

The Torah commands the Jew to revere his father and mother and to keep the Sabbath, איש אמו ואביו תיראו ואת שבתותי תשמורו אני ד'. The Torah links the reverence of one's parents and the keeping of the Sabbath. Keeping the Sabbath is also linked with another commandment involving יראה, reverence or trepidation, את שבתותי תשמורו ומקדשי תיראו, you shall keep My Sabbaths and fear My sanctuary. What is the connection between Sabbath and these 2 commandments that require יראה.

The Gemara (Kidushin 31b) explains that there are 2 forms of honor involving a parent: כבוד (respect) and מורא (reverence). The Gemara defines כבוד as physical care given to a parent, for example, bathing clothing, feeding etc. The child is responsible for the physical needs of the parent, even if the child must pay for that care from his own resources. The Gemara defines מורא as acting in a reverent way towards the parent. For example, one may not sit in his father's chair, or contradict him. The Torah commands that we give כבוד and מורא to a parent, and a Torah scholar as well, מורא רבך כמורא שמים, the reverence required from student to teacher is similar to the reverence a person must give Gd.

מורא applies to Gd as well as a human being (e.g. כבוד הברית). מורא, awe or reverence, is a characteristic that applies solely to Gd and not to a human being. The מורא that is required towards Gd is not the fear of punishment, מורא העונש, but rather it is the מורא הרוממות, awe and reverence at the exaltation of Gd.

Applying the attribute of reverence to a mortal being borders on the blasphemous. So why did the Torah command us to give יראה to a father and mother? Also, how is it possible to show יראה towards an object, for example the Mishkan?

The Gemara (Yevamos 6a) says that just as one does not exhibit reverence, יראה, for Shabbos but for the One who commanded us about the Shabbos, we do not show יראה for an object (The Mishkan) but we show יראה for the One that commanded us to show that יראה, Gd. Similarly, according to the Torah, an expression of יראה for a parent, is tantamount to showing יראה for Gd. The Gemara (Kidushin 31b) says that Rabbi Yoseph would rise up when he heard his mother's footsteps and would say that he is rising because he hears the שכינה, the divine countenance, approaching. Rabbi Yoseph did not say that he was rising out of כבוד, respect, for his mother. Rather he rose out of the same awe and reverence he was obligated to show for Gd. Just as the Divine Presence, השראת השכינה, is encapsulated in the Mishkan, it is also embodied in each father and mother. When a child shows reverence, מורא, for his parent, he is expressing יראת ה'.

How is מורא for a parent connected to keeping the Sabbath? Because the שכינה shines on, and through, the Shabbos. We recite Friday night, פני שבת נקבלה, this means let us greet the שכינה that is inherent in the Sabbath day. When we keep the Sabbath we exhibit awe and reverence to Gd, who gave us the Sabbath. For this reason, Shabbos is called the great and holy day, יום זה גדול וקדוש. We ascribe to the Sabbath the same attributes, גדול וקדוש, that we ascribe to Gd. The Sabbath, מורא אב, מורא אב, and האם all have the common theme that fulfillment of the Mitzvah results in an expression of, awe, for the שכינה.

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