

Kibbud Av v'Em
Issues of Honor and Reverence in the Modern Context for Adult Children

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Thesis Summary

Kibbud Av v'Em, Issues of Honor and Reverence in the Modern Context for Adult Children is intended to present an understanding of the issues that confront adult children in fulfilling their filial obligations and responsibilities in the United States in the Twenty-first century. This paper is grounded in an exploration of our traditional texts, starting with the *Torah*, and then moving into the *Talmud Bavli (Kiddushin)*, *Mishneh Torah*, *Shulchan Aruch* and commentaries. I then employed other modern commentators to further explore the subject matter as well as current authors, scholars and current statistical and demographic data.

The paper is divided into 4 sections. The first section entitled, “The Impossible Dream- Kibbud Av v'Em,” explores the concepts of honor and reverence, where they first appear in the *Torah*, how they are explicated in the pages of *Kiddushin* of the *Talmud Bavli* and the extraordinary, practically impossible task at hand. The second section is entitled, “Honor and Reverence for Parents: Practical *Halakhah*.” This section explores the development of the *halakhah* of honor and reverence within our texts including the *Mishneh Torah* and *Shulchan Aruch*. The third section entitled, “The Emotional Component in the *Mitzvot* of Honor and Reverence,” delves into the emotional and practical issues and how they affect honor and reverence. The fourth section entitled, “The Issue of Distance in Effecting Honor and Reverence,” explores the modern context of distance, the unique emotional and physical issues confronting the contemporary Baby Boomers. This section also offers suggestions as to how the rabbi and synagogue have an opportunity to provide assistance and support.

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Introduction

On January 8, 2011 my father passed away. He died of a heart attack after a protracted bout with emphysema, the result of a lifetime of heavy smoking. It was a week after he celebrated his 80th birthday at his home with his three adult children, their families and other friends. During his 10-year fight against an inexorable disease, I confronted the issue of how to observe the mitzvot *kibbud* and *mora*, honor and respect for parents.

I moved with my family to Florida in 1994. At that time, my father was not yet sick. I missed being in close proximity to my dad, but the decision to move was based on the needs of my family. He was diagnosed with emphysema when he suffered respiratory arrest. He recovered from the immediate trauma, and was able to move about relatively well, continuing to work in the real estate business. I invited him to join me in Florida, suggesting we might live together (I had divorced from my wife). But he declined, preferring to remain in familiar surroundings and among friends. I travelled up to New York to visit, as much as I could. But he was close to my brother who kept a rather close eye on our father.

As I contemplated the journey into the rabbinate and the decision to go to school, I considered my dad's situation. He was relatively robust. But his disease would get worse and he would decline in health. Part of the timing of the decision to leave for

Israel was based on the understanding that his health would deteriorate. So the sooner I went, the earlier in the process I would be back. I also knew that I needed to return to New York. A different campus would place me too far away.

I packed my things and went to New York to spend a week with my Dad before leaving for Israel. We shared a lovely time. He drove me to the airport and told me how proud he was as I embarked on this path to study for the rabbinate. While in Israel, we spoke regularly, often at length and with substance about what was going on with each of us. I believe that both of us enjoyed this time together and the conversations we shared served to strengthen our relationship.

I was given the transfer to the New York campus but actually came home to Philadelphia, to my fiancée. We started our life together and I started working for a synagogue in the Philadelphia suburbs while attending school in New York. My weekdays were spent in New York at school and my weekends were mostly spent studying at home or at the synagogue. Seeing my father did not happen often enough. His home was not easily accessible from either New York or Philadelphia and the grueling schedule of school made substantial blocks of free time scarce. That part of my plan was not working as well as I had hoped it would.

I did what I could to remain supportive of my father. I visited when I could and we spoke on the phone with regularity. The responsibility for caregiving however was my brother's. He made the time and facilitated my father's ability to live independently. I am grateful that my brother decided to assume this role, although I

do not believe he was obligated to do it alone. I struggled with the knowledge that I was unable to provide as my brother provided, either in terms of time or financial resources. Doing the best I could was one of those thorny issues. Was I in fact doing the best I could or was I rationalizing that what I did was somehow adequate? In his last five years, dad was living in a compromised situation, relying heavily on my brother and struggling with the stairs of his home. Where was the line drawn between helping him cling to the independent living arrangement and the safer, more secure, healthier and more social environment an assisted living facility would permit?

I believe that the genesis of my thesis started there. The struggle with how to fulfill my filial obligations was as old as time itself but a modern struggle as well. The thesis starts with an exploration of several *dapim* in Kiddushin (30-32). There the parameters of *kavod* and *mora* are already well established. Our morning prayer, *Eilu Devarim*, based on the Mishnah, Pe'ah 1:1 and declares there are certain things that are limitless, among them Honor of Father and Mother.

We continue to struggle with the issues that surround our filial obligations. The Jewish wisdom contained in our texts is profound and certainly a strong framework for understanding what we are to do. The Talmud even explains the reason why we do it as it understands our two parents in the context of a larger relationship, a “trinity” expanded to include God. The values set forth in the Talmud remain foundational. But modernity comes with a new set of complications. In this country and in this time, parents are living longer than ever. They statistically also have greater wealth than at any other time in history. This country and culture have

provided extraordinary mobility for both parents and children, so quite often one or the other has moved to a new location. Long gone are the days of sharing the same house or living in the same small village for an entire, and much shorter lifetime. Parents are living longer. The extended lifespans give new opportunity to remain active and engaged. But health issues are quite real and place a potentially onerous burden on the family fortunes as technology permits treatment of illness and extension of life-span. but does not necessarily address the quality of that life. The focus has been on resolving the issue of “what can we do” and only recently has the conversation turned to address “what should we do”. Further, the demands made by the children’s children are also great. New understandings of development, college and culture have all contributed to costly and ongoing requirements of many of these children for substantial and extended parental support.

It is my intention to explore and develop and understanding of Honor and Reverence through a Jewish lens, using the wisdom literature of our tradition, the vast compendium of knowledge and thought developed through time and cultures. I do not propose to definitively answer the question “How do I Honor and Revere My Parents”? Our rabbis and sages have helped us understand that there is no easy answer to the question, but in my thesis I am allowing myself the opportunity to seriously engage it. Only after we have engaged this question can we try to do our best to engage in the sacred work of honoring and revering our parents.

Chapter 1

כבוד ומורא את ההורים: The Impossible Dream

We are charged with the *Mitzvot* to Honor Father and Mother, *kibbud Av v'Em*, כבוד אב, and to revere/fear father and mother, מורא אם ואב. These *mitzvot* are based in Exodus 20:12, commonly known as the Fifth Commandment: כבד את-אביך ואת-אמך, "Honor your Father and Mother so that you will have long days on the earth which the Lord your God has given you." The mitzvah to revere parents is derived from Leviticus 19:3: –איש אמו ואביו תיראו ואת–, "You shall each revere his mother and his father, and keep My Sabbaths, I am the Lord your God."

The commands are clear. However, the implementation of the *mitzvot* are anything but clear. The aphorism "the devil is in the details" seems to apply. The rabbis quickly grasped the enormity of the implications contained in these two deceptively simple commands intended to apply to every adult in Jewish society. How does one practice honor, כבוד, and יראה, reverence? The question is given even greater gravitas because of the inclusion of God into the charge. God's presence substantially increases the stakes in the discussion as Judaism grapples with the concepts of honor and reverence. By acknowledging parents, people admit we are not the source of our own being. Rather, we owe our existence itself to forces beyond our personal reality. Issues of origin is paradigmatic to the choice between self-centeredness and acknowledging the Other.¹

1. Gerald J. Blidstein, *Honor Thy Father and Mother: Filial Responsibility in Jewish*

It makes sense from a sociological point of view that children should feel a sense of filial responsibility. Society benefits from a system wherein parents are not simply cast out once their duties as caregivers has been fulfilled. There would be little incentive to rear children if parents were left to fend for themselves as they grew older and increasingly challenged. There is a natural reciprocity at work when the young, who are incapable of survival without parental nurturing, respond by caring for those who have sustained them in their time of need. The child's "indebtedness" to his or her parents is further heightened because we understand our very existence is the result of our parents actions. Indeed, the rabbis understand the profound nature of this aspect of the parent/child relationship as they explain the act of procreation not as something limited to the parents, but rather as a partnership of the parents with God in the creation of life.

The Talmud as well as several other sources of Jewish wisdom view God as an integral and personal participant in procreation. *Kiddushin* 30b states:

“The rabbis taught in a Baraita, There are three partners in the creation of a person, the Holy One, Blessed be He, his father and his mother. When a person honors his father and his mother, the Holy One, Blessed be He, says: “I consider it as if I had lived among them and they honored Me.”²

Law and Ethics (Jersey City, NJ: KTAV Pub. House, 2005), p. 5.

2. *Kiddushin* 30b.

Rashi explains in *Kiddushin* 30b that the words for man and woman, אִישׁ and אִשָּׁה, are the same except for the י and the ה which together spell a name of God, יהי-ה.³ Rabbi Joseph expounds upon and supports the intimate relationship between God and parents stating, that when he heard his mother's footsteps, "אִיקוּם מִקְמִי שְׁכִינָה דַּאֲתִיָּא", "I will stand before the approaching *Shechinah*."⁴

The *Mekhilta d'Rabbi Ishmael* explicates the text of *Exodus* 20:12-14 by quoting no less than Yehuda Ha-Nasi, Rabbi, the force behind the compilation of the *Mishnah*. The two verses of honor and reverence, *Exodus* 20.12 and *Leviticus* 19.3, respectively, are summarized by Rabbi to mean that Scripture places honoring of ones parents, fearing of one's parents are equivalent to honoring and fearing God. Further, the cursing of one's parents is just like cursing God.⁵ The result is that behavior is either rewarded or punished appropriately: "If you honor them, the result will be that your days will be long, and if not, the result will be that your days will be short." Rashi similarly explains the verse. Both Rabbi and Rashi focus on the portion of the phrase "that your days may be lengthened," "לִמְעַן יֵאָרְכֶן יְמֵיךָ" and excluding the

3. *Kiddushin* 30b.

4. *Kiddushin* 31b.

5. Mother and Father are considered equals for the purposes of honor and respect. The source for this understanding is based on Father being listed first in the *Exodus* verse and Mother coming before father in the *Leviticus* verse. There are however a question that arise when honoring one conflicts with honoring the other. There are rules that are laid out for when there are conflicts between competing deeds for mother and father as well as for parents and in-laws. As Rashi explains in his interpretation of *Leviticus* 19, every man has the ability to fulfill the obligation to fear his parents without restriction, but a married woman is under the authority of another, namely her husband.

clause “on the land that the Lord, your God is giving you,” “על האדמה אשר יהוה אלהיך” “נתן לך”. Honoring parents in accordance with the Fifth Commandment is no longer bound to the Land. Honoring parents is to be observed wherever you may be. Proper treatment of parents will result in God’s blessing.

The chapter Bachodesh, in the *Mekhilta de-Rabbi Ishmael*, ends in an interesting and somewhat cryptic manner. After espousing the duties of honor and fear/reverence as well as the respective reward and punishment, the chapter concludes: “שדברי תורה” “נוטריקון”, “For the words of Torah are *Notarikon*.” By definition, *notarikon* is the system of mnemonics used to reduce phrases where a word is represented usually by the first letter of that word, creating an acronym. By ending this chapter with this comment, we are taught that the Torah is exponentially greater than the words of the scroll. Each letter represents at least an entire word/thought. So by extension, the verses quoted as the basis of honor and reverence from Exodus and Leviticus are therefore infinitely more complex than the *mitzvot* we are instructed to follow. Given our rich history of attempting to plumb the meaning of Torah, with commentator after commentator, we can conclude that honor and reverence are elusive at best, ever-evolving and limited by our own capacity to understand. So we are left to grapple with how does a child properly honor and fear parents.

6. "Bachodesh," in *Mekhilta De-Rabbi Ishmael*, trans. Jacob Z. Lauterbach (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1976), p. 259.

How far does the honor of Parents extend? The Talmud understands one of the particularly difficult aspects of honor, namely the financial obligation. This very question is posed by Rabbi Ulla to Raba in *Kiddushin* 31a. Story of Dama ben Netinah as told by Rabbi Eliezer tells us of a non-Jew who refuses to disturb his father's sleep to conclude a business deal to provide special jewels to the priests. Dama's refusal to negotiate is mis-interpreted as hard bargaining. Although the offers to buy the jewels continue to increase, Dama will not dishonor his father by awakening him to access the key beneath his pillow and does not conclude a transaction.⁷ Later, when Dama can make a deal, he returns to the original price he would have accepted, foregoing a chance to make substantially more money. Honoring a parent is far more important than any financial gain. A second story told of a Rabbi of the Talmud, continues to expound this important component of honor.

The story of Rabbi Tarfon helps to focus on the impossibility of the task at hand. He explains in *Kiddushin* 31b that he would bend over to permit his mother to climb on him in order to get in and out of bed. Instead of being lauded by his compatriots, the text says they chastised him saying he had not given his mother even half the honor due her. She had not yet taken his purse, perhaps a reference to his inheritance, and thrown it into the ocean without his protesting her action. Another similar situation is considered in *Kiddushin* 32a. This is a test of honoring one's parent; a child's proper response, even to the destruction of his or her property is to not react at all to such an

7. Dama is held out as an exemplar for us to follow. Dama acts in accordance with the mitzvah, but he is not obligated because he is a non-Jew. We are taught through this passage that as a mitzvah, we have a higher obligation to fully observe than the gentile. But Dama holds himself to an extraordinarily high standard.

action, lest he shame his father or mother. The relative importance of honor and money or material possessions is clear. Honor is more important.

Rav Huna reportedly tested his son, Rabbah, and tore silks in his presence, saying, Let me see if he gets angry, ⁸ איזול איחזי אי רתח⁸. Rav Huna destroyed valuable property but his son did not react. The Talmud probes the various aspects of this situation to understand the motivations of each of the two actors. Ultimately, the Talmud absolves Rav Huna of wrong doing and similarly commends Rabbah in his restraint. The honor of a parent is more important than even valuable possessions.

There appears to be a “Catch-22” regarding honor. In *Kiddushin* 31b We are told of the story of Rabbi Jacob ben Abbahu whose father and mother hold him in high esteem. Mother and father prepare wine for their son for when he returns home from school. One pours the wine and the other mixes the water. Abaye instructs Rabbi Jacob to accept it from his mother, but not to accept it from his father, as his father may feel affronted. The text understands that the father is likely performing this task willingly, but because he is a scholar, he may none-the-less feel ambivalence about providing this service to his son.⁹ However, the following questions arise: If the father has decided to perform this task, which appears to be one of service and honor on be-

8. This provocation of Rabbah has additional implications which will be discussed in a later chapter. Rav Huna ran the risk of entrapping his son and prompting him to act disrespectfully. Rav Huna was potentially guilty of “placing a stumbling block before the blind” לפני עור לא תתן מכשל (Lev. 19:14).

9. The Rav Huna incident also reverberates with this issue. The Gemarah states that Rav Huna had foregone the honor due him before submitting his son to the test, דמחיל ליה ליקריה.

half of his son, would not the act of refusing his hospitality be the very kind of shaming that we are instructed to avoid? Does preventing the possible shame the father might feel after the fact warrant the harshness of refusing a gift? Honoring one's parents appears almost impossible to achieve.

The couple in our story are not unlike many parents of accomplished children. They are proud of their children and continue to offer them gifts and service as a means of expressing their feelings of love. This is not a unique circumstance, although the particular rabbi, Rabbi Jacob, the subject of the story, is someone of virtue and merit, זכות, which makes the story all the more important as an example. But we all are aware of, if not experienced with, the mother who starts cooking the moment her child calls to say they are coming by for a visit. Is it not disrespectful to turn her aside from doing that which she likely finds meaningful in her own understanding as a loving mother? So this piece of *aggadah* leaves us in a quandary. No matter how we respond, we find ourselves in the wrong, offending a sensibility with improper thought or action.

This brings us to the important issue of intention. It is deemed wrong to only do the right thing. Action or deed without the proper intention is as wrong and therefore punishable as incorrect action. The *kavanah*, כונה, is of equal importance and value as the *keva*, קבע. In *Kiddushin* 31a-31b, a discussion focuses on the importance of inten-

tion. Avimi the son of Rabbi Abahu.^{10 11} “יש מאכיל לאביו פסיון וטורדו מן העולם.” One can feed his father *pisyon*, and drive him from the world, ויש מטחינו בריחים, and one can make him grind with a millstone, ומביאו לחיי העולם הבא, and bring him life in the World to Come. Rashi explains that despite serving a delicious meal, the son would be punished if served the meal with resentment. And in contrast, if the father had to work because the son was unable to support for the family and the son encouraged his father to help giving him due respect, the son will be rewarded. Rashi bases this explanation on the *Yerushalmi*, which shares two stories that elaborate these two parts of Avimi’s statement.

Avimi practices this correct sense of honor as illustrated in the following story which details his insistence to run to open the door of his home to his father, despite Avimi having five sons at home who were ordained (received סמיכה) and therefore knowledgeable in honoring their father. Avimi’s opportunity to honor his father was too great to forego. He was rewarded with understanding (of Divine source) Psalm 79,

10. The choice of protagonist for this story is significant as the Gemara will use both Avimi and his father R. Abahu as prototypes for teaching correct ways to honor their parents. When Avimi speaks, his voice carries appropriate gravitas.

11. A particularly tasty bird, such as a pheasant.

מזמור לאסף, “A Song of *Asaf*.”¹² Until this point Avimi was unable to comprehend the passage.¹³

The issue of honor and reverence is so deeply troubling and the task of fulfilling the *mitzvot* so daunting that the discussion in the Talmud actually goes to the extreme and suggest that it is preferable to be an orphan rather than have to experience the misery of failing to properly honor and respect one’s parents. Rabbi Yochanan submits “Happy is he who has not seen them.”¹⁴. This brings us back to the place of beginning, which is to ask how does one honor and revere one’s parents? The *Talmud* is not satisfied to leave this question so completely unresolved and conflicted. *Kiddushin* 31b attempts to explain the practical ways that honor and reverence can be expressed.

12. Psalm 79 seeks God’s forgiveness and return to his people to remember and avenge them in the wake of the Temple’s destruction and the murder of the Jews of Jerusalem. I presume the Psalm of Ingathering is deliberately selected as the troubling text for Avimi and here is used as a metaphor for the punishment for improperly treating parents and the rewards for giving parents their proper due.

13. Rashi’s commentary, *Kiddushin* 31b.

14. *Kiddushin* 31b.

Chapter 2

Honor and Reverence for Parents: Practical *Halakhah*

What is proper reverence and what is proper honor, *איזהו מורא ואיזהו כיבוד*? Simply put, the *Talmud* instructs from a *תנו רבנן* Baraita that reverence means that a child does not stand in his father's place, nor sit in his father's place. He may not contradict his father's words, nor offer an opinion on his father's words. Honor means a son must provide food and drink, dress and cover him, bring him in and take him out.¹⁵

Taken at face value, the filial responsibilities appear straightforward based on this synopsis provided by the *Talmud*. However, the task of properly honoring and revering one's parents is an impossible one. The degree to which one owes filial reverence and honor to those who have given life and nurtured is beyond the scope of human capacity. For as parents, mother and father are considered on a par with God in the creation of human life and they are to be handled as such. The unbounded responsibilities also seem to contain potentially contradictory commands and the requirement to have intention underlying actions that is completely pure. The *aggadic* stories of *Kiddushin* seem to say that no matter how much one does, it is insufficient to pay proper tribute to mother and father. Such a situation is impractical, and would be the cause of a breakdown in the society due to the onerous stresses it places on the children. Each act would be the source of angst and likely would lead to ripping apart the fami-

15. *Kiddushin* 31b.

ly unit and support system upon which society depended. The Rabbis of the Talmud understand this and begin to move from the *aggadic*-laden earlier passages into a more *halakhic* discussion creating the rules that inform how we fulfill the Torah based commands, דאורייתא, to Honor and Revere.

In his book, *Consolation*, Maurice Lamm discusses Maimonides' view of the afterlife, leading to his observation that "...Often it is in Judaism that abstract principles must be held in the larger, conceptual sense...(while for) pragmatic religious behaviors, the observances of the faith are worked out to their most minute detail..."¹⁶ Similarly, the rabbis move from the philosophical abstract concepts of honor and reverence and concretize pragmatic ways to exhibit honor and reverence.

An Example of Practical *Halakhah* Regarding Honor and Reverence

A key insight into the practical issues of honor and reverence are found in story of Rav Assi and his mother. Rav Assi cared for his old mother, אַמָּא זְקִינָה. She asks of him and he fulfills her requests for jewelry. She then requests of him a husband "בענא" "as handsome/pleasing as you". There is a recognition that the request is not a healthy one, and Rav Assi left her to travel to אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל. It is from this passage that Maimonides and subsequent commentators including the *Shulchan Aruch*

16. Lamm, Maurice, *Consolation, The Spiritual Journey Beyond Belief*, Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia, PA, p. 168.

understand limitations on caregiving for parents. When it is not possible for a child to properly care for his or her parent, a child can leave their care to someone who can properly care for them.¹⁷

Honor and Reverence in Life and After Death

There are practical issues and very particular differences in fulfilling the *mitzvot* of honor and reverence. There are also issues that are specific to honoring after death, that are different from those required of a child while the parent is alive. These are expounded in *Kiddushin* 31a.

Honor and Reverence in the Talmud

Kiddushin 31a focuses on how a child is to fulfill the mitzvah of Honor. This is accomplished through specific actions identified by the sages. A child extends honor to his father both during his lifetime and even after death. For example, while one's father is alive, a child must act deferentially in the public sphere to his father and also protect the father's reputation, for the son's request will be heard for his father's sake, הנשמע בדברר אביו למקום.¹⁸

17. Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Mamrim* 6:10, and R. Joseph Karo, *Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh De'ah*, 240:10.

18. *Kiddushin* 31a.

