



Kinder Torah®



For parents to share with children at the Shabbos table – Parshas Yisro
Dedicated in Loving Memory of Dovid ben Leah z"l

A Love of Torah

The Medrash Tanchuma relates that Yisro had seven names. One of them was Chovav, which means dear. Why was Yisro called Chovav? Because he cherished the Torah. This week marks the *sheloshim* (thirty days) since the passing of HaRav HaGaon Mordechai Gifter zt"l. His love of Torah knew no bounds, as the following stories heard at the *hespedim* (eulogies) in Jerusalem illustrate.

Rav Gifter once went with his son-in-law, Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Feuer to a diamond dealer in Manhattan. The dealer explained to the Rav the details about the size and value of the diamonds. Some of the diamonds were so small that their beauty could only be appreciated with a microscope. Yet, the dealer was very careful with each and every diamond, no matter how small. Rabbi Feuer related that Rav Gifter valued each and every word of Torah as a great treasure, in the same way that the diamond dealer valued even the smallest diamonds.

Once Rabbi Feuer told Rav Gifter a *chiddush* (original Torah thought) on Mesecta Eruven from one of his congregants. Rav Gifter, upon hearing this was so elated that got up, took his son-in-law's hand, and began dancing around the dining room table singing, "Tov li Toras picha me-alfei zahav vokeseif" (The Torah of Your mouth is better for me than thousands in gold and silver - Tehillim 119:72).

The Rav was once giving a *shiur* (lecture) to the entire Yeshiva. His *shiurim* were very deep and complicated, and to interrupt him was unthinkable. A young student stood up in the middle of the *shiur* and asked a question. Rav Gifter walked several feet across the room, and gave this young man a big kiss on the forehead. That is how much he valued the student's words of Torah.

The Radak explains the following verse in Tehillim (84:6). "Fortunate is the man whose strength is in You. It forms paths in his heart." Constant learning and striving to increase his

knowledge and wisdom of Hashem's Torah will make paths into your heart. Each day you will traverse those paths and strengthen them. That is the secret to love of Torah. Learn it constantly. It will enter your heart.

Kinderlach . . .
Someone who loves another person cannot bear to be separated from them. They want to be together all of the time. A person who loves a particular place or thing also cannot bear to leave it. That is what we are striving for in Torah. Rav Gifter zt"l learned so much Torah with such fire, that his love for it grew very strong. So strong that he and the Torah became inseparable. In his memory, let us strive to emulate him. Try to increase your learning. And try to learn with real enthusiasm. Keep in mind that the Torah that you are learning is more valuable than diamonds.

Like Any Other Mitzvah

"Yoni, I must tell you something very important."

"Sure, Imma. What is it?"

"I see that you have been playing in the street lately."

"Sure, Imma. The boys like to play out there. We have more room to run around."

"It is important to have room to run around Yoni, but I must tell you that the street is very dangerous. Buses, taxis, and cars speed down the streets."

"I know Imma, but we are careful. We watch out for cars."

"Yoni, I know that you are careful. However, no matter how careful you are, an accident can still happen. There have been many traffic accidents in our neighborhood. I am sure that all of those children who were in accidents thought that it would never happen to them because they were careful."

"But Imma, everybody plays in the street. All of my friends do it. Do you want me to give up my friends?"

"Of course not, Yoni. Maybe you can convince them not to play in the

street."

"Imma, I just cannot do it."

"Hmmm. I didn't expect you to say that. Let me ask you something Yoni."

"Sure Imma."

"Would you ever think of eating meat and milk together?"

"Of course not, Imma. It's not kosher."

"Would you ever think of not sitting in the Sukkah on Succos? Or not eating matzah on Pesach?"

"Of course not, Imma. They are mitzvos written in the Torah."

"Yoni, listening to your parents is also a mitzvah written in the very same Torah. It is in this week's parsha. 'Honor your father and mother' (Shemos 20:12). If you would not think about violation the laws of kashrus or Pesach or Sukkos, because they are written in the Torah, then you must also listen to your parents because it is written in the Torah."

"I never thought about it that way, Imma."

"Yoni, you are such a good boy, and I know that you want to do every mitzvah that you can. Why do you sometimes not listen to Abba and me?"

"Because I don't see it as a mitzvah."

"Exactly."

Kinderlach . . .
Sometimes we do not feel like listening to Abba and Imma. It's too hard. We're tired. We're busy. Nobody's doing it. We feel that we can say no if we want. We think that listening to them is like listening to our friend. It is not. The next time that you feel like contradicting them, stop a second and think. "This is a mitzvah in the Torah. I have to take it as seriously as I do other mitzvos. No fooling around here." "Here I come, Imma. Right away. I have a mitzvah to do!"

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