

THE MITZVAH TO HONOR FATHER AND MOTHER

Our Rabbis taught: It says, 'Honor your father and your mother' (Exodus 20:12), and it says, 'Honor G-d with your wealth' (Proverbs 3:9). (By using the same terminology,) the Torah compares the honor you owe your father and mother to the honor you have to give to the Almighty. It also says, 'Every person must respect his mother and his father' (Leviticus 19:3), and it says, 'G-d your Lord you shall respect, Him you shaft serve' (Deuteronomy 10:20). (Here the same word, -respect- is used.) The Torah equates the respect you respect, owe your parents with the respect you must show G-d. Furthermore it says, 'Whoever curses his father or mother shall be put to death' (Exodus 21:1'y). And furthermore it says, 'Anyone that curses G-d shall bear his sin' (Leviticus 24.-15). By using the same terms the Torah compares cursing of parents with cursing the Almighty. But when it comes to hitting (the prohibition against hitting one's parents) it is impossible to create equality (because the Almighty cannot be struck). And it is logical (to establish an equality between parents and G-d), because these three--G-d, the father, and the mother--are partners in the creation [of the child]. 'The Rabbis taught: There are three partners in the creation of man---The Holy One, blessed be He, the father, and the mother. **When a person honors his father and his mother, the Holy One, blessed be He, says: I consider it as though I lived among them, and they had honored Me.** It was taught: Rabbi said: It is revealed and known to Him who created the world that a son honors his mother more than his father (31a) because she persuades him with gentle words; therefore the Holy One, blessed be He, placed the honor of the father before that of the mother (in the verse, 'Honor your father and your mother' (Exodus 20:123. It is revealed and known to Him who created the world that a son respects his father more than his mother, because he reaches him Torah; therefore the Holy One, blessed be He, placed the respect of the mother before that of the father (in the verse, 'Every person must respect his mother and his father' (Leviticus 19:3)). A Tanna recited a Baraita before R. Nachman: When a person causes anguish to his father and his mother, the Holy One, blessed be He, says: It was proper that I did not dwell among them, for if I dwelled among them, I would be anguished to see a child treat his parents this way. R. Yitzchak said: Anyone who commits a transgression in a hidden place is as though he pressed against the feet of the Shechinah, for it says, -Thus said G-d, 'The heaven is My throne and the earth is My footstool' (Isaiah 66: 1). (By sinning in a secret place he is saying that G-d is not in that place. Thus he is pushing the feet of

the Shechinah' out of that place.) R. Yehoshua b. Levi said: A person is forbidden to walk, with a haughty posture, for it says, 'The whole world is filled with His glory' (Isaiah 6:3) [and the person who walks proudly erect is as if he were pushing the Shechinah away]. R. Huna the son of R. Yehoshua was careful not to walk four cubits bareheaded. He said: The Shechinah is above my head, [therefore it is not proper to walk four cubits with my head uncovered]. A son of a widow asked R. Eliezer: If my father says, 'Bring me a drink of water,' and my mother says, 'Bring me a drink of water,' which one should I give first? R. Eliezer told him: Leave your mother's honor for a moment and fulfill the honor you owe your father, because both you and your mother are obligated to show respect to your father. The same son then went to R. Yehoshua who gave him the same answer. -Rabbi- he said to him, 'what: if she is divorced [and does not have to respect my father anymore]?' He replied, 'From the sight of your eyelashes I can tell that you are the son of a widow. [Due to the excessive crying over the loss of his father his eyelashes had become very thin.] Pour some water for them into a bowl and coo coo them like to a chicken. [He gave a sarcastic answer, because he had asked a theoretical question and should not have framed his question as an actual case (Rashi).] Ulla Rabbah expounded at the entrance to the Nasi's house. What is meant by the verse, "All the kings of the earth will acknowledge You, G-d, because they heard Your statements" (Psalms 138:4). It does not say 'Your statement- but 'Your statements' [in the plural]. When the Holy One, blessed be He, said, 'I am G-d your Lord - and 'Do not have any other gods before Me' (Exodus 20:2,3), all the nations of the world said: He is looking only for His own honor. But when He said, "Honor your father and your mother' (ibid. v. 12), they retracted and recognized the correctness of the first commands. [Therefore, the kings acknowledged G-d when they heard all these statements.] Rava said: We can infer it from the following verse, "Your very first utterance is truth" (Psalms 119:160). Your first utterance, and not Your last utterance? But from Your last utterance it can be seen that the first utterance is also true. [From 'Honor your father and mother' the nations realized that the first commandments were true.] **TALMUD KIDDUSHIN 31**