The son cannot exploit the reputation of his father and he must accordingly. If the son asked a favor of another, relying on his father's reputation to have the favor granted, the son cannot make the request as though it would be granted because of the son's standing. The *sugya* extends this further; even if the son was held in the same esteem as his father, the son should still refrain from asking in his own name, preserving the son's respect for and deference to his father in the public sphere. Everything should be requested for the sake of the Father, כְּלֵהוּ בְּשֵׁבִיל אָבָא. Conversely, if a father's reputation is less than that of his son, the son must rely on his own reputation and not his father's. Otherwise, Rashi explains, the son risks disgracing his father if the son request is not granted.¹⁹

Honor continues even after death. Certain actions are taken to maintain the son's mystical obligations to his father during the first year of *avelut*, mourning²⁰. Specifi-

19. Rashi, *Kiddushin* 31a, s.v. שלחוני בשביל אבא.

20. Kaddish Yatom is not known to the Talmud. The first mention of Kaddish Yatom came in the *Or Zarua*, a thirteenth century halakhic work written by Isaac ben Moshe, the *Riaz*, according to the *Jewish Encyclopedia* and Hayim Donin in his book, *To Pray As A Jew*. This practice took on new meaning as Kaddish Yatom developed. When one dies, certain Jewish customs adhere to the belief that the deceased's soul enters Gehennom, for a period of atonement for misdeeds or sins committed in life. The mourners through prayer and rituals are empowered to honor the deceased's soul and also assist the souls elevation to its new, higher state of life. This state is expected to last a maximum of 11 months, as it is custom to understand that only the most wicked would be required to atone for a full year in Gehennom. A story is told of Rabbi Akiva meeting a man/spirit laboring as a wood carrier, bringing the wood used to burn him in Gehennom as punishment for his misdeeds while alive. He informs Akiva he would be released from this sentence if his son would recite the *Barchu* and the *Kaddish* before a *kehillah* that would respond with "Yhei Shemei Rabbah Mevorakh." The matter is further complicated because the father had neglected the son during his life. Akiba finds the son and teaches him Torah as well

cally, the Talmud instructs that a son when quoting his father not merely make attribution to his father during the first year. Instead the son instead should state, “So said my father, my master. May I be an atonement for his soul,” “אמר אבא מרי הריני כפרת”²¹ After the first year, there remain ways in which the son can act and continue to give his proper honor to his father’s memory. After *avelut*, the son is required to make the following attribution: “May his memory be blessed for life in the world to come”, “זכרונו לברכה לחיי העולם הבא.” Later, in the *Shulchan Aruch* the phrase is abbreviated to simply לברכה.²²

Honor of a Parent in Regard to Torah Scholarship

The rabbis continue further in their understanding of proper honor of a father in matters of Torah and quote a *Baraita* explaining that sages must not use the proper name

as the prayer. With the recitation the man’s soul was released from judgement and given eternal rest (*Mahzor Vitry*). The text from the *Mahzor Vitry* is included in the appendix.

21. These words are supposed to be said for the first full year after the father has died. This interestingly comments on the idea that in fact the father may have been wicked enough to warrant a full 12 months in Gehennom. However, a son’s honor of his father none-the-less extends to him, despite this possibility. This is complicated by the recitation of Kaddish which lasts for only 11 months, consistent with the understanding that no one is so fully wicked as to warrant a full year in Gehennom. Rabbi Moses Isserles references the 11-month recitation in his gloss to the Yoreh De’ah 374:4.

22. Joseph Karo, *Shulchan Aruch*, Yoreh De’ah 240:9.

of either their father or teacher when quoting them. The son would refer to his father not by name, but rather one would say either “this is what my father, my master said...” or “this is what my teacher, my master said...” The translator, תורגמן, however would cite the father’s name, so proper attribution would be correct. This careful treatment of the father’s name and words, would seem to be a natural extension of the sensitivity towards a father’s reputation in the public as well as the prohibition against commenting on a father’s statements, which will be taken up below.

Reverence

The rabbis taught in a *Baraita* that reverence means a children may not stand or sit in their parent’s place. They may not contradict their parent’s words and even more extreme, a son may not offer an opinion in any debate in which the father is a party.²³ Honor means that a child must give his father food and drink, dress him and cover him, bring him in and take him out. The Schottenstein Talmud’s editor understands that the mitzvah of honoring one’s parents demands that one act in a positive manner to show respect while the mitzvah of reverence demands that one not act in a way that detracts from their (the parents) status.²⁴

23. *Kiddushin* 31b.

24. Hersh Goldwurm, Yisroel Simcha. Schorr, and Noson Boruch. Herzka, "Kiddushin 30-32," in [Talmud Bavli] = *Talmud Bavli : The Schottenstein Edition : The Gemara : The Classic Vilna Edition, with an Annotated, Interpretive Elucidation, as an Aid to Talmud Study* (Brooklyn, NY: Mesorah Publications, 2004), p. 31b.

These ideas serve to rein in the unbounded filial piety and reverence commanded by the two verses of Exodus and Leviticus. However, they have not adequately concretized the things that one would do or would not do to properly demonstrate and to fulfill the obligations of the children to their parents.

Codified Halakhah in the Mishneh Torah

In the Mishnah Torah, Maimonides codifies a series of *halakhot*, specifically in *Hilchot Mamrim- The Laws of the Rebellious Elders*, that are grounded in Kiddushin 31b. Maimonides elucidates five mitzvot related to parents in chapter 6, of a total of nine, specific to honor and reverence towards parents:

Not to curse father or mother.	שלא לקלל אב ואם.
Not to strike them (mother or father).	שלא להכותם.
To honor them (father or mother).	לכבדם.
To revere (fear) them (father or mother).	ליראם.
For a son not to rebel against the voice (from the teachings) of his father or mother.	שלא יהיה הבן סורר ומורה של קול אביו ואמו.

Rambam understands the importance of filial responsibility to society. Further, Maimonides supports the notion that treating parents with contempt is cursed by God.²⁵ This is likely based on the concept that one who curses his parents curses God. Further, children may not, according to Maimonides, cause pain to parents.²⁶ Subtly the conversation has developed a new boundary. The adult must children be sensitive to their affect on their parents.

Maimonides Fleshes Out the Torah's Generalities about Honor and Reverence:

The Laws of Parental Obligations as Recorded by Maimonides

In chapter 6 of *Hilchot Mamrim* these *mitzvot* are explained in further detail. Honor of parents and fear (reverence) of one's parents is the first listed, and is considered of great importance. Maimonides relies on the proof texts of Exodus 20:12, כבד את אביך, ואת אמך, Honor your father and mother, and Proverbs 3:9, כבד את יי מהונך ומראשית כל-²⁷

25. Blidstein, *Honor Thy Father and Mother: Filial Responsibility in Jewish Law and Ethics*, p42.

26. *ibid.*

27. The *Mishneh Torah* quotes only the first portion of Proverbs 3:9, Honor God from the first of your harvest. The entire verse is included above. It is also noteworthy that the second portion of the verse is not included. This is possibly to ensure that the admonition to honor remains in force, and not limited to those who are farmers or vintners.

תבואתך, Honor God from your wealth (with the best of all your income, the first of your harvest), as the grounding for Honor.

Maimonides joins two verses from Torah, Leviticus 19:3, “A person must fear his mother and father,” “איש אמו ואביו תיראו” with Deuteronomy 6:13, “And you shall fear your God,” “את יי אלוהיך תירא,” equating the fear of mother and father with the fear of God, if that is possible. For now parents are considered on a plane with God. Just as He commands us to honor and fear His great name; so, too, He commands us to honor and fear our parents,” “כך צווה על כבוד שמו הגדול ומוראו, כן צווה על כבודם.” Rambam also follows *Kiddushin* affirming that both mother and father are to be treated equally in this regard.

Maimonides moves on to rein-in how to properly demonstrate the ideals of Honor and Reverence, as he asks “What is meant”, “ואי זהו”? He reiterates the passage from *Kiddushin* 31²⁸, Fear is not standing in his place, not sitting in his place, not contradicting his words, nor offering an opinion on his words.²⁹ These are actual things are those

28. It is interesting to note that although mother and father are to be treated equally in the spheres of honor and reverence, the passage in the Talmud and the *Mishneh Torah* both are explicitly dealing with the son’s responsibility toward the father. The *aggadic* texts of the Talmud offer strong examples of filial responsibility toward the mother however, as we move toward concretization, the examples are of how to fulfill duty toward the father. There are also no equivalents for the mother regarding a place sitting or speaking in the synagogue or among the elders, and there would not be an opportunity to quote one’s mother in a scholarly discussion.

29. There is an issue regarding the proper translation of the word מכריע. Eliyahu Touger, in his translation with commentary of the Mishnah Torah, offers the translation as “outweighs” based on Rambam’s Responsum 264. Touger acknowledges that an alternative translation is “support”, which is also used in the

done in a father's presence or in a father's place, rather than a metaphorical idea. Although this idea appears implied in the Talmud, the clarification is important. A son is not required to remain silent on all issues for which the father has offered an opinion. A son is able to express his own opinions on matters, even when they are different from the father's, provided the opinion is not offered in front of his father, an idea expressed in the *Shulchan Aruch*.³⁰ Indeed Maimonides expressed opinions on matters that dissented from views offered by his father, an example of which is *Hilchot Shechita* 11:10, cited by Eliyahu Touger.³¹ Maimonides is discussing a *sirchah*, adhesion, found in meat. Respectfully, he disagrees with his father who forbids such meat, who Maimonides refers to as "my father and teacher." Maimonides believes this meat is permissible. This apparent contradiction proper respect for a parent is resolved by understanding that a child's silence is required in the presence of the parent.

Schottenstein Talmud translation. Support implies that the son has enhanced the father's words and this is also considered a sign of disrespect. Based on what I believe is the underlying meaning of the phrase, I have used "offer an opinion" to express that any commentary on a father's words is considered disrespectful.

30. In the *Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh De'ah* 240:2, Rabbi Joseph Karo explicitly uses the phrase "before him (father)", ולא סותר את דבריו ולא מכריע את דבריו בפניו. It appears reasonable to infer that Maimonides would be in agreement with this position as the opinion Touger cites in *Hilchot Shechita* is such an example of a different opinion. Moses Maimonides et al., *Mishneh Torah* (New York: Moznaim, 1986), p. 376. Eliyahu Touger, is a scholar who has translated many works including the *Mishneh Torah*.

31. Eliyahu Touger cites *Hilchot Shechita* 11:10 as an example of such a situation. *ibid.*, p. 377.

Maimonides continues reiterating the ideas laid out in *Kiddushin*, a son should not ever refer to his father by name, referring to him as “My Father and my master.” However, Rambam goes further than the Talmud saying that when others share the same name as one’s father, the son should not refer to these other people by name, and instead use another name, lest someone might think the son is referring to the father and being disrespectful.³² Maimonides also indicates that when a father has a common name, the son can use the name to refer to others as long as the son is not in the father’s presence. These ideas are a honing of the concept of reverence (fear) offered by the *Talmud*.

Honor is also clarified by Maimonides succinctly following the explanation offered in the *Talmud*. Honor requires specific actions to be taken regarding the care and welfare of the father. Filial honor requires providing food and drink, clothing and covering them. It is the son’s obligation to provide these things, but importantly, the money needed to do this comes from the parent’s resources. If the parent does not have money to do this, then it is incumbent on the child to provide from his resources to the extent that he is able. If the child is well-off, then it is expected that the support will come from him, and the court can compel this action. If the child is not wealthy, then he is to provide according to his ability and even permitted to use the money ear-

32. *ibid.*, p. 377. Eliyahu Touger in footnote 9 of Chapter Six in his translation of *Hilchot Mamrim*, offers an actual example of this from Tosefot. The sage Abbaye was so named by Rabbenu Asher, whose father shared the same name as Abbaye, who was his nephew. Touger points out that Abbaye is the Aramaic derivative of the Hebrew Avi. By contrast Ravva, Abbaye’s colleague refers to him by his given name Nachmeini, and not Abbaye.

marked for charity for parental support.³³ This obligation includes both parents, כופין אותו וזן אביו ואמו כפי מה שהוא יכול. However, Maimonides goes on to say that the son should treat his father as one would treat a teacher, in other words act as a servant does towards his master, and stand before him as one stands before a teacher.³⁴

When a father is the student of the son, Maimonides rules that the father need not stand in the son's presence, even though this is considered appropriate respect for a teacher. The son however must always stand before his father. This understanding of respect is amended by later *halakhic* authorities. The Radbaz understands that due to his Torah knowledge, the father should stand before the son; therefore both should stand in each other's presence. This understanding of proper etiquette is also the position of both the Tur and the *Shulchan Aruch*.³⁵

Honor and Respect in Life and Death

Maimonides echoes the Talmud's understanding that the son must always pay proper honor and respect to his parents in public matters, stating his honor and fear/reverence of them to others and not attempting to take personal credit for things that are based

33. *ibid.*, p. 377. *Kessef Mishnah*; Ramah (Yoreh De'ah 240:5). The Ramah adds that this can only happen if the child does not have ample resources.

34. *ibid.* p. 378. *Hilchot Talmud Torah* 5:8 states that a student is expected to perform all the services of a servant for his master for his teacher.

35. *ibid.*, p. 378, Yoreh De'ah 240:7.

on the reputation of the father. Maimonides makes it clear that this should happen in all similar matters. Children should always be considering their parent's reputation, placing it before their own whenever this must be considered.

After the father's death, Maimonides reflects the *Talmud's* understanding of continued proper honor of the father. During the first 12 months after death, the son should, as noted previously, complete any teaching he attributes to his father with, "This is what my father and teacher said. May I be an atonement for him." After the 12 months, this phrase is amended to, "May he be remembered for life in the world to come," as the maximum time the father's soul would have been in Gehennom has lapsed. The *Shulchan Aruch* instead instructs the use of the phrase, "זכרונו לברכה," "May his memory be blessed."³⁶

Filial Responsibility extends to both Sons and Daughters

Maimonides reiterates the filial obligation is incumbent on both sons and daughters, אחד האיש ואחד האשה חייבין במורא וכבוד. But only a man is fully able to fulfill the obligation because a wife is subject to "another's influence", שהרי רשות אחרים עליה. As a wife, a woman is subject to her husband, and therefore she is relieved woman from

36. R. Joseph Karo, "Yoreh De'ah," in *Shulchan Aruch*, 240:9.

honoring her father while married.³⁷ However, if a woman is either divorced or widowed, she has equal filial duties to her male counterpart.

A question arises as to how a woman could possibly fulfill the responsibilities of reverence. Reverence is described as practices in a public sphere that would not be accessible to women and therefore might exclude them from such obligations. In his translation of the *Mishneh Torah*, Eliyahu Touger suggests that because the language including women is specific to honor, it might be possible that a woman's obligation might not extend to fear/revere towards her father.

It seems there is a logical case to believe that reverence/fear would remain as an obligation. The understanding of responsibilities is rather pragmatic. The specific duties of honor require a commitment of time and likely financial resources to properly fulfill. The economics of supporting many parents, up to four, would likely place an undue burden on most families. The obligations of reverence/fear by their nature, are attainable without such an economic strain placed on the family. However, another argument for a woman's responsibility for reverence can be made.

The examples given explaining how a son shows honor for his father are transferable as a construct to how a daughter should honor her mother. Just as the traditional roles of father and son are explained, so too can we understand the mother/daughter rela-

37. R. Joseph Karo, "Yoreh De'ah," in *Shulchan Aruch*, 240:17.

tionship based on traditional societal roles of women as mothers and home-keepers. A daughter can be properly deferential towards her mother as she learns from her to rear children, interact with grandchildren and maintain the home; cooking, cleaning and making a place for the father as he returns from work or study. There are ample opportunities for the daughter to offer proper deference, attribution and praise of the mother in the public sphere as she interacts with other members of the community as they all engage in the daily routines of their lives. Although this is never explicitly stated in the texts, the deduction that the daughter act reverentially is supported because there is not explicit language used to exclude the daughter from these filial obligations. She is only excused from obligations to her parents while she is married and explicitly called an equal to the son in her filial responsibility when she is divorced or widowed.

The Torah based *mitzvah* to honor one's parents remains in force without regard to a parents actions, even when they appear to be embarrassing or create a real loss. In *Halakhah* 7, Maimonides refers to the story in *Kiddushin* 32a³⁸; if a mother throws the son's a purse filled with gold into the sea, the son is required to remain silent, showing neither anger nor shouting so he will not embarrass his parent. In the *Kesef Mishneh*, Joseph Karo explains that a son is obligated to sacrifice all monies to keep a father from discomfort, even though a son is not required to use his own funds to honor his father as understood above. The Tur and Ramah (Yoreh De'ah 240:8) offer

38. Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Mamrim*, Perek 6, Halakhah 7.

that a son may try to persuade his father not to throw his purse away, but once it is done, he is to be silent.³⁹

The extent to which the *mitzvah* of fear/reverence is required is grounded in another piece of *aggadah* from *Kiddushin* 31a, the story of Dama the gentile. We are reminded that the unequivocal command to fear comes from God, the King of Kings. As a person is required to abide by rulings of an earthly king, קל וחומר, one must certainly abide by the decrees of God, “The One who spoke and brought the world into being.”

Parental Responsibility and Abusiveness

The responsibility for honor and reverence carries certain obligations on the part of the parent.

A parent is prohibited from placing excessive demands on his sons, a heavy yoke, להכביד עולו, or be overwhelmingly punctilious, לדקדק, rendering honor too difficult to achieve. Instead a father is expected to forgo his honor and ignore any affront. A father can also forgo his honor if he wishes. This answers the earlier dilemma in the Talmud regarding the parents who prepared wine for their son. It would seem that according to this understanding the in act of preparing the wine, the father is conscious-

39. Touger, Eliyahu, *Mishneh Torah*, p. 380.

ly forgoing his honor and therefore the son can accept the cup of wine without concern as to dishonoring his parent. For if a father decides to forgo/relinquish his honor, according to the Mishnah Torah, he may, “האב שמחל על כבודו מחול.”⁴⁰ According to Touger, the *Kesef Mishneh* implies that this *halakhah* is a deduction of Maimonides.⁴¹ But as noted, this interpretation would appear to be consistent with the story related in the *Talmud*.

Further, a father is prohibited from striking his adult son. Maimonides bases this on Leviticus 19.14, admonishing not to place stumbling blocks before the blind, “לפני עור לא תתן מכשל.” The earlier referenced account of Rabbah and his father Rav Huna responds to this concern in *Kiddushin* 32a. Although destroying valuable property is less an offense than striking a child, certainly the response by the aggrieved child to physical abuse might be retaliation in kind, which would be a capital offense. The Gemarah is concerned that tearing of valuable silk violated the prohibition in Lev. 19.14, “לפני עור לא תתן מכשל.”⁴² The Gemarah responds that Rav Huna had waived the honor due him, thereby relieving Rabbah from any punishment that might result from his becoming angry with his father. Maimonides rules that if a parent crosses a prohibited line, the community is to respond by ostracizing the father.⁴² Even the *mamzer*, although obligated to honor and revere his father, is not li-

40. Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Mamrim*, Perek 6, Halakhah 8.

41. Touger, Eliyahu, et al., *Mishneh Torah* (New York: Moznaim, 1986), p. 379.

42. Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah, Hilchot Mamrim*, Perek 6, Halakhah 9.

able for striking or cursing his father until the father repents.⁴³ Although according to the *Talmud* a son is to treat a father like a master or teacher, this does not give the father immunity to act abusively. Likewise, the civil treatment that one would accord to any person should be extended to the father. However, an inappropriate response of a child to a parent can be more egregious due to matters of filial honor and reverence. What is particularly interesting in the explanation of this aspect of behavior appears to be that the child still remains responsible for his actions. The father can be ostracized, but Maimonides does not excuse the bad behavior of the son even if the bad behavior was provoked.

The Limits of Direct Parental Honor (Care-taking) in Maimonides

Maimonides offers insight about caring for parents based on the story of Rav Assi and his elderly mother, the *aggadah* found in *Kiddushin* 31b. Maimonides says a son should take care of parents who are in a diminished mental state until they die, but he understands this can be an impossible burden. When a child cannot take care of them because they are fully deranged, שגשגתו ביותר, he can leave, but first he is obligated to charge others to properly care for them.⁴⁴ Rambam does not specify if this mental state of complete incapacity creates an emotional inability to care for the parent or a physical inability to attend to the parents' needs. The state described would

43. *ibid.*, Perek 6, Halakhah 11.

44. *ibid.*, Perek 6, Halakhah 10. The *Shulchan Aruch* echoes this in Yoreh De'ah 240:10.

indicate the parent is unable to provide for their own physical needs, but it appears that even if the child could provide for them, if such caring placed too much emotional distress on the child, the child could leave this care to others. This issue of distress would be supported from the story of Rav Assi, who we can infer was able to provide materially based on his gift of jewelry to his mother, but nonetheless left for *Eretz Israel* when his mother's diminished capacity led her to make inappropriate sexual requests.

Parents who are Sinners

The responsibility to honor and fear his father extends even to the *mamzer*. This is striking insofar as the son must perform his filial duties even though he is the product of a sinful act on the part of his father and as a result suffers in the community because of his status as the product of an improper union. Cursing and striking a parent, although prohibited acts are however not capital offenses until such time as the father has repented, which is consistent with an earlier *halakah*, from chapter 5. In both the *Kesef Mishneh* and *Shulchan Aruch* Yoreh De'ah 240:11- Karo asserts that a son is to honor parents, although Rama differs. Unless the parent had repented, child is not obligated to honor, but he should not aggravate him.⁴⁵

45. Touger, Eliyahu, et al., *Mishneh Torah*, p. 382.

Conflicts Between Parental Demands and Torah Obligations

Maimonides is steadfast that Torah Law is a supreme authority and therefore cannot be violated at the direction of a parent. Leviticus 19:3 states that one must fear mother and father and keep Shabbat. The second part of the verse becomes highlighted and important. Here, Maimonides understands keeping Shabbat as honoring God, “כלכם חייבין בכבודי.”

The son's obligation to the father when there are conflicting *mitzvot* is also addressed by the *Mishneh Torah* and *Shulchan Aruch*. Maimonides agrees that if the father makes a request at the time the son should perform another *mitzvah*, the son should satisfy the father. A request for drawing water to bring a drink is the example used. If there is another person that can perform the *mitzvah*, the son may tend to his father. However, *Kesef Mishneh* and the Rama in his commentary on Yoreh De'ah (240:12), clarify that this discussion is about a *mitzvah* that cannot be delayed, for example a burial. Both commentators further clarify that if the *mitzvah* is already underway, the son is to postpone servicing the father until the *mitzvah* is completed. Finishing the *mitzvah* takes precedence over honoring the father. Finally however, Maimonides states that Torah study is greater than honor of parents,⁴⁶ “ותלמוד תורה גדול מכבוד אב.”

46. *ibid.*, p. 383. Touger cites Pe'ah 1:1, *Torah* study surpasses all other *mitzvot*.

