

Morning Mindfulness & Gratitude: *Netzach*

R' Jesse Paikin • rabbijesse@sixthandi.org

Messilat Yesharim (Path of the Upright) Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzatto (1707–1746)
Trans. Rabbi Yosef Sebag, adapted

Chapter 6

Human nature weighs very heavily upon us. For the earthiness of the physical is gross. Therefore a person does not want to exert themselves and labor. But one who wants to merit to the service of the Creator must strengthen themselves against their own nature, mustering strength and zeal (*zerizut*)...

The angels were praised for possessing this good trait as written: “[Bless the Eternal, God’s angels], those mighty in strength, who perform God’s word, hearkening to the voice of God’s word” (Psalm 103:20); and “Dashing to and fro [among] the [heavenly creatures] was something that looked like flares.” (Ezekiel 1:14).

Behold, a person is a human and not an angel, hence it is impossible for them to attain the might of an angel, but one should certainly strive to do all they can to come as close to that level as possible.

Chapter 7

There are two divisions of *zerizut*. One applies before beginning a deed and the other one after beginning a deed.

Before beginning a deed: that one not allow a *mitzvah* to become delayed (Hebrew: *chametz*).

Rather when the time of its performance comes, or when it happens to present itself, or when the thought of performing it enters one’s mind, one should hurry and hasten to seize hold of it and perform it, and not allow time to go by in between. For there is no danger like its danger. Since, behold each new second that arises can bring with it a new impediment to the good deed...

For the trait of *zerizut* is a very high spiritual level of *Sheleimut* (wholeness) which a person’s nature impedes them from attaining at the current time. But one who strengthens themselves and takes hold of it as much as they can, will, in the future world, merit to truly attain it...

The division of *zerizut* “after beginning a deed” is as follows” Since one took hold of a *mitzva*, they should hasten to complete it. This is not in order to lighten on themselves like one who desires to cast a burden off themselves, but rather out of fear lest they not merit to complete it.

Reflect further that just like an inner fieriness of soul leads one to act with *zerizut*, so too the opposite, outwardly acting with *zerizut* leads to an inner fieriness of the soul. Namely, when one feels oneself performing a *mitzvah* with great swiftness this will move his inner being to kindle aflame also, and the desire and want will increasingly intensify within them. But if one acts in a sluggish manner in the movement of his limbs, so too the movement of their spirit will die down and extinguish. This is something experience can testify to.

Seek patience and passion in equal amounts.
Patience alone will not build the temple.
passion alone will destroy its walls.

Maya Angelou

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אלו דְּבָרִים שְׂאֵדָם אוֹכֵל פְּרוּמִיָּהֶם בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה
וְהַקָּרוֹן קִיָּמָת לֹו לְעוֹלָם הַבָּא. וְאֵלֵינוּ הֵן.
כְּבוֹד אָב וְאָם.
וְגִמְיִלוֹת חֲסָדִים.
וְהַשְׁפָּמָת בֵּית הַמְדָרָשׁ. שְׁחָרִית וְעַרְבִית.
וְהַכְנָסָת אוֹרְחִים.
וּבְקוֹר חוֹלִים.
וְהַכְנָסָת פְּלָה.
וְלִנְיַת הַמֵּת. וְעִיוֹן תְּפִילָה.
וְהַבָּאָת שְׁלוֹם בֵּין אָדָם לְחֵבְרוּ וּבֵין אִישׁ לְאִשְׁתּוֹ.
וּמְלֻמוֹד תּוֹרָה כְּנִגְדַּת כָּלָם:

These are the deeds that yield immediate fruit
and continue to yield fruit in time to come:

Honoring parents
Performing deeds of kindness and love
Attending the house of study morning and
evening
Providing hospitality
Visiting the sick
Helping the needy bride
Attending the dead
Probing the meaning of prayer
Making peace between one person and
another, and between husband and wife
And the study of Torah is the most basic of
them all.

(From morning prayers, based on
Babylonian Talmud Kiddushin 39b.
Trans: *Siddur Lev Shalem*)

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O Life of the World,
Grant me a full life -
a life which may be considered long
because it has been filled with
right living,
and considered rich
because it has been filled with holy acts.

Rebbe Nachman of Bratslav, *Likutei Moharan* 1:60