

"And it shall come to pass if you will listen diligently to My mitzvos." (11:13)

If one were to translate this *pasuk* literally it would read, "If you listen gna ot, then ugna,, you will listen." This interpretation communicates a different message which has great meaning. First, we must **begin** to listen, the rest will come later. One who refrains from beginning to listen obviously cannot **continue** listening. A specific process guides *mitzvah* observance. We must take the first step and then build upon the foundation which we have created. All too often, people become overwhelmed by the magnitude of *Torah* and *mitzvos*. They are confounded by their inability to grasp the entire storehouse of *Torah* knowledge. They fear their inability to perform all of the details of the *mitzvos*. This irrational fear of the unknown unfortunately creates a natural response. They do not even begin to listen.

This constitutes a tragic mistake. If we begin to listen "gna", Hashem will grant us the ability and courage to continue listening "ugna,", if that is what we truly desire. Perhaps another lesson can be derived from the literal translation of the *pasuk*. A beginning must engender continuity. To start and not to continue is tantamount to not starting at all! Continuity and consistency distinguish *Torah* observance.