

BS'D

HONOR AND FEAR YOUR PARENTS

*And every time that a person
heeds the voice of his father
or the voice of his mother he
fulfills a great Mitzvah
Mideoraita [From the Torah]*

Pele Yoetz Letter Chaf

*Whoever keeps the Torah is a
wise son; but he who is a
companion of riotous
men shames his father.*

(Mishle 28:7)

**Rav Pinchas Ben Aharon Shofet
Tzfat, Eretz Israel 5762**

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INTRODUCTION

And every time that a person heeds the voice of his father or the voice of his mother he fulfills a great Mitzvah Mideoraita [From the Torah] Pele Yoetz Letter Chaf

“Honor your father and your mother...” Honor them with all kinds of honor, make them happy with good actions, as it is written: (Mishle 23:24) “The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice”...Just as a man honors the Holy One Blessed be He, in just the same way he needs to honor his father and mother, for they have a partnership with the Holy One Blessed be He, and just as it is necessary to fear the Holy One Blessed be He, in just the same way it is necessary to fear his father and his mother and to honor them with all kinds of honor. (Zohar ha Kaddosh Yitro 92b-9)

The commandment to “honor” a parent obligates a person to serve his parent like a slave. He must give him water to wash his hands, set the table, serve him food and drink, and dress him. He must go on any errand the parent sends him. All this must be done gladly, with a cheerful expression. If one

gives his parent the finest roast squab to eat, but does so with a sour expression, he will be punished.
Sefer Yalkut Meam Loez, Yitro

Blessed be Hashem who in His kindness guided us to compile this work. It is well known that the Mitzvot to honor and to fear our parents are one of the most difficult to accomplish, not so much because sons and daughters do not wish to be thankful to their parents or because they are lax in keeping the Mitzvot of Hashem, G-d forbid, but because the Yetzer hara, the Satan, attacks with greater force in those Mitzvot that are of greatest importance. As proof of this is the fact that Hashem placed the Mitzvah to honor our parents among the ten commandments and this is a sign of the encompassing nature of the Mitzvah for through our honoring our parents we will also understand the need to honor Hashem who is the ultimate source of all that we have and this will lead us to properly fulfill all other Mitzvot. Also, we are assured that for our own good and in order to avoid difficulties in life we must fulfill the Mitzvot to honor and fear our parents as it is brought in the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch Ch 143:

“Just as the reward for the Mitzvah of honoring father and mother is very great, the punishment for transgressing it is very great. And the one who afflicts his parents causes the

Shechinah [The presence of Hashem] to separate from him and harsh decrees fall upon him and he is given many sufferings. And even if life smiles on him in this life, he will surely be punished in the World to Come”.

Our intention is not to find faults in our fellow Jews, G-d forbid, our only desire is that we will fulfill the Commandments of Hashem as expressed through Eliyahu ha Navi Zachor Le tov (Tanna debe Eliyahu Rabba Perek 27):

The whole world belongs to the Holy One Blessed be He, and The Holy One Blessed be He only asks from a person to honor his father and his mother and to fear them, which is as if the person was honoring and fearing the Holy One Blessed be He.

May Hashem give us the strength to honor our parents properly and to fear from them as we should and through this we will be meritorious to see the arrival of Eliyahu ha Navi announcing the coming of the Righteous Moshiach Amen

“Behold, I send you Eliyahu ha Navi before the coming of the great and terrible day of Hashem; And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the sons, and the heart of the sons to their fathers” (Malachi 3:23-24)

CHAPTER 1

VERSES DEALING WITH THE MITZVAH TO HONOR AND TO FEAR YOUR FATHER AND YOUR MOTHER

1. Honor your father and your mother; that your days may be lengthened upon the land which Hashem your G-d gives you. (Shemot 20:12)

2. And he who strikes his father, or his mother, shall be surely put to death. (Shemot 21:15)

3. And he who curses his father, or his mother, shall surely be put to death. (Shemot 21:17)

4. You shall fear every man his mother and his father, and keep My Shabbats; I am Hashem your G-d. (Vayikra 19:3)

5. Anyone who curses his father or his mother shall be surely put to death; he has

cursed his father or his mother; his blood shall be upon him. (Vayikra 20:9)

6. Honor your father and your mother, as Hashem your G-d has commanded you; that your days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with you, in the land which Hashem your G-d gives you. (Devarim 5:16)

7. If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son, who will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother and who, when they have chastened him, will not listen to them; Then shall his father and his mother lay hold of him, and bring him out to the elders of his city, and to the gate of his place; And they shall say to the elders of his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton, and a drunkard. And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die; so shall you put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear. (Devarim 21:18-21)

8. Cursed be he who dishonors his father or his mother. And all the people shall say Amen. (Devarim 27:16)

**FROM THE BOOK OF MISHLE
BOOK OF PROVERBS**

9. My son, hear the instruction of your father, and forsake not the Torah of your mother (Mishle 1:8)

10. My son, keep your father's commandment, and forsake not the Torah of your mother (Mishle 6:20)

11. The proverbs of Shlomo: A wise son makes a father glad; but a foolish son is the grief of his mother (Mishle 10:1)

12. A wise son hears his father's instruction; but a scorner does not accept rebuke. (Mishle 13:1)

13. A fool despises his father's instruction; but he who heeds reproof is prudent. (Mishle 15:5)

14. A wise son makes a father glad; but a foolish man despises his mother.

(Mishle 15:20)

15. He who begets a fool does it to his sorrow; and the father of a fool has no joy.

(Mishle 17:21)

16. A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her who bore him. (Mishle

17:25)

17. A son who causes shame and brings reproach, ruins his father and chases away

his mother. (Mishle 19:26)

18. Whoever curses his father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out in utter

darkness. (Mishle 20:20)

19. Listen to your father who begot you, and despise not your mother when she is

old. (Mishle 23:22)

20. The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice; and he who begets a wise child shall have joy of him (Mishle 23:24)

21. Whoever keeps the Torah is a wise son; but he who is a companion of riotous men shames his father. (Mishle 28:7)

22. He who robs his father or his mother, and says: This is no transgression; he is the companion of the destroyer. (Mishle 28:24)

23. He who loves wisdom makes his father glad; but he who keeps company with harlots wastes his wealth. (Mishle 29:3)

24. The eye that mocks at his father, and scorns to obey his mother, will be picked out by the ravens of the valley, and the young vultures shall eat it. (Mishle 30:17)

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CHAPTER 2
**THE LAWS OF HONORING/
FEARING FATHER
AND MOTHER**
FROM THE CODE OF JEWISH LAW
KITZUR SHULCHAN ARUCH
CHAPTER 143

1. One must be extremely careful to fear and revere one's father and mother, for the Scriptures compare it to the honor and fear of the Holy One, blessed be He. The Sages (Kiddushin 30b) tell us: "It is written (Shemot 20:12): 'Honor your father and your mother.' It is also written (Proverbs 3.9): 'Honor Hashem with your money.' Also, (Vayikra 19:3): 'You shall fear, every man, his mother and his father;' and (Devarim 6:13): 'You shall fear Hashem your G-d.' Thus we see that we must honor father and mother in the same manner that we honor and fear His great name. Three partners share in the creation of man: The Holy One, blessed be He, the father, and the mother. (The man provides man with the white substance, the woman with the red substance, and

the Holy One, blessed be He, breathes a soul into him and endows him with the faculty of sight, hearing, and speech, Niddah 31a). When we honor our father and mother, the Holy One, blessed be He, says: I account it to them as though I dwelt among them, and they honored Me.”

2. There is no limit to the Mitzvah of honoring father and mother, for it is very precious and he who increases in its performance, he is to be praised. And the one who keeps the Mitzvah to honor father and mother merits long life and good days in this life and in the life of the World to Come, he merits wealth and success in all his endeavors. And he merits that his sons and daughters will honor him and will fear and respect him also in his old age. And he who keeps this Mitzvah in the Land of Israel, his reward is greater than the one who keeps it outside the Land of Israel.

3. Everyone must love his father and mother as his own body (Zohar Ha Kaddosh). And he will honor them and find in them a good trait that they have and honor them and love them through

that. And when his parents ask him to do a favor, he must do it immediately and with great diligence.

4. Just as the reward for the Mitzvah of honoring father and mother is very great, the punishment for transgressing it is very great. And the one who afflicts his parents causes the Shechinah [The presence of Hashem] to separate from him and harsh decrees fall upon him and he is given many sufferings. And even if life smiles on him in this life, he will surely be punished in the World to Come.

5. A man is obligated to get involved himself in the Mitzvah to honor his father and mother even when he was not asked by them to do so. And even when others attend to his parents and nothing is lacking to them, anyway it is a Mitzvah to honor them.

6. What constitutes “fear?” One must not occupy the place appointed for one's father, in a council

of elders or the place reserved for him to pray. One should not occupy the seat generally occupied by his father at the dinner table. One must neither contradict one's father nor even corroborate his words in his presence, like saying: "Father is right." To what degree shall parents be feared? If a son, attired in costly garments, were to preside over a meeting, and his father or his mother came and rent his garments, and struck him on the head, and spat in his face, he should neither insult them nor show distress in their presence, or display anger towards them; but he should remain silent and fear the King who is the King of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He, who thus decreed. He may, however, seek legal redress for the damage they have caused him.

7. What constitutes "honor?" One must provide them with food and drink and clothing. One should bring them home and take them out, and provide them with all their needs cheerfully. Children who provide their parents with fattened poultry, but do so without grace, incur Divine punishment.

8. If the father or mother is asleep, and the key to one's store lies under their pillow, one must not waken them, even if one should lose much profit thereby. However, if the father would benefit by being awakened, and if the son should fail to awake him, he will grieve over the loss of the profit, it is his duty to arouse him, since that will make him happy. It is also the duty of children to arouse their father to go to the synagogue, or for the performance of any other religious duty, as all are equally bound to honor the Almighty, blessed be He.

9. If a son desires a favor from his townsmen, and he knows that it will be granted to him for his father's sake, even though he knows that he could also get into his own account, nevertheless, he should not say: "Do it for me" but rather: "Do it for my father's sake" in order to attribute the favor to the regard people have for his father.

10. If one is told by his mother to do a certain thing, and subsequently his father asks him: "Who told you to do this?" If he feels that by telling that his mother has told him to do it, his father would be angry at his mother, one should

rather incur his father's anger than implicate the mother.

11. Children must rise and remain standing in the presence of their father and their mother.

12. One must honor his parents even after their death. Thus, if he mentions their names within twelve months after their departure, he should say: "I am an atonement in his (or her) place" (That is, all evil that is to come on his or her soul, shall befall me instead). After the expiration of twelve months (when no more punishment is meted out, for even the wicked are not judged after the period of twelve months), one should add: "May his (or her) memory be a blessing in the life of the world to come."

13. Even if his father is wicked and a sinner, he must fear and revere him. Even an illegitimate child is bound to honor and fear his father. Some authorities hold that a child is not bound to honor a wicked father as long as he does not repent, and is forbidden only to cause him grief. It is best, however, to follow the former opinion.

14. When a child sees his father transgress a Divine Law, he must not say to him: “You have violated a command of the Torah,” but he should rather put it in the form of a question: “Father, is it not written in the Torah thus and thus?” As though asking for information and not admonishing him; so that the father may correct himself without being put to shame.

15. A child should not hearken to his father when he tells him to transgress a precept of the Torah, whether it be a positive or a negative command, or even a Rabbinical injunction. For, it is written (Vayikra 10:3): “You shall fear every man his mother and his father, and you shall keep My Shabbats: I am Hashem your G-d.” The observance of the Shabbat is mentioned in juxtaposition with the fear of father and mother, to mean: “Although I commanded you to fear your father and mother, yet if they tell you to violate the Shabbat, you must not listen to them, and so it is true concerning other precepts, for I am Hashem your G-d, and both you and your parents are equally bound to honor Me, therefore, you must not hearken to them to disregard My word.” Also, Rabbinical

injunctions are the commands of the Almighty, blessed be His name, for it is written (Devarim 17:11): “You shall not turn aside,” etc. Thus, if a child is told by his father, not to speak to or forgive a certain person with whom the child wishes to be reconciled, he should disregard his father’s behest, for it is forbidden to hate any Jew, unless he sees him commit a sin. Thus, in this case the father tells the child to transgress a command of the Torah.

16. If the son desires to go to some place to study the Torah, because there he will accomplish more than in his own town, but the father does not consent to it for some reason, he is not bound to listen to him, for the study of the Torah is greater than the precept of honoring father and mother. (As we find it in the case of our ancestor Yaakov, peace be unto him, that when he went away from Ytzchak, he retreated into the school of Eber for fourteen years, where he had engaged himself in the study of the Torah. Thereafter, he went to the house of Laban and, including the time it took him to cover the journey, he stayed away for twenty-two years. For these twenty-two years, during which he did not fulfill the precept of

honoring his father, he was punished, and Joseph was concealed from him for twenty-two years; but for the fourteen years that he had spent in studying the Torah, he was not punished). If the son desires to marry, and the father does not consent to it, the son is likewise not bound to obey him.

17. It is the duty of both men and women to honor their parents. However, a married woman, who owes devotion to her husband, is exempt from the precept of honoring her parents. Yet, she is obliged to do for the parents, all she can, if her husband does not object.

18. Whoever puts his father or mother to shame, even by mere words or by a gesture, is included among those whom the Almighty has cursed, as it is written (Devarim 27:16): “Cursed be he that dishonors his father or his mother.”

19. If the father or the mother has a splinter, the son is not allowed to remove it, lest he cause a wound thereby (which act is subject to the capital punishment of strangulation). If the son is a

physician, he is not allowed to bleed his parents or perform an operation on them, although he intends to cure them therewith. The above is true only when there is another physician to do it; but if no other one is available, he may bleed them and cut as much as is necessary for purposes of healing.

20. If one's father or mother becomes demented, the son should endeavor to act with them in accordance with their mental condition, until Hashem will have mercy on them. However, if the son can no longer bear it because of their aggravated condition, he may leave them and delegate others to take care of them.

21. One is forbidden to beat his grownup son. The word "grownup" in this regard, refers not to age but to his maturity. If there is reason to believe that the son will rebel, and express that resentment by word or deed, even though he has not yet reached the age of Bar Mitzvah, it is forbidden to beat him. Instead, he should reason with him. Anyone who beats his grownup children is to be excommunicated, because he transgresses the Divine Command (Vayikra

19:14): “You shall not put a stumbling block before the blind” (for they are apt to bring sin and punishment upon their children if they react aggressively against the parents).

22. A man must respect his stepmother during his father's lifetime, and his stepfather during his mother's lifetime. And it is proper that one should honor his stepmother or his stepfather, even after the death of one's own parents.

23. A person must honor his elder brother, whether of only the same father or the same mother. He must also honor his father-in-law and his mother-in-law (as we find it about King David, peace be unto him, who honored King Shaul, who was his father-in-law, by calling him “my father,” as it is written (I Samuel 24:12): “My father, see, yea, see” etc). He must also honor his grandparents. But the honor due parents is greater than that due grandparents.

24. He who truly wishes to honor his father and his mother, should devote himself to the study of the Torah and to the performance of good deeds,

for this is the greatest honor to his parents, because people will say: “Happy are the parents who brought up such a child.” But a son who does not walk in the right path, brings reproach to his parents and disgraces them in the most ignominious manner. Likewise, a father who is concerned about the welfare of his children, should engage in the study of the Torah and the practice of good deeds, so that he may please G-d and men and thus cause his children to be proud of him. But he who does not walk in the straight path disgraces his children. Also, children die for the sins of their fathers, as it is written (Shemot 20:5): “Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children.” There is no greater cruelty than causing the death of one's own children on account of one's sins. And none is more compassionate to his children than the righteous man, for his merit holds good for a thousand generations.

25. A convert to Judaism must not curse or despise his non-Jewish father; for they should not say: “We came from a higher level of holiness that is grave to a lower level of holiness.” But he should treat him with some degree of respect.

CHAPTER 3

THE RAMBAM

SELECTIONS FROM MISHNE TORAH HILCHOT MAMRIM

CHAPTER FIVE

1. A person who curses his father and mother should be executed by stoning, as [Vayikra 20:9] states: “He cursed his father and his mother; he is responsible for his death.” He is stoned to death whether he curses them while alive or after they died. It is necessary that [his act be observed by] witnesses and [they] warn [him] as is required with regard to other individuals executed by the court. The above applies to both a man and woman, and also to a *Tumtum* and an androgynus, provided they reached majority, the age when they can be subjected to punishment.

2. A person is not liable for execution by stoning unless he curses [his parents] with one of G-d's unique names. If he cursed them with another term used to refer to Him, he is not liable for execution by stoning. He should, [however,] be

lashed, as he would be lashed for cursing any other proper Jew.

3. Similarly, a person who curses his paternal and maternal grandfather is considered as if he cursed any other person.

5. A person who strikes his father or mother should be executed by strangulation, as [Shemot 21:15] states: “One who strikes his father or his mother should certainly die.” It is necessary that [his act be observed by] witnesses and [they] warn [him] as is required with regard to other individuals executed by the court. The above applies to both a man and woman, and also to a tumtum, and an androgynus provided they reached majority, the age when they can be subjected to punishment. A person is not liable for strangulation until he wounds [his parents]. If he does not wound them, it is as if he strikes another Jew. If he strikes them after their death, he is not liable.

6. When a person strikes his father on his ear and causes him to become deaf he is liable [for]

execution. [The rationale is that] it is impossible for him to become deaf without there being an [internal] wound. Instead, [we can be certain that at least] a drop of blood was released within the ear and [that] caused him to become deaf.

7. When a person lets blood for his father, or if he was a doctor and amputated flesh or a limb, he is not liable. Even though he is not liable, the initial and preferred option is for him not to perform the operation. Nor should he remove a thorn from the flesh of his father or mother lest he cause a bruise. When does the above apply? When there is another person there who is capable of performing these actions. If, however, there is no one else there capable of doing this but him and they are suffering, he may let blood or amputate according to the license that they grant him.

11. A convert is forbidden to curse or to strike his gentile father or to degrade him, so that [people] will not say: "They came from a more severe level of holiness to a lesser level of holiness, for this person degrades his father." Instead, he should offer him certain measures of honor. A servant,

by contrast, has no connection to his natural parents. His natural father is as if he was not his father with regard to all matters. This applies even if they were [both] freed.

12. When a person's father and mother are absolutely wicked and violate transgressions - even if they were sentenced to death and were being taken to their execution - it is forbidden for a son to strike them or curse them. If he curses them or wounds them, [however,] he is not liable. If they repent, even if they are being taken to their execution, he is liable and is executed because of them. To whom does the above apply? To [the convicted person's] son. If, however, an unrelated individual struck or cursed a person after he was sentenced to death, even though he repents, he is not liable, for that person will be executed. If, however, he embarrasses him, he is liable to pay a fine for embarrassing him.

13. If a person's father or mother committed a transgression punishable by lashes and the son is a court attendant, he should not lash them. Similarly, if they were obligated to be placed under a ban of ostracism, he should not be the

agent to apply this ban. Nor should he push them or degrade them while acting as the emissary of the court even though it is fit to do this to them and they have not repented.

14. A son should not serve as an agent to strike or curse [his parents] except if they entice others to worship idols. For [concerning such a person], the Torah [Devarim 13:9] states: “Do not have pity and do not cover up for him.”

15. In any situation where a person is obligated to take an oath to his son, we always endeavor that he never obligate him to take an oath that involves a curse. Instead, he should have him take an oath that does not involve a curse. We already explained, that when a father kills his son, none of the slain person's brothers becomes “the redeemer of the blood.” The Torah showed concern not only for striking or cursing one's parents, but also for shaming them. Anyone who shames his parents, even with words alone or merely with an insinuation, is cursed by the Almighty, as [Devarim 27: 16] states: “Cursed be he who degrades his father and his mother.” And [Proverbs 30: 17] states: “The eye that mocks a

father and scorns the training of a mother, [the ravens... will gouge it out].” The court has the right to administer stripes for rebellious conduct because of this and to punish in the manner they see fit.

