

The Weekly Farbrenge


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 EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

RESPECTING PARENTS (II)

THE EXTENT OF KIBUD AV VA'EIM

To what extent are we obligated to respect our parents? This, too, *Chazal* specify: "Even if one's parents take his pouch filled with golden coins and throw it into the sea, in front of his eyes, he should not shame them, nor shout nor show anger in their presence. Rather, he should accept the decree of *HaShem* ('Honor your father and mother') in silence."

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

From whom should we learn the extent of respect for one's parents? From *Dama ben Nesina*, a non-Jew from Ashkelon! Once, while he was sitting in the company of Roman noblemen, his mentally disturbed mother approached him, tore off the gold-embroidered silk cloak he was wearing, hit him on the head, spat in his face, and took a shoe and hit him. Despite all this, he continued to sit in silence. Moreover, when the shoe fell from her hand, he lifted it up and handed it to her so that she not be upset.

On another occasion, the *Chachomim* wanted to purchase precious stones from him for the *Ephod*, and were willing to pay a huge sum of money for them. Nevertheless, he turned down their offer, because the key to the box which held the precious stones was under the pillow of his sleeping father and the box was under his legs. *HaShem* rewarded him with a *Para Aduma* in his herd, and from this he gained the rich earnings he had lost from the missed opportunity.

(קידושין לא ע"א ובתוס', ירושלמי פאה פ"א ה"א)

Rebbi Tarfon treated his mother with such great respect that whenever she wanted to go to sleep, he would bend down, enabling her to clamber onto his back and climb into bed. Likewise, whenever she got out of bed, she would step down onto him and then onto the floor. Rebbi Tarfon once came to the *beis midrash* and began to speak highly of his degree of *kibud eim*. However, his fellow *Chachomim* told him, "You have not yet reached even half of the honor that one is required to show his parents. Has your mother ever thrown your wallet into the sea in your presence and you did not shame her?"

One *Shabbos*, while Rebbi Tarfon's mother was walking, her shoes tore. Rebbi Tarfon then placed his hands on the ground so that his mother could walk upon them, step by step, until she reached her bed.

And whenever Rav Yosef heard the footsteps of

his mother, he would say, "I shall stand before the approaching footsteps of the *Shechina*."

(קידושין לא ע"ב ועיין מהרש"א, ירושלמי פאה פ"א ה"א)

Chazal teach that even if one's parents are utter *resha'im*, one may not disrespect them. Indeed, even if as a result of their grave *aveiros* they had been sentenced to death by the *beis din* and were on their way to be punished, the son is forbidden to strike them or curse them.

(רמב"ם ממרים פ"ה ה"ב)

Someone once asked Reb Chaim Brisker, "Is it true that when the respect due to parents involves some monetary expense, it is the parents' responsibility and not the son's?"

"Yes," replied Reb Chaim, "that indeed is the *halacha*."

The man continued, "Then here is my question: My father lives in a distant town and I have just been notified that he is ill and bedridden. Trust me: I want to fulfill the holy *mitzva* of *kibud av* by traveling to help him. But alas, what can I do? The way is a long one, the train ride is very costly, and my father does not have the money to pay for the ticket. Doesn't that mean that I am exempt from making the trip?"

"True!" answered Reb Chaim, "You are not obligated to take the train. Go instead by foot...!"

(אוצר כאר"א ע' תקמ"א)

CONSIDER

Why is one required to go to such great lengths to serve one's parents?

THE WAY TO RESPECT

Chazal warn us that even more important than any service we do for our parents, is the way we do it. To demonstrate this they relate the following stories:

There was a son who took care of all his father's needs, serving him the finest delicacies. Once the father asked his son, "My son, from where do you have all this?"

"Quiet, old man!" the son retorted. "Just eat in silence, like the dogs."

Another man earned a meager living by grinding in a mill. One day, the king's officers came to conscript his father for the dreaded rigors of their master's service. Seeing this, the son told his father, "Father! You can take my place in the mill, and I will do the king's service in your place, accepting any embarrassment it will entail."

