

אור פני משה

שיחות מוסר על התורה

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Shmuessen from
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פרשת במדבר
שבועות
פרשת נשא

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Wishing all of
כלל ישראל
א גוט יום טוב!

פרשת במדבר – שבועות

וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה בְּמִדְבַר סִינַי בְּאֶהָל מוֹעֵד בְּאֶחָד לַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁנִי בַּשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁנִיית לַה':
(במדבר א' א')

Parshas Bamidbor is almost always the *parshah* that is lained in the Shabbos immediately preceding Shavuos when we celebrate our receiving the Torah, and indeed, the Medrash teaches us that in the very first *passuk* of the *parshah*, there is a hint about how one must approach his Torah learning. The *passuk* tells us that Hashem spoke to Moshe במדבר/in the desert. In order to acquire Torah, the Medrash teaches, one must make himself like a *midbar*/a desert.

One Who is in the Desert is Helpless – and Completely Dependent on HaKadosh Boruch Hu

What idea is connoted in 'making oneself into a *midbar*'? Rav Yaakov Neiman zt"l, the Rosh Yeshiva of Petach Tikvah, explains in his Sefer Darchei Mussar that one who finds himself in a desert is completely helpless. When he is hungry or cold etc., there will not be anyone nearby who can provide with his needs, whether for pay or for free. This individual is therefore absolutely and completely reliant on HaKadosh Boruch Hu. It is only with such complete dependence and connection to Hashem that a person can fully appreciate and understand the depth and breadth of Torah. Why is this so?

On a simple level, we can explain that only through complete *bitachon* in Hashem is one able to immerse himself in the Torah without being disturbed by worries and concerns over his *parnassah* and other needs. The knowledge that HaKadosh Boruch Hu is in complete control over all his needs and affairs grants him the peace of mind necessary to be able to focus completely upon the intricacies and depth in the wisdom of the Torah.

Understanding the Wisdom of Hashem on a Deep Level

Rav Neiman, however, explains this in an additional angle. Unlike other wisdoms of the world, the wisdom of the Torah is not simply abstract pieces of knowledge and information which require one to simply 'find out' the facts. The wisdom of Torah is actually a living entity, כביכול a figment of Hashem's Knowledge which enters one who is deserving of it. This does not happen on its own; rather, HaKadosh Boruch Hu actually teaches the individual and places His Wisdom within the mind and heart of the human being. Obviously, this requires first and foremost, direct, intense study of the actual words of the Torah, but that is not the whole picture.

Talmidim learn much Torah from their rebbe during the time of the actual shiur. A true talmid, however, understands that there is always more wisdom that he can glean from his rebbe. He accompanies his rebbe whenever he is able, in order to hear and discern as much Torah as he can, both from the rebbe's words as well as his conduct.

Klal Yisroel became Close to Hashem through their Dependence upon Him

Similarly, in order to absorb the fullest possible measure of Torah from HaKadosh Boruch Hu, Klal Yisroel needed to be 'in proximity' to Him. This does not mean a physical location, as Hashem *Shechina* fills the entire world; rather, it was necessary for them to be close to HaKadosh Boruch Hu in their hearts and minds. How did Hashem accomplish this? By making them be completely dependent on Him for their daily sustenance.

Rav Neiman explains with following analogy:

One who wishes to hear the king's words about a given topic may find it extremely difficult to do so. A common person is generally only able to see or hear the king

himself during those occasional instances when the king makes a public appearance. Or perhaps he may be granted the privilege of being granted an audience with the king – also an opportunity which does not occur too often. Moreover, even when he does hear the words of the king, it is the persona of the king in a formal setting, when he is weighing every word to ensure that a precise message is conveyed. He can never really know what the king really feels or believes in his heart.

What about, though, one who was bestowed the privilege of being a regular diner at the king's meals? Or suppose the king noticed a homeless child, and out of pity for the child's complete helplessness, he took pity on him and brought him into the palace. The king commanded that this child be made a member of the household. Do these people also only witness the king occasionally?

The answer is no; such individuals will clearly have the opportunity to hear the words of the king on a regular basis. They will also be privy to the king's words during his non-public life. By regularly witnessing the king up close in an informal setting, he can have a much better and deeper knowledge of the king's true opinions and feelings on many topics, much more than one who only hears from the king when he is issuing official, public statements.

