

Pursuit of Purpose

INSPIRING A LIFE OF MEANING AND CONNECTION

Calm In The Face Of Danger

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

לעילוי נשמת גיטל בת הרב אליעזר מנח | הרב יוסף חיים בן מאיר | רפאל חיים דוב בן בן-ציון שלום | ר' ברוך בן ר' יהודה | שרה בת ר' יחזקאל | לרפואה שלמה יהושע דוד בן אלטא יענטא

In this week's Parsha, the Torah commands us not to be afraid of our enemies, and consequently run away from them at the time of war. Rather our obligation is to stand up to them. The Sefer Hachinuch writes, "The reason why Hashem commanded us in this Mitzvah is because each member of Klal Yisrael should put their trust in Hashem, and he should not fear for his life in a situation in which he is able to give honor to Hashem." The Sefer Hachinuch ends off and says, "One who begins to have fearful thoughts and panic in war violates this commandment and his punishment is very great."

Upon initial observation the above mentioned explanation is difficult to understand. One would expect that a person who is fully trusting in Hashem that he will be saved, would be capable of facing a life threatening situation devoid of fear. However, after a careful read of the Sefer Hachinuch, he seems to be saying that one is obligated to have full trust in Hashem, and not even have a thought of fear, even though he is uncertain if he will be saved. This is implied from the fact that the Sefer Hachinuch says, "Each member of Klal Yisrael should put their trust in Hashem, and he should not fear for his life in a situation in which he is able to give honor to Hashem." The Sefer Hachinuch doesn't say that each person should put their trust in Hashem that he will be saved, but rather since this is a situation of honoring Hashem, he should not be afraid for his life. This is perplexing. How is a

person who is not trusting in Hashem that he will be saved, capable of facing death without even a thought of fear?

We can extrapolate from here a powerful insight into the Kochos Hanefesh of a person. It seems that every person is capable of feeling calm in the face of danger, even if he is not on the level of trusting that he will certainly be saved. When a person is doing the right thing, and involved in honoring Hashem, he is capable of feeling calm by the mere knowledge that Hashem is in complete control and everything is for the best. The Rosh Yeshiva of Chofetz Chaim, Rabbi Henschel Lebowitz ZT"l, would often quote his father as saying, "If Hashem wants something to happen he can do it without me, and if he doesn't want it to happen, I can't do anything to make it happen." It is this clarity that Hashem is in complete control and that we are just going through the motions, that can help us to create a feeling of serenity in all circumstances.

Often people find it difficult to reach the level of trust with certainty that they will be saved, and therefore find it difficult to calm their stress and fears. We see from here that one's anxieties can be calmed even without reaching that level of trust in Hashem. By focusing and internalizing that Hashem is in complete control, and everything is for the best, we have the ability to live without fear.

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.



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Shir HaShirim Insights

In loving memory of Mr. Marvin Halpern

Zion says, "Hashem has forsaken me, My G-d has forgotten me." Can a woman forget her baby, or disown the child of her womb? Though she might forget, I never could forget you. See, I have engraved you on the palms of My hands, Your walls are ever before Me. Swiftly your children are coming; Those who ravaged and ruined you shall leave you. Look up all around you and see: They are all assembled, they have come to you!

(Yeshayah 49:14-18)

The Ariz"l explains this last Pasuk based on the fact that before the final redemption Hashem will rectify all the Neshamos of the world. Therefore, He will tell Zion, "Look up all around you and see: They are all (even the ones that no one ever dreamed would return) assembled, they have come to you!" For just as a father doesn't abandon his children - no Jew will be left behind!

And not only will they not be left behind, but "As I live - declares Hashem - You shall don them all like jewels, deck yourself with them like a bride." For even those who seemed so far will serve as the greatest source of pride for Zion!



ELIEZER INSTITUTE **Emunah Highlights**

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Poland between World War I and World War II.

With poverty rampant, Nachum was lucky enough to get a job in a factory not far from home. The work was back breaking, but it helped his family survive. One day his hand got stuck in one of the giant pieces of machinery. His hand survived, but without any layers of skin left covering it. In the hospital, the only option offered was to graft skin from his leg which eventually took the place of the original skin on his hand. It was a little weird to see hair growing on his palm, but, it was a small price to pay to save his hand and be able to continue his occupation.

"Why did this accident have to happen? Was life not hard enough without this?" These were questions he didn't ask. When a loving Father does something He has His reasons.

A few years passed and life was turned upside down when German tanks rolled into Poland. Nachum's parents, brothers, and sister were rounded up, taken away by the Gestapo together with all of the Jews of his town. Only through a miracle did he and his sister, Malka, evade capture. Being all he had left in his world, he guarded her with his life, only leaving her side to forage for enough food to quell their hunger.

One day upon returning with a few morsels of bread his heart shattered into a million pieces. The Gestapo had obviously found his sister, his hiding place was turned upside down and she was gone. In a blinding rage he ran immediately to Gestapo headquarters.

Finding the commandant, he screamed from the depths of his pain, "Where did you take my sister?!"

With a wicked smile on his face the Nazi responded, "Where she belongs!"

With nothing left to lose he yelled with rage, "Return her immediately!" Enjoying the pain before his eyes the Nazi laughed, "When you grow hair on the palm of your hand I'll return her to you."

And he did! They both survived the war! Indeed, a loving Father always has His reasons!