

שבת מברכים חודש אלול, ראש חודש ביום ה', ו

This week's parasha highlights the mitzvah of Tzeddaka. Aser Te'aser (14:22), Pato'ach Tiftach Et Yadcha (15:8), etc. We all know the needs of Tzeddaka, so vast and great that no matter how much we do or give, it's never enough. But let me share with you an interesting dimension of Tzeddaka that may not have occurred to us.

The Netziv, R' Naftali Tzvi Hirsh Berlin (1817-1893), The Rosh Yeshiva of Volozhin, once sent two meshulachim (fundraisers) to travel throughout the Jewish world to raise money for the famous, illustrious Yeshiva of Volozhin. The meshulachim were Matmidim, (diligent), talmidim of the Yeshiva who would much rather have remained in their Yeshiva learning Torah, than traveling around collecting Tzeddaka. But what can they do, if this is what they were assigned to do?.

When the two meshulachim came to their first destination they decided that rather than spend time away from learning by traveling great distances for small donations, they would buy a lottery ticket, pray and learn, that HaShem give them the winning number and give the proceeds to the Yeshiva.

After deciding on a number, 277, one meshulach entered the local Beit Midrash to daven and learn Torah that the winning number be 277, while the other meshulach went into town to purchase the ticket. However, the one who was purchasing the ticket decided at the last minute to change the number to 278, which had a more favorable gematria (numerical value) – YEVARACHECHA HASHEM . His friend who did not know of the change continued praying all nightlong -for “277”.

When the winning number was announced in the morning, it was –277. !!!!!!!

The two meshulachim returned to Volozhin completely frustrated and dejected. When they related their experience to their beloved Rosh Yeshiva and asked for an explanation, the Netziv said to them: “My beloved students, do you think that the One who sustains the entire world is incapable of sending support to the Yeshiva in a dignified manner without having to resort to traveling thousands of miles and stopping in hundreds of towns? However, HaShem in His infinite mercy and wisdom wished to give thousands of Jews an opportunity to share in the Torah, which is studied in Volozhin. Your ill-fated plan would have deprived them of this great merit...”

Let's just internalize this message. The Netziv is saying that Giving Tzeddaka is a privilege, giving Tzeddaka is a zechut, and giving Tzeddaka is an honor. Let us be thankful to the collector who gives us this opportunity. And if we have nothing or very little to give let us at least extend a kind word to the collector, apologize for not giving more and wishing him HATZLACHA-success. That is what the Torah meant by stating “Ki LO YECH'DAL EV'YON,MIKEREV HA'ARETZ, „AL KEIN ANOCHI ME'TZAVECHA , LAIMOR” (15:11) –That poverty is a constant phenomenon, and today's magnate can be tomorrow's pauper. The tzeddaka that one dispenses today may well be returned to him in the future, if his fortunes become reversed.

Rav Soloveitchik would rise when he handed Tzeddaka to a collector, for he considered the collector as a “Cheftza Shel Mitzvah”

Shabbat Shalom, from Yerushalayim

Rabbi Aharon Ziegler

QUESTIONS ON PARASHAT RE'EI:

- 1 What is the minimum of Tzedaka that one is required to give based on a pasuk in our parasha?**
- 2 How do we know that a "Ger Tzedek", a gentile who lives in our holy Land and has agreed to observe the Seven Mitzvot of No'ach is to be given priority treatment over a gentile who has not agreed to observe the Noachite Laws**
- 3 "LO TEVASHEL G'DEE B'CHALEV IMOH"=IS WRITTEN IN OUR PARASHA (14:21) AND IN TWO OTHER PLACES IN THE TORAH. WHAT 3 LAWS TO WE LEARN FROM THE FACT THAT IT IS WRITTEN 3 TIMES?**
- 4 From where do we derive the Law that it is forbidden to erase the name of HaShem?**
- 5 "YOU SHOULD DO WHAT IS "GOOD" AND WHAT IS "RIGHT" (12:28). WHAT IS THE SPECIFIC DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO?**
- 6 THERE IS A MITZVAH IN OUR PARASHA ,which ACCORDING TO CHAZAL (GEMARA SANHEDRIN) WAS NEVER CARRIED OUT IN TRUE LIFE. WHAT MITZVAH?**

7-It is proper to tip someone who has performed a personal service to us. Where do we find this concept in the parasha?