



Published on www.bilvavi.net

[Home](#) > Essence of the Month - 003 Sivan | Walking Towards The Endless

Essence of the Month - 003 Sivan | Walking Towards The Endless

Sivan - "Walking"

The month of *Sivan* is the month when we received the Torah. Each month contains a special power, as our Sages taught; the power of Sivan is called "*hiluch*", "walking."^[1] What is the connection between *hiluch*\walking and with the giving of the Torah? And what exactly is the power of "*hiluch*", "walking"?

The Constant Spiritual Progress Of A Torah Scholar: Where Is His Serenity?

The *Gemara*^[2] says that Torah scholars have no *menuchah* (serenity), not on this world and not in the next, for it is written, "**יֵלְכוּ מְחִיל אֶל מְחִיל**", "*They go from place to place.*" If Torah scholars have no rest on this world or in the next, what kind of situation are they in? They are always in a state of *hiluch* – they are always 'walking', going, progressing.

However, there seems to be a contradiction. A Torah scholar, our Sages say, is the epitome of *menuchah* (serenity). The Torah says about the Yissocher, who is blessed with Torah scholars as his descendants, that "*he saw that serenity is good.*" The wisest of all men, the greatest Torah scholar ever, was Shlomo HaMelech, yet he is called '*ish menuchah*', a 'man of serenity'. But the *Gemara* we brought above says that a Torah scholar has no *menuchah*, not on this world and not on the next! How do we reconcile these two statements?

Making the question stronger, there's another statement of our Sages that says, "A Torah scholar is called *Shabbos*." *Shabbos* epitomes the concept of *menuchah* – serenity and rest. Here again we see that a Torah scholar is the epitome of *menuchah*.

Therefore, the statement of our Sages that "A Torah scholar has no *menuchah* (rest\serenity), not on This World, and not on the Next World" is a matter which needs understanding. If they are always progressing and moving forward, when do they ever get to have *menuchah*? And if a Torah scholar is the epitome of *menuchah*, why does he keep aspiring for more and more spiritual levels?

Defining The Concept of Hiluch\Walking\Progressing

In order to know this, we will first need to understand what the concept of "*hiluch*" ("going") is. What does it mean that Torah scholars are in always in a state of "*hiluch*", that they are always 'going from place to place'?

The way that a Torah scholar progresses and 'goes' [from one spiritual attainment to another] is not in the same way that we understand how a person simply 'goes' from one place to another. It's not the same kind of "*hiluch*". The Sages make a contrast between angels and Torah scholars: an angel is always standing, whereas a Torah scholar is always 'walking'. In this statement, the Sages are revealing to us that the Jew has the special power in his soul to keep progressing to higher levels; to constantly be in a state of "*hiluch*". In that sense, there is no *menuchah* (serenity), because there is always more spiritual growth for a person to reach.

There are two types of *hiluch*\walking. One way is when a person 'goes' from one place to another, and another case is where he leaves his own "*daled amos*" (four cubits); the Torah defines a person's *daled amos* as his actual *makom*, space. In other words, one kind of person will go from place to place by simply leaving his place, while another person can move from place to place while still being able to remain in it – he can move around within his own space of *daled amos*, and it is not considered as if he is gone anywhere.

On Shabbos, it is forbidden to leave the *techum* (boundary of the settlement). Within one's own *techum*, though, one is allowed to move around in on Shabbos. It would seem that moving within one's own bounds is the same kind of movement as moving past one's bounds, but they are actually two different kinds of movement. Understanding this deep difference will help us understand what the *hiluch* of a Torah scholar is.

One kind of *hiluch* is where a person moves from one place to another and as a result, he loses his *menuchah* (serenity). This is where a person leaves his place, and he goes to another place. When a person is always going from place to place, he cannot have *menuchah*. But when a person is remaining in his space, even as he's moving within it, he can have a degree of *menuchah* there.

Avraham Avinu left for Eretz Yisrael, and Yaakov Avinu was promised Eretz Yisrael, when Hashem folded the entire land of Eretz Yisrael and placed it under his head. In both of these situations, they were staying within one "place". Yaakov clearly had the entire place of Eretz Yisrael, but even Avraham was remaining in the same place the whole time; he was not actually leaving one place to go to another place. How?