CHAPTER SIX

1. Honoring one's father and mother is a positive commandment of great importance, as is fearing one's father and mother. The Torah equates [the honor and fear of one's parents] with the honor and fear of [G-d] Himself. [Shemot 20: 12] states: “Honor your father and your mother,” and [Proverbs 3:9j] states: “Honor G-d from your wealth.” Similarly, with regard to one's father and mother, [Vayikra 19:3] states: “A person must fear his mother and father,” and [Devarim 6:13] states: “And you shall fear G-d, your Lord.” Just as He commands us to honor and fear His great name; so, too, He commands us to honor and fear our parents.”

2. A person who curses his father or mother is executed by stoning and a person who blasphemes G-d is executed by stoning. Thus the

punishment for the two is equated. A father is mentioned before a mother with regard to honor and a mother is mentioned before a father with regard to fear to teach that they are both equal with regard to fear and honor.

3. What is meant by fear and what is meant by honor? Fear [is expressed by] not standing in his place, not sitting in his place, not contradicting his words, nor offering an opinion that outweighs his. He should not call him by name, neither during his lifetime nor after his death. Instead, he should say: "My father and my master." If his father or his teacher had the same name as others, he should call those [other people] by a different name. It appears to me that one should be careful only with regard to this matter with regard to a name that is unusual and which is not used frequently by people. With regard to the names which people are generally called, by contrast, e.g., Abraham, Ytzchak, Yaakov, Moses, and the like, one can call others by that name in any language and at any time outside [his father's] presence without thinking anything of the matter. What is meant by honoring them? One should bring them food and drink, clothe

them and cover them from their own resources. If a father does not have financial resources and a son does, the son is compelled to sustain his father and his mother according to his capacity. He should take him out and bring him home and serve him in all the ways one serves a teacher. Similarly, he should stand before him as one stands before a teacher.

4. When a father was the student of his son, the father need not stand in the presence of the son. The son, by contrast, must stand before his father even if he is his student. [A son] is obligated to honor [his father] in other matters when he is carrying out his business and seeing to his concerns. What is implied? If a person went to a place because of his father's words, he should not say: "Hurry [and free] me on my own account," or "Let me go on my own account," instead "Hurry [and free] me because of my father," "Let me go because of my father." Similar laws apply in all analogous situations. He should always include in his words [statements that indicate] that he is concerned with his father's honor and that he fears him.

5. [A son] is obligated to honor [his father] even after his death. What is implied? If he repeats a teaching in his father's name, he should not say: "This is what my father said." Instead, he should say: "This is what my father, and teacher - may I serve as atonement for him - said." When does the above apply? Within twelve months of his passing. After twelve months, he says of him: "May he be remembered for the life of the world to come."

6. Both a man and a woman are obligated to honor and fear [their parents]. It is only that the man has the capacity to do this and a woman is subject to another's influence [The Husband's]. Therefore if she is divorced or widowed, they are both equal.

7. To what degree does [the mitzvah of] honoring one's father and mother extend? Even if [one's parent] takes his purse of gold and throws it into the sea in his presence, he should not embarrass them, shout, or vent anger at them. Instead, he should accept the Torah's decree and remain silent. To what degree does [the mitzvah of] fearing them extend? Even if one was wearing

fine garments and sitting at the head of the community, if one's father and mother came, ripped the clothes, struck him on the head, and spat in his face, he should not embarrass them. Instead, he should remain silent and fear the King of kings who commanded him to conduct himself in this manner. Were a mortal king to decree something which would cause him even more suffering, he would not be able to move a limb [in protest]. Certainly, this applies [when the command emanates from] He who spoke and [caused] the world to come into existence as He desired it.

8. Although these commands have been issued, a person is forbidden to lay a heavy yoke on his sons and be particular about their honoring him to the point that he presents an obstacle to them. Instead, he should forgo his honor and ignore [any affronts]. For if a father [desires to] forgo his honor, he may

9. A person who strikes a son who has attained majority should be placed under a ban of ostracism, for he is transgressing [the charge,

Vayikra 19: 14]: “Do not place a stumbling block in front of the blind.

10. When a person's father or mother lose control of their mental faculties, [their son] should try to conduct his [relationship] with them according to their mental condition until [G-d] has mercy upon them. If it is impossible for him to remain with them because they have become very deranged, he should leave them, depart, and charge others with caring for them in an appropriate manner.

12. When a person's father tells him to violate the words of the Torah whether he tells him to transgress a negative commandment or not to fulfill a positive commandment, even if all that is involved is a point of Rabbinic Law- he should not listen to him, as [can be inferred from Vayikra 19:3]: “A person must fear his mother and his father and keep My Shabbats.” [Implied is that] all are obligated in honoring Me.

13. [The following laws apply when] a person's father tells him: “Draw water for me,” and he has the opportunity to perform a mitzvah. If it is

possible for the mitzvah to be performed by others, they should perform it and he should concern himself with honoring his father. For we do not negate [the observance of] one mitzvah, because of [the observance of] another mitzvah. If there are no others able to perform [the other mitzvah], he should perform the mitzvah and neglect his father's honor. For he and his father are obligated to perform the mitzvah. Torah study surpasses honoring one's father and mother.

14. If a person's father tells him: "Bring me a drink of water," and his mother tells him: "Bring me a drink of water," he should overlook his mother's honor and honor his father first. For both he and his mother are obligated to honor his father.

15. A person is obligated to honor his father's wife even though she is not his mother throughout his father's lifetime, for this is included in honoring his father. Similarly, he should honor his mother's husband throughout her lifetime. After [his parents'] death, however, he is not obligated to honor their spouses. It is a Rabbinical decree that a person is obligated to honor his oldest brother as he is obligated to honor his father.

CHAPTER 4

ETHICAL ASPECTS OF THE MITZVAH TO HONOR AND TO FEAR PARENTS

WOE TO THE ONE WHO CAUSES HIS PARENTS TO BECOME ANGRY

One should not cause his parents to become angry until the point that they may curse him, for woe to the person who makes his parents commit this grave sin, for this is a greater evil than hitting them for if the sin of leading others to sin is great, how much more in the case where one causes his father or his mother to become angry which is a grave sin in itself, and it will cause a curse to fall upon him and evil things to his parents, G-d forbid. But a wise son makes his father happy, and he will strive to do the will of his parents immediately without any delay, and good blessings shall reach him from his father and his mother and he will carry a blessing from Hashem and He will give him the reward, that he will have proper sons that will do his will as their will.

Pele Yoetz, Letter Kuf

AFFLICTING ONE'S PARENTS CAUSES A GREAT BLEMISH AND CREATES EVIL CREATURES

He who causes suffering to his father or mother with words and on purpose, this blemish is great and terrible, for it blemishes the first 2 letters of the name of Hashem, and the person should think how many times he has afflicted his parents from the time he was young, or how many times he has diminished their honor, and how many thousands upon thousands evil creatures were created from this sin, and even a small action against the father or the mother, the blemish that it produces reaches the highest places, for the Holy One Blessed be He equated His honor with theirs and our Holy Rabbis Z'L have said (Kiddushin 31b) Fortunate he who did not see his Parents, because of the great blemish that the sin of afflicting them causes.

Tahorat ha Koddesh Perek Zain

THE ONE WHO TALKS LASHON HARA ON HIS PARENTS IS CURSED

He who talks Lashon hara on his father or his mother, G-d forbid he is certainly transgressing the Mitzvah of Honoring father and mother, and besides this he also transgresses "Cursed be the one who dishonors his father and his mother", G-d save us

Sefer Chafetz Chayim Intro Positive commandments

**THERE'S A WARNING IMPLICIT IN
THE WORDING OF THE FIFTH
COMMANDMENT: IF YOU HONOR
YOUR PARENTS YOU WILL LIVE
LONG, IF NOT YOU WILL
NOT LIVE LONG**

Honor your father and mother, so that you may live a long time on the land that G-d your Lord is giving you. (Shemot 20:12)

The fifth of the Ten Commandments is that one must honor his parents. If one does this, he will “live a long time on the land.” If not, however, his days will be shortened. As a general rule in the Torah, a positive statement also indicates its converse.

It may seem somewhat difficult to understand why G-d gives the reason for honoring one's parents, “that you may live a long time...” One should not keep the commandments in order to receive reward. But this actually comes as a warning: “If you honor your parents, you will live long. If not, your life will be shortened.

Sefer Yalkut Meam Loez, Yitro

**THE ONE WHO INSULTS AND
OFFENDS HIS PARENTS BECOMES
LIABLE TO DEATH BY THE
BET DIN OR BY HEAVEN**

If the son transgresses and becomes a rebellious and wayward son, or if he insults and offends his father, then

he becomes liable to death by the Bet Din, and there is no way he can be saved, and similarly when he does not honor him properly, he becomes liable to death from heaven, and we derive this from: “So that your days be lengthened” [If you honor them, if not your days will be shortened]

Chatam Sofer Derashot le Shavuot

**THE ONE WHO SUPPORTS HIS
FATHER FINANCIALLY AND YET
TREATS HIM WITH DISRESPECT
LOSES ALL HIS MERIT AND MORE
THAN THAT AS WELL**

There is one who feeds his father delicacies and dresses him with the best clothes and nevertheless loses his own life in this world. For example if his father was old and he wished to eat early in the morning as old people like to do because of their weakness, and he went ahead and asked the son for food, and the son told him: “The sun has not even risen, you have awoken so early to eat!” Even if he feeds him delicacies since he has embarrassed him he loses his reward and is cut off from this world. Or when the father asks the son: “Son how much have you spent on this clothing or on this food that you bought for me?” And the son replies: “What do you care? I bought it and I paid for it why do you bother asking?” Or when the son tells the father that he paid much when he really paid little so

as to pretend that he spent a lot on him, or when the son thinks in his heart: “When will this old man pass away and I will not have to spend this money on him?” Or when the old man talks and the son contradicts his words and laughs at him and tells others about it, and says “My father says things that make no sense and he is already senile, his mind does not work anymore” And all those who behave towards their father with those sort of words even though they feed him all the delicacies proper of kings and dress him with royal clothes they are negated the life of the World to Come.

Sefer ha Mussar le Rabbi Yehuda Kalitz

SOME PEOPLE ARE CAREFUL ABOUT EVERYBODY ELSE’S MONEY BUT THEIR PARENTS

Some people are careful not to harm anyone and they are good to them and they honor them, but they are careless about their parents, and they eat and drink from their parents, and they also take their money with or without their consent, and they say: “We do nothing wrong because we are their sons, and all their wealth is for us and for our sons...and in reality these kinds of people fall under the category of “Cursed the one who dishonors his father and his mother”

Kitzur Shulchan Aruch Siman 182 Laws of theft

THOSE WHO FEAR HEAVEN HONOR THEIR FATHER AND MOTHER

Just as one must fear and honor The Holy One Blessed be He, so must he fear and honor his father and mother: (Shemot 20:12): “Honor your father and your mother so that your days be prolonged on the earth that the Lord your G-d gives you,” and (Vayikra 19:3): “A man, his mother and his father, you shall fear.” Whoever honors his father and mother and fears them has it reckoned unto him as if he feared and honored the Holy One Blessed be He. Know this to be so for all three are partners in him. For thus have our sages declared (Niddah 31a): There are three partners in a man: The Holy One Blessed be He, the father and the mother. His father sows the “white” from which is formed the bones, the sinews, the nails the white of the eyes and the brain matter. His mother sows the red from which is formed the skin, the flesh, the blood, the hair and the black of the eye. And the Holy One Blessed be He gives him spirit, soul, countenance, the sight of the eye, the hearing of the ear, the speech of the lips, the walking of the feet, knowledge, understanding and wisdom. All three are partners in him, so that it is impossible for a man to fear and honor his father and mother without, at the same time, fearing and honoring the “portion” of the Holy One Blessed be He...

Our sages of blessed memory said further (Yerushalmi Peah 1:1) Great is the honoring of father and mother, which the Holy One Blessed be He preferred to His very honor.

Sefer Maalot ha Middot

YOU CAN GIVE TO YOUR PARENTS AND GO TO GEHINOMM AND YOU CAN MAKE THEM WORK AND GO TO GAN EDEN

And lest one say: Since I must give food and drink and clothe and shod my father and mother, I may steal and rob to put food into their mouths and clothe and shod them in order to fulfill the mitzvah of honoring father and mother - thus have our sages of blessed memory said (Yerushalmi Peah 1:1): One may feed his father fatted fowl and pheasants and inherit Gehinnom, and another yoke him to the mill and inherit Eden. How may one feed his father fatted fowl and pheasants and inherit Gehinnom? A certain man used to feed his father fatted fowl and pheasants. Once, his father asked him: "My son, where do you get all this?" He answered: "Old man, eat and chew, as dogs do!" (That is, why do you ask me? Is it not enough that you eat these things that you must also ask me where they come from!) Such a one inherits Gehinnom for berating his father and answering him with scorn. Another yokes him to the mill and inherits Eden. How so? A certain miller received a king's summons for a miller [to serve in the palace], whereupon he said to his father: "Father, you grind here instead of me, and I shall fulfill the king's summons. For if you went there and returned beaten and smitten, it would not be good. Better that I return so, and not you. And if, G-d forbid, you were to be shamed - better that I be shamed and not you." Such

a one yokes his father to the mill and inherits Eden, being solicitous of his father's honor. (Kiddushin 30b)

Sefer Maalot ha Middot

HONOR YOUR PARENTS IN ORDER TO MERIT ALL KINDS OF BLESSINGS AND GOOD THINGS

My sons, come and see how great is the honoring of father and mother. For when one honors his father and his mother, he merits inheriting life in this world and in the world to come (Devarim 5:16): “Honor your father and your mother as the L-rd your G-d commanded you, so that your days be lengthened, and so that it be good for you on the land that the L-rd your G-d gives to you.” What is more, so long as one honors his father and mother, sin is not engendered through him.

Sefer Maalot ha Middot

JUST AS THE REWARD FOR HONORING THEM IS GREAT, THE PUNISHMENT FOR AGGRAVATING THEM IS GREAT

And if one does not honor his father and mother, stern decrees come upon him, (Isaiah 29:13-14): “And the L-rd said: “Because this people draw near with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but have removed their

heart far from Me, and their fear of Me is but the taught precept of men - therefore, behold, I will deal yet more wondrously with this people, wonder upon wonder. And the wisdom of their wise men shall go lost; and the understanding of their understanding men shall be hidden.” Great is the Mitzvah of honoring father and mother, which lengthens a man's days and years, confers good upon him, and causes him to inherit life in this world and in the world to come. But just as its reward is great, so is its punishment [for non-performance] great. For thus have our sages of blessed memory said in the Aggadah (Yerushalmi Peah 1:1): (Prov 30:17): “The eye that mocks at the father and scorns the mother shall be gouged out by the ravens of the valley and the sons of the eagle shall eat it”...The Holy One Blessed be He says: Let the raven, which is cruel to its brood, come and gouge out that eye, but derive no benefit from it. And let the eagle come which is merciful, and eat it, and derive benefit from it.

Sefer Maalot ha Middot

TO HONOR YOUR PARENTS IS A WAY OF REPAYING FOR ALL THE GOOD THEY HAVE DONE TO YOU

In the Midrash it says that all the Mitzvah of honoring father and mother is a way of repaying all the good that the son received from his father and his mother and the son that does not honor them is called a RASHA

[Evildoer] as it is written “The RASHA borrows and doesn’t pay back”. But the one who honors them and feeds them and fulfills all their requests is called a Tzaddik as it is written “And the Tzaddik is graceful and gives” meaning that he gives his parents with a good heart just as his parents gave to him and not with a miserly heart.

And included in the repayment of the obligation due to the parents is to love them with a strong love just the same way that the parents love him and he should not be to them a burden, nor a source of worries.

Sefer Charedim Perek Alef

IT IS INCREDIBLE HOW WE FORGET EVERYTHING OUR PARENTS HAVE DONE FOR US

It is indeed incredible how a person forgets all the kindness that his father and mother did for him from the time he was born until the time they merited to bring him up, not a single day they were at peace, at night they would not rest, and they sacrificed their bodies and their money for their son, and all this was done with great love and desire, and with great happiness, always thinking that they wanted what is best for the child, and this is well known to everyone, and they also prayed to Hashem on his behalf at all times, for the son to be saved from all trouble and disease until they merited to raise him up...

JUST AS WE SACRIFICE FOR OUR KIDS SO DID OUR PARENTS SACRIFICED THEMSELVES FOR US

And it is even more amazing that when the sons have already merited to raise their own sons, and they see with their own eyes and they feel the suffering of raising kids, they should then imagine and think that just as they are suffering and sacrificing for their sons, just the same their father and their mother did for them until they were raised. And therefore according to logic, they should at least recognize the goodness that their parents did for them, by honoring and fearing them as much as possible...

WE REPAY STRANGERS WHEN THEY DO A FAVOR FOR US: HOW MUCH MORE SHOULD WE REPAY ALL THE FAVORS OUR PARENTS DID FOR US

For we see how when a friend does some big favor to someone, then that someone remembers the favor for a long time and he loves that friend for that favor that was done to him, and whenever he can pay back the favor that was done to him, he does it every time with great happiness. And this is the proper way to act, for if someone does not recognize and does not repay the kindness that was done to him, at the end that person will also neglect to recognize the kindness that the Holy One Blessed be He does towards him.

And in the case of sons towards their parents the opposite occurs. For it is impossible to imagine and to count all the instances where the parents act with kindness towards their sons, and all the times that the father and the mother go through great suffering because of their sons and how many tribulations they have to go through because of their sons, yet the sons forget all this...

NOT ONLY DO SONS NOT HONOR THEIR PARENTS BUT THEY EXPECT THEIR PARENTS TO HONOR THEM

And even with the obligation the sons have to honor and fear their parents, and the obligation they have to thank them for all the good they have received from them, we see that the sons do the opposite and due to our many sins, the sons just want their parents to honor them and they continually ask for favors and demand favors from their parents, and this is exactly what we mentioned before that the greater and the more important a Mitzvah is, the more the Yetzer ha ra tries to annul it, in order to make man lose this life and the life of the world to Come. This is the case regarding the Mitzvah to honor father and mother, about which our Sages have declared that it is the difficult among the difficult in the Torah, and it is also one of the ten commandments which are the root of all the other commandments, and the one who fulfills it is assured length of days in this world and in the next, and it is one of the Mitzvot that a man eats of its fruits in this world and the principal is stored for the World to Come

(As it is written in Yerushalmi Pea 1) and the Holy One Blessed be He is very particular regarding this Mitzvah...

**THE SATAN, THE YETZER HARA
TRIES BY ALL MEANS THAT WE DO
NOT FULFILL THE MITZVAH TO
HONOR AND FEAR OUR PARENTS
AS WE SHOULD**

Imagine how much the evil one, the Satan, the Yetzer hara tries to prevent us from accomplishing this Mitzvah. He gathers all his strength and uses all his means to deviate us from properly fulfilling this Mitzvah. He continually devises new strategies to make us think that we should not honor our parents and tries by all means to make us forget all the good things our father and our mother have done for us since the day we were born. And the Satan also tries to make us forget that Hashem commands us to honor our parents, and he tries to make us forget how great is the reward for fulfilling the Mitzvah as well as the punishment for not fulfilling it...

