

TOO MUCH TZEDAKA – A PROBLEM?

Question:

We are the parents of a wonderful, sweet, nine year old girl. Our daughter is a regular, normal girl with normal middos. She fights with her siblings and is occasionally disrespectful, like most children. When it comes to giving *tzedaka*, however, she is unique. She insists on giving us all her money- every last cent - for poor people. While we appreciate her noble, selfless acts, we are concerned that in the future, she might become resentful and regretful about these donations, and perhaps we should be suggesting that she give *maaser*, or a little more, but not all of her money- to keep her normal. Some people have suggested that we should encourage her to give half the money and keep half for herself, but we feel that it is wrong to squash such beautiful, sincere gestures. On *Purim*, she received over one hundred dollars from her grandparents and she immediately gave all of it to *tzedaka*. It is not a solution to give the money to *tzedaka* and then replace it with our own, because we simply cannot afford to. She has given all her birthday, *Chanuka* and *Purim* money to *tzedaka* this year, over four hundred dollars. We have a large family, *ka'h*, and many expenses. Normalcy or an opportunity to raise an extraordinary *baalas chessed*; which takes precedence?

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Answer:

I am baffled by your question. You use the words “not to give all of her money – to keep her normal”. Then obviously you agree that one must be *mechanech* her in a normal way.

One should give *Tzedaka* between at least *maaser* and at the most twenty percent. Only great *tzadikim*, on the *madrega* of *malochim*, were able to reach a level where they would give all of their money to *tzedaka*. However, *Halacha* dictates what *Hakadosh Boruch Hu* regards as normal, which, in turn, becomes the accepted practice for the *hamon am*. Therefore, that is how you should be *mechanech* her – with normalcy.

I do not think that your having a “large family *ka'h* and many expenses” has any bearing on *chinuch* for *tzedoko* as it is her money, although probably not *halachically*, as she is only nine years old. Why do you feel you must “replace it with our own”? Shouldn’t she learn some responsibility towards her own needs, her future, her family and isn’t the home the place to acquire these traits?

In your query, you say you might lose the opportunity of raising “an extraordinary *baalas chesed*” by having her give *maaser* or a *chomesh*. You have already raised an extraordinary *baalas chesed*. Normalcy is extraordinary as that is what *Hashem* expects of us.

May *Hashem* give you the *koach* and *moach* to continue raising normal, *yiddishe kinderlach* and, hopefully they will grow to be *tzadikim* through their own *kochos hanefesh*.

*Gut Shabbos.*