When one walks in Eretz Yisrael, it is as if he is staying in one place the whole time, whereas walking outside of Eretz Yisrael is considered going from one place to another. What is the difference? Of Eretz Yisrael it is said, "*From beginning of the year, until the end of the year*". The entire land of Eretz Yisrael is considered to be one "place". The Sages teach that Hashem is called the "Place" of the world.^[3] When one feels this perspective, even as he walks from one place to another, he does not feel like he is leaving one place and going to another. Rather, he knows that he is always found in the same place – for the only "place" of the world is Hashem.

When one walks within his own property, we say that he's walking within his own place and that he hasn't left his place. But if one leaves his property and goes to another person's property, we say that he has gone from one place to another. We can learn from this that if a person views two different places as one place, he is not leaving that place, wherever he goes. When a person understands that only Hashem is called the "Place" of the world, he sees every place in the world as all one place – Hashem's.

Based upon the above, we can understand the difference between the "walking" of a Torah scholar, with the "walking" of one who is not a Torah scholar, an ignoramus. To a Torah scholar, every place is all one place, for only Hashem is the "Place" of the world. In his perspective, he is never leaving one place and going to another, because every place is really Hashem's. But someone who does not have the perspective of the Torah scholar thinks that he goes from one place to another, and that is why he

will not have *menuchah* (serenity), because according to his perspective, he's always on the go.

"By the mouth of Hashem they shall journey, and by the mouth of Hashem they shall camp." The Gemara says that from this verse, we learn that only Hashem is called the "Place" of the world, for wherever we go, we must follow Hashem; that makes every place into Hashem's place. This is how a Torah scholar progresses – he has the perspective that every place where he goes to is really all one place. It is all Hashem's place. It is like when the entire land of Eretz Yisrael was folded and placed under the head of Yaakov Avinu, and it is like walking in Eretz Yisrael, which is entirely one place – *"By the mouth of Hashem they shall journey, and by the mouth of Hashem they shall rest."*

Hiluch\Walking - Uncovering More Depth In The Same Area You Are In

Now let us explain this in terms that apply to our own personal souls.

Every person goes through all kinds of situations in life, where they are moving and progressing from one area to another. Some people are progressing in their spiritual attainments, whereas others are making progress in areas that are spiritually harmful (may Heaven save them). The Vilna Gaon says that a person is either ascending or descending, in his spiritual progress. No one stays in one place for long; either a person is rising, or falling.

Sivan is the month of *halichah\hiluch* (walking\progressing). The Torah is the revelation that whenever I go, I am in a place where Hashem is. "Hashem looked into the Torah, and created the world" – from the Torah, it is revealed that all of Creation is really one "place": it is all Hashem. The Sages said this explicitly of Eretz Yisrael (that anyone who walks in it is walking in Hashem's place), but it also applies anywhere outside of Eretz Yisrael, except that there it is more hidden.

The Torah is all one unit. There is no such thing as two different versions of the Torah, *chas v'shalom*. We find that a "place" can be divided, such as how the land of Eretz Yisrael is divided amongst the portions of the twelve tribes. But at the root, all is one. When a person sees the world through an inner lens, when he sees the root of this Creation, what does he see in the world? All he will see in the "world" is "Torah", for that is what the world was created from, and therefore only the "Torah" is the "world" (when one has the inner perspective).

If a person sees the world through superficial vision, however, he has the perspective that one can move from place to another, that he can be uprooted from his place and find rest in another place. With such a perspective, he has no real stability, so he will never have *menuchah* (serenity). But if a person only sees "Torah" in Creation (for "Hashem looked into the Torah and created the world"), he will see all places of the world as one single place.

Thus, the meaning of "Torah scholars have no *menuchah*, not on This World and not in the Next World" is that they don't stop moving within the place they are in. They are not moving out of one place and into another. Rather, in the very place they are in, they keep moving. In that respect, they don't have *menuchah*.

What does it mean that Torah scholars keep progressing, from one spiritual attainment to another, **יִלְכוּ מֵחֵיל לְחֵיל**? Does it mean to finish all of *Talmud Bavli* and then *Talmud Yerushalmi*? Along the lines of the same question, what essentially is the difference between a Torah scholar and an ignoramus?

The true Torah scholar is always revealing more depth to the very same verse of Torah he is learning, or in the very same page of Gemara he is learning. He keeps progressing spiritually within the same place, and that is he is always in movement, but without leaving the place where he is, by revealing more depth within the place where he is at.

