

"And he shall not have too many wives, so that his heart may not turn astray; and he shall not greatly increase silver and gold for himself." (17:17)

The *Yerushalmi, Sanhedrin 2:6*, explains why Shlomo *Ha'Melech* was deposed. *Chazal* comment that the "yud" of the word *vcrh* came before Hashem and "complained" that Shlomo *Ha'Melech* was rejecting a *Torah* prohibition. The *Torah* states that the king may not increase his wives, and Shlomo had done just that. Hashem responded that a thousand Shlomos would come and go, but never would a single letter of the *Torah* be eliminated. We must endeavor to understand why, specifically, it was the "yud" that complained. Why did not any of the other letters voice their opinion? What underlying message did the letter "yud" communicate that caused such a sharp reaction?

Horav Eliyahu Meir Bloch, z.l., offers a profound explanation. Shlomo *Ha'Melech*, the wisest of all men, certainly was able to explore the rationale behind the prohibition of having too many wives. Ostensibly he felt that the stated reason, "They would sway him away from Hashem," did not apply to him. In addition, Shlomo *Ha'Melech* was a great *tzaddik* and meticulous in **every** area of *mitzvah* observance. Surely he had a strong basis for what he was doing. What is the explanation? His error was in the area of "aveirah lishmah," transgressing for the purpose of doing a *mitzvah* or performing an *aveirah* with a noble intention.

The *Gaon M'Vilna* writes that from the time of *Matan Torah*, the giving of the *Torah*, every *mitzvah* has been "locked in place." There is no flexibility in "performing *avei'ros*." Yaakov *Avinu*, who married two sisters, and Amram, who married his aunt, both participated in marriage unions which are prohibited by *Torah* law. They did this, however, before the *Torah* was given to us. From the time the *Torah* "officially" became our religious code and blueprint for life, the *halachic* status of the *mitzvos* has been immutable. Shlomo *Ha'Melech's* "cheshbonos," personal reasons, albeit noble, were insufficient justification to transcend the law.

Horav Yitzchak Goldwasser, Shlita, explains the *Gaon's* thesis in the following manner: When *Bnei Yisrael* were liberated from the Egyptian bondage, we became the servants of Hashem by virtue of His redemption of us. A servant must submit himself totally and unequivocally to his master without demanding a rationale for his master's command. He serves because his master commands -- regardless of the reason! Likewise, the underlying reason for the *mitzvah* in no way plays a role in the need for complete compliance to it. The fact that it is the *tzivui* Hashem, the command of Hashem, should be sufficient reason!

We now understand why it was the letter "yud" which criticized Shlomo *Ha'Melech's* behavior. When the "yud" serves as a prefix to a verb, it transforms the verb into a command! Shlomo's action was not an inappropriate response given the *rationale* of the *mitzvah*. *Rationale*, however, does not play a role in the validity of a *mitzvah*. The mere fact that it is a *tzivui* Hashem is what

determines its authority. Shlomo *Ha'Melech's* action undermined the "*tzivui Hashem*" aspect of the *mitzvah*. Hashem responded that the *Torah* is unalterable. It is perfect in its essence and flawless in its integrity. One who does not accept the sovereignty of Hashem as presented by the *Torah* does not warrant his own monarchy.