**THE BEST ADVICE IS TO TRY TO
STUDY THESE LAWS AND TO
REALIZE THAT WE NEED TO FOCUS
ON PROPERLY HONORING
OUR PARENTS**

Therefore the best advice is that a person should take to heart everything that we have written here and should

realize at every moment the need to properly observe this Mitzvah. He should also study the laws that deal with this Mitzvah in the Shulchan Aruch (Yore Deah, siman 240-241) and in all the holy books that deal with the fulfillment of this Mitzvah, as our Sages of blessed memory have said: “The Holy One Blessed be He said I created the Yetzer ha ra and I have created the Torah to annul it...And the main things upon which we should worry are those that we find that we stumble upon them continually for precisely in those things is where we need to put most of our attention, more so than in other areas. This is what Rabbi Israel mi Salant ZTK’L wrote in his IGGERET HA MUSSAR. For the pitfalls regarding the observance of the Mitzvah of KIVUD AV VAEM are more common than the pitfalls with other Mitzvot because a man is used to be with his parents from the time he is born, and they suffer and withstands a lot of pain from their son, and they show him great love and care, and they deal with him with unbelievable kindness, and habit will lead the person to think that that is the logical way, to expect their parents to serve him always and for him to never pay back the kindness that they have done for him, and the person will much less think about honoring them or fearing them.

That is why I have extended myself a little Baruch Hashem, to show the greatness and the importance of observing the Mitzvah to honor father and mother and the Mitzvah to fear mother and father, and the obligation

to love them more than you love yourself and anything that is yours, and the reward and the punishment as brought by our Sages Z'L.

Sefer Cheshvon prate ha Mitzvot, 21 as brought in sefer Kivud av va em

I HAVE TO HONOR MY PARENTS EVEN WHEN I, G-D FORBID DON'T FEEL LIKE DOING IT

A person should think to himself: "I have to honor my father and my mother even when I do not feel like honoring them, for I know that the Satan is trying with all his strength to prevent me from performing this Mitzvah, one of the ten commandments, one of the most important, and I will not listen to the advice of the Satan who wants to destroy me and to drive me from this world and from the world to Come" Sefer Simchat Horim

OUR TWISTED KINDNESS: REPAYING STRANGERS BEYOND MEASURE WHILE TREATING OUR PARENTS WITH DISRESPECT AND WITH A LACK OF APPRECIATION

How can it be that when a stranger does a favor to us, we are swift to thank him and repay him the kindness he has done to us, but when it comes to our parents who literally have sacrificed their lives for ourselves we find it so hard

to thank them and to return the good they have done to us? Why do we focus on what our parents didn't do for us or on what they have done wrong? Shouldn't we focus instead on all the suffering and all the pain they have been through because of us?

Some of us think that we are kind people because we do some charity here and there or because sometimes we go out of our way to do a favor to a friend and yet when it comes to our parents we hardly thank them for what they have done... Do you think that kindness is to be nice to strangers? Isn't it real kindness to be nice to those who have sacrificed so much of their time for us? It's easy to be nice to strangers and yet to those to whom we should be thanking and honoring all the time, we only blame them for our shortcomings and deficiencies? How hard is it to pick up the phone to let your parents know that you are fine? How hard is it to tell your parents "I love you"? Wouldn't you love you son or your daughter to tell you: "I love you dad" or "I love you mom"?

**WHEN YOU ARE NICE TO SOMEONE
AND HE DOESN'T APPRECIATE IT
YOU FEEL BAD AND DENIGRATED:
IMAGINE HOW YOUR PARENTS FEEL
WHEN YOU DISRESPECT THEM**

Don't you find that the most despicable thing is when someone doesn't return kindness with kindness? If you do a favor to someone and he doesn't even acknowledge that you have done something good for him, don't you feel

used? Imagine how much more multiplied a million times when you do not treat your parents with respect, when you don't honor them as they deserve...

Therefore gather strength and be brave to fight against the Satan who is preventing you and is causing you to direct your kindness in the wrong way. Open your eyes and see for whom you should really spend your energies being nice to, for whom you should really go out of your way. For the main aspect of kindness is at home with those closest to you, those that you have to deal with constantly. And when Hashem sees that you are really trying to observe this Mitzvah of honoring your parents He will surely guide you along the proper path and He will make you achieve the desires of your heart for good as it is written: "On the way that a man desires to go, there he is led from heaven" (Shabbat 104)

Sefer Simchat Horim

**THE ZOHAR HA KADDOSH
MENTIONS THIS GREAT MITZVAH
SEVERAL TIMES**

**THE SON HAS TO DO THE PARENTS'
WILL IMMEDIATELY**

This is honoring father and mother: That the father will command his son to do something and his son immediately fulfills his father's request without any delay

Zohar ha Kaddosh Kedoshim 82a

A SON SHOULD BE LIKE A SERVANT TO HIS PARENTS

A son needs to work for his father and mother, and to become for them like a servant, an aid, a chair and a bench underneath. Tikkune Zohar, Hakdama 7b

THE SON HONORS THE FATHER AND NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND

Every son needs to be to his father like a horse and like a donkey to carry a burden, and to be bent under him. And this is the secret of “Man and beast saves Hashem” (Tehillim 36) and it refers to he who makes himself as a beast under his father.

Zohar ha Kaddosh III, 215b

It is not proper for a father to go visit his son, it is the son that needs to go visit his father and to see to his welfare.

Zohar ha Kaddosh I 97, Midrash ha Neelam

THERE ARE VERY FEW WORTHY MEN WHO FEAR THEIR FATHER AND THEIR MOTHER AS HASHEM COMMANDS IN THE TORAH

I saw worthy men and they are few, who will have upon them the fear of his mother and his father, and if they fear, they only fear from being hit when they are young,

but when they are a little older they break the yoke and not one in a thousand does what is necessary for them to do, Woe to the sons from the Day of Judgment for certainly G-d will come with judgment. Therefore the person who desires life will gather all his strength to do what is required of him in this aspect.

Pele Yoetz, Fear

All the fear that a man will have from his father and his mother will be Leshem shamaim, meaning in order not to cause suffering to the Holy One Blessed be He.

Chidushe ha Rim on Kiddushin 30b

**DON'T THINK THAT IF YOU HAD A
BETTER FATHER THEN YOU WOULD
HONOR HIM, FOR HASHEM
DETERMINES EXACTLY WHAT KIND
OF FATHER YOU NEED IN ORDER TO
FULFILL YOUR TIKKUN [MISSION]**

Honor your father and mother [The fifth commandment] corresponds to: "Do not covet your neighbor's wife nor any of his possessions" [The tenth commandment] for he who thinks that someone who has a father who is important and a Torah scholar and a Tzaddik, only a father like this we need to honor, but he who has a father that is a simple man, that kind of father we don't have to

honor, about a person that thinks like this it is written “Do not covet what belongs to your neighbor”, for this person wants to fulfill the Mitzvah of honoring father and mother because of honor and fame. And everything is determined and guided by the Holy One Blessed be He and the father you have is precisely the one you should have, he will be your father and also the same goes for your mother.

Sefer Derashot Maharam Farhand, Divre Hitorerut He

KING SHLOMO REMINDS US MANY TIMES TO FULFILL THE MITZVAH TO HONOR AND FEAR OUR PARENTS

“Hear my son the instruction of your father and reject not the Torah of your mother” On the level of simple meaning King Shlomo warned us to fulfill the Mitzvah of honoring father and mother, that a son should listen to the teachings of his father and that he not make a deaf ear concerning everything that his father commands him to do, and that he put to heart and that he will reflect on how to fulfill his father’s desire all the time and never go against him, and that he should accept upon himself the yoke of his father’s ethical teachings.

Rabbenu Bachye on Pirke Avot

**IF YOU HONOR THEM YOUR LIFE
WILL BE LENGTHENED AND IF NOT
THEN YOUR LIFE WILL BE
SHORTENED, G-D FORBID**

Honor your father and your mother; that your days may be lengthened upon the land which Hashem your G-d gives you. (Shemot 20:12) Rashi explains: “So that your days be lengthened: If you honor them your days will be lengthened, if not your days will be shortened, because we can deduce from the Torah the negative from the affirmative and the affirmative from the negative.

**THE ONE WHO OFFENDS HIS FATHER
WILL HAVE A BITTER END**

He who offends his father or his mother will be hung on a tree and will be stoned. For we see that Avshalom the son of Maacha and David because he offended David, died hung on a tree, was thrown on a pit and later had a pile of stones placed on top of him Midrash Aseret ha Dibrot

**THE ONE WHO DOES NOT HONOR
HIS FATHER AND MOTHER EVIL
DECREES FALL UPON HIM**

And it is written in the Sefer ha Middot that if a person does not honor his father and his mother, evil decrees fall upon him Sefer Charedim Perek Alef 35

A TERRIBLE BLEMISH IS CREATED BY THE ONE WHO CAUSES HIS PARENTS TO SUFFER

He who causes suffering to his father or mother with words and on purpose, this blemish is great and terrible, for it blemishes the first 2 letters of the name of Hashem, and the person should think how many times he has afflicted his parents from the time he was young, or how many times he has diminished their honor, and how many thousands upon thousands evil creatures were created from this sin, and even a small action against the father or the mother, the blemish that it produces reaches the highest places, for the Holy One Blessed be He equated His honor with theirs and our Holy Rabbis Z'L have said (Kiddushin 31b) Fortunate he who did not see his Parents, because of the great blemish that the sin of afflicting them causes.

Tahorat ha Koddesh Perek Zain

WOE TO THE ONE WHO MAKES HIS PARENTS BECOME ANGRY AT HIM AND THEN THEY CURSE HIM

One should not cause his parents to become angry until the point that they may curse him, for woe to the person who makes his parents commit this grave sin, for this is a greater evil than hitting them for if the sin of leading

others to sin is great, how much more in the case where one causes his father or his mother to become angry which is a grave sin in itself, and it will cause a curse to fall upon him and evil things to his parents, G-d forbid. But a wise son makes his father happy, and he will strive to do the will of his parents immediately without any delay, and good blessings shall reach him from his father and his mother and he will carry a blessing from Hashem and He will give him the reward, that he will have proper sons that will do his will as their will

Pele Yoetz, Letter Kuf

**TO ASCEND IN HEAVEN THE
TZADDIKIM ARE JUDGED ON HOW
THEY TREATED THEIR PARENTS
EVEN WHEN THEY WERE
SEVEN YEARS OLD**

Our Rabbi The Holy Ari ZTK'L wrote that the Tzaddikim in Gan Eden when they wish to ascend to a higher level, they are judged on what they did to their father and mother when they were very young, when they were seven or eight years old.

Sefer Midbar Kedemot Maarechet Chaf

**CLOSENESS TO HASHEM GIVES
LENGTH OF LIFE FOR HE IS THE
SOURCE OF LIFE AND WHEN YOU
HONOR YOUR PARENTS YOU ALSO
CLING TO THE ONES WHO GAVE
YOU LIFE THEREBY
MERITING LONG LIFE**

Its reward is length of days, because closeness to Hashem who is the source of life, gives long life to the person, and if he honors his father and his mother for they are the emanators of his physical body, it is obvious that the soul will give honor to his Father in Heaven, The Emanator of the soul, for the soul is a portion from the Most High, and through the closeness that the soul has to the Creator, it will merit length of days as it is written “And you who cling to Hashem are all alive today”

Kli Yakar Shemot 20:12

**JOSEPH WAS GRANTED LONG LIFE
ON ACCOUNT OF HAVING HONORED
HIS FATHER WHILE HE
WAS IN EGYPT**

The hoary head is a crown of glory; it is found in the way of righteousness. (Mishle 16:31) Go out and learn from Joseph ha Tzaddik that strengthened himself and fulfilled

the Mitzvah of honoring his father in Egypt, merited the crown of old age as it is written (Bereshit 50:23) *“And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation; the children also of Machir the son of Manasseh were brought up upon Joseph's knees”*.

Midrash Shocheh Tov on Mishle 16:31

**THE POWER OF THIS MITZVAH IS
GREAT AND PEOPLE CLEARLY SEE
ITS BENEFITS IN THIS WORLD**

The power of the Mitzvah to honor father and mother is great and it is a Mitzvah as precious as gold and people can clearly see that part of the reward is given in this World through plenty and success in all endeavors or through length of days, and this is the type of reward that is given for this Mitzvah.

Kad ha Kemach le Rabbenu Bachye, Kivud av va em

**WE HAVE SEEN WITH OUR OWN
EYES THAT THE ONES WHO HONOR
THEIR PARENTS HAVE SUCCESSFUL
AND SWEET LIVES**

You can learn from the elders, and surely your father will tell you and we have also seen with our own eyes many men who honored their parents as necessary, and they

merited through this great honor, wealth, sons and length of days and years.

Rabbi Chayyim Pallagi, Tochachat Chayyim Toldot

**WE ARE ASSURED THAT WE WILL
HAVE LONG LIFE IN THIS WORLD
AND IN THE WORLD TO COME**

We are assured that through this Mitzvah Hashem will fill all our days in this world and they will be long for the World to Come which is entirely long, and we will dwell forever on the good land that he will give us”

Ramban Shemot 20:12

**THE MITZVAH TO HONOR YOUR
FATHER AND MOTHER IS A
SEGULAH FOR LONG LIFE**

Honor your father and your mother; that your days may be lengthened upon the land which Hashem your G-d gives you. (Shemot 20:12) It is written that your days may be prolonged and not that Hashem will prolong your days, maybe the intention is to say that this Mitzvah is a SEGULAH for length of days apart from the reward that will come from Hashem, for there

are Mitzvot that have great Segulot besides the reward one will receive from Hashem for its performance, and this is what Hashem revealed here.

Or ha Chayim ha Kaddosh, Yitro

**THE MAIN ASPECT OF THE MITZVAH
TO HONOR FATHER AND MOTHER
LIES IN THE HEART BECAUSE
HASHEM WANTS THE HEART**

It seems that the main aspect of the Mitzvah of honor lies in the Heart for “The Merciful One desires the Heart” regarding every Mitzvah. And more so, because Hashem equated His honor with the honor of the parents, and Hashem complained about Israel not behaving a sincere heart towards Him as it is written in Yeshayahu 29:13 “And Hashem said, Since this people draw near me, and with their mouth, and with their lips honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear of me is a commandment of men learned by rote...”

Sefer Charedim Perek 9, 36

CHAPTER 5

ETHICAL ASPECTS OF THE MITZVAH TO HONOR AND TO FEAR PARENTS II

EVEN IN THE DESERT WHERE NO CHILD RECEIVED ANYTHING FROM THEIR PARENTS THEY WERE COMMANDED TO HONOR THEIR PARENTS

The obligation to honor parents is not merely a means to express appreciation for all they do for children. Thus, we are taught to honor father and mother “as G-d commanded you.” In the desert, where Hashem miraculously provided food, clothes and shelter for the Jew, no child received any of these things from his parents, and yet nonetheless they were obligated to honor their parents. Hence, even children whose parents did not tend to their needs must honor them.

Meshech Chochmah and Ksav Sofer (Va'eschanan)

ONE SHOULD NOT HONOR THEIR PARENTS THINKING ABOUT THE REWARD

One should not honor his parents merely because they are wealthy and will leave him an inheritance when they die.

Just as one should not serve G-d merely for the reward, so one should not honor his parents in order to gain personal benefit. One should honor his parents out of love and a feeling of personal obligation, and any inheritance will come of itself. If nothing remains, it should make no difference.

Sefer Yalkut Meam Loez, Yitro

**EVEN THOUGH IT IS LOGICAL TO
HONOR OUR PARENTS WE MUST DO
IT BECAUSE HASHEM COMMANDED
US TO DO SO**

It is known that the Mitzvah of honoring father and mother is a logical one, nevertheless a person needs to fulfill the Mitzvah only because the Holy One Blessed be He commanded him to do so, and not because logic dictates that we should do it, for if one honors his parents only because it is logical to do so one will not receive any reward for the Mitzvah.

Midrash Talpiot Alef, Kivud av va em

Also a person should think when performing the Mitzvah of honoring his parents that it will be a help for his study of Torah and for his Tefillot and for all Mitzvot and acts of kindness

Derech Pikudecha, Mitzvat Ase 33

THE HONOR HAS TO BE FROM THE HEART AND NOT ONLY THROUGH FALSE FLATTERY

One should honor them Leshem Shamaim (With no ulterior motives), for if he honors them only with the mouth and not with the heart then to that person applies what is written (Yeshayahu 29: 13-14) “13 And Hashem said, Since this people draw near me, and with their mouth, and with their lips honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear of me is a commandment of men learned by rote; 14 Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, marvelous and wonderful; and the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hidden.

Yeshuot Yaakov on Tanna deve eliyahu Rabba 26

THE ONE WHO FEARS HIS PARENTS MERITS TO OBSERVE THE SHABBAT

You shall fear every man his mother and his father, and keep My Shabbats; I am Hashem your G-d. (Vayikra 19:3)

The honor due to parents was equated to the honor of the Shabbat and whoever fears his parents, merits to observe the Shabbat.

Zohar ha Kaddosh III, 81b

WE NEED TO HONOR OUR PARENTS AND FEAR FROM THEM IN JUST THE SAME WAY THAT WE HONOR HASHEM AND FEAR FROM HIM

“Honor your father and your mother...” Honor them with all kinds of honor, make them happy with good actions, as it is written: (Mishle 23:24) “The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice”...Just as a man honors the Holy One Blessed be He, in just the same way he needs to honor his father and mother, for they have a partnership with the Holy One Blessed be He, and just as it is necessary to fear the Holy One Blessed be He, in just the same way it is necessary to fear his father and his mother and to honor them with all kinds of honor.

Zohar ha Kaddosh Yitro 92b-93a

ALL HASHEM ASKS IS FOR US TO HONOR OUR PARENTS

The whole world belongs to the Holy One Blessed be He, and The Holy One Blessed be He only asks from a person to honor his father and his mother and to fear them, which is as if the person was honoring and fearing the Holy One Blessed be He. This is so because the Holy One Blessed be He equated His Honor to the honor of a father

and a mother, and He equated His fear with the fear of a father and a mother.

Tanna debe Eliyahu Rabba Perek 27

WE HAVE TO DO THESE MITZVOT BECAUSE IT IS THE WILL OF HASHEM

Honor your father and your mother; that your days may be lengthened upon the land which Hashem your G-d gives you. (Shemot 20:12)

You shall fear every man his mother and his father, and keep My Shabbats; I am Hashem your G-d. (Vayikra 19:3)

In the first verse the father is mentioned first because our tendency is to honor our mother more than our father. In the second verse the mother is mentioned first because our tendency is to fear our father more than our mother.

From this fact we can see that we should do these Mitzvot LE SHEM SHAMAIM, and not because of some benefit or because of enjoyment. For Hashem commands us to do it in a way that is contrary to our nature, which shows that we have to do it because it is the will of Hashem.

Based on Mea Shearim, Chapter 58

TO VIOLATE A COMMANDMENT BECAUSE HIS PARENTS TELL HIM TO DO SO IS NOT HONORING THEM BUT IT IS THE CONTRARY

If one's parent tells him to violate any commandment of the Torah, he may not obey him. This is true whether it involves a positive commandment, such as making a Sukkah or taking the Lulav, or a negative commandment, such as lighting a lamp on the Shabbat or wearing shaatnez. Even a young child should not listen to his parents under such circumstances.

It is thus written, "Each person shall fear his mother and his father, and they shall keep My Sabbaths, I am G-d" (Vayikra 19:3). G-d is saying, "You all must honor Me." Therefore, in such a case, one may not obey his parents.

Furthermore, to violate a commandment is not honor to a parent. It is dishonor, since the parent will be punished for it in the next world. If a child violates the Torah because his parent told him to, the parent is obviously responsible for the violation.

If one sees his parent violating Torah law, he should not openly correct him. Rather, he should hint at it, so that they alone will know that they have done wrong. His entire motive should be to prevent them from sinning, and not to humiliate them.

Sefer Yalkut Meam Loez, Yitro

MAKING YOUR PARENTS HAPPY IS THE MAIN ASPECT OF THE COMMANDMENT

The main point of this commandment is that a person should make his parents rejoice because of the good deeds that he does and the reverence that he displays. This is true honor. If a child is good, people bless his parents, "May they be blessed for having such a child." But if a person is bad, people curse his parents, "Cursed are his parents for raising such a child." Through his bad deeds he causes his parents to be dishonored and cursed.

