

## Now, O Yisrael, what does Hashem your G-d ask of you? Only to fear Hashem, your G-d. (10:12)

Fear of G-d is essential. A person is able to acknowledge Hashem and freely submit to His will only when he truly fears Him. One naturally succumbs to the *yetzer hora*, evil inclination. Through our *yiraas Shomayim*, fear of Heaven, however, we are able to overcome the blandishments of the *yetzer hora*. The **Chofetz Chaim** placed emphasis on the word "viata" "now". A person should go through life inquiring, "What does Hashem ask of me - now? Not tomorrow, not yesterday, but right now! When we keep the idea of current obligation in our mind, Judaism becomes alive. Our whole manner of observance takes on a totally new perspective.

**Horav Chizkiyahu Cohen, zl**, notes the word "lgn" from you: It would seem that the *Torah* is emphasizing the individual. He elucidates this with a thought from **Horav Yisrael Salanter, zl**, who once met a person and asked him, "What do you do?" The person respectfully responded that he is involved in various business endeavors. Once again *Rav Yisrael* asked him, "What do you do?" This time the person elaborated a bit more about his business endeavors, hoping to satisfy *Rav Yisrael*. This answer still did not meet satisfaction. The question was asked another few times, resulting in the same response. Finally, *Rav Yisrael* told the individual, "I am questioning what you do, and you are telling me what Hashem does. You do not make the money; you do not create the success of the business endeavor. Hashem does all that. I asked what you do and you respond with information about what Hashem does.

Similarly, people tend to justify their laxity in *mitzvah* observance and *Torah* study maintaining, "I am busy." People identify their jobs and the pursuit of *parnasah*, livelihood, as the prime deterrents from successfully carrying out their commitment as Jews. The *Torah* responds to these thoughtless people; "What does Hashem ask of you? Only to fear Him. You do what Hashem imposes upon you, and Hashem will take care of your livelihood. The problems arise when we make the mistake of playing G-d, assuming that it is we who are making great achievements. If we would only realize that our success is all Hashem's doing, we might find more time to demonstrate our gratitude to Him.