

Time

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rebbetzin Tziporah Heller

Time consists of minutes, days, weeks, and years. It seems to be something unknowable measured through revolutions of the earth. Yet it's much more than that. Rabbi Chaim Vital noted that every prayer is different because it takes place at a different point in time. Hashem imbues every moment with a different revelation of His own essence. The way you can experience Hashem at Shachrit is different then at Mincha or Maariv. You might be saying the same words of shemone esrei but the moment is a different moment and you are a different person.

There are two ways to experience Hashem. One of them is the backdrop of Hashem continually sustaining the world where His presence is wherever you look. But there's also His direct relationship with you. So, although it seems the outside is unchanging and the world still seems the same, there's

still that subtle difference in hashgacha between how Hashem is interacting with you. The opportunities He presents you in the morning are different in the afternoon. Sunday is different than Monday.

Ana B'koach is a short Kabbilistic meditation by Rebbe Nechunia ben Hakana. Each stanza is a different meditation corresponding to the different sefirot that are revealed on the different days of the week. Shachrit on Sunday cannot be compared to Shachrit on Monday which has an entirely different revelation. So too every week has a different spiritual force which is why we read a different parsha every week. Who you are this week is different than who you were last week in terms of both the backdrop which will be subtly different and much more so your inner climate and Hashem's interaction with you.

Hashem's expectations from you and your potentials are different month by month. Every month has a different mazal, a unique divine force that flows down. There's a different tziruf, a different way of arranging Hashem's name, through which He is expressed. So too, every year is different.

One of the traps of life is acting as though you are living the same, day in day out, again and again. You have to be able to look at each day and ask- What am I going to accomplish today with the gifts inherent in this day? Our physical selves also notice the progression of change but adapts it to the drives and the baser side of self. It's important to realize that you have to take control of who you'll be at the end. Hashem provides us with an enormous amount. It's up to us to take control and make choices that are significant, moment by moment, day by day.

Thirteen Attributes of Mercy The Bonds of Love Between G-d and Israel Part III

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Dr. Esther Shkop

When Moshe asked Hashem, "Show me your face," Hashem answered, "I will pass all my goodness over your face and I will call out the name (Shem Havaya) in front of you." *Elokim* signifies judgment and the Shem Havaya symbolizes mercy. *Hashem Elokecha* represents the reconciliation of mercy and judgment which can only be comprehended in the Next World.

Chazal teach us that we know Hashem by the way He manifests Himself. When He shows Himself amid thunder and lightning, He appears as *Kel* or *Elokecha* which means a power. *Chazal* tell us that Hashem said, "I am called according to my actions." At *Yam Suf*, He appeared as a strong force of war. Rav Hirsh notes that the word *rachamim* comes from the root word *rechem* (womb). The ineffable name of Hashem is written in the feminine form. It's the aspect of Hashem that like the womb unconditionally nurtures, feeds and protects us.

We want mercy for ourselves and judgement for others. How do we reconcile the two? According to some commentators -what Moshe begged for was to understand how Hashem and *Elokeinu* could be one. If Hashem appears as multiple forces how can we understand it as one? In Hebrew a face is always plural *-panim*. It depends on your mood. Sometimes your face will appear angry and sometimes welcoming. It says, "*He'aver kol tuv* -Hashem showed all His goodness. According to one *Midrash*, Hashem showed Moshe all of creation and after creating each day (except Monday), it says, "And Hashem saw that it was good." Hashem told Moshe that it was all good and had a purpose. We tend to look at things from our little narrow perspective- Is it good for me? Other commentators say Hashem told Moshe He would show him something that he could only understand experientially with his heart. Rising above one's base instincts and loving someone even if he doesn't deserve it, forgiving someone even if he didn't say I'm sorry, giving away one's last piece of bread, risking one's life to

save another, these are uniquely human capacities.

Hashem told Moshe, "I will pardon that whom I will pardon and I will have mercy on whoever I choose to have mercy... but you cannot see my face and live." Rabbeinu Bachaya says that from this we can conclude that when a person dies it will all make sense, then we will be able to see *kavod Hashem*.

Chazal tell us Hashem showed Moshe the knot of the *tefillin* that is placed on the head. There are two segments- *din* and *rachamim*. Hashem showed him where the two of them were bound. For a moment he could glimpse the unity between these two seemingly disparate attributes. The *Chasam Sofer* says that Hashem told Moshe that he would see it in retrospect, after the fact he would see the hand of Hashem, but not while it was happening.