THE STORY OF DAMA BEN NETINAH

They asked the following question to R. Ulla: To what length does a person have to go in fulfilling the mitzvah of honoring parents? He replied: Let us examine what a certain non-Jew in Ashkelon by the name of Dama ben Netinah once did. The Sages once wanted to buy something from him on which he would have earned a profit of 600,000 [golden dinars]. And the key to the chest that contained the items the Sages wanted to buy was underneath the pillow on which his father was sleeping, and so he did not disturb him. R. Yehudah said in the name of

Shmuel: They asked R. Eliezer: What is the limits of the mitzvah of honoring parents? He replied: Let us see what a certain non-Jew did in Ashkelon by the name of Dama ben Netinah. The Sages wanted to buy from him jewels for the eifod (of the Kohen Gadol) for a profit of 600,000-according to R. Kahane it was a profit of 800,000-but since the key [to the chest that contained these jewels] was lying under his father's pillow while he was asleep, he did not disturb him. The next year the Holy One, blessed be He, gave him his reward. A red cow [which is used for purification] was born in his herd. When the Sages of Israel came to buy it he said to them, "I know that even if I asked you all the money in the world [for this cow], you would pay me. But I ask of you only the money I lost because of the honor I accorded to my father.' R. Chanina commented: If someone [like Dama ben Nesinah] who is not commanded [to honor his parents], and does it anyway received such a rich reward; someone who is commanded and fulfills the command, how much more so will that person be rewarded! For R. Chanina said: The person who does something he is commanded to do is greater than the person who does something he is not commanded to do. [Because someone who is commanded to do a mitzvah worries that he does not fulfill it properly; someone who does a mitzvah voluntarily does not have such concerns (Tosafot.). Also someone who is commanded to do a mitzvah has to overcome his yetzer hara that tells him not to do it, while a volunteer has no opposition on the part of the yetzer hara (Yavetz).] R. Joseph (who was blind) said: Originally, I thought that if someone told me that the halachah agrees with R. Yehudah, who says that a blind person is exempt from fulfilling the mitzvot, I would make a banquet for the Rabbis, because [being blinds I am not required to do the mitzvot, but I would do them anyway. However, now that I have heard R. Chanina's statement that someone who is commanded to do a mitzvah and does it is greater than someone who does a mitzvah although he is not commanded to do it; on the contrary, if someone told me that the halachah does not agree with R. Yehudah, [and a blind person is obligated to fulfill all the mitzvot), I would make a banquet for the Rabbis. **TALMUD KIDDUSHIN 31**

HONORING FATHER AND MOTHER

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

Avimi, son of R. Abbahu, taught the following: It is possible for a son to serve his father a pasyunu [a delectable fatty bird, similar to quail], and to be punished for it (if, while serving his

father, his facial expression shows that he begrudges him the delicacies). Then again, another son may put his father to work at turning a grindstone, and nevertheless this brings him to the World to Come, [for he spoke to his father, with sensitivity and dignity].

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

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

We learned in a Baraita: What is 'fear' and what is 'honor'? [The Gemara is referring to the verses, 'Every person must fear his mother and father' (Leviticus 19:3) and "Honor your father and mother" (Exodus 20:12). 'Fear' means that a son should not stand in his father's place, nor sit in his father's seat, nor contradict his words, nor side with his father's opponents in a Torah debate. 'Honor' means that he should give his father food and drink, he should help to dress his father, cover him, and lead him in and out.

A question was raised: Who should pay [for the expenses of the father's food and drink]? Rav Yehudah said: The son must pay for it. R. Natan b. Oshaya said: The money should come from his father.

R. Eliezer was asked: How far does the honor of parents extend? He answered: To the point that a parent could take a wallet full of money, throw it into the sea in front of their child, and the child would not embarrass them.

