



Parshas Va'era 5764

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May an adult hand a child food that is not kosher?

In three different cases the *gemora* in *Yevamos* 114a¹ teaches us that an adult may not hand a child an *issur*, regardless of the child's age.² The first case deals with handing a child something forbidden to eat. The *posuke* in *Vayikra* (11:42) says **לֹא תֹאכְלוּם כִּי שִׁקָּץ הֵם**, and the *gemora* teaches that the *Torah* is telling us **לֹא תֹאכְלוּם** – we must not feed a child an *issur*. This has nothing to do with the *mitzvah* of *chinuch* – educating a child to perform and heed the *mitzvos*, rather it is a negative commandment prohibiting adults from feeding a child an *issur*.

The second case refers to the *issur* of drinking blood. The *posuke* in *Vayikra* (17:12) says **כָּל נֶפֶשׁ מִכֶּם לֹא תֹאכַל דָּם**, and since this *issur* was written previously, the *gemora* understands that it is teaching us that an adult may not feed blood to a child.

The last case deals with *טומאה* – impurity. The *posuke* in *Vayikra* (21:1) says **אָמַר אֵל** **הַכֹּהֲנִים בְּנֵי אֹהֶרֶן וְאָמַרְתָּ** – you shall say to, the *gemora* understands that we are prohibited from handing a child-Cohen something that will cause him to be defiled. The *poskim* learn³ that these three *halachos* teach us that one may not hand a child any *issur*, even if it is only an *issur d'rabanan*.

What if I am merely placing it in his hand, or placing him next to the issur or the issur next to the child?

The *gemora Shabbos* at the end of the 9th *perek* says that one may not hand a child a non-kosher grasshopper, lest it dies and the child will eat it. (I suppose that this exact scene would not take place nowadays but the ramifications of this case are definitely pertinent). *Rashi* there explains that placing the *issur* in the child's hand is akin to feeding him the *issur*. It follows that placing the *issur* in front of the child, in a way that the child will certainly take it, is similar to handing it to him and if through one's action the child can partake of the *issur*, one may not do it.

What if the child is ill and requires the issur for his health?

We must differentiate between an *issur d'oraisso* (biblically forbidden) and an *issur d'rabanan*. One may not hand or feed the child an *issur d'oraisso* (such as *chametz* on Pesach) unless it is *pikuach nefesh* – the child's life is in danger.⁴

An *issur d'rabanan* is different as there are *poskim*⁵ who hold that one may hand a child an *issur d'rabanan* when he requires it, even if

¹ 6 lines from the bottom of the *amud*.

² *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* 343:5, *M"b* 343:3 and *Sha'ar Ha'tsiun* 6.

³ *M"b* 343:4 and *Sha'ar Ha'tsiun* 12.

⁴ *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* 343:5.

⁵ The *Rashba* and the *Ran*, see the *Bi'ur Halacha simon* 343 ד"ה מד"ס.

he is not ill, and therefore when ill one may rely on those *poskim*.⁶

Normally one may not instruct a gentile to feed a child an *issur*, even if the *issur* is only *ossur mid'rabanen* such as food cooked on Shabbos,⁷ but when a child is ill and he requires that particular food, one may instruct a gentile to feed it to him.⁸

It is important to note that nowadays it is quite rare that one has to rely on the *beter* to feed a child an *issur d'oraisso*, as many items are kashrus supervised and are relatively easy to obtain.

May an adult instruct a child to turn on the lights?

Accordingly an adult may not instruct a child to turn on a light on Shabbos because telling him or instructing is similar to handing an *issur* to him,⁹ and is forbidden.

If a child turned on the lights may adults benefit from them?

If the child turned on the lights for the benefit of others it is forbidden to benefit from those lights until after Shabbos.¹⁰ If the child turned the lights on for his own benefit an adult may benefit from them as well.

We will discuss *b'ezras Hashem* - the issue of preventing a child from performing an *issur* in the next shiur.

⁶ *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* 343:6

⁷ It is *ossur mid'oraisso* to cook on Shabbos but the prohibition not to eat that food is only an *issur d'rabanen*.

⁸ *Shulchan Aruch HaRav* 343:5 and *M"B* 343:5.

⁹ *M"B* 343:5.

¹⁰ *Bi'ur Halacha simon* 325:10 ד"ה א"י שמילא. One must also wait before benefiting the time of *שיעשו*, i.e. the time it takes to do the *issur*. Lights are not an issue because one can turn the lights off and turn them on again. In any case the time it takes to turn lights on is negligible.

Vort on the Parsha

Paroh declared that he had sinned and that *Hashem* is the righteous one, while he and his people are the wicked ones. *Rashi* later explains that it was due to this honest declaration that the people of Egypt were fortunate and worthy of burial.

It is amazing, points out Rav Sternbuch *shlita*, that due to a momentous declaration and understanding that *Hashem* is righteous and that their behavior and conduct was wrong, they merited a burial.

This is true for each time that we reflect upon our ways and realize that we are not perfect and an improvement of our ways is necessary.

One must not underestimate such thoughts as we see that they carry a tremendous reward and *kal vachomer* if we continue in that path and perfect our ways.

Food For Thought

If one forgot to turn out the refrigerator light may one ask a child to open the refrigerator door?

If I see that my child is about to do an issur must I prevent him from doing so?

Does it make a difference whether the child is about to do an issur for my benefit or for his?

What is the halacha with regards to other people's children?

Answers coming next week.

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Note: The purpose of this series is intended solely for the clarification of the topics discussed and not to render halachic decisions. It is intended to heighten everyone's awareness of important practical questions which do arise on this topic. One must consult with a proper halachic authority in order to receive p'sak.