Mainonides also reiterates the *Talmud's* conclusion on the issue of a conflict when both mother and father ask something at the same time. Using the example of a drink of water requested by both, the father is to get his water first and then the mother receives hers. This is because both mother and child are obligated to honor the father, therefore he would be served first and then the child is obligated to serve the mother. However, under circumstances when the mother is equal to father, such as in the case of divorce, the two parents are treated equally by the child. If they are divorced, the son can choose which parent to serve first without risking dishonor to one or the other, according to the *Shulchan Aruch*.⁴⁷

Parental Respect for a Spouse's Partner

The concept of honor of one's parents extends to their respective spouses in the case of another marriage, at least for the lifetime of the parent. Thus, a son is obligated to both step-mother and step-father while his father or mother are alive. Once the biological parent dies, the obligation to their spouse ceases. The *Shulchan Aruch* suggests that a son should continue to honor his step-mother even after his father's death.⁴⁸ This understanding Touger believes is grounded in Rabbi Yehuda Ha-Nasi's

47. Joseph Karo, "Yoreh De'ah," in *Shulchan Aruch*, 240:14

48. *ibid.*, 240:21

instruction to his sons to continue to honor their step-mother after he had died, which is shared in *Ketubot* 103a.⁴⁹

These are the filial responsibilities as promulgated by the Talmud, *Mishneh Torah* and *Shulchan Aruch*. They are difficult to implement and seem more aspirational than a concrete expression of what precisely to do in order to implement the *mitzvot* of honor and reverence for parents. The way in which we are directed to honor a parent leaves us still struggling with how to fully accomplish things such as feeding, clothing, or leading them in and out. The *Talmud* seems to take more time explaining how our deeds are inadequate rather than detailing how to fulfill our obligations. Furthermore we must also confront the thorny issue of who pays? Are the children required to underwrite the parents or does this remain the responsibility of the parents? And what is the emotional impact of these daunting *mitzvot*?

49. Touger, Eliyahu, et al., *Mishneh Torah*, p. 385

Chapter 3

The Emotional Component in the *Mitzvot* of Honor and Reverence

Kiddushin 30b

“תנו רבנן נאמר, ‘כבד את-אביך ואת-אמך.’ ונאמר: ‘כבד את-הי מהונך’” The *Talmud* juxtaposes the familiar verse of *Torah*, “Honor your father and Mother” from Exodus 20:12, with Proverbs 3:9, “Honor God with your property/material belongings.” The *Talmud* continues “השוה הכתוב כבוד אב ואם לכבוד המקום”. The *Talmud* places the honor of father and mother equal to that of God.⁵⁰ This joining of texts also moves us to consider the pragmatic questions of the concept of honor.

Honor has been defined as providing food and drink, clothing, bringing in and taking out. With honor defined as caring for physical needs, the rabbis understand there is a real cost to realizing the caregiving process. Among the first questions that naturally arise is, Who Pays? Is the child obligated or is the parent obligated to fund the costs of a parent’s physical maintenance? If the child is obligated, to what extent? What if the child has insufficient funds? How does the filial responsibility affect the other responsibilities that child has, particularly to *tzedakah* and his own family, wife and children. Also to be considered is the child’s proper approach to the filial obligation. How does intentionality affect the appropriate fulfillment of filial responsibility? In

50. This portion of the *sugya* goes on to understand that the same applies for reverence. Scripture puts reverence of father and mother equal to the reverence for God, “השוה הכתוב מורא אב ואם למוראת המקום.”

sum, how does the adult child fulfill the obligation of honor? In rabbinic thought there is *keva*, קבע fixed obligation, but also intention, *kavannah*, כוונה. The role *kavannah* might play in honor is the issue to be examined first.

Intentionality

Straddling the *dapim* of Kiddushin 31a and 31b, the Talmud relates a story explaining the implementation of honor. Avimi the son of Rabbi Abahu taught, יש מאכיל לאביו, פסיוני וטורדו מן העולם ויש מטחינו בריחים ומביאו לחיי העולם הבא, a person can feed his father pheasant and drive him from the world, and one can make (his father) grind a millstone and bring him to life in the world-to-come.

I had understood this text to mean that there is an element of intentionality that needs to be present in order to properly honor one's father. Even if you provided the finest things to your father, but you gave them begrudgingly, your works are counterproductive to your father's ultimate benefit. Alternatively, if you needed your father to continue at labor in order to provide his needs, but did so with righteous intention and appropriate respect, your acts truly honor him and you will be rewarded in the world-to-come. This is Rashi's understanding of this statement and appears to be its plain meaning as well.

Providing material needs to a parent falls within the talmudic definition of honor, as noted. Honoring or dishonoring a parent, within the talmudic discourse however, does not seem to have any bearing on a parent realizing reward in *HaOlam Habah*, the World to Come. God is quoted elsewhere in the text that He considers Himself honored when a child properly honors his parent, ⁵¹ מעלה אני עליהם באילו דרתי בניהם⁵¹. Likewise, God feels dishonored when a child acts improperly towards his parents, ⁵² שאלמלי דרתי בניהם ציערוני⁵². The God-Parent partnership has been broadened from the act of creation into God's vested interest in the actions of the child toward the parent. By extension, the active involvement of God could be read from the converse. That is, as God is affected by the actions of the child in this world, the parent is affected by the child in God's world, *HaOlam Habah*. This idea is bolstered by the plain reading of the text itself at the beginning of Kiddushin 31b, ומביאו לחיי, ⁵³ העולם הבא, and (this action- asking the father to work in a grist mill) can bring him life in the World to Come. But Rashi explains this phrase to mean that the child will be rewarded for his good words and deeds.

Rashi continues to cite a story from the the *Yerushalmi*. There the issue of intentionality becomes murky. In the first case, the child's harsh response to the father's question about affording the meal of fine fowl is interpreted by Rashi as the son expressing the burden that the father poses to the son. The *peshat*, or surface reading, is the son reacting badly towards his father. The underlying intention of the harsh answer seems to flow naturally from the response. This response dishonors the

51. *Kiddushin* 30b.

52. *Kiddushin* 31a.

father and can only come from a place of anger, frustration or other negative emotion the son has in response to his filial responsibility. But the second story complicates the matter. The son asks the father to remain in the grist mill working so that the son can take his father's place in the king's service. This can easily be ascribed to altruistic motivations on the part of the son. But we do not know the underlying emotions with certainty. It does appear reasonable, however, to conclude that the manner in which the actions are undertaken is of importance, but to whom?

Dr. Michael Chernick in his essay, *Who Pays? The Talmudic Approach to Filial Responsibility*⁵³, finds an alternative interpretation of this underlying idea, suggesting that the issue is one of uplifting the parent's psyche. It is the "emotional and physical well-being of the parent [that is] the focus of talmudic concern." The issue at hand for the child is in the proper execution of his or her filial responsibilities, the emotional issues or intentionality underlying the actions, are interesting but of secondary importance to the Talmud according to Dr. Chernick.

Dr. Chernick recognizes the complex emotions that enter into a child's relationship with his or her parents and maintains that this may be precisely the reason that the Talmud does not venture into the territory of intention. A child will have ambivalent feelings towards his or her parent due to the parent's complicated and conflicting roles

53. Michael Chernick, "Who Pays? The Talmudic Approach to Filial Responsibility," in *That You May Live Long: Caring for Our Aging Parents, Caring for Ourselves*, ed. Richard F. Address and Hara Person (New York: UAHC Press, 2003), pp. 96-97.

as “provider, disciplinarian compassionate supporter but also implacable judge.”⁵⁴ He concludes “what one actually does in the relationship between parent and child is ethically more significant than what one feels at any given moment.”⁵⁵

The Talmud’s interpretation of the *aggadah* of the fowl and the grindstone and Rashi’s commentary upon it seem to complicate Dr. Chernick’s understanding that the action is the ethically more significant. As noted, the two scenarios of the *Yerushalmi*’s Gemara cited by Rashi strongly suggests that the manner in which the action of honoring one’s parent is performed is important. The first story supports Dr. Chernick’s understanding: It is the emotional impact on the father that is considered, not solely the intention of the son. For the son performs the action, feeding the father. But the manner in which it is done can only serve to make the father feel diminished, feeling like the a burden the son carries. Does one pretend to deliver the goods with a happy heart, or is the underlying motivation important? The text lends itself to reading that the intentionality with which the deed is carried out is important, unless we are all fine enough actors to mask our emotions sufficiently so parents do not feel themselves a burden. The *Shulchan Aruch* also seems to support this view, איזהו כבוד? מאכילו ומשקהו מלביש ומכסה מכניס ומוציא. ויתנו לו בסבר פנים יפות שאפי' מאכילו בכל יום פטומות

54. Michael Chernick, "Who Pays? The Talmudic Approach to Filial Responsibility," in *That You May Live Long: Caring for Our Aging Parents, Caring for Ourselves*, pp. 96-97.

55. Michael Chernick, "Who Pays? The Talmudic Approach to Filial Responsibility," in *That You May Live Long: Caring for Our Aging Parents, Caring for Ourselves*, ed. Richard F. Address and Hara Person, p. 97.

והראה לו פנים זועפות, נענש עליו. One who does not feed his father with a “good demeanor” will be punished.⁵⁶ Although I would agree with Dr. Chernick that the action is most important, the text requires us to consider and reflect that we have proper intention to fully fulfill our filial responsibility of honor.

The commentary on the manner in which children show proper respect towards their parents addresses directly the issue of the parent’s feelings. I concur with Dr. Chernick that the prohibition for a son to argue in support of his father’s position is particularly telling in this regard. Not sitting in one’s father’s place, standing when he stands, not arguing against the father’s position,⁵⁷ these appear relatively straightforward means by which a child will give respect to his or her parent. These visible actions of deference will likely have the additional effect of making the parent feel good as they are displayed for him or her in public before peers. Dr. Chernick describes this as “encourag[ing] a sense of worth, even power to the parent.”⁵⁸ But the Talmud goes further, barring the son from making any commentary on his father’s position in a dispute, ולא סותר את דבריו ולא מכריעו. The son cannot disagree with his father’s words *and* he may not decide or comment on his views. As the *Aruch HaSulchan* points out⁵⁹, this includes all comments including the positive or

56. Joseph Karo, "Yoreh De'ah," in *Shulchan Aruch*, 240.4.

57. *Kiddushin* 31b.

58. Michael Chernick, "Who Pays? The Talmudic Approach to Filial Responsibility," in *That You May Live Long: Caring for Our Aging Parents, Caring for Ourselves*, p. 97.

59. Joseph Karo, "Yoreh De'ah," in *Shulchan Aruch*, 240.13.

supporting arguments of the father's position.⁶⁰ This far-reaching prohibition serves to support the full extent of respect/reverence, מורא, that a son is to show to his father. One could argue that this is an admission that the son is simply not worthy of speaking to the point made due to his inferior position. Dr. Chernick extends the idea suggesting that this prohibition further bolsters the father's feelings due to the repercussions of such a comment, as he questions how the father might feel as he considers whether he won or lost an argument based on the persuasiveness of his opinion or that of his son.

It is because of the understanding of reverence that is derived from the reading of this passage in *Kiddushin* that I believe we can still suggest that a child's inner feelings are important in the matters of honor and reverence. What the child must do is of primary importance and the appropriate duties and responsibilities are explicitly stated by the Talmud for both honor and reverence. Therefore it is not surprising that in his book *Honor Thy Father and Thy Mother*, Gerald Blidstein quotes Rabbi Eleazar Azkari, who understood that "the essence of (honor), כבוד, lies in "the heart," and "only from the heart can come the proper deeds of speech and action."⁶¹ But given the rather

60. The only exception to this rule would be if the father were to incorrectly state a Torah Law and the son had irrefutable proof. Then, according to Rabbi Joshua Falk in the *Perisha*, the son could state the correct Torah Law. Hersh Goldwurm, Yisroel Simcha. Schorr, and Noson Boruch. Herzka, "Kiddushin 30-32," in [Talmud Bavli] = *Talmud Bavli : The Schottenstein Edition : The Gemara : The Classic Vilna Edition, with an Annotated, Interpretive Elucidation, as an Aid to Talmud Study* (Brooklyn, NY: Mesorah Publications, 2004), footnote 34.

61. Gerald J. Blidstein, *Honor Thy Father and Mother: Filial Responsibility in Jewish Law and Ethics* (Jersey City, NJ: KTAV Pub. House, 2005), p. 54.

Blidstein bases his understanding from Azkari's works *Menorat ha-Ma'or*, and *Sefer*

explicit commands regarding reverential treatment and how they would clearly affect the father's attitude, the *aggadic* passages that serve to guide honor seem to go to the issue intentionality. These offerings include the story of the pheasant and the mill as well as the "dressing down" of Rabbi Tarfon, who is told by his peers that until he can remain silent while his purse is thrown into the sea, all he has done is not even half the honor he should do.

Who Pays?

The Talmud seems to be clear that the parent is responsible to provide for his or her physical needs. The notion that the parent is responsible for his or her needs seems to run contrary to the understanding of the plain sense of the texts of *Kiddushin* 30b and 31b instructing children to honor their parents with their material possessions and to honor by providing food, drink and clothing.

The emotions that seem to be wrapped up in the parent-child dynamic are complicated given the multiple roles the parent plays in the child's life. This is only further complicated as the child becomes an adult and assumes full responsibility for themselves while also possibly assuming responsibility for the care of his or her parent. The feelings of the parent are certainly considered in the discussion of reverence as noted above. The desire for the parent to continue to provide in their

Haredim, chapters 4 and 1.

role as caregiver to the child can often conflict with the child's desire to provide for their own welfare and that of the parent.⁶² But in order to fully honor parents, we are consider their feelings, their sense of independence and the relative superiority they have exercised as the caregivers to their children. The parent's ego must be considered and the affect children's actions may have upon that ego. So the question posed by the Talmud, משל מי⁶³, remains and is considered here in *Kiddushin* 32a.

Two opinions are offered. Rav Yehuda said the son must take responsibility for his parent's upkeep, משל בן, and Rav Natan bar Oshaiya said parental upkeep is the responsibility of the parent, משל אב.⁶⁴ But the rabbis agree with R. Natan that the obligation is the father's. But this ruling is at best incomplete, as the verse from Proverbs calls on a child to support his or her parents using his or her wealth.

The *Talmud* resolves this conflict by saying that the child is compelled to provide support in the forms of time and energy. This means being physically present for the parent, which often requires time away from profitable work. This is the "wealth" that the child lays out for the parent. Hence, this understanding of time certainly has

62. I have experienced the "fight for the restaurant check" with my father z"l, as we both would reach for the bill at the end of the meal. I wanted to treat him as a way of saying "thank you" and "I have the ability to do this." He wanted to continue to provide and possibly also demonstrate his continued ability to give, remain a tangibly important presence to me as well as his own independence. We resolved this issue when I suggested that we alternate paying the bill, which worked except when he seemed intent on paying in which case I gratefully deferred.

63. *Kiddushin* 32a.

64. *Kiddushin* 32a.

an economic component to it.

Who is Responsible When Parents Cannot Afford Their Own Upkeep?

In the event that parents are unable to provide for themselves, the responsibility then falls to the child. Fulfilling this filial obligation is considered very important even to the extent that the *tzedakah*, צדקה, can be allocated toward support of the parent in the event the child has insufficient financial resources to care for the parent and to give *tzedakah*. This is in fact צדקה, but it is allocated specifically to the father rather than to a stranger.⁶⁵ Gerald Blidstein summarizes Rabbi Meir of Rothenberg's thoughts on this subject in the Talmud as being the first to apply the catchphrase, "Charity begins at Home".⁶⁶

Another component in understanding the relative obligations of parent and child is based on the intertwining of the fortunes of both. In previously discussed *aggadot*, Rabbi Tarfon was chastised for not giving full honor to his parents as he has not remained silent when his purse was cast into the sea. Similarly, Rav Huna was liable for criticism when he tested his son by ruining expensive garments. Rav Huna or his

65. It is clear in the argument put forth in Kiddushin 32a that the child cannot use his funds allocated towards צדקה unless he or she is incapable of providing caregiving otherwise. A person who has the means to do both *tzedakah* and caregiving but uses the *tzedakah* money is robbing the poor.

66. Gerald J. Blidstein, *Honor Thy Father and Mother: Filial Responsibility in Jewish Law and Ethics*, p. 67.

son, Rabbah, must have owned the garments he tore. In each of these cases the son owns the property directly or quite possibly the property is owned by the parent. In the latter case, discussion might actually be centered around issues of inheritance and the parent's disposal or use of their own property. The need for the child to remain silent supports the understanding that the parent's assets are to be used at the discretion of the parents. They can spend their fortunes how they wish and are not under an obligation to leave an estate for their children. By extension, such an understanding would also support the notion that the parents would be responsible for themselves to the extent they are able to be their own providers.

A child might privately question the wisdom of certain spending that might be deemed wasteful, or squandering their wealth, metaphorically speaking, "like throwing money into the sea." But it is the parent's right to dispose of their wealth as they see fit. A child may reproach his parent for risking their capacity to care for themselves and ultimately determine the quality of their lives. But once the parents have made their decision, the child is to speak no more on the matter.⁶⁷

Dr. Chernick weaves reverence and honor together. Uplifting the ego and psyche of

67. The understanding that a child may question a parent on their intended use of their wealth comes from Rama's gloss to Yoreh De'ah 240:8, that a child can attempt to stop a parent from "throwing money into the sea" or squandering their funds. From this commentary, I believe it is reasonable to suggest that a child's motivation may be concern for the parent's welfare and not solely limited to a selfish desire to shield themselves from financially contributing to their parent's care or to preserve the estate. This raises a difficult issue with which the child must grapple. For they have watched the squandering of assets occur and now they may be expected to assist in their parent's care.

the parent and sensitivity of his or her self-esteem comes to the fore in the practice of reverence and honor. Hence, the *halakhah* requires the child permit the parent to pay for his or her own well-being.⁶⁸ And yet, there is a stream that runs counter to this understanding. God not only commanded to love and fear parents as Himself, but in some respects He places the honor due parents even higher than due Him. A person is only obliged to support the poor or to perform certain religious ceremonies, if he has the wherewithal, but it is the duty of a child even to go begging at people's doors, if he cannot otherwise maintain his parents.⁶⁹

Jewish tradition rightfully struggles with the question of who pays. As *Halakhah* is dependent on knowing the underlying facts of the issue at hand in order to determine the appropriate course of action, accurately knowing the precise details of the situations of parent and child are extremely difficult. Therefore, proper governance as to the correct thing to do in accordance with the mitzvah of honoring father and mother is almost an impossibility to achieve. The profoundly complicated nature of the parent/child relationship is highlighted in the following passage from the book of Malachi, "Behold, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before the coming of the awesome, fearful day of the Lord. He shall reconcile parents with children and children with parents, so that, when I come, I do not strike the whole land with utter

68. Michael Chernick, "Who Pays? The Talmudic Approach to Filial Responsibility," in *That You May Live Long: Caring for Our Aging Parents, Caring for Ourselves*, p. 98.

69. Louis Ginzberg, Henrietta Szold, and Paul Radin, "Volume 3," in *The Legends of the Jews* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), p. 101.

הנה אנכי שלח לכם את אליה הנביא לפני בוא יום יהיה הגדול והנורה. והשיב לב-אבות. destruction.⁷⁰ The text seems to affirm to us that the parent/child dynamic requires divine intervention to fully unravel it and smooth it over.

In the Talmudic literature, and this issue as case in point, there is sometimes no resolution to a problem. After consideration, the rabbis agree to let the matter remain unresolved. The word used is תיקו. In a world populated by acronyms, רשי תיבות, the word תיקו was reinterpreted thusly, תשבי יתרץ קושיות ובעיות, בגמרא מופיע ניסוח זה, כאשר אין פתרון לסוגיה “The *Tishbite* (i.e., Elijah) will resolve questions and problems.” In the *Gemara* this appears when there is no resolution of issues. Hence, Elijah would someday visit rabbis to help solve particularly difficult legal problems. Malachi had cited Elijah as the harbinger of the eschaton. Thus, when confronted with reconciling impossibly conflicting laws or rituals, the rabbis would set aside any decision “until Elijah comes.”⁷¹

We understand that supporting a parent as a caregiver the right thing to do. The manner in which we accomplish this however is a difficult and thorny affair fraught with emotional, psychological and economic consequences. Our struggle is a struggle handed down to us by the prior generations. Recognizing the complexities in

70. *Malachi* 3:23-24.

71. "Elijah," Wikipedia, February 03, 2013, Elijah's Cup, accessed March 04, 2013, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elijah>.

fulfilling the *mitzvot* of honor and reverence is common to all those interested in attempting to assume this responsibility.

The concept of *mora*, מורא, is laden with emotional implications for both parent and child. Fear or reverence is explained as certain deferential actions that one must carry out. It is arguable whether this deference is limited to only the public sphere, and therefore it is reasonable to consider these actions in a broader context namely the general treatment of the parent. For it seems illogical that one could be so deferential in the public sphere only to maltreat a parent in private. The story of the *pisyon* birds (pheasant) and the millstone seem to speak directly to this issue. So we must consider the implications of such deference and probe the potential underlying motives for such action.

Dr. Chernick in his essay and Rabbi Dayle Friedman in her work⁷² explore how a parent copes with a child's actions. *Mora*, in the words of Rabbi Friedman, is about preserving dignity.⁷³ How does a person cope with a loss of independent function? More particularly, how does a parent cope with the loss of independence to his or her child who was completely dependent upon them for being nurtured and raised? The impli-

72. Dr. Chernick's essay, *Who Pays, The Talmudic Approach to Filial Responsibility* and Rabbi Friedman's work in pastoral care including her book, *Jewish Visions for Aging*, specifically raise the issues of the impact on the parent of the child's actions, both emotionally and psychologically.

73. Dayle A. Friedman, "Beyond Guilt: What We Owe Our Aging Parents- A Perspective from Tradition," in *That You May Live Long: Caring for Our Aging Parents, Caring for Ourselves* (New York: UAH Press, 2003), p. 86.

cations of the role reversal compounds the already extraordinary events that occur when a person loses their capacity for self-sufficiency and self-reliance.

For this reason Dr. Chernick echoes the texts when he asserts the child must permit the parent to remain in their parental and independent roles for as long as is possible. I would argue that this requires the child to permit the parent to operate independently even if there is a perceived or real diminution in the quality of life. The adult child must tread carefully offering help as is welcome, or help that does not appear to undermine the sense of independence. The relationship of an adult child to a diminished parent cannot be one of inverted roles, not, at least, until it must.”⁷⁴ The obligation to preserve a parent’s dignity is at the core of the child’s responsibility toward their parent.

