

Every Jew is of Equal Infinite Value



There is a painting by the great American illustrator, Norman Rockwell, titled *The Rookie* which depicts a new ball player's introduction to his teammates. Wet-behind the ears is an understatement; his fellow players look at him with skepticism and horror laced with amusement. The team is evidently in the beginning of spring training, nonetheless it seems near impossible that he will be up to par in time for the season.

There is much to extrapolate from this picture; I will focus on them individually.

There is a reason for this kid to be here. Baseball teams do not sign-on rookies based (solely) on scholastic achievements, nor can one pay their way into the club. Evidently a recruiter found him and drafted him to play ball. He may be "green" now but somebody recognized his latent abilities; talents which may serve him well later in his career.

His teammates do not immediately comprehend the benefit of this guy joining their team. However, so long as this rookie is a member of their team, regardless of his performance, the team has a chance. A team minus a left-fielder, no matter how lousy he may be, simply cannot continue playing. The rookie, merely by being there, allows the team to push forward.

The players looking up in shock at their new teammate do not portend the future. There will be a time perhaps, World Series, bottom of the 9th, score 5-4, 2 outs and bases loaded that he comes of age. Mr. Left-fielder, the one who no one believed in, finally has his chance. A pop-up to left field is lobbed his way. His mitt makes contact with that projectile, snagging the out and clinching the trophy. Mr. Nobody is now Somebody.

We go through life, sometimes feeling a little superfluous, like a fifth wheel. We are not as bright, intelligent, learned or observant as the next. Like the rookie though, we are an integral part of the game; for so long as we exist, we are needed. If Someone created us as part of the Jewish people (and even more so if one had the good fortune to join oneself!) then that Someone recognizes our talents as integral for the Team. We are a piece of the Jewish people, a piece of the Jewish history. It may not be clear now why or for what purpose we are here but one day that may all change.

The sages say (Avos) "do not look askance at any person, for there is no person that does not have his place and time". One has to constantly do their best because there may be a time when only you can be there to save the team. And like that rookie, *you must not drop that ball*.

