

# ניצוצי אור Sparks of Light

בס"ד



No. 18

פרשת בשלח תשע"ה

## Heavenly Sustenance (2)

Rabbi Shimon Hellinger, Editor

### Fixed Wages

**Rav Tachlifa** taught: "All of a person's provisions are preordained for him during the days of Rosh HaShanah through Yom Kippur, except for the expenses of Shabbos and Yom-Tov, and the fees for his children's *chinuch*. If one spends less on these expenses, he is provided with less, and if one spends more, he is provided with more."

(ביצה טז ע"א, שו"ע סי' רמב ס"ג)

Aman complained to **Reb Meir of Premishlan**: "Someone is taking away my *parnasa*!"

"When a horse lowers its head to drink from a river," Reb Meir told him, "he stamps his hooves. Why? Seeing another horse reflected in the water, he becomes envious and angry, so he stamps at the other horse: he doesn't want it to drink up his water! You, however, surely understand that there is enough water for many horses. As our *chachomim* have said, no individual ever takes away from the livelihood that has been preordained for another."

(יומא לח רע"ב, סיפורי חסידים זוין תורה ע' 142)

The **Tzemach Tzedek of Lubavitch** writes that since the amount that a person will earn has already been set for him, he should not waste his time on extra work. Rather he should work only as much as necessary to earn the amount he needs to live at the time being, and trust in HaShem Who will provide for him in the future.

(דרך מצוותיך קז, ב)

### The Real Cause

How does a Jewish farmer go about producing a harvest? *Chazal* tell us that "he places his trust in the Life of all the worlds – and sows." Though the farmer knows that planting a seed in the ground will bring growth, he nevertheless realizes that this process is not automatic: it is being orchestrated by HaShem alone.

(ירושלמי שבת'ס שבת לא ע"א ד"ה אמונת,

לקו"ש ח"א ע' 216)

Jews have a unique ability to trust in HaShem. While non-Jews will recognize an obvious miracle, they will dismiss everything else as resulting from "the laws of nature." Jews, by contrast, can recognize that even constant, everyday happenings are brought about by the hand of HaShem Himself.

(לקו"ש ח"א ע' 240)

There are two approaches that a Jew can take when doing business: (1) Now that HaShem has commanded him to take a job, the job is the source of his *parnasa* (albeit because of the *bracha* of HaShem); (2) the job is merely a *mitzva* like any other, and his *parnasa* comes directly from HaShem, unrelated to the job.

This difference will also express itself in a person's day-to-day conduct:

If he sees his business as the source of his *parnasa*, he will be inclined to protect it even at the expense of a *mitzva*, such as investing more time in *davening* or more money in *tzedakah*. However, if he sees it as a *mitzva*, he will not let it detract from another *mitzva*.

(לקו"ש ח"ח ע' 294)

### Full Support

From time to time, the **Maharash of Lubavitch** would travel during the winter months for health purposes. Once, before he left the village, the local *baalei-batim*, whose *parnasa* came from supplying the visiting *chassidim* with food and lodgings, came to the Rebbe and complained, "If the Rebbe leaves, we will remain without *parnasa*."

The Rebbe asked them, "Did you ever hear of a cow that worries when her trough breaks? The cow's owner is the one who must worry! So too, HaShem will take care of your *parnasa*: there is no need for you to trouble yourselves."

(לקוטי סיפורים פערלאוו ע' קנא)

For the first ten years of his marriage, the *tzaddik*, **Reb Yitzchok Meir of Gur** (better known as **Chiddushei HaRim**), was supported by his father-in-law, who wanted him to be free to spend his entire day studying Torah and serving HaShem. At that time his father-in-law lost all his money and the family was left poverty-stricken, but Reb Yitzchok Meir continued studying Torah as before.

Once his wife asked him how he managed to sit undisturbed, free of any worry about their situation. Reb Yitzchok Meir answered, "Your father chose me for a son-in-law as an *ilui*, a person who can learn in one day what takes others a year to learn. Similarly, with regard to worrying: what takes others over three days to worry about, I can accomplish in one minute!"

The young *rebbetzin* had a question: "But what do you accomplish with your one minute of worrying?"

He answered with a question: "And what does three days of worrying accomplish? There is no place for any of this, for everything HaShem does is for the best."

A short time later, his brother, Reb Moshe Chaim, came to join him in his hometown, Warsaw, bought a house there, and appointed Reb Yitzchok Meir as his financial secretary. And that was how Reb Yitzchok Meir supported his family until one day he was appointed as a *rav* in Warsaw.

(החידושי הרי"ם ע' 159, 167)

## Consider This



How can work be an obligation in order to earn money, yet not be the cause for it?

## Sparks of Greatness

### The Maharam Shik - ר"ח שבת

**Reb Moshe Shik**, known as the **Maharam Shik**, was of the great Hungarian *Rabbonim* of the 19th century. As a child, he did not have an easy time learning, and had difficulty learning even *Gemara* alone. He put in exceptional effort and was persistently diligent, and thereby mastered a great amount. He was a student by the **Chasam Sofer**, who loved him dearly. He was a *Rov* in two cities and had a *yeshiva* of 800 *talmidim*. He is well known for his sefer "*Shailos u'Teshuvos Maharam Shik*". He passed away on *Rosh Chodesh Shevat*, 1879 (תרט"ט).

