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FROM THE SHIURIM OF

**HARAV YISROEL BROG** שליט"א

ROSH HAYESHIVA, YESHIVAS TIFERES AVIGDOR  
GRANDSON OF HARAV HAGAON AVIGDOR MILLER, ZT"l

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## PLAYING WITH FIRE

The subject we're going to discuss today is one that I wish I didn't have to address. But sadly, I have no choice, and this subject must be addressed. The subject of our discussion is something that is too often played around with and not taken seriously. People don't realize that they're playing with fire. Actually, it's much, much worse than playing with fire. I've been asked numerous times by doctors, "What is the reason that *frum* people have so many illnesses?" There is a disproportionate presence of *frum* Yidden in major hospitals receiving care from top doctors. The doctors who ask me about this, always wonder: "What's the *pshat*? Is it the potato *kugel*? Maybe they don't eat healthy foods. Maybe the mayonnaise, maybe *yeshivishe* foods." I'm sure some *chachamim* from Chelm can come up with brilliant theories, but I'm going to share with you something from today's *parshah* that is very telling and relevant. Please understand that I am not saying it's the **only** factor, but nonetheless, it's a tremendously contributing factor.

Let's begin. When the Yidden came to Eretz Yisrael, they came upon two big mountains. *Har Grizim* and *Har Eivel*. Hashem told them to make a tremendous ceremony. Half of the *Shevatim* got up on one mountain, and they said a bunch of *brachos*. The other half got up on the other mountain, and they gave terrible *klalos*. One of the *klalos* they said was, ארור מקלה אביו ואמו, "cursed is the one who belittles his father or his mother," ואמר כל העם אמן, "and all the people shall said 'Amen'" (Devarim 27:16).

Now first, you have to understand *pshat* in this *pasuk*. One might say the *pshat* is you're getting a *klalah* for not doing *kibud av ve'eim*. *Kibud av ve'eim* is one of the *aseres hadibros* and maybe we see here a severe warning of being *arur*, or being cursed, if you don't do *kibud av ve'eim*. But that's not *pshat*. Every one of these curses are independent *isurim*. It's talking about somebody who's *mechabed* his parents, he serves them, and gives them what they need, but he belittles them in the process. When you belittle your father or your mother, you earn yourself a terrible *klalah*, where the whole of Klal Yisrael signed off on this *klalah*. This is something you need to stop and think about because when you have a status of

an *arur* from Hashem, that means you have a status of *nidui* from Hashem: you're excommunicated by Hashem. And then one thing is guaranteed: Expect *tzaros raos verabos*. That's what you should expect, *rachmana litzlan*. That's what's coming. And no one wants that. So run away from this and be *mesaken* this terrible *chet*. I don't care what excuse you have.

## RESPECTING ALL TYPES OF PARENTS

I'm going to share with you something from the *Sefer Chareidim*.<sup>1</sup> The *Sefer Chareidim* (9:35) says that if a person is *mevazeh* (denigrates) his mother or his father *belibo*, in his heart, the *pasuk* says about him: ארור מקלה אביו ואמו. You hear that? The guy could be doing everything his parents say. He takes out the garbage. He washes dishes. He learns. He does everything! But he gets the above curse from the Torah because he belittles them in his heart.

The *Sefer Chareidim* relates an amazing story that happened during his lifetime. There was a fellow who took care of his older mother. He supported her. He fed her. He paid attention to her needs. But in his eyes, he looked down at her. His mother was nothing to be proud of. He looked down at her and was upset with her. You know why he felt that way? Because after his father died, his mother went and got remarried to a second man, and he couldn't take that.

One time, this man was walking near the sea, and he was killed and thrown into the *yam*. The *Yidden* sent out search parties to find him, and eventually they found him on the shore, where the tide had washed him up. They noticed that one of his eyes was poked out by ravens. The *Sefer Chareidim* says that was a fulfillment of a *pasuk* Mishlei (30:17), which says: עין תלעג לאב ותבוז ליקהת אם, if a person has an eye that mocks his father and shames his mother, יקררה ערבי נהל, ravens will come and poke it out. You hear that? If a person is *mevazeh* his father or mother, his eye is going to get poked out by a

