

THANKS FROM THE RECIPIENT'S PERSPECTIVE

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 # 366, The Melacha of Tearing. Good Shabbos!

Thanks from the Recipient's Perspective

The verse says, "Vayevarech osam Moshe," and Moshe blessed them. After Moshe saw that the entire Mishkan was completed as G-d had commanded, he blessed the people. The Medrash comments that this is a source for the custom of giving people a compliment of "Yasher Kochacha" [well done] upon successful completion of a task. After the Jewish people did everything they were supposed to do, Moshe Rabbeinu gave them a "Thank you".

The Reische Rav questions why they were deserving of any compliments. This was not a voluntary action on their part. They merely did that which G-d commanded them to do. They really had no choice in the matter! The specifications of the construction of the Mishkan were dictated down to the last detail!

This teaches us a fundamental principle in the concept of "Hakaras HaTov" [recognition of a debt of gratitude]. A person has an obligation to say thank you and 'Yasher Kochacha' when he receives something. The fact that the person who gave or did something had no choice in the matter and was merely doing his duty is irrelevant.

The Mishneh in Tractate Sheviis [4:2] says that the poor people, who are entitled to take the ownerless crops in the Seventh (Shmita) year, would nevertheless go to the owner of the field and say 'Thank you'. [They thanked the owner, even though the owner had no choice but to allow the poor to take the crop from his field during that year.]

The Rasha"sh comments that this Mishneh is the source of the widespread practice that when the Kohen descends from the platform after blessing the people with the Priestly Blessing, the members of the congregation thank him for the blessing.

The Rasha"sh points out that the Kohen also does not really have any choice. If he would not offer

the blessing, he would be neglecting the fulfillment of a positive Biblical command. "Why should I have to thank him for just doing 'his thing'?" The Rasha"sh says that we learn to say thank you in this case from the Mishneh in Sheviis. The circumstances which caused the giver to provide me with something does not diminish my obligation to thank him by one iota. Saying 'Thank you' has nothing to do with what one gave. It has to do with what one received.

This is the Jewish understanding of the concept of saying 'Thank you'.

Transcribed by [David Twersky](#); Seattle, Washington.
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This write-up was adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Torah Tape series on the weekly Torah portion. The complete list of halachic topics covered in this series for Parshas Pekudei are provided below:

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