



From the desk of
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עיר התורה שקרובה אליך

Office of the Rabbinate of Elad, Rosh HaAyin and Herzelia

Religious Court of Elad * Batei Hora'ah * Religious Services * Marriage Licensing * Kashrut * Mikvaot * Eiruvim

TORAT

Parashat Eikev

HAMELECH

Getting a Foothold

The parshah opens with the words: And it will be *eikev* that you listen to these rules etc.

What is the *eikev*? Rashi explains that it refers to *mitzvot* which a person tends to trample upon with his feet.

We can also explain *eikev* to mean *ikvi*, as in: persistent, consistent. That is the road to true success. Some people have great ideas of how to succeed. They put it into action, but when the excitement peters out, they slack off. It is consistency and persistence which breed results.

עקב has the same letters as **קבע**. If you want to succeed, be **עקבי** and **קבוע**. Make your Torah **קבע** and your tefillah as well. Not in the sense of boring and lacking emotion, but in the sense of making it an irreplaceable part of your daily schedule.

We also find by Avraham Avinu **עקב** that he listened to Hashem. Not just "because" but because he did it regularly, day in and day out, not only at moments of inspiration.

A person will be asked: Were you **קובע** set times to learn Torah? Not just: did you learn? But: were you **קובע** set times? That is what is important.

Once Again

A number of Elders were questioned as to how did they merit longevity. Each gave his own answer of particular meritorious deeds which he had done. One theme which appears in all of their answers is the consistency with which these deeds were performed, day in and day out. That seems to be the road to true greatness. (Megillah 27)

Masechet Derech Eretz praises those who put forth the effort to immerse themselves in Torah study with persistent diligence.

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi told his children to come early and stay late in the Beit Medrash. That will ensure them longevity. (Berachot 8a)

An elderly woman approached Rabbi Yosi ben Chalafta and asked how to die. (!?) She no longer tasted her food, life was no longer enjoyable. She wished to move on!

R' Yosi asked her, "What mitzvah do you do daily?"

She responded, "Even if I have something pleasant to do, I put it aside and go to shul every day."



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Rabbi Yosi suggested, "Stop going to shul for three days in row."

She did that and died.

This just goes to show you the power of a mitzvah done with consistency.

R' Yehoshua ben Levi and Kim Chitt

The *malach hamavette* was sent to show R' Yehoshua ben Levi his final resting spot. When he was close enough, he jumped inside and swore not to leave. Mr M.H. was not pleased with this turn of events. But Hashem ruled that if R' Y. ben Levi never went back on his oath in his lifetime, then we are to honor his oath and allow him to stay. (Ketubot 77b)

Here too, we see how the Rabbi's consistent adherence to a particular behavior secured for himself a great eternity without having to endure the pain of death.

Mrs. Kim Chitt merited having all seven of her sons function as Kohanim Gedolim in her lifetime. She attributed this to her meticulous attention to keeping her hair covered at all times. "Not once," she attested, "did the beams of my home see the plaits of my hair." (Yoma 47a)

Learn and Eat

Medrash Shemot Rabba (25:9) associates consistent Torah diligence with the consistency of the daily mon-fall. In the *midbar*, we received our daily sustenance in response to our daily diligence.

Keep on Working

An ant lives only for 6 months. In that time, it can live off a wheat kernel and a half. Nonetheless, it does not stop working and gathering and storing as much wheat as it can. "Maybe Hashem will grant me an extension on life," it hopes.

Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai attested, "An ant's hole was once discovered to contain no less than 300 kor (approx. 75,000 kilogram!).

Says Shlomo Hamelech, "Learn from the ant! Do as many mitzvot as you can, the more mitzvot you do here, the better an Olam Haba you'll have!" (Midrash Devarim Rabbah 5:2)

Mountain Climbing, a Hairsbreadth at a Time

R' Yehudah teaches that, in the future, Hashem will slay the evil inclination and all will bawl. Tzaddikim will see it as a big mountain and will cry and say, "How were we able to surmount that mountain?!"



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The wicked will perceive it as a tiny hair and they will cry out and say, "How is it that we could not overcome these tiny, almost non-existent obstacles?!" (Suka 52a)

Each individual challenge was miniscule, the size of a hair. Put it all together and you get a mountain. The wicked will bemoan the fact that they failed to perceive the significance of overcoming each tiny obstacle, when each was really within reach.

The righteous will be amazed at how much they achieved, as each spiritual victory gave rise to the next, until they ascended to the peak.

Drop after Drop

Avot de Rabbi Natan (chap. 6) recounts the well-known incident of how Rabbi Akiva observed the impact which drop after drop of water had upon a rock. Eventually a hole was bored.

R' Akiva understood that it must be that each drop has significance, even if its impact is not detectable to the human eye. It can't be that the first thousand or-so drops did absolutely nothing and along came one drop and it contained a powerful, invisible acid which naturally pokes holes in rocks. No, each drop did its task, and the last one only did the last drop.

So too, in Torah learning and in all areas of spiritual growth, we must plow away with diligence. We ought not stop frequently and ask ourselves, "Well, am I getting anywhere?" We must firmly believe that indeed we are getting very far. Every seemingly small action counts and in the end we will see the result.

Don't Ever Give Up

I saw a write-up about a boy from Kibbutz Sdeh Eliyahu, who was born almost completely paralyzed. His parents invested a lot of effort to see if there was any way to communicate with him. Eventually, he was able to maneuver a computer mouse with his toes! This way, he communicated and learned a lot about the world around him. When he was offered various educational options, through computer, he chose Limud Torah and eventually finished Shas! He kept up a correspondence with Gedolei Haposkim, asking about how he could do *mitzvot* given his limited physical abilities.

Well, if he could do it, we should never sell ourselves short! Keep on trying, day in and day out. Put in the effort and you'll see results.

Have a Great Shabbat!

Mordechai Malka