

# Pursuit of Purpose

INSPIRING A LIFE OF MEANING AND CONNECTION

## I Need To See For Myself

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 | הפאל 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

In Parshas Shelach, the Pasuk (13:2) states, “Send for yourselves men.” Rashi famously comments, “For yourselves - I did not command you to do so. If you want to, you can send. Because Klal Yisrael came and said, ‘Let us send men before us’...Moshe consulted with Hashem, and He said, ‘I told them it is good...I swear by their lives that I will give them a place to make a mistake in the words of the spies, in order that they don’t inherit it.’”

Obviously when one looks at the request of Klal Yisrael, we can see some slight lack in Emunah and Bitachon. Klal Yisrael was promised by Hashem that they would inherit Eretz Yisrael and they have nothing to worry about. However, this lack in Emunah and Bitachon is somewhat relatable if what was holding them back was a fear of their physical strength. Yes, intellectually they fully believed in Hashem’s promise, but emotionally they were somewhat hesitant to move forward based of their fear, and they needed to calm this fear on their own. As Moshe says - **הבמחנים אם במבצרים** - if they live in unwalled cities that means they are strong and unafraid of being attacked, or if they are in walled cities, which means they are weak and afraid of attack.

However, there are a few Medrashim on these Pesukim, which explain that Moshe was telling them the following, “Rebbi Avahu says, Moshe told them if they are strong in the 7 Mitzvos Bnei Noach you won’t be able to conquer them, if they are weak in the 7 Mitzvos you will be able to conquer them.” Are they **המעט הוא אם** - **רב** - “Moshe said to them if they make themselves small in this world in humility, you won’t be able to overcome them, however if they are arrogant you will be able to.” Is it **הטובה היא** - “If they go with generosity one with the other you will not be able to conquer them, however if they are stingy towards their friend, you will be able to conquer them.”

When one looks at the above comments from the Medrash it is quite perplexing, Hashem promised that He would give us the land of Eretz Yisrael, which means He is telling us all of these factors are a non-issue. It is one thing for Klal Yisrael to be concerned and fearful of their brute strength, as this is in the physical realm. Relying on a miracle that was promised is even hard for the Dor Deah, who just experienced all the miracles in Mitzrayim. This is a Chiddush, but understandable. However, why would they be afraid of an obstacle in the spiritual realm? Hashem who is the ultimate decider of how to weigh the spiritual realm told you this is not an issue. This fear seems to be completely unfounded, and the need for them to check this out is puzzling?

We can glean from here a tremendous insight into the human being, even on the level of the Dor Deah. A person has a need to see something on his own when he is going into a situation that he is afraid of, and not just fully take someone else’s word for it. Even if it is Hashem telling him, it even extends into the spiritual realm. Granted, they were expected to access their Emunah and Bitachon, but this need is still normal and a reality of our psyche. This idea truly expands the concept of **שמיעה לראיה**, hearing is not comparable to seeing.

### The Significance of Something Insignificant

The Medrash goes further in explaining what Moshe was telling them to see, “Is it hot or cold,” and “Are there strong winds.” This concern seems completely absurd. We can understand a fear to wage war, due to a fear of being killed, however this seems to be more of an annoyance rather than a fear. Klal Yisrael was promised to inherit Eretz Yisrael, and were told it is an amazing land “flowing with milk and honey.” This need to see its climate seems so unnecessary and petty. Could this really be that they were worried about this?

We see from here another powerful insight into the human being. On the one hand, Klal Yisrael of that generation reached great spiritual heights, heights that we can’t even relate to. On the other hand, even a human being on the highest level can be influenced by such seemingly petty and insignificant calculations, and those calculations can influence him in a significant way. We can’t underestimate the power of these subtleties to taint our decisions and perspectives.