<sup>1</sup> כבוד את אביו ואת אמו (שמות כ', י"ב: דברים ה', ט"ז), מצינו כבוד בלב, דכתיב (תהלים ט"ו, א') ה' מי גזר באהלך וכו' נבזה בעיניו נמאס, הינו עיני השכל, שיחשב האדם בלבו כי הוא נבזה ומאוס ונקלה, וסיפיה דקרא ואת יראי ה' וכד. ואם הכבוד בדברים ובמעשה בלבד ולא בלב, הרי משה אותם לו שהם נבזים ומאוסים בעיניו כמוהו רק מקבד אותם בפה מפני שהם יתברר צוה, אלא על קרח הכי קאמר ואת יראי ה' וכד בעיניו שידמה בלבו שהם גדולים ונקבדי ארץ שזהו עקר כבודם ומתוך כך ודאי יכבדם בדבור ובמעשה. ועל המבזה אביו או אמו בלב, או בדברים או במעשה שסות דבריהם או יושב במקום המיוחד להם וליזא-בזה, נאמר (דברים כ"ז, ט"ז) ארור מקלה אביו ואמו, ופרשו שאינו לשון קלה אלא לשון בזיון, ואשכחון בזיון בלב, דכתיב ותבז לו בלבה, ונקלותי עוד מזאת והייתי שפל בעיני (שמואל ב' ו', ט"ז). וכתוב ותקל גברתה בעיניך (בראשית ט"ז, ד'). ועל זה אמר שלמה (משלי ל', י"ז) עין תלעג לאב ותבז ליקהת אם יקררה עורבי נחל ויאכלוך בני נשר. ומעשה היה בימינו באיש שהיה זן את אמו, רק שהיתה קלה ובזויה בעיניו לפי שנשאה לאיש אחרי מות אביו, והאיש הזה הלך דרך ים ונהרג והשלך לים וחפשו היהודים לבקשו ומצאוהו על שפת הים ועין אחת מנקרת שנקרה העורבים, הרי לך בכבוד האב, וכו'\*\*. [\*\* הגה"ה: רבנו מפרש, עין תלעג, בלב, וגם המבזה בלב קאי בארור, ועין רמב"ם פרק ה' מפרים הלכה ט"ו דכתב דארור קאי על המבזה אפילו בדברים או אפילו ברמיזה, ולא הזכיר בלב, וכן הרדב"ז שם מבאר עין תלעג, ברמינה. והשלתון ערוך יורה"דעה סימן רמ"א סעיף ו' העתיק גס"ן לשון הרמב"ם. אמנם הברפי יוסף (שירי' ברכה סימן רמ"א) כתב דבכלל רמיזה גם אם מבזה בלב כמו שכתב הח"ד"ם וכן כתב בספרו לב דוד פרק י"ט, וכן כתב הב"ח (ש"ב פרשת שופטים אות כ"ג) ומסיים ועל זה ידוע כל הדו"י"ם. דכמו לענין כבוד ח"ב לכתבם גם בלב כמו שכתב רבנו כאן [וכן כתב הח"י אדם קלל ס"ז סוף סעיף א' וסעיף ג'] כן גם לענין ארור, ועין לקמן פרק כ"ד אות כ"ב, ועין באורים ישראלים].

raven. I don't know how you feel about that, but let me tell you, it's not very pleasant.

In our society, where we grow up, it's very common for us to shame and belittle our parents. I've told many people that the *emes* is that the chances of your mother being smart are not high. Rav Chaim Soloveitchik once asked a fellow, "Do you think most people are smart or dumb?" Rav Chaim told him, "Most people are dumb. What's the *ra'ayah*? Because when you see a smart person, everybody says, 'Oh, that's a smart person.'" If most people were smart, they wouldn't say anything.

I have asked many people who criticize Torah and *Chazal*: "Do you think you're smart?" "Yes." "Well, I have some news for you. You're not. Who said you're smart? Can you show me one smart person who said you're smart? Are you recognized in any field as being smart? Then maybe we can have a conversation." I once met a guy, not a *frum* guy, who made eighteen patents. He discovered eighteen things. One of his big ones was bulletproof glass. He told me he's smart. I said, "You think you're smart, but the *emes* is you're very dumb because you don't know Hashem. You're not smart at all."

