



Kinder Torah

Dedicated In Memory of Dear Aunt and Uncle
Solomon and Minnie Teller Kidorf z"l



Meaningful Vacation

"Abba, I am really enjoying this family trip. It is so quiet here. And the air is so clean. The whole family is getting a real chance to relax."

"We all work hard during the year, Eli. The children work hard with their school studies and their Torah learning. I work hard at my job, and Imma works hard in the home. Now is our chance for a break and change of scenery. We can enjoy quality family time together."

"It is wonderful."

"We still must be on our toes, however, Eli."

"What do you mean, Abba?"

"There are many opportunities to forget important things when we are on vacation. Have you read this week's parsha yet, Eli?"

"Yes I have Abba."

"Is there a central theme to the parsha?"

"It speaks a lot about reward for doing mitzvos and punishment for forgetting Hashem."

"Precisely, Eli. If you look carefully you will see that remembering Hashem is mentioned five times in the parsha. Guarding His mitzvos is mentioned eight times. Not forgetting Him is mentioned four times. And listening to Him is mentioned twice, culminating in the second paragraph of Kriyas Shema. Besides all of this, there are references to the miracles that Hashem performed for the Jewish people: the *mun*, *Yitzias Mitzraim*, etc.. Mention is also made of our sins (such as *Chet HaEgel*) and the places where we rebelled against Hashem."

"It is almost as if the parsha is speaking to those who are on vacation."

"In what way, Eli?"

"All year long we are in our routines. We have our regular classes, learning schedules, and times of prayer. Our schedule revolves around Hashem, His Torah, and His service. However, when we go on vacation, things are a bit different. We are off schedule. We can find many excuses to cut our learning session short, or forget about it entirely. Our *tefillos* (prayers) can become something that we just squeeze in between other activities. Therefore, we need extra reminders to remember Hashem."

"Excellent, Eli. You read my mind.

Come, let's read the parsha together. Then let's plan out a vacation schedule for our learning and *tefillah*. Let's keep something very important in mind. The world calls this time *chofesh* (time when you are free of any obligations). It is a misnomer. We are always obligated to serve Hashem. During this time we serve Him in different ways, and on a different schedule. In Yeshiva, we call this time *bein ha'zmanim* (inter session). We have a session between sessions. It has its own standards of obligations. We should rest and relax. However, we should do it in a way befitting of a servant of Hashem."

Kinderlach . . .

Vacation is now upon us. This is an opportunity to unwind and gain strength for the upcoming months. However, it must be done in the proper way. Set aside a time for learning every day. Learn whatever you want, and at your own pace. Make sure you pray with a proper minyan in a proper place and time. There is another very important point, kinderlach. Our Torah learning protects us in this time of danger for the Jewish people. We need to keep our defenses strong. Klal Yisrael is depending upon us.

Built To Last

"Did you hear about the terrible tragedy?"

"Oh no."

"Something that was standing in this world for 123 years is no more."

"I'm almost afraid to ask."

"It was magnificent. Hundreds of thousands of man-hours of work went into this project. It was under construction day and night. No effort was spared."

"When was it finished?"

"It was never fully finished until its demise. It was always being constantly improved."

"You've really got my curiosity aroused. Why didn't I hear about this on the news? What was it? Please tell me."

"A tzaddik died. The Torah recounts the death of Aharon HaKohen in this week's parsha (Devarim 10:6)."

"What? The death of a tzaddik? What sort of a construction project is that? I thought that you were

referring to a building, a bridge, or a tunnel."

"A tzaddik is a much bigger 'construction project' than any of those things. Do you know how many hours a tzaddik must learn Torah in order to become a *talmid chochom* (wise man)? Day and night for years and years upon end. Hundreds of thousands of man-hours of work. That dwarfs the amount of work put into any mere building or bridge."

"I never thought about it like that."

"A tzaddik benefits all of those who come to him to learn, seek advice, or spiritual strength. He is called *yesod olam* (pillar of the world). He is a paragon of wisdom, kindness, and good *middos* (character traits). What a magnificent spiritual edifice."

"I'm going to cry. His death was truly a tragedy."

"Let me comfort you. He is still standing. He is more permanent than any bridge or building. Even after his body dies, his soul lives on forever in *olam habbo* (the next world). His teachings will endure even in this world."

"May we all learn from them."

"Amen."

Kinderlach . . .

Let us appreciate tzaddikim while they are still alive. Go to tzaddikim to learn Torah and ask sha'alot (questions). Observe how they conduct themselves in a most regal manner. Ask them for blessings for success in all areas of life. Help them in any way that you can. Appreciate what a truly precious gift Hashem has given to us.

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