(KIDDUSHIN 31)

SHOULD RABBAN GAMLIEL SERVE DRINKS?

(32b) It once happened that R. Eliezer, R. Yehoshua, and R. Tzadok were sitting at the wedding banquet of Rabban Gamliel, while Rabban Gamliel was standing over them and serving drinks. He offered a drink to R. Eliezer, but he did not accept it. When he offered it to R. Yehoshua, he did accept it. R. Eliezer said, "How could you do such a thing, Yehoshua! We should be sitting while Rabban Gamliel [who is the Nasi] is standing and serving us! - R. Yehoshua replied, "We find that even a greater person than Rabban Gamliel stood and served his guests. After all, Abraham was the leading personality of his generation, and it says about Abraham, [with reference to the three angels who appeared to him]'He stood over them as they ate' (Genesis 18:8). And maybe you want to tell me that they appeared to him as angels, [and that is why he served them]; [that is not true,] they appeared to him only as Arabs" [and nevertheless, he served them). Then should we not allow Rabban Gamliel to serve us drinks?" Said R. Tzadok to them, "How long are you going to ignore the honor of G-d, and involve yourself with the honor of man? The Holy One, blessed be He, causes the wind to blow, the clouds to rise, the rain to fall, the earth to yield and sets a table for each and every individual; and we should not allow Rabban Gamliel to stand and serve us drinks?"

THE SON DID NOT WANT TO SUE HIS FATHER

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

SEFER CHASSIDIM 258

**THE BOND BETWEEN FATHER AND SON
LASTS EVEN AFTER DEATH**

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

SEFER CHASSIDIM 525

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

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

SEFER CHASSIDIM 541

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

A person left his hometown to go on a dangerous journey. His father and mother are worried sick, fasting and praying for his safe return. When he is out of danger, it is a mitzvah for him hire

a messenger to carry a letter to his parents, telling them that he arrived safely at his destination, so that they don't have to be concerned and fast any longer.

SEFER CHASSIDIM 542

THE LAWS OF HONORING FATHER AND MOTHER

CHAPTER 143 KITZUR SHULCHAN ARUCH

1. One must be extremely careful to fear and revere one's father and mother, for the Scriptures compare it to the honor and fear of the Holy One, blessed be He. The Sages Kiddushin 30b) tell us: "It is written (Exodus 20:12): 'Honor your father and your mother.' It is also written (Proverbs 3.9): 'Honor the Lord with your substance.' Also, (Leviticus 19:3): 'You shall fear, every man, his mother and his father;' and (Deuteronomy 6:13): 'You shall fear the Lord your G-d.' Thus we see that we must honor father and mother in the same manner that we honor and fear His great name. Three partners share in the creation of man: The Holy One, blessed be He, the father, and the mother. (The man provides it with the white substance, the woman with the red substance, and the Holy One, blessed be He, breathes a soul into him and endows him with the faculty of sight, hearing, and speech, Niddah 31a). When we honor our father and mother, the Holy One, blessed be He, says: I account it to them as though I dwelt among them, and they honored Me."
2. There is no limit to the mitzvah of honoring father and mother, for it is very precious and he who increases in its performance, he is to be praised. And the one who keeps the mitzvah to honor father and mother merits long life and good days in this life and in the life of the World to Come, he merits wealth and success in all his endeavors. And he merits that his sons and daughters will honor him and will fear and respect him also in his old age. And he who keeps this mitzvah in the Land of Israel, his reward is greater than the one who keeps it outside the Land of Israel.
3. Everyone must love his father and mother as his own body (Zohar Ha Kadosh). And he will honor them and find in them a good trait that they have and honor them and love them through that. And when his parents ask him to do a favor, he must do it immediately and with great diligence.
4. Just as the reward for Honoring father and mother is very great, the punishment for transgressing it is very great. And the one who afflicts his parents causes the shechinah to separate from him and harsh decrees fall upon him and he is given many sufferings. And even if life smiles on him in this life, he will surely be punished in the World to Come.

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

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

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

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

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

10. If one is told by his mother to do a certain thing, and subsequently his father asks him: "Who told you to do this?" If he feels that by telling that his mother had told him to do it, his father would be angry at his mother, one should rather incur his father's anger than implicate the mother.