A similar story happened with Rav Gifter. A fellow showed up once for *Ma'ariv* on Motzei Shabbos wearing a white suit. I remember he had to say *kaddish*. He sat on my bench. I walked over to him after *Ma'ariv*. I said, "*Gut voch*. Who are you? Where were you the whole of Shabbos?" He said, "I'm staying in the hotel at the bottom of the hill. They're having a Mensa conference." I said, "What is that?" "You never heard of Mensa?" I said, "I never heard of Mensa." He said, "Mensa stands for geniuses. It's a group of people who are legal geniuses." I said, "Are you a genius? I'm a genius." "Pssh. That's very nice." I said, "I would like you to meet the head rabbi, Rabbi Gifter. He's also a genius." So he accompanied me to Rav Gifter, who had a walker. Rav Gifter greeted him, "A *gutte voch*." He said to the man, "Who are you?" I said, "Uncle, this man is from Mensa." He said, "What is that?" I told him, "It's an organization for geniuses. He's a certified genius." Rav Gifter said, "You're a genius?" He said, "Yes." He said, "Sir, do you know of G-d?" He said, "I have my doubts." Rav Gifter went like this: He picked up one hand from his walker and he said, "Ach, *zeit gezondt*, but you're no genius. You're far from a genius. By us, every three-year-old knows about Hashem. A *gutte voch*." *Moradig*.

Most people are stupid like anything. So, the chances of your parents being stupid are high. It's a majority. The average person in the world is *pashut*. It doesn't mean they're not nice. It doesn't

mean they're not good people. But your chance of finding something to belittle them with is far from slim. Are most people Rav Chatzkel's *ba'alei mussar*? Are they Rav Yerucham Levovitz's? No. Chafetz Chaim? No. They're *anashim peshutim meod*. Even if they learn a little Torah, they're usually human beings with weaknesses and foibles. They can make mistakes. They can *potch* you too much. They can get angry too much. Or they don't do this or that enough. Whatever you've got against them.

## DON'T EVEN ROLL YOUR EYES

The Torah says, if you are *mevazeh* your mother or your father, you're an *arur*. You're a cursed man. Rashi says "*makleh aviv*" means simply to be *mezalzel*. All you're doing is belittling them. Like ונקלה אחיך לעיניך. How many people have told their mothers, "Ma, why don't you stop talking? You don't know what you're talking about." How many people have said that? Boatloads of people. You want to know why the hospitals are full? That's why. At least, that's one of the reasons. Because you have an *arur* upon you, you're carrying the worst baggage possible. We're not talking about somebody who's a *mechutzaf*. We're talking about someone who doesn't hold his parents in high regard. That's all. He treats them in an irreverent manner.

The Rambam writes: ולא על הכאה ולא על הקללה בלבד הקפידה תורה, the Torah is *makpid* not only on somebody who hits or curses his father or mother, אלא אף על הבזיון, the Torah is *makpid* also on belittling them, שכל המבזה אביו או אמו אפילו בדברים ואפילו ברמיזה הרי זה ארור, *Zugt* the Rambam, even if he is *mevazeh* with a *remez*, with just a hint, he is *arur*. Here is a guy whose father is talking - I've seen this hundreds of times in my life - and the father sounds like a simpleton. He's talking and *shtus* is coming out. I'm sitting there and smiling. "I hear. I hear. I hear." And the son is sitting next to them, rolling his eyes all around his head like, "Oh no. I feel bad for you. You've got to deal with my father. You've got to hear my mother's stupidity. You've got to listen to this *klutz* talk." It happens all the time, I am telling you! Just rolling the eyes - *nu*, ארור מקלה אביו ואמו.<sup>2</sup>

## DISASTROUS EXAMPLE: NOT TALKING ANYMORE

Today, we live in a society where, if my father doesn't treat me in the way I want to be treated, I don't have to respect him. Say a guy wants to go to Eretz Yisrael in the summer. *Nebach*, the poor family has twelve kids, and this guy decides he wants to fly to Eretz

<sup>2</sup> מי שנתחבב שבועה לבנו כך ראינו בו תמיד שאינו משביעו בשבועת האלה. שהרי זה בא לקללת אביו. אלא משביעו שבועה שאין בה אלה. וכבר בארנו שהאב שהרג את בנו אין אחד מאחיו של נהרג נעשה גואל הדם. ולא על הכאה ולא על הקללה בלבד הקפידה תורה אלא אף על הבזיון. שכל המבזה אביו או אמו אפילו בדברים ואפילו ברמיזה הרי זה ארור מפי הגבורה. שצאמר (דברים כז טז) "ארור מקלה אביו ואמו". והרי הוא אומר (משלי ל ז) "עין תלעג לאב ותבד ליקהת אם" וגו'. ויש לבית דין להפוט על זה מפת מרדות ולענש כפי מה שיראו (משנה תורה, הלכות ממרים ה')

