

Bareich aleinu ... es ha'shanah ha'zos.

After Adam and Chavah sinned in *Gan Eden*, Hashem brought certain curses to the world. One of these curses was *B'zeias apecha tochal lechem*, "By the sweat of your brow you shall eat bread." Toil and labor in the pursuit of a livelihood comprise a curse. Unfortunately, some of us have elevated this "curse" to blessing status, almost as if one looks for every opportunity to work himself to the bone in order to earn a living. Hashem provides one's "needs." Some of us "want" more than we "need." This is where the curse enters into the picture. We work and toil to the point that we become wed to our livelihoods. Will it make a difference? No. A person earns what Hashem deems for him. When his livelihood takes over his life – he manifests the curse, *B'zeias apecha tochal lechem*.

Another aspect of this curse is the preoccupation with earning a livelihood. It takes an individual away from his spiritual growth. How is one to achieve spiritual stature if his mind is on his material needs? He must realize that this is a curse. If he would only trust Hashem to provide for him while he instead focuses on his spiritual achievements, it would not be a curse. This does not mean that one should ignore his material needs. He should not, however, let them become his primary focus in life.