

## WHICH PATH SHOULD WE TAKE?

### PARSHAS SHMINI

❖ **The *Netziv* explains** that a regular kohain must be in a state of joy and happiness when he does a service in the holy Temple. That happiness must result of his awareness of and closeness to Hashem. It may not come from an artificial stimulant.

❖ **The Midrash (12:1) warns** against the danger of too much drinking. "If a person drinks too much wine, he will end up selling all that he owns to keep up his addiction to drinking."

Unfortunately, we see this problem, with alcoholism and with drug addiction. Even if the addiction stems from sadness or depression, the good feeling is fleeting, and the results can have serious consequences. If we do feel depressed or unhappy, we are told to go learn Torah. That will bring us closer to Hashem and will help us feel true joy.

❖ **The Midrash relates a story:** There was a man who spent so much money on his drinking habit that his family members were worried they would soon become penniless. They thought of a fantastic plan. The next time their father was drunk, they took him to the nearby cemetery. They hoped that when their father became sober he would be so shocked to find himself in the cemetery that he would realize his problem and stop drinking. Their plan may have worked were it not for a

*"Hashem spoke to Aharon. When you or your sons enter The Tent of Meeting, do not drink wine or other intoxicating beverages, lest you die."  
(Vavikra 10:8-9)*

strange happening. A caravan passing near the cemetery was attacked. As the caravan quickly left the area, a large barrel fell and rolled next to the sleeping, drunk father. When the father awoke, he was surprised to find the faucet of a barrel of wine right next to his face. Excitedly,

he put his mouth on the faucet and kept drinking, right there in the cemetery.

❖ **Rav Eliyahu Dessler commented,** we see from here the principle that **Hashem leads a person in the way he wants to go.** The events that led to the person to find the wine in the cemetery were so unusual that they were almost miraculous. Rav Dessler continues, "If this is so when a person wants to do something which is improper, **how much more so will Hashem lead one on the way when a person has a strong will to do what is good.**

**The greater our desire to do something, the more successful we will be.  
We should increase our desire for spiritual matters and Hashem will give us special help  
to lead us in that path and help us achieve our goal.**

Based on a dvar Torah by *Rabbi Zelig Pliskin*

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