

פרשת וישב

כי אם זכרתני אתך וכו' והזכרתני והוצאתני מן הבית הזה [מ,יד]

The אשרי האיש אשר שם ה' מבטחו ולא פנה אל רהבים [תהלים מ] says מדרש רבה (פר' פט ד) fortunate is the man who places his trust in Hashem and does not turn to false things. The words אשרי האיש אשר שם ה' מבטחו refer to יוסף who placed his trust in Hashem. The words פנה אל רהבים is also a reference to יוסף. When he mentioned to the שר המשקים a second time to remember him, another two years were added. The מדרש seems to be self contradictory. If there was something wrong with יוסף seeking the help of the שר המשקים to get him out, how can the מדרש refer to him as someone who had בטחו?

The Beis Halevi (פ' מקץ) answers that ideally a person should have a level of בטחון that he trusts entirely in Hashem without doing any השתדלות or effort whatsoever. However since we are not on that מדריגה, we need to make some sort of השתדלות together with our trust in Hashem. The purpose of doing our השתדלות is not because otherwise it can't get done, rather it is to strengthen our sense of trust that we place in Hashem. Therefore the amount of effort a person does must be commensurate to the level of trust he has. The greater the בטחון a person has, the less השתדלות he is supposed to do. יוסף הצדיק was someone who had a very high level of בטחון. Throughout his entire ordeal he felt the presence of Hashem with him. יוסף understood that these dreams were divinely orchestrated to get him out of prison. However he felt he must put in his השתדלות as well. This is why the מדרש refers to יוסף as someone with great בטחון. Because of his high level of בטחון, those few extra words he said to the שר המשקים were considered extra השתדלות, and his freedom did not come for another two years.

We see here a remarkable thing. יוסף put in too much השתדלות for his מדריגה by asking the שר המשקים to remember him. Not only didn't it help him, it backfired and caused him to remain an extra two more years. Our efforts are not what produce results; rather we must view our השתדלות as merely a tool to achieve help from Above. We also see that we must do the proper השתדלות. The Chazon Ish writes that buying lottery tickets is not השתדלות!!

Have a good Shabbos.

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