

The Wisdom of our Parents

Rabbi Alexander Davis

שְׁמַע בְּנֵי מוֹסֵר אָבִיךָ וְאֶל־תִּטֹּשׁ תּוֹרַת אִמְךָ
תּוֹרַה צְוֵה־לָנוּ מֹשֶׁה מוֹרָשָׁה קְהֵלֶת יַעֲקֹב

sh'ma b'ni musar avikha, v'al titosh torat imakha
torah, torah tziva lanu moshe,
morasha, morasha k'hilat yaakov

My son, hear the instruction of your father,
and forsake not the Torah of your mother
-Proverbs 1:8

Moses commanded us a Torah,
the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob.
-Deuteronomy 33:4

Rashi, ad loc (11th C., France)

שמע בני- מהשנתן שהקב"ה למשה בכתב ועל פה.

אמן- אומנתך כנסת ישראל. להם דברי סופרים שחדשו והוסיפו ועשו סייגים לתורה.

Hear the instruction- This refers to what God gave Moshe in writing and orally

The Torah of your mother- That is, the Nation of Israel. These are the words of our sages who renewed and added to the Torah and created fences to the Torah.

Ibn Ezra, ad loc. (12th C., Spain)

אמן- כי האשה חכמה מורה הדרך הישרה לבנה

For a women is wise. She teaches her children the upright path.

Kravitz and Olitzky, ad loc.

If you as the reader seek seek wisdom, suggests the writer, then reflect on the lessons that parents give to children- and not just what your own parents may have taught you.