

“If you will follow My decrees and observe My commandments... then I will provide your rains in their time...you will eat your bread to satiety...I will provide peace in the land.” (26:3-6)

The Torah provides the recipe for success, material abundance, and peace: connect with the Torah. We are faced with problems, vexing situations, challenges to overcome. Where do we turn for the answer? How do we get out of the quicksand of life's challenges? “If you will follow My decrees” – “Im bechukosai teileichu” – connect with the Torah. It is the wellspring, the source of life and sustenance. In it you will find the answer. It will provide the solution to your problems.

Horav Yaakov Galinski, Shlita, once spoke to a group of not yet observant Jews and gave the following analogy to support this idea. It once occurred that emissaries from a Bedouin Arab tribe came to Tel Aviv to visit and learn about life and culture in a large, modern metropolis. They spent an entire day seeing the sights, staring with awe at the incredible modern inventions that contemporary society takes for granted. The visit was capped with a lavish dinner in City Hall. At the end of the dinner, the mayor told the group that his community would like to give the visitors a gift that would enhance their daily lifestyle. If there was anything they had seen that impressed them, they could have it, as long as it was within reason.

The leader of the Bedouin group turned to the mayor and said, “Yes, there is something that we noticed that would truly enhance our lifestyle. We would be indebted to you if you could avail us of this gadget. You know that we live in the desert where water is scarce. Whatever water we use must be brought in from afar, carried in large jugs on the backs of donkeys. We noticed that here in the city, you just turn on the faucet and an endless stream of water flows. Could you please give us forty faucets, so that our lives would be enhanced by this wonderful convenience?” The mayor was quick to respond in the affirmative and promptly had the faucets delivered to the group. One can imagine the consternation and disappointment when after they had “attached” the faucets to their tents, the water did not flow in the desert as it did in the city. They called for a technician to come from the city to investigate the matter and figure out why their faucets were not working. As we can all well understand, when the plumber arrived he looked at them and laughed, “Do you think that water flows freely from the faucet? No! It is not the faucet that gives the water, the faucet is connected to a pipe which is, in turn, connected to a source of water. The faucet is only a medium for transferring the water from the source to the house. Did you think that by mounting the faucet on the wall of your tent, the water would instantly appear? It must be connected to a source.”

“This same idea applies to Torah study,” continued Horav Galinski. “If one thinks that Torah study is a purely intellectual pursuit which does not have any demands connected to it, he is greatly mistaken. It is our obligation to connect and cling to the fountain of life, the source of Jewish life,

the Torah. Regrettably, many of our brethren have abandoned this source of life. They have gone on to create new sources for sustaining themselves, sources that either do not produce or that quickly dry up. We are engulfed with challenges that test our faith. We have questions that tax our commitment. Where do we turn? The Torah provides the answer: connect with it, and your questions will be answered.”