



Using Maaser Money for a Child to Work in an Appropriate Setting

10. If one goes out to work and has two employment options – either a better-paying office that poses potential spiritual problems of seeing inappropriate things, or a less lucrative job in an office that is set up in an appropriate manner and contains no improper temptations – his/her parents may use *maaser* funds to supplement the salary of the lower-paying job and make it equivalent to the other job in order to incentivize him/her to take that position.

For example, if the job in the appropriate setting is offering \$500 a week and the other job is offering \$600 a week, the parents can use \$100 a week of their *maaser* money to persuade their child to take the first job.

(Rav Yechiel Michel Steinmetz shlita)

(The explanation for this *halachah* is as follows: According to the letter of the law, the parents are not obligated to pay money for this purpose; however, there is a mitzvah of *chinuch* to help one's children become upstanding Jews and to instill *yiras Shamayim* within them, which is accomplished by steering them toward the preferable work environment. Just as there is a mitzvah to provide money to help one's children learn Torah, there is a mitzvah to make sure they are in an environment that is conducive to spiritual success. In regard to the laws of *maaser*, one may not use *maaser* funds to pay for a mitzvah that he is obligated to do, such as purchasing an *esrog* and the like. But one may use *maaser* money for a mitzvah that he is not technically obligated to do, such as spending extra money in order to purchase a nicer *esrog* than is technically needed in order to fulfill "*hiddur mitzvah*." Accordingly, one may not use *maaser* money for a child to learn the basics of Torah, as parents are obligated to pay for this; however, one may use *maaser* money to go above and beyond their obligation by hiring a private tutor to help their child learn better. Therefore, since the parents are not obligated to supplement their child's income in order to ensure that he/she works in a more appropriate office, they may use *maaser* money for this purpose.)