

"These are the offspring of Noach -- Noach was a righteous man." (6:9)

The *pasuk* opens with an introduction to Noach's offspring, but then continues by mentioning that Noach was a righteous man. *Rashi* cites the *Midrash* which explains that the primary progeny of the righteous are their good deeds. Children are our legacy, the chain with which we connect to our future. Children are the way we eternalize ourselves. They carry on from the point where we depart this world. So, too, are a person's good deeds his precious legacy! He is remembered by them, as they serve to inspire others to continue in the same path upon which he tread.

The relationship between "offspring" and "good deeds" is interpreted in various ways by the commentators, focusing on the legacy that each impart. *Horav Moshe Feinstein, z.l.*, takes a somewhat different approach. He employs man's relationship with his offspring as the standard for relating to *mitzvos* and good deeds. In a homiletic rendering of the *pasuk*, he explains the following: One should perform good deeds with the same enthusiasm and love that he has for his own children. One sincerely desires to help his children, although he is not compelled to do so. Likewise, one should seek every opportunity to perform *mitzvos* with the same attitude that reigns when he helps his children.

Moreover, one should not distinguish between *mitzvos* in regard to their significance. A father loves **all** of his children, regardless of their individual shortcomings, whether they live up to his expectations of them or not. Similarly, one should not place greater emphasis on certain *mitzvos*, while practically ignoring others. Another area of focus is *mitzvah* improvement. We are never complacent in regard to providing for our child's development, always seeking ways to improve and enhance our children's material and spiritual environment. Likewise, we should seek to improve the quality of our *mitzvah* observance, never being content with an insipid performance.

Let us remember that just as our children are inherently ours, so, too, do we leave an imprimatur upon the *mitzvos* which we observe.