



Kinder Torah®

For parents to share with children at the Shabbos table
Parshas Ki Savo



Don't Push It Off

Moishe, time to come in and learn.

Abba, can I just stay out and play a little while longer? Please please.

Moishe, you know that we are not supposed to delay our learning. There is even a Mishna in Pirkei Avos (2:5) that states, "Do not say that when I have free time I will learn. Perhaps you will never have free time." Now is the time to learn.

But Abba, I have my whole life to learn Torah.

Yes, Moishe. If you want to be able to learn your whole life, you must learn now.

How do you know that, Abba?

The Gemora (Sukkah 46b) derives it from a verse in this week's parsha. The Torah states, "It will be that if you surely listen to the voice of Hashem . . ." (Devarim 28:1). The word "listen" is repeated twice. The Gemora explains that Hashem's ways are unlike those of mortal man. Man can only create a vessel that is finite. The more you fill it, the less room remains to add more. However, Hashem created a human being whose potential is infinite. The more he learns, the more he is able to learn. He never becomes "filled up". Rashi explains that the first word "listen" refers to listening to the word of Hashem by learning Torah in ones youth. The second "listen" refers to ones older years. If you learn Torah and accustom yourself to listening when you are young, then you will be able to continue learning when you are older. However, if you do not learn in your youth, you will not be able to learn in your later years.

Kinderlach . . .

There is no limit to how much you can learn. You can become the greatest talmid chochom (Torah scholar) in the world! However, to do that, you must begin now. You must develop good learning habits. You must always put your learning first. You should learn as much as you can now when you are young. The more you learn now, the more you will be able to continue learning when you are older. Unfortunately, the opposite is also true. If you do not take your learning seriously now, it will be much harder for you to learn when you are older.

Torah Nation

"This day you have become a nation" (Devarim 27:9). What national event happened on that day? We did not enter the Land of Israel. We did not begin speaking our own language. Rav Shimshon Refael Hirsch zt"l explains that the Jewish people took an oath to accept and uphold the Torah on that day. That was the beginning of our nationhood. Although we were still in the desert without a homeland, and without any visible natural means of existence, we were a nation. What unifies the Jewish nation? The acceptance and upholding of the Torah. We are now approaching Rosh Hashanah, the day in which we proclaim Hashem's sovereignty. He is the King. But there can be no King without a nation. We are his nation. But what is a nation without unity? To be the nation fitting to accept Hashem's rule, we must be unified. Rav Hirsch explains that upholding the Torah is the key to our unity. This month of Elul, is our month of preparation for Rosh Hashanah. We have the opportunity now to strengthen our national unity, to prepare ourselves to accept Hashem's rule. To do that, we must strengthen our Torah learning and observance of mitzvos.

Kinderlach . . .

We still have two more weeks until Rosh Hashanah. Try to strengthen your Torah learning each day. Try to be more careful when you do mitzvos. Daven (pray) and make berachos (blessings) with more kavannah (concentration). Do more chessed (acts of kindness) for people. Prepare yourselves. The King is coming.

Pray for Me Too

"Then we cried out to Hashem, the God of our forefathers and Hashem heard our voice" (Devarim 26:7). The Chofetz Chaim zt"l explains that we should cry out to Hashem in prayer during times of trouble. The request should be made on behalf of the entire Jewish people. It should also be made after we have performed a mitzvah. The Chofetz Chaim zt"l often repeated

the advice given to us by our sages when praying for a sick person. We should include him "amongst other sick ones of Israel." When comforting mourners we should comfort them "amongst the other mourners of Israel." Hashem will more readily accept a prayer offered on behalf of the nation that a prayer for an individual. The person is not alone. He is a member of the Jewish people. It is easy to turn away a single person. A whole nation cannot be denied.

Kinderlach . . .

The Chofetz Chaim zt"l give us yet another key to help us along the way in preparing for Rosh Hashanah. Praying for fellow Jews who are suffering. We probably all know of someone who is in need of special prayers. We also have our own personal requests. We should include them all in our prayers. Make sure that you pray as our sages say, "amongst the nation of Israel." Besides making your prayers more effective, it will make you feel more empathetic with other Jews who are suffering. Empathy towards others is a big step towards unity. May our efforts this month of Elul herald the coming of Moshiach.

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