



A LESSON FROM THE PARASHA

Not a Penny Extra

ALTER RAUBVOGEL



THE TORAH ONLY RECORDS TWO CONVERSATIONS between Yaakov and Eisav, and both highlight differences between the brothers. In this week's Torah portion, we see how each of them related to material wealth.

[Yaakov told Eisav that he'd sent gifts] "to find favor in the eyes of my master."

Eisav replied, "I [already] have plenty!"

Yaakov said, "...Please accept my offering... for Hashem has been generous to me, and I have everything I need." (33:8-11)

K'li Yakar explains—and this is the takeaway many people see here—that a righteous man is satisfied with whatever Hashem sends his way; Eisav, like many greedy people, felt that, while he was certainly well-off, he'd love to have even more.

Rashi, on the other hand, simply criticizes Eisav for boasting: "I'm so rich that I've got much more than I need!"

We know that Eisav was wicked. Whatever he said and did is open to criticism. But is it wrong for a person to feel like he has more than he needs—especially if he thanks Hashem for it?

In *Darash Moshe*, Rav Moshe Feinstein says "Yes!"

Rav Moshe explains what in his words is "obvious:" Let's say someone believes in Hashem and His Torah, believes that everything he owns comes from Hashem, and that Hashem gives him exactly what he needs, no more and no less. That means that even if Hashem doles out to him much more wealth than he requires to cover his expenses, *it is, nonetheless, something he needs*—otherwise, Hashem wouldn't be giving it to him!

The question is: What need is that money meant to cover?

The answer: The cost of performing more mitzvos, which he would otherwise be unable to afford.

That is the attitude of a righteous man, like our forefather Yaakov.

A wicked man like Eisav, on the other hand, prefers to feel entitled—both to his wealth and to the right to spend it as he pleases. To him, anything beyond the amount he's determined to be necessary is

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THE RABBI WAS ASKED

ADAPTED BY RABBI DOVID TZVI MEISSNER
FROM ME'AH SHE'ARIM
BY RABBI YITZCHOK ZILBERSTEIN

A young man was once recommended to a girl as a suitable match, and they began dating. This young man was, at the time, at odds with an acquaintance, who wanted to humiliate him. Unbeknownst to the couple, this person bought a newspaper ad, announcing that the couple was engaged! Hashem had compassion on them: The night before the paper went to print, the girl decided to seal the deal and get engaged. It was very late; the boy suggested postponing the engagement until the next day, but the girl insisted on wrapping it up that night, so they convened their families

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MAZAL TOV!

to Kollel Alums Rabbi Yitzie & Dena Stern, on the birth (and *b'ris*) of baby boy Eliyahu Mordechai. 🎉

TIDBITS OF CINCINNATI JEWISH HISTORY

RABBI MOSHE TZVI CRYSTAL

The weekend celebrating the installation of Rabbi Eliezer Silver as Chief Rabbi of the Orthodox community of Cincinnati began on **10 Kislev, 5692 (1931)**. Rabbi Silver had originally been invited to Cincinnati in his capacity as President of the Agudas HaRabbonim (the Union of Orthodox Rabbis of U.S. and Canada) to help organize the factious community. He had suggested creating an Orthodox City Council, with equal representation by all shuls, regardless of size, in decision-making, which would create a kashrus agency and tend to community needs. After Rabbi Silver had left, the search committee decided there was no one better for the position than Rabbi Silver himself. The celebration was hosted by several shuls, and it was held simultaneously with the bi-annual convention of the Agudas HaRabbonim. The installation itself took place at Beth Tefyla, also known as Reb Shachne's Shul, with Rabbi Chaim Fishel Epstein, then Chief Rabbi of St. Louis, as master of ceremonies. Rabbi Chaim Ozer Grodzinski, a Torah leader in Europe, wrote a letter of congratulations to the community. 🎉

A PARASHA Q 4 U

RABBI DOVID SPETNER

- Contemporary maps put north at the top. If the Torah came with a map, which direction would be at the top?