Similarly, explains Rav Neiman, Hashem caused the Bnei Yisroel in the *midbar* to have only *mann* to eat. The *mann* was the food of the *malachim*, כביוכל directly from the 'table' of HaKadosh Boruch Hu. It was not a natural form of sustenance, and they could never 'see' their next meal in front of them until the time of the meal arrived. Such an existence necessarily brought the Bnei Yisroel to focus their minds on trusting in Hashem and davening sincerely that their next meal should come to them. This trust and dependence on Hashem brought them close to Him, and through this closeness, they were able to reach a depth of understanding and insight in the wisdom of Hashem that would not have been possible otherwise.

For us to achieve an understanding in the Torah, we, too, must place ourselves at Hashem's table. This is done by seeing oneself as if he is in the desert. When one realizes that no one can help him other than Hashem, as if he is 'in the desert' with no human being around, he relies completely upon Hashem, and becomes close to Him. This is one of the conditions necessary for true success in Torah.

The Shechina is the 'Place' of the World

The Ohr Hachaim on this *passuk* focuses on a different question, from which he derives a very similar point. The Ohr Hachaim asks as follows: The *passuk* here identifies both the location and the time in which Hashem spoke to Moshe. Hashem spoke to Moshe ביהל מועד / *In the Desert of Sinai in the Ohel Moed*, - the place, and באחד לחודש השני בשנה השנית / *on the first day of the second month, in the second year* - the time. And yet, when we focus on the wording of each one, we will notice a difference in the way each of them is spelled out. When detailing the time of the occurrence, the *passuk* mentions first the day of the month - the specific point in time, and afterward, the year - the general time. In detailing the place, however, the *passuk* seems to follow the opposite sequence. First the *midbar/desert* is mentioned - the general location, and afterward the *passuk* specifies the precise location in the *midbar* where Hashem spoke to him - in the Ohel Moed. Why does the *passuk* reverse its sequence?

The Ohr Hachaim explains that in fact, the *passuk* did not reverse its sequence. In the description of location as well, the *passuk* is mentioning the specific place first. How is this so?

The answer to this point is based on the concept which is conveyed to us in the *passuk* הנה מקום איתי / *Behold there is a place with Me*. Chazal understand from Hashem's words, that Hashem is not within any location; rather, Hashem is considered the 'Place' of the world. Hashem's existence is greater than the world, and therefore, the location of the world itself is in the Presence of Hashem. Therefore, the 'Ohel Moed' is in effect, larger than the *midbar*, and is considered the general location, while the large desert is considered the specific location in comparison.

To demonstrate this idea, the Ohr Hachaim cites what Chazal teach us that in an incident in Sefer Yehoshua, the entire nation gathered in between the two poles of the *Aron*, a space of two and one half amos. The reason for this is because the *Shechina* rested in that space, and therefore, the space was 'larger' than the entire world. The physical dimensions of the space are entirely irrelevant where the *Shechina* rests, because such a location is under an order that is completely beyond nature. In that order, space and time are simply not limitations.

Tzaddikim Merit this Miracle throughout the Generations

This miracle is not limited only to the actual *Aron* of the Beis Hamikdash but has rather been experienced by many who were in the proximity of great *tzaddikim* through the generations.

Rav Hershel Zaks zt"l (grandson of the Chofetz Chaim) related to me how he once found Rav Elchonon Wasserman on his hands and knees in the study of the Chofetz Chaim with a tape measure in hand. Rav Elchonon explained that given the number of bachurim in the yeshiva in Radin, it was simply impossible for all of them to fit into the Chofetz Chaim's study at the same time. The fact that they were all able to come inside to hear the Chofetz Chaim's weekly shmuess was a clear miracle. Rav Elchonon wished to determine the exact dimensions of the room so he could have a full appreciation of this miracle.¹

It is said that the Chasam Sofer testified about his Rebbe, Rav Nosson Adler zt"l the same phenomenon. The room contained many more talmidim than physically possible. In fact, the Chasam Sofer added that when they kneeled on Yamim Noraim, there was space around each one, such that no one should hear the words of the person near him. This was a reflection of the miracle that occurred in the Bais Hamikdash, עומדים (אבות ה' ה') צפופים ומשתחווים רוהים /they would stand squished, but when bowing, there was space.

The Shechina is not Subject to Physical Limitations

The lesson we can learn from this is not limited to physical space but extends to all physical limitations. The *Shechinah* is not bound by such limitations, and consequently, one who lives with *Shechina*, also needs not worry about these limits.

