

נְאוֹת דֵּשֶׁה Neos Deshe

An Adaptation of Rabbi Shmuel Dov Asher Leiner's Neos Deshe by Rabbi Reuven Boshnack
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Neos Deshe Bechukosai

The Parsha opens up with the phrase, "If you will walk in the ways of Chukim- laws." (Vayikra 36:1) How does a person walk in Hashem's ways? It sounds very metaphorical. Vayikra Rabbah (35:1) explains it as:

If you will walk in my statutes: This is what is written ([Psalms 119:59](#)), "I considered my ways and I turned my feet to your testimonies." David said, "Master of the universe! On each and every day I would consider and say, 'To place x and to the home of y am I walking,' but my feet would bring me to the synagogues and to the Houses of Study. - this is what is written, "I considered my ways and I turned my feet to your testimonies."

Neos Deshe explains, how do you know if you are walking in Hashem's ways? David Hamelech said, when my feet are always bringing me to Torah and Mitzvos, then that is an indicator that you are walking in this way.

However, Rashi explains if you will go in my Chukim, you will be עמל- you'll toil in the Torah. This does not mean to learn Torah to the exclusion of physical life. Which one might take the Midrash to mean. How do we understand Rashi in light of the midrash describing David Hamelech ending up at the Beis Midrash without meaning to?

עמלות in Torah means that a person toils in Torah and emerges from its study a changed person. We understand this from the worlds of Shlomo Hamelech (Koheles 4:7) who says to toil without knowing for Whom they toil is futility. Everything which we do, must have some benefit coming out of it. This is why the Hagada says עמלנו means the children. Our learning must produce dividends. עמלות means that all of the learning which we do must result in some practical application of how this specific learning will impact my Avodas Hashem. Each thing which is learned must be viewed not as simply, "it's a mitvah to learn so I'm learning," nor should it be something which has nothing to do with you.

Both Rashi and the Midrash are making the same point. When we walk in the way of the Torah, it penetrates into us, it directs us in its way, but only when we constantly strive to make it a part of ourselves. Then our toil in the Torah will embrace every part of our lives, and bear dividends.