

Your Rebbe, Your Torah, Your Life

“Welcome home Abba!”
 “Thank you everyone. It’s great to be back.”
 “How did your trip go?”
 “Not so good. It was very crowded the entire way. There were hundreds of people traveling to Kadesh looking for housing and jobs there.”
 “Did you find anything for us?”
 “Yes, I found a nice home in a good neighborhood.”
 “How about *parnassa* (livelihood)? Will we be able to support ourselves over there?”
 “We have possibilities. Hashem will help us.”
 “Abba, why do we have to go to Kadesh? I like it here in our hometown. Our friends and family live here. We have good neighbors and a good school. I don’t want to move.”
 “I understand, Tzvika. However, many of our neighbors will be moving to Kadesh also. All of my *chaverim* (friends) from the Yeshiva will be going there. We must move because we no longer have a life here in this town.”
 “Why not? What is going on Abba?”

“Not so long ago, a terrible thing happened to our Rosh Yeshiva. He was climbing up a ladder, and he accidentally slipped and fell.”
 “Oy vey. Was he hurt?”
 “The Rosh Yeshiva only had minor injuries. However, he fell onto another man and killed him.”
 “Oy va voy!”
 “That’s right. The Rosh Yeshiva must now flee to Kadesh - the closest *Ir Miklat* (refuge city), and live there until either he or the Kohen Gadol dies. That is the *Halacha*.”
 “Kadesh? Aren’t we going to Kadesh?”
 “The entire Yeshiva is going to Kadesh, *kinderlach*. Over 1000 men women and children are resettling there, along with the Rosh Yeshiva.”
 “Why, Abba?”
 “Look here in the parasha, *kinderlach*. ‘This is the matter of the murderer who shall flee there and live’ (Devarim 19:4). Our sages explain that if a *Rebbe* (teacher) goes to *Ir Miklat* his students must join him. (Gemora Makkos 10a)”
 “Why?”
 “This Gemora (Taanis 7a) relates that a Rebbe learns the most from his students. If a Rebbe goes to *Ir Miklat* without his students, he is cut off from his main source of learning. A wise man who seeks wisdom and cannot attain it is considered

dead.* The murderer is fleeing to the *Ir Miklat* in order to live, as the verse states, ‘the murderer who shall flee there and live’. We are the talmidim (students) of our Rosh Yeshiva. Without us, his main source of wisdom, he cannot live! He is considered dead! Therefore, the entire Yeshiva along with their families is going to Kadesh, to give our Rosh Yeshiva life.”
 “Wow, Abba. I never realized how important a Rebbe is.”
 “A Rebbe and a talmid teach each other Torah. Learning Torah is our life! As the verse states, ‘For it (the Torah) is your life’ (Devarim 30:20). There is no life without Torah. We are going to Kadesh, the *Ir Miklat*, to live!”

*Kinderlach . . .
 Is there anyone who does not want life? Long life? A good life? What is the source of our life? The Torah. Who teaches us Torah? Our Rebbe. Listen to what he says. Study it. Know it. He is your link in the chain of Torah from Har Sinai. He is your source of life.*

*Rambam - Rotzeach 7:1
 For further explanation see Ohr Yohel.



Listen to the Rav

“Shalom Abba!”
 “Shalom *kinderlach*!”
 “Did you ask the Rav the *shayla* (question about a Torah ruling) about the photos, Abba?”
 “Yes I did, Avi. He said that even though the snapshots came out off-color in the development, we must still pay the full price. The photo shop owner made no guarantees about colors, therefore he gave us the service that he promised - film development and printing the pictures. We must pay the full price for his work.”
 “That’s not fair, Abba! The pictures look terrible!”
 “Avi, the Rav *poskined* (decided the *Halacha*) that we have to pay. We must listen to him.”
 “Abba, the photo shop ruined our pic-

tures. I am 100% sure that the *Halacha* does not make you pay for faulty work.”

Avi’s father pauses, smiles warmly at his son, puts his arm around his shoulder, and opens up a Chumash.

“Avi dear, the answer to your claim is a mitzvah in this week’s parasha. ‘...According to the judgment that they will say to you, shall you do; you shall not deviate from the word that that will tell you right or left’ (Devarim 17:11). The Sefer HaChinuch (Mitzvah 496) explains that we have a mitzvah to listen to the wise men of our generation. They have learned Torah day and night for years on end. They have put all of their energy into understanding each *Halacha* clearly. Therefore, Hashem has blessed them with the true and correct understanding of the Torah.”

“But Abba, I see it differently.”
 “You seem confident that you are correct Avi. Rashi speaks about just this point. Even if they tell you that right is left, you must listen. The Sifsei Chachomim explains that you are so sure that they are wrong, that they seem to be saying right is left. Still you must listen.”
 “Why, Abba?”
 “The Sefer HaChinuch relates that people have many different opinions. If every one were allowed to act according to his opinion without listening to a Rav, the result would be a destruction of Torah Judaism and divisiveness within the nation. Am Yisrael would cease to exist.”
 “Oy vey. That is terrible Abba. I had no idea.”
 “Your picture of the situation was a bit off, Avi. This experience at the photo shop brought you into focus.”
 “Than you for adjusting my lens, Abba.”

*Kinderlach . . .
 The Torah guides every facet of our lives. The halachos are often complicated and difficult to understand. Additionally, there are often disputes that are not mentioned specifically in Shulchan Auruch. These need the clarification and ruling of a Rav. Do not leave matters unclear. Go to a Rav. Listen to and obey his ruling. This is the foundation of Torah life. This keeps Am Yisrael alive.*

Parasha Questions:

- What is the punishment for one who worships avodah zara (17:5)
- What are the three things that a king may not have too much of? (17:16-17)
- What does the nation give to the Kohanim? (18:3-4)
- What types of witchcraft did the nations practice? (18:10,11)
- Does the *Ir Miklat* protect the intentional murderer? (19:11-13)