

## RESPECTING PARENTS (3)

### The Mitzva of Mora

Aside from the *mitzva* to honor and serve our parents, there is another *mitzva*, called *mora*, to stand in awe of them – by not sitting in their designated places, by neither contradicting what they say nor expressing one's approval of what they say, and by not calling them by name.

How far does this obligation go? If one is wearing precious garments, is seated at the head of the table in the presence of the entire community, and his father or mother come in and tear off his clothing, slap him and spit in his face, he must not shame them. He should remain silent and fear the King of Kings, Who gave him this command. For if a king of flesh and blood decreed something that would cause him even greater distress, he would not even flinch in protest. How much more so with regard to the decree of "the One Who spoke and the world came into being in accordance with His will!"

Although, according to many opinions, the son may demand that his parents reimburse him for the loss, he may nevertheless not shame them for their actions.

(רמב"ם מומרים פ"ו ה"ז ועיין לה"מ שם)

Once, during Pesach, the elderly mother of the *tzaddik*, Sar Shalom of Belz, was sitting next to her son during the *seuda*. The *tzaddik* was eating soup while she ate her *matza*, and because she had no teeth, she kept dipping her *matza* into his soup. Despite this, Sar Shalom went on eating his soup..., even though he was known to be very stringent with *gebros*.

(אוצר כאו"א ע' תקמ"ו)

### Not Contradicting their Words

The Gerer Rebbe, the *Imrei Emes*, was once present at a *shiur* given by his father, the *Sfas Emes*. At some point during the *shiur*, when the *talmidim* were having difficulty grasping his deep concepts, the *Sfas Emes* turned to his son and asked, "Do you, too, not understand?" The *Imrei Emes* just shrugged his shoulders as if to say that he too was puzzled. However, as soon as his father left the room, he stood up and gave the *talmidim* a clear explanation of what had just been taught.

His father, standing outside, heard what was going on, and later inquired, "When I asked if you had understood, why didn't you say Yes?" The *Imrei Emes* replied, "Were father to ask whether I had understood, I would have answered

accordingly, but when it was assumed that I did not understand, I could not contradict father's words by affirming the opposite..."

(ראש גולת אריאל)

Reb Yissachar Dov of Belz was sitting with his family at the *Seder* table, and his four-year-old son Aharon, who was later to become a great Rebbe, curiously eyed all of his movements, some of which were strange and unusual. The Rebbe had made these movements especially to arouse his son to ask *Ma Nishtana*, but the young Aharon did not ask. Attempting to help him open up, his father prodded, "You seem very curious about all the strange things I'm doing, so why don't you ask even one question?"

"Yes, father," his son replied, "Your actions truly do astonish me, yet I didn't ask, because one does not question his father."

(חזו"ת חיים)

When Reb Avraham of Sochatchov was a child, he was taught by his father, Reb Zev Nachum of Biala. One day, the father posed a complicated question in *Gemara*, but his gifted son came up with a solution right away. Reb Zev refuted his son's reply, and smacked him lightly on the cheek, saying, "You'll have to get out of the habit of answering quickly without thinking deeply beforehand."

Years later, when his father was old and ailing, Reb Avraham went to visit him. Reb Zev brought up what had occurred decades earlier, and admitted that after researching their discussion, he had discovered that his son's explanation had in fact been correct, but he had not told him so, lest this make him conceited. Now, however, he wanted to ask forgiveness. Reb Avraham confessed that he had known he was right, but he had not mentioned anything because of the *mitzva* of *kibbud av*.

(סיפורי חסידים זו"ן תורה ע' 233)

Even in a situation in which a son must speak up, he should do so respectfully. For example: If he sees his parents doing something wrong he should not tell them so outright, but instead he should ask them, as if he is himself unsure about it. They will understand the hint and not be embarrassed.

(שו"ע יו"ד ר"מ סי"א)

### The Value of Honoring Parents

In *Aseres HaDibros*, *HaShem* promises long life to those who fulfill the *mitzva* of respecting their parents. Conversely, *Chazal* say that the lifespan of Yosef HaTzaddik was shortened because of a

disrespectful gesture he expressed towards his father. Ten times during the dialogues between Yosef and his brothers, the *shvatim* referred to their father Yaakov as "your servant, our father" – and although Yosef heard, he remained silent. Since silence can be interpreted as agreement, his life was shortened by ten years.

