

"Cursed (be he) that confirms not the words of this Torah to do them." (27:26)

As translated above, this *pasuk* is ambiguous. How does one "confirm" the words of the *Torah*? The *Ramban* offers various interpretations of the word *oheh* from which we may derive important lessons. First, the *Ramban* states that the word "*yakim*" means to "uphold and accept" the validity of the *Torah* in all generations. Consequently, the curse applies to anyone who denies the relevance of any part of the *Torah*. Accordingly, it is our obligation to impress upon all Jews the *Torah's* relevance as a living source of guidance for modern society.

Second, the *Ramban* cites the *Yerushalmi* in *Sotah 7:4*, which interprets this curse as referring to one who has the power to uplift the *Torah*, yet refrains from doing so. It is imperative that we see to it that everyone is availed of the opportunity to study *Torah*. No child should be turned away from *Torah* study, due to financial concerns, family problems, or just not fitting into the image of its student body that the school would like to project. Conversely, those who support Jewish education are worthy of the prosperity, joy and happiness which preceded the curse.

The *Ramban* cites another interpretation which focuses upon the literal translation of *oheh*: Hold it up and do not let it fall down. The *Torah* must be placed in the *Aron Ha'kodesh* in such a manner that it is settled with dignity and not likely to fall down. In truth, everything in a *shul* must be respected, including the physical structure and its holy appurtenances. This same level of decorum should likewise be reflected by the congregants, who should show the proper reverence for a *makom kodesh*, holy place.

Last, the *Ramban* says that the *pasuk* refers to "holding up" the *Torah* high for all to see. The one who is honored with *Hagbahah*, lifting up the *Torah*, should unfurl it so that it can be viewed by all of the men, women and children present. In a deeper sense, this idea alludes to our responsibility to provide *Torah* to all members of the community, regardless of their age or background. As the *Torah* scroll is raised up high for all to see, so, too, should its message be transmitted to everyone, so that it can sustain us all.