

"And (therefore) you shall place these My words on (in) your hearts and on (in) your soul." (11:18)

Rashi states that the *mitzvos* of *tefillin* and *mezuzah* are distinct from others in that *Bnei Yisrael* are expected to continue to practice them even in exile. Thus, when they return to *Eretz Yisrael*, *tefillin* and *mezuzah* would not seem to be new/foreign *mitzvos*.

The *Vilna Gaon* questions *Rashi's* statement from the *Talmud Kidushin 3b*, which states that any *mitzvah* whose observance is limited specifically to the land (*Eretz Yisrael*) is not applicable to *chutz la'aretz*, countries outside of *Eretz Yisrael*. Those *mitzvos* which are not bound to the land, however, are applicable in *Eretz Yisrael*, as well as outside of its boundaries. *Rashi* seems to imply that *tefillin* and *mezuzah* are to be observed outside of *Eretz Yisrael* only to maintain one's familiarity with them for the time when he returns to the land. This statement is apparently inconsistent with that of the *Talmud*.

The *Vilna Gaon* cites an old manuscript of *Rashi's* which uses the letters ,v and n"g in abbreviation. These letters can serve as an acronym for the words ikhbp, ujhbv, they put on *tefillin* and ,uzuzn uag, they made *mezuzos*. The letters, states the *Gaon*, actually refer to something totally different. The letters ,v are an abbreviation for ,unur, uahrpv, they separated *terumah*. n"g refers to ,uragn urag, they tithed their tithe. Both of these *mitzvos* are dependent upon residence in *Eretz Yisrael*. This response seems questionable, since the juxtaposition of *terumah* and *maaser* upon the *parsha* dealing with *tefillin* and *mezuzah* is obscure.

Horav Eliyahu Shlesinger suggests another response. He asserts that there is a unique status accorded to those performing the *mitzvos* of *tefillin* and *mezuzah* in *Eretz Yisrael*, which is *not* accorded to those performing these *mitzvos* outside of *Eretz Yisrael*. Only regarding these two *mitzvos* does the *Torah* add to the promised reward the phrase, "that your days be multiplied and the days of your children upon the earth which Hashem swore unto your fathers." (11:21) This added phrase implies that *arichas yamim*, longevity, has been promised by Hashem as a reward for fulfilling these two *mitzvos* specifically "*al ha'adamah*," upon the earth." This refers exclusively to *Eretz Yisrael*. Consequently, life itself is dependent upon performing these *mitzvos* in *Eretz Yisrael*.

Obviously, one can not begin to compare a *mitzvah* performed when life is dependent upon it to a *mitzvah* performed when life is not contingent upon its fulfillment. This is *Rashi's* message. When we are outside of *Eretz Yisrael* our attitude towards performing these two *mitzvos* should be the same as if we were performing them in *Eretz Yisrael*. We should apply the same enthusiasm and excitement which we display when our life is contingent upon it, likewise in *chutz la'aretz*. Thus, when we return to *Eretz Yisrael*, our eagerness towards performing these *mitzvos* will not be shamefully lacking.