The first son served his father gourmet dishes, yet earned *Gehenom*; the second made his father drag heavy millstones – and earned *Gan Eden*.

(ירושלמי פאה פ"א ה"א)

The *gaon*, Reb Avrohom Dovid of Butchatch, would review the *halachos* of *kibud av va'eim* thirty days before visiting his parents, in preparation for fulfilling this precious *mitzva*.

(אוצר כאר"א ע' תקנ"א)

Every day, the *tzaddik* Reb Yaakov Yitzchak, who is better known as the *Yid HaKadosh* of Pshis'cha, would conduct a *Gemara shiur* for some of his chassidim. During one such *shiur*, he came across a difficulty in the text, and sat still, deep in thought, trying to understand it. One of the chassidim, a youth who had been orphaned of his father, knew that the Rebbe could sit in such a trance for quite a while, and figured he'd have time to hurry home for something to eat. When he finished eating, and was about to rush back to his Rebbe's house, his mother asked him to bring her something from the attic. His immediate instinct was to continue on his way, in case the Rebbe had resumed the *shiur*, but then he stopped himself: "Isn't doing a *mitzva* the ultimate goal of all my learning? So how can I not fulfill the *mitzva* of *kibbud eim*?" He hastened to do his mother's bidding, and then returned to the Rebbe's house.

Immediately upon his entry, the *Yid HaKadosh* awoke from his trance and asked him what *mitzva* he had just fulfilled. The youth reported what had happened, and then the *tzaddik* explained, "When you entered, I saw the *amora* Abbaye accompanying you, and my question was clarified. Abbaye was an orphan, and because he was unable to honor his parents, he accompanies anyone who fulfills the *mitzva* of *kibbud av va'eim*, because he wants a share in the *mitzva*. And when he came here, together with you, he explained everything to me."

(תפארת היהודי אות קמ"א)


spritzy
 FRESHLY SQUEEZED
 FRUIT INFUSED SELTZER

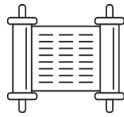

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FILTERING WATER ON SHABBOS

Can I use a water filter on Shabbos?

Halacha states that filtering a liquid from visible impurities transgresses a *tolda* of *borer* — selecting the waste from the good — unless the water is drinkable for most people without filtering, in which case there is no real waste.¹ While Shulchan Aruch warns that using a cloth may constitute the *melacha* of *melabein*, laundering, or may lead to *sechita*, squeezing out the water afterward, this is not of concern with a designated filter.

What if the liquid is only barely drinkable without filtering? While some *acharonim* write that if the liquid is at all drinkable, it's not true *borer* and may be done with a *shinuy*, others prohibit it, and the Alter Rebbe writes to be *machmir*.²

Regular tap water that is fit to drink may be filtered.³ Even if people don't like its taste, *poskim* posit that the "waste" in this case — the unpleasant taste — isn't apparent to the eye and, therefore, may be removed.⁴

What if there are minuscule bugs in the water that require filtering for kashrus concerns?

If one follows a view that the water is forbidden and undrinkable as is, some *poskim* would prohibit it. Others are still lenient if the majority of the local population (i.e., non-Jews) drink it unfiltered since the bugs are few and not easily seen.⁵ There is additional room for leniency when it isn't certain that there are bugs in that cup.⁶ Some under-the-sink filters don't remove and segregate the bugs from the water, but instead cause them to remain behind in the pipe. This leaves even more room for leniency.⁷

While some contemporary *poskim* prohibit the use of water machines since the water isn't drinkable while it passes through the filter, the consensus of *poskim* is to be lenient.⁸

1. ראה שו"ע סי' ש"ט סי"ג.
2. ראה שו"ע סי' ש"א שו"ע סי' ג.
3. שו"ת מגדנות אליהו ח"ב ע"י שינוי.
4. קצוה"ש סי' קכ"ה הע"י ל"ז.
5. ראה פסק"ת סי' ש"ט הע"י.
6. שו"ת מנח"י ח"ז סי' כ"ג.
7. ספר הליכות שבת ח"ב ע' 297.
8. ראה חיי אדם כלל ט"ז סי' ט.
תע"ז בארוכה לחומרא.

