

A Taste of Torah The Kind to Qualify

By Rabbi Mordechai Mandel

Eliezer is faced with a most difficult task. He is asked by his master and teacher, Avraham, to find a wife for his son, Yitzchak. Yitzchak was a person of impeccable character and very high stature, and deserved a spouse of his caliber. What qualities must she possess? Would it be beauty? It is known that Sarah, Yitzchak's mother, was from the most beautiful women in the world. Perhaps Eliezer would look for a clever woman suitable for Yitzchak, recognized for his greatness in Torah learning. Honesty and fear of God would definitely be important traits for her to have. Yet despite all of these qualifying attributes, Eliezer makes his decision based on one single quality – kindness.

Eliezer knew that the foundation that his master Avraham's house was built upon was chessed – kindness. This trait of kindness would compensate for everything else. Eliezer tested Rivka at the well and watched as she supplied water for him and all his camels without

being asked to. She went far beyond what was expected, showing her unusual sensitivity, care, and concern for another. After experiencing this, Eliezer was convinced that Rivka was indeed the appropriate match for Yitzchak.

We find this lesson again when Hashem chose Moshe as a leader for the Jewish nation. As a shepherd, Moshe portrayed a sincere concern for all of the sheep in his flock. His care extended to each sheep on an individual level, as evidenced by one incident where he spent three days following a sheep that had wandered off so that he could return it to its flock. This action of kindness proved that Moshe would be an ideal leader, caring for each individual of the nation.

The attribute of chessed is an inborn trait inherent in every Jew. Care and concern, kindness and consideration, are our most essential qualities. Let us work on developing and perfecting these traits, following in the ways of our ancestors.

Ask the Rabbi Yes, Your Honor

From: Name Withheld

Dear Rabbi,

Should one accept the Valedictorian award when offered to him by his school? On one hand, it says in the Mishna (Avos 4:28) that "jealousy, lust and honor remove a person from the world." But I once read that at times it is proper for a person to accept an award given to him.

Dear Name Withheld,

There's a difference between pursuing honor and accepting honor.

Jealousy, lust and honor remove a person from this world by capturing his focus. By pursuing these ends, his aim eventually becomes the fulfillment of the jealousy, lust, or honor. At that point, the person no longer is using this world for that which it was created – to

Stories For The Soul

A Touch of Warmth

Rivka was the ideal wife for Yitzchok because she exhibited the trait of chesed - kindness. When a stranger traveled through, she not only got water for him, she fetched water for all ten of his camels (that's a lot of water).

Chesed is one of the most sterling qualities. The world is built on chesed.

In the early 20th century, very few people had cars. They were not available and affordable like they are now, particularly in Eastern Europe. There was one man who used to drive to the local yeshiva every Friday and offer the bochurim (students) rides to and from town, so that they could do their errands. Friday afternoon is usually the only free time yeshiva bochurim have to do their shopping, laundry, etc. He showed up every week, rain or shine, and basically offered a free taxi service. He made as many trips back and forth as was necessary and was always most happy to do so.

A young man once asked him what motivated him to do this. He told him the following: When I was a young man, I was a bochur (student) at the Yeshiva of the Chofetz Chaim in Radin. I was not a very good student; in fact, I was a troublemaker.

The Rabbis decided that because I was a bad influence, I had to be expelled immediately from the yeshiva and sent home. There was no train until the next day, but the Chofetz Chaim did not want my bad influence in the yeshiva one moment longer so he had me sleep that night

Kollel Happenings

SHAREHOLDERS VS. MANAGEMENT AT NOV. 3 TORAH FOR TYCOONS

Join Rob Klugman, Former Chief Global Strategy Officer at Molson Coorswill, and Rabbi Shachne Sommers for "Shareholders vs. Management: Who has the Final Say?" at the next Torah for Tycoons, Wed., Nov. 3. Program will be held at noon at the East Side Kosher Deli. Cost: \$20. To RSVP, call 303-820-2855 or email info@denverkollel.org



KOLLEL/WEST SIDE COMMUNITY SHABBATON NOV. 12-13

The Kollel and West Side community will host a Shabbaton on Shabbos Parshas Vayeitzei, Nov. 12-13. Guests will be hosted for Shabbos by Kollel families and other community members. For information, call 303-820-2855 or email rye@denverkollel.org



LEGAL HOLIDAY LEARNING THURS., NOV. 25

The next legal holiday learning program will take place on Thansgiving, Thurs., Nov. 25 at two locations. The Zera Avraham program is for men only and will start with Shacharis at 8 followed by breakfast and a class from 9-10. \$125 sponsorship is still available. For information, call 303-820-2855 or email rye@denverkollel.org. At Aish, men and women are invited to davening at 8:15 followed by breakfast and a debate at 9:15. For information, call 303-820-2855 or email rmh@denverkollel.org

Interpersonal Issues Not Mere Child's Play - Part I

Although taking a minor's possessions is considered theft, parents are the exception. In general, the possessions of a minor who is supported by his parents are the property of his father. The mother may also take the child's possessions since she runs her husband's household. This includes gifts received by the child, whether from his parents, relatives, or others, objects found by the child (that are permitted to be kept and not returned), and

according to some opinions, even wages and profits earned by the child. Other authorities, however, say that wages are the child's property.

However, if the minor received an inheritance, or was given a gift on the condition that his father has no ownership in it, it is the child's property.

Adapted with permission from "The Halachos of Other People's Money" by Rabbi Pinchas Bodner (Feldheim Publishers)

Ask the Rabbi

continued from front
come closer to G-d.

Receiving honor will not in and of itself remove a person from the world, unless from there he is pulled into pursuing it.

Sometimes it is particularly proper to accept an honor. When a specific honor is useful for your future (for example to help you get a job), then the acceptance is considered a normal part of the effort involved in achieving that particular goal.

Receiving honor can also be an inspiration for others to do good. For example, when one donates money to a charitable organization, allowing

the donation to be known will inspire others to do similar good deeds.

Sometimes one's honor will give pride to his parents. Through this, one can fulfill the mitzvah of kibbud av v'em

If you were the one offered the Valedictorian award, congratulations! Unless your sole purpose is to have more and more honor heaped upon you, accepting the honor is fine. The right attitude is not to think of the honor as an end in itself, but rather as a means to an end.

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Stories for the Soul

continued from front
in his home.

It was a freezing Russian winter night and I could not fall asleep because of the cold. From my bed, I could spy the Chofetz Chaim pacing back and forth, studying Torah deep into the night. He was wearing a heavy winter coat, as there was no heat in the house. Suddenly the Chofetz Chaim came to my bedside to check on me. I pretended to be asleep. He looked at me for a moment, then took off his coat and covered me with

it. He obviously realized how cold I was. With that extra warm "blanket" to curb my shivering, I was soon fast asleep. What a compassionate man he was. That made such an impression on me that I decided then and there, that, even though I wasn't cut out to be one, I always wanted to help yeshiva people. I still remember that kindness like it was yesterday and it still warms me, even on a cold day. That is why I do what I do.

Adapted with permission from ShulWeek by Rabbi Boruch Lederman

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.

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