

# Parsha Pearls

FROM THE WORDS OF THE GEDOLIM

Vayikra 5768

"And He called to Moshe, and Hashem spoke to him from the tent of meeting, saying..." (1:1)

The Midrash comments that Moshe, in his wisdom, knew not to come into the tent of meeting before G-d called him. From this we learn, says the Midrash, that a Torah scholar who lacks knowledge (deah) is worse than a dead animal (Vayikra Rabbah 1:15).

In the Holy Tongue there are two words for knowledge: "chochmah" and "deah". What is the distinction between them? Rabbi Avigdor Miller explained, "Chochmah" means wisdom, but "deah" means wisdom with real perception. A person who has deah recognizes G-d's guiding hand in the world as a reality, as if he could see it with his eyes. The Gemara says: "If one acquires this [deah], he lacks nothing. If one does not acquire this, what did he acquire?" (Nedarim 41a) If one lacks clear emunah, then what are his other attainments worth?

We must accustom ourselves to the words of Chazal, "If a person sees that afflictions come upon him, he should examine his deeds" (Berachos 5a). If he has a toothache, he should think perhaps he spoke forbidden words. If a Jew is aroused to repent by small mishaps, he will be spared bigger mishaps. In not, he will need

bigger and bigger hints, until he begins to examine his deeds and realize that all is in the hands of G-d and there are no accidents in this world.

"He Who chastises nations, is He not thereby rebuking them?" (Tehillim 94:10) G-d punishes only in order to teach those who remain and all future generations. "He is the one Who teaches man knowledge" (ibid. 11) – the entire purpose of all misfortunes and wars is only to teach man knowledge.

The Torah says, "Also every illness and every plague that is not written in the book of this Torah, Hashem will bring them upon you until you are destroyed, and you shall be left few in number" (Devarim 28:61). All misfortunes and catastrophes that have ever since befallen our nation are here foretold. This establishes a principle: every form of adversity is G-d's retribution for disobedience, and therefore all adversity must be utilized as a reminder. To say that "we do not understand the ways of G-d", to fall back on the indolent and unthinking pretence of pious trust in G-d's ways, is a contradiction to the principles enunciated in this verse. (Shmueß; Fortunate Nation p. 322.)



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