

לימוד הדבר תורה לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי שי' בן רבקה לגאולה קרובה מן המוצר אל המרחב

Feeling for Another Yid

A Dvar Torah to encourage matters of Yiras Shomayim prepared to be shared and discussed with your family at the Shabbos table

CARING FOR ANOTHER

The Baal Shem Tov once told of a court case which was conducted regarding a simple Yid who did not know more than davening and Tehillim, but had exceptional אהבת ישראל. His thoughts, speech and action were permeated with feelings for other Yidden, and he was pained by the misfortunes of another and when one had a שמחה, he was joyful. The בית דין של מעלה decided that this simple Yid be given a portion in עדן among the Tzaddikim and אנונים.

The sigh (קרעכץ) of a Yid which comes from seeing another in trouble, breaks all iron boundaries of the מקטרגים (adversaries), and when one rejoices for another Yid and gives him a brocho, it is considered by Hashem like the tefilla of Rebbe Yishmael Kohen Gadol in the קודש קדושים.

(סה"ש תש"ג ע' 161)

After telling of the reward that he had received for helping a Yid, the Tzemach Tzeddek said to the Rebbe Maharash: All the gates of שמים are open for one who helps a Yid with his פרנסה.

Relating this to the Rebbe Rashab, the Rebbe Maharash added: It is not essential to know the route to the היכלות עליונים; the main thing is to help another wholeheartedly, with feeling, and to have a 'geshmak' (pleasure) in doing a favor for a Yid.

(היום יום כ"ה סיון)

The Rebbe Rashab said: It is an extraordinary advantage when Hashem grants a person the זכות of feeling a sense of pleasure for doing kindness to another, to the point that the other becomes more precious to him than his own self. This is because he may find numerous reasons why he deserves troubles ור"ו, but such is impossible with regard to the other's suffering.

(היום יום ו' אדר א')

At a farbrengen (כסלו תרצ"ו), the Frierdiker Rebbe said: In general, one Yid should be dear to another, especially so by chassidim. Is it appropriate that only after three months, one finds out that the other had a שמחה?! Chassidim, who have been nurtured with אהבת ישראל, must be very warm to other Yidden and hold them very important, to the point that one feels 'your שמחה is my שמחה, and my שמחה is yours.'

When the news arrived in Lubavitch that Reb Chonyeh Morosow was freed from army duty, the known chossid, Reb Hendel went out to the courtyard singing, "חניע איז ארויס", "Chonyeh is free!" He entered the Rebbe Rashab's room and relating the news, began dancing. The Rebbe stood up and put his hand on Reb Hendel's shoulder, danced around with him three times and said, "I will therefore say chassidus for you."

(לקוטי דיבורים, ח"א ע' 89)

GENUINE LOVE

The Frierdiker Rebbe describes: In previous generations, upon meeting another Yid, one would wish שלום עליכם wholeheartedly

and warmly, and the response, עליכם שלום, was answered sincerely as well. Nowadays, the ways of the world have seeped into our routine, bringing with it a coldness, and lack of truthfulness. The present, typical שלום עליכם often means 'goodbye', in contrast to the תורה'דיקער שלום עליכם of previous times which expressed the love one had for another.

(לקוטי דיבורים ח"א ע' ג)

The Frierdiker Rebbe said: A gesture in Ahavas Yisroel which is routine, such as asking another how he is doing because this is customarily done, is dry and lifeless. אהבת ישראל must be saturated and alive, causing one to see the מעלות in another. If a negative aspect is noticed, it is due to a lacking of the beholder and he should correct it within himself.

(ספר המאמרים תש"י ע' 264)

The chossid, Reb Eliyahu Abeler once went to the Rebbe Maharash for Yechidus and when asked by the Rebbe, "How is your business going?" he replied, "ב". But I am greatly pained by the lack of success of Yosef, a fellow villager, who is constantly befallen with misfortunes. A horse and carriage was purchased to enable him to travel to the city and sell some merchandise, but the wheel broke, the horse broke a foot and merchandise was stolen. Rebbe, Reb Eliyahu continued, "What can I do to help him?" He sighed heavily and cried, "Rebbe, give him a ברכה!"