It is therefore written, "Rejoice, the father of the righteous will rejoice" (Proverbs 23:24) When a person is righteous, his parents rejoice doubly; besides their benefits in the Future World, they also rejoice in this world when people bless them and speak well of them.

Sefer Yalkut Meam Loez, Yitro

WHEN YOU RESPECT YOUR PARENTS YOU ARE RESPECTING THE HOLY ONE BLESSED BE HE

One must have so much respect for a parent that even if one is wearing his holiday clothes and sitting in synagogue, and his parent comes and strikes him on the head, tears his clothes, and spits in his face, it is forbidden for him to display temper or to shout at the parent.

He must sit quietly and show respect to G-d who commanded such respect. He should contemplate that if a

king ordered him to do something that involved even greater mortification, he would do it without question. How much more so must he keep orders given to him by G-d Himself.

Sefer Yalkut Meam Loez, Yitro

WHEN RABBI JOSEPH HEARD HIS MOTHER'S FOOTSTEPS HE SAID: I HAVE TO STAND UP FOR THE SHECHINAH IS COMING

When R. Joseph heard his mother's footsteps he used to say, 'I have to stand up; the Shechinah is approaching.' R. Yochanan said: Happy is the person who never saw his parents, [for it is impossible to give them all the respect that they deserve]. (R. Yochanan's statement can be explained by the fact that) R. Yochanan's father died when his mother was pregnant with him, and his mother died when he was born. The same happened to Abbaye.

(KIDDUSHIN 31)

IF YOU TREAT YOUR PARENTS WITH HONOR MEASURE FOR MEASURE YOU WILL BE TREATED WITH HONOR BY YOUR SONS

Often, when a person becomes very old, he becomes a burden for his family. They must work hard to care for

him, and he is constantly demanding things, just like a small child.

G-d therefore warned us not to get tired of our parents. They should not be a burden to us, where we say, “When will we be rid of them?”

One must realize that if he lives to be old, his children will also be troubled by him. They will hope that he will die so that they will be rid of him, just as he hoped to be rid of his parents. In this world, everything is meted out measure for measure. A person will therefore be treated by his own children in exactly the same manner that he treats his parents. G-d therefore said, “If you reject your parents, your life will also be shortened. And even if you live long, your children will grow tired of you. They will look upon you as a pest in the house, and will hope to be rid of you as soon as possible.”

Yalkut Meam Loez Yitro

THE LAND OF CANAAN WAS TAKEN AWAY FROM HIM FOR HE DID NOT SHOW RESPECT FOR HIS FATHER AND WAS PUNISHED FOR THIS

The Torah stresses that the reward for honoring parents is that “you will live long on the land that G-d your Lord is giving you.” It is known that the Land of Israel originally belonged to Canaan. It was taken away because he did not show proper respect to his father, thus being

cursed to be a “slave of slaves” (Bereshit 9:25). Egypt (Mitzraim) was the brother of Canaan (Bereshit 10:6), and the Israelites were slaves to the Egyptians. When the land of Canaan was given to the Israelites, it was in fulfillment of the curse that Canaan would be a “slave of slaves.” We thus see that Canaan lost the land because he failed to honor his father. G-d therefore said, “Honor your father and mother so that you might live long on the land that G-d your Lord is giving you”—as a gift. But if you do not honor your parents, you will lose the land just as Canaan did.

Yalkut Meam Loez Yitro

3 PARTNERS IN THE CREATION OF A HUMAN BEING: HASHEM, THE FATHER AND THE MOTHER

There are three partners in the conception of a human being: his father, his mother, and G-d.

From the father's portion, five things are formed: (1) bone, (2) nerve tissue, (3) the brain, (4) the fingernails, and (5) the white of the eye. From the mother's portion another five things are formed: (1) skin, (2) flesh, (3) blood, (4) hair, and (5) the dark part of the eye. G-d then gives the person an additional ten things: (1) spirit, (2) a soul, (3) facial radiance, (4) eyesight, (5) hearing, (6) speech, (7) walking ability, (8) knowledge, (9) understanding, and (10) intellect...When a person dies, G-d dissolves the partnership. He takes the ten things that

are His portion, and leaves behind the body, which is the portion of the father and mother. Without G-d's portion, it is nothing but a piece of meat, and we see that in a short time, it begins to decay and become maggoty...

Yalkut Meam Loez, Yitro

HASHEM ALSO REJOICES WHEN CHILDREN HONOR THEIR PARENTS

When a person honors his parents, G-d says, "I will count it as if I dwelt among you and you honored Me." G-d takes pleasure when children honor their parents, and likewise, when parents teach their children to respect them until they are well trained. But when a child vexes his parents, G-d says, "It is good that I do not dwell among you. If I dwelt among you, you would torment Me as well." The parents are also to blame, since they spoiled the child and allowed him to develop bad ways. If they had trained him from early childhood, he would not do such things.

HASHEM IS MORE PARTICULAR ABOUT THE RESPECT CHILDREN HAVE FOR THEIR PARENTS THAN FOR HIM

...We thus see that G-d is more particular about the respect that people have for their parents than He is about the respect they have for Him. With regard to respect for

G-d, it is written, “Honor G-d with your wealth, he is exempt. In the case of parents, however, it is written, “Honor your father and your mother,” with no mention of wealth. Whether one has wealth or not, he must honor his parents. If one is poor he must beg from door to door if necessary in order to support them.

Yalkut Meam Loez, Yitro

HASHEM KNOWS PRECISELY THE TENDENCIES OF SONS AND DAUGHTERS AND HE WORDED HIS COMMANDMENTS ACCORDINGLY

There are actually two commandments defining a person's obligations toward his parents. First one must honor his parents, in accordance with the commandment here, “Honor your father and your mother.” Second, one must have respect and a degree of fear for his parents, as it is written, “Each man shall fear his mother and his father” (Vayikra 19:3).

One may wonder why the Torah places one's mother first in this last verse. Why does it not say, “Each man shall fear his father and mother”? After all, here in the commandment, the father is placed first: “Honor your father and your mother.”

But G-d knows that the average person will give more honor to his mother than to his father. The mother spoils him and speaks to him gently, while the father corrects

him, and if necessary, punishes him. Therefore, when the Torah speaks of honor, it places the father first.

One must be especially careful to honor a father. Even if a father corrects a person, this should not diminish the honor due to him. In the case of the mother, even if there were no commandment, one would honor her, because of all the obvious good she does.

With respect to fear, the opposite is true. It is natural for a person to fear his father more than his mother. Therefore, the Torah places the mother first in the commandment concerning fear: "Every man shall fear his mother and father." The Torah is telling us that we must fear our mothers as much as our fathers.

We therefore see that the Torah places a father and a mother on an equal footing with regard to both fear and honor. One must be very careful in this respect, since the Torah makes our allegiance to them equal to our allegiance to G-d Himself...

Yalkut Meam Loez, Yitro

THE ROOT CAUSE OF THE MITZVAH IS TO RETURN THE GOOD WE HAVE RECEIVED FROM OUR PARENTS

...At the root of this mitzvah lies the thought that it is fitting for a man to acknowledge and treat with loving-kindness the person who treated him with goodness, and he should not be a scoundrel, an ingrate who turns a cold shoulder [to him]-for this is an evil quality, utterly vile before G-d and mankind. It is for a person to realize that

his father and mother are the cause of his being in the world; hence in very truth it is proper for him to give them every honor and every benefit that he can, since they brought him into the world and then, too, labored through many troubles over him in his early years.

When he sets this quality firmly in his character, a person will rise from this to recognize the goodness of G-d, blessed is He, who is the primary Cause of his existence and the existence of all his forebears, back to Adam, the first man. And [he will realize] that He brought him forth into the light of day, provided for his needs all his days [on earth], brought him to his proper estate with all his limbs whole, and gave him a cognitive and intelligent spirit-and if not for this spirit with which G-d endowed him, he would be like a horse, like a mule, without understanding (Psalms 32: 9). Then let him reckon in his mind how very, very right it is for him to take care about serving and worshipping Him, be He blessed...

Sefer HaChinuch (mitzvah 48)

**THE KINGS OF THE NATIONS WERE
IMPRESSED AND RECOGNIZED
HASHEM'S GREATNESS ONLY AFTER
THEY HEARD THE COMMANDMENT
TO HONOR FATHER AND MOTHER**

1 And G-d spoke all these words, saying, 2 I am Hashem your G-d, who has brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. 3 You

shall have no other gods before me. 4 You shall not make for you any engraved image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; 5 You shall not bow down yourself to them, nor serve them; for I Hashem your G-d am a jealous G-d, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; 6 And showing mercy to thousands of those who love me, and keep my commandments. 7 You shall not take the name of Hashem your G-d in vain; for Hashem will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain. 8 Remember the Shabbat day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days shall you labor, and do all your work; 10 But the seventh day is the Shabbat of Hashem your G-d; in it you shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger that is within your gates; 11 For in six days Hashem made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day; therefore Hashem blessed the Shabbat day, and made it holy. 12 Honor your father and your mother; that your days may be lengthened upon the land which Hashem your G-d gives you. (Shemot 20: 1-12)

When the kings of the nations heard Hashem's First Commandment, they were not impressed. They argued, "Which ruler wishes to be denied? Hashem, like any other king, commands that He be acknowledged." When they heard about the Second Commandment, they similarly remarked, "Is there any ruler who will tolerate another authority? Hashem, like all kings, wants to be worshipped alone. That is why He decreed that no one should serve other gods!" Neither were they moved by the Third Commandment, commenting: "Which king would want his subjects to swear falsely in his name? Neither does Hashem want it" About Shabbat they said, "Of course, all kings like their special day to be celebrated!"

But when they heard about the Mitzvah of honoring parents, all the kings arose from their thrones and praised Hashem, admitting, "If someone in our circles is elevated to noble rank, he immediately denies his parents. Hashem acts differently. He commanded that everyone honor his parents!

Bamidbar Rabba 8:4

PARENTS FEEL GREAT PAIN WHEN THEY SEE THE SONS FIGHT AMONG THEM AND DON'T GET ALONG

The way of a father is to do whatever he can for his son, he will not rest nor sleep, for one father can handle ten

sons, and ten sons can hardly sustain one father as it is written in the Midrash rabba regarding Yaakov Avinu, Peace be upon him. And when a father sees that his sons do not get along among them, he feels great pain and suffers much , therefore if the son is wise, he is obligated to see to it that he does not afflict his father and he will forgo on what is rightly his so that his father will not suffer, and he is also obligated to make sure that his brothers don't argue among themselves.

Maane Rach Perek 16

DO NOT THINK YOU KNOW MORE THAN YOUR PARENTS BECAUSE WISDOM COMES WITH AGE

You should be careful regarding the honor due to your father and mother and do not deviate from anything they command you right or left, even if they tell you that right is left, because this is an evil thing that is found among sons, that consider themselves to be wiser and more intelligent than their father and mother, and if only they would be wise enough, they would see that the Torah already declared that with age comes wisdom, and it is also written that the fool considers his path to be right and the Tanna has said “Do not rely on your own understanding” and even if what these sons say that their fathers lack understanding is the case, G-d forbid, a

decree from the Almighty stands in front of the sons commanding them to listen to their parents' words and not to anger them, even if in the son's eyes the parents are not doing what's right, it is nevertheless a statute from the Torah for it is written: "To what extent should one honor his parents? Even in a situation where his parents grab his wallet and throw it to the sea in his presence, he should not embarrass them, shout, or vent anger at them (Kiddushin 30)". Pele Yoetz, Kaf

IF YOU HONOR YOUR PARENTS YOUR CHILDREN WILL DO THE SAME TO YOU

The intention of the Mitzvah when it says so that your days be prolonged..., is as if it were saying: "I am warning you regarding the honor of your father and your mother because when your days are lengthened and you will have sons of your own, if you honor your father and your mother, then your sons will also honor you when you are old, because it is known that in the same way that a person behaves in that same way others behave toward him, therefore honoring parents is not only for the benefit of the elder parents being honored but also for the benefit of the son who honors them for there is a wheel that turns in the world.

Don Yitzchak Avarvanel Parashat Yitro

**YOUR CHILDREN WILL LEARN TO
HONOR YOU JUST THE SAME WAY
THAT YOU HONORED
YOUR PARENTS**

The intention of honoring parents is that the sons will learn from him and will also honor and will do the same throughout the generations, and when we are old they will also honor us, for the tendency is to denigrate the elderly, when they can no longer do the things they were able to do before and they sit without nothing to do and they are of no use, therefore we are commanded to honor them, and the writing is telling us that just as we will honor our father and our mother when they are old, just in the same way when our days are prolonged, our sons will honor us in our old age and it will be good for us.

Melech Machshevet, Vaetchanan

**THE ORDER OF THE TEN
COMMANDMENTS: THE ONE WHO
DOES NOT HONOR HIS PARENTS
VIOLATES OTHER
COMMANDMENTS AS WELL**

It's written: "Honor your father and your mother" and immediately before it is written: "Remember the Shabbat to sanctify it" (20:8). This teaches that if a person honors his parents, he will not come to violate the Shabbat.

[There are times when a person inadvertently violates the Shabbat; the reward of honoring one's parents is that this will not happen].

It's written: "Honor your father and your mother" and then it is written: "Do not kill" to teach you that if a person has food in his house and does not honor and provide for his father and his mother even when he is young and how much more when he is old, he is considered before the Holy One Blessed be He as if he is a killer all his days

It's written: "Honor your father and your mother" and then it is written: "Do not commit adultery" to teach you that if a person has food in his house and does not honor and provide for his father and his mother he is considered before the Holy One Blessed be He as if he is an adulterer all his days

It's written: "Honor your father and your mother" and then it is written: "Do not steal" to teach you that if a person has food in his house and does not honor and provide for his father and his mother he is considered before the Holy One Blessed be He as if he steals all his days

It's written: "Honor your father and your mother" and then it is written: "Do not give false testimony" to teach you that if a person has food in his house and does not honor and provide for his father and his mother he is

considered before the Holy One Blessed be He as if he is giving false testimony all his days.

It's written: "Honor your father and your mother" and then it is written: "Do not covet your neighbor's house" to teach you that if a person has food in his house and does not honor and provide for his father and his mother he is considered before the Holy One Blessed be He as if he covets the money of others all his days

Tanna debe Eliyahu Rabba Perek 26

Remember the Shabbat to sanctify it: Honor your father and your mother What is the relationship between this and that one? Why are they next to each other? In order to teach you that as long as the person honors his father and his mother, no sin of desecration of Shabbat, nor any other sin comes to him. And if the person sins, he is immediately forgiven"

Tanna debe Eliyahu Rabba Perek 26

If the son follows the right path and his actions are proper, then for sure he honors his father. He honors him in this World in the eyes of the people of his city and he also honors him in the World to Come in the eyes of the Holy One Blessed be He, for the Holy One Blessed be He has compassion on him. Zohar ha Kaddosh, Pekkude

CHAPTER 6

OTHER LEGAL ASPECTS REGARDING THE DUTY TO HONOR AND FEAR OUR PARENTS

NO BLESSING IS RECITED OVER THIS MITZVAH FOR IT DEPENDS ON OTHER PEOPLE FOR ITS FULFILLMENT

Normally, before an observance, a blessing is recited. One may ask, since honor to a parent is so important, why is no blessing recited over it? The reason is very similar to the reason that no blessing is recited over visiting the sick. No blessing is recited over a precept which is dependent upon a second person. Since a parent can refuse honor, no blessing can be recited. Furthermore, a blessing is recited only over such observances that are only done by Jews. Since gentiles also honor their parents, it is not a precept that requires a blessing.

Sefer Yalkut Meam Loez, Yitro

THIS MITZVAH OBLIGATES US TO SERVE OUR PARENTS LIKE A SLAVE

The commandment to “honor” a parent obligates a person to serve his parent like a slave. He must give him water to wash his hands, set the table, serve him food and drink, and dress him. He must go on any errand the parent sends him. All this must be done gladly, with a

cheerful expression. If one gives his parent the finest roast squab to eat, but does so with a sour expression, he will be punished.

Sefer Yalkut Meam Loez, Yitro

YOU HAVE TO MAKE IT OBVIOUS THAT YOU ARE STANDING UP TO HONOR YOUR PARENTS

One should stand up when his father enters. If the father comes into the house and the son is about to leave, he should sit down after standing up for his father, and then he should get up and leave. This makes it obvious that when he stood up the first time, he did so out of respect for his father. If one is standing and sees his father coming, he should sit down in order to be able to stand up especially for his father.

Sefer Yalkut Meam Loez, Yitro

THE SON MUST STRIVE TO HONOR HIS PARENTS DIRECTLY AND NOT THROUGH MESSENGERS

R. Abbahu said: For example, my son Avimi is fulfilling the mitzvah of honoring father and mother. [How did Avimi fulfill the mitzvah in a superior way?] Avimi had five sons, each of whom received ordination while R. Avimi's father [R. Abbahu] was still alive. Yet when R. Abbahu came to see Avimi in his home, Avimi himself got

up to open the door. He would call out, “Yes! Yes! I’m coming to open the door,” until he got to the door. One day his father asked for a drink of water. By the time Avimi brought it, his father had fallen asleep. So he stood there, bent over, waiting until his father would wake up. During the time [that he stood bent over, ready to serve his father] he received Heavenly help and succeeded in expounding the psalm, “A song of Asaph, 0 G-d! The nations have entered into Your inheritance’ (Psalms 79), [which he did not understand before]. R. Abbahu asked Abbaye: Take me, for example. Before I return from the Yeshivah, my father prepares a cup and my mother mixes the wine; what should I do? Abbaye told him: From your mother you should accept it, but not from your father; for since he is a Torah scholar he will feel hurt [if you accept something from him]. R. Tarfon had an elderly mother; and whenever she wanted to go to bed he would bend down, and she would climb into bed by stepping on him, and whenever she wanted to climb out of bed, she stepped on him. He went into the Bet Midrash and praised [the fact that he was able to fulfill the mitzvah of honoring his mother in such a manner]. They said to him: You did not even reach half of what the mitzvah of honoring parents requires of you. Did she ever throw a purse into the sea in front of you, and you did not embarrass her?

(KIDDUSHIN 31)

WE HAVE TO PROCURE THE BLESSING OF OUR PARENTS

It is written in the holy Seforim that a person needs to make all the effort necessary in order to make sure that he will receive blessings from his father and his mother, even every day of the year and how much more on the eve of Yom Kippur.

Mate Ephraim Siman 619

THE SONS SHOULD KISS THEIR PARENTS' HAND EVERY SHABBAT

Included in the honor they should be given is that a son should kiss their hand every Shabbat and every holiday as is the custom, and the son should desire the father and mother's blessing, for not only will it produce fruits, but it is also a way of honoring them, and it will protect them.

Chesed La alafim, Hilchot Kivud av vaem Letter 17

FASTING TO ATONE FOR TRANSGRESSING THE MITZVAH OF HONORING PARENTS

The one who transgresses the Mitzvah of honoring father and mother should fast twenty six times, and every day he shall be flogged 26 times.

Shaar Ruach ha Koddesh Tikkun 8

He who sinned regarding honoring his father and mother will fast 45 times which is the Gematria of AV VA EM (With the Kollel)

Shaar Ruach ha Koddesh Tikkun 9

Even though it is enough with one Tikkun for many times that he has transgressed the Mitzvah, nevertheless he needs to do the Tikkun for his father and another Tikkun for his mother, and it is not enough one Tikkun for both of them for they are separate persons, and if he is weak he should replace the fast with Tzeddaka day for day, and he will say words of supplication as he replaces the fast with Tzeddaka.

