

No one, no one of you shall approach any close relative to uncover nakedness... And you shall not give any of your progeny to pass through for Molech... I am Hashem. (18:6,21)

After enumerating a list of sexual aberrations, the Torah concludes with an exhortation not to give one's child "to pass through for [the] *Molech* [god]." *Horav S.R. Hirsch, zl*, explains the rationale for this juxtaposition. He suggests a practical reason for the prohibition of the laws concerning *ervah*, physical relations with close relatives. He explains that a relationship between husband and wife should be predicated upon bonds of mutual love, which is the result of marriage. Any relationship which has been linked prior to marriage by bonds of mutual attachment and affection, or of familial love, precludes the link founded in – and based upon – marriage. This transforms the relationship into nothing more than crude physical attraction, which is common in the animal kingdom. If the marriage is founded upon the ideals of Torah, then what otherwise is *ervah* is elevated to the sphere of *mitzvah*.

The law against passing a child to the *Molech* teaches us that, just as children should be the product of a marriage built upon love and not blind physical urges, so, too, should the lives of these children not be given over to the random workings of some blind physical force. Children are to be conceived under the protection of Hashem's law, hence the prohibitions concerning *ervah*. Likewise, their lives and fortunes are also dominated by Divine protection and guidance!

Regarding the children, Hashem says, *Ani Hashem*, "I am G-d." Your children must be educated in My ways. Children must be "turned over" to Hashem – not to the *Molech*. Our children do not belong to us. They belong to Hashem, and we should raise them in that manner. Raising children is a privilege which is accorded to parents as long as they understand that they are nothing more than Hashem's agents. When parents make decisions concerning their children's education based upon their own personal preferences, they are abusing this privilege. *Molech* was a pagan god, and its service was contemptible. Such service represented a parent acting without direction from Above. This is not the Torah way. Throughout the millennia, Jewish parents have sacrificed in order to provide their children with the proper Torah values. They have realized the trust that Hashem placed in them.

Horav Shmuel Wosner, Shlita, was asked if there was truth to the story that his mother had given up a career as an opera singer after a great *tzaddik*, righteous person, promised her that if she did, she would be blessed with a son who would achieve even greater fame in the Torah world. He replied, "I never heard her say it, but my mother encouraged my learning, saying that I have no idea what she gave up for me!"