

# Pardes Yehuda

← Weekly Torah Journal By Yehuda Z. Klitnick →

Parshas Emor 5785 Year 15, #628

פרשת אמור תשפ"ה

## *The influencers have to be a role model in order to influence their children*

וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה אִמַּר אֶל הַכֹּהֲנִים בְּנֵי אַהֲרֹן וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם לִנְפֹשׁ  
לֹא יִטְמָא בְּעַמּוּיוֹ: (כא א)

“Hashem said to Moshe: Speak to the Kohanim, the sons of Aharon, and say to them: Let none of you defile himself for a dead person among his people. (21:1) There is a redundancy in the Posuk as Moshe seems to be told to say and then say again. Rashi quotes the Gemara (Yevamos 114A) which explains that this teaches us –that the older people must warn and educate the younger people. We must know that this is the case in regard to the entire Torah those who know more have an obligation to teach those who know less.

The Oznayim LeTorah from Hagaon Rav Zalman Sorotzkin z”l, offers a beautiful explanation which has very practical implications. We know that a child is influenced both by his parents/teachers and by his friends/environment. It is often unfortunate that the influencer does not abide at what he preaches. Trying to educate a child to act in a specific way or to consider certain things to be important when the influencer is not acting in such a way and are treating those things with disregard is exceedingly difficult. You have to personally assume all of those restrictions for yourself. By doing that and setting a proper example, you’ll be able to educate him to act in a way that none of his peers are acting. This is what Rashi is alluding to: The older people must warn and educate the younger people. This means that the older people must be strict and follow the rules and then setting a standard of being a role model for the children, and then would the influence work.

There is the famous story of a father telling his son not to speak by davening, yet the father himself spoke by the davening. The young boy said: I’ll wait until I become a father, and then I would be able to also talk by davening!

The famous Maggid Rav Shalom Shvadron z”l tells a powerful story of the Ridvaz, Hagaon Rav Yaakov Dovid Wilovsky, originally Rav in Slutsk, then in Chicago, and finally in Tzfas. He published two classic commentaries on the Jerusalem Talmud. One day the Ridvaz began to cry as he waited for the prayers to begin in the shul, on the day of his father’s yahrtzeit anniversary of his death. A close friend

approached him and asked why he was so upset considering the fact that his father had lived until the age of eighty and had died more than fifty years ago.

The Ridvaz explained: When I was a young boy, my father had hired the best melamed teacher for me. He charged one ruble a month which was a large sum of money in those days, especially for my father who was very poor. My father made a living building furnaces. One winter there was a shortage of cement and lime and my father couldn’t meet the payments for my melamed. Three months went by and he hadn’t paid him. One day, I brought home a note from my teacher which said that if he didn’t receive money by the next morning, he’d be unable to continue teaching me.

My parents were devastated. To them my Torah study meant everything and they felt that nothing should stand in its way. That evening at shul, my father overheard a wealthy man complain that the contractors who were building a house for his son couldn’t get a furnace because of the shortages. He offered six ruble to anyone who would get him a furnace. In Russia, a furnace was vital as it was used for both cooking and heating.

When my father came home from shul he discussed the matter with my mother. They agreed that my father would take apart our furnace, brick by brick and rebuild it for the rich man. They would then have money for my melamed.

My father did just that and received the promised six rubles. These he immediately gave me to pay my mela’med. “Tell the mela’med,” he said proudly, “that three are back pay and the other three are for the next three months.” That winter was bitterly cold and we all froze and shivered in order that I could have the best melamed and grow in Torah.

The Ridvaz took a breath and then continued. “This afternoon it was very cold and I was considering having a minyan for prayer in my home. Then I decided that in honor of my father I should make the extra effort, brave the cold and go to shul. I was crying thinking about the self-sacrifice that my family had for my learning.” This is what the Posuk is saying “Emor v’amarta” –say and then say again. Do as I do. The effects can last for generations. (Yehuda Z. Klitnick)

## **STORY OF THE WEEK** (By Yehuda Z. Klitnick)

\*\*\*\*\* **The Sultan admires the words spoken by the Tzaddik of Shepetivka** \*\*\*\*\*

Reb Yaakov Shimshon of Shepetivka was a Gaon, and a Tzaddik. He was a talmid of the Mezritcher Maggid. Near the end of his life he went up to Eretz Yisroel to live. He settled in Teveryah. There he devoted himself to helping

the poor people of the area. He traveled as a messenger to raise money for the Yidden of Eretz Yisroel and to strengthen the Yeshivos. During one of his travels he came to the great city of Istanbul, Turkey. He stayed at

the home of the Rav of the city, who was also the chief rabbi of the country. He noticed that the Rav was very tense. The Rav opened up to him and said, "I see you are a holy man, and I would like to ask you for advice. We have here in our city a parness, a community leader, who is also a very important merchant. He is also very close to the Sultan. His problem is that his arrogance has caused him to become an evil talebearer. He tells the Sultan whenever he finds out that a Yid has broken the law. He does this to find favor in the Sultan's eyes.