Ben Ish Chai II, Shoftim 22

**THE SON NEEDS TO DO WHAT HIS
PARENTS ASK HIM TO DO
IMMEDIATELY WITHOUT
ANY DELAY**

To honor a father and a mother is that the father will command something to the son and he will do immediately what his father told him to do without any delay.

Zohar ha kaddosh keddoshim

YOU SHOULD REFRAIN FROM ASKING YOUR PARENTS TO DO THINGS FOR YOU

One should try and refrain from asking parents to do things on one's behalf. A child may not make the parent his agent to act on his behalf, even for a mitzvah. Thus, the child may not ask his father to make a deposit for him at the bank or to search his home for chametz before Pesach

Yaalzu Chassidim on Sefer Chasidim 152

YOU CAN ASK A FAVOR FROM YOUR PARENTS IF IT WILL MAKE THEM HAPPY

A child may ask his parent for a favor if he is sure the request will make the parent happy. For example, if he is planning to go out at night, he may ask his parent to accompany him to alleviate the parent's concern.

Sefer Chassidim 562

IF YOU ASK A FAVOR FROM YOUR PARENTS IT SHOULD BE DONE IN A RESPECTFUL MANNER

When a child asks a favor of a parent, he should phrase the request in a respectful manner. He must not give the impression that he views his parent as someone obligated to serve him. It is preferable to say, "Mother, my pants are dirty. Are you doing laundry today? Should I put

them in the hamper?” rather than simply asking, “Could you wash my pants?”

R Ben Zion Ava Shaul quoted in **Mora Horim ve Kivudam**

THE SON NEEDS TO LOVE HIS PARENTS MORE THAN HIS OWN BODY AND SOUL

A man who is involved with the needs of his father and his mother, loves them more than he loves his own body and his soul, and everything that he has he will consider in his eyes as nothing, so that he can fulfill the will of his father and his mother.

Zohar ha Kaddosh Ki Tetze

IF THE SON BEHAVES WELL HE SURELY HONORS HIS PARENTS

If the son follows the right path and his actions are proper, then for sure he honors his father. He honors him in this World in the eyes of the people of his city and he also honors him in the World to Come in the eyes of the Holy One Blessed be He, for the Holy One Blessed be He has compassion on him.

Zohar ha Kaddosh, Pekkude

**EVERYONE IS OBLIGATED TO ASK
FOR FORGIVENESS FROM HIS
PARENTS ON THE EVE
OF YOM KIPPUR**

Every person should kiss the hand of his father and his mother on the eve of Yom Kippur before he goes to synagogue, and he will ask from them forgiveness. And this is a great obligation incumbent upon every man. And he who doesn't do this is called a sinner and one who denigrates the honor of his father and mother, for if regarding one man to the other our Sages commanded to ask for forgiveness before Yom Kippur then how much more so regarding his father and his mother, for everyone stumbles daily upon this sin.

Ben Ish Chai Vayelech, Saif Vav

**DON'T MAKE YOUR PARENTS DO
FAVORS TO YOU MORE THAN WHAT
THEY WANT TO DO FOR YOU**

In the Sefer Mea Shearim it is explained that the way of the world is for parents to do favors for their sons, and they do this with great pleasure, it is nevertheless forbidden for the son to burden them with more than what the parents are willing to do happily, for there is no permission to do this according to law.

THE ONE WHO HONORS HIS PARENTS AFTER THEY HAVE DIED DOES IT FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE

The son who honors his parents after they are dead is as if he honored them while alive, for the one who honors them while alive does it out of fear or out of inheritance but the one who honors them after they have died, does it only for heaven's sake.

Massechet Semachot Perek Tet

WE HONOR OUR PARENTS WHEN WE NAME OUR SONS AFTER THEM

The custom to name the sons and daughters after the names of their grandparents is a way of honoring the parents, and in the case of the Sepharadim who do this even when the grandparents are alive, there is the additional happiness and pleasure that the parents derive when they see their sons and daughters giving them honor through naming their sons and daughters after them.

THE SON SHOULD FEAR FROM HIS PARENTS AS MUCH AS HE WOULD FEAR THE AUTHORITIES WHO CAN PUNISH HIM OR LOCK HIM UP IN JAIL FOR HIS MISDEEDS

The Mitzvah to fear his Parents consists in that he should fear from them as he would from someone who can

punish him, like a King, and he will behave with them as he would behave when he is in front of someone he fears, and that would punish him for his bad behavior.

The Rambam Sefer ha Mitzvot Mitzvah 211

**JUST AS YOU WOULD BEAR AN
INSULT FROM THE KING IF HE WERE
TO SPIT ON YOU OR BREAK YOUR
CLOTHES JUST THE SAME YOU
SHOULD FEAR YOUR PARENTS AND
BEAR EVERYTHING THEY DO AND
DO THIS FOR HASHEM'S GLORY**

Because of Hashem's commandment, his father and his mother should be for him as a king and a queen, and he will greatly fear and tremble from transgressing their will, and everything that they will command together or separately, will be in his eyes as the decree of the King from which he should not deviate right or left. In general he should behave towards him as he would behave in front of kings of flesh and blood, from which he greatly fears lest he cuts his head off, that even if they break his clothing and spit on his face and hit him, he would bear the insult and remain silent from the fear of Hashem and from His great Glory, for He equated the fear of him with the fear of his parents.

Sefer Charedim Perek 9: 26

THE MAIN THING IS TO HONOR HIS PARENTS THROUGH NICE WORDS

One must honor his parents with words a great deal, and not only that but if he honored them much with all kinds of things and then he talked to them with disrespectful words, all his merit is lost through his talking bad to them. And he who honors his parents with words to a great extent and nevertheless does not honor them through actions because he is not able to, even if he makes them work but talks to them with great honor and respect, his reward is double [For he spoke gently to them]

Hameiri on Kiddushin 31A

A CHILD WHO CURSED HIS PARENT HAS TO REPENT

A child who cursed his parents while still a minor must repent upon achieving majority in order that he be pardoned by G-d.

Ben Ish Chai, II Shoftim 23, based on Sefer Chassidim and The Arizal

A SON SHOULD TALK TO HIS PARENTS WITH CALM WORDS IN A SOFT VOICE AND WITH GREAT RESPECT

Honor your father and your mother; One is obliged to honor them with words; that he will talk to them calmly,

with soft words and with words of honor and respect just as he would do if he were talking to a king, and this is the plain meaning of the commandment.

Sefer Charedim, Perek Dalet

ONE SHOULD NOT PUT ASIDE THE COMMANDMENT OF HONORING PARENTS IN ORDER TO KEEP OTHER COMMANDMENTS

A person should not think that he should put aside honoring his parents to keep other commandments. If a person wishes to be worthy of long life, property, wealth, and honor, both in this world and in the next, he must do both. G-d wants him to do any commandment that comes to him and also to honor his parents.

Sefer Yalkut Meam Loez, Yitro

PARENTS TAKE PRECEDENCE OVER ALL OTHERS REGARDING TZEDDAKA

If one's parents are poor, not only is one permitted to give them Tzeddakah money, but they take precedence over others.” However, if one is able to support his parents without the use of maaser money it is preferable to do so. Even though one should not give all of his maaser money to one person but rather divide it among many poor

people, this does not apply to one's parents. He may give them all of his Tzedakah money if they need it.

Sefer Yalkut Meam Loez, Yitro

Rama Yore Deah Siman 240, Chatam Sopher Yore deah Siman 229, Maharsham Yore Deah Siman 251

PARENTS COME FIRST

If a person has provisions in his house and he desires to do Tzeddaka with them so that others will be sustained through them, How will he proceed? First he will give to his father and his mother and if there is anything left, he will provide for his brothers and sisters, and if he still has provisions left, he shall give to the members of his family, and if there's something left he will provide the people in his neighborhood and after he will provide for the people of his city, from that point and on he will increase Tzeddaka with the rest of the sons of Israel...

Tanna deve Eliyahu Rabba 27:1

THE FATHER AND THE MOTHER HAVE TO DEFEND THE HONOR OF THE OTHER PARENT

When the mother hears that the son offends his father, she has to correct him and when the father hears that the son offends his mother the father should correct him, so that the son gets used to honor his father and his mother thereby lengthening his days.

Kaf ha Chayyim Orach Chayyim Siman 343, Letter 25

HONOR FOR PARENTS MUST BE EXPRESSED IN THOUGHT SPEECH AND ACTION

Honor of parents must be expressed in thought, speech and deed. True honor requires having respect for the person. Speaking with honor while in reality bearing scorn is false honor. Respect for his parents must be genuine. He must view them as great and special people - even if others consider them ordinary. This is the most proper form of honor that which he would show a sovereign with the power to punish those who treat him disrespectfully

Chayei Adam 67:3.

ONE HAS TO LOOK FOR SPECIAL QUALITIES HIS PARENTS MAY POSSESS

“I have an oral tradition that one does not properly fulfill the mitzvah of honoring his father unless he develops an inordinate respect and even worship of his father. One must discover in his father positive qualities in areas where his father shines and in which he might be considered one of the generation's greatest men. If one does not revere and value his father in his heart and soul, he has not fulfilled the mitzvah even if he feeds the father, gives him to drink, and displays other signs of respect.”

R' Chaim Shmulevitz (Sichos Mussar 5731:22)

REPENTANCE FOR YOUR SINS TO YOUR PARENTS MUST INCLUDE ASKING THEM FOR FORGIVENESS

One who was remiss in honoring parents must repent of his sin. As in all areas of interpersonal behavior, repentance only helps if one asks for forgiveness from the aggrieved party (In this case the parents).

Minchat Chinuch 33

A MITZVAH THAT HAS TO BE DONE IMMEDIATELY TAKES PRECEDENCE OVER HONORING YOUR PARENTS

A mitzvah that must be done immediately, such as burying a person, attending a funeral or a time-limited mitzvah (i.e. shofar before sunset), takes precedence to fulfilling a parental request.. If the other mitzvah can be done later or can be done presently by someone else, the child should attend to his parents' request first.

Yore Deah 240:12 11

YOU ARE EVEN ALLOWED TO TALK ABOUT TRIVIAL THINGS IN ORDER TO GIVE HONOR TO YOUR MOTHER

Although the Sages discouraged frivolous conversation between men and women in public, regardless of relation, one must engage in small talk in public with his mother if she wishes or if it will make her happy

Ben Yehoyada Berachot 43

IT IS BETTER FOR CHILDREN TO LIVE NEAR THEIR PARENTS

It is preferable for children to live near their parents. This facilitates tending to parental needs and increases the opportunities to fulfill the mitzvah of honoring them. A child must obtain his parents' explicitly granted permission in order to move out of their proximity. [Otherwise you will lose many opportunities to do the Mitzvah]

Aruch ha Shulchan 240:36

UNDER SOME CIRCUMSTANCES THE CHILD IS JUSTIFIED IN LEAVING THE PLACE WHERE HIS PARENTS LIVE

A child is justified in moving out of the place where his parents live if: a) He cannot provide a living for himself and his family while residing near his parents. b) Health considerations dictate he do so. He may, therefore, move to a place where the climate is better or where better medical care is available for any member of his family. c) The educational needs of his children will be better met in a different locale, or d) he moves to where he will find an atmosphere more conducive to Torah study. Better teachers, study partners or a less disruptive atmosphere are factors which will permit him to move away from his parents.

Although these circumstances allow him to move away from his parents without their permission, he must still

return periodically to his parents' locale to tend to their needs. If he cannot return, he must arrange for a sibling or hire someone else to assume his responsibility of taking care of the parents' needs.

Yore Deah 240:25, Aruch ha Shulchan 240:36

WHEN THE FATHER WILL BE UPSET IF HE IS NOT AWAKEN, THE CHILD IS JUSTIFIED IN WAKING HIM UP

A child may not awaken his parents even though, by doing so, the child will forfeit the opportunity to make a sizable profit. If allowing the parent to continue to sleep will result in the child suffering a loss, the child may wake the parent. However, if the parent stands to benefit from being awakened, and will thus be upset if he is allowed to continue sleeping, the child should awaken him. If it would give the parent great pleasure to see the child make a profit, the child is permitted to wake the parent.

Yore Deah 240:8, Aruch Hashulchan 240:40

If a parent receives a telephone call while resting, the child should inform the caller that the parent is unavailable to come to the phone. If the child suspects that the call is urgent and that the parent will be upset if not awakened, he may wake him. It is always preferable to have someone other than the child wake the parent, even when the child is permitted to do so himself.

R Ben Zion Ava Shaul quoted in Mora Horim ve Kivudam, Aruch Hashulchan 240:40

**PARENTS WHO ARE CONTENTIOUS
OR BAD MANNERED SHOULD ALSO
BE HONORED AND FEARED BECAUSE
HASHEM COMMANDS US TO DO SO**

Even parents who make excessive demands on their children must be honored. Parents may be contentious and bothersome particularly as they age. Sometimes they fight with children, curse them, or are generally difficult to deal with. In spite of their behavior, parents must be honored, even if public opinion considers the children as entitled to ignore the honor of parents on account of their uncivilized and irksome behavior. The main commandment of the Torah to honor parents is regarding this type of parents. Parents who are caring and treat their children well should obviously be honored for everything they do for their children, including the basic fact that they brought the children into this world. No commandment is necessary under such circumstances, since elementary gratitude would obligate the children in this case. The Torah thus comes to teach that even “undeserving” parents should be honored.

Tochachat Chaim, Parashas Toldot.

**IT IS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE TO
TRY AND MAKE OUR PARENTS
HAPPY ESPECIALLY WHEN
WE VISIT THEM**

It is great happiness for a father or a mother to see their sons, especially if some time has passed since they last saw them, therefore it is proper for sons that when they go to

visit their parents that they should have enjoyment from their visiting them and to fulfill their desires.

Eved ha Melech Shemot 20, 12

A SON NEEDS TO HONOR HIS PARENTS WITHOUT THINKING OF THE REWARD

A son needs to honor his father without considering the reward, and only because of the Mitzvah to honor his father and mother. And if the son does not want to obey his father's command, the father and the mother should strike him until he does it against his will. And if the son is older, they should take him to the Bet Din

Zohar ha Kaddosh III 82b

IT IS WRONG FOR PARENTS TO HABITUATE THEIR CHILDREN TO TREAT THEIR PARENTS DISRESPECTFULLY

Some people teach their children as they are learning to talk and play with them and the father says to the son: "Hit your mother" and the mother says: "Give me your hand and we'll hit your father" and they also teach him to curse and other bad traits, and in reality they are mistaken in two ways: a- The main part of the character traits depends on habit, and habit becomes second nature for the kids, and when they are young before they turn to evil ways it is easy to turn them to proper ways, b- When kids are young the parents have the strength to use force and to really force them to go on the right path, and on

the contrary it is the parents who sometimes teach the children to make little of the honor and the fear due to parents, and also cause the kids to habituate themselves to evil ways. May Hashem Blessed be He save us from all evil practices, Amen Erech Apaim Siman Gimel

**THE SON WHO LOVES AND HONORS
HIS PARENTS WISHES THAT HIS
BROTHERS AND SISTERS WILL
HONOR THEM AS WELL**

The son who loves his father properly, he wishes that also his brothers will love him and that they will also do his will and if he sees any of them transgressing the will of his father, even if he sees them that they don't attend to his needs as required, he will reprove them and admonish them and will guide them with all the means at his disposal until they love him as they should and do his will.

Sefer Mezake ha Rabbim Perek Yud Gimmel

**GROWN UP SONS WHO ARE
FINANCIALLY INDEPENDENT HAVE
THE SAME OBLIGATION TO FEAR
THEIR PARENTS AS THOSE SONS
WHO STILL DEPEND ON THEIR
PARENTS FOR THEIR SUSTENANCE**

“A man shall his mother and his father fear...” and the word man [ISH] is used in order to imply that even a grown man who does not depend on his parents for his sustenance has nevertheless the obligation to fear from them Ketav Sofer Kedoshim

**ONE HAS TO FEAR FROM HIS
PARENTS AS ONE WOULD FEAR
FROM THE KING WHO COULD HARM
HIM IF HE DID OR SAY SOMETHING
INAPPROPRIATE**

A man should fear from his mother and his father, and because of the command of Hashem they will be in his eyes as a king and a queen and he will fear and tremble of transgressing their will, and all that they will command will be in his eyes as the decree of the king from which he should not steer right or left, for fear applies only between a Master or a king and his servant...In general he must behave towards them as he would do towards a King of flesh and blood whom he greatly fears lest he cuts his head, and even if they break his clothes and spit in front of them and hit them, he will shut up and will bear the situation from fear of Hashem and from the beauty of His Majesty, for He equated the fear due to Him to the fear due to his parents, as it is written: "Hashem your G-d you shall fear". And on the parents it is written: "A man shall his mother and father fear" and the one who makes his father or mother suffer is as if he had made Hashem to suffer. And because of his fear of them, he will not stand nor sit in the space reserved for either of them, and will not contradict their words even when he knows they are not right, even then he will not say "You are not right"

and even to say: “How nice what my father or my mother said” is forbidden for he thereby makes himself equal to them...And this applies to men as well as to women

Sefer Charedim Perek Alef

EVERY TIME WE OBEY OUR PARENTS WE FULFILL A GREAT MITZVAH OF THE TORAH

And every time that a person heeds the voice of his father or the voice of his mother he fulfills a great Mitzvah Mideoraita [From the Torah]

Pele Yoetz Letter Chaf

WE HAVE TO ACCEPT THE WILL OF OUR PARENTS EVEN WHEN IT SEEMS UNFAIR TO US

It is a Mitzvah upon the son to honor and fear his father and if at times his father will be angry at him and will hit him and insult him for no apparent reason or because something is bothering his father’s heart from all the troubles that frequently occur, or because of his father’s bad character traits, or because of his lack of common sense, then the son needs common sense himself to withstand everything in order to honor the Mitzvah of his Creator, and he will not oppose him nor answer him in a

rude manner nor humiliate him G-d forbid, but he will rather bow down his head and he will carry the yoke for they have said in the Gemara about Dama Ben Netinah that even though he was a gentile and his mother was deranged, when she humiliated him in front of the great men of Rome and when she threw his belongings to the sea, even then he did not denigrate her

Pele Yoetz Letter Chaf

WE ANNUL TORAH STUDY TO SERVE AND TEND TO OUR PARENTS WHEN THEY NEED IT

The study of Torah is greater than the Mitzvah to honor father and mother. This is so when the son needs to annul his studies and will not reap great benefit because of having to honor his father and his mother, in that case then the Mitzvah of Torah study is preferable to the Mitzvah of honoring father and mother, as in the case of Yaakov Avinu when he spent all those years in the Yeshiva of Shem and Ever yet he was not punished for those years [When he did not honor his parents]. But in the case where the son sits and learns all day and his father has no one to attend to his needs and because of this his soul will be afflicted, in that case it is obvious that the son's Torah is not desired, because there is a time for everything, a time for Torah, a time for prayer. You must

know then, that we annul the study of Torah even for prayers which are Derabbanan. [How much more then do we annul some study to fulfill one of the Ten commandments!]

Chessed La Alafim Siman 240 Letter Yud

SONS SHOULD NOT BE PART OF THEIR PARENTS' QUARRELS

We find that Korach's sons did not take up their father's cause, even though this disgraced him. In this way, they escaped their father's punishment. Here follows Yalkut Korach on the first verse of Psalms (1: 1):

Fortunate is the person: These are Korach's sons.

Who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked: i.e., their father's counsel: "Remove yourselves from the tents of these wicked men" (Bamidbar 16:26).

Nor stands in the way of sinners: "The fire pans belonging to the men who committed a mortal sin" (ibid. 17:3).