As both scholars point out, the texts are focused on both the particular obligations through the concept of honor, but equally important, the manner in which the child fulfills these obligations. Neither the Torah nor Talmud, nor subsequent texts, command the emotions that a child must feel, although I have argued that in order to properly fulfill the duties and responsibilities of an adult child, there is the need to approach caregiving with a proper attitude. The texts place honor and reverence for parents on a level with our honor and reverence for God. But interestingly, the texts

74. Michael Chernick, *"Who Pays? The Talmudic Approach to Filial Responsibility," in That You May Live Long: Caring for Our Aging Parents, Caring for Ourselves*, p. 100.

do not command us to like our parents nor to love our parents, which is commanded in our relationship with God and affirmed in our daily prayers. Immediately upon recitation of Judaism's *creed*, the *Shema*, we repeat the words of Deuteronomy 6:5-9, וְאָהַבְתָּ אֶת יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ, you will love the Eternal your God completely.⁷⁵ Rabbi Friedman suggests that this may be due to the complexity of the child/parent relationship.⁷⁶ It is at first astounding to imagine that the implication of such a statement is that our relationship with our parents is actually more complex than our relationship with God. But such an understanding speaks an extraordinary truth. A belief system, such as Judaism, can command Love of the Supreme One, an embrace of God at all costs with the most intimate emotions, even if we might wrestle with God's nature or our relationship with the Eternal.

We find an intimate human partnership with God in Marriage. In entering this relationship, each individual is asked if he or she will love, honor and respect the person about to become their spouse.⁷⁷ As the Bride and Groom meet under the *chuppah*, the *Shechinah* is said to dwell there with them. And the seventh blessing of the *Sheva Berachot* blesses God as creator of אֲהָבָה וְאַחֻזָּה, love and kinship.⁷⁸ The marriage bond is

75. וְאָהַבְתָּ אֶת יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל-לִבְבְּךָ בְּכָל-נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכָל-מְאֹדְךָ. My translation of "completely" is based on my interpretation of the second half of the verse, "with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your essence."

76. Dayle A. Friedman, "Beyond Guilt: What We Owe Our Aging Parents- A Perspective from Tradition," in *That You May Live Long: Caring for Our Aging Parents, Caring for Ourselves*, p. 86.

77. "Wedding Service I," in *Rabbi's Manual* (New York: CCR, 1988), p. 53.

78. "Wedding Service II," in *Rabbi's Manual* (New York: CCR, 1988), p. 53.

sanctified, elevated in a unique fashion because of the bond of love that is forged in the presence of God. This is the primary relationship to which we are ultimately responsible.⁷⁹

Despite the lofty description of parents as partner with God in the child's creation, they remain human, fraught with human frailties and foibles. Parents are not infallible or truly God-like despite all they have done for their children as creators and nurturers, and therefore they are potentially even more confounding to love as a result. And it may be because of this, the rabbis knew that to command love would be futile, but to command honor and respect was critical. Although we might not love them, or be predisposed to caring for them, we are commanded to treat our parents with honor and respect and thus accept our roles as caregivers. And no matter what, we should do this with a "pleasant demeanor."

79. This primacy of relationship is supported by the understanding that God's presence is there under the *chuppah* and will dwell with parents as the third party in the creation of their family. Proverb 31 speaks eloquently to the centrality and profound value of a wife to husband and his need to recognize his אשת חיל, which by tradition happens every shabbat upon returning from synagogue.

Chapter 4

The Issue of Distance in Effecting Honor and Reverence

Honor and Reverence are difficult to transact. Our texts and tradition have demonstrated the daunting nature of filial responsibility. The difficulty of our task is underscored by the need to elucidate the importance of caring for our parents and the likening of filial honor and respect to honor and respect for God. There is yet another component to the issue of transacting honor and reverence and that is one of distance.

Distance comes in two forms, emotional and spatial. The Talmud and subsequent development of *halakhah* through later texts has grappled with the issues of emotional distance. We are presented with definitions of honor and reverence and then we learn the ways in which to serve our parents according to our responsibilities. We honor by providing food and drink, clothing, helping them in and out. We express reverence by preserving their dignity, acting deferentially and respectfully by standing before them, not sitting in their place, not speaking in their presence on matters on which they have expressed an opinion.

Our texts illustrate a profound understanding of the complexities facing children as they approach their filial responsibilities. The adult children is are tasked with both preserving the dignity of the parent while standing ready to be a caregiver as necessary. It may be more proper to distinguish between caregiving and care-taking, as the responsibility of preserving a parent's dignity is also a form of caregiving. The

manner in which the child approaches these caregiving tasks is important. He or she must present the proper attitude in providing support. And although the financial responsibility is understood to fall first on the parents themselves, the child must be prepared to step in to the best of his or her ability in the event the parents are unable to provide for themselves. The stresses on the child as caregiver are great. Sometimes the burden of caregiving can be excessive. Our texts have considered this as well.

The story of Rav Assi leaving his mother to travel to the Land of Israel is the beginning of learning how to grapple with this issue. Once he realizes his mother is suffering from dementia, Rav Assi leaves their home in Babylonia for the Land of Israel.⁸⁰ Maimonides grasps the underlying issue and codifies the concept that a child may leave the caregiving for his or her parent to another if the burden is too great for the child to endure. The *aggadah* in Kiddushin 31b also includes Rav Assi seeking and obtaining permission from his teacher, Rabbi Yochanan who understood Rav Assi needing to leave the Land of Israel to return to Babylon to care for his mother.⁸¹ The tradition has sided with Maimonides' interpretation of proper action. Although dissenting voices have been heard, notably Rabbi Abraham ben David's, the Ra'avad,

80. This story is complicated by the additional issue of Rav Assi complying with the mitzvah of returning to the Land of Israel to live. This particular mitzvah has been the subject of intense discussion and review by commentators such as Maimonides and Nachmanides. A discussion of this topic is beyond the scope of this paper but is noted as an important thread within the story to underscore the issues of competing or conflicting mitzvot. *B. Talmud Kiddushin* 31b.

81. The story can be interpreted as above, or alternatively Rabbi Yochanan could be understood to have granted permission to Rav Assi to leave the Land of Israel for the purpose of welcoming his mother to the Land. *B. Talmud Kiddushin* 31b.

commentary to the *Mishneh Torah*.⁸²

The Ra'avad asks a question that resonates in the contemporary ear, essentially, if we entrust our parents to others, how can we know that are being properly attended to?⁸³ I believe it is reasonable to interpret the Ra'avad's question as having two components. On the surface he is asking if the physical needs are being properly addressed? Are the parents being satisfactorily fed and clothed, etc.? The second issue is the emotional component. What is the affect on a person's dignity when they are left in the care of strangers? Understanding Ra'avad's comment this way illustrates that emotional and physical distance are intertwined and that the issues of physical distance might be an additional level of complexity, to the emotional issue of distance.

82. Isadore Singer, "Abraham Ben David," JewishEncyclopedia.com, accessed February 28, 2013, <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/>.

83. The Ra'avad wrote critical commentary on the Mishneh Torah. Maimonides, "Hilchot Mamrim," in *Mishneh Torah*. Regarding the issue of personally caring for a parent, in 6:10, Ra'abad says that if the child does not care for his parent, no one else will satisfactorily do so, השגת הראב"ד :

וילך לו ויצוה אחרים להנהיגם כראוי. אי אפשר אין זו הוראה נכונה אם הוא ילך ויניח לו למי יצוה. לשמרו

Distance in History

Jewish migration has been going on far longer than the travels recorded in the Talmud.⁸⁴ The Babylonian Talmud reflects the thoughts of a Jewish community already established outside the Land of Israel.

During Solomon's reign in the Tenth Century B.C., the Kingdom was at the crossroads of trade routes from Asia, the European and African continents. It shared a border with the Phoenicians, whose Mediterranean sea routes extended to the tip of Iberia and across the North African coast. Jews were likely traveling abroad. The Babylonian exile created a seismic shift. The initial Jewish revolt of Jehoiakim of 598 B.C. ended with the king's death and a reported 10,000 men from the leading families of Judah exiled to Babylon according to 2Kings 24:14.⁸⁵ The crushed revolt of 586 B.C., resulted in even more of the indigenous Jewish population carried off to Babylon, irrevocably establishing the diaspora. Those left behind in the former kingdom of Judah were the poor, who owned nothing.⁸⁶ Upon the assassination of Gedaliah ben

84. Migration seems to be a part of Jewish history from the beginning. However, the early biblical stories were of families and tribes which tended to move together as a unit.

85. 2Kings 24:14:

והגלה את כל ירושלם ואת כל השרים ואת כל גבורי החיל עשרה (עשרת) אלפים גולה וכל החרש והמסגר לא נשאר זולת דלת עם הארץ.

86. Jeremiah 39:10:

ומן-העם הדלים אשר אין-להם מאומה השאיר נבוזראדן רב-טבחים בארץ יהודה וייתן להם כרמים ויגבים ביום ההוא.

Ahikam, the appointed ruler of the territory, many more Jews fled to Egypt fearing Babylonian reprisals. It was these refugees who created the first nucleus of a Jewish diaspora on the banks of the Nile.⁸⁷

In the context of this paper, the lament of the psalmist in Psalm 137, “By the Waters of Babylon we wept as we remembered Zion”

איך נשיר את-שיר-יהוה על אדמת נכר אם-אשכחך ירושלם תשכח ימיני
תדבק-לשוני לחכי- אם-לא אזכרכי אם-לא אעלה את-ירושלם- על ראש שמחתי

takes on a new meaning.

Jerusalem can be seen as a metaphor for our parental home. How do we sing a song of the Eternal in a foreign land? We need always to remember Jerusalem, or else my right hand will wither, and I will lose my speech.

The message of the psalm in verses 4-6 above echoes the biblical admonitions to honor and revere our parents. “Honor your father and mother, that you may long endure on the land that the Lord your God is assigning to you.” (Exodus 20.12) “You will revere your mother and father, and keep my *Shabbatot*; I am the Lord your God.” (Leviticus 19.3)

87. Elie Barnavi and Miriam Eliav-Feldon, *A Historical Atlas of the Jewish People: From the Time of the Patriarchs to the Present* (New York: Knopf, 1992), p. 24.

Jewish migration continued throughout history moving alongside Christianity and Islam, often following economic opportunities. Communities developed as time and circumstance permitted, around the globe to places as distant as China and the “New World”. The ebbs and flows of Jewish historic population continued based on a combination of opportunity and in reaction to outside forces that alternately invited, oppressed or exiled the Jews within the greater communities and cultures in which they lived. Except for a wholesale exile, such as in Spain or England, it was difficult to bring an entire extended family. More likely, the nuclear family would come over as a group and the more extended family either followed or remained in place. Thus, the larger extended family would often be left behind. The idea of separation from families traces back throughout our history.

The historical perspective needs to be understood within its cultural context. The extended family had traditionally been the standard. The family unit was multi-generational, living together within the same household or at least within the same village. Long before the European experience, the Talmud recounts stories of the complications arising from conflicting *mitzvot* of caregiving for parents and the emigrating to *Eretz Yisrael*.

The Modern Experience

Modernity introduced mobility. Most notably the Emancipation of European Jewry brought with it the ability to leave the Jewish population centers, because the gates of the ghetto were now unlocked. Jews could move, at least theoretically. Economic opportunity, among other reasons such as greater freedom, could motivate and be the impetus to move. The scenario depicted in “Fiddler on the Roof”⁸⁸ shows Tevya’s three daughters making personal decisions to follow their husbands to Siberia and the United States, leaving their parents behind. Like most who left Europe to emigrate to America, parents were never seen again once the children left for the New World. The issues complicating filial responsibility have existed long before the American experience, but the American experience brought new levels of complexity due to unprecedented freedom, mobility, acculturation/acceptance and prosperity. In modern America, both parents and children have the means and ability to move away from each other. Often, children move for economic opportunity while parents move to retire in more temperate climates, or less costly areas than where they raised their families.

Cultural norms have also changed over time. The dominance of the extended family, has given way to the dominance of the nuclear family with husband, wife and child constituting the “normal” family unit. Furthermore, the American culture does not

88. “Fiddler on the Roof” as both Broadway play and Hollywood movie are based on the book *Tevya the Milkman*, originally written in Yiddish by Sholom Aleichem. The original story included six daughters, but the adaptations included three.

appear to place the same level of value on the older generation as other cultures have. There has been an erosion of respect for the elderly as a culture that celebrates youth has emerged. This tension continues and becomes internalized as a conflict for adult children as they attempt to understand a notion of traditional honor and reverence in a society that may not be predisposed to uphold these values.

This is not a new tension for Reform Judaism to consider. The CCAR Responsum 53 on Filial Obligation dated 1982 cites historical discussion in response to a current question on filial responsibilities. The Responsa specifically refers to the Sefer Chasidim which suggested that, at least in the medieval period in which the book was written, children seek to live in proximity to their parents but were not expected to make unusual sacrifices to accomplish that. They should be close enough to look after the needs of their parents (Section 564). But if father and son could not get along, it was better if they were separated (Section 343). The Responsum also acknowledges the Gaonic Responsum, cited by Meir of Rothenburg, (Responsa of R. Meir of Rotherberg, Responsa II, #81) recognizing that if an intolerable conflict arose between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law making living in the same household unviable, the daughter-in-law's husband was obliged to move his family out of the house. These rulings were based in the understanding in the Responsa that

“everything was done to balance the interest of the older and younger generations. Normative Judaism encouraged freedom for the younger generation. The children remained responsible for the maintenance of their parents and were to look after their physical and psychological needs, but the children were not to be subjected to every whim and desire of the older generation. Through this, the full personal

development of the younger generation was constantly encouraged.”⁸⁹

The government, albeit unintendedly, has also contributed to problems related to the traditional ideas about honor and reverence as social services have developed to provide caregiving to the population of the elderly. We may rightly ask, “Does the existence of the social programs help foster filial concern or does it exacerbate the erosion of filial responsibility? Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid have become important programs to augment, supplement or become primary support for the elderly. As these programs become understood as entitlements, the affect can be potentially negative. Parents are less predisposed toward saving for themselves, expecting these services to cover substantial portions of their expenses. But if these programs are inadequate, the burden will fall onto the adult children. Adult children similarly may view these services as sufficient for their parent’s needs, giving children the idea that they can re-direct their financial resources to the needs of the nuclear family. The economic costs of caregiving remains quite high, estimated by the AARP at \$450 billion in 2009.”⁹⁰

Adult children in modern society continue to struggle within American culture. The majority of families still try to maintain their obligations to their parents. Women

89. Jacob, Walter. "American Reform Responsa 53 Filial Obligation 1982." CCAR Responsa XCII (1982): pp. 207-09.

90. This estimate is based on 42 million caregivers providing approximately 18.4 hours per week of care at an average hourly rate of \$11.16. Lynn Feinberg et al., *Valuing the Invaluable: 2011 Update The Growing Contributions and Costs of Family Caregiving*, publication no. Insight on the Issues 51 (Washington, D.C.: AARP Public Policy Institute, 2011), p. 2.

continue to be primary caregivers, despite their increasing presence as providers to their own nuclear families. According to the AARP, a not-for-profit organization advocating for retired and over age-50 Americans, the typical U.S. caregiver is a

“...49-year-old woman who works outside the home and spends nearly 20 hours per week providing unpaid care to her mother for nearly five years. Almost two-thirds of family caregivers are female.”⁹¹

This is the dilemma of the so called “Baby-Boomer” generation. The Baby Boomers, ranging in age from 49-64, is in the middle between their children and their parents, the elderly. Because of increases in longevity the traditional definition of old age has been subdivided. The “young elderly”, range in age 65-74, representing 10% of the American Jewish Population. The “old” elderly are age 75 and above, and represent 9% of the American Jewish population.⁹² The percentage of these groups is expected to increase. We are all living longer and more active lives than ever before. This results in a pull from both ends of the age spectrum for the Baby Boomers. They have responsibilities to raise and nurture their own children and have responsibilities to their parents for a much greater period of time than in previous generations. For this reason, the Baby Boomers were dubbed the “Sandwich” generation. As everyone continues to live longer, there are grandchildren often that become part of the scene.

91. Lynn Feinberg et al., *Valuing the Invaluable: 2011 Update The Growing Contributions and Costs of Family Caregiving*, publication no. Insight on the Issues 51 (Washington, D.C.: AARP Public Policy Institute, 2011), p.1.

92. Miriam Rieger, *United Jewish Communities Report Series on the National Jewish Population Survey 2000-01 The American Jewish Elderly*, report, series 6 (Storrs, CT: Mandell L. Berman Institute North American Jewish Data Bank, Center for Judaic Studies and Contemporary Jewish Life, 2004), p. 4.

Four generations are becoming more frequent. Because of the pull that the Baby Boomer generation has felt from both sides in his book, *Seekers of Meaning*, Rabbi Richard Address has renamed the Baby boomer generation as the “Club-Sandwich” generation.⁹³

Adult children contend with struggles at both ends with children, parents and themselves. Children are struggling to venture out on their own. Adolescence is now generally considered to extend through the age of 25. Increasingly a college degree has been insufficient preparation for the start of a career. The economy is still recovering from a deep recession and grappling with systemic issues creating limited opportunities and great uncertainty. Often, the answer is to return to the nest and to live with mom and dad.

On the other side, parents are hoping to continue their lives long into the golden years. The limitations of old age for many has been postponed or augmented through technology. But independence has a price. The adult child often struggles to know how well his or her parents are doing. Long distance caregiving is quite difficult. Parents live away, making us even less aware of their circumstances. How do we let them remain independent and distant and yet fulfill our traditional responsibilities to them? More importantly, how do we know when they can no longer remain independent? How do we keep informed so that we can offer the proper honor and reverence?

93. Richard F. Address, *Seekers of Meaning : Baby Boomers, Judaism, and the Pursuit of Healthy Aging* (New York, NY: URJ Press, 2011), p. 81.

Who Pays Revisited

The increasing lifespans enjoyed in modern society require substantial additional outlays of resources. According to the governments statistics published by the Center for Disease Control, a person born today is expected to live to the age of 79. However, those who are currently 65 can anticipate living approximately another 19 years to the age of 84, while those who are currently 85 can expect to live another 6 years to the age of 91.⁹⁴ Sickness and disease associated with longer life-spans will require medical intervention. The costs of living increases as a result of living longer. But earnings do not necessarily keep pace.

The National Jewish Population Survey of 2000 and United Jewish Communities report on The American Jewish Elderly, only 21% of the American Jewish population reported income over \$100,000, 22% reported income under \$25,000, and 5% were reporting income at or below the poverty line. The American Community Survey of 2009 reported 4% of the Jewish population with income over \$200,000.⁹⁵ A lack of sufficiently high incomes to cover total living expenses places stress on savings.

94. United States of America, US Department of Health and Human Services, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, *National Vital Statistics Report*, by Elizabeth Arias, PhD., 3rd ed., vol. 61, September 24, 2012 (Hyattsville, 2012).

95. Miriam Rieger, *United Jewish Communities Report Series on the National Jewish Population Survey 2000-01 The American Jewish Elderly*, report, series 6 (Storrs, CT: Mandell L. Berman Institute North American Jewish Data Bank, Center for Judaic Studies and Contemporary Jewish Life, 2004), p.9.

Substantial portions of accumulated wealth will need to be directed toward this aging population, reducing what is available to be passed on through inheritance. Economists and sociologists once anticipated the greatest wealth-transfer in history occurring between the current generations, Baby Boomers and their parents. The assumption was that the well-off elderly would be prime targets for philanthropy and the next generation would be the beneficiaries of substantial estates. The wealth transfer envisioned however, may be limited by the need to redirect funds towards living related expenses.

MetLife, Inc., a leader in investment and life insurance products, produced a study in December 2010 entitled “The MetLife study of Inheritance and Wealth Transfer to Baby Boomers.”⁹⁶ The study indicated that Boomers were expected to receive approximately \$8.4 trillion overall, of which \$2.4 trillion has already been received. The current recession is expected to have permanently reduced the total by \$800 million. The remaining sum of \$5.2 trillion is expected to be inherited by approximately 2/3 of the Boomers in late middle age from the estates of their parents. This number equates to a median amount of \$64,000. However, the distribution is not even. Going deeper into the statistics, the top decile (top 10%) of the population, the median

96. Although I acknowledge that MetLife is a company in business to promote investment products, the information they share is still revealing.

dollar amount that a Boomer can anticipate receiving under the best of circumstances is \$335,000.⁹⁷ This would represent a “best case” scenario for the Jewish population.

The MetLife study cautions:

“...inheritances are important in aggregate, the timing and amount of the receipts of any particular household are highly uncertain. Wealth may be consumed by medical and long-term care costs, or simply as a result of living longer than expected. Wealth is also subject to fluctuations in the stock and housing markets. So an anticipated inheritance is not a substitute for adequate saving for retirement.”⁹⁸

This issue of sufficiency cannot be overstated. The longer we live, the more we spend if only for the routine expenses such as food and shelter. When we do become sick, the cost of the cutting-edge medical technology that can treat, sustain or even cure us can be substantial.

Furthermore, as the Boomer generation looks ahead, it faces many uncertainties that place their estates at risk. This cohort also faces rising health care costs, the largely uninsured cost of long-term care, the risk of job loss, and declines in prospective returns on their accumulated wealth. Some have yet to face the potentially substantial cost of paying for their children’s college education and may also be called upon to contribute to the cost of their grandchildren’s education. The above factors could lead

97. Alicia Munnell, *The MetLife Study of Inheritance and Wealth Transfer to Baby Boomers*, publication (New York: MetLife, 2011), p. 3.

98. Munnell, *The MetLife Study of Inheritance and Wealth Transfer to Baby Boomers*, p.3.

one to conclude that the Boomers might be less likely than previous birth cohorts to leave bequests to succeeding generations.⁹⁹

How this may affect our approach as Jews brings us back to the story in the Talmud: proper honor and reverence means to keep silent even if your parents were to throw your purse into the sea. But the ante may have been upped even further requiring that we actively support these actions, willingly giving up what might have been our inheritance in order for our parents to enjoy the best quality of life possible. The Baby Boomer's wealth is at risk from both their parents and their children as the Boomers stand ready to supplement the needs of each.

