

Fear not Avram, I am a shield for you; your reward is very great. (15:1)

Hashem promises those who fulfill His *mitzvos* that they will be rewarded commensurate with their good deeds. We understand, of course, the rule of *schar b'hai alma leka*, “reward does not apply to This World.” The ultimate reward that one will receive will materialize in the World of Truth, *Olam Habba*. The **Ben Ish Chai** questions this rule. We are all aware of the Torah’s injunction that a Jewish worker be paid on the day that he completes his work. *B’yomo titein scharo*, if one is hired for day work, he must be reimbursed for his work at the end of the day – not the next day – but that day. One’s wages may not be delayed – not even overnight. Why then does Hashem not reimburse us immediately for our *mitzvah* observance?

The *Ben Ish Chai* explains that the answer is concealed within a *halachah* in *Choshen Mishpat*. One who hires workers through an agent does not have to pay them at the end of the day. The *mitzvah* of *b’yomo titein s’charo* is in effect only if the worker is hired by the owner. A *shliach*, agent, does not carry such weight. Therefore, since *Klal Yisrael* accepted the Torah through the agency of Moshe *Rabbeinu*, the prohibition against delaying a Jewish worker’s payment does not apply.

An added caveat involves the first two *mitzvos* of the *Aseres HaDibros*, Ten Commandments, which *Klal Yisrael* heard directly from Hashem. Concerning these two *mitzvos*, the *s’char*, reward, is immediate. These *mitzvos* are: *Anochi* – referring to *emunah*, belief/faith in the Almighty; and *Lo yiheyeh lecha*, idolatry. Thus, one who believes in Hashem and shuns any form of foreign belief is worthy of receiving his reward in *Olam Haze*, This World. This, claims the *Ben Ish Chai*, is alluded to by the *pasuk*, *Al tirah Avram*, “Do not fear, Avram.” Hashem assured Avraham that he need not worry concerning his descendant’s reward, because *Anochi magen lach*, “The Anochi” will serve as a shield to protect you. This refers to the *Anochi* of *Anochi Hashem*, the *mitzvah* of *emunah*. A Jew who is faithful, who believes in Hashem with all his heart, will merit great reward – in This World.