

Perek 3 continues to list the children and families which comprised the nation during the travels in the desert. The beginning of the perek opens with naming the children of the two leaders during this time period.

וְאֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדֹת אַהֲרֹן וּמֹשֶׁה בְּיוֹם דִּבֶּר יְהוָה אֶת מֹשֶׁה בְּהַר סִינַי: וְאֵלֶּה שְׁמוֹת בְּנֵי אַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן | נָדָב וָאֶבְיָהוּא אֶלְעָזָר וְאִיתָמָר:

These are the descendants of Moses and Aaron on the day that the Lord spoke to Moses at Mount Sinai. These are the names of the sons of Aaron: Nadab the firstborn Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.

Did you notice anything missing? The *pasuk* states that the following are the children of Aharon and Moshe, but only Aharon's children are mentioned. Where are the children of Moshe mentioned? Noticing this omission, Rashi writes:

וְאֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדֹת אַהֲרֹן וּמֹשֶׁה: וְאֵינוּ מְזָכִיר אֶלָּא בְנֵי אַהֲרֹן. וְנִקְרְאוּ תּוֹלְדוֹת מֹשֶׁה, לְפִי שֶׁלִּמְדֵּן תּוֹרָה. מִלְּמַד שְׂכָל הַמְּלַמֵּד אֶת בֶּן חֲבִירוֹ תּוֹרָה, מַעֲלָה עָלָיו הַכְּתוּב כְּאִלּוּ יָלְדוֹ:

These are the descendants of Moses and Aaron: Yet only the sons of Aaron are mentioned. However, they are considered descendants of Moses because he taught them Torah. This teaches us that whoever teaches Torah to the son of his fellow man, Scripture regards it as if he had begotten him.

According to Rashi, Moshe's descendants are also included in this *pasuk*. Moshe and Aharon share the same offspring. Since Moshe taught Aharon's children Torah, it is as if Moshe himself had fathered them.

But what does Rashi mean by "it is as if Moshe himself had begotten them"? Aharon is the biological father. Did Moshe replace Aharon as the father? Does Moshe now pay the bills for Aharon's children? Alternatively, are Moshe and Aharon both considered fathers?

This Sunday on Shavuot, we are going to read the 10 commandments, where we are exhorted to honor our parents. Our parents brought us into this world, they gave us life in this physical environment, and they deserve honor from their children. One reason, then, for giving someone *kavod* is because that person provides us with life in this world.

However, there is another existence that we are all going to experience after our time on this world is finished. In the next world, in עוֹלָם הַבָּא, we will live again in a spiritual environment. Rashi is telling us that we have people -- parents -- who give us life in this world, and other people -- teachers -- who give us life in the next world. Aharon is the biological father, and he brought his children into their physical existence in עוֹלָם הַזֶּה. Moshe, who was their teacher of Torah, brought Aharon's children into their spiritual world existence. It is as if he also gave birth to them in order for them to live in עוֹלָם הַבָּא.

This relationship between teacher and student is even deeper than the relationship between child and biological parent. The Kitzur Shulchan Aruch states:

חייב אדם בכבוד רבו ויראתו יותר מבשל אביו, כי אביו הביאו לחיי העולם הזה, ורבו מביאו לחיי העולם הבא
*A person is obliged to honor his Rabbi/teacher and fear him more than he does his father.
For his father brought him into this world and his Rabbi/teacher brings him into the world to come.*

An opinion quoted by Rabbi Yosi in Baba Metzia goes so far to say:

רבי יוסי אומר אפילו לא האיר עיניו אלא במשנה אחת זה הוא רבו
that a teacher is defined as someone who illuminated another even to only one teaching.

As we prepare for Shavuot and Matan Torah, we need to be mindful of the people we are obligated to accord *kavod*. Both biological and spiritual progenitors are deserving of our *kavod*, because of the worlds to which they provide us access and our ability to exist in both those realms.