



A Taste of Torah

On the Money

By: Rabbi Akiva Stern

Money changes people. Money can transform a kind, gentle, giving soul into a hard-hearted, tight-fisted miser. The Torah recognizes the challenge of parting with your beloved green bucks, but clearly teaches that charity is a halachic necessity. The Torah in this week's portion takes pains to warn us of the detriments of misusing money, as well as the fantastic reward of well-spent money. The Torah adjures us to not withhold our giving hand from our impoverished brethren. The term "from your brother, the pauper (Re'eh 15:7)" is used specifically to teach us that if one doesn't use the monetary resources he has as G-d intends - to help provide for the less fortunate - ultimately, he will be "the pauper's brother," inasmuch that he will become impoverished alongside the very man he refused to help support!!

Frightening? Yes! But there is a positive aspect to this medium as well. A few verses later, the Torah states, "Let your heart not feel bad when you give him, for because of this G-d will bless you in all your activities and in all your undertakings (ibid.:9)." The Dubno Maggid (Rabbi Yaakov Kranz; c. 1740-1804) explains: If a man lost \$200 and then later stumbles upon

a different pouch with \$300 in it, he will be quite happy, but he will still wish he never lost the initial \$200, as then he'd have \$500!! Alternately, a different man was carrying a large sack of grain across his property to the silo at the far end. Upon arriving, he was dismayed to discover that the sack was half-empty. A small hole in the bag had allowed a steady flow of grain to spill onto the ground. At first he is unhappy, but, if in the next season, beautiful, healthy grain springs up all over his previously barren landscape, he will invariably be thrilled. He recognizes there was never loss, only investment.

We tend to think we give charity like the first fellow, for we believe that whatever we gave is gone and what blessing we receive is a bonus, but doesn't mitigate the loss. This, the Torah teaches, is not true. The blessing we receive is in direct proportion with what we have given others, much like the second fellow, whose gains are attained solely and directly from his losses. Clearly, the much-trod path of Torah dictates that we have the opportunity to share and help others, and that we should be very cautious as to possible misuse of money.

Stories For The Soul

Keep the Money

When the great Rabbi Yonasan Eibenschutz (1690-1764) was a young man, a Jew in his town, in a foolish act of zealotry, smashed the local church bell, as it was constantly tolling to call the local populace to services. The fellow was jailed and sentenced to death. One of the priests approached Rabbi Eibenschutz and told him that for an exorbitant sum of money, he would enable the prisoner to escape. Rabbi Eibenschutz immediately took the money he had received for his dowry and gave it to the priest.

Sure enough, the Jewish prisoner was able to escape. The church officials investigated, and their suspicions fell upon the priest who had enabled the jail-break. The priest, realizing he had to flee for his life, again approached Rabbi Eibenschutz and gave him the money he had received. "I know I can trust you," he said. "Hold my money until I am able to return for it. If something happens to me, the money is yours."

Several days later, the priest's body was recovered from a river; he had apparently fallen from a bridge in his haste to escape. Rabbi Eibenschutz was very troubled. The fact that the money he had given to save another Jew had been returned indicated that his good deed had been found wanting in Heaven. In a dream, he was informed that the reason for the Heavenly rejection was because he had wanted to give all the money himself, instead of giving others the opportunity to join in the mitzvah!

This week's parsha discusses the obligation of giving charity. An important part of charity is taking the needs of others - all others - into account.

Kollel Happenings

INSIDE THE NUMBERS

In Judaism, numbers are not simply a way to count things. Every number has a special significance. From gematria to Who Knows One? recited at the end of the Passover Seder, discover the world of numbers with Rabbi Moshe Heyman of the Denver Community Kollel. Every other Thursday from 2-3 pm Marathon Investments, 6565 South Dayton St., #1200. For more info, contact rmh@denverkollel.org.

THE M.B. GLASSMAN FOUNDATION GOLD LUNCH & LEARN PROGRAM

The M.B. Glassman Foundation GOLD Program is a division of the Denver Community Kollel dedicated to bringing Torah study to seniors in the community. Don't miss a great Lunch and Learn class on the weekly parsha at the East Side Kosher Deli, 499 S. Elm St. at 12:00 am. There is no charge for the lunch or the learning! Transportation can be arranged. For more information, contact rmf@denverkollel.org or call 303-820-2855.

