

Message Received

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

לעילוי נשמת גיטל בת הרב אליעזר מנחם | 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 Moshe approaches the Jewish people with a message of hope. He tells them that Hashem will bring relief to their suffering and redeem them from Mitzrayim. Klal Yisrael "did not listen to Moshe due to their short spirit and harsh suffering" (6:9). The Ramban comments on this Pasuk and says, "Their lack of receptivity was not because they did not believe in Hashem and His prophet. Rather, it is because they did not pay attention to Moshe's words due to their short spirit. It is like a person who has had enough of his labor, and does not want to live another moment in pain with the hope of a better future. Their short spirit is referring to their fear that Pharaoh should not kill them by the sword. Harsh labor is referring to the pressure of the taskmasters who pressed upon them and hurried them, which gave them no chance to hear anything and consider it."

Upon initial analysis the Ramban is difficult to understand. The emotion of fear is normally a catalyst for the **מאמין** to turn to Hashem and trust in Him, as the Pasuk says, "בִּירֵאָהָהּ מִבֶּטֶחַ עוֹ" **בִּירֵאָהָהּ**. Why didn't their fear of Pharaoh lead them to run to Hashem, and trust Him? Their despondency and inability to focus requires further understanding.

We see from here that although fear can often be exhilarating and lead one to trust in Hashem, it can also lead to the exact opposite. High levels of fear can overwhelm a person and cause them to become despondent. Fear can break a person to the point where they no longer want to live. Once a person reaches this state he is no longer able to listen and absorb what he is hearing. The despondency completely interferes with his ability to be receptive, even to a message of hope that he believes in and knows intellectually to be true.

A powerful lesson can be gleaned from here; if we wish to inspire those that are despondent, we can't rely on the power of the

positive message alone. As it may be that they are too despondent to listen. We must first get beyond their despondency and lift up their spirits. We must first put them in a good mood, so that they can be receptive to the message of hope.

Seforno also comments on this Pasuk and takes a different approach. He writes as follows: "They did not listen to Moshe to reflect on all this, so that they would have full trust in the salvation of G-d and give Him credit for this, as Avraham did. This was eventually the reason why this part of G-d's promise was not fulfilled in their lifetime, but it was fulfilled in the life of their children. Their lack of focus was due to their short spirit, meaning it did not appear believable and therefore they did not pay attention to the message. Another factor was the harsh labor. If it had not been for the heavy labor which they had to perform, they would have paid much more attention to Moshe's words, and they would have understood from Moshe's arguments that he is worthy of trusting."

The Seforno clearly takes the opposite approach of the Ramban and says that their suffering actually brought them to a lack of Emunah, and this deficiency did not allow them to focus. However the Seforno states further, that despite this lack in Emunah that didn't allow them to listen, they still would have been able to rise above it if not for the harsh labor. The harsh labor made them completely incapable of focusing on Moshe's message. A message that they would have received even with their lack of Emunah, if they could have focused.

Often we tend to think if someone is lacking Emunah there is no purpose in trying to get through to them, as they don't believe what we are saying. However, we see from here that if we can get someone to focus on the message, we can bypass their lack of Emunah and eventually reinstate it.



Shir HaShirim Insights

In loving memory of Mr. Marvin Halpern

It is written: "A song of Asaph. O G-d, heathens have entered Your domain (*Tehillim 79:1*): This verse should not have said "a song", but rather a "lament" of Asaph, a "mourning song" of Asaph, an "elegy" of Asaph, so why does it say "a song of Asaph"?"

Rather, it is analogous to a king who made a chuppah for his son and its foundation and its walls and its decorations, and his son went out and did evil debauchery, and so the king went up to the chuppah and tore up the curtains and smashed the supports and his tutor went and made a flute of the support and was playing music. They said to him: "The king overturned his son's chuppah and you are sitting playing music?" and he said to them: "I am playing music because he overturned his son's chuppah and did not pour out his anger on his son."

So they said to Asaph: "The Holy One, blessed be He, has destroyed the Beis Hamikdash and you are sitting and playing music?" and he said to them: "I am playing music because the Holy One, blessed be He, "poured out his anger" on wood and stone and did not "pour out his anger" on Klal Yisroel."

The beauty of the above Medresh speaks for itself. However, the parable does not seem to be analogous. The Beis Hamikdash was the holiest place in the universe, even the holiest prophet would incur the death penalty if he entered it's Holy of Holies, how can it be compared to the mere curtains and supports of a chuppah?

This shows us the infinite holiness and preciousness of even sinful Jews compared to whom the Beis Hamikdash itself can be compared to mere wood and stones!



ELIEZER INSTITUTE **Emunah Highlights**

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Can one merit the world-to-come with the merit of having bitachon and helping others have bitachon as well?

In the past we have quoted the astounding words of the Ramchal (*Ma'amar HaKivuy*): Even in Gehenom if one has bitachon, Hashem will take him out and put him in Gan Eden.

Perhaps we can suggest a source for this from the following Gemarah (*Ta'anis 22a*): ...Two brothers came to the marketplace. Eliyahu HaNavi said to Rav Beroka: These two also have a share in the World-to-Come. Rav Beroka went over to the men and said to them: What is your occupation? They said to him: We are jesters, and we cheer up the depressed.

The Shevet Musar (*Perek 14*) comments on this Gemara: Can one earn Olam HaBa with this alone? Rather they were ba'alei bitachon and they would instill into others this trait!

You may ask: How can this be when there are 612 Mitzvos besides bitachon. However, according to the Vilna Gaon this is very understandable for he writes (*Mishlei 22:19*): The central reason Hashem gave the Torah to Klal Yisroel was so that they would have bitachon!