

27-28th June '08

בט"ד
קרח תשמ"ח

Friends and neighbors

Welcome to all our friends and thanks to everyone who brought food.
Congratulations to Hanna whose birthday was last week, and to Ged on the engagement of Yoni.

It is exactly 19 years since we started having these Kiddushin, the first one being at Bunny & Allan Pearlman's. It was then our 20th wedding anniversary and so it's now our 39th.

It gives Ruth and I much pleasure to look around our salon and see all our friends (and neighbors) here today, so the subject of my drosha is "friends and neighbors".

Our parsha starts:

And Korach took...

ויקח קרח

Rashi on this quotes the Midrash Tanhuma:

לקח את עצמו לצד אחד, להיות נחלק מתוך העדה

He took himself to one side, to be apart from the congregation.

The verse continues:

ודתן ואבירם

Now why did they join Korach in his rebellion ?

Rashi explains that they were neighbors in the camp and

Woe to the wicked, woe to his neighbor !

אוי לרשע, אוי לשכנו !

That is, if you live next to a bad person you may well get dragged into his ways.
Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai (Perkei Avot Ch. 2, Mishna 14) said to his students: Go out and see which is the evil way that a man should shun.

Rabbi Yehoshua said: A bad friend. **חבר רע**

Rabbi Yossi said: A bad neighbor. **שכן רע**

He also said (Mishna 13): Go out and see which is the good way to which a man should cling.

Rabbi Yehoshua said: A good friend **חבר טוב**

And Rabbi Yossi said: A good neighbor **שכן טוב**

Rav Ovadia of Bertinoro said that a good friend is one that reproves you when you do something wrong and a good neighbor is one who is there for you at any time of the day or night.

I said at the beginning that this is the 19th year of the Shabbat Kiddushin. We have lived in Shwartz since June 1984, that is 24 years already, and we are always amazed by how many good friends and neighbors we have made here.

You are all wonderful people and all of you show as well, in abundance, what Rabban Yohanan said included all the other good qualities – **לב טוב** – **a good heart**

Shabbat Shalom.