THE FAR SIDE OF THE TALMUD Aggada, the passages of the Talmud that focuses on Jewish thought and outlook, provides keen insights into human nature, and offers advice on how to live our lives, can be difficult to understand, but the knowledge and wisdom hiding beneath the surface is ample reason to make the effort. Be fascinated and inspired as Rabbi Moshe Heyman presents a whole new dimension in Torah learning based on the classic work *Ain Yaakov*. Tuesdays, 1:45-2:45 pm at the Kollel Torah Center, 9550 Belleview Ave. For more info, contact rmh@denverkollel.org.

Increase Your Jewish IQ

By: Rabbi Yaakov Zions

Last week we asked: On the seven Shabbosos following Tisha B'Av, we read special *haftarahs* known as the *Shiva Dinechemta* (the Seven of Consolation) that focus on consolation after the tragedies of Tisha B'Av. What part of our prayers are based on these seven *haftarahs*?

A: In *Lecha Dodi* that we recite on Friday evening, the six stanzas beginning with the fourth, *mikdash melech*, discuss the rebuilding of the Bais Hamikdash and the return of the Jewish Nation to its past spiritual glory. These stanzas contain at least seven references to verses in these seven *haftarahs*. (Interestingly,

the *haftarah* of Parshas Re'eh is not referenced, while that of Parshas Ki Setze is referenced twice.)

This week's question: : The Written Torah comprises of three section: The Torah (Five Books of Moshe), the *Nevi'im* (Books of the Prophets), and *K'suvim* (Scriptures). When, during the prayers, do we mention a verse or verses from *Nevi'im*, followed by *K'suvim*, and make note of the distinction?

To submit an answer to Rabbi Zions, email ryz@denverkollel.org

Ask the Rabbi

Bargain, Agent or Buyer Gets Discount?

Chaim Bernfeld wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

This is a thing that happened. A friend of mine asked me to post this question on the Internet. He is in the construction business. A third person (a neighbor) found out he was on his way to a certain warehouse to pick up something, so he asked him to pick up something he purchased there and bring it home to him (I think some tiles). He gave my friend \$8000, which was the agreed price for the tiles. When my friend got there (I don't know exactly know why), he started bargaining, and the seller agreed to give him the tiles for \$6000. Question: According to halachah, who gets the \$2000 difference? Thank you.

Dear Chaim Bernfeld,

I asked Rabbi Zalman Nechemia Goldberg, *shlita*, who ruled that the two thousand dollars goes back to your friend's neighbor. The neighbor never relinquished ownership of this money; he merely entrusted it with your friend. Your friend didn't spend it on the tiles, so it goes back to his neighbor.

Now, if things had been slightly different,

your friend would have profited: If, instead of a lower price, your friend had received more tiles, the extra tiles would have been split between your friend and his neighbor.

The difference between these cases is as follows: In the first case, the point in question is the extra money. Since the neighbor is the original owner of the extra money, and he never lost his ownership, he gets it. In the second case, the point in question is the extra tiles. Neither the neighbor nor your friend is the original owner.

So who gets the extra tiles in the second case? Although the intention of the tile-seller was probably to give them to your friend, the Sages decreed that the bonus be split with his neighbor whose business transaction 'caused' the extra tiles.

Sources:

-*Shailot and Teshuvot Shevet HaLevi* 5:214

-*Ketubot* 88b

-*Choshen Mishpat* 183

Reprinted with permission from *Ohr Somayach*, Jerusalem, www.ohr.edu

The Torah Weekly is made possible through a generous grant from the

Harry H. Beren Foundation of Lakewood, NJ, in memory of Harry H. Beren, z"l.

Denver Community Kollel: 1516 Xavier Street, Denver, CO 80204 Tel: 303-820-2855 Fax: 303-820-2806

Email: info@denverkollel.org Web: www.denverkollel.org

To receive Torah Weekly by email, send an email to torah-subscribe@denverkollel.org