How do the Baby Boomers maintain themselves? Many have struggled in recent years. The real wage has decreased over the past 10 years. Careers and retirement nest eggs, comprised of investments and home values, have suffered in the recent recession. The thought of retirement is becoming an ever more distant dream. The social safety nets to the extent they have been in place are now actively questioned as to sustainability into the Boomer generation. The Baby Boomers are reeling with a sense that we are working for everyone but themselves. The ideas of finding self-satisfaction and fulfillment have given way for many to a hope for survival.

How does one properly practice *kavod* and *mora* under these circumstances?

99. Munnell, *The MetLife Study of Inheritance and Wealth Transfer to Baby Boomers*, p.14.

Distance from the Caregiver's Perspective

Caregiving is a demanding enterprise. Depending on the level of need and willingness to commit, caregiving can in fact be the equivalent of a full-time job. However, most of us are not in a position to give our full attention to caregiving for a parent. Usually there are other things competing for our attention including family, work as well as our own personal need to maintain balance and a life distinct from the role as caregiver. Because caregiving can be consuming it is critically important that the adult child evaluate his or her situation creating an assessment that establishes realistic boundaries and goals. The caregiver adult child must know how much help they are capable of giving and in what forms that help can occur. This assessment must begin with an understanding of one's personal situation at home and at work. Who are you? Where are you in the journey of your life? Are you happy at home and with the quality of your relationships within the nuclear family? Are you established in the workplace and satisfied with the situation as it presents itself? Last but not least, what is the relationship you share with your parent? These become important questions for they address the issues of availability as a caregiver from both the perspective of emotions and time.

We learn from the our texts that both husband and wife may place limitations on living with parents. the underlying understanding is that our first obligation is to our

own family unit.¹⁰⁰ If a wife finds her in-laws intolerable, the husband is compelled to accede to her request that the parents do not remain in the house. This understanding of the primacy of the marriage can be joined with Maimonides' ruling that if the burden is too great, caregiving can be shifted to someone else. By extension, it is appropriate to review with your spouse the family's capacity to extend itself to the elder parent. Even if only the one spouse expects to serve in the caregiver role, the entire family is affected by that commitment. One of the most difficult challenges facing adult children is balancing their obligations to parents with those to their own children and spouse-- relating to their parents with respect and honor but yet on occasion having to disagree with their petition since it would create excessive strains on their on families.¹⁰¹ Are the children at a stage where they are particularly needing of attention, and when choices need to be made, what are the priorities short of an emergency situation?

An honest assessment of situation in the workplace and finances is also required. Will the workplace permit the time and effort to serve as a caregiver? For some of us, there is a conscious choice we are willing to make, potentially sacrificing career advancement for time as a caregiver. In some workplace situations, this is not a choice that is available. In the situation of the small business person or entrepreneur, work is not a steady flow with a regular paycheck. Jobs appear and must be taken or lost.

100. Walter Jacob, "American Reform Responsa 53 Filial Obligation 1982," CCAR Responsa XCII (1982): 208.

101. Schindler, Ruben, and "Honor Reverence of the Elderly", *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, Winter/Spring, 1995, page 252.

High power positions such as medical doctors also will find that the demands of the job are often unforgiving and inflexible. The potential caregiver must know their boundaries beforehand. Such action gives the caregiver the opportunity to be proactive, prioritizing people. This will minimize the issues that will invariably arise as the needs of the parent conflict with other aspects of the caregiver's life.

A very important consideration is a true understanding of the relationship with the parent in need of care, or in potential need of care. Can you have an honest discussion based on trust and mutual respect? This is difficult for both parent and child. The parent is often as uncomfortable with the potential role reversal and loss of independence as the child is. Often we revert back to traditional roles of child and parent fraught with the emotional baggage that accompanies these roles. Can adult child be welcomed as a caregiver and what will it take to accomplish that? Are both parties prepared to have the adult child evaluate the parent's home to assess its safety and suitability? Can the child accompany his or her parent to the doctor and be included in the discussions both of diagnosis and prognosis?

The opportunity to be a caregiver is extraordinary. It can be sacred and holy work, it can be the fulfillment of *mitzvot*, an expression of love, an attempt to repay a debt to the one who raised and nurtured you. It will certainly be challenging to the caregiver, as they attempt to balance the myriad responsibilities required of this position with the other demands of family and work and personal needs. Careful assessment of the sit-

uation will serve to minimize the disruptions and difficulties and provide the best you have to offer to all the people you care about.

Determining the Needs of an Elder

The Jewish Home Services, Inc. is a not-for-profit institution providing home health-care services for the elderly. It also serves as a resource center to research issues on the elderly, located in lower New York State. The purpose of the home services is to enhance the quality of life for the elderly who are their clients through an home assessment and recommendations based on the home assessment. Jewish Home has broken down the issues of needs into six categories. The following list is presented on their website.¹⁰² These are:

- Personal care: bathing, eating, dressing, toileting, grooming.
- Household Care: cooking, cleaning, laundry, shopping, finances.
- Health Care: medication management, physician's appointments, physical therapy
- Emotional Care: companionship, meaningful activities, conversation
- Supervision: oversight for safety at home and wandering prevention
- Home Safety: lighting, furniture configuration, rugs, wiring and external issues.

102. "How Can I Determine an Elder's Needs?," Jewish Home Lifecare How Can I Determine an Elders Needs Comments, accessed March 01, 2013, <http://www.jewishhome.org/faqs/how-can-i-determine-an-elders-needs>.

Upon review of the list presented, both the broad categories and the specific things mentioned within them, are expansions upon the *mitzvot* of honor and reverence developed in the *Talmud*.

The comprehensive list provided above is detailed and intimate. It is interesting to consider how many adult children are comfortable performing the detailed quality of life review suggested as well as whether the parents are ready or able to have those conversations with their children as well. For that reason, a third party professional may be an appropriate surrogate. However, such services are not always readily accessible or affordable. But their value can be important when parent and child are incapable of doing it themselves.

Modern tools for closing the distance

Technology has helped to close the gap that exists when we live apart from our parents. It is not particularly intrusive, but it is not a substitute for being physically present. I recall the Summer Camp Director visiting our home to sell my parents on the summer camp experience for me many years ago. The pictures showed a wonderful campus with bunks that looked like bungalows, complete paneled interiors. When I arrived at camp, I discovered that in fact the picture was the camp director's bungalow. The bunks were far more spartan with screens for windows and no interior fin-

ishing except for basic bathrooms. This is not a plea for sympathy, but rather an acknowledgement that appearances, especially the representations of others, can be misleading. Without a physical presence over time to experience first-hand the circumstances, it is difficult to accurately assess the real situation for our parents when they live apart from us.

The telephone remains a basic tool to remain in touch. We are familiar with our parents so we can often tell from the sound of their voice or their speech patterns if something is unusual or suspicious. The advent of video calling via Facetime or Skype are improvements to the telephone. We can see their faces or they can show us things of interest. This further enhances our ability to gauge how well our parents are doing without being too intrusive or undermining their sense of independence.

Ideally we would all prefer that the parent and child have good communication skills and are ready willing and able to share with each other openly and honestly. That does not happen frequently enough to be considered the norm. So we are left struggling with emotions and issues that complicate and often obfuscate. These tools can bridge the gap that exists because we can see some things without needing to ask. We can tell if they look thin, act sad or sound weak or distracted. However, these are supplements not substitutes for aiding our parents. Personal visitations to the parent's home is important to assess the situation on the ground for oneself. Visits of parents to the children is also a good idea. It is a practical way to assess their capabilities to travel and take care of themselves.

There is also the opportunity to engage in conversation. Everyone reacts differently to aging, some gracefully and some go kicking and screaming. The loss of independence is difficult for many to grasp. The need to admit it and ask for help, particularly when that request is to a child can be very hard. Someone recently asked me for help with his fiercely independent parents. He was concerned they were diminishing in their capacity, but were refusing his offers to help. I suggested a brief visit, the pretense being that he missed them, not that he wanted to assess their living conditions. I suggested he consider asking them for help. To let his parents know that even as an adult, he missed them, and doing things for them since they have moved away. I hoped this approach might be more effective. It was all about their being ready, willing and able to accept help.

Other Means for Bridging the Gap

The issues of honor and reverence are no less daunting in modernity than ever before. And as noted, new issues surrounding culture, lifestyle, longevity all contribute to a new layer of complexity. These issues can serve to overwhelm the adult child, and the response to being overwhelmed is often frustration. A feeling of isolation can ensue; even though you may know intellectually others have confronted issues like yours, somehow your problems feel unique and you may feel alone in the struggle. Personal issues of ego and emotion complicate the matter further. The more levels and layers, the increasingly difficult it is to do what needs to be done. Outside assistance

can make a substantial difference in helping the adult child to understand the situation, his or her place in it, and possible ways to act more effectively based on this knowledge.

The natural suggestion that arises is to employ the services and help of a therapist and a rabbi. A therapist can invest the time and energy understanding and assessing the situation and how you relate to it. He or she can then assist you as you explore and learn about the situation and how you relate to it. There are many kinds of therapies available. It is beyond the scope of this paper to review the alternatives. It is satisfactory to note their existence and importance. I do want to address however, the issue of employing rabbis in the process.

Our rabbis continue in their important traditional role as teachers. They also spend time practicing issues of chaplaincy and pastoral care. The rabbi can offer compassion and empathy because they are removed from the emotional component of being in the relationships themselves, similar perhaps to a therapist. But the rabbi brings a spiritual Jewish component that is unique. The rabbi can engage in the sacred work of honoring a person's sacred story, as the chaplain. The rabbi can also engage the wisdom contained in Judaism to provide comfort in the religion, culture, history and richness of Judaism to travel with an individual on a path of exploration. The rabbi can learn with the individual what the tradition says about a given situation and how that might apply to the current circumstances. Such an approach can provide a renewed sense of strength and purpose; the adult children are no longer merely concerned with

fulfilling an obligation, they are engaged in the sacred work of *Kibbud Av v'Em*, Honor and Reverence for his or her parents. Furthermore, the rabbi offers an additional component to this process for the adult child. The rabbi can offer community through the synagogue. The adult child can find the emotional and spiritual support in a community that shares cultural, religious and emotional values.

The Synagogue

The synagogue has traditionally been defined as having three purposes: בית תפילה, בית מדרש, בית כנסת, a house of prayer, a house of study and a house of gathering. Each of these remains an critical component in fulfilling a synagogue's purpose. However, there are times when each aspect is more prominent than others and one of these may present itself as an access point for an individual that the others do not. Regarding the issues of filial honor and reverence, there is a unique opportunity available for the synagogue to reach out to people as a place of gathering. The issues that have been explored within this thesis are not unique to already affiliated religious Jews. These are issues that confront everyone who has a sense of compassion and obligation. One does not have to be religious to feel the tug of responsibility as a parental caregiver. However, there is a common experience that is being shared by the Baby Boomer generation as the group confronts elderly parents.

The synagogue can be a place where we can meet and find people with shared interests and issues, in particular the issues surrounding responsibilities towards aging par-

ents. Through a social and community approach, people can seek support from others and likewise provide support to those in need. Programming can be made available to create learning opportunities from the vast religious wisdom available, to secular professionals to help plumb the depths of the issues. Practical learning can also take place within the synagogue regarding specific resources for individual needs.

A sense of common bond and shared experience helps to create community. This community can occur within the synagogue and become a source of outreach for the synagogue into the community, providing an important draw to the people who have not found the other pillars of Judaism either fulfilling or sufficient. For those who are already synagogue members, such a program is a service that directly benefits them as they may ponder what purposes the synagogue continues to serve for them. Non-members may find this to be an aspect of the synagogue that draws them in. We have long accepted and promoted smaller communities within the synagogue space. This becomes an important access point to Judaism. However, it should not stop there.

This program under the auspices of the rabbi will not only foster relationships but also provide the opportunity for a non-threatening access to other facets of synagogue life. For some, the opportunity to explore the other aspects of Judaism may be intriguing, as the increases in adult education class attendance would already indicate. Other people may find a resonance in religious practice in this new phase of their lives, where it had not existed before. As parents get sick, the caring communities committee can provide support and visits. The rabbi continues to provide chaplaincy and

pastoral services. End of life issues are another opportunity to support the family, whether it is the counseling of the children or the funeral and bereavement services most will likely desire. As we counsel and support, we strengthen the ties of these adults with the community. As we serve them we can also move towards asking their support of others, to “pay it forward” for others who are going to experience the pain of separation, illness and loss. This is more than a “therapeutic community” of members providing mutual support to those with common problems.¹⁰³

The synagogue can create a new vitality by addressing the needs of the largest demographic segment in Judaism. The synagogue creates a sacred community within its walls helping people find meaning and strength in each other under the sheltering wings of their Judaism. By finding this new way to reach out to the adult population, the synagogue may find its ability to attract and retain members is reinvigorated.

Conclusion

The modern issues that we confront present another layer of complexity onto an already difficult topic. Distance as noted can be emotional as well as physical and the issue of physicality presents itself as both a distance that can be measured and a capacity to perform as well. Economics and longevity weave themselves into the issue

103. Lawrence A. Hoffman, *Rethinking Synagogues: A New Vocabulary for Congregational Life* (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights Pub., 2006), p. 143.

of distance in new ways. The complications presented in the modern day however still fall within the originally framed question “How does one practice Honor and Reverence for his or her parent”? The modern understanding of a parent’s needs are remarkably similar to the understanding of a parent’s needs in our texts. The issue remains to honor and revere, so our instructions remain to provide food and drink, clothe them and help them with their coming and going, and to treat them with dignity. Two issues that seems to be something new are the issue that parents can move away from us and the issue of prolonging life through medical technology. Moving requires we become more creative in checking in with them and medical care is constantly changing. But like other personal decisions, the responsibility for these decisions should continue to rest with the parent, the recipient of our caregiving. We still are not to do things before we need to in order to preserve the dignity and respect of the parent. But distance makes realizing when that point in time has arrived more difficult.

Conclusion

As Rabbi Dayle Friedman said, Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai said: "...The most difficult of all mitzvot is 'Honor your father and mother...'"¹⁰⁴ We continue to look to our forebears and our teachers for insight into the most difficult and perplexing of things and we honor those who have come before us by attribution, remembering their words as the basis for our understanding. As this paper draws to a close, I find myself returning to Rabbi Tarfon of the Talmud and his story of his mother. It is almost as if we are sharing a well worn joke, "What do I have in common with Rabbi Tarfon"? Neither one of us knows how to properly treat his mother.

But like any good joke, at its core is a kernel of truth. The story of Rabbi Tarfon stooping to permit his mother to climb on him to get in and out of bed was something of which he was proud. And he shared his story with his peers expecting to be well received. Although I believe Rabbi Tarfon indeed was sharing a story of what he believed were his good works, it is inconsistent with his reputation as a person of great humility and one who would in fact perform such an act for his mother. This seems to underscore the importance of the story. Rabbi Tarfon never expected the rebuke, that

104. This is an interpretation of a portion of a saying of Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai from *Tanchuma Eikev*, 2. The complete quote attributed to the Rabbi is found in the appendix. Dayle A. Friedman, "Beyond Guilt: What We Owe Our Aging Parents- A Perspective from Tradition," in *That You May Live Long: Caring for Our Aging Parents, Caring for Ourselves* (New York: UAH Press, 2003), p. 78.

he had not done even half of what he could to properly honor his mother. That Rabbi Tarfon is chosen is quite telling. He is a revered *Tanna* from our tradition. Rabbi Tarfon was there at the beginning of what would be rabbinic Judaism living through the physical destruction of the Temple and participating in the spiritual rebuilding at Yavneh. For Rabbi Tarfon to be stymied by the proper observance of the mitzvot means that all of us are equally ill equipped to fully do all that is to be done in the realms of *kibbud* and *mora*. It has been impossible and it always will be impossible. But Rabbi Tarfon's words quoted in the *Pirkei Avot* have particular insight: "It is not incumbent upon you to complete the work, but neither are you at liberty to desist from it".¹⁰⁵ Even if we cannot do all that is to be done, we must try none-the-less, for something great is at stake. I find new meaning through reinterpreting a second verse attributed to Rabbi Tarfon, usually joined with the previous in this context: "The day is short, the labor (honoring and revering our parents) vast, the toilers (we, the adult children who cannot complete the task) idle, the reward great, the Master of the house (God) is insistent".¹⁰⁶

We are connected to our parents in an intimate way. God has interjected himself and elevated the idea of honor and reverence of our parents to the honor and reverence of God. We are unique in the bond and in the service. Psalm 71 is the plea of the aged to both God and our children, "Do not cast me off in my old age. Do not forsake me". It is clear we will not. Our obligations are mitzvot, commands from God. And yet

105. *Pirkei Avot* 2:21.

106. *Pirkei Avot* 2:20.

we struggle with finding the way to fulfill these sacred and fundamental responsibilities.

In the *Talmud* the discussion of filial honor and reverence in Kiddushin comes after a discussion of the parental responsibilities toward their children, which include teaching a craft and swimming. The interconnectivity between the generations and even the interdependence becomes clear. The intergenerational transfer of wealth may in reality be the wisdom and caring being passed from generation to generation, the basis for our living together in harmony and order, or at least the aspiration to do so. Honoring our parents is central to honoring Torah, for it is within the home as children that we first encounter nurturing, knowledge, rules and wisdom. Honoring parents seems to be appropriate behavior. If honoring parents is correct behavior, then logically it would seem to flow that parenting is honorable, and from the earliest stages, the child looks to becoming a parent, and life continues. But this beautiful circle of life is more difficult to effect in reality and our texts acknowledge this.

In Genesis 2:24, we are told that a man leaves his father and mother and cleaves to his wife and they become one flesh, עֶלְכֶן יֵעֲזֹב־אִישׁ אֶת־אָבִיו וְאֶת־אִמּוֹ וְדָבַק בְּאִשְׁתּוֹ וְהָיוּ לְבָשָׁר אֶחָד. Man and woman are united and as such their primary responsibilities are to one another, and by extension to the children of their union. Life gets increasingly complicated and later we encounter the foundational texts of *kibbud* and *mora* in Exodus 20:12 and Leviticus 19.3, respectively. Our rabbis and sages have struggled to understand how we approach these sacred yet extremely difficult *mitzvot*.

We develop an understanding of our filial obligations through the *aggadot* and *halakhot* first introduced in the Torah and then later the Talmud, in Kiddushin. The codification and elucidation continues in the *Mishneh Torah* and *Shulchan Aruch* and the commentaries on these texts. Honor, is developed and refined from its initial obligation to feed, provide drink, clothe, help them in and help them out. Reverence is based on an understanding that a child is to not stand or sit in a parent's presence, not to comment upon their words in front of them and to refer to them respectfully both in life and in death.

How we actually put these into practical effect, how we do these things is the difficulty. We are confounded by our own ability to manage the complexity of these things and our own issues of ego and emotion as we move into the realm of caregiver for our parents. This is an impossible task, but it has always been so. Modernity has brought with it a new set of complications to realizing the *mitzvot*. But each generation has confronted its own set of issues complicating the already impossible task. In fact there are opportunities to assist us that generations past have not known. We have institutions including therapy, rabbis and synagogues to create understanding, community and support. Access to our parents is in some ways enhanced through technology including the now dated telephone and more modern Skype. We can take some comfort in the knowledge that the task has always been daunting but remains a sacred and holy obligation. We find insight and guidance from our traditions and text. The

words of Rabbi Tarfon continue to resonate; We need to do our best to try and fulfill the mitzvot of *kibbud* and *mora*.

Appendix
Source Texts for Citations

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Torah

Exodus 20:12

יב כבד את-אביך, ואת-אמך--למען, יארכון ימיו, על האדמה, אשר-יהוה אלהיך נתן לך.

Leviticus 19:3

ג איש אמו ואביו תיראו, ואת-שבתתי תשמרו: אני, יהוה אלהיכם.

