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## **Tzedakah in Your Everyday Life**

### **Is it 'eating you up' or are you eating it?: Consumers, consuming, and consumption**

### **Tzedakah Learning Pod - Year 2, Session 2: January/February 2012**

#### **TECHNICAL PREPARATION**

This session includes a link to a YouTube video. If you have an internet connection where you're meeting, it's probably best to load the video now. This will allow you to watch the video without interruption when you reach it later in the pod. Note that we will only be watching about 5 minutes of the video. To load the video now, do the following:

- 1) Set your computer to mute, so the video can load without disturbing your discussion.
- 2) Click on the following link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gLBE5QAYXp8>.
- 3) Make sure the video has started to play.
- 4) Once you reach the video, turn the volume back ON and hit REPLAY. Don't reload the page, as that will take longer to play than hitting replay.

#### **OPENING – PLEASE READ ALOUD**

In this second Tzedakah Learning Pod session, we want to explore consumption as a product of our creation, a social and cultural development that manifests itself from outings to the mall to protests against child labor.

This session is divided into 9 sections, and at the start of each section, there is a recommended amount of time. If we hold to these recommendations, the session will take 1.5 hours. Do we want to assign one person to help us keep the time?

Let's get started!

#### **SECTION 1 – REVIEW HOMEWORK**

##### **RECOMMENDED TIME – 10 MINUTES**

For homework, you identified the most and least expensive thing you or your family purchased in a day as well as the most expensive thing you or your family purchased in the past year. For each purchase you reflected on the following questions:

- Why did you buy it?
- What did it allow or help you to do?
- How does doing this help or enable you fulfill your goals for yourself, your community or the world at large?

Please share with your podmates one of the three purchases, as you feel comfortable and is appropriate.



**SECTION 2 – INTRODUCTION**  
**RECOMMENDED TIME – 2 MINUTES**

This pod session explores the topic of consumption. Consumption—acquiring and using stuff—can be seen as a natural human function. From eating and drinking, the most literal and necessary forms of consumption to shopping—which has developed into a social and cultural development of an entertaining pastime—we encounter consumption everywhere in our daily life. The point of departure of this learning exercise, however, is considering consumption as a product of our creation, rather than a biological necessity of our organism. This means we'll be looking at consumption as a result of our decisions, consent, and participation as individuals, communities and societies.

The sweatshop labor movement two decades ago and the environmental movement of the past decade have brought into public discussions consideration of how we make decisions about how we consume. It's not hard to see the relationship with the Occupy Wall Street movement of the moment, either, though it is focusing most directly on questions of wealth and income distribution and inequality.

Whether we are thinking about (buying?) sneakers, sweatshirts, cars, or produce, we are increasingly aware that the choices we make in developing a taste, taking up a look or commuting to and from work have an effect not only on us, but on those living near and far, beloved friends and complete strangers. In most developed countries it's difficult to grow your own food, or sew your own clothes, or even get to know the people who do. Buying goods and services is basic to our daily life, and in the U.S. it comprises the lion's share of our economy. If this system of consumption isn't necessarily good for us, but we can't easily or reasonably extricate ourselves from it, then how should we understand our relationship with it? And what do Jewish sources have to say about it?

These are the central questions that we will address together in this session.

**SECTION 3 – THINKING CRITICALLY ABOUT CONSUMPTION I: CONSEQUENCES OF CONSUMING**

**RECOMMENDED TIME – 23 MINUTES (3 min association round; 8 min video set-up, watching & reading; 12 min discussion)**

Let's start with a quick round of sharing what we associate with 'consumption'. Take 1 minute and write down words, ideas or experiences that come to mind. Then go around the group and share what you've written. What have you noted in common? What is different? Let's hold on to the lists for the end of this section.

One of the main criticisms of the economy of consumption typical of the U.S. and other developed countries is not just that it has deleterious consequences, but that it was *designed* to have them. In other words, in order to be able to offer consumer goods at relatively cheap prices, such that most of a country's population could participate in their consumption, a cheap means of production was needed. To achieve this scale, efficiency and profitability, this system of production tends towards pressuring workers and the environment, among other things, to achieve the right product at the right price.

