***בס"ד***

***Talmedei Chachamim and their Sons***

***לעילוי נשמת אמא מורתי לאה בת יוסף***

***Ari Cutler***

 It is not **prevalent** for ***Talmedei Chachamim*** to have children *who are talmedei chachamim*! (Nedarim 81a) the Maharaha asks in astonishment:

**ולפי טבע הבריאה המוליד מוליד בדומה וכיון שהם ת"ח אמאי אין בניהם ת"ח**

 If the child is around the *talmid chacham*, one would think that the child would be MORE likely to be a *talmid chacham*??

* Why is this prominent? Is it a **גזירה מן השמים**Divine Decree for some reason or is it an **עונש- punishment?** How many answers are there in the gemara? Is there a common theme with the answers?
* What is relationship to the gemara in Babba Metzia 85 that once You, your son and grandchild are talmidei chachamim- Hashem guarantees it will not stop?

**Answers and Lessons to learn**

**אמר רב יוסף: שלא יאמרו תורה ירושה היא להם.**

***The first answer of the gemara is that “people” should not say Torah is an inheritance for them.***

**Who are the people?**

Two explanations in **Rosh-** 1. **The children themselves** will say we do not need to work as it is ‘built in’. This is *Rashi’s* explanation of the Mishnah in Avos, “One must prepare oneself to learn Torah as it is not a yerusha”- Even though Abba is *Talmid Chacham* do not take it for granted that you will be *talmid chacham* you need to work and sweat for it.

The second opinion is that **others** will comment that Torah is a *talmid chacham* family business. As a result, we can have no relationship to Torah or success in learning! The *Maharal* explains in his introduction to *Tifferet Yisrael* that the *nusach* of *birchot Hatorah* relates to this phenomenon. **לעסוק** ולא **ללמוד** בדברי תורה -Do not think it is exclusive-only for *talmedei chachamim* it is for EVERYONE to be involved in!

**What is the relationship to the gemara in *Babba Metziah* that says after three generations it is guaranteed not to leave?**

There are different *meforshim* on this Mishnah in *Avot* that relates the Mishnah to this question: ***Tifferet Yisrael*** explains it is not 100% guaranteed. Rather, the Gemara means that it will not be as difficult. However, if someone learns half-heartedly without keviut there is no guarantee. Similarly, ***Tosafot Yom Tov*** explains that this is *chiiddush* of the Mishnah that only if one prepares oneself for the Torah will the Torah endure. The ***Rashbatz in Magen Avot*** explains within this sugya a beautiful inference in the passuk in Kohelet. 'והחוט המשולש לא **במהרה** ינתק' After three generations, it will not be **HASTILY** broken- It does not say **FOREVER!**

 **רב ששת בריה דרב אידי אומר: כדי שלא יתגדרו על הצבור. מר זוטרא אומר: מפני שהן מתגברין על הצבור**

“Should not rule over the Tzibbur”

What is difference between second and third answer?

**The Shitah Mekubetzet and Maharsha explain**

Opinion number two- **Gezeira from Hashem-** so they will not rule over the *tzibbur* or have too much *gaava* (Ran in Nedarim)

**Mar Zutra** argues answer number three is a punishment as talmedei chachamim ruled over the community with the wrong intentions- not *leshem shamayim*

**קרי להו חמרי קרי לאנשי חמרי\**

**Shita Mekubetzet**

 **Rav Ashi** argued that the talmedei chachamim are rageel to scorn people as *chamoreem*. Therefore as a **punishment,** you will not have children be *talmedei chachameem*

**Keren Ora**

All reasons in the gemara stem from arrogance:

***Rav Ashi*** – they put a lot of things on other people. The parable is that one overloads a donkey. If one was truly humble, he would not overburden others.

**According to girsa(brought in Maharsha) “ קרי להו לחמרי”**

It could be that the talmedei chachamim because of their high level only saw their sons lacking and focusing too much on the physicality of life. As a result, the sons were not encouraged to raise their level but actualized the “prophecy of being more physical…”

**"שלא ברכו ברכות תורה תחילה"**

**Ran in Nedarim**

**Not only What You Know**

Beginning of their dealings in the morning was not Talmud Torah or being involved in Torah. Even if you have lots of knowledge, one’s choices in the morning demonstrate what is primary to them. Does one learn for an hour or read the paper for an hour?