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

12. One must honor his parents even after their death. Thus, if he mentions their names within twelve months after their departure, he should say.- "I am an atonement in his (or her) place" (that is, all evil that is to come on his or her soul, shall befall me instead). After the expiration of

twelve months (when no more punishment is meted out, for even the wicked are not judged after the period of twelve months), one should add: "May his (or her) memory be a blessing in the life of the world to come."

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

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

15. A child should not hearken to his father when he tells him to transgress a precept of the Torah, whether it be a positive or a negative command, or even a Rabbinical injunction. For, it is written (Leviticus 10:3): "Ye shall fear every man his mother and his father, and ye shall keep My Shabbats: I am the Lord your G-d." The keeping of the Shabbat is mentioned in juxtaposition with the fear of father and mother, to mean: "Although I commanded you to fear your father and mother, yet if they tell you to violate the Shabbat, you must not listen to them, and so it is true concerning other precepts, for I am the Lord your G-d, and both you and your parents are equally bound to honor Me, therefore, you must not hearken to them to disregard My word." Also, Rabbinical injunctions are the commands of the Almighty, blessed be His name, for it is written (Deuteronomy 17:11): "You shall not turn aside," etc. Thus, if a child is told by his father, not to speak to or forgive a certain person with whom the child wishes to be reconciled, he should disregard his father's behest, for it is forbidden to hate any Jew, unless he sees him commit a sin. Thus, the father tells the child to transgress a command of the Torah.

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

spent in studying the Torah, he was not punished). If the son desires to marry, and the father does not consent to it, the son is likewise not bound to obey him.

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

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

19. If the father or the mother has a splinter, the son is not allowed to remove it, lest he cause a wound thereby (which act is subject to the capital punishment of strangulation). If the son is a physician, he is not allowed to bleed his parents or perform an operation on them, although he intends to cure them therewith. The above is true only when there is another physician to do it; but if no other one is available, he may bleed them and cut as much as is necessary for purposes of healing.

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

21. One is forbidden to beat his grownup son. The word "grownup" in this regard, refers not to age but to his maturity. If there is reason to believe that the son will rebel, and express that resentment by word or deed, even though he has not yet reached the age of Bar Mitzvah, it is forbidden to beat him. Instead, he should reason with him. Anyone who beats his grownup children is to be excommunicated, because he transgresses the Divine Command (Leviticus 19:14): "You shall not put a stumbling block before the blind" (for they are apt to bring sin and punishment upon their children).

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

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

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

25. A convert to Judaism must not curse or despise his non-Jewish father; they should not say: "We came from a holiness (religion) that is grave to a holiness which is trifling." But he should treat him with some degree of respect.

REVIEWING YOREH DEAH INSTEAD OF EVEN HA EZER

Once the Holy Rabbi Yechezkel from Shinawa zt'l was posed a difficult question on the subject of AGUNOT. He studied the matter deeply and then he decided to go visit his father, the Holy Tzaddik Rabbi Chayim of Tzantz zt'l author of the "Divre Chayim".

When he arrived at Tzantz, instead of going directly to visit his holy father, he went to an inn, took a seat on a table and demanded from the innkeeper a copy of the Shulchan Aruch, from the section YOREH DEAH specifically, because he wanted to prepare for the conversation with his father.

The assistant that was traveling with Rabbi Yechezkel asked him in surprise: "How come you have asked for the YORE DEAH section, when the subject of the AGUNA is discussed in the section of EVEN HA EZER?"

Rabbi Yechezkel explained to him as follows: "During the discussion that I will have with my revered father, we will have to argue matters of law (HALACHAH) and we may debate a particular law very intensely. Because of this, I must repeat to myself the laws concerning the honor due to your Father and Mother and these laws are found in the YOREH DEAH section of the Shulchan Aruch. Because even when one talks of HALACHOT with his father, it is

forbidden to forget to take all the necessary precautions in order to guard the laws of honoring due to a father.

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

And this wasn't the only occasion when Reb Yechezkel conducted himself in this fashion...