Let's watch about five minutes from a short video that presents this point in a rather pointed but entertaining manner. Importantly, you don't have to agree with this description of how the consumer market developed, how it operates, or its prospects for achieving equality or social justice. Rather, let's focus on two concepts introduced in the clip: planned obsolescence and perceived obsolescence.



We're interested in them as possible mechanisms in how the consumer market operates and how this might affect our possible range of responses as individual consumers and social citizens.

The Story of Stuff with Anne Leonard<sup>1</sup>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gLBE5QAYXp8>

- If you already loaded the video, click on RELOAD now (the circular arrow on the YouTube screen).
- Otherwise click on the link and start playing the video.

→ We will watch ONLY the segment from 10:46 until 15:40. Hover your mouse over the progress bar, and run it from left to right. When you reach 10:46 (arrow from Big Box store is yellow) click on the bar and start playing the video. You should watch until 15:40 (when it starts discussing 'national happiness').

*Summary of Video* (in case you can't/haven't been able to watch it): An economy based on consumption relies on two interconnected concepts: planned and perceived obsolescence. In order to generate sufficient sales from consumer products, a relatively rapid turnover is required. This means that if consumers only buy one car, one refrigerator or one pair of shoes for most of their working lives, this system of production is not sustainable. To generate demand, products are 'planned for obsolescence', meaning they are made so that they do not last very long. In this way, a new purchase is required within a relatively short time period. Coupled with this is 'perceived obsolescence', the notion that things go in and out of fashion, and we feel compelled or are forced to replace still largely useable products. The video provides figures and examples to illustrate these two concepts more fully.

*Questions for Discussion:*

- Do you agree with Leonard's assessment that products are made with intentionally short lifespans? Or that fashion and the like act to encourage us to consume more?
- Leonard points out that we can't easily choose any course of action in regard to consumption. Rather, the design of the economy encourages certain forms of consumption. (In her example it's through more direct factors like availability or pricing, or more indirectly, through perceptions of fashion, etc. But if you disagree with her assessments, you can likely think of other ways in which the design of a system, by the very nature of its construction, implicitly limits the consumption choices we can easily make.) What are the implications of having a more limited set of consumption choices?
- How hard can we be expected to work to be able to choose the 'right' option? Meaning, if locally-grown produce, clothes produced at a 'living wage' or cars that don't pollute are the 'right' option, to what lengths should we go to get them? What if they're not conveniently available where we live, if at all, or only at considerably higher prices than other options? What does it mean when we don't or can't buy them? Have we acted poorly or have we been forced to do so? Where does our responsibility lie?
- Look back at your list of associations with 'consumption' from the beginning of the section. Take a moment to reflect whether your thinking about what you have down has changed, if at all. Feel free to share with your group, if appropriate.

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<sup>1</sup> If you're interested in more information about this short film and the larger project, you can find it at: <http://www.storyofstuff.org/movies-all/story-of-stuff/>



## **SECTION 4 – THINKING CRITICALLY ABOUT CONSUMPTION II: DREAMING IN PLASTIC AND PAPER**

**RECOMMENDED TIME – 15 MINUTES (5 min reading; 10 min discussion)**

Excerpt from *Point of Purchase* by Sharon Zukin (Professor of Sociology, CUNY; scholar of urban change, gentrification, consumption and their intersection):

What are we entitled to? Consumer culture translates even our most idealistic desire for beauty, equality, and social acceptance into a need for commodities. [Even] the social spaces and honest brokers of consumption are, at bottom, inspiration to shop. And – to give it the specific American spin – the universal quality of consumer culture is felt to be a form of democracy. But it's not our desires that are at fault. I can empathize with Cindy, who dreams of a perfect pair of leather pants as a way of creating a perfect self. And with Artemio, who suffers from the illusions that having money in his pocket will enable him to fit in at Tiffany. And with the teenage boys in East New York, who think they can buy a genuine logo cheap – but find that they have to be better shoppers to gain respect from their peers. It's not wrong that we want to live happier, more comfortable lives – it's wrong that we think that products alone will make us free.

