

# Pursuit of Purpose

INSPIRING A LIFE OF MEANING AND CONNECTION

## עמלות בתורה Hashem Craves

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' יהזקאל | ראובן יוסף בן יהושע  
לרפואה שלמה יוסף בן מלכה מטל | דב בעריש בן שפרה צביה

In this week's Parsha, the Torah writes (26:3), "If you walk in My statutes, and safeguard My Mitzvos and do them." The Pesukim that follow go on to say that doing this will result in plentiful blessing, however if one does not do this it will result in negative consequences. The Pasuk at face value sounds like it is stating a prophecy of future events that will occur depending on which path one chooses. However, the Medrash has a different approach to explain this Pasuk. The Medrash says, "What is the language of 'if' which is also a language of asking? This teaches us that Hashem desires that Klal Yisrael labors in Torah. Similarly it says (*Tehillim 21:14*), 'If only my nation would listen to me, and walk in my ways, I would humble its enemies and on their oppressors turn my hand....' Similarly it says (*Devarim 5:26*), 'If only they would fear Me and keep all Mitzvos all their days, so that I can do good for them and their children forever.' This teaches us that Hashem desires that they labor in Torah."

Upon initial analysis the Medrash is difficult to understand and requires further clarification. The Medrash derives from the above Pesukim that Hashem desires us to labor in Torah. However, none of the above mentioned Pesukim mention anything about Ameilus in Torah. The Pesukim rather emphasize keeping the Mitzvos and developing Yiras Hashem. Where did the Medrash learn this lesson from the above Pesukim?

The Medrash must have understood that for a person to be committed to listening to all the Mitzvos and reaching a level of Yiras Hashem, it could only stem from a person who labors in Torah. Ameilus in Torah is critical, and without

it, these things cannot happen. Therefore, the Medrash concluded that since Ameilus in Torah is the root where everything stems from, it must be that this is at the core of what Hashem desires.

A new perspective towards Limud Hatorah can be gleaned from this Medrash. The Medrash is telling us that when it comes to laboring in Torah, it is not merely that Hashem is commanding us to do it, like the other Mitzvos. Rather, Hashem is begging us to labor in Torah because He craves it. Viewing Ameilus in Torah through this paradigm can help us increase our motivation and dedication to it. Knowing that Hashem is begging us to do it, and asking us for a favor, so to speak, can increase our desire to labor in Torah. In addition, our motivation will be further increased by realizing that the formula to receive all the good from Hashem, is based in Ameilus in Torah.

This idea can be used to explain a very difficult Rashi (26:14). Rashi says that if someone does not labor in Torah, they recognize their Creator and are intending to rebel against Him. This Rashi presents a challenge, as there are so many factors why a person would not labor in Torah besides trying to rebel. Perhaps he is lazy or doesn't value it? Where is the rebellion against Hashem? Based on the above Medrash this Rashi becomes more understandable. When it comes to not listening to the Mitzvos, failure to do so may be from laziness or other factors. However, Ameilus in Torah is something Hashem is begging us to do, therefore failing to do so, is rejecting Hashem's request for a favor, which one can only deny if he wants to rebel.



## Shir HaShirim Insights

*In loving memory of Mr. Marvin Halpern*

*You are beautiful, my wife. You are beautiful, your eyes are dovelike.*

*(Shir HaShirim 1:15)*

The Seforno explains that Hashem says these words to Klal Yisroel in response to our request of Him: "Please reveal Your Divine presence to us as in days of yore, then we will return to you as in days of yore." To which Hashem responds: "You are beautiful, my wife," - Now you do not need that form of miraculous Divine revelation as in days of yore, for I have already made you beautiful through the giving of the Torah, which I have written to guide you with miraculous logic.

We see from this Seforno that when one truly toils in Torah and delves to its depths, he beholds wisdom so miraculous and a connection to Hashem through His Torah so great as to negate the impression of witnessing with his own eyes divine revelations of the caliber of Yitzias Mitzrayim and Maamad Har Sinai.

Perhaps with this understanding we can further appreciate the explanation of the Seforno later on in Shir HaShirim. (7:8) There he explains that upon the cessation of Divine prophecy, the prophets beg Klal Yisroel, "Return, Return, oh Israel, – so that we will again merit Divine revelation." To which Klal Yisroel responds, "What will you be able to see already, can Hashem give you a new Torah." It seems that Klal Yisroel is responding with the assertion that their appreciation of the Torah is so great as to negate the great necessity of miraculous Divine revelation. Such is the greatness Hashem has implanted in our midst, waiting for us to take advantage of. A direct line of communication from our Father in Heaven through which He reveals Himself with a clarity as miraculous as the revelations of Har Sinai themselves. Perhaps this is the meaning of the words of the Zohar - "One who toils in Torah is as if He stands by Har Sinai."



## ELIEZER INSTITUTE Emunah Highlights

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*Trust in Hashem... take pleasure in Hashem, and He will grant you the desires of your heart.*

*(Tehillim 37:3,4)*

It seems that when one trusts in Hashem to the extent that his heart feels pleasure in His salvation, even before it takes place, he is assured, "He will grant you the desires of your heart."

Rav Shlomo Platzinsky explains the importance of this condition of taking pleasure in Hashem, to assure one's salvation, based on this week's Haftorah which states:

"Blessed is he who trusts in Hashem, whose trust is Hashem alone. He shall be like a tree planted by waters, sending forth its roots by a stream: It does not sense the coming of heat, its leaves are ever fresh; it has no care in a year of drought, it does not cease to yield fruit."

The Malbim says on this Pasuk, "You may ask: 'Don't we see people who seemingly trust in Hashem and don't get what they want?' To this the Navi answers in the next Pasuk – 'Most devious is the heart; It is perverse—who can fathom it? I Hashem probe the heart, search the mind (to see who is really trusting).'"

We see that specifically regarding trust in Hashem the Navi warns us that we easily fool ourselves. For this reason, explains Rav Platzinsky, the Pasuk in Tehillim spells out the condition of "taking pleasure in Hashem's future salvation" in order to be assured of it. One can easily fool himself that he trusts in Hashem, but, when his heart actually feels pleasure from his surety, he can rest assured he truly trusts Hashem even deep within his heart!