



## PERSONAL KINDNESS (I)

### Gemilus Chassadim

What *mitzva* could possibly be greater than *tzedaka*? Chazal say that doing kindly deeds, *gemilus chassadim*, is greater than *tzedaka* in three ways. Firstly, *tzedaka* is done with money only, while *gemilus chassadim* is done with money (such as by giving a loan) but also personally (e.g., by burying the dead, bringing joy to a *chassan* and *kalla*, or escorting a departing friend). Secondly, *tzedaka* is for the needy, while *gemilus chassadim* can be done for any person. Thirdly, *tzedaka* is given only to the living, while *gemilus chassadim* can also be done towards those who have passed on.

The value of kindness is measured according to the goodness of heart and effort invested in it. When one prepares food or delivers clothing to the poor, he is devoting thought and care for the other.

(סוכה נו"ט ע"ב)

*HaShem* said: All the kindness that you perform is more precious to Me than the *korbanos* that Shlomo HaMelech offered before Me.

Once, Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakai and Rabbi Yehoshua left Yerushalayim together. Seeing the destroyed Beis HaMikdash, Rabbi Yehoshua bemoaned the absence of a place of forgiveness for the Yidden. Rabbi Yochanan told him, "Do not despair! For we still have an equal opportunity for *kapara* – by fulfilling acts of *gemilus chassadim*."

(ילקוט הושע תקכ"ב, אדר"ג פ"ד)

The Alter Rebbe learned the following teaching from the *tzaddik* Reb Mordechai, who had heard it from the Baal Shem Tov:

A *neshama* may descend to This World and live for seventy or eighty years – in order to do a Yid a favor *begashmius* and certainly *beruchnius*.

(היום יום ה' איר)

In the year תס"ט (1699), when the Baal Shem Tov was only eleven years old, he joined the group

of *tzaddikim nistarim*. Three years later, in the year תע"ב (1702), the Baal Shem Tov impressed upon them the importance of helping Yidden *begashmius*, even where it would not lead to an influence *beruchnius*. Fifteen years later, seeing the great benefit which this approach brought, the *nistar* Reb Mordechai placed his hands upon the Baal Shem Tov's head and said, "*Tavo alecha bracha* (תע"ב)! May *brachos* come upon you for your *ahavas Yisroel*!"

(אג"ק רי"צ ח"ד ע' רצא, לקו"ש ח"א ע' 261)

The Torah commands a Yid to follow in the ways of *HaShem*. Chazal explain that just as *HaShem* clothed the naked, visited the sick and buried the dead, we should do the same.

(סוטה יד ע"א)

### The Necessity for Kindness

The Frieddiker Rebbe related:

One morning, while on *datche* with my father (the Rebbe Rashab) in Alivka, I awoke at 3:00 am and sat down to learn. I noticed that my father woke up early and was preparing himself for *davening*. At 6:00 am, he invited me to come with him for a walk.

As we were walking, he said to me, "When one rises in the morning, learns and then *davens*, something is accomplished, but without the opportunity of actually doing a kindness for another Yid, the day is 'dry.' One needs to *daven* to *HaShem* that He send a Yid for whom one can do an act of kindness – though one should *daven* that he not stumble upon unworthy people."

Later that day, two Yidden from Rudnia came to my father to ask him to do a personal favor for them. My father called me and said, "You see, if one desires truthfully, *HaShem* helps him."

(סה"ש תרצ"ט ע' 339, בבא קמא טז ע"ב)

In the year תרפ"ב (1922), when the Frieddiker

Rebbe was in Petersburg, the *chossid* Reb Zalke Persitz told him:

"It is now 25 years since I became a *chossid*! In the year תרנ"ז (1897) the Rebbe Rashab told me at *yechidus*, 'Just as a Yid must put on *tefillin* every day, he must spend fifteen minutes a day thinking about himself, about whom he can help *beruchnius* or even *begashmius*.' I asked the Rebbe, 'Rebbe, how is this possible?' To which he replied, 'For this, one must have a *mashpia*,' and the Rebbe suggested Reb Zalman Arsher.

"From then on, every day, I would record in a diary the act of kindness I had done that day, and on a day when I could not find someone with whom to do a favor, I would go to *shul* and spend time with Reb Zalman."

