

Corruption is not His – the blemish is His children's. (32:5)

Teshuvah is a wonderful thing, but sometimes it comes too late to prevent the damage that has already been done. There is no time limit to *teshuvah*. It is always accepted, thus allowing for a person who has lived a life of abandon to die and leave this world as a *tzaddik*, righteous person. There is, however, a collateral damage with regard to his children. This is a damage that is irreparable. When parents go along their merry way, living a life of abandon, a lifestyle that is antithetical to Torah, they must remember that their children are watching. When impressionable minds observe, they become influenced and it becomes part and parcel of their psyche. The parents, at one point in their lives, may decide that enough is enough. There is more to life than living for “today”, with a total disregard for the consequences. One of these consequences is their children, who have sadly learned a lifestyle that is wasteful and self-destructive.

This, explains **Melitzei Aish**, is the Torah's message. *Shicheis lo – lo*, “Corruption, not him, *banav muman* – his children, however, remain blemished.” Self-corruption may be repaired through *teshuvah*, but the children are lost – until they also come to their senses.