The Rebbe Maharash responded, "Yes, you can help him! For when one Yid is pained by the pain of another and asks on his behalf, he causes that all גזירות be taken away and all harsh judgment be broken." The Rebbe then took out a coin and gave it to Reb Eliyahu, saying, "I want to be a partner with you. Hashem should help you have the ability to benefit another Yid and it should be with hatzlocho."

(סה"ש תש"ה ע' 95)

When the Rebbe Rashab was five years old, he and his brother Reb Zalman Aharon decided to play 'chossid and Rebbe', where the רז"א would act as Rebbe and the Rebbe Rashab would be the chossid coming into Yechidus. The רז"א sat on a chair, fixed his hat, and the Rebbe Rashab came to ask him for a תיקון. "For what are you asking?" the רז"א asked. The Rebbe Rashab replied, "This past Shabbos I ate nuts, and later found out that the Alter Rebbe writes that it is good to refrain from eating nuts on Shabbos." The רז"א counseled him to make sure to daven from the siddur and not by heart. "Your advice will not help, and you are not a Rebbe!" exclaimed the Rebbe Rashab. "When a Rebbe answers, he is supposed to sigh, but you did not sigh, so your advice is no good!"

The Rebbe explained that when a Yid helps another, the assistance itself is not enough; the sigh, empathizing with the other's pain, is also necessary. Doing a favor for another to perfect one's own שלימות, without feeling the other's ache, is not kindness, but the opposite.

(תו"מ חכ"ז ע' 440)

PAINED BY ANOTHER'S MISFORTUNE

Before Pesach תר"מ, two chassidim arrived in Lubavitch, to the Rebbe Maharash. The first chossid, Reb Michael Aharon Pisarevsky, though not very knowledgeable in Torah and chassidus, had a 'chassidic heart', and was always concerned for others. The second chossid, Reb Leib Posen, was a wealthy chossid from Vitebsk, who gave tzedakah and occupied himself with גמילות חסדים, but all within a certain limit.

When he entered yechidus, the first subject he mentioned was the situation of his חבר Reb Nachman Zeltzer. He described the family's poor financial state and the children who were of marriageable age, and then pleaded for רחמים on his friend's behalf. The Rebbe gave his brocho that Hashem should help him, and Reb Michael Aharon begged the Rebbe that the brocho be a firm commitment.

When he then described his own dire situation, the Rebbe said, "It seems you're even worse off than Reb Nachman." Reb Michael Aharon answered, "About myself, I know I don't deserve anything better, so it is forbidden to complain, and I have to be satisfied with what I have." The Rebbe covered his eyes, sat in dveikus for a short while and then said, "If one davens for his fellow Yid, his own tefillos are answered first. May Hashem grant you hatzlocho!" Not long after, both Reb Nachman and Reb Michael Aharon became very successful in their businesses and very wealthy.

When the second chossid, Reb Leib, entered Yechidus, he spoke at length about his personal matters, relating his situation and asked for a brocho. Only then did he sigh and report the situation of his חבר the chossid Reb Shmuel Brin. Reb Shmuel, despite being a very active and successful businessman, would learn an in-depth shiur in Gemoro, חושן משפט and chassidus daily. Lately, Reb Shmuel's business had not been doing well, and had also been cheated by swindlers, causing him to fall deeply into debt.

Reb Leib related Reb Shmuel's misfortunes and concluded, "Of course, it is all from Hashem, but he still is to be pitied." The Rebbe covered his eyes, and sank deep in thought, but did not reply.