**HONOR DUE TO THE TEACHER THE
SCHOLAR AND THE KOHEN
CHAPTER 144 KITZUR SHULCHAN ARUCH**

1. A person must fear and revere his teacher more than his father because his father has given life in this world, while his teacher prepares him for life in the world to come.
2. It is written (Leviticus 19:32), "You shall rise up before the hoary head, and honor the face of the old man." By the expression 'Old man,' is meant a man versed in the Law of G-d, as it is written (Numbers 11:16): "Gather unto Me seventy of the elders of Israel," and there, surely, the choice was made on the basis of wisdom, not upon age, as it is written: "Whom You know to be the elders of the people and its officers." Therefore, it is mandatory to reverence and honor a man learned in the Torah even if he is not advanced in years and even if he is not our teacher. It is also mandatory to respect and honor a person of seventy years or over, even if he is unlearned, provided he is not an evildoer. Even an old heathen should be shown respect by kind words and by being given a helping hand.
3. When three walk together and one of them is a rabbi, the latter is to walk in the center, while the other two should fall back and walk on his side, the older one on his right, and the younger one on his left.
4. It is a grave sin to disrespect or to hate men learned in the Torah. Jerusalem was destroyed only after they began to despise the scholars, as it is written (11 Chronicles 36:16): "But they mocked the messengers of G-d, and despised His words, and scoffed at His prophets," that is, they despised those who teach His word. This is also what the Torah said (Leviticus 26:15): "And if you will despise My statutes," that is, if you despise those who teach My statutes." Whoever despises the Sages, has no share in the world to come, and he is in the category of (Numbers 15:31): "Because he hath despised the word of the Lord." It is forbidden to make servile use of a student of the Rabbinical Law.
5. If a scholar has merchandise to sell, we do not allow anyone to sell the same kind of merchandise until the scholar has sold his. This is only true where there are no gentile merchants

who sell this kind of merchandise. But if there are gentile merchants who sell the same kind of merchandise, then the scholar has no benefit by restraining the Jews from selling it and thereby cause people to sustain a loss in vain.

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

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

8. If a Kohen and an Israelite are equally learned, it is a Biblical ordinance to give precedence to the Kohen, for it is written (Leviticus 21:8): "And You shall sanctify him," and our Rabbis, of blessed memory, explained it to mean that in every matter of sanctity or importance, he shall be treated with honor, that is, he shall be called first to the reading of the Torah; he shall be the first speaker at every public gathering; at the house of learning, too, he shall be the first speaker; at a meal he shall be the first to say the benediction Hamotzi, and lead in the saying of Grace after meals. Likewise, he shall be given the first choice portion, unless there is an Israelite more learned than he, then the latter is served first. However, if the Kohen has some partnership with an Israelite, the latter need not give him the choice portion, as it is not honorable for him to take such a portion, for he who covets a choice portion, will never see even a sign of blessing. In a place where there is no Kohen present, it is well to give precedence to a Levi over an Israelite, if they are of equal learning.

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

**THOSE WHO FEAR HEAVEN HONOR
THEIR FATHER AND MOTHER**

Happy are the fearers of Heaven, who walk in the ways of the Almighty and take pleasure in their toil. They are happy in this world and it is good for them in the world to come, viz. (Psalms 128:1-2): "Happy all who fear the L-rd, who walk in His ways. If you eat the toil of your hands, you are happy and it is good for you." Therefore, my sons, be circumspect in this eminent trait so that you attain to wealth, honor, and life in this world and in the world to come, as it is written (Proverbs 22:4): "The heel of humility is fear of the L-rd - wealth, honor, and life." May our G-d in His mercies place His fear on our face, that we not sin.

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

Our sages of blessed memory have said (Kiddushin 31a): Which is "fear" and which is "honor"? Fear: He must not stand in his father's place or sit in his place, or contradict his words, or uphold another's against him. Honor: He must feed him and give him to drink and bathe him and bring him and take him out.

