

Highlighting The Importance of Hashgacha Pratis

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 | ראובן יוסף בן יהושע | לרפואה שלמה יוסף בן מלכה מטל

The Sefer Hachinuch on the Mitzvah of Tumas Metzarah (169) says, “The purpose of the Mitzvah is to establish in our souls that Hashem’s supervision is on each and every person. Hashem’s eyes are watching everything, as it says in Iyov, ‘His eyes are on all the ways of man and He sees every step.’ Therefore, Hashem warns us to pay attention to this sickness, and think that sin caused it. Our Sages already said that Tzaraas is mostly caused by Lashon Harah, and we should not attribute it to happenstance. We are commanded to go to the Kohen who is appointed to accomplish forgiveness for the sinner. Through association with the Kohen, perhaps a person will have thoughts of repentance. In addition, he is to go in isolation for a few days to reflect, and introspect on his actions.”

At first glance it seems that the Sefer Hachinuch is saying that since we are aware that everything is from Hashem, therefore we should view this illness as a result of our sins and do Teshuva. However, through a more careful read it seems that he is saying the exact opposite. He says, “The purpose of the Mitzvah is to establish in our souls that Hashem’s supervision is on each and every person..... Therefore, Hashem warns us to pay attention to this sickness, and think that sin caused it.” It is clear from these words that it is actually the Teshuva process which causes us to recognize that everything that happens in this world is divinely ordained, and that is the purpose of the Mitzvah.

Based on this reading we can derive a powerful insight into the importance of Hashgacha Pratis. Tzaraas is caused by Lashon Hara, a sin that is the very cause of our Galus. A sin that is equated to the three cardinal sins. Its severity is well known from the Sifrei Chofetz Chaim. One would think after knowing all this, that the primary purpose of Tumas Tzaraas is to spur us to do Teshuvah for the devastating sin of Lashon Hara. Yet the Sefer Hachinuch writes that the primary purpose is not the Teshuva. The Teshuva is secondary to the primary goal of internalizing Hashem’s Hashgacha. The Teshuva is the vehicle for the greater goal of deepening the awareness that Hashem is involved in every detail of our lives. We see from here how important it is to focus on Hashgacha Pratis, and how its impact and influence on us extends beyond the Teshuva process for Lashon Harah.

The Avudraham writes that the words **מלא כל הארץ כבודו** are referring to Hashem’s Hashgacha Pratis. The Avudraham is expressing that the recognition of Hashgacha Pratis is the ultimate in seeing the glory of Hashem. Often we view the importance of focusing on Hashgacha Pratis as a means to realize that all our actions are being watched, however, the Avudraham is telling us that it goes beyond this. Through focusing on Hashgacha Pratis we sense Hashem, and see His glory as encompassing the whole world. We begin to understand who Hashem is. Therefore it is critical for us to focus on the Hashgacha Pratis in our lives, and share it with others.



Shir HaShirim Insights

In loving memory of Mr. Marvin Halpern

Then will I remember My covenant with Yaakov; and My covenant with Yitzchak, and also My covenant with Avraham, and I will remember the land. (Vayikra 26:42)

Why does the Pasuk not use the word “remember” in connection with Yitzchak’s name? Because this is unnecessary, for — says G-d, as it were — the ashes of Yitzchak (who according to My command to Avraham was to become a burnt offering) are ever visible before Me as though they were heaped up lying upon the altar (*Sifra, Bechukosai, Chapter 8 6-7*).

Why are Yitzchak’s ashes more visible in front of Him than all the other merits of the Avos?

When we think of the sacrifice Avraham made by Akeidas Yitzchak, we think of his willingness to sacrifice his son. However, it was not merely his son he was willing to sacrifice, it was all the descendants Hashem had promised would descend from him. When Avraham was willing to sacrifice Yitzchak it is considered as if he did so, after which he burnt his body and piled his ashes upon the Mizbeiach. But really, every Jew who ever lived was also brought upon the alter with Yitzchak and it is as if their ashes are piled upon the Mizbeiach right now.

This is something to remember constantly. You are so close to Hashem, you are considered someone who has already been sacrificed to Him beforehand!



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In this week’s Haftorah (Yirmiya 17:5) the Novi says: "Thus said Hashem: Cursed is he who trusts in man, who makes mere flesh his strength, and turns his thoughts from Hashem." Seeing these words brings great fear upon me. I know how much I would fear if the Gadol HaDor would curse me, how much more frightening it is when coming from Hashem Himself?

The above words of the Novi should not bring one to fear. To the contrary, it is a bearer of great news! Why? Because this means that whatever one’s current situation is, if he had placed his trust in himself instead of having Bitachon, it is with the weight of a curse from Hashem that he has reached his current predicament. This means that in reality his fate was destined to be drastically more favorable and so it will be if he ceases to rely upon himself and works on his Bitachon!