Soon afterwards, a fire broke out on the street where Reb Leib's storage houses stood, causing him to lose tens of thousands of rubles. At the same time, another fire caught onto his shop, causing him an additional loss. He soon traveled to the Rebbe, and upon entering Yechidus, began crying bitterly, telling the Rebbe of his great losses. Looking at him piercingly, the Rebbe said, "When tragedy befell Reb Shmuel Brin and left him penniless, you accepted it calmly, but now, when it has come to your merchandise, you cry out. The 'you' and the 'I' are two separate things."

Leaving Yechidus, Reb Leib understood that his hardships have come because of his attitude towards Reb Shmuel. After wandering around for two days, in a daze, not knowing what to do, he returned to the Rebbe's room and asked to be guided on a path of תשובה, and took upon himself to think about the good of another.

The Rebbe Maharash quoted what the Baal Shem Tov says, that when one passes judgment on another, he is passing judgment on himself, whether for positive or negative. For example, if one says that another deserves help from Hashem for what he has done, or if he passes judgment on him, he is causing charges to be pressed against himself. One who shares in the anguish of a friend is compensated.

The Rebbe then instructed Reb Leib to lend Reb Shmuel three thousand rubles, and for himself, he should proceed to Moscow to buy merchandise for his shop. The Rebbe bentched him and he returned home, ready to do as instructed.

However, upon arriving at Reb Shmuel's home, he found out that his friend had traveled to Lubavitch, so though he was anxious to travel to Moscow for his own purchases, he was afraid to do deviate from the exact order of the Rebbe's instructions. Finally, on ליל שבת, when he entered the shul, he saw Reb Shmuel, who was in a joyous mood and surrounded by chassidim, listening excitedly to what he was saying. Reb Leib felt envious of him, that despite his losses, he looked like the happiest man. The gabbai quieted everyone and Reb Shmuel 'chazered' the מאמר he had heard from the Rebbe, and the following day, he 'chazered' it another two times.

On Motzei Shabbos, Reb Leib hurried to Reb Shmuel's house to give him the money. Warmly welcoming him, Reb Shmuel tried to raise his friend's spirits by explaining the common saying that 'after a fire one prospers.' Reb Leib was moved from the way Reb Shmuel was able to console him, when he himself had suffered from recent financial loss as well.

Reb Shmuel then told him of his initial feelings of despair when he had found out about the calamity that had befallen him. However, not long after, a special messenger came to him with a message from the Rebbe, telling him that he knows of his circumstances but does not agree with the way he is responding to the situation.

Reb Shmuel continued, "I traveled to Lubavitch and received instructions to buy readymade rafts and a brocho for good merchandise and a side income as well. Following these instructions, I traveled to Riga to arrange the order of some fine rafts, and on the trip returning home, I met a Yid looking for an arbitrator to settle a dispute between two businessmen. I agreed and after successfully sorting out the matter, I was paid.

"How will you pay those who will deliver the rafts?" Reb Leib asked. Reb Shmuel reassured him that he has the Rebbe's brocho and Hashem will help. Not knowing how to properly broach the topic, Reb Leib blurted out, "Don't worry about the money! I've brought you a certain sum for that!" and told him of the three thousand ruble loan he had in his wallet. Reb Shmuel refused to accept it, and Reb Leib then told him the whole story. Reb Shmuel said, "You have done what the Rebbe has told you to do, and our חכמים assure us that Hashem considers a good thought is as if it was actually done. Nevertheless, I am not accepting the money."

That same night, Reb Leib traveled to the Rebbe, complained about Reb Shmuel's refusal, and left the bundle of rubles on the table. Early Monday morning, the Rebbe's משרת arrived with a sealed envelope and a written note from the Rebbe: "I am sending you three thousand rubles until after selling the rafts. Have hatzlocho!"

Reb Shmuel accepted the money, bought and sold the rafts and earned a large profit. At the same time, Reb Leib traveled to Moscow where the merchants agreed to give him merchandise on credit. Moreover, he won thousands of rubles in a lottery and on the advice of the Rebbe, bought and sold flax for an incredible profit.

These four chassidim had much success and remained wealthy throughout their life.

(התמים חוברת ז' ע' קג)

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