



Parshas Beshalach 5764

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

We find a very interesting *halacha*. The *Shulchan Aruch*¹ teaches us that if *chas v'sholom* a fire is raging in a Jew's property, and a gentile, on his own accord offers to extinguish the fire, one may permit him to extinguish the fire and he need not be prevented. The reason is because the gentile has remuneration in mind and it is therefore considered as if the gentile is doing it for his own benefit.²

In contrast, a child is not of an age to realize that extinguishing a fire will bring him personal benefit, rather his sole intent and purpose is to make his senior happy and therefore it is considered as if he is doing it for the parent's or adult's sake.³

Does that mean that I must actually prevent him from extinguishing the fire?

Yes it does, because it is as if you told him to extinguish the fire, which is obviously forbidden to do.

Are we talking about ages of chinuch (education) or all ages?

The *Mishna Berura*⁴ says that this is not a matter of *chinuch*, rather it is a problem that a

child is doing something for an adult and he realizes that this will please the adult.

Does this apply to other cases as well?

It certainly does. Whenever a child is about to do an *issur* in order to benefit an adult, that adult must prevent him from doing so. This is true with regards to turning on a light, turning on the air conditioner etc.

Is there not a case in the gemora where someone dropped keys in the street in order for children to carry them?

Indeed the *gemora* in *Yevamos* 114a⁵ talks about a case where someone found the keys to the shul in the street on *Shabbos*, and he was told to tell children to play in the vicinity of the keys and hopefully they would spot the keys and take them home.

However, the *Mishna Berura*⁶ explicitly explains that the children must not think that the keys are someone's they know and one may only permit them (i.e. not interfere) when they take them home thinking that they found keys to play with etc. but if they intend bringing to the person who lost them they must be prevented from carrying them home.

The father, adds the *Mishna Berura*, must prevent him whatever happens because of the obligation to educate one's child not to

¹ *Simon* 334:25.

² *M"B simon* 334:61.

³ *M"B simon* 334:65, in the name of the *M"A* who cites the *poskim*.

⁴ *M"B simon* 334:64 in the name of *Tosefos*.

⁵ Top of the *amud*.

⁶ *Simon* 362:44. See inside the *M"B*.

violate the *Shabbos* even with an *issur d'rabanan*.

The bottom line is that one may not allow a child to violate an *issur* for an adult. If the child is doing it for his own benefit, and it is an *issur d'rabanan*, and you are not the parent, there is much more leeway.

Does the obligation to educate only apply to Hilchos Shabbos?

Not at all. The obligation to educate one's child applies to all types of laws. The *Mishna Berura* says ⁷ that if a parent hears his child speaking *lashon hara*, unclean language etc. he must prevent and educate him from an early age that it is wrong and forbidden. He adds that if the child is permitted to speak whatever he wants at a young age it is very difficult to train him to guard his mouth at a later stage.

This applies to eating non-kosher foods, as mentioned in the last sheet, seeing things he is not supposed to, and everything else that a Jew must adhere to. The younger one starts to educate one's child the more inbred it is. On the whole, one should teach other children as well yet the main role of education is up to the parents.

Vort on the Parsha

The *gemora* in *Chulin* 89a says that although Avraham in his humbleness compared himself to dust, Moshe and Aharon said "what are we", which is even less than dust. R' Yonasan Eibshitz זצ"ל *davened* in a shul on *erev Yom Kippur* and he overheard one of the people praying with much fervor "I am akin to dust", so much so that R' Yonasan

was pleased to be able to spend the next day – Yom Kippur in his midst.

On the morrow, our friend was called up to the Torah for the 4th *aliya* and he began ranting at the unjustness of the *gabai* saying that he is far more worthy than the person that was called up for the 3rd *aliya*.

R' Yonasan was amazed. Eventually he approached the fellow and said that the day before you compared yourself to dust and now you are demanding respect and honor. The fellow replied, then I was standing before *Hashem* where indeed I am nothing, but compared to the fellow, huh, I am far more worthy.

Here Moshe Rabeinui and Aharon were talking to people, not to *Hashem*, and nevertheless they said "we are nothing". That is true humbleness. It is unto fellowman that one should feel that he is far less worthy than others.

Food For Thought

Am I obliged to make sure that my child hears havdalah? What if havdalah is late at night?

Are children permitted to eat before Kiddush?

What is the reason one is permitted to feed one's child on Yom Kippur? If he can manage on his own may I feed him?

Answers coming next week.

⁷ *Simon* 343:3.

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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.