



Shabbat Ekev

Sat. 7 - 8 Aug. 2020 - 18th of Av, 5780

כ"ה אב תש"פ

שבת פ' עקב

Issue Number 964

Baal Koreh <i>Yom Shabbat Kodesh</i>	Mr Jacob Oved	(Page-856).
Mufteer & Haftarah	Mr David Gigi (Pres. by the Committee)	(Page -1189).

Hatarat Nedarim Sun. 9 Aug. 2020, 19 Av 5780 - after Shaharit Approx. 8:35. התרת נדרים - ביום ראשון יט באב תש"פ - 9 אוגוסט 2020, אחרי תפילת שחרית בערך 8:35.

Shir Hashirim, Mincha, Kabalat Shabbat & Arbit.	18:45
Shabbat Candles.	20:19
Shabbat Shahrit - (Shema 09:20).	08:30
Mincha Shabbat - (Sunset - 20:35).	19:00
Arbit - Motzei Shabbat.	21.34
Shahrit Weekday - (Sunday - 7:30).	06:30
Mincha & Arbit.	19:00
Next Friday: Mincha, Shir Hashirim, Kabalat Shabbat & Arbit.	18:45
Next Friday: Candles. Shabbat. Re'eh	20:06

Ekev 5780 (Deuteronomy 7:12-11:25)

Aug 2, 2020 | by [Rabbi Yitzchak Zweig](#)

GOOD MORNING! In the mid-1990's I was chaplain of an Orthodox Boy Scout troop. Five or six times a year we would take weekend camping trips with the boys and many of their parents. We camped all over the state of Florida, which is very long, so many of these trips entailed quite a bit of driving. If you have ever driven in Florida then you probably know that those drives were fairly monotonous.

Once, one of the parents handed me a recording of comedian Myron Cohen to pass the time. I had never heard of him, but I was captivated

after just a few minutes of listening. Myron Cohen had a gentle way of delivering jokes – mostly by retelling conversations, replete with all different types of European accents. His expertise was the “borscht belt” audience and his jokes were mostly about relationships. This week’s Torah portion reminded me of one of his classics.

The weather outside was horrible. Even though there was a blizzard raging outside, Irving trudged the half-mile to the bakery. Upon arrival, and shivering from the cold, Irving asked the owner for two rolls. The owner quickly retrieved them and

asked what else he wanted. Irving said, "Nothing else – just two rolls."

The store owner was surprised. "You walked all the way here in this weather for only two rolls?" Numbly, Irving nodded. "Well, your wife must really like rolls," said the bakery owner. "How do you know these are for my wife?" Irving asked. "Because your mother wouldn't send you out in weather like this."

This week's Torah portion outlines the foundation of the basis of our relationship with the Almighty:

"If you listen to these laws, safeguarding them and fulfilling them, then Hashem your Lord will guard the covenant that and the love with which He made an oath to your ancestors."

Rashi, the great medieval commentator, interprets this verse in a rather surprising way. Rashi says that the laws that this verse refers to are those that we generally "trample underfoot." In other words, this refers to those commandments – *mitzvot* – that we feel are insignificant.

Many have struggled to understand why Rashi is limiting the fulfillment in the verse to those types of *mitzvot*. In fact, it seems contrary to the simple reading of the verse, which seems to imply all types of commandments. What compelled Rashi to explain the verse in this manner?

Consider for a moment that you received a call from your neighbor at 2 a.m. begging you to come right over

because his wife had a medical emergency and has to be rushed to the hospital. They have young children sleeping and need someone to come over right away to stay with them. This actually happened to me and I did what anyone in that situation would undoubtedly do; I responded in the affirmative and immediately rushed over there.

Now imagine receiving a call at 2 a.m. from this very same neighbor, but instead he asks you to go to the store to pick up a jar of pickles and a carton of ice cream for his pregnant wife who suddenly has an intense craving. In this scenario, you would hardly be as accommodating. In fact, you might just begin to wonder whether or not your friend has lost his mind, and question the long term viability of the friendship.

Yet, a wife has no qualms about asking her husband to get out of bed at 2 a.m. and pick up items that would satisfy her cravings (or to walk a half mile in a blizzard to get two rolls). Why? The answer, of course, lies in the nature of the relationship. When you are closely connected to someone you can ask things of them that seem insignificant, but that show the strength of the bond. Of course, this is reciprocal and, if the situation were reversed, you would do the same for them.

Here is another way to understand it. Obviously, forgetting one's wedding anniversary is one of

the cardinal sins of marriage. A husband (and wife) must treat the day as a special occasion, perhaps buying a nice gift before spending the evening at a nice restaurant. This is a standard expectation.

Now consider a spouse who leaves notes of appreciation or buys flowers for no specific occasion, just to express how much they cherish and appreciate their beloved. Buying a small gift or giving flowers aren't really considered grand gestures. Yet, which would be considered a stronger indicator of the strength of the relationship; a nice dinner on an anniversary or notes and small gifts to a spouse for no specific reason other than to express one's love?

