, Chazal teach us that the additional two years of Yosef's imprisonment were in response for whatever fault was found (on his lofty level) in his method of Hishtadlus for asking the Sar Hamashkim to mention him before Pharaoh. How do these two Medrashim coincide?

Perhaps we could say that Hashem, indeed, added the extra two years in response to his Hishtadlus. However, as the Chovos HaLevavos says: One who places his trust in someone else, Hashem removes his Divine providence, so to speak, from upon him, placing him under he who he has placed his trust in. (Introduction to Shar HaBitachon)

Therefore, perhaps in response to whatever fault was found in Yosef being Mishtadel to attain his freedom through the hope that the Sar Hamashkim would mention his special power of dream interpretation, Hashem placed him under the natural destiny that power would bring him. Two years later, Pharaoh was destined to have a dream, warning him of the upcoming famine. Naturally, when no one was able to interpret it Yosef's name was mentioned leading to his freedom.

This explains the seemingly odd wording of the Medrash: *Why were two years added to Yosef's prison sentence? So that Pharaoh would dream and Yosef would become ennobled through a (not the) dream.* For indeed, the point was for him to be freed through any dream. For that is the power he had (so to speak, on whatever minuscule level) placed his trust in.