

The Rabbi turned to the man's wife. If your husband truly believed what I said, then he would not sell \$10,000 for \$5,000 under any circumstances. It is obvious that his belief is less than 100%." Then Rabbi Salanter faced the man, and, with an understanding smile, he said, "I think you should return to work as soon as possible."

Matters of faith require constant reinforcement. People never know when something may happen to damage their beliefs. The Torah commands us to believe in Hashem – that He is our Creator, and that He is in control of all that happens all of the time. Individuals should work on these concepts on a regular basis to strengthen them within their belief system. (One Minute with Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

Water Sanctification

A large utility truck obstructed R' Aaron Yosef Berger's view as he left his house one morning on his way to the *Kollel*. "United Water," read the lettering on the side. As he passed, R' Aaron Yosef noticed utility workers emerging from the home of one of his neighbors down the block.

"Uh-oh," he thought to himself. "They must be shutting off the water. I knew they weren't doing so well financially." R' Aaron Yosef mulled unhappily over the situation. He remembered how, not too long ago, the water company had mistakenly cut off the water supply in his own home. How aggravating it had been! The lack of running water disrupted the entire household. No washing, no drinking, no cooking. Even the basic necessities were impossible. The entire day had just turned into complete havoc. "How can I just allow my neighbor's water to be shut off? How can I allow him to go through such a frustrating experience?"

When he reached his neighbor's house, the truck was just pulling out of the driveway. "Wait!" R' Aaron Yosef called, waving his arms frantically as he tried to flag the driver down. "Please stop!"

The man stopped the truck, startled. He got out of the driver's seat and looked at R' Aaron Yosef in puzzlement. "What's the problem?"

"Did you shut off the water?" R' Aaron Yosef asked.

"Yes, that's right."

"I'll pay the bill. Please turn it back on!" he pleaded.

"What are you talking about?" the man asked in bewilderment. "Do you live here?"

"No."

"You want to pay some stranger's bill?" the man clarified, incredulous.

"Well, yes, my neighbor's."

"Actually, we're not shutting off the water because of an unpaid bill. There's a water main leak, and we have to shut off the water to fix it. But I can't believe you were willing to pay his bill like that!"

R' Aaron Yosef watched, startled, as the utility worker pulled off the necklace around his neck. A stream of vulgar language spewed forth from his mouth as he cast his religious symbol to the ground and stamped on it. "This is no religion! You Jews are amazing! Unbelievable! You must have the right G-d!"

He called over his partner, who was still sitting inside the truck. "You hear this? This man wanted to pay his neighbor's bill!"

R' Aaron fidgeted nervously, anxious that his neighbor might emerge from the house and witness the scene. He apologized to the men for disturbing their work and made a quick getaway to his *Gemara* in the *Kollel*.

As R' Aaron Yosef settled into his seat, he began his learning with a feeling of joy at his merit to perform a true *Kiddush Hashem*. (Visions of Greatness 8)

The Lorraine Gammal A "H Edition

לעילי נשות לאה בת בהיה

בס"ד

Congregation Magen Abraham

479 Monmouth Road - P.O. Box 444
West Long Branch, New Jersey 07764
(732) 870-2225



SHABBAT BESHALAH שabbat בeshalah

Haftarah: Shoftim 5:1-31

JANUARY 29-30, 2021 17 SHEBAT 5781

Friday Minhah: 4:53 pm

Shir Hashirim (midrash): 4:43 pm

Minhah (midrash): 4:53 pm

Candlelighting: 4:53 pm

Evening Shema after: 5:51 pm

These times are applicable only for the Deal area.

