

Pardes Yehuda

Weekly Torah Journal By Yehuda Z. Klitnick

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פרשת כי תצא תשפ"ז

The who delays payment commits a double transgression

בְּיוֹמוֹ תִּתֵּן שְׂכָרוֹ וְלֹא תְּבוֹא עָלָיו הַשָּׁמֶשׁ כִּי עֲנִי הוּא וְאֵלָיו הוּא נֹשֵׂא אֶת נַפְשׁוֹ וְלֹא יִקְרָא עָלֶיךָ אֵל ה' וְהָיָה כִּךְ הַמָּא: (כב טו)

"You shall give him his wage on his day, nor shall the sun set upon it, for he is poor, and to it he lifts up his soul; lest he cry against you to Hashem, and it be a sin in you." (22:15):

At first glance, the Torah's command to pay a worker promptly on the day of their labor appears to be a matter of fundamental ethics. However when we delve into the complex wording of the Posuk, we will be able to understand the deeper meaning of this mitzvah. The Gemarra (Eruvin 41b): sets a foundation "Poverty deprives a person of their mind and the mind of their Creator." עֲנִיּוּת מַעְבִּיר אֶת הָאָדָם עַל דַּעְתּוֹ וְעַל דַּעַת קוֹנֵו, This statement highlights that severe economic distress deprives an individual of mental clarity, peace of mind, and emotional composure. Without peace of mind, a person cannot direct their heart properly in prayer, nor can they contemplate Divine reality with *kavanah*. When an employer fails to pay a day laborer on time, they plunge that worker into a state of anxiety over basic survival. Consequently, the employer is directly responsible for disrupting the worker's capacity to stand before Hashem in prayer as required.

The great Gaon Rabbi Shlomo Kluger presents in his Sefer "Imrei Shefer", a precise reinterpretation of our Posuk, demonstrating how every word directly supports this spiritual insight: בְּיוֹמוֹ תִּתֵּן שְׂכָרוֹ וְלֹא תְּבוֹא עָלָיו הַשָּׁמֶשׁ "כִּי עֲנִי הוּא" *"On his day you shall give him his wage, nor shall the sun set upon it, "for he is poor".* The Posuk emphasizes the worker's poverty because an impoverished individual lives from hand to mouth and relies immediately on daily earnings. "...and to the wage he lifts up his soul..." The worker's entire vitality and emotional well-being are bound up in receiving their pay at the end of the day. They await it eagerly, relying on it for daily sustenance. "...lest he "not" call to Hashem..." Rather than translating "he cry out to Hashem "against" you," Rabbi Kluger interprets it functionally: "he will be unable to pray to Hashem." By being deprived of money and overwhelmed in distress, the worker lacks the composure required to pray properly. Finally the Posuk reveals the point with a supposedly surplus word עָלֶיךָ against you. Why is the word עָלֶיךָ

inserted here? The Posuk indicates that the responsibility for the worker's inability to pray falls directly "upon you", the employer, because your failure to pay caused their state of distress.

After all this, the Torah states וְהָיָה כִּךְ הַמָּא and it be a sin in you. This is extremely difficult that the Torah has to state that "it will be a sin". Of course every commandment that one transgresses is a sin and the Torah does not end off. Why then does the Posuk end with וְהָיָה כִּךְ הַמָּא? The great Gaon answers that this concluding phrase highlights an additional layer of sin. Beyond violating the direct command to pay wages on time שְׂכָרוֹ, the employer incurs an added sin: causing a fellow human being to be hindered from serving Hashem in prayer.

All the difficulties are now Resolved. Withholding a worker's wage does not merely inflict financial hardship or distress; it strikes at the individual's inner life, shattering their tranquility, וְנִשְׁבְּתָה הַנֶּפֶשׁ, and ultimately depriving them of serving Hashem through proper Tefillah. Thus, the employer who delays payment commits a double transgression: a breach of personal monetary law, and an indirect act of spiritual disruption against their fellow man's connection to the Divine.

When evil is eradicated in one place, the spiritual impact is felt around the world.

וְרָמָהוּ כָּל אֲנָשִׁי עִירוֹ בְּאֲבָנִים וּמָת וּבַעֲרַת הָרֶעַ מִקִּרְבּוֹ וְכָל יִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁמְעוּ וְיִרְאוּ: (כ"א כ"א) *"All of the men of his city shall pelt him with stones and he shall die; and you shall remove the evil from your midst; and all Yidden shall hear and they shall fear."* (21:21) The question arises: If the transgressor is executed here, how will all of Klal Yisrael hear? The answer can be that this is one of the secret workings of the world which we cannot understand rationally: When evil is eradicated in one place, the spiritual impact is felt around the world. Harav Moshe Teitelbaum זצ"ל (1759-1841) the "Yismach Moshe" comments on this Posuk: If you want that all of Klal Yisrael should hear your rebuke and mussar and to fear Hashem, first eradicate the evil from within yourself. A similar episode occurred in Yerushalayim. One Shabbos after davening Hagaon Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld זצ"ל began a fiery drasha on Shemiras Shabbos. The elite of Yerushalayim asked why speak in this shul where everyone is strong in Shabbos? The Gaon answered if we will be stronger here, then other Yidden all over the world will also become stronger.