This is relevant to our lives, and is certainly a prerequisite for accepting the Torah, as explained earlier. When a person places himself under Hashem's Hands and guidance, he can rely upon Hashem's sustenance and *hashgacha*, without worrying just how he will be taken care of. He simply needs to fulfill the will of Hashem and rely on Hashem for his needs; how they will come about is completely beside the point.

¹ *Rav Herschel would then whisper to me conspiratorially, "Rav Elchonon could not imagine that bachurim would skip the shmuess!"*

Rav Herschel's point was that we tend to imagine to ourselves that if only we would have the Chofetz Chaim to inspire us, we would always conduct ourselves in the most elevated fashion, and that it is only because we do not have that level of inspiration that we fall short of our potential. We thus 'excuse' ourselves somewhat from our shortcomings. However, in truth, the same *yetzer hara* that exists now, was there the same way even in the yeshiva of the Chofetz Chaim himself. *Bochurim* would skip the shmuess etc., even with all the great inspiration available to them. If that is the case, the converse idea then emerges. If we wish to be inspired, there is inspiration available for us as well. We just need to be sure that we don't pass it up through excuses and various other ploys of the *yetzer hara*.

Irrespective of Rav Herschel's point, the miracle in the Chofetz Chaim's study existed. The large number of *bachurim* who did attend the shmuess could certainly not have fit in there through physical and natural means.

The Existence of Kollel Yungerleit – Transcending Natural Laws

Even when under circumstances in which there would be no possible means for a person to survive, he can choose to live an existence beyond the domain of physical circumstances.

When Rav Ahron Kotler came to America, he wished to transplant a new idea from Europe – the concept of kollel yungerleit. This meant that there would be young men who would continue to completely devote themselves to Torah learning for many years after they are married.

Rav Ahron was faced with stiff opposition to this idea from all sides, and many tried to dissuade him from this task. Rav Ahron, however, understood the truth of his mission and he was undeterred by the resistance. He forged ahead, convincing young men to join him on his holy task.

“How will these young men survive?” he was asked. “How will they support a family? They need degrees so they can become professionals!”

Among the many arguments that were posed to him was the following:

“Such a system may have worked in Kletzk. Here in America, however, what counts is one’s profession. ‘What’s your line of work? How do you make money?’

“We’re sorry, Rosh Yeshiva, but your system has no place in America!”

How did Rav Ahron respond to this?

“The location of the Aron is not in the measurements!”²

Rav Ahron was referring to the concept we are discussing. When one is living his life in the shadow of the Aron, i.e. he is living a life consisting solely and completely of Torah and ruchniyus, he is removed from the limitations of this world. True, when one seeks to make an exact cheshbon and calculation of how he will earn his livelihood, he will then need a certain amount of fixed income. By physical calculations, he will need a job that pays a certain sum of money. However, when he lives in the world of Hashem and the Torah, he is completely beyond those calculations. He has complete confidence that Hashem will provide for him, and indeed, Hashem provides for him in ways which may seem completely unfathomable.

Rav Ahron’s life vision was proven correct when through the years arose an entire generation of kollel yungerleit who followed his call and devoted their married years to complete submersion in the world of Torah. Their existence and their ability to raise their families under their conditions is, indeed, a miracle; one which is only possible for those in the shadow of the Aron.

This idea was expressed by the Satmar Rav as well, in the following anecdote:

The Satmar Rav was well known for his zealous positions regarding the State of Israel. Whereas there were many that felt that there was an element of Hashgacha Pratis in the return of Eretz Yisroel to Jewish hands, the Satmar Rav held that this was completely unfounded. He attached no value to the Jewish victories whatsoever.

When the Israeli army executed their spectacular rescue of the Jewish travelers who were held in captivity in Entebbe, the world was amazed over the great strategy and success of the Israeli army. Many wondered how the Satmar Rav would react to this

² This is the expression the Gemara (Bava Basra 99a) uses when referring to the miracle regarding the measurements of the room of the *Kodesh Hakodashim* in the Beis Hamikdash. When one would measure the space all on either side of the Aron, the measurement would be identical to that of the measurement of the entire room from one side to the other, including the space of the Aron. Hence, ‘The space of the Aron was not included in the dimensions.’

event. Perhaps he would be forced to concede that this was indeed a Heavenly-orchestrated miracle.

