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[Home](#) > Tefillah - 151 Purer Motivations In Kiruv

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## Tefillah - 151 Purer Motivations In Kiruv

### ***Telling Over Hashem's Praises: Making Hashem Known To The World***

ונספר תהילתך, נודה לך, - "We give thanks to You, and we will tell over Your praises." Earlier in the blessing of *Modim* we express *hodaah* (thanks) to Hashem, and now we have *sippur*, we tell over, the praises of Hashem - ונספר תהילתך.

*Sippur*, to tell over praise, is in relation to others. We find the concept of *sippur* throughout the festivals. On Pesach, we tell over the story of the exodus (*sippur yetzias Mitzrayim*).

The concept behind *sippur* is ***pirsum*** - to make known something upon the world. This theme, ***pirsum***, runs throughout all the festivals: Pesach - as we already mentioned; on Sukkos, we go out of our homes and eat in the *sukkah*, which shows us others that Hashem took us out of Egypt; Chanukah is all about "*pirsumei nisa*" - making known the miracle of the oil that lit for eight days; on Purim, we read the Megillah, which is called the *pirsumei nisa* of the Purim story; and Shavuos was the time when the first set of Luchos were given, which was given out in the open.

So *sippur*\telling over is always associated with ***pirsum***\making known.

Chazal (our Sages) revealed that the world was created to 'reveal the Name of Creator'. Furthermore, it is written, "*All is called in My Name; it was all created in My honor.*" The Jewish people are the ones chosen who will reveal the reality of the Creator upon the world. Chazal also describe that the world was created for the '*kiluso shel Hashem Yisborach*', to express the praises of Hashem.

Speaking of Hashem's praises represents the purpose of creation: that all should know about the Creator. To make the knowledge of Hashem famous to the world is not only the purpose of Creation, but it is also what upkeeps the world. To ***know*** of Hashem's Name is intertwined with the concept of ***revealing*** His Name upon the world. We all have the nature engraved in our souls to reveal His Name, since we are all geared to reveal the purpose of Creation.

Avraham Avinu revealed the light of the Creator upon the world, through teaching others about *emunah* (faith in the Creator). Thus, he was the one to be the father the Jewish people, whose purpose is to further reveal the Creator, so that all will eventually know and recognize the Creator.

This nature to make the Creator known upon the world is the nature of the soul. People have a deep inherent nature to ***know*** of the Creator, and in addition, ***to make Him known*** to the world. But it is usually hidden from the conscious state of most people. The desire to know of Hashem - and surely the desire to make Him known upon the world - is usually not accessed by a person. But the nature is

still there, deep in our soul.

### ***When 'Pirsum' Is Used For Self-Serving Purposes***

However, the nature in a person to desire revelation is not hidden totally. People are using this nature all the time: with *themselves*.

Instead of wishing to make the Creator known upon the world, people use this nature often to wish to make *themselves* known to the world.

This is the deep reason that lies behind why people want to be famous. It is the soul's deep nature to reveal the Creator, being twisted around and misused by a person's ego, to "make known" the person *himself*.

**'Pirsum'** - advertising oneself - is not only used by people as a wish to be famous; a person might use the power of *pirsum* as a means to get something he needs. In the world today, the power of *pirsum* is being used all the time, on a much more constant basis.

Much of the *pirsum* that people engage in is to achieve their desires for more money; they use *pirsum* and make themselves known for the purpose of getting money. But there are people who take *pirsum* much further; they use it for a purpose to itself.

The closer we are to the redemption, in which the Creator will be revealed to the world, the power of *pirsum* is more active, but people are misusing it. A person in our times can be sitting in his house alone, and in one second, he can make himself known to the entire world in the blink of an eye, if he so chooses. This is actually a light of the future being misused for evil purposes; for it is well-known that the forces of evil draw their strength from powers of holiness.

