

# Velo Yeraeh eth pnei HaShem Elokeicham Rekam

During the Torah reading of the Shalosh Regalim we read “Shalosh paamim bashanah .. Velo Yeraeh eth pnei HaShem Elokeicham reikam. Ish kemathanath yado, kebirkath Hasham Elokecha asher Nathan lach”

We are commanded not see the “face of HaShem” empty handed, rather each “Ish (which means a capable man when used in the Torah) according to the gift of his hand, according to the blessing of HaShem your G-d, that He has given him”

Upon a bit of analysis of these words, a number of questions arise.

The pasuk, according to its plain meaning, is talking about going up to the Beith HJamikdash on the three Chagim, and making sure that you don't go empty handed , ie. you must take with you a korban.

But if you look at the terminology used, it seems a bit off. The pasuk tells us we should not “see HaShem's ‘face’ empty-handed.

The obvious question is that we don't actually see HaShem's face in this world!

Instead, the Chachamim teach us that when a person passes away and goes to the next World as a Tzadik, (by having his sins washed away in Gehenam), he is rewarded by sitting in the yeshiva of HaShem, and basking in the radiance of HaShem's ‘face’, if one can say that.

So ok, now we can say that this part of the pasuk is alluding to the next world, understood.

So, what does the terminology of “kemathanath yado / according to the present of his hand” mean? What gifts are the ones that are put in your hands?

In the language of the Chachamim, “Altah Beyadoh”- arose in his hand, means that the person was able to accomplish a certain task. Like Abayeh ( Berachoth 35 : ) says – “many tried to dedicate their time only to learning Torah like Rabi Shimon Bar Yochai, and they were not successful in accomplishing that goal. Many tried to do bothe Derech Eretz and Talmud Thorah, like Rabbi Yishmael, ve'altah beyadam”

Similarly, it can mean having the where with all to purchase or acquire something. For instance, a lady who gave birth must bring goat or sheep as an Olah and Chatath offering. If “ein yadah masegeth”- her hand cannot reach, ie she can't afford it, she can bring two bird offerings instead.

So, from this analysis, we can understand that “kemathanath Yado” in our pasusk, indicates the capabilities that HaShem has gifted each person.

The chachamim teach us that HaShem created mankind because He had a “desire” to do acts of kindness, and we are the means to “accomplish that desire” . The world was created as a vehicle through which HaShem can do acts of kindness to mankind.

However, HaShem wanted to make sure that we don't feel embarrassed when receiving the kindness that's constantly coming to us, therefore he gave the Torah and Mitzvoth . Learning torah and doing mitzvoth “earns us” the reward of unleashing His kindness onto us.

The chachamim take this concept one step further and teach us that each Jew has his own particular Torah portion that he received to illuminate and reveal to the world, and that he has his own particular mitzvoth that he is uniquely equipped to accomplish. As it says in Pirkei Avoth “ kol Yisrael yesh lahem chelek lelolam habah’ – each Jew has his portion, to work on, for the bringing about of the World to come.

So now we can understand what our pasuk is talking about.

It is admonishing us to not come to the next world, where we bask in the 'radiance of HaShem's face', without accomplishing the specific Torah elucidation, and the specific work that he gifted us to do .

As the chachamim also teach- "ashrei Ha'ish habah lekan vetalmudo beyadoh' – praise be the man of accomplishment, that comes to here, the next world, and his specific learning- Torah elucidation, and work accomplishments, are in his hand!

Now that we understand this, we can ask why does the pasuk seem to repeat and mention "kebirkath HaShem Elokekah asher natan lach" – like the blessing of HaShem your G-d that he has given you?

The chachamim teach us that the blessings that HaShem has given us in this world, are nothing compared to what we will be getting in the world to come.

The real purpose and reason why we get the blessings of this world is to enable us to accomplish the completion of our portion of the world to come.

The 'gifts of your hand' are the specific portions of the work that HaShem has gifted each person, and the 'blessing of HaShem' is the means that HaShem has given us to accomplish those goals.

So now we can get the picture.

HaShem put us in this world to shower us with kindness. He wants us to fully enjoy it and not feel embarrassed about getting such an abundance of loving kindness, so he gave us our own specific tasks to accomplish, and Torah to learn and elucidate.

To allow us to accomplish our portion of the work, HaShem gives us blessings in the form of money, connections, family, physical attributes, experiences, teachers, possessions, real estate, etc, to enable us to do so.

He does us the additional 'favor' of reminding us several times each year, when we read this Torah portion, that we should make sure to do our job, and not go to the next world unaccomplished. In fact, the chachamim teach us that if we still have work to accomplish, we will have to come back to this world to do so before we can take our seat in the next one.

May we all be zocheh to accomplish our work in life with alacrity!