

You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor shall you subtract from it. (4:2)

The Torah is Divinely authored and, as such, it is perfect. To add or subtract from the written word of G-d is to imply that it lacks perfection and is somehow not applicable in all venues or under all circumstances. When Hashem commands that *Tefillin* have four *parshios*, He does not mean that four is a minimum, allowing for us to add a fifth *parsha* at will. Every number that Hashem gives us is the requisite for this *mitzvah*. To add or subtract is to distort and demean the pristine nature of the Torah. To do so is to deny its Divine authorship. This idea would seem valid if one were attempting to subtract from the Torah. Why should the devout, observant Jew who wants to add to the *mitzvah* be held in contempt?

Simply, one who adds suggests that the original *mitzvah* is imperfect. We can look at it in another way. **Horav Lazar Brody, Shlita**, suggests an often-used parable which lends practicality to this prohibition. It also explains why those individuals who attempt to impugn the Torah with their own perverted ideas of religious observance not only lack clear perception in their understanding of Torah, but are also deficient in their religious observance.

A man visited his doctor complaining of chest pains and trouble breathing. The doctor put him through a battery of tests to confirm that nothing was seriously wrong with the man. The diagnosis came back as pneumonia, a lung infection that was treatable with antibiotics. The doctor was well aware that in order to rid the system of infection effectively, the patient would require 20,000 units of antibiotics. To swallow the entire dosage all at once would kill the patient. On the other hand, to spread the dose over a period of thirty days would not provide enough fighting power to eradicate the bacteria. Thus, the doctor wrote a ten day prescription, dividing the dosage over four times a day, providing the patient daily with 2,000 units of bacteria-fighting antibiotics. In ten days, the patient should be cured of his pneumonia.

The doctor took all of this into consideration when he wrote the prescription. He was not going to hold the patient's hand to make sure that he took the correct amount four times daily for the allotted time period. A patient who does not follow the doctor's instructions and misses a dose or doubles up on his dose either will not recuperate or will become sicker. Anyone with a modicum of common sense understands that the doctor knows what he is doing, so that to undermine his authority would be foolhardy.

Is it any different with the Torah's *mitzvos*? Hashem is the *Rofeh kol basar*, Healer of all flesh, the Supreme Physician, Who knows what is best for us, because He is our Creator. Hashem has determined that the Jewish *neshamah*, soul, requires four species for seven days – no more, no less. Those who are clueless concerning the spiritual anatomy of the Jewish soul should not attempt to change the age-old, hallowed traditions of our people. Egalitarian worship is just another ruse for “do not add.” Changes in *halachah* to conform with contemporary society were attempted

by the secular streams of Judaism two centuries ago. We all know how successful they were. Now we have those who call themselves Orthodox, attempting to do the same, all under the veneer of progress. They will meet with the same success as their secular mentors. The issue is only how many unsuspecting, misguided Jews will be misled because of their folly.