

A man shall fear his mother and father, and My Sabbaths you shall keep." (19:3)

Rashi notes that the observance of *Shabbos* is placed adjacent to the law of fearing one's parents. He explains that this order informs us that, despite one's obligation towards his parents, this *mitzvah* does not preclude observing the laws of *Shabbos* and other *mitzvos* as well. We may wonder at the *Torah's* choice of competing *mitzvos*. Indeed, the *mitzvah* of honoring one's parents does not override any other *mitzvos*. Why is *Shabbos*, which is viewed as one of the most lofty *mitzvos*, chosen to serve as the specific example?

We may derive from this *pasuk* a lesson regarding the importance of honoring and fearing one's parents. The *Torah* distinguishes this *mitzvah* to such a high level that people might be tempted to place its observance over the primacy of *Shabbos*. Indeed, it was necessary for the *Torah* to distinctly forbid its overriding the laws of *Shabbos*.

In addition, one who scrupulously observes *Shabbos* or any other *mitzvah*, is actually performing a service towards his parents. The reward earned by one's compliance to Hashem's *mitzvos* serves as a source of merit to one's ancestors. This unique opportunity to honor one's parents can be viewed in converse. If one does not observe the *mitzvos*, he is detracting from his parents' merit. It is incumbent upon us to reflect upon our actions and upon their consequences. In fact, prior to performing a given *mitzvah*, the author of the *Yesod V'shoresh Haavodah* would recite two declarations of intent (sujh oak); one for the actual *mitzvah* and the second for the *mitzvah* of honoring his parents. Thus, we see that our observance of *mitzvos* serves directly as a beacon of spiritual sustenance and merit for our parents.