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

Our Heroes



R. AVROHOM LEVIK SLAVIN

R. Avrohom Levik Slavin was a chossid of the Rebbe Rashab and the Friediker Rebbe. Born in Rogatchov in 5651, he was orphaned from both parents at a young age. He came to Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim in Lubavitch at age 14, and was placed straight into the Zal due to his advance level of learning. He served as a rov in Bobroisk, and in 5677 was sent by the Rebbe Rashab to Georgia (Gruzia) to open *chadorim* and *yeshivos* and raise the local level of Torah knowledge and observance. He lived in various cities in Georgia until he was arrested by the Communists for his activities in 5701. He was sentenced to 8 years in Siberia and passed away there.

The country of Georgia is in a mountainous region and the travel between towns was difficult and limited. The narrow windy roads hung over cliffs, and during the winter snow they would ride on horses alone without wagons.

During one heavy winter, word reached R. Avrohom Levik that because of the poor trade as a result of the snow, the *melamid* in Oni, some 65 miles away, had not been paid, and the cheder was at risk of closing. Ignoring the difficulty and the danger, R. Avrohom Levik rented a horse and a guide, and after an arduous journey they made it there. Upon arrival, he called for a community meeting and impressed upon the leaders to make chinuch a priority and he took upon himself to cover half of the cost. After all was settled, they began the journey back.

As they rode the narrow path, R. Avrohom Levik's

horse slipped on the snow. R. Avrohom Levik fell off the horse, but his legs were caught in the stirrups, and he could not free himself. Soon, the horse stood up and began dragging R. Avrohom Levik on the ground. The guide, who was some distance ahead, didn't see the fall, and couldn't even hear his screams. At last, the guide turned around, and not seeing R. Avrohom Levik, he went back and picked him up.

For two weeks, R. Avrohom Levik lay in bed to recover. He made no mention of his ordeal, until he *bentched* Hagomel and was pressed for a reason.

(זכור לאברהם ע' 35)

For twenty-four years, R. Avrohom Levik led the Georgian communities, until one woman decided to take revenge against him. The woman, who had been married, left her husband for another man. R. Avrohom Levik pressured her to accept a get and she agreed if the husband paid her a large sum. When the husband didn't pay up, she blamed R. Avrohom Levik and reported him to the NKVD.

The day before his arrest, a Yid with inside information disclosed that they plan to arrest him soon. R. Avrohom Levik's son offered him to relocate to another town, but he refused to abandon the shlichus placed upon him by the Rebbe Rashab.

After his passing, his family asked the Friediker Rebbe what day to observe as his *yahrtzeit*. The Rebbe told them that being a *shliach* of the Rebbe Rashab, they should observe the day of the Rebbe Rashab's *yahrtzeit* – Beis Nissan.

(זכור לאברהם ע' 70, 80)

A Moment with The Rebbe



THE IMPERFECT MITZVA

Reb Shlomo Pepenheim *a"h*, a leading figure of the Eidah Hachareidis in Yerushalayim, related:

After my father Reb Gavriel was *niftar*, I ran the family bookstore and immersed myself in establishing *mosdos chinuch* and working for the Eidah Hachareidis. However, due to my involvement in communal work, I neglected the store, and it was on the brink of bankruptcy.

Now, in our family's six generations of communal work, we have never used it as a source of livelihood. Additionally, my mother strongly encouraged me not to leave the *askanus*. I took the counsel of many great *rabbonim*, but no one provided me with a

convincing solution to keep up both ventures.

In 5718 (1958), I was in New York on public matters, and went in to the Lubavitcher Rebbe. After I laid out the problem, in a few short words the Rebbe illuminated my world. The Rebbe said, "If a *mitzva* cannot be done in perfection, should it not be performed at all?!"

The message was clear. It is preferable to do communal work and to take a salary from it than not doing at all. I am a Toldos Aharon chossid, and we follow the Satmar approach, but all my years of work for the Eidah Hachareidis I credit to the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

(As Reb Zalman Berger heard from Reb Shlomo)