When questioned about this, the Satmar Rav replied as follows: "Whether or not this was a miracle is a hard call. It depends on all the different factors which were in place before the event. What kind of weapons were in the hands of each side? Whose army was superior in fighting tactics and military strategies? Many factors such as these must be considered before determining if what occurred was an actual miracle, or if it was within the natural order that Hashem created and runs.

"However," the Satmar Rav continued, "there is one thing which I can tell you with certainty. When a yungerman who is sitting and learning with ten children at home and no dependable form of parnassah, is able to raise his family and marry off each one, that is an unquestionable miracle!"

Hashem Will Help Those Close to Him

The idea behind the concept we are discussing is that Hashem will bring about the fulfillment of His will without any hindrances by natural factors. *Tzaddikim* who live on an elevated plane are above the natural world, and therefore are not affected by it. Hashem has no shortage of ways to get around it for those who are deserving.

My rebbe Rav Elya Roth zt"l himself lived and breathed in this plane of existence, and he used to share many stories in order to bring out this message:

Rav Meir Simchah of D'vinsk was unable to attend the levayah of the Kovner Rav, Rav Yitzchok Elchonon Spektor.

When his talmidim who were present at the levayah reported back to him, he mentioned the name of certain maggid who was very popular at the time. This maggid was an excellent speaker, and he had the ability to be arouse his listeners into true hisorerus. It was obvious that he would have been asked to give a hesped at this choshuve levayah. Rav Meir Simchah turned to his talmidim and said, "I know that this maggid did not say a hesped. How exactly did this come about?"

His talmidim looked at each other in surprise. They had come to him immediately after the levayah concluded, and it was clear to them that no one had reported to him before they did. How did he know what had occurred at the levayah?

Rav Meir Simchah explained to them: "Many years earlier, there was a din-Torah between this maggid and the Kovner Rav. The outcome of the din-Torah happened to have been in favor of the Kovner Rav, to the displeasure of the maggid. As the maggid stalked out of the beis-din, I overheard him muttering to himself, 'I'm not saying any hesped for him!'

"When I heard him say that" Rav Meir Simchah continued, "I had a strong sense that Shamayim would cause those words to come true. It was quite clear to me, and I had no doubts about it. Now that the levayah passed, I simply wish to know how exactly it was orchestrated from Shamayim that this maggid would not speak!"

The stunned talmidim confirmed that, in fact, this maggid did not speak. He had been on the roster of speakers, but he was prevented by a mishap that had occurred at the time of his turn. This maggid was somewhat short, and a platform had been erected for him upon which to stand. As he was ascending the platform, the whole structure collapsed under him. Although he did not sustain any serious injuries, he was still badly beaten and bruised, and he was in no condition to deliver a public hesped. He

was forced to excuse himself from his designated slot, and the program continued onto the next scheduled speaker.

The following incident involved a simple Jewish couple living in Czarist Russia:

At that time, the restrictions against Jews were so severe and encompassing that there were very few channels by which a Jew could make a parnassah through legal means. Many were compelled to turn to illegal means to provide for themselves and their families.

This particular couple used to sell whiskey from their basement on the black market, and this was their source of parnassah. It happened once that the government staged a surprise inspection on their town, leaving the couple without enough time to hide their whiskey before the inspectors would arrive. The couple was frantic. If they would be discovered, they would face losing their only parnassah, let alone heavy fines, and perhaps a prison sentence.

Having no plan or idea on how they could save themselves, the husband decided that he would go the shul to say Tehillim.

“But how could you leave me?” his wife begged.

“We are in the Hands of Hashem,” he told her. “I must go daven.”

As the man was saying the Tehillim, a sense of calm enveloped him. He understood that his tefillos were accepted and that they had been saved. He returned home in a light and happy frame of mind.

As he entered his home, he said to his wife, “So Boruch Hashem, it’s ok!”

He did not say anything further.

After a few moments, his wife finally said to him, “Aren’t you going to ask what happened?”

He looked at his wife and said, “I know that Hashem saved us. How so? That’s not my concern. If you want to let me know, you may!”

His wife recounted to him how just minutes before they were at the house, she had suddenly realized that there was another issue as well. There were cockroaches in the basement, of which they had never gotten around to getting rid of them. If that was discovered, she realized in horror, then in addition to the charges they would face due to their illegal business, they would have to face charges for unhealthy conditions as well.

In a panic, she took the bucket of kerosene that was in their home and spilled it throughout the basement. The pungent smell killed all the roaches immediately. Soon afterward when the inspectors arrived, they walked towards the basement and caught a whiff of the kerosene. The smell was so repulsive to them that they could not continue walking toward it.