The Yalkut further states:

By what merit were Korach's sons spared their father's punishment? When, sitting with their father, they saw Moses walk by, they buried their faces in the earth, saying, "If we rise out of deference to Moses, we scorn our father, and we are commanded to show parents respect. If we do not rise, we trespass on 'Rise before the aged'

(Vayikra 19:32). It is best we rise for Moses, even if we thereby scorn our father.” At that moment their hearts were stirred to repentance. Of them, King David said, “My heart stirs me to utter kind words” (Psalms 45:2).

From this we see that if a man refrains from taking his father’s side in a quarrel, he will evade his father’s punishment. Even if he sees that his father is right, he should still make sure to keep silent and not support his father against the opposition.

Aside from the Mitzvah of bringing about peace, he should think of the possibility that maybe, because he loves his father like himself, he is making an error in judgment. The Sifri says that the neighbor (Reecha) who is like yourself is your own father, and no one sees faults in his own self.

(Shemirat halashon Shaar ha Zechira, Perek 17)

WE ARE OBLIGATED TO HONOR OUR FATHER AND MOTHER IN LAW JUST AS WE HONOR OUR PARENTS

A person is obliged to honor his father in law and his mother in law because a man and his wife are considered as a single body, and the father and mother of this one are like the father and mother of this one. And it is brought in the Midrash Shocher Tov on the verse (Shmuel Alef

24:11) “Father, see my father” that David referred in this manner to his father in law Shaul, from here we see the obligation to honor the father in law just as one honors his father. Sefer Charedim Perek Dalet

MANY PEOPLE TODAY ARE NOT CAREFUL TO HONOR THEIR FATHER IN LAW AND THEIR MOTHER IN LAW, G-D FORBID

It is known what our Sages of blessed memory have said: “A person is obliged to honor his father in law and his mother in law” (Yore deah 240) but nowadays due to our many sins, the contrary occurs and there are many that are not careful regarding the honor of their father in law and mother in law even while they are alive and they transgress the words of our Rabbis, and it is known that the words of our Sages are more important than the wine of Torah, and that the one who transgresses regarding the words of our Sages at the same time is transgressing a few positive and negative commandments. And how much effort and suffering and time have your father in law and mother in law spent on raising your wife/husband, and therefore we find that the aspect of repaying a good that one has received is also present in our relationship towards our father and mother in law, as it is brought in the Midrash, and if you don’t honor them and not only

that but you also make them suffer, not only are you transgressing the words of our holy Sages and many positive and negative commandments, but you are also included among those who repay good with evil G-d save us, therefore it is incumbent on the husband to honor them by all means available to him when they are alive as well as when they are dead. And how much more must the wife be warned to honor her father and mother in law.

Sefer Cheshvon Prate ha Mitzvot, Sefer Kivud av va em

WE MUST HONOR OUR FATHER AND MOTHER IN LAW JUST AS WE HONOR OUR OWN PARENTS

A man is obligated to honor his father in law and his mother in law, and this is so because a husband and his wife are considered as one body, and the father and mother of this one are like the father and mother of this one and the verse equates this (Micha 7:6) “For the son dishonors the father, the daughter rises up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house”, You see then that the sin of a daughter rebelling against her mother is equated with that of the daughter in law rebelling against her mother in law.

Sefer Charedim Mitzvot Asse Teluim ba Pe, Siman 10

DUE TO OUR MANY SINS WE DO NOT HONOR OUR ELDER BROTHER AND FROM THIS WE GO TO THE WORSE SIN OF NOT HONORING HASHEM

The wise said: “A wise son gladdens his father...” Due to our many sins a great sin in these times that we do not honor our elder brother, the younger knocks the head and there is no honor at all, and because of this the honor due to the father and mother has diminished also and because of our many sins, this generation has reached a point where it is the father and mother who need to honor the sons and to be afraid from them, and a generation like this one has been referred to as a rebellious and wayward generation. And the writings say: “If I am a father where is my honor...?” and the honor due to our parents is equaled to the honor due to Hashem, and if the generation does not honor Hashem and He is the father of all creatures, how much less do they honor their parents, and due to our many sins, they are not careful with the honor of this one nor of the other, and this Mitzvah of honor, is a logical one and one that should be practiced regularly, therefore its punishment is even greater...Therefore my sons, give honor to your fathers and mothers and to your elder brothers so that you will also honor Hashem and your reward will be great because of this.

Sefer Yearot Devash Chelek Bet

THE MAIN ASPECT OF HONORING PARENTS IS ACTUALLY AFTER THEY HAVE DIED

The main aspect of the honor is to do so once he is dead and all that is in his power to do to bring enjoyment for the soul of his deceased father he should do day after day, and not like many ignorant people who do not remember their father and their mother but only on their Yartzeit. And it is proper for a son to have the image of his father in front of him all the days of his life, and he should not miss even a single day from giving Tzeddaka in the name of his father. Pele Yoetz Letter Chaf

THINK OF YOUR PARENTS' TERRIBLE SUFFERINGS AND HAVE MERCY ON THEM

And if G-d forbid the son doesn't take to heart the things we have already mentioned, he transgresses the Mitzvah to honor his father which is the important among the important, and its main aspect is after the father has passed away, and if G-d forbid he transgresses he is then considered to have thrown his father into a deep pit. Please take it to heart and have pity and be merciful to your father, and think of his terrible sufferings and his great shame. Sefer Ysmach Israel, Pekude

**WHEN YOU FIGHT TO GET AN
ALIYAH IN SYNAGOGUE TO HONOR
YOUR PARENTS ON THEIR YARTZEIT
YOU ARE ACTUALLY THEM GREAT
HARM AND SUFFERING**

It is not appropriate to fight or argue in order to get the right to read the Torah or the Haftorah on his father's Yartzeit, for because of quarrel or hate, he does great evil to the soul of his father. And instead of doing him good he will be harming him, G-d forbid, and this is the action of the Satan, therefore be careful for the most important thing is peace and to lower your head continually, this is the main part of the good of the world and with this is the good portion of your father's soul, and the good actions of the son is the most important thing of all, and to learn Mishanyot and Agada and to give Tzeddaka for the benefit of the neshama, Hashem shall bless his people with peace and happiness, Amen.

Sefer ha Takanot deChevrat Shomre Emunim, Brought in the sefer Kivud av vaem

**WHEN THE SONS WALK IN THE
RIGHT PATH THEY CONFER HONOR
TO THEIR PARENTS IN THIS WORLD
AND IN THE WORLD TO COME**

“A son honors his father” (Mal. 1, 6). A son will honor his father as it is written: “Honor your father and your mother (Shemot 20:12)” We have learnt that when the father is alive it is the son's duty to honor him. Is he free from the obligation of honoring him after his death? Not so, since it is written, “Honor your father” (Ex. 20, 12) If

the son walks in the crooked path, of a surety he brings dishonor and shame on his father. But if he walks in the straight path and his deeds are upright, then he confers honor on him both in this world among men and in the next world with G-d, and the Holy One Blessed be He has compassion on his father and gives him a special throne of honor. An example is R. Eliza, who honored his father in his lifetime and now has made him more honored in the next world after his death as the progenitor of holy sons and a holy stock.’ Zohar ha Kaddosh Bechukotai 115b

And when a person sustains his father and his mother when they are young as well as when they are old, to what can this be compared? To a king who receives the visit of someone whom he loves. The King asks: “My son Where are you coming from?”, “From the house of my father and my mother” he says. “Your father and your mother What do they do?” The King asked, “They left in peace for the next life” the man said. The King said “Blessed are you and may you have satisfaction in life, for you gave repose to your father and mother until they finally departed from this world; Now come with me and I will show you what your father and your mother stored away for you with me” Just the same way, whoever honors and sustains his father and his mother until they depart in peace for the next life, and also goes along the paths of the Torah, and with his he brings pleasure to his father and his mother, The Holy One Blessed be He says to him: “My son, come and see the treasures of heaven that are stored with Me, to give to you, for you have honored and sustained your father and your mother, and you caused Me pleasure through your righteous actions, and also to your father and your mother... Tanna deve Eliyahu Rabba 26:27

CHAPTER 7

SELECTION FROM THE TALMUD MASSECHET KIDDUSHIN 30

THE MITZVAH TO HONOR FATHER AND MOTHER

Our Rabbis taught: It says, 'Honor your father and your mother' (Shemot 20:12), and it says, 'Honor G-d with your wealth' (Proverbs 3:9). (By using the same terminology,) the Torah compares the honor you owe your father and mother to the honor you have to give to the Almighty. It also says, 'Every person must fear his mother and his father' (Vayikra 19:3), and it says, 'G-d your Lord you shall fear, Him you shall serve' (Devarim 10:20). (Here the same word, -Fear- is used.] The Torah equates the fear you owe your parents with the fear you must have from G-d. Furthermore it says, 'Whoever curses his father or mother shall be put to death' (Shemot 21). And furthermore it says, 'Anyone that curses G-d shall bear his sin' (Vayikra 24:15). By using the same terms the Torah compares cursing of parents with cursing the Almighty. But when it comes to hitting (the prohibition against hitting one's parents) it is impossible to create equality (because the Almighty cannot be

struck). And it is logical (to establish an equality between parents and G-d), because these three--G-d, the father, and the mother--are partners in the creation [of the child]. 'The Rabbis taught: There are three partners in the creation of man---The Holy One, blessed be He, the father, and the mother. When a person honors his father and his mother, the Holy One, blessed be He, says: I consider it as though I lived among them, and they had honored Me.

It was taught: Rabbi said: It is revealed and known to Him who created the world that a son honors his mother more than his father (31a) because she persuades him with gentle words; therefore the Holy One, blessed be He, placed the honor of the father before that of the mother (In the verse, 'Honor your father and your mother' (Shemot 20:123). It is revealed and known to Him who created the world that a son fears his father more than his mother, because he teaches him Torah; therefore the Holy One, blessed be He, placed the fear of the mother before that of the father (in the verse, 'Every person must fear his mother and his father' (Vayikra 19:3)). A Tanna recited a Baraita before R. Nachman: When a person causes anguish to his father and his mother, the Holy One, blessed be He, says: It was proper that I did not dwell among them, for if I dwelled among them, I would be anguished to see a child treat his parents this way. R. Yitzchak said: Anyone who commits a transgression in a hidden place is as though he pressed against the feet of the

Shechinah, for it says, -Thus said G-d, 'The heaven is My throne and the earth is My footstool" (Isaiah 66: 1)....

THE KINGS OF THE EARTH ACKNOWLEDGED HASHEM THROUGH THE COMMANDMENT TO HONOR FATHER AND MOTHER

Ulla Rabbah expounded at the entrance to the Nasi's house. What is meant by the verse, "All the kings of the earth will acknowledge You, G-d, because they heard Your statements" (Psalms 138:4). It does not say 'Your statement- but 'Your statements' [in the plural]. When the Holy One, blessed be He, said, 'I am G-d your Lord - and 'Do not have any other gods before Me' (Shemot 20:2,3), all the nations of the world said: He is looking only for His own honor. But when He said, "Honor your father and your mother' (ibid. v. 12), they retracted and recognized the correctness of the first commands. [Therefore, the kings acknowledged G-d when they heard all these statements.] Rava said: We can infer it from the following verse, "Your very first utterance is truth" (Psalms 119:160). Your first utterance, and not Your last utterance? But from Your last utterance it can be seen that the first utterance is also true. [From 'Honor your father and mother' the nations realized that the first commandments were true.]

TALMUD KIDDUSHIN 31

THE STORY OF DAMA BEN NETINAH: TO WHAT EXTENT A GENTILE HONORED HIS PARENTS

They asked the following question to R. Ulla: To what length does a person have to go in fulfilling the mitzvah of honoring parents? He replied: Let us examine what a certain non-Jew in Ashkelon by the name of Dama ben Netinah once did. The Sages once wanted to buy something from him on which he would have earned a profit of 600,000 [Golden dinars]. And the key to the chest that contained the items the Sages wanted to buy was underneath the pillow on which his father was sleeping, and so he did not disturb him. R. Yehudah said in the name of Shmuel: They asked R. Eliezer: What is the limits of the mitzvah of honoring parents? He replied: Let us see what a certain non-Jew did in Ashkelon by the name of Dama ben Netinah. The Sages wanted to buy from him jewels for the eifod (of the Kohen Gadol) for a profit of 600,000-according to R. Kahane it was a profit of 800,000-but since the key [to the chest that contained these jewels] was lying under his father's pillow while he was asleep, he did not disturb him. The next year the Holy One, blessed be He, gave him his reward. A red cow [which is used for purification]' was born in his herd. When the Sages of Israel came to buy it he said to them, "I know that even if I asked you all the money in the world [for this cow), you would pay me. But I ask of you only the money I lost because of the honor I accorded to my father.'

R. Chanina commented: If someone [like Dama ben Netinah] who is not commanded [to honor his parents], and does it anyway received such a great reward; someone who is commanded and fulfills the command, how much more so will that person be rewarded! For R. Chanina said: The person who does something he is commanded to do is greater than the person who does something he is not commanded to do. [Because someone who is commanded to do a mitzvah worries that he does not fulfill it properly; someone who does a mitzvah voluntarily does not have such concerns (Tosafot.). Also someone who is commanded to do a mitzvah has to overcome his yetzer hara that tells him not to do it, while a volunteer has no opposition on the part of the yetzer hara (Yavetz).] ...

EVEN IN FRONT OF NOBLES DAMA BEN NETINAH RESPECTED HER MOTHER

When R. Dimi came [from Eretz Yisrael to Babylon] he said: He [Dama ben Netinah] was once wearing a gold embroidered cloak and was sitting among the Roman nobles, when his mother came and ripped it off him, hit him on the head, and spat in his face, yet he did not embarrass her.

TALMUD KIDDUSHIN 31

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A JEW AND A GENTILE REGARDING THE HONORING OF PARENTS

One might find the above story about Dama ben Netinah somewhat difficult to understand. As we have discussed earlier, the reward for honoring one's parents is longevity, since this is a fitting recompense. However, in the case of Dama, the reward was that a red heifer should be born to him, so that the money that he lost for honoring his father was returned to him. Why did G-d make this come about through a red heifer? It could just as easily have come through a different source.

It is true that this gentile was careful to honor his parents with all his heart and soul. In order not to cause his father even a moment's discomfort, he was willing to lose a huge sum of money. No greater respect is possible. However, there was an important point that was missing from his deed.

The main concept of duty is obedience to G-d and His commandments. If a person gives charity to the poor because he has a tender heart and has mercy on them, it is commendable, but not as great as doing so because it is G-d's will. G-d does not want us to keep the commandments as mere humanitarianism (torath ha-adam) which is dictated by logic; but because we are commanded to do so by G-d. Then, even if logic does not compel us to do a good deed, we will do it because of our duty toward G-d.

YALKUT MEAM LOEZ YITRO

**THE ONE WHO DOES SOMETHING
BECAUSE HASHEM COMMANDED
HIM IS GREATER THAN THE ONE
WHO DOES IT WITHOUT BEING
COMMANDED BY HASHEM TO DO IT**

This gentile, however, only honored his parents because he felt it to be a logical moral imperative. He felt that a child must respect his parents by not causing them any discomfort whatsoever. He therefore had a red heifer born to him to teach him that morality depends primarily on doing G-d's will.

The paradigmatic case of fealty to G-d's will is the commandment regarding the Red Heifer (Bamidbar 19). This is a commandment that is utterly illogical. If some of the ashes of the Heifer are sprinkled on a person who is ritually unclean, he becomes clean (Bamidbar 19:19). On the other hand, the person who does the cleansing ritual becomes unclean (Ibid.19:21). The entire ritual is utterly incomprehensible to human logic, and it is only kept because we have a duty to obey G-d's commandments. It is thus that we must keep all of the commandments.

YALKUT MEAM LOEZ YITRO

And every time that a person heeds the voice of his father or the voice of his mother he fulfills a great Mitzvah Mideoraita [From the Torah] Pele Yoetz Letter Chaf

CHAPTER 8

THE WAY PARENTS WERE HONORED AND FEARED AS BROUGHT IN THE TANACH

CANAAN WAS CURSED AND MADE INTO A SLAVE FOR HAVING DENIGRATED THE HONOR OF HIS FATHER

(Bereshit 9:25) “And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a slave of slaves shall he be to his brothers”. That he will not gain freedom forever, And what caused that he received this curse? Because he denigrated the honor of his father.

Midrash Tanchuma 58,15

YITZCHAK HONORED HIS FATHER WHEN HE NAMED THE WELLS AFTER THE NAMES HIS FATHER HAD GIVEN THEM

“And Yitzchak dug again the wells of water, which they had dug in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them up after the death of Abraham; and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them”. (Bereshit 26:18)

Rabbenu Bachye explains the verse as follows: Yitzchak did this in order to honor his father, and from the fact that the Torah brings this up, we can see that it was considered as a merit for Yitzchak, so that a man does not change the way of his fathers”

YITZCHAK HONORED HIS FATHER AT THE ALTAR

Yitzchak observed the Mitzvah of honoring father and mother when he was tied before his father like a sheep before a slaughterer.

Tanna deve Eliyahu Rabba 26

RIVKAH WAS CAREFUL NOT TO CAUSE DISTRESS TO YITZCHAK BECAUSE OF THE DEPARTURE OF YAAKOV

And Rivkah said to Yitzchak, I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Chet; if Yaakov takes a wife of the daughters of Chet, such as these who are of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life be to me? (Bereshit 27:46)

Rivkah did not wish for Yaakov to run away without the knowledge of his father, lest it be sorrowful in the eyes of his father, causing Yaakov to transgress the Mitzvah of

honoring his father. [Therefore she told him that we would have to leave and find a wife somewhere else]

Beer Mayim Chayim on Bereshit 27

WITH HOW MUCH RESPECT YAAKOV SPOKE TO HIS FATHER AND THE ROUGHNESS OF ESAV

18 And he [Yaakov] came to his father, and said, My father; and he said, Here am I; who are you, my son? 19 And Yaakov said to his father, I am Esav your firstborn; I have done according to what you told me; arise, I beg you, sit and eat of my venison, that your soul may bless me....

...30 And it came to pass, as soon as Yitzchak had finished blessing Yaakov, and Yaakov had scarcely gone out from the presence of Ytzchak his father, that Esav his brother came in from his hunting. 31 And he also had made savory food, and brought it to his father, and said to his father, Let my father arise, and eat of his son's venison, that your soul may bless me.

The Zohar ha Kaddosh I 144a says: “He [Esav] spoke in a rough and overbearing manner, with no sign of politeness. Observe the difference between Yaakov and Esav. Yaakov spoke to his father gently and modestly, as it says: “And he came to his father, and said, My

father...”. He was careful not to cause discomfort to him and said in a tone of entreaty: “Arise, I beg you, sit and eat of my venison, that your soul may bless me”. But Esav said: “Let my father arise” as though he were not addressing him personally. Also when Esav entered Gehinomm accompanied him, so that Yitzchak feared greatly as it says: “And Yitzchak trembled greatly, exceedingly”.

The Zohar Ha Kaddosh I 144a

ESAV WAS CAREFUL ABOUT HONORING HIS FATHER AND JOSEPH LEARNED FROM HIM

Esav kept the commandment of honoring his parents most carefully. Whenever he served his father, he would wear his very best clothes. He also placed himself in danger to get food for his father. Joseph learned from him. Therefore, when Yaakov told him, “Aren't your brothers tending the sheep in Shechem? Come, I wish to send you to them,” Joseph's immediate reply was, “Here I am” (Bereshit 37:13). Joseph was ready to do as his father told him, even though he knew that his brothers hated him. He ignored his own danger, and said to himself: “Esav went into the wilderness to get food for his father, even though he would be in danger from wild animals. I have no less of an obligation. I must go see how my brothers are doing

and what is happening to the sheep, which are my father's property." The Torah relates these accounts to teach us how much a person must strive to support his parents, and to seek out their desires, so that he will be able to do anything they wish.

