

PARSHAS BEHA'ALOSCHA
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KEEP GOING

The cloud of Hashem was upon them when they traveled from the camp.



Toch Hanachal, Beha'aloscha 5763

MAN'S POWER

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Dear ...

Hitting children accomplishes nothing. All it does is show the parent's loss of self-control. Be careful never to hit your children – especially if stress is the trigger – because hitting a child out of anger can damage him for life, both physically and emotionally.

When the Sanzer Rav zt"l was a child in cheder, he once overturned a heavy wooden bench and the commotion disrupted the entire class. The infuriated melamed got up on the fallen bench and stamped on it with all his might, paying no heed to the fact that young Chaim's leg was trapped beneath it. Chaim'l was badly hurt by this incident but was afraid to tell his parents what had occurred, so he bore the tremendous pain in silence. He suffered from the melamed's anger for many years, as the untended injury caused him to limp for the rest of his life.

There is never an excuse to hit children out of anger. No parent should ever delude himself into thinking that it is in the name of *chinuch* – such behavior stems from nothing but his own temper that he never learned to control. Hitting children is cruel and has no logical basis whatsoever, as the Rebbe states (*Sefer HaMiddos, Banim 96*) that one who does not have compassion on his children demonstrates his lack of *seichel d'kedusha*.

When circumstances do warrant a parent to give a child a light smack (if he is *chutzpah'dig* or does something dangerous, for example) it must be done when the parent is calm and in control of his own emotions.

The key to meriting righteous children is *tefilla*. Parents mustn't spare tears when davening for *erliche* children. The Chasam Sofer was once asked how he was *zoche* to such outstanding children, and his response was one that every parent must take to heart. He said, "Every night while reciting *Tikkun Chatzos*, I cried and cried to be *zoche* to *erliche* children – so much so that I could have filled a cup with my copious tears."

May Hashem bless you with success in all your endeavors.

Adapted from *The Light of Emunah* #3, page 78



Man: A Menorah

The Rebbe teaches (*Likutei Moharan 1:21*) that a person is likened to the *menorah* in the *Beis Hamikdash*, complete with seven *neiros*: two eyes, two nostrils, two ears and one mouth. One's job on this world is to purify all these organs thereby "lighting" his "*menorah*", and his heart will then be set aflame to serve Hashem.

How do we go about the task of purifying our organs? What must we work on with each one?

Our **eyes** can be a source of spiritual growth or destruction. We must ensure that we look only at that which is holy, keeping our vision untainted by impure sights. The **ears** are our receiving base for information; therefore, we must use them properly by listening to the words of *tzaddikim* and not listening to impure speech or gossip. The **nose** represents one's temper. We must work to keep our anger – *חרון אף* – in check even when things don't go our way and work to attain *אריכות אפים* – patience. The **mouth** must be kept holy by using it to daven, learn and speak only of things that uplift.

When learning about the importance of keepings our eyes, ears, nose and mouth holy, it is easy to get discouraged. Of course we want to be good and purify all our "*neiros*", but how can we actually accomplish this goal? The sheer volume of work that is necessary in order to attain perfection can quickly extinguish any desire to improve. What is the solution?

Mighty Mouth

The *passuk* states (*Bamidbar 8:2*), "אל מור" – פני המנורה יאירו שבעת הנרות – When lighting the *menorah*, the seven *neiros* had to be bent toward the center flame. The question that begs to be asked is as follows: if the three *neiros* to the right had to lean toward the middle and the three *neiros* to the left had to lean toward the middle, the *passuk* should have said *ששת הנרות יאירו*, since the middle flame should not have been included. What is the reason for this seeming inconsistency?

Each flame in the menorah represents one of the above-mentioned organs, the middle one representing the mouth and the power of speech. All organs lean toward the mouth, since perfection in these areas are only possible when a person uses his mouth to daven to Hashem for help. Also included in the *שבעת הנרות* that are dependent on the mouth is the mouth itself, because the only way a person can gain mastery over this organ is by using it to turn to Hashem for help in this area, too. Just like we must ask Hashem for His help in purifying all our other senses, we must also beg Him to help us use our power of speech properly, to build with our words and not to destroy.

If we were to realize the potency that lies in the simple

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organ we use to speak, we wouldn't be overwhelmed by the enormous task of reaching purification. Instead, we would utilize every spare moment to talk to Hashem and beseech Him to help us master our *middos*, for when a person speaks to Hashem again and again, he will ultimately attain perfection in all areas.

Spot-On Speech

The Rebbe teaches of four types of speech that can be used to maximize the potential of the mouth (*Likutei Moharan* 2:2):

1) דיבור של תשובה

This kind of speech refers to talking to Hashem in one's own words, discussing every challenge and struggle just as one would with a close friend. The *passuk* states (*Hoshea* 14:3), "קחו עמכם דברים ושובו אל ה'" – Take words with you and return to Hashem." *Chazal* teach us (*Shemos Rabba*, 38:4) that the only thing Hashem expects from us is to talk to Him, since the natural outcome of this is that we will then return to Him.