Shaharit: 6:08, 7:00, 8:00, 8:15, 9:00 am

Morning Shema by: 9:02 am

Shabbat Minhah: 1:30 & 4:30 pm

Shabbat Ends: 5:52 pm (R'T 6:24 pm)

Sunday Minhah: 4:55 pm

This bulletin is dedicated l'ilui nishmat Yaffa bat Kayla – in memory
of Karen Mizrahi – by her husband and children

This bulletin is dedicated in memory of Ralph Kassin
by his wife and children

This bulletin is dedicated by Sammy & Pamela Kassin and family
in loving memory of Rachel Kassin

This bulletin is dedicated in memory of Abraham ben Frieda "Abe Apples
Seruya," a wise man of noble character and kindness. An inspiration to all!
- By his beloved family

A Message from our Rabbi

וְהִשְׁרֵב עַנְיָנוּ תַּעֲשֵׂה

"And you shall do what is honest in [Hashem's] eyes" (Shemot 15:26)

The *Ramban* brings from the *Mechilta* the following words on the above *pasuk*: "This refers to doing business. This teaches us that whoever does business honestly, people are happy with him and is recognized by Hashem as if he kept the entire Torah."

We understand that people are happy and enjoy doing business with him, but how is it as if he has kept the entire Torah? Rav Yechezkel Abramsky zt'l explains that monetary dealings with others is one of our biggest tests to see if a person has a sincere inner being of honesty in all of his service of Hashem, or if it is only an outer factor that he displays. When it comes to money, all boundaries seem to dissolve and disappear, and one's own self is exposed.

Recently a young man named Yitzhak was visiting Kiryat Yoel, also known as Palm Tree, in Orange County, NY. He was on his way out of Kiryat Yoel, and wished to get a ride to the entrance of the community, from where he would travel to Brooklyn.

As he stood at the curb, a car pulled up to give him a ride. Yitzhak immediately noticed that the car, a taxi cab, was being driven by a Jewish religious taxi driver. It was a bit awkward for a moment, as Yitzhak had been looking for a hitch – a free lift – and didn't want to pay a taxi fare for a brief ride. He gently informed the taxi driver that he was waiting for a hitch, not a taxi.

"No problem," said the driver. "Come in. I'm not charging you."

As he sat down and closed the car door, Yitzhak asked, "But don't you drive a taxi for a living? What do you mean that you're not charging me?"

The driver smiled as he pulled away from the curb. Turning to his passenger he explained, "During the day I drive this car as a taxi, so I have to charge money. But I don't have an opportunity at that time to do *hesed*. Each day, however, my boss gives me a one hour lunch break. During that time, I can do the *misvah* of *hesed* by providing rides free of charge."

There is something so pure about the response of this taxi driver.

Shabbat Shalom

Rabbi Reuven Semah

Attitude of Gratitude

To what extent does *hakarat hatob* (gratitude) obligate us?

When *Klal Yisrael* reached the *Yam Suf*, they realized that they were in a dangerous predicament; they were surrounded by the Egyptian army on one side and the sea on the other. There was no natural means for them to escape. Hashem miraculously split the sea for them. The commentaries ask: Why couldn't we fight off the Egyptians?

The *Ktav Sofer* offers an astonishing answer: *Klal Yisrael* were hosted by *Misrayim* for 210 years, thus they had an obligation of *hakarat hatob* to them. Fighting them would have been a lack of *hakarat hatob*. Thus, they were left with no option but to await an open miracle.

The *pasuk* says *הִנֵּה רָאָה וַיַּנֶּס*, the sea saw and it ran away. What did it see? *Hazal* say it saw the coffin of Yosef, and specifically, his act of running away from Potiphar's wife. Why was this a cause for the sea to split? The *Ktav Sofer* explains: why did Yosef have to run? Why couldn't he merely remove the evidence by grabbing away his coat? The answer is, Yosef had the trait of *hakarat hatob*. He lived in Potiphar's house and benefited from him and his wife, thus it would be a lack of *hakarat hatob* to grab his coat from her hand. When the sea saw the extent of our *hakarat hatob*, it realized that fighting the *Misriyim* was not an option, thus it split.