**ALL THE GOOD THAT THE
DESCENDANTS OF ESAV HAVE IN
THIS WORLD IS A REWARD FOR
HIS HAVING HONORED
HIS FATHER**

As a reward for being so careful in honoring his parents, G-d gave Esav all the great good that his offspring have in this world. We thus see that when Esav discovered that Ytzchak had given the blessing to Yaakov, "he lifted his voice and wept" (Bereshit 27:38). He wept three tears, one from his right eye, one from his left eye, and one that did not leave his eyes at all. Even though his entire weeping did not amount to three tears, and he was an absolute fiend otherwise, he was worthy of all the power that his descendants would be given.

From this we can see how much will accrue to a G-d-fearing person who keeps this commandment. His merit will certainly be without bounds."

Yalkut Meam Loez, Yitro

HOW MUCH HAVE THE JEWS SUFFERED FOR THE HONOR ESAV GAVE TO HIS FATHER

“ And when Esav heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and very bitter cry, and said to his father, Bless me, me also, O my father” (Bereshit 27:34)

Rabbi Chiyya said: “How many bad things were brought as a result of those tears that Esav shed when he cried in front of his father so that he would be blessed by him, because it was very important in his eyes the blessing of his father Yitzchak.

Zohar ha Kaddosh I 145

HOW GREAT IS THE MITZVAH TO HONOR FATHER AND MOTHER THAT EVEN ESAV THE RASHA RECEIVED SUCH GREAT REWARD FOR OBSERVING IT

Come and see how precious is the Mitzvah to honor father and mother for the Holy One Blessed be He, for He will not withhold the reward and He will not distinguish between a Tzaddik and a Rasha, and from where do we learn this? From the evil Esav whom because he honored his father, The Holy One Blessed be He gave him all this honor...And what if this rasha receives such great reward

from the Holy One Blessed be He for having honored his father, the one who honors his father and does other Mitzvot how much more he will receive

Midrash Tanchuma Kedoshim 15

YAAKOV WAS PUNISHED WITH THE SUFFERING OF JOSEPH BECAUSE OF THE SUFFERING HE CAUSED HIS FATHER YITZCHAK

And Yitzchak trembled very much, and said, Who then is he who hunted venison, and brought it to me, and I have eaten of all before you came, and have blessed him? moreover, he shall be blessed. (Bereshit 27:33)

Rabbi Yehuda said: “Because of that fear that Yaakov caused his father Yitzchak to fear, Yaakov was punished with the punishment of Joseph, for he greatly feared when they told him (Bereshit 37 regarding the tunic of his son Joseph) “This have we found”. Yitzchak said: “Where?” [MI EPHO] and Yaakov was punished with “Where” As it is written “Where they are shepherding” and it was there that Joseph disappeared and through this Yaakov was punished, and even though the Holy One Blessed be He agreed to the blessings of Yitzchak, even so Yaakov was punished through this WHERE [EPHO] as it is written “Where they are shepherding” [EPHO HEM ROIM], and there Joseph was lost to Yaakov and he was punished. Zohar ha Kaddosh 144b

**YAAKOV WAS MADE TO SUFFER FOR
THE YEARS HE SPENT AWAY FROM
HIS HOUSE IN WHICH WE DID NOT
HONOR HIS FATHER YITZCHAK**

After being sold, Joseph was absent from his father Yaakov for twenty-two years. Yaakov spent this time in grief and mourning for his lost son. His pain was a Heavenly midda-keneged-midda retribution for having stayed away from his own father Yitzchak for twenty-two years, the time which he spent in Lavan's house. Since he failed to honor his father and mother for twenty-two years, Hashem caused Joseph to be absent from him for that very length of time.

However, Hashem did not punish Yaakov for his having stayed away from his parents during the fourteen years which he spent in Shaim and Aiver's yeshiva studying Torah because the mitzva of honoring parents is superseded by the greater mitzva of Torah study.

Talmud Megillah 16

**I EXERTED MYSELF TO HONOR MY
FATHER AND DID NOT ACCOMPLISH
EVEN ONE PERCENT OF
WHAT ESAV DID**

R. Shimon ben Gamliel said, "All my life I exerted myself to fulfill the Mitzvah of serving my father, but I did not attain a hundredth degree of the honor which Esav accorded his father.

“Whenever I served my father, I used to wear stained clothes and before I left the house, I changed my garments to appear properly dressed in public. Esav, however, dressed in royal garments before serving his father because he said, “It is not befitting my father's honor that I should serve him in anything less than royal garments!”
Bereshit Rabba 65:12

**ESAV DOMINATES THE WORLD
BECAUSE OF THE HONOR HE
SHOWED YITZCHAK HIS FATHER**

Rabbi Yessa said: “It is written: “A son honors his father and a servant his master” (Malachi 1:6) Such a son was Esav for there was no one in the world who honored his father as much as Esav did, and this is what procured him dominion in this world
Zohar ha Kaddosh Toldot 146b

**ESAV RULES OVER THE JEWS
BECAUSE HE HONORED HIS
FATHER YITZCHAK**

Esav's ability to rule over the Jewish nation is a result of his honoring his father. The Noam Elimelech interprets Ytzchak's blessing to Esav in this light. “Upon your sword shall you live” (Bereshit 27:40) - due to the mitzvos you

did with your sword (i.e. bringing food to your father) you will enjoy material success in life.

The way for Jews to weaken Esav's grip on them is through strengthening their commitment to this mitzvah. According to R' Yonason Eibenschutz it was for this reason that Haman, who was a descendant of Esav, was destroyed by Esther, whose parents died as she was born (see Esther 2:7 and Megillah 13a). Since she never saw her parents, she was unable to fulfill this mitzvah. Pained as she was constantly by her inability to do so, G-d viewed her as if she had honored her parents to the utmost. Thus, she was His tool in the downfall of Haman, Esav's offspring.

The Midrash alludes to this with the following cryptic comment: “G-d said to them [the Jewish people]: You said 'We are orphans without a father' [i.e., our merit from our righteous forefathers is no longer viable] - you will see that the redeemer I send you will be Esther, who, because she has no parents, can stand up to Esav and his grandson Haman.”

RACHEL WAS PUNISHED FOR CAUSING SUFFERING TO HIS FATHER LAVAN EVEN THOUGH HER INTENTIONS WERE GOOD

Even though Rachel [Who stole the idols from Lavan her father] did this to separate his father from idolatry, she

was punished through not being able to raise Benjamin her son and she was not together with her son in life even for one hour, because she caused suffering to her father, even though her intentions were good.

Zohar ha Kaddosh 164b

**JOSEPH WAS PUNISHED AND HIS
LIFE WAS SHORTENED FOR NOT
STOPPING HIS BROTHERS FROM
TELLING HIM “YAAKOV
YOUR SERVANT” TEN TIMES**

Rav Yehuda said in the name of Rav: Why was Joseph called bones during his life? As it is written (Bereshit 50: 25) “And Joseph took an oath from the people of Israel, saying: “G-d will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here.” Because he had no care regarding the honor of his father, for he was told (Bereshit 44) “Your servant our father” and he did not say anything

Talmud Sota 13b

Rabbi Yishmael said: “Ten times the sons of Yaakov said to Joseph “Your servant our father” Joseph heard and remained quiet, and silence is equivalent to approval, therefore his life was shortened by ten years.

Pirke de rabbi Eliezer 39

REUBEN WAS SWIFT TO HONOR HER MOTHER LEAH

“And Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest, and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them to his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, Give me, I beg you, of your son's mandrakes”.

(Bereshit 30: 14)

He brought them to Lea his mother to show you how much was he careful to honor his mother, that he did not taste them until he brought them to his mother.

There is no doubt that he intended to please her mother and to ingratiate her, and to show her through this act his deep love for her and his swiftness to perform the Mitzvah of honoring father and mother.

Shevet Mishor, Lechanuka 6

NAFTALI GREATLY HONORED HIS FATHER YAAKOV AND WAS REWARDED CORRESPONDINGLY

Of Yaakov's sons, Naftali excelled in the Mitzvah of honoring his parents. Any time his father Yaakov would send him on an errand, he would summon his every last ounce of strength to perform it with utmost swiftness. His efforts to fulfill his father's wishes were boundless. His love for the Mitzvah of honoring his parents caused him to renew his vigor for each mission as if this had been his

father's first command. Yaakov, therefore, in his last blessing to his sons, praised Naftali as a “hind sent forth” (Bereshit 49:21). Naftali, moreover, used to address his father Yaakov in an especially courteous manner as if addressing a king. Therefore, his sayings were pleasant to his father who lauded him, “he gives good words” (ibid.).

Naftali's midda-keneged-midda reward was twofold:

-He merited a portion in Eretz Yisrael whose fruits matured swiftly, just as he ran swiftly to obey his father's orders.

-A further midda-keneged-midda reward was accorded to his descendants during the period of the Judges. In the time of the prophetess Devora who was joined in leadership by Barak, a descendant of Naftali, the Jews were oppressed by the Canaanim. The Canaanite general, Sisra, mobilized a tremendous army comprised of infantry and nine hundred iron chariots. Barak and Devora had a comparatively small army of ten thousand Jews, which lacked suitable equipment. Nevertheless, the Almighty caused the enemy forces to be miraculously smitten in one day and their general Sisra to be slain. This speedy deliverance of the Jewish people was brought about by Hashem measure for measure through Naftali's descendant Barak in the merit of Naftali who was always expeditious in carrying out his father's errands

Bamidbar Rabba 14:23

JOSEPH LISTENED TO HIS FATHER'S COMMAND EVEN THOUGH HE WAS PUTTING HIS LIFE IN DANGER

“And Israel said to Joseph, Are not your brothers feeding the flock in Shechem? Come, and I will send you to them. And he said to him, Here am I.” (Bereshit 37:13)

Rashi comments: “Here I am” is a sign of humility and willingness to do the command of his father, even though he knew that his brothers hated him. Joseph thought: “Esav goes always to a place of danger in order to hunt for his father Yitzchak. And now my father is sending me to see how my brothers are and how the flock is, which is the livelihood of my father and his household and I will not go?... All this is written to teach the Jewish people how they have to work hard to bring a livelihood for their parents, and how they have to be diligent in fulfilling the command of their parents

Sefer Chassidim Siman 345

JOSEPH GOES OUT TO RECEIVE HIS FATHER YAAKOV AS HE WAS ARRIVING IN MITZRAIM

“When Joseph heard that his father was coming to Egypt, he took all his people with him and went to greet his father. Normally all the people go to greet the king, but the king does not go out to greet a man. [So why did Joseph did go to greet Yaakov his father?] To show that a man’s father is like his King.”

Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer

Perek 38

JOSEPH'S HIGH POSITION OR SUCCESS DID NOT PREVENT HIM FROM HONORING HIS FATHER

It is proper for a son to honor his parents as much as possible, and he should not abandon this duty because of success in politics or business, and as proof you will find that Joseph even though he was ruler over all of Egypt and had dealings with the people of all surrounding lands, he nevertheless went out to meet his father in order to honor him and to see his face.

Ralbag on Bereshit 46: 29

JOSEPH WOULD VANQUISH HIS EVIL IMPULSE BY HAVING THE MENTAL IMAGE OF HIS FATHER IN FRONT OF HIM

The Ohr HaChaim (On Vayikra19:3) writes: Holy men have told me that when a person is overwhelmed by impure thoughts and his Evil Impulse threatens to entice him to sin, there is one powerful preventive device. One should project a mental image of one's parents; when one sees them, the forces of sanctity are reinforced within him and he will find within himself the strength to overcome temptation. Thus, Potiphar's wife nearly succeeded in seducing Joseph until the image of his father Yaakov appeared before Joseph, and helped him overcome his passion. This explains the order of the verses of the Torah. First the Torah commands: Be holy! and immediately afterward it commands: Every man of you shall fear his

mother and his father, as if to say, “If you wish to safeguard yourself from temptation, fear your parents and picture them standing before you.”

My son, remember me always and let the image of my countenance always be before your eyes; let it never depart from you. Remove from your heart the desire to do anything that you know I despise. Be with me always. Observe the commandments of G-d and live! The Ramban in a letter to his son Shlomo

NADAV AND AVIHU ARE KILLED BECAUSE OF DISRESPECT FOR THE AUTHORITY OF THEIR FATHER AARON AND OF MOSHE RABBENU

And Nadav and Avihu, the sons of Aaron, took each of them his censer, and put fire in it, and put incense on it, and offered strange fire before Hashem, which he commanded them not. 2 And there went out fire from Hashem, and devoured them, and they died before Hashem. (Vayikra 10:1-2)

Why did Nadav and Avihu die suddenly? There are a few reasons and we bring here one of them:

It is written in Massechet Sanhedrin 52 “Moshe and Aaron were walking and Nadav and Avihu were walking behind them and all of Israel after them. Nadav said to Avihu: “When will these two old men die and you and I

will guide the generation?” Then the Holy One Blessed be He said: “We will see who will bury who”

Moshe was meditating what caused Nadav and Avihu to make the mistake to bring a strange fire before Hashem and he was sad...The Holy One Blessed be He said to Moshe: “What caused their mistake was that they wanted to precipitate things before their time, for they brought an incense offering during their father’s lifetime”

Zohar ha Kaddosh Achare Mot

GIDEON DESERVED TO SAVE THE JEWISH PEOPLE BECAUSE HE CARED FOR HIS FATHER

“And there came an angel of Hashem, and sat under a terebinth which was in Ophrah, that belonged to Joash the Abiezrite; and his son Gideon was threshing wheat by the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites. 12 And the angel of Hashem appeared to him, and said to him, Hashem is with you, you mighty man of valor. 13 And Gideon said to him, Oh my Lord, if Hashem is with us, why then has all this befallen us? And where are all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not Hashem bring us up from Egypt? But now Hashem has forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites. 14 And Hashem looked upon him, and said, Go in this your might, and you shall save Israel from the hand of the Midianites; have not I sent

you? 15 And he said to him, Oh my Lord, with what shall I save Israel? Behold, my family is the poorest in Manasheh, and I am the youngest in my father's house. 16 And Hashem said to him, Surely I will be with you, and you shall strike the Midianites as one man.” (Shoftim 6:11)

Yoash the father of Gideon was a wheat thresher. Gideon said to his father: “Father, enter into the house, and I will be the thresher, for if the Midianites come you have no strength to run away. The angel said to Gideon: “You fulfilled the Mitzvah of honoring your father and mother, it is worthwhile that My sons be liberated through you”

Midrash Talpiot Letter Alef

HOW YONATHAN RECEIVED AND ACCEPTED A DECREE FROM HIS FATHER THE KING SHAUL

23 So Hashem saved Israel that day; and the battle passed beyond Beth-Aven. 24 And the men of Israel were distressed that day; for Shaul had adjured the people, saying, Cursed be the man who eats any food until evening, that I may be avenged on my enemies. So none of the people tasted any food. 25 And all the people came to a wood; and there was honey on the ground. 26 And when the people came to the

wood, behold, the honey was dropping; but no man put his hand to his mouth; for the people feared the oath. 27 But Jonathan heard not when his father charged the people with the oath; therefore he put forth the end of the rod that was in his hand, and dipped it in a honeycomb, and put his hand to his mouth; and his eyes were brightened...

...Then Shaul said to Yonathan, Tell me what you have done. And Yonathan told him, and said, I just tasted a little honey with the end of the rod that was in my hand, and, behold, I must die. 44 And Shaul answered, G-d do so and more also; for you shall surely die, Yonathan. 45 And the people said to Shaul, Shall Yonathan die, who has wrought this great salvation in Israel? G-d forbid; as Hashem lives, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground; for he has wrought with G-d this day. So the people rescued Yonathan, that he died not. (Shmuel 1, 14)

In the book Mea Shearim it is brought that Yonathan himself could have argued that he did not know about the decree but in order to honor and respect his father he did not say anything but only admitted to eating the honey.

KING SHLOMO TREATED HIS MOTHER BATSHEVA WITH THE UTMOST HONOR AND RESPECT

19 And Bathsheva went to king Shlomo, to speak to him for Adonijah. And the king rose up to meet her, and bowed to her, and sat down on his throne, and had a seat brought for the king's mother; and she sat on his right.

Kings 1 2:19

HOW ELISHA HA NAVI SEPARATED FROM HIS PARENTS

19 And he departed from there, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth; and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him. 20 And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, Let me, I pray you, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you. (Kings 19: 19-20)

The Ralbag comments on this passage: “To show man that it is not proper to separate from his parents without letting them know, so as not to trouble their heart if they don’t know where he is. And see that with all the desire that Elisha had to follow Eliyahu he nevertheless went home to kiss his parents and to let his parents know that he would be leaving.

**THE HONOR THE SONS OF
YEHOADAV BEN REHAV GAVE HIS
FATHER BROUGHT IN YIRMIYAHU
CHAPTER 35**

5 And I set before the sons of the house of the Rechavites pots full of wine, and cups, and I said to them, drink your wine. 6 But they said, We will drink no wine; for Yehonadav the son of Rechav our father commanded us, saying, You shall drink no wine, nor you, nor your sons for ever; 7 Neither shall you build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have any; but all your days you shall dwell in tents; that you may live many days in the land where you sojourn. 8 Thus have we obeyed the voice of Yehonadav the son of Rechav our father in all that he has charged us, to drink no wine all our days, we, our wives, our sons, nor our daughters; 9 Nor to build houses for us to dwell in; nor have we vineyards, nor fields, nor seed; 10 But we have dwelt in tents, and have obeyed, and done according to all that Yehonadav our father commanded us.

**THEN HASHEM TELLS YIRMIYAHU
TO ADMONISH ISRAEL AND GIVES AS
AN EXAMPLE OF HONORING A
FATHER WHAT THE SONS
YEHOADAV BEN REHAV DID**

12 Then came the word of Hashem to Jeremiah, saying, 13 Thus says Hashem of hosts, the G-d of Israel; Go and tell the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Will you not receive instruction to listen to my words? says

Hashem. 14 The words of Yehonadav the son of Rechav, that he commanded his sons not to drink wine, have been kept; for to this day they drink none, but obey their father's commandment; however I have spoken to you, from early in the morning; but you listened not to me.

HASHEM REWARDS THE SONS OF YEHONADAV BEN RECHAV FOR HAVING LISTENED TO THE COMMAND OF THEIR FATHER

18 And Jeremiah said to the house of the Rechavites, Thus said Hashem of hosts, the G-d of Israel; Because you have obeyed the commandment of Yehonadav your father, and kept all his precepts, and done according to all that he has commanded you; **19** Therefore thus says Hashem of hosts, the G-d of Israel; Yehonadav the son of Rechav shall not lack a man to stand before me for ever.

THE MERIT OF RABBI SHIMON BAR YOCHAI AND HIS SON PROTECTS THE WORLD AND THE MERIT OF KING YOTAM BEN UZIYAHU IS SIMILAR TO THEIRS FOR HE HONORED HIS FATHER GREATLY

Rabbi Chizkiya said in the name of Rabbi Yirmiya who said in the name of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai: "I am able to absolve all the world from Judgment since the day I was created and until today, and if

Elazar my son were together with me, we could absolve the world from its Judgment from the moment the world was created until now and if Yotam ben Uziyahu was with us, we could absolve it from the moment the world was created until forever (Succa 45b)

Rashi explains: To free them, in my merit, I bear all their actions and all their sins and absolve them from judgment.

Who was Yotam ben Uziyahu? He was a Tzaddik and he was more humble than all the other kings, and he reached greatness through honoring his father and about him it is said: “A son will honor his father” that all the days that his father was sick with Metzora [A kind of leprosy] and Yotam had to judge the common people as it is written: “And Yotam his son judged...” All that time he did not use the crown of the kingdom and when his father passed away it is written: “And his son ruled after him...” and all the judgments that he would render he would render them in the name of his father.

