

These are the offspring of Aharon and Moshe... Nadav and Avihu, Elazar and Isamar. (3:1,2)

Rashi notes that the *pasuk* begins by informing us who the offspring of Moshe *Rabbeinu* and Aharon *HaKohen* were, but, in the end, only states the names of Aharon's sons. What happened to Moshe's sons? *Rashi* quotes the *Talmud Sanhedrin* 19a, asserting that the Torah is teaching us that Aharon's sons were considered Moshe's sons, because Moshe was their *Rebbe*: "Whoever teaches his friend's son Torah, it is considered as if he caused his birth." In other words, the individual who catalyzes a person's spiritual development is likewise a partner in his physical life. Simply, we might say that a life without the spirit, a life that is totally physical, devoid of spirituality, is no life. It is mere existence.

In his *Gur Aryeh* commentary, the *Maharal* wonders why the Torah emphasizes Aharon's sons more so than any other Jew. After all, Moshe was the *Rabban shel kol Yisrael* – every Jew's *Rebbe*. He explains that while Moshe certainly taught all Jews, he spent extra time and expended greater devotion to teaching Aharon's sons. This teaches us that the *rebbe* who is *massur b'lev v'nefesh*, devoted heart and soul to the student, to the point that he spends his own time, going beyond the "clock," he is the one who can view his *talmidim*, students, as sons.

Horav Ben Tzion Abba Shaul, zl, was the consummate *mechanech*, educator. A *gaon*, brilliant scholar, to whom Torah study was life itself, he viewed his whole purpose in living for *harbotzas Torah*, the dissemination of Torah knowledge. His students meant everything to him. In 1968, his students arranged a seven-day trip to Netanya. It was not termed a vacation; rather, it was a rejuvenation period, during which they would of course learn, but in a more relaxed venue. *Rav Ben Tzion* asked them, "Is everyone going on the trip?" (If they were all going to leave, he could maintain a relaxed schedule and have more time for personal Torah study.) One student raised his hand, "I must remain behind for personal reasons." (Apparently, his mother would be home alone, which made the student uncomfortable.) "If this is the case," *Rav Ben Tzion* declared, "then I will give my regular daily (three-hour) *shiur*, lecture. If one student remains, then I will teach!" During the next seven-days, when the *Rosh Yeshivah* could have spent time at home learning, he instead maintained his regular schedule to study with one student. This is what is meant by devotion to one's students. He saw every one of his *talmidim* as *banim*, sons.