If Karl Marx were alive today, he would write about shopping as the new class struggle. We shop to find the bread, jeans, and homes – or baguettes, Miss Sixties, and McMansions – that we need to survive. Though we don't make these things ourselves, we work at shopping to produce them in our lives. We spend hours, and sometimes months, doing research on the things we need, and then we spend more time doing research on the prices and stores where we can buy them. The smarter we want to be as shoppers, the more work we have to do. And the more money we want to save, the more we need to buy.

....But shopping involves us in our own exploitation: the more emotionally invested we are in consuming goods, particularly in consuming specific brands, the more time we spend thinking about them, the more likely we are to buy them, and the more money we will probably pay. We often rationalize our self-exploitation by interpreting shopping as an entrepreneurial investment. With a Honda (or maybe a BMW), we'll impress the boss; with an eye shadow from Sephora (instead of Maybelline), we'll get the guy. If we're thrifty at the supermarket, we'll show our family that we love them....

Shopping hides the means of exploitation. Though we shop to buy someone else's work, we know little, if anything about them. We don't know how many hours they worked to make our computers or our Nikes, or whether it was physically hard, mentally tedious, and not very well paid for them to do so. Shopping seems to absolve us from responsibility for knowing these things. Whether it's our distance from direct production, or the time we put into shopping, or the fact that we also have to work to buy things, we feel that shopping is on a completely different, a completely individualistic plane. If shopping has anything to do with our collective life, it gives us a place to pursue public dreams of a better society by fulfilling private dreams of a better self. The social spaces of stores represent our dreams. It's not just the ads, the merchandise, or the atmosphere; it's the stores' ability to embody the dream and allow us to move within it. (pp. 263-4)

*Questions for Discussion:*

- Zukin asserts that shopping serves a way of fulfilling personal dreams, or “making us free,” making it an emotional transaction as much as a financial one. If so, how does this shape our visions of social justice? If dreaming involves shopping, then do we all need to be able to shop equally to dream equally?
- If it's not wrong to want to “live happier and more comfortably,” but as Leonard maintains, we can only do that by buying things that will require further consumption and all that goes along with it, then how do we live happier and more comfortably, but without a heavy conscience ?
- What are the implications of the substantial amount of time we invest in shopping, or more precisely in the process of shopping (research, selection, purchase)? And if we consider money a financial form of our time (as most people work for pay, e.g. offer time in exchange for money) the time investment can be viewed as more substantive.
- In terms of tzedakah, should more ethical consumption practices – both higher prices one might pay as well as the time invested in identifying and accessing them – count as tzedakah? How might you imagine tallying them in dollar terms, as part of your tzedakah total for the year?

**SECTION 5 – JEWISH TEXTS ON ACQUISITION AND EATING I: CREATION AND CONSUMPTION**  
**RECOMMENDED TIME – 15 MINUTES (5 min reading; 10 min discussion)**

There isn't a lot of shopping that goes on in the Torah, and so direct correlates to contemporary forms of consumption aren't easy to come by. The main types of clothes we hear about are the high priests' ornate garb, and the most elaborate item is probably a candelabra sketched out in the heavens for Bezalel, the architect of the *mishkan* (tabernacle). So we might look at a more basic form of consumption with which the Torah is far more concerned: food. The biblical creation story relates the rapid assembly of elaborate ecosystems and diverse populations, yet the first human inhabitants of the planet didn't have a blank culinary check to write. They were initially limited to eating only vegetation. Meat was only included on the terrestrial menu after the flood, perhaps a welcome back gift of sorts. Let's look at the texts more closely and see what they might tell us about a Jewish perspective on consumption.

Full passages are included so that you can make sense of the context as well as text. If you or your group has the time and skills, feel free to read through them completely. However, if you're short on time or energy, the key phrases are underlined and/or bolded. If you're not reading through the full text, jump down to the questions and they will guide you to the specific verses on which to focus.



