

**Pure & Simple****By: Yosef Vogel**

Order in one's life is fundamentally important. Our ability to organise our thoughts, feelings and behaviour must also preface any endeavour. 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 is presented. Sometimes, to the extent, that it overrides the chronological order of events.

Our weekly Torah portion, although dominated by a most comprehensive presentation of many laws, primarily civil in nature, 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 here is 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 natural a connection as exist between parent and child. And it is this level that will always remain most powerful in our relationship with G-d, as it will be 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. 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 to the point that it no longer seems to be tenable.

It is at this point that we must reconnect with the innocence and purity of the child within us, so that we can reignite our simple and pure faith in the goodness of others, which will in turn allow us to overcome our inhibitions.

This is the reason why in our relationship with G-d and mankind, we must always revisit our core connection with G-d and humankind, which will always remain strong.

This sequence in our relationships with others should be a constant in our lives. Initially we are pure and simple and our relationship with other 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. It is at this point that we must revisit the purity of our childhood so that we can once again believe.

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17 February

***Mishpatim & Shekalim***

Shabbat Begins: 5:04 pm

Shabbat Ends: 6:08 pm