Yisrael. His mother tells him, “We can’t afford it.” He answers back, “Oh, you’re so cheap! You’re just thinking about yourself. You do whatever you want for yourself. You don’t do anything for the kids. Everybody goes to Eretz Yisrael.” How many is it really? Who’s everybody? Show me the ‘everybody.’ One rich kid goes to Eretz Yisrael. Two rich kids. You know how many calls I got this year from people who told me, “I have to send my kids to Eretz Yisrael; if I don’t, I’m finished.” The parents have to spend who knows what on the lousy kid, a spoiled brat who gives them very little *nachas*! They have to spend two or three thousand dollars for a couple of weeks in a camp. That’s crazy. They can’t afford it, but the kid threatens them. “Okay, I’m going to go off the *derech*.” “You’re going to go off the *derech*? Oh boy, oh no no no.” The kid calls the principal and lays it all out in front of him. “Send him to therapy,” the principal says to the father.

So the boy goes to therapy. The therapist says, “Tell me, son, what’s your problem?” “My parents. They don’t love me. They don’t give me what everybody else gets.” The therapist says: “I’m going to give you a suggestion. Isolate them. If I were you, I would not talk to your parents anymore.”

I’m telling you, there’s got to be a special Gehinom upstairs for therapists and psychologists like that. My grandfather used to say this. Instead of doing what Aharon Hakohen did and being *meivi shalom bein adam lechaveiro* and making peace, restoring peace, these psychologists do just the opposite. They say, “You know what? Don’t have any *shaychus* with your parents! Don’t talk to them!” The son comes home, “I’m not talking to you.” The mother says, “What happened to you? What happened at the therapist?” The mother calls the therapist and says, “Excuse me, could you tell me what happened to my son?” “I’m sorry. Legally, I’m not allowed to talk to you; I can’t explain to you.” The mother says, “Excuse me, I paid \$300 for you to listen to my son for 45 minutes. You can’t tell me what’s going on?!” “I’m not allowed. You’ve got to get permission from your son.” So the mother thinks the world is going crazy. She goes to her son, “Son, can you tell the doctor that he can talk to me?” He says, “I’ll think about it.”

I’m telling you this is one of the biggest, new *machalos* in our generation. Parents have been cut off and disconnected from their kids because their children decided to do that. These kids are *arurim*, ר”ל. I wish they weren’t. But the Torah says they’re ארור מקלה ארור ואמו אביו ואמו. It makes no difference - your mother or your father. If you *mezalzel* them, you’re going to pay a price you can’t imagine! You can’t avoid this. There’s no way to get around this *arur*.

I don't care if your parents didn't give you as many hugs as you wanted, when you were younger. I've heard this from too many kids. "Why don't you talk to your parents?" "You know, my parents never gave me hugs." I say, "I feel terrible for you. Come here. I'll give you a hug." That doesn't allow you to belittle your parents or stop talking to them. It doesn't say anywhere *ויחבק כל אחד מבני ובנותיו*. It's not one of the commandments in the Torah. There are some people who are warmer by nature. Some people aren't. My grandfather wasn't the huggy, kissy type of grandfather. I tried to get some kisses out of him. It wasn't his thing. My Rebbi wasn't a hugs and kisses kind of person. In Brisk, they weren't like that. That wasn't their nature. I'm sure some psychiatrists could write a whole thesis on them and tell them how bad their kids will turn out. It's amazing, though: Their kids are like super kids. Each one of them a bigger *tzaddik*, a bigger *lamdan*. It's crazy. It's not like they have only one kid. They've got families of kids. They're not mamby-pamby at all. I was convinced, watching them bring up their kids, that their kids were going to be toast. That it would *mamash* be the end. But it wasn't. These kids are *yarei shamayim*. They have *middos tovos*. It's just amazing to me! I've spoken to them for hours. I've tried to plumb this family, that family, to find out how it works. I couldn't figure it out.

I'm telling you, the pain that you cause a parent when you don't talk to him is *geferlach*. Sometimes people can't even tell why they ended the relationship. I've asked people, "Why don't you talk to your parents?" You know what they answer? "To tell you the truth, I don't remember anymore." I said, "What?!" "I don't remember anymore." I said, "Did they molest you? Did your father beat you with a belt day and night? No? What did he do to you? He didn't buy you the bike that you wanted? That's why you forgot because you realize what kind of *shoteh* you are." And the girls? I hear the same thing from them over and over. You don't go against your parents, even if there's a great reason to do that! *ארור מקלה אביו ואמו*

### THE PSAK OF (FINANCIAL) SELF DEFENSE

Maybe, maybe in some cases, if your father or mother is *mamash* destroying your life – and I'm talking about seriously, doing you very great wrong - then, maybe, some *rav* will tell you that you could exhibit some "self-defense."

