

Dear Friends;

I hope that you'll enjoy the following Parsha summary
followed by a Dvar Torah;

" Parsha in a nutshell "

Moshe tells the people of Israel how he implored G-d to
allow him to enter the land of Israel, but G-d refused, instructing him instead
to ascend a mountain and see the Promised Land.

Continuing his "review of
the Torah," Moshe reminds them of the glorious seen at the Mount Sinai: " Did
ever a people hear the voice of G-d speaking out of the midst of the fire... and
live? ... You were shown, to know, that the L-rd is G-d... there is none else
beside Him."

Moshe predicts that, in future generations, the people will
turn away from G-d, worship idols, and be exiled from their land and scattered
amongst the nations; but from there they will seek G-d, and return to obey His
commandments.

Our Parshah also includes a repetition of the Ten
Commandments, and the first paragraph of the Shema. The Torah then tells us to
bind "these words" as tefillin on our arms and heads, and inscribe them in a

mezuzah and put them on the doorposts of our homes.

" Dvar Torah "

This week's Parsha, as well as the rest of the Parashiot in the Book of Devarim, are the final days of Moshe Rabeinu's life. As a great leader, Moshe spends his final days to remind the people about the importance of keeping G-d's commandments when entering Eretz Yisrael. He tells them that the secret to their survival in the promised land is only if they keep the laws of the Torah, as he is trying to prepare them for a life without his leadership. So not to our surprise, he relates to them the Ten Commandments that they received directly from Hashem at Mount Sinai around forty years before, and he reminds them of how important it is to keep them. Although, the wording of the Ten Commandments said by Moshe is almost identical to the one given in Parashat Shemot, but still, we can find a few changes here and there.

One of the differences between Moshe's version of the Ten Commandments and the original one is found in the fifth commandment which is to "Honor your parents". The pasuk says: "Honor your father and mother, as Hashem your G-d has commanded you, so that you may live long...." The Chachamim immediately notice that Moshe has added a phrase to this commandment which is: "as Hashem your G-d has commanded you". What is the significance of this additional phrase?

Rabbi Frand has a very interesting explanation for this verse. He says that usually a mitzvah which sounds to be logical is much easier to keep. Honoring the parents

should be common sense, since everyone knows that raising children is very costly, time consuming and needs a lot of patience, energy and dedication. Parents lose many nights of sleep and many days of work when raising a baby. Accordingly, every person also understands that he has a moral obligation to repay his debt of gratitude to his parents. Therefore, the least people can do is to honor their parents. It is not a hard thing to make such a small payment on such a large debt.

But what if, G-d forbid, you think that your parents didn't do much for you when you were a child? Do you still have to honor them? I remember when my grandfather used to tell me that when he was a kid back in Mashad, majority of the Mashadies used to live a poor life. The parents could not afford to take their kids on any vacations and the boys had to go to work from the age of ten to support themselves and their families. But still, the children had much more respect for their parents in those days than the children we see today! And this is exactly what Moshe is trying to teach the Benei Israel that honoring parents should not depend on how much they've done for you in the past, but rather, you should honor your parents only because "Hashem your G-d has commanded you!"

Moshe waited until now to make this point, because it becomes more clear after forty years in the desert. During those years, raising children was much easier than it was ever before or after. The children did not have to be fed; there was manna from heaven. They did not need new shoes and clothing all the time; nothing ever wore out! They did not need to go to Yeshivas or Talmud Torahs; the Levites taught them for free! And most likely they didn't need orthodontic braces either! Life in the desert for the parents was like a

paradise since they didn't have to do anything for their kids. And still, the Torah demanded that parents should be honored. Clearly, the obligation is to obey Hashem's commandment rather than repay a debt of gratitude.

Yes my friends, we have to honor our parents because it is G-d's commandment and not because its payback time! We should love and honor our parents because they are the ones who gave us our "lives" and that's all the reason you need to love, honor and support them for the rest of their lives. The Torah is teaching us that the parents are not obligated to have done anything for us to earn their respect. We have to respect them no matter what! And to help us to do this great mitzvah, the Torah is telling us the reward for it too, which is: "so that you may live longer"! Therefore, honoring parents is the best life insurance policy you can buy for yourselves, since it guarantees you a long life!

But you may ask, how do we honor our parents? Our sages say that it's not enough to just stand up before them or kiss their hands. We should not disrespect them, we should not argue with them, we should not disagree with them, and above all, we should support them in every aspect of life if they need our help. Whether it is a physical help, emotional help or financial help! It's our duty to take care of them to the best of our ability.

But as parents get older, they can become more complaining and demanding. They can test the patience of their children. Sometimes, honoring parents under such circumstances can become very difficult. Is there a limit to such patience? How much patience can be expected of a person? Is there a point where a person is allowed to run out of patience and be

exempt from honoring them?

The answer is, obviously, NO! The same way that the mother does not lose her patience when her baby cries for a long period of time, the same way when she has to feed him and change his diapers for years, the same way when he is sick and she has to be by his side at all times, and still does not lose her patience and loves him to death, so too, we can not run out of patience with our parents and we should love them to death too!!

After all, they are the ones who brought us to this world, raised us and love us more than anyone else! Let us honor them as much as we can and cherish every moment with them before it gets too late!!

Shabbat Shalom and Regards;

Martin