The Maharam Shik was once traveling with his Rebbe, the Chasam Sofer, and he fell asleep, inadvertently, resting his head on the Chasam Sofer's shoulder. When the other *talmidim* wanted to wake him, the Chasam Sofer said, "This is a walking Sefer Torah." It is also said that the Chasam Sofer used to call him "my *seforim* bookcase".

When the heads of the community wanted to give the Maharam Shik a raise in salary, he stipulated that he would only accept it if the *melamidim*, *shochtim*, *dayan*, and *shamash* of the community would be given a raise as well.

## Library Sparks

The Jewish nation had to wage war on two separate occasions as it left Egypt and made its way to receive the Torah on Mount Sinai. The first war was against Pharaoh and his soldiers, and the second was the war against the Amalekites. This week's Torah portion, *Beshalach*, gives us an account of these two battles and illustrates the different reactions the Jews had to these two adversaries.

When the Jews were threatened by Pharaoh, they were commanded, "*G-d will fight for you, and you shall hold your peace.*" But later, when attacked by Amalek, G-d enjoined them, "*Go out and fight Amalek.*" Why was there a different attitude towards these two enemies?

The two nations posed different threats. Pharaoh presented a physical threat to Jewish existence, whereas Amalek posed a spiritual danger. The Jewish People were instructed to entrust their physical safety to G-d, but it was necessary that they themselves take action against Amalek's spiritual onslaught.

Pharaoh's pursuing army did not directly challenge the Jews' relationship with G-d and their beliefs. In this instance, G-d took their defense upon Himself, saying, "*and you shall hold your peace*"--just leave things to Me. G-d proved to the Jews that military might and victory is not what distinguishes Jews from all other nations.

Amalek, however, symbolizes a totally different sort of war. Amalek only dared to attack the Jewish People after they had passed through the Red Sea and were on their way

to receive the Torah. It was precisely at that juncture that Amalek tried to intercept them. The Torah uses the words, Amalek "met you (*korcha*) on the way"--from the Hebrew word *k'rirut*, meaning coldness. Amalek came and cooled off the enthusiasm the Jewish people had for holiness, at a time when they were at the apex of spirituality. Against such a threat the Jews had to retaliate themselves, and immediately.

Whenever anything, anyone, or any power prevents Jews from learning Torah or performing mitzvot, we cannot wait for G-d to come to our aid. All steps must be taken, including the prospect of waging physical war, to ensure that Jews be able to continue learning and maintain their Jewish way of life without hindrance.

The struggle against Amalek is of such importance that we are reminded of what they did to us every day in our prayers. The lesson we draw from this week's Torah portion is that in the battle against Amalek there can be no compromise. We each have our own personal, internal "Amalek," the evil inclination, which stands ever ready to deter us from the right path by cooling off our ardor, enthusiasm, and the love of G-d that burns within the heart of every Jew. To combat him we must remember how to deal with this old enemy--to take an immediate stand, and to once and for all banish Amalek with any means at our disposal. Only after he is vanquished can we continue on our way to Mount Sinai.

## Halacha Sparks

### Paying Immediately

*Rabbi Chaim Chazan*

**I returned home from an event and realized that I only have a large bill with which to pay the babysitter. Am I obligated to pay with that (and have her owe me the difference) or can I push off paying her until the next time?**

One who withholds payment due to a worker or employee, besides stealing, it is also in transgression of a specific prohibition related to withholding wages: "*Lo sa'ashok es rei'acha* - You shall not cheat [i.e. withhold wages from] your fellow." (*Vayikra* 19:13).

Furthermore, there is an additional obligation to pay wages on time and prohibitions against delaying payment: "*B'yomo titen scharo, v'lo sovo alav hashemesh* - On that day you shall pay his hire; the sun shall not set upon it" (*Devarim* 24:15); "*Lo solin pe'ulas sachir itcha ad boker* - A worker's wage should not remain with you overnight." (*Vayikra* 19:13). This *issur* is known as "*bal talin*". One transgresses *bal talin* at the end of the day or night when the work was completed. A violation of the prohibition *midoraisa* only occurs at the specific time the wages are due. Once that time has passed, and one has already violated the *issur min hatorah*, there continues to be an *issur derabonon* until he pays.

In addition, one only violates the prohibition if he has available funds. However, one should not hire someone knowing that he won't have the funds to pay on time, unless the worker is informed prior to being hired and agrees.

If one has money in the bank or in the hands of a friend, he is obligated to use that money. Furthermore, if one had money when hiring the worker and then spent it, he transgresses the prohibition. Even when one has no available funds, it is a *midas chassidus* (an act of piety) to borrow in order to pay on time.

One only violates the prohibition if the employee asks for his wages. However, if there is a concern that the employee wants the payment but is silent out of shame, it is considered as if he requested the payment. Furthermore, according to the *Zohar* one should be extremely stringent to pay wages on time, even if the employee desires that the employer hold onto the wages (rather he should pay him and then take it back to hold it).

In conclusion: Considering the fact that there are so many variables and it is easily possible to transgress an *issur d'oiraisa*, one should always be careful to pay on time for any work done.

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