

July 1, 1976

PEREK IV:

(gave at JC after morning services Thursday July 1st, 1976)

הבדל אמר של תבונה מן הלימוד יאל תעז עולם
הבדל... יאל...

The difference between *הבדל* and *הבדל* is actual, social separation, and digression from ideal norms of the Sinaitic community. R. Zadok says that even if you recognize the flaws in the community, and are aware of your own moral superiority, it is no reason to separate yourself from the real, living community despite all its shortcomings. You must seek to be a *חבר* for Israel, and see it in its best possible light.

However, this leads one to skew his objective judgment, because he always advocates a single point of view subjectively. R. Zadok must therefore warn the student against overdoing this tendency in situations and places where it is inappropriate. He therefore says, "do not make yourself into a lawyer," in the sense that the lawyer must always seek to present his client's case in the best possible light, and that is something which causes the subversion of justice (in the absence of an adversary who does the same for the other point of view). One must seek to advocate the cause of Israel without losing his sense of objectivity and truth. Hence, one must recognize the flaws and shortcomings of the Jewish community, and still remain with them and participate.

The next element deals with the abuse of Torah. One must not make personal, egotistical use of the Torah. The conclusion of the second half of the Mishnah is that if one does so *נפסו חיו מן העולם*, which is normally explained as an idiom for, "loses his life." More specifically, I would say that this is a reference to the blessing, *וה' יעלה נפש ברכי*. When you study Torah for its own sake, then it is as if God has implanted *חיים* in you, the life of eternity, within us. But when you study Torah not for its own sake, but in order to glorify yourself or advance your own egotistical end, when you seek to use Torah for enhancing your position in this *עולם*, then you take the *חיים* out of *עולם הבא*, you remove the liveliness of the "eternal life" that Torah should mean for us. Then you have a Torah which may be eternal, but it is no longer "alive"...