



## Heels Over Hierarchies

### Sicha Summary

Chelek 19 | Eikev | Sichah 1

#### The Sages:

On the verse, “And it will be, because (*eikev*) you will heed these ordinances ...” (*Devarim* 7:12) the *Midrash* notes that the word “because” (“*eikev*”) literally means “heel.” The verse thus cautions that we pay attention to those *mitzvos* which “people cast under their heels.”

The *Midrash* adds that this is the meaning of King David’s statement in *Tehillim*: “Why should I fear in days of misfortune? Because the iniquity of my heels surrounds me.” (*Tehillim* 49:6) That is, he did not fear that he was careless with the important commandments, but he was concerned that he may have been lax with the “trivial (heel-like)” commandments. (*Tanchuma, Eikev* 1:1)

#### The Question:

Why would King David, a thoroughly righteous person, be concerned about laxity in his observance of *mitzvos*?

#### The Explanation:

Every *mitzvah*, no matter how crucial or insignificant it may seem, binds a person with G-d. Therefore, every *mitzvah* must be performed with passion, attention, and self-sacrifice. Yet, the evil inclination persuades a person to view some *mitzvos* as more of a priority than others. “First perfect your observance of the more critical commands, then you can turn to the more trivial commands and customs,” it argues. But a Jew should not

make these calculations. He must run to take advantage of every opportunity to connect with G-d, no matter his level of observance in any other area of Torah.

Even though King David certainly fulfilled every *mitzvah*, he was concerned that he would not apply himself to the “heel” *mitzvos* with as much enthusiasm as to the more “headlike” *mitzvos*.

When we commit ourselves passionately to every *mitzvah*, we merit the conclusion of the verse — “G-d will keep for you the covenant and the kindness that He swore to your forefathers.”