

EC

Eternal Connections

BUILDING
OLAM HABA AWARENESS

Mitzvos are opportunities

Just Not Worth It

The town of Radin was facing a crisis. Food was in short supply and expensive, and many families were struggling to feed their children. The town's leaders, with the participation of the Chafetz Chayim himself, met to discuss what could be done.

Srulik was a young boy living in Radin at that time. Having just become bar mitzvah, he was particularly proud of his *tefillin*, making sure to wake up early each morning to put them at that correct time. Like other boys his age, when he heard about the emergency meeting, he made his way to the *beis medrash* where it was to take place, curious to hear what solutions might be offered to the town's pressing needs.

Srulik managed to find a space in the back of the room and listened with interest to the discussion. Suddenly, an idea occurred to him. Excitedly, he ran up to the front where the Chafetz Chayim was seated. "Rebbi, rebbi, I have an idea!" he exclaimed.

The other men did not seem pleased that a young boy was interrupting the meeting, but the Chafetz Chayim motioned for them to let Srulik speak. "What is your idea?" he asked.

"The Rebbi always speaks about the value of putting on *tefillin* even one time. So, here's my idea. We should ask Hashem to pay us back for one day of wearing *tefillin*, and then we'll have more than enough money to buy food!"

The Chofetz Chayim smiled and gently replied, "Let me explain something to you."

"Imagine that you win the lottery. The prize is one million rubles. When you go to claim your prize, the lottery office pays you the full amount – with a check.

"Excited about your newfound wealth, you decide to visit the candy store and buy yourself all the candy you ever wanted. You walk in and eagerly look around, thinking about all the treats you'll walk out with. You walk from one display to the next, choosing chocolates, nuts and sweets of all kinds. When it comes time to pay, you hand the shopkeeper your check. He looks at it, but then hands it back to you.

"This is too much money. I don't have change for you," he says.

"But you really want your treats. So you tell the man, 'It's okay. I don't need any change. Just keep the check, and I'll take some more candy.'

"Keep the check?!" the owner exclaims. 'I'm an honest man. I can't do that. Each candy is worth only a few small coins. This check far, far exceeds the value of all the candy in this store!'"

The Chofetz Chayim looked at Srulik lovingly. "Hashem is like the candy-store owner. Your one mitzvah is worth more than even a one-billion-ruble check. Hashem can't take your mitzvah in exchange for food because no food in this world is worth anything near the value

of a mitzvah. Your mitzvah of *tefillin* is worth far more than you can imagine!"

The Gemara in Kiddushin tells us that there is no reward for a mitzvah in this world. That's because the reward for a mitzvah is too great. Sometimes people mistakenly think – *oh, the reason I was successful today is because I did such and such a mitzvah*. This is not so, for the true reward for your mitzvah can only come in the World to Come.

(Rabbi David Sutton, *A Daily Dose of Bitachon for Children*, pages 56-58, ArtScroll/Mesorah Publications.)

A mitzvah is worth more than we can ever imagine. Do we mistakenly equate our reward with earthly recompense? Do we recognize the value of each mitzvah we do?

Take This Home

The next time a mitzvah comes your way, remind yourself of the above *mashal*. Whether the mitzvah is easy or hard to do, it will probably change the way you do it!

In Short

"...whatever we do, we are being photographed forever... When you know that the camera of eternity is directed at you, and that no act is unimportant, everything is recorded forever, then that means that all your deeds should be done as if you were an actor posing and trying to make the very best, the most favorable, impression that you can create for all time."

(Rabbi Yaakov Astor, *Rav Avigdor Miller on Olam Haba*, Judaica Press, page 90.)

It Happened to Me!

My Olam Haba Moment

My husband and I made the decision to keep our phones text-free. Without the constant distractions and disruptions of texting, we feel we waste less time and are better focused on what's important. We are also less privy to potential *lashon hara* and neighborhood or family "hock."

But it can be challenging to keep this up. Sometimes my children feel frustrated that they are "out of the loop" because they don't get the class-wide texts. I don't have the luxury of tracking my children's school buses in the morning since we are not part of the block texting group. On several recent occasions, we "lost out" because we were unaware of specific opportunities that were shared via text.

But we still maintain that it's worth it because in the long run – the long, long, long run – we are gaining – for Eternity.

– D.C., Lakewood

לע"נ בלימה בת שמואל יהודה הלוי

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