

Pursuit of Purpose

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The Essence Of Our Relationship With Hashem

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 יוסף בן מלכה מטל

In this week's Parsha, the Torah tells us that Aharon's sons, Nadav and Avihu, were consumed by a fire from Hashem, due to their offering a strange fire that they were not commanded to bring. After this event, Moshe comforted Aharon and told him, "Of this did Hashem speak, saying: I will be sanctified through those who are close to Me, and I will be honored before the entire people; and Aharon fell silent." (10:3) Rashi comments on the Pasuk, "Through those who are close to Me - this means, through those whom I have chosen."

An important insight into our relationship with Hashem can be derived from this single word בבחירי. Rashi is indicating that closeness with Hashem is synonymous with the fact that He chose us, and that is how that closeness is demonstrated and expressed. Often we use the term "relationship with Hashem," but fail to grasp its true meaning. When using this phrase to describe our human relationships, we are clear of the feeling and behaviors it conveys. However, the concept of a relationship with Hashem is more abstract and requires further clarification. Rashi is sharing with us that our relationship with Hashem is expressed and defined by the fact that He chose us. Through focusing on the fact that He chose us we can appreciate the meaning of having a relationship with Hashem.

This idea is played out in many of our Tefilos. In Birchas HaTorah we say, "That you chose us from all the nations and gave us the Torah." It seems that the first step in appreciating that Hashem gave us the Torah is focusing on our being chosen. We find this same idea in our Yom Tov Shemoneh Esrei, in which we say, "You chose us from all the nations, and loved us." This idea is also echoed in our Shabbos davening in which we emphasize that, "Hashem did not give it to the nations of the land, and our King did not inherit it to idol worshippers, and the uncircumcised cannot partake in our rest, for to Yisrael, Your nation, You gave it with love." The above Tefillos all clearly indicate that the key to our relationship with Hashem is realizing that we were chosen by Him.

Based on the above, it is evident that if we want to forge a positive relationship with Hashem, we need to constantly focus on our being chosen by Him. This will help us feel close to Hashem. It will transform what was once an abstract relationship into a concrete and tangible relationship.



Shir HaShirim Insights

In loving memory of Mr. Marvin Halpern

Who is like Hashem our G-d, who, raised on high, lowers Himself to see what is in heaven and on earth? He raises from the dust the poor, from the garbage He lifts up the needy to seat them with the great, with the great men of His people. (*Tehillim* 113:5-8)

Who is “the poor” and “the needy” that Hashem raises and what is “the dust” Hashem raises them from?

The Vilna Gaon (*Shir HaShirim* 6:12) writes that “the poor” in this Pasuk refers to “one who is bereft of mitzvos,” and “from the dust” refers to “one who is filthy from sin and desires to ascend from them, and he cries to ascend from them.”

And where does Hashem raise these sinners to? “To seat them with the great (this refers to the Avos - *Vilna Gaon*), with the great men of His people (the Nevi'im - *ibid*).

Why does Hashem take those who are bereft of any Mitzvos and filthy from sin, (just because they desire and cry to ascend from their state) and raise so high as to seat them with Avraham, Yitzchok, Yaakov and the Nevi'im?!

Because, as Rashi explains (*Shir HaShirim* 4:1) Hashem says, “Even those amongst you that are empty (of Mitzvos) are as precious to me as Yaakov and his sons!” Why? Because as Rabbeinu Avraham Tamach explains the words of the Pasuk (*ibid* 1:4), “‘Meysarim ahevucha,’ from the Avos; Avraham, Yitzchok, and Yaakov, remains with us the love for Hashem as an inheritance.” Even when they become filthy with sin the Pasuk (*ibid* 1:5 with Rashi) says it is like the filth of “‘the tents of Kedar’ that are easily cleaned.” For the filth is merely on the outside and never can penetrate to dirty the depth of a Yid’s *neshama*.



ELIEZER INSTITUTE Emunah Highlights

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The basic foundation towards the attainment of true Bitachon is understanding, at whatever level possible, the true extent of Hashem’s burning love for us. The Torah describes this love as the love a father has for his child. In truth, it is a much greater love, but the Torah uses the greatest love we can relate to, merely as an example.

Now let us try to imagine what is going on right now in Shomayim. Hashem is looking down at each and every one of us and is overflowing with fatherly love. However, there is a major difference between His love and a father’s love. The usual love a father feels for his son is great, however, there are times when this love is felt exponentially more than other times. For instance, if a child G-d forbid, is suddenly niftar and the father is standing by his bedside, at such a time the father's love is so much greater and deeper for his child. He does not love him now more than before, rather most of the father’s love is hidden deep within his subconscious and now that same love has awakened and truly been felt. In contrast, Hashem does not have any “forgetfulness”, “unconsciousness” or the like. The love He has He feels to its fullest, constantly.

Additionally, in contrast to a father who thinks and therefore feels his love for his son just several times a day, Hashem has no such limitations. Similar to the burning love of a father over his son’s deathbed, He feels for each and every one of us 24/7, 365. From the day we were born until today. (By Him, just because He has so many children does not diminish His full awareness and feeling for each and every one of them as if they were an only child.)

One must meditate upon the image of this love until he has seared it into his mind and soul. Then, whenever the need arises, whether while davening, learning or working on his Bitachon, he can refocus on this image and he will begin to truly feel that love.

Additionally, one should always keep in mind that no matter if he has succeeded in tuning in and is able to feel this burning love, it is happening right now and always. As sure as the sun rises in the east and goes down in the west, Hashem’s love for us is overflowing. Whether we are aware of it or not! With this awareness ingrained in our hearts, we can embark on the path to true Bitachon.