Thus, the special ability of the Torah scholar is that he can keep “walking”\progressing in the very area of Torah he is learning, by seeing another angle of understanding to it, another layer of depth to it, endlessly.

Hiluch\Walking\Progressing - The Way To Receive The Torah

What is the connection, though, between this concept of *hiluch*\walking\progressing and receiving the Torah?

It is because the Torah is the revelation of the very idea that a person can keep walking\progressing, endlessly, within the very same place that a person is in. One can keep revealing more depth to the same verse of the Torah he is learning, to the same Mishnah he is learning, to the same subject of Gemara he is learning. The amount of depth one can keep uncovering is infinite.

The Menuchah (Serenity) of Learning Torah In-Depth

To illustrate the concept, Rav Chaim of Brisk told his students to spend 40 days learning the same page of Gemara. It is because one can keep uncovering more and more depth within the very same area of Torah he is learning about, without moving on to a different area.

Now we can also understand how this also provides a Torah with *menuchah*. The soul cannot have true serenity when it keeps viewing a different page of Gemara every day; it never finds any place to rest in. But if it has 40 days to keep seeing the same words of the Gemara, it can be serene there. This is on condition, of course, that a person keeps studying the words with the intention to uncover more depth of understanding.

The *menuchah* in learning Torah comes from spending time learning the same page of Gemara for a while, getting yourself deeper and deeper into it. Compare this to digging a pit in the ground in order to lay a foundation to build a home upon. The deeper you dig into the ground, the more stable of a structure it will be, because the foundation is stronger when it is placed deeper. This is the meaning of true “*menuchas hanefesh*” (serenity of the soul).

A Torah scholar therefore does not simply ‘go’ from one subject to another in Torah. Rather, in the same subject of Torah he is studying, he keeps revealing more and more depth in that area. Now we can understand why Shlomo was called “*ish menuchah*”, a man of serenity. He was the one who built the *Beis HaMikdash*, the deepest spiritual place that there is in Creation. It was the gate to Heaven that was on this world of action, and it was a gate that led to the most absolute spiritual place [and since he uncovered the most depth, he attained serenity].

Reaching The Infinite

At Har Sinai, Hashem opened up all of the heavens and showed them “*Ain Od Milvado*”, that there is nothing else besides for Hashem. What was the reason for this? It is because the Torah enables a person to reveal more and more depth, until a person reaches *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*, which is the recognition of “*Ain Od Milvado*”.

That is what it means to have “*hiluch*” (walking) within Torah; it means to keep “walking” and moving within one place, within the very same area he is thinking about, until one reaches the Infinite - the deepest place possible to reach.

Sivan is the month when the Torah was given. The Torah is “*longer than the earth and wider than the sea*”, but besides for this, the Torah also reveals a power to keep “going” within the same place where one is, to keep revealing more and depth within the place that one is, until he reaches the *Ein*

Sof, (the Infinite).

This is not a matter which comes by itself to a person [as an automatic byproduct of learning Torah]. Rather, it is a matter which needs to be acquired, and it is the meaning of what it means to be a "Torah scholar."

In order for a person to see the depths of the Torah, when he sees the "deep waters" that the Torah is, he must become an "*ish tevunah*", "a man of understanding". This refers to the concept of the "50 Gates of Understanding".

The Depth of Sefiras Ha'Omer: Getting Deeper Into The Gates of Understanding

There are "50 Gates of Understanding" to the Torah. There are 50 days of *Sefiras Ha'Omer*, and the inner reason for counting each day of the *Omer* is so that one can keep entering deeper and deeper into the spiritual realm within him; until the innermost gate is reached.

The Vilna Gaon says that each of the 50 gates of understanding contain 50 levels, so when one reaches the 50th gate, he will find himself before another 50 gates to traverse. Thus, the depth of *Sefiras Ha'Omer* is to keep entering deeper and deeper into one's inner spiritual realm, until one gets to the "giving of the Torah" that is reached when one gets to the recognition of *Ain Od Milvado* ("There is nothing besides Him").

Counting *Sefiras Ha'Omer* is therefore not just a verbal act of the mouth, but a matter of the soul. When the Torah says, "Count fifty days", the intention is to keep entering deeper, past another gate and another gate, into one's inner spiritual dimension.

