

Ki Savo - 5784

Within the *brachos* before the תוכחה, the *pasuk* says (28:13) וְהָיִיתָ רֶק לְמַעַל, וְלֹא תִהְיֶה לְמַטָּה - You will be only on the top and not on the bottom. The obvious question is –if you are on the top, then surely you are not on the bottom! What could the Torah possibly be indicating by this seemingly unnecessary, repetitive phrase? Rav Tzadok HaCohen MiLublin answers as follows: There are many people who have great מעלות, great qualities. They could be *gebenched* with wonderful talents, skills, charisma or other exceptional abilities. However, despite these gifts that they have been given, they sometimes unfortunately remain as פשוטי העם, unaccomplished ordinary individuals who never actualized their talents. They are unaware how to utilize and develop their מעלות, which would allow them to shine. Without properly cultivating their wonderful attributes, they will not productively serve *Klal Yisroel* or attain greatness. Even after receiving מעלות, inborn talents and skills, we need a separate *bracha* to tell us that our talents should not remain dormant, keeping us at the lowest level of society, but dynamic and vibrant, propelling us to prominence!

Every child has areas in which he can excel, talents that need to be developed and characteristics that need to be molded and encouraged. Without parental guidance, there is no guarantee that talents will automatically develop in a positive and productive manner. It is our obligation as parents to challenge them and cultivate their talents, aptitudes and capacities that they have been endowed with. We must nurture a healthy work ethic, and teach our children to strive for excellence. We must instill determination and endurance. This will help make sure that their מעלות do not *chas v'shalom* remain unused or underdeveloped, but progress and improve, lifting them to great heights.

Wishing everyone a beautiful Shabbos.

B'yedidus,

Rabbi Tzvi Krigsman