And every time that a person heeds the voice of his father or the voice of his mother he fulfills a great Mitzvah Mideoraita [From the Torah] Pele Yoetz Letter Chaf

CHAPTER 9

HONOR DUE TO THE TEACHER THE SCHOLAR AND THE KOHEN

CHAPTER 144 KITZUR SHULCHAN ARUCH

1. A person must fear and revere his teacher more than his father because his father has given life in this world, while his teacher prepares him for life in the world to come.

2. It is written Vayikra 19:32), “You shall rise up before the hoary head, and honor the face of the old man.” By the expression 'Old man,' is meant a man versed in the Law of G-d, as it is written (Bamidbar 11:16): “Gather unto Me seventy of the elders of Israel,” and there, surely, the choice was made on the basis of wisdom, not upon age, as it is written: “Whom You know to be the elders of the people and its officers.” Therefore, it is mandatory to revere and honor a man learned in the Torah even if he is not advanced in years and even if he is not our teacher. It is also mandatory to respect and honor a person of seventy years or over, even if he is unlearned, provided he is not an evildoer. Even an old heathen should be shown respect by kind words and by being given a helping hand.

3. When three walk together and one of them is a rabbi, the latter is to walk in the center, while the other two should fall back and walk on his side, the older one on his right, and the younger one on his left.

4. It is a grave sin to disrespect or to hate men learned in the Torah. Jerusalem was destroyed only after they began to despise the scholars, as it is written (11 Chronicles 36:16): “But they mocked the messengers of G-d, and despised His words, and scoffed at His prophets,” that is, they despised those who teach His word. This is also what the Torah said (Vayikra 26:15): “And if you will despise My statutes,” that is, if you despise those who teach My statutes.” Whoever despises the Sages, has no share in the world to come, and he is in the category of (Bamidbar 15:31): “Because he hath despised the word of Hashem.” It is forbidden to make servile use of a student of the Rabbinical Law.

5. If a scholar has merchandise to sell, we do not allow anyone to sell the same kind of merchandise until the scholar has sold his. This is only true where there are no gentile merchants who sell this kind of merchandise. But if there are gentile merchants who sell the same kind of merchandise, then the scholar has no benefit by

restraining the Jews from selling it and thereby cause people to sustain a loss in vain.

6. One who is known to be a scholar in his generation, that is, he is competent to discuss topics of the Torah, and comprehends most of the places in the Talmud and the codes of law, and study is his main occupation, even if he has some profession or business from which he earns just enough to support his family but not to amass wealth from it, and whenever he is at leisure, he studies the Torah, such a man is, according to law, exempt from all kinds of taxations and assessments, even though he is rich. Even the personal tax which every individual is bound to pay, should be paid for him by his townsmen. And it is up to the discretion of the leaders of the town,

7. A scholar who makes light of the Divine Commands and is not G-d fearing, is to be treated like the most worthless man in the community.

8. If a Kohen and an Israelite are equally learned, it is a Biblical ordinance to give precedence to the Kohen, for it is written (Vayikra 21-8): “And You shall sanctify him,” and our Rabbis, of blessed memory, explained it to mean that in every matter of sanctity or importance, he shall be treated with honor, that is, he shall be called first to the

reading of the Torah; he shall be the first speaker at every public gathering; at the house of learning, too, he shall be the first speaker; at a meal he shall be the first to say the benediction Hamotzi, and lead in the saying of Grace after meals. Likewise, he shall be given the first choice portion, unless there is an Israelite more learned than he, then the latter is served first. However, if the Kohen has some partnership with an Israelite, the latter need not give him the choice portion, as it is not honorable for him to take such a portion, for he who covets a choice portion, will never see even a sign of blessing. In a place where there is no Kohen present, it is well to give precedence to a Levi over an Israelite, if they are of equal learning.

9. Even nowadays, it is forbidden to make servile use of a Kohen, as it is like committing sacrilege against a sacred object, for it is written (Vayikra 21:8): “And You shall sanctify him; for the bread of thy G-d does he offer.” Even nowadays that we have no sacrifices, the Kohen still retains the same sanctity. If the Kohen wishes to forego the honor due him, he may do so, for the Priesthood is his privilege and he has a right to relinquish its prerogatives and permit an Israelite to have them. Especially may the Kohen bestow honor upon an Israelite, by giving him precedence in all matters mentioned above.

CHAPTER 10

STORIES ABOUT HONORING PARENTS

RABBI AKIVA AND THE DEAD MAN'S REQUEST: A STORY

We find written in Midrash Tanchuma Parashat Noach that once, R' Akiva saw a bizarre man with a complexion black as coal. On his head, he was carrying a load heavy enough for ten men, and he was running swiftly as a horse. R' Akiva ordered him to stop. 'Why do you do such hard work?,' the Tanna asked. The apparition answered, 'Do not detain me lest my supervisors be angry with me.' 'What is this? What do you do?' 'I am a dead man,' he replied. 'Every day I am punished anew by being sent to chop wood for a fire in which I am consumed.' 'What did you do in life, my son?' asked R' Akiva. 'I was a tax-collector. I would be lenient with the rich and oppress the poor.' R' Akiva persisted. 'Have you heard if there is any way to save you?'

IF I HAD A SON HE COULD BE ABLE TO REDEEM MY SOUL

'I heard that if only I had left a son who would stand before the congregation and call out Bless HASHEM, Who is to be blessed – (BARCHU ET ADON-I HAMEVORACH) to which the people would respond Blessed is HASHEM, Who is to be blessed, forever and ever! (BARUCH ADON-I

HAMEVORACH LEOLAM VAED) And if only had I left a son who could proclaim to the congregation: “May His great Name be exalted and sanctified” (YITGADAL VE YITKADASH SHEME RABBA) - to which the people would answer: “May His great Name be blessed” (YEHE SHEME RABBA MEVARACH) If I had such a son I would be released from my punishment. R' Akiva went to the boy's place and taught him to say Kaddish and Barchu, and with this the dead person was freed from his punishment. Then the deceased appeared to Rabbi Akiva in a dream and told him: Worry no more because I have been spared of my punishment. Then Rabbi Akiva said (Psalms 135,13): “Your name, O Lord, endures for ever; and your renown, O Lord, throughout all generations.”

WITH EVERY MITZVAH WE PERFORM WE CAN HONOR OUR PARENTS

Among many Jews, it is customary to recite a short prayer before performing a mitzvah, in which they declare that they are doing the mitzvah for the sake of G-d, in order to fulfill His will. The prayer is known by its opening words, L'Shem Yichud.

R' Alexander Ziskind, author of Yesod V'Shoresh HaAvodah, would recite three such prayers before doing any mitzvah. Once one of his students asked him, “Why do you recite the prayer three times; isn't once enough?”

The Tzaddik replied: Every time a child does a Mitzvah, he honors his parents. Even if they already passed away, it is an honor for them in the next world,

since it is they who taught their children to do Mitzvot. Therefore, whenever one does a mitzvah he really is doing three mitzvos: (a) the mitzvah itself, (b) honoring his father, (c) honoring his mother. It is therefore only natural that I recite a separate L'Shem Yichud for each mitzvah!”

THE BAAL SHEM TOV DIDN'T HAVE THE MERIT TO BE A HIDDEN TZADDIK

For many years, the Baal Shem Tov was an undiscovered Tzaddik. Even after he became well known, he yearned for the days when he was able to serve Hashem undisturbed.

Once, while speaking with his students, he explained why it was ordained from Heaven that he be unable to remain undiscovered.

“When I was but a baby, I would never cry in my mother's presence, in order not to cause her any anguish. Even if I were really pained by something, I would hold back the tears as long as my mother was at home. However, once my mother left the house, I could no longer control myself and I would burst out in tears. I would cry and cry until I felt a little better. Only when I heard my mother's footsteps returning home would I again fall silent, in order not to cause her any anguish. The neighborhood women, however, who had heard my crying, would tell my mother about it, thus causing her to be upset.

“It was due to the pain that I caused her that Hashem punished me that I become famous.”

“On the other hand,” continued the Baal Shem Tov, “there exists a Tzaddik who as a baby totally controlled his urge to cry and never broke down. Even when his mother left the house, he would cry only very, very softly so that even the neighborhood women would not hear.

“Since he took such care to save his mother from any anguish, Hashem rewarded him and allowed him to remain anonymous, a hidden tzaddik.”

THE SON DID NOT WANT TO SUE HIS FATHER

It happened that a wealthy man promised his son, “If you marry this girl, I’ll support you and give you so-and-so much money.” The son married the girl, but the father reneged on his promise and refused to give him the money. The son’s friends said, “You should sue your father, since now you are forced to earn a livelihood and cannot pursue your Torah studies any more.” Replied the son, “How can I cause grief to my father? I will not take my father to court.”

SEFER CHASSIDIM 258

THE BOND BETWEEN FATHER AND SON LASTS EVEN AFTER DEATH

The following case was brought before the learned Rabbi Saadiah ben Joseph for adjudication: A merchant, accompanied by his servant, traveled to a distant country overseas, carrying a large sum of money on his person. While he was away from home, his wife gave birth to a

son. Subsequently, the merchant died (in that faraway country), leaving a fortune. Professing to be the merchant's son, the servant appropriated his master's vast inheritance. When the real son grew up and heard that his father had died, he went to claim his legacy that the servant had seized. Meanwhile, the servant had married into one of the families of the ruling aristocracy, so that the son was afraid to demand his rights lest he be killed. One day the son was invited for a meal at the house of Rabbi Saadiah, and told him of his predicament. On the rabbi's advice, the son presented his case to the king, who appointed Rabbi Saadiah as the judge to adjudicate the case. Rabbi Saadiah ordered that blood be drawn from the two litigants and placed into two separate bowls. He then took a bone of the deceased father and placed it in the bowl of the servant's blood. Nothing happened. When he placed the same bone in the bowl of the son's blood, the bone soaked up the blood. "This proves that they are one and the same body. He is the true son!" Rabbi Saadiah exclaimed, as he assigned the estate to the true son. Therefore, it is proper for a son to grieve and fast on the anniversary of his father's death.

SEFER CHASSIDIM 525

FIGHTING WITH ONE'S BROTHERS AND SISTERS CAUSES GREAT DISTRESS TO HIS PARENTS

There was a man who greatly respected his father and mother, but he was embroiled in a bitter fight with his

brothers and sisters, to the point that he would curse and infuriate them. His parents were deeply distressed about the bickering and the divisiveness. The rabbi told him, “You are honoring your father and your mother, yet, at the same time, you are causing them a great deal of grief. Imagine how anguished your parents would be if all your curses and imprecations came true. Therefore, don’t hurt your parents by cursing their children.” And even after one’s parents have passed away, a person should think, “If my father were alive, he would be saddened [if he heard me utter a curse]; therefore, I will not curse now either.” Because after death, the soul, which is man’s spirit, is aware of everything that is happening in this world.

SEFER CHASSIDIM 541

KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH YOUR PARENTS TO LET THEM KNOW YOU ARE WELL IS A GREAT MITZVAH

A person left his hometown to go on a dangerous journey. His father and mother are worried sick, fasting and praying for his safe return. When he is out of danger, it is a mitzvah for him hire a messenger to carry a letter to his parents, telling them that he arrived safely at his destination, so that they don’t have to be concerned and fast any longer.

SEFER CHASSIDIM 542

REVIEWING YORE DEAH INSTEAD OF EVEN HA EZER

Once the Holy Rabbi Yechezkel from Shinawa zt'l was posed a difficult question on the subject of AGUNOT. He studied the matter deeply and then he decided to go visit his father, the Holy Tzaddik Rabbi Chayim of Tzantz zt'l author of the "Divre Chayim". When he arrived at Tzantz, instead of going directly to visit his holy father, he went to an inn, took a seat on a table and demanded from the innkeeper a copy of the Shulchan Aruch, from the section YORE DEAH specifically, because he wanted to prepare for the conversation with his father. The assistant that was traveling with Rabbi Yechezkel asked him in surprise: "How come you have asked for the YORE DEAH section, when the subject of the AGUNA is discussed in the section of EVEN HA EZER? Rabbi Yechezkel explained to him as follows: "During the discussion that I will have with my revered father, we will have to argue matters of law (HALACHAH) and we may debate a particular law very intensely. Because of this, I must repeat to myself the laws concerning the honor due to your Father and Mother and these laws are found in the YORE DEAH section of the Shulchan Aruch. Because even when one talks of HALACHOT with his father, it is forbidden to forget to take all the necessary precautions in order to guard the laws of honoring due to a father.

When the innkeeper brought the book to Rab Yechezkel, he plunged into it for several hours without rest until he was able to manage all the details and nuances of these laws. Sippure Chassidim al ha torah

THE MOTHER WANTED THE SON TO HAVE THE MERIT OF SERVING HER

Reb Yitzchak of Vorki was always particular about showing respect to his mother, and every year he would journey to his birthplace, Zloshin, in order to fulfill this commandment. When there he would sit at the Friday night table together with her, while the many chassidim who assembled in the house crowded around the table to hear his teachings. Once his mother asked her son for a glass of water, but before he managed to move one of his Chassidim promptly rose and fulfilled her request. Leaving the glass on the table she said to her son: “Yitzchak, it was you I asked, not someone else.” The tzaddik rose at once and ran to bring her another glass of water. “The truth is that I don’t really want to drink,” she said. “I only wanted to give you the opportunity of being blessed with long life” — for this is the reward which the Torah promises those who observe this mitzvah. Then she turned to the chassidim around her and said: “One isn’t privileged to have a Yitzchak like this just from sitting and eating soup with noodles!”

Sippure Chassidim al ha Torah

Anyone who desires days and years and riches and honor and long life in this world and in the world to come, who desires a life that has no end and finality, he should do the will of his Father in Heaven and the will of his father and his mother therefore it is written: “Honor the Shabbat to make it holy...” and then “Honor your father and your mother...”. Tanna deve Eliyahu Rabba 26:25

THE SON DID NOT WANT TO CONTRADICT HIS FATHER EVEN TO HIS OWN DETRIMENT

A circle of brilliant young men used to assemble regularly to hear the scholarly discourses of Reb Yitzchak Meir of Ger, the author of Chiddushel HaRim. One of the listeners was his son, Reb Avraham

Mordechai. On one occasion, after delivering a lecture that was extraordinarily complex, Reb Yitzchak asked his listeners whether they had followed his argument throughout. The answer all around was negative. He then turned to his son: “And you likewise do not understand?”

Reb Avraham Mordechai shrugged his shoulders as if in assent. A moment later, however, when the tzaddik retired to an adjoining room, he overheard his son explaining to his friends every intricate step of the legal argument with remarkable clarity. Returning to his students he challenged his son: “If you understand the Pilpul so well, then why didn’t you fulfill the commandment of honoring one’s father and make me happy by answering, when I asked you, that you did in fact understand?”

“Father,” explained Reb Avraham Mordechai, “if you had asked me whether I understood, I would have answered ‘Yes’. But since you asked me whether I too did not understand, I fulfilled the commandment of honoring one’s father by not contradicting your words.”

Sippure Chassidim al ha Torah

IGGERET HA RAMBAN

(THE LETTER OF THE RAMBAN)

SPEAK CALMLY IN ORDER TO AVOID ANGER

Hear, my son, the instruction of your father and don't forsake the Torah of your mother (Mishle 1:8). Get into the habit of always speaking calmly to everyone. This will prevent you from anger, a serious character flaw which causes people to sin. As our Rabbis said (Nedarim 22a): **Whoever flares up in anger is subject to the discipline of Gehinnom as it says in (Kohelet 12:10), "Cast out anger from your heart, and remove evil from your flesh." "Evil" here means Gehinnom, as we read (Mishle 16:4): "...and the wicked are destined for the day of evil."**

THROUGH HUMILITY COMES THE FEAR OF G-D

Once you have distanced yourself from anger, the quality of humility will enter your heart. This quality is the finest of all admirable traits (see Avodah Zarah 20b), because (Mishle 22:4), "Following humility comes the fear of G-d." Through humility you will also come to fear G-d. It will cause you to always think about (see Avot 3:1) where you came from and where you are going, and that while alive you are only like a maggot and a worm, and the same after death. It will also remind you before Whom you will be judged, the King of Glory, as it is stated (I Melachim 8:27; Mishle 15:11), "Even the heaven and the

heavens of heaven can't contain You" -- "How much less the hearts of people!" It is also written (Yirmeyahu 23:24), "Do I not fill heaven and earth? says G-d."

**WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT ALL THIS YOU WILL
COME TO THE FEAR OF G-D**

When you think about all these things, you will come to fear G-d who created you, and you will protect yourself from sinning and therefore be happy with whatever happens to you. Also, when you act humbly and modestly before everyone, and are afraid of G-d and of sin, the radiance of His glory and the spirit of the Shechina will rest upon you, and you will live the life of the World-to-Come!

WHOEVER IS PROUD REBELS AGAINST G-D

And now, my son, understand and observe that whoever feels that he is greater than others is rebelling against the Kingship of G-d, because he is adorning himself with His garments, as it is written (Tehillim 93:1), "Hashem reigns, He wears clothes of pride." Why should one feel proud? Is it because of wealth? G-d makes one poor or rich (I Shmuel 2:7). Is it because of honor? It belongs to G-d, as we read (I Divre Hayamim 29:12), "Wealth and honor come from You." So how could one adorn himself with G-d's honor? And one who is proud of his wisdom surely knows that G-d "takes away the speech of assured men and reasoning from the sages" (Iyov 12:20)! So we see that everyone is the same before G-d, since with His anger He lowers the proud and when He wishes He raises the low. So lower yourself and G-d will lift you up!

**SPEAK GENTLY AND CONSIDER ALL
MEN SUPERIOR TO YOU**

Therefore, I will now explain to you how to always behave humbly. Speak gently at all times, with your head bowed, your eyes looking down to the ground and your heart focusing on G-d. Don't look at the face of the person to whom you are speaking. Consider everyone as greater than yourself. If he is wise or rich, you should give him respect. If he is poor and you are richer -- or wiser -- than he, consider yourself to be more guilty than he, and that he is more worthy than you, since when he sins it is through error, while yours is deliberate and you should know better!

**REGARD YOURSELF AS ALWAYS
STANDING BEFORE G-D**

In all your actions, words and thoughts, always regard yourself as standing before G-d, with His Shechinah above you, for His glory fills the whole world. Speak with fear and awe, as a slave standing before his master. Act with restraint in front of everyone. When someone calls you, don't answer loudly, but gently and softly, as one who stands before his master.

BE CAREFUL TO ALWAYS STUDY TORAH

Be careful to always study Torah diligently, so you will be able to fulfill its commands. When you arise from your learning reflect carefully on what you have studied, in order to see what in it that you can be put into practice. Examine your actions every morning and evening, and in this way every one of your days will be spent in teshuvah (repentance).

CONCENTRATE ON YOUR PRAYERS

Concentrate on your prayers by removing all worldly concerns from your heart. Prepare your heart before G-d, purify your thoughts and think about what you are going to say. If you follow this in all your daily actions, you will not come to sin. This way everything you do will be proper, and your prayer will be pure, clear, clean, devout and acceptable to G-d, as it is written (Tehillim 10:17), "When their heart is directed to You, listen to them."

READ THIS LETTER ONCE A WEEK AND G-D WILL ANSWER YOU IN ALL YOU ASK

Read this letter at least once a week and neglect none of it. Fulfill it, and in so doing, walk with it forever in the ways of G-d, may He be blessed, so that you will succeed in all your ways. Thus you will succeed and merit the World to Come which lies hidden away for the righteous. Every day that you shall read this letter, heaven shall answer your heart's desires. Amen, Sela! ***

When a person insults or hits his father or his mother, The Holy One Blessed be He as it were, brings His feet up and places them under His throne of glory and says: "I made My Honor equal to the parents' honor, the three are equal, if I were with them, they would do the same to Me, therefore it is good that I do not dwell with them in one place"

Tanna deve Eliyahu Rabba 26:25

**BARUCH HASHEM LEOLAM
AMEN VE AMEN**