

The Weekly Farbrengens



MERKAZ ANASH
מרכז אנש

למען ישמעו • בהעלותך תשפ"ג • 726
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

RESPECTING PARENTS (I)

APPRECIATING PARENTS

Explaining the *mitzva* to respect our parents, *Sefer HaChinuch* writes that a person should always appreciate what has been done for him, and not be ungrateful. He should take to heart all the effort his parents have invested in raising and nurturing him, and this will also give him an appreciation for all the good that *HaShem* has bestowed upon him.

The *mitzva* to respect one's parents is so great that it is equal to the obligation to respect *HaShem*. While a pauper is exempted from fulfilling certain *mitzvos*, for the *mitzva* of respecting his parents he is even required to collect funds if money is needed.

(יתרו כ, יב, ס' החינוך מצוה לג)

One of the claims with which the Alter Rebbe was challenged while in prison was that chassidim do not show proper *kibud av va'eim* (to their non-chassidic parents).

The Alter Rebbe replied that it is impossible that anyone who serves *HaShem* in his *davening*, and strives to attain *yiras Shamayim* (as chassidim do), should not fulfill this *mitzva* or any other *mitzva*. He added that if there is anyone among the chassidim who does not properly observe *kibud av va'eim*, then besides being unworthy of being called a chossid, he does not even qualify to be called a human being (!), and chassidim at large should not be evaluated according to the actions of such an individual.

(אג"ק אדמו"ר הדק"ח"ב ע' נט)

In the *tzava'a* (will) addressed to his children, the Rebbe Maharash writes: "First and foremost, I hereby direct you, my sons and daughters, to be exceedingly careful about respecting your mother. Although you have already been commanded about this in the Torah, we nevertheless find that *Chazal* reiterate this command. Even when you grow older, [do not rely] on your own opinion and doubt your mother's words, and certainly do not veer from her will or go against it.

"Now, the reward for this *mitzva* is long life in this world. Yet as you know, this entire world is worthless in comparison to one moment in *Olam HaBa*. So if in *Olam Haze*h a lack of *kavod* is so detrimental that it can make a person lose all the good of this world, how much more so with regard to *Olam HaBa*!"

(אג"ק מהר"ש ע' יב)

AT THEIR SERVICE

Chazal specify the obligations of *kibud av va'eim*: serving one's parents food and drink, dressing them, taking them wherever they wish to go and rising in their honor.

(קידושין לא ע"א. רמב"ם מגורים פ"ו ה"ז, שו"ע יו"ד ר"מ ס"ד וס"ח)

CONSIDER

Why is respecting parents a necessary trait to simply qualify as a human being?

What is the gain in personally serving one's parents? Can't a messenger do the same job?

The *tanna* Rebbe Yehoshua ben Alam was once told in a dream, "Rejoice, because you and Nanas the butcher will sit together in Gan Eden."

Rebbe Yehoshua woke up alarmed: "Woe is me! My entire life I have always been in a state of *yiras Shamayim*, I have toiled only in Torah, never walked four *amos* without *tzitzis* or *tefillin*, and have eighty *talmidim*. Yet all of my accomplishments are only equal to those of this *butcher*!?"

He promptly sent a message to his *talmidim* that he would not enter the *beis midrash* until he ascertained who this butcher was. He trudged from village to village asking about Nanas the butcher until he finally arrived in his town, but the townsmen were surprised that the *tzaddik* was interested in this ordinary individual. They set out to bring him, nevertheless, but he refused to come, not believing that the great sage was really asking to meet him. Rebbe Yehoshua had no choice but to visit the butcher himself.

When he arrived at the butcher shop, the butcher fell on his face and exclaimed, "Why is today so special that the Crown of Yisrael has come to visit his servant?"

Rebbe Yehoshua told him that he wanted to hear about his conduct.

The man replied, "My master! I work as a butcher, but I have two elderly parents who cannot walk themselves, so every day I dress them, feed them and wash them myself."

Hearing this, Rebbe Yehoshua kissed his forehead and said, "My son! Fortunate are you and fortunate is your lot! And how fortunate is my lot that I have been found worthy of being your partner in *Gan Eden*!"

(סדר הדורות סדר תנאים ואמוראים ערך רבי יהושע בן אלם)

The *tzaddik* Reb Yitzchok of Vorki was meticulous in his fulfillment of the *mitzva* of *kibud eim*, and would travel home every year to visit his mother. Once, during the *Shabbos seuda*, which was attended by many chassidim, the *tzaddik's* mother asked him for a glass of water. Right away, one of the chassidim jumped up and brought her the requested drink. Not touching the glass, she asked that specifically her son bring the drink. Reb Yitzchok got up and brought his mother a cup of water, and then she said to him, "I don't really need to drink, but I wanted to give you the opportunity of meriting long life, for that is what is awarded to those who fulfill the *mitzva* of honoring one's parents."

(סיפורי חסידים זוין מועדים ע' 425)

On *Motzaei Yom Kippur*, the Rebbe Rashab would visit his mother *Rebbetzin Rivkah* and break the fast in her home. The chossid Reb Zalman Duchman, who was once present there, related: "The Rebbe Rashab stood up from his place at the head of the table, at which everyone else did likewise, and approached the samovar located near the front entrance. He then prepared a glass of tea and brought it to his mother.

"Beginning the new year with a *mitzva*, *Rebbetzin Rivkah* exclaimed.

(לשמע און ע' 83)

The Rebbe was extremely scrupulous in his observance of this *mitzva*. For many years, he would take precious time to visit his mother every day and converse with her.