Any person in the world today has the power to make himself known to the entire world, in one moment. In the future Hashem will be revealed to all and His Name will be one, and that is the greatest *pirsum* that will be; but another revelation which will be made known, which is not as lofty as the aforementioned one, is that in the End of Days, everyone's life will be revealed to the world like an open storybook, as the possuk says in the end of Koheles: "*In the end, all will be heard.*"

So there are two main revelations that will take place: the main revelation will be Hashem, and the other revelation will be that the actions of all people will be revealed.

We are not yet at the redemption, but there is still a "light" of the redemption is here and beginning to shine; but the power of evil is able to get nourishment from it. The world is thus full of a very large and disturbing amount of *pirsum*, which is drawing its power from the great *pirsum* that will soon be here and twisting it around for its own egotistical motives that are in mankind.

Most of the *pirsum* going on in the world is being used to make money, as it was mentioned; but in addition, people are using *pirsum* to simply make themselves known, so that they can be famous. The desire for honor is one of the three things that take a person out of the world, as the Mishnah states in *Avos*. People are spending much time, energy and money in order to make themselves known, that everyone should know about all their good deeds.

A person might desire to make himself known to others with regards to how much Torah he knows, or to make known his good deeds (such as his acts of *tzedakah* or *chessed*), or to show off to others how well he *davens*. There are many more examples as well, of how people wish that others should know them.

It's difficult to understand why people are spending so much energy on this, but it's the reality: people are working very hard to make sure that others will know about their many qualities. (It can also stem from bragging about one's own qualities, which is rooted in the element of wind in the soul, as Rav Chaim Vital writes).

*Pirsum* is all about making oneself known; a person is prepared to work very hard so that others should know about them. They advertise themselves in newspapers, or they advertise their acts of *tzedakah*, by plastering their names on buildings; the main thing is that they want that all other should recognize their deeds.

The more a person pursues *pirsum*, the further he is from living an inner and true kind of life, and he cannot serve the Creator with purity. He becomes superficial and is entirely concerned with advertising himself.

### **'Pirsum' For Spiritual Reasons: Still Unholy**

A more subtle point relevant to this is that in the last couple of years, we see an increase of *shelo lishmah* (ulterior motives) when it comes to *ruchniyus* (spiritual areas). This is a more subtle kind of *pirsum*. People are using *pirsum* when it comes to their *ruchniyus*, and for their own personal motives. It is much better of course than the above-mentioned kind of *pirsum*, but it still a desire for *pirsum* nonetheless. They are "using the crown of the King" for their own purposes - they are using *ruchniyus* as a way to justify their need for *pirsum*. It is a subtle form of *shelo lishmah*.

So far we have explained how the nature for *pirsum* is used for self-serving purposes. When one purifies his motivations more and more, he eventually can penetrate into the depths of his soul, and then his desire for *pirsum* is to make known the Creator - not himself.

### **Making Hashem Known Vs. Making Oneself Known**

In addition, many people are engaged in making Hashem known to the world, but honor is a big factor motivating them; or, they do so because they want to gather "*zechusim*" (merits). Along the way, he makes sure to get a lot of *pirsum*.

Just as a person wishes to make himself known, so does a person wish to make his own opinions known to others, all in the name of teaching others about Hashem. A person might want others to know his opinions, and that just might be the main factor motivating him to teach others about Hashem! This person might have discovered spirituality in his own life and he came closer to love of Hashem, Torah, and mitzvos, and he might feel "*Baruch Hashem, I have seen the truth*" - but when he teaches it to others, his real motivation is to make his own opinions known, not about spreading the light of the truth.

There are also people who love to make their opinions known so that others can know what they are thinking. This really stems from conceit; this can also be the motivation in a person of why he wants to teach about Hashem to others. He simply wants others to know his opinions! This is not making Hashem known - it is making himself known.

One who is not sensitive to this will hear the person talking to him and think that he is being taught about Hashem. But if one's spiritual senses are heightened, he can tell that the person is just trying to let others know what his personal thoughts and opinions are!