2) דיבור של עשירות

This refers to training ourselves to speak positively about everything that occurs. *Chazal* teach us (*Avos* 4:1), "איזהו עשיר השמח בחלקו" – Who is truly rich? He who is happy with his lot."

A person with *emunah* knows that Hashem is the One running the world and that whatever occurs is part of His perfect plan. With this mindset, he never even thinks to complain or bemoan his fate. Instead, whenever he is asked how things are going, his response is always, "Baruch Hashem, everything is fantastic!" And then, as a result of speaking so positively all the time, his life truly becomes "fantastic!"

3) דיבור של מלכות

This refers to *mitzvos* that are done each day with the mouth: davening *shacharis*, *mincha* and *maariv*, saying *krias shema*, learning Torah, etc. When a person uses his power of speech for Torah and *tefilla*, his mouth becomes so pure that all who hear him speak are awakened to return to Hashem.

4) דיבור של צדקה

The greatest form of *tzedaka* is not done with money, but with words. More valuable than giving a large donation to a pauper is giving a hefty dose of *chizuk* to one in need. When a person gives money to a poor man, how much could those few dollars help him? Perhaps he'll be able to buy food for his family, or maybe pay rent for another month, but the cash will soon run out and he'll have to collect *tzedaka* again. However, when one gives *chizuk* to another, it can change his life forever! More valuable than the most magnanimous donation is one word of encouragement. We must distribute "tzedaka," spreading hope and positivity!

May we merit to use the gift of speech properly and thereby be *zoche* to a joyous life in *Olam Haze*h and *Olam Haba*.



pleaded with his father, "Please give me something warm for Grandfather!"

The miser was unmoved and responded, "Go to the attic and find something there. The clothes there are old; I don't need them anyway."

The boy went up to the attic and found an old coat, full of holes and covered in dust. Furious with the injustice, he took the tattered coat and tore it in two.

When he emerged from the attic with only half the coat, his father asked, "What is going on? What in the world do you have in your hands?"

The son responded, "It's half of a coat. I'm putting away the rest of it for **you**, so that when you will be old like Grandfather and I will kick you out of **my** home in the winter, I will send you the other half."

The wealthy miser realized his mistake, begged his father for forgiveness and invited him back into his home.

After reading this story, it is obvious how you should conduct yourself with your father, even though he is bad-tempered and blames you for everything. *Chazal* say, מעשה אבות סימן לבנים – the way you behave toward your parents is the way your children will behave toward you. You must continue to show your father respect and demonstrate to your wife and children how a Jew behaves toward his parents. By respecting and honoring your father you will be *zoche* to many blessings.

Keep sending me your questions and I will continue to guide you on the path that Mohorosh paved for us: the *derech* of our Rebbe who teaches us how we can merit a life of *Gan Eden* on this world.



DO I HAVE TO SPEND SHABBOS WITH MY FATHER?

Question:

To the Rosh Yeshiva shlita,

Thank you so much for all the shiurim and chizuk! They enhance my life so much. I especially look forward to and enjoy the shiurim that are given upstate in the summer months; they are really something special.

My father recently came to me for Shabbos and I put much effort into making it pleasant for all. However, things didn't quite work out as I had expected. My father was very irritable the entire time and kept getting annoyed with my children. As hard as I tried to make the seudos enjoyable, he still found reasons to be upset.

My father expects us to come to him for Shabbos quite often and invites himself over to us just as frequently. It's the same story each time: the atmosphere is tense and he is short-tempered. Of course, it's always my fault; whatever I do is never good enough for him. Do I have to keep going to him for Shabbos and hosting him in my own home? Why should my wife and children be subjected to this?

Thank you for everything.

The Rosh Yeshiva's Response:

Dear...,

I am so happy to hear that you derive *chizuk* from the *eitzos* of the Rebbe. Any person who gets a taste of the Rebbe's *hischazkus* is transformed – his davening and learning improve, he begins to yearn for a connection to Hashem and his entire life changes for the better.

Regarding your question: the *mitzvah* of *kibbud av v'em* is not an easy *mitzvah* to fulfill, yet its reward is tremendous. Not only that, but a person who honors his parents will have children who will respect him and honor him, and a person who does not honor his parents will have children who will behave with *chutzpah* toward him.



The Ben Ish Chai *zt"l* relates a powerful story on this topic:

An arrogant millionaire had an elderly, impoverished father. The wealthy man was also a big miser and had little sympathy for his less-fortunate father. Instead of helping him or giving him food and lodging, the millionaire threw his father out on the street to fend for himself.

One frigid day in middle of the winter, the miser's son came upon his grandfather sitting outside with the city's beggars, cold and hungry. Seeing his grandson, the poor man called out and begged for a warm coat so that he wouldn't freeze to death. The boy hurried home and

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