

Mishlei 19-18**Parenting – Patience****Key Concepts**

Raising children requires infinite patience. When children resist verbal persuasion, concerned parents may occasionally find it necessary to resort to physical discipline. However, such steps should never be accompanied by any show of anger and should be limited to a child's early years. The child should never have any doubt that he is loved.

If a child resists guidance, a parent should continue with gentle and positive persuasion, no matter how frustrating it may seem. Ultimately the child's future happiness and his destiny depends on the effectiveness of the guidance he received when he was young.

Exploring Mishlei

(יח) יִסֹר בְּנֵךְ כִּי יֵשׁ תִּקְוָה וְאַל הִמִּיתוּ אֶל תִּשְׂא נַפְשְׁךְ:

(18) *Discipline your son, for there is hope;*

let your soul not be burdened by his death.

This proverb teaches a parent never to give up hope no matter how difficult the child appears to be. The parent should always keep in mind the great responsibility that rests on his shoulders. Ultimately the purpose of raising a child is to enable the young person to live a meaningful and useful life, not to provide satisfaction to the parent. Although it is terrible to contemplate there is always the possibility that a failed upbringing can ultimately result in the child's spiritual and physical death.

Learning Mishlei

Discipline your son — יִסֹר בְּנֵךְ,

even using physical force, but only
if it is necessary and appropriate.

Have patience and don't give up,

for there is always hope — כִּי יֵשׁ תִּקְוָה

that the child will be influenced by your efforts.

and so that his ultimate death — וְאֵל הַמִּיתוֹ
will not be a burden upon your soul — אֵל תִּשָּׂא נַפְשְׁךָ.

Additional Insights

[1] Never let your child obtain anything by sobbing and playing on your emotions. The first skill to be mastered by the concerned parent is to be able to bear a child's screaming. (רשר"ה)

[2] Don't punish the child unless there is a reasonable expectation that it will have the desired effect. (הגר"א)