I told you a story last week of a father who robbed his son. A young man bought a house, and his father said, "Let me live in the house right now. I'll pay the mortgage." The mortgage was less than what the rent would have been. He said, "When you have to move into the house, I'll move out of the house." A few years go by, and the son tells him, "Pops, I've got to move into the house." The father says, "Okay, you've got to pay me \$150,000." Now, I wanted

to squeeze that father's neck and say, "What kind of chutzpah is that?! Your son let you live in the house. He could have gotten more rent out of that house. You want \$150,000 because you have to buy another house now? Why should he pay for it? You pay for it. You have your own business. You have your own thing."

The son called me up. I said, "Ask your father if he's willing to go for arbitration." No. He's not willing. There was nothing to talk about. Is the guy rational? No. When it comes to money, people lose their minds. They lose their *seichel*. They go crazy. You know what I told the kid? "Bargain him down to 100k, from 150k. Bargain him down."

About three people called me. "What kind of advice is that?" I said, "That's *Shulchan Aruch's* advice. In the *Shulchan Aruch* it says, if your father owes you money and you could be *tovea* in *din*, you can go to *beis din*, but השמר ושמר נפשך. Watch yourself." It's a very dangerous slope to go down. You'll live a lot better off if you keep quiet. It's your father, after all. Not because of *hakaras hatov*, but because Hashem told you you have to be *mechabed* your father and your mother.<sup>3</sup>

*Ai*, they're tough people. They have their *meshugas*. Maybe a father told his son he can't have his smartphone, and the kid blew up. It happens. I know of stories like that. There was a father who said, "In my house, you're not having a smartphone." The guy snuck a smartphone in and the father caught him playing on it on Shabbos. The father asked me, "Should I have given him a smartphone?" "No." What kind of *meshugas* is this? You thought you'd be a bigger *frum Yid* if you'd give him a smartphone? Are you crazy?

Rav Chaim Kanievsky says that one of the reasons so many kids are going off the *derech* is because of this reason. This is the *arur*. People are not listening to what Hashem has to say. They're *mevazeh* their parents. So it's *middah keneged middah*, Rav Chaim says. He writes this in *Orchos Yosher*.

### SIBLING RIVALRY AND OTHER THINGS THAT HURT PARENTS

Many times, two brothers fight with each other. I'm talking about adults, not little kids. It causes the parents tremendous pain to watch their children fight. It's usually over money, something stupid. The *Yalkut Meam Loez* in this week's *parshah* brings down from Rabeinu Yonah that when the brothers argue with each other and they hate one another, they cause tremendous *tza'ar* to their parents and they transgress ארור מקלה אביו ואמו.

<sup>3</sup> מי שנתייב שבועה כו'. בתשובת הגאונים סי' ש' שאלה אם יכול הבן לתבוע מאביו. תשובה לא אשכחן ראייה הפקיע תביעתו של בן שלא להשביע אביו אלא רגילין ב"ד לומר לבן הקנה תביעתך לאחר שלא תבא לידי מקלל אביו וכי הווייהו לאחר לא אתי הבן להאי מילתא עכ"ל (טורי זהב על שולחן ערוך יורה דעה רמ"א)

Now, most of us are very short-sighted, but I've been watching events unfold twenty years down the road. I've seen Hashem come down upon people unbelievably, as if there's no *rachmanus* left. Hashem is saying, "Listen. You've got an *arur*. Didn't I warn you?" This was done in the presence of *gantz Klal Yisrael*. How come you didn't *chap*?

I've gotten calls from many parents. "Could you possibly reach out to my children? They're mad for some reason." These parents ask their children, "What did we do wrong?" You know what the child says? "I'm not telling you. You have to figure it out." Do you know what that means? That they did nothing wrong. Or it's so petty that they can't say it. I saw parents beseech their kids. They're ready to accept whatever accusation the child makes. "I accept whatever you say. I abused you. I did this to you. I did that. Just be *mochel* me. Let's go *vaiter* in life." No. They're not willing to do this. ארור מקלה אביו ואמו.

