

These are the offspring of Aharon and Moshe... Nadav and Avihu, Elazar and Isamar. (3:2)

Interestingly, the *pasuk* indicates that it will detail the offspring of Aharon and Moshe, but only mentions the sons of Aharon *HaKohen*. *Chazal* (*Sanhedrin* 19b) infer from this *pasuk* (which mentions the offspring of Aharon) that one who teaches Torah to someone else's children is considered as if he had fathered him. Moshe *Rabbeinu* taught Torah to his brother Aharon's sons and, as a result, he was regarded to be their spiritual father. Moshe guided Aharon's sons by example and by deed. His mentoring gave life to them in a manner similar to that of their biological father. Teaching Torah to someone is tantamount to giving them life.

Marahal m'Prague questions this. Was Moshe's teaching exclusive to Aharon's sons? He taught everyone. The entire *Klal Yisrael* were his students – and thus, his offspring. Why did he single out Aharon's sons? He explains that, while Moshe certainly taught all of the *Klal Yisrael*, he apparently expended greater effort in teaching Aharon's sons. Thus, they are considered his spiritual offspring. These words provide us with a powerful lesson. In order to acquire one's students to the point that they are considered his children, he must go that extra mile, exert greater effort, spend more time. A *rebbe* that punches the clock might succeed in transmitting knowledge. In order to transform his students into his children, he must act like a father. Parents do not punch a clock. They never give up. They never slow down. They are parents.

I think we might add some clarity to *Chazal's* statement. They say *Kol ha'melamed es ben chaveiro Torah*, "He who teaches Torah to his friend's son." Why add *ben chaveiro* – friend's son – and, if the student does not happen to be the son of my friend, does that decrease his status in my eyes? Will I be less successful in transmitting the lesson to him?

I think *Chazal* are teaching us an important principle concerning *Torah chinuch*: Every student must be viewed as *ben chaveiro*, my friend's son. The *masirus*, devotion, that one manifests for his student should be similar to that which he manifests towards a good friend's son. There must be a relationship, care, love. Cold, dispassionate teaching does not transform students into children. It begins with the *rebbe* and grows commensurate with how much of himself he contributes to the relationship. In order for a student to become a son, the *rebbe* must love and teach as a father. This attitude is manifest in the words, *ben chaveiro*. Every student should be considered to be a *ben chaveiro*. Every Jewish child should have equal *protectzia* when it comes to Jewish education.