

GREAT FOR SHARING
AT THE SHABBOS TABLE!

בשבת



אור ישראל

Living Life Deeper

PARSHAS
SHELACH

BY RABBI NETANEL NAAMAT
RABBI NAFTALI ZIONS
RABBI AVICHAI BENSOUSSAN

A CRUCIAL ROLE

Our *Parshah* opens up with the list of spies that Moshe sent to scout out the land of Israel. The list contains their names, the names of their fathers, and the *shevet* they represented.

Of note, though, is a small detail that may be lost in the bigger picture. Each name is listed as “So-and-so סו-אנ-ד-סו.” The vowelization beneath the word סו is a *segol*. However, when it comes to Yehoshua, the word is סו — the same letters, but now with a *chirik* beneath the word.¹ Why the change?

Rabbi Yechezkel Lifshitz, (1862-1932) explains² that there are multiple partners in the creation of every person, the father, mother, and Hashem.³ However, we find that there is actually a fourth partner, one who brings the child not to this world, but to the next. This person, the *rebbei*, is also considered as a partner in the creation of this person.

In fact, despite not being involved in the birth of the child, the *rebbei*, at times is given preference over the parents themselves! For example, if one finds two lost objects, one of their parents, and one of their *rebbei*’s, and they can only return one, one is supposed to return the object of the *rebbei*’s.⁴

The more one is a true *talmid*, and the *rebbei* a true *rebbei*, the more the *rebbei* is considered a partner in the student’s creation. Thus, the relationship between Yehoshua, the paradigm *talmid*, and *Moshe Rabbeinu*, the quintessential *rebbei*, is the ideal illustration of this concept.

The Torah hints to Moshe’s portion of Yehoshua’s development by removing two dots of the *segol*, as if to say that the parent’s of Yehoshua have completely given their portion over to Moshe.

What an ideal! We all love our parents, they do so much for us, they care for us, and they know us best. Yet, we find that we owe so much to our *rebbeim*, as they are the one’s that will bring us into *mitzvos*, teach us about serving Hashem with delight, and how to get our reward in the next world.

1 Bamidbar 13:8

2 Hamedrash V’Hamaaseh, Chelek Haderushim, Parshas Shelach

3 Kiddushin 30b

4 Shulchan Aruch, Choshen Mishpat 264:2 - assuming it’s a *rebbei muvhak*

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Mind the Gap - Taking the Next Step

There are many ways to honour one’s *rebbei*; standing up when they walk into the room, not calling a *rebbei* by their first name, etc.

These are things that we do, though we may do them without feeling. How can we emotionally connect to the idea of honouring a *rebbei*?

First and foremost, the more we understand how precious the Torah is, and our purpose in this world, the more we will naturally gravitate towards those who know Torah, and those who teach Torah.

A *rebbei* is someone who gives us the keys to eternal life, someone who knows the secrets of how to connect to Hashem, and they are sharing these secrets with us!

How can we not jump out of our seat when someone like that comes in!?

By appreciating what a *rebbei* stands for, and how they are a link in the chain back to *Moshe Rabbeinu* himself, we will not only create a connection to our *rebbei*, but a deep regard and respect for everything our *rebbei* stands for.

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Many people who read Sifrei Mussar remain, essentially, unchanged. Why? One reason is that the power to change isn’t unlocked through “reading” alone. Rather the key is “Hispailus”- emotionally connecting to the words of Mussar with a soft and receptive heart, yearning to grow, ever more.
- Vilna Gaon, Iggeres HaGra

MUTUAL RESPECT

As a teenager, Rabbi Hertz Frankel attended Mesivta Torah Vodaath in Williamsburg, where he was a student in Rabbi Avrohom Pam's class. Rav Pam and Hertz both lived in East New York and every Friday afternoon, after class, they would travel home on the same train.

In those years there was no kosher bakery in East New York, so Rabbi Pam would buy *challo*s and other baked goods for Shabbos in Williamsburg. Honored to be able to walk alongside his *rebbe*, Hertz accompanied him to the bakery and then to the train. The first week that they traveled together, Hertz offered to carry the bags, but Rabbi Pam refused. "I wouldn't allow you to carry my packages for me. They are mine and my responsibility," Rabbi Pam said softly, not wishing to take advantage of anyone, especially a *talmid*.

Hertz protested but it was to no avail. As they walked together, however, Hertz felt uncomfortable allowing his *rebbe* to carry the bags. He asked Rabbi Pam to let him carry at least one bag but again his *rebbe* refused.

This went on for three weeks as the two of them traveled together every Friday. On the fourth week, after they got off the train, Hertz made another effort to carry the bags, again to no avail. Hertz stopped dramatically in the street and said, "*Rebbe* it's a *chillul Hashem*!"

Rabbi Pam looked up puzzled.

"Imagine, what people must be thinking," said Hertz emphatically. "They see a *yeshiva bachur* walking with his *rebbe*, showing a lack of *kavod haTorah*, as his *rebbe* carries bags and he doesn't even help him!"

Rabbi Pam stopped in his tracks. Smiling broadly at his bright young *talmid*, he said in Hebrew, "*Nitzchuni* (You have triumphed over me)." And with that he gave Hertz the bigger bag.

Hertz lived closer to the subway than did Rav Pam. He intended to walk Rabbi Pam home as he did every Friday, but as they passed Hertz's home, Rabbi Pam took the bag back and said, "From here you don't have to walk with me, there is no *chillul Hashem* because you can go home. From here I don't allow you to carry my bags."

That day, the young man listened to his *rebbe* and has continually heard this message of kindness and consideration until this very day.

**Adapted from "The Spirit of the Maggid" by Rabbi Paysach Krohn*

DID YOU KNOW?

- There is no sin that causes damage as much as one who impugns the honor of *talmidei chachamim*.¹
- Even if a *rebbe muvhak* waives his right to honor, a student should still give the *rebbe* honor.²
- The Ramban writes that one should give honor to one's *rebbe*, even if they have surpassed them in wisdom and knowledge.³

1 Maharal, *Chidushei Aggados* on 84:2

2 *Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah* 242:32

3 Cited in *Nemukei Yosef on Bava Metzia* 33a (18a in the *Rif*), s.v. אמר עולה