Harav Nebenzhal tells a parable of a woman

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who came to the doctor with her sick husband. The doctor gave them a prescription for medication. After a time, the couple came back to the doctor and the wife complained that the medication wasn't working. She showed the doctor the prescription, a mound of small slips of paper. Each day she would

give her husband one slip to swallow. Of course, it didn't work. Just reciting the *yud gimmel middot* and not do anything is like eating paper. The 13 Attributes were not meant to be a prayer but a prescription. We have to emulate Hashem's *middot*. Moshe asked Hashem, "Teach me your ways so I will

know you." One can know Hashem by acting like Him. We are not eternal nor all powerful, but we can be slow to anger, loving, forgiving and kind even to those who don't deserve it. Then we've internalized Hashem's message.

Remarkable Roots: Parshat Nitzavim

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Mrs. Shira Smiles
Summary by Channie Koplowitz-Stein

With all of *Bnei Yisroel* standing before Moshe Rabbenu, Moshe now reintroduces the covenant Hashem made with Avraham and seals it for all future generations. The *Torah* alludes to this by stating that it is a covenant "with whoever is here ... and with whoever is not here today." How could the covenant be binding on children not yet born?

The Shvilei Pinchas explains. The *Torah* writes, "Perhaps there is here among you a root flourishing with gall and wormwood," a root already infected with bitterness and a crack in his complete faith in Hashem. Perhaps, although he has witnessed wonders, he still has a passing fancy toward the gods of the surrounding nations. But he is the root from which future generations of fruit will emerge. If he is already infected with this bitterness, how will sweet fruit emerge? The Birkas Mordechai points out that we inherit both our spiritual and physical DNA from our parents. It is our responsibility to uproot our negative tendencies so they don't emerge in our future generations.

Sefer Shoftim recounts the incident of an idol erected by Michah. How could such a travesty happen shortly after so many miracles had been performed for Bnei Yisroel? The Vilna Gaon suggests that when the Jews were crossing the Red Sea, Michah's grandfather entertained a moment of cynical thought about Hashem's powers. He may have brushed the thought aside without totally uprooting it, and it took root in his grandson.

The Saba of Slabodka explains how a miniscule negative flaw could grow. A man studies *Torah*. He comes across a wonderful interpretation and passes it off as his own. In

the next generation, the son "borrows time" in repaying a loan promptly. Finally, the third generation has no respect for the property of others and becomes a thief.

But positive characteristics also bear fruit. Suppose two young men are studying *Torah* together. One finds it relatively easy to grasp concepts and to grow in his learning while the other encounters obstacle after obstacle. Perhaps the grandfather of one dedicated his energies to *Torah*, while the grandfather of the other was more lackadaisical. Each grandson then reaped the harvest of what had been planted, writes Rabbi G. Rabinowitz. Nevertheless, all is not lost, for the struggling student, by putting in his own effort, is establishing new, strong roots. The covenant goes on forever.

Attitude toward *mitzvah* performance plays a crucial role in the transmission of values to future generations notes Rabbi M. Feinstein. One may observe *Shabbat* meticulously but consider it very burdensome. His children will recognize this attitude and fall away from *Shabbat* observance.

Our roots in faith are strong, as they go back to Avraham Avinu. The *Torah* testifies that Avraham believed in Hashem/*vehe'emin baHashem*, and *vayachsheveha lo tzedakah*/He reckoned it to him as righteousness. According to the Shvilei Pinchas, it is this faith that we inherited for all generations. When Moshe would return to the enslaved *Bnei Yisroel* and tell them that Hashem remembered them and would soon redeem them, the *Torah* uses the same Hebrew root, "*Vaya'aminu baHashem*/they, *Bnei Yisroel*, also had faith" in spite of their distressful circumstances.

The *shofar* is blown from its narrow end symbolizing our flaw when it is still hidden. The Shvilei Pinchas sees an allusion to this in an acronym of the initial four letters in Moshe's admonition to the nation, "Lest you have within you *shoresh* (f)*poreh rosh* (u)*vela'anah*/a root flourishing with gall and wormwood." It is not enough, says the Shvilei Pinchas, to regret the sin. One must also uproot the psychological basis within our character that led us to sin, lest we be led along the same path to sin again.

The Slonimer Rebbe points out that the blessing over the shofar is to hear the sound of the *shofar*. The first day of Rosh Hashanah is the birthday of Adam. It is also when he sinned and when Hashem asked him, "Where are you?" The voice of the shofar should remind us of Hashem's voice asking us, "Where are you?" Will we hide from that voice as Adam did so many millenia ago? Allow the voice of the *shofar* to penetrate to your root and stir you to *teshuvah*.

If a person does *teshuvah* for committing a sin without uprooting the trait that caused it, writes Mesilas Bilvovom, it is probable he will fall again. Rabbi Eisenberger suggests that we channel this trait toward a positive path. For example, if someone has a tendency to be controlling, perhaps he can head a committee for a *Torah* or a *chesed* project.

As we prepare for Rosh Hashana let us remember our long chain of illustrious ancestors who stood before Hashem and entered into a holy covenant with Him. We must also never forget that we are the first link in a chain that will extends to all our future descendants.