

**August 19, 2008**

***Greetings from Missouri!***

*We might attribute our own sense of family closeness, a positive approach to our relationships, and a commitment to making a difference in the world to the homes or communities in which we grew up. Our parents, our extended families and our friends (and their families) offered us some of our first influences in how to form partnerships that can sustain what is good in our society and engender productive change.*

*The Torah readings from last week (Va-etchanan) and this week (Ekev) both include the language with we are familiar from the “V’ahavta” prayer:*

*“Bind these words as a sign upon your hand, and let them be a symbol between your eyes.” While this passage yielded the t’filin that are worn for prayer according to Jewish tradition, it could also provide a figurative reference to our actions (the work of our hands) and our personal perspective (how we see and view our own situation). The V’ahavta also reminds us to “teach these words to our children, and speak of them while we sit at home, when we travel on the road, when we lie down and when we rise up.”*

*As I looked around at my family reunion this past Sunday, and spoke with a minister friend last night, I realized how the values we learn as we grow in our childhood years can be passed down from one generation to the next. The goal is not for one generation to be a carbon copy of the previous one. It is, rather, that parents give their best to their children, and the children, in turn, to their children.*

*That is how the principles we prize can be preserved, in mind and heart, for the future. May this be a goal for which we strive in our congregation, our families and our community!*

**-- L'shalom,  
Rabbi Larry K.**