

Pursuit of Purpose

INSPIRING A LIFE OF MEANING AND CONNECTION

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The Transformative Power Of A Positive Connection

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

In this week's Parsha, the Pasuk (26:11) says, "And the sons of Korach did not die." The Medrash comments, "What merit did the sons of Korach have to be saved? This is because when they were sitting near Korach their father, they saw Moshe. They looked down and they said, 'If we stand up for Moshe Rabbeinu it will be a disgrace to our father, and we are commanded in כיבוד אב ואם. However, if we don't stand up we are violating the Mitzvah of מפני שיבה תקום.' They concluded that it is better to stand up before Moshe Rabbeinu despite the fact that it will be an insult to their father. At that moment they started having thoughts of Teshuva." The Medrash goes on to explain that their Teshuva was accepted and they were saved.

If we look at this Medrash in the context of what Rashi says in Parshas Korach (16:7), a powerful insight can be derived. "How did Korach, who was so wise, come to do something so foolish (as to challenge Moshe Rabbeinu)? He saw through prophecy that greatness would come from him...he said, 'Is it possible that so much greatness would come from me and I should be quiet?' Korach reasoned, Moshe said everyone will be destroyed and one will be saved...He was mistaken because his sons did Teshuva."

In summary, Korach thought that it must be that he will survive, and that he is therefore correct, because he saw great descendants coming from him. Rav Henoch Lebowitz ZT"L asked on this Rashi, if Korach was so wise, why didn't he think of the possibility that his

sons would do Teshuva, and in fact that he was wrong? The Rosh Yeshiva answered that Korach must have felt that since his sons were so deeply entrenched in this argument, it was impossible that they would do Teshuva. Korach's fatal mistake was underestimating the power of a person to change.

Based on the above insight it is difficult to understand how Korach's sons standing up for Moshe ignited a spark to do Teshuva. The Medrash says they stood up for Moshe based on the Pasuk of מפני שיבה תקום. They felt that due to his age it was proper to stand up for him. They accorded Moshe an honor that they would have given to anyone who was deserving of it, and it was not specific to Moshe. Additionally, they were not standing up for him due to his position as the leader of Klal Yisrael. This honor that they expressed was not in any way an admission to Moshe's side of the argument. It is therefore puzzling how this expression of honor was able to generate thoughts of Teshuva in people who were so deeply entrenched in their position.

There is a powerful lesson to be learned from here; that if a person has an ever so slight positive connection to the one he is arguing with, that can cause him to rethink his whole position. This holds true even when that positive connection is not directly related to the argument, and the argument seems irresolvable. Clearly, although a situation may appear to be so far gone, hope is not lost.



Shir HaShirim Insights

In loving memory of Mr. Marvin Halpern

Over the course of your many lessons from Shir HaShirim, I have come to understand the infinite love Hashem always has for Klal Yisroel even when they sin against Him. However, how are we to understand the times in Tanach when Hashem seems to spurn Klal Yisroel because of their sins?

One of the most severe expressions of Hashems spurning Klal Yisroel is found in Hoshea (*Chapter 1*) where Hashem says, "...for I will no longer accept the House of Israel or pardon them...for you are not My people, and I will not be your [G-d]."

Chazal are also bothered by this and explain (*Bamidbar Rabbah 2:15*): What is this comparable to? To a king who got angry at his wife, he said, "I'm divorcing her, and I don't care about her children! She is not my wife and I am not her husband!" He then went down to the marketplace, to the goldsmith, and said to him, "Make for my wife golden jewelry." His friend went and found him by the goldsmith ordering jewelry for his wife. He went and told his neighbors, "Did you not hear that the king is in a fight with his wife and he said to her, 'I am divorcing you?' I just saw him by the goldsmith ordering jewelry for his wife!" Similarly, when Hakadosh Baruch Hu got angry at Klal Yisroel he said, "I do not want her! She is not mine and I am not her's!" Hoshea said to the nations of the world, "You think because He said those things, 'For you are not My nation,' He is angry with them? Look what he says to them, what does it say afterwards, and instead of being told, you are Not-My-People, they shall be called 'Children-of-the-Living-G-d.'"

All impressions of Hashem spurning Klal Yisroel are merely ways Hashem, in His infinite and never waning love for us, uses to shake us up as He desperately attempts to return His ever beloved to Him!



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"He does not prize the strength of horses, nor value the fleetness of men; but Hashem wants those who fear Him, those who await His kindness."

(Tehillim 147:10,11)

It seems from this Pasuk that fear of Hashem and bitachon are synonymous. This can be explained by understanding "fear" of Hashem in this Pasuk as the Rambam (*Yesodei HaTorah 2:2*) explains the Mitzvah of Yiras Hashem:

But how may one discover the way to love and fear Him? When man will reflect concerning His works, and His great and wonderful creatures, and will behold through them His wonderful, matchless and infinite wisdom, he will spontaneously be filled with love, praise and exaltation and become possessed of a great longing to know the Great Name, even as David said: "My soul thirsts for God, for the living God," (Ps. 42,2); and when he will think of all these matters, he will be taken aback in a moment and stricken with awe, and realize that he is an infinitesimal creature, humble and dark, standing with an insignificant and slight knowledge in the presence of the All Wise.

When one comes to such an understanding, he has no one else's salvation to wait for but His! That is true Bitachon!