

The Beracha THAT you should listen (11:27) – **Rav Shaul Yisraeli ztl.** pointed out that the main beracha is not the reward that comes from keeping the challenge, rather the reward is in the challenge of listening by itself. One who gets the idea finds satisfaction in life itself because he has purpose. Normally we run through life trying to fill that which we find lacking in our existence and how to fill that which is missing. The answer is simple – we are missing the awareness of our greatest tools at our disposal – ourselves.

You should seek out his Shechina (12:5) – What does mean? The **Rambam** understands the biblical obligation of davening to be, in part, to daven toward the Mikdash. This is the source for the practice facing east. The **Netziv** writes that this is the Rambam's understanding of our Possuk. He sees that whenever it says to be Doreish Hashem seems to refer to Tefillah. **Rav Schachter Shlita** added that there is an additional level of interpretation – namely that after deciding to build a Mikdash, one must ask the Novi for approval. **Rav Tzvi Hirsch Kalisher** wanted to rebuild the Beis HaMikdash but the issue of needing a Novi to approve was proving to be difficult. Even in the Gemara we find that the second Beis HaMikdash needed a Novi to authorize the building.

After Hashem you should go (13:5) – the Hebrew words Achar and Acharei both refer to “going after” or “Behind”. However, the word Achar implies a closer following and Acharei implies from a distance. The Sefer Maayanah Shel Torah quotes a conversation between the **Chofetz Chaim** and the **Gerrer Rebbe** about why the more distant Acharei is used in this context. The Gerrer Rebbe is quoted as having explained that the further one feels from Hashem, the closer he is likely to get due to the desire of U'Bo Tidbakun. **Rav Chaim Kanievsky Shlita** added that it is impossible to be close to Hashem – the whole experience of being in Hashem's presence is achieved in seeing the whole picture and that, comes from a distance.

And you should cleave to him (13:5) – What is the love toward Hashem from a person all about? And how does one achieve Deveikus? **Rav Dovid Povarsky ztl.** explained that it is based on the idea of following that which Hashem does (Mah Hu Af Ata <see Sotah 14a>). That means that when we follow Hashem's ways we are cleaving to him. This is love. Chana notes this when she notes that there is no one who is Kadosh like Hashem and none like him. The connection is clear. When one follows Hashem's path and turns down his own desires – he is more Kadosh and sticking to Hashem's plan for him.

Don't take pity on him don't be compassionate and do not conceal him (13:9) – **Rav Aharon Kotler Ztl.** notes that the compassion shown to all Jews is directly challenged by the harsh punishment doled out to the Meisis. Rav Aharon adds that if this is the case of the Meisis then the contrapositive must be true as well, for the Mikareiv. **Rav Noach Weinberg Ztl.** adds that the Meisis tried to destroy the world. But one who tries to bring the Jews back is building many, many worlds.

You are sons to Hashem Lo Tisgodidu (14:1) – The Gemara notes that we are not permitted to make different groups (Yevamos 13b). If that is the case, how do we have such diversity in Yiddishkeit? **Rav Shteinman Shlita** explained that the Issur is based on the idea that the Torah should not look like it has 11 different versions. He adds that this is the case only when it looks that way at one time. Different customs in different places are not Agudos Agudos.

And the Levi in your midst (16:10) – Why does the Possuk mention the Levi in your midst specifically in regard to Shavuos and the Simcha associated with that holiday? **Rav Moshe Feinstein ztl.** explains that the Gemara notes that everyone agrees that on Shavuos you need Lachem. Now, for a Levi and other Talmidei Chachamim this makes good sense for after all, he is involved in learning. But what about the person who is working? Thus, the Torah tells us to take him into our midst and make sure the joy begins in the right place and go from there.

Haftorah: And the land is my footstool (Yeshayahu 66:1—Shabbos Rosh Chodesh) – What does Yeshayahu mean in his description? **Rav Schwab ztl.** explained that humans, as opposed to angels, are able to choose to serve Hashem or not to. Everything else in creation submits itself to the instinctual will of Hashem. Hashem's Kedusha was brought down to the earth by man's service of Him.