

And If Not Now, Then When?

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Growing Each Day

Kislev 14

<http://www.aish.com/sp/ged/45659452.html>

And if not now, then when? (*Ethics of the Fathers* 1:14).

Hillel's famous statement is a bit enigmatic. The simple answer is, "Later." Why can't we take care of whatever it is some other time? Granted that procrastination is not a virtue, why does Hillel imply that if not now, then it will never be?

The Rabbi of Gur explained that if I do something later, it may indeed get done, but I will have missed the current "now." The present "now" has but a momentary existence, and whether used or not, it will never return. Later will be a different "now."

King Solomon dedicates seven famous verses of Ecclesiastes to his principle that everything has its specific time. His point comes across clearly: I can put off doing a good deed for someone until tomorrow, but will that deed, done exactly as I would have done it today, carry the same impact?

The wisdom that I learn at this moment belongs to this moment. The good deed that I do at this moment belongs to this moment. Of course I can do them later, but they will belong to the later moments. What I can do that belongs to this moment is only that which I do now.

Today I shall...

try to value each moment. I must realize that my mission is not only to get something done, but to get things done in their proper time, and the proper time may be *now*.