“We’re not going down there,” they decided. “Even if they have any liquor down there, they couldn’t sell it because it will have absorbed that strong smell. So, let’s not even bother.”

And with that, they left the house, leaving the relieved housewife alone at home.

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Both Rav Yitzchok Elchonon as well as this 'simple' Jew, had the trust in Hashem to realize that the *yeshuah* would come. So strong was their *bitachon* that they did not even need to know how exactly the *yeshuah* happened. Without even seeing it, they were confident that Hashem orchestrated a *yeshuah*.

In Conclusion

This lesson complements the first idea we discussed. As explained earlier, one must have a complete dependence and reliance on Hashem alone. Through this he will be able to focus on his learning without being disturbed by his worries over his *parnassah*, and in addition, he will develop a special closeness to Hashem as a result, which will cause him to achieve deep understandings of the wisdom of Hashem contained in the Torah. As one grows in his *madreigos* of *Avodas Hashem*, he should see to strengthen his *bitachon* to the point that he has complete confidence in Hashem, regardless of the circumstances. He understands that he is completely in Hashem's Hands, and consequently, the circumstances and current limitations are irrelevant. Hashem can, and will, certainly find any number of ways to help him irrespective of the circumstances.

When one does reach these *madreigos*, he certainly merits a high level of Heavenly protection and supervision, and he can reach ever-higher planes of understanding in Torah. *Bez"H* we should reach these *madreigos* and be *zoche* to a true *Kabbalas HaTorah*.

פרשת נשא

יָאֵר ה' פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיְחַנֶּךָ: יִשָּׂא ה' פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיִּשֶׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם: (במדבר ו' כ"ה-כ"ו)

The Two 'Faces' of Hakadosh Baruch Hu

The middle *pasuk* of the *Birchas Kohanim* says: "יָאֵר הַשֵּׁם פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיְחַנֶּךָ" – *May Hashem illuminate His Face to you and be gracious to you*. The last *pasuk* has a similar reference to Hashem's 'Face': "יִשָּׂא הַשֵּׁם פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיִּשֶׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם" – *May Hashem lift His Face to you and establish peace for you*. These *pasukim* need explanation: first of all, what is the *pasuk* referring to when it says, 'Hashem's Face'? Additionally, the Targum Onkelos translates the word "פָּנָיו" in the middle *pasuk* as 'His Shechina', while in the last *pasuk* he simply translates it as 'His Face'. What are these two differing translations all about?

The Two Key Factors of a Healthy Relationship

I would like to answer based on what we discussed in the past in our Shalom Bayis series. We mentioned that there are two major factors that are critical for a healthy relationship between husband and wife: there's the 'work' factor – the actual labors that one is obligated to do for his or her spouse; and there's the 'recognition' factor – the positive words of affirmation, encouragement and recognition that one must frequently provide for his or her spouse.

For example, let's take a wife who is terrible at keeping to her chores at home. There are piles of dishes in the sink, the counters are covered in remnants from the past week's meals, the hampers are overflowing with dirty laundry, there's never a decent meal ready on time, the floors are covered in grime – it's a disaster. But, at the same time, this woman always smiles at her husband, tells him constantly how wonderful he is, compliments his accomplishments frequently and so on. While the positive expression and body language seem to be in the right place – they don't make up for the severe lack in the other major factor. This marriage will inevitably need a lot of fixing and rehabilitating. Conversely, if the house is always immaculate and all of the chores are done in a timely

manner, but simultaneously – the wife is constantly in a bitter mood and treats her husband to frequent verbal attacks, complaints and other expressions of discontent, then the marriage is heading in the direction of a massive trainwreck.

This same analogy can be given with a husband, a Cheder Rebbi, an employee – whatever the relationship may be, the participant needs to provide his 'work' and his 'positive communication'. If one is missing, then the relationship cannot last.

Perhaps this is the idea that the *pasuk* in *Birchas Kohanim* is implying. The first mention of the word "פניו" is referring to the 'positivity' aspect of our relationship with Hakadosh Baruch Hu. The *pasuk* says: "יאר השם פניו אליך ויהונך" – *May Hashem illuminate His Face to you and be gracious to you*, and Rashi explains: "יראה לך פנים שוחקות", *He will present Himself to you with a 'joyful' face*. What is this 'joyfulness' all about? Perhaps it is referring to the ultimate pleasure, being "נהנה מזיו השכינה"; the blessing is that Hashem will shine down a wonderful experience of closeness to Him.

