



**FROM THE DESK OF
RABBI MOSHE HAUER**

OU EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT



Re'eh – The True Reward

Years ago, I would spend ten days each summer at a program known as Sinai Retreats, spending a nice chunk of each day teaching Torah to a group of intelligent young professionals who had not previously had that opportunity. We studied and discussed core Torah concepts and ideas about the G-d we believe in, the mission of the nation we are a part of, the challenges and opportunities of life, and the Torah that we are to dedicate ourselves to study and practice. The opportunity to spend hours day after day in an immersive Torah environment sharing the incredible wisdom and strength of the Torah and the meaning and purpose that it gives our lives renewed my own appreciation for the Torah that we live and learn each day. *Ashreinu mah tov chelkeinu*, we are indeed very fortunate.

Many understand this to be the meaning of the opening phrases of our Parsha (Devarim 11:26-27). Rather than spell out external rewards and consequences for our observance of Torah, Moshe zeroes in on the ultimate blessing, the Torah itself. “See, this day I set before you blessing and curse: blessing, that you hear the commandments of Hashem your God that I place before you today...” As Rambam notes in many places (see for example

introduction to Rambam’s commentary to Perek Chelek and Hilchot Teshuva Chapter 10), our appreciation of and connection to Torah ultimately depends on our level of appreciation for its inherent value. In the words of Pirkei Avot (4:2), *s’char mitzvah mitzvah*, the ultimate reward of doing a Mitzvah is the Mitzvah itself.

Ramban very simply and beautifully underscores the value of our awareness of the inherent benefits of Torah in last week’s Parsha (10:12-13):

“And now, O Israel, what does Hashem your God demand of you? Only this: to revere Hashem your God, to walk only in His paths, to love Him, and to serve Hashem your God with all your heart and

May the learning
from this issue of TT be לעילו נשמותהן

**Of our beloved Mothers
both pillars of our lives**

Edith Glattstein Schwartz ע"ה
רבקה מלכה בת חנה ויהודה צבי ע"ה
כ' מנחם אב

May Pitasky Parker ע"ה
מרים בת לאה ובצלאל ע"ה
כ"ז מנחם אב

In loving memory
Tzillah and Zvi Schwartz, and families

soul, keeping Hashem's commandments and laws that I instruct you in today, for your good."

Ramban notes - as the Talmud had previously - how odd it seems that this phrase can begin with an apparent minimization of what Hashem demands of us when in fact the list of expectations is long and imposing. Yet, noted the Ramban, the key lies in seeing how the entire statement is anchored in its closing phrase, "for your good." The Torah is big and broad and its obligations many, but once we can recognize and taste the incredible benefit it provides us in our own lives, its observance moves immediately from burden to privilege. It is not a burden when we can truly appreciate its incredible benefits.

Each of us benefit greatly from taking every opportunity to learn Torah in a way that refreshes our own enthusiasm for it and that brings its light and its power both to those outside our community who have never seen it as well as to those inside our own family and community who have seen it but never fully tasted it. This will help all of us who have grown accustomed to the gift of Torah life and forgotten its privilege. *Ashreinu mah tov chelkeinu!* We are indeed very fortunate. ■

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