(משלי ז) אמור לחכמה אחותי את וגו', ואומר: (משלי ז) קשרם על אצבעותיך כתבם על לוח לבך, ואומר: (תהלים קכז) כחצים ביד גבור כן בני הנעורים, ואומר: (תהלים קכ) חצי גבור שנונים, ואומר: (תהלים מה) חציך שנונים עמים תחתך יפלו, ואומר: (תהלים קכז) אשרי הגבר אשר מלא את אשפתו מהם לא יבושו כי ידברו את אויבים בשער. מאי את אויבים בשער? אמר רבי חייא בר אבא: אפ' האב ובנו, הרב ותלמידו, שעוסקין בתורה בשער אחד נעשים אויבים זה את זה, ואינם זזים משם עד שנעשים אוהבים זה את זה, שנאמר: (במדבר כא) את והב בסופה, אל תקרי בסופה ו' שרוקה, פ' קמוצה אלא בסופה ו' בחולם, פ' קמוצה, ה דגושה. ת"ר: (דברים יא) ושמתם סם תם, נמשלה תורה כסם חיים משל, לאדם שהכה את בנו מכה גדולה והניח לו רטיה על מכתו, ואמר לו: בני, כל זמן שהרטיה זו על מכתך, אכול מה שהנאתך ושתה מה שהנאתך, ורחוץ בין בחמין בין בצונן ואין אתה מתיירא, ואם אתה מעבירה הרי היא מעלה נומי כך הקב"ה אמר להם לישראל: בני, בראתי יצר הרע ובראתי לו תורה תבלין, ואם אתם עוסקים בתורה אין אתם נמסרים בידו, שנאמר: (בראשית ד) הלא אם תטיב שאת, ואם אין אתם עוסקין בתורה אתם נמסרים בידו, שנא': לפתח חטאת רובץ, ולא עוד, אלא שכל משאו ומתנו בך, שנאמר: ואלך תשוקתו, ואם אתה רוצה אתה מושל בו, שנאמר: ואתה תמשל בו. ת"ר: קשה יצר הרע, שאפילו יוצרו קראו רע, שנאמר: (בראשית ח) כי יצר לב האדם רע מנעוריו. אמר רב יצחק: יצרו של אדם מתחדש עליו בכל יום, שנאמר: (בראשית ו) רק רע כל היום. ואמר ר"ש בן לוי: יצרו של אדם מתגבר עליו בכל יום ומבקש המיתו, שנאמר: (תהלים לז) צופה רשע לצדיק ומבקש להמיתו, ואלמלא הקב"ה עוזרו אין יכול לו, שנאמר: אלהים לא יעזבנו בידו. תנא דבי ר' ישמעאל: בני, אם פגע בך מנוול זה משכחו לבית המדרש, אם אבן הוא נימוח, ואם ברזל הוא מתפוצץ, שנאמר: (ירמיהו כג) הלא כה דברי כאש נאם ה' וכפטיש יפוצץ סלע, אם אבן הוא נימוח שנאמר: (ישעיהו נה) הוי כל צמא לכו למים, ואומר (איוב יד) אבנים שחקו מים. להשיאו אשה. מנלן? דכתיב: (ירמיהו כט) קחו נשים והולידו בנים ובנות וקחו לבניכם נשים ואת בנותיכם תנו לאנשים. בשלמא בנו בידו, אלא בתו בידו היא? הכי קאמר להו: ניתן לה מידי ולבשייה ונכסייה, כי היכי דקפצו עלה אינשי. ללמדו אומנות. מנלן? אמר חזקיה, דאמר קרא: (קהלת ט) ראה חיים עם אשה אשר אהבת, אם אשה ממש היא כשם שחייב להשיאו אשה, כך חייב ללמדו אומנות, אם תורה היא כשם שחייב ללמדו תורה, כך חייב ללמדו אומנות. ויש אומרים: אף להשיטו בנהר. מאי טעמא? חיותיה הוא. רבי יהודה אומר: כל שאינו מלמדו אומנות מלמדו ליסטות. ליסטות ס"ד? אלא, כאילו מלמדו ליסטות. מאי בינייהו? איכא בינייהו, דאגמריה עיסקא. כל מצות האב על הבן וכו'. מאי כל מצות האב על הבן? אילימא כל מצותא דמיחייב אבא למיעבד לבריה, נשים חייבות? והתניא: האב חייב בבנו למולו ולפדותו אביו אין, אמו לא! אמר רב יהודה, הכי קאמר: כל מצות האב המוטלת על הבן לעשות לאביו אחד אנשים ואחד נשים חייבין. תנינא להא דת"ר: איש אין לי אלא איש, אשה מנין? כשהוא אומר: תיראו הרי כאן שנים א"כ, מה ת"ל איש? איש סיפק בידו לעשות, אשה אין סיפק בידה לעשות, מפני שרשות אחרים עליה. אמר רב אידי בר אבין אמר רב: נתגרשה, שניהם שוים. ת"ר נאמר: (שמות כ) כבד את אביך ואת אמך, ונאמר: (משלי ג) כבד את ה' מהונך, הוה הכתוב כבוד אב ואם לכבוד המקום נאמר: (ויקרא יט) איש אמו ואביו תיראו, ונאמר: (דברים ו) את ה' אלהיך תירא ואותו תעבוד, הוה הכתוב מוראת אב ואם למוראת המקום נאמר: (שמות

כא) מקלל אביו ואמו מות יומת, ונאמר: (ויקרא כד) איש איש כי יקלל אלהיו ונשא חטאו, השוה הכתוב ברכת אב ואם לברכת המקום אבל בהכאה ודאי אי אפשר וכן בדין, ששלשתן שותפין בו. ת"ר, שלשה שותפין הן באדם: הקב"ה, ואביו, ואמו, בזמן שאדם מכבד את אביו ואת אמו, אמר הקב"ה: מעלה אני עליהם כאילו דרתי ביניהם וכבדוני. תניא, רבי אומר: גלוי וידוע לפני מי שאמר והיה העולם, שבן מכבד את אמו יותר מאביו, מפני

Kiddushin Daf 31a

שמשדלתו בדברים, לפיכך הקדים הקב"ה כיבוד אב וכיבוד אם וגלוי וידוע לפני מי שאמר והיה העולם, שהבן מתיירא מאביו יותר מאמו, מפני שמלמדו תורה, לפיכך הקדים הקב"ה מורא האם למורא האב. תני תנא קמיה דרב נחמן: בזמן שאדם מצער את אביו ואת אמו, אמר הקב"ה: יפה עשיתי שלא דרתי ביניהם, שאלמלי דרתי ביניהם ציערוני. אמר ר' יצחק: כל העובר עבירה בסתר כאילו דוחק רגלי שכינה, שנאמר: (ישעיהו סו) כה אמר ה' השמים כסאי והארץ הדום רגלי. אמר רבי יהושע בן לוי: אסור לאדם שיהלך ארבע אמות בקומה זקופה, שנא': (ישעיהו ו) מלא כל הארץ כבודו. רב הונא בריה דרב יהושע לא מסגי ארבע אמות בגילוי הראש, אמר: שכינה למעלה מראשי. שאל בן אלמנה אחת את ר' אליעזר: אבא אומר השקיני מים ואימא אומרת השקיני מים, איזה מהם קודם? אמר ליה: הנח כבוד אמך ועשה כבוד אביך, שאתה ואמך חייבים בכבוד אביך. בא לפני רבי יהושע, אמר לו כך. אמר לו: רבי, נתגרשה מהו? אמר ליה: מבין ריסי עיניך ניכר שבן אלמנה אתה, הטל להן מים בספל וקעקע להן כתרנגולין. דרש עולא רבה אפיתחא דבי נשיאה, מאי דכתיב: (תהלים קלח) יודוך ה' כל מלכי ארץ כי שמעו אמרי פיך? מאמר פיך לא נאמר אלא אמרי פיך, בשעה שאמר הקב"ה (שמות כ) אנכי ולא יהיה לך, אמרו אומות העולם: לכבוד עצמו הוא דורש, כיון שאמר (שמות כ) כבד את אביך ואת אמך, חזרו והודו למאמרות הראשונות. רבא אמר, מהכא: (תהלים קיט) ראש דברך אמת, ראש דברך ולא סוף דברך? אלא, מסוף דברך ניכר שראש דברך אמת. בעו מיניה מרב עולא: עד היכן כיבוד אב ואם? אמר להם: צאו וראו מה עשה עובד כוכבים אחד באשקלון ודמא בן נתינה שמו, פעם אחת בקשו חכמים פרקמטיא בששים ריבוא שכר, והיה מפתח מונח תחת מראשותיו של אביו, ולא ציערו. אמר רב יהודה אמר שמואל, שאלו את ר' אליעזר: עד היכן כיבוד אב ואם? אמר להם: צאו וראו מה עשה עובד כוכבים אחד לאביו באשקלון ודמא בן נתינה שמו, בקשו ממנו חכמים אבנים לאפוד בששים ריבוא שכר, ורב כהנא מתני: בשמונים ריבוא, והיה מפתח מונח תחת מראשותיו של אביו, ולא ציערו. לשנה האחרת נתן הקב"ה שכרו, שנולדה לו פרה אדומה בעדרו. נכנסו חכמי ישראל אצלו, אמר להם: יודע אני בכם, שאם אני מבקש מכם כל ממון שבעולם אתם נותנין לי, אלא אין אני מבקש מכם אלא אותו ממון שהפסדתי בשביל כבוד אבא. וא"ר חנינא: ומה מי שאינו מצווה ועושה כך, מצווה ועושה עאכו"כ, דא"ר ח: גדול מצווה ועושה ממי שאינו מצווה ועושה. אמר רב יוסף: מריש ה"א, מאן דהוה אמר לי הלכה כר"י, דאמר: סומא פטור מן המצות, עבידנא יומא טבא לרבנן, דהא לא מיפקידנא והא עבידנא, השתא דשמעיתא להא דא"ר חנינא: גדול מצווה ועושה יותר ממי שאינו מצווה ועושה, אדרבה, מאן דאמר לי דאין הלכה כרבי יהודה, עבידנא יומא טבא לרבנן. כי אתא רב דימי אמר: פעם אחת היה לבוש סירקון של זהב והיה יושב בין גדולי רומי, ובאתה אמו וקרעתו ממנו, וטפחה לו על ראשו וירקה לו בפניו, ולא הכלימה. תני אבימי בריה דרבי אבהו: יש מאכיל לאביו פסיוני וטורדו מן העולם, ויש מטחינו בריחים

ומביאו לחיי העולם הבא. אמר רבי אבהו: כגון אבימי ברי קיים מצות כיבוד. חמשה בני סמכי הוה ליה לאבימי בחיי אביו, וכי הוה אתא רבי אבהו קרי אבבא, רהיט ואזיל ופתח ליה, ואמר אין אין עד דמטאי התם. יומא חד אמר ליה: אשקיין מיא, אדאייתי ליה נמנם, גחין קאי עליה עד דאיתער, איסתייעא מילתיה ודרש אבימי: (תהלים עט) מזמור לאסף. אמר ליה רב יעקב בר אבבה לאביי: כגון אנא דעד דאתינא מבי רב, אבא מדלי לי כסא ואמא מזגה לי, היכי איעביד? א"ל: מאמך קביל ומאבוך לא תקבל, דכיון דבר תורה הוא חלשה דעתיה. רבי טרפון הוה ליה ההיא אמא, דכל אימת דהות בעיא למיסק לפוריא גחין וסליק לה, וכל אימת דהות נחית נחתת עלויה, אתא וקא משתבח בי מדרשא, אמרי ליה: עדיין לא הגעת לחצי כיבוד, כלום זרקה ארנקי בפניך לים ולא הכלמתה? רב יוסף כי הוה שמע קל כרעא דאמיה, אמר: איקום מקמי שכינה דאתיא. אמר רבי יוחנן: אשרי מי שלא חמאן. רבי יוחנן, כי עברתו אמו מת אביו, ילדתו מתה אמו וכן אביי. איני? והאמר אביי: אמרה לי אם! ההיא מרבינתיה הואי. רב אסי הוה ליה ההיא אמא זקינה, אמרה לי: בעינא תכשיטין, עבד לה. בעינא גברא, נייעין לך. בעינא גברא דשפיר כותך, שבקה ואזל לארעא דישראל. שמע דקא אזלה אבתריה, אתא לקמיה דרבי יוחנן, אמר לי: מהו לצאת מארץ לחוצה לארץ? א"ל: אסור. לקראת אמא, מהו? א"ל: איני יודע. [אתרח] פורתא הדר אתא, אמר ליה: אסי, נתרצית לצאת? המקום יחזירך לשלום. אתא לקמיה דרבי אלעזר, א"ל: חס ושלום, דלמא מירתח רתח! א"ל: מאי אמר לך? אמר ליה: המקום יחזירך לשלום, אמר ליה: ואם איתא דרתח לא הוה מברך לך. אדהכי והכי שמע לארונא דקאתי, אמר: אי ידעי לא נפקי. ת"ר: מכבדו בחייו ומכבדו במותו בחייו כיצד? הנשמע בדבר אביו למקום, לא יאמר: שלחוני בשביל עצמי, מהרוני בשביל עצמי, פטרוני בשביל עצמי, אלא כולהו בשביל אבא במותו כיצד? היה אומר דבר שמועה מפיו, לא יאמר: כך אמר אבא, אלא כך אמר אבא מרי, הריני כפרת משכבו. והני מילי תוך שנים עשר חדש, מכאן ואילך, אומר: זכרונו לברכה לחיי העולם הבא. תנו רבנן: חכם משנה שם אביו ושם רבו, תורגמן אינו משנה לא שם אביו ולא שם רבו. אבבה דמאן? אילימא אבבה דמתורגמן, אטו תורגמן לאו בר חיובא הוא? אלא אמר רבא: שם אביו של חכם, ושם רבו של חכם כי הא דמר בר רב אשי כי הוה דריש בפירקא, איהו אמר אבא מרי, ואמוריה אמר הכי אמר רב אשי. ת"ר: איזהו מורא, ואיזהו כיבוד? מורא לא עומד במקומו, ולא יושב במקומו, ולא סותר את דבריו, ולא מכריעו כיבוד מאכיל ומשקה, מלביש ומכסה, מכניס ומוציא. איבעיא להו:

משל מי? רב יהודה אמר: משל בן, רב נתן בר אושעיא אמר: משל אב. אורו ליה רבנן לרב ירמיה, ואמרי לה לבריה דרב ירמיה, כמ"ד משל אב. מיתיבי נאמר: (שמות כ) כבד את אביך ואת אמך, ונאמר: (משלי ג) כבד את ה' מהונך, מה להלן בחסרון כיס, אף כאן בחסרון כיס ואי אמרת משל אב, מאי נפקא ליה מיניה? לביטול מלאכה. ת"ש: ב' אחים, שני שותפין, האב ובנו, הרב ותלמידו פודין זה לזה מעשר שני, ומאכילין זה לזה מעשר עני ואי אמרת משל בן, נמצא זה פורע חובו משל עניים! לא צריכא להעדפה. אי הכי, היינו דקתני עלה, אמר רבי יהודה: תבא מאירה למי שמאכיל את אביו מעשר עני ואי להעדפה, מאי נפקא מיניה? אפילו הכי זילא ביה מילתא. ת"ש, שאלו את ר"א: עד היכן כיבוד אב ואם? אמר להם: כדי שיטול ארנקי ויזרקנו לים בפניו, ואינו מכלימו ואי אמרת משל אב, מאי נפקא לי' מיניה? בראוי ליורשו וכי הא דרבה בר רב הונא, דרב הונא קרע שיראי באנפי רבה בריה, אמר: איזול איחזי אי רתח אי לא רתח. ודלמא רתח, וקעבר (ויקרא יט) אלפני עור לא תתן מכשול! דמחיל ליה ליקריה. והא קעבר משום (דברים כ) בל תשחית! דעבד ליה בפומבייני. ודילמא משום הכי לא רתח! דעבד ליה בשעת ריתחיה. מתני ליה רב יחזקאל לרמי בריה: הנשרפים בנסקלים רבי שמעון אומר: ידונו בסקילה, שהשריפה חמורה. אמר ליה רב יהודה בריה: אבא, לא תיתנייא הכי, מאי איריא שריפה חמורה? תיפוק לי דרובא נסקלים נינהו! אלא הכי איתנייא: הנסקלים בנשרפים. א"ל: אי הכי, אימא סיפא, וחכמים אומרים: ידונו בשריפה, שהסקילה חמורה מאי איריא דסקילה חמורה? תיפוק לי דרובא נשרפים נינהו! א"ל: התם רבנן הוא דקאמרו ליה לר"ש, דקאמרת שריפה חמורה, לא, סקילה חמורה. א"ל שמואל לרב יהודה: שיננא, לא תימא ליה לאבוך הכי, דתניא: הרי שהיה אביו עובר על דברי תורה, אל יאמר לו: אבא, עברת על דברי תורה, אלא אומר לו: אבא, כך כתוב בתורה. כך כתוב בתורה צעורי קא מצער ליה! אלא, אומר לו: אבא, מקרא כתוב בתורה כך. אלעזר בן מתיא אומר: אבא אומר השקיני מים, ומצוה לעשות, מניח אני כבוד אבא ועושה את המצוה, שאני ואבא חייבים במצוה איסי בן יהודה אומר: אם אפשר למצוה ליעשות ע"י אחרים תיעשה על ידי אחרים, וילך הוא בכבוד אביו. אמר רב מתנה: הלכה כאיסי בן יהודה. א"ר יצחק בר שילא א"ר מתנה אמר רב חסדא: האב שמחל על כבודו מחול, הרב שמחל על כבודו אין כבודו מחול ורב יוסף אמר: אפי' הרב שמחל על כבודו מחול, שנאמר: (שמות יג) וי' הולך לפניו יומם. אמר רבא: הכי השתא, התם הקדוש ב"ה עלמא דיליה הוא ותורה דיליה היא מחיל ליה ליקריה,

הכא תורה דיליה היא? הדר אמר רבא: אין, תורה דיליה היא, דכתיב: (תהלים א) ובתורתו יהגה יומם ולילה. איני? והא רבא משקי בי הלולא דבריה, ודל ליה כסא לרב פפא ולרב הונא בריה דרב יהושע וקמו מקמיה, לרב מרי ולרב פנחס בריה דרב חסדא ולא קמו מקמיה, איקפד ואמר: הנו רבנן רבנן, והנו רבנן לאו רבנן? ותו, רב פפא הוה משקי בי הלולא דאבא מר בריה, ודלי ליה כסא לר' יצחק בריה דרב יהודה ולא קם מקמיה, ואיקפד! אפ"ה, הידור מיעבד ליה בעו. אמר רב אשי: אפילו למ"ד הרב שמחל על כבודו כבודו מחול, נשיא שמחל על כבודו אין כבודו מחול. מיתיבי: מעשה ברבי אליעזר ורבי יהושע ורבי צדוק שהיו מסובין בבית המשתה בנו של רבן גמליאל, והיה רבן גמליאל עומד ומשקה עליהם, נתן הכוס לר' אליעזר ולא נטלו, נתנו לר' יהושע וקיבלו אמר לו רבי אליעזר: מה זה, יהושע, אנו יושבין ורבן גמליאל (ברבי) (מסורת הש"ס: [דרבי]) עומד ומשקה עלינו? אמר ליה: מצינו גדול ממנו שמשש, (אברהם גדול ממנו ושמש) אברהם גדול הדור היה, וכתוב בו: (בראשית יח) והוא עומד עליהם ושמא תאמרו, כמלאכי השרת נדמו לו? לא נדמו לו אלא לערביים, ואנו לא יהא רבן גמליאל ברבי עומד ומשקה עלינו? אמר להם רבי צדוק: עד מתי אתם מניחים כבודו של מקום ואתם עוסקים בכבוד הבריות? הקב"ה משיב רוחות ומעלה נשיאים ומוריד מטר ומצמיח אדמה, ועורך שולחן לפני כל אחד ואחד, ואנו לא יהא רבן גמליאל ברבי עומד ומשקה עלינו? אלא אי איתמר הכי איתמר, אמר רב אשי: אפילו למ"ד נשיא שמחל על כבודו כבודו מחול, מלך שמחל על כבודו אין כבודו מחול, שנאמר: (דברים יז) שום תשים עליך מלך, שתהא אימתו עליך. ת"ר: (ויקרא יט) מפני שיבה תקום יכול אפילו מפני זקן אשמאי? ת"ל: זקן, ואין זקן אלא חכם, שנאמר: (במדבר יא) אספה לי שבעים איש מזקני ישראל רבי יוסי הגלילי אומר: אין זקן אלא מי שקנה חכמה, שנאמר: (משלי ח) ה' קנני ראשית דרכו. יכול יעמוד מפניו ממקום רחוק? ת"ל: תקום והדרת, לא אמרתי קימה אלא במקום שיש הידור. יכול יהדרנו בממון? ת"ל: תקום והדרת, מה קימה שאין בה חסרון כיס, אף הידור שאין בו חסרון כיס. יכול יעמוד מפניו מבית הכסא ומבית המרחץ? ת"ל: תקום והדרת, לא אמרתי קימה אלא במקום שיש הידור. יכול יעצים עיניו כמי שלא ראהו? ת"ל: תקום ויראת, דבר המסור ללב נאמר בו (ויקרא יט) ויראת מאלהיך. רבי שמעון בן אלעזר אומר: מנין לזקן שלא יטריח? ת"ל: זקן ויראת. איסי בן יהודה אומר: מפני שיבה תקום אפילו כל שיבה במשמע. רבי יוסי הגלילי היינו תנא קמא! איכא בינייהו יניק וחכים, ת"ק סבר: יניק וחכים לא, רבי יוסי הגלילי סבר: אפילו יניק וחכים. מ"ט דרבי יוסי הגלילי? אמר לך: אי ס"ד כדקאמר ת"ק, א"כ, נכתוב רחמנא מפני שיבה זקן תקום והדרת, מ"ש דפלגינהו רחמנא? למימר, דהאי לאו האי והאי לאו האי, ש"מ: אפי' יניק וחכים. ות"ק? משום דבעי למיסמך זקן ויראת. ותנא קמא מ"ט? אי ס"ד כדקאמר רבי יוסי הגלילי, א"כ, נכתוב רחמנא

קידושין דף לא ע"ב

ומביאו לעוה"ב- שמכבדו בדברים טובים ונחומים והמלאכה מטיל עליו בלשון רכה מראה לו צורך השעה שאינן יכולין להתפרנס אלא ביגיעה זו ובגמרת ירושלמי גרס מעשה בשניהם מעשה באחד שהיה מאכיל לאביו פסיוני פעם אחת אמר לו אביו מאין לך כך אלה אמר לו סבא מה איכפת לך טחון ואכול כלומר לעוס ואכול הראהו שקשה לו ושוב מעשה באחד שהיה טוחן בריחיים והיה לו אב זקן ושלח המלך בשביל אביו לבא לעבודת המלך אמר לו בנו אבא טחון ואני אלך תחתיך לעבודת המלך שאין לה קצבה.

מכילתא דרבי ישמעאל יתרו - מס' דבחדש פרשה ח

כבד את אביך ואת אמך. שנמע אני בדברים, ת"ל +משלי ג ט+ כבד את ה' מהונה במאכל ובמשתה ובכסות נקיה. ד"א כבד את אביה לפי שנאמר +ויקרא כ ט+ איש איש כי יקלל אביו ואמו, אין לי אלא איש, אשה טנמטום ואנדרוגיננס מנין, ת"ל כבד את אביך ואת אמה מכל מקום i מה כבוד לא חלק בן בין איש לאשה טנמטום ואנדרוגיננס, אף מורא לא תחלק בן בין איש לאשה טנמטום ואנדרוגיננס, דברי רבי ישמעאל i רבי יהודה בן בתירא אומה הרי הוא אומר +שם /ויקרא/ יט ג+ איש אמן ואביו תיראן ואת שבתותי תשמורן, מה שבת לא חלק בן בין איש לאשה טנמטום ואנדרוגיננס, אף מורא לא תחלק בן בין איש לאשה טנמטום ואנדרוגיננס.

רבי אומר חביב כבוד אב ואם לפני מי שאמר והיה העולם ששקל כבודן ככבודן ומוראן כמוראן וקללתן כקללתן i כתיב כבד את אביך ואת אמך וכנגדן כתיב /משלי ג ט/ כבד את ה' מהונה הקיש כבוד אב ואם לכבוד המקום i כתיב +ויקרא יט ג+ איש אמן ואביו תיראן וכנגדן כתיב +דבר' נ יג, י כ+ את ה' אלהיך תירא, הקיש מורא אב ואם למורא המקום i כתיב +שמות כא יז+ ומקלל אביו ואמן וכנגדן כתיב +ויקרא כד טז+ איש כי יקלל אלהיו, הקיש קללת אב ואם לקללת המקום.

בא וראה מתן שכרן, נאמר +משלי ג ט - י+ כבד את ה' מהונך וכנגדן כתיב וימלאן אסמך שבע; נאמר כבד את אביך ואת אמך וכנגדן למען יאריכון ימיה +דברים י כ+ את ה' אלהיך תירא - +מלאכי ג כ+ וזרחה לכם יראי שמי שמש צדקה. +ויקרא יט ג+ איש אמן ואביו תיראן ואת שבתותי תשמורן, מה אמור בשבת, +ישעיה נח יג - יד+ אם תשיב משבת רגלך - אז תתענג על ה' והרכבתך על במתי ארץ.

