

If you will follow My decrees and observe My Commandments and perform them. (26:3)

A Torah Jew must be the embodiment of *emes*, truth. Integrity – both moral and spiritual – must be reflected in his every demeanor. The image of a Torah Jew bespeaks *emes* under all conditions and circumstances. There is no other way. Hashem's *chosam*, seal, is *emes*. Since we are to emulate the Almighty, we must strive to achieve perfection in this character trait. What is this *emes*? How does one achieve the appellation *ish emes*, a man of truth?

The *roshei teivos*, three letters of *emes*—*aleph*, *mem*, *tav* -- are an acronym for the three *yesodos*, principles, to which a Jew must adhere and by which he must live: *Aleph* – *emunah*, faith (in Hashem) *mem*, *mitzvos*; *tav*, *Torah*. A Jew who is faithful, studies Torah diligently and performs *mitzvos*, lives by the rule of *emes*. He is an *ish emes*. Indeed, a Jew's life should revolve around these three principles.

The **Melitzer Rebbe, Shlita**, comments that, regrettably, some Jews question the need to adhere to all three of these principles. Perhaps one may slack off in one. What if a Jew were to be faithful and *mitzvah* observant? He is not much of a learner, always finding an excuse to escape being tied down to the *bais hamedrash*. He leaves the learning to others whom he feels are more competent. There is also the Jew who maintains a strong affiliation with *emunah*. He is even a learner, spending most of his free time in the *bais hamedrash* studying Torah. It is just that when it comes to *mitzvah* observance, he is not that adherent. He is certainly not a sinner. It is just that when opportunities to perform *chesed*, kindness to others, charity and other wonderful social justice *mitzvos* appear, he is not to be found.

It is regarding such a Jew who is concerned with the *im* – *aleph*, *mem*; or *es* – *aleph*, *tav*, that the Torah says, *Im bechukosai teileichu v'es mitzvosai tishmaru va'asissem osam*, *Eminah* and *mitzvos* without Torah study leaves a person an '*im*' Jew, who can only function if the '*im*' is followed with *bechukosai teileichu*, 'Walk in My statutes,' which *Rashi* interprets as *Shetiheyu ameilim batorah*, that you will toil in Torah. One must round off his *emunah* and *mitzvah* performance with Torah study. Otherwise, he is not *emes*; he remains a spiritual cripple.

Likewise, the "es" Jew, who has *emunah* and studies Torah, but is deficient in his *mitzvah* observance, he is told, *es mitzvosai tishmoru*; the "es" Jew must observe *mitzvos*, or, he, too, will be handicapped in his Jewishness.

We have just addressed the Jew who observes *mitzvos* and has faith in Hashem; he lacks Torah study. We have also dealt with the Jew who is faithful, studies Torah, but is lax in his *mitzvah* observance. What about the Jew who lacks faith? He observes *mitzvos* and studies Torah, but has difficulty maintaining his faith in Hashem. The Torah does not seem to allude to such a Jew. The *Rebbe* explains that the acronym for *mitzvos* (observance) and Torah (study) is *meis*, dead. Such a

person is considered spiritually deceased. The only solution is *va'asisem osam – aleph, tav, mem*; you must add *emunah* to resuscitate him and bring him back to the world of living.