Background: The sixth day of creation:

## Genesis Chapter 1 בראשית 1<sup>2</sup>

**כד** וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים, תּוֹצֵא הָאָרֶץ נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה לְמִינָהּ, וְבַהֲמָה וְרֶמֶשׂ וְחַיֵּיתוֹ-אָרֶץ, לְמִינָהּ; וַיְהִי-כֵן.

**כה** וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹהִים אֶת-חַיֵּית הָאָרֶץ לְמִינָהּ, וְאֶת-הַבְּהֵמָה לְמִינָהּ, וְאֶת-כָּל-רֶמֶשׂ הָאֲדָמָה, לְמִינָהּ; וַיִּרְא אֱלֹהִים, כִּי-טוֹב.

**כו** וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים, נַעֲשֵׂה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כְּדְמוּתֵנוּ; וַיְרִדוּ בִדְגַת הַיָּם וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם, וּבַבְּהֵמָה וּבְכָל-הָאָרֶץ, וּבְכָל-הָרֶמֶשׂ, הָרֹמֵשׂ עַל-הָאָרֶץ.

**כז** וַיִּבְרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הָאָדָם בְּצַלְמוֹ, בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים בָּרָא אֹתוֹ: זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה, בָּרָא אֹתָם.

**כח** וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתָם, אֱלֹהִים, וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם אֱלֹהִים פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ וּמְלֵאוּ אֶת-הָאָרֶץ, וּכְבַשְׁתֶּם; וַיְרִדוּ בִדְגַת הַיָּם, וּבְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם, וּבְכָל-חַיָּה, הָרֹמֶשֶׂת עַל-הָאָרֶץ.

**כט** וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים, הִנֵּה נָתַתִּי לָכֶם אֶת-כָּל-עֵשֶׂב זֶרַע זָרַע אֲשֶׁר עַל-פְּנֵי כָל-הָאָרֶץ, וְאֶת-כָּל-הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר-בּוֹ פְּרִי-עֵץ, זֶרַע זָרַע: לָכֶם יִהְיֶה, לְאֹכְלָהּ.

**ל** וְלִכָּל-חַיֵּית הָאָרֶץ וְלִכָּל-עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וְלִכָּל רֹמֵשׂ עַל-הָאָרֶץ, אֲשֶׁר-בּוֹ נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה, אֶת-כָּל-יֶרֶק עֵשֶׂב, לְאֹכְלָהּ; וַיְהִי-כֵן.

**לא** וַיִּרְא אֱלֹהִים אֶת-כָּל-אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה, וְהִנֵּה-טוֹב מְאֹד; וַיְהִי-עֶרֶב וַיְהִי-בֹקֶר, יוֹם הַשְּׁשִׁי. } פ

**24** And God said: 'Let the earth bring forth the living creature after its kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after its kind.' And it was so.

**25** And God made the beast of the earth after its kind, and the cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the ground after its kind; and God saw that it was good.

**26** And God said: 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; **and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.**'

**27** And God created man in God's own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.

**28** And God blessed them; and God said unto them: 'Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that creepeth upon the earth.'

**29** And God said: 'Behold, I have given you every herb yielding seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed--to you it shall be for food;

**30** and to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is a living soul, [I have given] every green herb for food.' And it was so.

**31** And God saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

### Questions for Discussion:

- What does 'domination' mean for the Torah, if the first person/s are given supremacy over all that flies, swims, walks, crawls and creeps, but can't eat them? (See verse 26 and 29.)
- Tucked in between the allowance to 'dominate' and the introduction of a vegetarian diet, there is an invocation "to be fruitful and multiply" (see verse 28). This commandment, however, introduces a new charge regarding resource use – "subdue it" – that goes further than before, but in the same breath it links it to greater responsibility - "replenish the earth." What are we to make of this first conception of consumption?

<sup>2</sup> Text and translation from <http://www.mechon-mamre.org/p/pt/pt0.htm>

**SECTION 6 – JEWISH TEXTS ON ACQUISITION AND EATING II: FRESSEN AFTER THE FLOOD**  
**RECOMMENDED TIME – 15 MINUTES (5 min reading; 10 min discussion)**

Background: Noah and company have been floating about for 40 days during the flood and are now about to leave the ark to return to the destroyed/restored earth.

