

And he will bless himself in his heart saying, “peace will be with me, though I walk as my heart sees fit.” (29:18)

One must be extremely sure of himself, ever smug, to feel that he has no cause to worry. *Horav Tzvi Pesach Frank, zl*, suggests that this *pasuk* refers to the individual who asserts that his heart will save him. He does not care about *mitzvos*. He rejects the *Torah*, but he has a “good heart,” he is a nice, kind human being. He gives of himself, opening his heart to those in need. Hashem does not forgive such a person. The heart is but one organ of the body, albeit an important one, that keeps the entire body functioning. One who just breathes is not very much alive.

The *Chofetz Chaim, zl*, takes an alternative approach to explaining this *pasuk*. A few members of *Klal Yisrael* have always been alienated from Judaism. They have concealed their indifference to the religion, always seeking ways to justify their assimilation and estrangement from the faith for which their ancestors had died. Today, (the *Chofetz Chaim* passed away over sixty years ago) there are those who, under the guise of “a new philosophy” of religion, or an “innovative approach” to religion, have made a mockery of the *Torah* and its precepts. Rather than conceding their weakness, admitting that they desire a material lifestyle, or that morality is something with which they cannot contend, they resort to transforming their weakness into an “ism,” a new theology. To the person who says, “I walk as my heart sees fit,” I do not sin – I translate the *Torah* differently: Hashem will not forgive him. There is no greater form of “*perikas ol*,” “throwing off the yoke” of *mitzvos*, than using evil to perform a *mitzvah*.