



# KINDER TORAH.™

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PARASHAS KI SEITZE

## HONEST

### BUSINESSMAN

**“C**lass, we have a treat for you today. We are bringing in a special guest speaker. He is a man who has merited much blessing from Hashem.”

“Please tell us about him, Rebbe.”

“He is one of the wealthiest men in our city. He owns a chain of stores. He uses his money to do many, many mitzvos. He is also over one hundred years old!”

“Wow!”

*The Rebbe steps outside the classroom. In a moment, he returns. At his side is a very elderly man. He is well dressed, and well groomed. The entire class stands up for him. He slowly walks to the chair in the front of the classroom and sits down. The Rebbe begins to speak.*

“Class, it gives me great pleasure to introduce our special guest to you, Mr. Boruch Yashar. He has taken the time and effort to be with you today.”

“Shalom aleichem, boys. It gives me such *nachas* to see a class of fine young men learning Torah. When I was your age, we did not have this beautiful Talmud Torah. Hashem has been so kind and blessed you with this wonderful opportunity to learn His Holy Torah.”

**“M**r. Yashar, we heard that you own a chain of stores. Can you please tell us how you started out and became so successful?”

“With pleasure, boys. I began as a peddler. I could not afford to buy a store, so I put my goods on a wagon, pushed it through the streets, and sold to people in front of their homes.”

“What did you sell, Mr. Yashar?”

“Foodstuffs. In those days, boys, sugar, oil, beans, grains, and coffee were not available in sealed packages. I went to the open market and bought my wares directly from the wholesalers. I carefully weighed out the merchandise, put it into my sacks, and paid for it. Then I loaded the sacks onto my wagon and went up and down the streets of the town. People would come out with their own bags and jars to buy my goods. I weighed them empty, filled them up, weighed them full, and charged them for what they bought. If I was fortunate enough to sell every-

thing, I went to the market to replenish my supply.”

“Things sure were different in those days, Mr. Yashar.”

“They certainly were, boys. We had no electronic scales or calculators. All merchandise was weighed on old-fashioned balance scales with balance weights. The price was then calculated by hand. This took time and patience.”

“How did you become wealthy, Mr. Yashar?”

**“M**y business gradually grew and grew, until I could afford to buy a store. I opened up a little shop in the center of town. My goods sold well, so I expanded my selection. Pretty soon, the store was overcrowded with goods and customers, so I bought a bigger store. I hired employees to handle the increased volume



of sales. That store also became too small so I bought another one. And so it went.”

“That is fascinating, Mr. Yashar. To what do you attribute your great success?”

“Boys, we all know that *parnassa* is from Hashem. I do not know why He chose to give me so much wealth. However, I am very careful to pray for *parnassa* and thank Him for His kindness in every *Amidah* prayer. There is one particular mitzvah that is actually found in this week’s parasha, which promises rewards of financial success and long life.”

“You have merited both.”

**“T**he mitzvah is in chapter 25, verses 13 to 15. ‘You shall not have in your pouch diverse weights, a large one and a small one. And you shall not have in your house diverse measures, a large one and a small one. A perfect and honest weight shall you have; a perfect and honest measure shall you have; so that your days may be long upon the land

that Hashem your G-d gives you.’ The verse itself states that the mitzvah grants long life. Rashi comments that one who has perfect and honest weights and measures will be blessed with much success.”

**“W**e see that blessing fulfilled in you Mr. Yashar. This is a mitzvah that is not so difficult to understand. An honest businessman does *chassodim* (acts of kindness) for his customers. He provides them with the goods they need at a fair price and honest measure. Hashem sees that this person is helping his fellow Jews. The Almighty has found in him a good business partner whom He can trust. Therefore, He gives the businessman more and more business and many years of life. With these twin blessings, he can help more and more people. Mr. Yashar, your name hints at the reason for your success – Boruch Yashar – blessed is the one who is straight.”

“Thank you Rabbi. I sincerely hope that these wonderful young men will be scrupulously honest in all of their dealings. May Hashem shower you with all of His blessings.”

“Amen!”

*Kinderlach . . .*

*Rav Shimshon Refael Hirsch, in his commentary on the Chumash, relates that honesty in business practices is one of the foundations of Jewish community life. The one who measures and calculates the*

*price of his goods is a dayan (judge). Honesty in judgment brings great rewards, as we have seen. Corruption, and stealing, cholila (Heaven forbid), cause terrible curses. Kinderlach, we will all have business dealings in our lives. Bills need to be paid, items bought and sold, work will need to be done and workers paid. These and all monetary transactions must be done with the ultimate care and honesty. Be an honest judge! Uphold society! Merit great blessings! Boruch Yashar – Blessed is the one who is straight!*

#### Parasha Questions

- May the son of a Mitzri convert marry a Jewish woman? (23:9)
- May you return a slave who escaped to his non-Jewish owner? (23:16,17)
- What is the punishment for kidnapping? (24:7)

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