

He saw tranquility that it was good... Yet he bent his shoulder to bear. (49:15)

We have before us a paradox concerning Yissachar, the symbol of the *ben Torah*, who devoted his life to Torah study and spiritual pursuits. If he sees that tranquility is good, why does he bend his shoulder to bear? Why should he toil if he has an easier way? *Horav Moshe Shternbuch, Shlita*, explains that the Torah is lauding Yissachar's devotion in that he remains committed, despite the easy way out – tranquility. Torah is so valuable to him that he would rather toil in Torah than relax. All the worldly pleasures which avail themselves to him do not stand up to the love for – and esteem in which he holds – the Torah.

He quotes the *Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh* in his commentary, *Bamidbar 23:21, V'lo raah amal b'Yisrael*; "He saw no toil in *Yisrael*." Simply explained, the *pasuk* teaches that Hashem does not see any sinful behavior among His People. *Amal*, toil, is a synonym for sin, since sin is a "toil" for Hashem. The *Ohr HaChaim* explains that the righteous who are committed to spiritual ascendancy always perform *mitzvos*, and their entire occupation is with the Torah. They do not feel that Torah study is burdensome and tedious. On the contrary, it is their most enjoyable activity. Due to their great passion for Torah, they do not feel encumbered.

Rav Shternbuch relates that a *bachur*, young man, asked him to inquire of the *Chazon Ish* concerning a certain *shidduch*, matrimonial match, that had been presented to him. Apparently, she hailed from a family of means, whose father was prepared to support the young couple for a number of years, so that he could sit and learn. The young man asked the girl what would happen when the allotted time of her father's support would run out. Would she insist that he seek a venue for earning a livelihood, or would she encourage him to learn for as long as he feels fulfilled? The young woman replied that she was willing to "sacrifice" for the Torah. He would be able to devote himself to study Torah without hindrance.

The *Chazon Ish* replied that this was not an equitable match for someone who was truly a *ben Torah*. He explained, "If she views Torah study as a sacrifice (as if she was relinquishing something, so that her husband could learn), then this *shidduch* is not for him." A *ben Torah* should marry someone who feels fortunate and effusive to partner in her husband's learning. Torah study is not a sacrifice. It is the optimal way of life, which not everyone (for a variety of reasons) is able to brook.