**בראשית Chapter 8**

- טו** וַיְדַבֵּר אֱלֹהִים, אֶל-נֹחַ לֵאמֹר  
**15** And God spoke unto Noah, saying:
- טז** צֵא, מִן-הַתֵּבָה--אִתָּהּ, וְאִשְׁתְּךָ וּבְנֶיךָ וְנִשְׁי-בְנֶיךָ אִתָּךְ.  
**16** 'Go forth from the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee.
- יז** כָּל-הַחַיָּה אֲשֶׁר-אִתָּךְ מִכָּל-בֶּשֶׂר, בְּעוֹף וּבְבֵהֵמָה וּבְכָל-הַרְמֵשׁ הַרְמֵשׁ עַל-הָאָרֶץ--הוּצֵא (הִיִּצֵא) אִתָּךְ; וְנִשְׂרְצוּ בָאָרֶץ, וּפְרוּ וּרְבוּ עַל-הָאָרֶץ.  
**17** Bring forth with thee every living thing that is with thee of all flesh, both fowl, and cattle, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; that they may swarm in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth.
- יח** וַיֵּצֵא-נֹחַ; וּבָנָיו וְאִשְׁתּוֹ וְנִשְׁי-בְנָיו, אִתּוֹ.  
**18** And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him;
- יט** כָּל-הַחַיָּה, כָּל-הַרְמֵשׁ וְכָל-הָעוֹף, כֹּל רוֹמֵשׁ עַל-הָאָרֶץ--לְמִשְׁפַּחְתֵיהֶם, יֵצְאוּ מִן-הַתֵּבָה.  
**19** every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, whatsoever moveth upon the earth, after their families; went forth out of the ark.
- כ** וַיִּבֶן נֹחַ מִזְבֵּחַ, לַיהוָה; וַיִּקַּח מִכָּל הַבְּהֵמָה הַטְּהוֹרָה, וּמִכָּל הָעוֹף הַטְּהוֹר, וַיַּעַל עֹלֹת, בַּמִּזְבֵּחַ.  
**20** And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar.
- כא** וַיִּרַח ה', אֶת-רִיחַ הַנִּיחֹחַ, וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל-לְבוֹ לֵאמֹר: אֶסְף לְקַלְלָל עוֹד אֶת-הָאָדָמָה בְּעֵבוֹר הָאָדָם, כִּי יֵצֵר לֵב הָאָדָם רָע מִנְעֻרָיו; וְלֹא-אֶסְף עוֹד לְהַכּוֹת אֶת-כָּל-חַי, כְּאֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתִי.  
**21** And the LORD smelled the sweet savour; and the LORD said in His heart: 'I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.
- כב** עַד, כָּל-יְמֵי הָאָרֶץ: זָרַע וְקָצִיר וְקֹר וְחֹם וְקִיץ וְחֹרֶף, יוֹם וְלַיְלָה--לֹא יִשְׁבְּתוּ.  
**22** While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.'

**בראשית Chapter 9**

- א** וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים, אֶת-נֹחַ וְאֶת-בְּנָיו; וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ, וּמְלֵאוּ אֶת-הָאָרֶץ.  
**1** And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them: 'Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth.
- ב** וּמֹרְאָכֶם וְחַתְקֶכֶם, יִהְיֶה, עַל כָּל-חַיַּת הָאָרֶץ, וְעַל כָּל-עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם; בְּכָל אֲשֶׁר תִּרְמֹשׁ הָאָדָמָה וּבְכָל-דְּגַי הַיָּם, בְּיַדְכֶם נִתְּנוּ.  
**2** And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, and upon all wherewith the ground teemeth, and upon all the fishes of the sea: into your hand are they delivered.
- ג** כָּל-רֶמֶשׂ אֲשֶׁר הוּא-חַי, לָכֶם יִהְיֶה לְאֹכְלָהּ: כִּיֵּרֶק עֵשֶׂב, נָתַתִּי לָכֶם אֶת-כָּל.  
**3** Every moving thing that liveth shall be for food for you; as the green herb have I given you all.