רבי אן, גלוי יידוע לפני מי שאמר והיה העולם שאדם מכבד את אמן יותר מאביו, לפי שהיא משדלתן בדברים, לפיכך הקדים את האב לאם בכיבן, ד גלוי יידוע לפני מי שאמר והיה העולם שאדם מתיירא מאביו יותר מאמן, לפי שהאן מלמדן תורה, לפיכך הקדים האם לאב במורא, מקום שחסר השלים; אן כל הקודם במקרא קודם במעשה, ת"ל איש אמן ואביו תיראן, מגיד ששניהן שקולין זה בזה.

כבד את אביך ואת אמך. אם כבודתן, למען יאריכון ימיה ואם לאן, למען יקצרון ימיה שדברי תורה ננטריקון שכן דברי תורה נדרשין, מכלל הן לאן מכלל לאן הן. על האדמה [אשר ה' אלהיך נתן לך], מכאן אמרן, כל מצוה שמתן שכרה בצדה אין ב"ד של מטה מוזהרין עליה.

א מזמור, לאסף:
 אלהים, באו גוים בנחלתך-- טמאו, את היכל קדשך;
 שמו את-ירושלם לעיים.
 ב נתנו, את-נבלת עבדיך-- מאכל, לעוף השמים;
 בשר חסידיך, לחיתו-ארץ.
 ג שפכו דמם, כמים--סביבות ירושלם; ואין קובר.
 ד היינו חרפה, לשכנינו; לעג וקלס, לסביבותינו.
 ה עד-מה יהוה, תאנף לנצח; תבער כמו-אש, קנאתך.
 ו שפך חמתך-- אל הגוים, אשר לא-ידעוך:
 ועל ממלכות-- אשר בשמך, לא קראו.
 ז כי, אכל את-יעקב; ואת-נוהו השמו.
 ח אל-תזכר-לנו, עונת ראשנים:
 מהר, יקדמונו רחמיך-- כי דלונו מאד.
 ט עזרנו, אלהי ישענו-- על-דבר כבוד-שמך;
 והצילנו וכפר על-חטאתינו, למען שמך.
 י למה, יאמרו הגוים-- איה אלהיהם:
 יודע בגיים (בגוים) לעינינו; נקמת, דם-עבדיך השפוך.
 יא תבוא לפניך, אנקת אסיר: כגדל זרועך--הותר, בני תמותה.
 יב והשב לשכנינו שבעתים, אל-חיקם;
 חרפתם אשר חרפוך אדני.
 יג ואנחנו עמך, וצאן מרעיתך-- נודה לך, לעולם:
 לדר ודר-- נספר, תהלתך.

ממרים פרק ו

א כבוד אב ואם מצות עשה גדולה וכן מורא אב ואם שקל אותן הכתוב בכבודו ובמוראו, כתוב כבד את אביך ואת אמך וכתוב כבד את ה' מהונך, ובאביו ואמו כתוב איש אמו ואביו תיראו וכתוב את ה' אלהיך תירא, כדרך שצוה על כבוד שמו הגדול ומוראו כך צוה על כבודם ומוראם.

ב המקלל אביו או אמו בסקילה והמגדף בסקילה, הנה השוה אותן בעונש, הקדים אב לאם לכבוד והקדים אם לאב למורא ללמד ששניהם שווים בין למורא בין לכבוד.

ג אי זהו מורא ואי זהו כבוד, מורא לא עומד במקומו, ולא יושב במקומו, ולא סותר את דבריו ולא מכריע את דבריו, ולא יקרא לו בשמו לא בחייו ולא במותו, אלא אומר אבא מרי, היה שם אביו או שם רבו כשם אחרים משנה את שמם, יראה לי שאין נזהר בכך אלא בשם שהוא פלא שאין הכל דשין בו, אבל השמות שקוראים בהן את העם כגון אברהם יצחק ויעקב משה וכיוצא בהן בכל לשון ובכל זמן קורא בהן לאחרים שלא בפניו ואין בכך כלום, אי זהו כבוד מאכיל ומשקה מלביש ומכסה משל האב, ואם אין ממון לאב ויש ממון לבן כופין אותו וזן אביו ואמו כפי מה שהוא יכול, ומוציא ומכניס ומשמשו בשאר הדברים שהשמים משמשים בהן את הרב, ועומד מפניו כדרך שהוא עומד מפני רבו.

ד והאב שהיה תלמיד בנו אין האב עומד מפני הבן אבל הבן עומד מפני אביו אע"פ שהוא תלמידו וחייב לכבדו בשאר דרכיו בשעת עשיית משאו ומתנו ועשיית חפציו, כיצד הנשמע בדבר אביו למקום לא יאמר מהרוני בשביל עצמי פטרוני בשביל עצמי, אלא מהרוני בשביל אבא פטרוני בשביל אבא, וכן כל כיוצא בזה, לעולם יכלול בכלל דבריו שהוא חושש בכבוד אביו ושמירתו ממנו.

ה וחייב לכבדו אפילו לאחר מותו, כיצד היה אומר דבר שמועה מפיו לא יאמר כך אמר אבא, אלא אומר כך אמר אבא מרי אני כפרת משכבו, במה דברים אמורים בתוך שנים עשר חדש שלאחר מיתתו, אבל לאחר שנים עשר חדש אומר זכרונו לחיי העולם הבא.

ו אחד האיש ואחד האשה חייבין במורא וכבוד, אלא שהאיש יש בידו לעשות והאשה אין בידה לעשות שהרי רשות אחרים עליה, לפיכך אם נתגרשה או נתאלמנה הרי שניהם שווים.

ז עד היכן הוא כיבוד אב ואם, אפילו נטלו כיס של זהובים שלו והשליכו בפניו לים לא יכלימם ולא יצער בפניהם ולא יכעוס כנגדם אלא יקבל גזירת הכתוב וישתוק, ועד היכן מוראן אפילו היה לובש בגדים חמודות ויושב בראש בפני הקהל ובא אביו ואמו וקרעו בגדיו והכוהו בראשו וירקו בפניו לא יכלימם אלא ישתוק ויירא ויפחד ממלך מלכי המלכים שצוהו בכך, שאילו מלך בשר ודם גזר עליו דבר שהוא מצער יתר מזה לא היה יכול לפרסם בדבר, קל וחומר למי שאמר והיה העולם כרצונו. ח אף על פי שבכך נצטוינו אסור לאדם להכביד עולו על בניו ולדקדק בכבודו עמהם שלא יביאם לידי מכשול, אלא ימחול ויתעלם שהאב שמחל על כבודו כבודו מחול.

ט והמכה בנו גדול מנדין אותו שהרי הוא עובר על ולפני עור לא תתן מכשול.

י מי שנטרפה דעתו של אביו או של אמו משתדל לנהוג עמהם כפי דעתם עד שירוחם עליהן, ואם אי אפשר לו לעמוד מפני שנשתטו ביותר יניחם וילך לו ויצוה אחרים להנהיגם כראוי להם.

השגת הראב"ד מי שנטרפה דעתו של אביו וכו' יניחם וילך לו ויצוה אחרים להנהיגם כראוי. א"א אין זו הוראה נכונה אם הוא ילך ויניח לו למי יצוה לשמרו, עכ"ל.

יא הממזר חייב בכבוד אביו ומוראו אע"פ שהוא פטור על מכתו וקללתו עד שיעשה תשובה, אפילו היה אביו רשע ובעל עבירות מכבדו ומתיירא ממנו, ראהו עובר על דברי תורה לא יאמר לו אבא עברת על דברי תורה אלא יאמר לו אבא כתוב בתורה כך וכך כאילו הוא שואל ממנו ולא כמזהירו.

יב מי שאמר לו אביו לעבור על דברי תורה בין שאמר לו לעבור על מצות לא תעשה או לבטל מצות עשה אפילו של דבריהם, הרי זה לא ישמע לו שנאמר איש אמו ואביו תיראו ואת שבתותי תשמורו כולכם חייבין בכבודי.

יג אמר לו אביו השקני מים ויש בידו לעשות מצוה אם אפשר למצוה שתעשה על ידי אחרים תעשה ויתעסק בכבוד אביו שאין מבטלין מצוה מפני מצוה, ואם אין שם אחרים לעשותה יתעסק במצוה ויניח כבוד אביו שהוא ואביו חייבים בדבר מצוה, ותלמוד תורה גדול מכבוד אב ואם.

יד אמר לו אביו השקני מים ואמרה לו אמו השקני מים מניח כבוד אמו ועוסק בכבוד אביו תחילה מפני שהוא ואמו חייבין בכבוד אביו.

טו חייב אדם לכבד את אשת אביו אע"פ שאינה אמו כל זמן שאביו קיים שזה בכלל כבוד אביו, וכן מכבד בעל אמו כל זמן שאמו קיימת, אבל לאחר מיתתה אינו חייב, ומדברי סופרים שיהיה אדם חייב בכבוד אחיו הגדול ככבוד אביו.

Kesef Mishneh
Hilchot Mamrim, Chapter 6
Rabbi Joseph Karo

כסף משנה הלכות ממרים פרק ו

הלכה א

כבוד אב ואם מצות וכן' עד הנה השנה אתם בעונש. ברייתא בפ"ק דקידושין (דף ל'): קרובה ללשון רבינן:

הלכה ב

הקדים אב לאם לכבוד וכן'. שם תניא רבי אומר גלוי וידוע לפני מי שאמר והיה העולם שבן מכבד את אמן יותר מאבין מפני שמשדלתן בדברים לפיכך הקדים הקב"ה כבוד אב לכבוד אם וגלוי וידוע לפני מי שאמר והיה העולם שהבן מתיירא מאבין יותר מאמן מפני שמלמדו תורה לפיכך הקדים הכתוב מורא האם למורא האב ומשמע מהכא ששניהם שוים בין לכבוד בין למורא:

הלכה ג

אי זהו מורא וכן'. שם (דף ל"א): ת"ר אי זהו מורא נאי זהו כבוד מורא לא עומד במקומו ולא יושב במקומו ולא סותר את דבריו ולא מכריען ופירש"י לא עומד במקומו המיוחד לאבין לעמוד שם בסוד זקנים עם חבירין בעצה ולא מכריען אם היה אבין וחכם אחר חלוקים בדבר הלכה לא יאמר נראים דברי פלוני. ורבינן ירוחם כתב בשם הרמ"ה דלא ישב אפילו במקומו המיוחד לו לישב בביתו וגם על מה שפירש"י ולא מכריען הקשה הרמ"ה אם כן היינו סותר דבריו אלא אפילו נראין לו דברי אבין אינו יכול לומר נראין לי דברי אבי שנראה כמכריע את דבריו אלא אם יש לו תשובה להשיב על דברי החולקים משיב עכ"ל. ואפשר שרש"י כשכתב לא יאמר נראין דברי פלוני על אי זה מהם שיאמר נתקונו שאפילו כשיאמר שנראין דברי אבין נראה כמכריע את דבריו:

ולא יקרא בשמן וכן'. ברייתא שם משנה שם אבין כלומר שיאמר כך אמר אבא מארי ולא יזכיר את שם אבין ומדקאמר משנה שם אבין סתם משמע ליה לרבינן דל"ש בחיין ל"ש לאחר מותן צריך לשנות: היה שם אבין וכן'. צ"ע מהיכן מוצאן וכל הלשון עד אין בכך כלום נסתפקתי בן והעירתי עליו בפ"ה מהלכות ת"ת:

איזהו כבוד מאכיל וכן'. ברייתא שם כבוד מאכיל נמשקה מלביש ומכסה ומכניס ומציא איבעיא להו משל מי כלומר נמאכיל נמשקה משלן או משל אבין רב יהודה אמר משל בן רב נתן בר אנשיא אמר משל אב אורן ליה רבנן לרב ירמיה וכן' כמ"ד משל אב נפסק רבינן כאותה הוראה חזא דרבינן נינהו ונעוד דהלכה למעשה היא וכן פסקן הרי"ף והתוספות:

ואם אין ממון לאב וכן'. כך פסק הרי"ף שם ז"ל והיכא דרויח הבן והאב לית ליה כייפינג לבן ושקלינג מיניה בתורת צדקה ויהיבין לאבנה כי הא דרבה כפה לרב נתן בר אמי ואפיק מיניה ת' וזוי לצדקה וכן שדרן ממתבתא. וכתב סמ"ג דאיתא בירושלמי דפאה דכבוד אב ואם אין כתוב כבוד מהנך שאפילו אין לך כלום אתה צריך לטחון ברחיים בשבילם וכתב הוא ז"ל דהיינו כשאין לאבין והתוספות כתבן דאיתא בירושלמי אמר ר' יוסי הלואי דהוויין כל שמעתי ברין לי כי האי שכןפין את הבן לזון את אבין ונעוד הביא ראיה ממקום אחר מהירושלמי דמשמע בהדיא דכןפין. נמ"ש ומכניס ומציא. כבר נתבאר בלשון הברייתא שכתבתי בבבא שקודם זן:

ועומד מפנין וכן' בפ"ק דקידושין שם רב יוסף כד שמע קל כרעא דאימיה אמר איקום מקמי שכינה דאתיא וגם מדאיבעיא לו בבנן והוא רבן כדבסמך משמע דבאין רבן פשיטא דחייב לעמוד מפנין:

הלכה ד

והאב שהיה תלמיד וכן'. שם (דף ל"ג ע"ב) איבעיא להו בבנן והוא רבן מהו לעמוד מפני אבין ובעי למפשטה מדא"ל שמאל לרב יהודה קום מקמי אבך ורב יהודה רבן של אבין היה ודחן התם דשאני

יחזקאל אבין של רב יהודה דבעל מעשים הנה דאפילן מר שמנאל נמי קאים מקמיה ובתר הכי איבעיא לן בנן והוא רבן מהן שיעמוד אבין מפנין והא נמי לא איפשיטא ורבינן פסק בחדא לקולא ובחדא לחומרא וצריך טעם. נמצאתי שכתב הרב רבינן נסים וכתב רבינן חננאל שאע"פ שהיא רבן חייב לעמוד מפני אבין אבל אבין אינן חייב לעמוד לפנין ואף הרב רבינן משה בר מיימון ז"ל כתב כן בפ"י מהלכות ממרים וצריך עיון למה נראה לי דאע"ג דלא מיפשיט בגמרא דילן ילפי לה מדגרסינן בירושלמי (פ"ק דקדושין) אמר של רבי טרפון ירדה לטייל לתוך חצירה בשבת ונפסק קורדיקין שלה והלך רבי טרפון והניח שתי ידין תחת פרסותיה והיתה מהלכת עליהם עד שהגיעה למטתה פעם אחת חלה ר' טרפון ונכנס חכמים לבקרן ואמרה להם התפללן על טרפון בני שהוא נהג בי כבוד יותר מדאי אמרון לה מאי עבד לה יותר מדאי ותנית להון עובדא אמרון אפילו הוא עושה כן אלף אלפים עדיין לא הגיע לכבוד שאמרה תורה ע"כ בירושלמי. ובודאי דקימה דרבן אינה אלא מדין חכם ואם איתא שאין הבן חייב לעמוד מפני אבין כשהבן רבן לא היתה רשאה אמר של רבי טרפון לקבל הימנן כך הילכך אע"ג דבגמרא דילן מספקא לן שבקינן ספקינן ונקטינן פשטייהן ולא משמע משום דבעלת מעשים הנות מדאמרינן סתמא עדיין לא הגיע לכבוד שאמרה תורה עכ"ל. ותמהני דהא בגמרא דידן נמי מיייתי דנמיה דההוא עובדא דירושלמי דר' טרפון כל אימת דהות בעיא אימא למיסלק לפוריא גחין וסלקא עליה ואפילו הכי איבעיא להן אלמא דגמרא דידן סבר דההוא עובדא לא מכרעא ואפשר שטעמן לומר דכיון דבירושלמי לא איבעיא להן משמע דמיפשיטא להן מההוא עובדא ואע"ג דגמרא דידן לא משמע ליה למיפשיט מההוא עובדא לא שבק פשיטותא ידיה משום ספיקא דגמרא דידן:

וחייב לכבוד בשאר דרכין וכן' עד זכרונן לחיי העולם הבא. ברייתא בפ"ק דקידושין (דף ל"א): כלשון רבינן ופירש"י הנשמע בדבר אבין למקום אם מכיר באנשי המקום שמכבדים אבין לחלוק לן כבוד לקבל דברים שיאמר בשמן אל יתלה הכבוד בעצמן ואפילו יודע שכבדוהו כאבין יתלה הכבוד באבין שלחוני בשביל אבא שהוא צריך לי אבל אם אינן נשמע למקום בדבר אבין אל יתלה באבין שאינן לן אלא גנאי:

הלכה ה

הריני כפרת משכבן. עלי יבא כל רע הראני לבא על נפשן מכאן ואילך כבר קבל מה שקבל שאין משפט רשעי ישראל בגיהנם אלא י"ב חדש: אחד האיש וכן'. ברייתא שם (דף ל'): איש אמר ואבין תיראן אין לי אלא איש אשה מנין כשהוא אומר תיראן הרי כאן שנים אם כן מה ת"ל איש איש ספק בידן לעשות אשה אין ספק בידה לעשות מפני שרשות אחרים עליה אמר רב אידי בר אבין אמר רב נתגרשה שניהן שוין ופירש"י ספק יכולת שאין מןחה בידן רשות אחרים בעלה. נתגרשה מבעלה הרי היא כאחיה במצות כיבוד:

הלכה ז

עד היכן הוא כיבוד אב ואם וכן'. שם (דף ל"ב) אהא דאיבעיא לן מאכיל את אבין משל מי אמרינן ת"ש שאלן את רבי אליעזר עד היכן כיבוד אב ואם אמר להם כדי שיטול ארנקי ויזרקנו לים בפנין ואינן מכלימן ואי אמרת משל אבין מאי נפקא לן מינה כלומר ואי אמרת כבוד האב על הבן בחסרון כיס אינן אלא משל אב אם כן האי ארנקי דקאמר רבי אליעזר משל אב הוא נמאי נפקא מינה להכלימן ואוקמה בראיין ליתרשן ומאחר שרבינן פסק לעיל שאינן מאכיל אלא משל אב אם כן האי ארנקי היינו כשהוא של אב דוקא וכמן שנתבאר ואם כן היאך כתב ואפילו נטלן כיס של זהובים שלן. ויש לומר דסבירא ליה דכי אמרינן דוקא משל אב הני מילי לכבוד אביל כדי שלא לצערן יש לן לאבד כל ממון שבעולם ועי"ל דהא דאמרינן דמשל אב דוקא היינו מדינא דאינן חייב לחסר כיסן בשבילן אבל מ"מ אם יחסר כיסן בשבילן בכלל מצות כיבוד הוא ולישנא דעד היכו כיבוד אב ואם הכי דייק. ואם תאמר א"כ מאי מןתיב מינה למאן דאמר משל אב יש לומר דאיו הכי נמי דמאן דמנתיב לא אסיק אדעתיה לפלגיה בהכי ומאן דתריץ הנה מצי לשנויי הכי אלא דאהדר ליה לפנים שיטתיה דלא הנה מפליג ביניהן: ועד היכו מוראו וכן'. שם (דף ל"א) בען מיניה מרב עולא עד היכו כיבוד אב ואם אמר להם בואן וראן מה עשה עכ"ס אחד באשקלון וכן' כי אתא רב דימי אמר פעם אחת היה לבוש סריקון של זהב והיה יושב ביו גדולי עירן ובאת אמן וקרעתן ממנו נטפחה לן על ראשן וירקה לן בפנין ולא הכלימה:

הלכה ח

אע"פ שבכך נכן. דברי רבינן ראויים אלין נלמד מהדיו שכתב בסמך שהמכה בנן גדול מנדיו אנתן. נמ"ש שהאב שמחל נכן מימרא דרב חסדא פ"ק דקידושיו (דף ל"ב):

הלכה ט

והמכה בנן גדול נכן. פרק ואלן מגלחיו (דף י"ז):

הלכה י

מי שנטרפה דעתן של אבין נכן. בפ"ק דקידושיו (דף ל"א): אמרנו רב אסי הנה ליה ההיא אימא זקנה אמרה ליה בעינא תכשיטיו עבד לה בעינא גברא נעיו לך בעינא גברא דשפיר כןותך שבקה נאזל לארעא דישראל. נמ"ש ניצנה אחרים להנהיגם כראוי עצה טובה קמשמע לו נאיו ספק שכו עשה רב אסי. נכתב הראב"ד ז"ל איז זון הנראה נכונה נכן. נאילן היה רבינן מנציא דיו זה מדעתן היה השגתן השגה אבל אחר שהנא מנציא אנתן מעובדא דרב אסי שכתבתי איז מקום להשגתן נהר"ו כתב על השגה זון ולא ידעתי למה דהא דרב אסי הכי מוכח אנלי הוא ז"ל סובר דדוקא למיסק לארץ ישראל נאין מחנור עכ"ל:

הלכה יא

המזר חייב בכבוד אבין נכן. טעמן מדתנו בפ"ב דיבמות (דף כ"ב) מי שיש לן בו מ"מ פטר את אשת אבין מהיבם נחייב על מכתן ועל קללתן חנץ ממי שיש לן בו מהשפחה נמהנכרית נבגמרא מ"מ לאיתניי מאי נכן. לאיתניי ממזר נכן. אמאי (חייב על מכתן ועל קללתן) קרי כאו ננשיא בעמך לא תאנר בענשה מעשה עמך נאנקימנא בשעשה תשובה נכתב הרי"ף על זה ה"מ לענין חנבא אבל לענין איסורא אפילן לא עשה תשובה אסור לבו להכנתן ולקללן דגרסינו בפרק הנחנקיו לכל איז הבו נעשה שליח לא להכנת אבין ולא לקללן חנץ ממסית נמדיח שהרי אמרה תורה לא תחמול ולא תכסה עליו נכ"כ הרא"ש נלאפקי מהתנס' שכתבן דההיא דהנחנקיו בשעשה תשובה היא:

