

ALL IN ORDER

by Rabbi Yaakov Menken

"If you will go in My Laws, and observe My Commandments..." [26:3]

What does it mean, to "go in My Laws," if not to observe the Commandments? Rashi, Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki, explains that this means to toil in Torah - to work to understand its complexities and many facets.

Why, though, is there special protection for Torah learning, even over and above that for all the Commandments?

Once, in a kingdom far away, an important and wealthy businessman needed assistance from the King on a matter of national import -- and so he asked for an appointment. Although he was accustomed to being treated with deference and respect, now it was his turn to behave as a supplicant. Nonetheless, he filled his part and also prepared his case well, arguing that it would help the kingdom greatly if the King were to do as he asked.

As he was in the middle of speaking, a local handyman barged through the door. Far from wearing his finest, the handyman was wearing blue overalls covered with grease. What's more, he was schlepping his box full of tools right into the king's chamber!

Even more stunning than the chutzpah of this man was the King's reaction. He practically jumped from his throne, completely ignored the prestigious businessman and his presentation, and with a warm smile went to greet the handyman and escort him personally into the royal quarters.

Understandably shocked and disheartened, the businessman turned towards one of the King's ministers. "Who was that?" he asked. "Why did the King not only allow him in here with a chest full of tools, but ignore me and personally take him back to his quarters?"

"Oh, that's simple," replied the aide. "That's Mendel the plumber - and there's a big leak in the Queen's bathroom! The King always takes personal care to be certain his wife is happy. You are doing something which is for your own benefit, and you are just trying to be sure it benefits the King as well. But as for Mendel, well, the King asked him to come! He's dressed like that, because he's got to be able to do his job!"

When we are involved with business, we have to make sure our actions are faithful, that we aren't cheating, and that we are, in fact, working for the sake of Heaven. We try to follow the appropriate Commandments, but since we are doing something which also benefits us personally, we must constantly worry that we aren't doing the right thing. But when we learn -- well, then we're doing what the King asked us to do, and taking care of His greatest gift to us. And that is another story!

[From a Dvar Torah by the Rebbe R' Moshe Leib of Sassov, zt"l.]

Good Shabbos!

Rabbi Yaakov Menken