This idea is illustrated by the Alter of Slobodka where he points out the seemingly strange Halacha that a Kohen Gadol can’t be on the Beis Din to decide on a leap year in Adar. There is a concern that since the extra month would cause Yom Kippur to be a month later, and it would be colder in Yerushalayim when he would walk barefoot in the Azarah, this would impact his decision in declaring a leap year. This Negiah is perplexing, the drop in temperature is not so significant. In addition, the Kohen Gadol was someone whose only concern was Ruchniyos, and he understood the graveness of deciding a Halacha wrong. Yet, such a small factor can taint someone’s judgment.

The above ideas are only a further call to learn Mussar. Our Middos and petty concerns all play a factor in our decisions and judgment. The only way to free ourselves from the shackles of these factors is refinement of character through Limud Hammusar.



## Shir HaShirim Insights

In loving memory of Mr. Marvin Halpern

**Kiss me, from the kisses of Your mouth for Your love** (the words of the Oral Torah) **is better than wine** (the Written Torah).

(Shir HaShirim 1:2, with Talmud Bavli, Avodah Zara)

In this week's Parsha, we encounter a Pasuk that discusses the severe consequences for someone who acts defiantly and curses Hashem. The Gemara in Sanhedrin further broadens the scope of those who despise the word of Hashem, including individuals who have the opportunity to engage in Torah study but choose not to. This may seem puzzling, as it raises the question of how one who neglects Torah study can be equated to someone who actively curses Hashem.

To gain insight into this concept, we must recognize the nature of Torah study. The Torah represents the Divine thoughts and wisdom of Hashem. When we engage in Torah study, we are granted the privilege of connecting with Hashem's thoughts and becoming unified with Him in a profound way. It is as if He is kissing us on the mouth, imparting His knowledge to us and merging His essence with ours.

Chazal teach us that the presence of the Shechinah accompanies those who study Torah. Tana D'Bei Eliyahu explains that when a Talmid Chacham sits and delves into the depths of Torah, the Holy One, blessed be He, sits opposite them, studying alongside him. This extraordinary partnership between Hashem and the Torah scholar highlights the intimate and personal relationship established through Torah study.

When an individual turns down the precious opportunity to engage in Torah study, it is akin to rejecting a personal and intimate meeting with a powerful king. Such an action demonstrates the utmost disrespect and disregard. Considering that the Torah is the manifestation of Hashem, the rejection of Torah study reflects a profound level of disrespect towards Hashem Himself.

By understanding the depth and significance of Torah study, we can appreciate the gravity of neglecting its pursuit. It is a missed opportunity to connect intimately with Hashem and delve into His Divine wisdom, which ultimately leads to a deepening of our relationship with our Creator.



## ELIEZER INSTITUTE Emunah Highlights

A Westwood Realty Initiative

Many times, a person will daven to Hashem, "Please be there for me during my business meeting tomorrow afternoon." He thinks in his mind: "If only Hashem will come through for me and involve himself in that meeting."

However, if one stops and focuses for a moment, he may realize how far this thought is from what he really needs. How much Heavenly intervention is needed just for his body to survive until that meeting? With each and every breath he takes Hashem is lovingly orchestrating events scientifically more complex than sending a man to the moon.

Just think of what science has realized regarding the complexity of the human brain:

"We each have something approaching 100 billion nerve cells - neurons - in the human brain (more than the number of stars in the Milky Way). Each of them can be connected directly with maybe 10,000 others, totaling some 100 trillion nerve connections. If each neuron of a single human brain were laid end to end, they could be wrapped around the Earth twice over." (The Independent UK Wednesday April 2, 2014)

We should take a moment to ponder this. There are approximately six billion people on Earth. For every person on Earth there are approximately 200,000 connections in their brain. During our simple business meeting mentioned above, in each of the two brains facing each other, Hashem will be orchestrating events many times more complex than all of the telecommunication connections on Earth. This is just during the meeting alone, not to mention all of the necessary miracles we need in order to lead up to the meeting.

And for everything else, we are assured that Hashem will be there for us. Dovid HaMelech advises us: "Throw upon Hashem that which weighs upon you and He will sustain you." (Tehillim 55:23) So let us add our business meetings into the mix. It will weigh no more to Him!!