

**Date:** 26 Av 5785 (August 20, 2025)

**Torah Portion:** Re'eh

**Topic:** To Give Is to Gain

It is written (Deut. 12:20), “When YHWH your Elohim enlarges your border as He has promised you.” The Midrash provides a verse from Mishlei (Prov. 18:16), “A man’s gift broadens for him and leads him before the great,” to connect with our verse. R’ Hiyya<sup>1</sup> was doing fundraising to be used in the great study house in Tiberias, and one man pledged a contribution of a pound of gold. R’ Hiyya took the man and seated him next to himself, and applied to him the verse, “A man’s gift broadens for him and leads him before the great.” In this incident, it was only the second half of the verse (and leads him before the great) that applied, for the man was seated next to R’ Hiyya. It is also possible that R’ Hiyya applied the first of the verse to this donor as well, as a form of prayer: “Just as the second half of this verse has been fulfilled in you, so may the first half be fulfilled, so that your wealth may become broadened.”

A king’s trustee who has shown himself to faithfully execute his charge is commonly entrusted with even larger sums to oversee (Matt. 25:14-30). In Mattiyahu (Matthew) the servant has proved himself worthy of his master’s trust. For overseeing king’s treasury, one requires no outstanding quality beyond his unwavering loyalty and integrity.

If one extends this concept to intellect and talent and he is endowed with these qualities, he is no more than a custodian over these gifts. If he proves himself worthy of these gifts by devoting them to spreading Torah and raising the spiritual level of his fellows, then Hashem will expand these gifts to him and furnish greater opportunities for him to utilize them for the benefit of His people.

This sheds new light on the famous Talmudic dictum (Makkos 10a) that while one learns much from his teachers, and even more from his colleagues, he learns most from his students. This refers not only to the added clarity one naturally achieves through teaching others. It refers as well to the additional blessing he receives for having shared his spiritual wealth with others. He becomes endowed with greater knowledge and is afforded even greater opportunities to spread Torah to the nation.

Peninim MiShulchan Govoah quotes this same idea by applying the dictum (Taanis 9a), “Tithe [your wealth]” so that you will become wealthy,” not only to monetary resources but to spiritual riches as well. A Torah scholar who teaches Torah to others and tithes his time for their benefit, sacrifices nothing. Rather, he himself benefits from having done so. The time he expends in this “charitable” pursuit is more than repaid to him in the form of greater ability and opportunity to expand his own storehouses of Torah knowledge.

Reb Shimon<sup>2</sup> was advised by his doctor to curtail his Torah lectures in his later years. But he refused and said, “Why does Hashem grant man life if not to disseminate the Torah to His children? The more I extend myself to spread Torah knowledge, the greater will be the additional strength and life granted to me.”

Shalom.

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<sup>1</sup> Hiyya the Great, 180-230 CE

<sup>2</sup> Shimon bar Yochai, also known as Rashbi, 2<sup>nd</sup>-century tanna