

Pursuit of Purpose

INSPIRING A LIFE OF MEANING AND CONNECTION

The Coexistence of Doubt and Confidence

based on the weekly Shmuess given by HaRav Shaya Cohen, Rosh HaYeshiva, Yeshiva Zichron Aryeh

לעילוי נשמות 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

In this week's Parsha, the Pasuk says (24:21), "And the man (Eliezer) was astonished by her (Rivkah), he remained silent to see if Hashem had made his journey successful or not." Rashi comments as follows, "He was amazed and taken aback over seeing his mission nearing success, but he did not yet know if she was from Avraham's family or not." After Rivkah finished giving the camels water, Eliezer gave her a golden nose ring, and two bracelets. Then he asks her (24:23), "Whose daughter are you?" And he gave her the jewelry before he knew she was from Avraham's family. Rashi explains Eliezer's behavior as follows, "After he had given her the nose rings and bracelets he asked her, because he was confident in the merit of Avraham, that Hashem made his journey successful."

Upon initial analysis there seems to be a blatant contradiction between the two Rashis quoted above. Rashi says that Eliezer felt his mission was close to success, but he did not know if she was from Avraham's family. We can clearly see from here that Eliezer was not one hundred percent sure that his mission had been successful, as he was lacking a critical piece of information. However Rashi then says that Eliezer gave her the jewelry prior to finding out that information, because he was sure his mission was successful due to the merit of Avraham. How can we resolve this contradiction? In addition, if Eliezer wasn't sure if

she was from Avraham's family how was he able to be confident that his mission was successful?

This contradiction can be resolved as follows: Granted that intellectually Eliezer had his doubts, however emotionally he was fully confident due to the merit of Avraham. Based on this there is no contradiction, the first Rashi is discussing Eliezer's intellectual perspective, while the second Rashi is discussing how he felt emotionally.

We can extrapolate from here a powerful insight into the nature of a human being in regard to Bitachon. It seems that a person can experience doubt and confidence at the same time. Although a person may have legitimate intellectual doubts, his emotional confidence in Hashem can override those doubts and cause him to act based on his feelings. Additionally, we see that those intellectual doubts don't have the ability to break the Bitachon one is feeling. Often we may become discouraged from continuing to work on our Bitachon, especially when experiencing doubts of success after working on Bitachon for so many years. We may view these doubts as a sign that our Bitachon is flawed. From the above we see that these two realities can coexist, and it is not necessarily a reflection on a deficiency in our Bitachon.



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.

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Shir HaShirim Insights

In loving memory of Mr. Marvin Halpern

I am aware that Shabbos is the day we separate from the mundane routine of our everyday lives to spend reveling in the presence of our beloved Father in Heaven. As we say in the zemiros, Hashem tells us, "Six days you shall work and on the seventh we will rejoice [together]." However, what can I do if I don't feel such love for Hashem and therefore don't revel in His presence this day?

The Pasuk (Bamidbar 10:10) states: And on your joyous days, your festivals and new moon days..

The Sifri explains that "your joyous days" in the above Pasuk refers to Shabbos. The commentaries are perplexed by this for we do not find the usual requirement to do things that cause one to be joyful (such as drinking wine etc.) on Shabbos as we do on Yom Tov. It seems that the obligation of joy on Shabbos is not a physical joy, rather, it is a spiritual one. Based on this we can explain the custom to recite Shir HaShirim at the time of Shabbos's arrival.

The Ta"z (O"CH 288:2) rules that although regular crying is prohibited on Shabbos, one may cry happy tears. "As Chazal say, 'The students of Rav Akiva found him crying on Shabbos and he said: It is enjoyment for me. It appears that because of his great closeness to Hashem, his eyes overflowed with tears. For we find in the Zohar regarding Rav Akiva that he would cry copiously when reciting Shir HaShirim, for he knew the great extent to which its words reached...'"

[See Zohar in last week's Parsha which relates that when Rav Eliezer was on his deathbed he taught: ... 216 explanations of the verses of Shir Hashirim. Rav Akiva's eyes poured with tears like water. Then the fire reappeared again. When he reached the verse, "Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples, for I am sick with love," (Shir Hashirim 2:5) Rav Akiva could not bear any more. He raised his voice and burst out bellowing (like a bull).]

Based on the above we can understand the wide-spread custom of reciting Shir HaShirim upon the arrival of Shabbos. There is no better way to reach joyfulness in our relationship with Hashem than through His own words describing His infinite love to each and every one of us and ours [though at times buried in the depths of our hearts] towards Him! There is no better way to set the stage for the next twenty-four hours of, "The King has brought me to His chambers. Let us delight and rejoice in Your love!" (Shir HaShirim 1:4)



ELIEZER INSTITUTE Emunah Highlights

A Westwood Realty Initiative

In this week's Parsha, the Torah relates Eliezer's conduct upon arriving to Charan in search of a wife for Yitzchak:

...When the camels had finished drinking, the man took a gold nose-ring weighing a half-shekel, and two gold bands for her arms, ten shekels in weight. "Pray tell me," he said, "whose daughter are you? [He asked her this after he had given her these presents, for he was sure that, on account of the merit of Avraham, the Holy One blessed be He, had made his journey successful - Rashi.] Is there room in your father's house for us to spend the night?" She replied, "I am the daughter of Besuel, the son of Milcah, whom she bore to Nachor." And she went on, "There is plenty of straw and feed at home, and also room to spend the night." The man bowed low in homage to Hashem and said, "Blessed be Hashem, the G-d of my master Avraham, who has not withheld His steadfast faithfulness from my master. For I have been guided on my errand by Hashem, to the house of my master's kinsmen."

Eliezer's actions are perplexing, for if, as Rashi states above, he was sure that, on account of the merit of Avraham, the Holy One blessed be He, had made his journey successful, why did he wait until after he asked her who she was to thank Hashem?

This can be understood based on the explanation of Rav Chaim Brisker zt"l of the Pesukim: And I, in Your kindness have placed my trust, my heart rejoices in Your salvation. I will sing to Hashem when He has saved me. (Tehillim 13:4-6) Rav Chaim Brisker explains the seeming repetitiveness of the Pesukim as follows: And I have placed my trust in Hashem, therefore my heart already rejoices in Your salvation even prior to its actualization. However, I will sing praise to Hashem only when I am actually saved, for there is a special rule regarding the mitzvah of singing praise to Hashem that it commences only after one's actual salvation.

Therefore, although Eliezer had no doubt that Hashem had led him on the correct path, so much so that he was willing to give the girl in front of him the jewelry destined for Yitzchak's wife, he actually thanked Hashem only after asking her who she was and his trust was completely confirmed.