(סה"ש תש"ד ע' 61)

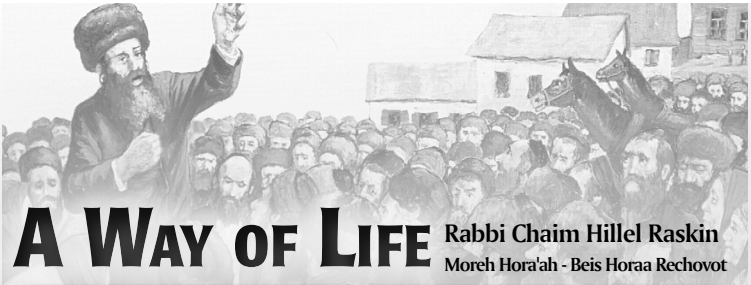
The Baal Shem Tov explained the words of Chazal, "Torah learning which is not accompanied by work – will become invalid." A person's learning must bring him to help another Yid, otherwise his learning is deficient.

The Rebbe explained why helping another Yid is described as "work". Just as a businessman does not wait at home for others to approach him, but opens his store in a busy location, hangs a sign and tries his best to convince others of his product, so, too, a Yid must actively pursue opportunities to help another Yid.

(סה"ש ת"ש ע' 115, לקו"ש ח"א ע' 260)

### CONSIDER THIS!

- Which is greater: helping another *begashmius* or *beruchnius*? Why?
- Why does one need special assistance from above to help another? How does having a *mashpia* help?



# A WAY OF LIFE

Rabbi Chaim Hillel Raskin  
Moreh Hora'ah - Beis Horaa Rechovot

## OUR HEROES

### Reb Noach Altshuler



Reb Noach Altshuler was a famous *talmid* and *mekushar* of Reb Mendel Horodoker. He was a decedent of Reb Yechiel Hilel Altshuler, the compiler of the *pirushim Metzudas Dovid* and *Metzudas Tziyon* on Nach. Some say he was married to the sister of the Mezritcher Magid. His son Reb Sholom Shachna married Rebbetzin Devorah Leah, daughter of the Alter Rebbe, and was the father of the Tzemach Tzedek.



A few years after Reb Mendel Horodoker moved to Eretz Yisroel, Reb Noach boarded a ship en-route there. On the boat he fell gravely ill. Knowing the law to throw any deceased passengers overboard, Reb Noach requested from the captian that after he passes away, but before throwing him into the sea, he should be tied to a board while wearing his *talis* and *tefilin* with a note in his hand stating his name.

On one *motzai Shabbos* Reb Mendel sent his *talmidim* to the shore commanding them to wait there and greet an esteemed guest — one of their colleagues who would arrive from abroad. After a few days of waiting they heard a great commotion that a man wearing a *talis* and *tefilin* could be seen floating on a board near the shore. The chassidim recognized Reb Noach and brought him for burial in the nearby city of Chaifa.

(עדן ציון ע' קסא)



When Reb Noach came to *Beis Din Shel Maalah*, they found one thing that he didn't fix during his lifetime. He was given two choices: half an hour in *Gehinom* or to return to this world. Reb Noach said, "My entire life I never did anything without asking my Rebbe. Now too, I want to ask my Rebbe." The *Beis Din Shel Maalah* found his words to be true and gave him permission. Reb Mendel Horodoker was sitting with his chassidim and said, "Reb Noach is here now and asked me what to choose. I say better half an hour in *Gehinom*. What do you say, chassidim?" All the chassidim of course repeated their Rebbe's choice, "*Gehinom*." At that moment they heard a cry, "Oy Rebbe!" and a mark of a burnt hand was seen on the window frame.

(אוצר סיפורי חב"ד ח"ז ע' 294, רשימות דברים ע' 207)

### Tums on Shabbos

May I take Tums to relive heartburn after the *seuda*?

■ Chazal prohibited taking medication on Shabbos – except in specific situations – out of concern that one would grind the herbs from which the remedy is made, which is the Torah prohibition of *tochein*. Although nowadays most people don't make their own remedies, nevertheless the consensus of contemporary *poskim* is that we cannot permit a rabbinic prohibition even if the reason is not applicable,<sup>1</sup> (especially when there are still some people who compound homemade remedies).<sup>2</sup>

■ It is self-understood that whenever there is even a possibility of a life-threatening illness (*safek pikuach nefesh*), it is permissible to transgress *melachos* as needed. However, in the absence of any danger, there are three general categories:<sup>3</sup>

