

The Weekly *Farbrengens*


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HELPING WITH DIGNITY (II)

HELPING WITH FEELING

The Baal Shem Tov said, "Even a person who gives *tzedaka* with an open hand, but without sympathy for the recipient, is considered to be shedding blood."

(הוספות לכתר שם טוב סי' לו)

One of the chassidim of the Mitteler Rebbe related:

In a *maamar*, the Rebbe once explained *chessed shebechessed* as doing *chessed* with feeling. Upon my return from Lubavitch, I repeated this *maamar* publicly and all those present were very moved by this explanation.

"What are you so excited about?" commented one of the elders. "In my youth, I was told a simple explanation for this: When you give a poor person an old pair of shoes, this is *chessed*; when you also give him a nail with which to fix them, that is *chessed shebechessed*."

The chossid relating the story concluded, "*Chassidus* introduced the importance of relating to another with inner feeling."

(אג"ק מוהרר"י צ"ח"ד ע"ב)

The Alter Rebbe was very particular that all charitable help and support should not be called "*tzedaka*", but rather "a loan" or a "*gemilas chessed*". And in practice, this was how his chassidim expressed themselves.

(אג"ק מוהרר"י צ"ח"ה ע"ב)

The chassidim of the Alter Rebbe would say, "In the *parnasa* that *HaShem* gives us, your share is also included."

(סה"ש תש"ג ע"ב)

THE WAY TO HELP

The *amora* Rav Yitzchok said: "Whoever gives money to the poor is *bensched* with six *brachos*; whoever pacifies him is *bensched* with eleven *brachos*."

(בבא בתרא ט ע"ב)

When Shlomo HaMelech was wandering in exile, after having been overthrown by Ashmedai, king of the *sheidim*, he was once invited for a meal, where he was served the finest delicacies. During the meal, however, his host reminded him of his days as ruler, causing Shlomo HaMelech to lament through the remainder of the meal.

The following day, when the king was invited

CONSIDER

Is the need for sympathy for the sake of the giver or the receiver?

Why is an appeasement more valuable than an actual gift?

by another man, he asked if he would be treated as on the day before. "I'm a poor man," said this host, "and I only have a few vegetables which I will gladly serve you, if you will honor me with your presence."

Agreeing, Shlomo HaMelech went to his home, where the poor man washed his face, hands and feet, and then served him some greens. Comforting him, the poor man said, "*HaShem* swore to your father that He would never take away the kingdom from his descendants. This is just the way of *HaShem*: He first rebukes and then comforts. Don't worry! *HaShem* will restore your kingship!"

When Shlomo HaMelech was reinstated as king, he said, "A meal of greens is better than the stuffed ox with which that rich man reminded me of my painful plight."

(ילקוט שמעוני מושלי ט"ו)

The *tanna* Shammai said: "If someone gave a pauper all the gifts in the world, but did so with a sour and sullen face, it is as if he gave him nothing. By contrast, he who greets another with a shining countenance, even without giving anything, is considered to have given all the finest gifts in the world."

(אבות דרבי נתן ג)

NOT TO EMBARRASS

Rebbi Elazar said, "One who gives *tzedaka* secretly is greater than Moshe Rabeinu, for he deflects wrath that even Moshe could not deflect."

(בבא בתרא ט ע"ב)

Rebbi Yannai, seeing a man give a *zuz* to a poor man in public, told him, "It would have been better to have given him nothing, rather than to give him a coin as you did now, embarrassing him."

(חגיגה ה ע"א)

A wealthy man once met a pauper and said, "Why don't you go to work? You are strong and able!"

HaShem said to the rich man, "Not only did you give him nothing of your own, but you have even placed an *ayin hora* on what he has!"

(ויקרא רבה פל"ד)

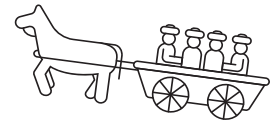
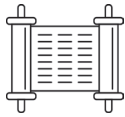
The Rambam writes:

If a person gives *tzedaka* to a pauper with a displeased expression, then even if he gives him a thousand gold coins he has lost his *zechus*. Instead, one should give *tzedaka* with a kind expression, sympathize with the pauper in his pain and offer him comforting words.

It is forbidden to scream or use a raised voice when speaking to the poor man, for his heart is already broken. Woe is to the person who embarrasses him! Rather, he should relate to him as a father, both in his actions and in his words.

(רמב"ם הל' מתנות עניים פ"י הל' ד-ה)





KASHERING A CHOCOLATE FACTORY

How are chocolate factories kashered?

During the production of chocolate, cocoa liquor is blended with sugar and other ingredients while heated. Many chocolate factories produce both pareve and milchig products and use the same equipment for both. This can present an issue of either chalav akum in a non-kosher facility or milchig in an all-kosher one (which, although being "nat bar nat," should not be eaten with meat).¹

Many companies are reluctant to allow kashering with boiling water since it can ruin the production if water gets into the chocolate. One alternative would be to kasher with libun (fire), but that is often impractical since the machinery has multiple layers that can't be reached and thick walls.

