

Chinuch Lessons From The Parsha by Benzion Sorotzkin Quotes

One can't say, adds Rav Boruch Sorotzkin, that Noach didn't have the power of influence and that's why he didn't try to influence them. Since he was successful in raising his own children, he certainly would have been able to influence others. After all, it is more difficult to successfully educate one's own children than the children of others. The reason for this, adds Rav Boruch, is because "every person, even a great person, has flaws. But he only exhibits these flaws to his family members and not to strangers." If Noach successfully raised his own children he certainly could have had great success in influencing the society at large...This insight from my uncle helps explain the phenomenon of children from "good homes" going off the derech and the like, which often leads people to conclude that this tragic occurrence could not possibly be the result of inadequacies in their parenting. From my uncle's explanation we can understand that what a child's experiences with his parents may be very different from what others experience.¹

He relates that the Radva"z was asked about a father who lost a son and didn't cry – perhaps this is indicative of a person with exemplary *emunah*. The Radva"z responded that, in fact, it is indicative of a cruel and cold hearted person.²

The direct connection between alienation from parents and alienation from Hashem is starkly highlighted by Rav Mattisyahu Salomon, the Lakewood mashgiach, who writes: When [parents told their children] that the Ribono Shel Olam is our Father in Heaven, what did this mean to them? What kinds of images were formed in their minds? Do they think of the Ribono Shel Olam as someone who comes into the house and screams at everyone and terrifies everyone.... How can you expect your children to have a positive conception of their Father in Heaven if you didn't set a good example for them?³

Likewise, Rav Shmuel Auerbach describes how the yetzer horah undermines a person's spirituality by getting him to feel that; "Nothing will ever become of me, and what am I worth anyways." Rav Auerbach cites an amazing statement of the Yavetz who gave the following

¹ 7

² 9

³ 16-17

explanation for not including a discussion on ענווה) humility) in his discourse on middos, “because [exaggerated] humility has destroyed many people.”⁴

While the laws of the Torah are the same for everyone, the understanding of the Torah is unique to each individual since no two people are exactly alike. Elsewhere, Rav Brodie warns that a person shouldn't abandon his unique style because that will be the beginning of his downfall...Rav Wolbe reinforces this point in a dramatic manner: “If someone considers his uniqueness he should shudder: There is no one else in the whole world who is exactly like him. In fact, from the creation of the world until the end of time there never was nor ever will be someone exactly like him. It is for this reason that a person should feel that the whole world was created for him. Because of his uniqueness he has a unique task in this world that no one else can fulfill in his stead.”⁵

Read online: <https://drsorotzkin.com/chinuch-lessons-from-the-parsha/>

Note: If you read online you can play it out loud with text-to-speech software such as Natural Reader. Until an audiobook is made, this may be the best option for many people.

⁴ 63

⁵ 65-66