



## KISHKA FOR KOPPEL

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*In this retelling of a Jewish tale, a magic meat grinder helps a poor Jewish couple recognize their blessings after the three wishes it grants them don't bring the happiness they expect.*

All of us, at some time or another, have probably wished for things we do not have while forgetting to be grateful for what we do have. In this comical story, *Kishka for Koppel*, Koppel the junk man and his wife, Yetta, have just this experience. When Koppel is granted three wishes by, of all things, a meat grinder found in the trash, Yetta and Koppel learn to appreciate what it is that they already have.

The Hebrew term for gratitude is *hikarat hatov*, which means “recognizing the good.” Practicing gratitude means recognizing the good that is already ours. This is also the thinking that lies behind the biblical proverb, “Who is rich? Those who rejoice in their own lot” (Pirkei Avot 4:1). Koppel and Yetta finally come to this realization over some tea and *kishka* (Hebrew for sausage).

A simple and effective way to practice gratitude is by making thanks part of your everyday life. Be thankful when you make that appointment on time, or when dinner is perfect, or when your child hugs you. Doing this can change your view of the world and your life.

### USING THIS BOOK AT HOME

Encourage gratitude in your own family. You might make a list together of how you feel blessed in your lives, as a

family and as individuals, and add to it on a regular basis. Make use of that space on the front of the refrigerator to proudly display your growing list!

Talk to your children about the value of sharing with others. The *mitzvah* of *tzedakah* (the commandment to give) comes from the Hebrew word *tzedek*, meaning righteousness. No matter how little we may have, Jewish individuals are encouraged to help others. Donating to charitable organizations or volunteering in your local community helps fulfill this *mitzvah*. What can your family—including your children!—do to help in your community and beyond?

Be adventurous! Experiment by tasting foods eaten by Eastern European Jewish families during the time of our great grandparents. The *kishka* (stuffed derma) that came out of Koppel's magic grinder was most likely *fleishig* (meat-based) but the *parve* (vegetable-based) variety can be found as well. Pj

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