**ד. אה-בשר, בנפשו דמו לא תאכלו** **4 Only flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.**

ה ואך את-דמכם לנפשתיכם אדרש, מיד כל-חיה אדרשנו; ומיד האדם, מיד איש אחיו--אדרש, את-נפש האדם.

5 And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it; and at the hand of man, even at the hand of every man's brother, will I require the life of man.

ו שפך דם האדם, באדם דמו ישפך: כי בצלם אלקים, עשה את-האדם.

6 Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made He man.

ז ואתם, פרו ורבו; שרצו בארץ, ורבו-בה. }ס

7 And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; swarm in the earth, and multiply therein.'

*Questions for Discussion:*

- After the flood, Noah and his merry band of survivors are allowed to eat meat. They are given a leg up as well, not in the form of gunpowder but in the introduction of “fear” and “dread” of them by all other beings (see chapter 9, verse 2). Yet here too, limits are put on consumption. Only the dead can be consumed. Living beings, however filled with dread and fear, are not to be eaten. What is the significance of this limitation, if any?
- This section of the flood story repeats the invocation to multiply three times, and thus serves to frame the expansion of the human diet to include meat with an invocation for procreation. Chapter 8, verse 17 states it in relation to non-human passengers of the ark, and the two references in chapter 9 (verses 1 and 7) are directed at the human passengers. How are we to understand the increase in consumption allowances in the context of the repetition of the call to “be fruitful and multiply”?

**SECTION 7 – BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER: A FEW QUESTIONS TO WRAP UP**  
**RECOMMENDED TIME – 10 MINUTES**

- One way to read the Torah's understanding of consumption, in this instance, is to view the linkages between rights and responsibilities, domination, consumption and procreation. Think back to Leonard and Zukin's take on consumption. How do their understandings of our rights and responsibilities in a consumption driven world compare with the Torah's?
- Now consider the constraints that exist when it comes to making choices about consumption (think back to Leonard's argument or other constraining factors your group may have identified). Recognizing these constraints as real and often difficult to overcome, what rights and responsibilities do we, as individuals (rather than a society) have? What are ways we can use tzedakah to fulfill them?



## **SECTION 8 – CLOSING, HOMEWORK, AND SCHEDULING – 10 MINUTES**

### **A. Closing**

*Please read out loud.*

This brings us to the end of our second Tzedakah Learning Pod session! Let's each share one thing from this session that was a highlight, a surprise, or a challenge.

### **B. Homework**

*Please read out loud.*

In order to keep momentum and maximize what we can do each session, there will be homework assigned each month. This is stating the obvious, but the more effort each of us puts into the homework, the more we'll get out of it. ☺ This month's homework will be the basis for the first part of next month's session and will provide us with information that we'll refer back to in a few upcoming sessions. (See Section 9 for homework assignment.)

We'll start next month's session by discussing our responses to this homework. Can we all commit to doing the homework? Are there ways in which we can help and support each other from now until then to help each other complete the homework?

### **C. Next month**

*Please read out loud.*

Let's make sure we have our date scheduled for next month. (Please meet after the 15<sup>th</sup> of February.) And remember – we can be in touch with each other with tzedakah ideas or reflections during the month, as well as sharing ideas with the broader Pod group through

[TLP2010-11@googlegroups.com](mailto:TLP2010-11@googlegroups.com)

See you next month!

## **SECTION 5 - HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT**

**Recommended time: Intermittently, a few minutes here and there throughout the month**

As preparation for our next Tzedakah Learning Pod session, please take note throughout the month of each time that you are moved to give tzedakah - what's the setting? What moves you? How does it feel to give?

Please also take note of the times that you feel the inclination to give tzedakah, but don't - What's the setting? What is different here from when you do give tzedakah? How does it feel to not give?

If you can, please note each of these times in your Tzedakah Journal - or if you can't write them down, please reflect on them so that we can discuss them at the start of our next Pod session.

