

"All the commandments which I command you today, you shall observe to do so that you may live and multiply and go and take the land into possession." (8:1)

In the previous chapter, the *Torah* dealt with the abolishment of any form of heathenism, as well as the removal of idols and anything even remotely connected with them from the Jewish domain. This chapter deals with the positive aspects of serving Hashem, as *Bnei Yisroel* had come to realize. This recognition requires the understanding that only through a faithful carrying out of our mission in this world, and an adherence to Hashem's *mitzvos*, will there be permanent happiness in our life.

Nothing in a heathenistic lifestyle can contribute in the slightest to our happiness; even the smallest heathen tinge can drag us down and threaten us with destruction. Overcoming all forms of heathenism is the aim of Hashem's governing of the world, and the mandate of His people among the nations. However, our source of happiness and well-being is not founded on the denial of heathenism, but rather upon the complete and positive devotion to carry out the will of Hashem as clearly revealed in His *Torah*. The Jewish home, if it is to be the place where our lives and prosperity are to be planted, nurtured, and brought to fruition, must be a home which maintains a strict observance of the *Torah*. Our *mitzvos* are our source of inspiration and happiness, as opposed to the deluded nations whose inspiration comes from an idol in the home.

The *Torah* sums up this enjoinder with the blessing of "*so that you may live and multiply and go and take the land into possession*". Observing the *mitzvos* grants us personal life and prosperity, exemplified by the blessing of children who will follow in our tradition, as well as independence and flourishing of our country. Individual life, family blessings, and national prosperity are guaranteed to us solely by keeping the *mitzvos*. By the utmost care for these *mitzvos*, we ultimately guard the source of our happiness.