

"You shall teach them thoroughly to your children." (6:7)

Rashi cites the *Sifri* that interprets "your children" as referring even to one's students, since the Torah views one's students to be like his children. We may wonder why the *Torah* did not simply say, "You shall teach your students." Why should this idea emerge only by inference? **Horav Yechezkel Sarne, zl**, responded with a profound insight. If one does not view his students as his children - then not only are they not his children - they are not even his students! The definition of a student is simple - a spiritual child related through the medium of *Torah*. By teaching *Torah* to this child, the *rebbe* has the capacity for creating and shaping a new being. Does that not define a parent-child relationship?

Horav Sarne extended this idea. Since the *Torah* uses the word "children" -- not "students" -- it indicates that the beginning of a *rebbe's* relationship with his student should be as a father to a child. As the father is compassionate, caring for every little need of his child, regardless of its triviality, so, too, should the *rebbe* concern himself with his students' necessities. The *rebbe* is first a father who must minister to his student/child's physical and material needs. After he has exhibited the love and care that a father has for his child, only then can he imbue the student with *Torah*.

Horav Yaakov Ruderman, zl, applies this idea to the long-term relationship between a *rebbe* and his *talmid*. A son is a son forever. There is no time limit concerning this relationship. Likewise, the student maintains his *kesher*, relationship, with his *rebbe* - forever - even after he has left the *Bais Ha'Midrash*. After all, he is his child.

There is no doubt that this relationship should be reciprocal. As the *rebbe* views the student as his child, the student should regard the *rebbe* like a father. It is interesting that we often find that a *rebbe* loves his students as a father loves a child, but this feeling is not always reciprocated. Children do not always demonstrate the same affection for parents as they themselves receive. Sometimes it takes years for a student, like a child, to fully appreciate all that his *rebbe*/parent has done for him.