

Pursuit of Purpose

INSPIRING A LIFE OF MEANING AND CONNECTION

Our Global Mission

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

לעילוי נשמת גיטל בת הרב אליעזר מנוח | לעילוי נשמת הרב יוסף חיים בן מאיר | לעילוי נשמת רפאל חיים דוב בן ריסא שושנה | לרפואה שלמה יהושע דוד בן אלטא יענטא

The Rabbeinu Bachya in his introduction to this week's Parsha says that all 613 Mitzvos can be split into 3 categories. The first category is comprised of מצוות מקובלות, received commandments. These are the Mitzvos that one would not have discovered on their own without the Torah's commandment. Examples of these would be Tefillin, Tzitzis, Milah, Sukkah, Shofar, Lulav, and any other similar Mitzvah. The Mitzvos from this group declare that Hashem created the world, He is all powerful, and that He is actively involved in our daily lives...The Torah calls this category מצוות מוכרות, logical Mitzvos. These are Mitzvos that one would have discovered on their own without the Torah's commandment. Examples of this type of Mitzvah would be stealing, oppression, murder, kidnapping, and similar Mitzvos. The Torah names this category מצוות שאין טעמן, משפטים. The third category are מצוות שאין טעמן, commandments that their reasons are not revealed. Examples would be Kilaim, not eating meat and milk together, the goat that is sent, and Parah Adumah. The Torah calls this category מצוות חוקים. This is what is mentioned in Devarim, "When your son asks you tomorrow saying, 'What are the מצוות, חוקים, משפטים that Hashem our G-d commanded you?' You should respond to your son, 'We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt and Hashem took us out, etc.'" The explanation of this Pasuk is as follows: Hashem began to become publicly known among the nations when we left Egypt. Since He was revealed because of us, therefore we are obligated to accept His Mitzvos, which are split into 3 categories.

The idea being expressed at the end of the Rabbeinu Bachya requires further analysis. Why is it necessary to emphasize the point that the Mitzvos are split into 3 categories, he already mentioned it earlier? In addition, the Rabbeinu Bachya's explanation as to why we are obligated in the Mitzvos needs further clarity, as the simple understanding of the Pasuk is, that since Hashem freed us from slavery we are now obligated to Him. What dimension in the

understanding of Mitzvos is the Rabbeinu Bachya adding by saying we are obligated because Hashem was revealed to the world because of us?

We can explain the Rabbeinu Bachya in the following manner: Considering that we had the privilege of being the catalyst of introducing Hashem to the world, we became obligated to continue that which we started and maintain an increased awareness of Hashem in the world. The Mitzvos are the vehicle by which we fulfill this mission and spread awareness of Hashem in the world. By emphasizing that the Mitzvos are divided into 3 categories, the Rabbeinu Bachya is explaining how they accomplish this goal of the world recognizing Hashem. מצוות מצוות declare Hashem created the world, משפטים create a functional orderly society that will be prepared to recognize Hashem and חוקים express a submission to a higher power.

We find a similar idea expressed by Rashi in his commentary on the Pasuk of שמע ישראל ה' אלקינו ה' אחד. Rashi explains the Pasuk as follows, "Hashem is our G-d now, and not the G-d of the nations. However in the future He will be one G-d. As it says, then I will change the nations to speak a clear language, so that they may all call out in the name of Hashem, and as it says, on that day Hashem will be one, and His name one." Rashi is clearly saying that part of our קבלת משימה, is accepting the responsibility that Hashem's name will be known to the whole world, and this is part of the mission of Klal Yisroel.

We can derive a powerful insight from this Rabbeinu Bachya that can help to energize us in our שמירת המצוות. Normally, we view Mitzvos as a means to achieve Shleimus. We see from here that there is an added global purpose to Mitzvos, which is to spread awareness of Hashem to the world. This can infuse us with an added sense of mission and purpose, as we are partners with Hashem in spreading the knowledge of Him to the world.

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

Why is the study of Shir HaShirim so crucial to our success in Avodas Hashem? There are numerous Chazal that relate to us the infinite reward for each Mitzvah and unfathomable punishment for every Aveirah. Why would focusing on those truths not suffice to spur us to ever greater levels of avodas Hashem?

Were the human being a purely logical creature you would be correct, but we are far from that. Our materialistic Yetzer Hara that urges for the here and now, cannot be subdued through logic alone, no matter how compelling it may be, if that logic is not supplemented with tangible benefits in the here and now.

This is made abundantly clear from the words of Dovid Hamelech: "If not for Your Torah, whose purpose is the eternal world, my delight, to comfort me from the suffering of the passing world, I would have perished in my affliction." (Tehillim 119:92 with *Seforno*)

Dovid HaMelech understood that the eternal reward for even one word of Torah is worth all of the suffering in this world. So how can we understand that this realization would not suffice for him to deal with his pain and only his delight in the study of Torah let him cope with his suffering?

We see from here that even the greatest of Tzaddikim is human. The future, as real and infinite as it is, does not suffice to deal with the trials of this world if it is not supplemented with tangible benefits in the here and now.

Shir HaShirim, with its nuanced and detailed descriptiveness, brings to life the reality that the greatest pleasures of eternity, the closest relationship with Hashem Himself, is ours for the taking also in the here and now!



ELIEZER INSTITUTE Emunah Highlights

A Westwood Realty Initiative

"Then Hashem said to Moshe, 'Make a snake figure and mount it on a stand. And if anyone who is bitten looks at it, he shall recover.'" (*Bamidbar 21:8*)

Rashi comments on this Pasuk: "Chazal said: But could the copper serpent cause death or life?! The explanation is that when the Jewish people would gaze upward at the serpent in the direction of Heaven and subject their hearts to their Father in Heaven, they were healed, but if they did not do this they waste away." (*Rosh Hashanah 29a*)

The Chizkuni explains: A snake was used specifically, as opposed to any other animal, to make known Hashem's wonders, that such are His ways, He wounds with a chisel and heals with a chisel. Just as Hashem had sent a plague on the Jewish people with snakes, so too He would bring the salvation through snakes.

It would seem superfluous to convey this specific lesson here. Klal Yisroel witnessed the greatest of miracles when as they gazed upon the snake and subjugated their hearts to Hashem, as prescribed, they were immediately healed. How would it add to their Bitachon that what they were gazing upon was the image of that through which they had been afflicted?

Purely based upon logic this would not add to the miracle, however, the human is not purely based on logic. If we were, we would not worry so often since our Father is the Creator of Heaven and Earth, Who loves us and desires our good more than we ourselves do. Unfortunately, we are emotional creatures who get caught up with the messenger Hashem sends to afflict us, and this is what causes us to lose sight of Hashem's complete control. By seeing their recovery come about through the same messenger that brought their affliction, the complete control of Hashem over all that happened to them was reinforced in their emotions as well, thereby removing the core obstacle to Bitachon in Hashem.

Whenever we are faced with suffering it is critical that we take a moment to reinforce our belief that anything we may suffer from is merely a messenger of Hashem.