

# **RAINS OF BLESSING: GETTING THE MOST WHEN THE FARMER CAN DO THE LEAST**

*by Rabbi Yissocher Frand*

## **Parshas Bechukosai**

### **Rains of Blessing: Getting the Most When the Farmer can do the Least**

*These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Tapes on the weekly portion: Tape 192, Making Shabbos Early. Good Shabbos!*

The pasuk [verse] says, "I will give you your rains in their proper time" [Vayikra 26:4]. Rash"i explains the term "proper time" to mean Friday night (leilei Shabbos). We can then sit cozily in our houses and say "let it rain".

Today's modern society considers a rainy weekend to be a minor calamity. "There goes the barbecue, there goes the sailing trip. Nebach, we have to go rent a video." That is terrible! However, the Torah teaches that such rains are a blessing. On Friday night it can pour. We are safe in our homes.

The Beis Av points out a deeper insight into this idea. In an agrarian economy, the farmer can work six days a week, putting in backbreaking hours sowing, fertilizing, plowing, and harvesting. However, all of the farmer's effort will be for naught if he does not have one thing -- rain. Without rain, the farmer is powerless.

When rain falls on the very day when the farmer does absolutely nothing (Friday night - the Shabbos), the farmer is sent a precious message. That which the farmer needs the most, he receives on the very day when he can do the very least. This is the lesson. Ultimately, the farmer needs to depend on G-d, not on himself.

#### **A Time For Faith and A Time For Heresy**

I would like to share one final insight. It is true that in the area of earning one's living, we must rely on faith (bitachon). However, we should never forget that this is a concept that we must apply to ourselves, but never to others.

I heard a comment in the name of the Brisker Rav. It is hard for me to believe the Brisker Rav said it, but we would in fact need a Brisker Rav to say such a thing. Every attribute, no matter how bad, has its place in the world -- even anger, haughtiness, jealousy, and argumentativeness. These are generally bad attributes, but there are times when one needs to become angry. There are times when it is appropriate to stand up for one's honor. There is even a time when it is right to make a machlokes - an argument.

There is another bad attribute called 'kefirah', heresy. A person who knows Torah, but rejects G-d -- a 'kofer' -- possesses such an attribute. Where is the proper place for this attribute of 'kefirah'? The Brisker Rav explains, "When your friend needs a favor, that's when you should be a 'kofer'".

In other words, when someone else has a problem, do not have the attitude that G-d will take care of him, G-d will find him a job, G-d will give him the loan. At such times, the Brisker Rav says, a person should "not believe" in G-d. A person should feel that G-d will not take care of him. Rather, a person must take the responsibility upon himself. That is no time for faith. It is a time for rolling up one's sleeves.

I do not need to tell you about the "workplace". I do not need to tell you that it is too often "not what you know, but who you know". I do not need to tell you about how many jobs are found through "connections". When it comes to your livelihood, you must be a believer. However, when it comes to someone else's livelihood, you must be an activist. In the words of the Brisker Rav, that is the appropriate situation for all of us to apply the attribute of 'kefirah'.

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This write-up is adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Torah Tapes on the weekly Torah Portion. The halachic topics covered for the current week's portion in this series are:

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