

FINANCIALLY INDEPENDENT

by Rabbi Yissocher Frand

These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Tapes on the weekly portion: Tape # 287, Women and Tzitzis. Good Shabbos!

Dedicated This Year Le'eluy Nishmas Chaya Bracha Bas R. Yissocher Dov - In memory of Mrs. Adele Frand

The 'Explicit Name' Is Only Given Over To The Financially Independent

In Parshas Korach, Moshe Rabbeinu defended himself against the onslaught of Korach and his assembled supporters. Among the things that Moshe said was, "I did not take a single donkey from them! I did not do any harm to any of them!" [Bamidbar 16:15]. There are not many rabbis today who can make the statement "I never took a dime from anyone". Unfortunately, rabbis and 'Torah professionals' must rely on the good graces of their congregations and their community. That is the way the system works.

But this 'system' sometimes compromises leaders. If the leaders are beholden to individuals, that sometimes makes it difficult for them to properly function. Moshe Rabbeinu was not like that. Moshe could say - in effect - "I never took a dime from anyone." Our Sages tell us that Moshe was personally well off. G-d allowed him to keep the "leftovers" from the hewing out of the Tablets of Stone containing the Asseres HaDibros [Ten 'Commandments'] [Nedarim 38a].

The Imrei Shammai cites an interesting passage from the Jerusalem Talmud [Yoma Chapter 3]: It was necessary for Moshe to never have received any monetary favors from any member of the Jewish people. The Talmud says that anyone who is in control of the 'Shem HaMeforash' [the Explicit Name of G-d], can never have had benefit from any individual. In other words, we do not trust anyone with this Holy Name if he has ever taken anything from anyone.

The Yerushalmi says that we are afraid that someone who once received something from someone might become angry at that person, and then - if he knows the 'Shem HaMeforash' - might curse him with that Name, with fatal results. The Imrei Shammai argues that since we know that Moshe Rabbeinu knew the 'Shem HaMeforash' [Rashi on Shmos 2:14], therefore we know that he never took anything from anyone.

Think about this. Does it make sense? Is it not more logical to say "if I GAVE something to someone and then became angry with him, then I may come to curse him with the Explicit Name of G-d"? If I HELPED him and did him favors and he double-crossed me, then I might become so enraged that I would curse him with the 'Shem HaMeforash'. However, that is not what the Yerushalmi says. The Yerushalmi says the exact opposite: If someone gave something to ME, then I may become so angry with him that I curse him".

The Yerushalmi relates that there was a certain doctor who knew the 'Shem HaMeforash' and wanted to give it over to Rav Pinchas bar Chama. However, Rav Pinchas bar Chama refused to learn it. He insisted that he did not qualify because he used to take tithes (ma'aser) from different individuals. Having benefited from various individuals he could not be trusted with the 'Shem HaMeforash', lest he come to use it against them.

What is the meaning of this? It is a very important insight into human psychology. We tend to get angry very easily at people who have done favors FOR US. A human being does not like to be beholden to anyone. Therefore, in an irony of human behavior, we are more apt to dislike and sometimes even to hate the people who have done favors FOR us, not the people for whom we have done favors. We do not want to admit, "I owe you."

The best way to illustrate this concept is through something [Rav Yakov Ruderman zt"l, (1901-1987)] the Rosh Yeshiva [Dean, of Ner Israel Rabbinical College, Baltimore] used to say in the name of the Chasam Sofer (1762-1839). The Chasam Sofer used to say, "I do not know why this person dislikes me - I never did any favors for him." At first glance, this sounds backwards. He should have said "...I never hurt him" or "...I never did him an injustice." However, the Chasam Sofer said "I never did him a favor" - because those are the people that one has to watch out for!

This is also why, on a certain level, there is so much tension between parents and children. Parents do so much for children and the children feel so beholden to their parents that there is often tension - and in some cases much worse than tension - between children and parents. It is sometimes very difficult to live with the fact of our enormous debt of gratitude to our parents.

Rav Ruderman used to say a slightly different expression, "I know that I did him a favor. I know that he will turn against me, but hopefully he will at least throw small stones, not big stones." It was taken for granted that eventually the person would be throwing stones.

This is the explanation of the Yerushalmi. We cannot trust the Explicit Name of G-d to anyone who received something from someone else. Human psychology being what it is, it is highly conceivable

that one day the person who received the favor will eventually become angry at his benefactor. We are afraid that he might use the Name unjustly. Consequently, Moshe Rabbeinu, who had knowledge of this Name, had to be able to say "I never took a dime from anyone in my life."

Transcribed by [David Twersky](#); Seattle, Washington
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This week's write-up is adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Torah Tapes on the weekly Torah portion (# 288). The corresponding halachic portion for this tape is: "Masiach L'fi Tumoh": The Coca-Cola Question. The complete list of halachic portions for this parsha from the Commuter Chavrusah Series are:

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