Bring this question to the Shabbos table and see who knows the answer! 🎉

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THE RABBI WAS ASKED

CONTINUED

and finalized the engagement.

The next morning, everyone was shocked to see the ad in the paper, announcing the engagement. Everyone wondered how the couple had managed to place the ad in the paper at such a late hour. The newly engaged couple, however, were thrilled about the ad.

A week later, the groom received a letter from the person who had placed the ad in the paper, intending to humiliate him, expressing his apology and remorse, and asking for forgiveness for his evil intent. However, he asked the groom to compensate him for the price of the ad, since he had benefited from it, thanks to the fortuitous turn of events.

Q Is the groom obligated to pay his friend for the ad?

A The Talmud (Sanhedrin 91a) recounts that a heretic once asked Geviha ben Pesisa taunting questions about fundamentals of the Jewish religion. Geviha answered him, and the heretic, upset at his response, retorted that he would kick Geviha so hard he'd straighten his back! (Geviha was a hunchback.) Geviha responded that if he would do so, he would call the heretic a professional doctor, deserving good pay.

The *Chida*, in his work *P'sach Einayim*, explains this incident based on a ruling by the *Rama* (*Choshen Mishpat* 264:4) that generally, someone who does a favor for a friend, to that friend's benefit, may demand payment. If, however, the doer of the favor meant to harass his friend, but it ultimately turned out to benefit him, the friend is exempt from paying. The heretic, explains the *Chida*, intended to harass Geviha and, accordingly, Geviha would not be responsible to pay, even if his back were straightened. Geviha only proclaimed that, despite this, he would call the heretic a skilled doctor who could demand payment for his services.

In short, the *Chida* teaches us that if someone intended to irritate his friend, but did what turned out to be a favor, the friend doesn't have to pay the would-be harasser. It follows that in our case, as well, the groom would be exempt from reimbursing his friend for the ad. 🕊

GREAT ACTS OF ORDINARY PEOPLE

Ori and Adele weren't religious, but they nonetheless sent their young son Ariel to the Chinuch Atzmai religious school in their town of Ramle. They had heard that its secular studies program was competitive.

When Ariel reached eighth grade, a young man by the name of Amram Cohen, who was part of the Acheinu outreach organization, befriended Ariel. Amram also got to know Ori and Adele.

As the school year drew to a close, Amram broached the topic of yeshiva for Ariel to Ori, who was very resistant at first. After much effort and discussion to allay their fears, Ariel's parents finally consented to give yeshiva a trial run.

Amram began the next difficult task, finding the right yeshiva. When Amram found one, Ariel did not do well on the entrance exam, and Amram had to then convince the faculty to accept him anyway.

All this time, meanwhile, Ariel's friends

had been badgering him to no end. Their negative comments about yeshiva had chipped away at his resolve, and he actually changed his mind.

Near the end of the summer, when he told Amram of his decision to abandon the plans for yeshiva, Ariel braced for his friend's strong reaction, even anger. But it never came. Amram accepted everything with equanimity. Amram even continued spending time with Ariel and his parents.

One day, Amram pointed out that yeshiva started four days before the secular school did. "Maybe try it for four days," Amram suggested, "and if you don't like it, then you can still start school on time."

Ariel thought about everything Amram had done for him, and decided he owed it to him to try. Ariel started yeshiva.

The first days were not easy, but Amram was there to help him. Ariel decided to take the plunge, and he stayed in yeshiva. 🕊

Sundays and
weeknights...



...in our busy
beis midrash!



Not a Penny Extra CONTINUED

extra. He can save it for a rainy day, or he can spend it now on life's pleasures.

Of course, Hashem won't necessarily approve of that "discretionary spending."

[Israel] didn't [contemplate to] know that I gave her grain, wine, and oil, that I multiplied her silver and gold; and she used it for the Ba'al (idolatry). (Hoshea 2:10)

This is true of material wealth, and it's also true of every blessing—time, intelligence, talent, friendship, freedom. It's all meant to furnish our *needs*. Our *spiritual* needs. And Hashem gives us exactly what we need. 🕊