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

Sefer Maalot ha Middot

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

And lest one say: Since I must give food and drink and clothe and shod my father and mother, I may steal and rob to put food into their mouths and clothe and shod them in order to fulfill the mitzvah of honoring father and mother - thus have our sages of blessed memory said (Yerushalmi Peah 1:1): One may feed his father fatted fowl and pheasants and inherit Gehinnom, and another yoke him to the mill and inherit Eden. How may one feed his father fatted fowl and pheasants and inherit Gehinnom? A certain man used to feed his father fatted fowl and pheasants. Once, his father asked him: "My son, where do you get all this?" He answered: "Old man, eat and chew, as dogs do!" (That is, why do you ask me? Is it not enough that you eat these things that you must also ask me where they come from!) Such a one inherits Gehinnom for berating his father and answering him with scorn. Another yokes him to the mill and inherits Eden. How so? A certain miller received a king's summons for a miller [to serve in the palace], whereupon he said to his father: "Father, you grind here instead of me, and I shall fulfill the king's summons. For if you went there and returned beaten and smitten, it would not be good. Better that I return so, and not you. And if, G-d forbid, you were to be shamed - better that I be shamed and not you." Such a one yokes his father to the mill and inherits Eden, being solicitous of his father's honor. (Kiddushin 30b)

Sefer Maalot ha Middot

TO MERIT ALL KINDS OF BLESSINGS AND GOOD THINGS

My sons, come and see how great is the honoring of father and mother. For when one honors his father and his mother, he merits inheriting life in this world and in the world to come, viz. (Deuteronomy 5:16): "Honor your father and your mother as the L-rd your G-d commanded you, so that your days be lengthened, and so that it be good for you on the land that the L-rd your G-d gives to you." What is more, so long as one honors his father and mother, sin is not engendered through him. For (Tanna dbe' Eliyahu Rabbah 26): (Exodus 20:8) "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy and (Ibid 12) "Honor your father and your mother, etc." - Why were these two commandments juxtaposed? To teach that so long as one honors his father and mother sin is not engendered through him (Isaiah- 56:2 "Happy is the man that does this, and the son of man that upholds it, who keeps the Shabbat mechalelo" [from profaning it] (Shabbat 118b): Read it not "mechalelo," but "machul Lo" [he is forgiven]

Sefer Maalot ha Middot

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

And if one does not honor his father and mother, stern decrees come upon him, viz. (Isaiah 29:13-14): "And the L-rd said: 'Because this people draw near with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but have removed their heart far from Me, and their fear of Me is but the taught precept of men - therefore, behold, I will deal yet more wondrously with this people, wonder upon wonder. And the wisdom of their wise men shall go lost; and the understanding of their understanding men shall be hidden.'"

Great is the mitzvah of honoring father and mother, which lengthens a man's days and years, confers good upon him, and causes him to inherit life in this world and in the world to come. But just as its reward is great, so is its punishment [for non-performance] great. For thus have our sages of blessed memory said in the Aggadah (Yerushalmi Peah 1:1): (Prove 30:17): "The eye that mocks at the father and scorns Yikhath of the mother shall be gouged out by the ravens of the valley and the sons of the eagle shall eat it": The eye that mocks the honor of father and mother and scorns (Deuteronomy 22:6): "Do not take [Lo tikach] (suggested by "yikhath")) the mother together with the fledglings" - "shall be gouged out by the ravens of the valley and the sons of the eagle shall eat it." (This one gouges and the other eats it?) The Holy One Blessed be He says: Let the raven, which is cruel to its brood, come and gouge out that eye, but derive no benefit from it. And let the eagle come which is merciful, and eat it, and derive benefit from it.

My sons, come and see how great is the mitzvah of honoring father and mother before the Holy One Blessed be He, who equated their honor to His honor; their fear to His fear; their being cursed to His being cursed. It is written here: "Honor your father and your mother," and, in respect to the Holy One Blessed be He, (Proverbs 3:9): "Honor the L-rd from your wealth" - their honor being equated. It is written here: "A man, his mother and his father, you shall fear," and, in respect to the Holy One Blessed be He, (Deuteronomy 6:13): "The L-rd your G-d shall you fear" - their fear being equated. It is written here (Exodus 21:17): "And one who curses his father and his mother shall be put to death," and, in respect to the Holy One Blessed be He, (Leviticus 24:15): "A man, a man, if he curse his G-d, then he shall bear his sin" - their being cursed being equated. (But in respect to the Holy One Blessed be He it is not written: "And one who strikes, etc.", as it is written [Exodus 21:15]: "And one who strikes his father and mother" - this being inapplicable to Him)