

EMPOWERMENT

It is in our interactions with people, that we often overwhelm them with our personal thoughts and seek to impose our own views in the many conversations we have daily. Generally, we like to share our views with others as opposed to the converse.

In this week's Torah portion we read about the single most influential event in our history; the revelation of G-d at Mount Sinai. However, notwithstanding what seems to be a momentous imposition of G-d onto the Jewish people and indirectly on the rest of mankind, we are witness to an extraordinary lesson that on the contrary is derived by the preface to this great story.

Prior to the narrative of this grand event taking place, we are witness to the dialogue between Moses and his father in law regarding the delegation of authority and responsibility in his role as a leader. It is here that we are exposed to what G-d intended for us at Mount Sinai.

Every human being is inherently good and therefore when given the right opportunity will want to behave accordingly. The inability to recognise this inherent goodness displays a lack of trust in others and ultimately in G-d and when interacting with this mindset, we often draw a negative response.

So, when we fail to listen to others and believe that they too have a contribution to make and instead impose our own ideas and regulations on them; we fail to acknowledge their divine purpose in the world. The corollary of this is when we do acknowledge that they have a contribution to make; we encourage their development and growth and ultimately help to facilitate them making a positive impact on their own lives and on the lives of those around them, marking their divine place in the world.

This notion of empowerment is the most significant of G-d's great visions for the universe and it is this that he shared with the Jewish people at Mount Sinai thousands of years ago. He imbued us with the divine ability to contribute to the world around us and to make a difference and it was this that Yitro and Moses highlighted for us as they empowered others to become contributing members of society.

It is when we empower others by putting them in touch with their unique purpose, that we in turn are rewarded by gaining clearer insight into the all encompassing vision that we were shown many years ago at Mount Sinai.

Warm Regards,

Rabbi Yosef Vogel

17th January

Sedra: Yitro

Shabbat Begins: 4.09pm

Shabbat Ends: 5.17pm