



Torah portion –Shoftim / Gili Katz

Illustrated by: Inbal Weissman

“You shall be wholehearted with the Lord your God.”
(Deuteronomy 18:13)

Rashi (on Deut. 18:13):

“Walk with Him in wholeheartedness, and place your hope in Him. Do not seek to probe the future. Rather, whatever befalls you, accept it with wholeheartedness. Then you will be with Him and of His portion.”

Rabbeinu Bahya, Introduction to *Duties of the Heart*:

You should understand that the aim and benefit of the commandments of the heart is that our inner life and our outer actions be in harmony—balanced together in the service of God. The testimony of heart, tongue, and limbs must be consistent: each confirming the other, bearing witness for it, not contradicting, not undermining. This is what Scripture calls being “wholehearted,” as it says (Deuteronomy 18:13): “*You shall be wholehearted with the Lord your God.*” Likewise (Psalms 15:2): “*He who walks wholeheartedly, and does what is righteous, and speaks truth in his heart...*”

By contrast, of one whose inner self is not like his outer it says (I Kings 11:4): “*And his heart was not whole with the Lord his God.*” And similarly (Psalms 78:36–37): “*They deceived Him with their mouth, and with their tongue they lied to Him. Their heart was not steadfast with Him.*”

Rashi interprets the verse “*You shall be wholehearted with the Lord your God*” not as “naïve simplicity,” but rather as an attitude of trust in the Holy One: to remain open and to accept the path that God directs for us, without probing into the future. Here lies a profound distinction—between “expectation of a process” and “investigation of the future.”





Expectation of a process allows a person to walk with God wholeheartedly, open to what may unfold. It cultivates the faith that life is dynamic, and that even the relationship between a person and their Creator evolves at every moment. By contrast, “investigating the future” is an attempt to fix events in advance, to confine them to a single script that has not yet occurred. Such an approach weakens devotion and obstructs growth.

Rabbeinu Bahya’s interpretation emphasizes that wholeheartedness (*temimut*) arises from the person’s own integrity—completeness of the body, and above all of the tongue, meaning that one’s speech should be pure and upright; and completeness of the heart, that one’s inner intention be sincere. We usually know the phrase “*one thing in the mouth and another in the heart*” as a description of dishonesty. Rabbeinu Bahya teaches us that to be *tamim*—wholehearted—one must cultivate harmony between mouth and heart, between what one says or does and what one truly intends.

Friday activities

1. Print the pages
2. Color the illustration

Ideas for Discussion at the Shabbat Table:

- **Personal Connection** – When did you feel that your mouth and heart were in harmony? How did this affect you and others?
- **Exploring the Plain Meaning** – The command “*You shall be wholehearted*” appears in the Torah portion in the midst of the prohibitions against various methods of foretelling the future—practices even described as an “abomination.” What can we learn from this placement?

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