

The Torah that Moshe commanded us is the heritage of the congregation of Yaakov. (33:4)

Chazal (Succah 42a) “When a *katan*, young child, knows how to speak, his father teaches him Torah. What does he teach him? [Obviously, this is a child at the beginning of his cognitive development, when he is just learning to speak.] *Rav Hamnuna* says: (He teaches him) *Torah tzivah lanu Moshe, morashah kehillas Yaakov.*” We derive from here that a child’s inaugural connection with the Torah should be, the awareness that it is a *yerushah*, heritage, which belongs to all the congregation of *Yaakov*. As long as one is counted as a member of *kehillas Yaakov*, the Torah is his heritage.

Horav Moshe Shternbuch, Shlita, posits that herein lies the foundation of *Torah chinuch*. The Torah is our bequest from Hashem. It is bequeathed from father to son, *rebbe* to *talmid*, as a *yerushah*, inheritance, which we/they received from Hashem. A young child says words. He parrots the words he hears, often without understanding their meaning and, certainly, their depth. As such, he follows the example of the adults with whom he comes in contact – his parents and earliest *rebbeim*. It is for this reason that *Rav Shternbuch* strongly suggests that the primary – and perhaps only – example he has be his father, thus continuing the *morashah*, heritage, of his family and upbringing. The *pasuk*, *Torah tzivah lanu Moshe*, is the principle which underscores the basic cornerstone of Torah.

Understandably, the orientation of our children’s *chinuch* should be a link with past generations. While we may introduce innovative methods, the basic philosophy of Torah transmission, heralding back to previous generations, is the overriding pedagogical tool which we employ. The lessons we teach must be pristine in the sense that the curriculum and spiritual level and demeanor of its educators remain unchanged.