

Every man, his father and mother shall you revere and My Sabbaths shall you observe. (19:3)

One might think that the respect one owes his parents overrides the observance of *Shabbos*. The *Torah* teaches us that the *mitzvah* of *Shabbos* or, in other words, listening to the command of Hashem takes precedence. We may suggest a novel idea. The *Torah* tells us that to desecrate *Shabbos* in order to fulfill a parent's request does not really constitute respect. The definition of respect for one's parents is the performance of activity that is in accordance with the will of Hashem. An action that runs counter to Hashem's *Torah*, albeit upon instruction from one's parents, is not considered *kavod*, respect.

The **Dubno Maggid** in his inimitable manner uses a parable to emphasize the distinction between listening to Hashem over one's parents. There were three people who had each studied and excelled in a specific field. One had studied optics and made a powerful telescope. The second had mastered the science of locomotion and mechanics. He had created a vehicle that could travel very fast, enabling him to traverse far distances in a short period of time. The third went into the field of medicine. After much study and research, he discovered a drug that had remarkable healing properties. Indeed, he was the proud master of the cure-all drug. These three people met together one day to share their individual talents with each other. In the course of the conversation, the creator of the powerful telescope peered through his scope and saw that in a distant country the king's daughter lay deathly ill. The distraught king was searching for anyone who would find a cure for his child. After sharing this information with his two friends, the three decided that together they would hop into the second man's amazing vehicle and travel to the country to save the princess using the third man's cure.

So it was; they came to the king and gave the princess the medicine. Within a few short days, the princess was saved. Out of a sense of gratitude the king said, "You saved my daughter. I will give her to one of you as a wife." When the men heard, they began to argue among themselves regarding who most deserved the reward. Each one felt that without his contribution the princess would certainly have died. The king said to them, "True, you have all participated in saving my child's life. After all is said and done, I am, however, most indebted to the individual who brought the medicine. It was he who saved my child. While in the past all three of you brought about her cure, in the future, it will be the one with the wonder-working medicine to whom I will always turn. He, therefore, will have my daughter as a bride.

The maxim of this parable as it relates to us is apparent. Three partners share in the creation of a person. Hashem, the father, and the mother. While each plays an essential part in a person's formation and development, the "third" partner, Hashem, serves as the only source of sustenance without Whom man would cease to exist. Consequently, while we might think that respect for one's parents overrides *Shabbos*, it is Hashem to Whom we must render our ultimate allegiance.