

TEMIMUS: WHOLEHEARTEDNESS IS NECESSARY TO BUILD TORAH INSTITUTIONS

by Rabbi Yissocher Frand

These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Tapes on the weekly portion: Tape #558, Competition Among Teachers. Good Shabbos!

Temimus: Wholeheartedness Is Necessary To Build Torah Institutions

A later pasuk in our parsha states: "You shall be Tamim [wholehearted] with the L-rd, your G-d" [Devorim 18:13]. Rashi interprets this to mean "Walk with Him with wholeheartedness (temimus). Trust in what He has in store for you and do not delve into the future. But rather, whatever comes upon you accept with wholeheartedness and then you will be with Him and His portion."

We are charged herein to accept what the Almighty gives us. We should not try to manipulate it; to anticipate it; or even try to figure it out after it happens. We should accept things that happen with an innocence like a child accepts that which his parents give him with confidence that it must be for his own good. This should be our approach to the Almighty.

The pasuk continues: "For these nations that you are possessing - they listen to astrologers and diviners; but as for you - not so has Hashem, your G-d, given for you" [Devorim 18:14]. The Gentiles who inhabit Canaan go to all kinds of necromancers and witchcraft to try to figure out what the futures hold for them. That is not what Hashem wants the Jewish people to do. We should be Tamim - accepting, not always trying to figure out what will be.

Israel is promised that they will be given prophets when they have a need to know what Hashem has in store for them. "To him, you shall listen" [Devorim 18:15].

Rav Moshe Feinstein explains that this is not to say that Israel SHOULD seek out the prophet to learn the future the same way the Gentiles seek out their astrologers or their witchcraft to learn their fate or destiny. No! We are not even supposed to go to the prophet! The prophet will be provided only to deliver the message that Hashem feels the Jewish people need to know. We are to listen to the prophets, not to inquire of them!

Our approach must be that whatever Hashem wants for me is what I want for myself. I am not going to try to anticipate what is going to be in the future. Be "tamim" - means do not try to figure it out and do not try to anticipate it. We have no business trying to find out what the future will bear.

Rav Moshe further writes that Torah was built in the United States by individuals who fulfilled the pasuk of "Tamimim you shall be with the L-rd your G-d." If before they built Day Schools, Yeshivas, and other Torah institutions, people would have tried to figure out "how exactly is this going to work?" and "how are we going to make it?" those institutions would never have been built in this country. If one has to know the "bottom line" to everything down to the last penny and the last dot, then he will not be able to be a "Torah builder."

When there are essential things that have to be accomplished and the question is "so where is the money going to come from?" "How is it going to work?", "How will this ever 'fly'?" our attitude must be one of "Tamim you shall be with the L-rd your G-d."

If you hear the stories of how Torah was built in America, you understand what Rav Moshe was talking about. Rav Ruderman went to a businessman in the 1930s and asked him for \$10,000 for Ner Israel. That would be like asking someone for over a million dollars today. "Are you crazy?"

Rav Ruderman was once walking with Rav Schwab in Baltimore and was looking at a house. Rav Ruderman commented: "A house like that can hold 200 students. Someday we will have a house like that for our Yeshiva!" Rav Schwab, years later, admitted that he too thought at the time that Rav Ruderman sounded crazy. "How are you going to pull it off? How can you start a Yeshiva in the middle of the depression? It's crazy!"

The truth is that one does not have to be out of one's mind - one just has to be wholehearted (tamim) with the L-rd his G-d. If it is the right thing to do, if it has to be done, it will happen! Logic will follow fact, rather than fact following logic.

This week's write-up is adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Torah Tapes on the weekly Torah portion. A listing of the halachic portions for Parshas Shoftim from the Commuter Chavrusah Series is provided below:

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