

Achrai Mos

When we study the words of the Torah portion of Achrai Mos, we find a great number of the rules of conduct between Man and his fellow Man, such as the laws of Kohanim, *Kedusha*, Yomtov, Honesty, Weights and Measures etc.

But seemingly out of context, at the end of Parshas *Achrai Mos*, the Torah states,¹ "You shall therefore keep My statutes and My ordinances." As *Toras Kohanim* points out, "You will observe My commandments because you started them." There is further reference to Torah as a *Gan Naul*, a locked garden; *Gal Naul*, a locked door and *Mayan Chasum*, a sealed well spring.² But you, Klal Yisroel, opened them by declaring *Na'aseh V'nishmah*, we will obey and we will listen.

This concept is exemplified by the following tale found in *Likutei Yosef*. An owner of an orchard which had many types of trees hired workers to do the watering and the trimming of the trees. At the end of the day, the workers came to the owner to be paid. The owner asked each worker at which type of tree he worked and paid them accordingly, some more money and some less money. The workers complained to the owner that they all had worked equally hard, and he, the owner, had not told any one of them about the different pay scales. The owner answered that had he told them the difference in wages, they would have all ran to the higher-wage trees and no one would have cared for the lower-wage trees, and I, as owner, need ALL my trees cared for, not just the more expensive trees.

The same is with you, Klal Yisroel. HKBH gave you a Torah with many kinds of Mitzvot (precepts), literally an orchard with all kinds of trees. But HKBH didn't say what reward He would give for each mitzva, in order that one should observe not only the most valued Mitzva, but also the Mitzva of lesser reward. As the Tana, Rabbi Yehuda Hanasi says,³ "One should be

careful in the performance of a seemingly light precept as well as a seemingly grave precept, for you do not know the value of the reward for each precept.”

Klal Yisroel, when they came to accept the Torah, didn't ask what the reward was for observing Mitzvos. The Torah was still *Gal Naul, Gan Naul, Mayan Chasum*. The Torah was still locked and sealed and they didn't know what it said. And yet Klal Yisroel said “we will do as HKBH commands, we will do what HKBH says and we will listen.” Then HKBH said: *Atem Naim Shomrim Osom*—“you will observe the Torah, you will keep the commandments because of your love of HKBH.” You will then forever sit in Eretz Yisroel and the land will not expel you as it expelled the Seven Nations before your eyes.⁴

In our era we must learn the lesson time and time again, that our Torah heritage requires us to observe ALL mitzvos, not just the convenient ones, that our Torah heritage requires us to learn ALL of Torah, not just a few select portions.

FOOTNOTES

1. Vayikra 18:26
2. Song of Songs 4:12
3. Avoth 2:1
4. Vayikra 18:28