Moreover, the *AriZal* writes that *tzaddikim* in *Gan Eden* are judged even for things they may have done as young children, when they were only seven or eight years old.

(יתרו כ, יב, פרקי דר"א פל"ט, מדבר קדמות להחיד"א)

When the Torah tells us how Eisav returned exhausted from hunting, it adds the description, 'He felt as if he were about to die.' With these words, the Torah is letting us know that the descendants of Eisav have merited their power because he endangered his life to hunt for his father. From this we must take a lesson as to how much exertion must be invested to sustain our parents.

(ספר חסידים סי' שמ"א)

The *Rambam* writes: If a person does not respect his parents, his children will not respect *him*.

(מורה נבוכים ח"ג מ, תקיז)

Reb Meir taught: "The Torah commands us to honor our father and mother, and a king's command applies more rigorously inside his palace than outside it. So if *HaShem* has commanded people who are outside his palace to honor their father and mother, how much more so does this command apply *inside* His palace – *Gan Eden*. However, if someone's sons are sitting among the *tzaddikim* in *Gan Eden* and their father is among *resha'im*, this is surely no way to fulfill the *mitzva* of respect."

After quoting this teaching, *Reishis Chochma* concludes: "Therefore, in the *zechus* of the son's good deeds, the father is saved and he, too, is ushered into *Gan Eden*."

To this the Rebbe Rashab adds that the main *mitzva* through which a son saves his father is the *mitzva* of *kibud av va'eim*. That is why Reb Meir learned the above concept, of how the *zechus* of a son saves his father, specifically from this *mitzva*.

(ר"ח פ' גידול בנים, קוני חנוך לנער ע' 31)

### CONSIDER THIS!

- What is the rationale underlying the awe of parents?
- Why was it permissible to eat *gebros* for the sake of *kibud eim*?

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# A WAY OF LIFE

Rabbi Moshe Gourarie

## Yissachar-Zevulun Partnership

If one supports someone who studies Torah to acquire the *zechus*, and that person does not learn *lishma*, does the supporter have the merit of *lishma* or not?

- The *possuk* says (Devorim 33:18) "Rejoice, Zevulun, in your departure, and Yissachar, in your tents." Chazal explain<sup>1</sup> that these two parts of the *possuk*, that of Zevulun and that of Yissachar, are connected. The members of *shevet* Zevulun would deal in business and support the members of *shevet* Yissachar, enabling them to study Torah full time. Since the *possuk* is addressed to Zevulun ("And to Zevulun he said"), Chazal derive that the Torah of Yissachar is accredited to Zevulun. Thus, a partnership between a businessman and a *talmid chacham* is known as a 'Yissachar-Zevulun partnership'.
- When one is unable to dedicate himself solely to the study of Torah, and must suffice with designated times for Torah, day and night, the Alter Rebbe prescribes a correct mind frame during the working hours. Shulchan Aruch<sup>2</sup> says, "[when not learning, the person] should involve himself in business in order to be able to support those who solely study the *halachos* of the Torah and their sources. This way, it is as if he himself is learning and their study will be attributed to him."
- Poskim<sup>3</sup> write that while one should not contribute more than a fifth of his belongings to *tzedaka*, supporting those who study Torah is not included in this restriction, since the Torah study is attributed to the donor and is not just *tzedaka*.
- Poskim<sup>4</sup> add that when faced with a choice of fully supporting one *talmid chacham* or partially supporting several individuals, the first option is preferable. This way, there is at least one undisturbed learning taking place.
- Even if the learner does not study *lishma*, the supporter still has the merit of Torah study. As far as the extra merit of Torah *lishma* there is a *machlokes*. Some Poskim<sup>5</sup> claim that since the partnership transfers the *zechus* of the learning to the supporter, if the learning was not done *lishma*, the Torah study earned by the donor will also lack that merit. Yet, since he did his share of giving the money *lishma*, he is considered as having tried to learn *lishma* but was unable to, due to reasons beyond his control. However, the majority of Poskim<sup>6</sup> maintain that the supporter is considered to have learned Torah *lishma* since he gave the money *lishma*.
- The Rebbe highlights<sup>7</sup> the greatness of "adopting" a Torah learner who will learn full time as a supreme form of *tzedaka*, and writes that it is even more beneficial for the *neshama* of a *niftar* than the writing of a *Sefer Torah*.