What about doing hagala with a run of pareve chocolate (which won't be eaten)? Can other liquids remove the absorbed taste like water?²

Chazal say that one may not use wine to kasher utensils that absorbed korbanos.³ Some Rishonim understand this as a stringency for korbanos, while others learn that it is invalid across the board.⁴ The Rama and the Alter Rebbe rule that l'chatchila one may not kasher in such a manner, but it is effective b'dieved.⁵

Halacha often rules that in a case of great need (sh'as hadchak), we permit whatever we would allow b'dieved.⁶ Is kashering a chocolate factory to have the chocolate considered a great need? While some would consider chocolate an extra, others consider it a staple.

But even if we consider chocolate to be a real need, is chocolate the same as wine? R. Moshe Feinstein rules that fats cannot be used for kashering since they aren't considered a "liquid."⁷ Accordingly, kashering with cocoa butter could be questionable since it solidifies at room temperature. For this reason, some kashrus agencies make a point of using liquid oil. (Another issue to consider is whether the machines are kashered at boiling point (212° Fahrenheit) or less.)

In practice, some kashrus agencies are very makpid on these issues, while others rely on more lenient approaches. It is appropriate to verify which kashrus agencies follow the standards you choose to follow.

1. ראה יו"ד סי' צ"ה ס"ב. 2. ראה רמב"ן חולין ק"ח ע"ב, וראה ר"ן חולין פ"ח מ"ד ע"א (דפי הרי"ף). 3. זבחים דף צ"ו ע"ב. 4. ראה שו"ת הרשב"א ח"א סי' תק"ג, שו"ת רעק"א ח"א סי' פ"ג, ומנגד ראה ר"ן ורמב"ן הנ"ל. 5. רמ"א שם. שווע"ר סי' תנ"ב סכ"ח. ובפרמ"ג סי' תנ"ב א"א סק"י דקודם פסח ישכירו שוב. 6. שו"ת שבה"ל ח"ו ע' 124. ראה שו"ת רעק"א ח"א סי' פ"ג. 7. אג"מ יו"ד ח"א ע' 103.

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

R. YEHOSHUA ELIYAHU VOLOSOV

R. Yehoshua Eliyahu Volosov was a chossid of the Rebbe Maharash, Rebbe Rashab, and Frierdiker Rebbe. His father R. Sholom was the baal koreh and makri for the Yomim Noraim by the Rebbe Rashab in Lubavitch. A native of Orsha, R. Yehoshua Eliyahu made a living from teaching accounting, first in Orsha, and after World War I in Charkov. He was known as a great baal tzedakah and chessed, and was a prominent communal activist on behalf of Yiddishkeit. Under Communist rule in Kharkov, he was moser nefesh to keep the local shul and mikvah open. He passed away c. 5700.

only one left in the city, while the others were converted into Communist meeting halls, theatres, and warehouses. The Communists repeatedly tried to close this one too, and R. Yehoshua Eliyahu put much effort into convincing the officials not to. Many officers were his accounting students, and they would come to him for help when they had accounting problems. He was therefore well-liked and could influence them. But it was a constant struggle, since new efforts were constantly being made to shut it down.

Throughout his life, R. Yehoshua Eliyahu was always busy with tzedaka and gemilus chassadim. Being a pleasant and kind man, all those in need would come to him, and he would help each one in a discreet manner. He would go to great lengths to conceal his good deeds.

In addition, he bore the heavy cost of maintaining the shul and mikvah, since he could not burden the mispalelim to pay dues. Besides the regular maintenance, they were forced to make repairs to strengthen the building, which were necessary both for the building itself and also for the government, which claimed was that it was unsafe, as if they were so concerned for their wellbeing.

(ס' הזכרונות דברי הימים ע' צט ואילך)

He worked as an expert accounting teacher, while his wife ran a small grocery store, providing them with a modest income for their livelihood. However, he gave tzedaka with a good heart and a generous hand, even beyond his means. Whenever an urgent matter arose, he would empty his pockets. He participated in all community affairs, and was friendly with all the people of the city. Everyone respected and loved him, and his name was held in high regard.

Once in yechidus, the Rebbe Rashab told R. Yehoshua Eliyahu to learn the entire parsha in Likutei Torah each week.

In his later years, he maintained the shul and the adjacent mikvah. This shul was the

R. Yehoshua Eliyahu asked the Rebbe, "But there are some parshiyos where it is impossible to learn all the maamorim on the parsha?" The Rebbe advised him to complete those parshiyos by reading them as he reads the parsha Shnayim Mikra each Erev Shabbos.

(רשימות דברים חדש ע' 281)

A Moment with The Rebbe



THE HEAVENS WILL PROTECT THEIR PLANES

After a lengthy discussion on the security challenges facing El Al Airlines with its North American director David Shine, the Rebbe suddenly said to him:

on Shabbos, then the heavens will protect their planes the rest of the week," the Rebbe responded.

"In order for the flights to stay safe, and in order for El Al to succeed, El Al must observe Shabbos."

Mr. Shine's nephew, Dr. Chaim Shine relates, "Although my uncle considered himself a non-believer, I know that the Rebbe's words had a strong impact on him. Indeed, a few years later, when there were great debates regarding whether El Al should stop flying on Shabbos, he was one of strongest supporters of discontinuing those flights."

Mr. Shine was surprised. "What does observing Shabbos have to do with preventing hijackings?" he asked.

"If El Al's planes will not be in the heavens