**Meiri**

**Kavod Hatorah**

***Meiri*** claims that by not making a *bracha* it is an expression of the belittlement and degradation of **KAVOD HATORAH**.

**Shita Mekubetzet in Bava Metziah** (quotes *Rambam*) with a new outlook in the explanation of שלא ברכו ברכת תורה תחילה. They did not get the first Aliyah as mandated by the Torah. Rather, they let the *Kohen Am Haaretz* first. This was a lack of ***kavod hatorah***. The Kohen is only first when they are equal in stature. Rav who is the author of this statement also spoke from personal experience as he got the first Aliyah even though he was not Kohen due to being a major *talmid chachom*(Gemara Megilla 22a)

If there is no reverence for what the sanctity of Torah represents than the Torah will not be bequeathed to the next generation.

**Keren Ora**

**Middot**

 ***Keren Ora*** claims that all the reasons of *gemara* emanate from arrogance!

The reason for Torah not to resonate in someone is that Torah is compared to water: It must be contained in a’ lower location’. This is similar to *Rabbeinu Yonah’s* interpretation of Mishna above “prepare yourself with **proper middot** ! If one has bad *middot*, one cannot be a proper vessel to contain the Torah

Similarly, when one does n*ot make birchot Hatorah* at the beginning of his learning, one expresses that it is all about one’s **own** wisdom as opposed to **wisdom of Hashem!!**

**Lack of Proper Kavannah**

**Shita Mekubetzet (Nedarim) and the Bach** explain that not making a *bracha* at the beginning signifies our learning is lacking the right intentions. The ***Bach*** explains that when one does not learn ***leshem shamayim*** one will not fulfill the *bracha* of "ונהיה אנחנו צאצינו וצאצאי עמך... **כולנו לומדי תורתך לשמה"**

**Chatam Sofer** based on **Ran** in ***Nedarim makes a fine*** distinction between *leeshmah and leshem shamayim:*

*Leshem shamayim connotes the* lacking of shelimut- Learning only to know how to perform mitzvoth vs learning *leeshmah* to “ להגות יומם ולילה "

Learning for learning sake as ideal of itself.

 How does one know the distinction? The *Chatam Sofer* explains based on *Gemara Menachot that one* makes a *bracha* only if the action is the conclusion of the mitzvah (גמר מצוה ) Here they did not make a bracha since not learning for the pure holistic mitzvah of Talmud Torah!

The **Bach** reacts that this seems to be a harsh punishment for not making a *bracha* at the outset? The *Bach* explains that the ideal is to learn Torah full of *kedusha* and as a result Hashem dwells within us. However, if one learns Torah for all side reasons it causes ‘*pirud hashechina* ‘. The natural result is that just physical world without *kedusha causes churban.*

**What might be behind the machloket whether it is punishment or gezeira?**

The approach of Gezeira focuses on **cheftza** of Torah that it has such power to inculcate t**almedei chachamim** can’t be talking about **punishment**. As a talmid expressed to me, if talmid chachom and penetrated with *Kedushat HaTorah,* how can he have this arrogance or bad middot? Rather, gezeira that Hashem knew **some** people might have misconception about (their) connection to Torah (שלא יאמרו ירושה היא (לו or misuse Torah in the wrong way and made decree to protect the sanctity of Torah and the *Tzibbur*. The approach of **onesh** could be focused on **gavra**- **how can it be that talmedei chachamim have bad middot, or arrogance?** 3rd answer- people are arrogant and want power so they are punished. While the last answer is about person’s intentions can have harmful effect!

How can it be that a **talmid chacham is arrogant**? The learning of Torah needs a certain confidence and clarity to understand sugyot. The Chavruta knocks down the *sevara* for the search of emet etc. If one is not careful, ((התקן עצמך ללמוד תורה one could fall into this trap of not understanding it is Hashem’s Torah!

As we approach the three weeks, im”h יהי רצון We will fulfill the words of our sages התקן עצמך ללמוד תורה and see the Mikdash rebuilt this year.