Please note that the above may not be applicable for your situation. Consult your Rov for a final psak.

1. ויקרא רבה פכ"ה, ב. ועד"ז בכ"מ.
2. הלכות ת"ת פ"ג ה"ד. ולא הובא כאן ענין התנאי והשותפות המוזכר ברמ"א ריש ס' רמ"ו, כי אדה"ז השמיט דברי הרמ"א, ומשמע דס"ל כשי" המחבר (וכפי שהאריכו באחרונים שהמחבר והרמ"א שם פליגי אהדדי) דגם בלא תנאי ושותפות ה"ז כאילו למד בעצמו.
3. וע"ע בכ"ז.
4. שו"ת ח"ס ח"ו סי' ט. ועוד.
5. ראה ס' אמרי שפר למוהר"ש פרימו דרוש לפרשת בהר, הובא בקיצור בראש דוד להחיד"א פ' קדושים.
6. שו"ת אפרקסתא דעניא ח"א סי' נז. ועד"ז בח"ס עה"ת אמורנו ע"א. ועוד.
7. אג"ק ח"ל ע"י צב.

לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה

לזכות הילד אברהם שי'

שיגדלוהו הוריו לתורה לחופה ולמע"ט

נדבת הרה"ת יתודה לייב ורעיתו ברכה שיחיו ורנן

לזכות הילד יעקב משה הכהן שי'

שיגדלוהו הוריו לתורה לחופה ולמע"ט

נדבת הרה"ת יונתן שלום הכהן ורעיתו רבקה שיחיו כ"ץ

## OUR HEROES

### Reb Avremkeh Zhebiner

Reb Avraham Landa, the *Rov* of Zhebin, is known by chassidim as Reb Avremkeh Zhebiner. He was a great *chossid* of the Tzemach Tzedek and the Rebbe Maharash. At first he was a business man and later became the *Rov* in Zhebin.



The *mashpia* Reb Shmuel Groinem Esterman was a very close *talmid* of Reb Avremkeh. He once related:

Since Reb Avremkeh was the only *Rov* in Zhebin, all the *sha'alos* would come to him. On *Yom Kippur* there were also *sha'alos* and they were often presented to him during *davening*. Reb Avremkeh said about this, "The *sha'alos* do not disturb my *davening*; they are Hashem's Will. But when the *chazan* starts to overdo the *chazonus* ('*machen zich narish*'), this does disturb me."

When Reb Avraham was in business, he made quite a fortune by sending rafts of wood from Russia to Danzig, Germany. His business ended when rafts carrying goods worth sixty thousand ruble sunk. He lost all his money and was left in heavy debt. What bothered him most, was that he could not concentrate on his learning. So he decided to dedicate time when he would think about his plight. At a given time, he shut the *sefer* and thought about his debts. After thinking about it he said to himself, "Look, I don't have any money left. I sold my house already as well as the bit of merchandise that remained. So what will help my thinking about it?" And he would open the *sefer* and carry on learning...

לזכות הת' ישראל קוגל וב"ג רות גראנער שיחיו לרגל בואם בקשרי שידוכן בשעטומ"צ

## A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

### I Don't Need Publicity

Reb Yechiel Zigman relates:

"My father worked for a prestigious video production company in *Eretz Yisroel*. One day, in the early 5750's, he proposed a documentary on the Rebbe, featuring famous Israeli personalities that merited a *yechidus*.

"The company was not *frum* but responded enthusiastically to the idea. Aside from their respect for the Rebbe, they thought it would bring great financial gain.

"However, my father was reluctant to go ahead with the idea before getting an answer from the Rebbe. They agreed to wait for the go-ahead.

"The answer came within a few hours: "I do not need any publicity at all; if you have the energy, invest it in *hafotzas hamayonos*."

"My father was dumbfounded. He had thought that the video itself would be tool for *hafotzo*. His employers were also upset. They even offered to pay for a ticket to New York, so he should 'convince' the Rebbe in person. My father obviously declined, and the project was called off."

(Kfar Chabad magazine, Pesach 5772)

לזכות הילד לוי יצחק דריי שי' שיגדלוהו הוריו לתורה לחופה ולמע"ט