

Pursuit of Purpose

INSPIRING A LIFE OF MEANING AND CONNECTION

Responding To A Crisis Calmly

based on the weekly Shmuess given by HaRav Shaya Cohen, Rosh HaYeshiva, Yeshiva Zichron Aryeh

לעילוי נשמות 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, Yaakov devises a strategy to separate his camp into two, with the hope of saving at least one of the groups from Eisav's attack. The Ralbag derives a lesson from here in regards to Middos: "It is inappropriate for a person who is encountering danger to neglect to strategize to choose the lesser evil over the greater evil based on the rationale that it is inappropriate to choose bad. This is not the proper course of action, rather one should choose the lesser evil so that he will be saved from the greater evil. This is the reason that Yaakov arranged the children based on Leah and Rochel and the two maidservants by placing the one who was most precious last, so that at least this one will remain."

To understand what perspective the Ralbag is addressing requires further clarification. Why would a person who is in danger think it is logical to pass up the opportunity to save half his group and let everyone die? Why would we need to derive this from Yaakov when the perspective the Ralbag is excluding seems so illogical?!

We can explain it as follows. The Ralbag is addressing the Middah not the perspective. The Ralbag understood that the Middah of neglect caused by a feeling of being overwhelmed in the face of danger, can distort a person's thinking and cause them to see the irrational as rational. It can cause a person to believe that doing nothing and letting everyone die is better than saving half the people in your group.

An important insight can be gleaned from here. Often we have the information necessary to make educated decisions, however due to this Middah of neglect and being overwhelmed we may convince ourselves of viewpoints that are based on faulty reasoning. We may freeze and believe it is more logical to do nothing. Therefore, it is important that we be aware of this potential response when we are overwhelmed and facing danger, and consult with others. While at the same time we must work on this Middah, and practice making rational and educated decisions when facing a crisis.



Why did Priority-1 initiate the 1-Focus Say Nishmas Campaign?

Priority-1 initiated this campaign because we are passionate about helping people strengthen their emunah and develop a strong connection with Hashem. We have noticed a wonderful increase in awareness of Hashem's absolute control over the world during the coronavirus pandemic. We want to ensure that the strides we have made on a communal level continue even after the crisis ends. That is the sole purpose of this campaign.



Shir HaShirim Insights

In loving memory of Mr. Marvin Halpern

"I understand the greatness of the Jews, after all many of the greatest humans ever have been Jews, but on the other hand, many of the very worst people have also been Jews. As Haman was told (*Megillah 16a*): This nation is compared to the dust of the earth and it is also compared to the stars; when they descend, they descend to the dust, and when they rise, they rise to the stars. So maybe we are not that great after all?"

The Pasuk (*Shir HaShirim 2:1*) states: [Klal Yisroel says] "I am a rose of the plain, a rose of the valleys." [Hashem responds] "Like a rose among thorns, so is my darling among the maidens."

The Vilna Gaon explains: The rose of the plain gets damaged from the sun, while the rose of the valley is the same flower but due to its protection from the sun it grows beautifully. Klal Yisroel is saying: "In truth I am the most beautiful of all the maidens, like the rose of the valley, only my darkness comes from the sun, like the rose of the plains." This itself is a great attribute, for coarse complexions do not darken much from the sun, only delicate and appealing complexions are blemished or sunburned by the sun. Similarly regarding beauty, when delicate people indulge, they enhance their appearance, their flush and glow, as opposed to coarse people.

We see from here that this tendency of Jews to fall so far when disconnected to the Torah is in fact just another proof of their inherent greatness.



ELIEZER INSTITUTE Emunah Highlights

A Westwood Realty Initiative

Fear – A Self Fulfilling Prophecy

"I understand the I can attain even more than I deserve through Bitachon, but, it's just too hard for me to work on it so I'm afraid I'll have to suffice with just receiving what I deserve."

Unfortunately, the premise of the above statement is incorrect. As we see from the words of the Riv" a in this week's Parsha on the Pasuk (32:26) regarding Yaakov's fighting the angel: When he saw that he had not prevailed against him, he wrenched Yaakov's hip at its socket, the socket of his hip was strained as he wrestled with him. The Riv" a explains: The angel succeeded to injure Yaakov despite G-d's assurances to him that "I will protect you wherever you go," because Yaakov allowed himself to be frightened of Eisav. We find something similar with Moshe that Hashem said to him (*Shemos 3:12*), "For I will be with you," and he was still hurt on the road because he had feared Pharaoh saying, "Please send someone else."

We see from here that not only does one's lack of Bitachon prevent him from attaining ever greater good than he deserves, but it can prevent him from attaining even that which he is already destined to receive.

So next time we are faced by a predicament let us remember: The only thing we have to fear is the self-fulfilling prophecy that man calls fear!