

Bais Yaacov Bnos Malka Newsletter

לעילוי נשמת יצחק עקיבא בן אהרן ז"ל

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Parshas Mishpatim

פרשת משפטים

אדר תשפ"ד



Setting the Table for Our Students

Parshas Mishpatim begins with the words, “ואלה המשפטים אשר תשים לפניהם,” “And these are the judgments that you shall place before them” (*Shemos* 21:1). What did *Hashem* mean when He told Moshe to place the *mishpatim* before *Bnei Yisroel*? Rashi explains that *Hashem* was telling Moshe that when he teaches Torah to *Am Yisroel*, he has to teach in a way that the Torah is like a “*shulchan aruch*,” like a table that is set and prepared to be eaten from. A teacher is obligated to explain things well, to be organized, and to clarify the Torah in a way that the student is able to understand.

One element of this obligation is preparation. In order to be able to teach in such a way, one has to put the time in to prepare for his lessons. Rav Orlowek *shlit”a* quotes from the *Pele Yoetz*, who urges even the best teachers to review their lessons before delivering them:

How fine and good that one about to address the public, with or without notes, should first review his speech two or three times privately. As *Chazal* say, “Even if he knows that *Hashem* has graced him with the educator’s tongue, it is a *mitzva* for him heed the Sages’ words – and personally benefit – by clarifying his talks repeatedly.”

It is striking that the *midrash* says that *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* Himself, in a sense, reviewed the Torah four times before presenting it to the Jewish People. We are supposed to learn from this the importance of proper preparation. This is one lesson one can take from this comment of Rashi.

There is another lesson as well. In order to teach this way – presenting a “set table” before one’s students – one has to be patient. It sometimes takes time for students to understand even the clearest and most organized lesson. Nevertheless, a teacher must be patient enough to continue going over the material until the students understand.

Rav Orlowek develops a beautiful insight, based on *Chazal*, regarding this idea. In several places, *Chazal* write that a teacher is supposed to resemble a *malach*, an angel. Rav Orlowek explains that there is an important difference between an angel and a human being. An angel is referred to as “עומד,” while a human is called a “הולך.” A *malach* remains at one level and stands in place; he does not grow. Man, on the other hand, is supposed to be constantly moving and progressing, always “walking.”

When *Chazal* say that a teacher is supposed to be like an angel, it means that he is supposed to stand in one place. He has to sacrifice his own moving forward, his own progression, for the sake of his students' learning. Obviously, a teacher has to continue to grow and develop his own learning. *Chazal* mean that in the classroom, a teacher's focus has to be on what is best for his students. If that means that the teacher will have to repeat the same thing several times, that is what she must do – even though the teacher doesn't gain anything personally by the time she has said it for the fourth or fifth time. A teacher's entire focus has to be on his students' best interests, even at the expense of his own growth in learning during the class time. This, I think, is a second point that we can derive from this Rashi.

This is a major *yesod* both in parenting and in teaching. Our goal should be what is best for the child, what is best for the *talmid* not what is best for us. As Rav Orlowek writes:

If your son enters the kitchen on Friday afternoon while you're preparing the cholent, and you tell him to leave because he is disturbing you, this is anti-educational. A parent should be concerned only with how his child develops. It might be good *chinuch* to send him out of the kitchen to teach him to avoid distracting others when they are busy, but the goal should not be that he is asked to leave the kitchen for the parent's own convenience... The *nachas* that the father enjoys is an outgrowth of his child's development. But on the other hand, if a father teaches his child only because he wants to have *nachas* from him, the result will be imperfect. When he teaches his child because he wants his child to mature into a correct person, the *nachas* comes as a matter of course. This is the foundation of all *chinuch*. The *talmid's chinuch* is my only concern. In this way, and only this way, does the *talmid* become my son, and the son become my *talmid*.

May we all be *zocheh* to learn and apply the lessons for *chinuch* from this comment of Rashi.

Have a wonderful and peaceful Shabbos!

Chana Ginsburg

The dvar Torah has been adapted from the sefarim of Rav Binish Ginsburg
This citation is from *My Disciple, My Child*, p. xxvii (with minor changes).



Kita Hey
is all
smiles!



Kita Alef
portrayed
the stories
they learned
in Aggadot
Chazal about
the mitzvah
of Kibud Av
V'em.



Kitot Vav-Chet enjoyed some wacky competitions in a fun and messy peula. The program culminates in a talent show this week, stay tuned!



Siyum B'Haaloscha
in Kita Daled was a
smashing success!



Kita Gimmel is ready for the Geula! They re-enacted Yetziat Mitzrayim as they finished learning Parshat B'Shalach.



Kita Alef learned all about the different geometrical shapes and designed pictures with them.