STORY OF THE WEEK (By Yehuda Z. Klitnick)
The Chasam Sofer and the miracle candles.

The heilige Gaon Harav Moshe Sofer Ztzal, the Chasam Sofer, was plunged into grief and sorrow when all his sons and daughters—one after another—fell sick with severe illnesses. The physicians were powerless to help, and as the family began to lose hope, most of the children began showing signs of recovery. Day by day, they regained their health. Laughter and joy returned to the household.

However, not all was well. Two of the children remained critically ill, their conditions pale and fragile. Their high fevers and agonizing pains defied all medical treatment. These were the two eldest sons—the young boy Shmuel Binyamin, later author of the Ksav Sofer, and his younger brother Yitzchok Leib later author of the Michtov Sofer.

Days passed and conditions worsened. The young boy Shmuel Binyamin lost consciousness entirely. He was no longer the brilliant child; he was now an eight-year-old boy, suffering in severe agony. Day by day, various complications set in. For seven long, agonizing days, different symptoms attacked his weakened body at once, bringing him to the brink of death. The situation of the boy was critical, and the city's top physicians threw up their hands in helplessness.

The family's prayers and tears broke through the heavens. Yeshiva students fasted, recited Tehilim, and learned round the clock. Everyone joined in fervent prayer for the son of their beloved leader. During this time, the Chasam Sofer added the name Avraham Shmuel Binyamin.

The Doctors' Despair

The greatest doctors called to his bedside stood helpless before the dying child. Seeing the initial signs of death, they threw their hands up in despair and whispered in low tones: Shmuel Binyamin has only hours left to live. We have done all we can. Our job is done—we now yield to the Chevra Kadisha. The disciples of the Chasam Sofer, standing by the dying child's bed, felt their souls nearly leave them upon hearing the bitter news. They quickly ran to the holy Chasam Sofer, interrupting his regular lecture. Softly, they reported: "Rebbe, thus said the doctors..."

The holy face of the Chasam Sofer darkened with pain. He kissed his Talmud, which lay open before him, stood up, and rushed to his son's room. Upon entering, a heartbreaking scene met his eyes: his child lay in bed, pale, breathing with difficulty, showing all the agony of a soul near departure. Yet, what caught his focus were the candles—the very candles lit by the Chevra Kadisha

around the child's bed, as was customary during the departure of a soul... The members of the Chevra Kadisha stood in the room, their eyes cast down, whispering the customary prayers for a dying person.

A Father's Prayer

The Rav's family, close students, and devotion-filled followers stood crying in the corners of the room. Tears streamed down every cheek as they awaited the grim moment... Our holy Master looked on with deep pain—a pain far beyond human endurance. Suddenly, the child's father turned to the doctors and declared: "We are in the hands of the Almighty. Although you failed in your duty, our Master in Heaven can perform miracles!"

Hearing the father's steadfast faith, the top doctor bowed his head in awe. He gathered his books and medical bags, which were already packed, and laid his hands upon the sacred manuscripts written by the Chasam Sofer himself. With deep emotion, he exclaimed: "May Hashem look upon your holy Torah and answer your prayers!"

When the doctor finished speaking, the holy face of the Chasam Sofer radiated. He whispered softly: "Blessed is the True Judge," and declared in words that left the onlookers stunned: "It is impossible that I should live to eighty and my son not live to carry my burden after me!"

Not a few moments passed, and the fragile child opened his eyes! The doctors stood in absolute astonishment at the miracle unfolding before their eyes: the fever broke, the boy's strength returned, and slowly, his color restored. Gradually, he made a full recovery! And indeed, fifty years later, when the Ksav Sofer was seventy-three years old, he departed to the eternal world—exactly thirty-three years after his father's passing in Pressburg. His father's decree and prayer had been fulfilled!

The Sacred Heritage of the Candles

Years later, when the Ksav Sofer reached an advanced age, Rabbi Ber Frank, head of the Chevra Kadisha in town, gave him those very candles that had been lit by his bedside during his childhood illness. These candles symbolized the darkest moments and the grand miracle that followed. They were meticulously crafted by a master artisan, placed in a beautiful ornamental box, and given as a gift to the head of the burial society for safekeeping through the generations. Today, these holy candles remain preserved in the hands of his grandson, the pressburger Rosh Yeshiva in Jerusalem.

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