

"If in My statutes, you shall walk." (26:3)

What is the meaning of "walking" in Hashem's statutes? This idea can be elucidated allegorically with the following parable: A group of people are sitting together around a large table. As long as they sit together, eating and drinking, there are no noticeable characteristics distinguishing any individual among them. This situation changes at the end of the meal, when they rise to go. All but one individual leave and go on their way. Only one person remains sitting in his place, as if paralyzed in his position. This riddle is solved only after careful inquiry. Due to a serious physical condition this man lacks the ability to walk. As long as everyone remains seated, his condition is not conspicuous. When everyone leaves, however, his unfortunate situation becomes obvious.

Horav Nochum Zev of Kelm Z"l applies this parable as a way of developing an insight into the true character of people. As long as everyone is sitting and studying together in the Yeshiva, it is not always possible to distinguish one student's character development from another's. Only after the students physically "get up" and leave the shelter of the *Bais Hamedrash* and its refined spiritual environment is each one's personality truly reflected. Only then can one discern between one who is able to stand erect and "walk" in the world equipped with his Torah education and one who is unable to "walk," consequently falling prey to the "winds of secular change" that permeate the air. This is the meaning of *ufk, h,ejc ot* If you will "walk" in My statutes and affirm your ability to carry yourself on the path of *Torah*, despite the opposition which you may face, you will be blessed with great reward.