It so happens, that lately he got into an argument with a friend about business. They couldn't come to an agreement, and the matter came to our Bais Din. When he appeared before our Bais Din he brought with him a letter with the seal of the Sultan on it. The letter said that this rich man must be justified by the Bais Din no matter what. For a week I have been wandering around in pain. I have not been able to find a way out. Therefore I beg you for a solution, since you are a gaon."

The tzaddik trembled when he heard this. Then he said, we can't allow something like this to happen! My advice is that the Rav should pretend to be sick, and send a message that he cannot sit in at this Din Torah. However, a Rav has come to our city, who knows Halachos of monetary issues very well, and the case will be heard by him. The litigants agreed to have the Shepetivka Rov hear the case. Unfortunately, the Sultan, a few days later, sent a letter to the Shepetivka Rav that had the same words as the first letter. The Shepetivka Rav did not react to this letter. He called the litigants to Din Torah. The parness came to the Bais Din confident he would win. The Rav then sat down and got ready to judge the case. Both sides laid their arguments before the court. The Shepetivka then thoroughly interrogated both litigants, and delved into the matter deeply until it was as clear as day to him that the merchant was correct, and the parness was wrong. He wrote out his ruling clearly on two sheets of parchment, and gave each of the litigants a copy.

When the parness saw that he had lost the Din Torah, and that he had lost a large amount of money because of this, he decided to take revenge. He ran immediately to the Sultan, and told him that the new judge had not obeyed the Sultan, and had ignored him and his letter entirely. The Sultan grew very angry. He sent for the Rav to come to the Sultan's court immediately. The Rav wasn't afraid. He put on his coat, took a chumash with him, and went to the Sultan's court, where the Sultan and all his ministers

sat. The Sultan, became angry, immediately threatened the Rav with accusations and threats of being a traitor and disloyal to the throne for not having obeyed the Sultan's orders. The Rav stood silently. The Sultan got even more angry when he didn't answer him. He screamed and insulted him, and finally asked him, "Why don't you answer me about what I accused you of?" Suddenly, the Shepetovka Rov opened the chumash he was holding to Devorim, and began to read in a loud voice: "Do not favor anyone in judgment; rather you shall hear the small just as the great; you shall not fear any man, for judgment is up to Hashem" (Devorim 1:17).

The Sultan and all the ministers around him sat like stones and listened as the Shepetivka Rav spoke. To them it sounded as if it was coming directly from heaven, so strong and sweet. Everyone liked hearing it, and admired the Rav's dignity as he spoke. The Sultan and all the ministers began to respect him greatly, and they sent him home with honor. When the tzaddik left the palace, everyone began to talk about this wondrous event. The ministers were from various countries, and each of them explained that he had heard the words of the Rav in their own language. One of them said that the Rov had spoken in formal, flowing Arabic, another insisted he spoke in complex, flawless French, and yet another minister said he heard it in well-structured, beautiful Turkish, and so on.

When the Sultan heard his ministers talking, he was bewildered. He asked that they bring back the Rav so he could explain to them what had happened. The Rav returned to the palace court, and they greeted him with a lot of honor. They sat him next to the Sultan, and the Sultan asked him, "Perhaps you could tell us which language you used when you spoke to us and read from your book?" The Shepetivka Rav answered, "You should know that when I spoke to you it was not my mouth speaking at all. The Torah spoke through me. I had in mind the same thoughts -Kavanos- that were present when we stood at Mount Sinai when Hashem gave us the Torah. There too, everyone in the world heard the first two words of the commandments in their own language. That's why each of you thought I was speaking to him in his own language. I actually spoke in Hebrew!

The Sultan's opinion, as well as the ministers' opinion, of the Rav grew when they heard that. The parness lost favor with the Sultan. And from then on, the Sultan refused to hear any bad word spoken against the Yidden.

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