

# JUST ONE REQUEST

*by Rabbi Raymond Beyda*

*"And now Israel, what does Hashem your G-d ask of you-only to fear the Lord your G-d, to walk in His ways, and to love Him..." Debarim 10,12*

In his last month of life on this Earth, Moshe Rabenu delivered his final words to his people--words of rebuke and words of encouragement.

In the verse cited above, Moshe seemingly contradicts himself. At first he asks "what does G-d ask of you?" And then he supplies the answer," Just to fear Him." implying that all He wants is ONE LITTLE THING. But then he continues with additional requirements. "To walk in His ways, and to love Him..." concluding with a demand that is anything but small "with all of your heart and all your soul!" What else is there?

In Midrash Shohar Tov on Tehillim, we learn that G-d asked King David a question similar to ours. In the Psalms, chap 27, verse 4, King David proclaims, "there is ONLY ONE THING that I ask of G-d-- this I request--to sit in the house of G-d all the days of my life." But then he continues to list numerous additional requests from his Lord..."He should hide me in His Succah on bad days, He should conceal me under the secret of His tent, He should raise me on a rock, and then He should raise my head above the enemies that surround me." Upon hearing this G-d said to His beloved monarch," David! You are a liar. First you declare that you only want "one thing " and then you ask for many things." King David answered, "Master of the Universe, it is from you that I learned...at first Moshe said "ONLY" and then he revealed Your many demands!"

The question is how would King David let words that were untrue leave his lips? But the truth is he really did only ask for ONE THING-- "to sit in G-d's house"

David Hamelech knew that if he were granted the opportunity to sit in "G- d's house" the other benefits would naturally follow in the merit of his Torah learning. This too was the case regarding the statement made by Moshe Rabenu. What G-d asks of the human being is that one develop fear of heaven --Yirat Shamayim --and should one succeed, then all the other items mentioned in the instructions of Moshe will follow naturally.

We can all learn an important lesson from our two great leaders Moshe and David. It is important to take a first step in the right direction. If one sincerely tries to turn towards G-d through positive actions like development of Yirat Shamayim [fear of heaven] and Torah study-- then his or her

prayers for spiritual success will be answered by invoking Divine Assistance in the pursuit of spirituality. What Hashem asks is that we take the initiative to do ONE THING!

*Shabbat Shalom*

**DID YOU KNOW THAT** in the period known as--ben hashemashot-- the first 13 1/2 minutes after sunset on lel Shabbat--Friday night--it is permitted to tell a non-Jew to kindle a light for Shabbat--or, similarly, to tell him to do any work which is for the sake of a Misvah. By the same token, one who has accepted upon himself the holiness of Shabbat an hour or two before dark may tell a non-Jew during that time to kindle a light or to do anything else that must be done.[Source Shulhan Aruh siman 261]

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