

The Profile of a Jewish Leader

The Mitzvah to Cleave to a Tzaddik

Exodus 7:1

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל מֹשֶׁה רְאֵה נִתַּתִּיךָ אֱלֹהִים לְפַרְעֹה וְאַהֲרֹן אַחִיךָ יְהִי־נְבִיאֲךָ
The Lord said to Moses, "See! I have made you a lord over Pharaoh, and Aaron, your brother, will be your speaker.

Deuteronomy 11:22

וּלְדַבְּקָהּ בּוֹ
and to cleave to Him

Maimonides: Positive Commandment #6

The 6th *mitzvah* is that we are commanded to be close to the wise and to associate with them. We should constantly be close to them and to be with them in all possible ways of friendship, such as eating, drinking and doing business, in order to thereby succeed in emulating their actions and knowing from their words the true way of looking at things.

The source of this commandment is G-d's statement (exalted be He), "And cling to Him." This commandment is repeated, "To Him you shall cling," and is explained in the words of the *Sifri*: "Cleave to the Sages and their students."

Our Sages also derived from the verse, "To Him you shall cling," that one must marry the daughter of a *talmid chacham*, marry one's daughter to a *talmid chacham*, give benefits to *talmidei chachamim* and to do business with them. Our Sages say "Is it possible for a person to cling to the Divine Presence, when the verse says, 'G-d your Lord is [like] a consuming fire'?! Rather, whoever marries the daughter of a *talmid chacham* [is considered to have cleaved to the Divine Presence]."