Let me give you an example of this kind of 'positive communication'. When Yosef was sold as a slave to a caravan of Arab merchants, he must have been feeling terrible. He was a *tzaddik*; he was Yaakov Avinu's prized *talmid*! And now, he was being transported in chains to the lowest country on the planet. It must have been an acutely painful experience. However, Hakadosh Baruch Hu sent Yosef a sign. Generally, Arab merchants would trade and sell "נפט" (kerosene) along with other products that have foul-smelling odors. However, this particular caravan was carrying ולוט וצרי – *spices, balsam and lotus*. Imagine pulling up to a gas station, and upon exiting the car, you notice that rather than smelling heavily of gasoline, the entire area is filled with the pleasant aroma of flowers. It turns out that this specific gas station no longer sells gasoline – they started selling flowers instead! That was precisely what happened with Yosef: instead of experiencing this excruciating journey along with acrid-smelling kerosene, he got to have pleasant-smelling spices as the backdrop. That was a 'positive communication' from Hashem; it was a way of conveying the message to Yosef that Hashem was there with him, and that all of this pain was happening for a purpose.

The last *pasuk* in *Birchas Kohanim* was referring to the other aspect of the relationship: the 'work' factor. The *pasuk* says: "ישא השם פניו אליך וישם לך שלום" – *May Hashem lift His Face to you and establish peace for you*. This means that Hashem will look after each and every one of us and provide us with all of our needs.

How Can Hashem Grant Us Preferential Treatment?

The Gemara in Brachos actually points out that the words "ישא השם פניו" imply a form of preferential treatment, so to speak. The Gemara says that the *Malachim* asked from a *pasuk* in Tanach that expressly states that Hashem is not a "נושא פנים", as this can appear as a form of injustice. The Gemara proceeds to say that Hashem answered as follows: "How can I not be "נושא פנים" to Klal Yisroel? I wrote in the Torah that they must only *bentsch* upon becoming fully satiated, whereas they are *makpid* to *bentsch* even on a *k'zayis*!"

Let me explain this answer with a *mashal*:

There are two fellows who are partners in business. They jointly own a store that sells silverware, dishes and the like. One day, a man walks into the shop and selects a set of dishes to purchase. As he is about to check out, one of the owners offers him the set for below cost price. His partner overhears the conversation and immediately interjects: "Wait a minute! Why are you giving it to him for so cheap?"

The other owner explains that this man davens in the same Shul as him, so he felt it would be appropriate to give him the dishes for half-price. His partner, however, doesn't see it the same way. "If you give it to him for such a cheap price, your whole Shul will start coming here and demanding discounts – and we'll incur a great loss! If you really wish, you can give him a 5% discount, but that's all!"

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The very next day, a man walks into the store and asks for the price of a crystal vase. "Take it for free!" exclaims the owner who was vehemently opposed to discounts just one day prior.

When his friend points out the inconsistency, he clarifies: "This fellow is our supplier; we need to show him lots of loyalty and support. Remember how busy things get around here during the Yom Tov seasons? Sometimes, we need instantaneous deliveries to restock our inventory; we need this guy to be our friend! But the Yid who sits near you in Shul – what do I need him for? Just to bring me more customers demanding generous discounts?"

The point I'm trying to make is that when Yidden go out of their way to accomplish Hashem's *ratzon* to the highest degree, it becomes very clear that we are the "suppliers" of *ruchniyus* in this world – making each and every one of us completely indispensable. When that becomes the reality, then it makes total sense for Hashem to give us some preferential treatment; after all, our existence is of paramount importance!

From here we can learn this important *yesod* of maintaining the two factors of a healthy relationship. Just as Hakadosh Baruch Hu treats us to both forms of "פניו", so too we must always take care to provide both the 'work' and the 'positive communication' aspects of our relationships. People don't realize how *nogea* this is. It's not just about *Shalom Bayis* or relationships at the office – it's also *nogea* with regard to things like a Shul. A person can provide for the Shul he *davens* at by paying membership, helping to put away *seforim*, folding tablecloths after Shabbos or any other form of assistance; but if he's the one who's constantly complaining to the *gabbo'im*, endlessly highlighting the Shul's flaws, or just *kvetching* about things in general – then he doesn't have a healthy relationship with the Shul. So let us all focus on emulating Hakadosh Baruch Hu and perfecting our relationships on both of these fronts.

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