

FATHERS AND SONS LEARNING TOGETHER

Our eight year old son, who is slated to start learning mishnayos with an expert Rebbi next year, has made himself a summer project to learn the Mishnayos 'ahead of the game.' He asked me to learn next years mesechta with him.

I am a Rebbi myself, and would not want a talmid in my class to do that to me. I think it unfair to the Rebbi, eager to inject his talmidim with enthusiasm his own way. However, I hesitate to stifle such a positive ratzon. I suggested learning something else, but he davka wants to do this. I asked the Rebbi, and he assured me that he is okay with it, but I feel that it might be depriving my son of something wonderful. What does the panel suggest?

You state that it is “unfair to the Rebbi” and then you say that the new Rebbi assured you that he is “okay with it”. You quote your son as saying that he “made himself a summer project to learn Mishnayos to be ahead of the game”. He states that he wants davka to learn the Mesechta that the class will be learning next year.

From all of the above it seems to me that you are in a WIN – WIN – WIN situation.
You WIN with the new Rabbi’s agreement.
You WIN with your son, by helping him with such a lofty summer project.
You WIN with Hakodosh Boruch Hu, for having and raising such a wonderful son.

It seems to me that the only problem you have is with your own ratzon to impart your special brand of “enthusiasm” into your students. I don’t think it is a good idea to project your brand of “enthusiasm” on your son’s Rebbi nor on your son. They both have a different outlook on the learning process.

Just as a bochur prepares the Gemora before shiur, let your son do the same with you. You should find out from the new Rebbi what he stresses, and then you can augment your own preparation with a different angle on the learning of the Mesechta. I know that there is very little comparison between a bochur learning Gemora and haschalas Mishnayos. However the idea is the same no matter what you learn. Shivim ponim la’Torah.

You are blessed with a highly motivated son who has a desire to learn, especially with his father. Take advantage of the wonderful opportunity he has given you - to learn Torah with your son and to develop a relationship with him based on the study of Torah.

Kein Yirbu BeYisrael