נדע שעל מ"ש רבינן שהמזר חייב בכבוד אבין כתב הטור רס"י ר"מ נז"ל נ"ל כיון שהנא רשע אינן חייב בכבודן כדאמרנו גבי הניח להם פרה גזולה חייבים להחזיר מפני כבוד אביהם נפריך נהא לאן ענשה מעשה עמך הנא פירוש נאיו חייביו בכבודן נמשני בשעשה תשובה אלמא כל זמו שלא עשה

תשובה אינם חייבים בכבודו עכ"ל. גם הגהות מיימו כתבו כו בשם ספר המצות אלא שהטור הוסיף תיבת גזולה נאיו כו דבנטלה ברבית מיירי כמבואר בריש פרק איזהו נשך נאיו משם ראה לסתור דברי רבינו דמדינא אינם חייבים להחזיר דאמר קרא אל תקח מאתו נשך ותרבית לדידיה אזהר רחמנא לבריה לא אזהר אלא דמשום כבוד אביהם חייבים להחזיר ודוקא בדעבד תשובה ולא הספיק להחזיר עד שמת דהוה לה ההיא פרה כאילו לא הורישא לבניו מאחר שהיה בדעתו להחזירה והוא דבר המסויים הילכך אע"פ שעדיין לא הוציאה מרשותו חייבים להחזיר מפני כבוד אביהם אבל כי לא עבד תשובה בניו ירשוה והתורה לא חייבתם להחזיר לדידיה אזהר לבריה לא אזהר הילכך הוי לגמרי ממונא דידהו נאיו חייביו לכבוד את האב בממונם דהא איפסיקא הלכתא כמא דאמר משל אב אבל בשאר כבוד דלית ביה חסרוו כיס איז הכי נמי דמחייבי אע"פ שהוא רשע כדמשמע מההיא דפרק הנחנקיו:

ראהו עובר על דברי תורה וכו'. ברייתא פ"ק דקידושיו (דף ל"ב) ובסנהדריו פרק הנשרפיו:

הלכה יב

מי שאמר לו אביו וכו'. ברייתא בריש יבמות (דף ו') ובסוף אלו מציאות (דף ל"ב) יכול אמר לו אביו היטמא או אל תחזיר אבידה ישמע לו תלמוד לומר איש אמו ואביו תיראו ואת שבתותי תשמורו אני ה' כלכם חייבים בכבודי. נמ"ש רבינו אפילו של דבריהם נראה שהטעם משום דכיוו דקי"ל דכל מילי דרבנו אסמכינהו אלאו דלא תסור הרי הוא ככל דברי תורה:

הלכה יג

אמר לו אביו השקני מים וכו'. ברייתא פ"ק דקידושיו (דף ל"ב) אלעזר בו מתיא אומר אבא אומר השקני מים ומצוה לעשות מניח אני כבוד אבא ועושה אני את המצוה שאני ואבא חייביו במצות איסי בו יהודה אומר אם אפשר למצוה שתעשה ע"י אחרים תעשה ע"י אחרים וילך הוא בכבוד אביו אמר רב מתנה הלכה כאיסי בו יהודה ופירש"י אבא אומר השקני מים ויש מצוה אחרת לפניו לעשות כגון לקבור את המת או

לויה. על כרחך לומר דהיינו דוקא במצוה עוברת שאילו איז זמנה עובר אפילו א"א לעשות ע"י אחרים
עוסק בכבוד אביו ואח"כ במצוה וכ"כ רבינו ירוחם בשם הרא"ש. וכתב הר"ו והלכה כאיסי בו יהודה מיהו
ה"מ כששתיהו לפניו אבל כשהתחיל במצוה אע"פ שאפשר לעשותה ע"י אחרים אם נזדמנה לו מצוה
שא"א לעשותה ע"י אחרים לא יניח את הראשונה דהא קי"ל דעוסק במצוה פטור מן המצוה ולא מפלגינו
בין מצוה למצוה וגם לזה כיוו רש"י כשכתב ויש מצוה אחרת לפניו:
וגדול ת"ת וכו'. מימרא דרבא במגילה (דף ט"ז ע"ב):

הלכה יד

אמר לו אביו השקני מים וכו'. ברייתא בפרק קמא דקידושיו:

הלכה טו

חייב אדם לכבד וכו' עד סוף הפרק. בכתובות פרק הנושא (דף ק"ג) ת"ר בשעת פטירתו של רבי אמר
לבני אני צריך נכנסו בניו אצלו אמר להם הזהירו בכבוד אמכם והקשו בגמרא דאורייתא היא דכתיב כבד
את אביך ואת אמך אשת אב הואי אשת אב נמי דאורייתא היא דתניא כבד את אביך ואת אמך את אביך זו
אשת אביך ואת אמך זה בעל אמך וי"ו יתירה כלומר דואת אמך לרבות אחיך הגדול ה"מ כלומר דחייב
בכבוד אשת אביו בחיים אבל לאחר מיתתו לא כלומר ולהכי מזהר להו עילוי
ומשמע ליה לרבינו דכי היכי דאינו חייב בכבוד אשת אב אלא בחיי אב ה"נ לא מיחייב בכבוד בעל אמו
אלא בחיי אמו וכו' משמע ליה דאשת אביו ובעל אמו כיוו דמאת מרבינו להו ככתובים מפורשים דמו אבל
אח גדול דלא מייטינו לה אלא מדרשה דוי"ו לא חשיב ככתוב מפורש בתורה אלא מד"ס:

איזהו כבוד ואיזהו מורא ודיניהם

1 צריך ליזהר מאד בכבוד אביו ואמו ובמוראם: הגה ומ"מ אין ב"ד כופין על מצות כבוד אב ואם דהוי ליה מצות עשה שמתן שכרה בצדה שאין ב"ד כופין עליה. (בית יוסף בשם הגמרא ובתא"ו נתיב א') :

2 איזו מורא לא יעמוד במקומו המיוחד לו לעמוד שם בסוד זקנים עם חביריו או מקום המיוחד לו להתפלל ולא ישב במקום המיוחד לו להסב בביתו ולא סותר את דבריו ולא מכריע את דבריו בפניו אפילו לומר נראין דברי אבא ולא יקראנו בשמו לא בחייו ולא במותו אלא אומר אבא מארי היה שם אביו כשם אחרים משנה שם אם הוא שם שהוא פלאי שאין הכל רגילים לקרות בו. אבל שם שרגילין בו מותר לקרות אחרים שלא בפניו (טור) :

3 עד היכן מוראם היה הבן לבוש חמודות ויושב בראש הקהל ובאו אביו ואמו וקרעו בגדיו והכוהו על ראשו וירקו בפניו לא יכלים אותם אלא ישתוק ויירא מן מלך מלכי המלכים שצוהו בכך:

4 איזהו כבוד מאכילו ומשקהו מלביש ומכסה מכניס ומוציא ויתננו לו בסבר פנים יפות שאפי' מאכילו בכל יום פטומות והראה לו פנים זועפות נענש עליו: הגה וכן להיפך אם מטחין אביו ברחיים וכוונתו לטובה כדי שינצל אביו מדבר קשה יותר מזה ומדבר פיוסים על לב אביו ומראה לו שכוונתו לטובה עד שיתרצה אביו לטחון ברחיים נוחל עולם הבא (גמ' ורש"י פ"ק דקדושין וירושלמי) וישמשנו בשאר דברים שהשמש משמש רבו:

5 זה שמאכילו ומשקהו משל אב ואם אם יש לו ואם אין לאב ויש לבן כופין אותו וזן אביו כפי מה שהוא יכול ואם אין לבן אינו חייב לחזר על הפתחים להאכיל את אביו: הגה וי"א דאינו חייב ליתן לו רק מה שמחוייב ליתן לצדקה (כן כתב הב"י דנראה כן מדברי הרי"ף והרא"ש וכ"כ הר"ן פ"ק דקידושין) ומ"מ אם ידו משגת תבא מארה למי שמפרנס אביו ממצות צדקה שלו (הגהות מרדכי דב"ב ובהגהות פ"ק דב"מ ובחידושי אגודה) ואם יש לו בנים רבים מחשבים לפי ממון שלהם ואם מקצתן עשירים ומקצתן עניים מחייבים העשירים לבד. (תשובת מיימוני הלכות ממרים בשם מוהר"ם והביאה הבית יוסף) : אבל חייב לכבדו בגופו אע"פ שמתוך כך בטל ממלאכתו ויצטרך לחזר על הפתחים ודוקא דאית לבן מזונות לאיתזוני ההוא יומא אבל אי לית ליה לא מחייב לבטל ממלאכתו ולחזר על הפתחים:

6 היה צריך על שום דבר בעיר ויודע שישלימו חפצו בשביל אביו אע"פ שיודע שגם כן יעשו בשבילו לא יאמר עשו לי דבר פלוני בשבילי אלא יאמר עשו בשביל אבא כדי לתלות הכבוד באביו:

7 חייב לעמוד מפני אביו ואם האב תלמיד בנו כל אחד מהם עומד מפני השני. (טור בשם הרא"ש): הגה ואם הבן רוצה למחול על כבודו לשמש אביו הרשות בידו דהא הרב שמחל על כבודו מחול ודוקא בצנעא או אפי' בפרהסיא ודש בעירו שהכל יודעים שהוא אביו אבל אם הבן גדול בתורה ואין אביו דש בעירו איכא למיחש לבזיון התורה אם יתבזה הבן לפני האב ויש להם להרחיק זה מזה שלא יקל שום אחד בכבודו לפני חבירו (הכל סברת הרב לדעת ב"י) וכן עשה מוהר"ם עם אביו:

8 עד היכן כיבוד אב ואם אפי' נטלו כיס של זהובים שלו והשליכו בפניו לים לא יכלימם ולא יצער בפניהם ולא יכעוס כנגדם אלא יקבל גזירת הכתוב וישתוק: הגה ויש אומרים דאם רוצה לזרוק מעות של בן לים דיכול למונעו דהא אינו חייב לכבדו רק משל אב אבל לא משל בן (טור בשם ר"י) ואין חילוק בין לכבדו או לצערו (ת"ה ס' מ') ודוקא קודם שזרקן דאפשר דממנע ולא עביד אבל אם כבר זרקוהו אסור לאכלומיה אבל יוכל לתבעו לדינא (טור בשם הרא"ש) ודוקא אם רוצה לזרוק כיסו לים דאית ביה חסרון כיס אבל אם רוצה להעביר ממנו ריוח בעלמא אסור בכל ענין (ר"ן פ"ק דקדושין) בן שיש לו דין עם אביו והאב הוא תובע הבן צריך הבן לילך אחר אביו אע"פ שהבן הוא נתבע ודר בעיר אחרת שזהו כבוד אביו אבל האב חייב לשלם לבן הוצאות דאינו חייב לכבדו משל בן (במהרי"ק שורש נ"ח) כמו שנתבאר:

9 חייב לכבדו אפי' אחר מותו כיצד היה אומר דבר שמועה מפיו אומר כך אמר אבא מארי הריני כפרת משכבו אם הוא תוך שנים עשר חדש ואם הוא לאחר שנים עשר חדש אומר זכרונו לברכה: הגה ואין חילוק בין אם לאב בכל זה (מהרי"ל ס' כ"ז) יש אומרים דאם כותב תוך שנים עשר חודש דבר ומזכיר אביו א"צ לכתוב הריני כפרת משכבו אלא זכרונו לברכה דהא כתיבתו מתקיימת לאחר שנים עשר חודש (הג' באלפס פ"ק דקדושין) ויש מחמירין אפי' בכתיבה (בנ"י ושאר מחברים וכ"מ בב"י סוף ס' רמ"ב בשם רשב"ץ ותשובת ה' חביב רס"ד) וכן נוהגין:

10 מי שנטרפה דעת אביו או אמו משתדל לנהוג עמהם כפי דעתם עד שירוחם עליהם ואם אי אפשר לו לעמוד מפני שנשתנו ביותר ילך לו ויניחם ויצוה לאחרים לנהגם כראוי:

11 ראה אביו שעבר על דברי תורה לא יאמר לו עברת על דברי תורה אלא יאמר לו אבא כתוב בתורה כך וכך כאילו הוא שואל ממנו ולא כמזהירו והוא יבין מעצמו ולא יתבייש ואם היה אומר שמועה בטעות לא יאמר לו לא תתני הכי:

12 אמר לו אביו השקני מים ויש לפניו לעשות מצוה עוברת כגון קבורת מת או לוויה אם אפשר למצוה שתעשה ע"י אחרים יעסוק בכבוד אביו (ואם התחיל במצוה תחלה יגמור דהעוסק במצוה פטור מן המצוה) (ב"י בשם הר"ן) ואם אין שם אחרים לעשות יעסוק במצוה ויניח כבוד אביו. (מיהו אם אין זמן המצוה עוברת יעסוק בכבוד אביו ואח"כ יעשה המצוה) (רבינו ירוחם נתיב א' בשם רא"ש):

13 תלמוד תורה גדול מכבוד אב ואם:

- 14 אביו אומר לו השקני מים ואמו אומרת השקני מים מניח אמו ועוסק בכבוד אביו ואם היא מגורשת מאביו שניהם שוים ולא יזה מהם שירצה יקדים:
- 15 אמר לו אביו לעבור על דברי תורה בין מצות עשה בין מצות לא תעשה ואפילו מצוה של דבריהם לא ישמע לו:
- 16 האב שצוה את בנו שלא ידבר עם פלוני ושלא ימחול לו עד זמן קצוב והבן היה רוצה להתפייס מיד לולי צוואת אביו אין לו לחוש לצואתו:
- 17 אחד האיש ואחד האשה שוין בכבוד ובמורא של אב ואם אלא שהאשה אין בידה לעשות שהיא משועבדת לבעלה לפיכך היא פטורה מכבוד אב ואם בעודה נשואה ואם נתגרשה או נתאלמנה חייבת:
- 18 ממזר חייב בכבוד אביו ובמוראו אפילו ה' אביו רשע ובעל עברות מכבדו ומתירא ממנו: הגה וי"א דאינו מחוייב לכבד אביו רשע אא"כ עשה תשובה (טור ומרדכי פ' כיצד ובהגהות מיימוני פ"ו דהלכות ממרים) :
- 19 אסור לאדם להכביד עולו על בניו ולדקדק בכבודו עמהם שלא יביאם לידי מכשול אלא ימחול ויעלים עיניו מהם שהאב שמחל על כבודו כבודו מחול:
- 20 המכה לבנו גדול היו מנדין אותו שהרי עובר על לפני עור לא תתן מכשול (ולא מקרי גדול לדבר זה רק אחר כ"ב שנה או כ"ד שנה) (בקונטרס פ"ק דקדושין וב"י ס"ס של"ד) :
- 21 חייב אדם לכבד אשת אביו אף ע"פ שאינה אמו כל זמן שאביו קיים וחייב לכבד בעל אמו כל זמן שאמו קיימת אבל לאחר מיתה אינו חייב בכבודם ומכל מקום דבר הגון לכבדם אף לאחר מיתה:
- 22 חייב אדם בכבוד אחיו הגדול בין שהוא אחיו מאביו בין שהוא אחיו מאמו. (ואפי' הקטן הוא ת"ח וגדול בתורה יותר מן הגדול) (כן משמע לו מתשובת הרא"ש שבסעיף שאח"ז ובסמ"ג ודלא כיש חולקין בזה) (ב"ז) :
- 23 אח גדול שחירף וביזה לאחיו שהוא ת"ח וקטן ממנו בשנים ונידה הקטן לגדול יפה עשה שנדוהו דכיון שאינו נושא פנים לתורה אינו עושה מעשה עמך ואינו חייב לכבדו:
- 24 חייב אדם לכבד חמיו: הגה י"א דאין אדם חייב בכבוד אבי אביו (מהרי"ק שורש מ"ד) ואינו נ"ל אלא דחייב בכבוד אביו יותר מכבוד אבי אביו (וראיה ממדרש גבי ויזבח זבחים וגו') :
- 25 אם האב רוצה לשרת את הבן מותר לקבל ממנו אלא א"כ האב בן תורה תלמיד שרוצה ללכת למקום אחר שהוא בוטח שיראה סימן ברכה בתלמודו לפני הרב ששם ואביו מוחה בו לפי שדואג שבאותה העיר העובדי כוכבים מעלילים אינו צריך לשמוע לאביו בזה: הגה וכן אם האב מוחה בבן לישא איזו אשה שיחפץ בה הבן א"צ לשמוע אל האב (מהרי"ק שורש קס"ז) :

מחזור ויטרי סימן קמ"ד ה' נמצא בספרי'

נמצא בספרי הפנימי'. ת': מעשה בר' עקיבא שהיה מהלך בבית הקברות בדרך ופגע באדם אחד שהיה ערום ושחור כפחם והיה טעום /טעון/ משאוי גדול של קוצים על ראשו. כסבור עליו ר' עקיבא שהוא חי והיה רץ כסוס. גזר עליו ר' עקיבא והעמידו. א' לו מה לאותו האיש לעשות עבודה קשה כזאת. אם עבד אתה [ואדונך] עושה לך [כך] אני אפדה אותך מידו. ואם עני עתה ובני אדם באים עליך בעקיפין אני מעשיר אותך. א' לו בבקשה ממך אל תעכביני שמא ירגזו בי הממונין עלי. אמר לו מה זו ומה מעשיך. אמר לו אותו האיש מת. ובכל יום שולחים אותי לחטוב עצים. אמר לו בני מה היה מלאכתך בעולם שבאתה ממנו. אמר לו גבאי המכס הייתי. והייתי נושא פנים לעשירים והורג את העניים. אמר לו כלום שמעת מאותם הממונין עליך לפורענות איזו דבר שיש לו תקנה. אמר בבקשה ממך אל תעכביני שמא ירגזו עלי בעלי פורענות שאותו האיש אין לו תקנה. אלא שמעתי מהם דבר שלא היה יכול להיות. שאלמלא היה לו לעני זה בן שהוא עומד בקהל ואומר ברכו את ה' המבורך והם עונין אחריו. ויהא שמה רבה מברך מיד מתירין אותו מן הפורענות. ואותו האיש לא היה לו בן מעולם. והניח את אשתו מעוברת. ואיני יודע אם ילדה זכר. ואם ילדה זכר מי מלמדו תורה שאין לאותו האיש אוהב מעולם. מיד קיבל עליו ר' עקיבא לילך לחפש אם הוליד לו **בן** זכר כדי ללמדו תורה ויעמידנו לפני הציבור. אמר לו מה שמך. אמר לו עקיבא. ושם אשתך. אמר לו שושניבא. ושם עירך לודקייא. מיד נצטער ר' עקיבא צער גדול והלך ושאל עליו. כיון שבא לאותו מקום שאל עליו. אמרו לו ישחקו עצמותיו של אותו האיש. שאל על אשתו. אמרו לו ימחה זכרה מן העולם. שאל על בנו. אמרו לו הרי ערל הוא. אפילו מצות מילה לא עיסקנו בו. מיד מלו ר' עקיבא. והושיבו בספר לפניו ולא היה מקבל התורה עד שישב (א) [מ'] יום בתענית. יצתה בת קול ואמרה לו לזה אתה מתענה. אמר לפניו רבונו של עולם והלא לפניך ערכתי אותו. מיד פתח הק' את לבו ולמדו תורה. וק"ש וברכת המזון. והעמידו לפני הקהל ואומר ברכו. והם ענו אחריו ברוך ה' המבורך. באותה שעה התירו אותו מן הפורענות. מיד בא אותו האיש לר' עקיבא בחלום. ואמר יהי רצון מלפניך הקב"ה שתנוח דעתך בגן עדן שהצלת אותי מדינה של גהינם. מיד פתח ר' עקיבא ואמר (תהלים קלה) י"י שמך לעולם י"י זכרך לדור ודור: ועל כן נהגו לעבור לפני התיבה במוצאי שבת אדם שאין לו אב או אם לומר ברכו או קדיש:

משלי פרק לא

לא, א	דברי, למואל מלך-- משא, אשר-יסרתו אמו.
לא, ב	מה-ברי, ומה-בר-בטני; ומה, בר-נדרי.
לא, ג	אל-תתן לנשים חילך; ודרכיך, למחות מלכין.
לא, ד	אל למלכים, למואל--אל למלכים שתו-יין; ולרוזנים, או (אי) שכר.
לא, ה	פן-ישתה, וישכח מחקק; וישנה, דין כל-בני-עני.
לא, ו	תנו-שכר לאובד; ויין, למרי נפש.
לא, ז	ישתה, וישכח רישו; ועמלו, לא יזכר-עוד.
לא, ח	פתח-פיך לאלם; אל-דין, כל-בני חלוף.
לא, ט	פתח-פיך שפט-צדק; ודין, עני ואביון.
לא, י	אשת-חיל, מי ימצא; ורחק מפנינים מכרה.
לא, יא	בטח בה, לב בעלה; ושלל, לא יחסר.
לא, יב	גמלתהו טוב ולא-רע-- כל, ימי חייה.
לא, יג	דרשה, צמר ופשתים; ותעש, בחפץ כפיה.
לא, יד	היתה, כאניות סוחר; ממרחק, תביא לחמה.
לא, טו	ותקם, בעוד לילה--ותתן טרף לביתה; וחק, לנערתיה.
לא, טז	זממה שדה, ותקחהו; מפרי כפיה, נטע (נטעה) כרם.
לא, יז	חגרה בעוז מתניה; ותאמץ, זרועתיה.
לא, יח	טעמה, כי-טוב סחרה; לא-יכבה בליל (בלילה) נרה.
לא, יט	ידיה, שלחה בכישור; וכפיה, תמכו פלך.
לא, כ	כפה, פרשה לעני; וידיה, שלחה לאביון.
לא, כא	לא-תירא לביתה משלג: כי כל-ביתה, לבש שנים.
לא, כב	מרבדים עשתה-לה; שש וארגמן לבושה.
לא, כג	נודע בשערים בעלה; בשבתו, עם-זקני-ארץ.
לא, כד	סדין עשתה, ותמכר; וחגור, נתנה לכנעני.
לא, כה	עז-והדר לבושה; ותשחק, ליום אחרון.
לא, כו	פיה, פתחה בחכמה; ותורת חסד, על-לשונה.
לא, כז	צופיה, הילכות (הליכות) ביתה; ולחם עצלות, לא תאכל.
לא, כח	קמו בניה, ויאשרוה; בעלה, ויהללה.
לא, כט	רבות בנות, עשו חיל; ואת, עלית על-כלנה.
לא, ל	שקר החן, והבל היפי: אשה יראת-יהוה, היא תתהלל.
לא, לא	תנו-לה, מפרי ידיה; ויהללוה בשערים מעשיה. {ש}

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