When I meet kids like that, I would love to shake them and say, "Wake up. You don't know what *tzaros* are going to come down your pipe. You can't live independently." The Rambam says that *kibud av ve'eim* is a *dugma* of the *kavod* that we must have for Hashem. It doesn't say the details of *kibud av ve'eim* in the Torah. You know why? Because it's supposed to copy the *kavod* that you have for Hashem. Hashem created us, says the Ramban (Shemos 20:12) and your father created you.<sup>4</sup> He played a role in your *yetzirah*. He played a role in your life, similar to that of the Ribono Shel Olam. And if you're *mevazeh* your father, that means you would do that to the Ribono Shel Olam too. This is not called just playing with fire. You want to play with fire? Play with fire. Believe me, playing with fire is much less severe than this. If you play with fire, you'll get a little burned by it. That's it.

But don't ever be *mevazeh* your father or your mother. I don't care what they didn't give you. I don't care what they said to you. Whether they were supposed to say it, or they were not supposed to say it, it's none of your business. It's their business. It's between them and Hashem. They didn't say it the right way. They didn't talk nicely to you. They didn't make you feel loved. They didn't make you feel special. They tell you the *emes* in your face and you don't want to hear it. You can't hear *tochachah*. So you talk back and then you cut off, and you think you'll be better off. You're not.

<sup>4</sup> כבוד את אביו הנה השלים כל מה שאנו חייבין בדברי הבורא בעצמו ובקבדו, וחסר לצוות אותנו בעניני הנבראים, והתחיל מן האב שהוא לתולדותיו כענין בורא משתתף ביצירה, כי השם אבינו הראשון, והמוליד אבינו האחרון, ולכך אמר במשנה תורה (דברים ה טז) כאשר צויתך בקבדו כן אנכי מצוך בקבד המשתתף עמי ביצירתך. ולא פרש הכתוב בקבד, שהוא נלמד מן הקבד הנאמר למעלה באב הראשון; ויתברר, שייזדך בו שהוא אביו ולא יכפר בו לאמר על אדם אחר שהוא אביו, ולא יעבדנו כבן לירשתו, או לענין אחר שיצפה ממנו, ולא ישא שם אביו וישבע בחיי אביו לישא ולשקר. וינסנו בכלל הקבד דברים אחרים, כי בכל קבדו נצטוונו, ומפרשים הם בדברי רבותינו (קדושין לא:), וכבר אמרו (שם ל:) שהקש כפודו לכתוב המקום: וכאשר המצוה הזאת היא בתחתונים, כן נתן שכרה באריות: מים בארץ אשר יתן לנו. ועל דעת רבותינו (קדושין טז:): ענין הכתוב למען יארכו: מירך על האדמה, יבטיח כי במצוה הזאת יהיו כל מותינו ארפים, כי ימלא השם: מינו בעולם הזה, ויהיו ארפים בעולם הבא שפלו ארף, והתיהו: ושיבתנו לעד על האדמה הטובה שיתן לנו, ובמשנה תורה (דברים ה טז) פרש "למען יארכו: מירך ולמען יטב לך על האדמה", והנה הם שתי הבטחות.

I'm watching the lives of people like that unfold. I ask people, "Tell me what's going on with your kids? Did it hit them yet? I know it's going to come." There's no way to avoid it unless they do *teshuvah*. And they never do *teshuvah*. People like this cannot really do *teshuvah*. They're so stuck in their ways, they don't understand the danger, the *sakanas nefashos* they're putting themselves in. Hashem gave you a commandment of stature, one of the Ten Commandments. One of the *aseres hadibros*. *Kabed es avicha ve'es imecha*. It's equated with the biggest *mitzvos*. Do you think you can somehow get away with this and it won't affect you? Is that what you think? One thing I know. You're not wise, you're otherwise.

### ✧ IN SUMMARY ✧

There seems to be a noticeable phenomenon where *frum* people are singled out for illness and tragedy. It is a painful fallout, and one result of a *klallah*. Hashem commands us to respect and uphold our parents. This means both in practice and in our hearts. The opposite of that is belittling and not respecting parents, which brings a *klallah*, as the Torah says, *arur makleh aviv ve'imo*, cursed is a person who denigrates or makes light of his parents' honor. A person could do every action their parent wants from them, but the parent is not honored in the child's heart, and the child violates this mitzvah. That is enough to earn terrible *onashim*. We must respect wise or unwise parents, parents who succeeded as our parents or did not succeed, and we should never, ever give our parents the silent treatment. This week (*bli neder*), I will set in motion a plan whereby I can respect my parents in some way on a regular basis.

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