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## Dear Editor,

**Dear Editor,**

It wouldn't be surprising to say that our book of ethics, Pirkei Avot, offers by way of a hint in its chapter ordering, a message that *derech erez* and Torah must accompany each other.

The first five chapters of Avot mostly discuss character, however, "five" is associated with Torah as well, the Five Books of Moses. Therefore, Torah is only Torah if surrounded by good character.

The sixth chapter focuses on Torah itself, and appears last, after the first five chapters that primarily focus on *middot*, to capture the idea that *derech erez kadma laTorah*. Therefore, all six perakim of Pirkei Avot are really saying that whether you are connected to Torah in any way or learn it in-depth, only *middot* give it authenticity.

The notion that Torah must be wrapped in *middot* conforms with the *midrash (Vayikra Rabbah 1:15)* that says even the carcass of a dead animal is better than a *talmid chacham* who lacks *da'at*.

These six perakim give us our *derech* for the six days of the week. Shabbos is so submerged in holiness that there is greater help from Above.

Pesach at eight is above *tevah* and is about keeping the dough at bay. All good character stems from knowing we are merely dust of the ground. With this knowledge, hopefully we will reach redemptive qualities.

**Steven Genack**

**Dear Editor,**

For those Jewish Americans who continue to support President Biden, Saturday's attack by Iran on Israel should be the final straw. Iran "crossed the Rubicon," with over 300 missiles and drones reigning down on Israel. What is even worse was President Biden's conversation with Prime Minister Netanyahu that followed the attack in which Biden allegedly said you've got your win (because neither people nor property were destroyed); now, don't escalate by retaliating on Iran.

It was with G-d's blessing that the Iron Dome worked, but to threaten Israel, a sovereign democracy, from striking back requires endless chutzpah. The Biden administration literally is accused of appeasing Iran by orchestrating and paying for the attack on Israel to prevent a wider war before the 2024 election. For President Biden, everything is negotiable including the fate of the State of Israel and the hostages. Even Rabbi Amiel Hirsch (a major liberal) warned President Biden that the results of the upcoming election do not only depend on Michigan, so Biden should ensure that he does not alienate Jewish voters who support Israel.

**Jan Henock Woodmere, NY**

**Dear Editor,**

Iran's attack on Israel this week was an outright miracle. No one was killed with all those missiles being sent our way!

*Continued on page 18*

Cover art "Kriat Yam Suf—Seeing the Light Through the Dark"

By Rachel Cohen

Prints of this painting available; artist can be contacted at [thetealrtree.com](http://thetealrtree.com) or [@thetealrtreeart](https://www.instagram.com/thetealrtreeart)

## Readers Poll

Does your family eat machine matzah on Pesach?

**68%**  
Yes

**32%**  
No