The *Ktav Sofer* takes this to the next level. It says that Yitro came because he heard of *keriyat Yam Suf* and the war with *Amalek*. What was it that attracted him? Yitro could have thought it not worth his effort to come, after all, who says *Klal Yisrael* will accept him. It is true that he had helped Moshe, but how was he to know if they would accept him? When he saw that they were able to fight by the war with *Amalek*, and yet, when it came to *Misrayim* they practiced restraint, he realized that they possessed this trait of *hakarat hatob*. Thus, he knew that he would be accepted.

Why does *hakarat hatob* obligate gratitude of such magnitude? The answer is; *Hakarat hatob* is not merely for the purpose of repaying the benefactor. It is part of our own spiritual development. The biggest proof for this is that *Hazal* say that Moshe did not hit the water or the earth because he had *hakarat hatob* to them. Is it possible to have an obligation to repay an inanimate object? *Mefarshim* say that *hakarat hatob* has to do with yourself and your attitude, not with the obligation to the benefactor.

One of the prime reasons that this trait is so essential, is because, as the *Hobot Halebabot* writes, *hakarat hatob* is what leads a person to *abodat Hashem*. When a person has trained himself to be cognizant of the favors he has received of others, he will realize just how much he has received from his Creator, this in turn will inspire him to serve Hashem as much as possible to repay His favors. (*Tiferes Yosef*)

Singing

"I sing to G-d, for He is exalted..." (*Beresheet* 15:1) After Moshe and the Jewish People saw the great miracle of the splitting of the sea, their salvation from the oncoming chariots of Pharaoh and the Egyptian army, and the total destruction of that army, they broke out in song. These events were enough to make anyone, even the most stoic - or tone-deaf - among us, sing the praises of the Al-mighty. Their sudden, miraculous salvation from death could hardly be ignored.

Yet, there are events in life that the Talmud (*Pesahim* 118, *Sotah* 2) teaches are just as miraculous, but do not usually trigger the same response: when a couple is joined in marriage, or even finding a job, shows the Divine Hand at work.

Even something as "mundane" as the body's ability to perform normal functions, says the *Talmud*, is as profound a miracle as the splitting of the sea. Dr. Kenneth Prager of Columbia University Medical Center wrote how he came to appreciate Judaism's special "*Asher Yasar*" prayer said after using the bathroom "after seeing patients whose lives revolved around their dialysis machines, and others with colostomies and urinary catheters."

We all enjoy expressing our positive feelings, or "singing" whether in the form of actual song, sharing good news with others, or cheering for our home team. This natural inclination could also be channeled, from time to time, to sing about the common miracles of everyday life. Instead of saying the "*Asher Yasar*" prayer as a simple recitation, we can invest it with feeling and meaning. We can also, of course, look out for and journal about the miracles we witness each day of our lives. Every day we could sing to G-d, recognizing His daily miracles and thanking Him for another moment of life. We can do so privately, or join good friends to sing about our everyday miracles. Why shouldn't we? (Rabbi Mordechai Dixler - based on *Tiferes Shimshon*, Rabbi Shimshon Pincus)

Believe It

Science has developed instruments to measure all types of things. Some items are so large that we would be unable to measure them were it not for specialized equipment, and other things are so microscopic that without particular tools to magnify them, they would not be visible to the human eye. People would not even know that they exist! But despite all these scientific advances, no tool has yet been created that can measure a person's belief.

Rabbi Yisrael Salanter, zt"l, said that if people truly believed that Hashem was providing all they needed, then they could have whatever they wished without having to work for it. A man who worked in plaster and paint heard this speech and asked the Rabbi to confirm the truth of his statement, and the Rabbi told him it was a fact. The worker left his job and stayed home, reading and praying all day long.

The man's financial situation steadily declined day by day. When the situation became unbearable, the man and his wife approached the Rabbi. "Why did your promise to my husband not come true?" the woman demanded. The Rabbi listened patiently to her tirade, and then answered, "It will come true if you are patient. I understand you want \$10,000. Perhaps, if you can't wait, you will sell me this pending sum of \$10,000 for \$5,000 today." The man jumped at the opportunity.