That is the depth of the concept of "*hiluch*". It is about digging deeper and deeper, into everything. In everything we encounter, there is always more depth to uncover, because there are always "50 gates of understanding" in everything.

The first 49 days of *Sefiras Ha'Omer* represents the external part of our task in preparing to receive the Torah. What is the preparation that we need to make in order to receive the Torah? To reveal more and more depth in whatever we see! *Sefiras Ha'Omer* is about revealing depth, to enter into another gate and into another gate.

Reaching The "50 Gates of Understanding" - Through Exposing The Heart

The *Nefesh HaChaim* explains that the root of Creation is that the Torah reveals all of Creation. The depth of this matter is that Torah can be found in any place where one is; it is not limited to any one place. A Torah scholar can see, in everything he comes across, the "50 gates of understanding". He doesn't only see it in one particular place; he can see it in any place, in anything he sees.

In order to reveal the depths of the Torah, one must reveal the "50 gates of understanding" in his own heart. The heart contains 50 gates. When one reveals his heart, he can enter into the 50 gates that are within the heart. Shlomo HaMelech said, "My heart has seen much wisdom." The 50 gates of the heart became opened to Shlomo, and that is how he was able to reach the 50th gate of the Torah, for his heart became a proper vessel that could receive the 50 gates of understanding in everything.

In order to see the 50th gate of understanding in anything, one cannot reach it through his intellect. The intellect is not capable to reaching the 50th gate of understanding in anything, because the 50th gate is always beyond intellectual comprehension. Only the heart, which contains 50 gates of understanding, can reach it. The Torah speaks of those who are "wise of heart", and this is not referring to intellectual wisdom, but "heart" wisdom. Only with this "heart wisdom" can a person

reveal the depths of understanding in something.

Purifying The Heart - Through Revealing Depth Within The Heart

It is written, *"A pure heart you created me with."* If a person wants to comprehend the Torah, he first needs to go through an inner process, of revealing the depths of his heart.

The spiritual structure of the heart is a complicated to know, because it is not one single layer. The "heart" itself is not the emotions of a person; it is a deeper dimension than just emotion, and there is depth upon depth to it. If a person has not yet purified his heart, he will only feel the outer dimension of his heart, which is the emotions, and if he stays that way his entire life, he will remain at the same emotional level of a child, yet he will feel certain that he's using his heart.

When a child feels happy, or when he feels sad, he feels that this is all there is to his heart. All of his recognition is based on the level he is at. But true "heart recognition" is only when one reveals new depth within his heart; one can keep entering deeper and deeper into it, traversing through the 50 gates that are hidden in his heart. That is where a person receives the "wisdom the heart".

This is the meaning of Shlomo HaMelech's words, *"My heart has seen much wisdom."* The wisdom he uncovered was the depths of the Torah, and he saw more and more depth in everything in the Torah.

The level of one's Torah learning will depend on the level he has reached in his own heart. When a person truly comprehends anything in Torah, it is not reached due to any intellectual prowess. If one is intellectually gifted when it comes to Torah learning, that is only the external part of Torah learning. One reaches true understanding in Torah only to the degree that he has revealed the depth within his heart. The more one uncovers the depth of his heart, the more understanding he will reach in Torah. The highest point one can reach is the "heart" itself. Beyond that, we are not able to know.

In Conclusion

And so, preparing to receive the Torah is through *hiluch*, "walking." It doesn't mean to "go" from one "place" to another "place", which is the perspective of the ignoramus. Rather, it means to keep walking/going further and further into our own depths; to the depths of recognition in our heart. That is the vessel that one needs in order to contain the depths of the Torah's wisdom.

"My heart has seen much wisdom" - to the degree that one has purified his heart, that is how much wisdom he will reach in Torah. Any of our previous sages and Gedolim who merited to receive much wisdom did not reach this from any of their intellectual abilities, but according to the degree that they purified their hearts. They therefore merited to become a *"maayan hamisgaber"* (mighty wellspring) that can reach understanding in Torah.

May Hashem give us the ability to go from one spiritual accomplishment to another, to reveal more and more depth in the Torah, and the Creator Who lays hidden in it.

[1] Sefer Yetzirah 5:5

[2] Berachos 64a

[3] Nefesh HaChaim, Gate III

Source: <https://bilvavi.net/english/essence-month-003-sivan-walking-towards-endless>