

# Pursuit of Purpose

INSPIRING A LIFE OF MEANING AND CONNECTION

פרשת  
שמני

VOL 80

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

לעילוי נשמות גיטל בת הרב אליעזר מנחם | הרב יוסף חיים בן מאיר | רפאל חיים דוב בן-ציון שלום | ר' ברוך בן ר' יהודה | שרה בת ר' יחזקאל | ראובן יוסף בן יהושע  
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## The Secret to Discovering the Purpose of Each Mitzvah

In this week's Parsha, the Torah says, "He brought forward the burnt offerings and sacrificed it according to regulation." (Shemini 9:16) The Ralbag derives the following from the Pesukim regarding the Korbanos, "The goal is to get us to focus on the intention of the Korbanos. Therefore, the Torah mentions at length all of the details of the Korbanos, as the Torah explains that Aharon did everything exactly as the Torah commanded. This is going to lead us to realize that everything is intended and what it is that they were intended for. If not for this reason the Torah would not have been so strict on all of the details."

The above Ralbag appears difficult to understand. How does an allegiance to all of the details of a Mitzvah cause a person to focus on the fact that everything they are doing is for a purpose? It is understandable that this would cause a person to feel subjugated to the will of Hashem or value the Mitzvah more, but how does it cause a person to focus on the intent of the Mitzvah?

It must be that when a person invests effort into something and is meticulous in all of its details, it causes him to recognize that what he is doing must be for a purpose, or else there would not be so many details. This will then lead a person to discover the true intent of the Mitzvah. Often people desire to know the intent and reason behind the Mitzvos, and feel that if they knew this they would be committed to all its details. It seems from here that the opposite is true, that committing to all its details will lead a person to his desire of discovering the purpose behind the Mitzvah.

## The Importance of Maintaining the Highest Standards of Dignity

In Parshas Shemini (10:6) the Pasuk states, "And Moshe said to Aharon and to his sons, Elazar and Isamar, 'Do not uncover your heads, and do not rend your clothes, lest you die and anger strike the whole community.'" The Ralbag comments on this, "It is a warning to the Kohanim not to serve with their heads uncovered, and their clothing ripped. Just as the Torah was strict that the Kohanim have clothing that is honorable and prideful to honor Hashem, and without this they cannot serve, so too the Torah was strict that one not serve with their head uncovered and with ripped clothing. The purpose of this is so that they do not become degraded in Klal Yisrael's hearts, which will then cause Hashem's honorable service to be degraded. It is known that Klal Yisrael ended up becoming engaged in idol worship through this error. As it says in Malachi (1:12), 'The table of Hashem is defiled and the meat can be treated with scorn.'"

This Ralbag highlights how important it is to treat everything with the highest standard of dignity and respect, as any lack in this area can lead to terrible things. In the above mentioned situation we are talking about the Kohanim expressing mourning, something that all of Klal Yisrael can surely understand. Yet, although Klal Yisrael can relate to this, this infraction still impacts them and lowers their respect for the Kohanim. This lowered status of the Kohanim can cause Klal Yisrael to reduce their respect for the service in the Beis Hamikdash. This is despite the glory and splendor of the Beis Hamikdash. Despite the Hasharas HaShechina that exists there! This would ultimately lead to idol worship.

We see from here how important it is to maintain the highest standards expected for dignity and honor. Our Shuls and Batei Medrashim should look pristine and kept clean. As Bnei Torah we need to dress nicely. Any lack in these areas can have devastating ramifications.



## Shir HaShirim Insights

*In loving memory of Mr. Marvin Halpern*

You are handsome, my beloved, most handsome, the beauty is not mine but Yours; You are the handsome one. (*Shir HaShirim 1:16 with Rashi*)

Hashem had expressed to Klal Yisrael how beautiful they are, and in this Pasuk Klal Yisrael responds by expressing how handsome Hashem is. However further clarification is needed as to why Klal Yisrael says they are not beautiful, and only you Hashem are handsome. Why can't both Hashem and Klal Yisrael both be beautiful?

Perhaps we can explain this based on the words of the Rambam in Morah Nevuchim (*Volume I 53:4*): "...For the chief aim of man should be to make himself, as much as possible, similar to G-d: that is to say, to make his acts similar to the acts of G-d, or as our Sages expressed it in explaining the verse, 'You shall be holy' (*Vayikra 21:2*): 'He is gracious, so be you also gracious: He is merciful, so be you also merciful.'"

Klal Yisroel's is beautiful but that beauty "is not mine but Yours; You are the handsome one," our beauty is only when we reflect Hashem's by following in His ways!



## ELIEZER INSTITUTE **Emunah Highlights**

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"Look! Answer me! Hashem, my G-D. Enlighten my eyes lest I sleep in death, lest my enemies say, 'We triumphed over him,' my tormentors will rejoice that I have fallen. 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*)

The Medrash Socher Tov on the above Pesukim points out that Dovid HaMelech does not say, "My heart rejoices in our salvation," rather he says, "My heart rejoices in Your salvation." The Medrash explains that in truth when we are saved from calamity it is as if Hashem Himself is being saved. Rav Chaim Volozhner explains, this is because whenever a Jew suffers Hashem suffers with him, as the Mishna in Sanhedrin (6:5, regarding a Rasha suffering his due punishment) states: When a person suffers Hashem says: "My head hurts, My arm hurts." If this is how much Hashem is pained over the blood of Reshaim that is spilled how much more so over the blood of Tzadikim.

Whatever predicament one may be in, he should think how much harder it would be for him if his beloved little child would be in that predicament. How much harder it would be for him to handle it? When we daven for Hashem's salvation we must always remember, at this exact moment Hashem is feeling more pain and wants to relieve us from our pain more than we feel and want ourselves. This helps us feel that He will truly not let us down!