When, in תשי"ב (1952), the Rebbe's brother passed away, the Rebbe made a special effort to hide this fact from her, not wanting to cause her unnecessary pain. The Rebbe instructed many people not to reveal the news to her, and went so far as to screen her mail.

(אג"ק ח"ו ע' קפג וע' רלו, מפי השמועה)



FRESHLY SQUEEZED
FRUIT INFUSED SELTZER

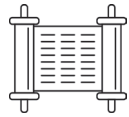


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CUTTING CORN OFF THE COB

Can I cut corn off the cob on Shabbos?

One of the 39 *melachos* on Shabbos is *dash*, threshing, a process that detaches and extracts grain kernels from their husks. A *tolda* of this *melacha* is *mefarek*, which includes extracting any food or drink from where it grew and was concealed — e.g., squeezing grapes for their juice or milking a cow.¹

The prohibition applies to removing the external shell, which is usually removed in the field or far in advance of eating the food (e.g., the outer paper-like skin around a garlic bulb²), not the shell or peel that is in direct contact with the food and is removed shortly before eating.³

Nowadays, many of the latter category shells — e.g., walnuts, almonds — are removed in factories, so some contemporary *poskim* rule that removing their shells would constitute *mefarek*. Others contend that since the food stays fresher with the shell on and it is only removed as a convenience for the consumer, it isn't considered an "outer shell" and it may be removed.⁴

Picking kernels off a stalk is also part of threshing and is prohibited on Shabbos unless they were made loose before Shabbos. Even then, as per the *borer* conditions, they must be removed right before the meal.

With foods that come to the consumer connected as a bunch — e.g., grapes, bananas, cherries — there is no prohibition to pluck one away on Shabbos since that is considered part of the eating process.⁵ However, a cluster of dates is considered by some to be an issue.⁶

Cutting off the corn from the cob is often done close to mealtime, though most corn is grown to be canned and removed from the cobs in the factory. Thus, it is a debate between *poskim*, and one who wishes can be *machmir*.⁷ Some argue that since cutting off the corn with a knife leaves a bit on the cob, this is not considered proper threshing and is therefore allowed.⁸

1. משנה שבת ע"ג ע"א, רמב"ם שבת פ"ח ה"ז, שו"ע ד ס"י ש"ה שמעות קצוה"ש ס"י קכ"ו הע"ז.
2. ראה קצוה"ש שם הע"ט.
3. אגלי טל שם סק"ב אות ג'.
4. קצוה"ש ס"י קכ"ו הע"ד, וראה אגלי טל דש סק"ג אות וסוסק"א.
5. י"א שאחד אחד לפה שרי'.
6. מקילים - חלק"י א"וח קל"ג.
7. פסקי תשובות ס"י ש"ט סק"ל.
8. אג"מ ח"א ס"י קכ"ה. מחמירים -

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

Our Heroes



R. AVRAHAM BARUCH PEVZNER

Born in approximately 5650, R. Avraham Baruch Pevzner learned in Tomchei Temimim in Lubavitch, where he served as a *chozer* for the Rebbe Rashab and also merited to assist him. He served as a *rov* and *Mashpia* for Anash in Minsk until he was forced to flee to Kharkov, where he continued to give shiurim and serve as a *mashpia*. He was arrested by the Communists in 5699 and exiled to Kazakhstan, where he passed away on Erev Pesach 5700.

R. Boruch Shifrin related:

It was after Frierdiker Rebbe left Russia, and R. Avraham Baruch asked me one day to accompany him to the NKVD offices. He explained that they had searched his house the night before and confiscated some documents and a picture of Frierdiker Rebbe that he hid between the pages of a *sefer*. He said, "The documents I won't bother with, but the picture - I can't live without!"

When I asked what he wanted me to do, he said, "Just wait outside. If I don't come out after two hours, please inform my family where I am." Thankfully, R. Avraham Baruch came out a short while after.

(המשפיע שלא חזר ע' 47)

A few days before he was arrested, R. Avraham Baruch unexpectedly fasted three days straight. As he lay on his deathbed in a hospital in Kazakhstan, he revealed to his wife what prompted him to take on that fast:

One night, before my arrest in Kharkov, I dreamed that the city's recently deceased *rov*, R. Aharon Tumarkin, came to me and said, "Avraham Baruch! We need you as the tenth for a *minyana*..." When I asked him what would be with my wife and children, he replied that Hashem would care for them as he does for all *almanos* and *yesomim*. That is why I fasted.

(המשפיע שלא חזר ע' 95)

A Moment with The Rebbe



WHAT THE FATHER SHOULD COMMAND

"Will you allow your son to continue his Torah studies in Montreal?" the Rebbe asked Reb Mordechai Shachna Zirkind.

But the Rebbe had a solution, "If you command your son to travel to Montreal to learn, and he fulfills your wishes, then he will actually be honoring you by doing so!"

Reb Mordechai owned a small butcher shop, and could not afford to hire any workers, so he therefore wanted his son Simcha to stay in Brooklyn and help out.

"If you put it that way," conceded Reb Mordechai, "how can I refuse?"

"I am not inclined to let him go" he responded, "because when my son will be far from home, he will not be fulfilling the *mitzva* of *kibbud av va'eim* (honoring his parents)."

Simcha indeed studied at the Montreal Lubavitch Yeshiva for seven consecutive years and went on to dedicate his life to the Rebbe's work, first in Tunisia and then in Canada.

(As heard from the Zirkind Family)

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