Teaching others about Hashem, Torah, and mitzvos should really come from a yearning of the soul for truth to reveal Hashem on the world. But people are using it as a yearning to reveal their own opinions to others; they feel good that others accept what they have to say. So it is often not coming

from the desire to spread truth onto the world.

These words are about a subtle matter. One has to know himself well and ask himself if he's really out for *pirsum* of Hashem, or that he's really out for his own *pirsum*.

### **'Pirsum' When It Comes To Zikuy HaRabbim: Benefitting The Public**

There are people who teach others about Hashem entirely for personal reasons, because they want *zechusim* (merits). They are into "*zikuy harabbim*" (benefitting the public) but they are using the public for themselves! A person might have helped thousands of people, but this was not real *zikuy harabbim*, because he had no *zikuy* (purity) from it; he thought all along that everyone depends on him.

Therefore, whoever engages in *zikuy harabbim* needs to make this soul-accounting (as for one doesn't engage in *zikuy harabbim* at all, he needs to wonder why he doesn't do so): "Am I helping others for the sake of meriting the public, or for my own personal reasons?"

We often see are people who love to engage in conversations with others and argue with them about matters of Jewish belief and faith and they think that this is called '*Da mah shetashiv*' - "Know What To Answer" - but it's not about proving Hashem; it's entirely so that the other person will accept his opinions, and the person is enjoying the feeling of stubbornly sticking to his opinions and arguing with others. It's not about Hashem, it's about himself.

### **Utilizing Your Potential Vs. The Wish To Be Famous**

Another point relevant to this topic is that a person might confuse the abilities in his soul and end up confused in his priorities, as follows.

Man has two distinct abilities in himself: the power to utilize his potential (***I'hotzi m'koach el hapoel***), as well as the power to reveal that which is hidden (***I'hotzi m'he'elam l'giluy***). These are two separate abilities and they must not be confused as the same thing, but often they get mixed up, resulting in misconceptions.

Man is created *b'tzelem elokim* ("in the image of G-d"), and just as Hashem can reveal something from its potential, so does man resemble his Maker in the fact that he can also **utilize his potential**. However, the power of man to utilize his potential is not to be confused with the power to **reveal something from a state of *he'elam***(concealment) **to *giluy***(revelation).

The concept of bringing *he'elam*\concealment to *giluy*\revelation has many applications, but it is mainly meant to be used when one exerts himself to reveal Hashem, and to reveal the words of Torah. Hashem is hidden, and one has to work hard to reveal Him. The words of Torah are also hidden and concealed, and one has to exert himself in its study to reveal its meaning. He brings it from *he'elam* (hidden state, or concealment) to *giluy* (revelation).<sup>[1]</sup> But the power in oneself to utilize his potential is a different ability: it is used with oneself.

The power to bring *he'elam* into *giluy* is a power meant to be used by man with regards to revealing Hashem and His Torah, whereas the power to use one's *kochos* (potential) is with oneself. Often people confuse these concepts: When a person has to use his *kochos*, he will try to use his *kochos* in a way that makes 'himself' go from *he'elam* to *giluy*. Instead of focusing on revealing his actual strengths, he will seek bringing *he'elam* to *giluy*. But he doesn't do this towards Hashem - he does it with himself. He will think that revealing his *kochos* from *he'elam* to *giluy* is the same thing as utilizing his potential, when in actuality it is not.

For example, often a person will feel that the time has to come to go teach Torah to others, and he will think that this will utilize his *kochos* (potential). But he can be making a mistake, because he is trying to immediately use his *kochos* in a way that 'reveals' himself – a misuses of the concept of bringing *he'elam* to *giluy*.

One who is really using his actual strengths will first use his strengths and then he can be able to reveal Hashem and the Torah. But when one confuses the two abilities (utilization of potential vs. revealing the hidden), he is not really utilizing his potential, and he is instead attempting to bring *he'elam* into *giluy* with his own self, instead of revealing Hashem and Torah. He will try to reveal "himself" more and more, and that is what he is really seeking [though he's not consciously aware of this].

