

Overriding Our Wants, Not Squashing Them

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

לעילוי נשמת 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 | ראובן יוסף בן יהושע | דב בעריש בן פסח צבי
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In this week's Parsha, on the Pasuk, "And I separated you from the nations to be to me," (20:26) Rashi comments, "Rebbi Elazar Ben Azariah said, 'How do we know that a person should not say I don't want to eat pig, I don't want to have a forbidden relationship, but they should rather say I want to, however what can I do my Father in Heaven decreed that I can't? The Pasuk says, 'I separated you from the nations to be Mine.'"

We can derive a tremendous insight from this Rashi into our relationship with Hashem. Often when it comes to keeping Mitzvos we view following what Hashem said to do as the key factor in building this relationship. Based on this viewpoint, if a person would be able to develop an aversion for pig so that he can fulfill the Ratzon Hashem it would be commendable. However, we see from this Rashi that a critical ingredient in this relationship is for a person to be Mevatel his own Ratzon to the will of Hashem.

Meaning, the relationship is built on a person wanting something, but refraining from it because he loves Hashem, and Hashem said not to do it. In other words, his desire to do what Hashem wants is more intense and powerful than his own desire, then he will be called "mine" by Hashem.

This is similar to how the Seforno defines love in the beginning of Shir Hashirim, where he says, "That the one who loves rejoices in the positive attributes of his beloved to such an extent that he wants to do his will." In other words, it is the love driving a person to do the will of Hashem and be mevatel his own desires to Hashem's will. This is the level we are expected to achieve, and not a person changing his or her feelings to fit with the will of Hashem.



Shir HaShirim Insights

In loving memory of Mr. Marvin Halpern

“The voice of my beloved is knocking: ‘Let me in, My own, My darling, My faultless dove! For my head is drenched with dew, My locks with the damp of night.’” (Shir HaShirim 5:2)

In this week’s Parsha (19:17) we are commanded to rebuke our fellow Jew who has strayed from the righteous path. The explanation of the Zohar sheds light on the correct approach to carrying out this Mitzvah.

“Despite all of Moshe’s reprimanding of Klal Yisroel, all his words were with love, as the Pesukim state: ‘For you are a people consecrated to Hashem, your G-d, of all the people on earth the Hashem, your G-d chose you to be His treasured people... You are children to Hashem, your G-d... And you, the ones who cling to Hashem, your G-d... Therefore you will listen to Hashem... because out of Hashem’s love for you...’ This is as the Pasuk states: ‘Open up for me, my sister, my wife.’ (Zohar Ha’azinu 86b)

When Hashem wishes to rebuke Klal Yisroel in their most dreadful spiritual state, in the depth of their Galus, when they seemingly have no interest in Him, He says: “Open up for Me! My sister! My beloved! My dove! My faultless one! For my head is drenched with dew, My locks with the damp of night.”

We too must emulate this Middah of Hashem when giving rebuke to our fellow Jew and only do so with the utmost care and endearment.



ELIEZER INSTITUTE Emunah Highlights

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Sanctifying Hashem; An Insight Into Our Chashivus

In this week’s Parsha, the Pasuk (20:26) states, “You should be holy to Me because I am holy, and I will separate you from the nations to be Mine.” The Medrash comments, “Someone who sees the moon, how should they bless when they sanctify the month?...Some say they should say Mekadesh Yisrael, because if Klal Yisrael does not sanctify it, it is not sanctified. Now don’t be shocked that the sanctification is dependent on Klal Yisrael, because Hashem sanctified Klal Yisrael, as it says, ‘You should be holy to Me because I am holy’, and because they were sanctified by Heaven, what they sanctify is sanctified. Hashem said, ‘I am holy, can I sanctify myself! Rather, I will sanctify Klal Yisrael and they will sanctify Me!’ Therefore it is written, ‘You should be holy to Me’, meaning, “sanctify Me through the fact that I made you holy.”

We say in Kedusha, “Let us sanctify Your name in the world just like the angels sanctify You in Heaven.” Then we declare “Kadosh, Kadosh, Kadosh.” We tend to think that through Kedusha we are declaring to the world how elevated and separated Hashem is from everything physical. However, we see from this Medrash that when we sanctify Hashem through Mitzvos and Kedushah, we are really doing so much more. It is, or it is as if, we are elevating His Kedusha, so to speak.

Although this idea is a bit abstract we can still glean a powerful insight from here into our Chashivus. Clearly we are much more Chashuv than we think, as we are able to impact Hashem. This also indicates how unique and special our connection is with Hashem. Through this idea we can gain a greater appreciation of ourselves and the impact we are truly making, which is way beyond anything we can imagine.