

PURE & SIMPLE

It is imperative that our lives are conducted with some semblance of order, as it is fundamentally important to our ability to be successful human beings. This notion of order must be employed in our ability to organise our thoughts, feelings and behaviour as the preface to our endeavours, as it is perhaps the single most significant thing that will ensure success in our lives.

Indeed much of the wisdom our great sages have learnt from the Torah has been derived from the order and sequence in which it has been presented to us. Sometimes, it is even to the extent, that the order of ideas it overrides the chronological order of events.

Although our weekly Torah portion, Mishpatim, is dominated by a most comprehensive presentation of many laws, primarily civil in nature, it is juxtaposed on both ends by the story of revelation at Mount Sinai. This would seem to be odd. For revelation represents the Jewish people's faith in G-d. Whereas the laws, being very logical in nature, would represent our peoples commitment based on a healthy understanding of what it is they are committing to.

And herein lies a most important lesson of "sequence" in man's relationship with G-d. In the first instance there is a natural connection that transcends anything that is of an emotional or intellectual nature. As the relationship with G-d begins in an organic way, it mirrors the natural kind of connection that exists between parent and child which begins with a pure loving bond. And it is this depth of connection that will always remain most powerful in our relationship with G-d, as is the case with the love that exists between parents and children.

However as we grow older and our minds and hearts evolve and we begin to mature as human beings, our relationships with others becomes more complex. And as we get in touch with our own personal feelings and ideas, our ability to connect and share our experiences with others becomes more challenging because we are clouded by the seeming complications which life throws at us and which blur our natural ability to connect freely without inhibition.

So, it is at this point that we must reconnect with the innocence and purity of the child within us, so that we may reignite our simple and pure faith in the goodness of others, which will in turn allow us to overcome our inhibitions and create dynamics that are honest and pure and free of the scrutinising, weary eye we impose on ourselves daily in the hope to come across as perfectly as is possible.

This sequence in our relationships with others should be a constant in our lives. Initially we are pure and simple and our relationship with others reflects that. As time goes on we are forced to venture beyond our innocence, due to our own weaknesses or that of others and as a result our relationships suffer because they become less and less authentic. It is at this point that we must revisit the purity of our childhood so that we can once again interact with G-d and with one another with the soulful compass with which we have all been endowed. The compass is that North Star which G-d himself placed into each and every one of us at the revelation of Sinai and should be the guiding light which G-d himself invested in us in the hope that it will lead us to reach our destinies in our purest form of self.

Warm Regards,
Rabbi Yosef Vogel

13th February
Sedra: Mishpatim

Shabbat Begins: 4.51pm
Shabbat Ends: 6.01pm