

Pursuit of Purpose

INSPIRING A LIFE OF MEANING AND CONNECTION

The Key To Our Survival- Kabbalas Hatorah

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 | לרפואה שלמה יוסף בן מלכה מטל

The year 2020 has been a difficult one to say the least. The state of unrest in society is frightening and has caused many to lose hope of a bright future in America. The political and moral viewpoint being espoused by many of our politicians are the antithesis of a Torah lifestyle. Can a world that is self imploding survive? Is all hope lost?

In this week's Parsha, the Pasuk says (1:31) "And it was evening and it was morning, the sixth day." Rashi comments as follows, "The Pasuk adds an extra Hey in the word Shishi at the completion of creation to tell you that Hashem made a condition with creation that its existence is dependent on Klal Yisrael accepting the five books of Torah. Another explanation of the extra Hey is that the entire creation was suspended until the sixth day, referring to the sixth day of Sivan that Klal Yisrael accepted the Torah, and the entire creation was strengthened." In summary, Rashi is saying that the purpose in creation and its continued existence are dependent on Klal Yisrael accepting the Torah.

It is interesting to note that Rashi does not say that the existence of the world is dependent on Klal Yisrael fulfilling or studying the Torah, but rather on Klal Yisrael's acceptance of the Torah. It sounds from Rashi that once the Torah has been accepted, and the potential to fulfill the purpose of creation has been instilled in the world, the world has what it needs to survive. Throughout history we have had lapses in our commitment to Torah. These lapses have caused us to suffer through the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash twice, as well as a long and bitter Galus. Yet, despite our inability to

fully fulfill the purpose of creation up until now, we need not worry of the world's imminent destruction; the potential of its fulfillment remains intact.

At first glance, this idea seems to be in contradiction to the Nefesh Hachaim. The Nefesh Hachaim writes that if at any moment the world would be void of someone actively studying Torah it would cease to exist. The Nefesh Hachaim implies that it is not the potential of the purpose of creation being fulfilled causing the world to continue, but it is its actual fulfillment of the purpose of creation that is driving its continued survival. Perhaps we can resolve this conflict and align the Nefesh Hachaim with Rashi by explaining the Nefesh Hachaim as follows: Without someone studying the Torah even the potential for the fulfillment of the purpose of creation does not exist, as there is no one who can offer the Torah's guidance. The potential is dependent upon accessibility, and that accessibility is only active if there is someone learning in the world.

We can draw inspiration and hope from the above idea. Although the moral decay in our society at times seems irreversible, and mankind seems to be moving further and further away from religion and G-d. We must remember that once we accepted the Torah, the vehicle of achieving Shleimus and fulfilling the purpose of creation is always there for the taking. Mankind always has the ability to turn towards the Torah for guidance and retrace his steps back to Hashem.

Why did Priority-1 initiate the 1-Focus Say Nishmas Campaign?

Priority-1 initiated this campaign because we are passionate about helping people strengthen their emunah and develop a strong connection with Hashem. We have noticed a wonderful increase in awareness of Hashem's absolute control over the world during the coronavirus pandemic. We want to ensure that the strides we have made on a communal level continue even after the crisis ends. That is the sole purpose of this campaign.





Shir HaShirim Insights

In loving memory of Mr. Marvin Halpern

In the Haftorah of Parshas Bereishis, Hashem displays his great love for Klal Yisroel with the following words: You are Mine! When you pass through water, I will be with you; through streams, they shall not overwhelm you. When you walk through fire, you shall not be scorched; through flame, it shall not burn you. For I, Hashem, am your G-d, the Holy One of Yisroel, your Savior.

However, one may ask, “In what spiritual state is Klal Yisroel when Hashem displays such love? Perhaps these words are relevant when they are on the lofty level expected of them and this has no bearing on the dreadful spiritual state we find ourselves today?”

The state of Klal Yisroel at the time Hashem expressed these intimate words of comfort is clear from the Pesukim immediately preceding those quoted above: Who was it that gave Yaakov over to despoilment and Yisroel to plunderers? Surely, Hashem against whom they sinned, in whose ways they would not walk and whose teaching they would not obey. So He poured out wrath upon them, His anger and the fury of war. It blazed upon them all about, but they heeded not; It burned among them, but they gave it no thought. But now thus said Hashem — Who created you, O Yaakov, Who formed you, O Yisroel: Fear not, for I will redeem you; I have singled you out by name, You are Mine! When you pass through water, I will be with you...

For no matter our spiritual state we are always His!



ELIEZER INSTITUTE **Emunah Highlights**

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Though Reb Yaakov was quite busy preparing for his son’s Pidyon Haben, which would take place latter that day, the site of the anonymous guest who no one had seen lifting his head from his Seforim since he wandered into town, intrigued him. (It was the Vilna Gaon disguised as a simple wanderer.) Seeing his eyes closed in deep concentration, Reb Yaakov took the opportunity to peek into his writings. “The entire universe and all that will ever happen is hinted to in the Tanach,” he began to read, “All of Tanach is hinted to in the Torah, all of the Torah is hinted to in Sefer Bereishis, all of Sefer Bereishis is hinted to in Parshas Bereishis, and all of Parshas Bereishis is hinted to in the first word of the Parsha: Bereishis.” Upon seeing this, Reb Yakov asked the Gaon, “Where is the mitzvah of Pidyon HaBen hinted to in the word Bereishis?” The Gaon immediately responded, “Binchah Rishon Achar Shloshim Yom Sifdeh (Your firstborn after thirty days redeem).”

Each week on these pages we dwell upon the two topics we feel are most important to all of our Avodas Hashem: Bitachon and Shir HaShirim. Being that this week’s Parsha is Bereishis, if indeed we are correct about the centrality of Bitachon and Shir HaShirim, one may ask: Where are these topics alluded to in our parshah?

The answer can be found in the words of the Vilna Gaon himself: The word “Bereishis” hints to six central precepts of Avodas Hashem. “Beis” stands for Bitachon, “Reish” stands for Ratzon (the will) of Hashem, “Aleph” stands for Ahavah (love), “Shin” stands for Shtikah (silence), “Yud” stands for Yirah (fear of Heaven), and “Taf” stands for Torah and “Bereishis” is also the acronym of the Pasuk (Shir HaShirim 5:2), “Let me in, My sister, My darling, My faultless dove! For my head is drenched with dew, My locks with the damp of night.” (See Aderes Eliyahu)