



KINDER TORAH.™

7"01

PARASHAS RE'EH

IT DOESN'T COST YOU ANYTHING

"Please, come in to my house. Would you like a cool drink? How about something to eat?"

"Thank you very much. I am quite thirsty and hungry."

The two men strike up a conversation and the homeowner soon realizes that the other man is in dire straits.

"Please, I would like you to join me this Shabbos. I am having a few guests, and I think that you will enjoy the company."

"Thank you so much."

The guest arrives shortly before Shabbos and finds a house full of guests. Each one enters very hungry, and leaves happy and satisfied.

"Thank you very much, sir. I enjoyed your hospitality tremendously."

"I enjoyed having you as my guest. Please come again. All of the people that you see here are regular guests in my home. You can join us any time that you like."

And so, the man becomes a regular guest at the home of his generous benefactor. One day, the homeowner's son asks his father a pointed question.

"Abba, we have so many guests. Are you ever afraid of not having enough money to feed all of them? You also have to support our family. You never seem to worry about *parnassa* (livelihood) at all. What is your secret?"

The father listens carefully. He sees the opportunity to teach his son an important principle in emunah. And so, he begins telling him a story.

"Avi, at one time I worked for a very big company. I was a member of the salary budget committee. We had the responsibility of deciding how much money to allocate to each department in the company. Once a year, we had a big meeting. We would review each department. Some departments had more employees, some had less. We allocated the yearly budget to each department-head according to the number of employees and their salaries. One who had more employees got more money; one who had fewer employees got less. The budget that the department-head received was

not his money. It was the company's money, put in his custody, to pass on to the employees."

"I see, Abba."

"That is the way it is in our home. We have many poor people who are dependent upon us. They are compared to the employees in the company. We are like the department-head. Hashem commands us to take care of them. 'If there shall be a destitute person among you . . . you shall not harden your heart or close your hand to your destitute brother. Rather, you shall open your hand to him' (Devarim 15:7,8). The Mishna also teaches us, 'The door of your home should be opened wide. You should treat



poor people as if they were members of your family' (Pirkei Avos 1:5). Hashem could not possibly obligate a person to fulfill a mitzvah without giving him the means to do it. From where do we get the money to feed the poor people? Once a year, on Rosh Hashanah, Hashem decides how much *parnassa* our family will receive. The more people that we support, including poor people, the more *parnassa* He must budget to us. The company followed the same principle. The *parnassa* is not our money. He just leaves it in our custody to pass on to those in our 'department.'"

"Abbba, you really have a lot of *emunah*. How do you give so easily and

freely? Do you have any tips to help me strengthen my *emunah*?"

"The Dubner Maggid has a very powerful piece of advice, Avi. We should conduct ourselves as the people did in the times of the Beis HaMikdash. A farmer had to give *maaser* (one tenth of his crop) to the Levi. Once the farmer piled up his produce and smoothed out the pile, it became forbidden to eat. It was called *tevel*. He first needed to set aside the *trumah* for the Kohen and the *maaser* for the Levi. Only then, was he allowed to eat the rest. When the Levi came to take the *maaser*, the farmer had no problem giving it to him. 'Here it is, waiting for you. Please take it.' That is how we should conduct ourselves with our *parnassa*. As soon as we receive money, we should set aside a portion for poor people. Then when they come to ask for money, we have no problem giving. We pull out the *tsedaka* envelope and say, 'Here is your money. Please take it.'"

"That is wonderful, Abba. I hope to reach your level of *emunah*, and also have a house full of guests."

"May Hashem grant your wish, Avi."

Kinderlach . . .

We are all department-heads in Hashem's company. We have a budget. How big is our budget? As big as the number of people that we are responsible for. If we take more people into our department, our budget will grow. Our department is the chessed department and our employees are the poor people that we care for. Why should we close our hand to them? Why should we refuse to give them money from the budget? It is not our money anyway. It does not cost us anything. Rather, we should generously open our hand and give Hashem's money to them.

*Based on a parable of the Dubner Maggid.

Parasha Questions:

- Which meat was forbidden in the midbar, and permitted in Eretz Yisrael? (12:20 and Rashi)
- How do we fulfill the mitzvah of attaching ourselves to Hashem? (Rashi 13:5)
- Why does the Torah repeat the warning, "Do not cook a kid in its mother's milk" three times? (Rashi 14:21)