

Pursuit of Purpose

INSPIRING A LIFE OF MEANING AND CONNECTION

שנאת חנם Getting To The Root of

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

As we mourn the Beis Hamikdash and reflect upon the cause of its destruction, fixing the baseless hatred that occurred during the era of the second Bais Hamikdosh is at the forefront of our minds. The Gra (Quoted in Sefer Even Shlomo 3:2) shares with us a fascinating insight into the root cause of hatred. He writes, "Someone whose heart is good in the trait of trusting Hashem, although he may violate the worst sins, is better than someone who is lacking Bitachon. This is because due to his lack of trust he comes to jealousy and hatred, even though he is learning Torah, and doing Chesed, because all of this is only to gain a good name." It is clear from this Gra that if we wish to fix the sin of Sinas Chinam that destroyed the Beis Hamikdash, we need to first work on developing the Middah of Bitachon.

The Medrash in Parshas Haazinu shares an important insight into how Bitachon works and how we can develop this Middah. The Medrash tells the following story on the words of the Pasuk - Hashem protects us like the pupil of his eye.

There was an extremely wealthy man who had one beautiful and saintly daughter. She got married three times and each time after the first night of the wedding they found the husband dead. She said, "No men will ever die because of me again, I will remain a widow until Hashem sees and has mercy on me..." This wealthy man had a poor brother in a different city, who had ten sons. Each day he and his eldest son brought in piles of wood from the forest to sell, to support his wife and children. One time they could not sell anything, and they could not buy bread, and they did not eat that day. The next day they went to the forest and the father's spirit became overwhelmed. The son's eyes streamed with tears over their poverty, and he looked heavenwards. The son asked his father and mother permission to go to his uncle.

The uncle and his family were so happy to see him, and he sat with them for seven days. At the end of seven days the nephew

said to his uncle, "I have one request to ask from you." The uncle responded, "Ask for whatever you want." The nephew responded, "Swear to me that you will honor my request," to which the uncle did. He then asked for his daughter's hand in marriage. The uncle started crying, and said, "Don't my son, due to my sins everyone who marries her will die." The nephew said, "Even so I want to marry her..." The father told his daughter and she started to cry bitter tears. She raised her eyes to Heaven and said, "Master of the Universe, kill me and don't let him die because of me..."

Eliyahu Hanavi came and told the Chosson that when an old poor man comes to the wedding, honor him. At the wedding, he saw the poor man and fully followed the advice of Eliyahu Hanavi. After the meal the poor person called the Chosson into a room. He said, "My son, I am Hashem's messenger, and I came to take your soul..." The Chosson said, "I ask you to please wait until I ask my wife for permission." He said that he will grant that, but he must go quickly. He came into the room and she was sitting alone davening to Hashem...She embraced and kissed him. She said, "Why have you come?" He said, "I have come to ask permission from you to leave this world because the angel has come to take my soul." She said, "Don't go, stay here and I will go and speak to him."

She went and found him... She said definitively, "He will not die now, as it is written in the Torah - when a man takes a new wife he may not go out to war, he should stay in his house one year and rejoice with his wife. Hashem is true and his Torah is true. If you take my husband's soul, you are making the Torah false. If you accept my words, good, if not take me to the great court." Immediately, Hashem screamed at the angel and he left....This is what it means, "Hashem protects those that trust in him."

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Shir HaShirim Insights

In loving memory of Mr. Marvin Halpern

If Hashem really loves me so much, why does He stand by while I suffer? What can I do to awaken His love for me?

While you are thinking, “How can I awaken Hashem’s love for me?” you should only know what is really taking place!

What is the most powerful force in the Universe? Is it the mighty oceans on Earth? The endless galaxies on high? Chazal teach us it is neither of the above. Obviously, Hashem is the most powerful, and the only force there is. And what is the greatest manifestation of Hashem’s might? We say three times each day: G-d, Who is great! Mighty! and Awesome! What does this refer to? The Gemara says: “This is [the greatest manifestation of] His might!” Rashi explains, “That he overcomes His inclination... and defers His anger over all the decrees the nations enact upon His children.”

The Chasam Sofer writes, “Hashem, so to speak, suffers in the distress of Klal Yisroel and this itself is the manifestation of His might, that He bears the pain in order to grant them the greatest good in the end!” The most powerful force in the world is Hashem’s love for us! It is manifested in Hashem overcoming it, for our ultimate good, and the second most powerful force in the world; the pain Hashem feels whenever we suffer!

While you suffer and think of how to awaken Hashem’s love, the most cosmic battle is taking place on High over your suffering. The battle involves the most powerful forces in the universe: Hashem’s suffering along with you in your pain up against His love for you His dearest child!



ELIEZER INSTITUTE Emunah Highlights

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(Continued from the first section:)

Upon initial analysis this Medrash is difficult to understand. Surely this Pasuk does not make any promises that the husband will not die during his first year of marriage, as her first three husbands already died! If that is the case, what is she saying to the angel of death? All the Pasuk states is that he can’t go out to war, nowhere does it say he has to live!

It must be that although the Pasuk does not say that a husband won’t die in the first year, it does express Hashem’s care about protecting the husband during the first year of marriage. This Pasuk must have inspired her to reach new levels of Bitachon, and have an emotional burst to state - “He will not die.” In other words, her realization of how much Hashem cares about the first year of marriage gave her the confidence that he won’t die.

We can derive from here an important insight into how Bitachon works. The feelings of true Bitachon do not necessarily have to be based on a rationale that can’t be countered and disproven. They can be built on an emotional burst of inspiration based on something a person perceives as unjust and contrary to his understanding. This Bitachon will qualify for Hashem to protect those that trust in Him. Therefore, when it comes to Bitachon we should not get caught up in assessing the validity of the feeling, as in truth all Bitachon is an emotional experience, as who really knows the ways of Hashem. We should rather use whatever inspires that trust and confidence to reach those higher levels.