Jewish Tribune – Chukas

**Logical Spending**

The Gemoro in Kiddushin (31a) tells the story of Doma ben Nesina. One time, the Chachomim wanted to buy stones for the ephod from him at a price that would give him an enormous profit – hundreds of thousands of gold dinars. But the key to the chest that contained the precious stones was lying under his father’s pillow and his father was sleeping. Doma showed amazing restraint and did not disturb his father.

The Gemoro continues that the following year, HKBH gave Doma his reward. A *parah adumah* was born in his herd. On hearing this news, a delegation of Jewish leaders came to Doma to purchase the *parah adumah*.

Doma again showed restraint and nobility and despite being able to charge an exorbitant sum for this rare commodity, he instead asked for the sum that he had lost out on previously. The Maharsha (to Avodah Zorah 24a) explains that Doma was a righteous gentile and wanted to receive his reward in Olam Habo, rather than in this world.

Why was Doma rewarded specifically with a *parah adumah*, the subject of our sedra? Couldn’t HKBH let him win the lottery? Why did HKBH choose the particular means of a *parah adumah* to reward Doma?

The Chiddushei Harim offers an interesting answer. Doma’s actions created a powerful “kitrug” (indictment) against Klal Yisroel. Look how far a non-Jewish person goes in honouring his father – do we Yidden, who are commanded to honour our parents, go to these lengths?

HKBH, therefore gave Klal Yisroel an opportunity to negate Doma’s impressive act by giving them the chance to spend a vast sum on a mitzva which, in contrast to Kibbud Av V’em, is not logical or does not have a known reason.

When the delegation spent a vast sum on Doma’s *parah adumah*, it demonstrated the love Klal Yisroel have for mitzvos and an appreciation of their immeasurable value. This served to negate the kitrug created by Doma’s act.

Living a Torah lifestyle does cost money and, due to the current cost of living crisis, it is becoming more and more expensive. Try explaining to your non-Jewish neighbour why you are paying a significant sum on what looks like a lemon at Succos time or just show him how much your weekly food shop costs. And whilst the mitzvos of arba minim or keeping kosher may not always be easy to explain, we know that the reward for these mitzvos is inestimable.

I recently came across a young boy in school who displayed impressive restraint and sensitivity and did not succumb to financial temptation.

Yossi is a popular and happy go lucky young man. But he has a sensitive eye, especially for a boy of his age. He befriended a boy in his year group who is slightly special needs and struggles to make friends. Yossi, despite being popular and having a wide circle of friends, makes a point to sit with his lonely new friend at lunch time.

A few weeks ago, it was Yossi’s birthday and to his surprise when he went to sit with his friend at lunchtime, the friend took out a £20 note and said to Yossi: “This is for you – a birthday present!”

Yossi was shocked. It was as unexpected as it was generous.

“Thank you” replied Yossi, “I appreciate the gesture, but I cannot take the money from you.” And he didn’t.

For a young boy like Yossi, £20 is a significant amount of money that he would happily spend. But in the circumstances, it would not be right to take it and some things are more valuable than money.

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