Grand gestures aren't necessarily a true barometer of the strength of the relationship, nor is responding to an expectation. We often go out of our way to help those in need, including complete strangers. But does calling 911 after witnessing a car accident indicate a relationship? That is the humanity within us, and it compels us to respond. A true relationship isn't about responding to a great need, it's about responding to an individual's needs – great or small.

In some sense, we have mostly forgotten what true friendship is all about. If you haven't already internalized what I am about to say, let me be the first to inform you: "Facebook Friends" aren't really your friends. Look at your list of "Facebook

Friends" and answer the following: How many of them would lend you \$1,000 or immediately come to you in a time of need? The precious few who would be your only true friends. That's because friendship comes with obligations to one another and a commitment to be there for that person.

As you are probably aware, we are collecting stories related to the extraordinary life of our beloved friend and mentor Rabbi Kalman Packouz, of blessed memory. Many of you have responded and we are grateful (if you have a story to share please send it to rabbipackouzstories@gmail.com). I am so pleased to relate yet another one of my own personal interactions with this great man and what it taught me about friendship.

In the mid-1990's I was the executive director of our day schools, which were much smaller back then so I didn't have much administrative staff.

Like most schools, we were perpetually trying to raise funds to meet our obligations. Every year we organized the majority of our fundraising around a scholarship dinner and it was a large event with months of planning and a seemingly infinite number of details to attend to. My responsibility was to see that everything went smoothly and that the night was successful from both a

fundraising perspective and a “friendraising” perspective.

One year, the honorees were close personal friends, so not only did I have to handle all the details of the banquet, but I also had to prepare two speeches to speak about the honorees. My pressure was at a fever pitch.

My beloved friend, Rabbi Kalman Packouz of blessed memory, somehow felt my suffering. He called to ask what he could do to help. I couldn't really think of anything as I was busy trying to compose what I was going to say that evening. He mentioned that I would probably be a little less nervous and it would probably also be easier if the speeches were neatly typed out. I answered exasperatingly, “I barely have time to quickly jot some notes. I still have to also work out details for the dinner. How am I going to find the time to carefully type them up?”

Thirty minutes later he showed up at my front door. With his magnificent smile he said, “I am here to type your notes!” I was astounded. Never would I have dreamt of asking him to come over and type up something. Yet there he was offering to do a menial task, just to help make my life a little easier. He insisted, and not only did he type my notes, he vastly improved what I wanted to say. He then noted that I probably had to get to the banquet hall a little earlier than the guests, and offered to watch

my children while my wife and I got ready to go.

I mean really, who does such a thing? Only a person who has an incredible heart of gold and understands the true meaning of friendship, which is being there for someone in their time of need, even if it's just to perform a small, seemingly insignificant action. This is what Rashi means when he says that fulfilling the seemingly insignificant commandments are the true test of our relationship with the Almighty.

Obviously, it is crucially important to fast on Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement), but does that really comment on the strength of our commitment as it relates to fulfilling all that the Almighty asks of us? Not really. In fact, there are many marginally connected Jews who fast on Yom Kippur, but otherwise do very little else that the Torah asks of them throughout the year.

We must remind ourselves that we are in a relationship with the Almighty and (as with every relationship), this comes with special privileges. But these privileges are accompanied by obligations as well. Observing, in particular, the commandments that one would tend to see as trivial is the real indicators of the strength of our bond with the Almighty. That is why it is the observance of these laws that guarantees God's fulfillment of the

covenant He made with our forefathers.



TORAH PORTION OF THE WEEK

Eikev, Deuteronomy 7:12 – 11:25

Moses continues his discourse guaranteeing the Jewish people prosperity and good health if they follow the *mitzvot*, the commandments. He reminds us to look at our history and to know that we can and should trust in God. However, we should be careful so that we are not distracted by our material success, lest we forget and ignore God.

Moses warns us against idolatry and against self-righteousness. He then details our rebellions against God during the 40 years in the desert and the giving of the Second Tablets (Moses broke the first Tablets

containing the Ten Commandments during the sin of the Golden Calf).

The Torah then answers a question that every human being has asked of himself: What does God want of you? "Only that you remain in awe of God your Lord, so that you will follow all His paths and love Him, serving God your Lord with all your heart and with all your soul. You must keep God's commandments and decrees [...] so that all good will be yours" (*Deuteronomy 10:12*).

“Quote of the Week”

Best friend is not a label – it's a promise.



In loving memory of
Rabbi Kalman Packouz
Kalman Moshe ben
Reuven Avigdor
1950-2019
Shabbat Shalom,
Rabbi Yitzchak Zweig

Security Alert: Please be very vigilant when you leave the Synagogue. Do not stand in groups and chat, go home without gathering on the main road. Be safe and alert.

THE KEHILLA WISHES חיים ארוכים "LONG LIFE"
TO THE FOLLOWING WHO HAVE YAHRZEIT

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|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 10 Av Mrs Vera Wegscheider | 20 Av Mr Dr. Maurice Gubbay |
| 11 Av Mr Dr. Maurice Gubbay | 21 Av Mr William Yadid |
| 14 Av Mr Sabah Shamash | 28 Av Mrs Victoria Shuker |
| 16 Av Mrs Edna Duke | 30 Av Mr Meir Lanyado |
| 17 Av Mr Kelly Saltoun | |