- (1) **Michush kal:** One with a mild ache (such as a runny nose<sup>4</sup> or a normal cough<sup>5</sup>) may not transgress any prohibition.<sup>6</sup>
- (1) **Tzaar gadol:** One who is in lot of pain but is not weak or incapacitated may do a *melacha (d'rabanan)* in an abnormal manner (*shinui*),<sup>7</sup> yet he may not take medication or undergo treatment (except external treatment applied by a non-Jew).<sup>8</sup> This precludes Tylenol for a manageable pain, powder for a rash, Tums for heartburn and sucking lozenges for a sore throat.<sup>9</sup> Some say that if one is on a schedule of medicine for such an ailment, he may continue taking the dosage on Shabbos.<sup>10</sup>
- (1) **Choleh she'ein bo sakana:** One who is in severe pain and cannot function (e.g. migraine headache) may do a *melacha* in an abnormal manner, ask a non-Jew to perform a *melacha* in the normal manner, and take medication.<sup>11</sup> He may take the medication as soon he feels the headache coming even if it is still bearable.<sup>12</sup>

■ Some *poskim* write that if the medication is thoroughly mixed before Shabbos into a food not normally taken with medicine, one may eat that food on Shabbos, since (a) he has actively distinguished it from normal medication – so he won't think to prepare medication on Shabbos, and (b) it looks different – so others won't think medication is permissible. This is an optimal solution for one who experiences heartburn or headaches on Shabbos.<sup>13</sup>

1. ראה ש"כ פל"ד הערה ז'.  
 2. ראה קצוה"ש סי' קל"ד בדה"ש ס"ק ז' שמאריך בנדון זה, עיי"ש.  
 3. וראה שו"ע או"ח סי' שכ"ח ס"יט – סכ"א (ליותר פרטים ושלבים).  
 4. ארחות שבת פ"כ ס"ק קמ"ה.  
 5. ערוה"ש סי' שכח ס"יט.  
 6. שו"ע או"ח סי' שכח ס"כ.  
 7. בקצוה"ש סי' קל"ד ס"ה כ' שמוותר רק מלאכה דרבנן. אלא שיש להעיר שע"פ משמעות שו"ע ר"ר סי' שכ"ח ס"כ וס"מ מותר גם מלאכה דאורייתא בשינוי בצער גדול. ומ"מ יל"ע מה שהשמיט המילה "גמורה", וצ"ע.  
 8. ע"פ שבת ק"ח ע"ב, רשי"י שם ד"ה ונתן, שו"ע ר"ר שם סכ"ז. וראה ארחות שבת פ"כ סעיף קל"א, ושם הע' קפ"ח שכך היה מורה הגרשז"א. וראה קצוה"ש סי' קל"ח בדה"ש סקל"א. (ולמעיר משבה"ל ח"ג סל"ו וחי"ב ספ"ב. אמנם באג"מ או"ח ח"ב סי' פ"ו החמיר בוה).

8. שו"ע או"ח סי' שכח ס"א, ס"כ.  
 9. ארחות שבת פרק כ' ס"ק קל"ג.  
 10. שו"ת אול"צ ח"ב פל"ו ס"ד. ובש"כ פל"ד הע' ע"ו שדוקא כשצריך לקחתה לשבוע ימים. וראה שבה"ל ח"ח סי' ס"ו.  
 11. שו"ע או"ח סי' שכח ס"יט.  
 12. ארחות שבת פ"כ ס"ק קכ"ה, וראה שם הע' קפ"ב.  
 13. ע"פ שבת ק"ח ע"ב, רשי"י שם ד"ה ונתן, שו"ע ר"ר שם סכ"ז. וראה ארחות שבת פ"כ סעיף קל"א, ושם הע' קפ"ח שכך היה מורה הגרשז"א. וראה קצוה"ש סי' קל"ח בדה"ש סקל"א. (ולמעיר משבה"ל ח"ג סל"ו וחי"ב ספ"ב. אמנם באג"מ או"ח ח"ב סי' פ"ו החמיר בוה).

לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה

## A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

### Take Word by Word

"It was when I first started working as a *mazkir*," Reb Yudel Krinsky recalls, "when the Rebbe called me in and handed me some handwritten papers to type.

"I gave one glance at the papers, and I was overwhelmed. The handwriting was tight, and was surrounded by omissions and additions, stars and arrows. The style was new for me, and although I didn't say anything, it must have been apparent on my face...

"The Rebbe noticed my reaction, and directed me. 'Don't let the arrows confuse you. Take word by word, line by line, with consistency. You'll see, everything will be in order.'

"To me," concludes Reb Yudel, "those words meant much more than typing tips. They gave me direction for all my years of work for the Rebbe, and for life in general."

