

Re'eh 2016

1.

### Tzedaka

Tiferes Shimshon (pages 206-207)

“If there shall be a destitute person among you, any of your brethren in any of your cities, in your land that Hashem, your God, gives you, you shall not harden your heart or close your hand against your destitute brother.” (15, 7)

"כי יהיה בך אביון מאחד אחד שערך בארצך אשר יקוק אלהיך נתן לך לא תאמץ את לבבך ולא תקפץ את ירך מאחריך האביון."

Money is something that is physical. The entire world depends on money. People work in order to get money. Money portrays power. However, it is impossible to buy knowledge with. Money has a lot of potential to buy many different items. Shlomo Hamelech says (Koheles 10, 19) “money answers everything.” "והכסף יענה את הכל." Money can also be dangerous in that it can cause us to detach ourselves from Hashem. Furthermore when we undergo a difficult financial state, Hashem will help because He is with us when we are in a state of pain “He will call upon me and I will answer him, I am with him in distress.” (Tehilim 91, 15). "יקראני ואענהו עמו אנכי בצרה." When we buy something for a spiritual purpose or when we give charity we combine two opposite forces together: the physical money and the spiritual mitzvah. Tzedakah is so important because it can save us from death as stated in Mishlay (10, 2) “charity rescues from death.” "צדקה תציל ממות." This could be why there have been very few wars on American soil. It is because of the merit of tzedaka.

2.

### Tzedaka

“You shall surely give him, and let your heart not feel bad when you give him, for in return for this matter, Hashem, your God, will bless you in all your deeds and in your every undertaking.” (15, 10)

"נתון תתן לו ולא ירע לבבך בתתך לו כי בגלל הדבר הזה יברכך יקוק אלהיך בכל מעשך ובכל משלה ירך."

Ateres Tzvi page 315

“Righteousness, righteousness shall you pursue, so that you will live and possess the land that Hashem, your God, gives you.” (16, 20)

"צדק צדק תרדף למען תחיה וירשת את הארץ אשר יקוק אלהיך נתן לך."

Tzedakah is so important because it can save us from death as stated in Mishlay (10, 2) “charity rescues from death.” "צדקה תציל ממות." The question arises; what is so important about the mitzvah of tzedaka that it has the ability to save from death? Why does the mitzvah of tzedaka save from death more than other mitzvos? The Zohar and Gemara in Nedarim (7b) say that a poor person is

considered as if he is dead. (עני חשוב כמת) When someone gives him money it is as if the poor person just underwent resurrection. Therefore since the giver saved this poor person from death, mida keneged mida (measure for measure) the giver will be saved from death as well.

The Gemara in Baba Basra (10) says that one who gives tzedaka will be saved from a weird type of death. Rabbi Yaakov Lorberbaum (Nachlas Yaakov, also author of Chavas Da'as) explains that one can only be saved from a bizarre type of death by giving tzedaka. However, one cannot be saved from a natural death. The Meom Loez (Mishlay abid) explains that the acronym of "וצדקה תציל ממות" is מות (death). The letters aren't in order in order to allude to the point that tzedaka has the ability to save from a weird death.

How many times do we need to give tzedaka? Rashi explains that we must give even one hundred times. The Rabbenu Bechia explains that when one gives tzedaka, Hashem will give him more money. The Torah Temimah (16, 10) explains that one should give even a small amount. Even poor people must give as stated in Gittin (7). The Mishna in Avos says everything depends on the abundance of good deeds. הכל לפי רוב המעשה. Rashi explains that we are judged for the actions we do. If we have more merits than sins then we will get rewarded and vice versa. The Rambam explains that **it is better to give one dollar one hundred times rather than give a hundred dollars once. Why is this so? Since he will naturally become more giving than one who merely gives once.** The Chafetz Chaim explains that the one who gave one hundred times prevailed against his yeitzer hara one hundred times, which is much more than the one who only gave once.

The sefer Mashal Lama Hadavar Dome (page 226) relates an excellent story. In the center of the city there was a river that divided the city. On top of the river there was a weak bridge. One day there was a group of thirty people on the bridge. It then suddenly collapsed. They all fell into the water. Two bystanders went into the water and tried to save them. Another bystander shouted and said 'you're outnumbered; you won't be able to save all of them.' They responded 'even though we won't be able to save all of them, we will at least save some of them. We must try to save as many as we can. It is even worth it if we save one life.' The same applies to tzedaka. **Even though we can't give tzedaka to every single poor person, we should at least try to help as many as we can.** The Gemara (Berachos (5b), Menachos 110) states whether a little or a lot as long as one's heart/intent is towards heaven (אחד המרבה ואחד הממעיט ובלבד שיכוין לבו לשמים). The simple explanation of this Gemara is whether a person brings a lot of korbanos (sacrifices) or a little, as long as he is doing so for the sake of heaven, then he has done well. The same applies to giving tzedaka, whether a person gives a lot or a little, as long as he is doing so for the sake of heaven, then he has done well. There is a similar story regarding a thief who knocked down apples in a store in the market place and began stealing them. A bystander shouts out to the store owner 'don't just watch him steal the apples! Grab and save whatever you can!' One of the lessons to that story is even if we are towards the end of Shemoneh esray and we then realized that we didn't have kavana for most of Shemoneh esray; nevertheless, we can still focus and have kavana for the remaining part of Shemoneh esray. However, we can also derive a lesson from this story that is relevant to tzedaka. Even though we can't save everyone, nevertheless we should try to save whomever we can.

We must realize that the tzedaka we give has major effects, even if we don't give a significant amount. What's important is that we give what we are able to give. The intent is what truly matters. We should help and give to whomever we can. That's all that Hashem expects from us.