

Pursuit of Purpose

INSPIRING A LIFE OF MEANING AND CONNECTION

Man's Greatness

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
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The Medrash Tanchuma states, “Rebbe Shmuel Bar Abba says, Hashem desired a place to reside down here, just as He has a place in the upper realms. Hashem said to Adam HaRishon, ‘If you merit, just as I am the King of the upper realms, so too I will make you the king of the lower world.’ Adam HaRishon did not listen to Hashem, so Hashem did not do this. Rather, since Adam HaRishon sinned, Hashem removed His Shechinah from him. When Klal Yisrael rose up, Hashem said to them, ‘You should know that your leaving Egypt was only on the condition that you should make for Me a Mishkan, and I will rest My Shechina among you.’”

It seems from the Medrash Tanchuma that Hashem’s original plan was to have Adam HaRishon be the resting place of Hashem. However, he sinned and therefore could not do it. This idea communicates a powerful insight into the greatness of man, and the global influence that a Tzelem Elokim can make. A person who achieves Shleimus can bring the Shechinah to the world!

This original plan was not achieved; however, Hashem so desired to reside in this world that He made for Himself a location to rest His Shechinah. One may think that man is no longer needed to bring Hashem’s Shechinah to the world. From Avos D’Rebbi Nosson we see that man still plays a significant role in causing the Shechinah to rest in this world. The Avos D’Rebbi Nosson states, “The Pasuk says, ‘And make for Me a Mikdash, and I will dwell among them.’ Why is Hashem

only resting His Shechinah on Klal Yisrael after they make a Mikdash? Shemaya says, ‘love work,’ therefore Hashem did not rest His Shechinah on Klal Yisrael until they did work.” We learn from here that although man is no longer bringing the Shechinah into this world by himself, his participation is still critical. Man’s greatness is still evident!

Love Dispels All Questions

The Medrash states, “I crave to reside next to my children. Once the angels heard this, they began to say, ‘Master of the universe, why are You leaving the upper realms and going down to the lower realms... this is Your praise that You are in the heavens....?’ Hashem responded to them, ‘Why are you puzzled about this? See how much I love the lower realms, that I went down and reside between curtains made from goat’s wool.’”

We can derive a fascinating insight from this Medrash. The angels are concerned that if Hashem resides on earth it will reduce His glory and honor. They know that Hashem is not concerned with His own honor, however, they must feel that this will lower His esteem in the eyes of people, impacting their relationship with Hashem. They therefore are puzzled; why would Hashem do this? However, Hashem responds that by lowering His glory and resting His Shechinah in curtains of goats, He is expressing to Klal Yisrael the extent of His love and therefore there is no question.



Shir HaShirim Insights

In loving memory of Mr. Marvin Halpern

Last week we discussed the importance of studying Shir HaShirim, especially for one who is not engrossed in full-time Torah study. We explained that through its study one will understand how great he is despite his temporal spiritual state. The importance of this is inestimable as the Rabbeinu Yonah writes that knowing one's inherent greatness is the first gate to Avodas Hashem.

From the following words of one of the greatest Rishonim, Rabbeinu Yedaya HaPenini, we see the importance of not only studying Shir HaShirim by oneself but also spreading its study to one's friends and inner circle as well. He writes (*Mivchar HaPeninim, Shar Bechinas HaChaburah*), "Only become close to one who recognizes his greatness, then, his company will be beneficial."

Rabbeinu Yedaya (*Shar HaChochmah*) then makes an astounding statement, "There is nothing that benefits a person as much as knowing his own greatness...!"

There is no better way to accomplish this than through the study of Shir HaShirim.



ELIEZER INSTITUTE **Emunah Highlights**

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The Shaarei Teshuva on Shulchan Aruch (*Orach Chaim 118*) quoting the Mahari Tzemach reveals to us a great benefit to a person in troubling times, that is awaiting our use three times each day.

He writes that when he recites the Bracha of Es Tzemach Dovid in Shemoneh Esrei, "[Speedily cause the sprout of Dovid, Your servant, to flourish and exalt his power with Your salvation] because for Your salvation we await all day, I also have in mind the salvation of Hashem which He performs with us to save us from numerous harms every day and every moment and I have found great benefit in this during many troubling times."

It seems the meaning of this Bracha is that Hashem should bring the ultimate redemption because we have Bitachon regarding all matters in our life. We see from here that it is the merit of Bitachon in our everyday matters that will bring about the ultimate redemption.

Similarly, we find in the Medrash (*Tehillim 40:1*): "And they will say on that day: Behold this is our G-d who we have awaited for, we awaited Him and He saved us! Even if Klal Yisroel only have the merit of awaiting Hashem's salvation they are worthy to be redeemed in the merit of awaiting!"