

Pay On The Day

"How much longer until you finish, Reuven?"

The repairman looked down at the homeowner. He was standing on the top rung of the ladder with his arms stretched up towards the ceiling. A heavy-duty power drill was chewing a hole in the solid concrete ceiling. It was a hot day and the perspiration was dripping down his face. His arms ached from the drilling. He was covered with concrete dust from the hole in the ceiling.

"I have to drill one more hole, mount the light fixture, then connect the wires. It should take about half an hour."

"Okay. Hurry up if you can."

Reuven was a very conscientious worker. He always tried his best to please the client. He finished the job in twenty minutes.

"There you are Mr. Shpate. Turn on the switch and enjoy your new light fixture."

The fixture sparkled and shed beautiful, bright light on the room. Reuven was exhausted. He was looking forward to a nice shower, and a good rest.

"Reuven, you did a fantastic job. How much do I owe you?"

"One hundred shekels."

"I don't have it right now. I'll pay you tomorrow, okay?"

Reuven's face fell, barely hiding his disappointment. He did not answer Mr. Shpate. He just packed up his bags and left.

"On that day you shall pay his wage (Devarim 24:15)." Why is it so important to pay the worker when he finishes? He gave his time to work for you. He finished the job. He did his part. You must do your part.

The following story illustrates this point. Rav Yosef Tomim (who is known to us as the *Pri Megadim*) was appointed to a prestigious Rabbinical position in Frankfurt. He ordered a new Rabbinical robe to give the proper honor to the position. He gave the money to his wife to pay the tailor because he did not want to lose a minute of learning time. He returned home from the Beis HaMedrash late at night and saw that the robe was there. However, he did not wish to wake his wife to ask her if she had paid for it. He was so concerned about

not transgressing the mitzvah of paying on time that he walked out in the middle of the night to the tailor's house. The lights were on and he knocked on the door. The tailor was frightened to see him. "What brings the Rav to my door at this late hour?" he asked. The *Pri Megadim* replied that he was concerned that perhaps the tailor did not receive his wage for the robe. The tailor assured him that he had been paid and the *Pri Megadim* returned home happy.

Kinderlach . . . Money matters are very important. They are one of the things that determine the true character of a person. Always pay all of the money that you owe. And pay it on time. People will truly respect you and trust you. And you will receive a big mitzvah. What could be better?



Your ID Card

"Young men, stop right there. Let's have a look at your ID cards."

The two young men were startled. They knew the national situation was tense, and security was tight. However, they were never stopped like this before. Each one pulled out his ID card and showed it to the officer. He scrutinized every detail very carefully, finished, and handed back the cards.

"You may pass."

"That was scary, Dovid."

"I didn't realize that we look like suspicious characters, Yossie."

"I guess they are checking everyone, these days; even us. A serious troublemaker, however, can pass the

checkpoint with a forged ID card."

"That's true. You can forge an identity card, but you can't forge an identity."

"That's a cryptic statement."

"I'll explain what I mean. We learn in this week's parasha that converts from the nations of Ammon and Moav are not allowed to marry Jewish women."

"Why?"

"The verse states, 'Because they did not greet you with bread and water on the road . . . and because they hired Bilaam . . . to curse you' (Devarim 23:4,5). The Gemora (Yevamos 79a) enumerates three qualities that are inherent to the Jewish people. We are *rachmanim* (merciful), *bayshonim* (humbly dignified), and *gomlei chasodim* (we perform acts of loving-kindness). Rav Yonason Eibushitz zt"l explains that the nations of Ammon and Moav refused to perform acts of *chesed* for the Jewish people. Not only that, they hired Bilaam to curse us. They do not possess the trait of *gomlei chasodim*. Therefore, they cannot be a part of Klal Yisrael."

"Fascinating."

"Mercy, dignity, and kindness are our identity. They come from our heart and soul. They cannot be forged."

"It is against the law in this country to walk around without an ID card. If we have to preserve our identity card, how much more so do we have to preserve our identity."

Kinderlach . . . Have rachmonus (mercy) on those less fortunate than you. Do chessed (kindness) for them and for all Jews. Dress, walk, talk, and act with a quiet, dignified humility. Be proud of your identity. You are a member of Klal Yisrael. Hashem's nation.

Parasha Questions

- Can you make pretend that you do not see a lost object? (22:3 and Rashi)
- Do you have to load up someone's animal if the owner himself does not help? (Rashi 22:4)
- May *tzitzis* of wool be tied onto a linen garment? (Rashi 22:12)
- When may a fruit picker eat from the owner's fruit? How much may he eat? May he take fruit home to eat? (23:25 and Rashi)
- When must you pay a worker his wages? (24:15)

Correction to Parashas Voeschanan - The din of "bar-metsra" (selling an adjacent field) only applies if the two price offers are equal.