There were *tzaddikim* in the past who would do *teshuvah* when they realized that they were made famous; they would wonder what sin they committed that caused this to happen (In the current generation, it's the other way around – the more famous you are, the more righteous you are...). The *tzaddikim* of the past frowned upon becoming famous, and they viewed being famous as a punishment from the *middas hadin* (attribute of justice).

(On a deeper note, there are souls who are meant to remain hidden in their righteousness, and these are the 36 hidden *tzaddikim* in every generation, and there is another grouping of souls which are meant to lead the generation, who are well-known. That is the holy root behind this matter.)

But let us know clearly that we have to differentiate clearly between what it means to utilize our potential with the power to reveal. The power to utilize our potential is used with ourselves, and we use the power to reveal when it comes to revealing Hashem and understanding in Torah. (On a more subtle note, *Chiddushei Torah* accomplishes both).

Every day, one must seek to use his abilities, not out of egoistic concerns but because it is the will of Hashem that we use our abilities. If there is *pirsum* from using our abilities, we must lessen the effort we are putting in so that our *pirsum* is lessened; of course, don't overdo it so that it won't cause you to withhold yourself from using your energies.

Sometimes it is simply impossible to avoid *pirsum*. If a person teaches Torah to the public, he is using his potential, and there is also *pirsum* involved, and this cannot be avoided. It is surely not the will of Hashem that he shouldn't teach Torah to others just so that he will avoid *pirsum*. But a person still needs to make a self-accounting and try to increase his motivations of *lishmah* so that he doesn't become totally *shelo lishmah*, and this is a subtle inner clarification.

So a person must utilize his own energies and potential, and avoid revealing 'himself' upon the world, so that he doesn't misuse the soul's desire to bring *he'elam* to *giluy*; one should to try to hide himself as much as he can from fame. The power of bringing *he'elam* to *giluy* should be used only with revealing Hashem and Torah. This reveals the yearning of the soul in which all will recognize Hashem as the Creator, as the King.

### ***A Sincere Desire To Make Hashem Known Upon The World***

In this way, when we say the words **נודה לך ונספר תהילתך**, it will be coming from a sincere desire to make Hashem's praises known to the world, a desire that comes from our soul, being that we come from Avraham Avinu who made Hashem known to the world; not for our own personal concerns, but because we really want the world to know of Hashem.

We shouldn't care if that will happen through us, or through others. We should just want that all will recognize Hashem, no matter how it happens – whether it happens through you, or whether it

happens through others.

This will slowly reveal the depths of the soul, which yearns for the revelation of Hashem upon the world. As we say each morning in: "The *neshamah* You placed in Me is *tehorah* (pure)." From the place in yourself that is *tehorah*, pure, you can desire that Hashem be known to the world.

When a person hasn't yet clarified what his motivations are, he seeks his own *pirsum*, not the *pirsum* of Hashem. He will get rewarded of course for making Hashem known to the world, and it's better than nothing, but he is very far from truth.

### ***In Summary***

To summarize, in this generation, there is a great amount of *pirsum* (fame), and most of it is used for totally evil and self-serving purposes; and even the small amount of *pirsum* that is used with regards to revealing Hashem on the world, is usually not being done with pure motivations.

### ***Purifying Your Motivations***

For this reason, there are many *baalei teshuvah* or those who became more *frum* because they received inspiration, but later they lost their inspiration, because the influence didn't come from one who had a sincere yearning from his soul to make Hashem known and revealed upon the world.

So even if one is involved all day with making Hashem known to the world and spreading Yiddishkeit, one has to check himself well and ask himself if he's really trying to make **Hashem** famous upon the world - or **himself**.

### ***In Conclusion***

May we merit that all the *pirsum* in the world be used for its true purpose, which is to reveal **only** the One who said that this world be created: Hashem, Who is One and Whose Name is One.

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[1] See ***Getting To Know Your Torah\_06\_Difficulty In Learning***