



"If you will walk in my statutes, and heed my commandments ..." (Vayikra 33:3).

This week the Torah bestows its promise of blessing and peace to those who follow in the path of Torah. Rashi is bothered by the seeming redundancy of walking in statutes, and heeding commands. He explains that "walk in my statutes" refers to arduous Torah study, and "heed my commandments" refers to keeping the mitzvos.

And then there is peace. Hashem promises that if we adhere to the directives, "I will bring peace to the land" (ibid p. 6) In the same pasuk, the Torah also tells us that "*a sword will not pass through your land.*" If there is peace, then obviously a sword will not pass through. What is the meaning of the redundancy? Once again, Rashi clarifies that the "sword passing through" is referring to a sword that is not directed against our people; rather it is a sword that is passing through on the way to another country. Thus the two types of peace.

But maybe there is a distinctive type of peace; one that does not refer to guns and ammunition, but rather to a peace that is on another level.

Rav Yitzchak Zilberstein of B'nei Berak tells the story of Rav Eliezer Shach, the Ponovezer Rosh Yeshiva, of blessed memory.

Rav Shach once entered a shul and sat down in a seat towards the back, and, while waiting for the minyan to begin, Rav Shach began to study Torah. Suddenly a man approached him, hands on his hips, and began shouting at him.

"Don't you know that you are sitting in my seat?" the irate man yelled.

"Who are you to come here and just sit down, without asking anyone permission?"

Rav Shach quickly stood up and embraced the man. He hugged him lovingly as he begged the man for forgiveness. He agreed to the irate man's every point.

"I am so sorry for taking your seat even if it was for a few moments," he pleaded. Please forgive me. I must have absent-mindedly sat down there. Please forgive me.

The man was taken aback at the Rosh Yeshiva's humility, and immediately apologized for his rude behavior.

"After the davening, students of Rav Shach approached him and asked why he so readily accepted guilt and begged forgiveness for what surely was not a misdeed. After all, why should he not be able to sit down in the seat. Rav Shach explained, "If Torah is all that one aspires to have, then everything else in this world, all the items one would normally squabble about has no significance. When one is immersed in Torah, a seat is meaningless, a place is meaningless. Surely a material object is not worth getting upset over, surely no less are they worth fighting over. Why shouldn't I apologize?"

The Torah tells us a secret to peace in our community. If we toil in Torah, there will be peace in the land. The Torah is telling us that if we immerse ourselves in Torah then all the temporal objects that are the fulcrum of most fights are meaningless.

We think of peace as a concept that occurs between nations. However, we often forget that what we need is peace within our own community. A separate peace.

Good Shabbos

Mincha: 6:35/8:05

Kriyas Shema: 9:44

Adapted from Rabbi Mordechai Kamanetzky

Candle Lighting: 8:04

Mincha: 7:55

Shachris: 8:45

Motzai Shabbos: 9:09

Kiddush is sponsored by the Shul this Shabbos in honor of Shelly and Laurell Salcman.

Mazel Tov to Rabbi and Rebbitzin Kaufman on the engagements of their son Binyomin to Bashie Zelinger and the engagement of their son Moshe to Aliza Stern.

Mazel Tov to Janine Weinstock and Aryeh & Faige Lebovic on the engagement of Janine's grandson Shmuel Weiss to Aryeh and Faige's granddaughter Shoshana Reich.