



PARASHAT MISHPATIM

מתי זוכה האדם להתקרב אל הקדוש ברוך הוא?

כתוב בפסוק (כב:ז): "ונקרב בעל הבית אל האלקים אם לא שלח ידו במלאכת רעהו". פעם אחת אמר הצדיק רבי מאיר מפרימישילן לחסידיו: "ונקרב בעל הבית אל האלקים" – מתי זוכה האדם להתקרב אל הקדוש ברוך הוא? "אם לא שלח ידו במלאכת רעהו" – אם נקי הוא גם מעבירות שבין אדם לחבירו, שלא פגע בחבירו או במלאכתו.

Hashem's Will Expressed at Har Sinai

The Pasuk in the beginning of this week's Parashah states (21:1): "Now these are the laws that you shall place before them." Rashi comments that the word "and" indicates a connection between these laws and those described in the previous Parashah. The "and" indicates that just as the previous laws were said at Har Sinai, so too these laws were said at Har Sinai. The Chiddushei Harim asked, don't we already know that every commandment in the Torah was said at Har Sinai? What then is Rashi coming to teach us? He explained that this comes to teach us that the laws of this Parashah, which deal primarily with civil laws, which could be understood purely intellectually and logically, are laws because Hashem wants them to be. It is not human logic which determines matters, but Hashem's will as expressed at Har Sinai.

An Attitude of Gratitude

This week's Parashah contains the Mitzvah of bringing the first fruits (Bikkurim) to the Beit Hamikdash (23:19), which is discussed at length in Parashat Ki Tavo. It is interesting to note that we are accustomed to thinking that the Mitzvah of bringing the Bikkurim is in Parashat Ki Tavo. However if we take a look at the Sefer Hachinuch, he states that in this week's Parashah we have the Mitzvah of bringing the Bikkurim, while in Parashat Ki Tavo we have the Mitzvah of making a declaration over Bikkurim. What is the Mitzvah of Bikkurim all about? The fruits are brought to the Kohen and their presentation is accompanied by a declaration (Parashat Ki Tavo 26:5-10) expressing one's gratitude to Hashem. At the beginning of the planting season, the farmer approaches his field with feelings of both anxiousness and fear. Will all his hard work pay off? Will he have enough food to put on the table? However when those first little fruits begin to appear it is very easy for a person to declare a personal victory, failing to realize that he only has what he has because Hashem decided it should be that way. Therefore the Torah prescribes that he bring that first little fruit to the dwelling place of Hashem, the Beit Hamikdash, where he is then required to verbalize the reason for his success - Hashem. In fact according to the Chiddushei Harim Jews are referred to as Yehudim from the word Hoda'ah - thanks, because as Jews it is essential that we look at all we have in the world with an attitude of gratitude.