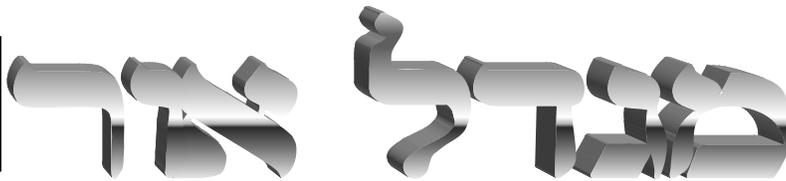


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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 4:41 - הדלקת נרות
- 4:59 - שקיעה
- 9:05 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:41 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:30 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 5:01 - שקיעה
- 5:45* - צאת הכוכבים
- 6:12 - צאת 72

* Based on the emergence of 3 stars

Times Courtesy of MyZmanim.com

A Bit of Bitachon - A weekly infusion of security from Chovos HaLevavos by R' Bachya ibn Pakuda.

What's It Worth To YOU?

The past few weeks, we have been discussing why the Torah doesn't spell out the rewards we will get in the next world for our behavior in this world. In other words, our mitzvos have no "price list" which tells us what each one is worth.

An important reason for that is because we do not earn reward Olam HaBa for good deeds alone. Rather, it must be in conjunction with two other factors.

The first factor taken into account when determining reward and punishment in the next world is the effect one has on others. If one teaches others to serve G-d and do good, that, together with his own merits for doing good and having faith despite tribulations, makes him worthy to receive reward in the next world.

The second factor, which is also key, is the beneficence of HaShem Yisbarach; His generosity and chesed. Dovid HaMelech commented on this in Tehillim (62:13) when he said, "Yours is chesed, HaShem, because you repay Man according to his deeds."

So why aren't good deeds enough? The answer is that even if a person were to fill his days with mitzvos as numerous as the sand by the sea, they would not equal even one of HaShem's great kindnesses which He bestows in this world.

That's true for a tzadik, how much more so when a person has sinned!

- To be continued

Thought of the week:

The beauty of empowering others is that your own power is not diminished in the process.

"וישלח משה את חתנו וילך לו אל ארצו." (שמות יח:ז)

"Moshe sent off his father-in-law and he went to his land."

Why did Yisro leave? Rashi quoting the Mechilta tells us he went to convert his family in Midian. The Sifsei Chachomim points out this must be the case or else Moshe would not have been credited with sending Yisro. But though Moshe may have inspired Yisro to go back and convert others, how can we say he was actually the direct cause of Yisro's trip?

On the contrary, we find in Bamdbar (10:29-32) that Moshe tried to keep Yisro from leaving. He asked him to remain with the Jews and grant them the benefit of his insight, and told Yisro that he would share in whatever good G-d had in store for the Jews. Despite this, Yisro went back to convert his family and didn't remain. How then can the Torah attribute Yisro's departure to his being "sent" by Moshe?

Earlier in the parsha, Yisro famously advised Moshe to ask HaShem to allow him to establish a hierarchy of courts. The Torah tells us that Moshe heeded Yisro's voice and did all that he suggested. The commentaries point out that the word used to connote listening to the voice, 'l'kol,' does not mean he followed the suggestion precisely. The Malbim says he gave it serious consideration, and the Netziv says he did "some" of what Yisro suggested.

If so, why does the Torah say Moshe listened and followed Yisro's plan? The Ibn Ezra teaches that when Moshe mentioned Yisro's idea, he didn't mention his own addition to it, that of creating a police arm to enforce the courts' decisions.

Moshe also didn't choose men of exactly the same caliber that Yisro suggested, nor were cases ranked according to Yisro's plan. But Moshe didn't belittle Yisro's plan, and instead gave him all the credit.

While the pesukim seem to imply that Moshe established these courts right away, the Malbim explains that, in truth, it didn't happen until a year later, after Matan Torah, and when they were preparing to enter Eretz Yisrael. In other words, when Yisro made his suggestion, Moshe listened carefully. He took it under advisement.

When the time came to establish courts, Moshe did so and never let Yisro feel that his plan was lacking. At that point, Yisro chose to return home. Why?

Yisro felt the time had come for him to go convert his family precisely because Moshe showed his faith and trust in Yisro's abilities. Yisro had made a suggestion which Moshe thought highly enough of to keep on his mind and put into practice many months later. Then, in trying to convince him to stay, Moshe begged Yisro to lend his vision to the Jewish people. That only strengthened his resolve to go home because he was empowered and emboldened by the faith Moshe showed in him.

This is why Moshe is credited with "sending" Yisro home to convert his family. It was his acknowledgment of Yisro's wisdom and his support of him which built Yisro's confidence enough so that he felt strong enough to take on anything. When we make people believe they can succeed and achieve, we empower them to do so and they will, in fact, succeed and achieve, perhaps even surpassing our expectations and what they were previously capable of.

R' Paysach Krohn became a Mohel (ritual circumciser) at a young age and found it difficult at first to find work. Trying to support his widowed mother and orphaned siblings at 21, he felt the strain of people not trusting his abilities because of his youth.

One day, a man approached him and said, "My wife is expecting. When she has a baby, YOU'RE going to do the bris!" R' Paysach got tremendous chizuk and encouragement from this and was able to push on and find opportunities to perform brissim.

A few months later, the fellow had a baby - a girl! R' Paysach was still grateful for the confidence the fellow had placed in him. He would later call it, "The greatest bris I never performed."